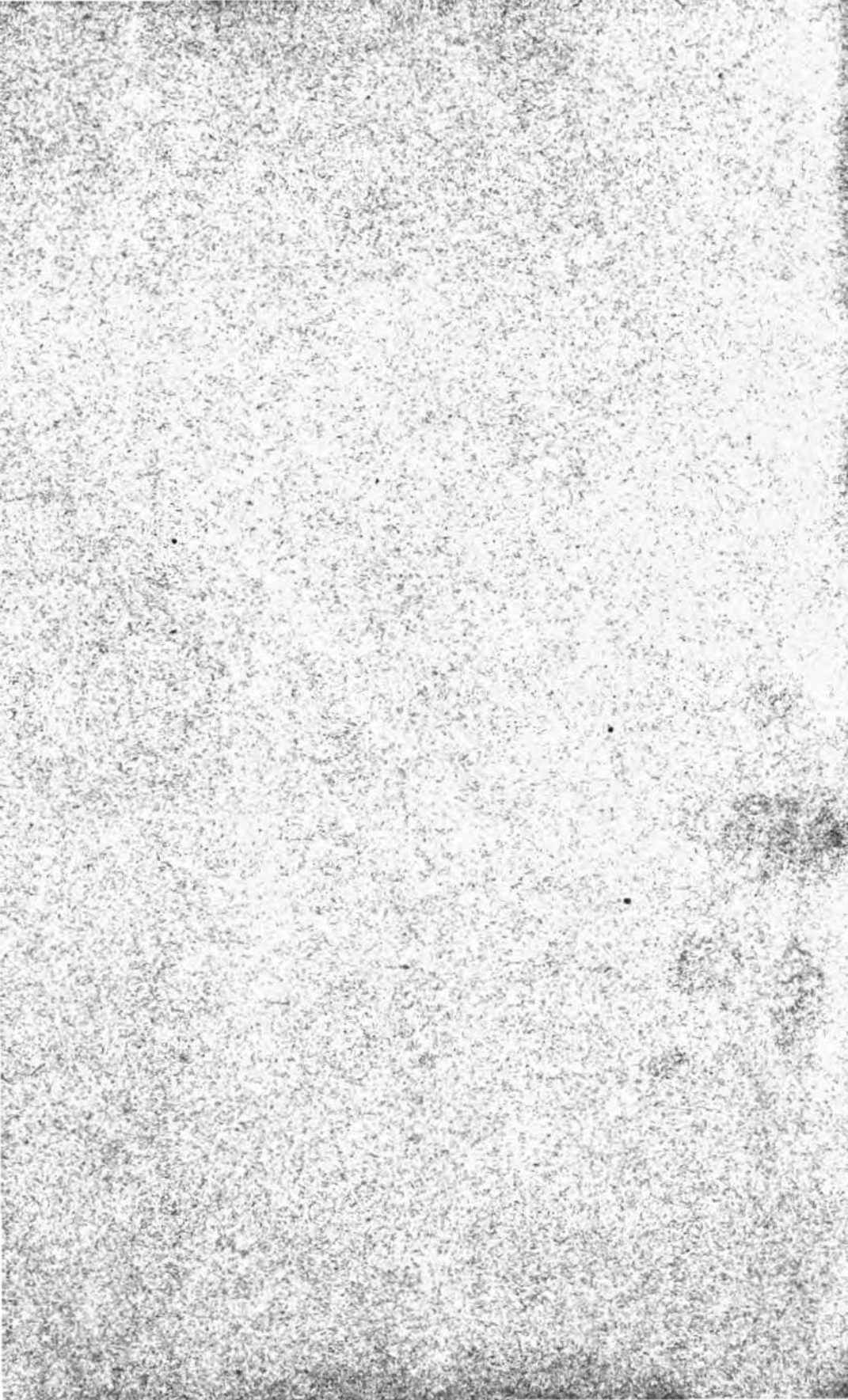


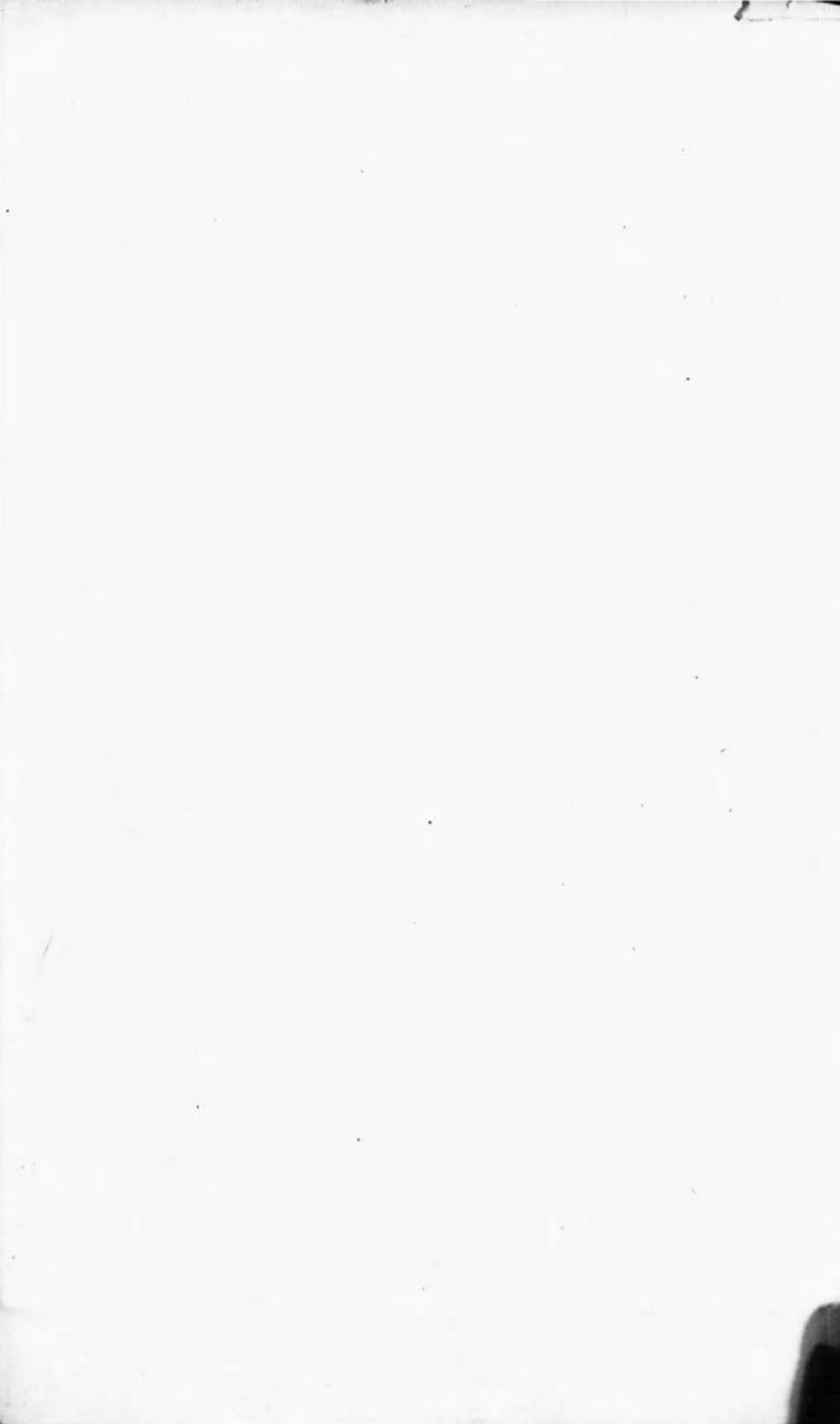
PHILATELIC SECTION.

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THE

(1-15)

Philatelists' Paper,

A Monthly Magazine for Stamp Collectors.

No. 1.—Vol.—I.]

OCTOBER, 1887.

[One Half-Penny.]

All about Surcharged Stamps:

A Collector's opinion; reasons why they have been issued; superfluity.

IN addressing ourselves to this subject we believe we have selected one on which a vast deal may be said and a considerable volume of light thrown towards the determination of the actual collectable value of certain stamps—the original condition of which has been affected by additions in the shape of surcharges or over-prints. In very many instances it has been found that the insignificant origin of surcharged stamps—*i.e.*, the over-prints themselves calls for very little credit to be placed to their account as postal gems, although a long price might have been paid for them. Writers have demonstrated the stupidity evident in the practice of placing a liberal value on some surcharged stamps, which we hope to mention in detail by-and-by, only because there is a demand for specimens in the market. For a stamp to be entitled to moral value and to be treasured as a “gem” its origin must be a respectable one, because the issue of any label or surcharge cannot be justified unless

there is cogent reason and necessity for such issue to be preferred and to take place. There we ask is the logic in giving to any stamp in your albums, whether surcharged or otherwise.—a particular value as a gem to which it has no actual right. Collectors' are to be found to whose door this suggestion might be brought with a decent chance of converting them to a more common-sense practice people may be met with continually who will tell you that they have almost priceless gems in their possession as Collectors, all owing their supposed value to some inpost by surcharging; but if the question is put to them to define the reasons why this or that “gem” was issued in otherwise than its formal state in very many instances it will be discovered that these claims to legitimacy are of the flimsiest nature possible. No great flow of words is required to point out the fallacy of treasured stamps like the 1881 provisional issue of Paraguay, and stamps of this class, although it is difficult to particularise fairly. The worst instances where undue confidence is generally placed and absurd values put upon stamps. We can speak from per-

sonal knowledge about the fascination a single stamp bearing a surcharge often has for even Collectors of experience and usually proxy character. The over-prints is often treated as a qualification. We know of an incident which will serve to illustrate this, where, the people interested were both Collectors of some years standing. As a sort of speculation one of them bought a dozen specimens of the Spanish Stamps bearing the surcharge "Habilitado," &c., and realised good value for the best looking specimens by exchanging. In one instance he got about twelve shillings worth of other stamps for a distinct specimen of the 100 nil. de esc., surcharged as above. Now probably if the present owner properly considers the real philatelic value of the label particularised or if the truth of the maker is shown to him he must decide for himself one of two things: Either that he has placed in altogether imaginary work upon the stamp, or that he is in common with many others, we fear, collecting stamps not for the sake of their beauty, usefulness, and historical value, but for the mere insatiate desire to amass as many varieties of labels as possible without any serious difference to the generally acknowledged objects of stamp collecting.

The adhesives coming from Mauritius show a different place of surcharging. In this case of course the over-print has not appeared until after the labels had

passed out of postal use, and now we are on the subject we will repeat the circumstances connected with these labels as detailed once upon a time by a Collector who aspired to an essay on "post-marks." His knowledge of the subject was good, but his fault strangely enough was a desire to communicate his ideas too liberally. "Why not" says the essayist, "adopt the same style of *post-mark* in our English Post Office as appears on the Mauritius Stamps—the word 'cancelled' in neat type." This only occurred last year, but we should imagine the real fact of the case are really too generally known to need repetition here. The Spanish labels with bars across, and the Swiss series over-printed "Ausser Kers" may all be put into the category. They have been so surcharged to prevent their use as prepayment of postage, being merely the remainders of the old stock in quantities to Dealers. Then there is another stamped in the threepenny and sixpenny values of the issue immediately preceding the present series of our own country's stamps. Here the reasons for the super-imposed 3d. and 6d. have been at various times attributed to indefinite and especially in one instance to any improbable circumstances. The suggestion that any sagacity on the part of the officials at St. Martin's-le-Grand was sire to this offspring is scarcely within the range of possibility.

(To be Continued.)

THE

Proper way to Lick a Stamp.

"The average ingenuity of the human family," said a retail stamp clerk at the post office, must be very small. Why, there is not one person in 500 who has gumption enough to put a stamp on a letter. I see the process gone through with a thousand times a-day, and I ought to know. All the people at my window begin by putting the stamps into their mouths, closing their mouths, rolling their eyes like a man trying to swallow a pill, and moving the stamps around in their mouths until they are perfectly saturated with saliva. They then lay them on the corner of their envelopes and bring their clenched fist down on them like a pile-driver. Then comes the profanity. 'See here, clerk,' they say, 'this stamp is no account. Won't you please put a little muscilage on it? So strange that they can't put enough muscilage on the stamps to make them stick.' Now, the trouble is that these people lick and chew all the gum off the stamp before they try to affix it; and if the gum were an inch thick, it would meet with the same fate. The way to put a stamp on is to moisten the gum very slightly, and then lay it on the envelope, and with the end of the forefinger slip it back and forwards once or twice until the saliva and gum are mixed. I have been licking stamps for forty

years, but I have never yet met with one which would not adhere if it was treated in this way."—*Chicago Journal.*

POSTAGE STAMPS—were first perforated for division in 1854.

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