



**ON SOME RECENT CHANGES IN THE  
SPANISH POSTAL REGULATIONS  
(1871)**

TO V. G. DE ISASY, ESQ.\*

In this country one moves on slowly, still one moves. On the 17th March last (1871), a new tariff was issued, whereby the following objects may be cheaply transmitted through the post:—

1.—Commercial papers.....	10 grammes for	3 cent. de peseta.
2.—Tracings.....	10 » »	3 »
3.—Blank paper sent for the purpose of showing its watermarks.....	10 » »	3 »
4.—Printed announcements of births, marriages, or deaths.....	10 » »	1 »
5.—Printer's proofs.....	10 » »	1 »
6.—Visiting cards.....	10 » »	6 »
7.—Photographic portraits.....	10 » »	6 »
8.—Medicines in powder, grain, or hard paste.....	10 » »	12 »

These articles should be sent under bands, or in such way as to give facility for the examination of their contents by the postal *employés*.

The privileges thus conferred are at present limited to the mother-country, and do not extend to her colonies. Their author is one of the ablest and most competent officials of the general post office at Madrid—Señor Emile C. de Navasqués. The postmaster-general, Señor Víctor Balaguer, and the Minister of the interior, Señor Sagasta, have been good enough to approve of these excellent reforms. Not a word, however, is said in the tariff respecting the prepayment of used or unused stamps. It is true that there are in Madrid several dealers in obsolete and current stamps, both Spanish and foreign, who trade openly; that philately is discussed in special and in ordinary journals; that timbrophily has, in fact, sprung up in the country of the hidalgos; but, notwithstanding, there exist two laws, which forbid trafficking in postage stamps, and, hence, as a logical sequence, the government discreetly keeps silence, on its new tariff, respecting the forwarding of these stamps.

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Now allow me to quote some of the laws which are today in vigour in unhappy and miserable Spain:—

«Any person who shall remove the postmarks from used stamps, or sell such stamps to the public, shall be put at the disposal of justice, that he may be judged and punished conformably with the laws.»—*Royal Decree*, 16th March, 1854, art. iii.

Again, let us see what is the state of the law respecting the later issues, and the stamps now in use:—

«It is an infringement of the law against smuggling (contrebande) for any person other than the government [or those whom it may appoint for the purpose] to sell postage stamps.»—*Royal Order*, 18th November, 1860, art. i.

You will see from this that stamp collecting in Spain is without protection.

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Just as is done in certain offices in India, Canada, and other places, so in some portions of Spain, obliteration with *pen and ink* is still performed. The law respecting the operation is as follows:—

«In the rural offices (termed in Spanish, CARTERÍAS) the stamps which prepay letters destined for another rural office, and which are not forwarded by an estafette, are to be annulled by means of a *cross*, made with pen and ink.»—*Order of the Postmaster-General*, 14th Sept., 1857.

The «too-late» English, or the French «*après le départ*», hand-stamps till recently had no equivalent in Spain, but the system of thus indicating the time of posting has just been introduced, and annexed is the fac-simile of the stamp employed. The translation of the words is, «*After the departure*». The first time that I observed it on the envelopes of letters and newspaper wrappers, was the 23rd March last (1871).

DESPUES DE LA SALIDA
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THE DOCTOR THEBUSSEM.



