Air Stamps from Abyssinia

With two years ago the Ethiopian Government indulged in a commemorative stamp issue on the occasion of the arrival of the first air mail despatch from Addis Ababa to other African cities, one might have expected that the latest flight of the air mail service of Persia would be allowed to pass unrecorded and bearing the words "Polarfahrt, 1931," comprising 1 m. canc., 2 m. canc. and 4 m. canc., depicting the dirigible flying over the world.

So far as is known, no mail, official or otherwise, was carried by the Graf Zeppelin on her return voyage from England to Germany.

Next month the giant airship is to undertake another Austrian cruise, and it is reported that distinctive stamps are already being prepared for the event at the State Printing Office, Vienna.

South-West African Air Post

At long last a use has been found for the air post stamps of South-West Africa, which at the last moment a few months ago by the postal department of South-West Africa in anticipation of the establishment of regular aerial communication with the Union itself. The first flight over a regular inland air mail route took place on August 1, 1931, when letters, etc., were conveyed by aeroplane between the following towns—Rehoboth, Mariental, Keetmanshoop, Okahandja, Omaruru, Ongwediva, Windhoek, Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. Up to the time of writing no "flown covers" have yet reached England, although they are expected by the next South-West African mail, but as the air mail fee has been fixed at 5 pence per lb., it would seem that the existing 3d. and 10d. air post stamps will need to be supplemented with ordinary postage stamps to make up the rates.

Air post collectors are reminded that covers originally prepared for despatch by the abandoned air service from Windhoek to Kimberley, which was to have commenced on April 1 last, exist bearing air mail stamps postmarked with various dates in the latter part of March. As, however, they were eventually forwarded by ocean mail to the Cape, they cannot be considered by any stretch of imagination as "flown covers," and are merely hybrids.

Air Mail in Malta

Although Malta has had a 6d. air mail stamp since 1928, the island only last June initiated direct aerial communication with any other country. As from June 17, 1931, however, the Italian air mail service between Genoa and Tripoli has touched at Malta in either direction. No special stamps have been provided, but a postmark lettered "Air Mail—Malta" has been introduced, in addition to which first flight covers were impressed with a violet cachet "1st Air Mail." Ordinary Maltese stamps are employed for pre-paying the air post fees, the overprinted 6d. denomination being reserved for letters forwarded to Australia, India, and Africa via Imperial Airways.

Sudan Air Stamps

By the time these notes are in print it is expected that the new definitive air mail stamps of the Sudan Government will be in circulation, and already before the time of this report the picturesque design represents an aeroplane circling over the Gordon monument at Khartoum, the values, colours and numbers of the initial printing being as follows:—5 millimetres green and black (80,000), 10 mls. red and black (80,000), 15 mls. sepia and black (100,000), 2 pastes orange and black (70,000), 3 p. grey and black (90,000), 5 p. bluish grey and black (90,000), 5 p. green and black (60,000), 5 p. blue and black (60,000).

Passenger Air Post

The picturesque air post stamps of Persia may shortly pass out of use in consequence of the termination of the contract between the Persian Government and the German Junkers Company owing to the insignificant amount of mail which has been conveyed by aeroplanes since their introduction. For this reason it is reported that several services have lately been suspended between Persian cities, and flights in other instances greatly reduced in number.