



# Nunn's Philatelic Annual.

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## *Nunn's Philatetical Annual.*

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PHILATELY—ITS PRESENT ASPECT ; AND THE  
SUBVERTERS OF ITS GENERAL  
MORAL TONE.

*By " Hippolyte."*

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**A**MONG the peculiarities of Philately are the different phases trade assumes every year ; for trade is never the same for two years in succession. Now the rage is for colonial stamps. Now collectors will only buy surcharged stamps. Then surcharged stamps are tabooed and fiscals used as postages are the fashion. Shortly after they fall into disrepute. Fashion changes again and half stamps are in demand ; but hark ! 'tis the death-knell ! anything new ? anything new ? and half stamps become a drug in the market.

The change is not limited to demands for certain stamps, but runs throughout the entire philatelic body. Collectors and dealers change in their manners of buying and selling.

The season of 1883-84 has been a very dull one notwithstanding the assertions of some dealers as to the enormous trade done by them then ; for exceptions do not make the rule, as some people would have us believe, especially when they want to make their own case the rule.

This dulness is attributable to the peculiar phase Philately is now assuming—a phase which is but the fuller development of that chronicled by Mr. Cheveley some three or four years ago. The peculiar trait mentioned by Mr. Cheveley was that of *“collectors who ought to rank as dealers, inasmuch as they carry on a continual trade in stamps of certain countries where they have connections—but then they make no profit out of it—so they say. They carry on a heavy correspondence, and jump at the chance to sell half-a-dozen stamps to any little errand boy who has sixpence to spend,—and all this not to gain a single penny, BUT OUT OF PURE LOVE TO PHILATELY! Noble fellows! These would attend the auction on the chance that the ignorance of the vendor, or the smallness of the attendance, might cause a stamp worth a pound to be sold for one shilling. Then, still out of pure love to philately, they would buy it, and, prompted by the same philanthropic spirit, would OBLIGE a friend with it next day for fifteen shillings.”*—This was no exaggeration, and at the time it was written it would have been easy to point out a score of these collectors ( ? ) whom the description portrayed to life. But it must be remembered that this critique was written more than three years ago. Philately has greatly developed since then, and needless to say so have these *“Noble fellows.”* The breed, if anything, is in greater perfection than ever. It is these collectors now who get a living out of stamps, whilst the dealers are expected to trade out of pure love to philately in its genuine sense. It is in fact a crime capital in the eye of some collectors now for a dealer to make a profit out of stamps. Collectors want to trade with dealers on terms more advantageous to themselves than to the dealers.

We could mention at least fifty collectors—so they call themselves—who trade in the following manner:—

They have connections in certain countries whence they receive very large supplies of stamps. For these stamps they desire to obtain others for their collections. So far so good—there is nothing against that—but they want to do business *on their own terms*, and these terms are generally:—Dealers must send them good selections of very rare stamps of certain countries which they mention, and only one stamp of each, and priced according to a standard catalogue—say Gibbons'—and they will choose therefrom those stamps they require, returning with the others some of their own stamps (priced according to same catalogue), and to the exact amount of their choosing, *not a penny over*. So that if there are any of their stamps that the dealer does not happen to require he must return them with next sending, which will come back with the exact amount of exchange to balance what has been kept and what the dealer returned—*no choice allowed*. And these “noble fellows!” if they fancy that the stamps sent them by the dealer are priced rather high by Gibbons, want to know if 25% discount cannot be allowed, so great is their fear of being swindled.

We remember a case in which a dealer, formerly in England, sent one of these people a magnificent selection amounting to within a few shillings of £100. A tidy amount was kept, and exchange sent to exactly amount chosen. At the time of receiving the return invoice another exchange lot was received from a *dealer*, and strange to say consisted of the same stamps, the dealer's being priced half as low as the collector's.

When the fact was mentioned to the collector he wrote back—" *I cannot help it, if Mr.—— (naming the dealer) chooses to break the market.*" Yet this person, we do not doubt, would feel himself insulted if called a dealer.

Who will venture to say where dealing begins and collecting ends? For thus these sophistical gentry put it:—" A dealer that collects is not a collector in the genuine sense of the word, but a collector that deals *is* a collector in the genuine sense of the word. Or; a dealer that collects is not an amateur, and a collector that deals is an amateur."

A great many collectors will not buy except at half catalogue price. Now, how is an *honest* dealer to sell stamps at half catalogue price? Dealers themselves would only be too happy to buy many stamps at half catalogue price, and even full catalogue price, if they were sure of obtaining nice specimens.

A dealer in the north of London was mentioning to us one day a case in point. A gentleman called in his shop, and wanted some stamps, of which he had a list, at half catalogue price. The dealer agreed on condition that the gentleman would take them all round. Agreed. Things went on swimmingly till they came to a stamp catalogued sixpence, which the collector thought would only be about a penny, so he would not have it. The dealer, a very straightforward person, told him at once that if he would not take that stamp he would not have any at all, for the agreement was to take them all round. The collector was obdurate, and he found the dealer no less so.

In another instance we know of a collector asking for a particularly rare stamp. It was obtained for him, but

then he found the price too high, saying:—"Twas too dear for him, for when selling his collection he should not be able to make a profit on it."

Now this is the point upon which our argument revolves, viz. :—that collectors make their collections a business speculation. It is no longer the interesting pastime or study, but the money-making part of the transaction which they admire; and no one can deny this injures the moral tone of philately, as thus the employ of dealers is taken out of their hands, and in their stead we have a set of pettifogging philatelic peddlers.

One may often see advertisements—"50% below any catalogue price;"—but, we ask, by what class of dealers are they inserted?—Are they well known names?—Are they dealers of any standing?—Answer, in the negative.

We do not mean to argue that collectors have no right to deal, but if they do let them call themselves dealers. We do not argue that collectors are not right to buy in the cheapest market. But let dealers live. We do not argue that dealers are ill-used, and we are not Quixotic enough to set ourself up as a redresser of wrongs, more especially when the dealers are more than capable of taking care of themselves. We do not argue that dealers are not often exorbitant, but what we wish to show is that collectors in their endeavours to reduce the price of stamps to a minimum by petty dealing and competition are really doing themselves injury.

How often do we hear an outcry against certain forgery-mongers? Alas! but too often. And what the cause? Simply that dealers find forgeries a more lucrative speculation than genuine stamps. Now rare stamps have a



fixed market value. True, this price fluctuates according to demand and supply, but on an average the prices keep steadily the same. Their fixed market value is catalogue price. How in all conscience can a collector expect to get these stamps at half catalogue price, or even at  $33\frac{1}{3}\%$  less, for one dealer ordering them from another would only get 25%. To demand half catalogue price is as much as to say that the publishers of catalogues cheat their clients of 50%.

It is folly to expect a small dealer to undersell a large one since in most cases the large dealer supplies him. To say I will buy if you sell so much cheaper than so and so, is but tempting to dishonesty; and, alas! human nature is but too prone to err. If the dealer is as unscrupulous as the collector he sells him a forgery, if the stamp is a very rare one and difficult to tell, and then the collector yells! He has been swindled. Truly under the circumstances he cannot expect it to be otherwise. It is nonsense for a collector to expect to buy stamps from a dealer and make a profit on them afterwards. One might as well expect to go into a draper's shop, order a coat, and when it has been worn once or twice expect to sell it and gain on the transaction. Collectors have to depend mostly for their supplies from dealers. Now for a man to be able to deal in stamps he must earn a living at it; if he cannot he seeks "fresh fields and pastures new," and the collector is left to his own resources. Very poor ones at the best.

As we said at the beginning stamp dealing is every year assuming a new phase, that is, it adapts itself to the demands of collectors. A new surcharge appears. A price is fixed. Very few collectors will pay it. In consequence

they are reduced by 75%. These amateur dealers then buy them as fast as they can be supplied. When the market is glutted the truth comes to light: the surcharges were made to order. Dire are the shouts for bringing the forgerymongers to justice. But where are they? Who are they? The riddle is never solved: and if it were, who is to bring them to justice? Let philatelists digest it as they may, this petty dealing is but provocative of forgerymongering, for it is on these amateur dealers that the forgerymonger principally lives. Societies are not much protection against these frauds, for in the course of our experience we have remarked that a cunning dealer is more than a match for the cleverest amateur that ever was. For it is impossible to tell how often the very heads of these societies are taken in by supposed new issues, rouelettes, shades changed by the action of chemicals, errors, and hundreds of other ways. And as to the principle before mentioned of collectors wanting to exchange with dealers on their own terms, we will simply give a quotation shown us some time ago by a dealer: it was from one of these "noble fellows!" who aroused Mr. Cheveley's admiration some years ago. The extract was as follows:—"I want good and rare stamps, and not fancy stamps at fancy prices, which dealers have lately taken the habit to send."

We should very much like to know how he could expect anything else on his terms, for as far as (with our humble light) we can see, it would be just as profitable, or even more so, on those conditions, for a dealer to take some stamps out of one of his books and replace them by others out of another of his books, for in this way he would save postage. For the dealer is selling *single stamps at wholesale*

prices, and getting in return wholesale lots at retail prices; and a very profitable speculation indeed it must prove to him.

If a collector now-a-days wants to sell his duplicates to a dealer he is kind enough to inform him that the stamps are catalogued at so much; and when the dealer sells him anything, he wants 25% or 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % discount, or else he won't buy. Several forgerymongers have lately been brought to book, and those collectors who have been taken in have only themselves or their "confrères" to thank for it.

It is being perpetually shouted in our ears—"All the best stamps are going out of the country!" Very likely, dear sir! but what have you done to prevent this? We do not doubt, as you assert, that you are always willing to buy rare stamps, but are you willing to pay their value? 'Twas but yesterday a dealer was telling us he could not sell you anything: that you wanted stamps *given to you*, that was his expression. He said he had really offered you stamps *at cost price* because he wanted money, and you found them too dear. Then let the stamps go out of the country, and don't grumble: the foreigners will get the genuine stamps and pay fair prices, and will sell you their forged stamps cheap!—Very cheap (?)

Who is wisest in his generation?

Societies innumerable have been got up for the protection of collectors, but jobbery has been rampant in everyone of them. In many cases prominent members of Societies have been found aiding and abetting forgerymongers in their pernicious traffic. The sceptical on this point can refer to the November number of the Foreign Stamp Collector's Journal, published 1880, in which is mentioned the case of "*Mr. ———*" (a Gentleman who at that time was decidedly the

*most active member of the London Philatelic Society) writes, 25th July, 1870:—"If you have any of the 3d. Transvaals printed in ROSE, OR BLUE, OR ANY OTHER COLOUR EXCEPT VIOLET (!) will you kindly forward some to me in equal quantities to the value of £5?"*

Dealers, and those of the biggest, are selling stamps that have been declared by the societies to be forgeries, and the societies are countenancing stamps known to be forgeries. Where is the protection to the Collector? A dealer with a large purse, and who knows how to flash it, can manufacture and sell forged stamps by the thousand with impunity under the very noses of the societies. This is fact. We have seen it done.

Reflect over this reader, and think of what use societies are to you. None whatever. If you get swindled the society will publish the fact, but on *your responsibility*. It takes nothing on itself. It only protects its own members, and that by halves.

The truth is here. If a great many collectors were not over anxious to do themselves justice at the expense of dealers, dealers would act more justly by them. If a lucrative business could be done out of genuine stamps, dealers would not have recourse to forgeries.

## PHILATELY IN AUSTRALIA.

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*By Dawson A. Vindin, M.R.P.S. of R.V.*

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**T**HINKING perhaps that a short account of things philatelic in this far off land might interest the many readers of the *S. C. J.* I take up my pen, asking the reader's kind indulgence while perusing this article, my experience of literature so far as contributing is concerned being very limited. So little is known abroad of these colonies that I expect few of you readers are aware of the extent to which stamp collecting is followed as a science and hobby in Australia and the surrounding Islands. To my own knowledge there are more than a thousand ardent philatelists scattered over the colonies, and most of these have collections holding from a thousand to 10,000 specimens. Having had the pleasure of seeing a large number of these collections I can hesitatingly say that in regard to possession of great varieties our colonial collectors are in the front rank of the great philatelic army, I may take for instance the collection of Mr. J. Russell, of Sydney, which collection numbers close on seven thousand specimens, among which are a great many magnificent specimens and varieties. His collection of Australasian stamps is especially fine, containing choice kinds, and wanting only three specimens to complete it. Mr. Russell has forty-five varieties of Sydney Views alone. Another collection of very great value is that in the possession of Mr. David Hill, of Melbourne. This gentleman has been an enthusiast for many years, and is a great

authority on Australian stamps. His collection is confined to one branch only—unused British colonials. His collection of these is well calculated to make you break the commandment—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods," for I defy any enthusiast in our science to look at this unique collection without feelings of admiration and envy. My own original collection I sold three years since, realising a very handsome price for it ; but I am now engaged in forming a collection to include all minor varieties of shades and watermarks. This collection I hope to make especially rich in the old Australasian stamps, and my ambition is to compile a work on Australasian Postage Stamps mainly from it. My position for compiling a work or catalogue of these particular stamps is a good one, having so much original information at my hands. My chief deterrent is a want of the necessary time. In addition to the collections I have mentioned there are many others very handsome and valuable. Mr. E. Lower, of Adelaide, has taken no less than nine medals at different Exhibitions for his collection. Other collectors of note are Messrs. Fred. Hagen, H. B. Taylor, T. Barstow, Thomas Kitt, Dr. Cox, and our great Australian civil engineer Mr. Norman Selfe, M.I.C.E. The latter gentleman has been collecting more than eighteen years ; and when it is considered that he still has his original collection, its value is easily imagined. In our Colonies there is a feeling of brotherly friendship existing between most of the more advanced collectors, who are more or less known to each other. In regard to dealers at present carrying on business, with the exception of one or two very diminutive persons I believe I am the only one left, although in 1881 there were no less than eight firms carrying on

business. Since then this number has decreased until I find myself the sole survivor in the Australian stamp trade ; and even I do not give all my time to it, being occupied with the study of my profession—dentistry. I carry on stamp dealing as much for my own pleasure as for what I gain from it, otherwise I might have also gone to the wall ere this. In a thinly populated country like Australia the demand in the philatelic line is not sufficient to pay even one man well.

Australia has never been famous for philatelic papers, they having been few and far between. I have copies of six papers published here and in New Zealand since 1874, and they represent a total of thirteen numbers only, of which six were published by myself and my predecessors Messrs. Buckley Blunsum & Co. Of these thirteen numbers the best by far was No. 1 of the *N. S. W. Stamp Collectors' Magazine*, published by Edward Buckley, November, 1879. The style of this paper was first-class, and in every way original, but it must be borne in mind that Buckley was one of the oldest and most experienced philatelists in England before he came to this City. I endeavoured to establish a paper here in November, 1882, but after printing two numbers I abandoned it mainly from want of time. I may say I received much encouragement in my venture, and my belief is that a high class philatelic paper would pay here, but it requires patience, ability, time, and money, to conduct a paper *with success* ; and these I could not give.

I am afraid Mr. Editor that I have already taken up too much of your valuable space, so to my fellow philatelists I shall bid adieu, hoping though the kindness of friend Nunn to again communicate a little news from our "sunny Austral Land."

THE VIEWS OF SYDNEY.

*By T. Martin Wears.*



On the 1st January, 1850, the colony of New South Wales issued three postage stamps. These stamps were of the value of one penny, twopence, and threepence, and were intended to prepay newspapers, as well as letters of light weight, whether local, inland, or foreign.

In design the stamp was peculiar, for it contained a picture, and on this account the issue is termed the picture stamps, or views of Sydney. The chief figure in this circular miniature is a woman who sits personifying the colony, holding in her hand a sceptre. She is sitting on a throne composed of a bale of goods, indicating commerce, separated into four compartments by two cords, which cut one another at right angles. It is generally supposed that the two upper compartments are inscribed "No. C.," which would signify *Novæ Cambriæ*; while the two lower contain the numerals 1788, being the date of the founding of the colony of New South Wales at Sydney. The woman is giving a welcome reception to three convicts just disembarked from the ship anchored in the bay, and offers them some agricultural implements placed on the ground before her. Two of the convicts are male, and one female; one of the former is in a kneeling posture. In the back ground may be seen two trees at the declivity of a hill; above, some



buildings and a steeple mark the presence of a town. Near this a man is ploughing. On the right a vessel indicates that this is a seaport. The sky is more or less clouded. It is stated that the design on these stamps is a copy of the colonial seal.

The motto SIC FORTIS ETRURIA CREVIT, which may be translated—*Thus grew the strong Etruria*, appears on a slab below the picture, a little above the inner frame. This motto is borrowed from Virgil's second *Georgic*, verse 533. The circular inscription round the allegorical group stands for SIGILLUM NOVÆ CAMBRIÆ AUSTRIALIS, and being translated—*Seal of New South Wales*.

The circular disc is set in ornamental rectangular frames of various designs, but they all bear the legend POSTAGE above, with value below. But before proceeding further it is necessary to point out that instead of preparing a single stamp and multiplying it by a process of stereotyping, a method usually resorted to in the preparation of engraved stamps, the engraver has preferred to reproduce his work. That is he has taken a copper plate divided into forty rectangular spaces, and has drawn the design in each of these compartments. Each of the stamps being engraved separately, they must necessarily differ more or less from one another; whereas if a matrix had first been constructed and impressions taken from it they would all have been uniform. Now it appears that after one copper plate of the penny value had been made and a number of copies pulled off, the plate became worn out, and a new one had to be constructed in order to supply the demand for stamps of that value. There are thus two distinct plates of the one

penny. These we will readily distinguish if we bear in mind that one is of rather fine engraving and wants the clouds; the other is of coarser workmanship and possesses them. Four plates of the 2d. stamp are to be met with. To distinguish these various tests might be given,—suffice it to say that the fan ornament of Plate I. in the lower part of the inscribed band, has shading on each side. In Plate II. the shading is inside the fan ornament; in Plate III. the fan rests on a three-pointed figure fashioned somewhat after a shamrock; while in Plate IV. it rests on a tiny round pearl. Of the threepence there are three plates; the first has no clouds; the second and third have clouds. Besides wanting the clouds the second has the ovals in the border meeting; so has the third plate, but with the addition of waved lines continued through the top and bottom labels. The series was superseded in December, 1852, by the introduction of stamps of different design.

The whole of the above stamps were engraved on copper by Mr. Robert Clayton, who, in his estimate, agreed to furnish press, dies, and plates for the sum of thirty-six pounds, covering the whole expense necessary for the completion of the work required for the General Post Office establishment. It appears to have been his first intention to have made one die, then to reproduce his work, as he mentions that the first cost of the die for each value would be about five pounds, and the probable cost about one shilling a thousand for the stamps, with an additional expense of about one penny a sheet, demy folio, for gumming.

Views of Sydney are year by year becoming rarer, for

both dealers and collectors in the colonies have hunted diligently for specimens in and around Sydney; and nearly all brought together in this manner have found their way into the hands of collectors. Neither is there any possibility of reprints turning up, because the colonial authorities of the dark and by-gone ages had a mania "to destroy the plates and everything connected with a stamp as soon as it was superseded." As regards prices, used copies generally fetch from three to six shillings; while twelve years ago three guineas was paid for four unused specimens at an auction sale of stamps at Sotheby & Co.'s, this being considered one of the bargains of the sale.\*

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### A REVIEW OF THE TRADE.

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**I**S trade what it used to be, is often anxiously asked by one dealer of another, and in answer to this oft repeated question I regret to have to say that it is decidedly not nearly so good as was formerly the case. This is not, in my opinion attributable to the gradual dying out of philately, which some narrow minded people rejoice in supposing, but owing in all probability to the bad times which have played sad havoc to every branch of industry in the United Kingdom. It is scarcely to be wondered at that people who find it difficult work to live, and keep up their wonted appearance, should find it still more

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\* For further information on this subject the reader is referred to the new monograph *The Sydney Views*.

difficult to carry on their pet hobby by adding new specimens to their albums. Therefore I think I may safely attribute this dulness of trade, experienced in Philatelic circles, to the same cause as dulness of trade in all other industries. We still have our large dealers, some of whom tell us they have not found trade bad, but inform us on the contrary that their receipts for the past year turn out to be the largest on record. This I can fully believe, and it is not far that one needs go to see the cause. These large firms advertise largely and well: continually keeping their names before the public; and for this enterprise they are in the end amply repaid. Of course there are many small dealers who cannot afford to advertise largely, and I am sorry to say that I must number myself among these; but, notwithstanding this drawback, I am glad to say that if it were not for that unscrupulous class of swindlers who obtain sheets and selections for the mere asking, and upon being requested to return the same are "*gone, no address,*" my balance sheet would show a fair margin for profit. In order to give a slight idea of the unlimited extent which this practice has reached, I may be allowed to say that in five months I sent out three hundred odd sheets and selections, out of which no less than twenty have been irrevocably lost in the manner described, this would at the lowest amount to £10; so it shows that dealers who try to convenience their patrons by sending out sheets on approval, are compelled to ask higher prices than would otherwise be the case, in order to redeem the heavy losses experienced in the way above stated. Turning to the wholesale department I find upon my books a large amount due long ago, and

this is a great evil: I allude to the wholesale abuse of credit indulged in by some who call themselves respectable (?) dealers. I have myself often supplied stamps at a ridiculously small profit, under promise of cash at a month, but it has sometimes been fifteen months before a settlement has been obtained, and then only by paltry instalments.

Our dealers have continued to improve their price lists and catalogues year after year until it seems almost impossible to produce anything more tasty or useful. The number of magazines and papers devoted to the cause remains about the same, notwithstanding the many new ventures launched in all directions, the majority of which are doomed to dry and wither up like tropical plants in a frost. In conclusion I trust and firmly believe that there is a brighter time still in store, and with this belief uppermost in my mind I will subscribe myself

ONE IN THE TRADE.

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### PHILATELICAL PUFFS.

*By Nemo.*

Inspired merit so by breath is barr'd :  
It is not so with him, that all things knows,  
As 'tis with us that square our guess by shows.

SHAKESPEARE.

NOT long ago we in England were wont to notice three papers devoted to Philately all boasting to have the largest circulation of any paper of the kind ever published: surely two out of three, if not all of them, must have stretched the point a little too far for once. 'Tis

strange, but nevertheless perfectly true, that there is more sound in an empty cask than in a full one, and this appears to be verified in this particular instance with a vengeance, for not one out of those three papers is at the present moment in existence ; *ergo*—when a paper begins to boast of its superiority over its contemporaries, no matter in what way, we may always feel pretty sure there is something behind the curtain.

Another puff is the way in which some advertise their goods : guaranteeing better value for money than any other dealer : offering rarities at one-half and sometimes one-quarter catalogue price. In far too many instances these stamps, offered on such very favourable terms, are not obtained in an honest manner—we would fain ask what becomes of the stamps obtained by those gentlemen who make it a practise of obtaining goods on tick without even the remotest idea of ever settling for them.

But now we come to the worst puff of the lot, namely the wholesale manner in which certain firms obtain free advertisements—and very good advertisements they are too—by inserting letters and paragraphs in some of the London daily and weekly papers, and also in many of the provincial ones. All the world knows that the editors of certain papers are only too glad to get hold of any little scrap, letter, or paragraph, that doesn't cost them anything ; but where ! Oh, where ! is the etiquette of those who indulge in such wholesale abuse of this privilege, to place, in the shape of a cleverly worded letter, a glaring free advertisement before the public ?

### A LETTER OF VITAL IMPORTANCE.

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WHEN the Earl of Elgin was Postmaster-General, in 1860, he gave the following as a proof that in the estimation of some people "vital importance" is valued at something less than five shillings. A gentleman called at the Post Office respecting a letter which he had posted, declaring that it was of vital importance that his application should be granted. He was told that such an application involved much trouble and a great departure from the ordinary rules, but that under the special circumstances it would be granted on his paying the clerk, who would have to make the examination, a gratuity of five shillings. No sooner, however, was this condition named, than the "vital importance" and the applicant at once disappeared.—*The Philatelist.*

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### EXPENSIVE POSTAGE.

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THE *Times*, in 1842, paid upwards of £300 for conveying a letter from Marseilles to London. This contained the news of the massacre in Cabul, which the *Times* was the first to make known. From Marseilles to Paris the conveyance was by carriages especially hired; from Paris to Boulogne by horse; thence to Dover by special steamer, and from Dover to London again by horse.—*The Philatelist.*

## PHILATELIC CUTTINGS FROM A COLLECTOR'S SCRAP BOOK.

THE distribution of letters is, in fact, one of the weakest points in the Italian postal system. Except in large towns the Post Office does not profess to make any house to house distribution at all, except on the payment of a small fee, generally a sou for each packet delivered to the postman; and in the large towns the delivery is done in a very careless manner. The postman rarely takes the trouble to climb the stairs to the different apartments, except just before Christmas, but contents himself with leaving all the letters for a house with the porter, who delivers them whenever he happens to be going upstairs. If the porter is not in the way the letters go back into the bag until the next round is made, or are even sometimes left at a shop near. No wonder then that letters frequently miscarry without such wilful intention as the postman showed who was discovered one Christmas stuffing all his letters into a sewer grating that he might get the sooner to his Christmas dinner. The excuse for non-delivery is that with houses of five or six stories the work is too hard for the postman; but the remedy for that is obvious. It is only fair to say that the Post Office does not recognise this hap-hazard distribution; but complaints only remedy the evil for a time, and somehow one's letters seem to miscarry more frequently after making them; as a consequence most business houses pay a small fee to the postman to have a box of their own, into which all their letters are put and withdrawn by a messenger. The



difficulties put in the way of cashing post office orders (and also, it may be added, of obtaining registered letters) are most vexatious. You must produce some one to identify you who is known to the officials, and it is easy to see how difficult this may often be ; otherwise a notarial certificate is required, and that is only removing the difficulty a step further.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

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AN American collector who has made himself a reputation for accuracy and diligent research, (Mr. Tiffany, of S. Louis,) has just had printed a curious and instructive work, the compilation of which has been the fruit of years of labour, and of no small pecuniary outlay. It is a large quarto volume of 112 pages, in a French grey paper cover, and is splendidly got up. It is entitled *The Philatetical Library ; a Catalogue of Stamp Publications, attempted by John K. Tiffany*, and forms an interesting collection of the titles of every stamp publication, big or little, literary or commercial, issued up to the middle of 1874, with the names of their publishers, date and place of publication, size, &c.

The first part of the work, occupying 78 pages, is filled with the enumerations of journals, albums, and catalogues, issued by American, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish houses. Here, side by side with magazines which have lent a dignity to stamp collecting, are found the ephemeral issues of boy-editors, and the price catalogues of forgotten firms, forming together the respectable total of 569. Part 2 consists of a list of trade advertisement sheets and prices current,

numbering 260, and filling fifteen pages. Part 3 consists of a reference list of books and isolated magazine articles on stamps or postal matters, and a recapitulation of the names of postage stamp games, music, and photographs. This comprehensive catalogue has every appearance of being complete: it is certainly as near completeness as could be expected or wished. Through Mr. Tiffany's fine sieve only the utterly insignificant publications can have passed unnoticed. His work is a remarkable illustration of the literary activity and the commercial energy and ingenuity to which stamp collecting gave, and still gives occasion; whilst at the same time it is a monument of its author's perseverance. I must not omit to add that this work, which is quite a typographical *chef d'œuvre*, has been privately printed, and that only 150 copies in all have been struck off. The title page is adorned with an engraving of the 10 c. S. Louis, ten times the size of the stamp it represents, and drawn by the engraver of the stamp itself, Mr. Kershaw.—MR. OVERY TAYLOR, IN ALFRED SMITH AND Co.'s *Monthly Circular*.

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### PHILATELICAL NONSENSE.

*Cribbed from various sources.*

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“JAMES, my son, take this letter to the post office, and pay the postage for it.” A short time elapsed, when James returned and said: “Father, I guess I saw lots of people putting letters through a hole, and when no one was looking I slipped yours in for nothing.” Tableau: Father, stick, and James.

Mistakes often occur in the best of regulated families, much more in telegraphic messages. A short time since a butler received a telegraph from his master asking him to send "ten bob" at once, as he was "greatly in need of it." The message got wired wrong, and "ten bob" should have been "tin box."

Some people have peculiar ideas. A nigger woman entered a post office, and handed a letter to the clerk, who said: "This wont go for two cents." The woman asked: "Wat's de matter wid it?" "Too heavy." "Yes, 'bout like I spected. Dat was writ by my son. I tould him he war a writin' too heaby a han': I'll take it back, sah, an' make he write it wid a pencil."

Yankees are pretty cute about some things. The other day one went into a telegraph office, and wanted to know the price of butter at Baltimore. The message went, and the answer came back, with fifty cents to pay. "I ain't going to be had like that," said our friend: "That darn tickin' thing of yourn han't bin out of this room. I watched it all the bloomin' time!"

Irishmen are often held up to ridicule for their peculiar expressions, but they are not all such fools as they look. Pat going into a post office the other day said to the telegraph operator: "Do you ever charge anybody for the address of a message?" "No," replied the operator. "And do ye charge for signing his name, sorr?" "No." "Well, thin, will ye plase to send this?—I jist want me brother to know I'm here," said Pat; and he handed in the following:—"To John M'Flinn, Long street, Glasgow. Signed—Patrick M'Flinn, London."

**YANKEE WIT.**—The undersigned offers for sale the following specimens of works of art, at a low price, terms cash:—1st, Specimens of the “certificates of stock” in the Grand Junction Ebenezer Wild-Cat Stamp Company, issued by Judkins, of Lowell, now defunct, with the motto in Spanish, “All is not gold that glitters.” 2nd, Specimens of extended Sandwich Island Stamps, from the same manufactory, done in fancy colours, and of fancy patterns, devised and arranged by Judkins aforesaid. 3rd, Specimens of the *Timbres Poste* tickets issued by Bowles, Wight, Gould, and Co., entitling the holder to a share in the grand lottery swindle, which was to come off, but didn't, owing to circumstances unforeseen by the enterprising, youthful, would-be knaves who got up the scheme, and very near got down to the Tombs. All the above for sale cheap, by W. J. Mahoney, dealer in waste paper, paper stock, rags, old iron, &c. &c., 23, Spring-lane, Boston.—*Stamp Collector's Record, Boston, U.S.*

**CONSUMPTION OF POSTAGE STAMPS.**—Enough postage stamps were used last year in the United States to roof a large township, with all its houses, churches, barns, gardens, forests and farms; or, if you choose to make a ribbon of them, enough to reach nearly from the equator to either pole. So that if everybody would be obliging enough to use the Government stamp on the envelope itself, the mere omission of these little extra bits of paper would lighten the mail bags by more than forty thousand pounds, and save in paper fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. The Postmaster-General does not impart this information in so many words, but he assures us that nearly 350

millions of stamps have been sold in the year past, besides nearly forty millions of stamped envelopes; and a simple calculation reduces the story to the tangible form we have given it.—*Scientific American.*

### PHILATELICAL CHIPS.

*By Omen, Junr.*

Five and twenty years ago, a ragged street Arab stood outside a newspaper shop in the Strand, and swore an oath that he one day would become proprietor of that Palatial building, and play the part of a "millionaire." Ladies and Gentlemen, can you guess who that boy was.

Something will have to be done, or dealers must starve. Can't a Philatelic Benevolent Society be started, to help those dealers who are backward in their payments. The wholesale abuse of credit, so freely indulged in by a certain irresponsible class is truly awful.

A desperate encounter by Philatelists—a London dealer threatened—Interference of the Police. From rumours going about the above startling heads were expected to appear in all the London Dailies, but didn't. It is however perfectly true that a row recently took place somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Strand.

*The Philatelic Pink'un*, much to the regret of Sporting Philatelists, failed to put in an appearance as promised. The alleged reason is insufficient support. We used to look for the latest "tips" in the *Pink'un*.

A well known country dealer received a letter the other day from a customer, of which the following is an exact copy. "Sir,—I now return your selection. I am sorry to have kept it three weeks beyond specified time. I am glad to say I have succeeded in selling 2d. worth. I keep 1d. as commission for my trouble, and the other 1d. I put on the envelope to pay postage of this letter. Please send me another selection.—Yours very truly, R. M——n." The dealer muttered something, but did not send the selection.

\* \* \*

"Why should Philately wait?" Is it not probable that a grand International Philatelic Exhibition may be held in the Autumn of 1885? Have we not dealers who are millionaires, and to whom a donation of a paltry £500 or so towards the expenses can be of no possible moment? Are there not "Exterminators" by the score, and do we not read announcements of "Strange Lives," "Romance in Reality," and other pretty fables? We really see no reason "why Philately should wait."

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#### WITH OUR DEALERS.

*By a disinterested Collector.*

MESSRS. STANLEY GIBBONS & Co. are the largest dealers in the world, and their business embraces all branches of the trade, both wholesale and retail. The Publishing Department is not forgotten, and many valuable Albums and other works have emanated from the careful supervision of this firm.

MESSRS. WHITFIELD KING & Co. rank next perhaps in point of largeness, and are known all over the civilized world. Their business is chiefly centered in the wholesale and album line.

MESSRS. PEMBERTON WILSON & Co.—An old established firm, and publishers of the *Philatelic Record*. This firm makes a speciality in supplying advanced collectors with rarities, and in publishing valuable philatelic books.

MESSRS. ALFRED SMITH & Co. do a large business, and have many stationers, &c., all over the kingdom as their agents. They issue a *Monthly Circular*.

MESSRS. GAEDCHENS & Co. have a wide spread connection and do a large business in all branches.

MESSRS. J. SARPY & Co.—An old-established and respected firm, making a speciality of variety packets and wholesale selections.

MESSRS. L. D. & J. K. FERGUSON & Co. have a very large stock of wholesale and retail stamps (*see advt.*), and have one of the largest stocks to select from of any English dealer.

MESSRS. NUNN, CHRISTIE & Co.—This is the name of the firm carrying on the business lately managed by Mr. C. H. Nunn, who is now only a partner in the concern. They make a speciality of supplying cheap packets and marvellously cheap sets.

MESSRS. TH. BUHL & Co. are a rising firm, and have a good connection. They publish a paper called *The Stamp News*.

**MESSRS. CHEVELEY & Co.**—One of the oldest established firms of English dealers. They are wholesale dealers only.

**MR. J. H. BRIGHAM** makes a speciality of Colonial and South American stamps.

**MESSRS. G. H. CALLF & Co.** always have on offer some remarkable bargains in the wholesale line.

**MESSRS. J. H. LACY & Co.** buy, sell, and exchange large parcels. They also sell on commission.

**MESSRS. CHARGOIS BROS.**—Retail and wholesale dealers.

**MESSRS. GREEN & BAWNS** usually have some bargains in West Indian and other Colonial stamps.

**MR. HY. TURNER, JUNR.**—Cheap packets are this gentleman's speciality.

**MESSRS. HUDSON BROS. & Co.** make Continentals a great speciality.

**MR. EDWIN ENGLAND.**—A rising dealer. Wholesale or retail lines his speciality. Also publisher of a paper called *The Foreign Stamp Collectors' News*.

**MESSRS. G. & H. DAWSON.**—Dealers in stamps, and publishers of *The Quarterly Philatelic Advertiser*.

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There are hundreds of other British firms I could mention, but I am afraid I have already overstepped my allotted space. Those who wish to find particulars of other firms should refer to the advertising pages of *The Stamp Collectors' Journal*, in which all the respectable and notable firms advertise.



THE INVENTION OF THE PERFORATING  
MACHINE IN ITS APPLICATION TO  
POSTAGE STAMPS.

*By T. Martin Wears, Author of THE SYDNEY VIEWS.*

“ Think of the time it took to catch  
A spark on tinder for a match !  
So every housemaid thanks the wight  
Who brought the lucifer to light ;  
And every clerk should spread the fame  
Of perforator ARCHER'S name.”

**A**LTHOUGH the existence of perforated stamps only dates back to 1854, before that the system was not unknown, for we find pierced paper, cards, and tin in use previous to that time. When adhesive labels were introduced to the British public, in 1840, and for fourteen years following, considerable difficulty was experienced in severing the stamps, or “ Queen's heads,” as they were then termed, from the parent sheet. For this purpose scissors were used by the servants at the Post Office. This, however, was a slow method, as well as an imperfect one, and it was by no means convenient for those who had letters to post to carry a pair of scissors about with them, while to tear the stamps one was in danger of tearing off more than was required.

To remedy this inconvenience Henry Archer, a native of Ireland, who had been promoter, managing director, and secretary of the then defunct Festiniog, or North Wales Railway Company, proposed, in the Autumn of 1847, to the Marquis of Clanricarde, then postmaster-general, a machine for the piercing or puncturing of the

sheets, so that each stamp could be readily separated. The invention was described as being one "for piercing the portions of the paper intervening between the labels by a series of cuts, in such a manner as to admit of their being detached singly without use of knife or scissors." Very little ingenuity seems to have been exercised by Archer in the matter. The suggestion he derived at a printing office, where he saw some perforated paper being worked upon at press; but something more than the mere idea of piercing the paper was needed. With the help of some mechanic, for he had little inventive power, and still less mechanical knowledge, he succeeded in producing an apparatus consisting of two rollers, one carrying thirteen little spur-wheels, the other twenty-one, both the length of the stamp apart. These rollers were intended to be used in succession, but as they speedily wore out the table on which the edges descended, the machine was pronounced unfit for the purpose. Another attempt was made with a like result. A series of lancet-shaped blades were introduced, but these also wore out the table and became blunted besides. It was not till the appearance of a third perforating machine, which punched out certain globules, that Archer's idea took practical shape.

This last he submitted to the Lords of the Treasury, but "My Lords" awarded him a remuneration so far short of the original cost that he rejected it altogether. The sum tendered was £200 as reward for his invention, with £400 of purchase-money for his machine. Rather than accept so trifling a return for so valuable and much needed an innovation—one which had cost him years of

labour and anxiety—he presented a memorial in support of his claim in May, 1850. This matter of remuneration had been kept open for settlement to the last, as the inventor asked for no payment before proof of success, having thus been graciously allowed to submit his proposals.

The story of this invention then suddenly takes another turn. There had just been invented in France a new process for printing stamps, admitting of greater expedition than the style of line engraving adopted by Messrs. Bacon and Petch, the British contractors. This was the invention of a Frenchman—M. Hulot—who, by the aid of electrotyping or the galvanoplastic process, had produced both stamps and bank notes in an incredibly short space of time.

In order to take advantage of the new method Archer sought the assistance of one Branston, an engraver, and commissioned him to engrave a die from which impressions might be taken on this surface principle. He was induced to this step so that he might the better test the capabilities of his machine, as well as the question of his being able to supply the Government with stamps at a much cheaper rate than was then being charged. To free himself from the accusation that he intended forgery he did not choose the head of Her Majesty, but selected instead that of her husband for his stamp. A few of the specimens have been preserved, and these are now distinguished by the name of "Prince Albert Essays."

After experiments were completed Archer and Branston, in March, 1851, proposed to print, gum, and perforate the whole of the postage stamps required by the

Inland Revenue Office, at fivepence the thousand, which would affect a yearly saving of £1500 to the public. They even agreed to lower their price to fourpence-halfpenny per thousand, if allowed to print them on the surface principle, of which Prince Albert's head was a specimen. Yea, more, Archer was to sink all claim to remuneration for his machines, and lost time in consideration of his proposals being accepted. But no acceptance was made, for the Secretary apprised Messrs. Bacon and Petch of the overture, and asked whether they were disposed to lower their price to fivepence per thousand, thus eagerly welcoming a plan for a piece of economy, cutting down no official. This lever to screw down those gentlemen in their charges proved a success, and they assented on condition of a five years' contract at that price. We find the agreement for providing a die—an engraved design of Her Majesty's Head reduced from Wyon's City medal—and printing stamps on sheets of gummed paper, at sixpence per thousand. This agreement is dated 5th May, 1843, and docketed as renewed on the 5th July, 1851, for five years, at fivepence per thousand.

Mr. Archer was thus coolly left to his fate, and his proposition ignored; the perforation of the sheets, or the public convenience, seeming to be of no account whatever. Parliamentary enquiry, however, was prayed for and granted, and the following persons were appointed a committee:—Mr. Spooner, Mr. Ormsby Gore, Sir John Tyrrell, Mr. Geach, Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Grogan, Mr. Rich, Marquis of Chandos, Mr. Henry Drummond, and Mr. John Greene; with Mr. Muntz, who made the application, as chairman. The minutes of their proceedings were

printed, and it is from them we take so much as bears directly on our subject.

Extract from minutes of proceedings of Parliamentary Committee appointed to consider the merits of Archer's proposal.

"March 29, 1852, Mr. Muntz presiding, surface printing on dry paper being the subject of enquiry, the chairman asked Mr. Branston, the engraver :

"516. 'Have you any specimens of postage stamp heads made by your printing?' 'We were ordered to destroy all the impressions, and therefore they have been destroyed. These (producing the same) are the heads of Prince Albert.'

"517. 'Are those surface printing?' 'Yes.'

"518. 'Were they done to show the capability of doing it on your principle?' 'Principally to show how they (the Prince Albert heads) might be combined to make one sheet, and the size being always the same: they were not intended as imitations.'

"581. [Marquis of Chandos.] 'Were those specimens printed on dry or damp paper?' 'We invariably take our proofs on dry paper, and those are the best impressions we get from engravings in relief: the less size there is in the paper the better the impression, and there is an absence of all size in India paper.'

"615. 'Are not these instances upon rather thin paper?' 'These are mere proof impressions.'"

March 30. Mr. Rowland Hill being examined, Mr. John Greene placed the Prince Albert stamps before him.

"1010. 'Is that a respectable forgery?' 'No, it is not a respectable forgery; in the first place, it is not an imitation of the stamp: it is the head of Prince Albert.'

"1011. [Mr. Spooner.] 'That is, not a forgery at all. I should like to examine this with a magnifying glass, because the security of the other stamp (the Queen's head)

depends very much upon its background ; it is a particular pattern, which can only be seen by a magnifying glass.'

" 1012. [Marquis of Chandos.] 'It is engine-turned ?' 'I believe it is engine-turned.'

[Mr. Muntz.] 'Have you seen Mr. Archer's plan for piercing ?' 'I have seen the results—not the machine itself.'

'What is your opinion as to the advisableness of adopting such a principle ?' 'My opinion is, it is advisable. I have stated that opinion in a minute addressed to the Postmaster-General, which is now before the Committee. I do not speak strongly upon the matter ; my opinion is it would be useful and acceptable to the public to a certain extent.'

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Concerning "Perforator Archer" himself there is little more to add beyond the fact that he was paid £4,000 for his patented right of perforation, half of which he had to divide amongst the mechanics who aided him in the construction of his different machines. He died at Pau, France, in March, 1863.

After the purchase had been completed various improvements were effected to facilitate perforating. Chief amongst these was the adaption for working by steam power, an arrangement due to the skill of Mr. Napier, the engineer, by which the machines were able to throw off 3,200 sheets per hour, sixteen needles being introduced into the space of two centimetres, but this number was soon reduced to fourteen, at which the gauge now stands. Of late years further improvements have been made in this direction, with the result that 5,500 sheets can now be perforated in the same space of time.

Besides this system of perforation proper, there is in adoption throughout the world various ways of separating

stamps. And here I may remark that the universal term "perforation" is not strictly applicable, inasmuch as it is a misnomer when applied to a solitary stamp, and neither does it embrace the whole of the methods in use for separating adhesives. The various methods are strictly known by the following terms:—

oooooooooooooooo

*Perforated.*

~~~~~

*Serpentine.*

-----

*Rouletted.*

~~~~~

*Scalloped.*

MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM

*Serrated.*

MMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM

*Dentelated.*

**PERFORATED.**—A stamp is said to be perforated when pieces of the paper are actually removed, leaving a series of round holes between the stamps. The stamps of Great Britain and the United States may be cited as instances. The method admits of a great number of varieties, which can be readily detected by counting the number of holes in the space of two centimètres.

**ROULETTED** is where there is a series of straight cuts or dashes, with no portion of the paper removed. Archer's first and second machines separated the labels in this manner. It corresponds with the French system of "perçage à la roulette" or "percé en lignes." Examples are found on many of the German stamps. Those of Uruguay, Wurtemberg, &c., also afford instances.

**SERRATED**, or "percé en scie," is where the edges are cut like the teeth of a saw, fitting into one another. For an example see the last issue of the Brunswick and the Bremen stamps.

SERPENTINE, "percé en serpentine," a wavy-lined kind of perforation, found on the issues of Finland from 1860 to 1871.

SCALLOPED, "percé en arc," produces a series of semicircles, one half of which on being separated appears alone to have been perforated. Instance: the last issue of Hanover.

DENTELATED, or "percé en pointe."—This style, consisting of a series of pointed ridges, differs from the serpentine in having straight instead of curved teeth. It is found on some of the stamps of La Guayra.

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## WITH THE MAGAZINES.

*By the Editor.*

IN the following few short notes under the above head we intend only to give a short sketch of such journals devoted to our interesting science—Philately—as exist at the present day. We have purposely confined ourselves to those issued in Great Britain, as to deal with those of every country would fill a volume many times the size of this. We take them in order of seniority.

Messrs. Alfred Smith & Co.'s *Monthly Circular* has reached with the present issue its one hundred and nineteenth number. It was first issued on January 1st, 1875, when it took the place of *The Stamp Collectors' Magazine*. In its present form, it is, as its name implies, a trade circular, but contains monthly a leading article upon some current philatelic event, and a nicely compiled list of new issues.



*The Stamp Collectors' Journal* published its first number on November 1st, 1878, and made its premier appearance when the field was unoccupied by any other contemporary, *The English Journal of Philately* having succumbed several months prior. The first number in appearance was not very prepossessing, consisting of only four small 8vo pages printed in pica, but the little journal soon became popular, and had to be frequently enlarged till it reached in some instances the number of thirty-two pages. When, in 1882, the amalgamation with *The Coin Collectors' News* took place, upon the completion of the current number it was deemed advisable to increase the size from 8vo to 4to, and to-day we find a large 16-page journal, well patronised by both dealers and collectors of stamps and coins. Many valuable and first-class articles have appeared from time to time, and the one now running, entitled "The History of the Mulready Envelope," promises to be no exception to the rule. It is published on the 15th of each month.

*The Philatelic Record.*—The first number appeared in February, 1879, and was at once made the official organ of the Philatelic Society of London. It is an excellent high-class magazine, and contains many first-class articles by some of the head authorities on philatelic subjects in the world. The subscription being somewhat high, places it out of the reach of many who would doubtless much like to have it, but cannot afford it. It is issued in the last week of each month.

*Bric-a-Brac* has been issued for about six years at various intervals. It now appears monthly, but takes more the form of an Advertising circular, than a paper interesting to Philatelists.

*The Stamp News* issued its first volume, a very creditable one, in 1882; suspended during 1883; and restarted again in 1884, and has appeared somewhat irregularly since.

*The Philatelic Globe* has been issued during the past two years, and has changed hands once or twice. We have not seen a copy lately, and its appearance is somewhat limited.

*The Philatelic Star* was formerly published by a collector, but is now issued as the official organ of the International Philatelic Union. It has been issued most irregularly of late.

*The Philatelic Referee*.—The first volume was issued during 1883. It was to have been issued quarterly during the present year, but only two numbers as yet have put in an appearance.

*The Foreign Stamp Collectors' News* completed its first volume successfully and punctually in September last, and is now issuing its second volume in monthly parts. It is carefully edited, and deserving of support.

*The South Wales Philatetical News* is a small paper. The first two or three numbers have been issued.

*The Philatetical Gazette*.—Another new paper, small in size, the second number of which we have only seen as yet.

*The Empire Exchange Gazette*.—Also another new paper. Its publication is only guaranteed for 6 months.

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Fine Colonials, including Gold Coast, Natal, Cape, 5/- Sierra Leone, Grenada, S. Vincent, S. Kitts, and other fine W. Indian. ... ..		6/-

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