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The Future
OF
Australian Philately

EDITED BY
COURTENAY SMITH.

Two Shillings and Sixpence.



THE FUTURE
OF
AUSTRALIAN PHILATELY

A Guide for Collectors.

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COURTENAY SMITH.

Subscribers' Edition.

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PREFACE.

There are said to be about five thousand stamp collectors in Australia. Of these, probably nine-tenths are Juveniles, for whom it is proposed to cater, in a special way, quite apart from the scope of this work. Many of them will, doubtless, blossom into full-blown Philatelists. But these pages are written for the five hundred, or so, "serious" Collectors, who, it is hoped, will, directly or indirectly, be reached and influenced by means of this publication. They may be divided into three classes:—

First, the students in the cult—those who cheerfully give much time and thought to the close study of stamps from a purely philatelic standpoint. They do not grudge expense in procuring rare and valuable specimens, and are not greatly concerned at the thought that their collections, whenever placed on the market, may fetch far less than they cost them. They are the true, amateur, Philatelists. But their number, unfortunately, is small.

Next, come the dilettanti collectors, who do not mind the money question, but will not give time or thought to serious study of the stamps they amiably buy when recommended as good, or rare. They are a temporary boon to the seller; but they soon slacken off in their enthusiasm. Of these, also, there are not many. The two classes may comprise about one-fifth of the whole.

The last is the great Middle Class, numbering, let us say, approximately, four hundred, among whom, it is pleasing to note, is a sprinkling of ladies. These collectors pleasantly occupy themselves in obtaining, studying, classifying, and mounting their oftentimes valuable collections. And they have, generally speaking, an

eye also to the main chance, always buying in the hope that a stamp costing a shilling to-day will be worth half-a-crown in a year or two, thus seeking to combine pleasure with profit in their philatelic pursuit. The anticipation of gain naturally lends zest to their fascinating hobby.

But, alas! it often happens that realisation falls far short of anticipation; and collections, which have taken many years and much money to accumulate, when circumstances compel their sale, fetch far less than cost price. This generally happens because the supply of the large majority of stamps is greater than the demand, at all events at rates profitable to the buyer. Hence it is only the rarities that fetch anything like a price satisfactory to the seller, and then, only, if bought judiciously in the first place. Thereupon, these sorrowful ex-collectors retire from the scene, taking their woes with them, and advising all their friends to "have nothing to do with stamps."

"Now, it is on the attention of the large Middle Class of Collectors that this little work ventures to obtrude itself, in that it professes to afford valuable information and guidance to those who are willing to devote some time and thought to the matter in hand. Nothing in life is likely to succeed without it, and most certainly "not" Philately.

Hence, if due attention be given to the facts, forecasts, and suggestions laid before him in these pages—the fruit of the minds of able experts—it should eventuate that the Collector availing himself thereof will find his hobby not only pleasant but profitable.

We have not forgotten the Dealers; although they are not classed—and do not class themselves—as Collectors. Without their aid, now-a-days, it would be impossible to form a complete, or even respectable, collection. Therefore, they are indispensable. Here, they form but a small body; nevertheless, they compare most favourably with those of other countries, in all of which our Australian dealers bear a very good reputation. In their case we may be allowed to quote the old Arab

phrase—altered to suit the circumstances—“In the name of the Profit—‘Stamps!’”

It will be remarked, in perusing this little volume, that much of the matter therein is of considerable value to “all” collectors of Australian stamps; and their name is “Legion.” The idea, however, has been to write specially in the interests of Australian Collectors.

In conclusion, the writer desires it to be understood that the views given herein are by no means to be taken merely as emanations of his own mind, but as being founded on a far safer basis, viz., a consensus of the experience and opinions of more able and expert Philatelists than himself. And he here begs to take the opportunity of expressing his deep sense of obligation to those courteous gentlemen who have been at pains to assist him in his endeavour to afford sound information and advice to Collectors under somewhat peculiar conditions. He also desires to tender his best thanks to many friendly Philatelists for their good wishes for the success of his present undertaking.

A word to the critics—and there will be many:— This book is written, not to be merely skimmed over, but with the object of affording abundant food for thought, and material for immediate fruition. So, “please don’t shoot the musician; he’s trying to do his level best!”

COURTENAY SMITH.

“Rest Haven,” Roseville,
Sydney, N.S.W., November, 1910.

THE CALL OF THE CULT!

A SKETCH.

The withered Anglo-Indian, home once more among the fair scenes and green lanes of "Old England," not infrequently becomes ennuié amid his erst familiar and cherished surroundings. He hears the "Call of the Orient," packs his traps, and hurries off to his scorched plains and foetid jungles, "East of Suez." The African hunter and explorer, bored to death with the inanities of West-Endom, and gasping for a breath of free air, hears the "Call of the Veldt," and is off at an hour's notice for Uganda, by way of Zanzibar, or the Cape to Cairo ironway.

The retired mariner, smoking his pipe as he placidly regards his cabbage patch on the little country property he proudly owns—the realisation of many a dream while on his bridge facing the gale in the "roaring forties"—suddenly hears the call of the "Sea Siren," and away he goes for just one more voyage for the sake of "Auld Lang Syne."

The reformed "beach-comber," now unexpectedly heir to a fine estate, and the last hope of his family, strolling through one of his father's coverts, gun on shoulder, listening to the breeze bending the tree tops above him, hears the "Call of the Pacific," begs six months' leave of absence from his anxious parents, and swiftly departs for one more sight of the lonely coral reef and the fascination of its waving palms and booming surf.

And the old Australian "Overlander," spending his latter days in the quiet retirement of his ancestors' home in an English county, while spinning a yarn of

the "Never Never" in the family circle one Christmas night, vividly hears the "Call of the Bush," and is off for a trip by the next Orient liner before his people have recovered from their surprise at his leaving his comfortable home for "them outlandish, foreign parts."

Yes! "It calls!" And, now, the renegade Philatelist hears it. He has basely deserted his first-love these many years. The puerile attractions of golf, tennis, chess, billiards and cards have led him astray. But, one night, while staying with a friend, he is shown a fine Collection, and the sight of a magnificent block of mint Sydney Views sends the fire into his eyes and the blood coursing through his veins. He writes off for an album and a catalogue, and is once more, and to his intense delight, deep in the mysteries of perfs., paper, watermarks, varieties, and errors.

Has not this scribe heard that Call? Did he not, in his boyhood's days, in the fifties, collect 750 specimens of the very earliest issues? Did he not pay the extravagant price of a shilling each for three or four Sydney Views? Did he not, when arrived at "years of discretion" (?) give that Collection away to a youth who did not in the least appreciate the gift? And did he not bitterly regret it in the seventies and eighties, when he started accumulating issues of that time? And did he not, in consequence of more important matters intervening, stow them away carefully—a hundred thousand of them—in a good strong box?

And did not "the Call" come to him when his old friend, the late Archdeacon King, of Sydney, showed him his fine collection? And did he not go to that box—opening it with strange difficulty—and find those stamps a seething, wriggling mass of white ants? Yes, verily, fellow members of the Cult, these things were so. But the Call had been heard—and answered. And here he is, in his old age, studying "perfs.," and hunting for "errors," until his eyes ache. Well! you all know what it means, or you ought to!

And, O Reader, if you be not of the serious few, the Cult calls "you"! Yes! It calls! You may have

been too inert or too indifferent these many years past to listen to it. Or you may have, as yet, taken no particular interest in this fascinating "vade mecum." To the winds with all vacillation! Away with sordid fear as to the debit side of Profit and Loss! Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest what is herein written for your guidance and good pleasure!

Then, soon, perchance, the hearts of your veteran philatelic brethren, in this great Australia, will be gladdened by the addition to their ranks of many enthusiastic volunteers, and by the infusion of long-needed fresh blood, fresh energy, and fresh enterprise into the glorious field of research and romance they have so pleasantly explored in days gone by, and hope still to explore for years to come.

RESPICE FINEM.

PART I.

THE EVOLUTION OF A FORECAST.

It was in the mind of the writer, only quite recently, to pen a brief "History of Philately in Australia," but the idea did not seem to be received with much favour. A well-known and experienced Philatelist wrote:—"My conviction is that people, now-a-days, want to know more about the future than the past." As a proof of the wisdom of this remark, no sooner was it made privately known that the present publication was contemplated than good wishes and other tokens of encouragement were quickly manifested. So, the work was entered upon hopefully.

To "dive into the future" may, in most cases, be likened to "taking a leap in the dark." But the present case should certainly be accepted as an exception to the rule. For, great care has been exercised in dealing with probabilities, according to the opinion of those well fitted to judge, as against the possibilities of visionaries. Therefore, although "to err is human," it may with confidence be affirmed that reliance is to be placed on what is written in these pages, as far as human judgment and foresight can go. And that is as much as can reasonably be expected in respect to such a variable quantity as Australian Philately.

Every thoughtful Collector realises that some day—if not in his time in his son's time, anyway, sooner or later—his collection will be broken up, scattered to the four winds of Philately, and distributed among the collectors of that day and generation. It behoves him,

therefore, to exercise caution and judgment in the forming of his collection, so that when it is finally disposed of those who are dependent upon him, or who come after him, shall not be losers by his indulgence in his hobby. And it was largely with this object in view, in consequence of some rather pitiful cases which had come under his personal notice, that the writer set himself his present task; so that, while seeking to arouse more interest in Philately, as a means of passing many a pleasant hour, its cultivation might also be made to some extent profitable, thus serving a double purpose. Let those, therefore, who seek enlightenment, read seriously and note carefully what is written.

If a number of persons heavily interested in agriculture seek the advice of several Meteorological experts and find that a large majority predict an early and big drought, common-sense will induce those agriculturalists to take immediate steps with a view of minimising the resultant loss and damage as far as possible. By analogy, therefore, if a number of Stamp Collectors are furnished with the carefully thought-out and carefully expressed views of a body of Philatelic experts regarding the future of Australian Philately, and find that the minds of a large majority of those experts run in the same groove, and that their opinions point the same way, it would be very unwise to neglect to avail of the information and guidance derivable therefrom.

That is the underlying principle embodied in the compilation of this work. The idea is quite simple; but the result may be none the less beneficial if the product be wisely made use of. With this preamble, then, we at once plunge "in medias res."

THE FIRST STEP,

therefore—and really the most important—was to ascertain the views of reliable experts on certain points; and the following set of 7 questions was sent to 12 leading Australian Philatelists:—

In Your Opinion:

I.—Is Philately in Australia on the increase—on the wane?—or stationary?

II.—Is it likely to become, in the future, more simple?—or more complex in its character?

III.—Is more attention likely to be paid to perforations?—or less?

IV.—Is more attention likely to be given to shades and minor varieties?—or less?

V.—What Australian issues (including those of Papua, Solomon Islands, and New Hebrides) are likely to be the most popular in the future?

VI.—Assuming a Commonwealth issue to be imminent, which would become the most popular (obsolete) Australian issues—the early?—or the recent?

VII.—Can you suggest any other simple and inexpensive means of arousing increased interest in Australian Philately?

THE REFERENDUM.

A hearty response followed on the part of ten gentlemen, one of whom, however, replied to only two queries. The Philatelists to whom the writer is thus indebted for assistance are Messrs. A. F. Basset Hull, W. R. Waddington, and C. F. Williams, of New South Wales; W. Brettschneider, C. B. Donne, D. H. Hill, and G. W. V. Minty, of Victoria; and F. C. Krichauff, W. L. Peck, and J. H. Welfare, of South Australia. In addition, the writer penned his own modest quota when sending out the papers. Thus there are eleven sets of answers to these questions, some of which are by no means easy ones to grapple with.

Now, it is quite a simple matter to grasp the fact that if the replies had been unanimous the task set of forecasting the Future of Australian Philately would thereby be practically at an end. But, here, the charm of variety comes in. It so happens that, while nearly all the Referees are in accord in their responses

to some queries, with regard to others they differ, and very materially, too. The reader can, however, dissect and analyse for himself some of the expressed opinions of these undoubtedly conscientious and veracious judges in order to arrive at a reasonable and sound conclusion.

We, therefore, now enter upon a highly interesting and instructive, as well as important, section of the work. Here are the

ANSWERS:—

Question I.—

“On the increase” (5);

“Slightly on the increase” (2);

“Undoubtedly increasing” (1);

“Steadily increasing” (2);

“If by Philately is meant the serious study of stamps and their history, I am of opinion that it is on the wane (locally)” (1).

(This answer evidently refers to the first class of collectors mentioned in the Preface.—C.S.)

Question II.—

“More simple” (2);

“More simple for the general collector, but not for the specialist” (1);

“Collecting, in the near future, will, to my mind, be better defined than it is now.”

“Simplified” collecting will be more extensively carried on, and, at the same time, specialising will be more common; but the specialising of the future will not go into such ridiculously minor details as at present” (1);

“I do not see how it can become more complicated, and I think it will eventually become simpler; differences in perforations will only be recognised where separate issues are concerned” (1);

“Rather more than less complex for the specialist, but on simpler lines for the beginner and a num-

ber of older collectors who cannot be bothered with much detail" (1);

"According to the individual taste of the collector" (1);

"The study will become more intensive. Specialisation will be the order of the day. Collections must be limited to one or more of the Australian States, if only so as not to unduly tax each collector's resources" (1);

"If strictly followed up in a scientific manner, it must necessarily become more complex, owing to the introduction of new processes in printing, perforating, and colouring" (1);

"Not more complex" (1).

Question III.—

"Less" (1); "Less eventually" (1); "Less in the future" (1); "Considerably less, especially minor varieties" (1);

"Less, except for the specialist" (1);

"Perforations will not receive so large a share of attention" (1);

"Perforations are likely to be disregarded almost altogether by the beginner and collectors who are lovers of the 'simple life,' but the specialist and more serious collector must note them. I think, however, that there ought to be a discriminating assessment of the value of perforation varieties. Where they indicate something special in the history of the stamps upon which they appear they should count for more than when it is not the case" (1) (a);

"More" (1);

"Australian collectors will, I think, follow in the wake of the majority of Continental and American collectors, and pay less attention to perforations" (1);

"There will be a tendency to separate into groups, comprising the various machines, and to 'lump' the gauges" (1);

Question IV.—

“Less” (3);

“Less, except for the specialist” (1);

“Minor varieties will not receive so large a share of attention, but distinctive shades will continue to receive a fairly large following”;

“The discontinuance of the S.G. Imperial Albums, and the introduction of the Blank and Loose Leaf Albums, will be one of the greatest factors in bringing about the better definement and simplification of General Collecting. General Collecting will thus become more common, since a Philatelist can make his scope what he pleases, and not be influenced by the wish to fill certain numbered blanks in his album, as in the past. Many collectors have become specialists simply because they could not hope to cope with the varieties provided for in most of the old-style General albums in use” (1);

“Precisely the same remarks ((a), see above in answers to Question III.) apply to shades and other minor varieties” (1);

“More” (1);

“Less attention will be paid to shades and accidental variations, but more attention to types” (1);

“Less attention to shades, more to minor varieties” (1).

“Less, except by specialists” (1).

Question V.—

“Sydney views and all early Australians in fine condition, and possibly those immediately before the Commonwealth issue, and all small Island issues (Papua, British Solomon Islands, New Hebrides, and any others under Australian control)” (1);

“The early issues of all the States, especially fine copies. All the Islands will be good, especially the Solomons” (1);

"Each collector in the Colonies, so far as I can judge, puts his own State first" (1);

"The earlier issues of the various States would receive the most attention. Papua would, no doubt, receive a fair share of attention, but the scope (i.e., of distinctly defined varieties) is limited, and the State may possibly suffer in consequence. Particular attention would most probably be given to Queensland, N.S.W., and Victorian" (1) (b);

"I think all Island stamps are likely to retain their popularity as far as Australian collectors are concerned" (1);

"The affections of collectors will not be confined to any one section of Australian stamps. All States and Classes will have their devotees—and this is just as well" (1);

"(1) South Australia; (2) New Zealand; (3) Western Australia" (1);

"Sydney Views will always hold pride of place, then early full face Queensland, and S.S. Island stamps, generally" (1);

"Those antedating the influence of 'Philately'" (1);

"The obsolete issues" (1).

Question VI.—

"The early" (5);

"The early, and anything up to Commonwealth, 1900" (1);

See (b). The fourth answer to Question V., also answers, Question VI. (1);

"Obsolete early issues" (1);

"The early issues undoubtedly. Although if a really fine Commonwealth issue were now sent out it would be very popular" (1);

("Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."—C.S.)

"Early issues, due to their artistic quaintness and

their connection with the misty past, would be the more popular" (1).

Question VII.—Will be dealt with later on.

THE FORECAST.

The above answers have been given "literatim et verbatim," so that the intelligent reader may be able to judge for himself and exercise his own discretion. But, for general purposes, and as carrying out one of the objects for which this book is written, we may safely take the verdict of the majority as our guide for the future, on the principle that, "the Will of the Majority is Law!" Therefore, we forecast as follows:—

I. Philately in Australia is decidedly on the increase, and will continue to be so for long years to come.

(This will be very gratifying intelligence not only to all Australian Philatelists, but to all collectors of Australian stamps throughout the world.—C.S.)

II. Australian Philately, in the future, will become more simple in its character for the General Collector, but more complex for the Specialist.

(This, in brief, is the fixed opinion of the great majority of Referees.—C.S.)

III. Less attention will be paid to perforations in the future, except by Specialists.

IV. Less attention will be given to shades and minor varieties, except by Specialists.

V. Early Australian issues, especially "Views," will be the most popular, and after them, the issues of those Islands, adjacent to Australia, in which we are specially interested.

VI. The appearance of a Commonwealth issue will not affect the popularity of the early Australian issues.

(The personal opinion of the writer is that early Australians will become more popular, still, after the

arrival of a Commonwealth issue, except, perhaps, with the rising generation of collectors, born under the Commonwealth Government, and more accustomed to the new order of things than their fathers.)

There, then, is the whole thing in a nutshell. "He who runs may read." We are **optimistic** as to the future of Australian Philately. And we hold that we have good reason to be so.

But Philatelists are not coral-islanders, basking under banana trees, waiting for the ripe fruit to fall into their mouths. There is Work to be done. The present number of Australian collectors has got to be doubled. And that without loss of time.

To that end the very serious attention of all concerned is directed to the Answers given to Question VII. :—



PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

For arousing increased interest in Australian Philately.

And here they are—a very good lot:—

1. "The circulation of cheap Philatelic literature, suitable not only for serious collectors, but for beginners—a want greatly felt." (This suggestion is already receiving attention.—C.S.)

2. "The more prominent notice of Philatelic Societies, and the encouragement of the various Societies of papers dealing with matters relating to Philately, and the fostering of discussion, and exchange of views on Philatelic subjects; the issue of a purely Amateur Journal by some Society; and the establishment, on a firm basis, of a regular Auction Room, the same as exists in England."

(As to the latter suggestion—for a permanency the expense would be too heavy. Also, the services of an expert Philatelist, as Auctioneer, would be necessary to ensure success. Nevertheless, in Sydney, at all events, it would be possible to hold Sales in the months of November and December, in each year, at comparatively small cost. The writer gives his views as an old Auctioneer.—C.S.)

3. "The only way that I have found of increasing the interest is by the Societies holding Exhibitions, to which the admittance is free." (In the event of such an Exhibition being held in Sydney in the months above mentioned, two or three Auction Sales would prove an additional, and considerable, attraction.—C.S.)

4. "No."

5. "This last question of yours is, I think, the hardest one of the lot. 'Inexpensive' is a serious ob-

stacle. There is no doubt, however, that the individual effort is the most effective, and I find this wanting in almost every case. Nine out of every ten collectors do not canvass their hobby in a judicious manner. They talk 'stamps,' technically, to a Philatelist by the hour, yet to a non-collector they only exhibit their stamps as they would as many newspaper clippings. Were they to try and find the weak joint in the non-collector's armour of indifference, and explain, simply and concisely, the different methods of printing stamps, rouletting, perforating, secret marks, etc., etc., the result would be very different, as I have found from actual experiment."

6. "By every Philatelist, capable of putting ideas on paper, writing short articles about his own particular studies, and endeavouring to get them published. Homely, popular, articles, carefully written, would do much to arouse interest."

7. "Forming Junior Branches of Parent Societies. But they need a good deal of coaxing, at first, such as inviting them to the meetings of Parent Societies, and arranging for collections to be shown (if possible, not too specialised, as these are likely to frighten off young fellows with limited means)."

8. "A good deal could be done by means of popular public Lectures and Exhibitions, something on the lines of the Commemorative gathering, last year, at the 21st Anniversary of the S.A. Society. By means of the Episcopa a large number of stamps were thrown upon the screen, accompanied by a few remarks on each group—the groups being arranged to indicate the wide range of arts, sciences, etc., comprised in Philately. Give the public the opportunity of learning what Philately really means." (A very successful function was held in Sydney, in 1904, to commemorate the Jubilee of the N.S.W. 5d. Diadem; and another agreeable gathering of that description might prove very acceptable and inspiring.—C.S.)

9. "Affiliation of Societies." "Cultivation of Exchange Correspondence." "Teaching of Philately in

Schools." (The last suggestion—somewhat modified—is under consideration.—C.S.)

10. "By encouraging the admittance of Junior Members to the Societies, or forming Junior Branches for the young members."

11. "Philately would be well served by the insertion of a series of readable articles in one or more of the Weekly papers. In my own case I well remember the absorbing interest for Stamps engendered in me by reading, many years ago, some Articles on Stamps then appearing in 'Cassell's Magazine.'" (This suggestion, also, is receiving attention.—C.S.)

Now here are a number of simple, useful, and practical suggestions, any one of which would, if carried out, benefit the cause of Australian Philately. In some cases united action is needful, and could best be arrived at by joint efforts on the part of the Executive Committees of the various Societies, in which the Hon. Secretaries would take chief part. The writer well remembers the stimulus given to a work he was engaged in for some years as Secretary of an Association, by holding monthly meetings of the officers of the City and Suburban branches. They were cheerful reunions, and all parted after each meeting filled with zeal and ardour for fresh effort. The same could, of course, not be done with officers of Philatelic Societies situated at a great distance from each other. Nevertheless, much could be accomplished by means of a regular and sustained monthly interchange of views.

But, after all, as the framer of Suggestion No. 5 justly remarks, "the individual effort is the most effective!" It behoves all Executives of Australian Societies not only to use all effort of which they are capable to recruit new members—and keep them—but, also, to employ their influence with the rank and file of the army in inducing each individual unit to act as a recruiting agent. If this were done the number of Stamp Collectors in Australia would be doubled in a year.

However, it is for the serious reader to study the

matter for himself, to weigh carefully all these valuable Suggestions, and to use his best endeavours to carry out at least some of them to their logical sequence. To be optimistic is to meet difficulties squarely and overcome them.

This section of the work may fittingly conclude with a quotation from "The Philatelic Journal of Great Britain," June, 1910:—

"The Collector of Stamps who is content to follow in the footsteps of others without having the initiative to strike out for himself does not realise the hidden delights that Philately offers; a store of treasure which can only be drawn upon by those collectors who 'find out' things for themselves. The chief charm of collecting rests in the ever-present possibility of being able to discover something fresh, some new variety, which will make brother collectors all wonder why on earth such a marked peculiarity had not been noticed years ago, also, why couldn't they have noticed it themselves!"

"Such discoveries have been plentiful in the past, lithographic errors of transfer on Chilian Stamps, the same on West Australian" (also on British Solomon Islands.—C.S.), "retouched plates for New South Wales, and New Zealand, compound perforations of a dozen different countries, these and similar varieties have all had their discoverers. These stamps, beloved by all true collectors, have given their finders a taste of the great joys of life which, in a bigger world, are enjoyed by such men as Scott, Graham White, Paulhan, and Peary."

"To those who know nothing of Philately it may seem a very trivial accomplishment to discover a retouched plate variety; in this world of stern reality perhaps it is, but it is not written that we should all be a Graham White, or a Scott, so let us try to discover something fresh in the hobby we are devoted to, and so prove to other stamp collectors that we can do, and have done, something they have not."

The Probable Effect of a Commonwealth Issue on Australian Philately, generally.

In the opinion of many this is a subject that will rank first in importance among those taken up in this work. And, considering that collectors have wearily waited ten long years for the consummation of a bona-fide Commonwealth issue, which now appears to be looming in the near future, considerable interest will be taken in the views herein set forth, which will constitute a guide for collecting hereafter.

Following on the same lines as before, a set of three questions was sent out, to which eight answers have been received. These were the Questions:—

RE COMMONWEALTH ISSUE.

I.—What special effect will it have upon Australian Philately?

II.—Will greater, or less, attention be paid to current and recent State issues?

III.—Will it be more popular, or less, than if it had been brought out at the time the Commonwealth was established?

ANSWERS.

Question I.

1.—“The older collectors will pay more attention to early issues; the younger ones to new, and Island, issues.”

2.—“I am of opinion that it will have a good effect, and cause more attention to be paid to all varieties of Australian issues, and especially those in use since the Commonwealth.”

3.—“The effect of the uniform Commonwealth issue upon Australian Philately will be threefold. It will (a) furnish a convenient “period” at which specialists in State issues can cry a halt, and devote themselves to the cultivation of the obsolete issues, without any fear of the task becoming complicated year by year with the appearance of new issues. (b) It will furnish the beginner with a clear-cut starting point, from which he can go on making a well selected and complete collection of each new type, shade, paper and perforation as it appears, without the drag on his resources of having to buy obsolete things at greatly enhanced prices. (c) It will generally stimulate collecting amongst the omnivorous collectors, who will feel that six potential issuers of periodical new stamps have been merged into one, and that their task of keeping up with the march of emissions is to so great an extent diminished.”

4.—“It may encourage young collectors to confine themselves at first to Commonwealth issues only.”

5.—“I think it would cause increased interest in Australian Philately, and also cause collectors to try to complete their collection of current issues before the new issue appeared and the old issues became obsolete.”

6.—“A Commonwealth issue would call the attention of Philatelists, the world over, to Australian stamps, and give a fresh impetus to the collection of them. Australian stamps have always been popular with collectors, and a special, general issue for ‘Australia’ would give them a new and additional interest.”

7.—“Philatelists, I find, have viewed the continuance of the various State issues with a certain amount of disfavour, and look forward anxiously to a uniform issue for the Commonwealth. The immediate effect of such an issue will probably result in a scramble for any current out-of-the-way lines of

the then existing State issues, and an extra keen desire in obtaining Commonwealth issues for a time. After the freshness of the Commonwealth issues has faded a little, collectors will, generally speaking, make a rather more careful study of Australian State issues than hitherto, and will undoubtedly collect these issues in a more scientific and discriminating manner."

8.—"It will draw the dividing line between the old and the new collector. The former will finish here; the latter (owing to the increasing scarcity of recent issues of the States) will commence with the Federal issues."

Question II.

1.—"Less by older collectors, more by the younger."

2.—"Greater."

3.—"The current and recent issues (which will be superseded by the Commonwealth stamps) will naturally receive more attention, since there will be no more than a known period over which to conduct research, and every step in the philatelic study of these obsolete stamps will tend to attain the goal of finality."

4.—"Greater by Specialists and less by General collectors, who may be satisfied with one copy of a stamp only, irrespective of watermarks, and certainly irrespective of perforations."

5.—"Lesser attention after sets are complete; greater temporary attention until sets were complete."

6.—"For a time, at least, there would doubtless be a good demand for the obsolete State issues, superseded by the new issue. Collectors would be desirous of filling up the blanks in their albums before it became too late, and others scenting a probable rise would also be likely to purchase. For a time, there-

fore, they are likely to receive more attention than at present, but would afterwards find their level. My forecast is—more temporarily, but not less, permanently than at present.”

7.—“Question II. is practically covered by the preceding paragraph (see answer 7 to Question I). I do not think a new issue will ever have the alluring attraction that an old and obsolete issue has to the Philatelist. An issue, though perhaps unique in many ways, does not fascinate collectors nearly so much as ‘when it is no more.’”

8.—“See previous answer.” (No. 8 to Question I.)

Question III.

1.—“Decidedly less.”

2.—“More popular, I should say, especially on account of the public interest that has been created by the paper controversy on the subject from time to time.”

3.—“Anticipation is often more pleasant than realisation, and the longer one anticipates (provided that one does not grow weary of the waiting) the greater the anticipated pleasure. This is trite, I am aware, but the application is that the new issue will be all the more popular for the delay in bringing it into existence.”

4.—“Less.”

5.—“It would not be possible to say. If brought out in 1901 when the Commonwealth was established I think the sales would have been heavier of unused stamps in sets than if brought out during present year.”

6.—“Rather less, I think. A Commonwealth issue should undoubtedly have been coincident with the establishment of the Commonwealth. It was looked for on all hands and would have been hailed with enthusiasm and interest. However, even now,

after weary waiting, a really fine issue would, I believe, be very popular, and be eagerly sought after. In passing, I may express the hope that the foreshadowed overprinting of recent varieties with the word 'Australia' will not take place. The general issue has been so long postponed that surely it should be possible to inaugurate the new system with a really representative, permanent, issue, and not resort to a clumsy provisional one."

7.—"I do not think that Question III. would have any effect from a philatelist's point of view. To him, so long as a stamp is a necessity of the time, and is not struck off for his particular benefit, the issue is accepted, 'philatelically.' With the public at large, however, the issue will be much more appreciated, but that is outside the scope of your inquiry."

8.—"Less."

Judging, again, by the verdict of the majority, we are enabled to arrive at a fairly sound foreknowledge of the effect of a Commonwealth issue on Australian Philately. But, again, the reader is advised to dissect the above answers for himself.

Here, then is

A SECOND FORECAST.

The special effect of a Commonwealth Issue on Australian Philately will be:—

I.—(a) Greater interest therein, generally.

(b) The drawing of a dividing line between the old and the new issues.

(c) The taking up of the new issue by beginners, at first (and very wisely so).

(d) The old collectors will pay more attention to the completeness of their State collections before values are too greatly enhanced.

(e) Briefly, the effect will be decidedly beneficial, all round.

II.—On the whole, greater attention will be paid temporarily, to current and recent State issues, until collections are complete. But the early issues will always be the more fascinating.

III.—The majority verdict is that the approaching Commonwealth issue will be less popular than if it had been brought out in 1901. And the writer inclines to that view.

Nevertheless, we must remember that there is a rising generation of collectors to whom a decade dates back to the dim and misty past. To them, therefore, the new issue, especially if artistic, will appeal very strongly.

The Outlook, generally, is, consequently, Optimistic in its character.



PART II

THE AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE SYSTEM; ITS BENEFITS, ITS DEFECTS, AND ITS FUTURE.

The system of Stamps Exchange adopted in Australia for many years past has been of great benefit to Collectors, who by means of it have been enabled, at small expense, to get rid of their duplicates and undesirable specimens, obtaining in exchange stamps required for their collections. But gradually, though surely, a new state of things philatelic has come about, and many participants are no longer as satisfied with the system as formerly.

The complaints made may be classed under three headings:—

First, the length of time occupied in making the circuit. This is due to the enormous distances the books have to travel, and to the lack of promptness and punctuality in despatching the books after being looked through. The former is unavoidable, but the latter is entirely the fault of the members, and can be remedied by strict enforcement of the rules, even at the cost of temporarily reducing the number of recipients and contributors. But when it was once thoroughly understood that rules were rigidly enforced, matters would mend of themselves, because the great majority of collectors like to see, and profit by, the books of the Society they belong to.

The second complaint is that stamps on the sheets are, largely, in poor condition and otherwise undesirable. The fact is—as has been stated elsewhere—that

the supply of ordinary "stuff" is always greater than the demand, and is increasingly so, as can be noticed by careful observation of exchange sheets for a lengthy period. We all know—both collectors and dealers—how imperceptibly a stock of second and third class stamps accumulates, until, often, it reaches quite large dimensions. And, now, that the clamorous call is for "Condition," it is becoming more and more difficult to dispose of superfluous commonplace stock. For some years past the writer has made it a practice to get rid of undesirable stamps that came in his way at any price, and replace them with others of better quality, following the principle laid down by drapers, who "sacrifice" their last season's goods to replace with the new. There is a market for almost anything—at a price—if one takes the trouble to seek it. And, to be quit of a burden affords an agreeable feeling of relief, encouraging one to continue collecting when, otherwise, disposed to give it up. By adopting this plan members would find the Exchange sheets far more presentable, and general satisfaction would ensue.

The third complaint is that stamps on the sheets, except of very low value, are priced too high, as a rule. This is certainly a fact. Collectors who make use of the Exchange system should bear in mind that if their copies are to be taken off they must be offered at lower prices than a dealer would charge, remembering, also, that he offers a variety to choose from, and is responsible for the quality of his goods—if he be (as our Australian dealers are) a respectable member of the trade. We have often known of stamps being taken off Exchange sheets at prices above those charged by the nearest dealer. Of course, the buyer may be "a mug;" but that sort of thing does not pay in the long run. If members want their duplicates disposed of, they must price them at reasonably low rates, or else expect them back on their hands. The Exchange system is not intended for profit, but for the convenience of disposal of surplus specimens, and for obtaining others in exchange.

But, while the writer has, here, been giving just his own opinions—which may be taken for what they are worth—he deemed it wise, in the interests of all collectors, to obtain the views of a more qualified man. He therefore wrote to Mr. C. F. Williams, the remarkably successful Hon. Secretary, and Exchange Superintendent of the "Sydney Philatelic Club," asking him for his opinion and advice on this very important subject. He courteously sent a prompt reply, which is here given, in full:—

"In reply to your request re Exchange circuit, I append herewith my opinions, based on the experience I have after three years' work as Exchange Superintendent.

"There has been a decided improvement in the class of stamps procurable from the books of this Club during the past two years. But, generally speaking, it is not an easy matter to obtain rare Australians in fine condition. Occasionally such are seen, and, being marked at more reasonable rates than sold at by dealers, are always purchased. The medium class are never priced too high. The difficulty is that most members have a stock of this class of stuff. (This is exactly the writer's view, as given above.—C. S.)

"My experience is that stamps are procured at cheaper rates on Club Exchange books than it is possible to obtain them at from dealers. The genuine Collector is the one most competent to speak on the question of price. Those who express the opinion that prices are too high are, generally speaking, dealers or speculators. Collectors do not complain at all. The system is purely Exchange, and only dealers or speculators are responsible for high prices.

"A point which should receive consideration is the purchase of small collections, and the disposal of the stamps not required, per medium of Club Exchange books, at a charge which would enable the member to show a small profit and retain such copies as required by him, at a very small cost. But speculators are, generally seeking, too eager after profit, and only

manage to sell a small percentage of the medium class of stamps, which, by reason of their plentitude, are not readily saleable unless priced low. Good Australians are hard to procure, and, unfortunately, good collections are scarce." (We presume Mr. Williams means they are scarce "in the market," which is a proof of permanent solidity in serious Australian Philately, i.e., Collectors don't want to part with their collections—a very good sign.—C.S.)

"The question of delay in circulation is due, in a great measure, to the despatch of books to the various country districts and other States, but is a small grievance in N.S.W., as the books of the S.P.C., in spite of the fact that we have the largest membership roll, complete the circuit much quicker than other Societies which have a smaller circuit. The only Society which has a membership roll of over one hundred, like our club, is the New Zealand Society, and stamps sent for circulation there take over twelve months to complete a circuit. The general time here is eight months, and the longest period is nine months. Under the new system of dividing the circuits, at present in vogue, I anticipate completing each circuit in seven months." (Mr. Williams is a great enforcer of rules, hence, to a great extent, his success as an Exchange Superintendent.—C.S.)

"The only system which would be quicker is the Approval Sheet system, per registered post; but the expense of same would be greater. If each member kept the book for the specified time, only, the circuit could be completed under six months by the present system."

Mr. Williams concludes by specifying:—

"THE FAULTS OF THE SYSTEM:—

"I.—Too much of the medium class at a high rate.

"II.—Faulty condition of the earlier issues.

"III.—Delay of circulation by country and inter-State members, generally.

"IV.—The futility of circulating each book issued among all members. There should be a division of the circuit, as at present in vogue by the S.P.C., and which works admirably.

"V.—I favour the Approval Sheet system among a limited number of members, especially with early issues and rarities."

The above results of the experience of such an expert as Mr. Williams are well worthy of careful study, and should prove of great value to all who make use of the Australian Exchange system.

There is no doubt that Stamp Collecting and Stamp dealing are undergoing a change in Australia, and a reduction in the prices of medium copies may be expected—in spite of the near advent of a Commonwealth issue—while rare Australians, in fine condition, will have an upward tendency. And the same may be said of the rarer stamps of the proximate islands, such as Papua, British Solomon Islands, and New Hebrides, the issues of which will always be very popular.

Suggestions have been made—with a view to lessen the time occupied in circuit—that—

I.—Books should be divided into two sections, one containing stamps up to 1s. each, the other having those above 1s. each; and that members should choose which to see, unless they required both. By these means, it is held, contributors of valuable specimens would get their returns much quicker.

II.—Books should be divided into two sections, one for members in, and the other for members out of, the State in which the Society is located.

Both these suggestions are worthy of consideration by all concerned, and might form a topic for discussion at philatelic meetings. The whole subject is one of great importance, affecting hundreds of Philatelists in Australia. And it is possible—and to be hoped—that this section of the present work may be the means of assisting in the improvement of the Australian Exchange in the near future.

With regard to the possibility of a slump in medium class stamps, there are two ways available of averting such a calamity. The first is for every collector to be a canvasser in arousing increased and fresh interest in Philately. Thereby it would be quite possible to double the present number of collectors in a year, which would go far to end the difficulty. The second way is for dealers to devise means to recruit juvenile collectors, and to encourage older folk to take up the study of the cult. Prizes might be offered with this object in view.

**“CONDITION,”
AND ITS COROLLARY.**

The present-day demand is for specimens “in fine condition.” This, of course, is the natural outcome of a heavily stocked market. With such lavish supplies—as have of late years come into dealers’ hands—to choose from, collectors soon began to discriminate and to pick out choice copies. And, now, it is almost the first thing a buyer looks at. Stamps that ten years ago were considered quite good enough for mounting in an album are not given a second thought now-a-days. The consequence is that prices of “fine copies” of most obsolete issues are always on the up-grade.

But, what then becomes of all the medium stuff, let alone the third-class? It is hard to say. Certainly, a good deal has, perforce, to be taken by collectors who cannot obtain, or who cannot pay the prices asked for, first-class stamps. But there remains a large residuum, for which—in Australia at all events—there are no buyers. Much is shipped to Europe at low figures. Yet, still, supplies are forthcoming—hoarded up, maybe, for many years, and worth less to-day than when first collected.

What is to be done with this accumulation? Both dealers and collectors suffer through it. In many English philatelic journals one sees British Colonials advertised for sale at from a fifth to a tenth of catalogue. And, on looking through any Australian Exchange book, you will notice many fair copies going begging at a fourth or fifth catalogue, to return to the keeping of their sorrowful owners. Yet lots of these stamps are quite good enough for an average collection. But there is no demand for them. That is the trouble. It is of

no use offering them at "tempting" prices. They are not wanted at any price. What, therefore, is to be done? The answer is simple:—

"CREATE A DEMAND!"

"But," you say, "how in the world is it to be done?" Well, collectors, collectively, could, if they would. Dealers would if they could. Seriously, the thing is feasible. A workable scheme is on foot at the present time, and may fructuate in the near future. Suffice it to say:—

"The Demand CAN be Created!"

And, we are optimistic enough to add **"It will be!"**



"ENTIRES."

There appears to be a growing demand in England for early Australian and "Islands" Entires, in fine condition. Many sent home from here, lately, have realised satisfactory prices. Doubtless, they will, in due course, become popular in Australia, and it is quite possible that, in time to come, special Exchange books will have to be provided for their circulation. The edict passed against "postmarking to order" must also stimulate the collecting of Entires, especially of the Islands.

It is, however, singular—and to be deplored—that Australian collectors should be content to look to England for the initiative as to stamps of their own country. For proof whereof observe the anxiety with which collectors await the advent of the next S. G. Catalogue. And the writer quite believes that if this present work had been brought out in London instead of in Sydney, there would have been double the number of Australian subscribers. This does not indicate a patriotic sentiment in Australian Philately. It is sincerely to be hoped that such a feeling will be more cultivated in the future. For that we look to the rising generation of collectors.

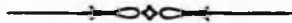
The new, and interesting, decision of the P.M.G. that all postage stamps, irrespective of State, are available for all postal purposes within the Commonwealth, will open up a grand field for collecting Entires and Postmarks. Some curiosities may be expected, and are, indeed, already to be seen. This does away with the proposed "overprint," while awaiting the long-looked-for Commonwealth issue. And a good thing, too!

There is, also, an increasing demand for

POSTMARKS,

especially of the early Australian and early "Islands" issues. This is quite intelligible, as clear, distinct, date cancellations are very helpful in fixing the issue. And they are most useful in regard to "Entires." Although, of course, they are not infallible guides, as a stamp affixed on cover may have an earlier watermark, not discoverable without removal.

However, the demand for clear postmarks is a healthy one, and should be encouraged, particularly among beginners. But, in all these matters, it is well for each collector, young or old, to strike out a line for himself, and carry it through to a finish.



UNCATALOGUED AUSTRALIANS, AND AN AUSTRALIAN CATALOGUE.

Many complaints are made that London cataloguers often omit to publish various Australian varieties to which their attention has been called, while specialising to the full such issues as those of Papua. Thereby the needs of the Australian collector are neglected. Also, it is rather discouraging to hear that when important items of that kind are sent to English philatelic journals the names of the patient and deserving discoverers are frequently not published.

Australian collectors are, as a rule, modest, retiring men; nevertheless, an occasional mention of his name, and a word of encouragement, now and again, would be appreciated by the most bashful man among them. While the Cause of Philately would most certainly gain in consequence. The idea that English philatelists are the only experts in Australian stamps ought to be exploded. There are plenty in the Commonwealth—in proportion to the number of collectors, quite as many as in the O'd Country.

Therefore, although hardly within the intended scope of this work, the writer has much pleasure in publishing some varieties not mentioned in Stanley Gibbons' catalogue, notes of which have been furnished him by two well-known Australian collectors.

Mr. W. A. Weymouth sends the following:—

Tasmania, Crown A.—Add to present list:

- (c) Compound of 12½ and 11—
3d., deep brown.

- 4d., buff (1907).
 9d., blue (1909).
- (d) Compound of $12\frac{1}{2}$ and 12—
 9d., blue (1909).
- (e) Compound of 11 and 12—
 2d., mauve (1907).
 9d., blue (1909).
- (f) Mixed perms., $12\frac{1}{2}$ and 11—
 $\frac{1}{2}$ d., green.
 2d., dull purple (1907).
 2d., mauve (1908).
 4d., buff (1907).
 9d., blue (1909).
 1s., rose and green.
- (g) Imperf.—
 1d., rose-red (1908).
 V. and Crown (1903-7).
 9d., ultramarine.

South Australia.—Crown A.

Compound perf. 12 and imperf.
 6d., blue.
 9d., lake.

Victoria.—V. and Crown.

Mixed perms., $12\frac{1}{2}$ and 11—
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., red on yellow.

Mr. C. A. Gillies sends the following "Notes":—

- "N.S.W., 6d., 136. Vertically imperf. unused. I am satisfied it is not clipped.
 ,, 1d., 437. Die worn, several of the "d" missing.
 ,, Ditto, perf., $12 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ with 11 added at foot (marginal row).

"N.S.W.,	3d. Crown.	N.S.W., imperf. in blocks.
"	1d., 437	" "
"	6d., 444	" "
"	1s., 451	" "
"	6d., 446	" "

Anomalies in Color Names:

- " 186 and 612, 214 and 632a, 214a and 632a.
- " 250-1, 643a-644, 646, 660a, 243 and 639, 323.
- " 324, 325 etc., and 677, 332 and (?) 682, 705, 707-8?
- " Colour, 402 and (?) 416 do.
- " 467 perfs; difference between 12 x 11 and 11½ x 11. Listed as one;
- " 488; footnote incorrect.
- " 579a, insert 2d.; 704-8, are not several of these slate as well as grey? (I think so.—C.S.)

"Queensland. 214 (a), 1d., with double serrations.

"Tonga. Current 1d., bisected diagonally for ½d.

"New Zealand. 108, ½d.

"I saw a double or treble strip in a collection in Auckland once, which plainly showed ordinary perfs. of 12½ had been missed at foot of sheet and supplied in one or two rows with the 10 perf. I have the 5d., type 19, treated thus on one side. Note anomaly 69 and 73. Add 221a, yellow-green. 120 perf. 12½ three sides, plus 10 on one, and 124 ditto. 183 b (? c) 12½. (Saw this in Hagens' some years ago.) 209 imperf. horizontally. (Hagen has had others of this issue in same condition, which he sent to America in 1901 or 2.) 258 perf. 14 three sides by 11—possibly from foot of sheet. 654 perf. 14: 14 x 13½; and 14 x 15. 672. ½d., mixed perfs. 675, mixed (11 and 14).

"Then, my article on New Zealand in the "Australian Philatelist" shows other varieties. Article re N.S.W. wmk. var. used about Dec., '01. Only find ½d., 1d., and 2d. in my lot here. The wmk. is (as to letters N.S.W.) wider and slightly nearer the Crown.

Surfaced paper. Perf. 12 x 11½. N.Z. again, 6d., 302 (d), mixed perfs.

“Re Anomalies. Papua wmk. are listed in every position, ditto papers, whilst N.S.W. 3d. and 5d., and Vic. and Westralian with wmk. varied are passed by. N.S.W. 159 exists on extremely thick paper. I also have Queensland prior to 1879—'80 issue on thinner paper—a few odd stamps, especially 6d., 27. Personally, I consider that N.S.W. issue, roughly, 207-287 should be collected ‘both ways.’ Why not cat. perf. compounds of Vic. stamps? Or is it the machines are irregular?” (Mr. Gillies concludes with a remark concerning perforations which if published might wound the susceptibilities of some specialists, but with which the writer fully concurs.)

To these lists, of course, many more items could be added, if inquired for, and the writer would like to be notified of some of them.

All this emphasises the need for a purely Australian Catalogue, complete and up-to-date, as far as possible. None would appreciate it more than our English brethren of the cult.

But the compiling of a work of this description, while highly important, is far too great a task for any one individual, and would need the co-operation of the various Societies in Australasia. Such a scheme, alone, would justify the holding of a Congress, elsewhere alluded to.

In the meanwhile, however, the writer would be glad to receive practical suggestions from individual Philatelists, including those of New Zealand. In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom.

Addendum.—Mr. W. L. Peek writes of a rare un-catalogued stamp in his possession—“a 2d. brown West Australia, whk W crown A., perf. 14, same type and perf. as the 2d. yellow, 1899. I know of five specimens only. I have three, and Mr. Krichauff and Dr. Benham, of our Society here, have one each.”

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF AUSTRALIAN PHILATELY.

WITH SOME CANDID ADVICE.

At all annual meetings of our Philatelic Societies one learns of cases of desertion from the ranks. True, as a rule, the vacant places are soon filled up, and often, more than refilled, by the advent of fresh recruits. Nevertheless, it is a fact that constant effort is needed to keep up, let alone to increase, the number on the roll of membership.

Now, it is a wise and proper thing to ask how it is that these defections occur? What is the reason, or, rather, what are the reasons for these losses, so discouraging to Secretaries and Committees?

They are, at the least, threefold, viz.:—(1) The absence of sustained interest. (2) Doubt as to one's ability to keep up to the standard of progressive collecting and find the requisite time for it; and (3) lack of means to form a fairly presentable collection.

Those who desert through the first cause are, probably, the members who can best be spared, for no one who soon loses interest in stamp-collecting is of any use to the main body. He does not—and never will—perceive the pleasurable possibilities in the cult, and if he did he, very likely, is possessed of a temperament unsuited to the due cultivation of the pursuit. To him we say, "Good-bye, friend! May you find a hobby more congenial and as harmless! Go in peace!"

Those who leave us for the second reason are of a class with which we greatly sympathise. The never-ending procession of new issues, new perforations, new shades, new watermarks, new paper, new varie-

ties, and new errors, and, in addition, the vast accumulation of undesirable and ill-conditioned specimens that a novice is sure to acquire, are enough to daunt the spirit of a Saint George, let alone a tyro in the subject. To such we say,—“Give us another show. We will simplify matters for you, and direct you how to collect satisfactorily, without addling your brains, confusing your common sense, or injuring your pocket. Take things quietly, one step at a time, with a distinct goal in view. Look before you leap, and closely study the trend of Philately by regular attendance (if possible) at your meetings, and, most certainly, by understandingly reading what suitable Philatelic literature you can procure.” (Note: A good Library should be a “*sine qua non*” with every Philatelic Society, including easy means of access for the members.) “If you only follow out these simple instructions you will receive great benefit therefrom!”

But, those of the third-class, who give up the hobby because of its everlasting demands on the purse are more difficult to deal with and to advise. For, there is no good in disguising the fact that stamp collecting is expensive, if carried out, by progressive steps, towards anything like a high ideal, or standard of efficiency. It seems quite amazing to a man of only moderate means how imperceptibly, yet how quickly, a few hundred pounds are invested in these “bits of paper.” And, then, when one would draw in one’s horns, one finds oneself confronted with just the nucleus of a good collection. Thus, one becomes faint-hearted, and fain, yet loath, to abandon the still-cherished, but, alas! elusive, object, and, probably, at considerable monetary loss.

Now, for this apparently hopeless state of affairs, there is a remedy. It means, just what is required to ensure success in every calling in life—preparation, patience, perseverance and perspicuity. The writer has tried the formula and has succeeded in affording himself great pleasure in following the cult, and not without sufficient profit wherewith to season the enjoyment.

In the first place, let the Collector of but moderate means carefully study the statistics available concerning the various smaller issues in which he is interested, or proposes to interest himself, those especially, at the beginning and at the end of such issues. By that means he will discover how much rarer some seemingly insignificant stamps are than others, even of higher face value. (Take, for instance, the over-printed Papua, 4d.) And, then, when he has the chance, which, sooner or later, and from time to time, will come in his way, of securing a few copies, at a low price, of a stamp sure to rise in value, he will, if he be wise, realise at a profit, sufficient to enable him materially to add to his collection without encroaching on his capital, or straining his resources. By careful watching he will find many opportunities of carrying out such tactics. But, let him always bear in mind that Study and Caution are most important requisites. Any respectable, honest, dealer will give him assistance in the pursuit of such a course, looking on him as a safe and permanent customer, because a satisfied one. And, then, there are always Exchange books going their circuit, in which may be found many desirable bargains.

And, now, a few words of advice as to the system to be adopted in his collecting by the wise Philatelist: It is inadvisable for anyone without plenty of means to attempt the forming of a General Collection. Adherence to this counsel will save much trouble, disappointment and loss in the future. It is absolutely impossible to make a first-class General Collection except at very great cost. And every Collector should make it his aim to have his collection, however large or however small, "first class." It pays in every way.

It is far better, from an economic and financial point of view, to have a small, carefully chosen, complete collection of the stamps of one State, in one ordinary book, than a sprinkling of indiscriminately gathered sorts sparsely scattered through a couple of large, handsome albums. Therefore, we advise the novice, or even the senior, if he has not gone too far, to take.

say, one State, or, if he prefers, one period, say, a decade, of all States (we write, always, of Australia), and work on that until complete. The handsome, up-to-date, album can be procured when the collection is well advanced in numbers and value. An out-of-date album is an annoyance to the possessor, even if it be only ten years old. The result will be more pleasing, and more profitable, in the end.

"Specialists," of course, are in another category. But, by possessing the "4 P's," previously alluded to, by paying great attention to "condition," and by avoiding another "P," the fatal evil of Procrastination, so common among Philatelists, many of these studious gentlemen form collections at once the envy and the admiration of all who have the privilege of inspecting them. And the Island issues, especially of those Islands wholly or partially under the control of the Commonwealth, afford, and will, in the future, continue to afford, a grand opportunity for "specialising" at a strictly moderate cost.

Australia is a land of magnificent possibilities, or, —as a well-known globe-trotter and author has sarcastically accused us of reiterating—"potentialities," to be taken advantage of in the near future! Australian Philately, also, presents a field of magnificent potentialities, only, however, to be tilled to advantage by the exercise of discrimination in selecting specimens, with strict attention to "condition"—for that is the order of the day, and will always be so in the future—by perseverance in following out one's speciality, and by the avoidance of procrastination in securing good things, when they are offered. They, very likely, may never come one's way again, unless at a higher price. For, the tendency of "good things" is, in a financial sense, upward.

Possibly, some hyper-critical member of "the trade," after perusing the foregoing, may exclaim: "Here's a nice thing! This man is writing in a way to curtail my business and diminish my profits!" Not at all! Friend Dealer! Not at all! Your business is

to keep your customers. Two hundred well-satisfied, regular, clients are better for you than one hundred who buy from you pretty extensively for a short time, and then drop off, disgusted and disillusioned, lost for ever to the ranks of Stamp Collectors. The small, methodical, periodical, customer is the man it will pay you best, in the long run, to cater for. And that is the class of Collector this scribe is endeavouring to attract and to advise, and not the meteor-like, evanescent creature of impulse, careering for a few, brief, months in the nebulous regions of Fantastic Philately!



LOSSES AND INSURANCE.

The loose manner in which valuable stamps, especially those sent on circuit by means of Exchange books, are transferred from hand to hand excites wonderment in the mind of the looker-on. Stamp collectors appear to have the habit of trusting largely to Chance, and many of them are culpably negligent in seeing to the due security of parcels containing hundreds of desirable stamps, more particularly when they have finished with them. The writer himself has received books containing from £100 to £150 worth of stamps, done up in most slovenly and insecure fashion, easily to be opened by any dishonest person temporarily in charge of the package.

This careless custom—for it has become a custom—often leads to the disappearance of stamps, and consequent annoyance to the Exchange Superintendent, and loss to the owner, which loss is generally irrecoverable, as no Society holds itself responsible in such case. Now and again one even hears of the total loss of a book, entailing serious consequences, while one wonders that such occurrences are not more frequent.

No public Insurance Company will accept a risk of this kind. However, to some extent, loss in this direction may now be obviated by means of a private Insurance Scheme propounded by the writer, who may be consulted thereon. Its adoption would certainly tend to a feeling of far greater security in the minds of all making use of the Exchange system. And that, alone, would be a great thing.

The following memoranda of proposed terms and forms of receipt will explain the matter easily. It must be understood that each transaction is a separate agreement between two persons, the underwriter and the Exchange Superintendent:—

TERMS

for Total Loss through the Post, or for Partial Loss, while otherwise in transit between Members of the Exchange.

Insurance up to £50.

Total Loss, if registered at time of loss ... 2½ per cent.
 Total Loss, if unregistered at time of loss .. 5 per cent.
 Partial Loss, while in transit other than through the post 5 per cent.

SECURITY.

The underwriter to deposit security in a Sydney Bank to cover the possible maximum of any single claim, and reserved against such contingency.

Against Total Loss.**Stamps Insurance Receipt,****For Use of a Philatelic Society, Only:—**

In consideration of the sum of £———, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I undertake and agree to pay———, subject to the conditions hereunder set forth, and subscribed to, the sum of £——— for the total loss while in transit through the Commonwealth Postal Department of a package No. ———, containing a book of Stamps, No ———, comprising ——— sheets of ——— stamps, valued at £———, the property of the ————. Payment of claim to be made to any person duly authorised in writing by the Hon. President and Hon. Secretary of the said ————, who shall also jointly sign a receipt for said payment.

Dated at Sydney, N.S.W.,

—————, ————, 191 .

Private Agreement. _____

Against Partial Loss.

Stamps Insurance Receipt.

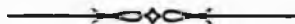
In consideration of the sum of £———, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I undertake and agree to pay ———, subject to the conditions hereunder set forth, and subscribed to, one half the amount at which any stamp or stamps were priced in an Exchange Book, No.——, containing — sheets of — stamps, valued at £——, the property of the ———, and from which book their loss while in transit is proved. Payment of claim to be made to any person duly authorised in writing by the Hon. President and Hon. Secretary of the said ———, who shall also jointly sign a receipt for said payment.

Dated at Sydney, N.S.W.,

———, ———, 191 .

Private Agreement. ———.

A copy of the conditions will be supplied to any Society wishing to insure Exchange Books.



A WORD OF WARNING AND ADVICE.

While the general tone of this work is undoubtedly optimistic regarding the future of Australian Philately, yet there is a matter of grave import to ventilate and condemn. That is, the feeling of inter-State jealousy which exists, even in matters Philatelic. This should not be. It is contemptible, and, if persevered in, it will retard the growth of Philately in this Commonwealth to a very appreciable extent.

Now, each year, towards the end of October and the beginning of November, many thousands of Australians from all States, wend their way, by road, rail, or water, to Melbourne. Inter-State rivalry, Federal Capital quarrels, and many minor meannesses are forgotten, or laid aside, in the one overpowering desire to see "the Cup" run!

Well! If this be the case with the National sport of horseracing, why cannot a similar amicable spirit be manifested in the International Cult of Philately? Why?

How is it, that, when, say, such an undoubtedly useful and important undertaking as a Philatelic Congress—so popular in Europe—is put "on the tapis" it is nipped in the bud of its inception by the veiled hostility of Philatelists in other States, who profess not to see its utility? Surely, it cannot be that this indifference towards a transparently valuable suggestion of that character arises from the fact that it emanates from another State? Yet such is, unhappily, inferred by some, able and willing to assist so forward a movement both Philatelically and financially.

This is a subject in which both dealers and collectors, present and future, are very deeply interested.

And the writer makes a most earnest appeal to the Philatelists of all Australia to sink local feeling, of whatever kind, for the sake of "the Good Cause," and to help on by every means in their power the next Federal scheme of the kind that is mooted.

If only for self-interest—the lowest consideration of all—every collector and every dealer in the Commonwealth should seek to advance the cause of Philately by some such means as the holding of a triennial Congress and Exhibition in, say, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, alternately. If twenty picked subscribers to this book were to put their heads together they could revolutionise Philately in Australia! And, in the meantime, let every effort be made to increase by a hundred per cent. the number of members on the rolls of the various Societies.

One word more. Too little attention is paid to the needs of the younger members and beginners. On their first admission to a Society they are puzzled listeners to a variety of comments and stamp talk by experts, of which they understand little or nothing. No one takes them in hand, they lose courage, and in a short time their seats are vacant. And no wonder!

A little patience, a little good-will, and a little commonsense on the part of some of the older members would have kept them. There is urgent need for suitable literature and for well-managed Junior Societies in Australia. (Collectors desirous of assisting in the formation of Junior Societies are invited to communicate with the writer.—C.S.)

PART III.

THE ROMANCE OF SOME ISLAND ISSUES.

There is always something romantic about an island. Of course, we don't mean such a gigantic one as Australia, which, on account of its enormous size, is designated the "Island-Continent"—a term, by the way, geographically incorrect. We refer to isles remote from the busy haunts of men, "far from the madding crowd," for preference, those of the Southern Pacific.

Gradually built up by that industrious, tiny creature, the coral insect, after reaching the surface of the water, birds from other shores convey thither the first seeds of the cocoanut, the bread-fruit, the banana, and the palm, soon to be followed by the canoe of the neighbouring islander and his permanent settlement on the new and flourishing gem of the sea.

Did you ever sight a coral island in the early morning? 'Tis a curious experience. You first observe on the horizon a row of objects like expanded umbrellas, without handles. They are the tops of the cocoanut trees, and their stems are as yet invisible, but soon come into your vision if you are approaching at a fair speed. Then you notice the lower and thicker vegetation, and, finally, the white line of surf, ever beating on the outer reef of the atoll. You pass in through the narrow channel left by beneficent Nature, and down goes the anchor in the quiet waters of a beautiful land-locked lagoon.

Instantly the friendly, chattering natives swarm up the sides from their frail craft, and inundate you with offers of fruit, fish and shells. And, if the island be of fair size one or more traders and p'anters—always a

Scotchman among them—come aboard to arrange shipment of their copra, and yarn with the skipper and the passengers. Quiet folk, these traders; slow of speech and of thought, owing to the isolated lives they lead. Decent fellows, as a rule; out-of-the-world recluses, they want but little—and they get it.

Occasionally, their enemy, the missionary, comes on board, too. Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, London Missionary Society man, even Seventh Day Adventist, each has his own special mission field, and each rules over his flock with the power of parental authority, under the aegis of his particular Church. One sometimes wonders what the simple islanders think of all these Christians, who worship the One Master in so many different ways, each of which is the only right and proper way.

After the missionary and the trader have settled on the island, there arrives the British Resident Commissioner, or his Deputy. And, then, come courts, laws, legislature, prisons, men-o'-war civilisation, and—Postage Stamps! A few thousand natives, who never write a letter, a dozen white men, who manage, between them, to make up a mail bag of 50, or 50, documents—mostly official—every six weeks, an issue of 150,000 stamps, to commence with—and there you are! And, now, you see why “used” “Islands” are so scarce, and “mint” copies so plentiful

But, we have to begin with an island of a different class, a large one, in fact, next to Australia, the largest on the globe, three times the size of England, with a vast native population, and shared by three countries. About half is under the rule of Holland, while the other half is almost equally divided between England and Germany. History does not inform us that the native inhabitants and owners of the soil were consulted in the matters of occupation and division. This is the great, wonderful and mysterious island of New Guinea, of which the British portion is under the control of the Commonwealth of Australia, and, by our Government was in 1906 officially styled,

I.—PAPUA

by which name the whole island was originally known. And why one small portion, only, should now be so-called our sapient authorities at Melbourne alone can tell us.

A good many years ago we held practically the whole of the Eastern half, but, owing to procrastination and apathy on the part of the Colonial Office people, another European Power was allowed to step in and share the plunder. For which act of philanthropy we, in Australia, may, possibly, have to suffer in years to come, say, when the Dutchman serves the Kaiser.

As a matter of history, Sir Thomas M'Ilwraith, when Premier of Queensland, actually annexed all but the Dutch portion of New Guinea to Queensland, in 1883. But the Imperial authorities did not endorse his action, and the following year the German flag was hoisted on the North Coast, and also in the Admiralty, Hermit, Anchorite, New Britain, and New Ireland groups, a secret step, taken in contravention to an understanding that had been arrived at between the British and German Governments. And, thus, it ever was—and is—and will be.

After a long period of stagnation, during which Missionary enterprise cleared the way for commerce, a wave of industrial activity set in from the near shores of Australia; and, now, there is a "rubber boom" proceeding in this strange and rich tropical country. But, "give me cocoanuts," as a shrewd island planter observed to the writer.

In the year 1901 a pictorial issue of stamps made its appearance, with a peculiar native craft—called a lakatoi—in the foreground of the design, and in the background the village of Hanuababa. The same design has served for the successive issues. In 1906 and 1907 two overprints (Papua) followed, in recognition of the change of name, and at the end of 1907 a so-called "permanent" issue came in. But, now, we are to have the latest (unicolour) issue; although we can only look

upon it as "temporary" in view of the fact that all Australian stamps are to be overprinted "Australia," or so it is stated, until another, long-expected, bona-fide, Commonwealth issue comes into vogue. After that—but who knows?

The British New Guinea and Papua issues form a very entertaining study and enjoy extraordinary popularity, which, we believe, they will maintain. They have been—and still are being—highly specialised. The foremost specialist in the stamps of Papua is Mr. Albert Ashby, of London, whose studious efforts are greatly thought of by all "serious" Philatelists who go in for "Islands." They make a most interesting collection, and a very great point is that it may be formed at quite reasonable cost, a desideratum all "moderate" collectors will appreciate. For economical reasons unused copies are mostly in evidence. But as an investment for profit, "used" specimens are sought after, being comparatively scarce (about a fourth or a fifth of the number of "mint" copies—above 2d.—in the market).

Collectors who have taken—or who are taking—up "Papuans" are recommended to read Mr. Fred. J. Melville's "British New Guinea and Papua," a most excellent and instructive little work, which ought to be better known in Australia than it is.

(N.B.—The writer would be glad to hear from anyone in the possession of Queensland stamps—especially on entires—used in British New Guinea from 1888 to 1901, and willing to dispose of them.)

The numbers received at Port Moresby of the different denominations of the so-called "permanent" issue were as follows:—

11th November, 1909.— $\frac{1}{2}$ d.: 75,960; 1d., 51,810; 2d., 50,520; $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 25,500; 4d., 25,590; 6d., 13,080; 1s., 10,920; 2s. 6d., 4,080.

4th August, 1910.— $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 20,040; 1d., 39,990; 2d., 39,870; $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 15,060.

23rd August, 1910.—4d., 24,840; 6d., 20,010; 1s., 19,950; 2s. 6d., 20,040.

(These figures were furnished by the Chief Postmaster at Port Moresby, but he has omitted to send those of previous printings, called, as we think, erroneously, the first issue.)

It should be understood that probably not more than one-fourth of these stamps are used in the post. The other three-fourths—or thereabouts—are bought by dealers, and thereby constitute a welcome addition to the small revenue of the Territory. In valuing all "Islands" it is safe to calculate that used copies are worth actually, in numerical proportion, from three to four times the price of unused, especially those of obsolete issues; though they may not fetch as much to-day. Nevertheless, in time to come, used copies will be the more sought after. And "entires," of the higher values, will be very scarce.

It has been mentioned elsewhere that collectors would be wise to look out for small issues. In proof whereof three recent instances are here given:—(1) Three years ago the B.N.G. 2/6, used was selling at face value. To-day it is worth from £4 to £5. (2) Two years ago the New Hebrides ½d., single C.A., was obtainable, used or unused, at 1d. It now fetches about 5/-. (3) Eighteen months ago the 1/- single C.A., used, of the same islands, could be bought for 1/6. To-day, it is worth anything you please. For, there are probably not more than 50, and certainly, not over 100, used copies in existence. The obvious moral of all which is, "Catch when young!"

But, then, one must always make allowance for the fickleness and illogical ineptitude constantly shown by stamp collectors, an instance of which occurs in connection with these two single C.A. New Hebrides varieties. For, when it was at first believed that only three sheets of the ½d. value were in existence, a single copy fetched 22s. at a London Auction Sale, a year, or so, ago. But, when it was found that at least 19 sheets

had been issued (the writer makes the number 21 or 22) the price only dropped to 5s., and will probably soon rise again. That was just merely the result of public attention being called to a certain stamp.

The 1s., of same watermark, however, although existing in only one-fourth proportion to the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., has not come into public notice. Yet it is a rarity, and, if priced pro rata to number and market value (say, 5s.) of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., would be worth no less than £480 for a single copy! Nevertheless, it is advertised at 20s. mint. If that is not illogical, what is?

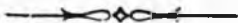
ADDENDUM.

On 23rd July, 1910, the writer received, among other, the following information from the Minister for External Affairs, Melbourne, under date 21st July:—

“I understand that a new issue of Papuan stamps is now in preparation, and will be placed in circulation at an early date.”

Under date 28th September, His Excellency the Administrator of the Territory of Papua, communicating with the writer from Port Moresby, stated that the Chief Postmaster there had replied to questions, *inter alia*,—“No new issue is contemplated.”

The exigence of the press prevents further inquiry being made in time for publication. The reader, therefore, must solve the puzzle for himself, unless it be already solved before this meets his eye.



II.—THE MYSTERIOUS SOLOMONS.

now known as the "British Solomon Islands Protectorate," under the control of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, are in lat. 8 degrees S., long. 160 degrees E., from 300 to 400 miles due East of Papua, and have an area of 12,000 square miles. The largest islands are Guadalcanai, Malaita, Isabel, Kausagi, and Choiseul. The principal port and chief post office are at Tulagi, where dwells a Resident Commissioner. The white population is about 400, and the native is estimated at 150,000. There are several branch post offices scattered through the islands, viz.: Gizo, Shortland, Gavutu, and Aola. The postal business is, of course, small.

It is only of recent years that these islands have become somewhat settled and civilised. It is not so long ago—not more than 20 years, in fact—that the principal news item concerning this interesting but savage Group used to be that the natives showed a great weakness for "long pig," which Epicurean taste has, indeed, not yet quite died out.

It is said by experts that the flavour of roast "carnis humanum" is like that of well-nourished and delicate pork. The writer rather doubts the statement, as he has seen the dish partaken of, and, though not a participator in the feast (and, fortunately, not an entree thereof), he could perceive no similarity in the appearance of the menu. While as to the aroma! Well—he lived for over a year alongside a burning ground (or outdoor crematorium) in India, and can vouch for the fact that the smell during the cooking process is totally different from—and greatly in favor of—that of the quadruped. Be that as it may, the fact remains that this phase of Epicureanism is being rapidly stamped out, happily for the rubber planters and copra traders dwelling in those parts.

The missionaries have nobly done their part in bringing about this happier state of things, and their stations and churches abound in these islands until lately the most dreaded in the Pacific. As to the means adopted for raising their ecclesiastical edifices, a rather strange account is given by a recent visitor, who says:

“At the native village of Boala Island, I noticed a big pile of large white blocks, and on investigation found they were coral, and it was intended to build a church with them. It was stated that the mission native (sic), when people committed offences—chiefly stealing each others’ wives or daughters—used to demand so many blocks of coral as a kind of conscience money. The offenders, therefore, went out on the reefs and with a crosscut saw cut the mushroom coral to the proper shape and size. It may be a church founded on iniquity, but it will be a very handsome one when finished.”

It has been said that in the early days of settlement and civilisation, the full dress of a Solomon Islands chief consisted of a “bell-topper” and a postage stamp! If that was so, the labels thus used for personal adornment must have been either British or Australian, as the islanders had no issue of their own until 1907, when Mr. W. E. Smith, of Sydney, printed a series to the order of Mr. C. M. Woodford, Resident Commissioner of the Islands.

These stamps were roughly lithographed on plain, unwatermarked, paper, the perforations, also, being somewhat rough. The central design is a canoe, turned very high up at both ends, which is being propelled on the water by a crew of natives. On both sides are cocoanut trees, while the background is formed by mountains. There are seven values, namely, $\frac{1}{4}$ d., 1d., 2d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 5d., 6d., and 1s., and they are all the same type. There were 60 on each sheet. The issue consisted of 60,000 each, of the first four values, and 30,000 each of the 5d., 6d., and 1s. The first postmark was that of Tulagi, Solomon Islands, February 14, 1907.

It was, however, quickly discovered that the colors of some of the values were not in accordance with Postal Union requirements; nevertheless, the Solomon Islands stamps were, on the 3rd September, 1907, gazetted for international postage. But, in consequence of the rather cavalier treatment accorded this issue by Philatelic journals, it did not become popular, which is a pity, because it was a perfectly legitimate, bona-fide, issue, though of very short duration. It will, however, increase in popularity because of the circumstances connected with its birth and of the rapidly increasing value of the islands to Australia. At present prices collectors will be wise to secure their requirements promptly.

The Deputy Resident Commissioner, Mr. F. J. Barnett, has courteously furnished the writer with the following notes:—

"Of these" (the above-mentioned first issue) "the following went into circulation:

45,364 at ½d. ; 25,598 at 1d.
 20,641 at 2d. ; 12,072 at 2½d.
 8,310 at 5d. ; 7,853 at 6d
 7,291 at 1s.

The remainders were officially destroyed under strict supervision, and as far as I know no person here holds any stock, in fact, there are difficulties in securing a set of this issue in the Solomons."

"On 27th October, 1908, stamps of the same denominations were received from the Crown Agents, and on 7th March, 1910, these were supplemented by the issue of stamps at 2/-, 2/6, and 5/-, and it is expected that a 4d. value will arrive in a few months."

"Most of the information you require is contained in a very excellent article, which appeared in the July and August numbers of the 'Stamp Lover' (Vol. II., Nos. 2 and 3, July and August, 1909)."

"The principal items of exports are Copra, which is a rapidly increasing product, Ivory Nuts, Pearl, and

other Shell, Turtle Shell, Cotton, and other tropical products."

"The Imports for 1909 were £59,300, and the Exports £57,441. The Revenue is about £12,000, and this amount forms the Expenditure."

To return to the first issue. Shortly after the arrival of the stamps in London, Messrs. Stanley Gibbons published a list descriptive of no less than 70 minor varieties, all of which should be dear to the extreme specialist. The general collector, however, will probably be satisfied with the more pronounced ones, such as the shades in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 5d., 6d., and 1s., and the omission of fraction bar in the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. The issue is fully as deserving of a collector's attention as any of those, say, of Papua. The higher values come within the category of rarities, and are hard to procure in used condition. It is said that there is not a complete used set of this issue to be obtained in Australia.

Mr. Barnett adds to his valuable information the following:—

"Ocean Island is the headquarters of the Resident Commissioner for the

GILBERT, ELLICE, AND UNION GROUPS,

which are under the control of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in Fiji. At present there are no special stamps issued for these Protectorates, but I understand that a scheme for establishing post offices is in course of completion, and no doubt there will soon be an issue of postage stamps."

These islands are situated to the East and North-east of the Solomons, and, like the latter, are served with mails by the Burns, Philp line of steamers. The Gilbert Group consists of 16 islands, and several islets between them, situated between 4 degrees North and 3 degrees South latitude, and 172 degrees and 177 degrees W. longitude; and the Ellice Group, between 5 degrees S. and $10\frac{1}{2}$ degrees S. latitude, and 176 degrees E. and 179.58 degrees W. longitude, consists of nine

islands. Ocean Island, in lat. 0.52 S., was included in the Protectorate in 1900. Population, about 35,000 and 80 Europeans. Total area, 166 square miles.

Since hearing from Mr. Barnett we learn that the expected issue of stamps is imminent. As in the case of the New Hebrides, they are overprinted on Fiji, in black, except on the 1s., which has red surcharge.

½d., green.
 1d., red.
 2d., grey.
 2½d., blue.
 5d., violet and olive.
 6d., purple.
 1s., black on green.

The post offices are at Ocean Island, Tarawa, and Butaritari, as far as we know at present.

This will form another interesting Island issue for Australian Collectors to study; and they are advised to be on the lookout for single C.A. watermark. Verb. Sap.

Addendum.—Mr. Albert Ashby reports that he has part sheets of ½d. and 2½d. British Solomon Islands, first issue, imperf. at margins.



THE NEW HEBRIDES.

This group, situated about 300 to 400 miles S.E. of the Solomons, and to the N.E. of New Caledonia, in about lat. 16 deg. S., long. 168 deg. E., is just now of peculiar interest to Australians, and deserves special mention.

The principal islands are Espiritu Santo, Mallicolo, Api or Tasiko, Efate or Sandwich, Eromanga, Aipere or Tanna, Futuna or Erronan, and Aneityum. The capital, and sole port of entry, is Vila (French—Port Vila), in which all postal business is transacted, and where, also, is a telephone exchange.

Twenty years ago Vila consisted of four tenements, of a sort. To-day it is a fine town, containing many comfortable and luxurious residences, the latest, and perhaps the most palatial, having been erected for the recently arrived Spanish President of the Condominium Court, Le Comte de Buena Esperanza.

This "Condominium" (joint, or dual, control) is of very great interest to the philatelist, because the overprinted stamps of Fiji and the overprinted stamps of New Caledonia are in use indiscriminately, often, indeed, both English and French being used on the same envelope. This, we believe, is unique in the history of philately. Hence these stamps—the Fiji Overprint especially—are very popular, and the more so because of their scarcity in used condition. And they will soon be among the rarities, as a new Anglo-Franco series is in course of preparation, and will shortly be in circulation.

Collectors would be more interested than they are in the French "Nouvelles Hebrides Condominium," overprint, were it not that the French Postal Department adopts the reprehensible practice of disposing of

enormous quantities of their Colonial issues long before the stamps reach their legitimate destination. For instance, in the present case, the new French overprint was in the hands of European and American dealers months before its advent in Vila. The only way to check this sort of thing is for collectors to refuse any but used copies, "with Port Vila postmark." A slump in Parisian-sold, mint, French Colonials would soon alter the present pernicious system for the better.

To explain, very briefly, the reason for the anomalous state of affairs in these islands it is necessary to mention that for many years they were a sort of neutral and common territory for the two nationalities concerned—a kind of "no man's land"—without any constitutional or, indeed, any other law.

To quote Mr. Wilson Le Couteur, one of the first residents:—

"In those days a few cheap Sniders, a case or two of gin, a box or two of thick tobacco, a few yards of turkey-red, beads, tomahawks, knives, and cartridges formed—in the early land deals, at all events—the consideration given in exchange for miles of foreshore and hinterland. The area was delineated by a sweep of the dusky arm of a native chief, as from a prominent tree in the landscape to a "big fella stone" at the other end, on the beach, forming the confines of the land sold. The descendants of this land-boomer have not always, it is said, regarded their ancestor's sale as a binding contract, even if they were cognisant of it, and have disposed of the same parcel to a succeeding alluring offer of white man's "fire-water" and cartridges. This, at all events, is alleged to be one of the problems to disentangle which the Condominium Court has been constituted, and I sincerely sympathise with the gentlemen who are charged to see daylight through the imbroglia."

The incessant disputes between the French and English settlers finally led to an agreement between the two Governments whereby the affairs of the Group are jointly managed by a French and an English Resi-

dent Commissioner, the latter acting under the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. This, however, has not put a stop to the unpleasantness in connection with land titles and the grave labour question. For, whereas in the latter the English settlers are strictly prohibited from illegitimate recruiting and from supplying arms and liquor to the natives, the French settlers are accused of all three breaches of the covenant made under the Condominium. Thereby, it is alleged, the English planters are very greatly handicapped, and suffer in consequence. To settle these matters definitely, a Court, presided over by the aforesaid nominee of the King of Spain, has been formed, and is now entering upon its delicate and difficult task.

It is certain that a very unhappy condition of things exists in these islands, and the simplest way out of the difficulty would be for one nation or the other to relinquish its claims in the Group for a substantial consideration, or an equivalent elsewhere. As, however, the Commonwealth Government is taking a hand in New Hebrides affairs, interesting developments may be expected.

The total white population is about 1,100, of whom 800 are French and 300 British. So that the former have greatly the advantage of us in numbers, and that fact should be taken into consideration when the merits of the case are weighed.

Mails are conveyed to and from Sydney by steamers of the Burns, Philp and Messageries Maritimes lines twice a month, the latter via New Caledonia, and mail matter is now delivered to about 250 persons in and around Vila.

The quantities of stamps received from Fiji up to 1st October, 1909, were:—

½d., 19,200.	5d., 19,200.
1d., 49,200.	6d., 19,200.
2d., 39,360.	1s., 16,080.
2½d., 30,000.	

These include the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 1s. with Single C.A. watermark, the number of the latter being very small.

Since then there has been only one delivery, viz., on 13th April, 1910:—

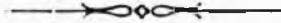
$\frac{1}{2}$ d., 24,000.

1d., 23,988.

This finishes the Overprint on Fiji Condominium issue, for by the time this work is published the new, permanent, Anglo-Franco issue will have arrived at Vila. As to the obsolete issue, it must be borne in mind that only a comparatively small proportion has been used postally. Copies in used condition are preferable, when obtainable. Prices will doubtless reach rather high figures in the future. (The last paragraph has been added just previous to going to press.—C.S.)

Delightful round trips to all the Pacific Islands mentioned in this section are provided on most reasonable terms (about ten shillings a day, "all found") by Messrs. Burns, Philp and Co., and those who have the leisure are recommended to see something of the novelty of island life in the waters adjacent to Australia under easy and favourable conditions.

It is certain that all these islands will, one day, occupy very important places, politically, in the Western Pacific. In wealth and population their value and power will increase yearly with great strides, while it is equally certain, from the standpoint of stamp collectors, that they will take prominent rank in the future of Australian Philately.



AN IMPORTANT EDICT.

As this work goes to press we receive news of the highly important circular issued by the Right Hon. the Earl of Crewe, Secretary of State for the Colonies, which will have a direct bearing on Australian Philately. The circular will have been read with interest by philatelists before this meets their eye, therefore it is unnecessary to reproduce it. But the certain effect will be to make used copies of Island issues much scarcer than they already are, and probably increase the demand for unused, and encourage the taste for Entires.

It is a sequel to the representations that have been made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of unnecessary issues of surcharged and other provisional stamps, and of the flagrant gambling in postage stamps by Government servants for their own personal gain. The situation is summed up in an interesting contribution to the London "Daily Telegraph" by Mr. Fred. J. Melville, a copy of which is taken from the "Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly."

Mr. Melville expresses the opinion that the action taken "will have a beneficial effect upon stamp collecting," and comments at some length upon its probable effects on the "**New-Issue Market**":—

"Of recent years" (he writes) "the collecting of the new issues of stamps has been systematised, and the trade has inaugurated regular subscription services, by which customers get practically every new issue hailing from any part of the globe at a small uniform charge over face value to cover the cost of importation and collection. To enable them to offer such services, the dealers have had to scatter liberally their cash deposits in the head post offices of many countries and colonies, the postmaster being requested to draw upon their deposits for supplies of newly-issued postage stamps or for orders sent by cable.

"Lord Crewe's recommendation will necessitate in many cases a rearrangement of the dealers' organisa-

tions. Instead of relying on the Colonial Postmasters to supply new stamps against cash deposits, the dealers will simply extend the system of special correspondents or agents in each stamp-issuing possession, or call in the aid of their banker's correspondents to secure the continuance or regular services of new stamp issues.

"There is frequently the keenest rivalry amongst the members of the stamp trade to be first in the collecting field with interesting new stamps. And success in this respect nearly always depends upon the facilities the dealers have for getting money to the spot, as post offices do not give credit. In small and remote island colonies where there is no bank, the dealer with a private correspondent on the spot has the advantage. Some of the systems of correspondents maintained by stamp dealers for this purpose extend into far more remote quarters of the globe than do the representatives of news services.

"At the present moment stamps are being expected at no very distant date from Tregganu, one of the protected States recently ceded from Siam to Great Britain, and another series is expected from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, which have not hitherto had postage stamps. To secure the Tregganu stamps, most of the new issue dealers have instructed their correspondents in the Federated Malay Straits and in the Straits Settlements.

"Lord Crewe's circular, therefore, while it will put the dealers on their mettle, will not involve collectors in any extra expense in securing the regular supply of new issues for their collections. I consider that it will give them increased confidence in the future honesty of Colonial civil servants, some of whom have long carried on an improper speculation in stamps, which has tended to bring many British Colonial post offices into bad repute."

Messrs. C. J. Philips, Bright and Son, P. L. Pemberton and Co., Charles Nissen, and other eminent firms, write approvingly of the action taken, which marks an era in Philatelic history.

A REVOLUTION IN AUSTRALIAN PHILATELY.

It has been stated elsewhere in this work that a large demand for Australian stamps of the medium class **could**, and, indeed, **would**, be created. Doubtless, many readers may have looked on this effusive pronouncement as mere bombastic bunkum. It becomes incumbent on the writer, therefore, in closing, to make good his promise, at all events as far as can reasonably be expected of him. So he unfolds a scheme which is now engaging his attention in the interests of Australian Philately.

It is estimated that in Australia there are about one million boys and girls between eight and sixteen years of age. It is held to be quite possible, at a very low estimate, to recruit at least twenty-five thousand of them into the ranks of Stamp Collectors by means of a monthly Home Journal for Juveniles, to be entitled,

"The Young Australian Stamp Collector."

Special means will be adopted for bringing this periodical before the notice of the young folk; and, also, the close attention of parents and teachers will be called thereto in a most attractive and convincing way. Hitherto young collectors have had no guide or inducement for permanently engaging in the pursuit. But, now, they will receive simple and pleasant education in the cult, on an advanced "Kindergarten" system, with substantial rewards for good progress.

The opinion is held by experts that far more encouragement will be given to the scheme in the country than in the large cities. Therefore, special arrangements will be made for introducing the journal into country towns and villages all over the Commonwealth, from the Leeuwin to Cape York Peninsula, and from

Hobart to Port Darwin, and in New Zealand, from the Three Kings to Stewart Island.

It is anticipated that a very large "trade by post" will ensue, after the advent of penny postage, to the extent of many thousands of pounds a year, and intimation is thus given early so that dealers may be prepared for such a revolution in their business.

Of course it is quite apparent that a large proportion of recruits would soon get tired of the hobby and desert. But allowance has been made for that contingency. Moreover, as each year a vast number attain the age of 8, the ranks would be continually filling up to normal figures, particularly as special inducements will be offered to that end.

But the most important point is that a considerable number of adults—parents, relatives, friends and teachers of the young people—may with confidence be relied on to take up Philately in consequence of its being brought prominently before their notice, and in an attractive and agreeable way. Hence, it is no stretch of imagination to assume that a thousand "serious" collectors will within a year or two be added to the ranks of the five hundred we already have. Philately is a pursuit essentially suited to people leading quiet country lives, just such as the journal will reach.

Thus the scheme is one that all Australian dealers and collectors should, as a business proposition, countenance and take a practical interest in, the former by advertising in, and acting as agents for, the journal, the latter by pushing its circulation wherever they can. It is, therefore, hoped that they will afford the promoter all assistance and encouragement in their power. Further particulars will be given in due course.

In the meantime readers hereof and all interested in "Stamps," are invited to give careful thought to the subject. And the more they study it the more likely will a large majority be to pronounce the verdict that it will mean "**a Revolution in Australian Philately!**"

AU REVOIR!

**TO PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND FRIENDS OF
YOUNG AUSTRALIANS AND
NEW ZEALANDERS.**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have often seen the questions asked, both in the secular and religious press, "What are we to do with our boys?"—"What are we to do with our girls?" These questions are of a very serious character, and, in these days of strenuous life, of hurry and scurry, of hustle and bustle, they need much thought and quiet contemplation of the future, from the standpoint of past, and particularly of present experience, to answer intelligently and correctly.

Of course we want our Boys to become clever and capable men in their special calling, and we desire that our Girls shall mature into capable, if not clever, women, filled with a steady intention of making their home lives replete with pleasant content, for the example and well-being of all around them.

And the trend of present-day education is all directed towards the expansion of the the minds of our children, so that they learn things as every-day matters of which we elders have only hazy ideas. Take electrical inventions as an example. How little is known even of the rudiments of electricity by people of, say, over 40 years of age. Yet, schoolchildren are, or should be, quite familiar with the subject.

But, just because of the strenuousness of modern education, much groundwork is neglected, and the children are too often taught first principles in perfunctory fashion. As long as they are sufficiently crammed to pass examinations in their due course, both parents and teachers, generally speaking, appear to consider their duty accomplished. Yet, if the majority of scholars be asked practical questions as to their

studies a year or two after leaving school it affords food for reflection to find how astonishingly vague the answers, in many cases, will be. That is because there has been no time allowed in the education system to admit of the mind being properly trained at the start. And the results are, often, not very cheering.

Now, our advice to you, as the result of long experience, is to make **Stamp Collectors** of your children at an early age! They, or at all events a large section of them, will benefit enormously thereby in years to come. You smile! But give our argument your thoughtful consideration before you discard it.

It is well for everyone to have a hobby, no matter what our time of life may be. Of course, with children there is a multiplicity of outdoor sports and pastimes. But, in the long winter evenings and in wet, stay-at-home weather, there is nothing to beat "Stamps;" while, unconsciously, by means of a kind of advanced Kindergarten system, an immense amount of useful, practical knowledge is acquired. Stamp-collecting is a wholesome and—when persevered in—a fascinating pursuit, certain to indirectly help the young people in their onward career, and at quite trifling cost. The study of "Stamps" evolves thoughtful, intelligent, and agreeable men and women. And that is what you would like your sons and daughters to be. Is it not?

Now, just contemplate for a moment what one acquires in the study of "Philately" (a compound of two Greek words signifying, "Fondness for Stamps"):

An increased and practical knowledge of History, Geography, Natural History, Botany, Zoology, Foreign languages, Foreign customs, Foreign coinage, Orthography, Arithmetic, Mensuration, Colours, paper manufacture, printing, and printing machinery, etc. It encourages a sound spirit of emulation, improves the memory, and inculcates the virtues of cleanliness, tidiness, patience, and perseverance. "As the twig is bent so the tree inclines!"

All this may surprise you very much. But it is an absolute fact. And a short test will prove its truth in

the case of a very large number of children, especially in country districts, where there are fewer juvenile distractions than in the large cities. As the advertisements say:—"Once tried, always used!"

Therefore we have confidence in asking you as Parents, Teachers, Friends of Young Australians and New Zealanders to assist us in the circulation of our proposed monthly Home Journal, "The Young Australian Stamp Collector," by every means in your power. Our ambition is to recruit an army of 25,000 juvenile collectors, and we look to your kind and considerate help in the attainment of that ideal.

Moreover, we feel sure that many adults will be led to study Philately by these means, and in their interests we propose to include a monthly page for "Grown-ups," which will be edited by eminent experts whose names are widely known throughout Australasia.

It will be news to many outside our ranks to learn that our King George is an enthusiastic Philatelist, possessing a splendid collection, largely of Australian stamps (His Majesty, as Prince of Wales, was Honorary President, and is now Patron of the "Sydney Philatelic Club"); and, as a large number of the English and Continental Nobility are also followers of the cult, to join them as fellow-collectors is now "quite the thing" in the fashionable world.

Your obedient servant,

COURTENAY SMITH.

Sydney, 19th Nov., 1910.



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OF

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