

THE INTERNATIONAL PHILATELIST.

A Journal Devoted Solely to the Interests of Philately,
and of Service alike to Dealer and Collector.

No. 1.

OCTOBER, 1902.

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The . . .

International Philatelist.

EDITORIAL.

WE are not certain if there is room for another Stamp Journal, but we think there is. Anyway we will send this Paper post free for a year to all who send us 6d., to cover cost of postage, and if we have to discontinue through lack of support, we will return the balance. It is as well to speak plainly. Stamp Collectors, as a body, are devoted to their hobby, but they do not trouble to support Papers run in their interests. It is not easy to know why, as practically all the knowledge gained by the Philatelist through his own researches could have been obtained from the Technical Papers at one-tenth the trouble. Still the fact remains, that collectors do not support Technical Journalism, and we, therefore, with commendable prudence, commence by saying what we intend to do, if we have to leave off.

A collection of Stamps, value about £7,500, was recently stolen in Hamburg; also, Lt.-Col. Schletter was recently robbed of a most valuable collection. Messrs. Bright and Son have been the victims of a burglary, losing a quantity of rare and medium Stamps. It behoves all collectors then to keep an eye on their Albums. A few years ago, only a Philatelist ever coveted his neighbour's genuine Bergedorfs, but now the general public are realising that small old collections are valuable, and those amongst them who are pickers-up, so to speak, act accordingly. Mem.:—Don't leave Sydney Views lying about in an old exercise book.

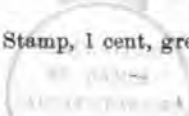
What is to be done about Niue and Penrhyn? Are they to be recognised as additions to the Album, or not? Any revenue from the sale of these Stamps naturally goes to New Zealand, as the Island's service is merely a branch of the N.Z. Postal Dept. It would be as sensible a proceeding for our own Postal Dept. to surcharge Stamps for use in Birmingham.

Denmark is issuing a 1 ore Stamp, as the Government are actually raising their letter rate—local from 4 to 5 ore, and inland from 8 to 10 ore. The new Stamp is to be orange-yellow, design of 5 ore.

Part I. of Gibbons' Catalogue is now ready, and should be in the hands of every collector. It is most attractively got up, and is as complete as all the publications of that well-known firm. But when are we going to have a standard of value fixed to our Stamps, to which all dealers and exchange clubs will adhere? It is funny to find Gibbons pricing the Jamaica 1d. blue, '83, at 3d., when Whitfield King asks 6d., and Bright the same.

As the collection of Fiscals appears to be growing in favour, we would recommend collectors of postal adhesives to keep all the revenue Stamps they get, as they will be useful to exchange for postal duplicates, obtained by Fiscal collectors.

A new Chillan Stamp, 1 cent, green, already issued.



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A Bargain in Stamps.

By B. KNARF.

THE silvery light of the moon, mingled with the warmer tints of coming day, fell gently upon the rugged cliffs and verdant hills of the Japanese coast, as our vessel approached the busy harbour of Nagasaki. As the day-light increased, and we steamed slowly through the long narrow channel leading to the famous anchorage, I was charmed with the quiet beauty of the scene. On either hand, almost, it seemed within a biscuit's throw of the ship, the steep hills ran perpendicularly from the water's brink, cut by the thrifty Jap into terraced garden plots almost to their summits' top, and here and there, half hidden by a clump of trees, peeped out a quaint little building of wood and thatch—such a building as one would expect to find in fairy-land—and a few early labourers in these terraced fields added just sufficient animation to the scene to dispel the idea of canvas.

Not even the anchor's splash and the cable's roar, announcing that at last we were fairly into port, entirely banished from my brain the strange spell of unreality which this, my first view of "Our friends in the Far East" had cast upon it, and I continued to lounge upon the rail, gazing upon, but hardly seeing the busy scene before me, mingling in my mind dreams of rambles amongst all this beauty, and speculations as to the prospect of picking up a few good specimens of the Japanese adhesives; for I had recently taken up stamp collecting, and was very enthusiastic upon it.

Presently I was aroused from my reverie by a voice at my elbow saying :

“ You buy good stamps, sir ? ”

I started and looked round, and there beside me stood a queer little fellow with bolt-upright hair, flat nose and almond eyes, dressed in a nondescript attire consisting chiefly of a pair of English cotton under-pants and the loose Japanese “ kimino.”

He was bowing politely, and in his hand held out for my inspection a sort of rice-paper “ approval sheet.”

“ You buy good stamps, sir ? ” he repeated.

“ How much ? ” I asked, taking the sheet from his hand.

“ Only fifty dollars, sir ! ”

Could I believe my eyes ! There, clumsily fastened upon the sheet were the Japanese stamps of my dreams. Every issue was represented. The queer little issues of 1871 and 1872 were all there, and a great number of the later types. Yes ! and even the scarce 20 cent. violet of 1874. And the price was only fifty dollars—barely £5.

Astonished, I hesitated, and this queer little dealer, no doubt misunderstanding the cause, placidly remarked :

“ You give forty-five dollars, praps ? ”

Hardly knowing what I said or did, I offered him forty dollars, which he readily accepted, and with another polite bow, which brought his head almost to the deck, he left me with my treasure trove, evidently well pleased with his bargain. So much so, that I, thinking what an innocent people these were, felt half inclined to call him back and make him a present of the other ten dollars. But I didn't, and in the light of future events I came to regard that decision with great satisfaction.

The captain's boat was just then piped ashore, and being anxious to get amongst the natives as soon as possible, as well as to stretch my legs a little, I slipped my new possessions into my breast pocket, and hastened to ask permission to go in her. This being readily granted, I was soon speeding towards the shore as fast as six pairs of brawny arms could urge the boat, feeling all the time a little regret that I had not taken the opportunity of chartering one of the many “ sanpans,” the owners of which so eagerly and clamorously plied for passengers around the ship, but consoled myself with the thought that I could do so on my return.

Eager as a schoolboy just on vacation, immediately upon landing I set out for the open country beyond the town, followed for a short distance by a clamorous crowd of "rickshaw" men whose services I had declined, feeling more the need of a walk than the luxury of a ride. "Besides," I thought, "I shall be able to note things better."

Half-an-hour's brisk walk and I was clear of the town. Feeling the better for the exertion after the long spell of inaction aboard, I proceeded more leisurely along a narrow foot-way towards a neat little building just discernable among the trees, without any special object in mind other than perhaps a mild curiosity.

Only a few minutes were needed to reach the little pathway leading up to the house, and the first object to meet my eyes was my little friend the stamp dealer. He was squatting upon his haunches on the verandah, placidly smoking his little metal pipe, and I almost laughed aloud as I stood and watched him carefully filling the tiny bowl with the "hair" fine tobacco, then blow out his cheeks, and with a vigorous puff bring into a blaze the smouldering roll of soft paper, very carefully apply it to his pipe, the contents of which he would exhaust with one long "draw," necessitating the repetition of the whole process.

I watched him for a few moments, and then turned to walk on, when he, his attention having been attracted by the slight sound I made, looked up, and, seeming to recognise me at once as his customer of the morning, jumped to his feet and came towards me, his head down as though about to "butt," and his hands clasped behind his back.

"A velly good morning, sir," he said, coming to a halt a few yards from me, and bending still lower. "You walk in—take tea—see stamps—velly good."

Anticipating more bargains, and being curious to see the inside of a Japanese house, I readily accepted the invitation, and followed my polite host on to the verandah which ran all round the house, and from thence into a spotlessly clean little room, the floor and walls of which were covered with a fine white matting, and which was utterly devoid of furniture of any kind. I remembered, just in the nick of time to prevent a bad impression, that it is considered "the thing" by the Japanese to leave one's boots on the threshold, and considering that they make use of this matted floor for bed, table, chairs, and everything else to which we put our more varied assortment of furniture, there is a great deal of reason in this custom.

Space will not permit of a description of the house, or of its inmates and their manners; suffice it to say that, having become awfully cramped by the squatting position I had assumed in invitation of my host during the time the tea was being served in the tiny cups, I was well pleased when that ceremony was over, and I felt myself free to sit in a more European position upon the floor.

My host then produced numerous books and sheets of all manner of old and new stamps, and in a very sociable manner proceeded to point out to me the many specialities of his collection.

“O, me make myself!” he explained, when I expressed surprise that he had been able to get together so large a quantity of rareties, “Japan very clever—can make any stamps.”

“And did you make these too?” I asked, producing those I had bought of him earlier in the day, with a foreboding that I had been “done brown” by the innocent Jap.

“O yes,” he answered placidly enough. “They very good, too, see,” and he proceeded to explain to me the beauty of his art, and pointed out that, although he had no difficulty in producing an exact copy of almost any design, he always found difficulty in copying exactly the Western letters and numerals; and sure enough, as he pointed them out to me, I could plainly see that these had a slightly inaccurate and unnatural appearance which I had not noticed before, and which caused me to decide that I would henceforth purchase my Japanese stamps in England.

I still have those home-made stamps, and although of no special value, they never fail to remind me of my first visit to Japan, and of my first Japanese friend, the stamp dealer.



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In this issue, the F.D.A., in our advertisement columns, publishes a "warning" against purchase of Sicilian, Tuscan, and Sardinian stamps. We have recently examined two clever forgeries of the Sicilian $\frac{1}{2}$ grano and Tuscan 2 crazies, and the imitation was remarkably close. We suggest that any reader having these stamps sent him, should forward to a leading firm for opinion. If they pronounce it a forgery, write "Forgery" across it in ink, and return to the senders. We would also recommend readers to look out for forged surcharges on Bermuda-Gibraltar stamps.

Will some energetic Philatelist, residing in or near London, accept the Secretaryship of the S.T.P.A.? The duties are, we understand, fairly light for an Association of such scope, and would not occupy a great deal of time. Of course an occasional day would have to be devoted to hunting down the approval sheet thief, but what Philatelist who has sent duplicates to this ubiquitous person, would begrudge that?

Touching on Approval Sheets, we have heard many complaints as to thefts, changing of stamps, soiling sheets or contents, that we should have thought all stamp firms would have exercised greater care. We do not know whether the competition is too keen, or the desire to give away stamps too pronounced, in the trade, but few firms learn wisdom. We know that collectors who are advanced do not like to be asked for references when applying to a new firm, but sound common sense says that valuable sheets of stamps should not be sent by any firm to unknown customers without some protection.

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Collectors should note that Messrs. Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., have advanced their price for Northern Nigeria stamps, unused, very considerably. A set of 4d. to 10s. bought singly now would cost £1 1s. 6d., compared with 19s. a few weeks ago. Presumably Southern Nigeria will rise also.

MINT UNUSED CURRENT GOSSIP.

By "THE BOY."

JOSEPH HILL, a cycle thief who had stolen no fewer than fifteen machines, evidently took but little interest in Philately. To persuade a pawnbroker that a certain bicycle was his own, he produced a receipt which he had forged for the occasion. He stamped it, however, with a King Edward VII. stamp, and dated the document some months before these stamps were issued. Is this the first time a stamp has done duty as a detective?

A certain amount of correspondence has taken place between Mrs. Bedingfield and the S.C.F., on the subject of errors in Army official stamps. I am collecting information on these, with a view to an early article on the subject. Will any reader who has noticed errors in these issues, send me information concerning same. I should be glad to hear from Mrs. Bedingfield as to the peculiarities she has already discovered.

More trouble for the collector who is trying to keep up-to-date. The current Italian stamps are being over-printed for use at the Italian Post Office in Albania, name in one line, and value (numerals twice, with coinage in centre) on a second. These are for use at Durazzo, Scutari and Janina. Also Bulgaria, having been celebrating the defence of the Shipka Pass by volunteers, against the Turks in '77, has issued three (5, 10, and 15 stot.) commemorative stamps. As they were only on issue for some six days, they will probably be easily obtainable in unused state. I wonder if they will be post-marked to order? (Sarcasm!) It would perhaps be a good speculation if publishers would issue albums with special places for the Laluan and North Borneo rubbish, and the Central American "ten issues a year, and none ever used" one and two cents stamps, which so encumber the albums of the young Philatelist, preventing him finding room for what I may as well plainly call legitimate specimens.

At one time a Collector was a worry to his friends, as he pestered all whom he had, to allow him to search their waste-paper sacks and morning correspondence for rarities. And a 5 pf. German, if he had it not, was a good to him as any other stamp known. He collected with enthusiasm, and all his stamps were found by himself, until he met a kindred spirit and they exchanged. I am not sure that in my schooldays I should not have looked a-bance at any unused stamp other than English. I could use the latter, but not the former, and I, in common with most others, felt that a stamp was not a stamp until it had been through the post. We gave up that reservation gradually, and I am not sure we were right to do so. But when what are practically fargeries are eagerly bought from sheets and packets, it is almost time for collectors to give dealers clearly to understand that they want used stamps, they want unused stamps, but they do not want stamps that are a deliberate lie, a stamp that has never been near the country whose name it bears, and which pretends to have been used, and shows bold black cancellation bars in barefaced deceit. Very many philatelists, getting one of these stamps, duly cancelled, feel confident that they are buying a genuine postally-used stamp. It is doubtful whether the selling of it is not obtaining money under false pretences.

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At one time a Collector was a worry to his friends, as he pestered all whom he had, to allow him to search their waste-paper sacks and morning correspondence for rarities. And a 5 pf. German, if he had it not, was as good to him as any other stamp known. He collected with enthusiasm, and all his stamps were found by himself, until he met a kindred spirit and they exchanged. I am not sure that in my schooldays I should not have looked askance at any unused stamp other than English. I could use the latter, but not the former, and I, in common with most others, felt that a stamp was not a stamp until it had been through the post. We gave up that position gradually, and I am not sure we were right to do so. But when what are practically forgeries are eagerly bought from sheets and packets, it is almost time for collectors to give dealers clearly to understand that they want used stamps; they want unused stamps, but they do not want stamps that are a deliberate lie, a stamp that has never been near the country whose name it bears, and which pretends to have been used, and shows bold black cancellation bars in barefaced deceit. Very many philatelists, getting one of these stamps, duly cancelled, feel confident that they are buying a genuine postally-used stamp. It is doubtful whether the selling of it is not obtaining money under false pretences.

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Stamps of the United States.

ALTHOUGH this country has issued an enormous variety of stamps, they are easily identified, nearly all being inscribed "U.S." or "United States" postage. There are also a very large variety of Locals, some of which date a long while back, and are of great interest.

In 1842-7 were issued the postmasters' stamps of St. Louis, Philadelphia, New York and others. Each of these stamps were of different design; the head of Washington on the New York issue, and Coat-of-Arms of Missouri on the St. Louis, were amongst those used; all these are now exceedingly scarce. For instance, the used St. Louis issue, 5 cent. black, is valued at £30, the 10 cent. black at £40, and the 20 cent. black at £150. Also the used New York issue, 3 cent. black on blue is valued at £50, 3 cent. black on green at £80, 2 cent. on 3 cent. green at £60, and the 5 cent. black on grey at £27. The originals of these stamps as seen are of great value, but at the same time there are many cheap forgeries and reprints on the market, most of which, however, are easily identified.

In 1861 a number of these locals were issued by the Confederate States postmasters. The designs are very varied, some of them having merely the name of the issuing town and the value. They were, however, of short duration, and are now scarce. Private locals have also been issued extensively. The use of these was to frank the correspondence of private companies in places not treated by the Government. The first to adopt such locals was Mr. H. T. Windsor, of New York, who started the "City Despatch Post" in 1842. Another early firm to start these stamps was Messrs. Brainard and Co., who started their express in 1845. They conveyed letters between New York, Albany, Troy and the intermediate places. The design is very simple, consisting of a large ring with the inscription BRAINARD & CO., N.Y., 58, WALL STREET, and having in the centre, 14, EXCHANGE ALBANY, 20 FOR ONE DOLLAR, TROY, 230, RIVER STREET. One of the most

interesting of these locals was that used by Messrs. Wells, Fargo & Co., called "The Pony Express," started in 1860. This service accomplished some wonderful journeys, but as the company were slowly losing over it, it was discontinued in 1862.

Carriers' stamps were issued in 1851, used for the payment of letters sent from the post office to the addressee by means of messengers, as letters were only prepaid from one post office to another. This rule is still maintained in some parts of America. These stamps, although quite as interesting, are not so rare as the ones previously stated. One of the dearest is only valued at £6.

Another of the United States important productions are the Departmental Stamps. These are issued for official use in the Executive, Agriculture, Interior, Justice, Navy, Post Office, State, Treasury and War Departments of the Government. With the exception of the Post Office Department the design on these series are all of Benjamin Franklin.

In 1865 Newspaper Stamps were first issued. A large quantity of these were used, the highest value runs up to 100 dollars. These stamps are of a very large size, the designs employed represent allegorical figures. They are of no great value, the highest being worth about £7.

Postage Due Stamps are used to denote the amount to be collected on insufficiently or unpaid letters. The design of these are very plain, and they are of no great value.

The stamps in general of the United States present quite an interesting portrait gallery with such a wonderful and artistic array of presidents and celebrities. The effigy mostly used is naturally that of George Washington, the hero of the Republic, and first President. Another of the earliest Presidents was Madison. He appears on the 2 dollar value of the present issue. Among others on the current issue may be mentioned Andrew Jackson on the 3 cents., and Abraham Lincoln on the 4 cents. It is interesting to know that Andrew Jackson was born in a log hut in South Carolina, yet rose from poverty to the Presidency. He was elected President in 1828 and again in 1837. Abraham Lincoln, a name dear to the hearts of all American people, also rose from poverty to the Presidency. He was elected President in 1860. While on a visit to Ford's Theatre at Washington, on April 14th, 1865, he was cruelly shot through the head by an actor named Booth, and died on the following morning. His death caused profound sorrow and sympathy throughout the United

States. President Garfield, whose portrait appears on the 6 cents., had a very singular career. In turn he was a canal lad, a farm labourer and a carpenter. From such a humble start in life, he, however, mounted the political ladder to the Presidency. The profile of Jefferson appears on the 30 cents., he is represented on a good many of the United States stamps. He became President in 1801, and was re-elected in 1805.

By careful study of these stamps, one may learn a good deal of the history of the United States of America, and I am sure the reader will find every one of great interest.

C. F. INGRAM (*London*).

PROVISIONALS OF JAMAICA.

IN 1860, when the Jamaica House of Assembly took over the Post-office from the authorities, the first stamps were then issued. These had as a watermark the emblem of the island—a pineapple. They were the 1d. blue, 2d. rose, 3d. green, 4d. orange, 6d. violet, and 1s. brown. When newspapers or circulars were posted, the 1d. blue was cut in two diagonally to make a provisional halfpenny, and at one time they ran out of 1d. stamps and were obliged to cut the 2d. rose in the same way.

These provisionals are very rare; in fact, they are the most valuable of all Jamaican stamps, but they must be on the complete original envelopes. Jamaican stamps with the pineapple watermark became obsolete soon after the rebellion at Morant Bay in 1865, when the Legislative Assembly abolished the representative constitution of the country and it became a Crown Colony.

A PILLOW-CASE OF RARITIES.

SOME years ago a well-known collector got wind of a whole pillow-case full of real old rarities, that might be had for the cheek of asking. The possessor of the pillow-case of desirables was quite unknown to the collector, and the news of the treasure came to him quite accidentally.

Said a friend to him one day, "I say, old chappie, you're afflicted still in the stamp direction, are you not?"

"Rather!" was the emphatic reply. "What of that?"

"Well, my sister is staying with an old lady, who, being over eighty years of age, has conceived the idea that it is time for her to put her house in order, in readiness for her anticipated departure for a better country, and Fan is helping her to go through her papers. Among the things that turned up in the sorting over was a pillow-case stuffed with old stamps. She told Fan to burn the lot as they were of no use, but Fan thought it was a pity to destroy them, as they might do to amuse her little nieces, so the pillow-case has been put aside for the time, and Fan talks of bringing it home for the kids. The old lady's sons were among the first settlers in Sydney, and as she had a habit of cutting off the stamps from all her letters, and as her sons were her chief correspondents, it occurred to me that you might like to look through the lot and pick out a few for yourself."

"First settlers in Sydney! Great Scott! My boy, there may be scores of Sydney Views in the lot."

"Sydney Views?" No, there are no pictures, only old postage stamps."

"I don't mean pictures of Sydney; what we call Sydney Views are the rare first stamps issued by New South Wales."

"Oh, I see. I expect there is scarcely anything else but old New South Wales stamps, if they are any use to you——"

"Any use! My dear fellow, they may be worth a small fortune. Let us have them up at the earliest moment."

Accordingly, the sister was written to in a cautious and guarded manner, and a lady friend commissioned to call for the parcel. In due time it arrived at London, and was met at the terminus, and carried home in great excitement. When that valuable parcel was opened and the contents spread out on the floor, thousands of stamps were disclosed to view, but every stamp there was of the commonest red penny English persuasion; there was not a foreign or colonial stamp of any sort in the whole lot. The collector and his friend were a day after the fair; someone else had picked over the pillow-case and annexed the Sydney Views.

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A Journal Devoted solely to the Interests of Philately,
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No. 3.

DECEMBER, 1902.

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NOTES.

By VARIOUS CONTRIBUTORS.

NOTE.—Contributions to these pages are paid for at the rate of 10s. per page of 600 words. They must be short, pithy, and interesting.

Is there no way of avoiding the heavy cancelling of English stamps? There are very few countries in the world, except Victoria, where stamps are so woefully damaged. It is particularly noticeable on stamps of a value above one penny. There should, surely, be something that could cancel a stamp without requiring the weight of a mailed fist, and an inkwell filled with pitch.—*Rev. E. R. Nevitt.*

A GOOD deal has been heard and written about forgeries of Japanese stamps, the clever imitations, and the difficulty to all but experts to decide as to counterfeits. It is not amiss to know that the chrysanthemum, the Imperial crest of the Mikado, figures on practically every stamp. The crest contains exactly sixteen petals, and a most severe punishment falls on anyone found imitating this. Consequently nearly all forgeries show fifteen or seventeen petals.—*G. B. J.*

THE constant multiplication of new issues opens up a very grave danger, at least, and that is the discouragement of collectors, owing to the number and price of the stamps. It is very questionable as to whether postage-due stamps should rank in our albums as postage stamps, and it is certainly wrong to admit stamps cancelled to order. The collectors of errors, variations in paper and perforating, are really tending to make stamp collecting a thing to avoid. (See notes by "The Boy."—Ed.)—

Rev. E. R. Nevitt.

I SHOULD like to suggest that some dealer (I would suggest Stanley Gibbons), would publish a chromo-lithographed chart of the colours of stamps as per S. G. catalogue. It is particularly difficult to decide which space in the album is allotted to your stamp, or its value. Take the Nevis 1867, S. G. 15 and 16. Blue-green and yellow-green, one 25s. used, the other 85s. used; and I never remember which is blue-green. Take again Nevis 1878. Rose red, dull red, red, bright red, S. G. 18, 19, 20, 21. Take the difficulty of deciding between lilac, lilac-brown, lilac-grey. Or mauve, magenta, bright purple. Or brown, red-brown, brown-rose, lilac-rose. Such a chart, sold at a penny or twopence, would, I am sure, command a ready sale.—*M. Dawber.*

A.C.H.—We should say that S. G.'s album No. 2 will answer your purpose. Post free 3s. 11d., from 391, Strand.

MINT UNUSED CURRENT GOSSIP.

By "THE BOY."

IT HAS been suggested that we issue an article on "Album Weeds." I am not quite clear as to the meaning of this; as to whether my correspondent desires us merely to publish a kind of catalogue, with just the names of stamps of no use to anyone, except to put in cheap variety packets; or whether to generalise on the torn, dirty, clipped abominations that fill up albums, and, I regret to say, a good many Exchange Club sheets. In either case, I fear the task is too huge for our columns.

As a good start in this direction, let me repeat what has so often been said before. Only clean, perfect stamps are valuable. Of course, I mean in reason. I, personally, should not mind a blue Mauritius 2d., 1847, even if it had a tiny tear, or rub. But as a general rule, only collect perfect, clean, well-centred stamps. Another thing. Do not waste money on pretty engravings because they come out like Christmas annuals and make a brave show of portraits, views, volcanoes, dainty maps, Pizarros, etc., etc. 1 centavo mauve, 2 centavos green—change of colours, 1 centavo green, 2 centavos mauve—commemorative issue, surcharged head of President—surcharged triangle, surcharged head and triangle, surcharged official. They may be pretty and they certainly are cheap, but—! Of course, again, there are exceptions to the rule of not buying cheap low value stamps. Look, for instance, at the Ionian Isles!

AND do not, as we have said before, buy stamps cancelled-to-order. Far better buy the unused issues, although few of them are any use, or ever will be.

WHICH brings to another subject. What to collect. Which again is divided under two heads. What to collect to make a fairly good collection from the point of view of Philately, and what to collect from a business point of view, that your collection may rise in value at a high rate. It is the fashion now to warn collectors against buying for a rise, but the advice always seems to me to be a trifle weak. I won't say interested. Dealers buy provisionals largely, especially the recent Colonial issues. Some of these they sell, others they keep. It is sound policy to sell sufficient, at a slight rise, to pay for the outlay, and to hoard the balance. Then, when they are put on the market, the demand, owing to the effluxion of time, jumps and collectors pay high prices. They would not pay highly at the time of issue. If the price was high, they would not purchase, but would wait until some other dealer offered more cheaply. So a few collectors get specimens, which appear or are scarce, and others hunt about for them, until the dealer unloads at a high price. But it seems to me that if the collector had jumped in on the right issue when they were offered cheaply, he could "swop" these for some good duplicates when the price went up.

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is sour grapes to the average collector,
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prices he can afford. It is

A COMMON ERROR

to suppose that stamps in fine condition, at
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principal dealers. My stock is not one of the
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It will only cost you a stamp and a satisfactory
reference (both of which are cheap if you are not
a philatelic parasite) to test the truth of this
for yourself. Send for a selection on approval
—I can do you good.

A. E. MOORE,
7, MAPLES STREET, NOTTINGHAM.

A TERRIBLE NIGHT.

THE strangest experience of my life is not such a pleasant one that it affords me any gratification in thus placing it upon record, but if it serves to while away the leisure time of my readers, it will have fulfilled the object for which it was written. Some five years ago I was spending my summer holidays at the country house of an old friend, who had not long been married. We were great chums, Louis and I, but alas, things were not as they had been when he was a bachelor gay; for where we had formerly gone off together for long rambles, I was now generally condemned to go alone. The country for some twenty miles around the Grange was but sparsely populated. A few hundred farmhouses were scattered here and there, the nearest town of any importance being fully thirteen miles distant. One glorious August morning I announced my intention at breakfast of making "a day of it," that being the usual way in which I intimated to Louis and his pretty wife that they need not expect to see me again until evening. "You are the most horrid Rambler I ever knew," said Mrs. Louis pouting. "Louis and I wished particularly to introduce you to Miss Smollett, when we call this morning." "The saints forbid," I muttered, attacking some poached eggs voraciously. Louis grinned sympathetically, knowing how I hated to be dragged around making morning calls: but how often since have I wished that I had braved even Miss Smollett, rather than the horrors I passed through during that never-to-be-forgotten day. About ten o'clock I started off to open up "fresh fields and pastures new," taking a straggling road across the moors in a direction I had not before explored. For nearly three hours I trudged along, drinking in the pure air, and enjoying to the full, as only a real lover of nature can, the many beauties of the wide stretches of purple moorland, and

stopping ever and anon to admire some more than usually delicate bit of colouring caused by the light ruffling of the heather by the breeze. I had not noticed a bank of dark frowning clouds which were rapidly covering the sky, until a drop of rain fell upon my face, and I looked around in dismay. That I was in for a thorough wetting was quite evident, unless I could obtain shelter somewhere near, and as there was straight ahead a clump of trees, and what looked, in the rapidly deepening gloom, like a house of some kind, I set off for it at a sharp trot. As I drew near, the rain commenced to come down in torrents, and I noticed, with a feeling of dismay, that the house was apparently empty, as all the windows were boarded up. And yet I could almost swear I could see smoke arising from one of the many curious twisted chimneys. I hammered loudly at a black oaken door, and was rather surprised to find it suddenly opened by a tall, well-dressed man, who courteously invited me to enter. "Caught by the storm, like myself," he said pleasantly, eyeing me over keenly the while. "Fortunately, I have just succeeded in making a fire in one of the least dilapidated of the rooms, and I dare say you will be able to dry your clothes, which seem to be rather wet." I could only express my thanks, and follow my guide to a room, in the centre of which stood a long table, apparently fastened to the floor. A cheerful wood fire was burning in the grate, and seating himself on the table in front of it, my companion, whom I took to be a medical man by his dress, asked if I had far to go. "I must be quite nine miles from Astley Grange," I answered, with a little smile at my own folly in coming so far. "Astley Grange?" with another penetrating glance. "Yes; I set out for a ramble, and had no idea I had come so far until the rain brought me to my senses." The stranger gave me another of those curious glances, and I noticed that his eyes were most unnaturally bright and piercing. "Do you believe in the new theory for indefinitely prolonging life?" he asked, after a short silence. "I cannot say that I have heard of it," I answered, feeling rather nervous at my companion's strangeness. "Oh, it is quite simple," with a sardonic smile, "you drive a small stiletto slowly into the heart of your subject, and as life leaves him you inhale it from his lips, as you lie by his side on the operating board. You have thus two lives to live, and you may multiply them as much as you please." I felt a thrill of horror as I recognised the fact that I was alone in the old rambling

house with a madman! What could I do? I tried to look unconcerned, and felt that the effort was a miserable failure. Then I tried to edge towards the door, but before I could reach it, a sickly, bitter-sweet perfume, which I also associated with chloroform, made everything swim before my eyes, and I could just distinguish the maniac waving a large handkerchief in my face, as I became insensible. When I came to, I found myself securely fastened with stout cords to the table on which I was laid, and my horrible companion muttering to himself as he replenished the fire. It was not till then that the full horror of my position flashed upon me. I was young, and life was dear, so with a strenuous effort I strove to free myself, but only succeeded in attracting the attention of my companion, who came across to me, and said in his calm even voice, "You have come round I see. That is well; I have here the stiletto," drawing it from his breast. It had a quaint silver hilt, and a long slender blade, on which my gaze rested as if fascinated. Then my thoughts flew to my tender little sweetheart, and I breathed the pet name I had given her, "Baby." How would she take it when she heard of my tragic death? "I have here a bottle of elixir, which I must first drink," continued the madman, "and then I shall lie by your side, and proceed to absorb your life." I shuddered violently as I saw him put the phial to his lips, and the next moment he lay on the board at my side. I could feel his breath on my cheek, and in his hand he held the cruel blade that was so soon to deprive me of my life. My agony was so intense that my brain seemed to be bursting—that demoniac face was pressed close to mine. I could feel the blade piercing my rough serge coat, and then with an inarticulate cry, I knew no more.

* * * *

When I again came to, I was lying in complete darkness; the fire had gone out, and I could feel by my side the form of the maniac. How quiet he was—perhaps he was asleep, and I scarcely dared breathe for fear of awakening him. I was now so numb and cold, owing to the cords which bound me so tightly, that I felt I should soon relapse into insensibility once more if I were not released. Hours and hours seemed to pass and my companion never moved. Strange weird noises filled the old house; gruesome tappings, hollow murmurs, and, finally, phantom forms emerged from the darkness to mock my

helplessness. Desperately I fought with the overpowering inclination to cry out and curse the mocking, jibbering forms, until finally I could resist it no longer, and a long piercing yell rent the air. Still my companion did not move. Could he be dead? As this horrible thought struck me, I again burst forth into wild ravings against the grinning creations of my fevered brain, and with one loud, delirious shriek of laughter, I again became insensible.

* * * *

"Poor old fellow, what he must have gone through," were the first words I heard in dear old Louis' voice. "Louis," I grasped, weakly opening my eyes and gazing in his face. "Yes old man," taking my hand, and pressing a flask to my lips; drink this, it will do you good." I felt better for the brandy, and sat up on the horrible table and looked around. It was broad daylight, the boards had been torn from the windows, admitting a flood of sunshine, and Louis with a room full of men were regarding me with a pitiful stare. "Where is he?" I asked, with a shudder. "Dead. He drank some chloroform from this phial," answered Louis, holding up the phial from which I had seen the maniac drink. Dead! Then I had lain all night by the side of the corpse! I tried to stand, but I was too weak, and it was not till I had been at the Grange three days that I was told the full details of their finding me laid there by the side of the dead maniac. He had escaped from a lunatic asylum some days previously, and was a doctor who had gone raving mad on the subject of indefinitely prolonging life. Louis, who had become alarmed at my non-appearance about the usual time, had, with the men, been searching for me half the night, and would never have dreamt of looking in the old house if they had not found the door wide open. And now, as I finish writing this, the strangest experience in my life, a soft loving hand is passed over my hair, and a tender little face pressed close to my own, as "Baby," now my wife, exclaims with the tears in her eyes, "Fred, dear, it must have been awful, to have turned your hair so purely white." And I quite agree with her.

F.V.R.

SCRAP-BOOK.

FROM OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

"AFTER April," writes a naval contributor to the *Sunday Times*, "Over-printed postage stamps will be issued to His Majesty's ships throughout the service. In itself this may appear a trifling circumstance, but it is at least significant of the efforts that are made by the Admiralty to render dishonesty impossible. Under the present system, when a ship is commissioned, the accountant officer is supplied with a stock of postage stamps. Admiralty letters are sent unstamped; other official letters are stamped at the public expense; private letters from the officers and ship's company are franked with stamps purchased from the accountant officer. After the commencement of the next financial year, the accountant will be supplied with two forms of stamps. The over-printed paper effigies of the King will bear the letters 'O. H. M. S.' across the face, but all others will be sold for private use, and each will have to be accounted for in the periodical statement."

* * * *

THE annual report of the U. S. Assistant Postmaster General recommends the adoption of a parcels post convention with the various European countries, and the testing with other countries of a universal postage stamp plan.—*Collectors' Universal Advertiser*.

* * * *

"Do not attempt everything at once, do a little at a time, but do it well; if you are collecting unused stamps, then have perfect copies only, full gum, perfectly centred, all perforations intact; if used, then take only fine, lightly postmarked copies." There you have a whole philatelic sermon in a sentence, from the pen of Mr. C. A. Stephenson.—*Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly*.

* * * *

MALTA.—Attention has been called to the fact that the Maltese Government, in order that the blue 2½d. stamps should not be supplied with a forged overprint of the "one penny" error, are marking all unused 2½d. stamps sold with a small tick in red ink. A correspondent in the island kindly sends us one of these examples of official "red-tickery," and adds: It is rumoured that the errors are being beld back by the postal authorities, as every error had been taken from the sheets by them. The use of the red mark seems to confirm this.—*Stamp Collectors Fortnightly*.

* * * *

ICELAND has at last indulged in a new issue of Adhesives and Post-cards. The stamps consist of eleven values, 3 aur to 100 aur. The postcards are of four values.—*Collectors' Universal Advertiser*.

* * * *

FORGERIES of the current German 10 pfennig stamps have made their appearance in Saxony.—*J. C. F.*

COMPETITION.

The International Stamp Exchange Co.

Now to announce the following - -

ALTERATIONS

In their Monthly Competitions.

Instead of these running from the 1st to the 28th of each month, they will run from

15th to 15th,

to enable the notices and results to be published in this paper. We cannot announce the winners of the £1, 10/-, and three 5/- prizes, as we go to press before close of the month.

Our next Competition, then, starts Dec. 15th.

On that date we will send all our old clients, and all new customers who apply, an Approval Sheet. The competitor should then buy, or sell if he does not need them, as many stamps as he can, at once, and send for fresh sheet, sending up in stamps, or postal orders, the amount of his purchases or sales. We will send fresh sheet by return, together with receipt for amount. This we will do throughout the month, sending as many sheets as required, all containing **good cheap stamps**, at low prices. To the competitor who is most successful before January 15th, 1903, we will award

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Replies to Correspondents.



A.J.R. (London)—A 4d. rose Ceylon, imperforate, first issue, if in very fine condition, would be worth about £14 on the market. Have you one?

Derman—No. We do not propose a page for new issues as yet. See remarks elsewhere.

T.P.H.—As we have already said, save your fiscal stamps. Interest in them is steadily awakening.

R.T.M.—Can we tell you a certain way to avoid forgeries? H'm. Don't buy Italian States! Joking apart, we wish we could. If you have been a victim of the counterfeiter you have one consolation, there are others. We had some Bergedorfs, once, which we bought eagerly. The only way is to buy only from a respectable firm, of which there are dozens. We won't mention any names, as we're not paid at advertising rates for this page, but you can find some.

Correspondence addressed, Editor I.P., 37, Sheep St., Northampton.

Notice to Readers and Contributors.

We shall be pleased to receive reports of Exchange Clubs, and any items of Philatelic interest that may be submitted will have careful consideration. We do not want people to write for nothing, nor do we propose to pay in stamps. We will send hard cash for articles of interest, and will pay at the rate of 10s. per page of 600 words for all accepted. We do not think this offer is exceeded—we doubt if it is reached—by any other Philatelic paper.

Articles, however, must be of interest, and absolutely correct, and subject to the usual conditions. We are going to provide one of the best stamp papers in existence, and aim at the highest possible standard of merit.

We would call the attention of all our readers to the remarks in our Editorial column, and to the offer of cash prizes for ideas adopted, likely to add interest in our journal. We are desirous of short pithy paragraphs from abroad, which, if written in French, Italian or Spanish, we will translate, and for which payment will be made in unused English stamps.

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