

you can learn when the ships are due, and then by calling again and asking in a respectful manner for the stamps from their letters, you will often get a number.

WHERE TO OBTAIN STAMPS

If you know of a merchant or anyone else in your town who gets foreign lettings, ask for the stamps—nothing is obtained without asking.

If you have parents, grandparents, relatives or friends who have any old letters stowed away, hunt them up and obtain the stamps. Often stamps are found in this way which can be exchanged for many others or sold. If you find a stamp which is valuable or which you do not find mentioned in the catalogue of stamps it is always best to leave it on the envelope until you write your dealer and ascertain its value.

There are millions of old stamps stowed away in trunks and boxes, and these the collectors should bring to light, as they are worth money.

BUYING STAMPS

If you cannot obtain stamps in any of the ways mentioned above you can purchase them at a small outlay, all dealers selling them in a variety of ways.

At the beginning of a collection it is well to purchase some cheap packets of stamps, as from these you will gen-



From the west Coast of Africa

erally obtain some duplicates which are good for trading.

Two kinds of packets are sold, one being "assorted," containing several stamps of one kind, and the other

being "all different." If you want packets with duplicates you should order the assorted kind.

Packets are sold from five cents up, and a variety of them are offered by all dealers.

If you desire to buy stamps singly you can order the ones you want from the dealer's list.

In buying single stamps an excellent method is to select them from "approval sheets." These are sheets of stamps with the prices attached, sent out by the dealers, and you take from them the stamps you want, returning the balance with the cash for those you removed from the sheet.

In buying in this way you have an opportunity to see the stamps, and if you do not like some of the specimens you need not take them. On these approval sheets the dealers allow from one-quarter to one-third reduction on the price of the stamps, and to get your friends to buy from your sheets the percentage of reduction is your



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profit. So if you sell one dollar's worth and the dealer allows you one-third off, you make a profit of 33 cents for your trouble. By selling stamps in this way you can make enough money to buy a large number for yourself.

TRADING STAMPS

Every collector accumulates a number of duplicate stamps, and these he should trade with other collectors for stamps not in his collection. The basis for trading should be the cata-