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Geographical and Historical Inferences in Philately.

By L. H. BENTON.

FROM the designs and character on, and the condition of, many stamps much geographical and historical knowledge may be correctly inferred.

If a certain country issues only imperforated stamps the natural inference is that the country is not far advanced in civilized arts. Examples of this are found in the issues of some of the native Indian states.—Bajra, Bhor, Jummo, Pouch, etc.

The comparative density of population may be inferred from the comparative number of stamps of the different issues used; ditto, its commerce to a certain extent.

A country issuing no uncharged stamps shows a good financial solidity, this manifesting an independence of resorting to surcharges, either for economical or for speculative purposes. In some instances the immediate demand for certain values make surcharging an imperative necessity.

Chili is a good example of the uncharging class, all the better for being a neighbor to Peru, the whirlpool of surcharges.

That the United States is a commercial nation of patriotic people is manifest by the portraits and profiles of various statesmen on our stamps, and also by the reproduction of historical paintings, pictures of coats-of-arms, steamships, locomotives, etc.

The Confederate Provisionals give evidence of postal difficulties in the south during the great civil war.

Look at the Afghanistan stamps! Do not those idiotic faces suggest a people given to idolatry?

From the Bavaria return-letter stamps do we not know at once that Augsburg, Bamberg, Munchen, Nuremberg, Regensburg, Speyer, Wurzburg are in Bavaria?

The keys on the Bremen, and the castles on the Bergedorf and Hamburg stamps suggest the German castles.

British Guiana's ships tell us of the commercial instincts of its people.

Canada's heaver and Newfoundland's codfish, seal, and vessels are emblematic of zoological, ichthyological and industrial matters in those places.

The various borders of the official Cubiertas stamps of Columbian Republic, and the fourteen varieties of paper on which many of Great Britain's envelope stamps are impressed imply a diversified variety of taste.

One would know that Congo was a Belgian possession by one look at the stamps.

That China, Corea, Hankow, Hong-Kong, Japan and Shanghai are in the "Celestial Empire" is obvious. The birds of Japan are also very suggestive.

An Architectural taste (combined with a taste for American dollars) is evinced by the geometrical designs on Cuba's 1883 issue.

The pyramids on the Egyptian stamps bring us to the conclusion that those Egyptians knew a thing or two about transportation and building long before Brutus playfully inserted his jack-knife between Caesar's ribs, or in the back of the neck, or as the case may be. I am a little uncertain about the precise point of contact, as I was not on the spot at the time of the action.

The changes in the government of France are apparent in the stamp issues.

The stamps of the various German states are all characteristic.

The very names on the stamps from Ivory Coast and Gold Coast tell the story of the production of those places. I wonder when Grain Coast, Slave Coast and Windy Coast, all near by, will have stamps!

All the British Colonies have, as does the other country, the head of the Queen on their stamps. We do not know how many times that head has appeared, but we will venture to place it above a thousand. Some day we will "take a week off" and count them. The idea of the Queen's head on all these colonial issues does not necessarily signify patriotism, as many poor colonists cannot help themselves.

Hawaiian stamps remind us in many points of our own.

The post-horn on, and in (watermarked) the stamps of Brunswick, Hanover, Hungary, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, etc., reminds us of indigenous postal customs; also suggesting native pastoral occupations.

In India the crude designs of stamps for the interior portray the extent of their cultivation. The swarthy faces surmounted by turbans on the Holkar and Sirmoor stamps each tell of the climate of the country and physiological characteristics of its inhabitants. The study of ethnography is one of the educational attributes of our philatelic treasures. The elephant represented in the watermark of the British Indian stamps tells more about the "inhabitants" of that sunburned country.

Liberia is another elephant country. Here *Elephas Africannus* has for a neighbor the hippopotamus. This warm country is the home for the palm trees and colored gentlemen.

New South Wales is easily located by *Leodieria* peit after seeing one of the five shilling stamps of 1880. The stamps of some of the Panama issues have maps on them also, and are likewise useful.

The stamps of the Centennial issue of New South Wales alone furnish material enough for a story. Apropos to my own suggestion, I shall write that "story" for the WEEKLY readers. The lyre bird, kangaroo and emu, as does the portrait of Capt. Cook, all mean something.

The Peruvian local surcharge of 1882-5 bring

to mind the troublous times in that country during that period—the hot time they had with Chili.

From the Rumanian early issues we learn the former name and extent of this kingdom—Moldavia.

Salvador stamps bring before us her volcanoes and Columbus' arrival on this continent. This is where was laid the scene of a certain Wag's little joke, when he remarked that Columbus immediately on arrival asked what time the next train left for Chicago.

On the Samoan issues we find the palm trees again.

Like Rumania, South African Republic issues tell us of a once different name, this one being Transvaal—the country across the Vaal.

The tiger in his jungle is faithfully portrayed on the individual stamps of Straits Settlements.

The newspaper stamps of Turkey are attached to the papers before they are printed, and this fact is plainly apparent by the appearance presented by the used newspaper stamp of that empire, the printing forming the cancellation.

Venezuela's educational development is manifest on the *Escuela* (school) stamps, the proceeds from the sale of which go toward paying the school expenses.

Western Australia—Swan River Settlements—stamps are aptly illustrated with the swan.

And so on with other instances, for I have taken only the most prominent ones.

From our Regular Correspondent.

OTTAWA NOTES

By W. I. SABOURIN.

Stamp collectors are increasing rapidly in numbers in our city. The rising generation are constant visitors to the offices and banks where they obtain whatever stamps are amassed by the clerks during the week.

An exchange department has been organized here in connection with the *Ottawa Philatelic Society*. Since Mr. Hooper had business to attend to down in Joliet, Quebec, Mr. Charles Sparks, formerly of Toronto has been appointed President, and Mr. Codville exchange Superintendent.

A half-penny Canada perforated was recently noticed in one of our exchange books marked at \$12, but collectors were not inclined to take it, and it was left owing to the high price.

Stamp collecting is advancing in the Dominion. Our time would be wasted in trying to compare it with three years ago. New recruits are coming in daily smiling as they enter into the field, and the majority of them are constantly showing outsiders their collections, which has the effect of inducing others to begin. Five years hence it is my belief that a great change will take place, and that comparatively few will hesitate in becoming stamp collectors.