

offered himself and his country to the British, who naturally would have nothing to do with him; so he next tried the Germans, and was actually indiscreet enough to send a telegram to Berlin in open German, offering his allegiance, forgetting that this must pass through a French office in Saigon. Of course it was read and reported from there, and orders were issued for his arrest. He believed that he was condemned to be shot for high treason, so he went to Europe by the German mail steamer, a few of his acquaintances in Hong Kong passing the hat around to pay his passage. After he had left the police succeeded in recovering most of the jewelry he had purchased and failed to pay for. A man of his stamp, however, is never very long without money, and after spending some time in prison in Ostend for debt, he next turned up in Paris and lived there in luxury for awhile, the French press not being quite sure what to make of him. Finally he returned to the Far East, settled down with one male companion and two or three female ones on an uninhabited island off the coast of the Malay Peninsula, where a cobra brought his strange career to an end by biting him on the foot. All that remains of "Marie I, King of the Sedangs" is the set of postage stamps he issued, which are among the most prized (?) curiosities of the philatelists.

Such is the true story of "a man who would be a king", and it is perhaps worth telling as an illustration of the fact that even in these late days there may be as much romance in reality as in fiction, at least in the wonderland of the Far East."

Asked the other day what was the value of a Krueger penny, I made enquiries and find that it has not as yet been sold in a public auction separately, so up to the present time there is no data to get at a reasonably correct value of the coin. I have heard that they are fetching as much as 17 sh. each in the Transvaal. The following prices were recently realized at a public sale: eleven Krueger coins, viz., £1, 10sh., 2sh. 6p., 2sh., two 1sh., three 6p. and two 1p. in all sold for

£4; again another set, consisting of £1, 10sh., 5sh., 2sh. 6p., 2sh., 1sh., 6p., 3p., 1p., realized £3 5sh. These, however, are not the prices some of the above coin are realizing at the Cape. I know from direct information that the following prices have been asked and paid: the 5sh. piece £30; and the 1p., 17sh., 50sh., and in one case £5. The rare pieces are the 5sh., the 3p. and the 1p. I do not, however, think it possible to obtain such prices in this country, and we must at present be guided by public sales.

"Mafeking Stamps."

A great deal has been written and said recently on the subject of the "Mafeking Beseiged" stamps, and the patience of the philatelic world has been greatly exercised by the many divergent opinions, theories and convictions that have been expressed. Seeing, however, that large prices are asked and given for specimens of this issue, and that the publishers of Gibbon's Catalogue have decided to class them as provisionals, it behoves us to assure ourselves that such action is consistent with proper appreciation of their status. The reason adduced for the view that these twenty varieties are genuine Provisionals is, briefly, this. That the occupants of the beseiged town were desirous of communicating with their friends in England and elsewhere, and in order to get letters through the lines runners had to be engaged who demanded as much as £25 for the undoubted risk of the enterprise, and it was therefore necessary to practically double the ordinary rates of postage, hence the surcharge.

Now after following very carefully the whole case for and against the supposition that these stamps are genuinely authorized to fill a provisional necessity we find ourselves quite unable to support such a theory, and are firmly persuaded they are nothing better than locals. That the post office at Salisbury or Beita accepted and transmitted letters stamped with the surcharged stamps is no proof that they accepted the surcharge, since they were obliged to recognize the stamps of the Cape or the British Bechuanaland