

The Philatelic Record.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

VOL. 1

MAY, 1901.

No. 5

Corea

E. R. ALDRICH

To day, the eyes of nearly the whole world are turned upon the orient. The contending forces with hostile, intent upon the soil of the old celestial empire and the not improbable dismemberment of the "Flowery" Kingdom can not fail to absorb the interest of all. At the time this is written it seem exceeding probable that at least two changes will take place. Russian control in Manchuria and Japanese control in Corea. This would probably mean the closing of the Corean page in the philatelist's album.

The "Hermit Nation" as W. E. Griffis in his work published in 1882 denominated Corea, lies between 34° 40' and 42° 30' north latitude and 125° and 129° east longitude and covers an area estimated at about 90000 Square miles. The entire country is a peninsula jutting out into the Yellow Sea and is entirely surrounded by water except on the north where it joins Manchuria and Asiatic Russia, being seperated from them by the Rivers Yalu and Tu-men respectively.

The government is a limited despotism, especial privileges being reserved to officials and hereditary nobles, but the ruler until 1895 subject to China, through only nominally and by payment of irregularly paid tribute. The present ruler is Li Young Kum and the seat of government is at Seoul (Chinese Wang King)

The population is variously estimated at from nine to twelve million. Japanese influence has been on the increase, steadily, for the past decade.

The earliest attempt at an establishment of a postal system occurred in 1884 and the first issue of stamps prepared. During a riot the post office was destroyed Dec. 7 and up to this date only the two lower values had been received and were in use it is said three days, consequently cancelled specimens are scarce.

Various perforations are found although

one authority has inclined to the belief that Perf 9 only was of the original lot in the office at the time of destruction. The set was 5 moon rose, 10 moon blue.

The three high values 25m orange 50 moon green and 100 moon blue

and pink, did not reach Seoul until after the post office was a thing of the past and are at the best only collectable as unadopted types.

Although a foundation for a future postal system was made a couple of years later it was not until 1895 that another issue of stamps was attempted. This set are perforated 11½ (so says the Scott catalogue though C. A. Howes in a recent article says 12) and consists of four values.

5 poon yellow green 10 poon blue 25 poon red brown 50 poon purple This set is litho-

