

Clippings.

All Clippings from newspapers thought by the Editor to be of interest to Collectors will be published in this column. Subscribers are invited to send clippings, which always prove acceptable.

The warm damp weather has played sad havoc with postage stamps that were remitted through the mails in payment of small obligations. The loss to the business public in this way is no inconsiderable amount. It is a shame that Uncle Sam can do no better by his busy nephews who make his Post-office Department a success.

The invention of the post office is ascribed to Cyrus, king of Persia, who lived about 600 B.C. Cyrus required all of his governors of provinces to write to him exact accounts of everything that occurred in their several districts and armies. The Persian Empire was of vast extent, and some means had to be provided to render that correspondence sure and expeditious. Cyrus therefore caused post-offices to be built and messengers appointed in every province. He found how far a good horse, with an experienced rider, could travel in a day without being hurt, and then had stables built in proportion, at equal distances from each other. At each of these places he also appointed post-masters, whose duty it was to receive the letters from the couriers as they arrived, and give them to others, and to give fresh horses in exchange for those that had performed their part of the journey. Thus the post went continually night and day, rain or snow, heat or cold, and Cyrus received speedy news of all occurrences, and sent back whatever orders he considered necessary. Darius, the last king of the ancient Persians, was superintendent of them before he came to the throne.

CURIOSITIES OF THE POST OFFICE.—Among the eccentricities in the Postmaster-General's report for Great Britain and Ireland are the following: On the 4th September a small cardboard box containing a live kitten was brought into the Parcel Post Office at Preston Station. The packet, which was addressed to Garstang, had been shot from the mail bag apparatus near Penrith into the express train. The kitten, though seriously alarmed, escaped with comparatively slight injury, but did not recover from the shock for a day or two. The sender, with a singular mixture of thoughtfulness and indifference, had provided a bottle of milk with a tube through the cork for the sustenance of the animal on the journey. The beverage was untouched, and it is to be hoped that such experience will not be repeated. Amongst the contents of parcels which reached the Returned Letter Office there were, as usual, a variety which were sent contrary to the well known regulations of the Department, for example, 500 leeches from abroad, live snakes, frogs, tame rats and a live locust from the Cape of Good Hope. In an Indian mail bag, sealed before departure and not opened until its arrival in London some three weeks subsequently, was discovered a specimen of the Indian mouse, which arrived alive and unharmed after its lengthened journey without any indication of having suffered from want of food. A letter posted by a lady in the neighborhood of Leamington without any address, and without any clue to the sender, was found to contain two £100 Bank of England notes, which, after enquiry, were traced to her and duly returned. The lady, in gratitude for the safe return of her property, sent a contribution of £30 to the Rowland Hill Benevolent Fund.

ENGLISH NOTES.

BY C. J. COX.

The Stamp Collectors of France are to have the same treat as we had in 1890, to wit—A Stamp Exhibition is intended to be held in Paris in October next, when the Philatelists of France will have some treasures on view. Another Stamp Exhibition in London is being talked about over here, to be held next year. Should they have another one the late Mr. Tapling's superb collection of British Guiana, Mauritius, etc., will be very much missed.

It is surprising how some stamps get so much reduced in price. Take for instance Mexico, 1864, of which the market seems to be over-stocked. These sets of 4 Mexico 1864 are now being sold for 6d. On reference to several lists of two years ago, I find that these sets were then sold at 3sh. per set! Are the above reprints, or are they a lot that have been brought to light accidentally?

The ranks of Philately are not without their royal supporters. The Duke of Edinburgh and Prince George of Wales are both ardent collectors. The Duke of Edinburgh's collection includes a fine set of Greek errors, and unused stamps of Uruguay early issues.

The Post Office issued an order recently, in which they say that information having been received from the Portuguese Postal authorities that no parcels or sample packets for Portugal, sent via France, will be allowed to cross the Portuguese frontier. All such packets and parcels will be sent by mail steamer to Lisbon.

Philately is at a standstill over here, and every one is looking forward to the next season.

A 4½d. stamp has been in contemplation by the Post Office authorities for some time past, but up to the present, it has not yet been adopted.

Mr. Henniker Heaton will be disappointed in the hope he once entertained that Canada would show England the way in the matter of imperial penny postage. Sir Adolphe Caron, the Dominion Postmaster-General, expressed his personal admiration for the idea, but he made it clear that Canada's financial position will not allow of her indulging in the luxury. Canada now pays \$125,000 for the carriage of mails to Great Britain, while the revenue derived from home-bound mails is only \$58,800, which, added to the \$14,565 received for the British Mails sent to Canada by Canadian Packet, make a total revenue of only £73,365, and leaves an annual deficit on the service.

The annual report of the British Post Office has now been issued, and the items are very gratifying. The total revenue is £10,402,700, and total expenditure £7,201,821, leaving a profit of £3,200,879.

The London Philatelic Society have lost the valuable services of Mr. Philbrick, Q. C., after being connected with the society for the past twenty-three years. The Earl of Kingston has been chosen as successor to the Presidential chair.

A new paper, called the *London Philatelist*, has been issued, and is far above the ordinary standard of philatelic papers.