

THE NEW COPPER COINS OF CONGO, AFRICA.

BY DAVID PROSKY.

Few persons would have believed a decade ago, that an American citizen would be the founder of a new State in that far-off region, Africa. Yet to-day, Stanley's Colony, under the patronage and government of Leopole II., King of Belgium, is an established fact, and a coin-issuing country. A series of silver coins composed of 1, 2 and 5 francs, and of copper coins of 1, 2, 5 and 10 centimes, this latter nearly as large as an American dollar, while the 1 centime is dime size. A set of the latter now before us merits description if for no other reason than that they are sold so cheaply by dealers as to be within the means of the poorest collectors. Obverse: Around a circular central perforation, are arranged five pairs of adjoined L's; a crown over each pair; a circle of pellets surrounding; between this circle and the edge the legend: "LEOPOLD II. ROI DES BELGES SOUV. DE L'ETAT INDEP. DU CONGO." Reverse: A radiant five-pointed star, its field has rays of pellets; three small stars to right and left; the value 1 CME., 2 CES., 5 CES., or 10 CES. above; the date 1888 below, separating the Mint Master's initials L. W. (Leopold Wiener); edges reeded. The legend on the 1 and 2 centimes is more abbreviated. The figure 7 is traced beneath the final "8" on the 5 centimes.—C.M.

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—FORGED STAMPS: HOW TO DETECT THEM. A very little sentence, and easily answered by me. Learn to examine stamps—learn their peculiarities, their style of engraving, their watermarks and their perforation. Study your specimens, and you will find an imperceptible sense come to you, by which you can at once detect an ordinary forgery and which sense will make you suspect—and that instinctively—the best of imitations. This is my advice, and always has been, and this is the secret of how to become a good judge of genuine and forged stamps.—E.L. Pemberton,

—That stamp collecting by young people improves their general knowledge, especially of geography, history, postal arrangements, etc., is a fact not seriously disputed by those in a position to know. It is only true however in regard to those who engage in the work intelligently, and with the determination to derive from it all the benefits it is capable of affording. The best advantages of our schools are only obtained by the few, and they are those who possess the faculty of turning to account all the facilities afforded them for increasing their stock of knowledge, and who apply themselves diligently to their studies. No one pretends that schools are a failure because the majority do not reap all or half their benefits. Neither is stamp collecting a failure because all do not know how to go about it in a way to insure pleasure and profit.—K.P.G.

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—Study your stamps. Oh that I could shout those three words in the ears of every stamp collector, or that I had the power to confiscate the collections of every one who maliciously accumulates scarce and almost unique specimens, and have about as much regard for them as the dollars they represent. I know of a collection now, that contains several stamps that could not be duplicated at any price, and yet the owner thinks no more of them than he would of a fine watch or any valuable piece of jewelry. His only idea in collecting, although he does not express it in so many words, "I am a richer man than you; I can afford to pay higher prices than any man in New York, so I have the largest collection." But I tell him as I tell you, five hundred stamps, arranged with care, and CAREFULLY STUDIED will give greater pleasure to the owner, and more satisfaction to the person they are shown to, than the finest collection in the hands of an illiterate man, who only shows his collection to give you an idea of his wealth. E.S.P.

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—The Collectors' Standard has been purchased by Mr. E. R. Marshall, Wyoming, Iowa.