

## John Cabot.

stamps, which has grown into proportions and magnitude to-day never contemplated by a single living creature a quarter of a century ago. The stock in trade of some dealers is almost appalling, when one considers that it is a mere little postage stamp that is causing all the fuss. An English dealer claims upwards of 15,000,000 in stock, that if placed end to end in a continuous line would reach nearly 250 miles. But this is nothing compared to one German dealer who says he imported 23,000,000 foreign stamps last year.

If this be true of only one year's importation, his accumulated stock, placed end to end, must reach at least from here to the moon, if not farther. All this is sheer nonsense. There is one thing, however, collectors have got to consider, and consider carefully, too. There must, sooner or later, be an end to general collecting. Specialties will have to be the rule and not the exception. Considering the magnitude of the present system, and the adaption by new and almost uncivilized countries of postal facilities, the increase in the next twenty years will be almost beyond conception. No collector, unless he be overburdened with wealth, can hope to keep pace with new issues; and then collections will become so bulky and large, that they will become before very long, white elephants on our hands. A rough guess places the number of letters mailed annually at about 55,000,000,000. Of course, this may not be a bull's-eye, but as one guess is as good as another, we will let it go at that. The stupendous mail of the world, the tremendous receipts, the vast army of bipeds and quadrupeds it gives employment to, and all this within fifty years, we may well look with dismay into the future, and wonder what the outcome will be.

Carefully scan the past, then look vaguely into the future, and ask yourself and squarely, has there been a greater, more complete, more instructive and more useful revolutionizer than the little bit of paper we call a postage stamp.

NEWFOUNDLAND issued a set of stamps lately in honor of the discover of Canada, who four hundred years ago, first visited Newfoundland. It may be of interest to learn more of John Cabot and his career, so we publish what Mr. John G. Bourmot has written in a late number of the Canadian Magazine.

"John Cabot was a Genoese by birth and a Venetian citizen by adoption, who came, probably during the last decade of the fifteenth century, to the historic town of Bristol, long famous in the story of English maritime adventure, and well described as "seeming to swim on the waters." The discovery of the islands now known as the "Antilles" by his great countrymen impelled Cabot to seek English aid for a new venture to a mysterious west. He was confident he could find by a more northerly route than that taken by Columbus, those rich asiatic countries which were for so many years—for more than a century after the voyages of Columbus and Cabot—the great incentive to maritime exploration and adventure. Eventually he obtained from Henry VII. letters patent, under date of March 5th, 1496, granting to himself and his three sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sancio, the right to navigate in any direction they pleased under the English flag, and "at their own cost and charges seek out and discover unknown lands," and to acquire for England the dominion over the countries so discovered. Early in the month of May, 1467, John Cabot sailed from Bristol in a ship called "The Mathew," and manned by English sailors. In all probability he was accompanied by Sebastian, then a young man of about twenty-one years of age, and when in later times, through the credulity of his friends and his own garrulity and vanity, took that place in the estimation of the world which his father now rightly fills. Some time towards the end of June they made a land-fall on the north-eastern coast of