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INTERESTING NOTES

Philatelists will learn with interest that Finnish postage stamps are to be superseded by Russian, writes a Finnish correspondent of the London Chronicle. The Russian Minister of Interior has informed the Finnish Senate that by virtue of the Postal Regulations Decree of 1890, Finnish postage stamps will not be available for foreign correspondence after January 1 1900, nor for inland postage after June 1, of that year Russia stamps taking their place. The instructions do not state whether their money value will go to the Russian Exchequer or to that of the Grand Duchy. It may be that Russia intends in this way to appropriate a not inconsiderable portion of the Finnish revenue. I ought to mention here that Russian stamps have for the last eight or nine years been on sale in Finland, and that their use has been optional. Curiously enough, the Russian stamps, by reason of exchange are slightly cheaper than the Finnish and occasionally people availed themselves of his small economy. Lately this had aroused considerable indignation, and the recipients of letters bearing Russian stamps conceived the plan of sending the names of their correspondents to the papers, which published a daily list of the delinquents, and thus the mischief has been put a stop to. But

the change of stamps is, except to collectors, not in itself of great importance.

In the matter of catalogues and albums, the difficulty of the present day is that of an embarrassment of riches, the albums being so numerous that it is hard to choose between them and the catalogues so full of detail as to be a puzzle to the beginner rather than an aid.

A collector who goes in for nighly varieties and any beyond the most limited extent can only collect in a blank album his catalogue will show him what there is to be collected, and he can surely arrange his stamps in accordance with the catalogue without requiring numbered spaces to show him where to put each specimen. What is really wanted by the beginner is a classified catalogue, including, or at least indicating, every possible variety but at the same time separating the more important from those that are less so, giving first, lists, as one might say, of stamps in their various designs, colours, and values, as recognized by the Post Offices, followed by lists of the varieties recognized by philatelists and these varieties further classified as far as can be done, according to their relative importance from a scientific point of view. Thus the beginner be taught how to begin and at the same time would have before his eyes the road that he might pursue if he desires to become a philatelist.