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Blank Albums.

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Collectors who have a fondness for the stamps of a certain country or countries, naturally endeavor to obtain as many stamps of that country as possible. In gathering these they are liable to discover varieties in color, paper, perforations, watermarks, etc. for which no set spaces will be found in the printed albums—for instance, there are over one hundred and thirty varieties of postage stamps of Canada, the International album (which claims to include all varieties of postage stamps) there are spaces for only eighty five different Canada. Of course there are blank pages in the more expensive albums, but when varieties of various dates are mounted thereon it presents a very patchy appearance. It is evident therefore, that the printed albums are of little use to the true specialist, who is forced to seek the blank one.

If you intend to specialize successfully it is necessary to obtain one of these; some dealers have them in stock, but if you are not acquainted with any, the perusal of philatelic advertisements, or upon enquiry to the publisher, you will readily obtain addresses of such. A competent book-binder can turn out a good album ranging in price from three dollars up. Of course for the more expensive ones a better quality of material must be used, which point

must be considered if you intend keeping your album for any number of years.

It is advisable to obtain an album with the pages ruled with very pale ink into small squares about three sixteenths of an inch in width. This will greatly aid in spacing off and also provides a good background.

In reference to spacing, consult two or three catalogues to obtain as large a list as possible, then space accordingly. The pages can be ruled or dotted into blocks or strips of squares (allowing about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch around each stamp) or an occasional fancy design, adds greatly to the appearance of the album; for instance, an issue of Canadian could be nicely arranged in a faintly tinted maple leaf (the maple leaf issue would be very suitable); the diamond Jubilee issue would be appropriately arranged in a diamond.

A short time ago I had the pleasure of looking over a collection of British Colonies mounted on sheets of white cardboard, but being unbound, great care was necessary to avoid damaging the stamps.

The stamps of British North America, and British West Indies, are the choice of many Canadian specialists, which countries make a total of nearly one thousand varieties. If this is considered too many, British North America is the next choice with varieties numbering nearly one hundred and fifty.

By being constantly on the lookout for