

## REVIEW

The April number of the Philatelic Spectator is very neat and is an improvement on last number. It contains some interesting notes and an article on the Transvaal Stamps.

The Philatelic Bulletin and Eastern Philately contains some good articles such as "Postage Stamps and How They Originated," "Stamping Thro' Mexico" etc.

Vol. 1 No. 1 of the Universal Philatelist will appear from Philadelphia next September. It will be a 16 to 72 page monthly journal devoted to the interests of postage stamp, postage and souvenir card collectors. It will be published by Wallace B. Grubb and will be edited by Claude T. Reno.

The Allegheny Philatelist and Herald Exchange for April contains a German page in addition to Puzzledom, Amateur Photography etc. As we stated in our last issue it now includes the Weekly Stamp Tribune.

The Weekly Era contains a short review of Stanley Gibbons' Journal.

The Weekly Era contains a short review of Stanley Gibbons' new catalogue, the usual notes and chronicle of new issues and an article "Used vs. Unused" taken from Stanley Gibbons' Journal.

The Universal Exchange and Auxiliary Phil. have consolidated and will appear with eight pages next issue.

The Bay State Philatelist for this month is exceedingly neat and well gotten up. The cuts of the officers of the Junior Philatelist are very good indeed. The trio are all promising looking young Americans. The paper contains an article on the 1895 Queensland Provisionals by Geo. Whitman. Miss Amy L. Swift under the title of "Ye Olden Tyme" discusses whether cut envelopes are really collectable or not. Philatelic notes, etc. are given by Claude Reno, S. E. Moisant, Cecil Rawson and John Peltz who all write well. "Did You Ever" a philatelic poem by Edgar S. Brightman appears in this issue.

The Junior Collector for April is a special birthday number, it having started on its second year. The articles are good and well worth reading.

The Adhesive is without a doubt one of the best philatelic publications issued to-day. It contains a cut and biographical sketch of Mr. Percival Parrish. A. R. Magill, Miss A. L. Swift, Mr. Chas. E. Jenney, W. O. Wylie and other good writers all contribute.

## THE PRINCELY PALM

BY A. LLOYD JONES.

From the pictures on our much-loved stamps we learn history, geography, biography, mythology, zoology and botany.

Take botany for example. In looking over our stamps we see pictures of strange and unfamiliar plants and trees. Wishing to know more of these we look up in different books of reference anything we can find relative to them. One of the most commonly used botanical pictures on stamps is the palm tree. Therefore, a short description of it should not be out of place in a stamp magazine whose aim it is to give instruction to its readers.

The palm is so named on account of its leaves resembling a hand, of which the Latin is palma. Groups of palms here and there nodding lazily to each other as they admire the reflection of their own beauty in the water add one of the most beautiful features to the tropics. The palm is the peacock of trees. It is the most graceful thing that grows and every movement of its plumage is on artistic lines, but you can't help feeling that it is vain and conceited and considers itself better than the bamboos and ferns and other features of the glorious foliage you find in the tropics. The ancients thought the palm to be peculiar to Palestine. This is incorrect but it shows the deep affection which the ancient Hebrews had for the stately palm. Many of the places mentioned by the geography are named for the palm. Several Biblical names could be mentioned as having some connection with the palm tree, either in derivation of name or from trees on the spot. In Deuteronomy Jericho is called the "city of palm trees." Bethany, where were gathered the palm branches for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, means nothing more than the "home of dates." Palms are a natural order of indigenous plants not excelled in importance by any order in the vegetable kingdom except grasses. Palms are generally tall and slender trees, often of a gigantic height (sixty to eighty feet) without a branch, and bearing at the summit a magnificent and graceful crown of very large leaves. The stem is sometimes, however, of humble growth, and more rarely it is thick in proportion to its height. Sometimes, but rarely, it is branched as in the broom palm, and sometimes, as in rattans, it is flexible, and seeks support from trees and bushes, over which it climbs in jungles and dense forests, clinging to them by means of hooked spines. Some of the species with flexible stem attain a prodigious length,

ascending to the tops of the highest trees and falling down again. Rumphuis asserts that they are sometimes one thousand two hundred or one thousand eight hundred feet long. Whatever the form or magnitude of the stem of a palm, it is always woody and the root is always fibrous. It is only toward its circumference however, that the stem is hard, and there in many species it is extremely hard; but the centre is soft, often containing when young six hundred to eight hundred pounds of starch or sago, as it is called, and sometimes filled when old with a mass of fibre which can be separated without difficulty. Palms are mostly natives of tropical and semi-tropical countries, being found almost everywhere within the tropics and forming a most striking characteristic of tropical vegetation. The tropical parts of America abound in them, producing a far greater number of species than any other part of the world.

There are about one thousand species of palms known. The following ones mentioned are amongst the best known. The date palm yields edible fruits, the staple food of some districts of northern Africa. The best dates are produced from a palm tree from sixty to one hundred years old; three hundred pounds are annually yielded by trees of this age. Date seeds are a substitute for coffee. The cocoa palm is valuable for its food, timber, foliage, fibres and cocoanuts, which are a source of wealth to their possessors. There are various species called cabbage palms, valued for their "cabbage," but as this is the terminal bud whose removal causes the destruction of the tree, this is a wasteful article of diet unless care be taken by judicious planting to avert the annihilation of supplies. Then there is the famous "coco-dermer" or double cocoanut, whose floating nuts might have suggested the twin steamboats, and are the objects of so many legends and superstitions. The tree is peculiar to the Seychelles, while it is used for many useful purposes. Its fruit is like a huge plum, containing a stone or nut like two cocoanuts (in their husks) joined together. The fan palm, wax palm, palmyra and palmette are also noted.

The wood, petioles, leaves, sap and fruit of many species of palm are invaluable in the arts and in domestic economy. It is impossible to over-estimate the utility of palms. They furnish food, shelter, clothing, timber, fuel, building material, sticks, fibre, paper, starch, sugar, oil, wine, tannin, dyeing materials, resins, and a host of minor products which render them most valuable to the nations and to tropical agriculturalists.