

gradually in the air; don't try to dry them near the fire as they very easily become crisp and shrink into unnatural shapes. When placing into the Album only fasten the upper edge, or, which is still better, use gummed paper; let it be either a collection of unused or used stamps; don't mix these two kinds indiscriminately, and if you only persevere and spend some time and money over your collection, you may be certain that you have made a good and paying investment, not considering the knowledge and enjoyment you have acquired by entering the hallowed domains of the "Philatelic World."

What We Learn from Postage Stamps.

The men who selected the designs which appear on the United States stamps may have made their selections at random, but if they are critically examined, it will be found that they give an insight into the lives of three great men.

The one cent stamp very appropriately shows the head of Benj. Franklin, the man who said, "Take care of the cents and the dollars will take care of themselves." The cent is the symbol of national economy, and thus the one cent stamp serves as a reminder of Franklin's frugal habits.

The two cent stamp bears the head of George Washington. It is the stamp mostly used by both rich and poor, and what better head could it therefore bear than the "Father of his Country."

The five cent stamp is used mostly in foreign correspondence, and bears the likeness of General Garfield, a man whose name was once in the mouths and is now in the hearts of all foreigners.

Some Valuable Stamps.

The most valuable stamp in existence is the Baltimore five cent black stamp, which was issued in 1846, each specimen having written upon it the autograph of James M. Buchanan, who was the postmaster at Baltimore at the time. A specimen of this stamp was sold only a few months ago for \$400. The next rarest is the celebrated Brattleboro, Vt., stamp, also issued in 1846. It is valued at \$250 an impression. Another stamp, not so rare as those last mentioned, but which is often mistaken for a much commoner issue, is that put forth by the United States in 1862. It is a two cent vermilion, with the head of Washington, and is worth \$10 a specimen, while its humbler brother, a stamp differing only in the shade of color, which is a lighter red, is only worth one cent.

The United States has been, without doubt, the most prolific of all countries in the world in the issue of postage stamps, having put forth about 500 different varieties altogether.