

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

PERSONAL PENCILINGS.

BY WALTER A. WITHROW.

MR. LEWIS BRODSTONE, the prominent collector of Superior, Nebraska, is at present attending school at Des Moines, Iowa. He has made several 'cycle tours in the past year, and in this way managed to pick up a very respectable lot of United States stamps.

Mr. C. E. Severn, of Chicago, who won the first prize of fifty dollars, for the best review of Mekeel's Postage Stamp Album of the World, captured the second prize in the second writers' contest of the *Weekly News*.

Roy F. Greene has "departed for pastures green and new." He recently discovered that writing for the philatelic press did not pay, and that writing for other magazines did. Roy, although he may not be another Howells, will score success, we are sure.

This will make the third "departure" from the ranks of our philatelic writers. First Quackenbush, then Benton, and lastly Greene. These three now devote their entire time, outside of a necessary time for slumber, to literary work, and although they are heard of occasionally, their articles are becoming less frequent. We are not sure but there are others who would be pleased to step out, if they possessed the necessary qualifications.

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THIRTY YEARS AGO.

BY NAUTILUS.

IT WAS about ten years previous to this time that the mania for collecting foreign postage stamps, now so prevalent, had just set in, and many an old philatelist can remember with what feelings of joy he, the happy possessor of a hundred used stamps which the owner exchanged with him for a box, a knife, and six quills. This was the first instance of used postage stamps having a marketable value, though even at this date rumors of something wonderful happening to anybody who had patience and folly enough to collect a hundred used penny stamps were prevalent. They were hardly credited even by that much abused species of humanity—the schoolboy.

The youths of this day were by no means inclined to consider a taste for old stamps childish or futile. They held the pursuit to be just as sensible as a taste for numismatics, and far in advance of butterfly collecting and other entomological pursuits.

We have said that the first instance of stamps having a marketable value had its genesis in trading at school; probably the next stage, an easy one, was dealing in schoolboy fashion.

Not long ago we had the pleasure of learning from a non-philatelic source the story, or whatever you choose to call it, of a gentleman whose firm had been in the stamp business nearly four years previous to 1865, and whose trade was equal to that of all other dealers put together. As the story might possibly be interesting to some collec-

tors we will give the tale, but in a condensed form.

About the year 1860 a cousin of the above mentioned gentleman, a boy of thirteen, came to him and asked him if he could exchange some foreign for him. He had none, being then a merchant's clerk, but he noticed that his cousin, even then, was able to purchase stamps from his friends, and suggested that the two should raise as much money as possible and start in business as stamp dealers. To this the young boy readily agreed, and they managed to get £5 with which they began transactions. The way to procure stock, however, was somewhat difficult; used foreign stamps given them by their friends did not amount to much, and they were therefore compelled to write the postmasters of large cities, of foreign countries, and ask them to enclose unused stamps to such an amount, for which they enclosed remittance. As may be supposed a great risk was attached to this method, and many a pound sent out was never heard of again. By advertising in such papers as were likely to give the best returns, a good business soon sprang up, and they found that they could dispose of large numbers of foreign stamps as fast as they could be procured.

A connection gradually sprang up in foreign countries, and they were therefore able to get stamps direct from their correspondents whenever they required them.

Their business gradually increased, and the firm who spent ten shillings a month for advertising at the start, in 1864 spent £360. At this time their stock comprised about 2,000,000 stamps valued at £3,500.

The receipts of the firm were about £300 per month. £100 may be considered a very good profit, yet each of the partners cleared £600 per year.

Here might have been a chance for many an enterprising young man to make a fortune, but stamp collecting was a fleeting fancy, and one bright morning when already to embark in the business, the would-be stamp dealer might have found the taste for stamp collecting entirely flown from the minds of the public. We, however, know that such a thing did not happen.

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OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS.

BY CHAS. E. JENNEY.

IHAVE always been very fortunate in my exchange relations with foreign collectors, not in the way of obtaining great bargains at little or no expense, but in finding intelligent collectors who were willing to exchange on fair and equal terms and who understood the comparative value of stamps. Many American collectors complain that they receive ridiculous offers from their foreign correspondents, offering worthless continentals for complete sets United States departments or other valuable stamps. I have never struck such a one yet. All my correspondents have been selected from the advertising and exchange lists of foreign and domestic philatelic papers, those making big offers having been avoided, and those simply asking for exchange with United States collectors, value for value, being usually selected. I have exchanged with collectors in about every country in Europe and have never been obliged to get an interpreter yet to translate my letters, although I can read