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HISTORY ILLUSTRATED BY NUMISMATICS.

Excepting that branch which relates to the short period of our own history, the interesting science of numismatics has received comparatively little attention from the people of this country. Two causes have operated adversely to its study. One is, that from her geographical position, America is in receipt of only a limited number of specimens, and the other, a more discouraging one, is the fact of the existence of large numbers of the products of the counterfeiter and forger. For both imitations of rare pieces, and also others which are wholly or in part the product of the imagination of their fabricators, often make their appearance here. Some of these are readily discovered by careful examination, but others are so skillfully made as to be detected only after an experience and a knowledge that few persons attain. It is proposed to give our readers some information on the subject, which will probably be new to the majority of them.

In order to a proper understanding, it seems desirable to state some first principals. Numismatics, then, is the science of coins and medals. A coin is a piece of metal stamped with certain characters by some power or government, making it pass current for money. A medal is never intended for money, but is usually struck in commemoration of some historical or local event. It will thus be understood that unstamped money is not coin. And we know that the former circulated for a very long period before we have any evidence of the existence of the latter. Thus in Genesis xxiii. 16, we read, "And Abraham *weighed* to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant." At this very early period, which chronologers compute at 1918 B. C., we have recorded the circulation of precious metals. For Abraham was stated to have been "very rich in cattle, silver and gold." The metals may have been in the form of drinking vessels and jewels, but there are reasons for believing that a part of it might have been actual money. The Egyptian sculptures and paintings, some almost as fresh as when they were executed, have representations of figures weighing out rings of money, while others are making a note on a tablet of the precise amount. Ancient authors

also allude to leather money, clay money, shell money and iron money. Of the latter, Rollin relates that Lycurges introduced it into Sparta, in order to sap the foundations of avarice, and had it made so heavy, and fixed the rate so low, that a cart and two oxen were necessary to carry home a sum equal in amount to about a hundred dollars of our money, and requiring a whole chamber to keep it in.

Humphrey says: "*Coined* money is not mentioned by Homer, which he would not surely have omitted to notice had it then existed, for his great poem is a sort of encyclopedia of the state of civilization in his time; and we find him, instead of coined money, alluding to the circulating medium then in Greece, as a much more primitive character; as when he says that an ox was exchanged for a bar of brass, three feet long, and that a *woman* who understood several useful arts was worth four oxen. Thus it appears that although metal was very early used as a medium of exchange, it merely represented, in a very direct manner, actual *barter*, till coin was invented."

(*To be continued.*)

ALASKA ANTIQUITIES AND CURIOSITIES.

BY EDWARD G. FAST, ESQ.

COLLECTION OF ANTIQUITIES FOUND IN ANCIENT GRAVES.

The Kaloshians believe in a continuance of existence after death; but not in a reward of the good or punishment of the bad. There are large hunting grounds and waters abounding with fish, unattainable by mortals, far away in the interior of the country for the souls of the deceased. In order to be admitted there, the soul must be free from the stain which unjust actions leave on it; and, to cleanse it from these, the body is burned after death. The ashes are placed in a wooden box, which is generally ornamented with painting or carving. In olden times, the boxes containing the ashes of adults, and some idols and charms, together with a supply of weapons and implements of the chase and fishing, were deposited in deep clefts of rocks, and those of children on the branches of high trees. In modern times, *i. e.* since about eighty years, these boxes are put in large wooden frames, closed tightly on all sides, and raised four feet from the ground. Such frames are spacious enough to contain the boxes of the ashes of a whole family. Some are covered in front with a blanket painted with idolatrous figures. The older graves are to be found mostly in distant places difficult of access; the newer ones stand in groups behind the village to which they belong. In old times, besides a supply of fishing and hunting implements, the canoes of the deceased were placed near the grave, and I have met with graves on which the remains of four canoes could be distinguished. If a chief died who had slaves, immediately after his death a slave whom he had previously designated for that purpose was killed, in order to wait upon his master in the other world, and his corpse was burnt at the same time.

This barbarious custom exists yet; and, so late as in June, 1868,

it happened that the principal chief of the Sitka tribe, before dying, designated a slave whom he intended to take with him into the other world as servant and companion, but the timely intervention of Gen. Jeff. C. Davis happily defeated the execution of this project.

WAR, HUNTING AND FISHING.

The collection of war implements comprises all the artificial portable implements which, in olden times, the warrior used as well for attack as for defence, viz: helmets, visors, coats of mail, swords, clubs, etc. The shape and skillful arrangement of these implements and their strange appearance are conspicuous peculiarities indicating a twofold design, viz: to supply a physical defence and to inspire terror in the enemy. Here are to be found all the constituent parts of full suits of armor, similarly shaped and arranged as those used in Europe, and abolished there when the introduction of firearms rendered them ineffectual. Since the natives have become acquainted with the Russians and their firearms, their only weapon is the old flintlock gun. These guns, however, are merely old cast-off military muskets or rifles manufactured by Russian convicts, and of remarkable primitive shape, and not till the Americans got possession of the country were the natives provided, by traders from the British territory, with new and useful guns, pistols and revolvers, never seen before in the hands of the natives. There appeared among them, for instance, in February, 1868, hundreds of new guns, marked "Parker, Field, & Co., 1868," replacing the old discarded Russian firearms.

The hunting implements, as spears, bows and arrows, have likewise been replaced by the gun, except in those rare cases where the sharp report or the peculiarity of its operation is calculated to alarm or injure the game.

(*To be continued.*)

HISTORY OF THE COINS, TOKENS, MEDALS, ETC., OF
THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

BY ALFRED SANDHAM.

(*Continued.*)

78. C. Obv.—Bouquet entirely different in form from any other specimen, the flowers being very delicate. "AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE BAS CANADA." Rev.—Open wreath with slender stems and 18 leaves, with sprigs between. No bow but a small ribbon over the front of wreath. No dot over "o" in Sou. Stems of wreath almost touch letters "N" and "E" in Montreal. The dies of this coin, were found in the cellar of an old building on Notre Dame Street, and are now in the Cabinet of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society, in Montreal. They are well executed, but not deeply cut, and are much larger than the usual *Un Sou* specimens, which probably is the reason they have never been used. No coins have ever been met with, struck from these dies, with the exception of four or five proofs in lead and about twelve in copper.

79. Brass. Obv.—Very open and slender bouquet. 1 rose, 4

leaves, 4 shamrocks, to right; 2 thistles, with 2 small leaves attached, 3 shamrocks, one of which turns over centre, to left. In centre, a leaf as in No. 39; on top, 2 similar leaves, attached to thistle on left, 2 heads and 2 blades wheat, the latter bending over to right and left. The whole bound by a slender bow to left, and ribbon to right. “*AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE * BAS CANADA.” Rev.—Open wreath of 18 leaves, with sprig between, 9 on each side; no bow, but 2 leaves start upwards to right and left, from centre. “UN SOU” in large open letters, in centre. “TOKEN MONTREAL.” Edge plain. Rare.

80. C. Obv.—Bouquet. 1 rose, 6 leaves, 3 shamrocks, to right; 2 thistles, 3 leaves, to left; one of these leaves turns over and forms centre of bouquet; on top, in centre, 1 blade of wheat, with head of wheat on either side. “*AGRICULTURE & COMMERCE * BAS CANADA.” The letters are exceedingly rough, and the die is cracked in two places. Rev.—An eagle supporting a shield, on which an anchor is inscribed, the whole being surrounded by thirteen stars of six points each. “T. DUSEAMAN BUTCHER BELLEVILLE.” Between the words “BUTCHER” and “BELLEVILLE” is a large five-pointed star, and between “T” and “BELLEVILLE” is a small star. Edge plain. This is claimed by Dickerson as a Jersey token. Certainly the reverse is more like an American than a Canadian device, unless the coin was struck during the Rebellion of 1837–38. If this was so, we can easily account for the eagles and stars, with the emblem of Hope. It must, however, be admitted that the obverse is Canadian. Taking the coin as it stands, it is a curiosity, American devices on the one side—English roses and Scotch thistles on the other—while to complete the medley we have Bas Canada (Lower Canada), whereas Belleville (supposing it to be the Canadian town), is situated in Upper Canada or, as it is now called, the Province of Ontario.

81. C. Obv.—Front and side view of same building as No. 30. “BANK OF MONTREAL 1838.” Rev.—Same as No. 26, but name of bank on scroll in raised letters, and no date. Edge plain.

82. C. Obv.—Same as No. 81. Rev.—do., do. “HALF PENNY.”

83. C. Obv.—Same as No. 81. Date, “1839.” Rev.—do., do.

84. C. Obv.—Same as No. 81. Date, “1839.” Rev.—Same as No. 82.

These four coins are very rare, Nos. 81 and 82 particularly so. A specimen of No. 82, said to be the only one in Montreal, was sold in the collection of Mr. Hall, in March, 1868, for \$10, the agent who purchased having authority to pay \$20 for it.

85. C. Obv.—“CANADA 1841.” Rev.—Same as No. 21.

(To be continued.)

COIN SALE IN GERMANY.

The cabinet of Dr. Heinrich Haase was sold by auction, at Leipzig, on the 4th of September. The catalogue, numbering 4782 lots, contained but few American pieces.

AN ENTERPRISING MANUSCRIPT HUNTER.

A late number of *Chambers' Journal* contains an interesting account of the efforts of M. Tischendorf to bring to light hidden literary treasures.

After M. Tischendorf had forced the doors of the Vatican Library, he was not to be stopped by others even more firmly closed. The monks of Mount Sinai were made to shake off their indolence and give up their treasures; and, in the spring of 1844, Tischendorf embarked at Leghorn for Egypt and Palestine. But by what secret could this savant without fortune prosecute such works? The fact was that the German public were becoming greatly interested in him, and when they heard that he intended exploring the manuscript riches East, from the convents of Cairo to those of Sinai, there arose a kind of emulation among his patrons. The King of Saxony was at the head, while the bankers of Frankfort and Geneva willingly offered their contributions; even the venerable David Schulz was not the last. Of this friend, Tischendorf says: "I never had but one letter from Schulz that found fault with me; it was when I returned the money he sent me."

He made a long sojourn at Cairo. Of the two libraries; one had been closed, or rather walled up, for many years; he opened these catacombs, where such literary relics of inestimable price were buried. How many precious pages also slept useless and despised among the Coptic monks and Georgian Cenobites, in the convents of Jerusalem, in the cloisters of Sinai, in the monastery of St Saba!

The reputation which his name and work had excited in Jerusalem drew the attention of Russia to him. The Russians have always had their eyes turned to the Holy City, with a longing desire for its possession. The year after the fall of Sebastopol, when the works of peace were to succeed those of war, the head of Russian legation at the Court of Dresden proposed to Tischendorf that he should make a third expedition to Palestine, in the name and at the expense of the Czar Alexander II. He and his empress threw themselves into the scheme with a kind of patriotic and religious enthusiasm, as they wished to establish the authenticity of the text on which the faith of the early Christians rested. In 1859, Tischendorf set out for Egypt.

The caravan of Bedouins was soon engaged; and in due time the majestic peaks of granite stood out against blue sky—the mountain alike honored by the Jew, the Christian, and the Mussulman, as the spot chosen for the revelation of the Law. A kind of fortress, built in the rents of the rocks, is the cloister of St. Catharine; at a signal from beneath, a door opens thirty feet from the ground, and a basket is let down, by which travelers must ascend. An exception was however, made this time for Tischendorf, according to the wish of the Ottoman government; and the prior met him at a gate reserved for visitors of rank, while his dragoman and baggage were hoisted up in the usual manner.

The three libraries of the convent excited his enthusiasm; a sort

of presentiment occupied his mind, and he felt sure that this journey would lead to some remarkable discovery. During his first visit, he had laid his hand on a basket of old papers and parchments, eaten away by damp, among which were many fragments of a manuscript Bible, which he recognized as one of the oldest specimens of Christian literature. He secured one of these fragments, and deposited it in the library of Leipsic; as to the others, he had no money to purchase, nor time to transcribe them; to his regret he was obliged to leave them behind him, recommending them to the monks' care.

(To be continued.)

BOGUS PORTRAIT.

ONE OF OUR REVOLUTIONARY FOREFATHERS—HE TURNS OUT TO BE AN IRISHMAN—A BOGUS PORTRAIT IN INDEPENDENCE HALL.

Independence Hall, so frequently called "The Mecca of Liberty" by patriotic and enthusiastic orators who happen to be called upon to receive a delegation of visitors from abroad within its walls, is also considered a place belonging to the entire country. On account of this sacred edifice being located in this city, the United States Congress decided that Philadelphia was the proper place in which to hold the centennial anniversary of American Independence. Every stranger who visits Philadelphia goes to Independence Hall, and hours are often spent in viewing the different portraits that hang upon the wall, and autograph letters, copies of the Declaration of Independence, and other things which are there displayed. Each portrait has appended to it the name of some person who, history tells us, took some part in the struggle of the nation for independence, either as a signer of the Declaration or a prominent army officer, and the autograph letters purport to have been written by Washington and other distinguished personages.

A few years ago, it will be remembered, an individual was arrested and taken before the Mayor upon the charge of attempting to swindle people by selling bogus autograph letters of Washington. He acknowledged the soft impeachment, and in the presence of the Mayor wrote rapidly the signature "G. Washington" as perfect as in documents known to be genuine. Then there were some doubt about the genuineness of the letter which was displayed in Independence Hall, which had always attracted so much attention from visitors. Finally, to settle the matter, the letter was sent for by the Mayor. It was examined closely by the prisoner, who finally said, "Yes, that is one of them; I wrote that." Another development has been made within a few days past. One of the Peale family dropped into Independence Hall, and looked at the pictures. Portrait No. 50, labelled "General Charles Lee," attracted the especial attention of the visitor. The picture appeared to have a somewhat familiar appearance. A closer examination was made, and then it was discovered that the painting was a portrait of General Arthur O'Conner, of the Irish Rebellion of 1798. This picture of General O'Conner was painted by the late

Rembrandt Peale, at Paris, in 1813. When the Peale collection (which originally belonged to the Philadelphia Museum) was sold, about fifteen years ago, a part of the collection was purchased by the city, and a part by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Some of the portraits were bought by Barnum for his museum in New York, and were destroyed by fire, a few years ago. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania was very careful to have the portraits which it purchased accurately labelled, but the Committee on City Property, who purchased for Independence Hall, was not so cautious. We have the satisfaction of knowing, however, that our City Fathers were not the only persons "sold" by the bogus portrait, as a New York publisher, who was engaged in publishing a life of General Charles Lee, sent here and had an engraving made from the portrait for the purpose of illustrating the book.—*Philadelphia Evening Telegraph*.

INTERESTING RELICS.

The executor and legatees of Miss Henrietta J. Bedford, who died, in August, at the age of eighty two, have consented that the valuable relics left by her shall be exhibited at Mr. Zibra Ferris, Jr.'s, store, so that our citizens may have an opportunity of seeing them before they leave our State forever. As they are of historical interest, many, no doubt, will avail themselves of this opportunity.

They consist of the following articles :

1st. Two pocket pistols, silver mounted, presented by General Washington to Judge Gunning Bedford, and bequeathed to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington. Miss Bedford's will says: "During the Revolution, General Washington desiring my father, who was aid-de-camp on his staff, to go from Trenton to New York, on some secret embassy, at night, and fearing that he was not sufficiently, armed with the pistols in his holsters, presented him with a pair of pocket pistols, with a view to his protection and greater security, which I devise to the Smithsonian Institute at Washington." On handing the pistols to Judge Bedford, Washington said: "If you return alive, keep these pistols as a memento."

2d. A silver punch strainer, belonging to my maternal grandfather, James Parker. Its history is briefly this: Dr. B. Franklin and my grandfather were printer boys in Boston, and saved a silver dollar from their first earnings, by selling newspapers in that city. They had these dollars made into punch strainers, and exchanged with each other, so that this strainer is made out of the dollar earned by Dr. Franklin. This is bequeathed to the Smithsonian Institute.

3d. Heavy silver tankard and waiter, with the Penn coat of arms engraved on them. These were presented to Gunning Bedford, grandfather of Miss Bedford, by John Penn, Jr., and John Penn, Esq. The inscription on them is as follows: "Presented by John Penn, Jr., and John Penn, Esq., to Mr. Gunning Bedford, as a Respectful Acknowledgment of his services in 1788." These pieces are

willed to Judge Gunning S. Bedford, of New York city, who is a great-great-grandson of the original owner. These pieces are exceedingly interesting and valuable.

4th. One heavy silver meat dish spoon, presented to Mrs. Judge Bedford, on the occasion of the birth of her first child, by Dr. Benj. Franklin. The will says Franklin, at its presentation, jocularly remarked, "as a pap spoon." This interesting relic is bequeathed to Mr. John McAllister, of Philadelphia.

Judge Gunning Bedford, although not a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was one of its framers, but, with his friend, Mr. Broome, was unavoidably absent at the time of its signing. It is to be much regretted that the voluminous correspondence of the Bedford family with Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Monroe and others were destroyed, as it leaves a gap in history never to be supplied.—*Wilmington, Del., Gazette.*

THE NATIONAL CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

We call attention to the following letter, with a view of obtaining for Col. J. Ross Snowden matter of interest to advance the good work he is engaged in:

Dear Sir: I have, at the request of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, undertaken to prepare a memoir for the National Centennial "upon the precise time, place and incidentals of the composition, adoption, signing and promulgation of the Declaration of Independence."

In order that this work may be prepared in a creditable and acceptable manner, I have deemed it proper to invoke the assistance of my fellow citizens in collecting materials for it.

First—Persons who may have in their possession any letters, diaries or other manuscripts relating to this subject, will render a public service by sending me copies of such papers, or by giving a reference where they can be examined or obtained.

Second—I will also esteem it a favor to be referred to any published book, pamphlet or paper which may be useful in the discharge of the duty assigned to me. I make this request because some publications, especially those of a local and personal character, may escape my notice unless my attention is called to them.

Third—I intend to embrace in this memoir a notice of historical places and objects connected with the composition, adoption and promulgation of the Declaration of Independence; for example, the house where it was written, the desk used by Mr. Jefferson, the table upon which it was signed, the Hall of Congress, the chair of Hancock, the bell of Liberty, etc. And, as far as practicable, to notice the places of abode of each member of Committee of Independence, and of each member of Congress of 1776, while sojourning in Philadelphia. Information on these points will be gratefully received; and any engravings or drawings of persons or places connected therewith will be thankfully acknowledged. It is intended to illustrate the work with pictorial representations of historical places, and of persons and objects connected with the great event to be commemorated.

Fourth—Copies of the Declaration of Independence were sent, by order of the Continental Congress, under date of July 5, 1776, to the several Assemblies, Conventions and Committees of Safety of the thirteen States then declared free and independent; and to the several commanding officers of the Continental troops with instructions that it "be proclaimed in each of

the United States and at the head of the army." In Philadelphia, this order of Congress was carried into effect by the Council of Safety on the 8th of July, at 12 o'clock, at which time the Declaration of Independence was read and proclaimed from the building, in Independence Square, which had been erected in 1769 as an observatory to notice the transit of Venus. It will be interesting to place on permanent record the time and place of the promulgation of independence in the other States, and by the commanding officers of the Continental troops. Information on these subjects is also respectfully invoked.

Fifth—And generally any information, paper, manuscript or engraving which is germane to the subject herein mentioned, will be thankfully received, and will be duly acknowledged in the work which it is my intention to prepare, if life and health permit.

Very respectfully, yours,

J. ROSS SNOWDEN.

Philadelphia (No. 7 State House Row), Aug. 28, 1871.

NUMISMATIC PHRASEOLOGY.

In a previous number of this journal, we have called attention to the unmeaning and ambiguous phrases adopted by "some dealers" in cataloguing coin collections; as also the unnecessary introduction of new phrases in regard to conditions of coins. Unless numismatists, and those who undertake to catalogue coin cabinets for public sale, adhere to the simple rule of a correct description and use proper terms in designating the conditions of coins, the science of numismatics will become a byword and a reproach, instead of an important interesting study, which should, from its historical significance, take rank with the highest and most useful of intellectual attainments. Our attention has again been called to this subject by the receipt and perusal of the catalogue of the Nexsen coin sale, to come off on the 5th and 6th of the present month, in New York. Instead of the very concise, correct and brief terms, such as "fair," "good," "fine," "uncirculated," etc., we are treated to an admixture of conditions, in the Nexsen catalogue, alarming in frequency of occurrence, and amusing to the last degree in their significance as descriptive numismatic terms.

We trust in Brother Cogan's superabundance of good humor and placid good nature, in making a few selections notorious—out of no ill will to Mr. Cogan, or desire to make invidious critical distinctions between dealers. The Nexsen catalogue treats us to several new terms, the most imposing of which are, "smeared," "much rubbed," "more rubbed," "a little smeared," "been handled," "red, but smeared," "but been handled," (the latter an entire sentence), "been varnished," "much smeared," "slightly smeared," "more smeared." It will be seen by examination of the catalogue that the *smearing* term is of very frequent occurrence, and naturally leads one from the *cent* to the *scent*; to cipher out, or rather guess at the condition of the coins described. Has the owner been addicted to coating his coins with coal tar, or greasing them with ham fat, or have they been defiled by some worse coating, such, for instance, as shoemakers' wax and sandstone? The catalogue is not very explicit upon the meaning of *smeared*, and buyers at the sale must examine the

smear'd pieces, gingerly however, to satisfy themselves whether the coin is irredeemably injured or only delicately defaced. We have heard of very choice pieces being found in sewers, vaults and other obnoxious places, and perhaps the coins described as *smear'd* may only have been blackened by contact with gaseous matter or tarnished by foul vapors. Pray, Brother Cogan, avoid what, to your own good sense upon mature reflection, will prove to be stumbling blocks (in the way of successful progress) to the seeker after numismatic knowledge.

CHINESE AUTOGRAPHS.

In a German *Autograph Collectors' Manual*, published in Leipzig, in 1856, we find much curious information on the above subject, for which the author, in turn, acknowledges himself indebted to an article in the *Journal des Debats*.

As might be expected from what we know of the general character of that people, the Chinese regard autographs with a degree of veneration that is to us almost incomprehensible. The art of printing is to them "the divine art," "the inaudible voice that speaks to the spirit through the eye." As they worship their ancestors, it is, therefore, but natural that they should cherish their autograph relics with the most profound reverence.

In the "Flowery Kingdom," calligraphy is regarded not only as an art but as a science. The penmanship of every applicant for admission to membership in the Imperial Academy is personally examined by the Emperor, and, if approved, he is thenceforth entitled "Han-lin," or academician, and is universally recognized as a man of liberal culture.

(*To be continued.*)

THEFT OF VALUABLES.

Several weeks ago, Professor Wagner, of the Wagner Free Institute, Montgomery avenue and Seventeenth street, in this city, missed from his valuable collection a number of minerals, precious stones and other articles. The loss is heavy and not easily repaired, as the Professor had been engaged many years in gathering the collection, which he valued at one thousand dollars. The matter was placed in the hands of Alderman Hagey, and after a diligent search he succeeded in arresting George R. Shirtcliff and one A. P. Case, charged with stealing the articles. Case, it seems, travels about the country as a professor of phrenology, and on Sundays takes part in debates on atheism. He is a sanctimonious-looking individual, and is a fluent talker. The prisoners were committed in default of bail.

FORTHCOMING COIN SALE.

The cabinet of American and foreign coins and medals, the property of Jno. A. Nexsen, Esq., will be sold at public auction, by Bangs, Merwin & Co., New York, on the 5th and 6th instants.

PARIS RELICS.

Among the curiosities at the present moment must certainly be ranked the shells on sale, exploded and unexploded. At first, shells are sold in the rough, and good prices given for mere *eclats* or splinters. But the Parisian has a horror of anything *au naturel*, and cannot allow shells any more than beauty to go unadorned. So now there is an ingenious man on the Boulevard des Italiens who has made shells his *specialite*. He has got cones of shells as inkstands—and very solid ones they make, too—whole shells (spiteful lead-coated four-pounders these) made into tobacco boxes; broken pieces cleaned and polished, a little too much so to look genuine, and made into paperweights. One huge Krupp shell has been cut so as to take drawers in it for pens, pencils, etc., while another has been tilted on one side and shows a clock let into the hollow for the powder. These are only a few of the ingenious devices for making shells useful, if not ornamental, which may be seen in Paris, and there is at least one comfort for the inexperienced in purchasing this kind of relic, namely, that they run little danger of having a suppositious article palmed off on them, seeing that the supply of shells, burst and unburst, in Paris, just now, is likely to be sufficient for almost any possible demand.—*Paris Correspondent of the London News, 13th ult.*

A RARE PIECE OF WORK.

We have recently been shown a magnificent silver medal, the property of a gentleman in this city. It is about as large as an American dollar and bears upon its obverse a bust of the Pope, surrounded by the words, PIVS IX. PONT. MAS. AN. XXI. On the reverse is a representation of Christ washing the feet of the Apostles, and beneath are the words, EXEMPLUM DEDI VOBIS. It was presented to the owner, in 1866, by the Pope himself, through the hands of Archbishop Spalding, of Baltimore, and is remarkable as being the second medal ever presented by the Pope to an American. Large sums of money have been offered for it, but the owner will not part with it. Gen. W. F. G. Shanks, editor of *Harper's Magazine*, after examining the medal, in New York, in 1867, offered a thousand dollars for it, which was promptly refused.—*Oshkosh, Wis., Paper.*

FADED OUT.

The *Curiosity Cabinet*, published by W. P. Brown, New York, has vanished into thin mist, in other words, gone to keep company with the "Black spirits and white, Blue spirits and grey," of similar transparent publications which preceded it to *where the ivy clingeth*.

Hereafter, we shall change the well-known quotation to "Brown spirits and white," etc., "Don't give it up so, Mr. Brown" Whose turn next? as the barber says. There are several other publications flickering like a used up candle between daylight and dark. We are putting our house in order so that when our time comes we may slip unperceived into a quiet obscurity.

HIGH PRICED COINS.

That the "good time coming," when rare coins can be purchased for something like a reasonable price, is fast approaching, is evident from the mere announcement that three great cabinets of coins are to come into the market, viz: Dr. Clay's, Col. Cohen's and Major Hodge's private collections. The question is, Can the coin trade maintain the present extravagant prices for rare and fine coins, in the face of such vast collections to be sold during the present fall and coming winter months? In Dr. Clay's catalogue, duplicates upon duplicates are to be found, and we fear the coin market can scarcely maintain its extravagant prices for rare and choice pieces in the face of such extensive sales as now threaten to engulf it.

COIN SALE OF SEPTEMBER 5 & 6.

The sale of the Elliot collection and other coins, at Geo. A. Leavitt & Co's., Astor Place, New York, last month, was not an entire success. The first day's sale was a good one in point of attendance and pecuniary result; but the second day's sale was not a good one in either point. We account for the falling off in attendance and prices by the exhibition of the Clay cabinet of coins. After having a good view of the latter collection, collectors and dealers concluded to save their surplus funds to invest in the Clay collection; and, here we would remark that auctioneers make a great mistake in exhibiting at their rooms a cabinet of coins, to be sold at some future day, upon the very occasion of a sale of the same kind not then concluded. The result, under these circumstances, is disastrous to the owner of a cabinet as well as to the auctioneers.

COIN SALE.

A private collection of coins, medals, etc., will be sold, at Birch & Sons' auction rooms, in this city, about the 1st of November. Catalogues will be forwarded to our patrons in a few days.

Philatelic Department.

NEW ISSUES.

SPAIN.—We have the good fortune to be the first to reproduce the type which, if we are correctly informed, has been adopted by the government for the forthcoming series of Spanish stamps. It may be said to mark a new era in European postage stamp portraits, as no attempt had previously been made to give the features of royalty on such a (comparatively) large scale, and to produce a life-like appearance. The profile of Queen Victoria is an ideal, that of the French Emperor is the expression of a Napoleonic idea, whilst the other portraits are mere engravers' inanities. That of Amadeus I is, on the other hand, remarkable for its truthfulness; the likeness is unmistakable, and it is large enough to give room for the clear delineation

of every feature. In this respect, it reminds one forcibly of the two cent American, with head of Old Hickory. As to the general contour of the face, it is not difficult to trace therein a "family likeness" to Victor Emanuel. The framework is of fair average merit, but presents no very salient point; and we fear that the border does not leave room for the expression in prominent characters of the lengthy denomination of value found on Spanish stamps. Only a few copies have been struck off; and the colors are not yet decided on. We hope, however, soon to have intelligence of both colors and values, as we are promised early impressions of the forthcoming series.

JAPAN.—We were able, last month, to refer to a rumor to the effect that stamps for the Japanese empire were really in preparation, and our Brighton contemporary's last number contained engravings of the said stamps. From information and specimens we have since received, we are in a position to state that besides the three stamps alluded to, a fourth exists, and perhaps others. They are all on very thin Chinese wove paper of yellowish tinge, and are lithographed. The inscription in the centre is black, and the surrounding design in color.

SWEDEN.—The long-lived Swedish adhesives are to be relieved from service on the 1st of January, 1872, when they will make room for an entirely new and, let us hope, original series, composed of the following values, viz.: 3, 5, 6, 12, 20, 30, 50 ore, and 1 rix dollar. In other words, the value will be the same as the present, with a new one added—the rix dollar; but with the adhesives will appear also a 12 ore envelope and a 12 ore post card. It is rather strange that the card should be as dear as the envelope. What can be the advantage in using it on those terms? The cards, it is true, are to be sold at their facial value, whilst another ore will be added to the facial value of the envelopes, if not more than ten are bought at a time, and half an ore for greater quantities; still there is not very much difference between the all-hiding envelope and the all-displaying card. Colors and design are as yet unknown, but the correspondent who has kindly favored us with the foregoing information has promised to furnish us with proofs on cardboard as soon as possible.

FRANCE.—We clip from a Parisian paper of the beginning of last month the following item:

Paris is suffering now from an inundation of false 10 and 20 centimes postage stamps, which is really surprising. These stamps are, it appears, obtained from new dies, with the effigy of the republic, which have been stolen. They can with difficulty be recognized; one single detail of engraving, uncompleted at the time of the theft, distinguishes them from the genuine impressions. But the police are on the track of the counterfeiters, who, notwithstanding all their stamps, will hardly be able to *go free* themselves.

It appears as if the engraved republic series were here referred to, and not the Bordeaux type; if so, a new emission may be reckoned among the probabilities.

SWITZERLAND.—One of our correspondents sends us a Swiss en-

velope—the 30 centimes, blue, in left corner, bearing the usual dove watermark, and therefore evidently official, with a peculiar flap stamp, consisting of a shield, with an obscure device on it, supported by griffins and surmounted by a coronet. The envelope came from Berne, but the design does not much resemble that of the “Kanton Bern” fiscal stamps. The arms are enclosed in a beaded oval, and as the impression of the upper part therefore is not clear, it would seem that this flap stamp was struck after the envelope was completed. There is nothing in the vocation of the senders of this particular envelope to justify the addition by them of these armorial bearings; we therefore think they are added in the Berne post office; and if so, the envelopes on which they appear become varieties of considerable interest.

HUNGARY.—The series of Hungarian adhesives and envelopes, recently noticed, and which we should have mentioned as being identical in its values and colors with the Austrian set, seems likely to have but a brief circulation. The design was lithographed, and left much to desire on the score of clearness. Probably from this reason the postal authorities have, we assume, determined to supercede it by an *engraved* and identical design. At all events, we have before us a 2 kreuzer stamp bearing a design engraved with a fineness and delicacy which could not be surpassed; and it is in all respects the copy of its lithographed predecessor. The portrait of the emperor is a remarkable one; and we shall be much surprised if it does not turn out to be a perfect resemblance.

GERMANY.—First among the postal emissions for the new empire, comes an unpretending post card, inscribed with the words DEUTSCHES REICHS POSTGEBIET,—“Post office of the German Empire”—an inscription which represents a fact, and not an “idea.” The imperial eagle divides the two of the above words from the last. It is a single headed eagle, and its two legs shoot out straight from the body; in an escutcheon on his breast is the Prussian eagle, with its attributes. The card which we describe is buff, the inscriptions are in black, and there is a place ruled on the right hand side to contain the adhesive stamp.

NEVIS.—The one penny is now printed in a rosy lake shade, approaching that of the first edition, but distinguishable therefrom by the paper, which, like that of the preceding issue is pure white. This new variety came over by the West Indian mail, together with supplies of the penny orange red.

CEYLON.—A correspondent writing from Kandy, informs us that a new coinage for the island, with the denomination expressed in *cents*, is shortly to make its appearance; and, he adds, no doubt the stamps will also be renewed. In thus adopting the decimal system, Ceylon will only be following the example of the Straits Settlements.

VICTORIA.—We are informed by a correspondent that it is in contemplation to issue half penny adhesive stamps to be used to prepay the postage on local town letters.

DANUBIAN STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY.—The 10 soldi is now printed in the same color as the 17 soldi—deep rose.

ST. VINCENT.—The penny stamp of this island, hitherto printed in red, is now changed to black.—*Stamp Collectors' Magazine*.

ORIGIN OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

Although postage stamps are among the most familiar objects of daily use, it is probable that very few persons have troubled themselves to consider when and where they originated. In a pamphlet by M. Piron, *Sous-Directeur des Postes*, published in Paris, in 1838, and entitled, "Du Service des Postes, et de la Taxation des Lettres au Moyen d'un Timbre," we find that the idea of post-paid or stamped paper originated early in the reign of Louis XIV, with M. De Velayr, who, 1653, established a private penny post, placing boxing at the corner of streets for the reception of letters wrapped up in envelopes, which were franked by bands or slips of paper tied around them, with the inscription, "*Post paid the——day of——, 1653 or '54.*" These slips were sold for a *sou tape*, and could be procured at the palace, at the turn tables of convents, and from porters of colleges. When Louis XIV used to quit his habitual residence, the personages of his suit were accustomed to procure these labels intended to be placed around letters destined for Paris. M. De Velayr had also caused to be printed certain forms of *billets*, or notes, applicable to the ordinary business among the inhabitants of great towns, with blanks which were to be filled up by the pen with such special matter as might complete the writer's object. One of these *billets*, filled up by Pelisson and sent to Mademoiselle Scudery, is still preserved in Paris, and is one of the oldest of penny post letters extant, and a curious example of a prepaying envelope. These primitive slips and forms were irregularly used and soon fell into disuse. In 1758, however, under Louis XV, one M. De Chamouset, a wealthy Parisian, established a modest post for the metropolis, charging two *sols* for single letters under an ounce, which were prepaid by stamps similar to those now in use. Government, perceiving the gains thus derived from the new enterprise, took it from him, compensating him by an annual pension of twenty thousand francs; but so meagre were the arrangements of the government that the *stamps* were seldom used, and soon were entirely forgotten.

The next country to issue postal stamps was Spain, they having been authorized by a royal decree of the 7th December, 1716, which stipulated that the secretaries to the crown, etc., will have the privilege of apposing on the letters addressed to the other authorities a seal, impressed in ink, bearing the royal arms of Castile and Leon, which will pass them free. By the general regulation of the post (8th June, 1794) notice was given that the stamps mentioned in the decree of 1716 were to be used only for letters concerning public business. These official stamps remained in use until the beginning of the present century, when their issue was entirely abandoned.

We have now to introduce to our readers a description of semi-official stamped postal envelopes used in Italy (Sardinia) from 1819 to 1836. On the 7th of November, 1818, the emission of stamped postal paper was announced, and the conditions on which it might be used. This paper was prepared under the immediate supervision of the *Directeur des Postes*, and could be procured at post offices, and from vendors of tobacco, who received a commission upon their sales. There were three values: fifteen centesimi, twenty-five centesimi, and fifty centesimi. These covers were but little used, however, and were finally withdrawn by the seventy-third article of a royal decree of the 30th of March, 1836, in consequence of a modification being made in the postal regulations by the seventy-second article of the same law.—*Harper's Magazine*.

(*To be continued.*)

THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR A MILLION STAMPS.

The following article has been going the rounds of the press for the past two months:

The Post Office Department is almost daily in receipt of letters from various parts of the country, making inquiry as to the truth of the current newspaper statement that the Government will pay three hundred dollars to the collector of one million of cancelled postage stamps. Of course, this statement is utterly without foundation, and it was doubtless started by designing persons to induce the collection of quantities of defaced stamps, with the expectation of picking them up in large lots at a trifling cost after the collectors have ascertained the futility of the original expectation of selling them to the government.

As the United States government repudiates the bargain, we take up the discarded job and now in good faith offer three hundred dollars for one million used United States Postage stamps of any issue, delivered in lots of one hundred thousand, and the money to be paid when the stamps are all delivered. Stamps to be well mixed as regards values.

RARE CONFEDERATE POSTAGE STAMPS.

Having recently secured a few of the rare one cent orange postage stamps of the Confederate States, we will send a single specimen unused and warranted original, for 25 cents to any address. These stamps have been sold by dealers for \$2 each. Early application will be necessary, as we purpose sending those remaining unsold, after a few weeks, to England.

WOULD NOT STICK.

A letter was posted, at a village post office, that had no postage stamp on it, but in the place of the stamp had the following written on one corner of the envelope:

“Mr. Postmaster, don't charge no postage on this; the stamp wouldn't stick, so I tore the thing up.”

COINS FOR SALE.

English Silver Crowns, prior to 1700; good condition,	\$1 50
English Half Crowns; old dates,	75
French Medals; bronze; proof,	75
Greek Silver Coins,	75
“ Brass “	50
Roman Silver Coins,	50
“ Brass “	15
California Gold Dollar, octagon or round,	1 75
“ Half Dollar, “	75
“ Quarter Dollar, octagon or round,	50
United States Mint Sets—Five, Three, Two and One Cent Pieces; 1871; proofs,	25
United States Mint Sets—One Dollar to One Cent, inclusive; 1871; proofs,	4 50
100 Store Cards, all different, fine,	3 00
100 Rebellion Tokens, all different, fine,	3 00
Silver Proof Sets, 1859 to 1870, each,	5 50

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The London Times in miniature—a photographic copy of the great newspaper—every word and letter distinct and in exact form and appearance of the original—4 inches by 3 inches. Every lover of the curious should have a copy. Price, 25 cents. Also, Harper's Weekly—photographic copy in perfect miniature (size of a visiting card) and folded in exact appearance of the original—illustrations remarkably perfect. Price, 25 cents.

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UNITED STATES ENVELOPE STAMPS.

Complete sets of United States Envelope Stamps, issue of 1865, cut with wide margin, 9 envelopes, 3 cents to 40 cents, per set, free of postage, \$1 50.

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CONFEDERATE STAMPS.

Two Cent Stamp, head of Davis, rose, unused, each,	10 cents
Five do do blue, do	2 cents
Ten do do do do	3 cents
Five do do blue, large, do	25 cents
One do do orange, do	25 cents

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A private collection of United States Cents, 1793 to 1857, including varieties of 1793, 1800, 1806, 1819, 1811, 1814; also including Colonial Coins of Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey, Virginia, &c. All the rare cents in fair condition; later dates good to uncirculated. Price, \$35.

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We have a fine steel plate for framing, 24 by 30 inches, containing the Lord's Prayer in fifty-four languages. Mailed for 50 cents.

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