

JUNIOR VIEW.

WITH THE BEGINNERS.

(By J.D. CAMPBELL)

I intend to devote some space to the subject of arranging and "writing up" of collections in loose-leaf albums. I suggest that those of my readers who have not yet reached the loose-leaf stage may find the subject useful to remember as all serious collectors reach this stage eventually.

Under the sub-title of "arranging," we may consider the choosing of an album. The main points to be noticed are the mechanism, the paper, and the covers. While I fully appreciate the fact that few beginners care to spend much on accessories (for every penny spent on accessories is a penny less for stamps) I must say I consider a good album to be quite essential. A cheap one may be a suitable home for a small collection, but as that collection grows — in value as in size — the album ceases to be worthy of it, and the collector is in danger of "spoiling the ship for a ha'porth of tar."

The mechanism of the album is important, but one can rely on getting a good strong article if one buys an album made by one of the well-known British firms. Avoid all books not made for stamps — such as old loose-leaf folders or ledgers. These are quite unsuitable and may easily spoil the stamps. The three best-known types of mechanism are the peg-fitting, slot-fitting and spring-back. Rather than expend space on describing these mechanisms, I would advise the collector to see each for himself before choosing any particular one. All are satisfactory and the last-named is perhaps the easiest to handle. For myself I prefer the slot fitting as being likely to last longer than the spring-back, and also because the leaves are more firmly held. However, the spring-back type will be found to outlast its covers in most cases.

The covers should be as strong as possible, and should have reinforced corners if the pocket will allow such a luxury. It will be found that an album with a good mechanism always has a good cover, but a good cover does not necessarily mean a good mechanism.

My own choice (finances permitting) of paper would be for an album having hand-made paper of a light cream shade, fairly thick, and linen-hinged, faintly ruled, and with transparent interleaving. This would be expensive, but with a good machine-made paper it would be quite cheap and within the reach of most collectors. The linen-hinging I consider to be not a luxury but a necessity. It allows the book to lie flat when opened — a great advantage. The transparent interleaving is cheap, and also essential for the protection of the stamps. Some albums have the backs of the

leaves covered with "Japan-tissue," this is an expensive refinement which does away with the need for interleaving.

Black leaves are becoming very popular, but are entirely a matter of taste. I do not think they will ever oust the white or cream leaves from their present position of first favourites.

THE CHARM OF STAMP COLLECTING.

(By E.W.B.)

Stamp collecting is a delightful hobby, simple enough for the simplest Simon, technical enough for the keenest scientist. Anyone can collect stamps. Therein lies the chief of its charms. Boys and girls, old men and women, rich and poor, wise and foolish — anyone and everyone at or between these extremes can find some point of interest in the King of Hobbies. Stamps are about the easiest things in the world to collect, and they can be about the most difficult. A showy and pleasureable collection can be gotten together without any expense at all to the collector, and at the same time, a king's ransom may be paid to secure some elusive specimen scarcely one inch square! Yes, the charm of stamp collecting lies partly in the fact that it is a hobby that appeals "to all sorts and conditions of men."

There is a tendency to-day, to replace "specialised" collecting with "subject" collecting. So varied are the designs of modern stamps that it is possible, for instance, to illustrate in the album the evolution of the aeroplane. Beginning with stamps illustrative of mythological flights, of Daedalus, the Sun Chariot of the Greeks and others, the story of the conquest of the air is progressively shown. There are miniature engravings of Leonardi de Vinci's quaint flying machine, of Wilbur Wright's plane, of Bleriot's crossing of the Channel and of the "Southern Cross." There is wonderful interest in a collection of this kind, for there are all sorts of side lines — pictures of aeroplanes over famous cities, over the Wall of China, over smoking volcanoes and so on. Then there are the epics of the air. Polar rescues, strathosphere attempts, famous air routes, to say nothing of those historic souvenirs of pioneer flights — autographed covers.