

SPAIN.—*The Centenary of Don Quixote.*—To celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Don Quixote*, the immortal work of Cervantes, the Spanish authorities have seen fit to issue a series of ten stamps, which will remain in circulation from May 1st to May 15th, according to a Royal Decree, which was published in the *Gaceta de Madrid* on 6th April, 1905. These stamps have been engraved by Don Bartolomé Maura in the National Coin and Stamp Factory. They are printed in various colours on white paper with control numbers in blue on the back, and are perforated 14. They will be on sale in the Madrid post offices. The designs are excellent, but the execution is very poor. Seeing the general interest that cannot fail to be aroused by the issue, it is a great pity that the stamps were not produced more in the manner of the very beautiful set which Crete has issued lately, for the Cretan stamps are really little works of art.

The 5c. depicts the first setting out of Don Quixote; the 10c. shows the windmill and Don Quixote tilting at it; the 15c. shows the hero on his knees before the village maidens mounted on asses; the 25c. will win fame as being probably the record of the funniest scene that has appeared so far on a stamp, for it represents Sancho being tossed in the blanket; in the 30c. the Knight is receiving his armour, and in the 40c. he is charging a flock of sheep with his lance; the 50c. shows the Knight riding the hobby-horse, and on the 1 peseta, he is having his adventure with the lions; on the 4 pesetas the Knight is riding in the long waggon drawn by oxen; and in the 10 peseta we are privileged to witness the meeting between the Knight and the Enchanted Lady. *Don Quixote* has been translated into Latin and into probably every living printed language. Cervantes died on April 28rd, 1616, eleven years after the publication of the first part of his great work.

Adhesives— 5c., green; first setting out of Don Quixote.
 10c., scarlet; tilting at the windmill.
 15c., violet; before the village maidens.
 25c., blue; Sancho tossed in a blanket.
 30c., turquoise-green; knighting Don Quixote.
 40c., rose; charging the sheep.
 50c., blue; El Chavil no.
 1p., red; adventure with the lions.
 4p., violet; Don Quixote riding in a waggon.
 10p., orange; the Enchanted Lady.

G.S.W.

PURLOINED GOVERNMENT STAMPS.

A recurrence of trafficking in the 5s. coin, 10s. duty, surcharged "postage," and 20s. Carrington stamps, taken off "collect" forms, which came to light about five years ago, came before the postal authorities of Sydney quite recently. "Collect" forms are papers representing amounts collected by country telegraph masters on telegrams which have been forwarded from various sources, and are marked "collect." This means that the receiver of the telegram is to pay for it

on it being delivered. At the end of each day the telegraph master places the equivalent of the money received in stamps on a form provided for the occasion, and in due course these forms are forwarded to the head office, where they are filed and stored for auditing purposes, and destroyed after being kept for two years. However, two officials in the G.P.O. thought that as they were no longer of any use there would be no harm in taking these stamped forms. Had they been content with keeping them for collecting purposes only, nothing further would, perhaps, have been heard of their rather questionable action, but these young gentlemen put them openly on the market, and thereby made a grievous blunder. The authorities then took steps to prevent--as they thought--any further trafficking in these stamps. But from recent developments, it is evident that the precautions were relapsed at some time or the other. Some disinterested (?) person informed the authorities recently that a parcel of 5s. and 20s. stamps, bearing the postmark of either Broken Hill or Newcastle, dated after the first exposure, had come into the possession of a dealer in Sydney. Investigations led to the finding of the offender, who confessed to his guilt. The investigating officer informed our publisher that the Department had, prior to the discovery of the second fraud, taken steps to prevent the recurrence of the 1901 fraud, as, since the beginning of April, all stamps of the 5s., 10s. and 20s. denominations, used for "collect" purposes, have had a hole of about a quarter-of-an-inch in diameter punched into them.

Brevities.

The Postal Service of Siberia.

If the Japanese may claim priority in an official service for conveying postal correspondence, the Russians, though they cannot claim such a standing, possess a very original and little known organisation. They have organised a postal service on the Yenissei, one of the largest rivers in Siberia, the mails being transported by means of specially-constructed vessels pulled by dogs. The banks of the river being quite impassable owing to the growth of plants, &c., the dogs find their way by wading through the water, jumping from rock to rock and swimming, and in this manner each vessel is towed by two teams composed of eight dogs each. Thus the service is carried on between the two important cities of Tenisrick and Furnschoesck, the distance being over 500 kilometres (about 300 miles). All the towns and villages adjacent to the river side are served by this system, and it works as regularly as the postal vans of olden times on the big roads of France. It is not mentioned whether the conductors of these mails are bipeds or bow-wow postmen.—*Postman's Gazette*.

Exit Corea.

We are informed from a reliable source, that the stamps of Corea are to become obsolete, the postal service of that country being taken over