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A Power that Moves the World.

BY "REGINALD."



FREEPORT, KANSAS:

F. R. GILLET, Publisher.

1888.

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PREFACE.

The purpose of this little volume is to enlighten those who are not already familiar with its subject—STAMP COLLECTING, and who are willing or desirous to become acquainted with one of the most popular pursuits of the day. Nearly everyone has a "hobby," something in which they become specially interested, and whether it be minerals, coins, books, or paintings, the enthusiast invariably collects and treasures up all he can of them.

Of stamps, their curiosity as a relic or novelty from strange, faraway lands, their convenience as keepsakes, their bright colors and curious designs, soon brought them into favor wherever known, and since the introduction of stamp collecting about thirty years ago it has risen to the front ranks of the collecting world.

That my remarks may merit the reader's appreciation is the wish of

THE AUTHOR.



A Power that Moves the World.

AN insignificant article of every day use may be one of the most necessary and powerful factors of our civilization. So it is with the postage stamp. This little thing may be fitly termed "a power that moves the world," the business world at least, as by its use the people of all countries are kept in communication with one another. To send a letter 10,000 miles today is as cheap and as safe as it was to send it ten miles 50 years ago, before the familiar postage stamp was brought into the world to revolutionize the old postal methods. In those dark days, it cost 32 cents to send a letter from London to Liverpool—less than 200 miles; \$1.00 from the Mississippi to California, and all other distances at exorbitant rates, while 2 cents will now take a letter any distance in almost any country on the globe, and all owing to the postage stamp.

About fifty years ago there was much

agitation in England over a scheme to introduce a uniform rate of postage, so that all people, rich and poor alike, could share in the benefits of correspondence at a low price per letter. In those times when a person had to send a letter (which was quite an important event) it had to be weighed at the postoffice, charged for the distance to be traveled, then paid for in money. This system was so complicated, uncertain and extravagant that many wise heads set to work to devise a means of relief. The new method under consideration was to have the P. O. carry a letter to any place in the kingdom at the same rate for a given weight, and find a new way to collect the postage in advance, to simplify accounts and save much useless trouble and expense. After three years of discussion and experiments the whole scheme was about to fail for want of a practical method of collecting the money in advance without considerable inconvenience to the public. At this juncture James Chalmers, of Dundee,

Scotland, brought forth in parliament an invention of his, which was simply a small piece of paper printed on one side and gummed on the other. But it had the desired effect; it was tested and proved a simple and practical means of supplying the long felt want of a Uniform Penny Postage. Thus this memorable bit of paper was the first adhesive stamp ever issued, and with its use began the process of revolutionizing the postal system of Great Britain. As the fame of the stamp's utility became known other governments gradually adopted them, and in 1847 the U. S. of America did so. Every year has seen some nation bring out stamps for its use, until today the whole world is linked together, so to speak, by the postage stamp and the postal system which it inaugurated.

The above briefly outlines the origin of the postage stamp, and now for a few facts on the subject of collecting stamps.

Not many years after the first introduc-

tion of stamps, some people in England, France, Belgium and Germany began to save and treasure up all the stamps they could find. Tradition has it that a French schoolmaster started the mania, as it was then called, by advising his scholars to place the different stamps in their atlases to render the study of geography more interesting. However, the time, place and cause of first starting the pursuit is unknown, and matters not except as a historical fact. In early days collectors were an object of contempt and ridicule; newspapers amused themselves by publishing libelous articles about the new pastime which was fast taking a hold on persons in every walk of life. But in spite of all the derision, stamp collecting flourished and prospered, wielded its charm among people everywhere, and in a few years became very fashionable in all Europe. 'Twas the plaything of society (a stamp album being as much a necessity as a parrot or lapdog,) the amusement of men and women, and the delight of the young people. It soon grew to such an extent as to demand attention as a source of

profit. In Paris, the hotbed of novelty, there was a stamp bourse or exchange, frequented secretly by clerks, business men, fashionable women, and all sorts of people who bought, sold and exchanged stamps, always with a sort of feeling that if their pursuits were known they would appear very ridiculous. Many persons began to make a business of dealing in stamps; and in 1862 the first catalogue was issued, describing, with price, all the varieties then known. About the same year a paper devoted wholly to stamp collecting was started in England, also one in Belgium; the latter, called "Le Timbre Poste," is still published, having been issued every month for over 25 years. In Germany and France illustrated papers began publishing serials on stamps about that time, while in these and other countries special papers devoted to the subject have never been found wanting. In the United States there are about a dozen magazines, besides many papers, devoted entirely to stamp collecting.

In 1880 M. Terpin, of France, introduced

the word "Philately," composed of two Greek words signifying love of exemption from tax, and applied it to the pursuit of stamp collecting. The word Philately was thus universally adopted as the name of the science, and the definitions of the terms now in use are as follows:

PHILATELY, noun; (pronounced philat-ely, accent on second syllable,) the science or profession of the collection, classification and study of postage and revenue stamps.

PHILATELIST, n., a devotee of philately.

PHILATELICO, adj., pertaining to philately.

So philately or stamp collecting continued to make rapid progress in all corners of the earth, and soon its votaries outnumbered the collectors of coins, minerals, and everything else. It became a pleasant study as well as a fashionable pastime; stamps, coming as they do from every nation of the world, impart much valuable information to collectors. Their attractiveness and oddity of design not only make them objects of interest, but to

understand them much must be learned of art, history, geography, postal laws and customs, in fact considerable is learned of all nations and peoples. The public is finding out, as people examine the pages of intelligently filled albums, that these gems are really the monuments and records of the world's modern history, commercial and political, and they can find stamps instructive as well as attractive.

The public press has come to speak with more respect, sometimes with eulogy, of a pursuit which is now found to occupy the leisure of potentates and statesmen, judges, lawyers, journalists, physicians and clergy, princes and magnates of the commercial world, officers of the army and navy, besides thousands of workers in less conspicuous positions who find pleasure and study among stamps.

As for philately being a frivolous pursuit and waste of time and money, so much has been said to prove the fallacy of these ideas that to argue further for the cause on this point has grown entirely too old for reiteration here. The narrow-minded individual who sees nothing in it, and even speaks

disparagingly of it, may be put down as a Rip Van Winkle unfit for this progressive age. School children who collect stamps are always ahead of others in the class who know nothing of this "royal road to learning." Teachers and principals of eastern schools encourage it among their pupils, and some adopt it in the school-room as an assistant instructor. Philately cultivates the memory and keenness of perception, promotes useful business ideas among them and educates the boys up to the times and ways of the world. As they grow older and enter active business life, their stamp album is full of enjoyment for their leisure hours, and those who keep their interest in philately during their entire career find it a solace for their old age, and are comforted by the treasures which they preserved for so many years. They recall many happy hours and incidents, which they might never have enjoyed had they not been interested in the popular pastime.

One important feature that greatly adds

to the interest in stamps is their commercial or money value, for all kinds of stamps are marketable for cash to any reputable dealer, and are worth from a few cents per thousand for the commonest, to \$200 or \$300 each for the rarest. These last figures are no exaggeration, even more is known to have been paid for a single stamp by some collectors. At any auction sale of stamps where valuable ones are offered it is not unusual for a stamp to bring from \$50 to \$150. At these sales assemble a crowd of intelligent men who go there to invest in the gems which yield them pleasure and profit. Many of the buyers travel long distances to attend auctions; this fact itself is conclusive evidence of philately's value and stability. It is well to bear in mind the fact that, as surely as stamp collecting and the stamp business increases, so do all stamps become more valuable and scarce. Money invested in them is always at interest, and parents should encourage their children in the pursuit, for 'it will be of

much better use to have them spend their spare earnings for stamps than for candy, toys, etc., and the boy who is truly interested will never neglect an opportunity to add to his album, which is a constant source of pleasure to him.

Philatelic societies have been organized in nearly all towns and cities where there are many collectors, who are mutually benefitted by union the same as any other class of people. They hold regular meetings and transact business relating to their vocation.

In September, 1886, the first National society of philatelists in the United States was organized, in New York City, and chartered under the name of "The American Philatelic Association." The advantages of membership in such a society are indispensable to anyone interested in stamps. On Aug. 8, 9 and 10th, 1887, the Association held its Second Annual Convention, in the Tremont House, Chicago. Members from all points of the compass were in attendance, some coming from as far as Boston, and thus was achieved another

victory for Philately. The daily papers published reports and editorials about the convention and society, which entered upon its second year in harmony and prosperity. The membership is over 400 at present and is steadily gaining. Its officers are gentlemen of high standing in the profession, who, with the hearty co-operation of members, are bound to make the American Philatelic Association as glowing a success as the well-established European societies. The A. P. A.'s Official Journal, published every month, is a high-class magazine furnished free to members. It is needless to describe, in this article, the numerous valuable features of our National Association, or to give the casual reader a fuller description of it.

Canadian collectors have recently organized a National Society; in fact philatelists in all parts of America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia are uniting themselves by means of societies, for the association of ideas and dissemination of knowledge, for the progress of our science and its benefits,

and for the ultimate unity, harmony and
fraternity of a universal brotherhood,
linked together by the potent charm of this
POWER THAT MOVES THE WORLD.

VIVE LA PHILATELIE !

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The rarest stamp in the world is a 4 cent British Guiana of 1850. Only one is known to exist, and it is valued at \$750.

There are about 50,000 varieties of stamps in the world. No one can get a complete collection, even with the wealth of the Vanderbilts.

H. E. Deats, of Flemington, N. J., recently purchased a magnificent stamp collection of Mr. E. B. Sterling, the celebrated Trenton dealer, for \$7,000.

The Prince of Wales has a valuable stamp collection. One of the Rothschilds, and a host of other famous people of Europe, are all philatelists.

One of the finest collections of stamps in this country is that of Mr. J. K. Tiffany, St. Louis, Mo. Mr. Tiffany is President of the American Philatelic Association, and is author of several good works on stamp subjects.

At the Scott Co's 32d auction sale, held Jan. 13th in New York, a fine specimen of the Brattleboro stamp was sold to Mr. Bogert for \$226.00. The same buyer secured a N. Y. 3c buff for \$86.00. Proceeds of the evening's sale, \$1,987.00.

The champion collection of stamps is that of M. de Ferrari, the famous Parisian collector. It is worth \$500,000! He is said to be one of the richest men in the world, and employs a learned philatelist to look after his albums, in return for the modest salary of \$3,000 a year.

There are many valuable stamps hidden away on old letters, etc., in various places, and if the owners only knew of their value they would be glad to hunt them up and sell them. Look among your old letters, documents &c. and see if you can bring any to light. The stamps of our own country are prized more than any others, and you may find some rarities. Certain stamps used in the late Confederacy are worth a fabulous sum. Don't take the stamps off the envelopes if you find any, they are worth more entire.

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Very few people have any idea of the vast extent of stamp collecting. A careful estimate gives the number of philatelists in the world as follows:

United States of America	225,000
Great Britain	200,000
France and Belgium	150,000
Germany and Austria	175,000
Other European countries	47,000
Canada	35,000
South and Central America	6,000
Africa and Australia	7,000
All other countries	5,000
Total	<u>850,000</u>

The above figures are hardly up to the average, some placing the world's collectors at two millions. New York City is said to have forty thousand of them. What attractions and benefits Philately must have to claim a million civilized people as its followers.

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