



AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE

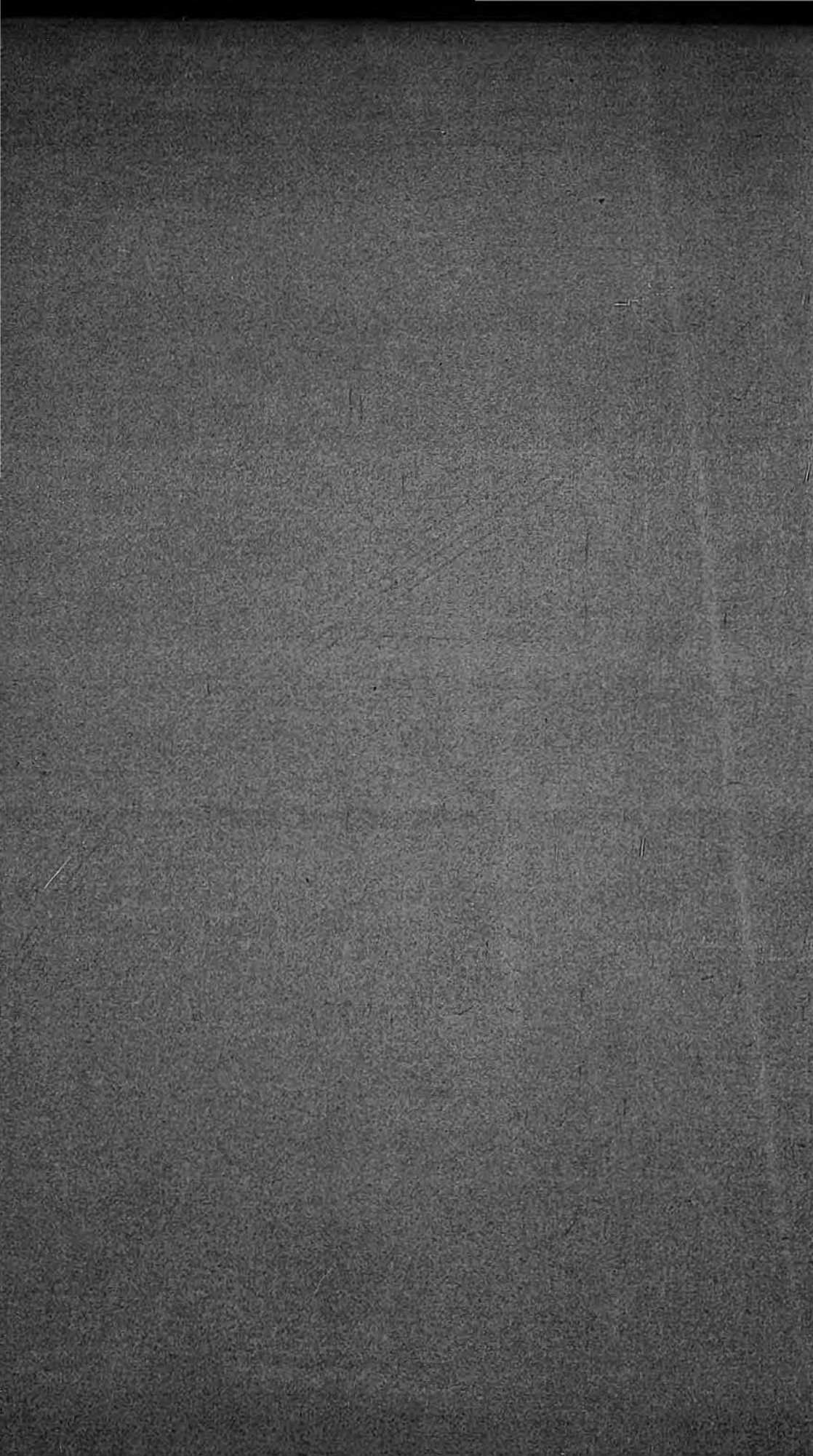
American Philatelic Association.

BY THE PRESIDENT,

JOHN K. TIFFANY.

PRICE TEN CENTS.

CHICAGO:  
WESTERN PHILATELIC PUBLISHING CO.,  
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DELIVERED BY PRESIDENT JOHN K. TIFFANY, BEFORE THE SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE AMERICAN PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION, HELD AT THE TREMONT HOUSE,  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, AUGUST 8, 9, AND 10, 1887.

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Fifty years ago last February a small pamphlet appeared in England which inaugurated a mighty revolution. Not a noisy, turbulent, violent revolution, but a silent, slow, irresistible change that made an important department of the British government no longer a panderer to the luxury of the rich and the few, but the servant of the millions, of the poor as well as the well-to-do. Its idea was not absolutely novel, perhaps, for others before had suggested pretty much the same thing. Their suggestions had only been looked at as a curious seed, that might some day produce an unknown plant. But this author was a man of deeds as well as words; he not only exhibited the mysterious seed, but having sown it, cultured and watched it, until after three years careful tending it began to grow. It was a tiny seed, yet the plant covered the United Kingdom, and now after fifty years its branches extend over the civilized world. It was the idea of Uniform Penny Postage; that instead of the old system of charging by the piece and the distance, with its complicated, uncertain, and bewildering system of accounts, the post office should carry for the same rate every letter, under a certain weight, from any office in the kingdom to any other, irrespective of distance; that this rate should only vary by being doubled for a double weight, or trippled for triple weight, etc.; that it should be paid in advance, thus abolishing the necessity for accounts, and should be about the sum that represented the average cost of handling a letter, calculated by dividing the entire cost of the service by the number of letters carried.

We are so used to this state of things,—it is so easy, so simple, so cheap, that we write our letters daily, hourly, at any minute perhaps, and commit them to the mail, or receive the communications of distant friends or business correspondents, upon trivial and weighty matters alike, whenever and wherever we may be, without a thought of the days, only fifty years ago, when the arrival or departure of a letter in the household or the office was an important event, and the postage an expenditure not to be made thoughtlessly, even by those in comfortable circumstances, not to be added to the expenses of a business house without due consideration,—an absolute prohibition to correspondence among the poor.

To the officials of the English postoffice of fifty years ago, to learned statesmen and expert politicians, men familiar with the old methods of the business community, of the commercial world, of every affair of life, the new scheme appeared perilous, ruinous, preposterous. Three years of discussion, public and private, ensued before the statesmen of the day even dared to try it, and when at last the Lords and the Commons had heard all the testimony of all classes of the kingdom and it seemed as if it might be a good thing if it could be done, it was about to fail for want of a practical method of collecting the money in advance without too great inconvenience to the public. Rowland Hill, to whom hardly too great a meed of praise can be given as one of those who have succeeded in putting into execution their plans for the amelioration of the human race, does not seem to have at first suggested a very practical method of collecting this postage. Think for a moment of the scenes that would be witnessed at the post-offices of any of our large cities if every letter had to be carried to the window, weighed, and paid for in money; and his stamped sheets and covers, or envelopes, were hardly better or more con-

venient. At this juncture parties to whom the invention of James Chalmers of Dundee had been communicated, brought it forward in Parliament again and Uniform Penny Postage was made simple and practical by the Adhesive Postage Stamp. Thirty-two pages of printing started the reform. About one-half a square inch of paper printed on one side and gummed on the other made it practicable and perpetuated it. It is all so familiar now, so easy, so trivial, that we hardly pause to think of it. Few persons imagine any other state of affairs as possible; few ever give to Hill or Chalmers a thought, much less the meed of thanks that is their due. We may not pause even here to-day to consider how great the change this suggestion has wrought; how it has modified the ways of doing business, how it has increased the possibilities of intercourse between severed friends, facilitated the circulation of ideas and news, and made the whole world kin. But its growth was slow. Established in England in 1840, it was only after five years of agitation, discussion, and investigation that uniform postage was adopted in the United States, and then only partially. It was two years more before the Adhesive Postage Stamp was authorized by law, for the first stamp sold by the Postmaster General of the United States was sold on the 5th of August, 1847, just forty years ago last Friday, and it was seven years more before compulsory prepayment was enacted. Other countries had adopted postage stamps before the United States. Gradually they have been introduced in all civilized countries, and many half-civilized and even barbaric nations, as we call them, are now enjoying the benefits of the invention of Chalmers and the persevering energy of Hill.

After a discussion of thirty-five years the first practical steps were taken towards a Uniform International Postage, and we had the Universal Postal Union. For twelve years, with a slow but sure and steady growth, the Union has been gathering in new members and increasing postal facilities, and many propositions of still greater reductions in the rates are being discussed and the necessity of the adoption of an international postage stamp is now seriously considered. Before the American Philatelic Association shall have attained its full growth and vigor, we may see the day when it will cost no more to send a letter from Chicago to the ends of the earth than it does to send it from New York to Brooklyn, for the principle of uniform postage is applicable to the case, and to-day a letter travels with greater security from London to the remotest corner of India, from Chicago to Japan for less postage, than it was carried for before the adoption of the plans of Hill and the invention of Chalmers from one district of London to another, or from Washington to New York. And these little bits of colored paper, which are used and thrown away by the thousands every day in the four corners of the earth, are the potent agents that have made all this possible. Their varying forms, their attractive designs, their artistic execution, their diversity of color, early made them objects of interest, and here and there one and another began to collect and preserve them; with great secrecy at first, in great ignorance for a long time, under the ban of contempt and ridicule for years, with great jealousy among those who cherished them when known to each other, the prey of the designing forger from the first, until at last the public press deigned to notice this new species of mania, as they called it, with scorn and contempt, an evidence of "softening of the brain" they said; and then it became fashionable, the plaything of society, and a stamp album was as much a necessity in my lady's boudoir as a parrot, a lap dog, or a pug. Then came a new harvest for the forger: bright, clean reproductions of unattainable varieties brought fair prices; inventions of stamps for remote and uncivilized countries, chemically changed specimens galore. In simulated mourning for deceased royalty the blues were made black with acids, or the greens became blues for a few days only, in honor of a royal birthday or a national jubilee. All this was gravely repeated and believed it appears, for so great was the dearth of specimens and so rare was any knowledge of what stamps actually existed that every novelty was prized and accepted. In Paris, the hot-bed of novelty, there was even a stamp bourse or exchange, frequented secretly by clerks supposed to be attending to important business of their employers; by fashionable women, closely disguised it is said, at hours when they were supposed to be engaged in napping or dressing; by sedate business men supposed to be at grave committee meetings; by persons of all sorts who bought, sold, and exchanged, always with a sort of feeling that if their pursuits were known they would appear very ridiculous. Then a bonanza was struck. The flock of rare birds called locals became the legitimate game of the collectors; a very profitable source of revenue of many suspicious express companies, a neat addition to the profits of some real business concerns, the joy and delight of the forgers. Until then a few hundred specimens, many of them forgeries or

inventions, could be counted in the largest collections—say twenty-five years ago—but the “locals” soon doubled the number. Twenty-two years after the first stamp was issued in England, an amateur paper began a series of articles on stamps and a stamp paper devoted to the interests of collectors was started. It lasted about two years. The next year another started and appeared regularly each month for about twelve years and then changed its name and form, and it has thus survived to the present day. In Belgium, about the holidays of 1862, *Le Timbre-Poste* appeared, and our latest mails have brought many of us the Jubilee number which celebrates its 25th anniversary. In Germany and France illustrated papers publish serials on stamps at this time, and in both countries special papers devoted to the pursuit have never since been found wanting. The philatelic press was soon represented in America, and we recall the *Record*, the *Mercury*, and the *American Journal* among the pioneers. But their pathway is marked by many a forgotten grave. About the same time the first catalogues appeared, vest-pocket editions they seem now, with their pages three by four inches square. The early ones in France, Belgium, Germany, England, and America, are all much alike; that issued by the publisher of *Le Timbre-Poste* looks like a pigmy beside his latest work, which with its two supplements is larger than many a family Bible.

In the meantime collectors learned something. They have discovered that these little bits of paper have an interest much greater than that of oddity of design or shape, attractiveness of workmanship or color; that to thoroughly understand them much must be learned of art, of the artistic talent, and of the mechanical processes and skill that are required to adapt them to their use and are spent in their manufacture; that much of geography must be learned, and of postal law and regulation. The public is beginning to learn, as one after another is induced to examine the pages of the intelligently filled albums that may now be found in every city and in many a quiet village, that these tiny gems are really the monuments and records of much of the world's history, if not always of its political, at least of its commercial history, which is often the most important. For here is written much of how “empires have grown and tottered to decay.” In the sombre colors of the first black, the V. R., the Mulready envelope, through the succeeding issues to the Jubilee series that this year have been added to our albums, are recorded forty seven years of the reign of England's Queen. In the stamps of France, the republic, the presidency, the empire, the German war, the siege of Paris, the balloon and pigeon posts, the loss of Alsace, the Republic again, are all recorded. The Unification of Italy, the loss of the temporal power of the Popes, the amalgamation of Germany, the changes in Turkey and its subordinate States; the spread of the English Supremacy in India, the gradual march of our civilization in China and Japan, a United Canada, the civilizing of South America, the civil war and some of its greatest tragedies in the United States, are all there recorded, and from finding it at first attractive, the public is finding it instructive. Even in some of the public schools, stamp collecting has been introduced as an assistant instructor.

The Public Press has come to speak always with more respect, sometimes with eulogy even, of a pursuit which is now found to occupy the leisure of potentates and statesmen, judges, counsellors, and attorneys, physicians and clergy, the princes and magnates of the commercial world, the officers of the army and navy, as well as thousands of the workers in less conspicuous positions, not merely as a pastime and a fashionable frivolty, but as an interesting study. The Government officials who for years have looked with suspicion upon these stamp collectors, whom they suspected very unjustly of being in some way, they know not how or wherefore, engaged in some attempt to defraud the revenues of the post office, are beginning to see that the interest of collectors to suppress all manner of fraud in regard to stamps, to disseminate accurate knowledge in regard to what has been, is, and is to be, is having a beneficial influence even to the suppression of abuses in the use of the mails, and not a little in the increase and protection of the postal revenues, and are slowly opening their records and letting collectors know what has been recorded of the proceedings and enactments of long ago and of to-day that has resulted in the issue of stamps of various series. A very cursory examination of the collector's library will show how very different were the articles and catalogues of twenty years or even ten years ago, with their guess work and inaccuracies, from the periodicals of to-day with their publications of decrees, statutes, and postal regulations, the manuals and even treatises embodying the accurate postal history of separate countries, from the introduction of stamps to their latest issues. Some of these volumes are as accurate as the official records can make them, such as that issued

In Spain with the sanction of its postal department, or the history of the stamps of England, compiled from the records in the stamp office. And the growth and spread of the desire for this knowledge has been fostered largely by the journals devoted to stamp collecting, but perhaps still more by the formation of associations and societies of stamp collectors, primarily in most cases for mutual assistance in enriching their collections, but always incidentally, often principally, with the object of learning something concerning their mutual pursuit.

Collectors are just beginning to appreciate the advantage of union. They are beginning to understand that their own collections are neither more nor less perfect or interesting because those of their neighbors contain this or that that is wanting in their own, and that by exchanging duplicates, comparing notes, discussion, and exchange of ideas, much of interest is added to the pursuit, many pitfalls and mistakes are avoided, and the larger and better other collections become thereby the larger and better their own become; in short, that it does not pay to be selfish and jealous, besides being very uncomfortable. There is room enough for all. The more accurate and extensive our knowledge of what exists in rarities, varieties, possibilities, the more we become sure that no one can aspire to absolute perfection. No one can hope for a perfect collection, no matter how much his plan is restricted. If he feels very bad about it there are always some consolations, and while he learns of the imperfections of his own collection, if he must be a little jealous he will probably learn of the imperfections of his neighbors' collections also, and not be slow to see points in which his own surpasses them. Perhaps if he learns enough, knowing how much is to each utterly unattainable, he will reach that state of sublime contentment with himself and his surroundings that is said to have possessed the last survivor of the flood, who, as the waters closed over the highest mountain, and hope and life abandoned all except himself and the ark, swam composedly on and called out to Noah, "I'll race your old tub, this is only a shower."

In England societies of collectors do not seem to flourish, at least we hear very little of them and their periodicals say less. But the Philatelic Society of London, if not the very oldest that exists, and confining its membership very closely as it does, has done much and good work for its members; not in the way of increasing their collections so much as in the way of producing accurate, careful investigations and investigators. In France *La Societe de Timbrologie*, which has also restricted its membership and its work to investigating and discussion, has produced in its quarterly bulletin perhaps the most valuable contributions to our library, and recently another society for exchange and barter has been started in Paris with fair success. Belgium and Holland have their societies; but it has been in Germany particularly that stamp collectors' associations have flourished, their number is legion. Like those of the United States, they were mostly local organizations until the Dresden Society, which has just celebrated its tenth anniversary and numbers nearly 1200 members, began gradually to unite them all in a National Association, upon the model of which, a little less than a year ago, the American Philatelic Association was founded. The intention of both these Associations is to combine all the different objects and attain all the benefits of the several kinds of associations. By the exchange of duplicates among members, by the purchase of new issues at first hands, and like means, to assist members in increasing their collections; by investigation and discussion, and the publication of a high class journal, to acquire and disseminate accurate knowledge about stamp matters; and by gathering members together for personal intercourse, to increase a feeling of friendship among them.

Probably no better model for the American Association could have been found than the Dresden Association, and yet things are so different in the two countries: institutions, habits of thought, all the surroundings, that attend some of its arrangements, were changed. Some things we have already altered once or twice and very likely must alter again. Just how they can best be done experience alone can teach us. In those departments which require much time and labor I think we have learned that we must have a division of labor. It is easy to see as the Association grows we must have more departments. But we are young yet and our mistakes should discourage none of us. We have not yet passed through the first year of our babyhood. It would have been surprising indeed if we had none of the trials, tribulations, diseases, incident to that period. When the convention of last year received the infant association from the assembly that had given it birth, and had adorned and arrayed it and formally presented it to the world of anxious collectors who had wanted and prayed for an association, who had wished they could be its fathers and mothers, who had boasted that when it was born they would at least be con-



nections, and would do this or that for it; the infant, alas, was not so large, so well filled out, or so strong as it was expected to be. The wiseacres had predicted a giant full grown; its weight to be measured by the hundreds was found to be way down in the tens. Similar disappointments have been chronicled occasionally under similar circumstances in the world's history, and the cronies have shaken their heads, prophesied, lamented, and are still lamenting. It was said we were born actually puny, that we had neither bone nor muscle, that our members would not take shape and would hardly hang together, that we scarcely knew what to do with our little body. We were too little for the crowd of expectant connections, they looked sour and did none of those things for us; they wanted to be sure we were going to survive and be big and strong before they would suffer themselves to be interested in us, or their affections or affairs to be entwined with our fate. For fear they should have to weep some day over an untimely grave they began wailing at once. Whatever of weakness or of evil they fancied existed in us they hastened to recount. When we were restless or dissatisfied it was the town talk. On the records of the Secretary are the names of all these gentry and they may be remembered by and by when they ask for an introduction after we are grown up. At first we did not grow very fast, hardly at all, but we began to notice things after a time, and among the first persons we noticed were the forgers and frauds. It is said, like the infant Hercules, we destroyed some pretty large specimens of these vipers that had come too near our cradle, and that the exploit has inspired other annoying vermin with a wholesome respect for us. One of our first labors must be, when we get a little larger, to clear the Augean stables of this filth. After a little it was found that we had a strong propensity for trading and a fair talent for buying. Our literary abilities have not been displayed very much, we were too young perhaps and the publishing of a journal was a rash undertaking for an infant without a fortune. We did not readily assimilate all the elements in our body, and manifested strong symptoms of indigestion. We have slept a great deal and been cross and fretful, grumbled and quarreled a great deal when awake. We have scratched and bruised ourselves in our struggles, torn our fair flesh somewhat perhaps in trying to cut our eye teeth, but we feel assured they are cut, and possibly our wisdom teeth also. In spite of the cronies we have not dismembered ourselves nor inflicted any mortal injury. We have grown and are going to grow. We are going to reform here and now. Let us call to mind that our object is to cultivate a feeling of friendship among philatelists which we seemed to have overlooked. Let us take this wayward child and begin its education. We are here today to know each other better and to shape, so far as we may, the course of our association for the future. If we have made the mistake of supposing that those who have entertained different views from us, or advocated a different policy, were actuated by enmity or improper motives, if we have failed to distinguish measures from men, if we have made the mistake of judging rashly from that letter which killeth, forgetting that behind it there may be that honest intent and kindly spirit which maketh alive, if in any Quixotean frame of mind we have been looking through distorted glasses and mistaken the sails of the windmills that have been grinding out the destiny of our association for the arms of some malicious enemy of our own Dulcinea, if we have set up the images of our fancy for the sake of knocking them down again, and forgotten that things are not what they "seem," let us have no more of it; let these spectres, they are no more, walk in the land of forgetfulness. Let us profit by the experience they have left behind. If we have not learned from these experiences that nothing is worth having that must be gained by ways that tend to retard the growth of a feeling for friendship, philately, and the association alike; if we have not learned that not with noise and clamor, not by quarreling and rancor, not by hot haste jumping for great results, is anything relating to our little treasures attained, and therefore the association could grow only by slow, silent, steady, sustained effort, with some self sacrifice perhaps, at some uncompensated personal expense for a time, with a willingness to attain small present gain now, that we and others may reap the more abundant harvest in the future, with mutual aid and assistance, in a feeling of friendship working together; if we have not seen in the brief review which we have just made together of the history of the slow process of the introduction of stamps as a power in the world's history, but the ultimate greatness of the result of the history; of the rise and progress of stamp collecting, with its small beginnings, and many mistakes, petty jealousies, and slow maturing from an irregular pastime to an intelligent pursuit and fascinating study; of the history of the formation of stamp societies and their growth from small traders to powerful associations, and their ultimate *assimilation* into those unions in

which there is strength; that both we ourselves and those who expected so much of us, expected what was unattainable in the nature of things, and that all that relates to stamps has always been the slow growth of the enduring oak, not the magic bean stalk that led to the land of giants in a night, but fated to be cut down in the morning; then indeed have we been associated for the past year to little purpose and our meeting in convention will avail less.

"What shall we do to-day and in the coming year?" is probably the question you are expecting me to answer all this while. There are others among you who can answer this question no doubt better than your president, who are waiting for the proper moment to make their suggestions. And this recalls the first thing to be done, and points, does it not, to one of our great mistakes in the past. Have we not all sat still too much and waited for some one else to speak and to do, instead of doing and speaking ourselves,—and then grumbled rather unjustly. I think you will agree, because nothing was done. There is probably no one of our number who does not know something that some others would be glad to learn, certainly no one who does not want to know something that some one else could tell him. The preamble of our constitution states the first object of our Association to be "to assist its members in acquiring knowledge in regard to Philately." How are we going to assist each other if we do not first ascertain what each wishes or needs to know, what another can do for us? Like the darkey who left the coon trap open at both ends, thinking "How's dis chile gwine fur ter tell if dat coon am gwine to clime up or clime down dat tree?" and wondered to see the coon pass through uncaught; or like that other lazy possum hunter who, instead of hunting, slept and dreamt he had caught and eaten a fine fat possum, but awoke bewildered and empty, and remarked: "If I has eat um, which I don't allow, he am de smallest and de mos unsatisfactory possum dat ever I cotched." The coon and the possum alike has remained uncaught and grinning, thinking no doubt "What fools these mortals be!" I think you will agree that if each member had asked for information on but one point, and but one member had attempted to answer each question through the proper channel, the official journal, the *American Philatelist* might have been the most interesting of stamp journals, and its editor would not have had to complain of want of matter. Had each member who saw, or thought he saw, defects in that journal, or in our organization, kindly and in a proper spirit pointed them out, and had we discussed them with that "feeling of friendship" "to cultivate" which the preamble of our Constitution says is the second object of our Association, we should, I think you will again agree, by this time have perfected both our official organ and our organization, and made it absolutely necessary for every collector who wished to "keep up with the procession" to be a member of the American Philatelic Association and read its journal.

Let us make a beginning here to day in this convention. Let each and all, if he has any thing to suggest, move its adoption without hesitating, some one will second it, we will freely discuss it and decide on the best mode of doing it.

Here to day in convention we can hardly do more than to perfect and so form our organization that it may, in the coming year, the better do its work. We may not be able to do all that should be done or to do what we do perfectly to our satisfaction, but allow me to suggest, nay to urge it upon the attention of every member, that our Association is always in session, that a motion may be made in a certain way at all times and must then be acted on. There is no occasion for moping or grumbling as has been done. Tell us what you want done, what you think about what has been done in a spirit of friendship and in the proper channel, and it shall be discussed in the same spirit. I say the proper channels; don't tell the Secretary and then blame the Editor; don't tell the Trustees and then blame the Exchange Superintendent; don't write to Boston and then blame St. Louis. Make your motions as in any other meeting, and see to it that they are in the form of motions, and you shall not have to complain that no attention is paid them.

In acquiring a knowledge of Philately we can do little here to day except to provide a means for asking and answering questions, for communicating ideas and information, and for putting questions into proper shape for discussion, either during the year or at the next convention. And this means your President is very anxious to have provided in such form as the Convention or the Association shall in its wisdom think best. Had we not abolished the office of official editor, much of this would have fallen legitimately to his department. It will depend much upon whether in your judgment, after deliberation and consideration, this office shall be re-es-

tablished, in what form this suggestion shall best be carried out. The idea is this, that a committee or board, to be called by an appropriate title, shall be each year appointed in convention; that information concerning stamps shall be asked of them and communicated to them. topics for discussion suggested; and that they shall determine what matters are of sufficient general interest to occupy the attention of the Association; that they should obtain the necessary information of such members as they judge most competent to answer, and have ordinary questions answered through the official journal each month. In this manner a department of Notes and Queries would be valuable and interesting. Such other questions as in their judgment required investigation and discussion should be propounded for discussion, one or more each month. The answers should be sent to this committee and such of them as were deemed valuable published, or all the answers collated and published in the official journal. The topics would often be suggested by and might all be made the subjects for discussion in the branch societies. The various countries might thus be taken up in succession and their stamps discussed. Whenever a special work on any particular country appeared it might be made the topic for a certain occasion. Thus the attention of all the members of the Association would be called to the same subject at the same time. The discussion would lead to the comparison of collections in each convenient locality and particularly in branch societies; collectors would be led to examine their collections and duplicates and strive to complete, so far as possible, the series under discussion; dealers would be apt to overturn their stocks and to offer the best they had of the country under discussion; many rare and often unknown specimens would be brought to light and chronicled, and much of the history of the various issues explained and learned. Possibly the results would justify the compilation of catalogues or manuals by the Association, which, if voluminous, might be referred by the Committee to competent members to collate and revise, and having been made the subject of discussion in convention would add much to the interest of these meetings. It being announced that the stamps of a certain country would be discussed by the convention of a certain year, arrangements could be made for an exhibition of collections of the stamps of that country at the time of the convention, and the owners of large collections, who might hesitate to exhibit their entire collections, might be induced to make special exhibits, and there would doubtless be many varieties offered for sale or exchange at these meetings. In fact in this way only could a stamp exhibition be made permanently profitable. For to carefully examine, even if arrangements could be made to properly exhibit them, any number of large collections would probably take more time than most of us could spend at a convention. The plan has been tried in a limited way by the St. Louis Society and adds much to the interest of our meetings, and I do not hesitate to warmly recommend it to the earnest consideration of the Association. It will further the first object of our organization, give us something impersonal to discuss and think about, increase our knowledge of what is and where it is, cultivate a friendly feeling among our members, and possibly arrangements can ultimately be made by which we can affiliate with other associations in these discussions and exhibitions.

A second object, much in the same line, for which arrangements might be made, is a general exhibition of postage stamps at the time and place of our next Convention; a year is not too much time to arrange the details, and if it is to be done it should be done now. The chairman of the committee to be appointed should be from the near vicinity of the place of meeting. The committee should either be large or have power to appoint assistant members in various localities where good collectors are known to exist, and care should be taken to make it as safe as possible for exhibitors to trust their collections to the committee for exhibition. The details must be left largely to the committee and should be arranged and announced as soon as possible. There have been at least two very successful exhibitions of the kind, one in Vienna some years ago, one recently in Antwerp. Whether of great benefit to collectors or not, probably nothing would more increase the general knowledge of the importance of stamp collecting, and the general interest in it, than an exhibition of the kind, and particularly if it were made an annual occurrence. I commend the matter to your consideration.

A third matter that needs immediate consideration is the Association Library. To be of practical use such literature as we have should be catalogued, and such of it as is in condition to bind, should be bound. Many of us possess duplicates that we would willingly contribute to fill up files, or that we would exchange for duplicates possessed by the Society, which

we have not cared to contribute on the chance of contributing useless duplicates. The binding and cataloguing will cost some money, which should in some way be provided, and the Librarian should be authorized and supplied with funds to purchase such works of value as appear from time to time, or such obsolete works as may be offered him for sale. These become very difficult to obtain in a short time after their publication, and no opportunity of procuring them should be neglected. The condition of our treasury during the past year has been such that while I have felt the importance of this matter I have considered it inexpedient to suggest it for action to the Board or the Association until it could be fully discussed. A very small contribution from each member would enable the Librarian to do a great deal. Once in fair running order the Library would take care of itself.

I pass now to the exchange department. During the past year this has been, and has shown itself likely to be in the future, one of the most attractive features of the Association, and one the immediate benefits of which are the most readily perceived. Almost every collector has peculiar facilities or extraordinary opportunities for obtaining certain things and lacks the facilities or opportunities of obtaining certain things that others possess. Hence each one is apt to have something in excess that another wants, and when two come together to exchange, each has something to give and to take. But this soon comes to an end, the giving and taking becomes less and less, until so much time is expended with so little result that it does not pay. That was the old experience. The local society bettered the matter and brought ten or twenty together, with the chances for exchange increased and prolonged very nearly in proportion to the increase in numbers. The single collector has the advantage of seeing and taking from the duplicates of the others and has ten others to take from his. But when he becomes a member of a branch of the Exchange department, he then has his chances of effecting an exchange increased many fold. For, if for instance, each member puts in \$10 worth, and receives \$10 worth when single, his chances are multiplied by the number of members engaged in the exchange, as all his go to each one of them, and each one of theirs comes to him, and if there were only 100 members in the exchange he would get say \$1000 worth to select from, with his chances multiplied by 100, of some one else taking his duplicates; but if each ten unite in a branch, then he receives \$100 worth each time to select from instead of \$10 worth, and the exchange is effected just ten times as fast and with much less cost. This advantage of the branches does not seem to be appreciated, and should be urged warmly upon members. Their formation should be encouraged though not made obligatory. They decrease the risk of losses, and the labor of the Superintendent. I shall make no further suggestions concerning this department, as having had some correspondence upon these matters with our Superintendent I presume he will make such suggestions as will render the department more effective. A committee should discuss them and report to the Association.

I would suggest considerable change in the Department of the Purchasing Agent. There is really too much to do in this department if all is done that might be accomplished. From my correspondence with the Purchasing Agent, who will doubtless make his own recommendations also, and from the suggestions of members who have kindly responded to my invitation to inform me of their desires, I am led to propose for your consideration the following plan: that the purchasing Agent should have two assistants, he himself should manage the department of obtaining new issues for those who desire to subscribe for everything that comes out, as provided in the amended by-law, and exercise a general control and conduct of the bureau; one assistant should obtain any current stamps for members who desire them; and the third should receive applications from members for any obsolete stamps they may want to purchase, and be notified by members of any varieties, etc., that they may wish to sell, endeavoring to ascertain where obsolete varieties may be had, bargains, etc. obtained, and notifying members through the official journal that he can obtain them. In a large measure these three things belong together and much of their correspondence might be with the same parties, so they should constitute a purchasing board. Many members have informed me that they want some such facilities. Shall we not try and provide them?

An amendment should be made to Article II, Sec. 2, concerning a quorum for the transaction of business; either by providing some mode of appointing delegates, for which no provision is made in the Constitution except that of proxies, or defining who shall be considered delegates, or by lessening the requirement of "two-thirds of the delegates appointed." As it now stands

two-thirds of the entire number of members are required to constitute a quorum. Roberts' Rules state that whenever a society has a permanent existence it is usual to adopt a much smaller number than a majority, the quorum being often less than one-twentieth of its members; this becomes a necessity in most large societies where only a small portion of the members are ever present at a meeting.

It should be provided that every person applying for membership should give such references as to his identity and standing as the Secretary may be satisfied with before publishing his name as an applicant. As it now stands it is possible for a person rejected in his own name, or knowing he would not be admitted, to apply and become a member under a fictitious name.

It should also be provided that when objection is made to the admission of an applicant the party making the objection should be required to state his reasons therefor, with his evidence; that the objection should be thereupon referred by the Secretary to the Trustees, and the party notified of the character of the objection and the evidence, and be permitted to present his answer to the Trustees, who should give the matter a fair examination and either admit or reject the applicant as they deem proper under the circumstances.

Provision should be made for the payment of the annual dues in semi-annual instalments, if members so elect, and the issue of membership cards for the period payed for. Members who are not entitled to vote by reason of being under age should pay only half the dues payed by other members. I am inclined to believe that this change would add many members.

I think even those of you who may be dealers or publishers of papers will, in the light of our late experiences, agree with me that it would be well to make a rule that hereafter those who have only a commercial interest in stamp collecting as dealers or publishers of stamp papers should in the future be ineligible to the elective offices of this association, because the actions of any member of the Board who has such other interests is apt to be misconstrued by those not in office and by members not so interested, and thereby the growth of friendly feeling is retarded. I am sure you will agree that no person who holds one office should be eligible to any other official or quasi-official position at the same time.

The last number of the *Western Philatelist* contains its resignation of the office of Official Journal, to which it had been appointed by a majority of the Official Board. While I did not approve of the manner of its appointment, I venture to assert that no member of this Association admires the typographical appearance and general get up of that paper more than your President, no one was more friendly in feeling toward its publishers, though personally unknown to him, no one would have more cheerfully seen that paper the official journal had the distinction been conferred by a direct vote of the members, and no one read with more satisfaction its final resolve to do the right thing. The resignation should be accepted and measures taken by this convention to provide for its successor. If it has seemed to any one that I am in any way "desirous just now," or at any time have been desirous of "renouncing any participation in the occurrences that have led up to the present state of affairs," or that what I have published would seem to indicate that I was or am desirous of appearing to be satisfied with the "old state of affairs and desired of no change in the official journal" let me beg of him, in the words of one whose kindly feeling for all men we can imitate but never hope to equal, to remember that "things are not what they seem." That an independent journal responsible to no one but the association, and having no interest to subserve but that of the association, is a thing greatly to be desired, and which we should strive to attain, I believe and have always believed. But about the time the change was being talked of by others I received a letter from the Treasurer of the Association stating the depleted condition of the Treasury, and containing an estimate, based on expenses incurred, and the prospects of income for the rest of the year, which showed, and the result has justified the calculation, that if we continued the paper the Association would not pay its expenses up to this Convention. The cost of the paper had been kept down to a minimum, because it always cost us more than we had. Members were complaining of its unsatisfactory appearance and its few pages, and I wrote "I think we shall have to discontinue it anyway, and should never have commenced it, but should make some of the leading papers our official organ." Unless we can largely increase our income from regular sources, or by the generosity of members, or in some other way, are enabled to guarantee a sufficient sum to publish the next thirteen numbers, I do not think it would be safe to attempt such a publication. I hope that laying aside all feeling of rivalry which the late discussion of

this matter has engendered we may have the wisdom to adopt a plan satisfactory to all by which such a publication may be attempted under the management of such an editorial board as I have suggested, presided over by an official editor. But if we cannot agree to attempt such a publication just now, and decide to appoint some one of the leading papers as our official journal instead, let us at least revive the office of official editor and create such a board.

Much has been said and done concerning this matter of the Official Journal that we all think had better been left unsaid. Some of us know each other better now that we have met and conferred together. For the sake of the honor and dignity of the Association "let the dead past bury its dead." For the sake of "that feeling of friendship" which we profess to "cultivate," both now and forevermore, in the words of one whose kindly feeling for all men we can imitate but never equal, "Let us have peace."

At the close of the session, in response to the urgent requests of all present, President Tiffany spoke as follows:

I don't know, gentlemen, what I could say that would be appropriate to this occasion, more than has been said, and said several times over, that I think we all ought to feel thoroughly satisfied, and that our associates whom we have represented here, as well as those who have not been represented here, will be satisfied with our work. I think we are justified in congratulating ourselves upon the harmony which has characterised all our deliberations, and the results which we have achieved. I wish, and am glad of the opportunity afforded me by the call to address you again, to express to you all, each and every one of you, my own thanks for the courtesy and kindness with which you have conducted yourselves toward the chair during this convention. I wish to express my own personal thanks, and to join with them the thanks of all the members from outside the City of Chicago, to the membership of the Chicago Society, whom I wish I could make understand how much we all appreciate the efforts they have made to entertain us. I think that when we go back and tell those who sent us here of the manner in which we have been received, and of the arrangements which were made for our comfort and accommodation, and of the royal manner in which we were treated last night, there will be many who will be very sorry indeed that they did not avail themselves of the privilege of meeting with us here.

I wish to say that we from the outside of the City of Chicago are very glad indeed that we have had this opportunity of meeting the Chicago Society and its members.

I don't know that I can say any more, though perhaps I have not said enough, but as we separate I wish to bid you all God-speed, and to wish you all success in all your pursuits, and particularly in your pursuits relating to Philately, and to express the hope that all of you will come to Boston next year and bring many more with you.

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