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How to Exchange.

BY W. J. SABOURIN.

LOOKING over my correspondence of five years ago, from collectors on this and the other continents, I am surprised to find such a great demand for our rare American postage stamps in exchange for the common European trash that has been a drug on the market since stamp collecting became general on this side of the Atlantic. It is curious, even now, to receive from collectors abroad lists of rarities which it is impossible to get for our own collections. They promise us in exchange a lot of good things, in the shape of stamps, and when we have been exchanging for a short time we receive what we might call "Rare Continentals" and the correspondence is dropped, owing to some misunderstanding between the two parties.

I would like to say a few words to American collectors regarding this mode of exchange, and give them a few hints that will help them out if they wish to keep on philatelic relations with their brother philatelists in distant lands, and are willing to entertain correspondence to that effect. After considering the matter thoroughly I have come to the conclusion that it is better to mount on sheets many varieties of South America, Central, U. S., Canada, and others which are difficult to obtain in the country you are sending them to. After they have all been placed, ready to mail, mark the catalogue price on each stamp, and then, in writing your letter, ask the correspondent to send you what he thinks best of his continent, fixing the stamps in the same manner. It is almost impossible to keep an exchange going if you put on sheets stamps of your own country only. Your stock will become exhausted in a very short time, and if you have a good correspondent it will be disgraceful to leave him when you progress wonderfully in your exchange. There are some who do not take the trouble of arranging sheets neatly that they send out, and it is a pity to look how they work their exchange. They enclose in an envelope a lot of common stamps of their country and only put in a couple of rare ones. Of course, no one will be foolish enough to take what they receive, and they will return it at once. No doubt there is trouble arising between those who practice this way of exchanging. No rarities are coming in and the philatelist is almost discouraged to some-time stamp collecting. If, on the other hand, he keeps his stamps nicely mounted he will be able to find out what his correspondent wants and thereby save money by buying only what is wanted for his or the other collection.

Now, it is preferable to buy from Approval Sheets or Pockets. I am sure that the collector who buys packets saves more money than the other. But I would suggest to collectors to buy sets; it is one of

the best things you can do. Try and get all the varieties you can from the country desired and you will be amply repaid for a few dollars you spend that way.

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An Awful Possibility.

BY GUY W. GREEN.

W. H. BARNES, librarian of the S. of P., was relieved of a sum of money, his gold watch and chain, overcoat, and numerous other trifles, on Nov. 27th. "Billy" figures up the loss at about \$160. Cause why? He was held up by two masked highwaymen who were not philatelists, for they failed to take any stamps, though he had several hundred dollars worth in his coat pocket. *Weekly Philatelist*.

It is customary for ministers to select a text before they preach a sermon. Notice that I do not say "about which to preach a sermon," because more often than otherwise the discourse bears no relation to the verse of scripture, which is supposed to be parent to it. I, too, have chosen a text which I quote at the beginning of this article, but unlike my brethren of the pulpit, I shall endeavor to make the connection between the opening lines and later ones discernable to the ordinary intellect.

There are several lessons to be drawn from the Minneapolis occurrence, all of which are of more or less importance, and a few possibilities are spread before us that are calculated to terrify the ordinary philatelist who is peaceably inclined.

We are first told that the robbers who gave Mr. Barnes so much mental pain (and physical agony, perhaps, if he was forced to expose his overcoat, sash-like form to the chilling breeze of a frigid night), "were not philatelists." This statement may, at first thought, seem a trifle startling when regarded in all the nakedness of its *naïveté*. But when we look at it more closely we find that it is not so surprising after all. Of course the highwaymen "were not philatelists." Who is there that even heard of a philatelist going out at the dead of night, midnight and with an active and energetic "slung shot" in one hand, and a disagreeable looking revolver in the other, "holding up" an unsophisticated innocent who chanced to be abroad at that unseemly time? No, Philatelists are not that kind of humanity. Poets tell us that they prefer to sit by the fire during the winter evenings and gloat over their albums. Our poets, like Geo. Washington, cannot tell a lie, and we are compelled to believe them. The full realization of the fact that no philatelists did the dastardly act which occurred in the dense wilds of a Minneapolis forest should cause every stamp collector's heart to swell with an inexpressible joy.

We are told, secondly, that the writer of the sad north-western news knows the robbers

were not acquainted with our hobby because they failed to take "several hundred dollars worth" of stamps from Mr. Barnes' "coat pocket." Why did they not take them? Because they did not realize the value of the specimens or, in other words, were ignorant of the merits and beauties of philately. They belonged to the great heterogeneous mass of our citizens whose obtuseness on stamp collecting subjects we so much deprecate. Suppose that these disciples of Robin Hood had been educated in all the strange lore of our brotherhood, where would "Billy's" treasures be then? Echo answers, "Where?" A dense and lugubrious gloom would prevail in Minneapolis to such an extent that it could be cut with the proverbial knife. Yet we, as philatelists, are trying to initiate everyone upon this round globe into the mysteries of stampdom. At our present rate of progress we had fair to succeed in our attempt. But when we have succeeded what may we expect? A carnival of crime, robbery, murder and bloodshed? Everything in the land will be conversant with the worth of rare departments and revenues, and no philatelist will be able to tread the streets after nightfall in safety. A loyal subject of Philately will find it necessary to be attended home from society meetings by an armed bodyguard. Every dark alley will hold its quota of homicidally inclined thieves ready to spring upon the passing stamp collector and demand "his stamps or his life," not using the word, "stamps," in any metaphorical sense either. We shall no longer dare to carry our Sydney views and Brattleboro abroad with us, but, on the contrary, we are very likely to be compelled to place them under lock and key. The prospect is full of awful and hair-raising dangers. Imagine, if you can, the portly Doebelin being "held up" by masked robbers who emptied his pockets, while our German friend uttered, an unwilling victim, breathing out guttural maledictions upon their heads. Think for a moment of "Ike" Mekeel returning from his foreign trip with his pockets bulging with rarities only to have his eyes bulge wide open as his pockets when some short-haired gent pokes a revolver under his nose and compels him to "stand and deliver." These fancies are too harrowing; and fearful lest my scalding tears blot the paper to such an extent that the printer will be unable to read these lines I desist.

In these reflections there is one consolation. Those of us who have no rare stamps will be comparatively safe. To us, a robber, no matter how great his moral turpitude, will be almost entirely innocuous. This is the only ray of light that illumines the darkness.

I cannot go further. I am overcome with an agony of fear—fear for my fellows who have good collections and rare duplicates.

Brethren, weep with me.

Mr. Stanley Gibbons, of Stanley Gibbons, Ltd., has just left on an eastern trip through Italy, Turkey and Palestine.