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Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

A WINTER EVENING.

BY LEWIS G. QUACKENBUSH.

The grim north wind is blowing chill,
The winter night is cold and clear;
The moon has thrown her gleaming light
Across the city, far and near;

The window-pane is dimmed with frost,
Few footsteps echo on the street:
'Tis then I sit down by my fire,
And there enjoy its welcome heat.

'Tis then, when business hours are done,
I draw my album from its place;
'Tis then, in looking o'er my stamps,
A smile of pleasure lights my face.

The darkness now has grown so deep
That I arise and light the lamps,
Then settle in my easy chair
To read and study of my stamps.

What pleasures can you show me, that
With such an evening can compare?
What other hobby has the power
To charm away all pain and care?

Our daily troubles fade away
When Philatelia reigns supreme;
When at her shrine we sacrifice,
Life is a sweet and pleasant dream.

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

A PHILATELIC BLUNDER.

BY ROY F. GREENE.

IT was one of those select schools, or academies, situated in staid old New England, where a class of ninety boys sought to obtain an education. The academy was noted for its strictness, and the tutors, especially "Old Grimes," as the boys called Professor Grimsby, was ever on the alert to catch up performing some of those pranks which had horrified one faculty of late. Of course, among a large class of ninety active, restless boys, it would have proven difficult to lay the blame on any one person, so one guilty had shared alike with the guiltless, and had gone unpunished. But this had only served to make the teacher more alert and watchful, so it was only with extreme caution that the daring few continued to indulge in their midnight escapades. Of course, we never practised any downright mean tricks; they were totally harmless pranks, and were indulged in only with a view of annoying the teachers and faculty. There were just five of us who belonged to the oath-bound organization known

to us as the Kro-Kum Club, and to these might be laid the whole series of deviltries which had horrified the whole faculty.

It happened that all of us were stamp-collectors; and as we were constant companions, probably for this sole reason we had formed this club to have a little fun; and as brother collectors we had implicit confidence in each other, and felt we were safe, for we well knew there were no traitors in our camp. There was one other fellow who was known in college as "Jack Ashley," who was a good friend of ours, but who was not a stamp collector nor a member of the "K.K.K." He was our boon and constant companion on every other exploit save our nocturnal rambles. He had a mild suspicion that it was our jolly crowd of five who were the objects of the professor's wrath, so one night he startled us by asking us about it outright. We felt that we could trust him, and so we "acknowledged the corn." He at once fell into our project, and wanted to join our club, asking the requirements and qualifications for membership. We told him of the iron-clad oath not to reveal any of our doings, and that every member of the "K. K. K." must be a stamp collector. This clause had been inserted in our rude constitution, though why we did not know, probably because we felt more like trusting a brother collector. Of the oath he made no fuss, he was willing to take that, but he was not a stamp collector, but he was eager to enroll himself with us, so he promised to commence collecting. A few days thereafter an album was secured, and Jack Ashley sought to gain honors in the philatelic field.

But he was not cut out for a philatelist; he studied his stamps diligently, but could not become interested. As some one has said, "Poets are born, not made," so I have been led to believe of philatelists. He could tell a triangular Good Hope from a U.S. Interior, and that was about all. But he was admitted as a member of our club, and thereafter the nightly escapades were graced by his presence.

We had secret meetings in one of our rooms, usually mine and Harry Brantford's, my room-mate, at irregular intervals, and had a code of signals—a password, countersign, and other like mysteries, nearly all of which were philatelic terms, and which we charged frequently, thus an obsolete password would not admit after a new one was in vogue.

But to the amusing blunder, which was enjoyed hugely by at least five of the school and came near putting a quietus to our pranks. We had been having a jolly time all through the week. One night we secured seven or eight large cow-bells and suspended them directly under the president's window, with cords attached which trailed along the ground and reached to a copse of trees near the tennis-court, which was to the south of the academy. I have forgotten to say that my room faced the south, and we had constructed a rope-ladder with which we descended after all had assembled in my room, and as soon as we had reached the ground we left the ladder in its place so that we might quickly ascend.