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The Philatelic Courier,

AND STAMP-COLLECTOR'S JOURNAL.

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The Philatelic Courier
—AND—
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OUTRAGEOUS

The *St. John Sun* of a recent date narrates the facts in an affair so extraordinary as to be almost incredible.

It appears that the Sheriff of Gloucester Co., N. B., had the audacity a few weeks since to take from the post-office at Little Shippegan, a registered letter addressed to another person, against whom he held an execution and a bailable writ, and to retain it despite the remonstrances of the postmaster. The same officer took from another post-office, two letters and a newspaper addressed to the same person.

There were other surprisingly outrageous acts performed by this sheriff in connection with this matter, but, as a philatelic journal, we have nothing to do with this.

What we have to deal with is the sanctity and security of the mails while *in transitu* and in charge of the postal authorities. The post-office is the most important adjunct to the business of any community—to say nothing of social intercommunication—and if it cannot be implicitly trusted to safely transmit correspondence secure from raids by officials or others its usefulness is gone.

Another point of importance is that the sheriff's information of the fact that the registered letter was *en route*

must have been obtained from some one connected with the post-office. We have no space in this issue to submit the proofs of this that have already been developed, but will give further details in our next. The point is that a postal official has violated his or her trust and revealed a fact that could only have come to him through his official position. This unworthy person should be ferreted out, and not only dismissed in disgrace but also punished by the laws.

The sheriff has not only tampered with, but has robbed H. M. mails. The law declares this a felony, punishable by imprisonment for a long term, and the sheriff cannot plead ignorance nor shelter himself under his official position to evade the penalty that he has earned. The majesty of the law must be vindicated and the sanctity of the mails must be fully protected.

Hon. John Carling, the Postmaster General, knows his duty and we do not hesitate to express a belief that he will perform it.

Before dismissing this subject we would remark that we are aware of instances in which registered letters sent to the West Indies have not been acknowledged by the persons to whom they were addressed, and repeated enquiries of the postal department have failed to elicit any information as to whether they ever reached their destination or not. Such a state of affairs is anything but creditable to the post-office department and should be at once altered. A radical reform appears to be urgently needed.

THE POSTAL SERVICE.—The estimated number of registered letters passing by the post in the Dominion for 1882 was 2,450,000. Of this number 113 were stated to have miscarried from various causes. In 81 cases out of the 113 the letters were stolen from the post office by burglars, lost by mail robberies while under conveyance, or accidentally destroyed by fire with the mails in which they were contained. Of the other 32 letters the loss in 24 cases was traced to officers of the post-office responsible for the negligence or other misconduct which occasioned the miscarriage and the value contained was made good them. In the remaining eight cases this could not be accomplished. The aggregate value of these eight letters was \$235. To the money order offices in operation on 30th June, 1882, were added in 1882-3, 20 new offices, making the total number in operation on the 30th July, 1883, 806 distributed as follows:—Ontario, 495; Quebec, 117; Nova Scotia, 114; New Brunswick, 87; Prince Edward Island, 6; Manitoba, 5; British Columbia, 12.

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