

Our Philatelic Literature.

BY J. SYDNEY DALTON.

Dear readers I am not one who is in the habit of denouncing anything and everything. On the contrary I praise all things that are established to help along a good cause. This article refers to philately—or at least a branch of it—and I praise everything that is going to help our hobby along. Our philatelic press, that great organ of collectors and helper of all things relating to stamps and their collection, is one of Philately's greatest helps. I therefore praise and laud it to the skies. Even the poorest specimen of a philatelic sheet helps along our cause to a certain extent and therefore is worthy of a certain amount of support.

A paper of better quality will soon enough sink into the depths of that stormy ocean—philatelic journalism. During the time of its existence, however, and before it is obliterated from the philatelic sphere give it some of your support.

The aforesaid ocean of philatelic literature will act on our stamp papers as the renowned ash sifter acts on the charred remains of the coal. It will sift our philatelic press until only those papers which are capable of battling against the mighty waves of the ocean, are left to forward the noble cause of philately.

The trouble of many of our would-be publishers today is, that the aspect of launching a journal of philately is not seriously thought of. The future is not considered, and he does not think of the trouble that awaits him on all sides once he has launched his frail craft unprepared and unsupported. He does not think of

the golden dollar, and that without it he is ruined before he starts. Any publisher who intends to run a paper successfully, should be prepared, before No. 1 appears, to print and circulate his paper for eight or ten months not including money realized on ads and subscriptions!

Our principal topic of discussion in this article, however, is not so much the philatelic press as the quality of matter printed.

The comparison of our philatelic literature of today and that of years back, does not seem to be a subject of discussion with the philatelic writers of late. Why? There are many who are not afraid to criticize, why do they not express their opinion? I shall proceed to do so; I may be wrong in some of my opinions but if so, I must ask to be excused.

I shall begin by making the bold statement that *our philatelic literature of today is inferior to that of eight or ten years ago!* My reason for saying this is not drawn from empty talk overheard while traversing the streets. I have old papers dating back to 1890 and I say again the news contained in them is as good, and often better, than any found in the average run of journals today.

For example: let us take the *Stamp*, first number issued April, 1892. Its articles are every bit as good as those which appear in our journals today. Even this however, is not so terrible for philatelists in 1890 were as well able to write articles as philatelists in 1900, but the surprising part is that the journals were as large as any of today and contained as many ads, etc.

Now is there any reason why our present papers cannot issue a number of from 24 to 30 pages every month? Remember I do not mean 20 pages of ads and from 4 to