

Phil. Atelist's Advice to Sye Benson.

Sye Benson, Esq., New York City:

MY DEAR SIR:— I am very glad to learn that you are going South on a starring tour, in the capacity of an itinerant teacher of Philately. No doubt New York lunch-counter keepers and boarding-house mistresses will also be joyous over the news. But oh! the sad, sad, South! But the South is large and can stand a great deal. A portion of it is threatened with a drought of the Porhibition type this month, but I don't reckon you will get very dry, as this is the season when late pastures are opened and good buttermilk is worth nine cents per gallon; nor hungry, either, as unguarded potato patches mark every turn as we turn along the highway.

Having had considerable experience in the South I feel it my duty to give you some good advice. You doubtless prefer some back-talk whisky and a cob pipe, but the advice will suit your constitution better.

Should you conclude to roam over the rural districts, you can supply yourself with a few copies of newspapers to advantage, as they can be traded off for grub to settlers living along your route.

Grub routes are pretty well taken up down South, and there are but few now open to pre-emption, and a close watch is kept on new-comers at church pic-nics.

Before you are a resident of any section long, some enterprising sheriff will ask you sundry questions about your poll tax, street tax, back tax, real and personal property, and make other inquiries into your cash affairs. Candidates will shake your arms tired, and maybe the chills will snatch you with an ungentle hand. Cotton harvesting will soon be the rage, when you can hump yourself, should you conclude to change employment.

When you make up your mind to tackle a town for a school, the following calculation will be of value to you: From total population deduct 40 per cent. for negroes from remainder 10 per cent for landlords and landladies of the white denomination; then from this remainder, 50 per cent. for females, and then 90 per cent. for those who don't care a continental, and are better Philatelists than you anyhow, and for an occasional dude, and you will have about the number who would like to attend Philatelic school. The foregoing rule will hold good in all Southern latitudes. The negroes' per cent is the most inconsistent quantity in the calculation. Often he is largely in the majority, while in portions of Texas, where the cowboy is specially numerous, he is well-nigh a *non ester*.

I do not agree with Bro. Pierce, who broadly intimates that when one promises two will come. Your success will depend upon your appearance, and the quality and quantity of oil which you apply to the silver portions of your vocal machinery.

Should you guarantee your students positions, I suggest that they be positions on the editorial staff of a hoe or grass blade, where they can keep well up on movement, and not an easy position, a large salary, two horses and a buggy thrown in, with the privilege of seven leisure days in the week.

You should not advertize yourself as the "Best Philatelist in America," nor say in print that your equals and superiors—if you ever had any—have long since been carted off to the boneyard; for if you do people will rise up and speak of you in language which no one would think of attributing to the author of Watt's Hymns.

PHIL. ATELIST.