

but a small part. To hold a really good collection, one should have at least one-fourth of the total number, and thus, when the Philatelist's collection reaches the enormous number of 25,000 varieties, he could lay claim to having a good collection. With these plain facts, very roughly drawn, but sufficient to illustrate my point, we will end the respite.

The owner of the album of the year 2085, being obliging and proud of his collection, points out to us the different varieties, commencing with the United States. Showing us a peculiar stamp, value 3c, color blue, 1869 issue, he relates his experience in obtaining it. In an old collection of letters belonging to his great-great-grand-father, he found an envelope with this identical specimen placed in one corner, upon inquiry, he finds it to be a great rarity, only seen in one album out of a hundred; saying, "I have been offered \$10.00 for it, but refused;" passing on, he points out a 3c. War Dept., explaining, that it was a kind of local, which he could not find the origin of; he supposed it must have been used in transmitting letters from the field of battle, in the times gone by. Pointing proudly to a half-penny green, English stamp, 1880 issue, he tells us that it is a specimen of the kind used when Great Britain was a monarchy; going farther on, he successfully points out his new issues, until turning to Canada, he shows a 3c. red, saying, it was supposed to belong to a set issued when Canada was under the Dominion of Great Britain, and that there is a celebrated Philatelist who owns the 2c. green, besides the 3c., for the both of which he was offered \$15.00 by a Mr. Blank, of Philadelphia. So he goes on patiently answering all our questions; at last, coming to the end of his somewhat small collection (I believe he said he had 15,000) we leave, much impressed and enlightened about the stamps these old times in 1880, when they only had about 7,000 different stamps to boast of.

Going from there to a dealer, we find that the demand for stamps is so great, that he is kept constantly importing thousands of stamps at a time. He tells us that the number of stamp journals grew so great in 2040, that a grand consolidation was made in America, taking in one hundred different papers. Showing us a volume of some 100 pages, he tells us it is the monthly edition of the "United American Philatelist," having a circulation of 150,000 per month.

Now let us drop back to the century we are fated to live in; let us re-fasten the moorings of our imagination and go back to our paltry 7000 varieties which, nevertheless, suffice to amuse some 2,000,000 Philatelists. These rather extreme sketches may appear entirely imaginary. It may seem absurd that there will be 100,000 stamps, yet upon looking into the present increase, it will be found to be true. Even then, I made no allowance for the vast increase of population, and the corresponding increase in letter writing. We have no conception of what will happen in the future to stop such growth, such as an International issue, etc., and so all calculations must be based on a stand, that we can only suppose to be correct. There is no doubt, however, that should the present state of things continue, my figures would be dwarfed in comparison with the reality. The value of the stamps of this date, is of course, also only approximate, for all valuations are not set by precedent, but by the valuation, the owner himself determined upon.

We can, however, rest assured, that our pleasure in collecting stamps will be shared by all coming generations, and that Philately will exert as beneficent an influence on our grand-children, as it does on ourselves.
—E. S. P.

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