

their deserts! Instead of the score of pages—not all perusing matter, however—you observe the innumerable pages of the numberless magazines. And as to quality, let it suffice to affirm that it is irreproachable and bears no potentiality of similitude, or even impartial comparison. And as to the *weeklies*, be it competent to assert that in that age of barbarism in Philately's field a sole *weekly* was the issue, and one that in this time of advancement would be calculated far in the rear of the medium. And it may further be declared that the number above the average is legion. Thus far comparison, though needless and unnecessary, yet bears approbation or acceptance. But thus far only. How magnanimously would the upholders of our scientific cause bear of marvel, admiration and prodigy when confronted with one of the few of our protuberant and conspicuous *dailies*. Derision and laughter would be the sentiments of the collectors in those days at such an idea. But now no prodigy or wonder is even expressed at such a novel (?) event.

But although the magnanimity of the above is astonishing, it is yet surpassed by the greatness of the numerical advancement of stamp collectors, the legionary progress of stamp collecting, and the augmentative promotion of Philately. In numbers stamp collecting may justly and accordingly claim its legions and ostentatiously boast of its myriads.

And here I advance to the progress of the *science and art* Philately. Who recollects those days of yore when agitation was in the prime of promotion, and when every opinion, resolution, argument and adoption bore its partial and impartial criticism and critique, whether good, bad, or indifferent, always receiving more or less approbation or disapprobation by both adherents and dissidents. One of these bearing more prominence and moment was the contention and dissension between the advocates of general collecting and the pleaders of specialism, the supporters of a subject then occupying the leading topic in Philatelic circles. After days of continual contention, after weeks of uninterrupted dispute, after months of never ceasing arguments, and after years of universal strife, the contending parties are again united under the reciprocal banner of both varieties of opinions. But not the laborious wisdom of the one, nor the judicious diligence of the other brought this intrigue to a limit. It was by the act of advancement, by the increase of civilization and by the diminution of human barbarism that this glorious arbitration was effected by a providential remedy. The sole debatable argument that bore consideration of the specialism and anti-general collectors' supporters was the multiplicity of new issues, the augmentation of the blending variations, and the odious misdemeanor and ill-effect of such a contagion to the cause as the "Seebeck issues," etc., as were then demolishing its name and fame. After battling these cogent foes, civilization triumphed, in that countries, states and kingdoms innumerable, and thus long disunited both in gubernatorial and popular interests, are now united, not solely in a union of friendship, but in the common unity of principles and concord, popular and governmental, which as a result of this centralization scheme was the abstinence of these feudal and satanic effects upon Philately.

But here I come to a check. These pleasant fancies have passed, these happy reflections have disappeared, and this visionary dream is no more. I find myself in this age of Philatelic barbarism, in this time of feudal transgression in Philately's bounds, in this period of *social and literary* defection, and lo!—my air castles have vanished.

For the CANADIAN PHILATELIST:

THE COLLECTING OF ODDITIES.

C. E. RANGE.

No country affords the distinctive varieties for the collecting of curiosities and odd styles of stamps as does the United States, its numberless character of stamps whose equivalent may be attributed to most any desired end, as is shown by an official residue of Postage, Fiscals and local stamps of every denomination, size, color and form. No art of postage stamp nature has yet been originated but it has at some time had a substitute among the postal output of the U. S. government. With the letter sheet, the return postal (now in issue), the news wrapper, the special delivery, the newspaper stamp, the carrier stamp, the postage due, the officially sealed, the department, &c., &c., which, with but three or four exceptions, are now in general issue and open to the public. Combining these varieties with revenue, proprietary, medicine, telegraph, cigarette, tobacco, express, local, match, beer and snuff stamps, can you but think that the formation of a complete collection of U. S. stamps, together with their possibilities, is the work of a life time.

The reason that the advocacy of a specific and special line of collecting is so ardently approved by the advanced philatelists (not dealers) in the United States is easily explained from the fact that in the formation of their own private collections the time and means in filling the spaces allotted in the albums to the U. S. requires the perseverance no other country imbibes, and the inspiration with which the stamps of one's own country is collected, where the varieties will permit, caused this valor among the collectors in general that a specialism in U. S. still exists.

One of the most hearty exponents of the collecting of curiosities in the stamp line is to be found in the person of Mr. Alvah Davidson, whose private collection of the adhesive stamps of the U. S. numbers over six hundred varieties, classed upon every distinct shade, perforation, embossing, grill, paper, die or error, and as his collection only includes adhesives no neater arrangement of a special line could possibly be made. The 3c. of 1851, 1857, 1861, 1870 are all of a class, noted for their innumerable varieties, and hardly a year rolls round but new varieties are chronicled upon the muster roll of Philately.

Those collectors that pursue a "rational" course (as it has been ascribed by a writer last month in one of our philatelic journals) must confine their collections to distinct shade, type and perforation or they will be classed with the rest of us fanatics and cast in thralldom forever. Envelopes in their entirety offer such an aggregation for collection, and the prices affixed, without previous defalcation or discount that it makes the "cold shudders run down one's back" when he even thinks of them. Color of paper, watermark, tints, a variety of dies and the size of envelopes constitute those elements required for the grace of the collection. That "albino" exist in envelopes is an assured fact, yet the apparent nonchalance of their collection reduces their price to an extreme, for only last week I saw one offered (unused, of course) on a sheet at the remarkable (?) price of 25 cents.

No source of varieties is so distinguishable as those procured from the stock of revenues, in which three issues were made on as many kinds of paper from