

few days reflection I decided to try again.

I went to New York and bought an International Stamp Album and was advised to get a philatelic paper. I got one and then subscribed for fifteen of them and began to learn more about my stamps. I am now buying from ten dealers every month and exchanging stamps and coupons with fifty persons besides.

Most of the dealers advertise 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % and 50% off and prices marked lower than catalogue. If you buy a stamp catalogued \$20.00 and take it to a dealer he offers you \$2.00 for it, so I came to the conclusion that the catalogue must be a humbug.

The best stamps I have received have been through exchanging. I received a 13 cent and a 5 cent Hawaiian Islands 1851-1852, which I understand are very valuable, and also a full set of Documentary stamps, series 1898, and I must confess that the exchanges are more honest than the dealers. All in all you must go through some pretty hard luck when a person is crooked.

On one of my days off, I was introduced to a philatelic writer, and I thought that this was my chance to learn something about stamps, but, to my surprise he did not have twenty-five dollars worth of stamps in his album and still that same man will have the nerve to write articles on stamps. Once I tried a new scheme. I answered two ads of dealers selling foreign stamps of the same series, unused. One set cost \$1.00 and the other \$6.00. I sent them to a friend in the place where the stamps came from to have them tested. When he presented them to the officials they were going to imprison him for having counterfeit stamps in his possession. I received the genuine set back which cost

one dollar. The other was kept by the government. I was out \$6.00. Then I thought of the old saying, "What fools these mortals be."

I have now over four thousand varieties, but I find it is no pleasant task to discover the difference between a counterfeit and a genuine stamp. A person must be temperate and have patience and then he can see the bright side of philately. I am now getting along first class with the aid of the philatelic papers. I can now tell the difference between lithographed or engraved stamps, take the paper off without damaging the stamp, and pick out any shade. Collecting has also learned me a great deal about geography, history and counting in foreign languages. A short time ago I started ten young men and girls in stamps by giving them each 250 stamps. If all advanced philatelists would do the same and have patience and teach the beginner, we would not have so many fake dealers with big displays in the philatelic papers, but more honest ones. They are not in it for the benefit of their health but for gold. If there were more honest dealers we would have more collectors as when they get "bit" once they generally give up collecting.

The next thing I noticed was societies. It appears to me that in many cases a dealer buys a book, charges ten cents initiation fee and places your name in the book, then for 25c or 50c a year you are entitled to all rights and privileges. In the first place the officers and members do not know one another. The President may live in California, the Secretary in Washington, the Sales Supt in Illinois, etc. When could they get together and have a meeting? I am a member of the