

Written for the CANADIAN PHILATELIC WEEKLY.

"What Fools We Mortals Be."

BY W. A. WITHEROW.

AT the next meeting of the Smithtown Philatelic Club, which occurred two weeks later, all of the members were present, though Gauthier looked rather glum, and it was evident that he would have much rather remained at home.

Whether some of his stock in trade had disagreed with him or whether he cherished resentment for our treatment of him at the former meeting, we did not know; however, to be on the safe side, we all remained at a respectful distance, for if he should maliciously tread on our toes the result would be painful to the treasurer, and also to ourselves.

After the routine business was disposed of, it was proposed that someone should tell a story for our mutual entertainment and benefit, and finally McKeever was persuaded to start the ball rolling.

"I can't say that I've had much experience in the philatelic line myself, but I once had a mild sort of adventure, and it was caused through a postage stamp, too. I am or rather was a Fenian. I suppose you have all heard of them?" he said inquiringly, looking around the circle and seeing everyone excepting Gauthier, who was on the opposite side of the stove, for it was very cold, and it required our utmost exertions to keep the heater from freezing.

However, something could be seen extending on each side of the stove, which experience had taught us was the Frenchman, and McKeever was about to proceed, when Gauthier, although he could not be seen, was heard:

"Heard of the Fijians? well, I should remark, there're the fellows that eat folks, ain't they?" he cried in alarm, glancing down at his portly form.

McKeever looked disgusted and then angry.

"Begad, they wouldn't eat you, so close your face."

Then the broken thread of the narrative and the braised form of the Irishman were taken up from the floor, and after a time things were in their normal state.

"Yes; before I came over from old Ireland, I was a Fenian," with a scowl at Gauthier, "and it was a revolutionary movement, we did not hold our meetings in the opera house, but selected instead, a quiet and retired place in another part of the city, where we would not be disturbed."

"Perhaps you don't know it but I was not always a tailor, for years ago I was an expert wood carver, and when we were sure we could make old Ireland a republic, we made all the preparations for her white, and, of course, we didn't want to use English stamps to post our letters, so I got the job of carving out some designs for stamps of our own."

"Unknown to us, the authorities got to hear of the matter, and a raid was made on us one night, and I just escaped by the skin of my teeth. I happened to have one of the stamps in my pocket at the time, but I sold that to a prominent Irish agitator, many years ago as a souvenir?"

A dead silence succeeded the conclusion. After a time, Rogers, the restaurant man, said:

"Was the type the same as that illustrated in the June, 1893, *American Philatelist*?"

"The same," said the Irishman, bowing low.

"How old were you at that time?" inquired Rogers, musingly.

"I? Why, about twenty-five, more or less."

"If I am not mistaken," said Rogers

thoughtfully, "those stamps were supposed to have been issued in 1865. You surely are not fifty-five years old, McKeever?"

"I am not. I'm just turned thirty, but didn't I say about?"

"I have always noticed that McKeever was very precocious, but to think of him being an expert wood carver at one or two years of age!" laughed Rettinger, dealer in boots and shoes.

"You fellows can't take the word of a gentleman," snorted McKeever, and we adjourned.

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Advantages of Societies.

BY W. J. SABOURIN.

IT is my object in writing this article to endeavor to give a few reasons which will serve to encourage collectors to join our Philatelic Societies.

A young man who has never been a collector learns one day that there is money saving stamps, and also that it is an agreeable pastime. What shall he do?

If he is not known among the collectors in general, he should before going, however, find out what societies are the best, and make an application for membership as soon as possible. The name is submitted to the Society through the official organ, and if within a month no objection is received he is considered elected a member. He then should immediately forward his dues to the secretary, and he will then have no drawback in beginning his progress in the Philatelic world, that is if he deals squarely with his fellow-collectors and meets his obligations promptly.

Now, as to a few of the benefits which are derived from being a member of a society. It increases the opportunities and facilities for exchanging duplicates, and also increases the confidence of dealers to whom you apply for goods on approval, as they will far more readily forward to a member of a society than to one who is not such. It will also help, no doubt, in the undertaking to make up a nice collection in a very short time, and also win the esteem of friends who are working for the same purpose. If a member of the society becomes interested in his hobby, there is no reason why he should not succeed like many other collectors have done before him. A society is a reference, provided, as I have said before, he is square in all his dealings. Some one will say: "I can get all the reference I want from parties I buy from, and I do not wish to trouble myself about societies." The words of these people are out of place. Perhaps they may succeed but, however, so long as we are a society member, they will be honest with us and dishonest with another, and no one will know it. But if they belong to an association such methods will not answer, as perfect honesty is one of the greatest necessities to a collector who desires to maintain his membership.

If, on the other hand, a person begins to collect and has not sense enough to enter into any society, his time will be lost. He will make requests to dealers which will be refused, and after a short time, seeing that he cannot secure the confidence of the collecting world, he will in all probability drop his treasures, if he has any, and sell them at a ridiculous price. This is one gone out of our ranks. He is known by a few, and his name which would have been better on the membership list of some association, has entirely disappeared from the collecting fraternity.

If you wish to succeed do not hold back, but join some of the leading societies at once.

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Confederate Envelopes.

BY E. R. ALDRICH.

WHILE the collecting of different styles of envelopes, not bearing a franking impress, can hardly be classed as philately, yet it may frequently be used as a side ail the same as the study of cancellation and post-marks. In the study of no class of stamps can the study of the envelope be better employed than in the study of the labels, which were sent forth by our South

era brethren during their attempt to sever their connection with the federal government. During the first year or so of the war the envelopes in many cases were fine white envelopes with patriotic pictorial designs, such as the confederate flag, a belching cannon surmounted by an ensign, the flag or arms of the different seceding states, Davis' head surrounded by stars and flags. Later on the quality of paper became poorer and the pictorial envelopes scarcer, but at the same time the renewed patriotic spirit of the people are denoted by the more fervent outpouring of patriotism in the mottoes, of which the following is but a single sample:

"Bright banner of freedom with pride I unfurl thee:
E'er of my country with love I behold thee,
Gleaming above thee in freshness and youth,
Emblem of liberty, Symbol of truth,
For the flag of my country in triumph shall wave
O'er the Southerner's home and the Southerner's grave."

Another interesting relic of the same period was a cheap manilla envelope with a belching cannon in black with the motto "Run yankee or die." Of course at this period, as in fact at all times during the pictorial, envelopes of the opposite sections will be found used by their opponents, who have evidently become possessed of them by the fortunes of war. Of this class an exceedingly interesting specimen recently came into my possession, where an envelope bearing Davis' physiognomy had come into the hands of the Unionists and been surcharged "The greatest traitor of them all" in bold black caps.

As the iron-iron-like bands of fate slowly began compressing the confederacy, the poverty of the country is well illustrated by the "covers" we find used. Odd envelopes were carefully taken apart, turned and again put together and made a second time to do duty. Envelopes made from wall paper are not infrequently met with. Books were robbed of their fly-leaves, in fact stray paper of every kind has been utilized. Among other envelopes I recently met with one made from a copy of "general orders."

In the last few months of the war the means of postal communications were well nigh destroyed, and the few envelopes met with are sorry specimens indeed, in fact envelopes used as high as three times may be found. The names being scratched and rewritten so that the entire face of the envelope was practically illegible, and the back utilized for the address. These envelopes are really very rare and very, very seldom met with.

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BOYD, L. B. 469 Colborne St., London, Canada. Foreign correspondence solicited. Send 50 to 200 stamps of your country and receive same number of Canadian. (52)