

PUBLISHERS OF PHILATELIC ALBUMS.

Long experience and much consideration of the matter has led us to the conclusion that publishers of philatelic albums, especially the larger and more valuable and costly ones do not take the proper method to meet the natural desires of their customers. A collector of stamps who has paid a considerable sum for an album that is at the time complete and who has expended a large amount of money in buying stamps to fill it—to say nothing of the patience, skill and labor involved—often discovers that the list of the stamps of his album was not as complete as he thought it was, and he always finds that there have been new emissions in different countries and that old styles have been retired and become obsolete. Under these circumstances he applies to the album publishers and is advised to buy a newer, revised edition in volumes. The most enthusiastic collector feels that this is not what he desires. He does not wish to throw away the book on which he has expended so much pleasant labor. Then the work of removing the stamps that have been pasted into one book, from the old into the new album, that will itself soon be obsolete, is not certain to be a complete success and will not recommend itself to any sensible person. In fact there can be no doubt that this difficulty is one important reason why many persons who have begun the study of the Philatelic Art and the gathering of collections have given it up in disgust. Thus not only publishers of albums but dealers in stamps lose customers who might have been retained or attracted if a proper regard to their convenience was shown.

It is very well to endeavor to induce a new customer to purchase the newest and fullest edition of an album but, after that, publishers should put themselves in a position to supply their customers from time to time with supplements to the albums that they have already sold them. We are convinced that they will, in the long run, find this course more profitable than that they now follow.

In publishing albums as in every other business there is so much competition that those who most truly consult the tastes and desires of their patrons will reap the amplest reward. We commend this idea to the consideration of Publishers of Philatelic Albums.

FREE POSTAL DELIVERY.—Letters, papers, etc., are delivered to their addresses in 109 cities in the United States.

USE OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

A correspondent of the *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, attributes the first use and issue of Postage stamps to John Lorimer Graham, postmaster in New York in 1842. These stamps were, he says, about the size of the stamp now in use, bore the head of Washington and were of the value of three cents. The postmasters of St. Louis, Baltimore, Alexandria, Va., New Haven, Providence, R. I., and Brattleboro, Vt., followed about in the order named in 1845 and 1846. According, however, to the recollection of an old employe of the New York post-office, stamps were brought into use first by Postmaster Morris in 1847 or 1848. He issued stamps of his own at five and ten cents apiece, those being the then current rates of postage; but the postmasters throughout the

country refused to recognize them. In 1851 an act of Congress was passed which led to the introduction of the rates and stamps now in use.

BRASS-LOCK REGISTRY EXCHANGE SYSTEM.

The "brass-lock registry exchange system," established two years since and explained in my report of last year, has proven completely successful, and is rapidly being put in operation on all important lines of star service in the country. It corresponds to the through-pouch system on the railroads, to which it is an adjunct, and is governed by somewhat similar regulations. Not only does it greatly add to the security of registered matter, but it greatly facilitates its transmission and saves much labor in re-handling. Prior to the establishment of the system registered matter was rebilled and recorded at each intermediate post-office on the line in order to fasten the responsibility in case of loss. It not unfrequently happened that the registered mail was so large that it could not be handled in time for the first outgoing mail, and was permitted to lie over to be sent on a subsequent day. On one important star route a post-office inspector reported constant detentions of registered matter, varying from ten to fifteen days, when the scheduled time for the trip was only fifteen hours. The delay in rehandling registered matter at intermediate offices was frequently pleaded by contractors in extenuation of failure to make schedule time, and as a reason for the remittance of fines imposed for such failure.

EXPRESS MONEY ORDERS.

One effect of the adoption by the express companies of the money order system of transmitting small sums will inevitably be to greatly diminish the revenue hitherto derived by the government from the corresponding branch of its postal service. Money may now be sent by express order more cheaply than by any facility offered by the postal service, while the security to the sender is equally absolute, and the promptitude in transmission certainly no less. Add to this the fact that express agents are as a rule more accessible than postmasters or their clerks—the former's tenure of place depending more directly on their ability and disposition to please the public—and you have a combination of influences tending to divert this class of business from the government to the express companies that cannot fail to make themselves felt. It is plain to see that the revenue the government has been reaping from this source, and which has gone a considerable way towards making the postal service self-sustaining, will show a sudden and serious falling off from the causes mentioned, but we suppose that all Uncle Sam can do is to grin and bear it.—*Prarie Farmer*.

RARITIES.

Dealers desiring varieties at special prices in quantities will please write for our private list.

Special attention is invited to my assortment of Provincial stamps, viz., Newfoundland, P. E. Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

HENRY HECHLER,
Importing Dealer in Foreign Postage Stamps.
184 Argyle Street,
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.