

and such as are treated in a standard catalogue. Generalize your collection and collect only varieties of stamps, giving no attention to perforations, watermarks or shades. Adhere to these advices until you are promoted to the higher sphere of philately as a *young collector*.

If you are a *young collector*, or somewhat versed in the *art* of collecting, you may then extend your territory in the collecting field, and give your attention to both *used* and *unused*, *postage* and *revenue* stamps, and if thought necessary you may also study watermarks and perforations, and collect varieties of the same. Give your especial attention to the issues of your own country, but *be a general collector*. You may also extend your limit to higher priced stamps and, perhaps, scarcities. Do not yet collect surcharges, as they are often counterfeited, and liable to deceive the young collector's eye. You will continue in that fashion, at the same time not forgetting the side-issues of philately, which are nearly as important as itself, including journalism and philatelic socialism, until you have reached the ripe age and period of your promotion to the third and foremost stage of the *scientific collecting*, better and properly known as philately.

If you are an *advanced collector* or philatelist, the several courses of collecting are open to you, and you may make your own selection. You may either generalize or specialize, at your pleasure. You may study and collect postage, revenue, local, telegraph, envelopes, and the other score and ten variations. You may classify your stamps according to shade, perforation, watermark, etc. You may collect pairs and blocks, errors and specimens, provisionals and surcharges, proofs and essays, engravings and lithographs, impressions and albums, and, in fact, everything in connection with them. The collection of all or any of the above oddities, are optional, and you may accept some and reject others.

You have reached the stage when the collecting is your idol—in fact *your second nature*, which will forever linger with you.

Kind readers, I have attempted to outline a brief summary of the three stages of stamp collecting, and what to collect, and trust that I have not encroached upon your time without benefit.

Thanking the editor for valuable space, I will conclude, with hopes of addressing my readers at a future time.

History of the Postal System.

BY SOCRATES.

How many of our young brethren in philately are acquainted with the history and reformation of our now perfect postal system? My experience has taught me that, with the exception of a few, they are not thoroughly acquainted with the same, and for their benefit I will attempt, to the best of my ability, to impart to them some inkling as regards its origination. Prior to 1784 it seems 'hat little or nothing was known or cared about the prosperity and management of the system in Great Britain, which consisted in the sender of a letter going to the mailing office with same, and paying charges in advance to the person in charge, who very frequently was not upright enough to place the charges in the right place, but, by mistake (?) removed same to his own interests. Then, also, was it a difficulty to those who had to travel many miles to reach the post office, if such it may be termed. In 1874, however, some postal reform agitators rose on a question for more speed of mail coaches, an argument which met with the obstinate opposition and indignation of the officials. Nevertheless, the former won the day, in that the speed of mail coaches was increased to six miles, and finally to eight miles per hour. The officials, though, had the satisfaction of seeing