

Ottawa in 1892, he won first prize for his postage stamp collection, and third prize for his collection of Canada revenues.

At the organization of the Canadian Philatelic Association he was one of the charter members, and was elected vice-president for Quebec, and subsequently elected to chairmanship of the Board of Trustees. In 1892 he was unanimously elected as President, which position he at present still holds. Mr. Wurtele is also a member of Montreal Philatelic Society, Societie Timbrophile d'Echange de Paris, and several others.

He is very prominent in military circles, having joined the Royal Military College of Kingston in 1878, graduating in 1882, when he accepted a commission in the 8th Royal Rifles, continuing with them ever since, 5 years as Adjutant and since then as Captain. Mr. Wurtele is the Secretary-Treasurer of the Royal Military College Club of Canada, and is Treasurer of the Q. M. & C. Railway of Quebec.

## THE PORTE DE MAR STAMPS OF MEXICO.

About these plain, ugly-looking stamps so little is definitely known, and so many wrong ideas are current, that it is with pleasure we quote of these stamps from "Grosses Handbuck der Philatelie," just issued.

It is indeed queer that the simple translation and meaning of the words *Porte de Mar* seem to have created enormous difficulties in the philatelic world, some catalogues translating them as "seaport stamps," as if such places had need for stamps for them alone. The Mexican Post-office Department distinguished two schedules of postage, the *Porte de Tierra*—inland postage—and the *Porte de Mar*—sea postage. About the use of the stamps, which are wrongly accepted by a good many authorities as some kind of postage-due stamps for incoming letters on which the postage

had not sufficiently been paid, the following is said in the official order issued by the Directorio para las oficinas del servicio publico de correos :

"While the English and French post steamers heretofore have carried the Mexican mail in consideration of a fixed amount, in the beginning of 1875 the directors of the English lines declared that according to higher orders they had to insist upon the payment of the sea postage (*Porte de Mar*) for every single piece of mail matter. The same declaration was soon afterwards made by the French agents."

In consequence, on all mail matter to be carried by English and French post steamers to European or American ports, a fee had to be levied outside the ordinary Mexican inland postage, and this fee should not be paid by affixing the ordinary stamps. In the beginning no stamps at all were issued for this additional fee. This way of doing business placed the postage clerk in the interior in a peculiar position towards the public, as the latter could not conceive that more postage had to be paid than stamps were affixed, and besides the accounting in Vera Cruz was made very hard by the different marking of the letters. Therefore, by a decree of May 12, 1875, certain kinds of stamps for the payment of such postage were created. These stamps in the official circular are called *Contrasenas*, or accounting stamps. A special account had to be kept about these stamps which were affixed by the inland office on letters before shipping them through the sea post. Generally stamps were placed on the back of the letters. As these stamps were not sold to the public it was not deemed necessary to have them surcharged like the ordinary Mexican stamps with the name of the postal district, nevertheless in a few cases this was done.

About the so-called first issue of these stamps, printed in black on yellow paper, the German authors say : "These empty designs on such loud paper were the first