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On the Collection of Envelopes.

Of late the discussion whether whole or cut envelopes should be collected has been revived and we wish to make a few remarks on the subject. Previous to the first appearance of post-cards, we used to preserve cut envelopes alone, in our own collection, but now that it is seemingly necessary to have a separate book for post-cards (for who would be guilty of the absurdity of cutting them out) we insert the envelopes entire, with the cards. Of course we have other reasons for doing so, besides that of convenience, but with many collectors this would go a great way and we therefore mention it.

Now let us look at the arguments used by the upholders of the different systems, after which we will give our opinions on them; first those of the entire envelope collectors. They say, in support of their style, that the whole envelope is what is issued by the post-office, and that as when the impressed stamp is cut out, it has no postal value, it is not deserving of collection. That it is impossible to distinguish between reprints and originals when the envelope is cut up, and that many envelopes have interesting watermarks or flap ornaments, which are

quite as worthy of preservation as the stamps themselves.

The collectors of cut envelopes have plenty to say in support of their ideas. The space whole envelopes take up; the impossibility of obtaining all the obsolete envelopes entire, except at ruinous prices, and even then difficult to procure; the ugliness of a wide expanse of paper, etc.

All these are arguments that have been employed by writers on the subject, and the strongest one in favor of entire envelopes is, we think, the first, for the principle thing to be looked at, when selecting a stamp for one's album, is that it be perfect, as issued by the post office; who would think of clipping off the margin close to the impression; of leaving octagonal or round stamps without any border? But leaving this unanswered let us proceed to examine the other reasons given by either side. That a whole envelope takes up a great deal of room is certainly true, but that it is ugly is not, for frequently it is set off by an elaborate watermark, or a printed inscription, both of which are quite interesting to any one who studies the minutiae of stamps. As to occupying too much space; on the same ground, all varieties would be rejected and