

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

STAMPS ON THE STAGE.

BY ROY F. GREENE.

A STAMP man in these latter days of collecting meets with stamps and stamp-collecting in some of its phases where'er he may go.

I have oftentimes wondered if it should be a stamp collector who would locate the long looked for North Pole, if he would not find some trace of stamps thereabouts.

In spite of the fact that I had never expected to see stamps or stamp albums in at least two places, in the church or on the stage, I have recently been made to draw the limits a little closer and made it to include only the church, for but a few evenings since, while attending a comedy by a regular company of artists at our opera house, I was much surprised to see an album with stamps brought out by one of the stars, and which was made to play not a minor part in the play itself.

If it had been a music portfolio, a photograph album, or a volume of poems which was used, this article would not have been written; but the novel idea of introducing to public gaze the much-abused stamp album caused ecstatic thrills of pleasure to enrapture at least one in the audience.

If I remember correctly there was a title to a valuable piece of property on which the plot hinged, and unless a certain bit of information, which had to be conveyed by letter from a foreign land, was forthcoming before a certain day the title to the land was to be made over to the villain and the hero reduced to want thereby.

Now the heroine of the play was a vivacious young lady whom the villain wished to make his wife. Her love, however, was given to a young laborer, poor but honest, and whom you will rightly guess was the hero. She was a stamp collector, and the villain had thought the way to her heart lay in securing stamps for her collection. And so the plot deepens and the play goes on.

One day the love-stricken villain gave to the lady a foreign stamp on a part of the envelope, which she placed in her album, and after a succession of startling events in which the villain succeeded in securing the title to the property, as the letter from the party in the foreign land failed to come. Some one appeared on the scene who had seen the villain destroy a letter which he had secured in some way, and little by little the plot cleared until the curtain raised upon a court room scene, where the villain is arraigned upon a charge of conspiracy or something of that nature.

The witness is sworn who saw the defendant destroy a certain letter, and then the young lady collector is placed upon the witness-stand and introduces as evidence the portion of envelope with stamp affixed and bearing the post mark of the foreign city, and the villain is convicted and made to languish in a felon's cell.

Of course, there are weak points in the plot to be noticed by a collector, such as why the lady collector contrary to all rules, should hinge the portion of envelope in its ragged state into her album instead of soaking it off and making it presentable.

But the fact is proven that philately is making its way into public notice, and a stamp album

may be made to play an important role in the eyes of the same public who a short while ago would have derisively laughed at such an innovation.

And who knows but that the remaining barriers may be removed, and in days that are yet to dawn we may receive a glad surprise by seeing a stamp album displayed from a pulpit even as I did the little album and its contents on the stage but a few nights since.

Written for THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST.

"WHAT FOOLS WE MORTALS BE."

BY W. A. WITHROW.

*Related Before the Smithsonian Philatelic Club by
George Gauthier, Esq.*

I SUPPOSE you have heard of Snipes & Co., 356 Strand, London? Well, I heard considerable of them and I guess my fame must have reached them as a philatelist of the first water, because I got a letter from them one day, asking if I'd go on the road for them, buying up old U. S. stamps.

Of course I was willin', providing I got my price, so I wrote 'em saying I would travel for their house if they gave me my price, which I set at a cool hundred a month, and expenses, and ten per cent of the catalogue value for all specimens found, and I was somewhat surprised to find in my mail, about two weeks later, an answer accepting my offer.

I didn't require cash in advance for I knew the firm to be strictly reliable, and I soon made my preparations for traveling. My wife casually suggested that it would be a good time to go down to Phoenix and visit my old uncle, for I had been hankering for a trip down there for a number of years and was only prevented from making the journey before by lack of funds. As my expenses were paid—or were to be paid—I thought it to be an excellent idea.

So to Phoenix I went. Uncle Hezekiah was very glad to see me; killed the fatted calf, etc., and we had a good time generally. I did not know how the idea might strike uncle, so I was cautious in my inquiries as to what persons had any old correspondence; but as you know, Yankees are proverbially curious, and as uncle was no exception, he soon had me cornered and I was forced to go over the whole rig-a-ma-role, as to how stamps were valuable, why, which, when and where they were collected and were worth the most. Gentlemen, before I got out of there I felt sick of the business, but I remembered the golden shekels which were to be mine and persevered.

I called upon Squire Stonan first and very solemnly stated my business, but no sooner did he know that I wished to overhaul his correspondence than he said:

"No sir! you can't look over my letters, for the first thing I would know a note 'ud turn up with my name forged unto it," and I was compelled to retire, notwithstanding my protestations of innocence.

I went off, and thinking that perhaps I had assumed too serious an expression, making the people believe that, to me, the result was of great