

WRITTEN FOR THE CANADIAN PHILATELIC WEEKLY

## Postal Card Collecting

LEWIS G. QUACKENBUSH.

THE war of words which for so many months has fiercely raged between generalists and specialists as to the merits of their respective systems seems to be practically over. All is silence in both camps. Not that the two contending legions have met the fate of the two Kilkenny cats, and after a prolonged fight destroyed each other; but the arguments of one party have proved too convincing to successfully be contested, therefore the other side, after a brave struggle, has sounded a retreat and the war is over. Now, only the occasional volley of some forlorn skirmisher seems to keep up the semblance of battle.

From the very beginning of my collecting career, I have held firmly to the doctrines of generalism, that is, I believe that the whole world is none too wide a field for the thoroughly enthusiastic stamp collector. But the force of circumstances and of time have somewhat shaken my allegiance to general collecting, and though I am still treading the old paths and gathering in impartially the issues of all five continents, as well as the islands of the sea, I find it useless to shut my eyes to the fact that specialism is gradually strengthening its position and that in time the continual increase in the number of legitimate, collectable varieties, as well as the increasing demands of a constantly increasing army of collectors will render specialism a necessity to that large majority of philatelists who must be guided more by the weight of their pocket books than by their inclinations.

The methods of specialism, however, may be infinitely varied, and thus there are immense opportunities for discussion as to the most fruitful fields for philatelic study. What particular corner of philately shall we explore? That is the great philatelic puzzle of the time, which every specialist is working out in his own way. It is of universal interest, and has received far too little consideration from the organs of our pursuit, the stamp journals, and from our spokesmen and leaders, the philatelic authors.

Who is undecided what to select for his specialty certainly cannot complain of insufficient variety. We may choose to collect the stamps of our own country or any other which especially interests us, of a group of countries, of a nation and its colonies, of a continent or of a world, just as we please. We may collect postage stamps, or we may revel in the accumulation of entire envelopes, or postal cards, or local, or fiscals. In fact philately is an unexplored wilderness, which we may roam over at will; a democratic pursuit, for no one can dictate what shall be collected. True, stamp collecting has its fashions like all other luxuries, but we are obliged to follow the crowd, to "do in Rome as the Romans do."

I intend to consider herein what I believe to be an especially interesting branch of specialism, namely the collection of entire postal cards. Postal cards have received some philatelic attention for a long time, but their real merits have not been fully realized until very recently. The card collector can exult over all other philatelists, for he has no foe of the counterfeiter. That despicable parasite troubles him not. He can barter his gold for rarities without a single misgiving that perhaps this seemingly rare old specimen is merely one of the latest products of the forger's art. The surcharge, unfortunately, is not altogether unknown to the accumulator of postals, but as yet forged surcharges are not sufficiently numerous to greatly trouble him.

However the chief merit of this species of collecting lies in the fact that its devotee can secure a first-class collection from all parts of the globe far more easily than he could a good representative collection of postage stamps. A

government usually issues only one kind of postal card where it uses a dozen different kinds of stamps. Hence the great advantage of postal card collecting over stamp collecting. An expenditure of \$300 for 3,000 varieties of cards makes a fine showing while the same sum spent on stamps will not half fill our album.

The postal card collector has always been puzzled how to properly display his treasures, and numerous attempts have been made to overcome this difficulty with small success. Until Mr. Adolphe Lohmeyer, the only American dealer who makes a specialty of postal cards, and editor of a journal devoted to the interests of card collectors, turned his mind to the problem and solved it by placing on the market an exceedingly practical and convenient album which has proved a boon to American collectors and which ought to stimulate the collecting of cards all over the world. The invention of such an album removes the greatest drawback of card collecting, and it should spread rapidly from now on. Postal card collecting is as pleasurable as stamp collecting and is a far less formidable task. The card is not usually as finely engraved as the stamp now is. It is handsomely colored, but the portrait or emblem is the same on both. Then again, a cancelled postal card is much more defaced than a cancelled stamp card, for much of the latter escapes unscathed. Also, on a postal the designer has far more scope for the display of his artistic skill. He can revel in flourishes and fancy scrolls, and ornamental borders, where the engravers of a postal stamp has no such privilege. Taken as a whole, a collection of postal cards really looks handsomer than a similar array of stamps, though they lack the vivid coloring of the latter.

Postal cards can be secured at present at very moderate prices and I believe that there are few better investments for postal card collecting in the present economic straits, to obtain great popularity in the near future. If we must have specialism why should not the postal card be our specialty?

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Used or Unused,  
Which?

GEO. B. KLEBER.

SOME collectors refuse all specimens which have been cancelled, and will place in their albums only new or unused stamps. Others will not admit unused stamps, and insist on having used ones only. The happy medium between the two extremes is to use the best, plain, cancelled stamps.

The collector who refuses used stamps, however handsome his collection may appear, must of necessity have many a blank space in his album, for it will be next to impossible to complete many sets unless, indeed, he be possessed of riches in abundance. In this case the stamps may be procured in sets from the countries issuing them, and his album then becomes very attractive. There is another drawback to the collection of unused only, and that is the unfortunate habit of reprinting, which many countries have adopted within the past few years. A collector of unused stamps or "remainders" which the officials have sold to dealers at a merely nominal price, hawked about at a penny each, while the specimen in his own collection cost, including postage and time spent in correspondence, several dollars perhaps. True, his stamp is the more desirable, and yet only an expert could detect the difference.

Those who collect used stamps are not expected to have complete sets, and for some reason, which we cannot clearly explain, a break in a set of used stamps does not appear such a serious matter as when the specimens are unused. Even a small used collection, if made

up of carefully selected specimens, will always look well, and its value will continually increase.

Do not put into your album stamps which are so badly defaced that it requires a careful examination to determine if the specimen be from Austria or from Turkey. A little care in selecting will add much, not only to the beauty of your collection, but to its value as well. Get stamps with even margins as far as possible, lightly but distinctly cancelled. Avoid specimens so cancelled as to spoil the appearance of the portrait, or whatever the design is, or marked so that it is hardly possible to tell whether the stamp is a 10 reis or 100 reis of Brazil.

Finally, have a care in mounting your stamps. Use hinges and then you can easily change a poor specimen for a better without injuring your album. Never paste your specimens in solid. This is a relic of the barbarous age of collecting and we now live in a more enlightened time.

## Sly Humor.

"Here is a stamp from Turkey, and another from Guinea," said Uncle Tom. "What?" "Oh, thank you," cried Baylis. "Maybe I'll get one from Rooster next."

A PLAY IN ONE ACT.

Druggist (aside). Now, by my halibut, here cometh the daughter of the rich Judge Turquoise. Forthwith must I hasten to pin beneath my elixir anointed moustache my most enterprising smile, for methinks this peerless maiden cometh hither to purchase of me countless stores of perfumery, blush of rose, chewing gum, and pills. To the lady— "Ah, good morning, madam. How can I serve you this morning? Speak on, and I will attend."

Fair Lady—"Good sir, it I please you, methinks I should like to purchase a two cent postage stamp. Thanks, awfully—any, nothing more do I wish. But, alas! what shall I do? My reticule have I left behind, and already have I adorned this packet with the stamp. How firmly it adheres—ah, woe is me."

Druggist (gallantly). "Let it not vex your gentle spirit, madam."

Fair Lady—"Thanks, awfully. Adieu." (exit lady).

Druggist—"To perdition with those simpering, sighing creatures! Away, smile, from beneath thy friendly shelter, and appear there never again! 'Sdeath and all the rest of the by words which a knight may safely use. This is but the sixth time I have been thus fooled since yester's sun arose. Get thee gone, smile, I say. Henceforth thy master is a hardened man."

## THE PHILATELIC PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

Forgeries Recently Discovered.

HOLLAND.—Unpaid letter stamp, 1881, one guilder, blue and red. Mr. S. K. Koning reports a very dangerous forgery of this stamp.

TRKKEY.—Current 10 and 20 paras, 1 and 2 piastres, surcharged with the word "Taxe" and the equivalent in Turkish characters; two complete sets current issue, surcharged "Imprint" in red; three unpaid letter stamps of the former issue; twenty paras and one piastre, surcharged "Imprint," in black. The above surcharges are all false, and have never been in use in any post office in the Turkish Empire.

UNITED STATES.—1868, 90c., blue; 1870, 6, 10, 15 and 24c., with fonged grille. Only the above values have been seen, but probably others exist. The grille to those that have been examined was too much oblong in shape, and the points composing same were too far apart.

FREDK. R. GINS,

Honorary Secretary.