

varieties which have no set space in the printed albums, the collector's faculty for minute observation receives excellent training.

The blank album plays another important part in the philatelic world, namely for the mounting of entires this being the only way of collecting these, as the printed albums only provide space for envelopes and wrappers, which have to be ruined by cutting to get them on their allotted space.

In closing I must state that the beauty of having but one or two issues to the page instead of five or six must be seen to be appreciated.

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### United States Minutes.

CONDUCTED BY USONA.

No legitimate issues from the United States for the month, but plenty of speculative cards and envelopes for Porto Rico and Cuba. The 1 and 2 cent on blue for Cuba are new, the same on buff and white are merely a fresh supply. One million 2 cent and 500,000 1 cent stamps have been surcharged "Puerto Rico" and sent on, also a supply of 2 and 5 cent envelopes. Stamps with the former method of spelling will be good investments at current rates.

From *Mekeel's*:—"Some men live in dread of the day when their wives find out how much money they really spend for stamps." Very true, I don't want my wife to know the catalogue value of my collection.

The Post Office Department states that a great deal of badly addressed mail intended for points in the United States gets to Havana, Cuba, and that letters for Cebu, P. I., also get to the Havana office.

The pneumatic tube delivery system is

to have a trial in Chicago, if Postmaster Gordon's suggestions are adopted. He has submitted plans for a line of 19.40 miles, to connect seven existing postal stations and a railroad depot, and later two more stations are to be established. The tubes are to be sixteen inches in diameter, to hold a No. 3 canvas pouch, and the motive power recommended is compressed air. The districts to be served cover a combined area of thirty square miles and have an approximate population of 60,000 people. In one place there will be a straight line for more than one mile.

There has always been something peculiarly fascinating to me in the acquiring of stamps through auction sales, and my own collection has been mostly gathered in by that method. Twenty years ago when starting collecting, my general collection was built up by packets, but the duplicates accumulated and my ardor waned in proportion as none of my friends had a collection. In 1896, locating in a philatelic community, my books were brought out, and a dozen cards were written to auction managers for catalogues, and since then auctions have been my source of supply. The first thing discovered was that there are "autions and auctions," to use a popular expression. Some of the mail auctions are woeful affairs, the managers do not seem to know the meaning of auction. For instance the following note was sent me after a without reserve mail auction, "Sorry, but this was the only lot on which your bid could be accepted." My bids were about current prices, and the answer clearly showed the affair to be a sale and no auction. On the other hand many of the mail auctions are good places to pick up nice lots.