

# The Philatelic Messenger

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## PHILATELIC SOCIETIES.

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It seems strange but nevertheless it is absolutely true, that many philatelists fail to appreciate the existence of philatelic societies.

It is estimated that the philatelic population of United States and Canada is at least 50,000, and the vast majority of that number are not members of any society, either national, state or local. It is very true that societies of the latter class have many members, who are either totally ignorant of outside societies, or who fail to take advantage of such societies on the ground that such do not interest them, and they prefer to deal personally with collectors, and not with every Tom, Dick and Harry from all parts of the country.

At the most, the total membership of all known (in U. S. and Canada) societies combined, we will estimate at 15,000. What prevents the other 35,000—or 70 per cent. of the total philatelic population—from joining our ranks? Many suggestions could be advanced, but suggestions are not motive power. What we want is unceasing push. In every society just organised you will find many new names of collectors from all parts of the country. In the applications for the first few months this is noticeable also. But later the names of the applicants are more familiar. On rare occasions you will find an unknown collector applying for membership.

There are many collectors who have not the opportunities to join a local society. These collectors reside in remote places and in numerous instances are the only stampites in those localities.

This is the class of collectors who lack the knowledge that large philatelic societies exist, and to reach these collectors is a problem not yet solved. It is safe to wager that if one half of these "hermits" were given the intelligence of the existence of philatelic societies, fifty per cent. would join instantly and the balance inside of six months.

What philately does need is a band of missionaries, not to convert but to enroll, and bring forward the ignorant to see the brighter light of philately. I would suggest the following proceedings, and I believe if same were carried out, our ranks would be greatly augmented thereby.

In large cities organise local societies. Do not depend on friends for all the aid, but have secretary, or in fact any member, address letters to all of the local newspapers, requesting the editors to have same published in their papers. This request is in most cases granted. The body of letter should read to invite all collectors of the city to attend the next meeting of your society. Great stress should be laid upon the provision that there is no age limit. These letters can be sent to the papers a few days before the date of the meeting each month. If an interested collector fails to see the notice the first time, he is apt to see it later; and he will, in all probability, accept the invitation to be a visitor at your