

The Quaker City Philatelist.

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LONDON PHILATELIC EXHIBITION.

IN the buildings once associated with Madame Tussaud and the Cattle Show, but now changed not only in appearance but in name, and known as the Portman Rooms, there has been opened the most splendid collection of postage stamps ever gathered together. It is the first of its kind in England, but nevertheless it transcends in quantity and quality any similar show which has been held at Vienna and other Continental capitals. The Jubilee of the Penny Post suggested the undertaking to Mr. M. P. Castle, a well-known collector, and his ideas were warmly taken up by the Philatelic Society, which promptly formed an executive committee, consisting of Mr. F. A. Philbrick, Q. C., Mr. T. K. Tapling, M. P., Mr. Douglas Garth, Mr. E. D. Bacon, Mr. J. A. Tilleard and Mr. Castle, with Mr. Charles Colman as honorary Secretary. As the number of entries soon convinced these gentlemen that large premises would have to be secured for their display, the Portman Rooms were secured, and when the Duke of Edinburgh, himself an ardent collector, consented to open the exhibition, the success of the enterprise seemed to be a foregone conclusion. It may at once be stated that this happy augury has been amply fulfilled. When it is stated that the accumulated stamps were valued at over £100,000, that a heavy insurance was effected at Lloyd's, and that guardians watched the cases day and night, it may readily be imagined that visitors enjoyed a long afternoon at this wonderful museum with a keen sense of the value of that which they are inspecting. There was a time when stamp collecting was scoffed at as the aimless amusement of school-boys and very young ladies, but actual experience has shown that it has become an art in its development, and one of the most valuable aids to geographical knowledge. Stamp auctions are regularly held in London, and sales are frequent, great prices being realized. For instance, last month a Bolivar small green 10 cent stamp of the first issue sold for £95; a Bolivia 500 cent black for £40; a British Guiana 1853 4 cent blue for £21; a 4d. vermilion, 1d. Venetian red, and 2d. rose of Great Britain for £82 6s.; a laureated 1d. Sydney with an error in the impression for £46; a Victoria beaded oval 6d. orange for £87 6s.; a Confederate States (used) 5 cent blue for £34; a West Australia first issue 2d. bronze for £57 6s.; a ditto 6d. for £80, and a Providence black (unused) 10 cent for £34. These sums give unmistakable evidence of the keen competition which exists among philatelists. Small wonder, then, that nowadays bundles of old letters are carefully overhauled by searchers after the forgotten treasures of the envelopes, and that the names of collectors, such as M. Ferrari, of Paris, and Mr. Tapling, M. P., enjoy a world-wide fame. At the Portman Rooms the cases positively swarmed with rarities. There is the only joined pair of the unprepossessing pink first issue of British Guiana alongside its yellow, green and blue brethren, all the property of Mr. E. B. Luard; there is Major E. B. Evans' splendid lot of Afghans, some so scarce that only disfigured specimens are known to exist. Then, again, there is Lord Kingston's nearly complete set of unused English issue; there is Mr. E. D. Bacon's vast assemblage of Japanese stamps, all native made and of endless variety; there are Mr. Tapling's Réunions, valued at £60 to £70 a pair, and his Mauritius, of which he boasts some examples to be found in no other English collection, and of which some fourteen or fifteen others only are known to

exist elsewhere. The same collector's Hawaiian are probably unique, one sheet of twelve being appraised at £400; and his New South Wales, including an uncut sheet of the first penny stamp, must fill the spectator with envy as they lie alongside of the fine assortment belonging to Mr. Castle and Mr. W. B. Thornhill. Possibly no one but a connoisseur would gauge the value of those Japanese post-cards at £5 a piece, or care to expend £30 on the yellow shilling label of Mauritius, or £200 on an unused 2d. stamp of the same colony. Who but he could guess that a set of eight Austrian envelopes would fetch £50, or imagine a 3d. "green" of New South Wales represented cash to the extent of from £10 to £15? Look, too, at the Duke of Edinburgh's fine row of Greek errors, Dr. Mallman's American locals, Mr. Tapling's Pacific Steam Navigations, and Major Evans' splendid group of native Indians, including those of Bhopal, Thind, Soruth, Kashmir, Nowanugger, Poonch, Sirmoor, Jannaghar, Puttialia, Gwalior, Faridkot, Nabha, Chamba, and other Eastern States, whose names are certainly not household words in Europe. There are such curiosities as uncut sheets of Philippines, Mulready's original design for his envelope, belonging to Miss Jaffray; the Duke of Leinster's inverted Black Swan; Sir Rowland Hill's unrivaled group of models, specimens and trophies, including the first Albert medal ever given by the Royal Society; and last, but not least, the large trophy of forgeries, nearly all of which are believed to be the work of one Italian engraver, some of whose imitations are very nearly perfect. Again, there is the ingenious perforating machine of Messrs. Perkins and Bacon, and the great show of reprints displayed by the Tasmanian Government. The exhibits of such firms as Lincoln, Maury, Stafford Smith, Pemberton & Wilson, and Stanley Gibbons show that the great dealers have not neglected their opportunity, and there is Mr. J. Leighton, F. S. A., with his simple and original method of voting at elections by post. Indeed, it is almost impossible to give a satisfactory idea of this novel and historical collection.

Punctually at noon the Duke of Edinburgh, who was received by a guard of honor of the 24th Middlesex (Post-office) Rifles, entered the building, and was received by Mr. Tapling and the committee. Among those present were the Duke of Teck, the Duke of Leinster, Lord Bangor, Lord Barrington, Lord Kingston, Sir Saul Samuel, Mr. Braddon (Agent-General for Tasmania), Admiral Woods and Sir S. A. Blackwood, who were joined later on by Mr. Raikes (Postmaster-General). Mr. Tapling, when his Royal Highness had taken his stand on the flower-decked dais, welcomed the Duke in a brief address, in which he pointed out the interest which had been aroused by the Postage Jubilee. His Royal Highness said in reply:

"Ladies and Gentlemen—Having myself for some time been interested in the subject to which this exhibition is devoted, I was glad to receive an invitation to open it and to have the opportunity of inspecting the highly interesting collection which is now to be displayed to the public. The fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of postage stamps into the world has certainly been well chosen for the inauguration of the exhibition. I congratulate you upon the assistance and coöperation so kindly bestowed by the Postal Department, both of this country and of the Colonies, as well as by the numerous private individuals who have placed at your disposal their valuable collections, and I need hardly say how much pleasure it afforded me to do what lay in my own power to assist you. I heartily wish all success to your efforts, and trust that the results will very materially conduce to the advantage of the charitable institutions connected with the General Post-office which have been so appropriately selected to receive benefit therefrom. I have now only to declare this exhibition open."

The Royal party then made a tour of the exhibits, the Duke of Edinburgh frequently stopping to discuss the technicalities of some of the specimens with Mr. Tapling and others. At one o'clock luncheon was served to some fifty guests in what was once the Chamber of Horrors, but which was now devoted to more appetizing occupation. A word of praise must be given for the menus. The covers, illustrative of the progress of penny postage, were decorated with "Queen's heads," real and unused, dating from 1840 onwards. After lunch Mr. Tapling rose, and, having given the toast of "The

Queen and Empress," which was drunk with all honors, added that of the "rest of the Royal family, coupled with the name of the Duke of Edinburgh."

His Royal Highness said:

"My Lords and Gentlemen—I return you my sincere thanks for the kind manner in which you have drunk my health. I also assure you that it gives the greatest pleasure to the Prince of Wales and the rest of the Royal family to visit any exhibition which tends to the good of our fellow-countrymen. It is, moreover, also our privilege to be connected with the public services. To-day Prince George of Wales starts from Chatham in the *Thrush*, to the command of which he has been appointed. I am sure you will join with me in wishing him a prosperous and pleasant cruise. He also is a stamp collector, and I hope that he will return with a goodly number of additions from North America and the West Indies. I am a collector, too, and I have been only too glad to contribute specimens to this fine exhibition. I need not detain you longer, for, no doubt, you are all anxious to resume your inspection of the treasures in the other room."

Mr. Tapling then proposed "The Postal System of Great Britain and the Colonies." The Postmaster-General, in responding, said that he might without indiscretion state the Queen took the greatest interest in things postal, and in evidence he related how interested she had been in the development of the three-penny Australian postcard, which bore a full-length portrait of herself on it. Sir Saul Samuel also replied, and, referring to the charges that had been made of disloyalty against those who had substituted the emu, the platypus, the kangaroo, and the lyre bird for the sovereign's head on the stamps of the Antipodes, asserted that he might say the last-named biped possibly typified these calumniators.

PATRICK CHALMERS AGAIN.

IN a recent circular Mr. Patrick Chalmers conveys the impression that the Philatelic Society of London would, at its Exhibition recently held, plainly show that it now admitted the claim that James Chalmers was the inventor of the adhesive postage stamp.

We publish herewith a letter from Mr. Philbrick, the President of the society:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE STANDARD:

Sir:—In the interesting article on the Vienna Postage Stamp Exhibition, which appeared in your paper on the 25th ult., you refer to the rival claims which have, from time to time, been advanced by different persons to have been the first to suggest the use of adhesive, as distinguished from non-adhesive, postage stamps, in carrying out the great postal reform with which Sir Rowland Hill's name is associated.

My attention has just been called to the circulation, on the eve of the London Philatelic Exhibition, of a leaflet, in which it is asserted that the Philatelic Society of London "now admits that Sir Rowland Hill did not originate the adhesive postage stamp," the suggestion of which is claimed for Mr. James Chalmers, of Dundee. Permit me to say that such assertion is entirely and absolutely untrue.

The London Society some years ago investigated the whole subject, and after a long and careful inquiry and consideration of the original documents, unanimously resolved that the claims put forward by Mr. Patrick Chalmers, on behalf of his late father, were "unsubstantiated." Since then the society has seen no reason to alter its views, and it certainly has expressed no such opinion, or made any such admission, as stated in the leaflet.

Those who are interested in the matter will be able to see, at the society's exhibition, to be held at the Portman Rooms, in the present month, examples of the actual stamps proposed by Mr. James Chalmers, and can then judge for themselves as to the merits of his suggestions. I may state that some fifty persons sent in proposals for

adhesive labels in response to the Government invitation in 1839; many of them recommending that the stamp should be inserted in the seal of the letter, leaving one end loose. This utterly impracticable plan were also favored by Mr. James Chalmers, whose suggestions were laid aside as useless.

But on the question of priority there can be no doubt that Sir Rowland Hill was first in the field, for, as stated in your article he, in his evidence given before the Commissioners of Post-office Inquiry on the 13th of February, 1837, proposed the use of adhesive as well as other kinds of postage stamps, while Mr. James Chalmers, both in his printed proposals, and in his original letters, which are in my possession, states that he first made his plan public in November, 1837.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

FRED. A. PHILBRICK,

President of the Philatelic Society of London.

LAMB-BUILDINGS, TEMPLE, E. C., May 1.

This very plainly shows that Mr. Chalmers has again indulged in one of his misrepresentations, and we cannot resist the conclusion that a cause which must be bolstered up by misrepresentation and deceit, has but little solid foundation in fact or reason.

This is not the first instance of perversion on the part of Mr. Chalmers, and such exhibitions as this must certainly raise a doubt even in the minds of his followers.

At the same time they serve a good purpose and a few more instances will effectually dispose of all that remains of Chalmersism.—*American Journal of Philately.*

CHALMERS-HILL CONTROVERSY.

Copy of the letter from Assistant Secretary of the General Post-office, London, to the Town Clerk of Dundee:

“GENERAL POST-OFFICE, July 4, 1888.

“*Sir*:—In reply to your letter of the 23d ulto., I beg leave to inform you, that, according to the records of this department, the use of adhesive postage stamps was first suggested by Sir Rowland Hill in his evidence of 13th February, 1837, given before the Commissioners of Post-office Inquiry, and printed at page 33 of their ninth report, dated 7th July, 1837.

“A suggestion respecting the use of such stamps was also made by Mr. James Chalmers, but so far as the official records show, not earlier than 8th February, 1838. This suggestion is contained in the *Post Circular* newspaper of 5th April of that year.

“I am, etc., (Signed) H. JOYCE.

“WILLIAM HAY, ESQ.”

MR. C. B. CORWIN'S Anti-Surcharge Association now numbers over 100 members. We advise all of our readers to secure a copy of the June *Metropolitan Philatelist*, which gives the aims and object of this association. If you desire to discourage the collection and therefore the making of surcharged stamps, join the Anti-Surcharge Association. If there is no demand for these oddities, there will only be a few made. The law of supply and demand applies to stamps as well as to other commodities.

THE catalogue for advanced collectors, Part I, Afghanistan to British Columbia, is one of the most valuable works to a collector. In addition to giving all varieties of color perforations and oddities, it gives the description of all counterfeits. With this catalogue no collector should have a counterfeit in his collection. Issued by the Scott Stamp and Coin Co. Sample sheets will be sent on application.

THE SCOTT STAMP AND COIN CO. expect to hold an auction sale during the meeting of the American Philatelic Association at New York city. Collectors that have never attended an auction will find it of much interest.

The Quaker City Philatelist.

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OUR AMERICAN PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION TICKET.

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FOR VICE-PRESIDENT—C. B. Corwin.

FOR TREASURER—A. N. Spencer.

FOR SECRETARY—Millard F. Walton.

FOR INT. SECRETARY—Joseph Rechart.

TO AMERICAN PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION MEMBERS :

I shall attend the Annual Convention at New York, and will be pleased to represent any member favoring me with his proxy. I do not believe in *centralization*, and will vote against it. I shall vote for incorporation, and shall also vote to keep the *elective offices*, as at present. To my mind, the Secretary and Treasurer should always be elected. *As contemplated, these offices are to become appointive offices.* I shall vote in favor of the whole Association, and against favoring any one locality.

W. A. MacCALLA,

237 Dock Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

THE Annual Convention of the American Philatelic Association will be held at New York city on the first Monday in August. The Convention of the Canadian Society will occur the week following at Montreal. If you desire to be represented, send your proxies to impartial collectors. The meeting at New York will be of great importance to our Association.

The Constitution and By-Laws will be thoroughly revised. The incorporation of the Association no doubt will be effected. The Exchange Department will receive much attention, possibly making it a Sales Department, all transactions being for cash. While this will be to the advantage of the sellers and the saving of time and trouble to the Superintendent, to our mind it will cause the buyers to take less amounts from the

sheets; it will also cause the owners to place a lower value on their stamps, making them compete with the dealers. The Philadelphia Branch are large purchasers from the exchange sheets. Their balances are settled promptly, still their credits are usually two or three months later than their payments. A trial of the cash system will show which is the best system. Before sending your proxies examine carefully the various plans for incorporation of the Association. Instruct your proxies whether you desire the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and International Secretary to be elective or appointive. The writer believes that all the present elective offices should still be filled by election. Let the rank and file still feel that they are the power, not having a few—the Board of Managers—appoint these officers. Of course we all know that the Board will appoint the best men; but if each one of us cast our vote for all the various officers, we will take a deeper interest in the affairs of the Association, than if we knew that we had no say in the appointments. Also instruct your proxies where you desire the next annual meeting to be held.

If you possibly can do so, attend the Convention of the American Philatelic Association in August. Instructions to your proxy holder can be made on certain points, but there are many details which you would take an interest in and you can vote more intelligently if present. By all means be there!

WE had the pleasure of looking over the collection of Lieutenant Kelton. Most of his specimens were obtained while away on duty. His Americans, excepting U. S., are most complete, containing many shades and varieties.

IN 1864, the known number of varieties did not exceed 2300. Who knows the number in 1890? Collecting then was very different from now. Then it was patience, now it is a matter of cash.

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