

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The members of the Canadian Philatelic Society who generously gave time and energy during the past several weeks in preparing for the eleventh Annual Convention of the American Airmail Society in Toronto, are pleased with the satisfactory conclusion of the interesting proceedings. The visitors from the United States fairly embarrassed us in their expressions of appreciation for the hospitality extended to them, and they proved such delightful guests that the privilege of serving as their host was a pleasure which we shall long remember.

The value of an international convention in Canada at this time was expected to be considerable and we believe that our hopes and expectations were more than realized. It was suggested to us that it was our duty to help to bring the convention here at this time, and we also had a desire to encourage airmail collecting in our own country.

With the convention over, there are plenty of other tasks awaiting attention and we hope to accomplish a lot during the coming months.

E. S. Ball.

TORONTO NEWS

The members of the Toronto Stamp Collectors' Club have been enjoying some of their summer meetings at the homes of Messrs. S. G. Bartlett, A. T. Brooke and W. S. Bayley, when these gentlemen proved ideal hosts and contributed a great deal toward strengthening the club spirit which exists in this club. The September and October meetings of the club are now being arranged and are going to draw a good attendance of prominent stamp collectors from Toronto and elsewhere.

THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN AIR MAIL SOCIETY

The Directors of the above Society were pleased to have our Society offer a trophy for annual competition for the best Canadian Exhibit. The Judging Committee was made up of Mr. Fred Jarrett and Mr. Gordon Crouch of Toronto as the Canadian representatives and Mr. Paul F. Robertson and Mr. Wm. Alley as the United States representatives with Mr. L. B. Gatchell of New York as Chairman. Mr. Gatchell is a Past President of the A.A.M.S. Mr. Robertson is the immediate Past President and Mr. Alley the incoming President of that Society. Other trophies being competed for were the A.A.M.S. Trophy; the St. Petersburg Trophy; the Cleveland Trophy and the Cincinnati Trophy. The Judges also decided that the Exhibits were worthy of several medals. These medals were designed especially for the Society by a prominent New York member, Mr. Paul Berdanier. A total of 21 medals were awarded this year.

The Convention, as reported by Mr. J. Miller Donald, Secretary of the East Toronto Stamp Club, in their current Bulletin, is reprinted below:

"The 11th Annual Convention of the American Air Mail Society was a big success and won the grand award for the outstanding philatelic event of the year. It put Toronto on the map. There were a number of local registrations but really there should have been many more. The Convention Committee was congratulated on every side for the manner in which it successfully conducted the programme and Exhibition. Credit is due to Mr. J.M. Stephen, Chairman, and the Committee made up of members of the Toronto District Clubs.

"The Exhibition was a real treat. There were over 100 frames entered. Those who viewed it were thrilled at seeing such complete and rare collections. We ourselves have to congratulate one of our members for his success. Mr. Syd. Northern won a bronze medallion for his collection of Australian Air Mail stamps and covers. Syd is very proud of his medal, presented by the Associate Editor of the Air Post Journal, Mr. L. B. Gatchell, at the dinner Saturday night. Congratulations, Syd., we are proud of you, too. The C.P.S. Trophy was won by

THE A.A.M.S. Convention (Cont.)

Mr. C. I. Haney, Drummondville, Que., with his collection of Canada Semi-Official and Official Covers. Mr. Haney, we are pleased to say, has been a member of the C.P.S. for many years.

Now to break all your hearts. The secret can now be told. The Postmaster General of Canada, Hon. William P. Mulock, K.C., M.P., presented with his compliments to each registered delegate a beautifully bound book containing the complete set of the current postage (value \$2.49). It is Air Mail Blue, with the coat of arms in Silver. It's too late now--there are no more. Each dinner guest received auto-graphed copies of Mr. T.P. Murphy's two addresses, "Autobiography of a Postage Stamp" and "Letters by Air". The menu cards were an authentic reproduction of the First Trans Atlantic Air Post from St. John's, Nfld. on April 12th, 1919.

In closing I can only say that the 11th Annual Convention of the A.A.M.S. has now passed into history and it will not be forgotten. Everyone who attended it will, I am sure, long remember the good time, the good friendships made, and the good fellowship they enjoyed."

THE BLUE STAMP

by Mr. T. Roy Woodhouse
(Cont. from August Issue)

Many thanks, dear reader, for your patience. You will now proceed to learn all about this Blue Stamp that I mentioned so often in the last instalment. I told you then of the formation of the Universal Postal Union in 1874.

Because of Heinrich Stephans dream and the U.P.U. today, be you beggar or king, whether you live in Hamilton or Honolulu, you can send a letter to any part of the world by using a blue stamp. The usual cost is 5 cents, but Canada raised the rate to eight cents in 1928. Germany inflated in 1921 and raised the rate to 10 billion marks, but still the stamp was blue. With such a blue stamp your letter will be carried swiftly, safely and carefully to its destination, no matter how far, nor what the cost, nor the difficulties to be overcome. Caesar with all his legions never got such a service; a service fit for Kings, but available for all.

The Blue Stamp costs five cents here. Who gets that nickle? The country you buy your stamp from. Who records the transaction? No one. How much does the destination country get for its services in delivering your letter? Nothing. Every nation delivers within its own borders, free and uncounted, all the mail it received direct from any other country. The theory is that every letter causes another letter in reply. So the country of origin receives one nickle, and the country of destination gets a nickle when the reply is sent.

But sometimes countries handle mail (called transit mail) which is merely passing through en route from another country to some third country. Your letter might be addressed to some obscure and remote post office in the heart of Africa. How does it get there? The procedure is quite simple. Your postmaster has two books. One book shows the location of every one of the world's 265,000 post offices. Another book shows the exact route your letter will follow. The Postal Services of six or seven countries may handle your letter en route, but each one does so unhesitatingly and unquestionably, giving the same speedy service to all. No thought is required. The procedure is automatic. Speed and service. The fastest steamers, trains, autos, horses and runners are used, regardless of whether the mail is coming from going to or passing through the country concerned.

Once every three years, the sordid subject of money invades this co-operative paradise. This is due to the transit mail, a service not strictly mutual, for some countries, due to their central locations, must run as many as 6 or 8 special trains a day to handle such mail only, from border to border. Money must be paid for transit mail. So every three years, a period of two or four weeks in May or October is set aside, wherein every bag or piece of mail sent to any country through a third, fourth or fifth country is counted or weighed. Every bag received from abroad via a third

The Blue Stamp (Continued)

or fourth country is checked or weighed. This record is sent to the headquarters of the U.P.U. in Berne. Intermediate statistics may be demanded under certain circumstances if a payment of \$1000. or more is involved.

When all statistics are received charges are computed on an annual basis - 13 times the four week Statistics Period. A statement is issued showing what each country must pay to each other country that handles its mail, for the next three years. French is the official language and gold francs and the metric system are used. The system of computation is so simple that it is officially described in five sentences. All bags weighed in 3 classes, viz 10, 30 & 60 lbs., and are considered as averaging 6, 24 and 48 lbs. respectively. 10% is deducted for weight of bags, post free items, etc. The figure for the 2 or 4 week period is multiplied by 26 or 13 unless traffic is abnormal during the statistics period, when another mutually satisfactory multiplier is used.

The creditor nation forwards his account to the debtor nation within 10 months and if no reply is received in 4 months the account is considered correct.

In the 1934 report, Germany owed the most - 1,600,000 gold francs. United States received 800,000 francs. The American foreign mail service costs \$47,000,000. a year and total revenue is estimated at only \$15,000,000.

A billion and a half first class letters use this blue stamp service every year. U.S.A. heads the list with 191 million letters. Then comes Britain, France and Germany, with Britain several lengths ahead and the other two neck and neck. Japan, Austria and Italy follow. The City of Singapore in the Straits Settlements mails as many blue stamp letters as all the Russias. Belgium sends three times as many as Brazil. It is very noticeable that the industrial countries send more foreign mail than they receive, and the undeveloped countries and colonies receive more than they send.

The Berne office of the U.P.U. has been going more than 50 years. It costs less than \$100,000 a year to run it, ordinary expense must not exceed \$70,000. Great countries like Canada, Great Britain and the United States have to contribute only \$2000. a year as their share of the cost. 13 other countries pay the same. In these 50 years ten Postal Congresses have been held. The Washington Congress of 1897 made the green, red and blue colors standard colors for stamps for international mail. Several lesser private agreements exist within the Union. For instance, three cents carries mail within the British Empire. The same is true between the Pan-American countries and Spain. There are no transit charges and no Statistics Periods in these two agreements. Except for Air Mail, no money changes hands at all. Letters are as free as birds. The Pan-American agreement is chiefly due to the complaints of Argentine. No countries lie beyond her - except the South Pole.

Heinrich Stephan died in 1896. The Human Race appears considerably less crazy because he once lived. Some day another Stephan may dream a similar dream about parcel post.

So now you know what the Blue Stamp is. If you are sufficiently interested, I shall be giving you in another issue of this bulletin, a summary of the U.P.U. Congress held in Cairo, Egypt, in 1934.

I wish to give credit to an article by Francis Rufus Bellamy for many of the details given to you so far in this series of articles.

T. R. Woodhouse.