PROPRIETARY STAMPS
BY TRAVELLER
(The American Journal of Philately, Vol. 4, April 6, 1871)

The collection of proprietary stamps is a branch of philately that, in my opinion, has not received the attention it merits: but while advocating the gathering of these beautiful and interesting labels, I wish my younger readers to understand that I do not advise them to be kept with their postage stamps, as that forms a mongrel jumble, unintelligible and uninteresting, and unless arranged with great neatness and taste, is positively ugly; but even a moderately complete collection of postage or revenue stamps, kept separate, are both interesting and instructive.

Some of the principal advantages proprietary labels possess over postage stamps, may be enumerated as follows: First, a complete collection does not number over four hundred specimens, and the highest price asked for the scarcest ones, do not exceed one dollar, and the majority can be purchased at from three to five cents; but any person in the country can obtain the greater part of them at the expense of a few stamps and the trouble of writing a few letters. But this is not the greatest advantage offered. In collecting postal, no amount of care, time and diligence will procure a complete collection, without a large expenditure of money, and the collector in moderate circumstances is annoyed by seeing the collections of his richer friends surpass his own, although they may not have expended one quarter the labor on their albums. But in collecting proprietary stamps, the case is entirely reversed, for these can only be obtained by diligent search, and nearly everyone who will give the time to it, may procure stamps, that it is next to impossible to duplicate, and those wealthy amateurs cannot control, for as they only sell for small sums, dealers will not take the pains to procure them as they seldom care to hunt up scarce stamps for anyone that they can only sell for a few cents when found, when with less trouble they can sell him fifty dollars worth of postage stamps. Another item in their favor, and I am done. Proprietary labels are, as a rule, much more handsome than postage stamps. There are many beautiful designs figured on the latter, I am willing to admit; but what postage stamp can equal in beauty Dally two cent stamp. The issues of Greenleaf, Pierce, Orono, Excelsior, Curtis, and dozens of others I might name. To show the popularity, this new branch of philately (or ‘side show,” as it has been termed by a well-known American philatelist) has attained since the first publication of an article on the subject in these pages, lists of the stamps known to the editor have been published in every American paper.

I had almost omitted to mention another claim these stamps have on American collectors, they are an everlasting memento of the late war, as but for it they would never have been issued, and they give conclusive evidence of the strait for want of money the government was put to when they had to levy a tax of one cent per hundred on matches, and even tax the medicines that are supposed to cure suffering humanity.

As I have many stamps in my collection that have not been heretofore catalogued, I annex a list of all that have not been given in these pages, and hope the subscribers to this JOURNAL will prevail on the editor to give a monthly notice of all newly issued and discovered revenue stamps, the same as he now does for postal emissions.

MATCHES
American Match Co., Eagle, 1 cent, black, 1 cent, green.
Barber, O.C., Head in circle, very long, 3 cents, black.
Beut and Lea, Arm with torch, 1 cent, black.
Brown and Durling, Head, 1 cent, black, 1 cent, green.
Curtis, W.D., Deer and tree, diamond, 1 cent, green.
Doolittle, W.E., Head, oblong, 1 cent, blue.
Orono Match Co., Pine tree, 1 cent, blue.

MEDICINES

Brown, Dr. C.F., Man holding horse, 1 cent, blue.
Burnett & Co., Female on horseback, 4 cents, black.
Collins Brothers, head, oblong, 1 cent black.
Davis, Perry & Co., Monogram, 2 cents, brown.
Drake, P.H. & Co., Bottle in centre, long, 2 cents, black.
Robacks, Dr. O.M., large figure of man, colored wrapper, 1 cent yellow, 1 cent, black.

PLAYING CARDS

Goodall, Charles, Playing cards, 5 cents, black.

CORRECTION

In the list of Match Stamps that appeared in the paper, the following correction should be made.

In place of Baner, George and O.C., read Barber, George and O.C. In place of Barber and Baudel, read Banner and Beudel.

In the Curiosity Cabinet list, A. Littlefield’s Stamp is classed with the match Stamps, it should have been medicine Zisemann Griesheim Stamps are both of the value of 1 cent.

The following gentlemen deny having issued more Stamps than have been noted here: - Demas Barnes, Bousfield & Poole, and Joseph Burnett & Co.