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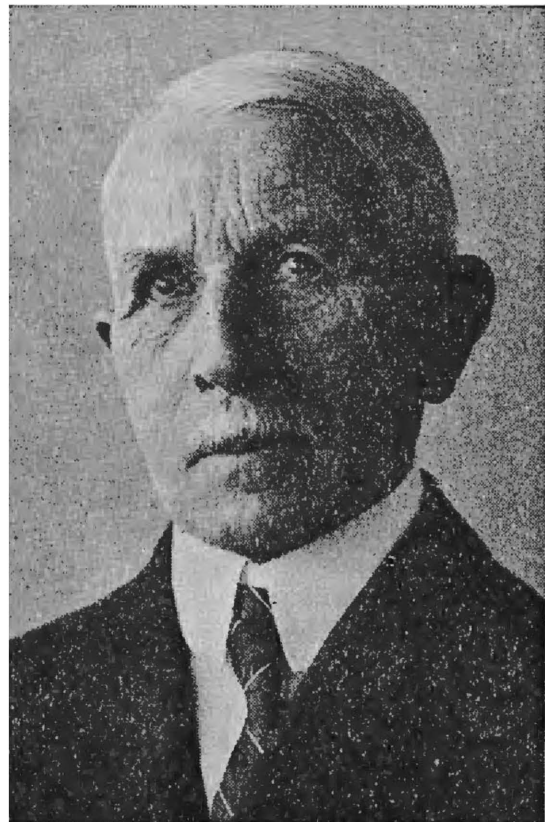
# Philately and Rocket Mail

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**T**HE CONGRESS OF the "Federation Internationale Philatelique, F. I. P." resolved at its session in Luxemburg during the recent exhibition the following: "The envelopes transported by rockets are unanimously considered as covers without philatelic value."

Considering that the development of air transportation which has taken dimensions undreamed of twenty-five years ago (the first mail flights took place in 1911) we cannot hope to be extra-ordinarily surprised about the resolution of this congress in Luxemburg. Rocket mail, as one of the pioneers in the exploration of stratosphere mail, certainly will have a promising future whose extensions we cannot today fully realize. I cannot understand why "philately" takes such an unfriendly attitude towards the efforts and special branches of aero philately. It seems to me that the real cause lies in the old difficulty of the terms which we express today under "philately" and "aero philately."

Philately concedes the collecting of only official postage stamps and refuses anything which has not been issued by a government. Fortunately, aero philately has never taken this one-sided point of view and from the beginning included in its studies not only stamps as such, but everything connected with the transportation of messages through air. Of course, there are a number of aero philatelic collectors who lean more towards philately and who believe that only the airmail stamp itself is worth collecting. The attempt to make a rule as to what should and what should not be worth collecting has raised havoc with all of us, but we do know that an intelligent person will not stand for any dictation by others who tell him what he should or should not collect, but he will follow his own inclination and pursue his hobby the way he likes it. We aero philatelists are only too glad to leave to the philatelists their joy in inspecting stamps with a microscope, and the satisfaction that the stamps have the official sanction of some government, and



were issued by such a government. We aero philatelists, however, will direct our attention to such modern problems of transportation by air of which the stamp itself is not the principal thing, but instead study the historic basis of the new progress and the documentary evidence which aero-philately gives us.

Naturally, shady and spurious exploitation of collectors will always be attempted, and I do not think that this could be entirely eliminated or avoided. I can remember very well, it is now over sixty years ago that philately always has had difficulties with the existence of less doubtful characters. We refuse, however, to condemn the efforts made by serious experimenters who have sacrificed a lot of personal gains together with those made by dubious speculators who have tried to discredit the fascinating problem of the future exploration through the stratosphere and the space beyond.

I am positive that the time will come and one will laugh with pity at the resolution taken during the congress in Luxemburg.