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Baptism

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Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste, 15th November 1864, Volume 1, Issue 5, pp.20-21

**Reprinted in Georges Brunel: *Ce qu'État la Philatélie en 1867.*,
Yvert & Tellier, Amiens, France, 1930, pp.11-12**

A translation is available in: F. J. Peplow: *The origin of the word, 'Philately'.*, *The Journal of the Philatelic Literature Society*, April 1915, Volume 8, Issue 2, pp.14-15

**Reprinted in Carlrichard Bruhl: *Geschichte der Philatelie.*, Two Volumes,
George Olms Verlag, Hildesheim, Germany, 1985, p.24. (It was during the
translation of various Chapters of this work that the current translation
of the article *Baptism* was accidentally carried out.)**

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October 1999

BAPTISM

Isn't it strange that over the six or seven years that people have been studying and relaxing with postage stamps no-one has thought of giving a name to this attractive occupation which gives pleasure to some and fortune to others? It is impossible to accept the word Timbromania as a suitable designation. This is in fact a rather insulting term, as certain people, trying to be clever, utter in a sarcastic tone what was meant to be quite innocent. Hence it has been used so far for want of a better name but the time has come to banish it ignominiously from our vocabulary. Even more, as readers and writers we should make ourselves forget this odious expression and even blot it out of existence. However, assuming the beast to be dead along with its poison, we have to find a successor which will have nothing in common with it and will, if possible, have as many good points as it has bad ones. But where shall we find this rare bird? Since everyone can have an opinion on this serious topic and fortune favours the bold, we will take this opportunity to put our view forward.

Everyone must have noticed that the majority of new words have classical words for their roots, doubtless because of the affinity that extremes have for one another. Now as neologisms tend to borrow their elements from Latin and Greek, we too shall try an incursion into one of these languages. We already hear the voices of a hundred critics crying

“Who will deliver us from these Greeks and Romans”

We shall ignore these vain clamours and continue on our way according to the sayings of Mr. Baour-Lormian and we shall state that as numismatics took its name from the Latin numisma, a medal, and sphragistics (the study of seals) from the Greek *** I seal, we too may borrow from this rich language and put forward to enthusiasts the word **Philately** to express the idea which the odious term we denounced above has tried to make ridiculous. **Philately** is formed from two Greek words: *** friend, enthusiast and *** (speaking of an object) free, having no charge or tax, prepaid. The substantive form is ***. Philately thus means: love of studying anything relating to the prepaid post.

Now the word has been released and the new-born has seen the light, we will straightaway beg our young and charming lady readers to be its godmothers, so as to increase its chances of health and prosperity. What's this, someone will say, you're talking Greek to young ladies? This is a queer way to please them and ask for their patronage? Perhaps this is not such an odd idea as you may imagine. Who knows whether the very oddity of the request might not be its best recommendation. Moreover, where can new ideas, new words ask for protection if it is not from young ladies who like new things and whose generosity is rarely appealed to in vain by the weak? Indeed, we are not attaching to the name of Greek any of the silly pretensions of Vadius in our Molière. Thus, without rashness but equally without embarrassment we solicit the approval of the most beautiful half of the human race, sure that if we get this we will soon have that of the other half

To sum up, we are not trying to impose anything: simply, the lists being open, we hope and even beg for letters on this subject, whilst stating in advance our entire readiness to follow the advice of a more-inspired **Philatelist**.

(Translator's note: I have not been able to reproduce the Greek text which has been replaced by three asterisks ***)

END