

Karl von Gündel

The projected appearance of a bibliography of German philatelic literature
[*Das in aussicht stehende erscheinen einer bibliographie der Deutschen philatelistischen litteratur*]

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THE PROJECTED APPEARANCE OF A BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF GERMAN PHILATELIC LITERATURE

Since **Dr. Emilio Diena** published his article *Ein nachschlagebuch über philatelistische literatur* [*A reference book on philatelic literature*] in issues 1 and 2 of the 1888 volume of **Postwertzeichen**, various philatelic journals have dealt in more or less detail with this topic. All clearly agreed that a work of this type would be very desirable and useful.

Diena's idea of a *philatelic bibliography of all countries in a single volume* was later abandoned, since insuperable difficulties meant it could not be carried out. Hence, the wish was expressed that every country would draw up the bibliography of its own philatelic literature and that in Germany this task should be left to the philatelic societies. However, this remained as a wish – nothing was done to carry it out.

Therefore, it is all the more gratifying that Supreme Court Justice **Suppantschitsch**, whose outstanding contributions to German philately are generally known, is willing to undertake to prepare this highly desirable philatelic bibliography. His preliminary work for this project has already reached the point where a prospectus for it could appear in issue 8 of **Philatelistische Börsen-Courier** published in April this year.

According to this, the work will be in 4 parts:

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| Part I | History of philately (Postage-stamp science) |
| Part II | History of German philatelic literature |
| Part III | Classification of German philatelic literature in line with the most accurate data |
| Part IV | Actual bibliography of all German philatelic literature in lexicographic form |

In his paper *A bibliography of German philatelic literature*, in issue 9, 1891, of **Philatelistische Börsen-Courier**, he says amongst other things that the bibliography will be a

guide to the entire German philatelic literature in which everyone who seeks information on any philatelic topic whatever will find everything worth bothering with in German on this topic. Not included, however, will be the sort of thing currently available to every philatelist; plainly available in every handbook and that can be found without difficulty, since nobody would use a service if he had to look up and study several hundred articles and memoranda, to find that 70-80 are out of date and have been corrected and superseded long ago, or that 50 of the articles contradict one another. The book will not give simply the title and details of the reference, edition, etc., from which the actual contents of the article can not always be determined with accuracy; instead, details will be given of what information can be looked for and found in these articles, memoranda, etc.

The layout of the work will be such that everyone can easily follow how to trace every subject for collection or philatelic term, with how, by whom and when it has been described in German journals. Every philatelic author will be listed separately and all his books, writings and journal articles with details of their subjects.

There is no doubt that this will be of great interest to scientific philatelists, concluding on the scientific side with a history covering German philatelic literature and a complete survey of all German scientific philatelic literature. The most desirable aspect, however, would still be to have a bibliographic survey of all the German philatelic literature in dictionary form, which would be a mine of information for philately.

The value and usefulness of this 4th part of the bibliography to philatelists striving towards higher levels cannot be rated highly enough. The following example will make this clear. Suppose someone wants to know everything that has been published relating to the production of a philatelic bibliography in Germany. He need only look in the 4th (lexicographic) part under *Philatelic Bibliography* and will find there the exact title, volume and number of every German philatelic journal which has published anything on this topic, so that all he has to do is look up the ones he wants in the relevant journals.

Of course, there will be a great deal of useless material from earlier years, but it is always possible for there to be some valuable grain amongst the old chaff. Also, there could be much interesting and important material unearthed, which was not valued at the time but looked at now can cast light on hitherto dark corners of philately. An apparent triviality is sometimes enough to point the serious researcher towards very important facts.

The work will consist of about forty sheets in 8° and (starting from about May 1892) will appear in fourteen parts at intervals of about 1 month, each consisting of 3 sheets*. A part will cost 1 mark; however, anyone who subscribed to the entire work via Herr **Karl Cl. Sauer** in Mährisch Ostrau before the 1st October this year will have a 50% price reduction.

*Editor's note: One can only presume that the author was referring to the original printing sheets which would contain 16 pages when printed in 8°. The book was eventually published in sixteen parts with 748 pages.

When we consider that these 14 marks (50% less for those who subscribe to the entire work via Herr **Sauer**) does not have to be paid all at once but gradually in 14 instalments (one becomes due after the appearance of each part), the price of this excellent, completely irrefragable – I might even say monumental – work cannot be beyond the reach of the least well-to-do. We may, therefore, really expect this work to find many purchasers in the world of German philatelists.

It will now depend on German philatelists whether they will support the publication of what can be confidently expected to be a truly epoch-making work, one which no other nation can show. If it is published – as can hardly be doubted – it will not only reflect credit on the German philatelic literature, it will also promote philatelic knowledge in unexpected ways, and take scientific philately a good way further.

In conclusion it may be said here that Herr **Suppantchitsch** asks all philatelic societies, the philatelic press and all philatelists who have an interest in the appearance of this work to give him the support he needs to produce something complete and entire.

This support could be:

- a) the transmission to him, without a direct request, of future society publications such as statutes, annual reports, society proceedings, etc., by the chairmen of societies, and the loan to him of any book he needs from the society library
- b) the transmission to him of philatelic journals, by the publishers (including those dealing with German private stamps), and of copies of philatelic studies, by the authors.
- c) the communication to him by all philatelists of details of older or less known German philatelic publications
- d) the transmission to him, without a direct request, of details of their books, articles in German philatelic journals, etc., including title, volume and number of the journal, plus some data on themselves personally.

He needs this information to ensure the exact completeness of his work.

The reason for Herr **Suppantchitsch** asking for material to be sent to him without a direct request is that he wants to devote all his time to preparing the work so that it will be ready at the given date, and he thus lacks the time to send special requests to the people concerned.

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