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CHATS ON COUNTERFEITS.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Compiled from various sources.)

INTRODUCTION.

IN every business, profession or occupation which flourishes in the midst of civilization, each has its fakes, its swindles, its misrepresentations, its forgeries; and every straight-forward business or professional person, in his or her particular branch of their sphere, deems it their duty to warn their fellow merchants against, and to assist in doing away with fraud of all kinds. It, however, remains a fact that notwithstanding the precautions, warnings and punishments inflicted on perpetrators of frauds, still they exist, and the world is kept in a continual flutter of watchfulness and anxiety, in their endeavors to prevent themselves and their fellow-merchants from being victimized.

Philately perhaps suffers as greatly from frauds of various kinds, and even more so than is in existence in business of any other nature. Why is this, and from whence does the temptation to defraud arise? From its simplicity, or from the fabulous profits which a counterfeiter may derive from his forged stamps in case they are so successful an imitation that they will foil the efforts of the dealers or collectors who are always examining their stamps, I believe it is this last which is the principal reason. It is assuredly not from a point of simplicity, for a postage stamp is as a rule fully as difficult to execute as the finest bank note. Writers for the philatelic press speak of collectors examining and studying their stamps so as to avoid placing counterfeits in their collections, yet is it not very seldom we hear a writer get down to solid work and endeavor by comparison to enlighten his readers as to distinctive differences between the genuine stamp and the counterfeit? It may be all very well to search through your collection in search of counterfeits, but unless you have a counterfeit of each variety to compare with the corresponding variety in your collection, or on the other hand have a work which will explain the differences mentioned above, it will be found that study of the class generally urged upon collectors is as good as useless. Now, seeing that none of the contemporaries of THE CANADIAN PHILATELIST have ever attempted a work of this style on a complete scale, I deemed that it would be space used to excellent advantage which was devoted to the foregoing purpose. The information and distinctive points of difference which are given herein

are the result of personal experience, a great part of which was obtained at a high price, and other portions being compiled from reliable sources and from the writings of competent authorities. The information appended can in every sense be strictly relied upon, as nothing doubtful or not fully authenticated will be admitted into this series of papers, which are intended for a reference list that shall be retained for constant reference by the collector who reads this article. In the following it will be noticed that I give the points wherein the genuine stamps differ from the counterfeit. I shall also casually mention bogus stamps. Before entering upon our subject, it may not be out of place to give two or three definitions taken from the *Stamp Collector's Companion*, as they will be often referred to in the course of the next few months.

"A *Bogus Stamp* is one of which there exists no original, of which there were never like stamps in use, but which is issued for the purpose of defrauding collectors. The stamps of Sedang and many of the so-called German Locals are bogus stamps.

"A *Counterfeit* is an imitation of a genuine stamp." "Fac-Similes are imitations of genuine stamps, equally as bad as counterfeits, except for the fact that they are sold as copies of the original stamp. In most instances they have the word 'fac-simile' printed in small type across the face."

"A *Government Counterfeit* is an obsolete stamp, the plates of which having been destroyed, new plates are prepared by the government and the stamps printed therefrom are sold as reprints. See U. S. 1847 issue which were re-issued in this manner, and are often erroneously called reprints."

"*Government Reprints* are stamps reprinted by the government from the original plates after the issue has become obsolete. For example, the U. S. 1851 issue reprinted for the Centennial Exhibition."

"*Reprints* are stamps printed from the original plates after the issue is obsolete."

There are other definitions which may be necessary to make our explanations clear, but these can be given as the occasion demands.

It will be noticed that I include definitions of reprints in the above; I do this simply because some stamps classed as reprints are nothing less than forgeries, and by reference to these definitions it will be readily seen what a reprint really is: It is my intention to devote considerable space to this subject in future numbers, especially in Vol. III, when our space for reading matter will be more extensive. This month, however, I am compelled to confine myself to the above introduction, and next month, and regularly thereafter, the important details of the subject will be discussed.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)