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HISTORY OF FRANCE AND HER STAMPS.

At the time our account begins King Louis Philippe ruled France. The people were not satisfied with his government. He resisted too strongly the growing desire for electoral reform. At last the people could bear it no longer so they broke out in open revolt. The King fled to England and a republic was set up. The next year, 1849, the first issue of stamps appeared. In accordance with the popular feeling of the time the portrait was that of Liberty, and at the top was the inscription "Repub. Franc."

The first President of the Republic was Louis Napoleon, nephew of the first Napoleon. He had been President but three years when by the Coup d' E'tat he violently set aside the constitution and assumed dictatorial powers. This occurred in 1851 and in 1852 a new set of stamps appeared bearing his portrait.

The Republic did not last long for in 1852 he was raised by almost the unanimous voice of the nation to the dignity of Emperor, as Napoleon III. His rule as Emperor was one of complete absolutism under which, however, France made great advances. In 1853 a set of stamps ap-

peared which was the same as those of 1852, except for inscription "Empire Franc" instead of "Repub. Franc."

In 1863 the next issue of stamps came out. They bear the Emperor's head crowned with a laurel wreath, and the inscription "Empire Francais."

In the reign of Napoleon III. several important wars were waged. The Crimean occurred in 1854, in which France and England defeated Russia who had made war on Turkey, on account of the latter refusing to allow her to protect the Christians in Turkey. Mexico was invaded by French troops. The Republican form of government was overthrown, and later, Napoleon made Maximilian, an Austrian prince, Emperor of Mexico.

The last war of Napoleon proved to be his downfall. There had been a jealousy of the growing power of Prussia rankling in the national mind since 1866, and yielding to this feeling the Emperor, on a frivolous pretext, declared war on Prussia. But he met more than his match. Defeated on all sides the Emperor gave himself up, together with 90,000 men at the battle of Sedan. After this occurred the mob of Paris, declared