

antique statues. Boys and girls held pleasant meetings there each day, and handed one another their books of duplicates which they wished to exchange: "I will give you two Belgians for your Spanish," and the collections gradually became enriched with types whose novelty rendered them admirable, while mamas and governesses, seated around on the large straw-covered chairs watched the childish transactions from a distance, reading or doing needlework.

On Thursdays, and especially Sundays the little market was more lively, as the schoolboys brought their noise and their pennies. There were also to be found junior clerks from banks and business houses, where the harvest of postage stamps was abundant and easy. The sales soon got ahead of the exchanges. The name of *Petite Bourse* (Little Exchange), given in pleasantry, was a happy one; all the newspapers mentioned it whenever they spoke of the mania of stamp collecting. The *Little Stamp Bourse* was seen at the theatre and was found in the annual reviews. Sardou introduced into the *Famille Benoiton* (1865) a broker of 8 years of age who got the best of his companions by buying up all the stamps of the Confederate States of America which were on the market, to sell them again an hour later when a dispatch announced that the Federals were the vanquishers. This has no common sense from a philatelic point of view, but let us proceed.

In 1864 the Stamp Bourse met every Thursday and Saturday, gathering from 200 to 400 persons, children no longer figuring for more than half. It was a real open market, where might be found persons of doubtful appearance, indelicate dealers, and even worse. Complaints were numerous; children had received counterfeit stamps in exchange for their genuine ones; books and albums had been carried off; young men there sold stamps which had been stolen. The

police, whom these periodical assemblies had annoyed for a long time, were delighted at receiving orders to tolerate them no longer. Tracked into all of the corners of the Tuileries where they had appointments, the collectors emigrated to the *Jardin du Luxembourg*. As soon as it became somewhat numerous, the new market was again dissolved by order, and was transplanted to the *Champs-Élysées*, at different points, and finally to the *Carre Marigny* behind the *Marionette* shows. It has remained there ever since, with ups and downs, according to the more or less tolerant disposition of the police.

Abroad, open stamp markets have been noticed in all the capitals, but as soon as they got beyond the proportions of children's games—that is, when dealer's appeared—they were no longer tolerated, and they took refuge in hired premises or beer saloons. The *Little Bourse* of Vienna is spoken of in this way, but it did not become very well known.

Postage stamp dealers, established in stores, becoming more and more numerous on all hands, prevented the open market from assuming proportions commensurate with the continually increasing number of votaries. The meetings comprise sometimes 20 persons, again to the number of 200 to 400; there are some frequenters who come in all weather, both winter and summer, if only to talk stamps. The general air is rather Bohemian, with a mixture of ardent collectors, who are always hoping, according to the slang of the place, to find an extra good bargain.

The stranger, the rich collector who wanders there and, pretending to be an expert, allows himself to be saddled with bogus stamps, is called a "*poire*" (gull).

Neither large collectors nor dealers habitually frequent this market.

The professionals carry bags having shoulder straps like omnibus conductors, whence they take out their books of stamps and wherein they engulf receipts. There are mute and automatic dealers