

Canadian and Foreign Postage and Revenue Stamps.

Postal Cards, Albums, Coins, Crests and Novelties.



# Dominion Bazaar.

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## PHILATELY.

The Art of Philately, or Postage Stamp collecting is a fashion not confined to any country, or class: for collections are frequently to be seen in the drawing-room of the luxurious, the study of the enlightened, and the locker of the school-boy. The fashion has been ridiculed, as all fashions will be, but if postage stamps are properly studied, collected, and arranged, there is no reason why they may not be quite as instructive and entertaining as a collection of birds, butterflies, shells, books, engravings, coins or other objects.

The main charm of collecting any kind of object is to educate the mind and the eye to careful observation, accurate comparison, and just reasoning on the differences and likenesses which they present, and to interest the collector in the design or art shown in their creation or manufacture, and the history of the country which produces or uses the objects collected. Postage stamps afford good objects for all these branches of study, as they are sufficiently different to present broad outlines for their classification, and yet some of the variations are so slight that they require minute examination and comparison to prevent them from being overlooked. The fact of obtaining stamps from so many countries suggests the inquiry, What were the circumstances that induced their adoption, the history of the countries which issue them? and the understanding why some countries have considered it necessary, in so few years as have passed since they first came into use, to make so many changes in the form or design of the stamp used, while other countries have never made the slightest alteration?

The changes referred to generally mark some historical event of importance, such as the accession of a new king, a change in the form of government, or the absorption of a small state into a larger one, a change in the currency or some other revolution. Hence, a collection of postage stamps may be considered, like a collection of coins, an epitome of the history of Europe and America for the last third of a century; and as they exhibit much variation in design and in execution, they may also be regarded as a collection of works of art on a small scale, showing the style of art of the countries that issue them; while the size of the collection, and the manner in which the stamps are arranged and kept, will show the industry, judgment, neatness, and taste of the collector, who should always bear in mind that every accessory that is shabby and bright takes away from the appearance and interest of the stamps themselves.

The system of prepaying postage by stamps has been adopted by all civilized countries, and has been extended

into other branches of the government and the law courts. It is also used in the electric telegraph service, and by several errand and carrier companies in America and Europe.

Some of the British colonies commenced with manufacturing their own stamps, and used emblematic designs, as Hope reclining, for the Cape of Good Hope; a swan, for Swan River; the Queen on her throne, for Victoria; but by degrees they have generally adopted a simple profile of the Queen, like the English; and the stamps now used in many of the colonies and other parts of the world, are designed, engraved, printed and embossed, in England, under the supervision of an officer of the Inland Revenue department, or an inspector appointed by the colonial or foreign governments. Our own stamps are manufactured by the British American Bank Note Co., of Montreal.

The majority of foreign governments, as they have adopted the system, have also adopted the profile or portrait of their sovereign for the stamp. Other governments use the arms of the state or sovereign for the purpose. Some states, which began by merely using as a stamp, a numeral surrounded by a more or less complicated frame, have since adopted the royal portrait.

In England, the manner in which the stamps have been obliterated by a block which, by the form of the internal disk, and the number in it, marks the postal district in which it was originally stamped. Each continental state cancels in its own manner; several have undergone considerable change during the time the stamps have been in use. The study of the means employed for obliterating affords an interesting object of contemplation.

A certain number of stamps—such as the old four-annas of India, the "too-late" and "registered" stamps of Victoria and New South Wales, the early issues for the Swiss cantons, Russia and Poland, one or more values of the more modern stamps of Roumania, Heligoland, Finland, Livonia, Spain, and the United States are printed in inks of two colors.

In England, the adhesive stamps are printed on paper with a peculiar watermark, different in the various stamps. Formerly the envelopes issued by the English stamp-office were all printed on a peculiar paper, three lines of colored silk being inserted in the paper, so as to form lines across the stamp; and this plan was also adopted by Prussia. It has now been disused both in England and Germany. In the latter the value was printed in small letters, in two lines, across the stamp, thus; *Post concert, ein groschen; post concert, zwei groschen, &c.*; but even this has now been discontinued in the envelopes issued by the German empire. The envelope stamps of Russia, Switzerland, Hamburg, and the United States, are embossed on spec-