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**CANADIAN PHILATELIC MAGAZINE**

DEVOTED TO STAMP COLLECTING.

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**Historical.**

**T**HE past of forty years ago or more is astonishing when reviewed. Note the wonderful changes which the postage stamp has wrought in the world's affairs. Before the invention or discovery of this convenience, it was a difficult matter to send a letter or parcel any considerable distance. Within half a century the complexion of the world's affairs has undergone a total change; and so complete and thorough has been this metamorphosis, that were the postage stamp and all its attendant usefulness to be suddenly blotted out of existence, the impediment to business and pleasures and the thousands of pursuits dependent there on would almost compel the earth to stop in her course. Thousands of human beings would be thrown out of employment: railroads, steamships, and all the complicated paraphernalia of the postal system would lose half their calling, and business upon the globe would be so badly shattered or stagnated that the world's affairs would positively have to stop or retrograde for a time. All the inventions of speed are now used to rush the mails, and this, next to the lives of passengers, is the main consideration of later-day railroading and steamboating. In some cases the mails come first and human life second, as is often demonstrated by the racing of ocean greyhounds

to determine which can cross the ocean and deliver the mails in the shortest space of time. No single invention has so changed and altered the affairs of men as the postage stamp.

Although the improved and practical system of universal postage is new, yet the idea itself of communicating by mail is very old. In "ye olden tyme" of Canada, and long before the U.S. became a nation, there were many mail packets plying the ocean, carrying letters and packages to distant lands, and actually performing, although in a rude, uncertain manner, the very duties that our highly civilized and almost perfect system accomplishes with such accuracy and speed during the present day. These clipper packets were built for speed, not so much to deliver the mails promptly, as to present their nimble heels to pirates and other ocean highwaymen. Captains were instructed to "run while they could, to fight when they could no longer run, and to throw the mails overboard when fighting would no longer avail.

Sir Walter Scott used to suffer a great deal from the high rates of postage. In his life of that gifted author, Hutton relates that Scott's bills for letters and postage seldom came under £150 a year. Gifts he would receive by coach parcels, but, as a rule, the postage or milage was about ten times as much as the donation was worth. Once a bulky package came to Sir Walter all the way from the United