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*Written for C. P. M.*

## OUR FRIEND THE FORGER AND HIS NUMEROUS LITTLE WAYS.

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To acquire even a passing knowledge of the many counterfeits, fakes, etc. in circulation, one must possess a good magnifying glass, a color chart, perforation gauge and a collection of literature bearing on the subject. A book should be kept containing full particulars of each counterfeit handled, giving all the differences noticable however minute. Sketches should be made of the cancellation marks, where with such forgeries are obliterated. In the case of rare stamps similar records should be kept of each specimen handled as to perforation, cancellation and quality of paper.

In the case of stamps which are available for revenue as well as postage, for example the high value Great Britain, a new and formidable difficulty is presented. Persons for object of gain, will remove the writing by which revenues are generally cancelled, and obtain a postal cancellation through a friend in the employ of the post office department.

To discover the fraud a strong glass will be needed, which will generally show the mark where the composition erasing pencil was used to remove the writing cancellation. Reprints postally cancelled through favor trouble many, but reprints were never yet manufactured but that *some* differences may be detected, wherein they differ from the

originals. Here your literature will come into use as to observed differences.

In the case of stamps of which few were used, but of which there exist many "remainders" (causing used specimens to command a premium over unused) the forger exerts himself in the manufacture of a die for cancelling now, as a postmark is very seldom a work of art the counterfeiter has an easy field for his nefarious operations. Now your "collection of sketches of genuine postmarks comes into requisition. In case the stamps have been a long period, obsolete the ink used in cancelling has generally put on a hue that nothing save time itself can reproduce, consequently the ink used by our friend the forger is of a brighter and fresher color.

Split values such as a 6 pence stamp cut in half and used as 3d. are also frequently forged. The collector demand such provisionals on entire original cover. The forger says "All-right you shall have them dished up in any way that suits your fancy." Our festive friend accordingly, takes an envelope on which rests a stamp of the same issue, but on which the cancellation marks has fallen so lightly as to mark the stamp only. He removes this stamp, and carefully washing off the gum that has remained on the envelope substitutes therefore and in its place and instead doth put the half of the higher denomination. Having cancelled this gem with a false marker he palms the fake off on some blissfully ignorant collector. And, in truth,