

on account of some peculiar design that had been beautifully executed and presented a fine piece of workmanship. It was compared with other kinds until a collection for comparison was thought to be of passing interest. It is commenced, and the method as of providing the stamps of every nation is studied up, and our scholar is familiar with every class of work known, and the manner in which it is rendered.

The business man assists his children in arranging the stamps they secure from the grand-mother's letters, together with a small packet sent in answer to some advertisement; and the rest he derives from such an hour spent, besides the satisfaction of pleasing the little ones, has its effect, and each night the programme takes place until the parent has found that the stamps suggest to him many things that the younger members of the household do not understand, and he is taken up with their study, while mechanically, he is arranging them for the youngster.

The fever finds him a fit subject, and for an hour each evening is whiled away in this occupation until our devotee is an acknowledged crank, and is not ashamed of it, but begins a collection of his own and soon learns the inducements open to a stamp collector when he has once started to collect.

The naturalist finds many subjects illustrated on the stamps of various countries that have their special interest for him, and he begins principally on this account, and makes a special study of these stamps and the various objects that they suggest.

Almost everyone can find some particular point in looking over a quantity of miscellaneous stamps that has a peculiar interest for him, and for this reason, together with many other

ers, can we attribute the steady increase of stamp collectors the world over.

It is a worthy indulgence, and only when carried so far as to interfere with your daily obligations is it to be considered time wasted or energy lost.

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OFFICIALLY SEALED.

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A few words regarding the "Officially Sealed of 1889 issue." There are many dealers still offering these labels for sale to the philatelic public. I have seen a number of articles, both pro and con, in the philatelic journals, but have failed to yet find one giving all the facts and particulars regarding this issue. These labels (they cannot and should not justly be called stamps) are manufactured by Morrill Bros. of Fulton, N. Y., for the convenience of country postmasters. I copy the following from their catalogue :

"Officially Sealed Labels some as this sample (gives illustration) printed on gum paper, for sealing letters opened by mistake. One of the many little conveniences that are always handy to have in an office. Prices: 50 for 25 cents, 100 for 40 cents, 250 for 55 cents, 500 for 75 cents, post-paid." It can be readily seen that the profits, especially as many are sold at 25 cents apiece, made by the dealers who handle these labels is rather large.

I wrote to both the First and Third Assistant Postmaster Generals at Washington, D. C., enclosing one of these labels in each letter and they each replied that they had never been authorized by their department. Consequently I fail to see how they can be called stamps, such as those issued by authority from the Post Office Department.