

services of the Empire is not responsible for the carriage of letters to the place of residence. It guarantees only their arrival at the chief town of each province. There they wait until some opportunity, as the coming of the police-agents from the several districts, permits the forwarding of the correspondence to the addresses. Given then the vast extent of certain provinces, some of which have an area equal to that of Spain, and moreover the infrequency of communications, it resulted from this way of doing things that often a letter did not reach the addressee till the end of six months, if he was then alive to receive it.

A service so defective must of necessity have attracted the attention of the governors and of the heads of *Semtivos*.

We find therefrom that as early as 1863 the Government of St. Petersburg decided on the creation of a local stamp, the affixing of which to letters would ensure their immediate delivery.

About the same time the Circle of the Wendic in Lonia issued a stamp of the same sort. In this way a start was made. In 1866 Schlusselfurg emitted a stamp for the province, and Rjeff and Berdiensk alike in 1867. In 1868 Tver, in 1869 Saratoff and Riajam, followed the movement and created special stamps, the revenue from which provided for the reorganization of the postal service. In 1870 an order of the Minister of the Interior, of which I have the text before me, authorized, under certain conditions all the provinces to create local post offices, and these offices being established in all the provinces they emitted special stamps.

The origin and value of these stamps are then not to be debated, and we would persuade all philatelists to receive them into their collections. In the course of time and progress it will inevitably occur that the postal service of the Empire will unite all the local post offices and suppress their stamps, as we have seen in the United States, where the private services have been suppressed, Wells, Fargo & Co. excepted by the organization of the government post office. Local stamps of Russia, therefore are sure to become very rare, and will be of so much the greater value if obliterated.

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MR. W. H. LUCE, of Hartford, Conn., has written us, warning of a party named Charles D. McGill, living in Yarmouth, N. S., who has defrauded a number of American dealers.

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WILL the party, under the initials of L. T., who sent to this paper, last November, some tobacco bands, please write and give his name and address. He will likely hear of something to his advantage.

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THE auction sale held in February, under the auspices of the Nova Scotia Philatelic Association was so successful that they have decided to hold another, to take place on the evening of the 29th of April. See catalogue in this number.

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WE must apologize for the quantity of official matter in this month, but it cannot be helped, as reports were not sent in time to be inserted in last month's paper.