

CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS

THE MUCH DISPUTED VALUE OF "A MILLION CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS"



LETTER addressed to the United States minister to Switzerland, and promptly replied to by him, discloses the fact that at Locle, a small Swiss town near Neuchatel, there exists a model orphanage for girls, whose funds have been for many years largely increased by the sale of cancelled postage stamps. The home was established in 1814 by a Swiss lady, and was designed as a place of shelter for orphan girls, irrespective of creed or nationality. A house was taken, and soon as many as a hundred girls were sheltered. The stamp trade in this connection was started by a lady, who, on hearing that old postage stamps might be sold advantageously, volunteered to help the orphans by begging stamps from her friends and selling them through the medium of certain stamp dealers, who were willing to waive their rights to any commission. Her effort soon became known, and now benevolent people the world over are helping the institution by sending to the orphanage packages of old postage stamps, which are sorted and disposed of to the best advantage. As a help to those who may feel anxious to send stamp offerings to contribute to the support and education of these destitute children we transcribe the rules, prefacing them with the information that the managers of the orphanage only accept parcels of stamps from benevolent friends, and that no notice whatever will be taken of offers of stamps for cash.

FIRST: All stamps not whole and not surrounded with the perforated edging are useless; the only exception made concerns rare stamps, which philatelic collectors prefer to possess, however spoilt, rather than to have no sign of them.

SECOND: The price of whole stamps greatly varies, and can often only be decided by experts, hence charitable contributors are advised to forward indifferently any kind of stamps not obliterated.

THIRD: Stamps must be cut out from envelopes, but it is not indispensable to remove them from the bit of paper on which they have been gummed.

FOURTH: It is scarcely worth while to divide stamps in packets of 50 or 100.

FIFTH: Embossed stamps, as well as the printed ones on postal cards and paper wrappers, have more value than the ordinary ones, but in cutting them out a half inch margin must always be left.

The address of this institution is "L'Aisle de Billodes, Locle, Switzerland." We may add that this article should settle at once and forever the much disputed question of the value of a collection of "a million cancelled postage stamps."