POPULAR STAMPS
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(The Philatelic Advocate, Berlin, Ontario, Vol 8, No 1 – January 1900)

With the writer all stamps are popular, but certain stamps are regarded with a sort of affection on account of the circumstances attaching to them. The 10c 1847 is regarded by me as a specially favorite one, because it came from a gentleman who has always been one of my best philatelic friends and although he is an inveterate joker, anything he says leaves no sting. The stamp is “on cover,” with a well known name attached to the letter itself, which is a part of the cover, and as the stamp was one the first issued by the United States, this fact is one of the elements of its popularity. A ½c Jubilee is regarded by me with favor as it was presented to me when these stamps first came out, when the stamps in question had an exorbitant price hitched on to it, by one of my staunchest young friends in Canada, whose life was recently cut off so early and when I look at this stamp its color helps to make it speak the words, in a silent way, “In Memoriam,” of Edward A. Marris. The 12 Kreuzer rural stamp of Baden, notwithstanding a quarter of it is gone, is well thought of because it was the first stamp I ever purchased, a quarter of a century ago, of the late F. Trifet, of Boston, and no more stamps were bought for over twenty years. I wish it was a used specimen (price $30).

Leaving personal considerations of popular stamps aside, I will speak of them in a general way. Of course with the specialist certain countries are popular. One of my friends has a singular liking for the stamps of Uruguay. One gentleman who was formerly a correspondent for me on the Perforator, has a liking for Peruvians. I am pleased to find out that he did not carry out his expressed intention of going to Siberia, and that he will contribute to my new journal. Another writer has a penchant for Tasmanians, although this party loves all stamps in an idolized fashion. It seems queer that anyone can be found to have a special liking for reprints, but such is the case; the lover of said reprints is rather young, but he has collected stamps longer than I. I called on him one day and asked him which were his most popular stamps, and he immediately turned to a page and said, “There!” and the page had nearly all the bright-colored Heligolands, which he liked because they were so “nice and clean.” A good deal of truth there. Although certainly homely stamps are very high-priced and wanted, I don’t know of anyone who makes a specialty of collecting homely stamps, although there may be those who do it.

I now come to the subject in general which may seem as far from the starting point as the minister’s “finally,” although his “finally” was as long as the rest of the sermon. Poor man, he is gone! I heard that “finally” twice a day nearly every Sunday for eight years. When I did hear it, i would give a sigh, and say to myself, “half through.” To many Americans (I mean Yankees or U.S. citizens) popular stamps seem to be those of our near neighbors, the issues of Canada, and if we did blow against those Jubilees, they were certainly popular, and since the price to a very popular one, and also the other “cornered” values. Tack on a stiff price to a stamp, and we all want it especially if it is high, and we eagerly grab it if it comes within hailing distances. Had this ½c stamp always been obtainable at face, would we have cared as much for it? Not if the 1c, 2c or 3, has listed at 65c instead of being “cheap stuff.”

There are stamps, too, which have never been particularly high-priced but seem to have a widespread popularity. The Cabots have met with a great deal of favor, and the 5c blue of Newfoundland
seems to be popular especially because it bears the face of a royal philatelist who stands a good chance of ruling the “Vaster empire than has been.” The Omahas are quite popular too, especially with those who commenced the fad when they appeared as were the Columbian with those who bought their albums in 1893. At the present time the Netherland issues have a large following because reasonable in price and on account of bearing the queenly head of the “flaxen-haired little girl.” Haytis are sought after a good deal. Conditions have a good deal to do with making stamps popular. Cubans have for a long time been favored on account of those “cunning little heads,” and, since the late unpleasantness Spanish issues have been eagerly wished for, for fear that change of ownership would make them scarce, and everybody wants those late 4 milesima issues of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines because of the high value attached to those stamps containing the head of the sickly-looking boy king. The recently issued Cubans are very popular indeed, being handsome enough to suit those who look for beauty. The “Remember the Maine” stamps seem to have “shot their bolt,” as it were. If a stamp had been brought out in October with Dewey’s head on it, people would have fell over each other trying to get it. His true admirers would never have ceased to love him, but the “Kickers” might have turned his face to the wall after the “house episode.” These folks probably never were in love, and don’t stop for reason. The 1898 issues of Portugal were handsome affairs. If they had been confined to the home country alone, they would b more popular. Fifty-six stamps instead of eight is too much of a good thing. The New Zealands are very popular, too, or were for a while before newer things came along. And “there are others,” too numerous to mention here.

It isn’t exactly stamps, but the fad came to me through my connection with them. Many pleasant correspondents have been placed on my list. It has been my desire to collect their counterfeit presentiments as far as possible, and they are prized more than the stamps in most or all cases. To secure these likenesses, I have given away many of myself and family. These likenesses have been tendered a little more lavishly than suit the prudent ideas of some, but with the best of intentions, all the same, and when I am told that “You do love to spread them around.” I am forced to smile and ponder on the inconsistency of people who take the negative side of everything you attempt and lose sight of the good you mean to accomplish from taking a daily vow not to speak well of you. Selah!