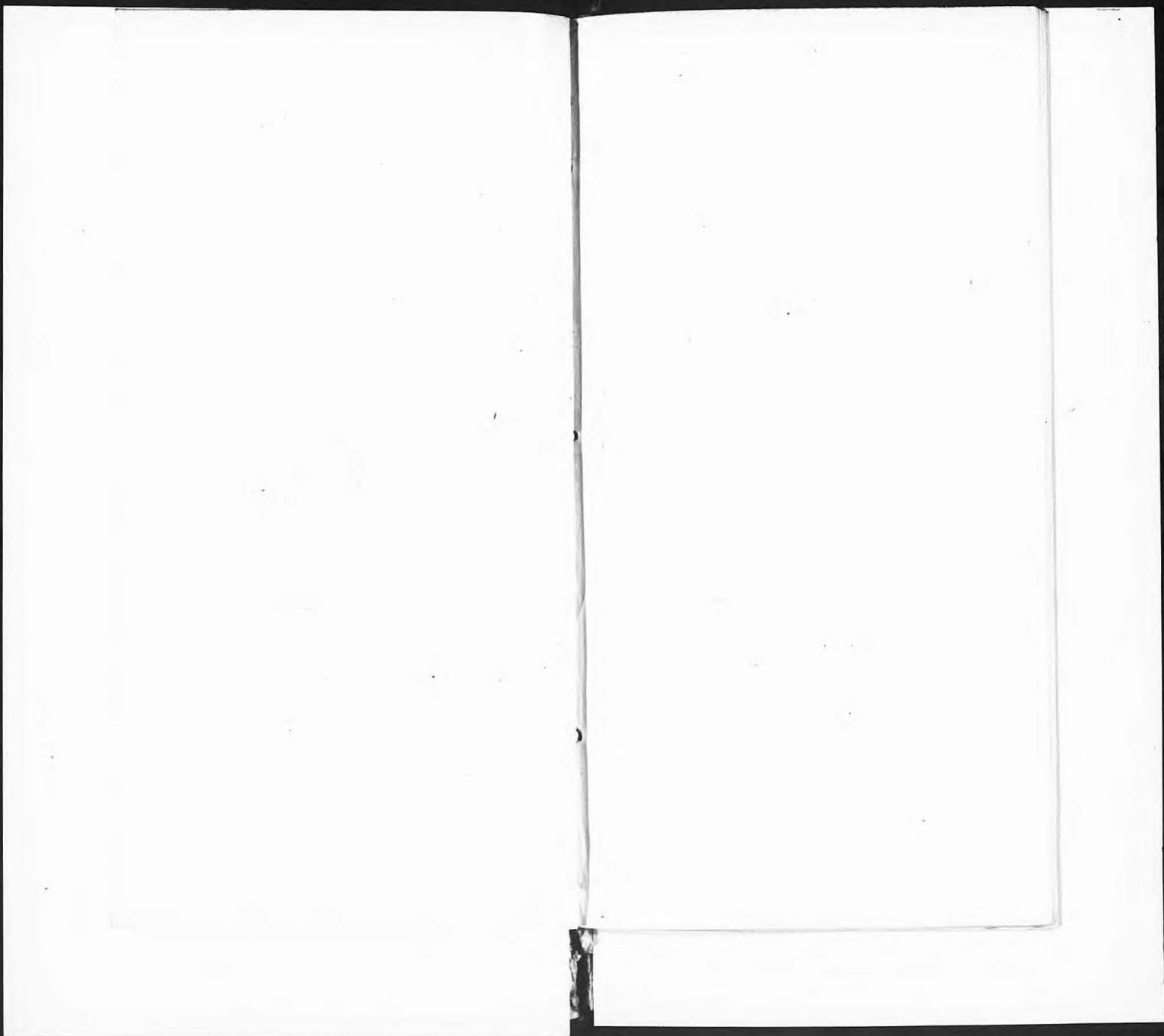


# The Stamps of Mars . . .



by E. P. Miller.





L. P. MILLER.

# The Stamps of Mars . . .

By L. P. MILLER

Perpetrator of

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Stamp,” “Philatelic  
Phoolishness,” etc., etc.

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**P**HILATELISTS are, as a rule,  
Bent on serious intentions,  
**R**EALIZING this, the author  
Is filled with apprehensions,  
**E**VERY previous handbook written  
Has dealt with certain stamps:  
**F**ROM the tropics of Campeche  
To England's dews and damps,  
**A**ll of them were scientific,  
Hence were welcomed with acclaim,  
**C**AN fictitious handbooks, then,  
Enjoy welcomes half the same?  
**E**XPERIENCE, only, can decide,  
Its decision we await.

A PERIOD of time will tell the tale,

• And decide this booklet's fate.

—L. P. M.

Harrisburg, Pa., May 18, 1911.



## Obadiah Doodle.


 IT WAS a sultry afternoon in June. Just such an afternoon as to cause one's mint superbis to assume a convex shape as soon as one's album be opened, and to encourage the original gum on the dealer's new issues to liquefy and flow calmly away.

Obadiah Doodle was lounging contentedly in a large, comfortable chair on the shady side of his abode, on this particular afternoon. Obadiah was a peaceable snoozer, and the only thing he actively opposed was work. In this respect, he was just like most of his fraternal brethren, for philatelists are lazy lubbers as a rule. Yes, Obadiah was a philatelist. In fact he was a born stamp collector, although he hadn't inherited the mania, by any means; the only things his ancestors ever collected were whisky bottles.

Mrs. Doodle and the little Doodles were not in sympathy with popper Doodle's devotion to his hobby, by a long shot. He carried it too far, in their estimation. He talked stamps, read stamps, dreamed stamps, and, in fact, did everything but eat stamps. He never used naughty swear words, but confined himself exclusively to "o. g." Only "mint" candy would he touch, and "gum" was chewed in preference to tobacco. Such was the condition of affairs at the opening of our story.

## II

### The Departure.



WITH the air of one who owns a Post Office Mauritius on entire cover, Obadiah Doodle reached leisurely under his chair, and fished out his stamp album. A friend once said, "Doodle's stamps and Doodle are never separated by more than a foot and a half." Truly, Doodle was a born collector.

For about the hundredth time that week, he opened the album, began at the crowded U. S. pages, hurried over desolate Abyssinia and Afghanistan, and proceeded on through the A's, and then the B's. By the time he reached Barbados, a strange influence had taken possession of him, and he couldn't turn another page. He simply stared, as if hypnotised, at his farthing copy of the 1897 issue.

No, it wasn't on blued paper, nor was there anything else about it that was out of the ordinary, in general appearance. But as our hero gazed, all else vanished. And behold, the stamp grew and grew, until it was as large as Obadiah's own lanky exterior. He was surprised, to say the least, and awaited the next move of the perforated mammal with his heart several millimetres distant from his Adam's apple.

Just then a marvelous thing happened. The inhabitant of Neptune's car—the central figure in the stamps of this issue—stepped down from her conveyance, as calmly as if she were getting out of a taxi on Broadway. Scepter in hand, and crown on head, she glided swiftly up to the entranced Mr. Doodle.

Not for nothing had this gentleman

Mrs. Doodle and the little Doodles were not in sympathy with popper Doodle's devotion to his hobby, by a long shot. He carried it too far, in their estimation. He talked stamps, read stamps, dreamed stamps, and, in fact, did everything but eat stamps. He never used naughty swear words, but confined himself exclusively to "o. g." Only "mint" candy would he touch, and "gum" was chewed in preference to tobacco. Such was the condition of affairs at the opening of our story.

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Not for nothing had this gentleman

collected "Queen's heads" for nearly fifty years. He at once recognized the royal-looking lady. She was none other than Queen Victoria. This being so, was the figure before him the shade of the Queen? Poor Doodle was at a loss. He had never collected shades, so how should he know?

Further speculation was unceremoniously cut off. The figure had taken hold of his arm, and was leading him into the waiting car. In a few moments, everything sublunary was left behind, and the car was soaring rapidly upward with its two silent occupants.

### III

#### The Arrival.



TO SAY that Obadiah was excited would be putting it mildly. Neptune's car was going higher and higher, just as the "bluish rags" had done on earth. He suddenly realized that terra firma had entirely disappeared, and gasped under his breath,

"Something has got to be did."

Then, summing up all his courage, he said, aloud, to his companion, "Please, your majesty, I wanna go back." Apparently the whizzing past of planets, comets, and what-not, had drowned his voice, so he tried again. "Your highness," he yelled, "I've got a wife and children to support, and besides, the A. P. S. couldn't get along without me. Won't yuh be a nice lady, an' take me back?" An increase of speed was the only reply.

One comfort had Obadiah, even in the pickle he found himself. He had retained his hold on the stamp album, and was desperately clinging to it. His best friend would be with him to the end.

Suddenly a terrible thing happened. An immense planet had loomed up in front of the car and a collision was unavoidable. Our hero felt a concussion, and promptly landed, pate foremost on world No. 2. His album lay open before him, at the Barbados page, and the farthing stamp was in place, looking as innocent as if nothing had happened. Neptune's car was exactly as it had been before, and Victoria was just as printer's ink had made her, back in '97.

## IV

### The Martians.



NOT more Obadiah began at United States, and started through the alphabet. No matter what destiny had in store for him, he positively had to look over those stamps. While thus engaged, a noise in the distance attracted his attention. It came nearer and nearer, and finally he saw a group of curious creatures, headed directly toward him.

As they drew closer, he noticed that their bodies were oblong, and perforated on all sides. The two perforations at the lower corners of each creature were overgrown, and served as pedal extremities. The two upper corner perfs. were prolonged into arms. The bunch looked more like a packet of "100 different" than anything else.

Just as Obadiah was wondering how they'd look mounted in a blank album, one of them came up to him and scratch-

ed him on the neck with his perforations. Our philatelic friend leaped up to his feet, said something stronger than "o. g." for the first time in many moons, and demanded to know where he was, what was up, and how he was going to get down.

The stampie-looking personage who had brought him so effectively to reality, replied that the place was Mars, and that the king of the Martians desired speech with the noted philatelist from the Earth. Of a truth, flattery accomplishes much. The "noted philatelist" was soon in the presence of the Monarch of Mars.

## V

### Philately in Mars.

 IT WAS not long until Obadiah Doodle and the king were the best of friends. Our hero told all about philately on the Earth, and explained everything he could about every stamp in his collection. The king nearly went wild over those stamps; the commonest German sticker was a rarity

scarce immediately. Also, the king made the stamps scarce by ordering every one destroyed. Hence, the stamps of the second issue are wisely regarded as merely finished proofs.

The king then ordered an issue showing only the numeral of value, and a black, mournful-looking number appeared on each denomination. Everything went smoothly until the six centers and nine centers got in a mix-up. Inverted six centers on an envelope saved the sender three cents, and the government lost accordingly. Besides, when a collector got a specimen of one or the other denomination, he couldn't tell whether it was going or coming. Manifestly, a change was badly needed.

The wise men of the planet finally assembled, and decided upon a series of landscapes to adorn the various denominations of a new issue. The result was a grand success, and philately boomed as it had never done before. So joyous was the king that he gave everybody a mint set gratis, and he didn't surcharge them "specimen," either.

However, such ardent collectors had to have something to collect, and as Mars had but one central government, it was up to that government to issue plenty of

stamps. Accordingly, a regularly issue had appeared every year, a commemorative set every few months, and surcharges, etc., almost every week, up to the time of Obadiah's arrival. And doubtless the happy state of affairs would continue for many more decades. There were no stamp dealers in Mars. Everybody got every stamp as it came out, without any trouble, and all philatelic accessories were home-made or second-handed. These things Obadiah learned in open-mouthed astonishment, so strange did they seem.

## VII

### Conclusion.

L, his life Obadiah had longed to live in a strictly stampic atmosphere, with nothing about him but stamps, stamps, stamps. Mars was the ideal location for the fulfillment of his wish. Even the natives were over-grown counterfeits of stamps. And to think of getting every new issue,

without even paying that 10 per cent. No philatelist could desire more.

As he thought over these things, he turned mechanically to the Barbados page in his album, and gazed at the stamp that had made all this possible for him. He half expected the lady in the car to bestir herself again, but she budged herself not an inch.

Suddenly there seemed to be an earthquake, and Obadiah was shaken till he rattled. Then he was terrified to hear Mrs. Doodle thundering, "Get awake you lazy loafer. You've been sleeping over an hour, and talking enough foolishness to run one of your stamp papers ten years. Get on over there to that wood pile afore I lose my temper."

Great Perforations! It had all been a blissful dream. There was the Barbados page, just as it had been when he dozed off, and he hadn't been in Neptune's car with another man's wife at all. And those Martian stamps that he had intended to startle Philately with, were nothing but the product of an idle philatelic brain.

Just as in the dream, when Victoria's shade had led our fallen hero toward Neptune's car, so now Mrs. Doodle led him toward the wood-pile. Saw in hand,

and stamps on brain, he began his job. The dream was forgotten in a short time, but Obadiah is still a philatelist.



## Brickbats and Bouquets.



I SENT "specimen sheets" of the foregoing superficial spasm to a few eminent personages, prior to publication, in order to ascertain the direct effects of same on said personages. Following are the kicks and commendations received in reply, which show the various degrees of patience with which the spasm was tolerated.

---

"The work is one which will undoubtedly aid materially in future peace relations with Mars."—Wm. H. Taft.

---

"The stuff ain't fit for to be printed; the uncorrect grammar is fierce."—Prof. Mumps, world-famed Rhetorician.

---

"It would be admirable translated into Arabic."—A Boston linguist.

"Such rot is intolerable. Our \$1,000 advertising pages are closed to the publisher."—*Collier's Weekly*.

---

"It's enough to make my customers turn in their graves."—Undertaker Deadwuns.

---

"Never, since Mark Twain, has such excellent humor been published."—The name of this liar has been misplaced.

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"If the handbook on Mars runs opposition to our recently published 'Canada,' we shall sue for damages."—*S. E. Stamp Co.*

---

"The masterpiece shows every phase of philately in Mars in its true light. (I'll read it after the coronation excitement.)"—*Geo. V, Monarch of England, and other places.*

---

"The thing shows distinct evidences of insanicitis on the part of the author. We prescribe specializing in Dutch Dues for a period not exceeding ten years. Pank-teen pesos, please."—*Drs. H. A. Davis and J. M. Holt.*

---

"Having read the classic, I am sending

a check for \$1,000, in payment for the entire edition. I do this for the furtherance of peace in the philatelic world."—Andrew Carnegie. (N. B. — The banks wouldn't cash the check).

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"Such muckraking stuff is unbearable. Will put author in Ananias Club as soon as it is reorganized."—T. R.

---

"The fictitious element is wonderful. I shall use the work as a guide in writing my next magazine article."—Doc. Cook.

---

"Nothing else like it in my entire philatelic library."—Earl of Crawford, K. T.

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"If women ruled the philatelic world, such stuff would not be tolerated, so there!"—Dr. Anna Shaw.

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"The author is disowned by us; he will be expelled as soon as he pays his dues."—Capital City Collectors Club.

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"The literary effect is heavenly. When published, send us a cloth bound copy gratis, and use a Schermack No. 2 in mailing if possible."—Philatelic Literature Collector.

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