

## HINTS FOR THE TYRO.

BY NEMO.

IN these few lines it shall be my endeavor to give the main points of my experience in philately, for the edification of my young friends who are just about to enter the philatelic arena; and perhaps some more advanced collector may find herein some brief item worthy of his notice.

Of course you have already purchased a standard catalogue. No? Then you should do so immediately; the selection of a suitable one I shall leave your own judgement, as knowing best to what particular line, if any, you intend to devote your especial attention. "Scott's Standard Postage and Revenue Stamp Catalogue" was my first purchase, and I have never had occasion to regret the small outlay since, at I am satisfied that it has saved me twenty-five to seventy-five per cent on nearly all of my purchases, although I have never had any dealings with the publishers. I would not advise the purchase of an expensive album at first, as it is certain to be discarded ere long on account of the many new issues. Or perhaps you may be able to obtain one through exchange; by this means I was enabled to obtain two good cloth-bound albums, the "International" and the "Improved," which answered my purpose very well. Never paste your stamps solidly in your album, as it spoils it and depreciates the value of your collection. Hinge them in by means of gummed paper, which can be bought of most dealers for this purpose; or you can make it yourself by covering a thin sheet of paper with a strong solution of gum-arabic, which does not injure the stamps. Some valuable collections have been destroyed by using bad gum.

If you intend to accept all used specimens of stamps, you might now buy a few good-variety packets, as well as a small quantity of mixed stamps, among which you will generally find some useful ones, which may be worth as much, or more to you than the entire assortment cost.

The next best thing for you to do will be to purchase a number of cheap sets, as near complete as possible,

taking care to first find out of whom you can get genuine specimens of the required stamps the cheapest; after you have done this you will find yourself in possession of a number of choice duplicates, which you can exchange with some brother or sister collector, taking care not to accept any which are marked too high, however tempting they may be. If you are interested in any other branch of collecting, you may be able to exchange other specimens for stamps; thus your opportunities will be increased manifold.

You are now far enough advanced to order a few sheets on approval, and I would advise you to order sheets at as large a discount as possible, and when you receive them to compare the prices with your catalogue, and accept none but those which are marked at or below catalogue prices, and only such as you may need to complete the sets which you have already commenced. By this means you will be enabled to make all your purchases at, at least twenty-five to fifty per cent below regular market value; what you make in this way is your own gain, but let me implore you, act honorably in all things, and you will find in the end that your collection has increased far more rapidly than it would otherwise have done.

Furthermore, if you patronize the exchange column of some reliable paper, you will receive numerous sheets unsolicited, which will save you the trouble and expense of sending for them.

I am only a tyro myself, and I must acknowledge that my means are very limited; nevertheless, by means of the instructions here laid down, I have been able to make up what I consider a very fair collection.

Last, but not least, you will want to subscribe to a few good papers devoted to the subject, and I would suggest that the CANADA STAMP AND COIN JOURNAL may head your list.

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—"What postage do I collect on this weekly, Heavenly Tidings?" asked the clerk. And the postmaster scratched his head thoughtfully for a moment, and then told him to rate it among the "foreign newspapers."