

Scott's 58th.

Last month we promised to devote considerable space in this number to the new catalogue. We now take up our pen to fulfil the promise. That the catalogue is one of the best half dozen that are published no philatelist will dispute. That the 58th is better than any former edition will be generally granted. That the catalogue is perfect in every respect not even its warmest friends will claim. So that while on the one hand we want to be ungrudging in our commendation of it, we want on the other hand to be conscientious in our censure.

We think it an improvement to have relegated the postal cards to another volume. We think it would be a further improvement to do the same with the United States locals, telegraphs and revenue stamps, and with the Chinese locals. We like consistency in a catalogue as well as in a man. The title of the catalogue does not truthfully represent the contents. There is no hint of revenue stamps upon the title page. The long lists of United States revenues and locals in the Scott catalogues are as much of a nuisance as the long lists of Russian locals are in those of Stanley Gibbons.

We like the alphabetical arrangement of the catalogue. It is the most convenient for reference. But we wish it were adhered to more closely. Senf's catalogue is far more convenient to refer to than either Scott's or Stanley Gibbons'. Senf's does not begin with the German Empire. A catalogue that aspires to be a standard for the philatelic world should not give the first place to the country in which it is issued. Stanley Gibbons' catalogue has only lately fallen into this error. We think it a mistake to group the Indian native states, but would prefer to see the alphabetical order adhered to without exception.

Some have found fault with the 58th because of the multitude of shades and

minute varieties listed. We cannot wholly agree with them. We do not think a standard catalogue can be too complete. But we could wish that more of the minor varieties were *priced*. And here we would like to see consistency too. Some countries are much more minutely catalogued than others. The varieties of perforation are given *ad nauseam* in Brazil, 1890-97. They are ignored in Roumania. The list of Canadian stamps is incomplete. The differences between Die A and Die B of the British Colonial stamps cannot be seen without 'a double million magnifying microscope.' The list of Greek stamps from 1862 to 1882 is a medley without any attempt at arrangement. Some of the most important varieties are omitted. But nothing is easier than finding fault. We might note omissions here and there in countries whose stamps we are most familiar with. The fact, however, remains that Scott's 58th is a marvel of research, completeness and accuracy, and that no better guide for the general collector is to be found among priced catalogues.

The paper, form and illustrations are everything that can be desired. The prices do not seem to be excessive when compared with English, German and French catalogues, but they are certainly too high for the present state of the American market. We trust that the Scott Stamp and Coin Co. will long be spared to issue many more of their indispensable annual standard catalogues.

The new Canadian stamps are neat, and the colors are well chosen. But postmasters complain that some of the colors are too dark, so that it is difficult at night to tell whether the stamps have been cancelled. They complain, too, of the absence of figures of value. This necessitates a close look at some of the stamps to discover the denomination. The gum is abominable—it will not stick.