

NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT.

Now is the time to buy, says C. E. Severn in the International Philatelist. Stamps are cheap in the face of the present stringency in financial lines. Money is more powerful, more valuable now, than it is in normal times. It has a larger expansion, a larger purchasing range at this day, than it will, if all goes well, within a year or less, from the present.

The stamp collector with little or much money to spend should buy stamps now, when money will do the most execution. In the stamp world, there exists a condition which is paralleled, perhaps, in any other business and semi-commercial circles. The speculative-minded feel that this is the time to sow cents to reap dollars in the future.

Nearly everybody collects U.S. stamps consequently they are standard and a safe investment. One can fill one's U. S. blank spaces at a more favorable rate compared with catalogue values now than one could for many years heretofore.

Let us consider some of the stamps that are usually lacking in the fairly good collections of U. S. The five cent 1851, is priced at \$13.50 in the advance sheets. This stamp is being advertised at from \$9 to \$11 in the current numbers of stamp journals. Condition is a most important factor in appraising the value of this stamp. One specimen may be cheap at ten dollars and another dear at the same figure; you look at the margins when you buy the stamp. The 5 cent, 1851, is staple and you can buy one at a more advantageous price now than at any time in the future.

The 90 cent, 1855-60, reverses the usual order of things as it is catalogued higher used than unused. The advance sheet price is \$27.50. It is possible to buy a fine specimen to-day for from \$20 to \$22.50. Money spent for this stamp is well spent. Its position among the scarcities is better defined, even than

some of the U.S. that catalogue more.

The ninety-cent, 1868, will be \$18 in the new catalogue. It is somewhat difficult to get a centered specimen showing the grill clearly. The stamp is being offered nowadays by dealers occasionally, at from \$12 to \$15 and all will concede that the stamp is one that lends dignity to any collection and that it should be got while it may.

The ninety of '69 has reached \$20 in the advance sheets. The price of this stamp varies greatly, according to the condition. It is doubtful whether any stamp holds its price so well as a good specimen of this ninety. Nearly every dealer has one or more customers who desire perfect specimens of the stamp. The well-centered copy of good color will bring very near, if not quite, full catalogue rates, and the stamp will never be cheaper, its price never will be lower, than it is at present.

The unwatermarked dollar values 1894, have about reached bottom prices. The slump in their case has been most pronounced, and they are now generally advertised by dealers at a slight advance over face. As times become easier, the prices will doubtlessly rise steadily.

No mistake can be made in filling in the departments at prevailing dealer's prices. Though the 24 cent and 90 cent State unused have attained \$10 and \$15 respectively, in the advance sheets, they are stamps well worthy of purchase, even at prices based on these quotations. The 24 cent Justice though doubled in price and now \$20, is still priced reasonably, and he who lacks this royal stamp should make haste to obtain it at any fair proportion of \$20.

The new price of the 10 cent Executive, \$12.50, is low enough. Were the collector to pay quite this sum for a perfect specimen, he would not be getting the worst of it.

The 2c Justice, of State, 24c Navy, 1c Navy and others are quoted much higher in the advance sheets than in the 56th catalogue, but they bear the honor becomingly.

All things considered, now is the appointed day to good stamps in general and good U. S. in particular. Stamps which for various reasons are considered standard, staple articles are a satisfaction to possess, quite aside from the feeling of financial security felt by the owners, even though it is very comforting to get certain stamps and then watch them rise. Good stamps are like good friends—the longer you have them the dearer they become.