

FARTHING POSTCARDS.

A farthing postcard, so they say,
Will quickly see the light of day.
—Aly Sloper.

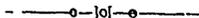
The problem of selling halfpenny postcards at a farthing, and still leave a margin of profit, appears to be satisfactorily solved by the Farthing Letter Card Company, for whom Messrs. Shelley and Co., the enterprising advertising firm, Leadenhall Street, London, have been appointed sole agents. The solution of the seemingly impossible, curiously enough, lies in the fact that the whole thing is based on sound commercial principles. While no one for a moment supposed that astute business men were going to make a present to the public, but few had the "nous" to perceive how the matter could be worked from the business point of view. Specimens of the ordinary halfpenny card purchasable for a farthing now before us reveal the plan, and this is seen to be as simple as it is effective and likely to result in a pretty heavy "boom." The four sides of the back of the card are subdivided into sections of about one and two inches in length by one in depth, and they are utilised for advertising purposes. The blank space bordered by advertisements, thus left for writing purposes, measures about three by one and a half inches, and will for ordinary postcard purposes be found quite sufficient.—E. F. Herdman.



HOW DIMES are MADE and COUNTED.

The United States Mint in San Francisco is said to be the largest institution of the kind in the world. Just at the present time there is a lively demand for silver dimes, and two of the money presses have been for some time running exclusively on this coin. The demand is so great that these presses are not stopped even on Sundays. The process of dime making is an interesting one. The silver bullion is first melted and run into two-pound bars. These in turn are run through immense rollers and flattened out to the thickness of the coin. These silver strips are then passed through a machine which cuts them into proper size for the presses, the strips first having been treated with a kind of tallow to prevent their being scratched in their passage through the cutters. The silver pieces are

then put into the feeder of the printing presses, and are fed to the die by automatic machinery at the rate of 100 per minute. 48,000 dimes being turned out in a regular working day of eight hours. As the smooth pieces are pressed between the ponderous printing dies they receive the lettered and figured impression in a manner similar to that of a paper pressed upon a form of type; at the same time the piece is expanded in a slight degree, and the small corrugations are cut into its rim. The machine drops the completed coin into a receiver, and it is ready for the counter's hands. The instrument used by the counter is not a complicated machine by any means, as one might suppose. It is a simple copper-covered tray, having raised ridges running across its surface at a distance apart the exact width of a dime. From the receiver the money is dumped on the board or tray, and as it is shaken rapidly by the counter the pieces settle down into the spaces between the ridges. All these spaces being filled, the surplus coin is brushed back into the receiver, and the counter has exactly 1,250 silver dimes, or \$125 on his tray, which number is required to fill the spaces. The tray is then emptied into boxes, and the money is ready for shipment. The dime does not pass through the weigher's hands, as does the coins of a larger denomination. One and one-half grains is allowed for variation, or "tolerance," in all silver coins from a dollar down, and the deviation from the standard in the case of the ten cent pieces is so trifling that the trouble and expense of weighing coins of this denomination is dispensed with.



—THE Stamp Collectors' Figaro has again made its appearance. We hope Mr. Voute will stay with us this time, as we missed his bright paper very much during the last few months.

—MR. TIFFANY'S "Library Companion" has been issued at last. It is not at all up to our expectations. The arrangement is first-class, but the information is not sufficiently copious to be of any great value. It does not include Canadian periodicals; an omission that makes it of even less value to Canadian collectors. However, we can't expect an encyclopedia for a quarter, and it is certainly a good twenty-five cents worth.