

Novelties.

Among the foreign novelties announced are Christmas cards having views hand-painted in oil, mounted on satin-tinted cards. The retail prices for these appear to be very low; that is, if the paintings are of artistic merit or value.

Another line consists of real ivory panels in boxes on "leather-grained" mounts. Fans richly painted and bearing devices appropriate for the holidays are also suggested. There is an effort to get out of the rut in the production of cards, and ingenuity has got to exert itself to do it.

Great variety and elaboration are to be found in the different styles of albums which are offering this season. Comparing these goods with those manufactured a number of years ago, one cannot but be much impressed with the improvement in general design, ornamentation and finish, and the comparative cheapness of the styles now in the market.

Under a ruling of the Treasury Department waxed paper made in Canada from paper and paraffine produced in the United States is not entitled to free entry as an article of domestic manufacture exported and returned, and duty must be levied on its market value in Canada at the time of exportation therefrom.—*Trade Lounger in American Stationer.*

LEAD PENCILS—REAL AND IMITATIONS.—There is no lead pencil, and there has been none for fifty years. There was a time when a spiracle of lead, cut from the bar or sheet, sufficed to make marks on white paper or some rougher abraded material. The name of lead pencil came from the old notion that the products of the different Cumberland mines, were lead, instead of being plumbago, or graphite, a carbonate of iron, capable of leaving a lead-coloured mark. With the original lead pencil or slip, and with the earlier styles of the "lead" pencil made direct from the Cumberland mine, the wetting of the pencil was a preliminary of writing. But since it has become a manufacture the lead pencil is adapted, by numbers or letters, to each particular design. There are grades of hardness, from the pencil that may be sharpened to a needle point, to one that makes a broad mark. Between the two extremes there are a number of graduations that cover all the conveniences of the lead pencil. These graduations are made by taking the original carbonate and grinding it, and mixing it with a fine quality of clay in differing proportions, regard being had to the use of the pencil. The mixture is thorough, the mass is squeezed through dies to form and size it, is dried, and encased in its wood envelope.—*Scientific American.*

WHAT is the next article? A clever salesman does not ask the question audibly, but will endeavour to take the measure of his customer's inclination, and show him something which is likely to interest him. When your customer asks for an article, do not begin by showing him the commonest quality, but try the better class goods first, and do not be afraid of the trouble of getting down half-a-dozen varieties for him to look at. Some customers know exactly what they want, but the majority do not, and only make up their minds when they see the right article placed before them.—*Captain Cuttle, junior.*

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