

[From the Boston Daily Advertiser.]
HOW CHROMOS ARE MADE.

Chromo-Lithography is the art of printing pictures from stone, in colors. The most difficult branch of it—which is now generally implied when chromos are spoken of—is the art of reproducing oil paintings. When a chromo is made by a competent hand, it presents an exact counterpart of the original painting, with the delicate gradations of tints and shades, and with much of the spirit and tone of a production of the brush and pallet.

To understand how chromos are made, the art of lithography must first be briefly explained. The stone used in lithography is a species of limestone found in Bavaria, and is wrought into thick slabs with finely polished surface. The drawing is made on the slab with a sort of colored soap, which adheres to the stone, and enters into a chemical combination with it after the application of certain acids and gums. When the drawing is complete, the slab is put on the press, and carefully dampened with a sponge. The oil color (or ink) is then applied with a common printer's roller. Of course, the parts of the slab which contain no drawing, being wet, resist the ink; while the drawing itself, being oily, repels the water, but retains the color applied. It is thus that, without a raised surface or incision—as in common printing, woodcuts, and steel engravings—lithography produces printed drawings from a perfectly smooth stone.

In a chromo, the first proof is a light ground tint, covering nearly all the surface. It has only a faint, shadowy resemblance to the completed picture. It is in fact rather a shadow than an outline. The next proof, from the second stone, contains all the shades of another color. This process is repeated again and again, and again, occasionally, as often as thirty times. We saw one proof, in a visit to Mr. Prang's establishment, a group of cattle,—that had passed through the press twelve times; and it still bore a greater resemblance to a spoiled colored photograph than to the charming picture which it subsequently became. The number of impressions, however, does not necessarily indicate the number of colors in a painting, because the colors and tints are greatly multiplied by combinations created in the process of printing one over another. In twenty-five impressions, it is sometimes necessary and possible to produce a hundred distinct shades.

The last impression is made by an engraved stone, which produces that resemblance to canvass noticeable in all of Mr. Prang's finer specimens. English and German chromos, as a rule, do not attempt to give this delicate final touch, although it would seem to be essential in order to make a perfect imitation of a painting.

The paper used is white, heavy "plate paper," of the best quality, which has to pass through a heavy press, sheet by sheet, before its surface is fit to receive an impression.

The process thus briefly explained, we need hardly add, requires equally great skill and judgment at every stage. A single error is instantly detected by the practised eye in the finished specimen. The production of a chromo, if it is at all complicated, requires several months—sometimes several years—of careful preparation. The mere drawing of the different and entirely detached parts of so many different stones is of itself a work that requires an amount of labor and a degree of skill, which, to a person unfamiliar with the process, would appear incredible. Still more difficult, and needing still greater skill, is the process of coloring. This demands a knowledge which artists have hitherto almost exclusively monopolized, and, in addition to it, the practical familiarity of a printer with mechanical details.

"Drying" and "registering" are as important branches of the art of making chromos as drawing and coloring. On proper registering, for example, the entire possibility of producing a picture at every stage of its progress depends. "Registering" is that part of a pressman's work which consists in so arranging the paper in the press, that it shall receive the impression on exactly the same spot of every sheet. In book-work, each page must be exactly opposite the page printed on the other side of the sheet, in order that the impression, if on thin paper, may not "show through." In newspaper work this is of less importance, and often is not attended to with any special care. But in chromo-lithography the difference of a hair's-breadth would spoil a picture; for it would hopelessly mix up the colors.

After the chromo has passed through the press, it is embossed and varnished, and then put up for the market. These final processes are for the purpose of breaking the glossy light, and of softening the hard outlines which the picture receives from the stone, which imparts to it the resemblance of a painting on canvas.

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No. 1.—1 Magnificent Rosewood 7 Octave Piano Forte, worth \$800 00
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No. 8 to 12.—5 No. 3 Willcox & Gibbs' (ornamental stand, polished mahogany) Sewing Machines, with attachments complete @ \$100 00 each, worth \$500 00
No. 13 to 18.—6 No. 7 Cooking Stoves, with Furniture complete @ \$110 00 each, worth \$660 00
No. 19 to 23.—5 No. 6 Cooking Stoves, with Furniture complete @ \$90 00 each, worth \$450 00
No. 24 to 27.—4 Coal Heating Stoves @ \$35 00 each, worth \$140 00
No. 28 to 31.—4 Coal Heating Stoves @ \$30 00 each, worth \$120 00
No. 32 to 41.—10 Sets China (12 pieces each) @ \$25 00 each, worth \$250 00
No. 42 to 43.—2 Plaid and Figured Silk Dress patterns @ \$50 each, worth \$100 00
No. 44 to 47.—4 Plaid Silk Dress patterns @ \$40 00 each, worth \$160 00
No. 48 to 51.—4 Plain Green Silk Dress patterns @ \$37 50 each, worth \$150 00
No. 52 to 54.—3 Plaid Silk Dress patterns @ \$32 50 each, worth \$97 50
No. 55 to 75.—21 Dress Patterns @ \$10 00 each, worth \$210 00
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100 Prizes. Worth \$5,000

Every Certificate will be numbered, and as only 5,000 will be issued, every purchaser will know by the number of his Certificate how the Enterprise is progressing.

It is to be understood that there is no limit to the number of Certificates to be issued to any one purchaser, thus offering to all the opportunity of getting as many shares or chances in the drawing as they choose; the only condition being that Ten Dollars' worth of Goods is to be purchased for each share.

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GODDE & MITCHELL.

G. B. L. City, Dec. 10, 1887.

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