

in which the lines are always incised. (2) *Etching*, usually on metal, in which the lines are corroded by means of acid. (3) *Mezzotint*, in which there are no lines whatever, but only shades produced by roughening the surface of the metal; and (4), *Woodcut*, on which the lines which print black have to be left in relief, while the surface round them is cut away.

That wonderful race, the Chinese, who are credited with the use of gunpowder and the mariner's compass, long before their introduction into Europe, are also said to have been acquainted with wood engraving from a very remote period, and to have used wooden blocks with the characters cut out in relief, for printing. The earliest known use of wood engraving in Europe is said to be in the year 1423, while engraving on metal plates did not come into use till 1461, or thirty eight years later.

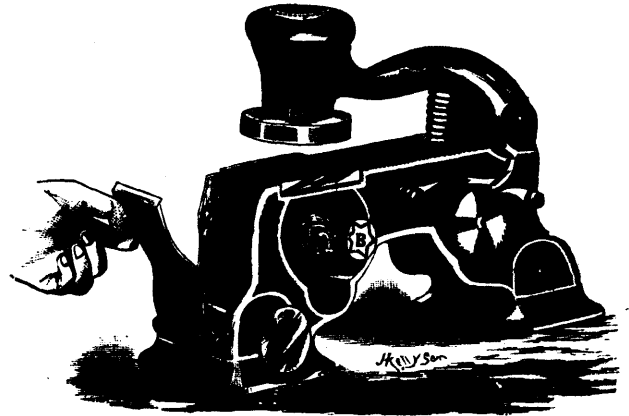
The difference between engraving on metal and wood is, that whilst in the latter the lines that are to appear on the impression are left prominent or in relief, in the former they are cut into the plate and when printed from are filled with ink, the rest of the surface being kept clean.

In Canada the art of engraving is carried to great perfection, and some firms turn out work that cannot be excelled, more especially in what we may term engraving for commercial purposes, such as Stamps, Seals, Letter-Heads, Cheques, Notes, &c. Probably the firm that has attained the highest reputation in this branch of business is that of MESSRS. PRITCHARD & MINGARD, *Sparks-st., Ottawa*, both members of which are practically versed in all the intricacies of the art, in its several branches; and we have had the good fortune to have been permitted to inspect some samples of their work, which are undeniably *chef-d'œuvres*.

Stamps and seals play a very important part in many transactions, such as legal documents and Government contracts, as well as in private papers of all kinds; and any of our readers who may have noticed the beautiful seals on the stationery used by the Government offices, have had unconsciously an opportunity of inspecting the workmanship of this firm, who are not only engravers to the *Dominion Post Office Department*, but execute a great deal of the higher class of work for the other branches. The extensive use and distribution of their goods may be imagined, when one thinks of all the post offices in this wide Dominion, each one of which has to be furnished with the necessary dating and obliterating stamps; and some of the larger offices, such as those at Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and Hamilton, have necessarily a formidable array of the many and various stamps used in our postal service. It certainly is a tribute to the excellence of *Messrs. Pritchard & Mingard's* workmanship that they are able to supply the Government with such an article, that instead of, as ten years since, importing all such appliances, the Dominion authorities now order them from this Canadian establishment; and although they are thus fostering an important industry, they are able to buy them at a much cheaper rate than formerly.

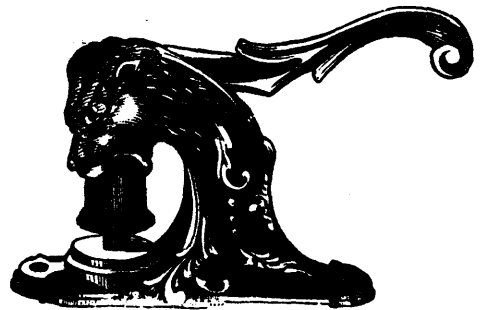
*Steel Stamps* is another branch of manufacture in which this firm are engaged, and which they have carried to great perfection. These stamps are very widely used, more especially by all manufacturers of wood and steel articles, who require them for marking their goods, such as axes, chisels, scythes, chisel-handles, etc., either with the firm name, trade mark, or both. These stamps, although of steel, are

altogether different from the post office stamps, and require to be cut with great precision, and tempered with unusual care, as if ever so little too hard they will "chip" on the first using, and if too soft will shortly become battered and spread out so as to be unfit for use. In using this description of stamp



considerable skill is required to make good work, as the blow must be struck so as to divide the force evenly, otherwise a bad impression, (or, more properly speaking, "indentation,") is made, one side being cut deep into the wood or metal as the case may be, whilst the opposite side is barely touched. The unskilful use is also calculated to damage the tool.

*Seals* require but brief mention here, as they are so well known, and no very startling improvements have yet been made in their manufacture. They are used for two purposes either for sealing wax or embossing. The former is not so much used now as a few generations ago, when every one who



aspired to be thought a gentleman was to be seen with a heavy bunch of seals dangling from the chain attached to his watch in the old-fashioned "fob" pocket. The improvements in envelopes since that time have happily done away with the common use of sealing wax; happily, we say, as the use of wax was attended with the loss of a good deal of time, trouble, and mayhap the unpleasant experience of a painful burn. Seals for embossing, which require a press, on the contrary, are in good demand, and are a cheap and ornamental means of addressing stationery.

A die is a seal made in a different shape, so that it will emboss thin metal, such as silver, etc., etc., or in another form again for embossing in colors Crests, Arms, Monograms, etc., on the envelopes and paper of those who desire an artistic and beautiful heading.

We have now to refer to the last but by no means the least important description of stamps. *Rubber Stamps* are used so extensively and are now so common that we need not more