

INDIA has strict rules for enforcing good conduct in the civil service. The postmaster of Cabul defrauded the Government and was sentenced by the Ameer to a flogging, and then had all his hair pulled out. So says a local paper. What a bald-headed lot of politicians we would have if this rule were in vogue here? It would cause a revival of the old *wig party*.—*English Ex.*

POSTAGE STAMPS.

Some things are so common that few apprehend the ingenuity and labour required to make them. Postage stamps, for instance, are in everybody's mouth, except the wise ones, who use a wet sponge, but scarcely any one knows how they are manufactured. In printing them steel plates are used, on which two hundred stamps are engraved. Two men are kept hard at work covering them with the coloured inks and passing them to a man and girl, who are equally busy at printing them with large rolling hand-presses. After the small sheets of paper upon which the two hundred stamps are engraved have dried enough they are sent into another room and gummed. The gum used for the purpose is a peculiar composition, made of the powder of dried vegetables mixed with water, which is better than any other material, for instance gum arabic, which cracks the paper badly. The paper is also of a perfect texture, somewhat similar to that used for bank-notes. After having been again dried this time on little racks, which are fanned by steam power for about an hour, they are put between sheets of pasteboard and pressed by hydraulic presses, capable

of applying a weight of two thousand pounds. The next thing is to cut the sheets in half; each sheet of course when cut contains a hundred stamps. This is done by a girl with a large pair of shears, cutting by hand being preferred to that of machinery, which method would destroy too many stamps. They are then passed to other squads, who, in as many operations, perforate the sheets between the stamps. Next they are pressed once more, and then packed and labelled and stowed away in another room, preparatory to being put in mail-bags for dispatching to fill orders. If a single stamp is torn, or mutilated, the whole sheet of one hundred is burned. About five hundred thousand are burned every week from this cause. For the past twenty years not a single sheet has been lost, such care has been taken in counting them. During the progress of manufacture the sheets are counted eleven times.—*Scotsman.*

BELCHER'S Farmers' Almanack, 1888, is now ready, and for sale by all dealers. It is an old and reliable favourite, thoroughly up to the times in all its facts, figures, and information. It is a Farmer's Almanack, most of all; but it is also stored with the facts which the man of business, the politician, the lawyer, the doctor, and the clergyman must have at hand. Its calendar is full and accurate; its lists of clergy, solicitors, &c., all that can be desired. The light house and signal service, and all the information for "those who go to sea in ships" can be found under appropriate headings. "Belcher's" for next year is worthy of its long and fine record.