

PAPER AND INK.

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ENGLISH ENVELOPE INDUSTRY.

THE envelope trade has always been a close corporation in Great Britain, the entire business done being confined to a very few firms, who have successfully held the work in their hands for a long period, and with considerable profit to themselves. Few people outside the inner circle can have any conception of the amount of the annual turnover. The business may roughly be divided into two branches, the "plain" and the "printed" flap, the latter section having developed by leaps and bounds since 1876; the initial steps emanating from a Dublin firm, who introduced a specially invented machine for the printing of "flaps" of envelopes at a rapid rate. Fully two years time was expended in developing the invention and in getting a machine built that would work satisfactorily. But ultimately the Dublin firm, says an English paper, through the patentee, succeeded in achieving their purpose, and were thus enabled to build up an extensive business in the manufacture of envelopes, and supplying them direct to traders with their business announcements printed on the flap. In 1877 the success was so great that the Dublin manufacturer had from sixteen to eighteen machines at work.

The success of the "printed flap" envelope business in Ireland induced a London

firm, possessing its own paper mills to procure machines and set up a department, which has ever since been eminently successful. These two houses had practically the control of the printed envelope trade in their hands the average charge for printing being 6d. per 1,000 envelopes; but the advantage was not confined to the charge for printing, for it, of course, secured the supply of the envelopes, and in addition, it also led to a large increase in the plain envelope trade. Other firms associated with the wholesale stationery trade embarked in the business and procured machines of the Cropper platen class which at that period were the only machines procurable—except the patent machine. Now, however, there are machines in the market which compete in speed and quality of work with the original machine, and large and increasing trade in the "printed flaps" is constantly being done.

JAPANESE PAPER MAKING.

The Japanese beat the world for hand-made paper. The Japanese paper is especially good for etching, and is greatly in vogue among artists. It is exceedingly durable and highly finished and prints from it are very much finer than any other quality of paper. The hand-made parchment paper is made from the inner bark of the sycamore tree and is of very tough fibre and is beautifully finished.