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ENGRAVING vs. LITHOGRAPH.

IN the early days of philately, says the Bazar, stamps were either line-engraved, type-set or lithographed; but now a very large proportion of stamps are "type-printed" or "surface-printed." We prefer the old names, i.e., *taille-douce* for line-engraved, *epargne* for surface-printed. Both these latter are really engraved, but the results are very different.

In *taille-douce* engraving, all the lines that are to print are cut out of the metal, appearing as hollows in the die. The die is inked and the surface wiped more or less clean, the paper is laid on, and the great pressure to which it is subjected squeezes the paper into the hollows, which are full of ink, consequently the paper takes up this ink out of the hollows, when it appears as glistening ridges on the paper. If we hold such a stamp obliquely, to catch the light, we shall be able to see the ink standing up from the paper, so that the uninked portions are lower than the design. The old black and red English 1p stamps are examples.

In *epargne* engraving, the parts of the die which are to print are left standing, and the rest of the metal is cut away, just as in a woodcut. The current English and colonies, and a few others are done in this way. The lines, in this form of engraving, are beautifully clear, but not embossed at all.

Lithography is very different. The design is drawn on the stone in litho-

graphic ink (or transferred from a drawing on paper) the stone is slightly etched with acid gum, so as to have the ink a very little in relief; the stone is then wetted, and the inking-roller is passed over it while wet. The ink from the roller adheres to the greasy ink of the design, but does not touch the wet stone. When the paper is laid on, the ink is transferred to it from the design. The stone is then wetted again, inked again, and another sheet of paper laid on, and this is continued until sufficient copies have been printed. Now, it will be seen that the ink from a flat design cannot stand up from the surface of the paper of the stamp, as in *taille-douce*, nor can the lines be fine and clear, as in *epargne*; for the pressure on the paper is likely to flatten and widen out the lines. Thus a lithograph has no trace of ridges of ink, and the impression is never very clear, the outlines being more or less ragged. The first issue Hungary is an example.

A type-set stamp is made from ordinary types, type-leads, ornaments, etc., set up together, and such a stamp shows all the lines of the design slightly sunk into the paper. The provisional British Guianas may be named as examples, also the Bamras, etc. We believe that the *taille-douce* is decidedly the most beautiful of all, but plates engraved in this manner will not stand the wear and tear of the present day, where stamps are not required by thousands, as of old, but by millions.

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