

Curiosities in Paper.

THE first watermark on record was the coat of arms of a town. The early papermakers were not slow to adopt this idea in impressing upon their sheets the device of the place where their mill was situated. For instance, the coat of arms of the village of Rives, a dolphin, is a common mark on old papers. This mark is still in use to-day. The first use of the watermark then was as a signature or emblem to point out the place of manufacture, and to recommend the material. For all that certain of these emblems were used by different makers and even in different countries with slight variations, brisures as they are called in heraldry, which were evidently not accidental, but intentional. The letter "P," used by numberless makers, is a good watermark to take as an example, since we find not only is there an endless variety of forms of the letter in the product of different mills, but that the same maker modified the brisures of the letter on different qualities of his paper. Another use of the watermark is more evident still. The names of the principal sizes of papier verge have been handed down to us, and the whole of these have suggested watermarks. Rising from the smallest sheet to the largest, they are as follows: Bell, pot, ecu (a.f.3 piece), crown, shell, grape, large grape, jesus, great eagle, and great world. The size "jesus" was indicated by the letter "j," the rest by their emblems. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the members of each trade guild were compelled to mark their merchandise with the seal of the guild. If they did not do so they were fined.