

WALL PAPER AND DECORATIONS.

HOW U. S. WALL PAPER IS SOLD TO THE TRADE.

REPRESENTATIVES of wall paper manufacturers and jobbers throughout the country, who met at the Gilsey House, New York, in September, have gone home. In some comments on the meeting, The New York Times says:

"Every year for more than 20 these men have been meeting at the Gilsey House to transact business. In former years they met in August, and would be in town for at least five weeks, but this year, owing to an agreement between the manufacturers and jobbers, they have been kept in town less than three weeks.

"The methods of doing business in the wall paper trade are unique. Since May 1, the manufacturers have been preparing the papers that will be sold next Spring. They have accepted their designs, made the rollers from which they are printed, and cut the paper into lengths of about a yard each and bound them in books. For three months the factories have been kept busy, working full time, to prepare these sample books, in order to have them in the hands of their representatives by Sept. 1. That is the date when it is agreed the new stock shall be first shown. On that day, all the manufacturers in the country take rooms in the Gilsey House, and jobbers from all parts of the continent come here and inspect the new samples.

"There are 34 manufacturers. Most of the factories are in the vicinity of New York or Philadelphia. There are about 100 jobbers, who come from different large towns. When the samples are shown the jobber is select what they think they will buy from each manufacturer and take samples. These samples are bound in books just as the original samples were, and to each jobber is given a book of the samples he chooses. Some of the larger jobbers give their orders while they are in New York. Others take their samples home, and send their orders on after mature deliberation.

"Now, all the jobbers have their books of samples, and are ready to offer their stock to the dealers, but in order that no one man may hurry out and get ahead of the others it is agreed among the jobbers that none shall show these samples until September 26. Each jobber who has been here selecting his stock will have time to get to his home, and all will begin selling at the

same time. The manufacturers, too, send their travelers out on the road, and by another agreement the prices are regulated so that one firm shall not undersell another. The jobbers receive a discount which gives them a fair profit, and when the manufacturers get into the field they are met on even terms. The prices are regulated according to the grade of the paper stock, and colors used, and the amount of work necessary to produce the paper. There is a uniform price all through the trade for each different grade of goods. Another rule in this trade which is very strictly enforced is that no jobber or manufacturer or any employe is allowed to 'run down' the goods of another firm.

"To conduct a business in this way requires a large amount of capital. For several months the manufacturers are paying out money and taking nothing in. An average firm will have seventy-five different patterns in their sample books. Each of these patterns is reproduced in different colors, so that altogether there may be several hundred different papers. The designs are purchased from artists, and they cost from \$50 to \$100 each, according to merit. When a design is purchased it has to be worked up. The color man in each factory decides what colors shall be used and the variety of combinations that shall be made. When this is done, the design has to be cut on the rollers from which the printing is to be done. One roller is required for each color. It costs from \$300 to \$500 for each set of eight rollers, which is the average number required to print a good paper. To make the rollers for a season's trade will cost an average house \$25,000. After these rollers are made thousands of yards of paper are printed, to be cut into pieces for sample books. This printing takes about three months, so that it can be seen that it may easily cost \$100,000 for the manufacturer to get ready for a new season's trade.

"The manufacturers will now receive orders, and will start to print to fill them. Their own travelers are already on the road, and will travel for about two months. They usually go to the large towns, leaving the smaller ones to the jobbers. The orders will be filled as fast as the presses can turn the paper out, but the retailers will not be able to offer the paper to the public before next Spring. By next May all the orders will have been filled. Then the rollers from which the paper has been printed will

be destroyed and, unless some jobber or dealer has a stock of some particular kind that might be wanted, none can be had. No orders are taken after Feb. 1.

"A roll of paper measures eight yards, and it is 20 inches wide. There are 200,000,000 rolls of wall paper manufactured each year, and the price ranges from 4½c. a roll to \$2 a roll. If joined end to end, this output of paper would be nearly 1,000,000 miles long. This paper would cover an area of 183,542 acres, or only about 10,000 acres less than the territory in the city of New York.

"The designs this year run more than last season in floral pieces, in which roses predominate. These are made in all colorings, and in smooth, rough, and tapestry effects. Turkish and other Oriental designs seem to have been popular. One design has on it in Turkish characters 'In God We Trust' and 'He Has No Peer.' Patriotic designs find favor. One that will be used in nurseries has pictures of several of the best known United States battleships and cruisers. The frieze is a dainty arrangement of flags. Then there is the flag paper. The frieze of this design is blue, with white stars, and the lower part is in stripes. Another paper represents Washington's coat of arms, on which is the motto, 'Exitus Acta Probat.' This is made in a variety of colorings."

THE UNITED STATES WALL PAPER COMBINATION.

It is said that one result of the new combination of wall paper manufacturers, called The Continental Wall Paper Co., will be a material advance in prices. The method adopted by the new combination is as follows: Each factory has been classified according to the number of rolls it turned out last year. The total output of combined factories has been placed at 100 per cent., and each individual factory has been allotted its quota of output for the current season. The goods will be sold by the factory making them, but all will be billed and paid for through the new company. In case one factory sells more than its quota and would be compelled to run overtime to satisfy the demand, the surplus will be turned over to one of the unfortunate factories whose quota has not been sold. The idea of this arrangement is to prevent overproduction, to properly look after credits and to classify dealers so that large retailers will not get as close prices and discounts as the legitimate jobbers.

THE WORRIES OF A SALESMAN.

"It is astonishing how much discernment a salesman has to possess in a paper store to be successful," remarked a clerk of a