

WALL PAPER AND DECORATIONS (Continued).

man or barber, as related by Mr. Fisher at the late Pennsylvania Convention, goes into the building business, he will cover the walls of the house he puts up with the most outlandish wall papers imaginable, papers without the least artistic value, and in which suffocating mazes of floral designs, huge vines and leaves interwoven, with lots of cheap bronze thrown in, will predominate. But don't imagine that these gentlemen do this simply because they don't know any better. They may not, indeed, be endowed largely with the artistic sense, but nature has not slighted them in the matter of astuteness. They use those bewildering patterns simply because they help sell the building. Take an empty house whose walls are done in the highest but plainist style of art, and it won't begin to appeal to the average buyer's eye as your more floridly decorated house. Besides, such papers show wear and tear less than plain papers do, and hence this is favored by buyers who intend renting out the property, and by renters themselves. Philadelphia contains miles of new houses, and more miles are yearly being added thereto, most of which rent at from \$12 to \$20 a month, and the wall paper decorations therein are stunning. No matter how cheap the house, the decorative effect is fine—from a popular view. We remember visiting one such house with its owner; while we were admiring the panelled ceiling of a bedroom, we noticed that a corner of the paper was loose, and catching hold of it, the landlord, at one pull, pulled the entire paper down in a sheet, and the white plaster came with it. Then it was re-decorated, finer than before, right on the brown plaster. Taste in wall paper your builder-contractor doesn't bother his great head about. Give him lots of convolutions in the design, and super-lots of bronze and cheap color, and he is happy. He is there to make money, and not to teach true decorative art. He still leaves to the professional decorator that honorable and useful, if not altogether lucrative, field of industrial art, content with shekels in lieu of honors.

CHEAP WALL PAPERS.

The agitation against extremely low-priced wall papers is gaining in strength, especially in the cities and larger towns. Wide-awake dealers are beginning to realize how much more profitable their business would be if there were no papers retailed at less than seven cents a roll. There should be a profit, even if a small one, on everything that goes out of the store, but let any dealer try to work out a profit on wall papers at 5 cents or less. The

average margin between cost and selling price is about 1 cent per roll; an ordinary room takes, say, 14 rolls, consequently the gross profit is about 14 cents per room; but against this have to be placed rent, taxes, heating, lighting, interest, remnants, etc. We leave it to any dealer to say how far 14 cents will go towards paying these necessary expenses, besides half an hour of his own or his clerk's time in making the sale. If he is able to sell a border to match he may save himself somewhat, but even so, he cannot make a profit. Besides, these papers do not always have borders to match.

We believe the manufacturers are largely responsible for the present condition of the trade, and if they would agree among themselves to make nothing less than, say, 4c. per roll wholesale, or, if cheaper goods are necessary, to limit them to a very few patterns, the trade would be much benefitted. When the manufacturers show such a large variety of 3 and 3½c. papers it is a great temptation to dealers to buy more of them than judgment dictates for fear that their competitors would be able to offer a larger cheap line. This is all a mistake. A large variety of very cheap papers is not necessary. A carefully selected stock of medium goods, ranging in price, say, from 10 to 25c. retail, is more attractive to the average buyer, and it must be remembered that every roll sold of 5c. paper displaces a roll of profitable goods.—W.L., in Painter and Decorator.

WALL PAPER NOTES.

Colin McArthur & Co. report that they are already hard at work cutting designs for the spring of 1898. This season's orders are being sent out as fast as possible.

Watson, Foster & Co. are shipping spring wall paper at the rate of 3 carloads per day. They say that unless sorting orders are in soon they run the risk of being unfilled, as they expect to be pretty well cleared out shortly. They claim that the goods turned out from the new factory are the best they have ever made.

M. Staunton & Co. are showing a very neat line of room mouldings in colors to harmonize with the prevailing shades in wall paper. The prices are very reasonable, and the goods can be had in any quantity, from one room lots and up. Samples can be mailed for special jobs if desired.

Damp walls are the cause of considerable annoyance to paper-hangers and to householders, as paper when hung on a damp wall will very soon become loose and stained. To overcome this waterproof papers are manufactured. It may be a

convenience for some of our readers to know that M. Staunton & Co., Toronto, keep in stock a paper, the surface of which is coated with tar, and which is much used for the above-named purpose. It is not expensive and can be retailed at 20c. per roll.

Sampling on the next season's line of wall paper will very shortly be commenced by M. Staunton & Co., and they inform us that the new line will be, if anything, more popular, both in regard to coloring and design, than heretofore. The designs have been most carefully selected to meet the wants of the Canadian trade, and no effort will be spared in the sampling to produce a thoroughly attractive and salable line. They report business as being very satisfactory for this time of the year, every mail bringing them in numerous orders.

SOUTHERN STATESMEN.

T. Y. Crowell & Co. have in press a new volume for their Library of Politics and Economics. It is entitled "Southern Statesmen of the Old Regime," by Professor Trent, of the University of the South, Seawane, Tenn. The book consists of a series of lectures, delivered in the first instance before the students of Wisconsin University and their friends. Professor Trent succeeds in investing even such hackneyed subjects as the life and career of Washington with new and brilliant colors. He makes it interesting, and that is saying a good deal. Where it comes to characters not so well-known—Toombs, for instance, or Alexander H. Stephens—he manages to throw a brilliant light on many obscure places in our national history. His treatment of Jefferson Davis is most satisfactory; it is a dignified and impartial account of a man who, like Don Quixote, had a streak of madness in his nature—the loco atrevesado con intervalos lucidos. Unlike Cervantes, he does not ridicule his hallucinations, but shows how honestly he believed that he was right, and was willing to be a martyr to what he felt was a holy cause. He fills the reader with pity rather than scorn. The volume will be illustrated with portraits. The translator of the two concluding volumes of Von Sybel is Mrs. Helene Schimmelfennig White.—Book-seller, Newsdealer and Stationer.

A NEW EDITION OF PARKMAN.

Little, Brown & Co., of Boston, are arranging to publish a new edition of Francis Parkman's histories of early Canada. It will be published in 20 volumes, illustrated with dozens of rare portraits taken from paintings and engravings. An "edition de luxe" will also be issued containing four colored reproductions made by Goupil. This new edition of Parkman will find many purchasers in Canada.