

MOST EXPENSIVE WALL PAPER.

What is believed to be the most expensively papered room in the world is an apartment in the residence of Charles Whitfield King, of Ipswich, England. It is papered with unused postage stamps with a face value of \$4,000 and an actual commercial value of about \$25,000.

Mr. King is a dealer in postage stamps at Ipswich, having begun to collect stamps when but a lad thirteen years old. His business has grown to such proportions that it is declared he is able from his stock of 300,000,000 to supply at a single order twenty tons of stamps.

For many years Mr. King devoted considerable time to the culture of orchids, having at one time over 1500 rare specimens. Then he turned his attention to calla lilies, crossing many species and developing some most wonderful varieties.

It is in his country home, "Morpeth," that his most unique conception in the form of a room papered with unused postage stamps is to be found. China covered with stamps and rooms papered with used stamps are not unknown, although quite rare, but Mr. King's library is the only apartment on earth decorated with stamps never used for postage.

The room is about fifteen feet square and of the usual height. The stamps extend from floor to ceiling, forming even the border. The work of transferring the stamps to the walls occupied the time of an expert decorator eleven hours each day for nearly 100 days. Approximately 50,000 stamps were used, their being forty-eight varieties and many denominations. The stamps were not merely stuck on the walls in blocks or strips with only the purpose in view of covering up the white walls, but according to plans and designs worked out by Mr. King, were arranged with a view to producing an artistic and pleasing effect.

Most beautiful and elaborate designs of an imitation mosaic have been produced by the employment of stamps of certain colors, which, remembering the fineness of the designs and engravings and the delicacy of the shadings, have produced a result exquisitely beyond the power of words to adequately portray.

Some idea of the beauty of a wall wrought in bright stamps, each a type of the highest skill of the engraver, may be obtained by an inspection of the frames showing samples of stamps and United States paper money in the Treasury building in Washington. These two frames are divided into panels produced by the arrangement of revenue and postage stamps fresh from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

The stamps used by Mr. King in the decoration of his library were from the Argentine Republic, Samoa, Bergedorf, Lubeck, Hanover, Servia, Cuba, Roman States, Philippines, Alsace and Lorraine, and the United Kingdom. Of the famous stamps of the Roman States, with the crossed keys and tiara, emblematic of the authority of the Pope of Rome, which are of wonderfully brilliant coloring, no less than 13,000 copies were used.

The actual face value of the stamps, \$4,000, represents only a fraction of the commercial value of the stamps. Many of them are worth ten times their face value, having become rare since they were pasted on the walls fourteen years ago, and it is conservatively estimated that the stamps on the walls, if removed and placed in saleable condition, would net the owner the tidy sum of \$25,000. If Mr. King would weary of his costly decorations, and desire to convert his expensive wall-paper into cash, he would find himself possessed of a comfortable fortune by reason of the fact that his "philatelic" treasures have been where he could not sell them. Thus is presented the curious spectacle of the most beautifully decorated room in the world, adding annually to the wealth of the owner through the increasing rarity of the paper of which the decorations are composed.

This is, perhaps, no more surprising than the statement of stamp collectors that a person may accumulate a collection of stamps during the year 1907, lay it away and forget it, and in 1915, and probably in 1912, it will have doubled in value; in fact, it is not infrequent for stamps to quadruple in value in a single year, and a decline in value is almost unheard of. A shrewd financier of New York who has followed stamp collecting as a recreation since boyhood, declares that stamps are a better investment, to say nothing of the pleasure of collecting, than diamonds of equal value.—Wall Paper News and Interior Decorator.

A WATER MAIN PRESSURE SCRAPER.

An unique invention, in the shape of a water main pressure scraper, employed by many British municipalities, is being sent from Scotland to Victoria, B.C., and will shortly be used in that city for the removal of extraneous matter from the 12-inch main, which has been laid for more than 30 years. The machine consists of two distinct portions connected by a swivel joint, the front portion carrying the steel scrapers, and the rear the wrought iron or steel propelling pistons. The latter are somewhat smaller in diameter than the bore of the pipe, for the pistons will not cut the cor-

rosion and the water must be allowed to pass them. Leather discs intersected by radial cuts, and stiffened at the back by lead plates, are placed behind each piston. The springs, with steel cutting edges, are arranged in two sets of four each, the set behind breaking joint with that in front, so as to effectively scrape the whole internal circumference of the pipe. The cutting edges are set in such a way that, should the scraper encounter anything in the shape of a projection, such as a ferrule screwed into a pipe, the whole machine will slew or turn round, and thus pass the obstruction without getting blocked; while the leather packings behind the pistons will fold back and pass any obstruction that can be passed by the pistons themselves.

NOTES.

It is reported that the Mitchell Electric & Machinery Company, of Winnipeg, have assigned to James Sinclair.

Mr. E. H. Keating and Mr. Wm. H. Breithaupt have announced the formation of an engineering partnership under the name of Keating & Breithaupt, with offices in the Aberdeen Chambers, Victoria street, Toronto. They will carry on business as civil engineers, taking up all branches of railway and municipal work, power developments, bridges, etc.

The Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto Electric Railway Company have achieved a triumph in the line of railway construction by building, at Merriton, Ont., a cement bridge capable of sustaining 350,000 pounds to the square foot. 1,500 yards of cement were used, and 58 steel rods, 1½ inches thick, were employed for re-inforcement. It is claimed that the Merriton bridge is the only one of its kind in this country.

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