

### A HAPPY EVENT.

Presentation and Dinner to Mr. F. C. Skelton by the  
Employees of Skelton Bros. & Co.

It was indeed a very happy gathering that assembled at the Queen's Hotel, Montreal, on Thursday evening, the 22nd Feb., to celebrate the opening of the handsome new factory recently erected by Skelton Bros. & Co., the well-known shirt and collar manufacturers, on the corner of Duke and William streets. The employees of the firm decided to mark the event by tendering to their respected head, Mr. F. Chas. Skelton, a presentation and a dinner, which took place as above mentioned.

The dinner was served in the usual first-class style of the Queen's Hotel and reflected great credit on the cuisine of that deservedly popular establishment.

The chair was taken at 8.30 p.m. by Mr. W. A. Brown, the manager of the firm, and on his right sat the guest of the evening. The vice-chair was ably filled by Mr. W. G. C. Lanskill, the firm's cashier, and a very large number of the employees gathered round the festive board.

After ample justice had been done to the good things provided to refresh the inner man, the chairman proposed the time honored toast of "The Queen," which was loyally drunk and the National Anthem sung.

Letters and telegrams were read from two of the firm's leading and most popular travelers—Mr. Jos. O'Hara and Mr. J. J. Doran—the former who represents the firm in Western Ontario, and the latter in Manitoba and British Columbia, expressing regret at their unavoidable absence and best wishes for a happy evening and great success to the new factory.

Mr. Brown then rose and read a beautifully illuminated address to Mr. Skelton, signed by the employees, congratulating him on his success in the past and hoping for increased success in the future, and expressing the hope that for many years to come he would continue to direct the important work in which he had been so long engaged. He then presented him with three very handsome chairs for his private office. Miss Wheeler presented a basket of beautiful roses to Mrs. Skelton.

The chairman then called upon Mr. Walter Radford to propose the toast of "The Firm," which that gentleman did in a neat speech, calling attention to the long and honorable career of the oldest shirt and collar house in Canada, and urging each and every employee in his various station to do his work honestly and well, thus insuring increased success to the firm they all esteemed so highly.

Mr. Skelton replied as follows:

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I do not know how I can express the deep emotion I feel and the sense of gratification at the manner in which you have proposed the toast of the firm, and the dinner arranged for my entertainment. I thank you for the valuable and handsome furniture you have bestowed upon me for my office, for the illuminated address and for this beautiful gift of flowers which I am to take to Mrs. Skelton. But, beyond the value which I place on these things, valuable and beautiful in themselves as they are, I appreciate far more highly the kindly feelings which they are intended to express, and I only regret that Mrs. Skelton is not

able to be present to-night to share your hospitality along with me. She has recently suffered deep bereavement, and I know you will understand this is a sufficient reason why she cannot attend this brilliant function.

"Now, I will not attempt to make a speech to you. I am not accustomed to expressing myself in this way, and I do not think you will expect very much from me in that way. The art of speechifying is only to be cultivated, like all other things, by definite thought followed by frequent practice. It is not one of my accomplishments, and the gift of tongues does not seem to have fallen upon me, but I would like to tell you in a plain, simple way how much I appreciate your kindness towards me and the pleasure it gives me to see expressed what I have always known to exist, the sense of comradeship among the employees. It is a very proud moment in my life to be here to-night receiving this testimony of your regard, although in my heart I do not feel really I am worthy of it. However, if you think differently, I accept it in the same spirit, and take more pleasure from it than perhaps you can conceive. On this occasion, when we are just entering a large, new factory, filled with new machinery and very many modern appliances, I would like to pause for one moment and go back in retrospect a little over a quarter of a century to the time when our business was started; for you know it is beyond the quarter century mark since we first began to make shirts, and, during all that period, the constant effort has been towards advancement and improvement, and that we have to-day a large and prosperous business in our hands, is due to that one idea predominating all connected with this business, each striving towards progress and improvement. That this concern is in existence to-day is not originally due to thought of mine, but rather to that of my brother, Mr. Leslie Skelton, who has not, however, been for many years in any way connected with the firm owing to the condition of his health. But in the early days of this concern, during the dangers and difficulties of establishment, among the rocks and shoals of a pioneer path, it was his hand that guided and his wisdom that directed the affairs of the firm. Of late years the direction has devolved upon me, and I would like to say now that whatever measure of success has attended this firm of late years I attribute largely to the energy, diligence and wise counsel of the friends I see around me to-night and other members of the staff, who, although not actually present at the moment, are represented by you.

"The manner in which our move from the old to the present factory has been carried out is an immediate instance of this which must be present to the minds of us all. It has been a hard and trying task, taxing the courage and endurance of all connected with the business, and that we have got the work done so well, so quickly and so thoroughly justifies me in saying to-night that the staff who operate this large factory are the equal of anything on the continent of America. Before work was stopped in the old factory and prior to the moving of a single machine, everything was carefully planned and thought out to its conclusion. It was arranged by whom each machine should be moved as well as how and when. It was carefully set down what the exact location of each machine should be in the new factory. Hands were detailed to have all moved from the old, and others to receive everything as it arrived at the new. By this system each one knew his duty down to the youngest junior, so, when the "great trek" began, everything having been carefully committed to paper and each day's work decided upon in advance, no unnecessary delay occurred and each one knew what he ought to do. I think Mr. Brown, to whom we all owe so much during this rather