

WALL PAPER AND DECORATIONS.

HISTORY OF AN ENTERPRISING WALL PAPER CONCERN.

IN the marked development of the wall paper trade of Canada during recent years, the well-known manufacturers, The Watson Foster Co., Limited, of Montreal, have been an all important factor.

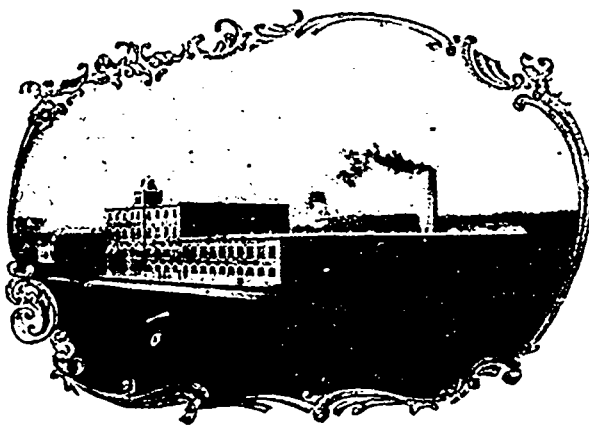
Less than twenty years ago this business was established by the late Mr. J. C. Watson, in partnership with Mr. Colin McArthur, under firm style of Watson & McArthur, which firm existed until 1884, when the partnership was dissolved, Mr. Watson continuing the business. At this time Mr. Watson had very little experience in the manufacture of wall papers, but it was not difficult for one with such business ability as his to quickly recognize the all important matter of securing first-class workmen to supply the practical knowledge which he lacked, and, with the assistance of Mr. F. Stuart Foster as manager, laid the foundation of the present large business.

In 1891, Mr. Hugh Watson, brother of the late Mr. J. C. Watson, and Mr. F. S. Foster, were admitted as partners, the firm being then known as J. C. Watson & Co., and under this title continued operations until 1894, when Mr. J. C. Watson retired, Mr. H. Watson and Mr. F. S. Foster continuing the business under the style of Watson, Foster & Co., and three years later this was formed into a joint stock company, under the present name, the directors being Mr. H. Watson, president, Mr. F. S. Foster, vice-president and managing-director, and Mr. S. S. Boxer. The latter had been for many years engaged with the old and well-known crockery firm of John Watson & Co., and when this business was disposed of in 1889 he continued with his old employers in the wall paper factory. Under the management of these three gentlemen the business has rapidly developed, as it naturally would, owing to the thorough knowledge they have of the business in all its details, and, what is most important, the requirements of the country in their particular line. When this business was first established (in 1880) the country's supply of wall paper was largely monopolized by American manufacturers. To-day, the company claim that their output more than equals 50 per

cent. of the wall paper used in Canada, including imported goods.

The expansion of business necessitated larger premises, and, about a year ago, the company erected on the corner of Pius IX. avenue and Ontario street, Montreal, a large factory and warehouse covering an area of 328 by 216 feet.

The latest improved printing plant was introduced, and the factory now ranks as one of the largest and most completely equipped establishments in the world. The Watson, Foster Co. thus having facilities for manufacturing more largely than the requirements of Canada demanded, turned their attention to foreign trade, and in this they have been equally successful, their



FACTORY OF THE WATSON, FOSTER CO., LIMITED, MONTREAL.

goods now being found in many markets of the world, including that of the United States, their strongest competitor.

There is no more popular concern in any line of business in Canada than this company, the directors thoroughly recognizing that the interests of the company and their customers are identical, and ever working in sympathy with their patrons. This is one of the features to which the company attributes their success.

To overcome the prejudice for American goods was at first a difficult matter, and to this end special lines of goods preeminently suited for the Canadian trade were introduced, and a noticeable resultant peculiarity is that all dealers who are exclusively handling the Watson, Foster Co.'s goods, in preference to foreign, have largely increased their business in a very short time. This is believed to be not only due to the superiority of the goods, but to the unvarying encouragement and assistance given those dealers by the company to extend their

business. The popularity of Canadian wall papers is now established beyond a doubt, and the skill and taste of this company have been strong factors in this condition of things.

An enviable reputation like that attained by the Watson, Foster Co. is not easily built up. It requires perseverance, hard work, unceasing activity, great enterprise, and long experience, and, above all, shrewd management. With all these still in undiminished force there is every prospect of still greater achievements and of the continued prosperity of the company being more and more appreciably felt, not only by its stockholders, but by the trade at large, and in a lesser degree by the city in which their busy works are established.

RICH COLORINGS A FEATURE.

Messrs. Colin McArthur & Co. have almost completed their samples for the season of 1898-99. They include many new designs and color combinations and are better and more extensive than last year's range. The special features are the dark, rich colors which prevail. Strikingly blended color effects in friezes are worth noting, while an entirely new range of ingrained shades, with special friezes to match, should be seen by everyone in the trade.

The firm's representatives will start on their regular routes some time this month.

THE U.S. WALL PAPER MEN.

The scheme to consolidate the wall paper interests of the United States has been abandoned, for the time being anyway. There appears to have been some friction between the official entrusted with the National Wall Paper Co.'s interests and the representative of the independent companies, which ended by negotiations being broken off. In many ways this is to be regretted, because the Canadian makers cannot obtain a fair price for good work so long as the present keen competition and ruinous cutting continues on the other side of the line.

SELECT GOOD STOCKS.

BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER has it on the authority of a wall paper traveler who has been on the road for over 15 years, that the trade do not, as a rule, select wall paper properly. "If the color effect pleases them," said he, "they buy, without reference to the quality and finish of the printing. This is a most important point, and dealers can't hope to satisfy customers who