

Some British Bookmakers.

WILLIAM COLLINS, SONS & CO. (LIMITED).

FEW of the great industries of our country have had a more rapid and successful development during the last half century than those identified with the printing and stationery trades, and towards the marvellous growth of these useful branches of industry perhaps no firm in the Kingdom has contributed in a more eminent degree than that of William Collins, Sons & Co. (Limited), which was founded in the year 1820 by Mr. William Collins, father of the present head of the firm, Sir William Collins.

Mr. Collins was not only a shrewd man of business, but possessed of remarkable natural and acquired ability, who, in spite of considerable business pressure, devoted much of his time and talents to the promotion of temperance and other philanthropic movements for the elevation of the masses. Hence, at a comparatively early age, his son, who had become, so to speak, his father's right hand, was led to take the practical management of the growing concern, which at first confined its operations to the work of a printing and publishing firm, issuing from their press the works of Dr. Chalmers, Merle D'Aubigny, and other noted authors. On the abolition of the Bible monopoly, in 1839, the publication of Bibles was added to the business, and the firm have since issued the Scriptures in fully twenty different sizes and types.

In 1843 the department of manufacturing stationery was added to the other branches, and has now become of the first importance in the firm's extensive business, for so rapidly did this branch develop that, during the first fifteen years after the firm added it to the business of the house, they found it necessary to remove six times to larger premises.

After the death of Mr. Collins, sen., his son carried on the business alone, but after 1865 other partners were included. The rapid progress of the business, however, led to another change in 1880, when the firm was converted into a limited company, under its present style and title, with a capital of nearly a quarter of a million, but none of the shares were offered to the public.

Although, during all these years, Sir William Collins has been the active managing head of the concern—which employs 1,700 workers in its various departments—he has, like his honoured father, taken a deep interest in all public questions that affect the social and moral welfare of the people. After being unanimously returned as a member of the Town Council of Glasgow, he was, in 1873, raised to the Magistracy; in 1877 he was elected by the Council to the honourable position of Lord Provost of his native city, and a year after his retirement from that high office, had the honour of Knighthood conferred upon him by Her Majesty at Holyrood Palace. Among the numerous public offices Sir William at present holds are those of President of the Scottish Temperance League, and member of the School Board of Glasgow; he was



SIR WILLIAM COLLINS.

also one of the most active promoters of the Glasgow International Exhibition.

The Herriot-hill Works are situated in one of the busiest and most populous industrial districts of the "second city of the Empire." The principal entrance is in Stirling-road, and the spacious and well-arranged warehouses of the establishment are in this part of the buildings. On the ground-floor to the left is the show-room, where customers are enabled at a glance to select the class and quality of goods they desire.

The extensive home despatch departments are arranged along the entire front of the buildings to the right of the main entrance, and the export department is situated in another part, towards St. James'-road. The warehouse proper, which comprises two series of galleries, contains stocks of every variety of commercial and general stationery, and all kinds of school and account books in every style of binding.

On the next floor is the Bible department, where family, teachers', and pocket Bibles, Psalm and Prayer Books are to be obtained in every variety of style and material. In the next gallery is the fancy stationery and leather goods department, where albums, purses, wallets, writing portfolios, menu, birthday, and other cards, and diaries abound. A series of the latter, issued by the firm, are made of the well-known sight-preserving paper, sea-green in tint, which is recommended by the medical profession as being less hurtful to the eyes than the white paper in ordinary use.

Immediately adjoining the despatch departments, on the basement floor, are the paper stores, which occupy an area of fully 1,500 square yards, and in which are huge piles of all qualities, colours, and sizes of papers, suitable for all the requirements of the firm. A large portion of these are made at the extensive mills owned by Sir William Collins.

The manufacturing departments may be divided into three principal sections—the letterpress, stationery, and envelope factory, and by the courtesy of Mr. William Black, who conducted us through the mazes of the enormous building, we were able to judge of the extent of the firm's productions. In connexion with the letterpress department there is a printing office, fitted up with the most approved machines; the composing room, and stereotyping and electrotyping foundry, besides machine rooms where a large part of their machinery is made and all repairs executed. Close by, the various branches of lithographing are executed by steam machines, which are kept in constant work producing head-line copy books, drawing books, maps, etc.

In a large building, to the south of the printing office, the folding, collating, sewing, and pressing are carried on, and in another lofty block, between the printing department and the warehouses, the various branches of stationery and letterpress binding find ample accommodation. Here the ruling, paging and numbering machines may be counted by the score, and thousands of quires are stacked up ready ruled to be made up into books. In almost each branch of the work there are two separate shops—sometimes more—for wholesale and order work, and every branch, even to the smallest details, is done in doors; "We send nothing out," said Mr. Black, "if it pays other people to do it, it will pay us." In the Bible department we noticed a new patent machine for indexing Bibles. It is worked by girls, who fan out the fore-edge, and having separated the leaves of one of the books, those leaves are placed under the machine, a lever touched by the foot, and down comes a stamp like the hammer of a pianoforte; printing Gen. for Genesis, or some other abbreviated name, till the whole fore-edge contains a handy index to the contents of the Bible. In the binding department

about 800 women and girls and 400 men and boys form the usual staff of a still growing business, and the buildings have lately been enlarged to give scope for the employment of more workpeople.

The envelope factory is situated at Provanside, to the west of Herriot-hill, where several millions of envelopes are turned out weekly.

Whilst the firm may be said to have their largest premises in Glasgow, the London house is by no means a small establishment, and there are other branches in Sydney, Melbourne, and Auckland. About twenty travellers are constantly engaged traversing the United Kingdom, and there is not a town or village where their products are not known; besides which the firm does a very extensive trade in Canada, India, America, and the Australian colonies by their direct representatives.

Russia Bands.



LARGE account books obtain the greatest possible degree of strength by affixing Russia bands to them. These bands are termed "single" when they extend about half-way down the sides, and "double" when those at the head and tail reach to the corners of the boards and are turned over the edges in the same manner as the cover. For "single" bands, according to the old-fashioned method, the workman used to measure the length of the book at the back, and then, by the aid of compasses, divide the whole into seven equal parts or spaces. He then cut three pieces of russia leather perfectly even at the edges, and of the exact size of the spaces they were intended to occupy, and pasted them on the second, fourth, and sixth divisions of the back, thereby leaving in sight the first, third, fifth, and seventh spaces of the vellum cover. He then drew the bands squarely on the sides and placed the volume in the press, fixing rods down the length of the book in order to force the russia into the joints. It was then left to dry under pressure.

When "double" bands were ordered, the back was divided into five spaces, or seven if four bands were needed. The middle band or bands were cut shorter than those at top or bottom, and pasted down in the same way as before described. The long band at head and tail were pared at the edges so as to enable them the more easily to be turned in at the head-bands and over the sides of the boards at the same time as the corners. The edges were cut the same way as the covering, and the adjustment of the rods and the pressing followed as a matter of course.

A binder of reputation recommends dividing the book into nineteen equal spaces, two of these (at top and bottom) be allotted to the long bands and three each to the short ones and the open spaces. The width of the book should be divided into seventeen equal spaces, giving six of these divisions as the size of the short bands. If the book has russia ends only, he recommends dividing the length of the book into six equal parts, and giving one-sixth at top and bottom for the end bands, leaving four-sixths for the centre. This gives greater uniformity and can be adapted to any size account book.—*American Bookmaker.*