

OPENING OF THE "C.R." SANITARY LAUNDRY.

A GOOD SEND OFF.

It was only to be expected that the directors of the "C. R." Laundry Company, Ltd., whose methods are characterised by up-to-date ideas, should celebrate the opening of their new laundry in a manner befitting the occasion. Wednesday was the day decided upon for the opening to take place, and at two o'clock a number of friends attended at the Holborn Restaurant at the invitation of the chairman and directors, to take part in the inaugural luncheon. Amongst those present we noticed Mr. F. Litchfield, deputy-chairman, who presided in the unavoidable absence of the chairman of the company, Mr. S. Hayward and Mr. Smith, directors, Mr. C. J. Robbins, managing director, Mr. Blake P. Allnatt, secretary, Mr. Taylor, consulting engineer, Mr. Dixon, representing the engineers, Mr. Davey, representing the builders, Rev. W. Burgess, and a number of other ladies and gentlemen. The excellence which is attained at this celebrated restaurant is well known, and we have only to add that the menu provided on this occasion was lacking in nothing that was essential to the enjoyment of the guests and the success of the gathering. Luncheon being over, the toast list was commenced.

The toast of his Majesty the King and Queen Alexandra and the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York were given by the chairman, and were enthusiastically received by those present.

The toast of the afternoon, "Success to the Sanitary Laundry," was given by the Rev. W. Burgess. He did not know why he had been chosen to propose this toast. He had not in the course of his ministry had much to do with laundries, though he had seen laundries of sorts, certainly, from the sharp and pointed washing stone which sufficed in the East End to the elaborate machinery which had been prepared to do the work at Green Lanes. He did not know why there should be such an air of mystery thrown about a laundry, unless it was calculated to draw the attention of the community. He fancied that was what their friends had in view in connection with this laundry. He had been very much questioned, and had tried to ferret out the meaning of this "C. R." He knew what a laundry was and what a sanitary laundry was, but was at a loss to explain what a "C. R." Sanitary Laundry meant. No doubt people thought this was some new development in scientific research, and believed that if they sent their linen to this place it would come back in such a way it was not possible from any ordinary place. He had no financial interest in the laundry as a reason for proposing success to it, though he intended to be a constituent. There was one thing gentlemen in the neighbourhood would be glad to know, and that was that they would have no trouble with their collars and cuffs. If there was anything calculated to disturb the patience of ever, a job it was a collapsible collar—(laughter)—or cuffs that became out of shape before they should do. He certainly disliked this laundry, the completest success, because his own patience and comfort would be affected if there should be any want of success in the outcome of this machinery. But he was sure there was nothing of that to forecast so far as this laundry was concerned.

He had known the managing director for some time, and knew he had a good deal of faith in the laundry. The speaker had inspected the machinery, and was certain that if the linen went through it all, and was not what it ought to be when it came out, it was the fault of the linen, and not of the machinery. Everybody could be certain that linen sent to this laundry would come back perfect, and all hung on this mysterious "C. R." That was the secret of the success, and he had pleasure in asking them to receive the toast of success to this mysterious organisation.

The toast was received with great enthusiasm.

Mr. Robbins responded, and said if there was any mystery about this "C.R." he could possibly explain. It meant that in time to come it would develop and raise the standard even of the good work that had been done in the laundry business in London. He said the arranging of the affairs of this laundry had caused him many an anxious half-hour, but it was a great joy to him to know that the laundry had been completed, and it would give him great pleasure to work in the future. He had to thank the directors for their uniform kindness to him, for they had treated him very well since the commencement of the laundry about a year ago. He had seen several laundry companies start from time to time. They usually looked around for their information, and having found it, they commenced the laundry. When it was completed, the next step was to find a man to work it, and it sometimes happened the man they chose was not used to the particular system, the directors in their wisdom put in, with the result that disaster, and sometimes financial loss followed. But this Company went to work differently. They first found their managing director, and then they supported him in all he suggested, and that was how they secured what they believed would be a success. The chairman, a well-known Reading man, had rendered valuable service on the Board, and their vice-chairman was also a splendid man of business. It was seldom a company possessed a professional gentleman of such high standing as they had managed to secure in the person of the secretary. They had been fortunate in securing such an able consulting engineer as Mr. Taylor.

He concluded by again thanking them so kindly receiving the toast.

Rev. W. Burgess, asked that the "C.R." mystery might be solved.

Mr. Robbins said, many people thought "C.R." was his initials, but was not so. Originally the Chairman and himself intended to run the laundry as a joint effort, but eventually decided it would be better to get their friends to help them. Then the question of a name cropped up, and Mr. Collins suggested it should be called the "C.R."—Collins and Robbins—and that was agreed upon, and would remain the name until the end of the chapter.

Mr. Taylor then gave the toast of the chairman, vice-chairman, director, and secretary. He said they had all done their duty like good business men.

The vice-chairman having responded, the proceedings terminated, and the party left to enter the special conveyances that were in waiting to drive them to the Laundry to assist at the

OPENING CEREMONY.

At the laundry there were a number of ladies and gentlemen in waiting, including the chairman, Mr. Collins, and Mrs. Collins, C. W. Jubb, J.P., and Mrs. Jubb, Councillor Rand and Mrs. Rand, Councillor Crowe, Rev. H. Wase Whitfield, and Mrs. Whitfield and others.

A silver key having been presented to Mrs. Collins, she then proceeded to unlock the door at the same time wishing the Company every possible success.

Arrived inside, a few remarks were addressed to the assembly by the chairman. He said they may consider they started on their career as a laundry from that moment. He also alluded to the mystic initials and said, one lady wanted to know if it meant to "cleanse and rub," whilst another suggested it was to "cleanse and repair."

It was hardly the function of a laundry to repair, he thought. He then explained the meaning of the initials in the same way Mr. Robbins had done earlier in the afternoon. He remarked that the directors had put into the building the most recent inventions in laundry machinery, which effected a saving of fuel as well as labour. The time was not far distant when the Company's name would be synonymous with uprightness, integrity, strict attention to the collection and delivery as well as for good work. They intended to make the place foremost amongst the laundry industry in the country. In inspecting the building they would see the thought and care bestowed on the employees, by the provision of a handsome dining room, in which those who had long distances to go to meals, could, if they preferred, have their meals in decency. The sanitary conditions at the laundry, were as perfect as possible. This was not the case with some of the smaller laundries, and because the "C. R." Laundry was carried on under the most approved sanitary conditions, they had a right to expect success.

The Chairman then left the visitors in the charge of Mr. Robbins, under whose guidance a tour of inspection was commenced, and considerable interest was manifested in the working of the wonderful machinery which has been installed.

After having closely inspected the works, the party again assembled in the entrance hall, and after a speech by Mr. Robbins similar in detail to that delivered at the luncheon, votes of thank were passed to the architect and consulting engineer, Mr. Taylor, the builders, Messrs. Davey and Co., and to the visitors.

The Rev. H. Wase Whitfield, as vicar of the parish, replied to the last vote, and said he was certain they were all very much impressed with all they had seen that afternoon, and would be ready to support the directors. He should do his best, and felt certain that the predictions of success would be realised.

So great is the public interest in this new laundry that a description of the building will, we feel, be highly appreciated.

THE LAUNDRY.

As a rule the middle classes are wont to consider washing at home a domestic discomfort, only to be undertaken from an unavoidable pressure of circumstances, at all events as far as the dwellers in populous districts are concerned; and from time immemorial poets and poetesses, not to proud to select humble themes for the subject of their muse, have decanted on the miseries of washing-day, to which "nor peace belongs, nor comfort," according to their showing—hence the comparatively modern institution "The Laundry." For long, and, in too many cases, even until this day, laundries were and are characterised by terribly insanitary conditions and together incompatible with cleanliness and wholesomeness. A small dwelling house with low ceilings was partially utilised, and the back-yard was, and is the drying-ground, or some upper room where the ironers are, and utilised for this purpose in wet weather, and what with the ventilated rooms, steam everywhere, and drains emitting noxious smells, the place reeks of an atmosphere with which the washed clothes could not fail to be permeated—thus carrying disease and oftentimes death. That such places still abound "pity is 'tis true." Of recent years efforts have been made to remove this danger by the erection of laundries specially erected for the purpose, and of these, the most recent in our midst is the "C.R." Sanitary Laundry, 594, Green Lanes, Haringey. It has been erected on a large plot of land in extent, and is open front and back—four square to all the winds that blow. The building is substantially built, and the foundations have been laid with a view to bearing another storey when that becomes necessary—the roof of the building at present, which would become the floor of the additional storey being fire-proof. The surroundings of the "C.R." Laundry prepossess one in its favour. The front entrance in the centre is laid with concrete, covered with an extensive cement and on either side is an extensive plot which is in course of being laid out in grass and shrubs. Entering the building, one is struck with the excellence of the light and the order which has been observed in planning the various machines. Those who have been to the Laundry Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, will observe that the "C.R." Laundry is fitted up with the most modern and up-to-date machinery in every particular form, and that it will be sure to turn out the work in the best possible style and finish. The hall in which the laundry machinery is placed, is 110 feet by 60 feet. To the left on entering is the Sorting Room. Here, the linen and other goods are assorted and marked so that no confusion can arise as to goods going to wrong addresses. Thence they are taken to the cylindrical washing machines, of which there are two large ones, so constructed that the perforations have no edges—thus ensuring that the clothes will not suffer from friction. It should be mentioned here that the Soap and Soda tanks are very ingeniously contrived and the water in these is heated by steam which brings the contents to boiling point. From the washing machines the clothes are taken to a hydro-extractor, where the water is drawn from them—indeed, they could if necessary, be made by this extractor as dry as a bone. Thence the clothes are taken to a machine appropriately called a "Tumbler," where they are shaken loose and each garment separated. The "wash" is then placed in the Drying Room where there are nine drying horses which draw out on rails. There is not in London such another drying

room. There passes through this chamber every minute 10,000 cubic feet of air 140 degrees in heat, drawn through tubes which are heated by the waste gases in the boiler flues, by means of fans in the engine room. There is another drying-room specially for shirts and collars, which is known as "Braithwaite's special drying room," and it can be heated up to 250 degrees. The shirt and collar starch Cookers are heated by steam, and the collar starching machine is both ingenious and interesting—the starch is kept boiling by steam, and the simplicity of the automatic arrangement is wonderful. The shirt front starcher and the wrist starcher, are ingenious contrivances, yet, they are in operation simplicity itself. The starched goods are taken to one of the drying rooms, thence to a damping machine, where the linen passes between two rollers, the under one revolving in a water tank. From this they are passed through a steam press, then taken to their respective ironing machines where the irons are all heated by gas. It would be difficult to convey an idea of those ironing machines; suffice it to say that the work they turn out is simply perfect, and the saving of labour is remarkable. One of those machines we particularly observed—it is used for ironing the bodies of shirts, the movement of the iron may be termed universal as it can be turned in every direction, and as the iron is always hot a shirt body is ironed in a few seconds. The collar cuffs for stand-up and turn-down collars, is an ingenious and effective contrivance. There are special machines for plain ironing, such as aprons, servants' dresses and body linen, and Taylor's patent calendar for table cloths after being starched, would greatly please good housewives, as the fine gloss and finish are remarkable. This is reckoned the best Napier finishing machine in the trade. The Decolour machine for sheets, towels and rubbers is most effective in its operation and such is the manner in which it works, it will arrest the attention of the visitor. Lace curtains are also done on this machine, and the custom of stretching is unnecessary—so that they are subjected to no strain whatever. The goffering machines for doing frills, laces, etc., so as to finish off certain garments are ingenious, and it is wonderful how expeditiously the work is done. There is a variety of laundry work which has to be ironed by hand, and to do this there are two tables, each about 40 feet in length, and all the irons used there are heated by gas. To drive all this machinery there is a centre shaft connected with the engine, and another shaft on each side driven by carrying belts. A most important feature in the "C.R." Laundry, is the mechanical ventilation which is driven by Blackman's ventilating fan, which is fixed in the roof and driven by the main shaft. By this means the steam is instantly drawn up and a wholesome atmosphere is maintained. In the engine room, is a Robey compound horizontal 12 h.p. engine. In the boiler room is a large Lancashire boiler, 27 feet by 8 feet diameter, and its working pressure will be 120 lbs. to the square inch. It is fitted with Allen's patent fire bars. Adjoining this is the installation room, where there is an auxiliary gas engine which drives the dynamo. The two engines are so fixed that should one for any reason be stopped, the other can do the whole work of driving the laundry machinery and the dynamo. In this room the fan is fitted up which passes the heated air into the drying room, and the high speed gives the best hygienic drying possible. There are over 100 electric lights in the large hall alone, while in front is a 500 c.p. light, and at the back is one of 100 c.p. to light the yard, and should anything go wrong, there is a gas lamp of 150 candle power.

With great consideration for the workers, a dining room has been fitted up 24 feet by 15, fitted with gas cooker, steam kettle, tables, chairs and all requisite dishes. Round this room will be lookers where the girls can put their victuals, and underneath they will be pegs on which to hang their hats and wandles. This is a spacious well ventilated and furnished room, which will add greatly to the comfort of the workers. The stabling and harness room are models of what such places should be. Close by is the shaft, which is conspicuous from far and near. It is 80 feet in height from the ground line. On the roof are the tanks and an economiser which takes the exhaust steam from the engine which boils the water used in the washing machines—it also feeds the boiler so that the water being warm, fuel is saved.

This Laundry was erected to plans prepared by Mr. E. Taylor, consulting engineer, of Tollington Park, N., and under the supervision of Mr. C. J. Robbins, the managing director. The "C.R." Laundry is evidently the outcome of great care and a knowledge begotten of long experience. Mr. Robbins served his apprenticeship as an engineer and having commenced business as an engineer, he turned his attention to Laundry trade, which was then in its infancy. Pursuing this further he made it his special study, and subsequently undertook the management of laundries in several parts of the country. He has thus a practical knowledge, unique in this trade and this accounts for the excellence of the arrangements of the "C.R." Laundry, which is the outcome of the efforts of two first class laundry experts—Messrs. Taylor and Robbins. This Laundry will be opened to-day, and we venture to predict for it great success as it supplies a felt want in a rapidly growing neighbourhood.