

ANDREW MATHER AND CO.**EXTENSIVE ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS.**

Hobartians have long been familiar with the old and honourable name of Mather. First came Mr. Robert Andrew Mather, then the citizens became familiar with Messrs. Robert and Thomas B. Mather, his sons. Each of them has stood before his fellow-citizens as "a Bayard, without fear and without reproach," yet ever enterprising and progressive, displaying also a benevolent disposition. This is a great deal to say in these *fin de siècle*, degenerate days in many phases of trade, but of the Mather's it can be said, with truth, and without its being characterised as either the "puff direct" or the "puff oblique." It is also gratifying to note that with long and honourable dealing the business in Liverpool-street has gradually increased in dimensions. It was established by Mr. Robert Andrew Mather in 1849, and is now carried on under the old style of Andrew Mather & Co. by Mr. Robert Mather and Mr. W. B. Scott. Mr. Scott was taken into partnership some three years ago, and steadily, as the concern has developed, additions have been made to the length and breadth of the premises, and to the quantity and variety of goods stocked and dealt in. Lately further extensions have been made. The cart road at the side which used to form a right-of-way between the shop and the Bible Depot has been taken in, thereby extending the width of the shop and the fine plate-glass window to the right of the entrance, very considerably. This alteration has also permitted of an apartment being furnished as a front shop office, whilst the counting-house is relegated to the rear of the building. The shop properly so called, into which the customers enter from the street, has been so much increased in size that it now undoubtedly forms the largest and most imposing drapery saloon (if one may use the term) in Hobart, being 144ft. long by 48ft. wide, and when lighted up after nightfall, with its lengthy vista of lights, one is reminded of the interiors of some of the magnificent drapery establishments in London, Manchester, Birmingham, and other large towns in the old country. Such a draper's shop is certainly a credit to Hobart, and stimulates one to say *Floriat Hobartia!* No other line of business so well lends itself to artistic colouring, arrangement and effect as that of the general draper, and when well ordered, with all the gay colours and gradations of colour, and all kinds of dress materials, diaphanous goods, ribbons, trills, and a hundred and one other pretty things are disposed in bright array, and with a good eye to the best effect, and the whole illuminated with long lines of brilliant lights, it is a veritable cave of Aladdin in "soft goods."

The alterations now made at the establishment under notice, in addition to giving increased room for displays of drapery, millinery, mantles, and other goods, in great variety, permit of new fitting rooms with a waiting room *en suite* being arranged and furnished on the first floor. One of the fitting rooms is so constructed that the greatest possible amount of sunlight can be obtained in the apartment by the aid of skylights, whilst it may also be so darkened in the middle of the day as to permit of ladies seeing the effect of their new costumes, when donned,

one day as to permit of ladies seeing the effect of their new costumes, when donned, by gaslight as well, which is an important desideratum. Many alterations and improvements in fittings and fixtures have been made. The "cash railway" system has had to make place for Lamson's new patent rapid wire-shooting system, which would seem to be the height of inventiveness in this direction. The cash carrier, instead of being a spherical article travelling to and fro along parallel lines of wooden rails, is a handier kind of box, which is shot along a wire from the different counters to the cashier with great rapidity, and he so rapidly shoots it back again, and thus the system is fully twice as rapid as the old one.

Moving with the times, too, the firm has improved the system of lighting throughout the premises. New carbon burners have been introduced, which not only make use of an infinitely better illuminant, but is calculated to reduce the gas bill (as Messrs. Andrew Mather & Co. have found out) by just 50 per cent.

After a tour of the workrooms, it is gratifying to record that they are spacious, having good ventilation, and the comfort and convenience of the many young women employed are apparently well studied. New Singer and Wertheim machines have been introduced. There is here a millinery department under the management of one of the best milliners the firm can procure; another department for costumes and dressmaking generally, and a third for jacket and mantle making work, etc., the head dress-maker having credentials of the highest character for style and experience in the very best branches of her business. In the dress-making branch estimates are given, so that ladies may know exactly what a costume will cost when completed, and under no circumstances will the amount be exceeded. This is certainly an innovation which *paterfamilias*, at all events, will appreciate, for those vexatious little "extras" cause many heartburnings after the dresses have come home. Altogether this seems to be one of the most complete dressmaking establishments in the colony.

Coincident with the alterations and extensions above alluded to, Messrs. Andrew Mather & Co. will on Monday make a grand opening show of the new season's goods in trimmed French and English millinery, costumes, and general dress materials. From several points of view this promises to be a more than ordinarily interesting one. Such is the edict just issued by the mysterious *arbitrator elegantiarum*, whose abode no one knows but whose command everybody more or less obeys, that there is about to be a considerable change in the fashions. What has up to lately been *en vogue* will now quickly become *de trop*, and the firm has obtained the latest things in the latest fashions, imported direct from London. They also make their linen, woollen and general Manchester goods a speciality, and new and special lines of these good at very low prices will be forthcoming, the whole calculated to be a grand and effective opening to the enlarged premises. The new window on one side of the shop will be used exclusively for a display of Manchester goods. Let us hope that the sales they will effect and the general business they will do, will be commensurate with the enterpriser they are displaying, and the extensive stock of goods they have imported.