As a "text" to our descriptive account of the new premises recently erected and now occupied by the famous bookbinder, Mr. Joseph Zaeahnsdorf, we may quote the brief preface to an artistic pamphlet issued by the house.

"Mr. Zaeahnsdorf informs his customers that he has removed to Cambridge-circus, Shaftesbury-avenue, W.C., opposite Mr. D'Oyly Carte's new Theatre, and three minutes' walk from Piccadilly-circus.

Owing to the increase of trade in recent years, the premises in which this business was established and conducted during the past half century have proved inadequate, and considerable inconvenience has been caused by the office and works being in separate houses, at some short distance from each other.

In the new building, spacious well-lighted workshops have been erected, and a show-room on the ground-floor will contain, not only specimens of elaborately decorated leather work, but cloth, half calf, half morocco, and other bindings suitable for libraries. Visitors will here have an opportunity of seeing a large stock of books bound in various styles.

Mr. Zaeahnsdorf feels sure that these new arrangements will enable him not only to sustain, but to increase the reputation his house has gained for supplying the best class of materials with the highest workmanship at moderate prices."

Before giving details of our visit we would remark that visitors to London and Londoners themselves would do wisely to stroll through Shaftesbury-avenue, now one of the finest highways in the metropolis. The many new buildings in that neighbourhood are among the best specimens of architecture the city boasts of, and are instructive as exemplifying a comparatively new architectural style. Mr. D'Oyly Carte's theatre is a building of great beauty, and throws all contemporary houses of amusement into the shade. It is at present the chief feature of Cambridge-circus, but when the various building schemes on foot are accomplished this large circular space promises to form a royal and comely sister to that king of open spaces, Trafalgar-square.

Mr. Zaeahnsdorf exhibited creditable discernment in the selection of a site for his new business home. His premises occupy a triangular point that faces the theatre named, and with one side in Shaftesbury avenue. To say that there is no other bookbinding establishment in London to compare with it, inadequately conveys an impression of the architectural beauty and construction of the house. Standing at the junction of the Avenue with Great Earl-street, it is free from adjoining premises, except at the back, and thus appeals to the beholder upon its own merits. These are in no way lacking, in fact a more pleasing exterior could hardly have been designed, to grace a business house. The broad entrance, with the name of Zaeahnsdorf suitably written over the swinging doors, is well backed by the line of windows, deeply set in stonework frames, and exhibiting a variety of remarkably bound books and strangely tanned and stamped skins. The upper floors are in consonance with that below, and the style of the roof fitsly caps a highly effective structure.

Upon passing through the entrance-way into the show-room our admiration was increased tenfold. It has been planned on the most palatial principles, and the broad sweep of marble floor is fit for the foot of royalty. With the light pouring in from all around and falling here upon the green leaves of palms and there upon the solid plate-glass of ebony show cases, filled with brilliant examples of cover decoration—little or nothing is left to be desired—unless it be the genial face of the young proprietor, who is acknowledged head of the bookbinding craft in Great Britain.
Horatii Opera, 1855.

BOUND BY ZAEHNSDORF.

PRINTED WITH INKS SUPPLIED BY MANDER BROTHERS, WOLVERHAMPTON.
Mr. Marlow, the manager, was soon welcoming us to his new abode and was immediately ready, with pardonable pride, to point out the leading features of the establishment. Throwing open a pair of glass doors, he exhibited one of the masterpieces of the extensive collection of elaborately bound volumes. It was a superb piece of inlaid work with the figure of an urn stamped in the centre. A reproduction of this cover was recently given in The Bookmaker.

At this point Mr. Zaehnsdorf joined us and smilingly received our hearty congratulations upon his new venture. Glancing at the book in our hands he remarked, "I would not undertake to complete a book in that style under nine months."

Several other volumes were also placed before us, mostly bound in morocco, bearing a highly polished surface. The cover of one had a groundwork of blue with inlays of entwined red ribbons—an early Italian style. The double was of red morocco with dentelle border. It was a magnificent piece of work and represented vast labour. Another sample was in brown morocco, elaborately inlaid with red of a Florentine pattern. The inside of the boards was also lined with morocco most beautifully tooled. The proprietor said that this book represented many long months of hard labour. Yet another book was an édition de luxe issued by the great house of Hachette. It was full of superb etchings reproduced by the Gillot process. The borders of the letterpress were worked in colour, in fact, both internally and externally the book was a brilliant specimen. The double was of Russia and the joints of morocco. All the schools were represented in one case or another—Maioli, Grolier, Le Gascon, Derome, besides several perfect imitations of Roger Payne, such as the great master himself might have been proud of. It is impossible, in print, to give a just idea of the workmanship. In execution everything shewn here is absolutely perfect, whether the style be in imitation of an old master, or a design founded on the conceptions of the modern aesthetic school.

Responding to our inquiry as to the value of some of these books, Mr. Zaehnsdorf said he priced the contents of the small case, immediately in front of us, at £1,000. Then, pointing to a set of large volumes in a corner, he said, that lot alone were also worth £1,000. In proof that the interesting art to which the house chiefly devoted its energies was not entirely expended on book covers, the manager exhibited a large jewel case most elaborately decorated in gold...
upon its covering of morocco leather, and many beautiful examples of blotters, writing cases, &c. The box could not have presented a richer and more valuable appearance had it been encrusted with solid gold inlays and mountings.

"But we do not confine ourselves to books costing two or three hundred pounds to bind," said Mr. Marlow. "We take orders for bindings at a shilling. Here is a specimen, and a large portion of our business is done in half-calf and half-morocco bindings executed for the trade."

Specialities in marble paper, novelties in leather, rich pieces of embroidery and many other things were brought to notice before the show-room was left and we found ourselves in Mr. Zaeheusdorf's sanctum sanctorum. Though but newly occupied the apartment bore an air of comfort and convenience. Upon the walls hung portraits of the late Mr. Zaeheusdorf and several other masters in the craft, living and dead. A large bookcase, filled with volumes of unusual shapes and sizes, proved to be a complete collection of all the works ever published upon the subject of bookbinding in French, English and German languages. Mr. Zaeheusdorf fondly believes that no other private individual possesses such a collection. In all probability he is right, and consequently we did not care to ask him to loan us a few of these volumes, though we wanted them badly.

Adjoining this room were the general offices and trade department, and in Mr. Marlow's office we observed two large safes specially erected for the safe keeping of valuable books. The basement has been used to great advantage. It is perfectly lighted all round and is exceedingly cool and lofty. The folding, sewing, collating, and washing are all carried on here. There is a special apparatus for washing, but we were quite unable to grasp its mysteries. As most of our readers are aware, this department is one necessitating special experience and in which very few binders excel. A number of neatly attired young ladies were quietly engaged at their sewing presses, performing that portion of the work which Mr. Zaeheusdorf contends is the foundation of good bookbinding. He says that for sewing purposes: "The thread should be of the best quality; the cords upon which the book is sewn, and which secures sheet to sheet and sheets to boards, should be of good hemp and of long fibre. Without a doubt the strength of a book is in the sewing and a badly sewn book has but a short life to run." In a corner of this basement was erected a photographic
lined the walls close by. A long rack, placed down the centre of the floor, was also laden with tools—many thousand in all. In passing through the workshops the visitor cannot but be impressed with the absence of machinery, especially when it is remembered what a large part machinery plays in a binder's work. "We use no machinery," remarked Mr. Zaeheisdorf, "Ours is all hand work. The screw presses are almost our only assistance, and you see I use a black japanned board for placing between the books when in the press to enable us to get that high polish which is so desired in morocco bindings." We watched for a few moments the finisher at work, for we felt that after all here was the artist of the establishment. This individual is

dark room. Photography is Mr. Zaeheisdorf's pet pastime, and he is, perhaps, one of the cleverest amateurs in London. Photographs are taken of all the high-class bindings executed, and, we believe, customers residing at a distance can obtain, upon application, photographic reproductions of the covers of any book mentioned in the catalogue issued by the firm. It will thus be seen that the proprietor is enabled to render his favourite amusement very practically useful.

Passing upstairs we noted a lavatory and other conveniences on every floor. Finishing, covering, and pasting down are the departments allotted to the second floor. Everything here is most conveniently arranged, and the men proceed noiselessly and calmly with their several tasks, the most noticeable feature being the entire absence of "rush." A large stock of leather was stowed away in a special apartment on this floor, and rows of tools in circular boxes
modestly described in the pamphlet before mentioned as follows: “The finisher should be a fairly good draughtsman, to enable him to draw his own designs; he should be a man of quick perception, in order to grasp any idea that may be given him to work from. He should have a knowledge of the various styles, for in bookbinding there are many known masters.” Another department especially in charge of young ladies is that of head-banding, which represents the silk or cotton finish of the edges, head and tail. To again quote, “In cheap work, this head-band, bought by the yard, is usually fastened on by glue, but here it is worked by hand, giving constant employment to girls, whose hands should be kept quite smooth, roughness fraying the fine silk used. In early times this head-band was twisted as the book was sewn, and formed additional strength by being laced into the wooden boards then used.”

The top floor is devoted mainly to the forwarers. These workers are responsible for the squareness and shapeliness of the book. It is an important department and one in which the credit of the firm is largely involved.

Returning to the counting house we again met Mr. Marlow, who reminded us that many visitors went through the workshops, and evinced the deepest interest in all they saw. The care and attention requisite for the binding of a book, and the number of hands through which a volume passes before its covering is completed being a surprise to many of them. Taking another glance round we left, feeling proud that such a building, under such excellent management, was connected with the bookmaking trade.

Clerkenwell Free Library.

A series of exhibitions illustrative of the processes employed in the production of books will be arranged at intervals of about two months under the direction of Mr. H. W. Fincham, and the first is now open for the inspection of the public. Curiously, the first little exhibition—for it only consists of one case—is of bound work, the last stage of bookmaking; but there are some very decent specimens and fairly assorted styles.

A Roger Payne, but not in his peculiar style, this one having plain lines and not too well done.

One of Herring’s bindings, with line frame and solid corner and side pieces.

A Common Prayer, bound by Kalthoërber, 1790-1825, is more interesting, as the foredge is decorated with a beautiful little painting of East Retford Church under the gold, the book being fanned out to show the work.

A half-red morocco book, by C. Lewis, 1814, is somewhat of a novelty. It has brown paper sides, but the corners are so cut that instead of the usual triangular shape, they form a square border about three quarters of an inch wide, with square ends, and are beautifully tooled in gold, while up the side of the back there is only a gold three line.

A Folio by Clark and Bedford, and a “Zoography” by Staggemeier.

“Angling,” a good specimen of inlaid symbolical work, by Hayday.

“Rhodocanakis,” in brown morocco, is richly tooled with a quatrefoil design, and has gilt gaufred edges, by F. Bedford.

“Dante’s Inferno,” by Leighton, in black straight-grained morocco, with a curious design of flames and an inlaid monster representing the “old serpent.”

The gems are, however, the two bindings by Zaeheinsdorf: “Omar Khayyám,” with a magnificent floral design, and “Lettres de Diana de Poitiers,” in brown polished morocco, grolieresque.

In the case is also a plate taken from The Bookbinder, and Mr. Zaeheinsdorf’s portrait from The British Bookmaker.