THE BRITISH BOOKMAKER.

T HE BOOK HUNTER IN PARIS," by Octave Uzanne (Elliot Stock). Until M. Uzanne's work was written, nothing like a complete monograph on the Paris quays could be found; he overhauled the libraries, toiled through catalogues, and shook the dust from the Journal de la Librairie from the year of its foundation, in the palmy days of the first Empire, but found nothing concerning

the quays of the capital with the exception of De Resbecq's "Voyages Litteraries sur les Quais de Paris," 1857, which merely gives a schedule of the spirit of old books in soporific prose.

There is no soporific prose about Octave Uzanne's work; every line of its ten chapters sparkles with bright thoughts and happy allusions, and the book is very unlikely to meet the end of which he writes in his dedicatory epistle "To the stall keepers on the quays of the gentle river Seine," one of the happiest portions of his work: "To you, in truth, should be its dedication, for you were the inspirers of this new book, which, sooner or later, after running through its fortune in the springtime of its newness, and submitting to the inevitable destiny of things, may, in the autumn of its prosperity, founder in your haven of the disinherited, as the stained and faded leaves, once freshly green, are whirled above your heads on the cold parapets of the Seine. Torn, and damp, and soiled, some squally day this book, now so trim in its bibliophilic dandyism, will reach you . . . is it not to live once more, this wandering in your boxes . . . cut, torn, consulted, read, taken up again, read again, useful to all, and almost proud of one's wounds? Surely that is better than to sleep embalmed in gilded morocco, covered with interlacings in some richly-glazed bookcase, intact and unread, a virgin still, and respected by the bountiful chastity of some bibliophilic Joseph."

Nodier's prophecy of fifty years ago, of the end of bibliomania and the second-hand bookseller, is still unfulfilled and still likely to be; the bookstall keepers line the quays in spite of complaints in a bibliographic de profundis "gone is the bookstall man"; "gone are the wonderful finds." The generations which grow old die out, all of them, amid this twaddle concerning the pre-excellence of the past. Of course, there are no longer the books sought after by our fathers, Aldines, Caxtons, Antoine Verards, and Simon de Colines, but the bookseller lives, he assumes a new skin, he is not the ancient of yesterday, but the modern of to-day, vending thousands of rarities which are still in the chrysalis stage of their evolution towards curiosities.

Glancing back to the bookstall keepers among the Romans in the vicinity of the Forum, and to the landing of Aulus Gallius at Brindisi, where he ran with the eagerness of a booklover to a stall and bought a number of precious volumes— to the decline of the bookstall keeper in the invasions of the barbarians, to the spread of printing and the fresh appearance of the second-hand bookseller about the middle

of the sixteenth century, our author brings us along to Paris, where, although for a long time previously a great book mart, the bookstall keepers only began to establish themselves by the river at about the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the Pont Neuf began to be devoted to the sale of small wares. Edouard Fournier describes this famous bridge as
The stall keepers who have disappeared, and those of to-day, are two delightful chapters of gossip and banter about the more important members of the fraternity, while of the bookhunters we have some graphic sketches, and we learn that “those who make the most rattle have the most cash,” an aphorism not applicable to every one. This chapter tells of some wonderful finds, amongst them a hundred-franc note between two leaves of a book, pasted together, which Xavier Marmier gave to the stall keeper who sold him the book, just saving the poor fellow from ruin. Of M. Marmier, too, we learn that “when he found a book richly bound and quite unworthy of its beautiful garb, he bought it to strip and use its morocco cover for some more estimable work less favoured.”

Of the book stealers, male and female, cunning and clumsy, there are some amusing anecdotes, and a note about working bookbinders who carried on a clandestine trade with certain stall keepers in stolen books. The thieves, however, are fairly well known, for “every trade leaves its stigmata,” and one stall keeper has drawn up a list of suspicious persons to be watched.

We have thus lightly touched upon some of the principal points of the book, and must leave the reader to the physiology of the bookstall keepers and the account of the banquet bequeathed to them by M. Marmier, as well as the thousand pleasant
details which crowd the pages of this work. The book is a handsome volume, beautifully and appropriately illustrated, and, as the preface by Augustine Birrell declares, the “author almost entirely discards the traditional, affected, sham-emotional style of the bookhunter—that style which in the heavy hand of the Rev. Dr. Dibdin becomes so utterly wearisome and repulsive.” For this especially we must heartily thank Octave Uzanne and his English publisher.

“DRAWING AND DESIGN,” by Edward R. Taylor (Macmillan & Co.).—This class textbook comes bearing the hope that drawing and design shall soon be taught concurrently with writing as an essential of the school course, a hope we cordially breathe back. The high standard of efficiency attained by the teachers of the Birmingham Art Schools, and the experience gained by them, gives an added force to Mr. Taylor’s words: “Experience has proved that the designing faculty, if exercised in conjunction with the earliest studies in drawing, is more easily, pleasantly, and rapidly developed than is a high power of technique in drawing”; and that it is an error to suppose “that before allowing any exercises in design the student must be conversant with the elements and principles of ornament as these have been evolved by theorists from the designs of the past.” These are great words, full of encouragement, and we hope the teachers and pupils of our technical classes, and those who are competing for our prizes for design, will take them to heart and get this little book.

Each plate constitutes a lesson, and there are forty-two lessons and illustrations of the system recommended by Mr. Taylor, who lays down this fundamental principle, that “writing is drawing,” and that in learning to write you are exercising and developing the same powers required for drawing. Taking the sloping letters of a plain large hand, he makes use of the main lines and curves, and with the addition of a few strokes in harmony with the form of the letters, makes the most effective designs, some of them having distinct reference to the patterns used for bookbindings. This little book ought to prove of the greatest service to all those who wish to study the principles of design, for it is full of bright ideas plainly put.

“CEMENTS, PASTES, GLUES, AND GUMS,” by H. C. Standage (Crosby, Lockwood & Son).—A practical guide to the manufacture and application of the various agglutinants required in various trades, including the leather working trades, giving recipes which the author has made use of in practice or which as a practical chemist he has critically examined and found efficacious. Generally the explanations given are clear and easy of application, though of course in some instances chemical apparatus would be required to make the mixtures perfectly, but this is not to be wondered at considering the enormous number of over 600 recipes given for agglutinants applicable to almost every description of material. Of glue the author says: “Good glue should be of a light brown colour, semi-transparent, and free from water or cloudy lines. Glue loses most of its strength by frequent remelting; therefore glue which is newly made is preferable to that which has been reboiled.

The hotter the glue the more force it will exert in keeping the joined parts glued together.” The recipe given for bookbinders’ glue is “carpenters’ or white glue to which, after beating and soaking, one twentieth of its weight of glycerine is added.” Rice flour is recommended as a paste for engravings, or a mixture of gum tragacanth and gum arabic for a thinner mucilage. For mounting maps rye paste is esteemed the best. A good mountant for photographs, either silver prints or Woodburytypes, which has the advantage of not considerably stretching either the print or thin mounts, is made as follows: “1 oz. cooling gelatine, 10-oz. alcohol (95 per cent.), ½ to 1-oz. glycerine. The gelatine is soaked in water for an hour, then taken out and drained and put into the alcohol in a wide-mouthed bottle, add the gelatine in proportion to make the mixture hard or soft, and put the bottle in a water bath, occasionally shaking the contents until the gelatine is quite dissolved. For use, heat by standing in hot water.” This recipe is especially good, as the mixture does not become decomposed subsequently.

This work is an extremely useful book of reference, not only for the workshop but for the handy man at home, and will often help such a one out of difficulties that daily occur.

OLD books ought to possess a peculiar interest for printers and binders, as well as for the industrious bookworm. Here, for example, is a curious typographic specimen, sold at the famous “Christie’s” a short time since. It is described as Queen Elizabeth’s Prayer Book, a work containing a collection of prayers and meditations specially composed for the Queen by her governess. It is bound in gold and enamelled, and is said to be the work of George Heriot, the famous goldsmith and banker of James I., and the founder of “George Heriot’s Hospital,” at Edinburgh. The prayers were written in 1574 by A. Barker, whose device is seen on several leaves: a man stripping the bark from a tree, and the couplet:

A Barker if you will
In name but not in skill

This book was worn by the Queen suspended by a chain from her girdle through the two rings which are at the top. The cover is of gold, ornamented with coloured enamel figures in full relief. In front is represented the raising of the Serpent in the Wilderness, an emaciated figure in the foreground, and three others, one in the attitude of prayer. On the back is represented the Judgment of Solomon. The edges and back of the cover are decorated with black enamels.

CREASES in drawings, engravings, etc., may be levelled out by following these instructions:—Fasten the engraving or drawing by drawing pins on a board face downward on a sheet of paper; on the back place another sheet of paper which retains a very slight quantity of moisture. Over this place flannel or blotting paper, and taking a hot iron pass it carefully over the part where the creases have been made until they disappear, and then submit the drawings or engravings to pressure between printers’ glazed boards.