

The First Bookbinder's Cloth.

OUR excellent contemporary, the *American Bookbinder*, states that as late as 1836 there was no manufactory of bookbinders' cloth in London, although this material had already been in use as a covering for books for some years—at least ten. The material first made use of was a "glazed calico." "Embossing" was the invention of Archibald Leighton, the London binder, about 1832, and it was thus effected:

The desired pattern was engraved on a gun-metal cylinder, and transferred in reverse upon one made of compressed paper strung upon an iron spindle, and turned in a lathe to the exact circumference of the gun-metal one, and these two being worked together in a machine, and the pattern transferred from one to the other, the cloth was passed between them, and received the impress of the pattern engraved on the metal cylinder. The cylinders were only fourteen or fifteen inches wide, and the machine was turned by manual labour, and heated by red-hot irons which were placed inside the gun-metal cylinder and when cold replaced by others. In those days it was customary to engrave special cylinders for books of importance, and stray volumes of "The Penny Cyclopædia," or "Knight's Pictorial England," with embossed cloth covers so prepared are still occasionally met.

The white calico was purchased by these London binders, and dyed and calendered by them before the process of embossing. Thomas Hughes, of Bunhill Row, London, was the first to manufacture and sell bookbinders' cloth to the trade. He brought the articles to such perfection that it no longer paid binders to dye, calender, and emboss their own cloth.

Designs for Booklets.

CHEAP and pretty booklets in a thousand different designs are now being turned out by many leading houses. The public taste has been cultivated by producers who have secured the best talent in this and past years in order to produce this class of work. We believe booklet work has reached a higher state of excellence in England than in any other country and a great share of the credit is due to the neat and tasteful work of the binder.

We, this month, give three designs suitable for booklet covers which have been specially prepared for this journal.

