

less, like stories of adventure—anyhow stirring stories. Sporting novels, too, as for example those of Whyte-Melville, or 'Handley Cross,' and 'Sponge's Sporting Tour,' by Surtees, go very well."

"I have asked you much, and I have still one other point, but only one. What are the powers which make for the sale or the non-sale of the book?"

"In my opinion, dinner table talk on books has more to do with the sale of books than anything else. A word at a dinner table from men like Mr. George W. Smalley or Sir Henry Calcraft in praise of a book will move the mysterious waters which insure a large sale. Even more so, recognition by Mr. Gladstone does a book a world of good. Not long ago the Grand Old Man, while at a country house, praised a biographical dictionary. Next day we sold a copy of the work to a member of the party at the country house."

"Get a book talked about, then, and it will sell; that is a first principle?"

"I certainly think it so. And after that influence come the reviews."—*The Bookseller.*

### Directory Curiosities.

THE new edition of the New York City Directory is even more interesting than its predecessors. People in search of light reading rarely turn to such volumes, yet there is a great deal in it that challenges attention.

A perusal of the new edition will show that Julius Cæsar is now making cigars for a living. Mark Antony is selling newspapers on Canal-street. Cicero is a Thompson-street tailor. Michael Angelo will be very pleased to shave you if you will step into his shop on Third-avenue. William Shakspeare is a printer. Richard B. Sheridan is an engineer in the annexed district. There are not less than twenty-five Tom Johnsons, five Macbeths, and six Macduffs. Washington Irving has apparently forsaken the barren field of literature, and is gathering coin as a broker. Henry Clay is a cook, and James G. Blaine is a coachman. There are nine Knickerbockers in the good book. It is a significant fact that there are only nine Angels, and only one of them is a woman.

There are eight Homers, three Virgils, nine Miltons, and two gentlemen bearing the name of Columbus. A. Dumas is engaged in the retail candy trade in Canal-street. It is not stated whether this is Dumas *père* or *fils*. Miss Cleopatra C. Ice is a typewriter. Eighteen people bear the name of Moon, but there is only one sun—Mr. Kwung On Sun. There is an Isaac Sunshine, however.

SOMEONE came past Deacon Podberry's the other night about ten o'clock, and was surprised to find that good man carefully examining his wood pile. "What are you looking for?" asked the passer-by. "Just examining this load of wood to see if it was all right," answered the good man. "I bought it from Brother Brown yesterday, and to-night in prayer meeting he called himself so many kinds of a miserable sinner that I thought maybe it was the quality of this load of wood which was weighing on his mind."

## History of Bookbinding.



THE early history of bookbinding is involved in some obscurity. There are to be seen in the British Museum samples of terra cotta cases which are generally considered specimens of the earliest art. These ancient book covers are inscribed in cuneiform characters, with simple archaic ornamentation, and are large enough to hold a small volume. It is supposed that the leaden tablets bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions were next introduced, and after these came the Egyptian roll, the most usual form of ancient manuscripts. For a long period after the Christian era, this form was adopted for all books, and many specimens are still extant, the relics of Greek and Roman libraries. The roll form of these ancient books would not permit of very great variety in the binding, and thus we may consider the history of bookbinding, as it is now understood, to have commenced with the introduction of folding instead of rolling the manuscript. We are unable to glean any details of the bindings of classic times from the Greek books which remain to us at the present day. A very full account of the Roman process of binding, however, is found in the works of Cicero and other Latin authors. The practice of collecting books for the value of their bindings, it would appear, is by no means a modern custom, for we find Seneca inveighing against the book collectors for whom the bindings had more interest than the contents. Lucian, also, wrote a treatise directed against this custom.

The exact date at which the folded book superseded the roll is uncertain. Emenes II., who about 197 B.C. was king of the cultured city of Pergamus, did much toward popularising the new shape. It is extremely doubtful, however, that the invention is to be attributed to him, as, in great probability, he derived the idea from the Roman pugillaria, or table books, many of which have been unearthed at Herculaneum.

In the opinion of some, the most ancient books in the modern form are to be found among the sacred volumes of Ceylon. These are composed of palm leaves joined with a silk string, and the practice, wherever introduced, must be considered the beginning of the art of bookbinding, as the two protecting boards are identical in purpose to the covers of to-day. This is where we must look for the origin of artistic bindings. In the course of time the workers in the precious metals directed their energies to the embellishment of the products of literary labourers. Decorative binding may be assumed to have commenced in the eastern Roman dominions, or Byzantine Empire, where it was cultivated and developed for many centuries, at last being transplanted to the western cities of Spain and Italy by the crusaders. The invention of printing, creating a demand for ornamental bindings, was also largely instrumental in the introduction of the art into the western countries. Bookbinding has been the theme of many authors in various languages, but the world yet lacks an exhaustive historical account, a want that will for ever continue to exist.