

Hints to Bookbinders.

THE binder is often called upon to insert photographs in books as extra illustrations ; but does he ever mount them to his own or his client's satisfaction ? It has been said over and over again that a photograph cannot be mounted so that it shall lie quite flat ; this "cockling" of the mount, be it of paper or cardboard, has hitherto been a constant bugbear to the binder. Here are a few hints that may guide him as to the proper means of mounting.

A silver-print photograph should never be placed on a very white mount, because the high lights of the print are never pure white, and a bright white margin round the print spoils its beauty by killing its delicate half-tones. Lay the print on paper of various tones, and select the tint that harmonises with it best. Next, pay attention to the mixture you use to fasten it ; let us call this the mountant. This cannot be too pure.

If you use STARCH, which is employed, we believe, more than any other paste, make it fresh every day, and in this way : take a teaspoonful of best starch in a large cup, add just enough cold water to break it up, but don't put in more than is quite necessary, pour boiling water on it, stirring the while, until it is quite transparent ; when cold it may be used.

Or, if you wish to use PASTE, take a teaspoonful of corn-flour, beat this well up in a teacupful of water till it is quite smooth and there are no lumps ; place this in a porridge saucepan (that is, a double one), and let it boil, stirring it continually ; it will turn to a delightfully thin and transparent paste that will be easy to work with and very adhesive. GELATINE dissolved in water—say a half-ounce to a teacupful—is also a very good mountant. It must be of the best quality and ought to be used hot. The preserved paste sold by the London Paste Company is very good.

Now for the difficult part of mounting. We will give three methods—

I. After trimming the print all round, moisten it slightly (the object being to have it limp, without stretching it), by placing it between sheets of damp paper over night, and it will be about right next morning. Damp the mount, also slightly, paste your print very carefully all over (using no more paste than is just necessary), lay it carefully on the mount, cover it with a piece of clean paper and rub it down well, and then place it in the standing-press, between pieces of blotting paper, and allow it to dry under pressure. It may be perhaps necessary to take it out of the press and change the blotting paper. If all this be done properly, the photograph and its mount will lie quite flat.

II. Another plan is to paste the back of the print all over and allow it to dry ; damp the mount, lay the print on the damp mount and pass them through the rolling machine, or place them in the standing-press, under strong pressure. For this method we have to thank Mr. A. Cowen, a well-known photographer.

III. Take a piece of lithographic stone or a thick piece of glass ; glue this all over with the gelatine, place the photographic print quickly down on the glued stone, rubbing it smartly all over, then pick it up and lay it down on the mount. All these actions must be rapid, and if done properly by this method, a photograph may be easily mounted even on thin paper without cockling.

There are other methods, but with any one of these a binder may easily, cleanly and properly mount a print of any size ; the chief object being to get the print on to the board

or mount before it has any time to stretch. We trust we have made ourselves quite clear. If not, we will answer any questions as to mounting in our next number. As a final warning, see that the mounts are not boards made from wood pulp.

The Actors' Address to the Queen.

THE thought was a happy one which suggested to a few of the leading actors and actresses in London the desirability of presenting to Her Majesty a Jubilee testimonial which should be representative of the dramatic profession. And, perhaps, no more suitable form for such a testimonial could have been devised than that of a handsome album containing the autographs of the chief members of the profession in London and the provinces.

The difficult task of procuring the very numerous signatures, and of preparing the volume, was entrusted to Mr. Zaehnsdorf, the well-known bookbinder, and this he has accomplished in a manner which it would be impossible to praise too highly.

As a rule, an array of autograph signatures is neither pleasing nor artistic. This "Address to the Queen," however, is more than usually interesting from the fact that the signatures inscribed upon it are those of well-known favourites of the public; and in the preparation of the work care has been taken to make it something more than a mere list of names. A separate page is devoted to every theatre in the United Kingdom, and each page, which is of pure white vellum, is adorned by a water-colour drawing more or less appropriate to the particular theatre or town in question, or with a purely floral and decorative design, many of which are very delicately painted. There is an appropriate half-title to the book, on which are a couple of chubby cherubs with flowers, upholding the Royal crown dated 1837, and the Imperial crown dated 1887. Then follows the Address, which is briefly worded, and surmounted by a distant view of Windsor Castle.

The "Address to the Queen" altogether forms a good-sized folio volume, and is magnificently bound. The boards are covered in a splendid skin of crimson levant morocco. The front cover bears an impression of the Royal arms, with the garter, inlaid with coloured leathers; in the lower corner, at the right hand, there is a free emblematic design, inlaid with suitable colours and worked in gold. The reverse cover also has an inlaid centre block of the Royal arms. The gilt edges of the book are tooled with scroll work of bay leaves; but it is when the boards are opened that we see the greatest effect. The linings are entirely of coloured leather, the margins are of crimson, and the panels of royal blue; these margins are embellished with a border of Grolier tooling, inlaid with blue and white. One of the panels is decorated at the corners with a leafy design, and powdered with a number of small Tudor roses; the other is completely covered with a rich Grolieresque design, gracefully flowing from a large centre-piece. It would be folly to deny to the artists of past ages a large amount of influence over the productions of modern times; but though that influence is distinctly traceable, the arts of design have undergone considerable improvement, and this "Address to the Queen" fairly represents the perfection at which Modern Bookbinding has arrived. It is truly a *Reliure de Luxe*.