It was about the year 1770 that Mr. John Kelly started a binder's shop in some place adjacent to the Strand, London, though its precise location is not known. Whatever doubts exist as to its whereabouts, it appears plain that he succeeded so well that in 1803 it became necessary to remove to larger premises, and the family accordingly migrated to Water-street, where they occupied a large house that not only contained commodious rooms suitable for workshops, where the business could be carried on, but also dwelling rooms for the family; for in those days a master craftsman usually resided on his business premises.

On the death of Mr. John Kelly, the business was for some time conducted by his widow, but was afterwards taken over by Mr. William Henry Kelly, his brother, father of Mr. Henry Kelly, the present head of the firm, who was born in the old house in 1824. As the family grew up around him, Mr. W. H. Kelly brought his two sons into the business, and the active co-operation of W. H. and Henry Kelly assisted the father to further extend the business until in 1852 its expansion, and other changes taking place in the immediate vicinity, necessitated the rebuilding of the premises, and the present building occupied by the firm was erected. The large increase of space afforded an opportunity for still greater development in trade, so that in 1858 Messrs. Kelly & Sons were able to take over the stock and plant of Mr. Macfarlane, of Old Bailey, and on its removal, the foreman and all the hands went with the work to Water-street.

Mr. W. H. Kelly, sen., died in 1866, but under his direction the firm had earned a good reputation for leather bindings, and though cloth was rapidly growing in favour since its introduction by Mr. A. Leighton, in 1822, this house did not seek to alter the character of its work, as many other establishments were doing, except in so far that cloth sides became the concomitant of a half-leather binding. Another important addition was made to the business in 1874, when, after Messrs. Westley had determined to confine their attention to cloth work exclusively, Messrs. Kelly took over their leather work. In 1878, Mr. Hubert Kelly was brought into the house, and, on the death of his uncle, Mr. W. H. Kelly, jun., in 1882, began to take an active part in the management with his father, which he still continues.

Under the guidance of the latter gentleman, we were favoured with a very full and complete inspection of the various departments, where the swish of the folding-stick and the thud of the backing-hammer mixing with the rhythmical whirl of machinery filled the air with the customary music of the factory. In the basement an Otto gas engine provides power for some of the machines, but the broad area is chiefly filled with large stores of boards and other stock. The ground floor is devoted to case making and cloth work generally, which it has become expedient for the firm to have done in-doors, but no very large quantity is executed, the class relied upon being chiefly half-bound, and the less elaborate kinds of whole bound modern work. On the first floor is the women's shop, from whence the work is easily sent down to the cloth department, or out, to be marbled or gilt, as may be required. Nearly all the folding and sewing is done by hand, with the exception of a wire-stitching for very simple work; the firm not being satisfied with the trustworthiness of machine work. The second floor is occupied by the forwarers, about sixteen of whom are employed usually, and nearly all the work in this department is done in boards. The third floor is divided into several smaller shops, where the odds and ends are done, such as map and photograph mounting, guarding, etc., which require special facilities for the work, and advantages are gained by separating them from the methodical litter of miscellaneous work in its early stages. The finishing shop is on the fourth floor, and contains usually eight finishers and eight assistant finishers, and here the diverse character of the work is immediately seen, almost every book requiring different treatment, at least as regards the lettering. Large quantities of law work were also in evidence, but principally in library styles, and we noticed many gilt top books with the top panel of the back bearing the stamp of well-known public libraries, colonial and otherwise. It is for this work that Messrs. Kelly are best known, and one of the binders of New York some years ago came over to this country and worked for the firm as a journeyman in order to gain some practical experience of their method of turning out this class of work.

Having exhausted the workshop views, we returned to the counting house and were shewn some very good specimens of pig-skin tree marbled, a style which should prove advantageous where extra strength is required for hard wear, and it appears an excellent method of treating pig-skin, which is not a very ornamental leather in its usual form.

What engrossed our attention most, however, was the new style of half-binding introduced by Mr. Hubert Kelly, the particular feature of which is the "reversed cloth" sides. Simple as this may appear, and not exactly new, for many a binder has accidentally put a grained cloth on a book the wrong side up and let the job go rather than alter it, yet it is new by intention and has merits which few would
Henry Kelly.

Hubert Kelly.
suspect who have not seen it. In itself, “reversed cloth” has these advantages over cloth the right way up—no crease or break mars its appearance, nor will water spoil it as it does the surface usually employed in the orthodox fashion, and it consequently wears better. What a good thing it is to be heterodox sometimes, especially since \textit{autos da fe} have gone out of fashion! Of course, great care and attention have been paid to finding out which cloths suit best, and to making the colours so harmonise or contrast with the leather that the effect is pleasant to the eye, whilst the colour and style of the marble papers and edges are also designed so that the tints shall be complimentary to the general effect. The feel of reversed cloth is more pleasant than that of many of the harsh surfaces of grained cloths, and as it is not spoiled by pressure between japanned plates, but alike smoothed and gilded with the leather, the sides are more like those of paper, though retaining the strength of the cloth for ordinary rough usage. This style of binding has been carried out in several different ways, but the best effects are obtained with a brown calf and drab cloth, and a dark green calf with a greyish cloth, through which the surface colouring of green shews in fine spots like sprinkle interspersed with little streaks.

Another very good method of using reversed cloth—which is generally the satin grain variety—is for end papers, introduced by the same hand, and we were agreeably surprised by the superior appearance it gives a book. By its use for this purpose, extra strength is acquired without that ugly ridge which the usual form of cloth joint causes under the paper glued to the board and which no amount of pressure will effectually remove, and we shall confidently expect this form to be very generally adopted ere long.

The large orders Messrs. Kelly now have on hand are a proof that the new style has caught the eye of the public, which is ever on the look out for tasteful forms in binding, as in other arts, and we shall expect a still further development of the style in the near future. It is by the introduction of novelties combined with good workmanship, rather than in following in beaten tracks, that we may hope to keep our trade in our own hands, and we welcome this addition to our many styles as a proof of the enterprise of Messrs. Kelly & Sons, and as an important item in the attractiveness of London work.

In 1512 the Jews offered the then Pope £10,000 for the Hebrew Bible in the Vatican.

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882).

“Books are a guide in youth, and an entertainment for age. They support us under solitude, and keep us from becoming a burden to ourselves. They help us to forget the crossness of men and things, compose our cares and passions, and lay our disappointments asleep. When weary of the living we may repair to the dead, who have nothing of peevishness, pride, or design in their conversation.” —COUNTESS DE GENlis (1746-1839).