

James W. White,

HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT BINDERY AT WASHINGTON, U.S.A.



By the death of Mr. White, at his residence in Washington, the bookbinders of that institution lose the best friend they ever had, and the Government a valuable and efficient employé. We may, with perfect propriety, go farther and state, humanity has lost an excellent specimen of a true manly man. He was pre-eminently a true and tried friend to the Bookbinders' Union. Whenever a question came up between the Government and the union, while zealously guarding the interest of the former, he would, in case of doubt, invariably decide in favour of the union. The last time the Arbitration Committee referred a question to him he said: "Rather than do the union an injustice I would take my hat and coat and walk out."

Mr. White was born on Capitol Hill (where is now being erected the new Congressional Library), fifty-seven years ago. He entered the Government bindery late in the "fifties," at first learning the art of paper ruling. A few years later he was made foreman of that department; about 1870 he was promoted to assistant foreman in charge of the blank-book and finishing departments. On the death of Mr. Harvey Roberts, 1883, Mr. White was again promoted to foreman of the entire bindery which he so satisfactorily filled until his death. He leaves a widow and four children to mourn his loss. The remains were buried in Rock Creek cemetery, the Bookbinders' Union attending his funeral in a body, assisted by the Masonic and G.A.R., in all of which he was an honoured and beloved member. It was the largest funeral in Washington since the death of Mr. Blaine. These societies adopted beautiful and pathetic resolutions in memory of the deceased. The floral tribute from the Bookbinders' Union was an elaborate reproduction of his office desk and chair.

James W. White was not only loyal to his fellow-men but loyal to his country. When traitors had fired upon the flag on Fort Sumpter, April 12, 1861, and three days later President Lincoln called for 75,000 (three months) troops, Mr. White was one of the very first to respond, enlisting April 16, 1861. When his term of service expired, the President's call for troops had touched a responsive chord in the hearts of nearly 800,000 patriots, so the demand was greater for mechanics in the Government bindery than it was for soldiers in the field, and Mr. White was soon again busy supplying the army with stationery. When the Confederate Gen. Early invaded Maryland in July, 1864, with 30,000 troops, defeating Gen. Lew Wallace at Monocacy, July 9th, and hurriedly marched in the direction of Washington, and by the 11th of July had encamped at Silver Spring, now a suburb of Washington, and attacked Fort Stevens the next day (at this period there were less than 15,000 equipped troops in Washington) the President called on the various department employés and citizens to volunteer for the safety of the Capitol. Mr. White again pulled off his apron and shouldered a musket, and with others marched out to Fort Stevens, where an engagement

was fought July 12, 1864, in full view of the dome of the Capitol. The enemy was defeated, and about 300 were killed. That night Gen. Early retreated, and about crossing the Potomac River at Leesburg. The next day, July 13, Mr. White again returned to the bindery, where he remained a conspicuous figure until about ten days preceding his death.—B.G., in *The American Bookbinder*.

An Old Library.

A FEW notes relating to the New York Society Library given in a recent issue of *The Ex-Libris Journal* will probably be of interest to many of our readers. The institution, which is believed to be the oldest lending library in America, having been founded so far back as 1700, owed its origin to the warm interest taken by King William III. in the educational improvement of New York. Among its earliest benefactors was the Rev. John Sharp, an English chaplain at the fort in New York, who was for some time connected with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; the Rev. Thomas Bray, founder of the well-known "Bray Libraries" in England; and the Rev. Dr. Millington, whose library, consisting of 1,642 volumes, was in 1730 placed in the City Hall, New York, under the control of this society.

"In 1754 the Society Library was duly established with rules and regulations, a 'library keeper' (the old term for librarian), and a number of trustees. From that date large purchases of books were made, and catalogues were issued in 1758 and 1761. In 1772 a royal charter was granted by George III., with the seal and signature of Governor William Tryon. Operations were suspended during the revolution, or from 1774 to 1788, the books being removed for safe keeping. In 1789 the library secured rooms in the City Hall; in 1793 another catalogue was published containing some 5,000 titles; in 1795 the institution removed to more commodious quarters in Nassau-street, in a building erected for the special purpose. In 1800 a supplementary catalogue was issued, showing the total number of volumes in the library as 6,500. In 1836 another removal took place, and in 1840 the library again removed to a more spacious building at the corner of Broadway and Leonard-street. It was at this period the most sought and most valued collection among the popular libraries of the country. In 1853 the property on Broadway was sold, and the library removed to the Bible House, where it remained until the completion, in 1856, of the present building on University-place, near Twelfth-street. The library was erected at a cost of 80,000 dollars. In 1876 it had about 65,000 volumes. It has from time to time received many important gifts of books, and was pre-eminently the library of the old Knickerbocker families of New York and their descendants."

ACCORDING to latest statistics, there are now in Germany 7,893 bookdealers, against 7,787 in 1892. The growth of the book trade in the last 150 years attracts attention when it is noted that in 1741 there were but 308 and in 1841 only 915 dealers in books in Germany.