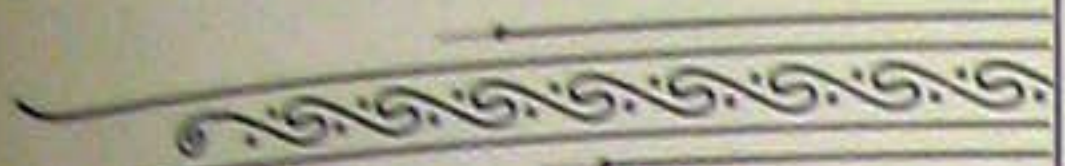
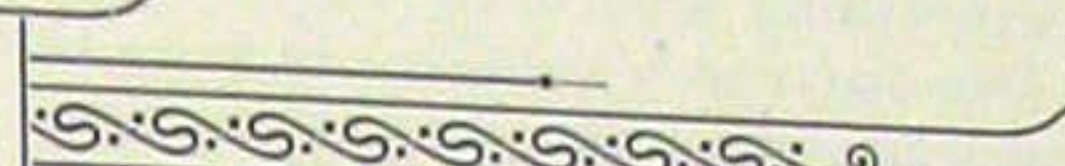


BOUND BY FAZAKERLEY, LIVERPOOL.

GOLD ON CITRON-COLOURED PRESSED MOROCCO. INSIDE LEATHER JOINTS, WITH BROAD GOLD TOOLED BORDER AND WHITE SILK ENDS AND FLYS.


 Our Portrait Gallery.
 

No. 12.—MESSRS. DIPROSE BROTHERS.

PERHAPS there is no shop in London where a greater variety of miscellaneous work is turned out than from the building in White Hart-street, Drury-lane, owned by Messrs. Diprose Brothers, specially designed and built for a bindery, and one of the first buildings in which the frontage is composed wholly of cast iron and glass, a style for which special sanction had to be obtained from the Metropolitan Board of Works.

Large as this business is, the firm is not a very old one. Mr. John Diprose was born in London in 1840, and his brother, Henry Landon, in 1847. Their father, Mr. John Diprose, was a printer and publisher, of the Strand, who attained some degree of literary eminence by the compilation of a work entitled "Some Account of the Parish of St. Clement Danes," which, besides being thorough and exhaustive, was so interesting that it received many favourable comments, a *Times* review stating that "no history of London could be written without it." Although having a good business of his own, Mr. Diprose, senior, determined to give his sons a thoroughly practical education, and apprenticed his son John to Mr. C. J. Forward in 1855, to have him trained as a bookbinder, and later on Henry Landon was sent to the office of *The Economist*, where he served his time as a printer.

After John had completed his apprenticeship, he remained with Mr. Forward for three years as a journeyman, when, in 1865, he commenced business for himself in Portugal-street, Lincoln's Inn. In 1868, the business having grown very rapidly and requiring further assistance, he was joined by his brother, and the premises in Portugal-street had to be vacated as they were wanted for the new building of the Middlesex Registry Office. They then removed to No. 6 Brydges-street, now Catherine-street, Strand, where they very soon had to make further extensions by taking in No. 5. By this time their business was firmly established and in a flourishing condition, but a portion of the house was let to Charles Dickens as a store room for numbers of *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, until his death, in 1870. At that time, Messrs. Diprose were blocked up with work, having, besides other books, 90,000 crown-8vo. copies of Dickens' works. As soon as the news of Dickens' death touched the hearts of the people, a sudden rush was made upon his books as if they were relics of the loved one taken away, and it was only with great difficulty that Messrs. Diprose could keep pace with the demand—a difficulty experienced by other binders as well as this firm. For a long time the pressure continued, until the firm was compelled to seek larger

and more convenient accommodation, which was not easily found just then, but in 1875 an opportunity presented itself, and the firm purchased a block of warehouses from Messrs. Bell, which had been specially designed for storing books, in White Hart-yard, Drury-lane.

Quite a little history is attached to these buildings—as there is to most of the properties around the Strand—of authors and publishers, some mention of which should prove interesting. Jacob Tonson, when he moved from his old shop, "The Judge's Head," in Chancery-lane, close to the corner of Fleet-street, where he had been from 1678, went to "Shakspeare's Head," over against Catherine-street, in the Strand. Andrew Millar—who published Thomson's "Seasons" in 1730, and continued to publish for Thomson,—who took the principal charge of the first publication of Johnson's Dictionary (1755),—and of whom Johnson's "I respect Millar, sir; he has raised the price of literature," is recorded by Boswell under 1755,—who published Hume's "England" and Fielding's novels,—carried on business at the same "Shakspeare's Head," 141 Strand. That No. 141 is now absorbed in No. 142, occupied by Gaze's tourist offices, facing Catherine-street. Millar retired from business in 1767, and his apprentice, Thomas Cadell, who had become his partner in 1765, succeeded to the business. This was the Thomas Cadell who toasted the four B's to which he owed his prosperity,—Blackstone's Commentaries, Blair's Sermons, Burn's Justice of the Peace, and Buchan's Domestic Medicine. Cadell lived at 141 Strand, like his predecessor, and was the host of Johnson and Gibbon; he was the "Mr. Cadell, a respectable bookseller," of Gibbon's Autobiography, "who undertook the care and risk of the publication [of the first volume of the history] which derived more credit from the name of the shop than from that of the author." Old Thomas Cadell resigned his business to his son and to William Davies, jointly, and this was the "respectable house of Cadell and Davies, in the Strand, which," as Lockhart puts it, "may be said to have first introduced Scott as an original writer to the English public," by the publication in January, 1802, of the first two volumes of the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border." On May 1st, 1803, Cadell was one of the parties in "a contract for the building of a stack of warehouses in White Hart-yard, Drury-lane,"—not quite 150 yards distant from 141 Strand. These buildings, designed for the storage of books, were in later years owned and used for that purpose by Mr. H. G. Bohn, and thereafter by Messrs. Bell—his successors in the publication of the Libraries—up to 1875, when Messrs. Diprose purchased the north-eastern portion of the property, to which they subsequently added the side in New Church-court. The new building was commenced in 1877, and in 1878 they removed all their plant and machinery into it, placing

