



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. 15.—**JOHN FAZAKERLEY.**



ALTHOUGH the seat of the book trade is in London, and consequently the great bulk of the work of bookbinding is done in the metropolis, yet some of our provincial towns and cities contain binderies where work is executed in quite as elaborate a style, and with as fine a quality of workmanship as any turned out in the Capital. Having occasion to visit Liverpool recently, we paid a visit to one of these of

the late John Sutton, of Paradise-street, where he began to learn the business in 1813, at a time when lads worked excessively long hours, but were put through the whole of the branches of the trade. After he had finished his apprenticeship, he continued with Mr. Sutton as journeyman, and afterwards as foreman till about 1833, when he went to Messrs. Robinson's, in Castle-street, as manager. On that firm retiring, he took over the business, associating himself with Mr. F. Davis, under the style and title of Fazakerley & Davis, but their partnership was of short duration,



THOMAS FAZAKERLEY.



JOHN FAZAKERLEY.

which we had often heard, and were delighted with the opportunity of inspection readily afforded by Mr. Fazakerley, and of learning a few details concerning the history of the house, which is that of a simple and almost uneventful career of steady prosperity.

Thomas Fazakerley, who was the founder, and father of the present bearer of the name, was born at West Derby, near Liverpool, and served his time with

owing to disagreement, and in 1835 Mr. Fazakerley separated and commenced a new business for himself in Atherton-street, from which he shortly afterwards removed to School-lane. There he remained for over twenty years, devoting himself to steady and persistent work in building up a quiet private trade, with little more of variable incidents than go to make up the periodic fluctuations called busy and slack times. In

1860 the old house in School-lane—where Mr. John Fazakerley was first initiated into the mysteries of the craft—had to be demolished, when the father removed to Hanover-street. Here the business was carried on under more advantageous conditions, and after a good training the son became of great assistance.

In 1877 Mr. T. Fazakerley retired, and Mr. John Fazakerley has since conducted the business on his own account. The present premises, No. 40 Paradise-street, were taken in the year 1888, and from the front windows we were pointed out the upper floor on the opposite side of the street where Mr. Fazakerley, sen., first made the acquaintance of the paste brush. The shop we had entered is a long, well lighted floor, divided into several departments, well arranged for the work, which consists of every variety and style, from the cheapest memorandum book up to the finest ledger with russia bands, or the half-cloth book up to the finest crushed levant *reliure de luxe*. A very wide, all-round experience is necessary for the conduct of such a business, but it does not take long to see how thoroughly Mr. Fazakerley has organised his resources to secure a profitable return on such widely different operations, all carried on under one roof. A large share of the work is done in a peculiarly appropriate style for the Liverpool, Birkenhead, and other libraries: this has to be turned out at once both strongly and cheaply, and the end papers are specially prepared, with a view to the prevention of that breaking away so common to the usually pasted-on end papers. Then we get the presentation address books and albums, which form a large and important item in the work of a provincial binder. For these and the best letterpress bindings, special designs are prepared and worked, and some of the rubbings and specimens shewn were of a high-class and artistic order, Mr. Fazakerley having a staff of highly skilled workmen, who are continually engaged on this best class of work. It is this branch of the trade that Mr. Fazakerley delights in developing. "Some years ago," he said, "I found the competition for the ordinary run of half-bound and cheaper kinds of work so intense, that there was little or no profit after all one's labour and anxiety, and I determined to strike out for the better work. I had thought that fine bindings were going down, but in reality I find that the taste for them is growing, and I have succeeded wonderfully well. Of course, it takes some time to get workmen capable of doing this best work; then the work takes a very long time, and the temptation is always to do cheaper work, which, though it yields less profit, allows of a quicker turn over of your capital, but, after all, I am well satisfied with the step I took, for I have since doubled my business, while I still retain customers who have been on our books for over forty and fifty years."

Mr. Fazakerley is no bigot as to style; he finds, however, that there is an inclination towards old models, and he gratifies the taste of those of his customers who admire the work of any of the past masters by following upon their general plan while eschewing their faults. Some of his designs, however, have a freshness which we do not often find. One of his corner pieces, repeated in various combinations, was especially pleasant and tasteful, but having only

the rubbings, we could not reproduce it. The works we have selected are from a few which happened to be on the premises, and are in no way specially prepared, but they show a fine degree of finish in execution, though based upon old styles of the art, while the forwarding is throughout highly commendable, the books opening with unusual freedom without in any way marring the beauty of the backs. We were delighted to find several specimens of painted edges amongst his work, two different pictures of "The Last Supper" being particularly fine in execution.

Mr. Fazakerley has a very large clientèle among the embossed leather workers in different parts of the country, and we have selected an illustration of the work. "Flora's Feast" was designed by Miss M. S. Smith, of the Kirby Lonsdale Home Arts Classes, and it is a beautifully worked specimen of a style that is evidently growing in favour.

Our visit to Mr. Fazakerley was made particularly pleasant by the knowledge that he is much interested in the general welfare of his fifty or more employées, and we were glad to hear his pronounced views upon the reduction of the hours of labour, with which he is in sympathy, believing that it would be a beneficial movement for all concerned, provided that sufficient time was given for a fair revision of prices. He holds the wise view that there is much that is artificial in the outcry for cheapness, and that it is exaggerated, and is inclined to the belief that we are on the point of returning to better methods of production, which will not sweat and grind the bones and marrow of the workers, regardless of anything more than the putting of some article upon the market at a penny cheaper than any one else can do it at. It is no wonder, therefore, that from all sides we hear how much Mr. Fazakerley has won the respect of those who know him, and we heartily wish him the best reward which can accrue to his enterprise, and a long life to enjoy it.

A Famous Family of Binders.

THE Boyer or Boyet family of binders flourished in Paris from 1670 to 1730. As compared with what had gone before, the style of binding adopted by them is distinctively their own. Many of the ornamental details were simply selected from the work of their predecessors; some were quite new, and the mode in which they were applied to the red or blue morocco coverings, manipulated with great skill, was fresh and elegant. It has been followed by the binders of all countries ever since, in spite of a few weak occasional attempts to substitute new methods. In the Boyer books, the backs of the volumes are more elaborately gilt than the sides; the surface of these being left to a large extent blank, without other decoration than the gold fillets and the corner-pieces of *dentelle* work. An elegant ornament is the figure of a vase, sometimes placed at the angles on the sides and in the panels on the back; but this had been used by contemporaries and followers of La Gascon before the first Boyer's time. The usual ornament was a flower on a bit of lace-work which, in combination with the corner-pieces in the panels on the back, left the morocco blank in lozenge shapes.