

permitting it to be set to even picas, and an adjustable stud on the knee, said stud entering the perforations.

Carl A. Meyer, of Zurich, Switzerland, has obtained United States patent No. 683,478, covering certain details of roller arrangements for rotary printing.

Thomas E. O'Brien, of Watertown, Massachusetts, in patent No. 684,298, illustrates a return-address envelope, having two sealing flaps, the outer one of which may be torn off and the inner one used for the return.

George H. Ziegler, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has assigned to the American Type Founders Company patent No. 685,083, on a type-finishing machine, that shows various improved details of construction.

TYPEFOUNDERS AND TYPEFOUNDING IN AMERICA.

BY WILLIAM E. LOY.

NO. XVI—JOHN T. RETON.

MR. RETON is a New Yorker by birth, where he first saw the light December 21, 1831. There he grew to manhood, and before engaging in the typefoundry business he occupied his time with various occupations, none of which seemed to be the particular one to his liking. At the age of twenty-two he came under the notice of James Conner, and at the earnest solicitation of the latter, he resigned a position in the tax office of New York city, to learn the trade of typefoundry. Under the directing eye of that eminent workman he learned the trade in all its branches, although later he served some time with Edward Miller, from whom he learned the finer technicalities of the business.



J. T. RETON.

In 1856 Mr. Reton was engaged by Edward Miller to manage the Northwestern Typefoundry at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a fully equipped foundry having been fitted out that year, and sent out to the then frontier city, at least so far as typefoundry was concerned. This position was acceptably held by Mr. Reton for fourteen years, when he purchased the defunct Albany Typefoundry, and moved it to St. Paul, Minnesota, establishing the St. Paul Typefoundry in 1870. This foundry was run for two years, when the alluring field of Kansas City proved a strong inducement to Mr. Reton, and gathering up the necessary tools and machinery, he established the Kansas City Typefoundry in 1872. Part of the equipment was purchased from the Northwestern Typefoundry, at Milwaukee, and all his time and energies were bent to the building up of the business in his new field. He fitted up a good line of matrices of the most necessary faces, and his labors were rewarded with a large measure of success. A little later his establishment was much augmented by the addition of the greater part of the tools, machines and matrices of the New England Typefoundry, which had previously been successfully operated for many years by Bailey & Gilbert, in Boston. Owing to the death of the head of the New England Typefoundry the establishment had been bought in at the closing out of the estate by the Boston Typefoundry, and Mr. Reton purchased from them all he wanted that was for sale. His establishment continued to grow, and with the development of the Middle West he found prosperity and wealth. In 1892, when the American Type Founders Company was buying up as many foundries as possible, both East and West, Mr. Reton sold his business to that corporation and retired from active duties. He now lives in Kansas City, enjoying a serene old age, though active and energetic, and keenly alive to

rapidly passing events, and the marvelous development of the region which he has made his home for a lifetime. He retains many pleasant recollections of his business career, and looks back on the annual meetings of the Typefounders' Association as the most enjoyable of his business outings. It is only just to say that his colleagues all speak most kindly of his honorable methods of conducting his business, and of his pleasant manner.

The beginnings of the Kansas City Typefoundry mark an epoch in the history of typefoundry and printing in the West. With the exception of the introduction of typefoundry in San Francisco at an earlier date, Mr. Reton's enterprise was and is the most westerly on the continent. His faith in the West was well founded, and there has grown up in that region a population giving ample support to the industry. Since 1892 the Kansas City Typefoundry has been one of the branches of the American Type Founders Company, and is now under the management of Frank Barhydt. One of the sons of John F. Reton (A. E. Reton) is manager of the St. Louis branch of the same company, and another son is in the employ of the Kansas City house. Like the elder Conner, he brought up his sons in his own business.

TESTIMONIAL DINNER TO STEPHEN GREENE.

A VERY enjoyable testimonial dinner was tendered to Mr. Stephen Greene on Tuesday evening, October 29, by leading representatives of the printing and allied trades in the city of Philadelphia, in commemoration of the fifty-fourth anniversary of Mr. Greene's connection with the printing business. Addresses were made by Provost Charles



STEPHEN GREENE.

C. Harrison, of the University of Pennsylvania, City Solicitor John L. Kinsey, City Treasurer J. Hampton Moore, M. Riebenack, Prof. Albert H. Smyth, Stephen N. Winslow, Dr. William H. Greene, Frank E. Manning, James McCartney, William H. Scott and others.

In his response Mr. Greene began as follows: "It is impossible to express my profound sense of the honor conferred upon me by my friends of the craft and allied trades. That nature would indeed be cold and stoical which, after a period of fifty and four years in the strenuous pursuit of a noble profession, failed to respond to approval and congratulations on the results achieved. And, while grateful for kind recognition of the persistent efforts to elevate the craft by development of skill in the production of fine typographical work, and beautiful and artistic designs, I am deeply sensible of that kind assistance and consideration which has been so freely



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Foreign, \$1.20 per year extra.

THE AMERICAN ANNUALS.

FIRST PAPER.—BY CHARLES DEXTER ALLEN.



COLLECTORS of early American engravings have long known the American annual to be a treasure-house of good things. Those particularly interested in the work of John Cheney, easily in his time the leading American engraver and the first to attain the front rank, know that in two or three of these series notable examples of his delicate and charming engraving are to be found. Those familiar with the early history of Hawthorne's literary effort know that in the annuals some of his finest tales first met the public eye, and those whose investigations have carried them into certain special lines of research, and those whose eyes are keen for local ana, also know that the annuals contain much of lasting worth. To the general reader, however, who takes up one of these small volumes and looks it over, it is likely to appear as an outworn example of a literary style he considers happily distanced in the progress of American literature. Nevertheless, such writers as Longfellow, Poe, Lowell, Bryant, Sands, Willis, Verplanck, Irving and Holmes contributed to their pages, and found in them the first circulation for some of their writings. Indeed the collected works of one or two of these do not contain all the poems and tales written for the annuals.

It is true that the annual has been distanced, that its style is out-worn, that it could fill no place to-day. It came at a time when American writers were still eager for the approbation of England and when English critics continually squelched American writing and attempted to wring the neck of any small hope that dared to rear itself here and there, that an American literature was beginning.

To the immense activity of the closing quarter of the eighteenth century in political writing succeeded an age of magazines. Natural causes, increase of popula-

tion, the steadier movement of governmental matters, the acceptance of books as mailable matter, the increase of education, greater prosperity and the enterprise of publishers led to this new form of literary expression. It was an age of "Mirrors," "Repositories" and "Miscellanies." The survey of this periodical field yields little but weariness of spirit. A high purpose was claimed by nearly all the publishers; their periodicals were not trashy, but were intended to cultivate, uplift, civilize. Secular periodicals flourished side by side with the scientific and the theological, and all ministered in their way to what was considered the necessity of the time. Articles from the foreign magazines were freely borrowed and many books were promptly and cheaply reprinted here. The classics came out in American editions rapidly, and there were many books designed to influence the mind of the youth of both sexes toward right living. Admonition, advice, warning and pleading were conspicuous in the books written for the young. There seems to have been a general belief that writers were called to appeal to the young, and by horrible example and effective lament, win them to a certain something hard now to define or appreciate. Certainly the intention was good and the effect not by any means wholly bad; but that the desired result was greatly assisted by these strenuous literary means may be reasonably doubted.

Before the annual appeared, these things were somewhat bettered. Irving had a recognized place. Cooper had published "The Spy," and history and biography were furnishing material for meritorious work. The second quarter of the nineteenth century showed a great advance over its predecessor in the matter of literary appreciation and endeavor. Though a taste for better reading than that previously supplied by American writers was forming, the air was not clear of that prevailing sentiment that gushed over a falling leaf, a flying fowl, or a rain-drop, while the desire to instruct youth by the printed appeal, disguised in various ways, was still strong.

The vigilant publisher, looking to England for his