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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS

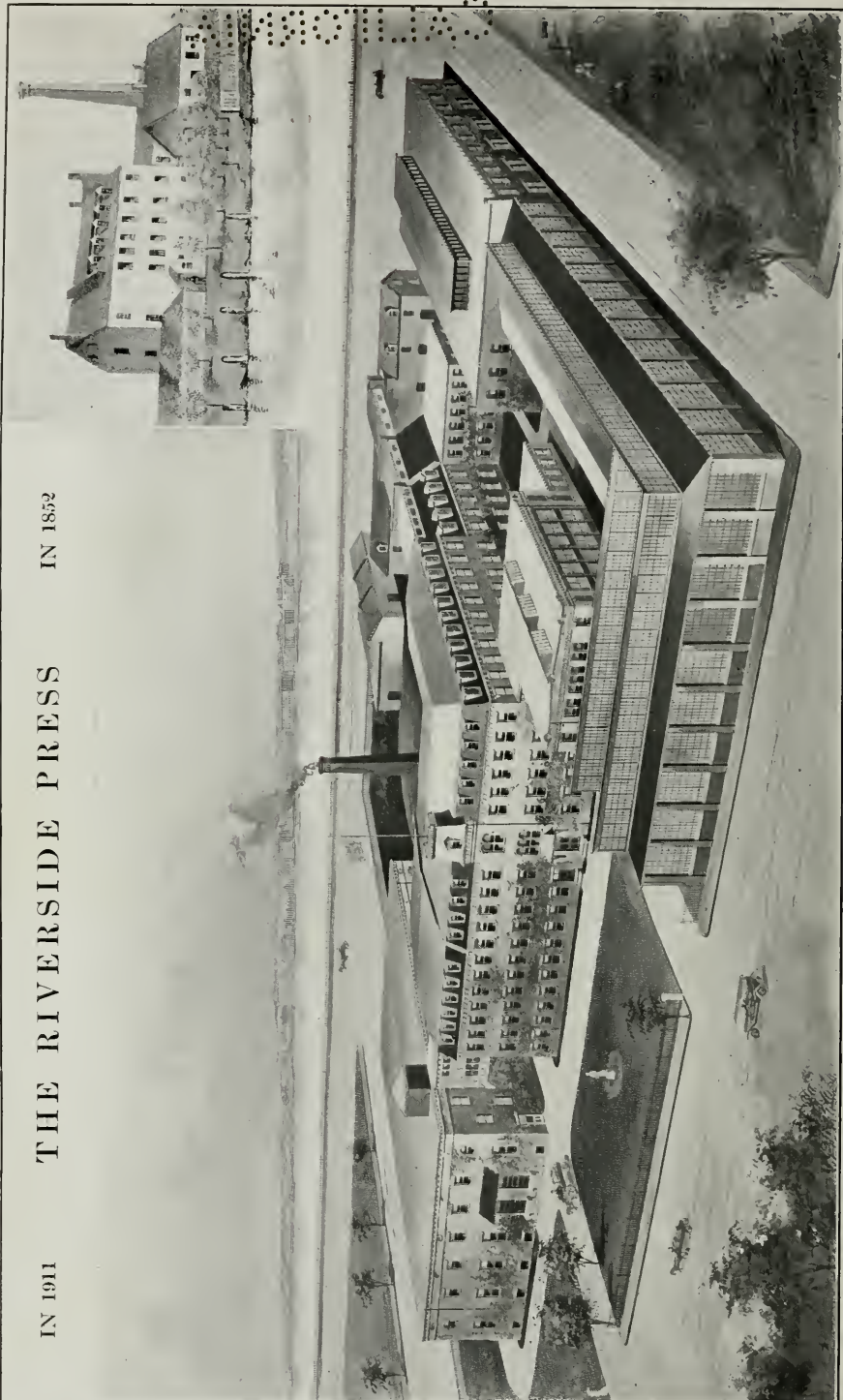


UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

IN 1911

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS

IN 1852



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The Riverside Press

“PRINTED at The Riverside Press” has gained so wide a distinction as a book imprint, and for almost sixty years has carried with it so high a reputation for maintaining the traditions of the great printers, that there is a host of book-lovers who would be glad to make a personal inspection of this famous printing establishment. Visitors are always welcome, but to those who live at a distance, and who cannot come in person, this little booklet will show where the complete writings of Aldrich, Emerson, Hawthorne, Holmes, Longfellow, Lowell, Mrs. Stowe, Thoreau, Whittier, and other more recent authors have been made into books.

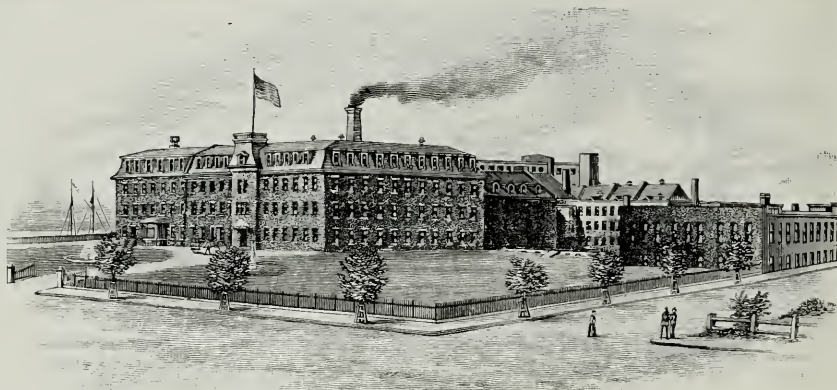
The Riverside Press of Houghton Mifflin Company is attractively situated on the banks of the Charles River, between Western Ave. and River St., Cambridge, Mass., where the business has been located since 1852, having previously been on Remington Street. It was founded by Henry O. Houghton, who was born in Sutton, Vt., in 1823. He began as a newspaper apprentice at the age of thirteen, worked his way through the University of Vermont, and became, during his forty-three years at the head of The Riverside Press, one of the most distinguished and successful American printers.

The grounds of the Press now comprise about four acres. The main buildings face east on Blackstone St., from which they are separated by well-kept lawns; and the Charles River Park system, soon to be completed, will furnish a wide roadway past the rear of the establishment.

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE RIVERSIDE PRESS IN 1880



THE RIVERSIDE PRESS IN 1902



STOCK BUILDING AND MAIN BUILDING, 1910

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



ENTRANCE AND MAIN BUILDING

The original building, a three-story structure of brick, sixty feet by forty, may still be distinguished in the midst of the group by its old-fashioned style and dormer windows. It is connected with the fire-proof warehouses that stand nearest the river, and forms an extension at the rear of the main building, which is four stories in height, and has a frontage on the east of one hundred and seventy feet, and an equal frontage on the north. On one side of this central group is a new Stock Building, and on the other a large building used for type-setting and dry-pressing, an Electrotypes Building, and a Press Building with a large new addition, while in the rear is a one-story brick safe for the storage of electrotypes plates, and a capacious engine and boiler house.

The distribution of material and apparatus and the organization of work in these buildings are planned to secure the least possible handling of books while in the process of manufacture, and the best conditions for healthy work on the part of the more than eight hundred employees. The separation of the plant from neighboring properties and its considerable open space give it a natural immunity from the danger of fire. Steam fire-pumps are always in readiness for use, and a very

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE OFFICES ON SECOND FLOOR OF MAIN BUILDING

complete outside tank and hydrant system gives adequate protection, in addition to that of the Cambridge Fire Department, with which the buildings are connected by an automatic alarm. The automatic sprinkler system is installed throughout, and a fire brigade, composed of eighty employees, is kept in constant training. In one of the buildings is a machine shop where a force of machinists is employed in making necessary repairs and alterations. There is also a large paper warehouse in which some five hundred tons of printing paper are usually on hand. In this connection, some idea of the size of the business may be gained from the fact that the Press uses from 2000 to 3000 tons of paper a year.

The large and sunny offices occupy the second floor of the eastern wing of the main building. Here the heads of the various departments, with their corps of assistants, clerks, book-keepers, cashiers, and stenographers, have their desks. On one of the walls hangs a three-quarters-length portrait of Mr. Henry O. Houghton, Senior, painted by Robert Gordon Hardie in 1895, and presented to the Press by its founder. Leaving the counting-rooms, let us follow the manufacture of a book in all its stages.

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



MONOTYPE KEYBOARDS

After the selection of a suitable style of type and size of page, the manuscripts are put into type either by machine or by the old method of hand-setting. For rapid, regular work the machines are generally used, and to the uninitiated their operation is little short of marvelous. They are the latest models of the Lanston Monotype, and consist of a keyboard and a casting mechanism. The keyboard is operated very much like a typewriter, but instead of printing letters it simply makes perforations in a roll of paper which indicate the type character that is to be made by the caster. Compressed air, passing through the perforated rolls, directs the movements of the casting machine in the casting and setting of the type. Unlike the linotype, which casts in lines, the monotype casts the individual type, which, after it leaves the machines, is handled in the ordinary way and may be corrected by hand. These machines are in the north wing of the main building, connected with which is a new two-story building, finished in 1909, and especially designed for the use of the hand-compositors and the proof-readers. Well lighted and away from the noise of the machinery, this building furnishes almost ideal conditions. Some work still requires hand-composition, and the equipment

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE NEW COMPOSING-ROOM BUILDING

here provided consists of a large variety of type in all styles and sizes, besides many special and unusual characters. All proofs are taken on hand presses and are read by the proof-readers before they are submitted to the authors. The work of these proof-readers is of great importance, and only men and women of high intelligence can properly perform this work, which requires patience, care, and long educational and technical training. They are responsible for the correction of all misspelling, grammatical errors, mistakes in punctuation, the misuse of type, and other details. In fact, the prestige and success of any press is in no small measure due to the high efficiency of its proof-readers. They are often of great assistance to authors in pointing out faulty construction, repetition of words and phrases, and even, at times, errors of fact.

After the type is set, it is made up into pages, and when all the corrections of both proof-readers and author have been incorporated, the pages are locked up in iron chases and taken to the Electrotyping Department. An impression of them is made in wax and this wax mould is coated with graphite and placed in a bath of copper sulphate through

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE NEW COMPOSING-ROOM



A CORNER IN THE OLD COMPOSING-ROOM

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE ELECTROTYPE-ROOM

which is run an electric current. Here the copper fills in every crevice in the wax and forms an exact reproduction of the type. This thin shell of copper is then backed up with metal, making what is known as an electrotype plate, with a surface much harder than the face of the lead type and capable with careful handling of giving an almost unlimited number of clear impressions when placed on the printing-press.

These plates are then taken to the Electrotype Finishing-Room, where they are prepared for the presses. This process is one which requires great skill, for the surface must be perfectly even and smooth, and if any typographical errors or imperfections remain they must be corrected in the plate. Consequently, each page is examined by experts from another set of proofs (called plate proofs), which show the final state of the book before it goes to press.

During 1910 the accommodations of the Press Building were greatly enlarged by the addition of a new L-shaped building extending 228 feet to and 122 feet along Blackstone Street. It is a single story structure with large steel-sash windows on all sides and having

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



THE NEW PRESS-ROOM BUILDING



NORTH WING OF THE NEW PRESS-ROOM

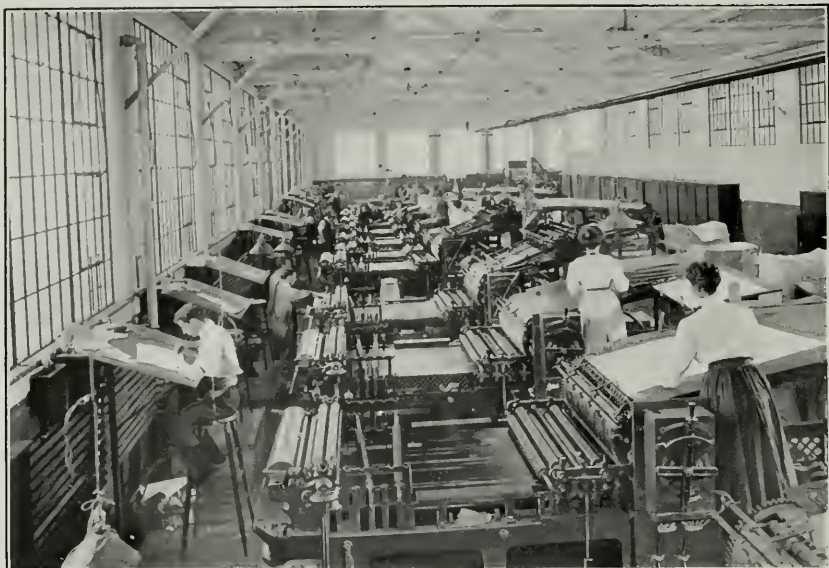


SOUTH WING OF THE NEW PRESS-ROOM

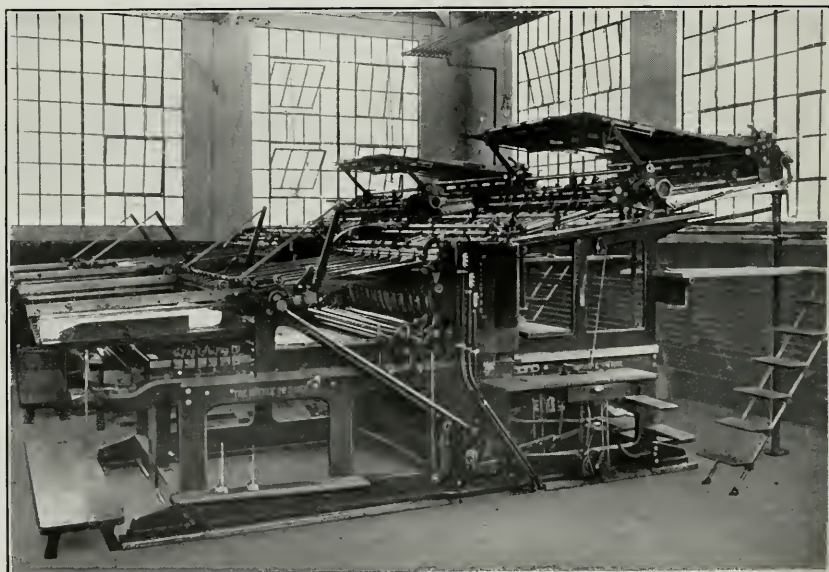


ADAMS PRESS-ROOM

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



A ROW OF CYLINDER PRESSES



TWO OF THE LARGE SIZE CYLINDER PRESSES EQUIPPED WITH
AUTOMATIC FEEDERS

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS

a saw-tooth roof, so that the maximum of daylight is assured. In the old and new buildings there are over 60 presses constantly running. They vary in size and in make, and are used according to the special conditions required in a general printing-house where a great variety of work is turned out. There are big presses on which are printed large editions of books in great demand, and others adapted for the smallest job work. In the new building where the large cylinder presses are placed, each press is equipped with an electric motor; and all such modern inventions as automatic feeders, appliances for neutralizing the electricity in the paper, and so forth, are utilized for gaining the best results. The building was designed so that by setting the presses on a concrete foundation all possible vibration could be avoided.

The Adams and job press-rooms are in the old Press Building, together with the make-up rooms, cut rooms, etc. The Adams presses, smaller and slower running than the cylinder presses, are used for printing the smaller editions, and much of the finest letter-press work is done on them; nearly all the work is printed on dampened paper. One of the distinctive features of this building is the private apartment for the women press-feeders. This is a cheerful, well-lighted room, provided with suitable furniture, where the women may occupy themselves with sewing, conversation, or lunch in the intervals of the work.

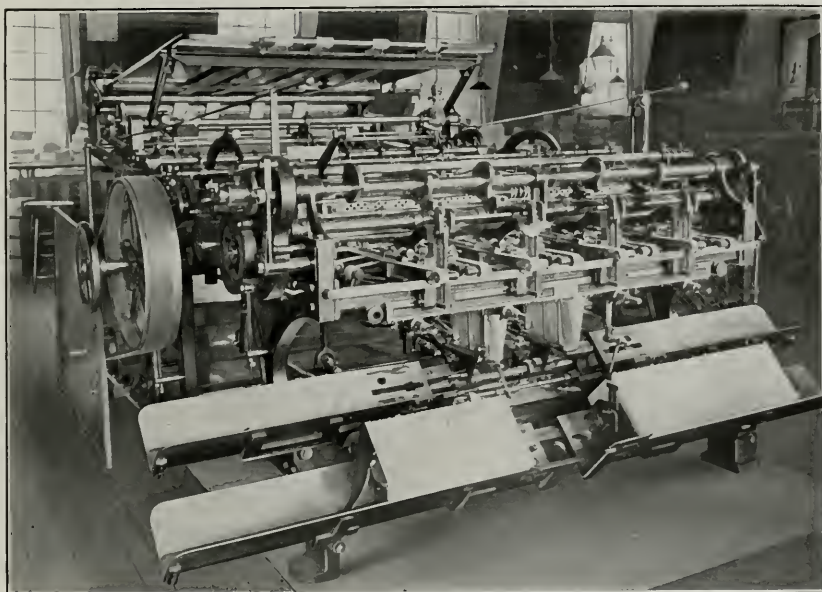
The plates ready for printing are taken through a subway which connects the main building with the press-rooms. They are made up into forms of eight pages or multiples and placed on the bed of a suitable press. The ink is carried over the face of the plates by rollers. The paper is supplied either by hand or by a mechanical feeder, and after going through the press and receiving the impression, it emerges at the opposite end, printed on one side. The same routine applies to the other side of the sheet. The famous printers of the old days found that by moistening the paper before printing on it, a clearer, better impression of the type was made, and in the highest grade of letter-press work done at Riverside this process is still in vogue, although it involves additional work and expense.

After sufficient time for the ink to dry, the sheets are generally put

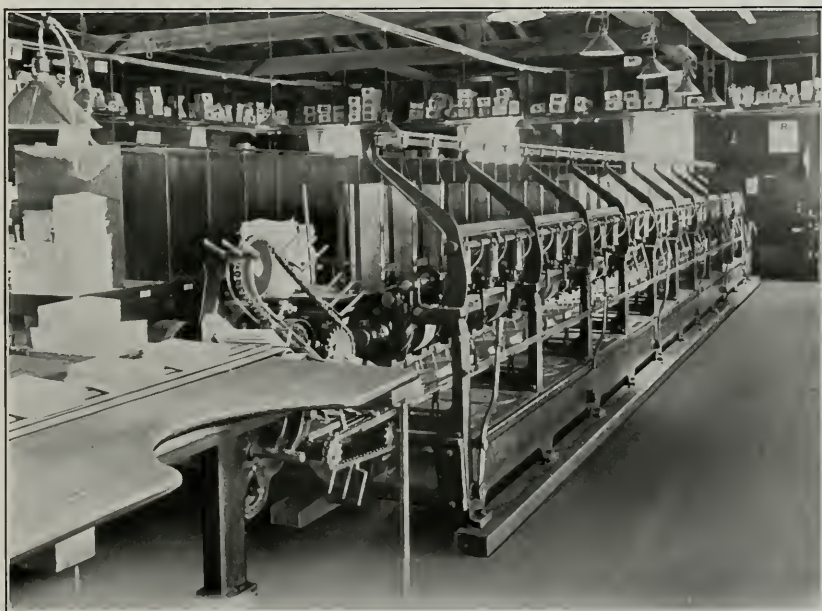


NEW DRY-PRESS ROOM

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



A QUAD FOLDING MACHINE



THE GATHERING MACHINE

THE RIVERSIDE PRESS



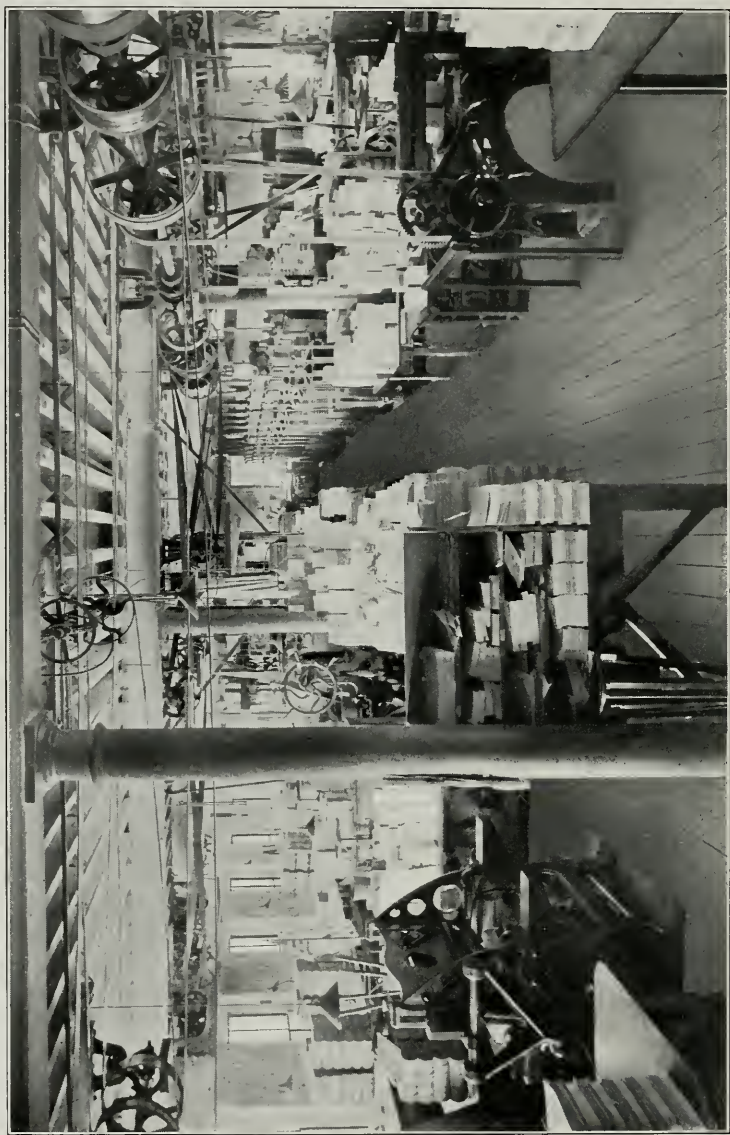
THE COVER-STAMPING ROOM

under heavy hydraulic pressure to remove the indentation. This is done in the Dry-Press Room, a large room occupying the lower floor of the Composing Building, adjacent to the Press-Rooms, and it is from here that the sheets are taken to the Bindery for the final step in book-making.

The Bindery, which occupies a large part of the main building, turns out from 10,000 to 15,000 books a day, and there are no fewer than 62 machines and 40 presses for the various stages of the work. Here the sheets, upon which there may be as many as 128 printed pages, are folded automatically by the folding machines. These separate folded sheets, or signatures as they are called, are then gathered into their proper sequence by one of the latest inventions, a gathering machine. To secure compactness, the books are then subjected to a quick, sharp pressure, and are ready for sewing, which is done by machines especially adapted to all sizes of books. The edges are trimmed, and then gilded or marbled if that is required, after which each book is rounded to conform to the general custom for shape, and "backed," that is, a little ridge is made on each side of the back to hold the covers more securely in place. It is then ready for the covers.



THE SEWING-ROOM



THE FORWARD-ROOM

The book covers may be divided into two classes, cloth and leather bindings. The cloth covers are made on machines which automatically glue the cloth and fold it around the cardboard sides, already cut to the proper size. It will doubtless surprise most visitors to learn that fully 280 large barrels of glue and paste are used every year at Riverside in book-making. Any design or lettering can be printed upon the cloth, while, if gold is used, it is laid on by hand, after the covers are prepared by "sizing" to make the gold leaf adhere to the surface of the cloth when stamped with heated dies. More than \$25,000 worth of gold leaf is put on the bindings and edges of books every year in this department. The last step in book-making comes when the books, properly shaped, are pasted securely to the covers and put under pressure until dry and ready for sale.

In the case of the leather bindings a great many steps are required, and it is an interesting fact to note that the processes now in vogue are practically the same as they have been for generations, modern machine methods being possible in only a very few stages of the work. The important thing to bear in mind about leather bindings is that the cover becomes an integral part of the book itself, for the tapes or strings on which the book is sewed are worked into the cover before the leather is drawn on. Hand-tooling is necessary to get a sufficient brilliancy into the gold designs on leather, and where these designs are elaborate, there are so many different tools used that it may easily take a skillful finisher an entire day to do the panels on the back of a single volume. There is a special department under an artist expert where the highest grade of fine leather binding is done, and its work is generally considered among the best in America.

One of the old buildings on the river bank has been remodeled and refitted for the production of the beautifully printed books issued in limited Riverside Press Editions, which have met with the warmest and most sincere commendation from book-lovers, collectors, and critics of both literature and art. With its walls of brick, large, heavily mullioned windows, and open-timbered roof, this room presents something of the attractiveness of the earlier printing establishments, before the advent of machinery. This attraction, however, is due almost wholly to the



THE MAILING-ROOM

substantial and workmanlike character of the fittings, and is not the result of any effort to create an effect. Here some of the methods of the old-time printers are being employed. The only machines are the heavy hand-presses upon which occasional volumes of the Riverside Press Editions are printed, for many of these books are printed wholly by hand, and often directly from the types, and not from electrotype plates.

There is no other trade in which the traditions and tastes hark back to first principles to the extent that obtains in book-making. This is one reason why the personnel of The Riverside Press is far above the average of a factory. Here the old-time custom of apprenticeship, under which some of the world's best printers learned their trade, is still in vogue. Long service is the rule, several employees having had records of more than fifty years, while not a few others have been employed for thirty or forty years. It is not uncommon to find succeeding generations of one family represented in the different departments. Nearly every branch of the work requires a high degree of intelligence and education. A spirit of sympathy and assistance in time of trouble and distress, especially indicated by the Riverside Press Mutual Benefit Association, results in good feeling which contributes to the happiness of those con-



SHIPPING-ROOM, STOCK BUILDING

nected with the business. Rarely does any one give up his position except for reasons that make such a step unavoidable. Loyalty to Riverside on the part of employers and employed is a characteristic feature, conducive to good work and the comfort and happiness of all.

The large increase in the publishing business of Houghton Mifflin Company during the last ten years, and the yearly addition of about 150 new books to their list of over 4000 titles, necessitated the erection in 1908 of a new building, 117 feet by 68 feet, for shipping and storage purposes. It has space for over two million bound books and a stock of three quarters of a million is constantly on hand, including a large supply of Webster's International Dictionary, which for almost fifty years has been printed and bound at The Riverside Press for G. & C. Merriam Company of Springfield, Mass. It also contains a large Shipping-Room, with the necessary offices and with facilities for filling all orders with great promptness. The Mailing-Room, from which the *Atlantic Monthly* and other magazines, circulars, and mail orders for books are sent out, is on the ground floor of the main building next to the Shipping-Room. In the fire-proof warehouses near the river are stored from two to three million books in sheet form ready to be bound whenever needed.

Within the last few years The Riverside Press has nearly doubled its capacity without impairing the high quality of its work. It is one of the largest printing establishments in the country; for, besides taking care of the publications of Houghton Mifflin Company, it handles a large amount of outside work for other publishing houses, commercial concerns, and private individuals. Houghton Mifflin Company now have in their employ nearly one thousand people, including those at Riverside, at the main office in Boston, and at the branch offices in New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Chicago, Seattle, and San Francisco. The Press motto, "*Tout bien ou rien*," which was chosen many years ago, is followed faithfully by employees and employers alike.



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