

HENRY LEWIS BULLEN, 1857-1938

An earlier photograph of the well loved authority on printing matters, taken in the incomparable Typographic Library and Museum which he founded and developed



The **OLD** **MAESTRO** **LEAVES**

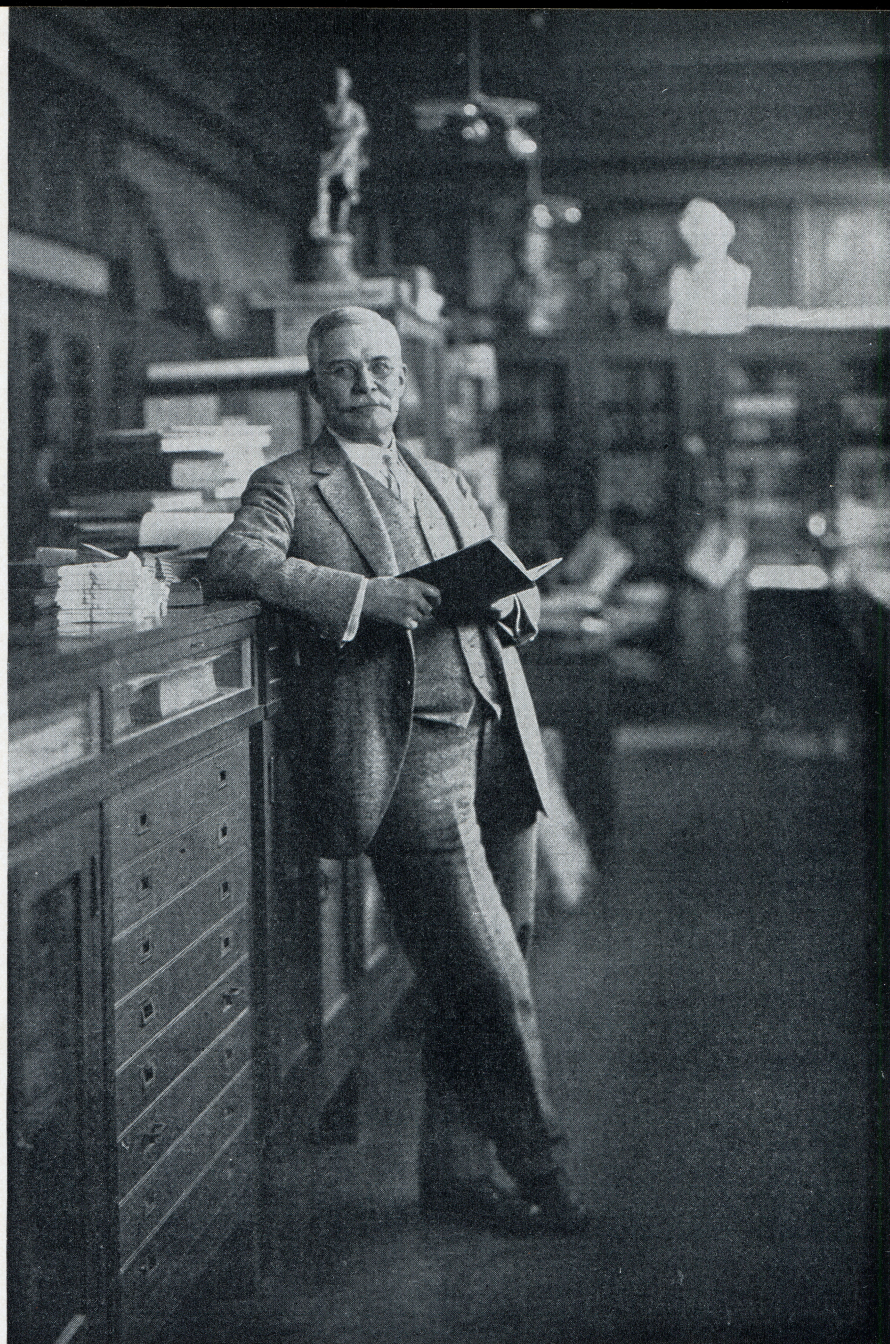
By **Stephen H. Horgan**

HENRY LEWIS BULLEN, founder of the largest library of books relating to printing ever collected, has been relieved from his unceasing labor by death, passing from this life early Wednesday morning, April 27. His extraordinary will power kept him working for months after his physical strength proved unequal to the task. The training he received as a boy in Australia was responsible for his indomitable will and his determination not to quit while there was work to be done.

Few printers, probably, can realize fully the debt the industry as a whole owes to Henry Lewis Bullen. Through his writing and lecturing, and his constant delving into the early records of printing, Henry Bullen did more than any other one man to create recognition and increase appreciation of printing as a cultural art. Through his founding and building up of the

Typographic Library and Museum of the American Type Founders, at Jersey City, New Jersey—now housed in Columbia University—he laid the foundation on which many others have carried on research into the early records of printing, and provided the inspiration for much future study.

From the more coldly practical and commercial viewpoint, Henry Bullen gave the printing industry many features which meant increased efficiency in printing-plant operation, and provided the impetus for others to carry forward the development of efficiency devices. He did much to further recognition of the importance of education in printing and of devoting more thought and attention to the proper training of apprentices; and many are those who have benefited from the kindly advice, counsel, and encouragement, as well as guidance they received from him.



Born at Ballarat, Australia, September 18, 1857, Henry Lewis Bullen was apprenticed at the age of fourteen in an enterprising printery where he learned typesetting and presswork, with lithography and bookbinding on the side. This gave him an appetite for more knowledge; eventually he became addicted to printing. At the age of eighteen, ambitious to learn all there was about his craft, he came to America, regarding it as the land of opportunity, which it proved to be.

Arriving in New York City from Australia in 1875, he was surprised to find so many printers, and especially to find that some of them were unemployed, for he had left a country where printers were in demand. So he went to Davenport, Iowa, where he heard printers were wanted. Those were free and easy days, as John T. Nolf records so well in his cartoons; they were easy days for making friends, and Bullen

was always a companionable fellow. He had heard much about St. Louis, and the Mississippi stern-wheelers intrigued him, so he went to St. Louis and worked there for a while.

Newspapers were heralding the Centennial Exhibition, so he once more pulled up stakes and arrived in Philadelphia on the day the great fair opened. He found employment immediately with Allen, Lane, and Scott. When the exhibition closed, he turned his face to New York City, stopping off at Trenton, New Jersey. He got work there, but a year later left for New York City, where he was employed as a journeyman compositor for a couple of years. His energy, sobriety, and general knowledge of printing gave him confidence that he would find employment anywhere.

Boston was still the "City of Culture" in 1880, so he went there and found work with George H. Ellis, and later with Thomas Todd. In 1883 he was secured by Golding and Company, becoming manager of its printing-material department, also serving as advertising manager and salesman, and remaining until 1888, when he left to fulfill a three-year contract in Australia as manager of the printing-material department of Alexander Cowan and Company. Henry Bullen returned to the United States in 1891, and entered the employ of the American Type Founders Company as manager of the New York City branch in 1892. He was then thirty-five years old. At the time of his death he was the oldest living employe of that company.

During all these years Henry Bullen was a persistent student of printing. As a young man in New York City he could be seen during his spare hours in the library of Cooper Union, the New York Typographical Society Library, and the old Astor Library, and in the Boston libraries when in that city. One of his sayings to apprentices, whom it gave him great pleasure to address, was: "The greatest dividends of life come from wise use of one's leisure."

Through the wise use of his own leisure time Henry Bullen became an unusual judge of the value of books on printing and its kindred arts. In this few could excel him, for he knew type design, typesetting, type-page makeup, printing inks, and illustration printing. As a salesman he gained an extensive knowledge of and training in papermaking and paper suitability.

Consequently he was more than a librarian and curator of books; he was

a bibliographer who could trace the science of bookmaking through all the ages down to the latest invention. He read and studied this science so thoroughly that, gifted with an extraordinary memory, he became a living encyclopedia on printing. The bibliophile, "one who loves books," was well illustrated in the manner in which Henry Bullen handled a book. He would take it so lovingly from its dust-sealed steel bookcase, touching its back and sides with reverence, and when he had opened to the proper page he would pat it gently as if it were a living thing.

There were few printing trade journals when, in the early nineties, *THE INLAND PRINTER* began to show signs of becoming the leading business and printing trade journal of the world. Its success gave Bullen as much pleasure as if he had owned it. Notwithstanding his intensely busy life during the day, he gave his evenings, far into the night, preparing articles for *THE INLAND PRINTER*. These articles, if collected, would make volumes crammed with historic, instructive facts that should make every printer prouder of his craft, which, as Bullen said in so many ways, "is the one occupation absolutely necessary to the intellectual life of mankind."

The following are a few of the titles of his literary contributions to *THE INLAND PRINTER*, published serially: "Discussions of a Retired Printer," 1906-1907; "The Literature of Typography," 1912-1916; "Collectanea Typographica," 1918-1925 and 1928-1931; "Biographies of Famous Printers," 1920-1922; "A Retrospect of Forty Fruitful Years," 1923; "Advent of Type-composing Machines," 1924. Mr. Bullen's sketch of Theodore Low De Vinne (July, 1922), with its admirable portrait frontispiece, should be reprinted as a monograph. It presents Henry Bullen's literary style at its best.

A few monographs, of which Mr. Bullen was author, are: "The Nuremberg Chronicle," printed by John Henry Nash, San Francisco, 1930; "Theodore L. De Vinne," 1915; "Nicholaus Jenson, Printer of Venice," 1926; "Printing and Civilization," 1923; "The Psychology of Printing Types," 1931; "The Greatness of Benjamin Franklin and Pictorial Life of Benjamin Franklin," 1923. Mr. Bullen cultivated what has been termed the classic period of type design by advocating Caslon, Cloister Old Style, and Garamond types. He

was inventor of the Little Giant brass rule and lead cutter, as well as the Standard composing stick, besides designing cut-cost and quick-job systems of composing-room equipment.

It was searching for early printing history under difficulty that inspired Henry Bullen with the idea that, as there are law libraries, medical libraries, engineering libraries, and so on through the various professions, so too should printing, the source of all libraries, and without which present libraries would be impossible, have an adequate one of its own. How cleverly he accomplished this through an anonymous article in *THE INLAND PRINTER* for July, 1906, was told in these pages for October, 1936, with a portrait of Mr. Bullen in his library.

The last writing Mr. Bullen did was a catalog of duplicate books offered for sale before removal of the library. In the introduction to this catalog Mr. Bullen wrote: "In 1908 the third president of the American Type Founders Company, Robert Wickham Nelson, was persuaded by Henry Lewis Bullen that it was the duty of the big type company to establish a Typographic Library and Museum in honor of the great and growing industry, and for its advancement. Mr. Nelson was brought to this state of mind by an anonymous article that Bullen wrote for *THE INLAND PRINTER*, which appeared in the issue for July, 1906. So effectual was this article that Mr. Nelson took up the project immediately with great enthusiasm, and convinced the board of directors that the idea was a sound one. Finally, in 1908, this Library and Museum was officially recognized. Nelson was a far-sighted man and became very proud of this Typographic Library and Museum. The idea and its plan was Bullen's, but no one knows better than Bullen that this Library would not have been the most extensive and best in the world if Nelson had not given it support."

The present writer was associated with Robert W. Nelson from 1884 to 1901 and dined with him frequently before his death in 1926. On more than one occasion he expressed the hope that the Library would be permanently located in New York City. It is at present housed in Columbia University. I was honored December 7, 1936, by a request to introduce Mr. Bullen to an audience at Columbia by telling something of his life work. Mr. Bullen, in the address which followed, expressed himself as being

happy that this collection of books on printing was so well located and in the care of a librarian like Dr. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, a great authority on printing and typographic literature with whom he would feel honored to carry on the work.

Mr. Bullen was fortunate in the companionship of his wife, Grace, who cared for his health when he paid little attention to food or barely took time for his meals, and who was tireless in nursing him in illness. She is of English birth, with an education that includes several languages, so that she was a most valuable collaborator as well as assistant in translations and while traveling abroad. She typed his manuscript, and assisted him with the enormous amount of correspondence he was continually receiving from all parts of the world.

Funeral services for Henry Lewis Bullen were conducted from the Universal Funeral Chapel, New York City, on Friday, April 29. The services were in charge of Bruno A. Menzer, the first apprentice and for nine years a teacher in the School for Printers' Apprentices and the New York School of Printing, to which the late Charles Francis and Mr. Bullen gave so much of their time and attention.

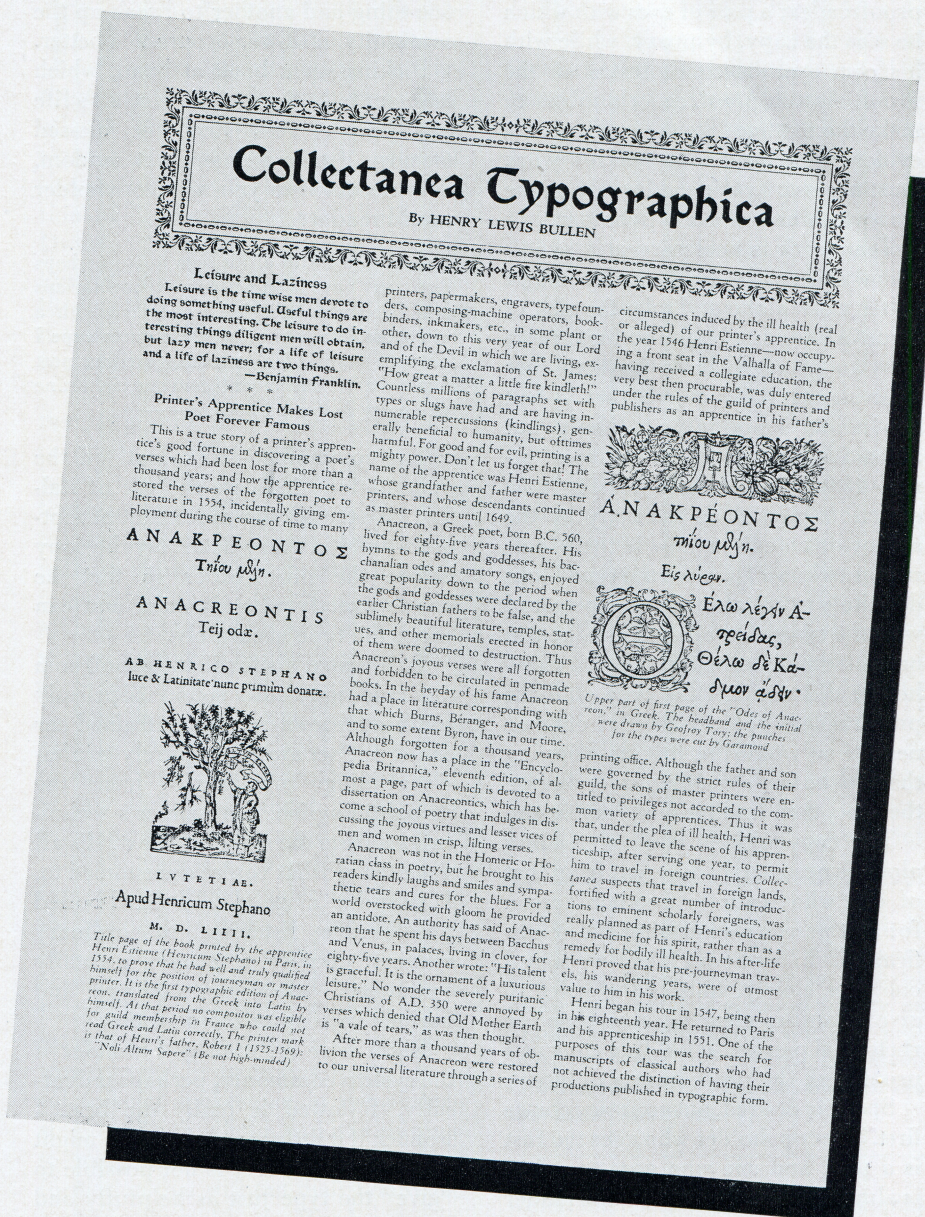
It was his desire that the services be simple, and that there be no religious rites, and his devotion to printing was demonstrated by his request that the Fust and Schoeffer printers' mark, now adopted as the emblem of the Printing House Craftsmen, be graved on his tombstone, with "Henry Lewis Bullen, Printer" under it. This request has been carried out by Mrs. Bullen.

The Craftsmen's Invocation was read at the services. Written by Mr. Bullen for THE INLAND PRINTER a number of years ago, and at his suggestion used as a frontispiece in a specially designed border embodying early printers' marks as the motif—the original drawing being later presented by THE INLAND PRINTER to the Craftsmen's clubs—this Invocation was read by Alfred Black, a leader in the Ethical Culture Society of New York.

Many prominent leaders in the graphic arts and other fields were present at the services to pay tribute to Mr. Bullen, among them being Henry W. Kent, president of the American Institute of Graphic Arts and secretary of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; John Clyde Oswald; C. Frank Crawford, chairman for many years of

the Arbitration Committee of the Federation of Graphic Industries; Edward Epstein, former president of the New York Photoengravers Board of Trade; Valentine Crawford, representing President Howard of the International Typographical Union; Clarence Marder, O. Schraubstadter, Robert Stephen, O. Alfred Dickman, Murtin

"a man who has made a contribution of lasting value to American culture and scholarship. As librarian, collector, curator, and scholar, and, earlier, as advertising manager and head of the engineering department of American Type Founders, Bullen has perhaps done more than any other man in America to impart a conscious-



A page from Henry Lewis Bullen's department, "Collectanea Typographica," which appeared in THE INLAND PRINTER (1918-1925, 1928-1931). Its scholarship and charm were widely famed

Springer; Joseph P. Matthews, presswork instructor, Board of Education; John A. Tennant, editor, *New Photo-Miniature*; and many others. Numerous telegrams and cables of condolence were received by Mrs. Bullen from over this country as well as from many points abroad.

Henry Lewis Bullen has gone, but his work lives on. In a special issue published in 1935, *PM*, a journal for production managers, paid tribute to

ness of the great traditions of the printing arts. . . . His contribution to the graphic arts is invaluable; he is, as scholar-printer-historian, an outstanding example of a man who has not done a work but a deed."

Henry Lewis Bullen's life and work will stand as a monument to the man himself, and as a continual source of inspiration to those aspiring to higher development in the more cultural and esthetic phases of the art of printing.