

was to be the presiding genius, with *carte blanche* as to expense. Nothing, however, could tempt Plantin from the city of his adoption, and this noble offer was also declined.

Reverting to our account of the museum, a few lines must suffice to notice the valuable collection of Sèvres, Chinese, and Japanese porcelain. Some years ago a well-known amateur, distracted by the beauty of six cups and saucers in *porcelaine verte de chine*, offered Mr. Moretus 15,000 francs for the set, but in vain; and these cups, which 50*l.* each, would not buy, still grace the Plantin Museum. The valuable cabinets of medals and the collection of minerals must be only mentioned, for we have still to pass through

V. The Printing-offices.—In the composing-room, which is capitably lighted by side windows, stand numerous frames, the cases still heavy with the types cast centuries ago in the adjoining foundry. The *visorium* still holds the “copy” in the position easiest for the workmen; the composing-sticks with the types still in them, the matter standing in the galleys ready to be made up, the forms leaning against the wall ready for press—all serve to delude the visitor into the belief that it is merely “dinner-time,” and that soon the hum of business will re-animate the empty rooms. The press-room has the same air of intermitted work, although out of the seventeen presses, which in 1576 were seen at work by De Thou, only five now remain. Two of these are as old as the sixteenth century, and all but one, which is used for the purposes of the museum administration, are unfit for work.

But what have we here in all these curiously-carved old cabinets, a single one of which would make a Soho dealer famous? Shelves upon shelves of woodcuts, over 15,000, illustrating three centuries of the engraver’s art. All sizes of floriated initials, “blooming capitals” as the Dutch called them; an infinity of head and tail-pieces, vignettes, printer’s marks, and what the French style *culs de lampes*. One