know that there are many subscribers of the “B.B.” who will be pleased to see the above heading.

In this busy age, when competition is so keen, it behoves a workman, if he has a modicum of common sense, to be ever on the look out for opportunities of adding to his stock of knowledge. Knowledge is a very useful commodity, and once acquired is easily carried from place to place. He would, indeed, be a very foolish man who, having learned one branch of the trade, is therewith content; fancying that he has gained sufficient knowledge to provide for his wants and carry him safely through life. I have met with such men, but happily they are rare. If we want to succeed in this world we must learn all we can. We ought never to lose an opportunity to add to that knowledge by which we earn our daily bread. We see and hear a good deal about the division of labour in our trade, and in most large shops it is often carried to an extreme, not only are the two branches—letterpress and stationery—kept separate, but all the various processes are individualised, so to speak, and each set apart to one man or a set of men. These things are no doubt necessary under certain circumstances. I have no inclination at present to discuss the pros and cons of the case; enough for us to know that such a state of things does exist. But when a man has to shift from one place to another, as we all have to do some time in our life, he will have a double chance if he has an “all-round knowledge.”

In the course of conversation with a good stationery binder not long ago, while admiring his work I asked him whether he had had any experience in letterpress work, he answered “Well, I have done a little, but I would like to have a few years in a good letterpress shop.” I trust he will get his wish gratified, as he had the right spirit. But enough. It is to help those who are willing to help themselves that I have undertaken the task of bringing this subject before the readers of this magazine.

One word more: I shall confine myself as closely as possible to workshop practice. I will use the technical language of the trade and will write as a binder to binders. I also invite criticism, and if anyone knows of a better method than the one expressed by which to arrive at a certain result, I trust he will send it for publication in the correspondence column.

The term “stationery binding” is a very wide one, and may be roughly stated to include everything in the shape of a book that is not actually readable matter. The 3/4d. tally book and the banker’s ledger are alike included in the terms.

Account book, or writing papers, as they are called, are made in different sizes and qualities. With the qualities we have but little to do, although it is not unusual for a binder to be able to tell good paper from bad when he sees it. Under ordinary circumstances it is imperative that we should know the sizes. I subjoin a table of the most useful, giving dimensions in inches and the usual weight per ream.

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<tr>
<td>Pot</td>
<td>15 × 12½</td>
<td>10 lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foolscap</td>
<td>17 × 13½</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>19 × 15½</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Post</td>
<td>20½ × 16½</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demy</td>
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<td>25</td>
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Some of these sizes for convenience sake are somewhat modified, as, for instance, we have “foolscap” made twice the usual size, and we call it “double foolscap.” One half is added to the sheet and is called “sheet and half,” in like manner we have “sheet and third,” etc., etc.

All papers are capable of being cut and folded in a variety of forms, hence we have the terms “broad folio,” “long folio,” 4to, 8vo, 16mo, 9mo, 6to, 12mo, and many others. There are many other terms applied to paper, such as “hand-made,” “machine-made,” “cream laid,” “blue laid,” “cream wove,” “yellow wove,” but I do not feel justified in doing anything more than merely mentioning them. Every man in a binding shop, whatever his position, ought to make himself thoroughly conversant with these things. It is like the A B C of the trade and should be learned, for without such knowledge many a serious mistake is made. I have seen a cutter for instance, who, although a fair workman, if he had been given a ream of paper with the instructions to cut it up oblong 4to, could not really do it unless a sheet had been folded or marked up for him.

The first operation of any importance is that of ruling the paper. Of course, strictly speaking, “paper ruling” has nothing to do with “binding,” but it is very closely allied thereto, both are often going on at the same time under the same roof, and many a time a rular is asked to fill in his time at binding, and if a binder is a bit slack it will be to his advantage if he can do a little ruling, even although it is only “feint lines.” However, I have decided to begin with ruling.

The first thing that a rular should do when he has opened his ream of paper is to look it over. I don’t mean that he is to lift it sheet by sheet and examine it closely, but just to turn it up at the sides and let it fall again gradually, keeping his eyes upon it at the same time and thus satisfy himself that it is all right. If the job is worth it, that is if it is good paper, I would advise him to keep the “watermark” all lying in the one direction, and when he comes to rule it make
THE BRITISH BOOKMAKER.

the top of the "watermark" the head of the paper. Although it may not be generally known, there is an
outside and inside top and bottom to a sheet of paper, and in ruling "bill-heads" or "memo forms" I would rule the side on which the "watermark" appeared when held up to the light.

After having looked over the paper the ruler goes to the cutting machine to "trim it round," or cut it to size as the case may be. When cutting for bookwork take care that there is left a trimming for the binder. A good method by which it is always possible to get your paper square, which is a sine qua non, is to cut first one of the long edges: take only sufficient to trim it, turn round the paper and place this cut edge evenly, taking care to keep the paper from shifting or twisting in any way, along one of the lines upon the back table of the machine. I am speaking of the ordinary guillotine; leaving below the knife one of the narrow edges, take a trimming off this. You can now use the guide or back-guage of the machine for the other two edges. It requires a good deal of care to cut a job at the machine. The great point is to have your paper well "knocked up," and while handling take care to keep it square and well pressed up to the guide. If the paper has a thick edge, which is often the case, fold up a piece of wrapper or take a few narrow cuttings and lay it upon the paper past the edge before bringing down the platen, this will obviate the bulging of the paper outwards when the pressure is applied.

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Xylonite for Bookbinding.

XYLOLITE is a material but little known in the bookbinding trade, yet it has points that need but to be explained to bring it into much more general use than it has hitherto been. It is not exactly new, though binders have used it for little else than tablets, but a firm in Ireland has executed some large orders for Catholic work in this material, much of which has gone to America. What it is composed of I am not prepared to say, further than that it has a base of paper, and is made in sheets of any thickness, from the 1/10th of an inch up to one inch, the usual size being 35-inches by 20. It is sold by weight at $1.25 per pound, or for the best "grained ivory" 5/-, and its cheapness may be easily calculated by saying that 18-inches (superficial) by 1-inch thick weighs as nearly as possible one pound.

In texture xylonite is close and compact, without any grain, except the best variety which is veined rather than grained. It may be flexible or stiff, with a highly polished surface, or rough, and though highly inflammable when brought into direct contact with fire, will stand a moderate heat in the blocking press without shrivelling. It is hard enough to retain form, yet it cuts easily and cleanly with no tendency to tear, either in the board machine or shears, and it can be carved with ordinary carving tools.

The forms best suited for bookbinding are the following:

A thin unpolished kind mainly used for tablets, can also be used as end papers for many books in which it is desirable to have some material for note taking, and is very convenient, as the pencil marks can be easily obliterated.

Another kind, known as one-line flexible xylonite, is in imitation of ivory, with a beautifully polished surface, and is so thin and pliable that it may be used for covering, and turned in like leather, yet without cracking up the joint. Of course the joint goes in time, but it wears fairly well. It is better to bind with a white leather back, using the xylonite for the sides only, but as it may be turned in no rim is necessary.

The "grained ivory" is the most beautiful imitation of the real material, both in the creamy white colour and the veins, and would deceive any but good judges. This can be bought in sheets of similar thickness to ordinary ivory as used on sides of books, and should be especially useful now that ivory has reached an almost prohibitive price.

Besides these forms xylonite is worked up into book sides and backs already for binders. The bevelled sides however differ in this respect: being moulded rather than bevelled, to secure lightness, the under side is hollowed out in proportion to the bevel. We have some very fine samples before us with sunk oval centres, having a raised one line or dotted line inside the oval, and in the centre a Latin cross, with a delicate spray of ivy leaves in the closest imitation of carving ivory work. Others have a cross and lilies, or a cross with the sacred heart, and other catholic emblems, but the cross with the ivy leaves is the prettiest, and the design is repeated in several sizes, from diamond 48-mos upward. The front side in this style, back plainly bevelled, and a rounded back for the smaller size, cost but 8/- per dozen sets, while a real carved ivory would probably cost about 10/- for the one set.

The difficulty of moulding the xylonite is too great for binders to attempt that work for themselves as the material has to be softened by steam, and special machinery used into which steam is forced during the moulding, the dies being very costly, but the manufacturers would no doubt have special designs worked up if the orders were large enough to repay the cost. With the plain material no difficulty exists, while the quality and general appearance is so good that it may benefit some of our readers to know of this substitute for the dearer animal product.

The tortoise-shell, either of the red or dark shell, almost defies detection, and there are imitations of many other substances, but it is with these two that the trade is particularly interested, and on both we have seen some excellent gold blocking for pocket calendars and note tablets, so we hope these hints may be useful.

There is probably more than a grain of truth in the joke in a recent number of New York Life, as to the "glories of literature." A lean, seedy-looking individual applies to a portly well-fed publisher for a position as canvasser for a new book, just coming out by subscription, and is met with an enquiry whether he knows anything about the book. "Yes," is the reply, "I'm the author; and I thought if I could get a position as canvasser I might be able to make a little money out of the book!"
There has been before the trade for a considerable time a wire-sewing machine—if such it can be called. The work which it does cannot be called sewing; each section is stabbed with a certain number of wire staples, the staples pass through and are clinched upon a piece of strong tape; each section is independently fastened, so that it really is not sewing. There is no doubt about the strength of the wire and tape, and if there were not such a thing as damp, the appearance of the wire would not change so readily. And besides, what will do for one class of paper is not of much use for another, as far as this work is concerned. Some papers are very brittle, and the constant opening and closing of the books soon begin to tell upon that part where the wire is tightly clinched. Like the wire-stitching machines, they may do for a cheap class of work, but for that which is to lie upon the banker's desk and be in daily use for years, there is nothing like the thread.

There is just now a thread-sewing machine for account books being introduced into the trade, which bids fair to make the wire take a back seat. It is brother to the little machine which has been in the publishing trade so long, known as the Smyth book-sewing machine. This machine, although quite new to the trade, requires little comment; it is enough to say that it will sew account books as well, and with like speed, as the little one does letterpress work. It is not my intention to go into the question of machinery in this series, I may have an opportunity of going fully into it by-and-by, when this sewing machine will be described in detail.

Previous to the book being sewn and while the sections are being pressed the end-papers should be made.

There are many different methods of making "end-papers," but it will be quite unnecessary to detail each one. A good method, which applies particularly to first-class work, is the following:

Four sheets of paper are required, which should be the same as is to be used in the book. The usual workshop practice is for the ruler to lay off four sheets for the end-papers after he has trimmed his job. These four sheets are now given to the binder, who folds them once, according to the shape of the book. He next proceeds to cut two strips, of leather, cloth, or linen, as circumstances demand, which strips are for the joints. These are laid upon a piece of waste paper and glued carefully with thin warm glue. If leather is used, the edges should first be pared with a sharp knife. One strip is now taken and laid straight upon the bench, the glued side uppermost. A sheet of the paper is taken and the folded side carefully placed upon this not quite half-way; another sheet is taken and laid parallel to the first with about \( \frac{1}{2} \) inch space between. The whole is now turned over and rubbed carefully with the folder, to ensure the cloth adhering at every part. The other is treated in like manner, and thus the four sheets become joined by the cloth into a pair of end-papers.

Marble paper, according to size, is now taken; one of the edges cut even, glued, and laid upon the inside of the end-paper, allowing it to overlap the cloth, so that when finished the cloth joint will be about 2 inches broad with the fold in the centre. Fig. 1 will assist in making this understood.

While the book is being sewn the boards should be made. This is very important, for all account books should have good boards, hard and strong, such as will not bend or twist when exposed to the atmosphere of the office. They must lie flat to the book. It is really a grave defect when the boards of a book become so "capped" that they form a kind of pivot for the book to turn upon when lying upon the merchant's desk. This is very common and should be carefully guarded against. Another defect, quite as common, is the boards turning outwards, as if they wanted to part company with the book. These important items can only be successfully accomplished by the workman who carefully watches the behaviour of the boards under all circumstances.

However, there is a rule to be observed in the making of boards, and I will try and make it clear to the reader.

Cut up a number of "grey" boards the size required, and of such a thickness as will suit the requirements of the book or books in hand. Grey boards are the best for this purpose, and are supplied in all sizes and thicknesses. When the boards have been cut they should be pasted together; and it will be best, if possible, to have a thin one for the inside, which should only be pasted half-way, so as to have half of it open for a purpose which will be described further on. When pasted together, they should be put into the standing press and considerable pressure exerted upon them, being left in the press to dry. It is a good
practice to have a quantity of boards of different sizes made in stock, so that a pair can be selected at any time, for the drier the boards the better will be their condition when put to the book. When they are taken out of the press they should be carefully arranged in pairs, i.e., the two insides together; this allows them to dry in the position they will always occupy.

These things may seem trivial, but, indeed, they are most important; if attention is given to them the boards will turn out all that is desired, and if not, the reverse will be the case. By such apparently trifling matters the good or bad workman is discovered.

In common cheap work it is usual to make use of straw boards, but the best class of board should always be adopted. Of course, where a large quantity of trade or contract work has to be done at cutting prices, the cheapest must be used. But there is a good quality of this board nicely milled, which is not much inferior to the grey board, and where possible I would advise binders to procure this. Sometimes, indeed, it can be used with advantage in the best work. It is much lighter than grey, at the same time giving the required thickness.

[To be continued.]

A Centenarian Bookbinder.

NEVER before in the annals of the trade has it been recorded of one of the craft that he had lived to become a centenarian. Through the kindness of Mr. R. Hislop we are able to give a short account of the aged gentleman who has recently died, and having seen an authentic copy of his certificate of birth we are convinced that there is no mistake about his age.

Archibald Guillan was born on October 18th, 1790, in the parish of Kilconquhar, Fifeshire, Scotland. After receiving his education at Cameron and Radernie, he was apprenticed to the late Mr. Cockburn, of Shore-street, Anstruther. Upon the completion of his apprenticeship he removed to Edinburgh, and in 1813 (the Waterloo year) he was employed in London. In 1816 he returned to his native place and started in business on his own account. During the same year he married Miss Blyth, a grand-niece of the late Lieutenant Waid, founder of the Waid Academy. Six children were born to him of this marriage, but only three survived; and he had the misfortune to lose his wife about thirty years ago. Mr. Guillan's life has been of a very quiet and uneventful character, but he was held in very great respect by all who knew him, and continued to work at his trade until the year 1884, being then 94 years of age. Since that period he has lived in retirement, and on October 18th last he was entertained at a social banquet held in the Town Hall, Anstruther, when a large circle of friends and admirers gathered round to do him honour. Ex-Provost Anderson, who presided, then presented him, in the name of the subscribers, with a purse of sovereigns in honour of the completion of his centenary.

He died on May 30th, 1891, and his remains were interred in Anstruther Parish Churchyard beside those of his wife. The plate upon his coffin bore the following simple inscription: "Archibald Guillan, Died May 30, 1891, aged 100 years."

The photograph, which has been kindly lent by a relative, was taken on his one hundredth birthday.

A Remarkable Book.—It is not everyone that can make his own books, but a noted angler and artist of New York has, after eight years of patient labour succeeded in making a book that is the envy of all collectors.

The text is printed with a pen on artificial parchment, and the hundred pages are profusely illustrated with some three hundred drawings in sepia, water colour, and India ink, while the capital letters are elaborately illuminated in gold and colours, after the style of ancient missals.

This unique work is entitled "Recollections of an Angler," and comprises the fishing trips and adventures of the author, W. Holberton, from his boyhood up to the present time. It is superbly bound by Stikeman, in crushed levant, with appropriate tooling; and the owner has the satisfaction of knowing that even the wealthiest collector cannot duplicate it.

Miss H. P. James, Librarian of the Osterhout Free Library, Wilkesbarre, Pa., U.S.A., sends the following to the Critic: "I have just read your wail over the dust on the rough tops of uncut books. If you wish to clean them, and also to leave them a little rough, take the finest grade of sand-paper and rub them with it. If a piece is tacked on a bit of wood about an inch square at the end and three or four inches long, the work can be done very rapidly. I have treated uncut books in that way, and find it works admirably."
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The difficulty of moulding the xylonite is too great for binders to attempt that work for themselves as the material has to be softened by steam, and special machinery used into which steam is forced during the moulding, the dies being very costly, but the manufacturers would not doubt have special designs worked up if the orders were large enough to repay the cost. With the plain material no difficulty exists, while the quality and general appearance is so good that it may benefit some of our readers to know of this substitute for the dearer animal product.

The tortoise-shell, either of the red or dark shell, almost defies detection, and there are imitations of many other substances, but it is with these two that the trade is particularly interested, and on both we have seen some excellent gold blocking for pocket calendars and note tablets, so we hope these hints may be useful.

There is probably more than a grain of truth in the joke in a recent number of New York Life, as to the “glories of literature.” A lean, seedy-looking individual applies to a portly well-fed publisher for a position as canvasser for a new book just coming out by subscription, and is met with an enquiry whether he knows anything about the book. “Yes,” is the reply, “I’m the author; and I thought if I could get a position as canvasser I might be able to make a little money out of the book!”