

Stationery Binding.

BY WM. C. DUFF, F.A.S.



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 store 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. 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.

NAME.	DIMENSIONS.	WEIGHT.
Pot	15 × 12 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 lbs.
Foolscap	17 × 13 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 "
Post	19 × 15 $\frac{1}{4}$	20 "
Large Post	20 $\frac{3}{4}$ × 16 $\frac{3}{4}$	23 "
Demy	20 × 15 $\frac{1}{2}$	25 "
Medium	22 × 17 $\frac{1}{2}$	34 "
Royal	24 × 19	44 "
Super-Royal	27 × 19	54 "

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 any more than merely mentioning them. Every man in a binding shop, whatever be 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 ruler 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 ruler 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

