

## Choice Secrets for Bookbinders.

THE following receipts are taken from an old volume published in 1750.

*To prepare a lack varnish for bookbinders, for French bindings.*—First, when the book is covered, either with calf or sheep skin, or with parchment, it is struck over with a varnish, and spotted with colour. Some will spot the leather before they lay on the varnish, and after they have sprinkled their colours (which they commonly make of amber) they lay the varnish over, and polish it with a steel polisher, after which they give it one layer of varnish more, which is the finishing stroke.

*French leather for binding of books.*—Make choice of such leather as is wrought smooth and fine, and strain it on a frame; then having your colours ready at hand, take first of one sort in a pencil made of hog's bristles, and with your fingers sprinkle the colours thereof upon the leather, and when you have done with one, you may take another colour, and proceed with as many colours as you think proper. If you would imitate a tyger's skin, dot your colours upon the leather with a stick that is rough at the end, or a pencil; and after it is well dried, lay it over with a Spanish varnish, which make in the following manner:—

Take a pint of high rectified spirit of wine, of clear gum sandarac four ounces, clear oil of spike one ounce; pound the sandarac and put in the spirit of wine, and then into the oil of spike; let it stand till it is dissolved and settled.

*To gild the edges of books.*—Pound whole armeniac and sugar candy together, and mix it with a proper quantity of the white of an egg, well beaten; this done, take the book you intend to gild, which must be well bound, glewed, even cut, and well polished, screw it last in the press, and as even as possible, then with a pencil give it a wipe with the white of an egg well beaten, and let it dry, then give it another wipe with the above composition, and when dry, rub and polish it well; and when you will lay on the gold wet the edges with a little fair water, and immediately thereupon lay on the gold leaves, cut of the size they are to be, pressing them down softly with clean cotton wool, and when dry burnish it with a dog's tooth.

*The manner of marbling paper or books.*—Take clear white gum tragant, put it into an earthen pan, pour fresh water to it, till it is two hands high over the gum, cover it, let it soak six hours, then stir it well together, add more water to it, keep it often stirring for a whole day, and it will swell; keep it stirring several days, according as you find your gum is fresh or stale, for the fresh will dissolve sooner than that which has lain by for a long time. Keep it now and then stirring, when you find it well dissolved pour it through a collander into another pan, add to it more water, and after it has stood a little and been stirred about, strain it through a clean cloth into another clean pan, keep it well covered to hinder the dust or any other thing from coming to it. This water when you go to make use of it must be neither too thick nor too thin; you may try it with your comb by drawing the fame from one end of the trough to the other; if it swells the water before it, it is a sign that it is too thick and you must add in proportion a little more water. Your trough must be of the largeness of your paper, or rather something wider and four inches deep.

After you have filled your trough with the aforementioned water, and fitted everything for the work, then (before you lay on your colours) take a clean sheet, and draw the surface on which will be a thin sort of film off it, then have your three colours, namely, indigo mixed

with white lead, yellow oker and rose pink, ready prepared at hand, and for each colour have two galley-pots in order to temper them, as you would have them in different shades.

All your colours must be ground very fine with brandy. The blue is easily made deeper or lighter, by adding more or less white lead. The yellow used for that purpose, is either yellow orpiment or *Dutch* pink. For blue, grind indigo and white lead, each by itself, in order to mix that colour either lighter or darker. For green take the aforesaid blue and white, add some yellow to it, and temper it darker or lighter as you would have it. For red, take either lake or rose pink.

Every one of these colours are, as we said before, first ground very fine with brandy, and when you are ready to go to work, add a little oxgall to them; but this must be done with discretion, and you may try them by sprinkling a few drops upon your gum water; if you find the colour fly and spread too much about, it is a sign of too much gall, which to remedy, add more of the same colour which has none; but when you see the colour spread and retract itself again gently, it is right.

### Our Competition.

IN our December issue we announced the particulars of our second competition. It was for whole-bound calf-work (not hand-coloured). For reasons which we mentioned in our January number, there were but few competitors, and we held over the award until this issue.

The volumes sent in were duly judged as stipulated in the conditions, the result being that the "award of 10s. for the most creditable specimen" has been given to Messrs. J. T. MOULDING and B. B. LEADER.

The following was the letter of guarantee from employer:—

#### MEMORANDUM.

January 17, 1890.

STOAKLEY & SON, Bookbinders,  
30, Green Street, Cambridge.

To the Editor of THE BOOKBINDER, 13, Charing Cross.

SIR,—We send one vol. of Scott for the Working-Men's Competition—

J. T. MOULDING, forwarder.  
B. B. LEADER, finisher.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of the book.

Yours truly,

G. F. STOAKLEY.

Our readers will undoubtedly note that the same craftsmen have carried off the prize as before, but this we cannot help; and we may add that the judges themselves will not know to whom the prize has been awarded until they see the announcement in this journal.

The volume sent in by Messrs. LEADER & MOULDING was an excellent piece of work, and would have done credit to any house in the trade. It was blind tooled, and mitred back and side. The blind tooling on the side included a three-quarter circle at each corner, and within this circle was placed a small gold tool. The same tool was used down the back. The head-bands were worked. A pin-head line was run along the edge of the boards