

## Stationery Binding.

No. III.—BY WM. C. DUFF, F.A.S.



HERE are many different methods of sewing books. The reasons for this are obvious. In the cheaper kinds of work, less care is taken than with those of a more substantial nature. Like the preacher who preached good or bad sermons according to the stipend, so the account book manufacturer has to do his work according to the price which he is likely to get for it when completed.

It will be unnecessary to go into minute details concerning all classes of work. I will describe as clearly as possible the method adopted in sewing a good book—one which is to stand wear and tear—and I will leave the cheaper class of goods to the fertile brains of those who have to think out dodges of making them pay.

First, let me impress upon those whose business it is to produce first-class work of a substantial nature the necessity of using only good material. The thread must be good; there are many who think that this is an item of little importance, but it is not so; if the thread is not good, the work will not stand. For a large book, such as royal or super-royal hand-made, five bands of good strong tape—twilled binding—will be required, and, to add still further to the strength, strips of vellum are used in conjunction therewith. I think it is always best to set up the bench for sewing purposes. Some people think it a waste of time, and

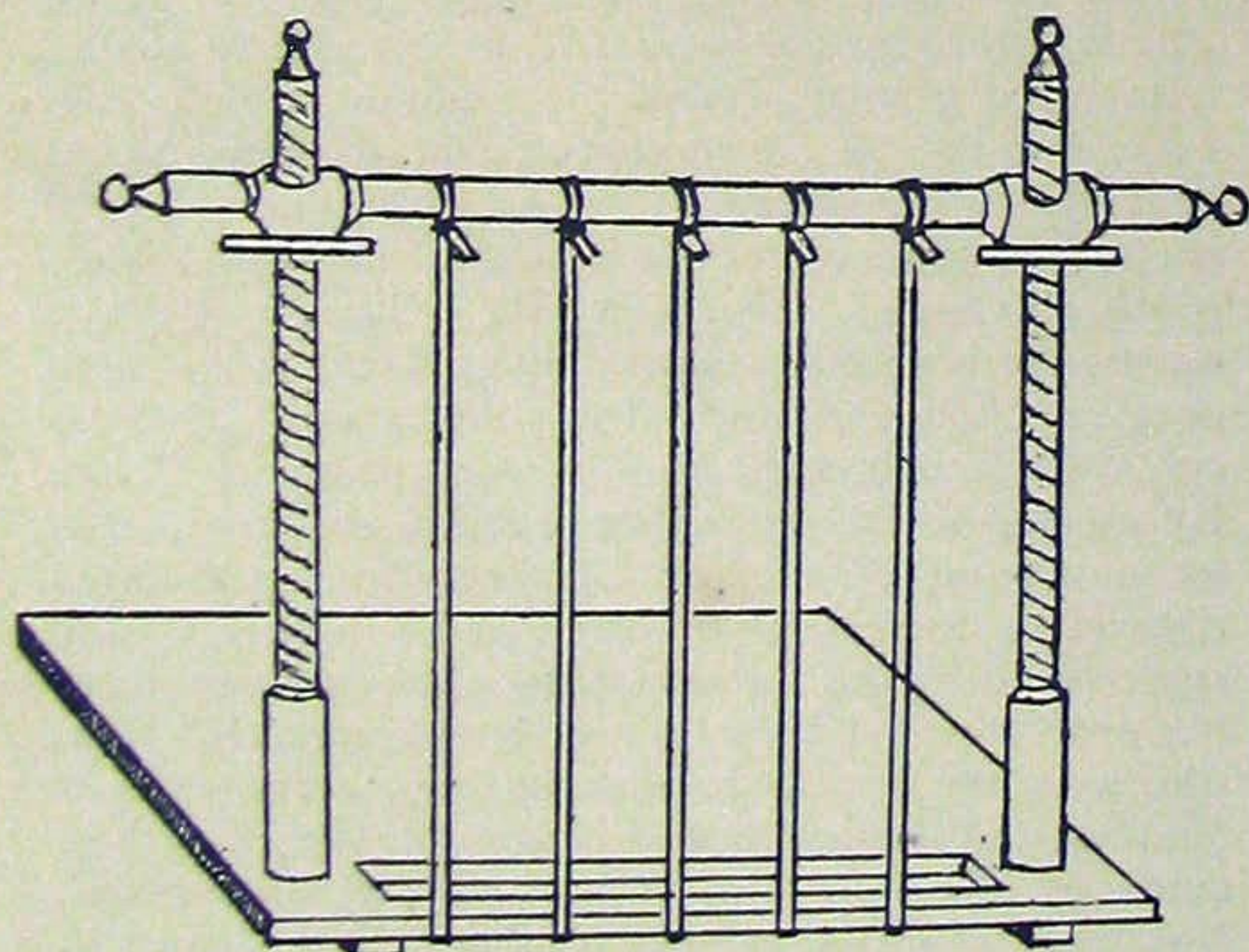


FIG. I.

sew on the table without the bench, but I consider this a very slovenly way of working. It does not take a good sewer long to set up her bench, and when it is done she can keep her bands much straighter, and besides, when they are loose they are always getting mixed up with the thread while the sewing is going on. When vellum is used, it is perhaps a little

difficult to get it fastened to the bench. The way I would do this would be to sew a small length of waste tape to the ends and fasten to the bench in the usual manner.

The sewing bench is so well known that it is not worth while describing it. It is made entirely of wood. A drawing of it is shewn in fig. I., which also shews it set for five bands.

What I consider to be the best method of sewing good work is, what is termed in the trade, sewing round the bands, *i.e.*, the first sheet is placed in position on the bench, the needle is put in at A in fig. II., brought out at B on the top side of the first

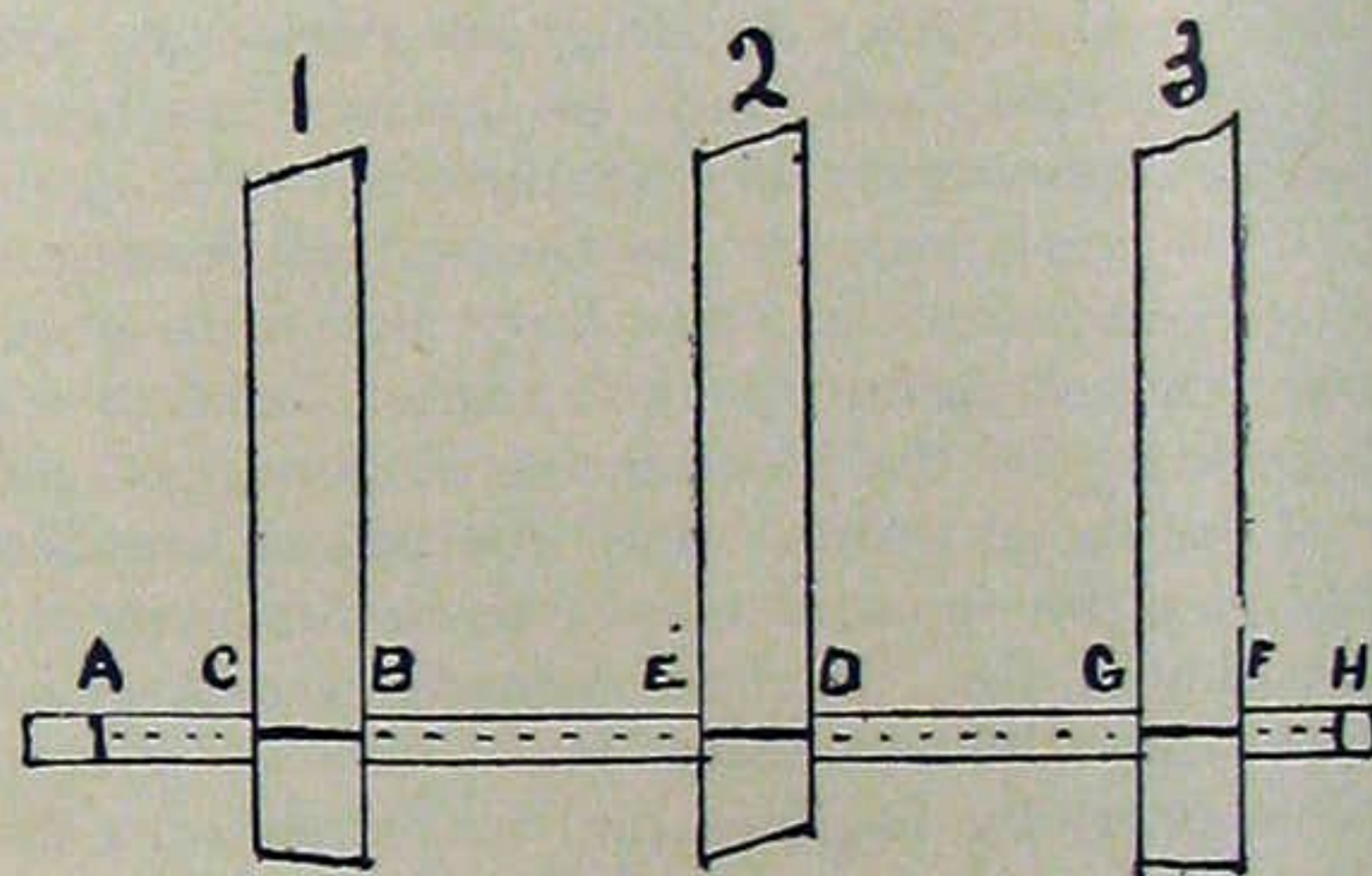


FIG. II.

band, in again at C, out at D, in at E, out at F, in at G, and out at H, thus completing the sewing of the first sheet. The second is laid upon this, and the needle passed in and out in like manner, but downward towards A, and this is carried on throughout the whole book. Very great care should also be taken in fastening off at the "kettle stitches" (A and H), as it is there where the greatest strain is. When sewing the first section sufficient thread should be left out at both ends to extend the full width of the back, if the book is thick and heavy it should be doubled. Fasten off each section three times, by passing the needle underneath the fourth, third, and second sections, at the same time working in the thread which has been left out, making a "band" of great strength and durability. Sometimes the needle is passed through the thread where it crosses the bands, but I do not think that there is anything to be gained by this process. Certainly, nothing is gained by sewing through the band, as I have seen done sometimes. Indeed, this should be avoided, as the book cannot be sufficiently rounded, and often during this process the thread is broken, which is not to be desired in any case.

[To be continued.]

HALF-A-MILLION of volumes are, according to Mr. Madan, now on the shelves at the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The library is growing at the rate of 120 volumes a day.