

the top of the "watermark" the head of the paper. Although it may not be generally known, there is an outside and inside and a 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-gauge 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.

[To be continued.]

Xylonite for Bookbinding.



XYLONITE 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 $\frac{1}{100}$ th of an inch up to one inch, the usual size being 35-inches by 20. It is sold by weight at 4/- 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 48mos 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!"