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John Andrews Annett was the pseudonym of John Hannett, a printer and a pioneer in the study of modern and historical bookbinding methods. *Bibliopodia, or the Art of Bookbinding*, first published in 1835 and enlarged the following year, was frequently republished and revised, and remains an important work on the subject. The author claims that it is the first practical manual on bookbinding to be published in England, derived from his own professional expertise and from recent French works on the topic. He explains every aspect of the process, from the folding of the sheets of paper and sewing, to the final finishing. He also discusses the various tools and machines in use, and provides a glossary of technical terms. This book is still a very valuable one for bookbinders and conservators, providing information on dyes and chemicals used in the 1830s as well as sewing and binding techniques.

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# Bibliopegia

*Or the Art of Bookbinding, in All Its Branches*

JOHN HANNETT



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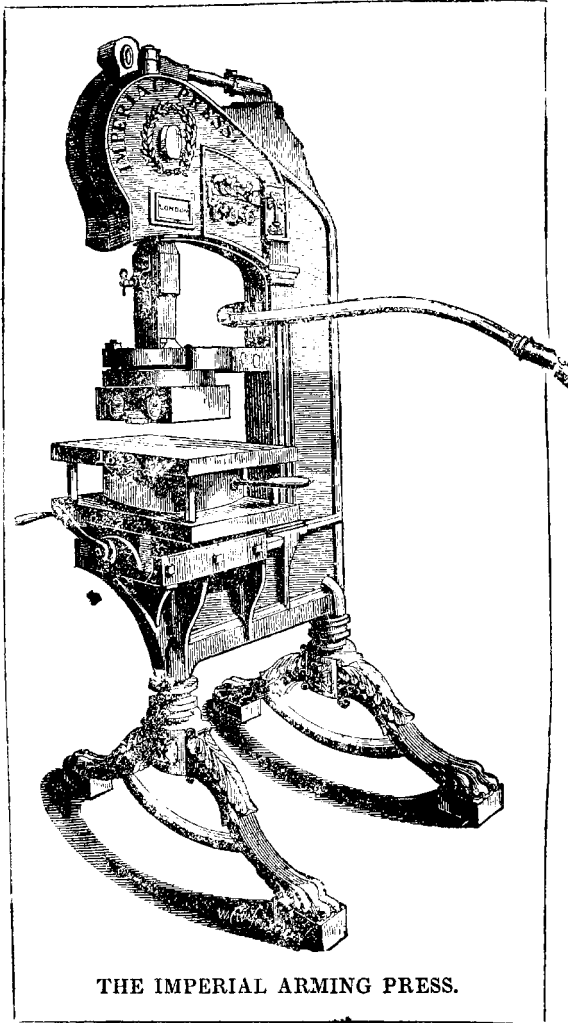
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**BIBLIOPEGIA;**

OR,

**THE ART OF BOOKBINDING,**

IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS.

BY JOHN ANDREWS ARNETT.

THE SECOND EDITION.  
WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

LONDON:  
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## PREFACE.

THE following Treatise, in which will be found a variety of new, interesting, and valuable information, it is trusted, will supply a great desideratum ; no work relative to the Art of Bookbinding having been published in this country, that can be placed in the hands of the workman, calculated to assist him in the most important manipulations of his Art.

To render it of the greatest utility, the utmost care has been taken to give the most clear and comprehensive directions, in every department of the various processes required in binding a book, from the folding to the final operation ; and though some slight imperfections may have crept in, from the difficulty attendant on the investigation of a subject, respecting which little information could be derived from previous writers, it will be found that nothing has been omitted that could render the work as complete as possible. To this end, in addition to his own practical knowledge of the Art, the Author has availed himself of the communications of the best Workmen, and also of such parts of the productions of *M. Dudin*, *M. Lesne*, *M. Normand*, *M. Mairat*, &c., as experience has proved useful in practice.

Difference of opinion will doubtless arise as to the propriety of making known the more difficult operations of the

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## PREFACE.

Art; but Science never lost by its general diffusion, and the clever workman will ever retain the elevated position which his taste, ingenuity, and attention entitle him to. With this view the work is submitted to the Trade, and public generally, as a miscellany of *real practical utility*, and a record of the present state of the BIBLIOPEGISTIC ART.

## NOTE TO THE NEW EDITION.

Keeping pace with the inventions and improvements that have been introduced, it will be found that considerable additions and illustrative embellishment have been incorporated in the present edition. These, with a few emendations of parts above referred to, it is believed, now render the work as complete as it is at present possible to accomplish.

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THE  
ART OF BOOKBINDING.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN treating of the Art of Bookbinding as practised in the present day, it will not be necessary to enter into any discussion concerning either the antiquity of the Art, or the manner of preserving books, on and before the invention of printing, this being a subject requiring so much study and such extensive research, as to preclude its being brought within the limits of an introduction.

Binding is the art of folding the sheets of a book, securing them together, affixing boards or sides thereto, and covering the whole with leather or other materials. There are various styles of binding, as *half-binding*, where the backs and corners only are covered with leather, and the sides or boards with marbled or coloured paper. *Law binding*, which is generally confined to law books, the leather being left its natural colour, and the edges of the leaves plain. *Dutch binding* is where the backs are of vellum or parchment. *In boards* signifies that the book is slightly done up, and covered with paper or

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cloth. The styles of binding for the various classes of literature are denominated by the titles of *filleted*, *lettered*, *gilt*, *half-extra*, *extra*, *super extra*, according to the quantity and style of work employed: thus we say *calf*, *morocco*, or *russia extra*, &c.

The trade of a Bookbinder has been ranked among the most difficult of the arts. It is incontestibly one requiring much care, great neatness, correct taste, and attentive practice, to form a skilful workman, and without these requisites no one will ever attain the three great characteristics of good binding,—solidity, elasticity, and elegance. This will more particularly be felt by the binder in small towns, who, from his situation, cannot possess the advantages which those of London, and other large cities, obtain. The country binder has generally to exercise the whole art, from the *folding* to the final operation required in binding a book; whilst his more fortunate brother of the capital, from his business being extensive enough to constantly employ *folders*, *sewers*, *marblers*, *gilders*, &c. has himself to execute what may be strictly called the binding only; viz. the FORWARDING and FINISHING, and even these are usually distinct branches. The appearance of the binding of a book, to a casual observer, seems to require little talent, but if the various subdivisions of the work, which form not less than sixty, are considered, and in the proper execution of which consists the Art of Binding, it will not be surprising to find how few men have arrived at eminence in it, arising

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from the obstacles presented in the acquisition of excellence in every department. Difficult, however, as the whole routine may be to attain, and numerous as will be the discouragements on first trial of critical parts, yet with constant application and rigorous observations with regard to the various minor manipulations required, as well as the more important details, the attentive workman, whatever his situation, need not despair to reach perfection. To this end a clear and minute description of the various processes, in the order that they are employed in binding, will be given in the pages of this manual, uniting all that may be useful, not only to young and rising workmen, but to those considerably versed in the art. In the department of colouring leather, attention will be paid to present the best receipts, for though, according to the prevailing taste of the day, many of them are seldom used, still it is requisite that they should be known, as the fashion of another period may reintroduce the whole series of marbles and fancy colours; and even now many periodical publications are required to be bound to patterns executed ten or twenty years ago. Some of the directions may, to the experienced, appear trivial or of no importance, but when it is considered that, by inattention to some part of the earlier stages of binding (such as being badly sewed, glued up, &c.) the beauty of all subsequent operations is frequently destroyed, they must be pronounced *all-important* to the character of any one zealous of the reputation of a good binder.

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The various errors and defects in the many important operations required in binding, will be pointed out under their respective heads; and a careful attention to the rules laid down will soon enable any individual, moderately expert, to execute binding worthy of a place in any library. Let it never be lost sight of that the proper *forwarding* a book is the great desideratum of all good bindings; the general appearance of the gilding and other ornamental operations being merely subservient to it. The early binders were rigid on this point, as is seen by their statutes and rules, edition 1750; and so particular were they that their books should be well forwarded, that the thirtieth article enacts,—“Be it held that the master-binders do sew all their books with thread and real bands, do back them with parchment and not paper, and in case of infringement the said books shall be done again at the expense of the infringer, who shall besides be condemned to a fine of thirty pounds for each volume.” Solidity and elasticity are always found in the workmanship of the early binders, which has not been sufficiently observed by those of later times. Attention to these particulars has, however, of late been paid; and aided by superiority in material, and the machinery now employed, a degree of solidity and elasticity, combined with a lightness and elegance of appearance, has been attained, which the most approved bindings of the fifteenth century do not possess.

Care is of the utmost importance when the book is

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valuable, either from its rarity, or the splendour of its embellishments, such works daily augmenting in price: for if carelessly or badly bound, the rebinding, and consequent *cropping* the book down by recutting the edges, tends considerably to deteriorate it in value, a good margin being a primary object to the genuine book collector. Many have contended that there is no occasion for this extra care in forwarding, since for a moderate sum other copies might be obtained, and thus the solidity and elasticity of the binding have been sacrificed to the general *coup-d'œil* of the finishing. Let not the binder, however, hazard his reputation on the effect thus produced, which will not be lasting, but rather let it be his ambition to produce such work as will bear the test of examination in every part, opening with freeness, and presenting an appearance at once firm, square, and compact. Should the possessor of a library limit his binder to price, he will do well also to sacrifice a portion of ornament (which adds nothing to the durability), to the charge necessary to be made for extra care in the earlier stages. Let him not be tempted by an elegant marble upon the cover and upon the edges, by a border full of delicacy and taste, by a gilding that pleases the eye, or by the gold spread with profusion upon the edges, the back, and the sides, to the neglect of the more important details of folding, sewing, cutting, &c. Rather let him not limit the binder too closely, and then, if he employs an experienced workman, he will be certain of receiving the satisfaction he desires,

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when presented with a volume possessing every characteristic of good binding. The knowledge communicated in this treatise, it is believed, will enable any one fully to appreciate superior workmanship, and once properly understood, none but the best will ever be satisfactory to the lover of his library. In the directions given, the amateur, who may take pleasure in devoting part of his leisure to an art interesting and amusing, will meet with all the information he may desire relative to the proceedings in use by the best binders.

The premises, presses, tools, and materials required by the bookbinder, are of much greater importance than, on first consideration, would be imagined. The great object in the former should be to procure as much light as possible, and with regard to presses, &c. unless they are of a superior kind, it will be impossible to execute binding in the first style of the art. These should be arranged with the greatest attention to convenience of situation, as much time will be saved from the facility with which the work will be executed, and from the additional neatness and beauty it will also acquire.

For the greater convenience of reference, and for properly distinguishing each branch of the art, a division into parts or sections has been deemed advisable. The technical terms will be found to have been adopted throughout; and though one volume only is generally spoken of, it must be observed that it is usual to proceed with parcels of ten, twenty, or more volumes at a time.