

which is done by laying the volume with the fore-edge towards the operator, who, pressing the fingers of his left hand upon it, gently taps the back up and down with a hammer, changing the sides alternately until the back is beaten into a shape somewhat circular. The book is now placed between two backing-boards, the thick edges of which are ranged parallel with each other, within about the eighth of an inch of the back. The boards and book being tightly grasped with the left hand, are lowered into the cutting-press, until the boards are flush with the cheek of the press, which is then screwed as tight as possible. The back is then hammered gently and uniformly up and down each side, and a little in the middle, which causes it to spread over the boards so as to form the required projection. The book, thus backed, is now ready for the covers, which are of mill-board, and, being cut to the required size, either with shears or in the cutting-press, are pierced with holes pricked with a bodkin, two at each cord, one about half an inch from the edge, and the second as much beyond it. The frayed cords are then sodden with paste, drawn through the outer side of the board or cover, and then passed through the other hole to the outer side again. The book is then held in the left hand, while, with the right, the pasted cords are hammered on a smooth piece of iron (a flat-iron screwed into the press will do) into the substance of the mill-board covers. It should now be left to dry.

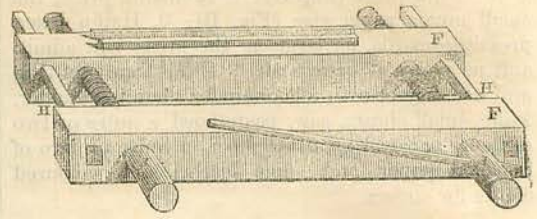
The next step is that of cutting the edges, which is rather a difficult process, and one which the amateur may omit with his first experiments in binding. Holding the book in the left hand, with the fore-edge upwards, the operator allows the covers to hang down on each side, and thrusts a paper-knife or a flat piece of metal between them and the back of the book. Then placing a cutting-board on each side, and opening the covers horizontally, he beats the back of the book against the press until it is perfectly flattened. A wedge-shaped cutting-board is then placed on the left-hand side of the book, so as to stand with its thick edge considerably higher than the course the knife will take; another board is then placed on the right side, exactly on the line which the knife is to follow, and which line must be previously marked with the point of a pair of compasses, and so measured that the edge when ploughed may fall about the sixth of an inch within the projection of the covers. When the boards are thus placed, the paper-knife or flat piece of metal is withdrawn, the covers allowed to hang down, and the volume is thus carefully lowered into the cutting-press, until the right-hand board is flush with the cheek, when the press must be screwed tight.\*

As we are now about putting the cutting-press to its legitimate use, we will take a glance at that instrument before we proceed further. It is represented by the annexed figure.

It is seen to consist of two wooden cheeks, F F,

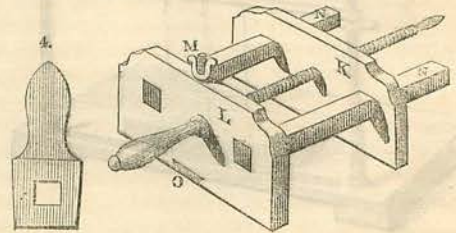
connected by two sliding bars, H H, and two wooden screws, I I. Upon one of the cheeks are

Fig. B.



two guides, or small raised rails, for the plough to work in.

Fig. B 2.



This, which is the cutting instrument, consists of two sides, K, L, connected by a screw with a handle, and by two slide bars, N N. A knife, 4, is fastened to the under side of cheek L by a strong bolt which perforates the cheek perpendicularly, and also the circumference of the lateral screw, and is kept tightly in its place by screwing down the nut M. The knife is worked by grasping both ends of the lateral screw, moving the plough backwards and forwards, and gradually turning the screw with the right hand, until the whole of the fore-edge is cut through.

The book is now taken out of the press, the covers folded in their place, and the back rounded as before, when the front edge, if the cutting is well done, will be elegantly concave, corresponding with the convexity of the back. The boards, being kept in the ledge or projection produced by backing, are now pulled down some eighth of an inch from their central position, and the head is ploughed by the knife in the same way as the fore-edge. Before ploughing the opposite end, the boards are pulled below the head as much again as it is intended they shall project; and this end also being ploughed, it will be seen, if the whole has been well done, that the projection of the covers is equal on the three sides, or, better still, that it is a little in excess on the fore-edge. The first lesson in bookbinding may end here.

#### LEBANON AND THE DRUSES.

WE have hardly a breath of air down here at Beyrout; and although the mountains behind us are snow-capped, and the blue calm Mediterranean looks cool, it is June! The breezes have deserted us; fever and sickness have taken up their abode in many of the narrower thoroughfares of this

\* The cutting-press stands on a hollow frame some three feet in depth, which allows of large books being partially lowered into it, and also receives the paper shavings as they are ploughed off.

ancient town. Then it is that gasping Europeans fly to Lebanon. Delicate ladies and children, merchants, consuls, strangers, all flee the plains as they would a pestilence. And they do right; for even now, when medical theory had fondly supposed that the "pest" was a thing that *had been*, or had given place to the little less dreadful cholera, tidings reach us that two undoubted cases of that scourge have happened at Beyrout. If we had no other motives, this alone would induce us to flee to the mountains; and Hadji Mahomed, the muleteer, has provided us with the necessary cattle for the flight.

Preparations of this sort entail an immense amount of anxiety and trouble upon families. It is not as if we were casual travellers, encumbered only with a portmanteau and hat-box; we have the whole household, children and servants included, to care for. Brokers' or linendrapers' shops there are none in Lebanon; and although the fertility of the soil and the industry of the people will yield us vegetables, fruit, milk, poultry, and meat, there are little dainties (such as chocolate or bottled beer for ourselves, arrowroot or sago for the children) which all the princes of Lebanon combined could not afford us. It is for this reason that my amiable and excellent hostess, who verges nigh upon seventy, and is a native of the country, dressed in Arab costume, is so exceedingly perplexed amongst the multifarious packages and baskets. It is therefore that she drops one slipper at the top of the staircase, and, coming back to look for it, loses its yellow companion over the balustrades, and, in the excitement occasioned by such mishaps, makes the poor Arab servant nearly crazy by her contradictory instructions. After the slippers had been recovered, and a lost ham found in a bandbox, my dear old landlady would bind about twenty yards of muslin round her head, and indulge in a narghilee and a cup of coffee. Then came the start. That was a tremendous job; and when we fairly got into the street, and found the mules all loaded, nothing would satisfy the old lady but seeing that every parcel was in its place. Then came a conference with the mucro (muleteer) about the capabilities, vices, or virtues of the animals. And (really it was very annoying) just as we got to the bottom of the street, the old lady remembered that the cat had been locked up in a closet. By this time the sun had become almost unbearable. *Sera nunquam est ad bonos mores via*—It is never too late to mend. I have painful recollections that my Eton Grammar contained that passage. I have also a slight recollection that such was the exclamation of a lamentably poverty-stricken Irishman, as he patched up some old garment. I am positive that it can never be too late to get through the streets of Beyrout, out into the plains. We pass the dreadfully narrow and old tumble-down streets (many of them roofed over), and the disgustingly noxious atmosphere from some of the romantically oriental shops, where dead flies constitute a prevailing feature. Through, however, we get; past the grand hummum (bath), which is the resort of every stranger; out of the city gates, where soldiers in shirt sleeves play

at dominoes; out upon the horrid wilderness of fine sand, hedged in with prickly-pear, where, at this hour of the day, the refraction is painfully intense; past military barracks, where military aspirants are practising sword exercise in the shade, and juvenile musicians are practising fifes to one monotonous tooty-i-tooty-too, accompanied by industrious young drummers, who have deal tables to perform upon; past exceedingly dilapidated taverns, with Greeks in huge white trowsers and gaily-decorated jackets, sitting under the shade and gambling from sunrise till night-close. So we travel along, twenty miles at least; maidservants and menservants, mostly buried in a mountain of bedding material, and many of the former carrying children; some, not so fortunate, bestriding animals laden with cooking utensils, which rock to and fro to the music of their own clatter, and are exceedingly grievous to the ankles of the men that bestride them. Now and then a mirthsomenely-inclined mule, exceedingly pestered with flies, thinks that a roll in the hot sand might be beneficial. The rider is of a contrary opinion; but the mule has the best of it, and some of the panniers contain the very choicest delicacies, mostly of a fragile nature. The old lady is in paroxysms of despair. So we pass on, and come into a pleasant shady wood; next the Nahr il Kelb; and then the foot of the mountains. We ascend, and as we advance we leave the dreary hot plains behind us.

The first object that attracts our attention after leaving the Dog River (ancient Lyeus) are the remarkable carvings upon the smooth rocks to our right-hand side—the arrow-headed characters of Assyria, with figures of the Satrap, who, 2572 years ago, carried irresistible arms and conquest into Egypt and Ethiopia. Sennacherib was more proud to display his banners on the summits of Mount Lebanon than he was even of the conquest of Jerusalem. And to this day his name and exploits stare at us with pristine freshness from the living granite, whilst perhaps the whole surface of the country around has been changed by violent revolutions of nature. So we go on mounting up higher and higher, and every fresh turning in the mountain discloses some new and picturesque spot. Ever and anon, too, we encounter Druse families journeying downwards towards the markets of Beyrout, their mules laden with the delicious fruits that grow so luxuriant here. Here and there, also, are Druse ladies, with the preposterous horns on their heads which so much remind one of hippopotami. Indeed, if a Druse lady was very spitefully disposed, and charged one ram-fashion, the results might be alarming. *Sometimes*, also, we see industrious Maronites tugging away in their efforts to transport huge logs of wood which they have felled, to meet the requisitions of builders down at Beyrout. Now and then a log gets hopelessly jammed across the road, and into the rocky crevices on either side; then the caravan comes to a stand-still, and the muleteer and his men, and all the servants, assail the offending timber—assail it with great and mighty threats, demanding what right it has to stop the sultan's thoroughfare, and declare that its ancestors must have been pigs.

Meanwhile the old lady, who has been slaking her thirst with grapes, astonishes a gaping Maronite peasant, who is, after all, incredulous, by telling him that she paid five-and-twenty piastres for a bunch of grapes in London. The old lady was in London some thirty years ago, and to this moment bewails the amount of money spent in that city.

But what shall I say of the magnificent panorama that bursts upon us when, after an hour's hard toil, we reach an elevated plateau, whence the country for miles around is discernible? What poet's imagination could form the shadow of the substance before us? Far as the eye can reach there are the silvery calm waters of the Mediterranean, undulating in little blue curves here and there where some stray zephyr has lost herself. Further, under the scarlet sky of Asia Minor is cool-looking Taurus, always encased in snow. Nearer is one vast extent of vegetation; plains upon plains of emerald, shadowed with clusters of fig-trees, wide-spreading apricots, apples, peaches, and a dense profusion of mulberries. Rising up from behind these, a little clear white thread of smoke indicates that the invisible planter in his invisible house is having something cooked for breakfast—a wise precaution, which we forthwith adopt by alighting at the nearest fountain; where there is a pleasant shade of trees; where fires are lit in little holes scraped out of the earth; where fowls are fluttering one minute, and are in the steaming-pan the next; and where a hospitable Druse treats us to a delicious basket of figs.

It is said that the cedars extended once over 3600 acres; they are now almost extinct, and we have to procure a guide from the Maronite village of Bescharry when we wish to visit the small remaining vestige of these patriarchs of Lebanon; and even these would have been carried off piece-meal by travellers had not a small chapel been erected on the spot, where an old priest exhorts strangers to resist from damaging the sacred trees. The ascent from the cedars is amidst perpetual snow, but the summit once reached affords a prospect well worthy of the trouble. Mountain on mountain, gorge upon gorge, crowd upon us. Down those rugged declivities the myriads of Sennacherib rushed in tumultuous array flushed with spoil and victory. Through that defile went the Grecian phalanx, laden with the spoils of Issus and exulting in the promised spoils of Tyre. Through those passes the Crusader chiefs led their deluded hosts. There is Sidon, and there Tyre—the one the birthplace of letters and navigation, the other queen of ocean's earliest commerce. Yonder azure mountains, which blend so softly with the ethereal skies around them, inclose the scenes of His career whose weapons were the words of peace.

The Druses are divided into two classes, the Okals and the Jakals—the learned and the ignorant. Their antiquity is very great, being of Arab extraction, and the exact period when the Arabs entered Lebanon is proved by records still in the possession of some of the nobler families. A finer race of people it is difficult to encounter: fearless, courageous, hospitable, true to their word, and of a happy, blithesome disposition, they follow up many

clannish principles which liken them not a little to the ancient Scots. Amidst the deadly feuds that rage between them and the Maronites (as is unfortunately the case just now) their beacon fires are lit from hill to hill, and their war-cry thrills upon the cold bleak winter's night. And they are terrible as foes, because they fight for liberty and home, for wife and child; death is preferred by them to the loss of any of these.

The emir Beschir was the chief at whose hospitable and magnificent palace we rusticated during the summer. Such an invasion in any other country would have been indeed unwarrantable even amongst the best of friends. Here our retinue of twenty was but a cipher. Day after day whole clans arrived to visit the emir; and not only they, but their horses, were well cared for. In fact, whole sheep were slaughtered daily to meet the hungry wants of the retinue and hangers-on, and the greatest insult we could have offered would have been to have purchased food. The prince, who had known the old lady for many years, was exceedingly attached to the English. He was positive that the Scotch professed the same religion as the Druses, and would converse for hours on the subject. It was one of this family that, during the recent mutiny in India, tendered one thousand men and his services to help to quell it. There can be few more magnificent spectacles than the re-union of these mountain clans at the sheikhs' and emirs' houses. Their well-comparisined horses, their exceedingly picturesque costumes, the cloudless sky and clear sunshiny weather, all contribute to render such scenes almost classical; the more especially when these knights of chivalry ride forth to break a harmless lance at their much-loved sport, the meidan, or mock tournament.

On the summits of hoary Lebanon, amidst a scenery and a climate unrivalled, amidst a people brave and hospitable, we soon accustomed ourselves to the rough up-hill and down-dale work necessary for the shortest visit; so much so that, flinging the reins over the mule's neck, I have travelled miles, deep in some work of interest, and the sure-footed animal carried me safely along. Curious was it, in the midst of this oriental scene, to witness us of an afternoon sitting out in the magnificent court-yard and drinking tea, to the uncontrollable surprise of spectators; still more curious as evening closed in, and the chirrup of a thousand crickets rang through the solitude, to sit and listen to the old gentleman, mine excellent host, (who very wisely absconded when packing operations were going forward,) reading aloud from some new work of interest received by the last steamer. To see this fine old octogenarian gazing mildly upon his faithful old Arab partner, and expostulating as he removed his spectacles against continued interruption, was a sight never to be forgotten. There are painful passages in the book which affect the old lady terribly, and she cannot help exclaiming, "Oh, B—, B—, why did they let him do it?" "Woman, did I make the book?" is the old man's quiet rejoinder. And so the bright clusters in heaven shine out upon the snow-clad summits, and we live and pass the summer upon Mount Lebanon.