

# BARROWMORE

## MODEL RAILWAY GROUP

*"Modelling to a high standard amongst friends"*



### Workshop notes: bow pens

[Eric Power came across this description of the sharpening of what today we would call a **bow-pen** in an old book entitled Machine construction and drawing by Frank Castle (2nd ed., Macmillan, 1931)

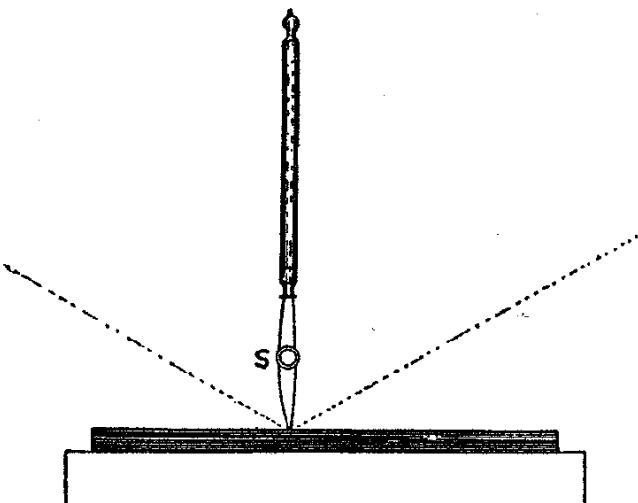


FIG. 20.—Setting a Drawing Pen.

**Setting a drawing pen.** A drawing pen of good material will be serviceable usually for a long time before it is necessary to reset it. In some cases, however, the pen, after comparatively little use, requires attention. When necessary, the two nibs of the pen should be brought into contact by means of the screw S (Fig. 20); then, holding the pen in a vertical position, the nibs are made of the same length by rubbing the end of the pen on an oilstone. The end of the pen should not be flat but carefully rounded. The rounding may be effected by moving the pen from side to side during the process of rubbing as indicated by the dotted lines in Fig. 20. The nibs are unscrewed afterwards and each worked up to a good edge, which should be rounded by slightly rocking the pen between the fingers

during the rubbing. The inclination at which the pen is held should increase as the rubbing proceeds, and care must be taken not to make a sharp edge; to ensure this the edge should be examined at frequent intervals. When finished, each nib should have the same appearance and should, when looked at end-on, show a small spot of light. After carefully wiping the nibs to get rid of all traces of oil the pen should be tried by using it to draw thick and thin lines. If the pen is too sharp it may be put right by making a few strokes with it on cartridge paper.