

**BY-WAYS IN BOOK-
LAND; SHORT ESSAYS
ON LITERARY SUBJECTS**

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By-ways in book-land; short essays on literary subjects by Wm. Davenport Adams

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WM. DAVENPORT ADAMS

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ON LITERARY SUBJECTS**

BY-WAYS IN BOOK-LAND

Short Essays on Literary Subjects

BY

WM. DAVENPORT ADAMS

AUTHOR OF 'DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE,' ETC.

'Excursusque breves tentat.'

'GEOGRAPHICS,' IV. 194.

LONDON

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1888

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

21003
H4

TO MY FATHER,
W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS,
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
Is Affectionately Inscribed.

TO MY
MOTHER

*I*N the following pages, the writer for the most part deals with small subjects in an unelaborate manner. He leaves the highways of literature, and strays into the fields and lanes, picking here a flower and there a leaf, and not going far at any time. There is no endeavour to explore with system, or to extend any excursion beyond a modest ramble. The author wanders at haphazard into paths which have attracted him, and along which, he hopes, the reader may be willing to bear him company.

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BY-WAYS IN BOOK-LAND



PAPER-KNIFE PLEASURES.

ONE is for ever hearing enough and to spare about old books and those who love them. There is a whole literature of the subject. The men themselves, from Charles Lamb downwards, have over and over again described their ecstasies—with what joy they have pounced upon some rare edition, and with what reverence they have ever afterwards regarded it. It is some time since Mr. Buchanan drew his quasi-pathetic picture of the book-hunter, bargaining for his prize,

‘With the odd sixpence in his hand,
And greed in his gray eyes ;’

having, moreover, in his mind's eye as he walked

‘Vistas of dusty libraries
Prolonged eternally.’

Mr. Andrew Lang, too, has sung to us of the man who ‘book-hunts while the loungers fly,’ who ‘book-hunts though December freeze,’ for whom

‘Each tract that flutters in the breeze
Is charged with hopes and fears,’

while

‘In mouldy novels fancy sees
Aldines, Bodonis, Elzevirs.’

There are periodicals which cater solely for old-book adorers; and while on the one hand your enthusiast will publish his ‘Pleasures’ and ‘Diversions,’ on the other a contemporary will devote a volume to the subjects which attract and interest ‘the Book Fancier.’

Meanwhile, is there nothing to be said of, or by, the admirer of new books—the man or woman who rejoices in the pleasant act of turning over new leaves? At a time when volumes are issuing by the dozen from the