

**BOOKS IN CHAINS, AND
OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
PAPERS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649084890

Books in Chains, and Other Bibliographical Papers by William Blades

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM BLADES

**BOOKS IN CHAINS, AND
OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHICAL
PAPERS**

BOOKS IN CHAINS

AND

OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PAPERS

BY THE LATE

WILLIAM BLADES

*Author of "The Life and Typography of Caslon," "The Foreman
of Books," &c., &c.*

BOSTON LIBRARY,
1794
SOCIETY

NEW YORK

A. C. ARMSTRONG & SON, 51 EAST TENTH STREET

1892

B 32.9.5



PREFACE.

I*T has been thought that a collection of some of Mr. Blades's Fugitive Pieces would form a volume acceptable to the readers of the Book-Lover's Library, as a companion volume to that distinguished bibliographer's Enemies of Books.*

A selection of these papers is now therefore presented to the public in a more permanent form, and an Introduction containing a general notice of Mr. Blades's life-work has been added.



INTRODUCTION.

THE life of William Blades was an uneventful one so far as the production of incidents that make a memoir interesting, but it was none the less a full life and one that may with advantage be taken as an example. In passing judgment upon his literary work it is necessary to bear in mind that he was a hard-worked business man, and that the work which has made his name renowned was undertaken in his hours of relaxation. Another remarkable feature of his literary work is to be found in its complete unity. Mr. Blades only dealt with those subjects respecting which he had a perfect and practical knowledge. He was born at Clapham on December 5th, 1824, and after a comparatively short attendance at

the Clapham Grammar School he, at the age of sixteen, entered the office of his father, Joseph Blades, a well-known printer of Abchurch Lane. Although he thus early learnt the trade of printing, he did not commence to teach others through the press until he had reached the age of thirty-four. In 1858 he contributed some introductory remarks and notes to a reprint of Caxton's edition of *The Governayle of Helthe*, which was printed in imitation Caxton's type. At this time he was in the midst of his researches on the life and labours of Caxton, which were soon to result in the production of his monumental work *The Life and Typography of William Caxton*, the first volume of which appeared in 1861 and the second in 1863. This work exhibits an early instance of the new scientific method in literary research, and it marks an epoch in English bibliography. It is sufficiently strange that it was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that an accurate record of the life and press of England's first printer was produced. In taking

credit to the country for Blades's laborious work it should not be forgotten that no bibliographer has yet arisen to follow his brilliant example. Will no one arise with the necessary technical knowledge and a painstaking devotion to his subject to do for Wynkyn de Worde and for Pynson what Blades did for Caxton?

The value of the work of Ames and Herbert need not be minimised, but too much has been discovered since their time to allow us to remain content with the researches of a former generation. It is to be hoped that the discredit of lacking a full and accurate account of the whole of our early printed literature will not continue much longer. Blades has set us a bright example, and his successor cannot do better than follow in his steps. Blades was ever active, and he has left a large number of fugitive pieces, a selection from which is now presented to the public in this volume. His contributions to our knowledge of bibliography range themselves under the following headings: I. Caxton; II. Invention of Printing;