Book Notes.

The book of the year, as regards typography, is without doubt "The Pentateuch of Printing, with a Chapter on Judges," by the late William Blades, just published by Mr. Elliot Stock. It is a handsome book typographically, is admirably illustrated, and as a specimen of bookmaking reflects the highest credit on the firm (Blades, East & Blades), of which the author was for so many years the head. To our mind the chief want of the book is a good portrait of Mr. Blades himself.

By the courtesy of the publisher and the binders (Smith Bros., Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row) we are enabled to present the engraved title page and some of the illustrations, and a reduced facsimile of the fresh and original cover design.

Turning to the contents of the book, the excellent prospectus gives such a clear résumé that we cannot do better than quote it in its entirety.

"The design of this work, which was left almost complete at the time of the death of the lamented author, is to present in a popular form an account of the rise and development of printing.

"So much that has previously been written on the subject has been either inaccurate, or the result of loose bibliographical methods, that the author was impressed with the importance of producing a work which, while it contained all the necessary information on the subject, should at the same time suggest to the student the lines upon which his further investigations might be made. With this view he adopted the novel arrangement of his subject, in the form suggested by the title, and traced the history of the chosen art in its various stages, from the beginning to the end of its journeyings, in the same manner as the great Pentateuch traced the origin and wanderings of the chosen people in quest of their promised land.

"Commencing with the Genesis of Printing, Mr. Blades sets forth in a lucid summary the present condition of the Invention Controversy, free from all the passion and prejudice which has so often clouded the issue of that great dispute. Exodus naturally describes the spread of the new art throughout Europe, and records particularly its first appearance in each of the lands in which, during the 15th century, it found a home. Leviticus deals with the methods and practice of the early printers in the manufacture of their types and the production of their books. Numbers is the record of the famous heroes of the press, on whose glory roll their names are inscribed. Deuteronomy describes the second invention of printing under the influence of steam and mechanism, a phase of its career which brings us down to the present time. To complete the survey, a chapter on Judges gives the student the names of the best authorities to consult in reference to each department of the subject.

"The book is very fully illustrated with facsimiles and engravings specially prepared under the author's own direction.

"It was thought desirable, in preparing the "Pentateuch of Printing" for the press, to adhere as closely as possible to the plan laid down by the author, and, by avoiding all unnecessary additions or alterations, to present it to the reader as it was left by him at the time of his death.

"The necessary editing has been done by Mr. Talbot B. Reed, who has prefaced the volume with a brief memoir of Mr. Blades, and has given a list of his principal works on the history of Typography. A full index is also added to the volume.

"The work is one on which the author bestowed his habitual care and conscientious research, and is marked by all that loving labour and solicitude which work congenial to his tastes always secured from him. It will be welcomed by those who knew the late Mr. William Blades as a worthy memorial of his devotion to the subject he worked upon for so many years; while the student will accept the volume as a valuable manual of reliable knowledge on the history of the Art of Printing, from the earliest time to the present day."

...
Book Notes.

The book of the year, as regards typography, is without doubt "The Pentateuch of Printing, with a Chapter on Judges," by the late William Blades, just published by Mr. Elliot Stock. It is a handsome book typographically, is admirably illustrated, and as a specimen of bookmaking reflects the highest credit on the firm (Blades, East & Blades), of which the author was for so many years the head. To mention both in each of the lands in which, during the 15th century, it found a home. Leviticus deals with the methods and practice of the early printers in the manufacture of their types and the production of their books. Numbers is the record of the famous heroes of the press, on whose glory roll their names are inscribed. Deuteronomy describes the second invention of printing under the influence of steam and mechanism, a phase of its career which brings us down to the present time. To complete the survey, a chapter on Judges gives the student the names of the authorities to consult in reference to each department of the subject.

"The book is very fully illustrated with facsimiles under the authority..."