



BOUND BY HARRY WOOD.

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## Our Portrait Gallery.

HARRY WOOD, LONDON.

**F**OR some time past we have heard it so repeatedly asserted that work was gradually leaving London, and that for what remained the prices were so low, and the cost of production so high, that there was no margin of profit left; that the trade was going to the dogs, and other propositions of a similarly disheartening character, that we had almost begun to believe them, in spite of evidence that the same doleful outcries were as frequently and as forcibly made by our grandmothers and their great grandmothers ever since the days of Queen Anne, without any signs of the dreaded disaster overtaking them. At the same time we knew that some houses were working full time even all through last year, when there was an undoubted general slackness, and we felt a little curious as to how it was some shops could keep going briskly while others were almost at a standstill. So being round Soho way, we called on Mr. Wood to ask him how he managed it for one, taking the opportunity at the same time to ask for his portrait.

Harry Wood has not been in business for himself very long, only just long enough to begin to prove himself, but we found him very comfortably busy on some good work, two volumes of which we borrowed for these pages, and we jotted down a few particulars of his career in the trade. He was born just outside Brighton, on February 5th, 1849, and was placed with his uncle at a very early age to learn the craft in Brighton. On the death of his uncle in 1866 he came to London to improve himself, staying here for about eighteen months, when he went to Belfast, and in Marcus Ward's establishment got an insight into the finer styles of work, which at that time was a prominent feature of the business, albums, address cases, etc. While there he joined the Belfast branch of the Bookbinders and Machine Rulers Consolidated

Union, that was in 1868; next year found him in Sheffield, and later on back in London again, where he found employment with the late Mr. J. Zaehnsdorf, with whom he remained for over twelve years as a finisher. He then left to take charge of Mr. Kaufmann's business in Frith-street, Soho, and when that gentleman retired and went abroad Mr. Wood bought the business and started for himself. That was in

1889, and two years afterwards he had so far increased it that he felt justified in taking larger premises, and removed to No. 13 Bateman-street, Soho, which he at present occupies, and where he hopes to further develop it.

A large portion of the work entrusted to Mr. Wood consists of valuable editions of foreign books, and fine editions of English works for America. The forwarding of these he personally superintends, but some of the finishing of extra work he does himself. The French Grolieresque design given herewith has been taken from the working pattern used on a binding of "Count Lucanor," which he executed some few months ago in French red levant, according to instruction, in sixteenth century style. "Connaissance Necessaire à un Bibliophile" is in dark crimson morocco, the leaves inlaid with green and the tiny drooping flowers in buff, worked



HARRY WOOD.

around in blind, the frame and scroll work being in gold, which makes a charmingly rich contrast. "Aucassin et Nicolette" is in a warm light brown cover, with an inlaid ribbon framework in two shades of green.

"How is it," we asked of Mr. Wood, "that you have been able to keep such a constant run of work while others have been complaining about its scarcity? What is the secret?"

"There's no secret about it that I know of," he replied, "I suppose I satisfy my customers. I can always get plenty of work, but I am not in a large way of business. I simply put into my orders the



