

BOUND BY
JOHN RAMAGE,
LONDON.



Our Portrait Gallery.

JOHN RAMAGE, LONDON.

WALKING up Ludgate-hill one day, we were wondering whom we should get for our next portrait, when we remembered that hard by in Creed-lane there was a binder who certainly deserved a place in our gallery, and whom we had well-nigh forgotten—for which we crave forgiveness—so we sought out Mr. Ramage, and asked him for a few particulars concerning his business.

JOHN RAMAGE was born in London on the 20th of February, 1836, and was apprenticed to Mr. John Wright, of Noel-street, Oxford-street, in 1851, where he remained until the term of his indenture expired in 1856, when, desirous of improving himself in his craft, he paid a visit to Paris, and was fortunate enough to obtain an engagement with Lortic, whose splendid bindings have earned for him such an enviable reputation. There, during the next three years, young Ramage paid assiduous attention to his study of the finest branches of the trade, and admits himself deeply indebted to M. Lortic for his instruction in the use of the finely-cut tools for which his atelier is famous, and for much of that refinement of taste which comes of good tuition aided by a residence amongst the all-pervading art influences of the French capital. But his sphere of training was not confined to

Paris; M. Lortic was in the habit of taking periodical journeys to the larger towns in the French provinces for the purpose of purchasing rare books or fine bindings, and as Mr. Ramage generally accompanied him, the pupil picked up a great deal of the master's knowledge of books and their values which can never be gained in the workshop, but is essential for the bookseller, as well as having the opportunity of studying the various styles of the great binders, as M. Lortic had the entrée not only into public libraries but to many a rich private collection. The three years

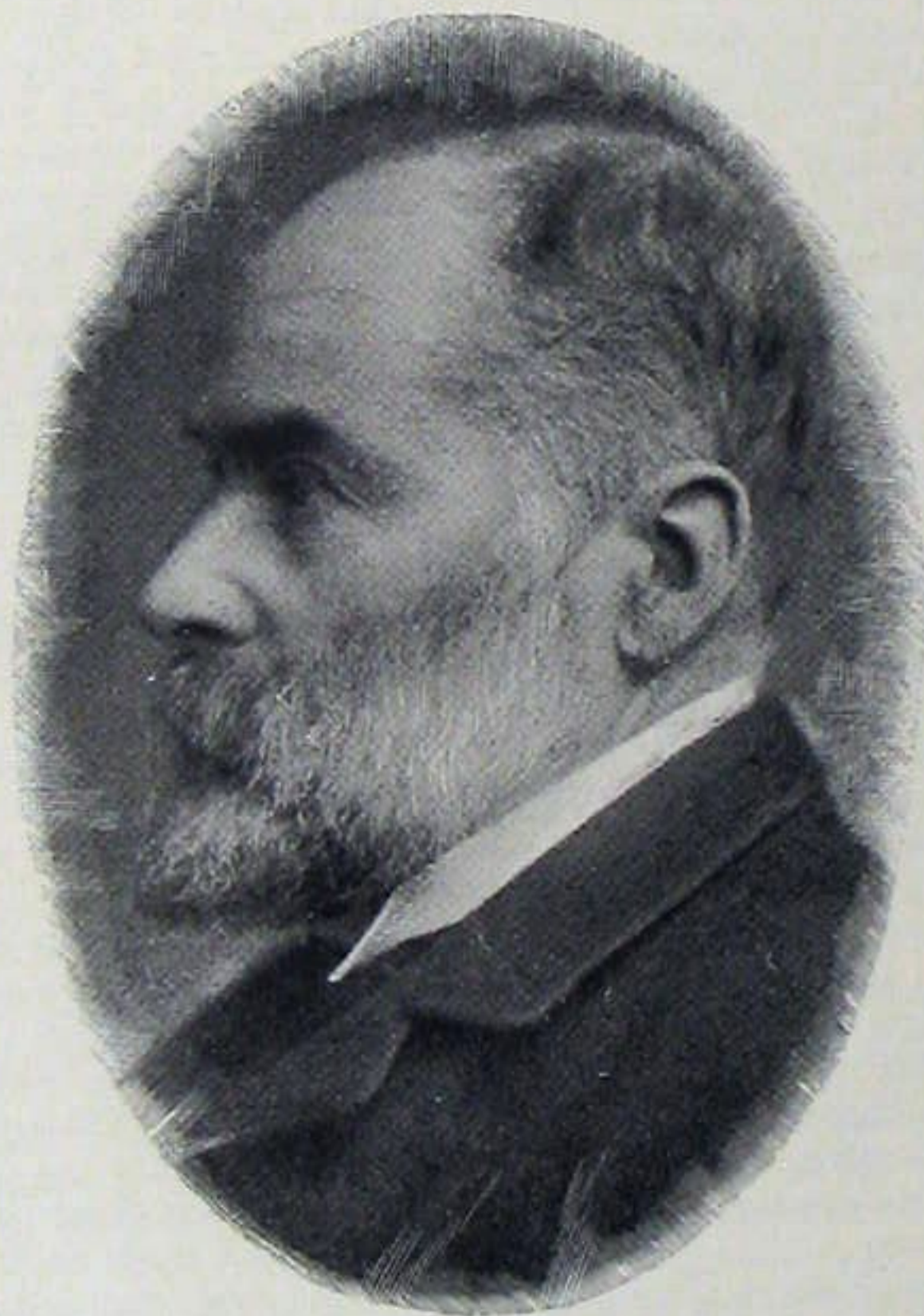
thus passed away in profitable and pleasant alternations of workshop life and interesting travel, until, at the latter end of 1860, Mr. Ramage left his tutor and went to Edinburgh, where he purchased the business of the late Mr. Banks, on the North Bridge, and commenced for himself. There another three years passed away, during which time he found that a great deal of his work was being sent to him from London, and to London it had to be returned; so that in 1863

he determined to take up a position in the metropolis, as being the place best suited for his trade, and he removed to Wells-street, Jermyn-street.

Here he was able to largely increase his business, and he then started buying books in quires, binding them, and selling them to booksellers both in town and in the country, which so entirely altered the whole character of the business that it necessitated another removal in 1870 to larger premises in Warwick-lane, which was nearer to the centre of the wholesale publishing trade. In 1884, the buildings in Warwick-lane had to be pulled down for the widening of the street, and a fresh home was sought in Warwick-square, where he stayed till 1891, when he migrated to his present business place at Nos. 4 and 5 Creed-lane.

Mr. Ramage is principally engaged in binding fine books or rare editions, and his experiences

in ministering to the varied tastes of book collectors are certainly amusing. There seem to be no harder people to please, for the fads of book collectors are innumerable, and should any one of their pet ideas not receive that full consideration which they deem it deserves, woe betide the unlucky binder. We were shewn some small-octavo volumes which had squares quite an inch deep, simply in order to bring the back up to the same size as some other volumes upon the same subject, and to make a neat array on the library shelves. Now we can quite understand the objection



JOHN RAMAGE.

