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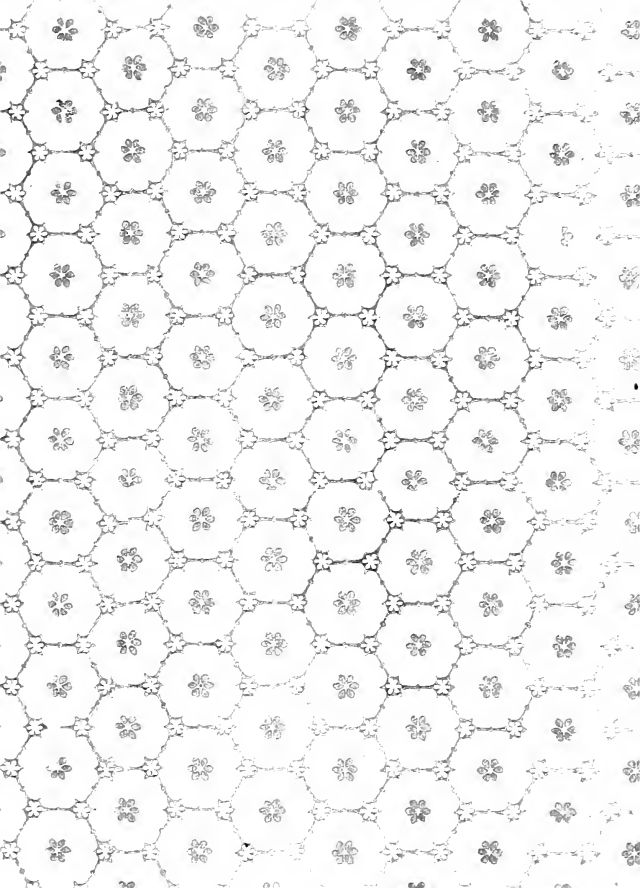
The Oxford Cotton Memorial

BIBLE.

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The Oxford Caxton Memorial

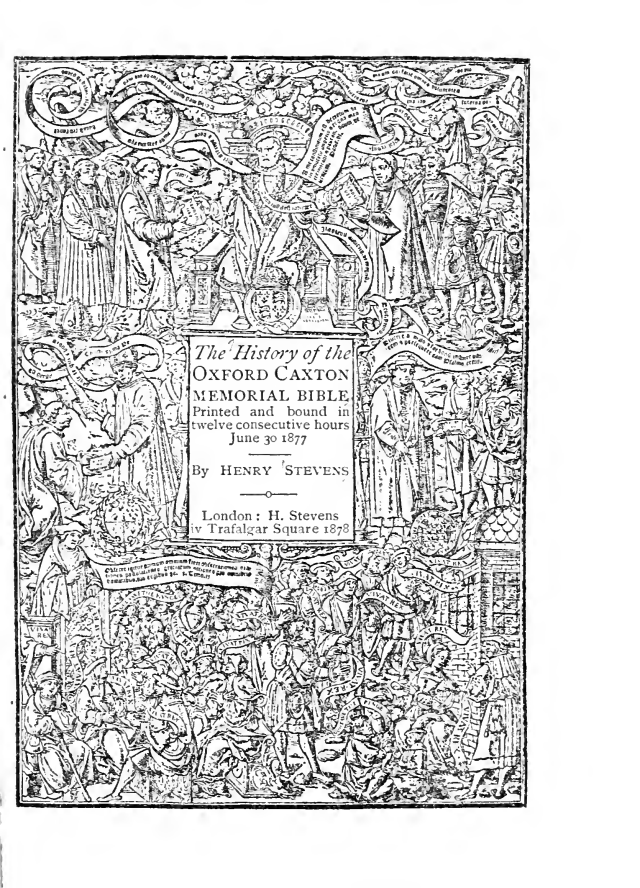
B I B L E.



'We must roote out Pryntinge,
Or Pryntinge will roote out vs.'

*The Vicar of Croydon in a
Sermon at Paul's
Cross.*

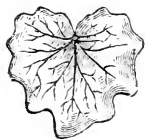




The History of the
OXFORD CAXTON
MEMORIAL BIBLE
Printed and bound in
twelve consecutive hours
June 30 1877

By HENRY STEVENS

London: H. Stevens
iv Trafalgar Square 1878



To

My Mother

Good here Better there

'But she is in her grave, and, oh!
The difference to me!'



786834

Wholly printed and bound in twelve hours,

On the 30th day of June, 1877,

For the Carlton Celebration.

100 copies were printed, of which this is

No.

Presented to

[In Memoriam Gul. Caxton.]

The
HOLY BIBLE,

containing the

Old and New Testaments:

Translated out of the Original Tongues: and with the former
Translations diligently compared and revised,
by His Majesty's special Command.

Appointed to be read in Churches.



Oxford:

Printed at the University Press.

London. Henry Frowde.

Oxford University Press Warehouse, 7, Paternoster Row

New York: 42, Bleeker Street.

Union 16mo.

JUNE 30, 1877.

Cum Privilegio.

‘ Printers have persecuted me without a cause.’

*David, Psalm cxix, 161, Specimen of Bible
Printing before 1702, according
to Cotton Mather.*





THE
Oxford Caxton Memorial



I B L E



IBLE PRINTING

was the glory of the Press in Gutenberg's day. It is the glory of the Oxford University Press of to-day. The Catalogue of Bibles in the Caxton Exhibition opened with the *first* Bible printed with moveable metal types, 1450-1455, and closed with the *last* Bible printed with moveable metal types on the 30th of June,

B

1877, the day of the opening of the Caxton Celebration Exhibition. As the circumstances and facts connected with this Memorial Bible have been somewhat misunderstood and not a little misrepresented, I may perhaps as well tell the true story here.

Taking my hint from Caxton himself, who, in 'The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye,' 1471, in Epilogue to Book III, wrote: "Because I haue promisid to dyuerce gentilmen & to my frendes to addresse to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd book/ Therefore I haue practysed and lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here see/ and is not wretton with penne and ynke as other bokes ben/ to thende that euery man may haue them attones/ ffor all the bookes thus empryntid as ye here see were begonne in oon day/ & also fynyshid in oon day/ which boke I haue presentid to" &c. Whatever idea Caxton by these quaint words may have meant to convey, I resolved, if possible, to have a Bible printed in Oxford and bound in London on

the 30th of June, 1877, in time for Mr Gladstone's after-déjeuner speech.

Accordingly, some four or five days before, I made application to the Rev. Professor Bartholomew Price and Mr Henry Frowde, representing the University Press, Oxford, and through them the hint was suggested. They both apparently favoured the idea, though at first some doubt was expressed as to the possibility of performing the feat. Professor Price asked if I could give a few hours for consideration. The answer was, "yes, till twelve to-morrow; but you must keep the secret, so that in the event of your declining to undertake the enterprise, it may be offered to the University Press, Cambridge, or to the Queen's Printers, London, or, as a last resort, by cable to the American Bible Society, New York," for, as I told them, I was resolved, if possible, to have a Bible honestly and fairly printed and bound on the morning of the 30th of June. So we separated, Mr Frowde urging the Professor to bring about the accomplishment of the feat if possible. The next morning Professor Price telegraphed from Oxford, "it shall be done."

It was subsequently arranged between Mr Frowde and myself that there should be one hundred copies printed, and no more ; that they should all be numbered in print from 1 to 100, and all be exactly alike in binding and ornament ; that all the copies should be presented in the name of the University Press to Libraries, Societies, distinguished individuals and others, in all parts of the world, and that no copies on any account should be sold ; that the first, or N^o 1, should be reserved for Her Majesty the Queen, and the last, or N^o 100, should be for Mrs Henry Stevens. A list of one hundred numbers was next made, and it was agreed that the nominations of the presentees should be divided into three parts, that is, Bible N^o 1 and every third number thereafter should be allotted by the University Press ; N^o 2 and every third number thereafter should be in the nomination of Mr Henry Stevens ; and N^o 3 and every third number thereafter to be at the disposal of the Delegates of the University Press and the Dons of Oxford. And finally, that, before the end of the year, when

the majority of the presentations would most likely be made, a list be printed with the numbers and names of presentees as far as then settled.

All these plans having been made and definitely settled, early on Saturday morning, June 30th, the chief particulars were briefly written out by myself, and submitted personally to Mr Gladstone at his house about nine o'clock, with the offer that Mr Gladstone was at liberty to make a point of them in his forthcoming speech in the afternoon if he liked, with a copy of the projected Bible in hand. Mr Gladstone at first expressed great doubts about the possibility of carrying out the project in time; said that he had once dined with a gentleman in the North of England, who presided at the dinner table in the evening in a dress-coat that had been made from cloth made from the wool of a sheep sheared that morning on the lawn before the house in the presence of some of the guests; but, added he, "if our Oxford friends accomplish this feat to-day with their Bible, they will outdo the enterprise of my northern friend."

Mr Gladstone entered fully into the spirit of the enterprise, and, well knowing Professor Price, expressed his entire confidence in the honour and squareness of the transaction. He was distinctly told by me that the book was to be printed in Oxford from standing moveable type, and the whole of the one hundred copies to be bound in London, all on that Saturday. The overcoming of the distance of the sixty-three miles between Oxford and London was to be considered as an essential part of the feat. Mr Gladstone was then, I submit, "properly instructed," and I should perhaps here add that he did not in his speech say that this Bible was 'set up' or 'composed' that day, as one of the five or six morning papers which reported him erroneously declared that he did.

A parcel containing ten copies of the Caxton Memorial Bible reached Mr Stevens at the Western Gallery, South Kensington, precisely at 2 o'clock that day, so that when Mr Gladstone, accompanied by Mrs Gladstone and the Emperor of Brazil, came to the table at about half-past two, a paper was placed before him

with the words in pencil, "the parcel has arrived all right and just as planned," and then, by way of confirmation, three copies of the Memorial Bible were placed in his hands, inscribed N^o 1, to Her Majesty the Queen, N^o 2, to Mrs Gladstone, and N^o 10, to His Majesty the Emperor of Brazil. So far there had not been a hitch, and the point that Mr Gladstone made of the "Caxton Memorial Bible" in his speech about four o'clock is known to everybody, while he held it up in the presence of the "Six Hundred" as "the climax and consummation of the art of printing."

During the short time that Bible N^o 1 was on the table before Mr Gladstone, a small drop of wine accidentally fell upon the gilt top edge of the book, and, before I had time to wipe it away, had made a slight but beautifully coloured purple star on the gilding. Not deeming this 'suspicion of Gladstone claret' by any means a blemish, the stain was allowed to remain as an additional and unique souvenir of the day. The Book so marked was therefore, after being

displayed under glass during the Caxton Exhibition, sent, enclosed in a morocco case, to Her Majesty.

The volume was printed at Oxford, bound in London, and delivered at the South Kensington Exhibition Buildings literally within twelve consecutive hours. The book was printed, not from stereotype plates, as has been erroneously stated by some of the morning papers, but from moveable type set up a long time ago, and not used for years. To guard against any fraud hereafter, it was thought best to take the forms of an edition that was entirely out of print. The printers commenced to make their preparations soon after midnight, and the printing actually commenced at two A.M. ; the sheets were artificially dried, forwarded to London by the nine o'clock express train to the Oxford University Press Binding Establishment, Barbican, where they were folded, rolled, collated, sewn, subjected to hydraulic pressure, gilded, bound, and taken to South Kensington before two P.M.

The book consists of 1,052 pages, 16mo,

minion type, and is bound in turkey morocco, bevelled boards, flexible back, gilt-lettered on back and inside cover, with the arms of the Oxford University in gold on its obverse side; and is free from the "set-off" or blemish which its hasty production might well have excused. One hundred and one persons, I have been told, were engaged in the Oxford University Press Binding Establishment, Barbican, London, that day on this Memorial Bible, all of whom received extra wages, besides a holiday the following Monday. The volume contains an explanatory inscription and an extra title: "In memoriam Gul. Caxton," with the occasion and date of the edition printed at the bottom of each of its thirty-three sheets, thus: "The Oxford Caxton Celebration Edition, 1877."

Mr Gladstone concluded his interesting speech with the following words, which are given as reported in "The Times" of July 2nd, with a few slight corrections:—"If you look at the list of works produced by Caxton and compare them at the same time with the

works produced in the Continental Press, you will be struck by their great difference of character. The works produced by Caxton appear mainly to belong to a low stage of civilization. He did not print the Bible, because the translated Bible, then popular among the people, was the translation of Wycliffe, and the translation of Wycliffe had been proscribed by the Church ; but he never attempted to print any one of the great standard classical works of antiquity. Are we to condemn him on that account? Not at all. His proceeding was an eminently English proceeding. Caxton conceived in his own mind that idea which we consider to be an eminently English idea—that he would make his great enterprise independent and self-supporting.

“Caxton seems to have determined to throw himself as far as he could upon the sympathies and intelligence of his countrymen—to do all he could by translations to bring learning near to their comprehension, and having brought them as near as he could, to trust them to do the rest. And the industry of this man was

marvellous. We are told that by the time he died he had translated nearly 5,000 folio pages for the benefit and instruction of his countrymen. Printing, too, was not looked upon by him so much as a mere manual art or accomplishment as that it was his business to develop the art as a link between the literary works on the one side which he had printed and the minds of his countrymen on the other side, and thus of bringing them into contact. This is a very remarkable and interesting history, and I venture to say that those who have not had the opportunity of closely examining it will find that the career of Caxton, considered as a biography, had a deep interest for any reader interested in the history of literature, and for most civilized of English readers it is a subject that will well repay any amount of diligence and care bestowed on it.

“ Well, ladies and gentlemen, I will not detain you much longer. My wish is gained if those who have not made his character and career a special subject for examination shall happily be induced to look a little into the

matter. The relatively backward condition of England at Caxton's time was evinced by the fact that after his death he had no English followers.

“Here I must say one word to point to the good sense and sagacity of Caxton. As I have said, he determined to make his press self-supporting, and he did so; and I dare say when he died, if he was not a wealthy man, he was a man of substance. And he was not a “high flying” printer. He took a hint from those who preceded him. Those Germans, Sweynheym and Pannartz, who were first established [at Subiaco] in the neighbourhood of Rome printed a great number of magnificent editions of the Greek and Latin Classics, and what was the consequence? They became bankrupts. That was a very melancholy end of a noble enterprise, but it enables us to understand the modesty, good sense, and sagacity of Caxton when we see how he steered clear of those rocks. He saw there would not be demand enough in England for what may be called an ideal press. He limited himself to practical

objects, and thus laid a sound foundation of what was a progressive work."

Mr Gladstone here took up a bound volume, and continued,—“I now call attention in a few words to the progress of this art, and I hold up a volume in my hand to which I beg every one to direct his eye, because I think it may be called the climax and consummation of the art of printing. This volume is bound, as you see, and stamped with the arms of the University of Oxford. It is a Bible bound in a manner that commends itself to the reader; I believe in every respect an excellent piece of workmanship, containing more than one thousand pages. Well, you will say, ‘That is very commonplace, why bring it before us?’ I do so in order to tell you that the materials of this book sixteen hours ago did not exist. The book was not bound, it was not folded, it was not printed. Since the clock struck twelve last night at the University Press in Oxford the people there have printed and sent us this book to be distributed here in the midst of your festival. They have sent several copies, one of

which will be presented to the Emperor of Brazil, who has but just left our table. This shows what can be done, and is what has been done, and it shows the state to which this great art is now happily arrived.

“If I began with a humiliating confession on the part of my countrymen as to the small share we could claim in contributing to the early history of printing, we may leave off, ladies and gentlemen, in a better spirit, because I think that such a performance as this is one that will be admitted to be a credit in any portion of the world. (Applause.)

“Now I will trouble you no longer, but will ask you to drink with me to the memory of that valued and honoured name, William Caxton—the first English printer, and for a while the solitary printer in this our beloved country.”

The paper was made at the Oxford University Press Paper Mills at Wolvercote, near Oxford, specially for this edition, only a day or two before it was printed. It might have been made (and is perhaps a matter of regret that it was

not) on the morning of the 30th of June in time for the printing of this Memorial Bible.

It has been said that scores of houses might have done the same thing. But they didn't, and the possibility of any other house in England doing it depends upon the single fact whether any other printing-house out of Oxford keeps the Bible standing in moveable type. It could not probably have been printed from stereotype plates in the time, and it has been estimated by the compositors of one of the largest printing establishments in London, that it would have taken 2,000 compositors and 200 readers to have 'set up' and properly read the Bible in these same twelve hours, to say nothing of the press-work and binding. Unquestionably the Bible, with all its points, capitals, italics, and small capitals, is the most difficult of all books to print with perfect accuracy. Again no inconsiderable part of the enterprise was in overcoming the sixty-three miles between Oxford and London.



*A List of the Oxford Caxton Memorial
Bibles allotted up to Easter,*

MDCCCLXXVIII.

N.B.—The 33 Numbers printed in Roman numerals were assigned to Mr Stevens for Allotment.

- i Her Majesty the Queen.
- ii Mrs William E. Gladstone.
- 3 The Marquis of Salisbury, D.C.L. Chancellor of the University of Oxford.
- 4
- v James Lenox, Esq. for the Lenox Library, New York.
- 6 The Archbishop of Canterbury, for Lambeth Palace Library.
- 7
- viii His Majesty the Emperor of Germany.
- 9 Mr John Henry Stacey, Oxford University Press.
- 10 His Majesty the Emperor of Brazil.
- xi The Hon. Stephen Salisbury, for the American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts.
- 12 Mrs Combe.

- 13 Ex-President General and Mrs Ulysses
S. Grant.
- xiv Mrs Edwards Pierrepont, Wife of the
United States Minister at London.
- 15 The Reverend J. E. Sewell, D.D.
Warden of New College, and Vice-
Chancellor of the University of Oxford.
- 16
- xvii The Library of the Massachusetts His-
torical Society, Boston, New England.
- 18 The Reverend Mark Pattison, B.D. Rec-
tor of Lincoln College, Oxford.
- 19
- xx
- 21 The Reverend John Griffiths, D.D. War-
den of Wadham College, Oxford.
- 22 The Right Hon. the Earl of Beaconsfield.
- xxiii The Library of the British Museum.
- 24 Mr H. E. P. Platt, M.A. Fellow of Lin-
coln College and Junior Proctor, Oxford.
- 25
- xxvi Mr J. S. Hodson, Secretary of the Caxton
Celebration, 1877.

- 27 The Reverend Henry Octavus Coxe,
M.A. Bodley's Librarian, Oxford.
- 28
- xxix The Library of Parliament, Dominion
of Canada.
- 30
- 31 Miss Louisa Court.
- xxxii His Majesty the Emperor of Russia.
- 33 The Reverend Bartholomew Price,
M.A. Sedleian Professor of Natural
Philosophy, Oxford.
- 34
- xxxv
- 36 The Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- 37 The Library of the British and Foreign
Bible Society, London.
- xxxviii The Library of the American Bible
Society, New York.
- 39 The Reverend William Bright, D.D.
Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical
History, Oxford.
- 40 James Franklin, Esq.
- xli Mrs John Carter Brown, Providence,
Rhode Island, New England.

- 42 Mr Francis Fry, F.S.A. Cotham, Bristol.
- 43
- xliv J. Hammond Trumbull, LL.D. for the
Watkinson Library, Hartford, Connecticut,
New England.
- 45 The Reverend H. G. Woods, M.A. Fellow
of Trinity College, Senior Proctor,
Oxford.
- 46
- xlvii Mrs Harriet A. Tenney, for the Michigan
State Library.
- 48
- 49
- 1 The Very Reverend H. G. Liddell, D.D.
Dean of Christ Church, Oxford.
- 51 Mr H. J. S. Smith, M.A. Savilian Pro-
fessor of Geometry, Oxford.
- 52 Mrs Taylor.
- liii Henry John Atkinson, Esq. Gunnersbury
House, Acton, Middlesex.
- 54 The Reverend William Stubbs, M.A.
Regius Professor of Modern History,
Oxford.
- 55 The University Library, Cambridge.

- lvi The Library of Congress, Washington,
United States.
- 57 The Reverend Edwin Palmer, M.A.
Corpus Professor of Latin, Oxford.
- 58
- lix William Blades, Esq. Author of the Life
of William Caxton.
- 60 The Archbishop of York.
- 61
- lxii His Majesty the King of Italy.
- 63 John Walter, Esq. M.P.
- 64 The Reverend Newman Hall.
- lxv The Library Company, Philadelphia.
- 66 The Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone.
- 67 The Library of the Hibernian Bible
Society, Dublin.
- lxviii
- 69 Thomas Burt, Esq.
- 70 His Grace the Duke of Devonshire.
- lxxi His Majesty the King of the Belgians.
- 72 The Library of the Society for Promoting
Christian Knowledge, London.
- 73 The Reverend G. G. Bradley, M.A.
Master of University College, Oxford.

- lxxiv Samuel Christie-Miller, Esquire, Britwell House, Burnham.
- 75 Mr Edward Pickard Hall, M.A. Oxford University Press.
- 76 The Right Hon. the Earl Spencer, K.C.B.
- lxxvii Mr Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press.
- 78 Rev. Henry Swabey, M.A.
- 79 The Library of the Académie Française, Paris.
- lxxx Prof. Dr Reinhold Pauli, for the Library of the University of Göttingen.
- 81 F. Max Müller, M.A. Professor of Comparative Philology, Oxford.
- 82 His Royal Highness Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte.
- lxxxiii The Library of Harvard University, Cambridge, New England.
- 84 Mr William Nelson.
- 85
- lxxxvi M. de Lisle, for the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

30 *The Oxford Memorial Bible*

88

lxxxix Mr Alexander Macmillan.

90

91 George Bullen, Esq. British Museum,
Chairman of Caxton Committee N^o 1.

xcii Chancellor J. V. L. Pruyn, for the New
York State Library, Albany.

93

94

xcv The Library of Yale College, New
Haven, Connecticut, New England.

96 M. Alfred Chaix, Paris.

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xcviii The Newberry Library, Chicago.

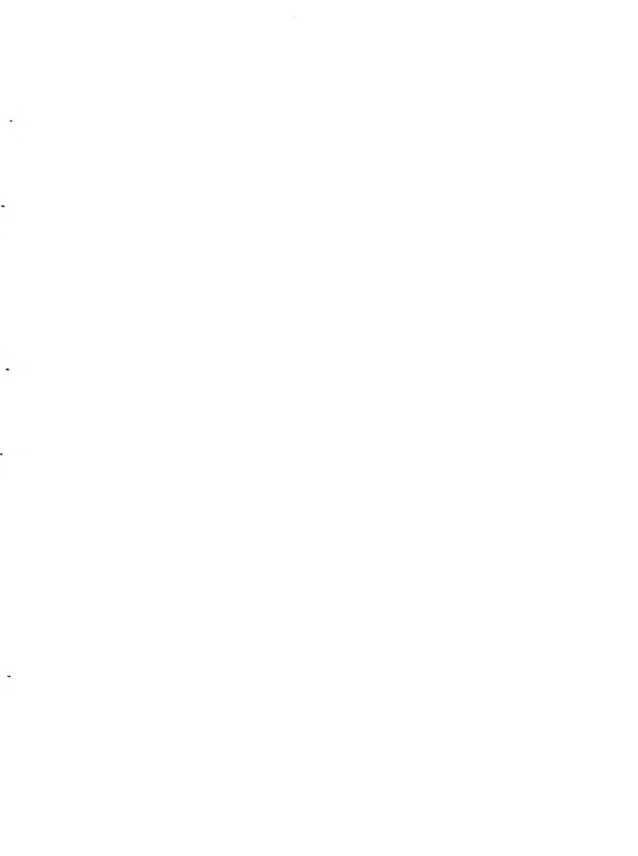
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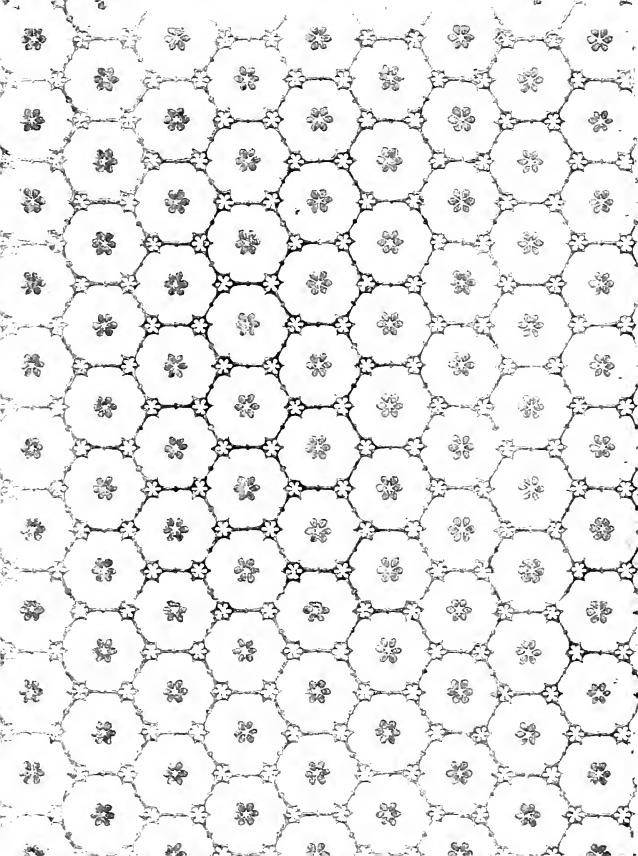
100 Mrs Henry Stevens, Vermont House,
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PRINTED BY JOHN C. WILKINS, 9, CASTLE STREET,
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25 MARCH, 1878.

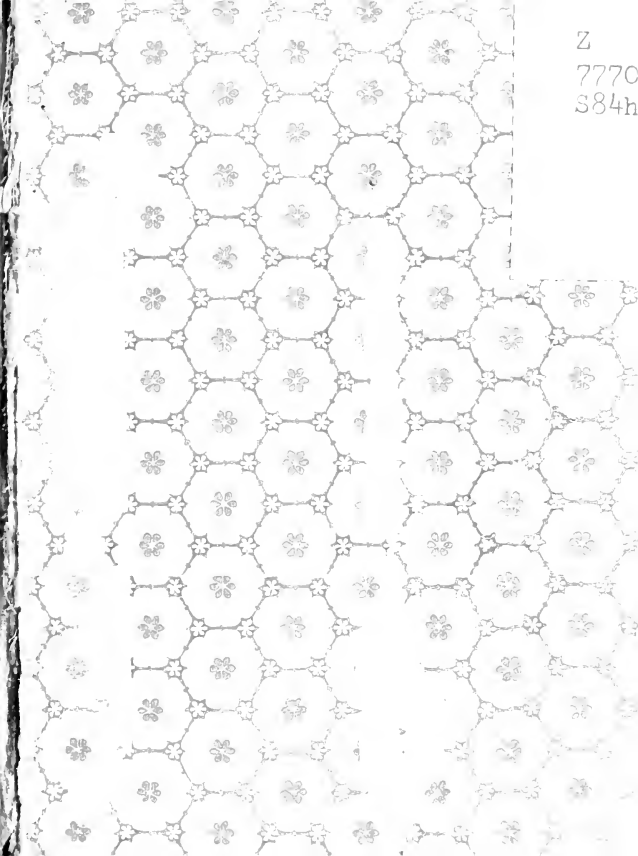




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