

**BOOK-PLATES  
OF TO-DAY**

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Book-plates of To-day by Wilbur Macey Stone

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**WILBUR MACEY STONE**

**BOOK-PLATES  
OF TO-DAY**





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# BOOK-PLATES *of* TO-DAY

EDITED BY WILBUR MACEY STONE



NEW YORK  
TONNELÉ & COMPANY  
1902



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no

*W. G. Bowdoin, J. Adams*  
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# AMERICAN DESIGNERS *of* BOOK-PLATES : WM. EDGAR FISHER

By W. G. BOWDOIN



By Wm. Edgar Fisher

THE book-plate designers of to-day are legion because they are many. Almost every one who can draw, and many who cannot, have ventured into the field of book-plate designing; and the result has been that many of the book-plates that are current have little to commend them to critical observers. The present increasing interest in these little bits of the graver's art has greatly encouraged the production of them, and new ones arise daily. It is desirable, therefore, if we are to have book-plates at all, that they shall be as artistic as may be; and it is important, from an art standpoint, to all those who are about to adopt the use of these marks of ownership that they shall have, as they may have,

the artistic flavor about them.

Most of our leading designers have hitherto been grouped in the eastern section of our country, or at least not much further west than Chicago. Some few designs, it is true, have been produced in California, but for the most part the book-plates of note have been marked with an eastern geographical origin.

In William Edgar Fisher we have a designer who has strikingly departed from geographical conditions of book-plate designing heretofore prevailing, and in far-away Fargo, North Dakota, has set up his studio from whence have come designs that are fresh, original and very pleasing. Mr. Fisher loves to work in a pictorial field. He makes a plate that tells a story, and in his best plates there is artfully placed something bookish that harmonizes with the design-form selected; and, because of art coherence and harmony in design that go



By Wm. Edgar Fisher



By Wm. Edgar Fisher

hand in hand, his plates are more than satisfactory. The general eastern notion in regard to North Dakota is that nothing artistic can come out of the State, but the work done there by Mr. Fisher quickly dispels such an idea. The plates he has drawn are acknowledged as highly meritorious by the best American masters of book-plate designing. In all the plates from the hand of this artist that are here grouped, and which may be regarded as quite typical of him, there are only two that do not contain a book as a detail somewhere in the finished plate.

One of the exceptions is the plate of the Studio Club that gains infinitely by the omission of a book in the plate as produced. The grouping of the five observers (symbolic of the members of the Studio Club) around the feminine portrait is most charming, and to the writer it appears one of the happiest of recent productions in appropriate book-plates.

Mr. Fisher's feminine figures that he introduces into many of his plates are likewise exceedingly effective. This is particularly the case when to the charms of femininity he has added those of symbolism, as in the case of the plate for Miss Winifred Knight, in which the graceful female masker appears at the shrine of the idealized god Pan, who writes, it may be something oracular, in her proffered album. The figure is gracefully posed and the lines of the arms and neck are marked by pleasant curves.

In the plate of Maie Bruce Douglas, Mr. Fisher may have been influenced by Hans Christian Andersen. At any rate, whether or not this is so,