

**A LIST OF THE EARLY PRINTED
BOOKS: AND AN INDEX OF
THE ENGLISH BOOKS PRINTED
BEFORE THE YEAR MDC**

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A List of the Early Printed Books: And an Index of the English Books Printed before the Year
MDC by W. R. Collett

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A LIST
OF THE
EARLY PRINTED BOOKS;
AND
AN INDEX
OF THE
ENGLISH BOOKS PRINTED BEFORE THE YEAR MDC.
IN THE
Library of Gonville and Caius College,
CAMBRIDGE.

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A LIST
OF THE
EARLY PRINTED BOOKS

IN THE

Library of Gonville and Caius College,

CAMBRIDGE.

COMPILED BY

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FELLOW AND LIBRARIAN.

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phrase that seems to have been framed as an apology for wilful ignorance, and to be put forward by some as a sufficient excuse for not extending their investigations below the surface of their chosen subjects, or beyond the topics of their own times. For with lists like the present, tending to facilitate our reference to books which are not easily or frequently to be met with,—to adopt the language of one* well qualified by experience to express an opinion—with such lists “indicating many long lost and forgotten sources of information, we should, I doubt not, discover much truth, not merely in what may be called bibliography,—though that science is of greater extent, value, and dignity, than many who use the word inconsiderately may suppose,—but in history, in science, and with regard to the acts and opinions of some whose characters are best worthy of our study.”

Whence it would appear, that one of learning’s best helps may be found, “in the first place, [in] the knowledge of the fact that certain books do exist on certain subjects—a species of knowledge apparently very simple, but really very important, and which would have saved many a writer from the disappointment of having to throw aside the labour of years on finding that it had been anticipated; or perhaps, from the greater inconvenience of being informed, after publication, that what he had said had been much better said, and fully refuted, before he was born. Secondly, in what I may perhaps be allowed to call a personal acquaintance with books—being conversant with the books themselves, so as to give to each some sort of personal identity, and not to conceive that every refer-

* The Rev. S. B. Maitland in p. vii. of “A List of some of the Early Printed Books in the Archbishop’s Library at Lambeth . . . London: MDCCCXLIII.” (privately printed.)

ence at the bottom of a page is of equal authority, as being to something which one never saw, or could expect to see."

"It would not be easy," continues the same authority, "to define all the advantages arising from this species of knowledge, or to specify all the evils which have arisen in the course of the past century, to the church in particular, from the want of it." And he takes occasion to express the belief, forced on him by many years of observation and reflection, "that there is no point in which the highest courses of education in this country have been more defective; and no defect which has given a greater advantage to foreign scholars and divines, who, while perhaps really inferior to our own in genius and scholarship, had been better instructed as to the sources of information, and were able with greater ease to approach them*."

To the objection which may occur to many when they see the small extent of this list, that it is on this account valueless as a contribution towards the remedy of the above-mentioned deficiency, it may be sufficient to reply that "Of the more extensive collections in this country there are large and valuable catalogues; and those who are competent to form any estimate of the knowledge and labour embodied in them, will be more ready to commend their extent and accuracy than to complain of their defects; and when to this is added a continual progress in multiplication and correction, what more can be desired? These catalogues, too, are accessible to all who are in any degree competent to use them; and by the knowledge and courtesy of those who have the charge of them, they are perhaps rendered as fully and extensively beneficial as they

* Ibid. pp. viii. ix.

can be expected to be. But there are many libraries and collections of books, less extensive and less known, which contain some scarce books, and perhaps some which are not to be met with elsewhere; and it would be an invaluable benefit and assistance to the student in any kind of learning, if those who by purchase, or inheritance, or office, are trustees, not merely for their safe custody, but for their application to the purposes for which they were created, would, by a friendly interchange of catalogues, ensure his finding in each of these sacred depositories an account of the treasures contained in all*."

With respect to the arrangement and plan of this list, that of the Archbishopial Library at Lambeth, by the Rev. S. R. MAITLAND (from whose Introductory Address the above quotations have been made), has been taken for a model. Like that, and for the same reason, this has been limited to books printed in the fifteenth century and within the first twenty years of the sixteenth, and (after the example of Panzer and other bibliographers,) has also been divided into sections so as to keep 'the fifteneers' separate. Hence it might form a not inappropriate Appendix to the Catalogue of the MSS. of Caius College by the late Librarian: especially as it owes its origin to his suggestions.

In giving the titles and colophons, the punctuation of the original has been preserved; so far at least as this, that if unnecessary stops have occasionally been omitted, in no case have any been supplied: and likewise as to the abbreviations, though some have been developed in the copying, none have been introduced. The spelling of the original has been retained; but what now appears a strange

* Ibid. p. vi.

use of small and capital letter has in some few instances been departed from in compliance with modern usage: at the same time prominence has been generally given to the name of a book, or an author, by putting it in capitals: and any remarkable feature in the title-page of a book has been described in the notes. These particulars are here noticed, because, while they will help in the identification of a volume, the mention of them will explain some things in the following pages which have an uncouth appearance, and may prevent the reader from laying the blame of any such thing upon the editor, without having compared it with the original. Nevertheless the editor must still acknowledge himself responsible for whatever errors may be found to exist; the difficulty of avoiding them, in preparing and printing a work of this nature, can be understood only by those who have tried the experiment.

The editor, in conclusion, gladly acknowledges his obligations to his predecessor, the Rev. J. J. SMITH, for his assistance in supervising the leaves of this list as they passed through the press; and he would also indulge the hope that sound learning may be advanced and the interests of literature promoted by the liberality of the College in printing it.
