

**THE DUTIES & QUALIFICATIONS  
OF A LIBRARIAN: A DISCOURSE  
PRONOUNCED IN THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE SORBONNE,  
DECEMBER 23, 1780**

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The Duties & Qualifications of a Librarian: A Discourse Pronounced in the General Assembly of the Sorbonne, December 23, 1780 by Jean-Baptiste Cotton des Houssayes

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**JEAN-BAPTISTE COTTON DES HOUSSAYES**

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THE DUTIES  
AND QUALIFICATIONS OF  
A LIBRARIAN

*An Edition of two hundred and fifty  
copies in this form and of twenty-five  
copies on Large Paper were printed  
at The Merrymount Press, Boston, in  
July, 1906*

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A DISCOURSE PRONOUNCED IN  
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BY  
JEAN-BAPTISTE COTTON  
DES HOUSSAYES



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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE



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**T**HE following address was originally spoken in Latin, and when first printed bore the title: "*Oratio habita in comitiis generalibus societatis sorbonicæ die 23 decembris 1780 à D D. Joan. Bapt. Cotton des-Hous-sayes doct. th. pariensi, soc sorbonico, bibliothecæ, sorb. præfecto, sc̄t. Parisiis, proelio Philippi Dionysii Pierres regis typographi ordinarii, 1781.*" Brunet is the authority for the statement that only twenty-five copies were issued.

The learned bibliophile, Pierre Alexander Gratet Duplessis, recognizing the value of the paper,

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*and desiring a larger audience for it, translated it into French, and gave it to Jacques Joseph Techener for the "Bulletin du Bibliophile, Petite Revue d'ancien Livres," where it appeared in the number for January, 1839 (No. 11, 3<sup>e</sup> série). It occupied the first place among the bibliographical, philological and literary notices which were under the editorship of Charles Nodier; and the title now appears as, "Discours sur les qualités et les devoirs du bibliothécaire, prononcé dans l'assemblée générale de Sorbonne, le 23 décembre 1780, par J.-B. Cotton des Houssayes; traduit du latin en françois par un bibliophile." The initials "G. D."*

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are signed at the end.

In 1857, Aug. Aubry reissued this translation exactly as it stood, among the "*Variétés Bibliographiques*" of his "*Bulletin du Bouquiniste*" (17<sup>e</sup> numero, 1<sup>er</sup> Septembre), but with the addition of a preliminary note signed "G. Duplessis." We may assume that the paper aroused the interest it deserved, since it was reissued the same year as an octavo pamphlet of thirteen pages, limited to one hundred copies. The title-page reads as follows:

*Des Devoirs / Et Des Qualités / Du Bibliothécaire / Discours prononcé dans l'Assemblée générale de Sorbonne, / le 23 décembre 1780, / Par J.-B. Cotton*