

**BRITISH MUSEUM. DEPARTMENT
OF COINS AND
MEDALS. A GUIDE TO THE
EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN MEDALS**

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British Museum. Department of Coins and Medals. A Guide to the Exhibition of Italian Medals
by C. F. Keary

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C. F. KEARY

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A GUIDE
TO THE
EXHIBITION OF ITALIAN MEDALS

Charles Francis
BY
C. F. KEARY, M.A., F.S.A.

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PREFACE

BY THE KEEPER OF COINS.

THE Italian Medals described in this Guide have been selected from the collection in the British Museum for exhibition on account of their artistic and historical interest. They are exhibited in the Department of Coins and Medals. In the Exhibition cases each medal is separately labelled and numbered in accordance with the descriptions in the Guide. Specimens in gold are represented by electrotypes, and specimens in lead by plaster casts, coloured so as to resemble the originals.

The chief interest of this series being artistic, the Introduction gives a brief sketch of the history of medallic art in Italy. Special information concerning the artists and the eminent persons portrayed on the medals is afforded in the body of the work. Each medal is described, and its metal and dimensions in inches and tenths stated, with other particulars needful for its identification.

The first illustrated edition of this Guide being exhausted, a second is now issued with a new set of seven plates, executed by the Autotype process from casts in plaster. The great variety in the sizes of the Italian medals makes it impossible to arrange them in a continuous series in the plates. They have therefore been illustrated in four such series: Plates I-III, representing large medals reduced to half their actual diameter; Plates IV-V, to two-thirds; Plate VI, to three-quarters; and Plate VII, small medals in their actual size.

BARCLAY V. HEAD.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE exhibition of Italian medals is divided into three series, containing (1) the medals of the fifteenth century, (2) those of the sixteenth century, and (3) a Papal series giving the portraits of most of the pontiffs who sat in the chair of St. Peter between the termination of the Great Schism and the end of the seventeenth century. Each of the first two series is again subdivided into two others, the one arranged under the medallists and designed to illustrate the medallic art of that time, the other giving the portraits of individuals concerning most of whom something is known of a biographical or historical interest. At the end of the medals of the sixteenth century are arranged a number of fine examples of the art of this period, of which the authorship is unknown. Regarding this division of the medals under artists and into personal medals, it will easily be seen that very many pieces cannot of right belong exclusively to either class: many medals which are interesting chiefly as the work of a medallist, display likewise important historical portraits, and other pieces, selected chiefly for the sake of the portraits upon them, are signed by an artist and therefore serve to farther illustrate his special work. To aid the student in obtaining all the information possible in either field of inquiry, indexes are given at the end, containing (1) a list of all the artists whose signatures appear upon the medals exhibited, with references to the medals so signed and to those other pieces which can with reasonable probability be referred to them; (2) a list of all the persons represented on the medals; (3) a list of the events, in the case of the Italian series but very few, which are recorded upon the medals. Biographical notices of the medallists are placed