

**FOLIOUS APPEARANCES:  
A CONSIDERATION ON  
OUR WAYS OF LETTERING  
BOOKS**

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Folious Appearances: A Consideration on Our Ways of Lettering Books by John Tupling

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**JOHN TUPLING**

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# FOLIOUS APPEARANCES.

## A Consideration on our Ways of Lettering Books.

Folious appearances, and not the central and vital  
interiors of truth.

*Sir Thomas Browne, in his Book of Christian Morals.*

By  
John Dupling

Printed for John Russell Smith, *Soho Square* ;

By Elijah Tucker, *Perry's Place, Oxford Street.*

M. DCCC. LIV.

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*What phrase is this, this is affectations?*

*Sir Hugh Evans.*

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## Of the Lettering of Books.

AS when a man hath a rich and fair estate, he, beyond all things, desires to adorn and magnify it with every circumstance of beauty, and in his endeavours to make it perfect widens his regard even unto the wall that rounds it; so it is, when they who love books obtain an exceeding good one. They read it, they grow familiar with it, moving with it as with a friend, and by their constant use do wear out and make loose the cloth cover wherein it was at first put; then do

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they desire to cover it more duringly in leather, and to make it as sweet in manner outside as it is in matter sweet inside. Then much cost and consideration is spent upon it: it is bound richly, as is right, and of the book right well deserved. Yet when this is done, all is very near spoilt, and brought to confusion, binding and book, by the way we signify or make sign what book it is upon the cover of the back or on the side. We declare in a common way and loudly its name by scribing it on the back, even as he, who enjoying the love of some woman, exceeding fair and precious, boasteth thereof in public places and in the streets, delivering himself, thereby, unworthy of that he hath. We put the name on our good books



outside, as a shopkeeper paints his over his doorway, or as the Peckham Dairy unadulterated milkmen attach theirs unto their hats. For common books this coarse way of lettering does very well; for books political, books referential, books biographical; but for good great books, books of poetry, books of thought, books of voyage, books of history, it is surely too poor. For common books so plain and formal a way of lettering is good, is necessary; for there are so many more of them in every library than of the good great books there possibly can be. Therefore on these, for distinction, it must be done; on these the plain name may be put: but on the others we know so and love, what need for it? So in large burial places, we find many stones

with names, names unknown, upon them, but perhaps one monument, fair and stately, with but some general word or words graven thereon, unparticular to any person, but applied by every body to the mighty man whom everybody knows there to be entombed. And when we build a law-court or a lodging-house, we put over the door what it is, but a palace or a cathedral we leave unscribed as to name; and if we carve any words upon it at all, they are such as relate to attribute, to use, or to quality, even as that Athens altar whereon Holy Paul found writ, *To the unknown God*. So it is with books: those that are common should be lettered plainly, but the others not so, for these are oftener read and better known, they are fewer

in number, and for them we have more affection ; therefore their names we do not want, rather their qualities. Even as with our acquaintance, they little known deliver their names on a card ; but they well loved, true and tried, wait at the door with heart quickly beating for a hand, and strike theirs into ours with some expression of love and joy. Thus should the labels of our books, our great books, and our loved, look down on us from their places, not giving us their names but bringing to our minds, by a happily applied word or words, some recollection of what they are, of what we are from them. Therefore, when we worthily cover these books in leather (I talk not of the primal cloth covering) let us letter them worthily. Since Britons will