

**A CATALOGUE OF A SELECTION
OF ENGRAVED TITLES AND
FRONTISPIECES PUBLISHED IN
ENGLAND DURING THE SIXTEENTH
AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES**

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A Catalogue of a Selection of Engraved Titles and Frontispieces Published in England During the Sirteenth and Seventeenth Centuries by Grolier Club

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On sale at
The Grolier Club
Twenty-nine East Thirty-second St., New York
April 8th to 23d, 1898



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Harvard College Library,
Bequest of Edward Roy Thompson,
of Troy, N. Y.

13 Feb. 1900.

By exchange of duplicate.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present collection of engraved book-titles and frontispieces to books, though there are not a few rare pieces in it, does not, of course, pretend to completeness: it has no higher aim than to hint at the pleasant store of suggestion and anecdote that will reward the student of these unconsidered trifles, although the artist, or even the amateur of engraving, should pass them by with a smile of disdain.

These engravings, though often of extreme rudeness, and rarely rising to a higher estimation than that of a neat and finished mechanism, even in the hands of a Faithorne or a Hollar, may be classed with book-plates, posters, play-bills and broadsides, fans, snuff-boxes, autographs, and the whole miscellany-lot of collectors' fads—the bric-à-brac of the Muse of History. But they are richer in suggestion and in solid interest than their com-

panions, and may even be allowed to have in some cases a mild literary flavor, due to their intimate association with the books in which they are found: while the design and execution, even when rudest, become interesting and respectable from their harmony, not only with the domestic arts, but with the art, properly so called, of the time. They are rarely so dissociated from the contents of the book as too often happens with us; but make one with the printing and general air, and reflect its character. It sometimes seems as if the designer had worked on the suggestion of the writer, and had himself become interested in what the author had to say; so that more than one instance will be found in this exhibit where the title-page serves as a sort of illustrated index to the contents of the book.

Nothing more has been attempted at this time than to give a sketch of what was done in England in this field in the seventeenth century. The exceptions to the rule are few; the most important are the specimens of the work of William Rogers, who was born in

London about 1545, and who was the first Englishman who is known to have practised copper-plate engraving. It is pleasant to find, among the examples of his work shown here, the portrait of John Gerard, the author of the well-known "Herbal," with its coarse but expressive wood-cuts, a good companion to the "Essay on Gardens" by his great contemporary Bacon, wherein the flowers and fruits of the English year are so cheerfully and summarily sketched. The work of the later engravers Faithorne and Marshall is shown in a collection of examples that may fairly be allowed representative. If Marshall, with his inferior technical skill, running the gamut of good, bad, indifferent, shall be found the more interesting of the two, it is perhaps because as the portraitist-in-ordinary, so to speak, of his time, his dullness is often forgotten in the interest we take in his subject. We thank him for having shown us, even as in a glass darkly, the faces of so many famous people. His well-known portrait of Milton, the first that was published, and which was so slyly rebuked by the great poet for its absurd want