A Short History of Bookbinding.*

By Bernard Quaritch.

The subject of Bookbinding is one which should be of high interest to the lovers and the makers of books. Supercilious persons may deride as mere vanity the jerkin of gilt leather in which the binder delights, and may prefer beauty in a naked state; but binding is like the saving grace of faith. Without binding, there can be no salvation; it confers mundane immortality on bad and good books alike, preserving the latter for our enjoyment and the former for our—instruction. For the want of binding, myriads of authors have perished, leaving a great many deplorable gaps in the literary history of the past.

This is the utilitarian side of the topic; it has also an aesthetic one. Binding offers a field for the display of decorative art which has not always been neglected, and the eye is as much gratified by dainty and delicate patterns on the outside of books, as by the display of taste in furniture, tapestry, hangings, urns, screens, vases.

There is besides a sentimental aspect in the cult of old bookbindings. The same feeling which formerly prompted veneration for bits of the True Cross, for the relics of saints and martyrs, the pollex of St. Sebastian, or the coxa of St. Margaret, inspires the modern book-lover with reverence for the volumes, whether well or ill bound, which are stamped with the emblems of his nobler predecessors. We have heard of the enthusiast who took to bed with him a newly acquired tome to which the quiver and crescents of Diane de Poitiers lent a vicarious fascination.

My catalogue of Bindings is devoted to the service of the Holy Church of Bibliophily, according to the three various Uses above specified. If the works of modern art predomi-

* Reprinted by permission from "Examples of Bookbinding." Quaritch's General Catalogue.
nate in the collection, there is little cause for grumbling. The names of Trautz and Bedford, Padeloup and Roger Payne, of Lortic, Chambolle-Duru, and Marius-Michel, are in themselves sufficient guarantee that the volumes which bear them are emphatically "fine books," which will some day become venerable as "old books."

The reading public is almost wholly ignorant of what is meant by "bookbinding." It is one of the industrial arts, capable of high and splendid cultivation, and absolutely indispensable for the preservation of the literary monuments of former ages. Most men who have handled and used books are aware of the necessity of such a mode of protecting them; but, ordinarily the work of the binder is not supposed to be anything more elegant or enduring than the mere temporary covering bestowed by the publisher upon his printed wares. Yet it has been for many centuries the delight of book-lovers to array their cherished volumes in gold and scarlet, and to embellish them with gems, enamels, and ivory carvings, or with decorative designs of such high merit that even the most stupid inheritor of a library would preserve its rough diamonds for the sake of their settings.

A history of Bookbinding would be a desirable addition to the literature of bibliography, but none worthy of the name has yet been written. Arnott's little work is not uninteresting but is absurdly pretentious in its scope; and his account of the bindings used in the classical world of Greece and Rome is ridiculous. We know nothing positive or sufficient on the subject, and we have little to do with the rolls enclosed in cylindrical boxes which were used before the time of Christ everywhere, and which are still used by the Jews. Bookbinding, in the sense in which the word is now employed, may be said to have begun with the fifteenth century. Two kinds of bookbinding had been practised for nearly a thousand years previously. In their elements, they were practically identical with the modern art; but their exterior decoration constituted an essential difference. The "forwarding" portion of the work has been constantly the same from the beginning. The sheets were stitched together in order, leathern bands fixed transversely at intervals on the back with their ends hanging out for a few inches. These ends were laced into wooden boards which thus covered the sides of the book, and finally a wrapper of skin or leather was superimposed so as to hide the nakedness of the back and the exterior surface of the wood, its lappings turned over the edges of the boards, folded down inside and fastened with glue. So far, all binding has been alike at all times, the chief change since the fifteenth century being the substitution of carton or pasteboard for the wooden covers. In the earlier time, the more precious volumes, especially those of biblical or liturgical character, seldom required a leather covering. The upper wooden board was used as a ground for ornamentation with plates of metal bearing pictorial designs generally in relief, set off with gems and enamelled surfaces, and frequently decorated with an ivory carving of the crucifixion, or some other sacred subject, inlaid in the centre. Examples of the kind are now very rare, the intrinsic value of the exterior rendering it liable at all times to become the prey of aesthetic burglars, or to undergo translation (with modification) from one book to another till it disappeared utterly. The plain leather covering upon other books began, in the twelfth century, to be considered appropriate for decorative treatment of a different kind. This was the impression of ornamental designs for plates engraved for the purpose, in blind tooling or à fers froids, as we now call it. The decorative motifs of the outside can always be considered as in some degree akin to the methods of ornament used by the calligraphers or illuminators on the
"LA RELATION DE L'ENTRE DU ROY AU HAVRE, SEPTEMBER, 1742."

BOUND IN RED MOROCCO BY PADELOUP.

From the Library of Louis XV.
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pages within; but there have been at all times recurrent traces of derivation from an Oriental source. The early excellence of English work may perhaps be traced through Anjou to Toledo, just as Italian work of the thirteenth to the fifteenth century betrays the influence of Saracenic and Byzantine models passing through the Levant to Venice and through Tunis and Palermo to Naples. France and Germany had their share of this foreign infusion, and the Crusades no doubt helped to mould the destinies of bookbinding as of so many loftier things.

Towards 1475 the Saracenic patterns on Venetian books began to be sprinkled with gold dots, a charming innovation, which sealed the fate of blind-tooling, and at the same moment engendered the true art of decorative bookbinding which we have here to deal with. (Blind-tooling died slowly, however, and was practised in Germany with great elaboration and success even down to the beginning of the last century.) Stamped bindings, such as the blind-toolled work which flourished from 1200 to 1600, and commercial gilt bindings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, belong undoubtedly to the genus of decorative bookbinding, but their mechanical qualities exclude them from the artistic species now in view, in which the craftsman worked with a free hand and with a distinct application of skill to every individual volume. Whatever was artistic in the decorative designs on stamped bindings was due to the engraver, not to the bookbinder. The same may be said of all modern publishers' bindings, whether done in cloth or in leather, and these likewise are excluded from our consideration. Individuality of character in the method and decoration of bookbinding is the one thing to be desiderated, for it demands knowledge and taste with the labour of skilled hands.

It may be said that Trautz-Bauzonnet and his fellows in France, Bedford and his fellows in England, have bound and decorated their books with a frequent repetition of the same style of ornament; each volume, nevertheless, was the object of a new effort, no stamps were used to multiply a single design, and the decorative details were in every instance worked out with distinct solicitude. Among their tools, they possessed some which enabled them to produce ad infinitum certain minute portions of the pattern needing repetition, and, so far, they were, from the utilitarian point of view, superior to the masters of the sixteenth century who cultivated their powers by resorting to more difficult means. To explain this, it may be said that the genuine artists among the binders of the sixteenth century used no other tools than those which enabled them to mark points, short straight lines, and slight curves. With such insignificant aids, they produced ornamental patterns which have never been surpassed in beauty and ingenuity. It is a pity that we are left in utter ignorance of the names of the men who performed high artistic work of that kind, while every little binder of to-day, no matter how moderate his pretension, takes good care that he shall not be forgotten.

It is quite certain that the art of decorative bookbinding was developed, if not hatched, in the house of Aldus Manutius at Venice between 1510 and 1520. During the last ten years of the fifteenth century books had been bound, throughout at least the north of Italy, the ornamentation on which resembled a square frame of gilt metal work impressed by a stamp. The books printed by Aldus, when bound in his own atelier, between 1495 and 1502 or 1503, are all of that kind. Soon after that date his presses became so active that he must have found it necessary to increase and improve his binding business. A new style of
decoration supervened; plain gold parallel fillets with small fanciful ornaments at the angles began to make their appearance, and the volumes thus finished display a close resemblance to the plainer bindings of all later times. This style was retained in many examples of Venetian work down to 1550, but in the meanwhile the school which produced geometrical ornament had arisen. (It is not inappropriate to mention here that the famous or infamous Pietro Aretino, for whom the Biringuccio, described on p. 13 of my Catalogue, seems to have been bound in the days of his greatness, had been himself a bookbinder at Perugia, about 1510–15.)

Aldus Manutius the elder died in 1515, after having printed about a hundred and seventy distinct works, all of intrinsic value, and many of them first editions. He made acquaintance in 1512 with Jean Grolier, the French treasurer of the Milanese, then and for some time after, a conquest of the French monarchy. In the Academy (or scholars’ club) founded by Aldus, Grolier met with Bembo, Maioli, and other men whose names are now recorded as great book-collectors. For want of all positive information on the subject, we can only presume (but it is highly probable) that a finer style of ornamental binding was suggested at those meetings, and that Aldus carried out, with the help of Venetian and Greek workmen, designs similar to those which had been admired on Oriental books by his French friend. The result was the creation of those elaborate geometrical patterns displaying a scheme of complicated but elegant interlacements. We know of Grolier’s fondness for strong white paper, for large margins, and for fine print: it is recorded in his own letters. It is therefore in nowise unlikely that he also desired and suggested this exquisite mode of decorating his books. He remained during the rest of his life the benefactor and friend of the Manuzio family and the Aldine press, frequently assisting them with large sums of money. After 1530 his career as treasurer of the Milanese ended, but in 1534 he returned again to Italy as ambassador to the Pope for a short time.

Most of Grolier’s books (over four thousand in number) were bound for him from the sheets, but some of them reached his hands already so well bound, that he merely caused the usual inscription to be added on the sides. These fall into one category; a second is formed by those expressly bound for him in Venice; and a third comprises the examples of binding done for him in France probably between 1540 and 1556. Those of the last kind are really the most beautiful specimens of Grolieresque work, the designs being more free and flowing, the lines not double but single, and their graceful interlacement diversified by fleurons and small azuré ornaments effectively interspersed. He did not, however, abandon the older geometrical style, with its masses of thick black parallel involutions outlined in gold; for we find books of his, equally late in date with examples of the French kind, decorated in the Italian manner. Whether he had them done in Italy, or at Lyons, or Paris, we have no means of knowing. But the complete identity of treatment between those and the work contemporaneously done at Venice for Maioli, makes it probable that all the more luxuriously embellished volumes were still bound for him in Venice down to the end. The identity of treatment just mentioned refers chiefly to design: as for the enrichment of the pattern with colour and gilding, Maioli’s books were decidedly more florid than Grolier’s.

Venice thus claims priority and pre-eminence over other seats of culture with regard to decorative bookbinding. It is not to be supposed, however, that Rome, Florence, and Ferrara, neglected the new and brilliant art. Magnificent work, similar in character to the
productions of the Aldine atelier, was done for Leo X., Clement VII., and other members of the Medici family. The earlier examples were plain in style, like those of the Aldine period between 1495 and 1515; but those which followed the geometrical manner of 1520 to 1530 offered a display of gorgeous magnificence rather than refinement of taste. The geometrical pattern was half hidden under the superincumbent waste of gold, which sometimes completely covered the sides and back, giving them the aspect of plates of metal, and sometimes the interstices between the coloured lines of the design were choked with masses of gold dots. These gaudy splendours led to a rapid decay of taste in Italy at a time (1550–70) when Paris was producing the loveliest and finest examples of decorative bookbinding. The contrast between such glittering vanities and the plain bindings bedecked with nothing more than a stamped gold border of the elder style for the framework, and a chaste cameo or medallion ornament in the centre, which were not infrequent at Venice between 1520 and 1550, is very great indeed. To the latter kind (which might have been mentioned before the Venetian Grolieresque since it was contemporary with that development) belong several volumes on which the central circular ornament is extremely beautiful, but which we must dismiss, as the exquisite charm of the cameo was not due to the actual binder. Amongst them, but hardly equal to the earlier examples, are the books of the Canevari library. Most of these seem to have been bound in Venice between 1540 and 1560, and cannot therefore have been done for Demetrio Canevari, the only known personage of the name, who was born in 1559, and who seems nevertheless to have had them in his library in the early years of the seventeenth century at Rome. He may have inherited them from a relative, but who that relative was we cannot tell, nor do we know if the name Mecenate hinted in Libri’s Monuments alludes to a distinct personage or is a mere epithet bestowed upon Demetrio.

To return to Grolier. He was not only (as we suspect) the actual creator of the school of binding known by his name, but he was also the cause of its sudden and rapid development in France and elsewhere. His books aroused the enthusiasm of the court of Francis I. Some volumes were bound (after 1540) for that king in a gorgeous and splendid style, rich in gilding and colour, which contrast strongly with the earlier work done for him by Etienne Roffet. The Dauphin (Henri II.) and several grands seigneurs caught the pleasing contagion, and Paris gave birth to a number of grand examples of the kind. Henri II. came to the throne, and between 1550 and 1558 several volumes bound for him and his beautiful mistress, Diane de Poitiers, exhibit the highest perfection of achievement in the Italo-Grolieresque style, individualised by the introduction of the chaste symbols of the Huntress Queen, and the mottoes and devices of the lady and her royal lover. Count Mansfeld, prisoner of war in France during five years of that period, caused some books of almost equal merit to be done for him in Paris, and even Catherine dei Medici diversified the ordinary elegance of her library with specimens of similar character. Good imitations were produced in Ghent and Antwerp, and adaptations of much superior quality made their appearance at the court of Edward VI. in London. The young English king,
and a few of the men around him, had books bound for them in the Italo-Grolieresque fashion with great success, but the art died out in a few years, after having enriched the royal library, that of William Cecil (Lord Burleigh), and that of (Sir) Thomas Wotton with some charming specimens of decorative binding. The exquisite Franco-Grolieresque, really superior as it is to the best work of the Italo-Grolieresque type, took no hold of English taste; I have only seen a single English specimen of it in a copy of the quarto Bishop's Bible of 1569, bound for Archbishop Parker in that year, at a time when the English Grolieresque school (1548–1560) had already died out.

It is generally supposed, and apparently with justice, that the Franco-Grolieresque style is due in some measure to designs from the hand of Geoffroy Tory. Grolier was one of his patrons, and did certainly make some use of his artistic powers, but to what extent we know not. A fact indicating this is recorded by Tory himself in the Champ Fleury, but it refers apparently to a date before 1523. Whenceover it may have been, we cannot place the earliest appearance of Franco-Grolieresque on Grolier's books before 1540. The manner was not adopted by other book-collectors till about 1555, when we find it used for some of the Henri II. volumes, and it was only from 1560 to 1575 that it passed into general vogue in Paris. With it came the use of rich olive and green morocco, more solid and substantial than the brown calf and thin smooth brown morocco which had previously been employed for most books. From 1560 onwards the material substance improved and took variety. We find citron, blue, olive, and red morocco book-covers, coloured in grain; the earlier brown, yellow, and white leathers having only been coloured (when different from their natural tints) by the brush of the binder.

It has been said above, and it may now be repeated, that the best specimens of the work done for Henri II. and his mistress, were, both in design and execution, the finest instances of decorative art applied to bookbinding which this craft has yet known. The king was a magnificent prince belonging to a family distinguished by its love for art and beauty; the lady (in her own person an example of both endowments) was quite equal in natural and cultivated taste to the monarch who had made her Dame de Vertus and Duchesse de Valentinois. She survived him seven years, and continued to add to her library at Anet books bound in the same fashion as before. It is true that some of them are not equal in splendour to their precursors—a royal purse was no longer at her disposal, and it is probable that her enforced retirement from the court deprived her of the services of her best artists. There is less grace in the later volumes; they are stiffer, harder and more Gothic than those of her palmy days. But as the same charge may be made against the books which were bound for Charles IX. and for Catherine dei Medici (at that time) we must conclude that the great master of the art had fled from Paris or was dead. Some persons have supposed that he was a Lyonesse Huguenot, forewarned of the danger which culminated on St. Bartlemy's day in 1574; and thus accounted for the utter disappearance about 1570 of the grand decorative style which had been flourishing since 1550.

Contemporaneously with the magnificent creations of Henri II.'s unknown binder, a new school of decoration had arisen in Venice and Lyons. The effect of the hand-work was emulated by means of stamps bearing designs of high artistic order, but only used in a commercial way to save the labour and cost of hand-work. Sometimes an inner space was left free on the sides to be filled up by the individual taste of the binder, but this was rarely
the case. The binders in most countries adopted this practice eagerly, and it led naturally to the nearly complete extinction of artistic bookbinding. It was the favourite style of English work from 1565 to 1620, being introduced by Archbishop Parker, and serving as the immediate successor of the Italo-Grolieresque of the days of Edward and Mary. (It is this fact which renders so singular the appearance of an English Franco-Grolieresque binding in 1569 such as that alluded to in a preceding paragraph.)

A family of bookbinders named Eve succeeded to the throne vacated by Henri II.'s Huguenot binder. They produced some very elegant work, work which is indeed preferred by some people to that of Grolier's and Henri II.'s books. The principal sort is that with geometrical decoration of the Grolier kind, but of wholly distinct species. The difference may thus be explained. If we cut off any portion of the design upon the Grolier or Henry II. books, it is visibly defective, and yields no complete gratification unless we try to supply the missing part from imagination. On the contrary, with the Eve bindings we may truncate any portion of the pattern, above, below, or on either side, and still there will remain a design sufficiently perfect in itself. The sense of completeness and unity is missing when we look at the charming designs of Nicolas or Clovis Eve, but we cannot for all that deny them the merit of grace and beauty—not the serene perfection of a classic Goddess, but the grace and beauty of a pretty Parisienne. The forms are all geometrical and in compartments formed by parallel lines of gold (the compartments not filled in), but they are on a small scale, allowing of indefinite extension and repetition. Nicolas Eve's earliest essays seem to have been made for Diane de Poitiers about 1565, and we next find him at work for Charles IX. in 1569. Within a very few years he (or his son Clovis) grew dissatisfied with the bareness of the interspaces on his covers, and he began to throw in here and there small fanciful ornaments, which have received the odd name of fanfares (for a reason too well known to be repeated here). Next he brought in detached wreaths and palm-branches, sometimes making centre-pieces, in which the wreath and palm-branch entwine to form a round or oval space for the insertion of armorial bearings. Next he interspersed gold dots and culots, and sometimes he bound volumes on which the geometrical pattern was entirely omitted, and nothing seen but the wreaths and palm-branches which had been subsidiary on the earlier designs. Clovis Eve was perhaps the binder who worked for Marguerite de Valois, and executed the pattern of which, as we may readily judge, she was the inventor. Small wreaths and palm-branches in great number are repeated all over the sides of the volume, leaving little spaces which are filled in with daisies and other flowers. The Valois escutcheon forms a centre-piece. This kind of binding, executed in red, citron, or olive morocco, looks very charming, and is full of fascination for modern collectors. It is impossible, however, to ascertain without doubt that it is by the hand of Clovis Eve; and the same may be said of the rather plain but elegant moroccos of De Thou's library. There is no ornamentation but simple fillets with the owner's arms in the centre upon the books of his collection; but the style is bold, sober, and imposing, like that of Bedford in modern England. The excellence of the work, the fineness and colour of the morocco, the carefulness of the "forwarding," and the chronological coincidence, are the chief reasons which induce us to think that Nicolas and Clovis Eve bound the volumes of the grand Thuanus library, beyond the fact that a few, a very few, books are known, more elaborately ornamented in the unmistakable Eve style, and bearing De Thou's arms.

[To be continued.]
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At the period to which we have arrived,—the early years of the seventeenth century,—a still plainer sort of binding is found in France contemporary with the more artistic kinds already mentioned. The back and sides of a book exhibit nothing but simple gold fillets as a frame-work. In England also it exists contemporaneously with the stamped Veneto-Lugdunese work; and it is likewise found in Flanders, Germany, and Italy. The more pretentious and costly bindings in Italy at this time were remarkable chiefly for a tasteless excess in gilding, and for a quantity of ornate details without any leading motif. There has been no improvement in Italian work since then. In Germany, several attempts had been made to reproduce the Grolieresque and the Eve styles of decorative binding, but with indifferent success. The usual mode was that of the old stamped work, in blind-tooling, upon volumes well and soundly compacted. France, Flanders, and England had begun to abandon that method towards 1530, but it still progressed in Germany, and the designs impressed upon the leather or hogskin were frequently of remarkable elegance, combining small medallion figures and a rich profuseness of fine arabesque decoration. The taste of Count Mansfeld, and the Spanish rule in the Low Countries, had influenced bookbinding so far as to give rise to many ambitious and excellent attempts to rival French models, but as a rule Flemish and Dutch work resembled the style of contemporary English binding more than any other. In the reigns of James I. and Charles I. some essays were made here in the direction of the Eve style, but with poor results; more success was achieved in imitation of
the royal bindings of Louis XIII. These royal bindings were “forwarded” with care and
clothed in rich morocco, in the style of De Thou’s books, but the external decoration was
effectuated by nothing more artistic than a multiplication of fleurs-de-lis in gold all over the
sides and back. The only merit of the French work is its regularity; the English copies
were not equally excellent in that respect, but at least there was somewhat more variety in
the combination of roses and thistles with the fleurs-de-lis.

About 1625 a new binder—known, or unknown, as Le Gascon—arose in Paris, who
worked for a time on the same lines as Clovis Eve. In fact, it would seem as though he
had been himself a workman in that house, and continued its traditions after he had left
it. The geometrical patterns were retained but the spaces were filled in here and there
with pretty curving ornaments formed by extremely minute gold dots (pointillé is the
technical name). The pointillé ceased by-and-by to be a mere accessory; it took the
principal place and wandered in dazzling brilliancy all over the sides and backs of Le
Gascon’s bindings, leaving uncovered on the red morocco only just so much blank space as
accompanied to the outlined patterns of the Eve kind. The broad effect became that of a
geometrical design in rosy relief upon the surface of ground covered with innumerable gold
dots; but when the pointillé is examined closely, its exquisitely fine convolutions are seen to
form a tracery of the most dainty arabesque details. This sort of work, unexampled before,
placed Le Gascon among the great inventive masters of his art. The pointillé decoration
was, however, too costly and laborious to be long-lived. It died out about 1660 in France
(Le Gascon himself disappears soon after 1650); that is, in its genuine entirety. A
modification of its character had already been in use for some time and still survived; in
which the gold dots alternated with lines of gold produced by a pressure of a single tool in
one effort, while the dots required each a distinct operation of the skilled free hand. By
degrees the pointillé diminished, and the fine curved lines increased in number; larger
spaces were left untouched upon the leather, and about 1670 we find the last great school of
French binding at work in Boyer’s house. Boyet or Boyer was the name of a family which
survived and bound books down to 1730. The characteristic style of these bindings was the
enclosure of the sides and back with plain gold fillets in the De Thou or Bourbon style,
which had lasted on since 1580, and the ornamentation of the angles and edges only. This
ornamentation was derived from the Gasconese mixture of lines and dots forming small
arabesque curves like embroidery at the corners, and running along the edges in straight
lines like small fringes of lace. Carefully worked in gold upon rich red moroccos, this style
of decoration was very elegant, while its limitation to angles and edges made it less expensive
and less laborious than some of the older kinds. It easily assumed pre-eminence, and
banished all rivals from the field, which it has ever since maintained; the Boyer bindings
being the prototypes of nearly all modern French and English work.

In England, the favourite Veneto-Lyonese style introduced by Archbishop Parker about
1570, gave way towards 1630 to a new fashion which became thoroughly and characteristically
English, although it was immediately derived from an imitation of the plain De Thou and
Bourbon work. The books were generally bound in blue morocco, ornamented soberly with
straight lines or fillets forming panels on the back and sides, occasionally ornaments at the
centre and corners, and slight edgings like points of lace along the bordering lines. All the
better books of this class, in which we must place the bindings done by Nicholas Ferrar and
his family at Little Gidding about 1630–40, those of Hugh Hutchinson in London about 1650–70, and those which were bound at Cambridge and Oxford during the same period—wear an air of infinite respectability, not devoid of elegance. There was occasionally an effort to produce some gayer-looking volumes at Cambridge and Oxford, and as for the Little Gidding books, their sober outsides were frequently hidden beneath a mass of embroidery superimposed by the ladies of Ferrar's family; this embroidered work being what is usually known as Little Gidding binding. Some splendid imitations of Le Gascon were achieved in London between 1660 and 1720, but they were only occasional and erratic, the ordinary English binding of the time being remarkably dull and plain. Similar Le Gascon-esque decoration was attempted in Holland and Italy between 1660 and 1700, the most successful imitator being Magnus of Amsterdam, who bound for the Elzevirs, but even his work is not superior to some of the English specimens, which are brilliant and rich to excess. In Queen Anne’s time, English binders were accustomed to produce copies of Boyer, but some occasional examples are found of magnificent work in mosaic, with inlays of variegated leather, the patterns on which usually belong to the Eve style of decoration, but also exhibit a tendency towards the forms which Roger Payne afterwards cultivated.

In France, Boyer, who bound for Colbert and Louis XIV., began about 1690 the occasional practice of doubling the covers of some of the costlier books with morocco linings, no less carefully decorated than the exteriors. This was a splendid innovation, which at once endeared itself to French taste, and has remained a favourite method of displaying the luxuriant fancies of the Paris doreurs. The chief difficulty has been to find suitable paper to face the rich doublure. Both the double and the ordinary style of Boyer’s binding were imitated by Antoine Du Seuil (1700–1730), whose merit was to have added a little touch of pointillé here and there, and a few gayer curves and culots, so as to lighten to some degree the decorous grandeur of Boyer’s style.

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Next came Antoine Padeloup as a master of the art, who also continued the Boyer tradition, but whose modifications of the ornamental details have been adopted by all his successors, and remain in permanent use. His more ambitious essays at mosaic-decoration are wonderfully splendid, and are looked upon as "adorable" by modern French collectors, but they offend on the side of gorgeousness, like the similar efforts of Le Monnier, who perhaps worked for Padeloup. In any case, however, Padeloup was a man of striking and exceptional talent; superior not only to J. A. Derome, who was his rival and contemporary, but also to Derome le jeune, whose work was in its time the most highly prized of all French bindings, and even now enjoys a well-deserved repute. With the Revolution and the younger Derome's death, bookbinding suffered an eclipse in France: the contemporaries of Derome and his followers sank so low that the efforts of younger men to found another school of ornamentation were eagerly received. The morocco used by the new school was very poor, the decorative methods chosen by Bozérian and Thouvenin soon fell out of vogue, the style of Simier was coarse and unattractive; and a reaction took place which turned the attention of the younger Simier and some of his contemporaries to the Boyer and Padeloup manner. A succession of binders from 1830 onwards have produced books admirably bound, decorated for the most part in the Boyer style, with tools cut in imitation of those used by him, by Padeloup, and by Derome. Very few of the motifs are new, most of them are transferred from the finer volumes of the first half of the last century; but the exquisite regularity and propriety of the forms, the perfect taste of selection, and the faultless execution of the work are so remarkable in the productions of almost all modern French binders, that every one can be called an example of decorative binding. Formerly good and bad work might be produced simultaneously in one house, and the same is true even now of some English houses, but the names of Capé, Chambolle-Duru, Hardy-Mennil, Belz-Niedrée, Lortic, Trautz, Thibaron, are in themselves sufficient guarantee of first-class bindings. The name of Cuzin is now added to those as a consummate master of his art, and no one is ignorant of the merits of Marius-Michel, father and son, who have worked as doreurs for several of those binders, and who have produced some books on their own account. The perfect skill of Marius-Michel in reproducing designs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with all the freshness, splendour, and regularity of nineteenth-century achievement, cannot be too highly praised. The only fault to be found with modern French binding is this, that the artists cultivate too slavishly the traditions of the past, that their eclecticism throws them in the way of absurd combination at times, and that they discourage all tendencies towards originality.

Elliot and Chapman, under the influence of Robert Harley, founded the Harleian style of binding about 1720. Its broad gold borders are rich and imposing, and are characteristically English, though somewhat heavy and dull in effect. The contemporary bindings done for Lord Sunderland were not of equal merit, being chiefly weak copies of French work. The best bindings done in England between 1740 and 1770 follow the methods of Elliot and Chapman; and great care was taken to secure good leather upon which to display the lavish gold borders. Many volumes were produced, in which a heavy
DECLARATION OF FAITH. LONDON: 1729.

_BINDING IN RED MOROCCO WITH RICH GOLD TOOLING, ATTRIBUTED TO ELLIOT AND CHAPMAN (COTTAGE-ROOF STYLE), WHO BOUND BOOKS FOR ROBERT HARLEY, EARL OF OXFORD._

_Lent by "The American Bookmaker."_
DECLARATION OF FAITH. LONDON: 1729.

BINDING IN RED MOROCCO WITH RICH GOLD TOOLING, ATTRIBUTED TO ELLIOT AND CHAIPMAN (COTTAGE-ROOF STYLE), WHO BOUND BOOKS FOR ROBERT HARLEY, BAKL OF OXFORD.

Lent by "The American Bookmaker."
and negligent method of decoration was redeemed by the rich colour of the blue or crimson morocco, and the pure brilliancy of the gold. Russia leather came into use about the middle of the century; and had acquired considerable favour as a covering for books at the time when Roger Payne begun his career. The celebrity of this tipsy workman as a skilful binder is very great, greater, perhaps, than he deserves. He bound in morocco and calf, but his best work was done in Russia, a leather which pleased him most, and on which he loved to display his acorns and leaves and little branches in what he called the English historical style. He was an excellent and enthusiastic workman, superior as an original designer, and in natural taste, to most of his English predecessors. Many books are attributed to him which he never bound, especially plain red moroccos with little ornament upon them. In the period of his conjunction with Richard and Mrs. Wier some of those plain moroccos issued from Payne's hands; others were done by the Wiers after their separation from him, and others came from Baumgarten's shop. Baumgarten, Benedict, Walthor, Staggemeier, and Kalthoeber, were five Germans working in London about 1800, more or less in the style of Roger Payne. Kalthoeber's work was most generally appreciated, and deservedly. There is a certain over-largeness and lack of due proportion in his methods of ornamentation, but he achieved great success with his rosy-coloured moroccos and his brilliant gilding. Even now there are many persons who prefer a Kalthoeber to a Bedford, there is such a desperate and irritating solemnity in the style of the latter, as compared with the cheerful brightness of Kalthoeber. Charles Hering was a faithful follower of Roger Payne and produced some graceful work. Charles Lewis was a binder of the first order, elegant and classic in everything which he did, and very catholic in the choice of decoration; but there is a lack of vivacity in his style which is rather annoying. Mackenzie was a good plodding industrious binder of the old English manner. Charles Smith was an imitator of Lewis. Clarke's work before he joined Bedford was very elegant in the Lewis style, and he had the merit of being the first English modern binder who imitated Grolieresque patterns. In combination with Bedford he produced fine "library bindings." Bedford was undoubtedly the greatest English binder of our time, and he achieved admirable results by imitating early Venetian work with twisted or Saracenic ornamentation, as well as the later Veneto-Lyonese style as exhibited in English binding of Queen Elizabeth's time. His copies of modern French binders are less successful, and the eclecticism which formed his own regular manner was effectively utilized. But there is no lightness or brightness in any department of his work; the monotony of his brown, olive, and dull red morocco fatigues the eye. Riviere was somewhat similar; he displayed a wrong-headed elaborateness in the selection of many of his ornamental patterns, and a lack of propriety of which Bedford could never have been guilty. Zachnsdorf is the man of the day. His achievements have not been many nor all successful, but he has the true instinct of appropriate variety, and he refuses to be fettered by the conventional traditions that have enslaved Bedford, Riviere, and all the modern Frenchmen. His father was a man of the old school; but he had in his service for some years a young Frenchman named Hague, an artist of consummate skill and taste, who ought rather to have lived late in the sixteenth than in the second half of the nineteenth century. There is in England to-day a new school of impressionists, headed by Mr. Cobden Sanderson, an amateur binder, who has already produced some fine work in flat contradiction to the précieuseté of his theories.