

Our Coloured Illustration.

THIS is a good example of the *inlaid* patterns of bookbinding which became the fashion in the sixteenth century, when coats of arms and monograms were frequently introduced. These are, of course, of much value at the present day, as they serve to tell the date of the book and the name of its possessor. Traces of the Grolier style still prevail in this example, in which the broad white lines are formed by strips of thin leather very carefully laid in. There are many examples of beautiful inlaid bindings in the British Museum which we hope to be able to describe in an early number. An imitation of this style in painted and enamelled surfaces was afterwards introduced.

Tree = Marbled Calf.

THE operation of "tree-marbling" is managed in the same manner as that described by us in our last number, but the flow of water instead of running from the back to the fore-edge, as best it may, must be made to flow from head to tail, and from the sides of each board towards the centre. To assist this, the boards of the book are slightly bent, and the rods upon which the book is placed must be slightly elevated at the top; a little water being squeezed from a sponge at the top and centre of each board, must be allowed to run down; water is then thrown on with the birch, causing the necessary flow towards the centre and lowest part of the boards. The larger quantity of water being in the centre of the boards prevents the fine spray of iron striking on the leather and there remaining white, the water thrown on with the birch in irregular patches causing or forming the branches giving the appearance of a tree formation. It will thus be seen the whole result is caused by the manner in which the water is allowed to run. The best effect is obtained by using very little water, only just sufficient to make the blotches of water join each other, and thus have a distinct but gradual flow towards the lower edge of the boards. It is absolutely necessary to have as fine a spray as is possible to fall from the brush with iron solution, or the lines will be very thick. This does not matter so much with the brown or tartar solution.

Of the many statements that have been quoted respecting the discovery of marbling, we are inclined to think the following the most likely; that a bookbinder was sprinkling some books when a bird which hung up in its cage overhead, threw or splashed some water on the books; the water running, took some of the colour with it and formed veins—this has been improved upon from time to time. But even this is rather vague and hard to believe, as first the books must have been in a favourable position for marbling, viz., tilted, which position is very unfavourable and unworkmanlike for sprinkling; again, the colour used for sprinkling is not strong enough for marbling, and could hardly produce veins. (We shall be glad to hear from our many subscribers if they can throw any more light on this subject.) There can, however, be no doubt but that it came from Germany. Mr. Clarke, the partner to Mr. Bedford, has had the reputation of making some of the best tree-marbles that have ever been done, and, as far as we have been able to ascertain, made his "trees" without any of the many dodges that are often used with the idea of getting something peculiar. Amongst others that of using a tallow candle, just dabbing it on the centre of the boards, thus preventing the water resting on the spot touched—the idea being to form a (so-called) knot.



BINDING EXECUTED FOR ANNE DE MONTMORENCY, CONSTABLE OF FRANCE.
About A.D. 1560.