

A Visit to the King's Library at the British Museum.



THE FALCON BADGE USED BY
QUEEN ELIZABETH.

NOTHING, perhaps, better illustrates the real wealth of the British Museum than the richness of the little exhibitions in the King's Library by which the Museum authorities have of late years shown their sympathy with various celebrations to which the terms of their charter forbade them to lend other help. The centenaries of Luther and Wyclif, the Spanish Armada, Anglo-Judaism, shorthand, and the history of the House of Stuart have all been illustrated from the Museum collections during the past few years, and the contents of the cases which have just been arranged as an adjunct to the Tudor Exhibition at Regent-street are certainly well worth a visit. The Departments represented on this occasion are those of prints and drawings, printed books, manuscripts, and coins and medals, and between the first three of these it is difficult to award the palm.

The interest of the seventy or eighty printed books and broadsides, which form the contents of the four cases on the right of the library, is divided pretty equally among their owners, their writers, and their subjects. "Polyanthea cum additionibus" would hardly arrest attention were it not opened at a page where the heading "Matrimonium" is illustrated with manuscript notes by that accomplished expert Henry VIII. Royal ownership, too, has contributed the delights of handsome bindings, both in leather and embroidered velvet, to some seven or eight books, most of them of no great note, though they include among them the Great Bible of 1540 and Parker's "De Antiquitate Ecclesie Britannicæ," the earliest specimen of an English book "privately printed." Coming next to the head of authorship, we note that nearly all of the Royal Tudors were writers or translators, mostly of matters theological. Books interesting for their subjects, though these are restricted to matters in which the Tudor took a personal part, are too numerous for us to do more than note a few of the chief. The literature of Henry's divorce suit is very amply represented, also "the noble tryumphant coronacyon of Queen Anne," also her execution. For the unhappy reign of Mary there is quite a nest of very little known books, mostly in Italian and Spanish, giving accounts of the events which followed on the death of Edward VI., of the departure of Philip of Spain for England, of the reconciliation of the English Parliament to the Church of Rome, and of the pains which were taken to secure the completion of the ordination of priests who had been admitted to benefices during the previous reign. For the times of "Good Queen Bess" there are numerous records of her triumphal progresses to "Killingworth" (that is, Kenilworth), Norwich, and other loyal and hospitable places; and some of these are opened at pages showing where Sir Walter Scott obtained hints for his description of the Kenilworth pageants.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*



HENRY VIII.'S BOOK
OF PSALMS FOR WEAR-
ING AT THE GIRDLE.