

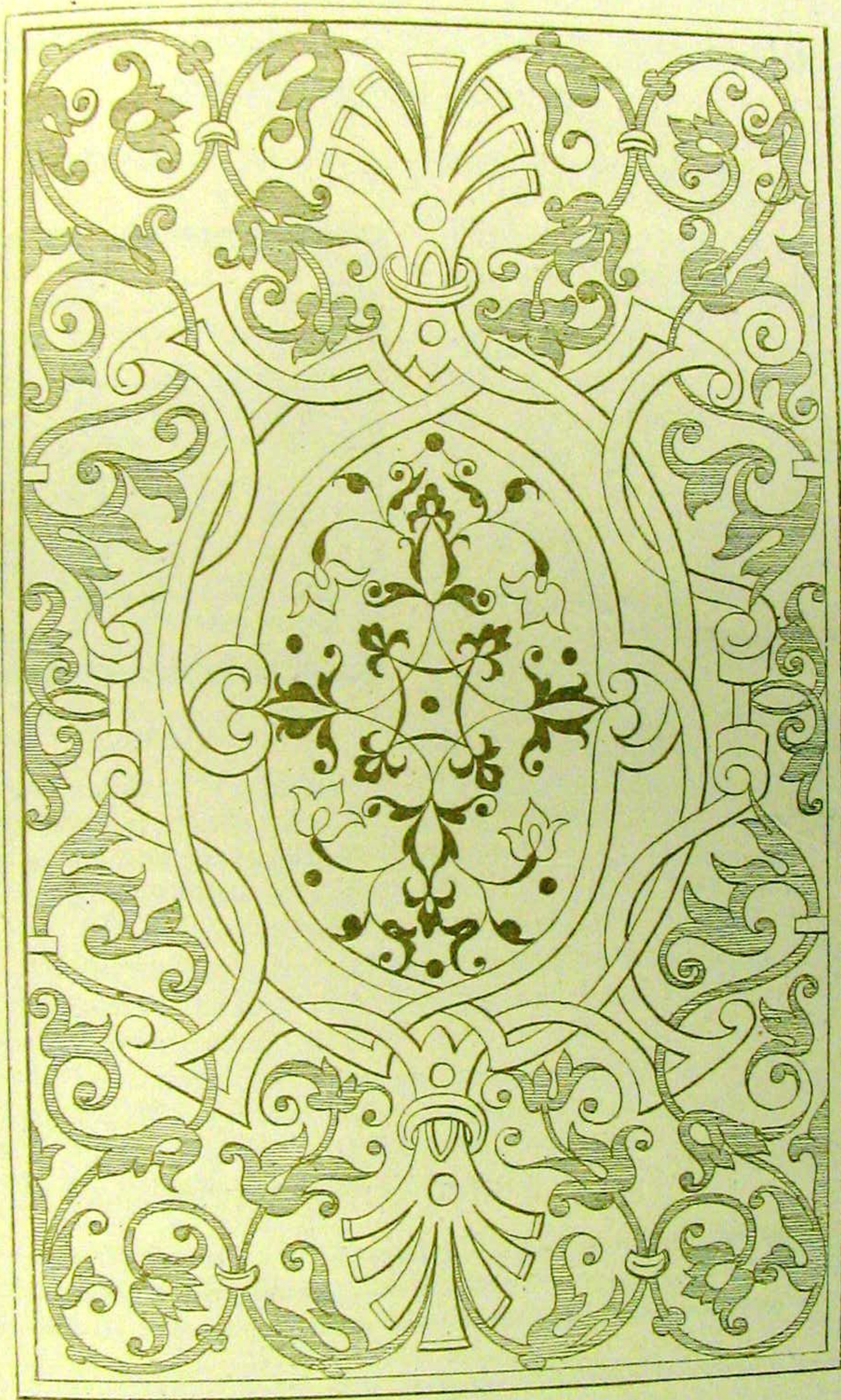
with tools which are only very slightly heated. Indeed, it is found that, for morocco, the cooler the tools are worked the brighter and cleaner will be the gilding. When all the panels are tooled off with centre and corners and filled in with side-sprig and stops, the hand-lettering is carefully blinded in, being kept even with lines marked lightly across the lettering piece by means of a straight strip of vellum and the folding stick. A well finished back should always bear cleaning off with the india rubber; but a final rub over with a piece of flannel or the flesh side of a piece of calf is always well before the back is polished. Should the leather be at all stained by the oil used in laying on the gold leaf, a sponge over with benzine will be an effectual remedy. Benzine is of great use in the finishing shop; but the finisher should not allow himself to depend upon its assistance, and so fall into the habit of using too much oil on his work. Prevention is always better than cure.

In the French style of morocco finishing, the tooling is never damped in previous to gilding, though for gilt backs an impression of the mitres should be made on the dry leather. The morocco is first well polished and the panels are accurately marked up. Paste-water is never used; but the back is washed over with vinegar, then once glaired, and, when dry, laid on with oil. The lettering-piece and tail are mitred round with a single line; for the other panels a French three-line or a fine two-line is used. The title is generally lettered with brass type—a method which in many shops is taking the place of hand lettering. The advantage of vinegar as a preparation for morocco is that, during the process of finishing, it keeps the leather moist and soft. The gilding, if the tools are not used too hot, comes up very bright and clean, and there is no trace left upon the surface of the leather such as paste-water often leaves. The glaire used for all morocco work should be perfectly clean and not too old.

In finishing the sides of whole-bound morocco books, the tooling—except that of rolls—should be blinded in. A wash with clean water or vinegar is sufficient preparation before glairing. In London shops it is now customary to polish and press the sides of all extra morocco books. The polishing is done with the ordinary “round iron,” sometimes with the addition of pressure with a heated steel plate in the blocking-press. The books are then placed between japanned plates and left for a few hours in the standing press. Varnish, unless sometimes of the finest quality, is not recommended for morocco.

Our Tinted Illustration.

THE binding of the LIVRET DE FOLASTRIES is remarkable for its originality and dissimilarity to any other we know of belonging to the sixteenth century. The gold scroll-work on fawn-coloured calf gives it an air of peculiar lightness, appropriate to the gaiety of the book. In the centre ornament, we see evidence of the Eastern style of decoration as first applied to binding by the Venetians.



LIVRET DE FOLASTRIES.—A.D. 1583.

Bound in fawn coloured calf, with gold tooing. In the collection of M. de Chalabre.