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Recent Books

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ITALY

Gli antichi sillabari della Biblioteca Panizzi. Catalogo. Ed. by MAURIZIO FESTANTI. Reggio Emilia: Biblioteca Panizzi. 2018. 142 pp. Available from the library on request.

Abcs and other learning aids for small children are by definition extremely rare, for the most part due to what their small owners do to them, but the losses are accentuated by the historical failure of libraries to consider them material worthy of attention. The present catalogue lists 550 items, of which 219 in English, from the eighteenth century up to the 1950s, many of them of course unique; it might seem small beer compared to the twenty thousand books in the Opie collection at the Bodleian Library, but the quality and execution of this generously illustrated catalogue is something to be emulated.

Antonio Gallonio scrittore di santi. Agiografia nella Roma di Clemente VIII. By GIUSEPPE FINOCCHIARO. (Biblioteca di bibliografia, 210.) Florence: Olschki. 2019. v + 104 pp., ill. €20. ISBN 978 88 222 6663 7.

Antonio Gallonio (1556–1605) was an active member of the Congregation of the Oratory, founded by St Philip Neri in Rome in 1575, which entered into the propaganda war and was entrusted with the task of countering Protestant debunking of the cult of saints and other articles of the Catholic faith. In his lifetime he published some ten works, mainly lives of saints, including the life of the founder of the order; at his death he left his personal library to the same, and in due course this became the founding nucleus of the Biblioteca Vallicelliana. This book publishes the inventory of his library, comprising some 364 items, including the identification of the titles still owned by the Vallicelliana. The illustrations include some rather gruesome images, published in a book printed in Macerata in 1585, of Catholic priests undergoing martyrdom in the England of Elizabeth I.

Artusi e gli editori fiorentini. La scienza in cucina e l'arte della stampa. By MONICA ALBA. (Biblioteca dell'«Archivum romanicum». Serie I. Storia, letteratura, paleografia, 515.) Florence: Olschki. 2021. xii + 301 pp. €29. ISBN 978 88 222 6770 2.

It needs something special to be the author of the country's most successful cookery book, especially if the said country has the proud gastronomic tradition of Italy. Nevertheless, this is the achievement of Pellegrino Artusi (1820–1911), a wealthy self-made businessman, who in 1891 fulfilled a lifetime's ambition by publishing *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar bene*. After the refusal of several major publishers to take an interest in the manuscript, a decision they certainly ended up regretting, Artusi self-published the work, commissioning its printing from the most important Italian typographer of the time, Salvatore Landi (1831–1911), in Florence. It was an immediate success, numerous re-editions followed, and it is still a steady seller today, including photographic reprints—for *buon gustai*—of the first edition, while the earliest translation into English was in 1944 by Olga Ragusa (1922–2018), who went on to become Da Ponte professor of Italian at Columbia University. By the beginning of the twentieth century the volume of sales was such that, though the printing was still entrusted to Landi, Artusi entered into an agreement with Bemporad, the publisher of *Pinocchio*, in order to handle distribution. The survival