

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY BOOKS ON MICROFILM

For some years the Library has been receiving the annual output of microfilm of "STC" books, that is English books printed between 1475 and 1640, recorded in the "Short Title Catalogue", compiled by Pollard & Redgrave, 1926. The result is that now the Library holds on film, the text of practically every English book printed in that period, a circumstance that places scholars in New Zealand in a the Southern Hemisphere.

This is an American enterprise, undertaken by "University Microfilms" of Ann Arbor, Michigan. The firm is now launched upon its next project, the microfilming of English books printed 1641-1700. In many ways this is of even greater interest for the scholar, embracing as it does the eventful years of the Civil War, the Commonwealth and the more favourable position than those in other countries of Restoration.

Despite the domination of political upheaval, social uncertainty, the devastation of the Plague of 1666, the Great Fire of London, war with Holland and a dislocated economy, it was far from a poor period in literature. It saw the greater part of Milton's publications, the appearance of Browne's "Religio Medici", Herrick's "Hesperides", Hooker's "Ecclesiastical Politie", Hobbes' "Leviathan", Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Dying", Walton's "Compleat Angler" and Butler's "Hudibras".

Here is the rich output of the Restoration dramatists, of Killigrew, Davenant, Shadwell, Wycherley, Lee and Otway. Bunyan and Boyle and Behn and L'Estrange, D'Urfey, Locke, Congreve, Collier, Defoe, Marvel, Fuller, all take their places on this stage. Most of Dryden's active years are within this span.

Thus the Library can look forward to a vast increase in the resources it can offer to students, making it often possible to undertake here under one roof, what it would be almost impossible to do except in another such repository, for no library anywhere has the whole printed output of this sixty years of the dramatic seventeenth century.