“Chascune hystoire est d’ymage illustree,” wrote Gilles Corrozet towards the end of the introduction to his emblem book, *Hecatongraphie*, published in Paris in 1543. He had begun by saying that the chief aims he had in mind when writing his little moral stories were pleasure and instruction but that pictures had been added to make his ideas more vivid; these would also be useful to people other than the “bons espritz et amateurs des letres” to whom the book was dedicated:

“Aussi pourront Ymagers et Tailleurs Pincestres, Brodeurs, Orfevres, Esmailleurs, Prendre en ce livre aucune fantasie, Comme ilz feroient d’une tapisserie.”

Sculptors and carvers, painters, embroiderers, goldsmiths and enamelers (here invited by the poet to take fantasies from his book “as they would from a tapestry”) were not expected to be lovers of books, but publishers had already discovered that they could be buyers, when pictures were provided. From the 1530’s, in fact, embroiderers in Germany, Italy, and France were especially well provided with printed patterns, published in little books, all now rare. There is an outstanding collection of these books in the Print Room of the Museum. They were reprinted so frequently that it is evident they were best-sellers. But, though full of the most charming birds and beasts, playing putti, and two-tailed mermaids, the sixteenth-century pattern books rarely provided illustrations to stories. And stories, sacred and profane, were what embroiderers, like the other craftsmen listed by Corrozet, very often wanted. Their needs were met by the illustrators, especially an artist of Lyons, Bernard Salomon, who, by illustrating both the Bible and Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, provided models to suit all tastes.

Lyons was a rich and cosmopolitan city in the sixteenth century, and many artists worked there; between 1535 and 1550 more than two hundred, Italian, Flemish, and French, are recorded, the vast majority of them now only names in the municipal archives. In these archives Salomon is
called "M^ Bernard le painctre"; in a letter he called himself "le petit Bernard." His professional life can be followed to some extent. In 1540, when he was probably in his early thirties, he worked as one of ten master painters under a Florentine to decorate the city for the ceremonial entry of Hippolyte d'Este, Cardinal of Ferrara and Archbishop of Lyons; eight years later little Bernard had risen to the top of the tree, for when, in 1548, King Henry II of France made his entry into the city, Salomon was in charge of the display, with forty painters working for him. It was a large-scale operation, with painted decorations, statues, tapestries, "dais faits de toile d'or et de toile d'argent et brodés," and special costumes. Salomon's receipt for his part of the work mentions his designs for presents in gold and for the "habillemens de mes- sieurs les enfans de la ville de Lyon." At other times we read of the house facades he painted, the city plan he drew up for use in a lawsuit, a stage with giants and furies (to celebrate the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559), and a book on perspective. "Figures et pourtraictures, pain- tures et tableaux" by him were still visible in 1585, though he had died in 1561 or 1562. In 1560 he was described as "peintre autant excell- ent qu'il y en ayt point en notre hemisphère."

Of the works of this most excellent painter of the hemisphere nothing remains but a painted miniature (the letter "C" with Saint Anthony) and more than a thousand book illustrations, much admired for their liveliness and endless variety. In many instances these illustrations were far more important than the accompanying text; as in so many popular art books of today the plates were the reason for buying the book. This is especially true of his Old Testament subjects, published in 1553 as les Quadrins historiques de la Bible, with a versified text that was quickly translated into Spanish, English, German, Italian, Flemish, and Latin; the poetry is said to be equally poor in all these languages. Similarly, his mythological pictures illustrated, not the complete text of Ovid but a digest, eight lines of verse to a story, in French, Italian, or Latin.

These little woodcuts were a godsend to craftsmen. They were used by the majolica-makers of Lyons and the enamel-painters of Limoges; ex-

amples of such copies in both these techniques are in the Metropolitan Museum. At least one tapestry and one carved panel on a piece of furniture have been identified as adapted from Salomon prints, and in many iconographical studies Salomon's representation of the Biblical event or the classical myth is found to have exerted a great influence over later representations. Of some subjects, especially the love affairs of the more obscure deities, his are the earliest treatments, and even the famous sky-line silhouette of Velazquez's Lances of Breda has been traced back to similar effects in the tiny woodcuts of this master.

Embroiderers were particularly indebted to Salomon, for in the second half of the sixteenth century they had vast expanses to fill. Tapestries could cover the walls, but the equally important hangings for the bed must be decorated with the needle. In France, the richly carved bedsteads of the first half of the century were disappearing as ever thicker and more abundant draperies began to cover the woodwork. Mary Queen of Scots took thirty sets of bed furniture with her when she went from France to Scotland in 1561; each had a name, the "Golden Phoenix," the "King's Hunt," the "Labors of Hercules." Royal beds such as these are often described in inventories as made of velvet or cloth-of-gold, embroidered with gold, silver, or pearls; as would be expected, these bejeweled treasures have not survived. Poorer people used wool or, less frequently, silk, in simple cross- or tent-stitch, and there is enough of their work extant to show how frequently the designers turned to the pages of Bernard Salomon.

One of a set of three bed valances, probably Scottish, with figures taken from Salomon's illustrations to Genesis was given to the Museum by Mr. and Mrs. Luke Vincent Lockwood in 1940 and published in the Bulletin for September 1941; its relation to the Salomon woodcuts was discovered by Mrs. Nancy Graves Cabot. Another panel, also in the Museum, shows the story of Tobias in seven episodes, taken, in part, from Salomon. The least altered scene (see p. 165) shows Tobias and his wife Sara praying before the fire on which he had cast the heart and the liver of the fish, while in the distance the angel
Raphael binds the evil spirit, who had “fled into the utmost parts of Egypt” when he smelled the smoke. This incident, seen through the window in the print, takes place just outside the room in the embroidery; the other major change is that the “young man’s dog” has been allowed into the bridal chamber.

The same print was copied more closely by the Limoges enameler Pierre Courteys on a casket in the Frick Collection.

Also more or less freely copied from Salomon’s Biblical prints are three panels with the story of Moses, given by Irwin Untermyer in 1953. They demonstrate the over-all changes that were apt to be made when the woodcuts were translated into wool on canvas. Large blank spaces like Salomon’s skies and mountains are not suited to embroidery, and would be very boring to work, so the designer cut them off at the top and then filled the foreground with flowers and animals; sheep and goats were already present in the scene that shows Moses with the daughters of Jethro at the well in Midian, but the snail, rabbit, snake, and frogs have been added. The plain sides of the wellhead have been enlivened with renaissance carving, and the great curving structure above has been clearly identified as the support for the rope; it now also serves as a stand for an elaborate vase. Needless to say, all the elegance of Salomon’s highly developed mannerist style has disappeared. The designs have been transformed from “modern” into “traditional” art.

The panels so far discussed are representative of a fairly large group of embroideries, French, British, Flemish, and German, made in similar technique and without great variation in style, in the second half of the sixteenth century. They are probably all amateur work, though professional artists may have had a hand in the designs. But the Museum has recently acquired a sixteenth-century embroidered valance of a very
different appearance. It is a panel of yellow satin, 6 feet 6 inches long and 14 \( \frac{3}{4} \) inches wide, edged with a blue-green passementerie and embroidered in brilliantly colored silks, chiefly in split and stem stitches. The condition is excellent except that, as usual, much of the black silk has perished. Two similar pieces are in the Musée Historique des Tissus in Lyons; one is the same length as the Metropolitan Museum piece, the other measures 5 feet 10\( \frac{3}{4} \) inches. One is trimmed with a similar passementerie border, and both have a long yellow fringe hanging from the lower edge. The three together constitute the upper valances of a very wide bed.

A glance at these sophisticated embroideries shows that they belong to a very different world from that of the other valances, but the debt to Bernard Salomon persists. Each panel has five variously shaped medallions, no two alike, with illustrations of stories from Ovid; the name of the principal actor in each scene is given. The Metropolitan Museum stories are the familiar ones of the rape of Europa, the metamorphosis of Actaeon, Jove appearing to Semele, and the death of Thisbe, as well as the less well known legend of Salmacis. She was the nymph of a fountain who fell in love with an unresponsive youth, Hermaphroditus. In answer to her prayer the gods united her with him in a single body, which, as Lemrière puts it, "preserved the characteristics of both their sexes."

The degree of dependence on Salomon's prints of the same subjects varies greatly. Some scenes, such as the rape of Europa, are very close; others, such as the Semele, show no resemblance. All are much simplified. But it is the decorative elements that are the glory of these embroideries. On either side of each medallion the most variegated figures and objects are grouped, all, except for the human beings, in the strictest symmetry, tortoise balancing tortoise, lobster lobster, and snail snail. Each loop of drapery or spray of foliage has its mirror image on the other side of the medallion, except where the passage to the next unit of design has necessitated the addition of an extra tassel or jewel, a solitary bird or butterfly, and these transitions are so skillfully managed that the eye is not conscious of them. Though there is a similarity of subject matter throughout, there is no repetition; each of the fifteen compositions—medallion, flanking figures, assorted oddments—is entirely different from all the others.

This light-hearted and quite pointless mixture of architectural fragments suited only to a world without gravity, of jewels and garlands, dangling beasts and fishes, airy canopies, delicate swags, precariously balanced vases, hollow masks, flying birds, and a hundred other unexpected and unexplained objects, is the grotesque style, so-called from the grotte, or excavated rooms, in Rome, where late classical wall ornamentation of this type was found at the end of the fifteenth century. A quarter of a century later Raphael directed the decoration of the Vatican loggie in this style, and colored copies of his wall paintings are known to have been sent to Antwerp and to Spain about 1550. Catherine the Great's famous reproduction of the loggie reflects, of course, a later enthusiasm; the style has, in fact, had three reincarnations, in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The embroideries in the Lyons museum were, until recently, believed to have been made during the second reappearance of the style in the late seventeenth century, when it was much used by Béreain and his followers; this attribution is understandable, as these pieces do not show figures in sixteenth-century costume like the man and woman flanking the Actaeon scene in the Metropolitan Museum panel.

After Raphael's triumphant demonstration of its possibilities the print-makers enthusiastically adopted the grotesque vocabulary, especially in France, where the exuberances of the final Gothic style had barely yet disappeared. Jacques Androuet Du Cerceau published his Livre de grotesques in 1566, and he had many imitators. "Nous sommes un peuple que la raison à ses règles engage," a French author has written, "ennemi de toutes les extravagances de l'imagination ou du coeur, épris d'idées claires et universelles." But the sixteenth century was that of Rabelais, not Descartes, and the designers of enamels and furniture and other minor objects of art were at that time by no means averse to extravagancies of the imagination; their grotesques are wilder than any made in Italy.

That the Museum embroidery and its com-
Detail of a yellow silk panel embroidered in brilliant colors with various fantastic figures, animals, and decorative objects in the grotesque style and stories from Ovid. The small scene in the medallion represents the Rape of Europa. French, 1560-1570. Height about 14 inches. Rogers Fund, 1956. Right, a page from Ovid's "Metamorphoses" illustrated by Bernard Salomon, showing a very similar scene of the Rape of Europa. About 4/5 actual size.
panion pieces in Lyons were made in France is shown by the sixteenth-century costumes already mentioned. These are French, of the 1560's. The closest parallels are the portraits of Charles IX as a young man, about 1566, for the man's dress, and the clothes worn by a man and woman in a drawing in the Gaignières collection, said to represent the fashions of Lyons in 1572. The lady here, however, no longer has the long panel hanging down from the back of her headress, which had ceased to be worn by this date. An unusual detail that probably also points to a French origin is the medieval headdress on the large head under Europa and on the herms on either side of Semele, as well as on several figures in the Lyons pieces. Though the grotesque style was so widespread in France at this time that any attempt to locate the city, or province, of manufacture can be little more than guesswork, there are a few clues worth following which, curiously enough, seem to wind back to Lyons and Bernard Salomon.

To begin with, both in design and in execution the embroideries are, without doubt, professional work. The draughtsmanship is extremely skillful, to a degree seldom seen in an embroidery. Everything is represented as if seen from below (note the undersides of the chairs behind the couple in contemporary costume and the arch below the Thisbe picture); as the valances would be hung above eye level this viewpoint is appropriate. A strong light is imagined to be falling from the left; though the effect has been somewhat weakened by the loss of much black silk, it is rigorously carried out in every detail except the frames to the story panels. These are thought of as flat, but everything else has its light and its shaded side; striking instances are the stairs above the Europa picture and the hanging rings above Salmacis. This interest in light and dark in purely decorative elements is quite unlike the usual practice of an embroidery-designer, who is apt to think in terms of flat patterns; it suggests the work of a painter or engraver. The quality of the designs indicates that their inventor was an accomplished artist, and their variety that he was a man with an inexhaustible supply of imaginative ideas.

It would seem, however, that this artist was not connected with Fontainebleau, though this was the most prolific and influential center for decorative ideas in sixteenth-century France. It was here that Italian and French artists, working for the king, produced a wealth of ornamental paintings and prints that established a new and fashionable style for all the minor arts. Their most striking invention was an ornamental device that might be called "cut scrolls" (in German, Rollwerk); this, based on the twists and rolls of cut paper or straps of leather, is ubiquitous in the decorative art of Fontainebleau. The substantial bands twist and turn in slow spirals, interpenetrating each other, thrusting out from the wall or the printed page, sometimes piled layer upon layer, with the satyrs and animals of the grotesque style entangled in their heavy convolutions.

It is surely significant that there is not a trace of this decorative idiom in the embroidered valances. Now, of Bernard Salomon's decorative work, which we know to have been extensive, nothing remains but the borders to his illustrated pages; in these he shows that he was not afraid of new ideas, for the other important decorative innovation of the century, the elongated, spiky foliage known as moresque, appears frequently. Examples are the borders to the Europa and Thisbe pages of the Metamorphoses. He was the first book decorator to employ moresque patterns in this way, but he did not use cut scrolls. Other Lyons book illustrators, such as Pierre Eskrich, did, and when Virgil Solis of Zürich copied Salomon's woodcuts he put them into cut-scroll borders.

But as well as moresque patterns Salomon used grotesques for his borders, such as those that surround the illustrations to the stories of Actaeon, Semele, and Salmacis, and it is here, I believe, that the closest parallels to the embroidery designs can be found. Some motives found in both, such as the dangling fish and crabs, the pin-pointed herms, the canopies, bows of ribbon, and baskets of fruit, are common to all the works in this style, being derived from the original classical prototypes, but there are more specific relationships, especially between the figures. That of the upper right corner of the Salmacis border is very close to a man on one of
Detail from the same panel with a scene showing Actaeon changed into a stag by Diana; and woodcut by Bernard Salomon of the same scene, from Ovid. The abbreviated version of the "Metamorphoses," the source for Salomon's mythological prints, was published in three languages—French, Italian, and Latin—by Jean de Tournes in Lyons. The Museum has the Italian version, "La vita et metamorfoseo d'Ovidio," 1559. Rogers Fund, 1918.
Detail from the same panel, with a medallion scene of Jupiter appearing to Semele; and woodcut by Salomon from the "Metamorphoses"
Detail from the same panel showing the dead body of Pyramus and the suicide of Thisbe; and woodcut by Salomon from the "Metamorphoses." The borders of the book pages are in two styles of ornament, the moresque as shown here and the grotesque, related to the decorative elements of the embroidered panel.
Detail from the same panel with a scene showing Salmacis and Hermaphroditus seated by her pool; and woodcut by Salomon from the "Metamorphoses"
the Lyons pieces, and even the Bosch-like monsters of the Actaeon border are reflected in a caricatured couple, also in Lyons. Parallels to the strangely curved furniture in the embroideries can be found in other Salomon prints, as well as the flights of steps and the lively hands with spread-out fingers; in the Lyons valances can be seen some of Salomon’s typical flying draperies. The combination of a Salomon story print and surrounding grotesques is found on several pieces of Lyons majolica.

The fifteen mythological scenes in the three panels show, as has been said, various degrees of relationship with Salomon’s Ovid illustrations. In one case (the story of Leda, found on a piece in Lyons) there is no woodcut of the subject, but in all the others, when there is a connection, the scene is shown in reverse. This, of itself, could indicate that the embroideries were derived from reversed copies of Salomon, such as those by Virgil Solis, but the great freedom of the adaptations and the use of quite different representations in some cases can be interpreted as arguments in favor of an origin in Salomon’s workshop; here his original drawings would be available, and they, following the usual practice, would probably be in reverse of the woodcuts. The master, or a trusted assistant, tracing the outlines on the yellow satin, would be free to use the drawings as much or as little as he felt inclined.

None of the embroideries has a history that can be traced back more than fifty years, and there are no coats-of-arms or symbols that could be used to determine the original ownership. Though less rich than the bed of Gabrielle d’Estrees, which, as recorded in the inventory made after her death in 1599, was of white taffeta embroidered in gold and silver and “sémé d’oyseaulx, bestions, fleurs et autres grotesques de soye de toutes couleurs,” the complete set of hangings of which these valances were a part must have been very sumptuous and very stylish. Though they were probably made after his death these embroideries reflect the spirit of Bernard Salomon and may well have been designed in his workshop. Otherwise they must have been produced by some equally imaginative French artist who, like him, owed more to Italy than to Fontainebleau. Far more than in the comparatively naive adaptations of the majolica- and enamel-workers, and the charming but old-fashioned and somewhat clumsy amateur embroideries, these panels can perhaps enable us to visualize those cloth-of-gold canopies, those gorgeous costumes for the children of Lyons, that “le petit Bernard” provided when the city wished to honor a very important person. Salomon, who can well be called the chief picture-maker of the embroiderers, has for once been worthily interpreted.