

A handsome florilegium from the heir to Italy's foremost family of botanists

Antonio Targioni-Tozzetti, *Raccolta di fiori, frutti ed agrumi più ricercati per l'ornamento dei giardini, disegnati al naturale da vari artisti, illustrati e descritti*. Florence: Presso Giuseppe Molini, 1825. 18 7/8 inches x 12 5/8 inches (479 x 321 mm), 86 pages, 42 hand-colored plates.

The natural inclination and early fostering so readily found in a family setting has produced numerous scientific, literary, and musical dynasties. In the case of botany, the inheritance of a paternal library and herbarium (essential to taxonomic studies) further enhances the succession. In Austria, there are the Jacquins (father and son), in Switzerland, the Candolle family, and in Great Britain, the Hookers of Kew. In Italy, the great botanical dynasty is the Florentine family of Targioni-Tozzetti: Giovanni (1712–83), his son Ottaviano (1755–1826) and grandson Antonio (1785–1856) — to say nothing of more obscure descendants. Antonio followed in his father's footsteps, succeeding him in 1829 as “Professore di Botanica e Materia Medica all'Arcispedale di Santa Maria Nuova” in Florence. As this traditional alliance of medicine and botany suggests, Targioni-Tozzetti was a practical man. His studies extended over the several fields of medicine, agronomy, political economy, and chemistry; his publications ranged from a detailed analysis of the properties and virtues of the mineral springs, waters, and baths of his native Tuscany to this florilegium, his *Collection of the flowers, fruits, and citrus most desirable as garden ornaments*, one of the most beautiful Italian colorplate books of its time.

This copy from the Chicago Botanic Garden Library is bound in contemporary calf-backed pastepaper boards and bears the bookplate of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society (“Stickney Fund 1886”) as well as their round stamp on each of the hand-colored plates.

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