I. INTRODUCTION

For many years work Prof. Wytze Hellinga led and supervised research at the University of Amsterdam for a ‘bibliography of Dutch book auctions on fiches’. This is a record both of copies of sale catalogues and of announcements and reports of sales (in, for example, seventeenth-century newspapers). The auctions are listed chronologically with indexes of auctioneers and owners of collections sold. When excerpting from library catalogues, notes were made not only of auction catalogues but also — at least for the seventeenth century — of publishers’ lists and stock or bookseller’s catalogues. The resulting bibliography is still very much a working apparatus. At the same time, the holdings of a number of important German and French libraries have still to be examined. Nevertheless, thanks to Hellinga’s initiative bibliographers and philologists now have at their disposal a collection of material capable of serving as the basis of study of northern Netherlandish book auction catalogues, particularly those of the seventeenth century.

In 1961 Hellinga published a study on Joan Blaeu’s bookseller’s cata-

* This article was originally intended for the Festschrift for Prof. Wytze Hellinga (Hellinga, Festschrift-Feestbundel-Mélanges . . . (Amsterdam, Nico Israel, 1980)), but could not be included there on account of its length. Dr. Isabella van Eegehen and Messrs. R. Breugelmans and B. Dongelmans were kind enough to read it prior to publication: I have made grateful use of their critical observations and suggestions.

† Bibliotheek- en documentatiegids voor Nederland, Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen, 3rd edn. (‘s-Gravenhage 1971), p. 25. This bibliographical apparatus for Dutch auction sale catalogues is now in Amsterdam UL.
logue of 1659. As a result of his attention to various different aspects of the same object, this analysis still has an important contribution to make to the study of the history of the book trade. The appearance of Pollard and Ehrman's standard work enables us to place this and similar sources within a historical framework. In this book, which is in many respects an impressive volume, the authors discuss the different sorts of catalogue in separate chapters. However, one category remains unmentioned: the stock or bookseller's catalogue with printed prices. Indeed, the fact that such catalogues were published in Amsterdam during the seventeenth century has also remained unremarked in later studies.

Rolf Engelsing summarized the catalogues with printed prices known to him in an article entitled 'Festpreise im europäischen Buchhandel des 15., 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts'. However, the catalogues which he


3 Graham Pollard and Albert Ehrman: The distribution of books by catalogue from the invention of printing to A.D. 1800, based on material in the Broxbourne Library (Cambridge 1965), hereafter referred to as Pollard & Ehrman.

4 Though Pollard and Ehrman mention catalogues with printed prices (see their index under Prices, pp. 49, 50, 65–6, 115), these are in all cases list catalogues, i.e. catalogues of printers or publishers, not of booksellers. I realize that the differences between the two are not always immediately apparent: almost all publishers in the seventeenth century were also, after all, booksellers, and many booksellers were also publishers. Where in what follows I refer to list catalogues or publishers' catalogues I use the terms to mean catalogues listing exclusively or almost exclusively works printed and/or published by the publisher of the catalogue. In the case of a stock catalogue the accent is on the generally large collection of books by various publishers which the publisher of the catalogue has in stock for sale. These may naturally also include a small proportion of books published by himself. Cf. Pollard & Ehrman, p. 64: 'Every sixteenth-century printer, however extensive his business, was also a retail bookseller. Catalogues were started as a means of approach to private buyers, and never lost their use for this purpose.'

5 That Hendrick Laurensz's stock catalogue of 1638 contains printed prices might have been gathered from the illustration of p. 119 in La librairie, l'imprimerie et la presse en Hollande à travers quatre siècles. Documents pour servir à l'histoire de leurs relations internationales. Compiled and annotated by W.P. van Stockum Jr. (La Haye 1910), Pl. 43, and from the caption given it by Van Stockum: '... avec les prix de vente en argent hollandais.' Compare, for a catalogue with printed prices from the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Pl. 128–31.