

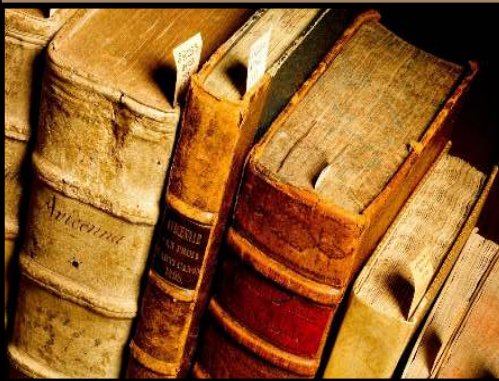
Notes from the
John Martin Rare Book Room
July, 2017

ANDRÉ DU LAURENS (1558-1609). *De mirabili strumas sanandi vi solis Galliae regibus christianissimis divinitus concessa liber unus.* Paris: Apud Marcum Orry, 1609.



Du Laurens taught at Montpellier until 1598 when he was called to Paris as court physician. In this position he eventually became personal physician to Marie de Medici and King Henry IV. During the Middle Ages, tuberculosis of the lymph glands of the neck was very common and was known variously as scrofula, struma, and the "King's Evil." For centuries it was believed that the "royal touch" could

cure this disease and many English and French monarchs were in the habit of touching their afflicted subjects during major religious holidays. Du Laurens was a firm believer in the effectiveness of the "royal touch" and, in this work, reports that King Henry IV often touched and healed as many as 1,500 individuals at a time. The work contains a magnificent folding copperplate engraving showing the King touching a number of sufferers who are gathered about him in a circle. The University of Iowa copy has an interesting provenance and can be traced back to Jean Auguste de Thou, its original owner, who died in 1617.



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