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Breugelmans R.

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During the seventeenth century, Holland's Golden Age, printing and publishing became a flourishing industry. In Leiden, where the presence of a university contributed to that success, Joannes Maire built up, in the course of more than fifty years, a list of at least 527 titles, especially in the fields of medicine, theology and classical philology. Although he is nowadays chiefly remembered as the original publisher of René Descartes's Discours de la methode (1637), his contemporaries knew him better from his numerous editions of works of Desiderius Erasmus. Maire's cooperation in his earlier years as a publisher with the Raphelengii and Thomas Erpenius, professor of Oriental languages in Leiden, and the availability of his books at the fairs of Frankfurt and Leipzig spread his name rapidly in academic circles. Dr Breugelmans's book has several interesting elements. It is the first one to pay attention to a single Leiden printer/publisher on such a large scale. Extensive bibliographical descriptions of Maire's books form the greater part of this publication and the inclusion of their title-pages on a CD-ROM is a novelty too. An introduction, giving substantial information on Maire and his authors and on Hardcover aspects of his list, such as the phenomenon of ""parallel editions"", supplies valuable further information on the working methods of a printer of that period. The inventory of Maire's estate proved to be an important source for his contacts with his colleagues, among them the Officina Plantiniana in Antwerp.

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