The Wanderings and Homes of Manuscripts

by M. R. James

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HELPS FOR STUDENTS OF HISTORY. No. 17

Edited by C. Johnson, M.A., and J. P. Whitney, D.D., D.C.L.

THE WANDERINGS AND HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS

BY

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THE WANDERINGS AND HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS

The Wanderings and Homes of Manuscripts is the title of this book. To have called it the survival and transmission of ancient literature would have been pretentious, but not wholly untruthful. Manuscripts, we all know, are the chief means by which the records and imaginings of twenty centuries have been preserved. It is my purpose to tell where manuscripts were made, and how and in what centres they have been collected, and, incidentally, to suggest some helps for tracing out their history. Naturally the few pages into which the story has to be packed will not give room for any one episode to be treated exhaustively. Enough if I succeed in rousing curiosity and setting some student to work in a field in which an immense amount still remains to be discovered.

In treating of so large a subject as this—for it is a large one—it is not a bad plan to begin with the particular and get gradually to the general.

Some Specimen Pedigrees of MSS.

I take my stand before the moderate-sized bookcase which contains the collection of MSS. belonging to the College of Eton, and with due care draw from the shelves a few of the books which have reposed there since the room was built in 1729.

The first shelf I lay hands upon contains some ten large folios. Four of them are a single great compilation, beginning with a survey of the history of the world and of the Roman Empire, and merging into the heraldry of the German noblesse. It was made, we find, in 1541, and is dedicated to Henry VIII. Large folding pictures on vellum and portraits of all the Roman Emperors adorn the first volume. It is a sumptuous book, supposed to be a present from the Emperor Ferdinand to the King. How did it come here? A printed label tells us that it was given to the college by Henry Temple, Viscount Palmerston, in 1750 (he had previously given it to Sir Richard Ellys on whose death Lady Ellys returned it: so much in parenthesis). Then, more by luck than anything else, I find mention of it in the diary of Thomas Hearne, the Oxford antiquary; his friend Thomas Jett, F.R.S., owned it and told him about it in 1722: he had been offered £100 a volume for it; it was his by purchase from one Mr. Stebbing. It was sold, perhaps to Palmerston, at Jett's auction in 1731. The gap between Henry VIII. and Stebbing remains for the present unfilled. So much for the first draw.

Next, a yet larger and more ponderous volume, Decreta Romanorum Pontificum—the Papal decretals and the Acts of the Councils. It is spotlessly clean and magnificently written in a hand of the early part of the twelfth century, a hand which very much resembles that in use at Christchurch, Canterbury. I am indeed, tempted to call it a Canterbury book; only it bears none of the marks which it ought to have if it was ever in the library of the Cathedral Priory. Was it perhaps written there and sold or given to a daughter-house, or to some abbey which had a less skilful school of writers? Not to Rochester, at any rate, though Rochester did get

many books written at Christchurch. If it had belonged to Rochester there would have been some trace, I think, of an inscription on the lower margin of the first leaf. No; the only clue to the history is a title written on the fly-leaf in the fifteenth century, which says: "The book of the decrees of the Pope of Rome," and it begins on the second leaf "tes viii." That does not tell us much; I do not recognize the handwriting of the title, though I guess it to have been written when the book came to Eton College. All I can say is that here is an example of a large class, duplicates of indispensable and common works, which the abbey libraries possessed in great numbers, and often parted with, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, to colleges and private purchasers.

Next we take out a thin folio written on paper. This time it is a Greek book which we open; it has the works of the Christian apologists Athenagoras and Tatian, and a spurious epistle of Justin Martyr, copied in 1534 by Valeriano of Forlí. A single MS. now at Paris, written in 914, is the ancestor of all our copies of these texts; but it has been shown that this Eton book is not an immediate copy of that, but of one now at Bologna. Obviously it was written in Italy. How does it come to be here? Sir Henry Wotton, Provost of the college, spent the best part of twenty years in Italy, mainly as Ambassador to the Court of Venice for James I., and left all his MSS. to the college at his death in 1639. There are numbers of MSS. from Italy in this bookcase, and, though hardly any of them have Wotton's name in them, it is not to be doubted that they came from him. A good proportion of them, too, can be traced back a step farther, for they have in them the name or the arms or the handwriting of Bernardo Bembo of Venice, the father of the more famous Cardinal Pietro Bembo. This Justin volume is not of that number, but we have a clue to its history which may be deemed sufficient.

I turn to another shelf and open a large book written somewhere about the year 1150, which was given to the college in 1713 by one of the Fellows; in 1594 it belonged to John Rogers (if I read the name right). It contains St. Jerome's

Commentary on Daniel and the Minor Prophets, followed by a tract of St. Ambrose, and another ascribed to Jerome (subject, the hardening of Pharaoh's heart), which was in reality, we are now told, written by a Pelagian. It is a very uncommon text. After that we have Jerome's (so-called) prophecy of the fifteen signs which are to precede the last judgment—of which signs, let it be said in passing, there is a fine representation in an ancient window in the Church of All Saints, North Street, at York. Can we trace this volume any farther back than 1594? I think so; the Ambrose and the two spurious tracts of Jerome (one, as I said, being of very rare occurrence) are entered, in that order, in the catalogue of the library of Peterborough Abbey. The library has long been dispersed, but the catalogue remains, and was printed by Gunton in his History of the Abbey. But the said catalogue makes no mention of the Commentary of Jerome, which fills 323 out of the 358 leaves of our book. A serious obstacle, it will be said, to an identification; yet a long series of observations, too long to be set out here, has led me to the conclusion that our Peterborough catalogue makes a practice of not entering the main contents of the volumes, but only the short subsidiary tracts, which might else escape notice. And without much hesitation I put down the book before me as a relic of the Peterborough Library.

Somewhat higher up stands a very stout book bound in old patterned paper. The material of it is paper too, the language is Greek, and the contents, for the most part, Canons of Councils. There are two hands in it; one is perhaps of the fourteenth century, the other is of the early part of the fifteenth. This latter is the writing of one Michael Doukas, who tells us that he was employed as a scribe by Brother John of Ragusa, who held some position at a Church Council, unnamed. There were two Johns of Ragusa, it seems, both Dominicans, one of whom figured at the Council of Constance in 1413, the other at that of Basle in 1433. The latter must be the right one, for there are still Greek MSS. at Basle which belonged to the Dominicans of that city, and were bequeathed by the second John at his death in 1442.

The book is important, because the first thing in it is the only copy of a treatise

ascribed to St. Athanasius, called a Synopsis of Holy Scripture. This treatise was printed first in 1600 by an editor named Felckmann, and no MS. of it has been used or known since. Where did Felckmann find it? In a MS. which belonged to Pierre Nevelet, procured for him (the editor) by Bongars, a distinguished scholar of Orleans. Now, the Eton book has in it a whole series of names of owners, some erased, but decipherable. The earliest seems to be Joannes Gastius, who in 1550 gave it to Johannes Hernogius (as I doubtfully read it). Then come Petrus Neveletus and his son, I(saac) N(icolas) Neveletus. Evidently, then, we have here the MS. which Felckmann used, and we arrive at some date after 1600. In 1665 or 1685 Daniel Mauclerc, Doctor of Law, living at Vitry le François, is the owner. He leaves France (the family were Huguenots), and brings the book to Holland. His son Jacques, Doctor of Medicine, has it in 1700, in England; his nephew, John Henry Mauclerc, also M.D., succeeds to it and enters his name in 1748, and gives it to Mr. Roger Huggett, Conduct and Librarian of the College, who died in 1769.

This is an unusually full and clear pedigree. One more, and I have done.

This time it is a copy of the Polychronicon of Ranulph Higden, monk of Chester; it was the popular history of the world and of England for anyone who could read Latin in the fifteenth century. No abbey library could be without it, just as no gentleman's library could be without a copy of the English Chronicle called the Brut. Here is a case in which we know the beginning and end of the book's wanderings, but not the middle of the story. The arms of Eton adorn the beginning of each of the seven "books" of the Chronicle, so we may take it that it was owned from the first by a member of the foundation. An inscription tells us that within the fifteenth century it belonged to the Carthusians of Witham in Somerset, and was given to them by Master John Blacman. Here is light. John Blacman was Fellow and Chanter of Eton, then Head of a House (King's Hall) in Cambridge, and lastly a Carthusian monk. He was also confessor to Henry VI., and wrote a book about him. In a MS. at Oxford there is a list of the books he gave to Witham, and among them is this

Polychronicon. More: he has prefixed to the text a pedigree of the Kings of England from Egbert, illustrated with drawings, the last of which is the earliest known representation of Windsor Castle. We have not, then, to complain of lack of information about the early stages of the history; but then comes a gap, and between the Dissolution and the early part of the nineteenth century, when Rodd of London had it and sold it to the fourth Earl of Ashburnham, I can (at present) hear nothing of the book. In quite recent years it passed from the Ashburnham family to Mr. H. Y. Thompson, from him to Mr. George Dunn, and at his death was bought back for its first home.

There, then, are half a dozen histories of MSS., fairly typical and fairly diverse. Naturally I have picked out books which have some traceable story. Very many have none. We can only say of them that they were written in such a century and such a country, and acquired at such a date: and there an end. Rebinding and loss of leaves, especially of fly-leaves, have carried off names of owners and library-marks, and apart from that there are but very few cases in which we are warranted in proclaiming from the aspect and character of the script that a book was written at one particular place and nowhere else.

I think it will be seen, from what has been said, that my subject is one which depends for its actuality upon the accumulation of a great number of small facts. There is, of course, a broad historical background: no less than the whole history of Western Europe since the period of the Barbarian invasions. That cannot be looked for here, of course; but there are certain data of capital importance which cannot be spared, and some plotting out of the whole field is indispensable.

The Limits of the Subject

Greek and Latin MSS. are the main subject. Oriental books we do not even touch upon, and vernacular books in English or French have to take a secondary place; and we may treat first of the Greek, for it is by far the most compact division. In the case

of both Greek and Latin books we shall ask where and when they were chiefly made, when and how they left their early homes, and where they are to be found now.

We shall rule out the whole of what may be called the classical period—the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamon, the bookshops of Martial's time—yes, and even the fourth-century library of Cæsarea—for of these we have no relics. Our concern is with what exists to-day, or what did exist until the nation, which has contributed so largely to learning and history in the past, turned apostate, and to its lasting shame destroyed and dispersed what more ignorant men had spared. The mischief Germany has done—and it will be long before we learn the full extent of it—she has done with open eyes.

We think primarily of Belgium and North-Eastern France as the scenes of her worst devastations, but she has not confined her work of spoliation to them. The Balkan provinces and Russia held great masses of Greek and Slavonic MSS. as yet very incompletely known. The actual invasions of German troops, and the wars and revolutions which Germany has fostered in those regions, can hardly have been less mischievous than her operations in the West.

Greek MSS.: Production and Dispersion

The area in which Greek MSS. were produced in the medieval period was (with negligible exceptions) confined to Greece proper, "Turkey in Europe," the Levant, and South Italy. In the monastic centres, particularly Mount Athos, there were and are large stores of Greek books, the vast majority of which are theological or liturgical; and the theological authors most in vogue are those of the fourth and later centuries. Copies of primitive Christian authors or classical ones are comparative rarities. True, one or two of surpassing interest have been found in such libraries; a famous Plato was brought by Dr. E. D. Clarke from Patmos, and is at Oxford now; the treatise of Hippolytus against heresies came in the forties from a monastery to

the Paris library. But these are exceptions. We have to look at Constantinople as by far the most important centre of learning and of book-production. The city was full of libraries, public and private, and of readers. The culture of the place was, no doubt, self-contained; it did not aim at enriching the outer world, which it despised; its literary productions were imitative, the work of dilettanti and decadents. Nevertheless, it preserved for us wellnigh all that we now have of the best literature of Greece, and, but for a few catastrophes, it would have handed on much more. Of thirty-two historical writings read and excerpted by Photius in his Bibliotheca, late in the ninth century, nineteen are lost; of several of the Attic orators, Lysias, Lycurgus, Hyperides, Dinarchus, he possessed many more speeches than we have seen. Michael Psellus, who died about 1084, is credited (I must allow that the evidence is not of the best) with writing notes on twenty-four comedies of Menander, of which, as is well known, we have not one complete. In the twelfth century John Tzetzes and Eustathius apparently had access still to very many lost authors. In short, before the Latin occupation of Constantinople in 1204, the remains of ancient Greek literature very notably exceeded their present bulk. Much of it, no doubt, was preserved in single copies, and only a narrow selection of authors was in constant use for educational purposes. Only three plays out of seven of Æschylus, for example, were read in the schools. The rest, with Sophocles and Apollonius Rhodius, practically depended for their survival on the famous copy now at Florence. Instances might be multiplied. The threads of transmission to which we owe most of the Euripidean plays, the Anthology, the History of Polybius, the works of Clement of Alexandria, the Christian Apologists, the commentary of Origen upon St. John, are equally slender. We cannot doubt that the sack of Constantinople by the Crusaders was, in its obliteration of works of art and of literature, far more disastrous than the capture of the city by the Turks in 1453. For the best part of a century before the latter date, the export of precious MSS. to Italy had been going on, and many of our greatest treasures were already safe in the hands of scholars

when the crash came. Nor is it possible, I believe, to show that between 1204 and 1453 many authors whose works no longer exist were read in Byzantine circles. That there was destruction of books in 1453 is no doubt true; but within a very few years the Turks had learned that money was to be made of them, and the sale and export went on at a great rate.

European Centres for Greek MSS.: Continental

Thus the drafting of Greek MSS. into the libraries of Western Europe has been a long and gradual process. Many of the best, that were secured by individual scholars such as Giannozzo Manetti, Aurispa, and Niccolo Niccoli, found their way into the Laurentian Library at Florence; others, collected by Nicholas V. (d. 1455), are the nucleus of the Vatican collection; a third set was the gift of the Greek Cardinal Bessarion (d. 1468) to Venice. But probably in quality, and certainly in quantity, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris excels even the Italian storehouses of Greek MSS. The premier Greek MS. of France is a copy of the works attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, which the Greek Emperor Michael the Stammerer sent to Louis the Pious in the year 827. It was long at the Royal Abbey of St. Denis, but strayed away somehow; then, bought by Henri de Mesmes in the sixteenth century, it came into the Royal Library in 1706, and has been there ever since. Its present number is Bib. Nat. Grec 437. Another treasure of ancient times which was once at St. Denis is the sixth-century uncial Greek MS. of the Prophets known as Codex Marchalianus, now in the Vatican; but when it came to France is not clearly made out. Coming to later times, the not inconsiderable collection made by Francis I. received a notable increase in that of Catherine de' Medici, once the property of Cardinal Ridolfi, and the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV. were for it an epoch of rapid growth. Between 1645 and 1740 the number of volumes swelled from 1,255 to 3,197. The Revolution period added the collection of Coislin, or rather of Séguier—400 more. At the present day Paris must possess 5,000 Greek MSS.

In Central Europe Vienna may be reckoned the chief repository. It contains the remarkable collection of the traveller Augier de Busbecq, made in the East about 1570, which was once at Augsburg. Spain—I think principally of the Escurial Library—has suffered from depredation and from fire, and is poorer than the prominence of its early contributions to the cause of learning deserves.

Greek MSS. in England

It is a temptation, when one turns to England, to enlarge upon the early history of Greek scholarship in the country, but it is a temptation which must be resisted. We had a share in preparing for the revival of learning. Roger Bacon and Grosseteste (I say nothing of the earlier age, of Theodore of Tarsus and Bede) were men whose work in this direction has hardly met with full appreciation as yet; and later on we gave Erasmus a welcome and a home. But we did not rival Italy or France in the early scramble for Greek books. Such classical MSS. of first-class value as we possess have been importations of the seventeenth and later centuries. Let me, however, speak somewhat more in detail.

There was a turbulent person called George Neville, who died Archbishop of York in 1476. It is evident, though not, I think, from anything that he wrote, that he was interested in Greek learning, and not only theological learning. A MS. of some orations of Demosthenes now at Leyden contains a statement by the scribe that he wrote it for Archbishop Neville in 1472. This is our starting-point. Now, the scribe in question—Emmanuel of Constantinople—generally writes a hand (ugly enough) which no one who has once seen it can fail to recognize. This hand appears in a not inconsiderable group of books: in a Plato and an Aristotle now at Durham, in a Suidas given by the Chapter of Durham to Lord Oxford (Brit. Mus., MS., Harl. 3,100), in a rather famous New Testament at Leicester, in three Psalters at Oxford and Cambridge, and in half of another copy of Suidas at Oxford. In this second Suidas Emmanuel's hand is associated with another, equally easy to recognize—that

of Joannes Serbopoulos. Serbopoulos lived, I know not how long, in the abbey at Reading, and transcribed several Greek MSS. now in Oxford and Cambridge libraries; he was still at work in the first years of the sixteenth century. This little episode is one that demonstrates, in a rather pleasing way, the value of the study of handwritings and of the inscriptions written by scribes; the light it throws on the history of scholarship is unexpected, and is worth having.

Two Biblical MSS. of high importance came to England as gifts to our Sovereigns. One was the well-known Codex Alexandrinus (A), given to Charles I. in 1628 by Cyril Lucar, the reforming Patriarch of Constantinople. Of the other I shall take leave to say more. It was that known as the Cottonian Genesis, which was brought over by two Greek Bishops "from Philippi" and presented to Henry VIII. It was a sixth-century copy of the Book of Genesis, written in uncial letters and illustrated, we are told, with 250 pictures. Queen Elizabeth passed it on to her tutor, Sir John Fortescue, and he to Sir Robert Cotton, the collector of a library of which we shall hear more in the sequel, and in that library it remained (when not out on loan) till Saturday, October 23, 1731. On that day a fire broke out in Ashburnham House in Westminster (where the Cotton and Royal Libraries were then kept), and the bookcase in which the Genesis was suffered horribly. The Cotton MSS.—for I may as well explain this matter now as later—were kept in presses, each of which had a bust of a Roman Emperor on the top. They ran from Julius to Domitian, and were supplemented by Cleopatra and Faustina. Augustus and Domitian had but one shelf each (Augustus contained charters, drawings, and the like; Domitian was originally, perhaps, a small case over a doorway); the others had usually six shelves, lettered from A to F, and the books in each shelf were numbered from i. onwards in Roman figures. The Genesis was Otho, B vi., and the three presses of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius were those in which the fire did most mischief. No complete leaf is left of Genesis; there are bits of blackened text and pictures, a few of which strayed to the library of the Baptist College at Bristol. The text had been examined by competent

scholars for editions of the Greek Old Testament, and we are able to judge of its value; but of the pictures, alas! no list or description had been made. Still, something is known. An eminent French polymath, the Sieur de Peiresc (whose life by P. Gassendi is well worth reading), borrowed the book from Cotton, and had careful copies of one or two of the illustrations made for him, and these exist. And a further interesting fact has come out: by the help of our scanty relics a student of art, Professor Tikkanen, of Helsingfors, in Finland, was able to show that the designers of a long series of mosaic pictures from Genesis in St. Mark's at Venice must have had before them either the Cotton Genesis or its twin sister, so closely do the mosaics follow the compositions in the MS.

In somewhat similar fashion, by gift from the reformer Theodore de Béze, the University of Cambridge acquired its greatest Greek treasure, the Codex Bezæ (D) of the Gospels and Acts in Elizabeth's reign. The riddles which its text presents have exercised many brains, and I do not know who would allow that they are finally solved. Another famous MS., the unique Lexicon of Photius, was acquired by Thomas Gale, Dean of York, early in the eighteenth century—one would like to know where. To my eye it bears signs of having been long in Western Europe, if not in England. Roger Gale gave it, with his own and his father's other MSS., to Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1738. On the whole, however, Cambridge has not been nearly so fortunate as Oxford in accumulating Greek books. Oxford had a magnificent present in 1629 from its Chancellor, the Earl of Pembroke, of 240 MSS. purchased in block from the Venetian Barocci, and in 1817 made a great and wise purchase of 128 more, contained in the collection of another Venetian, the Abate Canonici. In the interval such diverse benefactors as Laud and Cromwell had enriched it with some very notable gifts. The pedigree of one of Laud's MSS. may be familiar, but is too illuminating to be omitted. It is a seventh-century copy of the Acts of the Apostles in Greek and Latin. The earliest home to which we can trace it is Sardinia; a document connected with that island is written on a fly-leaf. Then we

find indisputable evidence that Bede, writing early in the eighth century, had access to it; he quotes in his Retractations on the Acts readings which are characteristic of it; and as he never left his monastery in the North, we may be sure that the book was at Jarrow or Wearmouth in his time. After that it disappears until Laud buys it. Like many of his books, it came to him from Germany, a spoil of the Thirty Years' War. These various data are best linked up if we suppose (1) that the MS. was brought from Italy to England by Theodore of Tarsus or his companion Abbot Hadrian in 668; (2) that it was taken from England to Germany after Bede's death by one of the companions of St. Boniface, the apostle of that country, and remained there, in or near Fulda, perhaps, until the convulsion which threw it back upon our shores.

Take another illustration. When John Leland, in Henry VIII.'s reign, visited the library of Canterbury Cathedral, he saw there part of the Old Testament in Greek—chiefly the poetical books and the Psalter. He does not mention the Pentateuch. Nevertheless, it can be shown that that was also there, for among the Canonici MSS. in the Bodleian is one of the thirteenth century containing Genesis to Ruth in Greek, which has on a margin the inscription, legible though erased: "liber ecclesie Christi Cantuarie." How it left England at the Dissolution one may guess easily enough, but what its fortunes were before it came to light again at Venice I believe there is nothing to show.

Speaking broadly, then, of the destinies of Greek MSS., I may repeat that they were produced in a comparatively small area, that a great many of the most precious ones were concentrated in one place, and that from the fourteenth century onwards they became objects of desire to the great ones of the earth, who vied with each other in sending special emissaries to collect them. As a result, the greatest treasures were soon locked up in the libraries of princes and prelates, and became less commonly exposed to dispersion and sale than Latin books. We must remember, too, that as a rule the monasteries of Western Europe did not collect Greek MSS.; they possessed a chance one here and there, as we have seen, but rather as curiosities than as books

to be used.[A] To the noble and the scholar there was a flavour of distinction about a Greek MS. which was wanting to all but the most venerable and beautiful of the Latin ones.

There is still much to be done in the investigation of the history and relationships of Greek MSS. In spite of the numberless editions of the great authors, and the labour that has been lavished upon them, I believe that scholars would agree that in very few cases, if any, is the transmission of the text at all perfectly known. For some writings we have too little MS. evidence, for some so much as to be embarrassing. In no case can we afford to neglect and to leave unrecorded anything that a MS. can tell us as to its place of origin, its scribe, or its owners. Names and scribblings on fly-leaves, which to one student suggest nothing, may combine in the memory of another into a coherent piece of history, and show him the home of the book at a particular date, and by consequence unveil a whole section of the story of its wanderings. With one little instance of this kind I will bring to an end my remarks on this first and shorter portion of my subject. In the library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge is a Greek Psalter written in the middle of the twelfth century. On one of its last pages is scribbled in Greek letters by a later hand the name of John Farley ("Ἰωάννης φαρλεί"). Only about five-and-twenty volumes away from this stands a MS. containing letters written by the University of Oxford on public occasions. One of these is signed by J. Farley. A little enquiry elicits the fact that John Farley was official scribe of that University near the end of the fifteenth century. The Greek Psalter, then, was pretty certainly at Oxford in Farley's time. What do we know of Greek MSS. then at Oxford? We know that Bishop Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln owned such things, and that he bequeathed his books to the Franciscans of Oxford at his death in 1254; and when we examine the Psalter again, we find that it is full of notes in a hand which occurs in other Greek MSS. known to have belonged to Grosseteste, and which I take to be Grosseteste's autograph. So the mere occurrence of John Farley's name helps us to write the history of the book from

within a hundred years of its making until the present day. Procured by Grosseteste some time before 1254, it passes to Oxford, and remains there till the Grey Friar's Convent is dissolved by Henry VIII. Then there is a gap of a generation at most. Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury, acquires it (believing it, absurdly enough, to have belonged to Archbishop Theodore in the seventh century), and bequeaths it to his college of Corpus Christi in 1574.

Latin MSS.

We turn to the Latin division, and here the difficulty of selecting lines of procedure is very great. A paragraph of historical preface, at any rate, must be attempted.

At the period of the Barbarian invasions—the fifth century—the learned countries were Italy, France (especially Southern France) and Spain. Of these three, Italy may be described as stationary or even decadent, but she possessed greater accumulations of books than either of the other two. The result of the invasions was, no doubt, that libraries were destroyed and education dislocated; but there was another result, as we have lately begun to realize—namely, that in the case of France there was a transplanting of culture to another soil. A number of teachers fled the country, and some at least came to Ireland. This, as far as we can now see, was the beginning of that Irish learning which has been so widely, yet so vaguely, extolled. Ireland, then, in the late fifth century and the sixth, holds the lamp. Its light passes to England in the middle of the seventh century, and from thence, near the end of the eighth, to the Court of Charlemagne, where it initiates the Carolingian Renaissance. In the ninth century, when England is a prey to the Danes, the Carolingian Court and the great abbeys of Germany are enjoying a vigorous intellectual life, stimulated and enriched by scholars from Italy and from Ireland. In a general view the tenth and eleventh centuries must figure as a period of degeneration; the twelfth as one of immense intellectual and artistic vigour, culminating in the thirteenth. In the fourteenth the foundations of what we call the Renaissance are already being laid, and we have

hardly passed the middle of the fifteenth before the MS. has received its death-blow in the publication of the first printed Bible.

This absurdly condensed review of ten centuries has, I believe, some truth in it, in spite of the fact that every clause needs qualification. We shall have to go over the same ground again a little more slowly. At present we will devote a little time to the beginnings of our period.

A few relics of the days before the Barbarian invasion have reached us. I am not thinking of the library of rolls found at Herculaneum in the eighteenth century, the unrolling and decipherment of which still goes on slowly at Naples, nor of the many precious fragments of rolls and books which have come in our own generation from Egypt, but rather of those which have been preserved above ground in libraries. Such are the Virgils of the Vatican, of St. Gall, and of Florence.

Perhaps a word about these ancient Virgils will not be unwelcome. They are cited in all the textbooks, it is true, but I think they are apt to be confused; at any rate it is easy to confuse them.

They are five in number: three very fragmentary, two more or less complete. The surnames they go by are Sangallensis, Augusteus, Vaticanus, Romanus, Mediceus.

Sangallensis and Augusteus are practically the only pieces of books we have which are written in the old square capitals, like those of the Roman inscriptions. Sangallensis consists of a few leaves which were found by Von Arx, a librarian of St. Gall, in the bindings of books in that abbey's library. Of Augusteus there are four leaves at Rome (Vaticanus latinus 3,256) and three at Berlin; and somewhere, perhaps in a private library in France, is or was another bit which was known to scholars in the seventeenth century. This copy was once at the Royal Abbey of St. Denis. Both of these are fourth-century books at latest.

Vaticanus (lat. 3,225) is a more complete copy, illustrated with fifty paintings in good classical style, and is also assigned to the fourth century.

Romanus (Vat. lat. 3,867), once at St. Denis, is a pictured copy too, but not nearly so good in style.

Mediceus, written before a.d. 494, is at Florence (a single leaf of it is bound up with Vaticanus). It was formerly in the abbey library of Bobbio.

These three books are written in "rustic capitals."

A larger, but still small, group of books of "classical" date are the palimpsests, the most famous of which are at Milan and Rome. There was a time, early in the nineteenth century, when Angelo Mai, afterwards Cardinal, and Prefect of the Vatican Library, was constantly launching fresh surprises upon scholars, the results of his work in what was then an almost untouched field. Large fragments of Cicero's Republic, of lost orations of Cicero, of the works of the rhetorician Fronto, were issued at short intervals: and all the most important of these were recovered from palimpsests in the Ambrosian or the Vatican Library. They had all come, too, from one place, the same Bobbio which has been already named. Bobbio was founded by the Irishman St. Columban (d. 615). The list of the early and valuable MSS. which can be traced to it would take up a large share of my available space; but among the precious things it owned was a number of quite ancient volumes, the Cicero and Fronto and others—books sumptuously written in uncial letters in the fourth century, which, sad to say, the Bobbio monks themselves broke up, washed out the earlier writing, and covered the pages with texts more immediately useful to them. Whence did they come? An answer to that question has been offered recently which finds favour among experts. They are the relics, it is said, of the library formed by Cassiodorus at his monastery of Vivarium or Squillace, in South Italy. Cassiodorus is a great figure in the history of his own time, and in his influence upon the general course of learning. He was private secretary to Theodoric King of the Goths; in his old age he retired from public to monastic life, and his last years were devoted to equipping the monks he had gathered about him for study—first and foremost the

study of the Scriptures, but also, as leading up to that, the study of languages, of history and geography, and, as conducing to the general welfare, of medicine, botany, and other useful arts. It had been a cherished project of his to found an academy at Rome where all such learning might be fostered, but that plan failed, and Cassiodorus took into his retreat at Vivarium all the store of books he had accumulated, and wrote a little manual to guide his monks to the right use of them. His Institutes (as the book is called) do not give a set catalogue of his library, but there are many and striking coincidences between the manual and the literary works which can be traced to Bobbio. A specimen may be given: he recommends a writer on gardening called Gargilius Martialis. Hardly anyone else mentions this person, and his work had disappeared until Mai found pieces of it in a palimpsest at Naples which had come from Bobbio. We owe much to Cassiodorus in any case, for it was he who commended secular learning to monks, and the fact that monks were the great preservers of ancient literature cannot be dissociated from his influence. I shall be glad if the theory I have stated (it is that of the late Dr. Rudolf Beer) proves sound; to have some of the very volumes which Cassiodorus handled would be worth much.

There is a link between the library of Cassiodorus and our own country. A famous Latin Bible now at Florence, the Codex Amiatinus, is known to have been once in England, at Wearmouth or Jarrow, and to have been taken abroad by Ceolfrid, Abbot of those monasteries, in 716 as a present to the Pope, whom it never reached, for Ceolfrid died at Langres on his way to Rome. The story has often been told, and needs not to be dwelt upon here; but a view has been broached, and is stoutly maintained by Sir Henry Howorth, which does deserve mention and is not yet familiar. It is that the first quire in the Amiatine Bible, which contains pictures and lists of Biblical books, is actually a portion of a Bible written for Cassiodorus. There is much to be said for this, and at the least we may be sure that it is a direct copy from such a Bible. Sir Henry would go farther, and claim the whole book as

Cassiodorian. I do not know that expert opinion is prepared to endorse this.

The mention of Cassiodorus has led us below the date of the "classical" period, for he died in 583. For one moment I revert to the earlier time to record an interesting example of wandering. Illustrated books of the early centuries are the greatest of rarities. The two Virgils, the Vienna and the Cotton Genesis, the Homer at Milan, the Gospels of Rossano in Calabria and those of Sinope now at Paris, the Dioscorides at Vienna, the Pentateuch of Tours, the Joshua-roll at the Vatican—these are the most famous, and there are very few beside them. Among those few are some pieces of a Latin Bible written in the fourth century, and containing parts of Samuel and Kings, with paintings which, when fresh, must have been of high excellence. They have unhappily suffered grievous damage, for they were used in the seventeenth century to make covers for municipal documents at the royal and ancient abbatial town of Quedlinburg (the scene of Canning's Rovers). The painted leaves are now at Berlin; a leaf of plain text remains at Quedlinburg. No one doubts that the book to which they belonged was made in Italy, and the likeliest history that can be imagined for it is that it was brought as a gift to the abbey by a German prince, say in the tenth century. It is hard to explain the neglect and mutilation of so noble a book, in whose contents there was nothing to offend Protestant or other religious susceptibilities. Only we find, by numerous examples, that the MSS. we should most prize now, those written in capitals or uncials with the words undivided, or in Irish or English scripts which became unfamiliar, were uniformly despised and neglected by the readers of later centuries. We meet with notes of this kind in monastic catalogues: "It cannot be read," "Old and useless," and the like. Still, one would have thought that the pictures of the Quedlinburg book would have saved it, even in a German nunnery.

Chronological Survey

Since this little book is not a treatise on palæography, a manual of art, or a history of

learning, and yet has to touch upon all three provinces, it is important to keep it from straying too far into any of them, and this is one of the most difficult tasks that I have ever enterprised. The temptation to dilate upon the beauty and intrinsic interest of the MSS. and upon the characteristic scripts of different ages and countries is hard to resist. And, indeed, without some slight elucidation of such matters my readers may be very much at fault.

I had begun a geographical survey of the field, taking countries as the units, and had written upon Italy and Spain, and attempted France. But I found that when the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were reached my tract was becoming a disquisition upon palæography, art, and learning, and, of course, was failing to do justice either to any one of them or to what it had promised in its title. I now think that a chronological survey will be more practicable, and that it will be best to take first the subject of book-production, looking at each country in turn in a single period, instead of following the course taken by each, from the sixth century to the fifteenth.

Sixth and Seventh Centuries.—Italy, France, and Spain are the main centres. Ireland is active in learning, and in the second half of the seventh century England, under Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Hadrian, produces schools which rival the Irish, and, in the person of Bede, has the greatest scholar of the time. Some of the great Irish monasteries, such as Bobbio, Luxeuil, St. Gall, are founded on the Continent.

Books are produced in considerable numbers in Italy, France, Spain; and from Italy they are exported, especially by English pilgrims, such as Benedict Biscop. The Gospel harmony written in 546 by or for Bishop Victor of Capua comes to England, and goes abroad again, with St. Boniface, perhaps, and now rests at Fulda, where also his body lies. A copy of St. Jerome on Ecclesiastes, written in Italy in the sixth or seventh century, has in it the Anglo-Saxon inscription, "The book of Cuthsuuitha the Abbess." The only Abbess Cuthsuuitha we know of presided over a nunnery in

or near Worcester about 690-700. Her book travelled to Germany with some British or English missionary, and is at Würzburg. Würzburg is an Irish foundation; its apostle and patron, St. Kilian, is said to have been assassinated in 689. From Italy, too, came (most likely) the illustrated Gospels now at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (286), which belonged once to Christchurch, Canterbury; and the beautiful little copy of St. John's Gospel at Stonyhurst College, which was found in the coffin of St. Cuthbert (d. 687) when it was opened in 1104. And St. Gall must have acquired its ancient Virgil from Italy also—when, we do not know.

Spain kept her books very much to herself, one would guess, judging from the very few Spanish MSS. of this age which are to be met with in the rest of Europe. The guess, however, would not be quite correct. There was one great Spanish scholar in the seventh century, Isidore of Seville (636), and his encyclopædia (The Etymologies or Origins), which fed many later centuries with learning, made its way all over educated Europe very quickly. Not only so, but we find English scholars (Aldhelm and Bede) quoting Spanish writers on grammar and Spanish poets who were almost their own contemporaries.

Eighth Century.—This sees the last part of Bede's career (d. 734)—the zenith of English scholarship, the mission of St. Boniface (d. 758) to Germany, the meeting of Alcuin with Charlemagne (781), and the beginning of the Carolingian Renaissance. But, on the other hand, Spain is overrun by the Moors, Italy is inert, England begins to be harried by the Northmen. On the whole, if there really was a Dark Age, the middle of the eighth century seems to answer the description best. But, of course, there were points of light. The great centres of Northern France, such as Corbie and Laon, particularly Corbie, were beginning their activities of collecting and copying books. Ireland was capable of producing such a work as the Book of Kells—whether it actually falls within the century or not I will not be positive, but work of the same amazing beauty was carried out before 800. Nor was the export of treasures from Italy to England quite stopped, in spite of difficulties. At the Plantin Museum at

Antwerp is a copy of the writings of the Christian poet Sedulius, which has pictures of the old Italian sort, such as we find in the frescoes of the Roman catacombs. In it is a note connecting it with a Bishop of the name of Cuthwin, who held the East Anglian see and died about 754. Another MS., at Paris, has a note describing an elaborately illustrated life of St. Paul, which, it says, the same Bishop Cuthwin brought with him from Rome.

Ninth Century.—There is immense activity, literary and artistic, afoot at the Court of Charlemagne (d. 814) and of his successors. The German abbeys—e.g., Lorsch, Fulda—and cathedral schools (Mainz, Bamberg, etc.) are full of scribes and teachers. Irishmen who know Greek flock to the Continent, driven from home by Danish invasion: such are Johannes Scottus Eriugena and Sedulius Scottus. They haunt Liége, Laon, Aix-la-Chapelle, and penetrate to Italy. Not less prolific are the French houses: at Tours the handwriting called the Carolingian minuscule, the parent of our modern "Roman" printing, is developed, though not at Tours alone. At Corbie, Fleury on the Loire, (now called St. Bénoit sur Loire), St. Riquier by Abbeville, Rheims, and many another centre in Northern and Eastern France, libraries are accumulated and ancient books copied. Of St. Gall and Reichenau the same may be said. In Italy, Verona is conspicuous. The archdeacon Pacificus (d. 846) gave over 200 books to the cathedral, where many of them still are; and at Monte Cassino, the head house of the Benedictine Order, books were written in the difficult "Beneventane" hand (which used to be called Lombardic, and was never popular outside Italy). Spain has its own special script at this time, the Visigothic, as troublesome to read as the Beneventane; its a's are like u's and its t's like a's. England is still overrun by the Danes, and does nothing before the very end of the century, when King Alfred exerts himself to revive education, and starts a vernacular literature.

An enormous proportion of the earliest copies we have of classical Latin authors come from this century, when old copies of them were actively sought out and

transcribed. Often great liberties in the way of revision and even abridgment of the text were taken by the scholars of the time, and, once transcribed, the old archetypes were neglected or even destroyed.

Books of very great beauty—Bibles, Gospels, Psalters—were produced for the Emperors and the great nobles and prelates. In these there is a marked effort to imitate and continue the traditions of classical art.

Tenth Century.—The tradition of study and scholarship lives on, but the impulse from Britain and Ireland has worked itself out, and few geniuses are born on the Continent. There is a period of splendour and vigour in England under the Kings Athelstan and Edgar and the Archbishops Odo and Dunstan. The calligraphic school of Winchester achieves magnificent results. At the end of the century the great teacher and scholar Gerbert (Pope Sylvester II.) is a prominent figure at the Imperial Court. The Ottos emulate Charlemagne in their zeal for literature and for fine works of art, but their attainment is slighter.

Eleventh Century.—Men still live on the traditions of the Carolingian Revival in the early part: there is later an awakening, principally, perhaps, in France and Italy. Great names like those of Anselm, Abelard, Bernard, come forward. Monastic reform is active; great schools, as at Chartres, take their rise; there is a preparation for the wonderful vigour of the next century. The First Crusade brings East and West together in a new fashion.

Twelfth Century.—The strength and energy of Europe is now tremendous in every department, and not least in that with which we are concerned. Our libraries are crammed to-day with twelfth-century MSS. The Gregories, Augustines, Jeromes, Anselms, are numbered by the hundred. It is the age of great Bibles and of "glosses"—single books or groups of books of the Bible equipped with a marginal and interlinear comment (very many of which, by the way, seem to have been produced in North Italy). Immense, too, is the output of the writers of the time;

Bernard, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Peter Comestor, Peter Lombard. The two last are the authors of two of the most popular of medieval textbooks—Peter Lombard of the Sentences (a body of doctrine), Peter Comestor of the Historia Scholastica (a manual of Scripture history). The Cistercian Order, now founding houses everywhere, is, I think, specially active in filling its libraries with fine but austerely plain copies of standard works, eschewing figured decoration in its books, as in its buildings, and caring little for secular learning. The University of Paris is the centre of intellectual vigour.

Thirteenth Century.—This is commonly regarded as the greatest of all in medieval history; and truly, when we think of achievements such as Westminster, Amiens, and Chartres, and of men such as St. Louis, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis, Dante, Edward I., Roger Bacon, we must agree that the popular estimate is sound. Certainly we see in France and in England the fine flower of art in buildings and in books.

Paris is still the centre. The "Gothic" spirit is concentrated there. The book trade is enormous. It is passing—under the influence of the University, most likely—out of the hands of the monastic scribes into those of the professional "stationers"; while great individual artists, such as Honoré, arise to provide for Royal and noble persons examples of art which stand as high to-day as when they were first produced.

It is now that we find a large multiplication of textbooks. If the twelfth century was the age of great Bibles, the thirteenth is the age of small ones. Thousands of these exist, written with amazing minuteness and uniformity. Only less common are the Aristotles, the Sentences, the Summæ, and the other works of the golden age of scholasticism. The Orders of Friars, Franciscan and Dominican, form libraries—partly of duplicates procured from older foundations, partly of new copies to which they were helped by charitable friends.

Towards the end of the century Italy comes forward as the great purveyor of books of a special sort. The University of Bologna becomes the great law school of

Europe, and exports in numbers copies of the immense texts and commentaries of and upon the Church (Canon) and Roman (Civil) law which were indispensable to the unfortunate student. These books become common at the end of the thirteenth century, and run over well into the fourteenth. They are prettily (but often very carelessly) written in a round Gothic hand, sometimes christened "Bolognese." Some were not only written but decorated (with poorish ornament) on the spot, but very many were exported in sheets and provided, in France or England, with such decoration as the purchaser could afford. A leading example is a copy of the Decretals in the British Museum (Royal 10, E. iv.) which belonged to St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield. It is in Italian script, but on each of the spacious lower margins of its many pages is a picture by an English artist; these pictures run in sets, illustrating Bible stories, legends, and romances.

As the centuries go on, the material they have left increases in bulk, and the complication of the threads is proportionately greater. I cannot hope in a survey like this to give prominence to every factor; but we shall not be wrong in fixing upon Northern France and England as the areas of greatest productiveness and the sources of the best art in the thirteenth century.

Before we pass to the next century a word must be devoted to a not unimportant class of books which seem to have been manufactured chiefly in Picardy and Artois, the illustrated Romances—e.g. the Grail and Lancelot—of great bulk, usually in prose, which served to pass the winter evenings of persons of quality. A few of these, and a book of devotions to take to church (oftenest a Psalter at this time; later on a book of Hours), were the staple books owned by the upper classes.

Fourteenth Century.—If the thirteenth century gives us on the whole the noblest books, the early part of the fourteenth affords the loveliest. They come from England, France, and the Netherlands. A noticeable element in their art is that of the grotesque and burlesque, never, of course, quite absent even from early books, but

now most prominent and most delightful. The defect of the art of this time is lack of strength and austerity; its delicacy is above praise.

The middle of the century sees Petrarch, and with him the Renaissance begins. Italy has been producing great men in every field, but the work of Petrarch reached farther and was more enduring than that of any other.

France, tortured by wars, put forth little in the middle years, but then came Charles V., a King who was really interested in books, and the library he formed at the Louvre gave a stimulus to book-production which spread wide and lasted long. Under Richard II. and through his Queen, Anne of Bohemia, a foreign influence makes itself felt in England, and some lovely results are achieved; but on the whole English art is waning.

The Universities, and to some extent the monasteries, were throughout this century great customers for the bulky books of scholastic divinity (Duns Scotus, Albertus, and the like) and the later generation of commentators on the Bible, such as Nicolas de Lyra and Hugo de S. Caro. Many shelves are filled with these.

Fifteenth Century.—The fifteenth century is our last; it ends the MS. period. Under the influence of the Renaissance, now enormously potent, every Italian noble forms a library. The scholars are seeking out the ninth-century copies of the classics, and they discard the Gothic (black-letter) hands of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in favour of the Carolingian minuscule (or, some say that of the twelfth century). As early as 1426 we find books written in a script adapted and refined from this; we call it a Roman hand, though the great centre of its propagation seems to have been Florence. In all essentials it is the parent of the type in which this page will be printed.

Italy, then, is the hub of the universe for books; and in Italy, Florence, Naples, and Rome are the most active nuclei. We have a record written by a Florentine bookseller, Vespasiano Bisticci, in the form of short biographies of great persons,

many of whom had dealt with him. For some he provided whole libraries, as for Frederick, Duke of Urbino, whose books are now mostly in the Vatican. Such a man as this would not look at a printed book—which in Vespasiano's mind is, of course, very greatly to his credit; for the press was bound to put an end to his particular industry. We still find, by the way, this prejudice against print in the very last years of the century. Some rich persons had MS. copies actually made from printed editions and elaborately illustrated. Such a one was Raphael de Marcatellis, natural son of Philip the Good of Burgundy and titular Bishop of Rhossus, near Antioch.[B] Part of his library may be found at Ghent, part at Holkham, and stray volumes at Cambridge (Peterhouse) and in the Arundel collection at the British Museum. They are very handsome books, and many have full-page paintings by capable artists, but the resulting impression is on the whole that of decadence.

Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary (d. 1490), is a name famous among old bibliophiles. He got together a library of fine books, mostly recent copies made for him, and it was dispersed and sacked by the Turks in 1526. It is spoken of with bated breath by the old writers, as if it had contained priceless treasures. I am sceptical.

Ferdinand of Aragon and Calabria was a collector of the same kind, whose beautiful books, adorned with his arms in the lower margin of the first page, are many of them at Valencia, having passed to the University there by way of the Abbey of St. Miguel de Los Reyes. These are of Italian and not of Spanish manufacture, and very fine they are.

These last-mentioned libraries have been scattered, but there are still some of the Renaissance period which survive in their original homes. The Laurentian at Florence and the Vatican at Rome stand at the head of all. With regard to the latter it may be said that though earlier Popes, of course, had libraries (that of Avignon was quite considerable), yet Nicholas V. (d. 1455) must be regarded as the founder of the

Vatican library in its present state. So, too, the Marciana at Venice and the Malatestiana at Cesena must rank as genuine Renaissance collections.

It was not only the great men who loved to have books. The tribe of scholars, foreign as well as native, who coveted them was numerous. Every library now has its quota of humbler copies of the classics, often on paper, in the Roman or the more cursive Italic hand, not written by a professional scribe. Often these are of infinitesimal value, transcripts of extant copies of no greater age; but there is always the possibility that they may be a competent scholar's own careful apograph of some ancient MS. which a Poggio had unearthed at St. Gall, and which has since vanished. A glance at the apparatus criticus of a few editions of classics will show that often a fifteenth-century MS. ranks high among the authorities for the text. Pedigree is what matters, not beauty of hand, nor, necessarily, date.

It has been the fate of these scholars' books, as it is the fate of all MSS., to be absorbed into great libraries, and many of them lurk there still unexamined and their origin undetermined. Discoveries, no doubt, yet remain to be made among them.

Whether or not a breath of influence from Italy was the cause, it is plain that library-making was popular in countries and circles which were not obviously affected by the Renaissance. The monasteries of England were certainly not so affected, yet we find many of them setting their books in order and building special rooms to contain them. Christchurch at Canterbury and Bury St. Edmunds are leading instances. Now, too, Universities and colleges made fresh catalogues, and received large accessions of books.

If the Renaissance did not touch the English public as a whole in this century, it made some proselytes. Among Englishmen who dealt with our Florentine Vespasiano were John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, William Gray, Bishop of Ely, Andrew Holes, of Wells. Others who resorted to Italy were John Free, Thomas Linacre, John Gunthorpe, Dean of Wells, William

Flemming, Dean of Lincoln, William Tilley of Sellinge, Prior of Christchurch, Canterbury. We shall see later on what traces some of these have left on our libraries.

In places to which the Italian influence did not penetrate the humdrum trade of copying went on. Anselm, Bernard, and Augustine; sermon-books by the score; Burley on Aristotle, etc. Then, in another class, the production of books for use in church was very large. There were few Bibles, but Missals, Breviaries, large choir-books to be laid on the lectern, Graduals and Processionals, are legion. Then, again, every well-to-do person must have his or her Book of Hours, illuminated if possible. Such things were common wedding-presents, it seems. Upon the best of them really great artists were employed, like Foucquet of Tours and Gerard David; we even find Perugino painting a page in one, but the average are shop work made for the Italian market at Naples or Florence, for the French at Paris, Tours, or Rouen, for the English very often at Bruges, where also many sumptuous chronicle books and French versions of secular history and romances were turned out. Edward IV. had a considerable number of such in his library.

These private Prayer Books are, of course, incomparably the commonest of all illuminated manuscripts. They vary from loveliness to contemptibility. Perversely, they figure in catalogues, and are lettered on their backs, as Missals; our ancestors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries forgot that a Missal must contain the service of the Mass, and that none of these books do.

There, then, is a second survey of our ground, somewhat more detailed than the first, but woefully sketchy. Everyone who has studied MSS. of any class or period would detect omissions in it which for him would vitiate the whole story. The best I can hope is that the assertions in it are not incorrect, and that it gives a true notion of the general course of book-production in medieval times.

Wanderings of Latin MSS.: the Continent

We are now to concern ourselves with the later destinies of the books which we have seen in the making. Here generalities will be less in place; nevertheless, I must begin with some.

There are two main classes of persons interested in MSS.: those who care for their literary contents, and those who prize them for their artistic beauty. Roughly speaking—very roughly—the precious literary things of ancient times were preserved in monastic and cathedral libraries, and the beautiful things in palaces and castles and church treasuries. I do not forget that poetry and romance in the vernacular were chiefly in the hands of the laity, nor do I depreciate their value as literature.

The ancient books, pagan and Christian, are perhaps to be regarded as the backbone of the subject, and therefore the first part of my enquiry shall be devoted to the ecclesiastical libraries, and considerations of space shall rule me on the other head.

The monastic and cathedral libraries can be best treated by countries. France, Germany, and England will serve as specimens. Of Italy perhaps enough has been said incidentally to attract attention to the most important centres, such as Bobbio, Monte Cassino, and Verona, and upon the whole I do not think that in Italy this class of library played so great a part in the later Middle Ages as it did in the rest of Europe.

France is full of Latin MSS. Every considerable town, besides many that are inconsiderable, has its public library, into which at the Revolution were collected the remains of the libraries of the religious houses of the district. France's Dissolution came at a time when many eyes were open to the possible value of ancient books, and strings could be pulled and influence exercised to stem the unreasoning fury that said:

We'll pull all arts and learning down, And hey, then, up go we!

It is easier, also, to rescue books than buildings. The Revolutionists tore down a

cathedral, and it is gone; but books are portable and, moreover, do not burn or tear or drown easily, especially vellum MSS.; and when the first hurricane of idiocy had blown over they were very likely found, rather dustier than before, still on their shelves.

Nowadays our methods are more effective, of course; but I have said as much about that as I can bear.

If, then, one took a map of France and marked down the principal abbeys, one would have a fair prima-facie indication where to look for their MSS. From Corbie, you would say, they went to Amiens, from Cîteaux to Dijon, from Bec and Mont St. Michel to Avranches, and so on. This would be right, but there are exceptions. Corbie, a specially important library, is one.

When in 1636 the French under Louis XIII. regained that territory from the Spaniards, the precarious situation of its treasures was recognized, and 400 select MSS. were taken to Paris. The Reformed Benedictines of the Congregation of St. Maur had done much at Corbie for the preservation of the books, and they now petitioned that the Corbie MSS. might not be alienated from the Order, "n' ayant personne qui soit si jaloux de conserver l'héritage de leurs pères que les propres enfants." The petition was successful, and the MSS. were placed in the Abbey of St. Germain des Près at Paris. This was in 1638. In 1791, during the Revolutionary troubles, there was a fire at the abbey, and in the confusion a batch of early books was stolen. These came into the hands of a Russian envoy, Dubrowsky, and most of them, if not all, are (or were until a more recent Revolution) in the Imperial Library at Petrograd. The rest, still a great collection, were drafted out of St. Germain into the National Library in 1795-96. Meanwhile a large number (including some very important books) had remained at Corbie, and these did go to Amiens in or about 1791.

But before 1636 Corbie MSS. had begun to stray from home. One fairly clear case

seems to be that of the Harley MS. 3,063, which was once in the library founded late in the fifteenth century at Cues, on the Moselle, by Cardinal Nicholas of Cues (Cusanus). It is one of two copies of the Latin version of Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary on the Pauline Epistles. The other is a Corbie book at Amiens. Both show the same gaps and blanks in the text, but the one is not believed to be a direct copy of the other. Both go back to a common original.

Other Corbie books are at Montpellier. They had a long roundabout journey to get there. Part of a magnificent collection formed by successive Bouhiers (seven of whom were Presidents of the Parlement de Bourgogne, and lived at Dijon), they were bought in 1781 from the heir of the last Bouhier by the last Abbot but one of Clairvaux. Then, when Clairvaux was suppressed at the Revolution, its library went to Troyes. Government commissioners were sent round to look through the departmental libraries and note the most valuable MSS. and printed books. One of those who visited Troyes was a Montpellier professor, Dr. Prunelle. The 300 and odd MSS. which he put aside would, if precedent had been followed, have gone to Paris, but they did in fact go to the famous old school of medicine at Montpellier, and there they are at this day.

One at least of the remarkable collection given by Archbishop Parker to Corpus Christi College at Cambridge (193), is a Corbie book—a product evidently of the Corbie scriptorium, though it bears on its first leaf the traces of an inscription of ownership which, illegible as it is, does seem to be that of another monastery. Parker's is, on the whole, so English a collection that the presence of this early French book arrests attention. It does not, however, stand quite alone; there is a rather similar one (334) which Professor Lindsay tells me is a Laon book of about the same (eighth-century) date.

Corbie has occupied a considerable space, but it is entitled to do so on several accounts. The number of early MSS. traceable to it is very large, their intrinsic

interest is high, and for a third reason I may again quote Professor Lindsay as having decided, from a minute study of the abbreviations used by Corbie scribes, that Anglo-Saxon influences were at work in the formation of its peculiar hand.

Corbie was, as I have hinted before, but one of many venerable centres of learning in the northern half of France. I shall not attempt a list of them, but go on to note one salient fact, that the southern half of the country is noticeably the poorer in MSS.

At Autun and Lyons, both of them magnificent cities in Roman times, some very ancient books did linger, and here is room for a digression. Lyons had a Pentateuch in Latin which was a great rarity, for not only was it in uncials of the fifth century, but it was of the Old Latin version, that made from the Greek before St. Jerome made his version from the Hebrew, which we call the Vulgate.

Rather before the middle of the nineteenth century an Italian adventurer of some learning and little virtue, the Chevalier Guglielmo (etc.) Libri, obtained employment under the French Government in the Department of Public Instruction, and was sent on a tour of inspection among provincial libraries. He made this the occasion for increasing a collection of MSS. which he had already begun for his private uses. Where he found that the town librarian was a good easy man, he removed (silently) from his keeping a selection of the most precious volumes, or, if it seemed unsafe to take the whole of a MS., he detached some few quires. Now and then he left a less valuable book in the place of the other. His best hunting-grounds were Tours, Orléans, and Lyons. At Lyons he conveyed away the Book of Leviticus and part of Numbers out of the Pentateuch. He had skilled workmen in his pay at Paris, who wrote names of other (generally Italian) monasteries and former owners on the first page of the stolen books, and otherwise disguised them; when he had made up a selection of a suitable bulk and attractiveness, he looked about for a wealthy purchaser, and found one in the Earl of Ashburnham, who bought en bloc, and whose manuscripts were not readily made accessible to the public. So the Lyons

Leviticus and an illustrated sixth-century Pentateuch from Tours and many other precious things from Fleury (near Orléans) and elsewhere reposed in England until the early eighties, when M. Leopold Delisle made public the result of a most patient and most subtle investigation of the whole fraud, and a selection of the best of the plunder was got back for France. Sad to say, the municipalities which had been most negligent in keeping their MSS. refused to contribute to the recovery of them. They are still at Paris, to the advantage of students, but to the discredit of the provinces.

Meanwhile Libri's reputation had been thoroughly blown upon, and he retired from France, and was dead in Italy or elsewhere before his crimes had been atoned for. A great mass of his accumulations was bought from the Ashburnhams by the Italians and is now at Florence. Madame Libri survived, like Madame Fosco, to defend his memory.

To return. In spite of the long history and great wealth of Bordeaux, Marseilles, Arles, Narbonne, Toulouse, you will not trace many famous books to those places. The city which, on the whole, has preserved its early manuscripts best is Albi, but it was never a great centre of learning, and its library, though extremely interesting, is not large.

However, we need not be surprised at the poverty of a region which has had to undergo Albigensian crusades, English occupation, wars of religion, and a revolution.

Some of the great early libraries of Germany were mentioned in our historical survey. Fulda and Lorsch were as remarkable as any. At the present day Fulda retains only the few Bonifacian MSS. which rank as relics of the saint—the blood-stained volume of Ambrose which was on Boniface when the pagans killed him, his pocket copy of the Gospels, the MS. written for Victor of Capua. The bulk of its abbey library, which remained together until the close of the sixteenth century, is dispersed and gone, no one knows where. Some books are at Cassel in the ducal

library. Lorsch has nothing in situ, but a good deal in the Vatican. Both houses were instrumental in preserving the classics; we owe to them Suetonius, Tacitus, Ammianus Marcellinus, and part of Livy.

The Thirty Years' War was responsible for a good deal of dispersion. Cargoes of books made their way to England, and Archbishop Laud bought and gave to the Bodleian many from Würzburg and Erfürt; in the Arundel collection at the British Museum the German contingent is large. Sweden also profited at this time, and got its lovely Codex Aureus (once at Canterbury), its Codex Argenteus (the Gothic Gospels at Upsala), and its Gigas, or Devil's Bible, which came from Prague.

In the Revolutionary period there was extensive secularization of abbeys, and whole libraries passed into central depots, as at Munich, which has the MSS. of St. Emmeram of Ratisbon and of Tegernsee, Benedictbeuern, Schäftlarn, and many other houses. Those of the old and rich foundation of Reichenau passed to Carlsruhe. Precious books, like the gold-covered Gospels of Lindau, were exported. This particular gem was bought by Lord Ashburnham, and in recent years has gone to America. Fine Gospels and other service-books from Weingarten are at Holkham; they appeal to the Englishman, for they contain pictures of our sainted King Oswald, of whom Weingarten owned a relic.

North Germany's contribution is far inferior to that of Bavaria and the Rhine provinces. The inhabitants of large regions were pagans till a late date (some might say they were so still), and have never, we conceive, been really civilized. Few books were made there before the fourteenth century, and I know of no good libraries that existed there in the medieval period. A good part of the contents of one at Elbing, near Dantzic, came somehow to Cambridge (Corpus Christi) in the seventeenth century; it is a dreary collection, mostly on paper, of scholastic theology, sermons, meditations, and a little medicine.

In Austria the abbeys were let alone till 1918. Such houses as Melk on the Danube,

St. Florian, St. Paul in Carinthia, Admont in Styria, still owned their estates, their revenues, and their libraries. That of Melk is noticeable, and at St. Paul is, oddly enough, one of the very earliest Irish vernacular MSS. I believe it came thither in fairly recent times from St. Blasien in the Black Forest. But, on the whole, these places were too remote from the main stream to accumulate many treasures of the very first quality.

Latin MSS. in England

Let me now turn to England, and treat in greater detail of the monastic and cathedral libraries there, and what happened to them. The Dissolution, as we know, occurred here near on 400 years ago, which makes the task of tracing the books at once harder and more fascinating than in the case of France or Germany, where a whole library may be found practically intact in a town near its old home. Of course, what was done there ought to have been done here. Leland, the King's antiquary, the abusive Protestant, John Bale, and the foolish but learned Dr. John Dee, begged that it might be done. Yet, whatever Henry VIII's or Mary's or Elizabeth's intentions may have been at times as to the foundation of a "solempne library" where the ancient books of the realm might be stored, they got but a very little way. Leland did secure some MSS. for the Royal Library, perhaps most from Rochester, but upon the whole the work was left in Elizabeth's days to individual enthusiasts—Sir Robert Cotton, Archbishop Parker, and Dee and Bale themselves. Others who did good work were Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel; Lord William Howard; Long Harry Savile of Bank; Laurence Nowell, who rescued Anglo-Saxon books; Nicholas Brigam, who was interested in English literature and built Chaucer's tomb in the Abbey; the Theyers of Brockworth, near Gloucester. These are names to some of which we shall return; it would be well at this moment to take a few libraries one by one and see what can be said of them.

Catalogues of MSS.

But, first, what are our means for pursuing such an investigation? We are best off if we have a catalogue of our abbey library, and preferably a late one; for in that case not only will the library be at its fullest, but probably the cataloguer will have set down, after the title of each book, the first words of its second leaf. Does this need explanation? Perhaps. In MSS., unlike printed books, the first words of the second leaf will be different in any two copies, say, of the Bible; the scribes did not make a page for page or line for line copy of their archetype—in fact, they may probably have avoided doing so purposely. By the help of such a catalogue we can search through collections of MSS., noting the second leaves in each case, and, it may be, identifying a considerable number of books. It is a laborious but an interesting process.

But, alas! such catalogues are very few; we have them for Durham, St. Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury (and partly also for Christchurch), St. Paul's Cathedral, Exeter Cathedral, Dover Priory, the Austin Friars of York (all now in print), and for not many more.

Next best it is to have a catalogue enumerating the contents of each volume; and next, and commonest, one which gives usually but a single title to each. Among the most useful I reckon those of Christchurch, Canterbury, Peterborough (an anomalous one), Glastonbury, Bury St. Edmunds, Rochester, Dover, Lincoln, Leicester Abbey (not yet printed in full), Ramsey, Rievaulx, Lanthony-by-Gloucester, Titchfield. There are a good many short catalogues for smaller houses, written on the fly-leaves of books, which do not, as a rule, help us much. The list of monastic catalogues, however, is dreadfully defective. We have none for St. Albans or Norwich or Crowland or Westminster, for Gloucester or Worcester, St. Mary's, York, or Fountains. What do we do in such cases?

The Evidence of MSS. Themselves

We have to depend, of course, on the evidence of the MSS. themselves. It was happily a common practice to write on the fly-leaf or first leaf Liber (Sancte Marie) de (tali loco). This is decisive. Then, again, some libraries devised a system of press-marks, such as "N. lxviii.," let us say. You find this in conjunction with the inscription of ownership; it is a Norwich book, you discover, that you have in hand, and all books showing press-marks of that form are consequently Norwich books too. Or you will find the name of a donor. "This book was the gift of John Danyell, Prior." Search in Dugdale's Monasticon will reveal, perhaps, that John Danyell was Prior of St. Augustine's, Bristol, in 1459. A clue to locality will often be given in such a case by the monk's surname, for it was their custom to call themselves by the name of their native village. Thus, a monk named John Melford or William Livermere will be a Suffolk man, and the abbey in which he was professed is likely to be Bury. Coming to later times, it is apparent that at the Dissolution groups of books from a single abbey came into the hands of a single man. If I find Dakcombe on the fly-leaf of a MS., I am almost entitled to assume that it is a Winchester book: John Stonor got his books from Reading Abbey, John Young drew from Fountains, and so forth. Lastly, and most rarely, you are justified in saying that the handwriting and decoration of this or that book shows it to have been written at St. Albans or at Canterbury. Hitherto the instances where this is possible are few, but I do not doubt that multiplication of observations will add to their number.

In questioning a MS. for any of these indications (except the last) you must be on the look-out for signs of erasures, especially on the margins of the first leaf and on the fly-leaves at either end. Here the owner's name was usually written. Often it was accompanied by a curse on the wrongful possessor, and at the Dissolution there were many wrongful possessors, who, whether disliking the curse or anticipating trouble from possible buyers, thought it well to erase name, and curse, and all. They seldom did it so thoroughly that the surface of the vellum does not betray where it was, and it can be revived by the dabbing (not painting) upon it of ammonium bisulphide,

which, unlike the old-fashioned galls, does not stain the page. Dabbed on the surface with a soft paint-brush, and dried off at once with clean blotting paper, it makes the old record leap to light, sometimes with astonishing clearness, sometimes slowly, so that the letters cannot be read till next day. It is not always successful; it is of no use to apply it to writing in red, and its smell is overpowering, but it is the elixir of palæographers.

Yet, when all has been done, there is a sadly large percentage of MSS. which preserve an obstinate silence. They have been rebound (that is common), and have lost their fly-leaves in the process, or, worse than that, they have lain tossing about without a binding and their first and last quires have dropped away. In such cases we can only tell, from our previous experience in ancient handwritings, the date and country of their origin.

English Libraries

And now to turn to some individual libraries. Some of the most venerable have practically disappeared—that of Glastonbury, for instance, the premier abbey of England, the only one which lived through from British to Saxon times.[C] To it we might reasonably look to trace many an ancient book belonging to the days of the old British Church. Leland, who visited the library not long before the Dissolution, represents himself as overawed by its antiquity. But almost the only record he quotes is one by "Melkinus," which most modern writers think was a late forgery. However, there is in the Bodleian one British book from Glastonbury, written, at least in part, in Cornwall, and preserving remnants of the learning of the British clergy. It has portions of Ovid and of Latin grammar, and passages of the Bible in Greek and Latin. The catalogue, too, shows that there were in fact a good number of old MSS., and also that the monks of the fourteenth century did not care much about them, for they are marked as "Old and useless," "Old and in bad condition" (debilis), and so on. The actual extant books which we can trace to this foundation are few

and for the most part late.

St. Albans, founded by King Offa in the eighth century, has left us, as I said, no catalogue, but there are many of its books in our libraries. Two groups of them stand out. First are those procured by Abbot Simon (1166-1188) and Prior Mathias. These are very finely written. A typical and very interesting specimen is a Bible at Eton (26) which has three columns to a page—a rare distinction in the twelfth century, pointing, perhaps, to its having been copied from a very early and venerable model. It has a sister book at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, and another—a New Testament—at Trinity College, Dublin. Then we have a large and important group of histories. The historiographers of St. Albans form a series reaching from Roger of Wendover (d. 1236) to Thomas Walsingham (d. 1422). The greatest of them was Matthew Paris (d. 1259). We have authentic and even autograph copies of many of these works, and especially of Paris's (at Corpus Christi, Cambridge (26 and 16), and in the British Museum, Royal 14, C. vii., Cotton Nero D. 1, etc.). And we have not only Paris's writing, but many of his drawings, for he was an accomplished artist. All these books furnish us with material for judging of the handwriting used at St. Albans in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and we can speak with fair confidence of St. Albans books of that period.

As in other cases, I believe that many books were written there for other monasteries, either as gifts or as a matter of business. Not every one of the little priories scattered all over the country had its own scriptorium; it was only natural that they should apply to the big establishments when they wanted a Bible or service-book or commentary of really good quality. This practice explains the fact that we quite often find books which we could make oath are products of St. Albans or of Canterbury, and which yet have inscriptions, written when they were new books, showing that they were owned by some small house. Let me here note two other ways in which books wandered from the great abbeys. One: all the abbey libraries were full of duplicates; read any catalogue, and you will realize that. When

the Orders of Friars were collecting libraries of their own, and when the colleges in the two Universities were doing the same, they found that the monks were often willing to part with one of their eight or nine sets of Gregory's Moralia or Augustine On the Trinity for a consideration. Two: most of the large abbeys maintained hostels at the Universities, singly or jointly, in which some of their younger members studied for degrees. These hostels were equipped with libraries, and the libraries were furnished from the shelves of the mother-houses. We have at least two lists of books so used: one of those which Durham sent to what is now Trinity College, Oxford; the other of those which Christchurch, Canterbury, deported to Canterbury College, Oxford, which stood on the site of Canterbury Quad, in Christ Church.

There was some compensation, by the way: the abbeys were not invariably the losers. A group of books (at Lambeth) was procured to be written by a Canon of Lanthony when he was studying at Oxford (about 1415), and given to the library of his priory.

We have digressed from the particular to the general. Returning to individual libraries, let us glance at the Norwich Cathedral Priory. Of this, again, we have no catalogue; it is a case in which press-marks and names of owners are our guides. Norwich has a system of press-marks consisting of a letter of the alphabet plus a Roman numeral: "N. lxviii." The press-marks of several other houses consist of just the same elements, but we can pick out that of Norwich by its size (not large) and its position (top of the first leaf of text); also there is usually added to it the name of the monk who procured it for the house, Henry de Lakenham or W. Catton—someone whose surname is the name of a Norfolk village. Over a hundred MSS. from Norwich are known to me, but they are a very small fraction of the library, as is shown by the numerals attached to the several class letters. Very few of them are as old as the twelfth century; late twelfth and particularly early fourteenth make up the bulk. I attribute this to the great fire of 1286, and I take it that then the greater part of the priory books were spoiled, and that energetic steps to refill the library were taken

in the years that followed. There are more Norwich books in the University Library at Cambridge than anywhere else; it has not been proved, but I do not much doubt, that most of them were given by the chapter to Cambridge about 1574, at the suggestion of Dr. Andrew Perne, Master of Peterhouse, who was a member of the cathedral body and an enthusiast for the University Library.

Not very dissimilar was the action of Exeter Chapter, who in 1602 gave over eighty of their MSS. to Sir Thomas Bodley's new library in Oxford, Bodley's brother being then a Canon of Exeter; and not long after the Canons of Worcester picked out a score of their MSS., for Dean Williams's new library at Westminster Abbey. These, however, I believe were never actually sent off. It is just as well, for the Westminster MSS. were burnt in 1694. Of Bury St. Edmunds I have attempted to write the history elsewhere, but it is not likely that many readers of this book will be familiar with my former publication. The only catalogue we have for this abbey is an early one (eleventh to twelfth century) written on the fly-leaves of a copy of Genesis (glossed) at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Thus it contains no fourteenth or fifteenth century books, nor, indeed, has it many entries of extant books of earlier date which we are sure belonged to Bury; but it is not to be despised, though we depend more upon press-marks than upon it for guidance. Bury press-marks were an introduction of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. Soon after 1400 Abbot Curteys built a library, and it was under the care of the monk, John Boston, who, I think, is responsible for the press-marks, as he certainly is for the copious bibliographical notices which occurred in some of the books. The press-marks consist of a capital letter and an arabic numeral (A. 130). Here, again, one has to be familiar with the handwriting of the marks and their position (top of first leaf and fly-leaf) in order to distinguish them from those of Exeter (often on last fly-leaf and large) or of the Hereford Franciscans (large, on first fly-leaf). However, in most cases they are backed up by the older inscription Liber S. Ædmundi regis et martiris. Bury library has, on the whole, fared well; an Alderman of Ipswich, William Smart, procured

over 100 of its MSS., which he gave to Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1599, and about 150 others are scattered up and down the country. One Bury book of extreme interest—not a library book, but a register—was taken across the Channel in the sixteenth century by a Bury monk to the settlement of the Benedictine refugees at Douai. Since the Revolution it has been (perhaps still is) in the town library there. Its importance is that it contains a list of the benefactors of the abbey, and among other things records the burial-places of the Abbots, including the famous Samson. In recent years it has guided excavators to the discovery of his bones. With it is a Psalter of extraordinary beauty, one of a group of marvellous books done in East Anglia—some say at Gorleston—soon after 1300. I grieve to hear that it has been severely damaged by damp. It has in it the name of an Abbot, John, who, I wish to believe, was of Bury, but doubt is thrown on this.

English MSS. on the Continent

A digression is allowable here as to English books that have passed to the Continent. According to Bale and Dee, there was a great expatriation of them at the Dissolution. In Archbishop Parker's correspondence there is talk of the negotiations of a German scholar, Flacius Illyricus, who wanted to buy Bale's MSS. after his death. At an earlier time Poggio visited England in the hope of unearthing classical authors, but writes as if he had been unsuccessful. Then, again, Sigismund Gelenius in 1550 edits at Basel treatises of Tertullian from a MS. belonging to the Abbey of "Masbury" (which I take to be Malmesbury), lent to him by Leland. More instances could no doubt be collected, but not, I think, very many more. When we come to enquire what English books are to be found now in Continental libraries, the results are not very impressive. I exclude the very early exportations, some of which have been mentioned, and confine myself to the books which were taken over at and after the Dissolution. There is a Bury Psalter with drawings at the Vatican, a St. Albans Psalter at Hildesheim, a fine Book of Hours at Nuremberg, a Winchester Pontifical

at Rouen, a Sherborne Book at Paris, a Ramsey Psalter at an Austrian abbey, another English Psalter at the Escurial. The Canterbury Codex Aureus is at Stockholm. The famous Utrecht Psalter, written, perhaps, in the Rheims district, strayed from the Cotton collection to its present home in Holland, we do not know how. All these, and some other remarkable illuminated books that could be named (I ought not to omit a Peterborough Psalter at Brussels), are not library books, but rather properties of great ecclesiastics or nobles. The largest collections have never yet been thoroughly searched. I myself have made many enquiries and some examinations with small result. One case there is, however, brought to light by the late Rev. H. M. Bannister, which gives hope of better things when a systematic search is carried out. He found that in the Vatican Library there are quite a large number of MSS. from the libraries of the Friars at Cambridge. They are late and not very important books, but no matter for that: the point is that they are there. Other instances known to me are—one at least of Sir Kenelm Digby's MSS. and one of Lord Burleigh's (a fourteenth-century volume of English historians) at Paris; the Greek Demosthenes already noticed at Leyden, and a MS. from Pembroke College (Seneca), also there. The Vossian collection at the same place has other books which I suspect were once in England; most notable is its Suidas, which is said by M. Bidez to be the parent of the English copies I mentioned, and which I think must be Grosseteste's own copy. This, however, is a Greek MS. A volume containing poems of Milo of St. Amand is most likely a Canterbury book. But the early books in Irish script, of which there are several, were probably written on the Continent.

At Wolfenbüttel is a "Wycliffe" Bible, large and handsome, which belonged to Lord Lumley (d. 1609), and also a copy of Gervase of Tilbury (that from which the text was first printed by Leibnitz) from the library of St. Augustine of Canterbury. There, too, are many MSS. collected by Flacius Illyricus, who made purchases in England. He printed many of the rhyming Latin poems attributed to Walter Map; for a good many his edition is the only authority, his MSS. having disappeared. I had hoped to

find some of them at Wolfenbüttel, but they do not seem to be there. What I did find was a small group of MSS. from St. Andrews in Scotland, containing rhyming poems set to music; they are books of the thirteenth century, well written and decorated. Scotch monastic MSS. are of rare occurrence. There are few enough in Scotland itself, not many in England, and, of course, still fewer anywhere else. At Upsala is a book written by Clement Maydestone of Sion for Wadstena, the Swedish mother-house of the Brigittine Order to which he belonged.

There were probably some English books at Turin, which was a mixed collection, but the fire of 1904 has made away with them. The old catalogue by Pasini notices at least one service-book with English saints. But it is time to bring this excursus to an end. Let me only add that the most famous English book on the Continent—the Vercelli MS. of Anglo-Saxon poems and homilies—seems to have been where it is now since the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

Remains of Medieval Libraries

Once again we return to these shores, and now we will enquire what medieval libraries, besides those we have glanced at, have left really considerable remains. Some few have kept their books in situ—the monastic cathedrals of Durham and Worcester best of all; each has some hundreds of MSS. The secular cathedrals, Lincoln, Hereford, Salisbury, come next. Rochester has nothing on the spot, but a great many MSS. in the old Royal Library in the British Museum. The two great libraries of Canterbury (Christchurch and St. Augustine's) are well represented, but their books are much scattered. Winchester, York, Exeter, have few but precious books.

There are important MSS. from Thorney at the Advocates Library, Edinburgh; from St. Mary's York, at Dublin; not a few from Cirencester at Jesus College, Oxford, and at Hereford; St. John's, Oxford, has many from Reading and from Southwick (Hants). There must, I am sure, be many Peterborough books to be found, but they

are rarely marked as such, and the character of the catalogue makes identification very hard.

Of all minor libraries, that of Lanthony, near Gloucester, has, I believe, been best preserved. A great block of it was retained by the last Prior of the house, John Hart, who retired to a country house near by, and whose sister married a man of good position, Theyer, in the neighbourhood. He kept the books together, and had descendants who valued them and added largely to their number. At the end of the sixteenth century Archbishop Bancroft conceived the idea of founding a library at Lambeth for his successors, and he seems to have bought about 150 Lanthony MSS. from Theyer,[D] which are now at Lambeth. Other Lanthony books are at Trinity and Corpus Christi, Oxford. A fourteenth-century catalogue of the books among the Harley MSS. shows that we possess at least a third of the whole collection.

Examples of the press-marks used by the various houses have been collected by the New Palæographical Society, and may be seen in their publications. They are, of course, most useful in cases where the inscription of ownership has not been inserted or has disappeared. The second case may be that of any book; the first is common to the Canterbury libraries, to Dover, the London Dominicans, St. Mary's York, Fountains, Titchfield, Ely. To the press-marks figured by the Society more will doubtless be added. I can instance one, that of the Franciscans of Lincoln, which is of this form: Symbol.

Disappearance of Classical and other MSS.

Passing over the painful subject of the wholesale destruction of MSS. which must have followed the Dissolution, I will give a few lines to an interesting question little mooted as yet. Is there evidence that England possessed many ancient writings which have since disappeared, or which have survived only in a few copies in other parts of Europe? Take the classics first. Poggio, as I have said, writes in a disappointed tone of his researches here, but these were neither long nor exhaustive.

We have better testimony from John of Salisbury, who in the twelfth century quotes parts of the Saturnalia of Macrobius which have dropped out of all the MSS. we now have. He also read a tract attributed to Plutarch, called the Instruction of Trajan; it was probably not by Plutarch, but it was an ancient work, and is now lost. Petronius Arbiter was known to him, even that longest and most interesting piece of Petronius called the Supper of Trimalchio, for which our only authority is the late paper MS. at Paris that was found in Dalmatia in the seventeenth century. But no medieval English scholar can be shown to have read Tacitus, or the lost parts of Livy, or Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, or others of the rarer Latin authors. Next for Christian antiquity. The Vercelli MS. gives a poetical version in Anglo-Saxon of the Acts of St. Andrew in the land of the Anthropophagi which have ceased to exist in Latin (so, too, Ælfric knew, and rejected, a poem on the adventures of St. Thomas in India). In one of its Homilies the same Vercelli MS. presents us with a translation of the Apocalypse of St. Thomas, a book of which until recently only the name was known. Two early MSS. contain short quotations in Latin from Cosmas Indicopleustes, a traveller of Justinian's time whose work remains only in a few copies, and is in Greek. Another has a fragment of the lost Book of Jannes and Jambres; another a chapter of the Book of Enoch, valuable as one of our few indications that a Latin version of it was current. John of Salisbury quotes a story about St. Paul which seems to come from the ancient apocryphal Acts of that Apostle. First on the list (twelfth century) of the library of Lincoln Minster (but lined through as if subsequently lost) is a title Proverbia Grecorum. What this book was is obscure; probably it was a translation from Greek by an Irish scholar. It is quoted extensively by Sedulius, the Irishman, and also in a collection of treatises by an unknown York writer (the Germans call him the Yorker anonymus) of the eleventh to twelfth centuries. The work of Irenæus Against Heresies (we only have it complete in Latin) was always rare, but there were at least two copies of it in England, one in the Carmelites' Library at Oxford, the other given by Archbishop

Mepham to Christchurch, Canterbury. The latter, I believe, we still have in the Arundel collection in the British Museum. The MS. of Tertullian which Gelenius got from England is gone, and our knowledge of the treatise On Baptism which it contained depends wholly on his printed text.

I cannot doubt that among the books imported in the seventh century from Italy by Benedict Biscop and Theodore and Hadrian, and in the great library of York, which Alcuin panegyrizes in his poem on the saints of York, there were texts now lost. But the Danes made a clean sweep of all those treasures, as they did of the whole vernacular literature of Northumbria, undoubtedly a rich one. The scattered indications I have collected in the preceding paragraphs point to the fact that some strange and rare books did lurk here and there in English libraries. It is almost a relief that catalogues do not tell us of supremely desirable things, such as Papias on the Oracles of the Lord, or the complete Histories or Annals of Tacitus.

Another word on a topic akin to the last. I have said more than once that the men of the later Middle Ages did not value early books as such; they were difficult to read, and often in bad condition. At first they were apt to be made into palimpsests; but when good new parchment became abundant and comparatively cheap, this practice was dropped. I conjecture that there is no important palimpsest whose upper writing is later than the eleventh century. The fate of the early books is rather obscure to me, but I see that bits of them were not uncommonly used for lining covers and fly-leaves for MSS. of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, and perhaps still oftener as wrappers for documents. Binders of the sixteenth century, and especially those who lived after the Dissolution, used up service-books and scholastic theology and Canon law to a vast extent, but early books not so lavishly. There are cases in which one is left doubtful as to whether the binder or his employer did not insert the old leaves with the definite wish to preserve them. I think of the leaves of a Gospel book bound at the end of the Utrecht Psalter, of a fragment of another fine Gospels in an Arundel MS. at the College of Arms, of some splendid Canons of the Gospels in the

Royal MS. 7. C. xii; but in the cases that follow I think that accident and not design has been at work, viz.: the fragments of several venerable volumes at Worcester, admirably edited of late by Mr. C. H. Turner; the leaves of a great sixth-century Bible found by Mr. W. H. Stevenson wrapping up Lord Middleton's documents at Wollaton; uncial fragments of Eucherius in the Cambridge University Library; other uncial leaves at Winchester College; bits of Ælfric's Grammar at All Souls'; of a Gallican Missal at Gonville and Caius; of an early Orosius (from Stavelot) in the British Museum and elsewhere; of an Orosius and Fortunatus at Pembroke College, Cambridge; and so on. My examples are set down almost at random.

Collectors of Books

We pass now from the monastic circle to that of the learned book collectors before and after the Dissolution. Many of the best medieval book-buyers were Abbots or Priors, and the history of their collections is merged in that of their abbeys. Leaving them aside, we find in fourteenth-century England one name which everyone has heard—that of Richard de Bury, Bishop of Durham, and author of the Philobiblion. I am inclined to think that he was a humbug; his book is of the kind that it is proper to translate, print on hand-made paper, and bind in a vellum wrapper, but it tells us just nothing of what books De Bury had or read, and I could not point to a single work of any importance which he was instrumental in bringing to light or preserving. Persons who take pains to advertise themselves as book-lovers or bibliomaniacs are rarely those who render great services to literature.

Perhaps the libraries of the pre-Reformation colleges of Oxford and Cambridge are the best hunting-grounds for traces of the early collectors. At Peterhouse, Cambridge is a large bequest from John Warkworth, Master late in the fifteenth century; another from J. Dyngley, Fellow, whose books were written expressly for him; yet another from H. Deynman, Master, who was interested in medicine. Here, too, we come upon the tracks of Roger Marchall, who must rank, on the whole, as a student of

natural science. Books with his name and his carefully written tables of contents are at Peterhouse, Gonville and Caius, Lambeth, the British Museum, King's College; one at Magdalene College (Pepys Library) came thither from Peterhouse via Dr. John Dee. Walter Crome was another fifteenth-century benefactor of the University Library and of Gonville Hall, who, like Dyngley, had books written to his order. These are Cambridge data. Just such another list could be made out for some Oxford colleges, particularly Merton, Balliol, and New College. In this Bishops William Rede of Chichester, and John Trillek of Hereford, and William Gray of Ely, would figure prominently. The mention of this last name will serve as a pretext for introducing the Renaissance scholars. Gray, we saw, was one of those who dealt with Vespasiano Bisticci of Florence, though not nearly all of the many MSS. of his giving which are at Balliol are Italian-written; a good number are by Flemish and German scribes. The other men to whom I alluded in the same connection were for the most part benefactors of Oxford. John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, beheaded in 1470 for treason, promised a large gift of books to the University, but they never reached it, nor do I know a single MS. to-day that was Tiptoft's property, though there can be no doubt that he was a considerable book-buyer. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (whom we are now forbidden to call "the Good"), did give the University what was then a large library; his name is inseparably associated with the great room of the Bodleian, but his books were swept away in Edward VI.'s days. Some few have come back to their old home, and others are in London and in Paris: twenty-nine is said to be the total. He intended further gifts, but he was cut off in 1444, and it is thought that one collection, perhaps his travelling library, was diverted to King's College, Cambridge. It is certain that soon after 1450 that college possessed some 174 MSS., among which such titles as Plato's Republic in Latin and a Greek-English dictionary betray a humanistic influence which is not likely to have been that of our founder, Henry VI. Moreover, the only one of those MSS. that remains is a Latin version of some orations of St. Athanasius, made by a secretary of

the Duke, and dedicated to the Duke; and in the British Museum is another volume of Athanasius translated by the same man, which actually has Duke Humphrey's inscription in it. This is respectable evidence in support of the King's College story.

William Flemming, Dean of Lincoln, and founder of Lincoln College, Oxford, gave a number of books to that society which show him to have been interested in the revival of learning; Greek MSS. are among them.

John Gunthorpe, Dean of Wells (d. 1498), is said by Leland to have bequeathed the large collection he brought from Italy to Jesus College, Cambridge. It is scattered and gone from there, but books of Gunthorpe's survive in a good many libraries. One deserves special mention—a Latin prose version of the Odyssey, which he picked up (not in Italy, though it is an Italian book, but at Westminster) in 1475. Probably it was the first copy of the Odyssey in any form that had come to this country since Roman times, unless, indeed, Archbishop Theodore brought one over in the seventh century. Archbishop Parker thought that he had, and the MS. which he fondly believed to be Theodore's was in his view the pearl of the collection he left to Corpus Christi. Certainly it has the name Theodorus in it in letters of gold; but, as certainly, it is a fifteenth-century book, and the Theodore for whom it was written was I believe Theodore Gaza, a humanist who lived in Italy.

An instance of a man interested in books and not unaffected by the Renaissance, though not himself a collector, may be introduced here. William Wyrcestre (or Botoner, or Worcester) is the man, and he deserves a special study. Some have called him the father of English antiquaries, in virtue of one of his notebooks which has been preserved, and which contains jottings about his travels in England; it is a sort of rude elementary Leland's Itinerary. It is by no means the only book of his compiling, nor the only one owned by him that we have. There are historical and literary collections of his, and not a few MSS. with his name in them. He knew John Free, the translator (reputed) of Diodorus Siculus, and he had read Cristoforo

Buondelmonte's book on the islands of the Greek archipelago.

A long list of the Elizabethan book-collectors could be made, but I shall not attempt one here. Two libraries of the time, Sir Robert Cotton's and Archbishop Parker's, stand out. The main object of both men was to preserve English antiquities, and it is no exaggeration to say that if these two collections, which together number less than 1,500 volumes, had been wiped out, the best things in our vernacular literature and the pick of our chronicles would be unknown to us now. We should have no Beowulf or Judith, only inferior copies of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and of Matthew Paris, no Layamon, no Pearl—not to speak of the mass of invaluable State-papers gathered by Cotton, and the Reformation documents and letters stored up by Parker. One touch of blame rests on Sir Robert Cotton. He had a vicious habit of breaking up MSS. and binding together sections from different volumes. This disguises the provenance of the books, and by consequence obscures the history of their contents.

Enough information about the Cotton and Parker MSS. is easily accessible to absolve me from writing much about them here. Less is generally known of two dispersed collections, those of John Bale and John Dee.

Bale must, I fear, have been an unamiable man—certainly a very queer Christian. But his controversial works, on which he doubtless prided himself most, are dead and very rotten, while those devoted to the more peaceful science of bibliography are of abiding value. In his larger one, Scriptorum Britannicorum Centuriæ, he inserts a list of the MSS. he had once owned; they were no longer in his hands, but, it is to be supposed, in Ireland, left there when he fled from his bishopric of Ossory on Mary's accession. It is not a very scientific list, not one that gives the contents of each volume, but merely names of treatises, groups of which no doubt went to make up volumes, and this makes it difficult to determine how much of his library is in existence now. After his death it was in England, and a syndicate of Germans,

including, as was said above, Flacius Illyricus, were negotiating for the purchase of it. Archbishop Parker also had an eye upon it; he had received books as gifts or loans from Bale in former years. I have not been able to make sure whether any of the books did actually go to the Continent; I doubt it, in fact. Many distinguished by Bale's curious small, "flat" handwriting are traceable among Cotton's and Parker's books, at Lambeth, at Cambridge, and doubtless also at Oxford (where there is at least the MS. of his Index Scriptorum, admirably edited by Mr. R. L. Poole and Miss Bateson). Bale was a Carmelite in his youth and interested in the history of his Order, and there is an a priori probability that any book dealing with Carmelite affairs will contain marks of his ownership.

Dr. John Dee's history has often been written, and the catalogue of the MSS. he owned has long been in print in a Camden society volume (Diary of Dr. John Dee) edited by Halliwell. The main facts of his life that concern us are that he lived at Mortlake, and in 1584 went on a wild journey to Poland. In his absence his house and collections were plundered by a mob, who, not without excuse, thought him a warlock. When he returned in 1589 he set himself to recover his scattered property, and to a great extent succeeded. He moved from Mortlake to Manchester, being made Warden of the college there in 1595; later on he returned, and died at Mortlake, much in debt, I think, in 1608. I find from Archbishop Ussher's printed correspondence that his books were still unsold in 1624; litigation may have prevented their being dealt with earlier. The lists we have of his MSS. date from before his foreign tour; that which is in print was made on the eve of his departure, and contains a little over 200 entries.

After the vicissitudes which his collection suffered it is remarkable that one should still be able to identify as extant well over half of it. I have been helped in my searches by certain marks—a little ladder, or the astrological sign of Jupiter, or a Δ—which occur on the first page of many. His handwriting, too, in notes, and certain names of owners (particularly P. Saunders) are guides. Some of his MSS.

were bought by Ussher, and are at Trinity College, Dublin, and a few were bought by Cotton. But the largest group of them is at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. These were acquired by the great Oxford antiquary, Brian Twyne, who hoped that his college would buy them from him, but this they would not do. Happily Twyne was not too much hurt by the refusal to leave them to the college at his death. I guess that one reason for his buying them was that some (perhaps many) of them had once belonged to his grandfather, John Twyne, a Canterbury man of some slight eminence, who in his turn had secured a considerable "lot" of MSS. from the library of St. Augustine's Abbey. In searching out the relics of that great library I found the combination, or pedigree, St. Augustine's—John Twyne—Dee—Brian Twyne—Corpus Christi, to be a frequent one, and this set me upon a general investigation of Dee's MSS. A little notebook of his at Corpus Christi showed that in early life he had borrowed a number of MSS. from Peterhouse and from Queen's College, Oxford. I did not find that these ever got back to their sources, but I do not think that Dee was dishonest in the matter; I believe he was allowed to keep them for some consideration received. Some of the Peterhouse books are traceable in the Ashmole collection, the Pepys Library, and the British Museum; of those of Queen's College I can say nothing. Dee was specially interested in mathematics, alchemy, and, as everyone knows, converse with spirits, but his library was not confined to books on these subjects; he had some excellent historical, literary, and theological MSS. One of them was the best copy of Alfred's translation of Orosius.

Another library of the sixteenth century deserves to be singled out from the many which offer themselves for notice. It is that of Lord Lumley (d. 1609); he inherited the books from Henry Fitzalan, Earl of Arundel (d. 1580). This collection had again been largely recruited from that of Archbishop Cranmer: the combination T(homæ) C(ranmeri) C(antuar)—Arundel—Lumley, is often found written on the lower margin of the first leaf of the MSS. concerned. These Arundel MSS., by the way, must not be confounded with the Arundel collection in the British Museum, nor with

that remnant of the same collection which is owned by the College of Arms. The Arundel MSS., so-called, were collected largely by Lord William Howard (Belted Will) of Naworth, passed on to Thomas, Earl of Arundel (d. 1644), and devised by Henry Howard to the Royal Society, 1681; they were eventually transferred by the Society to the British Museum in 1831. The Arundel-Lumley books had a different destiny. Most of them also came to the Museum, but by another path. They were bought after Lumley's death by or for Prince Henry, eldest son of James I., and added to the Royal Library, and that became national property by the gift of George II. in 1757. We have a catalogue, made about 1609, of the whole library, which is among the Gale MSS. at Trinity College, Cambridge. It bears no name of owner, but is easily seen to be Lumley's. Not all the MSS. that we find bearing Lumley's name are in it, and not all the MSS. in it are in the old Royal Library. To the second class belong the English Bible at Wolfenbüttel, the Bible of Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester (a fine but plain book which is at Cheltenham in the Phillipps collection), and the Bosworth Psalter bought not long ago from a private owner by the British Museum. The first class is more numerous; about twenty MSS. at Lambeth alone have Lumley's name, but are not in his catalogue. I conjecture that they were presented by Lumley (who was a generous giver of printed books to the Universities) to Archbishop Bancroft when he was forming his collection.

So one might go on through Ussher, Laud, Selden, Rawlinson, Harley, Askew, Drury, Heber, etc., to Sir Thomas Phillipps, whose 30,000 MSS., good and bad, must be the largest mass of such things ever owned by a single collector. But I think I have said enough of the public and private accumulations of this country to give an adequate idea of the kind of results that attend research, and of the ways in which large blocks of MSS. have been handed on to us. The epoch of the sale-room I have not really touched; it demands special tools and a special historian, and it concerns individual books. Nor, I will confess, do I feel quite at ease in touching upon the private collections of the present day. There is less objection to surveying such

things when they have passed as wholes into public institutions.

For example, the MSS. collected by the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres were acquired in 1892 for the John Rylands Library at Manchester. The Latin section of these I have had occasion to examine. It consists of nearly 120 items. The earliest and most remarkable of these almost all own the pedigree of Libri-Bateman-Crawford. Of Libri enough has been said to make it necessary to note here that none of the Crawford MSS. owned by him were pilfered from French libraries. The library of Bateman of Youlgrave was dispersed in 1893; the Libri purchases in it are mostly traceable in the Libri sale catalogue of 1859. Three tenth-century Spanish MSS., two from the Abbey of S. Pedro de Cardeña, one from Silos, happen, by an odd and lucky accident, to be elaborately described in Berganza's España Sagrada; how it was that exactly these books came into Libri's hands it is not likely that we shall discover. For the rest, Lord Crawford's purchases at the Howell Wills sale of 1894 were considerable in quantity, and he acquired three fine books at that of Ambroise Firmin Didot in 1878. Three others came from the Bollandist Fathers' Library at Brussels. One of these had for some years formed part of the very choice collection of the Fountaines at Narford, in Norfolk, scattered in 1894.

Of less choice quality, but of extreme usefulness to the student, are the 200 MSS. bequeathed by Frank McClean in 1904 to the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, and collected by him in the ten or fifteen years before that. Here we have few coherent groups of books, unless we reckon as such a certain number of volumes from the Cistercian Abbey of Morimund in North Italy, acquired singly, perhaps, by Mr. McClean from Hoepli of Milan. The Phillipps sales account for a good many, the Barrois and Ashburnham Appendix (1901 and 1897) for a few more, but most of the books were picked up one by one in auction-rooms or from dealers' catalogues.

In both these cases examples of illumination and calligraphy have been primary

objects in the collectors' eyes, and that is the ruling passion with most of those who buy MSS. nowadays. At the beginning of the nineteenth century what was more coveted was the accumulation of copies of the classics. It had hardly been realized that few of the Renaissance classical MSS. made in Italy have independent textual value, and collectors like Askew, Drury, Canonici, Burney, thought that the more of them they had the better. Lord Fitzwilliam (d. 1816), who devoted himself to buying French Books of Hours for the sake of the pictures, was something of a pioneer (at least in England) in this respect. Francis Douce (d. 1834) was another; his treasures are in the Bodleian. As for Sir Thomas Phillipps, he must have bought by the cart-load: Nihil manu scriptum a se alienum putabat. In spite of the large amount of rubbish among his 30,000 odd volumes, I can never hear without a bitter pang the tale that the University of Oxford many years ago shied at his offer of them, accompanied as it was by some tiresome conditions; their fate has been gradual dispersion to every part of Europe and to America.

I have said that I cannot embark here upon the history of sales of MSS. in the last hundred years. But my abstention, due to considerations of space, must not be imitated by my readers. Those who deal with modern collections or make collections of their own—a thing still possible for quite modest purses, in spite of the inflated prices which the great books command—are not absolved from the study of sale catalogues; that they will pay attention to book-plates, bindings, and names of owners, I need not repeat. The list of such catalogues issued by the British Museum they will find invaluable; the catalogues themselves, alike those of dealers and of sales, will often enable them to trace a particular MS. back through a whole century to some Italian palace or Flemish abbey, sold up or secularized under the stress of revolution. This period of MS. history has been less well worked than the earlier ones; it is but just ripening, in fact; but to anyone who is bitten with the passion for the books it will prove just as fascinating as the others.

Curiosities of Research

By way of conclusion let me come back from generalities to particulars, and attempt to kindle interest and stir the imagination by a few words on waifs and strays—the curiosities of MS. research. Some few leading instances have been mentioned, but in thinking over the collections I have examined and the documents I have had to copy or edit, others, less immediately showy, occur to my memory.

What has become of the Red Book of Eye in Suffolk? It was a copy of the Gospels which St. Felix of Burgundy, the apostle of the East Angles, brought with him in the seventh century. It was after his death in a monastery at Dunwich. Then it passed to a little priory at Eye, where Leland saw it. After the Dissolution it remained with the Corporation of Eye—now extinct—and people took oaths upon it. It is traceable in the records down to a comparatively late date—within the nineteenth century. Can there be truth in the tale I have heard that it was sent for safe keeping to a mansion not far off, and there cut up for game labels? I cannot believe it.

No doubt MSS. were cut up for game labels. I have seen—years ago—in a London shop one that had turned up in a billiard-room, and its blank margins had been many of them removed for that purpose. But there was a fashion equally reprehensible a hundred years ago of cutting out illuminations from MSS. and making scrap-books of them. It was especially common in the case of the great antiphoners and other huge service-books which stood on the lecterns in Italian churches. The remainder of the books went to the gold-beaters, perhaps (they used parchment, and in England bought MSS. sometimes to cut up), or to a like destination. Occasionally books so mutilated have been reconstituted. A leading example is that of a Josephus, illuminated in part by the great Tours artist Jean Foucquet. This the late King Edward VII. and Mr. H. Y. Thompson were able to combine in restoring. The King had a number of the pictures, cut out, in his library at Windsor; Mr. Thompson had the mutilated text and a pictured leaf or so. The fragments were brought together and

presented to the Paris Library, which already possessed the first volume of the set.

A miniature, cut, no one knows how long ago, from a fine twelfth-century Bible, was shaken out of a pile of printed copies of a funeral sermon at a country house. The book to which it belonged I believe to be one at Lambeth.

In 1890 Mr. Samuel Sandars bought at a London sale a scrap-book containing two leaves of a beautiful and very early Book of Hours. He gave them to the Fitzwilliam Museum. In 1894 came the Fountaine sale, and then Mr. William Morris bought the MS. from which these leaves had come. An arrangement was made between him and the museum that he should possess the leaves, replaced in the book, for his life, and then the museum should acquire the whole at an agreed price. Alas! he did not live to enjoy the ownership of them long.

To find, as the late Mr. Greenwell of Durham found, a leaf of a sixth-century Latin Bible from Wearmouth or Jarrow (or perhaps even from Cassiodorus's library) in a curiosity shop, is a chance that comes to few. But I have always lamented that I did not pass through the streets of Orléans at the time (not many years back) when an illustrated Greek MS. of the Gospels on purple vellum and in gold and silver uncials was exposed for sale in a shop window. A French officer had picked it up at Sinope, and used it to keep dried plants in. However, it went to its rightful and proper home, the Bibliothèque Nationale.

It is getting on for thirty years now since a small parish library in Suffolk, founded in 1700, gave to the world the book of the Gospels owned by St. Margaret of Scotland (at Oxford), and the unique life of St. William, the boy martyr of Norwich, and Nicholas Roscarrock's Register of British Saints (both at Cambridge). Not as long since, in a private library in Italy, some leaves were found of the early MS. (from Hersfeld Abbey in Germany) of the minor writings of Tacitus from which all our extant fifteenth-century copies descend. Still more recently, among a collection of scraps of MSS., a half leaf of an eleventh or twelfth century MS. in Welsh was

detected (a very great rarity); its generous finder (the late Mr. A. G. W. Murray, librarian of Trinity College) gave it to the Cambridge University Library, and thus added one more to the already remarkable collection of bits of early Welsh which Cambridge owns. It deals with the dry topic of finding Easter, but linguistically it is above price.

And now for an example which shows the odd wanderings of texts. There is a volume at Vienna, from Bobbio, made up of palimpsest leaves from many MSS., Biblical and classical. Two of these, apparently from one book, stand next to each other. They have only recently been deciphered; they are in Latin uncials of the fifth century. One of them is from the Apocalypse of Thomas, a book named in an old list of Apocryphal writings, but thought until a few years ago to be hopelessly lost. We now know complete MSS. of it at Munich and a fragment at Verona, as well as an Anglo-Saxon version in the Vercelli MS. The other Vienna leaf is from an equally apocryphal "epistle of the Apostles," never mentioned by old writers, but seemingly of the second century. It gives a dialogue between our Lord and the Apostles after the Resurrection. About 1897 Dr. Carl Schmidt, a leading Coptic scholar, published an account of a Coptic MS. of the greater part of the book (the MS. is at Berlin, and some time will be edited); and about 1913 a French scholar, Abbé Guerrier, published a complete version of it from Ethiopic MSS. which had been in Europe for half a century. It is about the last book I should have expected to find in a Latin version, and current in Italy in the fifth century. The combination of Egypt and Abyssinia is common enough; but that Bobbio should be added to that, and Asia Minor and Greece omitted, is indeed a strange thing. Perhaps Africa was the parent of the Latin version.

The Moral

So texts and books wander, and so do discoveries sometimes lie near our hands. The moral is: Be inquisitive. See books for yourself; do not trust that the cataloguer has

told you everything. I am a cataloguer myself, and I know that, try as he may, a worker of that class cannot hope to know or to see every detail that is of importance. The creature is human, and on some days his mind is less alert than on others. Nor is he interested in everything alike: an apocryphal fragment or an obscure saint will excite me, while a letter of St. Bernard which may be unpublished leaves me calm. But in spite of the imperfections of cataloguers, catalogues must be used, and they must be read and not only referred to. The mere juxtaposition of treatises in a volume will often reveal its provenance or its pedigree; besides, there is always the chance I have suggested, that the describer of any MS. may have failed through ignorance or want of attention to see that some article in it is of extreme interest and rarity. So it was that in reading Lambecius's (eighteenth-century) catalogue of the Greek MSS. at Vienna I noted down an entry that seemed unusual; and some years after, when I had an opportunity of getting a friend at Vienna to look at the tract in question, it was found to be the unique copy of the very most heretical (and therefore interesting) episode of the apocryphal Acts of St. John, written in the second century, and copied, to our lasting astonishment and perplexity, by some honest orthodox cleric in the fourteenth.

May discoveries infinitely more pleasing fall to the lot of many of my patient readers!

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(Others to follow.)

FOOTNOTES:

[A] Let not the 400 MSS. given by Coislin to the Abbey of St. Germain des Prés at Paris be quoted against me. They were the collection of a great noble, the Chancellor Séguier, and the library to which they were presented was practically a public one, whose permanence was seemingly assured.

[B] See Eubel, Hierarchia Catholica Medii Ævi, ii. 248.

[C] We have its catalogue admirably reproduced by Thomas Hearne, at a time (early in the eighteenth century) when it was rare to find anyone who would take the trouble to make a faithful copy of such a record, with all its erasures and alterations.

[D] Subsequently Theyer, as I said, went on collecting MSS., and finally Charles II. bought the whole lot for the Royal Library.

Transcriber's Notes:

Obvious punctuation errors repaired.

The original text had one page containing the list of Helps on the second page and it was concluded on the last page. The first page was moved to join the last.

Page 96, M. Bateson was small-capped to match the rest of the format of the Bibliography.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WANDERINGS AND HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS ***

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