

JAMES MONTAGUE RHODES

THE WANDERINGS AND
HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS

Montague James
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Homes of Manuscripts

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*The Wanderings and Homes of Manuscripts / Helps for Students of History,
No. 17.:*

Содержание

THE WANDERINGS AND HOMES OF MANUSCRIPTS	4
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	25

M. R. James

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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 Forlì. 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 Escorial 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 Bèze, the University of Cambridge acquired its greatest Greek treasure, the Codex Bezae (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 Barocchi, 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.¹ To

¹ 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.

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.

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