

## EARLY BOOKS AND LIBRARIES.

BY STEPHEN SALISBURY.

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CIVILIZATION has received no greater impetus than that given to it by the discoveries of the fifteenth century. Not only was the Western Hemisphere added to the known world, but the art of printing was invented, and in the latter part of the century was born the great leader of the Reformation, an agency most powerful in its influence upon human progress, whose initial movement was to a great degree occasioned by the invention of the printing press and the consequent revival of learning. Without that aid to the diffusion of knowledge and the impulse given to individual thought, it is not at all probable that the system of religious government which actually prevailed, or any which might have been instituted, would have been seriously menaced, still less powerfully interfered with and reformed. Although nothing new may appear in treating, somewhat at length, the gradual steps in the evolution of the printed book, from the early hieroglyphic sign scratched upon stone, bark or papyrus, still it may not be useless to repeat facts known to all, but infrequently considered.

Man in different parts of the world has shown a remarkable coincidence in practical phases of development from savagery into civilization, when called to devise a means of intercommunication by written or spoken language or to organize for social purposes, for protection, or in most of the lines of intellectual growth. So that it is by no means surprising when the investigator of to-day shows us that a new luxurious appliance is a crude approach to something that was better understood in an Egyptian civilization of

two thousand years ago, or in some later community, the record of whose existence perhaps remains only in the crumbling ruins which cover the surface of the soil, and whose advancement in the arts is shown solely by the elaborate and curious articles found in the excavations made in its neighborhood.

Of the early history of India and China we as yet know comparatively little, but that little teaches us to believe that cotton weaving, sculpture and engraving were brought to much perfection in prehistoric times, and that in China the art of printing with movable types was practised long before it became known in Europe.

Until a short time before the historic era the art of writing was unknown in Europe, even in its rudest and most elementary forms. All moral and religious maxims, as well as traditional history, were preserved by a sacerdotal order, which transmitted them orally to their successors. By this means a great multitude of facts were handed down from generation to generation, by a body of men who became very capable in this direction. When writing was invented the labors of these memorizers did not suddenly cease, even when codes of religious and moral laws had been transcribed. The oldest of moral and religious codes known to us, the Sanskrit Vedas, was probably orally preserved and transmitted for generations, as we learn that twelve years of study was necessary for inferior Sanskrit priests and forty years for those of the higher grades. It is believed that the poems of Homer were thus handed down for two or three centuries by professional bards and reciters of Greece, and the genuine portions of Ossian are known to have been preserved until a very recent period in the north of Scotland by oral tradition. It is possible that the arrangement of the sentence or theme into measured phrases having a balance of completeness, had its origin in an effort to aid the memory, and it is probable that the subsequent poetic metres of Greece and Rome were the result of such

efforts. Writing did not come at once into existence in its perfected state. It was the growth of centuries, like the culture of the memory. Egyptian writing, the parent of our own system, bears traces of the pictorial as well as of the phonetic principle. In Egyptian hieroglyphic writing, and in the Turkish and Chinese characters of to-day, we find a complicated series of pictures which have been changed and modified to secure convenience and despatch. It is said to be possible to follow the changes of form from the more correct pictorial representations through successive periods, until the letters assumed the present conventional character. At first, records that were kept were inscribed on the walls of palaces, temples, pyramids and obelisks. The vast number of these inscriptions and the want of space for more rendered some other form of preservation imperative. Records of victories and royal expeditions were carved upon rocks near the localities where they took place. The art of committing writing and inscriptions to small slabs of clay was discovered and practised in the Assyrian Empire, and notifications and proclamations were thus circulated. Lately we have seen samples of Babylonian books, which were secured by the late Catharine L. Wolfe expedition. They are little clay tablets inscribed on both sides in cuneiform characters and are commonly known as contract tablets, which contain the records of important social transactions, such as lay suits, marriage settlements, etc., and they are now found stored in record chambers. Rock inscriptions were known to the Assyrians as *speaking stones*, and to the Greeks as *hieroglyphics*. The Egyptians discovered the use of papyrus, as a material upon which writings might be preserved, and cultivated the rush-like plant of which it is the fibre, to enable them to furnish the great quantity required for home use, and to supply the demand from neighboring countries. The Assyrians came near to the invention of printing, in the use of engraved seals from which any number of impressions might be taken.

Layard found such impressions in baked clay from seals, which appeared to be royal orders, so that duplicates might be furnished to officers of the government, a near approach to the system from which block books were made. Greek learning received great assistance from the use of the finely prepared papyrus of Egypt, and of the inner bark of lime trees. Still manuscript writings remained very expensive, and the active circulation of ideas was impossible. In the year 453 of Rome, the Pontifex Maximus established yearly records, which were written on white tablets and were placed in a room in his house accessible to the public. Cæsar, in 694, caused the proceedings of the Senate to be made public daily. Books in the time of Augustus existed only in the form of scrolls, and from the scarcity of writing material palimpsests, or a second use of the same sheet after erasure of the first written matter, became common. The scrolls had rollers of wood or ivory affixed at either end. So rare and expensive were these scrolls that popular authors were read aloud at the baths and porticos. The first booksellers at Rome were the dealers in second-hand wares of all sorts, the buyers of manuscripts when forced on the market by the necessity of their owners. Families of wealth had slaves whose business it was to read aloud and to transcribe, and they were the book-makers of that period. Libraries of the time, as we may learn from Herculaneum, were but small collections. At Rome, books first took the square form in imitation of the tablets, and they were arranged in this form in blank for private memoranda, the pages of which were at first plates of metal coated with wax, within a cover more or less richly decorated and protected by raised edges, so that inscriptions written on the wax would not touch when the covers were closed. Afterwards five or six leaves of vellum took the place of wax tablets. These tablets with richly carved ivory covers were presented to consuls and other official dignitaries on their election to office, and served as their official badge.

The square form of books was probably adopted because of its convenience, and as affording a better opportunity for ornamentation. It is traced to the IV. century B. C. The early Christians caused the Bible to be copied and illuminated by the priests themselves, in the monasteries which rapidly arose, and the work of transcribing manuscripts was carried on with much regularity, and as the books were required for use in the churches much care was taken with the writing and embellishments. Some of the monasteries supplied other institutions and churches with religious books, and became at the same time the repositories of ancient manuscripts, often preserved only for the beauty of the caligraphy. From the V. to the XII. centuries luxurious churchmen were almost the only possessors of books, for they monopolized existing intellectual civilization, and the books they produced were chiefly intended for the services of the church.

Having thus far indicated very briefly some of the steps in the progress from pictorial rock inscriptions to the written books of the XIV. century, we now come to consider the discovery of printing, or the method by which written books may be reproduced at will and indefinitely multiplied. In the art as ultimately perfected, wood engraving plays a most important part. The Chinese are thought to have been the first who perfected the art of wood engraving to the degree of cutting designs upon blocks which might be transferred to woven fabrics in colored patterns. Wood carving in relief or in the round has been generally practised in all countries and by many savage tribes, but etching or engraving has been found only as the outgrowth of civilization and very considerable advancement in the arts. It is thought that printing written texts from engraved tablets was first practised by the Chinese. Dr. Isaiah Thomas in his "History of Printing"<sup>1</sup> says:

<sup>1</sup>The History of Printing in America. By Isaiah Thomas. Worcester: Isaiah Thomas, Jun. 1810. 8vo., Vol. I., p. 73.

“It is acknowledged by all writers on the origin of printing that the art was first practised by the Chinese. The precise epoch when it was invented cannot be ascertained. The Chinese assign a date to its origin which is anterior to the promulgation of Christianity. Some historians of other nations who have attempted to ascertain the fact, admit that the Chinese practised printing as early as the VI. century; others, among whom is Phil. Couplet, who has always been considered by the learned as a very accurate historian, ascribe the invention in China to the year 930. The celebrated Meerman in his history of printing mentions that the *Historia Sinensis* of Abdalla, written in Persic in 1317, speaks of it as an art in very common use. And indeed as the art is so useful, and, as practised in China, so simple, we cannot have a doubt that it was at least coëval with many other arts, which though less needful and more complicated and intricate in practice, are very generally acknowledged to have been in use in that great and very ancient empire for many years previous to a knowledge of similar arts in Europe.”

In the IX. century it is thought that the Chinese printed Block Books upon paper of their own manufacture, and in the XII. century it is said that they had a system of printing by movable types. Marco Polo returned in 1295 from seventeen years residence in China, and may have brought specimens of block books. In Europe engraving on wood in a crude form had been practised from an early date before the return of Polo.

The Venetians early in the XV. century established manufactories of playing cards on an extensive scale, and the Germans were also printers of colored cards which they called *heiligen*, whether they referred to sacred or profane subjects. Holland and Germany were the only countries where the art of printing block books was carried to any degree of perfection. They made their appearance at the close of the XIV. century, and were supposed to have been made on account of the high price of manuscript books and to meet the demand created by the revival of learning, which required a large supply of the classics and general

text-books of instruction, at a time when the business of transcribing was transferred from the hands of churchmen to professional transcribers. Some of the illustrations were very crude, much like stencil work. The British Museum has a manuscript book called in the catalogue *Figures de la Biblia*, where each illustration consists of a series of Bible subjects and occupies nearly the whole page, leaving little room for more than a written description and title. The colors appear to have been brushed on in nearly a dry state. Books of this class seem to have been the immediate forerunners of block books. One of the first authentic block books of which we are cognizant is the *Biblia Pauperum*, of which a copy of very early date is in the British Museum. It was probably made near the close of the XIV. century. Many copies of this work are still in existence, which show that they were once in demand, occasioned by the high price of the full Bible in manuscript. The *Biblia Pauperum* is supposed to have been made by St. Ansgar or Ansgarius, and had appeared in manuscript for centuries. It contained a series of scriptural designs briefly explained by passages from the holy scriptures, and is ascribed to St. Ansgar, because in an old copy of this xylographic work at Florence there is an entry in Latin, written in the style of the XV. century, to the effect that he was the author. The designs for the outline drawings of the original work, which were afterwards improved and served as models of the first block books that remain, were probably copied from the painted windows of some convent or from the sculptures of a cathedral. An effort to supply a simple class of block books was first made in Holland, which accounts for the large number of this class of books found there.

It is a question still shrouded in darkness and uncertainty, to whom the credit of first employing movable types shall be ascribed. Until the year 1870,<sup>1</sup> the weight of evidence

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<sup>1</sup> Library Chronicle, London, 1887, Vol. IV., Nos. 44, 45, p. 135. The Nation, New York, 1888, Vol. XLVI., No. 1179, p. 95.

and the prevailing opinion of the best authorities inclined to give Laurens Koster of Haarlem this credit, but at that time Van der Linde, himself a native of Haarlem, wrote a series of letters, which afterwards appeared under the title "The Haarlem Legend of the Invention of Printing critically examined," alleging that the documents produced in favor of the claims of Koster were forgeries, and that the real credit belonged to Johann Gutenberg of Mentz. The able manner in which Van der Linde presented his plea, and the emphatic way in which he disposed of the whole question seems to have silenced for the time those who held contrary opinions, and Van der Linde became very popular in Germany and was made *Oberbibliothekar* of the Royal Library of Wiesbaden, and became *Dr. Antonius Von der Linde* and more German than the Germans. But in 1882 Mr. J. H. Hessels, after a three years' study of this question, reviewed Van der Linde's second and larger work, and says in his preface: "He [Van der Linde] takes all his documents at second, third or fourth hand, rarely telling his readers upon what authority he himself prints any single document, and from not investigating a single point in the whole question his book presents a more complete chaos on the subject than any of its predecessors." Mr. Hessels has just published a more elaborate study of this question, which is entitled: "Haarlem the Birth-place of Printing, not Mentz."<sup>1</sup> This learned investigation, though it does not incontrovertably settle the question, still proves that there are no good grounds for doubting the general truthfulness of the account of Koster's connection with early printing, even if some inaccuracies of detail are made evident. As the question of priority of invention is never likely to be set at rest, it may be interesting to speak briefly of those most prominently connected with the early development of the art, in the order of priority which a large number of authorities has united in assigning to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Haarlem, not Mentz. By J. H. Hessels, London, 1887.



Laurens Koster was born in Haarlem about the year 1370, and like his father served in various municipal offices. He died in 1440, and for the last nineteen years of his life is thought to have been engaged in matters appertaining to the production of books. He is said to have been one of the earliest engravers of block books, and the plates of the *Biblia Pauperum* are thought to have been actually his work. The evidence for this is the style of the engravings and their arrangement, which is identical with other books attributed to him.

Block books are books printed from engraved wooden blocks, each block having the dimensions of a page, upon which is cut the illustration and such words or phrases as are intended to explain it, or it may consist of a page of engraved text without illustrations; briefly, it is like a stereotype plate in wood, if such a thing was possible.

Koster's first *Speculum* in block work was probably executed between 1410-20. The earliest edition contains forty leaves and the latest fifty, printed only on one side; the rubbing process, by means of which the impressions were obtained, having unfitted the back for the reception of impressions; while rubbing the face on which the impression was already taken would have much impaired the work; so that as long as this system prevailed it was imperatively necessary to print on one side only. Instances are found where two leaves are pasted together, thus concealing the blank side, but generally the blank backs of each leaf show distinctly the marks of rubbing with some soft substance. Until 1430 block books were printed by rubbing on dis-tempered inks, but after that time the more simple method of presswork took its place. Still these books continued to be printed long after the discovery of movable types, and we have the *Mirabilia Romæ* of 1480, and the *Opera Nova* of 1510.

In the earliest block books the engraving and lettering is very rude and evidently executed with much labor; and

the works selected were such as required little more in the text than brief descriptive titles or short paragraphs. But as the skill of the engraver increased, the handwriting of the time was better imitated, and successive pages of text were executed with entire success. The block-work in *Ars Moriendi* is nearly as regular and quite in the same style as in the earliest class of movable type work.

In block books, and in early movable type work, the precise imitation of the writing of the time was sought to be secured, and not the formation of a letter suited to the purposes of the printing press. It is not possible to credit the discovery of printing to any one person, for the art was taken up and carried on by successive workers. The substitution of paper for vellum in block books was necessary, as the rigidity and toughness of the vellum would have prevented an even impression from the wooden plate. But the labors of the image cutters, seal makers and xylographic book printers were necessary to pave the way by a succession of steps to the employment of movable types by Koster and Gutenberg. Koster made his first essay with movable types presumably in the year 1426; and eventually perfected metal types. The *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* was probably the first book made by Koster with movable types, in 1430; and before 1440, when he died, Koster had issued three editions. He printed block books, and afterwards mixed xylographic and printed pages, and also block pictures with printed text attached. A specimen attributed to Koster has the illustration in wood printed by rubbing with brown distemper ink, while the text, added by another process, was printed in black oleaginous ink from movable types in some rude kind of press and pasted to the illustration. The back of the plate still shows the gloss produced by rubbing, while on the back of the text no gloss is found.

“The Grenville copy of the *Speculum* in the British Museum has first a blank leaf, followed by five pages of

preface, entirely printed from movable type: the first printed page having a blank space left for the initial letter, a P, which has been rudely painted in by hand in red, leaving a white device in the broad parts of the letter. The leaves of the preface are printed only on one side, although no objection existed to printing on both sides as in the xylographic pages which follow, where the back of the pages is rendered unfit for printing by the rubbing to which the work had been subjected. The page on the Creation of Eve and the one next following are entirely xylographic; the third page, The Temptation, has a page printed from movable type in black ink, which contrasts strongly with the light brown distemper of the wood cuts. Then follow block pages till the twelfth which is in type; the thirteenth and fourteenth are block and the fifteenth is in type. The remaining block pages are 16, 17, 21, 22, 26, 27, 46, 55, in all twenty xylographic and forty-two typographic pages, including the preface. Of the first edition of the *Speculum* ten copies are known, and five of them remain in Holland. Of the second edition, which differs from the first in having its xylographic leaves cut away and their place supplied by printed pages, only one remains in Holland. The third edition, a Dutch translation in prose, is produced by the same double process, and has a text printed on one side only. The fourth edition of the *Speculum* is in Dutch prose, and differs materially from the others in being printed in smaller type. The execution of this copy is generally inferior to the other three. Of this last edition but three copies can be traced. One is at the Town Hall of Haarlem, the second is in the Haarlem Public Library, and the third is in the Lisle Public Library. The fourth, like the former editions, has the pages printed only on one side, two pages of the Lisle copy having an appearance of being printed on both sides, from the existence of a strong set-off, occurring no doubt in consequence of general carelessness of execution, for none of the back pages correspond in order with those which precede or follow. In this edition another defect has been pointed out, that in the Lisle copy and in that at Florence the fifth leaf of the third gathering has the text pasted on beneath the illustration, showing that it had been the custom in getting up the *Speculum* to print the illustrations first, or that the first text was spoiled in

printing. The discovery that wood blocks could be treated with the same ink as type not having been made at that time may have been the reason for pasting on the printed text in cases where the leaf had been soiled below the illustration."<sup>1</sup>

All the books ascribed to Koster, except the *Speculum*, are printed on both sides of the paper, a strong proof that the *Speculum* preceded the others.

Johann Gutenberg of Mentz, with two or three associates, in 1438 established a copartnership to develop a new invention which turned out to be essays in printing. His first attempts with lead types seem to have been failures because the metal was too soft. In 1450 Gutenberg was joined by Johann Fust who furnished him with money. Gutenberg, in 1451, printed a grammar for children, called a *Donatus* from the name of its author, an "Appeal against the Turcs" in 1454, and "Letters of Indulgence" in 1454-55, all of which appeared before his edition of the Bible. In 1455 the Bible was first issued. The rubrics of the first Bible were left blank to be written in by hand, and spaces were allowed the illuminator to introduce capitals, so that the book when completed by hand had the effect of an illuminated manuscript of that period. It was superior to manuscripts of the second order, though not to be compared with the best illuminated work. The first printed Bible was called the Mazarin Bible because it was first discovered in the library of the Cardinal Mazarin. It is probable that a few copies of the completed Bible were issued by Gutenberg while still master of the establishment, but in 1455 Johann Fust took possession of the whole of the materials under a foreclosure of mortgage. Gutenberg, though seemingly ruined by this loss of all which he had devoted twenty years of his life to acquire, still managed to re-establish himself, and in association with another partner he printed

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<sup>1</sup>History of the Art of Printing. By H. Noel Humphreys. London, 1868. Folio. p. 62., *et passim*.

“*Tractatus de Celebratione Missarum*,” which was discovered in the library of the Chatreux at Mayence. It contained this memorandum written in Latin “The Chatreux of Mayence possess this book through the liberality of Johann called Gutenberg, the production of his art and of the science of Johann Nunmeister, completed on the 19th of July in the year 1463.” His successors, Fust and Schoeffer, printed the Psalter, the first book with a printed date, in 1457. Their Bible of 1462 was an improvement in typography.

Cardinal Torquemada introduced printing into Italy in 1465 by importing two Germans, who set up a press at the Monastery of Subiaco near Rome. One of these men was an engraver and the other a compositor, and they were assisted by the monks. Printing was first practised in Venice in 1469. Nicholas of Breslau came to Florence in 1477, and in 1480 he published a copy of Dante’s *Divina Comedia* with copper-plate illustrations. In 1470 German workmen, imported to Paris, set up the first printing press in France at the Sorbonne.

William Caxton, the father of English printing, was born in England near the year 1411, and was in business in London with Robert Strange who dealt in dry goods and in books. This business arrangement continued till 1441, when Strange died, leaving Caxton a considerable legacy, who then carried on the same trade for himself. When yet a young man he left England as an agent for the Company of Mercers of London, and appears to have been proud of his country and of his business, for he styled himself a “citizen and mercer of the city of London.” Edward IV. employed him with Richard Whitehall to negotiate a treaty of commerce with the Duke of Burgundy. Their Commission styled them *Ambassiatores, Procuratores, Nuncios et Deputos Speciales*. In 1469 Caxton made an English translation of *Recueil des Histoires de Troyes*, which he issued from the press of

Ulric Zell of Cologne. In 1471 he issued from his press in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, "The Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers," commonly called the Game at Chess, the first book ever printed in England, followed by a large number of important works, many of them translated and some of them written by himself. The prologue of Caxton's first work,<sup>1</sup> which really was what we should consider a preface, and which contained the date of the publication, was very amusing. It was

"Here begynneth the volume intituled the recuyell of the Historyes of Troye; composed and drawn out of dyuerce bookes of latyn into Frensshe by the ryght venerable persone and worshipful man Raoul le ffeure, preest and chapelayn unto the ryght noble, gloryous and myghty prynce in his tyme Phelip duc of Bourgoyne, of Brabant, &c, in the yere of the incarnation of our lord god, a thousand, foure honderd sixty and foure, and translated and drawn out of frensshe into englysshe by Willyam Caxton, mercer of ye cyte of London, at the commandment of the ryght hye, myghty and vertuous Prynresse hys redoubted lady Margarete, by the Grace of God, Duchesse of Bourgoyne, of Lotryk, of Brabant &c, whiche sayd translacion and werke was begonne in Brugis in the Countee of Flandres, the first day of march in the yere of the Incarnacion of our sayd lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and eyghte, And ended and fynyshid in the holy cyte of Colen the XIX day of September the yere of our said lord god a thousand four hundred sixty and enleuen."

He wrote again in the colophon:

"Thus ended this book whyche I haue translated after myn Auctor as nyghe as god hath gyuen me connyng to whom be gyven the laude & preysing. And for as moche as in the wryting of the same my penne is worn, myne hand wery & of not stedfast, myn eyen dimed with overmoche lokyng on the white paper, and my corage not so prone and redy to labour as hit hath ben, and that age crepeth on me dayly and febleth all the bodye, and also because I have promysid to dyuerce gentilmen and to my frendes to ad-

<sup>1</sup> The Life and Typography of William Caxton. By William Blades. Vol. I. p. 131. London. 4to. Joseph Lilly, 1861.

dresse to hem as hastily as I mygth this sayd book. Therefore I have practysed & lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here see, and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other bookes ben, to thende that euery man may have them attones ffor all the bookes of this storye named the recule of the historyes of troyes, thus enprynted as ye here see were begonne in oon day and also fynyshid in oon day. \* \* \* \*"

There can be little doubt that libraries or collections of books, soon followed the invention of writing and the use of tablets or scrolls, upon which it could be inscribed and preserved, in all parts of the world where the art had passed to the use of conventional signs and pictures to clearly designate any idea or event. Before that time information was not intrusted to any portable material which should preserve its existence. It was inscribed upon stones, walls or buildings. Even before writing left the hieroglyphic state, it was intrusted to the paper formed from the Maguey plant by the Mexicans, and the few manuscripts that have come to us and the knowledge of the continuous *autos-dü-fé* practised by the Spanish conquerors and priests, lead us to think that early Indian tribes of the central portions of this continent must have had collections of their books or manuscripts at a period long before the earliest authentic information we have received from any oral or written statement regarding them. In a report for the Council of this Society, made by the writer April 26, 1876,<sup>1</sup> an account of Maya

<sup>1</sup>Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society (Old Series), April 26, 1876. Worcester: Charles Hamilton. pp. 45-48. Bishop Landa gives the following description of Maya manuscripts or books:

"They wrote their books on a large, highly decorated leaf, doubled in folds and enclosed between two boards, and they wrote on both sides in columns corresponding to the folds. The paper they made of the roots of a tree, and gave it a white varnish on which one could write well. This art was known to men of high rank, and because of their knowledge of it they were much esteemed; but they did not practise the art in public. This people also used certain characters or letters, with which they wrote in their books of their antiquities and their sciences: and by means of these and of figures, and by certain signs in their figures, they understood their writings, and made them understood and taught them. We found among them a great number of books of

manuscripts or books, taken from Landa's *Relacion des Choses de Yucatan*, was presented, and a detailed narration of the burning of large collections of these manuscripts and a description of the few that remain was given much at length, to establish reasonable grounds for supposing that the Western Hemisphere possessed collections of manuscripts or books at a very early date, as is found to be the case in other countries that have advanced sufficiently in civilization to be governed by civil rulers and priests, and to practise inter-communication by inscribed characters explicable by a generally accepted key. Although there is much traditional authority for the existence of libraries of Aztec and Maya books at the time of the conquest, no authentic proof of the discovery of such collections in any specified locality has been brought to light.

As the antiquity of the Indian tribes of the central and

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these letters of theirs, and because they contained nothing which had not superstitions and falsities of the devil, we burned them all: at which they were exceedingly sorrowful and troubled."

In Cogolludo's *Historia de Yucatan* there is an account of a destruction of Indian antiquities by the same Bishop Landa, of which we give a translation: "This Bishop, who passed for an illustrious saint among the priests of this province, was still an extravagant fanatic, and so hard hearted that he became cruel. One of the heaviest accusations against him, which his apologists could not deny or justify, was the famous *auto-da-fé*, in which he proceeded in a most arbitrary and despotic manner. Father Landa destroyed many precious memorials, which to-day might throw a brilliant light over our ancient history, still enveloped in an almost impenetrable chaos until the period of the conquest. Landa saw in books that he could not comprehend, cabalistic signs and invocations to the devil. Among the articles enumerated as being burnt by this celebrated priest were twenty-seven rolls of signs and hieroglyphics on deer-skins." Prescott writes: "The first Arch Bishop of Mexico was Juan de Zumarraga, a name that should be as immortal as that of Omar, collected these paintings from every quarter, especially from Tesucuo, the most cultivated capital of Anahuac, and the great depository of the national archives. He then caused them to be piled up in a mountain heap, as it was called by the Spanish writers themselves, in the market-place of Tlatelolco, and reduced them all to ashes." It is not then to be wondered at that so few Maya MSS. have escaped and are preserved when such a spirit of destruction animated the Spanish priests at the time of the conquest. Mr. Hubert Howe Bancroft, whom we are happy to recognize as a member of this Society, in a systematic and exhaustive treatment of the history and present condition of the Indians of the Pacific States, has presented a great amount of valuable information, much of which



southern portions of this continent is generally admitted to be very remote, the evidence there offered affords strong grounds for believing that here as in other countries, when ideas and records could be expressed by signs or drawings upon a portable material, they were made into the form of manuscripts or books and were kept apart for general or particular use.

Some of the oldest libraries probably exist in China, as there are good grounds for believing that writing, printing and the manufacture of paper in that country preceded the discoveries of the same arts in other parts of the world, and we know that Pekin has an ancient library of 300,000 volumes, and Yeddo, Japan, a collection of 150,000 volumes, which is rich in Chinese literature.

The ruins of a very ancient library are to be found in Assyria. It is said that

“The fragments of terra-cotta tablets containing these

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has never before been offered to the public; and in his wide view he comprehends important observations on Central American antiquities. He gives an account of existing ancient Maya Manuscripts or books: “Of the aboriginal Maya manuscripts, three specimens only, so far as I know have been preserved. There are the *Mexican Manuscript* No. 2, of the Imperial Library at Paris, the *Dresden Codex* and the *Manuscript Troano*. Of the first, we only know of its existence, and the similarity of its characters to those of the other two, and of the sculptured tablets. The *Dresden Codex* is preserved in the Royal Library of Dresden. The *Manuscript Troano* was found about the year 1865, in Madrid, by the Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg. Its name comes from that of its possessor in Madrid, Sr. Tro y Ortolano, and nothing whatever is known of its origin. The original is written on a strip of Maguey paper about 14 feet long and 9 inches wide, the surface of which is covered with a whitish varnish, on which the figures are painted in black, red, blue and brown. It is folded fan-like into 35 folds, presenting when shut much the appearance of a modern large octavo volume. The hieroglyphics cover both sides of the paper, and the writing is consequently divided into seventy pages, each about 5 x 9 inches, having been apparently executed after the paper was folded, so that the folding does not interfere with the written matter.”

It is probable that early manuscripts, as well as others of less antiquity than the above-mentioned, but of great historical importance, yet remain buried among the archives of the many churches and convents of Yucatan; and it is also true that a systematic search for them has never been prosecuted. A thorough examination of ecclesiastical and antiquarian collections in that country, would be a service to the students of archaeology which ought not to be longer deferred.

legends were found in the *débris* which covers the south-west and the north palaces at Konyunjik, the former being of the age of Sennacherib (717 B. C.), the latter belonging to the time Assurbanipal (670 B. C.). The tablets which are of all sizes, from one inch long to over a foot square are nearly all in fragments, and in consequence of the changes which have taken place in the ruins, the fragments of the same tablet are sometimes scattered widely apart. It appears from a consideration of the present positions of the fragments that they were originally in the upper chambers of the palace, and have fallen on the destruction of the building. In some of the lower chambers they covered the whole floor, in other cases they lay in groups or patches on the pavements, and there are occasional clusters of fragments at various heights in the earth which covers the buildings. The other fragments are scattered singly through all the upper earth which covers the floors and walls of the palace. Different fragments of the same tablets and cylinders are found in separate chambers which have no immediate connection with each other, showing that the present distribution of the fragments has nothing to do with the original position of the tablets. A consideration of the inscriptions shows that these tablets have been arranged according to their subjects in various positions in the libraries. Stories or subjects were commenced on tablets, and continued on other tablets of the same size and form, in some cases the number of tablets in a series and on a single subject amounting to over one hundred. Each subject or series of tablets had a title, the title being found by the first phrase or part of a phrase in the subject. Thus the series of Astrological tablets, numbering over seventy, bore the title, 'When the gods Anu, Elu,' this being the commencement of the first tablet. At the end of every tablet in each series was written its number in the work thus, 'The first tablet of when the gods Anu Elu,' 'The second tablet of when the gods Anu Elu;' and further to preserve the proper position of each tablet, every one except the last in a series has at the end a catch-phrase consisting of the first line of the following tablet. There were besides catalogues of these documents written like them on clay tablets, and other small oval tablets with titles upon them, apparently labels for the various series of works. All these arrangements show care taken with respect to

literary matters \* \*. Judging from the fragments discovered it is probable that there were in the Royal Library at Nineveh over 10,000 inscribed tablets, comprising almost every subject in ancient literature."<sup>1</sup>

Little is known of the libraries of ancient Greece. That there were early book collectors is certain, such as Pisistratus (560-527 B. C.), Eurypides (480-407 B. C.), Aristotle (384-322 B. C.), and Plato (429-347 B. C.). All of them were said to have possessed libraries, but we only know of the libraries of Greece from the inscriptions said to have been carved upon their portals, but nothing of their character and contents. Books were rare and expensive, written by hand, and each copy was made use of to entertain or instruct a large number of listeners.

The famous library of Alexandria, Egypt, was founded in the year 280 B. C., by Ptolemy Soter, at the suggestion either of Aristotle or Demetrius Phalereus. Its collections were increased by Ptolemy Philadelphus and his successors. Ptolemy Energetes obtained the original writings of Sophocles, Æschylus and Euripides on pledge, as the indispensable condition of permitting the purchase of Egyptian corn for the relief of a famine at Athens. The manuscripts were carefully copied at Alexandria and the copies were returned to the Athenians, who were allowed to retain the fifteen talents (\$14,500) which had guaranteed the safety of the originals. Seneca writes that there were 400,000 volumes (*rolls*) in the Alexandrian library. Aulus Gellius makes the number 700,000, and Eusebius says that in 247 B. C. the number of volumes was 100,000. The Orientalist Sylvestre de Sacy believes that there were four separate libraries at Alexandria: (1) Library of the Brucheion near the palace; (2) Library of the Serapæum near the temple of Serapis; (3) Library of the Sebasteum near the temple of Augustus; (4) Library of the school of Alexandria; and

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<sup>1</sup>The Chaldean Account of Genesis. By George Smith. 8vo. New York: Scribner & Sons, 1876, p. 19.

this view if correct will account for any discrepancy in statements regarding the contents of the library, whether considered as one great whole or regarded by its component parts. The names of five different librarians of the first great library are given, and embrace an epoch from the year 280 to 171 B. C. A large library at Alexandria was burned during the siege of that city by Julius Cæsar in the year 47 B. C., not designedly, but by the chances of war. However, history leaves us in doubt as to which of the collections suffered.

The next large library and a formidable rival of the great library of Alexandria was the Pergamus library, founded probably by Attalus I. who reigned from 241 to 197 B. C. It survived the Alexandria library but was sent to supply its place by Antony as a gift to Cleopatra, and at this time Plutarch says it contained 200,000 volumes. This library perhaps with its increased collections, or, according to Sylvestre de Sacy, that already mentioned as formed for the service of the school of Alexandria was destroyed by the Caliph Omar,<sup>1</sup> A. D. 642, on the conquest of the city by the Saracens.

As a historical fact, the accuracy of this statement has been frequently doubted. But whether it is better to take the assertions of four known oriental writers to its truth, or to disbelieve the story utterly from the silence of two other writers, and then to ascribe the destruction of the library to the early Christians, and taking advantage of the uncertainties of dates, to assert its falsity, is a question upon which those who wish to investigate this so called myth have authorities at command.

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<sup>1</sup>The Unseen World and other Essays. By John Fiske. Boston: J. H. Osgood & Co., 1876, p. 171.

Historical Difficulties. By Octave Delapierre. London: John Murray, 1868, p. 31.

A late article in *The Spectator*, London, June 2, 1888, No. 3,127, p. 749, by Malcolm MacColl, discusses the question exhaustively, and expresses a strong belief in the truth of the statement made by Abulpharagius.

Gibbon<sup>1</sup> thus speaks of this fanatical deed of Omar: "I should deceive the expectation of the reader, if I passed in silence the fate of the Alexandrian library, as it is described by the learned Abulpharagius. \* \* \* \* \* John Philoponus solicited a gift of the royal library, which alone among the spoils of Alexandria had not been appropriated by the visit and seal of the conqueror. Amron was inclined to gratify the wish, but his rigid integrity refused to alienate the minutest object without the consent of the Caliph. But the ignorant and fanatical Omar ordered that the library should be destroyed in the famous words, 'If these writings of the Greeks agree with the Koran they are useless and need not be preserved: if they disagree they are pernicious and ought to be destroyed.' The sentence was executed with blind obedience. The volumes of paper or parchment were distributed to the four baths of the city, and such was their incredible multitude that six months were barely sufficient for the consumption of this precious fuel. For my own part I am strongly tempted to deny both fact and consequence," says Gibbon in conclusion. The number of books destroyed in this holocaust of Omar is generally reported to be 700,000.

A buried library was discovered at Herculaneum in 1754 which had been hidden from the light of day since A. D. 79. The floor of one of the apartments devoted to this library was of mosaic work, and the books appeared to have been arranged in highly decorated presses. Careful exploration succeeded in collecting three hundred and thirty-seven Greek and eighteen Latin volumes or manuscripts, the latter of larger dimensions than the Greek and in worse condition, but the number of manuscripts and fragments originally deposited in the Naples Museum was one thousand six hundred and ninety-six. Of these eighty-eight had been unrolled and found to be legible, and three hundred

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<sup>1</sup>History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, by Edward Gibbon. London: John Murray, 1862. Svo., Vol. vii., p. 336.

and nineteen others had been operated upon and more or less unrolled, but were found to be illegible. From 1793 to 1844, eight folio volumes, reproductions from the Library of Herculaneum, have been published by the royal press of Naples. They contain two books of Epicurus, one of Philodemus with portions of other treatises by the same author, the works or parts of the works of Polystratus, Metrodorus and other Greek writers, and fragments of a Latin poem; supposed to be by Rabirius. The disinterred rolls when first discovered, appeared like roots of wood blackened and seeming to be only of one piece. One of them falling on the ground broke in the middle and many letters were observed, by which it was first known that the rolls were of papyrus. They were found enclosed in round wooden cases, so much burned that they could not be preserved. There is absolutely no information, other than what can be gathered from the ruins themselves, in regard to the libraries of Herculaneum and Pompeii; and in the latter place, as the manuscripts were more exposed to water and to the action of the air penetrating through the loose ashes, without such a barrier against it as existed in the consolidated tufa of Herculaneum, the carbonaceous parts of the papyrus have been entirely destroyed, and nothing is left but earthy matter.

Libraries among the Greeks at first consisted merely of archives, deposited for preservation in the temples of the gods. Pisistratus, the tyrant, has the honor of being the first to establish a public library, at Athens in 530 B. C., where were collected the works of Homer, and the Athenians themselves contributed to enlarge the collection. Aristotle is said to have founded a library, which after being transported to different parts of Greece became the library of Apellicon, which was taken possession of by Sylla at the capture of Athens and carried to Rome.

The earliest library at Rome seems to have been that of Æmilius Paulus about the year 168 B. C., and it was this

library to which the victorious Sylla added that captured in Greece. The library of Lucullus was both large and choice, and is said to have been opened to all comers. These, though open to the public, were essentially private libraries. Julius Cæsar, however, intended establishing a public library which should contain the largest possible collection of Latin and Greek books, but this beneficent design was frustrated by his assassination. To Asinius Pollio (84–4 B. C.) is ascribed the first foundation of an institution so useful to literature. He erected a public library in the atrium of the temple of Liberty on the Aventine Hill, and the administration of it was placed in the hands of Varro. Cæsar Augustus erected two public libraries, the Octavian and the Palatine, the former placed in the portico of Octavia in charge of Melissus, who had been manumitted by Augustus. The Palatine library was added by Augustus to the temple of Apollo which he had erected. There, were deposited the corrected book of the Sibyls, and from two ancient inscriptions quoted by Lipsius and Pitiscus, it seems that it consisted of two distinct collections, one Greek and the other Latin. Tiberius enlarged the libraries founded by Augustus, and began another collection in his own house, which he called the Tiberian library. Vespasian established a library in the temple of Peace, after the burning of Rome by Nero, and Domitian in the beginning of his reign restored at great expense those that had been destroyed by the conflagration, collecting books from every quarter, and sending writers to Alexandria to transcribe volumes in that collection, or to correct copies that had been made elsewhere. The most magnificent of the Roman libraries was that of the Emperor Ulpian Trajanus. It was erected in Trajan's forum, but was afterwards removed to the Viminal Hill to ornament the baths of Diocletian. This library possessed the so-called elephantine books, written upon tables of ivory, wherein were recorded the transactions of the emperors, proceedings of the senate and of Roman

magistrates and the affairs of the provinces. All these libraries and others at Rome, of a public nature, together with the many public and private collections in the principal cities of the Empire, were one after another destroyed by the irruption of the barbarians, or were burned by accidental cause, so that not one of them remains as a monument to the past.

In A. D. 330 Constantinople became the seat of art and literature under Constantine the Great, who gave much attention to the collection of a library, and after his death the work was continued by his successors, the number of manuscripts thus brought together varying from one hundred to six hundred thousand, according to different estimates. In A. D. 1453 came the siege and capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and probably the bulk of the collections perished; but it is certain that the great libraries of Europe owe to Constantinople some of their choicest treasures, which have been brought from that city. For many years it was believed that a closed building existed near the mosque of St. Sophia containing a large number of Greek, Hebrew and Latin manuscripts, but this expectation has proved to be ungrounded, and later examinations of the library of the Seraglio have failed to gratify the high hopes entertained. Still, in the library of the Holy Sepulchre at Constantinople in 1856, while it offered little aid to classical literature, were found many documents, which threw new light upon the history of the Greeks after the fall of the Byzantine Empire.

Libraries from the VIII. to the XV. century were mostly to be found in monasteries or in palaces, and the former repositories proved generally the safest. Though the ecclesiastics could not preserve pagan writings from sympathy with their religious theories, still their love of literature has preserved nearly all the Greek and Latin Classics which we now possess. The Benedictines were the first transcribers of the classics, and for generations the monastic



orders were the writers and publishers of the best productions of the Fathers of the Church, besides being the authors of school text-books and the translators and transcribers of the Bible.

It is very doubtful if the vague and various accounts we receive of the number of books in ancient libraries, represent the number of volumes or only of the rolls, each of which might contain merely a book of Homer, Virgil or Livy, which would greatly increase the list. It is probable that these rolls of the ancients were equivalent to little more than our modern parts of books or numbers of periodicals, and the contents of the largest libraries in ancient times should be much reduced in number, when estimated by the standard of the contents of modern collections.

Little is recorded of the use of books during the dark ages, between the fall of the Roman Empire and the revival of letters in the XV. century. Yet private libraries more or less accessible to students existed. Tonantius Ferreolus in the V. century made a remarkable collection in his castle of Prusiana, between Nismes and Clermont. Publius Consentius formed another collection at his villa near Narbonne, and Cassiodorus, minister of Theodore, King of the Goths, retired to a monastery which he had built, and there founded a library for the use of the monks about the middle of the VI. century. Later Charlemagne instituted a library near Lyons. Many others might be named who collected material for private study, especially those whose taste led them to religious investigations and to follow out curious historical points. Still the monks were the great collectors of the middle ages.

“Half a century before the taking of Constantinople by the Turks, learned men began to emigrate into Italy and elsewhere, and opened schools where they directed the public taste towards the study of the classic writers of Greece and Rome. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, new libraries sprang up in the independent Italian States, which were at once enriched by the importation of

Greek and Latin manuscripts from Constantinople. The taste for literature was thus revived and quickened, and collectors were sent to search for manuscripts in all directions; and in the course of a few years most of the ancient authors now known, were brought together in the libraries of Rome, Naples, Venice, Florence, Vienna and Paris. In the course of some eighty years a large proportion of the existing treasures of antiquity was made known to the world. Since that time, additional discoveries have been made, but the principal improvements of a subsequent date have consisted in the emendation of the texts of ancient authors, partly by a more extensive collation of manuscripts than the first editor possessed the means of making, and partly by the lights and aids of a cautious and judicious criticism."<sup>1</sup>

"In England in the XV. century there were a few ecclesiastics who saw the importance of books and who tried to found libraries, but the greater part of the clergy were very ignorant. They would not teach nor would they allow the common people to be taught. It was unlawful even as late as 1412 for laborers, farmers and mechanics to send their children to school. A great opportunity was presented in Wickliffe's translation of the Bible, which could have been made an effective means for diffusing the knowledge of letters among a religious people, but in 1415 it was enacted that those who read the scriptures in the mother tongue should be hanged for treason and burned for heresy. In spite of all these impediments there was a slow but positive diffusion of knowledge among English people. How the knowledge was communicated is not clear, for notices of common schools in England and indeed on the continent are infrequent and unsatisfactory. We have some curious relics of the substitutes for books used by the people. One of them is the horn book, by which the children were taught their letters and the Lord's Prayer. It consisted of a single leaf, containing on one side the alphabet large and small in black-letter, or in Roman, with perhaps a small regiment of monosyllables and the words of the Lord's Prayer. This leaf was usually set in wood with a slice of diaphanous horn in front; hence the name horn

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<sup>1</sup> *Libraries and Founders of Libraries.* By Edward Edwards. New York: G. P. Philes & Co., 1865, p. 29.

book. Generally there was a handle to hold it by, and this handle had usually a hole for a string, whereby the horn book was slung to the girdle of the scholar. It was frequently noticed by early chroniclers. One is mentioned from the time of Charles I.

“Books of the middle ages of large size were bound in boards never less than one-fourth inch, sometimes two inches in thickness. For books to receive hard usage, hog skin was selected as a covering for the boards. Books often received metal ornament and gilding, and to protect the ornament the boards were often panelled or sunk in the centre, and the corners and sometimes the entire outer edges of the cover were shielded with thick projecting plates of brass or copper. The book thus bound was too weighty to be held in the hand and was so full of angles and knobs that it could not be placed upon a flat table without danger of scratching it. For the safety of the books and the convenience of the reader, it was necessary that the book should be laid on an inclined desk or on a revolving lecturn. Some of these books had a mortise in the cover to the left, for the insertion of the hand when the book was held up for reading.”<sup>1</sup>

“St. Pamphilius, presbyter of Caesaria, and a martyr in the III. century, was the first known originator of a lending library. He was of eminent family, of great wealth, extensive learning and was ardently devoted to the scriptures, copies of which he loaned to some and gave to others, several of them having been transcribed with his own hand. In him were united the philosopher and the Christian. He withdrew himself from the glare of temporal grandeur and spent his life in the most disinterested benevolence. He erected a library at Caesaria which contained 30,000 volumes. This collection was made only for the promotion of religion, and to lend out to religiously disposed people. Jerome particularly mentions his collecting books for the purpose of lending them to be read. ‘This,’ says Dr. Adam Clarke, ‘is, if I mistake not, the first notice we have of a circulating library.’”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Invention of Printing. By Theo. L. De Vinne. New York: Francis Hart & Co., 1876. Svo., pp. 155-173.

<sup>2</sup>Encyclopaedia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote. By C. H. Timperley. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1842. Svo., p. 38.

Among the Benedictine collections the Monastery of Monte Cassino in central Italy was famous for its transcriptions, not only of theological works but of Virgil, Horace, Terence, the Idyls of Theocritus, the Fasti of Ovid, and many of the historians of Greece and Rome. The library of the Monastery was much resorted to by students, and though suffering at times from neglect it still contains a very valuable collection of manuscripts. The library of Fleury on the Loire was another famous collection of the Benedictines. But perhaps the most celebrated monkish library was that of Corbie in Picardy. It was founded in the VII. century by Queen Bathilda. Its collections were increased by gifts from Italian monasteries, and Corbie contributed by gifts or loan to the literary wants of other communities. Usually when books were borrowed other volumes were deposited in pledge. In some cases the books thus pledged remained in this library until its dispersion. Three several catalogues of the library at different epochs are still in existence. In 1795 what remained of its collections was removed to the National Library at Paris.

Canterbury in England is said to have enjoyed priority in possessing the first known library in the country, that of Christ Church monastery. Near the close of the VII. century Theodore of Tarsus is said to have added to the small foundation already made by St. Augustine. At the close of the XIII. century a catalogue of nearly 3,000 entries was made. The library of the monastery of St. Augustine at Canterbury is the subject of a XV. century catalogue now extant among the manuscripts of Trinity College, Dublin, which shows that besides its theological treasures, it was conspicuous for its English chronicles and for its numerous works in French romance. The libraries of Durham Abbey and of Peterborough contained, not only theology and church history, but very large collections of the Latin classics and many volumes of poetry of the middle

ages. Sir Richard Whittington built a noble library for the Franciscans in London in 1421 which became noted for the books collected. "It was called the Library of the Grey Friars, and was 129 ft. long by 31 ft. wide, fitted up with 28 desks and 8 double settees of wainscott, and was also ceiled with wainscott. In three years it was filled with books to the value of £556, of which Sir Richard contributed £400, and Dr. Thomas Winchelsey, a friar of the Augustines, supplied the rest. Thomas Walden, a learned Carmelite friar, who went by order of Henry V. to the Council of Constance and died approved in 1430, bequeathed to the same library as many manuscripts, written in capital Roman characters, as were then estimated at more than 2,000 pieces of gold, and adds that this library exceeded all others in London for multitude of books and antiquity of copies."<sup>1</sup>

Among the early private libraries, that of the Poet Petrarch (1304-1374) is to be noted. He was not only a collector, but he aspired to become the permanent founder of a library for Venice, and gave those books which he had or of which he might become possessed to the Church of St. Mark; but although he prescribed in his conditions in 1332 that "the books should not be sold or in any way misused, but preserved in a fitting place, safe from fire and from dampness," no attention seems to have been given to the precious gift of the poet, and the collection was allowed to fall into entire neglect; so that in the middle of the XVII. century only a few scanty remains were found in a long-deserted chamber. Boccaccio bequeathed his library, which was quite extensive, to the Augustinians of Florence in 1575. The library of the great Essayist Montaigne, 1533-1592, at his country seat in Perigord, was dispersed in some unknown way at his death, and only forty books can now be accounted for. Montaigne speaks of his house

<sup>1</sup>Encyclopædia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote. By C. H. Timperley. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1842. 8vo., p. 95.

and library in this way: "I see beneath me my garden, my court yard, my base court and most parts of my house. Now I turn over the leaves of one book, now of another. Sometimes I fall into a reverie; sometimes I dictate my dreams as you see whilst walking up and down. \* \* \* \* Here I pass the most of the days of my life, and most of the hours of the day. Close to it is a cabinet where in winter I can have a fire. \* \* \* \* From my writing table I can see all my books ranged on five tiers or shelves all around the room." As he was a diligent user of books many of them bear an appended critical summary or estimate and frequent marginal notes.

He chose to decorate his library with mottoes, and climbing a ladder, with the aid of a branding iron he burned his inscriptions, letter by letter with his own hands on the beams and rafters with infinite pains and perseverance. "Most characteristic are these mottoes. Solomon, Homer, Horace, Persius, Lucretius and Terence are all laid under contribution. But no writer is so often quoted in them as St. Paul, e. g. 'For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.' 'And, if a man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' 'I say \* \* \* to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think but to think soberly.' The '*Quantum est in rebus inane*,' and the '*O miseris hominum mentes*' of Lucretius: even the

*'Quid aeternis minorem  
Consiliis animum fatigas?'*

of Horace are but variations of the sad theme of The Preacher \* \* \* The inscriptions which adorned the other rafters are chiefly in Greek, with an admixture of Latin words in the same sentence; and seem for the most part to be of Montaigne's own adaptation. 'Amidst the see-saws of the intellect nothing is absolutely firm.' 'I do not

comprehend:—I pause:—I examine:—following the teachings of good sense.’ ‘No one ever possessed absolute certainty; no one ever will possess it.’ A third may be rendered by the words of our homely proverb ‘Much may be said on both sides.’ Another goes deeper, ‘Who knows but that what we call dying is beginning to live; and that what we term life is really death.’ Again, ‘It is not so much things that torment man, as the opinion he forms of things.’”<sup>1</sup> There are other mottoes recorded, but none which suggest introspection wiser than those we have cited. Montaigne died in 1592.

In an account of Old Lancashire Libraries<sup>2</sup> we find a notice of a relic of the past still remaining in the Bolton School Library.

“The books of which the Library at present consists are in an old oak chest which stands upon legs about three feet from the ground. The chest contains two shelves, divided down the centre with iron rods running along in front of each shelf, evidently for the purpose of chaining the books, and has folding doors opening in the centre. Along the outside above the doors runs this inscription, carved in the wood, ‘The gift of James Lever, Citizen of London, 1694.’ There is also a inventory of the books in these words ‘Books belonging to Bolton School Feb. 13, 1735, given by Mr. James Lever, Citizen of London, Dr. Morall and others, and chained by Henry Estenke in the Liberrary of yt Schoole.’ Eighteen volumes of the catalogue are still preserved in the book case and one folio volume of Fox’s Acts still retains its chain. \* \* \* Mr. John Crue in making an examination has discovered and clearly identified 56 of the 108 volumes originally deposited in the church, 49 vols. are perfect and 54 still have the chain attached to them. They are in poor condition and though one or two of them show signs of having been read, the bulk of them seemed to have suffered more from damp and dust than from use.”

<sup>1</sup> Libraries and Founders of Libraries. By Edward Edwards. New York: G. P. Philes & Co. 8vo., 1865, pp. 65-67.

<sup>2</sup> Old Church and School Libraries of Lancashire. By Richard Copley Christie. Chatham Society, 1885. 8vo., pp. 19-114.

“Humphrey Chetham in 1651 made provision for the Library and College at Manchester called by his name, and also for the establishment of five other libraries of Godly English Books in these words: ‘Also I do hereby give and bequeath the sum of two hundred pounds to be bestowed by my Executors in Godly English books such as Calvins, Prestons and Perkins works, comments and annotations of the Bible or some parts thereof, or such other books as the said Richard Johnson, John Tilveslay and Mr. Hollingsworth may think most proper for the edification of the common people, to be by the discretion of my said executors chained upon desks or to be fixed to the pillars, or in other convenient places in the parish churches of Manchester and Boulton in the Moors, and in the chapels of Tuston Walmesley and Gorten in said county of Lancaster one year next after my decease.’”

The effect of the general suppression of monasteries in England in 1537, and the consequent destruction of the libraries they contained, is well and concisely stated in the following extract:

“In the destruction of religious houses in the reign of Henry VIII. great stores of the highest value perished. He who neither spared man in his rage nor woman in his lust spared not the libraries of the church. For though it appears that Henry directed a commission to Leland, the antiquary, to search for and preserve such works belonging to the dissolved monasteries as might rescue remarkable English events and occurrences from oblivion, and though Leland acquainted Henry that he had conserved many good authors, the which otherwise had been lyke to have perished, to the no small incommodite of good letters; of which he tells him, part remayne in the most magnificent libraryes of your royal palaces; part also remayne in my custodie; yet he expressly recites that one of his purposes was to expel the crafty colored doctrine of a rowt of Romaine Bysshoppes’ which too plainly indicates that he conserved but little concerning ancient customs. \* \* \* Libraries were sold by mercenary men for anything they could get in that devastation of religious houses. But the antiquary makes mention of a merchant who bought two noble libraries about those times for forty shillings. The



books served him for no other use but waste paper, and that he had been ten years consuming them, and yet there remained still store enough for as many years more. Vast quantities and numbers of these books, banished with the monks and friars from their monasteries, were conveyed away and carried beyond the seas to booksellers there by whole ship loads, and a great many more were used in shops and kitchens."<sup>1</sup>

Having now briefly stated some of the facts concerning early books and Libraries, we shall be satisfied if we shall induce some abler writer to treat this interesting theme.

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<sup>1</sup>Encyclopædia of Literary and Typographical Anecdote. By C. H. Timperley. London: Henry G. Bohn, 1842. 8vo., p. 274.

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