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Cambridge Antiquarian Society.

OCTOBER 20, 1890, TO MAY 27, 1891,

WITH

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MADE TO THE SOCIETY.

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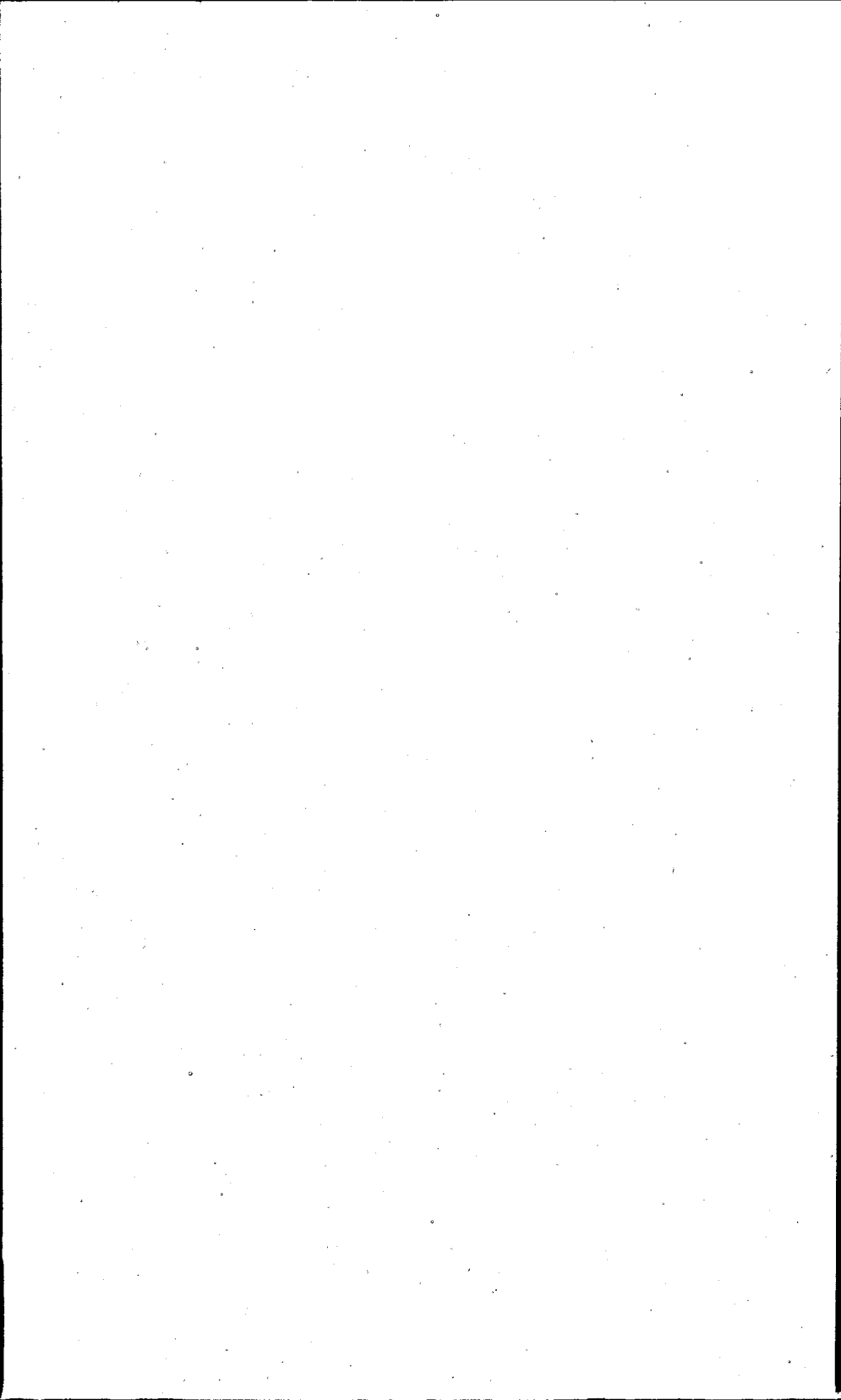
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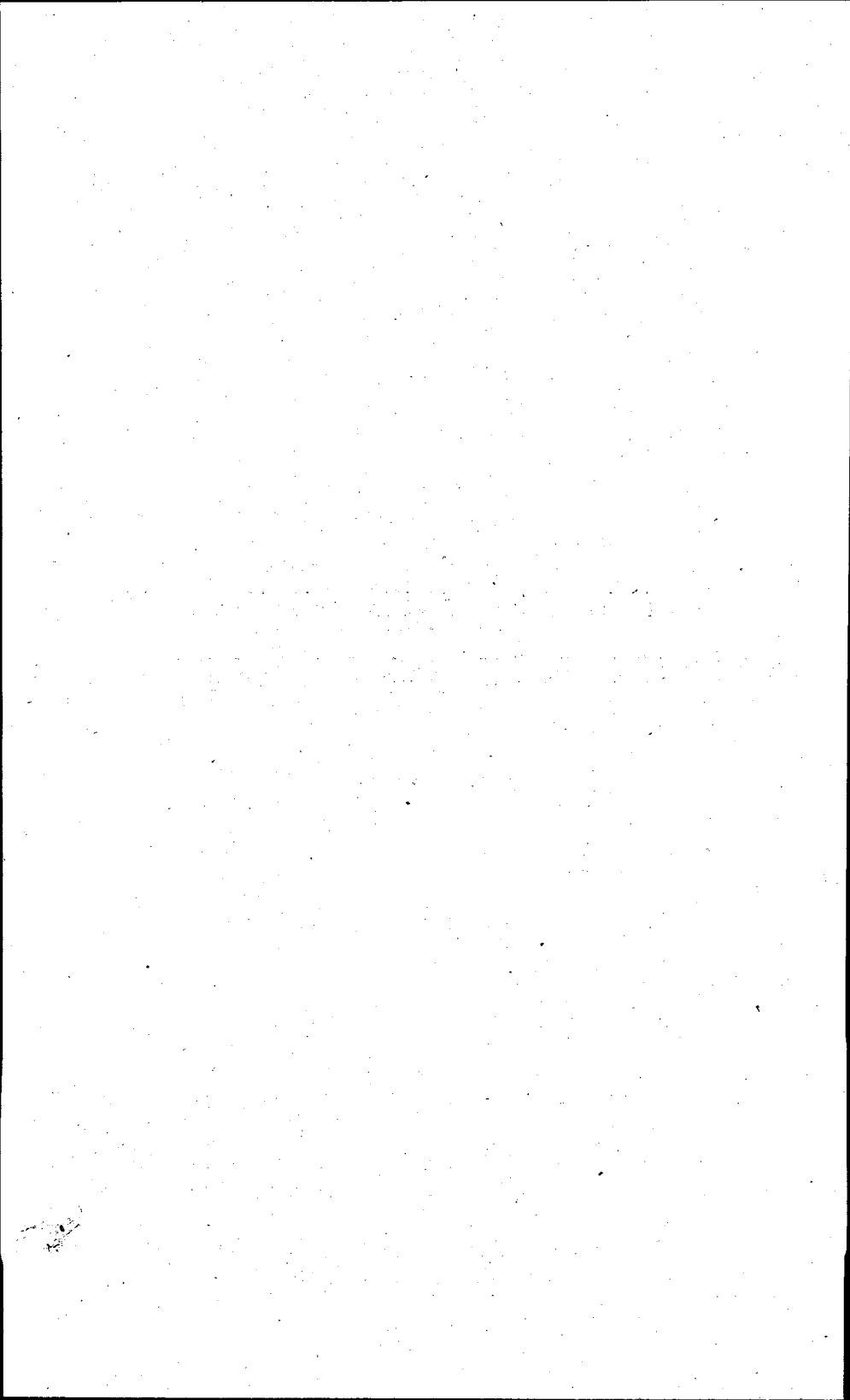
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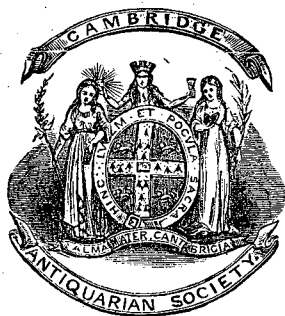


CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
PROCEEDINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS.



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OF THE
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WITH
COMMUNICATIONS
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VOL. VII.



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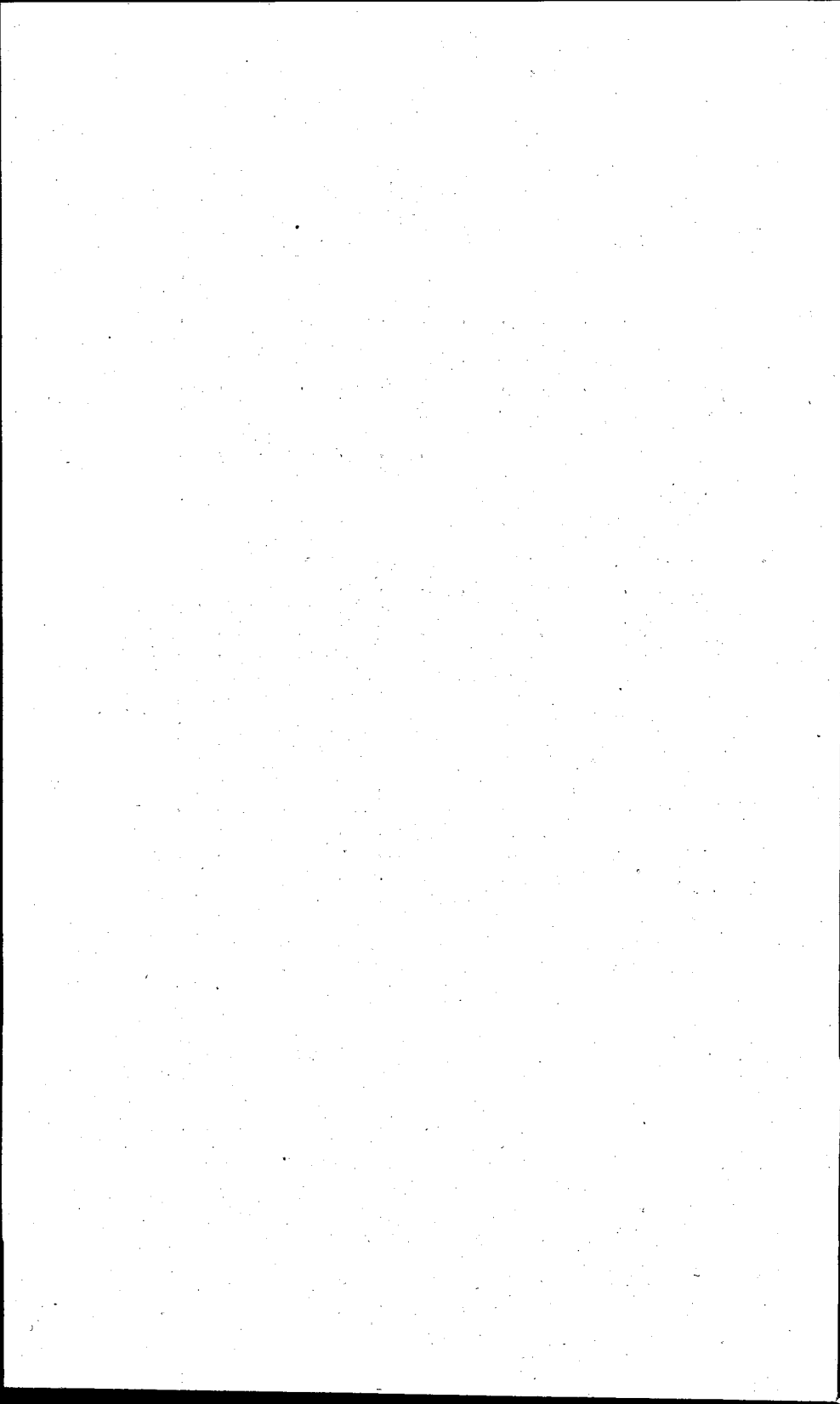
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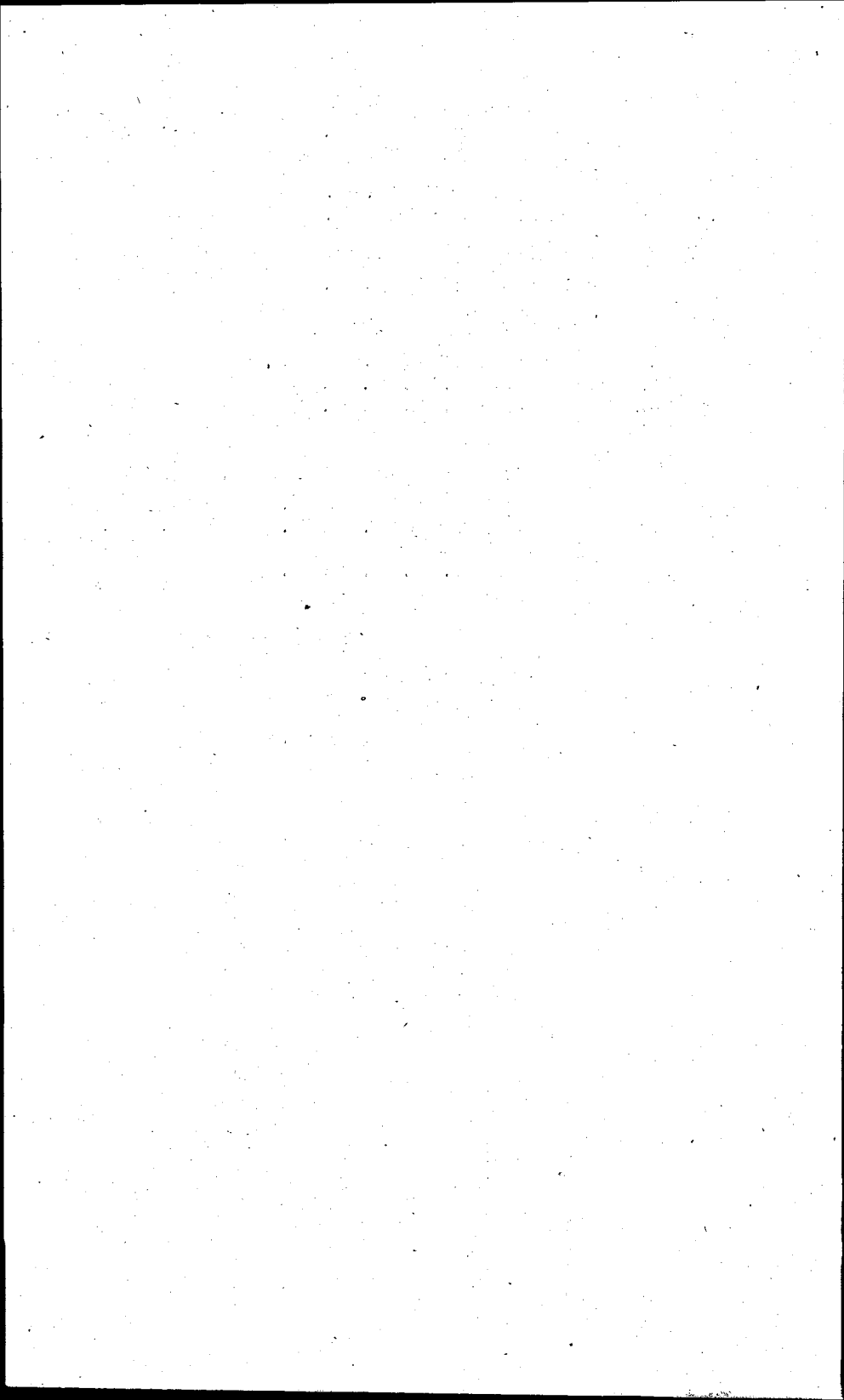
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WEDNESDAY, *November 19th*, 1890.

Professor HUGHES, M.A., President, in the chair.

The following new members were elected:

- Rev. Henry Barclay Swete, D.D., Gonville and Caius College, *Regius Professor of Divinity*.
- Edward Seymer Thompson, M.A., Christ's College.
- William Ingham Whitaker, B.A., Trinity College.
- John Edleston Ledsam Whitehead, M.A., Emmanuel College.

Mr E. GORDON DUFF exhibited a recently discovered fragment of an unknown book printed by John Lettou, on which he made the following remarks;

John Lettou was the first printer in London, and may be classed in some ways apart from all other English printers.

The works of Caxton, thanks to Mr Blades and Mr Bradshaw, have been fully chronicled, but Lettou has received no notice; Mr Bradshaw, who of all others could have given us information, has left few notes on this printer, so that such information as I can give you (and very meagre it is) comprises all that is known, at present, on the subject.

Lettou commenced to print in London in 1480, and began his career with three editions of John Kendale's Indulgence asking for temporal assistance, and promising spiritual reward, to such as would fight at the siege of Rhodes against the Turks. Caxton was the first to issue this Indulgence, but his edition was printed in a large ragged type which he used for English books; Lettou followed with his edition in a small, neat, compact type much more suitable for Indulgences, and it was probably this competition which caused Caxton to cast his smaller type.

Apart from these Indulgences, Lettou only printed two books.

1. Antonius Andreæ's Commentary on part of Aristotle,

which was printed in 1480; and

2. Thomas Wallensis upon the Psalms printed in 1481, but we have evidence in the two leaves exhibited this afternoon, lately found in Corpus Christi College, that a third book issued from his press, probably in 1481.

The rarity of Lettou's productions is extraordinary.

Of the Antonius Andreæ of 1480 one perfect and three imperfect copies are known. The perfect copy is in Sion College, and has only remained perfect owing to parts having been misbound.

Of the Wallensis only two perfect copies are known, in the University Library and the Bodleian.

Of the Indulgences: of one edition one copy is known; it is in the British Museum: the other two editions are known only from fragments, used to line the quires of a bible printed by Nicholas Götz of Cöln, but bound by Lettou, discovered by Mr Bradshaw in the Library of Jesus College.

There are two things to be noted about Lettou. His methods of work are very different from those of his contemporaries. He used a type quite distinct from, and opposed in character to, any English xvth century type; and so little is this type known that it is quite possible that there are other books printed by him which have escaped notice.

The type resembles very closely that used by Moravus at Naples, and by Christopher Arnoldus at Venice.

Dibdin calls Lettou's work very careless and slovenly, and the appearance of his type very rude; but it is really far in advance of any other English printer of the time, and shows that he must have had some experience before he settled in England.

Lettou was also a bookbinder, as most printers then were, but only two specimens of his work are known. One is in the Bodleian, the other, belonging to Jesus College, is now here.

After 1482 Lettou ceased printing by himself, and went into partnership with W. de Machlinia; from this press six books were issued.

About 1484 Lettou disappeared, and W. de Machlinia printed in future alone.

We know nothing about Lettou except what we learn from his books. He would seem from his name to have been a Frenchman, and he was assisted with money by a merchant named W. Wilcock.

There are exhibited to day:

Fragments of the Indulgences,

A leaf of the Ant. Andreae of 1480,

A copy of the Wallensis of 1481,

and the two leaves of the unknown book from Corpus. So then you have before you specimens of all Lettou's known productions.

Mr WOOD observed, with regard to the subject-matter of these fragments, that the book of which they formed part was clearly a collection of canonico-legal forms for use in Ecclesiastical Courts: such collections were very common in mediæval times under the name of *Ordines Judiciales*; they were the work of private doctors. The book was not, as had been suggested, the "*Regulæ, Constitutiones, et Ordinationes*" of the Roman Chancery. These fragments bore no resemblance to them whatever, though of course they were based upon the *Regulæ* so far as the latter applied to the subject-matter in hand. The *Regulæ* as a code were due to John XXII. They were enlarged by John XXIII. (whose edition is the first that was printed), by Martin V. (1417) and Nicolas V. (1447). The latter Pope practically settled them in the form in which they have since existed, though the present text is that of the edition confirmed and promulgated by Clement XIV., May 20, 1769. The *Regulæ* are 72 in number. They relate to the procedure of the Chancery to which is entrusted the drafting and expediting of Bulls and Briefs (Bouix, *De Curia Romana*, 266). They are in fact what we should call rules of Procedure. They, and the principles of Canonico-legal practice deducible from them, are applicable to the proceedings of Courts which acknowledge the Roman jurisdiction, except so far as they may be contrary to the provisions of Concordats or to local custom sustained by legitimate prescription (Bouix, 271). They are only of force during the lifetime of each Pope. The long-established custom has been for each new Pope on the day after his election to confirm and republish the *Regulæ*. (Rigantius, *De Reg. Canc.* l. p. 7.) The book from which these fragments came was for the use of the proctors and others practising in the Courts. They are common forms, intended to be filled in with the names of persons and places as each case might require. The blanks are here filled in with letters of the alphabet, except in one or two cases of officials, and of the name of Sixtus IV., and of the Church of Cologne. The fragments may be briefly described thus. One leaf begins

on the side which has been marked *a* with two concluding lines of some document. Then comes the form for a petition regarding admission to a benefice (in this case a chaplaincy in a cathedral) for which the petitioner had obtained a *gratia expectativa in communi forma pauperum*, i.e. he had during the lifetime of the previous incumbent obtained from the Pope a presentation, called technically *gratia expectativa*, and issued in this case "in forma pauperum" in contradistinction to the issue "in forma dignum." Amongst other things which are directed to be set out in full is the brief containing this *gratia*, and it is to be recited that it was granted by Sixtus IV. Usage requires that this form was intended to be used during the pontificate of Sixtus IV., i.e. between 1471 and 1484, otherwise there would have been an allegation of a brief or grace technically called "*Rationi congruit*." Hence it appears that these fragments were printed between those two dates. The next form is for use in a suit concerning disturbance in the quiet enjoyment of a benefice. The third is concerning diminution in the fruits of a benefice by what the canonists call "*spoliatio*" or "*spolium*." This form is broken off after a few lines by the conclusion of this leaf. The other leaf consists entirely of one document with the exception of four words at the commencement. The document is entire. It is an application "*super attemptatis*," i.e. to restrain the defendant from certain acts and from taking further proceedings during the hearing of the cause or during appeal, and concludes by praying sentence of excommunication against him should he offend. In this form there is mention of "Jo. officialis Coloniensis," and he is also referred to as "officialis curiæ C." i.e. no doubt Cologne. It is suggested that this mention of Cologne would indicate that this book of forms was intended for use in the Province of Cologne. In the other forms when a diocese is mentioned it is simply designated the diocese of N. so as to be applicable to any diocese of the province. But in this form, which was for use in the Appeal Court of the Province (corresponding to the Canterbury Court of Arches), there was no reason for putting simply a letter, as no other name would have to be inserted except Cologne. A confirmation of this suggestion is derivable from certain words in the first-named form, "*publicum imperiali auctoritate notarium*," which of course would at that period only be applicable to Germany. It is suggested then as probable that these fragments were printed by Lettou before he came to England (circ. 1480) and that they were most likely printed at Cologne. If this supposition be correct, it is interesting as giving a little additional glimpse at Lettou's history, as well as showing us a fragment of his work done elsewhere than in London.

Professor MIDDLETON exhibited a large signet in the form of a very massive silver thumb-ring, English work, of the 15th century, which he described as follows:

On the *bezel*, which is octagonal in shape, are, deeply incised, the letters M D, probably the initials of the owner. Over the letters is a crown, and round them are three small ornamental branches.

On the inside of the ring, extending all round the hoop, is the following inscription :

✠OGA✠OHORA✠OGVM✠

a meaningless combination of letters, such as often occur on medieval rings, but having a supposed cabalistic or magical virtue. Inscriptions of this class are often derived from Hebrew words, in a highly blundered form, through repeated copying and recopying.

The ring is a very fine and well preserved example of medieval jewellery. It has been first cast, and then the device and letters have been cut on it. On one of the shoulders of the ring is a minute star, probably a maker's mark.

Mr J. W. CLARK exhibited an embroidered canopy, on which he commented as follows :

The canopy which I have the pleasure of exhibiting to the Society this afternoon is said by tradition to have been carried over Queen Elizabeth on the occasion of her visit to the University in 1564.

Nichols¹ printed two accounts of this visit. The writer of what I will term the first account, after describing the Queen's progress on horseback to the west door of King's College Chapel, and the speech of the Public Orator, says: "Then she alighted from her horse, and, asking of what degree every Doctor was, offered her hand to be kissed. And then four of the principal Doctors, viz. Edmund Hawford, S.T.P., Master of Christ's College, and at that time Vice-Chancellor; Andrew Perne, S.T.P., Master of Peter House; John Porie, Master of Corpus Christi College; and Francis Newton, S.T.P., bearing a canopy, she, under the same, entred into the Church, and kneeled down at the place appointed, between the two

¹ *The Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. 1823, i. 151—189.

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