The Archaeological Journal.

MARCH, 1871.

EARLY PRINTED BOOKS.[1]

By J. WINTER JONES, F.S.A., Principal Librarian and Secretary of the British Museum.

THE history of printing is a large subject, comprehending many branches, each of which would require much more time for its discussion than could be given to it on the present occasion. I do not, therefore, propose to do more than to touch upon a few of the many interesting points it involves, and to offer such remarks as appear to me to admit of the widest application.

Learned and ingenious men have occupied themselves from time to time during upwards of three hundred years in endeavouring to decide upon the country which is entitled to the honor of being the birth-place of printing. Dutchmen have been loud in asserting the claims of Haarlem, and Germans have been no less earnest on behalf of Mentz; while the learned of other countries have advocated the claims of either city. A Dutchman, Hadrianus Junius, commenced the discussion about 1569 by bringing forward arguments and documents in favour of Haarlem. Another Dutchman, Dr. Van der Linde, seems likely to terminate the discussion by his exhaustive work, De Haarlemsche Costerlegende wetenschappelijk ondersocht, a second edition of which was published in 1870, in which he proves that Junius's facts are no facts, that many of his documents are myths, that Haarlem has no claim at all, and that all the evidence is in favour of Mentz. Under these circumstances I may well pass on to other subjects, merely stating that one great argument in favour of Dr. Linde's views is that the

[1] A discourse delivered May 5, 1871, upon the collection of Printed Books exhibited in the rooms of the Institute.

earliest books known bearing dates and the names of printers were produced at Mentz and not at Haarlem.

As my object is to confine myself as much as possible to established facts, I shall pass over the commonly received history of the manner in which moveable types were first produced, namely, that they were first cut in wood, of course slowly and laboriously, that they were then cut still more laboriously in metal, and that the third step was the discovery of the art of cutting punches and casting types in a matrix. We are told on the one hand that some of the earliest books were certainly printed from wooden types, while others assert that to cut wooden types for printing books would be practically impossible. I may say that I have long entertained this latter opinion.

However produced, the first printing types were generally cut in imitation of the recognized or set hand-writing of the period and country, as can be verified by reference to manuscripts. The result of this practice is that the early specimens of printing display a striking national character, and one of the most interesting features of an exhibition of the early specimens of the presses of different countries is the opportunity which such an exhibition affords of tracing this national individuality.

Of the artists by whom the types were cut we know little; but it is most probable that goldsmiths, who were the workers in metal of those days, were employed for this important purpose. The best engravers in metal would be the best able to cut the types or punches. And this I believe to be the true, or at least one great cause of the connection between Gutenberg and Fust, and not merely Gutenberg's poverty, as is generally stated. Fust was a goldsmith, and his artistic skill would be more important even than his money. We get occasional glimpses of this practice. In an action brought against Gutenberg in 1439 by the representatives of a deceased partner, one Hans Dünne, a goldsmith, gave evidence to the effect that three years previously, or thereabouts, he had earned from Gutenberg about 100 florins for work relating to printing.

Again, the first book printed at Florence with a date, perhaps the first book printed there at all, was entitled Servii Commentarii in Virgilium: it was commenced in 1471, and finished in October, 1472. The printer, Bernardo

Cennini, is described as *Aurifex omnium judicio præstantissimus.*

In 1501 Aldus printed his first edition of Virgil, using for it his beautiful Italic type for the first time, and at the end of his preface adds these three lines, which he entitles—

" In grammatoglyptæ laudem."

Qui Graiis dedit Aldus, en Latinis
Dat nunc grammata, scalpta Dædaleis
Francisci manibus Bononiensis.

And Soncino, in the dedication to Duke Valentino of his edition of the lyric poems of Petrarch, states that all the types used by Aldus, as well Greek as Hebrew and Latin, had been cut by this Francesco da Bologna.

The question who was Francesco da Bologna had never been decided until Sir Anthony Panizzi, in a monograph privately printed in 1858, proved that Francesco da Bologna and Francesco Raibolini, commonly called Francia, the celebrated painter, were one and the same person; and it is well known that Francia was a goldsmith, and was in the habit of signing his pictures with his name and description, " Aurifaber " and " Aurifex."

I have already said that the earliest types generally present a close imitation of the hand-writing of the period. There are, however, some exceptions to this rule. The most striking is the first book printed in Paris. It was produced by three Germans, named Michal Crantz, Ulric Gering and Martin Freiburger, and was printed at the Sorbonne about 1470. It consists of the Liber Epistolarum of Gasparinus Barzizius, and is printed in the Roman character. The book concludes with the following lines :—

Primos ecce libros quos hæc industria finxit
Francorum in terris ædibus atque tuis.
Michael, Udalricus, Martinusque magistri
Hos impresserunt, ac facient alios.

And they did so, printing several others in the Roman character; but as other printers established themselves in Paris the practice was discontinued, and the Gothic character prevailed. In Germany the Roman character was not introduced until 1472, when Gunther Zainer, of Augsburg, used it for his edition of the Etymologiæ of Isidore of Seville.

In Italy the first book printed in Roman type is the Epistolæ ad familiares of Cicero, printed at Rome by Sweynheim and Pannartz in 1467. This was also the first book printed in Rome. In England the Roman character was first used by Pynson in 1509, who printed in that type some parts of his Sermo Fratris Hieronymi de Ferrara; and his edition of the Oratio Ricardi Pacei, printed in 1518, is said to be the first book in which it is wholly used in England.

The processes of the early printers would naturally be simple. They did not use large sheets of paper and fold them twice or more to form quartos, octavos, &c., but merely folded their paper once, thus making folios or quartos (to use modern terms) according to the size of the sheet of paper. Three or more of these sheets were laid one within another, and formed gatherings or quires, each sheet after the first in each gathering being called an inlay. This printing by gatherings was adopted for the convenience of binding. The consequence of this practice would be that the printer would either print one page at a time or two, but no more. If two he would have to divide the matter to be printed into portions sufficient for twelve, sixteen, or twenty pages, according to the number of sheets in each gathering, and then print, say the first and the twelfth, then the second and the eleventh, and so on, and the result of this practice is occasionally seen in an inequality in the length of the pages, particularly in the centre inlay, which would be printed last, and therefore either have too much or too little matter if the calculation of the necessary quantity had not been exact.

The question of punctuation is one which deserves a few minutes' attention. For some years after the introduction of printing the ordinary practice in this respect was very simple. A straight stroke passing through the line obliquely generally indicated a pause, and a full point closed a paragraph. A colon was occasionally used. The exceptions to this practice were few. The Lactantius, printed at the monastery of Subiaco, in the Campagna di Roma, in 1465, the first book printed in Italy, has a full point, colon, and note of interrogation. There are also two books which are in advance of all others in this respect. One is the Liber Epistolarum of Gasparinus, before mentioned as being the first book printed in France, about 1470. It contains the full point, semicolon, comma, parenthesis, note of interroga-

tion, and note of admiration. But the semicolon appears to have more force than the full point, for while it is used reversed indiscriminately with the full point in the middle or at the end of a sentence, it is alone used at the end of a chapter or of a heading to a chapter, and then turned as we use it now. The other early book with these points is the Philogenia of Ugolino Pisani, a dramatic composition in ten acts, printed in Germany between the years 1470 and 1480.

The necessity of some guide for the proper arrangement of the leaves was not met until the year 1470. In that year Arnoldus Verhoernen, of Cologne, introduced pagination by numbering the leaves of his edition of the Sermo ad Populum. In the following year he printed the Liber de remediis utriusque fortunæ of Adrianus Carthusianus, in which he placed the pagination in the centre of the right margin of each leaf.

Signatures were used by the copyists of manuscripts long before the introduction of printing, but the early printers neglected them. The earliest instance we have of them is in the Præceptorium divinæ legis of Joannes Nider, printed at Cologne by Johan Koelhof in 1472.

Catchwords were introduced about the same time in the first edition of Tacitus, printed by Vindelin de Spira at Venice, and it is possible that the signatures were not considered necessary where catchwords were used, they answering the same purpose, that of showing the proper sequence of the leaves. There was not at this early period any uniformity of practice among printers, nor was any improvement introduced by one followed by others. There does not in fact appear to have been much communication between the printers of different countries or localities.

The last step to the completion of a book according to modern notions was made in 1487, by the printing of the "Confessionale" of Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, with a title-page. This book was printed probably by Martin Flach at Strasburg. But an approach to a title-page was made as early as 1476, at Venice, by Bernardus Pictor, Petrus Loslein, and Erhardus Ratdolt, who in that year printed an edition of the Calendarium of Johann Müller (commonly called Regiomontanus or Monteregio from the fact that he was a native of Königsberg), to which they prefixed a leaf containing ten lines of Latin verse, ending with

the date and names of the printers. This was one of the earliest calendars, and the title or announcement is so peculiar that I venture to read it in full :—

Aureus hic liber est, non est pretiosior ulla
Gemma Calendario, quod docet istud opus
Aureus hic numerus, lunæ, solisque labores
Monstrantur facile : cunctaque signa poli :
Quotquot sub hoc libro terræ per longa regantur
Tempora : quisque dies, mensis et annus erit.
Scitur in instanti quæcunque sit hora diei.
Hunc emat astrologus qui velit esse cito.
Hoc Ioannes opus regio de monte probatum
Composuit, tota notus in Italia.
Quod Veneta impressum fuit in tellure per illos
Inferius quorum nomine picta loco.
1476.

Then follow the names of the printers, the whole enclosed in an elegant floral border. In the same year they printed an Italian and a German edition of the same work with a similar title. I am not aware that this example was repeated or followed by other printers until the year 1487, as mentioned above.

I have already said that established facts are all in favour of Mentz being entitled to the honour of having produced the earliest specimens of typography. I may here enumerate the few books of the date of which there can be no doubt up to the year 1462. A Bible, a copy of which, found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, and therefore called the Mazarine Bible, first attracted the attention of bibliographers, although printed without the name of either place or printer, is by universal consent assigned to Mentz, and is generally considered to have issued from the press of Gutenberg and Fust. The date is approximatively proved by a contemporaneous memorandum written in the copy in the National Library in Paris to the effect that that copy was illuminated, bound, and completed by Henry Cremer, Vicar of the Collegiate Church of St. Stephen, in Mentz, in the year 1456. The book may, therefore, be reasonably supposed to have been printed not later than 1455, and probably three or four years earlier. The earliest document with a date is an Indulgence granted by Pope Nicholas V. to all those who should aid the King of Cyprus against the Turks, and is dated 1455. This was most probably printed in Mentz. The next book is commonly called the Mentz

Psalter, because printed in that city, and bears date 1457. It is the first book which was dated, and was printed by Fust and Schœffer. In the initial letters of this book we have the earliest specimen of printing in colours, and the earliest and for many years almost the only specimen of printing initial letters at all, for the custom long prevailed of leaving out the initial letters of paragraphs, or indicating them by a small letter, in order that they might be filled in by the illuminator. Two years afterwards, that is, in the month of August, 1459, a second edition of this psalter was printed in Mentz, also with a date, and in the same year, in the month of October, was printed the Rationale divinorum officiorum of Durandus, Bishop of Meaux. This was followed, in the year 1460, by the Catholicon of Giovanni Balbi, commonly called Joannes de Janua, the printing of which is attributed to Gutenberg, and the Constitutiones Clementis Papæ, printed by Fust and Schœffer. In the year 1462 was produced the first Bible with a date, printed by Fust and Schœffer at Mentz, and also a German version.

This list includes all the books which bear a date up to the year 1462; others may have been printed during the period, but the date can only be conjectured.

No book is known bearing the date of 1463 or 1464. This circumstance is attributed to the war between Adolph von Nassau and Diether von Isenburg, the two rival archbishops of Mentz. The former obtained possession of Mentz, and sacked the city in 1462. The printers were dispersed, and printing slumbered for the next two years. The wandering printers settled in different places on the continent, spreading a knowledge of their art wherever they went, but especially in Italy. In Rome there were more than twenty Germans who printed, from the year 1465 to 1480. In Venice there were upwards of twenty Germans, whose books are dated from 1469 to 1480. In Naples there were eight Germans and one Belgian, and in Padua eight Germans and one Dutchman up to the year 1480. There were about 110 Germans exercising their craft prior to the year 1480 in twenty-seven different cities. About the year 1480 there were established in Italy alone not less than forty printing presses in as many places, whilst in Germany there were only fifteen. Printing was introduced also into France and Spain by the Germans, who likewise came into England and

worked at Oxford and in London, and possibly also at St. Albans, soon after Caxton set up his press in Westminster Abbey.

Some writers have laid great stress upon paper marks, and have founded upon them theories as to the country in which certain books may have been printed. But no guides could be more fallacious. A great deal of paper was made in Italy and in the Low Countries, and supplied thence to Germany, France, and England. The first paper mill erected in England was established at Hertford, by one John Tate, in the reign of Henry VII.; and the first book printed on English-made paper was John Trevisa's English translation of the De Proprietatibus Rerum of Bartholomeus de Glantvilla, printed by Wynkyn de Worde at Westminster, about the year 1495, at least twenty years after the introduction of printing into England.

Block books, that is, books the pages of which were printed from blocks of wood, having the subjects of the pages carved or cut upon them, possess a peculiar interest, as being the immediate precursors of books printed from moveable types. Those that have come down to us are somewhat numerous, when we consider the laborious nature of their production—between thirty and forty, without reckoning specimens of xylography, consisting of a single plate. These latter have generally been preserved by having been pasted inside the covers of books. Impressions were not obtained by means of printing-presses; but, after the face of the block had been inked, the paper was laid upon it, and the impression was obtained by rubbing the back of the paper with an instrument made for the purpose.

The earliest specimen of a *block* impression known—that is, the earliest specimen of the date of which there is no doubt—is a representation of St. Christopher bearing the infant Saviour over a stream, with the date 1423. This piece was discovered by the learned German, Heinecken, in the Carthusian monastery of Buxheim, near Memmingen, and is now in the library of Lord Spencer. In 1844 there was announced the discovery, at Malines, of a wood engraving, in the lid of an old coffer, representing the Virgin and Child, surrounded by the saints Catherine, Barbara, Dorothea, and Margaret, and bearing the date 1418. This was immediately secured for the Royal Library at Brussels, by

the Baron de Reiffenberg, who published a long and interesting account of it. The genuineness of the date of this piece has, however, been doubted by several competent judges, and it is not now, I believe, shown to visitors. The Christopher may still, therefore, be regarded as the earliest-dated block impression known.

The latest xylographic production is a small work consisting of sixty-three leaves, entitled Opera Nova Contemplativa: Figure del Testamento Vecchio; printed at Venice, by Giovanni Andrea Vavassore, about the year 1510. The latest, with a date, is a German edition of the Biblia Pauperum, dated 1475. During the intermediate period, from 1423, a great number of block books were produced, of which the most popular were the Biblia Pauperum and the Ars Moriendi, each of which passed through several editions.

One of the rarest block books is the Defensorium Inviolatæ Virginitatis Beatæ Mariæ Virginis, printed in 1471. It consists of twenty-seven leaves, twenty-three of which contain two subjects each, with descriptive lines beneath, proving the possibility of the immaculate conception by reference to the wonders of nature and remarkable events chronicled in Albertus Magnus and other writers, Christian and pagan; such as—that if a newly born child can open locks with a touch—if the companions of Diomedes were turned into birds—if a lion can resuscitate its offspring by roaring, &c.—why should not a virgin conceive?

Of all the block books the Biblia Pauperum is the largest and the most important. It consists of forty plates, printed, or rather taken off, on one side of the paper, in the manner above described. It has passed through several editions, which are evidently copies by different artists, and in one or two instances show the style of different countries. It is supposed, and I believe correctly, that all the known exemplars were produced in the fifteenth century. The object of the work is to show the foreshadowing of the leading incidents in the life of our Saviour by prophecies and typical events in the Old Testament. Each plate contains a central picture of an incident in the life of Christ, with three rhyming Latin verses in explanation underneath, and, at each corner, a text from one of the Prophets. The typical events in the Old Testament are represented in two pictures, with the text, one on either side of the central design. The result

is a pictorial exposition of Gospel history, calculated to impress itself lastingly on the memory. The same intention is shown in works of the thirteenth century, only found in manuscript. In these, Bible history is explained by pictorial designs, accompanied by the texts, each subject being represented in two pictures—the type and antitype.

In all the printed impressions this arrangement of the three subjects prevails, and is generally followed in the manuscripts, of which there are several, dating from the end of the fourteenth century downwards. There have been many speculations as to the original designer of this book, but I am not aware that these speculations have led to any practical conclusion. The oldest compositions of which I am aware, of the same character as those in the Biblia Pauperum, are representations in enamel on an Antependium in the St. Leopold Chapel at Klosterneuburg, a town in the Archduchy of Austria, not far from Vienna. This Antependium, or altar front, contained originally forty-five subjects in enamel, taken from the Old and New Testaments, and so arranged vertically in triplets, that the first painting represents a subject before the Law, the second under grace, and the third under the Law, in the order I have before mentioned with respect to the subjects in the Biblia Pauperum. The work was executed by Nicolas de Verdun, in the year 1181. In 1329 it was removed from before the altar and placed on the altar, and six new subjects were added, making the number fifty-one. This splendid work has been minutely described, in 1844, by Joseph Arneth, then Director of the Department of Coins and Antiquities at Vienna, and the subjects have been carefully lithographed, at the expense of Albert Camesina, an accomplished connoisseur and artist of Vienna. Three of the subjects taken from this Antependium, viz., Joseph's Brethren putting him into the Pit, our Saviour being laid in the Tomb, and Jonah being cast out of the Ship and swallowed up by the Whale, occur in precisely the same order in the printed Biblia Pauperum, although the style of execution differs according to the different style of art prevailing in the respective ages of the two works.

There is little probability that the author or designer of the Biblia Pauperum will ever be discovered. In the Royal Library at Hanover there is an edition in which occurs the

following memorandum :—"S. Ansgarius est autor hujus libri." Ansgarius was a monk (subsequently Archbishop of Hamburg), who lived at the commencement of the ninth century, and may have composed *a* Biblia Pauperum ; but it does not follow that his Biblia Pauperum was the same as the block book so called, printed in the fifteenth century. In the British Museum there are two manuscripts of the fifteenth century, called Biblia Pauperum, but they again are totally different from the printed block book. Neither of them has illustrations. One consists of 212 Latin hexameters, describing the leading events of the Bible, with other short abstracts, and was evidently intended as a sort of Memoria Technica, and designed most probably to assist both preachers and laymen in remembering the events of the Bible in their chronological order. A memorandum at the head of this manuscript states that the author was Alexander Villa Deus, a Franciscan friar. This writer lived in the middle of the thirteenth century. The other manuscript, also called Biblia Pauperum, is an enumeration of virtues and vices, and contains, under each head, abstracts of Scripture passages bearing upon the subject of it. This also would appear to have been a guide or text-book for preachers. We learn from Lessing, in his Zur Geschichte und Literatur, that in the abbey at Ilirschau, in Würtemberg (destroyed by the French in 1692), there were forty windows in the abbey cloisters, on which were represented the same subjects as those in the Biblia Pauperum, and in exactly the same order. Lessing, however, was not able to trace the age of these windows further back than the year 1491, so that we are left in a state of uncertainty whether the Block book was copied from the windows or the windows from the Block book.

It is singular that the authorship of a work which must in its day have been so popular should rest in such total obscurity, and that even the meaning of the name "Biblia Pauperum" should be uncertain.

Books at all times have been produced more frequently to meet a want than to cultivate or to guide the taste. But this was more true in the early age of the discovery of the art of printing than it is now. The first books show the peculiar tendencies and phases of thought in each nation,—jurisprudence and speculative philosophy in one ; classical learning and poetry in another ; history and romance in a

third; and theology in all. It is not my purpose to indulge in general remarks, and if it were I need not expatiate on the flood of light diffused over the world by the introduction of printing. The discovery was permitted in God's own time. But in this, as in other branches of our subject, I may be permitted to allude to a few facts.

About the year 1360, Wycliffe finished his translation of the Scriptures into English. Copies of this translation were made by his followers, and circulated as widely as circumstances would permit. But the work was long and laborious, and although carried on with the energy which characterises the disseminators of new opinions, it may be safely asserted that during the forty years from 1360 to 1400 the number could not have exceeded a few hundreds. Contrast this with what follows, and we may form a tolerably accurate conjecture of what the number would have been had the art of printing then been known. About 100 years later (between 1450 and 1460) the art of printing was perfected, and the Bible was one of the first books issued. Panzer, in his Annales Typographici, records not less than 232 editions of the Scriptures and portions of the Scriptures which were printed during the forty years from 1460 to 1500; and if we assume the number of each edition to have been not more than 500 (and this I believe to be a moderate estimate) we have a result of about 116,000 copies. Of these editions, 155 were Latin, 39 Hebrew, 5 Dutch, 6 Bohemian, 7 French, 3 Greek, 2 Spanish, and 15 Italian. German, Dutch, Italian, and Bohemian were the only languages in which translations of the entire Scriptures were printed during the fifteenth century. Portions of the Scriptures in English were printed for the first time by Caxton in his Golden Legend of 1483. In his translation of verse 7 of the 3rd chapter of Genesis he anticipated the peculiar term which has procured for the Geneva Bible, printed in 1560, the name of the Breeches Bible. Caxton says, "And they toke figge levis and sewed them togyder in maner of brechis." And Caxton again was anticipated by Wycliffe, who says, "They soweden togidre leeves of a fige tree and maden hem brechis."

Until the year 1528 the Bible had always been printed in paragraphs. The division into verses was made by Santès Pagnino, in his Latin Bible of 1528, and this example was

followed in the Bible printed at Geneva by Rouland Hall in 1560, and which was also the first Bible printed in Roman letters.

Although so many editions of the Scriptures were produced within the fifteenth century, they afford but a very imperfect notion of the wonderful activity of the printing press during that period. Hain, in his Repertorium Bibliographicum, enumerates no less than 16,299 works and editions which issued prior to the year 1500; and we may safely assert that if a new edition of Hain's work were published now, large additions would have to be made to it.

Before bringing these remarks to a close, I may be allowed to mention a few unconnected particulars of a more specially bibliographical nature. We have already seen that the earliest printed book which has come down to us was the Bible. Of the profane classics the first which was printed was the De Officiis of Cicero, printed at Mentz in 1465 by Fust and Schœffer. This was also one of the first two books in which Greek type was used, the other being the edition of Lactantius, printed at Subiaco also in 1465. The first Greek classic was the edition of Æsop's Fables, printed at Milan about 1480, and the first *book* printed in Greek was the Greek Grammar of Lascaris, printed at Milan by Dionysius Paravisini, in 1476. Homer was not printed until 1488, when it was produced at Florence in two splendid folio volumes, and in precisely the same character as that used for the Lascaris and Æsop printed at Milan. It is most probable that the type used at Milan was afterwards transferred to Florence. An edition of the Psalms was printed at Milan in 1481, but the type is larger than that of the Lascaris. The first Latin classic printed in England was the Comedies of Terence, printed by Pynson, at London, in 1497. No attempt was made to print a Greek book in England until the year 1543, when Reyner Wolff printed an edition of the Homilies of St. Chrysostom at London.

The first dated German book printed with woodcuts, and also the first specimen of German poetry in print, is said to be the Fables of Bonar (Das Edelstein), a small quarto printed by Pfister at Bamberg, in 1461. The only copy known is in the Wolffenbuttel Library. I am not aware of any book illustrated with wood engravings of an earlier date than this. I speak of course of a date which cannot be disputed.

The earliest book illustrated with copper-plate engravings is El Monte Sancto di Dio, by Bettini, printed at Florence in 1477 by Niccolo di Lorenzo. It has not been settled whether the engravings are by Baldini or by Botticelli.

The first book printed in England with woodcut illustrations is the second edition of the Game and Playe of the Chesse, printed by Caxton, at Westminster Abbey, about 1480; and the first book printed in England with copper-plate engravings is Hugh Broughton's Concent of Scripture, printed in 1590.

The earliest book illustrated with folding views is Breydenbach's Opus Transmarinæ Peregrinationis ad Sepulchrum Dominicum in Jherusalem, printed in Mentz in 1476, which also contains the earliest specimen of cross-hatching in wood-engraving.

I will now proceed to notice a few of the more remarkable books contained in the present exhibition, and must express my regret that it has not been in my power to devote so much time to their examination as would have enabled me to direct attention to a greater number of the very interesting works which have been brought together.

Her Majesty has been pleased to allow six works to be exhibited from the Royal Library at Windsor.

1. The Mentz Psalter before referred to as printed at Mentz by Fust and Schœffer in 1457, the first book printed with a date, and the earliest book containing a specimen of printing in colors, as will be seen in the initial letter B. It has also been said to have been printed by those impossible things wooden types; but I do not suppose that any bibliographer would advance such an opinion at the present day. There is much yet to be learnt about this book, but its extreme rarity has hitherto made comparison difficult.

2. The subtyl Historyes and Fables of Æsope. Translated into Englysshe by William Caxton, and Emprynted by me William Caxton at Westmynstre, 1484. This is the first translation of Æsop into English, and the royal copy is the only perfect one known, all others wanting the frontispiece.

3. Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes. Printed by Caxton, as is supposed, abroad, and generally said to be the first production of his press. It has also been generally considered to be the first book printed in French; but whenever and

wherever printed there is another book which has equal claim upon all these points, viz. a work entitled, Meditacions sur les Sept Pseaulmes Penitentiaulx, which I had the good fortune to discover in the British Museum in the year 1846. The type is the same as the Recueil, and the work is bound with another Caxton, equally unknown, entitled, Les Quatre Derrenieres Choses, printed in the same type as the Mirror of the Worlde. Mr. Blades, however, in his excellent work on the Life and Typography of William Caxton, contends that neither Le Recueil, Les Meditacions, nor Les Quatre Derrenieres Choses were printed by Caxton, but by Colard Mansion of Bruges. He will, I am sure, forgive me if I decline to adopt that opinion; although, where there is so little positive evidence on either side, I should hesitate to pronounce him very positively wrong.

4. The first edition of Coverdale's Bible, printed in 1535. This was the first time that the entire Scriptures were printed in English, and, like all other editions of the English translation of the Bible, printed prior to the year 1537, was printed abroad. Another peculiarity attaches to this edition in common with almost all other previous editions of the English version, viz., that the place at which it was printed was not known. It was generally supposed that it was printed by Froschover at Zurich; but a book discovered a few years ago in the library of Lord Ashburnham of the same date, in the same type, and with many of the same pictorial letters, proves that it was printed at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. The work in question is entitled Cronica. Beschreibung und gemeine Anzeige vonn aller Wellt herkommen Furnehmen Landen, &c., by Christian Egenolff.

All the copies of this edition of the Bible, with the one exception after mentioned, have the introduction printed in a different type from that of the body of the work; and it was only about twenty-three years ago when a copy was discovered in the library of Earl Leicester at Holkham with a fragment of the introduction printed in the same type as the text that it became known that the introduction had been changed. The title also generally bears date 1536. The true explanation of these peculiarities appears to be that the book was originally dedicated to Queen Anne Boleyn, but her death having taken place before the book could be circulated in England, the dedication was reprinted and addressed

to Queen Jane. This alteration of course involved the necessity of altering the title-page.

5. The Boke of Faytes of Armes, by Caxton, and

6. Guy de Roye's Doctrinal of Sapience, also by Caxton. This book was supposed to have been the only work by Caxton printed on vellum until the discovery, by Mr. Maskell, of a copy of Bonaventura's Speculum vitæ Christi, a much finer book than the Doctrinal of Sapyence, and which was acquired by the British Museum in 1864.

No book can possess greater interest for Englishmen than the English translation of the Scriptures. I have already alluded to Wycliffe's version made in the fourteenth century, and disseminated among his followers in manuscript. Tyndale, early in the sixteenth century, did more than this; he translated the Scriptures into English, and then printed them in portions on the continent and smuggled them into England. He quitted England for the purpose of prosecuting this great work in 1524. His history from this time until his martyrdom at Antwerp in 1536 is well known to most persons through the exhaustive work of Christopher Anderson, The Annals of the English Bible. Wycliffe was protected by John of Gaunt, Luther by the Duke of Saxony; but Tyndale stood alone, supported only by the deep conviction that he was doing God's work, for of earthly support he had none. A frequent fugitive from one continental town to another he printed his books in secret, so that we are obliged to have recourse to indirect evidence in order to ascertain where many of them were produced. Of some only one copy or fragment is known. Soon after he left England he took up his residence at Cologne, from which city he was obliged to fly in order to escape from the persecution of Cochlæus. He was known to have been engaged in printing the New Testament at this time, but it was only about twenty-four years ago that Mr. Rodd, the bookseller, discovered a fragment of this Testament, consisting of thirty-one leaves, printed by Peter Quentell of Cologne, and which is now deposited in the British Museum.

It is recorded in a manuscript in the Lambeth Library (No. 306, fol. 65), that "upon the first Sunday of Advent, 1531, these books following were openly at Paul's Crosse, by the authority of my Lord of London, prohibited and strictly commanded by no manner of men to be used;" and there

follows a list of Tyndale's works, the last of which is "Jonas in English." This Jonas was thought to have been irrecoverably lost, until a few years ago, when a copy was discovered bound up in a volume with several other works. It was acquired by the late Marquis of Bristol. Another unique work of Tyndale's is a copy of an edition of his New Testament, printed without the name of either place or printer, but no doubt produced by Peter Schœffer at Worms. This is deposited in the library of the Baptist Museum at Bristol, and Mr. Fry of that city has produced a most excellent facsimile of it.

Sir William Tite exhibits to-day two editions of Tyndale. The Pentateuch, printed in 1530, and the New Testament, printed in 1534. The Pentateuch is very rare, only one perfect copy being known, that in the Grenville Library in the British Museum. Of the New Testament there are three editions printed in the year 1534. One printed at Antwerp by the widow of Christopher Endhover; a second, more correct in the text, was printed in November, 1534. The third is supposed to have been also printed at Antwerp. The edition now exhibited is the one last mentioned.

I would also draw attention to the copy of Caxton's Mirrour of the Worlde, 1480, exhibited by Sir William Tite, which is remarkable for the beauty of its condition.

The Rev. Mr. Fuller Russell exhibits a fine copy of Parker's work entitled De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ et Privilegiis Ecclesiæ Cantuariensis. Cum Archiepiscopis ejusdem 70, 1572, printed by John Day. Parker was the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury—that is, he was the first who was a Protestant at the time when he was raised to the Archiepiscopal dignity. His History was the first book privately printed in England, and is of great rarity, the number of impressions being very few.

It was the custom in most churches in England to elect on the Day of St. Nicholas (Dec. 6) the patron of children, a *Boy Bishop*, who assumed the attributes and received the honors of a bishop during the days intervening between that date and Innocents' Day (Dec. 28), on which occasion a sermon was preached by him in full episcopal robes, wearing a mitre on his head, and assuming all the episcopal offices.

The Rev. Mr. Russell exhibits a sermon delivered upon one of these occasions. The title is as follows:—"In die

Innocenciu ſmo (sermo) pro episcopo pueror." London, small 4to, Wynkyn de Worde. This is a sermon in English, written for the Boy Bishop, which was to be delivered by him at St. Paul's on Innocent's Day (Dec. 28). The following passage occurs in it: "Pray for the soule of the reverende fad' my lord Thomas Kempe late bysshop, and for the soules of alle benefactours of this chyrche of Poulis." Dean Colet, in the Statutes of St. Paul's School, which he founded in 1512, expressly ordains that his scholars should every *childermas* (Innocents') Day "come to Paulis churche and hear the Chylde Bishop's sermon: and after be at the hygh masse, and each of them offer a penny to the Chylde Bishop: and with them the maisters and surveyors of the scole."

The ceremony of the Boy Bishop is supposed to have existed not only in collegiate churches, but almost every parish in England. The service of the Boy Bishop set to music, appears in the early editions of the Sarum *Processionale.*

Gregory, a prebendary of Salisbury, describes the finding of a boy bishop's monument in the cathedral there.

Mr. Russell also exhibits one volume of the Complutensian Polyglot, entitled, Biblia polyglotta, Ilebraice, Chaldaice, Grece et Latine, nunc primum impressa de mandato et sumptibus Francisci Ximenez de Cisneros. In Complutensi universitate. Industria Arnaldi Guillelmi de Brocario, 1514—1517. 6 vols. This is the first polyglot Bible, and is a splendid monument of the enlightened views of Cardinal Ximenez. This Bible was superseded by the Antwerp polyglot published in 1573, but is a rare book and of much bibliographical interest.

The Boke called the Mirroure of our Lady, very necessary for all relygyous Persones. London, by Richard Fawkes, 1530. This is a very rare and curious work, treating of the proper behaviour at divine service, and containing also the service for each day of the week under the title of Seven Stories. It is exhibited by the Very Rev. Canon Rock.

The Kalendar of Shephardes, printed at London by Julian Notary some time after 1500. This is a rare edition of a very curious book, which is a translation from a French work entitled, "Le Compost et Kalendrier des Bergers, printed in 1493. The French original passed through nearly thirty editions between 1493 and the year 1540, and the editions of the

English version were also numerous. The work is interesting both for its contents and illustrations. Of the latter many are taken from the "Art de bien vivre et de bien mourir," printed by Verard at Paris in 1492. The contents are divided between Astrology and Theology. The usual information of a Calendar or Ephemeris is followed by the Trees and Branches of virtues and vices, with a Ballad of a woman shepherd. Also the ten commandments of the Devil and the reward that they shall have that keep them; "and howe men should do when phisicke doth fail them for health of body and soule made in a ballad royall," etc., etc. Exhibited by the Rev. Mr. Fuller Russell.

Another edition, but imperfect, is exhibited by Canon Rock.

At the end of the edition of the Shepherd's Calendar, printed by Pynson in 1506, are some stanzas by the printer, in one of which is expressed a regret that the Bible was not then printed in English. The lines are—

"Remember clarkes dayly dothe theyr delygens
Into oure corrupte speche maters to translate,
Yet betwene Frenche and Englysshe is grete deffens [difference].
There longage in redynge is douse and dylycate.
In theyr mother tonge they be so fortunate.
They have the *Bybyll* and the Apocalypys of devynyte,
With other nobyll bokes *that in Englyche may no be.*"

The edition of 1604 has the last line altered thus:

"With other noble bookes that *now* in English be."

In the above-mentioned edition of 1506 is recorded the fall at Ensisheim in 1492, of the celebrated meteorite, "a greate Thonder Stone," a great portion of which is now in the Mineralogical Gallery of the British Museum.

The Nuremberg Chronicle, exhibited by Mr. Russell, was compiled by Hartman Schedel, a physician of Nuremberg, and was printed in that city by Anthony Coburger in 1493. It is illustrated by upwards of 2000 woodcuts, which were executed under the superintendence of Michael Wolgemuth and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, distinguished artists of that day. Although the number of the cuts is so large, it must not be supposed that they are all different one from the other. Chatto, in his History of Wood Engraving, gives a copy of

one which first occurs in the chronicle as that of Paris, the lover of Helen, then as that of Thales, of Anastasius, of Odofredus, and of the poet Dante. Other heads and subject-cuts are made in like manner to do duty for different individuals and events.

Epistolæ Christophori Colombi. These are the first and fourth editions of a work of the highest interest, being the letters of Columbus, addressed on the 14th of March, 1493, to Raphael Sanchez, the Treasurer of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and giving an account of his first voyage and discovery of the West Indies. There were several editions of this letter, and all are of great rarity. Exhibited by the Rev. Mr. Russell.

Of the several service books of the Church of Rome there were two, which as late as the first quarter of the sixteenth century, were generally profusely illustrated and frequently very richly illuminated, these were the Missal and the Horæ—the Missal for public and the Horæ for more private devotions. These books frequently varied in some particulars, according to the diocese for which they were prepared. The cities of Paris and Rouen enjoyed almost a monopoly of printing the service books both for France and England up to the early part of the sixteenth century. This probably arose from the circumstance that the printers of other places might not have been possessed of the pictorial illustrations with which, as I have stated, it was the custom to ornament these books. There is an especial interest connected with the Horæ for Salisbury use. It supplied the materials for the English Prymer, and the Prymer was the manual which in the reign of Edward VI. supplied a portion of the contents of the Book of Common Prayer.

Of the Missals, Mr. Russell contributes one which merits careful examination. It is entitled, Missale Parisiense Novum, printed at Paris in 1489 by Jean Belin, Guillermus le Caron, and Johannes de Prato, and is printed on vellum, with illuminations of a very superior order. It has the Majesty as well as the Crucifixion, the former occurring much more rarely than the latter. This copy was sold at Hanrott's sale in 1833 for the small sum of £20. Another, but less fine copy, is in the Bibliothèque de Sainte Genevieve at Paris.

There are also exhibited on the present occasion several

Horæ of great interest and beauty. I cannot pretend to describe them severally, as that would occupy too much time, but I would particularly direct attention to two exhibited by Mr. Fisher. The first is a Horæ for Roman use, printed by Simon de Colinæus for Geoffroy Tory of Bourges, dated at the commencement 1524 and at the end 1525. The ornamentation of this volume is extremely delicate and Italian in its style, differing from most others, with the exception of the second, which is for Paris use, printed by Simon du Bois also for Geoffroy Tory of Bourges in 1527. Whoever the artist may have been, he must have studied Italian art carefully. I know of no Horæ with the same style of ornamentation but those printed for Geoffroy Tory. Mr. Addington also exhibits a fine Horæ printed by Simon Colinæus at Paris in 1543, with Italian borders of the same character, and also one printed in 1541, with remarkable borders containing representations of flowers and insects of Flemish design.

The first Bible printed by authority was that which is known as the Great Bible, printed in 1539, also called Cranmer's Bible. But Cranmer was not interested in that edition, but in the second, printed in April, 1540, for which he wrote a preface. There are seven commonly recognised editions of this Bible, one printed in 1539, three in 1540, and three in 1541. But Mr. Fry and other diligent bibliographers have discovered variations between existing copies, which in their opinion justify them in declaring that there are more than seven editions of this important work. The pictorial border to the title-page of these volumes is said to have been designed by Hans Holbein. It contains the full length figures of Cranmer and Cromwell, Earl of Essex, with their armorial bearings. But after the execution of Essex, his arms were cut out of the block, and the circular place was left vacant or painted over.

A copy of the edition of 1540 is exhibited by Sir William Tite.

Mr. Talbot Bury exhibits a copy of the Theurdanck, printed by Matthias Schulter at Augsburg. This work was written by Melchior Pfintzing, the Secretary of the Emperor Maximilian I., and is supposed to record the adventures of the Emperor prior to and consequent upon his marriage with Maria of Burgundy, the daughter of Charles the Bold.

It is a chivalresque and allegorical poem. The first edition was printed in 1517, in Nuremburg, by Hans Schönsperger, and is illustrated by 118 beautiful engravings by Jost von Negker and others, from drawings by Hans Schaüfflein. Many of the letters have remarkable ornamental flourishes, which were added after the pages were printed.

Two copies of the Poliphilo of 1499 are exhibited, one by the Society of Antiquaries, and the other by Mr. Russell. The title of the book is Poliphili Hypterotomachia ubi humana omnia non nisi somnium esse docet. Printed at Venice by Aldus. Although this singular work has a Latin title, it is written in Italian, with a mixture of macaronic words made out of Greek, Hebrew, etc. It treats among other things of objects and customs of antiquity, and is illustrated by many beautiful designs said to be by Giovanni Bellini. The author (Francisco Colonna) has concealed his name under the disguise of an acrostic, which will be found in the initial letters of each chapter. These give "Poliam Franciscus Colonna adamavit." Colonna was a Dominican friar, and Polia, an abbreviated form of Polita or Ippolita, is supposed to be Lucrezia Lelia, a daughter of a bishop of Treviso.

I now bring my remarks to a close. I must apologise for occupying so much of the time of the meeting on details, many of which I fear possess little interest for those who are not accustomed to bibliographical enquiries. But as we have met for the purpose of talking about old books, they could not well be avoided, and I can only express my thanks for the attention with which I have been favoured.