

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

SECOND DAY.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

ARGUMENT.

Ancient Missals and Breviaries. The Roman, Ambrosian, Mozarabic, and Vallombrosa Rituals. Ornaments of Printed-Books of Devotion. The Death-Dance. Allegorical, Pastoral, Grotesque, and Domestic subjects of Decoration. Of the most distinguished Printers of Missals, &c. Advice to Young Collectors.

Cambridge University Press

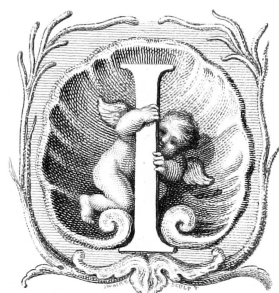
978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Bartholomew Beham Set, 1520.*

Second Day.



N diverging from the pleasing topics which occupied our discourse of yesterday, we cannot be said to enter upon a discussion altogether foreign to what has been previously advanced. We may, on the contrary, observe that the whole seems to form only links of one chain ; but that some of these links are wrought in metal of a baser character than others. The illuminator prepared the way for the imitative powers of the printer ; not that the latter always chose the identical subjects which graced the pages of the former ; for, to the best of my recollection, we have seldom, in specimens of pencil-illumination, those *Drolleries* and *Death-Dances* which appear to have delighted the printers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Farewell then to the arabesque border — to clustered fruits and flowers — to groups of thoughtful or of frolicksome characters :—farewell to the deep and delicate glow which described the blush of the maiden, or

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1
Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

the lustre of the gem with which she adorned her braided hair! Farewell to the intricate, but not ungraceful *capriccios* of the pen and pencil of Francesco Veronesi—and to the embossed and blazing gold of Girolamo, which, like the shield of Achilles, lighted up all that was around it! Farewell to the splendor and high finishing of Clovio! Farewell these objects of gaiety and grace! but not unwelcome, therefore, to me, the curious and complicated workmanship of EARLY PRINTED BOOKS OF DEVOTION!

You smile at these apostrophes, and think it high time that I should descend from such an aerial station and tread on terra firma with yourselves. Let me however make one other preliminary observation; which is this. I saw the sceptical expression that indented the brow of Lisardo, when I observed that we should in vain look for ‘fruits and flowers’ and ‘arabesque borders’ in the Missals and Breviaries which issued from the earlier presses; but I by no means wished the remark to be considered as canonical, or as an ‘ex cathedra’ position. Generally speaking, the ancient printers of Missals introduced arabesque—but not of the purest kind: it was rather crowded and dove-tailed, like mosaic work, as I shall presently shew you: and ‘fruits and flowers,’ as you will also presently be convinced, were of uncommon occurrence. But they endeavoured to compensate by variety, for the want of pure taste, in their selections. Accordingly, we are oftentimes greeted with a profusion of decorations—of a monstrous and miscellaneous nature. I speak, at present, of the *borders* of a page, where grave or historical subjects were not introduced; and here, Lisardo, you may remember the amusement which was afforded you, the other day, on witnessing an ape seated upon a buffalo’s back, a serpent coiled within a griffin’s mouth, a demon leaping

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1
Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

SECOND DAY.

5

out of a salamander's throat of fire; and men, women, and children, half human and half brute — with divers other similar exhibitions, which now it were tedious to specify.

I am yet far from wishing to be satirical, or to under-rate the real talents of the artists engaged in the publications here alluded to. On the contrary, their performances (as you will quickly learn) were at times equally elegant, singular, and successful; and subjects of sacred writ were, by such means, impressed upon the minds of youth with a very salutary effect. In reputation of another kind — in typographical skill—it may fairly be averred that all the talents of the **BULMERS** and **BENSLEYS** of the day could with difficulty produce such a series of vellum pages, (exhibiting ink of the most glossy lustre, press-work of the nicest execution, and ornaments of the most complicated nature,) as we frequently behold in the productions of the **VERARDS**, the **PICOUCHETS**, and **KERVERS** of former times. Whether it be that some important secret relating either to the ink,*

* *relating to the INK.*] I looked into Dr. Rees's edition of the Cyclopædia, (at this moment advancing rapidly to its *perihelion*.) with the hope, under the title of **INK**, of finding something curious or novel respecting the probable process of making **PRINTING INK**, in ancient times: and on being referred to the article **PRINTING**, for an account of **RED INK**, I there found only this solitary description — taken, as well as the entire article of **Printing** (proh pudor!), word for word, from our old friend Chambers; of whom the Doctor had been indeed a valuable coadjutor — 'For red ink (says Chambers) they use the same materials as for black; excepting only, that instead of lamp-black, they add a proper quantity of vermilion. Some hold that, by mixing and incorporating the bigness of a nut of fish-glue, or brandy, or the white of an egg, with the ink, the vermilion acquires a greater lustre.' Did the worthy Doctor never hear of one Antonius Musa Brasavolus, quoted by Petrus Maria Caneparius, in his prosing but not incurious quarto tome '*De Atramentis Cujuscunque Generis, Opus sane novum, hactenus à nemine promulgatum. Londini, 1660, 4to.*' The 4th chapter of the division of that work entitled '*Typographorum, Chalcographorumve Atramentum*'—treats of printing ink, of which a process is described as producing 'very black and adhesive ink.' There

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

6

SECOND DAY.

or to the preparation of the vellum, then practised, and at present unknown, render modern efforts of less avail, I cannot take upon me to determine; but—

LISARDO. You forget the enormous expense—

PHILEMON. I was quickly coming to the consideration of that point; which is indeed a most material one. Labour, I presume, was then rewarded by reasonable wages; or talent, of the kind necessary to produce such publications, was in former times comparatively common. But here you compel me to draw an invidious and heart-rending inference. When I speak of the general prevalence of talent, necessary for the peculiar productions here alluded to, it must be understood that I allude exclusively to the talents of *foreign artists*—for, in our own country, three centuries ago, (with a sigh does the remark escape me!) there was a prodigious

is scarcely a *coloured* ink but what Caneparius describes, and sometimes with a sort of poetical phrensy. Hear him discourse of a new kind of vitriol ('*Ad effingendum novum Vitrioli genus*:' which Mr. Astle might probably have consulted to advantage), '*Sacra numina testor (says Caneparius) neminem veterum legisse, ni memoria fallor, qui de his tractaverit; cum neque Dioscorides ullum egerit verbum, neque Galenus, non Ætius, non Paulus Ægineta, non Serapio, neque Avicennas, ac summam nemo hujus vel alterius sectæ notitiam horum attulit, quod sciam, quorum equidem inventionis gloria ætati nostræ tantum attribuenda est, tunc Italis, cum etiam Transmontanis: præterea nuper ex Transmarinis quidam Syrii advehunt ad nos quoddam Vitrioli factitii genus novum pulcherrimi coloris saphirini taxillorum forma, ceu chrisocollæ mineralis, quod Venetiis in plateis Divi Marci venundant pro medendis oculis equorum male affectis efficax. . . . etsi aliquis hujus magisterium occultare conatur, non patiar ego quin humano generi reddatur acceptum gratis ab Omnipotente Deo.'* &c. p. 221.

Mr. Astle, however, very justly observes; 'Simple as the composition of ink may be thought, and really is, it is a fact well known, that we have at present none equal in beauty and colour to that used by the ancients . . . What occasions so great a disparity? Does it arise from our ignorance, or our want of materials? From neither, but from the negligence of the present race; as very little attention would soon demonstrate. that we want neither skill nor ingredients to make ink, as good now, as at any former period.' *Origin and Progress of Writing*; p. 209. edit. 1803.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

SECOND DAY.

7

dearth and deficiency of graphic attainments. Nor must you be deceived by a colophon: for Missals, *professed* to be executed by our earlier printers, were in fact ‘begun and concluded’ in the offices of foreigners. Even Pynson too frequently shines in the borrowed plumage of Tailleux.* But of this hereafter. Let us however — to meet your observation — suppose that some spirited Collector, or a select committee of the Roxburghe Club,† should unite their tastes and purses, to put forth, from the SHAKESPEARE PRESS, an octavo volume of prayers from the Liturgy, decorated in a manner similar to what we observe in the devotional publications just alluded to — do you think the attempt would be successful? In other words, where are

* *Pynson too often shines in the borrowed plumage of Tailleux.*] The reader will find a few of the earlier and more magnificent Missals, published by Pynson towards the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, described in the second volume of the *Tylog. Antiquities*, p. 424. On reconsidering Pynson’s books, I rather attribute them to the press of TAILLEUX of Rouen; although Ames and Herbert seem to be of opinion that the Norman printer was only employed by Pynson for the execution of Law Tracts. There is, in the Auctarium of the Bodleian library, a very fine devotional volume, with the name of Pynson as the printer, of the date of 1529, in folio; but both in this copy, and in another of the same kind, in the library of St. John’s College, Oxford, without date, (each from the Collection of Archbishop Laud), there is very strong evidence of their having been executed *abroad*; and, if so, most probably by Tailleux, who was Pynson’s avowed assistant. The red ink, in these beautiful books, is much beyond what we see in other publications of our early printers; and the vellum is of very superior delicacy. If Pynson could have exhibited equal beauty in these two particulars, Wynkyn De Worde undoubtedly would have been equally successful; and yet whoever examines the *Book of Hawking, Hunting, Coat-Armour, and Fishing*, printed by the latter in 1496, upon vellum (in the possession of the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville), will find that most covetable volume considerably defective in regard to the red-ink and vellum. If Regnault printed many of the Church-Services for our later printers, Tailleux, in all probability, executed a few for our earlier ones.

† *the Roxburghe Club.*] Some account of this Club, and of the important event which gave rise to its establishment, will be disclosed in the EIGHTH DAY.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

the ink and vellum which can match with what we see in the Missals of old? The doubtful success of such an experiment would render it extremely hazardous; even were it not attended with, what may be called, an immensity of expense. Welcome therefore, again, I exclaim, the rich and fanciful furniture which garnishes the texts of early printed books of Devotion! But I will now assume the task of the historian.

In tracing the progress of these publications, it must be understood that I do it rather with reference to that of the art of engraving, than with a view to be chronologically accurate. I need not tell you that certain celebrated Cathedrals adopted their own particular forms of service, to which the minor Cathedrals appear to have rather voluntarily conformed. Abroad, if my memory be not treacherous, the French or the Norman churches led the way to this uniformity of discipline; and after these, the churches of Catalonia in Spain.* In our own country, I believe, the Liturgies of

* ‘ In after-ages Bishops agreed by consent to conform their Liturgy to the model of the metropolitanical church of the province to which they belonged The rudiments of this discipline were first laid in the French churches; for in the council of Agde [Concil. Agathens. Can. 30. “ Quia convenit ordinem Ecclesiæ ab omnibus æqualiter observari, studendum est ubique (sicut fit) et post Antiphonas, Collectiones per ordinem ab Episcopis vel Presbyteris dici,” &c.] a Canon was made about the year 506, that one and the same order should be equally observed in all churches of the province in all parts of divine service. And in the council of Epone [Concil. Epaunens. Can. 27.], of Vannes in Brittany in the province of Tours [of a still earlier date], and of Girone [An. 517, for the Spanish Churches], a decree was made that the same order of Mass, and custom in psalmody, and other ministrations, should be observed in all churches of the province, as was observed in the metropolitanical church.’ Extracted from *Bingham’s Antiquities of the Christian Church*; vol. i. p. 587-8. Muratori only disgraces himself when he speaks of Bingham as ‘ sectæ suæ pro viribus serviens, sed non semper veritati.’ *Opera*; vol. ix. edit. 1771, 4to. Bingham was a man of learning and moderation.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1

Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

SECOND DAY

9

YORK, SALISBURY, and HEREFORD * Cathedrals were considered as the standard texts for the performance of divine service in other Cathedrals. Of these Liturgies, that

* *the Liturgies of York, Salisbury, and Hereford.*] We may consider these Liturgies rather according to the importance of the Churches to which they were attached, than to the antiquity of the several impressions of them. York, first in magnitude, and pre-eminently distinguished for its Cathedral (perhaps the noblest Gothic structure in the world), was however the latest of these three Cathedral Churches which put forth an impression of the MISSAL peculiar to itself. Her BREVIARY however was printed in 1493; consequently it was nearly as ancient as any printed Breviary or Missal for the use of British Churches. Maittaire specifies the parts of this Breviary, in his *Annal. Typog.* vol. i. p. 568. In regard to the Missal, Salisbury had preceded her full two and twenty years; and Hereford, at least fourteen years. Accordingly (as far as Bibliographers have as yet aided us), it was not till the year 1516 that the public saw a printed volume entitled ‘*Missale ad vsum celeberrime ecclesie Eboracensis, optimis caracteribus recenter impressum,*’ &c. Maittaire (*Index*, vol. ii. p. 74) has been only copied by Panzer (vol. vi. p. 492) in his description of this beautiful and rare volume: of which I remember to have seen a copy in the Gough Collection in the Bodleian library. In his *British Topography*, vol. ii. p. 425, Gough describes it as ‘with musical notes, and several fine wooden cuts; and in Mr. Bandinel’s Catalogue of the Gough Library (1814, 4to. p. 418) we have a transcript of a note by Dr. Ducarel (whose copy Gough afterwards purchased) in which it is thus observed: “Of this very scarce York Missal, in folio, there are known to be only three copies; viz. one at Cambridge, one in the library of James West, Esq. [See *Bibl. West*, no. 1886, which copy was purchased by Herbert, for 2l. 18s.] and this copy in the library of Dr. Ducarel, A. D. 1762.” Herbert, in his *Typog. Antiq.* vol. iii. p. 1437-8, has added little or nothing to Gough’s previous description; and his copy, from the mark annexed to it, (†) appears to have been somewhat imperfect. The reader may consult the *British Topography* (*Ibid.*) for an account of other Services peculiar to York Cathedral; but let him not, if he love the mysteries of ancient church-lore, refrain from reading, by lamp-light, and in some ‘lone watch-tower,’ the form of *bidding prayer*, and another of *cursing*, for the church of York—which served as covers to a set of madrigals, in the possession of the late Sir John Hawkins!

The CATHEDRAL CHURCH of SALISBURY supplies both curious and copious details in the history of its ancient form of Service. ‘No cathedral (says Gough) has preserved such a variety of service books for its Use as Sarum. This is another name for the *Ordinale*, or complete service of the church of Salisbury, instituted by Bishop Osmund 1077. It was also named the *Consuetudinary*; and in Knighton’s and Higden’s time (which was in the xivth century) it obtained almost all over England, Wales, and Ireland. The whole province of Canterbury adopted it;

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-07651-7 - The Bibliographical Decameron: Or, Ten Days Pleasant Discourse upon Illuminated Manuscripts, and Subjects Connected with Early Engraving, Typography, and Bibliography: Volume 1
Thomas Frognall Dibdin

Excerpt

[More information](#)

of Salisbury was the most popular, and consequently Missals ‘after the Use of Salisbury Cathedral’ are, comparatively, of common occurrence.

and in right of it the Bishop of Salisbury was precentor in the college of Bishops whenever the Archbishop of Canterbury performed divine service. The Cathedrals of York, Lincoln, Hereford, Bangor, and Aberdeen, had their respective *Uses*; but the monks of Royston petitioned Fitz-James, Bishop of London, in the beginning of the xvth century, for leave to change that of Bangor for that of Sarum, in their offices; alleging that the former was imperfect in itself, and still more so in the performance, from their torn and worn out books, which they were unwilling to change except for a better form. . . . ‘The Use of Sarum not only regulated the form and order of celebrating the mass, but prescribed the rule and office for all the sacerdotal functions.’ *Brit. Topography*; vol. ii. p. 319, &c. and authorities cited.

Thus much for the ancient influence or popularity of the Ritual of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury. In regard to a bibliographical history of the several impressions of the various forms of service, the reader must be contented chiefly with the authority just referred to: but the following may not be unworthy of his notice. The *DIRECTORIUM SACERDOTUM* is undoubtedly the earliest printed book which has any connection with the ancient church of Salisbury; and this was first printed by Caxton, probably before the year 1490—but certainly by Gerard de Leeu in the year 1488. See the recent edition of our *Typog. Antiq.* vol. i. p. 323-5. I doubt much whether any copy of Caxton’s impression contained a frontispiece—as described by Herbert; who probably saw a copy with such decoration from a different impression. Pynson reprinted Caxton’s text in 1498, as may be seen in vol. iv. p. 423, of the *Bibl. Spenceriana*; where, as well as in Ames, may be read the facetious note of the crabbed Row-Mores concerning this work of ‘Directions for celebrating the Mass.’ Gough notices an edition of the ‘Directorium’ as printed by Theodore Martin, at Alost, in 1487, 4to.; but I suspect that the copy of this work which he saw attached to an impression of St. Chrysostom’s ‘Three Books concerning Providence,’ of the date of 1487, was of a more recent date; as Panzer, in describing this latter work, of the date of 1487 (see his *Annal. Typog.* vol. i. p. 3, no. 6), makes no mention of the ‘Directorium.’

The *MISSAL* was the next work which engaged the attention of the press; and of this, according to Denis, the earliest impression was of the date of 1492—printed at Nuremberg, by George Stöchs: *Suppl. Maitt.* p. 330, no. 2728. Neither Maittaire, Gough, nor Herbert knew of this edition; and Denis, to whom Panzer exclusively refers, inserts it on the authority of a copy in the possession of a private friend. However this may be, it is quite certain that Joannes Hertzog de Landoia printed an edition of it in 1494, both in folio and octavo, at Venice. An impression of the latter form is in the Gough library. See also Maittaire, vol. i. p. 577. The *Summer Part* of the *SALISBURY BREVIARY* was executed in the