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BOOKSELLING BEFORE THE INVENTION OF PRINTING.

Very few are aware of, and few of these few give a thought to the invaluable advantages enjoyed in our day in comparison with the circumstances of the time before the invention of Printing.—Then books were scarce and dear, all were written in manuscript, and learning was confined to the clergy and a small number of the first classes in Society. Many noblemen could not sign their names.

From the writings of a German Professor we have some account of the arrangements of the trade in books, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century, in France and Italy. From these we arrange our notices under the four heads of—Transcribers; the material upon which they write; dealers in books; and the prices of books.

The business of transcriber was an important one whenever there was a demand for books. At Bologna the number was very great, and among them were many females. The last mentioned were compelled by law to find caution for the safe return of the books left with them. Rich people spent immense sums in the ornaments of their books. No one was allowed to enter into a contract with a transcriber who was, at the time, working for another; and the student was required to take the transcriber's oath on this point before he concluded his bargain with him. The latter, if he perjured himself was expelled, and so was every student who was found to have further dealings with him.

The materials most commonly made use of in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were parchment and a kind of paper made of cotton. Paper made of linen

did not come into use until the latter end of the fourteenth century. Parchment was the favorite; and there was a law in Bologna (apparently made to prevent a scarcity) enacting that every manufacturer of parchment should find caution that two-thirds of what he made should be of the kind used in making books.

The circumstances of the period were unfavourable to any trade in books approximating in the most distant degree to that of our days; but it was not so inconsiderable as one might imagine. New books, it is true, were only made to order; and whoever wanted a copy of a book had to make his bargain with a transcriber.

There was a class of men called *Stationarii*—mentioned in the statutes of Bologna in the year 1259—who were enjoined to keep correct copies of books; not to sell them to any person out of the university; nor to raise their hire; nor to enter into any combinations with the teachers to substitute new glosses for such as were already received. They were obliged to take an oath of fidelity and find securities. Each was obliged to have by him copies of works enumerated in a specific list, and the remuneration for lending these books varied according to the size, the importance, and the scarcity of the work.

Another occupation of the *Stationarii* was the sale of books upon commission; and at Paris the trade of lending books to transcribers, and that of selling them upon commission, seems, as at Bologna, to have been originally united in the same person, to whom sometimes the name of *Stationarius*, and sometimes that of *Librarius*, was given. But a law of 1323 distinguishes between the trade of book-lender (*Stationarius*) and that of the commission salesman (*Librarius*). The former were forbidden to sell books without an express permission from the university, while to the latter the trade was left quite free.

As there were so many trades extensively devoted to the manufacture of books, they could neither have been so very scarce nor so dear as has been sup-

posed. Paris and Bologna were the towns in which the trade in books was most active during the middle ages; but no antiquary has directed his investigations in the way of prices.

A RECIPE FOR HAPPINESS.

It is simply, when you rise in the morning, to form a resolution to make the day a happy one to a fellow-creature. It is easily done—a left-off garment to the man who needs it; a kind word to the sorrowful; an encouraging expression to the striving—trifles, in themselves, light as air—will do it, at least for the twenty-four hours; and if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell when you are old; and if you are old, rest assured it will send you gently and happily down the stream of time to eternity. Look at the result; you send one person—only one, happily through the day; that is, three hundred and sixty-five in the course of the year—and supposing you live forty years only, after you commence this course, you have made fourteen thousand six hundred human beings happy, at all events, for a time. Now, worthy reader, is this not simple? and is it not worth accomplishing? This is so small a pill, that one needs no red currant jelly to disguise its flavor, and requires to be taken but once in a day; and we feel warranted in prescribing it—it is most excellent for digestion.

THE FOOL'S REPROOF.

There was a certain nobleman, says Bishop Hall, who kept a fool, to whom he one day gave a staff, with a charge to keep it until he should meet with one who was a greater fool than himself. Not many years after the nobleman fell sick, even unto death. The fool came to see him; his sick lord said to him, "I must shortly leave you."—"And whither art thou going?" said the fool. "Into another world," replied his lordship. "And when will you come again?" asked the fool; "within a month?"—"No," replied the nobleman. "Within a year?" said the fool. "No," was again the reply. "When then?" asked the fool. "Never," said the nobleman. "Never!" repeated the fool; "and what provision hast thou made for thy entertainment there, whither thou goest?"—"None at all!" replied the nobleman. "No!" said the fool; "none at all! Here, take my staff, for with all my folly I am not guilty of such folly as this."