

## A FRAGMENT OF NICOLAS TREVET ON THE MASS.

An interesting fragment has recently come to light in Stanstead church, near Long Melford. During the last week in August the rector kindly offered to show me the registers. On opening the earliest register, which goes back to about 1570, I found lying loose upon the fly-leaf two leaves of vellum on which was writing in a fourteenth-century English hand.

The fragment measures 11 ins. by  $7\frac{1}{4}$ . The two leaves are not consecutive, but assuming that they formed part of an eight-leaved quire, they would be leaves 3 and 6 of the quire, judging from the extent of the gap in the text. Each of the four pages contains two columns of writing. On the first leaf there are 43 lines to the page, on the second 54 to 55. The hand of the second leaf differs from that of the first. It is smaller and gives a slightly cramped impression. Both hands are pleasing in appearance, the first more so, giving the impression of greater care. Both are of the same style, English hands dating from the second half of the fourteenth century.

The vellum is so worn and creased, and has been so much handled, that it is difficult to tell which is the rough side and which the smooth. The inner side however seems to have been the rough. The leaves have suffered from damp, which has affected the rubrication of the chapter headings and rendered parts of them illegible. The text remains legible throughout owing to the excellence of the ink, brown on the second leaf, a little blacker on the first. The creases make reading rather difficult in places. There are various stains on the leaves, probably caused by beer having been spilt upon them.

The fragment turns out to be part of the treatise called *De Officio Misse* or *De Missa et eius Partibus* or *Ordo Misse seu Speculum Sacerdotale* by Nicholas Trevet or Trivet, an English Dominican, who spent most of his life at the Universities of Paris and Oxford, dying at Oxford in 1328. A notice of Trivet will be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His chief work was a Chronicle of the Plantagenet Kings up to the death of Edward I, but his other writings were numerous. Only three copies of the *De Officio Misse*, of which the Stanstead fragment forms a part, are known, one in Lambeth Palace Library, one at Merton College Oxford, and one at Peterhouse, Cambridge. The Lambeth and Merton MSS. are of the 14th century, that at Peterhouse round about 1400.

The treatise was divided into seven parts and into 82 chapters. The initial letters of the chapters formed an anagram making the inscription, "Frater Nicholaus Trevet de ordine fratrum predicatorum hunc tractatum compilavit ad honorem dei." The Stanstead fragment opens in the middle of chap. 9 of part vj with the words "*ab archos quod est princeps . . .*" On the first leaf chapter 9 is concluded.

Chapters 10, 11, 12 and 13 are complete, each with its rubricated heading, mostly illegible. Part vij ends on the seventh line from the foot of the second column of the verso of the first leaf, its conclusion being followed without break by the following words underlined in red: "Explic[i]t p[ar]s vij<sup>a</sup> Incip[i]t vij<sup>a</sup> de duab[us] p[ar]tibus misse residuis q[ue] d[icu]n[tu]r sacra[ment]i p[er]ceptio & gr[at]iar[um] accio. [con]tinens capitula xij." The *capitula* of the first three chapters of Part vij follow, and the leaf ends.

The second leaf begins in the middle of part vij chapter 4. Chapter 4 is concluded, and chapters 5 to 8 are complete. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 9 have rubricated headings, more legible than those on the first leaf, but badly smeared. Chapter 8, which begins at the head of the second column of the verso of the leaf has no heading. A space was left for it at the foot of the preceding column, but there is no trace of it, and it can never have been inserted. The text ends in chapter 9 of part vij with the words ". . . Missa a[utem] p[ro], defu[n]ctis t[er]minat[ur] dicendo Requiesca[n]t in pace." The last three words are underlined in black.

At the beginning of each chapter a space has been left for the insertion of a coloured initial. The initials, as is so often the case, have not been inserted, but the small letter written in the space for the guidance of the illuminator is present in each case. The extent of the fragment in proportion to the whole treatise will be seen at a glance by writing out again the anagram formed by the initial letters of the chapters and italicising the letters which are the initials of the chapters contained in whole or in part on the two leaves. *Frater Nicholaus Trevet de ordine fratrum predicatorum hunc tractatum compilavit ad honorem dei.*

The text does not exhaust the interest of the fragment. On the margin at the head of the recto of the first leaf is the name, very faint, "Johan Burges," in a hand which I should place about 1570. On the same page, written over the chapter heading (which had perhaps already faded?) in the second column is the same name in probably the same hand, "Joh. Burges de Stanstead." Also at the head of the same page, immediately above the first line of the second column, a little slantwise, occurs the name "Jerome Calfe," in a hand of about 1620. I understand that there are still a Calf Wood and a Calf Charity in Stanstead parish.

At the foot of the same page and at the head of the verso of leaf 1 on the left are faint sixteenth century scribblings, the former scarcely visible. In the latter the word "wiff[e]" can be made out. Both might yield to a re-agent, or better still to an infra-red photograph, but they are probably unimportant. In the left hand margin of the verso of leaf 2, written at right angles to the text, again occurs the name 'Jo. berges' (about 1570). All these scribblings, including the names, are probably pen trials.

University Library,  
Cambridge.

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5th September, 1938.