CHARLEMAGNE: AN ANGLO-NORMAN POEM OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

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AN ANGLO-NORMAN POEM OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND A GLOSSARIAL INDEX

BY FRANCISQUE MICHEL

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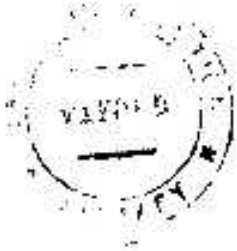

C. WHITTINGHAM, TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

TO

M. GUIZOT,

MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,

THIS WORK

PRINTED UNDER HIS AUSPICES AND DIRECTION,

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS GRATEFUL AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

One of the most ancient authors who speak of the conquest of Jerusalem by Charlemagne is, without doubt, Moses Maimonides(1) in the following passage:

"I, Moses, the son of Maimon, was very zealous for the Lord God of Israel, when I saw the books of the law in Egypt, that their *petuchæ*, and their *sethumæ*, and their *sidræ* were not according to the precept. Therefore I myself diligently sought time for labouring for the Lord, and I abstained from my studies, in order to write the book of the law of our God, namely the Pentateuch collectively bound together in a certain

(1) This author, born in Cordova, in Spain, about 1131, or 1139, died at Tiberias in 1209.

number of leaves, that thence other books might be corrected and transcribed. And the book from which I transcribed mine, is among the most celebrated in Egypt, containing all the twenty-four books, and it was at Jerusalem from the days of the Tanaites and the Amuraites, and when Jerusalem was taken by *King Carlun*, this book was taken thence, and was carried as booty into Egypt." *

* אני משה אבן מימון קנא קנאתי ליי׳ אלהי ישראל בראותי ספרי תורה במצרים שפרשיותיהן פתוחותיהן וסתומותיהן וסדורותיהן אשר לא כדת ודרשתי על עצמי עת לעשות ליי׳ ובטלתי מלמודי לכתוב ספר תורת אלהינו חמשת חומשים קשורים יחד בקונטריסי׳ כדי למניח ולהעתיק מהם שאר ספרים: והספר שהעתקתי ממנו הוא הידוע במצרים שהוא כולל כד ספרים שהיה בירושלים מימות תנאיים ואמוראים: ובשנלכדת ירושלים על ידי המלך קרלון לוקח משם הספר ובא שבי בארץ מצרים: (*Thesaurus Philologicus, seu Clavis Scripturæ:* . . . Authore Joh. Henrico Hottingero, Tigurino. *Tiguri*, Typis Joh. Jacobi Bodmeri. Anno M DC XL IX, in-4°, p. 117-118. After the word *Carolum* of the Latin translation of this passage, he adds between parentheses: "fabula est decantata in libellis quibusdam antiquo

Alberic des Trois-Fontaines, whose chronicle ends in 1241, the time at which he lived, has collected under the year 802, the testimonies of four writers more ancient than himself, who speak of Charlemagne's travels to Jerusalem ;(3) that is to

idiomate Gallicano scriptis, nec non Italicis poëmatibus celebrata, quæ tale quid de Carolo Magno nugatur.")

We had collected all the materials for our preface when we discovered that a paper on this subject had been written by M. de Foncemagne, and analysed in the *Histoire de l'académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, tome xxi, p. 149-156. We think that we have done right in translating it, with corrections and additions. This author was not acquainted with the passage in Moses Maimonides, nor with the French romances, which we publish, and of which we will speak.

(3) *Godefridi Gulielmi Leibnitii Accessiones Historicæ* . . . Hanoveræ sumptibus Nicolai Försteri Anno MDCC et M.DC.IIC. 2 vol. in-4, vol. II, part 1, p. 134-137. Some new readings were published, p. 38-90 of the first volume of Burchardus Menckenius's *Scriptores rerum germanicarum, praecipue saxonicarum* . . . Lipsiæ, Impensis Ioannis Christiani Martini. M DCC XXVIII, in-fol. Thus Roquefort (*Biographie universelle*, vol. I, p. 396) is wrong in saying that Menckenius has *caused* this chronicle *to be printed*.