

**THE CORRESPONDENCE
OF PHILIP SIDNEY AND
HUBERT LANGUET**

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The Correspondence of Philip Sidney and Hubert Languet by Philip Sidney & Hubert Languet

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PHILIP SIDNEY & HUBERT LANGUET

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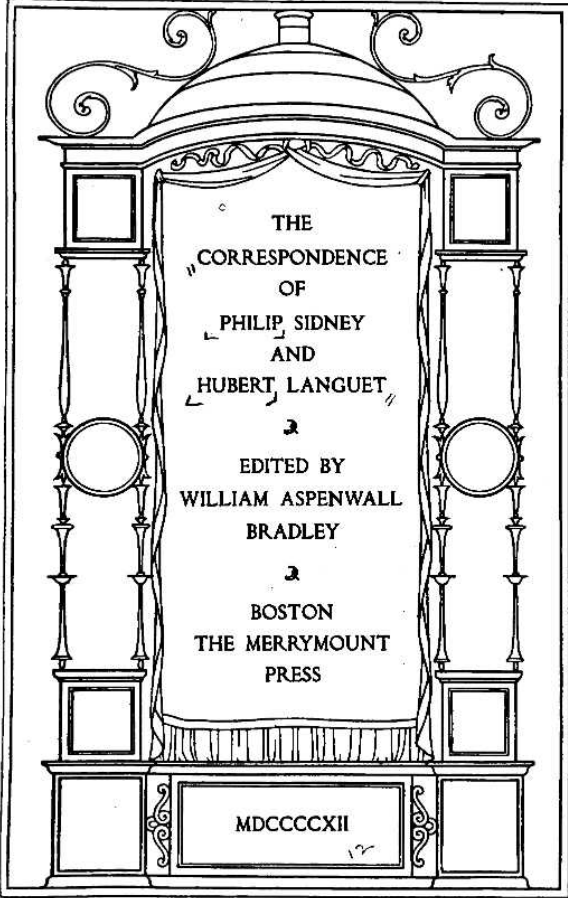
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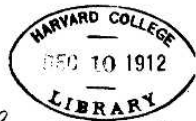
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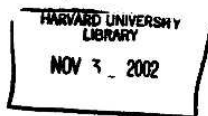
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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION



PHILIP SIDNEY first met Hubert Languet in the house of Andreas Wechel, the Protestant printer, at Frankfort. The meeting took place early in the autumn of 1572. Sidney was then in his eighteenth year, and fresh from Oxford and his first glimpse of court life. He had left England in May to enter upon that period of study and travel abroad which was beginning to be regarded as essential to the complete education of every well-born young Englishman who looked forward to a public career in his own country. Both he and Languet had recently been in Paris, where they had witnessed the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew. But while Sidney, safely hidden in the house of Sir Francis Walsingham, the English Resident Minister, encountered no real peril during the seven days of slaughter, Languet, who had incurred hostility by his open advocacy of the Huguenots, narrowly escaped death. The latter was fifty-four at this time, but the long years of arduous labour as diplomatic agent and envoy had not altered a generous and even genial disposition, or rendered an unusually warm heart less responsive to the appeal of youth. Languet stated that he was first drawn

Introduction to Sidney by a perception of intellectual promise in the lad, and by a presentiment of the part that one so endowed by nature and favoured by fortune might well come to play in the European drama. Perhaps he even represented to himself the opportunity thus offered him, not only to form such a future leader in accordance with his own conception of what Protestant leadership should be, but, in still bolder speculation, to make him the instrument by means of which England, the laggard nation, might, in time, be stirred to shake off her lethargy, and become the champion of the reformed cause. Such considerations, however, soon became secondary as Languet passed more and more under the spell of that "high and excellent spirit," that strong personal charm, which, even thus early, Sidney was beginning to cast over all who approached him. The latter could only have been flattered by the consideration shown him by a distinguished man so much his senior. He had come abroad for such intercourse with those who could school him in the affairs of Europe, and he found in Languet a preceptor who seemed as eager to teach as he himself was to listen and learn. But it was not long before Sidney forgot the master in the friend whom, in spite of the difference in their years, he could still address as "Hubert."
Languet, the son of a Burgundian gentleman,