

**THE LEGAL CODE
OF
ÆLFRED THE GREAT**

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The Legal Code of Ælfred the Great by Milton Haight Turk

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MILTON HAIGHT TURK

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EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

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TO MY FATHER.

PREFACE.

The preparation of a separate edition of Ælfred's Legal Code is due to the conviction that the nature of this work rendered desirable its consideration from a literary point of view. Philologically also its existence in one very old manuscript gives it among Anglo-Saxon Law-Books a peculiar value. But its chief claim to special consideration rests upon its author's great significance in Anglo-Saxon Literature. King Ælfred's literary tastes and occupations strongly colour this work; indeed in the Introduction the lawgiver is plainly supplanted by the man of letters, who, even in the actual laws, often presses close to the view. To prepare this monument for a place among Ælfred's literary works is the object of the present edition.

The last edition from the Mss. (Thorpe's, 1840) gave E rather inaccurately. We print from our own copies E, B, and the fragments Ot and Bu. The parts of the Vulgate used by Æ. in his introduction are given parallel to Ms. E. Besides the Bibliography and description and examination of the Manuscripts, with a discussion of the sources of Lambarde's text, an attempt is made to elucidate the literary characteristics of the work, to define the position of the laws called Ine's in it, and, as well as may be, to ascertain the probable date of its publication.

Although our citations are, with few exceptions, independent, yet the Bibliography owes a considerable debt to Professor Wülker's "Grundriss zur Geschichte der Angelsächsischen Litteratur", as must every work of this kind in the department of Anglo-Saxon. Furthermore, the consideration of the order of Æ.'s works in the "Grundriss", Schmidt's excellent treatise

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on the Beda, and the paper "Zu den Gesetzen der Angelsachsen", by Dr. F. Liebermann, have all been of much use. For personal favours in connection with this work the editor is further indebted to Prof. Wülker and to Dr. Liebermann. The Rev. Samuel S. Lewis, M. A., F. S. A., Fellow and Librarian of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, has laid him under obligations by many kind acts, including securing for his use from the Rev. F. J. A. Hort, D. D., LL. D., Professor in Cambridge, opinions on important points in Ælfred's use of Biblical sources. To these gentlemen and to the Rev. T. K. Cheyne, D. D., Canon of Rochester Cathedral, for placing the Textus Roffensis at his disposal, the editor wishes in this place to return hearty thanks.

Leipsic, July 1889.

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