

**"AS DAVID AND THE
SIBYLS SAY": A SKETCH
OF THE SIBYLS AND
THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES**

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"As David and the Sibyls Say": A Sketch of the Sibyls and the Sibylline Oracles by Alfred Cannon White & Mariana Monteiro

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ALFRED CANNON WHITE & MARIANA MONTEIRO

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A SKETCH OF THE SIBYLS AND
THE SIBYLLINE ORACLES

INITIATED AND PROJECTED BY THE LATE
VERY REVEREND ALFRED CANON WHITE

COLLECTED TOGETHER AND CONCLUDED (AT HIS REQUEST)
BY MARIANA MONTEIRO

“Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of
the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.”—Rom. iii. 29.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO THE
MAYOR
AND COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF
LONDON

[To face Preface.]

P R E F A C E

SOME twenty years ago, the late Canon White, when reciting the sequence in the Mass for the Dead, the *Dies Iræ*, conceived the idea that a book on the Sibyls would prove an interesting work. He spoke to me about the scheme, desiring me to collect the materials for this work when I frequented the Reading-room of the British Museum. As, fortunately, I am conversant with several languages, and, moreover, accustomed to work of research, I gladly seconded his wishes to gather from many sources the necessary information. The Canon had in mind to draw with his accustomed skill twelve sketches of the Sibyls, each with the attributes in accordance with their prophecies.

When engaged in this research, I found that some authors had formed the idea that these Sibyls were no more than a class of mythical

beings which had had no existence, and not real prophets sent by God. This idea is quite erroneous; and, similarly to many other errors, has been ignorantly circulated. Not only has Plato, Virgil, and other pagan writers who existed before the coming of Christ, and of undoubted veracity, spoken and described them as real women endowed with the gift of prophecy by God Himself, but some twenty-two of the holy Fathers of the Church and the earliest writers of authority during the first ages of Christianity, mention and speak of the Sibyls as women prophets, whom, on account of their virginity, God had endowed with the gift of prophecy, and sent them to the Gentiles lest they should ever allege as an excuse that God had only favoured the Jews, His chosen people, by sending them prophets to announce the redemption of the human race through the Passion, Cross, and Death of His only Son, the Second Person of the adorable Trinity. Hence God in His tender mercy sent these Sibyls to the Gentiles to announce to them also the glorious tidings of Salvation.

In the days when I was collecting and writing out this work, Canon White used to come to the Reading-room occasionally to superintend and

look over the various works I had found relating to the Sibyls, and was very much struck with one which contained illustrations of the twelve Sibyls. This work was in French and Latin, published in 1586, fol. : *Sibyllarum duodecim : Les Oracles des douze Sibyls, Lat. & French.* These I have had reproduced, and they will be found in the present work. He also copied many of the Latin verses which will be also found in this work. The greater portion of the information I gathered from foreign books, for the English writers do not seem to have taken much interest in this subject, no doubt because it would entail too much research ; for in this age of hurry and money-making, work is not done for the sake of love of art, science, or literature, but for what it will bring quickly to the author or publisher.

I had then arrived at the part where I commenced the Sibylline Oracles themselves, or what has remained of them, translated from the Greek, when I had suddenly to leave England and proceed to Portugal, leaving the work uncompleted. My stay abroad proved of some length, and on my return, on asking the Canon about the book—for I had left all the materials with him—he replied that he had done nothing further after I left.