

**A DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF  
THE MANUSCRIPTS AND SCARCE  
BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY OF ST  
JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**

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A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts and Scarce Books in the Library of St John's College,  
Cambridge by Morgan Cowie

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**MORGAN COWIE**

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DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

OF THE

MANUSCRIPTS AND SCARCE BOOKS

IN THE

LIBRARY OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE,

CAMBRIDGE,

BY

THE REV. MORGAN COWIE, M.A.,

LATE FELLOW OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE.

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"His chamber was all hang'd about with rolls  
"And old records from ancient times deriv'd,  
"Some made in books, some in long parchment scrolls,  
"That were all worm-eaten and full of canker holes."  
SPENSER'S Faerie Queene, B. 2, Cant. 2, Stanza 27.

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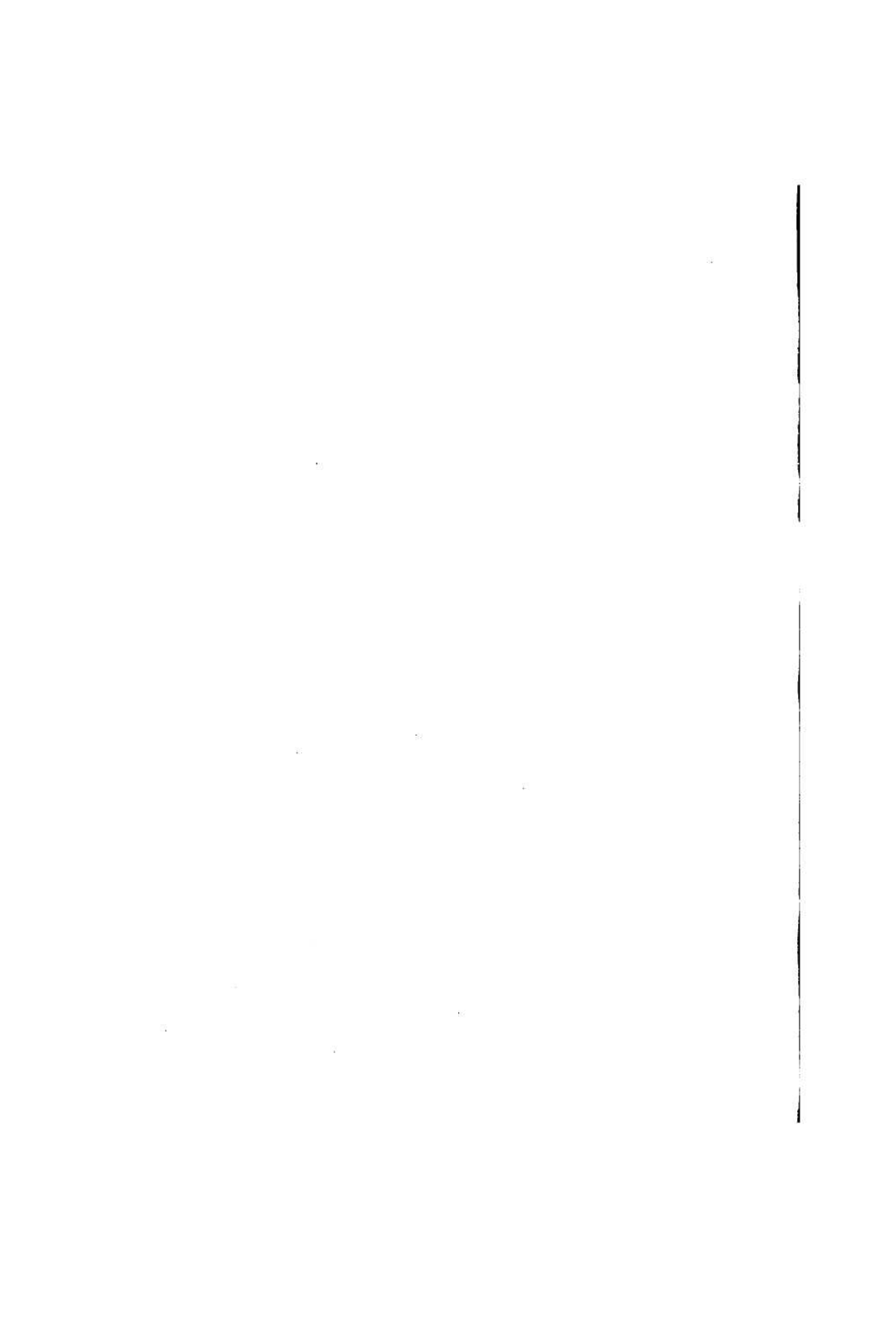
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## INTRODUCTION.

I BELIEVE there is no printed Catalogue of the following MSS., for I cannot meet with one, or find any record of its existence. The *Catalogus MSSorum Angliæ et Hiberniæ* (Oxon. 1697.) contains the Catalogues of the MS. Libraries of some of our Colleges, but not that of St John's College Manuscripts. The *Ecloga Oxono-Cantabrigiensi*, by T. J. (T. James,) contains very few of the College MS. Libraries. It is true, that *Dr Cave* in his *Historia Literaria*, and his editor *Wharton*, refer often to MSS. existing in the College, as also Bishop *Tanner* in the *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica*, and these references being generally accurate, I must conclude that they had personal access to the Library, (*Dr Cave* was a member of the College,) or had friends who supplied them with information among the resident Fellows. It seems very probable that *Mr Baker* may have supplied such references to the *Bibliotheca* of Bishop *Tanner*, as it is asserted that he did assist in the second edition of the *Notitia Monastica*. See *Master's Memoir* of him, p. 52.

However, if there had been a Catalogue in existence, it would not have been a useless task to have reconsidered and carefully reconstructed it from personal inspection. Those who have consulted the works above-named, will readily agree with me, that nothing can be more meagre than the accounts they give; and it is often quite impossible to make any use of the information, such as it is, from the careless manner in which the materials have been heaped together. That I may not be supposed to erect myself into a censor without sufficient ground, I will give an extract from a foreign review of some note, which expresses more censure on the ponderous volumes of the *Catal. MSS. Ang. and Hib.*, than I should venture to do.

The passage occurs in a review of one of *Hearne's* publications, and it goes on to speak of the then expected second edition of the *Bodleian Catalogue of printed Books*:

“Si spera, che questa ultima Edizione non solo sarà più copiosa, ma anche più corretta, e meglio disposta delle due precedenti, e farà più onore a i compilatori di essa, di quello che n'abbia fatto a suoi compilatori il Catalogo dei Manoscritti d'Inghilterra e d'Irlanda, stampata pure in Osford