

**CERTAIN SOURCES OF CORRUPTION IN  
LATIN MANUSCRIPTS: A STUDY BASED  
UPON TWO MANUSCRIPTS OF  
LIVY: CODEX PUTEANUS (FIFTH  
CENTURY), AND ITS COPY, CODEX  
REGINENSIS 762 (NINTH CENTURY)**

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Certain Sources of Corruption in Latin Manuscripts: A Study Based upon Two Manuscripts of Livy: Codex Puteanus (Fifth Century), and Its Copy, Codex Reginensis 762 (Ninth Century) by Frederick William Shipley

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**FREDERICK WILLIAM SHIPLEY**

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REGINENSIS 762 (NINTH CENTURY)

A Thesis

*Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts  
and Literature of the University of Chicago*

FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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### I. INTRODUCTION

THE tendency of Latin textual criticism has in late years been more and more in the direction of a conservative adherence to the authority of manuscripts, wherever possible. This may be seen in the gradually diminishing number of emendations and conjectures in the critical apparatus of recent editions of the Latin texts. Scholars now hesitate much longer about marking a word or an expression as corrupt merely because it is unusual. Confidence in all but very late manuscripts is on the increase. Recent years have seen the reinstatement of not a few manuscript readings whose place had long been taken by conjectures. A knowledge of palaeography is more and more becoming an essential factor in textual criticism, and, except in the case of texts which depend wholly upon manuscripts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,

<sup>1</sup> This dissertation, being the fruit of studies begun when the writer was a member of the American School of Classical Studies in Rome, was first published in the *American Journal of Archaeology*, Second Series, Vol. VII (1903). In its present form it has been reprinted, with the consent of the Editors, from the original plates of the *Journal*, but occasional alterations have been made in the plates, with a view to bringing the reprints more nearly into conformity with the general plan of a dissertation. It has still been necessary, however, to retain some of the features peculiar to the exigencies of periodical form.

one of the chief tests of an emendation is coming to be,—  
Is it capable of palaeographical explanation?

This tendency to place textual criticism more nearly upon a palaeographical basis has not been accompanied by a corresponding change in the character of the illustrative material used in books and manuals upon the subject. The collections of examples now placed before the student are not without their value, but they fail along the lines in which textual criticism has made the greatest advance. These examples consist for the most part in (1) a comparison of the corrupt reading of a manuscript with a conjectured emendation of a scholar, or (2) in a comparison of the readings of two or more manuscripts of the same author, of which the relationship is generally uncertain, or at least remote. Illustrations chosen according to either method are often misleading to the student, even granting that, in the first method, the scholar's conjecture is what the author actually wrote. A great many corruptions to be found in manuscripts of all periods are no longer in their initial stages, but are the complex result of several distinct processes of growth. The student, with nothing before him but what the author is *supposed* to have written and the corrupt reading of, let us say, a thirteenth century manuscript, may be dealing only with a corruption in a late stage. All the earlier steps are missing, and certainty with regard to them is out of the question. Such an illustration has little value for him, leading as it does to no conclusion which is surely right, and possibly to one which is wholly wrong. Likewise, neither of these methods keeps clearly before the student the character of the errors common to certain *styles* of writing and certain *periods* of time. Both of them are lacking in palaeographical details.

To be of the greatest practical value, illustrations of corruptions should fulfil the following conditions: (1) the two extremes which are compared should not be too widely separated; (2) neither of them should be based upon conjecture; (3) each illustration should present but a single stage in the

progress of an error, or at any rate should present but one stage at a time; (4) the cause of the error should be reasonably certain; (5) each example should keep distinctly before the student the periods of time and the palaeographical conditions involved. Material for illustrations which would answer all these conditions is not entirely wanting, though little use has heretofore been made of it. It is to be found in a class of neglected manuscripts whose readings have no place in the critical apparatus of the text editions, namely, direct copies of originals which are still extant. The circumstance which renders such copies useless for the constitution of the text of a given author makes them of the greatest value in throwing light upon the history of the texts in general. By comparing such a copy with its original it is possible, as it were, to look over the shoulder of the mediaeval scribe as he sits at his task. One may follow his hand and eye as he copies letter by letter and word by word. The difficulties with which he has to contend either in the script or the text of his original are clearly revealed. It is possible to see exactly how he performed his work, whether faithfully or carelessly, whether he has adhered closely to his text or altered freely, and, when he has made errors, how and why they came to be made. The extent to which the text suffered in his hands is thus made clear in every detail. Illustrations taken from the readings of two such manuscripts, original and copy, would enable the student to draw his own conclusions with full data before him,—the style of the script of the original, the date of each manuscript, the conditions under which the copy was made, and the knowledge that, in the case of corruptions, he is dealing with but a single stage. By this method it is possible to see exactly what, in the copying of a given manuscript, *actually happened*, and then to turn the information to account in considering the texts of other manuscripts produced under the same conditions, the originals of which are now lost.

Examples chosen by this method are as nearly as possible upon a palaeographical basis, and offer the student definite