

**THE BOOKS OF THE VAUDOIS:
THE WALDENSIAN MANUSCRIPTS
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TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN. WITH
AN APPENDIX**

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The Books of the Vaudois: The Waldensian Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin. With an Appendix by James Henthorn Todd

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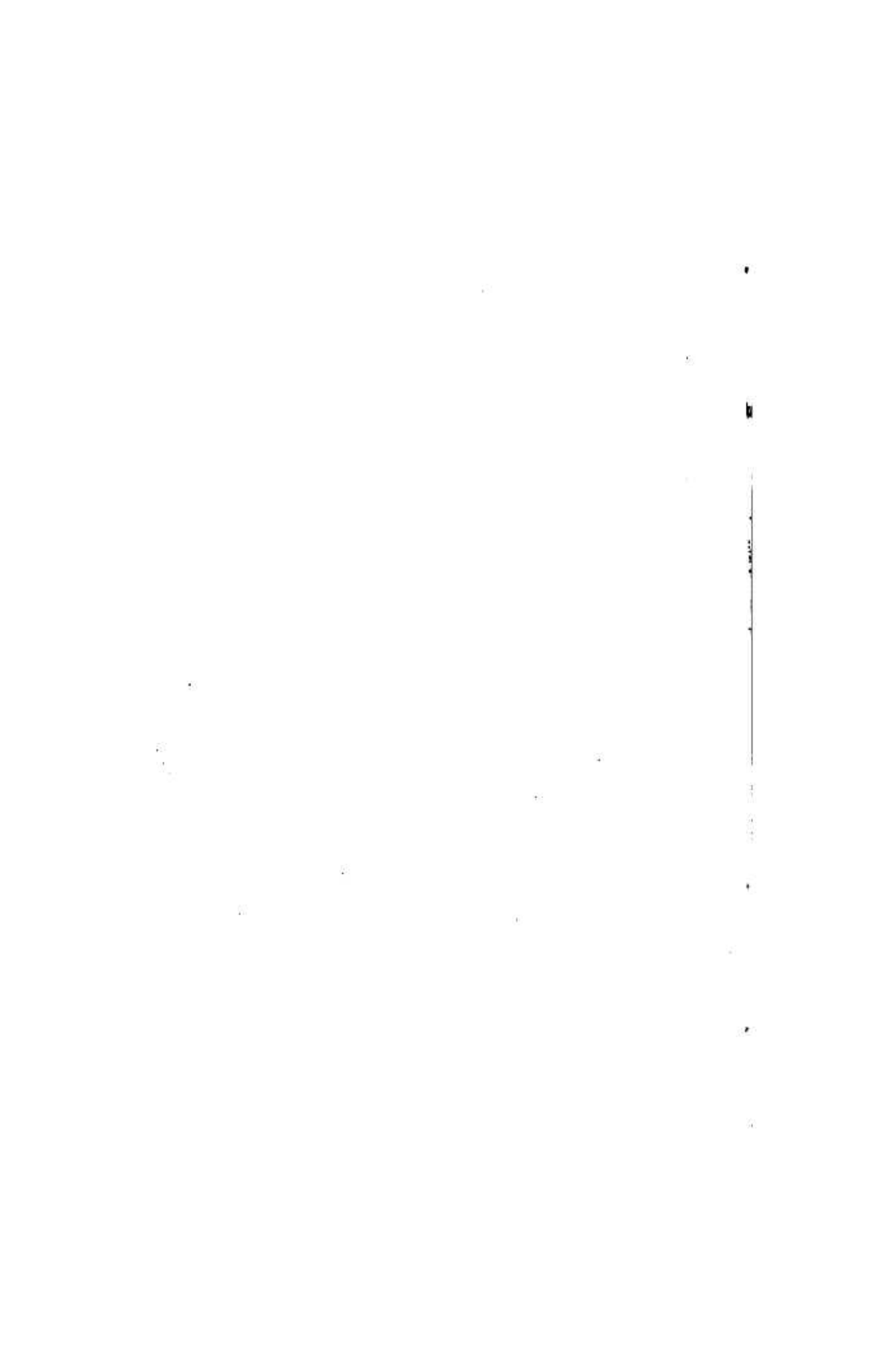
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JAMES HENTHORN TODD

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THE
WALDENSIAN MANUSCRIPTS

PRESERVED IN THE
LIBRARY OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

WITH AN APPENDIX,
CONTAINING
A CORRESPONDENCE (REPRINTED FROM THE BRITISH MAGAZINE) ON THE
FORMS OF THE POOR OF LYONS, THE ANTIQUITY AND GENUINENESS
OF THE WALDENSIAN LITERATURE, AND THE SUPPOSED
LOSS OF THE MORLAND MSS. AT CAMBRIDGE.
WITH MR. BRADSHAW'S PAPER ON HIS
RECENT DISCOVERY OF THEM.

BY
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PREFACE.

A VERY short statement will suffice to explain to the reader the circumstances which gave birth to the papers and correspondence re-printed in the following pages.

In a work* now almost five and twenty years before the public, I had occasion to examine at some length the opinion of the learned Joseph Mede, that the "time of the end," that is to say (as he assumed), the end of the prophetic periods of 1290 and 1335 days, was to be characterized by a new light communicated to the Church, as to the interpretation of prophecy, in accordance with the prediction (Dan. xii. 4), "Many shall go to and fro, and knowledge" [of prophecy, as Mede interprets] "shall be increased." He maintained that this increase of knowledge had been manifested at the beginning of the twelfth century by the discovery of a new, and up to that

* "Discourses on the Prophecies relating to Antichrist in the Writings of Daniel and St. Paul." Dublin: 1840. Page 398, *sq.*

time unheard of, principle of interpreting the prophecies relating to Antichrist. The Antichrist (*"scriptus dictus"*) had been previously looked for in the person of an individual man, who should obtain supreme power upon earth, teaching the doctrines of Atheism and infidelity, setting himself up as an object of Divine worship, and seeking by the most violent and bloody means to exterminate Christianity. But now, in the twelfth century, it was discovered that the Antichrist of prophecy was not to be an individual, but a succession of individuals, namely, the series of Roman Pontiffs, or the Papacy; that a deep and subtle corruption, which still retained the name of Christianity, not Atheism or avowed infidelity, was to be the character of this Antichristian power; that it was already come, and had silently taken the name of the Catholic Church, before any one suspected its existence; and that no other Antichrist was to be looked for.

In proof of all this, Mede relied upon a treatise, which he assumed had been put forth by the Waldenses,* and which had been dated 1120.

* That the Waldenses were not the originators of this new interpretation of prophecy, as Mede supposed, has been shown. "Discourses on the Prophecies relating to Antichrist," &c., p. 27, *sq.*

This tract, entitled *Qual cosa sia l'Antichrist*, set forth very distinctly the new doctrine; Antichrist was discovered to be a "*cosa*," and not a person. The obvious inference was, that, if the Papal power was the Antichrist, it was the duty of all Christians to come out from the communion of the Roman Church.

Mede seems to have been under the erroneous impression that the date 1120 was an integral part of this treatise, and that its author or authors claimed to have written in that year. It had been circulated or made public, as he maintained, between the years 1120 and 1125, and therefore he concluded that this period of five or six years must be the "time of the end," when the 1290 and 1335 days of Daniel were to be accomplished. But it turned out that the date, 1120, was no part of the treatise itself. This was a mistake arising from a typographical error in Perrin's history; and the tract *Qual cosa* was independently proved, by irresistible internal evidence, to belong to the age of the Reformation. It had been endorsed with the early date, not without grave suspicion of fraud, by Perrin, and after him by Leger, the Protestant historians of the Vaudois. Even Mr. Faber himself, with all his zeal for Waldensian antiquity, had been forced to abandon the date of 1120, and to admit