

The Livy of Pope Alexander the Sixth.

ONE of the most interesting books exhibited in the King's Library at the British Museum is the Grenville copy of the *editio princeps* of Livy, printed at Rome by Sweynheym and Pannartz, as usually supposed, in 1469. This copy is doubly remarkable, as the only one known to exist upon vellum, and as bearing the arms of the Borgia family beautifully painted on the first page of the text. Cardinal Roderigo Borgia, afterwards famous as Pope Alexander the Sixth, having been Abbot of the Monastery of Subiaco, where the first productions of Sweynheym and Pannartz's press were executed, it was naturally inferred that he had held this dignity in 1469, and that the book had been presented to him on that account. A statement to this effect, written by Mr. Grenville, till recently appeared in the handbook to the books exhibited in the King's Library. It was removed on the present writer's observation of its inconsistency with the statement of the contemporary diarist, Stephano Infessura (apud Eckhardum, *Corpus Historicum Medii Aevi*, tom. 2) that the abbey had been conferred upon Cardinal Borgia by Pope Sixtus IV immediately after his election on August 9, 1471, "Lo Vice Cancelliere hebbe la abbadia di Subiaco." Borgia accordingly could not have been Abbot before that date, and the book was evidently printed during the pontificate of Sixtus's predecessor Paul the Second, being dedicated to this Pope. At this time the writer had no access to any history of the Abbey of Subiaco, by which the statement of Infessura could be corroborated or disproved. The Museum, however, has very recently acquired a valuable book, "*Memorie di Subiaco e sua badia, raccolte dal Canonico Jannuccelli*," Genova, 1856. Jannuccelli, who seems unacquainted with the testimony of Infessura, confirms it by a citation from an old MS. chronicle of the monastery, and decisively proves that Borgia cannot have been Abbot in 1469, by producing a bull of Pope Paul the Second, dated in 1470, by which it appears that the abbot's chair had then been vacant for four years. It is evident, therefore, that Cardinal Borgia's possession of the Abbacy was a mere coincidence, and had nothing to do with his ownership of this magnificent volume, which must nevertheless in all probability have been executed for him, as there would otherwise have been some indication of a former possessor, who could only have been a person of great distinction. The fact is of interest as indicating that he was a more liberal patron of literature and scholarship than usually

supposed, since the book can no longer be regarded in the light of a merely official presentation. It should be added that he was a good abbot, restoring the castle of the monastery at his own expense, and granting his vassals the privilege of holding a market on Saturdays, which their descendants enjoy to this day. Finally, in connection with his apparent interest in Livy, it may not be amiss to remark that the character of him by Raphael Volaterranus, which has formed the basis of most subsequent estimates, is evidently imitated from Livy's character of Hannibal.

The splendid volume which forms the subject of this paper has been successively in the possession of the Benedictine Library at Milan, of the Abate Canonici, of Edwards the bookseller, of Sir Mark Sykes, of Mr. Dent, of Messrs. Payne and Foss, and of Mr. Grenville. It brought at Edwards's sale no less than £903.

R. GARNETT.

Of Librarians. II.

THE THEORETICAL LIBRARIAN.

YOUR theoretical librarian is an optimistic philosopher, and if you will but believe him salvation cometh neither from the east nor from the west, but out of libraries. "Not by their deeds, but by their books shall ye know them," quoth he, and he firmly believeth that the true millennium will only begin when every parish hath its library and its librarian. Nor is he careful to conceal that, in his opinion, it were no great loss if the church did duty for the one, and the parson made way for the other.

He loveth statistics, and if his library receiveth a crown he grudgeth not to spend one half in compiling mystick tables and schedules to show how the other was laid out. If words be taken in fines he disdaineth to account for it thus simply, and many pages of fair paper and much good ink will be employed to set forth in just proportion the quota of the butcher, the baker, and perchance of the candlestick-maker.

He is a mighty compiler of catalogues and bibliographies *in the clouds*. As other men rear great castles out of the smoke of their own brains, your theoretical librarian is ever laying plans for a great schematic work that will bring him much repute and will be to him as a monument for all time. It is naught to him that the least of his fancy-bred undertakings must needs be the work of a company of