

BULLETIN
OF THE
JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY

VOL. I.

OCTOBER, 1908.

No. 6.

IN MEMORIAM.

MRS. ENRIQUETA AUGUSTINA RYLANDS.

SINCE the publication of the last number of the BULLETIN Manchester has sustained an irreparable loss by the death of Mrs. Rylands, the munificent founder and continued benefactor of the John Rylands Library, which occurred on Tuesday, February 4th, at her residence in Torquay, in the sixty-fifth year of her age.

Enriqueta Augustina Rylands, the widow of John Rylands, was the daughter of Stephen Cattley Tennant, a Liverpool and Havannah merchant, who made his home chiefly in Havannah, where his daughter was born. Miss Tennant's education was commenced at a private school in New York, and was continued in Paris and in London.

It was on the 6th of October, 1875, that Miss Tennant became Mrs. Rylands, an event which was commemorated twenty-four years later, when the library which was to perpetuate the name of John Rylands was formally dedicated to the public, on the anniversary of that date.

For thirteen years Mrs. Rylands shared her husband's strenuous life in all its varied activities, with a devotion which evoked the admiration of all who came within the sphere of its influence.

Mr. Rylands took a deep and constant interest in all that related to literature, but the absorbing cares of business necessarily prevented him from living as much as he would have wished among books. He was always ready, however, to extend his aid and encouragement to students. He took an especial interest in adding to the studies of the poorer Free Church ministers gifts of books which were beyond their own slender means to provide, but which were necessary to keep them in touch with the trend of modern religious thought, since, in many cases, they were stationed in rural districts remote from anything in the nature of a library. There are many ministers living to-day who preserve a feeling of profound gratitude to John Rylands for the help which he extended to them in this, as in many other ways.

When, therefore, upon the death of Mr. Rylands, which took place on the 11th of December, 1888, Mrs. Rylands found herself entrusted with the disposal of his immense wealth, she resolved to commemorate the name and worth of her husband by dedicating

to his memory an institution devoted to the encouragement of learning. She recalled the little library at Stretford, which Mr. Rylands had watched over with so much care, and which in its time and measure had been of incalculable benefit to many a struggling minister. She also remembered how great an interest he had taken in theological studies, and accordingly resolved to establish a library in which theology should occupy a prominent place, where the theological worker should find all the material necessary to his study and research. From such modest beginnings has the present library arisen.

With this idea of the library in view, Mrs. Rylands in 1889 entered upon the collection of the standard authorities in all departments of literature, and in the year 1890 the erection of the splendid structure in Deansgate was commenced from the designs of Mr. Basil Champneys.

The scheme was conceived in no narrow spirit. Thanks to the contact with foreign countries which travel had yielded her, Mrs. Rylands was a woman of catholic ideas, and did not confine herself to any one groove, but allowed the purpose she had in view to mature and fructify as time went on. It was fortunate that she proceeded in a leisurely manner since various unforeseen circumstances helped to give a shape to the contemplated memorial which neither she nor any one else could have anticipated.

While the building was rising from the ground books were being accumulated, but without ostentation, and few people were aware that a great library was in process of formation.

THE PURCHASE
OF THE
ALTHORP
LIBRARY.

The only interruption of the perfect quiet with which this project was pursued occurred in 1892, some two years after the builders had commenced their work of construction, when there came to Mrs. Rylands the opportunity of giving to this memorial a grandeur which had not been at first contemplated. In that year the announcement was made of Earl Spencer's willingness to dispose of that most famous of all private collections, "The Althorp Library". When Lord Spencer found himself compelled to surrender the glory of Althorp, he wisely stipulated with the agent that a purchaser should be found who would take the whole collection, and so prevent the famous library from being dispersed in all directions. For some time this object appeared to be incapable of realisation, and the trustees of the British Museum were therefore tempted with the Caxtons, but the owner would not consent to have the collection broken up by any mode of picking and choosing, and so the negotiations fell through. Negotiations in other directions were then entered into, and it is almost certain that the collection would have been transported to America if Mrs. Rylands had not become aware that it was for sale. Recognizing that the possession of this collection would be the crowning glory of her design, Mrs. Rylands decided to become the purchaser.

While these negotiations were proceeding, scholars throughout the country were in a state of great suspense. As soon, however, as it was announced that the collection had been saved from the disaster of dispersion, and was to find a permanent home in England, a great sigh of relief went up. The nation was relieved to know that so many of its priceless literary treasures were to be secured for all time against the risk of transportation, and the public spirit which Mrs. Rylands had manifested was greeted with a chorus of grateful approbation.

Although the Althorp collection, of rather more than 40,000 volumes, is but a part of the John Rylands Library, which to-day numbers nearly 130,000 volumes, it is, by common consent, the most splendid part. Renouard, the French bibliographer, described

it as "the most beautiful and richest private library in Europe," and another writer has called it, "a collection which stands above all rivalry". It is true that other private libraries have possessed more printed books, but none could boast of choicer ones.

But Mrs. Rylands did much more than this. She had acquired for Manchester a collection of books which in many respects was unrivalled, but in doing so she had enlarged considerably the scope of her original plan, and decided to establish a library that should be at once "a place of pilgrimage for the lover of rare books," and a "live library" for genuine students, whether in the departments of theology, philosophy, history, philology, literature, or bibliography, where they would find not merely the useful appliances for carrying on their work, but an atmosphere with a real sense of inspiration, which would assist them to carry it on in the highest spirit.

After ten years of loving and anxious care the building was ready for occupation. Only those who were associated with Mrs. Rylands know how much was put into those ten years. From the very inception of the scheme Mrs. Rylands took the keenest possible interest in it, devoting almost all her time, thought, and energy to it. Not only every detail in the construction of the building, but every other detail of the scheme in general, was carried out under her personal supervision. Nothing escaped her scrutiny, and it would be impossible to say how many admirable features were the result of her personal suggestion. No expense was spared. The architect was commissioned to design a building which should be an ornament to Manchester, and in the construction of which only the very best materials should be employed. It is not too much to say that stonemason, sculptor, metal-worker, and wood-carver have conspired under the direction of the architect, and under the watchful care of the founder, to construct a building in every way worthy of the priceless collection of treasures which it was intended to house.

THE OPENING OF THE LIBRARY.

On the 6th of October, 1899, the twenty-fourth anniversary of Mrs. Rylands's wedding-day, the building and its contents were formally dedicated to the public, in the presence of a large and distinguished gathering of people from all parts of Europe. The inaugural address was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Fairbairn, Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford—an address in every sense worthy of a great occasion. A few passages from that address, in eulogy of the founder, may be appropriately quoted here:—

"It would have been a comparatively simple and easy thing for Mrs. Rylands, out of her large means, to set aside a sum ample enough to build this edifice, to equip and endow this institution. She had only to select an architect and choose a librarian, to summon to her side ministers and agents capable of carrying out her will, saying to them: 'Here is money, spend it in the princeliest way you can, and, if more be needed, more will be at your command'. But she did not so read her duty. The ideal created in her imagination, by the memory and character of her husband, was one she alone could realise. And she proceeded to realise it, with the results that we this day behold. Nothing was too immense, or too intricate to be mastered, nothing was too small to be overlooked. The architect has proved himself a genius. He has adorned Manchester; he has enriched England with one of the most distinguished and the most perfect architectural achievements of this century. . . . The library will be entitled to take its place among the deathless creations of love. To multitudes it will be simply the John Rylands Library, built by the munificence of his widow. . . . But to the few, and those the few who know, it will for ever remain the most

marvellous thing in history, as the tribute of a wife's admiration of her husband, and her devotion to his memory. The opening of this library calls for national jubilation. All citizens who desire to see England illumined, reasonable, right, will rejoice that there came into the heart of one who inherited the wealth of this great Manchester merchant, the desire to create for him so seemly a monument as this. It stands here fitly in a city where wealth is made, to help to promote the culture, to enlarge the liberty, to confirm the faith, to illumine the way of its citizens, small and great."

At the conclusion of the formal proceedings, after the National Anthem had been sung, Mrs. Rylands, in response to repeated calls, stepped to the front of the balcony from which the speeches had been delivered, when the great assembly rose to its feet and greeted her with ringing cheers, which she acknowledged with a simple bow.

Later in the day, Mrs. Rylands was summoned to the Town Hall, to receive the honorary freedom of the City of Manchester, as the highest distinction that it is in the power of the city authorities to bestow. It may be mentioned, in passing, that Mrs. Rylands is the only woman who has been so honoured.

The scroll on which the freedom of the city was presented, records the resolution of the City Council in the following words;—

FREEDOM OF
THE CITY OF
MANCHESTER
CONFERRED.

"That the members of this Council desire to express their opinion that the powers accorded to them by law for the recognition of eminent services would be fittingly exercised by conferring upon Mrs. Enriqueta Augustina Rylands the freedom of the city—the highest distinction which it is their privilege to bestow. Mrs. Rylands is distinguished and honoured by the community for the generous manner in which she has founded and dedicated to the public, and enshrined in a beautiful and costly edifice, a noble library for the promotion of study and the pursuit of learning; for the large collection of books formed by herself, and especially for its enrichment by the addition of the celebrated Althorp Library, purchased from Earl Spencer; for the exceptional service thus rendered by preventing this invaluable library from being removed from England; for the important facilities she has thus afforded to the student of bibliographical research by bringing together so many of the rarest and most precious of literary treasures as will make Manchester a place of pilgrimage to scholars throughout the world; for the enlightened wisdom by which this valuable property will be invested in trustees, its government entrusted to chosen representatives, and its management based on broad and liberal principles. The Council, in recognition of these and other eminent services, do hereby, in pursuance of the Honorary Freedom of Boroughs Act, 1885, confer upon Mrs. Enriqueta Augustina Rylands the honorary freedom of the City of Manchester and hereby admit her to the honorary freedom of the City of Manchester accordingly."

Mrs. Rylands's acknowledgment of the honour thus conferred was read just before she signed the roll of the Freemen of Manchester, by her brother, Mr. Stephen Joseph Tennant, who is still one of the Trustees of the library and its Honorary Treasurer. It was as follows:—

"I wish simply in as few words as possible to thank you, and I do it most heartily, for the great honour you have conferred upon me in presenting me with the freedom of your great city. It was certainly a surprise to me when I became

aware that you had it in contemplation to pay me this honour. I had never thought of public recognition of myself for this private work, which is designed as a memorial to my husband. It has been the delightful interest of the past ten years to watch its growth, and to-day that my object is fulfilled, and I see the library opened, I have only to add my earnest hopes that every expectation for good that it has ever raised may be fulfilled. In my affection the city of Manchester must always hold a unique place, inasmuch as it is the city with which my husband's life was most intimately associated, and it is for this reason, as you all know, that I have chosen to place here, in Manchester, this library bearing his name. And when I use the word city I use it in the widest sense, that is to say, as applying to the city in all its manifold activities and life. These activities, and this many-sided life—literary and educational, mercantile, professional and industrial, and lastly, what I regard as first in importance, religious—I have endeavoured to associate in the government of this library. Nor have I forgotten the part which Manchester has played in the past, and will, I hope, play in the future, in the life of the country at large, and more especially in that of the north of England. For this reason I have also associated in the government of this library certain bodies which are not local (such as the National Council of the Free Churches), and certain others which, though not exclusively local, have here the centre of their life (such as the Victoria University). Once again, I express to you my hearty thanks for all the kind things you have expressed, and I repeat my deep acknowledgment of the honour you have done me, and which I shall always hold as a treasured remembrance."

Mrs. Rylands's interest in the library did not end there. She endowed it with an annual income of upwards of five thousand pounds for its maintenance and extension, and again and again, when rare and costly books, or collections of books, came into the market which were beyond the reach of the ordinary income of the library to secure, she readily and generously found the money, if only she could be assured that the usefulness of the library would be enhanced by their possession.

In the month of August, 1901, another instance of the munificence of Mrs. Rylands, and of her continued interest in the library was made public, with the announcement that the celebrated collection of illuminated and other manuscripts belonging to the Earl of Crawford, numbering upwards of six thousand, had been purchased for a very considerable sum.

The purchase came as a great surprise to all but a very few. The negotiations had been conducted in the quiet, unostentatious, yet prompt manner which was characteristic of all Mrs. Rylands's dealings.

The importance of the collection cannot easily be overestimated. The manuscripts are familiar to scholars and specialists, for Lord Crawford had often lent sections of the collection for exhibition. But to the world at large and to many of our readers they are as yet unknown. For that reason it may not be out of place to indicate very briefly some of the outstanding features of the collection which gives to the John Rylands library a position with regard to Oriental and Western manuscripts similar to that which it previously occupied in respect of early printed books through the possession of the Althorp Library.

Just as the distinguishing mark of the Althorp Library was the early printed books, so the distinguishing mark of the "Bibliotheca Lindesiana," as the Crawford Library is

PURCHASE OF
THE CRAWFORD
MANUSCRIPTS.

known, was the manuscripts. To some of these the bindings impart a character and a value of a very special kind. The rarity of such jewelled bindings in metal and ivory, dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as are found here, may be gauged by the fact that the John Rylands collection, which contains only thirty, yet ranks third among the collections of the world. By far the richest is in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, next comes that in the Royal Library at Munich, and then comes the collection in Manchester. The origin of these bindings may be explained as follows. A monastery owned a precious tenth-century "textus" of the gospels; it also owned an ivory "pax," or tablet carved with a sacred subject, perhaps of a century later. A century later still it occurred to some rich abbot to have the second made into a cover for the first, and he would call in some jeweller or metal-worker from Cologne or Liège, who would encase the ivory tablet in a richly jewelled metal frame, and make the whole into a cover to preserve the manuscript. In many instances in this collection the ivory or enamel centre and the jewelled or chased border are of different centuries. But in nearly all cases the result of the joint work of the carver and the goldsmith is of singular richness and beauty. This is not the place nor the moment in which to describe the collection more in detail.

Of the Western manuscripts themselves, it must suffice to say there are some hundreds, exquisitely written and finely illuminated. There are, for instance, an unadorned St. Cyprian's letters and opuscula of the seventh or early eighth century; a "Gospel Book" of the tenth century, written for the Emperor Otto the Great, with his portrait; a "Sarum Missal" of the thirteenth century, which is probably the most venerable copy of this service book in existence; a beautiful "Psalter," which belonged to Jane of Navarre, Queen Consort of Henry IV, with her autograph; an equally beautiful "Horae," in which Mary Queen of Scots has written "*Mon Dieu confondez mes ennemis M.*" A copy of the "Postilla" of Nicolas de Lyra, in three volumes, with the date 1407, is full of marvellous borders and miniatures, made historically interesting by the portraits of the members of the Malatesta family, which are introduced—the family to whom it belonged, and for whom it was made. Even more splendid is the celebrated "Colonna Missal" in six large volumes, written and illuminated for Cardinal Pompeo Colonna by the Raphael school of artists. Of the English manuscripts, the finest is the famous copy of John Lydgate's "Siege of Troy," of which the borders are of extraordinary richness and beauty, written and illuminated not later than 1420. Another volume is the same writer's translation of Boccaccio's "Falle of Princes," a plainer, but still a very important manuscript. A third volume of great interest and importance is the copy of Wiclif's "Gospels," which was presented to Queen Elizabeth on her accession by Francis Newport, who had narrowly escaped martyrdom under Queen Mary.

We cannot pretend to indicate the wealth of the collection in the matter of Oriental manuscripts of all ages and in a variety of languages. Armenian, Singhalese, Tamil, Canarese, Tibetan, Burmese, Siamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Malay manuscripts are here in abundance. Here, too, are examples of those strange and rare productions, the medicine books in the language of the Battas. These things are, of course, curious, but of more general interest are the great collections of very precious Persian, Arabic, and Turkish manuscripts, numbering nearly 2,000 volumes, and forming one of the richest departments of the library. The Coptic papyri and codices range from the fifth to the sixteenth century. The Egyptian demotic papyri form by far the most important collection of documents in this script at present extant. There is an extensive collection of

Greek papyri, and a vellum codex of the "Odyssey," in a handwriting probably of the third century, which would make it the earliest vellum book known. Of Samaritan manuscripts there is an interesting though not large collection of biblical and liturgical works, and there are a number of Hebrew rolls and codices. To make known the value and contents of this collection Mrs. Rylands undertook to defray the cost of cataloguing it in a manner commensurate with its importance. To this end arrangements had been entered into with a number of leading scholars to deal with the manuscripts in their own special line of research. Professor Hogg has undertaken the Arabic manuscripts; Drs. Grenfell and Hunt the Greek papyri; Mr. F. Ll. Griffith the Demotic papyri; Mr. Crum the Coptic group; Dr. M. Rhodes James the Western manuscripts; Mr. Cowley the Samaritan; Mr. Nicholson, of Cambridge, the Persian manuscripts; and Professor Margoliouth the Arabic papyri.

Some of the catalogues are nearing completion, and will shortly make their appearance in print, although one can only regret that Mrs. Rylands did not live to see this part of her scheme carried through.

Mrs. Rylands's liberality was not by any means confined to the library. When the Whitworth Hall was built for the Owens College, by the late Chancellor Copley Christie, Mrs. Rylands crowned the benefaction by the gift of a fine organ. The organ was ready for use when the Prince and Princess of Wales opened the hall on the 12th of March, 1902. The celebration of the Owens College Jubilee had been deferred for a year, until the building of the hall was finished. On the 13th of March, to mark this auspicious circumstance in the history of the University and College, a number of honorary degrees were conferred, when Mrs. Rylands received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters, at the hands of the Chancellor of the University, the same Earl Spencer whose library she had been the means of bestowing upon Manchester. Mrs. Rylands greatly valued this honour, and was more pleased with the ovation given to her by the University students on the day when the degree was conferred than with any other tribute that fell to her lot.

From first to last Mrs. Rylands's interest in the library was unflagging. Until within a few weeks of her death she was making purchases of manuscripts and books, and one of her last cares was to provide accommodation for the rapid extension of the library, so that the work should in no wise be hampered for want of space. A fine site adjoining the library, in Wood Street, had been acquired, and it was her intention, had she lived, to erect thereon a store building that would provide accommodation for at least half a million volumes. Unfortunately death intervened before the arrangements in pursuance of her intentions could be completed.

Mrs. Rylands made additional provision in her will for the upkeep and development of the library. She bequeathed £200,000 in four per cent. debentures, yielding an annual income of £8,000. This sum added to the existing endowment gives to the trustees and governors an income of upwards of £13,000 per year, sufficient to enable them to administer the institution in a manner worthy of the lofty ideals of the founder.

In addition to the monetary bequest, Mrs. Rylands bequeathed to the library all books, manuscripts, and unframed engravings in her residence at Longford Hall, numbering several thousand volumes. It must suffice to say that the collection is very rich in modern "éditions de luxe," such as the great galleries of paintings of "Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle," "Bridgewater House," "Ham House," "The Wallace

HONoured BY
THE VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY.

PROVISIONS FOR
LIBRARY IN
MRS. RYLANDS'S
WILL.

Collection," "The Louvre," and "The Hermitage"; Sir Walter Armstrong's monographs on Sir Joshua Reynolds, Turner, Raeburn, and Gainsborough; Mrs. Frankau's "Eighteenth Century Colour Prints," "William Ward," and "John Raphael Smith"; Mrs. Williamson's "Books of Beauty"; Goupil's series of "Historical Monographs,"—these and many similar works are included, most of which are in the choicest possible state. Of such series as the "Doves Press," and the "Essex House Press" there are sets printed on vellum. Of "Grangerized," or extra-illustrated, books, we may call attention to the following: Forster's *Life of Dickens*, 10 vols.; *The Book of the Thames*, 4 vols.; Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 4 vols.; *The Works of Sir Walter Scott*, 67 vols., etc. Other noteworthy books are: Ongania's *Basilica di San Marco*, 15 vols., Bode's edition of Rembrandt, with Hamerton's work on the same master; the facsimiles of the *Grimani Breviary*, and the *Hortulus Anime*; the copy of Tissot's *Old Testament*, which contains the whole of his original pen drawings; and a set of the four folios of Shakespeare. The illuminated manuscripts include: two *Books of Hours*, painted by Hans Memling; two French *Books of Hours*, one of which was painted for King Charles VII, and several beautifully decorated Bibles and Chronicles. In the matter of bindings, there is a fine collection of examples of work by the great modern masters of the craft. There is also a very extensive collection of autographs and historical documents, including the greater part of the collection formed by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Raffles, of Liverpool, in the first half of the last century.

These are but a few items taken at random, and intended merely to indicate the character of the books which Mrs. Rylands gathered around her during the last twenty years of her life, not alone for her own pleasure, but with a view to the ultimate enrichment of the library on a side where it was but indifferently equipped.

These remarks, of necessity, are almost exclusively confined to Mrs. Rylands's relations to the library, which she looked upon with pardonable pride as her great achievement. But her munificence did not end there, nor with her gifts to numerous other public objects, in which she took a keen interest. The full extent of her benefactions will probably never be known. She was naturally reserved, and delighted to do good in secret, but those who take an active part in charitable work in Manchester could testify to her unfailing readiness to assist any good cause of which she approved. She did not simply give money out of her great wealth, she also gave care, thought, and attention to all that she was interested in.

Personally Mrs. Rylands was little known, but to those who did know her she was most kind and generous. She was a woman of very marked ability and of great determination. She did not like life in the eye of the world, and had absolutely no taste for society. Some of her friends were tempted, sometimes, to wish that a wider social circle might know and value her, but she preferred the home circle and a few friends, to the attractions of the larger world.

Those who had the privilege of assisting her in any of her numerous and absorbing interests, can testify to her wonderful business capacity and to her mastery of detail. She possessed truly and in a marked degree, "the genius of taking pains".

Of those who were associated with Mrs. Rylands in the foundation of the library three remain. Mr. Stephen J. Tennant, a trustee, and honorary treasurer of the library, Mr. William Carnelley, a trustee and vice-chairman of the council of the library, and the Rev. J. W. Kiddle, a trustee, and the honorary secretary, who was also for many years Mrs. Rylands's private secretary.

UNVEILING OF
THE STATUE OF
MRS. RYLANDS.

On the 12th of December, 1907, less than two months before the death of Mrs. Rylands, a statue of her was placed in the main hall of the library.

The governors and others concerned in the administration of the institution had long felt, and had often expressed the feeling, that the library was incomplete without some representation of a personal nature connecting it with the founder. They had the portrait of Lord Spencer, and the statue of Mr. Rylands, but nothing in the nature of a portrait of Mrs. Rylands. They were anxious to remedy this omission, and to this end representations were made to the founder with a view to obtain her consent and co-operation. After thinking the matter over, and foreseeing some difficulties in the way of getting a portrait painted, Mrs. Rylands asked to be allowed to carry out her own design. The governors gladly acquiesced, and Mrs. Rylands commissioned Mr. John Cassidy to execute a statue in marble as a companion to that of her husband by the same artist, which stands at the north end of the library.

On the 12th of December, Mr. Stephen J. Tennant, the brother of Mrs. Rylands, in the presence of a small company of governors and other leading representatives of Manchester, requested the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr. Alfred Hopkinson, K.C., as chairman of the council of governors, to unveil the statue which Mrs. Rylands had had executed for the purpose of presentation to the library, and to accept it as a gift from her.

The statue, which is slightly over life-size, is in Saravezze marble, and Mr. Cassidy is to be congratulated upon the success which has attended his efforts to produce an excellent likeness of Mrs. Rylands, and at the same time a dignified work of art. In a sense the statue puts the finishing touch to a splendid work. The photographic reproduction which accompanies the present number is taken from the artist's plaster model, from which the marble was carved.