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NOTES AND STUDIES

CHAPTERS IN THE HISTORY OF LATIN MSS OF CANONS

VII. THE COLLECTION NAMED AFTER THE MS OF ST MAUR (F), PARIS LAT. 1451.

WHEN Friedrich Maassen published in 1870 his *Geschichte der Quellen und der Literatur des canonischen Rechts im Abendlande*, he only knew of one MS of this collection, which he described in detail on pp. 613-624; and he naturally named the collection after the MS in question, 'Sammlung der Handschrift von Saint-Maur', because an inscription of ownership in a fifteenth-century hand on fol 1 b runs *Iste liber est s̄i pet. fossatē*—the house which gave its name to the Benedictines of St Maur. In the seventeenth century it belonged to Nicolas LeFebvre, and later on to Colbert, and so it passed to the Royal Library. Its present number is Paris lat. 1451. It was written, it would seem, quite early in the ninth century, whether for the monastery of Saint-Maur-les-Fossés, its earliest known home, we cannot say; but as the monastery was founded in A. D. 640, this is not impossible, and the situation of St Maur, to the south-east of Paris, does not contradict any of the known data of the case. I have called it F.

But at a very early stage of my own researches on the Canons, knowledge of a sister MS became accessible to me through Duchesne's *Liber Pontificalis* (1886), for on pp. xlix-li, after the account of Paris lat. 1451, follows the description of another MS, of the same contents and substantially the same date, Vat. Reginae 1127 (my f). Queen Christina doubtless obtained it in France, for in 1647 it belonged to Alexandre Petau. In the preceding century it had been in the possession of bishop Jean du Tillet; and when describing the MSS of du Tillet in an appendix to Dr Fotheringham's collotype edition of *The Bodleian Manuscript of Jerome's Version of the Chronicle of Eusebius* (Oxford 1905), I noted on p. 58, after Delisle *Cabinet des Manuscrits* i 285, 288, that du Tillet's MSS remained in his family till the death of another Jean du Tillet in 1646, and that Alexandre Petau sold his MSS to Queen Christina in 1650. Thus we are well informed about the later history of the MS; and as bishop du Tillet came from the

Angoumois, and the MS belonged about the year 1000 to the abbey of St Cybar at Angoulême (besides other indications of connexion with that locality), it is not doubtful that it belonged to Angoulême from a remote stage of its history, and quite possible that it was written there.

But already the preface of Sirmond's *Concilia Galliae* cites a 'codex Fossatensis' and recognizes its close relationship to another 'codex Engolismensis'. I myself have made regular use of both MSS in my *Monumenta* from the first published part onwards; and my collations made it quite clear that, while the two MSS are very closely allied to one another, the relation is not that of parentage and filiation but of independent descent from a common archetype.

Not more than these two MSS were known to Duchesne. At a later point and only by a very gradual process I came on the track of a third MS of the same family. In the *Journal of Theological Studies* for April 1900 I noted (pp. 437, 438) that the catalogue of the MSS of the Jesuit College of Clermont, drawn up at the time of the suppression of the Order in 1764, contained under the number 562 the description of a MS of canons, most of which reappears (with the loss of the first thirty-six leaves) in the 1824 sale catalogue of the Meerman MSS as no. 583. But at that time I had not succeeded in finding out what happened to the MS in 1824: out of 250 Latin MSS 190 were purchased by Sir T. Phillipps, and before the end of the nineteenth century the Phillipps collection of Meerman MSS passed from Cheltenham to Berlin; but though two important MSS of canons (in my numeration R and the second half of A) were included in these transactions, there was no trace of no. 583 having accompanied them.

Before my account of du Tillet's MSS—see the second paragraph of this paper, p. 1—was finally passed for press (I suppose early in 1905), I had realized, from a comparison of the catalogue of 1764 with the contents of my MSS F and f, that the lost MS belonged beyond question to the same family: *op. cit.* p. 60 n. 3. I was still as much in the dark as ever as to the fate of the MS at the Meerman sale in 1824, till I learnt from Mr. Fitzroy Fenwick of Thirlestane House, Cheltenham, Sir Thomas Phillipps's grandson, that no. 583 had been bought on that occasion by Baron Westreenen. Where then at the beginning of the twentieth century were the Westreenen MSS? I wrote to the friend I thought most likely to be able to answer the question for me, Père H. Delehaye of the Bollandist Fathers; and at last the long-drawn-out search was over—the Westreenen MSS were still at the Hague in the library known as the Museum Meermann-Westreenianum.

Hardly had I after so many years' unsuccessful search solved the problem when the same information came to me from a quite different source.

Wilhelm Levison of Bonn, well known as an authority on early medieval documents and history, wrote to me that he had seen the MS at the Hague and judged it to be superior to both F and *f*.

All this happened in 1911, and was made public in 1913, in the preface (pp. viii, ix) to the first part of the second fasciculus of tom. I of my *Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima*. Just in those years I was kept in England by home responsibilities, and all that I could do before the war was to obtain some collations of early Gallic councils made by my friend Prof. A. Souter of Aberdeen.¹ Then followed the war, and it was not in fact till the spring of 1923 that I came into personal touch with the MS, no. 9 of the Meerman-Westreenen collection.

My immediate purpose was to collate the text of the councils on which I was then working, Laodicea and Constantinople, and my time was limited to a single morning. But, as it happened, I stumbled on a reading which more than justified Levison's impression of the value of the MS, for it shewed beyond the possibility of doubt that *ff*—so I had labelled the MS, ten years or more before I saw it—was the lost common ancestor of both F and *f*. In the title of the council of Constantinople according to the Isidorian version occur the words 'quando ordinatus est beatus nectarius episcopus'. For the last two words we had in F 'nestorius ep̄s nectarius ep̄s,' in *f* the same thing in inverse order 'nectarius ep̄s nestorius ep̄s', and I dare say I ought to have guessed at once the true explanation of the *varia lectio*. Anyhow the reading of *ff* carried conviction, from the moment my eyes first lit on it, as the indubitable source of the readings of the other two. For *ff* has

nestorius ep̄s

nectarius ep̄s, the upper reading being in a different but contemporary or almost contemporary hand. Clearly some early corrector or commentator of *ff*, more familiar with the name of Nestorius than with that Nectarius as bishop of Constantinople, erroneously superposed the wrong name over the right name, before either of the copies, F or *f*, had been taken from *ff*. But the reader who inserted the wrong name in *ff* had made no attempt to erase the right name: both were left standing, and the scribes of F and *f*, confronted with the double text, did not venture to take any other step than to incorporate both readings in their copies; the only difference being that the F scribe put the gloss before the reading of the text, while the *f* scribe put the reading of the text first and then the gloss after it. That they acted just thus had the fortunate result of elucidating at once the mutual relations of the three MSS: F and *f* are independent copies of the same exemplar, both

¹ These included the fourth-century councils of Arles (A. D. 314) and Valence (A. D. 374).

made after the erroneous gloss 'nestorius ep̄s' had been written between the lines over the 'nectarius ep̄s' of the text of *ff*.

It was a great satisfaction to have arrived so easily at so clear a demonstration of the facts. But I will not deny that mixed with my satisfaction was a poignant consciousness of the waste of the many hours spent over the collation of the two copies when their common archetype was all the while, had I but known it, existing and accessible.

Naturally I realized at once that more attention would some day have to be given to the Hague MS. But as it turned out that task was not immediately pressing, since the F family did not contain any of the material which has engrossed in the last few years such leisure as I could spare for the Canons—namely the documents of the dispute between Rome and Carthage which came to a head in 419. Six years in fact elapsed between my single morning in April 1923 and the single morning which again was all I could give in September 1929. But the results of my second inspection of the MS were hardly less sensational than those of the first. The special object I had set myself to achieve was the examination of the contents of the Hague MS in comparison with Maassen's catalogue of the contents of F. I satisfied myself in general that the agreement covered not only the councils but the preceding matter that Maassen enumerates at the beginning of § 686 as well.¹ It was the councils, however, to which my attention was almost immediately diverted, for there a startling phenomenon revealed itself.

Maassen had noticed (pp. 616, 622) that the index of contents prefixed to the collection of canons (F fol. 25 *b* = *ff* fol. 19 *b*) differed from the text in two points: in the first place the index took no account of a number of pieces which are found in the text before and after the canons of Nicaea, and in the second place the canons of Sardica are postponed (under the number x) to all the Greek canons in the index, while in the text they come before all canons from those of Ancyra onwards. He had further rightly conjectured that the index represented the older form, the body of the MS a more recent form, of the collection.

No light was thrown on the problem by Vat. Reg. 1127 (*f*), which in the Greek councils agrees almost entirely throughout, both in index and in text, with F.² But an inspection of the hands and the gatherings of the Hague MS clears up much of the difficulty at once.

¹ The preceding matter, as Maassen indeed makes quite clear, is twofold: (1) actually part of the collection, though preceding the title and index of contents of the councils, are the documents enumerated below on p. 7 (Maassen p. 614): all these are in *ff*, foll. 2 *b*–9 *b*: (2) not part of the collection, described in smaller type, and not in the Hague MS as it exists at present, though they were still there in 1764, the documents catalogued *op. cit.* pp. 613–614.

² The only serious difference seems to be that between the matter taken from

In fact foll. 31-53 in the Hague MS form an intrusive element, which interrupts the original arrangement of the gatherings, is written in a quite different hand, and takes up more space on the page. These twenty-three leaves must be entirely neglected in the business of working back to the archetype of the collection—save in so far as it is possible that the last leaf of the original fourth gathering is represented for us in the inserted leaves by the first bit of fol. 31 *a* and the last bit of fol. 53 *b*.

On the other hand, foll. 1-30, 54-173, are in the same hand and are a continuous series of gatherings from A to T. The signatures are fol. 7 *b* A, fol. 15 *b* B, fol. 23 *b* C. All the sheets being quaternions, the signature D ought to follow on fol. 31 *b*: it is not there, for the simple reason that the last leaf of the sheet has disappeared, fol. 31 being instead the first of the intruded leaves. I shall return later on to the question of the contents of the original (now lost) leaf 31. Here we need only note that on fol. 54 we revert to the first hand, and the sheet which there begins is duly signed E, as we should expect, on fol. 61 *b*. Everything goes regularly as far as fol. 173 *b*, which has its proper signature, T: put aside the intrusive sheets, and there is nothing to prevent us from reconstructing the archetype of *ff*, except the disappearance of the last leaf of sheet D. Now fol. 30 *a* ends with canon XVIII of Nicaea, that on deacons, and with the title of the next canon—which has, however, been erased and another title written in another hand.

Now at this exact point (see my *Monumenta* I p. 235 col. *b*) the text of **F** begins to shew a sudden resemblance to the text of **S**, of which there was no sort of sign before. The version is still the Isidorian; but whereas in the previous canons **F**'s affinities were especially with the Quesnel family, **Q**, which is southern Gallic, they are henceforward with the St Blaise family, which is of Italian origin, though in the eighth century it had spread to the Rhineland and the north of France. So too **F** has the passage from Rufinus, the canon on kneeling, and the Nicene signatures (Maassen p. 617 ll. 11-15) in the same order as **S** and in a closely related form of text. Quite clearly then the inserted leaves had from the very first no sort of connexion with the *corpus* into which they have been inserted in *ff*. The presumption is that the same connexion with **S** is true of the half-dozen pieces that follow on foll. 32-53 down to and including the Roman synod of A.D. 595.

the Ephesine council and the Roman synod of A. D. 595, at fol. 42 *b* of **F**, the sister MS inserts an 'ordo romanus' about Christmas ceremonies, foll. 52 *b*-55 *b*; that section of *f* corresponds to foll. 47-50 of the Hague MS. But these four leaves in *ff* are an independent unit, and may perhaps have accrued to it after the date of the copying of **F**, but before the date of the copying of *f*.

Whatever their source or their relationships, whatever interest may attach to them, they have to be left entirely out of account in any investigation of the archetype of *ff*.

We turn now to the final junction of the intruded leaves (where they come to an end on fol. 53 *b*) with the original MS. Just as the first junction, where the intruded matter begins, was towards the close of the canons of Nicaea, so the second junction falls near the beginning of the canons of Sardica. Obviously, the one lost leaf of the original MS, the last of sheet D, must have contained the last canon of Nicaea and the first four canons of Sardica, for fol. 54 *a*, where the original hand recommences, starts with 'Addendum si placet' (p. 457 of my lately published text of Sardica), the opening words of the proposal of bishop Gaudentius of Naissus, which is treated in the MSS as an independent canon. I am under the impression that in the case of the Sardican canons—unlike the Nicene—the matter of the intruded leaf 53 *b* was repeated from the ejected leaf of the original MS, so that the canons of Sardica form one consistent whole.¹ If so, the title given to the council, on fol. 53 *b* of the Hague MS, and copied in *F* and *f*, is the genuine title of the archetype, ITEM CAÑ NICEÑ SIVE SARDICENS̄ QVI IN GRECO NON HABETVR EXPOSITVS EST AB EPISCOPIIS XXV(XX).

Here the Sardican canons are introduced as 'Nicene or Sardican', and in the archetype followed immediately on the undoubted canons of Nicaea. But at an earlier point (fol. 26 *b* of *ff*, 28 *b* of *F*, 35 of *f*) the *titles* of the Sardican canons follow straight after the *titles* of the Nicene canons under the rubric ITEM CAPITĪ CAÑ CONCILII EIVSDEM. It is therefore apparent that *F* has combined two authorities without succeeding in making them quite consistent with one another. What these two sources were it is not really difficult to decide.

Let us begin with a comparison of the collection which stands nearest to ours of all other collections, so far as the first four councils (Nicaea, Ancyra, Neocaesarea, Gangra) are concerned, namely the Quesnel collection or *Q*. That collection was put together in south-eastern Gaul, probably at Arles, somewhere about the year 500. It is therefore earlier than our collection, and so far as they are directly related to one another, *Q* must be the ancestor and *F* the descendant; and comparison of the two texts² shews that the relation between the two families at this stage is very close indeed. The redactor of the (original) collection *F* must I think have had before him (1) the *text* of *Q*, which he follows pretty closely, but also (2) an exemplar in which the canons of Nicaea and

¹ The readings of *F* for the earlier canons of Sardica, as for the later, shew affinities with *Q* and not (like the concluding canons of Nicaea) with *S*.

² See for Nicaea *Ecclesiae Occidentalis Monumenta Iuris Antiquissima* i 179-235; for Sardica i 452-486; for the other three councils tom. ii, parts 1 and 2.

Sardica were rightly distinguished from one another; and he did his best to combine his two authorities. Doubtless he had somehow learnt that the councils of Nicaea and Sardica ought to be distinguished; and he wanted at once to distinguish them, and yet not to diverge further than was necessary from his principal source **Q**. Now, for the title of Sardica as distinguished from Nicaea he agrees exactly with **Sp**¹ (see my *Monumenta* p. 452 col. a): for the division of the canons he does his best to combine his two authorities **Q** and **Sp** (see the tables, *ib.* p. 442).

We can now dismiss once and for all the intrusive matter, drawn from the Italian collection **S** not long after the Hague MS was written and before the two other MSS **F** and *f* were copied from it: that is to say, somewhere near the year 800. We have learnt on the way that the arrangement in **F** of the Sardican canons appears to imply a dependence on two sources, both familiar to students, **Q** and **Sp**; and therefore **F** is in date posterior to A.D. 500, and in place nearly connected with Arles. How far do these conclusions tally with the material that precedes the collection of canons and terminates in the middle of fol. 19 *b* in *ff*, and of fol. 25 *b* in **F**? This material is beyond question part of the same whole with the councils: it is prefixed to the canons, we may suppose, as necessary to a proper understanding of them. Its main constituents are (1) a chronological list of popes down to Pelagius II, † A.D. 590; (2) a history of the popes, or abbreviated *Liber Pontificalis*, down to Felix IV, † A.D. 530; (3) a politico-geographical description first of Gaul and then of the Empire, i. e. the *Notitia Galliarum* and *N. prouinciarum*.²

It may be said to be characteristic of all sixth-century collections in Gaul—the Quesnel collection indeed takes us back a little further, to the end of the fifth—that they are equipped with a list of popes brought down to date with a chronology of the years, months, and days belonging to each. The original form of the list can generally be detected by the cessation of the chronological details: the second hand, where there is one, was able to provide a supplement of the names of the popes to date, but not as a rule more than just the names. Duchesne's *Liber Pontificalis*, pp. 13 ff, prints some eight catalogues from Gallic MSS of canons.

¹ It has been so far I think universally supposed that **Sp** is Spanish; but the view that **Sp** really belongs not to Spain but to Arles is warmly championed by a young Catalan scholar now resident in Paris, the abbé Jean Tarré: see his paper 'Sur les origines arlésiennes de la collection canonique dite *Hispana*' in the *Mélanges Paul Fournier* (1929) pp. 705-724. The relations worked out in this and the next paragraph seem favourable to the abbé Tarré's thesis.

² For a detailed description of the contents of this part of **F**, see Duchesne *Liber Pontificalis* i (Paris 1886) pp. xlix-liii: for a summary of the whole matter, Lightfoot *S. Clement of Rome* (1890), i 303-305. For the *Notitiae* see Mommsen *Chronica Minora*, pp. 524-542, 552-614: he used **F** only, not *f* or *ff*.

The Arras MS of Q (my Ψ) gives the dates complete as far as Felix († A.D. 492), the continuation with names only as far as Severinus (acceded in A.D. 638): it is clear that the collection was put together in the pontificate of Felix's successor Gelasius, and bought up to date in the first half of the seventh century. The Corbie MS (my C) gives names and dates as far as Hormisdas inclusive († 523): the original collection therefore belongs to the time of his successor John (A.D. 523–526); the second hand adds names and years, but not months and days, as far as Vigilius inclusive († 555).¹ The MS of Chieti (my I), the one Italian MS to supply a list to Duchesne, ends in the same way with Hormisdas, and the collection, therefore, as first put together, is contemporary with the nucleus of the Corbie MS.² A third collection, the Reims MS (my R), now Berol. lat. Phillipps 8, has dates complete down to Hormisdas's predecessor Symmachus, and names of three popes more, Felix IV being the last. The Cologne MS (my K) brings the list down in the first hand as far as Agapetus, A.D. 535, and is continued by the second hand with both names and dates as far as Pelagius II, with the name alone of his successor St Gregory; but I differ from Duchesne in my interpretation of the chronological data of the list. I think that the list ending with Agapetus was copied by the scribe of K from his exemplar; and that the supplementary names as far as St Gregory were added by the same scribe—though in a semi-uncial and no longer an uncial hand—to bring the MS up to date. The MS was therefore written under St Gregory's pontificate.³ Finally, the list in the Albi MS (my A: copied from my T, of which some gatherings are now lost) comes down to the same point, the last dates being those of Pelagius II, the last name that of his successor St Gregory.⁴

The papal list of F has not been printed: neither that of the Hague MS, nor that of either of the derivative MSS F and f. The original catalogue—with which alone I am concerned here, for it alone bears on the original date of the collection—is carried down to Pelagius II († 590) and therefore presumably the date of the collection falls again under St Gregory. The catalogue is found in a double form, first with names only, but later on with names, years, months, and days. But the term is the same in both lists, Pelagius II; and it is, in my judgement, beyond dispute that the collection we call F dates at latest, like the MSS K and T mentioned in the preceding paragraph, from the turn of the sixth and seventh centuries.

¹ *J. T. S.* xxx pp. 233, 234 (Apr. 1929).

² *Ib.* xxxi p. 13 (Oct. 1929).

³ See my note on K in *Facsimiles of the Creeds* (H. B. S. vol. xxxvi, 1908) p. 41.

⁴ *J. T. S.* ii 269 (Jan. 1901): Traube in *Facsimiles of the Creeds* p. 53.

Obviously it was the fashion in Gaul during the century from A.D. 500 to 600 to prefix a dated list of popes to any systematic collection of councils and decretal letters. On the one side the fashion probably indicates a growing emphasis of dependence on the papal see; but on the other we must not forget the practical advantage of the accompaniment of a continuous chronology to a vast mass of miscellaneous documents. In the second century events in Christian history tended to be dated according to the pope under whom they happened. Somewhat in the same way, if you preferred to avoid the secular standards of consuls and emperors, the popes were the natural substitute when a continuous standard was wanted for the chronology of ecclesiastical affairs. For the historian it does not much matter what was the particular standard employed: the important thing is that a standard existed, and that any such test enables us to fix, simply and satisfactorily, the date either of the particular MS or, if not, of the collection which was its archetype. The indications then point to Arles and the sixth century as the date and place of the collection **F**.

So far as the Greek councils are concerned, neither **Q** nor **Sp**, the two collections with which our enquiries as to the sources of **F** have brought us in touch, can offer any guarantee of excellence in a text derived from them. And in fact consultation of the volumes so far published of my *Monumenta* will abundantly justify the anticipation of inferiority. Neither for the Isidorian version of Nicaea, nor for the Isidorian Ancyra, Neocaesarea, Gangra, and Antioch, is the text of **F** anything but second-rate.

But the texts contained in nearly all our larger collections of early Canon Law are composite. Certainly it is the case with **F** that, if the form of the material derived from the Greek contributes very little to the establishment of a final text, the state of things is exactly the opposite with regard to some of the Latin councils.

The collection opens with the Roman Council held under pope Damasus in A.D. 378 or 379, and generally known as the Tome of Damasus. On p. 282 of my *Monumenta* I have argued that the internal evidence of readings compels us to recognize that the group of MSS Col R **F** Pi is the group to which faith must be pinned. That the Nicene Creed is rightly prefixed to the Damasine document is not only what in itself we should expect, but in so placing it our group is supported by the only early Italian families of MSS which contain the Tome at all, **S** and **M**. It is more difficult to explain how it comes about that the best text of the document as a whole is contained in a group which is not Italian but Gallican, and of which the constituent members do not appear to have any obvious relation to one another. But there are the facts: **F** has on this occasion a first-class text. It is more easy to

understand how a first-class text of this Roman document came to Arles—the city in Gaul which stood in closest connexion with Rome in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries—than it is to understand how that same type of text should turn up in the north-Gallic centres of Le Mans (Pi), Reims (R), and Cologne (Col).

Nor is this the only feature which redeems our collection from insignificance. Of the earliest of all the Gallic councils, the *concilium plenarium* of Arles in 314, **F** gives a better text than any other among our authorities: in one important instance it gives the right reading against all other witnesses. 'Rebaptism is a special custom of the Arians' is the text consistently given by all our MSS save **F**; but it cannot be right, for Arianism did not exist, or at any rate had not been heard of in the West, as early as 314. Instead of **Arriis** we must undoubtedly read **Afris**, with no other support than **F**; and we can only explain the situation by the supposition that **F** had access to better sources than the generality of Gallic MSS—in other words, to the archives of the church of Arles.¹

Can we extend this proved superiority of **F**, in regard to the council of 314, to the remaining councils held in the fourth and fifth centuries? It is clear that the text of **F** is of singular value for the earliest Latin documents contained in it, those of the fourth century. Both in the case of the council of Arles of 314, and in the case of the Roman Tome of Damasus, this state of things would admit of an obvious explanation if **F**, like **Q**, had its origin at Arles. But the Gallic councils, as time went on, tended to be held, not like the earlier councils exclusively in the neighbourhood of Arles, but farther and farther north; and there is no longer the same *a priori* probability that Frankish and Burgundian councils would be best preserved at Arles as there was for those of the *Provincia*. The problem of the inter-relations of the Gallic councils and of the MSS that enshrine them has still to be worked out.

It is just worth while to note one case where a reference to the older documents as they existed at the oldest stage of canon law in Gaul is contained in the 31st canon of the council of Epaon² of A. D. 517. The subject is homicide, and appeal is made in the canon to the precedent of the 22nd and 23rd canons of Ancyra as still binding. But our MSS

¹ The *Liber Pontificalis*, the *Notitia Galliarum*, and *Notitia Prouinciarum* are of course exactly the sort of thing which a great central library like that of Arles might be expected to possess.

² Epaon was a 'parochia' which was 'medius atque oportunus locus' for the meeting of the bishops of the province of Vienne (see the letter of Auitus of Vienne convening the council in Maassen's edition, *Concilia Aevi Merovingici* p. 17): Spruner marks 'Epao' on the left bank of the Rhone, half-way between Vienne and Valence. The bishop of Arles was not among the signatories of the council.

are divided into two sharply opposed groups over the form of the reference. Most of them, followed by Maassen in his text (*M.G.H. Concilia Aevi Merovingici* [1893] p. 26), give 'Anquirritani canones'. But three of them (including my K and L) have instead 'antiqui Nicaeni canones', and I cannot doubt that this is right, for the earliest Gallic code included the canons of the earlier Greek councils, Ancyra, Neocaesarea, and Gangra, under the common title Nicene. But F (the only MS of the family used by Maassen) goes with the generality of the MSS, and gives the inferior reading in the form 'Anceritani'.

We cannot therefore, it seems, treat the value of F for the Gallic councils as a constant quantity. We must distinguish the different councils, or groups of councils, from one another, and for the present we must be content to say that on occasions the value of F is supreme. Perhaps when the fifth-century councils are critically edited, all those of the Lower Rhone valley may be found to reflect the same credit on F as the council of 314 undoubtedly does. But before we can pass an assured verdict, we must be in possession of a complete collation of the Hague MS. The material now put before scholars can at least claim to have made the true contents and ancestry of this late sixth-century collection a good deal clearer than they were before.

Before we part finally from the collection here described, there is a question which it is perhaps worth while to raise, even if, without fresh material at our disposal, it can hardly be answered. When the Hague MS was described in the Paris catalogue of 1764, it was of larger bulk than it is at present; for the first thirty-six leaves had disappeared when the Meerman sale catalogue of 1824 was drawn up. They did not belong to the collection proper, for the MS as it now stands begins as it should with a sheet signed A. But they were already in the position as described in 1764 when the copies F and f were made, for both those MSS contain preliminary leaves; and that these preliminary leaves are copied from the thirty-six leaves that in 1764 stood at the head of the Hague MS is clear—and I ought to have recognized this long ago—from the correspondence of the data of the 1764 catalogue with the enumeration of the preliminary matter of F on pp. 613, 614 of Maassen's book¹: a list of popes, the *Fides* of St Athanasius, the *Fides* of St Augustine, the *Fides* of St Jerome, &c. Probably these thirty-six leaves were detached from the Hague MS between 1764 and 1824, possibly by Meerman himself, and bound separately.

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¹ And in greater detail in his *Bibliotheca Latina Iuris Canonici Manuscripta* part ii (1867) pp. 173-175 = foll. 1 a-15 b.