

Williams Manuscript

**The Syrian Antilegomena Epistles ; 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude,
written A. D. 1471 by Suleiman of Husn Kaifa**

ed. by Isaac H. Hall

Hall, Isaac Hollister [Hrsg.]; Williams, William Frederic

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THE
SYRIAN ANTILEGOMENA
EPISTLES

2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude

Written A. D. 1471 by Suleimân of Husn Keifa

Edited by

ISAAC H. HALL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

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THE SYRIAC MANUSCRIPT, from which the accompanying pages were phototyped, was obtained some sixteen years ago by the late Rev. William Frederic Williams, then a missionary at Mardin, by whom it was sent to his brother, the present owner, Robert S. Williams, Esq., of Utica, New York. At what place it was obtained is unknown; but its possessor was an aged priest, unable to read it, who parted with it probably for that reason only. Through the courtesy of Mr. Williams I was permitted to take the MS for examination, in August, 1884, when I discovered the nature of its contents.

It contains: (1) Tables to find Easter and other movable feasts; (2) Tables of Ecclesiastical Lessons, for the biblical books in the MS; (3) The Acts and Catholic Epistles; (4) The Pauline Epistles, ending with Hebrews; and (5) A poem of 128 lines, filling two pages, consisting of a Hymn to the Trinity and an account of the compilation of the text and of the writing of the volume.

The MS originally consisted of 152 leaves of cotton paper, *charta damascena*, of which the first is gone, and with it, probably, the key to the Easter tables, which had to be discovered anew. Some fly-leaves are also present, mostly filled with Arabic medical recipes, and writing and scrawls of various sorts, in Syriac, Carshun, and Arabic.

The Acts, the Catholic Epistles as a whole, and the Pauline Epistles as a whole, as well as each of the last severally, have Proëmia taken from the "Storehouse of Mysteries" of Mafrianus—*i. e.*, Gregory Bar Ebraya; besides their respective titles and subscriptions. Nearly all the books are supplied, in the margins, with grammatical and expository notes, in Syriac and Arabic, which add much to the value of the MS. The text is pretty well voweled, uniformly so where doubt might arise without it; and the points *qushshoyo* and *ruchcho* are very faithfully marked in red throughout. Since the red appears black in the phototype, these points are here to be distinguished by their larger size. Some care is also needed, by reason of these points, to avoid confusing *dolath* and *rish*.

The Syrian sections, or larger chapter-divisions, are denoted by black numbers in the margin, written vertically. The lesson-captions are written, in red, in the body of the text, without a break; and their numbers are written horizontally, in red, in the margin. Other usual matter is rubricated, the details of which need not be specified. In the numbering of the sections and lessons, the Acts and Catholic Epistles are treated as one book, and the Pauline Epistles, with Hebrews, as another. The *verso* of the leaf is marked in the usual manner of Jacobite MSS, and also with the folio-number. The quires, or gatherings of folded leaves, are likewise numbered, in the usual manner, at the beginning and end of each.

Bibl. Goussier

The text throughout is excellent. The version is the Peshitto, except the parts which are lacking in that version—viz., the Antilegomena Epistles, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude. These comprise the peculiar feature of this MS, and are represented in the accompanying phototype pages. They are of the version usually printed in our Syriac New Testaments, which seems to be the Philoxenian, made by Polycarp of Mabûg, A. D. 508. The printed copies of these Epistles are all taken from the *editio princeps* of Edward Pococke, Leyden, Elzevirs, 1630, but are much varied by editorial conjecture. Pococke's edition depends upon a single, late, and inferior MS, in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Though some six or seven MS copies of these Epistles in this version are known to exist, some are mere copies of the others, and one of them is copied from the printed text of the Paris Polyglott. None of them, however, except the first mentioned, has ever been made available to scholars. The MS here phototyped is the second MS of these Syriac Epistles ever brought within reach of the critics. An examination will show its superiority and textual accuracy.

The date of the completion of the MS is given in the colophon as noon of Thursday, the 4th of Tammuz, in the year 1782 of the Seleucid era; which corresponds to July 4th, A. D. 1471. The compiler of the work, who is the author of the poem at the end, conceals his name, but tells us that he gathered many books, investigating what he did not know, and bringing forward the work letter by letter, so as to be sure of its accuracy. He renders thanks to friends who helped him in a land where he was a stranger, especially to his friend Suleimân, who bore the expense, though another, one Hassan, furnished the paper. Another Hassan, the scribe, and Ibrahim the priest, are also thanked for their efficient kindness. This second Hassan appears also in contemporary Arabic notes as an examiner of this "blessed book." The Arabic note which immediately precedes the Acts tells us that Daûd esh-Shâmi el-Homsi (David the Syrian of Homs) found the archetype (thus compiled) at the city of El-Keifa, and brought it to Husn Keifa, where he obtained this copy, written by the hand of Suleimân. This copy is therefore an accurate and compared contemporary copy of the compilation of the unknown scribe. Husn Keifa is a fortified place on the Tigris, in the edge of Armenia and Mesopotamia.

Daûd el-Homsi further says that this was the first book he had seen which contained *seven* Catholic Epistles (the Syrian churches had only three in their versions), and all furnished with the verses, chapters, and sections.

The paper is glazed in the Oriental manner, and usually of double thickness; but quite a number of the leaves are of one thickness, colored a deep brown, either by the glaze or the action of water. In these thin leaves the ink generally shows through

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from the other side, and sometimes is set off from the opposite page, rendering the reading sometimes difficult, but never dubious. The size of the leaves is exactly that represented in the phototypes. The quires, or gatherings, are *quiniones* in the first part of the book, but quaternions in the latter part, except the last quire, which is a *ternio*. The red ruling about the columns was done after the writing. The MS is in its original binding (except a new back); leather, with a flap; the board within the leather being compacted of older Syriac paper MSS.

A number of indications favor the conjecture that the unknown critical compiler of the work was one of the Syriac Christians of the Malabar coast, of whom a number visited Europe in the following century, leaving MSS of their handwriting in several places. Appended is a particular description of the several phototyped pages.

ISAAC H. HALL.

Baltimore,

January, 1886.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOTYPED PAGES.

I. Fol. 6, *a*. End of Table of Lessons from Paul's Epistles; and Arabic note written by or for the first owner of the MS.

The order of lessons in the table follows the ecclesiastical year; the numbers, their order in the series which runs continuously through Paul's Epistles. The first two lessons on this page are: Of the Appointment of Deacons, and Of the Blessing of Betrothed Persons; all the rest being, Of any Day. Numbers: 132, 105, 155, 51, 85, 107, 147, 148, 33, 135.

The note, in poor Arabic, reads: "Said Daūd esh-Shāmi el-Homsi—may God forgive his sins!—I have seen many books of the Acts, and Catholic and Pauline [Epistles], and of all of them the composition was upon one pattern, each like the other. But this book has been copied from an exemplar found in the city of El-Keifa. I saw it, and brought it with me to the district of El-Husn the Protected, Husn Keifa; and of it there were written a few copies, and in a good, praiseworthy transcript. Its Catholic Epistles are seven, and all furnished with verses and chapters and sections, not found in any book I have seen besides this; and it is the handiwork of the beloved brother, my friend, the repose of my eye, the repose of my heart, and the *kibleh* of my prayers, the one dear to my heart, the sweetness of my palate, and my most delightful food, my spiritual brother Suleimān. May the Providence of the Lord Messiah keep him from all calamities of time; by the prayers of the Mother of God may he be exalted."

A much later hand has added, in the last short line, "This is what Daūd el-Homsi wrote."

II. Fol. 6, *b*. Title to Acts; Proëmium to same from the "Storehouse of Mysteries" of Mafrianus (*i. e.*, Gregory Bar Ebraya); Acts i. 1-8.

Title: "With hope and reliance on the one true God, who is in three actual persons, Father and Son and Holy Spirit, we begin to write the Book of the Acts of the Holy Apostles."

The horizontally written numeral, 1, is that of the Church-lesson, whose caption fills the first line of the first column: "Of the Ascension of our Lord to heaven." The vertical number denotes Section 1. The other marginal matter consists of grammatical (orthographical) notes.

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III. Fol. 57, *b*. 1 Peter v. 6-14; 2 Peter i. 1-3. At top, the folio number, 57; at the right, top, the mark which denotes the *verso* of the leaf. The subscription to 1 Peter: "Ends the First Epistle of Peter. Verses, 318." Title, and first lesson caption, to 2 Peter: "Second Epistle of Peter. Of the Commemoration of Peter, Chief of the Apostles." Lesson number, middle margin, 108.

IV. Fol. 58, *a*. 2 Peter i. 3-14. Section number, left margin, 31 (at i. 13).

V. Fol. 58, *b*. 2 Peter i. 14-ii. 3. Folio number at top, 58. *Verso* mark at right, top. Lesson number, right-hand margin, 109; caption, in line opposite, Of the Feast of Tabernacles (at i. 16). Scrawl in lower right corner, repetition of a word in the text.

VI. Fol. 59, *a*. 2 Peter ii. 3-14. Lesson number, middle margin, 110; its caption, one line above in right-hand column, Of Monday of Nineveh (at ii. 9). Arabic scrawl at bottom, "Saith God." Indistinct Syriac scrawl at bottom, left, an unimportant remark about the fast of Nineveh.

VII. Fol. 59, *b*. 2 Peter ii. 14-iii. 3. Folio number at top, 59. *Verso* mark at top, right. Lesson number, right-hand margin, 111; its caption, in line opposite, Of Tuesday of Nineveh (at ii. 19). Arabic expository remarks at top and right. Note in middle column on the proverb in ii. 22.

VIII. Fol. 60, *a*. 2 Peter iii. 3-14. Lesson number, 112; its caption, in right-hand column, opposite, Of the Departed (at iii. 8). Section number, just below that of the lesson, 32 (at iii. 8). Arabic expository note at top.

IX. Fol. 60, *b*. 2 Peter iii. 14-18; 1 John i. 1-4. Subscription to 2 Peter: "Ends the Second Epistle of Peter. Verses, 195." Title to 1 John, and first lesson caption: "First Epistle of John the Apostle and Evangelist. Of the Sunday after the Nativity, and of dawn of the time of the Nativity, and of the Annunciation." Lesson number in middle margin, opposite, 113. Folio number at top, 60. *Verso* mark at top, right. Quire number, or signature, at bottom, 6. Syriac in lower corner, left, later written catch-word to next page.

X. Fol. 64, *b*. 1 John v. 20, 21; 2 John 1-12. The leaf is of thinner paper, stained dark brown, and showing the ink through from the other side, with some writing set off from the opposite page. Subscription to 1 John: "Ends this Epistle. Verses, 304." Title to 2 John, with first lesson caption: "Begins the Second Epistle

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of John. Of the Sunday before Nativity." Lesson number corresponding, right-hand margin, 121. Folio number, top, 64. *Verso* mark, top, right.

XI. Fol. 65, *a*. 2 John 13, 14; 3 John 1-13. Subscription to 2 John: "End. Verses, forty." Title to 3 John, and first lesson caption: "Third Epistle of John. Of the Commemoration of John the Evangelist." Lesson number, opposite, middle column, 122. Beneath it, section number, 35 (3 John 1). The leaf is of thin paper, as described in X.

XII. Fol. 65, *b*. 3 John 13-15; Jude 1-9. Subscription to 3 John: "Verses, 47." Title to Jude, with first lesson caption: "Epistle of Jude the Apostle. Of any Day." Lesson number, opposite, right-hand margin, 123. Folio number, top, 65. *Verso* mark, top, right. Leaf of thin paper, same as the last.

XIII. Fol. 66, *a*. Jude 9-21. Lesson number, middle margin, 124; its caption, opposite, to the right, Of the Revelation of Joseph (at 14). Top, left, *verso* mark set off from opposite page. Below it, an orthographical note. Leaf of thin paper like the last.

XIV. Fol. 66, *b*. Jude 21-25 (in lines running across the entire page); Subscription to the Catholic Epistles; Title to the Fourteen Epistles of Paul (likewise in lines running across the page); Title to Romans; Proëmium to the Fourteen Epistles, and to Romans; Romans i. 1-4.

Subscription to the Catholic Epistles: "End the Seven Catholic Epistles; one of James, and two of Peter, and three of John, and one of Jude the Apostle. All of them, summed up, one with another, in ten sections; and their collective verses, 1293. God be merciful to every one who is associated with this book."

Title to Paul's Epistles, with title and first lesson caption to Romans: "Again in reliance on God, who is true, and without end shames his creatures, we begin with the 14 Epistles of Paul the blessed Apostle. Epistle to the Romans. Proëmium. . . . Lesson of the Nativity of our Lord, and Of any Day." Lesson number, right-hand margin, 1. Middle column, section numbers, 35 (intended to mark either the end of the former series through Acts and the Catholic Epistles; or its continuance in the new series, in which case it is an error for 36), and 1 (beginning the series in the Pauline Epistles). Folio number, top, 66. *Verso* mark, top, right. Leaf of thin paper.

XV. Fol. 150, *b*. Hebrews xiii. 17-25; Ascription to the Trinity; Colophon, with date of MS.

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Subscription to Hebrews: "Ends the Epistle of the Hebrews that was sent from Italy by the hands of Timothy."

Ascription: "Glory to the Father who giveth strength, and worship to the Son who aideth, and praise to the Holy Spirit who helpeth and completeth. And they are in perfection One True God."

Colophon: "Finished on Thursday, the fourth day of the sultry month Tammuz, of the year of the Greeks one thousand and seven hundred and eighty and two, at the time of midday. And to the Holy Trinity that aideth my strength I will ascribe glory and honor forever. Amen."

This date corresponds to Thursday, July 4, A. D. 1471.

Verso mark, top, right. The scrawls in the middle column are unmeaning; the lower one reading "to the Father"; the upper bears no signification.

The Arabic notes are records of persons who examined the book at different periods, quite distant from each other in time. The upper one is contemporary with the MS, and reads: "There examined this blessed book the sinner, Hassan by name, deacon from the village El-Qasûr, from the house of Priest Ibrahim the departed (lit., who has obtained mercy). Mercy be upon him." The other is partly worn away with the lower part of the leaf. The leaf shows a patch in the right-hand column.

XVI. Fol. 151 (*b.*, written only on one side). Beginning of Poem, consisting of a Hymn to the Trinity, and a history of the composition and manufacture of the book. The Arabic in the right-hand column, in green ink, is another note by Hassan of Qeryat El-Qasûr, similar in purport to that on XV. That at the bottom is continued on the next page, and consists of thanksgivings to God. At the top, a scrawl shows through from the other side of the leaf. A patch, but no new writing, fills the hole in the right-hand column. This hole was worn through several leaves, but is patched in all, and supplied with new writing where the defect could be remedied.

XVII. Fol. 152 (*a.*, written only on one side). Continuation of the poem begun on fol. 151.

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قال داود النشائي رضي الله عنه خطاياه رأت كتابا كثيرة ابركتيات
وقال لقون وفوالص وكلها تقرشها صيغة واحد تشبه بعضها بعض اما هذا
الكتاب فانه يقول من نسخة وجدت في مدينة الكفار ايتها
انا وحيه الى بلاد الحسن المجروش حصن كينا وكتب منها نسخ قليلة
ومنها نسخة مكية مفتحة وسألتها القائلون سعة وكمها راطه وعبد
للاصاحبات والفصول بالدين في كتاب ما راينا غيره هذا وهو رسم المايخ العربية
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الروحاني سليمان حفصة غاية السيد المسيح من كل مصاب الزمان يصلون واذن الله
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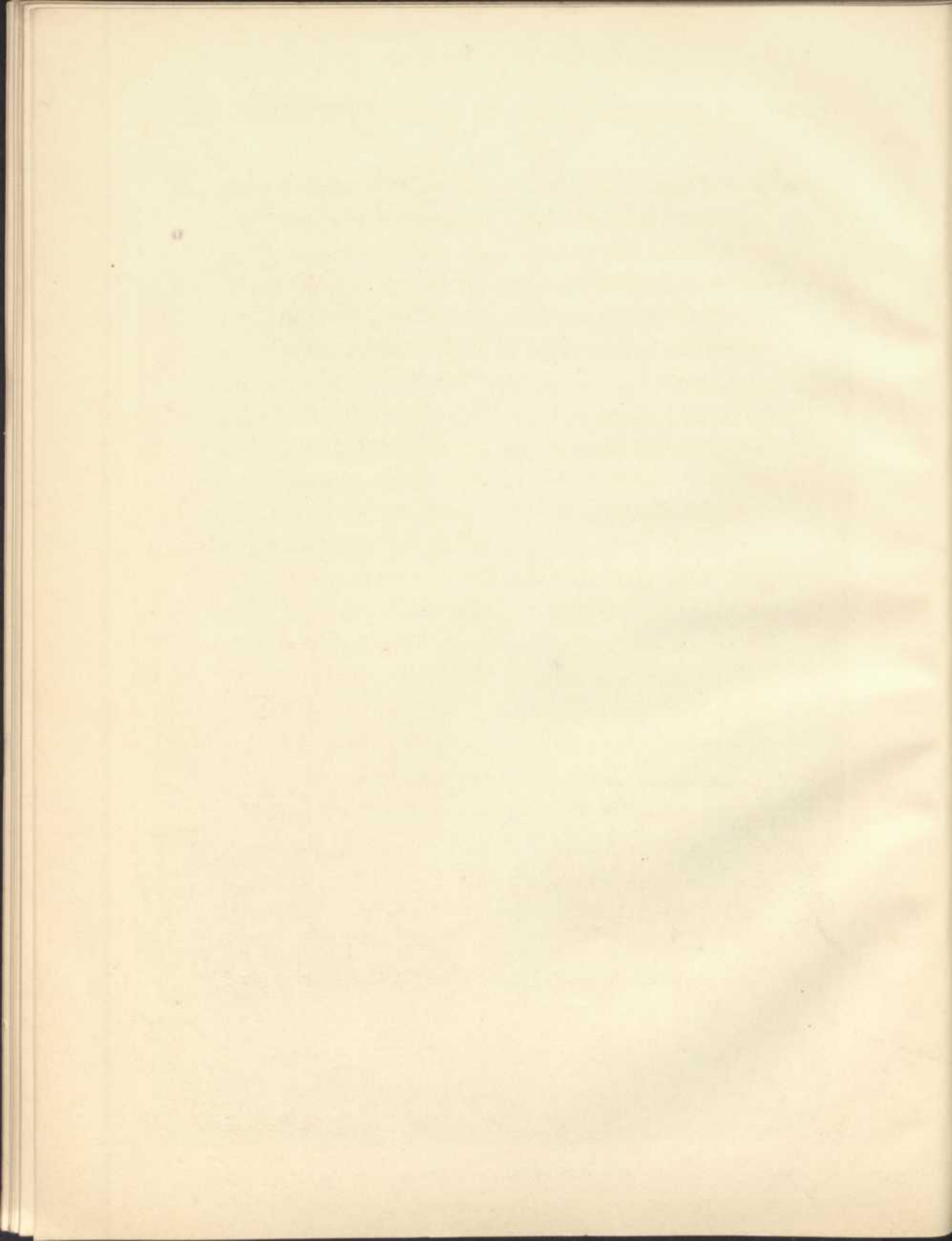
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