



The Book of Kells

By Edward Sullivan

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The Book of Kells By Edward Sullivan

From the intro: "ITS weird and commanding beauty; its subdued and goldless colouring; the baffling intricacy of its fearless designs; the clean, unwavering sweep of rounded spiral; the creeping undulations of serpentine forms, that writhe in artistic profusion throughout the mazes of its decorations; the strong and legible minuscule of its text; the quaintness of its striking portraiture; the unwearied reverence and patient labour that brought it into being; all of which combined go to mate up the Book of Kells have raised this ancient Irish volume to a position of abiding preeminence amongst the illuminated manuscripts of the world. Many attempts have been made to reproduce its unique illuminations; and, so far as form and outline are concerned, the reproductions have been as far as possible successful. But all such efforts have up till now failed to give a living representation of its marvellous pages—for without its colour harmonies no reproduction can be regarded as adequate from the point of view of art. The last important attempt at reproduction in colour was made about forty years ago; but the scientific knowledge of the time was unequal to the strain sought to be put upon it. In the years which have since elapsed the science of light, photography, and colour-reproduction has made rapid advances towards an accuracy which was unknown when the earlier attempts were published; and it is only by the aid of such advancement that the production of the present volume has become possible. In this respect the work now published differs from all its predecessors; for, though still distant from absolute perfection, the reproductions here given will be found to be infinitely closer to the originals in the important matter of actual colour than any of the so-called facsimiles which up to the present have been included in any published work. For this reason the present volume should not be regarded as in any sense a rival of the uncoloured reproductions which have already appeared of the Book of Kells. Its office is rather to supplement in colour what has already been accomplished by ordinary photography and monochrome; to add a new value to previous efforts with the assistance of the most recent methods and processes of polychromatic photography and colour-printing. Looked at from this standpoint one may fairly claim for the work here produced that it fills with some measure of satisfaction a gap in the pictorial history of Celtic illumination, and affords as it were a nearer view of one of the most interesting and beautiful manuscripts which have yet come from the hands of man."

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Editorial Review

Review

“This new British edition is a fantastic recreation of the tome that sits in repose at the library in Dublin’s Trinity College.”

- *NY Daily News Book Blog*

“Sheds much light on this treasured book and raises many more questions.”

- *Antiques and the Arts Weekly*

“A fine introduction to this extraordinarily beautiful work.”

- *Grand Rapids Press*

About the Author

Bernard Meehan is Head of Research Collections and Keeper of Manuscripts at Trinity College Library, Dublin, owners of the Book of Kells.

Users Review

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Florence Whitney:

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Maxine Ford:

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