

## Projects & News

Raymond de Roover (Wells College) announces the publication of his book, *L'évolution de la lettre de change, xiv-xviii siècles*, Paris: Armand Colin, 1953, under the auspices of the Centre de Recherches historiques, Ecole Pratique des Haute Etudes. The work deals with the history of the bill of exchange from its antecedents in the 12th century to the 19th century. The book stresses the fact that the bill of exchange during that period was not an independent instrument but a document which was used to execute a preexisting contract, the *cambium* or exchange contract. One of the main features of this book is a critical bibliography of all of the Scholastic treatises dealing with this contract. As the authors of these treatises usually deal also with such topics as usury and the just price, this bibliography should prove valuable to anyone interested in social ethics during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

In his report (cf. also RN III, 51 and v, 39) Mr. De Roover goes on to say: It should perhaps be stressed that the Italian libraries are extremely rich in books dealing with moral theology, canon and civil law. I found most of the books in Florence. Only in a few instances did I have to consult the libraries in Rome, the Archiginasio in Bologna and the Bibliotheque Nationalè in Paris. In this field the British Museum would have been unsatisfactory and it would have been difficult to locate all of these books in the United States.

For the benefit of historians who will work in Italy, attention is called to the *Mare Magnum*, an encyclopedic bibliography on all topics, compiled during the 18th century by Francesco Marucelli and his successors. It consists of one hundred and eleven manuscript volumes preserved in the Marucelliana Library in Florence.

With regard to the Medici Bank, there have been no sensational discoveries since 1950, when we found the secret account books of the Medici Bank from its foundation in 1379 to 1450 (RN III, 51). These contain the account for the partners' shares in the capital, for deposits on which interest was paid, for the distribution of profit and loss, and for salaries paid to employees. From 1420 onward they also contain the partnership contracts of the head office in Florence, the industrial establishments there, and the branches abroad. The pages con-

taining copies of the articles of association have been torn out of the first secret account book, but we have been able to reconstruct much of what the missing articles contained, especially as we found two original contracts, one for 1406 and an other for 1416.

Our most important recent find was several balance sheets attached to the *catasto* or income tax report of Giovanni di Bicci de' Medici, father of Cosimo, for the year 1427. Most of our work consisted in collecting the voluminous business correspondence. The bickerings among the different branch managers show that coordination was one of the most difficult managerial problems. We also found several reports, among others, a plan for the reorganization of the bank when it was on the verge of bankruptcy.

The new material makes possible a report on the history of the bank for approximately one hundred years (1397–1494), and a more comprehensive view of the whole business and the structure of the bank. There is detailed information on the relations between the main office in Florence and the branches abroad. We have statistical information on the profits of the bank and its branches, year by year. From the account books and the letters from branch managers we have information on the size of the staff, the scale of salaries, changes in the personnel, and the policy followed by the firm in its relation with employees.

In the archives of the famous foundling hospital of Florence, the Ospedale degli Innocenti, Mrs. De Roover found numerous sets of account books of Florentine silk merchants from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The hospital was founded and supported by the Guild of Por Santa Maria, to which the silk merchants belonged. Because of lack of artificial light and heat, there were not many months when it was feasible to work in the hospital archives, but we have now available material on the business activities of one silk merchant, Andrea Banchi (1372–1462), and we hope eventually to work on the records of other silk merchants, with a view of doing a volume on Florentine silk and silk merchants during the Renaissance.

Mrs. De Roover stumbled upon interesting information about the financing and marketing of three of the earliest works printed in Venice in Italian, which will appear in an article in the forthcoming issue of *Bibliofilia*. Another article, to be published in Bruges, is based on the diary kept by a member of the Strozzi family during a round-trip

voyage from Porto Pisano to Flanders and England in 1472-73. He was on the St. George, the sister ship of the St. Matthew, on the voyage when the two ships were attacked in the North Sea by Hanseatic corsairs. The St. Matthew was captured and taken to Danzig. Memling's altarpiece, the 'Last Judgment', was part of its cargo and that is how the painting came to Danzig. The St. George escaped, got safely to Southampton, and later returned to Italy.

Du Cange's *Glossarium mediae et infimae Latinitatis*, in the edition of 1887, is to be reprinted by the Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 59 Leonhardstrasse, Graz, Austria, at a subscription price of \$141. The firm also plans to reprint Stephanus' *Thesaurus Graecae linguae*.

G.R. Elliott (emeritus, Amherst College) is the author of *Flaming Minister, a study of 'Othello' as a tragedy of love and hate*, Duke University Press, 1953, xxxvi and 245 p., \$4.50, cf. RN v, 74. The book is concerned with the whole conception of tragedy current in the Renaissance, in drama as well as in literature. The author challenges the traditional conceptions of Shakespearean tragedy and endeavors to bring it closer to Greek tragedy, to Christian humanism of the Renaissance, and to the ways of the Elizabethan stage. He takes issue with the views of A. C. Bradley. Othello, not Iago, is the mainspring of the action. Hero and heroine are strong, complex persons whose great love is almost wrecked. But first Desdemona, and as a result Othello, are converted from a merely connubial love to a religious love that is at once merciful and just, a common idea of the Renaissance.

French Publications. The Société de Musique d' Autrefois announces the publication of a yearly volume of studies, *Annales Musicologiques*, dedicated to Middle Ages and Renaissance. The first volume, 1953, \$7-, will contain: L. Schrade, 'Political compositions in French Music of the 12th and 13th centuries'; M. Bukofzer, 'Interrelations between conductus and clausula'; A. Rosenthal, 'Le manuscrit de la Clayette (xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle)'; F. Ll. Harrison, 'English Polyphony of the late 15th century—The Eton manuscript and its contents'; N. Bridgman, 'Un manuscrit italien du début du xv<sup>e</sup> siècle, à la Bibliothèque Nationale'; D. P. Walker, 'Ficino's Music and the "Spiritus"'; F. Lesure et G. Thibault, 'Bibliographie des éditions musicales publiées par Nicolas du Chemin (1548-1576)'; K. J. Levy, "'Susanne un jour" The history of a 16th century Chanson'. The Society also announces a

series of musical documents the first of which is Otto Gombosi's edition of *Capriola's Lute Book, circa 1520*, \$12.50, cf. RN I, 11. Further volumes planned are: *The first Book of Madrigals* by Girolamo Frescobaldi, ed. G. Thibault; *The Keyboard Tablature of Faenza*, ed. Dragan Plamenac; *Balli d'arpicordo, Venetia Gardane, 1551*, ed. Marcelle de Lacour. American inquiries should be addressed to Leo Schrade, Hall of Graduate Studies, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.; European inquiries to Francois Lesure, 70 Rue du Bac, Paris 7e.

## Conferences

Reported in chronological order as follows:

February 3–March 10, 1954. Yale Shakespeare Festival

March, 1954. Paris Symposium

May 1, 1954. Midwest Renaissance Conference

May 7–8, 1954. South Central Renaissance Conference

### YALE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Yale University, February 3–March 10. The main features of the Festival were a series of dramatic presentations as well as a series of lectures. On February 15 the Yale Department of Drama presented *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, in Shakespearean pronunciation according to the research of Helge Kokeritz, and with music by Quincy Porter. On February 26 the Yale Dramatic Association presented *The Tempest*, and on March 12 Berkeley College offered Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. Lectures were given by members of the Yale faculty under the chairmanship of Charles T. Prouty. They were devoted to the central topic, 'Shakespeare: Of an Age and For All Time': February 3, David P. Harding, 'Shakespeare the Elizabethan': February 10, Helge Kokeritz, 'Shakespeare's Language'; February 15, Frank McMullan, 'Producing Shakespeare'; February 24, Arleigh D. Richardson, 3rd, 'The Early Historical Plays'; March 3, Eugene M. Waith, 'Macbeth'; March 10, Norman Holmes Pearson, 'Anthony and Cleopatra'. A concert of Elizabethan music for voice and instruments, featuring the consort music of Thomas Morley and music with Shakespearean associations, was also presented. Instruments of contemporary design from the Yale collection were used.