Aristotelian Collection
rapidly under the withering satire of Boileau, but in Germany it lasted well into the eighteenth century and only disappeared before the sharp criticism of Gottsched, who showed the unhistorical character of these so-called historical novels.

RECENT GIFTS AND PURCHASES

The following titles have recently been purchased for the Library with money contributed by members of "The Friends:"

Brown, Mrs. Louise N. *Block printing and book illustration in Japan.* London and New York, 1924. With 43 plates, of which 18 are in colors.

Conway, Sir William M. *The woodcutters of the Netherlands in the fifteenth century.* Cambridge, 1884.


Goddin, Francis. *A catalogue of the bishops of England, since the first planting of the Christian religion in this island, together with a briefe history of their lives and memorable actions, so neere as can be gathered out of antiquity.* London, 1601.


Among recent gifts from Friends of the Library are more than thirty works in musical history and biography and the study of music, from Dr. Otto E. Albrecht and from Mrs. A. C. Albrecht; and from Dr. Charles W. Burr a first edition of Poe's *Conchologist's first book,* Philadelphia, 1839, and a set of twelve American children's books, published between 1808 and 1828.

ARISTOTELIAN COLLECTION

Special mention should be made also of several notable additions to the Aristotelian collection, recently purchased for the Library by Dr. Burr, through whose generosity we are rapidly acquiring what seems likely to become an unexcelled
collection of early editions of Aristotle, the best modern editions, and the important commentaries. Among the latest additions are:

An edition of the *De mundo*, with the Latin translation of Lucius Apuleius, alternative version of Guillaume Bude, and *scholia* by Bonaventura Vulcanius, published at the celebrated Plantin press in Leyden, 1591.

Edward Brerewood’s “Tractatus ethic,” or commentaries on the Nicomachean ethics, Oxford, 1640.

And, perhaps most notable of all, *Francisci Vicomercati Mediolanensis in quatuor libros Aristotelis Meteorologicorum commentarii, et eorumdem librorvm e Graeco in Latinum per eorumdem conversio. Lvtetiae Parisiorvm, apvd Vascosanvm, 1556*. The author of these commentaries, Franciscus Vicomercatus, was an Italian scholar who, in 1540, after giving proof of his learning at Boulogne, at Pavia, and at Padua, became a member of the faculty of arts in the University of Paris, and shortly after was appointed royal professor of Greek and Latin philosophy. He was one of the five “judges” in the tribunal which the king, Francis I, appointed to consider and pass judgment on the “false and strange” doctrines of Pierre Ramus, who, in 1543, had proclaimed that “everything that Aristotle has taught is false and absurd,” thereby shaking to its foundations the orthodox scholarship of the university.¹

Vicomercatus published also commentaries on the *De anima*, in 1543, and on the *De naturali auscultatione* (Paris, Vascosan, 1550; Venice, 1564 and 1567), and a work entitled *De principiis rerum naturalium, libri III, nunc primum in lucem editi*, Venice 1596. The commentary on the *Meteorologica* was first published in Paris, by Vascosan, in 1556, and republished in Venice, 1565, and Paris, 1598. Both for his elucidation and his emendation, he has been called the most learned of all commentators on the *Meteorologica*, and of the most sound judgment.²

The first edition of his work on the *Meteorologica* is interesting and valuable, not only to scholars and students of Aristotle, but also because of its printer and its binding. It

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¹ Crevier, *Histoire de l’Université de Paris*, 5:388-394; DuBarle, *Histoire de l’Université*, 2:38-40; Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 4:27. By vote of three of the five judges Ramus was condemned for his “daring, arrogant, and impudent” doctrines, his two published works on Aristotle were ordered suppressed, and he was forbidden to teach or to write against Aristotle, under penalty of corporal punishment.

was a product of the famous press of Michel Vascosan, printer of the University of Paris, who was granted a royal license by Henry II for his services in making available the best and most useful works of literature. He was renowned for his choice of works to be printed, the quality of his paper, and the correctness and beauty of his typography. The binding of the volume, remarkably well preserved, is obviously of the Grolieresque school. It is in brown calf, decorated with an interlaced fillet of intricate pattern. On the gilt and gauffred edges at the bottom can be seen, by careful scrutiny, the date 1556.

Another book recently received from Dr. Burr, of indirect Aristotelian interest, is *Theodori Gazae introductionis grammaticae libri quattuor*, Graece, simul cum interpretatione Latina, iam quarto de integro recogniti . . . . Basil, 1545. Gaza, distinguished as a professor of Greek at Ferrara, in 1450 was invited to Rome by Pope Nicholas V to make new versions of Aristotle and other Greek authors. He was "the most skilful and popular of the Renaissance translators of Aristotle." His grammar, first printed in 1495, was frequently reprinted, but all editions are now scarce. It was in general use as a text-book in the early part of the 16th century, was translated into Latin by Erasmus and by other scholars, and was the subject of many commentaries even down into the 18th century.

Dr. Burr's generous and thoughtful interest in seizing every opportunity to acquire for the Library any desirable work of Aristotelian literature, supplementing his innumerable other gifts in practically all fields, is an excellent example of what may be accomplished in a short time by one who undertakes systematically to build up some one department of learning. A similar example is seen in the rich collections of the Walter Hatfield Memorial Library of Chemistry, representing the generosity of Mr. Henry Reed Hatfield over a period of many years.

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3 Chevillier, *L'Origine de l'imprimerie de Paris*, pp. 147-148, 384; *Biographie universel*.
4 Wingate, Mediaeval Latin versions of the Aristotelian scientific corpus, p. 127.