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THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
LIBRARY CHRONICLE

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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

C. SEYMOUR THOMPSON, *Editor.*

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THE SINGER MEMORIAL

By DR. JOHN C. MENDENHALL

I have been asked to describe for the *Chronicle* the recent fine memorial gift by Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Singer of their son Godfrey F. Singer's collection of eighteenth century novels. Mr. Singer, a member of the class of 1928 College, and an assistant instructor in English from 1928 until his untimely death in January of this year, had in December been elected secretary of the Friends of the Library. He was, so to speak, a natural born collector, delighting from his earliest years in music and books and making splendid collections of both. He loved to have his own books about him at school and at college; there were few books mentioned by his instructors which he did not acquire, and upon becoming particularly interested in an author, or in a period of literary history, he made every effort to acquire original editions, manuscripts, and other associated pieces which might vividly embody the man or the times. In the course of his study he developed a great fondness for that fascinating and wonderfully well-balanced century, the eighteenth, and for his thesis-subject in proceeding to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy chose the novel in letters, as perfected by Samuel Richardson and imitated by a host of subsequent novelists in England and America. The fashion was one which reached its height about 1785; thereafter it declined rapidly as a major mode in fiction, but it has left its mark to this day and meantime pro-

duced some of the most remarkable novels of the age. Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker* and Fanny Burney's *Evelina*, with their brilliant pictures of manners in the great decade 1770-1780, are outstanding examples.

Mr. Singer's thesis, to which he gave the title *The Epistolary Novel*, was a notable contribution to scholarship. As most of the novels necessary to complete the study are very rare and difficult to find, his first task was to locate as many of them as possible. This he set about with characteristic zeal, and acquired what is beyond question a unique and probably unrivaled collection of the novel in letters, of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is this group of books which constitutes the Godfrey F. Singer Memorial. It comprises more than five hundred titles and over fifteen hundred volumes. By action of the University authorities the collection has been installed in a pleasant alcove newly created in the reference room of the Library, the earnest, it is hoped, of an imposing rare-book room of which it will be the first and cherished nucleus. Though on view to all interested persons, actual use of the alcove is confined to duly accredited students in research in the field which it represents. For such, it furnishes a great and unusual opportunity, as a brief mention of some of its contents will indicate.

Here, for example, are several of those ponderous tomes, the heroic, or, as the French call them, long-winded novels, of a preceding century, the seventeenth, which gave to the modern novel on the one hand scope and sentiment, and on the other, the idea of historic background, as in the famous novels by "the author of *Waverly*." Until quite recently no copies of these extraordinary works were available in Philadelphia, and hardly anywhere in this country. Included in the Singer collection are several of the best of them, amongst them *Cassandra* and *Clelia*, and the rarer *Almahide*, which influenced John Dryden, in beautiful English editions, translated; and a native English example, *Bentivolio and Urania*, a story, if we may call so curious an allegory such, which was written in so strange a style that editions subsequent to the first explained the numerous hard names in marginal glosses. Well, indeed, its printer might provide for such aid, for what hardened reader, even, might at first sight recognize the esoteric meaning of Polistherion, Sosandra, Morosophus, as the City of Beasts, the Saver of her Husband, the Half-wit? No

doubt in its day this extraordinary nomenclature was one of the fascinations of the book.

Here, too, are interesting examples of the forerunners of the epistolary novel, like *The Post-man Robb'd of his Mail, or, the Packet Broke Open, being a Collection of Miscellaneous Letters, Serious and Comical, Amorous and Gallant, amongst which are the Lover's Sighs . . . in Five Books; Love-Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1694), and *The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen* (1726). Other works, semi-scandalous or wholly so, dwell upon that subject, horridly fascinating to Protestant England, of convent life (*The Nunnery, or the History of Miss Sophia Howard*); or the perennially gratifying one to a politically party-mad nation, of the inevitable wickedness, the moral (and nowadays the economic) depravity of the opposite party (Mrs. Manley's *Secret History of Queen Zarah and the Zarazians*; Zarah being a transparent designation of the masterful Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, who dominated Queen Anne during the earlier years of her reign).

Here are the great, the near-great, and the great mob of the undistinguished, who, like newspaper advertisements, become at least momentarily important again when rediscovered after a hundred years or more. We cite in inverse order, Samuel Jackson Pratt's *Emma Corbett, or the Miseries of Civil War* (the Civil War being the American Revolution), which gives us a glimpse, in 1779, of General George Washington in one of his magnanimous moments, probably the first, but certainly not the last appearance of that famous character in fiction. Likewise there is Mrs. Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* with its vivid glimpses of life in Canada in the days just succeeding the English conquest, glimpses of which the authenticity is vouched for by the fact that the authoress accompanied her husband, the chaplain of the Quebec garrison, thither in 1763. Rarer novels of the same author, like her *Excursion*, are included. Quite as popular, and of rather greater contemporary reputation, was Sarah Fielding, great Henry's sister, whose books "By a Lady," or "By the Author of David Simple," are not lacking in what were doubtless family gifts of ironic wit and good sense. All five volumes of her *David Simple* are found here, the fifth, written nearly nine years after the first, being very rare; also her *Ophelia* and others. To any but the student of

the period the names of Mrs. Eliza Haywood, Mrs. Charlotte Lennox, Sarah Scott, Robert Bage, are not likely nowadays to recall much, but here are opportunities for better acquaintance with what will be found to be quaint personalities and amusing tales. Do not titles themselves like *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*; *The Female Quixote, or the Adventures of Arabella*; and *Hermesprong, or Man As He Is Not*, suggest unsuspected originality? So too do many works, the anonymity of which still defies elucidation, like *The Adventures of a Hackney Coach*. Here also may be mentioned *Memoirs of an Unfortunate Young Nobleman, Thirteen Years a Slave in America* (1743), a story that provided inspiration to both Smollett and Scott. Rarer works by other novelists than those for which their names linger in scholarly memory are numerous. We note Sophia Lee's *Life of a Lover* (in six volumes); *The Picture*, by the Miss Minifies, that writing sisterhood of Fairwater in Somersetshire; *The Phoenix*, by Miss Clara Reeve; an edition of Sarah Scott's popular *Description of Millenium Hall*, inscribed on the title page to Goldsmith; and *Harcourt*, "By the Author of *Evelina*," together with other ascriptions worthy of that earlier arch pirate of the century, the "unspeakable" Curll.

Probably of greatest interest to the cultured reader and of utmost value to the advanced student are splendid original editions of *Tom Jones*, *Amelia*, *Clarissa*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Peregrine Pickle*, and *Tristram Shandy*. Absorbingly interesting as is the last work, it is not, I think, until one has seen it in the slender little volumes in which it was first read that the full charm of its airy and whimsical nonsense can be realized. When, in addition, one discovers in three of the volumes of the set the autograph of "Yorick" himself, one realizes an even greater thrill—not that the copy was Sterne's, we suppose, but that Sterne, a lion of the drawing-rooms, was an early (and easy) victim of that even then modern pest, the collector of autographs. Almost as thrilling is it to handle a book which once was handled by the famous dramatist Sheridan, as his book-plate indicates, or volumes in the fine set presented, as the autograph records, by Henry Mackenzie, that "Addison of the North," to a beloved sister. Mackenzie was first in the field to recognize the genius of Robert Burns, by a review, within a few days of its appearance, of the famous Kilmarnock edition of the poems. Mac-

kenzie belongs in the collection because of his novel in letters *Julia de Roubigné*, a tragic story written in his youth.

How worthwhile and comprehensive is the collection may be gauged by these typical examples. Early American fiction, especially that of Charles Brockden Brown, is well represented, as well as English. Included are "firsts" of *Jane Talbot*, *Edgar Huntley*, *Wieland* (several other editions with early memoir), and *Arthur Mervyn*. In passing we note also *Memoirs of the Bloomsgrave Family in a Series of Letters to a Respectable Citizen of Philadelphia etc.*, by Enos Hitchcock, D.D., inscribed to Mrs. Washington; and *Amelia, or the Faithless Briton*, issued in book form in 1798 after having run some years previously in the *Columbian Magazine*.

It will hardly be deemed impertinent, in view of their interest, to mention some of the other items associated with the novels. Some of these easily explain their presence: Voltaire's *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (1733); Mrs. Barbauld's *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson* (1804), with all the magnificent colored plates and facsimiles; *Letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu* (the famous "Queen of the Blue-stockings"), edited by her nephew in 1809; *Letters Supposed to Have Been Written by Yorick and Eliza* (1779). Curiosities are the oversize quarto of Jonas Hanway's *Journal of Eight Days Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston . . . , to which is added An Essay on Tea* (1756), Hanway having introduced the modern umbrella; *Lexiphanes* (1767), a Lucianic-Jonsonian satire on the great lexicographer, Dr. Samuel Johnson; biographical oddities like the *Life of Arthur Lord Balmerino* (1746), he being one of the two Scotch lords who were beheaded publicly for treason, the last execution of its kind on Tower Hill; the *Journal of Occurrences at the Temple during the Confinement of Louis XVI* (1798), and an *Essay on . . . Rheumatism, to which are added Observations on the Medical Treatment of the Rev. Mr. Sterne* (the novelist) *during his last Illness* (1776). I cannot forbear noting a group of poems included with the other books, the most curious being a "first" of Cowper's *Olney Hymns; Cottage Poems*, by the Rev. Patrick Bronte, Halifax, 1811; and an autograph manuscript of poems by J. K. Paulding (1843).

I cannot close this brief notice without a word of tribute to the ardent and enthusiastic character of the young scholar who collected, and the generosity of the parents who pre-

sented the books to our Library. He loved learning and all other good things; he was always considerate and helpful to others while he was with us; and by the leaving with us of these fruits of his scholarship we are assured of his example's being always present as a worthy inspiration. It is not without interest to mention that in addition to the novels themselves, a working reference library, including all the important histories of fiction since Miss Clara Reeve's *Progress of Romance* (1785), makes the use or examination of the collection more profitable.

Steps have been taken to add to the collection from time to time. Already a rare novel of Bage (*Barham Downs*) and two original manuscript novels in a copper-plate hand of 1753 have been acquired by gift and purchase since the installation of the Memorial. It is destined to grow, with the years, in value to the scholar and the lover of rare books.

PENNSYLVANIA'S "HOME OF SARASVATI"

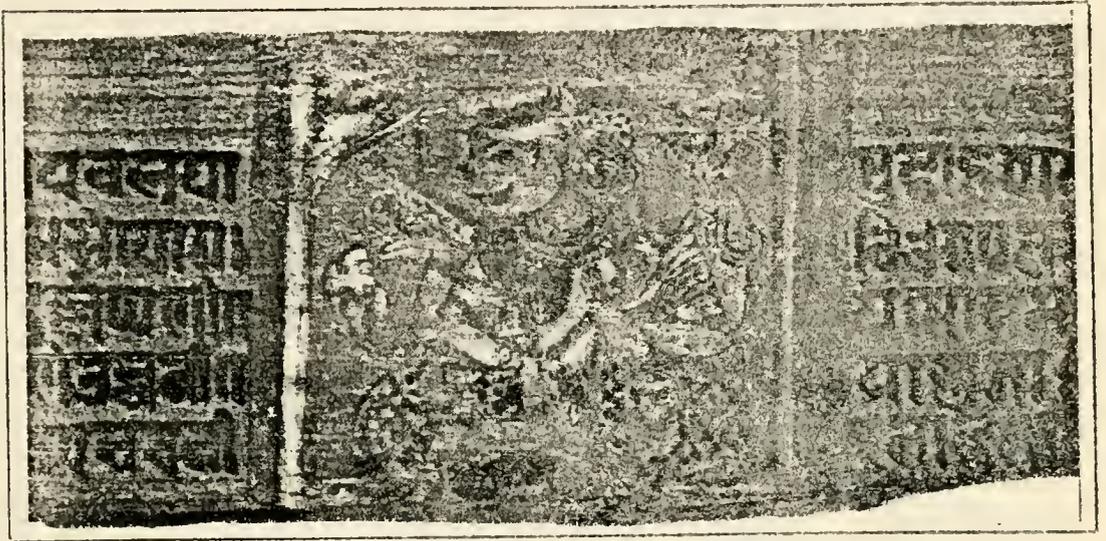
By DR. W. NORMAN BROWN

The Hindu goddess of learning Sarasvati is represented in sculpture and painting with a manuscript book in one of her four hands; and no "Home of Sarasvati" deserves that name, to a Hindu's mind, unless it has a notable collection of manuscripts.

Sarasvati's book is long and narrow; for in most parts of ancient India books were written on tough and durable palm leaves which when prepared for writing might vary from six inches in length to thirty, and were usually less than three inches in width. The writing ran across the page the long way, and each page therefore had only a few lines. The writing in northern and western India was done with ink; in southern India a stylus was used to scratch lines in the leaf, and the symbols were made visible for reading by dusting a dark powder into the scratches.

The reader of a book, if sitting down in the usual Indian cross-legged fashion, might lay it out flat before him on the ground or on a low desk, or he might hold it in his hands on one of the carefully fitted termite-proof teakwood boards that make a stiff cover for the book. After reading one side of a folio, the user would turn the page over, before and

away from him, as though there were an imaginary binding along the top of the palm leaf, and then he would read the other side. There is here a part analogy with our custom of binding a book at the side and turning the pages from right to left. At the center of short or medium-sized folios, or sometimes at two points in very long folios, holes were pierced through the palm leaves for strings to keep them from getting separated, and the string, or strings, were knotted behind the wooden cover. Hence one of the common words for book in India is *grantha*, "knot."



GODDESS SARASVATI
*From a manuscript in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, dated
 equivalent to A.D. 1260. (Natural size.)*

About the beginning of the 14th century paper came into use in India proper for bookmaking, and since that time a Sarasvati, but for the power of iconographic convention, might in many cases have held a book of different shape from that of the long and narrow palm leaf. This was especially true in northern and western India where writing was done with ink; paper provided a writing surface for that fluid which was better than palm leaf, and paper quickly supplanted palm leaves. In southern India paper was not successful, for it is not adapted to the use of a stylus, and palm leaf is still common there. The paper books were shorter and deeper than the older manuscripts, but the greater dimension was still the width, and the pages still turned over forward. Today books are sometimes printed in India in this format, and are bound along the top.

If Sarasvati has as her most characteristic attribute a manuscript, the symbol is almost mandatory for a department of humanistic Indian studies. The source materials for India's historic civilization are predominantly found in her great and ancient literature, a literature so extensive that even now, after a century and a half of exploration by western critical scholars and Indians who have adopted western methods, large sections of it are still far from fully known and in some cases hardly known at all. In ancient India kings or temples or monks or rich men or even poor scholars accumulated great or small collections of texts that interested them. Some collections of this sort still exist; but for the most part they were scattered or destroyed or driven into hiding when the disruptive blast of Islam swept northwestern and western India, from about 1000 A.D. on. Hindu books, like Hindu temples and Hindu sculptures, were mutilated or ruined; Hindu culture and learning were contracted and suppressed. Families that had held a tradition of learning for centuries were uprooted or impoverished, and their descendants, after some generations, literally had no better use for precious manuscripts than as kindling for the fire on which to cook a meal.

When the European nations came to India from 1498 on this was the state of the country, and the inner dissension accompanying it made easy the western penetration. About the beginning of the 19th century, when the British and then the Germans and the French began to cultivate Indic studies, Hindu learning was disorganized. These foreigners soon realized the value of preserving texts, and increasingly they made collections of manuscripts, some of which are now housed in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Berlin, Paris, Florence, Vienna, and elsewhere in Europe, and some in India. Other Hindu collections, including some belonging to the Jains, had somehow escaped the Muslim fury, and remained either in the open, as at Tanjore, or semi-secret as at Patan, Cambay, Jaisalmir. Continuing up to our own day the Government of India regularly appropriated funds for the purchase of manuscripts, kept in such depositories as those at Benares and Poona, and only the severe financial retrenchment that the "depression years" have made obligatory has now compelled the Government reluctantly to suspend this program. But manuscripts are still abundant in India, scat-

tered in private, and therefore unstable and unsafe, tenure, which should be assembled in permanent quarters.

For many years the only notable American collection of manuscripts from India was that at Harvard, where about 2000 belong to the university library. But in 1930 the University of Pennsylvania entered the field. Our Provost, Dr. Penniman, himself gave the first sum to purchase Indic manuscripts, and as soon as he was assured that it could be spent to advantage approached Mr. John Gribbel, who made a generous contribution. Further money was given by Dr. Charles W. Burr, and a few manuscripts have been purchased on the Faculty Research Fund. All these purchases, with the gifts of a few miscellaneous manuscripts that had come to the University in previous years, have brought our collection to something over 850 separate items. We have now the second largest collection in the United States. The third largest is that of the Library of Congress, where I believe there are about fifty.

The materials of the University of Pennsylvania collection are almost entirely connected with the religion of Hinduism (or Brahmanism); the two other great Indic religions, namely Jainism and Buddhism, are hardly represented. The goddess Sarasvati, though one, is also many. The Hindu Sarasvati would feel at home in our library; the Jain or Buddhist Sarasvati would miss her accustomed literature.

We have examples of many of the standard texts, such as the Rig Veda, some of the Brahmanas, parts of the epics and legendary history called Puranas, some legal texts, philosophical works, grammatical treatises, belles lettres, hymns of praise to various deities, sectarian religious books. We have also much material that represents texts so far unpublished or only inadequately published.

Of the latter class are various works of law, of which the most outstanding is the law code of the great Sivaji (1627-1680), a Maratha chieftain of western India who bitterly fought the Mohammedans and perhaps more than any other single leader contributed to the downfall of the Mughal empire. He endeavored to re-establish Hinduism, devoted himself to protection of the cow and honor of the Brahmans, and had his legal system modeled with timely variations on the orthodox Hindu codes. A voluminous and rare

Sanskrit manuscript in our possession contains his system as formulated by one of his Brahman ministers.

We have some valuable manuscripts dealing with Indian medicine, some of them coming from Nepal, and one being devoted particularly to the use of mercury in therapy. For some centuries in India, as I believe also in the West, this substance has been employed for a number of diseases, including syphilis.

One of the most interesting fields represented among our manuscripts of unpublished texts is that of mediaeval and current practice of domestic religious rites (or sacraments). The most ancient texts of this department of Indian religions have been fairly well, although not completely, explored. Later rites, which differ from the older as mediaeval and modern Christian baptism, marriage, funerals differ from those of early Christianity, have at best been reported only sketchily and hardly a text has been edited, translated, or even systematically analyzed. We have a number of these works showing how properly to be born, live, and die an orthodox Hindu. One of the best in our possession tells in thirty-six closely written folios what to do just before, during, and after death, if you and your close relatives want you in the next existence to get the full advantage of pious Hinduism. This manuscript formed the starting point of a doctoral dissertation in Sanskrit presented to this university in 1933 by Dr. H. I. Poleman, which has given us a critical edition of the text, now supplemented by a translation and commentary, and has led into the study of related texts of death rites, which Dr. Poleman is to pursue here next year (1934-35) as a Harrison Fellow for Research. In our collection are manuscripts of texts which could start similar important investigations into other mediaeval and current practices, for example, the daily rites of an orthodox Hindu.

A prominent modern Hindu variety of cult practice, which goes back to an antiquity we cannot yet determine, is that of Saktism, wherein the male creative principle and female energization of it constitute inseparable associates. We have numerous texts dealing with this, many of them so far unpublished.

In philosophy, which in India is never separated from religion, we have unpublished texts, the value of which can be determined only when scholars work upon them. Most

of these belong to the Vedanta system, which is orthodox in Hinduism today, but other systems are also represented.

One of the most famous Indian story collections, compiled about a thousand years ago, was known as the "Great Tale" and a version of this, of which perhaps only six other manuscripts have so far been reported, is represented by one of our Sanskrit manuscripts.

Our collection has been catalogued on cards, and it is likely that the catalogue will be published. The American Council of Learned Societies is financing a census of all Indic manuscripts in the United States, and our works will be listed therein. This census is of unquestioned necessity in the case of unpublished or unsatisfactorily published primary materials of research.

When a Hindu commences any important undertaking, he is likely first to invoke the god Ganesha, who removes obstacles that otherwise would prevent success. Then, if his labor is to be one of the intellect, he makes a prayer to that goddess Sarasvati, for whom our University is now making a place. Like an author I was recently reading, we might say: "She, through whose grace men see the entire three worlds like pearls in her hand—may that goddess Sarasvati be victorious."

DR. CHEYNEY'S "WILL"

At a dinner given by the Alumni of the College on March 7 to Professors Schelling, Rolfe, and Cheyney, retiring this year, Professor Cheyney made the following reference to the Library in one clause of a "Last Will and Testament (Academic)".

"The Library is the heart of the University. The circulation of books is much like the circulation of blood. If, as now demonstrated, the difference between an inferior and a superior brain is a matter of blood supply, so the intellectual activity of a university may be closely connected with the abundant flow of books and periodicals that can be pumped from the library into the thinking organs. No greater foundation in the University, no finer memorial or more evident proof of appreciation of higher things could be given by any alumnus or friend of the University or citizen of Philadelphia than the erection and endowment of a great Library, like the

Bodleian at Oxford, the Widener Library at Harvard, or the Sterling Memorial at Yale. In default of so great a benefaction, such additions to the present Library as the Lea, Furness, and Lippincott Libraries, various gifts and endowments that have been made by Alumni and others, and the encouragement given by the association of 'Friends of the Library' recently formed, are among the most helpful and elevating contributions to the building up of the recognition that Pennsylvania is a great university."

A MEETING OF "THE FRIENDS"

A meeting of the Friends of the Library was held in the Furness Memorial at the Library on May 15, with Mr. John Cadwalader, president of the Friends, presiding. The principal speaker of the evening was Dr. Felix E. Schelling, whose topic was "Shakespeare and Biography." Dr. Schelling's talk was a most interesting discussion of the various attempts which have been made to write the biography of Shakespeare, pointing out in humorous vein their defects and limitations, and the difficulties which confront the scholar who attempts this task.

Dr. John C. Mendenhall spoke briefly concerning the notable collection of eighteenth century English fiction, described by him in this number of the *Chronicle*, acquired by the late Godfrey F. Singer, and recently presented to the Library by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Singer. The opening to public view, for the first time, of the room which has been provided for the permanent housing of this memorial, was an important feature of the meeting. Much interest was shown in the room itself and in the collection. Many of the most interesting and valuable of the books had been placed on view in exhibition cases in the Furness Library and the main reading room.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Announcement was made by Mr. Cadwalader that the executive committee of the Friends had recently voted to establish life memberships in the organization, available to anyone making a gift to the University Library of \$100. or more. All money received through life memberships will be held as a permanent endowment, the income to be used for the purchase of books.