

a long life of studentship might dare to try my hand at a full length portrait of the greatest personality that I have ever known, for I have dabbled many a sketch of that great figure in my time and in sundry postures. But it will not do, for I should be proclaimed an idolator, and idolatry is out of date in these, our days. Besides there are two other excellent reasons. Why could I dare to hope for success where so many have failed? And lastly, why should I lose the proud distinction which is mine as the only English or American scholar dealing with the Elizabethan age and reaching, shall we say, the age of literary discretion, who has not perpetrated a full length *Life of William Shakespeare*?

THE GIFT OF LOUIS XVI

By C. SEYMOUR THOMPSON

(Continued from the October Number)

Readers of the first installment of this article will remember the dispute which arose over the value of the books presented to the University by Louis XVI. Francis Hopkinson, representing the Trustees, characterized the gift as "a valuable and elegant collection of books." M. Boinod, one of the editors of the *Courier de l'Amérique*, asserted that the selection did little credit to the literary knowledge and taste of Vergennes and Chastellux, on whose joint recommendation the King had made the gift. In the controversy which followed Boinod proposed that the question be submitted to the tribunal of public opinion. "Let the catalogue be printed," he urged, "and the public will decide whether you or we are the best judges of French books."

In belated acceptance of this challenge the "catalogue" is here printed; the first time, we believe, that the complete list has ever been published. The public can now determine whether Hopkinson or Boinod was the better judge of French books. Though frankly upholding the opinion expressed by Hopkinson, as self-appointed trial judge we present the case solely on its merits; thinking it proper, however, to charge the jury on two points. First, the collection must be evaluated with due consideration of the literary standards of 1784 and of the entire body of French literature then available. Second, the jury must not be influenced by the scornful remark of M. Boinod: "All these books are in excellent condition, and we have no doubt that they will be preserved a long time in the

same state." The fact that the Library still possesses 92 of the 100 volumes, most of them still in excellent condition, must not be taken as justification for this irony. Let it be construed, rather, as evidence of the efficient guardianship exercised through 150 years by the various librarians to whose care the books have been entrusted.

One other point, too, should receive consideration. It will be seen that 25 of the 36 titles were the product of "L'Imprimerie Royale." This press was established by Louis XIII in 1640, charged not only with the printing of official documents but with "the reproduction and distribution of the principal monuments of religion and of letters." Under Louis XIII and his successors the press became celebrated throughout Europe for the excellence of its typography. When it was suggested to Louis XVI that he honor the University of Pennsylvania by a gift of books he probably felt that the favor would have peculiar significance if many of the titles were products of the royal press. In this view he was undoubtedly correct. To us, today, there is certainly added interest in those volumes which bear on the title-page the imprint

A PARIS,
DE L'IMPRIMERIE ROYALE

It will be seen, too, that history, science, and exploration predominated in the selection. Probably these works were no less welcome in the young University than a greater number of classical authors would have been, for with these the Library was already reasonably well supplied. At all events, the collection as a whole should be judged more on its scientific and practical value than as an indication of the "taste and literary knowledge" of the King and his counsellors.

We now present the Catalogue, with brief descriptive notes appended to the titles, designed to assist the jury in reaching its decision:

Anville, Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'.

Mémoires sur l'Égypte ancienne et moderne, suivis d'une description du golfe Arabique ou de la mer Rouge. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1766.

The author was one of the most distinguished geographers of the 18th century. His writings and maps contributed greatly to a correct knowledge of many countries.

Arcq, Philippe Auguste de Sainte-Foix d'.

Histoire générale des guerres, divisée en trois époques - - - jusqu'à l'année 1748. Avec une dissertation sur chaque peuple, concernant son origine, la situation du pays qu'il habite, la forme de son gouvernement, sa religion, ses loix, ses moeurs, ses révolutions, &c. 2 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1756-58.

This work was not a great success, possibly because the author was engaged simultaneously on another too ambitious project, *Histoire du commerce et de la navigation des peuples anciens et modernes* (2 v., Paris, 1758). Neither work was continued beyond the second volume.

L'Art de vérifier les dates des faits historiques, des chartes, des chroniques, et autres anciens monumens, depuis la naissance de Notre-Seigneur. - - - Tome I. Paris, 1783.

This has been called "the finest memorial of French learning of the 18th century." The first edition, the work of Clémencet, Dantine, and others, was published in 1750. In 1770 François Clément issued an enlarged and greatly improved edition. In 1783 he published the first volume (in two parts) of this third edition (3 v., 1783-87), the usefulness of which was not entirely superseded by any of the later editions and continuations.

Bailly, Jean Sylvain.

Histoire de l'astronomie moderne - - -. 3 vols. Paris, 1779-82.

A worthy supplement to his *Histoire de l'astronomie ancienne* (1775), which had established his reputation as one of the leading astronomical scholars of his day.

Lettres sur l'origine des sciences, et sur celle des peuples de l'Asie - - -. Lettres sur l'Atlantide de Platon et sur l'ancienne histoire de l'Asie - - -. London and Paris, 1777 and 1779.

These two volumes were published separately, but were considered as one work, consisting of letters addressed to Voltaire, who had differed from Bailly's views on the origin of the sciences as expounded in his *Histoire de l'astronomie ancienne*.

Belidor, Bernard Forest de.

Le bombardier françois, ou Nouvelle méthode de jeter les bombes avec précision. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1731.

Belidor was prominent as a mathematician and an expert in military engineering, and was the author of many important books in this field.

Bougainville, Louis Antoine de.

Voyage autour du monde, par la frégate du Roi *La Boudeuse* et la flûte *L'Etoile*, en 1766, 1767, 1768, & 1769. Paris, 1771.

The author was a distinguished explorer who made many important dis-

coveries among the islands of the Pacific. The English translator of this work wrote (1772) that it "abounds with remarkable events and curious observations; equally instructive to future navigators, and interesting to science in general, and geography in particular."

Bourrit, Marc Théodore.

Description des Alpes, Pennines et Rhetiennes; dédiée à S.M. Très-Chrétienne Louis XVI, Roi de France et de Navarre. 2 vols. Geneva, 1781.

By an eminent Swiss painter and naturalist, author also of several similar works of importance, including a description of Mont Blanc, which he ascended in 1787. His work contributed much to knowledge of the Alpine glaciers.

Buffon, Georges Louis Leclerc de.

Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière, avec la description du cabinet du Roy. 15 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1749-67.

Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière - - - - . Supplément. 6 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1774-82.

Histoire naturelle des minéraux. Vol. 1. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1783.

Histoire naturelle des oiseaux. Vols. 1-8. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1770-81.

These four titles constitute what is known as the first edition of Buffon's monumental work, which was completed in 44 volumes, 1749-1804, the last 8 volumes being published after his death. The King's gift included all of the 31 volumes which at that time had been published with exception of v. 9 of the *Histoire des oiseaux*.

Callimachus.

Hymnes de Callimaque, nouvelle édition; avec une version françoise & des notes [par La Porte du Theil]. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1775.

La Porte du Theil was one of the most eminent Greek scholars of the time. He published many translations and editions of classical texts. His *Hymnes de Callimaque* was reprinted in 1795.

Chabert, Joseph Bernard de.

Voyage fait par ordre du Roi en 1750 et 1751, dans l'Amérique Septentrionale, pour rectifier les cartes des côtes de l'Acadie, de l'Isle Royale & de l'Isle de Terre-Neuve, et pour en fixer les principaux points par des observations astronomiques. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1753.

Chabert won distinction both as a naval commander and as hydrographer. His explorations and writings were of much value to later explorers along the North American coasts.

Chastellux, François Jean de.

De la félicité publique, ou Considérations sur le sort des hommes dans les différentes époques de l'histoire. 2 vols.

Bouillon, 1776.

The second edition, revised and enlarged. The inclusion of this work of so good a friend of the University, the one who was primarily responsible for the gift, was undoubtedly most highly appreciated.

Courtanvaux, François César Le Tellier de.

Journal du voyage de M. le Marquis de Courtanvaux, sur la frégate *l'Aurore*, pour essayer par ordre de l'Académie, plusieurs instrumens relatifs à la longitude. --- Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1768.

The official report of studies made by Courtanvaux and two other experts for the Académie des Sciences. For many years scientists had been seeking to produce more perfect chronometers.

Delius, Christoph Traugott.

Traité sur la science de l'exploitation des mines, par théorie et pratique, avec un discours sur les principes des finances ---; traduit en français par M. Schreiber. 2 vols. Paris, 1778.

An important contribution to the mineralogical knowledge of the day. This French translation was made by order of the King, and at his expense.

Desormeaux, Joseph Louis Ripault.

Histoire de la maison de Bourbon. 3 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1772-82.

Completed in 5 v., 1788. The author was a panegyrist rather than a historian, but his work contains much material which later historians have found useful.

Gregoras, Nicephorus.

Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina historia. --- 2 vols. Paris, E Typographia Regia, 1702.

An edition of the writings of Gregoras, one of the Byzantine historians, best known for his Roman history.

Institut de France—Académie des Sciences.

Recueil d'observations faites en plusieurs voyages par ordre de sa Majesté, pour perfectionner l'astronomie et la géographie. Avec divers traités astronomiques. Par Messieurs de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1693.

A compilation containing eight papers by Cassini, Picard, de la Hire, and other scientists.

Jaligny, Guillaume de.

Histoire de Charles VIII, Roy de France, par Guillaume de Jaligny, André de La Vigne, & autres historiens de ce temps-là, ou sont décrites les choses les plus memorables arrivées pendant ce regne, depuis 1483 jusques en 1498. --- Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1684.

Joinville, Jean, sire de

Histoire de Saint Louis, par Jehan sire de Joinville. Les annales de son regne, par Guillaume de Nangis. Sa vie et ses miracles, par le confesseur de la reine Marguerite. Le tout publié d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi, & accompagné d'un glossaire. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1761.

The two books last named are valuable collections of source material for the period of Charles VIII and of Saint Louis.

La Hire, Philippe de. (Editor.)

Divers ouvrages de mathématique et de physique, par Messieurs de l'Académie Royale des Sciences. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1693.

A collection of papers by Roberval, Picard, Frenicle de Bessy, and other mathematicians.

Lamarck, Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet de.

Flore françoise, ou Description succincte de toutes les plantes qui croissent naturellement en France, disposée selon une nouvelle méthode d'analyse, & à laquelle on a joint la citation de leurs vertus les moins équivoques en médecine, & de leur utilité dans les arts. 3 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1778.

By an eminent naturalist who has been called, with Buffon and Darwin, "the father of evolution." He was distinguished for his studies in the origin of diversities of plant life.

Le Brun, Charles.

La grande galerie de Versailles, et les deux salons qui l'accompagnent, peints par Charles Le Brun, premier peintre de Louis XIV, dessinés par Jean Baptiste Massé - - - et gravés sous ses yeux par les meilleurs maîtres du tems. Paris, 1752.

This is still a highly interesting item in our collection of books on painting.

Le Gentil de la Galaisière, Guillaume Joseph.

Voyage dans les mers de l'Inde, fait par ordre du Roi, à l'occasion du passage de Vénus, sur le disque du soleil, le 6 juin 1761, & le 3 du même mois 1769. 2 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1779-81.

By a celebrated astronomer, geographer, and adventurer. Of great importance to astronomy and to knowledge of the geography of India and the manners, customs, religion, and science of the Hindus.

Lubersac de Livron, Charles François de.

Discours sur les monumens publics de tous les âges et de tous les peuples connus, suivi d'une description de monument projeté à la gloire de Louis XVI & de la France. Terminé

par quelques observations sur les principaux monumens modernes de la ville de Paris, & plusieurs projets de décoration & d'utilité publique pour cette capitale. Dédiée au Roi. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1775.

A work which enjoyed considerable popularity for a time, though superficial and unreliable. The project of the author for a monument to Louis XVI was received with enthusiasm but was not carried out.

Mairan, Jean Jacques Dortous de.

Traité physique et historique de l'aurore boréale - - - -. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1754.

An important contribution to the astronomical studies of the time, though advancing theories which have since been rejected.

Metastasio, Pietro Trapassi.

Opere del Signor Abate Pietro Metastasio. 12 vols. Paris, 1780-82.

The first collected edition of the works of this Italian poet and dramatist, who was widely popular in his day and was one of the few Italian writers of the 18th century who had a reputation throughout Europe.

Portal, Antoine.

Précis de chirurgie pratique, contenant l'histoire des maladies chirurgicales, & la manière la plus en usage de les traiter; avec des observations & remarques critiques sur differens points. - - - - 2 vols. Paris, 1768.

Composed of lectures delivered by Portal, a distinguished physician and anatomist, to his classes at the University of Paris.

Réaumur, René Antoine Ferchault de.

Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des insectes. 6 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1734-42.

This was to have been completed in 10 v. Volume 7 was completed before the author's death but was never published. Réaumur was one of the leading French scientists, especially in the field of natural history.

Soulavie, Jean Louis Giraud—.

Histoire naturelle de la France méridionale. 6 vols. Paris, 1780-84.

By a prolific writer and compiler of works in history and natural science. Eight volumes were published (7 on minerals and 1 on vegetables), but the University received only six.

Tacitus.

Tibère, ou les six premiers livres des Annales de Tacite. Traduits par M. l'Abbé de la Bléterie. 3 vols. Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1768.

La Bléterie was a scholar who won distinction by several historical works and by translations of the *Germania* and the *Agricola* of Tacitus, which were highly praised. His *Tibère*, however, was severely criticized by Voltaire and others, and seriously impaired his reputation.

Themistius.

Themistii Orationes XXXIII. E quibus tredecim nunc primum in lucem editae. - - - Paris, De L'Imprimerie Royale, 1684.

Both the Greek text and a Latin version of the orations of the fourth-century philosopher and orator.

Thomassin, Louis.

Glossarium universale hebraicum. Paris, E Typographia Regia, 1697.

The compiler of this was a theologian, one of the most learned men of his time.

Zonaras, Joannes.

Joannis Zonarae - - - Annales. 2 vols. Paris, E. Typographia Regia, 1686-87.

An "epitome" of the world's history from the creation to 1118, one of the most important of the Byzantine chronicles. It is valuable both in the sources from which it was drawn, including the lost books of Dio Cassius, and in the author's use of his sources. This edition, with Greek and Latin text, was edited by Du Cange, based on the Wolf edition of 1557, a copy of which is in the Henry C. Lea Library of Medieval History.

The Friends of the Library

By action of the Executive Committee, the meeting of the Friends of the Library which regularly would have been held in December has been postponed to January.

This organization is now nearing the close of its second year, and this number of the *Library Chronicle* completes the second volume of the publication which is issued "by and for the Friends of the Library." It is our endeavor in this little quarterly, as stated in the first number, to keep the Friends informed "concerning the Library's activities, resources, service, and needs." Friendship implies intimate acquaintance; and we wish that all members of the organization who are not now familiar with what the Library has, what it is doing, and what it must plan to do in the future, would call upon us frequently enough to learn more of these things.

The first two years of the existence of this group of Friends have been successful to a gratifying degree. At the same time, we hope for far larger success in the coming year. There are a very large number of alumni who are undoubtedly of a friendly disposition toward the Library of the University, who have not yet enrolled as "Friends." We hope that many