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RARE BOOKS


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by Lawrence Heyl

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The Gest Oriental Library
at Princeton University

BY HU SHIH

The Princeton University Library held from February 20 to April 20, 1952, an exhibition of books from the Gest Oriental Library, entitled "Eleven Centuries of Chinese Printing," which brought to the attention of the general public for the first time the resources of this remarkable collection of Chinese printed books and manuscripts. The exhibition suggested to the Editors the desirability of publishing in the Chronicle a description of the collection, and at their request the following article was kindly written by Dr. Hu, Curator of the Gest Library from 1930 to 1952 and Honorary Curator since 1952.

The Gest Oriental Library was founded by two men, Guion Moore Gest and his friend and adviser Commander I. V. Gillis. Mr. Gest (1864-1948) was a Quaker in religion and an engineer by profession. In 1914 he founded in New York City the construction engineering firm bearing his name, which specialized in laying underground electrical conduits and which did important engineering work in South America and Asia as well as in the United States and Canada. It was during one of his business visits to China that Mr. Gest met Commander Gillis, then Naval Attaché at the United States Legation in Peking, who later was to resign his naval commission and become Mr. Gest's adviser and agent in the selection and purchase of the Chinese books which now form the Gest Oriental Library. In a true sense, Gillis (who died also in 1948) was a cofounder of the Gest Library.

The story of the accidental founding of the Gest Library is told
in the unpublished autobiography of my friend Mr. Thomas C. S. Ste, who was a fellow member with Gillis in the International Lodge, Peking, a Massachusetts constitution masonic lodge. According to this story, it was Mr. Gest’s eye trouble that first aroused his interest in Chinese books. He had long suffered from a disease known as glaucoma, for the treatment of which he had visited the leading ophthalmologists in America and Europe. It was in Peking that Commander Gillis suggested to Mr. Gest that he try an “eye medicine of the Ma family of Tingchow,” which was so well-known among the people of Peking that the family shop selling only that one item was able to make a livelihood from it. It is said that Mr. Gest bought the Chinese “eye medicine” and tried it on himself. It did not cure his glaucoma, but gave him some temporary relief. This interested Mr. Gest so much that he left an amount of money to enable Mr. Gillis to buy for him Chinese books on medicine, materia medica, and, in particular, the treatment of diseases of the eye.

That was how the Gest collection of Chinese books was started. This story, which has been confirmed from other sources, helps to explain the prominence of a special section of the Gest books, marked as “CM” (Chinese Medicine), which includes some 500 works in nearly 2,000 volumes and constitutes the largest collection of Chinese medical books outside of China and Japan.

It was Gillis who made Gest more and more deeply interested in collecting Chinese books far beyond his original narrow scope. Mr. Gest was not a very rich man even before the depression, and he could not read nor house the large number of Chinese books which Gillis was buying for him in Peking. This great collection, which began as a hobby and developed into a kind of investment, soon became a burden to the founder. The most urgent problem was to house the thousands of rare books and in particular the Chinese encyclopedias and the “ts’ung-shu” (collectanea), each numbering many hundreds of volumes.

Arrangements were made by Mr. Gest, whose firm had a branch office in Montreal, Canada, to deposit the collection in the Redpath Library building of McGill University, where it was formally opened on February 19, 1926, as “The Gest Chinese Research Library,” with 253 works consisting of about 8,000 volumes. By 1931 the collection had increased to some 75,000 volumes. In 1937 the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, with the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation, acquired the Gest collection with the understanding that it was to be administered as a part of the University Library. About 27,000 additional volumes were sent by Gillis from Peiping to Princeton, giving the collection a total of approximately 109,000 volumes. With Princeton University’s Chinese collection added to it, and with the acquisitions of recent years, the Gest Oriental Library has 197,089 volumes as of June, 1955. Dr. Nancy Lee Swann, whose connection with the collection began in 1948, was its curator from 1951 until her retirement in 1948. Mr. Shih-kang Tung, who joined the Gest Library in 1951 as my assistant, became its librarian in 1952 at the conclusion of my two years of curatorship. When the collection came to Princeton, it was installed at 40 Nassau Street, a building belonging to the University, where it remained until 1948, when it was moved into the Firestone Library.

Because of Mr. Gest’s financial difficulties during the depression years, Mr. Gillis’ book-buying seems practically to have ceased after 1931. Gillis, who had married a Chinese wife and bought a house in her name, continued to stay in Peiping and worked on his bibliographical notes and his Title Index to the Catalogue of the Gest Oriental Library, which was printed in Peiping in 1941, shortly before Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. When war was declared, he was ordered by the Japanese military to be interned in Shantung. But he was too sick to go, and his Chinese friends persuaded the Japanese to allow him to live in Peiping. He died in September, 1948.

Mr. Gillis was a very remarkable man. Originally trained for naval intelligence work, he was an expert in microscopic analysis of fingerprints and of typewriters and typewriting. Mr. Yilan T’ung-Il, Director of the National Library of Peiping, told me that Gillis would often entertain his friends by showing them how to identify a writer who typed his writings on two or three different typewriters. He would use a magnifying glass and lecture to them on his method of detection through the more or less similar lightness or heaviness in the imprint of the same letter of the alphabet, although different machines were used.

It was this remarkable training in detective work which Gillis applied to the study of Chinese books and editions. He had studied the Chinese language and was able to speak the Peking dialect with some fluency, although he could not read an unpunctuated text in classical Chinese. By hard work and by many years of
intimate handling of authentic material, he succeeded in acquiring a very good knowledge of Chinese books. Mr. Wang Chung-min, of the National Library of Peiping and of the Library of Congress, who was invited in 1946 to make a study of the rare books in the Gest collection, wrote of him in these words: "I have also examined the I. V. Gillis Notes in English on items [1029 through 3707], and feel that his knowledge of Chinese bibliography is exceptionally good. He made almost no mistakes in his Notes, but at times he failed to point out the significance of a certain rare edition."

After examining a third of the rare books in the Gest collection, Mr. Wang had this to say:

Among all the [Chinese] collections which I have ever examined, I think that the Gest collection is a very important one. I have examined 1,500 items at the Library of Congress, and also the 2,700 items which have been on deposit [during the war] in this country by the National Library of Peiping, yet I have found that Gest's A section (Classics) seventy per cent are not duplicated either in the Library of Congress "Orientalia" section, or in the National Library of Peiping's rare book section. Of the D section (literary writings) I found that fifty per cent are not duplicated. This suffices to prove the value of the Gest collection.

This is a great tribute to the Gest collection and to Mr. Gillis, who was responsible for its selection and purchase. I heartily endorse this tribute from Mr. Wang, whom I consider one of the best trained experts in Chinese bibliography.

I have also examined Gillis' Notes and have been greatly impressed by his remarkable qualities of bold vision and painstaking attention to minute details—an unusual but necessary combination of virtues which make a good research worker in any branch of knowledge. Let me cite his Notes on items 1352 and 1358 as an illustration of his method of working. These two items are two sets of the Imperial collection known as the Wu Ying Tien Chü Chen Pan Ts'ung Shu ("The Imperial Palace Moveable Type Reprint Series").

This series was started by the Emperor Ch'ien-lung in 1773 for the reprinting of rare and long-lost works which were then being copied out of the Yung-lo ta-tien, the great Encyclopedic Library of a.d. 1403-1407. The first four reprints were printed in 1773 from wood blocks. In the same year, an ingenious official named Ch'in Chien suggested to the throne that these reprints could be more economically and more speedily printed with movable wood type. Accordingly, some 250,000 wood types were cut and 134 works, totaling over 800 volumes, were printed with the Palace moveable type in the course of the next twenty years (1774-1794). These, together with the four works printed from wood blocks, made a total of 138 reprints, and were collectively known as "The Imperial Palace Moveable Type Reprint Series."

As soon as the work of printing any particular work was completed, the types were immediately distributed to prepare for printing other works. For each reprint, twenty copies were made for the Emperor's various studios in the palaces, and some three hundred copies would be offered for sale. Because the books were printed and sold separately throughout a period of twenty years, no attempt was made to assemble them in a complete set—except for one complete set of all 138 works originally kept in the Summer Palace at Jehol and now preserved in the Palace Museum of Peiping.

"Now," said the bibliophile T'ao Hsiang, "after nearly two hundred years, although copies of individual works of this series are often found in circulation, a complete set of all the original reprints is something hitherto unknown to collectors. . . . Only recently the bibliophile Mr. Miao Ch'ien-sun [1844-1919] after a life-long search, finally succeeded in getting together a complete set of the 138 works, all of the original moveable type edition."

Here the emphasis is placed on the difficulty in getting together a complete collection of all the 138 works in the original movable type edition. The original edition of each work was probably never more than the specified three hundred copies, and the more technical works, such as the mathematical and medical books of ancient and medieval times, were probably printed in even smaller numbers of copies. In 1776-1777 the provincial governments in the Southeast were ordered by the Emperor to make new wood-block editions of these reprints for wider circulation. Eight works were printed in Nanking and thirty-eight in Chekiang—these were printed from wood blocks in much reduced format, and are therefore easily differentiated from the original editions. But the Kiangsi provincial government printed fifty-four works and the Fukien provincial government printed 129, both using the original
movable type edition as a model for cutting the wood blocks. These provincial editions continued to be reprinted throughout the nineteenth century, and in 1895 the provincial press at Canton made a new wood-block edition entirely modeled on the Fukien edition. These editions were all loosely called by the same name as "The Imperial Palace Movable Type Reprint Series."

Mr. Gillis was determined to acquire for the Gest collection one complete set of the original movable type edition. He bought the set originally collected and owned by the bibliographical scholar Miao Ch'ien-sun, of which the 198 works were bound in 818 volumes. This Gillis called "The First Copy" (No. 1397). Then he succeeded in acquiring a nearly complete set of 137 works rebound in 600 volumes. This he called "The Second Copy" (No. 1398). And he also succeeded in getting together a complete third set for the Harvard-Yenching Institute at Harvard. In 1940 he got together a complete fourth set and offered to sell it to the Library of Congress for two thousand dollars. The Library of Congress could not buy it, and when Gillis was interned in Peking, his books were looted by the Japanese and this set was scattered.

Thus Gillis achieved the almost impossible task of acquiring four of the only five sets of the original "Imperial Palace Movable Type Reprint Series" in the world, the fifth set being the one in the Imperial Palace in Peking. To appreciate the magnitude of Gillis' achievement, one must realize that neither the National Library of Peking, nor the Library of the National Peking University, nor the most celebrated private collectors in China, can boast of possessing more than a few of the 198 works in the original Palace movable type edition. Mr. Gillis' great achievement, however, lies not so much in his boldness in conception and execution in the acquisition of these four sets, as in his painstaking method in establishing the minute criteria for distinguishing every one of the 800-odd volumes of the original movable type edition from that of the provincial wood-block editions.

It seems that Mr. Gest was somewhat troubled by the high price offered by Gillis for the first complete set in 818 volumes, and he made independent inquiries of American Sinologues in this country. At least one of them wrote Gest a letter challenging Gillis' judgment in accepting the whole set as of the original movable type edition. This letter said in part:

If the edition being offered is of the first, every individual work in it should be printed from these movable types. If there is one that is not, this would prove that the edition in question is one of the later provincial reprints. In other words, it is not sufficient that some or most of the individual work show this characteristic of lack of alignment of the characters, because this feature would naturally be transmitted when the [provincial] wood-block carvers used the pages of the first edition as their models.

In a lengthy reply to this challenge, Gillis pointed out:

When this collection of works (with the exception of the first 4 works in 8 volumes which were printed from wood-blocks before the types were made) was printed with movable types, it was found upon final proof-reading that there were many errors in each and every work, so these were corrected in the usual manner—the incorrect character was cut out, the space filled in by pasting on a small slip on the under side, and the correct character substituted. The provincial reprints were undoubtedly made by using copies of the original edition as models, so unless the copy made use of was an uncorrected one the resulting reprint would not contain the errors just mentioned above. . . . It may be taken for granted, therefore, that provincial reprints do not contain the errors to be found in copies of the original edition, and so may be readily detected.

I may add that, in the original Palace edition, the name of the proofreader was printed on the middle margin of every double page, and there was a prescribed penalty for errors undetected and uncorrected by the responsible proofreader. So these final and post-printing corrections were very good evidences of the original edition.

To establish these criteria, Gillis and his Chinese assistants had to examine minutely each of approximately 37,000 double pages to detect the cut-out spaces and the pasted corrections. In his Notes on the first copy, there are thirty-six foolscap pages of a double-column table of 2,082 such corrections, listing the volume, chapter, page, line, and words for each. This task probably involved many months of hard work. By this painstaking method, Gillis proved that literally "there were many errors in each and every work" of the 194 works printed with movable type; and
thereby he established for the first time in Chinese bibliography an indisputable criterion for identifying the original edition of this huge series of valuable reprints.

In his *Note* (No. 16), Gillis applied this criterion to his second set, and said that "one or more pages of each booklet has been compared with the same pages of the First Copy and the corrections found to be the same in every instance," with the important exception of one work (No. 128) wherein "no corrections have been made . . . at the time of publication or subsequently, . . ." I have no doubt that he applied the same criterion to the third copy, which he got for Harvard, and to the fourth copy, which he offered to the Library of Congress.

It was this ability to work hard and attend to very minute details that enabled Gillis to overcome the tremendous obstacles of language and culture and to earn the well-deserved eulogy from Mr. Wang Chung-min that "his knowledge of Chinese bibliography is exceptionally good."

The Gest collection has often been described—sometimes disparagingly—as a collector's library. That is what Mr. Gest and Commander Gillis originally intended it to be. And it is precisely as a collector's library that the Gest collection is unique, priceless, and so far matchless among all Chinese collections outside of China and Japan. That is the pride and the real worth of this remarkable collection.

What are the collector's pieces in the Gest collection? What is a "rare book" according to the traditional Chinese bibliophile's standards? What are the distinctive features of the Gest collection, which was collected by an American naval officer turned Chinese bibliographer and collector? And, finally, what is the value of this collection to the trained research scholar in the field of Chinese and Oriental history and culture? These questions I shall try to answer in a form which I hope will be intelligible to the Occidental reader.

*What are the collector's pieces in the Gest collection?*

Broadly speaking, of the 100,000 volumes that form the original Gest Library, at least forty per cent—about 40,000 volumes—may be properly described as "collector's pieces." They are grouped here for the purpose of giving a general picture of the Gest treasures:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Books printed from wood blocks cut in the years</th>
<th>VOLUMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A.D. 1292-1272 (Sung dynasty editions)</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Books printed from wood blocks cut in the years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1297-1322 (Yüan dynasty editions)</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Books printed in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644)</td>
<td>24,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Manuscripts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>Manuscripts copied before 1602</td>
<td>2,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>Other manuscripts</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The complete set of the 1728 edition of the</td>
<td>5,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imperial Encyclopedia in movable copper type</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Two copies of &quot;The Imperial Palace Movable</td>
<td>1,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(wood) Type Reprint Series&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A complete set of the Palace Wood-block Edition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the Twenty-four Dynastic Histories (printed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between 1739 and 1784)</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>First editions, rare Palace editions, rare reprints</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of Sung, Yüan, and Ming editions, made in</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recent centuries (1644-1920)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Kanjur (&quot;translations of Buddhist Scrip-</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tures&quot;) in Mongol (translations from the Tibe-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tan Kanjur), 1772-1799</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Books on medicine and materia medica</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

41,193

In short, more than forty per cent of the original Gest-Gillis collection was gathered with the express desire to make it a collector's library—a library of rare and exquisite manuscripts, of notable examples of fine and early printing, and of the oldest and best editions of well-known works of reference, history, religion, philosophy, and literature.

What is a "rare book" to the traditional Chinese booklover and collector?

To begin with, there are no Chinese "incunabula" in the European sense of the term. This is, in the first place, because book printing from carved wood blocks began in China so long ago—undoubtedly as early as the eighth century A.D. and very probably even earlier—and its evolution from seal-cutting and from "rubblings" of stone inscriptions was so gradual that its exact beginnings were never particularly noticed or recorded. And, sec-
ondly, because block printing probably had a rather lowly birth, being born of a superstitious belief cultivated by the medieval religions of Buddhism and Taoism that duplicating and distributing a charm or a sacred scripture meant an accumulation of great "merit" toward the salvation of the soul (whether one's own or his beloved parents or relatives) after death. Thus the earliest extant specimen of block printing are the meaningless Buddhist tantric charms (the _Muku Joko Sutra_ printed in one million copies about A.D. 769 by order of the Japanese Empress Shotoku. And the oldest extant Chinese printed book is the Buddhist _Diamond Sutra_ with a charm at the end, "printed in May, 868, by Wang Chieh for free general distribution in memory of his father and mother." Such short pieces, printed in tens of thousands of copies for distribution for religious "merit," were usually ignored by early collectors of books, to whom books meant only the beautifully and carefully handwritten scrolls of respectable literature, and to whom such cheaply duplicated short pieces were no books at all. The old prejudice was still strong that good books were for the enjoyment of the qualified few, and not for the masses. There were bookshops recorded as early as the first century B.C. But poets and philosophers never wrote for the general public—and they certainly never intended to have their writings sold for money.

The famous poet Yüan-chén (A.D. 779-891) wrote in 884 that, for twenty years past, some of his poems and songs and those of his friend Po Chü-i (724-846) had been hand-copied and printed without authorization from wood blocks by enterprising persons in Soochow and Hangchow and that the printed copies were sold in the market place for money or in exchange for wine and food. It was a tribute to the popularity of those two great poets, who, honorably, would never have thought of condescending so low as to have their collected works cut on wood blocks and printed for sale.

Indeed, Po Chü-i had his complete poetic and prose works carefully copied in four copies, one to keep in his own home, three to be deposited in three Buddhist monasteries (one in Lushan in the South, and two in the two capitals of Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang in the North). These four complete copies were made in the years 835, 866, and 889. In 890 he had his latest writings similarly copied for deposit. He was apparently not attracted by the new art of book printing, which had certainly already been making great progress in the preceding century.

The printed _Diamond Sutra_ of 868, which consists of six sheets of text and one sheet of a woodcut illustration, all neatly pasted together to form a continuous roll sixteen feet long, shows already a highly advanced technique: the text was written in good calligraphy and the cutting and printing were both well done. A contemporary poet and statesman, Su-k'ung Tu (who died a martyr's death in 908), wrote a circular letter soliciting funds for block printing a large learned work by a monk-lecturer of Lo-yang. The new art of printing was already attracting the attention of the Buddhist monasteries and lay Buddhists by the second half of the ninth century.

It was in the tenth century that book printing was taken up seriously and enthusiastically by individuals and by governments. The Imperial Government in the North began in 920 the big undertaking of block printing the Canonical Classics of Confucianism, which took twenty-one years (932-953) to complete. The text was based on the "Stone Canon" cut on stone in 837, the copies were written by selected calligraphers and checked by competent scholars of the National Academy, and the cutting was done by selected wood carvers. A prime minister of that government, Ho Ning (898-955), who was also a popular poet, copied his collected poetic and prose writings in his own fine calligraphy to be carved on blocks for printing. "Several hundred complete sets of his collected works, each totaling 100 chuan in volume, were thus printed for presentation to friends as gifts." It was beneath his dignity to have his works printed for sale, although books printed by the government and the monasteries were for sale.

Another scholar-statesman of the age, Mu Chao-i (died circa 960), left an instructive story which has become famous in the history of Chinese book printing. When he was a young struggling scholar, he suffered the humiliation of being refused the loan of a manuscript copy of a famous anthology of ancient and medieval poetry and prose. Thereupon, he made a vow to himself that, if he should achieve honors and wealth, he would have that voluminous anthology block printed for the benefit of scholars. He did achieve high honors and became prime minister in the western Kingdom of Shu. He fulfilled his vow by selecting his best students to copy and collate, not only the _Wen-hsien_ which had been refused him, but also a number of useful encyclopedias, and having them block printed in Ch'engtu for general circulation. His family preserved the blocks and continued to print from them long after
the Kingdom of Shu was conquered by the Sung Empire (965); and it was said that, as late as the early decades of the eleventh century, his descendants still made a comfortable living from the printing and sale of books of the Mu impress, which were then being sold in all parts of the reunited Empire.

This is the brief history, not of the earliest centuries of obscure and humble beginnings, but of the glorious development of the fine art of block printing in the tenth century.

Books printed in the first four centuries, from the tenth to the thirteenth, roughly corresponding to the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), and therefore loosely called "books of Sung editions," have always been eagerly sought by all lovers and collectors of Chinese books. Their passionate love and search for "Sung editions" is quite comparable to the Occidental collector's love and search for the European incunabula. And as Sung editions became rarer and rarer with the ravages of time, the collector's zeal for such books rose to even greater heights. When we read the many personal and intimate "colophon" which the famous collector Huang P'ei-lih (1769-1845) wrote to each of his rare items of Sung printing, we can still catch the contagion of his enthusiasm and the enthusiasm of his age. Huang often signed himself as "A Man Biased in Favor of Sung Editions," and named his library "One Hundred-Sung-Editions-In-One-House." Another famous collector, Lu Hsin-yiiian (1854-1894), built a special library to house his Sung editions and named it Pi Sung Lou, "The Library of Two Hundred Sung Editions." Such names attest to the zeal and pride of these collectors.

Books printed in the next dynasty—the Yüan or Mongol dynasty (1279-1368)—were sought by collectors with almost equal fervor. In the nineteenth century, books of Sung and Yüan editions were often purchased at so many silver dollars per leaf.

But this passion for Sung and Yüan editions (books printed in the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries) constituted only one of the many phases of Chinese book collecting. The vast majority of collectors naturally could not afford to pay for those early editions. The general principle for the wise collector is to seek the best available edition (shên-pên) for every work. A Sung edition based on a defective manuscript is not so good as a much later edition based on a more perfect text or collated by competent scholarship. As for works of the later ages, the practice has always been to search for the first or earliest available printed edition or an original manuscript copy. During the last three hundred years there has developed what may be called a science of textual collation and criticism. Scholarly collectors no longer regard early editions as mere objects of antiquarian adoration, but as tools for textual comparison and emendation. They would borrow the best and earliest editions from the wealthy collectors and note down all textual variations on their own copies. Such collated texts are highly valued by booklovers, and very often new editions are made with detailed textual notes by scholarly editors.

In the last century, the introduction of the photolithographic processes enabled collectors and publishers to reproduce many rare books in facsimile form at prices well within the reach of thousands of readers. Hundreds of very rare editions of classical literature, the voluminous dynastic histories, philosophical works, the dramas of Yüan and Ming dynasties, and others have been photolithographically preserved and made accessible to a larger public.

I may sum up this brief sketch of the history of Chinese book collecting by a quotation from a contemporary bibliographer, Mr. Ku T'ing-lung, who in the preface to his "Illustrated Descriptive Catalogue of Classified Specimens of Ming Editions" (Ming-tai pan-pên t'u-lu, 1941) says: "Even booklovers of our own day have not been entirely free from the old prejudice of treasuring Sung and Yüan editions far more than the books printed in the Ming [1368-1644] and Ch'ing [1644-1912] periods... They do not seem to realize that most of the Sung and Yüan editions have been either exactly reproduced in wood-block editions of recent centuries or photolithographically reprinted in facsimile editions, or reprinted with textual emendations, books of Sung and supplement, or indirectly preserved by having their textual variations recorded and published by scholars. How few of them still remain hidden and unknown?"

"On the other hand, the books printed in the Ming period [1368-1644] deserve our attention no less than the earlier editions. We are today as far removed in time from the Ming dynasty as the Mings were from the early Sung age. Many Sung editions of important works of classical learning were well preserved in exact reproductions in the Ming period. And there were important Ming works of great historical value which have never been reprinted and are available only in their original Ming editions.
Many of these works (because they happened to contain uncomplimentary references to the Manchus) were often destroyed or suppressed by the Manchu rulers. Surviving copies must be collected and preserved in the interest of history. And, finally, many of the Ming editions, because of their conscious emulation of the best printing of a preceding era, are themselves of such artistic excellence as to deserve the admiration and care of all booklovers.

What are the distinctive features of this collection made by an American naval officer who trained himself to be a Chinese bibliographer and collector?

There is clear evidence that Mr. Gillis made a careful study of the published descriptive catalogues of a number of the well-known libraries and collections, catalogues of books which were to be destroyed or suppressed by order of the Manchu government, indices to the T'ung-shu (catalogues), and bibliographical works by recognized scholars. In his Title Index, Gillis listed about two hundred such catalogues and bibliographies, but he indicates that only about twenty-eight of these were frequently consulted by him in his Notes and Title Index.

Being a shrewd Yankee, Gillis could readily see that it would be sheer madness for him, with his limited allowance from Mr. Gest, to try to compete with Chinese and Japanese collectors in the game of hunting for Sung and Yuan editions, which, by the standards of the twentieth century, were almost no longer obtainable except through elaborate negotiations with private owners and at prohibitive prices. Yeh Té-hui (1864-1927) reported in 1911 that he knew of a Hunan collector who paid three thousand silver dollars (at that time equivalent to about three thousand American dollars) for an incomplete copy of a Sung edition of Su Shih's Poetical So. Mr. Gillis made the very wise decision to concentrate his limited resources on collecting Ming (1368-1644) editions, which have the double advantage of being old enough to be "rare books," but not old enough (according to Chinese collectors' standards) to command very high prices. This explains why the Gest collection contains about 24,500 volumes of Ming editions. That is to say, almost one quarter of the original Gest-Gillis collection consists of books printed between 1368 and 1644. This is the largest collection of Ming editions outside of China and Japan, and one of the best in the world.

It is not easy to single out particular items from this huge collection of Ming editions for special mention. A few significant points of general interest may be stressed here.

In the first place, the collection contains representative specimens of the development of the art of book printing throughout the 270 years of the Ming dynasty. More than a tenth of this Ming collection consists of books (mostly government editions of the Confucianist Canon and Buddhist Scriptures in several different editions) which were printed before the end of the Ching-t'ai reign (1450-1456)—that is, before the Gutenberg Bible. Of this group, there are seventeen volumes of punctuated Buddhist texts printed from blocks cut in 1490, which are unusual rarities in being the earliest Buddhist books using punctuations (punctuated Confucianist Canonical works having begun as early as the twelfth century), and in being probably the only known clearly dated books printed from blocks cut under the reign of Emperor Chien-wen (1535-1542), which reign, having been overthrown by the Emperor Yang-lo (1490-1494), was deliberately obliterated from all documents and publications. These seventeen volumes show that the "reign-name" was also obliterated from the blocks, but the date "year one" and the cycle-number "chi-mao" combine to identify the year beyond question. Such unmistakable marks showing how the tabooed reign-name was cut from the blocks explains why collectors of Ming editions could never find books printed during that ill-fated reign. Mr. Wang Chung-min has also pointed out that there are Ming books in the Gest collection which Gillis acquired without knowing that they might be "the only extant copies in the world." The work Mr. Wang cited is a collection of poems by Hsi Chung-hsing of the sixteenth century.

Secondly, this collection includes practically all types of book printing of the Ming period: Imperial Palace editions, editions made by the many royal princes who were well-known as patrons of learning and literature, editions by the two National Academies at Peking and Nanking, editions by provincial and local governments, and books printed by private families and by commercial printers. Of the Imperial government editions, mention may be made of the most beautifully printed copy (1595) of the Yüeh-lü ch'ian-shu ("Treatises on Music") by Prince Chên Ts'ai-yü, one of the most learned men of the sixteenth century. Of the books printed by the great families and commercial printers, special mention should be given to the many works in the Gest collection which were printed by the great bibliophile and publisher Mao Chin.
(1599-1659), who, as a private individual living in an age of war, foreign invasion, and change of dynasties, undertook to print and publish in his lifetime a total of about six hundred works, including a large number of very voluminous works, such as the "Thirteen Classics with Standard Commentaries" and the "Seventeen Dynastic Histories." "The printing of these books," says Mr. Fang Chao-yong in his brief biography of Mao Chin in Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period, "aggregating more than 200,000 double pages, required a large quantity of paper which Mao Chin purchased in Kiangsi province in two varieties—a rather heavy kind known as mao-t'ien and a thinner kind called mao-t'ai. Both names retain the surname Mao, and the papers . . . are still so designated in publishing circles."

In the third place, this collection of Ming editions includes a number of works which the Manchu rulers, for political and racial reasons, had ordered burned and completely prohibited, or partially deleted and banned. At the height of the power of the dynasty, notably in the eighteenth century, this despotic destruction and prohibition of such books was harshly effective, violators being actually punished by capital punishment, and hundreds of books were probably irretrievably lost. Commander Gillis, in common with Chinese collectors of his day, took special interest in collecting items on the official lists of "Books to be Burned and Prohibited." Of this group, I like to mention the Ch'ü hsüeh chi (first series of collected works) of Ch'ien Ch'ien-i (1582-1604), who was a great scholar and intellectual leader of his age as well as one of the most famous collectors of rare books, but whose works came to be intensely hated by the Manchu Emperor Ch'ien-lung (1736-1795) and were ordered to be burned and destroyed wherever found. The Emperor's wrath was so strong that works of any of Ch'ien's contemporaries containing a preface by him, or correspondence with him, or even a complimentary reference to him, were ordered to be either partially or wholly banned or destroyed. This edition of Ch'ien's earlier collected works was made in 1842, the year before the fall of the Ming dynasty, and, having been copied by the best calligraphers and carved by a well-known artist, is considered by all experts as a most perfect example of the art of block printing of the Ming period. That such a voluminous work in 110 ch'ian, which could have been secretly kept by a collector only at the most dangerous peril to his life and to his family, has been preserved to this day in perfect condition, is an
eloquent tribute to the great courage which the love of good books can inspire in the true bibliophile.

But Gillis the detective and collector could not suppress his ambition to hunt for the Sung and Yuan editions. He bided his time and waited for his opportunity to satisfy his long-cherished desire. In the meantime, he was training himself to be able to recognize and acquire such early and rare specimens of Chinese printing without having to pay exorbitant prices for them. In other words, he expected to find his treasures among the large loads of books that were often offered at "junk" prices by impoverished noble families and dilapidated temples and monasteries in Peking and its vicinity.

His great opportunity came when he found and bought an incomplete set of the Buddhist Canon of Scriptures in apparently an admixture of various printed editions and hand-copied supplementary volumes. The total number of folded volumes was about 5,348. This purchase was probably made in 1928 or 1927. I have not found Gillis' correspondence or notes on the details of this most remarkable find. But Dr. Berthold Laufer, in his preliminary report on the Gest collection, which he had examined at McGill University on July 11-12, 1929, said that the consignment of this Buddhist collection "had just reached Vancouver, B.C.," and that Mr. Gest had shown him photostats of a number of pages. Dr. Laufer had also been told by Mr. Gest that this collection included "698 volumes printed under the Sung in A.D. 1246 [and] 1,035 volumes printed under the Yuan (14th century) mostly in A.D. 1306..." All this shows that this collection must have been acquired a few years before July, 1929, and that Gillis had already had time to examine and determine these dates.

It is very interesting that Dr. Laufer was informed that these Buddhist Scriptures "were obtained in a remote part of China." Gillis called this collection "Ta-pei-shih ching" ("the Buddhist Scriptures in the Ta Pei Monastery"). I have not found any document of his describing the location and history of this monastery, but, judging from the colophons at the end of a number of the manuscript volumes, I have no doubt that this must be one of the monasteries in the city of Peking, which was the capital of the Mongols from 1264 to 1506 and of the Ming dynasty from 1421 to its downfall in 1644. It was quite possible that Mr. Gillis had his reasons for not revealing to anyone where and how he acquired
this historic collection. At any rate, he found it expedient not to consult his learned Chinese friends about this precious find, and had to work all by himself on this collection and to rely on only one of his two hundred catalogues for guidance in making his own catalogue of the 5,348 volumes. It happened that Chinese collectors and bibliographers of the old school were not interested in the Buddhist Canons, which were usually too voluminous for the private library and which orthodox Chinese scholars were supposed to view with disdain and contempt. So the one catalogue Mr. Gillis consulted did not give him much information or guidance. He did not even realize that this edition of the Tripitaka, like all other editions, was arranged according to the order of the characters in the “Thousand-Character Primer,” which every Chinese child could recite by heart. So in his catalogue he followed the “order” or disorder of the 580 packages that were haphazardly numbered by the monks who sold him the collection! And nobody corrected him.

Moreover, his secret find was made a few years before the Chinese discovery in 1931 of an almost complete copy of the Chi Sha edition of the Buddhist Canon housed in two Buddhist monasteries in Sian, in Shensi province. General Chu Ch‘ing-lan, a leader in Chinese famine relief work and a lay believer in Buddhism, found this collection on one of his relief missions to Shensi. He immediately reported it to his Buddhist friends in Shanghai. A society was organized in October, 1931, to plan the work of reprinting this entire Canon in photolithographic reproduction in greatly reduced size. An editorial committee of this society took up the work of photographing the collection and checking the missing volumes and pages, for which corresponding volumes and pages from other old editions were photographed as replacements. The committee by that time was able to consult the three-volume “Catalogue of Catalogues of All Editions of Buddhist Canons,” which was published in Japan in 1929-1934 after the completion of the Japanese publication of the Taishō Tripitaka, and which includes a “Catalogue of the Buddhist Tripitaka of the Yen-shēng Monastery at Chi Sha in P‘ing-chiang-fu”—originally printed in a.d. 1354. The editorial committee found that the catalogue of 1354, having been printed at the beginning of the great undertaking, contains only 548 han (cases) numbered by 548 characters, while the Canon at the completion of printing in 1328 included forty-three more han, making a total of 591 numbered cases, comprising 1,532 works in 6,362 ch‘ian, originally bound in about 5,910 folded volumes. A new catalogue of the photolithographic edition was made and similarly printed when the reprinting of the whole Canon was completed in December, 1935.

All this took place after Commander Gillis had made his own catalogue and had delivered the collection he had acquired to Mr. Gest. Mr. Gillis never knew that his great find was primarily the original Chi Sha edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka of 1291-1292, with 868 volumes in various early Ming editions and 2,150 hand-copied volumes to make up the missing volumes. And the Chinese public never knew that another incomplete copy of the Chi Sha Canon had been found in Peking years before and had been shipped to McGill in 1939 and then to Princeton. When Mr. Wang Chung-min was invited in 1946 to examine the rare books in the Gest collection, he was shown a few volumes of this Buddhist collection. Mr. Wang expressed doubts that these were an original part of the then famous Chi Sha edition, saying that they might be copies printed from new blocks made in the middle of the nineteenth century. I am sure that Mr. Wang would have accepted these as of the original Chi Sha edition if he still had time, as I have since had, to examine the entire Canon, which was then stored away in an inaccessible corner at 20 Nassau Street in Princeton.

The history of the Chi Sha edition of the Buddhist Canon is briefly as follows. About 1231, the Yen-shēng Monastery at Chi Sha (Beach Sand), on Chi’en Lake outside P‘ing-chiang-fu (Soochow), decided to accept a donation from a wealthy patron to start the project of block printing the whole Buddhist Canon as it was then officially recognized. The Sian copy contains a volume dated June, 1231, which is missing in the Gest collection, but a Gest volume dated February, 1328, is reprinted in the lithographic edition without the dated colophon. Printing continued at Chi Sha until 1275, five years before the Mongols completed their conquest of the Sung Empire (1277). After an interval of twenty-five years, block cutting and printing of the Canon were resumed in 1297 and were completed in 1298. The cutting of the blocks took actually sixty-six years, spread over a period of ninety-one years. Buddhism under the Mongol regime was greatly influenced by the tantrism (worship of the magic power of charms or dhāranis) then in favor at the Mongol court. So a vast number of tantric sutras
was added to the Canon together with a few other works by Chinese Buddhists. That explains the fact that the completed Chi Sha edition included forty-three more cases (about 430 volumes) than what had been listed in the Chi Sha catalogue printed in 1254.

The Yen-sheng Monastery and its blocks of the Buddhist Canon were probably destroyed in the revolutionary wars of 1350-1368 which overthrew the Mongol dynasty in China and founded the Chinese dynasty of Ming. It appears that, about the year 1600, the monastery in Peking which owned the set of the Chi Sha Canon now at Princeton began to check its thousands of missing volumes and to find ways and means to replace them. These missing volumes were made up, in the first place, with corresponding printed volumes in other editions of the Canon, mostly in the "Southern Canon" edition printed in Nanking by the imperial government in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries and partly in the 1399 edition printed in the T'ien-lung Shan Monastery near Hangchow. And, secondly, funds were solicited to have hand copies made from the original Chi Sha edition then still available in other temples or monasteries in Peking. Many of the manuscript volumes bear colophons showing the names of donors of money and the dates of the copies. Most of the dates were of 1600 and 1602.

As a result of this checking and replacement, this set seems to have been completed about 1802, but it came to Mr. Gillis incomplete. The Canon should have about 5,910 volumes. According to Gillis' count, the Gest copy has only:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volumes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sung editions</td>
<td>627½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yüan editions</td>
<td>1,524½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ming editions</td>
<td>868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript recopies</td>
<td>2,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In his Notes (No. 2108), Gillis gives a detailed list of all these 5,348 volumes, each volume being marked by "S" (Sung), "Y" (Yüan), "M" (Ming), or "W" (white paper manuscript). In the same Notes, he makes another catalogue in which all the dated volumes are recorded with the years and months in which the blocks were made. There are fifty-five Sung volumes dated from 1292 to 1271 (the lithographic reprint edition contains one volume dated 1291 and three volumes dated 1272). There are 124 Yüan volumes dated from 1297 to 1319, (the lithographic reprint edition contains two volumes dated 1324.

With these dated volumes as criteria, Gillis was able to judge 697½ volumes as of Sung editions and 1,524½ volumes as of Yüan editions. The remaining printed volumes were of Ming editions. Gillis' judgments are valid in practically all the Sung and Yüan volumes, with only a very few cases of oversight or misconduct. I have found six volumes dated 1333, 1335, 1338, 1389, 1440, and 1641 respectively which were not noted in Gillis' catalogue of dated Sung volumes. But these overlooked dates only confirm Gillis' judgment that they were of the Sung editions. These nearly 700 volumes of Sung editions and nearly 1,700 volumes of Yüan editions (1,524½ volumes of the Chi Sha Canon plus a set of a Yüan cyclopedia in sixty volumes printed from blocks made in 1507) make the Gest Library richer in block printed books of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries than any other library in Europe or America.

Although we are still ignorant about where and how Gillis acquired this collection, and although he did not fully understand what he had found, it is time for us to announce that the Gest Library owns one of the two incomplete copies of the now famous Chi Sha Tripitaka of 1311-1328 known to be extant. For the Sian copy, from which the 1931-1935 photolithographic edition was made, is also incomplete, with about 600 volumes originally replaced by corresponding volumes in a Huchow edition of 1338, in addition to other missing volumes and pages which have been replaced by the editorial committee in Shanghai.

But the editors of the reprint edition informed us in their introductory notes that there were apparently eleven volumes which could not be replaced because their titles were unknown. These are:

- Vols. 5, 6, 7, and 10 of Case 568
- Vols. 1, 2, and 3 of Case 571
- Vols. 7 and 8 of Case 576
- Vols. 8 and 9 of Case 585

We have checked the Gest copy and can now inform the editors and owners of the reprint edition that, of the eleven missing volumes, the Gest copy has the following seven:
and the Gest copy also has Volumes 9 and 10 of Case 568, which are the same as Volumes 11 and 12 respectively of the reprint edition. They are not missing, but only wrongly numbered. The only volumes which are missing in both the Gest copy and the Sian copy are Volumes 8 and 9 of Case 568. At a more propitious time, these missing volumes found complete in the Gest copy should be made accessible to China and Japan through photostatic reproductions.

I have used “The Imperial Palace Movable Type Reprint Series” to illustrate the scientific technique of Commander Gillis in his book collecting, which is one of the distinctive features of the Gest-Gillis collection. That same microscopic analytical technique he applied also to his identification of the volumes in the Chi Sha Tripitaka and of the tens of thousands of volumes in his huge collection of Ming editions.

As an Occidental, Gillis was more deeply interested in the movable type editions than in the traditional Chinese bibliophile. It was this interest which led him to make the large collection of Chinese books printed with movable type of wood, lead, and copper (which were used before the invention of modern machine-made metal type). This collection, the largest in the world, includes a number of Ming books printed with movable type as well as the two copies of the wood type Imperial Palace Reprint Series in 1,412 volumes, and the great Encyclopaedia (the Ku-chin t'u-shu chi-ch'eng) of 1728 in 5,020 volumes, all in the original copper type edition. Only sixty-four sets of this Encyclopaedia were printed in the original edition. They were given by the Emperor Ch'ien-lung and his successors only to families and persons as rewards for special services to the state. In 1864-1868 a new edition of this Encyclopaedia was made in Shanghai with much smaller modern lead type, and 1,500 sets were printed as a private commercial enterprise. In 1890 the Chinese government ordered a lithographic reproduction made of the original edition. One hundred sets were printed of this edition, which was completed in 1898. But it was Mr. Gillis’ ambition to get together a complete set of the original copper type edition for the Gest Library. It is said that it took him years of search and minute checking to complete the Gest copy. It is one of the three or four sets of the original edition extant in the world. Because this set in 5,020 volumes was made up of volumes from a number of incomplete lots, Gillis probably paid very little money to have this complete copy—with many spare volumes for possible replacement of missing ones!

The patient picking of a complete set of this huge Encyclopaedia out of numerous scattered and inexpensive volumes illustrates another of the distinctive features of Mr. Gillis’ book collecting. The Chinese bibliographer and collector Mr. Miao Ch'ian-sun had spent years patiently selecting odd items of “The Imperial Palace Movable Type Reprint Series” and in the end made a complete set of it in 812 volumes, all of the original edition. The shrewd Yankee collector could readily recognize in such an enviable collection the principle that odd and inexpensive books could become valuable when they were made parts of a collection selected with a far-sighted design or objective.

For instance, many of the voluminous works published by the Manchu government and often printed on very good paper were usually ignored by Chinese collectors and their market-price has never been high. Even in the old days, incomplete sets of such bulky works were often sold to dealers by weight, and the pages were sometimes used for “paddings” in rebinding of old and rare books. (In recent years, such Palace and government editions are being collected in Red China to be delivered to state-controlled paper factories to make pulp.) But Mr. Gillis’ love for good editions and his modern sense of values (and the fact that his wife was a Manchu lady) led him to collect for the Gest Library one of the excellent collections of books published by the Imperial Palace and government, including official histories of major military campaigns, collected works of all the Manchu emperors, scientific works in mathematical and astronomical fields, collections of imperial edicts in both Chinese and Manchu, and hundreds of volumes of Manchu translations of Chinese classics, moral philosophy, and popular literature. He also made a complete collection of the Palace edition of the Twenty-four Dynastic Histories in 754 volumes, the block printing of which spread over a period of forty-five years (1759-1784). Mr. Gillis in his early days of book collecting was often criticized for his “fondness for Palace editions.” I believe that the time is already coming when his vast
collection of these official publications of the Manchu dynasty will be classed as valuable rarities of historical importance; and in particular his large collection of Manchu translations of Chinese works (among them the famous pornographic novel *Chün P'ing-mei*—not a Palace or government edition, of course) will be found a very important source of material for the student of the language and literature of this once great people, as well as for historians and anthropologists interested in problems of cultural contact and diffusion.

Of the large collection of manuscript volumes, there are many items of interest. Our oldest manuscript is a copy of three chapters of a Buddhist sutra, which is one of the many thousands of ancient manuscripts hidden for nearly a thousand years in a cave-library in the desert region of Tun-huang. The manuscript can be conservatively dated as of the sixth century A.D. It has a hemp-cloth wrapper bearing the official seal of the local collection of Buddhist Scriptures. The woman who did the sewing of the wrapper had the inspiration to sign her name, with the date which corresponds to A.D. 685. Another old manuscript—one of the few items bought by Mr. Gest himself in Japan—is a copy of a Buddhist text bearing a colophon which tells us that the copying was ordered by a Japanese empress in A.D. 740.

Of the 2,000-odd manuscript volumes copied in 1600-1608 for replacements of missing volumes in the Chi Sha Tripiṭaka, I may cite one colophon of human interest:

I, Mrs. Chao, née Shen, a devout believer, give fifteen taels of silver for the purpose of copying 100 of the missing volumes of the Sacred Tripiṭaka with the most devout prayer that my husband, Chao Chih-kao, the Grand Secretary of the Chien-chi Palace [i.e., Prime Minister of the Empire], may be blessed with improved health, that his hands and feet may be restored to smooth functioning, and that our young son, Chao Feng-ko, may be free from all calamities and be blessed with long life and happiness.

The copies were completed on the sixth day of the Sixth Moon of the 28th year of Wan-li [1600].

Her husband (whose biography appears in chapter 219 of the *Ming Shih*) was Prime Minister from 1594 until his death in 1601, but was confined to his sickbed for about four years before he died.
Her pious vow will interest the student of history, of religion, and of the development of book printing. It was the same belief in the “merit” of duplicating and spreading sacred scriptures—the belief that had been responsible for the origin of block printing in China—that made Madame Chao contribute money for copying the missing volumes. And it will interest the economic historian to know that fifteen taels of silver in 1600 was sufficient to pay the scribes for making careful and exact hand copies of one hundred volumes. The scribe got 0.15 of a tael of silver for copying each volume, which meant at least two whole days’ labor. According to contemporary records, the official rate in 1606 was 690 copper cash for one tael of silver, but the market rate was only 450 cash for one tael. So the scribe got about seventy copper cash for two days’ labor!

And, finally, what, after all, is the value of this collection—in nucleus “a collector’s library”—to the trained research scholar in the field of Chinese and Oriental history and culture?

In much that I have said above, I have already tried to answer some such question, not with abstract discussions of the real worth of “a collector’s library” to the research scholar, but with concrete examples of how difficult research problems can sometimes be solved with the help of rare and authentic documents and books found only in some collector’s library.

It is unnecessary to defend or apologize for the Gest collection with the often repeated statement that “it is really more than a collector’s library.” Of course it is much more than a collector’s library, especially with the thousands of additional volumes acquired in recent decades. But there is nothing wrong for any learned institution to have and take pride in having as many collector’s libraries as can be had. Such libraries may remain for months and years without being consulted or utilized. But it is always the dream of a research scholar to find someday in some collector’s library the very item for which he has long been hunting in vain. As an old Chinese proverb says: “An army is maintained for a thousand days so that it may be used on one particular morning.” That is the luxury and the utility of libraries of rare and very rare items.

The thousands of “Tun-huang manuscripts,” for example, had been lying idle for decades at the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale. Then there came a Chinese professor who
found among them a great many pieces of Buddhist and secular stories retold in popular rhymed recitals hitherto unknown to the historian of Chinese literature. Then came another Chinese professor who found among these manuscripts long rolls containing the recorded discourses of Shên-hui (died a.n. 750), a great Buddhist monk of the eighth century who was the real founder of Ch' an (Zen) Buddhism but whose works had long been lost. He also found in the London and Paris collections other long-lost documents of great historical significance in understanding the development of Buddhism. Such finds have resulted in the rewriting of the history of medieval Chinese literature and the history of Chinese Buddhism.

It is my sincere belief that the Gest Oriental Library will become a place to which scholars will resort more and more in their hunt for rare and authentic materials needed in their historical researches in various specialized fields. A few of these fields may be mentioned here.

In Buddhist literature, the Gest Library not only owns 2,300 volumes of Sung and Yüan editions of the original Chi Sha Tripiṭaka and its Ming replacements, but also 4,600 volumes of the "Ming Northern Canon" (Pei tsang), 800 volumes of the "Ming Southern Canon" (Nan tsang) and hundreds of volumes in other editions of the Ming period. Serious scholars not satisfied with such modern Japanese reprint editions as the Taihō Tripiṭaka (a set of which is in the Gest Library) may find it necessary to turn to these Gest volumes for textual collation and authentication. And any student interested in the historical development of Buddhist printing will certainly find it profitable to make use of the Gest Buddhist collections.

The Gest collection of books on Chinese medicine and materia medica will surely interest scholars investigating the history of Chinese science in general and Chinese medicine in particular. In fact, this collection is now being utilized by an American scholar, Professor W. A. Lessa of the University of California, who is interested in Chinese works on anatomy and physiology.

The Gest Library has an incomplete copy of the Ta-ming shih-lu ("Veritable Records of the Ming Dynasty") in 1,498 ch' ian and 173 volumes. This copy, though incomplete, is a good copy once owned by the bibliophile Sung Yün (1681-1760). Another more complete copy of this work in 343 volumes, belonging to the National Library of Peiping, has been microfilmed by the Library of Congress, and positive copies of it are now accessible in a few leading university libraries. A copy of the Ta-ming shih-lu in Nanking was reproduced photolithographically and published in 500 volumes by the "puppet" regime in Nanking during the Japanese war in China. As this work constitutes one of the most important sources for the study of the history of the entire Ming period (1368-1644), the time will come when trained scholars will want to make a detailed textual comparison and collation of the published set against such available manuscript copies as the Gest copy and the microfilm copy of the National Library of Peiping. (Other manuscript copies are to be found at the Academia Sinica now in Taipei, Taiwan, at the University of Cambridge, and in private collections.) Such a huge work which has remained in manuscript copies for many centuries cannot be safely used without the necessary work of textual collation by competent scholarship.

I shall conclude this survey by mentioning a few of the intellectual delights which I have personally derived from the collections of the Gest Library. One of the very recent delights was my discovery of a perfectly preserved copy of the first edition of Liao-tai chih-i (which Herbert A. Giles partially translated into English in 1908 under the title of Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio), by Pu Sung-ling (1640-1715), one of China's greatest writers and story-tellers. As a devoted student of the life and works of this author and as one who once wrote a fifty thousand-word introduction to establish his authorship of an anonymously published great novel, Hsing-shih yin-yuan chuan ("A Married Life that Would Awaken the World"), I had been searching everywhere without success for a copy of this first edition of his short stories, which was not printed until 1766, fifty years after his death. It was therefore an entirely unexpected pleasure to find it here.

In 1943 I undertook the retrieval of a celebrated historical case involving three great men of the eighteenth century. This piece of historical research took me five years to finish (1943-1948). One of the controversial points required my examination of a manuscript copy of a work by Chao I-ch'ing (1700-1764), one of the three men involved—and I had to have it in the manuscript form as it was copied into the "Imperial Manuscript Library" of Emperor Ch'ien-lung. I was then in the United States and fully realized that it was absolutely impossible for me to have access to
any of the four surviving copies of this manuscript library in 96,000 volumes. It was a great and happy surprise to me when I learned in 1944 that I could borrow from the Gest Library at Princeton a complete exact copy of Chao's work which was originally copied in the early nineteenth century from the Imperial Manuscript Library at Yangchow by the well-known bibliophile T's'en Yung, of that city. I was permitted to keep this copy for a time and compare its twenty thick volumes in detail with the printed editions. The controversial question was settled satisfactorily with the help of this copy, the only one which was available to me in those war years.

In connection with the same research work, I also wanted to find out the date of a poem which the Emperor Ch'ien-lung wrote in praise of a manuscript copy of the newly emended text of the Shu-ching chu supposedly collated by the scholar and philosopher Tai Chên (1724-1777), one of three great men involved in the case I was retreating. But in the whole United States there was no complete copy of the collected poems of that emperor—except in the Gest Library. I appealed to my friends Dr. Nancy Lee Swann and Dr. T'ung Yu at the Gest Library, who were kind enough to find the date I wanted to ascertain. The date turned out to be March 27 or 28, 1774, which, however, was beyond even my boldest hypothesis, for I had expected it to be some time in 1775 or very late in 1774. The poem was written eight months before Tai Chên's collated text was presented to the throne in November, 1774! I was therefore forced to conclude that the poem was in praise, not of Tai Chên's text, but of a text collated and edited earlier by someone else. Tai Chên did not arrive in Peking until September, 1773, and could not have completed before March, 1774, the detailed collation and editing of a work which, minus textual notes, comprises some 345,000 words.

That was in 1945. Many years afterward, I was myself working at the Gest Library and one day I came upon the collected poems of Emperor Ch'ien-lung. I re-examined the poem and its short preface. To my great surprise, I found that the Emperor's preface to the poem contains three important words totally different from the corresponding words on the first page of Tai Chên's text as it was published in 1775 in the Palace movable type edition. The preface in the Emperor's collected poems praised the editor for having supplied many missing words in the text—"from a few words to as many as eighty or ninety words." That was apparently the original wording in His Majesty's own copy which nobody had the opportunity to change. But in the Palace movable type edition published in 1775, the words "eighty or ninety words" were changed into "over four hundred words!" The chief editors of the Manuscript Library had apparently taken the liberty to change these words in order that the eulogistic poem might appear to apply to the later and much better collated text.

So my early conclusion was more strongly verified that the text eulogized by the Emperor in March, 1774, was not the text collated by Tai Chên and presented in November, 1774. The great Emperor, the most conceited and "omniscient" dictator as he was, never knew the difference! My hero, Tai Chên, apparently so much detested this action of his powerful superiors that he published in the same year his own text in a private edition at his own expense, without the textual notes and without the Emperor's eulogistic poem, as a silent protest. That conclusion solved one of the most baffling mysteries in the celebrated controversy. For those evidences leading to its solution, I gladly give my hearty thanks to Mr. Gillis, who had the good sense to collect the complete works of an emperor who in his long life (1711-1799) and long reign (1756-1796) composed some 42,000 poems which were so poor that no Chinese bibliophile and no other library in the United States seemed to care to collect the six huge collections of his verse totaling 654 ch'üan.

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A Letter of Advice from the Author of Cranford to an Aspiring Novelist

by ANNETTE B. ROPKINS

One day in the latter part of September, 1862, Elizabeth Gaskell received a letter from an entirely unknown young woman with literary aspirations asking for her criticism of a novel. The letter had been forwarded from Mrs. Gaskell’s Manchester home to her temporary address at Eastbourne, Sussex; the manuscript of the novel, for good reasons, had been held to await her return.

To this request the elder woman replied at length. She could do so because she was, at the time, enjoying a rare moment of leisure.

1 Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, nee Stevenson (1810-1869), was born in London. Her mother died when the child was about a year old, and she was reared by a maternal aunt, Mrs. Hannah Lumb, at Knutsford (the original of Cranford). After a happy childhood she attended Ayleshank school at Stratford-upon-Avon. In 1832 she married William Gaskell, junior, later senior minister, at Cross Street Unitarian Chapel, Manchester, the city that became her home for the rest of her life.

Her principal works are: (1) Novels—Mary Barton, Cranford, Ruth, North and South, Cousin Phillis, Sylvia’s Lovers, Wives and Daughters, published 1848-1860; (2) Biography—The Life of Charlotte Brontë, 1857.

2 The letter was acquired by the Parish Collection of the Princeton University Library in September, 1959, as a gift from Robert H. Taylor, 30-37.

3 The year 1862, which was added in pencil by an unknown hand, is probably correct. My conjecture can be supported by a variety of evidence. From the letter itself we learn that Mrs. Gaskell was staying at Eastbourne and that if her correspondent should need further aid, she would not be able to reply as promptly another time because after returning home she would be “very much occupied.”

In a letter to Charles Eliot Norton dated July 19, 1862, she says: “Last autumn and winter was such hard work—we were often off at nine—not to come home till 7, or by past, too worn out to eat or do anything but go to bed.” (Jane Whittell, ed., Letters of Mrs. Gaskell and Charles Eliot Norton, London, 1898, p. 107.) Mrs. Gaskell is referring here to the duties caused by the cotton famine in England during our Civil War, a result of certain economic factors and the Federal blockade of Southern ports which occasioned a serious halt in the flow of raw material to the factories, the closing of hundreds of plants, and untold misery to the vast industrial population, particularly in the Manchester district, which was the center of the cotton industry (see F. L. Oloway, King Cotton Diplomacy, Chicago, 1931, chap. V, esp., and bibli.). Unemployment reached its peak in the closing weeks of 1861, and it must have been in June of that year that Mrs. Gaskell, after several months’ sojourn abroad, returned home and at once engaged in the work of relief. This task proved to be such a physical and emotional strain that by September she broke down and went to Eastbourne, a seaside resort in Sussex, for a rest. It was while there that she had the chance to write her long letter. She was soon to go back to the grueling labor she spoke of to Norton in July of 1862. The autumn and winter she mentions are those of 1861-1862.

in an extraordinarily busy life. Her letter is of unusual interest because of what it tells us about Elizabeth Gaskell both as woman and writer and about her correspondent, whose picture emerges fairly clearly from these pages of practical advice. The letter has, too, a wider significance through its remarks on the age-old, essentially feminine question of career versus the obligations of home.

Sept 25, Eastbourne
Sussex
[1862]

My dear Madam, I have received your letter at this out of the way place, (where I shall not remain much longer, so Plymouth Grove Manchester will be your best address, if you have to write again.) Your MSS* has not been forwarded to me along with your letter; so at present I have no opportunity of judging of it’s merits; when I feel very sorry for you, for I think I can see that, at present, at least you are rather overwhelmed with all you have to do; and I think it possible that the birth of two children, one so close upon another may have weakened you bodily, and made you more unfit to cope with your many household duties. Try—even while waiting for my next letter, to strengthen yourself by every means in your power; by being very careful as to your diet; by cold-bathing, by resolute dwelling on the cheerful side of everything; and by learning to economize strength as much as possible in all your household labours; for I dare say you already know how much time may be saved, by beginning any kind of work in good time, and not driving all in a hurry to the last moment. I hope (for instance,) you soap & soak your dirty clothes well for some hours before beginning to wash; and that you understand the comfort of preparing a dinner & putting it on to cook slowly, early in the morning; as well as having always some kind of sewing ready arranged to your hand, so that you can take it up at any odd minute and do a few stitches. I dare say at present it might be difficult for you to procure the sum that is necessary to purchase a sewing machine; and indeed, unless you are a good workwoman to begin with, you will find a machine difficult to manage. But try, my dear, to conquer your “clumsiness” in sewing; there are a thousand little bits of work, which no sempstress ever does so well as the

* Mrs. Gaskell frequently used "MSS" to denote the singular.

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wife or mother who knows how the comfort of those she loves de-
depends on little peculiarities which no one but she cares enough
for the wearers to attend to. My first piece of advice to you would
be get strong—[I am almost sure you are out of bodily health
and if I were you, I would make it my first object to attain. Did
you ever try a tea-cup full of hop-tea the first thing in the morn-
ing? It is a very simple tonic, and could do no harm. Then
again try hard to arrange your work well. That is a regular piece
of head-work and taxes a woman's powers of organization; but
the reward is immediate and great. I have known well what it is
to be both wanting money, & feeling weak in body and entirely
disheartened. I do not think I ever cared for literary fame; nor
do I think it is a thing that ought to be cared for. It comes and it
goes. The exercise of a talent or power is always a great pleasure;
but one should weigh well whether this pleasure may not be
obtained by the sacrifice of some duty. When I had little children
I do not think I could have written stories, because I should have
become too much absorbed in my fictitious people to attend to
my real ones. I think you would be sorry if you began to feel that
your desire to earn money, even for so laudable an object as to
help your husband, made you unable to give your tender sympathy
to your little ones in their small joys & sorrows; and yet, don't
you know how you,—how every one, who tries to write stories
must become absorbed in them, (fictitious though they be,) if
they are to interest their readers in them. Besides viewing the
subject from a solely artistic point of view a good writer of fiction
must have lived an active & sympathetic life if she wishes her books
to have strength & vitality in them. When you are forty, and if you
have a gift for being an authoress you will write ten times as good
a novel as you could do now, just because you will have gone
through so much more of the interests of a wife and a mother.

All this does not help you over present difficulties, does it? Well
then let us try what will—How much have you in your own power?
How much must you submit to because it is God's appoint-
ment? You have it in your own power to arrange your day's work
to the very best of your ability making the various household arts
into real studies (& there is plenty of poetry and association about
them—remember how the Greek princesses in Homer washed the
clothes etc etc etc etc.) You would perhaps find a little book called
The Finchley Manual of Needlework of real use to you in sewing;
it gives patterns and directions etc. Your want of strength may be
remedied *possibly* by care & attention; if not, you must submit to
what is God's ordinance; only remember that the very hardest
day's bodily work I have ever done has never produced anything
like the intense exhaustion I have felt after writing the "best"
parts of my books.

All this letter is I fear disheartening enough: you must remem-
ber I have not seen your MSS as yet; & I can only judge of it from
such a number of MSS sent me from time to time; and only one
of these writers has ever succeeded in getting her writings pub-
blished, though in several instances I have used my best endeavours
on their behalf.

Have you no sister or relation who could come & help you for
a little while till you get younger,—no older friend at hand who
would help you to plan your work so that it should oppress you
as little as possible? If this letter has been of any use to you, do
not scruple to write to me again, if I can give you help. I may
not always be able to answer you so soon as I do now, for at home
my life is very very much occupied but I will always try & do so.
And do my dear, always remember to ask God for light and help—
for with Him all things are possible—and it almost astonishes
one sometimes to find how He sends down answers to one's
prayers in new bright thoughts, or in even more bright & lovely
peace.

Your sincere though unknown friend

E. C. Gaskell

While Mrs. Gaskell's letter fails to acquaint us with even the
name of her correspondent, it does reveal almost everything else
about this young woman that is worth knowing. She is probably
in her early twenties and certainly unsophisticated, to judge from
her uncommon communicativeness to an utter stranger. She must
have considered herself in the last extremity to have written so
freely. Such a request as her letter embodied could not have come
as a surprise to Mrs. Gaskell; she was used to having writers call
on her for her services. In their early careers, Matthew Arnold,
John Addington Symonds, D. G. Rossetti (for his sister Christina),
Charles Reade, and authors of less note had come to her for in-
formation or encouragement or for her interest with a publisher.
In this instance it is obvious that the aspiring novelist hoped to
further her cause by backing it up with the story of her domestic
tribulations. Mrs. Gaskell sees through this bit of naïveté, but she treats it kindly.

The young woman is married, congenially, we may assume, since she has expressed the laudable wish to use her pen to eke out her husband’s modest income. She is too poor to employ a “sempstress” or to buy a sewing machine, and she is very clumsy with her needle—a grave handicap for a woman, married or single, in the days before ready-made clothes had become common. Frail in health and with a headpiece not overly strong, we suspect, her delicate constitution has been weakened by too frequent pregnancies. Moreover, she seems to have little sense about organizing her day’s work. And, finally, she has aggravated her troubles by being very, very sorry for herself.

A busy woman writer of today, on facing such a problem, might refer the patient to a general practitioner or to a psychiatrist and feel that she had done her duty by the case, at least in its human aspect. Elizabeth Gaskell, who lived when home doctoring still prevailed and before psychiatry had come into vogue, tackles this difficult case herself, with characteristic courage, good sense, and warm human sympathy. Thorough in all she did, she picks up every detail of this tangle and handles the problem with an efficiency that had developed out of long experience.

She distinguishes clearly between the conflicting demands of home and family on the one hand and the desire to write, on the other, although in discussing them she does not always keep them separate. She flies from one horn of the dilemma to the other and back again, setting down her thoughts just as they pop into her head, without stopping to put them in logical order.

Her simple “I feel very sorry for you” springs not only from genuine concern but from the power to enter imaginatively into the plight of another. Toward anyone who came to her for help, whether a slum-dweller of Manchester or a fledgling novelist with a manuscript of doubtful value, she was never either indifferent or patronizing. With natural grace she at once met the inquirer on his own level. This was the secret of her success in human relations; it was a gift to which her contemporaries paid unfailing tribute.

“I have known well what it is to be both wanting money, and feeling weak in body and entirely disheartened.” As Elizabeth Stevenson she had been wisely reared by a practical aunt, who, while in comfortable circumstances, was also thrifty. As Elizabeth Gaskell she never forgot those domestic lessons taught her by her “second mother,” Aunt Lumb, so that when she became the wife of a young minister starting on a small salary, she knew how to make a little go far.

Here she surmises that what lies at the bottom of this complex problem is ill-health. “My first piece of advice to you would be get strong.” Incidentally, it is not the first unless she means first in importance. Simple remedies are suggested, along with the necessity for good arrangement of the day’s work. “That is a regular piece of head-work and taxes a woman’s powers of organization ...” Elizabeth Gaskell knew whereof she was speaking. And such intimate counsel as soaking and soaking soiled clothes before attempting to wash them, always having at hand a bit of sewing to fill in the odd moments, starting the boiled dinner early enough to allow it to cook slowly—all of this came directly out of her own experience.

Don’t despise physical labor, she continues; even mean tasks may be performed in an aura of poetry. And here, with the one flash of gaiety that lights up these otherwise sober pages, she reminds her correspondent of that delightful episode in The Odyssey where the princess Nausicaa is discovered with her handmaids doing the family wash. We hope that this overworked young housewife was not too far gone in her misery to raise a smile, if only a wan one, when she came to this charming bit of pleasantness.

As the writer warms to her subject, she begins to realize that so far she has no more than touched the surface; so she tries to probe more deeply. She asks the searching question, how much do you have in your power to remedy your situation; have you become too bogged-down in self-pity to take a grip on yourself and pull out? How much, she questions, in the phrase of the believing Christian that she truly was, how much must you submit to as the will of God? In other words, can you distinguish between controllable and uncontrollable factors? This is a point that only the patient can settle.

In taking up the problem of profession versus family duties Mrs. Gaskell comes to a dilemma that has had to be faced by every woman in every age who thinks that she is made for a career but finds herself frustrated by the claims of home. Some women (like Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot) were able to play this double role if not altogether with joy yet without bitterness. But there must have been many who fell between stools.
Even the more successful, to judge from the tenor of their letters, had their difficulties at times. Elizabeth Gaskell, in a mood of mingled vexation and humor, sometimes explodes over her multifarious daily chores. Mistress of a household embracing (by the time of this letter) a very busy, absorbed husband, four vivacious daughters, five servants indoors and at least one man outside to care for garden, chickens, pigs, and cows, she once exclaimed distractedly, “The house comes to me in every dilemma!” Whatever other kind of headwork she undertook, she had had to master that of running a house or go under.

Nowhere does she speak out more fully and emphatically on the exactness of this double role than in her Life of Charlotte Brontë, where she points out that a woman with a real gift for writing must not hide her talent in a napkin; she must use it. At the same time she must not neglect the household duties imposed on her by her sex. These are distinctly separate duties and are, therefore, difficult to be reconciled but not impossible. In her letter she shows plainly how she solved the problem for herself. While your children are little, their claims must come first. If this truth is disheartening, remember that you can’t write what is worth reading unless you absorb yourself in your characters and thus incur the danger of neglecting your children. Remember, too, that the best realistic fiction is written out of the novelist’s experience; you will, if you have the ability, write a far better novel at forty than you ever can now. But if you will write now, she says toward the close of her letter, “…only remember that the very hardest day’s bodily work I have ever done has never produced anything like the intense exhaustion I have felt after writing the ‘best’ parts of my books.”

Such sensible, forcefully put advice ought certainly to have given the aspirant serious pause. “You are not yet ready in any way to write a promising novel,” Elizabeth Gaskell virtually says. Again, and with equal emphasis: “All this letter is I fear disheartening enough: you must remember I have not seen your MSS as yet; & I can only judge of it from such a number of MSS sent me from time to time; and only one of these writers has ever succeeded in getting her writings published, though in several instances I have used my best endeavours on their behalf.”

This should have prepared the young novelist for the bitter truth. Mrs. Gaskell, in a letter to Norton, once listed a staggering number and variety of tasks demanded of her in the course of a single morning: among them, “See a lady about an MS story of hers, and give her disheartening but very good advice.” She has said at the beginning of her letter, “I will give you the best & truest opinion I can.” It is highly unlikely that in this instance she will allow her sympathy, genuine though it is, to blur her critical judgment.

As far as is known, this ends the correspondence; though it may be safely assumed that Mrs. Gaskell read the manuscript and gave it her “best & truest opinion.” It may be almost as safely assumed that the opinion was not flattering. Whether the would-be novelist was sufficiently discouraged by the results of her approach to Mrs. Gaskell to desist from her literary efforts, at least until she was older and more experienced, or whether she took hope from her mentor’s final remarks and eventually produced a masterpiece, must remain a mystery.

It is worthy of comment that, living in an age which made sentimentality not only respectable but fashionable, when even men confessed without apology to shedding tears over a patetic story, Elizabeth Gaskell should have been able to keep her letter wholly free from false or excessive feeling. Absence of sentimentality is, however, characteristic of her letters as distinct from her early stories and novels; this weakness is practically absent from her later and finest work.

It also seems appropriate to reflect on her remark, “I do not think I ever cared for literary fame; nor do I think it is a thing that ought to be cared for. It comes and it goes.” But, she questions whether the pleasure derived from it is worth the sacrifice of other duty. Fortunately, for herself she did not have to make the choice. Since she could, by adroit management, exercise a gift which she clearly and justly felt she possessed and as clearly felt it her duty to exercise, she followed the urge and was conscious of genuine satisfaction in her achievement. She was pleased with the widespread recognition she received, distinctly worried when critics or readers mistook her intentions, and was aware of the value of her manuscripts. But as a conscientious Victorian wife and mother, had she been called upon to face the bare choice, not for one moment would she have entertained the idea of sacrificing her family to follow a literary career. Had she disciplined her artistic conscience with the rigor that controlled her sense of social
responsibility, she might have become an even better writer. Yet it is plain that her talent was vigorous enough to overcome the handicaps set up by a house that came to her in every dilemma. For her work was growing in maturity and conscious artistry up to the moment of her sudden and untimely death.

As a human document this letter is altogether charming. It is a mirror of Elizabeth Gaskell’s nature, faithfully reflecting the rare qualities of her mind and heart. The advice given here is undated, timeless. It leads us into the heart of her personal philosophy, the secret of her conquest of life. She accepted her lot with grace. She had her difficulties, although beside those of many people they may seem minor. All told, her lines fell in pleasant places, but this good fortune never dulled her to the reality of others’ suffering. For she moved in the world of fact. There is missing from this letter only what would have been quite out of place here—the wit, the piquancy that enlivened so much of her conversation and that finds happy expression in her correspondence and her novels.
cerning every type of labor relationship in the United States and Canada and also current information concerning legislation on this subject throughout the world” and also that this information should be made available “not only to the faculty and the students but to business men and labor-union leaders, and any others interested in this subject.” This conception of an information center which would extend its service beyond the confines of the campus has led to a somewhat different type of library program from that found in Pliny Fisk and other special departments in the University Library.

The Section has one of the oldest and most representative collections of industrial relations materials in the country. In general it covers not only the field of labor economics, but also the development of the labor movement, collective bargaining, labor disputes, personnel practices and policies, labor legislation, and social insurance. This broad scope has proved its value as industrial relations has increasingly become an interdisciplinary subject area. The emphasis in collecting material has always been on its potential value for research purposes not only to the academician, but also to the industrial relations practitioner. To quote again from the Section pamphlet previously referred to, “While current books can be purchased, the experience out of which good books are built is usually recorded in memoranda and unpublished documents which soon disappear unless conserved and catalogued in a special library.”

Our greatest strength has been in the accumulation of company documents. We have on file the publications of some six hundred companies and nearly two hundred unions. Almost half of our company files have been built up over a period of twenty-five years or more, and much of the union material covers an equally long period. By means of systematic follow-up with these co-operating organizations, we are able to keep these files current.

The type of material so collected is extremely varied in form and content and reflects the constantly changing developments in our field. Company documents include personnel manuals, union contracts, employment forms and procedures, training programs, employee handbooks and magazines, benefit plans, and information about wages, hours, safety programs, suggestion systems, medical services, and many other activities. From the unions we receive

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convention proceedings, constitutions, journals, research bulletins and reports, educational pamphlets, and political action materials.

This company and union material is the backbone of our collection. Every reasonable effort, however, is made to keep abreast of the rising tide of other material in our field. We have a small and carefully selected collection of books chosen with an eye to acquiring the more significant specialized works, rather than duplicating books in the University Library, although we do duplicate whenever demand seems to require it. We also receive the publications of such organizations as the American Management Association, the National Industrial Conference Board, the Society for the Advancement of Management, the Industrial Relations Research Association, the research reports emanating from our sister sections in some twenty-five other universities, and the more important periodical literature in our field. We collect the statistical data and more ephemeral publications of such agencies as the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Social Security Administration. Through subscriptions to several weekly loose-leaf services, we have access to current information on labor legislation, court decisions, and collective bargaining developments. In addition to these, we receive a considerable amount of material from abroad, most of it from Canada, Great Britain, and France.

Since the terms of the original grant of funds to the Section provided that it should be housed in the University Library building, it has been possible for us to integrate our collection with that of the University Library to our own great advantage. This has been particularly helpful in the increasingly important field of labor legislation. The fact that the University Library has available nearly all of the printed publications of the United States Government, those of many state governments and foreign countries, as well as the publications of the International Labor Organization and other international agencies has made it possible for us to use our limited library budget, staff, and space for the acquisition of types of material too specialized to be of interest to a general university library.

The working materials collected by our own research staff have always been turned over to the Section library as research studies were completed. These confidential files are building up an appraisal of historical developments in our co-operating developments that is of utmost value to the research staff. In recent years the
resources of our library have also been considerably enriched by gifts of research materials, documents, and pamphlets from interested friends.

The chief function of our library staff is to make this mass of material readily available for research and reference use. The card catalogue which we have maintained ever since 1922 serves as a detailed index to the collection. Almost every individual item received is catalogued under at least one of the headings included in our Subject Index, and these headings are cross-indexed by company, union, industry, or geographic area whenever such treatment is appropriate. Analytic entries are made for periodicals and for the contents of the more important sources of information. We also make cards for books in the University Library which are of interest to us and index the more important articles appearing in a number of the periodicals which the University Library receives.

This careful analysis and indexing of the material in the collection enables us to provide reference service to co-operating organizations and any others interested in our field, to prepare bibliographies, and to assist those doing research to gather background information. Reference service is given by mail, by telephone, or in person and often involves the compilation of a selected bibliography or the preparing of a brief memorandum summarizing data or suggesting sources of information. Although most reference work is done for members of company personnel departments, we receive frequent requests for help from union personnel, government officials, members of staffs of other universities, consultants, lawyers, research organizations, and many others.

In addition to the preparation of bibliographies in connection with reference service, the library staff participates in the compilation of the printed bibliographic series published by the Section. These include The Office Library of an Industrial Relations Executive, now in its sixth edition, The Trade Union Library, published in a fifth edition in 1949, and both printed and mimeographed annotated bibliographies on such subjects as social insurance, employment tests, wage incentives, and job evaluation. Our bi-monthly series of Selected References, in the preparation of which the library and research staffs co-operate, are especially designed to help the busy executive sift out the most valuable material on issues which are of current importance.

The resources of our library have always been made freely available to Princeton faculty and students, both graduate and undergraduate. We provide them, in many cases, with the raw material for theses and special research reports or projects. In addition we can often save their time by suggesting to them the most valuable sources of information and by helping them to use our card catalogue most effectively. Since we have been in our present quarters in the Firestone Library, student use of the Section library has increased greatly, and this trend may be expected to continue as interest in industrial relations in fields other than economics and sociology continues to grow.

Emphasis upon the building up of a collection of material for the use of both the theoretician and the practitioner and in making it as readily accessible as possible has characterized the Industrial Relations Section library during its entire history. In a very real sense ours has always been a workshop library. We find ourselves, therefore, in complete harmony with the current emphasis in the University Library on the "laboratory-library" as the most desirable goal.—HAZEL C. BENJAMIN

COLLECTOR'S CHOICE

Books, prints, and memorabilia relating to the Austrian ballerina Fanny Elssler, lent by Allison Delarue '89, were exhibited during January as the third "Collector's Choice" of the current academic year. Fanny Elssler (1810-1854) made her debut in Vienna as a member of the children's ballet at the Kärntner-Thor. A tour of Italy (1824-1827) was followed by engagements in Vienna, Berlin, London, and Paris, where she captivated audiences both by her personal beauty and by her skill in dancing. In 1839 Henry Wilkoff, a Philadelphian living in Paris, persuaded her to accept the offer of a New York theater manager to come to the United States. After two years of great success, with Wilkoff acting as impresario for her entire American tour, Fanny Elssler returned to Europe. In 1851, having amassed a fortune, the celebrated ballerina retired from the stage. Included in the exhibit were a number of books published in New York illustrating the tremendous interest she aroused in this country; Memoir of Fanny Elssler, 1850, and The Letters and Journal of Fanny Elssler, 1845, both by Henry Wilkoff; the anonymous No Star, Else-Star, 1840; J. M. Field's La Déesse, an Elsler-atic Romance, 1841; and the undated comic book Sad Tale of the Courtship of Chevalier Slyfox-Wilko.

Logan Pearsall Smith and his Trivia were featured in the "Collector's Choice" case for February. Smith was born in Millville,
New Jersey, in 1865, the son of Robert Pearall and Hannah Whitall Smith, members of old Philadelphia Quaker families. He was graduated from Haverford College and did postgraduate work at Harvard. After a year in the family bottle manufacturing business, Smith in 1884 left the United States for England, which became his home. In 1893 he was graduated from Balliol College, Oxford, and two years later his first book, *The Youth of Parnassus*, was published. Although Smith was a poet, a biographer, an anthologist, a critic, and a grammarian, he won his celebrity by the minute essays of his *Trivia*. The carlist of them appeared in 1897, and the latest revisions in the edition of *All Trivia* published in 1949, the year before his death. The writing and re-writing of these essays was Smith’s absorbing interest during a great part of his life. Some of the steps in their development were shown in the exhibit in copies he tirelessly corrected for successive editions. These volumes, formerly in Smith’s library, were lent by Howell J. Heaney.

A group of Ernest Dowson and John Galsworthy items from the collection of C. Vincent Armstrong ’44 formed the “Collector’s Choice” for March. The short-lived Dowson (1887-1900), who has been called “the poet symbolic of the eighteen-nineties,” was represented by manuscript drafts in his hand of two poems; by a letter written from France in 1896 to his publisher, Leonard Smithers, in which he mentions his recently published volume of verses: “I am only afraid that the reviewers will think the contents unworthy of such display”; and by copies of his two books of verse, *Verses, London, 1896* (with a cover design by Beardsley), and *Decoration, London, 1899*. Three first editions of Galsworthy were included in the exhibit: George Barr McCutcheon’s copy of *The Man of Property*, London, 1906; *The Country House, London, 1907*, a presentation copy from the publisher; and *The White Monkey*, London [1924], inscribed by the author, *The Man of Property* contains an inscription by McCutcheon concerning his impression of the book: “This is one of the few novels that approach greatness.” McCutcheon evidently informed Galsworthy of this opinion, for inserted in the book is a letter from Galsworthy to McCutcheon thanking him for “the wording of that most heartening first impression.” When Galsworthy addressed the Friends of the Princeton Library on his visit to the United States in 1951, he inscribed this copy for Mr. Armstrong.

“LENT BY PRINCETON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY”

“To lend or not to lend,” is a question that most custodians of rare books and manuscripts must answer with increasing frequency as requests for such materials for exhibition purposes multiply. As far as its own exhibitions are concerned the Princeton Library feels that its primary obligation is to display the University’s own possessions and therefore reserves to borrowing only when it “needs” some specific item to fill a definite gap in the theme that is being illustrated. Conversely, the Library has tried to apply somewhat the same reasoning in the matter of lending to other institutions. Borrowing en bloc has been discouraged, but requests for specific items, where these would seem to fill a definite place in the plan for an exhibition, have in general been granted. Each such request is considered as an individual case, with due regard for the security guarantees offered and the expressed wishes of donors.


Four manuscripts from Princeton were shown in the loan exhibition of “Mediaeval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts” held at the Los Angeles County Museum from November 25, 1953, to January 9, 1954. Described by its organizer, Martin C. Ross, as “the first attempt at an important loan exhibition of Mediaeval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts to be held west of the Mississippi River,” the display included many of the greatest manuscript treasures in American collections. Princeton’s contributions were a French Book of Hours from the Rohan atelier, ca. 1425 [Garrett No. 48]; Gulielmus Durandus, *In Sententias Petri
Lombardi, written in France, 1336 [Garrett No. 85]; an edition of Vergil's works written in Italy about 1450-1460 [Garrett No. 110]; and a Hebrew Ritual from Northern Italy, ca. 1480 [Garrett No. 65]. Other illuminated manuscripts were lent by Princeton to the Albright Art Gallery of Buffalo, New York, for its exhibition of "Art in the Book," held from December 5, 1953, to January 3, 1954. These were Haimo de Halberstadt's Expositio in Isaia, written in England in the twelfth century [Garrett No. 73]; a Flemish Book of Hours, ca. 1470 [Garrett No. 50]; a manuscript of Le Roman de la Rose executed in France in the late fourteenth century [Garrett No. 80]; and Giovanni Marcanova's Antiquitates, written in Italy in 1485 [Garrett No. 159].

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LOPE DE VEGA'S JERUSALEN CONQUISTADA

The Library has acquired as a memorial to the late James Thayer Gerould, Librarian from 1920 to 1938, presented by members of the Library staff who served under him, a book that is at once unusual and fitting in an institution imbued with the traditions of Princeton. This acquisition is a first edition of Jerusalén Conquistada, by the Spanish poet and playwright Lope Félix de Vega Carpio (1562-1635).

The book itself, once housed in the Wentworth Woodhouse library, and bearing the bookplate of Lord Fitzwilliam, is a thick, small quarto, still in its original vellum binding. It is a splendid example of the printer's art, published in Madrid, in 1609, by Juan de la Cuesta, a printer who is best known to us for having first issued the Don Quixote, by Lope de Vega's great contemporary, Cervantes.

Lope (he is universally known by his first name alone in the Spanish-speaking world) defies the imagination. With a disarming touch of arrogance, he regarded himself first and foremost a poet; and, as such, he professed to scorn the popular theater of his day, which, ironically, he created almost single-handed in his spare moments, moments that sufficed to produce a corpus of drama—much of it splendid—that not merely borders on, but fully invades, the realm of the fabulous.

Estimates of the amount of Lope's dramatic production vary considerably. In 1608, at the age of forty-two, Lope claimed authorship of 250 full-length plays. Six years later he speaks of 483; and subsequently the sum mounts in suspiciously round numbers to 800, 900, and finally 1,500. His biographer, Montalván, one year after Lope's death, sets the figure at 1,800 secular plays and over 400 one-act religious dramas, or autos sacramentales. Plays, and even titles, have dispersed like mist in the course of more than three centuries; nevertheless even today we can authenticate some 500 at least by title, and often enough by the text itself. Lope was
careless of his fame as a dramatist, so we can only conjecture about the correct figure: certainly it was over 500; was it 1,000? or even 1,500?

Even the lowest figure would tax the acquisitions section of a library. But Lope was not by preference a playwright; he dedicated his serious efforts to poetry. Sonnets, ballada, eclogues, lyrics of all types flowed from his prodigious pen in an endless torrent, competing for attention with major productions of epic proportions, half a dozen and more, on subjects of every nature, from mock warfare between cats to a saga on Spain’s archenemy, Sir Francis Drake. Then, too, Lope turned his hand to prose mixed with verse, in Arcadian or amorous novels. The total number of lines that he penned—in verse that is not infrequently of exquisite beauty—is literally incalculable.

Among the serious poems of major proportions is the new acquisition, _Jerusalén Conquistada_. In the external sense, this “tragic epic,” as Lope termed it, is derivative. The title is reminiscent of Tasso; the form—twenty cantos written in Italianate octaves—is inspired by Renaissance Italy’s echoes of Greece and Rome. To us today, unlike Lope’s popular theater, the work seems, perhaps, mannered and dated.

But this appearance is deceptive. Behind its formal façade, the poem breathes a spirit that justifies its inclusion among the valuable books of our library, Taking certain liberties with the Muse, Clio, Lope shows Spain joining hands with England, and France too, in the Second Crusade, when he makes Alfonso VIII of Castile become a partner of Richard the Lion-Hearted against Saladin. (Lope confesses to some misgivings on this in his preface!) Actually, of course, Alfonso had his hands more than full in Spain, warring against the Saracen, and he never went to the Holy Land. His endeavors were crowned with success, for he was the first Spanish monarch in half a millennium of warfare to set the tide of the Crescent on a permanent ebb. So, in point of fact, he could be said to have joined hands with Richard of England, who was a fellow fighter against the Infidel, and also, historically, his father-in-law.

It is no small matter that, in 1609, Lope could have recognized the larger historical truth. He was a loyal subject of the Spanish Philip, and had himself taken part in the disaster of the Invincible Armada. He inveighed, albeit chivalrously, against Spain’s English foe, Drake; and he mourned in verse the tragic fate of Mary Stuart, victim of the upstart Tudors, who turned infidels to boot. But he rose above national partisanship to the higher challenge of history in his _Jerusalén Conquistada_. The work is Spanish to the core, yet at the same time it extends its horizons to the bounds of Christendom in its themes and in its art. Our late Librarian, James Thayer Gerould, knew no boundaries to his parish, so the migrant first edition should find a congenial home in Princeton.

—RAYMOND S. WILLIS

THE ROCKEY ANGLING COLLECTION

For several years Kenneth H. Rockey ’16 has been presenting quietly to the Library groups of volumes from his extensive collection of books on fish and fishing. It is with great pleasure that the Library now announces the donation of the Rockey Angling Collection as a memorial to the late Isabelle A. Rockey, who shared her husband’s enthusiasm for books and the outdoors. While Mr. Rockey intended to continue his active personal interest in adding to the collection, he has also set up a generous endowment to perpetuate it. A part of the income will be used for the purchase of additions to the collection and a part to provide staff time for acquisition and maintenance. This last provision, enthusiastically commended by the Librarian, reflects the understanding of library problems which Mr. Rockey has gained through active participation on the Council of the Friends as well as his desire that the Angling Collection place no additional burden upon the Library.

The Rockey Angling Collection is primarily intended for use, and it is the donor’s wish “that the books should constitute an open circulating collection designed for practical use by students.” Although some volumes will of necessity be kept for protection in locked cases, the greater number will be placed on open shelves for browsing and circulation.

Numbering at present about fifteen hundred volumes, the collection appropriately begins chronologically with the most famous of all angling books, Isaak Walton’s _Compleat Angler_. It contains nearly 150 editions of the _Angler_, starting with the fourth, 1668. Many of these copies came from the collection of Arnold Wood, who published the well-known bibliography of _The Compleat Angler_ in 1900. Among them is an elaborately extra-illustrated copy arranged by Wood, the two-volume Pickering edition of
The eighteenth century is represented by the first editions of such popular angling books as Richard Brooke's *The Art of Angling*, *Rock and Sea-Fishing*, London, 1740, and *The Gentleman Angler. Containing Short, Plain and Easy Instructions, whereby the Most Ignorant Beginner may, in a Little Time, be made a Perfect Artist in Angling for Salmon, Salmon-Peel, Trout, Pike, Carp, Perch, Barbel, Tench, Bream, Chub, Greyling, Mullet, Flounders, Roach, Dace, Gudgeon, &c. With Several Observations on Angling, Angle-Rods, and Artificial Flies; How to Chase the Best Hair, and Indian Grass; Of the Proper Times and Seasons for River and Pond-Fishing; When Fish spawn, and what Bait are Chiefly to be used, &c.* To which is Added, *The Anglers' New Song.* By a Gentleman, who has made Angling his Diversion upwards of Twenty-Eight Years, London, 1726.

The main strength of the collection is in the American and English nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature of angling in fresh and salt water. Most popular with student and faculty fishermen will undoubtedly be the many practical treatises on fish, fishing, and tackle and the volumes of angling reminiscences which renew in the reader the contemplative delights of pleasant days on his favorite stream. But there are also the fiction and poetry of angling, scientific works and government publications on fish and fisheries, publications of angling societies, and all of the kinds of books which would be expected to interest a fisherman.

What a Princeton scholar and fisherman, Henry Van Dyke '75, wrote in a preface nearly sixty years ago may be applied to the Rockey Angling Collection: "So if you are what Izaak Walton calls 'a severe, sour-complexioned man,' you would better carry it back to the bookseller, and get your money again, if he will give it to you, and go your way rejoicing after your own melancholy fashion. But if you care for plain pleasures, and informal company, and friendly observations on men and things, (and a few true fish-stories,) then perhaps you may find something here not unworthy your perusal." The Library hopes to find the space and the means to house the Rockey Angling Collection along with its other growing sporting and outdoors collections in an attractive area where those who care for such "friendly observations on men and things" may share their pleasure.—WILLIAM S. DIX

"THE VERITABLE RECORDS OF THE CH'ING DYNASTY"

Hu Shih has presented to the Library, "as a little token of my appreciation of several years of pleasant association which I have enjoyed as Fellow of the University Library and Curator of the Oriental Library," a complete set of the *Tu Ch'ing Li-ch'i ao shih-lu* ("The Veritable Records of the Ch'ing Dynasty"), in 1,280 volumes wrapped in 182 cases. This collection of "Veritable Records" consists of the day-to-day records of the important events, edicts, decrees, and memorials to the throne of the Ch'ing (Manchu) regime from the time of its founder, Nurhaci (1559-1626), down to the end of the dynasty in 1911-1912.

It was the established practice of official Chinese historiography that, when a ruler died, his successor would appoint an imperial Commission of Historiographers to work over the daily records kept at the court (the Ch'i K'ai chü) and to edit the "veritable records" of the deceased monarch's reign. Some of the records, therefore, in the collection presented by Dr. Hu were compiled and copied in the seventeenth century, some in the eighteenth, and the rest in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two supplements have been added to the "Veritable Records": a "Record of the Origins of the Manchus," tracing the tribal beginnings to earliest times; and a "Record of the Important Events and Edicts of the Reign of Hsuan-tung (1669-1722)."

The whole set was photographically reproduced from the manuscript copy originally deposited at the Imperial Palace in Mukden. The photographing and printing were authorized by the "Foreign Office" of the puppet regime of "Manchukuo" (which was set up by the Japanese in 1932 and lasted until 1945) during the early years of that regime.

THE ARNOLD COLLECTION OF RUSSIAN STAMPS

The Russian postage stamp collection assembled by the late Abraham S. Arnold, Curator of the Philatelic Collection of the Princeton University Library from November, 1949, until his death in April, 1951, has been presented to the Library in his memory by his son, James R. Arnold of the Class of 1943. The collection consists of approximately eleven thousand stamps and is mounted in twelve albums.
Rumania has been using postage stamps since 1858. Until 1869 Rumanian stamps were used for domestic purposes only. All foreign mail had to pass through the Imperial Austrian Postal Agency at Jassy or Galatz and, naturally, Austrian stamps had to be used. In 1869 Rumania joined the Universal Postal Union and thenceforth used her own stamps on letters and packages going abroad.

Because of the scarcity of the stamps issued from 1858 to 1865 ("Bull Heads"), it is not surprising that Mr. Arnold's collection should be incomplete for that early period; the collection, however, may be considered complete from 1865 to 1940. Mr. Arnold showed exceptional interest in the stamps issued between 1865 and 1899. These issues in his albums display a fine range of shades and types, which are far more numerous than those listed in Scott's or Gibbons' catalogues. For the commemorative stamps issued since 1903 Mr. Arnold gave short descriptions, stating the number of stamps printed, the number of stamps sold, and the number of the remainders.

Carefully and painstakingly assembled, the Arnold Rumanian stamps form an important addition to the Library's Philatelic Collection and a fitting memorial to the collection's first curator.

—MARTIN H. FISHER

THE MANUSCRIPT OF WILKIE COLLINS' POOR MISS FINCH

The manuscript of Wilkie Collins' novel Poor Miss Finch has been given to the Parrish Collection by Robert H. Taylor '30. Poor Miss Finch first appeared as a serial in Cassell's Magazine (October, 1871-March, 1872) and was first published in book form, by Richard Bentley and Son, as a three-decker in January, 1872, in an edition of two thousand copies. The manuscript is written on 308 leaves entirely in the hand of the author and is extensively corrected by him throughout.

Poor Miss Finch is the story of the rivalry of identical twin brothers for the love of a blind girl. If it is not Collins at his best, it is nevertheless a skillfully constructed novel of suspense, containing some of the author's most memorable characters and unhindered by any special social mission. "As for the object which I have had in view in writing this story," states Collins in the dedication, "it is I hope plain enough to speak for itself. I subscribe to the article of belief which declares, that the conditions of human happiness are independent of bodily affliction, and that it is even possible for bodily affliction itself to take its place among the ingredients of happiness. These are the views which 'Poor Miss Finch' is intended to advocate—and this is the impression which I hope to leave on the mind of the reader when the book is closed."
Contributions totaling $1,465.00 have been received from friends. Carl Otto v. Kienbusch '06 enabled the Library to acquire a portion of the correspondence of the late Samuel Putnam, author, critic, and translator (described in the previous issue of the Chronicle, pp. 168-169). Gilbert S. McClintock '08 made a donation to the book fund of the Marquand Library. In addition to these contributions, the Library has received from Kenneth H. Rockey '16 a generous endowment for the enlargement and maintenance of the Rockey Angling Collection (a description of which is included in “New & Notable”).

Gifts

Sinclair Hamilton '06 presented fourteen additional items to the Hamilton Collection. Included in Mr. Hamilton's gift were Nathaniel Ames, An Astronomical Diary, or, an Almanack For the Year of our Lord Christ 1766, Boston [1799], the William Loring Andrews copy; Edes & Gill's North-American Almanack, and Massachusetts Register, For the Year 1770, Boston, 1770, containing Paul Revere's woodcut entitled "A Prospective View of the Town of Boston"; Thomas Dillworth's A New Guide to the English Tongue, Philadelphia, 1772, with woodcuts attributed to Henry Dawkins; and The Boy's Book of Sports, New Haven, 1838, with "the first real American picture of baseball." Alfred C. Howell gave the two-volume Wild Flowers of Western Pennsylvania and the Upper Ohio Basin, Pittsburgh, 1958. From Edward Naumberg, Jr. '24 came eighteen volumes, mainly first editions of nineteenth-century American writers. From J. Harlin O'Connell '14 the Library received a group of John Davidson and Arthur Symons items (which will be described in the next issue of the Chronicle). Bernhard K. Schaefer '20 gave a letter written by George Washington to George Walton, July 13, 1789.

Gifts were received also from the following friends: Mrs. Jules Aresty, Gordon A. Block, Jr. '36, Archibald A. Gulick '97, Alfred C. Howell, Howard L. Hughes '10, Dewitt C. Jones, Jr. '13, William A. B. Paul '18, Carl H. Pforzheimer, Henry L. Savage '15, Bernhard K. Schaefer '20, Edward L. Shen '16, and Hugh Stott Taylor.
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