

has lavished upon the first and which will undoubtedly make this book a most valuable asset for anyone concerned with Renaissance studies.

Michelangelo, III: The Medici Chapel. By Charles de Tolnay. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1948. 280 p., 330 ill. \$20.00.

OBERLIN COLLEGE

Letter from Italy

BY D. J. GORDON

THE International Congress on Humanist Studies (ed. note: cf. RN II, 48) which in 1948 was held in Paris took place in Rome and Florence in 1949. The meetings in Florence were devoted to 'The Formation of the Critical Spirit in Humanism.' The foreign delegates would certainly wish to express their gratitude to those who entertained them so courteously. To visit Camaldoli, for instance, in its enchanting setting, where we enjoyed the generous hospitality of the Order and heard the concluding papers of the conference—one should mention that by the Abbé Marcel on 'Socrates as the patron saint of humanism' for its special appropriateness—in the hall of the *Disputationes Camaldolenses* must have been for most of the delegates an experience to be remembered.

The meetings of the conference were held in the rooms of the *Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul rinascimento* in Palazzo Strozzi. This institute, whose activities had lapsed but which will be remembered for its pre-war activities, has recently been reconstituted by the Ministry of Public Instruction. Its Director is Professor Mario Salmi, Professor of the History of Art in the University of Rome, and chairman of the *Consiglio Superiore delle Belle Arti*. Professor Salmi sends this message:

'This institute, which is the only one in Italy specifically concerned with renaissance studies, is now faced with urgent problems; its collections must be reassembled, means must be found for extending them, ways must be sought to re-establish relationships with foreign scholars and organizations so that the institute may become an effective centre of study.

These are the first projects which the Council of the Institute has in hand. The review "La Rinascita" which was published under the editorship of Giovanni Papini from 1938-1943, is to reappear, either in its old shape or in the shape of occasional issues. Publications on the Greek humanists and publications on art history are to be started again. (Seventeen volumes in all had already appeared under the auspices of the Central Committee and the Committee for Lombardy). Confer-

ences, both Italian and international, will be held on the Renaissance. Preparations are being made for the commemoration of Columbus. At the end of May 1950 an international conference is to be held on "Il Vasari la Storiografia e la Critica d'Arte nel Cinquecento." The Committee of the institute will be most happy to collaborate with any foreign scholars and organizations who are interested.⁷

Also held in Florence were the Medici celebrations. Professor Raghianti had prepared an exhibition on the theme 'Lorenzo il Magnifico e le Arti' (catalogue published by *Studio Italiano di Storia dell'Arte*). The exhibition was arranged as a series of rooms devoted to individual artists. There were many beautiful objects—this, indeed, could hardly be avoided—and many little-known ones. There was perhaps too great reliance on conjectural attribution, for example in the room given to Antonio Pollaiuolo. The most general criticism, however, that was heard is that it was difficult to see where in fact Lorenzo himself came in. This is signally apparent in the catalogue. The exhibition probably fell between two stools. It was neither simply an exhibition of the masterpieces of Florentine art in the second half of the fifteenth century, nor was it based on a serious historical attempt to reconstruct Lorenzo's relations with the artists of his time. To get close to the Medici themselves one went to the Laurentian Library, where there was an exhibition of the library of Lorenzo, that is the collection of the Medici family as it was in the time of Lorenzo himself. This superb exhibition it would be difficult to overpraise. (Ed. note: cf. F. Gilbert's comments RN II, 49.) Arranged and catalogued with scrupulous care, it was itself a historical document. There were of course the single manuscripts to be admired, like Filelfo's great *Homer*, but even more fascinating were the general bearings of the exhibition. To see, for example, the *Lucretius* written by Niccoli, or the letters of Cicero in the hand of Poggio, or the manuscripts which passed from Salutati's library to Cosimo's, or the *Ovid* bought by the young Cosimo himself, is to come nearer to an appreciation of the closeness and continuity of the humanist tradition in fifteenth century Florence. The richness of this visual survey of what humanism was for the Medici and their scholars (the inventories and records of the Medici libraries are also included) needs no emphasizing. But the sensation given of coming close to the personalities of the men who made and handled these books is not an illusion and is part too of the process of historical study. As is the realization acutely present here, as in every field of the arts in Florence in the period, that to pass from Cosimo to Lorenzo is to pass into a new age: in this case to pass from the grave simplicity of the manuscripts written for Cosimo to the splendours of ultramarine and gold of those prepared for Lorenzo (the

sumptuousness of the Ficino manuscript done for Lorenzo is unexpected and notable). It is good to be able to say that this exhibition will be given again in Florence in the summer of 1950.

A second instalment of Mr. Gordon's letter, dealing with Palladio and Bellini exhibits will follow in the Summer issue.

Library News

ACQUISITIONS

DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The library of the late Guido Mazzoni, of the University of Florence, numbering about 23,000 books, is now in process of being sorted and arranged. It was acquired for the Library by Allan H. Gilbert, who describes it in *Library Notes . . . for The Friends of Duke University Library*, No. 23 (January 1950), pp. 3-7. As an editor of Dante, Tasso and Macchiavelli, Guido Mazzoni amassed exceedingly rare reprints and pertinent philological research up to the time of his death in 1943.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Houghton Library. The printed *Report of Accessions for the Year 1948-49* lists Renaissance MSS and books on pp. 1-12, among them

Missale Carthusiense [late 15th century Spanish MS, with brilliant colors, Pomponius Mela. *Cosmographia*. Valencia, 1470. 1st ed.

— *Cosmographia*. Valencia, 1482. 5th ed.

Solinus. *Polyhistor*. Venice, N. Jenson, 1473.

Ars numerandi. Cologne, c. 1482. A very large copy.

Honorius Augustodunensis. *Lucidarius* [German] Strasburg, Knoblochtzer, c. 1481.

Orosius. [French] [Paris, for Verard, 1491] ex coll. Fairfax Murray.

Seneca. [French] [Paris, for Verard, 1491] ex coll. Fairfax Murray.

Tuppo. *Aesop*. Naples, 1485. ex coll. Dyson-Perrins.

Til Eulenspiegel. Paris, 1532. 1st French ed.

Rabelais. *Les oeuvres*. Lyons, 1564. With the folding woodcut of the jug which has not been traced in this edition.

Michael Servetus. *De Trinitatis erroribus*. Hagenau, 1531. ex coll. Hoym.

Martin Luther. *An den Christlichen adel Deutscher nation*, 1520. 1st ed.

Gaspar Heltai. *Chronica ex Magyarok-nac delgairol*. Colosuarot, 1575. ex coll. Crawford-Landau.

Hieronymus Natalis. *Anotationes*. Antwerp, 1595. ex coll. Colbert-Hoym-La Vallière-Beckford.

Joachim Schiller. *De peste Britannica commentariolus*. Basle, 1531. ex coll. Maskell.

George Gascoigne. *A hundredth sundrie flowres*. [1573] ex coll. Steevens-Hosmer-Griswold-Purdy-W. A. White.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARY

Antonio Pagani. *Il Discorso Universale della Sacra Legge Canonica*. Venice, B. Zaltieri, 1570.

I Dieci Circoli dell'Imperio. Venice, 1558.

Rechte der Stadt Strassburg. MS c. 1520. Galasso Alghisi. *Delle fortificazioni*.

Venice, 1570.

PIERPONT MORGAN LIBRARY

A page from Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae*, Paris, 1494, with a note by Curt F. Bühler, is reproduced on page 2 of this issue.