

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LOAN EXHIBITION OF INCUNABULA

from the

VOLLBEHR COLLECTION

[Books printed before 1501 A. D.]

and

Manuscripts of the Fifteenth Century

Selected from the Private Library of
DR. OTTO H. F. VOLLBEHR
Berlin, Germany

SPRING, 1928

CATALOG

1. Jen Hsiao. Huang Hou Ch'uan Shan Shu. (Chinese Book of Exhortation to Virtue, compiled by command of the Empress Jen Hsiao of the Ming Dynasty with a preface by herself, sealed with her great imperial signet. Earliest block book of the Ming period. The Chinese date, printed after the Empress' preface, corresponds to March 9, 1405 of our Christian reckoning. On silk paper. The paper bindings of these three volumes are modern. No other specimen of this Chinese classic in any European or American library. Of great interest to bibliophiles because it it precedes the earliest printed European block books by fully a generation.)
2. Eyb, Albertus de. Ob einem Mann sei zu nehmen ein Weib oder nidt. Nuremberg, A. Koberger, about 1472. (An amusing early German book on the advantages and disadvantages of matrimony.) Very rare.
3. Arnold, of Villa Nova. De virtutibus herbarum. Venice, S. Bevilacqua, 1499. *Many wood cuts.*
4. Richental, Ulrich. Concilien Buch zu Constanz. Augsburg, A. Sorg, 1483. *Many wood cuts.*
5. Hora Beatae Virginis Mariae ad usum Romanum. France, about 1430. A splendidly illuminated French manuscript on vellum.
6. Horae Beatae Virginis Mariae, ad usum Romanum. Paris, P. Pigouchet, 1498. *Printed on vellum.*
7. Riederer, Friedrich. Spiegel der wahren Rhetorik. Freiburg im Breisgau, F. Riederer, 1493. (*First edition. Earliest book printed by its own author.*)
8. Bartholomaeus Anglicus. Le propriétaire des choses. Lyons, M. Huss, 1491. *Wood cuts. First edition in French.*
9. Berry, Richardus de. Philobiblon sive amore librorum Cologne, 1473. First edition of the famous Philobiblion, the earliest work on book collecting and the love of books by the most celebrated book collector of the fifteenth century, an Englishman.
10. Augustine, Saint. De civitate Dei. Rome, Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1468.
11. Mela, Pomponius. De situ orbis. Venice, E. Ratdolt, 1482. *With map of the world.*
12. Brant, Sebastianus. Stultifera Navis (Ship of Fools). Basle, Johannes Bergmann de Olpe, 1497. *With 117 large and curious wood cuts.*
13. Aristotle. Les livres de Politique. Paris, A. Verard, 1489. *First edition in French.*
14. Rolewinck, Werner. Fasciculus temporum. Rougemont, H. Wuerzburg, 1481. *Wood cuts.*
15. Greek Anthology, (in the original Greek). Florence, L. de Alopa, 1494. *Printed on vellum. First edition.*
16. Another copy of the same edition printed on paper.
17. Bonaventura, Saint. Vita Christi. Venice, M. de Monteferrato, 1497.
18. Botho, Conrad. Chronica der Sachsen. Mainz, P. Schoeffer, 1492. *Many wood cuts.*

19. Cicero. De officiis et Paradoxa. Mainz, Fust and Schoeffer, 1466.
The first edition printed on vellum.
20. Homer. Iliad and Odyssey, (in Greek). Florence, B. de Libri.
First edition.
21. Jerome, Saint. Epistolae et tractatus. Mainz, P. Schoeffer, 1470.
The only known copy printed on vellum.
22. Bergomensis on Ladies of his Time. Ferrara by Laurentius de Rubeis, 1497. One of the first works with portraits of contemporaneous women.
23. Officium Mortuorum. (Duodecimo.) With miniature paintings by Attavante degli Attavanti, about 1490 (done for Ippolita Sforza, Queen of Naples.) *Manuscript on vellum done by Antonio Sinibaldi.*
24. Refranes Glosados. Burgos, Fadrique of Basel, about 1490. *The only known copy.*
25. Publicius. Ars oratoria. Augsburg, E. Ratdolt, 1490.
26. Gerson, Johannes. De regulis mandatorum. Mallorca, N. Calafat, 20 June 1485. *Only two other copies known.*
27. Thomas à Kempis. Imitatio Christi. Ulm, J. Zainer, 1487. Gerard, of Zutphens. De spiritualibus ascensionibus. Basel, J. Amorbach, 1488.
28. Peter, of Abaño. Expositio Problematum Aristotelis. Venice, J. Herbort, 1482.
29. Jerome, Saint. Vitas patrum, (in English). Westminster, Wynkyn de Worde, about 1495. *Many wood cuts.*
30. Molitor, Ulrich. De laniis et phytonicis mulieribus. Strassburg, J. Pruss, 1489. *Wood cuts. First edition of this earliest book on witchcraft.*
31. Silvius Italicus. Punica. Venice, B. de Tortis, 6 May 1483. *From the library of the uncle of Amerigo Vespucci.*
32. Geistliche Auslegung des Lebens Jesu Christi. Ulm, J. Zainer, about 1485. *Many wood cuts.*
33. Fridolin, Stephan. Schatzbehälter. Nuremberg, A. Koberger, 1491. *Many wood cuts.*
34. Pliny. Historia Naturale, (in Italian). Venice, N. Jenson, 1476. *Famous for its beautiful type.*
35. Musurus, Marcus. Etymologicum magnum, (in Greek). Venice, Z. Callierges, 1499.
36. Sallust. Opera. Venice, John of Cologne, and J. Manthen, 1474. *From the library of the Duke of Roßburghe.*
37. Celsus, Cornelius. De medicina. Florence, N. Laurentius, 1478. *First edition.*
38. Filelfo, Francesco. Saturae. Milan, C. Valdarfer, 1476. *First edition.*
39. Breydenbach, Bernhard von. Peregrinationes ad Terras Sanctas. (Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.) Mainz, E. Reuwich, 1486. *First edition. Many wood cuts. Earliest work illustrated by its own printer.*
40. Herodotus. Historiae, (in Latin). Rome, A. Pannartz, 1475.
41. Horae Beatae Virginis Mariae, (in Greek). Venice, Aldus, 1497.
42. Lucan. Pharsalia. Venice, Unidentified printer, about 1470.
43. Gaforius. Theoria musicae. Milan, P. Mantegatiis, 1492. (With first printed picture of a musician.) *Wood cuts.*
44. Theramo, Jacobus de. Belial. Strassburg, H. Knoblochtzter, 1483. *Many wood cuts.*
45. Crescentiis, Petrus de. Della agricultura. Vicenza, L. Achates, 1490.
46. Perottus, Nicolaus. Grammatica. Paris, J. Trepperel, 1497.

47. Wimpeling, Johannes. *Super raptu ducissae Britannicae*. Lu-
beck, S. Arndes, 1492. (A rhapsody on the elopement of a
duchess of Brettany.)
48. *Constitutiones*. Barcelona, P. Posa, 1481. *The only copy known*.
49. *Flos sanctorum*. Santiago, J. de Bobadilla, about 1480.
50. Antonius. *Summa*. Saragossa, P. Hurus, 1497. *Only one other
copy known*.
51. Guerinio il Meschino, (in Italian). Venice, N. Girardengis, 1482.
Only one other copy known and that is imperfect.
52. Cisneros, Garcia de. *Exercitatorium vitae spiritualis*. Montserrat,
J. Luschner, 1500.
53. Aesop, *Life and Fables*, (in Latin). Basel, M. Furter, 1490. *Many
wood cuts*.
54. *Horae Beatae Virginis Mariae ad usum Romanum*. Paris, J. Phi-
lippe, 20 Dec. 1497. *Printed on vellum*.
55. *Diurnale Moguntinum*. Marienthal, Fratres vitae communis, 1478.
(An ancient chronicle of Mainz.)
56. Valera, Diego de. *Chronica de España*. Saragossa, P. Hurus, 24
Sept. 1493. *Many wood cuts*.
57. Livy. *Historiae Romanae decades*. Rome, U. Gall, 1470.
58. *Missale ad usum Ordinis Praedicatorum*. Venice, A. Torresanus,
30 Dec. 1496. *Special edition of one copy on vellum presented to
a Pope before publication of the missal on paper*.
59. Petrarca, Francesco. *Le vite de pontefici*. Florence, Apud. S. Ja-
cobum, 1478. (*First edition of Petrarch's Lives of the Popes.*)
60. *Psalter*, (in Greek). Venice, Aldus, 1497.
61. Savonarola, Girolamo. *Del bene morire*. Florence, B. de Libri,
1496. (Famous sermon by the martyred Florentine reformer,
who was burned at the stake.)
62. *Deutscher Kalender*. Augsburg, J. Schuessler, 1472.
63. Savonarola, Girolamo. *Meditatio*. By an unidentified Italian print-
er, about 1500. (Sermon by the martyred reformer.)
64. Breydenbach, Bernhard von. *Reise ins Heilige Land*. Augsburg,
A. Sorg, 1488. *Many wood cuts*.
65. *Dialogus creaturarum moralisatus*. Antwerp, G. Leeu, 1486. *Many
wood cuts*.
66. Lombard, Peter. *Sententiae*. Nuremberg, A. Koberger, 1481.
67. Eschenbach, Wolfram von. *Parsival*. Strassburg, J. Mentelin, 1477.
First edition. (From this old German epic Richard Wagner got
the story for his opera "Parsival".)
68. Scharffenberg, Alfred von. *Tyturrell*. Strassburg, J. Mentelin, 1477.
First edition. (From this old German epic Richard Wagner got
the story for his "Lohengrin".)
69. Aesop. *Fables*, (in Latin and Italian). Brescia, B. de Boninis,
7 Mar. 1487. *Many wood cuts*.
70. Aquinas, Thomas. *De potentia Dei*. Cologne, J. Koelhoff, about
1475.
Bound with it:
Schussenried, Werner von. *Modus legendi abbreviaturas*. Nurem-
berg, F. Creusner, 1476.
71. Ptolemy, Claudius. *Cosmographia*, (in Latin). Rome, P. de Turre,
1490. *With copperplate maps*.
72. *Ein Buch der Kunst ...* (An early German art book.) Augsburg,
J. Baemler, 1477. *Many wood cuts*.
73. *Defensorium inviolatae virginitatis Mariae*. Basel, L. Isenhut,
about 1490. *Many wood cuts*.

74. Jerome, Saint. *Epistolae*. 2 vols. Rome, S. Riessinger, about 1467-68. *Held to be the first book printed in Rome.*
75. Higden, Ralph. *Polycronicon*, (in English). Westminster, Wynkyn de Worde, 1495.
76. Capua, Johannes de. *Hortus sanitatis*. 23 June 1491. *Many wood cuts*. Printed in Mainz.
77. Mexia, Alfonso. *Nobilario*. Seville, Brun and Gentile, 1492. *Many wood cuts*.
78. Passau, Otto von. *Die vierundzwanzig Alten*. Augsburg, A. Sorg, 1480. *Many wood cuts*.
79. Another edition of that work. Strassburg, J. Schott, 1500.
80. Ptolemy, Claudius. *Cosmographia*, (in Latin). Ulm, L. Holle, 1482. *With wood cut maps*.
81. *Scriptores astronomici veteres*. Venice, Aldus, 1499. *With diagrams. Two volumes*.
82. Caesar, C. Julius. *Opera*. Milan, A. Zarotus, 10 Feb. 1477. First edition in Latin from the library of Pico della Mirandola, the great Renaissance scholar, with marginal notes in the hand of Melanchthon, collaborator with Martin Luther.
83. Livy. *Historiae Romanae decas prima*. Rome, Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1469. *First edition*.
84. Apuleius. *Opera*. Rome, Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1469. *First edition*.
85. *Reformation der Stadt Nuremberg*. Nuremberg, A. Koberger, 1484.
86. Bertholdus. *Horologium devotionis*. Cologne, U. Zell, about 1470. *Many wood cuts*.
Bound with it:
Gerardus de Zutphens. *De spiritualibus ascensionibus*. Cologne, U. Zell, about 1470.
87. Dante. *Divina comedia*. Brescia, B. de Boninis, 31 May 1487. *Many wood cuts from engravings by Botticelli*.
88. Ludolphus de Saxonia. *T'boeck van der leven ons heeren Jhesu Christi*. Antwerp, G. Leeu, 1487. *Many wood cuts*.
89. Orpheus. *Argonautica et Hymnae*. Florence, B. de Libri, 1500. *First edition*.
90. *Speculum Salvationis*, (in Latin and German). Augsburg, G. Zainer, 1473. *Many wood cuts*.
91. Mila, Luis de. *Indulgentia*, (in Catalan language). Lerida, H. Botel, 1498. *Broadside. The only copy known*.
92. Albertus Magnus. *De secretis mulierum*. Augsburg, J. Schonsperger, 1497.
93. *Dialogus creaturarum moralisatus*. Gouda, G. Leeu, 1482. *Many wood cuts*.
94. Petrarch, Francesco. *De vita solitaria*. Strassburg, A. Rusch, 1473. *First edition*.
95. *Songe du Vergier*. Paris, Le Petit Laurens, 1500. *Wood cuts*.
96. Boccaccio, Giovanni. *Les nobles dames*. Paris, A. Verard, 1493. *First edition in French*.
97. Brunswig. *Chirurgia*, (in German). Augsburg, H. Schonsperger, 1497.
98. Angelus, Joannes. *Astrolabium*. Venice, J. de Spira, 1494. *Many wood cuts*.
99. Platina, Bartholomaeus. *De honesta voluptate et valetudine et arte coquinaria libri decem*. Venice, Laurentius de Aquila and Sybillius UMBER, 1475. (*First edition with date, of the famous Renaissance cookery and dietetic work.*)

100. Apicius, Coelius. *De re coquinaria*. Venice, B. de Vitalibus, 1497. *One of the first printed cook books.*
101. Jerome and Eusebius, Saints. *Epistolae*. Rome, Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1468. *From the library of William Morris.*
102. Gregory IX, Pope. *Decretales*. Venice, B. Stagninus, 1486. Monastic binding, Saracenic style.
103. Paulus de Sancta Maria. *Scrutinium Scripturarum*. Strassburg, J. Mentelin, 1470. *Bound in tanned human skin.* (An anti-semitic tract by a Jew converted to Christianity.)
104. Voragine, Jacobus de. *Passionael*, (in Dutch). Zwolle, Pieter van Os, 1490. *Wood cuts.*
105. Lucena, Juan de. *Vita beata*. Burgos, J. de Burgos, 1499. *Bound with it:*
Villena, Henriques. *Los doze trabajos de Ercules*. Burgos, J. de Burgos, 1499. (The Labors of Hercules, in old Spanish.)
106. *Evangelia et Epistolae*, (in German). Augsburg, H. Schobsser, 1487.
107. Augustine, Saint. *De arte praedicandi*. Mainz, J. Fust, 1459. *First edition.*
108. *Chiromantia*. Padua, M. Cerdonis, 1484. *Many wood cuts. Palmistry.*
109. Bertholdus. *Horologium devotionis*. Basel, J. de Amorbach, 1489. *Many wood cuts.*
110. Honiger, Jacob. *Kalender fuer Erfurt*. Nuremberg, K. Hochfeder, 1494. *Broadside.*
111. *Prophetiae Posteriores*, (in Hebrew). Soncino, 1485.
112. *Contrasto dell'acqua e del vino*. Florence, unidentified printer, about 1491. *The only copy known.* (Earliest temperance tract ever printed.)
113. *Colloquium peccatoris et Crucifixi*. (Colloquy between the Saviour and the Sinner on the Cross). Paris, G. Marchand, 1494.
114. Aesop. *Fabulae moralisatae*. Venice, M. de Bonellis, 1491. *Many wood cuts.*
115. Barberiis, Philippus de. *Opuscula*. Rome, J. P. de Lignamine, 1481. *Many wood cuts.*
116. *Biblia Latina*. (Holy Scriptures in Latin.) Johannes Gutenberg. Mainz, 1450-55. A modern reprint of the celebrated Gutenberg Bible done by the Fischer Verlag of Berlin. The original Gutenberg Bible in the Vollbehr Collection in Berlin, recently acquired from the Benedictine Monastery in Carinthia, is one of the only three complete copies on vellum known to exist—the other two being in the British Museum in London and in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Gutenberg spent five years and all his fortune in producing this famous Bible, the earliest work printed in Europe from movable type.

GIMBEL BROTHERS

33RD STREET AND BROADWAY, NEW YORK

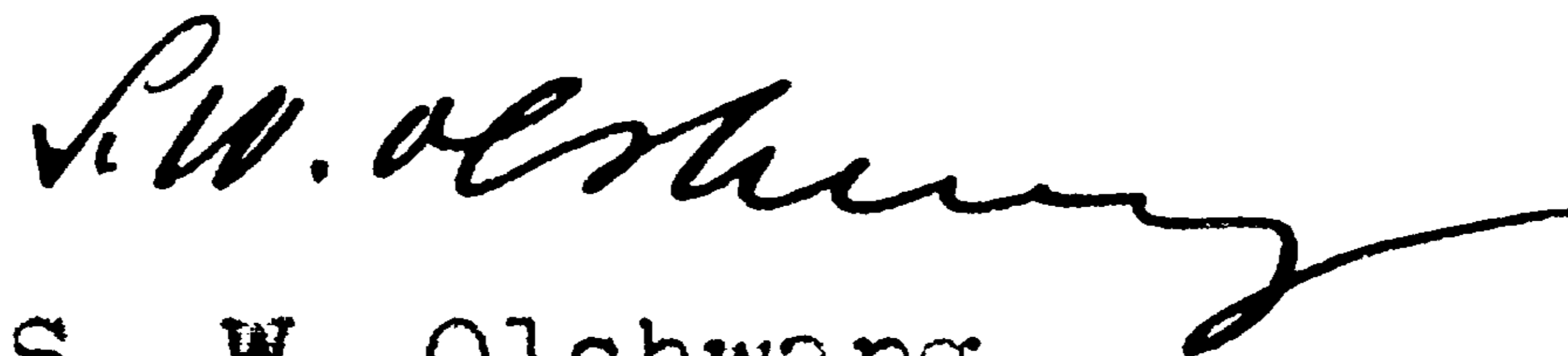
PENNSYLVANIA 6-5100

November 22, 1941

My dear Mr. Posner:

With reference to my letter of November 18, you are being sent under separate cover, a photostatic copy of the page in the "GESAMTKATALOG", referring to the item we sent you on the same day.

Respectfully yours,



S. W. Olshwang
Hearst and Mackay
Art Collections
At Gimbel Brothers

SWO:AH

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

THE VOLLBEHR COLLECTION OF INCUNABULA

TO meet the many inquiries that continue to reach us regarding the significance of the Vollbehr Collection of fifteenth century books, it has seemed worth while to prepare the following statement:

First, as to fifteenth century books in general: In the course of the first half century after the invention of printing, 1450-1500, the world's stock of knowledge was being transferred to printed books, which continue to form the principal group of original source material indispensable to the scholar and scientist. These books, incunabula, as they are called, embody the sum total of the learning made available to man in that significant period in which modern scholarship took its rise. "No other era has provided anything comparable ... in impressiveness, of equal power to grip the imagination of future ages."

The total number of incunabula that have survived the centuries since 1501 is about 30,000 works (including different editions of the same work). The total number of copies of these 30,000 works now extant is not accurately known, but there are estimated to be nearly 500,000, all told, in all the libraries and private collections of the world. By far the greater number are still in Europe, where they originated. The State Library at Munich is understood to have the largest collection, say 16,000 volumes (excluding duplicates), the British Museum in London 13,000, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris about 10,000; the State Library in

Berlin, the Vatican Library, the Bodleian at Oxford, perhaps 5,000 or 6,000 each.

In North America, a "Census of Fifteenth Century Books owned in America", published in 1919 by the Bibliographical Society of America, after years of research, disclosed only 6,640 titles (represented in 13,200 copies) in the hands of 169 public libraries and 246 private collectors. The past ten years have no doubt added to the American holdings, but it is probable that the present American total is still surpassed by a single European collection—the State Library at Munich. Europe is rightly jealous of such possessions. There they were created and there they will remain, except as changes of private fortune necessitate the sacrifice. On account of their rarity, the building up of a new collection presenting a cross-section of the knowledge, culture and civilization existing in the fifteenth century is a matter of long years of effort, even when unlimited means are available. This is the reason why American collections are still so limited. American investigators of fifteenth century learning must still cross the Atlantic for direct contact with three-fourths of their source material.

The Vollbehr Collection, 4,500 works, is 50 per cent larger than any single American collection. It is equal in number to one-third of all the incunabula listed by the American "Census" of 1919. Nearly forty per cent of its titles are apparently not represented in America by a single copy.

Outstanding features of the collection, which has been formed with great skill and knowledge, are—

(1) The 42-line Bible. Gutenberg, 1450-1455.

A copy printed on vellum. Only two other perfect copies are known. No other printed book approaches it in interest and value; it is literally priceless. Of the Gutenberg Bible, A. Edward Newton in his "Greatest Book in the World"

(1925) says: "If we can imagine, in the far-off future, a Gutenberg Bible coming up for sale, some wise rich man or richly endowed museum might gladly pay a million dollars for it." Dr. Rosenbach, in his "Books and Bidders", says of it: "More than \$1,000,000 will some day be a reasonable price for it."

(2) Representation of the great majority of 15th century presses, usually by fine, often by extraordinarily fresh and handsome copies, illuminated, in well preserved original, or more recent art bindings. (The Thacher Collection now in the Library of Congress, assembled with the sole "aim of bringing together examples of as many fifteenth century presses as possible", includes about 520 presses. Vollbehr has 625.)

(3) Unique copies of works or editions not elsewhere recorded or described.

(4) Strong representation of the classical and scientific literature in all branches of knowledge, of the works intrinsically important and valuable for their content. Mr. George Parker Winship, of the Harvard Library, says of the Vollbehr Collection:

"This collection is representative, to an amazing degree, of every sort of publication which came from the fifteenth century presses. It would have taken no great skill, nor a noteworthy amount of money before the Great War, to gather 4,000 different incunabula. Since the war, one American gentleman has exceeded that number. But to make a collection large enough to include a due proportion of all sorts of books, and keep it thoroughly representative of half a dozen racial stocks and of a crowded half century, must have taken skill, persistence, and wide connections.

"It is a curious commentary upon the way libraries are formed, that no other collection of incunabula has been made, that I am aware of, comparable to this one in extent, and with this especial purpose."

In the Library of Congress a fair beginning has already been made. To the slow accretions of a century (about 600 volumes) the Thacher bequest in 1927 added 925 specimens, putting the Library in the third place among American collections. (The Huntington collection in California is first with its 3,000 volumes.) The addition of the 4,500 Vollbehr volumes would quadruple the collection and place it in the group of eight or ten foremost libraries of the world in this particular, comparable to the others in distinction as well as extent, and in some respects surpassing some of them.

Having in mind the steady advances of the past fifteen years in the prices of rare books, comparing the prices actually realized for other copies of many of the principal rarities in this collection, and considering the years of effort that would be required to assemble another collection like this, if indeed it could ever again be duplicated, it is quite safe to say that the price now asked for the collection is moderate.

A collection of such outstanding importance should not be allowed to be broken up. It should be kept intact for all time. And it should be kept in America, where the collections are still very limited, and where such an acquisition would constitute in fact a form of endowment of research, becoming more and more precious, more highly appreciable with the passage of time, imperishable in its influence on scholarship and the advancement of science and culture in the United States.

A similar opportunity may never present itself again.

C. M.
F. W. A.