NEWS FROM THE CENTRE FOR REFORMATION AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES

by F.D.Hoeniger, Director

The Centre recently received a gift of \$2,500 from the New York Associates of the University of Toronto, for development of its library. This gift will be mainly spent on our project of developing a humanist scholar's and Renaissance gentleman's library in replica.

The Public Lectures by Professor Roland Bainton of Yale University on January 14-15 on "Erasmus and the Liberal Catholic Reform" and "Erasmus and the Protestant Reform" were attended by an enthusiastic audience, which increased from 150 to 300 for the second lecture. Since then, Professor Bainton has sent us two fat parcels of xeroxes of booklets and offprints dealing with Erasmus and similar subjects, as well as a xerox of the unique copy of the poems of Guil. Hermannus of Gouda at the Pierpont Morgan Library, which includes Erasmus' second earliest publication (the first was his commendation of Gaguin's history, of which the centre has a copy dated 1528). Professor Bainton also suggested that we write the Schwenkfelder Library in Pennsylvania from which we have since received as a gift the 19 volumes of the works of the leading anabaptist reformer Johannes Schwenckfeld.

Two of the Centre's Fellows this year, Germaine Warkentin and Jane Couchman, are engaged in research on the books which Montaigne, Sir Philip Sidney and Spenser read. This is one part of the preparatory work for our humanist gentleman's library. Mrs. Warkentin is also preparing a list of Renaissance school-books, while Mrs. Couchman is preparing a specialized catalogue of total holdings in Toronto libraries by and on Montaigne, Duplessis-Mornay and Charron. We already have such catalogues on Rabelais, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon and Butzer which can be consulted in the Centre. Sally Kaplan, another Fellow, is continuing the work of preparing a catalogue of all STC books (i.e. English books printed before 1641) which exist in facsimile or reprint. Many of these reprints are not well known by scholars, being hidden away in the volumes of the Percy Society or God knows where. When the list becomes reasonably complete it should be of great value to scholars in our university which happens to be singularly poor in original STC holdings (though of course UTL does have the Ann Arbor microfilms).

With a view primarily to organizing the strategy of our acquisitions policy for the next few years, the Centre's Director recently prepared a statement estimating what has so far been accomplished in developing the Centre's research library. We have acquired about 6000 volumes since 1964 concerning approximately the period 1450 to 1680, of which about 1000 are sixteenth or seventeenth-century books. To become truly useful, the library will have to reach an initial size of 20-25,000 volumes. The core of our library is of course the Erasmus collection, one of the best on the continent. We have by now acquired a considerable collection of humanistic editions of classics, of which a separate list has been prepared. The bibliographical collection has had a good start. In most other areas, the lacunae are still too obvious, though many basic texts have been acquired and many books are unavailable elsewhere in Toronto. We are especially proud of a small collection of Renaissance mythographers, including Natalis Comes, Piccinelli, Ripa, Alciati, Cartari, Hyginus and the like. Apart from developing our humanistic project, in the next few years there will probably be special emphasis on English and French literature and related history and thought, so as to satisfy the large numbers of staff and graduate students in these fields. For the reformation, we have decided to concentrate on the German-Swiss reformers and all German reformers except Luther. Much of the latter material will be acquired in microfilm or some other form of photographic reproduction, though we always believe that a few original books have special appeal and educational value.

We are greatly concerned by the lack of private book-collectors in Canada, and hope soon to offer prizes to encourage the art among undergraduates and graduates.

We wish to repeat our appeal to local scholars in the Renaissance or Reformation to send us copies of their offprints. Surely a collection of such materials by scholars to whom this Bulletin is sent would itself be of real interest. We have made some advance with a collection of this kind on Erasmus. We hope shortly to acquire a collection of Spenser offprints. As you read this, please drop some into an envelope, and send them to F.D.Hoeniger at Victoria College.

THE NORTH CENTRAL RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE, MAY 10 - 11, McMASTER UNIVERSITY, HAMILTON, ONT.

The Editors of the Bulletin are informed by E.M.Beame of the Department of History, McMaster University that the following papers have been arranged, at the time of going to press (April):

"Vergilian Recollections in Italian Renaissance Art", by A.G.McKay (McMaster University)

"Calvin and the Legal Profession", by W.Stanford Reid (University of Guelph)

"The Early High Renaissance Musicians as Stylists", by Rika Maniates (University of Toronto)

"Spenser and the Renaissance Orpheus", by T.H.Cain (McMaster University)

"Ben Johnson and Machiavelli: Some Shifts in English Political Orientation", by Philip London (University of Windsor)

"The Italian Humanists on the Sacraments", by Charles Trinkaus (Sarah Lawrence College)

There will also be an exhibit of the Italian materials available at the McMaster Library, arranged by Thomas Cain, whose account of this collection follows in the present issue of the Bulletin. In addition, those attending will be entertained by a presentation of Machiavelli's Mandragola.

THE REOPENING OF THE NATIONAL CENTRAL LIBRARY IN FLORENCE, JANUARY 8, 1968

The flood of November 4, 1966 and its disastrous effect on Florentine libraries, especially the National Central Library, is well-known. The library reopened on a partial basis in the spring of 1967, offering to readers its excellent reference collection, the manuscripts, and the sixteenth-century editions on the shelves of the Sala del Rinascimento. These were on the second floor and consequently were untouched by the waters. Still unavailable to readers was the stack collection of three to four million items and the catalogues housed on the main floor. On January 8, 1968, the library officially reopened to the public with the bulk of the collection available, and services restored on a limited but satisfactory basis. I was in Florence on that date and for a few days afterward, and would like to report on the state of the library.