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.

First, the catalogues have been almost completely restored. The large hand-written folio volumes of the Palatina and Magliabechiana collections have been replaced by typewritten cards for the former and Xeroxed handwritten slips for the latter. The "author catalogue since 1886" is also restored with the exception of part of "G" which was expected to be ready in a few days. In addition, there is an unexpected bonus for the reader. Several of the older small collections which had their own separate catalogues (for example, the Nencini collection) have been incorporated into the Palatina catalogue. This means that the scholar searching for a volume published before the twentieth century need check only three author catalogues rather than the four or more of the past. The periodical catalogue and the new acquisitions catalogue are also restored, but the subject catalogue is not ready. This is regrettable but users will recall that it was recently begun, small, and of limited use. The entire catalogue has been placed in new, easy-to-use metal trays, and these have been located in the large, well-lighted central lobby. My impression is that the catalogue is easier to use than in the past.

How much of the stack collection is available to readers? According to newspaper accounts and the librarians, about two-thirds of the stack collection is available. My experience in the few days in which I used the library confirms this estimate. I obtained about three-fourths of my requests of sixteenth-century editions and twentieth-century secondary works. In the catalogue room are posted lists of the range of shelf marks of the sections which were flooded. But if in doubt, one should request the book and hope for the best. Often it simply depends on how high the waters came in a certain area of the stacks. In addition, as anyone who has used the older materials in the library remembers, there are many duplicate copies of sixteenth-century books in the various collections. The chances are fairly good that one can find a copy of a desired title.

At present the hours of the library are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., and on Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Sala di Consultazione, Sala del Rinascimento, and Sala dei Manoscritti are open for this entire period. One may request books from the stacks at any time but they are delivered only during the morning hours. There is also limited external borrowing.

The work of restoration of the books and of the building continues. The director and his staff, aided by funds and students from all over the world (including the University of Toronto) have done a magnificent job in getting the library back into operation so soon. But much remains to be done and the library can certainly use financial help. Perhaps it is easiest to send contributions directly to the Direttore, Dott. Emanuele Casamassima, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Firenze.

While in Florence I also visited another flooded library, that of the Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia of the Università dei Studi in the Piazza Brunelleschi. On my first, brief visit I found that the entire catalogue is available to the public although restoration work on it continues. A few days later I returned and found that the Facoltà was "occupied" by students who were protesting that the University Reform bill proposed by the government was insufficient. Although there were no students or professors about (plenty of signs, however), the Facoltà was officially occupied and the library remained closed for the rest of my stay in Florence.

The important thing is that the National Central Library is again functioning. This is good news for Renaissance scholars.

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