

# RARE BOOK ACQUISITIONS

BY JANICE A. KRAUS

Ms. Kraus is the Rare Book Librarian and Exhibitions Coordinator for Special Collections & Archives, Rutgers University Libraries

The rebirth of interest in classical literature, the discovery of new lands with exotic customs, early investigations in the medical sciences and a nationalistic philological enterprise in a young country are the dominating themes of the rare books acquired for Special Collections & Archives this year. These volumes have been purchased with a view to enhancing those areas in which there are good base collections, areas in which Special Collections & Archives can make a contribution both to preserve a part of our cultural and intellectual heritage and to interpret our holdings to those in the Rutgers community and those outside. This revitalized rare book collection, through steady growth, can become an essential part of the library and an asset to the scholarly world. Accordingly, rare books are carefully selected for purchase each year, purchases made possible by the generous bequest of Charles H. ('25) and Mary Elizabeth Brower and, just this year, the Cameron Memorial Fund.<sup>1</sup> The following is a discussion of the volumes thus acquired.

The Venetian printer/publisher Aldus Manutius (1449/50-1515) and his heirs were among the driving forces in the popularization of classical literature in the sixteenth century. Aldus himself was responsible for the coming together of elements critical to both the quality and visual enjoyment of a text: stringent scholarly editing, an easy-to-read italic typeface and the handy octavo ("pocketbook") format. The Aldine volume acquired this year consists of two classical texts, the *De coniuratione Catalinae. Eiusdem De bello Iugurthino* of Sallust (86-35 B.C.) and the *De rebus gestis Alexandri Magni* of Quintus Curtius Rufus (1st cent. A.D.), published in Venice in 1509 and 1520, respectively. Neither were simply reproduced from earlier printed or manuscript editions; Aldus and his associates brought their own expertise to bear on the texts. Aldus and Francesco Torresano (d. 1546), the son of his partner Andrea Torresano (1451-1529), edited the Sallust texts, incorporating two previously un-

<sup>1</sup> All of the books purchased this year have been bought with funds from the Charles H. ('25) and Mary Elizabeth Brower Endowment, which supports the purchases of rare books. The Cameron Memorial Fund made possible the purchase of *Diversi avisi particolari dall'Indie di Portogallo ricevuti, dall'anno 1551 sino al 1558* (Venice, 1558/59). Special Collections & Archives wishes to acknowledge the support of our generous patrons without which such acquisitions would not be possible.

known manuscripts into their recension. They also included the *Oratio contra C. Crispum Sallustium*, traditionally ascribed to Sallust's old enemy Cicero, but written in fact after Cicero's death. Francesco Torresano continued this kind of careful scholarship in his edition of Curtius Rufus, making extensive corrections to the text and clarifying points where the author had been obscure. The edition of Curtius Rufus is extremely rare. Aldus and his associates published many other editions of classical authors, always anxious to achieve the most reliable text and one that could be sold at a reasonable price. Special Collections & Archives has other Aldine editions, including a 1514 edition (in Greek) of Suidas and a Latin translation of Aristotle's *Poetica* of 1536.

Along with the re-emergence of the ancient world into European consciousness came the European discovery of ancient civilizations in the Far East. The first visitors were traders, merchants and missionaries; the missionaries were the first to write full accounts of their activities in lands without parallel in their experience. Many religious orders sent representatives, the Franciscans, Augustinians and Dominicans among them, but it was the Jesuits, of a worldlier turn of mind than the mendicants, who wrote the most copious accounts and who came to identify most closely with the people they met. Four important volumes relating to the activities of that order and the consequences of their entry into the Far East have been acquired for Special Collections & Archives.

The earliest account is a Venetian publication of 1558/59, printed perhaps in the shop of Michele Tramezzino, containing many Jesuit letters. It goes under the title of *Diversi avisi particolari dall'Indie di Portogallo ricevuti, dall'anno 1551 sino al 1558*. It is one of the first such collections of Jesuit letters concerning the Far East. These compendia were one of the principal means by which Europeans were informed of the Orient, its people, land and customs. The *Diversi avisi* contains the earliest contemporary printed reference to Japan, a letter of 1549 written by St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552), the pioneer missionary to Japan. Xavier's letter is famous as befits such an initial communication and is replete with respectful references to the Japanese. The other Jesuit letters go into greater detail on Japanese typography, customs, the lofty moral character of the Japanese and news of Jesuit centers in that country. Later Jesuit letters go on in more detail and add further layers of information, but this extremely early compendium (the only earlier accounts are brief notices from traders in the early 1500s) offers a look at the very beginning of the Jesuit experience in the Far East and the letters reflect the startling newness of everything and the utter lack of comparison with anything these Europeans had known before.

Two later compendia of Jesuit letters go on to fill in our knowledge not only of the European view of Japan, but also of Japanese reaction to an alien and threatening religion. *Nuovi avvisi del Giappone con alcuni altri della Cina del LXXXIII, et LXXXIV* (Venice: I. Gioliti, 1586) recounts the beginnings of the official proscription of the Christian religion in general and the Jesuit order in particular in 1583 and 1584. There is much detailed information given on the revolution against Nobunga, the ruler of central Japan, who had been friendly to Christians. Nobunga's support, as well as that of other provincial rulers, had enabled the Jesuits, by the 1580s, to cap their own indefatigable efforts and convert some 150,000 Japanese and to begin an extensive church-building program. By 1587, Christianity and Jesuit activity would be banned, a situation which would stay in force for two hundred years, although Westerners, including Jesuits, were still allowed to reside in Japan. The *Nuovi avvisi* is a "companion" volume, as it were, to one written by Guido Gualtieri and published also in Venice in the same year (1586). It is the *Relationi della venuta de gli ambasciatori Giaponesi a Roma, fino partita di Lisbona*. Gualtieri recounts the trip to Europe, begun in 1582, of four young Japanese noblemen. Alessandro Valignano (1539-1606), the Jesuit *visitor* to Japan, had sponsored the journey to Europe in an effort to arouse European interest in Japan and to obtain financial support for the Jesuit missions there. The duration of the journey was some eight years (1582-1590); by the time the young men returned to their country, Christianity would have entered the twilight of suppression, as the *Nuovi avvisi* records.

The third volume of letters goes under the title of *Lettere annue del Giappone degl'anni MDCXXV. MDCXXVI. MDCXXVII*. (Rome: Francesco Corbelletti, 1632). This extremely rare volume tells of the situation for the Jesuits in Japan during the year 1625-1627, when the Jesuits engaged in clandestine proselytizing and often paid for it with martyrdom. There is a wealth of biographical detail concerning individual missionaries as well as information on the conditions under which Westerners now lived in Japan.

Two papal documents bound together, one of 1690, the other dating 1768, comprise the fourth acquisition in this area. Both were issued by the Congregatio Sacrorum Rituum and concern the case for the canonization of 205 Dominican, Franciscan, Augustinian and Jesuit martyrs who had died in 1622 in "the Great Martyrdom" as it came to be known. Special Collections & Archives has an eyewitness account of this slaughter, the *Relacion breve de los grandes y rigurosos martirios* (Madrid: Andres de Parra, 1664), compiled from letters written by Jesuits who were at the scene and accounts of survivors who escaped to Manila. The papal documents were

printed in limited numbers only for the members of the Curia actually concerned with the case in question and as such are exceedingly rare. The first is entitled *Sacra Rituum Congregatione Emo [Eminentissimo], & Rmo [Reverendissimo] Dmo [Domino] Card. Colloredo Japonen. Beatificationis, & Canonizationis, seu Declarationis Martyrii* (Rome: Typis Rev. Camerae Apostolicae, 1690), which contains biographical summaries of the candidates for canonization and arguments for and against [the devil's advocate] such action. The second, unrecorded publication is *Sacrorum Rituum Congregatione . . . Cardinalis Ducis Eboracensis Japonen . . . Beatificationis, seu Declarationis Martyrii* (Rome, 1768). It shows the process continuing with further argumentation. This process is typical in actions for beatification and canonization. The signature of the papal censor is also present, attesting to the accuracy, authenticity and orthodoxy of the contents. These 205 martyrs were finally canonized in 1867 by Pope Pius IX. This folio volume is bound in a red morocco binding with the arms of Clement XIV (1769-1774) on the covers.

The sixteenth century saw not only the exploration of alien lands and cultures, but also the beginnings of the scientific examination of more minute life forms, especially plants, and a new observation of physical/psychological aberrations with an attempt at a new language of description.

Special Collections & Archives has acquired another volume of the works of Pietro Andrea Mattioli (1500-1577), the Siense medical botanist who wrote a standard commentary on Dioscorides' *Materia medica* and made it the foremost Renaissance text on pharmacology and herbals. Mattioli continued to study and record new examples of medicinal herbs and plants, often receiving information from fellow naturalists. Mattioli's voluminous correspondence was first gathered together and published in 1561 and this compendium, *Epistolarum medicinalium libri quinque* (Prague: Georgius Melantrichius for Vincentius Valgrisius, 1561) has been acquired. Mattioli corresponded with many important scientists on such subjects as alchemy, pharmacology, plants in general and medical plants in particular. Among the scientists with whom Mattioli discussed such issues were Konrad von Gesner (1516-1565), the Swiss naturalist and botanist; Gabriele Fallopio (1523-1562), the Paduan professor of anatomy and botany who first described the fallopian tube; and Ulisse Aldrovandi (1522-1605), the encyclopedic Bolognese naturalist who founded the Bologna botanical gardens and who acted as a drug inspector. Mattioli's letters are signposts to the burgeoning interest in direct observation of the natural world and the medical applications of plants and herbs. Special Collections & Archives has a good collection of Mattioli's

works, including the celebrated 1554 Latin edition of his commentary on Dioscorides.

Interest in scientific explanations for aberrant physical symptoms was another by-product of the new spirit of inquiry and an area in which Special Collections & Archives is interested. This year a work of Ignazio Monti, the *Apologia Pe' Medici Pavesi con la giustificazione di un consulto sopra di un'atrofia nervosa scritta estemporaneamente in Milano* (Pavia: Porro, Bianchi, 1775), has been acquired. Monti, an eighteenth-century physician, had been called to Milan to consult in the treatment of a young woman who was an obvious alcoholic. Monti discusses her underlying illness, a severe case of depression which she combatted with alcohol, as *atrophia nervosa*, but tried, lacking the proper vocabulary, to break through the terminology of simple physical description into a more appropriate discussion of psychological breakdown. The tract is heavily footnoted, which contradicts Monti's statement that it had been written extemporaneously in Milan.

Special Collections & Archives has a very good dictionary and grammar collection and this year Noah Webster's *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* (Hartford, New Haven, 1806) was purchased to add to the collection of works of Webster already owned by the Library, including his grammars and school texts. Webster's 1806 dictionary, with its brief definitions, was a prelude to his more extensive 1828 quarto edition in two volumes, a copy of which is housed in the Mabel Smith Douglass Library.