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Articles printed in Columbia Library Columns are selectively indexed in Library Literature.
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1
Roman coin from the Olcott Collection. *Aes Grave* ("heavy bronze"), libral *as* (12 sericiæ). The obverse, showing the Janus-head, is here reproduced. On the reverse side is a ship’s prow.
IN THE following pages are articles about eight of the most unusual collections in the Columbia Libraries. Although the objects included in these collections number several thousand, there is not a printed book among them! Readers must have noticed the remarkable variety of the Libraries' holdings described over the years in Columns, but this issue will, we think, surprise them. It tells of bones, coins, stones, tiles, lead pipes, papyri, potsherds and tablets—with some five hundred Islamic manuscripts thrown in for good measure.

The messages on all this ancient hardware look cryptic indeed to the layman; translated, they come alive like Ezekiel's dry bones, and there emerge men and women with very recognizable human emotions. If you doubt it, turn to page 26 and read what the misogynist bishop wrote, centuries ago, to the anchorite. . . .
The Olcott Collection of Ancient Coins

COLEMAN H. BENEDICT

WHEN the opponents of Jesus asked him to take a stand on the issue of the "tribute-money," they hoped that he would discredit himself either with his followers or with the Roman authorities. His shrewd answer, "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," 1 reminds man not only of his higher duty to God but also of his duty to be a law-abiding citizen for, according to a Hebrew proverb, "where a king's coin is current, his sovereignty is acknowledged." 2

Ever since the invention of coinage in the seventh century B.C. in Asia Minor—an invention that replaced the cumbersome practice of making payments in kind or by weighing out precious metal—the issuing of money has been recognized as perhaps the chief indication of a state's sovereignty. A coin bears an official emblem or legend, testifying that the government which issues it guarantees it as being worth a certain amount. So long as a state is sovereign, its money passes as a medium of exchange; when a government is overthrown, the money issued in its name is no longer valued by the people and they revert to the older principle of barter or the use of precious metal.

The collection and study of coins, technically called numismatics, is, therefore, of importance to the student of economics

1 Matthew 22:17-21; similar account in Mark 12:14-17, Luke 20:21-25. The "penny" was the denarius (to this day, the British penny is abbreviated "d." for denarius), worth about $1.00 in purchasing-power and levied as a poll-tax on the inhabitants of Judaea by the Roman government.

The Olcott Collection of Ancient Coins

and history. Furthermore, the portraits and other "pictures" as well as the inscriptions found on coins are frequently of value to the student of art and to the linguist. The Columbia University Library offers an excellent opportunity for the direct study of coins from various periods of history, particularly from ancient Greece and Rome. The coins from these latter countries are in the Olcott Collection, located in the Special Collections Department of the Library. Most of these items have been described and cataloged and, for convenience of study and comparison, are arranged in chronological and typological order in several shallow trays.

If we examine the Roman coins, we can trace in them the economic growth of Rome from the early days of the Republic when lumps of bronze (aes rude), some of them bearing the image of a bull, were weighed out for every business transaction. Later, when Rome began to do business with its Italic and Greek neighbors in southern Italy and subsequently engaged in overseas trade with the Greeks and Carthaginians in Sicily, a more business-like

3 It is also possible to study coins indirectly, that is, from photographs and from impressions made on plaster of Paris. The latter are often better for study than the originals because they show up more of the details. The University Library received in 1938 a remarkable set of such impressions of most of the types of coins issued by the Greek city of Syracuse, and representative coins issued by thirteen other Greek cities of Sicily during their period of greatest activity (the dates of the issues run from 530 B.C. to 212 B.C., when Sicily passed under the control of Rome). Some of the originals are rare and virtually inaccessible for direct study.

4 George N. Olcott, Associate Professor of Latin, Columbia University, died March 2, 1912. His posthumous fame rests chiefly upon his ambitious, but unfinished work, Thesaurus Linguarum Latinae Epigraphicae (familiarly, "The Olcott Dictionary of the Latin Inscriptions.") The magnitude of this enterprise is illustrated by the fact that Olcott had published 520 pages before his death, yet he had gone only from A to ASTURA. According to the terms of his will (cf. Columbia University: Charters, Acts of the Legislature, Official Documents and Records, New York, rev. ed., 1920, pp. 561–63), his entire collection of antiquities, including 3,847 coins, was bequeathed to Columbia University.

5 In a community that is primarily agricultural, as Rome was for centuries, a man's capital is in his cattle (note that both words are derived from Latin capitalis, "pertaining to one's head or life") or in his flock of sheep (Latin pecus, whence pecuna, "money").
Here are shown examples of most of the varieties of Roman coins discussed by Professor Benedict in the accompanying article. Number 1 is a specimen of bronze as of the early period, showing a ship's prow on the reverse side of the coin. Numbers 2 and 3 are silver denarii of about 90 B.C., the first showing the obverse side with the head of Roma and the second, with serrated edge, showing a chariot on the reverse side. Number 4 is a coin struck in the time of Julius Caesar; it is a silver denarius of which the reverse is shown. Number 5 shows the reverse side of another silver denarius struck in the time of Augustus Caesar. Number 6 is a gold coin, an aureus of the Augustus Caesar period; the reverse side is shown. Number 7 displays the obverse of a copper sestertius struck by authority of the Senate (SC); the value of this coin was one fourth that of a denarius. Number 8 (obverse) is again a gold coin, an aureus struck during the reign of Tiberius. Number 9 (obverse) is a copper Antoninianus (a double-denarius); vestiges of the original silver plating still remain.
coinage was issued: the standard *as* (weighing one Roman pound of twelve ounces) and its subdivisions. This *aes grave*, “heavy bronze,” bears the heads of Janus on the obverse (“heads”) and the prow of a warship on the reverse (“tails”). Later still, when the bronze *as* was reduced in value and weight (one ounce), a new standard, the silver *denarius*, was established. This coin together with its subdivisions, *quinarius* (half a *denarius*) and *sestertius* (one-fourth), was destined to flourish for many centuries throughout the civilized world. Originally about the size of our dime (though in the Empire its size was increased), it bore on the obverse the head of Roma wearing a winged helmet, and on the reverse the Dioscuri (Castor and Pollux) or Jupiter in a chariot, and the word ROMA. In the later period of the Republic, the head of Roma was sometimes replaced by that of a magistrate or general, but always after his death—a custom which we have inherited from the Romans. It is significant that the first Roman to place his portrait on coins was Julius Caesar; after his time, the Emperors regularly did so. The scenes and inscriptions on the reverse varied widely and are often of considerable historical importance. They commemorate, and hence serve to date, battles, the foundings of colonies, the building of temples and other public structures, gifts of grain to the people, and other matters. The coins often shed light on political affairs, as when rival generals issue separate coinages, or when Brutus and Cassius issue coins showing a cap of liberty between a pair of daggers (alluding to the assassination of Julius Caesar).

When Augustus was the supreme power, he thoroughly reorganized the government and its coinage, placing them on a solid foundation that was to endure with little change for centuries. Henceforth, the Emperors issued the gold and silver coinage, placing their portraits (occasionally those of their wives) on all coins, and left to the Senate, which in Republican times had

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6 This type was borrowed from the Athenian drachma which showed a helmeted head of Athena; the Roma head in turn was the model for the head of “Liberty” on our dimes.
The Olcott Collection of Ancient Coins

had full charge of the coinage, the right to issue copper and bronze coins only. Senatorial issues always bear the letters “S.C.” Senatus Consulto, “by authority of the Senate.” The reverse of all coins, whether of imperial or senatorial issue, carries on the tradition of commemorating historical, religious or social events. The lengthy titulature of the Emperors, found on the obverse, generally renders it possible to date imperial coins accurately. To supply the large volume of coins necessary for the conduct of business and trade, mints were established in several mercantile cities, such as Milan, Ostia, and Ravenna in Italy; Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople in the eastern provinces; Arles, Lyons, London, and Carthage in the west. In the third century, coins carried mint-marks to show their place of origin.

Throughout the long history of the Empire, the silver coinage slowly lost value, whether because of periods of inflation or because of deliberate adulteration of the silver, with the result that the denarius and even the double denarius, issued by Caracalla and called the Antoninianus, became virtually copper coins with a thin mask of silver; occasions are on record when the coinage became so debased that the government refused to accept its own coins in payment of taxes. Sometimes, ordinary commodities like salt were used as mediums of exchange and occasionally soldiers were paid in salt (sal, whence salarium and our word “salary”).

The business and trade carried on within and beyond the Roman Empire was very large and complex. Mass-production of goods kept prices low, there was but one coinage, there were no trade-barriers, goods and people moved freely and safely on good roads and waterways. The far-flung trade of Rome is graphically illustrated by numerous finds of Roman coins as far north as Scandinavia, Scotland, Ireland, and even Iceland, as far east as India, Ceylon, and China, and as far south as Somaliland. Gold coins

7 It is noteworthy that the Romans, and the Greeks before them, generally used metallic currency, not paper notes or fiat money. Within a province, however, fiat money was occasionally employed for purposes of local trade, as in Egypt.
were issued almost exclusively for use in foreign trade because
the value of gold is fairly stable and hence acceptable anywhere.
The *aureus*, as the gold coin was called, was worth about twenty-
five *denarii*.

The Olcott collection enables a person who is interested in such
matters to see and touch the actual coins that once circulated in
the market-place of every city in Europe and in many other parts
of the world, coins which helped establish the basis of business
and trade as we know them today.
Chinese Oracle Bones

L. CARRINGTON GOODRICH

ON THE beautiful doors of the annex to the Library of Congress are inscribed the names of the legendary creators of script in various parts of the world: Thoth, Ts'ang Chieh, Nabu, Brahma, Cadmus, and Tabmurath. The Chinese hero is second in the list. When he lived we can only guess. Until sixty years ago the oldest Chinese writing in existence was thought to be on certain Chinese bronze vessels dating from the beginning of the first millennium before our era. This writing was already so conventionalized, however, that one was safe in assuming that man in eastern Asia must have developed it over a long stretch of time. Then around the year 1899 curious little fragments of bone and tortoise shell, bearing inscribed characters somewhat like but more primitive than those on the bronzes, began appearing in a few antiquary shops. What was their use? How old were they? Where were they found? Only two Chinese scholars started work on their decipherment at first, as the time was greatly out of joint. (In fact, this was the year the Society of Boxers began its bid for power, and one of the first scholarly investigators, a courageous official, took his own life in 1900 because of the humiliation suffered by the imperial court at this time.)

In the decade which followed, a number of other scholars took up the inquiry, among them at least three foreigners: one German, one Scot, and one American. In fact, the last, the Rev. Dr. Frank H. Chalfont, was the first to make the script known to the western world; see his Early Chinese Writing (Memoirs of the Carnegie Museum IV, 1, Sept. 1906). Part of his collection of bones and tortoise shells is in Pittsburgh, part in Chicago, and part in Princeton. His writings, including the manuscript of a Syllabary of all characters found (some 3,000 including variants),
which he was compiling at the time of his death (January 1914), are the property of the East Asiatic Library of Columbia University, the gift of his widow and son.

The date of his death is worth noting. It was not until that very year that three scholars independent of each other determined the site whence these little artifacts came (Mr. Lo Chen-yü, a Chinese, Mr. James Mellon Menzies, a Canadian, and Mr. Langdon Warner, an American.) The lucky men of the soil who had found them on their farms and the dealers in curios who bought them had successfully kept the secret from the scholarly world for fifteen years. The parlous condition of the world (in 1914–18) held up field work. Not until 1928 did excavation of the site, a place near Anyang is northern Honan province, tentatively begin, stimulated by Carl Whiting Bishop (A.M. Columbia University, 1913), associate curator of the Freer Gallery of Art, and supported by its funds. Off and on for a decade the dig continued, after 1929 solely conducted and supported by the Chinese National Research Academy, and directed by Dr. Li Chi (Ph.D. Harvard University, 1923). It proved to be a spectacular discovery, the most momentous excavation of any historical site in all China. During those years before the outbreak of war in 1937, and in the decade since, there have been laid bare many of the foundations of structures belonging to a city which was the capital of a royal state in the Yellow River Valley during the years from about 1300 to 1050 B.C. Chinese history of these two and a half centuries, known only in a shadowy form, suddenly came to life. And what gave the period life was not just the tombs, and artifacts, and skeletal material found, but tens of thousands more of these inscribed bones and tortoise shells.

Why are they called oracle bones? Because, like the Greeks who consulted the Oracle at Delphi, the ancient Chinese rulers wanted to know the answers to many pertinent questions: questions having to do with the weather (then as now a proper subject for anyone and especially for a ruler whose people were all con-
cerned about seed time and harvest), questions about military expeditions, about prisoners of war, about hunting, about marriage, about worship and sacrifice, in fact about any matter of concern to the king. These questions seem to have been written

Chinese oracle bones from the collection of the late Professor Paul Monroe. The inscription on the bone at the left reads, "On the day kuei wei a divination is made. Chêng, an augur, divined: ‘Should Tzu-hua be summoned . . .?’" (Translation by Professor Shigeki Kaizuka of Kyoto University.) Tsu-hua is the name of a member of the Royal Family; kuei wei actually locates the exact day in Chinese chronology. The reproduction on the right shows the burned spot where a hot stick was applied to cause cracking on the opposite surface.

(i.e., scratched on to the surface of the bone) by an official diviner in the temple of the ruler's ancestors. Then a cavity was prepared on one side of the bone or shell. A hot stick was next applied to the cavity. The heat produced a crack on the opposite side or face, and from this the diviner would determine whether the spirits' response was favorable or unfavorable—frequently
L. Carrington Goodrich

signing his name. Through these oracles have been obtained a large mass of data on the life of the ruling class of some 3,200 years ago, and the information is growing yearly as fresh finds are made and as epigraphists resolve the puzzles inherent in the ancient script.

The great majority of these inscribed pieces, estimated in 1952 at 162,000, most of them in fragmentary condition, are in China, either in Taiwan or on the mainland, but substantial collections are also in Japan, in England and Scotland, in Canada, and in this country. Columbia University is fortunate in possessing a number of study pieces due to the generosity of Professor and Mrs. Ernest K. Smith, Dr. James H. Ingram, Dr. Cyrus H. Peake, Dr. Roswell S. Britton, Dr. William W. Rockwell, and most recently Mrs. Jeanette Monroe Bassett and Mr. Ellis Monroe (daughter and son of the late Professor Paul Monroe of Teachers College).
A FORCEFUL indication of the value of the science of epigraphy to the student of the ancient world appeared in the introduction to Volume XII of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, where the editors were at pains to explain that the history of the period there under review (roughly, the third century A.D.) was the monument of Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and that the main advances beyond his work, such as they are, had been brought about by the advance in studies in epigraphy and numismatics. The epigraphist, to be proficient in his science, it may be said, must be a historian, and the historian must be thoroughly competent in epigraphy. To see at a quick glance what epigraphy means to the scholar in ancient history, one needs only to look at the monumental histories of the Hellenistic world and the Roman Empire by the late Professor Rostovtzeff.

The Columbia tradition in this important field has been especially strong, owing to the efforts of the late James C. Egbert, who held the chair of Roman Archaeology and Epigraphy, and George N. Olcott, also a professor of Roman Archaeology and Epigraphy, who bequeathed to the University the valuable collection of antiquities which bears his name.

The Epigraphy Collection of the Columbia Libraries is not a research collection in the sense that the Papyrus Collection is: there are no important original documents to be published. It is, however, in another respect, very important for research. Here are *all* the books; it is one of the most complete compilations of epigraphical books in the Western Hemisphere. Only very rarely will the epigraphist—or the historian or the linguist concerned with epigraphical data—fail to find the book or the information
he needs. But it is also an excellent teaching collection, with a considerable selection of original inscriptions in the Olcott Collection (largely Roman sepulchral inscriptions, but there are also some stamped tiles and lead water pipes, and three Greek inscriptions),

Roman inscription of an honorific nature, ca. 100 A.D. It reads: “For Lucius Clodius Ingenuus, son of Publius, of the Tribe Claudia, Prefect of the Cohort of Mattiaci, Military Tribune in Legion I Italica, Military Tribune in Legion V Macedonica, Military Tribune in Legion VII Claudia Pia Fidelis.” A fine specimen of formal Roman capitals, on a plaque which possibly was used or intended for the base of a statue.

plaster casts of the famous Rosetta Stone and a few other inscriptions, and about 500 “squeezes” of published inscriptions, all of which give the student not only training in the reading of ancient documents but also, when he sits with the inscription before him, the feeling of immediacy of contact with what some Roman or Greek felt, thought, and said some two thousand years ago.
Greek Papyri

JOHN DAY

THE Columbia Libraries contain one of the most extensive holdings of Greek papyri in the Western Hemisphere. Consisting of some 700 items, it is second only—but second by a wide margin—to the great collection at the University of Michigan. The notable collections in Europe, which are much larger than those in America, were acquired through purchase and through excavations before the First World War. In the United States, at that time, only the University of Chicago began to purchase papyri, but soon gave up the attempt to form a collection. Only after the First World War, in the decade of the Twenties, did American institutions begin to assemble them—mainly through purchase from dealers, although the University of Michigan acquired a large number of important papyri through excavation at Karanis.

Columbia’s papyri are mainly of the documentary type, owing to the special interest in social and economic history of Professor Westermann (under whose leadership the holdings were assembled). But the Collection contains some literary pieces and Columbia papyri have made their contribution to the emendation of the texts of Homer and Euripides. Also of particular note are the numerous letters from the famous Zenon Archive. Also of particular note are the numerous letters from the famous Zenon Archive. Through the publication of its papyri in *Columbia Papyri, Greek Series* (now consisting of five volumes, with the sixth in preparation), and in the volume entitled *Apokrimata* (in the Columbia Bicentennial Editions and Studies), along with numerous articles in learned journals, the Collection has attained a notable international reputation. But it is not merely an instrument of research: it is also a very important teaching collection. Here the student learns at first hand the details of the evolution of the book, the
Greek Papyrus (No. 272). Petition in a case of usury and illegal detention, ca. 245/244 B.C. The petition reads:

To King Ptolemy greeting from Antipatros, resident of Philadelphia. I am being wronged by Nikon. For having loaned seventy silver drachmas to my wife Simon at an interest rate of six drachmas per mina each month and having totaled (the interest) with the principal he drew up a contract of loan with her for 115 drachmas in which I myself was entered as security. After I had gone away from Philadelphia because I was being falsely accused by Artemidoros, agent of Apollonios, the dioecetes, and had opened a shop in Upper Hermopolis, Nikon wrote a letter to Philadelphia to a certain Menestratos, our servant, in which he includes the statement, made upon royal oath, that he will draw up an agreement with us for the principal by itself, namely, the seventy drachmas. When Menestratos wrote me at Hermopolis to come to Philadelphia and I sailed down there, Nikon sailed up to Hermopolis and said that he would hand my wife over to the praktor in the matter of the loan unless she followed him of her own accord. Simon, impelled by fear, sailed down with Nikon together with her boy, and Nikon led them to Herakleopolis and shut them up with certain persons, apart from each other. Then Simon escaped and came away; but the boy he holds in detention even now. And when we demand that he give him back, sometimes he acknowledges that he has seized him as a pledge for the debt and is still holding him, sometimes he denies it. I beg you therefore, O King, to send my petition to the chreematistai, and if I prove that the allegations set forth in the petition are true, I beg that Nikon may meet with fitting punishment both in the matter of the interest which he has contracted for contrary to the ordinance and because by his own authority he has placed in detention and holds (the boy), a free person; and I beg that the boy be restored to me in order that I, having fled to you for help, O King, may meet with justice.

Farewell
ways in which the texts of ancient authors have reached their present form, and the different styles of writing and how they may be employed in textual criticism (how certain letters or combinations of letters could have been misread by the scribes—thus providing a clue to the editor in his emendations). Two Ph.D. dissertations have thus far grown out of the resources of the Collection, and work on a third is well-advanced.

For the Collection to maintain its research and teaching functions, it would be desirable to add fresh material from time to time. But in the 1930's papyrologists became defeatists: the great days of accumulation of valuable papyri were past and gone; never again would we recover, through the papyri, lost works like Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, substantial portions of the plays of Menander, or the poems of Bacchylides or Callimachus. But suddenly the atmosphere has changed, and if the general literate public had not fixed its attention so intently upon the dramatic discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it would have joined the papyrologists in their enthusiasm over the recovery—through a splendidly preserved papyrus whose text has, at the moment of writing this note, just come from the press—of the *Dyscolus* of Menander, the first complete play of that Greek playwright to be recovered from oblivion.¹

¹ A translation, entitled "The Curmudgeon," by Professor Gilbert Highet of Columbia, will be published in the July issue of *Horizon*. 
Coptic Papyri

A. ARTHUR SCHILLER

COPTIC PAPYRI, nine packages' was the entry I ran upon in the card catalog in Low Library shortly after I arrived at the University many years ago. After protracted search the 'packages' were located, and pored over in the "Papyrus Gallery" high in the dome of the Rotunda. They turned out to be some fifty Coptic texts—papyri, parchment and paper—among a much larger group of Arabic manuscripts. There were no records of accession, but it seems likely that the lot was presented to Columbia by Professor Gottheil, either a purchase he made in Egypt or a small part of the Genizeh finds. The Coptic texts were framed and photostated; what has become of the Arabic texts, I do not know.

In the decades which followed, the photostats and requested photographs were submitted to Dr. Walter E. Crum in connection with the preparation of his Coptic dictionary. As a result, many of the terms in several of the texts are included in the examples given in this standard dictionary. One of the paper documents in the Fayyumic dialect afforded numerous instances of unusual lexicographical interest. Another text, this time a parchment fragment, preserved variant readings of a well-known sermon of Shenute, a famed church father. In addition to the Dictionary references, two of the parchment texts setting forth an interesting amulet have been published. For the most part, though, the texts are so fragmentary that they do not merit further publication.

In 1932, however, opportunity was afforded to purchase a unique Coptic papyrus from the late Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, a former director of the British Museum. This papyrus of 286 lines, practically complete, is perhaps the most important unpub-
lished Coptic document that is known. It contains the stenographic record of the hearings before an arbitration tribunal of a dispute concerning the ownership of portion of a house in a town of Upper Egypt, dating from approximately 660 A.D. We possess no other document of similar character, either among the Greek or Coptic papyri of the Byzantine or early Arabic period. There is, indeed, great interest in arbitration proceedings as well as in court litigation, due to the publication of several intriguing Coptic and Greek documents, primarily settlements of disputes. A full understanding of the nature of the process for settling controversies in Upper Egypt during the seventh century of our era awaits the publication of this Columbia Coptic papyrus, with pertinent commentary on the related Coptic and Greek instruments.

Unfortunately, there seems little likelihood of publication in the foreseeable future. The first years after acquisition were spent in transcribing a rather difficult text, but with the unstinting aid of Dr. Crum, the text, with translation and commentary, was ready for publication by 1939. The war intervened, and since the war years, the cost of publishing such an extensive Coptic text has become prohibitive. The “Columbia Papyri, Coptic Series,” which had been designed to present this and other documents—to parallel the Greek Series—cannot be undertaken at the present time. It would seem that the scholarly world will have to be content with a summary description of the text, announced a quarter of a century ago, commencing:

We have heard the petition of John, the deacon, with Tsoker, his uncle, against Philemon and Thekla, his wife. The party of John suing Philemon and his wife concerning a house which is in their possession, John alleging that it belonged to a woman, Thekla, who was the sister of his father; and that for this house aforesaid, consisting of a room and a dining-room and a bed-room and a cellar, she received a holocot from them. She pledged it and made it over in mortgage to them, paying its interest to them until she left. When she wished to depart, she left a girl-child who was hers with us, and she took the boy and the other girl and went away, going by land.
Coptic Papyrus, ca. 660 A.D. The text reproduced is translated in the accompanying article by Professor Schiller. Included at the top of the reproduction is the “protocol,” the official stamp of the manufacture of the papyrus roll.

and continuing through the opening pleas of John and then of Philemon, the reply of John and the testimony of his witnesses, the answer of Philemon and the introduction of written evidence, to the closing arguments of John and Philemon. This remarkable instrument finds its sequel in a deed of settlement of this very case, fortunately also preserved. The full story waits upon a magnanimous patron.
Coptic Ostraca

A. ARTHUR SCHILLER

WITHIN the past year the Columbia Library has acquired a most remarkable collection of Coptic "ostraca," perhaps without equal in this country. Some sixteen hundred in number, these potsherds and limestone fragments are likewise of considerable linguistic and cultural significance. For this collection comprises, in the main, the bulk of written material which came to this country from the Egyptian archaeological expeditions of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It is a splendid sampling of the day-to-day writings of the inhabitants of upper Egypt during the seventh and eighth centuries of our era.

Many of these texts, together with hundreds of other ostraca which are now located in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, provided the information upon which Dr. Herbert E. Winlock, the director of the expeditions, and Dr. Walter E. Crum, the leading scholar of Coptic language and literature, based their monumental study of the life of the inhabitants of the monastery of Epiphanius in the hills of western Thebes. The Columbia ostraca which have already been published will offer future students practice materials in reading various styles of Coptic handwriting. For many of the texts, however, translations alone have been provided and the reading of the ostraca themselves will give further insight into linguistic and palaeographical problems. The great mass of the ostraca have yet to be read and, although there is little likelihood of startling discoveries, there is no telling what may be found. Coptic ostraca, in contrast to Greek—which are uniformly minor official documents, generally tax receipts, with monotonous repetition of the same simple formulae—, run the gamut from Biblical texts and magical incantations, through the range of literary effort, to the humblest notes and lists; all manner of private correspond-
Coptic ostracon. For a translation of the text see the quotation beginning “Be so kind, my father . . .” in the accompanying article, page 26.
ence, as well as documents, legal instruments including copies of
documents originally written on papyrus.
The collection has not been in Columbia's possession long
even to have been the subject of research here, but some of the
ostraca which have already been published will give an idea of
the scope. A large proportion of the texts deal with the monastic
community, some even being of minor historical significance:

Deliver this to my beloved and truly religious brother Epiphanius,
the anchorite, from Serenianus, the bishop. Be so good as to take the
trouble on the first Sunday of Lent and come to the site of Apa Phoeb-
ammon and reprove Papas, for he hath profaned my monastic cell in
that he hath brought in a multitude of women and hath given them
communion. Make haste . . .

There is a unique example of a letter on the recto of a sherd
(the convex surface) which is repeated with dialectical variations
on the verso (the concave surface). Seemingly the latter is the
writer's own draft, the recto a notary's version:

Be so kind, my father, and receive me in unto the feast. For I have
learned that one came in and told thee lying words so that thou didst
send and expel me. Be so good and admit me, for my end draweth nigh.
(The convex side of this sherd is shown in the illustration herewith.)

Another relates to book illumination:

Before everything we greet thy pious, revered fathership. See, I have
sent thee the book. Do thou examine the 'Prayers' and send it to me
that I may adorn it for thee. I am adorning the 'Apostle' for thee. Be so
kind, if so be thou have vinegar, send me a little, that I may . . .

Not all relate to clerical or monastic matters; there is a recurrent
theme of short weight in coinage:

For the half solidus which thou didst send me I got fourteen carats and
308. It was found to lack half a carat. Thus forty she (coinage) hath
the man not yet received.
The Columbia ostraca stem from a number of sites in and about western Thebes and range over several centuries in time. They will provide a fruitful source of research for years to come to the occasional scholar equipped to delve into their secrets. They will remain for all time a permanent record of the daily life of a humble people.
Cuneiform Tablets

ISAAC MENDELSON

ABOUT twenty-two years ago Prof. Edward Chiera of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago wrote a popular little volume describing the great finds dug up by archaeologists in Iraq, Ancient Babylonia. The book was published in 1938 under the title They Wrote on Clay, and since then ten impressions of it have appeared—an extraordinary event indeed! It demonstrates the fact that an essay dealing with a culture that had its beginnings some 5000 years ago had aroused the interest of such a large body of readers that it has almost become a bestseller. Of course, the success of Chiera’s book may be partly ascribed to the fascination Ancient Babylonia has on the reading public. Babylonia was part of “The Fertile Crescent” where stood the cradle of Western Civilization, and it was an integral member of “The Bible Lands.” It was there that man made the first attempt to reach the heavens by building “The Tower of Babel”; it was the birth place of Abraham, the ultimate source of the later great religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; and last, but not least, in its territory was located “The Garden of Eden” in the Age of Innocence.

The inhabitants of Babylonia (Sumerians in the third millennium and Semites in the second millennium B.C.) are credited with the invention of practically every “first” in man’s recorded history: the first script, the first law code, the first epic composition, the first mathematical and medical hand-books; they were also the first city builders, and the first organizers of public schools. These claims are not exaggerated. They are fully attested in the large number of clay tablets written in cuneiform (wedge-shaped signs) dating from the beginning of the third millennium B.C. to the first century A.D.
Although Columbia University has not participated in excavations of Ancient Near Eastern sites, the Butler Library possesses a small but valuable collection of about 500 Babylonian tablets. The bulk of these was purchased by the University back in 1896,* and in the last two decades this acquisition was supplemented by
texts from the David Eugene Smith and the George A. Plimpton collections, and most recently by 75 tablets donated by Mrs. Jeanette Monroe Bassett and Mr. Ellis Monroe. The dates of the tablets range from about 2100 to 300 B.C., embracing the Sumerian, Old-Babylonian, Kassite, and Neo-Babylonian periods. The Sumerian written tablets consist of temple inventories, receipts, lists of laborers and their wages, rations of agricultural products,

* From the dealer Daniel Z. Noorian, of New York, to whom they were consigned directly from Baghdad. The greater part of them was reported to have been originally procured from the ruins of Tello.
and students' exercise copies. The Old-Babylonian tablets consist of real estate transactions, loans with and without interest, manu-
mission of slaves, and three votive inscriptions of the pre-Ham-
murabi period. The Kassite and the Neo-Babylonian tablets are of the same general character. The latest text is a fragment of a real estate transaction dated in the tenth year of Alexander the Great. The most remarkable tablet in the whole collection is a unique mathematical text resembling so-called "Pythagorean num-
bers." The script is Old-Babylonian, that is, it was written or copied between 1900 and 1600 B.C., at least one thousand years before the great Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras was born. (For a description of this text and its place in the history of mathematics see O. Neugebauer and A. Sachs, Mathematical Cuneiform Texts, 1945, pp. 38-41.)

Unlike many other manuscript collections in the Columbia University Libraries which are patiently waiting to be redeemed by descriptive catalogs, the small cuneiform collection has had the good fortune of having its contents made available to scholars in two publications: Dr. Robert Julius Lau's Old Babylonian Temple Records (in the Columbia University Libraries), which appeared in 1906, and the present writer's Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the Libraries of Columbia University, which was published in 1943.
Islamic Manuscripts in the Columbia Libraries

A. SÜHEYL ÜNVER

When I wanted to examine the Oriental works in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish in the Butler Library at Columbia University, I found, after inspecting some 100 manuscripts registered on the catalog cards which had been given to me, that the latter were inadequate and contained many errors. My good friend, Professor Halasi-Kun, and I discussed this situation with the Director of Libraries and also with the Head of Special Collections. It was finally decided that I should undertake the preparation of a new catalog.

Manuscripts in the three languages which I have classified in the Smith and Plimpton Collections comprise: Arabic, 375; Persian, 128; and Turkish, 43. If we examine the 375 Arabic manuscripts one by one, we find that they include: 25 collections of prayers written in Iran, 12 collections of prayers written in Turkey, 44 Korans written in Iran, 14 collections of prayers written in Arabia, 34 Korans written in Turkey and Arabia; 10 Coptic-Arabic Bibles, Collections of Psalms, and of prayers; 40 Koran fragments, half of them written in Arabia, and the other half in Turkey; and 21 pages from the Koran. Apart from these religious works, each of the remaining 175 manuscripts is designated in the catalog simply as “Arabic MS.” Among them, all branches of learning and science are represented. Our classification of the 128 Persian writings is: 34 literary works, 15 religious manuscripts, 3 manuscripts of prayers, 1 history of Pahlavi, 38 scientific works, 24 works of philosophy or mystical folklore, 4 Persian translations of the Koran, 3 histories, 1 dictionary, and 5 miscellaneous.

The 43 Turkish manuscripts include: 4 calendars, 2 registers of
Koran. Naskhi script, 18th century (?). The opening chapter, here reproduced, is beautifully illuminated in gold and color in the original. The text on the pages above reads in translation as follows:

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of mankind, The Merciful, the Compassionate, Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and to Thee do we turn for help.

Guide us in the straight path, The path of those to whom Thou hast been gracious, Not of those with whom Thou art angered, nor of those who go astray.
A. Süheyl Ünver

accounts and guides to letter-writing, 12 literary works, 2 social works, 4 dictionaries, 10 religious works, 1 collection of prayers, 4 scientific works, 2 historical works, and 2 miscellaneous.

Besides these 43 Turkish manuscripts, however, there are 26 Arabic Korans, 12 collections of prayers in Arabic, and 20 Koranic fragments written and signed by well-known calligraphers. These bring the total up to 101.

The calligraphy and the gold inlay of all of these, and the Iranian bindings in particular, are works of art. Furthermore, the bindings of many of the Arabian manuscripts were put on in Turkey. Both the writing and the gold inlay of the Arabic Korans and other religious works produced in Turkey were done by Turks. Although the language is Arabic, the workmanship belongs to Turkey.

To classify the manuscripts according to the language in which they are written might give the impression that the Arabs have produced more than they did. However, the Iranians and Turks, by cultivating the very important Arabic literature and using Arabic as the language of learning side by side with their national and local languages, made artistic reproductions of the already existing Arabic works—especially those of a religious nature.

It would be scientifically correct to classify these manuscripts under a general name such as "Islamic Manuscripts," taking the three languages of the Near and Middle East together, while at the same time distinguishing among them manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish.

Since the late Professor David Eugene Smith was a natural scientist interested in the history of Science, most of the manuscripts in the Smith Collection are on astronomy, arithmetic, and geometry. Many of them are of Iranian origin and were probably obtained from there. They are important manuscripts, of which there are various copies.

According to my estimate there are in the United States, in museums scattered through countless libraries, about 100,000
hand-written and printed books in Turkish, Arabic, and Persian dealing with all branches of learning, science, and of art. If detailed inventories of all of them were to be compared, the Smith Collection would be destined to occupy an especially important place. A general catalog of all of these manuscripts would make possible the publication of works in the various areas of Oriental studies.
John Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*, in Dutch. Published illegally in Holland during the Nazi occupation, 1944. One of a collection of such works recently presented by Mr. and Mrs. Valerien Lada-Mocarski.
Editor’s Note: In January the Libraries placed on exhibit a substantial part of the collection of illegal press publications which were presented by Mr. and Mrs. Valerien Lada-Mocarski. After seeing the examples of books published in Nazi-occupied Holland, Dr. Benjamin Hunningher, Queen Wilhelmina Professor at Columbia, was moved to write to Roland Baughman the letter which, with Dr. Hunningher’s permission, is printed below.

Dear Mr. Baughman:

I want to tell you how deeply your exhibition on the resistance press in western Europe has moved me. I suddenly found myself facing another part of my life which is as far from our Columbia existence as one planet from the other. I really never would have expected to find these publications here and certainly not that translation of Steinbeck’s *The Moon Is Down*, *De Vliegenwanger*, which means in Dutch: *The Flypaper*. We used this publication for our Actor’s Fund. In 1942 the Germans ordered all the artists to register with the Kultur-Kamer. Those who refused were not allowed to continue working. For the actors who did not sign up (about 40 per cent) we had set up a fund from which we could pay them a small basic income. When it appeared that we had no money left, one of the actors translated the Steinbeck book, which by one way or another had been smuggled into the country and we had it printed in an edition limited to one thousand copies. We sold each copy for a minimum of 100 guilders, which was at that time for us more or less the equivalent of $100 here. Everything went extremely well and the proceeds helped us through some difficult months. Later on, however, the printer was caught by the Germans while printing some other resistance material, and was shot.
It is needless to say how scarce these copies of *De Vliegenwanger* are and what a miracle it is to find one exhibited in the peaceful library of Columbia University. I thought you would like to know about this, and how greatly I appreciated this exhibition. . . .

Faithfully,

B. Hunningher
Our Growing Collections

ROLAND BAUGHMAN

Adams gift. Mr. Scott Adams (B.S., 1940) has presented a unique specimen of the book-making arts, a congratulatory volume presented to Mr. John A. McLean of the Government Printing Office by various divisions of the GPO.

Arnaud gifts. From time to time Dean Leopold Arnaud has presented to the Avery Architectural Library items out of his personal collection. They have usually come in small lots, so that there has always been the danger that their importance may be overlooked. In recent months Dean Arnaud has presented 101 books and pamphlets, 113 serials, and three packages of collected student drawings. All of these items are of high usefulness and are gratefully accepted into Avery Library.

Christy gift. Through the good offices of Mrs. Mary K. Dobbie we have received from Mrs. Arthur Christy a very valuable collection of Thoreau materials (photostats, typescripts, and notes), representing the late Professor Christy's research over many years. One of the principal items in the collection is Professor Christy's unpublished editing of Thoreau's Book of Facts, Extracts Mostly Upon Natural History, itself unpublished.

Class of 1923 gift. One of the most notable Elizabethan manuscripts to become available in recent decades is now the proud possession of the Columbia University Libraries, the gift of the Class of 1923. The manuscript is a translation of Aesop's "Fables" (A Morall Fabletalke) by Arthur Golding, written about 1590. Golding was one of many gifted Elizabethans who labored so fruitfully to render into English the wealth of continental and
Roland Baughman

classical literature. He was indefatigable as well as able; his translations of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* and Caesar’s *Commentaries* (both published in 1565) are well-known, but he is also credited with having published nearly twenty-five other translations. This “Aesop” has never been published, and so has remained unknown to the Golding canon until recently. The manuscript, consisting of 131 pages in the translator’s own handwriting, is the sole relic of this particular text.

The gift was made by representatives of the Class of 1923 to the University through John G. Palfrey, Dean of Columbia College, at a special ceremony on Dean’s Day, February 7, 1959.

**Domen-Matano gifts.** At a ceremony in the President’s Office on February 9, Mr. Mitsuo Tanaka, Japanese Consul General in New York, presented to Dr. Kirk a letter announcing a gift which will add approximately one thousand volumes of Japanese-language materials to the East Asiatic Library. Books resulting from the gift will be those specifically needed by the Library. The gift comes from Mr. Toyonobu Domen and Mr. Kensuke Matano, who were in residence at Columbia University in 1914–15 and 1920–22, respectively. Mr. Domen is Chairman of the Columbia University Education Exchange Fund Committee in Tokyo and President of the Columbia University Alumni Association, also in Tokyo. Mr. Matano is remembered also for his gift of two Japanese stone lanterns which now flank the entrance to Earl Hall.

**Friedman gifts.** Mr. Harry G. Friedman (Ph.D., 1908) has continued his splendid gifts to Columbia. Recently he has presented a group of six manuscripts and twenty-five printed books. The manuscripts include two abridgments of the Koran, written in Kufic script and dating from the 13th century or before; a beautiful Arabic Koran, written and decorated in 1734 by Mustafā Rifqi; a compendium by Nasafi of Mohammedan law according to Hanafite rite, dated 1487; a leaf from a Syriac book of prayers,
16th century; and a manuscript in French (about 1750) containing a "Petit abrégé des revolutions d'Angleterre." The printed books range from Caesar's *Commentarii* (Paris, Michael Vascosan, 1543) to a miniature edition of *De Imitatione Christi* (Paris, Gaume Fratres, 1853). Of special note is *Wiennrischer Opern-Kalender* (Vienna, Mathias Ludwigs, 1796) in a contemporary green satin embroidered binding, protected by a gold-tooled red morocco solander case, also of contemporary workmanship.

*Gift Shop* gift. Knowing of the remarkable Winston Churchill collection which has been presented to Columbia by Mr. Daniel Longwell, the Columbia University Gift Shop has presented a full-color, framed reproduction of Artur Pán's well-known portrait of Churchill, painted in 1943.

*Longwell* gift. Mr. Daniel Longwell (1922 C) has added a holograph letter to the collection of the works of Sir Winston Churchill which he recently presented to Columbia University. The letter was written by Sir Winston to his future mother-in-law, Lady Blanche Hozier, on August 18, 1908—less than a month before his marriage to Miss Clementine Hozier.

*Plimpton* gift. Mr. Francis T. P. Plimpton has added two items to the Plimpton Library: (1) a very rare work by Franciscus Vergara, *De Graecae lingua grammatica*, Compluti (Alcalá), Michael de Eguia, 1557; and (2) the fourth edition of Joseph C. Hart's *Abridgment of Geographical Exercises*, New York, 1827.

*Robinson* gift. Professor Mabel Louise Robinson (A.M., 1907; Ph.D., 1916 T.C.) presented her books, correspondence, and manuscripts to Columbia University at a special ceremony held in the Trustees' Room of Low Memorial Library on Thursday, April 2. Because of Miss Robinson's illness, the presentation was made by her friend and colleague, Miss Helen R. Hull, who taught
creative writing at Columbia from 1916 to 1955; the gift was accepted on behalf of the University by Dean Lawton P. G. Peckham. Professor William A. Owens, Dr. Michael J. Lepore, and Mrs. Ann Petry also spoke.

The occasion was highlighted by the fact that the remarks were tape-recorded, for later play-back to Miss Robinson.

_Somerville bequest._ Through the executor, Mr. Henry G. Van Veen, the Drama and Theater Collection formed by the late Professor Randolph Somerville (A.B., 1914) has been presented to Columbia University. In addition to nearly 1,600 volumes of plays and books pertaining to the drama, the collection includes Professor Somerville’s lecture notes, scripts, correspondence, about 50 framed watercolors, prints, and photographs, and a large assortment of clippings and unmounted photographs.

_Strong gift._ Mr. John L. Strong has presented two useful items which fit well into the Plimpton Library. One is a manuscript entitled “Abel Collins’ Exercises Upon Arithmetic, Commenced Dec. 1st AD 1825” and consists of 154 closely written pages filled with sums. The other volume is Roswell C. Smith’s... _Geography on the productive system; for schools, academies, and families..._ Hartford, 1843.

_Tewksbury gift._ Mrs. Donald Tewksbury and the Reverend M. Gardner Tewksbury have given the East Asiatic Library nearly 300 volumes of books and 130 periodical issues, in Chinese and in English, from the estate of the late Professor Donald Tewksbury (A.B., 1920; A.M., 1921 T.C.) of Teachers College. The material is primarily on Communist China and especially its political ideologies.

_Witmark gift._ Mr. Julius P. Witmark (B.S., 1925) has made a most generous gift to his Alma Mater, by presenting his collection
of sixty-two published musical scores of operettas and musical comedies, mostly of the period 1900 to 1910. Most of these scores have been autographed by the various members of the casts, by the authors, and by the producers. Among the items is Richard Wagner's *Parsifal* in an English translation by H. and F. Corder, piano score by R. Kleinmichel, as presented at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1903. The program of the first performance is tipped in, and the volume is autographed by the conductor and various members of the cast. Also in the collection is Puccini's *The Girl of the Golden West*, 1910, autographed by Puccini, Enrico Caruso, Toscanini, and 18 other members of the cast. Other notable scores bearing important signatures are: Herbert's *Babes in Toyland*, 1903, *Mlle. Modiste*, 1905, and *The Princess "Pat,"* 1915; Hoschna's *Bright Eyes*, 1909, and *Madame Sherry*, 1910; and Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*, 1906, and *Tosca*, 1905.
Photograph of the Sholom Aleichem Centennial exhibit, which was on display in Butler Library in March, 1959, showing varied aspects of his voluminous editorial, literary, and artistic work.
Activities of the Friends

Meetings

_Bancroft Awards Dinner._ On Wednesday, April 22, approximately 200 members of our organization and their guests met for the culminating event of the academic year—the Bancroft Awards Dinner which was held in the Men’s Faculty Club. Mr. August Heckscher, past Chairman of our association, presided in place of Mr. Barrett who was unable to be present.

During the program, President Kirk announced the winners of the prizes for the two books judged by the Bancroft Prize Jury to be the best published in the field of American history during 1958: _The Americans: The Colonial Experience_, by Daniel J. Boorstin, and _Henry Adams: The Middle Years_, by Ernest Samuels. He presented a $3,000 check to each of the authors, who responded with short addresses. Mr. Heckscher presented certificates to Mr. Jess Stein, Editor of Random House, and to Mr. Thomas J. Wilson, Director of Belknap Press of Harvard University, the publishers, respectively, of the two award-winning books. The principal speaker for the occasion was Dr. Harold C. Syrett, Professor of History at Columbia University and Executive Director of the Hamilton Papers Project, who spoke with high good humor about some of the problems and incongruities involved in such a major editorial project.

As Mr. Heckscher said at the conclusion of the program, this seemed to be one of the most richly enjoyed of the series of award dinners. Mrs. Albert M. Baer of the Friends’ Council was Chairman of the Committee which made the arrangements.
Activities of the Friends

Election of Officers

Since the two-year term of Mr. Barrett as Chairman expired in January, the Council at its meeting on February 2, 1959, discussed arrangements to be made for the Chairmanship during the new two-year period. One of the Council members, who had been urged to accept nomination for the Chairmanship, indicated that he would not be able to have his name presented in 1959–60 because of business and personal commitments. As an interim measure and with Mr. Barrett’s concurrence, the Council voted to extend the latter’s term as Chairman for another year.

At the meeting of the Council held on May 4, Professor Lewis Leary was elected Vice Chairman to succeed Mrs. Donald Hyde whose term of office also expired at the Annual Meeting of the Friends in January.

The nominations for both offices were made by an ad hoc committee of which Mr. August Heckscher was Chairman.

Finances

As has been our custom in the May issue of Columns, we are publishing below the annual statement as to the amount which has been contributed by the Friends during the twelve-month period ending on March 31. During the year $5,516.20 in unrestricted funds and $8,811.00 for specified purposes were received, making a total of $14,327.20. The total cash gifts from the Friends over the past eight years now amount to $148,122.76.

In addition to the monetary gifts, the Friends have during the year augmented the Libraries resources for research by presenting rare books, manuscripts, and other items which have an estimated value of $13,299.25. This brings the eight-year total of such gifts to $236,469.99. (The principal items have been described in “Our Growing Collections.”)
Activities of the Friends

The comparative figures for contributions by our members during the past years is indicated in the following table.

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* December 1950–March 31, 1952. Subsequent years begin April 1 and end March 31. As of March 31, our association had 369 members.
CREDITS

The opening lines of the Koran which are reproduced in translation on page 33 are printed through the courtesy of The Heritage Press.
THE FRIENDS OF THE COLUMBIA LIBRARIES

PRIVILEGES

Invitations to exhibitions, lectures and other special events.
Use of books in the reading rooms of the libraries.
Opportunity to consult librarians, including those in charge of the specialized collections, about material of interest to a member. (Each Division Head has our members’ names on file.)
Opportunity to purchase most Columbia University Press books at 20 per cent discount (through the Secretary-Treasurer of the Friends).
Free subscriptions to Columbia Library columns.

*   *   *

CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP

Annual. Any person contributing not less than $10.00 per year (dues may be waived for officers of the University).
Contributing. Any person contributing not less than $25.00 a year.
Sustaining. Any person contributing not less than $50.00 a year.
Benefactor. Any person contributing not less than $100.00 a year.
Checks should be made payable to Columbia University. All donations are deductible for income tax purposes.

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