

science which he had presumably taught himself, and there was certainly no shadow of scandal at the time in his honorable career.

The life is written in popular style, and is not set forth as systematically as one would like; it is nonetheless convincing. A genealogy of the Vespucci would help, as would certainly the text of the voyage documents; and the case for the first voyage should have been made more explicit, at least as much so as it can be made in the absence of official documents. For the content, the author has made good use of recent scholarship, especially the work of the Argentine scholar Levillier (*América la Bien Llamada*, 1948), which establishes the first voyage as fact by showing its immediate influence on current maps. The value of the biography under review lies first in its introduction of this scholarship to the English reader, and second in its setting of the voyages against the background of the Spanish court and of the complex trading enterprises of Spain and Portugal. This latter value it shares with recent authoritative studies of Balboa and Magellan, and it is clear that this social context is essential to an understanding of the discoveries.

QUEENS COLLEGE

George B. Parks

R. J. Mitchell. *John Free. From Bristol to Rome in the Fifteenth Century*. London and New York: Longmans, 1955. xii + 157 pp. \$4.50.

Miss Mitchell continues her studies of English students in Italy in the fifteenth century with this life of a promising scholar who died young. The value of the book is less in the biography proper, since the facts known are too scanty to prove either that John Free, though a student of Guarino, was in fact an accomplished scholar, or that he was really named to a bishopric at 35. Its value lies rather in the background of university life in England and Italy which the author describes vividly, from new documents.

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## *Library News*

In a recent issue of *Renaissance News* (VIII [Autumn 1955], 170), mention was made of the first book printed by Christopher Plantin: *La institutione di una fanciulla nata nobilmente* by Giovanni Michele

Bruto (1515-94). The volume contains the original Italian text with a French translation on facing pages.

It may be of interest to readers of this journal to learn that a copy of this scarce work was recently acquired by the Pierpont Morgan Library (PML 47296). This volume belongs to the issue which has on the title page the announcement: 'EN ANVERS. Chez Jehan Bellère, à l'enseigne du Faucon. Auec Priuilege.' The colophon reads: 'De l'Imprimerie de Chr. Plantain [sic]. 1555.'

Curt F. Bühler

## Conferences

THE NEWBERRY CONFERENCE ON RENAISSANCE STUDIES will be held at the Newberry Library in Chicago on Saturday, April 7, 1956, at 10 a.m. The following will be the speakers and topics: Clyde L. Manschreck (Duke), 'Distinctive Elements in the Reformation Philosophy of Education'; Jean Hagstrum (Northwestern), 'Some Relationships of Painting and Poetry in Sixteenth-Century Italy'; Albert Hyma (University of Michigan), 'Erasmus in England'; Harold J. Grimm (Indiana), 'The Sermon of the Protestant Reformers'; Frank L. Huntley (University of Michigan), 'The Sermons of Thomas Lushington'. An English translation by William Ballard of *Il Festino Nella Sera Del Giovedì Grasso Avanti Cena* (Op. xviii, 1608) (*Entertainment on the Evening of Fat Thursday before the Last Supper*), a madrigal comedy by Adriano Banchieri, will be sung by the Northwestern University Chamber Singers, William Ballard, Director. There will be an exhibit of prints illustrating sixteenth-century madrigal performance. The Library cordially invites the members of the conference to an assembly in the Fellows Room following the program. For further information, write Professor Z. S. Fink, Chairman of the Conference, at the Department of English, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.

THE RENAISSANCE CONFERENCE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION will hold its first meeting at Stanford University, Stanford, California, on April 21, 1956, to organize the group for annual meetings. The first conference is being arranged by Professors Fran-