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LUMIÈRES

THE BIBELOT AND THE PHILISTINE

The history of printing in the United States is populated with many interesting characters. Two of these are men who both began to print books for the collector's market around the turn of the nineteenth century. The products of both are to be found in many home libraries and collections which date from the 1895-1920 period. One such collection was given recently to the Middleton Library. In it were about twenty Elbert Hubbard/Roycroft items and seven volumes published by Thomas Bird Mosher.* Both the Roycroft and Mosher items are collectible today, with some titles bringing considerable prices.

A glance at the physical appearance and the subject matter of Roycroft books versus Mosher books would lead one to think that Elbert Hubbard and Thomas Bird Mosher would be a study in contrasts. The similarity lies in the fact that both men, in approximately the same time period, were highly successful at catering to the American reading public with especially designed and produced collector's volumes.

Elbert Hubbard had an extremely successful business career in advertising and a partnership with his brother-in-law in the Larkin Soap Company. He sold his interest in 1893, at the age of 37, to become a writer. He was unsuccessful as a novelist, but in 1894, while on a visit to England, he talked with William Morris and was much impressed with the philosophy of the arts and crafts movement and the products of Morris and Co. Hubbard decided to undertake a similar operation in East Aurora, New York. The word "Roycroft" which means "King's Craftsmen" was chosen for the East Aurora enterprise.

In 1895, Hubbard began to publish *The Philistine; a Periodical of Protest*. It became one of the most successful of the small format magazines published around this time with as many as 200,000 subscribers. *The Philistine* was pure Hubbard written in an informal

style which established rapport with the reader. It was a personal soapbox for his philosophy and satire. In it he belittled all editors who had turned him down. His detractors thought the periodical aptly named as its subscribers fitted Matthew Arnold's definition of Philistines—the anti-intellectual and uncultured middle class. Included in *The Philistine* was the first publication of "A Message to Garcia," the essay which made Hubbard sensationally famous.

The philosophy of "A Message to Garcia" is that everyone should be concerned about doing his job well without question or protest. In the essay, a man named Rowan is declared the real hero of the Spanish-American War because he carried a message from President McKinley to the leader of the Cuban rebels in the mountains. He did not ask how to accomplish the mission when given the assignment—he just proceeded to carry it out. "A Message to Garcia" was adopted by big business; it was translated into many languages and made Hubbard much in demand on the lecture circuit.

Hubbard was a controversial figure. He was not an intellectual; he was an entrepreneur and supporter of big business. His personal philosophy was self-reliance, initiative, and hard work. Viewed today, his greatest talent lay in advertising. He was able to parlay a personal philosophy into a credo which many in his time adopted as their own. Hubbard capitalized on his own fame to attract talented workers to East Aurora. His periodicals carried advertisements for the books and crafts produced in the Roycroft shops. For years, thousands of visitors flocked to East Aurora to see the Roycroft compound. The advertising reminds one of the promotional spins-off created from Disney, the Muppets, or Star Wars enterprises. So successful was the Hubbard-built Roycroft shop that after he and his wife died on the *Lusitania* in 1915, a son was able to continue the Roycrofts another twenty-three years using the same products and promotional methods.

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The books produced in the Roycroft printing shop were either reprints of classics or writings by or about Hubbard. These books were not outstanding in typography or design. They were printed on heavy deckle-edged paper with art nouveau designs and various types of binding. Some were bound in a chamois leather. The Roycroft books looked very different from trade books of the time and appealed to an audience which wanted "special editions".

Besides books, the Roycrofters produced furniture, lamps, picture frames, leather goods, and copper and silver items, all of which bore the Roycroft trademark. There was even a Roycroft Kandy Kitchen!

SONNETS
FROM THE PORTUGUESE
BY ELIZABETH BARRETT
BROWNING



Portland, Maine
THOMAS B. MOSHER
Mlccciv

A title page from a book produced by Thomas Mosher showing the simplicity of the Mosher publications.

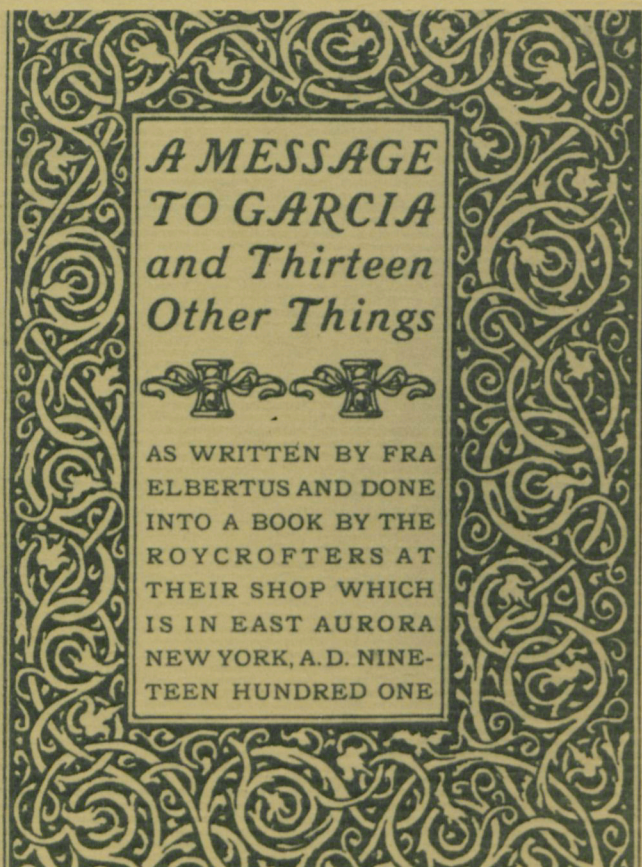
In the same year as the inauguration of *The Philistine*, another small format magazine was begun by Thomas Bird Mosher. *The Bibelot* was a literary magazine consisting of reprints of prose and poetry. There were no editorials or philosophical essays aimed at shaping subscribers beliefs. Just as *The Philistine* mirrored its publisher so did *The Bibelot* in its contents reflect Mosher's aims as a publisher: to bring readers the best literature at modest prices.

Thomas Bird Mosher had not enjoyed a successful career in any field when he turned to publishing at age 39. Yet he, like Elbert Hubbard, was able to sense a market for the kind of books he wanted to produce. All of the Mosher editions were of classical and contemporary authors designed by Mosher and printed in Portland, Maine, where he lived. They varied in size but were usually small books. Most were printed on fine Van Gelder handmade papers with covers of Japan vellum. Red ink was used on the title pages. These books have an elegant simplicity which bespeaks great care in their production. Each edition was limited and they were very popular as gifts.

Mosher did not lead the promotional public life of Elbert Hubbard. But Mosher was a good salesman also. Early in his publishing career he developed a list for direct-mail selling as a means of reaching book buyers. And when controversy came he could turn it to his advantage. At that time the U.S. copyright laws did not apply to foreign authors and it was common practice for U.S. publishers to appropriate their works without permission or royalty payment. Mosher became known as the "Portland Pirate" for this practice, and during several episodes of public attention Mosher adroitly escalated the situation for publicity purposes.

Although the personal styles of Elbert Hubbard and Thomas Bird Mosher differed and the books they published reflect these differences, both men and their publications found an eager market with the reading public of the 1895-1915 era. Their books reflect the reading habits and personal tastes of the public at the time and are collected today because of these same characteristics.

Anna H. Perrault
Humanities Bibliographer



The title page from the most famous publication from the Roycroft print shop, *A Message to Garcia*. The art nouveau border design is typical of the Roycroft publications.

*From a collection given by Claude M. Brooks in memory of Marion Overton Brooks.

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BOOK BAZAAR NEWS

Occupying center stage in the fund-raising activities of the *Friends of the LSU Library* is the annual Book Bazaar held at Bon Marche Mall. The 1981 Book Bazaar was again a hit.

Upstaging the totals of all previous sales, the 1981 figure in the limelight is a profit of over \$27,000. The producer of the 1981 show was Book Bazaar chairman Mrs. Charles Bryant Smith with assistant chairman Mrs. Warren David Millican, secretary Mrs. D. O. Spann, and treasurer Mrs. Raymie Edmons. Those playing supporting roles were book collections chairman Mrs. Charles Prosser and co-chairman Mrs. Don Bell; Book Barn chairman Mrs. R. Gordon Kean with Mrs. Eugene Owen, co-chairman; book transport chairman Mrs. Robert Stuart and assistant chairman Mrs. H. T. Bradford. Sales were directed by Mrs. John Keenon, chairman, with co-chairman Mrs. T. Warren Ogden (arrangements) and Mrs. Joseph S. Simmons (floor-coordinator).

The back-stage crew was supervised by stock room chairman Mrs. John Gonce. Casting was handled by the staffing chairman Mrs. John N. Carmena with Mrs. Donald Harrison and Mrs. John M. West III, assistant chairmen. Front-office operations were performed by hospitality chairman Mrs. Lewis W. Eaton, Jr., and Miss Barbara Ann Eaton. The information desk was under the direction of Mrs. Leslie McKenzie and Mrs. Robert Holtman acted in publicity. The scrapbook chairman is Ms. Sandra Mooney and library liaison is Mrs. Kenneth Kahao.

All of these hard working crew members and all of the volunteers for the three sale days deserve a round of applause. Because of their dedication, the *Friends of the LSU Library* organization has enjoyed another smash hit of a year.



Book Barn chairman Mrs. R. Gordon Kean is photographed with celebrity visitor Mrs. Elizabeth Stone, 1981 president of the American Library Association, and 1981 Book Bazaar chairman Mrs. Charles Bryant Smith.



Stock room chairman Mrs. John Gonce and helper are spotlighted with more books to keep the tables full.



Friend of the Library and Civil War-buff Powell Casey is helped at the southern books table by sales chairman Mrs. John Keenon and Mrs. John M. West III.

ELLA V. ALDRICH SCHWING – LIBRARY BENEFACTRESS

In the spring of 1982, the LSU Library Lecture Series will mark a milestone with the delivery of the fiftieth lecture in the series. To observe this occasion, its name has been changed to honor the benefactress of the series, Mrs. Ella V. Aldrich Schwing.

The LSU Library Lecture Series has been funded entirely by Mrs. Schwing since 1966. A total of 49 lecturers, including some of the foremost practitioners in American librarianship, have delivered papers on topics of interest to librarians, library educators, and the academic community. Publication of the lectures in *Library Lectures* is also sponsored by Mrs. Schwing.

The generosity of this gracious lady from Plaquemine toward libraries does not stop with the sponsorship of the lecture series. Mrs. Schwing was one of the initial contributors of the LSU Library Endowment Fund and was its major benefactor for many years through the donation of royalties from her book *Using Books and Libraries*. The bald cypress paneling in the Louisiana Room of the Middleton Library was given by Mrs. Schwing in memory of her husband, Calvin Kendrick Schwing. She has also made gifts to the LSU Library of paintings and books. Other libraries in the Baton Rouge area also have benefited from her generosity.

The intense interest Mrs. Schwing has maintained in the quality of the LSU Library springs from her years as a librarian at LSU, a faculty member in the LSU Library School, as head of the Books and Libraries Department, and as a member of the LSU Board of Supervisors. The books and libraries curriculum was developed by Mrs. Schwing and received nationwide attention at the time as an innovative program in the instruction of students in the use of university libraries. Her book *Using Books and Libraries* was written as a textbook for this program.

As a member of the LSU Board of Supervisors in the early 1950's Mrs. Schwing was a vocal advocate for a new library building at LSU. When construction funds were finally appropriated, she celebrated the success of the building campaign by serving on several planning committees and donating funds for the purchase of paneling for the Louisiana Room.

In 1974 Mrs. Schwing was presented an honorary doctorate in library science by the University. During her academic career she earned a B.A. in chemistry and an M.A. in comparative literature from LSU. She received a B.S. in library science from Columbia University, and another honorary degree in civil law from the University of the South.

Among Mrs. Schwing's professional activities were terms as Louisiana Library Association President and on the ALA Council. She is a life member of the American Library Association and a member of the board of the *Friends of the LSU Library*. She is a former member of the Board of Supervisors and a past regional director of the Association of Governing Boards of State Colleges and Universities. Other civic and philanthropic activities include serving as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation and Episcopal High School, the Board of Trustees of the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc., the Board of Trustees of the Baton Rouge Little Theater, the Board of Directors of the Baton Rouge Gallery, and the Board of Directors of the Young Women's Christian Organization.



Mrs. Ella V. Aldrich Schwing has served as the sponsor of the LSU Library Lecture Series since 1966. To honor Mrs. Schwing for her generous support and outstanding contributions to the Middleton Library and to the University, the name of the series has been changed to the Ella V. Schwing Library Lecture Series.

The *Friends of the LSU Library* wish to acknowledge the contributions Mrs. Schwing has made to the field of librarianship through her sponsorship of the lecture series and to recognize Mrs. Schwing for her support of the LSU Library endowment fund and other gifts. Among those many generous individuals who have contributed to and who continue to support the LSU Library she is an outstanding example.

Caroline Wire
Assistant to the Director

A Reminder

At the spring 1981 meeting of the Friends' Executive Board, it was decided that dues would be placed on a calendar-year schedule. Renewal notices, along with forms for gift memberships to the Friends, were mailed out in November.

Please remember to renew your membership. At the same time, why not give a year of delight to an acquaintance or relative who is a book lover? Each member of the Friends will receive a Christmas gift as will all recipients of gift memberships.

TRAITÉ DE FAUCONNERIE—TRÈS PRÉCIEUX LIVRE

The E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection of the Middleton Library, widely known for its outstanding resource materials in the form of rare natural history books, has recently acquired another volume to add to its already prestigious collection.



One of the lithographic plates of life-sized birds which appears in *Traité de Fauconnerie*.

The work, entitled *Traité de Fauconnerie*, is a finely illustrated and authoritative treatise on falconry as it was practiced in Europe through the nineteenth century. Published in Leiden between 1844-1853, it combines the scholarship expertise of A. H. Verster de Wulverhorst and Hermann Schlegel with the exceptional artistic talent of Joseph Wolf. This volume, one of no more than fifty remaining copies, is considered a classic work, the finest of all books on falconry.

Wulverhorst, who in 1838 was Inspector General of Hunting in the Netherlands and who had authored other books on field sports, instigated the project of producing the book, and relied heavily on the expertise of H. Schlegel, a professional ornithologist employed at the Rijksmuseum. To illustrate the work, Schlegel commissioned an unknown but extremely talented ornithological artist, Joseph Wolf. Wolf's illustrations in the *Traité* were instrumental in assuring his future as one of the foremost bird illustrators of all time.

The *Traité* is a major work of scholarship with great reference value to researchers. Contained in its text are discourses on the ancient terminology of falconry, an account of the instruments used in the sport, and information on the training of falcons—all based on the expertise of the recognized authorities of the day. Schlegel also included a natural history of the species of birds used for the sport of falconry as well as an historical survey of the literature from ancient times.

The volume's hand-colored lithographic plates of life-sized birds are considered by many to be the finest plates of falcons ever published.

Traité de Fauconnerie was purchased with funds from an anonymous donor. It may be seen in the McIlhenny Collection weekdays between 8 A.M. and 4:30 p.m.

Kathryn Morgan
E. A. McIlhenny Natural History Collection

Memorials

In memory of:

Mrs. Lonie Barie
by Claudia Browning, Kathy Easthope, Ann Lee,
Renee Nesbitt, Arthur Roberts, Geraldine Solite,
and Robert Wooten

Miss Lucy B. Foote
by Miss May E. Olson

Dr. Nelson A. Hauer
by Mrs. Dorothy B. Borth

Mrs. Aline Persac
by The Book Club

Mr. Wyatt A. Pickens
by Chancellor Emeritus and Mrs. Cecil G. Taylor

Mrs. Karl D. Reyer
by Mrs. Marion Keen and daughters; Dr. and Mrs.
James W. Reddoch; The Thirty-niners Book Club

Lt. Leroy A. Swain
by Ms. Renee Nesbitt

Mrs. Alexis Voorhies, Jr.
by Dr. and Mrs. Paul W. Murrill

Yancey Woodside White
by Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Millican

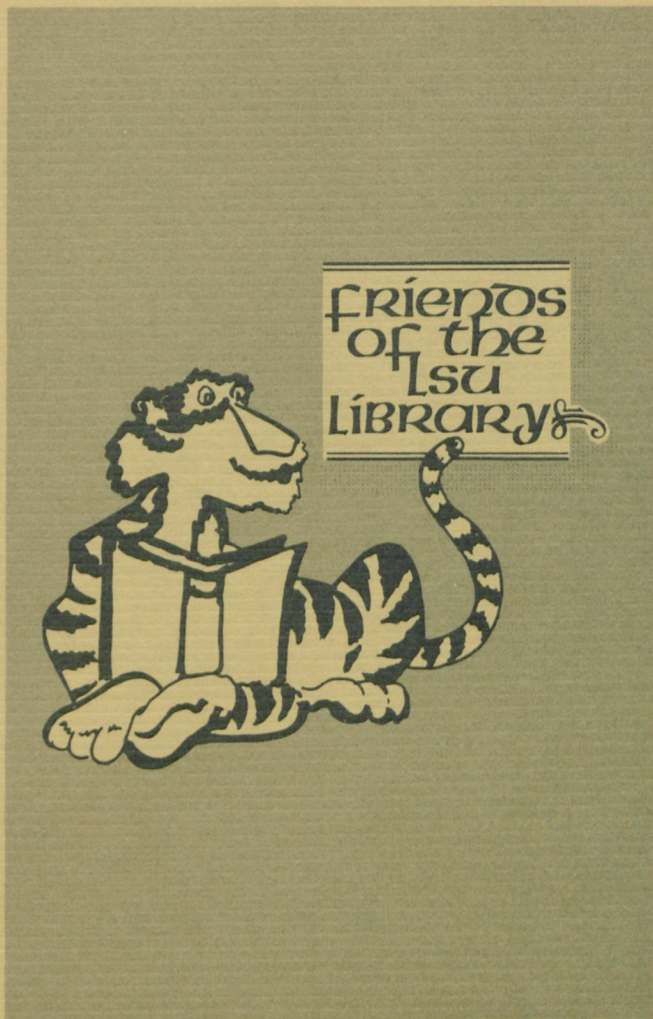
Miss Rachel Wildman
by Dr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Kirby

LUMIÈRES

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131 Pleasant Hall, Louisiana State University Anna Perrault, editor

Volume 6 Number 2

Literally "lights" in French, lumières is frequently used to denote enlightenment or knowledge. As such, it illustrates the purpose of the newsletter: to enlighten members of the Friends of the LSU Library with news of the organization and with needs of the LSU Library. The cover design is based on an exquisite hand-illuminated border from a 15th century French religious manuscript.



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