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A REMARKABLE COLLECTION.

Some of the Features of the Riant Library—A Suggestion.

To the Editor of the Yale Alumni Weekly:—

Sir: In the pages of the Yale Alumni Weekly early this year the needs of the University Library were clearly stated and discussed. Action to meet some of these needs has been taken both by the Corporation and by individuals not having official relations with the University, who have made gifts. I desire to present a fuller statement than has yet been made concerning one of the more considerable and important of these individual gifts, that of a collection of books relating to Scandinavia, forming a portion of the library of the late Count Paul Riant.

Count Riant was born at Paris in 1836 and died at St. Moritz in Switzerland in December, 1888. Ill-health compelled him to reside for the greater part of his life, not in Paris but in Italy or Switzerland. He was a man of wide and exact learning in the large and curiously diversified field to which with strenuous persistence he gave the labor of his entire life. This field was the history—in the large sense, but based upon infinite details—of the Crusades and of Christian institutions in the Latin Orient, the countries east and north of the eastern part of the Mediterranean. For the degree of docteur es-lettres, taken in 1865, he prepared two theses, which were in reality extensive, learned works, that characterize his intellectual interests and explain how he came to make so large and rich, that portion of his library which is now here. The thesis in French treated of the expeditions and pilgrimages of the Scandinavians to the Holy Land in the times of the Crusades. The thesis in Latin dealt with Haymarus, Archbishop of Caesarea and later Patriarch of Jerusalem, and his poem on the taking of Acre in the year 1191.

From about 1873 on, Count Riant published in quick succession the fruits of his researches,—editions of original sources, with valuable introductory essays and comment. In 1875 he founded the Society of the Latin Orient and as its Secretary until his death, may be said himself to have been the Society. Of its publications about ten volumes have been issued, containing "careful editions of the earliest itineraries of travelers and pilgrims to Palestine, descriptions of the Holy Land, and other large texts from early writers."

Count Riant also created the Archives of the Latin Orient, a publication of which two thick volumes appeared in 1881 and 1885. He published many papers in the *Memoirs of the (French) Society of Antiquaries*, in the *Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions* and in learned periodicals both in and out of France. He left several large works incomplete, of the chief of which on the Bishopric of Bethlehem, a large first volume appeared in 1888. In 1879 Count Riant was made a member of the Institute, being then elected to the Academy of Inscriptions and he also was a member of many foreign academies.

SECURING THE LIBRARY.

Of Count Riant's library, the portion relating more particularly to Scandinavia, was offered for sale in Paris early in the summer. The

THE OLD LIBRARY.

TREASURY BUILDING.

NORTH COLLEGE.



INTERIOR OF CAMPUS SINCE DESTRUCTION OF OLD CHAPEL.

[From photograph by Pach.]

books were arranged in lots for sale at auction if necessary, and a catalogue was printed. As soon as this catalogue, a large octavo of over 400 pages, reached Mr. Van Name, together with a letter stating that the collection could be had entire, he saw what an extraordinary offer was here made. Fortunately a wise and generous patron of the Library was quickly reached, on whose account the purchase was at once concluded by cable. Delay would have been disastrous, for immediately thereafter two acceptances from Sweden were received in Paris, one being from the leading antiquarian book store in Stockholm. This is conclusive evidence of the money value of this collection.

This gift contains very nearly five thousand one hundred, bound and five hundred unbound volumes, and sixteen thousand dissertations and theses. These dissertations are in date earlier than 1852 and come from the universities and learned schools of Sweden and Finland and from Swedes living abroad; accompanying them is a printed bibliography in four volumes. Of the book proper, one must say that rarely is so large a collection clothed so well; almost everything is finely bound and there are very many beautiful and costly bindings, among them not a few signed.

Contents are, however, more important than covers, and this collection relates to fields in which the University Library was not rich before,—in general to the history and geography of Scandinavia, travels in the northern lands, colonization therefrom, the Old Norse (Icelandic) lan-

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YALE MAY BE TAXED.

Attitude of the Assessors—The Matter Discussed.

It has recently been announced that the Assessors of the Town of New Haven have listed those portions of the property of Yale University, which they assert are not directly used for educational purposes. This question has never been before agitated with any great degree of seriousness, but it now bids fair to become one of great importance to Yale, and to bring in its train a long series of law suits and appeals to the highest courts. Yale College has never before been taxed for any of its buildings on the Campus, nor for the Dining Hall, Gymnasium, Laboratories, or White and Berkeley Dormitories on the new Campus, these extensions being exempted without question. The erection of Pierson Hall, however, on York Street, probably brought the question more forcibly before the notice of the Assessors and they referred the matter to Mr. Goodhart, the Town Counsel, for decision. Mr. Goodhart's opinion is in substance as follows:

The liability of the Corporation to pay taxes depends upon the character of the corporation and the statute laws of this state.

The General Statutes, Section 3,620, provides among other things that "buildings or portions of buildings exclusively occupied as colleges, shall be exempt from taxation."

A "college" is a literary institution, or an institution for the purpose of study and learning. It is a society of schools incorporated for the purpose of study and instruction. It is not, and does not in-

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Yale Men in the Princeton Parade.

Last week Prof. H. P. Wright received a letter from the Princeton Sesquicentennial committee inviting 24 Yale undergraduates to take part in the torch light parade, held last night, (Oct. 21), at Princeton in honor of the 150th anniversary of that College. The invitation was promptly accepted and at meetings held to choose the men who should represent Yale, delegations were chosen of twelve from the Academic Senior class and twelve others from the Scientific Senior class, as follows:

Academic—G. C. Brooke, H. G. Campbell, T. L. Clarke, H. S. Coffin, G. P. Day, C. E. Hefflefinger, A. B. Kerr, T. W. Miller, Dean Sage, J. P. Sawyer, N. A. Smyth, D. V. Sutphin.

Scientific—E. H. Brewer, E. W. Carlton, W. O. D. Cox, Jr., J. D. Francis, R. S. Kilborne, T. M. Laughlin, H. W. Letton, J. J. Miller, J. H. Porter, H. L. Rogers, S. S. Spencer, Jr., C. Colgate.

Sophomore Deacons Elected.

The Sophomore class met last week to elect permanent deacons. Eight men were nominated on the informal ballot. The men nominated with the number of ballots they received, were as follows: D. H. Day 96, C. H. Welles, Jr., 94, W. F. B. Berger 81, W. M. Wheeler 80, N. C. Holland 37, G. W. Brown 30, L. Cogswell, Jr., 24, H. J. Nichols 23. The men elected were: Dwight Huntington Day of Indianapolis, 198; Charles Hopkins Welles, Jr., of Scranton, Pa., 163; William Mersereau Wheeler of Portville, N. Y., 99; and Walter Frederick Bart Berger of Denver, Col., 93.