A NEW OXFORD BOOK OF 1517.

BMBEDDED in a British Museum tract-book (C. 37. c. 44), between a 'Libellus sophistarum ad vsum Oxoniē', printed by De Worde, which wants at least the last leaf, and a 'Tractatus de quinque vniuersalibus' printed by Pynson, which wants its title, there lies a hitherto unrecorded Oxford book, which must be one of the earlier productions, perhaps the earliest at present known, of the second Oxford press. Like its bedfellows on either side, the tract is imperfect, wanting the last leaf, so that in pre-historic times it and the title-less Pynson which follows it appear to have been regarded as all one book. Its own title is fortunately preserved, and is here transcribed:

¶ Compilatū est hoc opusculum insolubilium secundū vsum
 ī signis Schole parui fii alma vniuersitate. Oxonie ¶ pro no-
 uellis studentibus in sophistica ad eorum ingeni- ¶ orum
 acumina subtili inuestigacione dirigenda ¶

[Woodcut of the arms of the University.] ¶ ¶ ¶ Insignia
 alme vniuersitatis Oxonie. ¶ A.i.

The wood block of the university arms is from the same block as that used for Burley's 'Tractatus expositorius super libros posteriorum Aristotilis' of 1517 (Madan's 'Early Oxford Press,' plate vi.), and for the 'Questiones moralissime super libros Ethicorum' of Joannes Dedicus of 1518. In both

these books there is a flaw in the lower border-line of the block, and the edge of the book, which, with the three crowns, forms the arms, is in one place damaged, so that it only just catches the ink. The block as used in the newly found 'Insolubilia' is free from both these defects, and can thus hardly be later than the Burley of 4th December, 1517, hitherto regarded as the first book from this press, with the 'Dedicus,' of 15th May, 1518, as the second.

The tract should apparently consist of four leaves, of which the Museum copy has the first three. It has the running headline 'Sophistica insolubiliū / ad vsum Oxoniēfiū,' and three capitals of different sets. The first of these is a gothic J with a bird standing on one leg and poking its bill into the angle formed by the upper projection and the stem. This belongs to the same set as the V in the beginning of the 'Dedicus,' and measures 21 by 14 mm. The second capital is a small (13 by 13 mm) F, white on a dotted background, with three black ornaments in the white. The third is a small lombardic F, 9 mm. in height. The paragraph-marks and the two types (92? and 54 mm. to 20 lines) are the same as in the 'Dedicus.' They would appear to have been obtained from Wynkyn de Worde.

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