

SIXTEEN NATIONS UNITE TO TELL THE STORY OF BOOKS

At International Exhibition of Book Industry and Graphic Arts in Leipsic— Everything from Stone Tablet of Rameses III. to Modern Press Is Shown.

By Prof. Wilhelm Braun, Columbia University.

UNDER the sullen grandeur of the towering granite memorial to the Battle of the Nations there is spread out upon the plains of Leipsic a real World's Fair, the first international exhibition of its kind since civilization began.

"Waren Sie schon auf der Bugra?"—this is the inevitable question which meets the traveler in Germany this Summer. But the traveler will search his pocket dictionary in vain for the word; quite possibly he will guess it to be some new entomological term; the last thing that would occur to him, since it is German, is that it could be an abbreviation, but so it is. "Weltausstellung für Buchgewerbe und Graphik" has been boiled down to Bugra (pronounced boo-grah and accented on the first syllable.) The longer title stands for the International Exhibition of Book Industry and Graphic Arts.

There can be no question as to the pre-eminence of Leipsic to be the seat of such an exhibition. With its 600,000 inhabitants it now ranks fourth in size among the great cities of Germany. Science and art, commerce and industry, most important of all its book trade and production—these are the foundation stones upon which the city's extraordinary progress has been built.

The first impression which the traveler gains upon his arrival is that of an international center, for he alights in the greatest railroad station in all Europe, which is now approaching completion at a cost of about \$30,000,000.

For centuries Leipsic has maintained its lead as the headquarters of the German book industry, a circumstance which is closely connected with the city's (1409) and importance of its great university, where in their day studied Leibnitz, a Lessing, and a Goethe. It now numbers about five thousand students, with a Faculty of more than two hundred. In the Thomaskirche, where Johann Sebastian Bach was organist and his traditions are still maintained; while the "Ewandhaus" concerts under the direction of Nikisch are among the most distinguished musical events on the continent.

Upon grounds about half a mile square are arranged forty separate buildings, in which are housed the exhibits of sixteen nations. None of these buildings could be called monumental, nor was it necessary that they should be so. Without exception, however, they strike one as being well suited to their purposes. Nor has it been possible to preserve anything like uniformity of style, since almost every country which occupies a separate building has attempted to express some national characteristic in its architecture; especially the English and the Russian pavilions.

International Pavilion.

Those countries, however, which do not occupy their own buildings are grouped together in one large international pavilion. Here are the exhibits of Switzerland, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Spain. A Spanish representative showed with pride an interesting example of the technique of printing on cork. Here, under glass, was a book of about 100 pages, with leaves as thin as the most delicate India paper, printed on both sides, as in an ordinary book, and ornamented here and there with illuminated initials which had required at least five impressions; and the entire volume weighed scarcely more than a champagne cork. Its use? Just to show that it could be done. Another feature of the exhibit was an enormous lithographed poster of a tulip, which had taken place only a few weeks before, for the benefit of the schools for the poor in Spain, but also in honor of the present exhibition, and the name "Leipsic" in large letters upon the poster indicated.

Dignity, good taste, and general excellence distinguish the exhibit of the Netherlands. The representative emphasized, among other things, the fact that the house of Brill in Leyden was the only publisher who could print the famous Chinese-English dictionary by Herbert Giles, a splendid copy of which was shown. The same firm included in its display the Lord's Prayer printed in thirty-three languages requiring non-Latin type, from hieroglyphics to Chaldaean and Chinese, for the purpose of showing the great variety of characters employed by the firm in its work.

An important branch of the Dutch industry consists in superb reproductions of the great masters of art. One of the most notable of these is the famous Rembrandt Bible, a splendid specimen of book-printing. An almost priceless product is the fac simile of the "Breviarium Grimani," the famous treasure of St. Mark's Church in Ven-

ice, which the artist Memling has done in three volumes, with 500 plates in the original gold and colors, and which is published by Sijthoff in Leyden. The price of the complete work is \$1,200 per copy.

Sombre and yet capricious, with its rigorous scheme of black and white, seems the interior of the Austrian Building. Here one is impressed with the excellence of the technique in the various lithographic processes and fine art reproductions. Especially in the commercially important field of the picture postcard the Austrians are without a rival. Here, too, the interest centers in a very fine exhibit of the very earliest books and bindings. Perhaps the rarest of these are the four volumes of the Commentaries to the four Gospels, by Thomas Aquinas, from the Court Library in Vienna. Interesting, too, is the oldest Viennese wood-cut, of the year 1482.

Shakespeare Treasures.

England, in its building which suggests the classic streets of Oxford, is especially proud of its Shakespeare exhibit. One of the most interesting of the Shakespeareana is a "Hamlet" in Chinese translation, which has been loaned by the Chinese Ambassador in London. Among the oldest specimens is the First Folio edition, with the Shakespeare portrait upon the title page, while the most sumptuous is a lavishly illuminated and illustrated manuscript volume of "Romeo and Juliet," bound in Levant and set with upward of 500 pearls and rubies. The work upon this one volume occupied two years and ruined the artist's health. The manuscript is one of the finest examples of modern illuminated work in existence, and is valued at more than \$8,000.

Another feature of the British exhibit is twenty original drawings by Aubrey Beardsley, which represent a value of \$250 each. Aside from these special features, and a number of autograph letters from the pen of Lord Byron, David Livingstone, Sir Walter Scott, Thackeray, and others, the exhibit is notable for the dignified display of the standard and current productions of the great English publishers.

The French Building, in pleasing Louis XVI. style, calls special attention to two splendid Gobelin tapestries, after Raphael, loaned by the French Government from the collection in the Louvre for this exhibition. These and some very fine leather bindings are all that could be called distinctive in the French exhibit.

In all of these collections in the Street of the Nations there must inevitably be a certain amount of repetition and sameness. Not so when we enter the Halle der Kultur, a designation which is not exactly rendered by the translation Hall of Culture, since it is the part played by the graphic arts in the progress of civilization that is here brought before us. "Three Thousand Years of the Graphic Arts in the Service of Science" is the motto for this vast building, which may be regarded as the central feature of the whole exhibition.

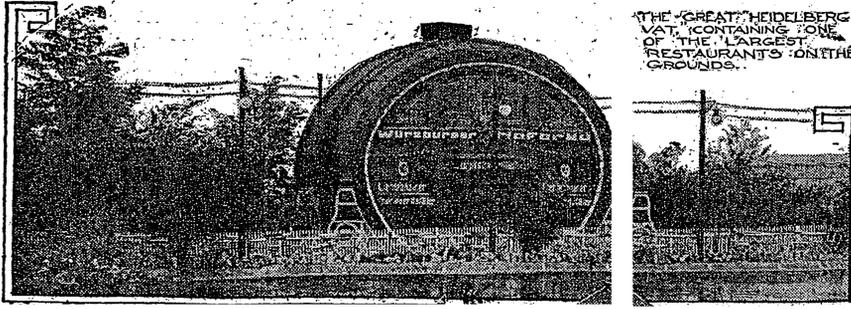
Hieroglyphics greet us from about the year 2000 B. C. A legal document from Thebes, that is to say, a stone tablet of the twenty-fourth year of Rameses III., reports the police inspection of a private tomb that had been broken open. From prehistoric times we are shown specimens of the first attempts at writing, in the Stone Age, then the Bronze Age, and then the picture writing of the Iron Age, all arranged in ethnographically correct order, down our own times. Even tattooing is counted among the graphic arts and is exhibited as a phase in their development.

Treated as a separate section is the period from the invention of mechanical manifold printing to the modern technique of printing in the nineteenth century, with its rapid rotary presses. We see the earliest attempts at printing in the fifteenth century in the form of crude woodcuts and leaflets and books not set with movable type to form a page, but each page printed from a solid block of wood, in which the text had been laboriously carved. In order especially to signalize the first use of separate type, which is attributed to Gutenberg about 1454, a special room, equipped exactly as it must have been in his day, is arranged, in which there is also shown a unique international collection of prints earlier than the year 1500.

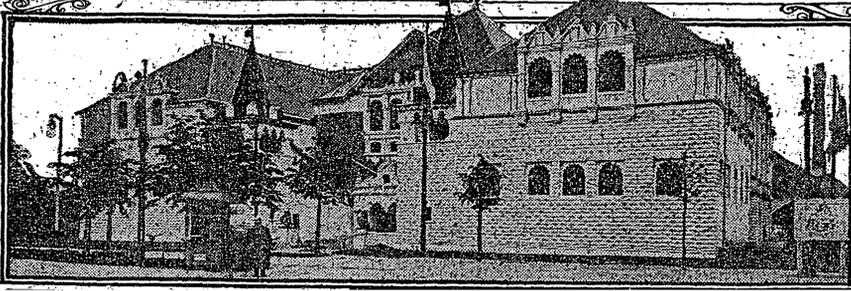
It is amazing to see the rapidity with which in the relatively brief period of fifty years the new art spread throughout Europe, bringing with it, as a matter of course, an entirely new importance to the book trade. What it meant for the whole intellectual development of Europe and of the world could not be more strikingly illustrated than in the fine collection of publications, for the most part polemic, of the time of the Reformation and the new Humanism.

Then follows the transition from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, which is marked by the appearance of the newspaper, at first in the form of loose sheets reporting current events, but with no idea of periodicity or regularity. It is a remarkable fact that from its first establishment as a regular periodical the newspaper, right down to our own times, has never relinquished its dominating position as a factor in the development of the press.

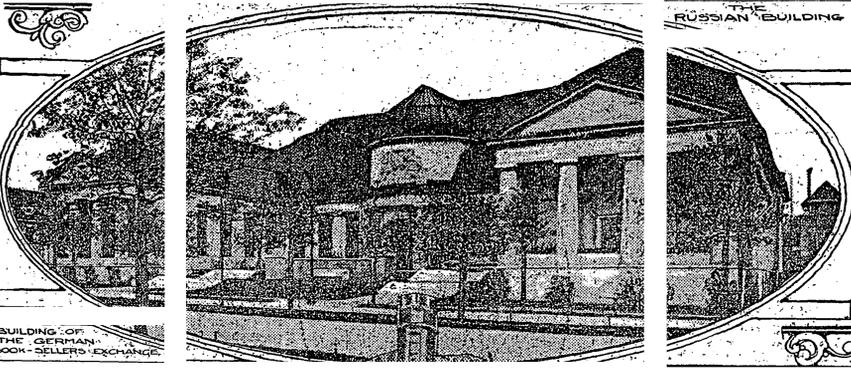
In the eighteenth century the homo-



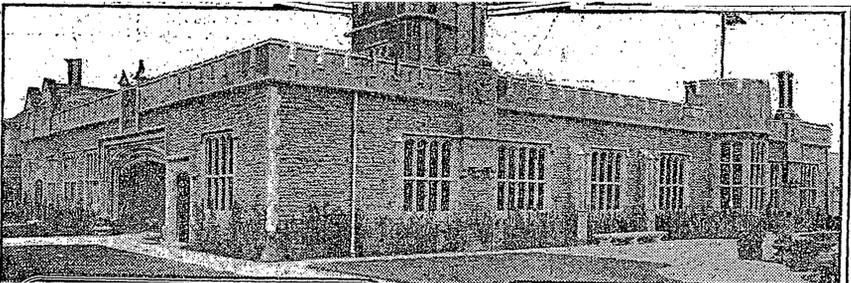
THE GREAT HEIDELBERG VAT, CONTAINING FOUNTAIN OF THE LARGEST RESTAURANTS ON THE GROUNDS.



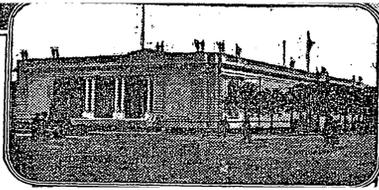
THE RUSSIAN BUILDING



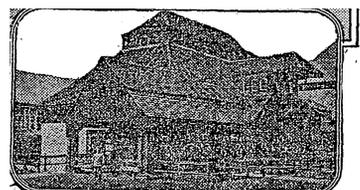
BUILDING OF THE GERMAN BOOK-SELLERS EXCHANGE



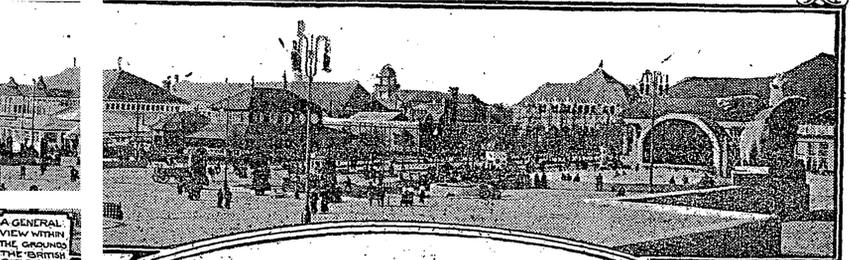
THE BRITISH BUILDING



FRENCH PAVILION



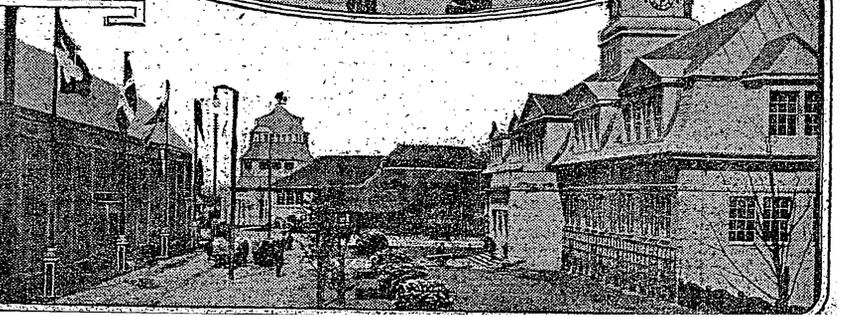
THE MEDIEVAL PAPERMILL



A GENERAL VIEW WITHIN THE GROUNDS OF THE BRITISH BUILDING IN THE CENTER



ONE OF THE RESTAURANTS



THE BUILDING DEVOTED TO THE CHILD AND THE SCHOOL TO THE LEFT, THE WALL OF THE NATIONS

ly but virile wood cut is replaced by the elegant copper plate, while it remained for the nineteenth century to devise the making of good books cheaply.

A surprisingly large space is devoted to the various branches of photography. Many of the pictures, both in the room given to amateur and to professional photography, are real works of art; while the display of color photography is probably the finest and most extensive ever seen. The cinematograph is given a prominence in due proportion to its popularity.

In another part of the building separate rooms are provided for the contemporary art of the various countries, which, however, is confined mostly to drawings and etchings. There are some half-dozen excellent pictures by Frank Brangwyn, loaned by the Galerie Arnold of Dresden, who have a separate exhibit and also show some fine works of Max Klinger, Israels, and others. Cubism and Futurism are conspicuous by their absence.

In Machinery Hall modern machinery of every kind used in the production of books and newspapers is shown. In contrast to the noiselessness of the other buildings is the constant whirring and clatter that greets us as we enter. Here is a machine which, apparently unassisted, manufactures envelopes with incredible speed and precision; over yonder another automatically wraps and seals packages of various sorts. Further along is a press for printing wall paper—an endless array.

The Old Paper Mill.

In a second section typesetting and book and newspaper printing machines are seen at work, while a third section is devoted to machinery for bookbinding. But we are so accustomed to such miracles of modern inventive ingenuity that we find a visit to the mediaeval paper mill and printing shop altogether more fascinating. This quaint old mill, with its water wheel, comes from the town of Haynsburg, near Leipsic, where it had been making paper for over two centuries. It was carefully dismantled, packed, and shipped to Leipsic and re-erected on the exhibition grounds, where it has resumed its clattering activity.

By means of this seemingly crude and dingy old wooden machinery the most exquisite and aristocratic hand-laid paper is manufactured every day for the entertainment of the visitors to the fair. And what is no less interesting, just on the other side of the passageway through the old building, this paper is then printed upon in a workshop of the old style and technique. A typesetter pours type in the manner of Gutenberg, and a printer turns out from an old hand press the most beautiful masterpieces of his art, with the interesting colored marginal decorations of the late Middle Ages.

Having now seen the gradual development of the first essential to the production of books, namely, the art of writing, and also of the secondary prerequisites, book printing and binding, there remains but one other factor, the housing and preservation of books in libraries. To this due space and attention are also devoted. It is the one field in which America may justly claim the blue ribbon, and prominence is accordingly given to the exhibits of the Library of Congress and of Columbia and Harvard Universities. The handsome photograph of Columbia University Library, conspicuously placed, calls forth much admiring comment, as does also the model of a reading room in a large branch of the Brooklyn Public Library. It is practically the only department in the entire exhibition in which America is represented.

Of fascinating interest is a series of models placed in chronological order, side by side, showing the historical development of the library. The first model, which is, of course, an imaginative reconstruction, represents the library of Assurbanipal, King of Nineveh, about the year 650 B. C. It consists of several rooms, in which the tablets of terra cotta, the books of that day, are carefully arranged in rows upon stone shelves, and resemble nothing so much as biscuits baking upon a hearth.

Then follows a model of the library at Ephesus in the year 110 A. D. The books now take the form of rolls of papyrus and are kept piled up in large pigeonholes or compartments. In a monastery library of the fourteenth century we see the brown-cowled monks sitting before their high lecterns, to which their priceless treasures, the manuscript tomes of those days, are securely chained.

Through the magnificently adorned Royal Library of Vienna, designed by Fischer in 1722, we come finally to the new Royal Library at Berlin, which represents the most modern and practical development of library construction, with provision for 4,500,000 volumes. Here the books are arranged on steel shelves in fireproof stacks eight stories high, in the manner of our own great American libraries.

Recalling Germany's prominence in the field of pedagogy, we expect to find full cognizance taken of the intimate connection between books and the graphic arts on the one hand and the school on the other. We have only to enter the spacious building bearing in large golden letters over its portal the designation "Das Kind und die Schule," which is being conveniently called the "Schulhaus," to find our expectation fully realized. In fact the exhibition claims that this is the first complete presentation of the subject that has ever been made, and that it is based, moreover, on an entirely new principle. There have been exhibits dealing with the development of child life and with various phases of pedagogy, such as school systems and school equipment, but here we have under one roof an exhaustive demonstration of the problems and the practices of pedagogy from every conceivable point of view.

A description must necessarily sound like a catalogue, and yet the building is perhaps the most interesting one on the grounds. Passing through the great entrance hall we come at once into the largest of the rooms, in which the methods for teaching the child to speak, to read, to sing, and to memorize are exemplified. Beyond are the spaces devoted to drawing and penmanship. A room devoted to the use of photography and another showing the work of the latest adjunct of the up-to-date teacher, the talking machine, complete the arrangement of the main floor.

Above we find rooms given over to school statistics and school history, both from its serious side and also under the caption "The School in Art and Caricature." A splendidly equipped laboratory of experimental psychology, with lecture-room facilities, forms the central feature of this floor. Mention must be made, however, of the rooms devoted to the physician in the school, the literature and periodicals for the young, and also to the special journals and literature of pedagogy. The idea which dominates the whole exhibit is not simply to display the graphic work of pupils or of departments, not to place various forms or systems of instruction on view side by side, but rather to follow the inner development of the child's self-expression from its earliest beginnings in order to understand its natural course, and then to study the effect of the school upon that natural course of development and thus to determine the results which may be expected from the training provided by the school.

The last serious department of this many-sided exhibition is the Woman's Building. And here let it be stated at the outset, to the credit of the non-militant German woman, that she has erected an impressive monument to her own dignity and worth. Probably in no other field of human endeavor could she have shown so diversified a participation as in the varied occupations that come under the general head of the graphic arts. And so it was the express wish of the exhibition management that her display should be housed in a separate building.

This was designed in excellent style by a woman architect in Berlin, who personally superintended its construction. The inner arrangement and the decorations, too, are without exception by women artists. Invaluable prints borrowed from monasteries and museums furnish the evidence in one section that even in the early Middle Ages women were engaged in the writing and binding of books. Another section shows women in the work of teaching the technique of these processes and of the graphic arts generally to other women. A model business office shows how indispensable the woman has made herself as the business man's assistant, especially as secretary, as stenographer and typewriter.

Upon a higher artistic plane stands the exhibit "Women in Literature," in which the best recent works by women writers are brought together. Similarly treated is the section on woman's achievement in music. Naturally the lion's share of space is devoted to women in art—that is, in the graphic arts. Examples of their best work from women of almost every European nationality are effectively arranged, and it is not difficult to see that it has been a dominant factor, especially in the development of the industrial arts. Here are designs for embroideries, for furniture, for garments, and many other industrial purposes; there we find exquisite specimens of fine bookbinding, both by hand and by machine. In photography, too, excellent work is shown, as also in the field of advertising. And then there is the team room.

There is a Midway Also.

The mention of the team room provides an easy transition from all this food for serious thought to the last frivolous fact that must be chronicled in order that truth shall be fully honored: the Bugra has a Midway! But we shall look and listen in vain for the usual side shows with their brazen-voiced barkers. There is, to be sure, one "Hour in a Turkish Harem," but it really has to behave in company so decorous. For this very unique Midway is chaperoned by an academic or students' quarter, with the charming setting of "Alt-Heidelberg." On a really impressive scale the most picturesque parts of the old Heidelberg castle have been reproduced here to provide a home for everything that pertains to the work, but more especially to the lighter side of student life.

Again we begin with the historical view. University archives and museums have loaned documents which describe the student life at universities which have ceased to exist. Another display recalls the student days of great Germans, among them Uhland, Arnim, and Blumack. Almost all the German student societies, roughly corresponding to our fraternities, with about a thousand chapters, are represented, showing their colors and costumes and all the picturesque paraphernalia which have been traditional with the German dueling student for centuries. Thus are the olden times of student life brought before our eyes, and we can see how it has changed from generation to generation. From Alt-Heidelberg it is only a step to the real amusement park, where there are restaurants, a Japanese village, a roller coaster, a dancing pavilion, and so forth.