

**CATALOGUE OF AN EXHIBITION
ILLUSTRATING THE VARIED INTERESTS OF
BOOK BUYERS 1450-1600, SELECTED MAINLY
FROM THE COLLECTIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE
CLUB OF ODD VOLUMES, AND HELD AT THE
CLUB HOUSE, 50 MT. VERNON STREET, MARCH
18 TO MARCH 26, 1922**

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Catalogue of an exhibition illustrating the varied interests of book buyers 1450-1600, selected mainly from the collections of members of the Club of Odd Volumes, and held at the Club house, 50 Mt. Vernon street, March 18 to March 26, 1922 by Club of Odd Volumes

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CLUB OF ODD VOLUMES

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BOSTON
THE CLUB OF ODD VOLUMES
1922

This Exhibition is made possible by the coöperation of the Members of the Club to whom the Committee has appealed for assistance; in particular to Messrs. Hart, Bemis, Brigham, Goodspeed, Hunnewell, Murdock, Nichols, Shillaber, Streeter, Updike, and Webster. The Club is also under obligations to Harold W. Bell, Pierre de C. La Rose, Marsden J. Perry, Bruce Rogers, and to the American Antiquarian Society.

William K. Richardson

John Woodbury

George P. Winship



THE FIRST PRINTED BOOK is known as the GUTENBERG, MAZARIN, or the FORTY-TWO LINE, BIBLE, from the Printer, the Owner of the copy which first attracted notice as being the *First Book printed from Movable Type*, or the Number of Lines on a page. The two volumes of the complete work were finished before August 15, 1456. The leaves exhibited comprise the Gospel according to St. John.

First Printed Latin Bible, Mainz, 1450-1456 I

JOHANN GUTENBERG nowhere put his name on any book with which he can be associated. The only work produced by him about which there is no reasonable controversy is the *Catholicon*, an encyclopedic compilation by JOHANNES BALBUS, dated at Mainz in 1460. Alfred W. Pollard, an honorary member of the Club, has pointed out that "We can imagine an inventor who, despite his invention, remained profoundly unsuccessful, writing the opening words of this colophon [which states that the book was produced 'by the help of the Most High . . . who oftentimes reveals to the lowly that which He hides from the wise']—and it is not easy to see their appropriateness to anyone else."

Balbus, Catholicon, Mainz, Gutenberg, 1460 2

JOHANN FUST, a Mainz banker who loaned money to Gutenberg in 1450 and 1452, and his son-in-law, PETER SCHOEFFER, the most skilful printer of his time, in 1457 possessed the equipment used in producing the First Bible. FUST & SCHOEFFER put their name and the mark showing their coats of arms at the end of nearly every book from their press. The reference to the glory which printing had conferred upon Mainz, in the colophon of the *Institutes* of JUSTINIAN, printed by Schoeffer in 1476, after Fust's death, is typical of the language they ordinarily used. They never suggested that either had any-

Justinian, Institutiones, Mainz, Schoeffer, 1476 3

thing to do with the discovery. This is significant if the invention was perfected with Fust's money and if, as is supposed, Schoeffer was the principal workman employed by the inventor.

4 *Valerius
Maximus,
Strassburg, Rusch,
c. 1471*

JOHANN MENTELIN of STRASSBURG, where Gutenberg lived from 1430 to 1448, and his son-in-law, ADOLF RUSCH, were the earliest rivals of the Mainz printers. The technical crudity of much of their work suggests that they may have acquired their training before the details of the invention had been perfected. This lack of skill is shown by two facing pages in DIONYSIUS DE BURGO's *Commentary on Valerius Maximus*, on one of which Rusch used over 300 contractions in order to get the necessary text onto the page, whereas the next has less than a quarter as many. Rusch is better known as "the R Printer," from his use of a peculiar capital R in some of the books supposed to have been printed by him. As neither he nor Mentelin ordinarily put any name, place, or date on their work, their books have to be identified by peculiarities of the type.

5 *Die Bibel in
Teutsch,
Augsburg,
G. Zainer, c. 1475*

GUNTHER ZAINER of AUGSBURG was another early competitor of the Rhine Valley printers. The Augsburg wood engravers opposed the introduction of the new method of making books cheaply, until they had been guaranteed extra work. This explains why the city became a publishing centre for vernacular literature and for illustrated books. The *German Bible* from Zainer's press, with many pictorial initials, was William Morris's copy, and was studied by him while designing the types for his KELMSCOTT PRESS. Beside it is Morris's own copy, on vellum, of the *Kelmscott Chaucer*, and also the original sketch of one of the illustrations, by BURNE-JONES. A

6 *Chaucer, Works,
London,
Kelmscott Press,
1896*

- later Augsburg book is JACOBUS PUBLICIUS, *Oratoris artis epitoma*, printed by ERHARD RATDOLT, who shows the influence of his ten years at Venice. It contains a curious alphabet and chessboard. Publicius, 7
Epitoma,
Augsburg, Ratdolt,
1490
- HILDEBRAND BRANDENBURG of Biberach was a book buyer of this early period who patronized the press by having his bookplate printed. Two volumes from his library, which he gave to the Charterhouse at Buxheim, contain this plate: the ST. BONAVENTURA printed at Cologne in 1474 and the *Sermones* of ANTONIUS DE BITONTO, from Johann Grüniger's press at Strassburg in 1496. Another plate, designed by ALBRECHT DÜRER for BILIBALDUS PIRCKHEIMER, a Nuremberg lawyer who became one of the leading scholars of the Reformation, is in a volume which illustrates the way in which German readers depended upon the Italian presses for books dealing with Renaissance subjects. This is DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSUS, *Libri Antiquitatum Romanarum*, printed at Treviso by Bernardinus Celerius in 1480. St. Bonaventura, Dieta
Salutis, Cologne,
Koelhoff, 1474 8

Bitonto,
Sermones,
Strassburg,
Grüniger, 1496 9
- CONRAD SWEYNHEYM and ARNOLD PANNARTZ, more adventurous than their fellow craftsmen, made their way to the Benedictine monastery at SUBIACO, a day's journey from Rome. There they finished the *first book printed in Italy* and perhaps the *first printed Latin Classic*, in September, 1465. Of this CICERO, *De Oratore*, a single leaf is shown. The Subiaco type is considered the most splendid used by any of the early presses. It was followed closely by Emery Walker and Sidney C. Cockerell in designing the type used by St. John Hornby in the later books from his ASHENDENE PRESS, represented by a copy on vellum of DANTE'S *Paradiso*, issued in 1905, and by the 1913 MALORY'S *Morte d'Arthur*. Dionysius,
Antiquitates,
Treviso, Bernard.
Celerius, 1480 10

Cicero,
De Oratore,
Subiaco, Sweynheym
and Pannartz, 1465 11

Dante, Para-
diso, London,
Ashendene Press,
1905 12

Malory, Morte
d'Arthur,
London, Ashendene
Press, 1913 13

14 *Bessarion,
Plato, Rome,
Sweynheym and
Pannartz, c. 1469*

SWEYNHEYM & PANNARTZ went on to ROME in 1467. There they made the important discovery that the heavy, angular gothic type, modelled on the writing of the Northern scribes, had gone out of fashion in Renaissance circles. The devotees of the new learning had adopted a more delicate, rounder letter, and they used a lighter ink. The printers promptly adapted their type and presswork to conform to the prevailing style. This type, still known as "roman," was used in the treatise of Cardinal BESSARION, *Adversus calumniatorem Platonis*, printed by them about 1469.

15 *Livy,
Decades,
Venice, Wendelin
de Spira, 1470*

JOHANN OF SPEIER, with his brother WENDELIN, introduced printing at VENICE in 1467, using a roman type that retained some of the gothic solidity. This is shown in the LIVY, *Historiae Romanae Decades*, finished by Wendelin after his brother's death. It used to be said, echoing William Morris, that no good books have been printed since the Fifteenth Century. This opinion was challenged in 1904 by the MERRYMOUNT PRESS in its TACITUS, *Opera Minora*, which was designed, with books like this Livy in mind, to be as good in type, page, paper, and presswork as any older book.

16 *Tacitus,
Opera
Minora, Boston,
Merrymount Press,
1904*

17 *Eusebius, De
evangelica
praeparatione,
Venice, Jenson, 1470*

NICHOLAS JENSON, a Frenchman, and the second printer at VENICE, produced a type for his first book, EUSEBIUS, *De evangelica praeparatione*, which has met with the highest praise—close imitation—from the time it appeared to the present day. It was copied by Emery Walker and T. J. Cobden Sanderson in the type for the latter's DOVES PRESS, and by J. F. van Royen of The Hague at his ZILVERDISTEL press, the most interesting of contemporary Continental experiments in fine printing. The Doves type was designed for a quarto page,

18 *Wimship,
William
Caxton, London,
Doves Press, 1909*