

## ENGLISH SUMMARIES

*Translated by Bent Nordhjem*

### A Mirror for the Sky – John James Audubon, a Painter in the American Wilderness

*By Jørgen Andersen*

In the first half of the 19th century the American wilderness attracted many painters and writers who undertook a description of the riches of wild life, or went to live among the Indian tribes whose existence was then being threatened by the advance of the pioneers. Disdain showed in the eyes of young *George Parkman* as he and his travelling companions, lightly equipped, passed the heavily moving columns setting out for the west.

Armed with shotgun and brush, and carrying the recently published "American Ornithology" by Wilson, *John James Audubon*, a young painter of French extraction, had set out on a mission of his own. Setting aside an unlikely career as a frontier tradesman among the settlers of Kentucky, Audubon was forced to adopt the profession of teacher and dancing master in order to provide the means for his absorbing hobby, bird-painting. Eventually he succeeded in finding patrons for a publication of his studies, and engravers who were able to reproduce them in the very large size that was required. Audubon was indefatigable in pursuit of his mission, and religiously moved by the splendours of wild life provided for the inspiration and delectation of man by the benevolent Lord of Creation.

A selection of Audubon's own writings in translation contains extracts from the bird biographies and diaries: Methods of hunting the Wild Turkey, methods of bird portraiture, the vivid description of a huntsman preparing his gun, an estimate of the numbers and habits of the passenger pigeon, and a description of the happy meeting with Thomas Bewick in England. The illustrations show the artistic range of Audubon, from the full-page setting provided for the Barn Owl to the superb, effortless elegance of the Peewees and Flycatchers balanced on a straw of Buffalo Grass. The illustrations are reproduced from the complete first edition found in the Copenhagen University Library.

The Design of Children's Books

*By Poul Jeppesen*

Some years ago there was a public controversy on the design and get-up of school-books. Existing schoolbooks came in for a good deal of criticism; as a result, most of the schoolbooks which are now being printed are both practical and attractive.

But children also use books outside school hours. There is a whole branch of literature which caters for their spare time. Books for children used to be classed with toys; nowadays, most of them come under the category of pulp. Therefore, educationalists and librarians are now focusing their attention on the problem of childrens' sparetime reading. But the discussion has so far centred on the contents rather than the appearance of these books. However, if a book embodies an artistic experience, although expressed in a simple, unpretentious style, there is every reason why it should also be presented in an attractive form. A good book for children ought not to look like a cheap means to while away a few hours; it ought to be, and look like a thing of lasting value, deserving careful treatment.

Many books for older children are printed on ugly wood-pulp paper; their covers are often inartistic, indeed vulgar. But if the author has been at pains to create genuine human beings, he should not be let down by the cover illustration. Since it is expensive to print covers in four colours, it might be better policy to economize on colours and spend a little extra on other facets of the book.

Picture books for small children have always been aesthetically superior to books for older children. Through more than a hundred years, great artists have felt the attraction of this youthful public. Some of the best picture books of the last century were created by leading artists (Frølich, Pietro Krohn, Erik & Frants Henningsen, etc.), and their works have become nursery classics. All valuable picture books have a human content which immediately appeals to all readers.

Modern printing techniques are less favourable to Danish picture books. The market is too small for mass production; hence, many picture books are now imported from abroad, and only an impersonal text is added in this country.

In the years before the War a considerable number of fine picture books were created by Danish artists like Arne Ungermand and Sikker Hansen; fortunately, several of these books are still being reprinted. And even today, in the face of all the technical difficulties, artists like Egon Mathiesen and Ib Spang Olsen are succeeding in producing beautiful and valuable picture books. Makers of picture books in Denmark cannot afford to be over-ambitious; but the limits within which they have to work are not incompatible with good quality.

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### Block-printed Papers

*By Svend Eriksen*

The article gives an account of an exhibition of block-printed papers of the 18th and early 19th centuries held at the Museum of Decorative Arts, Copenhagen, during the summer of 1958. The exhibition consisted partly of a collection of unused or detached, undated sheets of paper, partly of a collection of bound books with block-printed covers or end-papers. While the loose sheets of paper came from the collections of the Museum, the majority of the books, more than 300 items, were borrowed from various Danish libraries. With a few exceptions, only books in contemporary covers were shown. Many of them were dedication copies, presented upon publication to the Danish King and subsequently included in the Royal Library, Copenhagen. Other books were dedication copies which had belonged to Johan Bülow, an 18th-century Danish courtier who left all his books to the Academy Library at Sorø.

On the assumption that the block-printed papers used in the exhibited books were made in the year printed in the books (or slightly earlier, according to local customs), the books served as a sort of time-table from which undated papers could be dated; and the exhibition as a whole gave a rather good impression of the stylistic evolution of block-printed papers during the period in question. All papers dated in this manner were photographed, and a typewritten descriptive catalogue was made. The photographs and the catalogue may be seen in the libraries of the Museum of Decorative Arts, Copenhagen, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

### Johann Trattner, Prince of Pirates

*By Aleks. Frøland*

By way of introduction the author summarizes the history of piratical publishing in the German-Roman Empire from the invention of printing, and shows how all attempts to eliminate it were, for a long time, of no avail. As examples of such anti-piracy measures he cites the five-year monopoly granted in 1469 to the German printer Johannes de Spira in Venice, and the privileges enjoyed by certain books under the Emperor Maximilian from 1511. But the *Länder* system and the theory of mercantilism tended to nullify the effect of such measures. Incidentally,

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the pirates had both prominent defenders and opponents; among the latter, Martin Luther.

Piracy expanded rapidly with the growing output of books. It culminated in the 18th century under the stimulus of the ideals of Enlightenment and the rise of a national literature in Germany. Simultaneously, the new custom of paying the author a fee for his manuscript widened the price gap between original and piratical publications, so that, despite growing opposition, pirated works sold better than ever, simply because they were cheaper. The tension between piratical and original publishers was aggravated by the fact that the latter were passing through a difficult period of transition. In the 18th century a group of progressive Leipzig publishers were trying to replace the old barter system that operated between publishers and booksellers by a new outright-purchase system based on cash payment or limited credit; but this reform was strongly opposed by booksellers in the rest of Germany.

Thus, it was on a scene torn by rivalries and antagonisms that, about the middle of the 18th century, the Austrian Johann Thomas Trattner made his entry and gradually won a name for himself as the Prince of Pirates. Austria was then an underdeveloped area as regards the publication of books; but Trattner succeeded in building up a great printing and publishing concern. Enjoying the active support of Maria Theresia and, subsequently, Joseph II (for he was an adept in currying Imperial favour and adopted the motto *Labore et favore*), Trattner scraped together monopolies and ruthlessly squeezed out all rivals; was twice ennobled, and became Thomas Edler von Trattnern. The article relates the story of his life from 1732 or 35 when, a poor orphan, he was apprenticed to a Viennese printer, until his death in Vienna in 1798. He was immensely enterprising in all sectors of the book-trade: he acquired two printing houses in Vienna, five in other towns, bookshops in eight different towns in addition to Vienna, and depots in a number of German cities, e. g. Frankfort-on-Main and Leipzig. Moreover, he realized several ambitious building projects: his main achievement in this field is the Trattnerhof in Graben, one of the main streets of Vienna.

Trattner, the pirate, inevitably clashed with Philipp Erasmus Reich, the prominent Leipzig publisher, who was diametrically opposed to him in theory and practice. Reich was proved right by subsequent developments; but in his lifetime he was not a match for the protégé of the Viennese court. Matters came to a head in 1765: In that year Reich set up a *Buchhandels-gesellschaft*, the first association of German booksellers, whose chief aim was to stamp out piracy; but in the same year Trattner successfully offered subscribers a highly ambitious piratical work.

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The concluding part of the article deals with Trattner's building activities and various aspects of his little-known private life. Mozart was for a time his tenant at the Trattnerhof, and Trattner stood sponsor to one of his sons. The second Mrs. Trattner, *née* von Nagel, who took lessons from Mozart, showed such promise that he dedicated a pianoforte sonata to her. The article also quotes some colourful, though possibly not quite authentic, Trattner anecdotes.

On his death Trattner's wealth turned out to be less well founded than had generally been assumed. It proved impossible to carry on the business on the old basis. Trattner had based everything on piracy; and piracy was no longer a sound policy for a publishing house.

### Some Unknown Book-Illustrations by Renoir

*By Ebbe Sadolin*

The author describes how he came across a cheap copy of Zola's "*L'Assomoir*" – a large quarto edition printed on thin paper of poor quality, without any date but probably from the 1870's. This book contained about 60 full-page illustrations by many different artists; some of them were in the melodramatic manner of the popular weeklies; others were more restrained; and a few of them were detailed character studies executed with great pictorial freedom. The artists' names included a number of obscure amateurs, but also well-known ones like André Gill and Alb. Oberländer.

Three of the illustrations stood apart from the rest in virtue of their technique. Although composed of innumerable light strokes made with a very thin drawing-pen, they formed harmonious wholes; the figures were clear and plastic, the composition simple and carefully planned. This technique was strangely reminiscent of Auguste Renoir's paintings, with their many light brush strokes.

A magnifying glass revealed the name Renoir in the corner of one of the illustrations, a zincograph; another one, also a zincograph, was unsigned, but evidently in the same manner. The third, which was a xylograph and therefore of a somewhat different character, carried the signature A. R.

On being shown these three illustrations, the Renoir expert, John Rewald, New York, stated that he knew one of them (the original of which may be seen in his "*Renoir Drawings*", New York 1946) although he did not know where it had been reproduced; that he was sceptical about the authenticity of the xylograph, in spite of the signature A. R.; but that he accepted the unsigned zincograph as an indubitable Renoir.

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Thus, Renoir, who began by painting in porcelain colours on the white glazed surface, and who later became a passionate lover of his canvas and oils, must have passed through a stage when he was drawn by the bittersweet attractions of the printer's ink and the triumphs and disappointments of graphic reproduction.

### Paper Qualities for Letterpress Printing

*By Sigurd Christensen*

After emphasizing the extent to which the general impression we receive of a book or a periodical depends on the quality of the paper employed, the author surveys the making of paper in general, but with special reference to such types of paper as are suitable for letterpress printing.

The article describes methods of obtaining cellulose fibres from wood and other sources, resulting in such raw materials as mechanical wood pulp, sulphate pulp and sulphite pulp from coniferous and broadleaf trees, straw and esparto cellulose, and rag pulp. The effect of the various pulps on the characteristics of the paper produced from them is briefly discussed.

Next, the additives are described. They include fillers like china clay and titanium dioxide, but dyes and sizing materials are also used. Papermakers' alum is employed to precipitate the additives on the fibres.

The principles of stock preparation and the effect of beating on the fibres are examined. The paper machine is described; similarly the process of paper finishing, in which calendering, surface sizing and coating affect the qualities of the paper for letterpress printing.

The principles of letterpress printing are briefly discussed; and the desirable characteristics of printing-paper are enumerated: bulk, softness, surface strength, opacity, and absorbency. Methods for securing these characteristics by suitable techniques in paper-making are described.

The author surveys the principal types of paper suitable for letterpress printing, their fibre composition and filler content, their characteristics and their proper use. Finally, offset paper is mentioned.

## BOGVENNEN

Aarbog for Bogkunst og Boghistorie  
er tilrettelagt og trykt i Gyldendals Forlagstrykkeri,  
København, på specialfabrikeret papir fra  
De forenede Papirfabrikker.

Skriften er Linotype Granjon. Klicheerne er  
fremstillet af F. Hendriksens Eftf.s Reproduktions-  
Atelier. Bogbinderarbejdet er udført af  
Gyldendals Forlagsbogbinderi

