

binets, because this department serves as it were as a cog-wheel connecting the past with the achievements of the present-day. We shall reserve the consideration of this part of the exhibition for an especial article; in the two following essays the development will only be followed as far as the moment of Cheret's appearance.

The relatively smallest group is that of ancient advertising, especially when it is remembered that the Roman Imperial era, which above all comes into consideration, had very strong points of contact with the present in the first centuries A. D., and therefore must have possessed a well-developed advertising system. This period stood at a height of outward culture which was not attained by the modern world until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and which we may since, thanks to our mastery of steam and electricity, be said to have surpassed. Here we find highly-developed manufactures and trade and commerce flourishing under a strong central power which extended over nearly all countries of the then known world. Here we already find giant towns with gigantic masses of humanity, such as Rome, Alexandria, New Carthage, Antioch. It is only natural under these conditions that an extensive advertising system should develop. To be sure the propaganda was materially hindered in its effectiveness by the fact that it could not be mechanically reproduced in printed books and pictures, and therefore could never be produced wholesale. Every piece of advertising was an original. Naturally the prospectus and the newspaper advertisement were lacking. There were two principal methods of advertising: The painted or sculptured business sign and the painted poster inscript. (It is possible that picture posters also existed, but this is not proven). As may well be imagined, little is left of the business signs, outside of those found in Pompeii. Who ever thought of keeping such a thing once it had fulfilled its purpose, and possibly grown unsightly under the influence of the weather? Nevertheless the drawings and photographs collected in the Exhibition give us an idea of the character of these productions.

The most engaging is perhaps the double sign of a cloth-dealer with a lively delineation of traffick-ing scenes. An oil or wine-dealer's, a butcher's shop and others are also represented. There is also shown a plaster cast of a piece in the possession of the Berlin Museum which depicts four women, three of them in the positions of the well-known groups of the three Graces, and bears the inscript-

ion "ad sorores quatuor". This sign is usually supposed to be connected with a house of joy, but it is possible that it is only an inn-sign. I have heard that the inn-sign "au quatre soeurs" is popular to this day in the South of France.

The script posters were painted on the walls of houses by professional poster-painters, or on sign-boards especially prepared for the purpose, in red or black. These boards were, called "album" on account of the white painted surface. Naturally there would be next to nothing left of these branches of ancient advertising, had it not been for the frightful catastrophe of the year 79 A.D. which destroyed Pompeii in the course of a few hours. This had for us the fortunate result of preserving the petty details of life in the days of antiquity. Thus the ashes of Vesuvius also preserved for us a large number of ancient script-posters, of which to be sure the weather has exercised its destructive influence. Another circumstance contributes to the presentation of a total picture differing from the everyday scene. At the time of its fall, Pompeii was on the eve of a local election. A kind of poster plague had broken out in consequence, which covered the houses with quantities of election slogans, many of them naturally deriving from un-professional scribes. Nevertheless there are enough poster inscriptions left to let us see that even in this small provincial town, the art of the poster-painters was very highly developed. We see scripts of monumental power, others again dainty with irregularities of charming effect, in short the people understood their business perfectly, and they were quite well aware of this. One of them, Aemilius Celer by name, had even signed his work on occasion. Several alben were also found in Pompeii, artfully divided by columns and crowned with a flat triangle or a flat curve. Two surfaces of such an album have been reconstructed for the exhibition and filled out with inscriptions also found in Pompeii although in other places.

When the Roman Empire declined and fell and antique culture became a thing of the past, script advertising also ceased for many centuries. In the states which came into being on the ruins of the world empire there was neither the necessity for script advertising, nor its most essential preliminary: literacy on the part of the majority of the population. In these states, which were overwhelmingly agrarian, there were neither great cities nor commercial traffic of importance, and the knowledge of reading and writing was a privilege of the clergy, especially of those in the monasteries.