



Photo: Pfanckuch

Publishers' bindings

TILLESSEN

The designing of modern publishers' bindings is, as is generally known, a very difficult and problematic task, if only for economic reasons. It makes great demands on a conscientious processor, while the artist requires, in addition to all his skill as a graphic artist, thorough knowledge of the natural requirements of the publishing and bookselling trades. Kurt Tillessen, a series of whose very impressive book jackets were reproduced in an earlier issue of this periodical, proves to be a successful artist with a sure touch and cultivated taste in this special sphere too. While paying full attention to the economic and technical restrictions to which the book is subject, he knows how to produce the maximum results from the point of view of the book trade with a slight expenditure of the means at his disposal. The publishers' bindings which he designed need fear no comparison from the purely æsthetic point of view with more expensive hand-made bindings, while the perfectly harmonious general impression is always pleasing. They are documentary evidence of contemporary book culture because Tillessen's intentions in designing them are always determined in the first place by the functional tasks of the binding, its size, volume and material, and because in his case the technical elucidation and treatment of these preliminary questions then almost automatically results in the right graphic design. This systematically well-considered and disciplined attitude is perhaps most obvious in the backs of the books which are mainly responsible for the impression created by the books when they are later placed in a bookcase. They are all characterized by a clear and comprehensible arrangement of the surface, entirely in keeping with the size of the book in question and are achieved almost exclusively with simple