period seems to show that they used such types, even if they did not invent them.@@1

From such evidence as we have it would seem that Europe is not indebted to the Chinese or Japanese for the art of block-printing, nor for that of printing with movable types.

In Europe, as late as the second half of the 14th cen­tury, every book (including school and prayer books), and every public and private document, proclamation, bull, letter, &c., was written by hand ; all figures and pictures, even playing-cards and images of saints, were drawn with the pen or painted with a brush. In the 13th century there already existed a kind of book trade. The organi­zation of universities as well as that of large ecclesiastical establishments was at that time incomplete, especially in Italy, France, and Germany, without a staff of scribes and transcribers *{scriptores),* illuminators, lenders, sellers, and custodians of books *{stationary librorum, librarii),* and *per- gamenarii, i.e.,* persons who prepared and sold the vellum or parchment required for books and documents. The books supplied were for the most part legal, theological, and educational, and are calculated to have amounted to above one hundred different works. As no book or docu­ment was approved unless it had some ornamented and illuminated initials or capital letters, there was no want of illuminators. The workmen scribes and transcribers were, perhaps without exception, caligraphers, and the illuminators for the most part artists. Beautifully written and richly illuminated manuscripts on vellum became objects of luxury which were eagerly bought and treasured up by princes and people of distinction. Burgundy of the 15th century, with its rich literature, its wealthy towns, its love for art, and its school of painting, was in this respect the centre of Europe, and the libraries of its dukes at Brussels, Bruges, Antwerp, Ghent, &c., contained more than three thousand beautifully illuminated MSS.

In speaking of the writing of the manuscripts of the 15th and two preceding centuries, it is essential to dis­tinguish, in each country, between at least four different classes of writing, and two of these must be again sub­divided each into two classes. All these different kinds of writing were, in the first instance, taken as models for cutting such portions of text as were intended to illustrate and explain the figures in block-books, and afterwards as models for the types used in the printing of books and documents.

(1) The *book hand,* that is, the ordinary writing of legal, theo­logical, and devotional books, was used by the official transcribers of the universities and churches. These men had received a more or less learned education, and consequently wrote or transcribed books with a certain pretence of understanding them and of being able to write with greater rapidity than the ordinary caligrapher. Hence their writing may be called (*a*) the *current* or *cursive book hand,* of which a good many illustrations may be found in Wilh. Schum, *Exempla Codicum Amplon. Erfurtensium.* Quite distinct from this current writing, and much clearer and more distinct, is *(b)* the *upright* or *set book hand,* which was employed by some writers who worked for universities and churches, and also by a good many who may be presumed to have worked in large cities and Com­mercial towns for schools and the people in general without uni­versity connexion. (2) In the *church hand* (Gothic or black letter) were produced transcripts of the Bible, missals, psalters, and other works intended for use in churches and private places of worship. This writing we may again subdivide into two classes,—(*a*) the *orna­mental* or *caligraphic* writing, found exclusively in books intended for use in churches or for the private use of wealthy and distin­guished persons, and (*b*) the ordinary *upright* or *set church hand,* employed for less ornamental and less expensive books. (3) The *letter hand* may be said to be intermediate between the set literary book hand and the set literary church hand, and to differ but little from either. It was employed in all public documents of the nature of a letter. (4) The *court* or *charter hand* was used for charters, title-deeds, papal bulls, &c.

Dypold Läber (Lauber), a teacher and transcriber at Hagenau in Germany, is known to have carried on a busy trade in manuscripts just about the time of the invention of printing. His prospectuses, in handwriting of about the middle of the 15th century, announce that whatever books people wish to have, large or small, “geistlich oder weltlich, hübsch gemolt,” are all to be found at Dypold Lauber’s the scribe. He had in stock *Gesta Romanorum, mit den Viguren gemolt* ; poetical works *(Partirai, Tristan, Freidank)* ; romances of chivalry *Der Witfarn Ritter ; Von eime Getruwen Ritter der sin eigen Hertze gab umb einer schonen Frowen willen ; Der Ritter unter dem Zuber)* ; Biblical and legendary works *(A Rimed Bible ; A Psalter, Latin and German ; Episteln und Evangelien durch das Jor ; Vita Christy ; Das gantze Passional, winterteil und summerteil ;* devotional books *(Bellial ; Der Selen Trost ; Der Rosenkrantz ; Die zehn Gebot mit Glosen ; Small Bette-Bücher)* ; and books for the people *(Gute bewehrte Artznien-Bücher ; Gemolte Loss-Bücher, ce.,* fortune-telling books ; *Schachtzabel gemolt).* The lower educational books consisted for the most part of the *Abecedaria,* containing the alphabet, the Lord’s prayer, the creed, and one or two prayers ; the *Donatus,* a short Latin grammar extracted from the work of Ælius Donatus, a Roman grammarian of the 4th century, and distinctly mentioned in a school ordinance of Bautzen of 1418 ; the *Doctrinale,* a Latin grammar in leonine verse, compiled by Alexander Gallus (or De Villa Dei), a minorite of Brittany of the 13th century ; the *Summula Logica* of Petrus Hispanus (afterwards Pope John XXI.), used in the teaching of logic and dialectics ; and Dionysius Cato's *Disticha de Moribus,* and its supplement called *Facetus,* with the *Floretus* of St Bernard, used in the teaching of morals. As helps to the clergy in their attempts to educate the lower classes, and as a means of assisting and promoting private devotion, there were picture books accompanied with an easy explanatory text, for the most part representations of the mystic relation between the Old and New Testaments (typology). Among these books the *Biblia Pauperum@@2* stands first. It represents pictorially the life and passion of Christ, and there exist MSS. of it as early as the 13th century, in some cases beautifully illuminated.@@3 A richly illumi­nated MS. of it, executed in the Netherlands *c*. 1400, is in the British Museum (press-mark, King’s, 5), and also fragments of one of the 14th century (press-mark, 31,303). A remodelling and develop­ment of this work is the *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis,* a work in rhyme of the 14th century, which in forty-five chapters represents the Bible history interwoven with Mariolatry and legend. Of this work the Paris national library and arsenal library each possesses a MS. composed in 1324, whereas the British Museum has nine MSS. (six being illuminated) of the 14th and 15th centuries, written in the Netherlands, Germany, France, and England, one (press-mark, 16,578) bearing the distinct date 1379 and. another (press-mark, Egerton, 878) that of 1436. A work of a similar nature is the *Apocalypsis,* of which at least two recensions with illustrations may be pointed out. One gives the text as we know it, with or without commentary, for which *cf.* Brit. Mus., 17,333 (French), 18,633 (French, but written in England), Reg. 2 D. xiii., and 22,493 (French),—all four early 14th century. Another is more a short history or biography of St John, but the illustrations follow those of the former work very closely ; *cf.* Brit. Mus., 19,896 (15th century, German). It is this last recension which agrees with the block­book to be mentioned hereafter. Other devotional works are the *Ars Moriendi,* the *Antichrist,* and other works which will be found mentioned among the block-books.

*Block-Printing or Xylography.*

When all this writing, transcribing, illuminating, Ac., had reached their period of greatest development, the art of printing from wooden blocks (block-printing, xylography) on silk, cloth, &c., vellum, and paper made its appearance in Europe. It seems to have been practised, so far as we have evidence, on cloth, &c., and vellum as early as the 12th century,@@4 and on paper as far back as the second half of the 14th century, while it was largely employed in the early part of the 15th in the production of (1) separate leaves (called *briefs,* from *breve,* scriptum), containing either a picture (*print, prent,* shortened from the Fr. *emprunt, empreinte,* and already used by Chaucer, *C. T.,* 6186, six- text, D. 604, *printe, prente, preente,* and in other early English documents ; also called in colloquial German *Helge, Helglein,* or *Halae)* or a piece of text, or both together :

@@@1 See Ern. Satow, “On the Early Hist. of Printing in Japan,” in *Trans. Asiat. Soc. of Japan,* x. 48 *sqr.;* and Stan. Julien, “Documents sur l’Art d'imprimer,” &c., in *Journ. Asiat.,* 4me ser., ix. 505.

@@@2 We find this title applied to at least three works,—(1) the well- known block-book, of which we speak below, (2) a treatise “ in qua de vitiis et virtutibus agitur,” and (3) a work in rhyme by Alexander Gallus.

@@@3 See Laib and Schwarz, *Biblia Pauperum,* Zurich, 1867.

@@@4 Weigel, *Anfänge,* i. 10.