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## 78 Colby Library Quarterly

tween Great Britain and the United States, and was then able for a while to turn his back upon the sad spectacle of Paris in ruins.

Until his collapse into paralysis in 1873, Eugene Lee-Hamilton was no poet. His letters, although they are usually intelligent, often incisive, sometimes vivid, almost nowhere show sympathy, the sense of involvement, the color and sparkle of detail, of a budding poet. Eventually, as a poet, he penetrated far beneath the surface of his prose personality, but the conflict in him—Pecksniff versus poet—was never resolved. These letters, then, are the calm before the storm.



### THE NUREMBERG CHRONICLE

*By* JAMES HUMPHRY, III

**I**N December of 1491, a group of influential citizens of the free city of Nuremberg, Germany, entered into an agreement to produce a book that would surpass any other published since printing with movable type was invented. In the summer of 1955, some four hundred and sixty-four years later, a trio of generous Americans made it possible for the Colby College Library to own a copy of this book. The distinguished Americans to whom I refer are Mr. Harris A. Dunn, Mr. Gano Dunn and Mr. James A. Healy, all of New York. Through the generosity and thoughtfulness of Mr. Harris Dunn and Mr. Healy, the book I am talking about has been presented to the college in memory of Mr. Dunn's late brother, Mr. Gano Dunn, an internationally famous New York engineer, whose grandfather, Nathaniel Dunn, graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825 in the same class with Henry W. Longfellow and Nathaniel Hawthorne. In 1947 Mr. Gano Dunn received the honorary degree of LL.D. from Bowdoin.

## Colby Library Quarterly 79

And now what *is* the distinguished book I have been referring to? Although Nuremberg had been the site of the production of hundreds of books since the printing press was introduced there in 1470, the volume most closely associated with this city is commonly known as the Nuremberg Chronicle. This large folio, printed first in Latin and later translated into German, was the work of Dr. Hartmann Schedel (1440-1514), the city physician of Nuremberg who had become intensely interested in the "New learning," and who was chosen by the "influential citizens" of the free city to write the text of the *Liber Cronicarum*. It was to be an illustrated history of the world from the creation to 1493, the year in which the book was finally published.

The wealthy burghers who agreed to finance the publishing venture naturally insisted on commissioning the services of the best talent. While Schedel, the doctor and scholar, was writing the text, two of Nuremberg's most noted artists, William Pleydenwurff and Michael Wohlgemuth, the latter a teacher of the great Dürer, were supervising the task of making the more than 1,800 wood-cuts, which give views of cities, and portraits of saints and scholars. The fact that the same single cut is used to represent a number of different poets, or that one cut suffices to depict views of several cities appears strange, if not unethical, to us; but in 1493 this method of multiplying the usefulness of a cut was not only characteristic, but perfectly acceptable.

The task of printing the *Chronicle* fell quite naturally to Anton Koberger, who was born the same year (1440) as Schedel, the same year in which printing was inaugurated by Gutenberg. Koberger, who eventually owned the largest printing establishment in Europe, was an exponent of large-scale production; this fact, coupled with his ability as a craftsman in the art, led to his being chosen as printer. Koberger with the help of his twenty-five children, a

## 80 Colby Library Quarterly

hundred workers, and twenty-four presses completed his assignment on the twelfth of July, 1493. The book sold for \$26.00 or \$78.00, depending on its state—the \$26.00 copy was unbound and uncolored; the \$78.00 copy was bound according to the purchaser's taste, and it was "illuminated" and colored by hand. In 1944 a copy of the Nuremberg Chronicle sold for \$1550.00.

The Colby copy of this famous Chronicle is, in spite of its being almost 500 years old, nearly perfect. It lacks 32 leaves at the end of the book, and we are therefore without the famous map of Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa—the first map of modern Europe. But our copy does contain one of the most famous woodcuts of the Chronicle—that of Pope Joan, the scandalous and legendary lady shown wearing the papal triple crown, and with a baby in her arms.

If space permitted, much more could be written about the Chronicle—"completed in the most famous city of Nuremberg, this work of the history of the ages of the world and a description of cities . . . compiled in a short time by Dr. Hartmann Schedel . . . in the year of Our Lord 1493, the fourth day of the month of June"—to quote the first of several colophons in the book.

"The Nuremberg Chronicle is probably America's favorite incunabulum," writes Ellen Shaffer in her monograph *The Nuremberg Chronicle*, published in 1950. "In cherishing learning and the arts, the creators of the Nuremberg Chronicle achieved more than they realized. Not only did they glorify their beloved city, they immortalized it. . . . Students of typography and the graphic arts will find rich fields for study. . . . The golden age of Nuremberg lives on, and four hundred and fifty years have only enhanced the charm of the Nuremberg Chronicle."

