

of scholarship the Oxford English Dictionary, and the Dictionary of National Biography.

### House of Babel

The total quantity of type is estimated at a million pounds of metal, and there are about 550 founts of type, in 150 different characters—from hieroglyphic and prehistoric Minoan to modern phonetics. In between are Sanscrit, Greek, Roman, Hebrew, Arabic, Ethiopic, Coptic, Chinese, Tibetan, Burmese, Tamil, etc., etc.

To-day, the University Press is nominally split into two parts, the Clarendon Press and the Oxford Press. Readers may remember our interview with David Fullerton, Overseas Sales Manager for Oxford, in which the administration was described. The University owns both Presses entirely and governs them through a Board of Delegates. Humphrey Milford, publisher to the University, retired recently and has been succeeded by G. F. J. Cumberlege.

### 100 Years' Start

Cambridge University's first printer was one John Siberch (his trademark is reproduced on this page) who was a friend of Erasmus. His name first appears on a title page in 1520. Thomas Fuller, who wrote a history of Cam-



DR. JOHN FELL  
Printing owes much to him

bridge University in 1655, said: "True it is, it was a great while before Cambridge could find out the right knack of printing, and therefore they preferred to employ Londoners therein . . . but one Sibert, University Printer, improved that mystery to good perfection."

Henry VIII granted a charter to the University in 1534 authorising it to print "all manner of books," so Cambridge had that liberty 100 years before Oxford.

In later history of the Cambridge University Press, some early experiments in stereotyping figure largely, and in the 18th century the famous printer John Baskerville was connected with the Press, after sending a Cambridge friend a specimen of one of his types "calculated for people who begin to want

spectacles but are afraid to use them at Church." Baskerville achieved his ambition to print a folio Bible and two prayer-books for the University, and then became "one of the Stationers and Printers" of the University, on a ten year contract.

Modern achievements of the Cambridge University Press include the Cambridge Modern History, and several other co-operative historical publications, and the 1911 edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

### Some Lessons From America

[IN June of last year, the "Saturday Review of Literature" devoted itself for the third time to University Presses in a special number, the guest editor being Donald Porter Geddes. We have taken extracts from three of the articles it contained, as having some relevance to the establishment of a University Press in New Zealand.

### On Utility and Practicality

(From an article, "What University Presses plan for the future," by Datus C. Smith Jr., Director of the Princeton University Press).

THE whole question of utility of scholarly publishing is part of the larger and more familiar one of the practical value of "impractical" research; inasmuch as publication is merely the final stage of the research process, the arguments in the two cases are identical. Precisely because the university presses carried out important pre-war publishing projects even though no immediate application was apparent, they were in a position to do a critically important, down-to-earth practical job when the country's great need came. An example can be cited from the list with which I am most familiar, but every press can illustrate the same thing. In 1938, Princeton published a book called "Hurricanes," by Ivan Ray Tannehill, chief of the marine division of the United States Weather Bureau. The number of readers professionally concerned with Caribbean meteorology was very small, and in those days the lay market for specialised technical books was insignificant, the popular interest in hurricanes (before the 1938 blow) practically nil. No technical house was



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