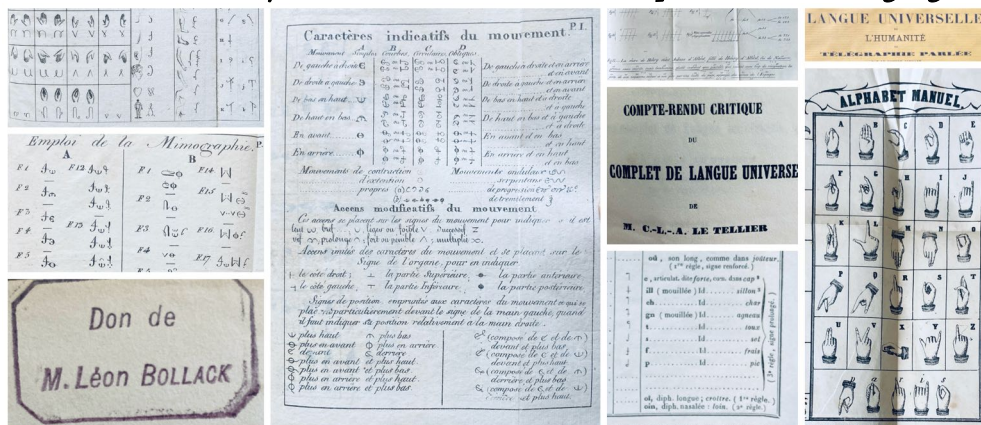


In Search of the key to the Tower of Babel: who speaks the blue language?

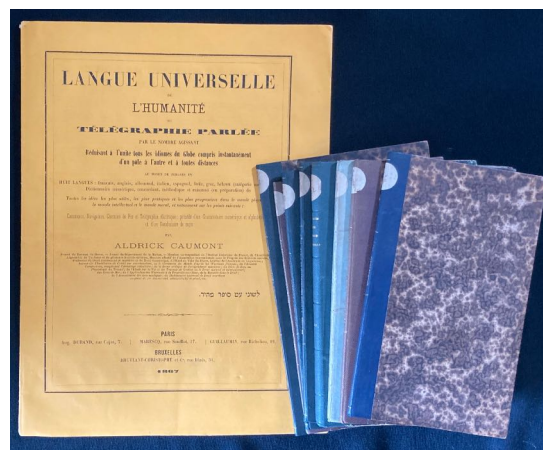


From the library of the creator of “La Langue Bleue.”

A collection of rare universal languages treatises from the library of Léon Bollack (1859-1925), a Parisian businessman and the inventor of “Bolak”, which was also known as “la Langue Bleue”, a competing language with Esperanto. Bollack wrote and published several works related to the project: *La Langue Bleue Bolak: langue internationale pratique* (1899), *Grammaire abrégée de la langue bleue* (1900) and *Premier vocabulaire de la langue bleue Bolak* (1902). In 1907 Bollack gave up his project and shifted support to another language system, Ido, a reformed version of Esperanto. His wet stamp *ex dono* appears in eight of the nine titles here. Notably, the works bearing Bollack’s stamp (i.e., all but Caumont’s *Langue Universelle*) were published before he was born, indicating his dedication to the history of universal languages, which undoubtedly informed his own work when developing “Bolak.”

Speed and efficiency in the Industrial Revolution:

The 19th century saw the development of a number of life changing technological forces, such as the telegraph, the steam engine, and the railroad, that increased the speed and spread of communication. Similarly, an increase in the number of language systems like Bolak, Esperanto, and Ido, but also stenography, sign language for deaf-mutes, etc., sought to remove the barriers of native languages and thus increase the speed and efficiency of communication. The creation of universal languages was approached from a number of perspectives, documented by the nine titles offered here.



Writing sign language for deaf-mutes

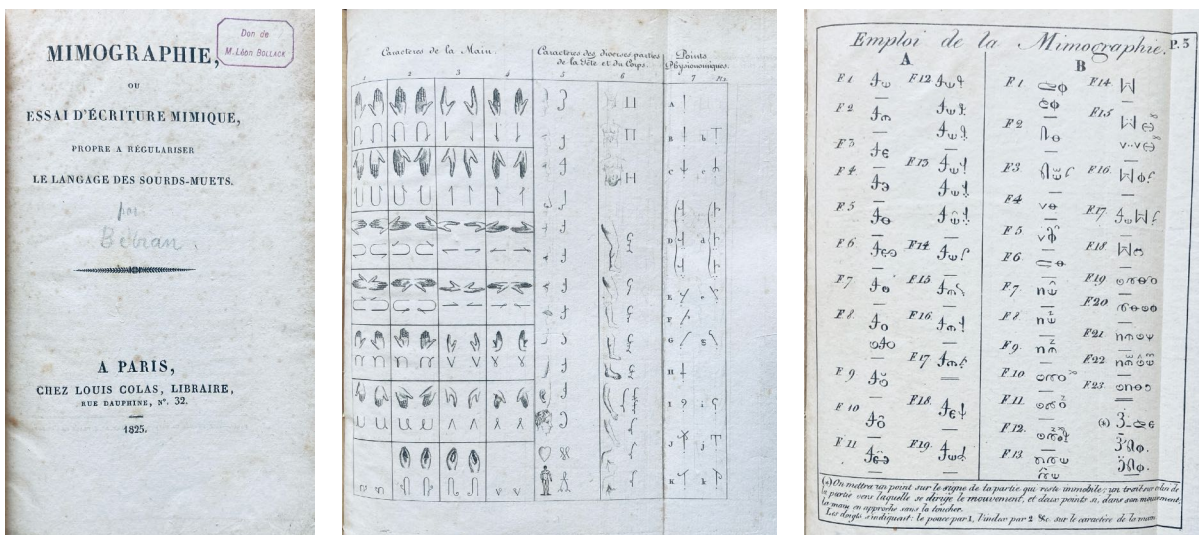
1). Roch Ambroise Auguste Bébien. *Mimographie : ou Essai d'écriture mimique, propre a régulariser le langage des sourds-muets*

Paris: Chez Louis Colas, Libraire, rue Dauphine, no. 32, 1825.
 (21.5 x 13.3 cm). vi, 42 pages, 3 folded of plates. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine.
 Some spotting, but otherwise excellent copy. Bollack *ex dono*.

SOLD

Roch Ambroise Auguste Bébien (1789-1839) was one of the first successful educators in French sign language. He published widely on sign language and instruction for deaf-mutes, and in *Mimographie* he developed a

system of writing sign language through symbols, which are illustrated in the text via 3 engraved plates. An uncommon title with only 3 copies listed in North America (OCLC).

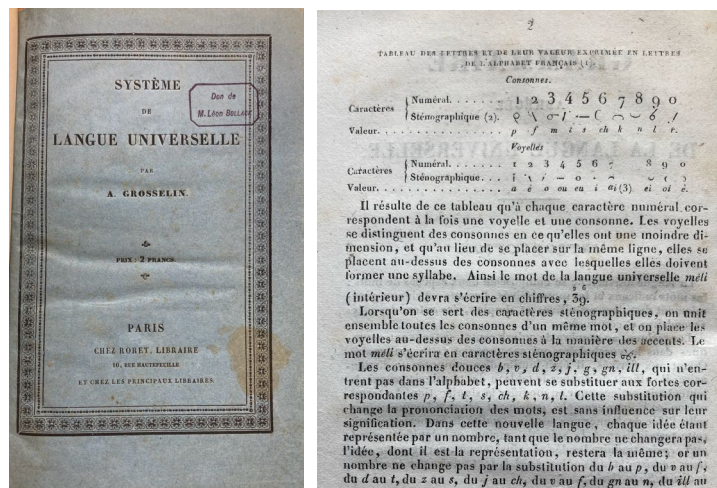


The title page and 2 of the three plates from *Mimographie*.

2). *Augustin Grosselin. Système de langue universelle, par A. Grosselin. Discours prononcé par M. Grosselin, à la séance d'ouverture de son cours de langue universelle, le Dimanche 27 novembre 1836.*

Paris: Roret, n.d. [1836]
 (21.5 x 13.3 cm). 24 pp. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine, publisher's original wrappers bound in. Some spotting. Bollack *ex dono*.

SOLD



The work opens with Grosselin's speech for the inaugural session of a course on his universal language, followed by an abridged grammar of the language, in which consonants and vowels have numerical correspondents, and words may be written in either numerical sequences or stenographic symbols.

OCLC: BnF only

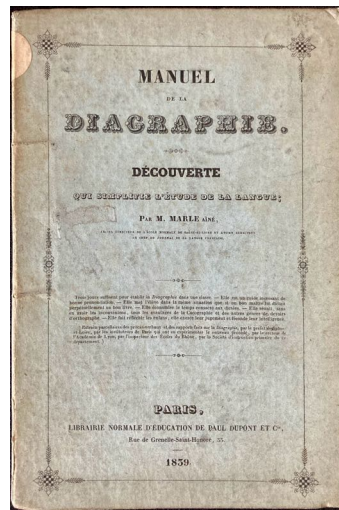
Augustin Grosselin (1800-1870) was an important innovator in stenography, developing his own manual [*Système de sténographie, méthode facile*, 2nd ed. 1824] and an innovator in the teaching of deaf-mutes.

3). [Charles Louis] Marle. *Manuel de la diagraphie : découverte qui simplifie l'étude de la langue / par M. Marle aîné...*

Paris, Librairie Normale d'Éducation de Paul Dupont, 1839

(22 x 14.5 cm). 72 pp. Original publisher's printed paper cover over thin boards, soiling to covers, but a solid and very good copy. Bollack *ex dono*. 2 copies in OCLC.

\$1,400



Charles-Louis Marle (1799-1860) was a French grammarian who gained some fame for his attempt at spelling reform, which is presented in this work, in which he describes a purely phonetic script that he called “diagraphie”: a 19-symbol alphabet that is employed to represent all the sounds of spoken language. This system was explained by him in two works: *Manuel de diagraphie* (the present title) and *Grammaire théorique, pratique et didactique, ou texte primitive de la grammaire diagraphique* (Paris, Dupont, 1839).

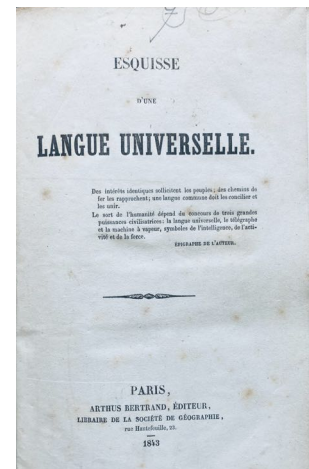
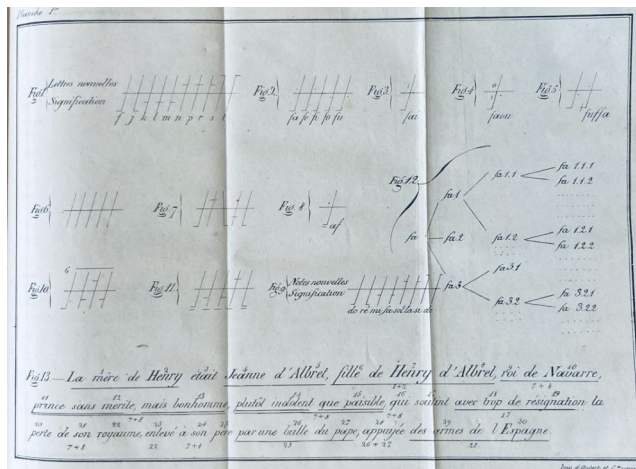
“People are solicited by the same interests; railways bring them closer together; a common language must reconcile and unite them. The fate of mankind depends on the co-operation of three great civilizing powers: the universal language, the telegraph, and the steam engine, symbols of intelligence, activity, and strength.”¹ –from the author’s preface.

4). *Esquisse d'une langue universelle.*

Paris : Bertrand, 1843

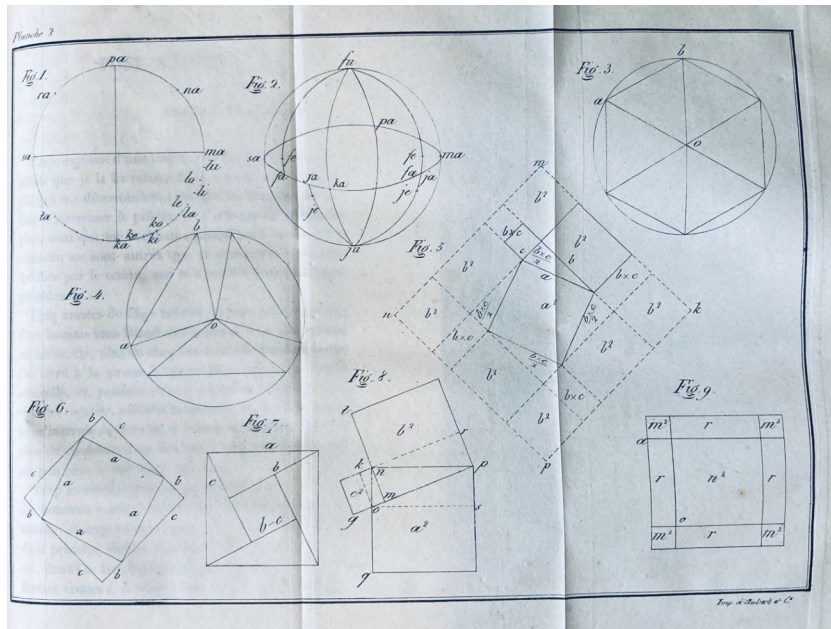
(22 x 14 cm). [6], xiv, 201, [3] pp. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine. Two folding plates of diagrams. Annotations, underlining, and scattered notes from a previous reader clearly studying the text . Bollack *ex dono*.

\$2,500

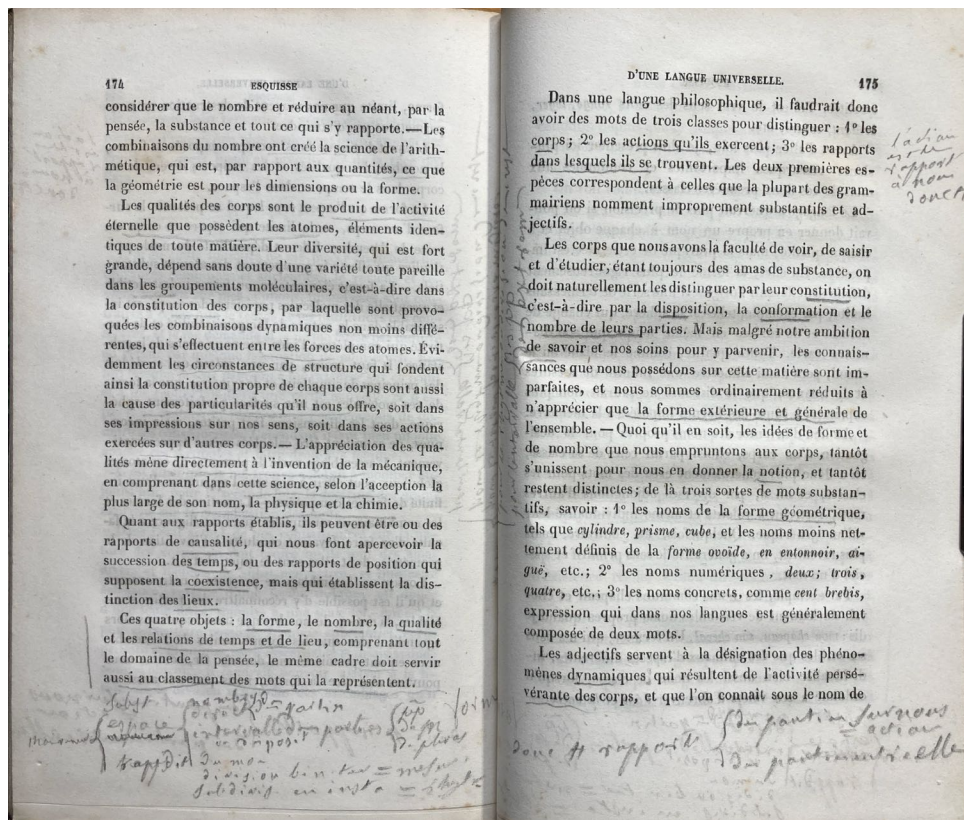


¹ “Des intérêts identiques sollicitent les peuples; des chemins de fer les rapprochent; une langue commune doit les concilier et les unir. Le sort de l'humanité dépend du concours de trois grandes puissances civilisatrices: la langue universelle, le télégraphe et la machine à vapeur, symboles de l'intelligence, de l'activité et de la force. ÉPIGRAPHE DE L'AUTEUR.”

An earlier edition appeared under the imprint Librairie orientale de Ve. Dondey-Dupré, Paris, 1837, which appears to be the same sheets with different title page, but without the *post-scriptum*, which in our copy is also annotated by a former reader, as is the main part of the text. Contains a writing system that the author offers as a replacement for stenographic methods. OCLC lists only a single copy of this edition, and only four of the 1837.



The folding plates diagram the author's system, which are complemented by seven explanatory tables.



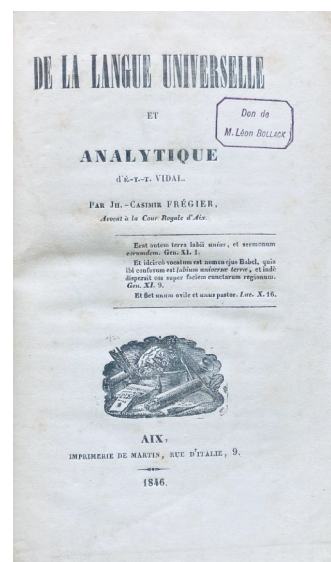
The copy bears a number of annotations in pencil, especially in the postscript.

5). Frégier, Jh.-Casimir. *De la langue universelle et analytique d'É.-T.-T. Vidal / par Jh.-Casimir Frégier.*
 impr. de Martin, Aix, 1846

(22.5 x 14.5 cm). [2], 20 pp. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine. Bollack *ex dono*.

É.T.T. Vidal was a stenographer and author of several texts related to the art of “writing as quickly as one can speak”, particularly across languages. In this brief explanatory work, Jh.-Casimir Frégier gives a summary of the benefits of a universal language and more particularly Vidal’s system and its virtues, plus a short explanation of its principle mode of operation—it reads like an erudite promotional précis.

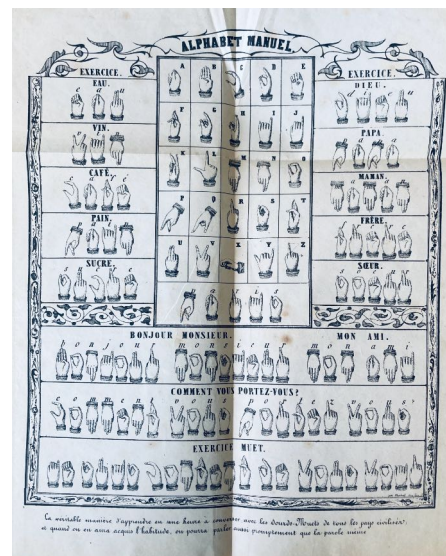
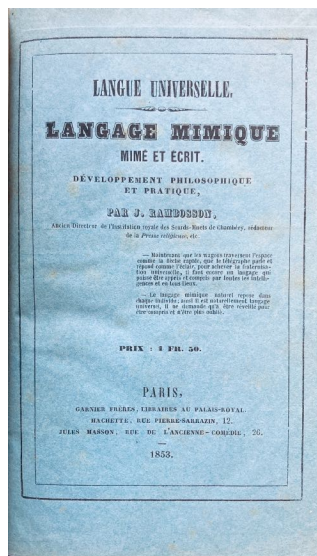
\$800



Vidal’s *Langue universelle et analytique* first appeared in Paris, 1844. He was also the author of *Sténographie verticale* (1849). Vidal argued that, to write and translate a language before learning to speak it, it is enough to have the translation of the given work in one’s own language.
 OCLC: 3 copies in France only.

6). Jean Pierre Rambosson. *Langue universelle: langage mimique, mimé et écrit, développement philosophique et pratique.*
 Paris, France : Garnier, Libraires au Palais-Royal, 1853.

(22 x 13.5 cm). [4], 43, [1] pp. Folding plate illustrating sign language, which is absent in some copies. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine, original wrappers bound in. Spotting. Bollack *ex dono*.



SOLD

Chapter one opens with a general definition of the language system: ***langage mimique* is the expression of thought by gestures, just as verbal language is the expression of thought through the spoken word.** Following is an explanation of the system, its application, as well as correcting certain prejudicial assumptions about deaf-mutes. There is a chapter on *langage mimique* as a universal language, and, as witnessed by the folding plate, several sections on communication methods for deaf-mutes and sign language—chapter 6 is dedicated to those methods and the application of the gestures used in the *langage mimique*. Rare: OCLC lists 3 copies, all in Europe.

Jean Pierre Rambosson (1827-1886), published on a number of scientific topics, and he brings the rigor of his scientific approach to this language for deaf-mutes.

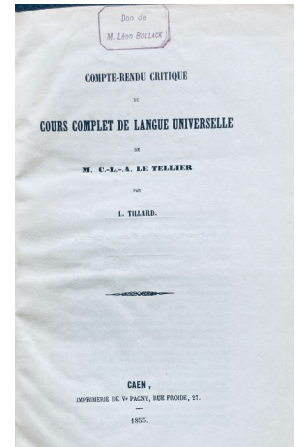
7). Léon Tillard. *Compte rendu critique du "Cours complet de langue universelle" de M.C.-L.-A. Le Tellier, par L. Tillard.*

Caen : Impr. de Vve Pagny, 1855

(22 x 13.5 cm). 14 pp, an lpp. table of contents. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine. Excerpt from the journal "Le Moniteur du Calvados." Bollack *ex dono*.

OCLC: BnF only.

\$400



In this pamphlet Léon Tillard reviews *Cours complet de langue universelle* by Charles-Constant Le Tellier (1768-1846), the French lexicographer, author of *Dictionnaire (nouveau) portatif de la langue française, ou Vocabulaire rédigé d'après le Dictionnaire de l'Académie et les ouvrages des meilleurs grammairiens* (1827). Le Tellier's *Cours complet de langue universelle* is a two-volume work that falls into a category of artificial languages that "used more conventional means, that is, letters, syllables, and words, to constitute the vocabulary of an artificial language. In several of these languages, letters and their position in syllables and words were used to reflect a classification scheme, so that the structure of a word indicated the position which the thing designated by that word occupied within the classification." (cf. Maat & Cram, pp. 249-50)

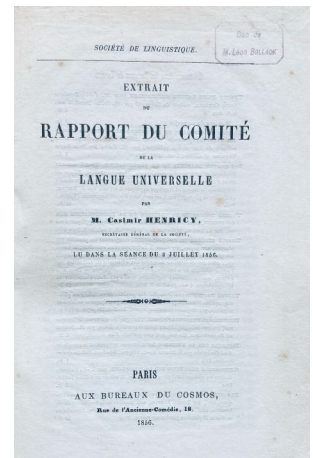
8). Casimir Henricy. *Société de linguistique. Extrait du rapport du Comité de la langue universelle, par M. Casimir Henricy ... lu dans la séance du 3 juillet 1856.*

Paris: Bureaux du Cosmos, 1856.

(24 x 15 cm). 8 pp. Cloth spine over marbled paper boards, gilt title on spine. Bollack *ex dono*.

OCLC: BnF only.

\$450



Henricy provides his secretary's report for the July 3, 1856 meeting of the Committee to form a universal language of the *Société de linguistique*. The function of the latter, as stated by Henricy, was to "deal with all subjects related to philology and linguistics considered in their greatest extension, and especially from a practical point of view... [also], while carrying out a more or less radical reform of the spelling of the French language, [address the] question of... the idea of a universal language." The report then provides "a summary and quick presentation of the work of the Universal Language Committee... showing you the path that this Committee has followed, the obstacles that have stood under in its path, [and] the magnitude and difficulties of the task it has accepted."

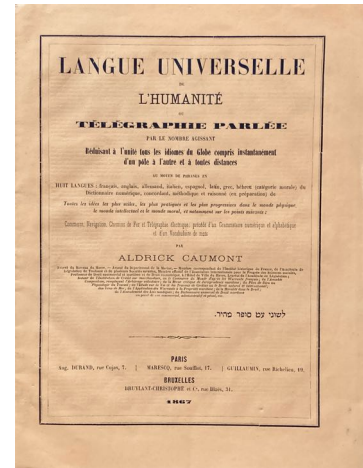
Casimir Henrycy (1814-1900), was a linguist, journalist, and French politician who in the 1850-60s collaborated on efforts to create a universal language; it has been noted by Décimo that “his intellectual biography mirrors the ideological atmosphere of a large swath of the republican and bourgeois population at that time, affinity for social and religious utopias, both fascinated by positivism and anchored in traditional patterns of patriotic thought” (cf. Décimo, Marc. (2012). “A propos de l'aventure de La Tribune des linguistes (1854-1860): utopie et dépassement”).

9). Aldrick Caumont. *Langue universelle de l'humanité, ou, Télégraphie parlée par le nombre agissant: réduisant à l'unité tous les idiomes du globe compris instantanément d'un pôle à l'autre et à toutes distances.*

Paris : A. Durand ; Bruxelles : Bruylant-Christophe, 1867

(36 x 27 cm), iii, 23 pages; Bright original publisher's yellow wrappers printed in black.

\$800



This work aims to create a universal language that through a concordance of phrases in eight languages (French, English, German, Italian, Spanish, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew) will allow members of different native language groups to communicate by referring to the numerical reference in the chart of phrases (see the illustration).

LANGUE UNIVERSELLE DE L'HUMANITÉ.				LANGUE UNIVERSELLE DE L'HUMANITÉ.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
FRANCAIS.	ANGLAIS.	ALLEMAND.	ITALIEN.	ESPAGNOL.	LATIN.	GREC.	HEBREU.
1	My house is on the plain of the river's rapid.	Mein Haus liegt auf dem Ufer des rasch fließenden Flusses.	La mia casa è sulla riva della rapida del fiume.	1	1	1	1
2	My house is in the city of a great number.	Mein Haus liegt in der Stadt eines grossen Volks.	La mia casa è in città di gran numero.	2	2	2	2
3	I will do it.	Ich werde es thun.	Farò questo.	3	3	3	3
4	Let us go.	Lasst uns gehn.	Andiam.	4	4	4	4
5	Here, you are welcome.	Hier, willkommen.	Qui, benvenuto.	5	5	5	5
6	Our work is not finished.	Unsere Arbeit ist nicht beendet.	Il nostro lavoro non è finito.	6	6	6	6
7	He is not a man.	Er ist kein Mann.	Non è un uomo.	7	7	7	7
8	Remember to do this.	Denk daran dies zu thun.	Ricordati di fare questo.	8	8	8	8
9	Continue to do this.	Fortfahren dies zu thun.	Continua a fare questo.	9	9	9	9
10	Others have done this.	Andere haben dies gethan.	Altri hanno fatto questo.	10	10	10	10

Thus, the author proposes to create a “methodical and reasoned” idiomatic concordant dictionary with “All the most useful, practical, and progressive ideas in the physical world, the intellectual world and the moral world, and in particular on the following points: Commerce, Navigation, Railways and Electric Telegraphy, preceded by a Numerical and Alphabetical Grammar and a Vocabulary of Words.” As of the time of the publication of this brochure, the dictionary had yet to be created and the author has used biblical phrases for his sample chart of phrases.

Aldrick Caumont (1825-1884), was an attorney, professor, and writer. Corresponding member of the Institut historique de France (in 1867). - Professor of commercial and maritime law and economic law at the Hôtel-de-Ville of Le Havre (in 1867).