

seems natural. They are based on our knowledge of the things themselves, putting weight on whatever seems important. Ideas of what is important are not the same at all times or in all countries, and this fact makes the designs different. Sometimes the head of a man seems important, sometimes not; sometimes even the hands and the fingers seem important. Certainly the ISOTYPE signs are dependent on their times like all these old sign-languages. Later times will see what their special qualities are and what the conditions were which made them.

In present Europe the idea of picture education is not more than 300 years old. Before that there was not very much connection between words and pictures. The books and the thoughts of those times had little to do with experience, but were in the field of religion and had to do with questions of reasoning. The pictures were not based on science and gave their story of religion to a wide public. In later times the relation between words and pictures became clearer, in connection with the development of science.

The Orbis Pictus of Comenius gives pictures for a great number of words and

Old military picture



PICTURE 37