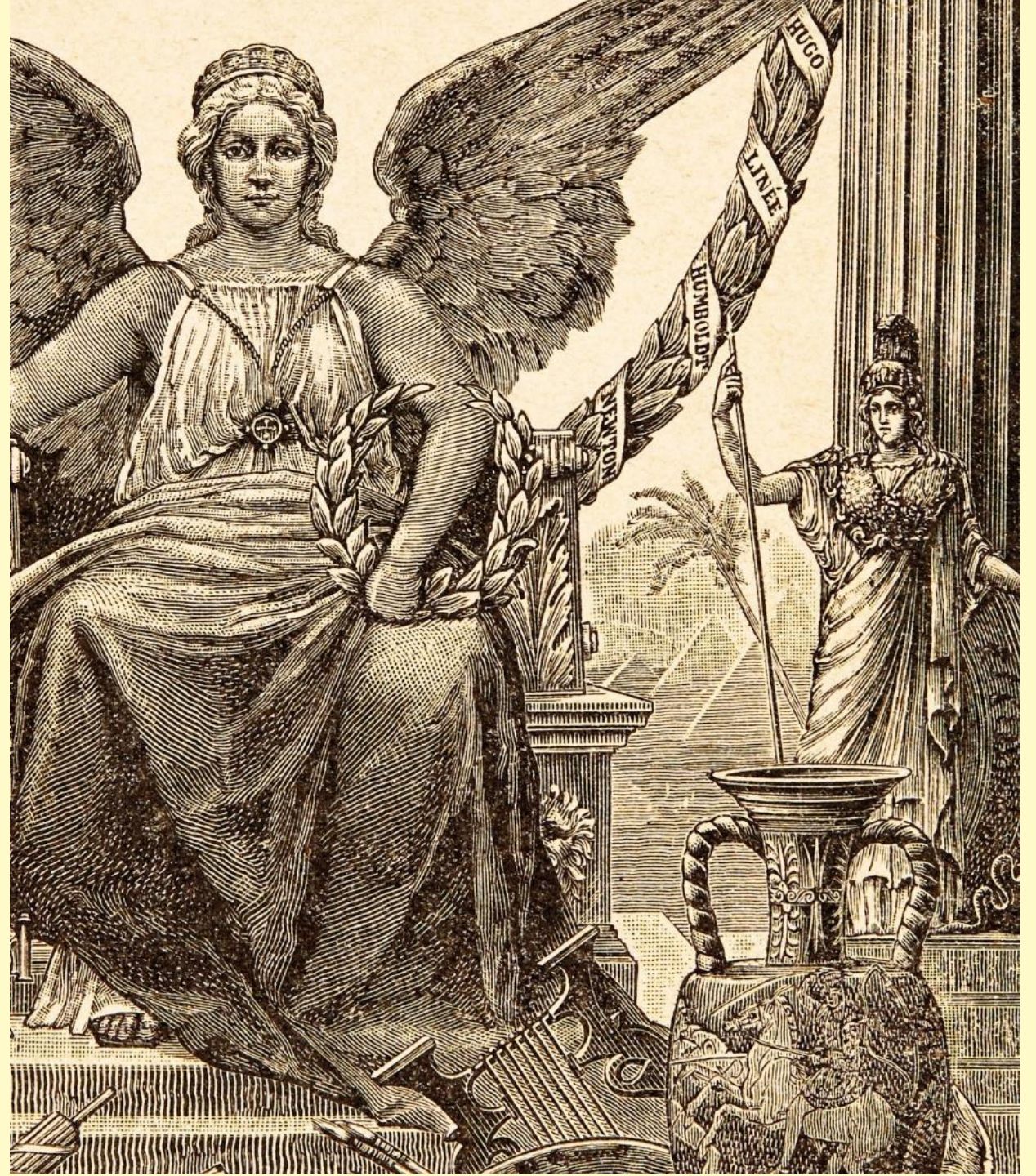


Olomouc:

The story of one exhibition.

01. In spring 2020, the Regional Museum in Olomouc was scheduled to open an exhibition titled *Czech encyclopedias in the shelf and under the lamp* which aimed to present the history of creating and publishing Czech general knowledge encyclopedias from the first attempts at the beginning of the 19th century to the ups and downs of this field during the totalitarian and post-revolutionary period.



02. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic ruined the plans. The opening date of the exhibition was postponed indefinitely. It was decided that the main priority of the 'covid-time' would be to prepare an accompanying exhibition catalogue.

Lets look into the history of Czech general scientific dictionaries. As visible in the picture, the problem of breathing and face masks is not a hot topic only these days – it was an actual topic already in 1931 when the *Otto General Dictionary of the New Era* was published (Audos, 'a set of emergency breathing apparatus working with oxygen and absorbing exhaled carbon dioxide', *Otto General Dictionary of the New Era*, p. 325)



Audos



03. The first attempts to compile a modern Czech encyclopedia date back to the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The ambition to compile a completely new Czech encyclopedia without the use of any manuals from abroad was not feasible until 1858, when the first edition of the *Czech Encyclopedia of General Knowledge* was published, edited by politician František Ladislav Rieger.

04. František Ladislav Rieger thus fulfilled his father-in-law's dream. He married a daughter of František Palacký, who is to be considered the father, or rather the grandfather, of the Czech modern encyclopedias. It was him, who repeatedly tried to bring the project of a general knowledge Czech encyclopedia to life during the first half of the 19th century.



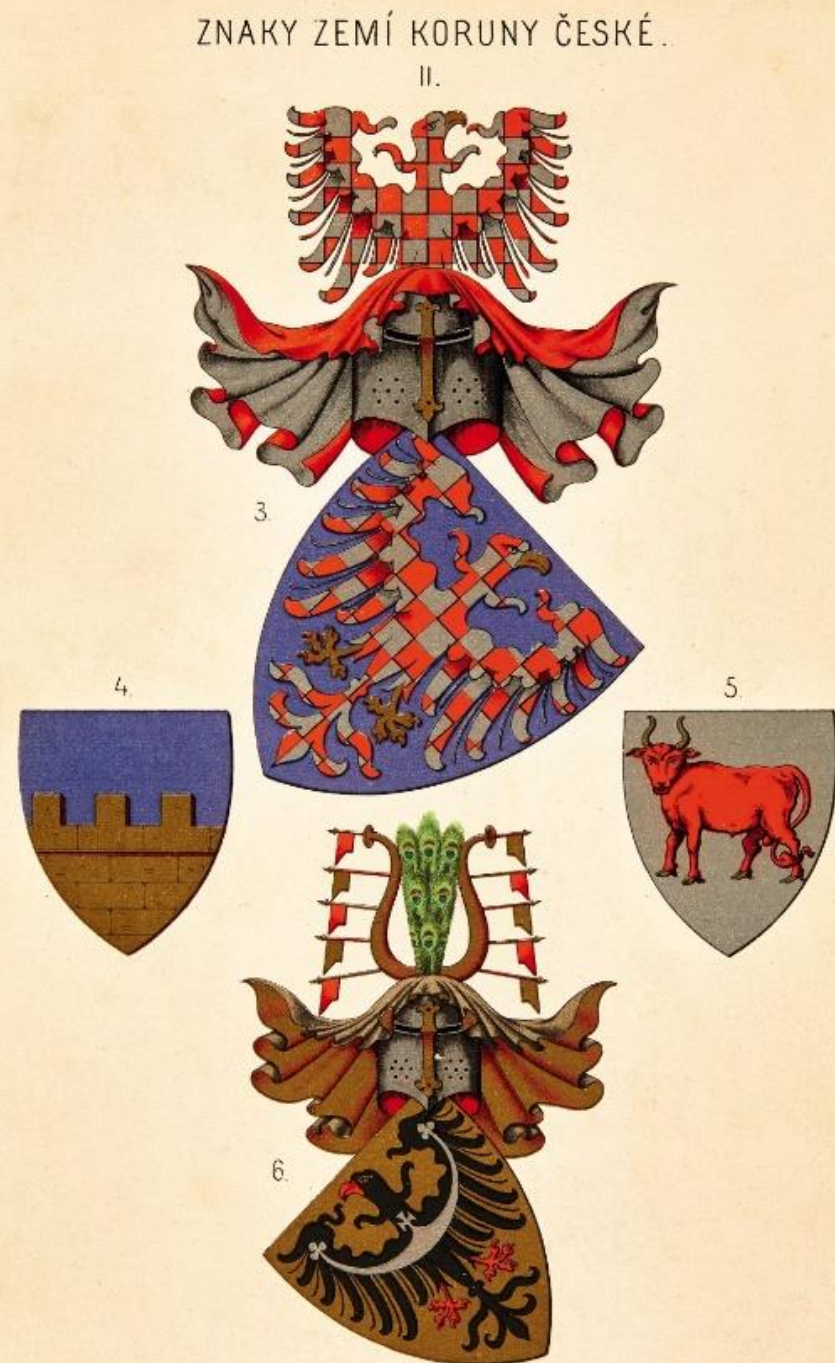
05. The first volume of Reiger's *Czech Encyclopedia of General Knowledge* was published in book form in 1860, when the dictionary already had 5,500 subscribers! However, the number of real buyers was much larger. F. L. Rieger himself mentioned that 9,000 copies of each volume were printed.





06. At the beginning of the 1880s, the plans of Jan Otto, who also longed for the publication of a general encyclopedia, were already given concrete outlines.

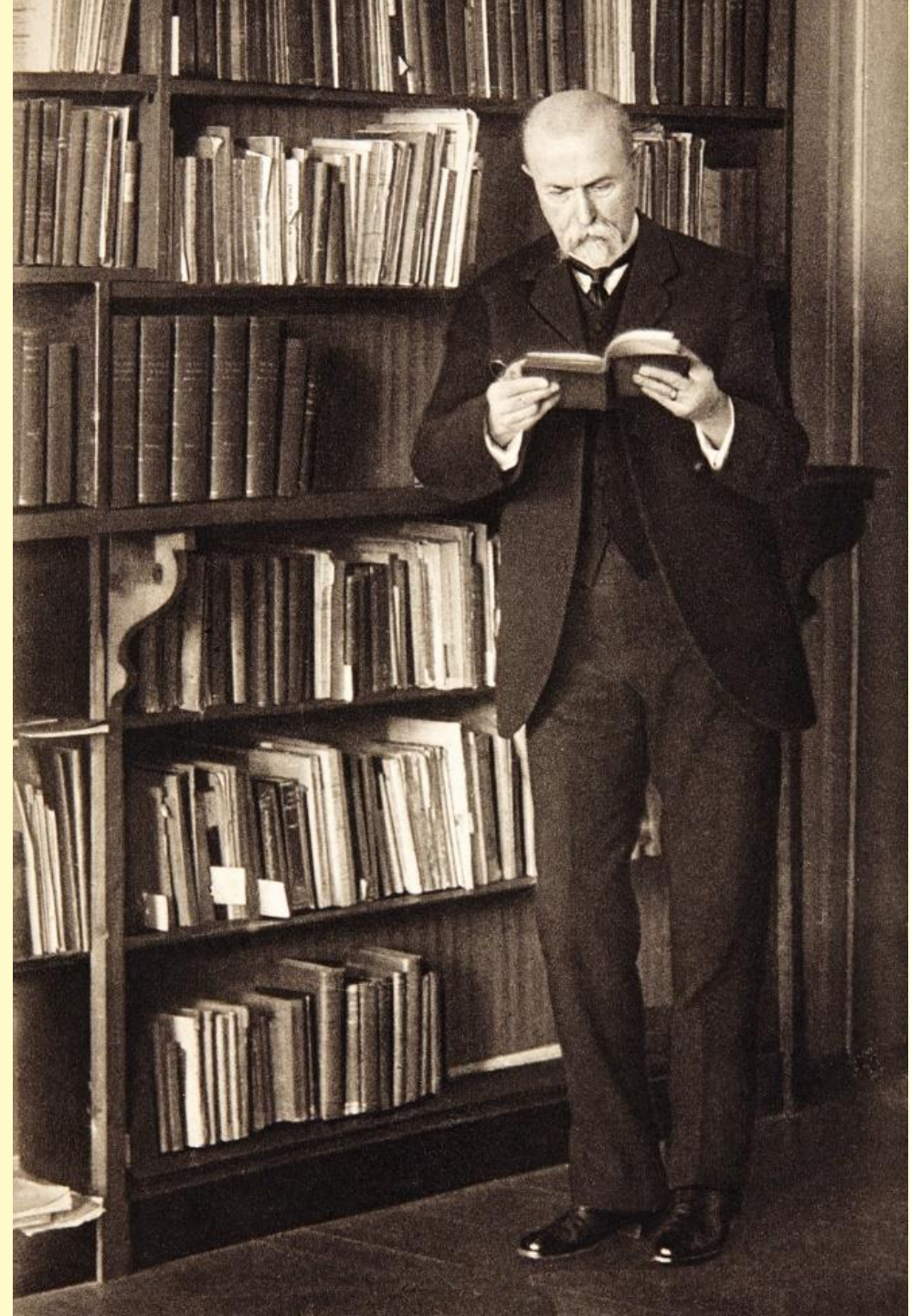
07. Unlike Rieger's dictionary, however, it was supposed to be an illustrated encyclopedia.

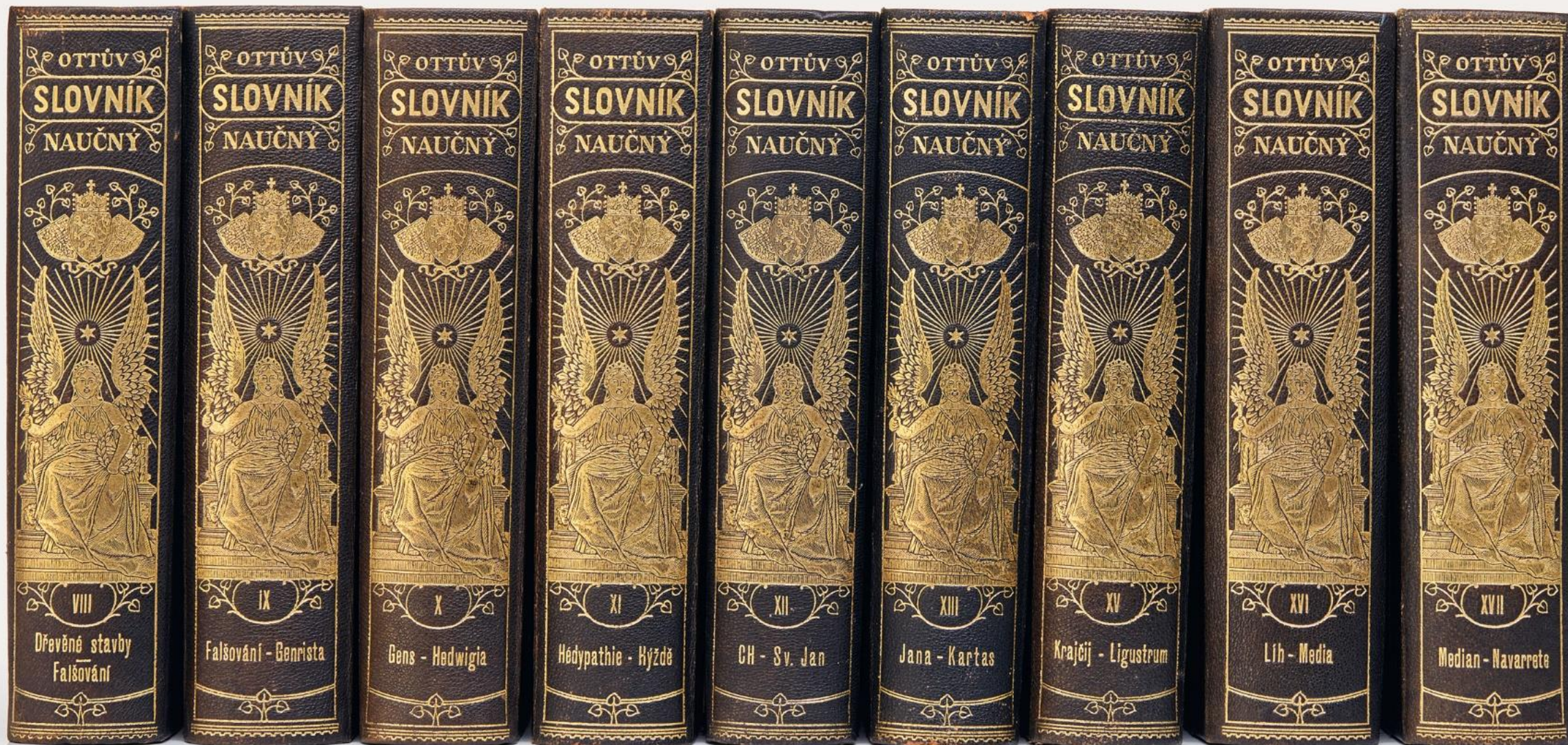


08. An example of a full-page colour appendix of Otto's encyclopedia is a picture of Czech *majolica* from the 16th and 17th centuries added to the 14th volume of the encyclopedia.



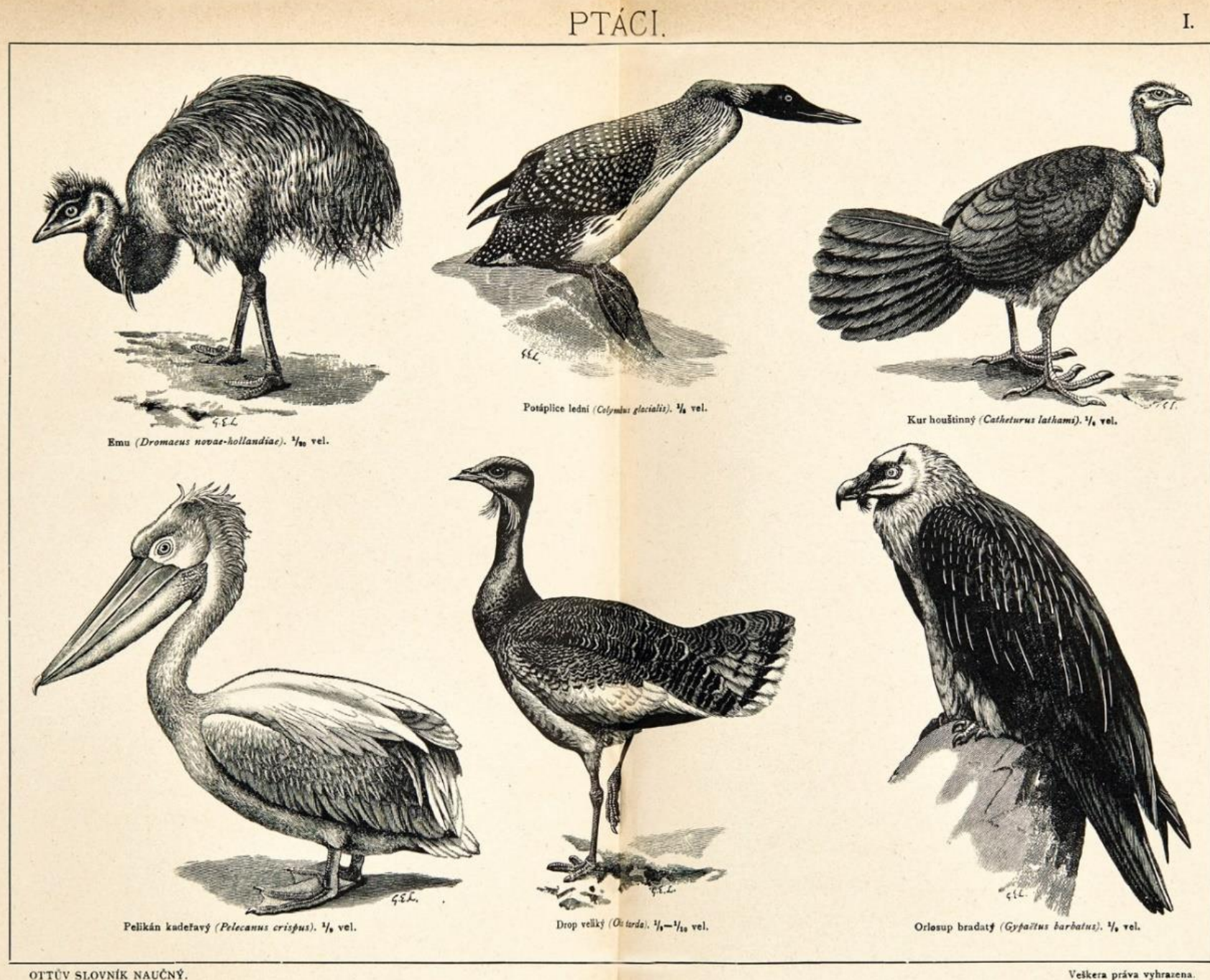
09. The publisher Jan Otto managed to connect with Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk and get him as the leading person for his project. In 1885, the publisher J. Otto and professor T. G. Masaryk concluded a cooperation agreement on a large illustrated encyclopedia. However, T. G. Masaryk did not complete his duties as an editor due to the struggle for the authenticity of the Královédvorský and Zelenohorský Manuscripts. At the start of 1887, T. G. Masaryk resigned from his position within the project.



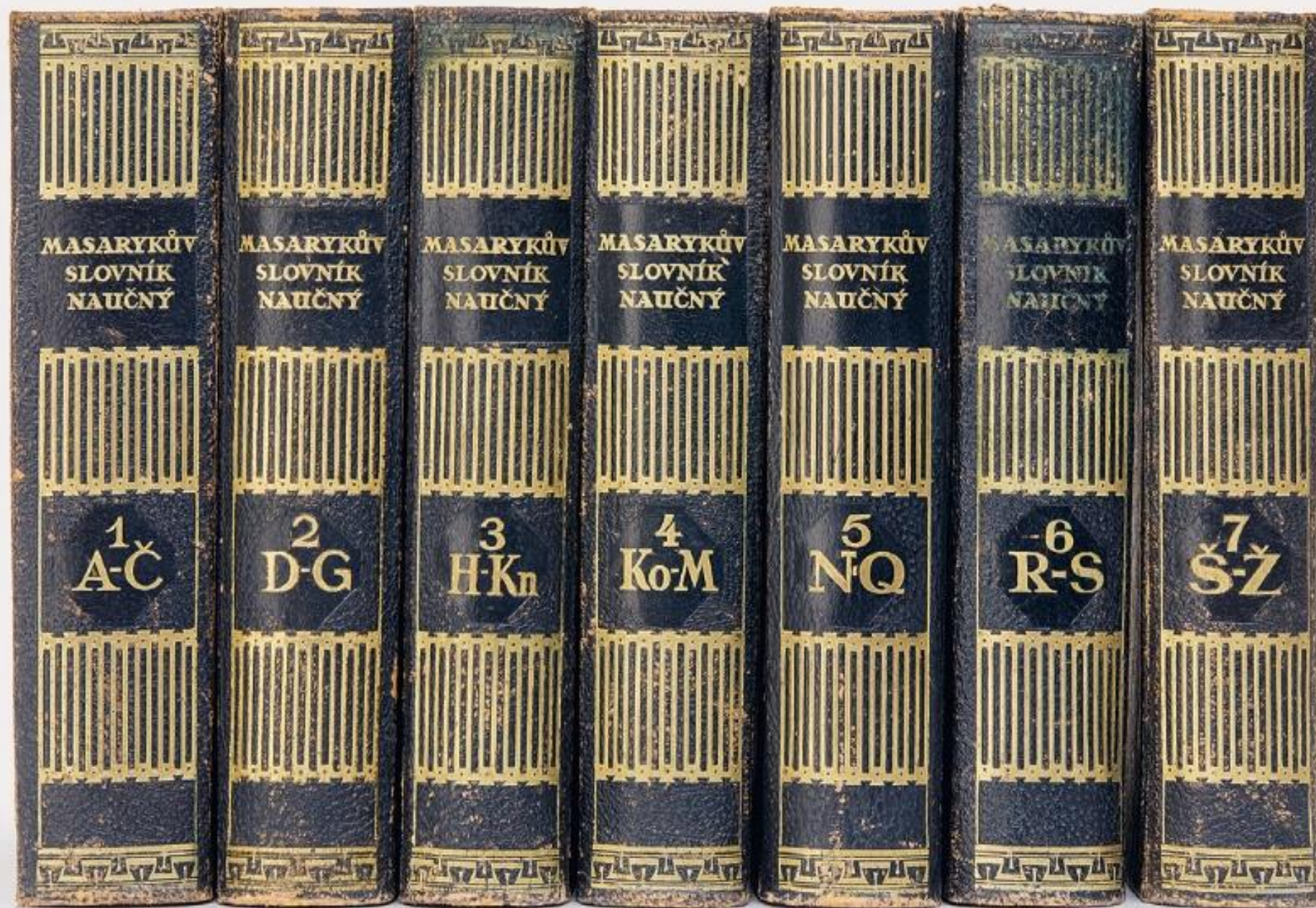


10. On January 22nd 1888, the first volume of *Otto Dictionary of General Knowledge* left the printing press. It was accepted with great success.

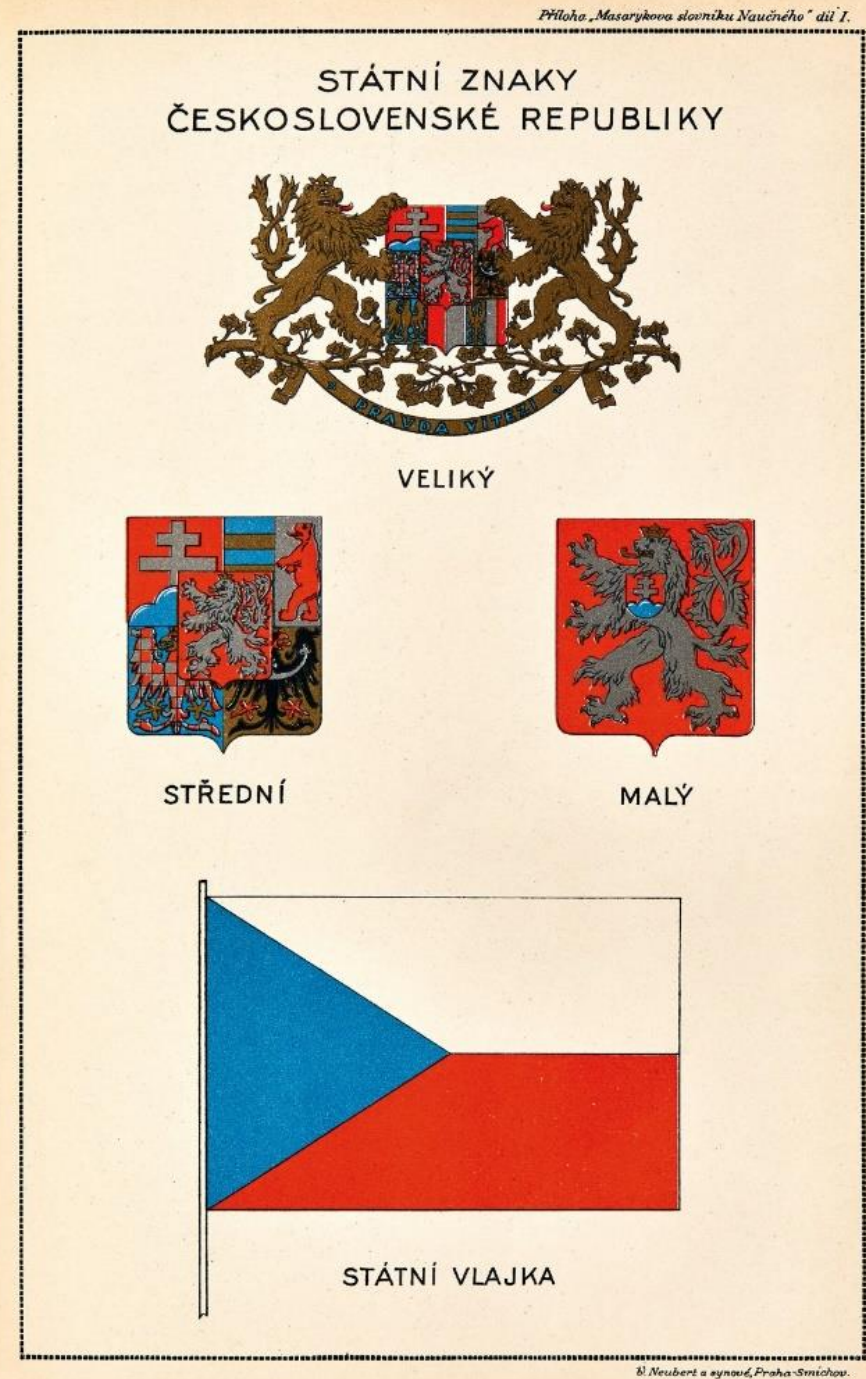
11. In 1908, the last volume of Otto's dictionary was published. More than a thousand experts participated in the encyclopedia, producing almost 140,000 dictionary entries. In the same year, *Otto Pocket Dictionary*, the smallest of Otto's encyclopedias, got on the shelves of bookstores.



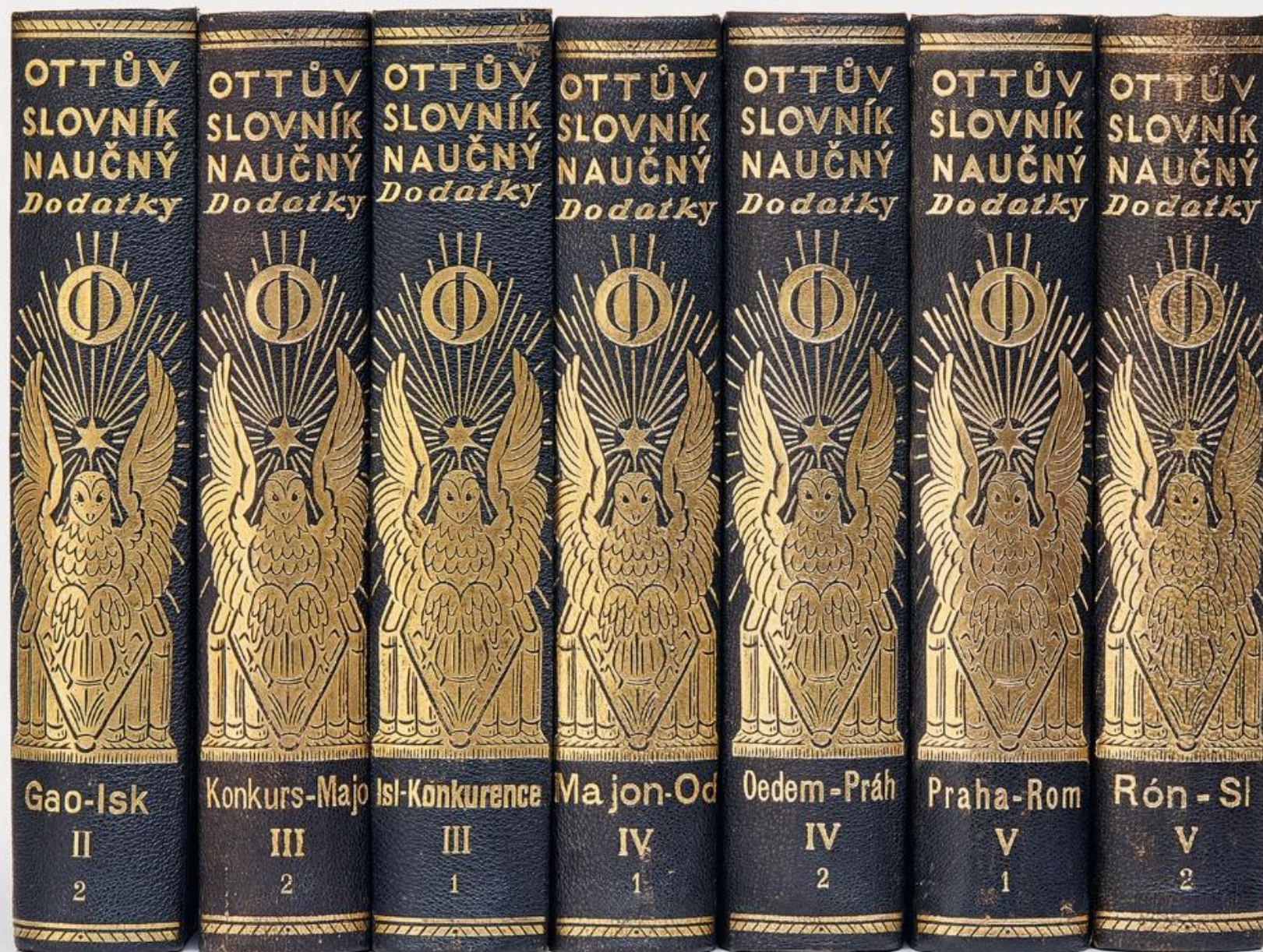
12. In 1925,
the first
Czechoslovak
president lent
his name to a
purely popular
encyclopedia
called *Masaryk
General
Dictionary*.



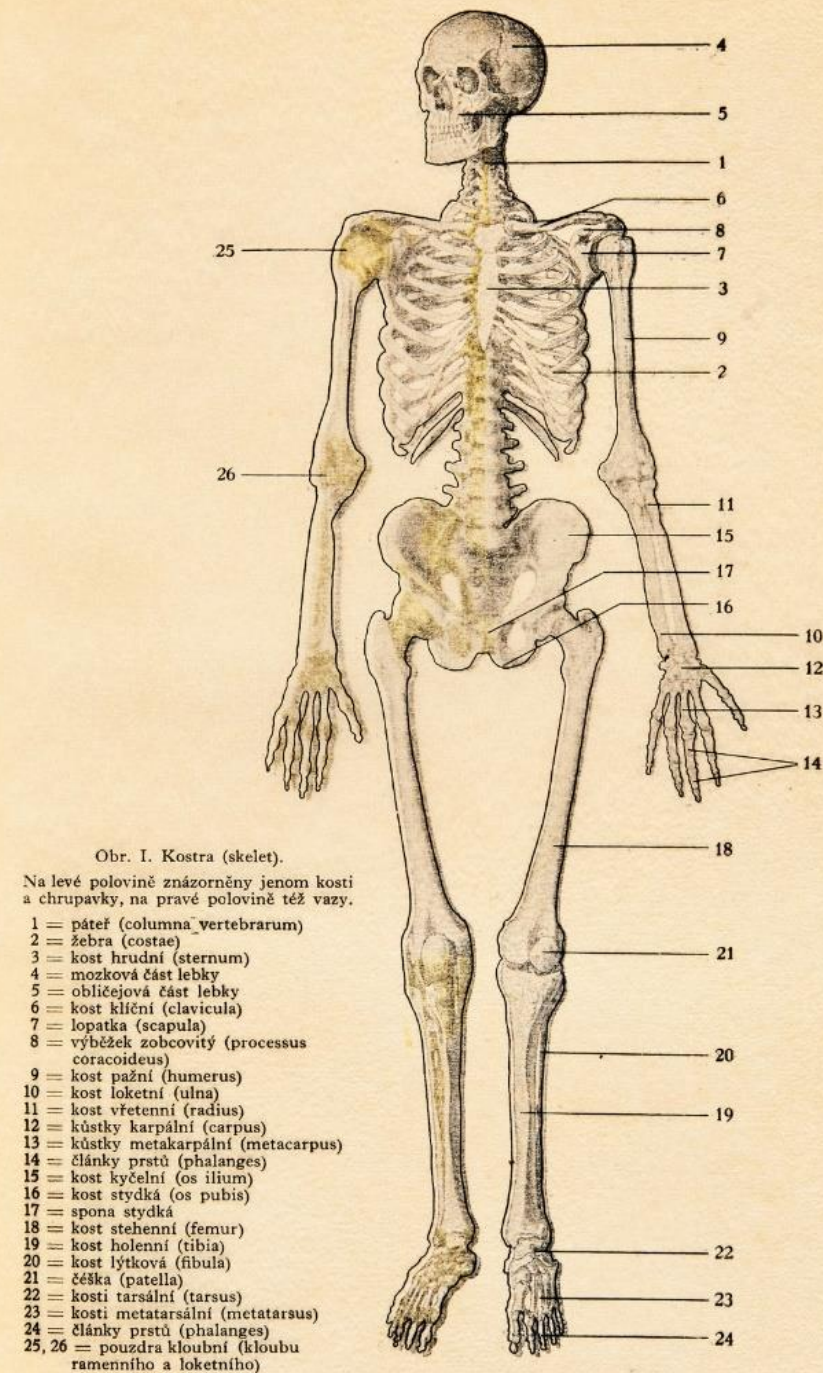
13. While the first volume of Otto's encyclopedia boasted of a high-quality presentation of the emblems of the Czech lands, *Masaryk General Dictionary* showed the symbolism of the new state in comparable quality.



14. In 1930,
a competitive
encyclopedia appeared
in bookstores: the first
volume of *Otto
General Dictionary of
the New Age*.



15. The picture describing a human skeleton with the addition of translucent paper is a proof of how sophisticated illustrations the reader found in the dictionary.





16. The change in the political course of the late 1930s is best illustrated by the pictorial appendixes of the first (1938) and second volume (1939) of the *Educational Dictionary of News*: Pictures from the funeral of President T. G. Masaryk on page 33 ...

17. ... in the 1939 edition, the photos on the same page were replaced with photographs presenting the Nazi triumph.





1. Panenské české. 2. Mišenské. 3. Strýmka. 4. Sampaňská reneta. 5. Průsvitné žluté. 6. Parména zlatá. 7. Holovouský malináč. 8. Coxova reneta. 9. Vejlímek český.

18. In the period after the Second World War, Czechoslovak encyclopedism did not prosper much, even though publishing of general knowledge dictionaries was organised 'from above', enjoyed material support and had sufficient staff.



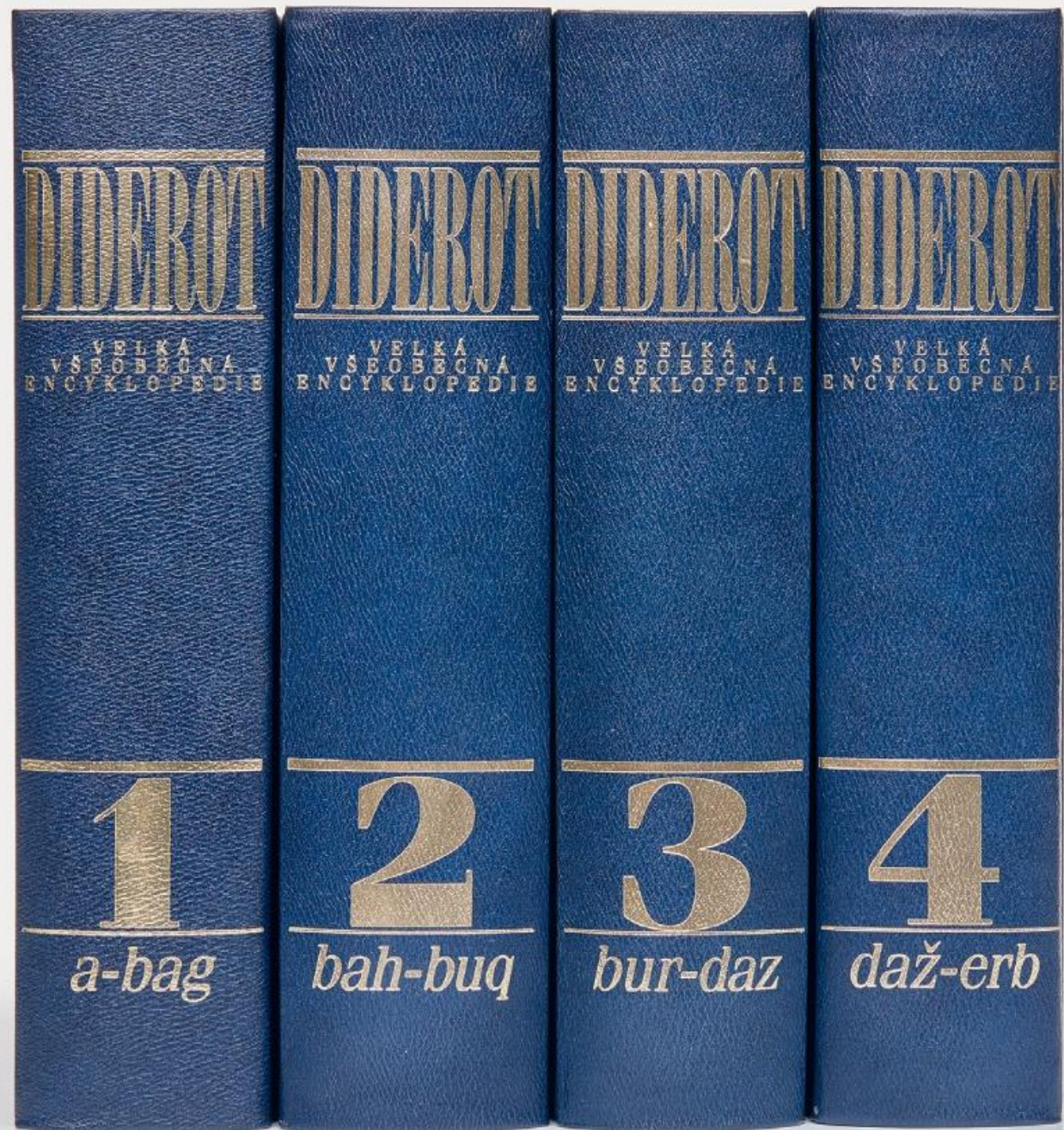
19. Until the Velvet Revolution in 1989, however, all encyclopedias originated in the hands of the communist regime and adhered to Marxist-Leninist doctrine.



1. President, 1897, Kopřivnice, motor Benz, 2 750 cm³; 2. závodní automobil, 1899, Kopřivnice, 3 300 cm³, 100 km.h⁻¹; 3. osobní automobil typ J, 1905, Kopřivnice, 5 873 cm³; 4. Tatra 12, 1929, Kopřivnice, 1 056 cm³; 5. Tatra 30, 1930, Kopřivnice, 1 680 cm³; 6. Tatra 603, 1956, 2 545 cm³, 160 km.h⁻¹; 7. voiturette typ A, Laurin & Klement, 1895, 1 005 cm³, 40 km.h⁻¹; 8. faeton Laurin & Klement, 1920, 4 712 cm³; 9. faeton Škoda 430, 1929, 1 655 cm³; 10. Škoda 1101 Tudor, 1946, 1 089 cm³; 11. Škoda 440 Spartak, 1954, 1 089 cm³; 12. Škoda 450 Felicia, 1959, 1 089 cm³; 13. Škoda 100, 1973, 988 cm³; 14. Praga Piccolo, 1925, 707 cm³; 15. Praga Grand, 1931, 4 429 cm³; 16. Praga Baby, 1934, 996 cm³; 17. Aero 500, 1929, 499 cm³; 18. Aero Minor, 1946, 615, 75 cm³.

20. A page with automobiles is an example of an illustrated appendix of the *Small Czechoslovak Encyclopedia* published in 1984.

21. The first attempt at the original Czech encyclopedia respecting the changes after 1989 is the eight-part *General Encyclopedia (Diderot)*.



22. Finally, the book „Czech Encyclopedias. The History and Transformations of General Dictionaries“ has been completed, and published in May 2020 .





23. The grand opening of the exhibition took place on the 9th June 2020 in the Regional Museum in Olomouc, only a few days after the re-opening of the museum.



24. Visitors could admire the luster of gilded blind-print bindings as well as various types of illustrations with which the publishers enriched their encyclopedias.



25. As a tribute to the distant past, a large format copperplate to Diderot's encyclopedia from the second half of the 18th century was presented.



26. The exhibition was opened from the 10th June to the 23rd August 2020. Words of thanks for cooperation on the exhibition as well as on the book presented go to my colleague Jiří Černý, the photographer Pavel Rozsival, graphic artist Miloš Dvorský and the whole team of colleagues from the Regional Museum in Olomouc.