

DIE PERLE: A 1920s GERMAN TRADE JOURNAL

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Though short lived, the German trade journal, Die Perle, contains a wealth of information concerning the European bead and jewelry industry of the 1920s. Short articles provide insight into new machinery and apparatus for producing beads, natural and artificial materials for the production of beads and other ornaments, fashion trends, market reports, and numerous other topics. As well, there are several departments which deal with specific themes such as technical questions and sources of supplies. As the journals are in German, English summaries are provided for a representative sample of the articles to give the reader an idea of their vast scope.

INTRODUCTION

Die Perle was a technical trade journal published in Naunhof bei Leipzig, Germany, from 1924 to 1929. Although written in German, it was aimed at the entire European beadmaking community. In the early years, its full title was *Die Perle: Zentralorgan für die gesamte Edel- und Kunstperlen-Industrie, Perlenschmuck, Korallen-, Bernstein- und Edelsteinbranche* (The Bead: Central Organ for the Entire Gem- and Artificial-bead Industry, Bead Jewelry, Coral, Amber, and Gemstone Branch). In June of 1927, it became *Die Perle: Zeitschrift für die gesamte Perlen-Industrie, sowie Schmuckwaren, Besatz- und Devotionalien-Branche* (The Bead: Journal for the Entire Bead Industry, as well as the Jewelry, Embroidery, and Devotional Branch).

Each issue, with 8-12 pages, contains a number of brief articles on sundry aspects of the bead, jewelry, and button industries, as well as several departments, including:

1) *Aus der Werkstatt des Perlenmachers* (From the Workshop of the Beadmakers). Contains brief items concerning technical aspects of beadmaking.

2) *Export-, Zoll- und Handelsnachrichten* (Export-, Customs- and Commercial Report). Presents information relating to the export of beads and jewelry to specific countries worldwide.

3) *Technischer Fragekasten* (Technical Question Box). Provides answers to specific technical questions from commercial correspondents.

4) *Bezugsquellen-Anfragen* (Inquiries Regarding Sources of Supply). Contains inquiries from readers concerning sources for specific products, supplies, and equipment.

5) *Patentschau* (Patent Review). Lists recent patents relevant to bead and jewelry production.

6) *Marktbericht* (Market Report). Provides current prices for various raw materials required for the beadmaking and jewelry industry.

7) *Literatur, Büchermarkt, or Bücherschau* (Literature, Book Mart, or Book Reviews). Announces technical publications of interest to the industry.

Each issue also contains numerous display advertisements which reveal what various enterprises were manufacturing and supplying (Fig. 1). Some of them include illustrations of the advertiser's factory (Fig. 2), or the beadmaking equipment (Figs. 3-5) being offered for sale.

In all, the journal contains a goldmine of information concerning beadmaking and the European bead and jewelry industry, especially that of Germany, during the 1920s. Unfortunately, the journal is obscure and sources for it are very difficult to find. Karklins was fortunate enough to track down and acquire a microfilm copy of volumes 1 and 3-6 from the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig a number of years ago. He was subsequently equally fortunate in enlisting Anita Gumpert to annotate a representative sample of the articles in the existing issues. Their translated titles and abstracts are presented below.

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM DIE PERLE

Presented here are summaries of a representative sample of the articles that deal specifically with beads. Articles dealing with other aspects of the jewelry industry have not been included. The year, volume, number, and initial page for each article appear in parentheses at the end of each summary.

Juwelen- u. Uhren-Zeitung
WIEN, I., Tuchlauben 7a.

Verbreitungsgebiet: Oesterreich und alle Nachfolgestaaten - Hochwertiger redaktioneller Inhalt
Schmuckzeichnungen - Beste Insertionselgnung.
Probenummer kostenlos!

Der Zweck

dieser Anzeige ist, Sie darauf aufmerksam zu machen, daß alle Ankündigungen,

wie auch „Kleine Anzeigen“ in der „PERLE“ besten Erfolg haben! :-)

Echt Italienischer Bimsstein
In allen Mählungen
H. PROPFE & CO. m. b. H., Hamburg 1.

OROLOGIUL

**Ceasornicarie-Bijuterie-Metale si Pietre Pretioase
Diamante si Perle-Gravura-Optica**
CLUJ (Rumänien), Cal. Reg. Ferdinand 62
Das einzige Fachorgan der Branche, vermittelt den direkten Verkehr mit Erzeuger u. den Händlerkreisen für Absatz in Rumänien.
I BESTES INSERTIONSORGAN!
Unverbindliches Insertionsoffert und Probenummer kostenlos!

Perlseiden

aus garantiert, reiner Naturseide, in allen Stärken, Längen und Farben, mit 1 und 2 Nadeln liefert äußerst preiswert [76]

Carl Schinle sen., Schramberg (Würtbg.).

PERLEN, COLLIERS, KNOEPFE

aus Galalith und imit. Bernstein fabriziert als Spezialität
Sächsisch. Kunsthorn-Industrie,
Neukirch (Lausitz) 2.

FISCHSILBER-PASTE
ASTRALUCIN

VOLLENDETES FABRIKAT
UNÜBERTROFFEN IN FEINHEIT UND FEUER

CHEMISCHE FABRIK
H. E. BEUTEL, ZITTAU

Holländisches Fischsilber

zum Dekorieren von Perlen in bester Qualität liefert

Herm. Feix
Morchenstern
bei Gablonz,
Schillerstraße 816. (2)

Fischsilber
Fischsilberpaste - Fischschuppen

In allen Qualitäten liefern

Ruben & Bielefeld
Berlin O 17, Breslau: str. 15/16

Figure 1. A sample page of display advertisements from *Die Perle* (1929:vol. 6, no. 1, p. 8).

Kunsthorn
Marke
Galalith
Eingetragene Schutzmarke.

ist das Ideal-Material für die Knopf- u. Perlen-Fabrikation
Lieferbar: in Platten u. Stäben.

Nicht feuergefährlich *Absolut geruchlos:*



*Altteste, grösste und
Kunsthorn-Fabrik* *leistungsfähigste
der Welt.*

Internationale Galalith-Gesellschaft Hoff
Harburg-Elbe.

Figure 2. Advertisement for the synthetic material Galalith, used to make both beads and buttons (*Die Perle* 1928:vol. 5, no. 1, p. 7).

The Production of Machine-Made Wound Beads in France

A patented invention by M. Bonnet introduces a mechanized system for the manufacture of wound beads. The machine permits the mechanized rotation of glass gathers wound on a solid metal wire that is coated with a solution that prevents the gather from sticking to it. The invention presents distinct advantages, but whether the product can replace handmade wound beads by well trained artisans remains to be seen. (1924, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 3)

Utilit, A New Art Material for the Manufacture of Beads

A new material called Utilit has been put on the market by the German Raw Material Industry that is a by-product of the distillation of wood and anthracite and therefore belongs to the category of phenol resin. It is fireproof, unaffected by water or temperature, can be carved, perforated, tooled, ground, and polished to a high gloss, and has a rich scale of

colors, from transparent to vivid red. These characteristics led in a short time to its use in the manufacture of beads. Utilit is marketed in the form of sheets or bars about 25 mm thick. (1924, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 5)

About Acid Polishing Glass Beads and Glass-Paste Gems

Polishing with acids is widely used for articles that cannot be easily faceted and polished. This article advises on the kinds of acids to be used, at what temperature, and in what proportions. The proportion of the various kinds of acids used varies according to the composition and hardness of the glass. (1924, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 10)

The Manufacture of Venetian Glass Beads and their Decoration

The article recalls that the manufacture of small glass beads for decoration dates back to 1500 B.C. and seems

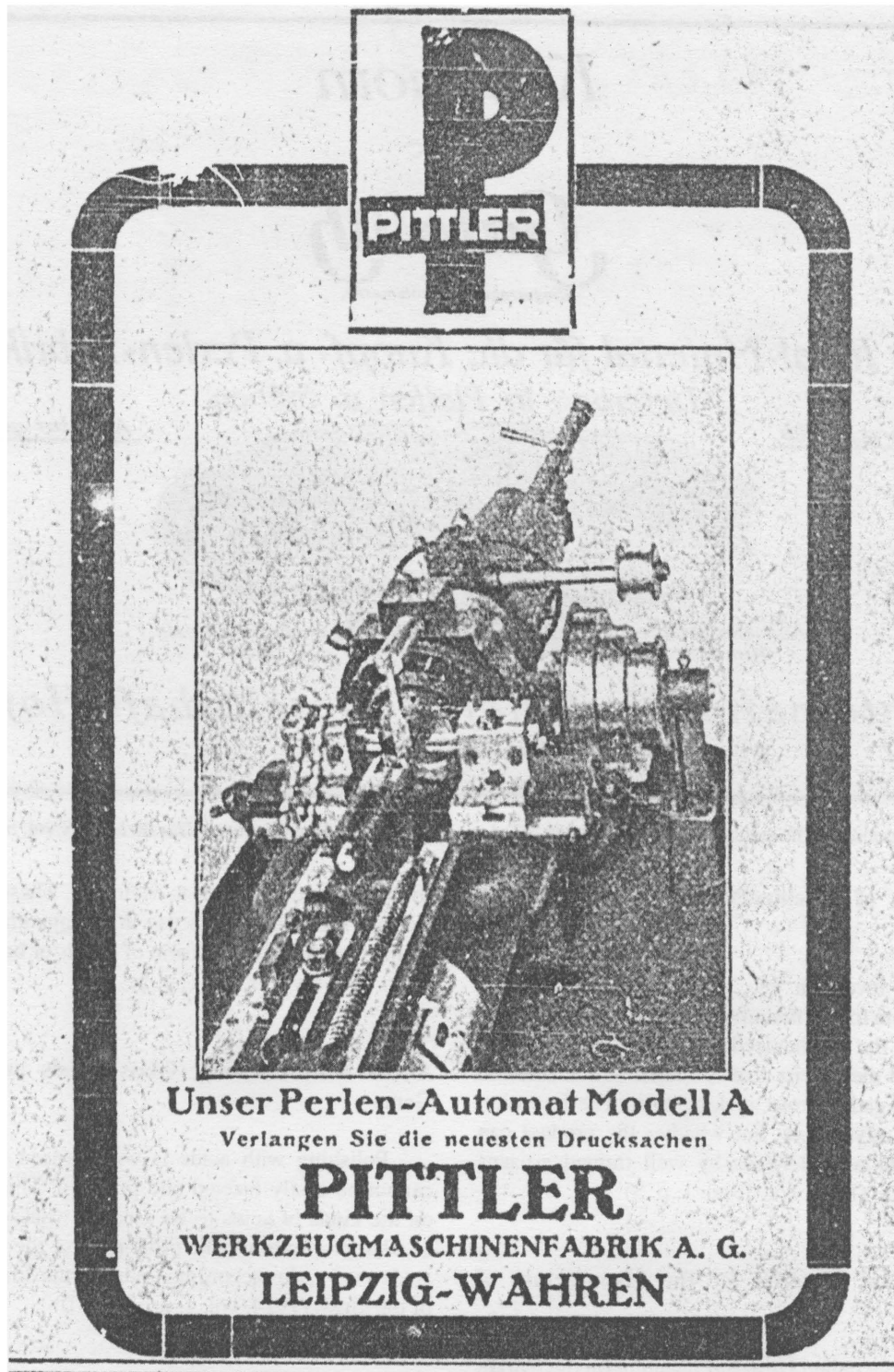


Figure 3. Advertisement showing the Pittler automatic beadmaking machine Model A (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 1, inside front cover)

to have been forgotten until the 14th century A.D. when Venice revived it for the manufacture of rosaries. In the 16th century, when the Italian Andre Viadora created a sensation

with his hollow glass beads, the first machine for automatic beadmaking was introduced. Since those primitive and hand-operated beginnings, the machines have evolved into those

DER TRIUMPF DER TECHNIK

ist der nach zweijähriger Arbeit soeben fertig gestellte

Perlen - Automat A. 20. P.

Einzig in seiner Art steht der neue, vollkommene konkurrenzlose, in allen Kulturstaaten zum Patent angemeldete Perlen-Automat ohne Fassonmesser und ohne Supporte da.

Unerreicht in: Leistung (Garantie bis zu 50 Stück, je nach Größe, in der Minute), **Sauberkeit** (vollkommen symmetrische Perlen bzw. Oliven), **Materialverarbeitung** (Holz, sowie jedes auch das sprödeste Kasein- und Kunstharz-Material). - Arbeitet Perlen bis 20 mm Dm. mit ein und demselben Messer. - Arbeitet Oliven bis 20x35 mm Dm. mit ein und demselben Messer. Keine Anschaffung von Fassonmessern mehr. - Ausschaltung jedweden Ausschusses und Materialverlustes: 1 m Stab ergibt ca. 98 cm Perlen! Interessenten bitten wir zur Besichtigung nach unserem Betrieb zu kommen. Wir sind bereit, alle Materialien, die uns gebracht werden, zu verarbeiten. - Holen Sie noch heute unverbindliche Offerte ein von der Alleinigenden Herstellerin und Patentinhaberin

**Katzmareck & Co., G. m. b. H.,
Böhlitz-Ehrenberg-Leipzig.**

Telegramm-Adresse: Holzautomat.
Fernruf 42039, 42185.

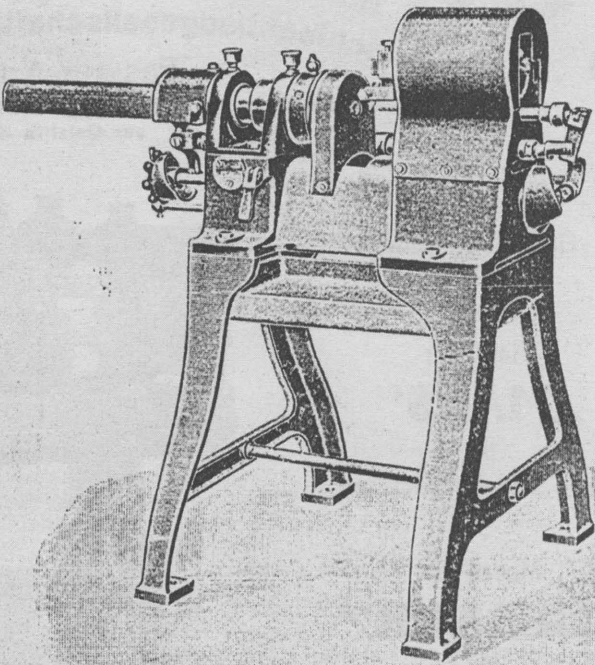


Figure 4. A machine for the production of beads from wood and other materials from the firm of Katzmareck & Co. (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 2, p. 16).

currently used for the manufacture of seed and bugle beads (Fig. 6). The process is described including the methods for silvering and gilding the beads. (1924, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 11)

Perlfix, A New Machine for the Manufacture of Beads

Perlfix is to date the best patented machine for the production of beads of various forms from synthetic materials like artificial resins. It is small, easy to operate, and avoids the mishaps of previous systems, like the premature breaking of the articles. It can fashion the beads from the tiniest size to diameters up to 20 mm. It is marketed by the German firm Katzmareck & Co., Leipzig. (1924, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 12)

New Synthetic Materials for the Bead Industry

Dekorit and Leukorit are two new synthetic materials for the manufacture of beads produced by the chemical factory of Dr. F. Raschig in Ludwigshafen. Dekorit resembles

celluloid, Galalith, and hard rubber, but is not flammable and harder than celluloid. It can be used for imitation coral and ivory. Leukorit is the perfect substitute for ivory. (1924, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 13)

About the Mechanized Mass Dipping of False Pearls in France

To keep abreast of the competition from Japan, European beadmakers have endeavored to simplify the production and decoration of beads. Now France has devised a mechanized system to decorate pearls with fish-scale luster that can be easily adapted to the coloring of other types of beads. It therefore deserves the attention of all bead manufacturers. A schematic drawing shows the apparatus (Fig. 7). (1924, vol. 1, no. 3, p. 20)

About the Bead Market

Future prospects for the bead business are encouraging, according to trade circles. Particular attention is paid by

SYLBE & PONDORF
 Maschinenbaugesellschaft, SCHMÖLLN in Thüringen
 Fasson-Automaten
 zur Herstellung von Perlen, Kugeln, Oliven und allen ähnlichen Formen
 aus Galalith und Holz.

Gegründet 1884.

Modell I:
„MARS“
 für
 6—14 Stabdurchmesser.

Modell II:
„MERKUR“
 für
 15—32 Stabdurchmesser.



800 Angestellte.

Nach
 vollständiger
 Neukonstruktion
 stellen unsere Automaten
 das Vollkommenste dar,
 was auf diesem Ge-
 biete in den Handel
 gebracht
 wird.

Figure 5. Advertisement offering two models of machines for the production of beads from Galalith and wood (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 2, inside back cover).

buyers abroad to beaded laces, fringes, and ornaments. An interesting phenomenon on the bead market is the attempt of Japanese beadmakers to be ahead of the French. A temporary truce occurred only because of the present American boycott of Japanese products. How long that boycott will last is questionable as the American buyer is calculating and will let the two rivals play it out among themselves to his own economic advantage. (1924, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 26)

A Faceting Apparatus for Beads and Stones

Great progress has been made in this field, especially in France. The new machines are not specially manufactured in tool factories, but are systems created by competent mechanics that are based on their practical experiences. The article illustrates and explains the functioning of the apparatus. (1924, vol. 1, no. 4, p. 27)

Synthetic Materials for Bead Manufacturing

Juvelith is widely used in the button and bead industries. It is the synthetic material that most resembles amber. It can also imitate gemstones, is light in weight, and easy to polish. Galalith or "milk-stone" is made into various convincing imitations of tortoise shell, amber, ivory, and horn. Unlike other synthetics, it is not only surface-colored, but dyed all the way through. (1924, vol. 1, no. 5, p. 36)

A Simple and Practical Apparatus for the Faceting of Beads

This machine is destined primarily for small enterprises that still use pedal power and hand-control. It ensures absolute regularity of faceting, is simple in construction, and easy to use (Fig. 8). (1924, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 56)

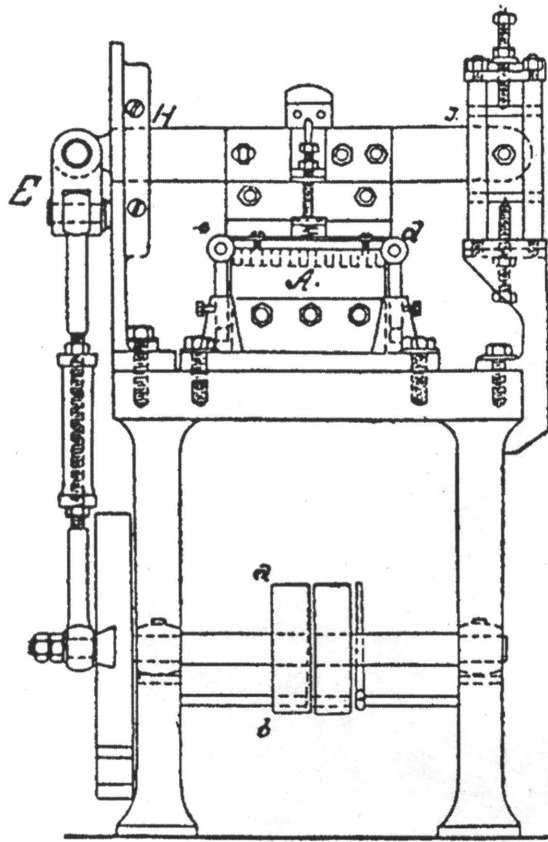


Figure 6. An example of the type of machine used in Venice to chop glass tubing into bead lengths (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 2, p. 11).

Iridization of Glass Beads and Glassware by a Cold Method

This is accomplished through the application of various chemicals. The process is described in detail. (1924, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 56)

About the Cutting and Polishing of Horn, Bone, Vegetable Ivory, Galalith, and Celluloid Beads

The process is carried out in two stages: a preliminary, rough polishing followed by polish to a fine finish using pumice, emery, or felt discs especially manufactured for the purpose. Which one is used depends on the consistency of the material to be polished. (1924, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 57)

Modern Beaded Purses

This article describes and illustrates several modern Parisian beaded purses that incorporate glass, wood, and

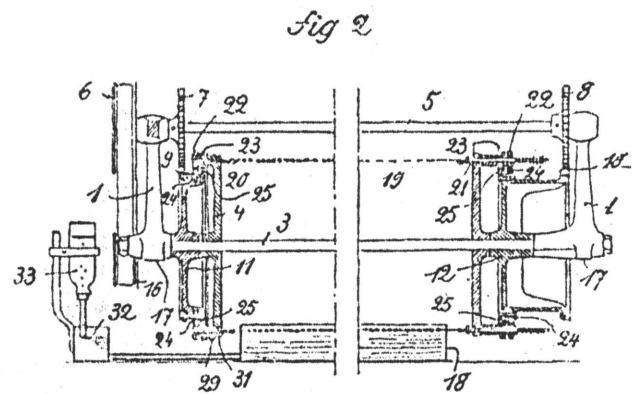
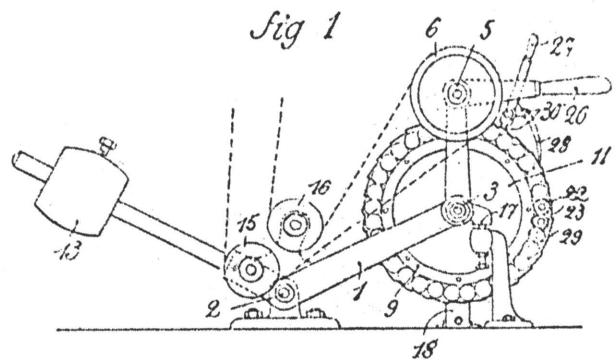


Figure 7. Schematic diagram of the mechanized system used to decorate pearls with fish-scale luster (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 3, p. 20).

synthetic beads, but in a different way than before (Fig. 9). The beads no longer fill the entire surface of the purse, but outline the contours with stitched borders or tassels. Some are square, some oblong, and have metal frames. All have beaded handles. The latest Parisian creations are dainty purses woven with golden rocaille beads. Table runners and covers are decorated in a similar manner. (1924, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 66)

Of the Overseas Glass Bead Business

Germany and Bohemia have neglected the glass bead business because they have taken their overseas customers for granted. If they don't want to lose out to Japan and France in those markets, they will have to pay close attention to the evolution of tastes in the "exotic" countries where the bead business has undergone very little change because these countries have not been subject to fashion trends until now. (1924, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 68)

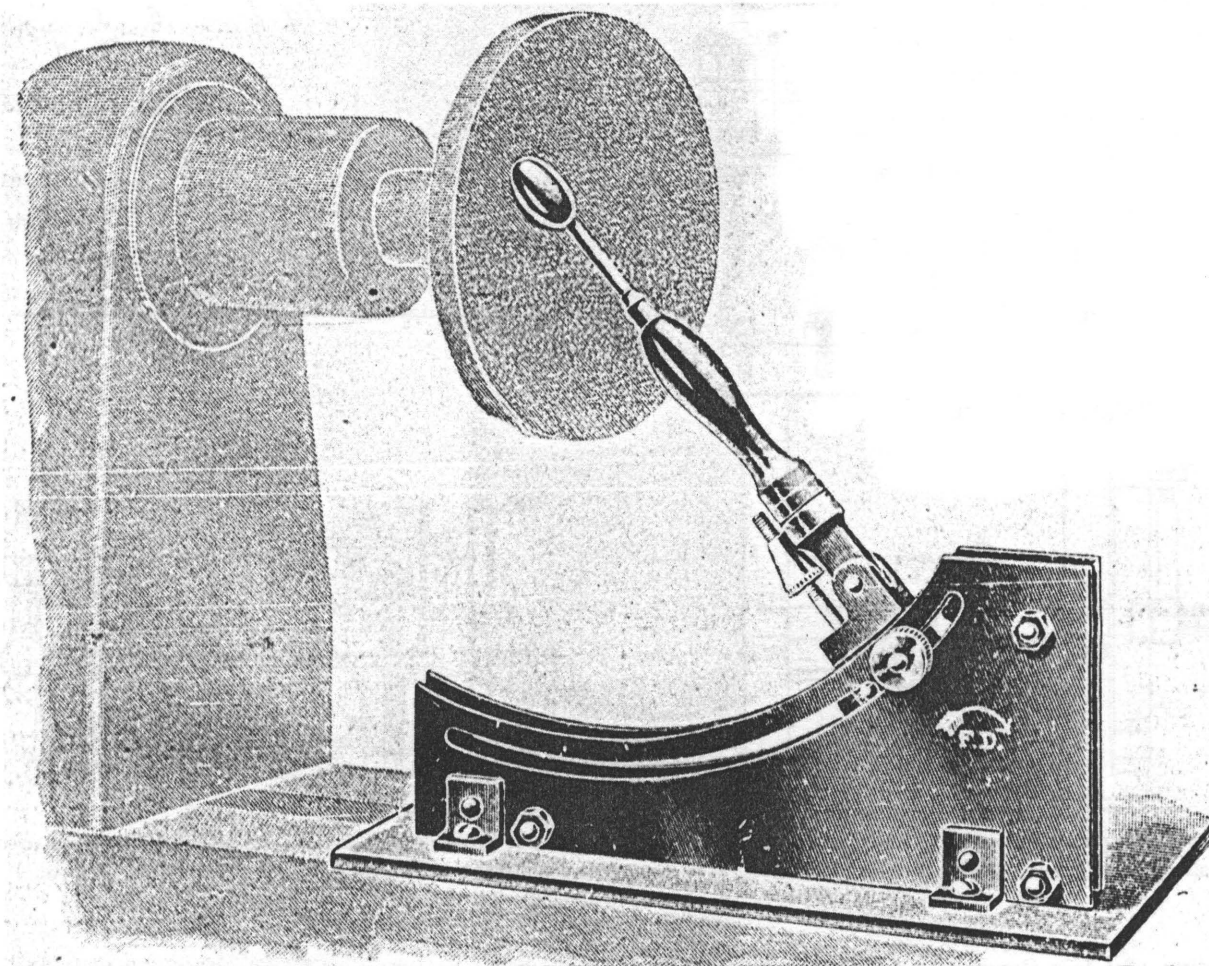


Figure 8. A simple and practical apparatus for the faceting of beads (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 7, p. 56).

Year's Review in the Bead Industry

The year 1925 was favorable for the bead and pearl industry in spite of foreign, especially Japanese, competition. This primarily thanks to technical advances in the creation and production of new synthetic materials. The popularity of natural, cultured, and artificial pearls has also contributed to a heightened interest in beaded jewelry. Prospects for the coming year are also favorable. (1926, vol. 3, no. 1, p. 2)

Practical Instructions for Coloring Vegetable Ivory Beads and Buttons, etc.

The method is similar to the coloring of cotton. The difference is that the amount of the coloring material is determined by the amount of liquid and not by the size of the material to be dyed. The article provides recipes for producing 33 different colors. (1926, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 14)

Albolit and Utilit as Raw Materials for the Button and Bead Industries

Although already widely used in the manufacture of buttons and beads, we again draw attention to these synthetic materials because of their usefulness for all kinds of industries. Both are made today in 200 shades of color and many shapes. Both are easy to mold, fireproof, and adaptable. Albolit is essentially based on the already well-proven Utilit, but surpasses the latter in solidity, hardness, and elasticity. It is thus an ideal substitute for natural ivory. (1926, vol. 3, no. 2, p. 17)

News about Bead Embroidery

Pearl embroidery retains its fashion value. There is much demand for brightly colored embroidery beads for

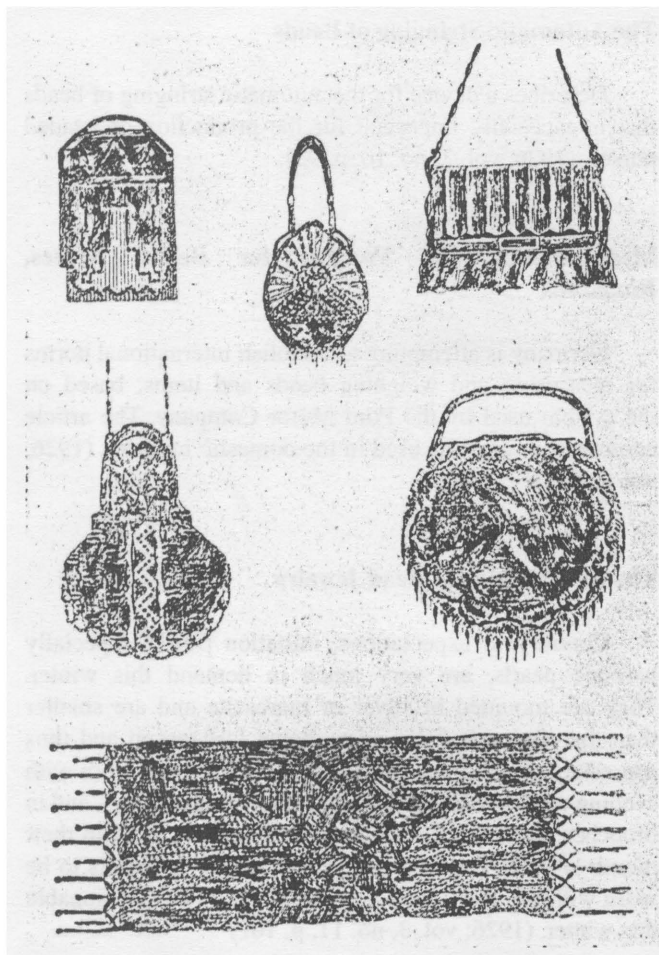


Figure 9. Examples of modern Parisian beaded purses that incorporate glass, wood, and synthetic beads (*Die Perle* 1924:vol. 1, no. 8, p. 66)

purses and pouches. Importance is now attached to the fabric foundation to ensure a favorable contrast with the stitched pattern. (1926, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 28)

New Raw Materials for the Bead Industry

The new material called Vigorit has the advantage over other synthetic materials because of its greater solidity and stability of color when exposed to light. Also, it can be transparent, opaque, or translucent. It is particularly useful for much-handled objects like umbrella handles but should be used also for those that are now dependent on phenol-based synthetic resins. Also new is Dekufit, another phenol-based material which is available in all imaginable colors and is well suited for beads and other products. (1926, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 31)

The Spring Fair in Leipzig 1926

The results of the fair reflected the world-wide economic crisis, but were favorable for the bead industry where movement was slow at the beginning but picked up encouragingly before the March closing. The application of new synthetic ivory materials to costume jewelry items was much admired. It is, however, difficult to predict to what extent this new form of decoration will influence future business. (1926, vol. 3, no. 4, p. 41)

Parisian Novelties in Bead Jewelry

The trend among fashionable Parisian ladies is to wear pins of modest size that are adapted to the almost always present bead necklace. These popular pins usually consist of a central, transparent and finely faceted stone surrounded by innumerable tiny spherical beads that end in a spiral. An alternative is a simple metal filigree design encrusted with tiny spherical beads. These items in no way endanger the necklace fashion but, on the contrary, make the two dependent on each other. (1926, vol. 3, no. 6, p. 61)

Miscellany about Glass and Other Beads

Written in Darjeeling in the Himalayas, this article discusses the significance of beads for the people living there and for their animals. The correspondent points out that most beads are European imports, always in great demand, as “elephants and camels need many meters of those necklaces.” He then lists the beads made in India that it would be useful to import into Europe, like berries, ivory, and bone, including human bone. Indian ivory, he reports, remains white, while African ivory yellows rapidly. (1926, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 69)

On the Subject of “Chemically Produced Pearls”

This article warns against erroneous reports of a complicated method for the fabrication of artificial pearls. Such reports appear even in specialized publications and should not be taken seriously as they reflect a total ignorance of the subject. (1926, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 71)

Recognition of Amber

What distinguishes Baltic amber—or succinite—from other forms of fossilized resin is that it contains amber acid

and the others do not. The article, quoting O. Helm, suggests two methods for determining if the substance contains amber acid. This is a way to ascertain what antique amber jewelry is made of. (1926, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 71)

Glass and Glass Beads in Antiquity

Glass was made in the Euphrates area and in Northern Mesopotamia thousands of years before it was produced by Egyptians who learned it from glass workers from these areas around 1500 B.C. This was stated by Egyptologist Sir Flanders Petrie in a lecture given in London to the Society of Glass Technology. Petrie also said that these glass workers of antiquity were able as early as 7000 B.C. to achieve the purple-blue color that is difficult even for today's industry. The first glass beads made in Egypt were made of glass paste only. (1926, vol. 3, no. 7, p. 71)

Rivalry in the Bead Industry

The entry of America into the bead industry will have catastrophic consequences for Germany's production. The technical advances in the manufacture of glass beads and beads of synthetic materials will enable America to become independent of imports and will enable her to swamp the outside world. (1926, vol. 3, no. 8, p. 77)

Beadwares and Jewelry for Burma (Rangoon)

Burma is an ideal market for jewelry produced in Germany as personal adornment is a priority among all women and men also. Women wear at least three types of jewelry at once. Beads of all sizes are purchased and many are used to decorate cows, horses, goats, and elephants. Bead curtains are also popular because they give an illusion of coolness. (1926, vol. 3, no. 9, p. 89)

The Perfection of Amber Beads

Impurities in amber are removed by immersing the rough pieces of amber in certain oils that are heated gradually and sometimes repeatedly. The semblance of polishing or faceting can also be achieved through the oil bath, as well as color changes when color is added to the oil. (1926, vol. 3, no. 10, p. 94)

The Automatic Stringing of Beads

Describes a device for the automatic stringing of beads that is especially important for the production of beaded purses. (1926, vol. 3, no. 10, p. 95)

Measurements and Weights for Beads, Stones, Rings, etc.

Germany is attempting to establish international norms for measuring and weighing beads and items, based on the system used by the Ford Motor Company. The article enumerates examples used in the domestic industry. (1926, vol. 3, no. 10, p. 96)

The New Fashion in Bead Jewelry

Contrary to expectations, imitation pearls, especially baroque pearls, are very much in demand this winter. They are mounted in silver or marcasite and are smaller than the obviously false ones shown last season and thus can easily pass for the genuine article. They are worn with evening clothes, as necklaces, bracelets, and earrings, and in brooches shaped like animals with a baroque pearl in their mouth or claw. Baroque pearls also appear in garters to be worn with the short, knee-revealing ball gowns fashionable this winter. (1926: vol. 3, no. 11, p. 101)

The Pearl Enjoys Renewed Favor in Fashion Again this Coming Spring

Imitation pearls will again be in great demand in the coming season, especially those made of enamel, alabaster, and opal materials. Japan and France are in close rivalry in this, with Japan slightly ahead because of its cheap labor. The Parisian pearls made of enamel fish-luster will also be much sought after. America shows great interest in baroque pearls of the finest quality supplied by Central Europe. (1926, vol. 3, no. 12, p. 109)

Jewelry and Costume Jewelry Novelties Abroad

Apart from the continuing popularity of pearl necklaces, especially with pearls made with fish-scale silvering, rosaries have become a fashion item in certain areas since manufacturers were supplied with brooch or pendant containers for rosaries with tiny pearls. There is a promising

development in jeweled hat pins, combs, and buckles where the demand for black jet items has given way to multicolored and iridescent articles. (1926, vol. 3, no. 12, p. 109)

Some Facts About Pearl Problems

The growing demand for pearl essences and the great number of patents for Essence d'Orient in various countries points to an upswing in the manufacture of imitation pearls. Today there are substitutes, synthetic materials, and imitations in all fields, even for rubies and diamonds. But all of them are easily identifiable as imitations by the expert. Presented is a description of the advantages artificial pearls have over natural ones and of the various methods of producing them. (1926, vol. 3, no. 12, p. 110; 1927: vol. 4, no. 1, p. 1)

The Decoration of Metal Beads

The decoration of metal beads is limited to the embellishment of the surface with other metals, generally achieved by immersion. Detailed descriptions of gilding, silvering, and coloring are provided. (1927, vol. 4, no. 1, p. 3)

The Pearl Necklace in its New Presentation

The popular length for pearl necklaces is now 140-160 cm. They are either of uniform size, between 4 and 8 mm, or graduated from 2 to 8 mm. This type is the fashion in France, Central Europe, and America. The different designs of the necklaces and the materials used are described. This includes an American invention of a mother-of-pearl imitation and a Viennese synthetic product called Polopas. (1927, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 9)

Germany's Amber Industry

The industry focuses mainly on the exploitation of raw amber with which Germany supplies a large part of the world market. Production has remained the same as in pre-war times, but exports have diminished considerably, especially those for the markets of Russia and Austria. Germany also converts large amounts of raw amber into melted amber that, together with its byproducts, amber acid and amber oil, is used by the varnish and lacquer industry. (1927, vol. 4, no. 2, p. 12)

America's Business in Pearls, Costume Jewelry, and Buttons

In spite of its great absorption possibilities, America has held back recently on imports because it has been swamped by offers of low-quality merchandise. Another negative factor is that America has begun its own production of pearls and buttons of organic and glass-like materials. If there is a demand for cheap items, America will import these from Europe for re-export to Argentina or Australia, for example. The American market demands high quality in gem-jewelry as well as in cheaper costume jewelry. America's production of synthetic pearls has made such progress that it is becoming a dangerous rival for European manufacturers. (1927, vol. 4, no. 3, p. 18)

Some Facts About the Manufacture of Porcelain Beads

Attempts to make porcelain beads may have begun by the end of the 18th century, but the production was started in earnest by Bapterosses and later imitated in Germany and Austria. A description of the various raw materials that are utilized in the manufacturing process is provided. (1927, vol. 4, no. 4, p. 27)

Anticipated Revival of the Bead Business through the Russian Market

Prosperous circles in Russia spend a lot of money on personal adornment. The country's attempts to manufacture these items at home were not successful and that is why Russia offers good business opportunities for such items, mainly embroidery beads, ribbons, and belts, as well as purses adorned with beads and colored stones. Business is centralized, but satisfactory arrangements can be made, especially through exchanges. (1927, vol. 4, no. 5, p. 36)

The Real Orient Pearl and the Cultured Pearl

Describes a special microscope called the Endoscope for the fool-proof distinction between natural and cultured pearls and how to use it. Constructed by professors Chicowsky and Perrin of the Sorbonne (Fig. 10). (1927, vol. 4, no. 6, p. 44)

The Coral Fishery

Corals originate from the Mediterranean, especially the African coast. Methods of fishing have not changed

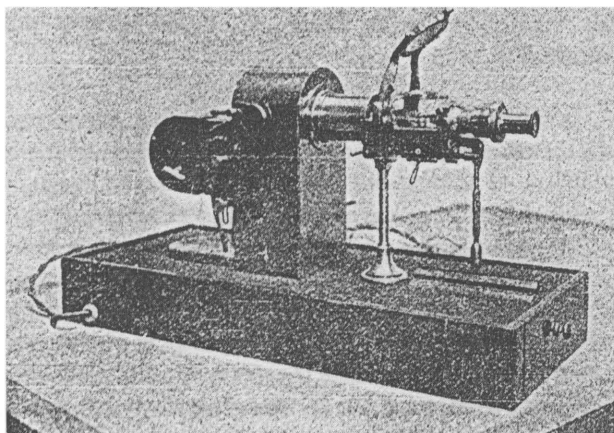


Figure 10. The Endoscope, used to distinguish natural from cultured pearls (*Die Perle* 1927:vol. 4, no. 6, p. 44).

much since the 15th century when the French held licence to harvest them. New sources have since been found in the Adriatic. The yearly yield in Italy alone is estimated at 160,000 kilos. A great part of this is shipped to East India. Coral beads in considerable amounts are exported to South America and Australia. (1927, vol. 4, no. 7, p. 51)

Some Facts About Mold-Pressed Beads

This type has been made in Bohemia since 1780. The method is said to have been invented by chance by a glass-beadmaker who dropped the metal bar or wire he wound beads with into the glass mass and when he fished it out with tongs, he noticed that the glass that adhered to them took on its shape. Tongs with several bead-shaped molds have since been in wide use. Decorating the surface of pressed beads was introduced in the 1840s. (1927, vol. 4, no. 7, p. 52)

Preparations in Jewelry Fashion for the Coming Season

Paris again endeavors to lead jewelry fashion in the coming season. It will be dominated by the black-and-white combination. The French bead industry was in the vanguard with the successful launching of necklaces of varying lengths and styles composed of black glass, wax, and jet beads, combined with pearls and white mother-of-pearl. Such necklaces can also be adorned with tassels of seed beads. (1927, vol. 4, no. 8, p. 1)

Novelties in Bead Jewelry and Devotional Articles

Beads retain their fashion value. Foreign countries seek particularly the finely stitched, embroidered items of

earlier times. Trimmings in black and white are favored. For rosaries, beads on metal-links are used. They are made of nacre or jet; ruby-beads are the only colored ones. Carved wooden beads are still prominent. For adornment of such strands, new forms in pendants, such as hearts, tiny crosses, and horseshoes are used. (1927, vol. 4, no. 10, p. 73)

The Matting of Glass Beads

This is usually done with quartz-powder in a tumbler, sometimes with acid. Several other methods and their recipes are listed. (1927, vol. 4, no. 10, p. 75)

Future Tasks for the Bead Industry

To maintain and develop sales, it is indispensable to keep step with the fashion industry. This applies both to artificial pearls that are mass produced as well as to glass beads, and is to be achieved by constant improvement of the materials and the development of new forms of decoration such as oxidation that achieves iridization. A foremost task of the bead industry is to again draw the attention of women to bead embroidery and encrustations of glass stones that must, of course, conform to modern tastes. (1927, vol. 4, no. 11, p. 81)

The Utilization and Working of Corals

Working coral for jewelry usually takes place at the site of its origin. The corals first have their rind removed, then are cut into bead shapes, ground, and polished. Ranging from white to dark red, the latter color is the most popular with large cabinet pieces having immense value. After the coral dies it turns brown if left at the bottom of the sea for a long time and is the cheapest. Black coral comes from the Indian Ocean, has an inner horn-like structure, and bends easily. It is used for mourning jewelry and for decoration on regal scepters. Then there is a very rare blue coral that in the Cameroons is called *Akori*. (1927, vol. 4, no. 11, p. 82)

The Manufacture of Artificial Horn from Casein for the Production of Beads

This article lists methods for the production of artificial horn from casein that makes it as efficient as Galalith for the production of buttons, beads, cigar holders, and the like. (1927, vol. 4, no. 11, p. 83)

Surface Decoration for Celluloid and Synthetic Beads

Describes methods for coloring celluloid, Galalith, and other synthetic materials. Galalith can be faceted, employing the same methods used for glass beads. (1927, vol. 4, no. 11, p. 84)

New Designs in the French Jewelry and Costume Jewelry Industry

Astonishing novelties in this field are primarily fashion embellishments for such items as belts and hair ribbons as well as blouses, coats, and dresses. The slides used on such adornments are showy, but not aggressively so, and each piece is an adornment in itself, made of polished (faceted?) glass or synthetic material. A rarely seen novelty is the neck ring. Similar items have been created for the boy-style haircuts. They are glittery silk ribbons, sometimes decorated with beads. (1927, vol. 4, no. 12, p. 90)

America's New Jewelry Fashion

Affluent American women are currently focused on hair jewelry and clothing ornaments. The various hairpins, combs, and coronets, all produced in America, are described. Clothing adornments are characterized by glitter and bright colors. Other articles of jewelry like necklaces, bracelets, and earrings have not changed much compared to previous trends. Whether Europe can be considered as a supplier is uncertain, but it is a possibility if it conforms to American tastes. (1928, vol. 5, no. 1, p. 1)

Celluloid as a Raw Material for the Bead Industry

After a long struggle against prejudice because of its flammability, celluloid has rapidly become a most valuable material that is unequaled by any other plastic substance in malleability, the capacity to imitate precious raw materials, and economy. A description of its composition and methods of use is provided. (1928, vol. 5, no. 2, p. 12; vol. 5, no. 3, p. 19)

The Polishing and Faceting of Beads

In the 1840s to 1870s, the faceted bead was a sought-after trade object. In those days, veritable faceting artists produced black-glass beads with 50-100 facets made on foot-activated grinding wheels. A similarly primitive

technique was used decades ago for amber. The popularity and value of such beads led to the invention of automatic faceting machines that are described in detail. (1928, vol. 5, no. 3, p. 20)

Modern Venetian Beads

The colorful Venetian bead has enlivened the jewelry market and supplanted the domination of oyster-pearl necklaces. The article presents a panegyric to the attractiveness, variety, and manufacturing techniques of these beads that "conform to Nordic tastes" in spite of their imaginativeness. (1928, vol. 5, no. 4, p. 25)

Some Facts About the Bead Industry

The search of early beadmakers for raw materials easy to use in the manufacture of beads has opened the field to a wide variety of such materials. Bone and wood were used in rosaries, artistically carved and believed to have been soaked in resins as early as the 17th century. These products were not widely known as they were made with primitive techniques and mostly for local consumption. Very few of such beads have survived. They are mostly black and flattened. Now and then, the carved grooves were colored with some red material. They were never used as jewelry. (1928, vol. 5, no. 4, p. 28)

Paris Brings New Jewelry

This year (1928) is under the sign of large and not always genuine jewelry creations from Paris that interest the great capitals of Europe. Last year, pearls or colored bead necklaces gave way to paste that does not attempt to look like real diamonds. Pearls, strung in novel ways and in very long strands are among the imaginative inventions of Paris jewelers. Another novelty is the snake necklace. Real and false jewelry is sometimes worn together. (1928, vol. 5, no. 5, p. 33)

Madre Pearls

This new pearl is neither an imitation nor a synthetic. It is so far the most perfect elaboration of the nacre-pearl. Made from the thickest part of the real Macassar or Tahitian shell, it is used also for crucifixes, elements for modern crafts, and for rosaries. (1928, vol. 5, no. 5, p. 35)

Rational Manufacture of Beads from Synthetic and other Materials

Describes a machine that forms beads with a minimum of complication and labor and little waste material. (1928, vol. 5, no. 6, p. 42)

About the Fabrication of Furfurol and Phenolresins for Industrial Articles: Radio Parts, Beads, etc.

When heated, these materials become a black, shiny, and hard gum-like substance. Different ways of producing and applying it are provided. (1928, vol. 5, no. 6, p. 43)

The Stringing of Beads

This article describes a device for the mechanical sorting and stringing of beads (Fig. 11), by color and according to patterns. These strands are used for the weaving of beaded purses. (1928, vol. 5, no. 8, p. 57)

Agitation Against German Glass-Stone Jewelry in India

Great indignation was caused in India following the lively sale of precious gems in Calcutta that turned out to be glass imitations originating in Germany. Police investigations revealed that these items were the product of special polishing machines imported from Germany. It has not been discovered yet who imported them and where they were installed. The incident has led to a prejudice against all German glass products imported by India. (1928, vol. 5, no. 8, p. 59)

News from the Necklace Design Market

New designs intensified the interest in bead necklaces, especially in France and abroad. The new designs differ from previous mass-produced necklaces by returning to translucent, colored, and finely faceted beads and replacing simple one-strand necklaces with multi-string and multi-element neck adornments that completely fulfill the role of fine jewelry. (1928, vol. 5, no. 9, p. 65)

The Decoration of Porcelain Beads

This is similar to the methods used for glass beads. Frequently, however, attempts are made to give the beads an

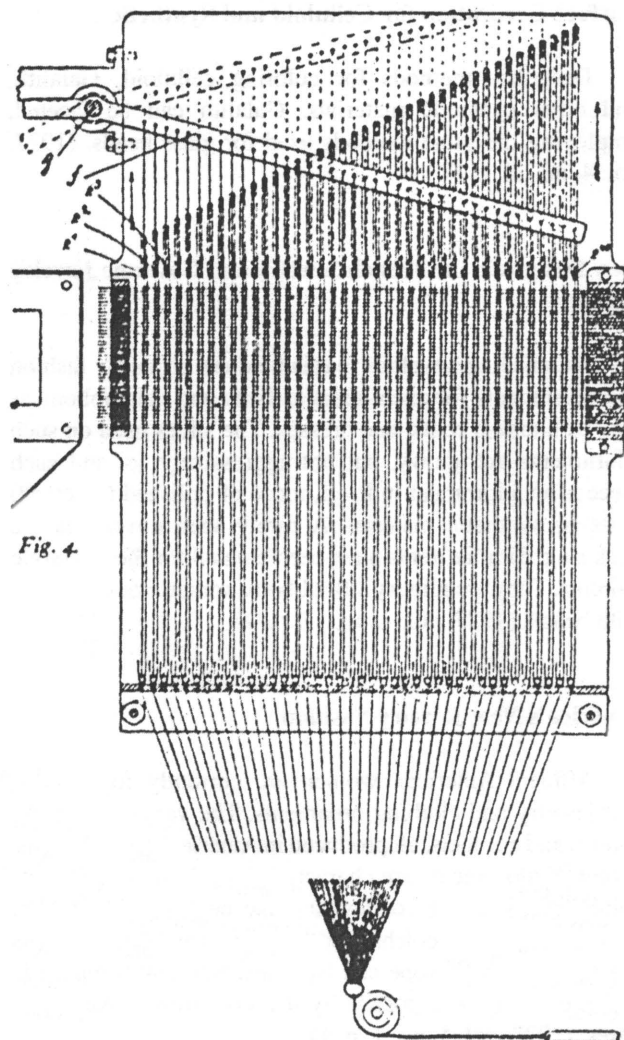


Figure 11. One of four schematic views of a device for the mechanical sorting and stringing of glass beads (*Die Perle* 1928:vol. 5, no. 8, p. 58).

opalescent luster in different colors. This article describes the procedure and the chemicals used. Ready-made formulas are available in commerce. The recipes are mostly secret. (1928, vol. 5, no. 12, p. 91)

About Bead Embroidery in the Ready-Made Industry

The article points to a coming fashion of bead embroidery for curtains, wall hangings, table mats, and purses that uses old models and has an antique look with some modifications. Several motifs are illustrated. (1929, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 1)

A Bead-Turning Machine

The article describes and illustrates a machine that can measure, turn, perforate, and cut off beads from rods or pipes in a single procedure. The machine can produce 12,000 to 18,000 beads per day. A small schematic drawing of the machine (Fig. 12) and a description of the production process are provided. (1929, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 3)

The Gablonz Industry during the Business Year 1928

On average, the year 1928 was rather satisfactory, but the aftermath of the earlier business crisis should not be minimized. It is difficult to predict future developments since for jewelry they depend on fashion and, in general, on custom's policies of the importing countries. (1929, vol. 6, no. 1, p. 4)

Glass Beadwork

Paris and other fashion centers overseas are already preparing for an anticipated fashion wave that will favor glass beads for ornamentation on clothing, embroidery, and accessories. The designs will be based on models of the Biedermeier period but with a completely contemporary execution in form, color, and brilliance of the beads. For necklaces, crystal remains all important, but here too, the

new creations show distinctive novel shapes and ways of faceting. It is pleasing that all contemporary craft enterprises are earnestly endeavoring to resolve the fashion problems and that their preliminary work is artistically mature. (1929, vol. 6, no. 3, p. 18)

France's Bead and Fancy-Stone Industry

The article presents details of this industry given to a group of German industrialists by M. Legentil, president of the French Board of Trade that represents the stone cutting and artificial pearl industry. Paris has always been the site of artificial pearl production and the French Jura produces imitation stones. According to M. Legentil, France will soon be able to beat the competition of Czechoslovakia and Germany in price and quality, thanks to the latest improvements to the French industry. (1929, vol. 6, no. 4, p. 26)

Bead Embroidery and Knitting

This article provides a brief history of glass and glass bead production and of the multiple decorative uses of beads, especially in Germany. Among the centers of production, the author, Dr. Charlotte Steinbrucker, mentions only Germany and Bohemia (after Egypt of antiquity and Venice beginning in the 12th century). Germany's glass bead production started at the beginning of the 16th century. Steinbrucker goes on to state that embroidery and the use of beads in knitted, woven, and crocheted items of all sorts peaked in the mid-19th century, declined in the 1870s, and revived only recently. (1929, vol. 6, no. 5, p. 33)

Perloid

Perloid is a perfect substitute for mother-of-pearl as a raw material. The so-called fish-silver, it is a German product on the borderline between organic and synthetic as it is made from the scales of a tiny fish found in East Prussian lakes, but attains its gloss only through a certain chemical treatment. It is made and marketed in sheets of different dimensions and lends itself to the manufacture of innumerable objects, and as an inlaid decoration. (1929, vol. 6, no. 6, p. 42)

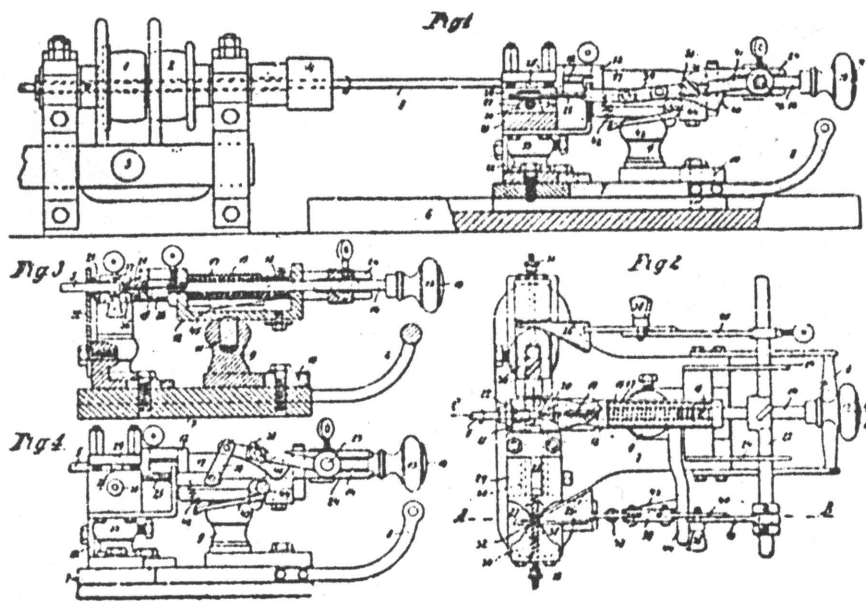


Figure 12. Schematic view of a bead-turning machine (*Die Perle* 1929:vol. 6, no. 1, p. 3).

Some Information on the Production of French Colloid Pearls

Such imitation pearls have been on the market for some time and are very similar to but much cheaper than Japanese cultured pearls. They are made using a gelatine-solution. In the case of large pearls, one or more layers of cotton-wool are wrapped around a metal rod and dipped into the gelatine solution. Later techniques utilize water-clear celluloid instead of gelatine. (1929, vol. 6, no. 7, p. 1)

The Polishing of Wooden Beads

This can be accomplished with special tumbling machines or with chemicals that also serve to harden the wood surface. The article goes on to describe methods for staining such beads and coloring them to conform to the fashion of the day. (1929, vol. 6, no. 7, p. 50)

From the Patent-Literature on Pressed Amber Manufacture

Lists seven patents for methods to utilize waste amber, clarify amber, transform copal into a substance that more closely resembles genuine amber, and for the imitation of amber using bone. (1929, vol. 6, no. 8, p. 60)

From the Gablonz Industrial District

The industry reports a weakening of business due to fashion changes and a long winter and cool spring. The manufacture of glass beads and gem stones is satisfactory, but payments are slow and insolvencies are increasing in the country and abroad. The Czech porcelain and glass industry is fighting to counter a planned increase in American customs tariffs by having all European countries raise their customs tariffs on all imported American products. A proposal to that effect was presented by Czechoslovakia and Germany to the European Customs Union for discussion. France, Italy, and Belgium are willing to go along with such a measure. (1929, vol. 6, no. 9, p. 67)

On the New Fashion in Necklaces

Bead necklaces are again in fashion. Beads are more highly valued than any other kind of jewelry element, with

glass as the favored material. The article goes on to provide a description of different types of modern necklaces, mostly composed of graduated, round beads of transparent, glossy materials in various colors. (1929, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 89)

Novelties in Rosary Beads and Similar Articles

New sketches show very dainty rosaries of tiny beads and chain-links, housed in egg-shaped, flower-decorated capsules. The well-known book-shaped metal containers have been lowered in price by some firms to such an extent that customers lost confidence and stopped buying them. Rosaries of faceted beads, preferably black with shimmering silver overlays, are gaining popularity. Paris decorates rosary pendants in pearl or pear shapes that contain pictures of the Virgin Mary or Christ with his crown of thorns. Such adornments could again become the fashion for similar pieces of jewelry. (1929, vol. 6, no. 12, p. 89)

CONCLUSION

Although it was only published for less than a decade—a victim of the 1929 stock market crash—*Die Perle* provides an amazing amount of information concerning the European bead and jewelry industry during the affluent Roaring Twenties. The summaries provided above present only a fraction of the information in its pages. There is much more there for the student of beads, beadwork, and jewelry. Unfortunately, the German text makes this information difficult to access by non-German-speaking individuals. It is, therefore, hoped that a selection of the more significant articles can be translated and published in the near future. It is also hoped that the text of all the extant issues can be made available to interested researchers in an electronic format.

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