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BOOKS AND PRINTING

A TREASURY FOR TYPOPHILES

edited with an introduction by

Paul A. Bennett

W. GOUDY

W. A. DWIGGINS

D. B. UPDIKE

HOLBROOK JACKSON

CARL P. ROLLINS

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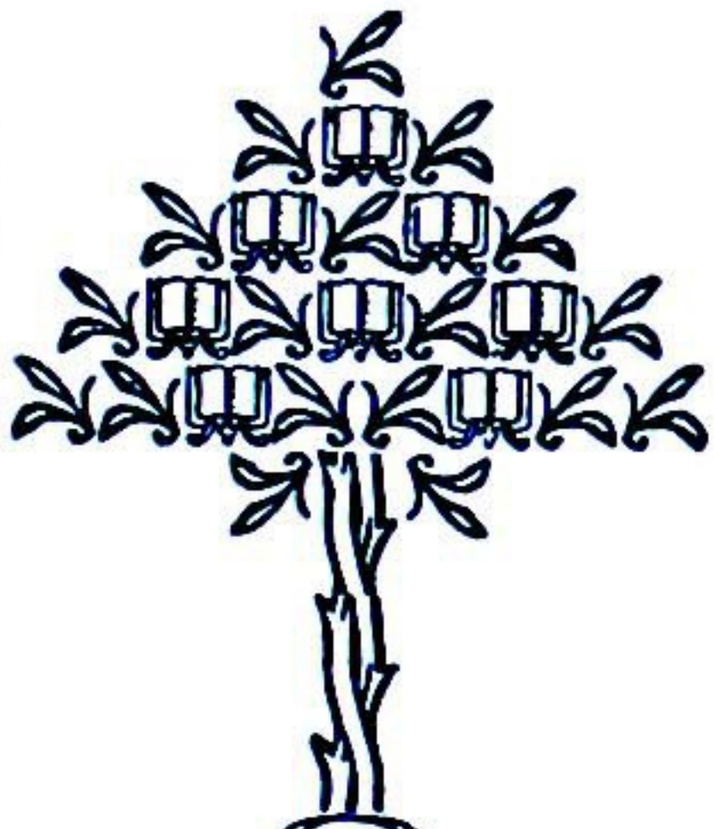
BOOKS AND PRINTING

A TREASURY FOR TYPOPHILES

edited by Paul A. Bennett



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P. A. B.

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BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

LABELING these observations "introductory" isn't to confuse the purist. He knows that the terms preface, foreword and introduction become mixed frequently, he doesn't like it and he much prefers retaining the proper distinctions.

"An introduction," he will insist, "should be solely concerned with the subject of the book, and introduce or supplement its text. And the preface or foreword should properly deal with the book's purpose, and define its limitation and scope. Let's keep things that way."

Unfortunately, there isn't one term that covers comment which flows from one division to the other in a miscellany like this. At times—and at the risk of editorial modesty—I may seem something of a typographic barker, singing the praises of certain essays and pointing up different attractions. At others, the text will be supplemented with an explanatory note, or amplified to bring it up to date, as in the Josephy, Ransom and Rushmore articles.

It amounts to an assist in getting back to purpose: that of informing on matters typographic, and on books, their printing and some of the fascinating steps along the way. In selecting material of appeal to the collector, printer, typographer and student, I have not overlooked the professional curiosity of editors and technicians. That's the thinking behind the inclusion of extracts from McKerrow and Mores and Watson, among other scholarly contributions.

Where there was a choice, the preference was for the author with a point of view and the ability to express it interestingly. Four articles indicate this approach. "Printing, Paper and Playing Cards," the brilliant survey of Lancelot Hogben, illumines the birth and spread of writing and printing as nothing else I know. Otto Ege's brief account of the development of our alphabet, with its memorable letter-diagrams, has a different, not less valuable appeal, as does Oscar Ogg's comparison of "Lettering and Calligraphy," with its specimens of his own distinguished hand. And in "Printers As Men of the World," Evelyn Harter writes of a number of great printers as men of intellect, at home in the world of ideas. Her stimulating

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text suggests the compensation of looking at the background of printing in relation to world events.

There was no preconceived attitude to consider in evaluating the essays included: no restriction by country of origin; no fixation about the traditional or modern in typographic approach; no desire to slant, or plant, ideas; no intent other than to select much of the best writing in English by authors of substance. That the gathering may provide riches to be added to "the savings account of your memory" is my hope.

In a quite real sense, the experience has been something like spending many long weekends with friends in good, solid talk—some of it controversial, much of it illuminating and informing. The re-reading has not only opened "doors and windows for a welcome flood" of ideas, it has suggested new trails and made for valuable comparisons of favorites first met with years ago.

It has been difficult to resist the temptation to include more essays of historic and technical appeal to typographers and printers. Many of the present generation, I presume, may not know De Vinne's authoritative account of the development of the American Point System, which occurred in the late eighties and is detailed at length in his *Plain Printing Types;* or the invaluable Meynell and Morison essay on "Printer's Flowers and Arabesques," with its fascinating reproductions, from *The Fleuron.* I have omitted these two with reluctance, and have used the space they would occupy for a half-dozen shorter essays not less worthy in themselves, but on different topics.

Since space was limited, I needed to be. I would have welcomed the opportunity to include additional essays by D. B. Updike, whose incomparable *Printing Types: Their History, Forms and Use; In the Day's Work*, and *Some Aspects of Printing: Old and New*, and other writings on typography should not be missed; by W. A. Dwiggins, the distinguished American letter artist and designer, who writes as well as he draws; and by Holbrook Jackson, the great English critic, literary historian and essayist, whose *Anatomy of Bibliomania, Fear of Books* and *Printing of Books* are required reading.

There are other favorites omitted too, for unlike Jackson's remark about the house of books, "There are many mansions and room for all trades, whims, and even fads"—this book could comfortably hold no more.

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It has not seemed desirable, as it would be possible, to eliminate a degree of duplication in part among some of the essays. That would have required an amount of editorial surgery and revision unfair to the authors concerned. More importantly, it would have assumed that every reader would read every essay—hardly an attainable ideal.

Nor has any documentation been attempted to reconcile opposing viewpoints—that of A. W. Pollard and Holbrook Jackson, for instance, in respect to William Morris as printer and typographer. Happy will that reader be who finds this and other instances sufficiently provocative to embark upon further research of his own.

And while it is easier to come upon material in a collection such as this than to track down each item individually, much of the fun of the search is missing, along with the memorable thrills of discoveries in scattered places. There's much gold yet to be found by even moderate digging.

The greatest area for argument is that within the opposing views of the modern and traditional approach to book design. It is unrealistic to oppose the concept that contemporary typography should reflect some of the differences that mark our time from other epochs. Defining distinctions and relating them precisely to the arts of the book is something else again.

In his eloquent *Harsh Words*, T. M. Cleland decries the restless craving for something new. "This poison is aggravated in printing and typography," he insists, "by the fact that of all the arts it is, by its very nature and purpose, the most conventional. If it is an art at all, it is an art to serve another art. It is good only so far as it serves well and not on any account good for any other reason.

"It is not the business of type and printing to show off, and when, as it so frequently does, it engages in exhibitionistic antics of its own, it is just a bad servant. . . . Typography, I repeat, is a servant—the servant of thought and language to which it gives visible existence. When there are new ways of thinking and a new language, it will be time enough for a new typography."

The modern designer disagrees. He believes books can be freshened, made more appealing to eye and hand, and more inviting to read, just as product-packaging has benefited by the imaginative conceptions of skilled industrial designers. He concedes that books remain unsurpassed as a medium for transmitting thought to the

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reader's mind—and admits they do it best with a minimum of visual distraction. But, he asks, "is it not reasonable to remain open-minded and appraise the modern artist for what he may contribute?

"Books, to be sure, are much more than packages to be styled for shelf attention and sparkle. Yet it seems reasonable to believe they also may benefit by traveling the road of visual appeal and design attractiveness, and that they may be assisted in typographic handling to convey the author's words with a minimum of reading effort."

It isn't difficult to dismiss the modern approach and call it uninformed nonsense, but that doesn't lift the curtain and illumine the problem—or settle the continuing debate.

I recall discussing modern typography some years ago with the late D. B. Updike, in his library at the Merrymount Press in Boston. A catalog from the Museum of Modern Art was at hand, designed by Herbert Bayer of Bauhaus fame.

It looked strange in its all-lowercase typography, and seemed to slow reading because of that strangeness. To many it was the newest of the new . . . perhaps it would institute a trend? Mr. Updike smiled, reached to a shelf for a book. It was printed more than a hundred years earlier in Paris and set throughout in lowercase. "So far as this had any influence, then or later," he remarked, "the experiment of *Typographie Economique* is as dead as Queen Anne."

All of which points up Bertrand Russell's remarks, "On Being Modern Minded," in his recent *Unpopular Essays**: "The desire to be contemporary is new only in degree," he declares, "it has existed to some extent in all previous periods that believed themselves to be progressive.

"The Renaissance had a contempt for the Gothic centuries that had preceded it; the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries covered priceless mosaics with whitewash; the Romantic movement despised the age of the heroic couplet. . . . But in none of these former times was the contempt for the past nearly as complete as it is now.

"From the Renaissance to the end of the eighteenth century men admired Roman antiquity; the Romantic movement revived the Middle Ages. . . . It is only since the 1914-18 war that it has become fashionable to ignore the past *en bloc*.

"The belief that fashion alone should dominate opinion has great

* Bertrand Russell, *Unpopular Essays* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950).

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advantages. It makes thought unnecessary, and puts the highest intelligence within reach of everyone."

Really thinking through the design potential not only seems the nub of the matter, but is basically sound typographically. Read Peter Beilenson attentively as he discusses the amateur printer and the development of a new style (page 313). "It is simple, but dull, to copy an old style," he points out. "It is hard, but exciting, to work out a new one. And while you are working at it, you must expect cynical observers to give your experiments the adjective 'wacky'; you must expect certain curious kinds of people to praise your work for the wrong reasons; and you must expect alternating moods of conceit and confusion. The proofs you gloat over at night will become commonplace by dawn. . . .

"You will make misjudgments about the intelligence of ordinary readers. You will make mistakes of taste. You will find it too easy to get an effect by means of shock, and you will forget that any book, even a twenty-first-century book, must be a coherent unit. And you will often, since there are no highway markers for the explorer, feel lonely and discouraged and want to go back to the old familiar, well-traveled roads again. . . .

"You can be subtle or bold, as you feel the urge . . . you can advance your own work by looking to other fields of creation, enjoying and profiting by the experiments going on in them. You can feel yourself part of the whole forward-looking culture of today . . . and if you do strike a vein with the least glitter of real gold in it, you will become rich indeed. For you will have become a creator in a new sense; your duty done as an amateur will be compensated with a twenty-four-carat satisfaction. . . ."

There's sense in that essay, as there is in the views of Merle Armitage, T. M. Cleland, Porter Garnett, Eric Gill, Frederic W. Goudy, Edwin Grabhorn, Robert Josephy, Aldous Huxley, Stanley Morison, Bruce Rogers, Carl Purington Rollins, D. B. Updike and Beatrice Warde on related topics. Admittedly, some are in opposition —yet that very quality of provocativeness may help in dispelling the fog.

Whether we like it or not, the factor of competition affects the sale of books and their reading. Because so many elements compete for reading time, we frequently forget that they comprise the ,

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obvious: sports and the allure of the outdoors, newspapers and magazines, the theater and movies, radio and television, as well as social and family distractions.

These elements are real, measurable to a degree, and materially affect the reading of books and consequently their sales. To the trade publisher and printer they affect the business future and may be considered opponents. To them, the question of whether the modern approach is more effective than the traditional is no academic matter.

We have indicated the problem at length, though only in part, because of its consuming interest. For a comprehensive and sympathetic account of the modern view, see *Books for Our Time*. That illustrated record of the exhibition sponsored by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (recently published by Oxford University Press), was designed and edited by Marshall Lee, and has essays by Merle Armitage, Herbert Bayer, John Begg, S. A. Jacobs, George Nelson and Ernst Reichl.

It was Henry Watson Kent who sagely pointed out that the collector who has affection for the book's format is not necessarily indifferent to its soul—"the thought enshrined in it." And so, as the one may proudly discuss his Kelmscott, Doves or Ashendene items and their literary background, so the other—more knowledgeable in graphic arts lore—may find equal pleasure in his discoveries: John Winterich on Franklin as printer and publisher, possibly, or Sir Francis Meynell on collectors who also read, or James Shand's revealing account of G.B.S., his interest in typography and his relations with his printers.

Instead of asking the fine press enthusiast to show his Doves Bible, his B. R. *Pierrot*, Nonesuch Dickens, or Grabhorn *Leaves of Grass*, the collector who reads about the making of books may get even more satisfaction in discussing his favorite essays or his most recent "find."

That the one can be as satisfying as the other is quite definite in my mind. In fact, I am certain that the collector who learns to appreciate bookmaking details will find the greater pleasure: his knowledge becomes a part of him as prized items on his shelves never can; he will enjoy looking *in* books even more than looking *at* them.

A concluding typographic note: Excepting for strictly type specimen material, and the degree of typographic expression attempted

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in Parts six and seven of *The New Colophon* for a different reason, I don't recall any other book set in such a variety of distinguished body types. Yet that seemed so natural and sensible an idea for this that it has been stimulating to work it out.

Much of the detail and burden has fallen to the willing hands of Joseph Trautwein, the able designer responsible for this format, and the continuing interest of Joseph and Miriam Schwartz of Westcott and Thomson, the superior Philadelphia typesetters, whose wealth of typographic resources is evidenced in these pages.

Some of the reasons for coupling specific essays and types are detailed in the final chapter, which includes also a brief specimen of each face with a note on its attribution.

And finally, I want to salute William Targ, World's editor, for inviting me to put this miscellany together, and for his patience in watching the book develop. That hasn't proved anything like the challenging experience I envisioned, but instead became a spare-time, weekend pleasure I've enjoyed for months. Indirectly, of course, this is related to the great fraternity of bookmakers and typophiles, rich in its friendships and international in scope, that I have been privileged to enjoy through the years. As I scan the contents again, I see not only the names of many good friends and the rewarding associations they bring to mind, but also some of their best writing. My chief regret is that there just wasn't room for more of it in this collection. But that's a different adventure—and possibly another book.

PAUL A. BENNETT

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BOOKS AND PRINTING

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OTTO F. EGE

The Story of the Alphabet

ITS EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Do you know your A B C's? Each Letter Character Has a History and a Reason for Its Present Form. Have you Ever Questioned the Origin and Significance of the Alphabet?

OUR transition from barbarism to civilization can be attributed to the alphabet. Those great prehistoric discoveries and inventions such as the making of a fire, the use of tools, the wheel and the axle, and even our modern marvelous applications of steam and electricity pale into insignificance when compared with the power of the alphabet. Simple as it now appears after the accustomed use of ages, it can be accounted not only the most difficult, but also the most fruitful of all the achievements of the human intellect.

Man lived by "bread alone" and without the alphabet untold ages, and with a practical alphabetic system not more than 3,000 years. So important and wonderful was this step deemed by those who lived nearer the time of its inception—in the time before the wonder of its extraordinary powers had been blunted by long possession and common use—that its invention, as well as that of writing, was invariably attributed to divine origin.

Modern investigation always seeks sources other than mythological ones, and thus the science of ancient handwriting, paleography, came into existence. In the last hundred and twenty-five years the writing of the ancient Egyptians, which was a "sealed book" for nearly twenty centuries, has been deciphered through the efforts of Champollion and Young; the mysterious cuneiform characters of ancient Assyria and Babylon have been interpreted by Grotofend and Rawlinson, and the "missing link" to connect

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our present alphabetic system to these ancient ones is being partly completed by Sir Arthur Evans, who is compiling and analyzing Cretan characters and pre-Phoenician writing. The story, however, will probably never be told in its entirety.

The forms of our letters, with the exception of G, J, U, W, reached their full development two thousand years ago. The Roman letter was the parent of all the styles notwithstanding the diversity that has appeared in Europe since the beginning of the Christian era. With a little imagination it is not difficult to note the resemblance between similar letters of the old Roman capitals and those following that have been designated as script, italic, Old English or black letter, versal, uncial and an endless list of alphabet families. The desire for speed, and the influence of the tool, pen, reed, chisel, brush, were the determining factors in the change of form. Curiously enough instead of being archaic, the Roman alphabet, which is now 2,000 years old, is still the most useful because of its legibility, and also the most beautiful.

We derived twenty-three of our letters from the Romans. They had taken probably eighteen of these from the Greeks about the fourth century B.C. and afterwards borrowed elsewhere or invented seven more. Instead of giving them names as the Greeks did, they simply called them by the sounds for which they stood: A (ah), B (bay). They introduced the curve wherever possible, whereas the early Greek letters were all angular—what an interesting analogy is evident in the architecture of those two peoples, the temple pediment and angularity of the Greeks as contrasted with the dome and arch of the Romans.

The Greeks, in their contact with those great traders and "Yankees of ancient time," the Phoenicians, saw the value of their alphabetic writing and inaugurated its use about the time of the first Olympiad, 776 B.C. Three or four centuries before they gave it to the Romans the ancient Greeks found use for fifteen of the Phoenician letters and then conceived enough to round out an alphabet of twenty-four characters. The changes that took place in the shape of their letters can be attributed to their sense of order; the letters are balanced better and the parts better related.

The Greeks were interested in the sound value only, not in

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the picture value of the symbol, and, therefore, they probably did not notice that A, for instance, had ever been a picture of the head of an ox and that it was now drawn upside down; and that the Phoenician name "Aleph" meant ox and that they mispronounced the sound in calling it "Alpha."

The Romans borrowed from the Greeks and the Greeks had borrowed from the Phoenicians, but where did the Phoenicians obtain their letters? Did they invent them? To what extent were these letters influenced by earlier systems of writings as those employed by the Cretan, Assyrian and Egyptian civilizations? These are questions that probably will never be answered satisfactorily. Many arguments and theories are advanced. We can, however, trace back with certainty a number of our letters to the Phoenician alphabet of 1000 B.C. Beyond this all is, at present, a matter of conjecture.

The Phoenician alphabet consisted of twenty-two pictures of familiar objects. These pictures were rudely and simply made, for writers and readers soon recognized the fundamental characteristics and all unnecessary details were eliminated. The great advance that can be credited to them is that they realized that a small number of sound-expressing characters, if well selected, are sufficient to express any word. Other races at this period had phonetic systems but they consisted of numerous symbols and cumbersome appendages of non-alphabetic characters—"eye pictures" side by side with "ear pictures." No doubt earlier Phoenician writing passed through the stages of development traceable in so many countries:

1. The pictures or characters suggesting the thing or incident (picture writing).
2. The pictures or characters symbolizing the thing or idea (ideographic or symbolic writing).
3. The pictures or characters representing the sound of the thing or idea (phonograms).
4. The sign suggesting the various sounds of the language (alphabetic system).

To free this last stage from the others was the great Phoenician contribution.

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A

Why is A the first letter? It represents one of the commonest vowel sounds in ancient languages. Naturally the Phoenician alphabet makers selected a familiar object in the name of which this particular vowel sound was emphasized. Since food is of primal importance, it is not surprising to find that he chose the ox—"Alef" (ah'lef), or rather the head of the ox, for the characteristics of animals are chiefly embodied in the head. Not only was the ox important as food but also as a beast of burden, for the ox had been harnessed to the plow centuries before the horse was domesticated. Thus one of the earliest and most important of man's friends among the brute creatures was honored.

In making this letter repeatedly and rapidly they became careless and instead of crossing the letter V they tried to make it with one continuous scratching, hence when the Greeks became acquainted with it three to five centuries after its invention, the picture had deteriorated almost beyond recognition. They introduced balance and the V was inverted, and the cross-bar was retained between the lines. Unknowingly they were drawing the ox head upside down; and it remains so with us to this day. The Greeks called the first letter alpha, the Romans called it A (ah) and we call it A (ay), a sound it never possessed in Latin.

B

The second letter of the alphabet represents a crude house, roughly outlined. After food, shelter is an important consideration and this fact was expressed by the early alphabet maker. The Greeks again were ignorant of the picture and careless or indifferent as to the exact name of the character, and thus two triangles instead of the square supporting a triangle were made and the name changed from "beth" to "beta" (ba'ta). Combine the Greek names for the first two letters and we have (alpha-beta) "alphabet." The Romans shortened the name "beta," calling it B (bay) and introduced the curved loops. The original name is familiar to us through names found in the Scriptures: Bethel (house of God) and Bethlehem (house of bread).

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C-G

The "ship of the desert," the camel, gave its name to the third letter. Our name for this animal is traceable back to the Phoenician "gimel" (ghe'mel) or "gamel" (gah'mel). The long neck and the peculiar angle of the neck in relation to the head could easily be represented. The Greeks made changes similar to those in other letters—they improved the shape and changed the name to "gamma." The Romans did not forget the curve and gave it both the hard and soft sounds (kay and gay). Later on, about the third century A.D. to distinguish the "g" sound from the "k" sound they added a little bar below the opening. Thus we get both C and G from the picture of the camel.

Stevenson said that when he was a child the capital G always impressed him as a genii swooping down to drink out of a handsome cup. Kipling's story of the invention of the alphabet is filled with similar delightful stories of the picture origin of letter forms.

D

The next letter, D, came from a representation of a door—"daleth" (dah'leth). It probably pictures the door of a tent. A custom that prevails among the Arabs and in a number of countries gave particular importance to the door of a tent—a stranger, or even an enemy, if he entered through the door of a tent must receive food, drink and shelter. "Daleth" became "delta" with the Greeks and D (day) with the Romans, who, of course, rounded the angle.

E

The house picture gave us B, the door, D, and the window, E. "He" (hay) meant to look, to see, or window, and one writer asserts our familiar street cry "hey, there" can be traced to these ancient times. One side bar of the window was lost early.

The Greeks at first used this sound for the long "e" (epsilon) but afterwards employed the character H or "eta" for the long sound. The Romans at first made no change except to call it "eh."

This is the letter that occurs so frequently in English words,

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and many no doubt recall the interesting use that Poe makes of this fact in his story "The Gold Bug."

F

Our letter order does not agree with that of the Phoenicians or the early Greeks. Our sixth letter, F, is missing in classical Greek, but it is found in earlier writings. It comes from a Phoenician representation of a hook or nail (?) "vau." The Hebrew form resembles the latter object. The nail was important in shipbuilding, a common industry of the early traders. When the Greeks used this letter they called it "digamma" (double gamma) and its form represented one "gamma" (Greek c) superimposed over the other. The Romans called it F (ef) and during the reign of Emperor Claudius the consonant V was represented by the F inverted. This was done because the Latin alphabet had but one character to represent U and V and OCTAVIA became OCTAƎIA.

H

Two fence posts and three horizontal boards gave us our eighth letter, H. The fence was called "cheth" (haith). The Greeks omitted the upper and lower boards thus making it like our H, and called it "eta" (ata). The Romans gave it a soft sound H (hah) just as we do today.

I-J

The parts of the human body also played an important part in giving form to the letters of the alphabet. The early peoples recognized the value of the hand and the head and these members gave rise to the letters I and K, and Q and R respectively. The hand in profile bent at the knuckles and wrist gives us the character "yod" (the hand) as used by the Phoenicians. The Greeks, who always liked to have their words end in vowels, added "a" and called it "Iota" (e-o'ta). When the Romans received it, it was simply a vertical stroke, I (ee) which represented the same long "e" sound as it did with the Greeks, but later they used it both as a consonant and vowel, differentiating the con-

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Genealogy of Our Letters from the Phoenician Alphabet 1300 B.C.

Phoenician 13ºº-10ºº B.C. Form, meaning, name	Greek 7ºº-5ºº BC Form, name	Roman 50 BC Form, sound	Evolution of small letters 3ºº to 8ºº A.D	Gothic 12ºº AD	Italic 15ºº AD	Script 16ºº AD
=ox Aleph	Alpha	A Ah				
=house Beth	Beta	B Bay				
=camel Gimel	Gamma	C Kay				
=door Daleth	Delta	D Day				
=window He	Epsilon	E Eh				
=hook Vau	[Digamma]	F Ef				
[*see footnote]						
=fence Kheth	Eta	H Hah				
=hand Yod	Iota	I Ee				
=palm Kaph	Kappa	K Kah				
=whip Lamed	Lambda	L El				
=water Mem	Mu	M Em				
=fish Nun	Nu	N En				
=eye Ayin	Omicron	O Oh				
=mouth Pe	Pi	P Pay				
=monkey Goph	Koppa	Q Koo				
=head Resh	Rho	R Air				
=tooth Shin	Sigma	S Ess				
=mark Tau	Tau	T Tay				
	Upsilon	V Oo				
			when 11th Cent. Anglo-Saxon } W			
=post Samech	Xi	X Eex				
	Upsilon	Y Ü				
=weapon Zayin	Zeta	Z Zayta				

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O.FEGE

* Until the 3rd Century B.C. the character *c* represented the sounds of both *g* and *k* when a slight modification of the character *c* was made for the *g* sound.

In a table of this sort, dates, forms, and even meanings must be arbitrary. For instance, *Koph* can be spelled *Goph* or *Qoph; He* may have no meaning; *Lamed* (*Lamedh*) may mean *teacher's rod; Samech* (*Samekh*) may mean *fish* or *fulcrum; Zayin* may mean *olive* or *balance.*

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sonant by making the letter I longer, J; but they did not give a distinct letter form for the capital J until the sixteenth century.

The small j came into being nearly a century later. The dot over the i was first introduced in a thirteenth century manuscript.

K

The silhouette of the open hand, with its radiating lines, discloses the origin of the letter K, "kaph," which signified hollow or palm. We know that palmistry was practiced by the ancients, and probably the association of reading the hand and writing influenced the inclusion of this character. The Greeks added their favorite vowel sound, "a," again and thus obtained their "Kappa." The Romans had no need for this letter at first, as C furnished the same sound. When they did accept it, they made no change.

L

The ox goad or whip lash, "lamed" (lah'med) gave rise to the next letter. Herding oxen and sheep was the important occupation of the slaves of the Phoenicians and hence the last, an object so unfamiliar to us, was easily recognized by them. The Greeks again added an "a" and called it "lambda" and made it in the form of an inverted V. The Romans, strangely, adhered more closely to the original form than did the Greeks.

M-N

The Phoenicians were lovers of the sea, and from this source two letters were derived, M and N. They explored not only all of the Mediterranean shore at an early date, but they also sailed boldly through the gates of Gibraltar, and "beyond the world" where they found Britain. They were the first navigators that sailed by night and it is said they discovered the north star. Therefore it is not surprising that water "mem" (maim) is the source of M and that fish, "nun" (noon) the source of N. The letter M has changed but little in form, it is the Greek letter "Mu" and the Roman M (em). The head of the fish, from which the letter N is pictured, was simplified even more than the head of the ox,

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in A. It no doubt represents the fisherman's viewpoint—not a swimming fish but a suspended one. The Greeks reversed the stroke and called it "Nu" and the Romans did not change its form but called it N (en).

O

In Phoenicia, as in Egypt, China and Mexico, the eye is one of the commonest elements found in the writing. It was called "Ayin" (ah-yin). The Greeks used it for two sounds now designated by "Omicron," little "o," and "omega," great "o," the letter which, strangely, was placed at the end of the Greek alphabet. We find in the Bible: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." How many today would think of using the alphabet for such an important illustration? It is easy to trace the Roman O (oh) from its Greek parent, "omicron."

P

Many letter pictures run in pairs—finger and hand, water and fish—and now after eye we find mouth "pi" (pe) which represents the lower lip. The Greeks made little change in the name or shape at first, but later they introduced the angles and made the downward strokes equal. The Romans formed the letter by continuing the curve farther than the Phoenicians and called it "pe" (pay).

Q-R

Now we come to Q and R, the letters which were mentioned above as those probably coming from the head. Whether Q (koph) was derived from the picture of the back view of the head and neck, or whether it represents a knot, which, no doubt, was as important to navigators then as it is now, is a mooted question. The Q sound is guttural and the tail of the letter is supposed to indicate the throat sound. The Greeks soon discarded "koppa," as it was called, and the Romans went back to the original source for their Q (koo).

The back view of the head is the unusual one, for as we look

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at the drawing of the early races, or memory pictures, or the delineations of a child of seven or eight we find they are almost without exception profile pictures. The Phoenician "resh" represents the profile and shows very little resemblance to a human being, although at first the features may have been more clearly indicated. The Greeks, as was to be expected, turned the letter around, and later, oddly enough, introduced a curve making it exactly like the Roman letter P. The extra stroke which we find in the Roman letter was no doubt due to the carelessness in copying. They pronounced it R (air).

S

There is a common legend explaining S, the letter with the hissing sound. Bėcause of its curved shape and its hissing sound many people believe it to be derived from a snake. Its real history is easily followed from Phoenician "shin" or "sin" (teeth) to the present day. Its form closely resembled our W. The Greeks made it perpendicular for their "sigma" and the Romans simplified and curved it giving S (ess).

T

Our twentieth letter, T, is particularly interesting because it is derived from "tahv" a mark or cross made by people who could not write, and no doubt their signature frequently resembled it. We must not forget that even Charlemagne and other kings of the middle ages had to make their mark or trace their initials through stencil plates. The only change of "tahv" to Greek "tau," and to Roman T (tay) was the raising of the cross bar.

U-V-Y

The letters U, V and Y were all taken from the letter "Upsilon," and it may have been derived from the queer Hebrew form of "Ayin" which closely resembles Y. The letters U and V were interchangeable. Upsilon, known as the "Samian letter," was used by Pythagoras as an emblem to represent the parting of the ways—the young man making a choice in life.

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W

Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers contributed two letters, W (wen) and another often confused with Y, called "thorn." These were introduced during the thirteenth century. The French always called the former letter double vay, and in English it may be said to represent double U, as its name indicates. The letter "thorn" had the value of the digraph "th," and "ye" in old English should be pronounced "the" like the definite article.

X-Z

Although we have no direct need for the letter X, for Z can be substituted for it when it is used as an initial letter, and "ks" when used elsewhere, it has remained in the alphabet since its frequent use by the Greeks. It came from the Roman X (eex) which may have been derived from the Greek "ksi." The latter resembles the Phoenician character "samech," meaning a post or support.

The dagger "zayin" from which we obtain our Z must have been important in the daily lives of the Greeks, Hebrews and Phoenicians for it occupies the sixth place (Zeta) and the seventh in the latter alphabets. The Romans did not change its name or shape, but although there has been little change in 2,000 years we see little resemblance to the short sword in the letter the Romans gave to us.

Many slight changes that have occurred in the formation of the letters of the alphabet may be accounted for. At first the Greeks wrote from left to right in one line and from right to left on the next line—a mode of writing which has been termed "boustrophedon" because it runs as an ox plow does in a field, up one furrow and down another. It is due to this fact that many letters were reversed from their original prototypes. It is interesting to note that recently books for the blind have been embossed in this manner.

The small letters of the alphabet, sometimes called "lower case" letters because printers keep them in a case below the capitals, or "minuscule letters" in contrast with "majuscule," or capital let-

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ters, illustrate further changes due to rapid writing of capitals in a cursive or running hand.

The few characters selected by the Phoenicians, the great traders, artificers and farmers of the ancient world, not only influenced Greek literature and life, Roman and modern nations in Europe, but also spread eastward to the very walls of China. The Hebrews copied them as a whole and retained the original names with only slight variations. They did change the shapes because a different writing instrument was employed.

According to a legend, Jehovah gave the letters to Moses, hence all the left curves in Hebrew letter form turn upward—as symbols of a finger pointing heavenward.

The Phoenician alphabet is also the parent of the Arabic, Indian, Javanese, Corean, Tibetan, Coptic syllabaries and alphabets. No small country ever gave such a great gift to humanity; no large country could have given a greater gift.

THIS ARTICLE COMPOSED IN JANSON TYPES, AS ARE THOSE ARTICLES FOLLOWING FOR WHICH NO OTHER TYPE FACE IS INDICATED.

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LANCELOT HOGBEN

Printing, Paper and Playing Cards

TWENTY thousand years or more separate the way of life of the Aurignacian hunters, who contributed the first pictures to the modern symposium of human communications, from the beginnings of settled community life and the beginnings of a priestly script. Fully three thousand years separate the way of life of the first Semitic trading folk who had an alphabet from the vast expansion of knowledge which occurred in Northern Europe after the spread of printing from movable type during the half century before the voyages of Columbus. Civilised mankind had to surmount many hurdles before it was possible to exploit to the fullest extent the considerable economy signalised by the introduction of alphabetic writing.

At first, there were few people who had any use for the art of writing except as a convenience of commercial intercourse. There was in fact no incentive to adapt the art of writing with letters to the flexible uses of daily speech. . . . An age-long popular tradition of community singing and community dancing lies back of Aeschylus, Euripides and Aristophanes; but it was one which could assume so novel an aspect only in the trading communities of the islands in the Mediterranean, where constant interchange of personnel promoted conditions less propitious to the dominance of a priestly class of avaricious landed proprietors than under the earlier dynasties of Egypt and the near East. Thus and there, at an early date, a segment of tribal ritual crystallises as a secular pursuit; and where there is a flourishing drama there is also a motive for writing, equally aloof from association with the repetition of sacred texts or from the limited requirements of the counting-house. There is, in fact, an incentive to write down

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what is more than a ceremonial password, an epitaph or a bill o goods, an incentive to record in writing what living people ac tually speak.

It is indeed a far cry from the Greek drama to the free-and-eas visual speech of a modern novel or of a modern newspaper i the Western world; but we unduly belittle our too often over rated debt to Greek civilisation, if we fail to pay tribute to a innovation which entitles Greek literature to rank as a cardina contribution to the self-education of the human species. To far greater extent than the Romans, the Greeks wrote about th life of their times with an intimacy and liveliness which fore shadows the adaptation of writing to all the familiar uses o speech. For the Latin which generations of schoolboys reluctantly construed in the grammar schools, Latin in the Gladstone tradition, was actually dead when committed to writing, a language as remote from the common speech of the Italian peninsula as the idiom of Gertrude Stein from that of the contemporary American household.

Within the framework of Greco-Latin society, the written word became available to the more prosperous citizens on a scale unprecedented in the civilisations which had preceded them; but there were still very few who read much or read often. The spoken word was still the main instrument of instruction and of political persuasion. Even among those who could read, there were still few who could also write. There were in fact two formidable impediments alike to the use of the written word as a medium of instruction or of propaganda and to the availability of any considerable body of written matter for those with inclination and training in the art of reading. Needless to say, one was the laborious nature of the only available means of multiplying the products of the pen, when it was necessary to copy every script individually by hand; and since this was a labour commonly entrusted to slaves, deficiency in penmanship gave little affront to self-esteem among the still privileged few who could read with ease. The other handicap was the writing surface itself, often of its very nature inadaptable to free circulation and at best costly.

PAPER is so much a part of everyday life that we too easily overlook the significance of writing material as a circumstance limiting the advancement of literacy. It is on that account worthy of more than a single sentence. The clay tablets of Babylon and

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Crete might serve the purpose of stocking a temple or a palace library; but no household of modest size could have accommodated the contents of several issues of the *New Yorker*, if transcribed in the cuneiform tradition. Much the same may be said about the wax tablets in common use among the Roman contemporaries of Cicero. Indeed the advantage Egyptian civilisation, and thereafter the mainland Greek, Alexandrian, and late Latin, enjoyed from the use of *papyrus* is difficult to exaggerate. Papyrus consists of longitudinal ribbons of reed laid on a wet surface, stuck with gum to an overlaying layer of similar strips at right angles, dried in the sun and subsequently polished. It has a double advantage over clay and wax. It is not bulky, and its smooth surface permits an easy cursive style of writing. On the other hand, its manufacture is tedious; and it does not stand up to a moist climate.

Long before printing began in Europe—during the Han dynasty in the first century A.D.—the Chinese had taken a lesson from the wasp, which makes its nest by chewing vegetable fibre and pressing the moist suspension into a film of even thickness. As a source of vegetable fibre, the Chinese used anything which came to hand: old fishing nets, worn-out rope and hemp, macerating it in tubs before removing with a sieve the artificial detritus. It is then possible to compress the latter to required thickness, and the triturated fibres adhere when dry. The Mandarin had now material far superior to papyrus, alike for copying or for storing the written word; but he lacked the incentive to share the advantage of this invention with his underprivileged compatriots. Chinese literature received a new impetus; but there were still few who could enjoy its benefits. . . .

The capture of Samarkand by the Arabs in A.D. 750 marks the date when paper starts on its trek to the as yet non-existent printing presses of Europe. The Moslem invaders of Spain and Sicily brought it with them into the territories they conquered, and with it a recipe for deriving the fibre basis from old rags. For three centuries after its introduction to Christendom, somewhere about A.D. 1200, it had to compete with parchment or vellum made from stretched, pressed and dried animal membranes. What was probably decisive in establishing its supremacy was the spread of water mills in the two centuries before Caxton. Power was necessary to speed up maceration of the raw material; and we

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have record of paper mills in Germany by A.D. 1336. Had it not been for this new tempo and economy of production of thin, smooth and flexible material for the impress of the written word, the vastly increased volume of written matter put into circulation by the printing press could not have come about.

As we all know, printing from movable type began in Europe about fifty years before Columbus set out on his first voyage; but few of us reflect upon the dramatic speed with which the new trade spread from one city or one country to another. A single leaf of a sibylline poem called the *Fragment of World Judgment* is supposedly the earliest extant product of the new technique, probably issued about the year 1445 from the press of Gutenberg, a master printer, then resident in Strasbourg. From law-suit records we know that Fust, a goldsmith of Mainz who financed Gutenberg's earliest trials, was printing there during the fifties; and McMurtrie, author of *The Book*, states that

> the first *dated* piece of printing preserved to us appeared in 1454, which is thus the earliest date that can be set beyond any speculation or controversy. In that year four different issues of a papal indulgence appeared in printed form. The occasion was historic. Constantinople had fallen to the Turks the year before. At the solicitation of the king of Cyprus, Pope Nicholas V granted indulgences to those of the faithful who should aid with gifts of money the campaign against the Turks. Paulinus Chappe, as representative of the king of Cyprus, went to Mainz to raise money of this cause. Ordinarily, these indulgences would have been written out by hand, but in this case, as there were a considerable number to be distributed, the aid of the new art of printing was enlisted, and forms were printed with blank spaces left for filling the dates, the names of the donors to whom they were issued, and other details.

The new art turned out to be a double-edged weapon in the hands of papal authority. A Latin Bible in two columns of forty-two lines to the page came out in 1456, most probably, according to McMurtrie, from the press of Fust, now in competition with Gutenberg. As early as 1478, a Cologne master printer issued a Bible in two different German dialects with well over a hundred illustrations. There were 133 editions of it during the next fifty years. To be sure, a century was to elapse before printed Bibles

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were available in the home tongue throughout Germany, Britain, Scandinavia and the Low Countries; but it was a disastrous step to make the poorer clergy Bible-conscious.

Within ten years of the issue of the Indulgence mentioned above, printing by movable type was going on in several German cities other than Mainz and Strasbourg. German printers brought the art to Rome in 1467, and two years later John of Spire, like Fust a goldsmith, had started work in Venice. In Switzerland, says McMurtrie, it seems likely that "the first printing office in Basle began work about 1467." Printing in Paris starts about a year later. In 1469, Caxton, a Kentishman, who had occupied consular status to the English Merchant Adventurers at Bruges, began translating into his own tongue for the press the *Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*, printed there in 1475. A year later, he returned to England, set up business with Colard Mansion in the Almonry near Westminster Abbey, and from that office produced *The Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophers*. This, states McMurtrie,

> was the first dated book printed in England, the Epilogue being dated 1477 and in one copy November 18. Though this was the first *dated* book, it was not certainly the first issue of the press, Caxton's translation of Jason and a few other publications of slight extent having probably preceded it.

Within twenty years from the start, on the threshold of the discovery of the New World, printing from movable type is thus in full swing throughout Europe. The speedy and consequent intellectual ferment is an oft-told tale, scarcely worth further comment, if it were not too customary to dwell on the alleged impact on natural knowledge, as on biblical criticism and political theory, of Greek scholarship imported into Europe by Byzantine immigrants in flight from the victorious Turks. The fact is that the positive outcome of Alexandrian mathematics, astronomy, medicine and mechanics had long ago penetrated north-western Europe through visits of students to the Moorish universities in Spain, where positive knowledge had attained a higher level than ever before through the marriage of Alexandrian science to Hindu number-lore. Equally indisputable is the fact that the universities of Toledo, Cordova and Seville were midwives of the cartography which Jewish pilots put at the service of Henry the Navigator.

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That the new technique of printing made available for the great explorations of the fifteenth century a new scientific amenity for which there was a pre-existing and insistent demand is evident from the mounting number of nautical almanacks published between Gutenberg's first productions and the project of Columbus. Soon there were to follow manuals of military science propounding problems of ballistics created by the introduction of gunpowder into warfare—like paper, from Chinese sources by way of the Moslem world.

Why monks, such as Adelard of Bath, should disguise themselves as Moslems to study in the Moorish universities during the twelfth century is easy to understand. The Church had assumed the responsibilities of the ancient priesthoods as custodians of the calendar, and hence of astronomical lore, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. As founders of hospitals in conformity with the beatitude of the sick visitor, they were prohibited from active participation in the advancement of medicine as a science by Papal bulls against dissection of the human body, but on that account the more well-disposed to Jewish missionaries of the Moorish culture, when the latter set up schools of medicine on the campuses of the mediaeval universities. . . .

That Ionian scientific speculations exerted a salutary influence on Newtonian science, when the atomic concept invaded modern European thought after the seventeenth-century translations of Gassendi and others, is not open to dispute. Nor need we rob the fugitive scholars of Constantinople of the credit for playing a minor part in this climax off-stage; but the efflorescence of science in the seventeenth century was the immediate consequence of technological advances made in the preceding century, and put into circulation through a commercial undertaking which had to sell science to a reading public of master pilots, mining engineers, artillery commanders and spectacle-makers before naturalistic science had paid its way into university cloisters under a more accommodating sobriquet as natural philosophy.

With this overdue obituary on the immigrants from the fall of Constantinople in the year preceding the first dated product of the new printing technique let us leave them; and again get into focus the astonishing speed of its spread in an age when the craft guilds jealously guarded their secrets. Here is a technical revolu

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tion of the first magnitude at a time when technical innovations diffused leisurely against menacing obstacles of custom thought and of legal sanctions. As such, its tempo is a challenge to curiosity; and part of the answer to the enigma is that there was already a flourishing craft of printing to take advantage of the economy of movable type, when Gutenberg and Fust began their partnership.

Again, we must pause to pay a debt of gratitude to China, and to civilisations far older than the Chinese. We have seen that the seal is the oldest form of signature; and that all our knowledge of one of the earliest literatures of the world comes from clay tablets on which the Sumerian priesthoods engraved their sign-language with a punch to which it owes the characteristic style called cuneiform. The same impulse to impose the signature of a sky-sign on the clay tablet had led men to impress symbols of ownership or good omen on the soft clay products of the potter's wheel before the baking began. A stamp is, after all, a seal to carry a pigment; and the practice of stamping pottery with coloured patterns is of great antiquity. The next step is intelligible in its own territory. In China, whence the silkworm made its lethargic way across the great trade routes of Asia, stamping patterns on silk was probably a practice before the Christian era began; and it was China which produced the first paper. Probably about A.D. 700, though it may well be earlier, the practice of stamping charms by wood blocks on paper began there. In A.D. 767 the Empress Shotoku of Japan ordered a million Buddhist charms to be printed from wood blocks on paper for placing in miniature pagodas.

The Chinese predilection for games such as *Mah Jongg* is an ancient tradition; and an early use of block printing—long before it came into Europe—is the production of *sheet dice* or, as we should say, playing cards. As charms—pictures of saints—and as playing cards, wood-block printing established a market in Europe at least a century before Gutenberg's Bible. Fortunately, we know some facts about this, as often by a happy dispensation. For the age-long obstruction of the legal mind to progress conspires with its obsessional drive to record its own ineptitudes and thus to perpetuate milestones of progress by the resistance it offers to innovation. Thus we have the record of a prohibition issued by the Provost of Paris in A.D. 1397 against working men

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playing cards on working days; and there were many such prohibitions in German towns about this time. We have also originals of contemporaneous wood-block prints portraying saints for sale at shrines by travelling pedlars and palmers, encouraged to foregather by papal indulgences for the pilgrims.

Like *Snap* and other children's card games of today, the first playing cards were wholly pictorial, in suits exhibiting the feudal hierarchy, starting with the king and queen. The joker is a relic. Sometimes, the wood block of the picture card accommodated a title or epithet, and often the *Heiligen*, or shrine charms promoted by the clergy as an antidote to the carnal indulgence of card-playing, would carry the name of the saint. Either way, the next step was inevitable. We are now in sight of printing as a medium for the rapid circulation of knowledge; but we have to take stock of several features of the folk ways of Europe in the Middle Ages before we take the next hurdle.

When we reach the threshold of the fifteenth century, writing is no longer the prerogative of a priestly caste. There are merchants with big balances in the wool trade, the herring trade and the spice trade. There are pilots who have to rely on their *rutter* books to navigate cargoes of the spice trade over long ocean routes. There is a mounting volume of manorial accountancy and litigation connected with the exchange of produce between the countryside and the boroughs where master-craftsmen and merchants are now aspiring to domestic conveniences heretofore inaccessible to the landed gentry. All this signifies the pre-existence of considerable semi-literate personnel to provide a market for the products of Gutenberg's trade. It is necessary to say this, because school history too often exhibits the Church and the Law as the custodians of literacy.

What is true is that the monks, and to a less extent the lawyers, were the only people who had time to write *at length* during the century we have now reached. The lawyers we may leave to their own sadistic pursuits. . . . The Church deserves kinder consideration, even if the Church had outstayed its welcome. For Catholicism kept alive the lucidity of picture-language in an age when a new technique of illustration offered the only means of grace to the few men who saw the light of science through a miasma of verbal puns.

In short, we are here talking of the *Missals*, a form of sacred

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art with a charm to which even a hard-boiled technician such as the writer is not entirely indifferent. There is a pathetic earnestness about the tender care with which the monks illuminated their copies of devotional texts, and one which established what we may fairly call the first experiment in visual education for the people. The monks who made the missals offered a helping hand to the new industry. To be sure, we read a lot of rubbish written about what we owe to them; but they did one thing of enduring value besides starting hospitals and nursing the spectacle trade for the benefit of "poor blind men." They made *block-books* possible. In the admirable book already cited, this is what McMurtrie has to say about their contribution:

> There is . . . one exceedingly primitive block book, the *Exercitium super Pater Noster*, in which the illustrations are printed from woodcuts and the text added in manuscript . . . The costume is that of the Burgundian court of the second quarter of the century, and this feature, in conjunction with the technique of design and cutting led Hind to date the book about 1430 and hardly later than 1440.

There is still argument about whether devotional block-books with both illustrations and text produced from fixed blocks antedated or synchronised with printing from movable type; but it seems fairly certain that block-books were in circulation before the wastefulness of cutting the same letter over and over again on the same block occurred to Gutenberg, and likely enough to many others. The issue is of academic interest only. What we can say certainly is that the printers of playing cards and of *Heiligen* were already involved in the book industry before it occurred to anyone to make punches and dies for letters of the alphabet in order to dispense with the necessity of repeatedly carving the same sign on a composite block. Metal-founders of the thirteenth century already knew the art of using stamps with single letters in relief to make an impress on fine sand for molten metal when making inscriptions, themselves to appear in relief on the finished casting. In bell foundries, among craftsmen who made pewter vessels with inscriptions, in the minting of coin and the casting of medals, the use of metal single-letter punches and dies was also commonplace.

In short, there is already in existence an industry of master

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printers when the record of Gutenberg's lawsuit bequeaths the first documentary evidence of printing as we use the term today—moreover an industry working in close contact with ancillary crafts which had already solved the technical problems on whose solution printing on a larger scale at less cost was attendant. There is a market for books, with richer profits if the printer can solve the technical problem of outsmarting the monks in the art of making the first copy, as he can already outsmart them by reproducing the first copy without limit. In one sense, we now have a press.

Still, we have not explained the phenomenal rapidity with which the new technique of cutting stamps to make up a frame of continuous type spread throughout Europe, unless we look at our period in its social entirety; and if we are to do so we must take stock of many things which were not happening in China, the parent civilisation of the printing art. One of them is sufficiently obvious to be easily overlooked in an age of central heating. Europe, as post-war American tourists will agree, is rather cold and rather cloudy. That is why it is important to bring glass into the picture. GLASS is an invention of great antiquity, being in fact an early Egyptian amenity; but the very qualities we admire in the iridescent glass of Etruscan or Roman vessels make it equally unsuitable to the uses of domestic life or to the science of gas or temperature measurement. Before you have leisure to read, in the chilly north of the Hanseatic League or the Flemish wool trade, you must have a technique of house design utterly different from what meets your requirements in the sunny south of Greece and Italy, Crete or Egypt. It is therefore relevant that there is now, in the fifteenth century, a prosperous burgher class with houses equipped with windows made of glass, glass of poor quality by our standards but vastly better fitted to its principal use than the glass of antiquity. Nor is it irrelevant that spectacles are now coming into use for the old folk who have time on their hands.

The very fact that we now have windows brings into focus that we have an emergent class of semi-literate and relatively prosperous merchants and craftsmen, a class which is beginning to send its sons to grammar schools to get a smattering of reading and of the art of cyphers. This consideration prompts reflection upon the almost ubiquitous association of the goldsmith as the patron,

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partner or financier of the earliest master printers of books. There is now a wealthy craft of jewellers and armourers skilled in the art of using punches and dies to make patterns in relief on a metal surface, with a secure trade among the nobles and the wealthier merchants; and there are already the beginnings of a new trade in pictorial reproduction fostered by artists seeking patrons among them. Before printing by movable type begins, the wood-block illustration is competing with a better technique. Instead of smearing a sticky ink on a raised surface, it is now possible to achieve the same end by filling the crevices in a metal plate wiped clean; and who should be more concerned with promoting the use of pictorial reproduction by engraving than goldsmith and jeweller well versed in the uses of impressing a pattern in relief or intaglio?

What is happening in the fifteenth century is not the outcropping of inborn genius. Contrariwise, we should regard it as the confluence of a large number of new techniques, individually of little import to human advancement, collectively with a new momentum. Nor need we pride ourselves on the fact that European civilisation proved equal to exploiting to greater advantage what it had thanklessly received from the Eastern world. Paul Pelliot has discovered wooden types attributed to Wang Cheng in the beginning of the fourteenth century, well over a hundred years before the first dated printing from movable type in Germany; and if this invention came to nothing, have we far to seek the explanation? With twenty-six pigeonholes for a box of letter type at his elbow, the European compositor of the fifteenth century enjoys an immeasurable advantage over his fourteenth-century fellow craftsman who has to manipulate several thousand Chinese characters. Korea took up movable type, probably through Chinese influence, about fifty years before Europe.

No intelligent Anglo-American needs to be told at length how printing contributed to the diffusion of knowledge previously transmitted by oral tradition, how much more the master printers and book-makers from Gutenberg to Benjamin Franklin contributed to the making of our language habits than all the professors of their time, how much the trade in reading matter contributed to the great enlightenment of the four centuries which followed, how it also contributed to the liberation of Christendom from papal authority, what it bestowed on the age of Galileo and Newton, how it catalysed man's thought about human dignity

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and fundamental human rights. What we are prone to forget is how much water had to pass under the bridges before the homeland of Caxton or that of Franklin could assert the ability to read and to transcribe the written word as the birthright of every citizen.

In North America and in Northwestern Europe, literacy is today a medical diagnosis. That a person cannot read or write is now a sufficient criterion of mental defect; and this is so in a sense which would have been utterly false of Britain or the United States alike when Charles Dickens wrote an uncharitable record of his transatlantic itinerary. Until the middle of the nineteenth century there was everywhere a large underprivileged class cut off from the possession of books and without the incentive to purchase reading matter. . . .

By attaching a cast of the hand-set type to cylinders it was possible to take advantage of the introduction of steam power with considerable economy of time entailed in running off the printed sheet; but it was impossible to reap the harvest of this economy while it was still necessary to set type by manual extraction from a box of each die for a letter, cypher or punctuation mark. Also, the manufacturer of paper from rag was a relatively costly process by modern standards; and the discovery of a cheaper source of raw material was a precondition of expanding trade in the printed word. Rag, be it said, is simply woven fibre of cotton or flax; and any vegetable fibre is good enough for the work of the wasp. It was therefore a great advance, when it was possible to use the by-products of the lumber camps for paper manufacture. Wood pulp as a source of paper came into its own in the eighties, though its use goes back to a German patent about 1840. In 1857 Routledge had introduced, as an alternative source of raw material, esparto grass from Spain and North Africa; and there had been notable advances in the mechanics of paper production during the preceding fifty years.

In 1803 the French printer Didot brought into England a device which took advantage of steam power by running wet pulp on to a moving, endless belt of wire mesh through which the water drained off. It could run off in a day six miles of paper of uniform width. In 1821 Crompton invented the process of drying by steam-heated rollers. Between 1803 and 1815 König in Germany and Cowper in Britain had perfected power-driven

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machinery for printing off a continuous roll of paper from cylinders carrying the type cast. The four-cylinder machine patented by Cowper and Applegarth in 1827 ran off 5,000 sheets per hour of the London *Times* simultaneously printed on both sides. The Walter Rotary of 1866 appears to have been the first cylinder machine to print on both sides of an unwinding roll of paper with a power-driven mechanism to cut the sheets, previously fed to the machine by hand. By that time a cheaper source of paper was available.

The advent of cheap paper accommodated the purchase of reading matter to the purse of the poorer classes in the community; but it did not bring into their lives a daily stimulus to read. While typesetting remained a manual operation, the maintenance of a daily press was beset by many difficulties and possible only because it did not as yet aspire to the topical immediacy which could coax a large semi-literate section of the population into the habit of daily reading. What made possible a truly popular press was an invention thus described by McMurtrie:

> Setting extensive manuscripts by hand is, of course, a very slow and laborious process, and as the printing industry grew in extent and importance it was only natural that efforts should be made to devise a means of setting type mechanically at greater speed and less cost. . . . The failures were myriad. All efforts to take the foundry type used by the compositor and set it up mechanically came to naught. Finally, however, Ottmar Mergenthaler invented a machine which, by the action of a keyboard somewhat resembling that of a typewriter, assembled not type but matrices and, when a whole line was set and spaced, cast this line in one piece, or "slug," of type metal. This machine, which was first put into practical use in 1886, and appropriately christened a "linotype," gave a revolutionary impetus to the printing industry . . . as with all new inventions of importance it was expected that thousands of compositors would be thrown out of work. But, again as usual, the industry grew so fast that more men were employed than before.

This device is not the only machine which sets type. On its heels came the monotype which employs the pianola principle for power transmission and is for some purposes preferable. The technical advantages of one or the other are irrelevant to our

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theme. What makes printing by linotype an outstanding achievement of nineteenth-century technology is that it permits typesetting to keep pace with the tempo of topical affairs at a time when a railroad schedule co-ordinated by telegraphy has made man minute-conscious for the first time in history. It is at once a new goad to the new social discipline of punctuality and a new means of satisfying an appetite for sensation among a section of the population not as yet attuned to habitual reading. . . .

That the Moslem world of Omar Khayyam and Alkarismi transmitted so many of the benefits of Chinese civilisation to the West, reaping themselves no advantage from the invention of printing, illustrates a truth which Marxist dogma ignores. Fruitful innovation is, as the Marxist rightly asserts, the result of interplay between human needs and natural resources; but the triple formula of means, motive and opportunity suffices to account for the vagaries of man's history only if we recognise the inherent inertia of human motivation. Beliefs do not come from heaven; but they have a remarkable tenacity in the teeth of worldly profit, a tenacity forcefully illustrated by two facets of the Moslem creed. In the racy, though none the less scholarly, account of the history of printing already cited several times in this chapter, McMurtrie states:

> The Koran forbade games of chance . . . The Koran had been given to the Moslems in written form, and writing, therefore, was the only means by which it might ever be transmitted. To this day the Koran has never been printed from type in any Mohammedan country; it is always reproduced by lithography.

One consequence of this is that Moslem countries, and African communities which have received their script from Moslem missionaries, suffer from the educational disability of a cursive style which is ill-suited to easy reading. If we are tempted to ascribe this to defective hereditary equipment of peoples whose culture was the inspiration of Europe in the Middle Ages, we may well reflect with moral and intellectual benefit to ourselves on the complacency with which western scholars disown the constructive tasks of language-planning at a time when scientific journals embodying new discoveries are appearing in twenty or more languages.

Statistics which convey a clear picture of the mounting volume

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of printed matter issued annually during the four centuries of European printing are hard to come by. The number of editions printed in England increased from 13 in 1510 to 219 in 1580, to about 600 a year in the first two decades of the nineteenth century and 12,379 in 1913. Unhappily, an edition is a grossly misleading index of production, even of new books. What we call a modern best seller signifies a first edition of over 25,000 copies. In the fifteenth century, the average edition was about 300 copies. Till the middle of the eighteenth, an edition rarely exceeded 600; but there were notable exceptions. There were 34 editions of the *Adagia* of Erasmus, each of a thousand copies, in the first few decades of the sixteenth century, and 24,000 copies of his *Colloquia Familiaria* came out in the same author's lifetime. Of Luther's tract *To the Christian Nobility* 4,000 copies were sold within five days. The Bible Society, founded in 1711 by Baron von Canstein in Halle, printed within a short space of time 340,000 copies of the New Testament and 480,000 copies of the Scriptures as a whole. The British and Foreign Bible Society, founded in 1804 by Thomas Charles of Bala as an incident in his crusade against Welsh illiteracy, was responsible for the issue of 237 million copies in the three decades 1900-1930. . . .

So far, we have taken no cognisance of the formative role of the master printer *vis-à-vis* the culture of contemporary western civilisation. We shall now try to get into focus the consequences of something quite new in the history of our species, the emergence of a social personnel with a vested interest in the enlightenment of mankind. Of such was the inventor of the first saleable electrical device, the originator of the very names positive and negative in their now most common technical context, a man who rendered signal service for his country at the court of France and put his signature to the Declaration of Independence, the man whose last will and testament begins "I, Benjamin Franklin, Printer . . ."

At first, the master printer was also a publisher, till the trade began to expand a bookseller as well, and sometimes, like Caxton, translator or author. Nor is it surprising that printing and bookselling still preserve the professional outlook of the mediaeval craftsman far more than any other contemporary commercial undertaking, with *mores* peculiar to themselves. Today, as

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throughout the past four centuries, there is still a place for the small-scale high-quality firm in printing, publishing or bookselling alike. Throughout the five centuries of printing from movable type the small proprietor has ever been the ally of novel thought; and the book trade still thrives on the free expression of views which are anathema to big business, oil politicians and Wall Street tycoons. To say this is not to say that every publisher, every partner in a printing firm or every back-street bookseller is in the vanguard of liberal sentiment and fertile cerebration; but to be blind to their contribution to our common culture is to be blind to one of the burning issues of our age. Even to say that the publisher, the printer or the bookseller is always ahead of his business colleagues in joining the bandwagon of progress is to dispel a miasma of moral indignation which distorts our view of a decision contemporary man has to make wisely or incur the prospect of a dark age of superstition and authority. . . .

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Colophons ☙ Ruth S. Granniss

THE late printer-scholar, Theodore Low De Vinne, was wont to exclaim with regret over a puzzling bookish question, "Alas, bibliography is not an exact science!" Since his day, what with the learned publications of bibliographical societies (first and foremost—that of England), with such scholarly independent productions as Ronald B. McKerrow's *Introduction to Bibliography* and some of its followers, and with such undertakings as the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*—not to speak of the many masterly library catalogues and bibliographies which these late years have brought us—we are almost tempted to reverse his dictum. We have all these, added to the wealth of pioneer writings of book-lovers like Richard de Bury, Gabriel Naude, Guillaume François De Bure, Gabriel Peignot, Thomas Frognall Dibdin, and the more scientific but no more (nor less) book-loving Panzer, Hain, Brunet, Renouard, Bradshaw, Haebler, Proctor, Claudin, and our own Wilberforce Eames. We pause for breath, but have only picked a few random names from the long roll of those who have loved and worked for the arts that go into the making, and the science that goes into the understanding of a printed book—the vehicle which must continue to preserve and to carry down through the ages the results of men's thoughts and the records of their deeds.

All this is as it should be, but of late, and especially in connection with the present vogue for collecting the works of living authors, a certain quality (shall we call it self-consciousness) has crept in, an undue stressing of small technicalities, and we blush to confess a confused feeling of sympathy for the modern book-hunter, who is having so much of his fun taken away from him by neat little textbooks and articles, bristling with allusions to "points," "right copies," "firsts" and the like (with the inevitable quotation marks)

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and filled with weighty questions of dollars and pounds—the seemingly all-important matter of the investment value of our treasures. This surely is not the fine frenzy which possessed Charles Lamb when he wrote: "Do you remember the brown suit which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried 'Shame upon you!' It grew so threadbare—and all because of that folio 'Beaumont and Fletcher,' which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden. Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late. And when the old book-seller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards), lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures, and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome, and when you presented it to me, and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it), and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till daybreak—was there no pleasure in being a poor man!"

Where there is much smoke, however, there is fire, and it is assuredly good that this interest in bibliographical things should have swept the country, and incidentally that the joys of the bibliomaniac and the bibliophile are being experienced today by many more than the elect few of the past, on whom we love to dwell. But if we moderns are doomed to buy our first editions ready labelled and to have our equations worked out in advance, if a fine copy must be termed immaculate and the back of a book must be its spine, etc., etc., ad infinitum, let us start with the right premises, and hold on to the terms which were proverbial before we were born. Which brings us to our point—What is a Colophon?

The question would seem a reflection upon the intelligence of the average booklover, at this late day, were it not that there seems to be a growing tendency, shared (even instigated) by lexicographers, to mis-define the word, or to use it out of its truly bibliographical and philological meaning. To booklovers and collectors of even the preceding generation, acquainted as they were with

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the niceties of their vocation, or avocation, the suggestion of more than one signification would have seemed well-nigh an insult. Perhaps it is even because we are living in this late day that heresies have crept in. After all, it is nearly a quarter of a century since the Caxton Club of Chicago brought out *An Essay on Colophons*, by Dr. Alfred W. Pollard, later Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum, whose word on all bibliographical matters carries the highest authority—the Club thereby performing one of those great services to students of bibliography for which it and similar institutions are acclaimed by an appreciative, if limited, circle. Perhaps the very limits of the circle are accountable for lack of knowledge, and it may be that a book, printed nearly twenty-five years ago in an edition of some two hundred and fifty copies, may never have come within the ken of a writer on bookish things today—even of an earnest one. But that is just where our quarrel begins —ought anyone to write on colophons, or on anything else, without some knowledge of at least the chief literature of the subject, and should the next man, and the next, be allowed to hand on an error, or perhaps a misconception, without a thought of the original sources of information? For that is just what has been happening in America in this matter, and what it seems must also be occurring in greater ones. There is plenty of thorough scholarship here, scholarship that shrinks from no drudgery—then why is it that so much hasty, slipshod work is allowed to pass?

But we were speaking of colophons—a word which, to many people who trouble with it at all, seems to mean almost anything, —for instance the mark or device of a printer or publishing firm, placed anywhere at random in a book, possibly bearing a motto or a name. Indeed, this is the signification which has frequently been given to it of late in print and in common speech by people who should have known better, and whom a little thought or a little more research would have taught better. For instance, a publisher's assistant suggested that a given place upon the title page is the proper location for the colophon; a librarian wrote to request a copy of the "colophon of the Grolier Club" to add to a collection; a book-trade magazine issued an article on devices or trademarks of publishers of today, appearing on the title pages of their publi-

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cations, and dubbed them all colophons; a college professor used the term in like manner; and all this occurred within a period of a few months.

The only protest to be raised in print seems to be that of Leonard L. Mackall, in his dependable "Notes for Bibliophiles," a department of the *Herald Tribune's* Sunday magazine, *Books*. In the issue of March 17, 1929, he wrote: "Right here we must call special attention to the fact that, some modern ignorant or careless misuse to the contrary, notwithstanding, a colophon is not really a colophon at all unless it appears at the end of the book. Most certainly the word does not properly mean merely a publisher's device wherever used, as stated in a [recent] anonymous illustrated article."

No one has heeded him, however, and my own like-minded objections were met with the advice to look in the dictionary, and then the blow fell! It is true that some dictionaries, but by no means all, countenance this usage of colophon as a device upon a title page. Before quoting their definitions, let us look at the Oxford English Dictionary, where we find:

1. "Finishing stroke"; "crowning touch," *obs.*

2. The inscription or device, sometimes pictorial or emblematic, formerly placed at the end of a book or manuscript, and containing the title, the scribe's or printer's name, date and place of printing, etc. Hence, *from title page to colophon.*

It may be noted that, of the various examples (1774–1874) quoted by the Oxford English Dictionary, not one refers to the colophon as placed elsewhere than at the end of the book.

Our Century Dictionary is sound on the subject, but we have in Funk & Wagnalls' Standard Dictionary:

1. An inscription or other device formerly placed at the end of books and writings, often showing the title, writer's or printer's name and date and place of printing.

2. An emblematic device adopted by a publisher and impressed on his books, usually on the title page of each volume (accompanied by an illustration of the printer's mark of Nicolas Jenson, inscribed: "Colophon of Nicolas Jenson" [1481]).

The phrase "usually on the title page" (not in the Oxford Eng-

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lish Dictionary) seems to us absolutely wrong, and not to be countenanced for a moment by bookmen who have proper regard for the correct usage of words.

The corresponding definition in late editions of Webster's Dictionary is:

> An emblem, usually a device assumed by the publishing-house, placed either on the title page, or at the end of a book.

In what subtle way this secondary and inadequate definition has crept into American usage we do not know, and we plead earnestly for its abandonment.

In the encyclopedias consulted, there is nothing disturbing, the definition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, written by Dr. Pollard, being especially clear and concise. It runs in part as follows:

> . . . a final paragraph in some manuscripts and many early printed books, giving particulars as to authorship, date and place of production, and sometimes expressing the thankfulness of the author, scribe or printer on the completion of his task . . . the importance of these final paragraphs slowly diminished, and the information they gave was gradually transferred to the title page. Complete title pages bearing the date and name of the publishers are found in most books printed after 1520, and the final paragraph, if retained at all, was gradually reduced to information as to the printer and date. From the use of the word in the sense of a "finishing stroke" (from the story that the final charge of the cavalry of Colophon was always decisive) such a final paragraph as has been described is called by bibliographers a "colophon," but this name for it is quite possibly not earlier than the eighteenth century.

Let us turn from general works to those specifically bibliographical. In his *Introduction to Bibliography*,[1] Dr. McKerrow writes: "In the early days of printing, the end of the book was the normal place for the printer's name and the place and date of printing to appear. The history of the colophon is merely that of the gradual transference of this information to the title page. When this was

[1] Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1927).

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complete the colophon was as a rule of no use and it was abandoned."

Later, among his catologuing instructions we find: "A colophon should always be noticed, if there is one. It is also, I think, desirable to record the occurrence of a printer's device (even without a verbal imprint) at the end of a book, as this often appears to take the place of a colophon."

Iolo Williams' *Elements of Book-Collecting*[2] contains this paragraph: "In the earliest printed books the title page's functions were performed by the colophon, a word which is a transliteration of the Greek, a summit or finishing stroke. The colophon is put, not near the beginning of the book, like the title page, but at the end, and it usually takes the form of a statement that here ends such-and-such a book, written by so-and-so, printed by so-and-so at such-and-such a place and date. The use of the colophon has been revived in certain finely-printed modern books, but such modern volumes usually contain both a title page and a colophon."

Though not quite as satisfying, the following allusion in Van Hoesen and Walter's *Bibliography*[3] should be quoted, as occurring in a modern American treatise on the subject: "The early printers used the colophon at the end of the book instead of a title page, and the colophon is still used to indicate the printing firm in cases where it is not part of the publishing firm given on the title page."

These are the latest printed words that we have noticed. Suffice it to say that we have nowhere found in earlier important manuals anything but the (to us) proper explanation of the term. In other words, we gather from important sources that, while a colophon may include or even take the form of a printer's mark or device, such a mark, placed upon a title page, is not a colophon.

Aroused by the dictionary findings, and discovering those American students of bibliography whom I consulted to be in agreement with me, I wrote to Dr. Pollard, as to a court of final appeal, to inquire if he considered it meticulous to object to the intrusion of

[2] Iolo Williams, *The Elements of Book-Collecting* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1927).

[3] H. B. van Hoesen [and] F. K. Walter, *Bibliography, Practical, Enumerative, Historical* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928).

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this illogical trade definition which some dictionaries and many people are giving us. His answer, which I am allowed to quote, seems definite and wise enough to carry conviction, coming as it does from the admitted authority on the subject: "If a sufficient number of people misuse a word, Dictionaries have to record the wrong use as well as the right, as in the case of *hectic* and crowds of other words. But the misuse of the word *colophon* as a synonym for the printer's mark or device, without regard to position, has not yet gone as far as this and should be strenuously resisted. By standard use as well as by etymology, the word means the crowning stroke, or finishing touch, to a book or part of a book, and it must come at the end of the book, or part of a book, rightly to be given this title.

"In cataloguing early books it would not in my judgment be incorrect to enter the printer's device at the end of a book, under the heading colophon."

And now, the unpleasantly controversial side of the matter having been disposed of (if so large an adjective as controversial may be applied to so small a paper), let us devote our little remaining space to the colophons themselves, first turning our attention to Dr. Pollard's book,[4] with his own rendering into English of the unwieldy fifteenth-century Latin.

In the introduction, Dr. Richard Garnett gives a brief sketch of the derivation and earliest uses of the term. He quotes the Greek word *colophon,* the head or summit of anything, usually used in a figurative sense, the position on a crest of the City of Colophon (whence its name), the first appearance of the word in the seventeenth century, with its secondary classical sense of a "finishing stroke" or a "crowning touch," and goes on to say: "Of the use of the word *colophon* in the particular significance elucidated in this essay—the end or ultimate paragraph of a book or manuscript—the earliest example quoted in the New English Dictionary is from Warton's *History of English Poetry* published in 1774. A quarter of a century before this it is found as a term needing no explanation

[4] Alfred W. Pollard, *An Essay on Colophons, with Specimens and Translations;* with an Introduction by Richard Garnett (Chicago: The Caxton Club, 1905).

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in the first edition of the *Typographical Antiquities* of Joseph Ames, published in 1749. How much older it is than this cannot lightly be determined. The bibliographical use appears to be unknown to the Greek and Latin lexicographers, medieval as well as classical. Pending further investigation, it seems not unlikely that it may have been developed out of the secondary classical sense already mentioned sometime during the seventeenth century, when the interest in bibliography which was then beginning to be felt would naturally call into existence new terms of art."

While acknowledging the great interest that many authors have found in individual colophons, Dr. Pollard states that his task is the more ambitious, if less entertaining one of making a special study of this feature in fifteenth century books with the object of ascertaining what light it throws on the history of printing, and on the habits of the early printers and publishers. His first conclusion being that colophons are the sign and evidence of the printer's pride in his work, he draws attention to the utter lack of such information as they give in the very earliest books of all, as contrasted with the self-glorification of Fust and Schöffer when, printing independently, they affixed the first known printed colophon to their Psalter of 1457 (in at least one copy accompanied by their device):

> The present copy of the Psalms, adorned with beauty of capital letters, and sufficiently marked out with rubrics, has been thus fashioned by an ingenious invention of printing, and stamping without any driving of the pen. And to the worship of God has been diligently brought to completion by Johann Fust, a citizen of Mainz, and Peter Schöffer of Gernsheim, in the year of the Lord 1457, on the vigil of the Feast of the Assumption.

Of Peter Schöffer's later allusion to the shields of his device Dr. Pollard writes: "Needless discussions have been raised as to what was the use and import of printers' devices, and it has even been attempted to connect them with literary copyright, with which they had nothing whatever to do, literary copyright in this decade depending solely on the precarious courtesy of rival firms, or possibly on the rules of their trade-guilds. But here, on the authority of the

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Pſalmorꝝ codex · venuſtate capitaliū decorāt⁹
rubricationibuſq; ſufficienter diſtinctus,
Adinuētione artificioſa ĩpīmendi ac caracterizandi·
abſq; calami vlla exaratione ſic effigiatus, Et ad eccle-
biam dei ĩduſtrie eſt ꝯſummatus, Per Johem fuſt
Cīuē magūtinū · Et Petrū Schoffer de Gernſzheĩm,
Anno dñi Mcccclvij · In vigilia Aſſūpcōis,

Psalter. Mainz, Fust and Schöffer, 1457

THE FIRST PRINTED COLOPHON

printer who first used one, we have a clear indication of the reason which made him put his mark on a book—the simple reason that he was proud of his craftsmanship and wished it to be recognized as his. 'By signing it with his shields Peter Schöffer has brought the book to a happy completion.' "

Again he calls attention to the boast of John of Speier at Venice, "primus in Adriaca formis impressit aenis," by which he asserts his individual priority over any other firm in that city. And here is the rhyming colophon used by the same John, in which he boasts with some ambiguity of the number of copies of Cicero which he has printed in his two editions:

> From Italy once each German brought a book.
> A German now will give more than they took.
> For John, a man whom few in skill surpass,
> Has shown that books may best be writ with brass.
> Speier befriends Venice; twice in four months has he
> Printed this Cicero, in hundreds three.[5]

In wording their colophons, the early printers were only following the constant practice of medieval scribes, of whose many colophons a selection of examples is given in Bradley's *Dictionary of Miniaturists*.

The moving of printers from one town to another, transference of their stocks, their quarrels, their boastings and pleas for favor with those in high places, all are followed, and much information gathered in the *Essay*. There is simple pathos in the colophon of the *Chronicles of the londe of England* printed at Antwerp in 1493, which records the death of its famous printer, Gerard Leeu,

> a man of grete wysedom in all manner of kunnyng; whych nowe is come from lyfe unto the deth, which is grete harme for many of poure man. On whos sowle God almyghty for hys hygh grace haue mercy. Amen.

"A man whose death is great harm for many a poor man must

[5] Cicero, *Epistolae ad Familiares*, Second edition (Venice, 1469).

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needs have been a good master, and a king need want no finer epitaph," writes Dr. Pollard.

The days when we find the book trade highly organized and the functions of printers and publishers clearly separated, are pictured in the following colophon:

> Here you have, most honest reader, six works, etc. It remains, therefore, for you to make grateful acknowledgement to those who have produced them: in the first place to that eminent man Master Simon Radin, who saw to their being brought to light from the obscurity in which they were buried; next to F. Cyprian Beneti for his editorial care; then to Jean Petit, best of booksellers, who caused them to be printed at his expense; nor less than these to Andrieu Bocard, the skilful chalcographer, who printed them so elegantly and with scrupulous correctness, June 28, 1500. Praise and glory to God.[6]

Here are men making aspersions on the editions of rival publishers, with warnings against them:

> Here end the Decretals, most correctly printed in the bounteous city of Rome, queen of the whole world, by those excellent men Master Ulrich Han, a German, and Simon di Niccolo of Lucca: with the ordinary glosses of Bernard of Parma and his additions, which are found in few copies; both printed and corrected with the greatest diligence. Purchase these, bookbuyer, with a light heart, for you will find such excellence in this volume that you will be right in easily reckoning other editions as worth no more than a straw.[7]

We find that the Nuremberg Chronicle is the only book which Dr. Pollard can call to mind that gives explicit information as to its illustrators, Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenworff; and finally we come to books where the author takes a hand, and we sometimes have a double colophon, as in the case of the *Morte d'Arthur*. Here we have Sir Thomas Malory's colophon, requesting the reader's prayer for his deliverance, and for the repose of his

[6] Diui Athanasii, contra Arium, etc. (Paris, 1500).
[7] Decretals of Gregory IX (Rome, 1474).

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soul, and William Caxton's business-like statement as editor, printer and publisher.

The author's struggle with the printer, to obtain his own way, is no new thing, as proved by this late colophon of the musician, Johann von Cleve, affixed to his *Cantiones*, 1580:

> As I come to the end of my task it seems worth while to inform students and amateurs of music that this collection of Motets was in the first place entrusted to Philip Ulhard, citizen and printer of Augsburg, to be printed, and that he (as often happens), being made unreasonably capricious by bodily ill-health, often did not carry out our intention, and compelled me, by leaving out some motets (which however, if life bears me company and God helps, will shortly be published), to abridge the work, and more especially as the same printer, when the work was not yet finished, came to an end of his days, and there upon the work was entrusted to Andreas Reinheckel to be completed, if anything, therefore, is found which might disturb a connoisseur, I pray musicians to bear with it with equanimity. Farewell. In the year of the Lord 1580, in the month of January.

We have noted one rhyming colophon, a mannerism much affected by Italian printers. Another fanciful custom by which the early printers called attention to their colophons was the use of eccentric arrangements of types, by which these final paragraphs appeared in the shape of wedges, funnels, diamonds, drinking glasses and the like.

The earliest known title page is in a Bull of Pius IX, printed in Mainz by Fust and Schöffer in 1463, but it was some twenty years before the custom became common. At first the title only, taking the form of a single sentence, appeared at the top of a title page, but it was not long before, either in the interests of decoration or of advertising, a simple woodcut or the device of the printer appeared below the title. In his *A Treatise on Title-pages*, 1902, Mr. De Vinne proposes the following ingenious explanation of the evolution of the printer's mark: "It was hoped that the distinctiveness of a peculiar device would be remembered by the book-buyer who had forgotten the name of his preferred printer.

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"In the beginning the device was put at the end of the book, above or below the colophon. It was at first a small and simple design . . . but the eagerness to have a device that should be striking led to its enlargement and afterward to an entire change of position. When the greater part of the last page was preoccupied by the last paragraph of the text, the device required a separate page. This led to making full-page devices and afterward to the putting of the device on the first page."

As time went on it was only natural that the remaining space at the foot of the title pages should be utilized for brief details of printing and publishing, but the transition was gradual and unsystematic. Indeed, some printers continued to use colophons alone well into the sixteenth century, and there are frequent instances during that century of books containing both title pages and colophons, the latter being a repetition, at the end of the book, of the imprint, as the few business-like lines at the foot of the title page had come to be named.

By the time that title pages were firmly established, publishing had become a separate business, and the publisher was not long in assuming the ascendency, often pushing the printer altogether into the background and appearing alone in the imprint. For a long time the printer modestly tucked in his name wherever he could, sometimes on the verso of the title page, and sometimes at the bottom of the last page, but in a formal manner, without the naive and often delightful and useful details which make the early colophons so interesting.

With the nineteenth-century revival of interest in typography, the printer came to the fore again and we see his name appearing in a new place, the certificate, preceding the title page—an entire leaf, moreover, on which are set forth the details in which he is interested, the paper, number of copies, and so on. This use seems to have been introduced by the finely printed volumes of the French book clubs, with their "Justification du tirage," and it was followed through the later decades of the nineteenth century, in the publications of book clubs and many other privately and finely printed volumes. Simultaneously with these came the publications of the Kelmscott and other private presses, which revived the use of colo-

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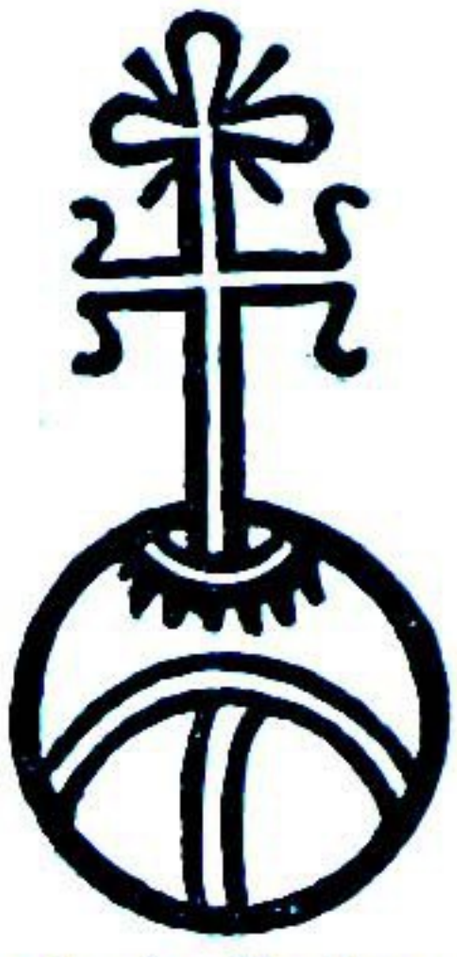
Ad laudem et gloriam omnipotentis dei. glorioſe virginis marie. et omnium ſanctoꝝ. Finiunt feliciter elegantiſſimi atꝫ pulcherrimi ſermones beati. Bernardi dareuallēſis abbatis doctoris melliflui ſuper Cantica canticorum ſūma cū diligencia correcti atqꝫ impreſſi in Roſtock per fratres Coīs vite. ad ſanctū Michaelem. Anno a natiuitate domini. Milleſimo quadringenteſimooctuageſimoꝑmo q̄nto kalēdas Auguſti.



St. Bernard. Sermones. Rostock, Fratres Domus Horti Viridis, 1481

COLOPHON WITH PRINTER'S MARK

phons in the early manner. The separate page, placed at the end of the finely printed book of today, giving details of the making of the volume, is the result of this modern impetus in book-making[8]—the interest in fine production of the person for whom the book is made, added to the desire of the modern printer for recognition of himself as the producer.

This is but the very logical expression in the books themselves of the modern trend, so assiduously cultivated, toward the making of good books, and the return to prominence of the printer after the long period of his subservience to the publisher. In the present-day notice of its makers, on the final page of a book, the colophon is revived, and once more the printer has the last word!

[8] We may note that the French technical term for the modern colophon, "achevé d'imprimer," emphasizes this importance of the printer.

COMPOSED IN GARAMOND TYPES

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EDWIN ELIOTT WILLOUGHBY

Printers' Marks

A PRINTER'S mark is a trade-mark. Printers used them in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for the same purpose that printers employ them today—to ornament their books and to make each volume readily recognizable as the product of the printing establishment which produced it.

The printer's mark was but one of the many types of marks which, largely because of the widespread illiteracy of the people, were used throughout all phases of medieval life. The ownership of objects, for example, was often shown by means of a regularly used mark. Two examples of this type of mark, the seal and the cattle brand, go back to the dawn of history and have continued in use to the present time. Merchants in the Middle Ages often identified their property by placing on it their merchants' marks.

The mark of a merchant was legally recognized as his by his guild or by the town government. Often it was a representation of the tools of the man's trade or a replica of his house sign. Sometimes it was an animal or object which formed a pun on the merchant's name. Frequently, simple geometric designs were used. Toward the latter part of the Middle Ages, as merchants grew richer and more powerful, they aped the upper class by making their marks resemble, as closely as they dared, the heraldic devices of the knights and nobles. These marks enabled employees or hired porters to recognize at a glance a merchant's property.

Places, as well as objects, were identified by means of marks. Inns, shops and similar public places in those days before houses were numbered were designated by house signs. The Tabard, the inn from which Chaucer's pilgrims started for Canterbury under

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the leadership of its host, Harry Baillie, took its name from its sign—a representation of a short outer jacket. An equally famous tavern, patronized by Shakespeare, Ben Jonson and other "sirenical gentlemen," bore the "Sign of the Mermaid." And over the door of the Globe, Shakespeare's theater, hung a picture of Atlas bearing the world on his shoulders.

Printing houses, like other business establishments, were known by house signs. The printer's mark of Adrien van Berghen supplies an illustration. [Page 48.]

Not only were objects and places designated by marks in the Middle Ages, but under certain conditions people were recognized by them also. A knight, his face obscured by his helmet, made his identity known by wearing on his helmet, shield and tabard simple pictures or symbols by which he could be recognized. As it was usual for members of the same family to wear the same emblems, these simple pictures, many of which became conventionalized, descended from father to son, indicated relationships, and finally developed under the control of officers of the king into the elaborate system of heraldry.

Marks, then, were widely used in the Middle Ages. It was inevitable that they should be used to identify the makers of manufactured goods. Craftsmen with pride in their work naturally desired others to recognize their products. As a result, the use of trade-marks became common. Craftsmen of every trade were frequently compelled either by law or by guild regulations, to affix a mark to their products as a guarantee of their honesty and good workmanship. Such marks were required especially of goldsmiths, silversmiths and other artisans who were under unusual temptation to misrepresent the quality of their goods. In England, to take another example, arrowheads, the quality of which might determine the issue of a battle, were ordered, by a statute of Henry IV, to be "marked with the mark of him who made the same."

These trade-marks performed much the same function as the house mark or the merchant's mark; indeed, the three were often the same. They enabled a purchaser, literate or illiterate, to identify the maker of a product and to buy thereafter according as he had been satisfied or displeased with the first article purchased.

The printer, to be sure, was under few of the compulsions to use a trade-mark that beset his fellow craftsmen. His patrons

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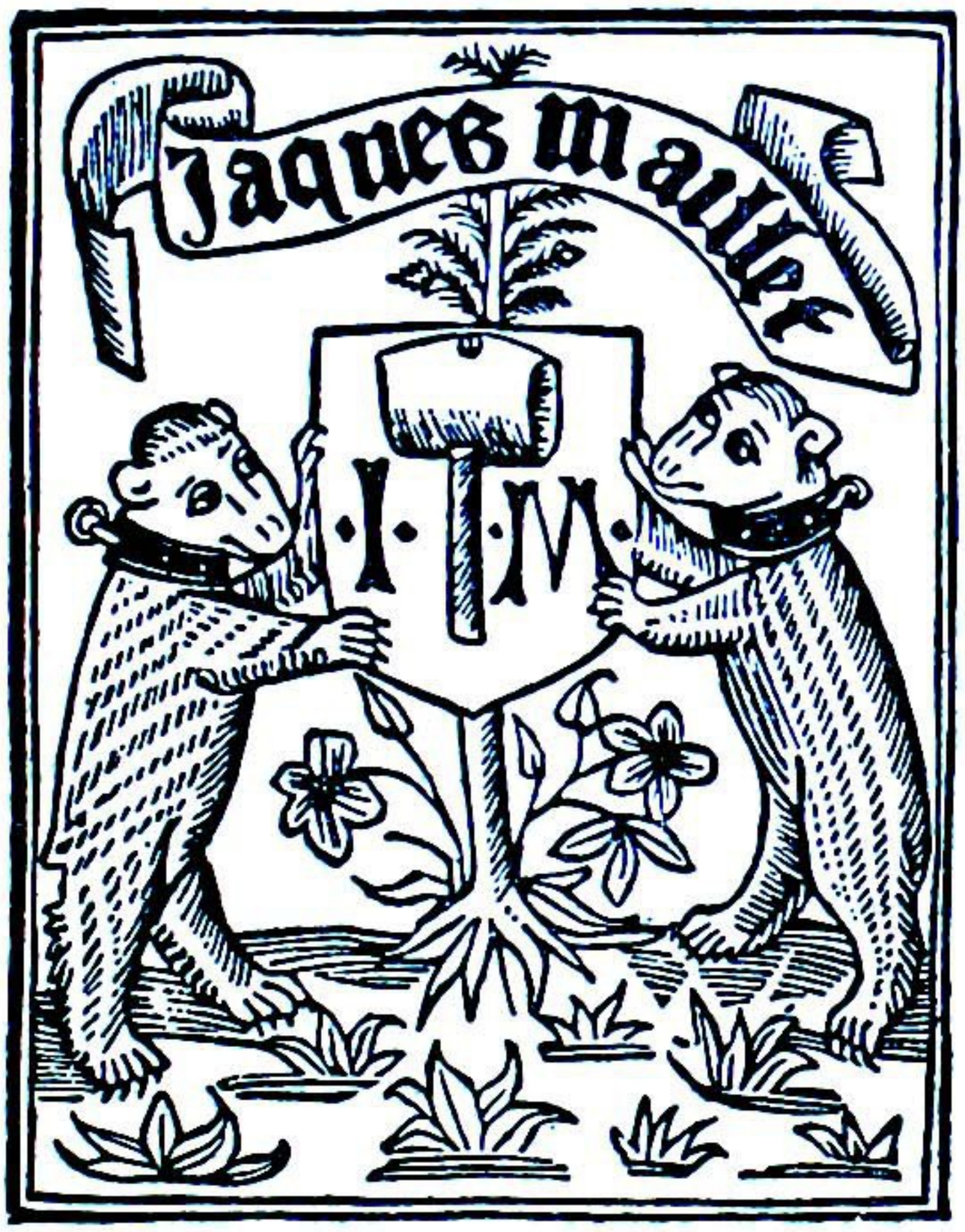
GUY MARCHANT

printed his first book at Paris in 1483. His motto, *Sola fides sufficit* (Faith alone suffices) appears above the clasped hands, with the first word represented by the musical notation, *sol* and *la*.



JACQUES MAILLET

began publishing at Lyons in 1482, and probably began printing at the same time. His mark represents a shield, supported by two dogs, which bears his initials and a mallet (*maillet* in French), hanging from a tree.

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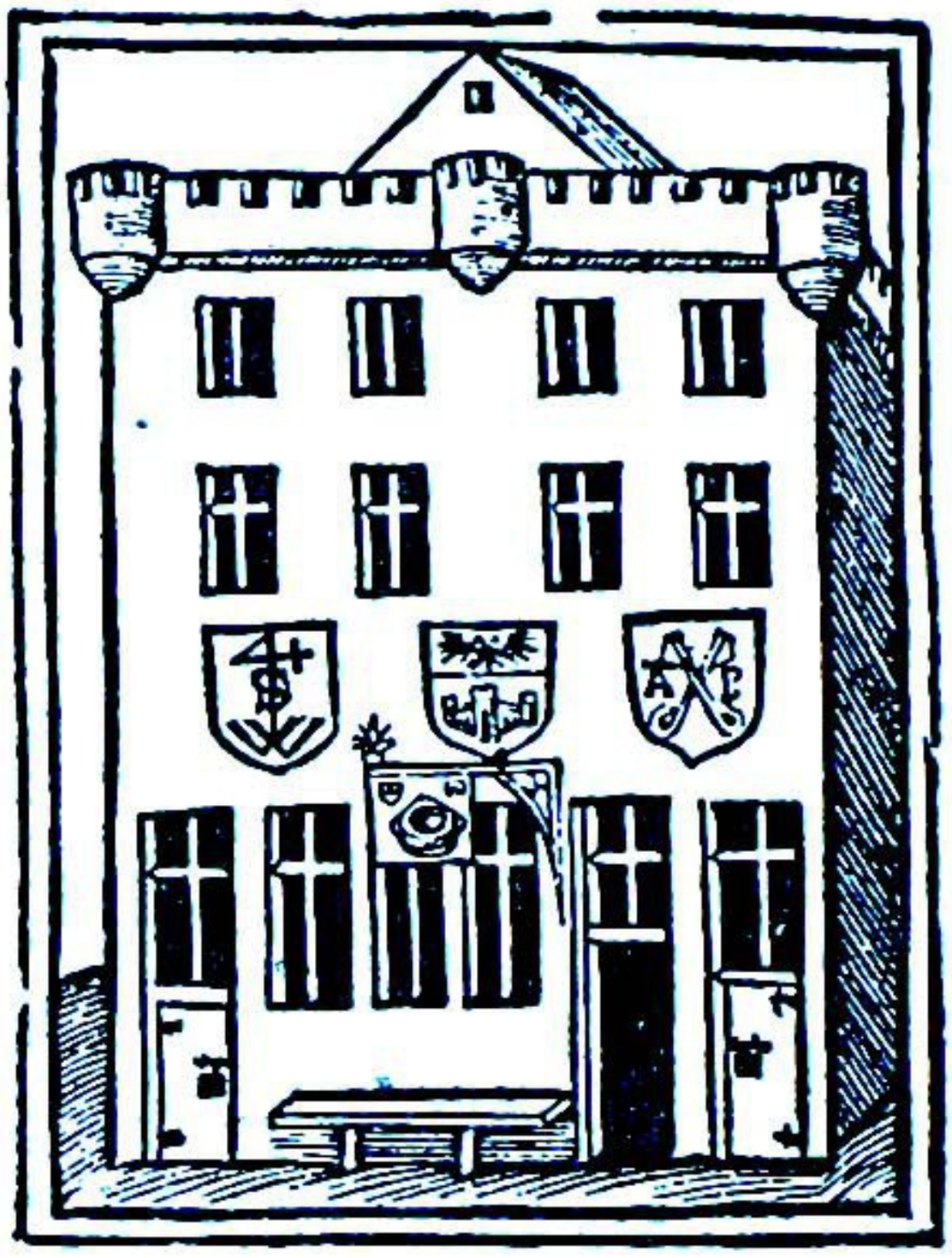
were literate; they could read his name and address—when he chose to set them down—either in the colophon at the end of the book or on the title page. But the example of other craftsmen was not to be resisted. Besides, a well-made printer's mark, or a publisher's device, could be both useful and ornamental. Put at the end of the book, it could give it a fitting close. Used in the middle of a book, it could set off chapters and parts. Above all, especially when it was printed in red, it could give life and balance to a title page.



ADRIEN VAN BERGHEN
in his mark pictures his printing house "at the Sign of the Great Golden Mortar in the market place" at Antwerp, where he started in 1500.

By the printer's mark, also, a prospective purchaser could recognize at a glance the product of a press. It could prevent a careful purchaser from being deceived by a false imprint. "Look at my sign," warns Benedictus Hector of Bologna, "which is represented on the title page and you can never be mistaken." It was harder to counterfeit a printer's mark than to filch his name.

Even a mark, however, was not infallible protection. The "prince of printers," Aldus Manutius, complains that his Florentine competitors "have affixed our well known sign of the dolphin wound around an anchor. But," he adds, "they have so man-

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aged that any person who is in the least acquainted with the books of our production cannot fail to observe that this is an impudent fraud; for the head of the dolphin is turned to the left, whereas that of ours is well known to be turned toward the right."

WILLIAM CAXTON

the first English printer, printed his own translation of a French romance, *Recuyell of the Histories of Troy*, in 1474. At his press at Westminster he completed nearly eighty books between 1477 and 1491, many of which he also translated from the French.

In one country only, and there for but a brief period, was the use of a mark made compulsory. In 1539, François I, in an act intended to suppress both the piracy of copyrighted works and the printing of heretical books, ordered every printer and bookseller in France to have his own device so that purchasers might easily ascertain where books were printed and sold.

Although (with this exception) the use of marks was voluntary with printers, they were early adopted. In 1457 Fust and Schöffer, the successors of Gutenberg, first employed one in the Mainz Psalter, the first book to contain the name of the printer and the place and date of printing. [Page 39.] The device con-

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sisted of two shields resembling coats of arms. Other printers quickly followed their example. As the fifteenth century saw the rise of the mercantile class, it is not surprising that printers used in their marks heraldic devices, if they had the right to bear arms, or shields displaying their merchant's marks in a manner often resembling armorial bearings.

Frequently, printers used as the central part of their marks the signs which served to designate their places of business. Pierre LeRouge, for example, used a red rosebush for his sign and in his device. The London printer, Berthelet, used in like manner the figure of Lucrece.

WILLIAM FAQUES

began printing in London about 1503. His mark represents a hexagram of interlocking triangles bearing biblical quotations, which enclose his monogram pierced by an arrow. The initials "GF" are those of the French form of his name.

If the printer's name could be punned on, it was common to use for a mark an object the name of which sounded like the printer's own. Jacques Maillet's surname means mallet. He made it easy to remember by displaying a mallet in his device. [Page 47.] A few printers, among them Aldus Manutius, John Day, John Wight and Willem Vorsterman, even used their own portraits in their marks.

Many other signs and emblems were employed. In an age fond of symbolism it is not surprising to find that many marks had

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symbolic and mystical meanings—not only in the earlier period, when ecclesiastical symbols were often used, but in the later period also, when devices were frequently copied from emblem books. Sometimes a printer would use a woodcut to illustrate a book and then, because it struck his fancy, adopt it as his mark. Thomas Gardiner and Thomas Dawson, partners, on the other hand, had a block which contained, around a central open square, figures forming a rebus of their names: a gardener, a daw and the sun. With their initials in the open square, it served as a mark; with the appropriate display letter, it was a factotum bearing the initial letter of the first word of a chapter.

Printers' marks, in fact, took a multitude of forms during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the late seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, they became conventionalized and were used infrequently; but they did not die out altogether. The Oxford and Cambridge University presses, for example, continued to put them on the title pages of their books.

The revival of printing late in the nineteenth century saw an increased use of the printer's mark. This was almost inevitable, for when the craftsmen strove to do fine printing, they desired, just as did the craftsmen of the fifteenth century, to have their work easily recognized. Today, private presses which specialize in fine printing, some university presses, and many publishing firms, frequently use marks which both ornament their title pages and identify for the reader the creator of the volume.

THE GROLIER CLUB

A rendering of the Club's familiar mark by Rudolph Ruzicka

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A. F. JOHNSON

Title Pages:

THEIR FORMS AND DEVELOPMENT

IT IS a curious fact that the title page was evolved at a comparatively late date in the history of the book, and is indeed almost unknown before the printed book. There are a few examples among early surviving manuscripts of a separate leaf being used for the title, but they are quite exceptional, and even these give the title on the back of this leaf. The usual practice of the calligrapher was to give any information considered desirable as to the author and the date and place of the making of the manuscript in the colophon. This practice was taken over by the printers, although in the first years of the new art they frequently said nothing as to place of printing, probably with the deliberate intention of concealing the fact that the book was produced by mechanical means. The title page as we know it, giving the title, author's name and an imprint, being, in fact, a kind of advertisement of the book, was not well established until some years after 1500. . . .

The title page owes its origin, according to one theory, to the fact that printers found it necessary to protect the first leaf of the text. Whereas a manuscript would be bound as soon as the calligrapher had finished the text, most of the copies of a printed edition were delivered to a bookseller in sheets, and many might remain unbound for years. Hence arose the practice of beginning the book on the second leaf or on the back of the first leaf. The first page could then be used for the purpose of advertising the book, for the fully-developed title page arose out of a commercial need. A few early examples of the addition of a brief title on

From *One Hundred Title Pages:* 1500–1800, selected and arranged with an Introduction and Notes by A. F. Johnson. Copyright 1928 by John Lane, The Bodley Head, Ltd. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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the first page are known, the first being that of a Bull of Pope Pius II, printed by Fust and Schöffer at Mainz in 1463. But the blank title leaf is found for many years after that date, and to the end of the fifteenth century a title leaf containing a brief description in a few words is common. As late as 1548 we find the brothers Dorici at Rome printing several volumes of the works of Cardinal Bembo with the title on the back of the first leaf. An edition of the Vulgate printed at Venice in 1487 by Georgius Arrivabene offers an example of the most rudimentary form of a title page, with the single word *Biblia* on the first leaf.

The example of Ratdolt at Venice, who in 1476 printed a Calendar of Regiomontanus with woodcut borders and an imprint on the first leaf, was not followed by contemporary printers. Even this solitary case hardly presents a title page in the form in which we know it, since the leaf, in place of a title, has a poem in praise of the book. Of the fully developed title page, giving title, author and full imprint, Dr. Haebler, the German authority on incunabula, knows of only one instance in the fifteenth century, a book by Johannes Glogoviensis printed by Wolfgang Stöckel at Leipzig in 1500; the title itself, however, is cut on wood.

The lettering of the simple fifteenth-century title page was often that of the text of the book, or sometimes a larger, heading ype was used. Very frequently the words were cut on wood, and since for the printer it was as easy to print from a block containing a design in addition to a brief title, the woodcut illustration on the first leaf soon followed. The examples of the John Lydgate, printed by Pynson, *c.* 1515, and of the *Deceyte of Women*, printed by Abraham Vele about 1550, are typical title pages of popular books of the earlier printers. In Spain especially his combination of title and illustration, in that country often an heraldic cut, both cut on wood, became the fashion and persisted for many years in the next century. Scenes from school life often illustrated educational texts, while a school of woodcutters at Florence designed a famous series of illustrations which decorated the title pages of devotional tracts by Savonarola and other works. The first printers' devices, the two shields of Fust and Schöffer and the double cross rising out of a circle at Venice, were added to the colophons, and it was only when the French printers began to use large devices surrounded by borders, for which there was no room on the last leaf, that the printer's name,

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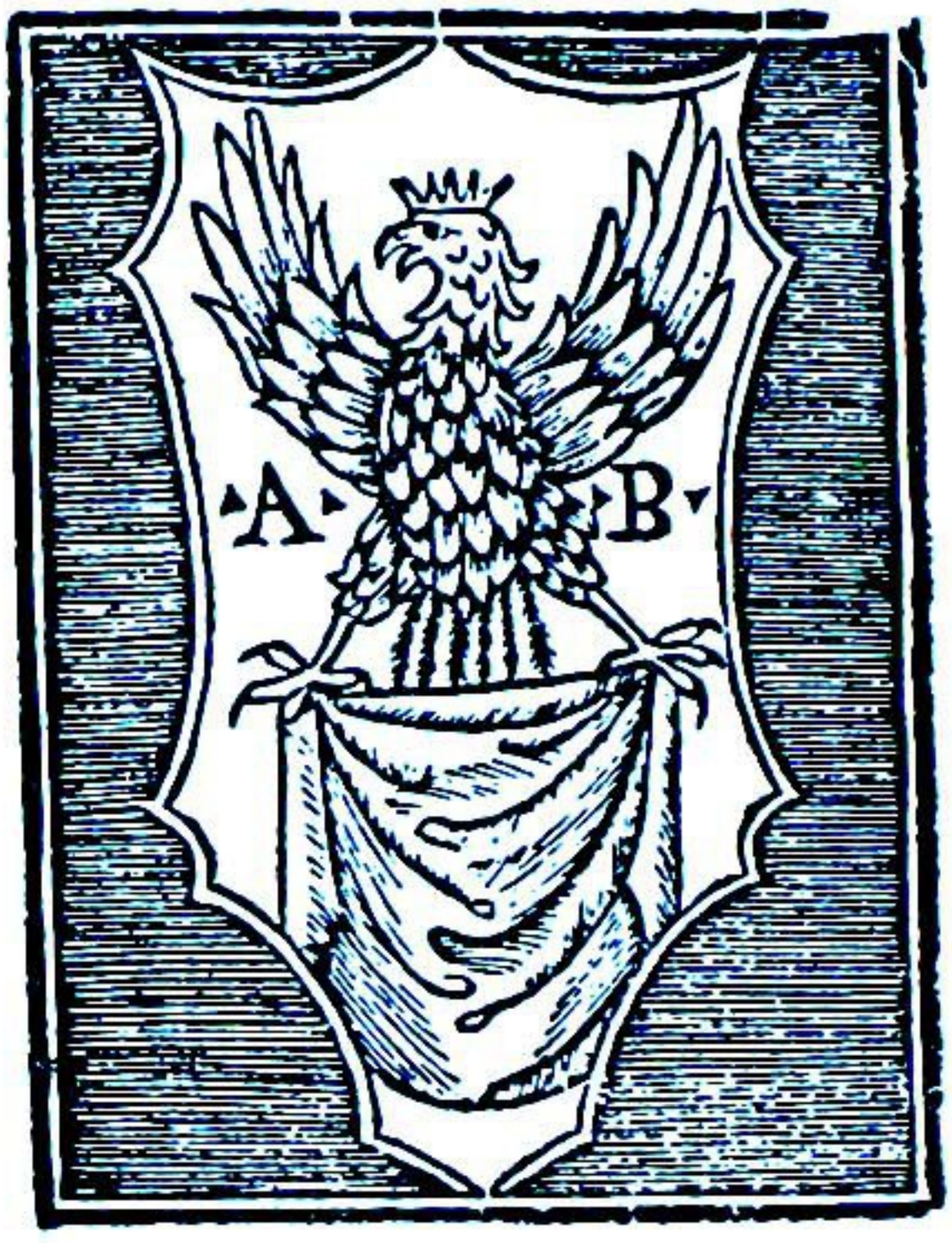
DISCORSI DI NICOLO MACHIAVELLI
CITTADINO, ET SEGRETARIO
FIORENTINO, SOPRA LA PRI
MA DECA DI TITO LIVIO,
A ZANOBI BVONDEL-
MONTI, ET A COSI-
MO RVCELLAI.



Con Gratie, & Priuilegi di. N. S. Clemente
VII. & altri Prencipi, che intra il termino di. X.
Anni non si stàmpino, ne Stampati si uendino:
sotto le pene, che in essi si contengono.
M. D. XXXI.

MACHIAVELLI, SOPRA LA PRIMA DECA DI TITO LIVIO,
ANTONIO BLADO, ROME, 1531

The formal italic below the device, designed by Lodovico Vincentino, the calligrapher, was used in many of Blado's books. It has been revived and is known as Blado Italic. (Size, 5½ x 8¼ inches)

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or at least mark, began to appear on the title page. Thus one further step was taken towards the title page as we know it.

The sixteenth century is especially the age of the woodcut title-border (or metal-cut, for the material used for blocks was frequently metal). The practice of decorating the first leaf of the text with a woodcut border had been started by Ratdolt at Venice, and after 1490 was common among the printers of that city. In fact, several of the borders originally used for an opening were actually converted into title-borders after 1500. During the following century the variety of borders used in all the countries where printing was practised is remarkable. In Germany especially, during the years of the Reformation, when the printing press was unusually active, a very large number of decorative borders were cut, many of them by artists of the first rank, including even Dürer and Holbein. The work of the Holbeins and Urs Graf at Basle is well known to English book collectors. Perhaps less familiar is the work of Hans Baldung Grien, Hans Weiditz and Daniel Hopfer at Strasbourg and Augsburg, and that extraordinary series of designs which appear on the Luther tracts printed at Wittenberg and on similar works produced in Saxony. Many of these borders are highly successful as decorative pieces. The fact that they are less familiar to us may be accounted for by two circumstances. In the first place the earlier book collectors were almost all collectors of the classics, and the first writers on the history of printing, except in the matter of the invention of printing, approached the subject from the point of view of the student of the Greek and Roman classical writers. In the second place the German printers cut themselves off from Western Europe by clinging to the gothic letter after Italy, France and finally England had adopted roman and italic, even for books in the vernacular. . . .

There is one point about the early woodcut borders which must seem strange to the printer of today, and that is the suitability of the decoration to the subject matter of the book. The sixteenth-century printer naturally found it economical to ignore the fact that a border originally intended for a Bible was not suitable for a medical work. He did not regard it as incongruous to use a border depicting scenes from Greek mythology on a French medieval romance. Even a printer of the class of Jean de Tournes uses the same piece on the title page of a *Xenophon* and

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ORONTII

FINEI DELPHINATIS, REGII MATHEMATICARVM PROFESSORIS:

QVADRANS

ASTROLABICVS, OMNIbus Europæ regionibus inſeruiēs: Ex recenti & emēdata ipſius Authoris recognitione in amplioré, ac longè fideliorem redactus deſcriptionem.

PARISIIS.
Apud Simonem Colinæum.
1534.

O. FINE, QUADRANS ASTROLABICUS, S. DE COLINES, PARIS, 1534

The border was probably designed by the author. His mathematical diagrams are generally decorated with leaf forms like the "petits fers" of this title. (Size, 7⅝ x 11⅝ inches)

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of a book of French verse. Nor was the average printer very particular about the state of a block. Especially in England, where the general standard was lower than on the Continent, a damaged block would be used as long as it held together.

In the second half of the century two rival fashions of decoration were developed which finally banished the woodcut border, first the method of decoration by type ornaments or printers' flowers, and secondly the engraved title page. There is one example of type ornament known even in the fifteenth century, in an *Aesop* printed at Parma in 1483. After 1500, examples of borders made up of separate cast pieces are fairly frequent and are especially common in England in the books of Wynkyn de Worde and his contemporaries. But it is not until about 1560 that we find borders built up of type ornaments worked into arabesque patterns. It seems to have been Robert Granjon, the engraver of types at Paris and Lyons, who cut arabesque fleurons, divided them up and built up fresh patterns out of their component parts. The use of printers' flowers in borders is found at most centers of printing towards the end of the century and obtained its greatest popularity in the Netherlands and in England. Many fine examples are found in English books from about 1570 for the next fifty years. Joseph Moxon, who wrote on English letter-founding in 1683, tells us that they were considered old-fashioned in his day. They were revived again in the eighteenth century by P. S. Fournier at Paris, who cut many new designs which were copied all over Europe. Fournier's flowers could be built up to form all manner of ornaments and were more adaptable than the arabesques of the sixteenth century, when the original unit always resulted in the same pattern. Just as Granjon had devised a method of decorating without the use of the woodcut block, so Fournier designed his new flowers in order that printers might dispense with engraved vignettes. However, the vogue of the Fournier designs had a shorter life, and may be said to have been killed by the classical school of printing of the end of the century.

Engraving on copper was practised in the fifteenth century, but the engraved title page originates about 1550. Curiously enough, the earliest known engraved border occurs in an English book, the Anatomy of Thomas Geminus, printed in London in 1545. In the following year we find a second example, cut by

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A Sermõd ſpo

ken be fore the kynge his maie-
ſtie at Grenwiche, vppon
good fryday: the yere of
our Lord. M.CCCCC
xxxvj. by Johan
Longlõd bysshope
of Lincolne.

Ad laudem & gloriam Chriſti, &
ad memoriam glorioſæ paſſio-
nis eius.

J. LONGLOND, A SERMON, LONDON, 1536

Wynkyn de Worde and his contemporaries used cast pieces as ornaments, at least from 1504. Although their use was frequent, the arrangement of this title page is uncommon. (Size 5¼ x 7¼ inches)

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ARIETTE,

MISE EN MUSIQUE

PAR

M. L'ABBÉ DUGUÉ.

A PARIS,

des nouveaux Caractères.

DE FOURNIER LE JEUNE.

M. DCC. LXV.

DUGUÉ, ARIETTE, FOURNIER, PARIS, 1765

This rather ornate border shows what could be done with Fournier's new type ornaments. (Size, 7¼ x 10¼ inches)

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Corneille de La Haye for Balthazar Arnoullet at Lyons, where there was a remarkable group of engravers at work about this time. From 1548 the books of Enea Vico printed at Venice begin the fashion in Italy, where, after 1550, examples are fairly numerous. In the Netherlands also, beginning with the work of Hubert Goltzius at Bruges, they are met with almost as frequently as in Italy. It was, perhaps, Christopher Plantin at Antwerp who, more than any other printer, made the engraved title-border the fashion for all larger and more important publications. But it is with the seventeenth century especially that engraved borders are associated. The Elzevirs used them even on their pocket editions, while at the other extreme the massive volumes issued at Amsterdam and at Paris in the reign of Louis XIV are almost invariably introduced by an elaborate engraved frontispiece. . . .

Perhaps the worst examples of these overloaded frontispieces are to be found in German books of the period. Often, also, the engraved border is only a bastard title, the proper title page being set up in type. The earlier examples, dating from the sixteenth century, are in general the best, being simpler and not yet overburdened with a mass of detail. The good taste of the eighteenth century brought about a reform. But at Paris most books of this period had a typographic title page and the work of the famous school of French engravers was lavished on the illustrations. However, the engraved vignettes of that age were often very effectively used. Even Baskerville did not always disdain the vignette, and it was the last form of decoration abandoned by Bodoni.

One other form of decoration may be mentioned, that of metal rules. Rules have been used occasionally at almost all periods, by Geofroy Tory, for example, among others. But as far as title pages are concerned they are found most often in the seventeenth century.

The purely typographic title page is naturally of greater interest to the modern producer of books. At all periods the title page which was effective mainly by the arrangement of type has been common, and at most periods there have been printers who preferred to dispense with ornament of any kind. In the sixteenth century the books of the Paris printer, Michel de Vascosan, illustrate this severer manner, and the classical style of the great printers at the close of the eighteenth century was likewise in-

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¶ The deceyte of women. to the instruction and enſample of all men, yonge and olde, newly corrected.

THE DECEYTE OF WOMEN, A. VELE, LONDON, C. 1550

The combination of black-letter and a woodcut is a usual title page in an early English book. This undated example is probably mid-century, as the printer, Vele, is not heard of before 1548. The cut seems to date much earlier. (Size, 5¼ x 7½ inches)

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dependent of decoration. Some sort of arrangement of the letters displayed on the title page suggested itself from the first, and very soon various shapes were tried. Perhaps the commonest arrangement was the conical one, or the so-called hour-glass shape, in which the lines of type begin by being long, to become short at the center, lengthening again in the imprint at the foot. Others have preferred a natural arrangement, printing the matter exactly as if on a page of the text. Geofroy Tory, a book producer whose work was of great importance in the history of the book, seems to have been against the fashion of his day in his choice of the natural layout. It has certainly been the usual custom to aim at some sort of pattern in the division of the lines of type. In this respect the earlier printers had one advantage which was not enjoyed by their successors. They felt no difficulty about dividing a word in a title, even when the second part of the word was to be set in a different size or even a different kind of type. Frequently we find examples of such breaks in words as custom has made impossible for the modern printer. The simplification of the task for whoever was responsible for the layout is obvious. One rule which seems to have been almost universally observed is that the mass of the type must be in the top half of the page and not evenly distributed. [Page 69.]

Equally important with the distribution of the matter is the question of the kind of type to be used, the sizes of type, upper- or lower-case, and the number of different fonts. The simplest manner of using the letter employed in the text met with little favour and was soon displaced by the use of larger types and especially by the use of capitals. The heavy, square roman capitals, like those of Froben at Basle, for the first line, with smaller capitals for succeeding lines, were more or less customary in Northern Europe in the first quarter of the sixteenth century. In some countries a mixture of a "lettre de forme" and roman capitals was not unusual at the same period. With the introduction of the new Garamond romans at Paris about 1530 began the fashion of using the Canon and Double Canon sizes of the lower-case letters for titles. In the seventeenth century we find large and heavy roman capitals again in favour, often balanced by a woodcut ornament of a basket of flowers. This century, undoubtedly the worst in the history of typography, notwithstanding the Elzevirs, is especially remarkable for its crowded title pages. It had

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A

SPECIMEN

OF

ISAIAH THOMAS's

PRINTING

TYPES.

Being as *large* and *complete* an ASSORTMENT as is to be met with in any one Printing-Office in AMERICA.

Chiefly MANUFACTURED by that great Artist,

WILLIAM CASLON, Esq;

Of LONDON.

PRINTED at *WORCESTER*, MASSACHUSETTS,

By ISAIAH THOMAS.

MDCCLXXXV.

ISAIAH THOMAS, A SPECIMEN OF PRINTING TYPES, WORCESTER, 1785

As with most type specimens, this early American title page displays many different types and flowers. (Size, 5⅜ x 7⅝ inches)

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become the custom to give as much information as possible about the contents of the book and the qualifications of author, editor, etc., and the printer took the opportunity of displaying as large a variety of his types as possible. No doubt the use of title pages as posters for advertising is partly responsible for the custom. It has been established by documentary evidence that such methods of advertising books were usual in England and in Germany, and probably this was so in other countries also. Incidentally it may be pointed out that the posting up of title pages accounts for some of the early collections, such as that of Bagford, now in the British Museum. Bagford has been attacked for his vandalism in mutilating books for the sake of his hobby, but it now appears that he may have been quite innocent of the charge. In any case the result on the title page as a specimen of typographical arrangement was deplorable. . . .

With the eighteenth century title pages became simpler and letters became lighter, and the result is again work as good in its different style as that of the sixteenth century. The eighteenth century is certainly a great period in the history of book production, with its center in Paris. In England the influence of Caslon and Baskerville at length raised our typography to a level with Continental work. For one innovation P. S. Fournier is mainly responsible, the introduction of outline and other decorative capitals which were so successfully used at Paris. At the end of the century we have the work of the Didots and Bodoni, the classical school, whose technical achievement has hardly been surpassed at any period. One may cavil at their conception of the ideal shape of letters, one may dislike their excessive use of hair lines and their flat serifs, but it must be admitted that as practical printers and typecutters their work was of first rate quality. These classical printers were proud of their types and wished them to stand alone. Bodoni, who at the beginning of his career used ornaments copied from Fournier and engraved vignettes, in his later years more and more abandoned decoration and outline letters. The classical title page is composed in roman capitals of varying size, but without the admixture of lower-case letters or italics and without the aid of decoration. Like Baskerville, these printers considered that type is itself sufficiently interesting to stand alone.

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Lawrence C. Wroth

THE FIRST WORK WITH AMERICAN TYPES

ON 7 April 1775 there appeared in Philadelphia the initial issue of Story & Humphrey's *Pennsylvania Mercury*. This newspaper was referred to by a contemporary diarist as "The first Work with Amer. Types" and with certain qualifications, later to be made, it seems to be entitled to the distinction of priority implied in this descriptive phrase. Type founding in the colonies went through those phases of tentative effort, complete failure, and partial achievement which are normal to the beginnings of great industries, and before going on with the story of the font of type from which the *Pennsylvania Mercury* was printed, it is proposed to give briefly an account of earlier attempts at the establishment of letter founding in English America. By doing this it will be possible to secure correctness of sequence and of relationship among the several elements of this study in origins.

The first font of types cast in English America was that which resulted from the painful efforts of Abel Buell, a silversmith and lapidary of Killingworth, Connecticut. Shortly before 1 April 1769 Buell cast a small font of letters, crude in design and in execution, from which proofs were taken for the examination and the criticism of his friends. In October of the same year, using a different and much better type of his own making, he presented to the Connecticut Assembly a printed petition in which he asked that body for financial assistance in his proposed establishment of a letter foundry. In reply to this memorial he received a loan from the colony for the purposes of his venture, and soon afterwards he

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removed to New Haven and prepared to manufacture type for the printers of a continent. The story of his failure at this time, and of his success on a much smaller scale twelve years later, is a part of the present study only in the sense which has been indicated in the introductory sentences.

ABEL BUELL,
of Killingworth in Connecticut, Jeweller and Lapidary, begs leave to aequaint the Public, and the Printers of the Several Colonies, that he hath diſcovered the art, and hath alreday entred upon the Buſineſs of founding Types, which as Soon as he can furniſh himſelf with Stock, will ſell for the ſame price at which they are purchaſed in LONDON; in which Buſineſs he hopes for the Encouragement of the Printers, and all American Patriots

Abel Buell's First Font
From a proof of May 1769. Courtesy of the Yale University Library

Buell was not without a rival in his ambitious plans. David Mitchelson of Boston, possibly acting under the direction of John Mein, a printer of that city, is reported by a contemporary newspaper writer to have attained as great a degree of success as the Connecticut silversmith in the difficult art of letter casting. In the *Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly News-Letter* for 7 September 1769 there appeared among the local news items a report on recent developments in American manufacturing activities in which are certain sentences of interest in the story of colonial type founding. "We are assured by a Gentleman from the Westward," said the writer, "that Mr. Abel Buell, of Killingworth in Connecticut, Jeweller and Lapidary, has lately, his own Genius, made himself Master of the Art of Founding Types for Printing. Printing Types are also made by Mr. Mitchelson of this Town [Boston] equal to any imported from Great-Britain; and might, by proper Encouragement soon be able to furnish all the Printers in America at the same price they are sold in England." The absence of a

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known specimen of Mitchelson's letters or of any specific information as to his operations is enough, however, to require a verdict of "not proven" on any claim to priority in American type casting that has yet been made on his behalf.

Because of the unfruitful nature of the enterprises which have been spoken of, the year 1770 found the American printer still dependent upon European importation for his printing type, and at the moment there existed little prospect of relief from a situation which in the years of the Revolution was to become a hardship rather than the simple inconvenience of the earlier period. The policy of non-importation, however, was stirring the colonies to the establishment of local manufactures, and under the whip of necessity, type founding, among other essential industries, was to take its rise in the United States. The carrying to success of this manufacture in Pennsylvania in the year 1775 was undoubtedly assured by the political and economic situation of the country, but its beginning, which must first be described, had its cause in a set of circumstances of a more general character.

"The secular history of the Holy Scriptures," wrote Henry Stevens, "is the sacred history of printing." In these words the Vermonter gave sententious expression to the truth that the printing of the Bible has been in all ages an appreciable factor in the development of typography. The successful beginnings of type founding in English America, it is believed, may be traced to the desire of Christopher Sower Jr. of Germantown, Pennsylvania, to issue a third edition of that German Bible which first had made its appearance at the pains and expense of his father in the year 1743. It is said that the younger Sower's dissatisfaction with the conditions of type importation from Germany led him to conceive the idea of importing thence matrices and moulds instead of finished type, and with these placed in the cunning hands of Justus Fox, his journeyman, of casting his own letters for use in the proposed edition of *Die Heilige Schrift*. An enterprising man, a religious zealot, and the proprietor of one of the most extensive printing offices in America, he was able, partly at least, to carry out his intention.

The exact date of the first use by Sower of locally cast German letters evades determination. Sometime in the year 1770, he began the publication of the "second part" of a periodical known as *Ein Geistliches Magazien*. The title page of No. 1, Part II, of this early religious magazine tells us that it was printed by Christopher Sower

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TO THE HONORABLE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF CONNECTICUT, Convened at New-Haven the Second Thurſday of October AD 1769:

The Memorial of ABEL BUELL of Killingworth Humbly ſheweth;

That your Memorialiſt having Experienc'd the Great Goodneſs of this Honorable Aſſembly, for which he Begs Leave to render his moſt Grateful Tribute of thanks, and to Aſſure them from a Grateful Senſe of their Clemency he has made it his unwearied Study to render Himſelf Uſeful to the Community in which he lives and the American Colonies in general, and by his Unwearied application for a number of months paſt has Diſcover'd the Art of Letter-Founding; And as a Specimen of his abilities Preſents this Memorial Impreſs'd with the Types of his Own manufacture,-and whareas by an Antient Law of this Colony, this Aſſembly were Graciouſly Pleaſed to Enact that any one who ſhould make any Uſeful Diſcoveries ſhould Receive an Encouragement there-for from this Honorable Aſſembly; and as the Manufacture of Types is but in Few hands even in EUROPE, he humbly Conceives it to be a moſt Valuable Addition to the American Manufacture, and as the Expence of erecting a Proper Foundery will be Great and beyond the abilities of your Memorialiſt, he humbly hopes for Encouragement from this Aſſembly Either by Granting him the Liberty of a Lottery for Raiſing a Sum Sufficient to enable him to carry on the ſame, or in ſome other way as to this Honorable Aſſembly may ſeem meet; and your Memorialiſt as in duty Bound ſhall ever Pray.

Abel Buell

Abel Buell's Second Font, October 1769
Courtesy of the Connecticut State Archives

at Germantown in the year 1770, and the undated colophon of No. XII of the series contains information of singular interest in the words, "Gedruckt mit der ersten Schrift die jemals in America gegossen worden." The probability is that this issue of *Ein Geistliches Magazien* was published late in 1771 or early in the ensuing year. Upon the basis of this quoted statement and in view of the knowledge that when his estate was sold in 1778 there were disposed of to Jacob Bay and others certain lots of letter moulds, crucibles and a large quantity of antimony[1] it becomes clear that Sower's interest in type making developed well beyond the stage of thinking it would be a nice thing to do.

The initiatory efforts of Sower have a particular significance in the story of American type founding; for the tradition is that while engaged in the casting process of type making in the Germantown foundry, Justus Fox and Jacob Bay learned the more difficult mysteries of an art in which later they attained proficiency. Because of the link of continuous effort thus formed between Sower's initiation of the business in 1770 and the later cutting and casting of Roman letter by these artisans, there must be conceded to him the distinction of having begun in English America the industry of type manufacturing, regardless of whether or not his casting of German letter from imported matrices was as extensive as has been supposed.

Our knowledge of Fox and of Bay is derived largely from the *Additions to Thomas's History of Printing*, a body of tradition of uneven reliability transmitted to Isaiah Thomas by William McCulloch, a Philadelphia printer active in the early years of the century. Selections from the six communications of the period 1812–1814 in which this information was transmitted were incorporated by Thomas in the revision of his book upon which was based the second edition brought out by the American Antiquarian Society in 1874. Long afterward the series of letters was published as a whole in the *Proceedings* of the Society for April 1921 under the title, *William McCulloch's Additions to Thomas's History of Printing*.

In these letters to Isaiah Thomas, McCulloch was recording his own memories and the accepted Philadelphia tradition. Because he

[1] Editor's Note: *Pennsylvania Archives*, 6th Series, 12:887–919. In *Typographic Heritage*, the second printing of this essay, Sower's type founding venture is more extensively treated, and the rare existing issues of Part II of *Ein Geistliches Magazien* are located (pp. 143-144).

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was well advanced in years at the time of writing, one is not surprised to find that now and then he trips over the barrier that separates documented fact from hearsay and personal recollection. It is much to our comfort in the present instance, however, to learn that he possessed and made use of unusual opportunities to obtain correct information as to the craftsmen who are the subject of our interest. These facts which he records of Justus Fox, for example, he obtained from Emmanuel, the son and partner in type founding of that artisan, and in *Justus Fox, a German Printer of the Eighteenth Century*, Dr. Charles L. Nichols accepts his testimony as of general reliability. He was indebted to various relatives of Bay, among them a sister, "a plump lady of 68," for the account of him which is found in the pages of the *Additions*. It is possible to compare various items in McCulloch's sketches of these men with records unknown to him, but available to us, with results so little at variance that one is inclined to accord a high degree of credence to all that he wrote concerning their activities.

At the time of Sower's importation of German equipment, McCulloch informed Isaiah Thomas, he had among his journeymen an ingenious general mechanic, Justus Fox, whom he charged with the responsibility for casting the letters to be used in the great Bible. In April 1772 he employed a newly arrived Swiss silk weaver, Jacob Bay,[2] to assist Fox. Two years later Bay left Sower's service and set up a foundry on his own account in a near-by house in Germantown. Fox remained in Sower's establishment, presumably engaged in casting the large quantity of type required to keep standing an edition of the Bible. In addition to this routine work he is said to have cut and cast an unspecified amount of Roman letter before 1774, the year of Bay's separation from the Sower establishment. Working in his separate foundry, it is recorded by our volunteer historian, Bay "cast a number of fonts, cutting all the punches, and making all the apparatus pertaining thereto, himself, for Roman Bourgeois, Long Primer, etc."

That this reported activity in type casting in Germantown about

[2] McCulloch, p. 181, gives the middle of December 1771 as the date of Bay's arrival in Philadelphia. In Rupp's *Collection of Thirty Thousand Names of German, Swiss, Dutch, French, and other Immigrants in Pennsylvania from 1727 to 1776*, p. 398, Jacob Bäy is among the arrivals on the Brig *Betsey* on 1 December 1771. The name is spelled Bey by McCulloch, Bäy by Rupp, Bay in various lists and documents in the Pennsylvania Archives. The last-named spelling is used in the present study on this authority.

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the year 1774 was not a play of the imagination on the part of its historian is made certain by the definite statement that occurs in one of the non-importation resolutions of the Pennsylvania Convention. On 23 January 1775 the Convention "Resolved unanimously, That as printing types are now made to a considerable degree of perfection by an ingenious artist in Germantown; it is recommended to the printers to use such types in preference to any which may be hereafter imported." [3] Referring somewhat vaguely to this resolution, both as to content and as to origin, McCulloch tells us that even at the time of its passage Fox and Bay each claimed the honor implied in its terms. To this day the identity of the "ingenious artist" remains uncertain.

It is not clear by what evidence it was known to the Convention that "a considerable degree of perfection" had been attained in the making of type in Germantown. The only known specimen of printing type cast at that place before the meeting of the Convention in January 1775 is the German letter employed in Sower's periodical, *Ein Geistliches Magazien*, and it is not likely that this or any other specimen of German type would have led the Convention to a recommendation as sweeping as that which has been quoted from its journal. It could only have been a Roman letter that the delegates had in mind for a usage so general as was indicated in their resolution, and we must remain in doubt as to what specimen or specimens they had seen of locally cast type in this character. It is certain, however, that at the time of their action a font of Roman letter had been completed, or at any rate, that it was then in the process of casting. It is quite possible that a trial specimen of this font had been submitted to the Convention for its examination and approval.

It is a satisfaction to be able to introduce the new font through the medium of a contemporary reference to its use. We are indebted to the correspondence and to the diary of the Rev. Ezra Stiles of Newport, later President of Yale College, for some important information on early American type founding. Excited by Buell's efforts to make type in the year 1769, his interest in the manufacture seems to have remained in being, for on 9 May 1775 he appended the following comment to an entry in his Diary: "Extracted from the Pennsylv[a] Mercury, whose first N° was pub. the

[3] Journal of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania . . . (1776–1781), Volume the First (Philadelphia, 1782), p. 33.

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7th of April last: printed with types of American Manufacture. The first Work with Amer. Types: tho' Types were made at N. Haven years ago." [4] The fact that Ezra Stiles was one of the earliest patrons of Abel Buell's venture in letter casting, supported as this fact is by his interest in American manufactures generally, lends a certain amount of weight to any observation that he might make on the subject of American type founding, although it is probable that he was ignorant of Sower's partial achievement of the art, just as Sower some years earlier in his claim to priority had seemed to be unaware of Buell's technically successful effort. If we may interpret Dr. Stiles's words as meaning that Story & Humphreys's *Pennsylvania Mercury* [5] of 7 April 1775, Vol. 1, No. 1, was the first published work printed in Roman letter which had been cut and cast in English America, we may unhesitatingly repeat his description of it as "The first Work with Amer. Types."

The Philadelphia newspaper which has been referred to is one of the rarest of American journals of the period. Complete files, comprising issues from 7 April to 27 December 1775, are found only in the Library of Congress and in the Harvard College Library. From the first page of its first issue, the publisher's announcement is here reproduced.

A glance at the pages of the newspaper in which the new Roman letter was first used makes us feel that in his commendable willingness to admit imperfection the publisher paid small tribute to the skill of his "ingenious artist." The letters of "rustic manufacture" were far from perfect, it is true, and in later issues of the newspaper it is observable that they had not worn especially well, but nonetheless they composed agreeably and they were sufficiently well executed to entitle them to something more than the half apology with which they were offered to the public. Their interest, however, as the first American-made Roman type to be used in a publication intended for circulation transcends considerations of worth and appearance.

Rejoicing in their encouragement of native manufactures, the practical support they were giving to the Pennsylvania non-importation resolutions of six months earlier, the publishers of the *Mer-*

[4] Ezra Stiles, *Literary Diary*. Ed. by F. B. Dexter. 3 vols. (New York, 1901), I:549.

[5] Story & Humphreys's *Pennsylvania Mercury, and Universal Advertiser*. Evans 14477. No copy seen by Hildeburn.

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THE PRINTERS beg leave to acquaint their Subſcribers and the Public, that the TYPES with which THIS Paper is printed are of AMERICAN manufacture, and ſhould it by this means fail of giving ſuch entire ſatisfaction to the judicious and accurate eye, they hope every patriotic allowance will be made in its favour, and that an attempt to introduce ſo valuable an art into theſe colonies, will meet with an indulgent countenance from every lover of his country.--------We are ſenſible, that in point of elegance, they are ſomewhat inferior to thoſe imported from England, but we flatter ourſelves that the ruſtic manufactures of America will prove more grateful to the patriot eye, than the more finiſhed productions of Europe, eſpecially when we conſider that whilſt you tolerate the unpoliſhed figure of the firſt attempt, the work will be growing to perfection by the experience of the ingenious artiſt, who has furniſhed us with this ſpecimen of his ſkill, and we hope the paper will not prove leſs acceptable to our readers, for giving him this encouragement.

We beg leave further to obſerve, that as one of the eaſtern mails is now diſpatched from Boſton, in ſuch time as to arrive here on Thurſday (inſtead of Saturday as formerly) we have judg'd it expedient to change our day of publication to Friday, by which alteration we expect to have an opportunity of furniſhing the moſt early intelligence from that intereſting quarter. We truſt this will be a ſufficient apology for making that only deviation from the aſſurances given the public in our propoſals, nor will any other alteration be admitted unleſs manifeſtly tending to the advantage and entertainment of our Subſcribers.----We' return thanks to thoſe gentlemen in this and the neighbouring provinces, who have kindly countenanced our intentions, and obligingly aſſiſted us by taking in ſubſcriptions, &c. for the PENNSYLVANIA MERCURY and UNIVERSAL ADVERTISER, and would beg them ſtill to continue ſuch their friendly offices, and thoſe who have not yet ſent us their liſts of ſubſcribers names will pleaſe to tranſmit them and the Papers ſhall be immediately forwarded.

Extract from The Pennsylvania Mercury of 7 April 1775
Courtesy of the Harvard College Library

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cury advertised on 23 June 1775 *The Impenetrable Secret* as a work "Just Published and Printed with Types, Paper and Ink, Manufactured in this Province." If they had added, as possibly they might have done with truth, "on a press of Philadelphia make," we could regard this statement as the declaration of independence of the American printer from the English manufacturer.[6]

Isaiah Thomas says that the *Pennsylvania Mercury* was established with the backing of Joseph Galloway as a substitute for the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, that disastrous earlier venture in journalism in which the Quaker politician had engaged with William Goddard. If this was the case, certain features of the new publication must have been displeasing to the silent partner, for Galloway the Tory could hardly have rejoiced with the publishers in their virtuous encouragement of native type founding, with all its patriotic implications. Furthermore, from an advertisement of John Willis and Henry Vogt in the first issue of the paper one learns that the publishers were making use of other articles of printing equipment made by these general craftsmen, who here announced their ability to make presses and any and all of the mechanical appurtenances required in a printing shop. This well-advertised Americanism of the publishers, however, seems not to have availed them in the attainment of success, and after their establishment had been destroyed by fire in the closing days of the year the business was never resumed.

It is not certainly known who was the maker of the significant *Mercury* types. Assuming that Sower's foundry was in full operation in the early months of 1775, we must assume also, in the absence of knowledge to the contrary, that its principal activity was in the manufacture of German letters for the great Bible, first published in 1776, and that Sower would not have been likely to engage in the making of Roman type on a large scale until this work had been completed. Because of our ignorance of other possibilities there remain to be considered only the two craftsmen, Fox and Bay, as the probable makers of this first successful American letter. According to McCulloch, Fox had cut and cast Roman letter at some period before the year 1774 while still working for Sower.

[6] It well may be that this production was not a book or pamphlet but a popular card game of the educational sort. See A. T. Hazen, *A Bibliography of Horace Walpole*, p. 173, and the same author's bibliography of the Strawberry Hill Press, pp. 145–148.

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This statement contains all that is known of his efforts at making Roman type during the years that he remained with Sower, but there is the chance to be taken into account that the *Mercury* font was the result of his experimentation during this period in an art which later he pursued with no small degree of local success. On the same authority it is said, it will be remembered, that Jacob Bay had left Sower in 1774, and in a near-by house in Germantown had set up a type foundry on his own account. In this separate establishment, it is likely that he was able to devote to the business such time and energy as would be required in making a font of sufficient size to accommodate the needs of such a newspaper as the *Pennsylvania Mercury*. The fact of his separate foundry having been established sometime in 1774, the reference in the Convention resolution of January 1775 to the "ingenious artist" at Germantown and the appearance in April 1775 of the new font of type acclaimed by the publishers as "an attempt to introduce so valuable an art into these colonies" are considerations which, taken in their order, seem to give ground for an assumption that it was Jacob Bay who cut and cast the letters for "The first Work with Amer. Types." Until proof is forthcoming, however, this must remain an assumption and nothing more.

It is certain that both Fox and Bay maintained their interest in letter casting for many years. At the sale of Sower's confiscated property in the year 1778 both of these artisans were present as purchasers of type-making tools and material.[7] Bay especially seems to have taken advantage of the opportunity to secure equipment at this dispersal of his old master's goods. Among other purchases which he made at the sale of what was probably at the time the largest typographical establishment in the country were "a lot of letter moles" at three pounds, "a Box with 9 Crusibles" at £5 15*s*., a quantity of worn type at 8*d*. a pound and antimony worth £8 18*s*. 3*d*. He was living at the time in a house rented from Sower,[8] and at the sale of the printer's real property in September 1779 he purchased another house belonging to the estate for £4200, a sum which he paid in two installments before 28 October 1779.[9] In recording from tradition the fact that Bay secured at

[7] Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, 12:887–919.

[8] McCulloch's statement is borne out by the inventory of Sower's real estate in Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, 12:872–873.

[9] Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, 12:918–919.

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this time one of the Sower houses, McCulloch asserts that he purchased it from John Dunlap, the printer, whom he paid in type of his own making. It is possible that he borrowed the purchase price from Dunlap on this or a similar basis of repayment, a transaction that would explain McCulloch's version of the story. It is said that he conducted his foundry until the year 1789, and that between this year and 1792 he sold the business to Francis Bailey. Fox continued the making of type until his death in the year 1805, when his son and partner Emmanuel Fox sold the equipment to Samuel Sower of Baltimore, the son of Christopher Sower, the Second, of Germantown, whose enterprise had been the determining cause of its existence.

McCulloch was emphatic in his praise of the sturdiness of Fox's types, but when he remarked to Archibald Binny upon the excellent wearing quality of a set of figures and capitals cast by the Germantown founder, which he and his father before him had been using for many years, that gentleman replied with scorn that they were "at first so devilish ugly . . . the longest using cannot mar their deformity."

The type-founding operations of Fox and of Bay have greater importance in the history of the art in America than is usually conceded them. When they are referred to at all by general writers, their activities are mentioned briefly or in such a manner as to give one the impression that their efforts were sporadic or tentative. It is with the work of the Scotch founder Baine, using imported equipment, that the story of American type founding is usually begun, but with the *Mercury* font before us, cut and cast thirteen years before Baine's first operations, and with assurances by McCulloch that Fox cut and cast the letters used in the McKean edition of the *Acts of the Pennsylvania Assembly*, printed by Francis Bailey in 1782,[10] and with references by McCulloch to fonts produced by Bay, it seems certain that there exists material which will require a revision of the story of American type-founding origins. Beginning with the incontestable fact of the successful *Mercury* font of 1775 and accepting McCulloch's relation of later events as a working hypothesis, there is seen to exist a field for research which should prove productive of discoveries, inasmuch as the fact and

[10] McCulloch gives the date indefinitely as about the year 1784. His father, John McCulloch, from whom he received much information embodied in the "Additions," was at one time foreman in Bailey's shop.

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the tradition indicate a continuous activity on the part of one or the other of these early Pennsylvania founders, Fox and Bay, from 1775 to 1805. In the course of these years other founders, better known to us, began their work, and between the years 1796 and 1801, more than one hundred American printers, from Massachusetts to Georgia, purchased type from the foundry of Binny & Ronaldson of Philadelphia.[11]

The identification of the various fonts of locally made type used in Pennsylvania in the quarter century following "The first Work with Amer. Types" would form an interesting chapter in the story of early American type founding.

[11] *One Hundred Years*, MacKellar, Smiths and Jordan Foundry, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1896), p. 12, where is given a list of printers found in Binny & Ronaldson's ledgers from 1796 to 1801. The original books are in the Typographic Library and Museum of the American Type Founders Company, now a part of the Columbia University Library.

COMPOSED IN MONTICELLO TYPES

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RONALD B. McKERROW

Typographic Debut

Notes on the Long ſ and other Characters in Early English Printing.

The letters ſ and s

From the beginning of printing until towards the end of the eighteenth century ſ was used initially and medially and s finally, following of course the practice of the MSS. There were certain exceptions: Sweynheim and Pannartz, setting up the first press in Italy at Subiaco in 1465, used a type transitional in character though with marked gothic features, which used the long ſ in all positions, a practice which may have been imitated from Neapolitan MSS. of the period. Other printers sometimes followed the same usage in roman type.

The first book to discard ſ is said to have been Joseph Ames's *Typographical Antiquities* of 1749, but this was regarded as an eccentricity, and the normal ſ is used in Herkert's edition of 1785–90. The effective introduction of the reform has been credited to John Bell who in his *British Theatre* of 1791 used s throughout, the same practice being followed in the Boydell *Shakespeare*, of which vol. 1 appeared in 1792.*

It is worth noting that Capell in his *Prolusions*, 1760, had attempted a modification of the usual practice. He there uses s

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* Note: In the Birrell & Garnett catalog, *Typefounders' Specimens*, London 1928, pp. 39–40, it is pointed out that the short s was effectively introduced by the Martins "who worked the Apollo Press at Edinburgh, and their London publisher, John Bell. The first book of theirs that I have seen is the series of Poets, for example the Dryden of 1777 . . ." Graham Pollard relates there the instructive and amusing history of the error, for which Hansard was responsible: J. Johnson in *Typographia*, London 1824, wrote ". . . for which we are indebted to the ingenious Mr. John Bell, who introduced them in his edition of the British Classics." In copying this, Hansard (1825) made the error in transcribing "British *Theatre*." He was followed by C. H. Timperley in 1842,

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medially for a z-sound, retaining ſ for an s-sound, thus: easily, visible, rais'd, &c., but verſes, purſuit, ſatiſfy.

In London printing the reform was adopted very rapidly and, save in work of an intentionally antiquarian character, we do not find much use of ſ in the better kind of printing after 1800. The provincial presses seem, however, to have retained it somewhat longer and it is said to have been used at Oxford until 1824.

The letters i, j, u and v

As a general rule, until early in the seventeenth century there was only one capital letter, I (in roman) or 𝔍 (in black-letter), for the letters now represented by I and J; and only one capital letter V (in roman) or 𝔘 (in black-letter) for the letters U and V. As was pointed out by F. W. Bourdillon, this has in early French books the odd result that a *libraire juré* is liable to appear in capitals as "I V R E." When reprinting a black-letter text in roman it seems logical to represent these by I and V in all cases, though some editors have preferred to use J and U, perhaps because the black letter forms approximate more closely to these letters in shape.

In lower-case most founts had i, j, u and v, but j was only used in the combination ij (often a ligature) or in numerals, as xiij, while v and u were differentiated according to position, not according to pronunciation; v being always used at the beginning of a word and u always medially.

Thus the following are the normal spellings: iudge, inijcere or iniicere (=*lat.* injicere), vse, euent, vua (=*lat.* uva). Certain printers varied the practice in a few books, but the rule followed by most was absolutely rigid. It is quite incorrect to say that the letters were used indifferently, or that the sixteenth-century usage was the converse of the modern. . . Rimes and puns show that the Elizabethans *called* V by the name we now give to U (hence W is called double-u). I have failed to discover the originator of the modern name "ve . . ."

who added the qualifying phrase "about 1795," by J. B. Nichols in his *Illustrations of Literature*, 1858, and by R. B. McKerrow in 1927, "where it has been given a new lease of life by correcting the obvious mistake in date to 1791."

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In England no example of the distinction [between i and j, u and v] seems to have been found earlier than J. Banister's *History of Man*, printed by John Day in 1578. The new method is followed in a few other books of Day, and in 1579–80 we find it followed by Henry Middleton in reprinting a Latin Bible from a Frankfurt edition in which the distinction had been made. From that time onwards to the end of the century we find a certain number of books following the new system either completely or with certain modifications, and thereafter the number gradually increased until between 1620 and 1630 it became the general rule.

The majuscule U at first employed was of the general design of the lower-case u with a small tail or serif at the foot (which has been revived in some modern fonts). The modern U begins to come into use in English printing about the middle of the seventeenth century.

The letter w

In early fonts this is often represented by vv. In later times the same is often found in fonts of extra large size (presumably of foreign origin), and in ordinary fonts when there happened to be a run on the w and the compositor had not enough.

Ligatures

Two or more letters joined together, or differing in design from the separate letters, and cast on one type-body, such as ꝛt or ffi, are called a ligature. There were two reasons for their being so cast, custom and convenience.

In the early fonts the great majority of the ligatures were due to custom alone and represented a following of scribal practice which commonly joined together certain pairs of letters. Thus in the fount used by Caxton in the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers* we find such ligatures as ad, be, ce, ch, co, de, en, in, ll, pa, pe, po, pp, re, ro, te, &c., all of which owe their existence solely to imitation of MSS. of the time. Many of these customary ligatures persisted throughout the sixteenth century and even later in black letter founts . . . while a few have combi-

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nations with certain capitals such as Ch, Sh, Th, Wh... Even in roman founts we find ct, oo, &c., of which ct has persisted until modern times. In italic fonts we also find *es*, *us*, *st*, and others. (The original Aldine italic had many more.)

When a letter part of which overhangs the body of the type, such as f or ſ, happens to be followed by such an upright letter as l or h, or by an i, the overhanging part or "kern" of the first letter comes in contact with the top of the second, and either the two types do not fit together properly or the kern of the first letter gets broken off. To avoid this, most fonts even at present have ligatures of f with l, i and another f (the end of the curve of the first letter or the dot of the i being suppressed), and of ff with l and i. In early times these ligatures for convenience included also a set with ſ. The f and ſ ligatures are also presumably copied from the MSS., where they frequently occur, though not in all hands. . . .

Punctuation marks

/ In quite early fonts this sign is used for the comma, or perhaps we should rather say to indicate any short pause in reading. . . . The modern comma seems to have been introduced into England about 1521 (in roman type) and 1535 (in black letter). It occurs in Venetian printing before 1500.

? The query mark seems to have been used in England from about 1521.

; The semicolon seems to have been first used in England about 1569, but was not common until 1580 or thereabouts.

. The full stop was commonly used *before* as well as *after* roman, and sometimes also arabic, numerals until about 1580. Thus ".xii." It was also used before and after i (.i. = id est) and ſ (.ſ. = scilicet), and I have found it once with q = cue: "as though his .q. was then to speake."

' and ‘ were used indifferently in such abbreviations as th' or th‘ for 'the.' It may be noted that 't'is' or 't‘is' (instead of ‘ 'tis') was so common in the Elizabethan period that it should perhaps be regarded as normal.

" Inverted commas were, until late in the seventeenth cen-

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tury, frequently used at the beginnings of lines to call attention to sententious remarks. Modern editors have occasionally regarded such passages as *quotations* and completed the quotes, which is generally wrong. So far as I have observed they were not especially associated with quotations until the eighteenth century, although, owing to their use for calling especial attention to a passage, they often appear in passages which are actually quoted.

Even after they become clearly used to mark quotations they generally appear at the beginning of the passage and at the beginning of every line, but not always at the *end*. The practice of closing the quotation with two apostrophes seems to be comparatively modern. (I have found it in the middle of the eighteenth century, but it does not seem to have been regularly observed until much later.)

Inverted commas, as well as many other signs, Greek letters (sometimes inverted) &c., were used in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century printing as reference marks directing to side- or footnotes.

( ) were often used in the sixteenth century where we now use quotation marks, and were indeed the general way of indicating a *short* quotation, e.g.:

"she was neuer heard to giue any the lie, nor so much as to (thou) any in anger."—STUBBES, *Christal Glasse*, 1591.

They also seem sometimes to be used merely for emphasis, e.g.:

"What yesterday was (*Greene*) now's seare and dry"—COOKE, *Greene's Tu Quoque*, 1614.

[ ] Square brackets are common in some Elizabethan fonts, being used as we now use round ones. They were also sometimes used instead of round ones for the purposes mentioned above; e.g.:

"which is as much as [of olde] or [in times past]."—PLUTARCH, *Morals*, 1603.

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COMPOSED IN CASLON 337 TYPES

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EDWARD ROWE MORES

Metal-Flowers

METAL-FLOWERS were the firſt ornaments uſed in printed books, to be ſet at the head of the firſt page and the tail of the laſt page, as well as at the head and tail of any ſeparate part of the whole work. and they were ſometimes uſed as an edging to the matter according to the taſte of the author or the printer. they were uſed ſparingly and with ſmall variety, but in time they became more numerouſ, and were cut in ſeveral ſhapes, forms and devices, and continued in reputation till *Cutters in Wood* ſupplanted them. when *Mr. Moxon* wrote they were accounted old-faſhioned. but the uſe of them was revived by the *French* and *Germans* and the variety of them conſiderably encreased by the Two *Mr. James's* in *England*.

The *flower*-matrices in their foundery have been divided into *old* and *new*, which to be ſure is a diviſion, but ſuch as conveys nothing or a falſe idea to the underſtanding.

We are to obſerve then that the latter, though moſtly now in vogue, are mere figures of fancy, made up of circular oval and angular turns, contrived to look light, airy and unmeaning, and to try the genius or patience of a compoſitor.

But the former expreſſed ſome meaning and were adapted to other purpoſes than barely to dress and decorate a page. they were formed from real objects natural and artificial, civil and

From a Dissertation upon English Typographical Founders and Foundries by Edward Rowe Mores. London 1778. Reprinted by The Grolier Club, 1924.

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military, as from weeds and flowers of the field and garden, leaves, branches, fruits, flower-baſkets, flower-pots, urns, croſſes, banners, launces, ſwords, and tilting ſpears, and other ſamples culled from the fields of nature and of heraldry; yet germane to the ſubject matter of the work.

They were frequently emblematical and monitory; as cherubs' faces for the hymns of charity girls, hour-glaſſes for lugubrious orators, and *mort*-heads for the pariſh-clerks. they were ſymbolical of nations; as the crown and roſe, the crown and lyz, the crown and harp;—of dignities and orders; as diadems, crowns, mitres and coronets; the red hat called at *Camb.* the *Cardinal's cap*, where too the mitre is called the *golden night-cap;* the courtelass; the arms of *Ulſter*, and the anchor of hope; the *Scotch*-thiſtle and ſprigs of *rue;* both *ſub*-ſymbolical; the former rendered more ſo by the *cry de guerre* "*Noli me Tangere*";—of ſtates and conditions; as the myrtle, the weeping willow, and the bugle-horn. with many others which to enumerate would be tedious here.

COMPOSED IN CASLON 337 TYPES

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JAMES WATSON

The HISTORY *of the Invention and Progress of the Mysterious Art of* PRINTING *&c.*

IF THE Ignorant look upon PRINTING without admiring It; it is, because they do not understand the same: The Learned have always judged far otherways; and have, with Reason, thought, That, for almost the Three Ages wherein this Wonder hath been seen in Europe, the Wit of Man did never invent any Thing that was either more lucky, or more useful for Instruction.

This Truth is so universally acknowledged, that it needs no Proof: Every one knows, that, without this marvellous Art, the Studies, Labours, and Works of great Men, would have been of no Use to Posterity. We are then obliged to this Art, for the Knowledge of the Works of the old Philosophers, Physicians, Astronomers, Historians, Orators, Poets, Lawyers, Theologues; and, in a Word, of all that hath been writ upon any Art, and Science whatsoever. It is by the Means of PRINTING that Theologues do attain to the sacred Mysteries of our Religion; That the Doctors of Law, do teach those admirable Laws, which do regulate the Society of Men; That Historiographers do furnish us with Examples, which we are either to follow or shun; That Astronomers do make every Day such fine Discoveries in the Heavens. It is this very Art which furnisheth Physicians with Means to preserve and recover the Health of Man's Body; Which discovereth to Philosophers the more hid Secrets of Nature; Which furnisheth Geometricians with Ability to measure the Earth; And to Arithmeticians, to give every Man his Due. In fine, what would the Moderns know

From *The History of the Art of Printing* . . . printed by James Watson, Edinburgh, 1713.

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in any one Science, and Art, if PRINTING did not furnish them with All that the Ancients found out? All the Elogiums which we make of PRINTING, and the Honours which we pay to It, come far short of It's Merit: And we cannot but easily consent to this, if we consider the vast Expences which the Ancients were obliged to be at, in procuring Manuscripts. . . .

THE PUBLISHER'S PREFACE TO THE PRINTERS IN SCOTLAND

Gentlemen,

That Men are not born for themselves, but for the Republick, is an ancient and universally applauded Maxim. And it is so agreeable to right Reason, that the wisest and best Part of Mankind, in every Age since the Creation, have endeavour'd to lay the Foundation of a lasting good Name, by every Action of their Life; whereby they might improve the Body or Society of which they were Members. To this Principle it is, that we owe the Invention or Improvement of all the Arts and Sciences that are instructive or beneficial to Man. 'Mongst which the Invention, and vast Improvement, of the no less honourable, than useful and admirable Art of PRINTING, which we profess, deserves a very eminent Place: Since by It, all Sorts of Learning, Sacred or Profane, and every Kind of profitable Instruction and Invention are both publish'd and preserv'd; as my Author, I here give you the Translation of, shews clearly and copiously enough.

This Book, being the History of the Beginning and Advancement of our Art, shews the Character of the Men who first profess'd It, the Marks of Honour paid them, wilst alive; nay, and the Monuments rais'd to preserve their Memories after Death. By all which 'tis plain, That those illustrious Persons were honour'd, and ranked among the best of their fellow Citizens, in those Times: Whereas now we are scarcely class'd or esteem'd above the lower Forms of Mechanicks. How we came to lose that Honour and Respect due to our Profession, (since the present Age is much more learned, and I believe, as just too, and discerning of Merit as their Ancestors) shall be a little inquir'd into. But first let me give some general Account of this Work.

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It bears the Title of, The History, *&c.* of our Mysterious Art; *and the Author, with great Exactness and Candor, fairly shews the Claims, Reasons and Authority supporting them, on both Sides, in the lasting Contest betwixt the Towns of* Mentz *and* Harlem; *for the Glory of the Invention. A clear Mark, what a solid Honour 'tis esteem'd for a Town to have been the noble Theatre, where so wonderful an Art was first brought to Light.*

He next gives the Names of the first learned Printers, together with a Catalogue of the Works printed by them, and the Marks of Honour paid to them by their Fellow-Citizens and Country-Men; which will more than enough justify what I have affirm'd above.

The Author wrote in French, *and I have caus'd translate it for my own, and the common Benefit of these practising the Art in this Part of* Britain; *without proposing any other Advantage or Gain by it, but the Improvement of the Art, or at least raising It to the Pitch of Perfection It was at here in former Times. And since we are, I trust, all of us honest Men, and of better Spirits than to propose the Earning our Bread as the chief and only End of our Labour; I entertain a settled well grounded Hope, that the Perusal of this, will inspire us all with a noble and generous Emulation of equalling, nay, exceeding, if we can, the best Performances of our laudable Ancestors in the Employment. That since our Native Country has at present as many good Spirits, and Abundance of more Authors than in any former Age; we may make it our Ambition, as well as it is our Interest and Honour, to furnish them with Printers that can serve them so well, that they need not, as many of our former Authors have been forc'd to do, go to other Countries to publish their Writings, lest a learn'd Book should be spoil'd by an ignorant or careless Printer.*

Thus, Gentlemen, we shall have this Honour, which is truly more valuable than immense Sums of Money or opulent Estates, that, for the Glory of our Country, we have retrieved the Art of PRINTING, *and brought It to as great Perfection as ever It was here in former Times. . . .*

EDINBURGH, MAY 29TH, 1713

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Printers as Men of the World

EVELYN HARTER

PRINTERS are usually judged as printers, and there are those who hold that this is as it should be, that the printer should stick to his pica rule and follow copy out the window. But in their spare time printers also eat, vote, marry and go to war. It would therefore be possible to look at them from various points of view, as, for instance, how many were vegetarians, anarchists, bigamists and top sergeants. This could be so of any group of craftsmen. If we look at printers from another viewpoint, as to whether they were men of the world, it is because of the nature of the stuff with which they work.

I should like to begin obliquely by speaking first of an approach to the history of printing. Probably the history of printing is more limited, definite and easy to encompass than that of almost any subject. That is not to say that anyone can ever learn all of it, or that we cannot go on learning something new about it all our lives. But printing started fairly recently in time; it is its own record. Excluding the science of bibliography, the literature is not large compared, for example, with that of art or philosophy or geology. Yet few people know as much of it as they might know with pleasure, and perhaps the reason for that might be a faulty approach. It is customary to send beginners to study Updike, but it is easy for beginners to get bogged down in *Printing Types*, particularly if they start to read it from the beginning. Updike's magnificent work is, in its writing and its outline, gratifying to the student whose basic knowledge has been fixed and matured. Beginners move more freely in the pages of George Parker Win-

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ship, possibly because he related printing events to world events to a greater extent than does Updike. Usually the person who wishes to learn more about printing has already at hand a lot of names and dates and places vaguely relating to world events of the past. To such a person printing history lends itself readily to the method of study by association. It can be a good game to find out what was happening in printing when Napoleon was looking at the Pyramids, or when Charles I was beheaded. If one is interested in art, he can correlate artists and printers, and find that Leonardo was born about the same time that printing was born in Europe, or he can correlate printing with advances in the knowledge of medicine or agriculture. There are small but interesting links between the history of printing and that of music. For instance William Caslon the elder loved music, and it is possible that the composer Handel sometimes played his new pieces at the concerts held in Caslon's organ room, since the two men had mutual friends in the musical world of London.

There have been printers who were interested in other worlds. The Dutch printer Blaeu studied astronomy under Tycho Brahe, and himself produced in 1600 a celestial globe. The Scottish typefounder Alexander Wilson, although educated as a doctor, became interested in type and left a considerable foundry to his sons before he himself moved on to become professor of astronomy at the University of Glasgow.

If you wish to make the most of this method, you must do it yourself. Then it is you who will have the fun, and then what you learn will stick. What follows illustrates the method briefly by looking at a number of printers in the past five hundred years from one angle, judging them not simply as printers but as men of the world.

It would be nice if we could start with a definition of "man of the world" and a definition of "printer" but actually this small investigation is an attempt at definition. We cannot mean "man of the world" in the Chesterfieldian sense, although there have been many printers who knew how to dress and carry themselves at court and salon, notably Aldus, Caxton and members of the

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Didot family. Chesterfield would be obliged to allow some of our printers in his company, but I doubt if we could allow him in ours, for in one of his letters to his son he says, "Due attention to the inside of books and due contempt for the outside is the proper relation between a man of sense and his books." Perhaps he was thinking of the vanity of fancy bindings, though it is more likely that he was beguiling himself into one of those untruths common to aphorizers. However that may be, our man of the world does not mean gentleman of the world as Chesterfield thought of gentleman, although there are printers who are both—not all dead.

If we were to speak of the printer as a citizen of the world, we would be coming a little closer to it, but citizen implies being at home in the geographical world, whereas we are thinking of him being at home in the world of ideas. When we say "of" the world, we mean that he knows that he belongs to his contemporary world, that the people and events are of interest to him, the politics, art, science and poetry—not only some particular dexterity, professional specialization or money-making device of his own.

It might be argued that the bulk of printing has not now, and never has had, much relation to ideas, that in the early days its chief business was dubious theological disputes and that its chief business now is advertising soap flakes and the like. But printing, in its entirety, is a description of the world, and if a great deal of print is devoted to murder cases, toothpaste ads and income tax blanks—well, that must be the kind of world we have. However, when new ideas have been advanced, they have been advanced in print, so that the printer has never been safe from them. Even now, in the event that they be promulgated by radio, they must be fixed in print in order to stick and sink in. Let us only say then that with regard to gaining knowledge of the world in which we live, the printer is in an exposed position—nothing more.

Although we do not know much about Gutenberg,[1] the first

[1] Johann Gutenberg (c. 1397–1468). Gutenberg is considered the effective inventor of printing, but his biography is written darkly only in the records of the law courts to which he was constantly summoned on money matters. His was a complex of inventions: he not only cast type in single pieces, but devised a chase to hold it, mixed suitable ink and perfected a technique for register and good impression, with the result that the first printing remains among the best.

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printer, we doubt that he was a man of the world in our sense. How could he have been? For the preceding four or five hundred years to be a man of the world was to be unworldly; people had been concerned with building cathedrals, making religious paintings, going on crusades. Printing was the chief factor in making the man of the world in our modern sense. Printing enabled him to know what was going on so that he might take part in it, although printers did not realize this during the cradle days of printing. Great events were occurring then; the Turks captured Constantinople; the Hundred Years' War came to an end with the English driven off the continent of Europe; the Portuguese sailed to the Canaries and the Azores; but these events found little mention in early printing. *The Nuremberg Chronicle,* as Helen Gentry and David Greenhood point out in their *Chronology,* made no mention of Columbus' discovery of America in the previous year. First came religious books, then school books, law books and classics. It is true that Fust and Schöffer printed proclamations and information for the archbishop, but it was not until Von Olpe at Basle printed *The Ship of Fools* in 1494 that we have "a book dealing with contemporary people and their exploits instead of with historical accounts of the past."

Although Gutenberg had been involved in the politics of Mainz in his youth, probably he thought of nothing but printing after he began work on his invention. We have an old book of stories for children which describes Gutenberg in a dream: "He thought of the great harm which might be done through the printing of bad books—how they would corrupt the minds of the innocent, how they would stir up the passions of the wicked. Suddenly he seized a heavy hammer and began to break his press in pieces. But then a voice seemed to come from the press itself saying, 'Hold your hand, John Gutenberg. The art of printing will enlighten the world.'" I have no idea where the author could have found source material for this little fantasy, for we can feel quite sure that Gutenberg had little conception of the influence of his invention. He was all craftsman and inventor and carried his world in his head. His financial reverses alone would indicate that.

The word "printer" has been an elastic word from the very

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beginning, including scholars and artists, businessmen and craftsmen. If we were to consider the term "printer" narrowly in the sense of a typesetter or a pressman or a man who supervises these operations, we should still have to make room in our history for men like Jean Grolier, the patron, and Geoffroy Tory, the artist. We know of many printers who were first and last businessmen. Johann Fust was a banker until he put money in Gutenberg's project. The first English printer, Caxton, was a retired wool merchant who liked to translate French romances for his friends and became tired of writing them out in longhand. Anton Koberger, who was Dürer's godfather, the publisher of *The Nuremberg Chronicle* and a great entrepreneur in his day, began as a printer; he printed books in various languages, did sub-contracting and printed advertising circulars. Probably if the plain motives of most printers could be discovered, making a living would loom large.

There have been many printers who were also scholars, beginning with Aldus and including the Estiennes and the Didots. And there are the typecutter-printers who combined letter-founding and printing—Nicolas Jenson, Giambattista Bodoni, John Baskerville, as well as the names equally brilliant in printing history of those who devoted themselves to founding—Claude Garamond, William Caslon and the Fourniers. A general haze surrounds the subject of the contribution of less well-known typecutters to printing. Although the use of a distinguished type may be one of the chief reasons for the printer's success, compare the fame of the printer Aldus with that of his type designer, Francesco da Bologna, of John Bell with that of Richard Austin, of Thomas Bensley with that of Vincent Figgins, of Bulmer with William Martin, of Elzevir with Christoffel van Dyck, of François Ambroise Didot with that of Waflard. On the subject of the share which these printers had in suggesting the nature of the type to the men who cut it, typographical writers are almost consistently inexplicit, although we do know that William Martin brought his types with him when he started work for Bulmer. Even Updike, who gives credit to the type designer and cutter wherever he is known, says, "At

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first the best printers were often type-founders too, although Garamond merely (*sic!*) cut and cast type for the use of others." Binders and papermen, ink-makers and machinery manufacturers have always had an affectionate and proprietary air about printing. Rather than try to define "printer" strictly, it may be truer to say that printers are an adjectival lot, and that printing can honorably be a very inclusive term, but that we might have a new printing terminology which would better define the various contributions.

What was happening in the world about the year 1500 when Aldus Manutius[2] had his great printing shop in Venice working at its peak? Columbus had made several voyages, and the Portuguese had been around the tip of Africa although Magellan had not yet sailed around the world. Leonardo da Vinci had left Milan for political reasons, and was working in Venice, as was Giovanni Bellini and his pupils Titian and Giorgione. Northern Italy was the scene of much brawling between rival princes, with Emperor Maximilian I stepping in now and then to make things worse. The battles were nuisances to Aldus, for they interfered with the production and distribution of his books. I do not know how much he knew about the geographical discoveries of his time, but we can be sure that a man of his cultivation knew about the great painting and sculpture being done. Ralph Roeder says of this time that its "triumphs are preserved in art, its reverses in its spiritual story, and both are the result of the same cause—its supreme vitality."

It is one more indication of that vitality that Aldus at the age of forty embarked on a project which was to bring about a tremendous enlargement of the conception of the purpose of books. Many printers in history have drifted into printing or its allied trades by

[2] Aldus Manutius (1450–1515). Aldus' contributions to printing—small capitals, the first italic, the popularization of the small type page—centered about his wish to help scholars. He wrote to a friend: "We send these Satires to you, my dear Scipio, that they may through their brevity become once more your intimate friends, as they were formerly during your stay at Rome as a young man, when you possessed them as thoroughly in your memory as your own fingers and fingernails."

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chance, but there seems to be no doubt that Aldus knew exactly what he was doing all the time. He was a man who knew what he wanted. He had been a scholar and tutor to Alberto and Lionello Pio, princes of Carpi, when he first saw printed books and realized what could be done to make classical manuscripts generally available. With the aid of the Pio family he went to Venice, which, since the fall of Constantinople, had been the richest repository of manuscripts and a residence of Greek scholars. In order to have reference books available for his proof-readers and editors, he first printed a Greek dictionary and a Greek grammar and himself prepared a Greek-Latin dictionary. He gave Venice a university when he started the New Academy of Venice. For his press he hired the finest scholars of the day—Bembo and Reuchlin, Musurus and Erasmus. We, in the twentieth century, have a tendency to think of scholars as removed from the affairs of life. Aldus was a scholar who was also in the midst of life, because scholarship was an important affair in the world of Renaissance man. He must have been a true cosmopolitan as well, commanding, as he did, the friendship of men as different as Erasmus of Rotterdam and Jean Grolier of France, from whom he had a commission to print special copies of his books on vellum.

The 1500's were a time of religious bickerings and of religious wars, of Henry the VIII's break with Rome, of the German wars following the death of Martin Luther, and the Inquisition in Spain. In the early part of the century there was working at Lyons, which was then second only to Paris as a printing center in France, a young scholar and printer named Etienne Dolet.[3] There is a story that he was the illegitimate son of Francis I, but at any rate he came of a wealthy family, having been to Venice as secretary to the French Ambassador and to Toulouse to study law. By the time he was twenty-seven he had published a Latin Dictionary which was "one of the most important contributions to classical scholarship in the century" and was given a license by Francis I

[3] Etienne Dolet (1509–1546). Dolet belongs with the great scholar-printers Aldus Manutius and Robert Estienne, although he did not live long enough to compare with them in volume of work. His career of collision with the authority of the church, the state and other printers terminated when he was tortured, hanged and burned on his thirty-seventh birthday.

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providing that Dolet might print for ten years any books written or supervised by him. His great range of taste and interests may be judged by the fact that he printed the New Testament in Latin and Rabelais in French.

He had met Rabelais when he first went to Lyons to work under Sebastian Gryphius as proof-reader, and there gained his practical knowledge of printing under the foreman, Jean de Tournes. E. D. Christie, Dolet's biographer, says that Dolet, arriving in Lyons with a fever, may have been taken directly to Rabelais, who was at that time practising medicine, with the position of Physician to the Great Hospital. Christie also thinks it possible that Dolet may have seen Rabelais perform a dissection on a man's body ten years before Vesalius. Everything Dolet did shows him to have been a man with lively fearless intellect and no talent for playing safe and keeping out of trouble. He spent several terms in jail for lack of orthodoxy on religious questions, was pardoned by Francis I for killing a man, and was denounced by Rabelais for printing an unexpurgated edition of *Pantagruel* after Rabelais had fixed it up to suit the Sorbonne.

At Lyons in the months of April and May, 1539, there occurred the first large organized printers' strike. It was no wonder, for Updike says that it was not unusual for the printers' day to begin at two in the morning and last until eight or nine at night. The workmen said that the masters did not supply sufficient food, that wages had been reduced, that there were too many compulsory holidays. The Seneschal of Lyons was empowered to meet a committee of journeymen and one of masters; at this conference rules were drawn up. But the trouble spread to Paris, and as a result of arbitration there, the working day was set from five in the morning till eight at night. Then there was a flare-up at Lyons again because the master printers threatened to move away; this was some years in settlement.

Of all the master printers of Lyons, the only one who sided with the strikers was Dolet. This was held against him later when he was imprisoned on a charge of atheism, tortured, hanged and finally burned on his thirty-seventh birthday. (See *Chronology of Books and Printing*.) On his way to his death he made a Latin

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pun on his name. If we speak of him as a man of the world, the accent is on man.

It is said that it was this event—the burning of Dolet—which decided Christopher Plantin[4] to leave France in 1548 for Antwerp, though Plantin never exhibited the uncompromising attitude of Dolet; rather he showed a business toughness and adaptability which enabled him to survive and stay in this world, which was no small feat for a printer in the sixteenth century. It was a time when empires and ideologies were in tremendous conflict; the period of the German religious wars following the death of Martin Luther; of Spain and England in unrelenting struggle for control of the sea, culminating in the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588. Antwerp itself was a focal point of disorder after Philip II sent the Duke of Alba to subdue the Netherlanders. Plantin had built up a good printing and publishing business when, in 1562, it was liquidated because of his alleged unorthodoxy. Within a few years he had recovered to the extent that he was made Printer to the King of Spain, from whom he received assurances of help on his Polyglot Bible. Again, in the sack of Antwerp by Spanish soldiers in 1576 his business was all but ruined; he went to Leyden for a few years, but returned to finish his days at Antwerp. To a man living in those times, the issues must have seemed even more confused and difficult than ours do now. Recent investigations indicate that Plantin belonged to a sect of heretics for which he printed books secretly, while also doing books for the church.

Another sixteenth-century printer who could hardly be oblivious to the events of his time—he was so knocked about by them—was Robert Estienne.[5] Even though he was at one time Royal Printer,

[4] Christopher Plantin (1514–1589). Plantin, a Frenchman who migrated to Belgium, printed in many languages, using fonts by the best contemporary type-cutters; he undertook work for the King of Spain and the City of Antwerp, which honored him in death by burying him in its cathedral, with the inscription ". . . king of typography."

[5] Robert Estienne (c. 1503–1559). In Robert Estienne, as in Aldus and Dolet, the scholar and printer combined to produce tools for humanism: dictionaries, lexicons, grammars, editions of the classics. On his death his son Henri Estienne, grandson of the first Henri, augmented the family tradition of scholarly publishing, though he never surpassed the books of his father and grandfather in typographical brilliance.

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liked and respected by Francis I, he sometimes had to seek the sanctuary of the King's court to escape the King's censors. Robert must have been a man of stature, for he published his *New Testament* in defiance of the Sorbonne, and only after Francis I died did he leave Paris for Geneva. He was a believer in one of the springs of Renaissance thought—that through scholarship it is possible to come to the truth, and through printing all men may recognize and know the truth.

It would be possible for a man of the world to be so without ever stirring from the town of his birth, yet oftener than not the man with breadth of interest is a cosmopolitan and a traveller. Such cosmopolitans were fourteen members of the Elzevir[6] family, who, over a period of one hundred and thirty years, engaged in printing and selling small books chiefly intended for poor scholars. This Dutch family of practical internationalists established their bookshops and printing offices in nearly every large city on the continent, from Denmark to Italy, printing their books in Latin and Greek, French and Arabic, on subjects ranging from medicine to political science. All this in spite of the Thirty Years' War, which was to bring about the decline of the artificial internationalism of the Hapsburgs and the Holy Roman Empire, and in spite of similar disturbances before and after.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the geographical boundaries of printing were extended vastly outside of Europe. The colonization of North and South America was going forward. The first press in America had been established at Mexico City in 1539 by agents of Kromberger of Seville. European printing was carried to India in 1561, to China in 1589, and to Japan in 1591. The first printing was done in Russia in 1563.

Credit for doing the first printing in the American colonies, *The Freeman's Oath,* was once given to Stephen Daye, is sometimes latterly given to his young son, Matthew Daye. Were they

[6] Louis Elzevir (1540–1617). About one hundred and thirty years after the invention of printing, Louis Elzevir became the first publisher in the modern sense; not primarily a scholar or craftsman, but a businessman who undertook the risk of production and distribution of quantities of books for a variety of readers throughout Europe.

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more than mechanic, compositor and pressman? Who chose the copy, proofread it, set policies, pushed the work along? Possibly some of the founders of the new Harvard College, or possibly Mrs. Glover, the widow of the man who originated the idea of the press. She was probably a woman of education, since she settled in Cambridge to be near the new college and later married the President, Henry Dunster. She undoubtedly shared her first husband's independent views—he had been suspended from his parsonage in Surrey because of his nonconformity; she might have picked *The Freeman's Oath* for the first copy. She may have been more of a printer and more of a woman of the world than the fragments of knowledge which we have about her disclose. . . . Whoever guided the destiny of the first press, it was a person not completely confined by dogma, for the books included almanacs, law books and college thesis lists, as is pointed out by Carl Purington Rollins, himself perhaps our best example of a modern fine printer conscious of what is going on around him.

During the late 1700's the Industrial Revolution began, but its implications were not guessed by artisan or statesman, and the best printers were still in the age of elegance. Baskerville was businessman, eccentric, free-thinker, but his printing, as much as that of Bodoni who was employed by the Duke of Parma, was regal.

Probably Horace Walpole,[7] more than any other printer, felt that the world was his house, in which he could move about freely from room to room, always at ease. He had the wit and manners to be an ornament to French salons, the originality to introduce a new brand of literature in his *Castle of Otranto*—the forerunner of our mystery novel of today, the personal force to influence the trend of English architecture with his "little Gothic castle" at Strawberry Hill in Twickenham. In one of his letters to the artist Richard Bentley he says that he can't resist going to fires, and there is something of this spirit in his activities. The collector W. S. Lewis says, "He was not only, in his own word, a 'gazetteer'

[7] Horace Walpole (1717–1797). Walpole is the great example of the gentleman-amateur in printing. His fame as a printer has been bolstered by his renown in other fields, especially in literature and architecture.

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but the historian of English painting and gardening, an essayist, poet, novelist, pamphleteer, dramatist, printer, antiquarian, and *arbiter elegantiarum* and in the modern sense and phrase a 'debunker' of historical figures. . . . It was his main purpose in life to be the official historian of his time."

Although he had a seat in Parliament, he paid little attention to the nation's business. He represented those parts of life in the eighteenth century which had natured and were drawing to a close, as Fielding and Goldsmith, the American Revolution and the French Revolution represented things to come. Printing being one of his minor activities, he is of more interest as a human being than as a craftsman.

If Walpole was a man of the world and man of letters, John Bell[8] was man of the world and man of business. During a lifetime of eighty-six years he was, as Stanley Morison pictures him, bookseller, printer, publisher, typefounder and journalist. Like a lesser Franklin—he had not Franklin's scientific interest, integrity, or vision—he was endowed with the ability to grasp the salient facts of a trade or profession, and a wealth of exuberant interest in life around him. At the beginning of his career as a bookseller, he published a sort of early version of Wilson's *Cumulative Book Index,* a list of current books for the use of the trade. As typefounder (and introducer of the short "s") he employed the talent of the punch cutter Richard Austin to produce the first English "modern" type. In addition to a successful fashion magazine, he published at different times four newspapers. At one time he even made himself a war correspondent, when he visited the British Army then fighting the French Revolutionaries in Flanders. He reported the action at Ypres, made a march with the troops from Courtrai to Tournai and pursued his object of finding "active and well-informed persons in different parts of the continent" who would act as regular correspondents for his paper, *The Oracle.*

[8] John Bell (1745–1831). Bell was a journalist and impresario in printing whose enterprises ranged from publishing fashion magazines to sets of Shakespeare. If he did not entirely realize the ambition announced when he started his foundry—". . . I am not without hopes of raising my fame in this pursuit beyond the reach of competition in any country whatever"—the type which bears his name remains today his best memorial.

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The books he published included law books, Shakespeare, a series of the poets of Great Britain; he engaged members of the Royal Academy to illustrate the plays of a series called *The British Theatre* and hired the best engravers of the day to copy the paintings. He knew the literary men of the day—Sheridan wrote for his *World*—and even had a balloonist for a friend—Lunardi, who made the first ascent in London. Compared to his contemporary Bulmer, who could be called a printer's printer, Bell was a promoter whose medium was printing.

Of all the Didots, and they seem to have been able men, Firmin Didot[9] is of most interest to us. He taught many of the printers of Greece out of sympathy for the cause of Greek independence, the same for which Byron died. He wrote plays, translated classics, and after he retired from business he entered the Chamber of Deputies; he learned Spanish at the age of sixty-three. Desmond Flower says, in writing of him, "Printing is a curious and perhaps unsatisfactory hybrid between a profession and an art; the men who have caught the sense of it most successfully have been intelligent people who could see it whole—scholar-printer-publishers—for whom some other rivers flowed beyond the simple floods of printing ink." Perhaps when Mr. Flower wrote this he had forgotten how "tacky" printing ink is, but his meaning is a large part of what I am trying to say.

The question of what world one chooses to recognize—that of courts and salons or of slums—arises in connection with the great printer of the nineteenth century, William Morris.[10] He saw what was happening as a result of machinery and large industry, and he did not like it. He must have seen it very plainly in order to revolt against it so strongly. His printing period was the last in his life, following the chintzes, stained glass windows, tapestries, rugs

[9] Firmin Didot (1764–1836). The Didot family illustrates again that printing ink seems to linger in the blood longer in France than in other countries; of the Didots, Firmin stands out as a man who loved his profession and constantly looked beyond it.

[10] William Morris (1834–1896). William Morris was a man who looked backward in the crafts and forward in human relations, yet had a full life in the world of his own time. As a printer he had great influence, not all good.

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and furniture. He felt that people would be better people if they made and owned beautiful things, and he also saw, like his contemporary, Karl Marx, that the economic structure would have to be changed before the best qualities in people could operate, though he was not willing to follow Marx in his methods. When we think of the William Morris who printed the Kelmscott *Chaucer,* we do not always remember the William Morris who stood in Hyde Park near the Marble Arch talking to the street crowds about socialism, wondering if the police were coming; who for years travelled about speaking in a thousand stuffy halls in England, Ireland and Scotland. When he was old, tears would come to his eyes when the misery of the poor was mentioned. It is easy to say that his socialism was vague and his desire to return to the methods of the thirteenth century unrealistic, but considering the sincerity of his motives and the breadth of his interests, I think that we must say that he was not so much a man of this world as a man of a better world.

Perhaps we must return to America to find the printer who has made the greatest contribution to political history. We can hardly detail here the cosmopolitan accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin. We might rather examine what right we have to call him a printer, in view of the magnitude of his other accomplishments. He liked to think of himself as a printer, and started his will with the words, "I, Benjamin Franklin, printer." Once when he visited the establishment of the Didots in France he stopped at a hand press and pulled a few proofs. When the workman exclaimed at his dexterity he said, "Do not be surprised. Printing is my real trade." Wherever he went in England or France he corresponded with printers and visited their establishments. We know about his private press at Passy and about his wholesome influence on American printing. Carl Van Doren, in his biography of Franklin, says that when he died the printers of Philadelphia walked in his funeral procession and that the printers of Paris gathered to honor him, listened to a eulogy by one of them while others set it in type as fast as it was delivered and distributed printed copies as souvenirs. If then we can claim him as a printer, we can feel sure that

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the man who helped draft the Declaration of Independence, who was sent to negotiate the peace and was a delegate to the Constitutional Convention was, more than any other printer, a man of the world.

It could hardly be maintained that being connected with printing makes one a man of the world. It might even be argued and proved by examples past and present that preoccupation with the problems of the craft is a narrowing influence. Since most of the circumstances of our lives are arranged for us when we are born, it is possible to travel through life as on a conveyor belt, having things done to us along the way, and this can be as true of a fine printer as of a bank president. Each can go through life utterly ignorant of the economic and mental processes that bring food to his table and send his son to the wars. It was always a question, now more than ever critical, what part of a man's life must be given to being a citizen against the claims of livelihood, philosophy, family and amusement. The events of the past few years have dramatized the dilemma. Printing has helped bring us to this place in history. And so, although we cannot condemn a good craftsman because he is interested in nothing except shop talk, we might say that printers who are also men of the world realize that they are working in a bigger shop.

WOOD ENGRAVING BY REYNOLDS STONE, 1937
COMPOSED IN GRANJON TYPES

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ANNE LYON HAIGHT

Are Women the Natural Enemies of Books?

IN MY search for knowledge about lady bibliophiles I climbed the library ladder and among the books on collecting saw *The Library*, by Andrew Lang, London, 1881. Confident that I would find some charming and sympathetic essay on the subject, I took it down and turned to the index, but evidently I had forgotten Lang's prejudice, for to my horror the startling lines "Women the natural foes of books" met my eye. They were classed with the other enemies of books: damp, dust, dirt, bookworms, careless readers, borrowers, book stealers, book-ghouls, etc., so I hastily turned to the page and read: "Almost all women are the inveterate foes, not of novels, of course, nor peerages and popular volumes of history, but of books worthy of the name. It is true that Isabelle d'Este and Madame de Pompadour and Madame de Maintenon were collectors; and, doubtless, there are many other brilliant exceptions to a general rule. But broadly speaking, women detest the books which the collector desires and admires. First, they don't understand them; second, they are jealous of their mysterious charms; third, books cost money, and it really is a hard thing for a lady to see money expended on what seems a dingy old binding, or yellow paper scored with crabbed characters. Thus ladies wage a skirmishing war against booksellers' catalogues, and history speaks of husbands who have had to practise the guile of smugglers when they conveyed a new purchase across their own frontier. Thus many married men are reduced to collecting Elzivers, which go readily into the pocket, for you cannot smuggle a folio volume easily."

From *Bookmaking on the Distaff Side* by Anne Lyon Haight. Copyright 1937 by the author and reprinted by her permission.

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Poor man, his experience with the fair sex must have been a very unfortunate one. Perhaps he had been disillusioned by reading of the sixteenth-century abbess of the convent of Rumsey in Hampshire, whom Dibdin tells about. She was bibulously rather than bibliographically inclined and bartered the books of the abbey for strong liquors and consequently was accused of immoderate drinking, especially in the nighttime when she invited the nuns to her chamber to participate in these excesses. But fortunately the women whom Lang describes in his diatribe are really the rare exception to the rule and only lack of space prevents my writing a folio volume about the many famous women collectors who have been friends not foes to books throughout the ages.

It is true though that the female of our species has never been as susceptible to the malady of book madness as the male, possibly because she has not had the same opportunity. Unless a woman is economically independent there are many demands upon her allowance and consequently she must really want a book very much to buy it instead of a new hat or something else that is dear to her heart. She is not as apt to buy for speculation or because a book is one of the conventional collector's items, but is more independent and adventurous in following her personal taste, although the spirit of a true collector of books is the same whether it be possessed by man or woman.

Strange to say, the first bibliophile on record is a woman. She was a Benedictine abbess named Hroswitha. She lived in the Nunnery of Gandersheim in Saxony in the tenth century. She not only read all the parchment rolls and great codices which came into her hands, but caused books to be written for her Convent, wrote plays in Latin and translated Terence. Hroswitha probably knew but little Greek, as certain monks of the period considered the language an invention of the devil. Her example was followed in the next century by the lovely and intelligent Countess Judith of Flanders, who, wherever she followed her warring English husband, caused the most exquisite illuminated manuscripts to be made. She continued her interests on the continent when she later married the Duke of Bavaria. Four of her manuscripts, magnificently bound, are now safely housed in the Pierpont Morgan Library where "though they are books worthy of the name" their beauty may be appreciated by women who are

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not even "the brilliant exception to the general rule" of collectors.

The Golden Age of women bibliophiles in France from the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries must have been a glorious time to have lived. The Queens, the Princesses, the Mistresses of the Kings and all the great ladies had their libraries. They were composed of beautifully illuminated breviaries, missals and manuscripts, and from the presses of the great printers of the day came romances, histories, plays and religious books, veritable works of art. These books and manuscripts were bound in gold and silver and jewels, embroidered velvet, and in some of the most beautiful leather bindings the world has ever seen. Briefly: Marguerite of Navarre was one of the famous scholars of her day and the author of a collection of love stories, *The Heptameron*. It is said of her "L'amour du livre, chez la fille de Catherine fut une véritable passion." Her books were bound by the famous Clovis and Nicolas Eve and were decorated with daisies. Madame de Pompadour was for many years an inspiring influence in art and letters, although she owned more plays, novels and other "productions légères" than serious works. She had a printing press at Versailles and also etched plates for illustrations and as gifts for her friends. La Countesse de Verrue was a discriminating collector, a patroness of all the arts and a fascinating woman. The Du Barry acquired 1,068 volumes. When she began to form her library she could scarcely read or write. However, with practise, she soon learned to read well, but like many of us never to spell. Anne of Austria was fortunate in having her friend Mazarin, a kindred spirit in bibliomania, to advise her. Marie Antoinette had two libraries. She kept her particular books in her boudoir in the Trianon and the titles in the catalogue are very entertaining. Mary Stuart had a catholic taste in literature and her books were exceptionally well chosen. In deference to the loss of her first husband some were bound in black with black edges. It is comforting to know that when she left France as a young widow to return to her native Scotland where so much tragedy awaited her "qu'elle avait pour les livres un goût profond, et ils etaient pour ainsi dire sa seule consolation loin de ce beau Pays de France." In England, one of the most fortunate of the many ladies who appreciated literature was Queen Elizabeth, for she lived in an age when masterpieces were being written, many of them dedicated to her

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and many inspired by her. When she was young she embroidered velvets in gold and silver threads to bind her treasures. Among the manuscripts in the Bodleian Library are the *Epistles of St. Paul*, etc., which was Elizabeth's own book. She has written at the beginning "I walke many times into the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I plucke up the goodlie-some herbes of sentences by pruning: chaw them by musing: and laie them up at length in the hie seate of memorie by gathering them together: that so having tasted their sweetness I may the less perceave the bitterness of this miserable life."

One of the most touching and beautiful tributes ever written to a woman is Sir Philip Sidney's dedication of his *Arcadia* to his "deare ladie and sister," the Countess of Pembroke, to whom he wrote in part: "you desired me to do it, and your desire, to my hart is an absolute commandment. Now it is done onely for you, onely to you." She was his great inspiration and helped him in the editing of the book.

Where there's a will there's a way and women seem able to smuggle folios as well as duodecimos into the library. Catherine de Médici, for instance, had such a passion for books that she got them by fair means or foul. She longed for the library of her cousin Marshal Strozzi and as soon as he died appropriated it for her own. Catherine neglected to pay for it and owed the booksellers as well, so after her death when her books were about to be seized by her creditors, De Thou raised the money to pay for them and they were saved for the state. The fascinating and glamorous Diane de Poitiers was a practical business executive as well as a bibliophile, for it was she who supposedly advised Henry II to pass an ordinance requiring publishers to present a copy of each book they published to the royal libraries at Blois and Fontainebleau, thereby increasing these collections by more than seven hundred volumes. Thus the present-day copyright law was initiated by a woman. Catherine of Russia was also courageous in her methods of gratifying her literary tastes. She partitioned Poland in 1772 and seized enough books to form the foundation of the Imperial Library at the Hermitage. She used to ask the Ambassadors, particularly the Ambassador from England, to get foreign books for her and if she did not have the money to pay for them at the time she conveniently forgot about it.

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In later days there were women in the young colony in America who enjoyed their books in the midst of their primitive surroundings. In 1643 in Emans, New York, the inventory of the Widow Bronck included Danish books. Mrs. Willoughby of Virginia left over one hundred volumes at her death in 1673, and in 1700 Elizabeth Tatham of New Jersey left five hundred and fifty-two volumes, while their New England contemporary, Hannah Sutton, acquired a library of about seventeen hundred volumes.

In the early nineteenth century Miss Richardson Currer of Eshton Hall, Craven, Yorkshire, amassed a large and scholarly collection of books on many subjects. It was housed in a great room with a gallery which must have been the envy of all book-lovers. She was the fond possessor of the rare *Book of St. Albans*, written and compiled by Juliana Berners, prioress of the nunnery of Sopwith in Hertfordshire. It is said that the ardent book collector Richard Heber, being unable to secure the book in any other way, ardently proposed marriage to Miss Currer. She was firm in her refusal however, preferring to keep this first book about sport to be written by a woman to herself.

One of the most learned lady bibliophiles of this century in America was Miss Amy Lowell of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Her books and manuscripts, including her collection of Keats, are being preserved for posterity in the Harry Elkins Widener Memorial at Harvard. She always enjoyed smoking a good cigar while writing or carrying on her sparkling conversations, as she thought it made her thoughts flow more easily.

One could not write of women in connection with books without speaking of two distinguished custodians of famous libraries, scholars, who are as well known abroad as in America: [the late] Miss Belle Da Costa Greene, the brilliant Director of the Pierpont Morgan Library, and Miss Ruth Sheppard Granniss, former Librarian of the Grolier Club and sympathetic friend of all bibliophiles, male or female. They, of course, come under Lang's category of exceptional examples.

But what of the many other exceptions? Would Lang have thought that Miss Lowell could not understand books? Or that Diane de Poitiers could be jealous of their mysterious charms? Or that Catherine of Russia would hesitate to spend what money

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she could procure to satisfy her passion for them? What could his lady friends have been like to be classed with the enemies of books—and such enemies at that?

It would appear that book collecting is a truly feminine pastime, containing many elements which appeal to their sex; romance, intellectual curiosity, love of the beautiful and the quest of something difficult to obtain. But feminine collectors should beware of pitfalls, for sometimes this mania arouses the baser instincts such as envy, extravagance and self-indulgence. Wives have even been known to spend their marketing money on books instead of daily bread, and to waste hours reading book catalogues instead of attending to their housewifely duties. Book collecting, however, is a common denominator of all ages and a medium through which the minds of both sexes may meet with pleasure, and therefore greatly to be recommended as a delightful occupation.

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»» BEATRICE WARDE ««

PRINTING SHOULD BE INVISIBLE

IMAGINE that you have before you a flagon of wine. You may choose your own favorite vintage for this imaginary demonstration, so that it be a deep shimmering crimson in color. You have two goblets before you. One is of solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns. The other is of crystal-clear glass, thin as a bubble, and as transparent. Pour and drink; and according to your choice of goblet, I shall know whether or not you are a connoisseur of wine. For if you have no feelings about wine one way or the other, you will want the sensation of drinking the stuff out of a vessel that may have cost ten thousand dollars; but if you are a member of that vanishing tribe, the amateurs of fine vintages, you will choose the crystal, because everything about it is calculated to *reveal* rather than to hide the beautiful thing which it was meant to *contain*.

Bear with me in this long-winded and fragrant metaphor; for you will find that almost all the virtues of the perfect wineglass are parallel in typography. There is the long, thin stem that obviates fingerprints on the bowl. Why? Because no cloud must come between your eyes and the fiery heart of the liquid. Are not the margins on book pages similarly meant to obviate the necessity of fingering the type-page? Again: the glass is colorless or at the most only faintly tinged in the bowl, because the connoisseur judges wine partly by its color and is impatient of anything that alters it. There are a thousand mannerisms in typography that are as impudent and arbitrary as putting

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port in tumblers of red or green glass! When a goblet has a base that looks too small for security, it does not matter how cleverly it is weighted; you feel nervous lest it should tip over. There are ways of setting lines of type which may work well enough, and yet keep the reader subconsciously worried by the fear of "doubling" lines, reading three words as one, and so forth.

Now the man who first chose glass instead of clay or metal to hold his wine was a "modernist" in the sense in which I am going to use that term. That is, the first thing he asked of this particular object was not "*How should it look?*" but "*What must it do?*" and to that extent all good typography is modernist.

Wine is so strange and potent a thing that it has been used in the central ritual of religion in one place and time, and attacked by a virago with a hatchet in another. There is only one other thing in the world that is capable of stirring and altering men's minds to the same extent, and that is the coherent expression of thought. That is man's chief miracle, unique to man. There is no "explanation" whatever of the fact that I can make arbitrary sounds which will lead a total stranger to think my own thought. It is sheer magic that I should be able to hold a one-sided conversation by means of black marks on paper with an unknown person half-way across the world. Talking, broadcasting, writing and printing are all quite literally forms of *thought transference*, and it is this ability and eagerness to transfer and receive the contents of the mind that is almost alone responsible for human civilization.

If you agree with this, you will agree with my one main idea, *i.e.*, that the most important thing about printing is that it conveys thought, ideas, images, from one mind to other minds. This statement is what you might call the front door of the science of typography. Within lie hundreds of rooms; but unless you start by assuming that *printing is meant to convey specific and coherent ideas*, it is very easy to find yourself in the wrong house altogether.

Before asking what this statement leads to, let us see what it does not necessarily lead to. If books are printed in order to be read, we

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must distinguish readability from what the optician would call legibility. A page set in 14-point Bold Sans is, according to the laboratory tests, more "legible" than one set in 11-point Baskerville. A public speaker is more "audible" in that sense when he bellows. But a good speaking voice is one which is inaudible *as* a voice. It is the transparent goblet again! I need not warn you that if you begin listening to the inflections and speaking rhythms of a voice from a platform, you are falling asleep. When you listen to a song in a language you do not understand, part of your mind actually does fall asleep, leaving your quite separate aesthetic sensibilities to enjoy themselves unimpeded by your reasoning faculties. The fine arts do that; but that is not the purpose of printing. Type well used is invisible *as* type, just as the perfect talking voice is the unnoticed vehicle for the transmission of words, ideas.

We may say, therefore, that printing may be delightful for many reasons, but that it is important, first and foremost, as a means of doing something. That is why it is mischievous to call any printed piece a work of art, especially fine art: because that would imply that its first purpose was to exist as an expression of beauty for its own sake and for the delectation of the senses. Calligraphy can almost be considered a fine art nowadays, bacause its primary economic and educational purpose has been taken away; but printing in English will not qualify as an art until the present English language no longer conveys ideas to future generations, and until printing itself hands its usefulness to some yet unimagined successor.

There is no end to the maze of practices in typography, and this idea of printing as a conveyor is, at least in the minds of all the great typographers with whom I have had the privilege of talking, the one clue that can guide you through the maze. Without this essential humility of mind, I have seen ardent designers go more hopelessly wrong, make more ludicrous mistakes out of an excessive enthusiasm, than I could have thought possible. And with this clue, this purposiveness in the back of your mind, it is possible to do the most unheard-of things, and find that they justify you triumphantly. It

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is not a waste of time to go to the simple fundamentals and reason from them. In the flurry of your individual problems, I think you will not mind spending half an hour on one broad and simple set of ideas involving abstract principles.

I once was talking to a man who designed a very pleasing advertising type which undoubtedly all of you have used. I said something about what artists think about a certain problem, and he replied with a beautiful gesture: "Ah, madame, we artists do not think—we *feel!*" That same day I quoted that remark to another designer of my acquaintance, and he, being less poetically inclined, murmured: "I'm not *feeling* very well today, I *think!*" He was right, he did think; he was the thinking sort; and that is why he is not so good a painter, and to my mind ten times better as a typographer and type designer than the man who instinctively avoided anything as coherent as a reason.

I always suspect the typographic enthusiast who takes a printed page from a book and frames it to hang on the wall, for I believe that in order to gratify a sensory delight, he has mutilated something infinitely more important. I remember that T. M. Cleland, the famous American typographer, once showed me a very beautiful layout for a Cadillac booklet involving decorations in color. He did not have the actual text to work with in drawing up his specimen pages, so he had set the lines in Latin. This was not only for the reason that you will all think of, if you have seen the old typefoundries' famous *Quousque Tandem* copy [*i. e.*, that Latin has few descenders and thus gives a remarkably even line]. No, he told me that originally he had set up the dullest "wording" that he could find [I dare say it was from the *Congressional Record*], and yet he discovered that the man to whom he submitted it would start reading and making comments on the text. I made some remark on the mentality of Boards of Directors, but Mr. Cleland said "No: you're wrong; if the reader had not been practically forced to read—if he had not seen those words suddenly imbued with glamor and significance—then the layout would

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have been a failure. Setting it in Italian or Latin is only an easy way of saying 'This is not the text as it will appear.'"

Let me start my specific conclusions with book typography, because that contains all the fundamentals, and then go on to a few points about advertising.

The book typographer has the job of erecting a window between the reader inside the room and that landscape which is the author's words. He may put up a stained glass window of marvellous beauty, but a failure as a window; that is, he may use some rich superb type like text gothic that is something to be looked at, not *through*. Or he may work in what I call transparent or invisible typography. I have a book at home, of which I have no visual recollection whatever as far as its typography goes; when I think of it, all I see is the Three Musketeers and their comrades swaggering up and down the streets of Paris. The third type of window is one in which the glass is broken into relatively small leaded panes; and this corresponds to what is called "fine printing" today, in that you are at least conscious that there is a window there, and that someone has enjoyed building it. That is not objectionable, because of a very important fact which has to do with the psychology of the subconscious mind. This is the fact that the mental eye focusses *through* type and not *upon* it. The type which, through any arbitrary warping of design or excess of "color," gets in the way of the mental picture to be conveyed, is a bad type. Our subconsciousness is always afraid of blunders [which illogical setting, tight spacing and too-wide unleaded lines can trick us into], of boredom, and of officiousness. The running headline that keeps shouting at us, the line that looks like one long word, the capitals jammed together without hairspaces—these mean subconscious squinting and loss of mental focus.

And if what I have said is true of book printing, even of the most exquisite limited editions, it is fifty times more obvious in advertising, where the one and only justification for the purchase of space is that you are conveying a message—that you are implanting a desire,

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straight into the mind of the reader. It is tragically easy to throw away half the reader-interest of an advertisement by setting the simple and compelling argument in a face which is uncomfortably alien to the classic reasonableness of the book-face. Get attention as you will by your headline, and make any pretty type pictures you like if you are sure that the copy is useless as a means of selling goods; but if you are happy enough to have really good copy to work with, I beg you to remember that thousands of people pay down hard-earned money for the privilege of reading quietly-set book-pages, and that only your wildest ingenuity can stop people from reading a really interesting text.

Of course every one of you realizes that whatever interesting effects you can produce with displayed advertising, Direct Mail is your paradise. It is here that you approach the august precincts of the designer of books; here you can deal in the fascinating questions of paper, ink, presswork, and all those minute and thrilling technicalities by which the craftsman proves his worth. You also have the satisfaction of knowing that the better and more mannerly Direct Mail advertising looks, the more solid returns it will bring in.

To sum up: printing demands a humility of mind, for the lack of which many of the fine arts are even now floundering in self-conscious and maudlin experiments. There is nothing simple or dull in achieving the transparent page. Vulgar ostentation is twice as easy as discipline. When you realize that ugly typography never effaces itself, you will be able to capture beauty as the wise men capture happiness by aiming at something else. The "stunt typographer" learns the fickleness of rich men who hate to read. Not for them are long breaths held over serif and kern, they will not appreciate your splitting of hair spaces. Nobody [save the other craftsmen] will appreciate half your skill. But you may spend endless years of happy experiment in devising that crystalline goblet which is worthy to hold the vintage of the human mind.

COMPOSED IN BEMBO TYPES

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PORTER GARNETT

The Ideal Book

IN adopting a prescribed title for this paper, I must begin by registering my dissent to its validity. There is no such thing nor can there be such a thing as "the ideal book." No single book, no particular style of book can be said to represent in itself an ideal below which all other books and other styles which differ from it fall. A certain book may be ideal for its purpose, but books can no more conform to a fixed ideal than can churches, cocktail-shakers, or hats. The best that one can do is to attempt to enumerate and codify those elements of good bookmaking that enter into what may be called the "fine" book.

It is difficult to declare oneself an advocate or exponent of fine printing or fine book-design without being misunderstood. Such a declaration, however, is not to arrogate superiority. It merely means that one believes in certain principles of craftsmanship and in upholding certain standards based upon a scrupulous and uncompromising observance of refinements and minutiæ. It is a mistake to assume that the word "fine," as applied to printing and to books, is a comparative term meaning a grade or measure of merit. Consider for a moment its true meaning: delicate, studied, subtly calculated. It represents not a grade of excellence, but a *quality*, a quality distinguishing those books and pieces of printing which the term properly describes from other books or pieces of printing. It may be allowed, however, that fineness is itself a comparable term; that there are, in other words, degrees of fineness. Thus a book may be fine without being of the first order of fineness. But if we are to seek for a standard of excellence equivalent to what is implied by the word "ideal," it should be obvious that only fineness of the first order can be considered. A fine

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book of the first order is the end-result of a sedulous effort on the part of designer, printer, and binder to bring to their artifact every care for physical and technical details, every revision in the interest of betterment, of which they are capable, to the end that the finished product shall represent the capacity of each for the fulfilment of his artistic wish, his desire for perfection. To slacken this effort, to compromise wittingly (or wilfully), to surrender to expediency, is to repudiate fineness of the first order.

It is this concern for perfection that Mr. Stanley Morison means when he says "The fine printer begins where the careful printer has left off." It is this concern with perfection that Conrad celebrated when he wrote:

"Now the moral side of an industry, productive or unproductive, the redeeming and ideal aspect of this bread-winning, is the attainment of the highest possible skill on the part of the craftsman. Such skill, the skill of technique, is more than honesty; it is something wider, embracing honesty and grace and rule in an elevated and clear sentiment, not altogether utilitarian, which may be called the honor of labor. It is made up of accumulated tradition, kept alive by individual pride, rendered exact by professional opinion, and, like the higher arts, it is spurred on and sustained by discriminating praise. This is why the attainment of proficiency, the pushing of your skill with attention to the most delicate shades of excellence, is a matter of vital concern. Efficiency of a practically flawless kind may be reached naturally in the struggle for bread. But there is something beyond—a higher point, a subtle and unmistakable touch of love and pride beyond mere skill; almost an inspiration which gives to all work that finish which is almost art, which *is* art."

In dealing with the constituents of the fine book I intend no disparagement of seemly, modest, and honestly-made books to which the term "fine" is not strictly applicable. Even the humblest volume, *ad pauperum commoditatum*, may be, by virtue of its suitability to purpose and its seemliness, wholly admirable. As for the better class of trade books, the productions of university and great commercial presses, they often display qualities of design and workmanship of a high order. Though not of the first order of fineness, they represent, with gratifying frequency, what Conrad called "efficiency of a practically flawless kind."

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That the best of them belong, however, to a lower stratum than the truly fine book may be, I think, quite easily demonstrated. One does not have to consider the work of the Doves Press or the Bremer Presse or the finer examples of French printing of the sixteenth or eighteenth century the *ne plus ultra* of book-making in order to recognize in them a quality (mark the word) which the trade edition, however charming, never does and never can attain. By reason of this quality—the quality of fineness—they are *different* from trade books, whether or not they are *superior* must remain for each of us a question of personal values. Since that is true, let us now—having cleared the ground and removed perhaps the possibility of a misapprehension with regard to the title of this paper—consider the values and the physical constituents of the fine book.

These constituents fall into three divisions: first, *Dimensional* (size and proportions); second, *Tectonic* (plan and construction); and third, *Visual* (appearance).

It would be absurd to contend that, ideally, a book should be of a certain size. Very large books are, of course, awkward to handle and are unsuitable, let us say, for reading in bed or in a railway train. But it does not follow that, because our habits of life differ so radically from those of the more leisurely and contemplative past, the tall volume is no longer justified. The large book is not an impediment to meditative reading and, although the "handy volume" will, in most circumstances, serve every purpose, there are those who, undeluded by pragmatism and undebased by false ideas of efficiency, may still, in the seclusion of study or library, find pleasure in the leisurely perusal of, let us say, *The Golden Legend*, in folio, nobly enthroned upon its lectern. Again, there is nothing incongruous or unpractical about the scholar (perhaps I should say, "research-worker") making use of a huge volume, spread before him on a library table. Large volumes are, moreover, frequently justified by the fact that illustrative plates of a large size are often desirable or essential. Who will deny that reproductions of Egyptian papyri, of eighteenth century engraved portraits, of Oriental carpets, in fact, of almost all works of art other than such small objects as miniatures or jewelry, would be better in folio than in octavo or duodecimo? It can be said, I think, that the very large book should be unconditionally condemned only when its size defeats the purpose to

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which, by reason of its content, it would normally be put. Stateliness of form imparts dignity. It may be argued, therefore, that a great work on engraved gems, imposing in size, with plates, each showing many specimens, comports better with the character of its subject matter quite aside from any advantage it offers for comparative study, than would the same work printed as a book one might slip in one's pocket. Stateliness of form implies stateliness of content, and vice versa. Let a book be, for a generation, of such good report that it may be said to have become a classic, and a large-paper edition is justified. Let those who must cavil do so. If they cannot rise above the utilitarian ideal, they can easily obtain the work in a small format and be happy.

It may not be out of order to say at this point that, while a considerable range in the size of books is not only permissible but desirable, there are limits at both ends of the scale where practicability ceases to exist and we pass into the realm of curiosities and *tours de force*. Thus the miniature book, for all its charm, lies outside the confines of normal book-design. As to the maximum size that may be legitimately allowed for a book, it should never, I think, exceed the normal folio height (defined approximately by the larger moulds employed for manufacturing hand-made paper) while its bulk and weight should not preclude the possibility of holding it by the spine with one hand while turning the leaves with the other, when such a method of referring to its contents may be necessary. And now a final word as to dimensions. Large or small, the most perfect book will always be one of which the thickness bears a just and agreeable relation to its height and width. Small and slender books are delightful objects which no one could wish to abolish (one cannot say as much for the lamelliform folio, a veritable atrocity), but their inferiority to books of a meet thickness becomes apparent when with (or, worse yet, without) their vertical, neck-twisting titles they are placed on a shelf.

We must next turn our attention to those aspects of a book which have to do with its plan and construction and which we have called *tectonic*.

In its physical character a book addresses itself to two of our senses, the sense of sight and the sense of touch. Because the tactile qualities of a book are relatively of less importance than its visual

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aspects, let us first deal with those elements which are, in part at least, evaluated through the sense of touch.

Our first impression of a book is received from its exterior, its binding. Now the qualities to be looked for in the binding of a book are: (1) the character and quality of the material, (2) suitability, (3) soundness and charm of design, (4) agreeable color (a relative term), (5) workmanship, (6) pleasantness to the touch. Granting adequacy in all of these (and no book can pretend to fineness without such adequacy), there is still another *desideratum* less easy to specify. It might be called (7) "the evidence of durability." A book when taken in the hand should have a feeling of compactness, almost of solidity. I do not mean by this that it should feel like a block of wood, but it should, when picked up, when opened, or when its hinges are tested, give the impression that leaves and cover are so firmly (and honestly) knit together that they constitute a unit, having in its "feel" the evidence (or the assurance) of durability.

The next characteristic of a book to be noted through the sense of touch is the *texture* of the paper. By "texture" several things are meant: a surface agreeable to the hand, the degree of crispness, an impression of toughness (again the evidence of durability), and the degree of flexibility. Ideally, the paper in a book should satisfy all these requirements and should possess as well certain qualities of character, style, and color, pleasing to the informed eye. These will be dealt with in their proper place. The paper should be flexible, without the flimsiness characteristic of papers weak in substance. It should bend readily when the leaves are turned and should flow smoothly through the hand when all the leaves are bent at once. Stiffness in the leaves of a book (an all too common defect) is not, it should be observed, always the fault of the paper. It is often due to the choice of a paper too heavy for the size of the leaf. The same paper in a larger leaf might have the desired flexibility.

The final tactile test of a fine book (applicable, alas, to very few books indeed) resides in the character of the impression of the type on the paper. In the best printing, the surface of the page, if rubbed with the palm of the hand, shows a slight and pleasant roughness due to the sinking of the type into the paper. Such printing is rare in modern books because it is difficult of

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attainment with machines designed for quantity production. To attain the effect described the paper should be dampened before printing, and an ink employed that is adaptable only to the hand press. Dry paper, particularly when heavily sized, resists a deep impression. It can be *heavily* impressed, but there is not the same difference between the impressed and unimpressed portions, due to the impaction of the substance caused by the pressure of the type, which results when dampened paper is used. In the latter instance, the depth of impression is *within* the sheet, not an embossment on the reverse side. This incisiveness, without a corresponding relief on the back of the sheet, is shown when an impression without ink is made on a hand press with dampened paper and a hard packing.

In printing on dry paper it is necessary, if adequate color is to be obtained, to use such a quantity of ink, of a consistency suitable to machine-press printing, that a really deep (not merely heavy) impression cannot be imparted to paper without "spreading," which slightly modifies the sharpness of the type. The machine printer must choose therefore between a surfacy quality with sharpness and a heavy (not necessarily deep) impression with a loss of sharpness, neither of which is ideal. There are some that will question the truth of this statement, calling attention to specimens of machine printing on dry paper in which the ink has been driven into the sheet and perfect sharpness maintained. It may be said, however, in support of our contention, that, under the test of hand and eye, this perfectly printed dry sheet will be found, in the last analysis, to lack, in comparison with a sheet perfectly printed by hand on dampened paper, a certain almost-indefinable something that can perhaps be best described as a *living* quality. This ultimate grace arises, I think, from the fact that in competent hand-press printing the third dimension is not merely suggested but actual; we have, in other words, not merely sharpness but crispness; the effect attained is sculptural. No printing that is lifeless, or to which such terms as "slick" and "dry" may be appropriately applied can be called fine printing.

Turning now from the tactile to the visual elements of the fine book, we shall consider, first of all, that fundamental factor of all books, the text-page, upon the form or "layout" of which all other typographic elements must, to a large extent, depend. The

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text-page is of primary importance because by its rightness or wrongness a book must stand or fall.

The elements of the text-page that call for consideration may be grouped under three heads: first, *Form* (the proportions—width to height—of the type-page and the balance of the rectangle of type with the rectangle of paper); second, *Space* (the ratio between the areas of the type-page and the paper-page); third, *Tone* (the tonal value of the type mass and the relation between its tone and the white area of the margins). In the perfect text-page all these elements may be observed in nice adjustment, severally and mutually.

There are those who contend that a proper relation of margins to type-page may be arrived at by employing ratios identical with those to be found in the well-proportioned pages of the early printers. Others declare that correct margins can be created by the application of an arithmetical or a geometrical formula. It can be admitted that such procedures are, at least, *safe;* that is to say, the danger of malproportioned margins will be avoided. But neither the method nor the result can be ideal for the simple reason that, while providing for the factors of form and space, they fail to provide for the factor of tone. It should be obvious that a rectangle of black type, with no space (leading) between lines, and a rectangle of the same shape and size printed from light-face type and generously leaded call for different margining.

All of this may seem to be supervacaneous, but the stubborn fact remains that no one of the factors set forth above can be ignored. It is perfectly true that the accomplished book designer will compass the desired end through a sagacious application of his knowledge and taste, but we are concerned here with presenting the elements of the ideal book and it is therefore essential that *all* the elements, no matter how much the initiated may take some of them for granted, should be, for the benefit of the layman, categorically enumerated.

It is necessary at this point to allude to the dictum—voiced in high places as well as in low—that a book is primarily something to be read; that every factor which does not contribute to that end is an impertinence. The worthy champions of this faith would be on firmer ground if they heaped their condemnation

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upon such adjuncts of a book as actually *lessen* its readability. M. Paul Valéry has disposed of the matter so effectively from the aesthetic point of view in his essay, *Les deux vertus d'un livre*, that nothing remains to be said on that side of the question. But there are other objections to be raised to this *ipse dixit* of the mechanists. Their contention that what we all grant is at once the basic and paramount function of a book, its readability, is its only function would, if carried to its logical conclusion, lead to a doctrine in book design equivalent to what is known in present-day architecture as "functionalism." Since functionalism or, as it is sometimes called, the "machine and function" principle, demands that the design of a building must grow out of and be restricted by its predetermined use or purpose, it should follow that, if the sole purpose of a book is that it be something to read, there is no reason, based upon utility, for not using the whole area of the paper-page, with margins of no more, let us say, than a quarter of an inch or so. The uncomely, marginless illustrations of certain recent books represent an application of this principle. If the protagonists of the utilitarian ideal admit that margins are other than a waste of usable space, they make a concession to the aesthetic conception of a book, for the determination of margins, the *mise en page*, is primarily an element of design. It will be argued no doubt, in contravention of this statement, that margins make for ease of reading (utility), but that this is an untenable defensive assumption should be proved by the perfect readability of newspaper columns separated only by a light rule, or by the two-column book or magazine page with only a pica of white between the columns. Since it cannot be denied that the margins of a book, if well proportioned, promote pleasure, an aesthetic function, the true functionalist should, to be consistent, insist upon doing away with them.

We may turn now from that major fundamental of the fine book—a text-page of perfect seemliness—to a consideration of other elements. But before doing so, it may be proper to explain what some of my readers may deem an omission. I have said nothing about the choice of type. It is axiomatic that good letter is a prime essential of the good book. There are only two kinds of type, good and bad. Good types, whether based upon classical models or the quasi-original forms of contemporary type-designers, are sufficiently numerous to make a suitable selection, pro-

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vided the printer knows anything whatever about the subject, quite simple. It should be pointed out, however, that, other things being equal, type cast from matrices struck from hand-cut punches is superior to machine-cut type. This superiority is a matter of real importance, chiefly in printing by means of the hand press. Only in such printing is the difference between the hand-cut and machine-cut letter fully apparent.

No type is good if some of the characters are marked by eccentricity. Unorthodox peculiarities in the forms of certain letters sometimes lend charm to a type-face, but there is a difference between a peculiarity of shape thoughtfully and discreetly arrived at and freakish variations which do not justify themselves and bespeak only a stupid desire for novelty at any cost.

Given the seemly text-page as the prime requisite of the fine book, our next consideration should be what may be called *integration of the parts*. Here we must again think in terms of architecture, with which art book-design has so much in common. Let the parts of a book be few or many, simple or complex, it is of the first importance that they be, one to the other and each to all, harmoniously correlated.

In the simple undecorated and unillustrated book it is not only desirable that sunken pages, if any (the first pages of chapters or sections, for example), should show an equal sinkage. But all isolated typographic elements, such as half-titles, elements of the title page, copyright notice, dedication, headings of preliminary and supplementary matter, etc., should fall on levels which, though not necessarily identical, bear a mensural, not an arbitrary, relation one to the other and to the structure of the book as a whole. This requires, perhaps, some elucidation. Suppose we give the first pages of our chapters a uniform sinkage. These pages, let us say, establish three levels for us—(1) the chapter heading, (2) chapter title, and (3) the first line of text. If we adopt the same sinkage for Contents, Illustrations, Appendices, and Index, putting the headings of this group on the same level as the chapter headings (LEVEL 1), the first text lines of this group should be on the same level as the chapter titles (LEVEL 2), or on the level of the first text lines of the chapters (LEVEL 3). If, on the other hand, we adopt a different sinkage (smaller) for the second group, we may still relate it mensurally to the first group by placing the first text lines of Group 2 on the same level as the chapter headings

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of Group 1. Suppose further that we place our half-titles on one of the three or four levels that have been established. We still have to deal with a copyright notice, perhaps a limit notice, a bibliographical note, and a dedication. It is not essential that all of these should fall on the same level, but it *is* essential that each be *related to some one of the established levels*. Finally, it is desirable that such major elements of the title page as a sub-title or the author's name should be placed on one of the established levels.

An observance of this principle makes for homogeneity of design. In reading a book so put together we are spared (without knowing that we are spared) the disturbance of our sense of balance which results, almost without our knowing it, when our eyes fall upon a page some part of which is not "tied in" architecturally with the rest of the book. The effect is similar to that of a many-paneled room with an impost cornice at a certain height in all the panels except two or three where it is either higher or lower. We have, in one case, faulty architecture; in the other, faulty book-making. In judging a book or a building, it should be borne in mind that, however charming its parts, it must be regarded as a whole. If our contemplation of it is to be attended with pleasure and comfort, its parts must be so disposed, so correlated, that they will not produce a "jumpy" effect.

It is not contended that every book in which this refinement of perfectly integrated parts has been ignored should be considered a failure because it is less than perfect. If that were true, few books would pass the test. It would indeed be hypercritical to insist that a failure to observe this principle actually spoils an otherwise well-made book. It is desirable, however, that the principle should be observed *as far as the material will permit*. It must be recognized, also, that sometimes the elements are so diverse—chapter headings or the internal titles of essays, short stories or poems—that a strict adherence to the principle becomes impossible. In such instances, the designer's task is still to strive for order and integration. Perfect order, symmetry, and balance may be unattainable, but this does not justify him in being haphazard. When order is observed we may not be conscious of it; when it is not observed we are aware of its absence. Movement is of the highest importance as a factor of design—such movement, for example, as is imparted to a book by this very diversity of its elements—but good design demands movement that is ordered,

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not arbitrary. If liberties are taken (and it is desirable, in the interest of vitality and charm, that they should be taken) they must justify themselves aesthetically; they should not only please us in themselves but as evidence of the designer's intelligence, his insight, subtlety, sensitiveness, discrimination, and tact. However diverse the elements or parts of a book may be, however they may, by reason of such diversity, render perfect order and balance impossible, their arrangement should at least possess a *rationale*.

This need of a fundamental balance has its basis in its pleasure-giving value. I have adverted to the analogy between book-design and architecture, let me point now to an equally pertinent analogy with the structure of poetry. "Verse," says Poe, "originates in the human enjoyment of equality, fitness. To this enjoyment, also, all the moods of verse—rhythm, meter, stanza, rhyme, alliteration, the refrain, and other analogous effects—are to be referred." Specifically, the parts of a book—half-titles, headings, etc., etc.—should be, severally *and collectively*, related as are such structural elements in verse as recurrent rhythms, rhymes, and refrains.

We must now consider the decorated or illustrated book. In the first place, it should be understood that no form of decoration or illustration is legitimate in the strictly fine book except such as are printed from wood or metal engraved by hand, preferably in relief which comports with type both in physical character and in the means by which the image is imparted to the paper. Process-engravings are disqualified not only because of the preponderant mechanical factor, but because mechanical engraving in relief cannot produce a line of the delicacy and purity obtained with the engraving tool. As a corollary to the principle of integration set forth above let us take first the type of decorated book to which most obviously it applies. A book carrying on various pages head-bands of varying depth and varying tone—deep, shallow, black and heavy, light and delicate—will produce a disturbing effect. Less obvious but hardly less disturbing is a succession of initial letters differing in size, in tone, or in position on the page. The book with initial letters strewn through the text, sometimes several on a single page, is a challenge to the designer. When thus arbitrarily employed it is important, in order that the initials shall not be obtrusive, that they be so selected as to size (in proportion to the page) and so integrated with the book as a whole that their

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"accidental" character is either disguised or lost and their recurrence actually contributes to the unity of the volume by virtue of their consistent accentual value.

An arbitrary arrangement of tailpieces is likely to produce a "jumpy" effect. Since the spaces (at the ends of chapters or sections) within which tailpieces may be placed differ in area, such decorative elements cannot always fall on the same level. This irregularity can be compensated for in a measure by adjusting the size of the decoration to the area of the space it occupies. By what may seem to be a negation of the law of balance here insisted upon, such a variation is more productive of architectural harmony than tailpieces of uniform size would be if disposed in spaces of varying area.

Returning for a moment to the undecorated book, it may be remarked in passing that verse, particularly a collection of short lyrics, does not lend itself to good book-design. It should be enough to point out that the disproportion between type mass and white paper caused by short measure and the frequently meager letter-press deprive books of verse of the book's basic structural factor, the rectangle of type. How decoration can be employed to overcome this deficiency is perfectly exemplified in the original edition of Dorat's *Les Baisers*.

With the principles of balance and unity still in mind, it will hardly, I think, admit of contradiction that the scattering of odd-sized illustration through the text is incompatible with both of these principles. Such illustrations, particularly those of irregular shape bounded on two or three sides by type, are as destructive of balance and unity as is poor fenestration in a building. It is not enough that something like a balance is effected on facing pages (an elementary principle in layout); the lack of a complete integration of the pictures with the book and the disturbance created by distorting the letter-press into odd shapes preclude the possibility of such a book being regarded as well-planned, much less ideal, however charming it may be in detail.

We have seen, while considering the major aspects of book-design, in what wise paper must be judged with regard to those first or immediate impressions gained from seeing and feeling it. I must now carry the consideration of paper a little farther. Since style and character are essential qualities of the fine book, we must insist upon these qualities in every element of its substance. Now

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style and character at their utmost are peculiar (for reasons that have to do with the methods of manufacture) to hand-made paper only, laid or wove, and, it may be further insisted, to only the best hand-made paper. Desirable as wove paper is for certain purposes, it cannot be denied that it has less character than the laid sheet. It is also true that no feature of fine laid paper gives more character to a sheet than the so-called "antique" factor, a slight thickening of the pulp and greater opacity along the chain-lines. By an "improved" method of mould-making, introduced by Baskerville, this thickening was eliminated, but, whatever mechanical superiority its absence may represent, there can be no question but that it represents a loss of character. All book papers produced by machinery (particularly the laids in which the effect of laid lines is mechanically faked) are as much imitations of and substitutes for hand-made paper as machine-made lace is a substitute for hand-made lace, and the disparity in quality is as great. We speak of "imitation lace" and "real lace," meaning machine-made and hand-made; we might, with equal propriety, speak of "imitation paper" and "real paper." Ideally, then, the fine book, in the fullest and strictest sense of the term, can be printed on no other than paper that is hand-made and of the best quality.

As to the color of paper for fine books, the whole question may be considerably clarified at once by the statement that everything suggestive of artificiality should be avoided. A paper that is chalky white or bluish white tells us at once that the rags which went into its manufacture were chemically (that is to say, artificially) bleached. A great many toned papers, described as "cream" or "india," are artificially colored and show it. The most desirable tone for fine book paper is the "natural" tone of unbleached (and sorted as such) linen rags. Its slight creamish color is at once pleasant to the eye and holds the promise of that agreeable mellowness which comes, very slowly, with age. A number of very pleasant books have been printed in recent years on gray, blue, green, and brownish papers (the last usually a deliberate simulation of ancient paper), but, despite their charm, they are, I think, open to the charge of affectation, against which, if true, there is of course no defense. If not actually "arty," they come perilously near to it.

It has not been my purpose in this paper to lay down the rules

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for making a fine book, for, after all, rules are of no use whatever (in an art or in a craft) except to be broken—wisely. Neither has any attempt been made, since this is not a technical treatise, to outline the methods by which the results described may be produced. I have tried merely to set forth the various criteria by which fine books should be judged and the principles (quite different from rules) that underlie them. If the "specifications" seem over-exacting, if they are to be dismissed as *trop raffinés*, I must ask the caviler if that which purports to be "fine" can be "too refined"? Let those who wish to compromise (with popular taste, with outlay and returns, with honesty, with self-respect, or with machinery) do so, but unless the thing they produce represents, with eloquence and beauty, the full and unconditional employment of *every realizable aid to betterment, physical and technical*, it is something other than a fine book of the first order. We must discourage ourselves in order that we may be strong.

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W. A. DWIGGINS

EXTRACTS FROM · *AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF BOOKS* · AS THEY ARE AT PRESENT PUBLISHED UNDERTAKEN BY THE SOCIETY OF CALLIGRAPHERS · 1919

NOTE: *The accompanying extracts from the Transactions of the Society of Calligraphers are published with the approval of the Society. They form a part of the exhaustive and unbiased Report returned by the Committee in charge of the Investigation, which Report will be presented in its entirety in the Annual Bulletin. The report is of so surprising a nature that it was deemed unwise to withhold all notice of the findings until the annual publication. The Society, therefore, has the honour to present certain portions of the Inquiry together with an abstract of the Committee's recommendations.*

W. A. DWIGGINS, *Secretary*

384A *Boylston Street, Boston*
December 1, 1919

Editor's Note: In commenting on the reception of the now famous *Investigation*, Watson Gordon pointed out (in *Mss. by WAD*, a collection of the writings of Dwiggins on various subjects, published by The Typophiles, New York, 1947) that it "received wide attention in publishing circles where some exceptions were taken to the findings. Certain publishers felt sure that some of those replying to the pertinent and impertinent questions of the investigator were members of their organizations who preferred to remain anonymous." The complete report, with its original note and illustration, as well as the sequel of twenty years later, follow.

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IT MAY BE said in introduction that the Society's Investigation into the Physical Properties of Books was undertaken by a special committee whose personnel insured that its consideration would be thorough and unbiased.

The Committee began its labour by an examination of all books published in America since the year 1910. This examination forced upon the investigators the conclusion that "All Books of the present day are Badly Made." The conclusion was unanimous.

Working out from this basic fact in an effort to arrive at the reasons underlying the evil, the Committee held numerous sittings in consultation with men concerned with various branches of printing and publishing. From these sittings there developed a mass of information of an unusual and stimulating character.

The publishers have chosen from the Record of the examination a few examples, not because they are extraordinary but because they present typical points of view. They are transcribed verbatim. It will be obvious that in certain cases it has been no more than courteous to suppress the names of the persons assisting the investigation. For the sake of uniformity it has been deemed wise to follow this practice throughout.

I. Mr, B.

Q: Mr. B——, will you please tell the committee why you printed this book on card-board?

A: To make it the right thickness. It had to be one inch thick.

—Why that thick, particularly?

—Because otherwise it would not sell. If a book isn't one inch thick it won't sell.

—Do you mean to say that people who buy books select them with the help of a foot rule?

—They have to have some standard of selection.

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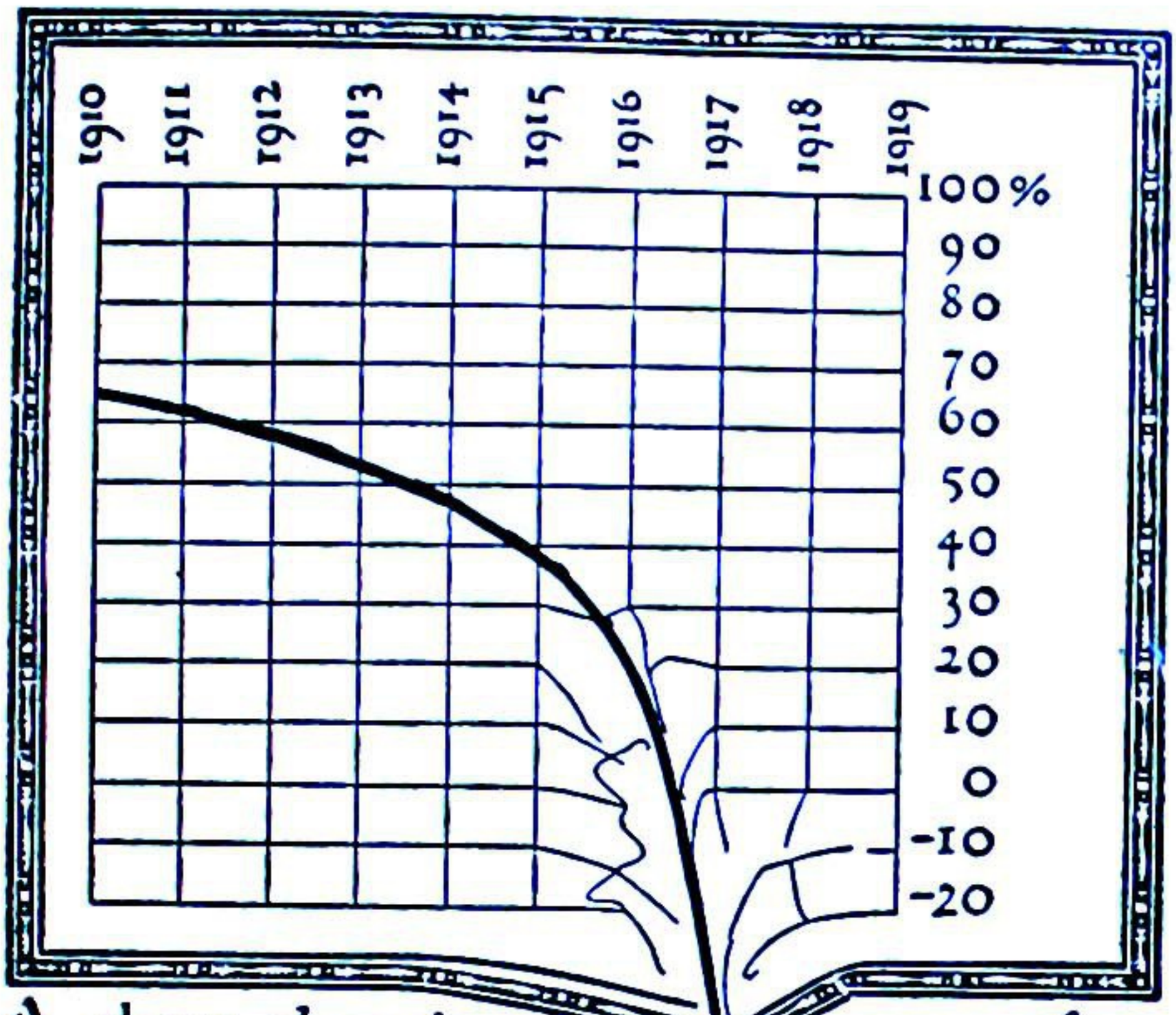
—So that it is your practice to stretch out the text if it is too short by printing it on egg-box stock?

—Not my practice, particularly. All publishers do it. We are obliged to use this and other means to bring the book up to a proper thickness. You must remember that our prices are not based on the contents of a book but on its size.



A chart showing the percentage of excellence in the physical properties of books published since 1910.

—You mention other methods. Would you mind telling us what other method you use?

—We can expand the letter-press judiciously. We limit the matter to seven words on a page, say, and so get a greater number of pages. We can use large type and can lead considerably.

—But does not that practice hurt the appearance of the page? Make a poor-looking page?

—I am afraid I do not get your meaning.

—I mean to say, is not the page ugly and illegible when you expand the matter to that extent?

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—You don't consider the look of a page in making a book. That is a thing that doesn't enter into the production of a book. If I understand you correctly, do you mean to say that it matters how a book looks?

—That was the thought in my mind.

—That's a new idea in book publishing!

—You were speaking of the pressure of industrial conditions since the war. Under these conditions what percentage of the traditions of the craft can you preserve, would you say?

—The traditions of what craft?

—The craft of printing, obviously. What I am trying to get at is this:—There are certain precise and matured standards of workmanship in the printing craft; these standards are the results of experiment through nearly five hundred years. How far are these standards effective under your present-day conditions?

—Those standards, so far as I know anything about them, are what you would call academic. In the first place, book-manufacturing is not a craft, it is a business. As for standards of workmanship—I can understand the term in connection with cabinet-making, for example, or tailoring, but I should not apply the expression to books. You do not talk about the "standards of workmanship" in making soap, do you?

—Then in your mind there does not linger any atmosphere of an art about the making of books?

—When you talk about "atmosphere" you have me out of my depth. There isn't any atmosphere of art lingering about making soap, is there?

—You would class soap-making with book-making?

—I can see no reason why not.

—May I ask you why you were selected by —— Company to manage their manufacturing department?

—Really, I must say that you overstep the borders—

—Please do not misinterpret my question. It is really pertinent to the inquiry.

—It should certainly be obvious why a man is chosen for a given

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position. I am employed to earn a satisfactory return on the shareholders' investment. Is that the information you want?

—I think that is what we want. Would you then consider yourself as happily employed in making soap as in making books?

—Quite as well employed, if making soap paid the dividend.

—While we are on this subject, may I ask you how you choose the artists who make your illustrations?

—My practice is to select an illustrator whose name is well known.

—Is that the only point you consider?

—I should say, yes. I am not aware of any other reason for spending money on this feature. It is always an uncertain detail and this way of making a choice puts the matter on a safe basis.

—It is sometimes assumed that the illustrations should have a sympathetic bearing on the story. Does not that consideration have some weight with you in choosing your artist?

—None, I should say. You see, the pictures are not really a necessary part of the book. They are a kind of frill that the public has got in the way of expecting, and we have to put them in. Illustrations as a rule stand us as a dead loss unless they are made by a well-known artist. Then, of course, they help sell the book.

II. Mr. McG.

A: The gentlemen of the committee must remember that the book-publishing business is a gamble. Each new issue, particularly in the department of fiction, is a highly adventurous risk. Our percentage of blanks would astonish you if we dared to state it. But any book may turn out a best-seller. This hope keeps us going. It is absolutely a gamble, as I say. You can see that under these conditions we cannot spend very much money on non- essentials. We have to strip the books down to the barest necessities.

Personally I should like to see the firm put out nothing that is not well designed and well printed. But as an agent of the firm I have to set aside my personal preferences. The directors are very much down on what they call art.

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—Has the firm ever looked into the question of good workmanship as a possible aid to sales?

—Not under the present management. The founder looked at good work as more or less a marketing advantage.

—What do you think caused the present management to change from that opinion?

—They haven't changed. They never had it. They get at the matter from another angle altogether. Their policy is to reduce the production cost to the minimum. The minimum in theory would be reached when the public complained. The public hasn't complained, so you can't tell when to stop cheapening.

You see the directors don't look at a book as a fabricated thing at all. Books are merely something to sell—merchandise. Our management—and all the rest of them, for that matter—come from the selling side of the business and do not have any pride in the product. Old Mr. —— was a publisher because he liked books. That made an entirely different policy in the old firm, of course.

—To get back to the question of good workmanship helping sales:—Here are two books published abroad to be sold at 50 cents and 80 cents. They can very well be called works of art. Do you not think that these well designed paper covers would stand out among other books and invite customers to themselves?

—Undoubtedly they would.

—Have you ever tried the experiment of putting out editions in paper covers of attractive design?

—Never. It couldn't be done. People wouldn't buy them.

—But you said a moment ago—

——Moreover the difference of cost between cheap cloth sides and paper covers of the kind you have there is so slight that it wouldn't pay to try the experiment. People want stiff board covers. It doesn't much matter what is inside, but they insist on board covers.

—How do you arrive at that fact?

—Through our salesmen.

—And you say that paper covers have never been tried?

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—Never. None of our travellers would go out on the road with a sample in paper covers.

—A little while ago you said something about your salesmen helping you to an understanding of the public taste. I infer that you get considerable help from this source?

—Most valuable help indeed. We depend entirely on the reports the sales force turns in in these matters. The salesmen are in direct contact with the retailers and are naturally in a position to feel the public pulse, so to speak. Their help is invaluable. They can anticipate the demand very often.

I had reference more particularly to the way books are made.

—Oh, on that point too. We never make a final decision on a cover design, for instance, without showing it to the salesmen. They very often make valuable suggestions as to changes of colour, etc. They run largely to red.

—It would seem, then, that the designing of the books is very much in the hands of the salesmen?

—Quite in their hands.

—Are the office-boys often called into consultation?

—Mr. ——— finds his stenographer a very great help in passing upon certain points—illustrations, etc.

—Does it appear to you that the sales department would be the one best qualified to pass on points of design?

—Well, there, you see—the books have to be sold—that is what we make them for—and the sales department is the one in closest touch with the people that buy the books—that knows just what they want.

—The standards of quality, then, are set by the people who buy the books?

—Oh, absolutely so. How else would you move the books? It is a merchandising proposition, you must remember.

—But do you not think that people would buy decently made books as willingly as poorly made books?

At the same price, yes. No question about it. The book-buying

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public doesn't worry its head about the way books are made. It doesn't know anything about it. And well made books cost more. The trade is committed to a dollar-and-a-half article and can't risk going above it.

—Your opinion is that the price of a well made book would be so high as to prevent its sale?

—In the case of fiction, yes. The price has become almost a fixture.

—We shall have to go outside of fiction, then, to look for well made books?

—It amounts to that.

—You have said that certain unproductive factors prevent you from spending what you otherwise might on good workmanship. What specific factors would you mention?

—Plates—electros. We plate everything on the chance of its running into several printings. 80 per cent of the books are not reprinted. You can see that the money tied up in plates is a very considerable sum, and, as I say, 80 per cent of it is dead loss. We are obliged to take the chance, however.

—Has any remedy occurred to you?

—If stereotyping could be revived as an accurate process it might help us out. It would cost much less to make and to store paper matrices than to make electrotypes. The difficulty here is that no one knows how to make good stereotypes, and the stereotype plates at their best are more trouble to make ready. Trouble with the press-room, you see.

—Is it possible under good conditions to get satisfactory results from stereotype plates?

—Unquestionably. The books printed from this kind of plates in the first days of the invention are entirely satisfactory.

III. Mr. L.

Q. Can a trade-edition book be well made and sell for $1.50?

—That depends on how high you set your standard.

—Well, let us not be too rigorous. Can it be made better, say, than this book?

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—Beyond question. It will all depend upon whether or not the printer has a few lingering memories of the standards of printing.

—But should not the setting of standards come from the publisher?

—Oh yes, under ideal conditions. Both printer and publisher should have a hand in it.

—How would you make a book of fiction to be sold for $1.50?

—Well, such a book could have a good title-page as cheaply as a bad one—and the whole typographic scheme would cost no more if it were logically done instead of crudely strung together. By logically done I mean with well proportioned, practicable margins and legible headings, etc. The press-work on books is reasonably good but the "lay-out" or design is entirely neglected. It calls for a little planning, of course, but no more than should be available in any reputable plant. It isn't so much that these books are badly planned as it is that they are not planned at all.

—But most printing firms have a planning department, do they not?

—The planning in most presses is concerned with the handling of material, not with the *designing* of material. This is no doubt due to the fact that the Taylor System has not yet got around to Aesthetic Efficiency.

—Are not the typographical unions concerned to train their men on these points of design that you mention?

—The unions have only one idea—and it is not concerned with the improvement of printing.

—Are there any trade schools that teach these things? Are not the employers' associations promoting schools to train men in the craft?

—The employers' associations have one idea—a little different from the idea of the unions, perhaps, but not concerned with the improvement of printing. There are trade schools but they teach only the mechanics of the craft.

—Apparently, then, there is no place in this country where one can learn how to design printing?

—You can safely say that there is no such place.

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IV. Mr. A.

Q: What is your own opinion on the subject of illustrations in books?

—In what particular do you mean?

—I mean, do you think that illustrations help or hinder the quality of a book?

—The question is too general to be answered easily. May I ask you to be more specific?

—For example, here is a "best-seller" with several—five or six—half-tone illustrations. Do you consider that these pictures make the book a more complete thing as a specimen of book-making?

—Most certainly not.

—Then would you say that illustrations in such books were a detraction?

—Illustrations such as these, yes. Though it would be hard to detract from this particular book.

—It is a standard book—a standard type of book.

—I fear that it is.

—What kind of illustrations would you favour?

—For many books, none at all. In these books of current fiction the pictures are either futile or else detrimental to the development of the plot. They give the game away, so to speak, when the author may wish to hold the story in suspense. The effort to avoid this disaster accounts for the multitude of undramatic pictures you see in books.

—Your theory of no pictures should appeal to the publishers but I doubt if the illustrators will stand with you.

—Illustration is a trade as well as an art.

—True. But we are trying to limit the inquiry to the artistic side at present. When, then, according to your deductions, would illustrations be called for?

—When they can make a stage-setting for the story. When they ornament it or suggest it, perhaps, instead of reveal it. Impressions and "atmosphere" instead of literal diagrams with a cross marking the spot where, etc.

—But perhaps people like the cross marking the spot where.

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—We are limiting the discussion to the artistic side, are we not?

—What about the half-tone process of engraving?

—The process is a way of doing a thing that cannot be done cheaply by any other means.

—Do you consider it a process that adds to the artistic possibilities of book printing?

—You mean according to the standards that prevailed in the earlier days of the craft?

—I do. Yes.

—According to those standards it seems to me that half-tones will always have to be considered as necessities forced upon the book-printer. They demand a kind of paper that is never a satisfactory book-paper. In the case of the kind of books we are talking about the relief line methods have always given the most artistic results, because they are so closely related to the character of type.

One regrets, however, to give up the chances for tonal designs that the half-tone process provides. Probably the designers and printers will work out a satisfactory relation between half-tones and type when the craze for photographic detail passes a little. As things stand, I should say that the best results are to be had with uncoated book-papers and with line plates. It is true books are rarely illustrated this way—current fiction, I mean—but the method might be used to produce a very attractive and unusual result.

—Then you would condemn the use of half-tones in this kind of book?

—If you mean the usual kind of half-tones printed separately and inserted, I do. But if you are making a book of travel, for example, the half-tones from photographs explain and justify themselves.

But on this whole subject of book illustration it strikes me that if you are to make the design from the start you might as well make it in harmony with the kind of paper and printing you are planning to use, and get all the artistic advantage of fitting your means to your limitations.

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Are you familiar with the Christy-Holbein Test?

—Yes. That is to say, I have heard of your applying it, and remember that the percentages were very much against Holbein.

—Ninety-three to seven, on an average. How do you explain such a crudity of taste in these groups of people otherwise well educated?

—By the deduction that they are not educated. That is to say that these people, cultivated in other ways, react precisely like savages when confronted with pictures or drawings. They "go for" the tinsel and glitter and are opaque to the higher and more civilized values. They get the most pleasure from drawings that they think they could make themselves. This is the basis of the Eight-year-old Formula widely applied in the department of newspaper comics: "Make your drawing so that it can be understood by a child eight years old."

All of this is clearly lack of training, because their taste is good in other matters—music, for example, and house furnishings.

—You would deduce, then, that the periodical and book-publishing industry has failed to train the taste of its public in such matters?

—It has done worse: it has depraved that taste. Because there was, not very long ago, a fine tradition in this country in the line of illustration.

—Why should the publishers find any advantage in depraving the taste of the public—as you say they have done?

—Because they turned their backs on the standards of the publishing business and became merchandisers solely. They had to sell the goods and they had to "sell" a big new public. The quickest way to this public—through flash-and-crash tactics—they adopted. And naturally ran themselves and the public down hill.

—May there not be other sides to it, too? May it not be that the art schools are not now producing draughtsmen of a calibre to support the fine tradition you mention?

—That may have something to do with it. But even that is

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mixed up with the other. I think that the chief difficulty is with the publishers.

—And the public?

—The public will follow if the publishers lead.

V. Mr. S.

A. Are you not making the mistake of keeping too close to the publishers? It seems to me that you will not get at all the facts behind the situation until you get in touch with the people we sell the books to. *They* are the factors that bring about the conditions you object to. The publisher is merely a machine for selling the public what it wants.

—Then the publisher has no selective function?

—Absolutely none.

—How does the public bring about the condition we object to?

—Obviously by buying the books.

—I mean to say, how does the public prevail upon you to sell it trashy books instead of well made books?

—The public is entirely uneducated on the subject of books, in your sense. People know nothing at all about paper or printing or pictures or things of that sort. One book is as good as another to any educated man so long as he can read it. He doesn't know that there is any such thing as good printing or bad printing or good or bad taste in making books. Under these conditions we should be fools to spend money on features that do not have any bearing on sales. It's a simple business proposition.

—Would the public that you are discussing buy well made books as willingly as trashy books?

—Oh, absolutely. It's the books they are interested in—what they contain, not how they are made. They wouldn't know the difference.

VI. Mr. G.

A: What's the use of talking about standards in connection with things like these? These are not books. They aren't fit to wad a gun with. I wouldn't have them in the house. Nobody pays any attention to stuff like that.

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There isn't what you would call a book on the table, except this one, perhaps. That's printed in England and sent over in sheets and bound on this side. But that one is set in a bastard Caslon. It isn't the original Caslon but a revision with the descenders cut off. See how he's got his O upside down!

Those others—what's the use of talking about them at all? It reminds me of the story about the Chinaman—

—But, Mr. ——, do you not think it possible to get up this class of books in a manner that would suit you better?

—You can't hope to get anything like a decent book until you do away with the damnable cheap paper and the vile types. And then you will have to start in and teach the printer how to print. There aren't more than a half a dozen presses in the country that know how to print. Most printing looks like it had been done with apple-butter on a hay-press—

—What you say is unhappily true. What we are trying to find out are the causes of this state of things.

—The causes are everywhere—all through the rattletrap, cheap-jack, shoddy work that is being done in every kind of trade. Nobody cares for making decent things any more.

The only cure is to get back to decent standards of workmanship in everything again. But the case seems to me to be hopeless. I try to do printing up to a decent standard—and that is about all any of us can do. I don't believe you can hope to do much good through your societies and investigations. I believe in each one doing his own job in the best way he knows how. That's the only way you can raise the standard. It's the work you turn out that counts.

An Abstract of the Committee's Recommendations

Two main questions resulting from the Inquiry present themselves to the Committee. The first question is: Is it within the power of the Society of Calligraphers, of any society, or of Society itself, to restore to the printing of books a standard of good work? The second and major question: Are books necessary to the present social state?

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I. When the Committee began its work it assumed as a matter of course that the established standards of printing would serve it as guide-posts and criteria. It expected to traverse a country where the highways were in need of repair, perhaps, and the marks of direction dim, but on the whole a negotiable country. It found a very different state of things.

Instead of roads to be followed with some excusable discomfort it found not even trails. Such highways as had once been charted were obliterated. Not only guideposts but the most elementary blazemarks were overgrown and lost beyond any hope of recovery. Instead of following the planned course of visit and consultation the Committee was forced to reorganize itself into an expedition of discovery. It has been fortunate to return at all.

The collected data of the exploration can lead to but one conclusion: That the whole fabric of Standards of Workmanship will have to be rebuilt from the beginning. Whether this can be done under the present state of society is a matter to be discussed in connection with the second question.

I. Are books necessary to the present social state? The Committee's finding is, unanimously and conclusively, No.

During the past twenty years many influences have been at work to wean mankind from the use of books. Automobiles, the motion-picture drama, professional athletics, the *Saturday Evening Post*—these operated even before the Great War to discourage the habit of reading. Since the war the progress of society—culminating, in America, in the dictatorship of the proletariat—has effectually completed the process. Books as an element vital to the welfare of the race have been eliminated.

The Society of Calligraphers is thus freed at one stroke from the obligations implied in the first question. But there are still books in existence, and for these the Committee feels a professional concern. For the Investigation, if it has done nothing else, has disclosed the most cogent and ineluctable fact: that wherever there is contact between books and the public, the effect upon the books is deleterious.

So far as the immediate situation is concerned, the public, by

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discontinuing the contact, has obviated the danger. But in period of revolution no condition can be taken for granted a fixed. It is quite within the range of possibility that the public under compulsion, may turn again to books and reading; an this, the Committee believes, is a contingency the Society shoul be prepared to meet.

Publishers as a group promise, for the immediate future, to b a harassed and unimpressionable body. Influence upon them ca be brought to bear only through public demand. Should a publi demand for books revive, it will be imperative for the Societ either to quench it altogether—a project which the Committe has discarded as visionary—or to take it in hand at its inceptio and give it constructive shape by forcing upon public attentio such knowledge of the more elementary points of good taste a shall make impossible the further prostitution of standards. A the most direct means to this end it is urgently recommended b the Committee that the Society take up at once the study o advertising.

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TWENTY YEARS AFTER · Mr. McG., Mr. A., Mr. L. *and* The Society of Calligraphers

Note: *In* 1919 *the Society of Calligraphers published a pamphlet:* Extracts From An Investigation Into the Physical Properties of Books. *In the summer of* 1939, *three of the people who reported in the investigation were visited again and their opinions solicited as to what had happened in the interval of twenty years to change the physical characteristics of books. Transcriptions of parts of the three interviews follow.*

Mr. McG.

Q: Twenty years ago you were kind enough to discuss book-manufacturing with us.

—Twenty years. Remarkable memory!

—It meant a great deal to us—your help. It was in 1919. We were conducting an inquiry—perhaps you remember—into the physical qualities of books.

—Oh, yes! How you could improve them, and so on. Yes.

—Now we are back again—to see what you think now.

—Good. Interesting idea. Ask me questions.

—For instance . . . Does it strike you that trade books have improved in the twenty years?—as physical objects,—packages?

—Packages. Very neat. Sums up the situation.

—We mean, both as implements, tools, for getting a job done; and as pleasant things to look at, handle, use . . . or the contrary.

—Well. Let's see. Yes. I think trade books have improved decidedly in twenty years. Decided improvement.

—What points of improvement, would you say?

—Well. More care taken with the get-up, margins, format as you call it, title pages. Real design coming into it. And much more careful about the type—legibility and all that—paper, suita-

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bility for reading, good surface for the eye, etc., etc.

—You said, twenty years ago, that your directors' lack of interest in the product hampered you. Since you have been in charge here have you been able to bring your books up to a level that suits you better?

—Yes . . . and no. . . . Costs have climbed in twenty years, materials, labor. We've pushed up retail prices, but the manufacturing costs eat up all we gain. More than eat it up. Less margin now for design or style or whatever than twenty years ago, I'd say.

—That looks like faulty adjustment somewhere, doesn't it?

—Situation needs adjusting, certainly!

—I mean, maybe you are paying out money for quite unnecessary features.

—Possibly.

—Not a strictly *factual* meeting of the conditions, perhaps?—not "realistic," as the dictators say. Have you ever thought how you might study the market-product relations from an entirely new and fresh angle?

—Now there! . . . that's interesting . . . I have. I've thought a lot about it. When I get off into the Maine woods and look back at it there's one thing that sticks out like a sore thumb. We've got into a rut. The whole trade has. Not a shadow of a doubt about it. We let ourselves be ruled by a whole catalog of standards and values and "musts" that are as dead as the dodo. Standards inherited from an entirely different state of society. A thousand years different, you might say. It is amazing how conservative a tribe we are, we book people. . . . Take the cover of a book, for example. Take this cover here, for instance. We spent a lot of trouble and money dickering it up—worry about the colors and the design—cost of dies, cost of stamping, cost of foil . . . and not a soul will ever see it! It's all hidden away under the jacket, and it'll *stay* hidden under the jacket! All this book-cover stuff is . . . what's the word? . . . vestigial—like your appendix—something no longer used—something useless left over from an earlier stage of evolution. Did you ever see anybody in a book store turn the jacket back and look at the cover? Did you ever hear of a cover

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that helped sell a book?—to the slightest extent? No. And when they get 'em home and read 'em and lend them to their friends the jacket stays on. Never comes off. Book-covers are just expense —useless expense—the decoration and things, I mean.

—You would do away with covers, then?

—No. It's got to be in boards—people want them that way—it's one of your "realistic" details.

—In your "new angle" volume would you have the insides as you do them now?

—No. There again I'd let the demand shape the product. Your market doesn't give a hang about the type and printing so long as they can read it.

—That sounds like twenty years ago!

—I know. Very likely it does.

—Haven't things changed?

—Not much. It's as true now as it was then.

—But all this talking and writing and lecturing . . .

—Two or three thousand persons, perhaps—two or three thou-and have become "book conscious" as they say—the limited dition crowd. I'm dealing with the ten million. . . . There's a lot f whoosh in all that book beautiful stuff, you know.

—Mr. —— thinks it helps to tell them about type and paper, tc.

—I know. It doesn't. They don't understand his little notices— 's all shop talk. He likes 'em. He thinks they give the books tone, daresay. I think it doesn't matter a damn one way or the other. ll that shop detail is zero. They don't care to know and they on't *need* to know. Just make your book so it will read handily nd let it go at that.

—Have you got this "new angle" idea to a point where you ould describe a book made that way?

—Well. I might. Take the cover—I'd have board covers and oth. But I wouldn't stamp them. Bright color. Gay. Patterned oth sometimes. I'd have the simplest kind of paper label on the ckbone. Printed from type—standard affair—library label that u could read. No embroidery, just plain function. On the least pensive terms possible. Make it a kind of house-trademark

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feature. . . . Inside I'd forget all I knew about fine printing—the art—it's a great art—forget all I knew—start fresh with the *use*.

—*You* like fine printing.

—That's right. I do. In its place. The place isn't trade books. You can't have fine printing in trade books. All you can have along *that* line is cheap imitation—celluloid collar and no shirt. If you go out with your imitation fine printing as a mark to shoot at you come back with what we turn out now, all of us—shabby genteel, to the limit. My book won't try to get by with a paper collar. My book won't have *any* collar. It will get down to the basis of realism—a handy, efficient, *cheap* tool for temporary use. Read it—throw it away. Who saves a book now? If you save it, where are you going to put it? In the car?

—That suggests question of size—what do you think about size?

—Oh, small, by all means. For the usual job not larger than the 5½ x 7¾ range. Smaller than that when you can.

—You think people do not want a big package for their money?

—Not when they want a book to read. If we can get the price down they'll flock to small size, I'm sure. When they pay two-fifty, three, perhaps they want their poundage. Books for gifts too, possibly—want 'em impressive. But on my basis of a good workable tool they'll like them small and handy.

—Your point in general, then, is that modern books should be looked at as temporary affairs.

—Absolutely. Temporary affairs. Like magazines. And they ought to be *produced* as temporary affairs. Paper a little better than newsprint, but not much better—better color, on the warmish side instead of blue-grey. "Guaranteed by the Bureau of Standards to last three hundred years." Bosh. Presswork: set your standard at the level of legibility. That's low—look at the newspapers. Get it so you can read it easily and let the fine points ride. Give up points of paper and makeready to get a cheaper package. You are making a tool, remember, not a *bijou*—you're making a sound, efficient, easy-working tool—tools don't need paper lace and fake-leather upholstery to make them sound—when a tool is efficient it has a style of its own, inevitably.

—Your dictum is, "books as tools."

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—Books as tools. Right. But here's a point. All this is on the technical side. Treat a book as a temporary affair. But while it lasts I'd take considerable pains to have it be a *lively* affair. Not freakish—you can't play tricks with the reading process—but lively, like a good, interesting talker. Little fresh twists, but hardly noticeable in detail. A lot of ways to do it in an inconspicuous way. Mustn't be conspicuous—mustn't interfere with the reading job. Little touches of ornament in the right places. Pictorial bits—pictures are coming back into trade books again, in a new form—easy, swift, simple illustrations that fit in with the "temporary affair" style. Some of the money saved by a strategic retreat from impossible printing standards I'd put into things like that—to keep the pages gay and interesting.

—In this connection, do you think that modern books ought to be "modernistic" in design?

—Absolutely *not*. As I said a minute ago, you can't play tricks with the process of reading. . . . One of the necessities of the modernistic stuff is the necessity to shock you—to make people jump. You can't set off firecrackers on a book page every few paragraphs without taking the reader's mind off the text. You simply can't read in the neighborhood of modernistic design. It isn't because you are not used to it. It's in the very nature of the style. . . I'm talking about books, of course. For advertising, it's prime. Have all the modernistic design you want on your jacket. The more the better.

—And that brings us . . .

—Yes. I've been waiting for it. That brings us to book-jackets!

—Yes. What do you think . . .

—Now *there* you are in another country entirely. Now's the time to beat the drums and run up the flags and drape the bunting. . . . All the money you can't afford to spend on covers you *can* afford to spend on jackets. Because, first, the jacket *is* the cover; and second, the jacket helps directly in selling the book. Jackets are advertising—posters—billboards—so make 'em shout.

—Attractive?

—If you mean *pretty*, not so important. If you mean oomph, by all means. Feminine charm, in the prevailing mode. . . . But

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sock-'em-in-the-eye. Make them strong. Make them so people can't miss seeing them.

—What is your own formula?

—Formula? I haven't any formula. . . . If I had I think it would be *contrast*. Contrast with all the other books on the table. Don't follow anybody's style. Get away from the prevalent "successful" style of the moment. Take a look at the tables—what would stick out now more than plain white paper with plain black type? I'd probably varnish it. Contrast.

—Do jackets sell books?

—Oh . . . no. Jackets don't sell books. They *help*. What sells a book is the stuff inside—story—text. But books need to be *seen*. Jackets help make them visible.

—You save on covers and spend on jackets. You save on paper and printing, and put some of the saving into pictorial and design features. Would you come out with enough saving to get the retail price down from two fifty?

—I think so. I think if the thing were studied out on our "new angle" basis you'd find that you not only liked my books a lot better—as "packages"—but that you'd be able to buy more of them.

MR. A.

Q: One thing I wanted to ask . . . you have had a considerable part in shaping your juvenile department.

—Yes. I have.

—My question may seem a little . . . cool . . . Do you prepare your juvenile titles with the children themselves in view—the ultimate consumers?

—The question's quite proper. I am glad you asked it—it goes straight to the heart of a big trouble about children's books. . . . The children themselves in view, eh? The ultimate consumers. . . . No. I am sorry to say, we do not. We can't. Because children do not buy books. . . . You see, a juvenile, like any other book on our list, has to please the person that's likely to buy it. And that

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means, a book to please adults—a book that a grown-up will mark down as something a child ought to like. *Ought* to, you see—the adult's judgment, not the child's. We can't get past it. We can't find out what the child really *does* like. When children rally to an author, or a style of book, then we get a glimpse of the children's state of mind. But that is our only contact. . . . All our *new* ventures have to be baited and primed to catch the fancy of the mothers and the cousins and the aunts—*against* the interests of the ultimate consumer, you might say, when that is necessary. Sometimes a juvenile runs to large sales purely on the strength of adult appreciation alone, like Ferdinand, for instance. . . . If it were possible, there is nothing I should like better than to deal with the children direct. I have children of my own. I think I understand them . . . to a certain extent. I think I could please them. Once or twice—this is a confession—I did take a direct hand—made a couple the way I thought they ought to be. *My* judgment against the child's, eh? . . . Complete failures—drugs . . . I couldn't move them—couldn't get past the censor—couldn't sell the grown-ups.

—Have you ever thought of ways for getting into direct touch with the children?

—I can see no practicable way. As the case stands you can't penetrate the Adult Front Line.

Mr. L.

Q: This scheme of Mr. McG.'s for a different kind of book—what do you think of it?

—If he can *control* his "decline from a high estate" I am with him, emphatically. Books need to be cheaper. Books *vis-à-vis* market certainly need to be studied all over again—from a new base line. I agree with his findings about shabby-genteel. And I'm sure that I'd like his "cheap" books much better than the kind I buy now, *if* he can liven them up as he suggests. The question is, can he stop his "strategic retreat" at the right point? It's like inflation: easy to start, but . . . ! He drops the standard of material and process—will his proofreading go down hill too? . . . Many French books in paper wrappers—made at the lowest cost-level, badly

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printed on cheap paper—have an air and a style that our own more expensive affairs can't quite achieve. *Somebody* laid a finger on them. Who, in Mr. McG.'s scheme, is to be this somebody whose touch creates liveliness and interest? A highly important factor in the product! . . . If we *can* get the liveliness and interest, we will be glad to trade more expensive paper and printing to get it. Our books are pretty dull. . . . But, *just* inferior printing on cheap paper, *without* the lively touch and style, is going to bore us worse yet!

—You mean dull in content?

—I mean dull optically, visually. . . . Like—to put it into terms of sound—like a long, droning recital of a tedious story—no inflection—no climax—no motion. . . . I like Mr. McG.'s figure of a "good, interesting talker."

—You'd spice it up with "modernist" feeling?

—No. He's right, there. No fireworks. Keep the explosions *outside* the book.

—*You* have used "contemporary" design.

—Yes, but you'll notice, not in places where *reading* is going on. . . . Another point: letting the market set the *tone* is not good merchandising. The market needs to be led, by a tone a little higher than its average taste. . . . And Mr. McG.'s good tool isn't made by majority vote in Congressional committee—it's made by somebody who knows, expertly and practically, just what the tool is intended to do and how it works.

—You are for "books as tools."

—I am for books as tools—and that means cheaper books. . . . I think, too, that a lot of the things that make books expensive are false value—brummagem. . . . But the trade is so firmly established in the tradition of false-front and bustle-rear that I'm afraid it's going to take an awful tussle to get it back to real values again—to the tool basis—to the simplicity and directness and general fitness-for-its-job, for example, that makes a carpenter's plane a masterpiece of appropriate design.

COMPOSED IN ELECTRA TYPES

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DESMOND FLOWER

The Publisher and the Typographer

WE live in an unhappy age. I suppose that it must be the most wretched known in history since the hordes of Genghis Khan swept across the face of the eastern world. Yet it is not the physical losses—though these are bad enough—which are responsible for the malaise, but a spiritual shortcoming: a lack of direction and a lack of faith. Ours is an age in which there is no single thing, not great or small, which can escape our petty probing, our questioning and our doubts. Nothing is because it is: a shadowy reason must be sought behind.

In the course of man's desire to examine and explain away everything, one of the multitudinous minutiæ which have come in for worried attention is the position of printers, particularly in relation to the publishers they serve. The first four centuries of printing produced ninety-nine per cent of all the books which are worth looking at: yet, at what time during that period did anyone worry about the division of responsibility in a book's production? Then, it was a matter which somehow got done; now, unfortunately, it is a subject for discussion.

When Sweynheim and Pannertz started work at Subiaco in 1465 they were at the same time both printers and publishers, and this represents a dual personality. But when Fichet, the Rector of the Sorbonne, decided to set up the first French press five years later within the precincts of the University, he imported three printers from Germany, and possibly the first printer-publisher relationship was born. That this relationship was a living thing is shown by the fact that Fichet had the books which the press produced printed in roman type. Soon after the great Rector

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had gone into voluntary exile for his political opinions, the press moved out of the University precincts to become a normal commercial printing shop, and Gering and Krantz reverted to the use of gothic type! Since the use of roman lay within the high road of French classical development—France being the only country in Europe which did not begin its printing history in gothic—this stands as the first instance of the views of a publisher, as a man ordering the print, being in advance of the more timorous craftsmen, who were glad to revert to their old, safe and conventional ways as soon as the refining influence was removed.

French printing as a whole in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is full of printer-publisher problems for our questing minds. Simon le Vostre, the great ecclesiastical publisher of his age, used Pigouchet mostly for his printing; the Hardouyn brothers commissioned several lovely books from Anabat: why, and who dictated the terms? The balance of power may then well have lain with the printer, since in the Hardouyn's 1500 *Book of Hours* the first page is filled with Anabat's superb device. But what shall we say of the *Hours* printed in 1527 by Simon du Bois, but which bears on every page the unmistakable stamp and signature of its publisher, Geoffroy Tory? Now, they say, too, that Tory was not a binder: yet from him we have two gilt panels done to his order and to his design, matching exactly the work which he hired his printers to do for him.

I feel we are too certain in our minds that in the past printers were *ipso facto* publishers, or that those "for" whom they printed were merely agents. Like a fatal crack hidden for many years in the foundations of an outwardly sound edifice, the split between printer and publisher had occurred at the Sorbonne in 1470, but was patched, mended and ignored from time to time for long thereafter. Yet like that neglected flaw which, having widened until it defies repair, will in the end bring the whole building down, the printer-publisher relationship has now some time ago irrevocably divided.

Today the publisher and the printer are two separate men; there are few exceptions to this rule. Mr. Oliver Simon recently began one of his all too rare essays with the words "Printing is a way of life"; and later he remarked that "if he (the printer) is not something of an artist, he cannot hope to evolve and maintain a typographic style." But these words must be read in con-

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junction with one of Holbrook Jackson's many wise remarks: "whether it (printing) is an art or not is a secondary affair, so long as it is good printing. 'Art happens' says Whistler, and the printer who sets out to be an artist is liable to make a mess of both art and print." One further quotation will show how readily Holbrook Jackson's wisdom can be thrown out of the window; in these pages last year Mr. Herbert Read criticised the English and American editions of his own book, *The Grass Roots of Art*. He wrote "On balance, I do not find much to choose between these two designs from a functional point of view, but discounting a poverty due to material restrictions imposed on the English publisher, there is a certain liveliness in the American production, which, were I a purchaser faced with a choice, would induce me to buy the American edition, even if it cost me rather more. But if the English edition had been printed on better paper, it would have been the easier of the two editions to read. . ." With the exception of the last sentence, the whole of this passage seems misleading and irrelevant. The use of the word "functional" is one of the crosses which we in the twentieth century have to bear, but, since it has occurred, we must presume the function of printing to be that of presenting the written word to the reader in its most easily assimilated form; if the English edition in question is, apart from its paper, more easily readable, how can both editions be equally functional? The implication that a piece of printing—particularly when the text is a work of serious criticism—is to be purchased (even at a higher price) for its liveliness at the expense of its readability is particularly unfortunate. If for "liveliness" we read "speciousness" or "pretention" we have found a ready definition of the one quality which should be excluded from book printing at almost any cost. For this reason I am frightened of Mr. Simon's statement that "printing is a way of life"; good printing implies a philosophy, it is true, but I fear that printers who are far from good may assume airs above their station and, when they produce a perfect horror, state "that is my way of life—take it or leave it." If they do, they may be astonished at how fast any decent publisher will embrace the latter course. I disagree with a great deal more which Mr. Read wrote in his article, but there is room here for comment only upon his remarks about Baskerville type. Baskerville is *not* an easy type, nor a safe one (though printers may find that it satisfies their

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customers). The "gentlemanly sort of type which passes unnoticed, unquestioned" is undoubtedly Caslon and all its derivatives. Baskerville with its broad face and flourishing italic is hard to handle, and in consequence is employed in a higher percentage of bad printing than any other type face.

It is generally agreed that when an irresistible force meets an immovable body, the result is a stalemate; equally obviously, whichever power wanes first will suffer an immediate eclipse. From this we may proceed by a process of elimination. A publisher who knows what he wants employs a printer who is an artist, and the result should be a masterpiece of give and take. A publisher who does not know what he wants employs a printer who is an artist, and the result should be a piece of fine printing. A publisher who knows what he wants employs a printer who is not an artist, and the result will depend on the degree of taste of the publisher. A publisher who either does not know what he wants or does not care, and employs a printer who is not an artist, will both get and deserve a shambles. From these simple equations one constant factor emerges—the publisher; and this fact is not at all at variance with the traditional saw that he who pays the piper calls the tune.

There have been a number of eminent publisher-printer relationships in the past. I have mentioned the French of 1500-1550, where there seems already to be evidence of a publisher's taste exerting an influence. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries offer no examples which are worthy of study: the works undertaken by one printer on behalf of a syndicate of publishers produce no evidence of the book's appearance being dictated by any taste other than that of the printer himself.

The nineteenth century saw the publisher come into his own. One of the greatest publisher-printer partnerships in the history of British book-production is that of Pickering and Whittingham. It would be reasonable to suppose that Pickering was the moving force in this partnership, since the ideas are publishing ideas mainly exemplified by the Aldine poets and the Diamond classics, and their starting point is Pickering's choice of the anchor and dolphin with the motto grouped about it: *Aldi Discip. Anglus*. To the same taste of Pickering and his delight in the printing of Aldus and his contemporaries may be attributed the gracious and restrained use of sixteenth-century fleurons which

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in the eighteen-thirties are not readily to be found elsewhere, and the curiously appropriate renaissance borders occasionally introduced. Another partnership in which I suspect that the publisher had a considerable say was that of Edward Moxon and Bradbury & Evans. In 1850 Moxon issued the first edition of two most important works, Wordsworth's *Prelude* and Tennyson's *In Memoriam;* both were printed by the same printer. But eight years later we may point to John Murray's edition of Coleridge's *Table Talk;* this, too, was printed by Bradbury & Evans with more than a glance over the shoulder at Pickering's publications, but without the guiding hand of Moxon. It is an interesting book, for it just fails before every problem which the text sets. Pickering would have set the solid prose at least a point smaller and increased the margins; in the same way he would have managed to get more space between each specimen of *Table Talk*. Instead of a page of grace and readability, there is in consequence a slightly crowded air and the eye skips disconcertingly from line to line.

Little more than thirty years later British book production was influenced by the most powerful small group of publishers which had ever turned printing upside down: it was indeed a small group —it consisted of three men: John Lane, Elkin Mathews and Leonard Smithers. The splendid series of publications for which each of these extraordinary individuals was responsible need no enumeration here . . . but it is worth pointing out that they were the pioneers of the asymmetry which Mr. Read praises as an unusual and notable feature in the American edition of his book already mentioned. Holbrook Jackson said the last word on the publisher-printer relationship: "it was publishers like Pickering, Moxon, Field and Tuer, Elkin Mathews, John Lane and J. M. Dent who by their example in the nineteenth century helped to *defend* [my italics] printing from printers who were content to do as they were told, and, if no one told them, to follow rule-of-thumb methods which tended always to become worse rather than better."[1]

To quote again from Holbrook Jackson: "It was long before the average printer took advantage of the awakening of typographical taste which began in the eighteen-nineties. The men who extended and consolidated that taste came from anywhere but the printing offices. The majority of modern typographers

[1] *The Printing of Books.*

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are intellectuals or scholars who have forced themselves on the trade, often through the publishing houses." In almost every age there have been a few commercial printers of first-class standing, but perhaps it is no coincidence that it would be difficult to name one who was at work in the eighteen-nineties—the most lively age of the publisher's influence. The situation has not materially changed by the middle of the twentieth century, except that in our own age we are fortunate in having among us a few printers who bow to no man, and have left their mark upon this country's production. First among them stands Mr. Oliver Simon, whose steady output of fine printing must command unqualified admiration. Both the Cambridge and the Oxford University Presses have evolved styles of their own, and there are a few others who are fine printers in their own right. But on the other side of the ledger there is Sir Francis Meynell, who, despite the criticism that much of his work is pastiche, showed with exquisite taste [in the first hundred Nonesuch Press books] what could be made of the types and ornaments which Mr. Stanley Morison had made available through the Monotype Corporation, and all this with a multitude of printers who were set to work and produced but one result—pure Meynell. There is also the more recent example of Mr. Jan Tschichold at work in the Penguin pool.

This lamentable lack of taste among the generality of printers led publishers to give instructions as to their wishes, and this in turn has created a new position in publishing offices: the typographer. Once this person made his appearance on the payroll, the initiative passed from the printer for ever. In the first place, if the publisher employs a typographer he is going to be sure he gets his money's worth; in the second, human nature being what it is, most printers will willingly accept a publisher's design because it is the line of least resistance, and because, according to the best principles of business, the customer is always right.

I cannot see why the initiative in design should ever pass back to the printer. The problem was admirably expressed by D. B. Updike in his little book of essays on the craft, *In the Day's Work:* "If printers had more of a standard and a stiffer one, both about the types they employ and the way in which they use them, printing would be better. The printer, if he has no standard, *must* allow the customer to dictate his own wishes about types." I hope that there will always be the handful of printers who are great

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enough to say "you will do it my way—or else," but the rest will do as they are told by publishers' typographers, which amounts to the substitution of house styles for printers' styles. Printing, like so many arts, has fallen into the hands of the middleman—for such indeed the publisher is. There I am sure it will remain, and it is now for the middleman to justify himself. If he will take his responsibilities seriously he can do nothing but good. The good printer's compositor who is "something of an artist" will go on setting the target; but the publisher's typographer can, if he will, go far towards dragging the mediocre printers up towards the same high standard. If this is done, design in British printing will show a welcome overall improvement.

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WILLIAM DANA ORCUTT

The Anatomy of the Book

THE experienced designer is familiar with the successive parts of a complete book. All less formal embodiments of the book idea have some of these parts, and their position in the whole scheme should be governed by the traditions of the book proper.

In order to leave complete freedom as to number of pages, the favorite custom is to number the text pages in arabic folio numbers, beginning with 1. The front pages are then numbered with roman folios, and thus it makes no difference with the body how many or few front pages are finally found necessary.

The typographical treatment of front matter and chapter pages throughout the book should be in perfect harmony, whether the treatment is simple typography or calls for elaborate embellishment. The character of the book is largely decided by what is done in this respect, and the intelligent designer fully realizes its importance and the chance thus given him for distinguished work.

The following summary gives these parts in proper sequence, and the nature of each.

BASTARD TITLE (*always a right-hand page*)

Now-a-days this page (often miscalled "Half Title") is used merely because custom demands the familiar resting place for the eye in advance of the Title Page. It should never be omitted in work of any pretension to style and quality, and it should never be made unduly prominent by decoration or other treatment. Conventional dignity is the safe note for this page in the book.

ADVERTISING CARD (*always a left-hand page*)

If an Advertising Card or other similar announcement is required, it should be typographically a part of the book, no mat-

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ter what the client's style in his advertising typography may be. If a customer has a special or unique form of advertising, and insists on its use, the printer should inform him that it conflicts with the harmony of the book to do so.

THE TITLE PAGE (*always a right-hand page*)

The Title Page gives the reader his sense of the whole book's quality. It should, therefore, be as nearly perfect as may be. Its first essential is that the eye shall read instantly the three important facts that it has to tell: the title of the book, the name of the author, and the imprint. In the case of a business volume this means the merchandise or business subject, the name of the business house, and the address or addresses. The typography should make these three divisions clear at a glance. There should be as little else on the title page as possible. Everything that can be left out is an aid to quality. The principle of the page is that it is an announcement of the book's contents and that it should not go beyond a very few display lines. It is the door to the house. White space is of the greatest value in this part of the book. If decoration is used, it should never be made more important than the type lines. The use of different faces of type is almost always bad, and success is obtained only occasionally by a genius. So important is harmony that it is not safe even to combine lines of capitals and lower case letters, except after careful planning and with assured understanding and talent.

COPYRIGHT (*always a left-hand page*)

The Copyright of the volume should be placed a little above the center of the page. The best taste calls for caps and small caps, or small caps alone. It is customary to use the bottom of this page for the printer's imprint or the international requirement, "Printed in the United States of America," or both, but the size of page should be considered.

DEDICATION (*always a right-hand page*)

The character and purpose of the Dedication dictate that its treatment should always be formal. The "monumental" style is appropriate and correct. Small caps are the best. The Dedication

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should always be a right-hand page. Its reverse must be left blank.

PREFACE [OR FOREWORD] (*always a right-hand page*)

A Preface that has simply the ordinary character usual to most prefaces should be set in the same size of type as the body of the book, and in the same face. For any preface of unusual importance, the page may be double-leaded, or set in a type one size larger than the body. If the book has both Preface and Introduction, the Preface may be set in italics to mark the distinction. Italics may also be employed if the Preface has been written by a person other than the author. In this case, however, the Preface is preferably placed after the Contents and the List of Illustrations.

CONTENTS (*always a right-hand page*)

The Contents or Table of Contents, filling as many pages as necessary, follows the Preface. The quality of this part of the book-job depends on the little niceties of spacing, margin, and proportion of white space to type which are too often ignored, even in otherwise pretentious books. The Contents pages are almost as important as the Title Page in establishing a sense of quality.

THE LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS (*always a right-hand page*)

The List of Illustrations follows the Contents pages, but no matter where the Contents finishes, the List of Illustrations should begin on a right-hand page. Obviously its typographical style should be the same as the Contents.

INTRODUCTION (*always a right-hand page*)

The Introduction follows the List of Illustrations, and its composition should be in the same size and face as the body of the book. Any typographical distinction between Preface and Introduction should be limited to the former, as stated under "Preface." Authors are not always clear in their understanding of the difference between a Preface and an Introduction. Their Introduction often is really a Preface, and should be so entitled

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and placed in the book accordingly. The Preface is the author's personal remarks to the reader, and these may be of any character, treating of any subject. The Introduction, on the other hand, should treat specifically of the subject of the book, and should contain only statements of direct bearing and importance.

HALF TITLE (*always a right-hand page*)

As the Bastard Title always precedes the Title Page, so the Half Title always precedes the first page of the text—the page which carries the title of the book at its top. The Half Title must always be on the right-hand page immediately preceding this page, and it should consist of not more than the title of the volume. Half Titles may run through a book before various divisions.

Those sections of a book which follow the text must be treated with the same typographic care as the pages which precede the text. These sections are usually as follows:

APPENDIX (*always a right-hand page*)

This should be set in the same face as the text, but in one size smaller type. If the text ends on the left-hand page, a Half Title may be thrown between the text and the Appendix.

GLOSSARY (*preferably a right-hand page*)

The size of type used for the Glossary depends wholly upon its nature, but it usually is two full sizes smaller than that used in the text of the volume. A Half Title may be thrown in before the Glossary, if the text ends on the left-hand page.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (*preferably a right-hand page*)

The comments made under "Glossary" apply equally to the Bibliography. The combination of titles of books and the names of authors offers an attractive opportunity for artistic treatment.

INDEX (*always a right-hand page*)

If the text ends on the left-hand page, a Half Title may be thrown in before the Index. The type used for the Index is

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usually 8 point size set in double column. There is so much difference in the way the index entries read that great care should be exercised to select a model which will fit the particular case in hand.

A SYMPOSIUM: *By Bruce Rogers, Carl Purington Rollins, Joseph Blumenthal, P. J. Conkwright, Arthur W. Rushmore, Milton Glick, Morris Colman, Evelyn Harter, Peter Beilenson and Ernst Reichl.*

Have there been any material changes in the anatomy of the book in the past quarter century? Should there be, to have the contemporary book reflect the times in which it is designed, set and printed?

As these and other questions occurred, we re-appraised the Anatomy of the Book summation in *The Manual of Linotype Typography*, reprinted in the foregoing pages. That text seemed to stand up pretty well. It was written originally by William Dana Orcutt for the *Manual*, whose typographical plan and critical comment was prepared with the co-operation of the late Edward E. Bartlett, then Director of Linotype Typography.

What revisions or additions would Mr. Orcutt suggest for a reprinting? What would other prominent designers and bookmakers suggest?

The idea of a symposium appealed. The counsel of Bruce Rogers, Carl Purington Rollins and Joseph Blumenthal, in the field of fine and privately printed books, was invited, with that of P. J. Conkwright in the university press field.

Trade bookmakers would also have opinions and suggestions, in all probability. Counsel was sought from Milton Glick, who heads the Viking Press design and production activity; Morris Colman, former chairman of the A.I.G.A. Trade Book Clinic and one of Viking's top designers; Arthur W. Rushmore, former Harper vice-president in charge of design and production, now retired to the delights of his Golden Hind Press, at Madison, N. J.; and Ernst Reichl, one of our ranking modern designers,

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whose long association in book manufacturing with H. Wolff and as a free-lance brought an unmatched experience in working with many publishers. Mr. Reichl also has been prominent in A.I.G.A. Book and Magazine Clinic activities.

The comment of an author and a publisher also seemed in order, and happily one in each field with a considerable appreciation of the graphic arts was obtained: Evelyn Harter, whose novel, *Dr. Katherine Bell*, was recently published by Doubleday, and who formerly headed design and production activity for Random House, Smith and Haas and other firms before retiring to private life as Mrs. Milton Glick. As publisher-designer-printer all in one, Peter Beilenson was invited to comment. He, with Mrs. Edna Beilenson, directs the Peter Pauper Press in Mt. Vernon, and is consistently represented in the A.I.G.A. "Fifty Books of the Year" selections.

"So far as I know," Mr. Orcutt wrote, "the Anatomy remains the same today and I can think of no changes I would want to make. I may be wrong, but I am still hoping that it is one thing that doesn't change."

To Joseph Blumenthal, who directs the Spiral Press in New York, and whose books are famed for their simplicity of design and excellence of typography and presswork, the statements of the Anatomy are sane and safe. "In the hands of a sufficiently experienced and versatile designer," he added, "no rule is absolute to the point where it cannot be broken, at least in part, where occasion requires."

To Bruce Rogers, most distinguished of designers of books, the Anatomy "is an excellent short treatise that covers all the points of a well-designed volume. . . . I recommend it for the perusal of anyone engaged in bookmaking. Following it literally would result in a decided advance in that art."

Several minor suggestions that B.R. made have been incorporated in the text of the Anatomy as here reprinted. These concerned the substitution of "should" for "must" in several instances, "in order not to be too dogmatic." His other points were: 1, "that it is frequently preferable to place the preface before the contents"; and 2, "that there seem to be too many half-titles recommended for anything else than a de luxe book—especially at the end, for the index and vocabulary."

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To Carl Purington Rollins, Printer Emeritus to Yale University, lecturer and writer on the graphic arts and one of the foremost American masters of the book, the Anatomy "is a very sound and sensible guide for young book makers—and, to judge from the queer books coming out of New York, older ones could profit from it. I have no disagreement with it in any particular," he continued, "and if it will not make a genius, it will at least prevent a diligent reader from going astray."

P. J. Conkwright found the text clear and concise. "Any extensive elaboration would defeat its usefulness, I think, to those approaching the subject for the first time.

"My only quarrel," he added, "is with the paragraph concerning Copyright. If there is no Dedication I like the Copyright statement and printer's imprint grouped together a little above the center of the page. If there is a Dedication, I like the Copyright statement at the top of the page lining with the top line of the title page, and the printer's imprint at the bottom of the page, lining with the bottom line of the title page.

"This is a good example, however, of how an elaboration of the text can get too involved for a beginner."

To several experienced trade-book designers with considerable production and manufacturing experience, the Anatomy text was less satisfactory.

Both Evelyn Harter and Milton Glick found the text too dogmatic in its dicta. They were bothered most by the first two sentences under Copyright, the last sentence under title page and "references to 'genius.'" They both liked best the remarks regarding Contents, Preface and Introduction.

"Ought not the topics of chapter openings be included," Mr. Glick inquired, "also illustrations, captions, running page heads, folios and such?"

As an ex-designer turned author, Miss Harter has "come to appreciate more than ever the values of legibility and simplicity, with no extraneous tricks."

Morris Colman concurred in feeling the Anatomy text is pretty arbitrary for today, and that chapter openings, running page heads and all other normal elements of a book should be included.

"In particular," he added, "I would like to see the various arguments presented both in terms of tradition and also in terms

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of the particular function which each element of a book performs.

"For example, the title page is not only the 'main entrance' but it also is the source of the bibliographic information which appears in hundreds of library cards, catalogs, etc., and its contents and arrangement determines whether it will be listed in all these places in such form that you or I could find it if we wanted it.

"There are certain legal requirements which influence the form and content of copyright pages. Dedications, while formal in a technical sense, may need to be treated quite informally to express the spirit of the particular dedicator.

"And with many kinds of contemporary books," he continued, "the contents page is made to precede any other preliminary matter, despite tradition, for the greater convenience of the reader. I am sure that this is always why the Index is invariably the last element in back matter."

To Arthur Rushmore, the Anatomy "is darn good copy, clearly stated. There are a couple of amplifications that might help give more clarity:

"*Advertising Card* seems a little vague. This is more likely to be a 'List of Author's Books' or 'Series Title and Titles of Books already issued' if the book is in a historical or other series.

"*Copyright:* Relatively few books carry the Printer's name on copyright and the line 'Printed in the United States of America' looks better and obviates a printing problem if run as a line directly under the copyright notice. A single line at the foot of the page, after the first 500 impressions of 1951 printing, is either bold face or completely unreadable.

"*Dedication:* To me, 'small caps are the best' is doubtful. Small caps are the worst printing of all characters in a font, and unless small caps of a larger size than text will look too weak and small. I'd say 'should be planned with the utmost care for balance and position on page.'

"*Half Title:* First paragraph too dogmatic. If book is a novel, or book without 'Parts' then half title should be 'book title' backed blank and folioed in roman front matter. If book has 'Parts,' the half title should not bear book title, but should carry the Part or

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Section Title and folio arabic 1, backed blank 2 and first page of text folio 3. Similar half title for all other Parts or Sections folioed in."

Peter Beilenson, whose comment on the pleasures and duties of the amateur printer is well worth reading (page 313), thinks the Anatomy "perfectly all right, so far as it goes. If it wavers from the perfect, it is in being too strict—*vide* the remarks about the title page, the "it should never" of the bastard title, etc.

"But," he asks in suggesting the text be extended, "what about additions to the coverage? Footnotes, running heads, chapter titles, initials, etc., are not the limbs of the anatomy, but they are organs. What about the binding? The jacket? The direction of the stamping of the title on the spine?"

To Ernst Reichl, the Anatomy comprises "what might be called the basic minimum. Any designer worth his salt should not only start with this standard but also allow his imagination to roam far beyond it.

"An 'anatomy,' however precise and objective, necessarily breaks down a living entity into component parts. These parts in reality show much more cohesion than is apparent in their piece-by-piece description.

"In the modern book, in particular, we tend to treat the volume as a whole and to submerge the importance of the single page in it. The bastard title, for instance, might be left entirely blank; the title page may be spread over two pages and the advertising card incorporated into it; the copyright page and the dedication page might be treated as a double-page spread, etc.

"The tendency today," he summarized, "is altogether to handle the double-page spread as the unit of the layout, rather than the single page. This may help to break down in some degree the rigidity and formality which awes ordinary human beings, and makes them as reluctant to touch a book as to put on a dress suit. It may also help to make our books a little more ordinary and lively."

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ROBERT JOSEPHY

Trade Bookmaking:

COMPLAINT IN THREE DIMENSIONS

THE development of trade bookmaking since 1920 has been an extraordinary phenomenon in the conservative business of publishing. At that time most publishers looked upon "manufacturing" as a necessary but routine activity, ranking with accounting, shipping and such, and on a far lower intellectual plane than the cultivation of authors and reviewers, or the writing of good blurbs. The production of books was usually entrusted to an uninspired saint who was expected to be hard on his printer's back and soft under his boss's feet. The idea of the publisher himself taking any interest in the *aesthetics* of bookmaking was thought to be a trifle queer.

There was, to be sure, a small traffic in books printed for collectors, and the term "fine printing" had already come to mean "not printed to be read." Typography, as usual, was less than twenty years behind current architecture, and American type founders had already cleaned up the Renaissance and were well on their way into the eighteenth century, while American typographers, like interior decorators, were learning to hop nimbly from period to period. Everyone was learning to blame the machine for the things we were too greedy or too lazy to do properly; fortunately small power presses could be made to imitate hand-press printing, so it was not really necessary to do business at hand-press rates.

In the field of general publishing, however, the hand-press page was out of the question, period styles were incongruous, and the real problem of designing the trade book had never been attempted, because it had never been seen with any clarity. There

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were many experiments with new binding materials and designs, and with printers' flowers and other typographic embellishment, but these were all attempts to "dress up" the old formats, and arose from no real understanding of the problem.

Today [1935], thanks to the leadership of a very few publishers, the educational work of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, and perhaps to the enthusiasm of the designers themselves, there is a steadily widening appreciation of good trade bookmaking, and a better perception of the problem among bookmakers. We are learning to plan books in *three* dimensions, considering proportion and weight and the texture of materials—designing for the hand as well as for the eyes. We are getting free of "period" styles and "period" motifs, and developing a new idiom to suit new methods of production. We are finally trying to make the physical aspect of our books bear some relation to the culture of our own time.

Everyone has come to recognize certain aesthetic values in cheap machine-made glass and metal-ware, if it be designed for the machine and does not attempt to imitate the hand-made, and we find in it a quality different from, but not necessarily inferior to, that of the more elegant article. Thus in printing we are coming to realize that electrotyped plates, made from machine-set type and printed on wood-pulp paper on a perfecting cylinder press can produce a page quite as satisfactory, aesthetically, as the product of the hand-press. It is this new sense of values, born of respect for the machine and for what it can do if used with character, that must be the basis of the designer's attitude. If he is working with his fingers crossed, his work will show it.

The problem of suiting type to subject is the cause of much confusion. We give too little study to the characteristics of typefaces, and the announcements of the foundries and composing-machine people frequently attribute the most fantastic qualities to their new types.

Furthermore, most of the faces available on the composing machines have been cut to reproduce some earlier design, and few to meet the contemporary technical or literary requirements, so that we have several great gaps in the line of type resources that need to be filled. Recent books examined, and a great part of all current bookmaking, show that we have largely thrown off the

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reactionary hand-press ideal, and that we are learning to construct instead of decorate. We have finally obtained a supply of modern book cloth; Europe has given us a supply of modern display types; and we are anxiously awaiting the composing-machine companies' arrival in the Twentieth Century.

Two years later:

The end of a three-hour period spent examining a month's output of American trade books leaves one thinking much more about the book making situation in general than about the four books one has chosen. What impresses one is not that four books, or forty, are decently made, but that all the rest are so badly made.

After my last experience in inspecting a collection of this kind, I wrote, with some satisfaction and much optimism: "We are learning to plan books in *three* dimensions . . . designing for the hand as well as for the eye. . . . We are finally trying to make the physical aspect of our books bear some relation to the culture of our own time." Well, I still think we are only *trying*.

Designing a book is a problem in *three* dimensions. The first essential is good and suitable materials, the second good proportions, the third a good type, and the last good typographic arrangement. Good decoration (or any decoration) is not essential at all. If the materials are poor in quality and unsuitable to the idea of a book; if the proportions detract from the aesthetic effect, or from the book's practical usefulness, typography can do very little to save it.

In the last two years the publishers have been increasing trim sizes without increasing list prices, and at the same time increasing bulks, instead of reducing them to compensate. What that means in simple arithmetic is that when a novel is increased from a 7½ inch 12mo to an 8⅛ inch large 12mo, and the bulk from 1 inch to 1⅛ inches, it requires a third more cubic inches of paper, a seventh more square inches of cloth, a sixth more board, etc.—all for the same money. It means even softer, less printable, less bindable paper; cheaper binding materials throughout; sewing in 32's and other skimping in workmanship. And it means clumsier, uglier, more perishable books.

While other industries are seeking to make the implements of

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living more convenient and more durable and more beautiful, we are deliberately making books less convenient and less durable and less beautiful. While other industries are helping to develop popular taste and anticipating changes in it, we are waiting for our customers to get mad at us. While we see the masses getting wise to other frauds of branding and packaging, we still hand our "intelligent minority" the old fraud of inflated books.

The digest magazines can get millions of readers, though magazines have always had *large* pages, but "that's not the book business." A few of the publishers can sell small books, but "that's all right for *their* lists." Booksellers can tell us the public is on to us, but "*their* customers aren't typical book buyers." Our friends can tell us they like to carry books in their pockets, and that they have no more room on their shelves, or under their beds, but they're only our crazy friends. Our salesman can tell us he got a bad order because the book was too thin—and ah! there we have the real and only truth.

Publishers of new books blame this practice on the reprints, but they themselves control much of the offending reprint output. We allow the cheapest and shoddiest goods to set our styles; as if Fourteenth Street were to lead our dress industry, and jerry-built Queens our builders. Publishing is indeed, as we are so often told, a "different" kind of business!

Most of the books I examined suffered from this inflation. In most cases the money spent on them would have produced a sound, handsome, and durable book in a smaller size, and without small type or crowding. Books printed on proper paper were so rare that I found myself reluctant to discard the few I found, however undistinguished in other respects some of them were. (I felt the same way about the few books with trimmed edges—but that is a delicate subject better discussed face to face, and with weapons, than in a family journal.)

Most of the books suffered also from too much typography. I think we are all trying desperately to overcome typographically the handicap of paper and materials. Some of us find that if we don't do stunts the publisher will think we're not trying. Some of us are still suffering a little from Rogers-complaint. And some of us are perhaps just too anxious to express ourselves.

Whatever the reason, we seldom have the courage to let a simple book stay simple. We are very particular about the type

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we select, and then we are afraid to use it boldly, and to depend on the design of the letter for our effects. Books with illustrations, diagrams, complicated heads, or other special matter, we are apt to handle well; but when the copy is simple we do insist on using rules and/or ornament. When we use ornament we are inclined to have meaningless little units repeated endlessly throughout the book, instead of a few positive, significant elements, used with proper restraint.

In many of the books I saw, the design bore no relation to the subject matter, either in materials, format, or typography, and these were by no means all from the hands of inexperienced designers. Many suffered, of course, because good types are not available for certain problems. None of the composing machines has a really suitable type for books on contemporary subjects: the natural and social sciences, architecture and technology, etc. There should be several such types, comparable to the old numbered "moderns" and "old styles" but better in design, traditional in general form but impersonal and mechanized in drawing; and cut in several weights for different papers. If I may conclude by quoting again from my last effort in this medium, we are *still* "anxiously awaiting the composing-machine companies' arrival in the Twentieth Century."

Postscript, 1951:

Re-reading the above complaints, I am saddened to find how many of them I would repeat today. Many of them, but not all. The inflated book is becoming rare, but it took a world war to finish it off. With it we are losing the sloppy rough-cut fore-edge. "Period" typography is quite dead, but its belated and tortured passing is no credit to any of us.

We still have too much typography, however; too many self-conscious tricks, too much un-discipline. And we still lack many of the types we need. The war may fairly be blamed for disrupting the programs of the machine people, for a book face takes years of labor and trial to produce. But where are the new hand-types?

A healthy printing industry needs a prolific type design program. Creative type-founding stimulates the typographer, and paves the way for the machine cutting. We need ignore competition in the foundry field, and all we have is one tired monopoly.

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Perhaps most of us are too polite to point, but let us not think that we can ignore the foundry situation, and supply the lack of types with calligraphy. Every creative period in printing history has produced its own new types. The present period can make no important contribution without doing the same.

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WILL RANSOM

WHAT IS A PRIVATE PRESS

WHENEVER private presses are mentioned, one of two questions is certain to be heard. The layman asks, "What do you mean, a private press?" while a collector smiles quizzically and inquires, with gentle malice, "How do *you* define a private press?" There have been many answers and much discussion, but common agreement has not yet fixed upon a single definite phrase. Perhaps one fascinating element of the subject is this very uncertainty.

There is really little question about the meaning of "private" in any connection, with its connotation of complete personal freedom in thought and expression and exemption from exterior influence or compulsion. So it is a simple matter to define a private press in those terms. The usual argument, however, is less concerned with a fundamental definition than with its interpretation. The uncertainty is about which of the many presses of past and present shall be considered, from the collector's viewpoint, private enterprises as distinguished from commercial ventures. Actually the line of demarcation is so broad and nebulous that decision must always remain a matter of personal opinion. For a working basis, the following statements provide the best available material.

John Martin, in his *Bibliographical Catalogue of Books Privately Printed* (1834), included certain presses whose productions "were not intended by the writers for sale, and the circulation of which has been confined entirely to their friends and connexions or to those who took an interest in the matter contained in them." The intent is apparent, but it applies equally to privately printed and private press printing, which

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are different matters. The restriction to "writers" is unfortunate, and Martin contradicts himself by including at least one press, Strawberry Hill, many of whose books were offered for public sale. On the other hand, he omitted many which were clearly within his own terms.

M. Claudin, the French bibliographer, explains at greater length that a private press is "one set up in a monastery, a palace, a residence, or a private house, not the office of a printer. In fact it is a press reserved for personal and not for public use, patronized, held, owned, or hired for the occasion by a private person at his own house, or by a congregation in, or close to, their buildings. Whether the copies issued were merely intended for the use of an ecclesiastical order or to be presented to high personages, whether they were exposed for sale or reserved for exchange . . . makes no essential difference." That seems to cover the ground pretty thoroughly.

Alfred W. Pollard, one of the foremost English authorities, says: "For a press to be private a double qualification seems to be necessary: the books it prints must not be obtainable by any chance purchaser who offers a price for them and the owner must print for his own pleasure and not work for hire for other people." And Falconer Madan, another noted English bibliographer, condenses his decision into "a press carried on unofficially by a person or group of persons for his or their private purposes."

The following paragraph, as originally written, erroneously ascribed the quotation to John T. Winterich. It should have read: Still another neatly phrased version occurs in *English Books* 1475–1900, by Sawyer and Darton: "Perhaps, in the end, the best definition of a private press is that it is an enterprise conceived, and masterfully and thoroughly carried out, by a creative artist who (whether or not he likes to cover some of his expenses by sales) does his work from a sincere conviction that he is so expressing his own personality."

Except that any book offered for sale may easily come into the hands of "any chance purchaser" who learns of it, and that "creative artist" is a severe limitation, the common factor of independent expression is apparent in all these.

Granting the connotation of "privacy" as an imperative factor, a survey of impulses and characteristics provides a better understanding of the matter. Actually, the principal differences of opinion and the major argument derive from the question of whether or not the productions of a press are sold or given away. But what difference does that make if the fundamental impulse and continued purpose prove monetary

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return to be a minor consideration, a casual effect rather than a desired result? It is true that many private presses, even some of the greater ones, continued for longer and more prolifically than they would have without patronage, but that was because their subscribers liked the result of what was done in free personal expression. Even the Kelmscott Press produced an edition for Way and Williams with a Chicago imprint, but it should be noted that the publishers bought the book and the book-making of Morris' choice instead of engaging him to carry out their wishes. So there seems to be sufficient justification for disregarding the financial element, so long as it is clearly secondary, except to note that a private press must be free from the necessity of considering that phase of the matter.

As individual expression chooses many avenues, each with its particular attraction, the reasons for establishing private presses are numerous and varied. They have sprung from the dreams and desires of craftsmen, authors and artists, prophets and dilettantes. Broadly, they divide into two general classes, one being concerned with literary content and the other with typographic form, with perhaps a third division concerned only with enjoying something to play with. The typographic viewpoint seems to attract popular interest to the greatest extent.

The simplest and perhaps the truest type of private press is that naintained by one who is, at least by desire, a craftsman and finds a ›eculiar joy in handling type, ink, and paper, with sufficient means and eisure to warrant such an avocation. His literary selection may leave omething to be desired and art may be disregarded or amazingly inter›reted, but he has a good time. As a correspondent recently wrote: 'This small effort shows the difficulties of an amateur both with ink nd with type. But as it is a matter of the mere fun of the thing, rather han business, I am in that singularly fortunate position of being able o tell anyone who doesn't like it to go jump in the lake." Another 'ersion of the same spirit was happily expressed by Edwin Roffe (Roch›ster Press) in 1861:

I must confess,
I love my Press;
For when I print,
I know no stint,
Of joy.

At the other extreme is the author who is entirely or largely con›erned with producing his own writings. He may turn printer by choice

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or for economy, or may hire a workman, but he must, to qualify as a private press, maintain the equipment in his own ownership or control. In this group the personal element is usually the one point of interest, as the typography is generally a mere means to an end. Somewhere in this rating may be included the secret presses devoted to political and religious propaganda in the days when free speech was a hazardous adventure; also those which, like Middle Hill, were established to preserve and distribute rare or unique items of information and record.

Then there is the dilettante who dabbles a little in both phases but performs few of the functions in his own person. His viewpoint is more nearly that of a publisher, yet insofar as he maintains a press and follows an individual program he is a member of this goodly company. Horace Walpole was an excellent example. "Present amusement is all my object," he said at the start, and no doubt he accomplished that purpose not only for himself but for many of his friends.

Another distinct approach to private press activity, most familiar because its results have been more significant and have affected typography as a whole more emphatically, is from the standpoint of aesthetic or artistic vision. Men with a fine feeling for beauty have done marvels with available materials, but the impulse usually includes type design. "Let's make a new fount of type" voiced the conception of the Kelmscott Press and the next ten or twelve years saw almost as many types designed, not all successful but certainly bearing the impress of individual expression. Even Dr. Daniel, with no assumption of creative ability, served the cause well by searching out and reviving the Fell types.

Finally, there is a kind of press which may or may not be considered private but is certainly not commercial, a press maintained by a school for educational purposes of one form or another. Rarely do these reach a collector's attention, since their products are distinctly localized, but there are instances of significant accomplishment. The notable example is the Laboratory Press where, under the direction of Porter Garnett, students of printing learn something of typography in terms of the ideal, not to mention other cultural by-products. Mr. Garnett's statement may well be added to the definitions already quoted. "Issuing publications (for such, in spite of their slenderness, our students' specimens are) and having no commercial function, the Laboratory Press is, in the purest sense of the term, a private press; and its purpose being solely educational, it may be said to be the first private press to be dedicated exclusively to educational ends." On the sole point of priority the

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Whitmash and School Presses might be offered in evidence, but no comparison of purpose can fairly be suggested.

Somewhat in the same spirit is the use of a private press for experimental work, as proposed by James Guthrie, who has said: "The artist at the press is, before everything, an explorer. His true mission is to suggest and demonstrate, not ideas thirty years old, but new ideas, which may take our friend the fine printer (by easy methods) another thirty years to see the drift of!" That approach, as well as another stated intention towards "a gesture of protest and criticism," is of a part with the purpose animated by vision of new and finer achievement. That there was feeling of experiment in the first Kelmscott type and book is a matter of record, as is the fact that subsequent experience and development have changed the result in some important details.

While these groups serve to distinguish the main differences between various kinds of private presses, very few individual instances lie within one classification. Craftsmen have turned to writing, authors to printing, and dilettantes to both. Some have achieved simultaneous distinction in type design, writing, and bookmaking. Such versatility is rare, yet it is illuminating to note that the outstanding figures, those who have contributed most of permanent worth to subsequent culture, of which William Morris is the chief example, are the ones who have combined the greatest number of elements in their activities.

Out of all these has come something more than individual purpose and personal endeavor. Though the poorest of them have earned nothing more than pity or at best a genial tolerance, the significant presses have contributed richly to the program of typography and to aesthetic progress in general. Although the story of private presses is no more than a tiny chapter in the annals of graphic art, although all of them are but an infinitesimal part of the deluge of printers and printing since the middle of the fifteenth century, their influence, particularly upon book design, is strikingly impressive out of all proportion to their size and number. Verily, they are "the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump."

After all is said, the distinguishing quality of a private press is no ess than a matter of spirit, indefinable except by inference. Whatever lecision is made concerning the status of a press, with regard to its being rivate or not, must be based upon a recognition of the ideal apparent n its works, with due consideration for the human elements of its ctivities. Freed from the confining strictures of details, a private press ay be defined as the typographic expression of a personal ideal, conceived in freedom and maintained in independence.

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PRESS MARK, ITS SECOND, BY FREDERIC W. GOUDY

Mr. Ransom was associated with the Village Press during its beginning months at Park Ridge, Ill., in the Summer of 1903.

POSTSCRIPT, 1951:

Twenty-four years later the question is still academic. Instead of a few distinguished private presses there is now a spate of "press books," some of which are produced in home privacy, others designed or printed or published by an outstanding personality, and a few, regrettably, on the border line of the commercial limited editions racket. But the meaning of "privacy" remains unchanged and a private press is what it has always been, a personal activity. I cannot improve on my original statement.

To fill out the record with some definitions that were unknown or omitted in the earlier chapter, and to get all of the statements into one place, we may begin with William Morris's *Note on His Aims in Founding the Kelmscott Press* (1898): "I began printing books with the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty, while at the same time they should be easy to read and should not dazzle the eye, or trouble the intellect of the reader by eccentricity of form in the letters."

C. R. Ashbee, of the Essex House Press, stated in *The Private Press: A Study in Idealism* (1909): "A private press as we understand it at the present day in England and America is a Press whose objective is first of all an aesthetic one, a press that if it is to have real worth challenges support on a basis of Standard, caters for a limited market and is not concerned with the question of the Commercial development of printing by machinery." In 1933 (also twenty-four years later) he repeated that definition in *The Book-Collector's Quarterly* (No. XI, p. 72) and added: "That, I think, is as near as we shall get."

For the Doves Press, T. J. Cobden-Sanderson explained his purpose in the three *Catalogues Raisonné* of 1908, 1911, and 1916, shortened

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in the last: ". . . to attack the problem of Typography as presented by ordinary books in the various forms of Verse, Prose, and Dialogue and, keeping always in mind the principles laid down in the Book Beautiful, to attempt its solution by the simple arrangement of the whole Book, as a whole, with due regard to its parts and to the emphasis of its capital divisions rather than by the addition & splendour of applied ornament."

Among the commentators and bibliographers, Robert Steele, in *The Revival of Printing* (1912) makes no attempt at definition, and G. S. Tomkinson, in his *Select Bibliography of Modern Presses* (1928) "still seeks the right answers." In the latter book, Bernard H. Newdigate's introduction contains two statements which indicate the spirit that informs private presses and in recent years has expanded into more public bookmaking: ". . . a zeal in the pursuit of their art which has been inspired by something more than mere money-making, and in many cases by the attainment of a degree of excellence which invests their work with a peculiar interest for all those who study printing . . ." and specifically about operators of private presses who "have printed their books because they have judged the books worth printing for their own sakes, or worth printing in some particular way; and it is the particular way in which each of these printers has sought to give expression to his conception of how his books should be printed and the way in which he has overcome the limitations of his type and plant and solved the several problems which beset the studious printer in every detail of his work, that give them so much individual interest . . ."

In later years, we have had noble bibliographies of the Nonesuch, Grabhorn, and Ashendene Presses, Bruce Rogers' *Paragraphs on Printing*, and Daniel Berkeley Updike's *Notes on the Merrymount Press* and *Some Aspects of Printing, Old and New*. All of these are required reading for collectors of press books, and each represents a personal viewpoint, but only one defines a private press.

That is the Ashendene *Bibliography*, but one who seeks for a formal declaration will not find it. The few phrases that can be isolated—". . . the absorbing interest of an otherwise busy life . . ."—"The Press was started solely for the sake of the interest and amusement I expected to derive from it. . . ."—". . . the striving after an ideal . . ."—these casual comments are slender evidence. If, however, the entire Foreword is read, one discovers just why and how a private press is operated—"the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive."

COMPOSED IN ELDORADO TYPES

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ALFRED W. POLLARD

The Trained Printer and the Amateur: and The Pleasure of Small Books

PRINTERS,.as a class, like all other craftsmen, can only thrive by supplying their customers with what they want at prices which they are willing to pay. Here and there an exceptionally gifted and courageous craftsman may rely on being able to obtain a better price for better work, and be rewarded for his confidence, but success will always depend not only on himself but also on two external factors over which he has very little control; the existence of enough customers, or potential customers, able to recognise better work than that which they have been getting, and the ability and willingness of these customers to pay a higher price for it as long as a higher price is necessary for its production. But occasionally the discriminating customer (or potential customer) may not find a master-craftsman able and willing to do for him what he wants, and if so, if he cares enough about it to be an enterprising amateur, he starts a press of his own to print the books he wants as he thinks they ought to be printed. Very often he fails; almost always he finds that he must engage at least one skilled journeyman to help him through. But occasionally he succeeds, and when he succeeds he brings new life into the craft of printing.

Definitions of what constitutes an "amateur" have always proved difficult. The two characteristics of the class of which I am thinking are that they have been readers and lovers of books before they have become printers and that they will not knowingly print any book badly for the sake of making a profit off it.

From the Centaur announcement booklet, Lanston Monotype Corporation, Ltd., London, 1929.

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As a rule they will only print the books they like, and they will print them according to their own standards. That some of them have made a good living by their work, does not alter their status.

In the early days of printing amateurs abounded, but not at the very first. When printing was invented it was applied first of all to multiplying a few much-used Latin grammars and calendars for which there was a large and steady sale, because the production of manuscript copies had been too slow and too expensive. These early efforts, which have come down to us mainly in fragments found in binding, are rude and ugly enough. There is no evidence of any effort to make them beautiful for the sake of making them beautiful, and there was no need to do so. Fifteenth-century schoolmasters did not cosset their pupils with pretty school-books; they beat them. Their standard in printing was strictly utilitarian. But when the adventure was once undertaken, whether it was by Gutenberg, or by Fust and Schöffer, of printing large Bibles for use in church, there was at once admitted a standard of dignity, and this the Church for centuries did more than any other body to maintain. Furthermore when the goldsmith Fust and the scribe Peter Schöffer, greatly daring, set themselves to produce psalters for use in choir which, by red printing and by large and small capitals in red and blue, should rival the beauty of the hand-written and hand-painted psalters then in use, to the dignity of the first Bibles there was added beauty and charm, and in a few years bookmen all over Europe were eager to apply the new craft to multiplying the books in which they were specially interested. A few secular highbrows stood aloof. As some old ladies still drive out in their carriage and pair (a very pleasant and dignified way of getting about) and abjure motor-cars, so there were a few great bookmen who clung to manuscripts and would not have a printed book in their libraries. In the same way for some twenty years bishops looked askance at presses and types, and it was not until 1474 that a printed missal was placed upon an altar, and not until 1479 that more than two editions were printed in any year, or anywhere outside Italy. But when Milan and Rome had continued to set the example, German bishops were content to follow it, and when they decided to print they found a vigorous way of maintaining a high standard. They commissioned the best printer they could get to do the work; they allowed him to charge an agreed price

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for it, and they obliged every Church in their province or dio cese to provide itself with a copy before a specified date.[1]

In France in several instances a Bishop, or the Canons of Cathedral, arranged with a printer to come to the Cathedral town and print a missal or breviary under their supervision. These good men were perhaps rather amateur publishers than amateur printers working private presses with a hired man to do the heavy work. But if we choose to think of them only as customers, they were customers who knew what they wanted and brought the printer under their roof as the best means of seeing that they got it

As regards the printing of secular books in the fifteenth century, since the craft was a new one, it was necessarily run in the first instance by men who had been brought up in other occupations. In this sense nearly every native printer outside Germany was an amateur. At the outset the newcomers were largely clerks in minor orders and professional scribes; but merchants, professors and men of letters generally were attracted to the new craft, many of them doubtless only to make money, others to print books in which they were specially interested. Even more than in the case of the bishops or canons who commissioned missals and breviaries, we must think of this motley crowd of recruits rather as amateur publishers than amateur printers. It may be doubted whether even Caxton (who was by trade a mercer) set all his fifteen years in the business, set up the equivalent of one of his small folios with his own hands. He started his press because

[1] The story of Bible-printing in England runs on very much the same line As soon as it was decided that English Bibles were to be placed in all churches the printers were chosen, the price was fixed and every Parish was ordered to supply itself with a copy. From that day to this, with only a very partial exception for a few years under Queen Elizabeth, the printing of the plain text of the Bible has been a monopoly in England. Since the seventeenth century it has been kept absolutely in the hands of the King's Printers and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. From about 1770 onwards various provincial printers tried to circumvent this monopoly by printing Bibles with only a nominal amount of commentary, but hardly any of them found it worth while to issue a second edition. The monopolists knew that to maintain their rights in the nineteenth century, which made unrestricted competition into a fetish, they must give good value to buyers, ensure good workmanship, and give their workmen no ground for complaint. They have fulfilled all these conditions, and as a result we still have a Bible Trust in England, which is a Trust in the true meaning of the word, because it is worked in the interests of everyone concerned.

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he wanted to get his books into print as the easiest way of circulating them; but there are no signs that he took any special interest in fine printing for its own sake, or took any joy in producing a handsome book. His standards were those of a competent but unenterprising scribe, who only wanted to set his words down accurately on the page so that they could be easily read. The master printers all over the Continent of Europe, when they had the courage to stand out against the pressure to cut prices or increase profits by using cheaper and cheaper paper, and crowding more on to it, were doing much better work than Caxton, and when they found customers who encouraged them to do their best their work altogether outclassed his.

When we turn to the scholar-printers of the sixteenth century I think it would be hard to deny the claim of Aldus and the Estiennes to a disinterested love of good printing, as well as a desire to get the books in which they were interested into print. It is true that the rich scholars of Italy and France were used to a high standard of excellence in the books, manuscript or printed, which they put on their shelves, but it is to the credit of Aldus and the Estiennes and Simon Colines and Geoffroy Tory that they catered also for the needs of less wealthy scholars, not by cheapening paper or crowding more old types on a page, but by designing, or causing to be designed, new fonts, with which they could print more economically without loss of beauty. Moreover, more especially at Lyons, the new ideals of compact printing, of the small book beautiful, were applied to printing not only in Greek and Latin, but in the vernacular, and these sixteenth century models can still be imitated without archaism or ostentation, which, when fifteenth century masterpieces are followed, are often difficult to avoid.

"A penny, I trow, is enough for books," said one of Robert Copland's customers to him, somewhere about 1530, and the spirit of that remark haunted the vernacular English book trade for nearly a century and a half. Amid all the outpouring of the wonderful Elizabethan and Jacobean literature, though no printing was allowed in the provinces except at Oxford and Cambridge, there was not a sufficient demand for books in all England to provide work for more than about five and twenty master printers many of whom had only a single press, with a couple of journeymen and an apprentice. The Privy Council was always trying to

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keep down the number, both of printers and presses, and its action in so doing is usually represented as solely dictated by the fear of their being employed in producing seditious or schismatic pamphlets. No doubt this fear was the main cause of the Council's action. But if there had been enough lawful work for twice as many printers and presses, the number might have been doubled with no increase of risk. The risk lay solely in the fact that a man who owned and could use a press, if he could not get enough lawful work to give him a living, might be tempted to take secret work. Unless they were desperate, men would not risk hanging to earn a few shillings, or a few pounds, but there is ample evidence that in Shakespeare's day some of the small master printers really were desperate, and it was only natural that they should do bad work—as indeed they did. All over Europe printing at the beginning of the seventeenth century was bad; in England it was very bad indeed.

During the second half of the seventeenth century and the whole of the eighteenth, the wealth of England steadily increased, and with its wealth the standard of education. There was a much greater demand for books, and though printing was permitted after 1693 in the provinces without restrictions, there was clearly more work to do in London. Printing became neat, and on occasion elaborate, and throughout the eighteenth century, both in England and Scotland, there were constant experiments and efforts to improve it, to which full justice has not yet been done. Among these efforts to improve it there is no reason to include Horace Walpole's private press at Strawberry Hill, or any of the other private presses which, possibly in imitation of his example, subsequently sprang up, except perhaps that at Lee Priory. The Strawberry Hill books were handsomely printed according to the taste of the day, but they showed no originality, such as was displayed by Baskerville or even the Foulises, and they certainly started no style. The other private presses of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were purely literary in their aims, and many of the books produced at them are below the average good commercial work of the day.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the great spread of education caused a demand for very cheap books, both for amusement and instruction, which led to some lowering of standard

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More dangerous still were the very gaudy ideals of decorative work which found favour during the era inaugurated by the Great Exhibition of 1851. There was an epidemic of bad taste among book buyers and publishers, and therefore printers responded to it, as they always will, whether gladly or reluctantly, respond to any popular demand which brings grist to their mill. Meanwhile much quite good work was being done by the Chiswick Press and other firms, but the influence of the amateur on the professional printing of that period is not much in evidence, either for good or for evil.

The Daniel Press, worked as an amusement by the Rev. C. H. O. Daniel, Provost of Worcester College, Oxford, for a good many years, beginning about 1874, seems to me one of the best examples of a really amateur press that can be adduced. The interest of its books is mainly literary, but it is also typographical, and though the performance is usually slight, and even thin, Dr. Daniel showed real *flair* in his revival of the old Fell types, his uses of italics, and the happy knack with which the work was put on the page. I think that Dr. Daniel's influence may possibly be traced, though only quite slightly, in some of the pretty books (often a little spoilt by the weakness of the ink) published by Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., in the eighties, most of them printed by Messrs. Ballantyne. If this is true, it is so much more to Dr. Daniel's credit.

We come now to the movement of which William Morris was the leader, which placed to the credit of English typography some of the finest books the world has ever seen. Morris must be classed as an amateur, and his press as a private press, because he printed to please himself, and no offer of money, however great, would have induced him to print anything he really disliked. We must not, however, allow the private income which enabled Morris to carry out his ideas without worrying over cash-returns, or the fact that he sold most of his books by means of circulars from a private house instead of over a counter, or any other consideration, to blind us to the fact that he was one of the world's greatest craftsmen, and certainly, if we consider his versatility, his sureness of touch and his imagination, the finest that the British Isles have ever produced. If he had had the largest printing house in London, and had printed the Kelmscott books in a special depart-

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ment of it to advertise the rest, it could not have made him more of a craftsman than he was. He stands in a very real sense alone by virtue of his unique and splendid personality.

Admiration for Morris led to the setting up of several private or amateur presses, which did excellent work in his spirit: notably the Doves Press, conducted at first by Mr. Cobden-Sanderson, an ex-barrister, who had produced some real masterpieces as a book-binder, and Mr. Emery Walker, the photo-engraver, who had ever been ready to help anyone trying to promote good printing; afterwards by Mr. Cobden-Sanderson alone. There was also the Ashendene Press of Mr. St. John Hornby, one of the partners in Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son, who, I fancy, has done rather more of the work with his own hands than most other private printers. Robert Proctor's Greek type, again, was brought into existence by love of Morris, but Proctor, like Messrs. Ricketts and Shannon, who were responsible for the Vale Press books, had no press of his own.

The beauty of all these books reinforced the influence of the Kelmscott Press ones, by proving that what Morris had done on his own lines could be done by lesser men with the variations suggested by their individual tastes. They reinforced also the proof which Morris had given, that so long as it is regarded as a hobby (or in a commercial house as an advertisement) the production of really fine specimens of printing is not an impossibly expensive one. Morris made no profit from the Kelmscott books as a pub-

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lisher; could allot himself no payment for all the magnificent decorative work which he put into them with his own hands. He got nothing from his venture save the joy of achievement and pleasure of giving copies to his friends. But he proved the existence of a public willing to pay for the cost of print and paper, even when both print and paper were the best which money could buy; and I believe that most venturers in the same field have been supported to about the same extent. From our present point of view, this is one of the most important results which Morris achieved. The direct influence of his work on men like Mr. Updike and Mr. Bruce Rogers can only be reckoned very slight. But if the Kelmscott books had not made the success they did, neither Mr. Updike nor Mr. Bruce Rogers would have been given his chance, and to make it possible for younger men to get their chance is one of the finest things a master craftsman can do.

Private presses have multiplied greatly in the last thirty years, and some of them have done fine work. But the influence which they are exercising on the commercial printing of the present day is not in any way comparable to that which the Kelmscott and Doves books exercised a generation ago. There is no virtue in a book being printed in a small edition or in a private house, and no virtue in producing endless specimens of printing rather than books. Mr. Meynell and the Nonesuch Press (whose achievements I should admire much more joyously if it had not been called a "press") have shown what a diversity of interesting work can be obtained from commercial printers by a man who has good taste and knows how to get what he wants. When fine work can be obtained in this way private presses seem of little use save as an amusement to their owners. But no one is as yet making full use of the revolution (a much greater revolution than that inaugurated by the Aldine italics) which the "Monotype" machine has effected in modern printing just at the moment when (owing to the economic conditions, compositors having at last secured a fair wage) it was most needed. Thanks to the wonderful facility with which small types can now be cut and the greater quickness of machine-setting there is now only one obstacle to a new triumph of the Small Book Beautiful; and that is the obsession of the paymaster, the Customer, that it is unreasonable to expect him to pay anything approaching the same price for compact books in small clear type with no needless expanse of blank paper

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around the type page, as for the same number of words printed in larger type and with much more blank paper. The obsession is fostered by the fact that the reprints of popular books which have passed out of copyright and which often are produced in very pretty forms, are sold in large quantities at small prices, because no author has to make a livelihood out of them. But if a book does not appeal to a large public and yet has to earn money for its author it cannot be sold at a low price, and it is childish for the customer to insist that this fact should be concealed from him by books being made needlessly large in order that he may persuade himself that he is still getting plenty for his money. Publishers and Printers and Authors should unite to educate their paymaster the Customer on this point, and it is much to their interest to do so, for the book space which is now occupied by a couple of hundred volumes might easily hold two or three times as many if all books were printed with pleasant compactness. If an Amateur would arise who would help to train Customers to pay high prices for beautiful compact books he would be doing good service. At present most of the finely printed books are needlessly and inconveniently large.

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FRANCIS MEYNELL

SOME COLLECTORS READ

IT WOULDN'T BE EASY TO IMAGINE AN IDEA, A POLICY and a business more "personal" than our Nonesuch has been. This is my excuse for the personal (worse, the first-personal) character of these ensuing notes.

Nonesuch was started by three of us in the close quarters of a basement room (two of the three became husband and wife); at our busiest and most successful we have never had an office staff of more than three, usually our friends as well as our associates; we later lived above and in our office; we have been responsible ourselves not only for every decision of policy of what to publish and not to publish but also for every piece of printing, of make-up, of advertising; for jackets, catalogues, specimen pages and a vast deal of miscellaneous editing. And, more than anything else, it is our own taste which has determined our choice of books and choice of styles. In short everything (except typing and account-adding in later days) has been done by Vera Meynell or David Garnett or me.

When I set myself to the making of these notes I thought I should only have to remember, not to reconstruct. I had by heart all that was worth knowing about the beginnings of the Nonesuch in itself. But for its remoter beginnings in myself I found that I had in fact to go back to my childhood.

This essay appeared originally in *The Colophon*, Part IV, 1930. It was revised and retitled The Personal Element for inclusion in *The Nonesuch Century*, 1936, from which it is here reprinted.

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What induced this revision of my opinion was a phrase (quoted in my brother Everard's "Life" of Francis Thompson) from a letter of my mother's. "Please return" she had written to Thompson, "the revise proofs sixteen pages at a time."

First of all (said I to myself) I am the son of a mother who was not only a poet but who knew also that page proofs have to be dealt with in units of sixteen. Yes, and that was only a trifle of the family's knowledge. I have often seen my mother unflinchingly cut a treasurable phrase in one of her essays so that it should end to the line or paragraph of the printer's prescription; and correct a proof so that a word deleted here would be promptly balanced by an added word there to save the over-running of the corrected lines. Where did she learn this tenderness towards my craft? But from my father, of course.

And then I realised that, if he likes it or not, the Nonesuch Press is really my father's grand-son. In establishing it I was doing no more than reverting to type.

There was of course the literary background, the great names and exciting personalities of the writers who were my parents' friends. There was George Meredith, whose limping descent of the staircase I can just, and whose yearly tip of a pound at Christmas I can very easily, remember. There was the silver teapot which I never carried to be replenished without remembering my father's solemn sanctification of it: "Robert Browning has taken his tea from this." There was W. B. Yeats standing owl-like at the door blinking to discover my mother through the smoke emitted from the Egyptian cigarettes which I had lately been sent at top speed to buy, my father sometimes going twice through his pockets before he assembled the necessary tenpence halfpenny. (Tenpence halfpenny was also the price of a box of soldiers, and once I thought of buying soldiers instead of cigarettes and running away from home.) There was Francis Thompson, "The Poet" as we children always called him, fragile, mannered, and complaining of the weather or of the quality of our food. Much later I remember Jack Squire discussing the plans for the first *London Mercury;* and Hilaire Belloc brought by Wilfrid Blunt because of my

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father's "discovery" of his first writing in the *Morning Post*. I don't remember Stevenson or Patmore; but framed holographs of *In the Highlands* and *The Toys* were set between the gold Japanese embroideries which surrounded the sitting room. This literary "atmosphere" was more continuously and intensively itself than anything I know to-day—even in psycho-analytic or Communist circles. "Does he write? Then do bring him." "Is he a Thompsonian? Of course he must come."

Every Sunday afternoon and evening my parents were "at home." There was endless poetry-reading, endless "literary talk" by my mother's devoted admirers. No, not endless. There were two signals for their departure. The first gong, so to speak, was the arrival of the hot blackcurrant jam drink. The second was my father unbuttoning, almost unostentatiously, the top button of his boots.

But all this was literature, not letters, and letters was after all the chief occupation of the house. A literary hot-house should have produced in me, very nearly did produce, an over-sensitive literary plant. And sure enough I wrote poetry, with three of my sisters and one of my brothers. (George Moore in one of the "Hail and Farewell" volumes has a disconcerting fancy of the young Meynells assembling for their verse-writing hour once a week.) But letters made me into a printer.

In a play about Francis Thompson which was lately produced my father had necessarily to be represented. He objected to his portrayal under his own name, and he was therefore made to appear as John Oldcastle, his writing-name before I was born. In one scene he was shown sitting in the office of the paper which he edited, *Merry England*. He struck the bell twice for his sub-editor, once for his office boy, three times for his secretary. There was indeed such a magazine. But there was never an office, never a secretary, never a sub-editor, never an office boy. The whole work was done by my mother and father and amateur helpers on and about the library able. If I was allowed in the room on press-days the bargain was hat I was to sit under the table. Mostly this was fun. I learned a lot

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about the leg-fidgets of writers. And "under the table" became my own kingdom, from which I could at the age of seven declaim without embarrassment Gray's "Elegy" to the Sunday night supper guests. But one memory survives which still carries horror with it—the memory of my mother suddenly going down on her knees, down to my level, and burying her face in her hands. She had just been told, in the midst of proof-correcting, of the death of Coventry Patmore.

"The Poet" was one of the helpers—a feared helper. He would wish to engage all the rest in argument as to the desirability of this or that paragraph. On one occasion, J. L. Garvin, who could disturb by his brilliant relevance almost as much as Thompson by his dull irrelevance, made an unexpected call. Proofs were already overdue. By a masterly manoeuvre "the poet" was sent to entertain him. Garvin, the liveliest talker of our day, was overwhelmed by Thompson's discussion of the relative merits of Lyons and A.B.C. tea shops. He sat mumchance an afternoon through. Thompson reported: "Never have I known Garvin so brilliant."

Merry England was a monthly, but its crises were not less acute for that. You can put off so easily until too late what has to be done only once a month. But *The Weekly Register,* which was also my father's property, and which was written almost wholly by himself and my mother, was a weekly. The correction of proofs was a diurnal occupation with Thursdays as the grand climax. It was printed by the Westminster Press; and here, too, my father was the begetter of my trade. For he was part-owner of the Westminster Press and helped to establish with it a style of typography and a care for detail in printing which were far ahead of the run of commercial presses.

When he was over fifty my father added the last segment to the circle. Magazine proprietor, editor, writer, printer, he now became book publisher, as managing director of Burn & Oates. He transferred from John Lane Francis Thompson's books and my mother's, and he gave me my first job. He gave me also my first lesson in detail. *The Collected Works of Francis Thompson* were issued by Burns & Oates a few months after I had joined the firm, and I was allowed to

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JOHN BUNYAN 1628-1688

The

Pilgrim's Progress

AND

The Life & Death of Mr. Badman

THE NONESUCH PRESS 1928

The title page of Bunyan's classic, composed in Caslon and Deutsche Zeitschrift, printed by the Kynoch Press, edition, 1600 copies.

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have a hand in designing the edition. When it was printed my father discovered that several commas had broken away from the ends of lines and that a number of the kerns or top loops of the letter "f" had been broken. Day after day piles of the imperfect volumes were massed in his flat, which was immediately above the office. We had a sort of fire-bucket drill. One of my sisters would find the page, my father would dab in the comma, I would do the blotting and another sister would restack the books. Some scores of thousands of pen corrections were thus made. I don't think my father would have trusted any one of us to do the actual pen work. He leant back, he quizzed, he admired after every stroke.

In 1913, pursuing a common typographical errand, I chanced to meet Stanley Morison, who had just emerged from a bank and was anxious to concern himself with book-production, and he joined forces with me at Burns & Oates. A year later as a personal venture I purchased a hand press, which I kept in my dining room; and my next step was to persuade the delegates of the Oxford University Press to let me use some of their seventeenth century Fell types. They were very obliging, and they let me have what I wanted, charged me for it as if it were sold, but very properly kept the legal title to it, so that if I were to misuse this cherished type they could at any time call upon me to surrender it. I still have these Fell types in my possession. "The Romney Street Press," since I lived in that street, was my new "style," and I issued a prospectus, which I regard now with mixed feelings of shame and admiration at my audacity; for if ever there was a gold-brick prospectus this was one! Here it is:

"The Romney Street Press at 67 Romney Street, Westminster,
"has been set up for the better and unaffected production of Books,
"& Pamphlets, & single sheets of poetry. The type of the Press (used
"for this prospectus) is the finest of the series imported from Holland
"in about 1660 by Bishop Fell for the Oxford University Press, by
"whose courtesy it is now used. The editions of the Romney Street
"Press will be limited to a maximum of fifty copies. The preliminary

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"costs of equipment amount to £40, & Francis Meynell, the Director "of the Press, invites subscriptions to cover this amount. Subscribers "will have first call upon the publications of the Press at cost price, "upon the amount of their subscription. The first publications will "be Seven Poems by Alice Meynell, written since the issue of the "Collected Poems. There will follow Mary Cary, the meditations, "occasional poems and spiritual diary of the wife of a Cromwellian "captain, now first published, from her MS. note-book; & Love in "Dian's Lap, by Francis Thompson. But the process of production "will be slow. Suggestions for other books, particularly of 17th cen-"tury reference, will be welcome. APRIL 1915."

I may say at once that the only two books which I issued (*Ten Poems by Alice Meynell,* and *The Diary of Mary Cary)* were, with a good deal of difficulty, disposed of—yes, the whole of the fifty copies; but there were no general subscriptions to the Press, not one, and the cost of equipment, forty pounds, bore heavily upon me. Perhaps because of this, perhaps because my dining room was my workshop, and printer's ink was apt to get into the soup, I discontinued the venture—which in any case (since I had no technical assistance and very little competence myself) was decidedly irksome.

Meantime decisive things had happened to me. I had met George Lansbury, inspiration of my politics, and I had met Bruce Rogers, inspiration of all eager typographers. For the next five years I worked in close association with George Lansbury. (I suppose that he has lately become one of the most generally loved men in England. To anyone who has known him in times of deep stress as intimately as I have that cannot be surprising. There is no qualification in my admiration and affection.[1]) In him I found a most ready support for

[1] When we published the Compendious *William Morris* I sent copies to G. L., to Ramsay MacDonald and to Mr. Baldwin—the last a stranger to me. Their replies make almost a résumé of their political characters. G. L. saw in the social essays a conscience-pricking reproach about things left long undone. J. R. M. saw in them a cause for self-congratulation. Mr. Baldwin did not answer for nearly two years: the book had been mislaid. But when he did answer he covered two pages with his close hand-writing to apologise and explain. The Perfect Gentleman!

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my "propaganda" view of good printing and good craftsmanship of any kind. Lansbury secured the financial support which made it possible for me to start the Pelican Press. I think the Pelican was a pioneer in the policy of having very few types but all of them of good design. We set advertisements for commerce, which was in those days something of an innovation; and we printed political pamphlets in the Minority Labour interest. These pamphlets are odd to look at now. The slogan of "fitness for purpose" had not yet informed us. A report of the great meetings which we held at the Albert Hall after the first Russian revolution was designed with the mannered elegance which would have suited better an essay by Walter Pater. And I remember myself writing a double-page political manifesto for the *Weekly Herald*, calling upon the proletariat to rise and end the war, which was set in Cloister Old Face with a seventeenth century flower border and sixteenth century initials. . . . I set up with elegance what must be the rarest of Siegfried Sassoon first editions. I myself have no copy. Bertrand Russell brought him to see me when Sassoon had decided to refuse to go back to the war, and I made into a leaflet his letter of explanation to his Commanding Officer. I am now astonished at what we published without prosecution. Now it would be "seditious propaganda." I can only put it down to the innocent elegance of typography!

Soon after the war I began making proposals from the Pelican Press to various publishers. Would they allow me to print for them this that and the other book in a "really nice" edition? I pointed out that if they were in fact wrecked upon the conventional desert island and wished to take with them the conventional choice of two books, Shakespeare and the Bible, they would not find a current edition of either fit for a tasteful shipwreck. But my arguments were fruitless—except of a plan for myself. Why shouldn't I do what I wanted them to do? Why wait on them? So I began to hanker after the as yet unnamed, unmanned and unfinanced Nonesuch Press. The next step was to bind David Garnett and Vera Mendel to the adventure.

David Garnett's family history, like my own, is full of literature.

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He is the son of two writers and the grandson of a third. He too, after a brief excursion into the Natural Sciences, reverted to type, opened a bookshop (with Francis Birrell), wrote his first novel and, in the same year, lent both the cellar of his bookshop and the assistance of his critical and book-learned mind to our new venture. He too "liked" books. He could, I mean, enjoy the feel of a book, its weight, shape, edges, the synthesis of sensitive things which is represented by that most insensitive word "format."

Vera Mendel was the useful necessary incubator for our schemes. She provided our small capital and she did the routine work. She was also our fearless critic-in-chief. The things she stopped us doing! She, too, developed in me the sense which David Garnett already shared with her— the sense of responsibility about texts. And she put sobriety whenever she could into my lush "blurbs." Her flexibility of mind made our work, too, flexible. She translated Toller's first play, which was among our earliest books; and shared with me the editing of *The Week-End Book*. For the first eighteen months, while I was working full time at the Pelican Press and David Garnett at his bookshop, and before we felt justified in employing as much as an office girl, she did everything, from editing to stamp-licking, that I could not steal time to do.

This about ourselves. Whence our corporate name? We began by looking not for a name, but for a device; and we found in a tapestry surviving from Nonesuch Palace the elements which Stephen Gooden made into our first "mark." In adapting the device, we took also the name; and I silenced an early objection that it was too boastful by pointing out that Nonesuch means "nonpareil" and so had an esoteric meaning. For nonpareil is the name of a very small and very humble size of type. Nonesuch was chosen, then, in a spirit of mixed hope and humility. Ralph Hodgson, the poet, who was interested in my enterprise, was most anxious that I should call it the Pound Press. (He had lately seen and admired my father's seventeenth-century farmhouse, which has in front of it a delightful yard or "pound.") Every book, he urged, warming to his subject, should

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OF AGE

I CANNOT receive that manner, whereby we establish the continuance of our life. I see that some of the wiser sort doe greatly shorten the same, in respect of the common opinion. What said *Cato Junior*, to those who sought to hinder him from killing himselfe? Doe I *now live the age, wherein* I *may justly be reproved to leave my life too soone?* Yet was he but eight and fortie yeares old. He thought that age very ripe, yea, and well advanced, considering how few men come unto it. And such as entertaine themselves with, I wot not what kind of course, which they call naturall, promiseth some few yeares beyond, might do it, had they a privilege that could exempt them from so great a number of accidents, unto which each one of us stands subject by a naturall subjection, and which may interrupt the said course, they propose unto themselves. What fondnesse is it, for a man to thinke he shall die, for, and through, a failing and defect of strength, which extreme age draweth with it, and to propose that terme unto our life, seeing it is the rarest kind of all deaths, and least in use? We only call it naturall, as if it were against nature to see a man breake his necke with a fall; to be drowned by shipwracke; to be surprised with a pestilence, or pleurisie, and as if our ordinarie condition did not present these inconveniences unto us all. Let us not flatter our selves with these fond-goodly words; a man may peradventure rather call that naturall, which is generall, common and universall. To die of age, is a rare, singular, and extraordinarie death, and so much lesse naturall than others: It is the last and extremest kind of dying: The further it is from us, so much the lesse is it to be hoped for: Indeed it is the limit, beyond which we shal not passe, and which the law of nature hath prescribed unto us, as that which should not be outgone by any; but it is a rare privilege peculiar unto her selfe, to make us continue unto it. It is an exemption, which through some particular favour she bestoweth on some one man, in the space of two or three ages, discharging him from the crosses,

Page from Montaigne's *Essays*, composed in Poliphilus and Koch Antiqua, printed by R. & R. Clark. Published 1931; edition, 1375 sets of two volumes.

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weigh a pound and cost a pound! After some intensive correspondence his enthusiasm was routed, and the Nonesuch Press came into being.

So there we were, in 1923, in our cellar under Birrell & Garnett's bookshop, book-enthusiasts, amateurs in the literal, though not, I hope, the derogatory sense of the word, tackling the donkey work of book production and the mule work of book distribution.

For nearly two years we continued in the half light of our limited premises, producing illuminating works in limited editions, and varying the daily task with such occasional diversions as "invoice bees"—parties to which our friends were bidden in order to help us between drinks with the task of writing our invoices, "statements," et caetera.

It is scarcely worth recording the vicissitudes of those underground activities. Only when we tried to stop an ever-rising tide of Congreves—which, as with breaking back I eagerly unloaded the volumes from the lorries, narrowly escaping immuring V.M. in that unhistoric cellar for good—only then did we wonder whether, for purposes of self-preservation, the Press might not have to expand. (Indeed, one wall did bulge alarmingly.) Happily, part of the edition of Congreve got lost in Devonshire. . . The lorries which were carrying the bound books from the printers at Plymouth broke down before we did.

I myself travelled the first books, being received with varying degrees of courtesy by the booksellers. Of those who were civil some were encouraging, some politely discouraging. When, very soon, we were obliged to "ration" orders, these were rewarded and persuaded, and the discourteous received no more than their small deserts.

We meant to have fun with our business and fun we have had. Even when it had outgrown its puppyhood we continued to buttonhole our customers and sell them not only our goods but our tastes and our views. Let me anticipate for a moment and quote a sample from the opening paragraph of our 1929 catalogue.

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"In these days of literary censorship exercised by Sir Archibald "Bodkin (of Savidge case fame), Sir William Joynson-Hicks and a "Detective-Inspector of Scotland Yard, no publisher can be positive "in his announcement that he will issue such and such a book. "Chaucer? Fie, his language is coarse. Plato? The less said about "Socrates and his young friends, *if* you please, the better. Shake-"speare? He will perhaps pass unchallenged, for Lamb's Tales doubt-"less exhausted the censors' interest in this prurient author. Farquhar, "Don Quixote even—these too may corrupt the corrupt, which is "the current legal test of obscenity. With a propitiatory bow to Sir "Archibald and to the potent and anonymous Detective-Inspector "(the unlamented Home Secretary gets no more than a distant nod), "we therefore give to this list of announcements the precautionary "title, 'Bodkin Permitting.'"

But this jape, and others, were part of a serious and deliberate policy. From the beginning we had a plan and hoped to have a public. In the words of our first (1923) catalogue, we intended to make books "for those among collectors who also use books for reading." We intended to choose our books to suit our tastes, not the imputed taste of a hypothetical public.

Not that we felt ego-centric and exclusive about it, like the Californian millionaire who, I am told, caused a Shakespeare to be printed to suit his own taste and his own library—an edition of one copy. We have made now over a hundred editions to suit our own personal requirements—the author we wanted, the text we wanted, the format we wanted, the decorations we wanted. And if there had been no other profit from the Press, this shelf of my library would have seemed in itself a sufficient recompense for my share of the work. But fortunately, many other people also wanted these books. For our taste proved to be a normal contemporary taste. We did not create the vogue for Donne, for instance—we were ourselves part of that general tendency which has in these days found him afresh.

My previous experience in printing had shown me quite clearly

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that, in order to avoid monotony and to produce desirable editions at a reasonable cost, one must intelligently exploit the best mechanical equipment and the highest technical skill available. Today there is more fine typographical material to be had than even the largest printing house in the country could possess; and the various commercial presses have developed technical skill and variety along various lines. There was therefore no good reason, we thought, for a new "private press" in the old style, arrogantly self-contained, and with but one type and obsolete "hand" machinery.

Our stock-in-trade has been the theory that mechanical means could be made to serve fine ends; that the machine in printing was a controllable tool. Therefore we set out to be mobilisers of other people's resources; to be designers, specifiers, rather than manufacturers; architects of books rather than builders.

The propriety of our use of the word "Press" was called in question by Arnold Bennett and others. Pedantically it may be wrong; by the spirit it is nearly right. There is no exact word for our function, which was new. Nor for my own part in that function. When I have wanted to "sign" a book, at first I wrote "Typography by." But ypography is only a quarter of my battle, and that phrase puts undue emphasis on one department, one only, of a job the essence of which is that it is manifold. A number of books I signed F. M. *Finx*. But 'finxit" means "fashioned," and so "made," rather than "designed." I also used the phrase "under the care of," but this is vague and inaccurate, suggesting merely the oversight of someone else's designs. Perhaps "This book was planned by" is the least inaccurate formula, though this again leaves out the whole business of overseeing. Overseeing is no purely typographical matter. It means the planning and coordinating of the whole book—text, editor, and artist, as well as papermaker, printer and binder. In fact, it involves an editorial as well as a typographical attitude.

Foulk Grevill writing of the posthumous edition of Sidney's *Arcadia* said "This requyres the care of his friends, not to amend (for I think that falls within the reach of no man living) but only to see

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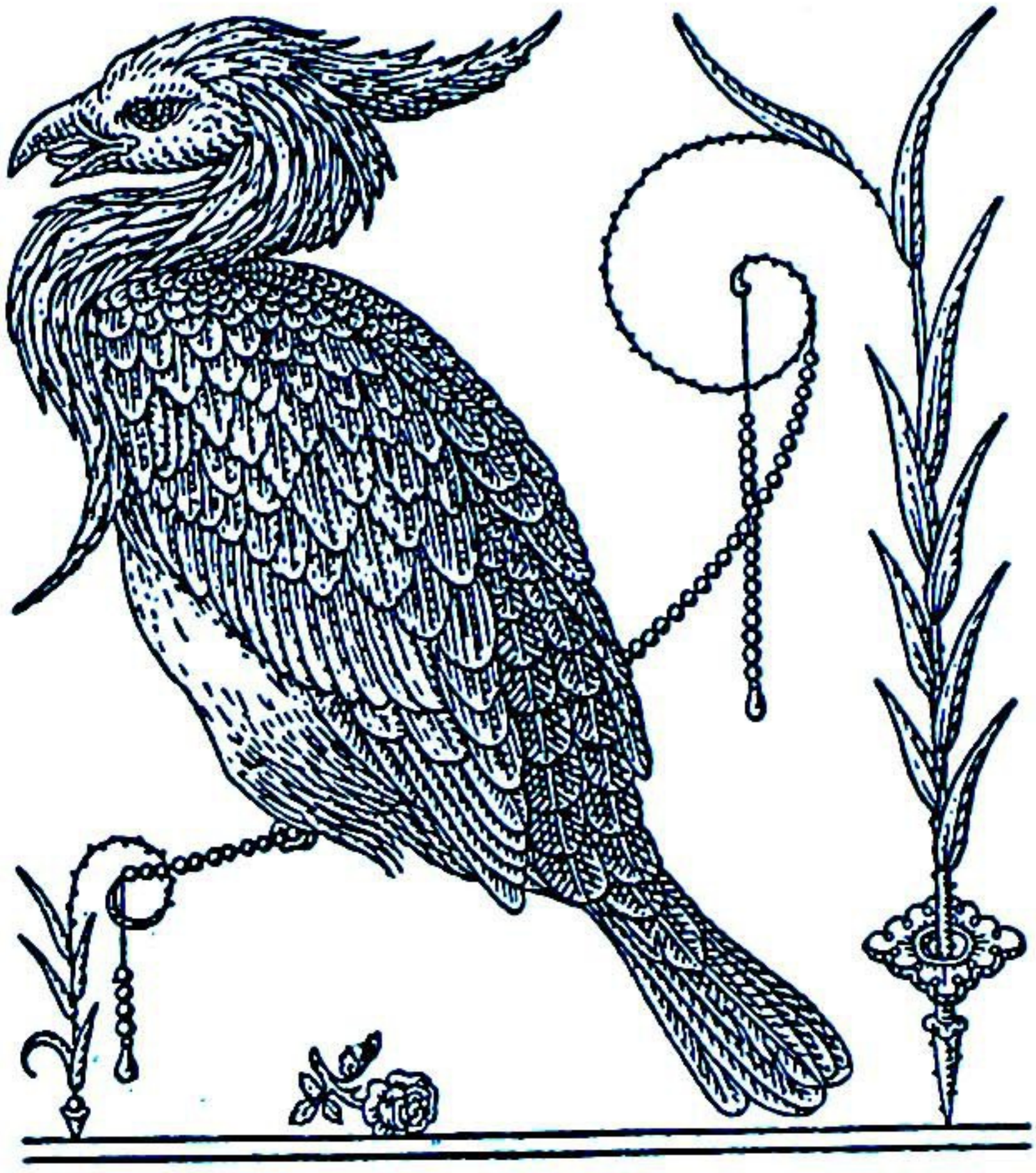
THE
PRINCESS OF *BABYLON*



THE AGED BELUS, king of Babylon, thought himself the first man, upon earth; for all his courtiers told him so, and his historiographers proved it. What might excuse this ridiculous vanity in him was, that, in fact, his predecessors had built

Opening page from Voltaire's *Princess of Babylon* with line drawing by Thomas Lowinsky. Composed in Caslon, printed by the Westminister Press. Published 1928; edition, 1500 copies.

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to the paper, and other common errors of mercenary printing." My own interest and ambition in founding the Nonesuch was to see to the paper and other common errors of mercenary printing; but D.G. and V.M. aspired to tackle the question of amendments as well. From our fourth book onwards that policy has governed all our major publications. When, as sometimes happens, a text needs no more editing: when it is adequately and accurately "established," there is still the quasi-editorial function of the illustrator. He may, he should, become in his designs more than a decorator; he should, I believe, become a significant *commentator*. "Kauffer on Burton" is, for example, how I would describe the drawings for our edition of *The Anatomy*.

Our books were published in "limited editions" because we had to rope in the collector as well as the reader and student. We have found that it was necessary to impose another sort of limit on our output—a limit to the number of titles we could conveniently and properly publish in a given time. We came to the conclusion that eight books a year was about as much as we could manage if every detail was to be our personal concern and if all were to be freshly designed. The making of our books in a great variety of styles was an early principle, firmly held to. I did not want people to be able to say at the first sight of our books, "Oh yes, that must be a Nonesuch book." I wanted them to say, "That's not a bad looking book," and then to find that it was ours. My calculation—it was a calculation, not a programme—proved surprisingly right. Our first hundred books have taken us twelve years to make.

Our friends have been our editors; and our editors have been our friends. We have had the most valuable suggestions for books, and the most valuable criticism of details of production even, from them. I have seldom "passed" a binding, for example, without asking Geoffrey Keynes's opinion of it. His well-wishing has been of extraordinary value to us, apart from the many editions which he has himself admirably edited for the Nonesuch. It was he who introduced us to those other excellent editors of our texts, John Hayward

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and John Sparrow—the former a keen critic and helpful adviser. E. McKnight Kauffer, Stephen Gooden and T. L. Poulton have also done for us much more than illustrate a number of our books.

E. McKnight Kauffer (who drew us from the life for the last of his illustrations to *The Anatomy of Melancholy*) at one time had office-room with us. The hours I spent in discussing aesthetics with him were stimulating—over-stimulating, we found, when there was work to do. So, in the end, we nailed up a list of "red-herring words" ("functional," "the Artist" and so forth) which were not to be used during office hours on pain of a fine of sixpence for each use. But there was no sixpenny escape from George Moore. While *Ulick and Soracha* was at the printers, he came almost daily, hung up his square bowler hat and settled down to read aloud to us the revisions he had made in his last batch of proofs. Each time it was an entirely new text. The first version was almost illiterate. The second grammatical but undistinguished. The third a transfiguration. It was fascinating to see the process of his composition at close quarters: and our feelings were undisturbed by anxieties about the printer's bill, for he had proposed at the outset that he should pay for his own corrections. They exceeded the original cost of the setting. In any event, who am I to be critical? For one book I had 37 different varieties of title-page set up. My friend William Maxwell, who printed this book, said that he did not mind "losing" (printers are like farmers) on the text of a Nonesuch book because he always made up his loss on the title-page. . .

In 1925 we moved from our cellar to Great James Street and we decided (with some misgivings) to incorporate the firm. It seemed better to our auditors although we had suspicions that our subscribers might be discouraged from collecting when they saw first the formula "Ltd." on our letter-paper. We did them an injustice. The partners became directors and shareholders. Vera Meynell bought a little book entitled "The Secretary and His Directors" and, impressed by the legal penalties that hedge about these offices, occasionally wound up one of our long triangular discussions by taking down

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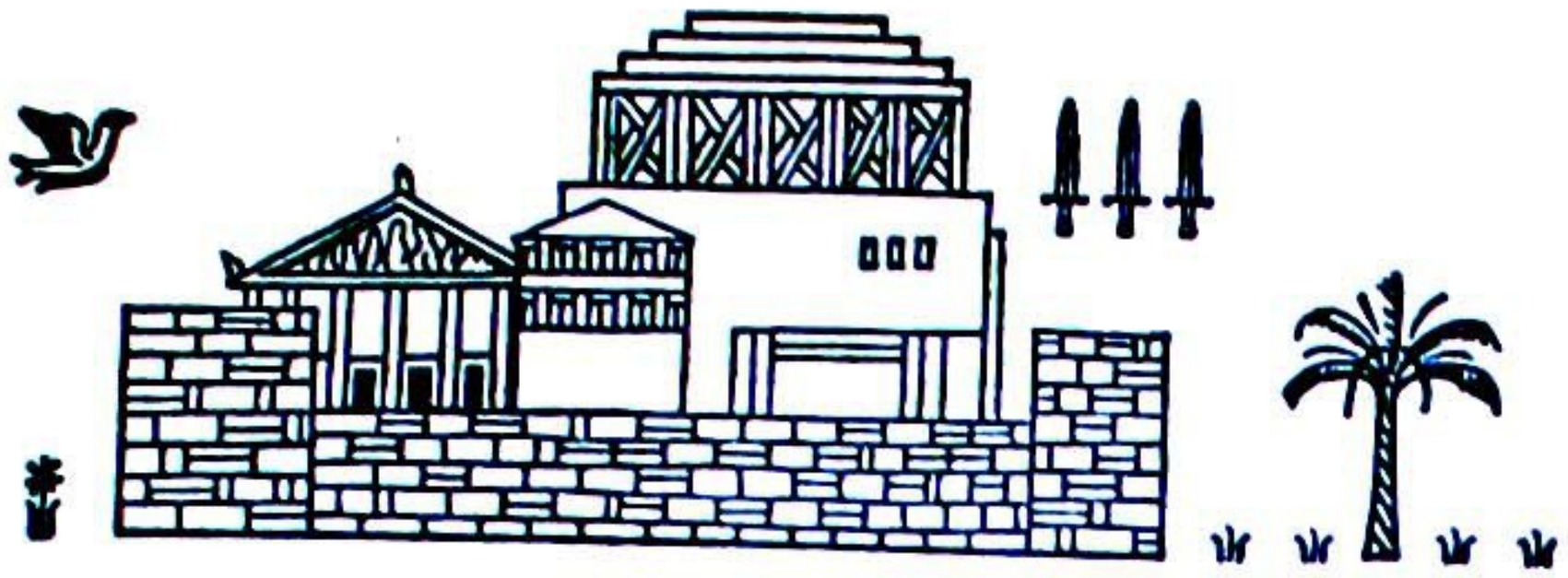

ΙΛΙΑΔΟΣ Α

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,
πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.
Τίς τ' ἄρ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι; 2
Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεὶς
νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὦρσε κακήν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί,
οὕνεκα τὸν Χρύσην ἠτίμασεν ἀρητῆρα
Ἀτρεΐδης· ὁ γὰρ ἦλθε θοὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν
λυσόμενός τε θύγατρα φέρων τ' ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα,
στέμματ' ἔχων ἐν χερσὶν ἑκηβόλου Ἀπόλλωνος·
χρυσέῳ ἀνὰ σκήπτρῳ, καὶ λίσσετο πάντας Ἀχαιούς,
Ἀτρεΐδα δὲ μάλιστα δύω, κοσμήτορε λαῶν·
„Ἀτρεΐδαι τε καὶ ἄλλοι ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοί,
ὑμῖν μὲν θεοὶ δοῖεν Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
ἐκπέρσαι Πριάμοιο πόλιν, εὖ δ' οἴκαδ' ἱκέσθαι·
παῖδα δ' ἐμοὶ λύσαιτε φίλην, τὰ δ' ἄποινα δέχεσθαι,
ἁζόμενοι Διὸς υἱὸν ἑκηβόλον Ἀπόλλωνα."
Ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἐπευφήμησαν Ἀχαιοὶ 3
αἰδεῖσθαί θ' ἱερῆα καὶ ἀγλαὰ δέχθαι ἄποινα·
ἀλλ' οὐκ Ἀτρεΐδῃ Ἀγαμέμνονι ἤνδανε θυμῷ,

1

The Antigone Greek type used in Homer's *Iliad*, decorated by Rudolph Koch. Printed by Joh. Enschedé en Zonen. Published 1931; edition, 1450 copies.

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the minutes book and saying: "Well, I suppose that this might as well have been a board meeting." Once a year, for the benefit of Somerset House we (the directors) presented to ourselves (the shareholders) with all due formalities, a report on the year's accounts and progress. Otherwise it made no difference.

Even the "mundial bad-time" (to quote the phrase of an Indian friend) of 1930 did not seem to affect us or our customers much. But the second year of the great depression brought onto the market many hoarded copies of our books from the pickle-shelves of profiteers and deflated some of their more astronomical prices. Our survival-value (as luxury trades go) is perhaps due to the fact that even in boom-time we tried to be honest traders, not using our success with collectors to put prices as high as the traffic would bear, but giving a constant ratio of good value in the sheer materials of book-making, so that our paper, printing, binding were as good as any to be had at the price.

No book-producing of our kind can subsist without sales in America. It was our good fortune to ally ourselves in 1927 with Random House of New York. No collaboration could be more satisfactory from a technical or a personal point of view. It survived the get-rich-quick temptations of 1929; it has survived the difficulties of the depression. New blood and money entered the Press two years ago when Cecil Harmsworth, Desmond Harmsworth and Eric Harmsworth joined our board. But they belong to our Second Century, not to our first.

We have avoided antagonisms, even avoided competition. My friend Osbert Sitwell suggested that we should publish a satire on Noel Coward; Coward that we should publish his satire on the Sitwells. To both we said "no." How pleasant it would have been to issue them together in a single book! When I found that Peter Davies and the Nonesuch were both planning to reissue Cobbett's *Rural Rides,* we met and tossed for it. He won; and our editorial work was made over to him.

Of all Nonesuch books that by which I should best like the ven-

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ture to be judged is our Shakespeare, edited by Herbert Farjeon. It brought us, among other things, a characteristic contact with T. E. Lawrence. Lawrence had written a letter of fervent praise of the Shakespeare to David Garnett; and I sought permission to use it. David Garnett was himself our ambassador. Lawrence appealed to the group of friends with whom he happened to be. "I don't want my letter to be reprinted. I hate the advertising of my name and opinions," he protested. To his obvious chagrin (for Lawrence had a passion for publicity as great as his passion against it) his friends supported his view. "After all," said they "you are not a Shakespeare expert." That decided Lawrence. "I think it is my duty to give permission," he said. This was his letter:

"We turn over to the Nonesuch Shakespeare. There you have "created a most marvellous pleasure. I have handled it ever so many "times, and read THE TEMPEST right through. It satisfies. It is "final, like the Kelmscot Chaucer or the Ashendene Virgil. And "it is a book which charms one to read slowly, an art which is almost "gone from us in these times. Every word which Shakespeare uses "stands out glowing. A really great edition. The tact and grace of "your editor have been surpassing. I think I like the size and shape "and binding almost as much as the text. The paper, too, is just "right. Altogether a triumph. One of the best things is that it can be "done again. Nobody will ever dare to produce the old type of edi-"tion now, while your text stands there to reproach them. It means a "permanent improvement in Shakespeares."

"There they are, my fifty men and women." They must speak for themselves, and I have almost silenced them with my chatter. For their successors I can say only this: that it remains the ambition of the Press to make a worthy edition, textually and typographically, of every major English writer who has not already been appropriately served. It will make these books for money, and has no shame in that. We are not "Gentlemen Farmers" but workers at our trade. But we are enthusiasts also, even in our middle years; and still propagandists.

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SELECT

POEMS

DIVINE AND

HUMANE

BY

Thomas Beedome

The Nonesuch Press
Bloomsbury
1928

Title page for small book edited by Francis Meynell, composed in Janson an "printed on the premises" at the Press on Van Gelder mould-made paper. Editio 1250 copies.

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Every well-designed book or advertisement or prospectus is the begetter of others; and good printing is one of the graces of life even where life is ungracious.

In a letter from Vienna in 1717, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writes of Prince Eugene's library that it is "though not very ample, well chosen; but as the Prince would admit into it no editions but what are beautiful and pleasing to the eye and there are nevertheless numbers of excellent books that are but indifferently printed, this finikin and foppish taste makes many disagreeable chasms in this collection!"

I should like to make Prince Eugene patron saint of the Nonesuch. And dear Lady Mary as well; for it remains the object of the Nonesuch Press to meet tastes finikin and foppish like his, studious like hers.

COMPOSED IN POLIPHILUS AND BLADO TYPES

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CHRISTOPHER SANDFORD

Printing for Love

I HAVE called this talk "Printing for Love." I have not come to preach a gospel to you, but, as I proceed to discuss printing and publishing and book-illustration, it will be apparent to you that one of the tenets of my religion is that we workers should do our job, whether it be farming, or gardening, book-keeping or building, hewing coal or engineering, *with a will*. In Ecclesiastes the Preacher advises us: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." (Ch. 9, v. 10.) You may say that my job is a nice job; that it is all very well for me to talk. I can assure you that book-manufacture is a most intricate process. Things tend to go wrong at every stage of production. Of worries we printers have no end.

I often feel like an Irish farmer driving his pig to market. In one hand he holds a stick to prod the pig. In the other a string tied to the pig's leg. The pig goes to the right and then to the left and the countryman wonders will he ever get that pig to the market. Many of my books are like that pig. They drive me to despair. And yet I love my printing like a mountaineer loves his mountains, which he climbs arduously with sweat and aching limbs. He has his reward when he reaches the summit and enjoys a fine view, much as I enjoy the appearance of a book which I have made with infinite pains. For both of us there is the joy of achievement—of something attempted, something done.

"Oh, but," you may expostulate, "supposing you were a sewer-man, could you bring love into your work?" I am sure I would. In fact this case in point was quoted recently on the wireless. If

From *Cockalorum:* A Bibliography of the Golden Cockerel Press, June 1943–December 1948. (An address to the Art Society, University of the South West of England in Exeter, June, 1947.) Copyright 1950 by the Golden Cockerel Press. Reprinted by permission of author and publisher.

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I remember rightly, a speaker had referred with commiseration to the lot of the sewer-man working underground among the rats in the muck and stench of drains. He was called to task by a most insulted sewer-man, who explained that his was a good job—as good as any other. All the artists and the craftsmen who co-operate with me—the paper-makers, the cloth-makers, the tanners, the brass-cutters, the illustrators, the compositors, the pressmen, the binders—aye, and the authors too, who write and rewrite their text until it seems to me just right for the Golden Cockerel—all of them have their worries and their toil, but their work for me is done with love.

This is a question you might ask yourselves: can a beautiful thing be made cynically? The dice is loaded against the unwanted child of a loveless marriage. You cannot divorce your work from your life. The two are parts of a whole. My religion is that love should be the basis of all one's living and all one's work. In so far as my books have been successful as works of art, it is because they have been made with love.

Only with great self-restraint can I refrain from reading you again that beautiful thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians on Faith, Hope and Love—you remember "Love suffereth long and is kind, love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." Please read it now and then. It is so important.

Perhaps, when you heard my talk was to be called "Printing for Love," you thought, "Oh, he means printing without financial reward." Believe me, love, too, hath its reward. Make what you have to make, and do what you have to do, the way I advocate, and you will have your reward. You must have *faith* in this. We have got to fight our battles against obstructions, but, if we fight well, and do what we are intended to do, everything is made possible for us: the most miraculous things happen in their due time.

At the Golden Cockerel I never choose a book because I think it a good seller. Publishing friends are astonished when I admit that quite recently I refused books offered to me by Evelyn Waugh—one of the best selling novelists of to-day—and Sir Osbert Sitwell. Of course I do not disapprove of the authors. I admire them greatly. But in each case the manuscript submitted was not one I wanted for the Cockerel.

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I choose those books which I believe are *right* for this gay, mirthful, versatile bird. At times he likes to play, at times to be serious. He is interested in genuine old tales of adventure written by explorers and missionaries, who may have travelled in birch-bark canoes or quaint unwieldy ships. He is interested in old peoples and their poetry. At present he is printing a translation of the epic of Gilgamesh preserved on stone tablets. It is at least six thousand years old and refers to a flood—like Noah's Flood—which was recent history to people then. They were either more or less civilized then than we are now, according to your view of what constitutes civilization. They appear to have had more to eat than we have now; they spent more time in making life beautiful, and in thoughtful enquiry into spiritual things, such as survival after death. They had libraries of books, not printed like Golden Cockerels, but inscribed on series of stone tablets. There were several "copies" of the epic of Gilgamesh in the library at Nineveh.

To return to the Golden Cockerel, he also loves the master-pieces of English and French literature and classical literature. He is really a very human bird, kind and sometimes very amorous, never spiteful, never morbid, never cruel. I personally pretend to run this Press, but you know this chimeric cockerel really rules the roost. When I and two friends took over the Press in 1933, I had quite different ideas for it from those I had accepted a few months later. This Cockerel had his own personality and traditions. I have rather enjoyed following his gaudy plumage along the aerial avenues in which he seems to want to fly.

This has not always been easy for me. From time to time I had partners to help me. Their ideas and mine naturally did not always coincide. They gave in to me so often that just occasionally I had, in common charity, to print and publish some book favoured by one of them and which I did not myself like. Usually on such occasions the finished book was to me abortive—a baby cuckoo among my own fledglings. And they usually did not sell well. Try as you may, you cannot do quite as well for someone else's offspring.

It has always been of paramount importance that my books should sell. As a husband and a father of three children, I have had to make the Cockerel pay. Otherwise I should have had to work at something else. Obviously you cannot make a large

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income from the sale of, say, half a dozen books a year in small limited editions. But the Cockerel has never let me down and always made it possible for me to keep on with this work. The late St. John Hornby, who used to publish those monumental Ashendene Press books at prices in the neighbourhood of 100 gns. has said that, taken all over, he would just approximately cover his costs. No profit! He was in a financial position to ignore costs and the necessity to make his books pay. In theory that is good. In practice I think it is wholesome that the products of your labour should be commercially right. The absolute necessity for you to sell what you produce makes you take notice of the reactions of your patrons, keeps you from being too personal, too idiosyncratic, too precious, shall I say too amateurish? Here I am on difficult ground. It depends what you mean by amateurish. I think of myself as a professional, but, to the trade publishers (who would not dream of rejecting a manuscript from Evelyn Waugh), I, and others like me, are looked on as amateurs, because we do what we like.

This type of amateur, who does what he likes, scientifically, is, I believe, very important. Into this category would fall research students, and poets, and scholars, and inventors, and all sorts of people. Has a scientific study ever been made of the amateur throughout the ages and his influence on our life? If not, *there* is a noble thesis for a research student, and he could make of it a most interesting and I think saleable book. Perhaps *one of you* will do it!

Now you may be thinking, "here's this chap and they tell me he has a certain reputation as a printer. We get him down here to talk to us about printing, and off he goes gassing about love, and Noah's flood, and how to make money without trying to."

Please forgive me! You see I started as a printer and taught myself how to dress a book according to my tastes. Then I became a publisher. Let us make no mistake: the important thing is the literary content of the book. How it is dressed is only of secondary importance. It *can* be dressed any old how. Obviously it is better when it is suitably dressed. But the dress, that is, the printing and binding, must not be accorded *too* great importance —it must not *vaunt* itself. If you ask a bookseller who has built up a circle of people who collect "cockerels" *why* they like cockerels, he will answer "because they are *cockerels*." By this

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he does not, I hope, mean "because they wear cockerel dress"—or, shall I say, "plumage"?—but rather that they are, in their literary content, in their dress, and in their illustration, examples of the cockerel idea of what a book should be.

Of course it is no good the author thinking he has done everything—it is the composite whole which is so engaging. I have known some illustrators who think the author doesn't count. And authors tend to think the artist a hack who should do what he is told. Both may think that my own small contribution, as the architect of the whole structure, is unimportant. Quite the greatest joy for me in publishing is being in constant delightful intercourse with these beautiful authors and artists. Beautiful is the right word. I don't mean physically, of course, but in their natures. Compare them if you like, to the most sensitive instruments designed by man and you behold these God-made beings a hundredfold more sensitive. Go to the races and delight in the controlled nervousness and the pent-up fire of enthusiasm in those beautiful thoroughbred horses, and yet these dreamers of dreams, these passionate romancers, these scholars, in all the controlled exuberance of their knowledge and their zeal for research, these drawers of pictures, who "see the light that never was on sea or land": the horses are as nothing beside them!

Now, who are these authors and scholars and artists? Well, some are, of course, professionals, in the sense that they live by their art, and others, a lot of them, are civil servants, or architects, or even prime ministers, who make their art a hobby. But can we end there? Is not every roadman tidying his road, every thatcher on the roof, or every good accountant neatly writing his accounts, and every worker planting his allotment of a summer's evening, an artist to a greater or less degree? He seems to me, watching him, to be working for love. And so with those of us who make seemly books.

Normally you have the publisher who chooses what books he will publish, and contracts with the author to produce and sell his work in book form. You have also the paper-maker, the ink-maker, the type-founder, the maker of printing machinery and plant. You have the printer, with his compositors who prepare the type for press, his proof-readers, his pressmen who print the corrected type on the paper, and his warehousemen, who deal out the paper, and pack the printed sheets. You have the binders and

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manufacturers of material and machinery used in binding. Normally a host of people have taken their part, however small, in processes which go to the making of the finished book.

In a "private press" a very great deal of the work is concentrated in the hands of its owner. In certain cases the owner himself has set the type and printed it on a hand-press. His output has thus been severely limited to the productivity of one single pair of hands. This is not practical politics to-day—one's turnover is too small to cover overheads. An alternative is to employ skilled help with the type-setting and presswork. This was the method employed by the Golden Cockerel up to 1933. For reasons I need not go into, this method does not now pay.

The survival of the Golden Cockerel, since I and my friends took it over in the midst of the great depression, has been due in large measure to the method of production which we adopted. By working in with the Chiswick Press, a famous old firm of trade printers, we arranged that the Cockerel should have the use of their plant and their skilled labour precisely as and when we wanted it, without the necessity for capital expenditure on plant or of providing the wages of skilled craftsmen, week in week out, whether or not fully employed. Those were terrible times, and our solution was the only one practicable. It was a great experiment, but it worked. Of all the important private presses in this country, the Cockerel alone has carried on—and right through the war. In the books of the Golden Cockerel a great tradition survives.

But the survival of the Golden Cockerel, and of the tradition which it holds dear, is not achieved solely by its method of production. On the contrary, there are other prime factors. I have said that in my view the literary content of the book is more important than its dress. We must not print for the sake of printing. Firstly then I only print what I greatly desire to publish—something that is really good. I think I have been successful in finding a lot of new literary material which a sophisticated section of the community does enjoy to read. Of course some of my bookseller friends often beg me to print the old favourites, for which there is such a great demand. Occasionally I oblige. I have a Gray's *Elegy* at the binders now and a Keats' *Endymion* in the press. But generally the Cockerel prefers to be more enterprising. Look at all the literature we unearthed and published on the sub-

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ject of the Mutiny on the Bounty—book after book. And then those volumes of Shelley's letters to Hogg. We found and published the journal kept by the Pilgrim Fathers when they went to America. Then there were the four previously unpublished books by that legendary character, Lawrence of Arabia, and so on. These are typical of the sort of thing we've found and published for the first time. Not the old favorites, but, because they add to literature and knowledge, so well worth making known.

The second important feature of Cockerels is their illustration with engravings. More than any other process, engraving harmonizes with type. Engraved wood-blocks and copper-plates are very difficult to print as they should be printed, especially on a durable rag-paper. They are therefore little used in these days of mass-production. In the hands of the team of artists who work for the Golden Cockerel, engraving as an artistic medium is flowering as never before. By the enthusiasm and *love* which these artists bring to their work, they advance their techniques year by year, always improving on their own previous best, or the previous best of their competitors, till there sometimes seems to be no limit to the new effects they will obtain in their illustrations. It is an undying satisfaction to the Golden Cockerel to be able to encourage and advise talented engravers, and, by displaying their work to the best advantage, to build up for them the reputations they deserve. In the twenties it was Eric Gill, Robert Gibbings, Eric Ravilious, David Jones, Blair Hughes-Stanton, Agnes Miller-Parker and John Nash. In the thirties, and more recently, other engravers like Clifford Webb, John Buckland-Wright, Reynolds Stone, Gwenda Morgan, Peter Barker-Mill, and John O'Connor have come to the fore. You have seen a few examples of my own wife's work among the books I have brought along. And now we have others too, of an astonishing brilliance, like Dorothea Braby, coming on. It is impossible for me to be sufficiently grateful for the privilege of being able in my small way to nurture this flowering and progressive art.

After their literary content and their illustration, the third feature of Cockerels which has sustained the Press, when other presses have fallen out, is my policy of co-operating with the buying public—of producing books which they can afford to buy. Obviously the very rich men who can pay 100 gns. for a book are now very few and far between. I have resisted the temptation

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to compete with the 100 gn. books—the "museum pieces." I have resisted the temptation to spend so much on the production of my books that they are inaccessible. With the levelling of incomes there is now a considerable public, which, if it appreciates them, can buy Cockerels at the 2 guineas or 4 guineas which their production necessitates.

Those, then are the particular features of Cockerels which have maintained the Press through difficult years. That they are works of art—the conceptions of a book-architect—would not have sufficed, but, since they are expressions of the art of the book, let us consider them architecturally for a few minutes. The subject is vast: I must try to epitomise it. . .

COCKEREL DEVICES BY MARK SEVERIN

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ARTHUR W. RUSHMORE

THE FUN AND FURY OF A PRIVATE PRESS. *Some Voyages of The Golden Hind*

"It's FUN, isn't it?" said my wife. "I've gotten so that I can recall whole sonnets just by reading these first lines." We were sitting in a patch of warm September sunshine under the walnut, trimmed high like a giant umbrella, over the terrace back of the press. Proof and copy of the long Contents of Edna Millay's new volume of collected sonnets lay on the table between us as we idled, savoring the first signs of Fall in the yellow leaves that the breeze scattered about the gray flagstones. The air was spicy and the ageratum and marigolds in the border matched the autumn colors of the goldenrod and wild asters by the roadside. "I love gardening, too," she said loyally. "I must pot those double begonias before the frost gets them." I lit my pipe again and we went on with the proofs. One hundred ninety-two pages set in Bruce Rogers' beautiful Centaur, corrected, tied and wrapped, lay in neat piles waiting to be taken to Camden for printing. We had worked at it off and on all summer—painstaking work, but as rewarding, in our eyes at least, as any labor we could think of—interesting copy, lots of problems to argue over, the excitement of watching the author's mind at work as proofs came back with alterations, changes that in some miraculous way always added clarity or cadence to the lines; reading and rereading proof until the sonnets became part of us. Now it was finished,

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and we had added one more book to the world's store and to our little shelf of Golden Hind Press imprints. This book will be published by Harper & Brothers in an edition which would take us the rest of our lives to print by hand. The design, the whole format and all the composition is ours. The printing and binding will be done elsewhere. Thousands of people will share our pleasure (or brand us failures). We feel that books of this type offer golden opportunities for the private press. We are not selling them, we are making them our way for someone else to sell. However, most of our books are printed on an old hand press, and given to our friends. So far we still have our friends.

As a hobby, a private press may be as extravagant, or as inexpensive, as one chooses to make it. It's fun and hard work and a challenge to all the intelligence one possesses.

We started our press in 1927, named it The Golden Hind after Drake's flagship that went on adventures no more hazardous than ours. Elmer Adler called it "A Busman's Holiday" for a publisher's production man. Perhaps he was right. At that time we knew little about the problems—about as much as parents do about the first baby. We don't know much yet, but we've had a swell time and through it have made a jolly lot of friends which in itself is reward enough.

We started with an ancient hand press of unknown vintage that had been in use in the cut-room at the old Harper plant in Pearl Street since before the knowledge of any man now living. I've an idea that it may have come from England when Harpers started in 1817. Until the 1830's all their books were printed on hand presses—so close are we to the beginnings of the art of printing.

Later, in Philadelphia, we found a big Washington hand press in perfect condition that was going out as old metal. The bed was smooth though the edges showed the nicks of hard wear from the endless up-ending of the forms of some country newspaper. With decent treatment it will be just as good a hundred years from now.

We made up in enthusiasm what we lacked in knowledge. It's not always wise to know too much—it's a great damper on ambition. Shortly after we started, a chance came to do a proposed definitive edition of a well-known poet's works. It was to be in seven folio volumes on handmade paper and no effort was to be spared to make it right. Six hundred pounds of 18 point Lutetia and weight fonts of the smaller sizes were ordered cast at the Enschedé Foundry in

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Haarlem, Holland, for the job. The type duly came, pages were set, and sample forms printed and bound—and then the project was withdrawn! In the light of accumulated experience I still break out in a cold sweat at the thought of our colossal nerve to have taken on such a task. Anyhow we had the type, and have used it many times. With it we have set the limited editions of each new book of Edna St. Vincent Millay's poems as they have come along, since 1928.

The status of a private press is difficult to define. As far as we are concerned it is to make as well as we can only those books that we want to do and to turn down all else; to have no "help," no payroll, keep no books; to care not a hoot about a balance sheet which has no column for satisfaction; and to take all the time we want to do the job the way we want it. From the standpoint of factory speed we are nothing to write home about—but we are not a factory and have no ambitions in that direction. Ours is a private press and we work as we please: that is where the fun comes in. We can work hard if need arises; then hours have no meaning, and we work till we get exhausted, fed up, and solemnly vow that we'll never do another book. But we have been at it nearly fifteen years and we still think, even though composition is exacting work, that such congenial labor is the best fun in the world. Sometimes we have furious arguments over punctuation, as though life depended on it. It is surprising how much warmth can be generated over the position of a comma. When we set *Shakespeare's Sonnets* we had at least six different sources to work from, including a facsimile of the first edition. A single punctuation mark will completely change the meaning of a sonnet, so condensed is the wording to fit the mould. No two sources agreed throughout—who were we to put in Shakespeare's points for him—so the smoke got pretty thick sometimes, and the result was still another reading of the sonnets embodying those details we preferred from each: that's the fury of it.

The dream of every private press is to own its own private face. We had our chance but didn't know what to use for money so we let it go. One of the best presses in the United States now owns that type—alas! We have many, too many, faces and borders and florets collected from Europe when the world was sane, yet every new volume seems to need something we do not have. Fred Goudy cast for us at his shop at Marlboro two sizes of Mediaeval. We did Mrs. Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese* in it. That type is precious now since the matrices were lost in the fire that destroyed all his

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equipment at Deepdene. Long before the Monotype cut the Deepdene face, Fred cast it for us. We used it for Dr. North's *Hymns*. Then along came a book my wife wanted to do. Two hundred and eighty-eight pages of 14 pt. A.T.F. Garamond all standing in galleys made a lot of type for us to store. We used it again for Frederic Prokosch's *The Assassins* and later for *The Carnival*. Gradually the metal has crept into the house until scarcely a room is spared. We sleep with 60 cases of type in stands on our sleeping porch. We should be safe in a tornado—we have plenty of ballast.

A couple of years ago we did a group of Edmund Spenser's *Amoretti* for Christmas. The lines breathe the spirit of another day and we wanted to preserve, if we could, the romantic atmosphere. I remembered that for the titles of the poems in *The Queen's Garland*, printed for R. H. Russell in 1898, D. B. Updike had used an odd italic which he told me was Original Old Style cast by the old Farmer foundry in 1854. Some one had had fun with the 18 point size—it had a swell set of oversized vowels and all the long ſſ ligatures. The resulting effect looked much like very early printing. The mats were in the possession of the A.T.F. though they seemed never to have heard of them and were a bit annoyed by my insisting on seeing their file copy of the Farmer type book. There it was, and eventually they dug them out and cast them for us. We printed the book on our old Hoe hand press on Arak Ash white paper. For a frontispiece we used Virtue's beautiful engraving of Spenser. It was bound in tan boards with dusty rose cloth spine and a bright yellow label. In many ways it is our favorite book.

Last year we had fun (perhaps I should say I did as my wife did not give her fullest sympathy). 1940 was celebrated, and how! as the 500th Anniversary of the Invention of Printing. The whole country broke out in a rash of exhibitions, lectures, special articles and such like, on poor old Gutenberg about whom practically nothing is known to begin with, not even that he invented movable type. If he did, he was only trying to fake manuscript writing and should have been hung as a forger. I got pretty fed up on the tosh that was being handed out. So, to even the score, I "discovered" in a garret in Mainz, Germany, the private diary of Gutenberg's wife (no one but I knew he had one). By quoting from her diary I showed conclusively that all the credit was really hers. I had cuts made of the old leather-bound volumes of the diary (four old volumes from the Harper Medical Library) and a page of the manu-

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script (translated *into* German and written in the lovely hand of Dr. Otto Fuhrmann). Dr. Herman Püterschein, that infallible authority on things typographic, wrote a Foreword. It was titled *The Mainz Diary: New Light on the Invention of Printing* and 200 copies went out for Christmas. Then the unexpected happened. Letters began pouring in showing it was being taken as gospel. Pundits, librarians, experts in the graphic arts, fell for it hard. My wife threatened to disown me. Of course the tale hadn't a word of truth in it. I had been in Mainz and Frankfort a few years before so that the thing started off with some element of reality. A friend in London gobbled it whole—I had to send a letter by Clipper to keep him from showing it proudly to his friends. After all, my yarn had about as much truth in it as most of the hash that I'd been forced to listen to during the year and I'd gotten quite fond of Frau Gutenberg. I felt, too, that I'd done my bit for the cause. Many of the biggest libraries, including the Library of Congress, had requested and received copies. Ten years from now it will pop up in some bibliography of a Ph.D. thesis.

I had my fun all right.

But the boys got even with me. A year later, the editor of a well-known art magazine and his wife, with careful deliberation and much ingenuity, sold me down the river with a hoax that I gobbled whole. So we are even and everybody is happy.

Why are we so cracked about a private press? I often wonder myself. The house smells of printer's ink and type wash. Right now there are eleven metal-strapped type boxes on the sunporch where the expressman left them a week ago; and my wife is to have a luncheon tomorrow. Fine looking mess. I'll get around to them soon. There are piles of printed signatures of our Christmas book all over the place. The composing room is crawling with undistributed type. Can hardly work without spilling it. My pet Vandercook brayer has fallen arches—it was left in the sun yesterday and its insides turned to soup.

Next morning on my desk I found the proof of our new broadside *Emmer Jane* with the drawing at the top beautifully colored by the artist. It's swell. Presently the messenger brought in the advance copies of the new *Sonnets* bound in blue natural-finished cloth stamped in gold, just as I wanted it. I can hardly wait to get home to show them to my wife. We must get that new type to use for

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The Ghost Ship. We'll start it this week-end. How slow the days go. Isn't a private press fun!

Postscript: 1951

Still hard at it. We are older but no wiser. Nowadays the grandchildren come in the back door and call up the composing-room stairs, "Arthur, may we play type and picture cuts?" They spend hours at it and I spend hours putting things to rights.

The check-list has grown to 186 books and pamphlets. The work is still as exciting as ever, though we try to check the fury a bit. The skipper of the *Golden Hind* retired in January 1950, which released more time for the press; being in business always was a nuisance.

We spent the summer doing a first edition of a Mark Twain book for Harpers—mixed with a lot of farming. For a retirement occupation we can commend a private press. It keeps up the interest in life.

Offers of work flow in, much more than we care to accept. We are not in business and we have more projects of our own than we shall ever complete.

It's fun to get up with the chickens and work together all morning, spend the afternoon puttering about outdoors, and retire at night dog tired—what my wife calls "nice tired," no nervous tension.

The *Golden Hind* is twenty-four years old but her seams are tight and she manages nicely—who knows, maybe the voyage is only nicely begun.

COMPOSED IN FAIRFIELD TYPES

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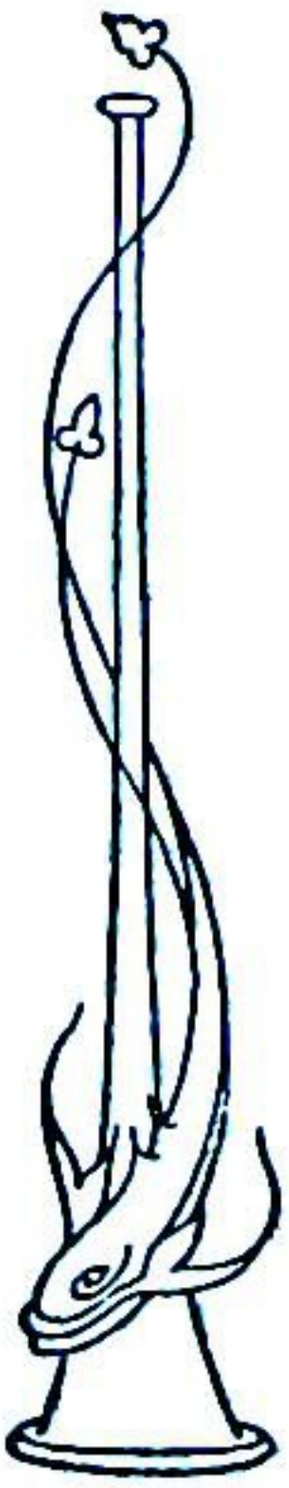
EDWIN GRABHORN

The Fine Art of Printing



I KNOW of no better way of beginning this talk to you tonight on PAPER, INK and TYPE than by first sketching a brief outline of the Art of Printing.

Printing in its childhood was an art. The highest period of any art is its childhood, because childhood moves by spontaneous inner urge, not by rules and intellectual bondage that runs all into fixed moulds. It is an accepted truth that as skill and elaboration creep into development of an art, simplicity, feeling and beauty decline. The early printers were not weighed down with rules, formulas and theories which have smothered us today. With but one font of type, a wooden frame with a screw attachment and a crude inking device, they have given us books of strength and beauty that we have never equalled.

We all like to think of the invention of printing as springing Minerva-like from the brain of man. Printing is, of course, the combination of paper, type, ink and the press; and these various elements were some three hundred years in the process of springing. Paper was the cheap substitute for vellum, and type the substitute for hand-writing.

All of us are more or less familiar with the invention of printing and with its God-like first-born, the Gutenberg Bible. Those who have had the thrill of examining the great 42-line Bible have told us that it is the most beautiful book ever printed. This is a magnificent tribute—one that I have never heard contradicted.

An address before the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco at its meeting in the Allied Arts Guild, Menlo Park, California, May 15, 1933. Fifty copies printed by Edwin and Robert Grabhorn for members of the Roxburghe Club, May 15, 1933. Reprinted by permission of the author.

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Just how much of the beauty of this Bible is due to the art of the illuminator and how much to the skill of the printer has never been told by those who represent it to be the most perfect specimen of printing.

A few years ago a book speculator dissected an incomplete copy, selling the leaves with beautifully hand-illumined initials at twice the price of those pages without decoration. I hope this speculator lost his ill-gotten gains in the stock market.

A thing of beauty stands alone, and I know of no fixed law by which we can judge beauty except through the emotions; and emotions are rather difficult to tabulate. I, myself, can only contemplate the childhood of printing with amazement and admiration. In its youth it exhausted every possibility of type arrangement.

An estimate of the activity of those first wooden frames can only be guessed at. In Venice alone, as early as 1472, over two million separate volumes were printed. By the opening of the sixteenth century the art of printing had spread to every civilized country and the supply of its raw materials became so great that the process of cheapening set in.

The first printers had selected as models for their types the beautiful hand-written books of their day. The second generation of printers modelled their types from those of the first printers. The illuminator gave way to the wood-cutter and the fine art of printing became a science, then a craft, and when William Morris tried to stop its downward slide, in 1891, it was a trade.

During this downward trip through four centuries, weak attempts to restore the art of printing to its first high place in the life of man were made. Benjamin Franklin wrote on the "Improvement of Printing Backwards," protesting the discontinuance of the tall "f." But man was not interested in the intangible influence of art as much as he was in the perfection of the machine.

The ink was hardly dry on the effusions of our modern printing critics, when the collapse of over-production set in and silenced them, I hope, permanently.

Writing about modern books in the latest edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Francis Meynell of the Nonesuch Press says: "The type-setting machines used with as much skill as hand-set type will give a better result, and in alliance with fast but

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very perfect cylinder printing presses, will give this result not to a few, but to a multitude. It has taken us from the day of 'the book beautiful,' and given us the day of the beautiful book."

The fast moving cylinder presses of the Nonesuch Press have slowed up since this was written. And we can thank God that we have some opportunity for reflection.

One of the modern criticisms of William Morris and the private presses that he inspired is that too much stress was placed on method. Method means how a thing is done and how a thing is done is of very vital importance if we want to give our work durability.

I have said before that it was William Morris who attempted to stop the downward slide of printing. He was the leader in the revival of what is known as "modern fine printing." It has been said that Morris was inspired by a lecture of Emery Walker's on the Golden Age of Printing. While not denying Walker's position in this revival, we must admit that there is a vast gulf between talking and doing. Morris's was a very simple yet positive personality. There were no tints in his makeup. When asked if he liked colors, his answer: "blue and red," tells us whole volumes in folio. He had no tolerance for the effeminate printing of his day. He even scorned the sunny pages of the Italian Renaissance printers. It is no wonder that his Gothic books, in violent contrast to the weak old styles and modern type faces of his time—and our time, too—were startling. I have no doubt that some antiquarian hundreds of years hence, delving among musty tomes, will find Morris's books still giants in a land of dwarfs.

Whether you like or dislike Morris's books is of little concern to me. But what is of vital importance to me as a printer, and should be to all printers who are endeavoring to print books that will last, is the honesty of William Morris. Morris knew, because he was a collector of the earliest printed books, that those early printed books could not have descended to him, looking as sparkling and vital as the day they left their makers' hands, without honesty of craftsmanship. It was this craftsmanship that Morris revived, and that we today will have to revive again before our books can have any claims to a long life.

Let me briefly describe to you the various processes used in the making of books, beginning with the paper on which the book is printed. Morris found no paper being manufactured that

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was suitable for his use. It was only after months of experiment and failure, during which he worked at the paper mill himself, that a satisfactory sheet was made for him. With the closing of the Kelmscott Press after Morris's death, T. J. Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker used his specifications for this paper at their Doves Press. This mill still manufactures this paper, and it can be obtained easily enough. But it is not popular with the printers of today because its texture is so tough, its resistance to type so great, that we rather choose the short cut to the Royal Road to Fine Book-making, using the many counterfeits with their imitation deckle edges and their artificial ageing at the mill. We also like opaqueness in our paper, although transparency is usually a guarantee of its quality. All-linen-rag quality paper can easily enough be printed on if dampened first. By lessening the resistance of the paper through dampening, the type can penetrate its tough fiber, and the ink thus becomes a part of the paper itself. But by taking the short cut and not dampening the paper, at least four times the quantity of pressure and ink must be used. This over-abundance of pressure and ink still does not penetrate the paper but leaves the ink upon the paper's surface so that it looks to me as if printed from an etcher's plate. The excessive amount of ink, because of the heavy varnish used in its manufacture, has a tendency to shine when dry, producing a luster that is hard on the eyes. In time a film of oil will encircle each individual letter, discoloring the paper, and the page will look like those cheaply printed eighteenth-century books do to us today.

I know of no process in the making of a fine book more difficult of perfecting than getting the right amount of pressure and ink into the paper. In hand-made paper there is only an approximate uniformity in the thickness of the sheets, and these variations can be overcome by using a hand-press. The sense of touch must be developed until you can feel the right amount of pressure through the lever. The mechanical press is so regulated that it cannot control the variations of the paper's thickness. The right pressure can, of course, be applied to the average sheet—the heavier and lighter sheets can be sorted out before printing. However, this is seldom done. The paper is usually sorted when the finished book is being collated.

I can speak with some authority on the importance of dampening a sheet of fine paper. Such a process takes lots of time, but if

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you think the time not well spent compare a book from the Kelmscott Press with any of the books of our best machine printers of today. You will see that decay is already beginning to set in in the machine book. The edges of the paper will soon turn yellow and the ink begin to spread.

I hesitate to turn from the processes of making a fine book endure without impressing upon you the importance of using the finest quality of paper. The paper, and the ink that becomes a part of that paper, determines the life of the book, just as stones and mortar do in architecture. No matter how fine the type or how beautiful the decorations, the book must die if quality be lacking in both paper and ink.

And now just a few remarks about the binding of a book. Bindings are the protection for the body of a book. Here permanency decreases as use increases. Only those books that have escaped usage have come down to us with their original bindings, except those bound in limp vellum. Heavy boards encased in leather were the protection of many early books. The swinging of the heavy covers breaks the hinges of the book, and this leads to destruction. William Morris revived the use of limp vellum as a book covering.

Of far more importance than the cover in the making of a fine book is the gathering and sewing. When the printed sheets are folded a trained eye should put them together so that pages either under- or over-inked may be taken out. If there are no extras, then all the light pages can be put into one book, and the dark in another. If this is done, the critic will say that the press work is even.

After the book is assembled the sheets are sewn together by hand, using a strong linen thread. Of course, they can be sewn on a machine, but you might just as well save that expense by gluing the sheets together. If you don't believe me, take a machine-sewn book, before it is glued, pull off the first section, hold it up by the last page and watch the book fall to pieces. Hand-sewn books are sewn on either cords or tapes. Of course, you can have cords and tapes on a machine-sewn book, but they will be false ones, pasted on after the book has been stabbed to death.

I do not want to give you the impression that I am some sort of John the Baptist crying in a wilderness of machines. Machines are designed for special purposes and when we try to use them for

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a different purpose from that for which they were intended we fail. You would think a carpenter who used a machine that was made to drive nails in an orange box unbalanced if he tried to adjust that machine to build a house. The delicately adjusted printing press that Francis Meynell idealizes was designed for producing our ephemeral printing.

A machine cannot create—it can only assist, directed by the mind and imagination. The more that is left to the machine, the worse the work. The machine can arrive at perfection, perfection that is cold and dead and mechanical. And it is this cold and dead perfection that brings me to the beauty of the book of today.

I would say that "Post-Modern" Fine Printing began in America with Bruce Rogers, at the plant of William Rudge. It was Bruce Rogers' books that have influenced American and English printers more than any other recent single force. It was the "charm" and finish of this man's work that none of us escaped. During the years that Bruce Rogers was designing special editions at the Riverside Press there were few collectors of his books. As late as 1920, I bought some of these books from the publishers. They had been in stock nearly twenty years! Among them was "The Song of Roland" at the publisher's price. When I first started printing I was already an admirer and collector of these Riverside Press limited editions.

Now William Rudge was a better business man than a printer. He recognized the ability of Rogers and engaged him. Then things began to happen to our Fine Art of Printing. The typographical designer came into fashion, the machine was glorified and we all became theorists. Printing was aimed at suitability. The scholar and critic displaced the master craftsman and the advertising artist was added by way of variety.

Each new type face, faithfully re-cut by the aid of the pantograph and resurrected from our admittedly worst periods of printing, was eagerly bought by our typographical experts. The printers who had been quietly producing books, trying to make them a little better than necessary, fell into the hands of the publisher and the publicity agent. And the publisher announced that the next limited edition of 1600 copies was completely oversubscribed—the poor printer got one-third of what you had to pay. It was a Wonderland, indeed, until Alice woke up, and the printer was left with all the cards, and they were all blank.

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I am very glad it all happened. I would go through any form of hysteria again, if we could produce another *Leaves of Grass.* Since I am going to talk about type, I know of nothing better than to relate our experience in printing Walt Whitman's masterpiece, for it has shown me the folly of theory and intellect in art.

We accepted this undertaking with enthusiasm. Here was an opportunity to prove that we could print a book. The first deposit had no more than been spent when the publishers announced it as the finest book to be printed in America, and off we started on the wrong track.

Well, the finest book had to have the finest type and the finest type was the latest type. And it had to be a folio in size, because for One Hundred Dollars you had to get a folio. We bought one thousand pounds of the finest type; 18 point Lutetia, fresh from a new designer in Holland. And we hired two printers to set this bright new type and when it was all set, we pulled a proof and started to put grass into it—pale green grass, and it looked like grass and we pulled it out and tried again. Well, every time we tried that bright new type it didn't look right. So we dug up some of the latest theories about suitability, tried again, but it was no use. The brain told us one thing and our eyes another.

Meanwhile, one thousand pounds of bright new type and months of labor were tied up with strings and the Master Craftsman was getting worried. He went to specialists for advice. They said: "Try this new initial or this new picture," and the Master Craftsman went back to his shop and bowed his head.

Then his tired eyes lighted on a dusty case of type, designed by the artist Goudy but the critics had condemned it to the graveyard. Wearily the Craftsman dug it up and set a page of Whitman in it. Then he pulled a proof and Lo! He saw something that the machine had discarded; he saw strength: he saw the strong, vigorous lines of Whitman, born of the soil, without grass. He saw what he had heard whispered before. He saw strong, vigorous, simple printing—printing like mountains, rocks and trees, but not like pansies, lilacs and valentines; printing that came from the soil and was not refined in the class-room.

And the printer knew that the limited edition was not a racket as long as he had honesty and sincerity, and reverence for the best traditions of his craft.

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HOLBROOK JACKSON

THE TYPOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM MORRIS

WILLIAM MORRIS is an ironic figure. His achievements not only missed their mark, but hit marks he was not aiming at. His printing is no exception. The masterpieces of the Kelmscott Press which he aimed at making "useful pieces of goods" were typographical curiosities from birth, and so far removed from the common way of readers that they have become models of what a book should not be.

He was a Bibliophile, or more exactly, a typophile whose affections became unruly in the presence of decorated incunabula, and, although he was outwardly correct towards pure printing, his heart was not there. According to Sir Sydney Cockerell he flirted with the idea of a folio edition of *The Earthly Paradise,* "profusely illustrated by Sir Edward Burne-Jones," a quarter of a century before the inception of the Kelmscott Press. His personal taste was much the same then as later, although he continued to pay homage to good as distinct from fine printing. It was the "essence of my undertaking," he said, "to produce books which it would be a pleasure to look upon as pieces of printing and arrangement of type." Thus inspired by the example of "the calligraphy of the Middle Ages, and the earlier printing which took its place," and in spite of his passion for decorated books he observed that the early printed books "were always beautiful by force of the mere typography, even without the added ornament with which many of them are so lavishly supplied."

Much has been made of the emphasis he laid upon the book as an organic assembly of paper, type, and binding. But although few printers or publishers in the nineteenth century had insisted upon

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the excellence of these ingredients, as he did, the architectonic principle had never been wholly ignored. But in the main it was unconsciously observed. Deliberation is evident in the construction of the Pickering books, in the Keepsakes and Table Books of the thirties and forties, in the illustrated books of the sixties, and the later productions of the Daniel Press; and, if we may leave England for a moment, in such convenient publications as those of Bernhard Tauchnitz, where there is rectitude to satisfy the demands of the most austere of functionalists.

It was not, then, the architectonics of the Kelmscott books which evoked a typographical revolution. Nor was it the pursuit of beauty which always haunted Morris's intentions. "I began printing books," he said, "in the hope of producing some which would have a definite claim to beauty." Many printers and publishers of the time would have claimed as much. Bad taste in the arts and crafts is invariably the result of beauty-mongering, and the more costly books of the nineteenth century are littered with beauty from cover to cover.

Neither was it originality. Morris never sought to be original. He was a revivalist, and all his work is derivative. There is nothing new even in that, for all the arts and crafts are derivative, and originality is apt to be a myth and often a nuisance. Morris was even less original than many other earnest innovators, and the Kelmscott books are derivatives twice removed. They are modern variations of the early printed books of northern Europe, as they in turn were but mechanical imitations of the manuscripts which preceded the invention of movable types.

Nor again was there anything peculiar even in that, for all mechanical evolution seems to proceed in the same manner. The earliest railway carriages followed the lines of the stage-coach; the earliest steamships were schooners and brigantines with funnels and paddle-boxes; and the earliest motor-car was a horseless-carriage complete with tail-board. It is not surprising to learn that the earliest printed books were imitations of manuscripts, but it is surprising to find a nineteenth-century printer of genius imitating the imitations.

There is, however, more than one difference between these mechanical devices and the Kelmscott books. The engineers copied

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HERE BEGIN POEMS BY THE WAY. WRITTEN BY WILLIAM MORRIS. AND FIRST IS THE POEM CALLED FROM THE UPLAND TO THE SEA.

SHALL WE WAKE ONE MORN OF SPRING, GLAD AT HEART OF EVERYTHING, YET PENSIVE WITH THE THOUGHT OF EVE?
Then the white house shall we leave,
Pass the wind-flowers and the bays,
Through the garth, and go our ways,
Wandering down among the meads
Till our very joyance needs
Rest at last; till we shall come
To that Sun-god's lonely home,
Lonely on the hill-side grey,
Whence the sheep have gone away;
Lonely till the feast-time is,
When with prayer and praise of bliss,
Thither comes the country side.

A page from *Poems By The Way*, written by Morris and set in the Kelmscott Golden type. This small quarto was the first book printed at the Press in two colors, black and red. Issued in October, 1891, in an edition of 300 copies on paper and 13 on vellum.

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because they could not think of anything better. Now and then they even made concessions to beauty, in the form of superadded decorations, much as Morris did. But there was a marked difference between them, for Morris knew better. Although to him beauty meant decoration or ornament, yet in the first edition of *The Roots of the Mountains* he actually produced an undecorated book of great distinction. The book is not only admirable in itself, but it has had a better influence on recent typography than all the Kelmscott books together. Morris himself was delighted with the book. He declared it to be "the best-looking book issued since the seventeenth century," and added: "I am so pleased with my book, typography, binding, and must I say it, literary matter, that I am any day to be seen huggling it up, and am become a spectacle to Gods and men because of it.". His enthusiasm rings true, but this was a passing fancy, for even then he was in hot pursuit of more opulent beauties.

It was the magnificence of the Kelmscott adventure which impressed and influenced printers, professional and amateur, and resuscitated the curious vogue for so-called "Private Press" books artificially rarefied and deliberately beautified. But, in spite of many extravagances and some few absurdities, the Kelmscott influence has been beneficial. Morris reasserted sound principles, and the richness of his books helped to secure their acceptance. "The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom." The style of the books themselves, because of their massive individuality, must always provoke differences of opinion, but in the house of books there are many mansions, and room for all tastes, whims, and even fads.

I prefer my books pocketable, flexible, and legible. In the Kelmscott books these qualities are not sufficiently balanced. Each is there in some measure, but something is invariably added to weaken proportion. William Morris (or worse, Burne-Jones) is always getting between reader and author. I like my Chaucer neat. Morris produced Chaucer as Henry Irving and Beerbohm Tree produced Shakespeare. I suspect that enthusiasts for such productions are not readers. The idea is supported by the fact that the majority of Kelmscotts are still in mint state; it is not easy to meet a copy bearing the honourable and endearing scars of use.

Legibility is relative, as I am reminded by my own experience, for myself when young did eagerly frequent Pickering's *Diamond Classics*—a practice I should probably have defended with conviction

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Hiere begynneth the seconde booke of the Recucill of the Historyes of Troye, that speketh of the prowesses of the stronge Hercules and of his deth.

Howe Hercules foughte ayenste three lyons in the forcste of Nemee, and how he slewe them and tooke their skynnys or hides ✲ ✲

IN the fyrste booke is begonnen the faytes and prowesse of the stronge and puyssaunt geante Hercules, and how he destroyed fyrste the cyte of Troye vpon kynge Laomedon. After whiche feet & conquest he retorned in to Grece, where he helde hym a certayn space of time with out doyng of ony thynge that is founde by writyng ❧ But than as the olde Juno by her cuyll and cursid enuye gaf her to ymagyne and thinke how she myght make Hercules to be destroied & dye, tidynges cam in to Crete that in the forcste of Nemee were comen many lyons. And amonge alle other there was oon that was sixteen palme of heyght that destroyed & wasted alle the contree. And thys Juno had warre agaynst Eristeus, & than for to haue aqueyntance of Hercules, and vnder fayned colour of good loue for to sende hym in to the clawes of thys lyon, she maad pees with Eristeus & sende for hym to come in to Crete for to conferme the pees. Eristeus that thought no thynge but well, wente in to Crete and brought with hym Hercules ❧ The pees was made; Juno aqueyntid her with Hercules; they cam to speke of

A page from the first book printed in the Kelmscott Troy type, *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye,* a large quarto printed in black and red and published by Bernard Quaritch in 1892. The edition: Two volumes, 300 copies on paper and 5 on vellum. "As to the matter of the book," wrote Morris, "it makes a thoroughly amusing story, instinct with medieval thought and manners."

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based upon sight rather than insight. I take a different view to-da not only of miniature types, but of rules and spacings general Morris granted the necessity of legibility. In this he differed fr another poet and amateur of printing, Robert Bridges, who us Gothic characters for the Daniel Press edition of his poems to indu slow ingestion. Morris believed that solidity of type and setti made for easy reading. By solid type he meant "without needle excrescences" or "the thickening or thinning of the line," whic with reservations, can be defended. Density of type area is a diffe ent matter and, if I admit charm, I reserve the right to question eve aesthetical propriety in favour of legibility. The solid page is im pressive: solidity inspires confidence, but confidence, as we know is often illusion and not always guiltless of trickery. The first editio of *The Roots of the Mountains* would probably have been mo readable with than without rules.

But although legibility must always be the first rule of printin there are other important principles. Morris summed them up i the word "beauty" with impressive but dubious results, because o his predilection for ornamentation. Any plain space for him was a opportunity for decoration, or, in Ruskin's words, for "the expre sion of man's joy in his work." He would go out of his way to mak books bigger than they need be so that he might have more spac to fill with his and Burne-Jones's illustrations. His type-faces becam picturesque, his margins inclined to pomposity, and his paper wa pretentious. The Kelmscott books are overdressed. They ask you t look at them rather than to read them. You can't get away fro their overwhelming typography, and, even if you could, you migh still be cheated of your author by their high-minded purpose, for i addition to being the creations of an impressive genius the Kelm scott books were protests against the logical conclusions of mechan ical book-production.

All these things are hindrances to reading, and I still believe tha to be read is the destiny of a book, and that reading is best when yo are least conscious of print or paper or binding. Since the Kelmscot books are not likely to induce that condition they must remain mu seum pieces, typographical monuments—beautiful and ineffectua angels beating in the void their luminous wings in vain.

COMPOSED IN EMERSON TYPES

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Stanley Morison

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF TYPOGRAPHY

NOTE: This essay towards a rationale of book-typography was first attempted as an article, s.v. "Typography," in the twelfth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (Chicago and London, 1929). It was reconsidered and entirely rewritten for No. 7 of *The Fleuron* (Cambridge, 1930) when it also went out of print. . . . Although several reprints have been brought out and extracts have been made, demands continue for the whole text from printers as well as from those outside the trade for whom the article was originally written. . . . As the brevity of the essay seems to be one of its most approved qualities, no expansion, and only slight revision, was made. . . . The present reprint is that of the Amsterdam edition published in 1947, in which the first paragraph was interpolated. . . . It may be added that while the principles here set forth apply to the typography of books, the sections dealing with composition may be adapted to the design of newspapers and publicity. . . .

S. M.

LETTERS of the alphabet that are cast or founded for the purpose of impressing upon paper are known as "types" and the impression thus made as a "print." But every impression, from any raised surface, is a "print." Hence the impression from the particular raised surfaces known as "types" is called a "typographical" impression; or, to use a more old-fashioned term, "letter-press." The precise form of the "types" and the exact position they need

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to occupy upon the selected paper involve skill in the art that is called "typography."

Typography may be defined as the art of rightly disposing printing material in accordance with specific purpose; of so arranging the letters, distributing the space and controlling the type as to aid to the maximum the reader's comprehension of the text. Typography is the efficient means to an essentially utilitarian and only accidentally aesthetic end, for enjoyment of patterns is rarely the reader's chief aim. Therefore, any disposition of printing material which, whatever the intention, has the effect of coming between author and reader is wrong. It follows that in the printing of books meant to be read there is little room for "bright" typography. Even dullness and monotony in the typesetting are far less vicious to a reader than typographical eccentricity or pleasantry. Cunning of this sort is desirable, even essential in the typography of propaganda, whether for commerce, politics, or religion, because in such printing only the freshest survives inattention. But the typography of books, apart from the category of narrowly limited editions, requires an obedience to convention which is almost absolute—and with reason.

Since printing is essentially a means of multiplying, it must not only be good in itself—but be good for a common purpose. The wider that purpose, the stricter are the limitations imposed upon the printer. He may try an experiment in a tract printed in an edition of 50 copies, but he shows little common sense if he experiments to the same degree in the tract having a run of 50,000. Again, a novelty, fitly introduced into a 16-page pamphlet, will be highly undesirable in a 160-page book. It is of the essence of typography and of the nature of the printed book *qua* book, that it perform a public service. For single or individual purpose there remains the manuscript, the codex; so there is something ridiculous in the unique copy of a printed book, though the number of copies printed may justifiably be limited when a book is the medium of typographical experiment. It is always desirable that experiments be made, and it is a pity that such "laboratory" pieces are so limited in number and in courage. Typography to-day does not so much need Inspiration or Revival as Investigation. It is proposed here to formulate some of the principles already known to book-printers, which investigation confirms and which non-printers may like to consider for themselves.

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II

THE laws governing the typography of books intended for general circulation are based first upon the essential nature of alphabetical writing, and secondly upon the traditions, explicit or implicit, prevailing in the society for which the printer is working. While a universal character or typography applicable to all books produced in a given national area is practicable, to impose a universal detailed formula upon all books printed in roman types is not. National tradition expresses itself in the varying separation of the book into prelims, chapters, etc., no less than in the design of the type. But at least there are physical rules of linear composition which are obeyed by all printers who know their job.

The normal roman type (in simple form without special sorts, etc.) consists of an upright design, and a sloping form of it:

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The printer needs to be very careful in choosing his type, realizing that the more often he is going to use it, the more closely its design must approximate to the general idea held in the mind's eye of readers perforce ruled by the familiar magazine, newspaper and book. It does no harm to print a Christmas card in **black letter**, but who nowadays would read a book in that type? I may believe, as I do, that black letter is in design more homogeneous, more lively and more economic a type than the grey round roman we use, but I do not now expect people to read a book in it. Aldus' and Caslon's are both relatively feeble types, but they represent the forms accepted by the community; and the printer, as a servant of the community, must use them, or one of their variants. No printer should say, "I am an artist, therefore I am not to be dictated to. I will create my own letter forms," for, in this humble job, no printer is an artist in this sense. Nor is it possible to-day, as it just was in the infancy of the craft, to persuade society into the acceptance of strongly marked and highly individualistic types—because literate society is so much greater in mass and correspondingly slower in

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movement. Type design moves at the pace of the most conservati reader. The good type-designer therefore realizes that, for a ne fount to be successful, it has to be so good that only very fe recognize its novelty. If readers do not notice the consumma reticence and rare discipline of a new type, it is probably a goc letter. But if my friends think that the tail of my lower-case r or th lip of my lower-case e is rather jolly, you may know that the fou would have been better had neither been made. A type which is have anything like a present, let alone a future, will neither be ve "different" nor very "jolly."

So much for Type. The printer possesses also Spaces and Lea as a normal part of his typographical material, straight lines metal known as rules, braces, and finally a more or less indiscrim nate collection of ornaments—head and tail-pieces, flowers, dec rated initial letters, vignettes and flourishes. Another decorati medium at his option lies in his command of colour; red is, wi sound instinct, the most frequently used. For emphasis, heavy fac are used. White space is an important item of composing-roo equipment—margins, blanks, etc., being filled in with what a known as "quotations." The selecting and arranging of the elements is known as Composition. Imposition is the placing of th composed matter upon the sheet. Printing includes impressing due order, perfecting the sheet in due register (backing up), regula ing the inking, and achieving a crisp type-page. Finally the ton weight and texture of the paper are important factors enteri into the completed result.

Typography, therefore, controls the composition, imposition impression and paper. Of paper, it is at least necessary to dema that it be capable of expressing the value of the composition; imposition, that the margins be proportionate to the area of th text, affording decent space for thumbs and fingers at the side an bottom of the page. The old-style margins are handsome in them selves and agreeable to the purpose of a certain kind of book, bu are obviously not convenient in books where the page dimensio is unavoidably small or narrow, or the purpose of the book is to b carried in the pocket. For these and other kinds of book, the typ may be centred on the measure of the page, and slightly raise above ocular centre.

Imposition is the most important element in typography—for n page, however well composed in detail, can be admired if the *mis*

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en-page is careless or ill-considered. In practical printing to-day, these details of imposition are on the whole adequately cared for; so that it is possible to report that the mass of books presents a tolerable appearance. Even a badly composed work may give a good appearance if it is well imposed—good imposition redeeming bad composition, while a good composition would be effectively ruined by bad imposition.

III

THE designer of the book, therefore, first determines his imposition and then tackles the details of composition. The first principles of composition do not require much discussion since they necessarily follow from the conventions of alphabetical printing in the roman letter accepted by those for whom we are printing. The matter is relatively simple. First, it is certain that the eye cannot read with ease any considerable number of words composed of letters embodying sharply contrasted thicks and thins; secondly, it is none the less certain that the eye cannot agreeably read a mass of words composed even in a rightly constructed letter, if the lines are beyond a certain length. The most expert reader's eye cannot seize more than a certain number of words in a given size except in a proportionate length of line. Thirdly, practice proves that the size of the letter must be related to the length of line. Respect for these principles will generally protect the reader from the risk of "doubling" (reading the same line twice). The average line of words which the reader's eye can conveniently seize is between ten and twelve. Nevertheless, the typographer, while exerting himself to the utmost to respect this ocular truth, is daily confronted with the fact that unavoidable conditions make it impossible for him to secure a type of the duly related size, and that he is driven to use a relatively small type. To obviate here the risk of "doubling," he consistently inserts proportionate leads through the matter, so opening the lines that the eye comfortably travels and returns from beginning to end and from end to beginning.

The practice of leading, denounced in certain quarters as essentially evil, is an inevitable necessity to a large proportion of printing; and the skilled typographer, making the best use of his material, makes in turn, wise use of leads. The orthodox high-brow view that leads produce in every instance an unhappy weak-looking effect will not survive a wide experience. On the contrary, it will be

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found that their absence may effectively ruin even a compositi in large type, so that it is true to say that the intelligent use leading distinguishes the expert from the inexpert printer. A slig differentiation of typeface may make the practice advisable. Clear while a letter of the size now under the reader's eye, with fair long ascenders and descenders, would not require leading unle set to a measure of more than 3½ in., there exist letters with sho descenders designed rather to sustain leading by rule than exception. Baskerville's is a type to which leading is invariably advantage. The problem of determining the amount to be given not to be settled by considering only the ascenders or the body the type, because breadth of letter is also a factor to be reckon with—some letters are narrow in respect to their height, wh others are wide. A composition in a round, open, wide lett chosen because it is rather loose (that is to say, the space betwe the letters is greater, or appears greater, by reason of the curves the c, o, e, g), gains in consistency when there is a satisfactory le between the lines. It is often argued that loose setting is not adm- able in itself; to which it might be replied that the printer generally bound to carry out the instructions of his customer; oft to respect the wishes of an artist who may be illustrating the wor and, not seldom, committed by the publisher to a paper-size d tated by irrelevant considerations.

Further, it is obvious that the space between words compos in a condensed letter may be less than that between words in round, wide form of letter. Where there is no leading between t lines, and the composition is, for extrinsic reasons, necessar tight, it may be an advantage to set leads between the paragrap even though this result in pages with uneven tails. In paragraphin it is important to realize that the opening sentence of a work shou automatically manifest itself as such. This may be secured by t use of the large initial letter; the printing of the first word CAPITALS, or SMALL CAPITALS; CAPITALS *and* SMALL CAPI ALS; or by setting the first word into the margin. On no accou should the opening of a chapter be indented, since indention shou mark (and always mark) the subsequent sections, i.e., the par graphs, of the text. The abolition of paragraph-indentions is plain an undesirable practice; nor is setting the first word in capitals small capitals an agreeable substitute for the indention. The spa of the indention should be sufficient to be noticeable.

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As both measures must be related, displaying a proportion pleasing to the eye, the depth of the page follows from its width. It seems that the proportions of the oblong are more pleasing than those of the square; and as a horizontal oblong drives out the line to an impossible length, and a two-column arrangement is tedious, the vertical oblong has become the normal page.

Such are the elements of typography; and a volume built up of type-pages composed in accordance with them will be generally satisfactory. There remain only the page headings and the folio. By ranging the headings inside towards the gutter, to the left and right respectively, two pages are fixed as a unity; but they can also be ranged outside to the right and left, or they may be centered. The folio may be centered at the foot, or range either way at the top or bottom (preferably, for quicker reference, on the outside), but it cannot be centered at the top without cancelling the running page headline—only to be done by exception. The running headlines may be set in capitals of the text, in upper and lower-case of the text, or in a combination of capitals. Full-sized capitals over-emphasize what is, after all, a repetitive page-feature inserted chiefly for the convenience of librarians and readers interested in the identification of leaves which have worked loose. If set in upper and lower-case, the headline loses in levelness, so that it seems well to employ SMALL CAPITALS; these are best separated by hair spaces, since the unrelieved rectangular structure and perpendicularity of capitals tend to defeat instantaneous recognition. Full-sized capitals may well be used for chapter headings, with the number of the chapter in smalls; both indications being hair-spaced.

The reader, travelling from the generally invariable blank at the end of a chapter to the beginning of the next, finds a dropped chapter head an agreeably consistent feature, which saves him from feeling suffocated or overpowered by the text.

IV

THE foregoing elementary directions affect the main part of the book, its body. There remains a section which goes before the text, known as the "preliminaries," often complicated both in respect to arrangement and draftsmanship. Before considering these, it may be well to summarize our present findings—to concentrate them into a formula. According to our doctrine, a well-built book is made up from vertical oblong pages arranged in paragraphs

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having an average line of ten to twelve consistently spaced words set in a fount of comfortable size and familiar design; the lines sufficiently separated to prevent doubling and the composition being headed by a running title. This rectangle is so imposed upon the page as to provide centre, head, fore-edge and tail margins of dimensions suitably related not only to the length of line but to the disposition of space at those points where the text is cut into chapters, and where the body joins the prefatory and other pages known as "preliminaries."

Now these first pages, being intended rather for reference than for reading and re-reading, are less strictly governed by convention than the text-pages. They consequently offer the maximum opportunity for typographic design. The history of printing is in large measure the history of the title-page. When fully developed, the title occupied a recto page, either partially or wholly; and the title-phrase, or the principal words of it, has generally been set in a conspicuous size of type. Sixteenth-century Italian printers generally used large capitals copied from inscriptions, or by exception from medieval manuscripts; while English use emulated the French in employing a canon line of upper and lower-case, followed by a few lines of pica capitals. Next came the printer's device, and at the foot of the page, his name and address. These large sizes of upper and lower-case, an inheritance from printers who were accustomed to black letter (which cannot be set in solid capitals), have gone. The device has also vanished (it has been revived by a few publishers), and thus the contemporary title page is generally a bleak affair, exhibiting in nine out of ten cases a space between the title and the imprint of the printer-publisher, so that this blank tends to be the strongest feature on the page. When the device was first abandoned, the author, printer or publisher took advantage of the leisure of the reader and the blank at their disposal, to draft a tediously long title, subtitle and list of the author's qualifications, designed to fill the entire page. The present-day publisher goes to the other extreme, reducing the title to as few short words as possible, followed with "by" and the author's name. A professional writer may insert, e.g., "Author of *The Deluge*" under his name or there may be incorporated a motto; but apart from such exceptions three and sometimes four inches of space separate the author's name from the first line of the imprint.

The result is that unless the title is set in a size of type out of al

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relation to that of the remainder of the book, this space is more conspicuous than the chief line. It is more reasonable to lessen this space by shortening the depth of the whole piece from title to imprint. It is clear that a volume in 12-point does not require a 30-point title unless it be a folio in double-column; and it is of no consequence if the title page is a little shorter than the text pages. There is no reason, other than a desire to be "different," for a title page to bear any line of type larger than twice the size of the text letter. If the book be set in 12-point, the title need be no larger than 24-point—and may decently enough be smaller. As lower-case is a necessary evil, which we should do well to subordinate since we cannot suppress, it should be avoided when it is at its least rational and least attractive—in large sizes. The main line of a title should be set in capitals; and, like all titling capitals, they should be spaced. Whatever may happen to the rest of the composition, the author's name, like all displayed proper names, should be in capitals.

V

HERE we may pause to counter an objection. It will be contended that whatever the value of our preceding conclusions, their adoption must mean an increase in standardization—all very well for those who have an economic objective but very monotonous and dull for those whose aim is that books shall possess more "life." This means that the objectors want more variety, more "differentness," more decoration. The craving to decorate is natural, and only if it is allowed the freedom of the text pages shall we look upon it as a passion to be resisted. The decoration of title pages is one thing—that of a fount to be employed in books is another. Our contention, in this respect, is that the necessities of a mass-production book and the limited edition differ neither in kind nor in degree, since all printing is essentially a means of the multiplication of a text set in an alphabetical code of conventional symbols. To disallow "variety" in the vital details of the composition is not to insist upon uniformity in display. As already pointed out, the preliminary pages offer scope for the utmost typographical ingenuity. Yet even here, a word of caution may be in place, so soon do we forget, in arranging any piece of display (above all, a title page), the supreme importance of sense. Every character, every word, every line should be seen with maximum clearness. Words should

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not be broken except unavoidably, and in title pages and other compositions of centred matter, lines should hardly begin with such feeble parts of speech as prepositions and conjunctions. It is more reasonable, as assisting the reader's immediacy of comprehension, to keep these to the ends of lines or to centre them in smaller type and so bring out the salient lines in a relatively conspicuous size.

No printer, in safeguarding himself from the charge of monotony in his composition, should admit, against his better judgment, any typographical distraction doing violence to logic and lucidity in the supposed interests of decoration. To twist his text into a triangle, squeeze it into a box, torture it into the shape of an hour-glass or a diamond is an offence requiring greater justification than the existence either of Italian and French precedents of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, or of an ambition to do something new in the twentieth. In truth; these are the easiest tricks of all, and we have seen so much of them during the late "revival of printing" that we now need rather a revival of restraint. In all permanent forms of typography, whether publicly or privately printed, the typographer's only purpose is to express, not himself, but his author. There are, admittedly, other purposes which enter into the composition of advertisement, publicity and sales matter; and there is, of course, a very great deal common to both book and advertisement composition. But it is not allowable to the printer to relax his zeal for the reader's comfort in order to satisfy an ambition to decorate or to illustrate. Rather than run this risk the printer should strive to express himself by the use of this or that small decorative unit, either of common design supplied by the type founders or drawn for his office by an artist. It is quite true that to an inventive printer decoration is not often necessary. In commercial printing, however, it seems to be a necessity, because the complexity of our civilization demands an infinite number of styles and characters. Publishers and other buyers of printing, by insisting upon a setting which shall express *their* business, *their* goods, *their* books and nobody else's business or goods or books, demand an individuality which pure typography can never hope to supply. But book-printers, concerned with the permanently convenient rather than with the transiently sensational or the merely fashionable, should be on their guard against title-page borders, vignettes and devices invented to ease their difficulties. There is no

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easy way with most title pages; and the printer's task is rendered more difficult by the average publisher's and author's incompetence to draft a title or to organize the preliminaries in reasonable sequence.

VI

THOSE who would like to lessen or vary the tendency towards standardization in day-to-day book production have a field for their activity in the last-mentioned pages. The position on the page of the half-title, title, dedication, etc., and their relation to each other, are not essentially invariable. Nevertheless, as it is well for printers and publishers to have rules, and the same rules, it may be suggested that the headings to Preface, Table of Contents, Introduction, etc., should be in the same size and fount as the chapter heads; and should be dropped if they are dropped. The order of the preliminaries remains to be settled. With the exception of the copyright notice, which may be set on the verso of the title page, all should begin on a recto. The logical order of the preliminary pages is Half-title or Dedication (I see no reason for including both), Title, Contents, Preface, Introduction. The certificate of "limitation," in the case of books of that class, may face the title where there is no frontispiece, be incorporated with the half-title, or be taken to the end of the volume. This order is applicable to most categories of books. Novels need neither Table of Contents nor List of Chapters, though one or the other is too often printed. If it is decided to retain either, it would be reasonable to print it on the back of the half-title and facing the title page, so that the structure, scope and nature of the book will be almost completely indicated to the reader at a single opening. Where the volume is made up of a few short stories, their titles can be listed in the otherwise blank centre of the title page.

VII

FICTION, Belles-Lettres and Educational books are habitually first published in portable, but not pocketable formats; crown octavo (5 by $7\frac{1}{2}$ in.) being the invariable rule for novels published as such. The novel in the form of Biography will be published as a Biography, demy octavo ($5\frac{5}{8}$ by $8\frac{3}{4}$ in.), the size also for History, Political Study, Archaeology, Science, Art and almost everything but Fiction. Novels are only promoted to this format when they

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have become famous and "standard"; when they are popular rather than famous they are composed in pocket (4½ by 6¾ in.) editions. *Size*, therefore, is the most manifest difference between the categories of books.

Another obvious difference is *bulk*, calculated in accordance with the publisher's notion, first, of the general sense of trade expectation and, secondly, of the purchasing psychology of a public habituated to certain selling prices vaguely related to number of pages and thickness of volume (inconsistently enough, weight does not enter into these expectations). These habits of mind have consequences in the typography; they affect the choice of fount and size of type, and may necessitate the adoption of devices for "driving out," i.e., making the setting take up as much room as possible. By putting the running headline between rules or rows of ornaments; introducing unnecessary blanks between chapters; contracting the measure; exaggerating the spaces between the words and the lines; excessively indenting paragraphs; isolating quoted matter with areas of white space: inserting wholly unnecessary sectional titles in the text and surrounding them with space; contriving to drive a chapter ending to the top of a recto page so that the rest of it and its verso may be blank; using thick paper; increasing the depth of chapter beginnings and inserting very large versals thereto; and so on, the volume can be inflated to an extra sixteen pages and sometimes more—which is a feat the able typographer is expected to accomplish without showing his hand.

Limited editions of standard authors, or of authors whose publishers desire them to rank as such, are commonly given a rubricated title or some other feature not strictly necessary. A dreadful example of overdone rubrication is to be found in an edition of Thomas Hardy's verse, in which the running heads throughout the book are in red—the production of a firm which desired to make an impression on the purchaser in view of the price asked for the edition. This could have been better done by reserving colour for the initial letters. Handmade paper is generally used for *éditions de luxe*, and none but the brave among publishers will disregard the superstitious love of the book-buying classes for its untrimmed, ugly and dirt-gathering edges. That most of the public prefer to have it so is because a trimmed book looks "ordinary" to them. Any book which is "different" from the "ordinary" in one superficial way or another is apt to impress those lacking trade experience. And there

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has been a notable increase during recent years in the category of books, generally illustrated, known to the trade as *fine printing*, *éditions de luxe*, *press-books*, *limited editions*, *collectors' books*, etc. Hence, it is hoped that the above setting out of the first principles of typography may give the discriminating reader some sort of yardstick which he can apply not only to the entries catalogued by the booksellers as limited editions, but to the output of publishers responsible for printing the literary and scientific books which are more necessary to society, and are often designed with greater intelligence.

COMPOSED IN NEW TIMES ROMAN TYPES

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CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS

American Type Designers and Their Work

A PIECE of paper about two inches square, originally pinned to the manuscript of the Rev. Ezra Stiles's diary in the Yale University Library is all that remains of the first original American type design. It is a proof of letters made by Abel Buell, a Connecticut Yankee, in 1769.* Buell was his own designer, punch cutter, and caster, since in his day, as for many years after, the making of type was entirely a hand operation. Not the least exacting part of the work was the cutting of the punch on the end of a short bar of softened steel. It was not until the invention of the Benton pantograph punch-cutting machine in 1885 that any other method was known. All type made before 1885 was therefore dependent on hand punch cutting, and the designer of the type was almost always the same man who cut the punches.

Who these type designers were after Buell is a matter of uncertainty and obscurity. The first type specimen book in America was that of Binny & Ronaldson of Philadelphia, issued in 1812; and from then almost to our own day the type foundries have taken the credit for the type designs which they have offered for sale. Type designers, like architects, got no credit; possibly Modesty, with a backward glance at old specimen books, raised a warning finger, and the designers were willing to let the foundries have whatever glory there was.

Abel Buell and his contemporaries and successors followed the

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* Reprinted in Lawrence C. Wroth's "The First Work with American Types," page 65.

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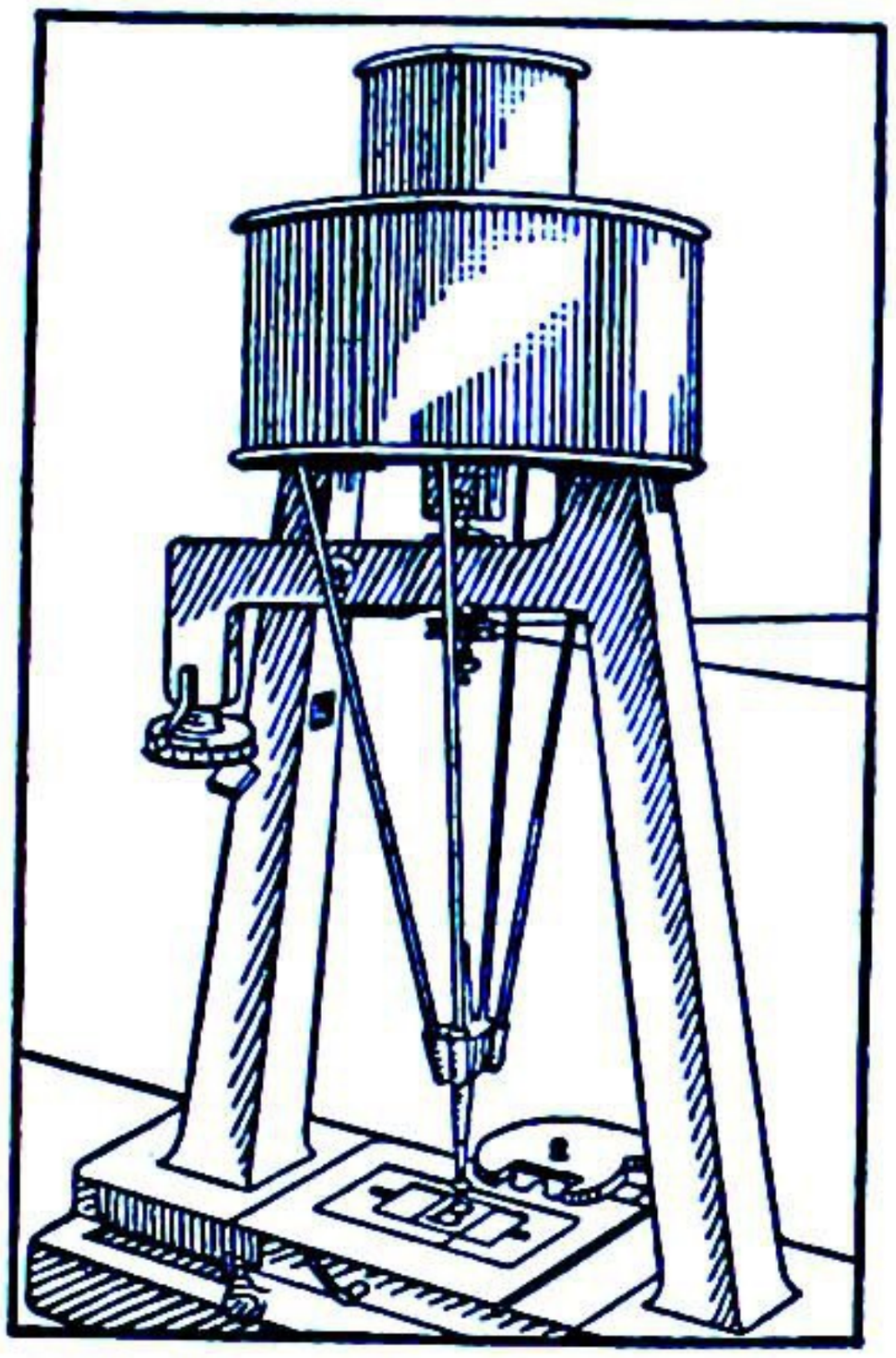
general trends in design in the arts as a whole. The Greek Revival and the Victorian Age, marked by the two great expositions at London and Philadelphia with their crudities and extravagancies in design, found echoes in our imitative craft of printing. So it is not surprising that type design began to improve, along with the other arts, with the advent of the '90's. We have always followed European and especially English models, and it is natural that the upheaval in type design in England under Morris's influence had immediate repercussions here. But while imitations of Kelmscott types were soon on the market, two surprisingly original American designs appeared at the same time as the imitations. About 1894 or 1895 the Central Type Foundry of St. Louis



The Punch Cutting Machine.
Courtesy George Macy Publications.

introduced a face which became widely used, called (for no better reason than attends the christening of most type faces) "De Vinne." It is of unknown parentage, though there is some reason to suppose that it descended from the Elzevirs; but it was a face of character and distinction. At the same time the same foundry brought out another design which had an acknowledged father—Will Bradley. Of this face it has been said that it has "remarkably bold letters, with peculiarities of form never before attempted." Thus we have in the De Vinne and the Bradley faces

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two fresh and distinctively American types, destined to be the forerunners of many others. And in one case the name of the designer was definitely attached.

With the invention of the pantograph punch cutter, type design became an "art" rather than a craft, and as might be expected the personality of the designer became for various reasons more important. It is not without interest that the chief designer of the American Type Founders Company—a man responsible for almost the whole type output of that foundry for many years—Morris Fuller Benton, was the son of the man whose machines were responsible for this revolution in type design. For it was the two basic machines invented and developed by Linn Boyd Benton which made it possible for those unskilled in the intricacies of type making to provide the basic designs for type. The machines were very ingenious, and the designs partook of the "faultily faultless, icily regular" perfection of the mechanical device. This method of making type faces involved the drawing of the design and the making of two or three patterns in thin brass of the outline of the letter—each pattern good for several sizes of type, and slightly modified for another group of sizes. This is the way in which modern type is designed. It is the reason why such a type series as "Cheltenham," designed by the architect Bertram G. Goodhue in 1900 for the Mergenthaler Linotype Company, while very expertly handled in the details, seems monotonous in mass; whereas the Caslon type of the original cutting shows all the inevitable variations of hand work.

A survey of the types of the first quarter of the present century, made by the Editor of the *Inland Printer* in 1927, displays 161 type faces brought out by seven or eight of the leading foundries between 1900 and 1925. Of these, it was possible to name the designers of 72, almost all from the Barnhart Brothers & Spindler foundry of Chicago, whose records seem to have been in better shape, or whose generosity was more spontaneous. Oswald Cooper, Sydney Gaunt, Will Ransom, Robert Wiebking, and George Trenholm were the chief names. It is unfortunate that the names of the designers of the types put out by the American Type Founders Company have not been preserved except in rare instances. Of course, Benton was responsible for the greater portion, and on the aesthetic side they occasionally scored a triumph as in the case of the "Cloister" face.

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The list included in the *Inland Printer's* survey fails to include some of the outstanding designs of the period. Goodhue's "Merrymount" was done in 1894, but after 1900 we have Mr. Rogers's "Centaur," Mr. Hunter's odd but forceful types (properly cut on punches by the designer), the output of the rapidly growing composing-machine industry, and Frederic W. Goudy's fifty designs completed in that quarter century. Goudy's output of six score type designs in fifty years is an amazing record, one probably never equalled. Such designs as those for "Goudy Modern," "Goudy Text," and "Hadrian" would establish his reputation. He had his limitations as a designer—most of his designs lack a certain crispness—but his versatility was extraordinary.

In the years since 1925 new designers have come to the fore: Blumenthal with his "Emerson," Dwiggins with his "Electra" and "Caledonia," Ruzicka with his "Fairfield," and Chappell with his "Lydian." This brief survey cannot hope to mention all types or designs which American designers have contributed, but it is well to see if any tendencies can be detected.

The type which Buell made in 1759, as well as the type of his immediate successors into the first decades of the nineteenth century, were mainly variations on the so-called "modern romans" of Didot, Bodoni, Austen, and Thorowgood. As the artistic styles in design in general, not alone in type, gradually lost the evolutionary force which has developed letter forms through the centuries, eccentricity and anarchy came into play. The nineteenth-century types as shown in the specimen books of Bruce, Connor, Farmer, etc., and exhibited in all their grotesque horror in Fred Phillips' "Old-fashioned Type Book," had no legitimate parentage, and they are as well relegated to the bizarre and pseudo-nostalgic advertisement. The result of the Kelmscott "revival" was to turn attention to type forms of the past which could be revived for modern use, and the type designers after 1900 did a remarkable piece of work in introducing good type faces. The advertisers have been eager to use new and novel faces, and have greatly stimulated this activity, even in many cases overexciting it. The most interesting result has been the renewed interest in calligraphy. First directed toward new forms of script, the truer form of broad pen lettering is now beginning to influence type design, to free it from too slavish a devotion on the one hand to the serif, and on the other to a too-free rejection of the

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serif altogether. Such a face as Mr. Chappell's "Lydian" is an example of real advance in design, and if one could adduce European examples, more could be cited.

American designers have not developed many new or good book faces; such types as Oxford, Centaur, Emerson, Fairfield, Electra, are the exception. Their efforts have been given to the drawing of display and advertising types—too often not to the enrichment of the printer's repertory. It is quite as true now as in the past that distortions of the normal roman letter form in the direction of extra condensed or extra heavy or very light monoline letters result in eccentricities which have no permanent value. On the other hand such novel type designs as Garamond Bold Italic, Hadriano, the newspaper Ionics, and Lydian are meritorious additions to the printer's fonts. When it is realized that eccentricity and originality are not the same thing, we may expect from our increasingly intelligent designers indigenous types of usefulness and charm.

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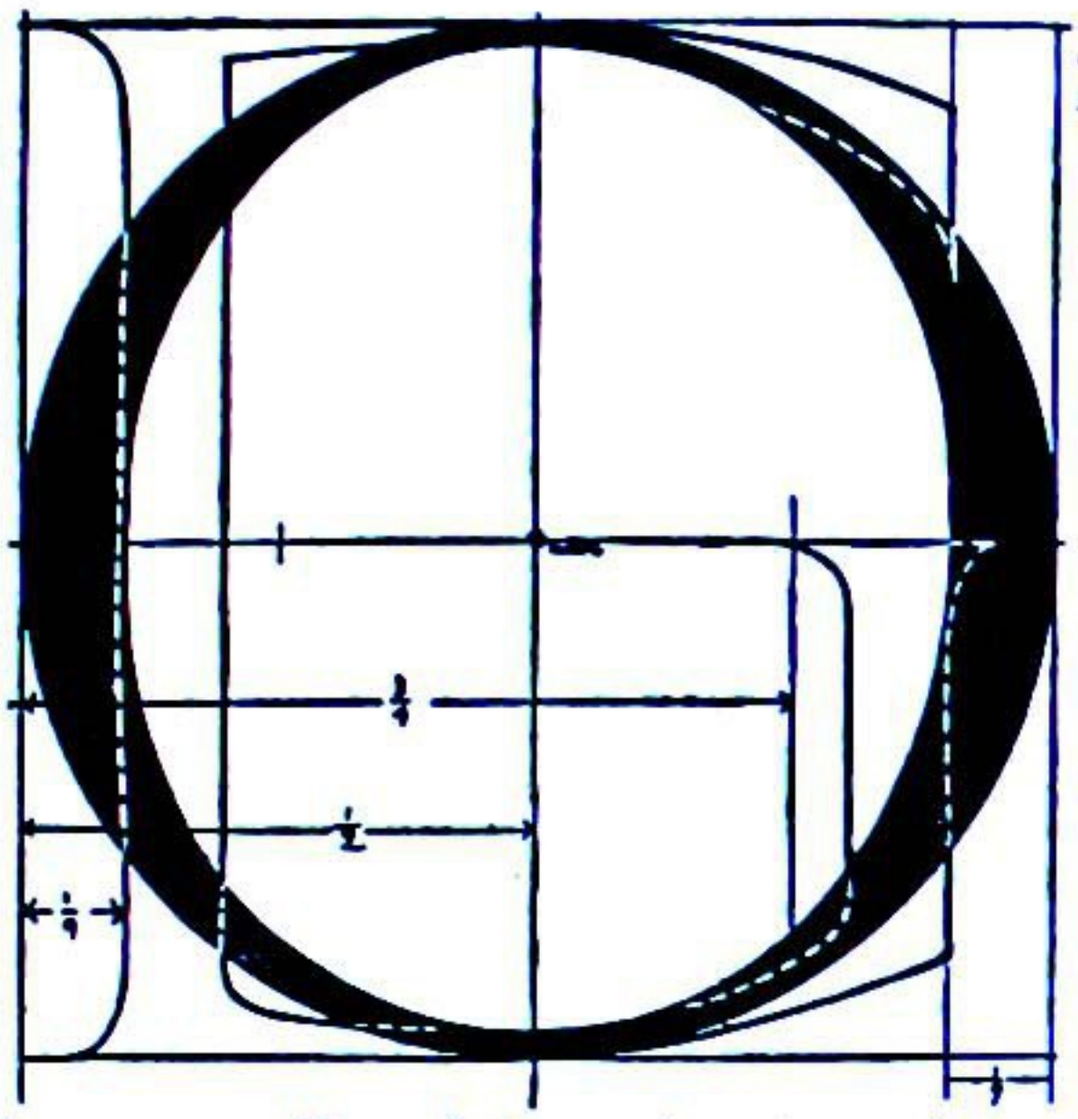
·TYPOGRAPHY · ERIC GILL·



NE OF the most alluring enthusiasms that can occupy the mind of the letterer is that of inventing a really logical and consistent alphabet having a distinct sign for every distinct sound. This is especially the case for English speaking people: for the letters we use only inadequately symbolize the sounds of our language. We need many new letters and a revaluation of existing ones. But this enthusiasm has no practical value for the typographer; we must take the alphabets we have got, and we must take these alphabets in all essentials as we have inherited them.

First of all, then, we have the ROMAN ALPHABET of CAPITAL letters (Upper-case), and second the alphabet which printers call ROMAN LOWER-CASE. The latter, tho' derived from the Capitals, is a distinct alphabet. Third we have the alphabet called *ITALIC*, also derived from the Capitals but through different channels. These are the three alphabets in common use for English people.

Are there no others? It might be held that there are several; there are, for example, the alphabet called Black Letter, and that called Lombardic. But these are only partial survivals, and very few people could, without reference to ancient books, write down even a complete alphabet of either. As far as we are concerned in modern England, Roman Capitals, Lower-case and Italics are three different

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alphabets, and all are current "coin." But however familiar we are with them, their essential differences are not always easily discovered. It is not a matter of slope or of serifs or of thickness or thinness. These qualities, though one or other of them may be commonly associated with one alphabet more than another, are not essential

Figure 1 illustrates the contention that slope in either direction does not deprive Capitals, Lower-case or Italics of their essential differences.

Figure 2 in which the upper line of letters is essentially "Roman Lower-case"; the lower essentially "Italic."

marks of difference. A Roman Capital A does not cease to be a Roman Capital A because it is sloped backwards or forwards, because it is made thicker or thinner, or because serifs are added or omitted; and the same applies to Lower-case and Italics (see Fig. 1).

The essential differences are obviously between the forms of the

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letters. The following letters, a b d e f g h k l m n q r t u and y, are not Roman Capitals, and that is all about it. The letters shown in the lower line of Fig. 2 are neither Capitals nor Lower-case. The conclusion is obvious: there is a complete alphabet of Capital letters,

Figure 3 shows the differences and similarities between the three "current" alphabets. Note: the curve of the Italic y's tail is due to exuberance, and not to necessity.

but the Lower-case takes ten letters from the Capital alphabet, and the Italic takes ten from the Capitals and twelve from the Lower-case. Figure 3 shows the three alphabets completed, and it will be seen that C I J O P S V W X and Z are common to all three, that b d h k l m n q r t u and y are common to Lower-case and Italics; that A B D E F G H K L M N Q R T U and Y are always Capitals; and that a e f and g are always Lower-case.

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But tho' this is a true account of the essential differences between the three alphabets, there are customary differences which seem almost as important. It is customary to make Roman Capitals up-

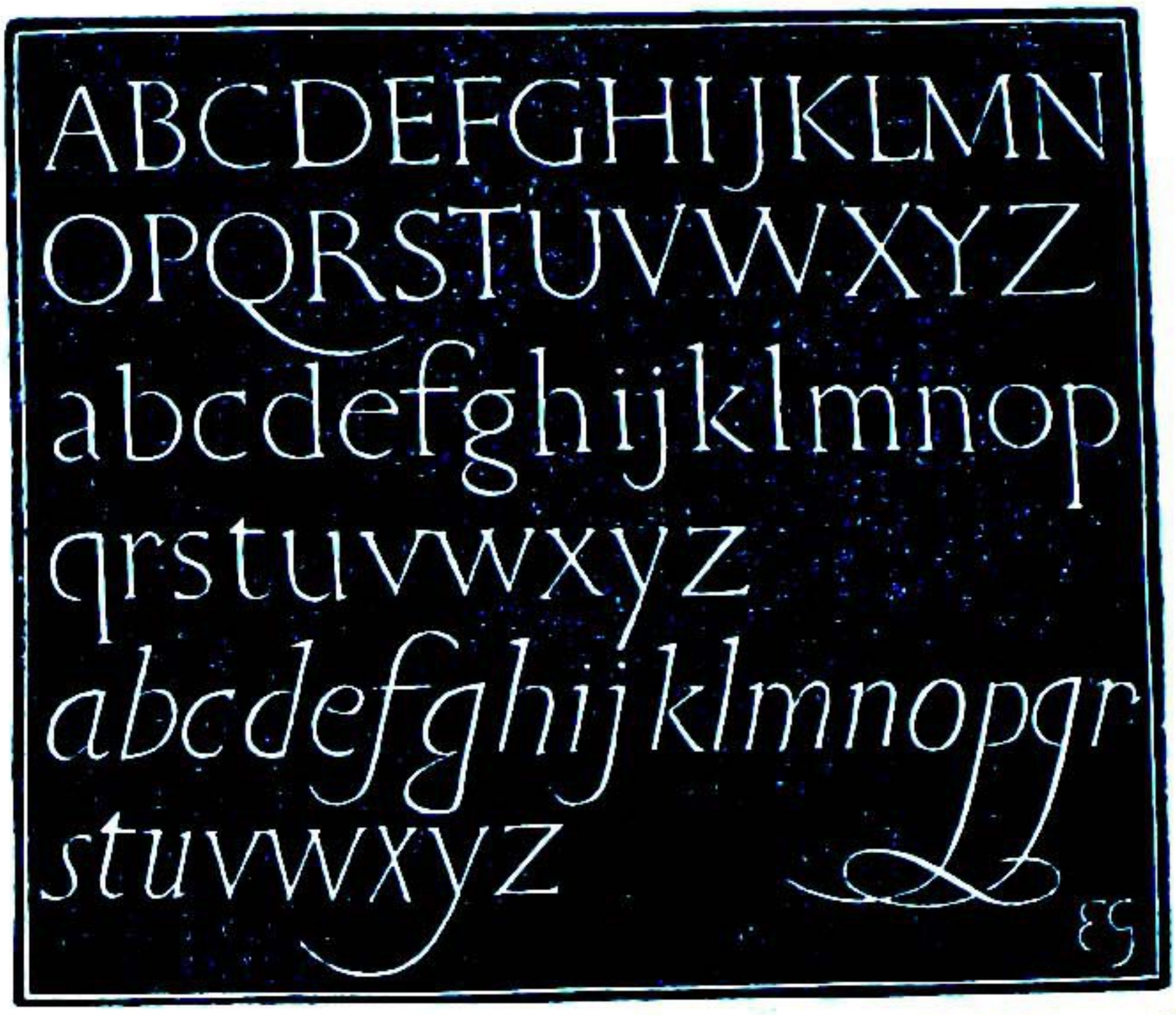

Figure 4 shows the Capitals, Roman Lower-case and Italics with their customary as well as their essential differences.

right. It is customary to make Lower-case smaller than Capitals when the two are used together; and it is customary to make Italics narrower than Lower-case, sloping towards the right and with certain details reminiscent of the cursive handwriting from which they are derived. Fig. 4 shows the three alphabets with their customary as well as their essential differences.

Properly speaking there is no such thing as an alphabet of Italic Capitals, and where upright or nearly upright Italics are used ordinary upright Roman Capitals go perfectly well with them. But as Italics are commonly made with a considerable slope and cursive freedom, various sorts of sloping and quasi-cursive Roman Capitals have been designed to match. This practice has, however, been carried to excess; the slope of Italics and their cursiveness have been

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much overdone. In the absence of punch cutters with any personal sensibility as letter designers, with punch cutting almost entirely done by machine, the obvious remedy is a much more nearly upright and non-cursive Italic, and for Capitals the ordinary upright Roman. Even with a nearly upright Italic, the mere presence of the Italic a e f and g alters the whole character of a page, and with a slight narrowness as well as a slight slope, the effect is quite different from that of a page of Lower-case.

The common practice of using Italics to emphasize single words should be abandoned in favour of the use of the ordinary Lower-case with spaces between the letters (l e t t e r-s p a c e d). The proper use of Italics is for quotations and footnotes, and for books in which it is or seems desirable to use a lighter and less formal style of letter. In a book printed in Italics upright Capitals may well be used, but if sloping Capitals be used they should only be used as initials—they go well enough with Italic Lower-case, but they do not go with one another.

We have, then, the three alphabets, and these are the printer's main outfit; all other sorts of letters are in the nature of fancy letters, useful in inverse proportion to the importance and quantity of his output. The more serious the class of book he prints, the wider the public to whom he appeals, so much the more solemn and impersonal and normal will be and should be his typography. But he will not call that book serious which is merely widely bought, and he will not call that a wide appeal which is made simply to a mob of forcibly educated proletarians. A serious book is one which is good in itself according to standards of goodness set by infallible authority, and a wide appeal is one made to intelligent people of all times and nations.

The invention of printing and the breakdown of the medieval world happened at the same time; and that breakdown, tho' hastened by corruption in the Church, was chiefly caused by the recrudescence of a commercialism which had not had a proper chance since the time of the Romans. The invention of double-entry book-keeping also happened about the same time, and though, as with modern mechanical invention, the work was done by men of brains rather

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than men of business, it was the latter who gained the chief advantage.

Printing, a cheaper method of reproducing books than handwriting, came therefore just at the right moment. Since its first fine careless rapture, and in spite of the genuinely disinterested efforts of ecclesiastical presses, University presses and the work of many notable individual printers and typefounders, the history of printing has been the history of its commercial exploitation. As is natural with men of business, the worse appears the better reason. Financial success is, rightly, their only aim, and technical perfection the only criterion they know how to apply to their works.

TYPOGRAPHY (the reproduction of lettering by means of movable letter types) was originally done by pressing the inked surface or "face" of a letter made of wood or metal against a surface of paper or vellum. The unevenness and hardness of paper, the irregularities of types (both in respect of their printing faces and the dimensions of their "bodies") and the mechanical imperfections of presses and printing methods made the work of early printers notable for corresponding unevennesses, irregularities and mechanical imperfections. To ensure that every letter left its mark more or less completely and evenly, considerable and noticeable impression was made in the paper. The printed letter was a coloured letter at the bottom of a ditch.

The subsequent development of typography was chiefly the development of technical improvements, more accurately cast types, smoother paper, mechanically perfect presses. Apart from the history of its commercial exploitation, the history of printing has been the history of the abolition of the impression. A print is properly a dent made by pressing; the history of letter-press printing has been the history of the abolition of that dent.

But the very smooth paper and the mechanically very perfect presses required for printing which shall show no "impression" can only be produced in a world which cares for such things, and such a world is of its nature inhuman. The industrial world of to-day is such, and it has the printing it desires and deserves. In the industrial world Typography, like house building and sanitary engineering, is one of the necessary arts—a thing to be done in working hours,

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those during which one is buoyed up by the knowledge that one is serving one's fellow men and neither enjoying oneself like an artist nor praising God like a man of prudence. In such a world the only excuse for anything is that it is of service.

Printing which makes any claim on its own account, printers who give themselves the status of poets or painters, are to be condemned; they are not serving; they are shirking. Such is the tone of the more romantic among men of commerce; and the consequence is a pseudo-asceticism and a bastard aesthetics. The asceticism is only a sham because the test of service is the profits shown in the accounts; and the aesthetics is bastard because it is not founded upon the reasonable pleasure of the mind of the workman and of his customer, but upon the snobbery of museum students employed by men of commerce to give a saleable appearance to articles too dull otherwise to please even the readers of *The Daily Mail*.

Nevertheless, as we have already shown, commercial printing, machine printing, industrial printing would have its own proper goodness if it were studiously plain and starkly efficient. Our quarrel is not with such a thing but only with the thing that is neither one nor the other—neither really mechanically perfect and physically serviceable nor really a work of art, i.e., a thing made by a man who, however laughable it may seem to men of business, loves God and does what he likes, who serves his fellow men because he is wrapped up in serving God—to whom the service of God is so commonplace that it is as much bad form to mention it as among men of business it is bad form to mention profits.

There are, then, two typographies, as there are two worlds; and, apart from God or profits, the test of one is mechanical perfection, and of the other sanctity—the commercial article at its best is simply physically serviceable and, per accidens, beautiful in its efficiency; the work of art at its best is beautiful in its very substance and, per accidens, as serviceable as an article of commerce.

The typography of Industrialism, when it is not deliberately diabolical and designed to deceive, will be plain; and in spite of the wealth of its resources—a thousand varieties of inks, papers, presses and mechanical processes for the reproduction of the designs of same designers—it will be entirely free from exuberance and fancy.

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Every sort of ornament will be omitted; for printers' flowers will not spring in such a soil, and fancy lettering is nauseating when it is not the fancy of typefounders and printers but simply of those who desire to make something appear better than it is. Paradoxical though it be, the greater the wealth of appliances, the less is the power of using it. All the while that the technical and mechanical good quality is increasing, the de-humanizing of the workmen is also increasing. As we become more and more able to print finer and more elaborate and delicate types of letter it becomes more and more intellectually imperative to standardize all forms and obliterate all elaborations and fancifulness. It becomes easier and easier to print any kind of thing, but more and more imperative to print only one kind.

On the other hand, those who use humane methods can never achieve mechanical perfection, because the slaveries and standardizations of Industrialism are incompatible with the nature of men. Humane Typography will often be comparatively rough and even uncouth; but while a certain uncouthness does not seriously matter in humane works, lack of uncouthness is the only possible excuse for the productions of the machine. So while in an industrialist society it is technically easy to print any kind of thing, in a humane society only one kind of thing is easy to print, but there is every scope for variety and experiment in the work itself. The more elaborate and fanciful the industrial article becomes, the more nauseating it becomes—elaboration and fancifulness in such things are inexcusable. But there is every excuse for elaboration and fancy in the works of human beings, provided that they work and live according to reason; and it is instructive to note that in the early days of printing, when human exuberance had full scope, printing was characterized by simplicity and decency; but that now, when such exuberance no longer exists in the workman (except when he is not at work), printing is characterized by every kind of vulgarity of display and complicated indecency.

But, alas for humanity, there is the thing called compromise; and the man of business who is also the man of taste, and he of taste also who is also man of business will, in their blameless efforts to earn a living (for using one's wits is blameless, and earning a living is

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necessary), find many ways of giving a humane look to machine-made things or of using machinery and the factory to turn out, more quickly and cheaply, things whose proper nature is derived from human labor. Thus we have imitation "period" furniture in Wardour Street, and we have imitation "arts and crafts" in Tottenham Court Road. The-man-of-business-who-is-also-man-of-taste will tend to the "period" work, the-man-of-taste-who-is-also-man-of-business will tend to the imitation handicrafts. And, in the printing world, there are business houses whose reputation is founded on their resuscitations of the eighteenth century, and private presses whose speed of output is increased by machine-setting and gas engines. These things are more deplorable than blameworthy. Their chief objectionableness lies in the fact that they confuse the issue for the ordinary uncritical person, and they turn out work which is neither very good nor very bad. "Period" printing looks better than the usual vulgar products of unrestrained commercialism, and there is no visible difference, except to the expert, between machine-setting and hand-setting, or between sheets worked on a hand-press and those turned out on a power-driven Platen.

Nevertheless, even if these things be difficult to decide in individual instances, there can be no sort of doubt but that as industrialism requires a different sort of workman so it also turns out a different kind of work—a workman sub-human in his irresponsibility, and work inhuman in its mechanical perfection. The imitation of the work of pre-industrial periods cannot make any important ultimate difference; the introduction of industrial methods and appliances into small workshops cannot make such workshops capable of competition with "big business." But while false standards of good taste may be set up by "period" work, this "good taste" is entirely that of the man of business and his customers; it is not at all that of the hands—they are in no way responsible for it or affected by it; on the other hand, the introduction of mechanical methods into small workshops has an immediate effect on the workmen. Inevitably they tend to take more interest in the machine and less in the work, to become machine-minders and to regard wages as the only reward. And good taste ceases to be the result of the restraint put upon his conscience by the workman himself; it becomes a

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thing imposed upon him by his employer. You cannot see th difference between a machine-set page and one set by hand. No, bu you can see the difference between Cornwall before and after became "the English Riviera"; you can see the difference betwee riding in a hansom and in a motor-cab—between a "cabby" and "taxi-man"; you can see the difference between the ordinary issu of *The Times* to-day and its ordinary issue a hundred years ago; yo can see the difference between an ordinary modern book and a ordinary book of the sixteenth century. And it is not a question c better or worse; it is a question of difference simply. Our argumen here is not that Industrialism has made things worse, but that it ha inevitably made them different; and that whereas before Industri alism there was one world, now there are two. The nineteent century attempt to combine Industrialism with the Humane was neces sarily doomed, and the failure is now evident. To get the best out o the situation we must admit the impossibility of compromise; w must, in as much as we are industrialists, glory in Industrialism an its powers of mass-production, seeing that good taste in its product depends upon their absolute plainness and serviceableness; and in s much as we remain outside Industrialism, as doctors, lawyers priests and poets of all kinds must necessarily be, we may glory i the fact that we are responsible workmen and can produce only on thing at a time.

That if you look after goodness and truth beauty will take care o itself, is true in both worlds. The beauty that Industrialism properl produces is the beauty of bones; the beauty that radiates from th work of men is the beauty of the living face.

COMPOSED IN PERPETUA TYPES

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FREDERIC · W · GOUDY

TYPES AND TYPE DESIGN

IT WOULD be mere affectation on my part were I to pretend not to be touched by the signal honor you extend to me this evening, and I would be ungrateful indeed if I neglected to voice my very great appreciation of your kindness. I wish that I might express that appreciation in words that would leave no shadow of doubt in your minds as to the depth and sincerity of my feeling.

I am not conscious of any outstanding reasons for the kind words spoken here tonight of my work. At the same time I am under no illusions as to the ultimate value of the work I have *attempted* to do, although it is, after all, merely the every-day work of an earnest craftsman who endeavors to perform each task well and the next one, if possible, even better; and withal no thought or expectation of acclaim.

My craft is a simple one. For nearly two score years it has been my constant aim and endeavor to create a greater and more general esteem for printing and type design; to give to printers and readers of print more legible and more beautiful types than those in current use. This has involved some little sacrifice; the missionary seldom

The Syracuse University School of Journalism awarded its first medal of honor to F. W. G. in 1936, "for distinctive achievement in typographic design." His address then, reflecting the typographic philosophy and practice of two-score years, is reprinted as published by the University in 1936.

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acquires much more than the satisfaction of work well done, and y
on the whole, I haven't done badly, since my work has brought e
a wealth of friendship beyond measure.

And now to the subject which has been assigned to me for t s
occasion—something about types of the past, type revivals, and a
bit about type design, as I see it. I trust you will not find that m
brief postprandial attempt bears out Gay's lines too literally:

So comes the reckoning when the banquet's o'er,
A dreadful reckoning, when men smile no more.

ONE hundred and twelve years ago type design was generally i-
agined to be a matter that concerned only the letter cutter. J. Joh-
son, author of *Typographia* (published in 1824), wrote of a type fa
that the printer needed only to "observe that its shape be perfect
true, and that it lines or ranges with accuracy, and that by noti
certain mathematical rules the letter cutter may produce roman cha-
acters of such harmony, grace and symmetry as will please the e
in reading; and by having their fine strokes and swells blended t
gether in due proportion, will excite admiration." He says furth
that "if the letter stands even and in line, which *is the chief good qual
in letter*, it makes the face thereof sometimes to pass, though othe
wise ill-shaped." Type design as a profession evidently did not ex
in 1824. And even today many printers are uninformed as to t
various steps that must be taken between the inception of a ty
face in the designer's mind and its eventual appearance on t
printed page.

Today the designing of type is practiced by few artists as a se
arate craft; it is an humble art at best—and a minor one. Yet eve
user of types demands in them certain artistic qualities, i.e., inve
tion, novelty, style, beauty, distinction (a few insist on legibility
most of those users forget or do not realize that these are qualities
artist only may secure, and even the artist cannot always insure th
his design will present all of them.

First: Invention requires that we soar above mere caprices of fas
ion or the demands of passing fancy. Our letter forms have becom
fixed in their essentials by long use and tradition, yet a study of
that has gone before will enable the designer seeking new expre

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sions to infuse new life and character into traditional shapes and inspire him to create new designs based on the broad impressions stored in the granary of his mind.

Second: Novelty gives us some new impression suited to and brought about by new conditions of life and environment—by the changes that time has wrought. By novelty I do not mean, however, the imitation novelty so frequently met with and presented as something new; too often it means simply some older thing newly described. Achieving the fantastic quality reminiscent of the "slimy trail" of *Art Nouveau*, which you older ones will recall as rampant in the 1890's, produces freaks of fashion in an attempt to be novel, but may not, necessarily, always secure the novelty desired. Traditions of the past need not be disregarded nor overlooked in order to meet the prejudices of the present.

Just now a seemingly insatiable demand for novelty is giving us a senseless and ridiculous riot of "beautiful atrocities." The inundation of freak types is largely due to a revival of some former products of ignorance bringing in their train new designs even more bizarre in the attempt to secure "novelty"—a detestable word used frequently, I fear, like charity, to cover a multitude of sins. It has no place in artistic considerations, as a thing that really is good should be good for all time. Sporadic outbreaks in the name of novelty inevitably occur from time to time and fortunately have usually only their little day in the sun before vanishing forever into the limbo of the forgotten.

I do not wish to imply that novelty itself is undesirable—by no means; striving for newness keeps things fresh and alive. It is the re-presentation of the extraordinarily ugly and bizarre types of the middle of the last century with no exceptional artistic warrant for their revival, in an attempt to do something different, that I deprecate. Newness for its own sake only may not always be worth while.

I find it difficult to speak dispassionately of some of the types advertisers are using nowadays, because I am too deeply steeped in the traditions of the past to accept them. I cannot be accused of intolerance, however. The best art of the designer, the highest skill of the printer, and the clear, lucid argument of the advertisement writer must be requisitioned. Yet in much of the typography of today many

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of the new types display a marked avoidance of everything that is plain, simple and legible. Why are simplicity and easy readability no longer esteemed as desirable qualities in print? Why are these outlandish characters selected? For four hundred years the roman types of the early Italian printers have furnished models to suit all tastes and serve every purpose.

For several years past advertisers and even our magazine and book printers have somewhat strayed from a definite standard of dignity and beauty in the quest for novelty. Foreign types, imported to add a touch of novelty to our advertising (types which, no doubt, are good enough for the conditions in the bailiwicks that gave them birth), too frequently impart to print a fantastic or a too fanciful effect when used under the entirely different conditions found here. These types are likely to impart to our printing an air of incongruity displeasing to the trained taste. *En passant*, I am reminded of a suggestion offered by Reinhardt, the scenic designer: "Do not try to inspire from foreign ideas. Be interested in them, of course, and they will help to fertilize your own."

Third: Style is a subtle quality that comes from an intelligent use of a good tradition renewed and advanced into our own times; it is a quality inseparable from the tools and materials employed, and is not to be acquired simply by taking thought or by a determination to attain it. Style is the living expression controlling both the form and the vital structure of the vehicle which presents thought in tangible form—an intimate and inseparable something in the work of a craftsman wholly unconscious of style or of any definite aim towards beauty for itself.

Fourth: Distinction is more difficult to secure, yet, when a type presents an unassuming simplicity; when it expresses thought in every detail; when it is clear, elegant, strong; nothing in it that is loose and vague, no finesse of design, but showing clearly in every line the spirit the designer has put into the body of his work, that type can hardly fail of real distinction. To meet the demands of utility and to preserve also an esthetic standard is the problem the type designer must attempt to solve. Obviously a large order for a mere amateur (or even for a professional designer).

As to legibility, I shall not here comment. Everyone knows (or

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thinks he knows) just what constitutes it; I fear I do not, or I would never permit myself consciously to make a type that was not the quintessence of legibility.

I AM frequently asked how I design a type face. There are so many things that lead up to one that it is difficult to give a specific reply. I once told a student that "I think of a letter and then mark around the thought." That is hardly real designing. It may be easy to think of one letter, but to think also of its twenty-five relations which with it form the alphabet and so to mark around them that they will combine in complete harmony and rhythm with each other and with all—that is the difficult thing, the successful doing of which constitutes design. What is the inspiration for a new face? That also is difficult to answer. In the first place, it is hardly possible to create an absolutely new type or one that will not be reminiscent of the past.

It is quite within the province of the letter artist to take his inspiration for a new face from any source—the lapidary inscriptions of the first centuries of the Imperial age of Rome; a mediaeval brass that marks the last resting place of a departed ruler; a manuscript letter by some unsung scribe of the Renaissance, or an early type of the golden age of typography. Or maybe he may even strive to put into tangible form on his drawing board some vision from out of nowhere—the realization of a chance thought straying through an idle reverie which he will whip into a satisfactory medium of intellectual exchange. On the other hand, he may prefer to attempt the re-creation of new letter from the bones of a more ancient form, endeavoring to secure in it a new expression of life and vigor, with new graces suited to our times and our use.

If the designer chooses to disregard old types and go direct to their source, the manuscript hands of the scribes, well, why not? By revising their forms, refining them, eliminating their whimsicalities and vagaries and formalizing their irregularities, he may meet, too, the mechanical requirements and technical limitations of type founding. This, probably, is the more legitimate method, since in this way he will inspire from the real beginnings of our lower case forms. For myself I am inclined to agree with a writer who maintains that "it

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is doubtful whether the type designer benefits from a close study of hand lettering," meaning of course the manuscript hands of the past. Interesting as old manuscripts are, I find them of little practical use as offering models for new types. Speaking for myself only I find it more feasible to get my inspirations from a study of the earlier types that appeal to me. They frequently offer opportunity for new expression. With no attempt to copy their particular forms, or to make changes merely in weight or serif, I endeavor rather to tear from them the qualities and the spirit that makes them good, for incorporation in my own letter shapes.

I realize, of course, that the letters I may select as my models were, without doubt, inspired by some manuscript hand that personally I may find offers little for use in my own work. With complete independence of calligraphy I attempt, instead, to secure the negative quality of unpretentiousness; I strive for the pure contour and monumental character of the classic lapidary forms of the first centuries of the Christian era; I endeavor in my work to avoid any bizarre quality or exhibition of conscious preciosity. (It has been said that in this latter aim I sometimes fail.)

Once in a while a type face by some other designer seems to present an interesting movement or quality that I like. I take early opportunity to make it mine, frankly and openly, in the same way that a writer might use exactly the same words as another, but by a new arrangement of them present a new thought, a new idea, or a new subtlety of expression. Or as two painters using identical tools and colors, each might produce a masterpiece, yet the work of one probably would not resemble that of the other in any detail. By copying carefully a few characters of the type that appeals to me drawn by another hand, I try to secure in my own drawings some certain movement or rhythm his may present. I soon discard my model and proceed from there, as it were, under my own steam, and sometimes produce a face which my good friend Kent Currie says "has an acid, typy quality" and (in substance) that it is regular and well-ordered, that it has interest, color, movement, and sometimes quaintness.

Several years ago I accepted a commission to make a type for a magazine of large circulation. At that time it was my practice to make drawings from which matrices were engraved for me by the

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late Robert Wiebking of Chicago. His death occurred just about the time I was to send him my originals for translation into "mats" from which to cast the type. In order to carry out my arrangement with the magazine, and finding difficulty in procuring the work elsewhere, I determined to try doing also the mechanical work of matrix engraving myself. Like Moxon, I "learnt it of my own genuine inclination," with no previous instruction in the craft. With no engraving or casting plant ready to my hand I began the getting together of the various paraphernalia of a type foundry. Procuring machines for a type foundry was comparatively simple; the operation of them, making patterns for use in the engraving machines, the lining and fitting of the cast types, etc., all after I had reached my sixtieth birthday, was something else. Looking back, I am amazed at my temerity. It was literally a case of rushing in where angels might well fear to tread. Yet, since that time I have engraved many hundreds of matrices.

And now, one other personal note. It is my credo. For nearly two score years I have made use and beauty the great *desiderata*. I have never permitted myself intentionally to utilize the message I was attempting to present, to serve as a mere framework or scaffolding upon which to exploit my own skill, nor ever to allow my craft to become an end in itself instead of a means only to a desirable and useful end.

COMPOSED IN DEEPDENE TYPES

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THEODORE LOW DE VINNE

with a note by FREDERIC W. GOUDY

The Old and the New

A FRIENDLY DISPUTE BETWEEN JUVENIS AND SENEX

JUVENIS: What is it that you admire in the types of old books? Don't you love them more for their quaintness than for their beauty? I have seen originals or accredited facsimiles of the best books of Gutenberg, Jenson, Aldus, Kerver, Caxton, and other notable printers, but I prefer modern types.

Senex: Then you have seen the pointed black-letter, the round gothic, the aldine italic, the flemish black, and the early roman. Did not any of these styles please you?

Juvenis: Not one. To try to read the pointed black of Gutenberg and Kerver is as repelling as a walk through the crypts of an old church; the round gothics are as scraggy as a heap of oyster-shells; the Aldine italics are squeezed as to width, elongated as to height, and incongruously mated with absurdly small capitals; the flemish black-letter is the 'tour de force' of a literary acrobat. In all these characters I see bad drawing and disregard of proportion. The founding is as bad as the design; some characters are fitted too near, others too wide, and many letters are out of line.

Senex: You surely cannot censure Jenson's roman for bad fitting?

Juvenis: I do except that, for Jenson was a good mechanic, and so was Kerver. Their types are well fitted and neatly lined. But I have small praise to give Jenson for his much admired roman letter. Better, no doubt, than any other roman of the period, but was it perfection? Bibliophiles forget that this Jenson roman

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was out of fashion fifty years after his death, and that his models have been altered by every succeeding punch-cutter.

Senex: How, then, can you explain the favor shown to the recent types of William Morris? His 'Golden' type is based on the Jenson model; his 'Troy' and 'Chaucer' types are modeled after the round gothic of the fifteenth century.

Juvenis: I do not pretend to explain freaks of fashion in typography any more than in religion or art or music. The Athenians who worshiped an unknown or forgotten god have successors in every generation. There are Englishmen, nursed in the Catechism, who try to be devout Buddhists; there are Impressionists, Pre-Raphaelites, and Wagnerians.

The lover of singularity who can invent nothing that is new must hunt up something that is old, or at least odd, to keep up his reputation for discernment. It is enough for me to know that the literary world, outside of Germany, moved by common impulse, discarded all the early types. The sacred black-letter of Gutenberg, and other forms, went to oblivion for good reason. All were of bad form and hard to read—obscured by abbreviations, misuse of capital letters, absurd divisions, and inconsistent orthography. Much as a student of our time may profess admiration for early typography, he will not consult the 'Bible of Forty-two Lines' for a disputed text, when a more readable edition is accessible.

Senex: You confound two features of typography that should be kept separate. The shapes of early types should be considered apart from the skill, or want of skill, in their compositors. The black-letter types of the fifteenth century are often fair copies of the admirable manuscripts of the period.

Juvenis: The black-letter of every early printer was but a servile copy of the manuscript most attainable. Malformations were copied, but the flowing graces of penmanship could not be reproduced in mechanically square types. No punch-cutter of the period improved on the manuscript copy. All the early books abound in infelicities of design and cutting, indicating that the work was not as thoughtfully done as similar work is done now. It is a begging of the question to assume that the early punch-cutters were demigods in art. To say that they were right is to say that Albrecht Dürer and Geoffroy Tory, who wrote books on

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the true proportions of letters, and Granjon and Garamond, who gave a lifetime to typemaking, were wrong. I prefer to accept the teachings of known artists as of higher authority.

Senex: Is not the difficulty of reading old black-letter due to its unfamiliar abbreviations and to mannerisms in type-setting now out of fashion? Would not modern types be obscure if similarly treated?

Juvenis: They would; but the fault begins with the shapes of the printed letters. You note it in the modern German fraktur, always a perplexity to every English-born student. The Germans themselves practically admit its inferiority. Their scientific books are usually in roman. Their preference for roman is a confession that roman types are better, and that the printers of the seventeenth century did wisely in their general abandonment of pointed letters. The reading world had outgrown them. Why should we revive them?

Senex: Let us not trouble ourselves about pointed letters. There is no probability that they will ever be accepted by Americans for the texts of ordinary books. Let us consider the roman types that have been in use by the Latin races and by English-speaking people for three centuries. Are modern types as readable as those of Jenson? Here is his Pliny of 1472, and here is the 'soprasilvio' of Bodoni, as exhibited in his *Manuale Tipografico* of 1818. Which is better?

Juvenis: I am surprised at the question. Every character in the Bodoni type is correctly drawn; every system of uniform thickness, every hair-line and serif sharp as a knife-edge. Curves are true and graceful, angles exact; fitting and lining beyond criticism. In the Jenson type there is not one perfect letter. The hair-lines are scant and of unequal thickness, the serifs are stubby, the stems of uneven width, the characters out of proportion. Raggedness of drawing and roughness of cutting are not concealed by its fairly good fitting and lining. No publisher of the last two centuries would dare to print, and no reader consent to buy, a contemporary book in this type.

Senex: Can you not see something more in this Jenson type? Is it not more readable? I put them side by side at a distance of ten feet, where you can read the Jenson and cannot read the Bodoni

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Juvenis: True: but types in great primer are not made to be read at ten feet distance.

Senex: True again; but the mannerisms that obscure the Bodoni type at ten feet are more distressing in his small types, usually read at the distance of fifteen inches. The over-sharp hair-line, the dazzling serif, and the vanishing curve are more irritating in the smaller than in the larger sizes. Ordinary eyesight does not seize at a glance the entire face of modern type; it dimly sees hair-lines or serifs; it deciphers the stems only; it sees but half of the letter, and guesses at the invisible. The type of Bodoni is a wearying strain on the eye.

Juvenis: Your remarks do not fairly apply to readers of good sight.

Senex: They do apply to the majority of readers. It is a mistake to make for ordinary texts types with lines that cannot be easily seen by all.

Juvenis: If you think boldness of most importance in a type, why make Jenson's type your model? Why not go back still farther? Why not take up the lapidary letters of old Rome, Greece, or Etruria?

Senex: They are uncouth and wasteful of space. Designed to be chiseled on stone, they are unfit for types. The 'Caroline minuscule,' which is the basis of our roman text letter, is more compact, quite as irregular, and much more readable.

Juvenis: If you believe that there was a gradual improvement in the shapes of letters between the first and fifteenth centuries, why stop at the fifteenth? Why not admit that this improvement continues?

Senex: Because the changes that followed were not always improvements. The faultless curves, sharp lines, and exact angles of Bodoni were disfigurements made at the expense of readability. Types are made to be easily read, not to show the skill of the designer. When they fail in readability the fault is fatal. The proper development of typography was checked by the invention of copper-plate that trod on its heels. Its delicacy of line, its perfect graduation of shadows, its vigorous blacks, and its facile rendering of a receding perspective put out of fashion all strong and manly work on wood. Dürer's 'Little Passion,' Hol-

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bein's 'Dance of Death,' and Vostre's *Book of Hours* were put aside, and the insipid effeminacies of overworked line-engraving took their place. Punch-cutters of the sixteenth century thought that printing would be improved if they imitated the methods of line-engravers, and so they cut their types sharper and thinner. They would not see that relief engraving and incised engraving are diametrically opposed in theory and practice, and that the imitation of one process by the other is impossible. Repeated failures did not check this desire to imitate. Increasing refinements in types produced a corresponding degradation in printing. The inferiority of the average book of the eighteenth century is largely due to the so-called 'improved' faces of type. The most irrepressible imitator of copper-plate effects was Bodoni of Parma. William Morris is right in saying that his imitations of copper-plate delicacy indicate a real abasement of the typographic art.

Juvenis: If correct drawing, exact proportion, and high finish are merits in other arts, why should they be faults in typemaking.

Senex: 'Finish' is a merit only when it improves; when it over-elaborates, when it leads the reader to think more of the means employed than of the object sought, it is a fault. Bodoni's careful drawing and finical cutting defeat the purpose for which types were made. They do not fully show the letter; they do show Bodoni; and it is a fair supposition that he was more intent on showing his skill than he was on aiding the reader. Your ideal of merit in types is that of mechanical precision. You forget that letters are of irregular shapes, with intent to make them distinct. The more you prune away the irregularities, the more indistinct they become. Readers do not isolate and critically examine each letter; They read words at a glance. They prefer characters with enough of irregularity to arrest the eye and fix the thought of the writer. It is with types as with penmanship. Has it been your misfortune to revise a long manuscript written in feminine style with a crow-quill pen, and with admirable precision, but with almost invisible hair strokes? Recollect your exasperation at its mechanical precision and wearisome monotony. How gratefully you turned to a jagged and masculine but readable style of penmanship, in which you were content to have all the rules of writing-masters violated! Recall these experiences, and then un-

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derstand why I prefer old types. Not because they are old, or of faultless form, but because the letters are more distinct. They were made, not to show the skill of the punch-cutter, but to help the reader; and they deserve the credit due to straightforward workmanship.

A NOTE BY FREDERIC W. GOUDY

In 1898 *the name "De Vinne" meant little more to me than the name of a then popular display printing type, until the day, in a book-shop in Detroit, I chanced on a copy of* The Book-lover's Almanac *for* 1896. *Of the eight or ten articles listed in the table of contents one was by Theo. Low De Vinne. The article was written in the form of a discussion between "Senex" and "Juvenis" on the comparative merits of the early type faces and those of Bodoni and his successors. This was, I believe, my first realization that "De Vinne" was the name of a living personality.*

I was just becoming interested in the history of the typography of books and was making also a closer study of type design, but it did not occur to me that such study would ever lead to the actual practise of the art I have since made peculiarly my own....

When I first read Mr. De Vinne's article it seemed to me that "Senex" had rather the better of the argument, indeed, I have not found, during the nearly two score years that have elapsed, any statements elsewhere that have changed materially the opinions then formed as to the soundness of his asseverations....

If I were asked to say what I think has been the greatest single influence in my work as a type designer I would be hard put to find a satisfactory reply; but there is no doubt in my mind that the principles set forth in this article and in his book Notable Printers of Italy During the 15th Century *have certainly loomed large in crystallizing the character of my types. The consistency of thought he displayed, his sound knowledge of old types, his fairness in the consideration of each moot point, the simple yet lucid presentation of his ideas and opinions interested me; they influenced my own thought, and in turn are reflected in my work.*

If, to my more mature consideration of this discussion there is

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any lapse of the author's pen, it seems to me it is, that "Senex" failed to stress more strongly a demand for greater grace and beauty in types in closer combination with legibility. I feel that the proper standard of beauty in types basically resides in their utility, but there are, nevertheless, secondary esthetic attributes which may be included without any sacrifice of life and vigor and legibility. A certain rugged beauty is perceived without difficulty, and irregularities which in isolated or individual characters, might seem objectionable from the standpoint of grace alone, may prove highly desirable in the composed line. Readability is of course to be considered above every other quality, because, failing this it fails utterly, regardless of every other excellence; yet, while striving for legibility, beauty of form should also be given almost equal consideration. . . . I venture to disagree with Senex's statement that "the lapidary letters of old Rome are uncouth and . . . unfit for types" . . .

Marlboro, N. Y., May, 1933

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PARAGRAPHS ON PRINTING

NOTE: The text for this book on the functions of the book designer was elicited from B.R. in talks with James Hendrickson. These informal observations on typographical problems were accompanied by numerous reproductions of pages of Mr. Rogers' design, by way of illustration and example.

YOU THINK of the *book*, the size and shape of the book, before you consider type or anything else. What kind of a volume should it be? In what particular form and in what face of type would *you* like to read it? The type and format should be governed by your conception of the character of the subject matter. As an instance take Conrad's tale, *The Tremolino*, recently printed. It is a slight but vivid story, to be read almost at a glance, so it would have been a misfit to make it larger, say in octavo size. The vividness is indicated by the dramatic little cuts in color, the slightness by the dimensions and open character of the pages.

After the size is determined the selection of a suitable type

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comes next. And that depends usually on what types are available in the office in which the book is to be made. Even this is not always necessary, as many offices have composition done outside by type-composition firms, so that an almost unlimited choice may be yours. There are so many varieties of type now, that for almost any size or kind of book you plan you will readily find an appropriate face. At any rate it isn't so vitally important as other things.

It is a great advantage in laying out a page, especially a title or display page, if the designer can handle pen or pencil; and the more definitely he can represent the type he proposes to use, the greater saving of time and expense there will be when it comes to the setting of it. It is true that some masters of printing do not resort to sketching—at least not more than mere lines on the paper, labeled with the kinds and sizes of type they represent. But to visualize the completed page in such slight indications is an unusual gift, and if one does not possess this gift there is the probability that the first setting of the page will have to be torn apart several times before a satisfactory one is produced. It is sometimes well worth while to work a page out very carefully, even in pen-and-ink, so that it will be a pretty close approximation to the finished thing; especially if you have to submit the scheme to a customer for his approval, or if he asks to see alternative treatments.

Of course, after many years of familiarity with type faces, it isn't necessary to draw them accurately for your own guidance, even though you should possess that ability; but some nevertheless find it a pleasant thing to see the page take form under their pencil or pen before it goes into actual type. Frequently, however, there is a sense of disappointment in

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seeing the first type proof, for the freedom and swing of your sketch has usually vanished in its translation into type; and the more formal the style of type the less it will retain the quality of your sketch.

Making an "allusive" format for a book—that is, casting it in the style of the period of the original text—is in a small way something like planning the stage setting for a play. An up-to-date style for an ancient text would compare with staging *Hamlet* in modern dress. However novel and effective in its own way, you feel it to be strange, and this sense of strangeness is an annoying distraction; you are forced to think of the setting and the designer rather than of the text.

The character of the text to be printed is of course the first thing to consider in selecting the kind of type; and the number of pages to which the book will probably run is the determining factor as to what size of type is possible. The width and length of the type page are then to be proportioned to the paper page, which in turn also helps to determine the size of the type. All these considerations are interlocking.

There have been several rules formulated for page proportions. One is that the width of the page should approximate one-half of the diagonal. Another is that the length of line should be one-half more than the length of a line of the twenty-six lower-case letters of the type used. But all such rules are only guides, to be discarded when the effect you are after seems to require something else; this something else to be determined only by the judgment of the designer and his feeling for the appearance of the page. In the reproduction of the styles of early typography the designer should avoid setting

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small type in too wide a measure. The old printers in their folio volumes did not seem to mind very long lines of comparatively small type. But most of these ancient books in roman type were never intended for rapid reading. They were generally Latin texts where the eye follows the line better than in English or French composition. Latin composition naturally makes more beautiful pages on account of the preponderance of short letters—m, n, u, etc., with comparatively few ascenders and descenders. The evenness of spacing that the early printers got came from their abundant use of Latin abbreviations and their indifference as to how many consecutive word divisions occurred at the ends of lines, but it was never a conscious effort to obtain what is called "texture" in the page. There should be no laboring to produce a perfectly spaced page but rather an endeavor to avoid a badly spaced one.

The amount of leading that a page requires depends on so many factors that it is difficult to give any fixed method of procedure. The kind of type, the size of type, the length of line and the general character of the text all bear on this point. Generally speaking, most types should be at least slightly leaded, especially if the lines are fairly long. This helps the eye to catch the following line in rapid reading more easily than when the type is set solidly. The solid pages were usually adopted when old-style types were used exclusively; but when modern type came in, beginning with Bodoni, the custom of leading, sometimes double-leading, arose. The effect of these new types was helped by a generous amount of white paper between the lines. This applies to Bodoni, Bulmer, and the Scotch face and their derivatives. Antique types were, however, occasionally very freely leaded, especially in Spanish books of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

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The conventional use of quotation marks is to place a double mark at the beginning and end of the passage quoted, with single marks for any quotations within it. In books with much conversation the use of double quotes frequently results in very mottled typography, and for many years some English printers have adopted the single mark for the major quotations, using double marks only if an inner quote occurs. This violates, a little, one's sense of relative importance, but in a book where there are only simple quotations there is no reason why the single mark should not suffice, much to the visual improvement of the typography. There is some possibility of confusion if the last word of the extract should chance to be a possessive plural, with an apostrophe, as the two marks are identical; but this occurs so infrequently as to be negligible.

Inverted commas were used for opening quotes in most founts until comparatively recent years, but now a separate pattern is provided for most founts. Reversed, instead of inverted commas now accompany many founts, particularly the reproductions of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century types, at which time they were first introduced.

French, Spanish and other continental founders furnish a special design of marks, « »; but these look rather strange to Anglo-Saxon eyes.

In Elizabethan printing the quotation marks sometimes ran entirely down the margins of the extracts, and if, as was frequently the case, the page was enclosed with rules, they were often placed outside the rules. This treatment occurs in one of the handsomest books of that period, *Nobilitas Politica vel Civilis*, printed in 1608 by William Jaggard, the printer of the First Folio fifteen years later. The *Nobilitas* is generally accounted the masterpiece of his press, and in itself comprises nearly all of the various typographical features of books of

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that time. Large and small types, roman, italic, black-letter and Anglo-Saxon, both solid and leaded pages, tabular work with handsome braces, side notes, woodcut initials, head-pieces and tail-pieces, and a series of costume plates engraved on copper and printed within the rules on folioed blank pages left for them in the form—all go toward making a book that is a compendious example for students of Elizabethan typography.

Red is the most satisfactory secondary color with black, and you will often find that it is better to use just one spot of color on the page. In using red for an occasional display line, blue-red or purple-red or orange-red should be avoided. A red such as the early printers had, a full-bodied, rather dull vermilion, which will hold up well with the black, is the most successful. If it is desirable to employ the blue for a border or an initial it shows up much more brilliantly when the design is in white on a solid or stippled ground of the blue. An outline design in blue is too light in mass to accompany the black of the type. But black and blue alone are never so pleasing a combination as when red is introduced as the second color, with blue as the third.

The black for the text or reading types should be intense without being glossy, because the gloss causes a reflection of light and interferes with legibility. The same objection does not apply to colors, for a moderate gloss enriches them and overcomes a sort of dustiness that their surfaces take on.

The text pages of most books should be printed in black ink.[1] The tendency of a young printer is often to try for novelty by printing with color rather than with black, not

[1] Of the more than half-thousand books that Mr. Rogers has designed, only four come to mind as having the text matter printed in anything other than black; and these four were all slight volumes, more or less in the gift-book classification.

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realizing that most types were not designed for anything but black on white. If, however, the job is somewhat aside from the usual run of books, and is not of too great extent, a brown or green ink may be substituted for black if the tint be dark enough to afford perfect legibility. But the result then acquires something of the character of an object of art rather than a book.

Letter-spacing is often misused. It is safe to say that lower-case type should practically *never* be letter-spaced, for the individual letters were designed for close combination with other letters of the alphabet. If it becomes necessary to fill out a line it is preferable to put all the extra space between the words even though the resultant "holes" are distressing to the eye. Sometimes with very large types it is permissible to letter-space in a minor degree, as the spaces between the letters naturally are larger and letter-spacing does not detract too much from the appearance of the line, especially if it is distributed according to the irregular space between the different letters as normally set.

With capitals or upper-case letters the conditions are different. Then it is frequently a great advantage to use letter-spaces, even considerably; but this depends upon the general style of the typography adopted for the book. In the hands of some contemporary printers the Aldine practice of wide letter-spacing of small capitals has been followed quite skilfully in title- or sub-title lines, chapter headings, and other display work. This is of particular advantage with the rather heavy-faced modern types, i.e., Scotch, Bodoni, etc.

It is well to avoid too many, and too open letter-spaced lines in any kind of display composition, for the effect is sometimes disastrous. Baskerville was very fond of letter-

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spacing and most of his work is, in that respect, extremely ugly.[2] He sometimes pushed spacing to the point of absurdity; notably in his great Bible, where in the heading of the Book of Job he set the letters J O B in capitals of about 48-point size with three inches of space between them. It could hardly be called a word, but rather just a bad job of type-setting.

The practice of letter-spacing to produce blocked-out lines of capitals must be done with great caution and skill or else a very uneven texture will be produced. Frequently it is better to abandon the idea of a block of type if the spacing cannot be done with a fairly uniform effect. It is a mistake to start with a determination to produce a block of type and then to persist in it at any cost of legibility or appearance. When lines of capitals are set without leading, letter-spacing should never be used. The leading should be in proportion to the spacing in order to keep the continuity of the lines of type, otherwise you will produce columns of letters instead of lines. It is hardly necessary to say that the best letter-spacing is not done with uniform spaces between the letters. The spacing on either side of a letter should be determined by the shape of the adjacent letters. Most compositors have now learned to use spaces according to the shape of the letters, but the cutting of such letters as V, W, to make them set closer than their natural width is usually very much overdone. The new logotypes cut for this purpose are equally faulty in this respect. The resulting effect is more noticeable and more objectionable than the natural setting of the type would be. Anything that strikes the eye as strange or unusual in a line of type is to be avoided.

2 "When we look at his books we think of Baskerville; while to look at the work of Jenson is to think but of its beauty, and almost to forget that it was made with hands!" UPDIKE, *Printing Types*, II, p. 116.

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Periods and commas of letter-spaced capitals should not be set off from the last letter of the word, regardless of the amount of spacing used elsewhere in the line.

Colons and semicolons have traditionally been set apart from the word they follow, whether in capitals or lower case. In old books they are frequently centered in the space between the words where they occur. Exclamation and interrogation points should if possible be set off with thin spaces because they often form disagreeable and confusing combinations with the last letter of the word, such as ff!, ll!, f?, etc.

COMPOSED IN CENTAUR AND ARRIGHI TYPES

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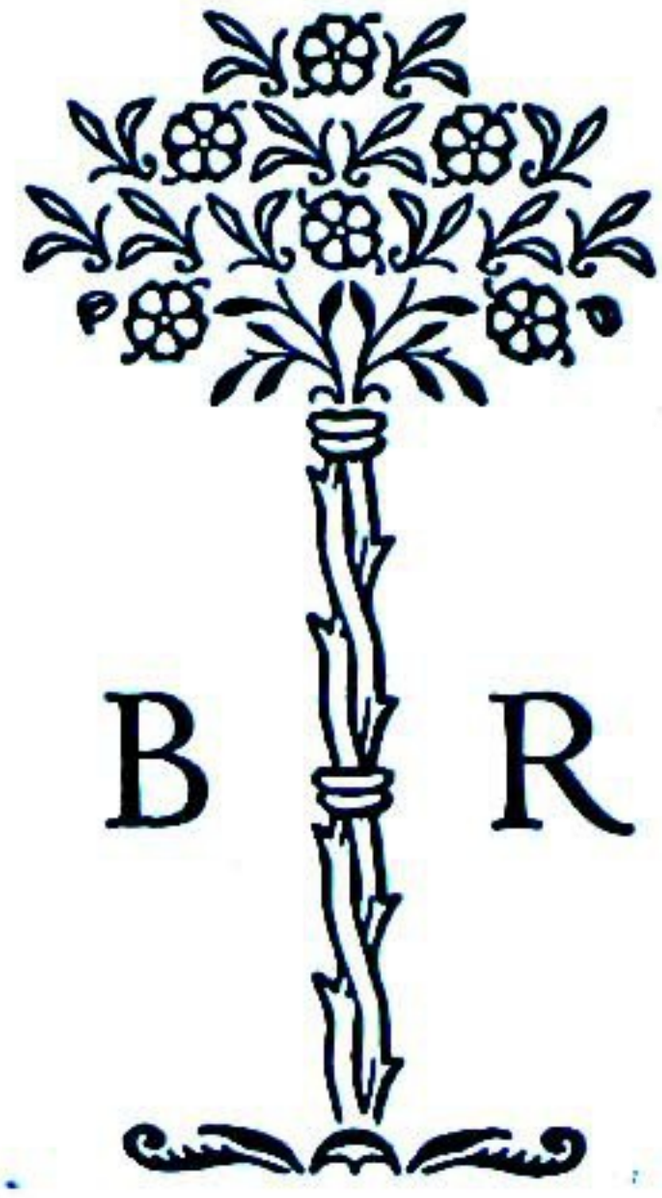

ADVENTURER WITH TYPE ORNAMENT

Paul A. Bennett

To anyone who has set or handled type, the achievements of Bruce Rogers in combining decorative type units to form a design are extraordinary. This may seem undiluted enthusiasm; actually and sincerely it is but simple fact.

How? Why? Only a detailed examination of a particular B.R. design with type ornaments will reveal. An examination, that is, accompanied by simultaneous scanning of a proof of the individual elements comprising the design. When one sees the units alone—some of them so seemingly useless that one wonders that anything, even second-rate stuff, could possibly be done with such drab material—then one appreciates the typographic magic B.R. has accomplished.

How he sees anything in some of the units he uses so dexterously, I don't know. When and how he first became

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interested in doing designs with type ornaments is worth considering.

His experiments date back to Riverside Press days, though in that period no attempts were made to use type ornament except by conventional combinations into borders or headpieces. But even at that time he had several seventeenth-century flowers recut for the decoration of a collection of early American documents, titled *Sailors Narratives of Voyages Along the New England Coast,* 1524–1624, edited by George Parker Winship.

Interest in combining type ornaments was shown again while at the University Press in Cambridge, England, during 1918–19, but he developed it there into nothing more than the revival of two or three other earlier ornaments which were used, as at Riverside, in conventional ways. A page of his scrapbook shows also a number of trials with Egyptian hieroglyphs, but apparently nothing came of these.

The germ of his allusive use of ornaments is probably to be found in the "Goosefest" menu which he concocted at Carl Rollins' Montague Press; when at the bottom of an elaborate bill of fare three of Will Bradley's strutting little figures are set (or laid) flat on their backs in a row, with the legend, "Turn over (not us but the leaf)."

The earliest traceable use of ornaments and punctuation marks that in combination bear directly upon the text thus decorated was in the heading for the first page of *The Symbol and the Saint,* where a line of parentheses, a cross and three dolphins symbolize the overseas quest of the hero of the tale. This same motif was developed and elaborated later in *Joseph Conrad the Man, The Ancient Mariner,* and other pieces. His scrapbook shows many unused variations on this theme. The

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THE SYMBOL AND THE SAINT

ONCE UPON A TIME a young man made ready for a voyage. His name was Norss; broad were his shoulders, his sea and leaping dolphins and palms seem to be his favorite preoccupation.

Probably the most difficult compositions of this kind he has produced are to be found in Conrad's unfinished novel, *The Sisters;* where in a space the width of the page and one-quarter to one-half inch in depth may be found suggestions

JOSEPH CONRAD: THE MAN

EVER since I came upon "The Nigger of the Narcissus" in tranquil ante-bellum days I had been under the spell of Conrad's art. "Typhoon,"

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THE SISTERS

BY

JOSEPH CONRAD

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION

BY

FORD MADOX FORD

NEW YORK
CROSBY GAIGE
1928

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of illimitable Russian wheat fields, Paris with its mansard roofs and French roads leading into it, a farewell scene at sunset on a winding Spanish road, etc., each based upon some phrase or paragraph in the story itself.

III

STEPHEN, letter in hand, looked across space and time at the land of his birth. From afar it loomed up immense,

IV

HE had visited that town before, in the second year of his travels, and then had, for some months, camped in

V

THOSE Ortegas were the owners of the house, or rather the man owned the house which the woman ruled with

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Most certainly B.R.'s accomplishments surpass those decorative combinations of type ornaments shown in early printers' and typefounders' specimens—yes, even including the foremost achievements of the hallowed rule benders.

Little research is necessary to support these rather inclusive statements. An excellent example is the *Utopia* title page, done for the Limited Editions Club. Here is swirling movement in a border, if ever you saw it. And accomplished, mainly, with two units of ornament and their reverses. The entire border took but several more.

Setting them out individually, doesn't give a hint of their possibilities. Yet look at the result of their use by B.R., scan the design closely to discover just where and how each element is placed with such telling effect—and you begin to appreciate the man's ability.

Another example—old stuff B.R. will call it—is the title page of a little Christmas book issued a dozen years ago by Rudge. Could one reasonably expect anything remotely approaching typographic whimsy from a few typographic toy soldiers, a dog, an elephant, a few Christmas trees, a half moon and some stars? Just glance at *The Symbol and the Saint* title page though, and see how B.R.'s subtle skill utilized material teetering toward the junk pile.

"Never," your perceptive collector will say, "has anything more masterful been done with type ornaments than in the Grolier Club *Pierrot of the Minute.*" Few would disagree, for if ever there was a typographic jewel, the *Pierrot* is it. Yet B.R., in discussing it critically, termed it "French millinery. Prob-

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UTOPIA

Written in Latin by
Sir Thomas More
and done into
English by
Ralph
Robynson

NEW YORK
THE LIMITED EDITIONS CLUB
1934

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ably all right for its purpose. Rather over-decorated, but then the poem itself seems over-decorative."

There are dozens of other examples of B.R.'s mastery of typographic decoration. But space is not limitless, and I want particularly to say something about some designs with Linotype ornaments (drawn by T. M. Cleland) that Mr. Rogers devised a few years ago for the Linotype Company. These were used for the first time in the insert discussing the auction prices of twenty B.R. books, which appeared in *Barnacles From Many Bottoms,* several of which are shown on pages 290, 299 and 300.

That "something" may best be told, I believe, by excerpts from letters written to a Company executive, in April and May 1931, by B.R., who then was in London:

". . . In an odd hour I got to playing about with some of the Cleland ornaments, cutting them out of a specimen and pasting them into a design which finally evolved itself into several amusing compositions. Later on it occurred to me that you might be able to use them in some piece. . . .

"Having only a limited number of proofs, and no slugs whatever, I was able to work out the idea in only the roughest fashion—not fit to show anyone—but the principal one of the designs is for a page heading . . . or the elements composing it could be used singly—as tail pieces, initial letters, etc.

"This probably is an impractical idea [a suggestion by Mr. Rogers on how the material might be used], but I only make it to put into action more or less work that I have already done to save it from the scrap basket—work that might be useful to your firm as a demonstration of what can be done with some of your product. I really don't think anyone has yet worked out the possibilities of your ornamental material, much of which is the best on the market."

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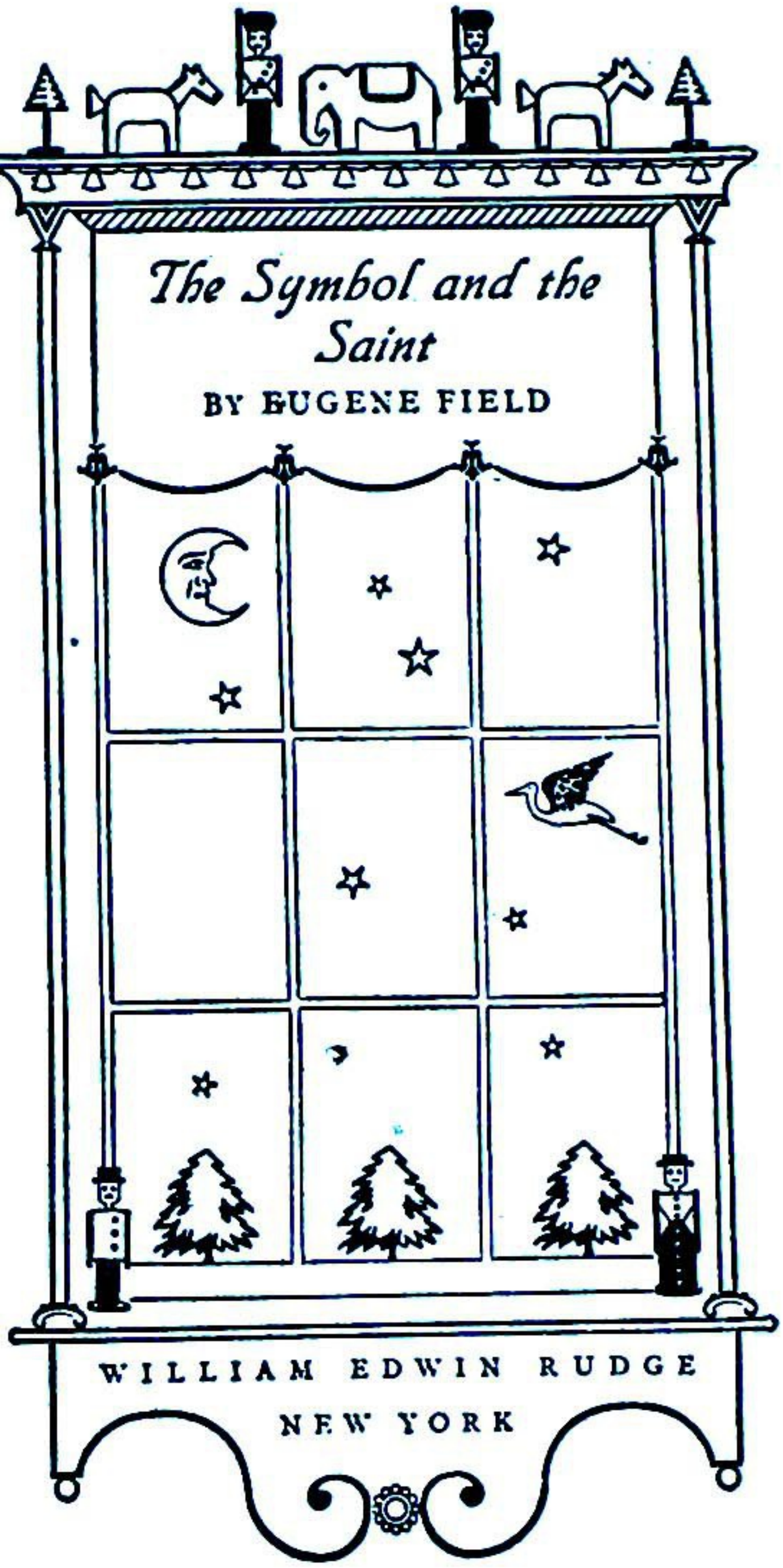
The Symbol and the Saint
BY EUGENE FIELD
WILLIAM EDWIN RUDGE
NEW YORK

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THE

PIERROT

OF THE

MINUTE

BY

ERNEST DOWSON

NEW YORK

The Grolier Club

1923

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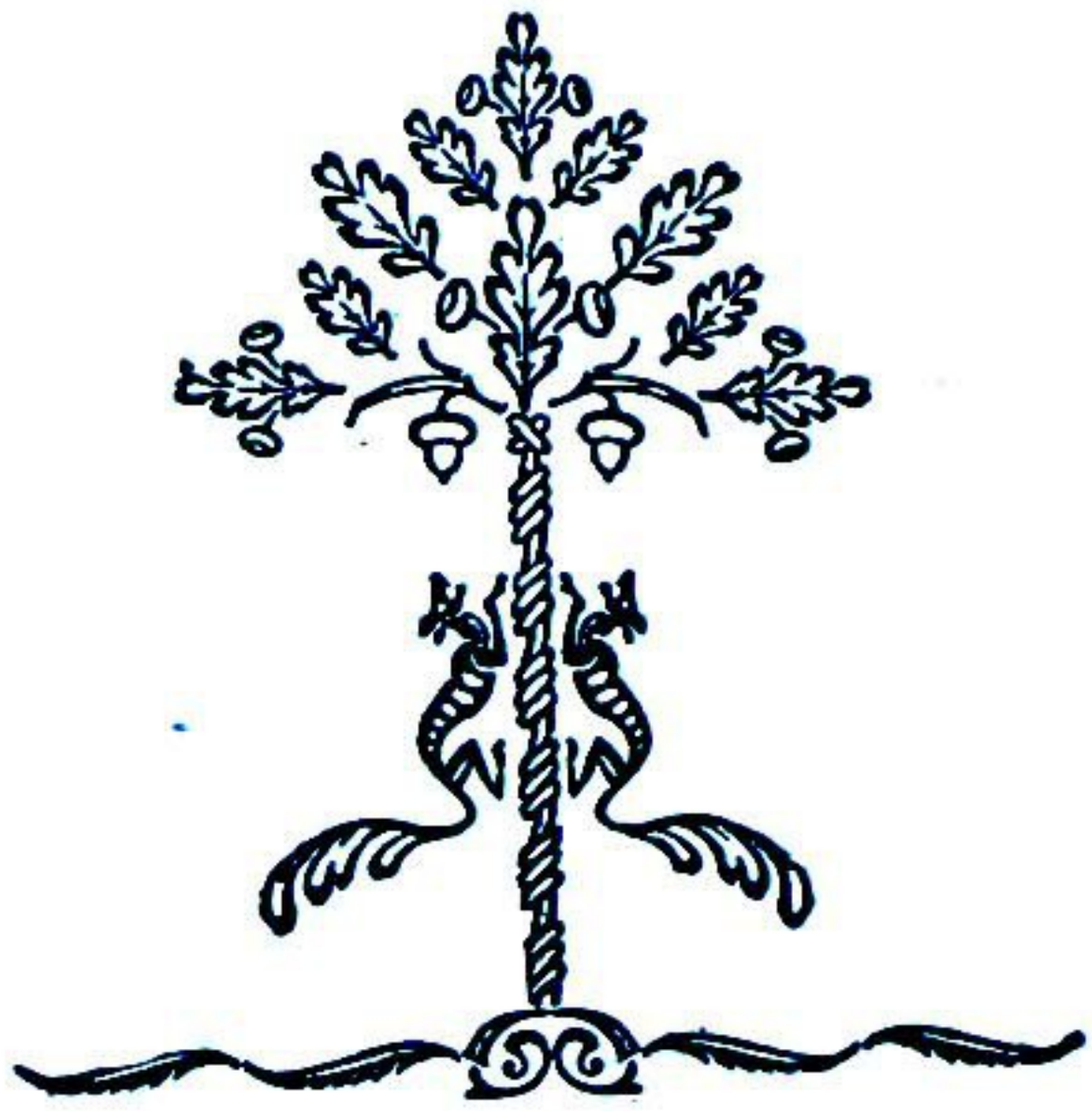
Additional proofs of the Cleland ornaments were sent immediately to Mr. Rogers in London. With them he made eight designs, cutting the proofs and pasting the ornaments to show the desired effect. This tree, for instance, was used on the title page of the *Barnacles* insert:



This was printed from a line engraving made direct from Mr. Rogers' paste-up, and used "as is" to show how accurately his layouts for this type of work reach the composing-room.

A month later, in May 1931, Mr. Rogers returned his layouts with this note: ". . . I have only just been able to complete the designs I had begun. . . . One or two other combinations occurred to me, which I have also put in—but we could go on endlessly, almost, when once started on this kind of thing. . . . I would have built up the designs with impressions from sections of a slug, had you sent an inch or two of each unit; but it is perhaps better, though slower, to cut and paste proofs, as each cutting is a guide to the compositor as to how and where trimming or beveling the ornaments are necessary. But only a few such trimmings are required, and all the bevelings are at 45 degrees—as is the diagonal composition of the oak tree heads.

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"If at all possible I would like to have a chance to revise proofs of these, before they are actually printed—but if that isn't feasible, then I must rely on the compositors getting the closest possible approximation to my pasted-up designs. As close setting as possible is the secret of most work of this kind. The various parts must hang together well—though I do not mind a slight indication at the joints that they are made of individual pieces of type. I once had an over-zealous electrotyper fill up all the joints with solder—and ruined the appearance of the design—it looked like a drawn one."

It wasn't possible to show Mr. Rogers what had been done with his layouts for the insert in *Barnacles,* which was essentially a surprise book distributed as a keepsake at a dinner in his honor.

The "fighting cocks," to cite one instance, were originally suggested by B.R. to be used to dress a page folio at the bottom of the page; in the insert they were raised to the top of the page and printed with his initials. Other slight adaptations of similar character were taken in that piece of printing.

"Typographic whimsy," wrote Carl Purington Rollins in *B.R.—America's Typographic Playboy,* in 1927, "is a pretty difficult achievement. The compositor at the case is too much concerned with the practical minutiæ of his craft to have much time for such trivialities, and the man who designs printing at a draughting board is apt to find his humor, if he attempts it in type, limping like a thrice-told jest. Mr. Rogers has had the advantage of enough familiarity with type to know what can be done, and he has been able at times to work with compositors who take a large and robust view of their calling."

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That "whimsy" Mr. Rollins had reference to lies in many of B.R.'s more ephemeral efforts, frequently reproduced. It is reflected to a measure, by *The Symbol and the Saint* page. But there is considerably more than whimsy in the type ornament designs by B.R. These have graced dozens of books of varying subjects . . . and the marvel of it all is, to me, that the man never repeats himself—he swings off on a new tack . . . adventurous, exploring, mastering new trails, scattering typographic inspiration for dozens of others, pointing up paths they previously never even suspected.

Postscript, 1951: It is fitting to add a note concerning one of B.R.'s more distinguished recent projects, the great folio Bible designed for The World Publishing Company, which was four years in the making.

The design of the World Bible employed decorative treatment for the bordered title page, the sixty-six book openings, initial letters and numerous tailpieces. "These, together with the type selected [a revised, special cutting of Goudy Newstyle], are intended to give a slightly oriental flavor to the volume," B.R. pointed out, "indicative of the Syriac and Hebrew sources of the text on which the King James translators based their classic version."

In discussing the matter of ornaments in the Bible with the publishers, B.R. revealed his thinking concerning their use: ". . . Most of the Books will probably not begin at the top of the page and the use of ornaments are to me necessary to separate the end of the preceding book from the title of the following one.

"The Bible has always been a book on which much decoration and illustrations have been lavished, and there is no reason in tradition why it should be treated solemnly in that

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THE END
OF THE
PROPHETS

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respect. The very first edition (of which I have specimen sheets and a whole Bible printed from the same type and with the same decorations by the same printer, twenty-five years later, 1635) is just peppered with woodcut decorations and type ornaments. So we have a good precedent for a decorated treatment—if any were needed. You know the Bible is on the whole one of the most exciting texts in existence, and the modern 'practical' treatment of it as mainly a book of devotion is ignoble, to say the least. . . ."

Some of the typographic decoration and initials used in the Bible are included here. William Targ's detailed account, *The Making of the Bruce Rogers World Bible,* contains most of the decorative elements—initials, tailpieces and chapter initials—and reveals the intimate story of the progress of the book's production through the four years. It was published by World in 1949, in a limited edition of 1875 copies, 500 of which were for sale.

COMPOSED IN CENTAUR AND ARRIGHI TYPES

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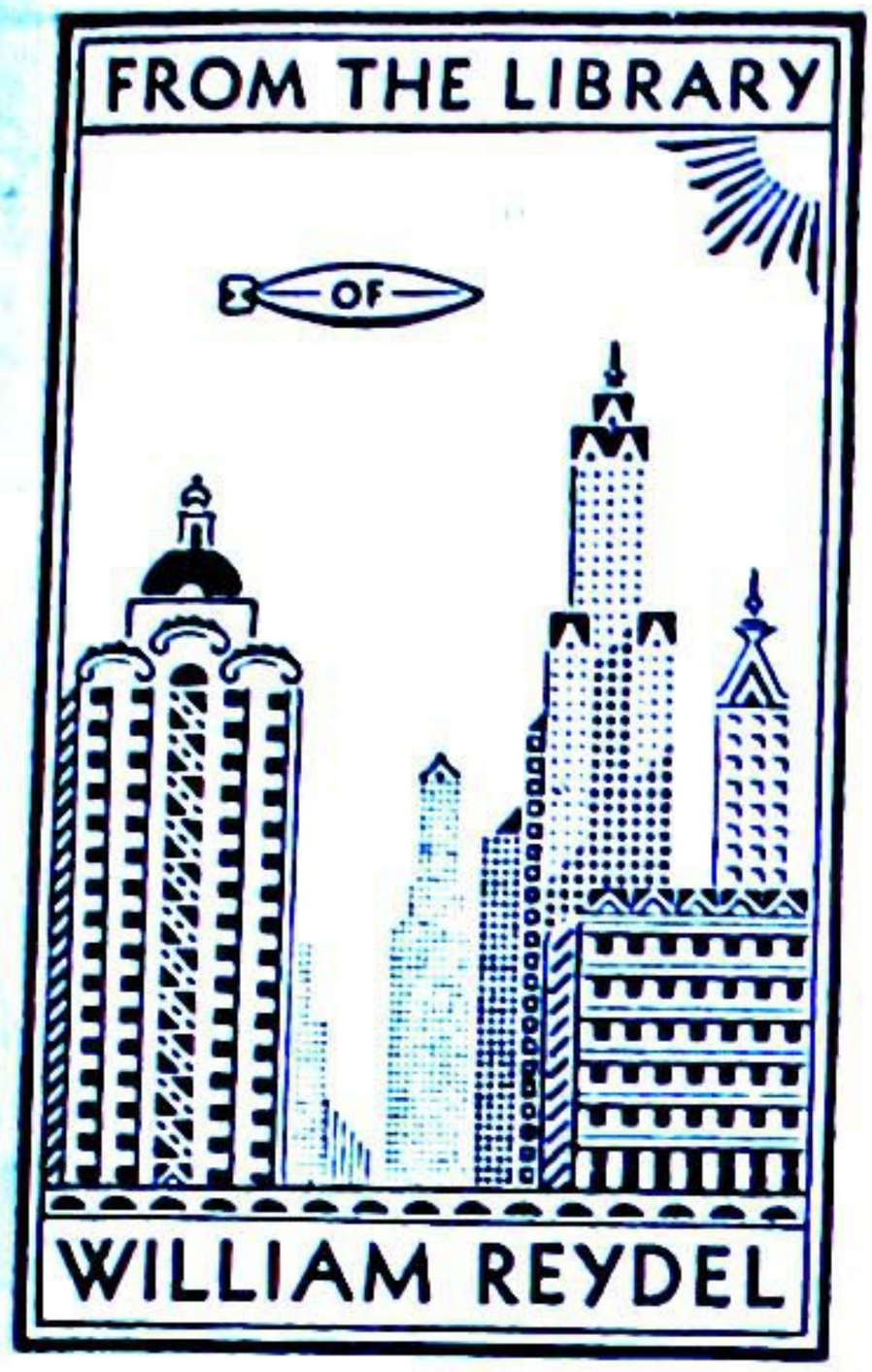

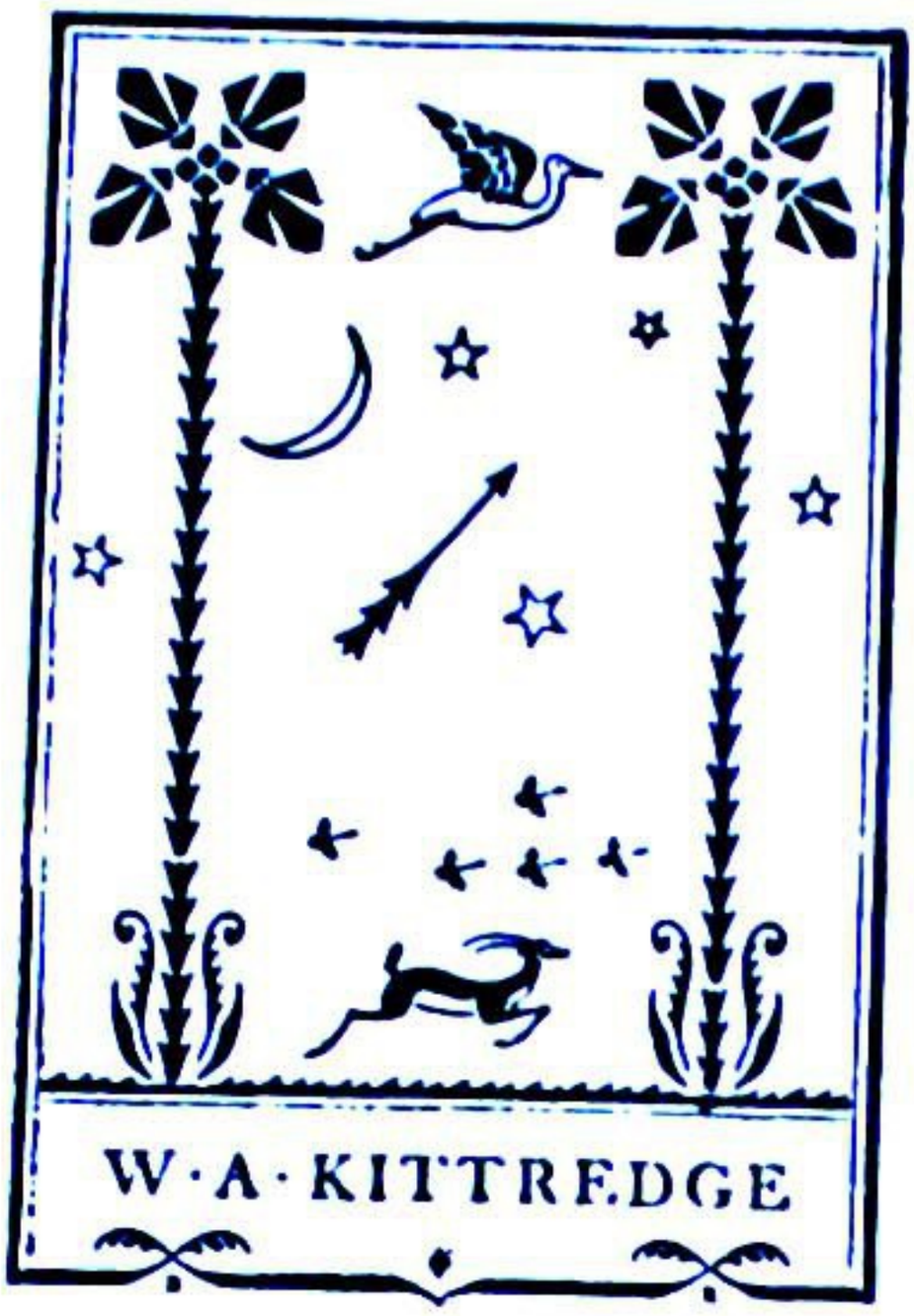

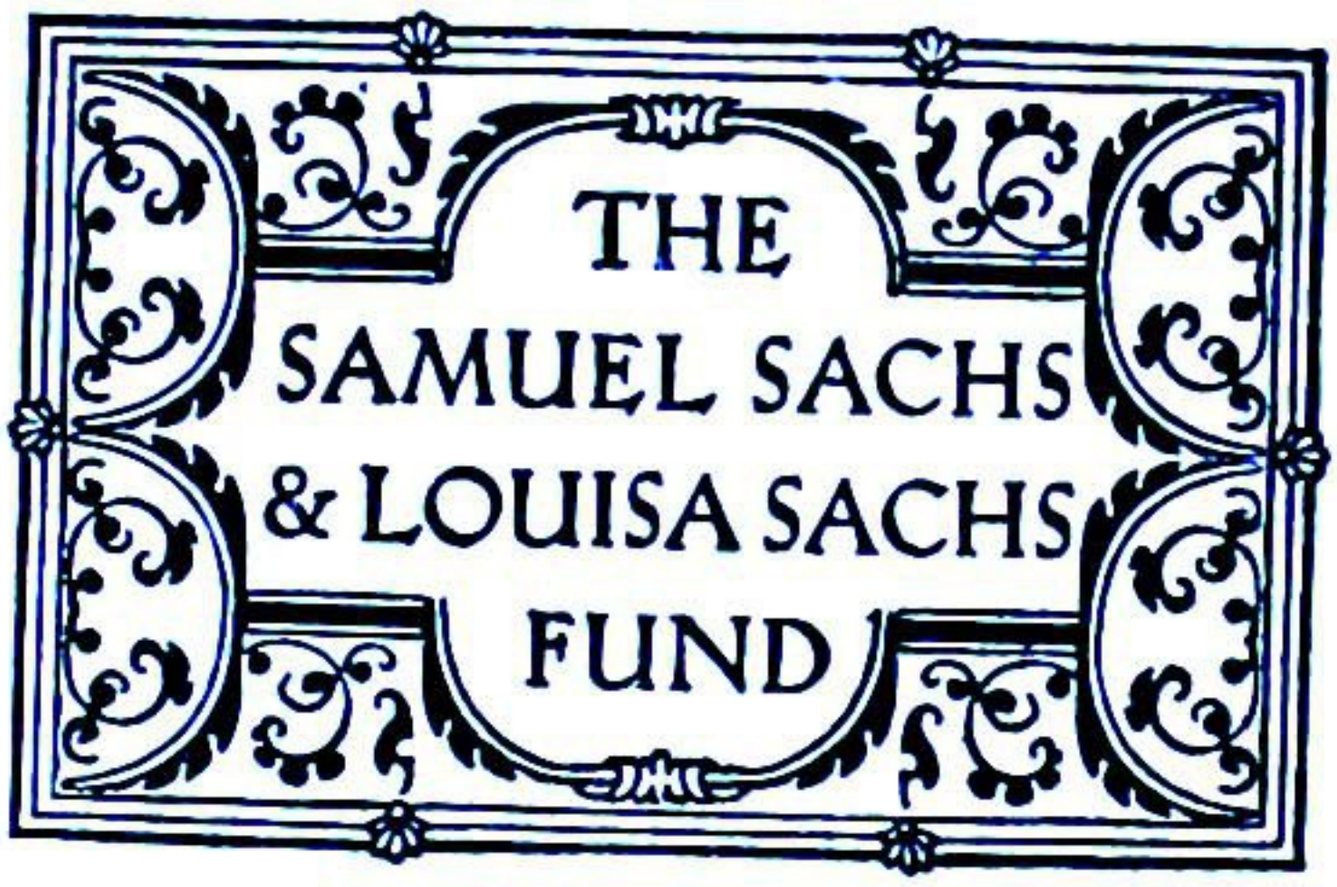

Book labels devised with typographic ornament by B. R. In the originals, a second color was used for each excepting the Reydel.

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SOME TENDENCIES IN MODERN TYPOGRAPHY

Daniel Berkeley Updike

NOT very long since I was asked by a printer to what extent he should accept or avoid modern trends in the design of types and books. I attempt here to answer that question.

I have a friend, connected with one of the great companies supplying machines for type composition. Not long since he spoke to me in unflattering terms of the examples of typography shown at an exhibition of the products of the Bauhaus School, originally of Weimar and later of Munich. He protested against a practice there manifested of discarding capital letters and depending solely on those in the lower-case. I consoled him by showing him a French book, printed entirely in this style. This volume, entitled *Typographie Economique*, was published in Paris in 1837 and so far as it had any influence on printing, then or later, is as dead as Queen Anne. The author, the Count de Lasteyrie, who promoted this scheme, was one of a race of French scientists, of some intellectual and social importance—one of the daughters of Lafayette married into that family. In the eighteenth century no less a person than the German writer Grimm tried a similar typographical

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plan. In the Fairy Tales containing "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," later compiled by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the practice was not continued. This supports the contention that many new and disturbing experiments, under the patronage of distinguished names, are merely survivals or revivals of ancient failures. Thus in the light of experience, there is in Bauhaus typography nothing for my acquaintance—or anybody else—to be excited about.

Now Bauhaus typography is of the essence of modernism. That its position may be fairly stated I quote the following from a *Bauhaus Year Book:—verbatim* and (I may add) *literatim:*

["] why should we write and print with two alphabets? both a large and a small sign are not necessary to indicate one single sound.
A=a
we do not speak a capital A and a small a.
we need only a single alphabet. it gives us practically the same result as the mixture of upper and lower-case letters, and at the same time is less of a burden on all who write—on school children, students, stenographers, professional and business men. it could be written much more quickly, especially on the typewriter, since the shift key would then become unnecessary. typewriting could therefore be more quickly mastered and typewriters would be cheaper because of simpler construction. printing would be cheaper, for fonts and type cases would be smaller, so that printing establishments would save space and their clients money. with these common sense economies in mind . . . the bauhaus made a thorough alphabetical house-cleaning in all its printing, eliminating capitals from books, posters, catalogs, magazines, stationery and even calling cards.
dropping capitals would be a less radical reform in english. indeed the use of capital letters occurs so infrequently in english in comparison with german that it is difficult to understand why such a superfluous alphabet should still be considered necessary.["]

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Now in German printing all nouns have capital letters. In the sentence "A Dog chases a Cat into a Barn," dog, cat, barn are all capitalized. No one can be blamed for wanting to be rid of so much capitalization. But when Germans purge anything the innocent invariably suffer with the guilty. Thus all capitals must go. While it may have overcome a difficulty felt in Germany, this imported missionary zeal corrects no difficulty in the printing of English prose or poetry. In some instances such a custom brings about surprising results. Suppose, for example, a newspaper says "the white house favors black and prefers even green to a dyed-in-the-wool red." To make the sentence intelligible would need the addition of a number of words—which would not be *typographie économique!* We need labour this point no further but leave these experiments to the advertising of Coty and Elizabeth Arden. Such effects have what is called attention value—like Neon signs—but I am not considering that kind of typography. I have, however, here traced the source of a current fashion of printing signs and advertisements without capital letters.

I have been classed by my work as a conservative, but I am a liberal conservative or a conservative liberal—whichever you like or dislike. All I wish to conserve, either in traditionalism or modernism is common sense. What little I have was gained by experience. I regard many typographic experiments with good will and many traditional viewpoints with tolerance. I agree wholeheartedly with neither. I remember—or try to do so—that every generation has in turn to be told that there was once a man named Caesar, who wrote a very dull book called the *Commentaries*, of which the first sentence is all that most people remember; that the makers of Baker's Chocolate did not invent the familiar picture of a chocolate girl, which was an eighteenth-century painting by Jean Etienne Liotard now in a Dresden picture gallery, and that William Blake did not write, but only illustrated, the Book of Job. We who have long known these things forget that people are born not knowing them. We should therefore

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look tenderly on many typographic experiments. To us elders they may seem akin to lighting a fire with kerosene or applying one's tongue to metal in zero temperatures, but it is by such unwise ventures that we outgrow them. And as I have spent a long life learning, and to most questions do not yet know the answers, I have no right to frown on more youthful and enterprising enquirers.

Obviously some of the eccentricities of present-day typography are a natural reflection of that rather tortured world in which we find ourselves. If art, the drama, literature, and music reflect current trends of life it is natural that printing should in a measure do so. If we throw overboard old standards of conduct, we may far more readily throw over old standards of taste. When one casts a convention away as useless and outmoded, we often learn for the first time why it was there! It is urged that fuller expression of individuality, unhampered by rules, is development. It seems to me more accurate to say that through the experience of trying these experiments development comes—though not always of a kind expected. Such development ought never to stop until in the exact sense of the word we are "accomplished"—finished—which few live to be.

The *problem* is to distinguish between a true development and a false one. In judging either modernistic or retrospective typography, that is what must be decided. Do these developments—wise or otherwise, produce a well-made and readable book—in short a good book? "In the printing of books meant to be read," says an authority, "there is little room for 'bright' typography. Even dullness and monotony in the typesetting are far less vicious to a reader than typographical eccentricity or pleasantry. Cunning of this sort is desirable, even essential in the typography of propaganda, whether for commerce, politics, or religion because in such printing only the freshest survives inattention. But the typography of books, apart from the category of narrowly limited editions, requires an obedience to convention which is almost absolute—and with reason."

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It is the fashion, just now, to decry typographic conventions. Some conventions and traditions deserve to be decried and some have already been laughed out of existence. There are, however, good and bad conventions and traditions in printing, just as there are true and false developments, and the trick is to know which is which! Convention and particularly tradition are, generally, the crystallized result of past experiments, which experience has taught us are valuable. In some of the extreme modernistic typography a little more tradition might come in handy. The trouble with the modernist is that he seems afraid not to throw everything overboard and mistakes eccentricity for emancipation. Thus some books of today seem to be the arrangement of a perverse and self-conscious eccentricity. Such printing is often the work of eager, ambitious, and inexperienced men, and because they are young and God is good, one can afford to be patient; sure that they will, in the long run, outgrow the teething, mumps, and measles of typography. Their convalescence will possibly be hastened by meditating on the saying of Lord Falkland that "when it is not necessary to change, it is necessary not to change."

No movement ever accomplishes all that its first promoters intended or hoped for; almost all movements make some lasting contributions to our common stock. Every new idea, every new invention brings along with its expected benefits unforeseen evils. Modernistic architecture is at present exciting because new and unusual; when more common it will become commonplace. When it becomes difficult to differentiate the exterior of a modernistic church from a warehouse, we may get very, very tired of it. Then a compensating reaction will set in and balance will be restored. The same thing is true of modernistic typography. At present, it shocks us into attention, but we get tired of being shocked, for we do not want printing to surprise but to soothe us. The modernist must remember, too, that "such a thing as an underivative work of art does not and cannot exist, and no great master in the arts has thought or asserted otherwise."

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We gladly admit that some modernistic formulas have had good results. In architecture, perhaps to some degree in typography, they have taught us to get rid of clutter and useless ornamentation. But neither the one nor the other leads anywhere—except to a dead end.

The conservative, however, need not think that all truth is on his side. However much he tries to practise retrospective or "period" typography, consciously or unconsciously his work will show the influence of his time. Just as there is a popular idiom in speech which varies in each decade, so there is a current idiom in printing. All these idioms, literary and typographic, have not come to stay, but some become accepted terms. Under Theodore Roosevelt we suffered from the word "strenuous." President Harding inflicted the word "normalcy" on American speech. We now have "reactions," and "contacts." Clergymen "challenge" things, have "spiritual adventures," talk of "strategic positions" for their parish houses and aid parochial charities by "clarion calls," though if confronted with a "clarion" (if this instrument exists outside of sermons) they would be quite unable to blow it. All these catch-words and stock phrases are in the air. We suffer much the same thing in typography, about which there is also a new jargon which replaces the old *clichés* of my youth about rhythm, balance, and colour. Neither in speech nor printing can one make a clean sweep of the past nor help being of the present, no matter how hard one tries. I deplore violent attempts to make current printing accord with the spirit of the age. It always has, always will, and does now.

Nor need the conservative sniff at typographic experimentation. To turn to another department of daily life, what would happen if no one had ever tried experiments with food? In the distant past there was the first human being who—as an experiment—ate an oyster, though perhaps first trying jelly-fish with less comfortable results. Others died of eating toadstools before people learned that they could survive on mushrooms. Almost all our vegetable food we owe to gastronomic adventurers. Thus the hide-bound conservative

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owes sustenance to the fruits, and vegetables, of experiment.

To speak more seriously, both modernist and conservative should lay to heart what Benedetto Croce says in his *Autobiography* about "the impossibility of resting on the results of past thought" and the necessity of modesty in stating one's present position. "I see," he writes, "a new crop of problems springing up in a field from which I have but now reaped a harvest of solutions; I find myself calling in question the conclusions to which I have previously come; and these facts . . . force me to recognize that truth will not let itself be tied fast. . . . They teach me modesty towards my present thoughts, which tomorrow will appear deficient and in need of correction, and indulgence towards myself of yesterday or the past, whose thoughts, however inadequate in the eyes of my present self, yet contained some real element of truth; and this modesty and indulgence pass into a sense of piety towards thinkers of the past, whom now I am careful not to blame, as once I blamed them, for their inability to do what no man, however great, can do . . . to fix into eternity the fleeting moment."

There is, to the reasonable mind, no real quarrel between modernism and traditionalism in printing, *except in degree.* Modernism must and does influence the conservative in spite of himself—if by modernism we mean a healthy awareness of the needs of the time in which we are living. Tradition must and does influence the modernist, if by tradition we mean patient and respectful appraisal of what that accumulation of yesterdays, which we call the past, has to teach. It is only by experience that we can effect a wise blend of the two. Then we produce books which, while representing the best practice of our time, will outlast it. The appraisal of their ultimate values we must leave to the future.

"There is no past that we need long to return to," said Goethe, "there is only the eternally new which is formed out of enlarged elements of the past; and our real endeavor must always be towards new and better creation."

COMPOSED IN BELL TYPES

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PETER BEILENSON

The Amateur Printer:
HIS PLEASURES AND HIS DUTIES

ALTHOUGH the title of this piece is sufficiently long to be impressive and important-sounding, all I really want to write about is printing as fun. I am going to write about the amateur printer, and the amateur is the fellow who has fun.

I do not wish to belittle the affection a professional printer may have for his work. He should love his work. But he can love it only in a different way: for after all he is essentially a businessman about it. His work, like that of any other businessman, is something he has to sit down to by nine in the morning and something he can't leave until five at night. It is something that involves landlords and labor unions, payrolls and tax inspectors, truckmen, office-boys, salesmen, compositors, pressman, bindery workers—and customers. He has to worry about payments, and depreciation, and publicity, and time sheets.

The professional has to concern himself with all these things which are not printing at all, because he is in business and has to make money. His primary yardstick of success as a professional is: *How much money did we make last year?* Of course he has other minor yardsticks of success too: he may be successful because his presses turn out useful things like timetables, or gratifying things like corporation reports for the year, or beautiful things like four-color reproductions of Varga girls. To make these things well is a kind of fun; and insofar as the fun comes from the satisfaction in the thing itself rather than in the profit that derives from it, I'd like to call it amateur satisfaction.

But essentially our professional printer—and permit me to limit myself to the professional book printer—is supposed to make money, not to have fun. And he makes money best, nowadays,

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if his plant is equipped with the efficient modern machinery which is designed for maximum production. Such machinery is a wonderful creation of man; it is thrilling to watch in action; and it gets results. But it has its disadvantages. Now that mechanization is becoming more and more complete in more and more places, we can begin to see clearly the greatest disadvantage of all: under such mechanization individual workers have lost pride and satisfaction in their work, because they have become mere replaceable units of less and less importance; whereas the machines they operate are more and more important, and have become the essential units.

A generation ago the professional printer might have boasted of his skilled compositors, who could set type more expertly, or his skilled pressmen, who could make more careful overlays or match ink better than someone else's craftsmen. Today he boasts of his remote-control composing machines, his presses which come close to eliminating make-ready altogether, and his ink supplier's new gadget which matches colors scientifically. Today the most successful printer is the one who with the least possible dependence on man-power, can keep the most presses running fastest for the greatest number of hours per day and days per year. He is not the one with the most skilled craftsmen.

In such a world, where the executive's function is to feed the machine and the workman's is to tend it, the human spirit begins to cry out for the fun in work which I have called the amateur satisfaction. It is true that today's shorter working hours—which the machine makes possible—permit people to have more outside fun; permit the manager to play more golf, and the workman to play more softball (or more pinball) in the late afternoon; it is true that more people now see more beer advertised on more television programs, and may even drink more of it, in the evenings. But managers and workmen alike turn so avidly to such kinds of fun because they no longer get fun out of their daily work. It is becoming harder and harder for people to equate work and happiness.

Now I do not set myself up as a social reformer dedicated to the dream that all people should be happy in their work. Nor do I propose as a step to this end that we revert, smash the wonderful machines, and go back to the good old days when everyone really *did* work with his hands—usually from dawn to dark, six

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days a week. There was no pinball or television then, but *still* I do not wish to go back! Nor do I suggest that the solution is the promised thirty-hour week, with all the workmen driving their own Buicks home at two each afternoon, and taking out the wife and kiddies to Braves Field or the Gardner Museum.

But I do suggest that some of you people who really love printing, but are too involved with the nine-to-five daily business of it to enjoy it much, should enrich your lives by becoming amateur printers in your spare time. You will have fun.

I yield to no man in my boredom with vegetables and salads. I see green at every meal save breakfast. I have eaten enough stringbeans to stretch—if they were straightened out and laid end to end—from Fordhook Nurseries in Delaware to the city of Burbank, California. If you could see all the lettuce leaves I have consumed in my lifetime, piled leaf on leaf and dripping in their oils, their vinegar, their mayonnaise, and their roquefort dressings, you would be absolutely appalled. But, bored as I am with green things on the table—bored because despite their goodness they have been too plentiful and too easily come by—I am not bored on those occasions when, like Candide, I cultivate my garden, get my hands into the dirt, and smell God's good fragrance in the loam. To watch the power of living things like salad greens and stringbeans pushing their way out of the seed, up through the earth, reaching down for water and up for sunlight with an irresistible drive, is to realize afresh the power of life on this planet. It is a reinvigorating and religious experience. It is impossible to watch seeds grow into plants and flowers and fruit and still to believe cynically in a mere mechanistic explanation for such a life drive. To get back to the seed, the earth, and the root is to re-experience the fun and meaning of life.

In the same way that I have become bored with salad, we have all become bored with words, printed words. We have seen too many of them, we have read too many of them, we have measured, or proofread, or edited, or sold, too many of them. We have forgotten their primal power, their irresistible living urge. We have forgotten that sincere authors have not put them down on paper because of two cents a word or 10 per cent of the retail gross—that they have been written (in the best cases) out of human necessity, human ebullience, human passion, human sym-

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pathy, or human understanding. The industrial book-printing world cannot ever think of words in that way. It must always think of them as areas of type 22 by 28 picas, as numbers of pages which do or do not make up a multiple of thirty-two, as units of sale at $3.00 less 40 per cent.

To go back to nature and become an amateur printer in such an industrialized book world is like working in the garden when you are bored with salad. You really get back to the roots of words. If you are a genuine amateur printer, and set the type and print the pages yourself, you actually can share in the creative agonies and satisfactions of the author. For you put down his words, letter for letter in your type-stick, just as he did with his quill or his battered Remington. The best way on earth to appreciate an author and his creative spirit (or for that matter to realize more quickly the faults in him) is to pick him up letter by letter from a California case. An even more acid test is to distribute the type after printing him. In such a case you pick up half a dozen lines of type at once and work backwards, distributing the last word of the last line first. It is a revelation how the hollowness of an author can show up under this treatment. It is especially cruel to poets, for every word which is not really necessary, which is there just for padding or for a rhythm or a rhyme, becomes as noticeable as the well-known sore thumb. But the genuine, sincere author with a pure style stands up beautifully under such treatment, and has his reward in your pleasure at this discovery.

After you have set your author's type you must make up his pages, choose his decorations or illustrations, and set his headings. You must decide whether to stretch him to twenty-four pages or condense him to sixteen. You must buy his paper, lock up his pages in your chase, make him ready, curse your press which is printing him, apply your ink to his words, and impress him for posterity. Perhaps you will thereafter fold him, sew him, and encase him in boards.

In so doing, you become, to the extent of sixteen or twenty-four pages, in an edition of one hundred or three hundred copies, God. You have created something which did not exist before, and which would not have existed save for your thinking brain and tired back and dirty hands. True, you have not created Heaven and Earth, and you have undoubtedly worked at your creation

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for more than the original quota of six days. But anyway you have given the world something which was at first only words you loved, and is now a whole, real book, which you love all the more because it is your book, your child, your embodiment of those words. That is the fun and satisfaction of being an amateur. In our printing world there is no other satisfaction equal to it.

Good old Ralph Waldo Emerson was mortally right when he wrote down his doctrine of Compensation. His doctrine of Compensation says that every pleasure carries some penalty, every gain some kind of loss. Every duty accepted gives you a satisfaction, and every satisfaction received involves you in a duty. Thus far I have written of the satisfaction of your being an amateur printer. Now I wish to write of your duty and obligation.

The amateur book printer has a duty which, if he will accept it, will in the long run return to him the greatest satisfaction. This duty is to teach the professional, by example, about the outer cultural world, and to experiment for him in matters of printing style. Now this is directly contrary to what ninety out of one hundred current amateurs would seem to think, and I must therefore beg their ninety pardons if I disturb their habits of mind.

Most amateurs either don't trouble their minds about problems of printing style at all, or else they fall too easily into the habit of working in the Colonial style, or Venetian style, or some other historical style, rather than in a contemporary one. Maybe they do so for psychological reasons. And maybe not. I am too set in my diction to learn the trick of talking in psychological terms. I would express their case like this: Amateurs who work in historical styles do so because they are romantics, romantics who turn away from the impersonal machine world of the present for a breath of the more human and glamorous-seeming past. I sympathize with such an instinct, and hold myself ready to defend any man who seeks to re-inject a human element into the printing craft.

The trouble is, such amateurs think that because printing in the past was done by hand, and because there is something more satisfying and human about printing by hand, they must therefore work in an antique printing style and make Colonial and Venetian books in order to enjoy themselves. This is a false syllogism. I

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strongly recommend printing by hand to amateurs because it will give them greater satisfaction, not because it will make their books look like antiques. It is too easy to fabricate such antiques, and to do so will in the long run give you less enjoyment than making something which in style is original and new.

As a matter of fact it is already too late to think in terms of revivals and reproductions. In printing, the revival habit started over a hundred years ago with Whittingham and Pickering, when they dusted off the forgotten Caslon types and the eighteenth-century style. It has been going on ever since, and reached a climax of understanding and skill in our century at the hands of Updike, Rogers, Rollins, Goudy, and others. This revivalism was a kind of search for humanism, and a kind of rebellion against commercialism. These men were not unique. In every generation since 1800, in every art and craft, every field of thought, the Industrial Revolution has prompted men to make the same search backward for satisfactions which the modern world did not seem to offer.

Too many of our amateurs are still making the same search, although the Industrial Revolution is well over one hundred years old, all the necessary backward searching has been done, and all the historical styles have been reworked. Our predecessors have made it unnecessary for us to go through the process once again. We can see now that their work was an escape perhaps for them, but that it can never be a durable way of creative realization for us. From now on, we must join up with the forward-looking crowd who think they can build a new world.

The book-printing industry has not been very forward-looking in matters of style. With the exception of a few printers and designers, book printers have been unhealthily backward. Therefore the time is ripe for amateur book-experimentalists to prod and teach them. The amateur can do it.

He is, or should be, a man with interests in other fields of culture than his own. He is aware already of what has been done in painting and music, in fabrics and furniture design, in architecture too—most important of all. He must now help printing to develop its own new styles, equivalent to those in other fields. That he can do so is evidenced by the fact that in recent years the greatest strides forward have been taken not by the profes-

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sionals but by people who in a sense are amateurs, but who have known how to apply modern ideas from other fields.

The Bauhaus group first became notable, between the wars, by applying the functional theories of modern architecture to the printed page. The Black Sun Press and Harrison of Paris applied the ideas of Monroe Wheeler and others who were stimulated by modern painting. There may be similar publishing projects in this country today, but they are not yet influential. The most effective, most vocal, most lovable of contemporary American influences is that rugged individual Merle Armitage, whose ideas have been influential in shaping my own attitude. Such people all know that the world has changed; that it will never turn back again; and that it is up to us to catch on to the flying coattails of Today. I urge other amateurs to join the ranks of these apostles of change. It will be a great day for all of us when ninety out of one hundred are experimentalists, and not the other way around.

Of course in urging amateurs to develop new styles, I am not recommending any easy hobby. It is simple, but dull, to copy an old style. It is hard, but exciting, to work out a new one. And while you are working at it, you must expect cynical observers to give your experiments the adjective "wacky"; you must expect certain curious kinds of people to praise your work for the wrong reasons; and you must expect alternating moods of conceit and frustration. The proofs you gloat over at night will become commonplace by dawn. Your wife may go back to her mother in rage and despair. You may need sleeping pills.

You will make misjudgments about the intelligence of ordinary readers. You will make mistakes of taste. You will find it too easy to get an effect by means of shock, and you will forget that any book, even a twenty-first-century book, must be a coherent unit. And you will often, since there are no highway markers for the explorer, feel lonely and discouraged, and want to go back to the old familiar well-traveled roads again.

But if you go through with it, or even if you just play with it sometimes as a hobby, you can have great fun. For it will put you out in the open, free to please yourself, with the boss and the customer left far behind. You can be subtle or bold, as you feel the urge, for you do not have to please the great common denominator, the common man. You can advance your own work

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by looking to other fields of creation, enjoying and profiting by the experiments going on in them. You can feel yourself a part of the whole forward-looking culture of your day, and not someone off in a little forgotten corner.

And, if you do strike a vein with the glitter of real gold in it, you will become rich indeed. For you will have become a creator in a new sense; your duty done as an amateur will be compensated with a twenty-four-carat satisfaction. At such a moment of realization you will have earned the privilege to rest and feel content. As on a seventh day after six of creation, standing late at night with bloodshot eyes and inky fingers and aching back in a paper-littered room, you have become a creator. You have not merely escaped from the flattened monotony of the machine age—you have become one of the shapers of its future. More power to you in that work!

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T · M · CLELAND

Harsh Words

Mr. Chairman and Members of The American Institute of Graphic Arts:

THE generosity of your invitation to me to speak on this important occasion leaves me a trifle bewildered. I am so accustomed to being told to keep my opinions to myself that being thus unexpectedly encouraged to express them gives me some cause to wonder if I have, or ever had, any opinions upon the graphic arts worth expressing. But since it is the theory of your Committee that I have, and it may never be anybody's theory again, and they have gone so far as to give me no instructions or suggestions as to the scope or the limitations of what I might say, it would seem as ungracious to decline such an exceptional offer as it would be to abuse it. So if I accept it as wholeheartedly as I believe it was given—if I take you at your word and say things that I have long wanted to hear somebody say—I hope it will not be thought an abuse of this kindly tendered privilege.

I realize that, nominally at least, my subject must be that of printing and typography as exemplified by the selection of the fifty best books of the year which we are here to celebrate; and I suppose, by comparison to deplore the fifty thousand worst books which may be seen elsewhere. But by what may seem a very odd paradox, I don't quite know how to stick to this subject without

An address delivered at a meeting of The American Institute of Graphic Arts, in New York City, February 5th, 1940, on the occasion of the opening of the eighteenth annual exhibition of the Fifty Books of the Year. Copyright 1940 by T. M. Cleland. Reprinted by permission.

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wandering a good way off it. Or, perhaps I should say that I cannot approach it directly except by a very roundabout way.

If I have a thesis for these remarks, I can only develop it in terms of a tree. This is because I do not believe that invention in the arts can be picked from empty space like objects in a prestidigitator's act. Fruits really grow on trees and trees have roots in the earth. The tree I have in mind is cultural civilization: one of its limbs is art and a branch of this we call the graphic arts, and a twig on this branch is printing and typography. I promise not to dig into the roots of this tree, but I may be found, monkey-wise, climbing all over it before I am through.

I am at some disadvantage in that I do not belong to any organizations for the advancement of typography and the graphic arts —not even to this one—and I am ill-informed and out of touch with what is going on in these fields except by casual observation. But as members of this very useful organization, you are not engaged in printing or other graphic arts, I take it, solely for each other, but for the enjoyment and delectation of the world at large. So there is a partially compensating advantage in my being "at large" myself, and thus able to speak of present trends in the graphic arts as they appear from the outside, looking in. But this advantage may in turn be offset by the fact that I cannot honestly speak of what I see with much enthusiasm. I can bring you no message of hope or light of inspiration. Much as I am filled with admiration and respect for many individual talents and accomplishments that still contrive to exist, they seem to me to stand unhappily isolated in what I can't help viewing as artistic bankruptcy and cultural chaos. Among them are printers making beautiful books and other things about as well as these things have ever been made. But as to the general volume of printing, no one has asked me, to be sure, what I thought was the lowest point of artistic taste in the five hundred years of its existence which we are celebrating this year, but if anyone *should* ask me, I would be bound to say that we have reached that point just about now. Things may get worse, but it's hard to see how they can. To paraphrase a remark in the concluding chapter of Updike's classic work on printing types, it has taken printers and publishers

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five hundred years to find out how wretchedly books and other things can be made and still sell.

I am not forgetting that there were some very benighted periods of taste in other centuries that would seem to refute this sweeping assertion. Perhaps it is worth noting here—and the fact is peculiarly ironical—that the design and style of official and governmental things—money, postage stamps, bonds and stock certificates—was created and solidified into a seemingly unalterable convention at that hitherto all time low point of the decorative arts in the mid-nineteenth century. So powerful is this convention that we would be suspicious of a ten dollar bill that was not visually saturated with ugliness. A counterfeiter with aesthetic sensibilities must not only sweat blood but weep tears over the job of imitating one. But in the sadly perverted taste of that epoch there was a kind of innocence: standards were still respected, and proficiency, though overworked and misdirected, was recognized and not condemned.

Today when I look about in the bookstore, and more especially on the newsstands, or open the pages of most of the magazines with the biggest circulations, I want to do what the little boy did in the story which was a favorite of my friend, the late Hal Marchbanks. The little boy had been to his first party, and when he arrived home, his mother said: "Did mama's little boy have a nice time at the party?" "Yep," he replied. "What did mama's little boy do at the party?" "I thow'd up."

Against this steady decline in both taste and workmanship, your fifty books selection and exhibit each year has been a noble effort, and in this country, almost the only concerted one of consequence to uphold some standards. You have inspired both publishers and printers to earnest endeavor to improve their products with frequently admirable results. But these are only fifty books out of how many other books and other printed things. Without this good work of yours, one wonders if any standards at all would survive the flood of cheap and easy mechanization, careless workmanship and bad taste. Not that there is anything wrong with machines. The first hand press, it should be remembered by its sentimental admirers, was also a machine. We have

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not learned to use the machines at their best, but accepted them like fruits in the Garden of Eden, and thought of nothing but how much we could get out of them in speed and quantity and profit. Because we can do with them easily what formerly demanded time and pains to do at all, we have too easily assumed that they delivered us from the need of any time or pains.

Before I go any farther on or off the track with these random remarks, I should like it to be understood that I am addressing them particularly to any students and beginners in the graphic arts that may be present, rather than to those who are arrived. I am a student and still a beginner myself, and so my interest and my heart are naturally with my own kindred. I speak as an old beginner to younger ones. I am at a great disadvantage with regard to the number of years I have left in which to get started, and if I have any advantage at all, it is only in experience with the bewilderments and illusions that clutter our common way in learning and trying to practice one or more of the graphic arts. The confusions and distraction of this day make the path of the student and beginner rough and tortuous. Having travelled it for more years than I like to admit, when I look backward, I am astonished to discover the number of twists and turns and pitfalls I might just as well have spared myself.

Perhaps the most foolish of these was the fear of not being original—what Romain Rolland calls "the fear of the already said." The notion that I must do something new every day, or I would not be creative—forgetting that God made the planets all the same shape as far as we can see, and that the oak tree does not alter the form of its leaves from year to year. There is no supposition so pathetically misleading as that creative originality is within your own volition—the notion that it can be acquired leads to deplorable results. It distracts the mind and energies of the young student from gaining needful technical competence—from learning his trade, and in more mature stages tempts the would-be artist into vulgar mannerisms and formulas which he will call his "style."

The idea that originality is essential to the successful practice of the graphic arts is more prevalent today than it ever was in the

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days when the graphic arts were practiced at their best. The current belief that everyone must now be an inventor is too often interpreted to mean that no one need any longer be a workman. Hand in hand with this premeditated individualism goes, more often than not, a curious irritation with standards of any kind. The conscious cultivator of his own individuality will go to extravagant lengths to escape the pains imposed by a standard.

But of all the perils that lie in wait for adolescent artists there is none more seductive than the bewildering array of ologies and isms that leer and beckon to him at every crossroad of his journey. Just as isms and ologies have taken the place, in social and political life, of right and wrong; so have they become the accepted terms of the arts. In fact, nonsense is now so universally the language of art that it is nearly hopeless to try to make oneself understood in any other.

Brood mare to all of these extravagancies—and I have lived to see many of them come and go—is that one which achieves the super absurdity of calling itself "modernism"; and none has been expounded and exploited in more contradictory and antic ways. To deliberately call oneself "modern" is no less ludicrous than something an old Danish friend told me years ago about a line in one of the books of a very prolific writer of historical romances in his country. In a tale with a medieval setting this writer had one of his knights in armour cry out to another: "We men of the middle ages never take insults, etc."

Embraced with fanatic enthusiasm by many architects and designers is the current quackery called "Functionalism." It, in common with its many predecessors, offers a new gospel for the regeneration of our aesthetic world by restricting all design to the function of its object or its materials. Like the new religions and philosophies that have paraded in and out of our social history for countless generations, it purports to be an original concept. It has brought to us such gladsome gifts as concrete boxes with holes in them for buildings, chairs of bent pipe with no hind legs, glass fireplaces, beds of cement blocks joined by structural steel, the queer agglomeration of unsightly edifices we call he World's Fair and many other specimens of stark and for-

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bidding claptrap. Unless all signs are misleading me, it is another mass vulgarity like the age of golden oak and mission furniture, even now on its way to the junk pile or the attic, perhaps to be someday rediscovered there and dragged out by future generations in search of quaintness.

It seems to me, ladies and gentlemen, that *all* art was *modern* when it was made, and still is if it is suitable to life as we now live it; and I look in vain for any applied art worthy the name that was not also, in some sense functional. From the buttresses of a gothic cathedral to the gayest Chippendale chair one finds, upon analysis, a perfect work of engineering perfectly adapted to its purpose. If this were not so, these things would hardly have endured for so long a time. So that common regard for function which has always been the basic principle of first-rate design, assumes the impressive aspect of a religion, with high priests and ritual, by the simple addition of an "ism." As students and beginners in search of truth, we are today being pushed and pulled about by no end of such bogus preachments—familiar faces with false whiskers—old and common principles dolled up with new names and often used to account for incompetence and laziness.

And what is the meaning of this term "functionalism"? Must a design be related to no functions except mechanical and material ones? Might not the most fantastic and elaborate works of the geniuses of the baroque and rococo styles have also been functional in that they expressed the spirit and fitted perfectly the life they were intended to serve?

We hear much holy talk of "simplicity" in this day and the idea of simplicity expressed by a total absence of everything not essential to mechanical function has been elevated to a fetich. We have divorced simplicity from its old mate charm as we might break up the happy relationship of ham and eggs or pork and beans. But in this reverent renunciation of all adornment not strictly functional in this limited sense, have we paused to ask whether we are in fact following a basic human instinct, or merely attempting to make a virtue out of poverty of invention? There is no evidence that man is imbued with an instinctive love of simplicity in the objects with which he finds it useful to surround

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himself. Indeed, our museums are bulging with evidence to the contrary. From the Cro-Magnon cave to gothic cathedrals, from the temples of India to the palace of Versailles, the earth has been made to flower with man's inherent love of ornament. It would seem then that ornamentation is deeply rooted in the human instinct since no tribe, however primitive in other respects, is without it. The restraints of this instinct and the tempering of it with what we call taste is a cultivated faculty like the restraint of our other appetites; but to be a teetotaler in ornament or in anything else, is to confess to either weakness of control or incapacity for enjoyment. "A teetotaler," said Whitman, "is just another kind of toper."

This instinctive yearning for ornamentation is well demonstrated in the case of our own Rockefeller Center; where it has been catered to with peculiar ineptitude. Here all the important structures have been piously stripped of everything non-essential to mechanical function. Pillars, pilasters, cornices and mouldings—ornaments that at least have their genesis in structural functions—have all been piously renounced. And then because it was found that the human spirit could not tolerate such barren starkness, and business might suffer from it, ornaments have been pasted around its doorways and approaches like gold paper lace on a pasteboard box—ornaments completely unrelated to any structural function of any kind. Sculptures, fountains, trees, flowers and awnings have all been pressed into service to compensate for this spurious simplicity. Many of these things are beautiful in their own right like Mr. Manship's golden figure of Prometheus. One of the little office girls that further decorate the scene at the noon hour, was overheard the other day explaining to another that this was a statue of "Primiscuous escaping from Responsibility."

So under this wildly flapping banner of "Modernism" marches a quaint array of worn and shabby syntheses for art, each day parading a new dress and a new alias. The common urge for self-expression can always find one or another of them at its service. For those who are particularly deficient in the talent, energy and patience demanded for the mastery of an art, something called

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"non-objective" art has been invented. For this the only things required are a box of paints, brushes and a surface to exercise them on. With these simple and easily procurable tools you express your own inner emotions and need not trouble yourself with anyone else's or with what anyone else sees. If you watch the others you will see that it is mostly being done with triangles, circles or vortexes of paint just as it comes from the tube. If you have no paint, toothpaste will do as well. If, after a few minutes of this, you are tired, stop—you will have added spontaneity to its other attractions. The fact that it deals only with your own emotions will not prevent you putting it on exhibition for other people to enjoy. If anyone balks at enjoying it, you smile wanly and shrug your shoulders and pity them for their dumb enslavement to outworn tradition. It works like a charm—no one will dare attack you—they will all be afraid that you've got something there. People have a terror of making mistakes—as if they had not been made by the best people in all ages. It is the most perfect device yet invented for attracting attention to yourself with the least trouble. A generation ago we heard a great deal about "art for art's sake": now it is art for the artist's sake, like bread for the baker's sake or medicine for the doctor's sake. And I say, for God's sake, tell me what art made through the vision of a human eye with a brain behind it is *not* "non-objective"? No two men will ever draw or paint the same picture of the same object. Only the lens of a camera will render it quite objectively, and even the camera in the hands of an artist is capable of some degree of subjectivity.

And since I have inadvertently mentioned the camera, I ought to say a good word for it too. It is just now in its hey-day and people are taking greater pains with it than they are willing to take with any other medium of artistic expression. I see a great many very fine pictures made with it, in spite of its obvious limitations. But it has also been tortured into serving as a medium for self-conscious originality until its "new ideas" have come to be, in their way, in their monotony and staleness, an intolerable bore.

The marvels of color photography have revealed to us hitherto unsuspected depths of aesthetic sordidness. This factual repro-

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duction of what we are told are "Nature's colors," I am given to understand, is not yet wholly perfected. Only when it is will we know the worst—only then will we know what the things that through our eyes have stirred us by their beauty, really are! Perhaps another super instrument of disillusionment will be invented to reveal us, not in form and color alone, but in spirit, to each other as we really are. Good-by then to human love, respect and friendship!

I have strayed a good way from my subject, as I warned you that I might; and these remarks must appear by now to be not only ramblings but the ravings of an old reactionary who is blind to anything that is new. That deduction will be almost literally correct, ladies and gentlemen. There is no denying that I am old, and toward much that I see around me, I am reactionary; and I have learned nothing in all my years of striving for knowledge, more convincing than that statement in the Book of Ecclesiastes to the effect that there is nothing new under the sun. I plead guilty to this hideous indictment and throw myself on the mercy of this court. I am even happy to have learned that much, and wish, in the manner of the camp meeting revivalist, that I might pass on something of this blessed revelation to the "brethern and sistern" present.

While I thus brazenly deny the existence of anything really new, and fail to recognize what is called "progress" and deplore the waste of talent and energy that is dissipated in striving for these things, I am far from blind to the value of revolt. Our creative sense is all too prone to doze off into dreams of past glories. From these, and the sterile copying of them, we may be awakened and rescued by even the crudest of revolutions. We may benefit from them provided we do not let them tear up our roots—provided we still can recognize an illusion when we meet it. The squirrel in his revolving cage must have some illusion of progress, else he would not take any exercise, and without exercise he would fatten and sicken and die.

And, remember, there is always progress to be made within yourselves, no matter if it is the same progress in the same direction that has been made by countless other souls. And there will,

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I hope, always be things new to you, as there are every day things new to me, even if the sun has seen them all before. I don't want to live a day longer than I can learn.

There is no reason to suppose that there is not today as much latent talent for the arts in existence, as at any time in their history. But talent for art is not talent for being an artist—one may have much of the one, without much of the other. It seems to me that there are more temptations and distractions working against the talent to be an artist today than ever before. More alluring short cuts and seductive philosophies—a disturbing babel of undigested ideas and indigestible objectives. If in this riot you can keep your heads and not lose sight of the important difference between "a grain of truth" and the whole truth, if you can grow in understanding of what it is you want to do, you may, even now, have a good chance of doing it.

But what has all this to do with printing and typography and their related graphic arts? I seem by now to be so far off the track that it will take a derrick and wrecking crew to get me back on again. As a matter of fact I have not forgotten the subject altogether and have, in my lumbering way, been working toward it. But because I can't think of typography as an art in itself, unrelated to all the other arts, I could not approach it except by the way I have.

All of these things that I have been complaining about in the other arts, have their counterparts in present-day typography and printing. The same restless craving for something "new," the same preoccupation with isms, the same monotonous sameness. But this poison is aggravated in the case of printing and typography, by the fact that of all the arts, it is, by its very nature and purpose, the most conventional. If it is an art at all, it is an art to serve another art. It is good only in so far as it serves well and not on any account good for any other reason. It is not the business of type and printing to show off, and when, as it now so frequently does, it engages in exhibitionistic antics of its own, it is just a bad servant.

For this reason the embarrassing ineptitude of the current efforts toward a "new typography" are even more distressing

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than similar contortions in other fields. Typography, I repeat, is a servant—the servant of thought and language to which it gives visible existence. When there are new ways of thinking and a new language, it will be time enough for a new typography. When we have altered all of our manners and social customs, only then will it be time to radically alter the well grounded conventions of this very minor art. Within them there is now ample room, as there always has been, for the exercise of ingenuity, skill and individual taste. I suggest that those who cannot abide the conventions of typography are mostly those who have never tried them.

In what does the newness of this new typography consist? It seems to be new as the neu in neurosis from which it largely derives. It is new as it would be new for a man to enter the dining room on his hands instead of his feet, and instead of eating his soup, to pour it into his hostess's lap. It is as new and agreeable and pleasing to look at as delirium tremens which it closely resembles. The new typography engages in such side-splitting pranks as putting the margins of a book page in just the opposite arrangement to that which practical utility and well founded tradition have always placed them. It might with equal reason and originality, turn the type page upside down. In advertising display it makes use of that highly original and refreshing device of printing what is to be read at a cockeyed angle. The makeup expert indulges that other fresh and original dodge of bleeding pictures off the edge of the page so that a flat two dimensional photograph is viewed without a frame on two of its sides and must compete with a background of all the three dimensional things in the room.

I refuse to bore you or myself by enumerating all the tiresome stock-in-trade eccentricities of the typographic expert in search of something new—the epileptic fits he throws to attract attention to himself at the expense of the words he is printing. You see enough of them every day to know what I mean. Nearly every magazine and newspaper page, not to mention a good many books, present the same revolting spectacle—the order of the day, it seems, is disorder.

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And speaking of magazines, it has fallen to my lot from time to time in the past thirty-five years to design and redesign a number of periodicals of one kind and another. Such jobs require really very little actual work—it's by endless argument and conference that they can wear you to the bone. My simple purpose with these things has always been to bring any measure of order the case will permit out of the disorder in which I generally find it. My mission, if I have any, is to suppress typography, not to encourage it—to put it in its place and make it behave like a decently trained servant. I find magazines rolling in the gutter covered with the accumulated mud of years of dissipation. I pick them up and brush them off, give them a cup of black coffee and a new suit of clothes and start them off on respectable typographic careers. But like other missionaries, more often than not, I find them a year or so later, back in the same gutter, drunk and disorderly and remorselessly happy about it.

If the philosophy of functionalism has hit the new typography as it has the other applied arts, I see no evidence of it. On the contrary, in this field, anything goes, so long as it is eccentric, free from the restraints of reason, and can successfully discourage the reader from reading. All the distortions of the roman alphabet that were discarded a half century ago—in fact any types which are as nearly unreadable as types can be made—have been dragged out again and called "modern." These range from the elaborately ornamental letters of the most depraved periods of design to the stark diagrams of letters that were called by type-founders in my youth: "Printer's lining gothic"—as absurd a misnomer as could be imagined, since they have nothing whatsoever to do with gothic letters or any other letter forms known to history. Laymen called them, more accurately, "block letters"; but in the new typography they are elegantly referred to as "sans serifs" because, among other features of the roman alphabet which they lack, is a total absence of serifs. They bear the same relation to roman letters as would an engineer's drawings for a trolley track. At the moment they are very much in vogue and are widely believed to be modern and to be a simplification in harmony with the new architecture, furniture and other things. They

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are supposed to represent the spirit of our day like the noise of rivetting hammers in a modern musical composition. They simplify the traditional forms of type as you might simplify a man by cutting his hands and feet off. You can no more dispense with the essential features of the written or printed roman alphabet, ladies and gentlemen, than you can dispense with the accents and intonations of human speech. This is simplification for simpletons, and these are block letters for blockheads.

The users of typography and printing, the publishers and advertisers, are also confused by illusions of their own. Foremost among these is the notion that they require every week new types to give freshness and effectiveness to what they print and publish. This wholly unwarranted assumption is undoubtedly a godsend to the typefounders, however disastrous it is to the development of a sane and ordered typography. It has peopled the earth with typographic experts who know "the latest thing" and not much else, and it has relieved the designers of printing from the burden of knowing anything about design. It is so much easier to buy new types than to learn how to use effectively the types we already have. And if, instead of flooding our composing rooms with new types, which are seldom more than variations upon old themes of distortion, our typefounders would give us at least twice as many sizes as they now make, of a few good types, we should have a really flexible medium to work in. We would have to make fewer compromises with good design, and they might profit commercially, as typography surely would profit artistically.

And this constructive suggestion reminds me that I ought perhaps to temper this hurricane of destructive criticism with some further helpful hints. At the moment I can only think of two that might relieve the dreadful situation that I have pictured. One is that we organize a pogrom of all type designers—a little hard on them perhaps, but they would gain martyrdom to a cause—and the other is that we establish a concentration camp in which to intern all those who think up or think they think up new ideas in typography for such time as it will take them to recover from their delusion. There they might while away pleasant hours in

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the distinguished company of the inventors of paper-towels, pasteboard milk bottles and beer in cans.

With my younger colleagues still in mind, I ought to say something of the practical problems that we encounter in professing and practicing one or other of the graphic arts. We are, or should be, if we are really artists, more concerned with what we give to our art than with what we get out of it. But we have to live—or think we do—and to do that by the practice of art is certainly no easier now than it ever was. If anything, it's a little harder. Beyond that inner satisfaction with what we can give—and there is only a little of that and at rare intervals—the only two things to be got *out* of art are money and fame; and I daresay there are few of us who would not welcome a little of both. But we must compete today with a great many of those who work for nothing else; and who, under the banner of one or another of these isms of which I've been prating, can concentrate upon that unique objective unhampered by any serious interest in art itself. They are devotees of success, like their commercial brethren, and by means of the same promotional paraphernalia they succeed so well that one is tempted at times to believe that the only living art is the art of self promotion.

Another curious development of these times is the classification of artists according to political ideology. We hear now of "left wing" artists. As nearly as I can discover, these are to be recognized by their contempt for any sort of craftsmanship and a peculiar inability to keep their drawings clean. They make penury—the unhappy lot of nearly all artists—a pious virtue, and they are not infrequently big with pretension to being the only serious interpreters of life and truth. These are balanced on the other end of the political see-saw by a school of "economic royalists" who have made of art a commercial opportunity. As Industrial Designers with large staffs and control boards and troops of indefatigable press agents, they have welded art and commerce so successfully that it is nearly impossible to tell them apart. Somewhere between the two is the artist; and he is as often as not a forgotten man. Not quite poor enough to be picturesque or heartrending, just well enough off to keep his collar and his

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drawings clean, he must nevertheless spend an exorbitant part of his life and energies in worrying about bills.

And now to stop the clamor of the butcher, the baker *et al*, to whom must we sell our graphic arts? For the most part, I suppose, it will be to publishers, industrialists and advertising agents. The publisher is a pretty decent sort, on the whole, but if he is a book publisher, he can generally be recognized as such by the fact of having very little money to spend on art. In my own experience, the most generous and appreciative customer for our wares has been the industrialist. What you do for him can often increase his profit very materially, and he is not slow to recognize that fact.

The advertising agent, speaking very generally and with the particular exception of one very dear friend in mind, deals largely in what might be called scientifically organized fraud. I am aware that to say this now is to risk being called a "communist transmission belt"—whatever that may be. It has even been suggested that by these animadversions upon advertising, I am biting the hand that fed me; but I suggest that I am biting the hand that I have fed until I am fed up on feeding it. It may be that you will find, as I sometimes have, in the ranks of these shock troops of deception, sympathetic and amiable clients for your work who can deal differently with artists than they deal with the public—but not very often. Each of them employs what is called an Art Director whose importance is derived, not so much from art as from the financial size and number of advertising accounts toward which he directs it. It is his duty to furnish you with what he calls "ideas," upon the theory that an artist is not mentally up to having any of his own. Ten to one he will end by altering your drawing to give it the "wallop" thought to be essential to all advertising. A public, already groggy and half blind from the incessant battering of advertisements with a punch, will hardly notice the difference.

"To think at all," says the Spanish philosopher, Ortega y Gasset, "is to exaggerate." A careful measurement of anatomical detail in the drawings and sculptures of Michelangelo will reveal startling exaggerations of fact, but these enlargements upon fact

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are but his medium for truthful expression. He gives us the figure of a man or woman more essentially true than could be made by any anatomist with micrometer calipers. So, I humbly pray, ladies and gentlemen, that you will apply no instruments of precision to my words—they are the best I could find in this emergency for saying what I believe to be true. If you think me guilty of exaggeration, the foregoing remarks are my only defense. But if you accuse me of being facetious, I will tell you that I have never been more serious in my life.

COMPOSED IN BODONI BOOK TYPES

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OSCAR OGG

A Comparison of Calligraphy & Lettering

SUPERIOR writing and able lettering have never made inconsequential literature valuable, nor have poorly conceived, incompetent calligraphy and lettering ever invalidated good literature. Letters which are well considered, expertly executed, conscientiously fitted to their purpose, however, can create visually a spiritual state in a reader which will influence him to be receptive to the message he reads. It may even be possible that beautiful writing, aside from the intense pleasure it gives us as graphic art, helps to make uninspired authors seem more profound.

Perhaps it is this realization that has made graphic artists in recent years exhibit a notable increase in interest in American "calligraphy." The quotes are intentional. So much which is not calligraphy has had the term applied to it and so much which is calligraphy has been considered something else, that some sort of evaluation and comparative definition now appears to be wise.

The aura of romance which has surrounded the tools, the methods, and the products of the scribe has tended, we believe, to place them in the eyes of practicing letter artists somewhat higher in the scale of the arts than those of the letterer. Hence the "lettering man" likes to call himself a "calligrapher." This same snobbishness is often evident between easel painters and illustrators, between book illustrators and magazine illustrators, between book designers and advertising typographers. And all of it is false. By simple definition lettering and writing are related but certainly not competitive arts.

Calligraphy is "beautiful writing."

Lettering, in modern usage, refers to built-up, designed forms.

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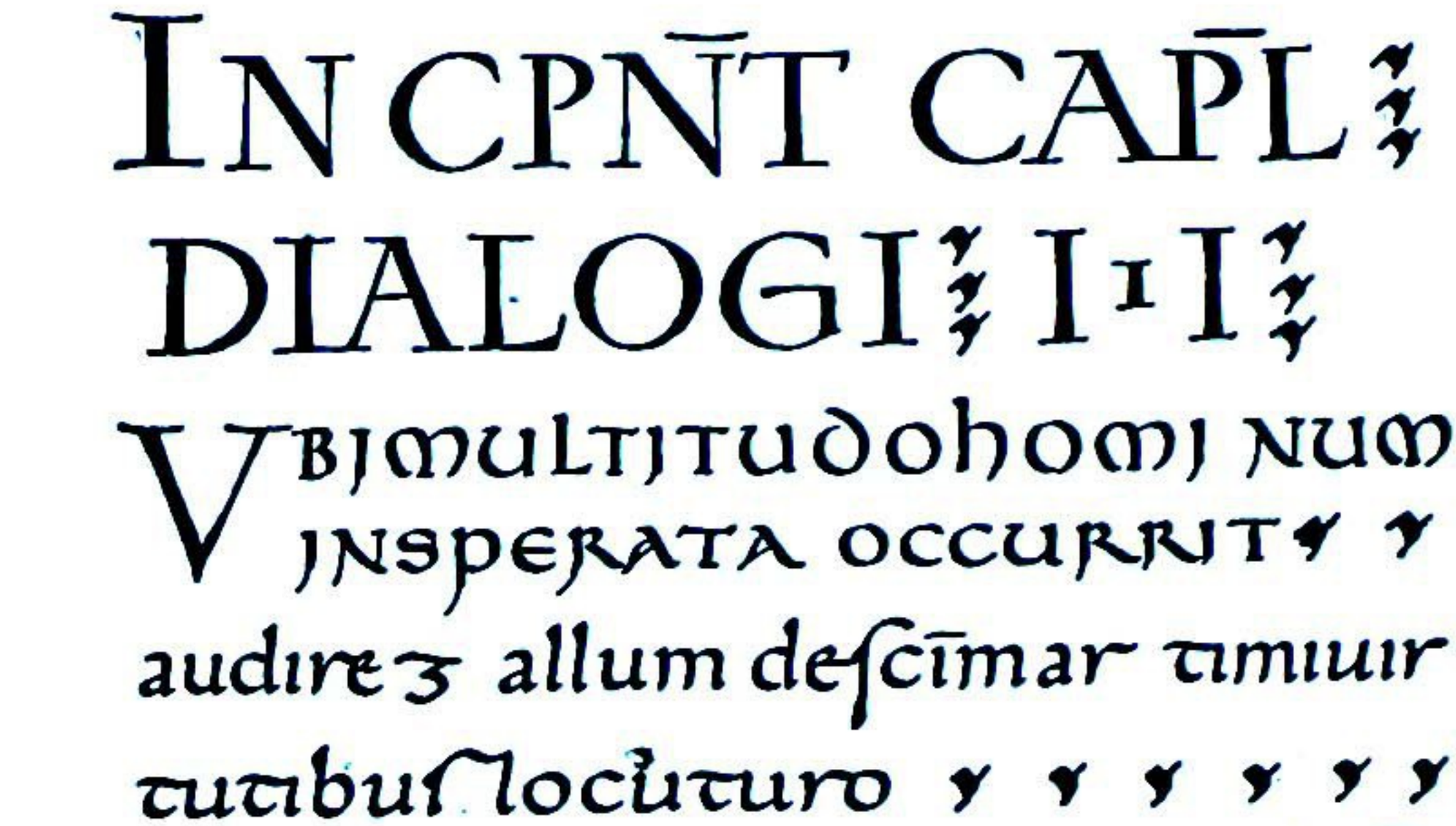
Stanley Morison, in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, says: "Calligraphy is the art of fine writing. Writing is a means of communication by agreed signs; if these signs or symbols are painted or engraved on stone or wood [or paper] we have that extension and application of writing known as *lettering*, *i.e.* a script generally formed with mechanical aids such as the rule, compass, and square. But it is the essence of handwriting that it be free from such, though not from all, government. . . . Calligraphy may be defined as freehand in which freedom is so nicely reconciled with order that the understanding eye is pleased to contemplate it."



The same nib was used for built-up and written forms in this freely rendered fragment of a ninth-century manuscript.

Built-up and written forms each have their place. One of the tenets of fine letter art is that the forms be in perfect taste; that is, that the letter and its method of production be in harmony with its use. A delicately drawn cursive is as out of place on a subway card advertising a cough remedy as is a poster *egyptienne* on the title page of a small volume of romantic poetry. To assume, however, that either the written or the drawn form is the more aristocratic is unsound. To attempt a representation of either by the other is likewise illogical. Written letters, based on traditional manuscript usage, are more serious in concept than their less restrained contemporary built-up characters and do not permit of the same unconcern with anatomical discrimination. Both, properly executed, can be superb examples of letter art—and both can be terrible.

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OSCAR OGG

A simple Roman, executed entirely with a broad nib. Characteristic strokes employed in writing the above.

A similar letter designed and built up using a brush. Characteristic outlines to be filled in for above.

The growing practice of calling all script-like letters "calligraphy" is unjust to writing and lettering alike. Particularly the practice of producing with a pointed pen or brush the built-up, tricked-out impersonations of broad nib writing must be abandoned if the art of making letters is to remain honorable.

Having defined, then, the general limitation of the terms, let us look at some of the principal differences in character between the two. Historically, we find them side by side. Since they were both produced by scribes and illuminators working in like tradition, there was no question of fitness one with the other. Both stemmed from the same source and were produced with the same type of tool. They were necessarily in harmony.

Contemporarily, however, much lettering is executed by craftsmen who neither know or care about the historical background of the alphabet. The responsibility for this lies, we believe, as much with the purchaser as with the producer of letters. The art director, working in a viciously competitive field, demands of the letterer something "different." The result is usually a built-up form which has little in common with its ancestors, either in shape or method of production. But, if it is handsome in itself, it may have a real affinity for a text of type. A written element may also serve beautifully as a foil for the rigidity of a type page.

To establish further the variance between calligraphy and let-

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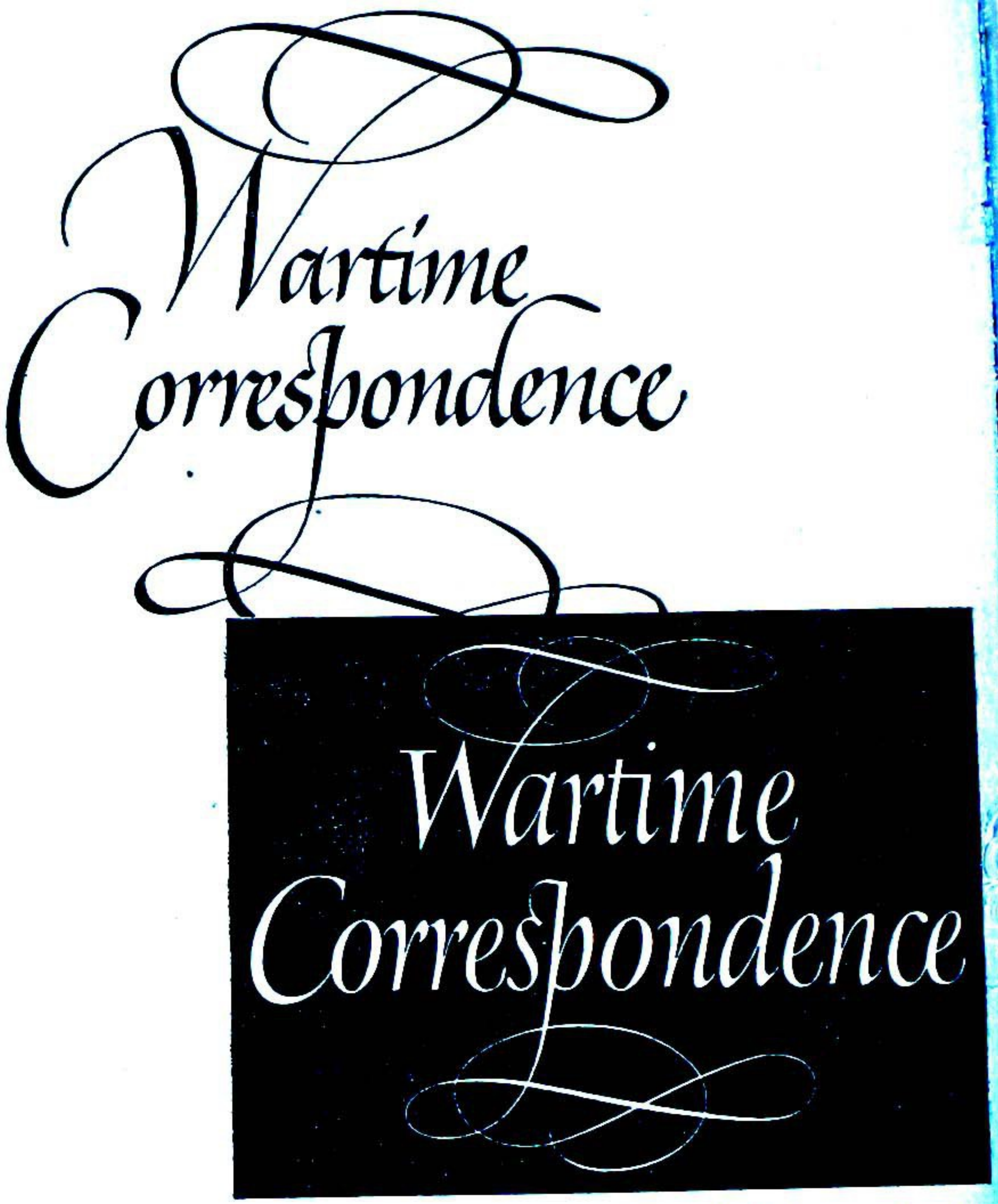

These two treatments of a title are by no means the only likely ones by either method. The lower form was actually used. The letter was designed in the spirit of the type which was used in conjunction with it. Perhaps if a written title had been chosen, one based on an Italian rather than an English hand would have been more suitable. The great difference in these two treatments is that the written serves as a contrast, while the built-up harmonizes with the type on the page.

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tering, a brief inspection of the methods of production may be advantageous. The designed form is conceived as a drawing—it is a device which may be finished up with any instrument at hand. The only limitation which the designer must not exceed is the recognizability of the particular letter.

The written form depends upon tradition for letter shape and upon tool for letter character. Distortion is possible and poor form not unusual, but since the pen is essentially *the* letter-making tool, the natural action of a properly cut pen eliminates at least some of the opportunities for improbable forms.

These two letters, enlarged from the two renderings of "War-time Correspondence," illustrate the control which is exerted by the cut and size and handling of a square nib upon the calligraphic form as opposed to the freedom from constraint in the built-up treatment. The tool decided the shape of the first. A careful patterning of curves and weights to conform to the type of the book page (Poliphilus) determined the second. A Soennecken steel pen was used for the written, and a pointed brush for the built-up.

The calligraphic and the built-up approach to the execution of a book title may indicate how each may be employed frankly and honestly without recourse to camouflage to procure particular effects. The size, general weight, and disposition of the letters are indicated in the rough layout. The artist who executes the built-up rendering will keep the weight of letters *even* by constant checking of one against the other. The calligrapher will cut a reed or pen to this weight and thus maintain even color.

It will be noted that the designed form is completely and finally established in the penciled form. The laying-out for the written form is less accurate and is the product of a double pointed tool, set to the width of the nib to be used. In any but a very tight design such as this, the pen-executed letter requires rather less preliminary penciling than is here indicated. A line for the bottom of the letters is usually sufficient.

It has been impossible to crowd all one should like to write on this subject into these few words. If, however, this first voicing of a need for a sane concept of the relations between lettering and calligraphy has even the smallest influence, the author will bear with pleasure the rightful criticism of incompleteness.

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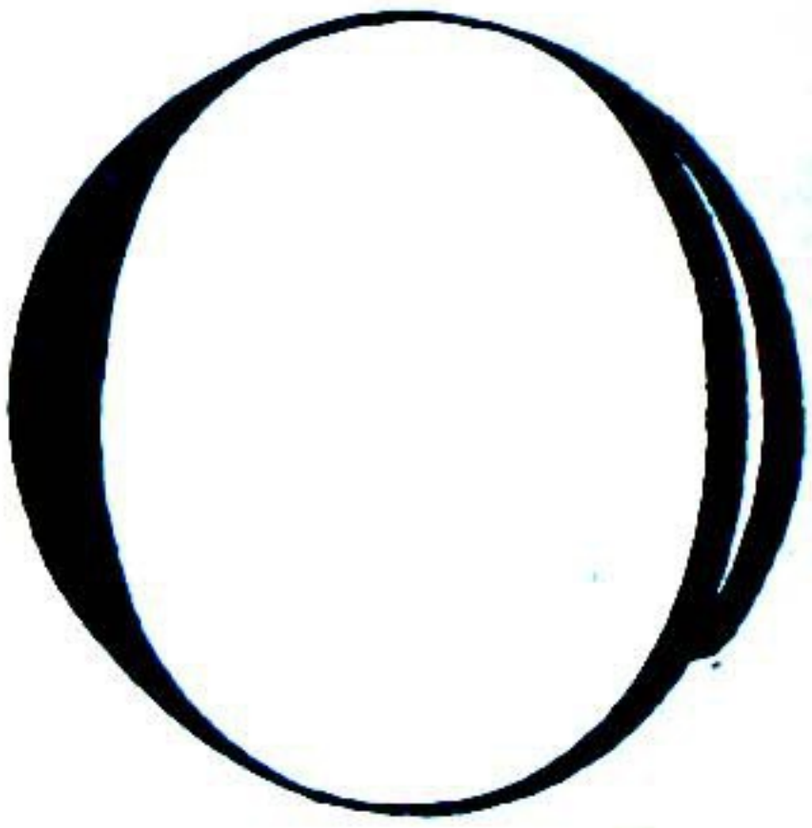
Calligraphic



The width of the nib is that of the widest part of the down-stroke. Strokes 5 and 6 fill the openings thus left.

The 26 Letters

Layout and demonstration of the written form (calligraphic).

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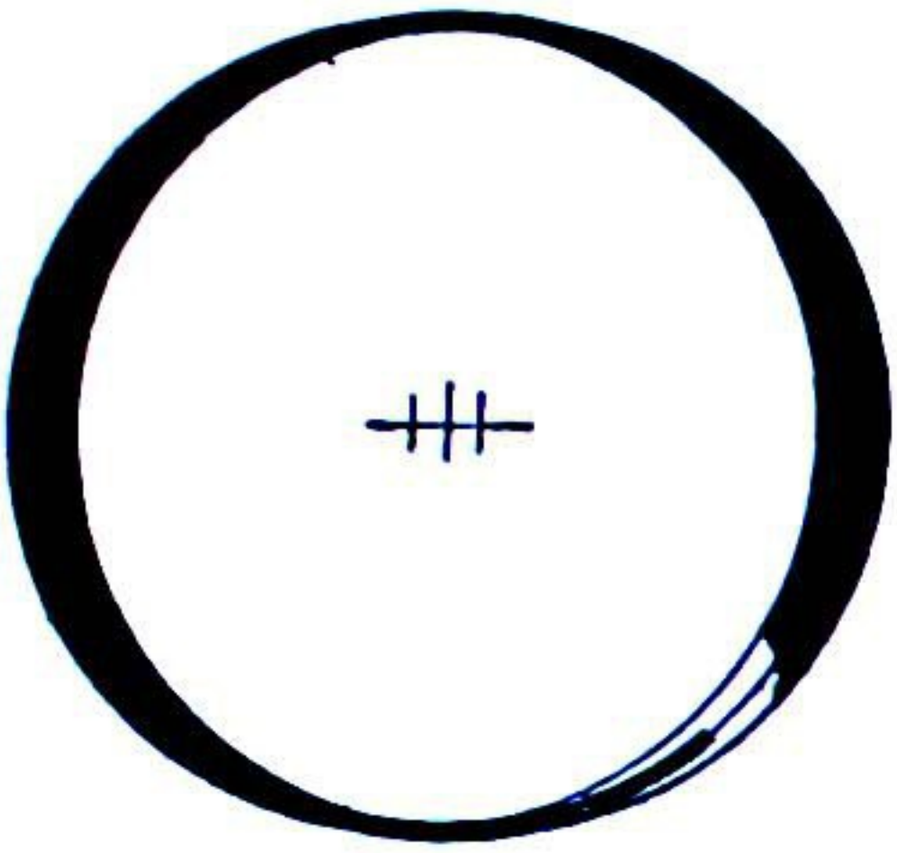
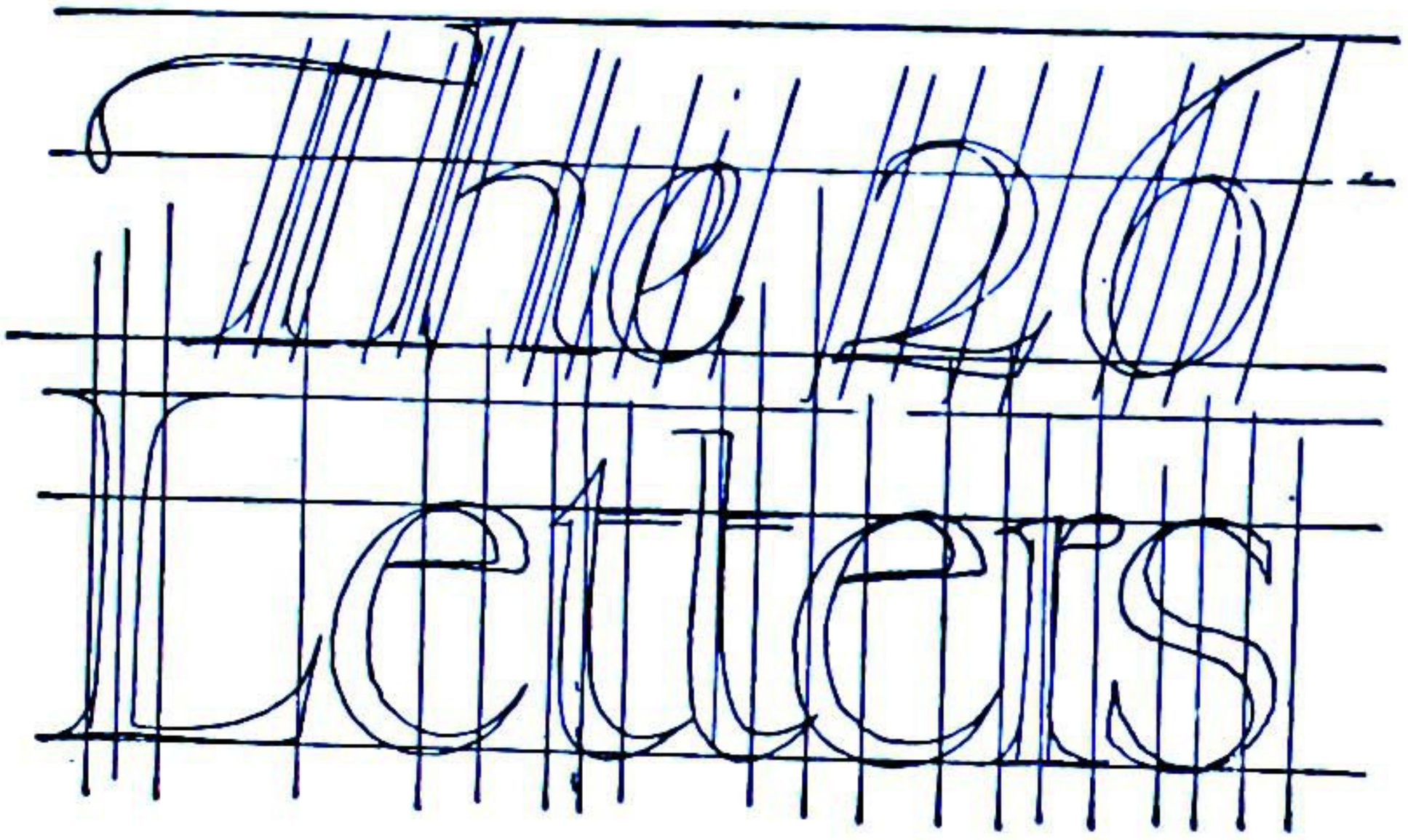
Designed



The center line is drawn by compass. Width of the swell is arrived at by moving the point ½ this width to right and left.



The 26 Letters

Layout and demonstration of the designed form (lettered).

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ALDOUS HUXLEY

Typography for the Twentieth-Century Reader

IN OUR enthusiasm for the spirit we are often unjust to the letter. Inward and outward, substance and form are not easily separated. In many circumstances of life and for the vast majority of human beings they constitute an indissoluble unity. Substance conditions form; but form no less fatally conditions substance. Indeed, the outward may actually create the inward, as when the practice of religious rites creates religious faith, or the commemoration of the dead revives, or even calls into existence, the emotions to which the ceremonial gives symbolical expression.

There are other cases, however, in which spirit seems not to be so closely dependent on letter, in which the quality of the form does not directly affect the quality of the substance. The sonnets of Shakespeare remain the sonnets of Shakespeare even in the most abominable edition. Nor can the finest printing improve their quality. The poetical substance exists independently of the visible form in which it is presented to the world. But though, in this case, the letter is powerless to make or mar the spirit which it symbolizes, it is not for that reason to be despised as mere letter, mere form, mere negligible outside. Every outside has a corresponding inwardness. The inwardness of letters does not happen to be literature; but that is not to say that they have no inwardness at all. Good printing cannot make a bad book good, nor bad printing ruin a good book. But good printing can create a valuable spiritual state in the reader, bad printing a certain spiritual discomfort. The inwardness of letters is the inwardness of any piece

The introduction from *Printing of Today*, an illustrated survey of postwar typography in Europe and the United States, by Oliver Simon and Julius Rodenberg. Copyright 1928 by Peter Davies, Ltd., London, and Harper and Brothers. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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of visual art regarded simply as a thing of beauty. A volume of the Penny Classics may give us the sonnets of Shakespeare in their entirety; and for that we may be duly grateful. But it cannot at the same time give us a work of visual art. In a finely printed edition we have Shakespeare's sonnets *plus* the lovely equivalent of, say a Persian rug or a piece of Chinese porcelain. The pleasure we should derive from bowl or carpet is added to that which the poetry gives us. At the same time our minds are sensitized by the contemplation of the simple visual beauty of the letters: they are made more susceptible of receiving the other and more complex beauties, all the intellectual and spiritual content, of the verse. For our sensations, our feelings and ideas do not exist independently of one another, but form, as it were, the constituent notes of what is either a discord or a harmony. The state of mind produced by the sight of beautiful letters is in harmony with that created by the reading of good literature. Their beauty can even compensate us, in some degree, for what we suffer from bad literature. They can give us intense pleasure, as I discovered in China, even when we do not understand what they signify. For what astounding elegances and subtleties of form stare out in gold or lampblack from the shop-fronts and the hanging scarlet signs of a Chinese street! What does it matter if the literary spirit expressed by these strange symbols is only "Fried Fish and Chips," or "A Five Guinea Suit for Thirty Shillings"? The letters have a value of their own apart from what they signify, a private inwardness of graphic beauty. The Chinese themselves, for whom the Fish-and-Chips significance is no secret, are the most ardent admirers of this graphic beauty. Fine writing is valued by them as highly as fine painting. The writer is an artist as much respected as the sculptor or the potter.

Writing is dead in Europe; and even when it flourished, it was never such a finely subtle art as among the Chinese. Our alphabet has only six and twenty letters, and when we write, the same forms must constantly be repeated. The result is, inevitably, a certain monotonousness in the aspect of the page—a monotonousness enhanced by the fact that the forms themselves are, fundamentally, extremely simple. In Chinese writing, on the other hand, the ideographs are numbered by thousands and have none of the rigid, geometrical simplicity that characterizes European letters. The rich flowing brushwork is built up into elaborate

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forms, each form the symbol of a word, distinct and different. Chinese writing is almost the artistic image of thought itself, free, various, unmonotonous. Even in the age of handwriting, the European could never hope to create, by means of his few and simple signs, an art of calligraphy comparable to the Chinese. Printing has rendered the Chinese beauty yet more unrealizable. Where the Chinese freely painted we must be content with reproducing geometrical patterns. Pattern making is a poorer, less subtle art than painting. But it is still an art. By some one who understands his business the printed page can be composed into patterns almost as satisfyingly beautiful as those of the carpet or the brocade.

The problem which confronts the contemporary printer may be briefly stated as follows: to produce beautiful and modern print-patterns by means of labour-saving machinery. There have been numerous attempts in recent years to improve the quality of printing. But of these attempts too many have been made in the wrong spirit. Instead of trying to exploit modern machinery, many artistic printers have rejected it altogether and reverted to the primitive methods of an earlier age. Instead of trying to create new forms of type and decoration, they have imitated the styles of the past. This prejudice in favour of hand-work and ancient decorative forms was the result of an inevitable reaction against the soulless ugliness of nineteenth-century industrialism. Machines were producing beastliness. It was only natural that sensitive men should have wished to abandon the use of machines and to return to the artistic conventions in vogue before the development of machinery. It has become obvious that the machine is here to stay. Whole armies of William Morrises and Tolstoys could not now expel it. Even in primitive India it has proved itself too strong for those who would, with Gandhi, resist its encroachments. The sensible thing to do is not to revolt against the inevitable, but to use and modify it, to make it serve your purposes. Machines exist; let us then exploit them to create beauty—a modern beauty, while we are about it. For we live in the twentieth century; let us frankly admit it and not pretend that we live in the fifteenth. The work of the backward-looking hand-printers may be excellent in its way; but its way is not the contemporary way. Their books are often beautiful, but with a borrowed beauty expressive of nothing in the world in which we happen to live.

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They are also, as it happens, so expensive, that only the very rich can afford to buy them. The printer who makes a fetish of hand-work and medieval craftsmanship, who refuses to tolerate the machine or to make any effort to improve the quality of its output, thereby condemns the ordinary reader to a perpetuity of ugly printing. As an ordinary reader, who cannot afford to buy hand-made books, I object to the archaizing printer. It is only from the man with the machine that I can hope for any amelioration of my lot as a reader.

To his credit be it spoken, the man with the machine has done his duty. He has set himself to improve the sordid typographical surroundings in which the impecunious reader was so long condemned to pass his life. He has shown that cheap books need not necessarily be ugly, and that machinery directed by a judicious mind can do as well as, or much better than, the hand of an uninspired craftsman. There are publishers in business to-day whose seven-and-sixpennies, regarded as typography, are worth a guinea apiece. (What they are worth as literature is another question.) There are a dozen Presses producing fine work at moderate prices. The men behind the machines have used their brains.

Some of our excellent machine-printers are still, it is true, too fond of using decorations borrowed from the past, and types that savour of another age than ours. So long as our sense of period remains as strong as it is, so long as we retain our love of the quaint and its more modern equivalent, the "amusing," this tendency to substitute pastiche for original creation is bound to persist. There is an incessant demand for the antique: we should not be too hard on the printers who supply it. If they are sinning, they are at least sinning in company. Let the architects and painters, the interior decorators, and the theatrical producers throw the first stone. There are pastichers among the printers, just as there are pastichers among the professors of every art. But there are also more original men, who are prepared to encourage modern decorators and to use types that are elegant and striking without being affectedly archaic.

With this last phrase I may seem to be damning the moderns with the faintest of praise. But the truth is that Typography is an art in which violent revolutions can scarcely, in the nature of things, hope to be successful. A type of revolutionary novelty may be extremely beautiful in itself; but, for the creatures of

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habit that we are, its very novelty tends to make it illegible, at any rate to begin with. I know a rather eccentric German typographical reformer, for whom legibility is the greatest enemy, the infamous thing that must at all costs be crushed. We read, he argues, too easily. Our eyes slide over the words, and the words, in consequence, mean nothing to us. An illegible type makes us take trouble. It compels us to dwell on each separate word: we have time, while we are deciphering it, to suck out its whole significance. Putting his theory into practice, this reformer had designed a set of letters so strangely unlike those with which the typographical practice of generations has made us familiar, that I had to pore over a simple English sentence as though it were Russian or Arabic. My friend was perhaps justified in thinking that we read too much and too easily. But his remedy, it seems to me, was the wrong one. It is the author's business to make reading less facile, not the printer's. If the author concentrated more matter into the same number of sentences, his readers would have to read more carefully than they do at present. An illegible type cannot permanently achieve the same result, for the simple reason that it does not permanently remain illegible. If we are prepared to make the effort to read until the novel forms have become familiar, the illegible type will come to be perfectly legible. In practice, however, we are reluctant to make this effort. We demand that typographical beauty shall be combined with immediate legibility. Now, in order that it may be immediately legible, a type must be similar to the types with which we are familiar. Hence, the practical printer, who has to live by selling his wares to a large public, is debarred from making revolutionary innovations in the designs of his type. He must content himself with refining on the ordinary, accepted types of commerce. If he has great typographical reforms in view, he must proceed towards them by degrees, modifying the currently accepted designs gradually, so as not to repel the ordinary lazy reader, who is frightened by the idea of making any unnecessary effort. In other arts, where form and substance are directly associated, revolution is possible, may even be necessary. But the outward form of literature is not typography. The association, in a book, of literature with one of the graphic arts is in the nature of an accident. The printer who would at one stroke revolutionize his art frightens away readers, for whom the idea of revolution in literature, or

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in any one of the graphic arts that is independent of literature, has no terrors. The reason for this is obvious. People buy books for the sake of the literature contained in them and not, primarily, as specimens of graphic art. They demand of the typography that it shall be beautiful, yes; but also that it shall give them immediate and unhampered access to the literature with which it is associated. Printers may desire to be revolutionary; but unless they can afford to sell no books, they are compelled by the force of circumstances to adopt a cautious policy of gradual reform. The Communist must either turn Liberal or retire from business.

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☆ MERLE ARMITAGE ☆

NOTES ON MODERN PRINTING

HOW DOES ONE DESIGN A BOOK? I CONCLUDE AS I BEGAN WITH A FEW GENERAL IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS:

1. Allow the subject of a book to determine its design and format.
2. Design a book for effortless reading, utilizing the format to enhance or interpret the text.
3. Use the prime materials—type, paper and space—to achieve your results. Meaningless decorations disclose the designer's poverty of invention.
4. Simplicity is the best policy.
5. Make no attempt to design every page . . . let type and space have their natural rhythm.
6. Understand the text . . . know your primary aims . . . let form follow function.
7. Type ornaments have their place . . . but an ornament designed for general use has no particular significance.
8. A brilliantly designed book can't save a dull or mediocre text.
9. A page of type can be a thing of unique, arresting beauty.
10. Mere type legibility is to a book as mere shelter is to architecture.
11. Book design should be a synonym for the arrangement and integration of materials—paper, binding, illustration, type and space.

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MERLE ARMITAGE

My friends of the musical world believe that music is the most important thing in life. Painters are absolutely certain that the reformation will come only through an understanding of art. Acquaintances among the engineers are sure that by technological development alone can emancipation come to man, while scientists rightfully take the credit for progress in the contemporary world. Friends in industry insist that mass production is the great panacea. The photographers can prove that photography makes the pictorial painters unnecessary, and the writers I have encountered are convinced that the written word is the one route to world unity.

However, the painter . . . the musician . . . the engineer . . . the photographer . . . the industrialist . . . the scientist . . . and the writer have a rendezvous with the book. Here, the knowledge, the romance, the fiction, the facts, the speculations, the opinions, and the accomplishments of the world are made permanently articulate.

This is our day, our time, our environment. We can make a statement, through the employment of design, that is valid and true . . . not divorced from tradition, but using the great works of the past as a springboard toward new horizons!

COMPOSED IN GILL SANS TYPES

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Benjamin Franklin:
PRINTER and PUBLISHER

JOHN T. WINTERICH

JOSIAH FRANKLIN was reared a dyer in the village of Ecton in Northamptonshire, but soon after his arrival in America, about 1682, he foresaw a greater future in the trade of tallow-chandler and soap-boiler. It was a calling which seems humble enough in a day that has evolved such mouth-filling occupational designations as sales engineer, merchandising counsel, and mortician. Josiah Franklin, had the locution been available in his era, might have asserted with all accuracy that he was an important factor in public utilities—even our own catch-phrase epoch has not been quite equal to the coinage of the label "public utilitarian." For when the Boston town watch wanted fresh candles they bought them from Josiah Franklin—from other tallow-chandlers too, perhaps, but at least some, by documentary evidence, from Josiah Franklin.

The close relationship between progress in the science of artificial illumination and progress in the dissemination of the printed word could be charted with almost mathematical accuracy. . . . Most of the books of colonial days were designed for the use of those whose professions exacted some considerable amount of "required reading"—ministers, physicians, lawyers, public officials, schoolmen. The man who toiled with his hands (and hands are eminently useful in the building-up of a new country) labored while the light of heaven would let him and then returned to a home wherein the conveniences were hardly such as to make reading a pleasure. Lincoln studied by the glare of blazing pine-knots, but the middle-class Bostonian and New Yorker and Philadelphian of the generations immediately pre-

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ceding Lincoln (to say nothing of their country cousins) had to depend on illuminants that offered no greater inducements to either the solace or the benefits of type.

Josiah Franklin's wife and their three children accompanied him to America. Before her death she bore him three more children. Josiah remarried, and of the second union ten children were born. Of this multitudinous offspring thirteen grew to maturity—a remarkable proportion for the time and region. The eighth child and last son of the second marriage, christened Benjamin after a paternal uncle, was at first intended for the Church, but Josiah could not afford to give him the education which this most learned of the professions demanded, and at the age of ten, after receiving as thorough an intellectual rearing as could be expected in so short a space, Benjamin Franklin quit school to assist his father in the fabrication of candles and soap. An elder brother, John, had already become proficient in the twin arts of illumination and sanitation and had gone to the bustling colony of Rhode Island to practice them. Another brother (and another Josiah) had also investigated them, found them not to his liking, and run away to sea.

Benjamin, also, made it clear that the parental pursuits were not to taste, and a wise father, fearing another abrupt departure, took Benjamin walking about Boston, that he might "see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work" and thereby, boywise, make known to his elder which way his inclinations lay. A patent leaning toward books at length persuaded the father to make him a printer, despite the fact that another brother, James, Benjamin's elder by nine years . . . had adopted the craft. Benjamin conceded a preference to the claims of printing over those of tallow-chandlery, but he still sniffed, with the true landsman's appetite, the tang of the salt breeze that blew in from the east. Josiah, however, was insistent, and the parental insistence of 1718 was no toy scepter to swing above the head of a sub-adolescent boy. Accordingly, Benjamin was duly indentured to James "to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year."

Before long, Benjamin was writing odds and ends of verse, and James, with the inbred Franklin sagacity, encouraged him in his endeavors and let him put some of his compositions in type.

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One (declared Benjamin) was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters: the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of Teach (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars.

The importance of these two pieces consists in the fact that they were "the first with which Franklin's name can be identified as either author or printer," according to Dr. William J. Campbell, who adds that "no copy is known to exist, nor is the exact title of either of them known." This was true in 1918, when Dr. Campbell's admirable catalogue of *The Collection of Franklin Imprints in the Museum of the Curtis Publishing Company* was issued, and it is unfortunately still true today [1935]. If they were at all like similar productions of both earlier and later date, they were broadsides—single sheets that were distributed like handbills, the main difference being that they commanded a price. They would command a fantastic price today, together or singly, and their eventual discovery is by no means beyond the bounds of possibility. A copy of one—or copies of both—may be tucked away in some forgotten contemporary theological compendium which has not been opened for a century.

The disappearance of these broadsides is regrettable on many counts, not least of which is the fact that even if Benjamin had never accomplished anything else, he could at least claim credit for sponsoring perhaps the most textually interesting productions of his brother's press. James Franklin was a skilled printer —London trained, and "no slovenly self-taught colonial," in Paul Leicester Ford's phrase—and James was not, of course, in any degree responsible for the dullness of the copy that was brought to his shop. A brief glance at a few of his imprints of this period is of interest mainly because of the certainty that Benjamin worked on many of them.

The product of James Franklin's press (says Ford in *The Many-Sided Franklin,* New York, 1899) is a dreary lot of "gone-nothing-

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ness." A few of the New England sermons of the day; Stoddard's *Treatise on Conversion;* Stone's *Short Catechism; A Prefatory Letter about Psalmody,* in defense of church singing, which many Puritans still held to be unholy; an allegory styled *The Isle of Man, or, Legal Proceedings in Manshire Against Sin;* Care's *English Liberties;* sundry pamphlets on the local politics of the moment, such as *A Letter from One in the Country to his Friend in Boston, News from the Moon, A Friendly Check from a Kind Relation to the Chief Cannonneer,* and *A Word of Comfort to a Melancholy Country;* two or three tractates on inoculation, and one aimed half at the Boston clergy and half at the fair sex, entitled *Hooped Petticoats Arraigned by the Light of Nature and the Law of God,* were the chief output of the new printer during the years his brother served him.

In the summer of 1721, James Franklin established a newspaper, *The New England Courant.* Two years earlier he had been engaged to print the *Boston Gazette,* but with the transfer of its management a few months later the contract had gone elsewhere. The *Courant* was a new departure even for the novelty that was American journalism—so extensive and violent a departure, indeed, that in the following year the authorities sentenced the printer-proprietor to a month's imprisonment for his insolence. The punishment did not improve him; free again, he pressed the thorn of the *Courant* deeper into the flesh of his persecutors, with the consequence that he was soon forbidden "to print or publish" either the *Courant* "or any other pamphlet or paper of the like nature" unless it were first submitted to the secretary of the province.

There were two apparent ways out of the dilemma, and one was as eminently unsatisfactory as the other. The first was to quit printing and publishing. The second was to submit to the censorship. James hit upon a more ingenious solution. He turned the *Courant* over to sixteen-year-old Benjamin. Benjamin's indentures as apprentice to James had five years to run, and in order to forestall any objection on the part of the authorities that an apprentice was not competent to manage the paper, the indentures were ostentatiously canceled and a new document drawn up as a private and confidential (but none the less binding) memorandum which in theory was no one's affair save James's and Benjamin's. The half-sheet issue of the *Courant*

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for February 4-11, 1723, identified it as "printed and sold by Benjamin Franklin in Queen Street, where Advertisements are taken in." Benjamin Franklin's name thus first appeared in an imprint. It remained on the tailboard of the *Courant* until the paper's discontinuance in 1726, long after Benjamin had left Boston.

The gratifying tableau of two stalwart brothers battling loyally side by side for freedom of the press, however, was not the whole picture. James and Benjamin had differences, and Benjamin later admitted that he himself was "perhaps . . . too saucy and provoking," and that James, despite "the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me," was "otherwise not an ill-natur'd man." Benjamin, at all events, decided to take advantage of the freedom accorded him by the cancellation of his indentures, which act he later conceded to have been "not fair" and "one of the first errata of my life." James spread the tidings of this perfidy throughout Boston, and every local printing establishment thereupon became a closed shop to Benjamin Franklin.

If James assumed that Benjamin would thus be forced to return to his own shop, he reckoned without his Benjamin. For not long thereafter, with the connivance of a friend, John Collins, Benjamin was smuggled aboard a New York-bound sloop, and three days later, thanks to a fair wind, he was in a city which was not yet a metropolis judged even by easy colonial standards. He called on "old Mr. William Bradford" (aged sixty), who had nothing to offer, but who suggested that his son Andrew, then flourishing (after a fashion) in Philadelphia, might have a position for him, since Andrew's "principal hand," Aquila Rose, had just died.

Franklin set out by water by way of Perth Amboy. It is interesting to note, in view of the dispute regarding the earliest New Jersey imprint . . . that the trip from New York to the New Jersey port took thirty hours. All in good time he reached Philadelphia.

Washington did not cut down a cherry tree and then inform his father that he could not tell a lie; Wellington did not say "Up, Guards, and at 'em!" or Pershing, "Lafayette, we are here." The dear old legends explode all about us; it is gratifying to

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recall that there is one at least the accuracy of which is unimpeachable. Walking up Market Street, Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin did pass the home of his wife-to-be with a roll under each arm and munching a third, and his wife-to-be did see him and note that he made "a most awkward, ridiculous appearance."

Andrew Bradford had nothing to offer—the vacancy left by the death of Aquila Rose had already been filled. But Franklin was not yet done with the ghostly trail of Aquila. At Andrew Bradford's suggestion he waited on Samuel Keimer, who had recently set up as a printer despite a meager endowment of equipment, native ability, or acquired skill. He found Keimer "composing an Elegy on Aquila Rose" directly from the type.

So there being no copy (recorded Franklin), but one pair of cases, and the Elegy likely to require all the letters, no one could help him. I endeavor'd to put his press (which he had not yet us'd, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be work'd with; and, promising to come and print off his Elegy as soon as he should have got it ready, I return'd to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the Elegy. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

This broadside poem, therefore, was the first piece of Philadelphia printing with which Franklin's name is clearly identified. The "pamphlet to reprint" may have been *A Letter to a Friend in Ireland, The Doctrine of Absolute Reprobation Refuted, A Letter from One in the Country to His Friend in the City, A Parable,* or (and this would certainly have been Franklin's choice) *The Curiosities of Common Water,* all of which Keimer imprints of 1723 are listed in the short-title check list which follows the Curtis catalogue. No more specifically is it possible to identify the "little job" which Andrew Bradford gave him.

It is not likely that Franklin would have long continued with Keimer (who was "an odd fish; ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing receiv'd opinions, slovenly to extream dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal") even if a roundabout coincidence had not brought him

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to the attention of the governor of the province, Sir William Keith, whose quarrel with William Bradford had been one of the impulses that had established the latter as New York's first printer. Keimer "star'd like a pig poison'd" one day when no less a worthy than Sir William entered the shop in search of the new assistant from Boston. Governor and assistant adjourned to a tavern, where the former disclosed a grandiose idea for setting the newcomer up in a shop of his own. He must first, of course, go to London to buy equipment, and to this end the governor loaded him down with enthusiasm and letters of credit. After a short visit to Boston, where all "made me welcome, except my brother," who "receiv'd me not very frankly, look'd me all over, and turn'd to his work again"), Franklin sailed for London, which he reached the day before Christmas, 1724—to learn, to his intense mortification, that Sir William's letters of credit were worthless, since that gentleman's prowess as a promiser and his shortcomings as a performer were rather more familiar in the old country than in the new.

Franklin, however, had little difficulty in extricating himself from the crisis into which he was precipitated on his arrival in London by the non-negotiability of Sir William Keith's commercial paper. "I immediately got into work at Palmer's," he says, "then a famous printing house in Bartholomew Close, and here I continu'd near a year." Samuel Palmer, declares John Clyde Oswald in *Benjamin Franklin, Printer* (New York, 1917), "was more than an ordinary printer. He had visited America, was letter-founder as well as printer, and was engaged in the writing of 'A History of Printing,' only a third of which he had completed when he died in 1732."

Franklin identifies only one of the jobs on which he worked at Palmer's. "I was employed," continues the *Autobiography*, "in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature.*" The name of William Wollaston (1659–1724) now survives mainly by virtue of this adventitious association with a nineteen-year-old immigrant compositor. *The Religion of Nature Delineated* first appeared in 1722 in a small privately printed edition. Presumably this first edition is now rare, but no collector is impressed thereby, preferring above it that on which Franklin worked (the third in strict sequence, but the

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second published edition), which, happily, is relatively common. It bears the imprint: "London: Printed by S. Palmer, and sold by B. Lintott, W. and J. Innys, J. Osborn, J. Batley, and T. Longman. 1725." The printer from America pondered over the copy as he set it, and out of his ruminations came a pamphlet reply to the recently deceased author: *A Dissertation on Liberty And Necessity, Pleasure and Pain* (London, 1725). Franklin printed one hundred copies, gave a few to friends, and then, repenting of his materialistic agnosticism, "burnt the rest except one copy"; pride of authorship would not wholly down. That copy may be one of the four known to survive today, all in institutional collections.

Receiving a better offer from John Watts, who conducted a larger printing establishment, Franklin went thither, remaining six months, when he accepted the proposal of a Philadelphia merchant then in London that he return and act "as his clerk, keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy his letters, and attend the store." In leaving London, therefore, Franklin supposed that he thereby "took leave of printing forever."

Man proposes. Franklin and his new employer reached Philadelphia; the store was duly opened and its new clerk installed; four months later the employer died. The establishment was taken over by the executors and Franklin was out of work. Keimer wanted him back as foreman of his new and larger shop, but Franklin, who knew well his Keimer, first sought a place at his new trade of clerk and salesman. Nothing offered, so he reluctantly accepted Keimer's bid. The affiliation did not last long. Franklin and Keimer quarreled over "a trifle" that represented the culmination of a long series of abuses:

> A great noise happening near the courthouse, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, look'd up and saw me, call'd out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business, adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity, all the neighbors who were looking out on the same occasion, being witness how I was treated. He came up immediately into the printing-house, continu'd the quarrel, high words pass'd on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he

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had not been oblig'd to so long a warning. I told him that hi wish was unnecessary, for I would leave him that instant; and so taking my hat, walk'd out of doors.

Had affairs not fallen out thus ludicrously, then some other incident would have "snapt our connections." If no "great noise" had occurred near the courthouse (what, one wonders, was the cause of the disturbance?), there would still have been a subsequent great noise in Keimer's shop, and the hireling would have spoken his piece to the overlord and walked out of the identical door to the fulfillment of his high destiny.

Franklin was of more than half a mind to return to Boston, in which event Philadelphia would one day have been compelled to seek another patron saint. Fortunately for Philadelphia, while working at Keimer's, Franklin had struck up a friendship with Hugh Meredith, a fellow craftsman, who suggested a partnership. A secret agreement was drawn up, and pending the completion of arrangements for launching the venture, Franklin sought temporary work at Bradford's. Keimer meanwhile was negotiating with the provincial government of New Jersey for the printing of an issue of paper money at Burlington, and urged Franklin to accompany him if he was awarded the job. The plan went through, and the pair were in Burlington three months. "There is not a single piece of this paper money known to exist today," says Dr. Campbell, "and of the New Jersey Laws that they printed at the same time there are only two known copies. . . ."

In the summer of 1728 the new firm of B. Franklin and H. Meredith came into existence. They had scarce "opened our letters" (their cases, that is, not the morning mail) when a friend "brought a countryman to us, whom he had met in the street inquiring for a printer." The identity of this bucolic, casual, but superlatively important patron of the typographic arts is unknown and probably forever unknowable, for he could hardly have been aware that he was the instrument of Providence chosen to motivate the first imprint issued by Franklin as a master printer. Dr. Campbell surmised the job was "probably stationery or a small handbill." Whatever it was, it has probably vanished beyond hope of recall, or at least beyond hope of positive identification.

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Almost on the heels of this first customer came another—none other than Samuel Keimer, whose general ineffectualness and chronic state of panic provide much of the comic relief in the history of early American printing. Keimer had been working off and on for three years on William Sewell's *History of the Rise, Increase, and Progress of the Christian People Called Quakers: The Third Edition, Corrected.* The end was not in sight, and Keimer, evidently in a condition of acute mental distress, rushed to the new shop for assistance. Franklin and Meredith composed and printed "forty sheets," totaling nearly a third of the seven hundred pages—the first known job to issue from their shop, even though it did not bear their imprint. Sewell's *History* is doubly a Franklin item, as Franklin must have worked on the book while he was still in Keimer's employ.

Thanks to the diligence of its proprietors—or of one of them, for Meredith "was often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at low games in alehouses"—the new shop prospered. But about the middle of 1730 it encountered a hazard which its sponsors had not foreseen. Meredith's father had advanced one hundred pounds to put the enterprise on its feet and had promised another hundred. When the time came for him to meet his obligation, he could not, and "the New Printing-Office near the Market" was faced with a creditor's suit. This crisis confirmed young Meredith's conviction that he was not cut out for the printing business; moreover, he was anxious to join a company of fellow Welshmen who were planning a settlement in North Carolina. Two of Franklin's friends offered to come to the aid of the senior partner, and the difficulty was amicably adjusted. Thus was the "B. Franklin" imprint born. It appeared for the first time not on anything in English, but at the bottom of the title-page of *Mystische und Sehr Geheyme Sprueche,* by Conrad Beissel, whose religio-communistic Ephrata colony, itself to become one day an important printing center, had been organized only a few years before.

Shortly before the dissolution of the firm of Franklin and Meredith there had been another odd run-in with Keimer. Franklin was already planning a newspaper, and "foolishly" imparted the secret to a friend who forthwith made it known to Keimer. Toward the end of 1728 the not-to-be-anticipated

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Keimer issued the first number of *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences: and Pennsylvania Gazette.* It was Keimer's inescapable genius to start what he could not finish, and he was soon glad to dispose of the paper to Franklin and Meredith, whose control dates from October 2, 1729. One of Franklin's first acts as a newspaper publisher—his memory must have harked back to the old Boston days—was to shorten the too comprehensive title to *The Pennsylvania Gazette.*

Probably some three months after the departure of Meredith Franklin initiated a new partnership. He married. "Partnership" is no romantic figure of speech. The name of Deborah Read has an honored place on the roster of women who helped to make American printing. By her husband's own testimony, her share in the work of the establishment included, in some measure, the "folding and stitching" of pamphlets, and it is not unlikely that her hands had a busy share in the preparation of some of the series of pamphlets with which, more than with any other, Franklin's name is most clearly associated as author-printer-publisher—the *Poor Richard* almanacs.

The importance of the almanac in the colonial scheme has already been stressed. Franklin was naturally alert to this importance; in fact, as soon as the house of Franklin and Meredith was in existence he had commissioned Thomas Godfrey to compile an almanac. Godfrey was "a self-taught mathematician, great in his way," but "he knew little out of his way," and there was considerable of the prima donna in his make-up. He prepared almanacs for 1730, 1731, and 1732, and then, in an outburst of temperament, transferred his skill to the shelter of Andrew Bradford. The fortunate result, certainly not anticipated by Thomas Godfrey in his dudgeon, was, as Paul Leicester Ford defines it, the birth of American humor. Franklin initiated the *Poor Richard* series, compiling the bulk of the contents himself, but attributing their authorship to Richard Saunder or Saunders, whose almanacs had enjoyed enormous popularity in England and were still enjoying it, though Saunders had been gone this many a year. A *Poor Robin* series of almanacs was also popular in England, and James Franklin a few years earlier had begun a series of Rhode Island almanacs under this title. *Poor Richard* was an immediate success, and though the first number was not advertised in *The Pennsylvania Gazette* until December

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19, 1732, which was rather late in the year for a new almanac, three printings were necessary to supply the demand. *Poor Richard* thereafter issued regularly every December under Franklin's own editorship until 1757 (for 1758).

Poor Richard's rich wisdom has become part of common speech wherever English or any other language is spoken. Everyone from China to Peru knows that God helps those that help themselves, that three removes are as bad as a fire, that

Vessels large may venture more,
But little boats should keep near shore.

A recent commentator—Carl L. Becker in the *Dictionary of American Biography*—says of the *Poor Richard* almanacs:

> Nothing better exhibits the man, or better illustrates his ingenuity as an advertiser. . . . "Richard Saunders," the Philomath of the *Almanack,* was the Sir Roger de Coverley of the masses, pilfering the world's store of aphorisms, and adapting them to the circumstances and the understanding of the poor. "Necessity never made a good bargain." "It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright." "Many dishes make diseases." "The used key is always bright." The *Almanack* was immediately successful and commonly sold about ten thousand copies. "As poor Richard says" became a current phrase, used to give weight to any counsel of thrift. The work made Franklin's name a household word throughout the colonies. . . . The introduction to the last *Almanack* (Father Abraham's speech at the auction) spread the fame of Poor Richard in Europe. It was printed in broadsides and posted on walls in England, and, in translation, distributed by the French clergy among their parishioners. It has been translated into fifteen languages, and reprinted at least four hundred times.

Franklin's rise to the position of the most important printer in the colonies after the well-entrenched Bradfords was now rapid. Before long he was official printer to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Of the bulk of his non-governmental productions, Ford writes that while generally "of little moment," still "there can be no doubt that as a whole they contain more of genuine merit than those of any other printer of the same or previous periods in the colonies, the amount of doctrinal and polemical theology being a minimum, and bearing a less pro-

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portion to the whole mass than can be found in the books of contemporary American printers." In 1735 appeared over Franklin's imprint James Logan's *Cato's Moral Distichs Englished in Couplets*. Nine years later Franklin sponsored Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*—not only the first American edition, but the first novel to be printed in America, "Price 6 s." In the same year, 1744, he issued what is generally regarded as the typographical masterpiece of his press, *M. T. Cicero's Cato Major, or His Discourse of Old-Age: With Explanatory Notes* (also Englished by James Logan), referring to it in a four-page foreword of his own composition as "this first Translation of a Classic in this Western World." This was a wide error, for George Sandys had translated Ovid on the banks of the James River a life-span earlier, and the translation had been printed in London in 1626; moreover, Franklin forgot those *Moral Distichs* of Cato and James Logan which he himself had issued in 1735.

In 1748, Franklin formed a partnership with an alert young Scotchman whom he had engaged five years before, and the "Franklin and Hall" imprint thereupon replaced (with a few exceptions) the familiar "B. Franklin." A few earlier connections must be mentioned. Franklin's name is found on several German titles in combination with that of Gotthard Armbruester and with that of Johannes Böhm, and, apparently once only, with that of Johannes Wüster, but these seem to have been purely partnerships of convenience, and suggest no such dual affiliations as those with Meredith and Hall. The Hall partnership lasted eighteen years, and during that period Franklin's connection with printing and publishing became less and less important as the crisis in international affairs that was bringing on the American Revolution grew more and more acute. But the printer in him could not wholly be suppressed. When he went to Paris in 1776 as representative of the colonies, he established a little press for his own amusement at his home in Passy, then a suburb, now as much a part of the metropolis as Greenwich Village is of New York. It was not quite such a toy as Robert Louis Stevenson and his stepson Lloyd Osbourne were one day to set up in Switzerland, the main difference being that the Stevenson-Osbourne combination knew nothing about printing and was joyously aware of it, whereas Franklin, with just as joyous awareness, knew as much about it as any man of his time.

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One factor the two private presses of Passy and Davos-Platz have in common—their productions are excessively rare and costly collector's playthings. The story of the French venture is authoritatively set forth in Luther S. Livingston's *Franklin and His Press at Passy*, issued by the Grolier Club of New York in 1914. Livingston listed thirty-two entries, and since his monograph was published six others have come to light, according to Will Ransom's *Private Presses and Their Books* (New York, 1929).

The output of Franklin's press from 1729 to the termination of the Hall partnership (1766) is statistically impressive. The following summary is tabulated from the short-title check list of all Franklin imprints known in 1918 which Dr. Campbell appended to the Curtis catalogue (excluding *The Pennsylvania Gazette* and the numerous issues of paper currency printed by Franklin from 1731 to 1764):

1729 8	1748 30
1730 15	1749 33
1731 8	1750 19
1732 15	1751 24
1733 14	1752 18
1734 15	1753 16
1735 20	1754 15
1736 8	1755 27
1737 13	1756 26
1738 9	1757 31
1739 12	1758 13
1740 46	1759 16
1741 45	1760 10
1742 31	1761 12
1743 25	1762 8
1744 25	1763 15
1745 15	1764 18
1746 23	1765 19
1747 27	1766 4

Any book, pamphlet, broadside, or periodical that bears a Franklin imprint, alone or in combination, is worth treasuring on that account alone. In general, the scale of desirability is set by scarcity, this scale one might suppose, should follow the line of chronology with reasonable accuracy, but it happens that it

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does not. The Sewell *History*, for instance, ought by chronological measurement to be an excessively rare book as the first book on which Franklin worked as an independent printer, and rare it assuredly is, but by no means to the point of utter elusiveness.

Twelve years later the total of Franklin imprints was moving toward two hundred—and in that twelfth year, 1740, there issued from his press the second edition of David Evan's *A Short, Plain Help for Parents and Heads of Families, to Feed Their Babes with the Sincere Milk of God's Word. Being a Short, Plain Catechism, Grounded Upon God's Word, and Agreeable to the Westminster Assembly's Excellent Catechism.* No copy of the first edition is known to be extant—Dr. Campbell quoted the title imperfectly from a contemporary advertisement—and neither Hildeburn nor Campbell knew that a second edition had ever been issued. Neither did anyone else until 1929, when a copy came to light and won its way to a New York bookseller's catalogue. The book is mentioned here, not because it possesses great intrinsic importance (it would be of trivial note if a hundred or two copies of it survived), but as an indication of the fact that unrecorded Franklin imprints are likely to appear at any time, and as indication, further, that the scarcity of Franklin imprints does not altogether parallel the dates of his activity as printer and publisher.

In these notes it has been necessary to neglect Franklin, the author (save as Poor Richard), in favor of Franklin, the printer and publisher. But it would be an effrontery to allude even briefly to Franklin without mention of the *Autobiography*. Begun in 1771 in the quiet charm of an English country-seat, the first great American classic never was completed. The manuscript first appeared in print, by an odd series of accidents, in French in 1791. Subsequently Franklin's grandson, William Temple Franklin, issued it in a Bowdlerized English version that would have afforded the old man quiet and somewhat indignant laughter. The text was not definitely published until 1868, soon after John Bigelow had come into possession of the original manuscript.

Franklin's epitaph is easily the most familiar in American history, and almost as well-known a document, perhaps, as Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. It is not generally known, however, that

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the original version of it was composed in 1728, the very year in which its author, a youth of twenty-two, entered into partnership with Meredith. The version written in that year, which differs in minor details from the final draft, was this:

THE BODY OF

B FRANKLIN PRINTER,

(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK

ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT

AND STRIPT OF ITS LETTERING & GILDING)

LIES HERE, FOOD FOR WORMS.

BUT THE WORK SHALL NOT BE LOST;

FOR IT WILL, (AS HE BELIEV'D) APPEAR ONCE MORE,

IN A NEW AND MORE ELEGANT EDITION

REVISED AND CORRECTED,

BY THE AUTHOR.

• *Note:* A documented account of the various transcripts of Franklin's celebrated epitaph appeared in *The New Colophon,* Volume 3, New York, 1950. It discusses the date of its composition, place of first publication and the differing texts, and was written by Lyman H. Butterfield, associate editor of the Jefferson papers.

COMPOSED IN BASKERVILLE TYPES

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EARNEST ELMO CALKINS

The Book & Job Print

THE printing office was a long narrow room over a store. One front window was appropriated to a cubicle known as "the office"—seldom used, its desk piled high with galley proofs and dusty government reports. Frames for type cases occupied the two remaining front windows and the three at the back. In between were the hand-power cylinder press, the two Gordon jobbers, an imposing stone for the newspaper and one for job work. Along the walls ran the dump—sloping shelves divided longitudinally by strips of wood, holding galleys and standing jobs tied up with white packthread. The prevalent odor was a mixture of benzine and warm roller composition familiar to old-time printers, but sweeter than the scents of Araby to the young apprentice about to be initiated into the craft and mystery of printing.

They seated him on a high stool before a case in the darker part of the room, with a composing stick, a setting rule, and a piece of patent medicine reprint. A slug on a string hung on his upper case to hold the copy in place, for the oldest rule of the printing trade is "follow copy though it goes out the window." In each corner of the lower case boxes Big Sweeny, the foreman, had stuck letters from a job font to guide the youngster in learning the case.

For days the tyro was absorbed in the seemingly impossible task of setting a stick full of type and "dumping" it on the galley. The first lot exploded in the air; it took hours to distribute the "pi."

In a few weeks he had learned his case, except the small boxes around the edge, double ffls and ffis and little-used punctuation points. He could distinguish a 3-em space from a 5-em, and justify a line by distributing them judiciously, remembering, as was often

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impressed on him, to put more space between words ending in tall letters. He began to look about him and take stock of the curious world in which he found himself.

For years he had dreamed of printing, his appetite whetted by the life of Franklin in the Harper Story Books, and a manual of instructions for young printers in the same volume. He pored over type specimen books obtained from Barnhart Brothers & Spindler, and reveled in the amazing faces shown. Other boys had their ambitions—firemen, policemen, railroad engineer—but his hero was the journeyman printer, a green shade over his eyes, sleeves rolled to display a bright red undershirt, spitting tobacco with an accuracy that missed nothing but the spittoon. Tales told by typographical tourists, the tramp printers, were his folklore, and for some years after he learned his trade his chance to work came mostly in "subbing" for printers frankly laying off to get drunk.

Type had two names. He was setting brevier Roman; the smaller size used for quotations and for county correspondence was nonpareil. Other sizes with equally picturesque names piqued his curiosity. In the early eighties the point system had not reached the prairies. Later he became familiar with it. The old names of the types with approximate sizes in points that prevailed in the days of our young apprentice were as follows:

Diamond, 4½-point; Pearl, 5-point; Agate, 5½-point; Nonpareil, 6-point; Minion, 7-point; Brevier, 8-point; Bourgeois, 9-point; Long Primer, 10-point; Small Pica, 11-point; Pica, 12-point; English, 14-point; Columbian, 16-point; Great Primer, 18-point; Paragon, 20-point; Double Pica (strictly this should be Double Small Pica), 22-point; Two-line Pica, 24-point; Two-line English, 28-point; Two-line Great Primer, 36-point; Two-line Double Pica, 44-point; Canon, 48-point.

It must not be supposed that all these sizes were found in the office of the Book & Job Print, nor for that matter probably anywhere but in the warehouses of Barnhart Bros. & Spindler, Marder, Luse & Co., MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan Co., Bruce, or other type-founders.

Our apprentice was afflicted with one of those curious prying minds that sought to know the reason for all things. Much typographical history lurked behind the names given to type sizes. *Diamond*, *agate* and *nonpareil*, it seemed, were merely fancy

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names, but *brevier* was so-called because it had been used to print breviaries; *canon*, from the first lines of the canonical mass, and *primer* for primaries or elementary prayer books. *Bourgeois* has been attributed to the city of Bourges, to a printer named Bourgeois, and to having been used in cheap books for the middle classes, the bourgeoisie. *Minion* was said to be the French word *mignon*, darling. But the origin of *pica*, so constantly used as a yardstick for measuring leads, slugs, reglets, and the width of columns and pages, is as fascinating as it is baffling.

Pica is Latin for magpie, and it has been ingeniously supposed that some work now lost, an account of that thievish and mischievous bird, was printed in type now bearing that name. De Vinne[1] cites a far more amusing derivation: "Like great primer, pica takes its name from its early use as a text letter. 'The Pie,' writes Mores, 'was a table showing the course of the service of the church in the time of darkness. It was called the Pie because it was written in letters of black and red, as the Friars de Pica were so named from their party-colored raiment black and white, the plumage of the magpie.' " And is it not at least probable that "pi," a jumble of unsorted type, is also derived from the same source, either because of the pied feathers of the bird, or from its habit of assembling a miscellaneous collection of objects in some hiding place?

As he explored his upper case, our apprentice discovered that while the capitals and small capitals were ranged in alphabetical order, *J* and *U* were left to the end like substitute ball players on the bench. By studying an unabridged dictionary he learned that those letters were late comers into the alphabet; the old scribes, finding that *I* tended to become confused with the last stroke of the previous letter, gave it a tail to distinguish it. The two forms were used indiscriminately for the consonant and vowel sounds of *I* until in due course they were separated. In the same way *V* was half of *W*, distinguished as singleyou and doubleyou. *V* was carelessly written as *U* and even as *Y*, and had all the sounds, but was at length assigned one job, and the *U* added to the alphabet. How long ago that happened! So conservative was the printing art that even after two hundred years the case had not been shifted to accommodate them, and dictionaries as late as 1800

[1] *Plain Printing Types*, Theodore L. De Vinne, New York, 1902.

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still used both forms in the same classification. Our apprentice felt that the office where he was learning his trade had not changed greatly, typographically at least, since Plantin.

II

The number and variety of faces at the disposal of the master printer equalled their ugliness, though this apprentice considered them all beautiful. There were of course the Roman faces, some of which were good, and still are, but these were strangely distorted as condensed, extra-condensed, extended, expanded, as well as shaded, open, skeleton, contour, sloped (both ways), ornamented, and hairline letters.

One would think these were enough for all the printing anyone would want to do, but there was also a bewildering multitude of so-called job types of fancy and fantastic design. Each foundry put out a book as big as a dictionary, filled with bizarre creations in which the innocent alphabet was twisted and tormented and decorated until some of its masterpieces were illegible.

Among them were a number informally standardized and cast by all foundries. Such were Antique, Boldface, Gothic, Lightface, Clarendon, Caledonian, Ionic, Doric, Egyptian, Runic, Celtic, Rustic, Script, Grecian, Monastic, Norman, Title, and these too were also condensed, extended and otherwise squeezed, stretched and pulled about. When the typewriter came there was added that monstrosity, typewriter type. But the pride of each foundry was its own exclusive creations, to which were given names as fantastic as the designs, putting Pullman nomenclature to shame, such as Pansy, Olive, Asteroid, Van Dyke, Vulcan, Schwabacher, Florist, Teuton, Text, Eastlake.

From such an array the country printer was expected to choose the types to equip his shop. His outfit consisted of fair quantities of Roman, nonpareil, brevier and long primer for straight matter—the weekly newspaper, booklets and pamphlets, with larger sizes for job work, too many faces with few fonts large enough to set more than a line or two. This did not matter since it seemed obligatory to set in a different letter each line of display, advertisements, title pages, as well as dodgers and handbills, the greater the contrast and variety the better, with "ands" and "thes" in lines by themselves, centered and flanked by flourishes on each

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side. Type larger than two-line canon was made of wood, and was called "stud-horse type" because used for the big bills tacked up on barns and trees to advertise the services of a stallion.

Small fonts of job type were listed in foundry catalogues "5A 13a," to indicate quantity, other letters being in proportion. There was seldom more than one of little used letters, necessitating a shift to another font when a line turned up with two Xs or two Zs. Job types were laid in cases like the uppers of Roman, the boxes all of a size, capitals on one side, lower case on the other.

New type was an abomination. The compositor's fingers, already tender from the lye used to wash forms, were cut by the sharp edges, and his eyes blinded by the glare from sorts, and the printers were forever prowling the shining metal. There was chronic lack of up and down the live bank with tweezers, pulling out the needed letters, and inserting an equal-sized type upside down to mark the place. Another source of trouble was the font from a different foundry, supposedly the same body, but with a slight variation, that was forever getting into the wrong case and being set up, dropping out when the form was lifted.

III

The apprentice was kept too busy to have much time for the acquisition of abstract knowledge. In return for instruction in the art and mystery of printing he was expected to perform the duties of a "devil." He arrived at half-past six, started the fire in the pot-bellied stove, swept up (no light job, for the continuous barrage of fine-cut and plug formed a coping around the feet of every frame, and the trimmings from the big knife lay in windrows). All day he ran errands with proofs, handbills, billheads, advertisements, to submit to customers; wet down paper for the weekly run of the newspaper, and pasted the subscribers' names on them for the mail; distributed "pi," and rushed the growler for thirsty journeymen.

But he learned that the printers in one shop were a "chapel," the head was the "father," who was not the foreman. It thrilled him that such expressions went back to the time when Caxton had his press in Westminster Abbey. A small group of men working on the same job was a companionship, and had strict rules as to who was to do what. Points of procedure, such as the first or a "fat take," or the selection of a victim to set up the beer, was

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determined by a curious custom. The men gathered around the imposing stone, and each in turn shook out a few em-quads, five or seven, throwing them on the stone like dice. The one with the most nicks uppermost was the winner.

These were time-honored practices, but each shop had customs peculiar to itself. He learned not to whistle at his case, for a sponge of dirty water was apt to take him squarely in the mouth. When late he found lines set up in his composing stick, which he had to distribute before he began work, at his own expense—when he was finally promoted to piece work,—

A diller, a dollar, a ten-o'clock scholar,
What makes you come so soon?
You used to come at ten o'clock,
But now you come at noon.

For some time his tormentors had alluded mysteriously to the "type louse" that haunted the forms, and promised to show him one when found. A journeyman working at the stone over a newspaper form wet down for distribution called him over, and pointing excitedly, cried,

"Now, there, look!"

He looked.

Handfuls of type had been removed, and the water gathered in small pools between the columns. The apprentice bent over eagerly to behold the strange insect, whereupon the journeyman shoved up a column of type, forcing the water to rise like a fountain into the apprentice's innocent face, while the force roared with laughter and pounded with their composing sticks on the frames.

IV

In a small office in pre-union days, every printer was or became an "all-round" man. Not only could he stick type (and some old-time printers had a wonderful instinct for spacing), but he could "kick" a jobber, impose, make ready, and feed a cylinder press. Some of the vagabond printers who drifted back and forth across the West, working a few days at each halt, were not only craftsmen but characters. It was amazing how promptly they became at home in a strange shop, in a few moments working as if they

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had been there for years. The saga of the typographic tourist has yet to be told.

It was not long before he found himself standing on one leg like a stork, working the treadle of the Gordon jobber with the other, feeding some small job, milk tickets or dodgers or billheads, against three 3-em quads pasted to the tympan in lieu of gauge-pins. As the press had no grippers the feeder must grab the printed sheet before the ink pulled it off and insert the next, regulating the speed according to his need. Pasting scraps of cardboard on the quads to project a bit helped hold the printed card or paper. The regular gaugepins sold never seemed to work as well as quads, and anyway, old-time printers were self-helpful and never bought what they could make.

From feeding press he graduated to making ready and locking up forms. There were always enough odds and ends of furniture for small jobs without cutting new, but for big work, particularly a book or pamphlet, the furniture was cut to fit the job. The form was "locked" by driving quoins, wedge-shaped bits of hard wood, along the tapering side sticks with an implement known as a shooting stick, notched at one end. The form was planed with a block of wood beaten over the form to drive down type that might stick above the printing surface. Something like this still prevails, no doubt, but not with such primitive tools, and very little printing is now done from the type. I am sure the shooting stick and wooden quoins must be as obsolete as ink balls.

The night before the newspaper was run off, the paper was laid down on a broad platform, a quire at a time, drenched with water, covered with a wide board, and a heavy stone placed on top to squeeze the water out. Dampening was necessary to make the ink stick. Subscribers received their papers so wet they had to dry them before reading. The press was a cylinder with a large flywheel having a handle attached. It was run by human power—a husky Negro, who also furnished the muscle for the big knife, or guillotine, with which books were trimmed. In the words of the proprietor he "always gives a scent back no matter what we pay him." The apprentice and devil doubled for the porter when he was otherwise engaged, but shortly steam was installed, adding greatly to the excitement on press day.

Feeding the dampened sheets against the gripper was not easy, and often he missed. To stop the press he grasped the long switch

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lever and threw the overhead belt on to the idle pulley. If it failed, as it sometimes did, the tympan was inked, and several sheets must be run through before it ceased to offset on the wrong side of the paper, a waste of which his employer made him emphatically aware. It had been easier to stop the press when it was turned by hand.

A daily chore which fell to his lot cruelly sharpened the appetite of a hungry boy toward the noon hour. This was the menu card from the local hotel with corrections for the day's dinner (square meal, 25 cents). He picked up the standing type, slid it on a galley, and proceeded to pull out yesterday's banana fritter and stewed corn and insert today's pear fritter and stewed tomatoes. He then ran off thirty copies, taking extra care as the stock was special and had the word *Menu* embossed in gold and other decorations. It was a sort of Barmecide's feast for him, whetting an appetite that needed no whetting.

Every printing office boasted one of those geniuses expert at rule twisting, who with shears, file and pliers bent brass rule into patterns that would print scrolls and flourishes around headlines and on title pages, ornaments for the corners of boxes, and when needed extra long braces. Some could create intricate designs, birds with streamers in their beaks in which type could be set, like those that were the pride of the writing masters. Like leads, brass rule was bought in lengths of a foot or so, and cut as needed. Much ingenuity was required to make the corners meet, until the arrival of "labor-saving," with corners mitered or beveled.

V

When work in the printing office became slack he was moved to the bindery, where the files of Godey's, Peterson's and Ballou's Magazines were put in dull black covers with names lettered on the spine. Its principal work, however, was the manufacture of account books, made to order to fit the individual bookkeeping methods of bank or merchant. The ancient ruling machine of mahogany looked something like a loom for weaving cloth. Until the advent of loose-leaf books and adding machines, business men kept their accounts in three enormous tomes labeled respectively Day Book, Journal, and Ledger. Every transaction was entered in the Day Book chronologically. It was reëntered in the Journal to separate outgo from income. Finally, each item appeared in

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the Ledger under the name of the customer, or creditor, to show the status of individual accounts.

Sheets of paper, bearing picturesque old names—Royal, Crown, Demy, or Foolscap—were fed to the ruling machine, and came into contact with a battery of pens, each with its own little fountain of ink, red or blue, as the line demanded—both colors ruled at once. The sheets were then printed at the top of each page with the name of the firm, numbered by hand, and bound in the familiar heavy books, with covers half an inch thick, hinges of rawhide, red leather backs and corners, and sides decorated with marbled paper.

The marbled paper was made in the shop. A square tray or pan of slate was filled with a thin sizing of water and gum tragacanth. On its surface were gently shaken little blobs of color that spread slowly on the surface of the pool. The fashion in blank books seemed to run to red, blue and white. The spots of color were combed into the wavy patterns peculiar to such books. A sheet of paper laid on the surface of the water took off a fine impression of the pattern. These sheets were used for end-papers as well as covers. The edges of the book were also marbled. All this was once done in a small printing office in a prairie town of about 12,000 inhabitants. The books were sturdy and durable. I have seen many of them preserved in vaults beneath banks, filled with the neat Spencerian hand of the bookkeepers of that era, the pupils of the writing masters who drew without taking pen from paper the flowing florid birds trailing messages from their bills.

He was for some years a "two-thirder." A two-thirder received two-thirds the wages of a journeyman printer, which were fifteen dollars a week. They did not have piece work at the Book & Job Print, but later he entered another world, worked on the evening newspaper of the town and tasted the excitement of a race against bogie, the average day's work of ten thousand ems, the printer's measure familiar to all crossword puzzle fans. The piece rate was twenty-five cents a thousand, whether leaded brevier or solid nonpareil. A rapid compositor could set ten or more thousand a day, according to luck with "takes." One learned the fine art of jockeying for position, slowing up when the next take on the hook, was an undesirable one, or speeding in the race for a fat one. Fat takes were pickups—railroad time table, baseball score, market report, taken from the live bank, corrected and added to one's

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string to be paid for as if set. Each compositor had a numbered slug that he dumped on the galley with his stickful of set matter. When the galley was proved he kept a copy, and at the end of the day pasted up his work, being careful to join the takes closely, signed his name and turned it in. As soon as the paper was up there was a let-down, the tension relaxed, pipes were lit, conversation was possible, and the men picked up incredibly long handfuls of type from the forms returned from the pressroom, and proceeded to throw in a thumping big case against next day's work.

Cuts, if any, were of wood. There was an engraver in the town who supplied illustrations when badly enough needed and plenty of time was available. He made both the drawing and the block, and was a better engraver than artist. His pictures were what is now modernist and even surrealist. An ingenious method of making cuts in an emergency was nipped in the bud by the progress of zinc etching. That was the chalk plate. A metal plate coated with a film of chalk could be drawn on with a sharp instrument, cutting through the chalk to the plate. The plate was then used as a matrix to make a casting that would print the lines drawn, something after the manner of a stereotype.

But the pride of the country press was its stock of ready-made cuts—Lodge emblems: Masonic, Odd Fellows, I.O.G.T.; patriotic: eagle, star, flag, Liberty Bell; trade symbols: mortar and pestle, false teeth, piano, anvil, watch, domestic animals, together with the inevitable pointing finger (fist) and clasped hands. There were houses, ships, buggies, and, even still on hand in some offices, runaway slaves. These were used to embellish circulars, invitations, or programs, and were also used in small ads in the newspaper.

There were molds for casting rollers that looked much like huge candle molds. The roller composition was a mixture of glue and molasses, consistency varying according to the season of the year. It was more practicable to buy rollers by this time, but homemade rollers were still cast occasionally. In a near-by village as late as 1889 a four-column folio weekly newspaper was run off —pulled, I should say—on a hand-lever press, one page at a time, the same method and almost the same press as that which printed the *Virginia Gazette*, or the earlier *Saturday Evening Post*, or for that matter all incunabula.

It is quite likely that all the old-time editors of country news-

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papers were printers. The tradition no longer holds, but one apprentice printer in my old shop whose destiny was no doubt influenced by this early contact with type was John Finley, who became editor of the country's greatest newspaper. There are still men, though not so many as there were once, playing important roles in world affairs who at some time in their lives experienced the thrill of handling the twenty-four (now twenty-six) potent little lead soldiers that change the history of the world. No man ever loses that sense of the importance of printing, or can look upon a printed thing with indifference, who has once felt it. Nor for that matter does he ever forget the lay of the case. It is a craft that gets into the blood.

In 1889 or thereabouts I witnessed a scene which foretold the great change that was coming to the art I had learned with such patience and diligence, as revolutionary as the change of shipping from sail to steam. There arrived and was set up a machine intended to set type. Its name was Thorne, and its principle was to release the letter called for when the key was pressed by means of nicks in the body of the type, like the tumblers of a Yale lock. The type travelled in the channels to a galley, and was justified by hand, if I remember rightly. Obviously the device depended upon a hair-trigger nicety of adjustment. Even the mechanics who came with it had difficulty in making it work. It jammed repeatedly, and before many hours the floor was covered with broken sorts. After a few months it was packed up and sent back, and the old-fashioned method of setting by hand was reinstated, until that day when that office, like every one of its class, was equipped with a battery of linotypes. Thus vanished a craft that had been four hundred years in the making, that uncanny skill with which a good printer manipulated type.

The tramp printer, with his thirst, his steel setting rule, his budget of gossip of all the printing offices in a wide territory, has become extinct. The callous forefinger of the printer is as much a legend as the miller's sensitive thumb.

VI

Did they print books in those far-away prairie printing offices? They certainly did. One of the rarest items of Western Americana bears a Galesburg imprint. A pioneer of that town, a genius who played the flute and made many inventions, one of them the rotary

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plow still used to clear snow from the tracks of western railroads, was Riley Root. In 1849 he caught the gold fever and made the trip to Oregon and California overland in a covered wagon. He had many adventures, and on his return wrote a book that was printed in Galesburg and is now a collector's item. A famous Boston bookseller became excited when he discovered a copy. "Unknown," he wrote in 1932, "to Wagner, Smith, Cowan, or as far as we know to any other bibliographer of the West, and unrecorded in the entire run of American Book Prices Current."

The front wrapper reads:

Journal of Travels / from / St. Josephs to Oregon / with / observations of that country / together with / a Description of California, / its agricultural interests, / and / a full description / of / its Gold Mines. / By Riley Root / Galesburg, Ill. / Intelligencer Print / 1850.

The matter on the wrapper is repeated on the title page with some minor variations. The book is a substantial pamphlet, size 9½ by 6 inches, 144 pages, uncut. The Boston bookman continues:

"Riley Root's Journal has everything that a rare piece of Western Americana should have. In the first place, it *looks* rare. Like several rare Western items of which only a few copies exist, it was printed in a small mid-Western town. 'Galesburg, Illinois, 1850' is an imprint that has charm for the collector."

It must be excessively rare. The only other copy of which I know, besides the one described, is now appropriately in the Seymour Library of Knox College. Of this copy the librarian said (when he acknowledged the gift to the Library in 1931):

"This little unbound pamphlet was written by Riley Root who came with his family to this prairie country in 1836, when he was 37 years old, and helped to build the houses of Log City, the forerunner of Galesburg. . . . It was printed in Galesburg in 1850 by the 'Intelligencer Print' and bears in the border of the cover the name of the compositor, Southwick Davis, who graduated from Knox in the first class—that of 1846. This creditable piece of printing was done only about fourteen years after Galesburg was staked out and when Knox College was graduating its fifth class.

"In April 1848 Riley Root left Galesburg to make this overland journey, crossing the continent by way of the Oregon Trail

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to Oregon City, a distance of 1846 miles from St. Josephs on the Missouri River, which was regarded as the starting point for the long journey through the Indian Country. Although gold had been discovered at Sutter's sawmill in California on February 10th, 1848, nearly two months before Mr. Root left Galesburg, it is not probable that he learned of that famous event until he reached Oregon in mid-September. The news spread slowly even on the Pacific coast, credible reports reaching San Francisco only in May. Mr. Root says that the excitement ('yellow fever,' he calls it) began in Oregon about the middle of August, and that within one month nearly 2,000 persons left Oregon for the gold fields. The purpose of Mr. Root's overland journey to Oregon is not stated, but it would seem from an entry in his diary seven months after reaching Oregon City, to the effect that he had been 'roaming up and down the valley, in pursuit of information,' that he was scouting for new lands on a new frontier. Finding himself in the midst of all the gold rush 'commotion' he may very well have been attacked by the 'yellow fever' bug himself. At any rate he left Oregon in April, 1849, just a year after leaving Galesburg, and going to San Francisco and the California gold fields, spent five months, returning to Illinois by way of Panama and New Orleans. He arrived in Galesburg, January 8, 1850.

"This little pamphlet records the details of this epic journey, and if Riley Root's reputation rested on this alone he would take high rank as a historian. It is extremely well done and is a faithful journal of not only the day to day happenings, but of the country and its climate, the wild animals, the Indians, the geology and botany, the mountains, the forests and streams, and many other features that give evidence of the observant eye of the author. One interesting and important chapter relates the harrowing details of the Indian massacre of November, 1847, in which Dr. Marcus Whitman and his wife lost their lives. This story was supplied to Mr. Root by eye-witnesses and is said to be its earliest publication in book or pamphlet form."

Among the many changes of ownership of presses in Galesburg, it would be difficult to decide whether the shop in which I learned my trade was a descendant of the Intelligencer Print or not, but it was produced in just such a primitive and resourceful plant.

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James Shand

AUTHOR AND PRINTER: G.B.S. AND R. & R. C.: 1898-1948

opolski's drawing from
e illustrated Penguin
ygmalion.

AUTHOR AND PRINTER, PUBLISHER AND BOOKSELLER; these conjunctions flow too easily from the pen. They cover an immeasurable sum of human experience, both melancholy and magnificent, in the long history of the book trade; they should be used with more reserve.

Fortunately for the reader, the writer is no doctor in bibliography expounding the perils and diseases of textual transmission, but a typographical reporter, with an interim case-history of a particular author, a particular printer and a healthy body of work in progress.

Our author is George Bernard Shaw, sometime of Dublin: our printer, R. & R. Clark, now, as always, of Edinurgh. The association is unique in more than a geographical ense; in time it covers fifty years; in space it defies quantitative nalysis. Bernard Shaw's quota, if consigned to the Society of uthors, would probably make that body independent of the ublishing trade for years to come.

From *Alphabet and Image:* 8, Winter, 1948. Copyright by Art and Technics, d. Reprinted by permission of the author and publisher.

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Miss Marjorie Plant has pointed out, in her always readable economic history, *The English Book Trade*, that there was once a time when "the person who was of no account whatever in the early years of the book industry was the author." At a later period when the printer was dominated by bookseller and publisher, Dr. Johnson wrote in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1739, "We can produce some who threatened printers with their highest displeasure for having dared to print books for those who wrote them!"

In the history of English literature the relations of author, printer and publisher have often been bitter and obscure, posing many problems in bibliography and textual criticism. Dr. McKerrow, introducing the literary student to bibliography, suggests that "the best way of obtaining a clear and lively comprehension of the processes by which the books of Shakespeare's time were produced" would be by actually composing a sheet or two in exact facsimile of an Elizabethan quarto and printing it on a hand-press. "Once he does this," he adds, "he will find that the material book, apart altogether from its literary content, can be a thing of surprising interest."

The surprise of Dr. McKerrow's student trying to disentangle the impositions by which the Penguin edition of more than a million copies of Shaw's plays were produced on modern perfector printing presses and automatic folding machines would indeed be considerable. Nevertheless it is to be doubted whether there are as many bibliographical vagaries and obscurities in Shaw as in the folios and quartos of Shakespeare. Certainly there is something of the same fascination in the printing and production of the "material" books of the later playwright; apart from the literary antics of an ebullient Irish author with that most emotional of all romantic characters: seemingly hard-headed Scots printers.

Since we are presenting the romance of playwright and printer, without benefit of publisher, let us set our characters in their dramatic place and scene. The place is Edinburgh; the scene R. & R. Clark; the principal characters, Edward Clark, Bernard Shaw and William Maxwell; with a faint echo off-stage

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Personal

William Maxwell Esq
R. & R. Clark Ltd
Brandon St
Edinburgh 3.

Shaw's original shorthand draft of his letter to Maxwell on the centenary of R. & R. Clark in 1946.

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from that habitual bankrupt, Grant Richards, later deserted for the more solid attractions of a "commissioned" Constable.

Professor G. M. Trevelyan, in one of those two brilliant chapters on Scotland in his *English Social History*, points out that rapidly developing eighteenth-century Edinburgh "was hardly less important than London in the British field of letters."

Mr. Stanley Morison, speaking in Edinburgh in 1944 on the subject of *The Typographic Arts*, pointed out that the first history of typography ever written for the instruction of the trade was James Watson's *The Art of Printing*, published in Edinburgh in 1713.* A few years later the Edinburgh bookseller, Alexander Donaldson, who set up shop in the Strand and put Edinburgh printed classics on sale at 30 per cent to 50 per cent below the usual prices, was largely responsible for the creation of a "permanent and enlarged printing and typefounding industry in Edinburgh." Mr. Morison also asserts that in the last quarter of the eighteenth century Scotland led the interest in technicalities of printing.

The first edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, printed in Edinburgh in 1771, was brought out by "a Society of Gentlemen of Scotland." John Bell's *British Poets* and *British Theatre* were printed at the Apollo Press by Gilbert Martin, an Edinburgh printer of whom Mr. Morison would gladly know more.

"The social, imaginative and intellectual life" of Scotland in the early nineteenth century centred largely in Edinburgh on Burns and Scott, Adam Smith and *The Edinburgh Review*. The familiar publisher names, Ballantyne, Blackwood, Chambers, Constable, Nelson, were also printers. In typefounding, Miller & Richards' Scotch Roman cut in 1803, and the later Old Style, were widely used throughout the trade, at home and abroad, right up to the present day.

It was in 1846, six years before Alexander Phemister cut the now famous Old Style, that Robert Clark, with a loan of £200, laid the modest foundations of R. & R. Clark. After serving his apprenticeship in Montrose as compositor and pressman (what is called in the Edinburgh trade a "twicer") he sought experi-

* Two excerpts are included in this book, see pages 86 and 87.

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ence in London as a journeyman, before returning to Edinburgh to start his own business. His London experience must have been of some value to him because it was not long before he and his partner, James Kirkwood, had developed an active business with London publishers: Macmillans, Bentley, John Murray, Smith Elder, A. & C. Black, amongst others.

Robert Clark's policy of providing fine quality, with conscientious service at the highest possible price, no doubt contributed to the financial success of a rapidly developing business which moved to the present printing works at Brandon Street in 1883. Robert Clark's only surviving son, Edward, took over sole control after his father's death in 1894. William Maxwell first appears on the scene at this time, entering R. & R. Clark as a shorthand writer in 1892.

It was in 1892 that Shaw's first play, *Widowers' Houses*, was produced; 1898 when *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*, published by Grant Richards, were printed by R. & R. Clark.

Few living authors nowadays can claim continuous direct relations with one printer over a period of fifty years. Books are now the product of mechanical composing machines, automatic printing presses, and mechanized binderies. They require expert control by experienced production staffs dealing with many different paper-makers, printers and binders. For this reason alone the printed works of such a productive author as Bernard Shaw are a remarkable exception to the general rule in the highly-organized printing and publishing trades.

Commission publishing is the resort of authors whose reputation guarantees a lucrative circulation and who can afford the necessary capital. Shaw now deals directly with his printer and binder, buying and paying for his own composition, machining, paper and binding.

Shaw had always very definite ideas about the format of his books and, with the complete and friendly co-operation of his present publisher, has dealt continuously with R. & R. Clark since 1898. Clarks are now 102, Shaw 92, Maxwell 75; this unique association of author and printer is also a competition in longevity.

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out of all his blunders with the bayonet. In future, sir, I must ask you to be a little less generous with the blood of your men, and a little more generous with your own brains.

SWINDON. I am sorry I cannot pretend to your intellectual eminence, sir. I can only do my best, and rely on the devotion of my countrymen.

BURGOYNE [*suddenly becoming suavely sarcastic*] May I ask are you writing a melodrama, Major Swindon?

SWINDON [*flushing*] No, sir.

BURGOYNE. What a pity! What a pity! [*Dropping his sarcastic tone and facing him suddenly and seriously*] Do you at all realize, sir, that we have nothing standing between us and destruction but our own bluff and the sheepishness of these colonists? They are men of the same English stock as ourselves: six to one of us [*repeating it emphatically*] six to one, sir; and nearly half our troops are Hessians, Brunswickers, German dragoons, and Indians with scalping knives. These are the countrymen on whose devotion you rely! Suppose the colonists find a leader! Suppose the news from Springtown should turn out to mean that they have already found a leader! What shall we do then? Eh?

SWINDON [*sullenly*] Our duty, sir, I presume.

BURGOYNE [*again sarcastic—giving him up as a fool*] Quite so, quite so. Thank you, Major Swindon, thank you. Now youve settled the question, sir—thrown a flood of light on the situation. What a comfort to me to feel that I have at my side so devoted and able an officer to support me in this emergency! I think, sir, it will probably relieve both our feelings if we proceed to hang this dissenter without further delay [*he strikes the bell*] especially as I am debarred by my principles from the customary military vent for my feelings. [*The sergeant appears*]. Bring your man in.

SERGEANT. Yes, sir.

BURGOYNE. And mention to any officer you may meet that the court cannot wait any longer for him.

SWINDON [*keeping his temper with difficulty*] The staff is perfectly ready, sir. They have been waiting your convenience for fully half an hour. Perfectly ready, sir.

Page from the Standard Edition, which began publication in 1931, in Fournier small pica, 1½ points leaded, large crown octavo, 5 x 8 inches.

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The influence of Bernard Shaw on our time has been profound; in the theatre, in films and in broadcasting. The circulation of his printed works has been immense. His direct collaboration with his printer over a long period is of more than professional interest to publishers, printers and bibliographers. This unique author-printer relationship provides an unusual aspect for us of the wit, vigour and working methods of one of the most successful authors and playwrights of our time; demonstrating also in no uncertain terms the integrity, craftsmanship and mechanical resource of the printing house of R. & R. Clark, so soundly based and flexibly developed over the last hundred years in the solid traditions of the Edinburgh book-printing trade.

In 1946, on the occasion of the centenary of R. & R. Clark, Shaw wrote of that renowned Edinburgh printing firm, "Ever since it printed my first plays, *Pleasant and Unpleasant*, in 1898, it has been as natural a part of my workshop as the pen in my hand." Few printers can ever have received so eloquent a tribute from so eminent an author.

As a young author, Shaw's experiences with publishers had not been exactly encouraging. Between 1879 and 1883, as regularly as clockwork, at the rate of one a year, they rejected all his novels. The climate in publishing at that time is best described by Shaw himself writing to Daniel Macmillan in 1943. The letter is quoted in full in Charles Morgan's *The House of Macmillan;* a small portion bears reprinting here. After describing how Meredith turned him down for Chatto's without extenuating circumstances; how Blackwood accepted his first novel but reneged; how Smith Elder were polite and asked to see future efforts, Shaw goes on to write: "I am now one of the few who personally remember the Grand Old Men of the publishing world of that day: Alexander Macmillan, Longmans and Bentley. They were so powerful that they held the booksellers in abject subjection, and were denounced by Walter Besant and his newly-organized Society of Authors as remorseless sharks. When they died and were succeeded by their sons, the hereditary system did not always work as well as it did in Bedford Street; and the booksellers got the upper hand. John Murray's

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Byronic prestige was so select that I did not dream of trying him until years later, when I was an author of some note and had already helped to bankrupt three publishers. I offered him *Man and Superman*. He refused in a letter which really touched me. He said he was old-fashioned and perhaps a bit behind the times; but he could not see any intention in my book but to wound, irritate and upset all established constitutional opinion, and therefore could not take the responsibility of publishing it. By that time I could command sufficient capital to finance my books and enter into direct friendly relations with the printers (this began my very pleasant relations with Clarks of Edinburgh). I took matters into my own hands and, like Herbert Spencer and Ruskin, manufactured my books myself, and induced Constables to take me "on commission."

Sidney and Beatrice Webb sent Shaw to their Edinburgh printer. An informative and amusing correspondence reprinted at length by Grant Richards in *Author Hunting* reveals how he was ruled and educated by Shaw in the choice of type, "Morris" margins, specimen pages, paper and other details of production. Holbrook Jackson has pointed out in an article in number four of *The Fleuron* that Shaw's books followed the model of William Morris's *Roots of the Mountains*, printed in Caslon Old Face at the Chiswick Press in 1892. Shaw, Socialist intimate and admirer of Morris, was also in close touch with Emery Walker, and familiar no doubt with the typographical ideas of Morris, Walker and Cobden-Sanderson, first elaborated in Edinburgh in 1889 at a meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Art, and later published in *Arts and Crafts Essays* printed in Edinburgh in 1893.

In preliminary discussions of the production of *Plays Pleasant and Unpleasant*, Shaw insisted on a trade union printer. Grant Richards doubted whether a union house could do justice to his ideal of the book beautiful. "I had few notions of what makes a union house," wrote Grant Richards. "I do not think I had a union house on my list. The problem shifted to the question of fair wages, and R. & R. Clark were approved." Shaw, in a letter to Grant Richards in 1897, observed, "Clark is all right; a first-

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rate house. I enclose a letter which you can hold as a certificate of compliance with my fair wages clause." . . .

Edward Clark doubtless also got much entertainment from his dealings with a teetotal, non-smoking, vegetarian, Socialist of an author. There is a story that, on one specimen, Shaw's instructions for close and mechanically-equal spacing between words were so precisely followed by the pragmatical Scots, that at the end of some closely spaced lines the definite article "the" was divided "t-" and "he" turned over, and the indefinite article "a-" with "n" turned over. Shaw's comment when returning the specimen, as Maxwell tells the story, was, "Excellent; but please do not go so far as to prove the author is really a damn fool." Shaw denies the story; nevertheless, true or untrue, it has a Shavian flavour.

Shaw's choice of Caslon for his original edition was inevitable. We know that he picked up the pre-Kelmscott formula ready-made from William Morris; but, unlike the founding fathers of the private press movement, he lacked the unearned income to indulge in a privately-cut typeface. In 1897 we must remember that there were only two text-types available in most book-houses: Old Style or Modern. More often than not, before mechanical typesetting, there was not even any choice. Publisher and author often had to accept the type of which there happened to be, at any given moment, the greatest amount of "dis."

Shaw's original hand-set page in typefounder's Caslon, long primer solid, stood up to thirty years' constant use. To our post-war eyes, conditioned by authorized economy standards, the precise and consistent setting of the plays, with their even roman small caps, lower-case italics in square brackets, with occasional lower-case roman words letter-spaced, has considerable nostalgic typographical charm. Here is sense and sensibility in book-making, well ahead of its typographical time. Of course, there are many people, William Maxwell and Bernard Newdigate amongst them, who protested that long primer Caslon set solid was too small and too difficult to read. But Shaw proved faithful to his original style and to his original setting until the plates wore out. He liked a colourful block of letterpress with-

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out white "rivers." He complains that modern printing ink is not black enough.

In the middle twenties when the project of a Limited Collected Edition was discussed, Shaw still preferred Caslon, but agreed to a larger size, pica solid, on a larger page, medium octavo. But, and to William Maxwell it was a considerable but, Shaw specified hand-setting. As a disciple of William Morris, Shaw objected to setting his books by machine. Our William from Edinburgh thereafter called on Shaw with two different specimen pages, one hand-set in original Caslon and one "machine-justified" in Monotype Caslon. Both were submitted to Shaw without saying which was which. The suspected Monotype "justification" was preferred. Maxwell triumphed. Emery Walker, consulted by letter, also approved the machine-set page.

What a victory for the machine! Or rather, what a subtle example of Maxwell's typographical tact and persuasiveness! The re-setting of the whole of Shaw by hand would have been an inexcusable and expensive drudgery. Maxwell convinced Shaw that the mechanical composing machine could equal hand-setting in typographical quality and close spacing between words and sentences.

The devotion to Monotype Caslon in the middle twenties seems strange to us now, looking back from a wealth of typographical equipment, including Bembo, Bell and Times. But if we look round the literature of the trade at that time, particularly at *The Fleuron*, we note that Caslon in its Monotype version had a vogue, almost a kind of typographical Indian summer. *The Fleuron* number one was set in the "then fashionable" design known as Garamond; number two in Baskerville; numbers three and four reverted to Caslon. When Mr. Stanley Morison took over the editing of numbers five, six and seven, and the printing moved from Curwen to Cambridge, the final volumes were all set in Fournier.

It was about this same time that William Maxwell told Shaw that his old Caslon plates were worn out and suggested complete resettings in a new Standard Edition in large crown octavo in small-pica Fournier 1½-points leaded. In the final choice of type

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for the Standard Edition, we detect again how Shaw trusted William Maxwell's judgment and accepted his advice. No doubt there was an improvement in readability over the original edition, but my own feeling is that the Standard Edition, as at present printed, has none of the evocative charm of the original edition. It may be that the Sundour binding seems prosaic. But Shaw, disgusted by the fading of his green covers, was converted to Sundour by a Winterbottom director emphasizing that not even the Indian sun could change it.

When Shaw first saw Maxwell's specimens for the new Standard Edition in various typefaces, Caslon, Baskerville, Scotch Roman, Old Style and Fournier amongst others, he replied, "I like them all but I'll stick to Caslon until I die: and after I am dead you can do what you like." Fortunately, Shaw is still alive and the Standard Edition is in Fournier.*

I cross-examined William Maxwell closely and at some length on this switch from Caslon to Fournier. His persuasive and peculiar ability to get his own way, even in face of such a do-or-die statement of Shaw's, must be remarked here. I am afraid, however, the only light I can throw on this, the greatest typographical conversion of all time, is that Maxwell himself is very fond of Fournier italics. Maxwell is no hard-headed Scot. He comes from the soft Hyperborean north, where the Gulf Stream makes the fuchsias grow six feet high. When he confesses to an affair with an elegant French type there isn't much chance for even an Irish author, much less the English public, to break up the "auld alliance." Thus Shaw's Standard Edition, now running into some thirty-five volumes, began publication in Fournier in 1931 and has steadily reprinted in this type and format at intervals ever since.

In an article on "Author and Printer" in the eleventh impression of the ninth edition of Collins's *Authors' and Printers' Dictionary* Dr. R. W. Chapman observes: "The prolixity of modern writing, fostered by cheap paper and print, by the habit of making books out of articles and lectures, by the use of typewriters and stenographers, is a positive evil."

* A specimen page from *The Devil's Disciple* is shown on page 386.

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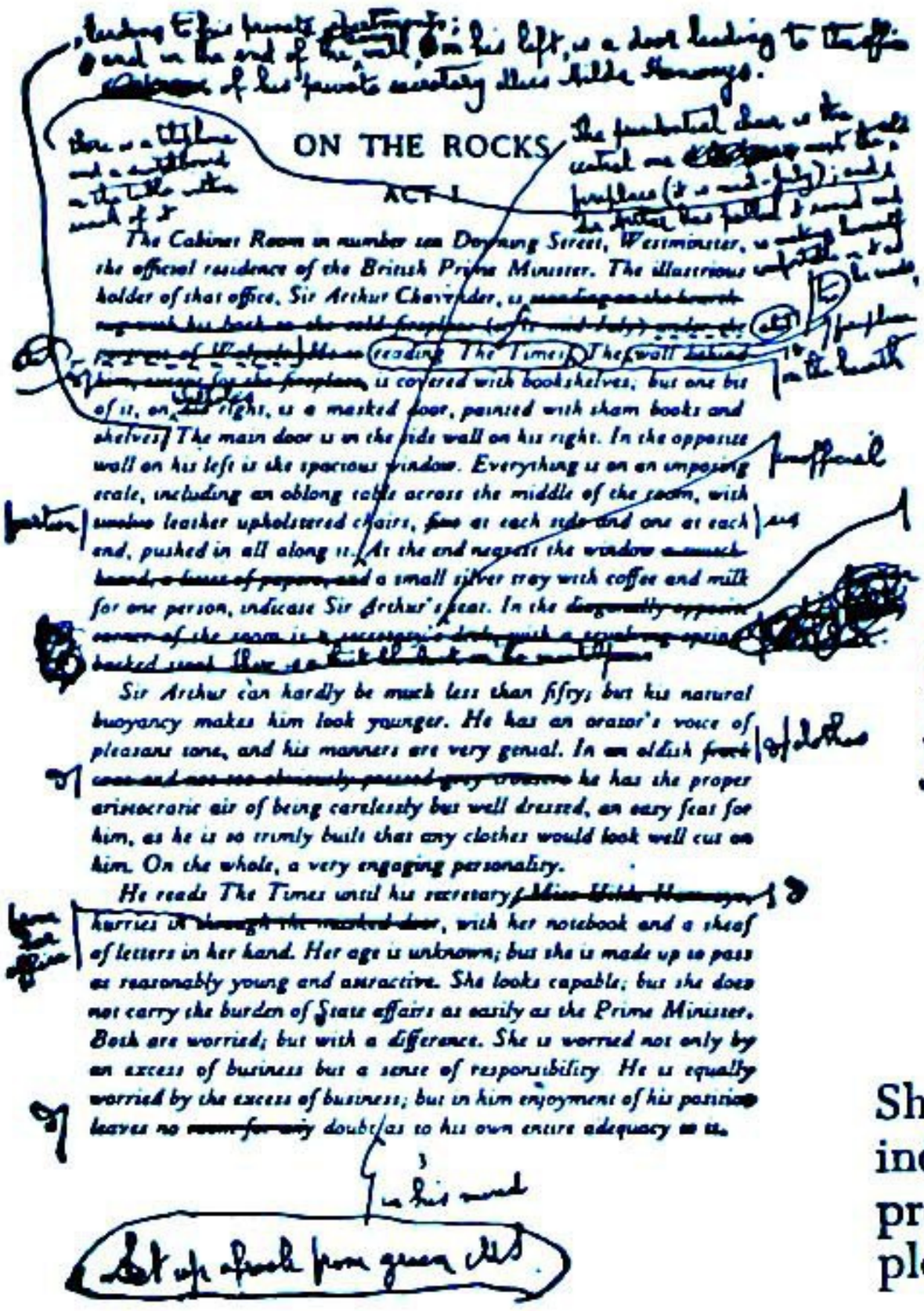

ON THE ROCKS

ACT I

The Cabinet Room in number ten Downing Street, Westminster, is the official residence of the British Prime Minister. The illustrious holder of that office, Sir Arthur Chavender, is reading The Times on the hearth under the portrait of Walpole. The fireplace is covered with bookshelves, but one bit of it, on the right, is a masked door, painted with sham books and shelves. The main door is in the side wall on his right. In the opposite wall on his left is the spacious window. Everything is on an imposing scale, including an oblong table across the middle of the room, with fourteen leather upholstered chairs, five at each side and one at each end, pushed in all along it. The presidential chair is the central one next the cold fireplace (it is mid-July); and there is a telephone and a switchboard on the table within reach of it. Sir Arthur has pulled it round and is making himself comfortable in it as he reads. At the end nearest the window a small silver tray, with coffee and milk for one person, indicates Sir Arthur's unofficial seat. In the corner farthest from Walpole, on his right, is a writing bureau and chair for the secretary. In the corresponding corner on his left, an armchair. There is a bluebook lying, neglected and dusty, on a half empty shelf of the bookcase within reach of the Prime Minister's seat.

Sir Arthur can hardly be much less than fifty; but his natural buoyancy makes him look younger. He has an orator's voice of pleasant tone; and his manners are very genial. In oldish clothes he has the proper aristocratic air of being carelessly but well dressed, an easy feat for him, as he is so trimly built that any clothes would look well cut on him. On the whole, a very engaging personality.

He reads The Times until his secretary hurries in from her office, with her notebook and a sheaf of letters in her hand. Her age is unknown; but she is made up to pass as reasonably young and attractive. She looks capable; but she does not carry the burden of State affairs as easily as the Prime Minister. Both are worried; but with a difference. She is worried not only by an excess of business but a sense of responsibility. He is equally worried by the excess of business; but in him enjoyment of his position leaves no doubt in his mind as to his own entire adequacy to it.

Shaw's meticulous proofreading is indicated by this heavily-corrected proof of *On the Rocks*, with a complete retyping of the passage below.

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Shaw's method, probably verging on the diabolical to Dr. Chapman, is to write everything first in shorthand. A double-spaced typescript then becomes his working copy, to be sent to the printer only after careful emendation and revision, in Shaw's always clear hand.

The manuscripts, typescripts, galley, page and final press proofs, indeed the whole apparatus of the Shavian "workshop" in William Maxwell's collection, show the great pains Shaw takes in writing and revising before setting. His meticulous proof reading is as characteristic as the clarity of his proof correction. William Maxwell tells me that Shaw's first-proof corrections are often heavy, sometimes involving considerable re-setting and re-make-up. But wherever lengthy excisions or additions are made in final proofs, Shaw is always careful to supply the exact number of words; sometimes in shorter corrections counting individual letters in substituted words in order to avoid over-running and re-justification.

By all the standards of Horace Hart and Howard Collins, Shaw would qualify as an admirable and expert author in the technical aspect of his relations with his printer—except, perhaps, for Dr. Chapman's scholarly strictures on prefatorial prolixity and diabolonian authorship.

Shaw's plays are drafted in what he calls Author's Shorthand (simplified Pitman); typed by his secretary; revised; printed; and passed for press after two more revisions. For rehearsal, fifty copies are struck off as "By a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature." If more are required they are "By Bernard Shaw." These sets are "privately printed." Alterations and additions in rehearsal and during the run of the play are incorporated as final corrections before publication.

One of the most interesting Shaw exhibits in William Maxwell's possession is the original of the filmscript of *Pygmalion*. Shaw allowed no hand but his own on the scripts of his films. The corrected copy of the play, with alterations in dialogue and time scheme for the screen and the additional scenes and sequences, is in itself remarkable visual evidence of Shaw's nimble-witted inventiveness. Few playwrights at the age of

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eighty-five have tackled so successfully the transition into another medium, cooperating with director and producer to present in all its freshness and verve the authentic Shavian touch on both sound-track and screen.

The original edition, the Limited Collected edition, the Standard edition, form the bulk of Shaw's printed works; his printed ephemera are not my concern here. There are, however, various editions of what we might call out-of-the-run-plays-and-prefaces books: *The Intelligent Woman's Guide*, *Everybody's Political What's What*, the two-column quarto editions of the *Prefaces* and *The Complete Plays*, the illustrated *Black Girl*, the illustrated *Good King Charles's Golden Days* (there was also an illustrated edition of *Geneva* printed by the Chiswick Press) and the illustrated Penguin edition of *Pygmalion*. "Omnibus" editions of the *Plays and Prefaces* have been published by Odhams, cheap editions by Penguin; and *Back to Methuselah* by the Oxford University Press in World's Classics. The Odhams omnibus was reprinted from Shaw's plates; the Penguin editions were re-set in Times.

The Intelligent Woman was instructed in Caslon on a page dimension decided by William Maxwell; a binding design by Douglas Cockerell; and a four-colour half-tone jacket from an original drawing by Eric Kennington of a nude female Intelligencer looking down a well. She, needless to add, had a much less shapely figure than the Black Girl.

The typography of *The Intelligent Woman's Guide* (1928) is in the Caslon formula. We need only note in passing that the drop initials at the beginning of chapters are tightly fitted and spill over into the margins. The binding suggests that too much Cockerell can spoil a trade binding. The jacket was regrettable: the externals of this book seem out of character with the rest of Shaw's production. A more acceptable popular edition, printed from the same plates, with reduced margins in small demy octavo, was published a year later in 1929.

The two-column edition of the *Complete Plays*, set in Scotch Roman in quarto, is a skillful piece of book-making; a pleasant,

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4. WHITEHALL COURT (130) LONDON. S.W.1.
TELEGRAMS: SOCIALIST, PARL-LONDON.
TELEPHONE: WHITEHALL 3160.

From Bernard Shaw

I have sent a fearful job to Brandon St: a new edition of Pygmalion with several screen scenes interpolated. It will keep the comps busy for part of the duration altering and adding to my standard plates.

The occasion of it is a proposal to Penguinize Pyg. I accepted on condition that you are to print it; and I promised to throw in the screen stuff. I am now writing to Alan Lane to say that the new matter is in your hands ready for publication.

This affects the paper situation. The Penguin will find its own paper as best it can; and as sele will probably cut out the Standard for some time to come. This, and my scepticism as to the length of the duration, makes me hesitate to spend £1000. Do you still advise it in view of Penguin?

AYOT ST LAWRENCE. WELWYN. HERTS.
STATION: WHEATHAMPSTEAD. L & N.E.R. 2¼ MILES.
TELEGRAMS AND PHONE: CODICOTE 218

9-11-39

Shaw's note on the corrected *Pygmalion* filmscript in which he altered the dialogue and time scheme, providing additional scenes and sequences for the film as shown in the two pages following.

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Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-ow-oo!

THE NOTE TAKER [*whipping out his book*] Heavens! what a sound! [*He writes; then holds out the book and reads, reproducing her vowels exactly*] Ah-ah-ah-ow-ow-ow-oo!

THE FLOWER GIRL [*tickled by the performance, and laughing in spite of herself*] Garn!

THE NOTE TAKER. You see this creature with her kerbstone English: the English that will keep her in the gutter to the end of her days. Well, sir, in three months I could pass that girl off as a duchess at an ambassador's garden party. I could even get her a place as lady's maid or shop assistant, which requires better English. ~~Thats the sort of thing I do for commercial millionaires. And on the profits of it I do genuine scientific work in phonetics, and a little as a poet on Miltonic lines.~~

THE GENTLEMAN. I am myself a student of Indian dialects; and— Of course I can.

THE NOTE TAKER [*eagerly*] Are you? Do you know Colonel Pickering, the author of Spoken Sanscrit?

THE GENTLEMAN. I am Colonel Pickering. Who are you?

THE NOTE TAKER. Henry Higgins, author of Higgins's Universal Alphabet.

PICKERING [*with enthusiasm*] I came from India to meet you.

HIGGINS. I was going to India to meet you.

PICKERING. Where do you live?

HIGGINS. 27A Wimpole Street. Come and see me tomorrow.

PICKERING. I'm at the Carlton. Come with me now and lets have a jaw over some supper.

HIGGINS. Right you are.

THE FLOWER GIRL [*to Pickering, as he passes her*] Buy a flower, kind gentleman. I'm short for my lodging.

PICKERING. I really havnt any change. I'm sorry [*he goes away*].

HIGGINS [*shocked at the girl's mendacity*] Liar. You said you could change half-a-crown.

THE FLOWER GIRL [*rising in desperation*] You ought to be stuffed with nails, you ought. [*Flinging the basket at his feet*] Take the whole blooming basket for sixpence.

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THE FLOWER GIRL! Whats that you say?
THE NOTE TAKER. Yes, you squashed cabbage leaf, you disgrace to the noble architecture of these columns, you incarnate insult to the English language. I could pass you off as the Queen of Sheba. [To the Gentleman] Can you believe that?

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The church clock strikes the second quarter.

HIGGINS [*hearing in it the voice of God, rebuking him for his Pharisaic want of charity to the poor girl*] A reminder. [*He raises his hat solemnly; then throws a handful of money into the basket and follows Pickering*].

THE FLOWER GIRL [*picking up a half-crown*] Ah-ow-ooh! [*Picking up a couple of florins*] Aaah-ow-ooh! [*Picking up several coins*] Aaaaaah-ow-ooh! [*Picking up a half-sovereign*] Aaaaaaaaaaah-ow-ooh!!!

FREDDY [*springing out of a taxicab*] Got one at last. Hallo! [*To the girl*] Where are the two ladies that were here?

THE FLOWER GIRL. They walked to the bus when the rain stopped.

FREDDY. And left me with a cab on my hands! Damnation!

THE FLOWER GIRL [*with grandeur*] Never mind, young man. I'm going home in a taxi. [*She sails off to the cab. The driver puts his hand behind him and holds the door firmly shut against her. Quite understanding his mistrust, she shews him her handful of money*]. ~~Eightpence~~ aint no object to me, Charlie. [*He grins and opens the door*]. ~~Angel Court, Drury Lane, round the corner of Micklejohn's oil shop. Lets see how fast you can make her hop it.~~ [*She gets in and pulls the door to with a slam as the taxicab moves off.*]

~~FREDDY. Well, I'm dashed!~~

A taxi fare

Here. What about the basket?

THE TAXIMAN. Give it here. Tuppence extra.

ELIZA. No: I don't want nobody to see it. [She crushes it into the cab and gets in, continuing the conversation through the window], Goodbye, Freddy.

FREDDY [dazedly raising his hat] Goodbye

TAXIMAN. Where to?

ELIZA. Bucknam Pelles [Buckingham Palace].

TAXIMAN What d'ye mean — Bucknam Pelles?

ELIZA. Don't you know where it is? In the Green Park, where the King lives. Goodbye, Freddy. Don't let me catch you standing there. Goodbye.

FREDDY. Goodbye. [He goes].

TAXIMAN. Here. What's this about Bucknam Pelles? What business have you at Bucknam Pelles?

ELIZA. Of course I haven't none. But I wasn't going to let him know that. You drive me home

---

TAXIMAN. And where's home?

ELIZA. Angel Court, Drury Lane, next Micklejohn's oil shop.

TAXIMAN. That sounds more like it, Judy. [He drives off].

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readable page, which William Maxwell can appropriate entirely to his own credit. For size, weight and general colour the Scotch Roman was eminently successful for all the plays in one volume, not too heavy in the hand, in a format which makes for easy reference and re-reading.

The contrast of the two-column Fournier setting of the *Prefaces* with the two-column setting of the *Complete Plays* in Scotch Roman is to the advantage of the Scotch Roman. The small pica Fournier is too large in relation to the width of the column and, to my eye, does not look at all happy in this two-column setting.

Everybody's Political What's What provides us with an interesting example of the close collaboration in proof-reading between William Maxwell, his press-readers and Shaw. Shaw, to illustrate some argument, asserted erroneously that so many codfish were being caught at one period that great quantities were being thrown back into the sea. Maxwell pointed out that codfish were never thrown back into the sea; they are salted, dried, preserved and disposed of in many other ways. Shaw, hazy about varieties, intended fish in general and not codfish in particular.

Also in this book, Shaw mentioned that when an outsider wins a race, bookmakers lose. William Maxwell, no mean expert in the making of these other kinds of "books" and having absorbed, no doubt, from Edward Clark some knowledge and appreciation of "the sporting spirits," questioned this; and innumerable letters from punters and bookies overloaded Shaw's letterbox. He re-worded the passage to silence the rule-of-thumb practitioners.

We have all been afflicted from time to time in prefaces and authors' notes with the names of odd people who have also "read the proofs." There can be few authors who get the benefit of skilled press-reading and skilled scrutiny from a managing director so knowledgeable about fish and about "bookies." The cod-fish and "bookie" stories are an interesting indication of how every page of Shaw's goes through a double sieve at Brandon Street, such is the passion of Scots for accuracy in typesetting. The Scots' passion for perfection in press-work comes to light in this association with the production of *The Black Girl.*

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Some time prior to 1932, Shaw asked Maxwell to suggest an engraver-illustrator for this Voltairean tale; Maxwell suggested John Farleigh. With that thorough attention to detail characteristic of the Scot, he not only ensured that Shaw should have an illustrator capable of interpreting his ideas, he also took care that the engravings, paper and ink should all be happily matched and tested. By accepting full responsibility for the typography of the illustrated page, he undoubtedly produced an illustrated Shaw of a quality and at a price which was a credit to author and printer.

My typographical feelings about *The Black Girl* are mixed. The engravings seem rather too heavy for the Fournier setting; it may be an odd observation to make about a Shaw book, but the illustrations overload the text of this slim book; the binding is too much and too black. Shaw's own wash drawings of the Black Girl are much more subtle in suggestion than John Farleigh's white line. But there was little doubt about the success of *The Black Girl* with a large public. It is an interesting and successful example of a short book with text and illustrations printed at one impression, and without any complications in binding.

The contrast between Farleigh's sharp white line and Topolski's loose black squiggle in the illustrated edition of *Good King Charles's Golden Days* demonstrates what I mean by the rigidity of *The Black Girl* page. Shaw as an author is impossible to illustrate; he can only be annotated and decorated. There is an engaging light-hearted quality about Topolski's cosmopolitan draughtsmanship which seems to suit Shaw better than Farleigh's engravings.

Maxwell's earliest recollection of meeting Shaw is of going to see Mrs. Shaw at the Adelphi about the printing of her translations of some plays by Brieux, the author of *Damaged Goods*. Shaw had written an introduction to them.

In the centenary letter to William Maxwell in November 1946, Shaw wrote: "I remember Edward Clark very kindly and very well; but it was with you that our business relations developed into a cordial personal relationship which has been of inestimable value to me as an author. . . ."

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on the part of the politically conscious and articulate minority (the majority can hardly be said to have any political views)

that the old Suffragists and Suffragettes dreamt of, or would have advocated if they had dreamt of it: namely, a demand for the abandonment of parliamentary government and the substitution of a ~~dictatorship. In desperation at the failure of Parliament to rescue industry from the profiteers, and currency from the financiers (which means rescuing the livelihood of the people from the purely predatory side of Capitalism), Europe has begun to clamor for political disciplinarians to save her. Victorious France, with her currency in the gutter, may be said to be advertising for a Napoleon or a political Messiah~~. Italy has knocked its parliament down and handed the whip to Signor Mussolini to thrash Italian democracy and bureaucracy into some sort of order and efficiency. In Spain the king and the military commander-in-chief have refused to stand any more democratic nonsense, and taken the law into their own hands. In Russia a minority of devoted Marxists maintain by sheer force such government as is possible in the teeth of an intensely recalcitrant peasantry. In England we should welcome another Cromwell but for two considerations. First, there is no Cromwell. Second, history teaches us that if there were one, and he again ruled us by military force after trying every sort of parliament and finding each worse than the other, he would be worn out or dead after a few years; and then we should return like the sow to her wallowing in the mire and leave the restored profiteers to wreak on the corpse of the worn-out ruler the spite they dared not express whilst he was alive. Thus our inability to govern ourselves lands us in such a mess that we hand the job over to any person strong enough to undertake it; and then our unwillingness to be governed at all makes us turn against the strong person, the Cromwell or Mussolini, as an intolerable tyrant, and relapse into the condition of Bunyan's Simple, Sloth, and Presumption the moment his back is turned or his body buried. We clamor for a despotic discipline out of the miseries of our anarchy, and, when we get it, clamor out of the severe regulation of our law and order for what we call liberty. At each blind rush from one extreme to the other we empty the baby out with the bath, learning nothing from our experience, and furnishing examples of the abuses of power and the horrors of liberty without ascertaining the limits of either.

Correction in popular edition of *The Intelligent Woman's Guide* showing careful count of words and letters for exact fit of substituted passage.

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JAMES SHAND

William Maxwell at an early stage in his career became aware of the printer's responsibility to the author. Clark's work for Robert Louis Stevenson must often have been recollected and discussed. Many other authors have passed through Brandon Street on their way. It is one of the doubtful pleasures of a book-printing establishment to deal direct with authors. Maxwell has had his full share of that kind of mixed pleasure and responsibility with Hardy, Kipling, the Webbs, Sir James Frazer, Hugh Walpole, Virginia Woolf, Charles Morgan, Osbert and Edith Sitwell.

I began with an Edinburgh book-printer; I conclude with an honorary LL.D. of Edinburgh University. In 1947 that ancient University conferred on William Maxwell that honour which he values above any personal recognition. It was a deserved compliment to R. & R. Clark and to Scottish printing as a whole.

No man is self-made; but so far as any one individual can by his own efforts raise the standard of his trade, the renown of his firm and add to the lustre of his native city, Dr. William Maxwell has done so by his devoted and sedulous years in the service of many authors and many publishers. . . .

This inadequate typographical report is in no sense intended to be either accurate or inclusive. Nor do I make any claim for startling innovations in graphic design or any particularly noteworthy contributions to typography. This productive association has covered fifty of the most inventive years in the mechanical development of book-printing; Bernard Shaw himself wrote, "I have not had to think about my printing. I have left it to do itself, which means that R. & R. Clark had to do it." All the same he thought a lot about it.

I may well conclude with the final paragraph of Shaw's letter to William Maxwell of November 1946. "Long may you and R. & R. Clark Ltd. flourish after we have said our last farewell which we shall both, I hope, be still too busy to attend to."

COMPOSED IN CALEDONIA TYPES

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PAUL A. BENNETT

On Type Faces For Books

IT IS simple enough to understand that type, paper and ink are components of book printing. But not so easy to comprehend the reasons for the variety of papers available, nor the many dozens of type faces offered for book composition.

The reasons for this great variety are partly functional, partly aesthetic, and competitive. Papers differ in many ways—color, finish, opacity, strength and bulk are some of them.

Type faces differ, too, and for equally valid reasons. There are the important design and style differences that comprise the old style, transitional and modern faces suitable for books. And distinctions in weight or "color"; distinctions in roundness, in degree of compactness, and distinctions in legibility, and in size.

To the designer of books, type face selection is important in relation to the character of the text to be printed. The size of type selected, and the amount of "leading," or space between its lines, has a bearing upon the number of pages the manuscript will make.

Some shorter manuscripts, for instance, need to be "driven out" or padded, to make the book appear greater in content than it actually is, to justify its price. Others need every possible degree of compression to get the manuscript into a lesser number of pages, which, in turn, means fewer "forms" to print, fewer "signatures" to bind, and less paper to use.

To turn from the functional use of type to the aesthetic, and also make a rather loose analogy, one may think of the type face as a garment with which the designer dresses the author's words.

In this instance the designer selects a type face to develop an "allusive" format—to reflect something of the style of the period of the manuscript. Bruce Rogers, the greatest master of allusive bookmaking, in his "Paragraphs on Printing" points out that in a small way this is "like planning the stage setting for a play.

"An up-to-date style for an ancient text would compare with staging *Hamlet* in modern dress. However novel and effective in its own way, you feel it to be strange, and this sense of strangeness is an annoying distraction; you are forced to think of the setting and the designer rather than the text."

It is easier to suggest a feminine appeal with types like Estienne or Fairfield or Garamond, than with less decorative faces such as

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Baskerville, Bodoni or Janson. Yet it is foolish to go too far in this direction. Strictly speaking, there are no definitely feminine or masculine types—the way type is handled has much to do with the mood it evokes. And it is dangerous to pin labels on types without knowing a great deal of their background and derivation.

The idea of using many distinguished types for the composition of this book was deliberate: The intent was to demonstrate, on a uniform paper surface and under identical printing conditions, the "behavior" of twenty of the finest types of our time.

And to afford a basis for comparison that might not only illumine some of the points mentioned, but also provide reference specimens of these notable book faces. To that end, a complete alphabet showing in caps and lower-case of each face is included, with a brief account of its background and development.

Not every essay will be equally appealing, typographically. Yet the variety of faces used in setting them seems more successful than would be the less sensitive treatment of uniform typography. Reading the articles and studying the performance of the individual types should provide an increased appreciation of the part typography plays in developing the book's format.

In this present instance, the designer has chosen one basic "background" face, Janson, for the majority of the essays. And has "interleaved," so to speak, many of the essays set in different types. This treatment lessens any tendency toward uneven color and spottiness, and minimizes some of the potential "scrap book" feel of many differing type specimens.

The problem of coupling face with essay was carefully considered. There could be none but the obvious selection of the author's own design in connection with five of the essays: Electra for W. A. Dwiggins' "Investigation into the Physical Properties of Books"; Perpetua for Eric Gill's "Typography"; Times Roman for Stanley Morison's "First Principles of Typography"; Deepdene for Frederic Goudy's "Types and Type Design"; and Centaur for the extracts from Bruce Rogers' *Paragraphs on Printing*.

Some background on the type selections for other essays may be of interest: Monticello, a recutting of one of the earliest American types, was a natural and excellent choice for Lawrence Wroth's "First Work with American Types," as was Bembo, one of Beatrice Warde's favorite faces for her "Printing Should Be Invisible." Bell, which Mr. Updike was one of the first to use with distinction—he called it Mountjoye when he acquired it in 1903—was the choice for his "Some Tendencies in Modern Typography."

The selection of Poliphilus for Sir Francis Meynell's "Some Collectors Read" seemed appropriate in recognition of the many fine

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Nonesuch books he had set in English Monotype faces; while that of Baskerville for John Winterich's essay on Franklin as printer and publisher was because Baskerville was a type Franklin greatly admired. Caledonia, an original Dwiggins face influenced by Scotch Roman, was the more subtle choice for Scot printer James Shand's revealing account of George Bernard Shaw's relations with his printer—more appropriate to Shand's preference and background, than would have been the choice of Caslon or Fournier, in which Shaw's books have been set.

The brief mention of old style, transitional and modern faces may need amplification. And also the descriptive terms Linotype and Monotype, which are trade-marked words that indicate *methods* of composition.

In *Linotype*, the product is an actual line of type, called "slug" in printer's parlance. This is produced by one machine, from matrices assembled through finger action on a keyboard. In operation, the assembled line moves to the mold for casting and the matrices are then returned (distributed) to their channels in the magazine for use in other lines.

In *Monotype*, the product is individual pieces of type—letters and spaces assembled into a line of many elements, as in hand type. The Monotype machine consists of two units: the keyboard (which resembles a typewriter) punches holes in a roll of paper, not unlike that in a player piano. This roll is then fed into the casting unit, where it functions by controlling levers which bring the matrix of each character into position for casting letters and spaces in sequence in the lines.

The distinctions between type faces called

old style
transitional, *or*
modern

are apparent at a glance to the technician. Just as, for instance, you distinguish instantly between a Scandinavian, a Latin-American, or a Mongolian. Analysis may indicate that the chief factor in your instant recognition of these types is memory of features.

So too in type faces. Here the differences are more minute, and essentially a matter of design distinctions: the weight and relation

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of thick and thin strokes, the treatment and stress of curves, and the handling of "serifs." There is little difference in the actual shapes of letters, which is as it should be.

One of the more lucid accounts of the development of letter forms is W. A. Dwiggins' "The Shapes of Roman Letters," included in his *MSS. by WAD*. Illustrations from this minor classic are used here by permission.

Remember that most of the letter forms we meet are modifications of written letters, shaped by pen action. Some differences in the details of serif treatment are indicated by these Dwiggins drawings:

a *b* *c* *d*

a shows a commonly designed serif detail, much better handled by natural pen action in *b*. The arch of a letter, frequently handled in type as *c*, is more crisp and attractive in *d*, the natural pen form.

In type, serifs help carry the eye in a horizontal direction, a designer friend points out, setting up a "flow" from letter to letter within the word, and from word to word across the line.

e *f*

Contrast the "degenerate, commonly used" form of o shown in *e*, with the more attractive pen form in *f*. Here is graphic distinction in the treatment and stress of curves.

The two most common classes of type faces are "old style" and "modern." The "transitional," a merging of the old style form into the modern—is typified by the illustration of Bulmer, between the Janson and Bodoni specimens used for the visual presentation on page 404.

Our old style faces descend from the early Italian Roman types and differ in minor details and "national" characteristics. Among the old style faces used in this book are Bembo and Centaur, which reflect the Italian form; Estienne, Granjon and Garamond, which reflect the French form; Caslon and Janson, typical of the English-Dutch form; and Fairfield and Times Roman, as differing expressions of contemporary old style types.

Modern faces, the result of a swing of taste in the opposite direction, stemmed from an effort to copy in type the letters of eighteenth-century copperplate engravers. Bodoni, the classic form of the modern, is included in its lighter rendering, named Bodoni Book.

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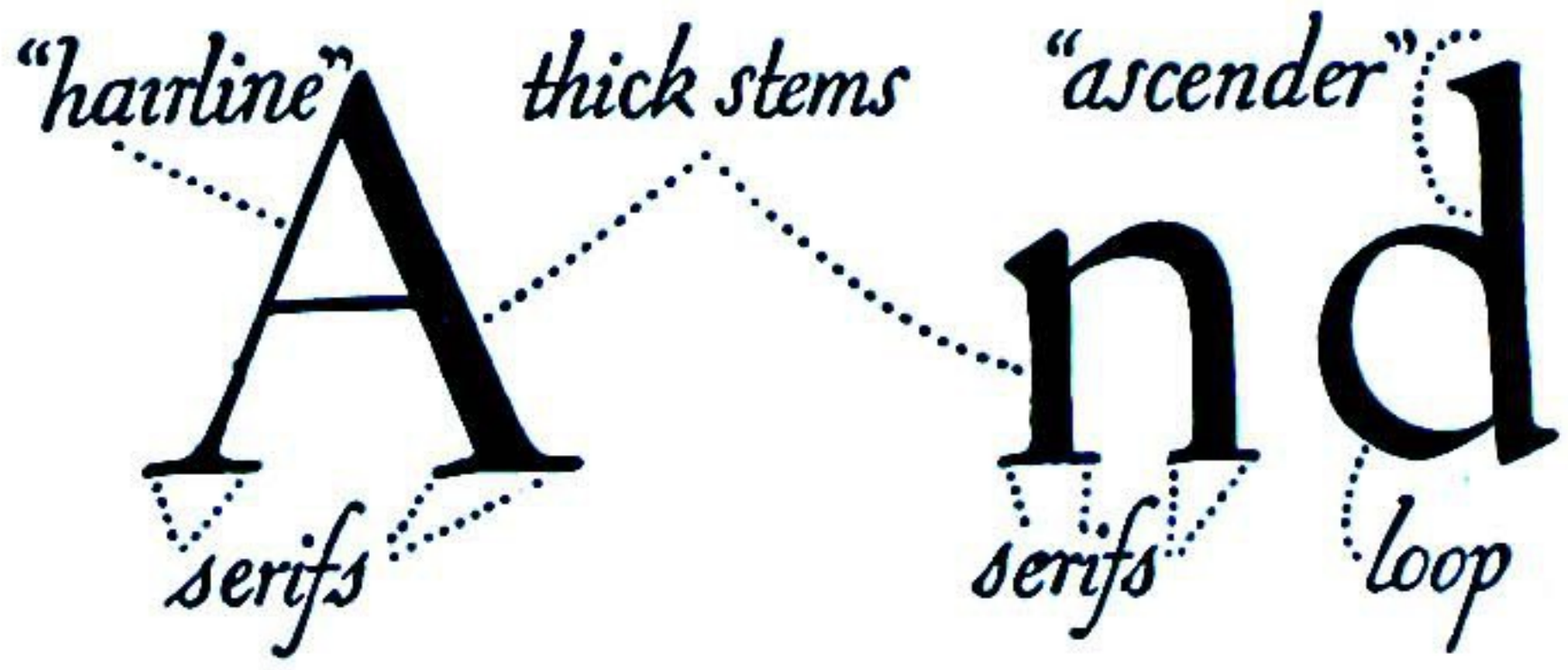
The first English modern, named Bell, is also included; together with two contemporary moderns, the Dwiggins-designed Electra and Caledonia faces, cut by Linotype. All three are less severe than Bodoni and retain elements of the transitional form in some letters.

The two really transitional faces included are the classic Baskerville, and Monticello, which verges somewhat more to the old style character.

"Letters," as Mr. Dwiggins illustrates graphically, "are made out of thick 'stems,' thin 'hairlines,' loops and 'serifs,' or finishing strokes."



How the variations that produce the different styles of Roman types actually came about is easily understood by seeing how the nib of the pen is slanted to write an old style letter like Caslon (*g*), as against holding it at right angles to the written line for the modern letter, such as Scotch (*h*):

g *h*

Differences in curve and finish are a natural result of these two pen positions.

As Mr. Dwiggins explains: "In writing lower-case 'a,' for example, the stroke begins at the little bulb at the upper left-hand corner, passes over the arch at the top, descends to form the straight stem, and finishes with an upward flick; a second motion forms the loop. As the line moves, it swells and thins in accordance with the shape of the pen and the direction of the movement.

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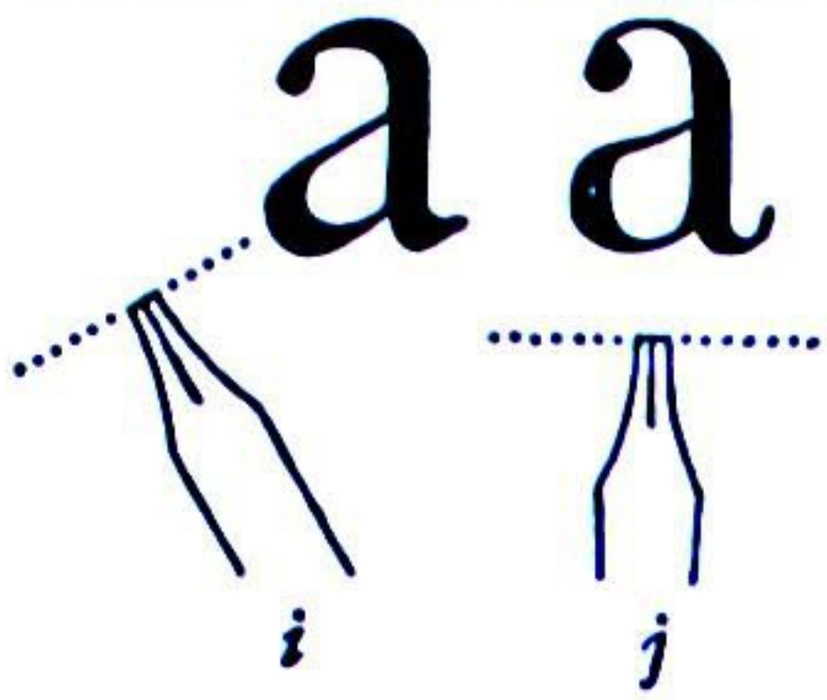
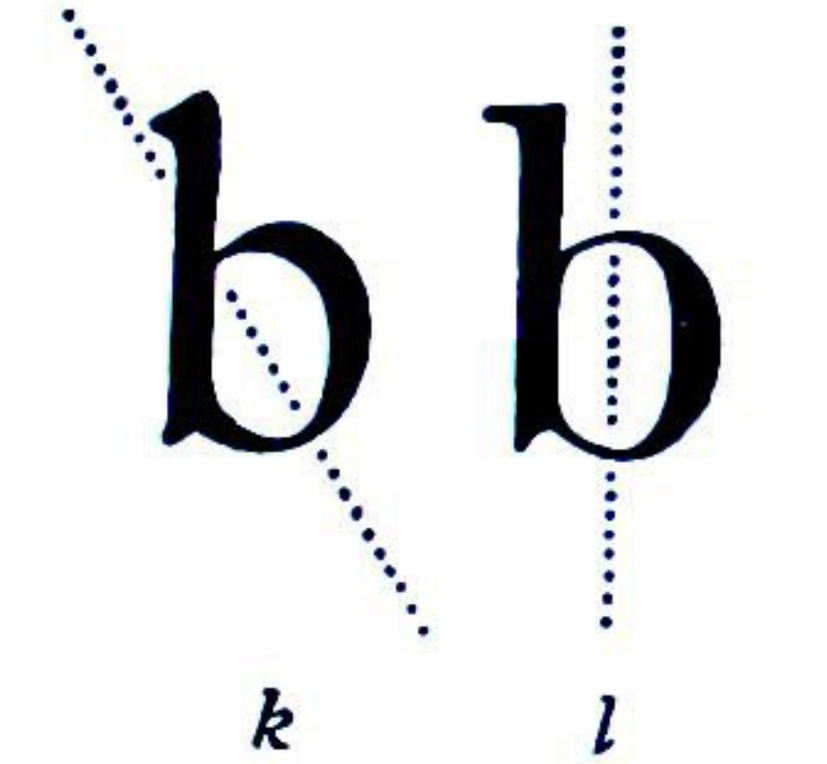


"In the Caslon letter (i), the swelling at the top begins at the bulb or dot; the arch expands throughout its whole curve; the loop has a decided tilt, as has the finishing stroke.

"In the Scotch letter (j), the arch is a thin line; the expansion does not begin until the downward stroke of the stem; the swelling of the loop is at right angles to the line of writing, and the letter ends with a perpendicular flick.

"In the 'b,' one notices the difference in the loops and in the serifs at the tops of the letters.



"The typical 'old style' serif at the top (*k*) tilts as the pen is tilted; the loop is a tilted sweep of the slanted pen; while the serif and loop of the 'modern' letter (*l*) partake of the perpendicular position of the pen. These characteristics of tilt or perpendicularity appear in all the lower-case letters and to a limited extent in the capitals."

To check the distinctions in different characters in the following twenty types, a magnifying glass will be helpful.

"The artistic quality of a type letter," Mr. Dwiggins concludes, "is determined by its degree of grace of line and proportion. The standards of grace and proportion are to be looked for in the natural motions of the pen. But the quality called art is dependent, too, upon the artist's appreciation of the material in which he works—namely metal. The draughtsman does not attempt to copy *exactly* the form of his pen-written model, but modifies the pen form to a shape suitable to its final state—that of a metal punch."

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NOTES ON THE TYPE FACES USED IN THIS BOOK

By Paul A. Bennett

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NOTE: The following specimens are set in a 10 point type size, except Centaur, in 14 point, and Eldorado, in 11 point, which were the only sizes available for this book.

BASKERVILLE, the fine transitional face named for the eighteenth-century English printer, is available in several contemporary versions. The Linotype cutting used here, most faithful to the original roman, was produced from a complete font cast from the original matrices, exhumed at Paris in 1929. For twenty years Baskerville has been a favored type with American bookmakers.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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$,.:;-''?!()*†‡§[]¶ *!?''-;:.,£ *()!?''-;:.,$

BASKERVILLE was used for setting *Benjamin Franklin: Printer and Publisher*, pp. 352-367

BELL, the fine English transitional-modern, was cut by Richard Austin about 1788 for John Bell, a leading English book and newspaper publisher. The English Monotype version used here was reproduced in 1931 from the original punches, then in possession of the Stephenson-Blake foundry in Sheffield. Bruce Rogers used the type (calling it Brimmer) for many fine Riverside Press books.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 *1234567890*

Jk *ACJNQSTk* JR

,.:;-''?!()* £¶% Æœ ,.:;-?$*Ææœ*

BELL was used for setting *Some Tendencies In Modern Typography*, pp. 306-312

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BEMBO, the fine Venetian old face, is a revival by English Monotype of one of the earliest Aldine romans. That was cut before 1500 by Francesco Griffo of Bologna, the designer responsible for the first italic type a half-dozen years later, and named for Pietro Bembo, the humanist scholar (later Cardinal and secretary to Pope Leo X), whose *De Aetna* was printed by Aldus in 1495.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

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BEMBO was used for setting *Printing Should Be Invisible*, pp. 109-114

BODONI BOOK, a light weight rendering of the popular A.T.F. Bodoni, is widely used in the United States for book and periodical composition. Introduced in 1910, it is not a copy of the types of the great Italian, Giambattista Bodoni, but rather a version retaining his principle of modern letter design. The lessened degree of contrast between its thick and thin lines make it gain in reading ease.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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$,.:;-"?!()*[] *()?!"-;:.,$

BODONI BOOK was used for setting *Harsh Words*, pp. 321-336

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CALEDONIA, a contemporary Linotype face designed by W. A. Dwiggins, was inspired by the work of Scotch type-founders, in particular by a lighter weight, more slender transitional face cut by William Martin for Bulmer around 1790. Christened for its forebears, Caledonia resembles neither—though it has touches of both Bulmer's Martin and Wilson's Scotch, and also "something of the simple, hard-working, feet-on-the-ground quality of Scotch Modern."

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

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CALEDONIA was used for setting *Author and Printer: G.B.S. and R. & R.C.*, pp. 381-401

CASLON, the great eighteenth-century English old style, has suffered more from "improvement and refinement" by succeeding generations of type founders than most celebrated types. A development based on Dutch models rather than an original creation, Caslon has been eloquently termed "the finest vehicle for the printed conveyance of English speech that the art of the punch-cutter has yet devised." Monotype's excellent rendering used here (No. 337) reflects the essential qualities of the original.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890 *1234567890*

,.:;-''?!()*.‡¶$[]ÆæŒœ ,.:;-?!ÆæŒœÆŒ

CASLON was used for setting *Typographic Debut*, pp. 78-82 and *Metal-Flowers*, pp. 83-84

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CENTAUR, a distinguished Italian Renaissance face designed by Bruce Rogers, was cut by Robert Wiebking of Chicago in 1914, in the 14 point size. Its first use by BR was in a limited edition of De Guerin's *The Centaur,* printed at Carl Rollins' Montague Press. The face, recut by English Monotype in 1929, seemed to D. B. Updike to be "one of the best Roman founts yet designed in America." The italic is Arrighi, designed by Frederic Warde, used since there is no Centaur italic.

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CENTAUR was used for setting *Paragraphs On Printing*, pp. 281-289, and *B.R: Adventurer With Type Ornament*, pp. 290-305

DEEPDENE, designed and cut by Frederic W. Goudy in 1927, was named for his estate at Marlboro-on-Hudson. In his *A Half Century of Type Design*, Mr. Goudy mentions the face was "suggested by a Dutch type (the Lutetia of Van Krimpen) which had just been introduced . . . but as with some of my previous designs, I soon got away from my exemplar to follow a line of my own." The Monotype recutting, done later, is used here.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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.,-:;!?" .,-:;!? *A B C D E G M P T gy gg*

DEEPDENE was used for setting *Types and Type Design*, pp. 267-273

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ELDORADO, the latest Linotype face designed by W. A. Dwiggins, was developed through the war years and completed in 1951. It was suggested by an uncommonly compact and distinctive eighteenth-century face used in Madrid by the Spanish printer, DeSancha. In no sense a copy, Eldorado retains in its letter anatomy something of the treatment of curves, arches and junctions that brought distinction to its antecedent, as well as flavor of Spanish typographic tradition.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

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ELDORADO was used for setting *What is a Private Press*, pp. 175-181

ELECTRA, an original modern, designed for Linotype by W. A. Dwiggins, reflects the warmth and distinction of his personal lettering. The effort was to work into Electra letter shapes, where possible, some of the twentieth-century spirit: electricity, high-speed steel, streamlined curves, the readers' familiarity with newspaper and typewriter faces . . . to develop letters filled with energy, human warmth and personality. Electra is available with either an oblique roman lower-case companion form, or the more familiar cursive.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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ELECTRA was used for setting the *Investigation Into the Physical Properties of Books*, pp. 129-144 and *Twenty Years After*, pp. 145-152

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EMERSON was designed by Joseph Blumenthal and cut by Monotype in England in 1934. The face is a duplicate of his Spiral Press type, designed several years earlier and cut for him by Louis Hoell in Frankfort, Germany, in 1931. This face was initially used for a limited edition of Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay on *Nature*, printed on a hand press at Croton Falls in 1932, and privately published. The accompanying Emerson Italic was designed in 1936.

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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EMERSON was used for setting *Typography of William Morris*, pp. 233-238

FAIRFIELD, a slightly decorative, original and contemporary old style, was designed for Linotype by Rudolph Ruzicka, the distinguished American wood engraver. Sharply cut, as though the letters came from the artist's graver rather than pen, Fairfield was designed for reading by "one of the most knowledgeable men in the country about letter forms and their style." To invite continuous reading, the designer feels, "type must have a subtle degree of interest and variety of design."

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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$£,.:;-‘’?!()*†‡§[]¶ ¶[]§‡†*()!?‘’-;:.,£$

FAIRFIELD was used for setting *The Fun and Fury of a Private Press*, pp. 220-225

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GARAMOND was introduced in America by ATF in 1919, when their cutting, based on the *caractères de l'Université* of the Imprimerie Nationale, appeared. Since, at least eight other versions have been made: by the English and American Linotype and Monotype, by Intertype, Ludlow, and the Stempel foundry. A documented article considering the XVI and XVII sources of the Garamond types, by Paul Beaujon, appeared in *The Fleuron*, V. This version is the American Monotype.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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GARAMOND was used for setting *Colophons*, pp. 31-44

GILL SANS, designed by Eric Gill in 1928, was patterned after lettering done for the Douglas Cleverdon bookshop in Bristol. First offered by English Monotype as a titling font (caps, figures and points only), the lowercase was added as the face grew in favor. Today, Gill is the most popular sans serif in England. It ranges through a variety of weights, including light, normal, heavy, extra heavy, and shadow and outline display and condensed versions.

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

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GILL SANS was used for setting *Notes on Modern Printing*, pp. 350-351

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GRANJON was designed for Linotype by the late George W. Jones, one of England's greatest printers. It is neither a copy of a classic face nor an original creation, but rather something between the two, with its basic design stemming from classic Garamond sources. An exceedingly compact and useful old style, Granjon is exceptionally clear in small sizes. Its space-saving virtues are important in the book and periodical field.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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GRANJON was used for setting *Printers as Men of the World*, pp. 88-102

JANSON, the distinguished seventeenth-century old style face, is presumed Dutch in origin. It was issued by Anton Janson, a Leipsic punch-cutter and type-founder, between 1660 and 1687. Little is known of Janson to supplement his first type specimen issued in 1675. The original matrices, bought in Holland from the heirs of Edling, Janson's successor, are possessed by the Stempel foundry in Frankfort, Germany. The Linotype recutting of Janson was made from type cast from the original matrices.

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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$£,.:;-‘’?!()*†‡§[]¶ $£,.:;-?!’’()*

JANSON was used for setting all the essays in this book excepting those indicated in other faces.

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MONTICELLO is a recutting of the famous Binny & Ronaldson Roman No. 1, a distinguished early American face cut in 1796 in Philadelphia. Type cast from the original matrices by A. T. F. has been favored for years by such discriminating printers as D. B. Updike, Fred Anthoensen and the Grabhorns. Linotype's remodeling of the type for modern use was named for the *Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, a fifty-volume publishing project by Princeton, for which the face was adopted.

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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MONTICELLO was used for setting the *First Work With American Types*, pp. 65-77

PERPETUA was designed by Eric Gill, the eminent English sculptor and maker of letters with pen, chisel and graver. Mr. Gill's account of his type (cut in England): "from drawings made by me. Those drawings were not made with special reference to typography—they were simply drawn with brush and ink. For the typographical quality of the fount, as also for the remarkably fine and precise cutting of the punches, the Monotype Corporation is to be praised."

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PERPETUA was used for setting *Typography*, pp. 257-266

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POLIPHILUS is a literal reproduction of the Aldine roman used in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* in 1499, cut by Francesco Griffo. The recutting, by the English Monotype organization in 1923 (from sheets of the book) was attempted with the thought of providing a type to convey an old-world atmosphere appropriate for reprinting fifteenth-century classics. The accompanying italic, named *Blado*, was the first of a number of Chancery italics to come from European type-founders.

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POLIPHILUS was used for setting *Some Collectors Read*, pp. 191-211

TIMES ROMAN was designed by Stanley Morison for the London *Times*, and first used in that great newspaper. Its masculine simplicity, directness of design and excellent color makes it exceptionally useful for periodicals and general commercial work. The basic design objective of maximum legibility in minimum space has resulted in the larger letter-structure that makes each point size seem the equivalent of a size larger in most other types.

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abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

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TIMES ROMAN was used for setting *The First Principles of Typography*, pp. 239-251

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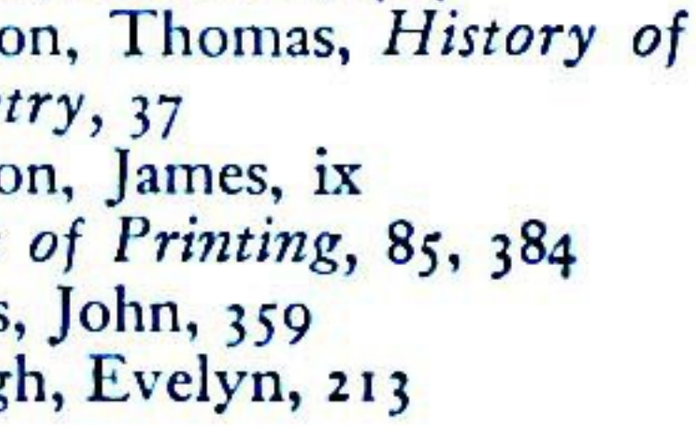

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