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The Monotype Recorder

A Journal for Users & Prospective Users
of the Monotype Composing
Machine & Supplies



Book Printing Number

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Oxford University Press—Monotype Keyboard Room

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Tendencies in British Book Printing

TWICE in the last two centuries England has created a typographic sensation which has affected the whole world of book production. John Baskerville of Birmingham led the way towards what might be called modern or present-day printing, and William Morris, at the end of the nineteenth century, brought book-lovers of every land to a new realization of the beauty and dignity of the printed page. But of the two movements the earlier one was the more important, because, although Baskerville's work was designed, just as Morris's was, to appeal to the collector of fine printing and typographical innovation, Baskerville had the good sense to invent the necessary mechanical improvements as he went along, and thereby to make it possible for the ordinary book printer and publisher to turn the unlimited edition into a thing of beauty by using fine types, properly made paper, and, above all, a higher standard of press-work. With the types of Caslon and Baskerville in the eighteenth century began what one might call the distinctively English book, or, if we consider the high level maintained by Scottish printers, the British book. Nothing is more important in the formation of such a style than the existence of fine types and a few men who have enough respect for the past to carry on, as it were, the tradition. We often think of the fine work of Pickering and the Whittinghams as starting a fresh movement in English printing in the nineteenth century, but, as a matter of fact, the period from Baskerville's time to the revival of Caslon old-face contains many enthusiasts in various stations of life; publishers like Bensley, authors like Dibdin, type-founders like Fry and John Bell, who kept alive a very definite pride in the craft.

With the Pickering editions, however, typography took a new turn. We are only now recovering from the practice which he inaugurated of appropriating decorative material from past ages; but the new insistence upon legibility, and

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a certain lofty consistency in taste, did much to set that style which has become so admirably national in its character. Long before the beginning of the private-press movement, certain publishers were reforming the book style; Dr. Blackie was one of the first to improve book standards; the Ballantyne Press had early won that reputation which it still maintains in a later incarnation. The firms of Dent and John Lane were producing work in the 'eighties and 'nineties which was rather affected by the whole tendency of beauty in everyday objects than directly by the private-press movement.

With the work of Walter Crane and Charles Ricketts we come to the first impact of the avowedly artistic press upon commercial publishing. Crane drew and wrote with enthusiasm, and Charles Ricketts put his technical knowledge to the service of book-making. How swiftly the modern interest in fine printing has arisen is shown by the fact that several of the pioneers of this movement are still actively at work. Besides Mr. Emery Walker, to whom William Morris owed so much of his technical knowledge, there is Mr. Bernard Newdigate, whose father, in charge of the Arden Press, first at Leamington and later at Letchworth, and backed by the great firm of W. H. Smith & Son, gave Mr. Newdigate the opportunity to work out that clear and sober style which perhaps more than any other has become national. To this earlier period of the revival of printing the Westminster Press also contributed the sane and stimulating co-operation of artists and publishers.

The second period of revival might be said to begin with the work of Burns & Oates, printers of liturgical and other religious books under the typographic guidance of Mr. Francis Meynell, who used old types, and especially old printers' flowers, in a new and provocative way. The revived use of the Oxford University Press's Fell types added particular interest to the experiments of this house. Liturgical printing gains by having very definite problems of its own to solve, and this firm solved them with extraordinary discretion and liveliness.

In 1912 *The Times* issued a supplement on the *Art of Printing*, which had the effect of bringing the attention of the outside world to the possibilities of fine typography, and in the following year *The Imprint*, edited by J. H. Mason,

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established by the Westminster Press, sought to interest the consumer as well as the printer in the 'well printing of what needs printing'—if we may adapt the text of Professor Lethaby's opening article to No. 1, Volume I. For this journal the 'Monotype' cut a new face, and it may be said that the present supremacy of the 'Monotype' in the department of book-printing, not only in respect of output but of quality also, was powerfully assisted by the successful cutting of this letter. 'Imprint' demonstrated that the 'Monotype' matrix-cutting department was equal to the severest tests; and though its programme was like that of many another British individual or firm interrupted by the war, the 'Monotype' may be said, without any exaggeration, to have contributed more than any other single organization to the renewal of typography in Britain.

In the old days book designers had to take into account certain limitations involved in machine composition. These limitations affected the actual shape and putting together of the types, and seemed at first to be inherent in speedy, economical printing. The greatest contribution of the 'Monotype' machine to good printing has been the literal abolition of any limitations whatever in presenting a fine type-face.¹ As the result of this new ability to interpret every subtle variation in width and setting, it has been possible to reproduce even the most wayward old-style italic without cramping or distorting any of the graceful kerned or tied letters. Among the first classic faces thus produced was the Poliphilus, with its accompanying italic, Blado, the latter being the first chancery italic produced since the sixteenth century. The years following 1923 show what was perhaps the most fertile period of type design that has ever occurred during a few years. Under the guidance of Mr. Stanley Morison, the present editor of *The Fleuron* and author of many authoritative books on letter

¹ We would call the reader's attention to an article by Paul Beaujon in the January number of *Arts & Crafts* on 'The Machine in Book Composition', from which we quote the following: 'Sometime after the appearance of *Imprint*, began that phenomenon which Dr. John Johnson, Printer to the University of Oxford, has described as the one most

'important factor in raising the standard of British book production to its present high level; i.e. the policy of the Monotype Corporation in putting a design first, and—as it were—persuading the machine to produce it perfectly, rather than subordinating the proportions of the face to any supposed limitations of the machine.'

forms, there appeared a succession of reproductions of the outstanding masterpieces of type design, such as were used during the finest periods in the history of printing. These range from Garamond through Plantin, Baskerville, and Fournier to Bodoni.

It should not be thought, however, that the 'Monotype' policy of enabling the printer to use the best type-faces of every past period stopped short of the present day. As Mr. Morison himself has said: 'Before even approaching the subject of a twentieth-century type, to differ from other types as our age differs from past ages, it is necessary that the whole reading public should be given a novitiate period in which they can learn to take good printing type absolutely for granted, and to be sharply intolerant of a poor design without the slightest reference to whether it was made four centuries, or five years, ago. The time, I believe, is now ripe, and the book-face in process of being cut from designs made by Mr. Eric Gill will be the first definite attempt of this kind in modern English type founding. All the previous efforts in period reproduction will only have served as a sort of parallel to the *Meisterstück* which was presented to the Craft Guild in the Middle Ages by a journeyman, at the end of his apprenticeship, to support his claims to enter the Guild as a master craftsman.'

Another present-day design which the 'Monotype' has produced is Pastonchi, based on the beautiful calligraphy of a well-known Italian poet. This, however, is not avowedly an interpretation of modern artistic ideas, but rather a return to the gracious forms of classical writing and lettering. It is a very difficult thing to experiment with a type-design. For the first purpose of type is to be read, and legibility itself is based upon long-standing custom and agreement, and the least alteration of proportions or colour militates against its reading efficiency.

As the new 'Monotype' faces were produced, therefore, each one opened out vast new fields for the idealistic printer and provided a new standard of beauty, and slight, refreshing novelty for English book-work. One of the first definite effects of this new opportunity was shown in the appearance of the Nonesuch Press, under the typographic direction of Mr. Francis Meynell. This Press was based on a very sound economic theory, i.e. that people want pleasantly

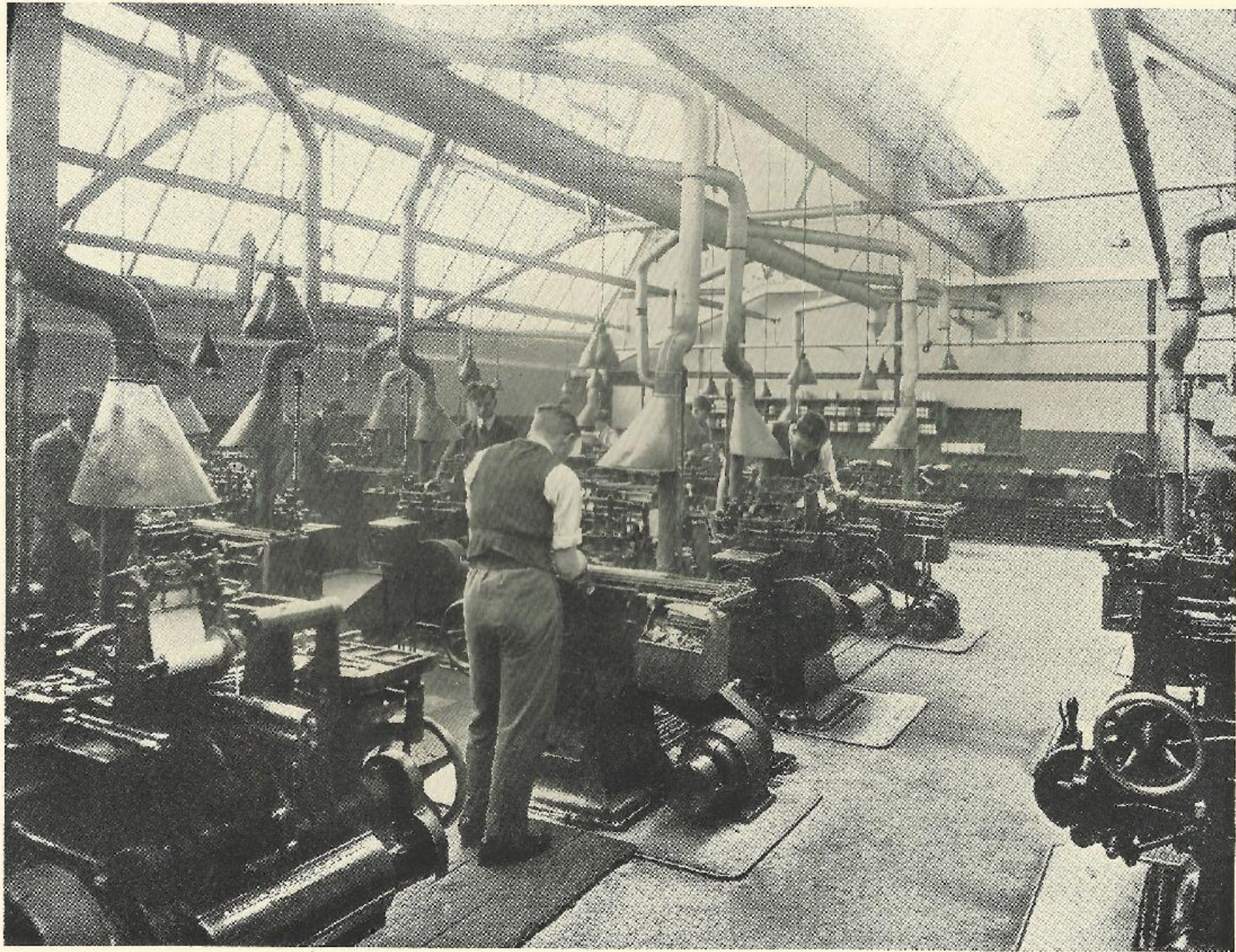
printed books, but do not want to be penalized for their good taste—in other words, that given modern production methods, it ought to be quite possible to do definitely fine printing at a low price. The astonishing success of this venture is shown by the fact that practically every edition is heavily oversubscribed before publication, and that the unlimited editions from the Press are also eagerly bought. The Nonesuch *Weekend Book*, set in ‘Monotype’ Plantin, has sold over 60,000 copies. With the exception of five or six hand-set books, all the Nonesuch editions have been ‘Monotype’ set. As Mr. Meynell recently said: ‘All we have tried to do is to make good use of modern mechanical production, which has a double efficiency. It allows greater flexibility, wider versatility, firmer control than handicraft processes; and by its comparative economy it widens almost unbelievably the market for carefully considered and competently executed printing. The Monotype has done for composition what cylinder presses have done for machining, and what the Fourdrinier mechanism has done for paper-making. Together these processes have allowed us to make nice-looking and inexpensive editions for those collectors—pardon the irony—who also use books for reading.’

The Curwen Press, profiting by the typographical ability of Mr. O. J. Simon, came to the fore about this time in the printing of well-designed books, and various other printing offices were affected by the very general wave of interest in good typography. One result of this was the foundation of *The Fleuron*, under the editorship first of Mr. Simon and later of Mr. Morison, in which many important articles have appeared, bringing out new facts, or proposing new improvements in book- and type-design.

Like every other healthy art or craft, printing grows from the ground upwards. That is to say, fine book-work can never really flourish, except perhaps in times of economic inflation, unless the man in the street who buys a copy of a trade edition at 7s. 6d. knows enough to reject a shoddy book and to take a certain pleasure in the well-printed page. We should note, therefore, the extreme value to the whole craft of a custom which came into favour at the time we are speaking of: namely, for the general publisher to entrust the details of book-design

to an expert, not necessarily a printer, but a man who knew how to handle types, margins, spacing, and all the other minute but important parts of a successful book. At the present moment the existence of such an expert is taken for granted in many of the foremost publishing houses, and as a result standards have risen considerable. In this way one man can be of influence in more than one way. For example, Mr. Morison, having gained practical experience from the Pelican and Cloister Presses, became the typographic adviser to Wm. Heinemann Ltd., and has created a logical and recognizable book-style, distinct from that of the more elaborate limited edition, yet sound in itself; while in latter years he has taken on this same task for the Cambridge University Press and Victor Gollancz Ltd., respectively.

The age of experiment in British book-work is not past. We have just received a very interesting pamphlet from the Alcuin Press, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, which will be preserved by all lovers of good printing. The text indicates that a designer is at work who has a keen critical appreciation of printing types. Among the faces shown are the Poliphilus and Blado founts, on the latter of which there appears the following note: 'In the quest of an italic 'mate for use in conjunction with Poliphilus, it seemed natural, at first sight, 'to reproduce the type of the Aldine Virgil; but closer inspection showed that 'this was too heavy in colour for the purpose. After further research, which 'led from Venice to Rome, the choice of the Lanston Monotype Corporation 'lighted upon the finer of the two italics used by Antonio Blado, Printer to the 'Holy See from 1515 to 1567. In all probability this type was designed for 'Blado by the celebrated calligrapher Ludovico Arrighi of Vicenza, author of 'two famous textbooks on Chancery handwriting, the first of which was printed 'at Rome in 1522, perhaps by Blado himself. Whether or not this attribution 'of the design be correct, there is certainly a close affinity between Blado's italic 'and the type used by Arrighi when he himself began work as a printer in 1523. 'Both are superior to the Aldine model, and the one now happily restored to 'active service takes rank as the finest of all italics in use at the present day. 'The fact that it has been found possible, in the twentieth as in the sixteenth



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'century, to print entire books from this type alone, is at once a tribute to its legibility and a reminder of its original destination.'¹

Further in the text appears this significant sentence, 'As with inks, so with type-metal; a material for which the printer has become responsible now that the "Monotype" casting machine enables him to be again, as in the early days of the craft, his own typefounder.'

In summary, therefore, we can say that the design of the British book tends more and more to quiet clarity, with only such originality as arises from the logical use of many very varied type-faces. Technically it is interesting to note that the bulk of British books are 'Monotype' set, and that abroad the proportion of 'Monotype'-set books is steadily growing. Quite apart from our personal interest in this (to us) satisfactory state of things, we may be permitted to point out that the unique flexibility and range of fine book-faces thus acquired cannot but maintain the English and Scottish book in the proud position which it holds at the present time.

¹ It may be noted that the Nonesuch editions of *Milton* and *Dante* are printed throughout in Blado italic.

The Oxford University Press

IF Master William Caxton had by some miracle been endowed with the span of life that men seem to have enjoyed before the Flood, he would this year be celebrating his five hundred and eightieth birthday; but he would not be an old man. There is a vast difference between being old and being 'full of years'; between being ancient and being antiquated. Earnest pilgrims to Master Caxton's printing-office would probably find that he was spending last summer at the Pressa Exhibition in Cologne, doing precisely what he went to Cologne to do in the year 1471; that is, learning all he could about the newest developments and possibilities of the intricate craft of printing. For when you can count upon Methuselah's span, your fifth century finds you in the very prime of life.

The Oxford University Press has been directed by men who were Caxton's contemporaries and disciples, and by gentlemen in brocaded coats and periwigs. Some of its composing frames, still in daily use, are of such historical interest that they are destined finally to rest in museums. The very structure of the Clarendon Press in Walton Street is one of the monuments of Oxford's antiquity. But the Press itself is in the prime of life. Like a sturdy tree, its deep-thrust roots only anchor it more firmly, and the branches are still spreading farther.

The present Clarendon Press building was erected a century ago on a scale which at that time must have seemed almost needlessly generous. Through the pillared portico one enters into a large quadrangle with a fountain in the middle. Extending on either side are two long wings, known as the Bible Side and the Learned Side respectively. The fourth boundary of the quadrangle contains the houses which used to be occupied by the printers to the Bible and Learned Sides respectively. So far, the only reminder of recent events is the quietly beautiful stele of the War Memorial, which faces the entrance.

But it is the pride of the Oxford University Press that it has adapted the antique but somewhat inconvenient arrangement of the building as conditions altered, and the need for space enormously increased, into a system by which work circulates with quiet efficiency from one room to the next, eventually returning almost to the starting-point. Before the invention of stereotyping, electrotyping, and mechanical setting, Bible printing alone occupied the Bible Side. Now the other activities of the Press have encroached upon this space, and outer wings, or 'sheds', run parallel to the original building to supply the needs of modern printing practice, notably machine composition on the 'Monotype'. Passing through the offices of the Press, one enters the right-hand wing (the Learned Side) and through it the first section of this new part: a large composing-room scientifically arranged to give the maximum of efficiency, with a glazed-in office directly in the centre of a maze of steel cases and racks. The most interesting point about the room is that some 12,000 standing galleys are ranged there in numbered divisions accessible at any time. The next room along the wing is devoted to the 'Monotype' keyboards, all twenty-two of them tapping at full speed, so that the sound is pleasantly reminiscent of rain on a roof, with a tinkling obbligato of bells as each machine gives warning that the end of a line is approaching. From this room one passes into the 'Monotype' casting department, with its familiar perfume, pungent and sweet, of molten metal and hot machine oil. From the nineteen casters rise special ventilating pipes, which converge, like the branches of a Jesse tree, into a main trunk into the ceiling. Along one wall are ranged the many matrix-cases which are necessary for the widely varying demands of a learned press.

A large gas-heated furnace is in the next room. Such is the extent of the Press's activities that over a ton of metal is used every day. The work of imposing is forwarded through carefully planned areas, one interesting feature being the large number of 'live' formes which must be ranged ready for instant use.

One passes over to the Machining Department (on the Bible Side) through the houses of the University Printers, of which the kitchens and even the old wine vaults have been converted to the daily use of the Press. But before con-

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tinuing the progress of the routine work, the student of printing history must step aside into the room which is to him one of the most interesting in England, for here on shelves rest the hand-type moulds of older days, and here, behind a steel safe with swinging doors, are guarded the most famous type-punches in England, those which Bishop Fell brought over from Holland for the use of the Press about 1667. These are not only exhibited to visitors; as all the world knows, the Fell original matrices are still used to cast by hand those extraordinarily brilliant and interesting types in which so much of the special fine printing of Oxford is done. One can see here the ancient ritual by which the wooden mould is held in the left hand, while the ladleful of molten metal is poured in with the right; the abrupt swing that jerks the metal into every crevice of the matrix, and the deft twist that breaks open the mould and ejects the type.

Rows upon rows of presses, ranging in size from giants which print 328 pages of a Bible on a single sheet to small jobbers, are all in movement as one enters the printing-rooms. A stack of exquisite collotypes may be ranged next to the sheets of some inexpensive primary text-book. For the Press scorns no method of serving learning and the arts, and its capacity allows for—indeed, counts upon—the production of a book and a pamphlet each day.

The Binding Department is always interesting to laymen, especially the uncanny forwarding machines, which pick up boards, seem to finger and consider them, and then with lighting-like swiftness pass them on to be gummed, taped, and creased. The not-unpleasant reek of glue, reminding one of low tide on the sea-shore, would tell any printer in what department he was, even if he were deaf to the long sinister crunch and clank of the guillotine or the busy clatter of the stitchers.

The lunch-bell rings, and out of the great portico comes a swarm of bicycles as the workers wheel off into the narrow Oxford streets. Even more than in other ancient English printing-houses has the sense of confraternity developed through many generations at the Clarendon Press. Recently on one day the retirement occurred of five employees whose combined length of service had

been 250 years. The Press, proud of this communal loyalty, encourages many social and sporting clubs among its members, and a large sports field at Jordan Hill has been placed at the disposal of the Press Amalgamated Clubs. The quarterly *Clarendonian*, printed 'in the House', shows the many-sided interest and literary tastes of the staff. The Readers of Oxford, of course, are the very aristocrats of their difficult profession, and their queries have for many years operated (in the words of Professor George Gordon) 'to train, and to train on proof-sheets, half the editors of England'. Learned men devote their time here to verifying the most obscure points in exotic or dead languages. The publishers of the greatest of all Dictionaries cannot afford to misquote, or to misplace a Greek accent!

To one who lives in the world of printing and book production, there is something very gratifying in the intimate connexion between august scholarship and the printers' craft that exists at the Clarendon Press. The publishers of the *Oxford Dictionary*, the *D.N.B.*, and over ten thousand other works of learning or piety, have developed a selling organization which extends from Australia to the United States (by the longer way round); yet the Oxford University Press not only remains an actual press but continues to make technical improvements on its production side. Privileged to print the Bible and the Prayer Book, the resourcefulness of the Oxford University Press has made possible a great improvement in the printing of sacred texts; for by means of the now famous 'Oxford paper' bulk can be so reduced that a book of many pages can be printed in relatively large type and still be kept at a minimum weight. Since 1870 the Press has owned the Wolvercote Paper Mill. Its private types, as we have seen, can still be cast and set by hand, in rooms which are a printer's museum in themselves; and just as these rooms represent not mere antiquity but the very best that could be done in English book composition in the seventeenth century, so the presence and arrangement of 'Monotype' machines in the new rooms represent the highest and most efficient development of twentieth-century work.

A Distinguished Visitor

Discusses English Book Printing

FEW men to-day fulfil Fournier's famous definition of a typographer as one who is skilled not only in the arrangement but in the actual design of types. Few, indeed, are the type-designers who have worked so discreetly with the time-honoured proportions of the letters as to produce a fount which combines definite novelty with that serene absence of mannerism and eccentricity which we call 'legibility'. It was, therefore, inevitable that the appearance in 1925 of a new type called Lutetia should arouse the interest of all book-lovers in its designer, Mr. J. van Krimpen, who proved to be a young Hollander associated with the ancient but still important typefoundry and printing-house of J. Enschedé en Zonen, Haarlem. The more recent début of Lutetia italic has confirmed Mr. van Krimpen's place in any history of printing types; and the Lanston Monotype Corporation is naturally very much gratified by having been invited to reproduce this classic face, under the personal direction of its designer, for use on the 'Monotype', thus greatly increasing its field of usefulness under present-day conditions.

While this number of the MONOTYPE RECORDER was in preparation, Mr. van Krimpen paid a short visit to London to inspect the first trial punches of the new face. Knowing that Mr. van Krimpen enjoys an additional reputation as a maker of fine books, the MONOTYPE RECORDER hastened to obtain an interview with this distinguished visitor.

'What I like about the typical English book,' said Mr. van Krimpen, 'is that it looks as if it were meant to be read. I am speaking, you understand, of the "trade", or unlimited, edition, which I believe has reached a higher standard in Great Britain than anywhere else in the world. "Fine" editions tend to be stand-offish in their appearance, and their appeal is always hard to appreciate outside their own country, for the *édition de luxe* of every land is a very personal and distinct creation. But the usual well-printed English book offers a quiet and

supremely tasteful invitation to the reader—and that is the first purpose of any book.

‘There is a national style, certainly. One can identify a book printed in Great Britain—or at least the books of six or seven good publishers—by the general effect of the typography, which gives a light and pleasantly open page, with not much use of large display types or decoration. Setting and leading, in general, reach a higher standard than one finds on the Continent. In the matter of press-work there seems to have been some improvement, but even now the Germans are able to produce a clearer and more even inking. But then the German printers, where they have passed from text to roman type, have generally favoured a “modern” face which *must* be properly inked; the traditional old face in your country allows a certain amount of laxity in press-work. The “grey page”, unless it is handled by experts in the press-room, is a dangerous standard to strive for; an under-inked page can be just as annoying as one on which the letters are thickened with ink.

‘One thing which above all contributes to the excellence of book-printing here is the range of fine type-faces. The fact that such a very large proportion of book composition is done on the “Monotype” not only means that the printer has sharp types and a flexible instrument at hand: it also means that he can use faces of the first quality. The mere use of “Monotype” faces would not, of course, identify a book as coming from this country, for they are equally popular abroad. But I am glad to see that the sizes usually chosen here range from eleven point down to nine point, and I prefer the greater ease of reading which this makes possible. There is something very attractive to the reader in these smaller sizes of Baskerville, Fournier, and Imprint particularly, and the choice of one of these faces goes far to assuring a look of distinction for the book.

‘The bound book opens well in the hand, and seems to be solidly put together. I like the plain and conventional English binding: the decorated sort seems to me to be behind the times, and the use of new materials and embellishments has gone much farther on the Continent.

‘On the whole, the British character seems to me to be well reflected in book

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production. One finds a delightful matter-of-factness in style; care and logic without pretentiousness in execution; and the same hospitality to the reader's eyes that the foreigner himself gratefully learns to expect upon arriving in this island.'

We do Notice the Printing!

By an Average Reader

NOTE: *Much has been written about book typography from the technical point of view, but one seldom hears, save in casual conversation, the opinion of that most important individual, the Man who Buys the Books. We are glad, therefore, to present to our friends in printing and publishing circles this bona-fide contribution from 'An Average Reader', whose only relations with the book trade have been those of the Ultimate Consumer!—ED.*

SPEAKING as a reader of books, it seems obvious to me that the printing of a book has a great deal to do with its success. Although I should not go so far as to say that bad printing will ruin my enjoyment of a good author, it will nevertheless mar my concentration in even the most enthusiastic mood; whereas good printing, besides enhancing a well-known author's reputation in my eyes, will often bring an unknown author favourably to my attention, by indicating at once that the publishers have considered the book worthy of a fine presentation.

I find it impossible to form any reliable opinion as to the reading matter in a book by a cursory glance in the bookseller's, but I am able, in that glance, to get a very good opinion of the printing, and this is going to influence my purchase. Therefore it should be the printer's aim to attract and please my eyes as I casually take up the book; and the printer's most powerful weapon of attraction is the title-page. I am bound to look at the title-page; in fact it will be the first thing I look at. Here I wish to see the title of the book and the name of the author—for the moment the publisher's name is not so important to me as either of these other requirements, and therefore I feel the publisher should not insist on his name being printed in larger type than the title and the name of the author. The title-page should be neat and tidy; extravagant decoration distracts the purchaser's eye from the necessary information and does not help to sell the book. Publishers' marks should be avoided, I think, as they distract attention from the more necessary information, and often tend to upset the balance of the page.

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As an example of an excellent title-page, I would cite that of Humbert Wolfe's *Requiem*, published by Ernest Benn. Here we have the title and the name of the author placed well towards the top of the page, and the publisher's name and address at the bottom. The essential information is there, there is no decoration, and the whole presents a neat, tidy, and well-balanced picture.

After looking at the title-page of the book I am thinking of purchasing, I open the volume in a haphazard manner and take in the appearance of a page of the text. Again I do not read much of the text, but I study the page as a whole and am influenced accordingly. I notice whether the type is clear, neat, and well arranged, whether the chapter and page headings are clear and distinctive, and whether the general effect is pleasing or tiresome.

The pages of Sinclair Lewis's *Elmer Gantry*, published by Jonathan Cape, strike me as being admirably designed from the reader's point of view. The type is of a readable size, it is clear and neat, well arranged and suitably spaced, and the page-headings stand out clearly without rendering the page top-heavy. The whole appearance is that of a thoroughly readable page executed in the best of taste.

I find I do not react sympathetically to illustrations. Often I get the impression that they are there merely to bolster up the somewhat scanty contents. Besides, illustrations rarely seem to catch the spirit of the book; the illustrator and the author seem to be working at cross-purposes. Of course there are notable exceptions; for example, we cannot imagine A. A. Milne's delightful books without Ernest Shepard's equally delightful illustrations.

These few points are those which seem to me to influence the normal reader of more or less ordinary books in his purchase. *Éditions de luxe* have a set of rules of their own. They may attract readers by their quaintness, their faithfulness to old styles, their illustrations, or a hundred other means. They are not, however, of supreme interest to one like myself, who enjoys reading for the sake of the contents, and who wishes his favourite books to be designed and produced, as his house furniture would be, on an unpretentious but uncompromising standard of taste.

Wanted—One Thousand Classics

By E. Haigh Roscoe

THE other day, in a bookshop of the noble, by the noble, for the noble, a large lady, wearing very horizontally a dateless hat, asked a mild and mannered assistant to 'show her Trollope'. He obliged in terms of guineas and shillings. The guineas edition was spurned as being far too large an indulgence of a little whim, and the shillings edition provoked the following rapidly fired monologue:

'*This!* Why can't they print them nicely! I *cannot* understand it! Why they 'don't! *Stupid* little book! *Horrid* little book! I'll take it. But I don't like it. 'I think it is a *silly* little book. Will you send it? ("Yes, madam," promptly, from 'the quiescent assistant.) I should very probably drop it or leave it behind 'somewhere or do something with it. . . .'

At this point the relevance of the incident ceases. Here is my moral:

There are those with money who will not spend it. There are those without money who will. There are those not obviously either who will or will not according to the strength of temptations received. There are legion others. My contention, aptly, I think, illustrated by the foregoing anecdote, is that among this number there is in embryo a sufficiently multitudinous market to make the booksellers' mouths water. Many components of this group do not perceive their presence therein. An interview with them would be fruitless. Yet they and their happy kind are, I hold, even now often to be seen gazing sadly at Nonesuches and far more sadly at the Manysuches. How happy, relatively, could they be with either were t'other dear charmer away! Ere Nonesuch came, the Manysuch met a want and brought a brief content. Now, while publishers dally between tricks and retractions, this swelling public fingers its moderate coinage in despair.

Where is our Elzevir? Who will oblige?

Without waiting for the 'buts' that are bound to be pelted at me, I consider that this need for the Manysuch edition in Nonesuch dress is proved. I sweep

on, with the eloquence born of conviction, to those questions which, poor things, continue in a vexed state (all because I have not given audible attention to them until now!). Shall I enlist Mr. Shaw? His dogmatic manner and typographic wisdom is necessary here. No; on second thoughts I won't. He would have the few worth-while books: Shaw, Shakespeare, and the one or two also-rans, printed in minute, solid, spaceless, ruleless Caslon. All very fine in its way; but are there not too many other good flowers in the printer's garden for the one supremely English bloom to please all?

I will see what I can do without Mr. Shaw himself, but with what I can borrow of his pungency. I do not think myself alone in being minded as I am in this matter, but they who do agree with my mind cannot have half the heart!

Let us instantly produce the cream of literary creation with the cream of typography for the price of grade A milk. Let us fill the shiny shelves of the bookcases in Mr. Drage's windows with books so clothed as to pass the epicure, please the dear public, and enable Mr. Drage to deliver finely printed classics in plain vans on the same sweetly convenient terms as he delivers the more wooden and brassy things. That is so manifestly a delightful prospect that I will consider it proved and proceed to my next point.

We are going to print all permanent books in perfect form. Very good. Does my imaginary committee murmur! Yes! Tst—tst! One wants Shakespeare with funny f's and all the other first folio oddities, and another cries shame on such a backward intent and claims that modern work is best. I, silencing the absurd conservative, ask the liberal-conservative what he means by 'modern': the ephemeral bizarre or the chaste and simple? The latter is beautiful I consent, but Mr. Morison, who performs in that kind so well, would age very rapidly if he were put to giving each of, say, a thousand classics a dress which was consistently plainly modern and yet ideally appropriate to the author, the author's period, and the author's message! Mr. Rogers is more acrobatic and might fare better in such an effort. And so on: everybody wrangling. With a regal rap on the table I produce an awful silence, in which entirely suitable atmosphere I conclude the proceedings with a considered statement:

WANTED—ONE THOUSAND CLASSICS

The want is proved. The way is proved. In brief, it is this: One thousand classics. Average price per volume three shillings. Publisher's name to be announced shortly (I hope). Description: Each work will have about it (1) the look of the person who wrote it; (2) the look of what he wrote about, and (3) the look of the time he wrote it in. (1) and (2) require merely inspiration and genius, easily supplied in this year of grace. (3), though requiring the same, will have to be done with that ease and carelessness which cannot be other than the result of the most penetrating care and perception on the part of the inspired typographer.¹ It will have to be done not by copying the practice of the period, but by paralleling it on a higher plane. Away with funny f's, duplicate first words of pages, battered type, and faulty spacing.

Further words are useless. There is much more that could be said on the subject, but the point is that either you see it or you don't. The object of this essay is to be incendiary. To rouse those who see the point to such a pitch of feeling that they will rise up and produce the proof for those who could not see. In the name of the book-acquisitive public I call upon the enlightened publisher and typographer for swift proof positive!

¹ The attention of inspired typographers—and others—is called to our preliminary announcement on p. 25 of a competition for appropriate printing.

How would you print it?

A Competition for Printers and Laymen

IS there such a thing as appropriateness in typography? Not merely the mechanical appropriateness of type-size for line and page, but that subtler matching of type and decoration to the mood, the period, or the locality dealt with by the author, which seems to be the desire of so many great book designers of our day. 'Suitability' is Mr. D. B. Updike's word in summing up the final art of the maker of books. The word includes, of course, what one might call the physical purpose of the book; that is, whether it is to be carried in the pocket, pulled off a shelf, or propped up on a lectern. But it means, when used by Mr. Updike or Mr. Bruce Rogers, far more than that. The latter designer was recently responsible for a book on *Wedgwood Medallions*, which, like most of his books, is a classic of what is called 'allusive' typography. The title-page bore a border of neo-classic anthemion pattern, obviously appropriate for the contents; but not so obvious was the choice of a very faintly porcelain-green paper on which Baskerville looked doubly cool and demure.

Your Average Reader would possibly protest that the words of the text need only be legible, and the paper not too flimsy, for his imagination to leap clean off the appearance of the printed page into the author's world. People who do not actually move their lips while reading cannot be said to *see* a sentence as a group of types. When we read, in a book by Edna Millay, 'The blue night stood flattened against the window, staring through', what we see is the actual, mysterious menace of twilight, and not those types which are themselves the transparent window-panes through which the author's words shine. Sometimes a shabby, thumbled little book, almost illegibly printed, has so endeared itself to us that the text, first discovered in that humble form, never looks right in a more elaborate dress.

But against all this stands the exclamation of the young man on first seeing *The Book of Ruth* in its Nonesuch edition: 'Why, it's quite a readable story!'

He had come to think of that limpid pastoral as an affair of double-columns of close-set type, interspersed with annoying verse-numbers and italic mutterings from the inside margin. Many readers would prefer to own a Plutarch that was set in the noble, ancient Poliphilus face, possibly with a discreet touch of Renaissance decoration, than one set, however legibly, in Scotch roman.

Elsewhere in this number a contributor appeals to the present-day typographer to present us with a *corpus* of English classics in really appropriate dress. We are interested in the possibilities of the question. Is there, for example, any 'spirit of the age' that permeates both the writings of Voltaire and the types of Baskerville, in such a way that it would at once occur to the modern book designer (as it occurred to Beaumarchais) that Baskerville somehow 'went with Voltaire'? If so, this can lead to 'period typography' at its most unimaginative. Is there, on the other hand, something so incisive and cool about Bodoni that Swift's *Tale of a Tub* ought to be printed in that face? That calls for a somewhat arbitrary critical taste on the designer's part. But really fine typography is rare enough and subtle enough to demand more than a simple mechanical knowledge of how types are combined.

We intend, therefore, to announce in the near future a new kind of competition for book-lovers. We shall give a list of six or eight titles of well-known books in classic or modern English literature, and ask competitors to imagine that they are book designers, working for modern publishers, who have already made all necessary copyright arrangements, that the books indicated are to be produced at what may be called a 'reasonable' price, and will be, in common with most well-printed English books, 'Monotype' set. They can indicate any type-face in the 'Monotype' specimen book; but special sheets of standard book-faces, ranging historically from Poliphilus and Verona to Scotch roman, will be prepared and sent free to competitors on request. Further details will be given when the definite announcement is made to the public. Any one with theories as to the making of fine books is welcome to compete, and publishers and advertising men will be given a chance to judge the choices, not only of the competitor whose suggestions, and reasons why, seem best to the judges

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(who will themselves be distinguished men in the typographic world), but also of any other meritorious entries, especially those of the younger and less-known typographers in whose hands the future of good printing in England surely depends.

A Page for Tyros

By William Wythe

DESPITE the valuable work that has been done at the various Schools of Instruction, there must still be a number of operators who, not having had the advantage of a school, would appreciate the following notes:

It should be the first aim of the beginner to set correctly. Speed will come with practice. Having mastered the lay-out of the keyboard, the operator should turn his attention to the position of his hands. The dropping of the wrist develops jerky movements and should be avoided; with the wrist flexed the hands are free in their movements; the operator can keep his fingers close to the board and reach out rather than raise his hand to strike the keys. The blanketing of the justification keys by the copy should be avoided, and the right-hand button bank should be operated without swinging the keyboard.

To obtain the best results from the keyboard air-pressure should be kept at a point where the machine is 'lively', care being taken that unit values are registered correctly and the paper-feed mechanism responds quickly. Excessive air-pressure is unnecessary and does not make for accuracy, being a frequent cause of mistouches.

A study of spacing mechanism of the keyboard and its relation to the caster will well repay the beginner; in fact, it is essential to successful operating. In many cases it will be found that the close watching of unit wheel and em scale can be avoided and setting simplified; it is the means whereby the machine does the 'thinking' and becomes the servant of the operator.

As an example, in the following table, after using set spaces for the first column, the remaining columns (each measuring $2\frac{1}{2}$ ems) can be set by using a variable space each side of the figures. This method would be easier to operate than using set spaces, the operator setting his figure columns as straight matter:

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Railway	Working Expenses per Cent. of Earnings									
	1897	1898	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	1905	1906
Caledonian	50.4	51.7	53.3	56.6	56.4	55.7	55.8	53.9	53.6	57.7
Glasgow & South Western	54.6	56.1	58.0	61.6	61.2	60.8	61.4	59.9	59.3	60.5
Great Central	56.4	58.3	65.3	70.3	72.7	67.3	63.1	62.9	62.7	62.9

In statistical work where consecutive columns have similar wording and figures variable spaces and one justification can be used for the whole line:

Details for Four Years	1906-1907	1907-1908	1908-1909	1909-1910
	(a) Net	(a) Net	(a) Net	(a) Net

A combination of set and variable spaces can be used to advantage in alternate columns having the same wording or equivalent unit values:

Year	British Empire		Other Countries		Total	
	Gold	Silver	Gold	Silver	Gold	Silver

Here, in the last line of a heading, we have six column heads consisting of the words 'Gold' and 'Silver' used alternately. At first sight of this quite common form of heading a tyro using rule-of-thumb methods would no doubt single justify each column and set the em-rack pointer and unit wheel by hand to the starting-point of the next column; that is to say, five handlings of the unit wheel and six justifications. But if in centring the word 'Gold' in the second column, using a 4-unit variable space each side, it is noted that 16 units are required to fill the column (each 4-unit variable being increased to 12 units), the remaining five columns can be set by using a 4-unit variable space each side of the word 'Silver' and two 6-unit spaces each side of 'Gold', the one justification necessary to centre the word 'Silver' in each column being shown automatically at end of line as in setting straight matter. Alternatively, the unit value of the smaller word can be calculated mentally and the columns

set straight across as described. Both of these methods are an improvement on the single justification of each column.

These examples are given as possible uses of the variable space, but as most tabular composition is a combination of set and variable space work, the learner should make himself acquainted with the use of 7 and 8 unit spaces and 8, 9, and 10 unit leaders.

A further study will bring to light the many uses of letter-spacing: the addition of odd units to the first em rule in cross-rule lines; the increasing or reducing of set widths in a tight table head; the economical handling of author's corrections by in-spacing; and the obtaining of 3-unit spaces on any set by the simple method of combining the 5-unit space with the variable space and normal justification.

The essentials in letter-spacing are to register correctly the unit values of each character (taking care that unit rack does not slip to right) and to increase the justification scale figures by the justification for 2 units of set in use; that is, the difference between the normal and the 6-unit justification figures. When using scales based on 1 unit of 24 set add 1 unit of justification.

In setting straight matter the learner must bear in mind that though justification is possible within less than 4 ems from zero on the em scale, the ringing of the bell is not the signal to send the line away, but is a warning to attend to the spacing: on good spacing depends the appearance of the finished book.

The type-face in use and the nature of the work should decide the spacing to be used. If it is decided to close space, the space may be omitted inside quotation marks and before the colon, semicolon, exclamation and interrogation marks, the latter being followed by a space of the line. A 5-unit and variable space can be used after the full point, or an en quad when the point is followed by a capital T, V, W, or Y. Words will have to be divided frequently in preference to wide spacing, and in the larger sizes letter-spacing may be necessary to avoid bad divisions and short break lines.

Educational and general magazine work set in ordinary book-faces admit of more open spacing. In this class of work the 7-unit quotation marks can be

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used with advantage, and the colon, semicolon, exclamation and interrogation marks can be placed in wider unit rows so that a space is cast on the left of their shanks. The spacing will be as used in close spacing, but the average justification should give about a 6-unit space.

In lines presenting any difficulty owing to undividable words, proper names, or figures falling at the end of a line, letter-spacing in the smaller sets, or the use of the 5-unit in combination with the variable space in the larger sets, will be found useful for in-spacing. Spacing can also be reduced by the justification key within limits.

On the question of spacing the learner should think in 'points' and not in ens or thick spaces, and to this end should compare the size of spacing given by the lower row of figures on the justification scale in use.

The young caster attendant should work in close co-operation with the keyboard operator, for keyboard and caster are inseparable as regards composition. By exploring the possibilities of caster and keyboard together, much will be learned to mutual advantage.

To be an efficient caster attendant one must take an interest in the functions of the machine and watch its product closely. A study of the matrix-selecting mechanism, and the sizing, spacing, and ejecting mechanisms, will give an added interest to his work and enable him ably to second the man at the keyboard.

To both keyboard and caster men I would say in conclusion that 'near enough' is not good enough on the 'Monotype'.

The 'Younger Generation' in the Book Trades

By Charles Legge

We are glad to call attention to the aims of the Bookcraft Guild described in this article by Mr. Legge. From the growing support given to this association it would seem that the younger generation in the publishing and bookselling trade is fully alive to the necessity for discussion, comparison of experience, and the acquisition of new ideas in book production and selling. Those interested should write to the Secretary, 'Chumleigh', Micawber Avenue, Hillingdon, Middlesex.—ED.

AT their Cambridge Conference in July 1927 the Associated Booksellers passed a resolution to the effect that an endeavour should be made to revive or develop the system of apprenticeship in the Book Trade, and presumably some sort of scheme is afoot on these lines. So much for booksellers' assistants. What of the publishing branch? There appears to be no provision whatsoever for them, apart from classes held by the L.C.C. at the London School of Printing.

Now the watchword in business to-day is 'efficiency'. Looking round at the various commercial activities of the present day one sees that in practically all of them the assistants have placed before them opportunities for getting ahead in their work. In banks and insurance offices clerks are encouraged to sit for the various examinations held by their respective institutes, and having passed these examinations are, in various ways, advanced in their professions. Look down the list of subjects covered by a well-known correspondence college. The list covers practically every side of industrial life to-day. But does one see book-selling or publishing? Not a bit of it, yet on these two trades (or professions?) depends practically the life of the college in question.

Why is it that these two most important jobs are from the point of view of the assistant left to chance? Surely the dissemination of knowledge, be it in the form of a text-book or a masterpiece in prose, is of such paramount importance in the life of any nation that it demands intelligence of a high order. And yet it

is all left to chance. A boy, or a girl for that matter, wants a job. One is going in a bookshop or a publisher's office. Apparently the responsible people consider only the fact that the applicant is of more or less attractive appearance, honest and trustworthy, and does not demand a salary out of reason. Do they ever stop to wonder for a moment whether or not the prospective assistant has even a transitory interest in books, whether he even knows how to *open* a book, before engaging a new hand?

One is impelled to the conclusion that they do not, and yet they spend their time, or a great proportion of it, to say nothing of their money, devising ways to make the public buy more books, when by proper attention to their own internal economy at least a part of their problem would be solved.

The public, as a whole, does not know what it wants to read. Mr. Michael Sadleir, in a lecture once at Stationers' Hall, instanced a lady who went into a bookshop for a novel 'two inches thick', and still another who wanted one 'bound in a cloth of a colour to match her frock'. What a golden opportunity for an assistant who knew his job! One does not say that the bookseller must teach the public, but the opportunities arise every day where the seed of a genuine love of good literature may be planted by an astute and intelligent assistant, to bear fruit in time, who knows, perhaps fiftyfold, perhaps a hundredfold.

Now in London to-day there is a small company of booksellers' and publishers' assistants who, while acknowledging the debt they owe to the London School of Printing, are not satisfied with that, but are going further. Started originally in 1925 not more than twenty strong, this small club, now the Bookcraft Guild, with no advertisement and no capital, has amongst its members some of the keenest brains amongst the publishers' and booksellers' assistants in London to-day. They have recognized that the Trade Associations cannot or will not do anything for them, and they have decided to help themselves. They meet once a month, and the informality of their meetings—a point which strikes one immediately—is conducive to the utmost good fellowship. Each month a different topic is discussed or lectured upon, but in such a friendly informal manner that it is not a class but a family gathering. They have a brief



Oxford University Press—Monotype Composing Room

THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS

Constitution and their aims are defined as follows, based on the medieval idea of the Trade Guild:

- (1) To unite all persons engaged in the publishing and bookselling trade by means of lectures, discussions, and social meetings.
- (2) To do all in its power to assist the welfare of all members of the Guild.
- (3) To encourage and promote efficiency in all members of the Guild.
- (4) To promote a spirit of mutual co-operation and good fellowship among its members.

Mark the first of these, '*all* persons'. Here is the essence of industrial peace to-day. One need say no more. The point is amplified in the last paragraph, and co-operation is the watchword of the Guild. Every member is pledged to help the others, and by the interchange of ideas, opinions, and experiences to help on the work not only of selling books but of influencing public taste in literature, and so making a nation of book-buyers instead of book-borrowers.

It is significant that amongst the lecturers this year are Mr. Michael Sadleir, Mr. A. Tresidder Sheppard, and Mr. Charles Young, the President of the Associated Booksellers; but great as the attraction of listening to gentlemen so eminent in their professions as these must be, one cannot but admire in the members of the Guild the grit that can give up leisure time to listen to what is indubitably 'shop' with no other object than to make themselves more efficient, and with little or no hope of reward.

Modern Fine Book Printing—A Review

THE FLEURON. A Journal of Typography. Edited by Stanley Morison. No. VI. Cambridge University Press. 1928.

PRINTING OF TO-DAY. An Illustrated Survey of Post-war Typography in Europe and the United States. Edited by Oliver Simon and Julius Rodenberg, with a General Introduction by Aldous Huxley. London: Peter Davies. 1928.

MODERN BOOK PRODUCTION. The Studio Ltd., London. 1928.

TALK—ordinary drawing-room conversation—is undeniably a stimulus to the arts. Not to the artist; he works better out of earshot of the clatter of tea-cups and the parochial chatter of 'groups'; but to the arts which thrive or perish under our present social system, according to the patronage they enjoy. Patronage to-day does not mean subsidy by a few wealthy individuals. But it does mean a more or less general interest among intelligent people, fortified by some critical standards and made significant by their power to purchase. We may be glad, therefore, to realize that during the last few years book printing has definitely become one of those subjects that 'one might as well know about'. It sounds like another whim of aesthetic snobbery; possibly it often is so. The printed page offers a fine range of semi-technical jargon which is not beyond the amateur's grasp. But the book is, after all, a far more intimate part of Everyman's life than other objects which give him a less easy chance to play the connoisseur: wines, Oriental carpets, Latin poetry, the turf. All these subjects supply the talker with the opportunity—always dear to him—of sitting in judgement. But one Persian carpet that is worth casually exhibiting to his guests costs more than even a Kelmscott Chaucer; and picking a horse is not, like picking a favourite press, 'a matter of taste'. It is a very significant point that in one of the wittiest and most snobbish novels of the year, Louis Marlow's *Mr. Amberthwaite*—a novel

which would have been called 'fashionable' a generation ago—the hero, casting about for a topic of conversation with a 'modern' young woman, chooses 'the latest Nonesuch edition'. (To have discussed a far more expensive Ashendene Press book would presumably have 'dated' him.) Decidedly, book printing is now being discussed by diners-out who have never soiled their fingers with printers' ink; and the result, coming with the inevitableness of any economic law, is that publishers find a sale for carefully planned books; designers are given commissions with much less string tied to them; the Book improves, and the steps of its progress are noted in a growing collection of critical and documented works on book production, such as those we are reviewing here.

This new lay interest in printing has grown up synchronously with the career of *The Fleuron*, and has been greatly supported by that 'journal of typography', which appears about once a year and goes, under its present editorship, from glory unto glory. That a well-bound book of 268 pages, with 65 fine illustrations and many specially designed type specimens, can still be sold for a guinea is worth noting, particularly as this means that *The Fleuron*, with its policy of wedding practice to theory and modern inspiration to historical research, can go to the audience for which it is intended, namely, the intelligent man here and abroad who intends to do something about book production. Whether that something consists of creating or adapting new ideas in typography or illustration, or merely of noting the printer or illustrator who should be encouraged by subscriptions or even commissions, the subscribers to *The Fleuron* represent an active rather than a passive body. The responsibility of the editor, then, is to act as a world scout for new typographic developments, and to put historical research to the service not of mere bibliographic knowledge but of present-day book-work. This Mr. Stanley Morison is eminently fitted to do, as he is not only a critic and student of printing and type-forms, but also a practising designer, having created a typographic style which has influenced, directly or indirectly, the 'house style' of many leading publishers.

The current *Fleuron*, No. VI, contains no fewer than seven full-length articles, and a number of reviews, besides continuing the excellent feature of 'type

reviews', critical and comparative studies of new types which have been judged worthy of notice. In each case the annexed specimens were specially designed, and printed under the supervision of the designer or producer; the value of these specimens is further enhanced by the choice of an unpublished text. Thus first-edition enthusiasts will find an engaging short story by Sylvia Townsend Warner (illustrated, in the special edition, by Ceri Richards) printed as a specimen of the new 'Monotype' Pastonchi. Of this face the reviewer says: 'The affection of literary men for the letter forms upon which their immortality depends has brought about, in the past, almost as much improvement in type design as any other motive. It is, therefore, a significant thing that so renowned a poet as Signor Pastonchi should have joined the illustrious line of authors and editors who, debarred from the anxious pleasure of writing out their own books, at least insist on creating a type that shall convey in some way a spiritual holograph independent of set tradition.'

The first article deals with the work of Rudolf Koch, the German artist and letter designer, whose personality and originality has not only made him the foremost book artist in his own country, but has impressed itself on the typography of other lands. A very different type of book artist, but one who has also combined typographical experiment with illustrative work, is Bernard Naudin of Paris, about whom M. Luc Benoist writes. The advantage to the type designer and book decorator of having real ability and draughtsmanship may often be noted to-day. There are Weiss, Ehmcke, Tiemann, and Bernhard in Germany—all graphic artists—and in America we learn of the decorative work of T. M. Cleland and W. A. Dwiggins, described by Mr. Paul Beaujon in his article 'On Decorative Printing in America'. The author puts the case for relevant and discreet decoration in printed books, and urges a sharper distinction between the dignified aims of book production and the mere cajolery of advertising. There are illustrations of various unpublished designs by Messrs. Bruce Rogers, Cleland, and Dwiggins—the latter represented by some interesting modernistic experiments.

Each number of *The Fleuron* contains at least one article of serious research in

the history of typography. This time Mr. A. F. Johnson makes a long-needed survey of the work of Geoffroy Tory, the sixteenth-century French illustrator and type designer. The attributions made by Mr. Johnson will throw much light on a career which has become somewhat legendary owing to Bernard's too-inclusive work; and the illustrations, which include many rare pages, are beautiful in themselves.

Within the last year we have seen a growing interest in decorated letters, and the article on the subject by Mr. Stanley Morison is therefore of particular interest, as it traces the different forms of letter design from early in the Christian era down to the outstanding masters of our own day. The reproductions are full of stimulating ideas for designers, and include some original experiments with a graver on actual printing types.

Mr. D. B. Updike contributes an address by a connoisseur of printing during the French Revolution, with his own comments on the fine period of design in which the Gillé types were created.

Numerous reviews, marked by witty good sense, form with the above-mentioned type reviews the closing part of a volume which is essential to all who have to do with book production. We note that with the next number, *The Fleuron* will come to its self-appointed end, and the seven volumes thus completed will form a remarkable monument to a period which is exceptionally fruitful of ideas and original work.

Printing of To-day and *Modern Book Production* are selections of international scope which, by reason of their intelligent editing, are supplementary to each other rather than overlapping to any serious extent. The former does not hesitate to examine the whole philosophy of fine book-printing, and it is significant that Mr. Aldous Huxley, as representing the Intelligent Reader rather than the Printing Expert, should appear as the author of the general preface. The editing has been well done, for there is a definite uniformity of aim and method in the sections respectively written by Mr. Oliver Simon, Dr. Julius Rodenberg, and Mr. Paul Beaujon. Mere lists of names have been avoided in favour of generalizations, sometimes radical, but always stimulating. Mr.

Simon's plea for a contemporary type is perhaps somewhat premature. The private-press movement taught us very strikingly that originality is not the first quality of a good type-face, and that type designs must grow slowly and naturally out of a society and period which takes legibility and beauty of form completely for granted. Now that the classic book-faces issued by the Monotype Corporation are in general use, not only in England but on the Continent, one may say that the soil for any possible new growth has been fertilized from the rich detritus of earlier periods; and before the next year is over it will be shown that the Monotype's policy of reviving the best of ancient type-faces has only been a necessary preparation for the production of contemporary work of equal merit.

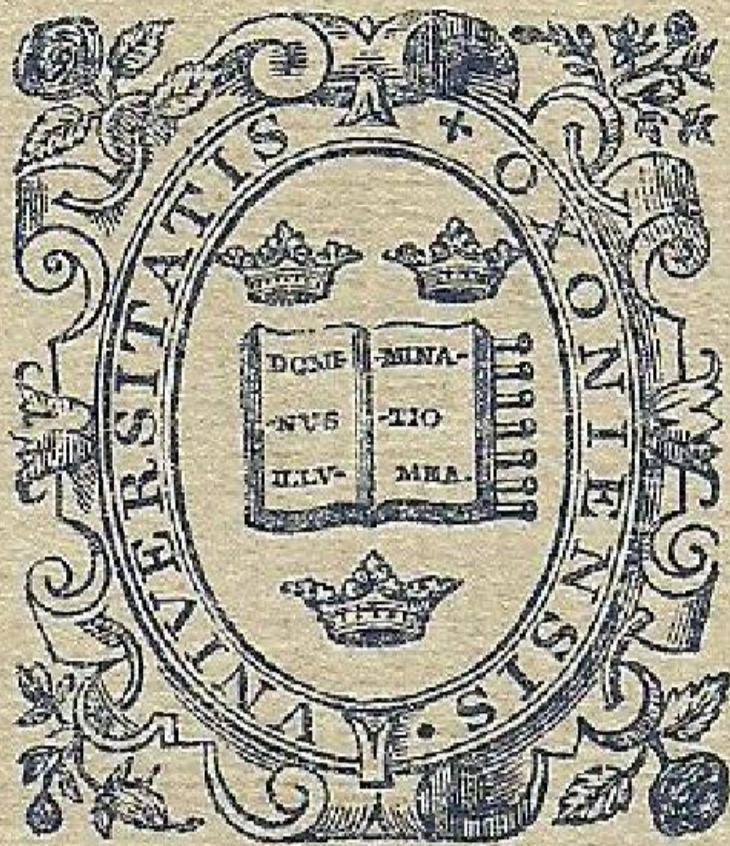
The *Studio* volume, *Modern Book Production*, covers no fewer than fourteen countries specifically with articles in each case by experts who know their ground. The result is that one gets a much clearer notion of the differences existing, let us say, between Hungarian, Polish, and Czecho-Slovakian printing than as if all these were grouped simply as 'Central European'. The foreword and the article on Great Britain by Mr. B. H. Newdigate show an admirable power to draw conclusions from specific cases. Speaking of the good work done by machine composition in making fine printing practicable for a larger market, Mr. Newdigate pays handsome tribute to the 'Monotype'.

But it is in the selection of examples that both this book and the one mentioned above are particularly valuable. Obviously there is such a thing as a national style in present-day book-work. One has only to glance from the light, polished-looking Swedish pages to the forceful and strongly calligraphic designs of Jugo-Slavia and Poland to be assured of this. Similarly, one gathers that there is some special genius among the German craftsmen for bindings and cover designs, not only in the unapproachable work of Wiemeler and Math  y of Leipzig, but in many of the ordinary commercial publications as well. In the same way, fine illustrations seem to be the particular *forte* of France, and here we note specially the amazing talent of M. A. Alexeieff. There is a specimen of the new Treyford type, designed by Mr. Graily Hewitt,

and produced for the Oxford University Press by the Lanston Monotype Corporation. The English section of *Modern Book Production* is chosen with discrimination, and to the foreigner would probably be more interesting from a typographic point of view than for the technically fine, but somewhat too daintily 'mannered', illustrations. There is, however, the work of Mr. Eric Gill to put against the finest wood and copper engraving now being done abroad. The section on the Netherlands is perhaps incompletely representative of the best work done in that country. One regrets also that more space could not have been found for Russian printing, and especially for the admirable work of the State Publishing House. There is, however, an opportunity to see some of the work of Vladimir Favorsky, one of the greatest present-day masters of wood-engraving.

One serious fault with the *Studio* production is the omission of dates in the descriptions of the books. Seeing that the work of at least ten years is being reviewed, the date has considerable significance to would-be collectors.

To one who cannot attend all the stimulating exhibitions of fine printing here and abroad, books like the three we have mentioned are essential to a knowledge of the various means by which the modern book has acquired its new prestige. Even to one who attended the International Exhibitions at Leipzig in 1927 and at Cologne last summer, these books form a valuable record of achievement, and they may be unhesitatingly recommended to all lovers of printing.



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