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TOWARDS AN IDEAL TYPE

BY

STANLEY MORISON

The general life of any more or less permanent society gives being to a variety of opinions, sentiments and principles both pragmatic and absolute. The historian, besides distinguishing between good, average, and bad, notices a certain flux of custom, of opinion and of principle. Of course, not every movement is sufficiently deliberate to become progressive, nor sufficiently well-founded in common sense to be permanent. The accidental and by no means intelligent approval of authority (or what is held to be such) creates for a time what many feel to be a tradition to which deference is due from all men of good will. Thus with other influences there slowly emerges a body of practice, conventions, and finally of dogma. It is more than difficult for the individual to separate himself from the social process which has made him what he is, and when he does so the consequences may be unfortunate. It is presumably this fear that keeps us all to the beaten track. The typographer is apt to be more keen even than the theologian or the lawyer in ferreting out precedent. Perhaps this is just as well in view of the extremes in roman type design to which certain German *Buchkünstler* have gone, a defect due to the absence of the strong tradition which restrains experimenters here and in America. Yet nevertheless it may prudently be doubted whether our traditions are as pure as they are powerful. What are we to think, for instance, when, in his Note on the Foundations of the Kelmscott Press, William Morris says that 'There was only one source from which to take examples of perfected roman type, to wit, the works of the great Venetian printers of the fifteenth century, when Nicholas

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monstra haberentur. Deinde aliquāto post cum theologiā naturalē prędicans quorundam philosophorum sentētiās digessiss&: opposuit sibi quęstionē & ait. Hoc loco dicit aliquis. Credat ergo cęlum & terram deos esse: & supra lunā alios: infra alios. Ego feram aut Platonem: aut peripateticum Stratonē: quorū alter deum fecit sine corpore: alter sine animo. Et ad hoc respondens qđ ergo tandem inquit: Veriora uidentur Titi Tatii aut Romuli: aut Tullii Hostilii summa: Cloatinam Titus Tātius dedicauit deam: Picum Tiberinūq; Rōuluf Hostilius Pauorem atq; Pallorem: teterrimos hominum affectus: quorū alter

Fig. 1. Da Spira, 1469

Lo Helephante fa suono in bocca circa lenani simile allo starnuto & per lenari i fuori suono simile a quello delle trombe. Solamente ebuoi hanno piu graue uo mine che emaschi. In tutti gl'altri e lopposito: & tra gl'huomini etiam emaschi ca hāno piu graue boce che le femine. Del fanciullo che nasce non sode uoce se prim e tutto fuori. Non parla senon dopo lanno: Ma el figliuolo di Creso Re di Lydia di sei mesi: el quale prodigio significo la ruina di tutto quello regno. Quegli ch minciono a parlare presto penono piu a andare. La uoce di uenta robusta da ci anni in la & nella uecchiaia fa sſotigla. Ne e alchuno altro animale nel quale piu so simuti. Sono prete rea molte cose degne di riferire della uoce. Nelle Orchestre:

Fig. 2. Jenson, 1470

through the streets of Micklegarth, and hedged with their axes the throne of Kirialax the Greek king, it was alive & vigorous. When blind Dandolo was led from the Venetian galleys on to the conquered wall of Constantinople, it was near to its best & purest days. When Constantine Palæologus came back an old and care-worn man from a peacefuller home in the Morea to his doom in

Fig. 3. Morris, 1891

well-doing, 'with the spirit & clear aims of a Man. He has discovered that the Ideal Workshop he so panted for is even this same Actual ill-furnished Workshop he has so long been stumbling in. He can say to himself: 'Tools? Thou hast no Tools? Why, there is not 'a Man, or a Thing, now alive but has tools. The 'basest of created animalcules, the Spider itself, has a

Fig. 4. Walker and Sanderson, 1901

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Jenson produced the completest and most roman characters from 1470 to 1476.' This confident statement, made in 1891, has gathered wider acceptance with the frequent repetition and quotation which the interest of Morris's experiments inevitably occasioned. Elsewhere the Kelmscott master claimed that 'Jenson gives us the high-water mark of the roman letter and that after his death printing declined till it reached its lowest depth in the ugliness of Bodoni.' Further praise of Jenson's type is implicit in Mr. Pollard's appreciation of the Doves type, avowedly based on the type of the *Eusebius* of 1470. The Doves is held by Mr. Pollard to be 'the finest roman fount in existence,' and Mr. Updike himself says that 'the types of Jenson have never been equalled.' This is a remarkable consensus of expert opinion. Nevertheless, with due respect to these distinguished authorities, I should like to plead for a little qualification in the eulogy they bestow upon Jenson's type and its derivations. When I ask what it is that I am entitled to demand of a type face before committing myself to the statement that it is satisfactory, I find that I require at least two things: first, that the essential form corresponds with that handed down; and secondly, that the letters compose agreeably into words. Of the many types in present and past use which fulfil the first condition there are, I fear, but few that comply with the second. It is essential that not only should every combination of lower case letters achieve due evenness of line and colour, but that the upper case be equally homogeneous, and as easily as possible merge with the small letters. And it is in the relation of upper to lower case that I suspect Jenson's type to be less than perfect. This is obviously a point to be regarded in the light of its origin and growth as well as in connection with æsthetic considerations. We know a thing largely by its cause, and it is obvious that knowledge of its genesis is essential to an intelligent understanding of its nature and end. I make no excuse, then, for first transcribing a page of relevant history.

Our roman types consist of upper case (capitals) and lower case, or, in the terminology of the palæographer, majuscules and minuscules. For the first three or four centuries of our era formal writing consisted of capitals whose shapes were drawn from the inscribed letters cut by the stone engravers. These cutters had standardized their alphabet, i.e. they made their capitals of equal height. To this rule they allowed an exception: they occasionally treated the I as an ascender. Out of a sense of reverence, for example, they would cut IMPERATORI. Again, they would use it at the beginning of a line

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copiosilactis effluere. Puer. sur-
rexit incolomis. Nos obstupefacti
tantaereimiraculo. idquod ipsa
cogebat ueritas fatebamur. Non

The Caroline minuscule

Fig. 5. From Delisle, *Mem. s. l'école calligraphique de Tours au ix^e siècle*

Dilecti filij. Saltem et apostolicam ben. Accepimus litteras uestras quibus
Nos filij dilecti franciscum ipsum tum ob famulatus dignitatem: tum
nec ipsi: nec uobis possumus complacere. Quia minor est annis et
adiuncula petro cardinali nostro saltem carnis nepoti contulimus: q. ecclesie
bres mutare. Sed offerret se in dies occasio in qua Franciscum ipsum poteri
caritate recipiat: eiq. ad possessione ecclesie antedictae pacifice consequi
annulo p. scatoris die .xxiii. Maji. Mccc. lxxii. Pontificatus

The Chancery hand

Fig. 6. The writing of a papal brief, 1472 (from Steffens, *L. P.*)

DE FALSA SAPIENTIA.

se, suaq. confirmet: nec ulli alteri sapere concedit; ne se
desipere fateatur. sed sicut alias tollit; sic ipsa quoq. ab
alijs tollitur omnibus. Nihilo minus enim philosophi
sunt, qui eam stultitiae accusant. Quancunq. lauda-
ueris, uerumq. dixeris; a philosophis uituperatur, ut fal-
sa. Credemus ne igitur uni sese suamq. doctrinam lau-
danti; an multis unius alterius ignorantiam culpant-
ibus? Rectius ergo sit necesse est, quod plurimi sentiunt,
quam quod unus. Nemo enim potest de se recte iudi-

The Chancery type

Fig. 7. The italic of Aldus cut by Francesco Griffo, 1501

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as a decorative element or to indicate a long quantity in words like *DIVO*. But this '*I-longa*' practice was quite optional. A similar but more disciplined custom is also to be noticed in early manuscripts, but minuscule letters did not begin to show themselves until the third century.¹ The difference here in size between majuscule and minuscule is as slight as the difference in form. In all cases the *h* and *l* are a fraction less than double the height of the minuscule. The majuscules scarcely rise above the minuscules. The specimen reproduced at p. 309 of *Greek and Latin Palaeography*, 'may,' says Sir Maunde Thompson, 'be accepted as a standard example of the perfect half-uncial written with a full sense of beauty by an Italian scribe.' It will be observed that the ascenders, *b*, *l*, *f*, are well developed.

In the eighth century Charlemagne erected his famous school at Tours. The general practice of this school, which initiated what we now call the carolingian reform, is to employ majuscules for titles and other headings of the volume usually selected for ornamentation. Paragraphs are distinguished by the employment of large versals: once more the height of majuscules occurring in the text is (as will be seen from the reproduction at fig. 5) considerably less than that of the ascenders *l*, *b*, *f*, etc. We are entitled to assume, I think, that the Tours calligraphers, in their consideration of the æsthetic side of the reform, would have used larger capitals had they judged that this would improve the appearance of the composition or was necessitated by their view of the purpose of capitalization. In this connection we must also remember that the caroline minuscule is due not to a dilettante demand for a new hand by a set of modish young calligraphers, but to a serious appreciation of the importance of accurate transcription. The reformers possessed equally a sound understanding of the fundamentals of fine writing, secured, we must believe, after a thorough examination and practice of the previously current forms.² It is fair, I think, to conclude that the Tours preservation of a modest capital represents the considered judgement of experts alike in calligraphy as in transcription. We are concerned here, of course, with the appearance of writing rather than with the accuracy with which an author's meaning is conveyed to readers of the present and future. It is generally admitted that the caroline letter is a vast improvement upon previously existing hands; and in the opinion of no less

¹ Facsimile in Maunde Thompson, *Greek and Latin Palaeography*, Oxford, 1911 (No. 94).

² So E. A. Loew, *Studia palaeographica*, München, 1910.

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T: Deo optimo & Immortali auspice:~
A b c d e e f g g h i k l m n o p q r s t u x x
 x y x y z z z z z

*C*osì uia il stato human: Chi questa sera finisce'
 il corso suo, Chi diman nasce'. Sol
 virtu doma morte' horrida
 , e, altera .

L u d o . V i c e t i m s R o m e ' i n P a r h i o n e '
 s c r i b e b a .

• ANN • M D X X I I •

*D*eo, & *V*irtuti' omnia debent ,

A Model of the Chancery style

Fig. 8. A page from the writing-book of Ludovico Vicentino, Rome, 1522

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an authority than Mr. Madan, the caroline minuscule 'may still be regarded as a model of clearness and elegance.' The post-caroline letter suffered a full measure of modification and corruption, and if a number of fine writers shed lustre upon the twelfth century, it was not until the renaissance that the purified caroline letter entered upon that development as a result of which it was to supersede all other hands.

Our present type forms, then, are due to a mixture of development and atavism. When the humanists deliberately abandoned all gothic and semi-gothic scripts in favour of the caroline in which was preserved the letter of the very classics upon whose spirit they nourished their philosophy, their chief concern was to surpass the beauty of all existing manuscripts. It cannot be denied that this ambition was achieved. The neo-caroline hand was taught at a school inaugurated in Florence by Niccolo Niccoli (1364-1447) during the first years of the fifteenth century, and it spread throughout Italy. Its progress was much assisted by its employment as a diplomatic hand, a piece of good fortune due to the increasing business in the Roman curia. Thus Eugenius IV found it necessary to separate the work of writing important *bulls* from the less important *briefs*. For the latter a new department was opened, and following diplomatic precedent a distinctive hand was allocated to it. As this class of document was intended to be executed with despatch, the simple neo-caroline was chosen, and it was under the pontificate of Nicholas V (1447-1451) that the formulæ and characters of these documents were fixed.

This neo-caroline script, in the hands of the writers of diplomatic, acquired an essentially cursive character whose slope gives natural encouragement to flourishing. In this form it is known as the chancery or cursive hand, as may be seen from the first of all copy-books, *Il modo & Regola di scrivere lettera corsiva over cancelleresca*, compiled by Lodovico de Henricis (Ludovico Vicentino), who describes himself as *scrittore de brevi apostolici*. The chancery hand found favour with many artists, sculptors, and artificers of the Italian renaissance, Mantegna, Benvenuto Cellini, Enea Vico, Baldassare Peruzzi, Leonardo da Vinci, all using this form. Thus the neo-caroline spread as a correspondence script, gathering vigour and individuality in various hands. The pleasant renaissance habit of writing their private letters with a view to being handed about as specimens of latinity naturally developed in scholars an interest in calligraphy not less than in epistolography. There grew up, consequently, a demand for the services of the writing master, and

Guardie ponno accettar si in parte, & con le conditioni giustificate, et neccessarie, che di sotto si diranno, ma non gia, quando cōbatterse vno cō l nemico, quale fosse di pari forza, et si ritrouassero amendo in camisa, e l detto nemico se li presentasse cōtra in detta Guardia di Prima, cō l pie sinistro innanzi, perche fermā dōsi Questo verso lui in Quarta ordinaria larga, col pie destro innanzi, subito giunto, li andarebbe incontro, firmandosi in Terza stretta, et non mouendosi l auersario insino à tanto, chē Questo ancora fosse arriuato in detta Terza, spingerebbe di Seconda, sopra il suo pugnale, ciò è de l auersario, doue volendo alzar si la punta con detto pugnale, per mandar la fore con animo di tra passar verso lui, verrebbe da se à firmarsi la spada ne la persona la quale ne l approssimarsi, tanto maggiormente anco si discoprirebbe, & offerirebbe al colpo. Il che se pure occorresse à Questo, riti ouandosi per caso ne la detta Guardia di Prima, come staua l altro col pie sinistro innanzi, uolgerrebbe alquanto in dentro la spalla sinistra, solamente per schifar il parare, essendo prohibito per le ragioni gia dette, accompagnando la spada del ne

Fig. 9. The chancery italic at Rome. Blado, 1523

La bontà et utilità de le cose, o Lettori, suole essere sempre Speciale cagione, che esse siano da gli homini amate, et accettate; e se pur qualche maligna, et inuidiosa nebbia tal hora tanto le cuopre, che siano da le genti biasimate, e rifiutate, aduiene poi, che quando da la ragione, o dal tempo vengono scoperte, subito sono disiate, et abbracciate. La onde vedendo io di quanta utilità, anzi necessità siano a la scrittura Italiana le lettere ritrovate dal Trissino; di maniera, che non è possibile senza esse ad imparare a leggere, ne Cortigiano, ne Toscano, ne niuna de l altre belle lingue d Italia a chi non le sà, ne a chi le sà poter senza esse drittamente scriverle, ne ad altri propriamente manifestarle, ho voluto un'altra volta stampare la Epistola, che egli di esse lettere scrisse a Papa Clemente Settimo, che di presente è Sommo Pontefice, acciò, che questa nostra lingua si

Fig. 10. Rome: Vicentino and Trissone, 1524

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*Hauendo Io Giouanniantonio Tagliente prouisionato dal
Serenissimo Dominio Venetiano, con ogni debita cura di-
mostrato a fare diuerse Partite di ragione mercantile con
le sue regole secondo el consueto delli pratici mercatanti,
Et sforzatomì di narrare quanto e stato il bisogno della
Inclita città de Venetia, Et se per alcuno mio diffetto o
uero corso di penna alcuno pelegrino ingegno retrouasse
nella presente mia opera qualche errore prego che in mio
loco uoglia supplire, laquale e intitulata Luminario di
Arithmetica Stampato con gratia et Priuilegio nel Anno
di nostra salute. M. xxv,*

Fig. 11. Italic probably designed by the celebrated Venetian calligrapher Tagliente, 1525

*Al nobilissimo Signor Rocco Granza,
huo Compare; & maggiore honorando.*

*I vn paese doue si tira di balestra d a bolzoni molto aspre-
gnatamente; dice che fu vn tratto vn astuto bales-
trieri, ilqual tirando a mira per dar nel capo a vn'al-
tro, non gli venne colto, per buona ventura. Colui
vedutosi volare il bolzone così apresso alle tempie, &
tanto accosto che rasembrandolo gli fece vento, si comin-
ciò a conturbar tutto. Onde il traditore voltandola in
ridere disse, hauesti paura sorio? da questo saluto da ca-
ni si leuò vn proverbio; se coglie colga, se non, hauesti
paura? Vo dir così, che io ho dato della mia Zucca sul
capo a parecchi pazzeroni e buon anno. Ma se per sorte
nel dar giu la ramatata, la mia Zucca sia piena di fas-
le, di semi, di ciuaie, o d'altra cosa laqual sia pesante;
io credo che la darà loro vn mal crocchio, & se per
mala disgratia la troua sola la buca, (che'l granchio fus-
se ito a spasso) la farà maggiore scoppio, & rintrone-
ra piu loro il capo. Ultimamente se la s'abatte ad ac-
chiappare scoperta la Zucca; i poveri capasoni hanno fat-
to il pane: percioche la ne darà loro vna sì fatta che'l
muro gne ne darà vn'altra; hor sia con Dio.*

Fig. 12. Italic of Marcolini (Venice), 1530. Note the modest capitals in this and in figg. 9, 10 and 11, all modelled by fine calligraphers

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this manual of Ludovico Vicentino (Rome, 1522) was followed by a large number of imitations published in Venice and elsewhere.

Now the precise relation between majuscule and minuscule which has been remarked in the writing of the 8th-century caroline reformation, is carefully reproduced by the 14th-century hand, whether upright or sloping. At p. 60 I show a piece displaying this characteristic.¹ It must not, of course, be inferred that there is no extant MS. in which the capitals range with the ascenders. I submit, however, that it is clear that texts with reduced capitals not only tend to predominate in number, but certainly occur in the best (i.e. the most carefully written) specimens. Formal manuscripts of this epoch exist, of course, in satisfactory numbers at the present time, but it is unfortunate for our purpose that no scholar has considered it worth while to examine in any detail the palæography of the sixteenth century. Nevertheless it is possible with the help of such publications as Steffens, *Lateinische Paläographie* (Fribourg, 1899), Biagi, *Fifty Plates from MSS. in the Laurentian Medicean Library* (Florence, 1914), Carta, *Codici della Bibliotheca Nazionale di Milano* (Rome, 1895), Carta and Cipolla, *Monumenta Palaeografica sacra* (Turin, 1899) to compare a sufficient number of examples to justify the statement that in the clear majority of cases it will be found that majuscules in the text rarely rise to the height of the ascenders. Prominent exceptions will be discovered in the cases of letters in which the perpendicular stroke is the foundation of the character. Thus *I, L, P* tend to rise even above the ascenders. It is obvious that these forms may be indulged in without in any way compromising the homogeneity of the page, and are indeed but a natural efflorescence of the splendid advantage in freedom which the pen will always enjoy over a type form necessarily confined to a geometrically regulated unit. Even so, MSS. were preferred to the best books of the printing press.

Vespasiano de Bisticci, the Florentine bookseller, who had a large share in assembling a library for the Duke of Urbino, says of that splendid collection: 'The books are all beautiful in a superlative degree and all written by the pen. There is not a single one of them printed, for it would have been a shame to have one of that sort.' Another exceedingly fine series of classical and other texts was added to the library of Lorenzo de' Medici. They were written at the time when printers were striving hard to match their excellence. Of MSS. written by such talented scribes as Antonio Sinibaldi, who worked for the Medicean court, and Giulio Pomponio Leto, who was em-

¹ And see nn. 152, 156, 157, 158, 159 in Maunde Thompson, *G. & L. P.*

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ployed by the Vatican Library, it is no exaggeration to claim that they form the very finest specimens of calligraphy extant. Cunning scribes were also attracted to the courts of local Italian princes, and there were besides a number of writers practising in the various courts attached to the Roman curia. The book writings practised by such scribes as Sinibaldi and Leto are formal, upright, and disciplined text-hands. A fair specimen of Sinibaldi's script will be found at fig. 17. It is, then, from these text, formal and semi-formal hands that there developed the roman and italic types of our own day.

It now becomes necessary for us to notice that when, in 1468, the brothers John and Vindalino da Spira of Venice issued their *Cicero* they employed for the purpose what they justifiably claimed to be a new type form, and which was to have a decisive effect upon subsequent type design. It is not a bad letter. To the lower case indeed it is even possible to give very high praise. It is a regular well-cut face of good form. It is, I submit, doubly unfortunate that it was thought well to disregard the traditional relation of the two letters and to increase the measure of the capitals by raising them almost to the height of the ascenders. If a page of da Spira be compared with one of Sinibaldi it will be agreed, I think, that the effect of the printer's capitals is to 'spot' the page. They do not compose well, because in ranging them with the ascenders the designer has *ipso facto* given them too much bulk. In the smaller size used for the *Pliny* of 1469 and the *Livy* of 1470, the capitals are a trifle reduced, but still remain much too conspicuous. It is, as I have said, a double misfortune, because the da Spira type founded a dynasty which lives to-day in the Doves and other types. The da Spira type is held in the very highest esteem by the modern experts. Something of the same welcome was, we may be sure, extended to it in the Venice of that day. But great as Venice was commercially, can we say that its literary and cultural importance was equal to that of Florence? I need not, perhaps, try to answer this question, but if we confine our attention to the subject of calligraphy there cannot, I think, be any doubt that precedence is easily won by Florence. I have already alluded to the fact that the first schools to teach the humanistic script were in Florence. I think, too, that it can be demonstrated that, perhaps by reason of the character and wealth of the nobles of the quattrocento, Florentine achievement in illuminating and writing surpassed that of all other Italian cities, whether Ferrara, Milan, Padua, Bologna, or even Venice. It is not too much to say that the Floren-

✠ CLAVDII CLAVDIANI
POETAE ILLVSTRIS.
DE RAPTV PROSERPI-
NAE LIBER PRIMVS.

i Nferni raptoris equos, afflatâq; curru
Sidera tænarior caligantēsq; profunde
Iunonis thalamos audaci promere cātū
Mens congesta inbet. gressus remoue-
te prophani.

Iam furor humanos nostro de pectore sensus
Expulit, & totum spirant præcordia Phœbum.
Iam mihi cernuntur trepidis delubra moueri
Sedibus, & claram dispergere lumine lucem,
Aduentum testata dei. iam magnus ab imis
Auditur fremitus terris, templūmq; remugit
Cecropidum, sanctasq; faces extollit Eleusis.
Angues Triptolemi strident, & squamea curuis
Colla leuant astricta iugis: lapsūq; sereno
Erecti, roseas tendunt ad carmina cristas.
. Ecce procul ternis Hecate variata figuris
Exoritur: letisq; simul procedit Iacchus
Crinali florens hedera: quem Parthica tigris
Velat, & auratos in nodum colligit vngues.
Ebria Mæonijs figit vestigia Thyrsis
Dij, quibus in numerum vacui famulantur auerni,
Vulgus iners opibus quorum donatur auaris
Quicquid in orbe petit, quos styx liuentibus ambit
Iterfusa vadis, & quos fumantia torquens
a. iiij.

Fig. 13. Colines, Paris, 1529

de Colomnes egualles, telles qu'il vous plaira, cōme vous en voyez icy six, & les
eussiez faites eguallemēt esloignees les vnes des autres, vous estāt au meilieu d'i-
celles, verriez le racourcissēmēt desdittes Colomnes estre naturellement donné,
& ce sans artifice aucun. Dont s'ensuit que les Colomnes & Entrecolomnes
plus esloignees vous sembleroient moindres, & les plus prochaines de vous, plus
grandes, combien qu'ils soient egualles. Puis donc que naturellement ce qui est
viz à viz de vous sus la ligne Terre, se racourcist, il n'est besoin y adiouster ra-

Fig. 16. Le Royer, Kerver, etc., Paris, 1540. Notice that all these French types exhibit reduced capitals

from Cousin: Perspective fo. C42

V N iour trescler, que le Soleil luysoit,
Et sa clarté vn chacun induysoit
Chercher les boys, haults, fueillux, & espais,
Pour reposer à la frescheur, en paix.
Faunes des boys, Satyres, Demydieux,
Sceurent pour eux tresbien choisir les lieux
Si bien couuerts, que le chault en rien nuire
Ne leur pouuoit, tant sceust le Soleil luyre.
Sur le liēt mol, d'herbette, espesse & verte,
Se sont couchez, ayans pour leur couuerte,
Vne espesseur de branchettes, yssues
Des arbres verds, iointes comme tyszues,
Et aupres d'eux (pour leur soif estancher)
Sailloit dehors d'un cristallin rocher,
Douce & claire eau, tresagreable à voir,

Fig. 14. Granjon & de Tournes, Lyons, 1549

IVINA PROVIDENTIA
factum esse puto, FRANCISCE Rex
Christianissime, vt quæ præclara sunt & dif-
ficilia, quantò magis ab ipsis desiderantur &
perquiruntur hominibus: tantò tardiùs à pau-
cis plurimùm inueniantur, & in sua diffe-
rantur tempora, illisque destinenter inuento-
ribus, quos solus Deus ad hæc nouit esse dele-
ctos. Cùm ob multa, tum vt igneus & planè

Fig. 15. Colines, Paris, 1545

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tine school of writers, of whom Antonio Sinibaldi was a conspicuous example, produced the very finest writing of that unsurpassed century. If only printing had found there a more congenial atmosphere! Had Sinibaldi cut a type, say, for Torrentino, I should not, perhaps, now be under the necessity of lamenting the fact that the excessive bulk given to da Spira's capitals was repeated by Jenson, exaggerated by Ratdolt and, save for one or two exceptions, continued to our own day. The ugly appearance of William Morris' golden type is directly due to his being seduced by the letters of Jenson and Rubeus, neither of whom, I am bold enough to suggest, is worthy to be taken as a *perfect* exemplar. But this is the place for a little more history. A fine letter was cut *circa* 1498 for Aldus by Francesco Griffo, of Bologna, and used for the *Hypnerotomachia* of Poliphilus. In one or two points this type, I think, easily surpasses Jenson. First of all the capitals are noticeably less high than the ascenders. Indeed, so anxious was the master that his upper case merge agreeably with the text that these are a trifle lighter in line than the lower case. The heavy slab serifs of Jenson's capitals are gone, and the whole fount composes into a restful and pleasing page. A comparison with the *Poliphilus*, written in Italian and containing therefore more capitals than the Jenson *Eusebius*, is, I think, all in favour of the Aldine page. For my own part I must confess that I am prepared to use a still more modest upper case than Griffo felt able to employ. It would seem that in the thirty or forty years which had elapsed since the invention, dozens of types had appeared retaining the characteristics of the da Spira letters. Nevertheless the old—and I dare add, the true—proportions died hard. Griffo's italic, cut for Aldus in 1501, and another version made for his own use at Fano in 1503 are excellent. The relative of Aldus, Antonio Blado of Asolo, who was appointed printer to the Apostolic camera in 1515, followed his relative with a beautiful but entirely dissimilar italic (? by Ludovico Henricis) in 1523, which preserved the ancient proportions, as also does the interesting italic used in the edition of Trissino's *Epistole* printed and published by Henricis in 1524 and which was (as stated by Trissino himself) cut by Henricis. Imitations and adaptations of Griffo's and Henricis' italic, such as those used by Gryphius, Lyons, 1535, Simon de Colines, Paris, 1530, also conformed. Until the cutting of the *types de l'Université* italics were worked with upright capitals, nor was it felt awkward that they were in some cases thirty per cent. lower than the ascenders. Garamond himself seems to have inclined in many instances towards a modest upper

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case, though the *trismegiste*, his most ubiquitous letter (it appears on nine out of ten titles of the period), lines the capitals with the ascenders. Thenceforward the tale is one of increasingly arrogant capitals. They assert themselves far in excess of their true function and are tolerated to-day, I must assume, only because custom has covered with its all-enveloping cloak a multitude of otherwise unjustifiable usages. By the end of the sixteenth century there were in use no roman types built according to the ancient tradition. In a few italics it survived. Van Dyck's most beautiful italics, cut in 1660, were deliberately destroyed (cf. the story in Updike) in order to make room for Fleischmann's modernities. Fell *bourgeois* is admirable. For the rest, capitals ranging with the under side of the beaks of the ascenders are the rule.

The history of calligraphy reveals that with the passage of time there resulted an even more widespread declension from the old standards set by such masters as Vicentino and others. At first the imitators of Vicentino were legion. After Sigismundo Fanti (Rome, 1523) came Giouantonio Tagliente, *prouisionato dal serenissimo dominio Venetiano per merito de insegnare questa virtute del scrivere*, as he proudly says, with a writing-book (Venice, 1524), in which are shown several models of *literae cancellaresche*. An equally fine series was brought out by Giovanni Battista Palatino in his *Book*, published handsomely by Antonio Blado (Rome, 1540), who also issued the first book of Giovanni Francesco Cresci's *Essempiare di piu sorti lettere* (1560).

The last named was the first volume whose cuts were printed from copper plates. Thereafter handwriting models were at the mercy of the exceedingly cunning engraver, eager rather to demonstrate his skill than to form fine models of practical handwriting. In the fashion for finesse, over-elaboration and super-decoration which supervened, there was no room for simplicity. Engravers and writers, by now corrupted with these examples, vie with each other in the brilliance of their plates, producing the most intricate and fantastic exhibitions of 'command of hand' and of 'striking.' By the end of the sixteenth century scarcely a vestige of the original chancery hand is discernible. Every Italian, French, Dutch, and Spanish practitioner felt himself free to range capitals with ascenders, whether roman or italic. Such is the appetite for regularity displayed by all the contributors to Geo. Bickham's *Universal Penman*, that it surprises one to find the lower case *t* excepted. One 'elegant' writer indeed, Mr. Nathaniel Dove (1738), actually elongates his *t* to the height of *l* and *h*, etc.

The copybook writers reached the zenith of fatuity in the nineteenth

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century. We all know the vile hands taught to our parents and grandparents. Perhaps the worst of all writings is the attenuated American variety known as office script. The fearful lettering of English Victorian architects runs it close. From these horrors we have been delivered by Mr. Edward Johnston, who twenty or so years ago gave himself to an intensive study of handwriting which bore fine fruit in his *Writing, Illuminating, and Lettering*. Here he shows a complete mastery of the quill. Nothing is strange to him. He is equally strong with all the historic hands between the 6th to the 12th or 13th centuries, the uncial, semi-uncial, lombardic, and caroline.

Mr. Johnston's unique contribution to calligraphy has laid many printers under a sense of great obligation. His work in a number of volumes for the Doves Press and for early volumes of the Grossherzog Wilhelm Ernst editions of German classics published by the Insel Verlag, is already well known, but his services to typography do not end here. His influence is to be found in the books of the Bremer Presse (Munich), and indeed the new German calligraphic movement derives directly from Johnston just as the parallel movement in typography is due to Cobden-Sanderson. Here, perhaps, as I would not be misunderstood, I may be permitted to voice a protest against the all but universal practice which obtains in Germany of using, for fine books, a purely calligraphic title-page in, e.g., lombardic capitals, to a work composed in one of the new (and sometimes offensively new) types designed for the German private presses. Obviously this is not the best sort of help which the calligrapher can offer to the printer, whose endeavour should always be to use *type* to the best advantage. To resort to the calligrapher for an entire title-page is an implicit confession of a sadly deficient sense of design or an inadequately furnished composing room. It is the calligrapher's work rather than his quill which should be bought by the printer. The calligrapher's use of initials, massed capitals, manner of lay-out, ornaments and colour, can be very instructive to him. It would then, I submit, be to the great advantage of the craft if calligraphy and typography were more *en rapport*. It must be said, however, that Mr. Johnston's contribution, unique as it is, possesses, perhaps, a note of archaism which renders a little dangerous the use of his work as a model for the printer. Mr. Johnston himself, perhaps, and, I think, certainly his school, has eyed almost too lovingly and too exclusively the pre-humanist MSS. Mr. Johnston's school would tend to carry printers back to the eighth century and the caroline minuscule.

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Of course it cannot be denied that this and earlier hands are extremely beautiful as practised by Mr. Johnston and his pupils. It is safe to say, however, that they will not develop a type form of which we could make anything like general use to-day. Our need as typographers is to be in relation with a school of calligraphers whose hands represent not a reversion to the early Middle Ages, but whose *terminus a quo* is the humanistic script I have already described. In other words, I ask for a reduction in the conscious or unconscious archaism which now characterizes the Johnston school. I beg them to bring their art into kinship with printing, to *design* ornaments and borders consistent with the *Zeitgeist*. At the present time calligraphers give us the floral evolutions of the Middle Ages. Thus even calligraphers are living in a 'period.' But an attack on 'period' calligraphy and 'period' printing is not my present purpose. I desire to point out that just as the highest interests of typography forbid mere satisfaction with resurrected Garamond, Aldus and Jenson, so it is impossible to remain content with uncials and semi-uncials, no matter how beautiful. At the risk of making a King Charles's head of the *scrittura umanistica*, I must repeat that I think that a serious study of fine MSS. in this hand is an essential to fine letter design and its development. In this connection I should like to be allowed to say that unless we are shown how to appreciate this renaissance hand we had better give up our ligatures *ſ*, *ff*. I hope the printer knows what to say, who has to justify his use of ligatures to a customer's objection to 'these twiddly things.' However, ligatures, like 'period' printing and 'period' calligraphy, are another story. But it belongs to the present article to point out that had the leading European calligraphers (I have not seen the work of Mr. C. L. Ricketts of Chicago) examined *in detail* one or two of the magnificent humanist MSS. kept in the Laurentian Medicean Library at Florence they could not but have adverted to the comparatively reduced capitals. Mr. Johnston, followed by Mr. Graily Hewitt, Mr. Percy Smith, Frl. Anna Simons (Munich), Prof. Rudolf Larisch (Vienna) are, like the typefounders, at present following the proportions of Jenson and elevating their capitals at least to the beak of the ascenders.

Here it may be objected to me: what about the 'humanistic type'? have we not the authority of Dr. Guido Biagi for the statement that its form is based upon the script of Antonio Sinibaldi? It is true that Mr. Chas. Eliot Norton and Dr. Guido Biagi praise the humanistic type, and it is true that the letter is praiseworthy. But the type-cutter has laboured to copy in

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V i superum sæuæ memorem iunonis ob iram:
M ulta quoque & bello passus dum conderet urbem
I nferretq; deos lato: genus unde latinum:
A lbanique patres, atque altæ moenia romæ.
M úsa mihi causas memora. quo numine læso
Q uid ue' dolens regina deum: tot uoluere casus
I nsignem pietate iurum tot adire labores
I mpulerit: tantæ ne animis cælestibus iræ?
V rbs antiqua fuit tyri tenuere colom:
C arthago italiam contra: tiberinaq; longe
H ostia: diues opum studiisq; asperrima belli.
Q uam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam
P osthabita coluisse samo. hic illius arma
H ic currus fuit: hoc regnum dea gentibus esse
S iqua fata sinant iam tum tenditq; fouetq;
P rogeniem sed enim troiano a sanguine duci

Fig. 17. The writing of Antonio Sinibaldi in his codex of the Aeneid (Bib. Laur. Flor.)

V rbs antiqua fuit tyri tenuere colom:
C arthago italiam contra: tiberinaq; longe
H ostia: diues opum studiusq; asperrima belli.
Q uam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam
P osthabita coluisse samo. hic illius arma
H ic currus fuit: hoc regnum dea gentibus esse
S iqua fata sinant iam tum tenditq; fouetq;.
P rogeniem sed enim troiano a sanguine duci

Fig. 18. The Humanistic type: notice the larger majuscules

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metal the characteristics of quill letters, and thereby produced a letter which falls between two stools; to look at, it is neither type nor script, though the essential form of the characters is, in my view, perfect. A much more serious point is revealed if a page of Sinibaldi's codex of the *Aeneid* (MS. Laurentiana 517) be compared with the type. The comparison demonstrates that the founders have raised the capitals by some ten or fifteen per cent. in order to range them with the ascenders. There would be more excuse for this were there any justification in any other of Sinibaldi's MSS. I do not think this is forthcoming. The superb *Horae* (MS. Laur. Ashb. 1874), written by Sinibaldi and illuminated by Francesco d'Antonio del Gherico in 1485 for Lorenzo de Medici, consistently uses modest capitals.¹ As I have already suggested, the use of the modest capital was no mere fad, nor was it confined to Sinibaldi. There are very small capitals, for instance, to the text of *Josephus* (MS. Laur. *Plut*): 'Scriptus manu mei Gherardi Joannis de Ciriago, civis florentini pro Joanne Cosmae de Medicis cive optimo florentino.'² The 'Humanistic' type being unsuitable, it may well be demanded if at present there exists any letter which more nearly secures what I have ventured to regard as the true relation between the capitals and lower case.

It will be natural to turn to the faces put forth by the most prolific designer of our, and indeed of any, time. Upwards of forty-five faces are credited to Mr. Goudy, and though I have not been able to see, or at least to recognize, all these, I think I am familiar with his founts since their designer became an important factor in this field. I think Mr. Goudy first came into deserved prominence with his Forum capitals and Kennerley roman upper and lower case. Since then he has cut a number of founts, all, save one, preserving the full-sized capitals customary since the days of Jenson. The latest design, 'Italian Old Style,' perhaps owes a trifle to Ratdolt, at least the size of the capitals reminds me of that Venetian—they range exactly with the height of the ascenders. I fear, therefore, that the exception which I have noted is due to a happy caprice rather than to a heartfelt conviction of sin. Goudy Modern remains, however, an admirable letter. It is advertised as being based upon a type by Bodoni, but Mr. Goudy has clearly left the Italian far behind. The 'Modern' has an excellent colour, the traditional

¹ See the facs. in Biagi: *Fifty Plates from MSS. in the Medicean Library*, Nos. XXIV-XXVIII.

² Cf. fac. in Biagi, *op. cit.*, No. LXVI.

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sharpness of contrast between the thicks and thins is agreeably reduced, the serifs have been suitably revised, and a notable reduction has been effected in the size of the upper case (see Fig. 19). Nevertheless this letter is hardly suitable except for the more abnormal kinds of bookwork. Search elsewhere among available types reveals scarcely any possibilities. There is Fell *bourgeois* italic, and the italic of Christopher van Dyck, already mentioned, both of which are well constructed and graceful letters with modest upper case. Some present-day typographers, among them Mr. Rogers, Mr. Rollins, and Mr. Meynell, have been constrained to use the lower case of one size with caps of a smaller body. This expedient is not always justified by its result. Will not some modern designer who knows his way along the old paths fashion a fount of *maximum* homogeneity, that is to say, a type in which the upper case, in spite of its much greater angularity and rigidity, accords with the greatest fellowship of colour and form with the rounder and more vivacious lower case? So, in my submission, we shall draw nearer an ideal type.

to Mentz is not known, but, as he
was married to Christina Fust in
1455, it is probable that his con-

Fig. 19. Mr. Goudy's 'Modern' type