ALPHABETS
OLD AND NEW.

COMPANION VOLUME TO THIS

LETTERING
IN
ORNAMENT

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE DE-
CORATIVE USE OF LETTER-
ING · PAST · PRESENT · AND
POSSIBLE.

OTHER WORKS
BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

ALPHABETS
OLD AND NEW

FOR THE USE OF CRAFTSMEN,
WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY
ON 'ART IN THE ALPHABET'

BY

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'ORNAMENT AND ITS APPLICATION,'
ETC.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED & ENLARGED

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE alphabets here gathered together have been selected, and some of them designed, with a very practical purpose—to trace the development of lettering, to register the forms characteristic of successive periods of design, to show how writing is affected by the tools employed, and, finally, to suggest the endless variations a man may himself play upon shapes in some measure fixed by custom.

Here are models not for penmen only—the pen is only one of the implements employed in writing—but for all manner of craftsmen who may have occasion to make decorative use of wording.

The introductory essay on " Art in the Alphabet" is meant to supply just so much information as will enable the designer to depart from too familiar forms without betraying his ignorance. It is addressed to the artist. No pretension is made to paleographic learning.

The ideas expressed upon design—pronounced as they may be, and confidently as they may be pronounced—presume to be no more than personal

opinions, which the reader must take for what they are worth.

A more detailed account of the various Alphabets than it was possible to give upon the page itself or in the introductory essay will be found in the " Descriptive List of Illustrations."

Every care has been taken, in the reproduction of Ancient Alphabets, to observe the spirit of the old writing; but I have not scrupled to supply letters missing from them. This is to do the scholar no wrong, for he will know well enough which letters would not occur in the writing of a given period; and, as for the workman, he will be glad to have models as complete as possible.

" Alphabets Old and New " concerns itself only with the letters of the Alphabet and the corresponding Numerals—their decorative use is the subject of a separate volume, " Lettering in Ornament."

In this new edition some alphabets which did not come out satisfactorily in the first have been re-drawn; the place of others has been supplied by better examples; and a number of entirely new ones have been added, to make it more thoroughly comprehensive.

LEWIS F. DAY.

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    December, 1905.

NOTE.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. GREEK ALPHABET—From an MS.—characteristic of the pen. (Compare the B with 32 and 34, and observe the likeness of the Ω to W.) 9th century.

2. COPTIC MS.—10th century or earlier.
3. COPTIC MS.—12th century. } Compare with Greek.
4. COPTIC MS.—14th century.

5. MOESIAN MS.—Characteristically penwork. 4th century.

6. ROMAN MS.—Penwork. A has no cross stroke. Upstrokes thick and thin. (Compare 30.) 4th century.

7. MS.—Penwork. Round D and M. G has a tail. 7th century.

8. ROMAN UNCIALS—Penwork. 8th century.

9. "RUSTIC" ROMAN—Penwork. A has no cross-stroke. F and L rise above line. E, I, T not easy to read. 5th century.

10. ROMAN CAPITALS—Penwork. R has thin upstroke. 6th century.

11. ROMAN CAPITALS—Penwork. (Compare square O with 17, 18, 36.) Note "dilation" of strokes. 6th century.

12. BYZANTINE CAPITALS—7th century.

13. ENGLISH INSCRIPTION—From a monument to the sister of William the Conqueror. 1085.

14. FRANCO-GALLIC CAPITALS—Heading of an MS. Penwork, of which the curly quirks are indicative. 7th century.

15. VISIGOTHIC MS.—Moresque influence perceptible. Note long and short letters. 10th century.

42. ROMAN LETTERS cut in marble—From inscriptions in the Forum at Rome. Characteristically chisel work. (Compare 43.)

43. ROMAN—From fragments in the British Museum. Cut in stone. In E, F, L, P, R, T strokes run out. Note variety in rendering the same letter. 2nd and 3rd centuries.

44. ENGLISH, IRISH, OR ANGLO-SAXON—From illuminated MSS. Curves inclined to take a spiral direction. Considerable freedom of penmanship. Various forms of the same letter. Note long tails and unequal length of letters. 6th century.

45. FROM A CODEX in Latin—Written between ruled marginal lines. Considerable variety in the form of the same letter. Note the square C and G, and the deep waist of the B and R, which compare with alphabet 1. 7th or 8th century.

46. GALICIAN CAPITALS—MSS. 8th century. (Compare B and R with alphabets 1 and 45.)

47. IRISH—From the Book of Kells. Illuminated. Note square forms of certain letter—the curious D-shaped O and the general thickening of the upright strokes at the starting-point. Various forms of same letter. 8th century.

48 and 49. ANGLO-SAXON—Various MSS. Forms sometimes rigidly square, sometimes fantastically flowing. Strokes developing occasionally into spirals, or into interlacing, which ends perhaps in a grotesque head. 8th and 9th centuries.

50. SAXON AND ANGLO-SAXON MSS.—The outline penned and filled in with various tints. The scribe has not made up his mind as to any logical use of thick and thin strokes. Note square C and S, and looser T and U. 7th, 8th, 9th centuries.

51. MS. LETTERS—More nearly resembling the orthodox Roman character, with exception of D, E, G, P, U, in which Gothic characteristics begin to appear, and perhaps a hint of future minuscule forms. 10th century.

52. FRENCH MS.—Initials in colours. More Gothic than Roman, flourishing into tails of foliation. 12th century.

53. FRENCH—From the doors of the cathedral at Le Puy. Wood, simply grounded out. Several varieties of letter. The curved lines characteristically cusped. Probably 12th century. (Compare with 19.)

54. GERMAN MS.—Initials. Distinctly penwork. Departing again widely from the square Roman form. 12th century.

55. GOTHIC UNCIALS—From the Arundel and Lansdowne MSS. in the British Museum. Written with a rather frisky pen. English. End of 12th century.

56. GOTHIC UNCIALS—From a Bible in the British Museum (15·409). Characteristically penwork. 13th century. (Compare 55.)

57. GOTHIC UNCIALS—From the inscription upon a bronze bell at Hildesheim. 1270.

58. GOTHIC UNCIALS—From a Psalter from St. Albans, now in the British Museum (2. B. VI.). Penwork. 13th century. (Compare 56.)

59. MS. LETTERS—Typically Gothic capitals. "Closed" letters. Sportive finishing strokes. 14th century.

60. ITALIAN CAPITALS—Drawn by J. Vinycomb. 14th century.

61. INCISED GOTHIC CAPITALS—From Italy, Spain, and south of France. About 1350.

62 and 63. GOTHIC INSCRIPTIONS—From Nordhausen. Cut in brass. 1395-1397.

64. ENGLISH INITIALS—From MS. in the British Museum. On a background of delicate ornament, penned in red. About 1400.

65. ENGLISH GOTHIC INSCRIPTIONS. Stone. From monument of Richard II. in Westminster Abbey, and others of same date. About 1400.

66. GOTHIC LETTERS carved in stone—The ground sunk. Spanish. 14th or 15th century. (Compare 31.)

67. PENWORK—Severe and straight beginning of a type which eventually becomes excessively flowing and florid. 1420.

68. FRENCH—From an inscription on a picture-frame in the Louvre. The slight but characteristic curling and twisting

of the points of serifs comes of the use of the brush. Note the recurrence of the square C, more characteristic of an earlier period. 1480. (Compare 183.)

69 GERMAN MS.—Gothic initials. 15th century.

70. GERMAN MS.—Gothic initials. The thickening of the curved strokes is characteristic. The swelling is not gradual, but sudden. This occurs in other German MSS. of the same period. 1475.

71. MS. INITIALS—The terminations again rather frisky. But letters of this kind (compare also 59, etc.) being usually in colour, most often in red, their tails etc. do not cause the confusion in the ranks of writing which they would do if they were in black. About 1475.

72. LATE GOTHIC LETTERS—Woodcarving in relief. Note the foliation of otherwise simple forms. French. Probably 15th century.

73 and 74. GOTHIC MINUSCULE—From monumental brasses. Severe and simple forms. End of 15th century.

75. GOTHIC LETTERING incised in marble—German. 1482.

76. ELIZABETHAN LETTERING—From an inscription incised in wood at North Walsham, Norfolk. (Compare 181.)

77. INITIALS—Framed in delicate ornament, penned in red. 16th century.

78. GOTHIC CAPITALS—16th century.

79. BLACK LETTER MINUSCULE—From a rubbing of a memorial inscription. Flemish. 1579.

80. FLEMISH MINUSCULE—From a memorial tablet at S. Jacques, Bruges. Cut in stone. There is a suggestion of turning over and interlacing the strokes of the letters, which was very usual in engraving of the period, whether on brass or stone. 16th century.

81. ITALIAN GOTHIC INITIALS. From a corale at Monte Casino. Framed in penwork in colour. 16th century.

82. ITALIAN INITIALS—Broad penwork of late Gothic character, neither so rigid nor so florid as the typical German writing of the period. 15th and 16th centuries.

1815; but the character is at least as early as the 14th century, and may have been in use a century or more before that.

116. HEBREW ALPHABET.

117. HEBREW ALPHABET—Ornamental version. From Sylvestre's "Paleographie." Almost identical with a 16th-century alphabet by Palatino.

118. MODERN ROMAN, MAJUSCULE AND MINUSCULE, sans serif. These thin letters, all of one thickness, are sometimes described as "skeleton."

119. MODERN ROMAN, MAJUSCULE AND MINUSCULE, of French type, elegantly shaped and spurred. Drawn by J. Vinycomb.

120. MODERN ROMAN CAPITALS—A version of the French type (119). L. F. D.

121. MODERN ROMAN CAPITALS, not quite of the usual character and proportion. (Compare 101.) L. F. D.

122. MODERN ROMAN CAPITALS AND NUMERALS—Suggestive rather of the chisel than of the pen. J. Cromar Watt, architect.

123. MODERN ROMAN CAPITALS AND LOWER CASE—Rather further removed from orthodoxy than the last. J. W. Weekes.

124. ENGLISH—Roman capitals and numerals, by William Caslon. Printed type, "old face." 18th century.

125. ENGLISH—Roman lower case, and italic upper and lower case, by W. Caslon. Printed type, "old face." 18th century.

126. MODERN TYPE not used for book-work, but as a "display" type—Cast by Stephenson & Blake of Sheffield.

127. MODERN "COMPRESSED" TYPE (for "display")—Designed at the De Vinne foundry, New York.

128. MODERN FRENCH TYPE—Designed by Grasset, and used in France for book-work. An English version is in use for advertisements, etc.

129. MODERN "BLOCK" CAPITALS—Based chiefly on Roman. W. J. Pearce. From "Painting and Decorating." C. Griffin & Co., Ltd.

163 MODERN CAPITALS adapted for execution with single strokes of the pen. L. F. D.

164. MODERN CAPITALS—Rather Gothic than Roman, which break out (as was common in old work) into foliation which forms a sort of background to the letter. L. F. D., designed for Mr. Matthew Bell.

165. MODERN GERMAN GOTHIC CAPITALS (Facturschrift)—Penwork. Otto Hupp. In the later German character penmanship ran wild. The lettering is often quite inextricable from the tangle of flourishes in which it is involved. Herr Hupp has avoided the utmost extravagance of the national style. To any one acquainted with the German character, it is clear enough which of his sweeping strokes mean business, and which are merely subsidiary penmanship. The happy mean is, of course, to make ornament against which the letter tells plainly enough. That is attempted also in 164.

166. MODERN GERMAN GOTHIC capitals—Otto Hupp. From "Alphabete und Ornamente."

167. MODERN PEN DRAWN ALPHABET. By Otto Hupp, from Rudolf von Larisch's "Beispiele Kunstlerischer Schriften."

168. MODERN GOTHIC CAPITALS, executed with a quill—The forms designed for execution with two strokes of the pen. Walter Crane.

169. MODERN MAJUSCULE AND MINUSCULE, directly written with the simplest stroke of a quill pen. Walter Crane.

170. MODERN CAPITALS, shaped with deliberate view to direct and easy expression with the chisel, the cuneiform character of the Assyrian inscriptions being taken as a suggestion that a wedge-shaped incision was about the easiest thing to cut in stone. (See p. 28.) Alfred Carpenter and L. F. D.

171. GOTHIC MINUSCULE—From the Church of St. Francesco at Prato. Simple forms incised in marble and filled in with cement. About 1410.

172. MODERN MINUSCULE—From an inscription etched on lithographic stone by John Tischberger, who was a writing-master at Nuremberg, 1765-70. The touch is neither that of the pen, nor of the brush, nor of the chisel.

the method of execution, and not of any period. 1591. (Compare 178.)

181. From inscriptions rather rudely carved upon a beam of elm now in the V. and A. M. The incised line on the face of the letters occurs only in parts. Letters G, J, K, Q, X, Z were missing. English, dated 1638. (Compare 76.)

182. MODERN GOTHIC RIBBAND ALPHABET—Engraved on brass, the ground cross-hatched. Adapted from Otto Hupp.

183. From a lengthy inscription round the obviously original gilt frame of a picture of the Last Judgment in the Academy of Bruges, by Jean, Provost of Mons, who died in 1529. Painted. Flemish. The missing letters are given in outline. (Compare 68.)

184. MODERN ALPHABET IN RIGHT LINES, suggested by the square form of Chinese writing. L. F. D. (See p. 29. Compare with 178.)

185. MODERN ALPHABET, expressive of the brush, suggested by brush forms in Japanese writing. L. F. D. (See p. 29.)

186. MODERN BRUSHWORK LETTERS after Mucha.

187. MODERN STENCILLED ALPHABET adapted from E. Grasset and M. P. Verneuil.

188. MODERN GERMAN MINUSCULE—Fancifully treated. After Franz Stuck, compiled from various designs by him, in "Karten und Vignetten," etc.

189. MODERN MINUSCULE ALPHABET—By Selwyn Image. An example of his ordinary penmanship, given as an example of a modern handwriting which may fairly be described as caligraphy.

AMPERZANDS.

190. AMPERZANDS from various MSS., dating from the 7th to the 15th centuries.

191. AMPERZANDS—Free renderings of instances dating from the 16th century to the present day. In the top row may be traced the connection between the accepted & and the letters ET, of which it is a contraction.

NOTE.—Other examples of amperzands occur in illustrations 105, 119, 123, 124, 127, 128, 135, 139, 146, 152, 155.

NUMERALS.

192. GERMAN. CUT IN STONE—The peculiar form of 4 is of the period ; the 7's have, so to speak, fallen forward. 1477.

193. VARIOUS 15TH-CENTURY DATES—Flemish and German. 1491 is carved in wood and grounded out. 1439 is cut in stone, 1439 in brass.

194. FIFTEENTH CENTURY—German. Cut in stone.

195. DATES FROM 1520–1545—Chiefly cut in brass or bronze. The figures in relief and grounded out.

196. FIFTEENTH CENTURY Numerals, 1520–1531, etc. German. Cut in bronze or brass.

197. NUREMBERG—Bronze. About 1550.

198. GERMAN—Bronze. 1560.

199. ITALIAN—Painted on faience. Brushwork.

200. BRUSHWORK—16th or 17th century.

201. ITALIAN—From a corale. Penwork. Compare 83 and 87. 16th century.

202. GILT FIGURES on a dark ground—Brushwork. 1548 ?

203. INCISED IN WOOD—1588.

204. BRASS, GROUNDED OUT—16th century.

205. PAINTED ON GLASS—16th century.

206. BRUSHWORK—16th or 17th century.

207. ROTHENBURG—Cut in stone. The 4 suggests the origin of the 15th-century shape. It is an ordinary 4 turned part way round. 1634.

208. ROMAN NUMERALS—From a bronze dial. Swiss. Figures in relief, grounded out. 1647.

209. CUT IN STONE—1692.

210. VARIOUS DATES—1633, wood in relief. 1625, wood incised. The rest on brass (grounded out) or cut in stone. The 1 in 1679 resembles the letter *k*—a not uncommon occurrence in 17th-century German inscriptions.

NOTE.—Other numerals occur in illustrations—

ART IN THE ALPHABET.

THERE are two conditions on which the artist may be permitted to tamper with the alphabet: whatever he does ought, in the first place, to make reading run smoother, and, in the second, to make writing satisfactory to the eye. Neither of these desirable ends should, however, be sought at the expense of the other.

The way to make reading easier is to mark whatever is characteristic in the letter; to develop what is peculiar to it; to curtail, or it may be to lop off, anything which tends to make us confound it with another; to emphasize, in short, the individuality of each individual letter, and make it unmistakable. At the same time, there is no reason why reading should not be made pleasant as well as easy. Beauty, that is to say, is worth bearing in mind. It must not, of course, interfere with use; but there is not the least reason why it should. Beauty does not imply elaboration or ornament. On the contrary, simplicity and character, and the dignity which comes of them, are demanded in the interests alike of practicality and of art.

It is impossible judiciously to modify the letters of the alphabet as it is, or as at any given time it was, without thoroughly understanding how it came to be so. The form and feature of lettering are explained only by its descent.

All writing is a sort of shorthand. It is inevitable that the signs used to represent sounds should be reduced to their simplest expression. They become in the end mere signs, as unlike the thing which may have suggested them in the first instance as a man's signature, which is yet honoured by his banker, is unlike his name: enough if writing convey what we are meant to understand: the business of a letter is to symbolize a definite sound.

We arrive, then, by a process of what has been termed "degradation" of such natural forms as were first employed in picture-writing (call it rather adaptation), at an alphabet of seemingly arbitrary signs, the alphabet as we know it after a couple of thousand years and more. So well do we know it that we seldom think to ask ourselves what the letters mean, or how they came to be.

The explanation of these forms lies in their evolution.

Our alphabet is that of the Romans. We speak of it to this day as Roman, to distinguish it from Gothic or black letter. The Romans had it from the Greeks, or, if not immediately from them, from the same sources whence they drew theirs.

Certainly the Greek, Etruscan, and old Roman

alphabets were all very much alike. They resembled one another in the number of letters they contained, in the sound-value of those letters, and in the form they took. There were sixteen letters common to Greeks, Etruscans, and Pelasgians: ABΓΔEIKLM ΝΟΠΡΣΤΥ; and this number sufficed always for

ΛΛΒΒΒΓΔЄЄЄЄΖΖ

ΗΘΘΙΚΚΛΜΗΜΝΟ

ΟΠϛΡΡΤΥΥϕΧΧΨѠ

I. GREEK MS. 9TH CENTURY.

the Etruscans, the race dying out before ever it had need of more. The Greeks had no longer (as the Egyptians had) any signs to represent syllables, that is to say combinations of vowels and consonants, but they grafted on to the old Pelasgian or native alphabet (whencesoever that may have been derived) sundry new letters necessary to express new words, borrowed from the

2. COPTIC MS. 5TH TO 10TH CENTURY.

Phœnicians. Naturally they took the letters also from them. These same Phœnicians had probably adopted from the Egyptians signs to express foreign sounds new to their own language, without knowing or caring anything about the pictorial origin of such signs. There was thus no reason why they should not modify what they regarded as arbitrary expressions of sound-values, and every reason why they should reduce them to the very simplest and most conveniently written shape—which they did; and so it comes about that we to-day are in all probability directly indebted to ancient Egypt for at least a portion of our alphabet, far removed as it may be from the hieroglyphics

of the Pharaohs. That, however, is by the way,
and, besides, a long way off. For present purposes
we need not go further back than to ancient Greece.
The four Phœnician letters first incorporated with
the Greek alphabet were Z, Θ (*th*), Φ (*ph*), X (*ch*),
and eventually there were added also the letters
H (*ee*), Ω (*oo*), Ψ (*ps*), Ξ (*ks*).

The Romans dropped all compound conso-
nants, using at first the two consonants which
most nearly expressed the sound equivalent to
that of the Greek double letter ; for example, PH
in place of Φ. But they proceeded also to devise
single letters for sounds which until then had
been expressed by two ; F, for example, instead
of PH, and Q for CV.

3. COPTIC MS.   12TH CENTURY.

4. COPTIC MS. 14TH CENTURY.

A Greek alphabet of the year 394 B.C. is given in alphabet 28, and a 16th-century version in 29. The more cursive form employed by the 9th-century scribe is shown in the manuscript letters (1) on page 3.

It is interesting to compare with these the Coptic writing (2, 3, 4), which is obviously only a variant upon the Greek; for the Christianized Egyptians, when they accepted Christianity, adopted the Greek alphabet, just as the Turks took the Arabic character at the time they accepted the Koran; and when, in the 6th century, the new faith was firmly established at Alexandria, Coptic writing supplanted the old Egyptian. So it happens that the Coptic alphabet is Greek, except for seven extra signs, taken from the ancient demotic alphabet, to express Egyptian sounds for which the Greeks had no equivalent.

Akin to the Coptic lettering is the Moesian alphabet of the 4th century (5), which bears on the face of it the evidence of the broadly cut pen with which it was written.

The early Roman or Latin alphabet differed very little from the Greek. The latest comers in it were G H K Q X Y Z.

In its adaptation to the Latin language, Greek gamma or G becomes C. G is, in fact, almost equivalent to *hard* C. To the not too subtle ear the two sounds are like enough to pass one for the other, just as *soft* C may be made to do duty

for S. When G came to be used as a separate
letter, distinct from C, then C in its turn was used
for K, though K did not go quite out of use.

The Greek H (*heta*) stood for EĒ ; but at the

ABCDEFGHI
JKLMNOPQ
RSTUWXYZ
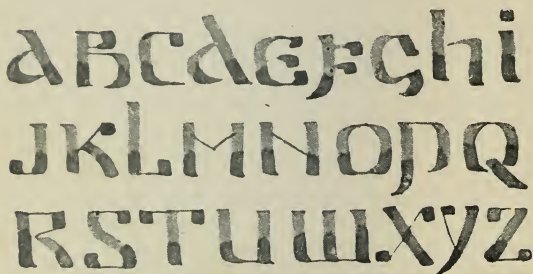
5. MOESIAN MS. 4TH CENTURY.

beginning of a word it answered the purpose of
the aspirate. The Romans used it for the aspirate
only ; that is to say, practically just as we use it
now, for H.

The letter J did not exist either in the Greek or
in the ancient Roman alphabet. It is equivalent
to II. Place one I over the other and you get a
long $\frac{I}{I}$. Eventually the initial developed a tail,
and became J. Towards the 15th century the
initial I was pretty generally written J.

The Greek Υ (*upsilon*) becomes the Roman V—
whence the confusion, until modern times, of the
letters U and V, long used indiscriminately. They

were considered as interchangeable ; one or other of them might be used, or both at once in the same word in the same sense. It was not until the 10th century that the custom arose of reserving V for the beginning of a word, and elsewhere using U.

Ω (*omega*) stood for OO, and in the minuscule form, ω looked like it, thus *showing* its derivation ; but in the end it was used for UU, or W. It appears that in some Greek dialects it is used for OU. It is quite certain that in the 9th century (see p. 3) omega was *written* precisely like a W. When you come to think of it, the sounds are very nearly alike. Take any word beginning with W, change the double U into double O, and then try and pronounce it—say, for example, not WHY, but OOHY. Is it not much the same thing ?

The alphabet, as we know it, owes something also to Scandinavia. The Runic writing, as the script of the Scandinavian and other Northern European priesthood was called, dates back to legendary days. It was the invention, they say of Odin himself. If so, Odin, to judge by internal evidence, must have derived it from some earlier Greek or Roman source. What we know is, that it was in use from the time of the first intercourse between Scandinavians and Romans. The Christian Church forbade its use, and with the triumph of Christianity it passed out of currency ; but it

ΛBCDEFGHILM
NOPQRSTUY

6. ROMAN MS.   4TH CENTURY.

lived long enough to affect in some degree our
Anglo-Saxon writing.

It will be well now to mark the more decided
steps in the progress of the alphabet. The type
we use takes, as every one knows, two forms—a
larger and a smaller, a major and minor, or as
printers put it, "capitals," and "lower case" or the
small letters which, being most continually in
request, it is convenient to keep near at hand, in
the lower part of the case from which the com-
positor, so to speak, feeds himself. Our written
character takes the form of a "running" hand,
and is known by that name, or by the more high-
sounding title of "cursive."

Now, the printer's "lower case," or "minuscule,"

ABCDEFGhILM
NOPQRSTUWXZ

7. MS.   7TH CENTURY.

ABCDEFGHIKLM
NOPQRSTUVY

8. ROMAN UNCIALS. 8TH CENTURY.

as it is also called, is practically the book form
of running hand, except that the letters are
quite separate, not conjoined as they are in what
pretends to be only the hand of the ready writer,
and does not claim to be beautiful at all.

The earlier form, whether of Greek or Roman
letter, was the capital, the square shape, with rela-
tively few curved lines, which could conveniently
be cut in stone or engraved on metal. This is,
in fact, the *monumental* style—adapted to, and,
what is more, inspired by, the chisel or the graver.
You have only to look at it (40, 42, 43) to see how

ABCDEFGHILM
NOPQRSTUVY

9. ROMAN "RUSTIC" WRITING. 5TH CENTURY.

ΛBCDEFGHILM
NOPQRSTVY

10. ROMAN MS. CAPITALS. 6TH CENTURY.

precisely fit it is for its purpose. There is no
mistake about it, it is incision.

Manuscript writers adopted for book writing a
different character, or rather they adapted the
square capital letter to more ready execution with
the pen, and so evolved a rounder kind of letter
which is known by the name of *uncial*—not that it
was invariably inch-long, as the term is supposed
to imply.

The uncial form of writing is intermediate, you
will see (8), between the monumental writing and
the "current" hand of the ready writer. It is, if
not the step between the two, a compromise
between them—no matter which ; what it concerns
us to know is that calligraphy took that direction,
which goes to explain many a later form of letter
widely differing from the original square type. The
relationship between these uncial letters and the
cursive Greek (1) is obvious.

The uncial character does not so much affect the
modern printer ; but it is the form of letter from
which the artist who prefers his own handiwork

AAACDEFILM

OⷦPQRSTV

11. MS. CAPITALS. 6TH CENTURY.

to that of the printing press has perhaps most to
learn.

A squarer form of capital employed by the
Romans in manuscripts of the 5th and two follow-
ing centuries, is known by the name of "rustic;"
not that there was anything rustic about these
capitals in our sense of the word; but the Latin
word was used in the sense of free and easy, *sans
gêne.* The character of the writing is not so formal
as was supposed to befit the town. It is a kind of
country cousin; it stands, let us say, for the Roman
capital in a loose coat and a soft hat. The charac-
teristic points about it (9) are that the vertical
strokes are all very thin, and the cross-strokes
broad. These cross-strokes take the form of a kind
of tick, tapering at the ends; and similar ticks are
used to emphasize the finishing of the thin strokes.
That all of this is pen-work is self-evident. But,
as before said, the more usual form of penmanship
at that time was the uncial letter.

ABCDEFGHIK
LNOPRSTVX

12. BYZANTINE CAPITALS.   7TH CENTURY.

Even when the Roman manuscript writers used,
as they sometimes did, the square capital form, they
did not confine themselves (11) to the severely
simple shapes which came naturally to the lapi-
daries.   The unequal strength of the lines, the
thickening of the strokes at the ends, and the
spurred or forked shapes they take, all speak of
the pen ; not the steel pen, of course, nor yet the
more supple quill, but the reed pen—rather blunter
than a quill, but pliant enough, and not given to
spluttering.   Moreover, it did not tempt the writer
to indulge in unduly thin upstrokes.

Capitals, Greek and Roman alike, represent,
roughly speaking, the first accepted shapes, en-
graver's or carver's work.   Uncials stand for MS.
writing, scribe's work, growing by degrees rounder
and more current.   The smaller minuscule was
evolved out of the running hand of the mercantile,
as distinguished from the literary, scribe.   It was
not used by the ancient Romans, and it was not
until towards the 8th century that running hand
was thus reduced to order.   The greater part of
what is called cursive writing scarcely concerns

ABCDEFGMN OPQRSTVX

13 INSCRIPTION CUT IN STONE. A.D. 1085.

the calligrapher ; it might equally be called dis-
cursive, so apt is it to run wild, in which case it
tells less of the progress of writing than of the
caprice or carelessness of the individual writer.

That was not the case with the various ceremonial
versions of running hand employed by the writers
of Papal Bulls and Royal Charters. Such " diplo-
matic " hands, as they are styled (because diplomas
were written in them), and the so-called " Chancery "
hands, are highly elaborate, and in a sense orna-
mental, but they are so unlike our writing as to
be, practically speaking, illegible. They are very
suggestive for all that. A specimen of English
Court hand is given in Alphabet 115.

With the decline of the Roman empire came
naturally the demoralization of the Roman
character, capital or uncial ; and just in proportion
as Rome ceased to be the one centre of the world,
and other nations rose into importance, so their
writing began to show signs of nationality. At
the loss of some refinement, we get thenceforth

variety of character. By the beginning of the 8th century distinctly national styles of lettering were evolved.

To subdivide these styles so minutely as the learned do, is rather to bewilder the poor student by their multitude. The important European races were, the Latins, the Franks, the Teutons and Anglo-Saxons, and the Visigoths ; and from them we get respectively the Lombard, the Frankish,

14. FRANCO-GALLIC MSS. HEADLINES. 7TH CENTURY.

the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon, and the Visigothic types of writing, all of which eventually merge themselves in what we call Gothic, in which, nevertheless, we still find traits of nationality, English, French, Italian, German, Spanish, as the case may be.

First as to the Lombardic character, which prevailed in Italy from the 8th to the 11th century. It was not, as its name might be taken to imply, the invention of the Lombards. They were just long-bearded conquerors, and invented nothing. The character was not even confined to Northern

Italy ; only it happened first to be developed there, and so all later Latin writing (after the Empire) came to be called " Lombardic."

It has already been explained how uncial writing was transitional between square " caps" and rounder pen-forms. The Lombardic shows a further stage of transition. The penman had not quite made up his mind between straight lines and curved ; he hesitated between the square-lined M and N and the rounded forms (19, 20, 54). Eventually he decided in favour of the bulging shapes, which in their later development we distinguish by the name of Lombardic capitals (59).

There is a broken-backed version of the Lombard minuscule, " *Lombard brisée*" the French call it, which, though not intrinsically beautiful, is interesting as foreshadowing the later form of Gothic " lower case " which we call " black letter."

Our own "lower case" we get more or less directly from Charlemagne. He found, perhaps his friend the Pope told him, that writing had degenerated by the time he came to the throne (A.D. 800) to a state unworthy of a mighty emperor. Accordingly he ordained its reformation. He went so far as to compel bishops and other important personages who could not write decently, to employ scribes who could. In this way he revived the small Roman character, which we eventually adopted for our printed type.

The scribes of Charlemagne (and for some time

after him) did not yet manage to fashion very
satisfactory capitals.   They still mixed up letters
all of one thickness with others in which thick and
thin strokes, or diminishing strokes, were used in a
most illogical and awkward way (50)—indicative, of
course, of a period of change.   But they did arrive
at a satisfactory and very characteristic rendering

INIE DN INEPT OP·SE·M

PREFATONS INQVA

EXPRIMITVR HVMILS

15. VISIGOTHIC MS.   10TH CENTURY.

of minuscule lettering.   A conspicuous feature in
it was the elongation of the longer limb of the
l p g q f d—*tails*, that is to say, came into fashion,
and long ones, as much as four or five times the
length of the body of the letter.   The letter s took
also the long form, f.   The letter t, on the other
hand, does not rise much above the line, sometimes
not at all.

16. SAXON ILLUM NATION (CAROLINE). 9TH CENTURY.

That elongation of up-and-down strokes is
characteristic of Frankish and Visigothic lettering
generally. It occurs even in the case of capitals, as
in the headlines of the 10th-century MS. on p. 18.
There the I, the H, and the L rise high above the
heads of their fellows, whilst, on the other hand,
the V-shaped U in the word OPVSCVLVM is
reduced to more than modest proportions.

There appears to be in Visigothic lettering, of
which that is a good example, usually a trace
of Moorish influence, betraying itself in the liberties
taken with the *proportion* of the characters; the
Moors had by that time overrun Spain.
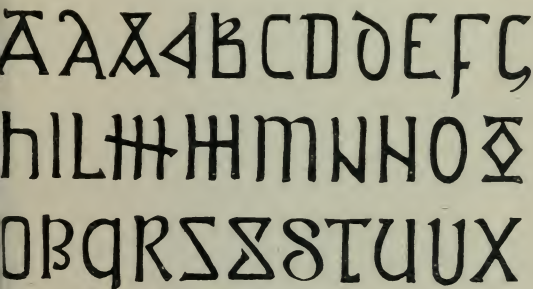
17. ANGLO-SAXON.

1S. ANGLO-SAXON MS. 9TH CENTURY.

There is something very whimsical about the character of Anglo-Saxon capitals; at times mechanically square in form, at others exceptionally flowing and even frisky (16, 17, 48, 49). Anglo-Saxon lettering was affected by lingering traces of an obsolete alphabet derived perhaps at some remote period from the Gauls, which, to judge by internal evidence, must have been something like the Greek. In the minuscule character (18) there is a curious twist in the long stroke of the b and l.

By the 13th century the Gothic style had formed itself. In the next hundred years or more it was perfected. At the end of the 15th century it was

19. FLORENTINE, INCISED AND INLAID. 12TH CENTURY.

still flourishing—flourishing was the word literally
—in the 16th letters were sometimes nearly all
flourish : it takes an expert to read them.

The Gothic variations upon the Roman capital
form are characteristic : the thick strokes are not
even-sided, but expanded at the two ends or
narrowed towards the centre ; the curved strokes
do not swell so gradually as before, but bulge

ABDDOEHL

IMNNOPRSY

20. ITALIAN MS. EARLY 13TH CENTURY.

more or less suddenly ; the tails of sundry letters
break insubordinate from the ranks ; and the ex-
tremities are often foliated or otherwise orna-
mented (52, 55, 56). Markedly characteristic of
Gothic of the 13th and 14th centuries are also
the " closed " letters, of which examples occur in
Alphabets 61, 62, 63, 64, etc.

What are called Lombardic capitals were used,
not only as initials, but for inscriptions throughout.
In fact, it was not until the 15th century that

inscriptions were commonly written in minuscule letters. In many cases these Lombard capitals were not written with a pen, but with a brush, from which results something of their character. The brush lines were fatter than pen strokes.

Gothic characteristics, however, only gradually
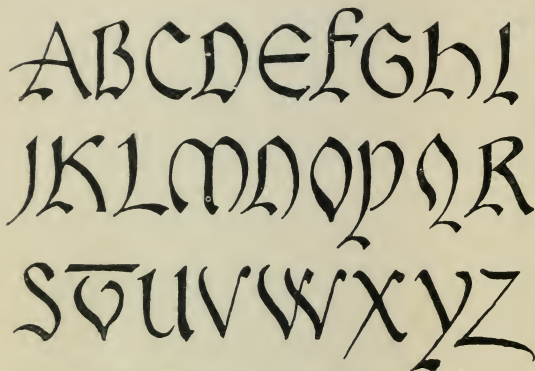
21. FREE RENDERING OF LOMBARD MSS. ABOUT 1250.

asserted themselves, and individual scribes clung tenaciously to the older forms. The alphabet opposite, for example, though of the 15th century, only mildly represents the period to which by date it belongs.

Gothic letters lend themselves to more variety in design than Roman, not being so perfect in themselves. To some, perhaps, they are more

interesting on that very account : perfection palls upon us. Anyway, the Gothic forms are often very beautiful. The Roman letter is classic, and therefore fixed—or, should it rather be said, it is fixed, and therefore classic ?

With regard to the Gothic minuscule character (23, 24, 25), the even perpendicularity of the broad, straight strokes gives at a glance the character distinguished as " black letter," because it is rela-

ABCDEFGHIILM
NOPQRSTVXZ

22. CAPITALS. 15TH CENTURY.

tively much heavier than the Roman minuscule. You have only to compare the two to see that the "black letter" *is* blacker.

The Germans marked this form of lettering for their own, and persevered in its use long after the rest of the world, in pursuance of the fashion of classicism prevailing in the 16th century, had abandoned it for the Roman style of lettering.

The mediæval German version of black letter was stronger than that of other countries, the French more fanciful, the Italian more refined, more perfect, but perhaps never so Gothic.

The old "black letter" varied, as will be seen,

abcdefghi
klmnopqrz
fstůvwryz
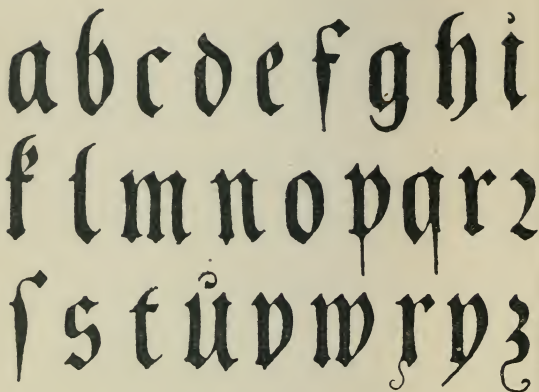
23. GERMAN GOTHIC MINUSCULE.

very much in character. The rounder form (23) is
freer, easier to write, more cursive. The more
regular and straight-backed letter (24, 25) went
rather out of fashion for a while; but it was
revived by the printers, who saw in it what they
could best imitate.

The type we use nowadays has shaped itself in a
more or less accidental way. In the first place, it
was a copy of manuscript forms. That was in-
evitable. Possibly printers were anxious to palm
off their printed books as manuscripts. But, apart
from any such intent on their part, their text was
bound to follow the written page, or no one would
have been able to read it. And as, at the time of

abcdefghi

klmnopqr

2sctuvxyz

24. GERMAN GOTHIC MINUSCULE.

the introduction of printing, two styles of writing
were in use for manuscripts, there arose naturally
two styles of printed type—" Roman " and " black
letter." In printing, as in manuscript, however,
black letter gave way to the Roman character,
but not all at once ; there was a period of tran-
sition during which some very interesting and
characteristic types were used. We in our day
have arrived, by a process of copying the copies of
copies of copies, from which all the virtue of vitality
and freshness has died out, at a 20th century type
(look at the newspapers), which compares most
unfavourably with the early printing. The modern
form of letter is in a measure fixed for us by
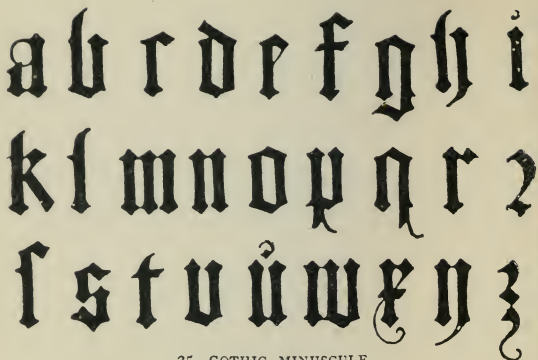
25. GOTHIC MINUSCULE

circumstances ; we cannot conveniently depart far
from it ; but something may be done.   There is
no need to revive mediæval lettering, no occasion
to invent new lettering all out of our own heads, if
that were possible ; any new departure of ours
must be very much on old lines ; but at least we
might found ourselves upon the best that has been
done, and go straight to that for inspiration.

Type, as before said, was based on manuscript
forms.   These manuscript forms had been shaped
with a view always to easy writing.   What was
difficult to pen dropped out of use, and lettering
became what the scribe made it.   The considera-
tions, however, which guided the writer no longer
concern the printer.   It is time, perhaps, he took
stock of the alphabet—looked over it with a view

to its perfection, since one shape is about as easy to *print* as another. The changes which have taken place in our printed type during the last three hundred years or so may very likely have been on the whole in the direction of easy reading, but they have not been in the direction of beauty; and it is quite likely that it may be worth while restoring some obsolete forms of letter now that we have not to write them. There is inconvenience in departing in any appreciable degree from the accepted form of letter; but we have arrived to-day at a period when everyone is so familiar with the printed page that, prejudiced as we may be against any modification of it, there is no danger of our finding any real difficulty in reading an improved type. Lettering is none the more legible because it is ugly: beauty is compatible with the very sternest use.

The earliest writing was most probably scratched with a point upon whatever came handiest to the scribe—skins, palm leaves, or the bark of trees, and especially upon clay, a material which had only to be burnt to become more lasting than stone.

If, in scratching upon firm clay, the writer begins his stroke with a dig and then drags out the tool, it results in a wedge-shaped scratch. That seems to be the way the cuneiform character came about; but the lettering upon the early Babylonian "bricks," as they are called, is so precisely defined that it must have been done with a sharp graver-

like point. These "wedge-shaped" or "arrow-headed" characters came to be copied, as we know, in stone, in which again they were about the simplest thing to cut. Three, or at most four, direct cuts give the Ninevite character, as we know it in the famous bas-reliefs. It is descended from clay forms, but its own mother was the stone out of which it was cut. The chisel was its father. Even in inscriptions as late as the eighteenth century or thereabouts, the stone-cutter lapses, as may be seen opposite, into more or less wedge-shaped incisions; the chisel tempted him, and he yielded to its persuasion.

From the cuneiform character to simple Greek (40) or Roman (42) capitals, as square as well could be, is not far; and the clear-cut inscriptions on classic monuments are still typically chisel work. Very early Greek inscriptions are, however, not much more than scratched in the granite or whatever it may be. The small Greek character on the famed Rosetta stone is *mere* scratching.

Writing done with a stylus on tablets of wax was naturally blunt. Penwork at first was also much blunter than modern writing—owing partly, no doubt, to the use of the reed pen, partly to the texture of papyrus, and partly to the consistency of the ink. The strokes of early lettering in Egyptian, Greek, and Latin manuscripts alike, are rather thick, and rounded at the angles, not sharply turned.

It was a reed pen with which the Arabs wrote,

holding it more or less horizontally so as to retain the ink, and sloping the paper or papyrus at a convenient angle ; and it was in writing the Roman letters with a reed pen that the mediæval scribes gave it its Gothic character. It was not until the quill (which held the ink better) came into use that the Italians developed their minuscule letter with its thick and thin strokes.

A glance is sometimes enough to tell whether an early Egyptian manuscript was written with a pen

AABCDEFGGHI KLMNOPPQQR SSTUVWXYZ

26. FROM INSCRIPTIONS CUT IN STONE. ABOUT 1700.

or with a brush. The Arab penmen, who took great pride in their art, wrote with a wonderfully elastic pen, and got out of the reed forms which remind one at times of brushwork ; but the *neskhi* character is as obviously the pen form of writing as the squarer *cufic* is the monumental. So also we find among the Chinese and Japanese one form of lettering which is characteristically brushwork, and another almost rectangu'ar, which last is clearly the monumental manner.

Even in late Gothic lettering we find a minus-
cule which is of the pen (23), and another (24, 25)
which is monumental, adapted, that is to say, to
precise and characteristic rendering with the graver
upon sheets of brass. It is curious that out of this
severe form of writing the florid ribbon character
(88) should have been evolved. But when once the
engraver began to consider the broad strokes of
his letters as bands or straps, which, by a cut of
the graver, could be made to turn over at the
ends, as indicated in Alphabet 80, it was inevitable
that a taste for the florid should lead him to
something of the kind. The wielder of the brush
was in all times induced by his implement to make
flourishes (32, 33), in which the carver had much
less temptation to indulge. The sloping or "italic"
letter (27) is, on the face of it, the product of the pen.

We find, then, that the implement employed,
stylus, reed-pen, brush, or whatever it may have
been, goes far to account for the character of
ancient lettering. So soon as the writer ceased
to be satisfied with mere scratching or blunt
indentation, and took to the use of the chisel, he
felt the need of a square cross-cut to end the
stroke of his letter. If that was broad, there was
no occasion for the cut to go beyond the width of
the stroke itself. If it was narrow, the easier
thing to do was to anticipate the danger of over-
shooting the mark, and frankly extend the end
cut. This method of finishing off the broad line

by a projecting cross-line is technically called
truncation, though literally that only means
cutting off. Slight but appreciable difference
in character results from the angle at which the
strokes are truncated or cut off.

In working with a pen, this difficulty of ending
the stroke occurs only in the case of very bold
lettering. In small writing the strokes naturally

*a b c d e f g h
i k l m n o p q
r ſ s t u x y z*

27. ROMAN ITALICS.

take pen-shape. They start square and gradually
diminish, or *vice versâ*, or they thicken in the
middle, according to the angle at which the pen
is held, and to the pressure, which it is difficult to
keep quite equal from end to end of the stroke.

It should be observed that the pressure is not
naturally in the middle of the stroke, but at one
end; the penman does not naturally get the
symmetrical Roman O, but the Gothic O (87).

That is the pen-born shape. The even-sided O was, if not easier to cut in stone, at least as easy; there was nothing to prevent symmetry, which was accordingly the rule in sculpture. It is rather futile to aim at that kind of thing with a pen; much better let the pen have its way; and its way is otherwise (147, 163). We get so much more out of our tools by going with them, that it is rather stupid to strive against them.

In very bold writing, even with a pen, the necessity for truncating the thick strokes occurs. You cannot easily, with one stroke of the pen, make a thick line which begins and ends square. It wants trimming; and the easiest way to trim it is by means of a fine cross-stroke extending beyond its width. This cross-stroke T helps to preserve and to accentuate the regularity of the *line* of lettering, for which a writer worth the name naturally has a care. The broad stroke being rather loaded with ink, the fine cross-stroke is inclined, in crossing it, to drag a little of the ink with it, rounding one angle of it. The obvious way of rectifying that is to round the opposite angle also—and so we have the familiar finish T, which is equivalent to the " spur " of the chiseller mentioned just now (119).

The angle at which the cross-line joins the stroke may be softened until it disappears, and the stroke appears to be curved on either side— " dilates," to use another accepted term, at the
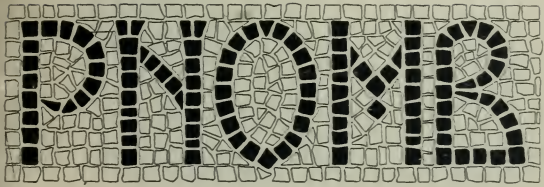
28. ROMAN MOSAIC. LOUVRE, PARIS.

29. ENGRAVED BRONZE TABLETS. NAPLES MUSEUM.

30. ENGRAVED BRONZE TABLETS. NAPLES MUSEUM.
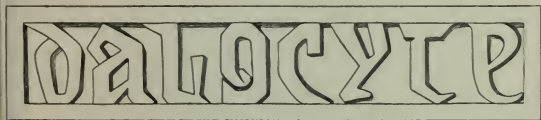
31. STONE. CORDOVA. 1409.

D

ends. Historically, we arrive at that in Lombardic and other writing as early as the 8th century (46).

Anticipating this dilation, the penman eventually made strokes in which the elementary straight line altogether disappears (54). Further elaborating, he arrived at the rather sudden swelling of the curved back of the letter, familiar in work of the 13th century and later (58, 70). With the forking of the terminations, and the breaking of the outline in various ways (20), we arrive at fantastic variation to which there is no conceivable end (34, 69, 71, 72, 92). Few instances, therefore, of the elaborate ornamentation of the lettering are here given (91, 92, 113, 114). Enough to give alphabets in which the ornamental design is in the construction of the letters themselves.

With the use of thick and thin strokes comes a difficulty. Which shall be thick, and which thin? The scribes were a long while making up their minds on that point, and they contrived some very awkward combinations (50). The solution we have at last come to is probably the best that could be found. We need scarcely bother ourselves about trying to improve upon modern practice in that respect; it has been a case of the survival of the fittest.

Out of the use of thick and thin strokes arises the necessity for graduated strokes, there being no other way of treating the *curved* lines intermediate between the two. Then, if the thick strokes are

35

abcde
fghik
lmnop
qrstu

32. PAINTED ON HISPANO-MORESQUE POTTERY.
15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES.

truncated, the thin lines appear to want corresponding accentuation at the ends; and so the "serif" runs all through the alphabet (101, 102, etc.).

The further influence of the writing tool upon the form of the letter is shown on pages 35, 37, 39, 41, and in Alphabets to which reference is made in the descriptive list of illustrations. A number of these Alphabets have been deliberately designed with a view to execution in a specific material.

With regard, now, to Numerals. Until the 15th century, the letters M, D, C, L, X, V, and I were in general use to express numbers.

The Arabic numerals, as they are called, found their way into Europe some time during the 12th century, but did not come into general use before the 15th, nor indeed much before the introduction of printing, which diffused the knowledge of them. Their adoption in England was more tardy than on the continent, the beginning of the 17th century being given as the date of their universal acceptance here. The numerals, as we know them, or even as they were written in the 15th century, do not bear any marked resemblance to the genuine Arabic; numbers 1 and 9, and the all-important cypher, 0, are the only Eastern figures which seem to claim direct oriental ancestry.

The figures of the 15th century are not always at first sight very easily legible ; the 7, for example (190), presents anything but a familiar appearance, but upon examination that inverted V proves

33. PAINTED ON ITALIAN MAJOLICA. 16TH CENTURY.

to be really an equal-limbed 7 placed (as it would
naturally fall) so as to rest upon its two ends : it
is not the figure that is changed, but its position.
Much more puzzling is the early form of 4 (192,
193, 194), a loop with crossed ends upon which it
stands. The popular explanation of the figure as
" half an eight," is anything but convincing ; and it
appears to have no Eastern prototype. There is a
17th-century version of it, however, in the Francis-
kaner Kirche, at Rothenburg (207), which, had
it been of earlier date, might have been accepted
as a satisfactory explanation. There the loop has
a square end, and the figure rests, not upon its two
loose ends, but partly on its point. Imagine this
figure standing upright, one point facing the left, and
it is seen to be a 4 of quite ordinary shape. This
may not be the genesis of the form ; but, if not, it is
ingeniously imagined by the 17th-century mason.

Writers have from the first made use of con-
tractions, the ready writer in order to save time
and trouble, the caligrapher, sculptor, and artist
generally, in order to perfect the appearance of
his handiwork, and, in many cases, to make it fit
the space with which he has to deal. The ends
of art are not satisfied by merely compressing the
letters, or reducing them to a scale which will
enable the writer to bring them all into a given line
(119). We, in our disregard of all but what we call
practicality, have abandoned the practice of con-
traction, except in the case of diphthongs, and in

34. ENGRAVED ON BRASS. 1395.

STYGEZ
CLUTIA

35. PAINTED ON WOOD. 1727.

GNGRGY

36. PAINTED ON MAJOLICA. 1518.

the exceptional instance of the word "et." The "amperzand," as printers call it (190, 191), still lingers in his founts of type, and is used even more habitually by the ordinary penman of to-day.

To what does all this investigation of the alphabet lead? It is of no use trying to evolve brand-new alphabets out of our inner consciousness. No one would understand us, and we want to be read. Originality is what we all desire; but it is scarcely the thing to seek consciously, least of all in lettering; it comes of its own accord if ever it comes. We are original or we are not.

While the alphabet is alive there will be changes in it, but they must inevitably be gradual; we can only creep on to new forms. Practically, what we have to do is to take an alphabet and modify it according to our wants or inclinations, without, as a rule, interfering much with its legibility. A man may, if he knows what he is about, make it more legible, as well as in other ways bettering it. But to do that intelligently, he should know something of the descent of the lettering on which he founds himself. That is why it has been thought worth while to discuss the subject at such length here.

An important consideration in the design of an alphabet—if design be not too pretentious a word to use in speaking of what can scarcely be much more than a variation upon orthodox forms—is

PTARVM

GLOSKN

37. GOLD LETTERS PICKED OUT OF BLACK PAINT. SPANISH.

AEGRS3

38. PAINTED ON WOOD. ITALIAN. 15TH CENTURY.

AEIOPQ
RSTVY

39. PAINTED ON GLAZED EARTHENWARE. ENGLISH.
18TH CENTURY.

that the letters should be systematically treated. They are more likely to be all of one family if we derive them from one source. But there is no reason why we should not cross the breed in lettering, if thereby we can improve the stock. An alphabet, however, should not *look* hybrid. The artist is free to do what he can; but the test of success is that his creation should look as if it must be so, and could not have been otherwise.

Why, it is asked, should any one trouble himself about hand-drawn lettering, when he has ready to his use type, which is so much truer and more perfect? Truer, perhaps, it may be, in the sense of being more mathematically exact, but it is not necessarily so truly uniform in effect; for the unyielding letters of the type-founder come together as best they may, and if they come awkwardly he can't help it. The writer can, and indeed he should.

There is no denying that many an artist who ventures to introduce lettering into his design, does it ill, does it so carelessly, or is so easily satisfied with very indifferent penmanship, that of the two evils hard and fast letterpress would have been the lesser. None the less true is it that an artist who has been at the pains to learn to write, can, if he aim at what pen or brush will do, and refrain from entering into foolish and ineffectual rivalry with the printing press, do what that cannot do, and do better.

Looking at an early printed book, you are

astonished, each time afresh, at the beauty of the page. But if you go from that straight to a fine manuscript, you realize that, after all, printing, even such printing as was done by the great printers, is a makeshift. It is a makeshift we have to put up with, and we may as well make the best of it; merely petulant complaint is childish; but when occasion does occur, let us have the real thing, and don't let us be persuaded by readers so greedy of print as to have lost all appetite for beautiful writing, that there is no flavour or artistic savour in it. It is not good manuscript, but their spoilt palate, which is at fault.

Having perfected machinery, we are doing our best to make ourselves into machines. Until that happens—which God forbid!—man's hand is still the best, in art at all events; and were it not the best, it would still have the charm of character, that individual quality for which a public brought up exclusively on printed type has no relish. Print, with its mechanical smoothness and precision, has gone far to distort the modern ideal of lettering, just as photography, with its literalness, has degraded the ideal of art. There are people who resent as a sort of impertinence anything in lettering which the printing press cannot do. They are ready to take offence at whatever is unfamiliar. Really the impertinence is in a makeshift thing like type usurping any kind of authority in a matter quite beyond its scope.

The great difference between old lettering and new is that in days before type-founding the scribe was free to play variations on the well-known alphabetical air, whereas our print is monotonous as the tune of a barrel organ.

Pedants are never happy until everything is fixed. But nothing is fixed until it is dead. Life is in movement. Philosophy has long since given up the search for perpetual motion, but that is the secret of it—life; and that is the evidence and sign of life—motion. English will be a dead language when there is no longer any possibility of change in the way it is written.

40. GREEK. FROM A STELE AT ATHENS. B.C. 394.

A B Γ Δ
E Z H Θ
I K Λ M
N Ξ O Π
P Σ T Y
Φ X Ψ Ω
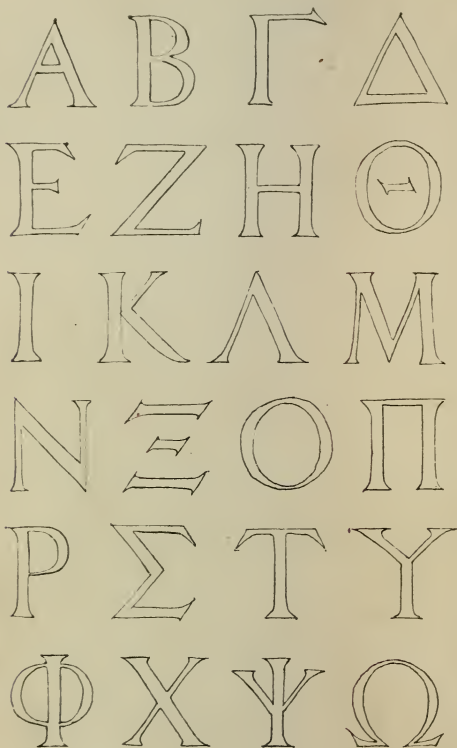
41. GREEK INITIALS, PRINTED AT BASEL . 16TH CENTURY.

A A B C C
D E F G H
J L M N H
O P G R S
S S T S U

44. ANGLO-SAXON? 6TH CENTURY.

E
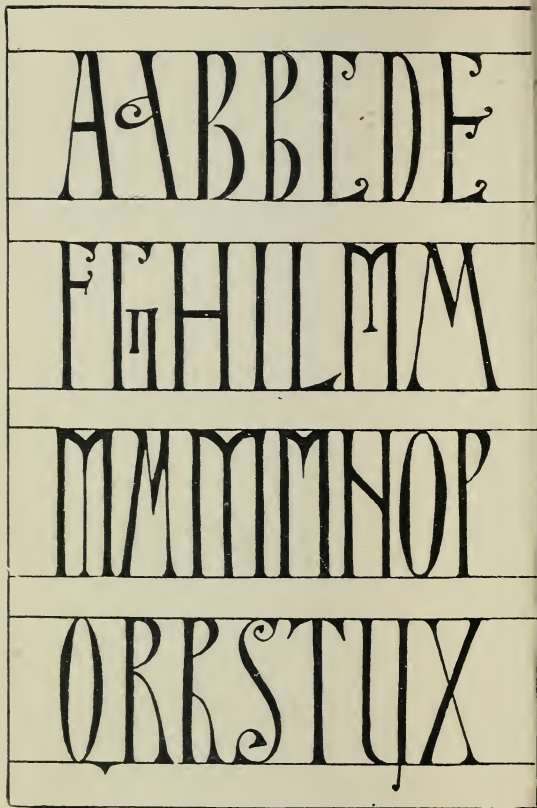
45. FROM A CODEX. 7TH OR 8TH CENTURY.
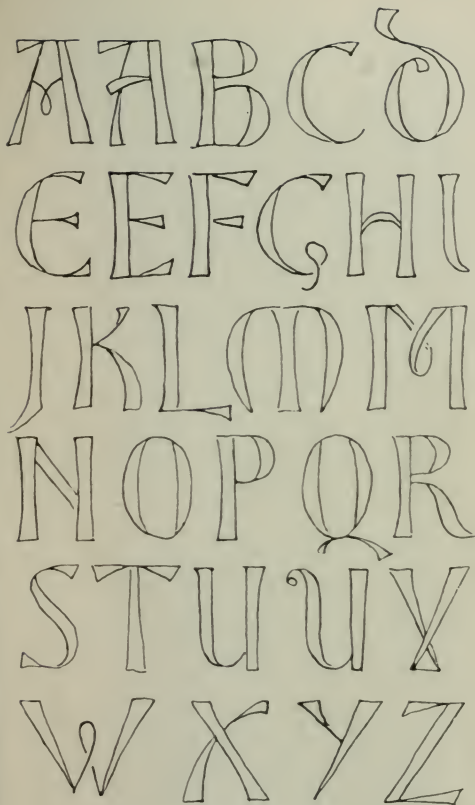
AABCD
EEFCHI
JKLMM
NOPQR
STUUX
WXYZ

46. GALICIAN MS. 8TH CENTURY.

7

B B b c d
f f F T T
A ᴔ ᵾ ᵾ
ᵾ R R R ſ
V ᵾ X X

OF KELLS. 8TH CENTURY.

48. ANGLO-SAXON MSS. 8TH AND 9TH CENTURIES.

ABCDEFG

HIKLMN

OPQRST

UVWXYZ

49. ANGLO-SAXON MSS. 8TH AND 9TH CENTURIES.

ABCCD
DDEEF
GCgHIJ
KLMNN
OPQqR
SƵTTU
VWXYZ
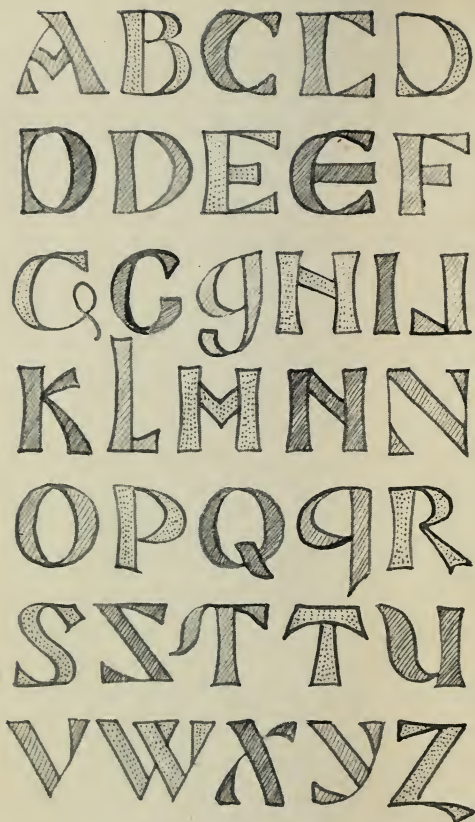
50. SAXON AND ANGLO-SAXON MSS.
7TH, 8TH, AND 9TH CENTURIES.

ABCDE

FÇBIJK

LMNOP

QRSTU

VWXYZ

51. MS. 10TH CENTURY.

52. FRENCH MS. 12TH CENTURY.

53. LE PUY. WOOD. ABOUT 12TH CENTURY.

A A B B C
D E F G H
I J K L L
L M N N O
P P Q R R
S T T U V
W X X Y Z

54. 12TH CENTURY MS. GERMAN.

ABAABC
DEFFGh
IJKRIRL
MNOPQ
RSTTHU
VWXYZ

55. END OF 12TH CENTURY MSS. ENGLISH.

ABCDE
EFGHh
ILMNO
PQRBS
TUVXZ

56. FROM A BIBLE, 13TH CENTURY.

57. FROM A GERMAN BELL. 1270.

58. FROM A PSALTER. 13TH CENTURY.

59. MSS. 14TH CENTURY.

ABCDE
EFGHh
IJKLM
MNNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

60. ITALIAN. 14TH CENTURY.

F

61. INCISED GOTHIC CAPITALS.   ABOUT 1350.

ABCDEFGH
IKLMNOPQ
RSTUVWX

62. FROM A BRASS. NORDHAUSEN. 1397.

63. FROM A BRASS. NORDHAUSEN. 1395.

23

ABOUT 1400.

65. STONE. WESTMINSTER ABBEY. ABOUT 14CO.
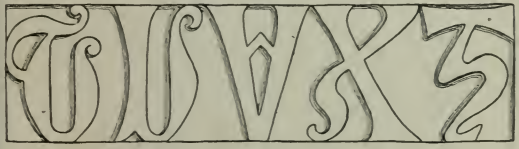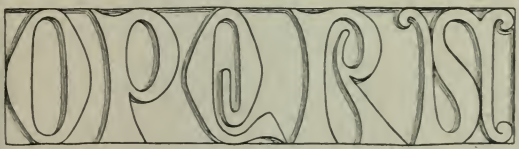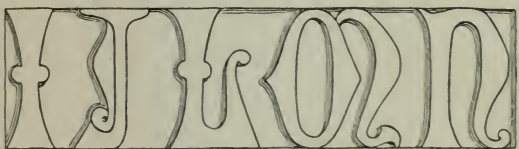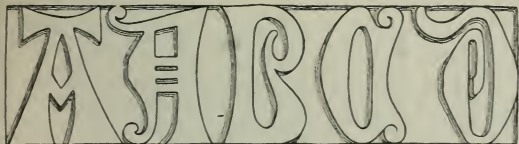
66. CARVED IN STONE. SPANISH.

67. MS. 1420.

ABCDE

EEFGHI

JKLMNN

OPQRST

UVWXYZ

68. FROM A PICTURE-FRAME IN THE LOUVRE, PAINTED, 1480.

69. GERMAN MSS. 15TH CENTURY.

AABCO
OEFGHI
IKLM
NOPQR
SSTUV
WXYZ

70. GERMAN MSS. 1475.

71. MS. ABOUT 1475.
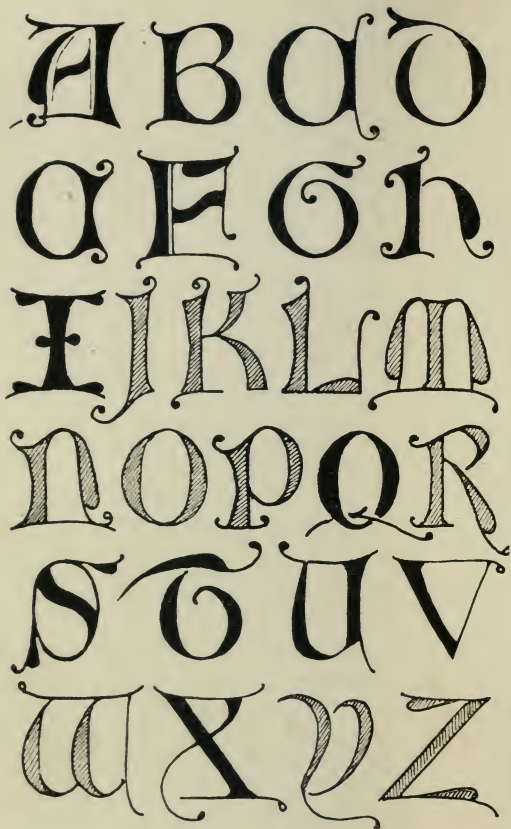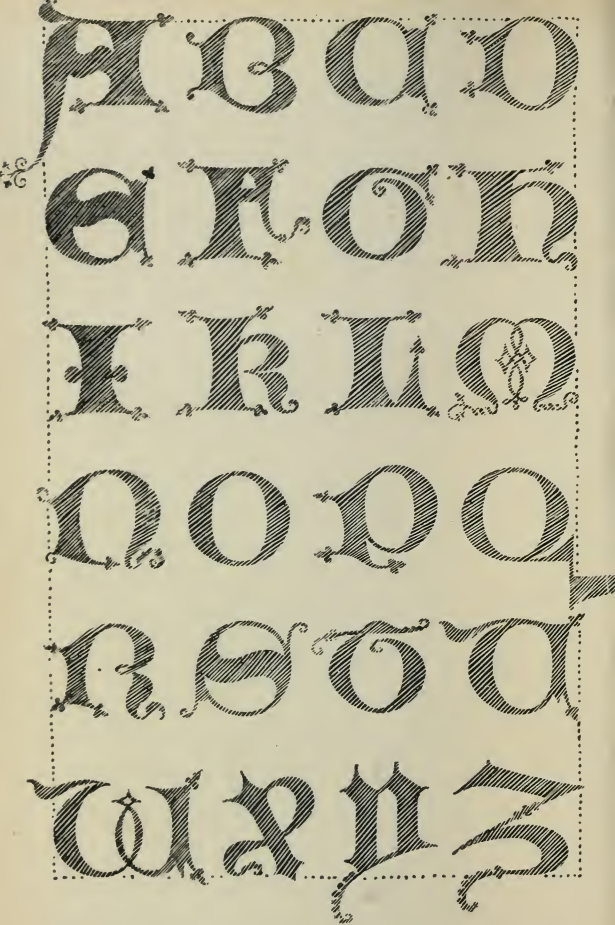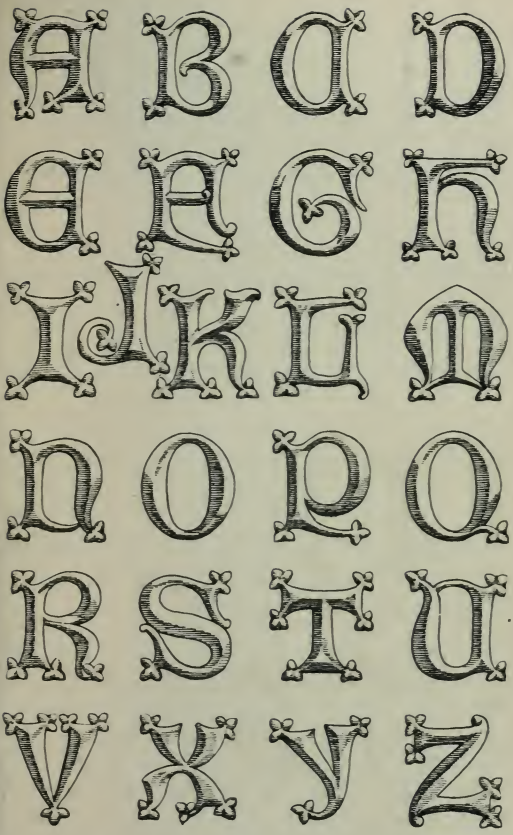
72. CARVED IN RELIEF. FRENCH. PROBABLY 15TH CENTURY.

abcdef
ghiklm
nopqrs
tvwxyz

73. FROM A BRASS. END OF 15TH CENTURY.

abcdef
ghiklm
nopqst
uvwxyz

74. FROM A BRASS. END OF 15TH CENTURY.

75. INCISED IN MARBLE. GERMAN. 1482.

76. INCISED IN WOOD. NORTH WALSHAM.

77. FROM A MANU'

16TH CENTURY.

78. GOTHIC. 16TH CENTURY.
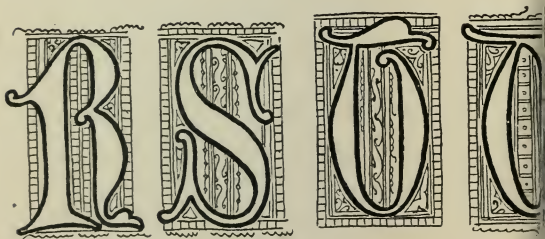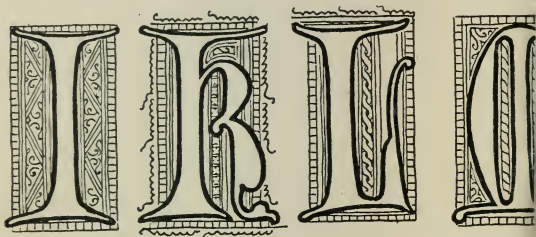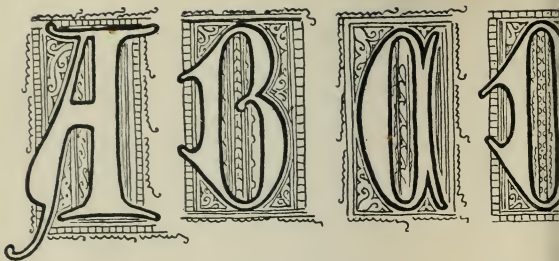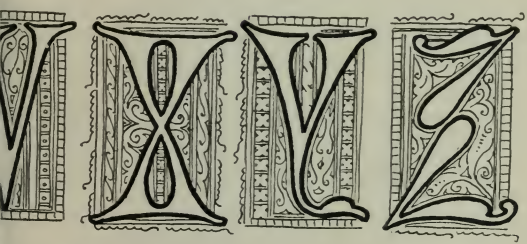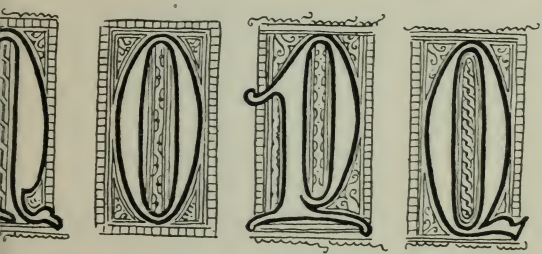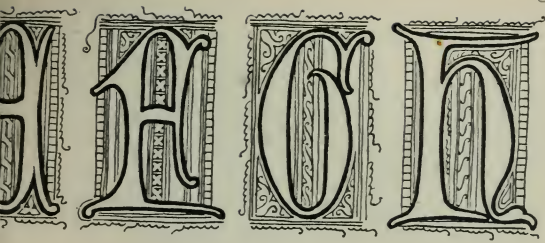
abcdefghij
klmnopqr
sstubwryz

79. INCISED. FLEMISH. 1579.

aabbbccdeeefg
ghhijklmnnnyor
zsstuvvbbexyz

80. INCISED IN STONE. FLEMISH. 16TH CENTURY.
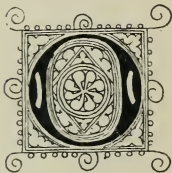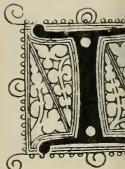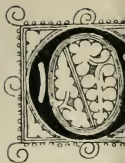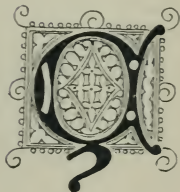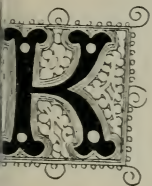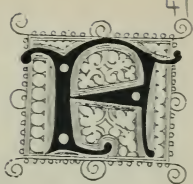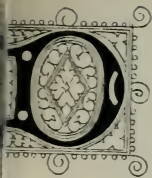
MONTE CASSINO. 16TH CENTURY.

82. ITALIAN MSS. 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES.

ABCDE

FGHIJ

KLMN

OPQR

STVV

WXYZ

83. AFTER LUDOVICO CURIONE. 16TH CENTURY. 1530.

84. ALBRECHT DÜRER. EARLY 16TH CENTURY.

abcdef
ghijkl
mnopq
rstuv
wxyz

85. ALBRECHT DÜRER. EARLY 16TH CENTURY.

86. AFTER G. F. CRESCI. 1570.

47

abcdd
efghik
lmnop
qrzſs
tuxyz

89. ITALIAN, VICENTINO. 1523.

51

90. ITALIAN. PALATINO. 1546.

H

CRESCI. 1570.

93. ITALIAN. G. F. CRESCI. 1570.

Aabc
defgh
ilmno
pqrst
uxyz

94. ITALIAN. G. F. CRESCI. 1570.

95. SPANISH. JUAN YCIAR. FIRST HALF OF THE 16TH CENTURY.

96. PRINTED INITIALS. END OF 16TH CENTURY.

ABCLDEEFG
GHHIKLMNID
OPRSTVWZ

97. FROM A BRASS. MEISSEN. 1500.

ABCDEF
GHILM
NOPQR
STVX

98. FROM BRONZE BY PETER VISCHER. 1495.

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQRS
TUVVVXYZ

99. INCISED. FLORENTINE. 15TH CENTURY.

AAABBCC
DDEFGGH
IKKLMMN
NOPPQQR
RST🔳VXYZ

100. ENGRAVED BY HEINRICH ALDEGREVER. 1530.

A B C
G H
N O
T V W
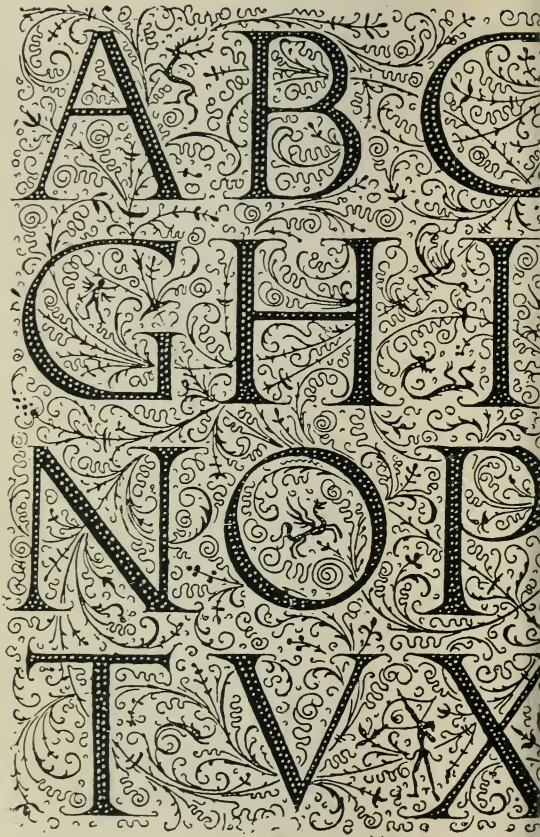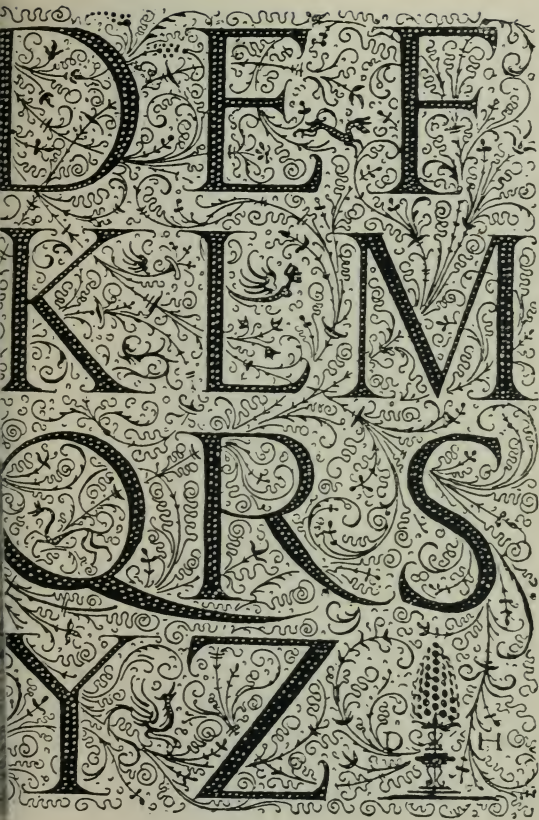
63

D E F

K L M

Q R S

X Y Z

DEF
KLM
QRS
YZ

H

ABCDE
FGHJKL
MNOPQ
RSTUV
WXYZ

103. STONE. BINGEN. 1576, 1598, 1618.

ABCD
EFGH
IJKLM
NOPQ
RSTVV
WXYZ

104. ITALICS, 17TH CENTURY.

ABCDEFGH

IKLMNOPQ

RSTVWXY

Z. &. abcdefg

hijklmnopqrstuw

xyz Aº Dm̄ 1665.

105. STONE. WESTMINSTER ABBEY. 1665.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMNM
NOPQQRR
STVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstvwxyz.
Anno Dom: 1697

106. INCISED. CHIPPENHAM. 1697.

ABCDE

FGHIJJ

KLMNO

PQRSTU

VWXYZ

107. PAINTED. GERMAN. 1727.

ABCDEF
GGHIJK
LMNOPQ
PRRSTU
VWXYY

108. PENWORK. GERMAN. J. H. TIEMROTH. 1738-48.

109. BRASS. BAMBERG. 1613.

73

abcde
efghi
klmn
opqrs
stuvx

110. STONE. OSNABRÜCK. 1742–56.

abccde
fghijlm
mmnop
pqrrſsſt
stuvx

III. SLATE. WÜRZBURG. 1617.

abcde
efgghi
jlmnop
qrrstf
uvvxz

112. SLATE. WÜRZBURG. 1784.
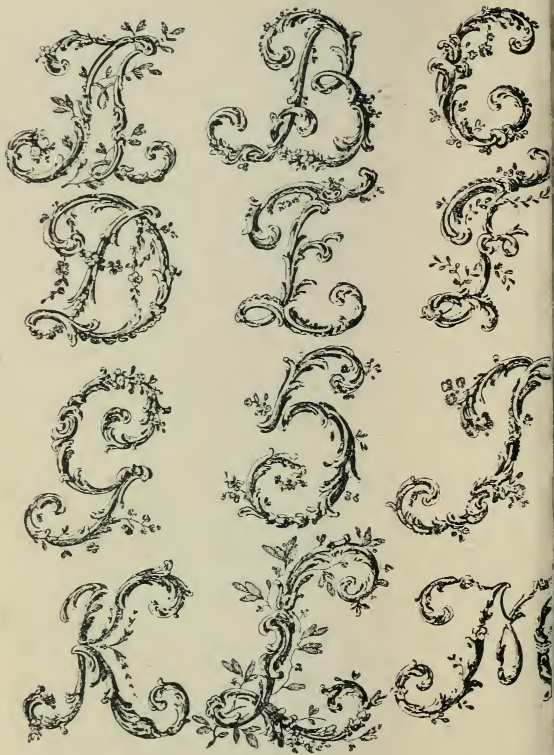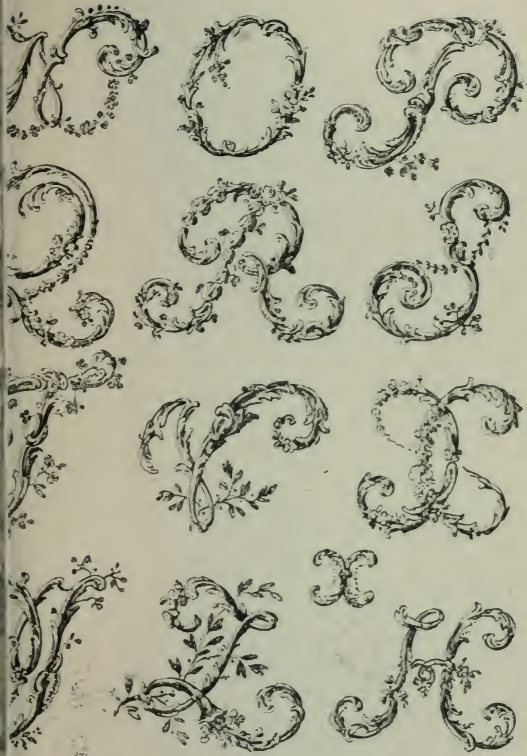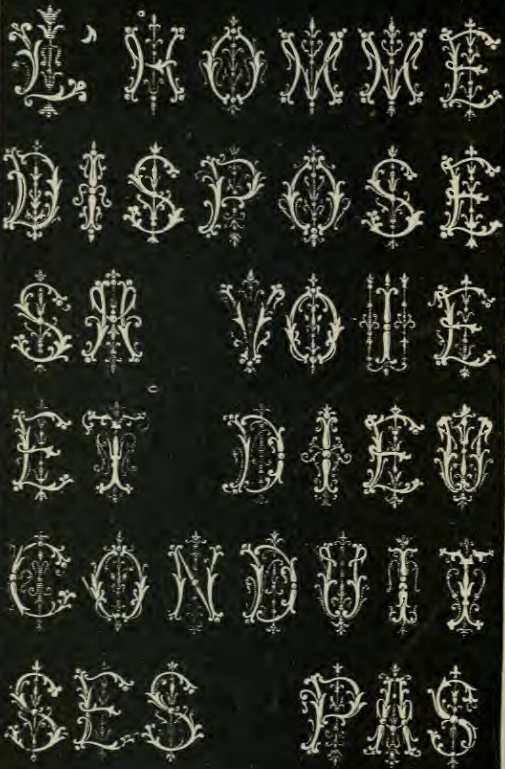
LOUIS XV.

114. FRENCH. E. GUICHARD. PERIOD OF LOUIS XV

115. ENGLISH COURTHAND. FROM A. WRIGHT'S "COURTHAND
RESTORED." 1815.

116. HEBREW ALPHABET.

Beth   Aleph
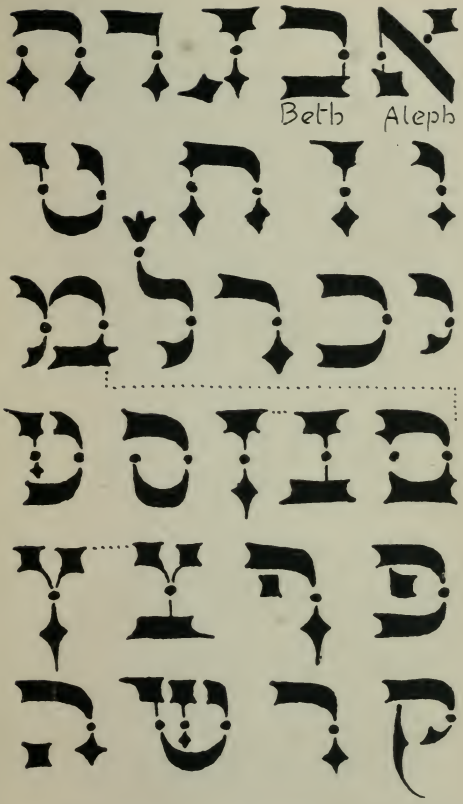
117. HEBREW ALPHABET. FROM SYLVESTRE'S PALEOGRAPHIE.

ABCDE
FGHIJK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ
abcdefghi
jklmnopqr
stuvwxyz

118. "SKELETON." J. VINYCOMB.

ABCDEF
GHIJKL
MNOPQR
STUVW
XYZ&&

abcdefghij
klmnopqr
stuvwxyz

119. "FRENCH." J. VINYCOMB.

ABCDE

FGHJK

LMNOP

QRSTU

VWXYZ

120. L.F.D.

ABCDE
FGHIK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

121. L.F.D.

ABCDEF
GHJKLM
NOPQRS
TUVWX
YZ · 1234
567890

122. . CROMAR WATT, ARCHITECT.

ABCDEF
GHJKLM
NNOPPQ
RRSSTU
VWXYYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz.&

123 J. W. WEEKES.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&
12345
67890

124. PRINTED "CASLON" TYPE.

abcdefghijkl
mnopqrstuv
wxyz *ABCD*
EFGHIJKL
MNOPQRS
TUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

125. PRINTED "CASLON" TYPE.

ABCDEFGHIJK
LMNOPQRSTU
VWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

126. PRINTED "HOGARTH" TYPE.

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQRS
TUVWXYZ &
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz

127. "COMPRESSED" PRINTED TYPE.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ &

abcdefghijkl
mnopqrstuv
wxyz

1234567890

128. FRENCH PRINTED TYPE. DESIGNED BY GRASSET.

ABCDEF GHIJKLL MNOPQ RSTUV WXYZ&

129. BLOCK CAPITALS. W. J. PEARCE.

ABCDEF
GHIJKL
MMNOPQ
RRSSTU
VWXYYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyyz3.

130. "SANS SERIF." J. W. WEEKES.

ABCDEFGHI
JKLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghijkl
mnopqrstuv
wxyz.
Roland W. Paul

131. PENWORK. ROLAND W. PAUL, ARCHITECT.

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

132. PENWORK. R. K. COWTAN.

ABCDEF
GHIJKLM
NOPQRST
UVWXYZ

133. PENWORK. R. K. COWTAN.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRST
UVWXYZ

134. PENWORK. R. K. COWTAN.

ABCDEF
GHIJKL
MNOPQ
RSTUV
WXYZ&

abcdefghij
klmnopqr
stuvwxyz

135. "OLD STYLE" ITALICS. J. VINYCOMB.

ABCDE
FGHIJK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

136. ITALICS. L.F.D.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMMN
NOPQQRR
STVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz.
1234567890.

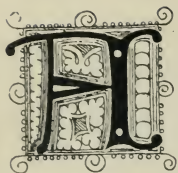ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
WXYZ
12345
67890

138. PENWORK. BAILEY SCOTT MURPHY, ARCHITECT.

L

A B C D E
F G H I K L
M N O P Q
R S T V W
X Y Z &
1905

139. PENWORK.   R. ANNING BELL.

ABCD EFGH
IJK LMN OPP
QQRR SS TT
UV WX YZ

1

234567889₀

A·D·

MDCCCCV

E·R·I° · F·D°

140. PENWORK. R. ANNING BELL.

abccdeff

ghijKlmnop

qrsſstuvwx

yz 123 Design letters
. 45 into words.
67890

141. PENWORK. PROF. A. B. PITE, ARCHITECT.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMNMN
OPQRSRS
TUVWXYZZ

AN ARCHITECT'S
LINE ALPHABET
FOR PENWORK.

142. PENWORK. PROF. A. B. PITE, ARCHITECT.

143. PEN WRITTEN. J. WALTER WEST

ABCDE
FGHIJK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

144. PEN WRITTEN. B. WALDRAM.

ABCDEF
GHIJKLM
NOPQRST
UVWXYZ

145. PEN-DRAWN "ROMAN" CAPITALS. B. WALDRAM.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&

146. PRINTED "ROMAN" TYPE. MODERN FRENCH.

ABCDGEF
GHIJKLOO
NOPQRST
UVWIXYZ

147. PEN-WRITTEN UNCIALS.   B. WALDRAM.

abcdefghij
klmnopqrs
stuvwxyz

148. PEN WRITTEN.   L.F.D.

149. GOTHIC CAPITALS. W. J. PEARCE.

ABCDEFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRST
UVWXYZ

159. L.F.D.

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
DOPQRSTUVWXYZ

160. SCRATCHING. ADAPTED FROM OLD SPANISH. L.F.D.

ABCD
EFGHI
JKLM
NOPQR
STUV
WXYZ

161. OTTO HUPP. "ALPHABETE UND ORNAMENTE.

EFGHI

OPQR

WXYZ

ABCDEF
GHIJ KL
MNOPQR
STUVW
XYZ&
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz

155. L.F.D.

EFGH

OPQ

UPYZ

A·B·C·D·
AIJKL
Q·R·S·T·
X·Y·Z·
EFGHIJK
UVWXYZ. 1

E·F·G·

MNOP·

UVW·

&· ABCD

NOPQRST

4567890 ·

A B C
G H I
O P Q
U V W
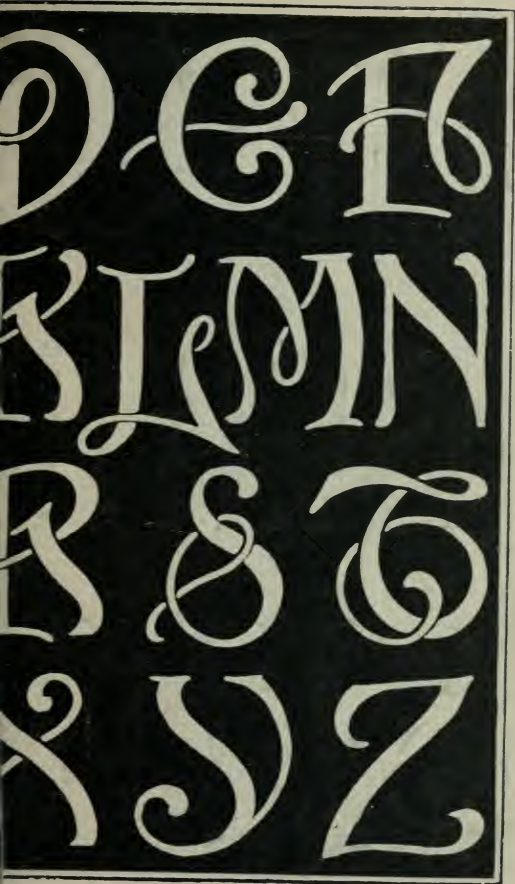
ABCD

KLMN

STUV

abcde
fghijk
lmnops
qrstuv
wxyz

150. PEN WRITTEN. L.F.D.

ABCD

IJKLM

RSTU

ABCDE

FGHIJK

LMNOP

QRSTU

VWXYZ

156. MODERN GERMAN.

157. ENGRAVING. ADAPTED FROM MEDIÆVAL GOLDSMITH'S WORK.
L.F.D.

158. L.F.D.

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

162. DESIGNED FOR ENGRAVING ON METAL; BUT NOT
UNSUITED TO PENWORK. L.F.D.

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

163. PEN WRITTEN. L.F.D.
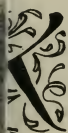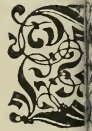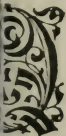
166. PENWORK. OTTO HUPP.

167. PENWORK. OTTO HUPP.

A B C
G H I
N O P
T U V

DEF
KLM
QRS
XYZ

CRANE.

N

ABCD
EFGHIJ
KLMNO
PQRST
UWXYZ

a b c d e
f g h i j k
l m n o p
q r s t u v
w x y
z

WALTER CRANE.

abcdefghik

ũnopqr

stvwxyzʒ

171. INCISED AND FILLED WITH CEMENT. PRATO. 1410.
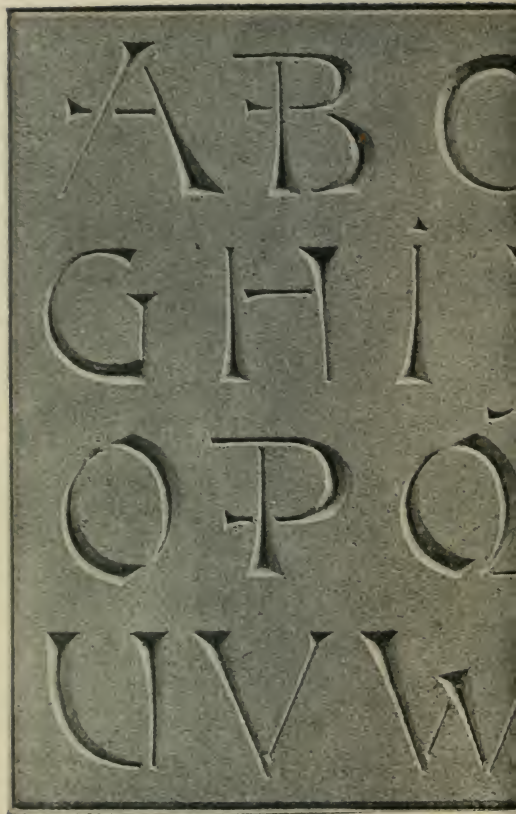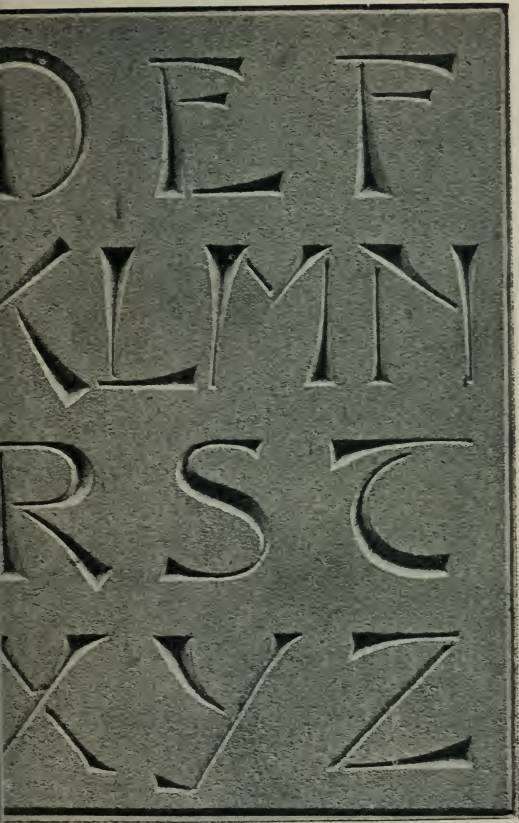
abcdefghi

jklmnopqr

stuvwxyz

172. ETCHED ON LITHOGRAPHIC STONE. NUREMBERG.
1765-70.

174 ENGRAVING ON SILVER. L.F.D.
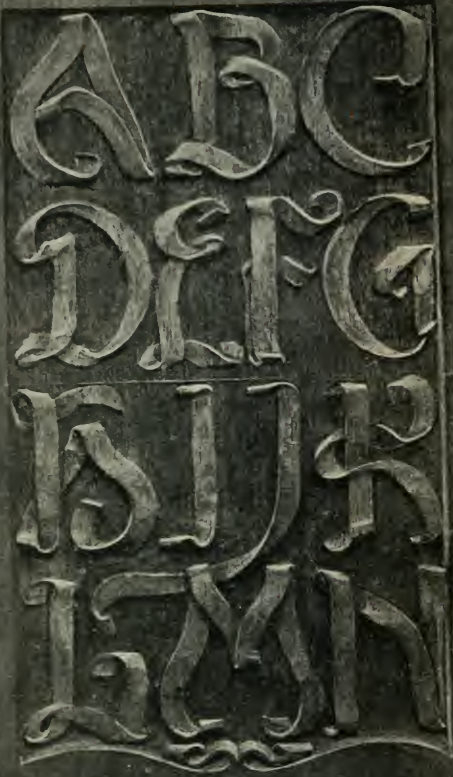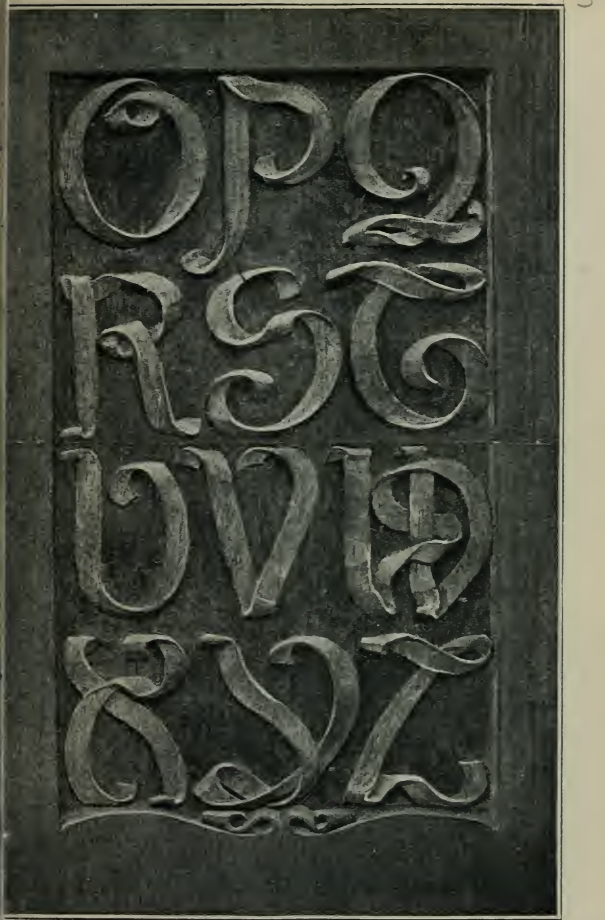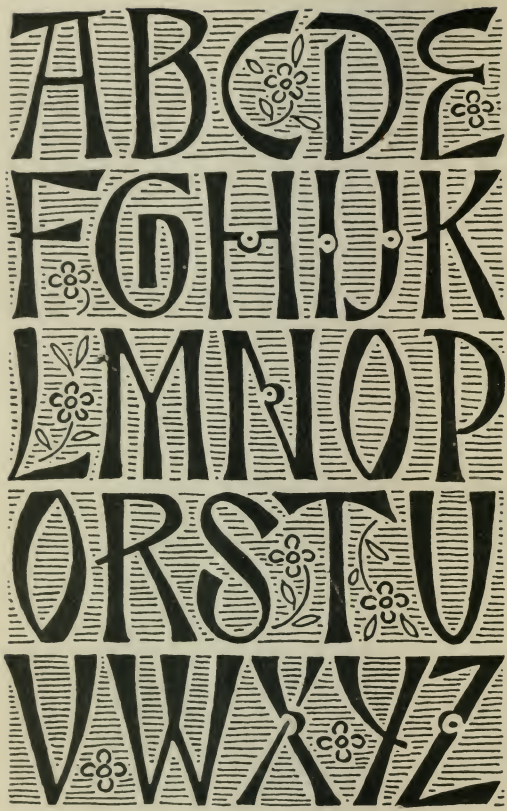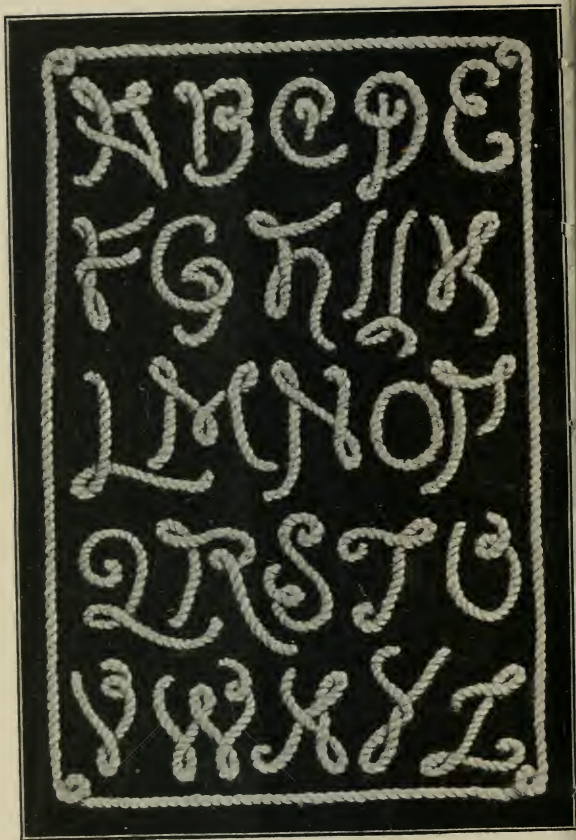
176. EMBROIDERED IN COUCHED CORD. L.F.D.

177. BEATEN METAL. L.F.D.

178. NEEDLEWORK. ADAPTED. L.F.D.

179. SGRAFFITTO. L.F.D.

180. FROM THE LACE-BOOK OF GIOVANNI OSTANS. 1591.

181 CARVED IN WOOD. ENGLISH. 1638.

182. ENGRAVING ON BRASS. ADAPTED FROM OTTO HUPP.
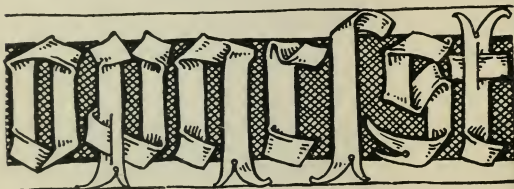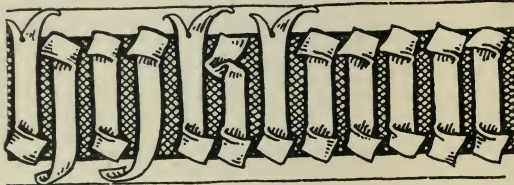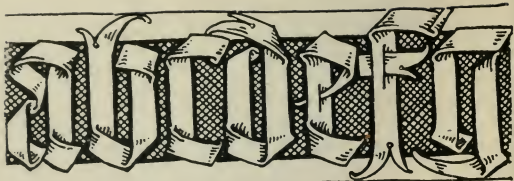
ABCDE
CFGHII
KLMNO
PQRST
WXYZ

183. PAINTED. FLEMISH. EARLY 16TH CENTURY.

184. SQUARE-CUT. QUASI-CHINESE. L.F.D.
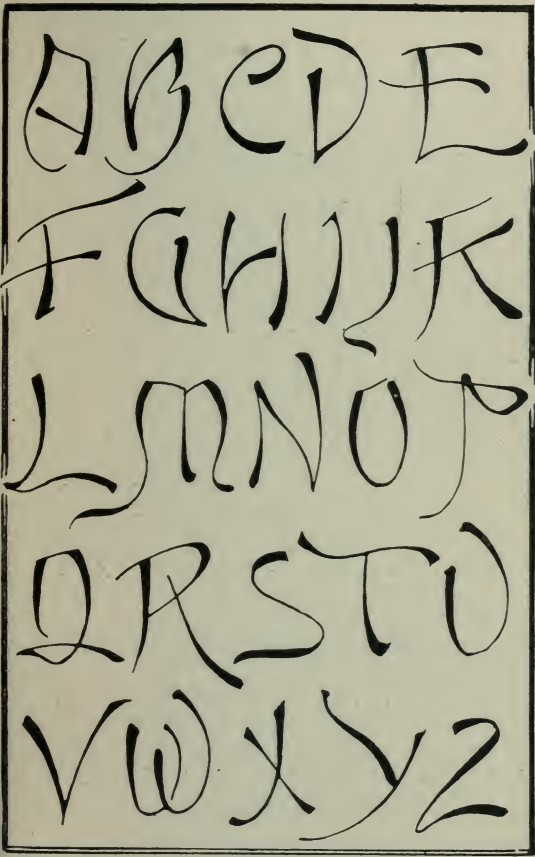
185. BRUSHWORK. QUASI-JAPANESE. L.F.D.

ABCDEFGHI
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ
abcdefghij
klmnopqrst
uvwxyz?!

186. BRUSH-WORK. MUCHA.

ABCDE
FGHIJK
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

187. STENCILLING ADAPTED FROM E. GRASSET AND
M. P. VERNEUIL.

188. PENWORK. FRANZ STUCK.
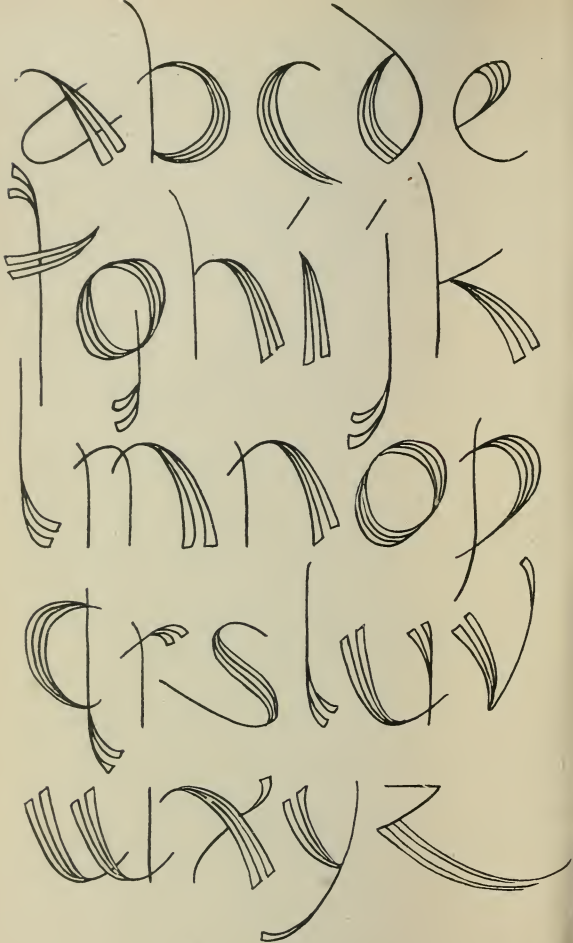
abcdefghijklmn
opqrstuvwxyz

Of course the first question is that of materi:
al; and care must be taken to choose or de:
sign an alphabet, not only practicable in,
but suitable to, the medium in which it is
to be executed. One of the commonest errors
is that of taking a style of lettering excell:
ent when written on parchment or paper, with
a quill pen, and carving it, let us say for
example, on wood. Of course the result is
often, although by no means necessarily so,
incongruous in the extreme. Many letter-
forms are, indeed, interchangeable in this
way: but if it is desired to adapt the letter.
ing of one class of object to the purposes of

189. CURSIVE WRITING. SELWYN IMAGE.

190. AMPERZANDS. 7TH TO 15TH CENTURIES.

191. AMPERZANDS. 16TH CENTURY, ETC., FREELY RENDERED.
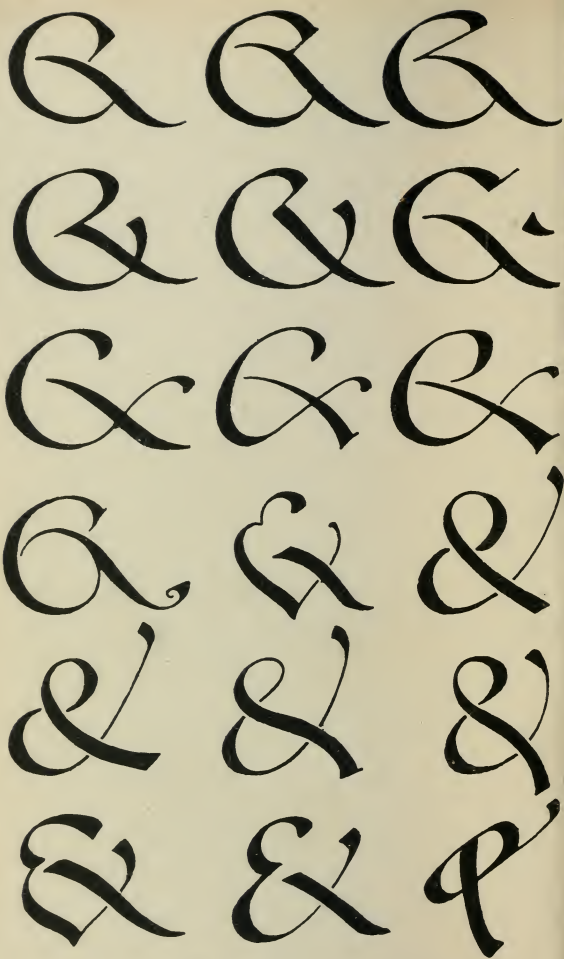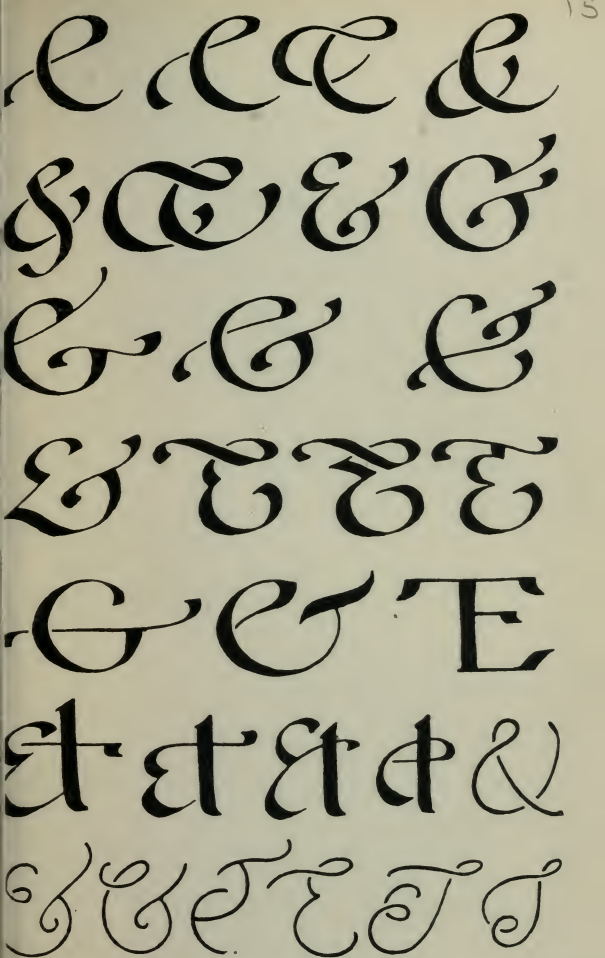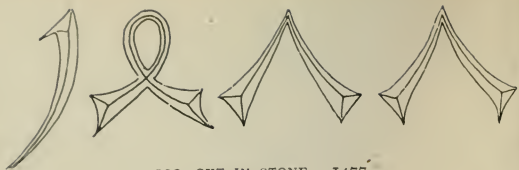
192. CUT IN STONE. 1477.
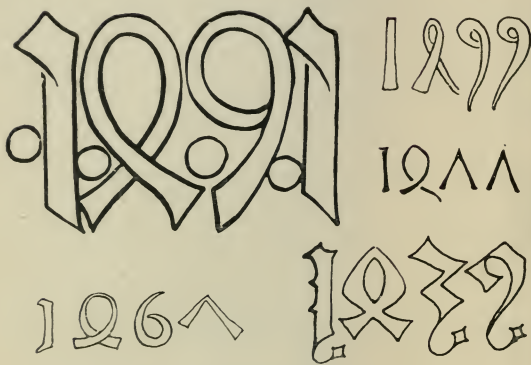
193. STONE AND BRASS. 1439-1491.
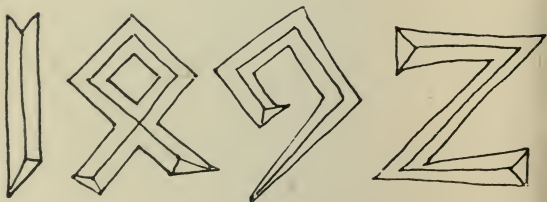
194. CUT IN STONE. 1492.

·1·5·2·0·1522

1520 1522

1521 1522

1531 1542

1531 1543

1533 1543 1544.

1539 1545

195. CHIEFLY BRASSES. 1520–1545.

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

57890

67890

67890

67890

197. BRONZE. ABOUT 1550.

198. BRONZE. ABOUT 1560.

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

199. BRUSH-WORK. FAIENCE. 16TH CENTURY.

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

200. BRUSH-WORK. 16TH OR 17TH CENTURY.

P

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

201. ITALIAN MS. 16TH CENTURY.

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

202. BRUSH-WORK. GILT, ON BLACK. 1548?
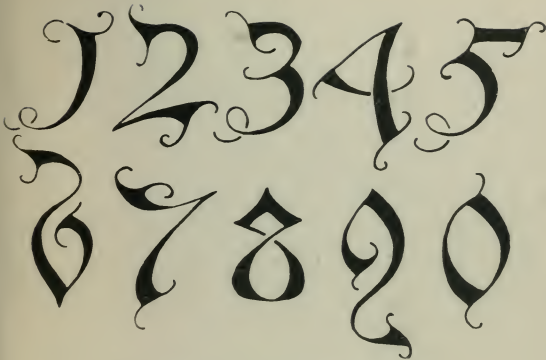
203. INCISED IN WOOD. GERMAN. 1588.
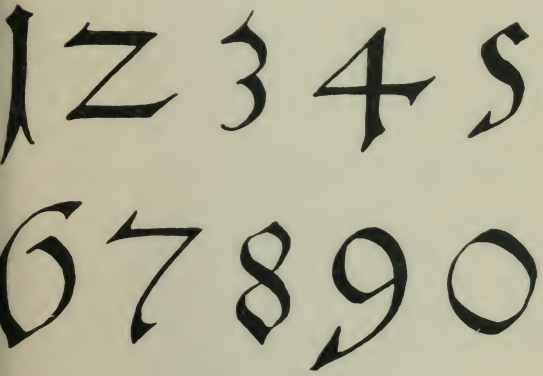
204. BRASS. 16TH CENTURY.

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

205. BRUSH-WORK. 16TH CENTURY.

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

206. ABOUT 1700.
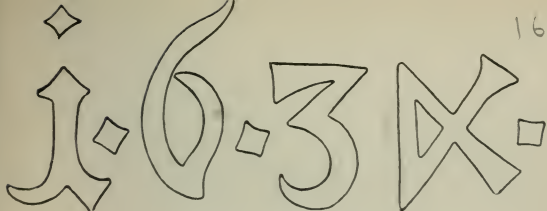
207. CUT IN STONE. 1634.
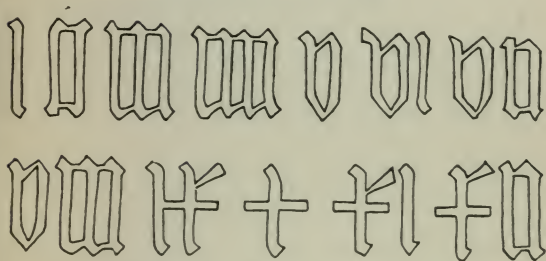
208. RELIEF IN BRASS OP BRONZE. 1647.

209. STONE. 1692.

P *

1563.55 J623
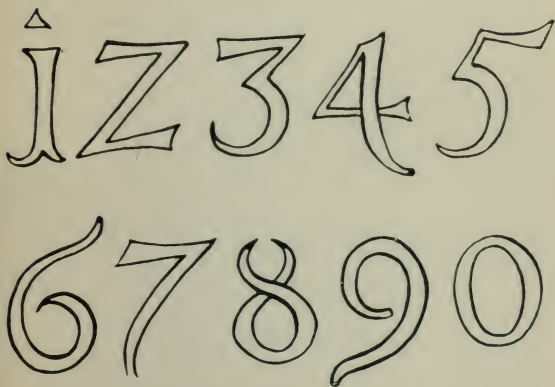
1584 J625

j63i·z 1625

1633 K679

1697 1699

1707 368

210. BRASS AND WOOD. 1563-1707.

J12334

56789

j7Z6 48

JJ32 ° 5

j744 · 9

211. 18TH CENTURY.

ɟ716·294 ẋ7ɨ9

d7Zd j723

1724 J725

J735·Z ɨ738

J755486 J763

1774·695 J783

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 74 0

213. BRASS WIRE INLAY ON WOOD. 1740.

1573 1593
1649 1747

214. ENGRAVED ON STEEL, OR INLAID IN WIRE ON WOOD.

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 0

215. L.F.D.
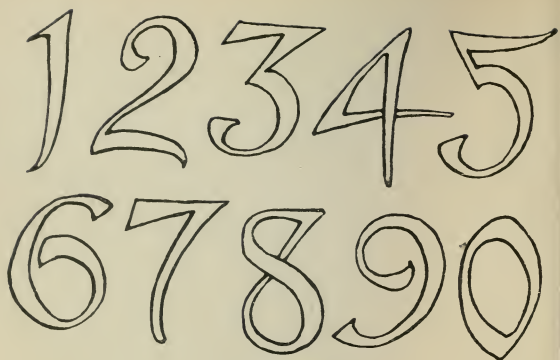
216. MODERN.
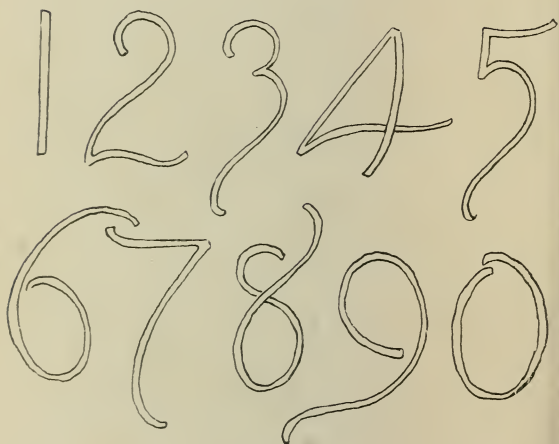
217. L.F.D.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8 9 10 11 12

218. ALÖIS MÜLLER.

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 0

219. L.F.D.

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