

Frank Steeley

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A COMPLETE ALPHABETS WITH SETS OF NUMERALS INCLUDING INITIALS, MONOGRAMS &c.

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INTRODUCTION

This book of Lettering, though primarily intended for use in Schools and Colleges, cannot fail to be of help to Artists, Draughtsmen, Lawyers, Architects, Lithographers, Law Stationers, Sign Writers, Type Founders, Engravers, Metal Workers, Stone Masons, etc. The book contains upwards of forty complete alphabets in various styles, including suitable numerals for each, and three plates of "type" alphabets, together with several sheets which are devoted to method, showing the use of the broad pen for engrossing and illuminating, and the construction of Gothic capitals and Black letter text.

In the following pages we have felt it desirable to depart from the usual chronological sequence in order that we may proceed by easy stages from the handwriting of the present day, of which the pupil must be assumed to have acquired a fair mastery, until the more ornamental and difficult characters of the Gothic period are reached. Some suggestions are also given as to the placing of letters to form words and sentences, a matter of no little importance, together with hints to those desirous to design new alphabets, or rather to vary the old, for a new alphabet would be unintelligible to all except the designer.

A number of the alphabets are adapted to different classes of work, such as, first of all, those which can readily be produced with a quill, a steel pen, or a brush; while others are suited for execution in various materials, such as metal, wood and stone; for engrossing and illuminating, and processes such as stencilling, engraving on metal, piercing in metal, carving in wood and stone, etc. A final plate is added of abbreviations, monograms, and other devices which may also be of service.

It may be mentioned that the designing and compilation of this book was begun some time before the issue of the new circular and illustrations on Primary Drawing by the Board of Education, in which "Lettering" is introduced for the first time. Some additions and modifications have been made in order to bring the book into line with the Board's recommendations on this hitherto neglected subject; and it is hoped that the suggestions herein contained, may have some value in furthering efforts that are being made by the central authority on educational matters.

FRANK STEELEY.

LETTERING

It is but recently that "Lettering" has been thought worthy of a place in our school curriculum. Even in Schools of Art, few have taken up the subject seriously, and yet when it is considered how much it enters into every-day life, and how impossible it is to shut our eyes to the vast amount of lettering everywhere displayed, it is surprising to find that its full recognition has been so long delayed. "Lettering" should surely be regarded as an Art, whether standing by itself, or forming part of a general design, and such should keep pace with the general progress of the time. The ordinary signboard alone will frequently serve to show, as a rule, the utter disregard for beauty; the majority of these will be found to be of the *shaded block* type, and sometimes with shadows on *both sides* of the letters, which is entirely opposed to good taste. It might be argued that the fundamental idea of a sign or advertisement is "attraction," but is it necessary to violate art principles to attain this end? Will not good form and proportion, with due regard to legibility, more effectually serve its purpose, than the ugly, and sometimes illegible, letters with which we are only too familiar, and where it is evident the chief and only aim has been to "strike the eye"?

If lettering be viewed in its true light, viz: that of decoration, as well as to convey an idea, then the forms must keep their place and not be made to appear as solid blocks standing away from the ground; the acceptance of a flat surface must be insisted upon, and treated on a similar principle to that laid down for surface decoration. The realistic representation of solid letters should therefore not be attempted.

It has just been said that the object of lettering is to express something; the first thought therefore must be its legibility; its second should be its decorative effect; but it should be remembered that the former must never be sacrificed for the latter.

It is not intended here, nor is it desirable, to give any but the shortest account of the history of this most interesting subject; but it will suffice to briefly state a few facts in connection with the matter. It was thousands of years before our era that writing was invented; and it has not yet been definitely settled to which nation the honour is due. Greek writing was undoubtedly derived from the Phoenicians, and afterwards served as a basis for Roman calligraphy.

The Roman is the source from which all the styles of Mediaeval and our own modern lettering arose. It is easy to see how well suited the Greek and Roman capitals were to the methods of expression that were then in vogue, which consisted of a metal plate or tablet coated with wax, upon which the letters were scratched or indented with a hard point called a stylus; at the end of this a disc was fixed, to enable the writer to smooth the surface at will. These then were the equivalents to the paper and pen or pencil of the present day.

LETTERING

The Reed, which was introduced at a later period, as a means of writing, modified in a large measure, the shapes of the letters; a cursory glance at the different tools used should make this evident. The hard point of the stylus regulated the thickness of every stroke, while the reed, cut across at the point, gave facilities for a broad stroke and some variety. The reed pen is still used by Eastern scribes. Gothic and Black letter text cannot well be written with any other kind of pen, except the quill, cut in a similar manner. This method of writing was always a long and tedious process, and was eventually superseded by the modern running hand, written with a quill, cut to a point and slit, and finally by the familiar steel pen of to-day. The use of the reed and the broad pointed quill is now almost confined to the production of documents, addresses, and special work of that description.

MATERIALS

The materials required for practice in writing (or printing as it is sometimes erroneously called), are few and inexpensive. Ordinary ruled exercise books will answer the purpose; plain paper, however, is advised; the size of the letters can more easily be varied, according to the work in hand. A fairly smooth surface is best, provided it is not glossy. For some of the early examples in this book, an ordinary writing pen of a fairly coarse kind, will be suitable. A quill pen will be found useful for the Roman letters on Plate III. For the Old English, German Text capitals, and Black letter text, a quill pen may be used, but it must be cut in a similar way to that shown on Plate V. (see Fig. I). The quill pen is the best for this class of letter, but the difficulty of keeping the point in trim is a serious one when dealing with a number of pupils who cannot cut one themselves; not an easy matter at best. An excellent substitute is provided by the steel pen specially cut; two are here recommended as being good (see Plate V., Figs. J & K). The small one is suitable for text similar to that given on Plate V. The broad pen marked K on same plate, size $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 1, is a useful width for capitals.

Ordinary ink is quite good enough for practice; its only fault is that it is liable to blot, and its colour too is uneven; but with care the danger of blotting can be obviated. Indian Ink is the best to use, being intensely black and somewhat thicker; its greater cost, however, is a consideration.

Vellum is the recognised surface to work upon for addresses, but is necessarily very expensive, and is only used for important work. Vellum paper is a good substitute. "Bristol board" is also a fairly good ground to write upon.

PLATE I.

WRITING.

It is usual in books on alphabets, &c., to commence with the old Roman style, and rightly so, as it was the source from which most, if not all, later styles were derived. As everyone is now taught to write, it has been thought more expedient, and it appears reasonable too, to develop the practice of lettering from ordinary writing, to the more rigid forms of type-like letters. The first plate is therefore devoted to shapes only slightly removed from common writing; the chief difference being in the case of the small letters, which are not of a "running hand," each letter being separated; this, when carefully done, has a distinct decorative effect, especially if the letters are kept strictly parallel and close together. The next alphabet, No. 2, is approaching the vertical position; and that which follows is quite upright, and rather more difficult on that account. No. 3 is another step removed from ordinary written forms, and has merged into a "type." All these can be done with a common writing pen.

Writing. (sloping.)

PLATE I

¹ 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. & 1 2 3 4 5 6
 7 8 9 0. 170.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Upright.

² 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
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz.

writing forms merged into type.

³ 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.
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PLATE II.

LINE LETTERS; "ITALICS" and "EGYPTIAN BLOCK LETTERS."

No. 1 is what is sometimes called a "skeleton" alphabet, which is composed of lines of uniform strength. This is probably more difficult of execution than No. 2, italic, which follows, because any little irregularities which occur in sloping letters are not so noticeable as in the upright character. It will be useful here to draw attention to some of the general characteristics of the letters. Most of those in set No. 1 fall into or are a part of an oblong, except the A, V and W; the A and V are in their general shape, isosceles triangles, though spaced out as oblongs, and the W fairly fits into a square. The letters B, E, G, R, S, and X, it will be observed, are all larger in the lower half, and the cross bars of the B, E, F, H, P, and R are placed slightly *above* the middle. The centre of the S too is on a similar level. These are termed "high waisted letters," and have a much more graceful effect than if the cross bars were exactly central. By inverting ordinary print, it is a surprise to many to find so much difference between the upper and lower halves of the letters; the eye seeming to magnify the upper portion of the letter, producing an optical illusion.

In No. 2, corresponding features will be noticed, but the letters are drawn at an angle; these are called "italics." Both the foregoing alphabets can be drawn with the usual writing pen.

No. 3 is a common block-letter of Egyptian origin. It will be best in this case to outline these first with a pen (see W), and fill in solid with a brush. They may be treated in other simple ways as indicated.

It is always advisable to rule two parallel lines to enclose the letters so as to ensure strict regularity. The letters should also be roughed out in pencil before attempting to finish with a pen or brush; the method of doing this is shown on Plate IV., No. 3.

LINE or "SKELETON" LETTERS: (upright) PLATE II

1
 ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567
 890. 1803.

ITALICS. (sloping.)

2
 ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ.
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 12345
 67890

EGYPTIAN BLOCK LETTERS

3
 ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PLATE III.

"OLD ROMAN," or "ITALIAN," 16th Century.

This is perhaps one of the best types for study; the letters are simple and good in proportion, but above all, legible. The chief difference between these and the previous ones is that the parts of the letters vary in thickness, and are finished with "serifs," which add considerably to the effect. The "serifs" are the short lines which terminate the limbs of the letters. For practice it is recommended that the pupil should rule two parallel lines about the same distance apart as those shown on first line, and set out in squares and oblongs according to the letter. Many of these capitals will be found to fall into exact squares, such as A, O, Q and Z, and others may be made to do so; while I, J, E, F, P, S, etc., are preferably, and some necessarily, oblongs, in their general block. It is not thought desirable to lay down any hard and fast rules for proportion. For instance, the C and D here would look equally well if set out in squares; this greatly depends upon the combination of letters forming the word. Several varieties of proportion are shown (see No. 3), which explains what is here meant.

For the first exercise, the letters should be indicated in pencil, and then drawn in outline with a fairly broad writing pen (a good quill is best), see C and D, on top row. The whole of the Alphabet is to be drawn this size at least; the letters may afterwards be filled in solidly with a brush or pen, as at A; or the ground may be painted black, or with a colour. It will be noticed that when the background is filled in as shown in the B, the letter loses appreciably in thickness, and is liable to appear weak, in proportion to the strength of line adopted; it is well, therefore, to make allowance for this shrinkage when the ground is to be so treated, drawing the parts of the letters thicker than if for outline, or if the letter itself is to be filled in.

The next exercise might be to draw these same capitals in outline, direct with the pen, without any previous sketching in pencil, as in the first lesson, except the parallel lines enclosing them, and the spaces for each letter; see C and D, on first row.

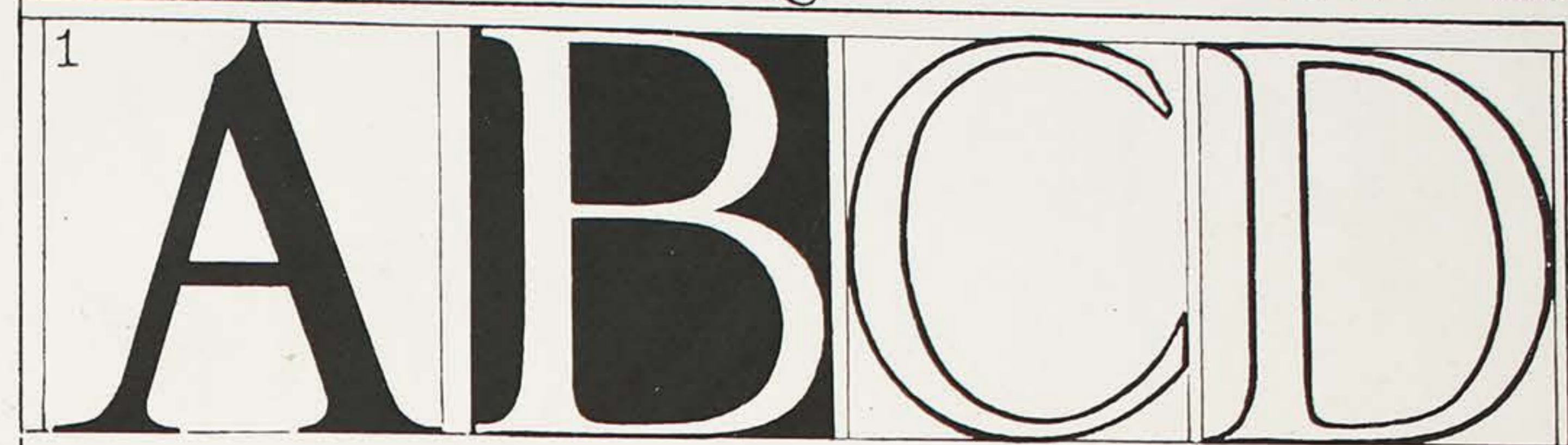
The capitals may now be drawn within two parallel lines about three-quarters of an inch apart. These and the small letters should be drawn direct, as before, without any help beyond the guide lines, drawn very lightly in pencil, which, as before mentioned, are to keep the letters straight, and to regulate their size. The pressure of the pen must be increased for the thick strokes; each stroke and curve of the letter should be finished, as far as possible, by one movement of the hand. For the small letters this is quite necessary, and, after a little practice, will be found easy to do. It will be seen that two forms of the letter d are given; either of these will be correct. The numerals are also to be drawn in a direct manner.

The original drawings for this plate were done with a quill pen.

CAPITALS

Old Roman.

PLATE III.



2. lower-case letters



3 Other forms of Old Roman Capitals



PLATE IV.

“ROMAN” and “ITALIC.”

On this plate are given two alphabets derived from Roman examples; though they are more regular and perfect in many ways than the Old Roman on the preceding plate, they are not nearly so free and artistic.

No. 2 is a Roman Italic alphabet, with some slight variations, and may be considered more refined than No. 1. These same shapes could well be arranged for an upright alphabet. It would be good training if these were taken as exercises in accurate and neat work, using all the aid possible to be obtained from the pencil, rule and compass. The original drawings for this plate were made in this manner.

The terms “upper case” and “lower case” need explaining. The capitals are technically called *upper case*, and the small letters, *lower case*. It is purely a printer’s or compositor’s term, and originated by the fact that the small letter types were kept in a lower case or box, and the capitals in the upper portion or upper case.

A suggestion is given in No. 3 for arranging and setting out words. The word “Roman” is composed of capitals, the letter R being about one-third larger than the other letters. These should be outlined first and filled in as drawn; the straight lines may be ruled. The method of setting out is shown above. The word “Italics” is made up of an italic capital and lower case letters. The proportion between capital and small letter should be carefully noted. Though other scales may be adopted, this is considered a good one. The chief difficulty here is to keep all the letters sloping at the same angle; this can be done by ruling a number of parallel lines with a set-square and rule, at the required angle.

Roman.

PLATE IV

¹ ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

² *Italics.*
 ABCDEFGHIJKLM
 NOPQRSTUVWXYZ.
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

³ Examples of arrangement.
 ROMAN Italics
 ROMAN Italics.
 to be done in outline, or filled in solid.

PLATE V.

CONSTRUCTION of "BLACK-LETTER TEXT."

This plate shows as completely as possible how the black-letter text of the Old English style is constructed. The quill pen, cut like Fig. 1, or a steel pen similar to that illustrated at J, is indispensable for the correct rendering of this class of letter. The elements are drawn detached in order that they may first be practiced separately; they will serve as introductory lessons. Fig. 1 is the first stroke to learn. No more ink should be taken in the pen than is necessary for one or two strokes, and with the pen in the position shown at A, it should be moved in the direction marked by the arrow.

Nos. 2 and 3 are made by simply producing the stroke, but in a slightly different angle. Nos. 4 and 5 are done with the pen in the position as drawn at D; with steady, firm, downward strokes. No. 6 is obtained by turning the pen as shown at E, and moving it horizontally, a much thinner line is thus obtained, which is the result of altering the direction of the stroke. It will be noticed that Figs. 1, 2 and 3 are slightly broader than Figs. 4 and 5, for the reason that the full width of the pen is brought into use; an alteration of the position of the hand would be necessary to get the same breadth. This is further illustrated at B and C. By turning the pen and using the edge (see F), a fine line can be made like Fig. 7.

Fig. 8 is given in stages, and is a common beginning of many of the letters. Fig. 9 is occasionally needed. Fig. 10 is another form frequently used, which can be produced easily by pressing the pen heavily at first, and with a curved movement upwards, lifting the pen rather suddenly at the finish. Fig. 11 is the reverse of Fig. 10, but longer; for this, one should commence lightly with the edge of the pen, and work on to the broad part with full pressure (see G, H). Fig. 12 shows two combined strokes, which are used in some form in most of these "lower case" letters. The position of the pen for obtaining Fig. 13 below is given at L; this is the first stroke of the letters V and W.

The letters have been arranged according to difficulty, and are drawn in stages to better explain their construction. The complete alphabet is given below, with suitable numerals.

The original drawing for this sheet was executed with a broad pen, like the one illustrated at J, and done in a *direct* manner. The little thin lines or "ticks" may be put in either with a fine pen, or with the edge of the broad pen, as shown at F. The sentence on the last line is also written direct, and is effective without the ticks.

It is quite unnecessary to draw these letters in pencil first; words merely require spacing out. For important work it is as well to indicate the letters; the method of doing this is given on Plate VII., in the words "Old English."

PLATE V

black letter text.

elements.

letters shown in stages.

pens.

complete alphabet:

example:

compose letters into words.

PLATE VI.

CONSTRUCTION of "OLD ENGLISH CAPITALS."

Figs. 1 to 21 show the various elements needed to make up the capitals of the Old English. Fig. 1 is made in the same way as the vertical strokes on the previous page; the only addition being that before drawing the stroke, the pen is moved to the left downwards a little, finishing with another movement to the left, which sharpens it off. Fig. 2 needs no comment, except that it forms the chief part of the letter A. Fig. 3 is similar to Fig. 1, but in a horizontal position; it is required in the making of the letters Z and X, and, in a modified way, the cross bars of the A, F, and M. Figs. 4, 5 and 6 are made in a similar way to Fig. 7 on Plate V., the edge of the pen being employed. Fig. 7 is the stroke of the X. Figs. 8, 9 and 10 are not unlike those already given on Plate V. Fig. 8 is used in the letters A, B, D, H, K, L, N, P, Q, S, and its manner of production is shown on Plate V. (G, H). Fig. 9 is part of letters B, D, E, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, R, U and Y, while Fig. 10 is required in the C, E, F, G and X.

Fig. 11 is part of the letters H, N, O, Q, R and Y, and Fig. 12 is a similar stroke to the one in the B. Fig. 13 is a difficult form; it can best be done with a bold sweep, commencing with the pen as shown, increasing the pressure at the middle. The position of the pen changes with a natural movement (see a, b and c), giving the graduated stroke; this is a common form, and is composed in the letters C, E, G, O, Q, T, U and W.

Fig. 14 is produced by a like movement, but reversed, and is used in the C, E and G. Fig. 15 occurs in many of the letters, with sometimes a short stroke added, as at Fig. 16 (see letters B, F, H, J, K, L, M, N, V and W). A similar stroke, slightly longer and with less curve, is drawn at Fig. 17, and completed in Fig. 18, this is required in the T and Z. Fig. 19 is part of the S and the tail of the Y. Fig. 20 is the main part of the D, and is somewhat difficult, but with practice it can soon be mastered; the chief point is that the first portion is practically horizontal, and the second perfectly vertical.

Fig. 21 requires some care to write neatly; it belongs to the letters K and R. Fig. 22 shows the various stages in writing the S; beginning at a, and moving in the direction of the arrow to b, continuing according to the lettering in the sketch, finishing with the fine up stroke following from the diminishing thickness at j.

The complete alphabet is here given, and, as in the small letters, each one is drawn in stages, which should help in simplifying this somewhat difficult construction. These are all done in a direct manner, with a broader pen than that used for the small letters; one like that shown at K on Plate V, is recommended.



1
 A B C D E F G H I K L
 M N O P Q R S T U V
 W X Y Z abcdefghijklmn
 opqrstuvwxyz.

2
 Old English. 

EXAMPLE:

METHOD OF SETTING OUT

3
 A B C D E F G H I K L
 M N O P Q R S T U V;
 W X Y Z.

ARABIC NUMERALS.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
 z x y z:

4
 EXAMPLE:  Annie  Williams:  x y z: 

PLATE VII.

“OLD ENGLISH.”

This plate contains further examples of the Old English style of lettering, capitals and black-letter text. The first is very little removed from the preceding one, the difference being in the detail. The words “Old English” are given to show the proportion of the small letter with the capital; the placing of the letters to form the words; and also the method of setting out in pencil, previous to drawing in ink.

Fig. 3 is an alphabet based upon the first one, but heavier in every way and somewhat simpler. It is often desirable to have in a design, dark, heavy letters such as these.

It is important here to observe that these Old English capitals (and German Text capitals too), are not suited to form words in themselves; they are essentially capitals or initials, and should only be used as such. Several examples are given of the proper use of such capitals. Arabic numerals are given also on this plate, and can appropriately be used in conjunction with the Old English letters, or the Gothic which follow.

PLATE VIII.

"GOTHIC CAPITALS."

Plate VIII. contains an alphabet in the Gothic style. This may be copied with a pen and filled in with a brush, or better still, painted entirely with a brush. The letters should be set out in pencil as drawn on the second row of this plate; the details can be put in with a brush in a direct manner. These capitals are perfectly suited for use in forming words, and if the initial is made larger than the rest, the effect is more pleasing. Old English and German Text lower case letters form an agreeable contrast to these Gothic capitals, and may be arranged as shown at No. 3.

The initial T is made an important feature here; a method frequently adopted in illuminated addresses and like documents. The T is a little more elaborated than the ordinary capital, but the main characteristic is retained. It should be noted that the lower case letters are not always placed on a line with the lower part of the capital or initial. They may be arranged to come in the centre, as in this copy, or at the top. The figures "1902" are designed to fill the shape; these are in the style of the Arabic numerals given on Plate VII., and though little additions have been made here and there, they are quite subservient to the vital form of the figures.

Some suggestions are shown of simple ornament and lining.

1



Method of setting out.

2



3



Example:-



Sketch showing method of blocking out.

PLATE IX.

“GERMAN TEXT” and “GOTHIC” LETTERS.

The first of the alphabets on this plate is German Text capitals and small letters. The capitals are not difficult of execution with a good broad pen. These and the Old English are essentially pen-constructed letters; their forms being the direct result of the use of the quill or broad pen, and are therefore perhaps unsuited for large work such as signboards and the like. The lower case letters of this alphabet are good and very effective; they can be used consistently with any of the Gothic or Old English capitals.

No. 2 are Gothic capitals, based upon types of the best period; they are good for two reasons; in the first place they are very legible—one of the chief points to secure in a letter, and for that reason are to be preferred to the Old English or German Text—and secondly there is a better opportunity of little variations in form and proportion, which is not so easily done in the two just named. They can be used entirely to form words, as they are not essentially capitals. Two initials are given here, A and B, with black grounds to show where little changes in shape may be made without destroying the features of the style.

It will be seen after studying the black letter text, that they must be placed close together, not to say crushed together as close as can be without actually touching. This always secures a decorative and pleasing effect.

No. 2 is another set of Arabic numerals; the one given on Plate VII. is in many respects the better set.

German Text.

PLATE IX

1
 A B C D E F G H I
 K L M N O P Q R
 S T U V W X Y Z
 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.

Gothic

2
 A B C D E F G H I
 K L M N O P Q R S T
 U V W X Y Z. A B

black letter text.

3
 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.

Arabic Numerals

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PLATE X.

PEN and INK ALPHABETS.

Several examples are given here of pen and ink constructed alphabets. No. 1 can easily be executed with an ordinary pen of fair breadth, and is a further development of those given in Plate I. Lower case letters and numerals are also given, and will be found well suited for rapid writing. No. 4 is also drawn with an ordinary pen, and the letters are filled in with parallel lines, which give a light toned effect—useful where it is essential that the letters should be unobtrusive. It is often necessary to write upon Architect's and Engineer's drawings or designs, titles, and descriptions, and which, for obvious reasons, should not be too prominent, and yet at the same time must be clear and legible at a glance. These letters lend themselves well to this class of work. Numerals are given and a combination forming a date and a name, showing where small variations can be made according to the arrangement of the letters or figures. The formation of words should be carefully thought out; letters often need to be altered and modified so that the effect as a whole leaves nothing to be desired. After all, the placing of letters to form a word is a matter of design, requiring careful selection, and considerable judgment. For example, where A follows an L, unless care is taken, a break in the word is formed; this can be obviated by the addition of a curve, which is shown in alphabet No. 4 on this sheet, or by placing the letters close together, and allowing the left leg of the A to cross or overlap the L.

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

⁴ 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.

⁵ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 A D 17 5.

Example

⁶ G. W. B A C O N & C^o. L^d.

PLATE XI.

PEN and INK and BRUSH-WORK ALPHABETS.

This is a plate of pen and ink letters, and an alphabet which is the outcome of the use of the brush. No. 1 is a good type of letter, and may be recommended to architects and others. Part of the letter is lined, but an equally good effect is obtained by mere outline.

No. 2 is a broad pen alphabet; it may readily be seen how it is written, using the broad side of the pen for the horizontal strokes with full pressure, and the edge of the pen for the vertical lines.

No. 3 is again done best with a pen, and needs no comment.

No. 4 is drawn with a brush, and might be called a brush-work alphabet; for quick work it is particularly effective. It is intended that this should be done in a bold direct manner, and, in copying it, one should not niggle with the strokes, and should not trouble if they do not come the same as the copy at first. There are other ways of making letters with a brush, which may be tried after practicing this one

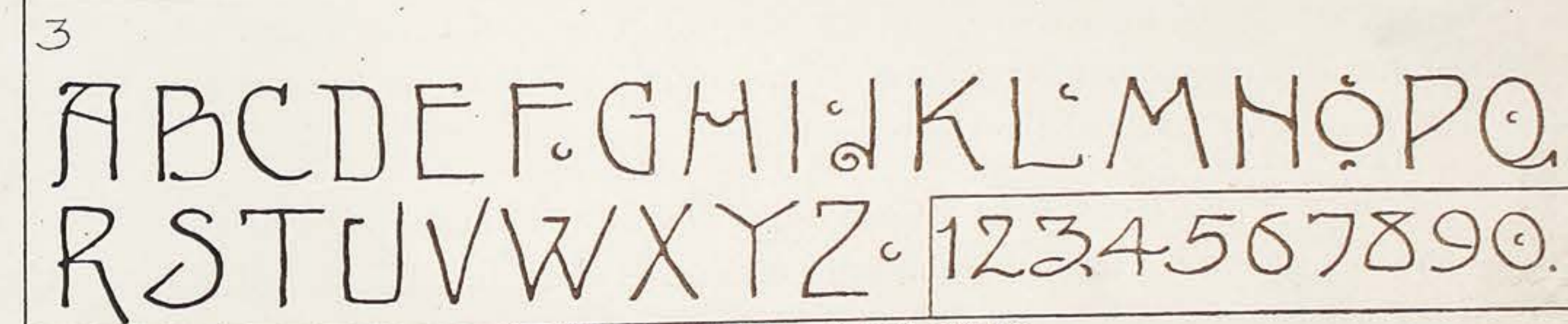
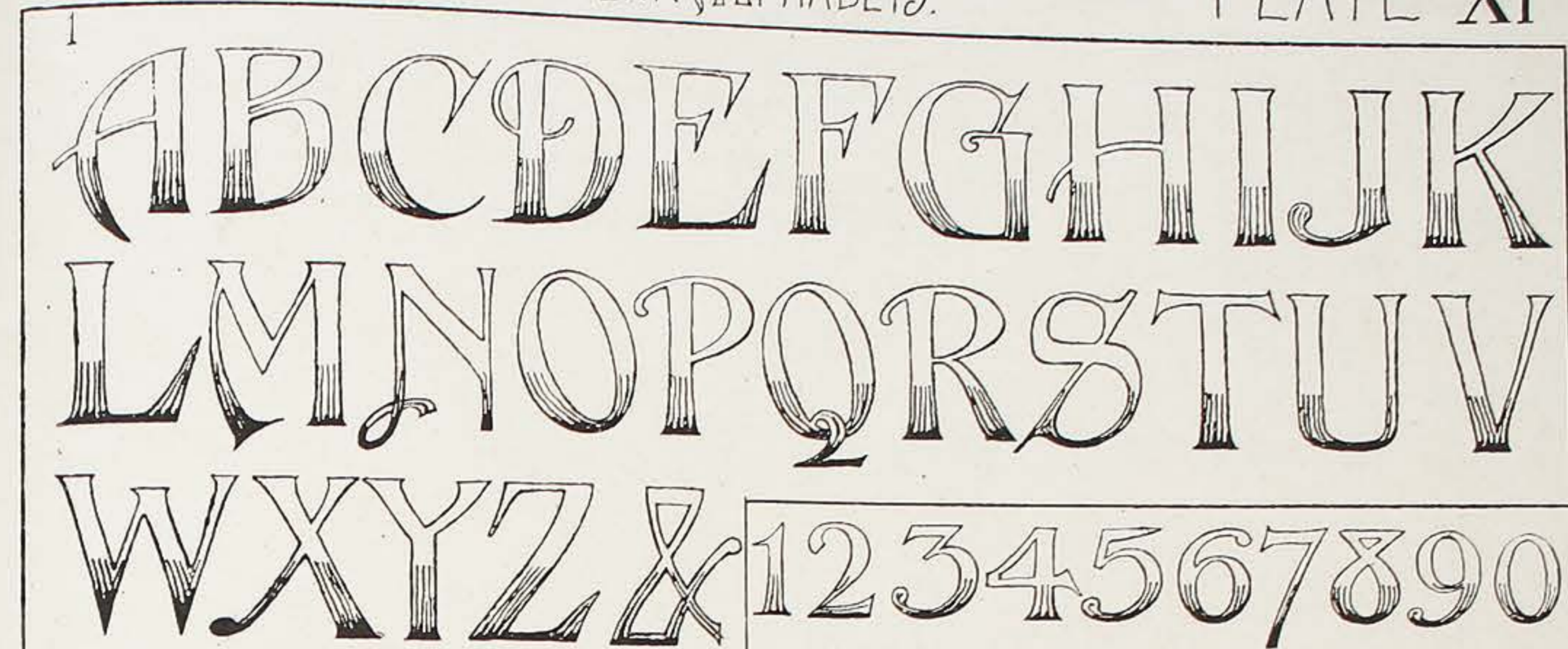


PLATE XII.

ALPHABETS BASED UPON ANGLO-SAXON TYPES, &c.

Nos. 1 and 2 are based upon Anglo-Saxon examples, and contain many good features worthy of study. Though they are shown here in outline only, they may be filled in solid, or decorated in a simple way as suggested on Plate II. The letters G, H, K and N call for special notice as being among the most interesting in form. No. 2 is perhaps the more unique of the two alphabets, having, in some of the letters, peculiarities not often seen in modern examples, and yet which would not be mistaken for any other letter than the one intended. The A and B, the G and the O are particularly good.

No. 3 is also based upon an early class of letter of similar date, and has some elements in it which may almost be considered original. The A and E in many points are rather unusual, and at the same time, very satisfactory; for certain kinds of work this alphabet should be of special value.

¹ 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 · 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0.

² 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 · 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

³ 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 · &
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PLATE XIII.

BLOCK LETTERS and VARIATIONS OF ROMAN TYPES.

The alphabets shown here are variations of the Egyptian block letter and the Roman, by which it is intended to show that it is still possible to infuse a little newness and novelty into our somewhat stereotyped forms. In all handwork there should ever be a desire to stamp it with ones own individuality wherever possible; at the same time much reticence must be exercised in making any extensive alterations or additions to the already satisfactory letter forms.

To strive for originality is commendable; but it must be the outcome of serious study of old examples, assisted by considerable artistic training. The best plan is to adhere generally to the recognised good alphabets of the old styles, and continue to use them—to even slavishly copy them—it is better to do this than to attempt new ones which may be inferior. The old forms are for the most part excellent, and have stood the test of ages, and are not, therefore, to be lightly tampered with, without much thought and experience.

BLOCK LETTERS.

PLATE XIII

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
 · · 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 · ·

VARIATIONS of ROMAN LETTERS.

² 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 · 1 2 3 4 5
 6 7 8 9 0

³ A B C D E F G H I
 J K L M N O P Q R R
 S T U V W X Y Z · & ·
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

PLATE XIV.

STENCIL & WIRE-WORK ALPHABETS, &c.

No. 1 is designed as a stencil alphabet. A stencil plate is a perforated card, the perforations forming either the background or the pattern (in this case the letter.) It will be seen that if these letters were cut out, or rather, if the black parts were cut away, they would not fall to pieces, but would hold together, and could then be used as a stencil. This condition of holding together is secured by means of a series of ties, which is obtained by breaking the lines at convenient places. If for instance, to take one example, the letter A were cut clean out from a piece of card (that is if the letter was to form the stencil and not the ground), the inner triangle composing the letter would fall out unsupported; the left hand line of the letter is therefore broken in two places for the sake of holding the triangle in its place. The same remarks apply to the letters B, D, O, P, Q and R.

No. 2 is another form of the same idea, only here the ground is cut away, leaving the letters white. The main point is to keep the letter tied, which, in this case, can best be done by extending the unimportant parts so as to touch in some cases, or to cross over to its neighbour; but this is not necessary in every letter, as will be seen by reference to the plate, so long as each letter is well secured at the top and bottom.

No. 3 is a similar class of letter adapted to pierced metal. The same principles are employed, viz:—that of tying and connecting the parts, in order to prevent them from falling away.

No. 4 is an alphabet composed of wire, and should prove useful in many branches of work. It could be adapted also for incising on soft clay, of which tiles and pottery are made.

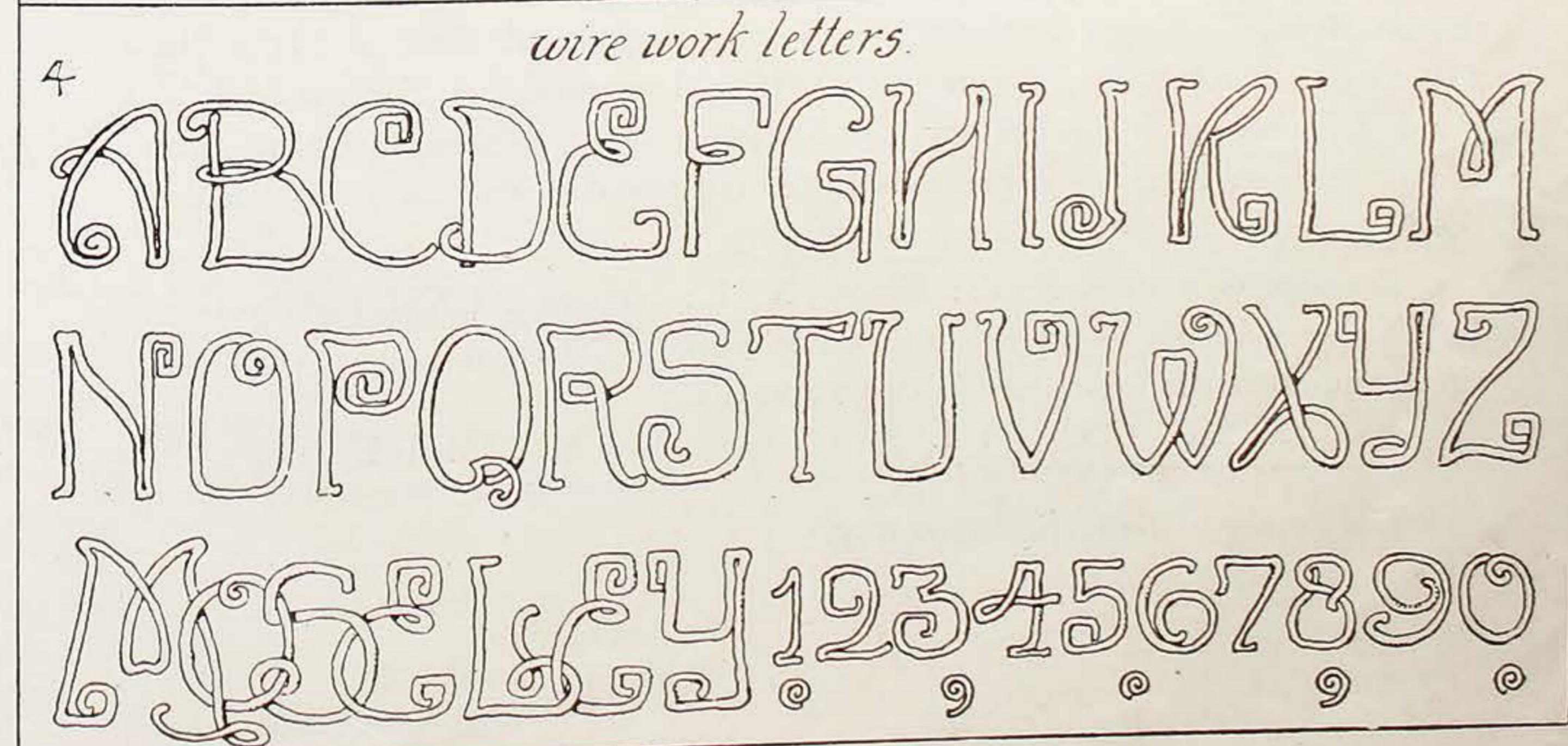


PLATE XV.

MISCELLANEOUS ALPHABETS and ROMAN NUMERALS.

No. 1 is an alphabet composed of straight forms, being devoid of curves and oblique lines, and is what might be named a "right angle alphabet"; it is sometimes useful where this condition of construction is inevitable. No. 2 is a rugged class of letter, and is considered suitable for wood carving. Note: two forms of E and G are given, either of these will be found in harmony with the rest of the alphabet.

No. 3 is given rather as a curiosity than for serious study; the lines merely represent the shadow side of the letter, assuming that they were cut out of some thin material, the light coming from the left-hand side. It will be noticed that each letter appears to complete itself, though only half is drawn.

No. 4 is a suitable class of lettering for engraving on metal.

No. 5. Roman numerals. These may be found of service to many. The first twelve of these are of course known to every-one, and need very little explanation; it will be as well, however, to briefly describe the whole of the letters used, also the principles of reading and writing them.

There are seven letters employed; they are the following: I, V, X, L, C, D, and M. I stands for *one*; V for *five*, and X for *ten*. L equals *fifty*; C, a *hundred*; D, *five hundred*, and M, a *thousand*.

The principles of writing and reading any variations of the above are these; firstly, when a letter which represents a number less than the one that follows, the first must be *deducted* from the second; and secondly, if a letter representing a small number follows a larger one, then the second must be *added* to the first.

For example: when I is placed before a V, thus: IV., it reads as *four*; the one being deducted from the five; but when placed thus, VI. (the one following the five), it then becomes *six*. If an I preceeds an X, thus: IX., it stands for *nine*, but if the I follows the X, it then becomes *eleven*. Again, *forty* is written thus: XL.; as X preceeds L, ten must be deducted from fifty. Place the X *after* the L and it then represents *sixty*.

Fourteen is written XIV.; *sixteen*, XVI.; *sixty-two*, LXII.; *sixty-nine*, LXIX.; *one hundred and fifty-five*, CLV.; *ninety*, XC, and so on. 1902 and similar numbers can be written in two ways, thus;

M D C C C C I I. or M C M I I.
1000 500 100 100 100 100 & 2 1000 100 deduct from 1000=900 & 2

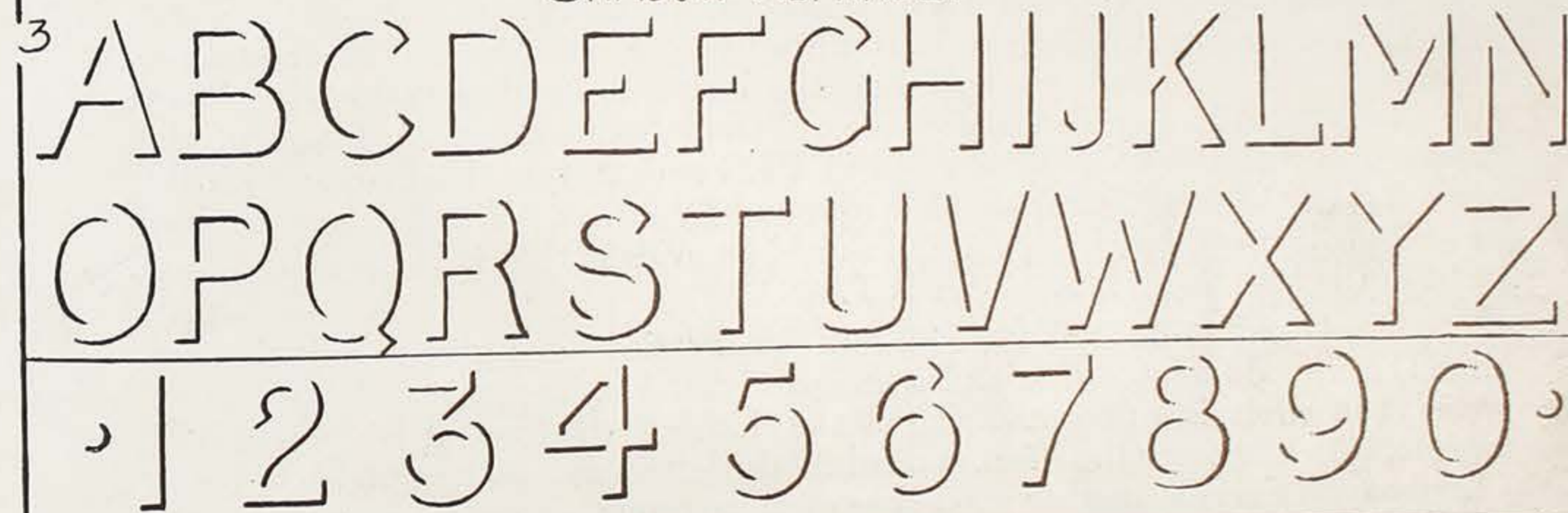
The former is the more simple way.



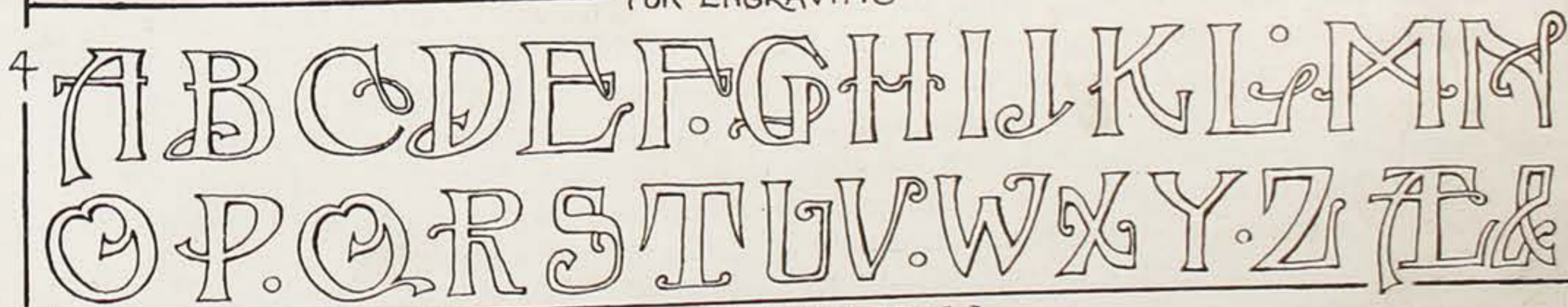
SUITABLE FOR WOODCARVING



"SHADOW" ALPHABET



FOR ENGRAVING



ROMAN NUMERALS



ABBREVIATIONS and MONOGRAMS.

This is a sheet of abbreviations and monograms. In some instances, it will be seen, the same limb of the first letter becomes also part of the second (see NE, YL, ND, AE, AR and TE in the first row, and others, and sometimes a third (see THE, TEL, and VAE on second row; also AND below). LLO on first row, and LET on second, might be enclosed by a square; while THE on fifth row fills an oblong. These are examples for economising space, and are useful in many ways.

The question of monogram making is a large one, and can only be touched upon here. It is comparatively an easy matter to entwine letters in a haphazard fashion and call it a monogram; but it needs some artistic instinct to adjust the curves and arrange the interweaving satisfactorily. A few general rules for the making of monograms may be of use and are as under:—

1. Monograms must be legible and each letter well-formed.
2. The shape of the letters forming the monogram must be in *one style*; e.g., a Gothic letter embracing a Roman one would be absurd.
3. The initial of the surname must be the most important, either in size or in its placing.
4. Looking at the monogram as a whole it should be a piece of decoration, and not merely a mixture of lines without effect.

The monogram AQ, and TS on third row, are fairly easy combinations and the spaces arrange themselves in comparatively equal parts. It should be observed that it is not necessary for all the letters to be of the same size; they may be elongated or widened, according to the letters and circumstances of the space to be filled. This is illustrated in PLG and HE on third row, and OST and TGM, the last figures on fifth row, and by others. The last one on third row is made up of four letters, and it should be evident that C is the chief letter, and O the least important—it reads TAOC.

The Gothic monogram FS on fourth row is “tied,” and gives a united effect. END is a good example of a simple arrangement, and is suggestive of Persian style. GWB in circle is a free rendering of the Gothic; the ground is spotted with white, which lightens the effect, and brings the letters and background into better harmony. FNB is another good class of monogram; somewhat resembling the Chinese style; it is suggestive of needlework. The next one AD is again a satisfactory arrangement, and would fill a circle well. AHJB, the first on the fifth row is a simple and unmistakable monogram, and is placed in a heart shape. The oblong, following has a monogram FMS, and is suitable for beaten metal or repoussé, there being an absence of delicate “serifs” and points. “FROM” is arranged in a running monogram, and would serve as a useful piece of decoration at the commencement of a chapter of a book.

The system of interlacing should be carefully noted; the letters, as a rule, running first under and then over alternately.

The alphabet and the numerals at the finish, are done to show that it is possible to treat the whole of the alphabet and numerals in monogram fashion, and to indicate where liberties may legitimately be taken with the forms. The extensions of the extremities for connecting should be thin, and must not distort the main features of the letters or figur



SPECIMENS
OF
TYPE ALPHABETS



¹
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

²
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

³
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

⁴
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

⁵
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

TYPE ALPHABETS

PLATES XVII., XVIII., XIX.

As so much of the lettering that now comes under notice is the product of the type founders and the printers, these pages would be incomplete without specimens of printed alphabets.

It will at once be recognised that the type founder has had to face technical difficulties that are not encountered by the person who works with the pen or brush, and therefore, though the work of the former may have much utility and inspiration, it is not wise for the student to submit himself to the unnecessary restraints that this class of lettering implies.

Chief amongst these restraints has been the necessity that each letter shall either occupy a rectangular form, as in the Roman types, or a parallelogram, as in the Italic, and that each letter shall be an exact replica of a similar letter appearing in another part of a line or sentence. That an art student should follow this would be the same thing as to ask a worker in wrought iron to give up his delightful freedom to copy specimens of cast iron work.

Of recent years type founders have realised the advantage of more freedom and by various methods have done something to secure this, and in addition have supplied the printer with variations of certain letters and compound letters, which prove very agreeable to the eye.

In selecting these three pages of printer's alphabets, we have been careful to select only such examples as have stood the test of time, and have met with the general acceptance of those who have devoted themselves to this branch of our subject, and to avoid those which, by their fanciful character, are only likely to secure a temporary vogue.

It should be mentioned as one of the chief glories of the printer's craft that it was one of their number who invented Italic, for Aldus Manutius in 1501 used this type for the first time in his celebrated edition of Virgil, but it has been said by those who consider, on rather insufficient grounds, that penmanship is the basis of all good lettering, that the Italian printer received his inspiration from the beautiful handwriting of Petrarch (1304-1347).

The specimen of Italic on Plate XVII. is from the matrices of the first William Caslon; it appears in his first specimen sheet, a broadside, issued in 1734. Even at the present day it is considered to be the standard of excellence in this

¹
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

²
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

³
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

⁴
A B C D E F G H I
K J L M N O P Q R
S T U V W X Y Z

⁵
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

TYPE ALPHABETS.

department, and we are indebted to their successors and lineal descendants, Messrs. Caslon & Co., for permission to use it.

Most of the other examples are issued by Messrs. Miller & Richard of London and Edinburgh, who have done much to bring the revived old style printing into prominence.

It may be again mentioned that the beauty of an alphabet can scarcely be realized by placing one letter in order after another, but only by its suitability to form a sentence or a line, especially is this so when there is what is termed by printers an upper and lower case; the student will therefore do well to attempt to reproduce these letters in such combinations.

SPECIMEN OF COMBINATION:—

G. W. BACON & CO. LD.
Geographical Publishers, &c.

DRAWING PUBLISHERS
Charts, Cards, Books, &c.

1
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

2
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

3
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

4
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

