

Written for THE INLAND PRINTER.

## DESIGNERS AND ENGRAVERS OF TYPE.

BY WILLIAM E. LOY.

NO. V.—ALEXANDER PHEMISTER.

A STUDY of the development of modern type founding, particularly in the delicate operations of punch cutting, shows a remarkable number of Scotsmen who have excelled in the art. Not only have they left the impress of their genius on the celebrated foundries of England and Scotland, but many of the foremost workers in American foundries claim the "land o' cakes" as their birthplace.

Alexander Phemister, the subject of this sketch, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1829. As a mere lad he showed unusual aptitude for designing letters. He naturally became



ALEXANDER PHEMISTER.

interested in printing types, and at an early age bound himself as an apprentice to William Grandison, Edinburgh, a famous punch cutter.

Graduating at the age of twenty-three, Mr. Phemister's work immediately attracted the attention of Messrs. Miller & Richard, the Scotch type founders, and while in their employ he cut several series of romans, so advancing the style of body-type faces as to make this house famous with English publishers.

In 1861 he came to the United States, and after two years with George Bruce's Son & Co., where he designed and cut several notable romans, he entered the employment of the Dickinson Type Foundry, Boston, later becoming a partner. Mr. Phemister retired from business in 1891, when the Dickinson was merged into the American Type Founders' Company, and died at his residence, Chelsea, Massachusetts, October, 1894, after a long and painful illness resulting from close application to the details of his work.

It is difficult, at this time, to properly review Mr. Phemister's labors in type founding. He was one of the few punch cutters of the day who designed and cut his alphabets. His taste was exquisite, and his workmanship the finest; when a letter left his hand it was beautifully perfected, and rarely criticised. No cutter since Caslon has had such influence upon roman letters, or whose work is so admirable in shapes and finish. He cut few job faces, but those he did originate (black letters, scripts, italics, etc.), are of the best, and remain standards of their class. In romans his work includes the Modern Old Styles, brought out by Miller & Richard, and later cut, with modifications, for the Dickinson, under the name of Franklin Old Style. Then followed the Wilson, the Standard, the Riverside, the

Full-Grown, and innumerable other series, Mr. Phemister being a rapid and voluminous producer. One bold task he assumed in his prime was a small pica font for the Cambridge University Press. He designed and cut the entire alphabet, driving a punch as soon as it was cut, with the matrix fitter following closely, and the typecaster immediately behind the fitter, delivering Mr. Wilson a two-thousand-pound font within thirty days from cutting of the first punch. In the printed book bound and handed him by Mr. Wilson, Mr. Phemister first saw the proofs of his punches. It was a feat that could only be attempted by a man sure of his powers.

Mr. Phemister was of a delightful personality, with the strong, sturdy Scotch sense of integrity, helpful and considerate of others. He left a memory fragrant with good deeds and honorable living.

## PROCESS ENGRAVING NOTES AND QUERIES.

CONDUCTED BY S. H. HORGAN.

In this department, queries addressed to *The Inland Printer* regarding process engraving will be recorded and answered, and the experiences and suggestions of engravers and printers are solicited hereto. It is believed that herein will be found a medium for the interchange of valuable hints and suggestions never before offered to those in interest.

THE following list of books and magazines is given for the convenience of readers. The Inland Printer Company will receive and transmit orders and subscriptions at list prices for the books and publications herein named.

*Wilson's Photographic Magazine* (monthly), 30 cents a number. Edited by Edward L. Wilson, 853 Broadway, New York City.

*Anthony's Photographic Bulletin* (monthly), \$2 a year; 25 cents a number. E. & H. T. Anthony & Co., 591 Broadway, New York City.

PHOTO-ENGRAVING.—By Carl Schraubstadter, Jr. Bound in cloth; illustrated with numerous diagrams, and provided with a copious index. \$3.

*Process Worker and Photo-Mechanical Printer* (monthly), 50 cents a year; 5 cents a number. Published by Scovill & Adams Co., 60 East Eleventh street, New York City.

*Photo-American* (monthly), \$1 a year; 10 cents a copy. Edited by Edward W. Newcomb. Photo-American Publishing Company, 20 East Seventeenth street, New York City.

*Photographic Times* (monthly), \$4 a year; 35 cents a number. Edited by Walter E. Woodbury. Photographic Times Publishing Association, 60 East Eleventh street, New York City.

DRAWING FOR REPRODUCTION.—A practical handbook of drawing for modern methods of reproduction, by Charles G. Harper. Bound in full cloth; 162 pages; 47 illustrations. \$2.50.

PHOTO-ENGRAVING.—By W. T. Wilkinson, revised and enlarged by Edward L. Wilson, New York. 180 pages, 6½ by 8½ inches; substantially bound in cloth; fully illustrated. \$3.

*Process Review and Journal of Electrotyping* (monthly), \$1 a year; 10 cents a number. Edited by George W. Gilson. Professional Photographer Publishing Company, Buffalo, New York.

*Photogram* (monthly), 4s. 6d. or \$1.10 per year; 3d. or 10 cents a number. Edited by H. S. Ward. The Photogram, Ltd., Farringdon road (close to Ludgate Circus), E. C., London, England.

*Process Work and the Printer* (monthly), \$1.25; *Junior Photographer* (monthly), \$1.50; *Practical Photographer* (monthly), \$2.10. Percy Lund, Humphries & Co., Bradford, England, publishers.

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF DESIGN.—By Frank G. Jackson. An advanced text-book on decorative art, being a sequel to "Lessons on Decorative Design," by the same author. Bound in cloth; 216 pages; 49 plates. \$2.50.

PRACTICAL HALF-TONE AND TRI-COLOR ENGRAVING.—By A. C. Austin. This is the latest book on process work. Bound in cloth; 158 pages. Illustrated with examples of three-color and half-tone engraving. The Professional Photographer Publishing Company, Buffalo, New York. \$2.

PHOTO-ENGRAVING.—By H. Jenkins. Containing practical instructions for producing photo-engraved plates in relief-line and half-tone, with chapter on three-color work. The frontispieces are progressive proofs of one of the best exhibits of three-color work. The whole is richly illustrated, printed on highly enameled heavy paper and bound in light brown buckram, gold embossed; 140 pages. \$2.

PHOTO-TRICHROMATIC PRINTING.—By C. G. Zander. To learn the first principles of three-color work there is no better book than Zander's "Photo-Trichromatic Printing." The photo-engraver or printer who attempts color-work without understanding the laws of color phenomena will waste much time and money. To supply this elementary knowledge is the purpose of Mr. Zander's book, and it is done in a thorough manner without scientific complexity. Fifty pages, with color plates and diagrams. Bound in red cloth. \$1.

HALF-TONES FROM FLAT PHOTOGRAPHS.—Edward H. Fox, Danville, Kentucky: "What is the best treatment of the aristo-platino photos to get the best results in half-tone? For instance, when I get one with bluish whites and smoky gray half-tones and shadows, my experience has been that it is difficult to get a good negative from the enamel processes. If I give a long exposure with a small stop the shadows gray too much, and if a short exposure with a large stop the dots in the middle tones are not strong enough, and I get no detail in the shadows, or they are very weak and undecided. I would like to know the best all-round treatment to get the best results. Please answer in 'Process Notes' in *THE INLAND PRINTER*,



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## THE INCENSE OF CHICKEN.

BY OPIE READ.



STROKE of misfortune made me one of the owners of the paper. I had set type in the office, and for my accumulated string I accepted stock. The sheet was known (limited) as the *Evening Mail*, and was published in Nashville, Tennessee. The Centennial at Philadelphia was striving to pour balm on the slow-healing war wounds of the country. But Nast's tiger still crouched in the political jungle, and the bloody shirt had been washed through but one water. It was at such a time that our paper preached sermons of brotherly love, written by an old gentleman whom we paid, or agreed to pay, \$5 a week. In terms of tenderness he referred to our hated contemporary, a pirate whose insulting steam was always up, and who was constantly driving its iron ram into our vulnerable parts. One day the brotherly sheriff came in and showed his strong attachment for us. We closed our volume with an editorial entitled "The Whole Duty of Man." In the town there were more printers than work. Circumstances, the most peremptory of physicians, advised a change of scene. Bob Dutton, who had received similar advice, went with me. We tramped. I was young and inclined to tell truth. I do not know whether Bob lied because he had no conscience or whether he desperately choked the truth to kill his conscience, feeling that he was hampered by it. In the army he had been punished for stealing a barrel of whisky from an officer who had stolen it. There is no greater crime than to steal from a thief. Peace settled upon the country and disgrace fell upon Bob at about the same time. I was warned not to take him as a traveling companion, but in the warning there was a hint at adventure, and this, of course, sweetened his disreputable company. We wandered off down into the cypress country of West Tennessee, dodging high water on our way to Memphis. We were constantly cut off from our supplies. "I may

not amount to much in a general way," Bob would declare, "but I've got an appetite sharp enough to shave with."

Late one afternoon we came to a cabin set on a sandy knoll, in the thick shade of scrub oaks. A red-whiskered man stood in the door. We asked for something to eat. He appeared pleased to see us.

"Come in," he said. "Sit down there. Where are you from and what is your line of employment when you so far forget yourselves as to work?"

This rascally insinuation pleased Bob. "We are printers," said he.

"That so? Do you mean that you make newspapers?"

"Well, we do the only work of any importance. We set the type, and the other features do not amount to anything."

"So you set the type." And then, calling to a woman, he commanded: "Jane, kill two of those young dominecker chickens for these gentlemen, and fry them brown."

Bob's eyes snapped, and I felt an emotional surge of water in my mouth. For days we had fed upon the tasteless berry of the swamp, and the leathery "hand-out" passed from the kitchen window. We had dreamed even of fat bacon. Our cowed souls had not dared to muse upon fried chicken. Bob strove to say something, but emotion overcame him. We heard the chickens flutter—heard the axe fall upon their necks.

"So you set type," said the host, stroking his beard. "Is there much money in such work?"

"Fortunes," Bob answered, with a stir of his lying impulse. "But the trouble is that work is hard to get. It is a sort of luxury."

"Do they pay you by the newspaper you set up or by the week?"

"By the piece," Bob answered.

"I don't exactly understand," said the host, pondering. "How by the piece?"