

DESIGNERS AND ENGRAVERS OF TYPE.

BY WILLIAM E. LOY.

NO. XXIII.—CHARLES HENRY BEELER.

THE subject of this sketch, Charles Henry Beeler, was born the last day of August, 1855, in Philadelphia, and it may be said that he literally grew up in a type-foundry, for at the age of four years he was allowed to accompany his father, who was an engraver in the old Johnson Type Foundry, and he amused himself playing with such movables as were not placed out of his reach. Here, in the



C. H. BEELER, JR.

room occupied by Edward Ruthven and other members of the engraving force, the boy built substantial castles with the large metal letters then cast in great quantities by type-founders. Mr. Beeler says he has a vivid recollection of a famous spinning-top which Mr. Ruthven turned out for him, the making of which occupied the whole of that gentleman's time for a day.

Mr. Beeler's time was pretty evenly divided between the typefoundry and the school, though he says he preferred to go fishing or hunting rather than to school, until 1869, when he began regularly to work at wood-engraving with his father, with the view of making that his occupation. He soon developed so much skill at his work that he was given the most difficult jobs that came in, such as facsimiles and match dies, requiring extreme care and patience. He continued at wood-engraving until 1872, when, at the suggestion of the late Richard Smith, he undertook type-engraving. Here again he made rapid progress, and at the expiration of fifteen months he was able to take the place of Mr. Jackson, who was then leaving the employ of the firm. Mr. Beeler has been continuously employed in the foundry of the MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan Company, or its successor, the American Type Founders Company, since he began work, with the exception of about three months, during which interval he did work for other typefoundries.

Naturally a man of so active a temperament as Mr. Beeler has done much work during the twenty-seven years he has devoted his entire time to type-designing and engraving, and the list of his productions is a long one. He gives much credit to Mr. Richard Smith for the careful training he received, and he says that gentleman spent from two to four hours per day for four or five days in each week in the designing and engraving room. At the same time he was benefited and profited by the example and suggestions of Mr. Ruthven, with whom he was on most friendly terms, and who, he says, is unquestionably the father of the art of letter-cutting, as now practiced in all American typefoundries. While never directly associated with Mr. Ruthven further than their association as fellow-workmen in the same establishment, they came to use the same methods in their work, and employed the same tools and machines.

Most designers and engravers have some special kind of work in which they excel, and Mr. Beeler points with pride to the many fine and delicate faces he has cut, all with an accuracy and finish not surpassed. He attends to every part of his work himself, doing all the designing, photographing and enlarging where necessary, and his only assistant is his son. Thus a design is never out of his hands until completed. He is also the inventor of a simple and accurate form of pantograph, which changes the proportions of the letters according to taste, instead of following the one fixed templet from six-point to seventy-two-point, as is usually done. He has also invented a combined routing and ruling machine—which is a great time-saver and capable of doing

wonders—and is about completing a machine for engraving type which will not only alter the proportions of letters from the one fixed templet, but will also cut a back-slope or italic from the same templet. These are inventions of the utmost importance to typefounders, but they do not represent all of Mr. Beeler's inventive energy. He has made a number of other inventions of equal importance to other industries.

A list of the faces of type designed and engraved by Mr. Beeler shows to the reader who will take the trouble to read with the specimen book before him, far more forcibly than a mere catalogue can, the diversity of his genius. The list includes some of the most perfect and most artistic of the notable faces produced by the MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan foundry during the past twenty years or more. Among those designed and cut by Mr. Beeler are the following: Japanesque Nos. 1, 2 and 3, Luray (200 lines to the inch and mechanically perfect), Shadow, Hansard, Bizarre, French Clarendon Italic, Black Cap, Opaque Shaded, Cameo, Polo, Whittier, Telegraph, Knobby, Esthetic, Cloister, Giraffe, Giraffe Extended, Keystone, Oblique, Tinted, Steelplate Gothic, Plain Shaded, Gothic No. 8, Trojan, Black Inlaid No. 2, Stencil, Livermore, Livermore Open, Lining Antique, Lining Gothic Nos. 43, 44 and 45, Mortised Initials 443, and in addition he cut 7-point and 15-point Ronaldson (the latter for the "Souvenir" volume issued by the MacKellar, Smiths & Jordan branch, in 1896, in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary), and 11-point and 12-point Old Style No. 7. For the foundry of George Bruce's Son & Co. he cut Celtic Ray Shaded No. 1,073; for Collins & M'Leester he cut Octagon Gothic Ray Shaded; and for the Keystone Type Foundry he cut the Basic series. It is not the purpose of this series to praise the men written about, but all readers of this journal can not but be impressed with the admirable work done by Mr. Beeler.

It may be of interest to some to know that this gentleman is an enthusiastic rifleman, and is a champion shot. As captain of his club he has been the winner of many medals, and is proud of his achievements.

THE PRINTING TRADES IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

The following information regarding the progress and condition of the printing trades in various foreign countries has been specially collected and prepared for *The Inland Printer*.

THE PRINTING TRADE IN MEXICO.

Although lithography and printing have developed considerably in Mexico in recent years, they have not yet reached the state of perfection that might be desired. Thirty or forty years ago there were not more than four or five printing-houses in the city of Mexico; today there are at least fifty, but most of them are so poorly equipped that only unimportant work can be done. On the other hand there are a few establishments which are equipped with all the modern appliances, such as "El Mundo" and "Europea"; these produce quite presentable work in photography and zinc-etchings.

The printing-house "Hoel," although not very prominent, is known for the excellent character of its work. The plant is small but well equipped. Recently it put in two linotype machines. The high price of these machines is at present a barrier to their general introduction.

Some progress has been made in lithography of late, but, as is always the rule in Mexico where art is concerned, progress is slow. The work is always splendid in design and shows good taste in its execution. Special mention should be made of the lithographic establishment at Iriarte; the firm of Santiago Hernandez also does good work.

A very small amount of poster and color work is done by the Mexican printing establishments. The latest processes for doing color-work by means of photo-engraving have been very slightly introduced, if at all. There is no competition