

PRINTING TYPES
THEIR HISTORY, FORMS, AND USE

A STUDY IN SURVIVALS

BY

DANIEL BERKELEY UPDIKE

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

*"Nunca han tenido, ni tienen las artes otros
enemigos que los ignorantes"*

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ing and sculpture made itself felt also in oratory and literature. And thus it seemed necessary, in typography, to clothe new modes of expression in a new way, and new type-forms were demanded to do it.¹ It required only a "man of the hour" to accomplish this—in France Didot, in Italy Bodoni. Thus artistic movements, political reforms, and dynastic changes, together with certain tendencies in design, contributed to the popularization of a kind of type which, however far from classicism it seems to us now, represented to the bibliophile of that epoch a return to "antique virtue"!

II

IN bringing about this change in typographic practice, Bodoni showed great originality in his new type-forms, and in this respect was the man most to be reckoned with. The scholarly prestige of the Didots (in the long run a far greater force) was influential in popularizing these new styles of type.

Giambattista Bodoni, the son of a printer, was born at Saluzzo in Piedmont in 1740. Leaving home as a lad, he made his way to Rome, where he served as apprentice in the press of the Propaganda Fide—*la felice scuola*, as he called it—

¹ As formal types called for a formal style of illustration, old decorators of the book had to change their manner. The beautiful Italian (1754) edition of Lucretius, — *Della Natura delle Cose*, — translated by Marchetti, edited by F. Gerbault, and dedicated to the Marquis de Vandières, brother to Madame de Pompadour, or Le Monnier's *Fêtes des Bonnes-Gens de Canon*, etc., published by Prault and others at Paris in 1778, with frontispiece by Moreau, are both printed in easy old style eighteenth century French types, with which the decorations admirably accord. On the other hand, the embellishments made for Didot's folio Horace of 1799 by the architect Percier meet "Empire" requirements, and Moreau's illustrations to Legouvé's *Le Mérite des Femmes et autres Poésies*, brought out in Paris by A. A. Renouard in 1809, show a painful endeavour to do so. Both these books are printed in Didot's "classical" fonts.

for which he always retained his early affection. Its director, Ruggeri, a learned man, was kind to Bodoni, and encouraged him in trying to improve himself—even at that early date we find Bodoni cutting types for the establishment. His stay there was not long. Ruggeri committed suicide, and Bodoni, unable to endure further employment at Rome, left the Press with the idea of seeking his fortune in England. On his way there, stopping at his parents' house at Saluzzo, he fell ill; and before he had a chance to continue his journey he was asked, in behalf of Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, to take charge of the Stamperia Reale at Parma. This was in 1768. Bodoni's work there was that of a private printer; he produced either such things as were needed at court, or interested the Duke; or such work as he, on his own initiative, proposed. His first stock of types came from the Parisian foundry of Fournier, and he also cut type based on Fournier's models. What this stock of type was in 1771 is shown in Bodoni's specimen of that year, and to this period belong his *Essai de caractères Russes* (1782); a *Manuale Tipografico* in quarto, a folio *Manuale*, and a Greek specimen—*Serie de' caratteri greci di Giambattista [sic] Bodoni*—all three produced in 1788. By this time Bodoni had designed a great number of types, which, beginning as old style, by degrees took on a more modern appearance. His press became one of the sights of Europe, and was visited by the *dilettanti* and *cognoscenti* on the "grand tour";¹ his

¹ Arthur Young, in his *Travels in Italy*, writing from Parma, December 9, 1789, says: "In the afternoon . . . to the celebrated *reale tipografia* of Signore Bodoni, who shewed me many works of singular beauty. The types, I think, exceed those of Didot at Paris, who likewise often crowds the letters close, as if to save paper. The *Daphne and Chloe*, and the *Amynta*, are beautifully executed; I bought the latter, as a specimen of this celebrated press, which really does honour to Italy. Signore Bodoni had the title of the printer to the king of Spain, but never received any salary, or even gratification, as I learned in Parma from another quarter; where I was also in-

editions were admired and collected by bibliophiles everywhere. After 1790, his situation—*vis-à-vis* the Duke of Parma—was improved. This came about through an offer which Bodoni received from De Azara, Spanish Minister to the Papal Court, who conceived the idea of starting a press there (to bring out editions of the classics), of which he invited Bodoni to take charge. This plan coming to the Duke's ears, he made a counter proposal, with the result that Bodoni remained at Parma with a larger press and a more independent position, which permitted him liberty to print for any one who wished to employ him. So, besides Italian, Greek, and Latin books, Bodoni enlarged his field by printing French, Russian, German, and English books—Walpole, Gray, and Thomson being among the English authors for whom he produced editions. He was appointed printer to Carlos III of Spain; he received a pension from his son, Carlos IV; he corresponded with Franklin; he was complimented by the Pope; the city of Parma struck a medal in his honour; he obtained a medal for his work at Paris; he received a pension from the Viceroy of Italy; Napoleon gave him another and a larger one, and in short he was a great personage. He was one of those fortunate mortals who, appearing at just the right moment, knew exactly what he wanted to do, attempted it, succeeded in it, was praised for it, and deserved (and highly enjoyed) the praise. What more could one ask? He departed this life at Parma in 1813, and even his funeral ceremonies appear

formed, that the salary he has from the duke is only 150 *zechins*. His merit is great and distinguished, and his exertions are uncommon. He has 30,000 matrices of type. I was not a little pleased to find, that he has met with the best sort of patron, in Mr. Edwards, the bookseller, at London, who has made a contract with him for an impression of two hundred and fifty of four Greek poets, four Latin, and four Italian ones—Pindar, Sophocles, Homer, and Theocritus; Horace, Virgil, Lucretius, and Plautus; Dante, Petrarcha, Ariosto, and Tasso."

to have been precisely what he would have wished them to be!

As to Bodoni's specimen-books (apart from the charming little specimen of 1771, *Fregi e Majuscole*, described in a former chapter), the inscriptions in exotic types, — *Iscrizioni Esotici a Caratteri novellamenti incisi e fusi*, 1774, — printed to commemorate the baptism of the Prince of Parma, may be considered his first attempt to display his exotic characters. It is an interesting book—of 50 pages, quarto—and shows twenty of Bodoni's "learned" fonts (*fig.* 305). The magnificent *Epithalamia* in folio, printed in 1775 and later to be described, also falls into this class. Bodoni's *Manuale Tipografico* of 1788 I have never seen. It was apparently a quarto book of 360 pages, containing one hundred specimens of roman and fifty of cursive types, displayed in French and Italian on one side of the leaf. In it were also included twenty-eight sizes of Greek character, which were issued separately as well. This edition of the *Manuale* seems also to have been printed in octavo form on various special papers and on vellum.

In the same year, 1788, Bodoni issued the finest and most imposing of his specimens—a folio collection of roman, italic, Russian, Greek, and Cancellereschi types. The book opens, unfortunately, with the last named, in fifteen sizes of a detestable form of script capital; but the twenty-eight alphabets of roman and twenty-seven of italic capitals which follow are perhaps the most magnificent of *their kind* ever displayed. The roman capital letters in larger sizes (from 1 to 5) are specially fine—brilliant in cut and splendidly printed in ink of a wonderfully rich black. Then, too, unlike Bodoni's later books, the paper has a pleasant surface from which all the life has not been smoothed out. Nine alphabets of Greek capital letters follow, both in upright



HELLENISTICA

Εἰδοξάσθη

τὸ • βάδισμα • αὐτοῦ

ἐν • ἐξόδῳ • οἴκου • καταπετάσματος

καὶ • λαμπρότης • βλέμματος • αὐτοῦ

ἐστίν • ὥς

λαμπρότης • βλέμματος • Ἀγγέλου

Περιέζωσεν • αὐτὸν

ὁ • Υἱὸς • στολὴν • δόξης

καὶ • συνήλειαν • καυχήματος

ἐνέδυσεν • αὐτόν

Πρόσωπον • αὐτοῦ • χαρίτων • μεστὸν

καὶ • θαυμαστὸν

ὥς • ἀστήρ • καὶ • ὥς • τόξον

φωτίζον • ἐν • νεφέλαις

δόξης •



Adria, Cit-
tà antica d'
Italia, che
diede il no-
me al Gol-
fo Adriati.

Adria, vil-
le ancien.
qui a don-
né le nom
au Golfe
Adriatiq.

306. Roman and Italic from Bodoni's Specimen, Parma, 1788

and cursive forms—though how legitimate Greek "*italic* capitals" are is a question. The sizes from 1 to 4, or 5, are superb, especially number 1, in both italic and roman. Next come Russian capital letters in twelve sizes of roman and italic, and here again the cutting is brilliant and the impression effective to the last degree. From that point on, the types are upper and lower-case, beginning with roman and italic *papale, imperiale, reale, ducale*, in three weights of letter down to *tresmégiste*, below which roman and italic are shown in ten sizes of each; followed by similar Russian fonts of great magnificence. Fonts of Greek follow in descending sizes, and a few specimens of roman and italic (*fig.* 306), which are much more old style than Bodoni's later equivalent fonts.

The splendour of this book depends upon pure typography. There is not an ornament in it—not even the little tablets by which Bodoni sometimes gave a dash of salt to his books, but with which less skilful printers have peppered their reproductions! From a passing allusion in Bodoni's preface to his *Manuale* of 1818, it appears that only a few copies of this specimen were printed.¹

To this period also belongs Bodoni's "Letter" to the Marquis de Cubières² in French and Italian, printed in 1785. Concerning it Franklin wrote the following letter to Bodoni, dated Philadelphia, October 14, 1787:

"I have had the very great pleasure of receiving and perusing your excellent *Essai des Caractères* [sic] de l'*Imprimerie*. It is one of the most beautiful that Art has hitherto produc'd. I should be glad to see a specimen of your

¹ An example is in the Boston Public Library.

² *Lettre de J. B. Bodoni, Typographe du Roi d'Espagne et Directeur de l'Imprimerie de S. A. R. l'Infant Duc de Parme, à Monsieur le Marquis de Cubières.* Parma, 1785.

other Founts besides this Italic & Roman of the Letter to the Marq.^s de Cubières; and to be inform'd of the price of each kind.—I do not presume to criticise your Italic Capitals; they are generally perfect: I would only beg leave to say, that to me the form of the *T* in the word *LETTRE* of the Title Page [fig. 307a] seems preferable to that of the *T* in the word *Typographie* in the next Page [fig. 307b], as the downward stroke of *T, P, R, F, B, D, H, K, L, I*, and some others, which in writing we begin at the top, naturally swells as the pen descends; and it is only in the *A* and the *M* and *N* that those strokes are fine, because the pen begins them at the bottom.”

De Lama says that Bodoni was overcome with joy to have from the President of the United States of America this flattering letter, which he considered a title to glory and preserved with religious care. Bodoni and De Lama, although a little mixed about the office which Franklin held in America, were quite right in being pleased; and this compliment so flattered Ferdinand, Duke of Parma, that he had the letter translated into Spanish, and sent it to his uncle, Carlos III, at Madrid, to whom Bodoni was honorary printer by appointment.¹

In 1806, the *Oratio Dominica in CLV Linguas Versa et Exoticis Characteribus Plerumque Expressa* is another mas-

¹ Bodoni was often called “the King of Typographers and the Typographer of Kings”—a phrase suggested by the epitaph on Plantin’s tomb at Antwerp. He was also styled “the Baskerville of Italy”—just as Didot was called “the Bodoni of France,” the Foulis brothers “the Elzevirs of Glasgow,” and Thomas “the Baskerville of America.” This rather ridiculous habit of calling somebody the something of somewhere else has always attracted a certain class of mind in this country. A worthy gentleman who lived in Rhode Island in the eighteenth century and collected pictures was styled “the Lorenzo de’ Medici of Newport,” and a Boston schoolboy described Demosthenes as “the Edward Everett of Athens.” It was reserved, however, for Mrs. Piozzi to call Switzerland “the Derbyshire of Europe.”

LETTRE

DE J. B. BODONI

Typographe du Roi d’Espagne

et Directeur de l’Imprimerie

de S. A. R. l’Infant Duc de Parme

a Monsieur le Marquis

DE CUBIÈRES

307. (a) Title of *Lettre à De Cubières*

Si dans les feuilles du Comité de Correspondance, à l’article de la Typographie, on a comblé d’éloges quelques faibles essais de mes caracteres, vous savez que je les dois entièrement à l’empressement flatteur, avec lequel vous avez exigé

307. (b) Text of *Lettre à De Cubières*: Bodoni, Parma, 1785

fonderia: il Manuale presente ne renderà esatto conto, qualora vogliasi confrontare col primo. Converrammi piuttosto osservare, che il sesto e il contorno sono i medesimi ch'egli vivente diede ad alcune pagine fatte imprimere per prova. In queste, a differenza del suo primo Manuale, ove ogni pagina conteneva la descrizione di una qualche città, cominciando col nome di essa, volle replicato il principio della prima Catilinaria = Quousque tandem abutère ecc. per mettere sotto l'occhio de' commettenti di caratteri il vantaggio che potrebbero ritrarre domandando

terly showing of what Bodoni could do in foreign and ancient alphabets—though a somewhat tiresomely perfect book.¹

The second and final edition of Bodoni's *Manuale Tipografico*—in two quarto volumes, with a *Discorso* by his widow and *Prefazione* by Bodoni (figs. 308 and 309)—appeared in 1818, five years after his death. It was completed under the care of his widow and Luigi Orsi, who was for twenty years foreman to Bodoni. Signora Bodoni, writing to M. Durand l'ainé of Metz, from Parma (November 14, 1817), says: "The *Manuale Tipografico* in two volumes on *papier-vélin*—the only kind of paper used for it—is not yet completed, but it will be, without fail, at the beginning of the coming year. I dare to believe that book-lovers will thank me for having published a volume which is so very important to Typography. The reception which it will have, will make up for the trouble it has cost me (although Bodoni has left the blocks or models for it) and the considerable expense which I shall have had to incur before it is finished. Also, in view of the fact that but 290 copies are struck off, I cannot dispose of them at less than 120 francs, without any reduction. M. Rosaspina has engraved *au burin* the portrait after one which the celebrated Appiani . . . painted in oils, which is a striking likeness."²

The first volume contains, under the title of *Serie di Caratteri Latini, Tondi e Corsivi*, a series of roman and italic

¹ This polyglot *Oratio Dominica* was printed at the suggestion of Pius VII, who, in May, 1805, had passed through Parma on his way from the coronation of Napoleon. It was intended to outdo a like work published by the Imprimerie Imperiale at Paris. Bodoni's book was dedicated to Eugène Beauharnais, Viceroy of Naples, to whom he personally presented a copy. In return for this work, Bodoni received a pension and an offer of the direction of the Royal Printing House at Milan.

² From an unpublished letter belonging to the author.

types, which cover 144 pages. These run from *parmigianina* to *papale*. Sometimes there are as many as fourteen varieties of the same body in different designs and weights of line. It is almost impossible to conceive why it was necessary to have so many kinds which, even to a trained eye, appear much alike: though it is perhaps justifiable in the larger sizes—as in the three weights of *ducale* (*fig. 310*)—where differences can be clearly detected. The *number of sizes* of type, so nicely graduated that one almost merges in another, is more explicable. This great series enabled Bodoni to place on his pages, not approximately, but *exactly*, the size of type he wished to employ (*fig. 311*).

Succeeding pages (145–169) show *Serie di Caratteri Cancellereschi*, etc., in smaller sizes ugly, gray forms of script. Here and there an interesting one appears—like number 13, or the large sizes, 16 and 17. The English scripts are imitations of the “fine Italian hand” then fashionable in England, and have little to recommend them. Volume I closes with an enormous array of capital letters, both roman and italic, followed by a few pages of hideous script capitals unworthy of the collection.

The second volume contains an assemblage of roman and “italic” Greek capitals, covering sixty-two pages; and exotic types, beginning with Hebrew, run on to the ninety-seventh page. These are followed by German and Russian types, many of great splendour. The book closes with series of borders, mathematical, astronomical, and other signs, musical notation, etc. Some few ornaments (*fregi*) are attractive (*fig. 312*), but most of them, while very perfect, are chilly, sterile, and uninteresting. The borders (*contorni*) confined in rules—a form of decoration which Bodoni affected for his broadsides—are, however, quite charming (*fig. 313*). The arabic figures displayed are distinguished, and

dono puro di Dio e felicità di natura, benchè spesso provenga da lunga esercitazione e abitudine, che le più difficili cose agevola a segno che in fine senza più pur pensarvi riescono ottimamente fatte. Che però la grazia della scrittura forse più che in altro sta in certa disinvoltura di tratti franchi, risoluti, spediti, e nondimeno così nelle forme esatti, così degradati ne' pieni, *che non trova l'invidia ove gli emende*. Ma forse più sicuro è restringerci a dire che han grazie le lettere, quando sembrano scritte non già con isvogliatezza o con fretta, ma piuttosto, che con impegno e pena, con felicità ed amore.

Tanto più bello sarà dunque un carattere, quanto avrà più regolari-

Quousque tan-
dem abutêre, Ca-
tilina, patientiâ

Quousque tan-
dē abutêre, Ca-
tilina, patientiâ

Quousque tan-
dem abutêre,
Catilina, pati-

310. Specimen of Bodoni's Ducale in three weights
Manuale Tipografico, Parma, 1818

A B

PHILOSOPHUS

ET

ORATOR

CIVIS ROMANUS

ORATOR ELOQUENTISSIMUS

PHILOSOPHUS

NATUS ANNO AN URBE CONDITA

C D

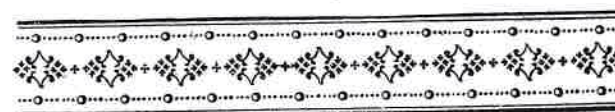
311. Largest, medium, and smallest Roman and Italic Capitals
shown in Bodoni's *Manuale Tipografico, Parma, 1818*

FREGI

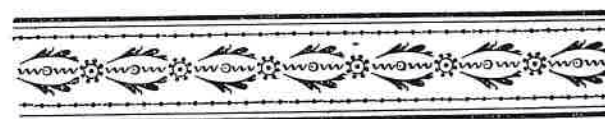


CONTORNI

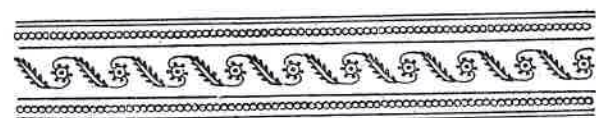
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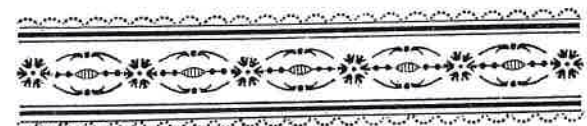
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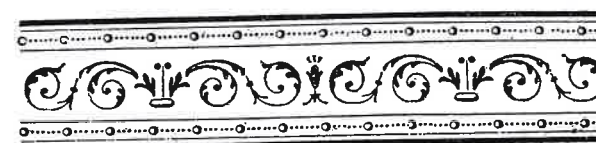
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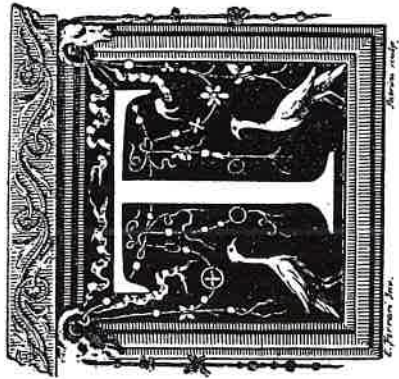


XVIII



XIX





anta est hoc tempore in toto terrarum orbe
linguarum multitudo, tanta varietas, ut qua
aetate hominum animi ad mutuam intelligen-
tiam societatemque inter se ineundam im-
penfius feruntur, graviora eorum studiis im-
pedimenta communi quodam fato obfata vi-
deantur. Quae enim restat felicissimo hoc nostro aevo dete-
genda natio, quae novae coloniae deducendae, quae inaudi-
ta cum diffitissimis regionibus ineunda commercia, quae con-
quirenda demum remotioris vetustatis monumenta? Magnis
haec laboribus majorique alacritate a nobis fuscipiuntur, quae

314. Roman in *Epithalamia Exoticis Linguis Reddita*, etc.: Bodoni, Parma, 1775

deserve mention. The music type is uninteresting, the plain-song notation in particular being too modern in effect. The work is probably the most elaborate specimen that the world has ever seen — an imposing *tour de force* — and the acme of Bodoni's late, chilly, dry manner.

Bodoni's work may be divided into two periods: (1) when he employed old style or transitional types and used decorations somewhat profusely, and (2) when he depended on his own type-designs and unadorned typography for his effects. His early printing shows French influence very distinctly, and in the specimen of 1771 — *Fregi e Majuscole* — the border of Bodoni's title-page is almost a copy of that of the second volume of Fournier's *Manuel Typographique*. But earlier than that, the French fashion of printing appears in such books as *Le Feste d'Apollo* and the *Pastorale* of 1769 — which commemorate gala performances in honour of the marriage of the Duke of Parma. Some other early books of the Stamperia Reale — such as Alberti's *Saggio di Poesie Italiane* (1773) or Trenta's tragedy *L'Auge*, issued about 1774 — are so far from Bodoni's later style that it is at first sight difficult to believe that he printed them. Such a book as the *Epithalamia Exoticis Linguis Reddita* of 1775, issued in honour of the marriage of Marie Adelaide Clotilde, sister of Louis XVI, printed in Bodoni's "first manner" from old style types, is a masterpiece; really magnificent in its types, their arrangement, and the superb engraved decorations which, for once, enhance the effect of the page (figs. 314 and 315). I think it one of his finest volumes.

In 1784, Bodoni printed another very charming book in this early manner — *Prose e Versi per onorare la Memoria di Livia Doria Caraffa*, a collection of poetry, prose, and inscriptions which is probably one of the most beautiful memorial volumes ever produced. The fonts of delicate roman

and italic type are distinctly old style. In 1785, Bodoni's edition of Anacreon's *Odes*, in quarto, was published—a most beautiful book (printed entirely in capital letters) in Greek and Latin. The volume *In Funere Caroli III*, of 1789, and the *Orazione Funebre* of Botteri (for the same occasion) are also good specimens of his earlier taste. The Greek and Italian Callimachus of 1792 retains a great deal of his early style; and his *Tavola di Cebete Tebano* of 1793 is another delightful piece of printing—simple, and very characteristic. The Brief of Pius VI of 1792, of which there were but twelve copies printed in folio, may well have caused the Pope to exclaim that he must issue a second brief to praise the way in which Bodoni had printed the first one! Of all this work, a little 32mo Anacreon in Greek of 1791 is my favourite—one of his most exquisite bits of printing. Meanwhile, the increasing number of books prefiguring his later way of working—like the Horace and *Imitation* of 1791 and 1793—show that he was feeling his way into the refrigerated manner of his last days. But his first period—less known, and when known, less considered—is his best.

Of Bodoni's second manner—which, roughly speaking, may be called his nineteenth century style—there are innumerable examples, and in all these later books the area of unprinted space on his pages is great. Bodoni lightened the solidity of close-set composition by exaggerating his ascenders and descenders, and also by ingeniously placing small faces of type on large bodies, which effectually prevented such fonts from being set solid. His quarto Tacitus of 1804 is a fine book—transitional in style, perhaps. *Il Bardo della Selva Nera* of 1806 is a full-blown example of his favourite and typical way of working. The *Oratio Dominica* of the same year, Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* of 1807, the Greek *Iliad* in three volumes folio of 1808, La

Rochefoucauld's *Maximes* in French of 1811, and the French *Télémaque* of 1812, which Bodoni thought perhaps his best work—all these are books showing originality of conception, even though the conception may not be of a very endearing kind.

One of the last and most typical of his editions is *La Giuditta* of 1813—begun but not finished by Bodoni—a book absolutely without ornament, and very fine in its way. Some smaller volumes of poems in 16mo, delicately printed from delicate types, on paper which is much like vellum in quality, are delightful of their kind. Such are Parini's *Odi* of 1799; *Versi di Giordani*, in four volumes, of 1809; and *Versi del Conte Aurelio Bernieri*, 1811, in four volumes.

Finally, Bodoni's broadsides—inscriptions in capitals, framed in borders made up of ornaments—are among his most interesting performances. These are rare; and while no reproduction gives much idea of them, I refer the reader to their facsimiles at the end of Bertieri's admirable book.¹

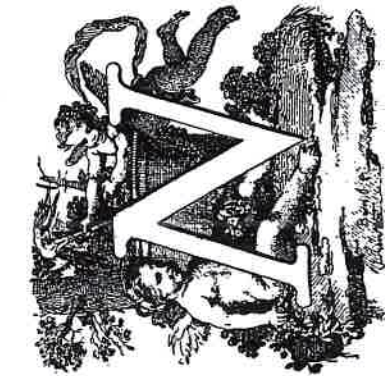
Bodoni's larger volumes were certainly often magnificent. They were planned on a great scale. It has been very well said of him that those who came after might choose to do something else; but that what he chose to do could never be done better. His first manner, in one way less characteristic of him, is, as I have said, much the more agreeable and sympathetic. He was then under the influence of French styles, although perhaps he had given up employing French types; but there was about the books of this period—as in those of his rival Didot—real charm. The distinction of old style type was retained, but it was slightly refined.

¹ For these and other interesting facsimiles see Bertieri and Fumagalli's *L'Arte di Giambattista Bodoni*. Milan, 1913. The series of plates at the end show at a glance the difference between his early and late manner of printing. A chronological table of Bodoni's editions forms Vol. II of De Lama's *Vita di Bodoni*. Parma, 1816.

But while it was in his first period that he produced his most beautiful books, he himself did not think so. It may be said that this is self-evident, because he soon changed his style for one which he must have considered an improvement. But it was not Bodoni, but the spirit of the art round about him, that made his later types more and more rigid, their heavy lines thicker, and their light lines thinner and more wiry. Wonderfully perfect as these types were in detail, they contributed to a style of printing that made these later books as official as a coronation, and as cold as the neighbouring Alps! His volumes were to other printing what Canova's statuary was to earlier sculpture.

Many of Bodoni's books lacked intimacy and charm, too, because of his conception of the function of his press. He cared nothing about printing as a means to popular instruction. He did not despise the masses — he forgot all about them! He was a court printer, existing by the patronage of the Lucky Few. His editions were intended to be *livres d'apparat*.¹ He not alone saw no harm in making them so, but the bigger and more pretentious they were, the better he liked them. In fact, he openly said so, and told Renouard, the French publisher, "Je ne veux que du magnifique, et je ne travaille pas pour le vulgaire des lecteurs." I am afraid, too, that he always retained an eighteenth century Italian carelessness about detail, which often gave Italian architecture and painting of that period such delightful *brio*. But "broad effects," when applied to scholarship and proofreading, lead to disaster. Thus the texts of Bodoni's classical editions have never been considered very correct, and his books, apart from their appearance, are not valuable to the

¹ A collection of Bodoni's books in all their different editions, on large paper, "special" paper, vellum, etc., is preserved in the Ducal Library at Parma, where the matrices of Bodoni's types are also exhibited.



ovum opus, nec, ut arbitror, poenitendum, ingenti plane meo periculo, ac labore exantlatum in literariae reipublicae conspectum omnī ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ educo. Quae me ad illud edendum impulerint caussae, & quae illius sit ὁικονόμησις, habeto. Vt primum de nuptiis CAROLI EMMANVELIS FERDINANDI, subalpinae galliae principis ad me rumor perlatus est, statim mecum ipse reputare coepi, qua ratione possem non modo defixam animo gratulationem palam testari, sed

PARANGONE I.

N'ayez de l'attachement, et de l'amour pour le monde, qu'à proportion du temps que vous y devez être. Celui qui voyage, ne doit point s'ar

Non abbiate attacco, ne amore pel mondo, se non che a proporzione del tempo, che voi vi dovete dimorare. Quegli che ec.

PARANGONE II.

Il n'y a au monde que deux manières de s'élever; ou par sa propre industrie, ou par l'imbecilité des autres. On ne vole. ec

Non ha l'uomo che due mezzi per aggrandire; o la propria industria, o l'altrui imbecillità. Non si vola colle stesse ali etc.

scholar. Didot, who published much better editions, but did not print so well, justly enough said that Bodoni's books would figure on the shelves of collectors, but not in the libraries of savants—adding, "Comme littérateur je condamne ses éditions, comme typographe je les admire." There were other eminent critics who took the same tone. Apparently it was not only in the classics that he sinned; for Horace Walpole, writing in 1790 to Mary Berry, who was then in Italy, says, "I am glad you did not get a Parinesan *Otranto*. A copy is come so full of faults that it is not fit to be sold here." But whatever Bodoni's faults were, he was perfectly characteristic of his period, and expressed it in his work. Because he was so characteristic of his time is perhaps the chief reason that he is a great printer.

Andrea Amoretti, a learned Italian priest, who, renouncing his calling, engraved some of Bodoni's types, and who printed some pretty books himself, issued a delightful little specimen, *Saggio de' Caratteri e Fregi della Fonderia dei Fratelli Amoretti Incisori e Fonditori in San Pancrazio presso Parma* (1811), and this book shows how the Italian output had been influenced by Bodoni and Didot¹ (fig. 316). The clear-cut ornaments, which are to earlier ornaments what the Amoretti types of 1811 are to earlier types, are very perfect, very brilliant, and extremely characteristic of the fashionable style in printing at that period (fig. 317). Indeed, Bodoni's work was much copied by such presses as that of the Vicenzi at Modena and in other parts of Italy. The luxurious books of the *Tipografia della Società Letteraria* at Pisa (now almost forgotten), which employed Amoretti's fonts, were important and collected by amateurs of printing. The effect

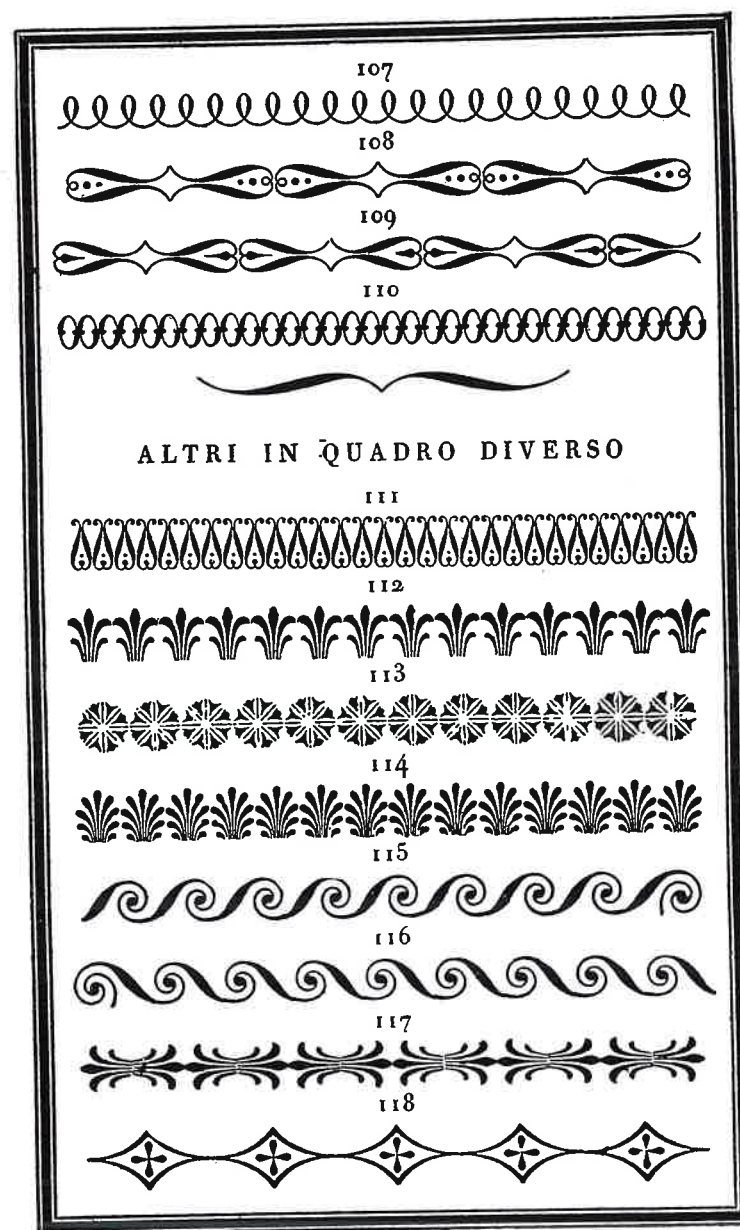
¹ The Amoretis also issued in 1830 another specimen — *Nuovo Saggio de' Caratteri e Fregi della Fonderia dei Fratelli Amoretti Incisori e Fonditori in Parma*. It is inferior to the first one and shows some types in the English manner of Thorne.

of Amoretti's fonts is shown in the folio *Poesie di Catullo*, in Italian and Latin, issued at Pisa in 1815. This book recalls Bodoni's manner, but just misses its excellence; somehow the types seem commonplace, and their arrangement lacks Bodoni's clever touch. Amoretti's types are also used in Tasso's *Aminta*, printed in Pisa in 1804 at the same press; but here the types are too much spaced and look weak, not only on that account, but because they are so.

III

SOME account of the manifold activities of the Didot family is given in a previous chapter, but we must now consider their important part in the development of nineteenth century type-forms. Their eighteenth century influence in the movement toward lighter types is shown by François Ambroise Didot's fonts cut by Wafard about 1775,¹ in that interesting book already spoken of, *Épître sur les Progrès de l'Imprimerie*, written and put forth by Didot l'aîné in 1784, and in the delightful *Essai de Fables Nouvelles*, in which the *Épître* was reprinted in 1786. It is but fair to say that mid-eighteenth century French specimens were full of very light fonts, in what was then called the *goût nouveau*, and it was these that the Didots somewhat refined upon. On the other hand, some of the graceful and spirited but attenuated old style types used by the Didots about 1780 were very beautiful, and have not been sufficiently noticed — types just on the turn of the tide — foreshadowing the coming change in style, but by no means

¹ I have not been able to examine any volumes showing large sizes of the Wafard types, which were quickly superseded by Vibert's fonts, for which Pierre Didot was responsible. Alphabets of Wafard's characters are shown in Thibaudeau's *La Lettre d'Imprimerie*, Vol. I, pls. 15 and 16. The date of their appearance there given (1757) would appear to be open to question.



317. Ornaments: Amoretti's *Saggio de' Caratteri*
Parma, 1811