

IRONING PIXELS

How to Achieve Perfect Type on the Web

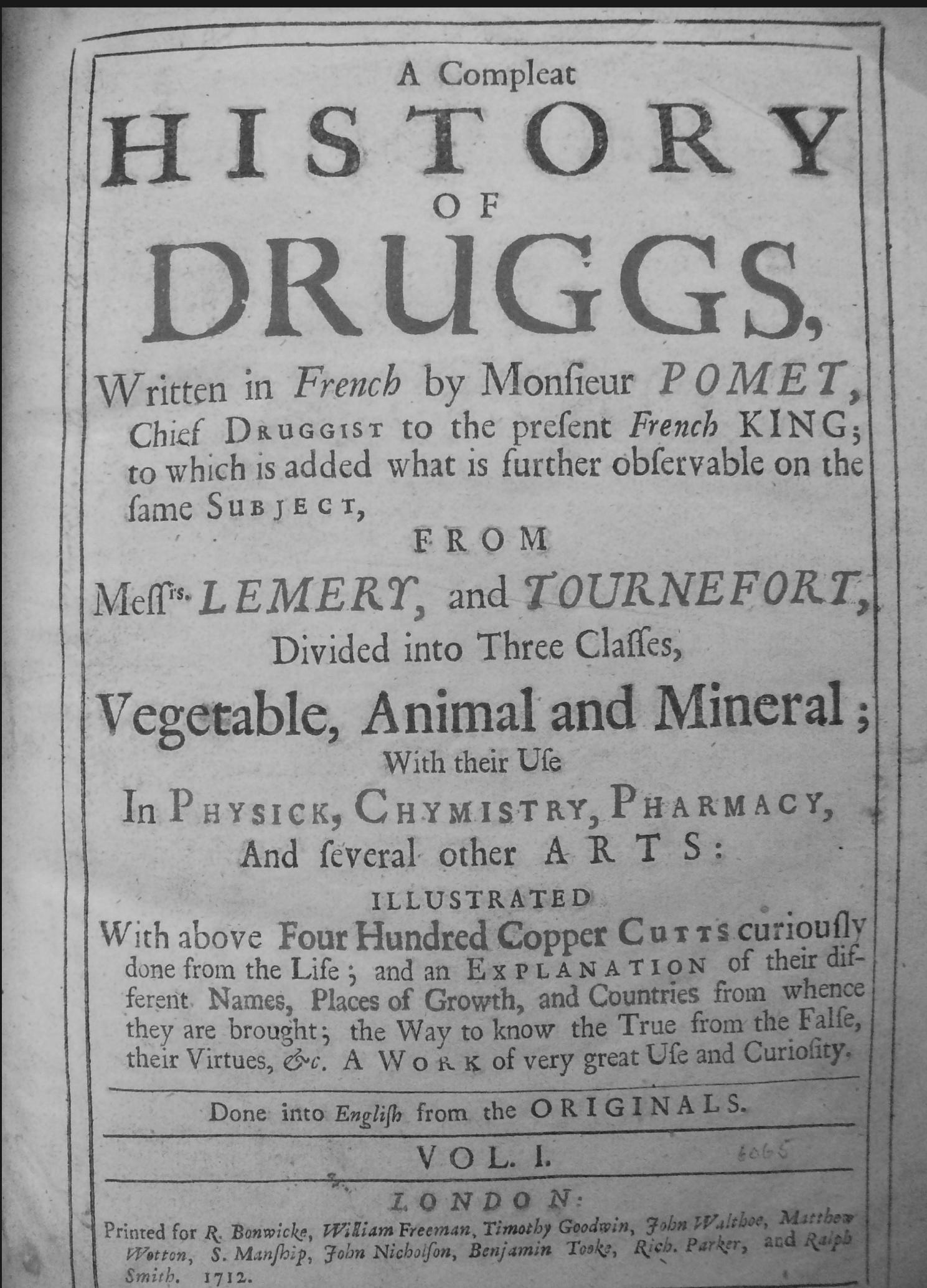
1

B A S K E R V I L L E

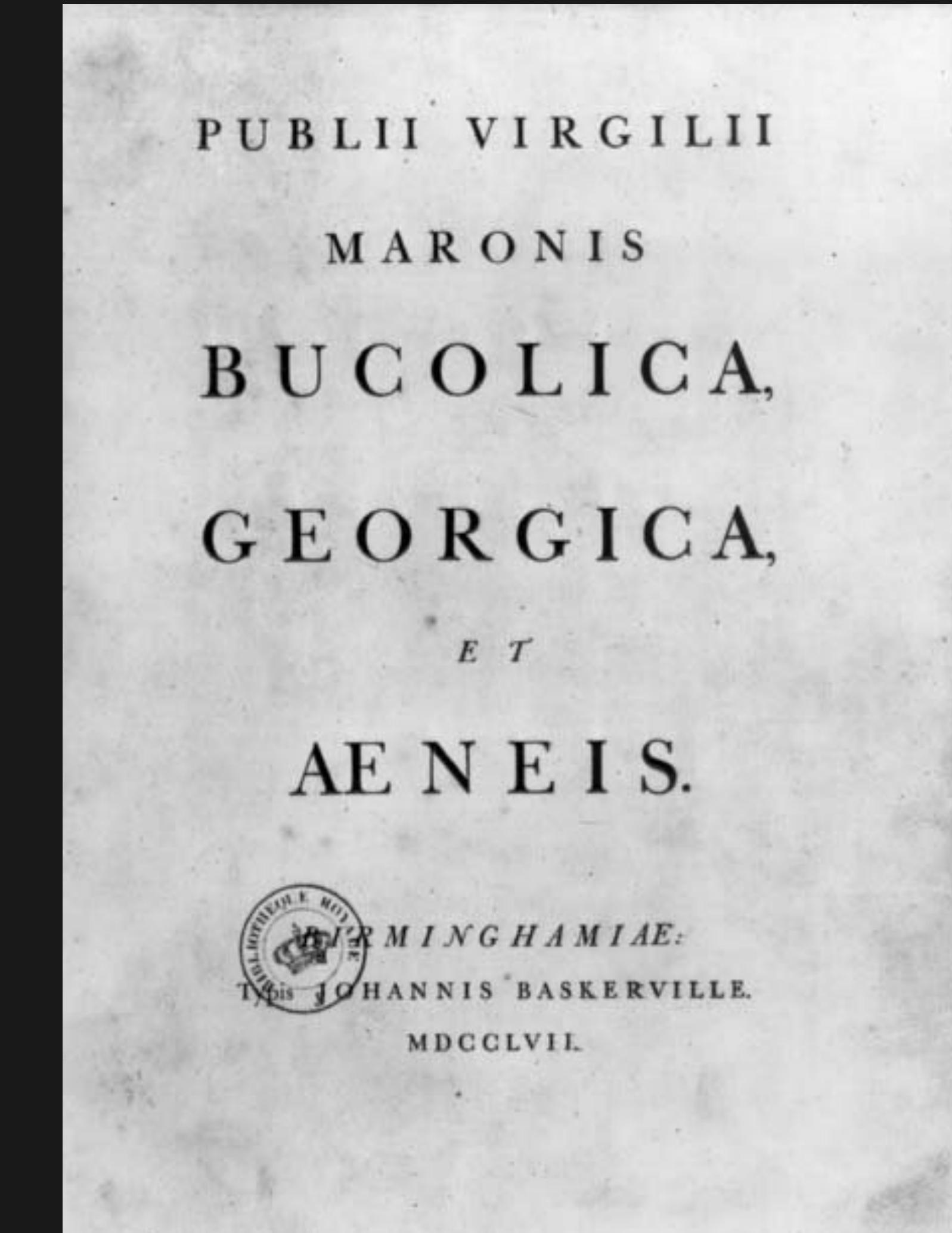


JOHN BASKERVILLE

1706 - 1755



A Compleat History of Druggs
1712



Virgil's Opera
1757

Every part of the volume was in
harmony with every other part. In
looking at it today, we wonder how
it was done when it was done.

JOSIAH H. BENTON

Having been an early admirer of the
beauty of letters, I became
indefensibly desirous of contributing
to the perfection of them

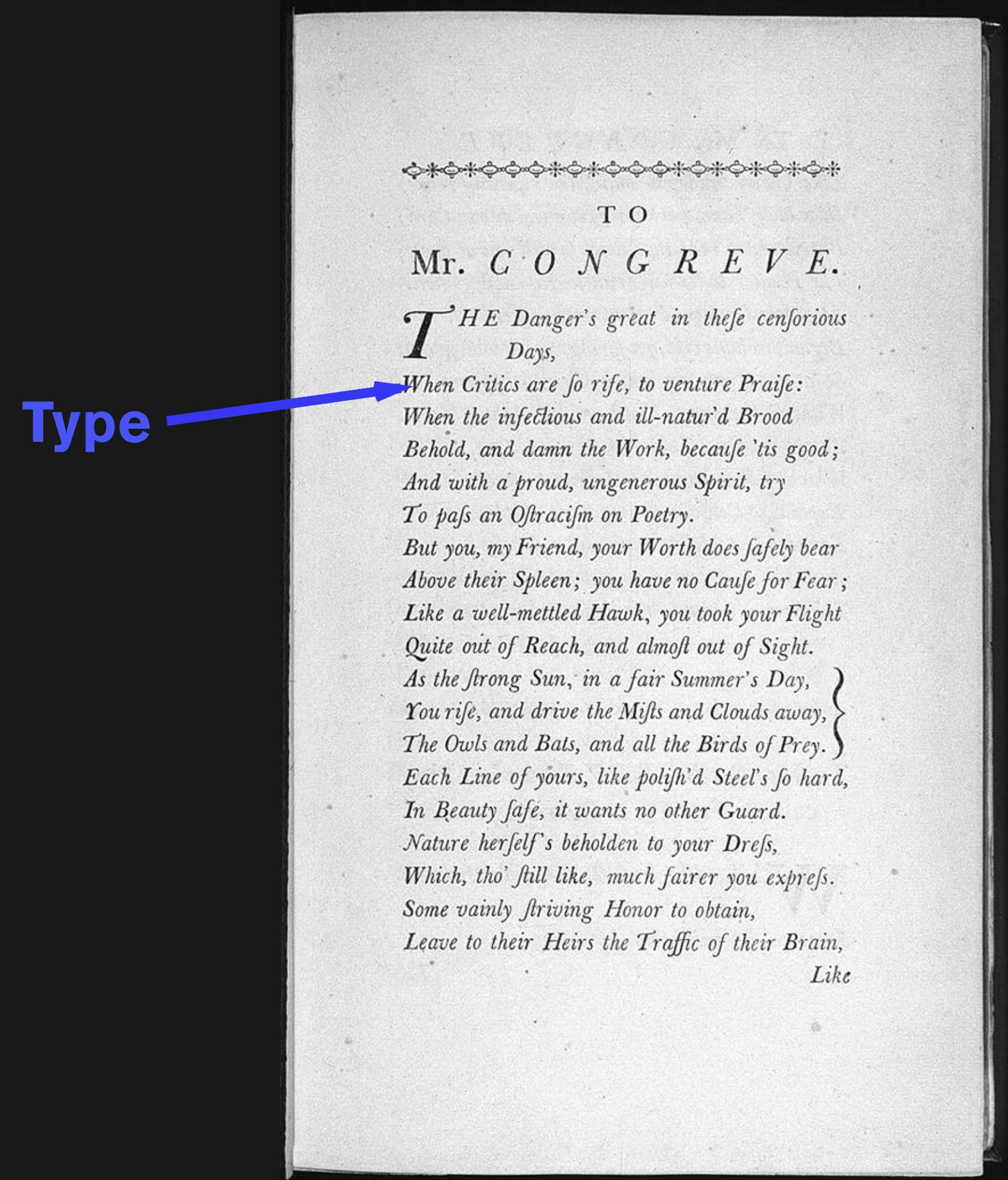
INTRO TO PARADISE LOST

- Letter
- Ink & paper
- Workmanship

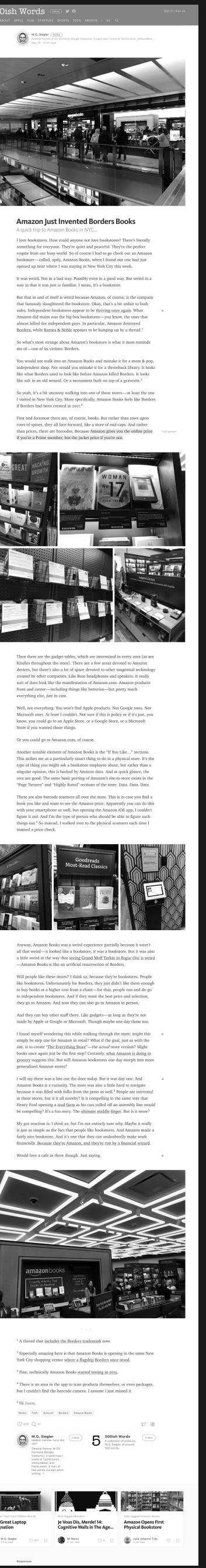


2

W H Y T Y P E M A T T E R S O N T H E W E B

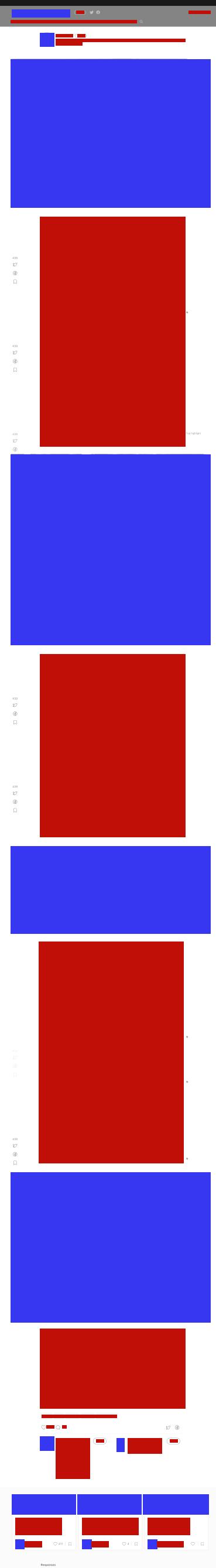


Congreve, The Works 1761



Medium Article

June 2017



Medium Article
June 2017



interlude

Who am I and what am I talking about?



Hey, I'm Taylor

Designer, currently at Moment

Previously at expii, Venmo, and
the Carnegie Mellon HCII

Type nerd

IRONING PIXELS

1. BASKERVILLE

2. WHY TYPE MATTERS ON THE WEB

Interlude

3. HOW THE WEB IS DIFFERENT

4. LETTERS THAT WORK ON SCREENS

5. RENDERING ON THE FLY

6. BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Driving question:

What does it mean to
obsess over type on the
web in 2017?

github.com/tpoulos/ironing-pixels

3

H O W T H E W E B I S D I F F E R E N T

- Pixels, not wood pulp
- Built without complex typography in mind
- Rendered on the fly
- Accessible to everyone

- Letter
- Ink & paper
- Workmanship

- Letter
 - Ink & paper
 - Workmanship
- 
- Letter
 - Rendering
 - Robustness

4

LETTERS THAT WORK ON SCREENS

WHERE TO FIND QUALITY FONTS

Google Fonts

Viewing 818 of 818 font families

Roboto
Christian Robertson (12 styles)

Bubbler One
Brenda Gallo (1 style)

All their equipment and instruments are alive.

Barrio
Omnibus-Type (1 style)

I WATCHED THE STORM, SO BEAUTIFUL YET TERRIFIC.

A red flair silhouetted the jagged edge of a wing.

Open Sans
Steve Matteson (10 styles)

Almost before we knew it, we had left the ground.

Free webfont host
e.g. Google Fonts

Adobe Typekit

Browse fonts | Typekit

All Families Full Library Limited Library Marketplace

Include web-only families Default Japanese

+ Show filters

Realigned Omnes Darden Studio 18 fonts In paid plans or to buy

Realigned Gastromond JTD 2 fonts In paid plans or to buy

Realigned Hatch psType 8 fonts In paid plans or to buy

Realigned Europa EuropaType 6 fonts In free & paid plans

Realigned Realiane Realiane Realiane Realiane

Paid webfont host
e.g. Typekit

Klim Type Foundry

Retail Fonts • Test Fonts • Custom Fonts • Blog • Your Account • Cart

Untitled Sans Regular

Untitled

Untitled Serif Regular

Untitled

Direct from the foundry
e.g. Klim

Rendering

Rendering

N

→a

Key

NO THIN LINES

OPEN APERTURES

GENEROUS X-HEIGHT

N

→a

Key

To I

KERNING HINTING

To I



An example testing setup

17/24 × 500 Casual reading is sentences here and there (the caption, the pull quote) to text. Sustained reading is engaged reading (pursued for its own understanding). Readers slow

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Poor cross device performance

D E M O

What are variable fonts?

5

R E N D E R I N G O N T H E F L Y

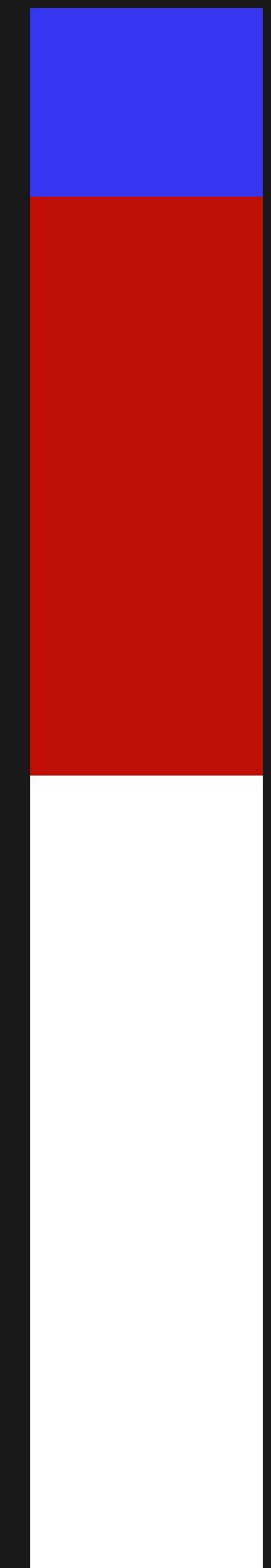
D E M O

What does page loading and rendering look like?

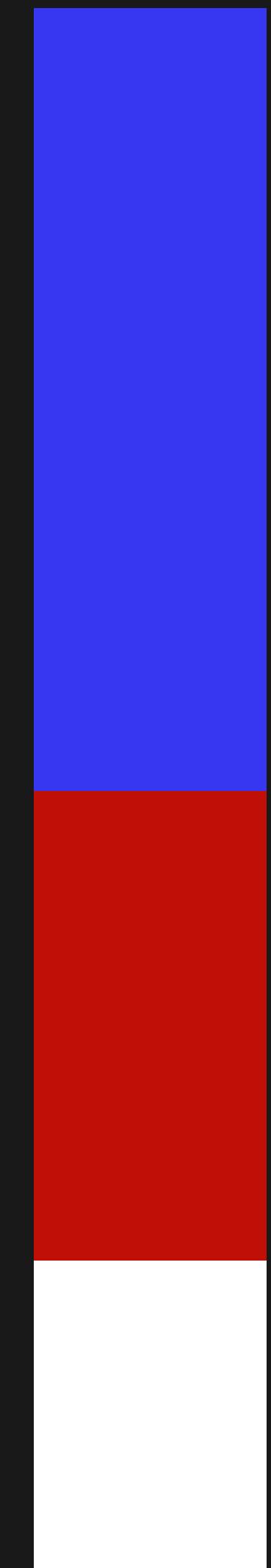
CONNECTIVITY IS STILL A PROBLEM

Data from September 2015
OVUM World Cellular Information Service

Worldwide



United States



- Load as few fonts as possible
- Load progressively
- Time out on slow connections
- Match font metrics

There was once a Dog who used to snap at people and bite them without any provocation, and who was a great nuisance to every one who came to his master's house. So his master fastened a bell round his neck to warn people of his presence. The Dog was very proud of the bell, and strutted about tinkling it with immense satisfaction. But an old dog came up to him and said, "The fewer airs you give yourself the better, my friend. You don't think, do you, that your bell was given you as a reward of merit? On the contrary, it is a badge of disgrace.

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Baskerville URW
48px / 52px

Georgia
48px / 52px

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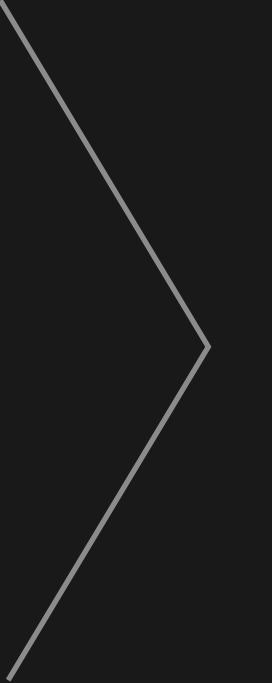
What does it look like when everything goes right?

6

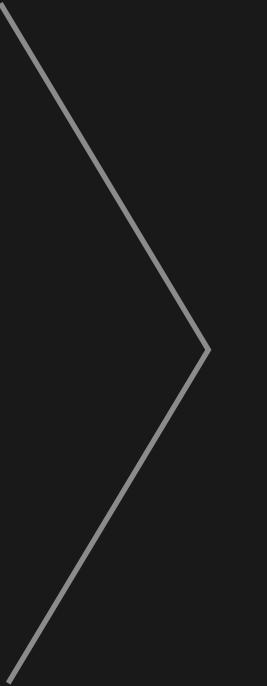
BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE



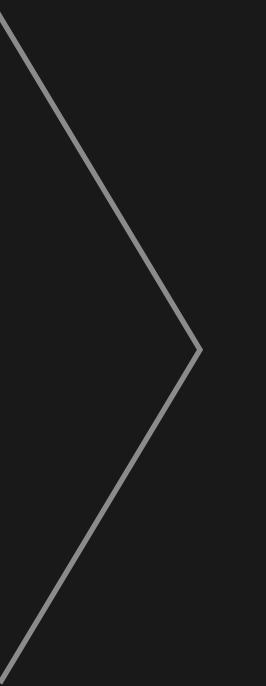
THE FUTURE

- Letter
 - Ink & paper
 - Workmanship
- 
- Letter
 - Rendering
 - Robustness

- Letter
- Ink & paper
- Workmanship



- Letter
- Rendering
- Robustness



Context
aware
typography

IRONING PIXELS

@twpoulos

Slides, links, & feedback:
github.com/tiou/ironing-pixels