

EDITORIAL

It is eighteen months since the last issue of *The Journal* was published. My first task, as Editor, must be to apologize to subscribers for the delay in producing the present issue, and to express gratitude to them for their faith in its ultimate appearance. The delay was caused by factors outside the Society's control.

The type face used for *The Journal* was selected after much careful consideration from a number of possible alternatives. It is known today as 'Janson', but the first extant type specimen sheet, dating from 1720, describes the types as 'Hollandische Schriften'. They were, in fact, cut in Amsterdam by the Hungarian punch-cutter and typographer Nikolas Kis (1650-1702). Janson possesses the robust but unaffected qualities which Morris sought in a type, and provided an alternative to the ubiquitous Caslon of the 'Revival of Printing' period. For machine setting, the face is available only in text sizes, but the problem of titling was solved when the Schriftgiesserei D. Stempel, of Frankfurt-am-Main, generously presented the Society with a number of founts of founders' Original Janson Antique.

There remained the problem of the 8 point used for biographical details and foot-notes. This was not held by the printers of *The Journal*. A fount was kindly lent by the Printing Department of Linotype & Machinery Limited for the production of the first three issues, but obviously the Society could not continue to trespass on the Company's kindness. One attempt to have the 8 point matter set by one of the few houses that run the face in that size proved prohibitively expensive. Of a number of possible solutions, the only really practicable one, was for the Society to invest in the necessary fount of matrices - the moulds in which the type characters are cast. This involved considerable expenditure and a long delay in delivery, which in the event, has proved longer than was foreseen. However, the Society, perhaps unusually, now possesses this piece of capital equipment essential to the production of *The Journal* and there is no reason why issues should not henceforth appear at the originally intended rate of two a year. It would, of course, have been possible to produce *The Journal* in another type face; but that solution would have been un-Morrisian.

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