

4 - OPENING PAGE OF THE FIRST U.S.
EDITION OF JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES



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It's [...] one of several instances in the novel when attention is drawn to letters themselves, that is, to the raw material of language [...].

In "Joyce's forest of symbols," the critic Guy Davenport suggests that words in *Ulysses* can be scrutinized for what is called the "Kells effect," which he defines as "the symbolic content of illuminated lettering serving a larger purpose than its decoration of geometry, imps, and signs." For instance, the original connotations of the first two words of the novel—"stately" is an adjective for kings, and "plump" is for plebeians—encapsulate the conflicts in the opening chapter. At the same time, the last word of the novel, "yes," is contained within the first, "stately." Thus prominent letterforms, such as those at the beginning or at the end of a chapter, can serve a larger thematic and structural purpose within the book.

— "A Die with 26 Faces," Louis Ltithi, *Bulletins of The Serving Library* #3, 2012

Ernst Reichl,
Opening page of the first U.S. edition of James
Joyce's *ulysses*, 1934, this page from an
unknown edition, 30.5 x 23.5 cm