

ficult of all the tasks before the commission was that of bringing the photographic apparatus into successful operation, putting every part together, making sure that every thing worked properly, and drilling the photographers in the necessary manipulations. To do this in the best way required talent and skill in delicate physical manipulation which it was very hard to command. At length the position of superintendent of photographic operations was tendered to Professor Henry Draper, of New York, who had proved his skill as a physicist by his photographs of the diffraction spectrum, as well as by a great reflecting telescope, which was the work of his own hands. The position was accepted, and the services rendered gratuitously, Dr. Draper not even asking for the refunding of his personal expenses incurred by his numerous journeys to Washington.

Every thing was got ready in Washington before the end of May, and on Monday, June 8, the United States ship *Swatara*, Captain Ralph Chandler, U. S. N., sailed with the five parties for the southern stations already described, hoping to reach the last one by the 1st of November. The northern parties were sent out to the stations in China, Japan, and Siberia by the Pacific Mail Steam-ship line, Professor Hall and party being conveyed from the terminus at Nagasaki to Wladivostok by the United States ship *Lackawanna*. It was intended that these parties should reach their stations three months before the transit.

The question may be asked why so much

pains should be taken to measure the distance of the sun, and whether it makes any difference to mankind what orbit Venus describes. Scientific investigators never inquire of what use knowledge is; they leave its practical application to others. But a very little consideration will show that astronomy has, in a merely utilitarian way, paid the world manifold for all the labor spent in learning it. Did it never occur to the reader that it is to Kepler, Newton, and their successors that we owe the means of navigating the ocean in safety? When a ship is out of sight of land there is no way of determining her position except by observations of the heavenly bodies. But observations could not be used for this purpose unless the laws of motion of those bodies had been discovered and taught by mathematicians and astronomers. A striking example of this is fresh in the memory of all. A year and a half ago the splendid steamer *City of Washington* sailed on her usual voyage across the ocean, but constant cloudy weather prevented observations to determine her position. In consequence, she was wrecked on the coast of Nova Scotia, and the loss of more property than would pay for all the expenses of observing the transit of Venus paid the forfeit for failure to make the necessary observations. A large portion of the labors of astronomers is devoted to fixing the positions and motions of the stars and planets with continually increasing accuracy, and the observations we have been describing are one step in this work.

DECORATIVE ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN ENGLAND.

BY M. D. CONWAY.

[Third Paper.]

ANOTHER American artist, and one of whom his country has no less reason to be proud, has adorned his London residence in a way quite notable. The ancient mansion of the Lindsays (300 years old) on the northern bank of the Thames, at Chelsea, has been divided up into six houses, and one of these has for many years been occupied by Mr. Whistler. This gentleman's enthusiasm for Japanese and Chinese art is well known; but that large number of people who are in the habit of holding up their china plates at dinner as texts from which to descant on the strange ignorance of drawing, perspective, etc., under which the Chinese and Japanese suffer would find good

reason to check their laughter if they should ever be fortunate enough to see Mr. Whistler's drawing-room. The Chinese and Japanese have known for a good many centuries certain principles of art which Europeans are only now beginning to recognize; one of these is that a plate or pot is by no means the proper place for a realistic picture, but, on the contrary, that the only use of art on such an object is to give it spots of color. The chief object is not the picture, but the pot. No people know the laws of perspective better than the Chinese and the Japanese, or have greater realistic power. Mr. Whistler has dotted the walls and even the ceiling of his dining-room with the brilliant



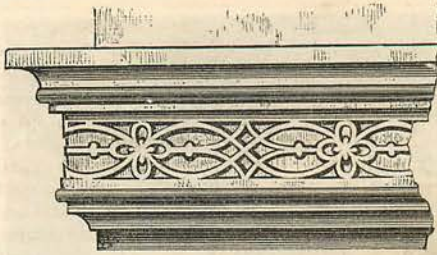
WILLIAM MORRIS.

Japanese fans which now constitute so large an element in the decoration of many beautiful rooms; but in his drawing-room there are fifteen large panels made of Japanese pictures, each about five feet by two. These pictures represent flowers of every hue, and birds of many varieties and of the richest plumage. The very lustre of nature is on every petal and on every feather; the eyes of the birds are as gems that emit light, and their tortuous necks are painted with a boldness which no European art can rival. There are also in the room an ancient Chinese cabinet with a small pagoda designed on the top, an old Japanese cabinet of quaint construction, and several screens, etc., from the same region, altogether making one of the most beautiful rooms imaginable. Mr. Whistler has done much to light up and beautify a somewhat dark staircase in his house by giving the walls a lemon tint above a dado of gold, on which he has painted butterflies such as adorn the frames of his pictures, and constitute the signature of his work. I have become convinced,

however, by a visit to the beautiful house which one of our best architects and decorators, Chambrey Townshend, has arranged at Wimbledon, that there can be nothing so suitable for somewhat dark corridors and staircases as a faint rose tint. In Mr. Townshend's house, however cold and cheerless the day may be, there is always a glow of morning light. This gentleman has shown that a sage-gray paper with simple small squares (such as Messrs. Marshall and Morris make) furnishes the best dado to support the light tints upon walls which are not papered. Where the walls are papered several gentlemen of taste have substituted for the usual dado, made of somewhat darker paper, one of matting. If the matting has a dark red stripe, the effect is good, but checker marks are

not pleasant. Mr. Ionides, a Greek gentleman of London, arranged a remarkably beautiful hall and stairway in his house at Notting Hill by using a plain straw-colored matting for the continuous dado, uniting it by an ebonized chair boarding with a light-colored Morris wall-paper. Of course tiles are sometimes used to make the dado, but either because of their common use in hotels and public buildings, or for some other reason, they appear with increasing rarity in private houses in any other capacity than that of adorning the fire-place. This remark does not include the use of tiles as plaques, to be hung as works of fine art, a use of them which is now frequent, and is the means of producing a great deal of beautiful work.

It is easy to understand that the house in which one resides must have a large share in determining the decorations which shall be placed in or upon it. A historic or semi-palatial mansion of the olden time will require to have its great halls and stairways and deep rooms illuminated with col-



MOULDING OVER DADO.

ors, and its large spaces intersected with pictorial screens. Mr. William B. Scott, of whose mural paintings I have already spoken, and whose occupation it is to study effects of ornamentation, has a happy field for his taste and task in his residence, Bellevue House, at Chelsea. This mansion merits particular attention, both on its own account architecturally, and for its decorations, added recently. These have been chiefly devised by the artist himself in carrying out the original plan, and add a suggestive and, properly speaking, imaginative character to the interiors. The house was built, it is said, by the Adamsons, the architects of the Adelphi, in the Strand, where the Society of Arts holds its meetings (the approach to which is still called Adams Street). At that time, about a century ago, decorations in the way of carved mouldings running around doorways, and passing all round the rooms on the surbase and dado, were in use. Previously to that time the entire walls were generally paneled, but then began the system of paneling or boarding flatly to the height of three feet only, at which height began the lath and plaster wall. Along the top edge of this dado—which being just over the height of a chair or table gives a very well-furnished and comfortable air to a room, and ought on that account to be again adopted—ran a more or less ornamental moulding. That mostly used in Bellevue House is carved in wood and very good, closely resembling, indeed, those on the best specimens of Chippendale furniture, which belongs to the same date—about 1770. I may add here that the demand among artistic designers for a recurrence to the dado is shown by the increasing frequency with which a darker paper than that above, with paper cornice, is made to do duty for it.

A hundred years ago the hall of a mansion was a more important part of the plan, and more decoratively treated, than now. The entrance is here divided by folding-doors from the hall proper, which is ample enough in area to place the stair a good way back, and to give a correspondingly wide space above on the drawing-room landing, filled in the olden time by a table, cabinet,

eight-day standing clock, and other objects. The ends of the steps were carved, sometimes very elegantly. But the most ornamental feature then in use was the moulded ceiling, which was planned in ovals and spandrels, according to the shape of the room, sometimes with medallions of Cupids, and occasionally with a picture, representing an emblematic personage or some such matter, in the centre. A few of these are still to be seen in London; there is one in Knight-Rider Street, painted by Cipriani. In Bellevue House the two drawing-rooms possess very pretty arrangements of fan-shaped ornaments and delicate foliage. These are now "picked out" in colors, blue and white for the most part, producing an effect resembling that of Wedgwood-ware.

The plan on which the rooms of large London houses were originally arranged was *en suite*, entering one through another, connected by double doors if the walls were thick enough, so that on great occasions they could be opened throughout. On either side of the drawing-rooms at Bellevue House are smaller rooms connected in this way, one of which is at present used as a library and evening sitting-room, and, I must also add, as a room on the walls of which the ever-bourgeoning studies of the idealist take shape and color. The woodwork, that is to say, the dado, doors, etc., are painted Indian red, with black or light yellow edgings; above this the wall is covered by a green pattern, but the upper part of this surface is divided by painting into panels two feet deep by a foot and a half wide, the *stile* or division between being half a foot. The ceiling is, in the centre, a very faint blue, with a darker blue meeting the cornice (two feet wide); this darker blue—the blue of the sky—also fills the painted panels, which thus resemble the openings for ventilation in some Oriental



CHIPPENDALE MAHOGANY MOULDING, BELLEVUE HOUSE.

countries. Across these openings a flight of vermilion birds—Virginian nightingales, plumed and winged by imagination, red being evidently chosen for bright effect against the blue—is represented. The birds re-appear above the cornice, and stream in pretty migration round the ceiling, decreasing in size till they nearly disappear.

The chimney-piece of this little room is exquisite, and is much like one designed by Sir E. Landseer which I saw among his sketches, except that the jambs were caryatides. The white marble jambs and archi-



DRAWING-ROOM OF BELLEVUE HOUSE.

traves in Mr. Scott's design are diapered with leaves—laurel and ivy—of Indian red color, and above the chimney-shelf is a second chimney-piece and shelf, giving thus double accommodation for objects of ornament or use. The artist's collection of old china, majolica, and other objects of similar kind serves to render his chimney-pieces particularly beautiful. I have not seen a more attractive work of this kind than the chimney-piece in his principal drawing-room. The jambs here are paneled, the panels being filled with mirrors, and divided half-way, two feet nine from the floor, by a shelf large enough to accommodate a lamp or candle, with a tea-cup or other object. The arrangement is admirable both for utility and beauty. A supplementary chimney-shelf is added here also to the marble one; and rising nearly to the ceiling is a surface of black wood, with brackets, for the exhibition of some very fine old Hispano-Moresque ware, the golden, metallic lustre of which is favorably seen against the black. The centre is filled by Mr. Scott's own most beautiful picture of Eve, which, with a large screen covered with classical figures, sheds a glory of color through this unique room, which has, be-

sides, the good fortune to command from its windows the finest views of the Thames.

Entirely different from either of these residences is that of Mr. George W. Smalley, the distinguished correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, in Chester Place. Birkett Foster, George Boughton, W. B. Scott, and Mr. Whistler have naturally decorated their houses with an eye to picturesque effect; theirs are the homes of men whose daily life is consecrated to art, and a use of colors seems appropriate to their environment which might not so well accord with persons differently occupied. Those who have experienced some of the wear and tear of this busy London existence can hardly enter the door of the American gentleman to whom I have alluded without finding around him a sufficient justification for the growing desire of families to surround themselves with household beauty, against all the charges of the puritanical. "Thus I tread on the pride of Plato," said Socrates, as he stepped on the carpet of his famous friend. "With a pride of thy own," answered Plato, who is supposed to have got the better in this little encounter. Nature is not nowadays in such discredit as formerly for having blended beauties with utilities, making even

her pease and potatoes bear graceful blossoms. And there would appear to be some reason in the tendency of her yet higher product, a home, to wear a fitting bloom as the sign of its reality. Such a suggestion is made by the subdued and delicate tints and tones which here meet the eye. One may have stepped from other houses of this fashionable neighborhood to find here a sweet surprise. There is, then, no absolute and eternal law making it compulsory to select ugly things instead of pretty things. Tinsel is not entrenched in the decalogue. Here is a hall in which gray and brown shades prevail in dado and paper, where a soft light prevails, and the garish light and the noise of the street can hardly be remembered. One may enter the nursery and find the children at play or study amidst walls that bring no shams around their simplicity, no finery, but sage-gray and straw-color, setting off well their bright faces and those panels in the book-case which tell the story of Cinderella.

To the suit of drawing-rooms every ex-

cellence must be ascribed. They consist of two large rooms and a large recess, all continuous, whose decorations adapt them to any domestic or social purpose whatever. It is an apartment in which the finest company that could be gathered in London would feel itself in an atmosphere of refinement and taste, and it is a place to lose one's self in a good book; it is a place where the mind can equally well find invitation to society or solitude. Perhaps it is the rich Persian carpet that gives such grace. It is after a pattern two thousand years old, but which in all that time has never repeated itself, each carpet coming forth with its own tints and shades, and in which every color is surrounded by a line which mediates between it and the next. It is not stretched up to the walls and nailed, as if its business were to conceal something, or as if it were too flimsy to lie still except by force of iron. It is as a large rug laid for comfort on the waxed parquet, which is ready to display more of its own beauty when the proper season arrives. Beginning with this



LIBRARY IN BELLEVUE HOUSE.

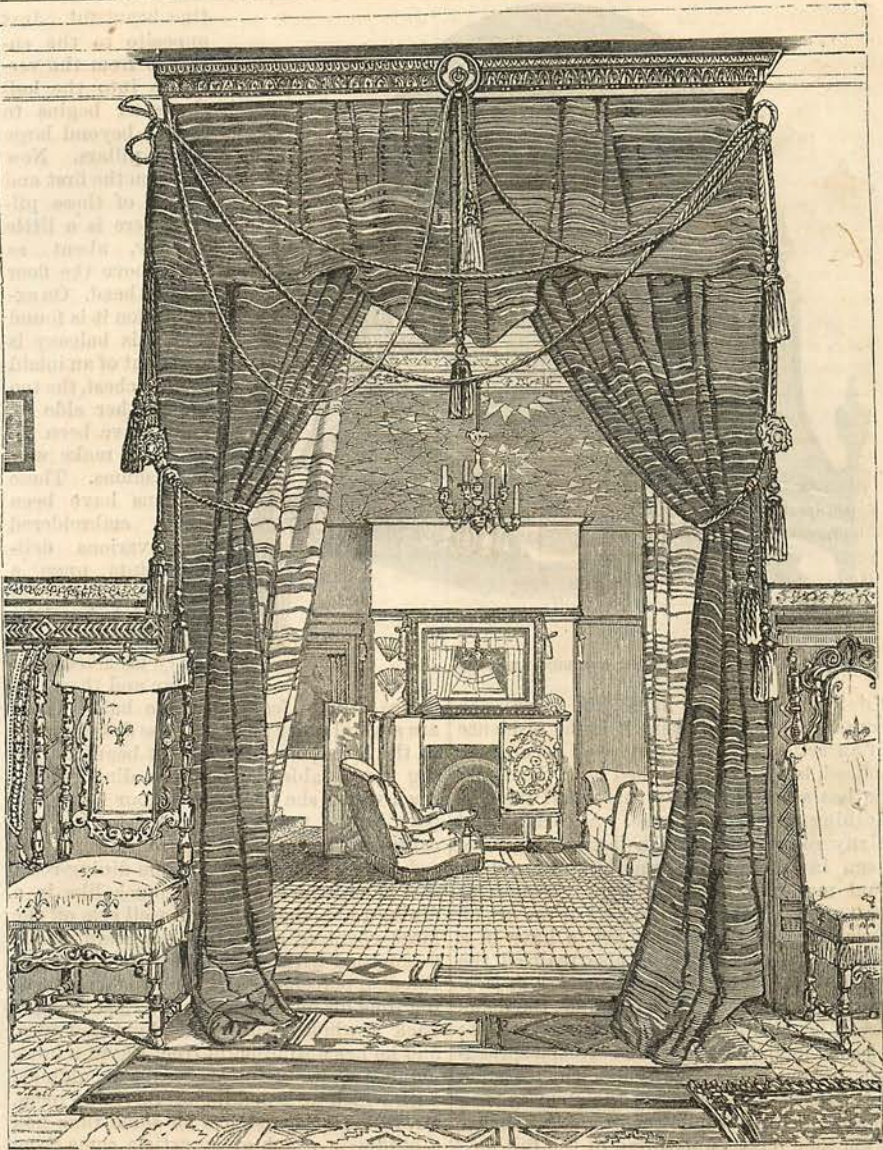
rich carpet, with its sober tints, the eye ascends to the dado, to the walls, to frieze, cornice, and ceiling, and finds variation at every stage, but no break in the harmony of all. The golden tints in the carpet are more fully represented in the dado, which is of an olive-golden color, with a small turquoise line on its cornice leading to the main papering. This paper is of a French tapestry pattern, in which the golden thread, which is its basis, weaves in colors that are rich but always subdued, and of every shade. There is no pattern to rivet the eye; it has no certain relation to the vegetal or floral or animal kingdom. This paper rises to a moresque frieze of about one foot in depth, which holds hexagonal medallions containing the ghosts of plants. There is next a cornice of three mouldings, arabesque, Egyptian, and floral, leading to the ceiling, which is covered with paper of a rich creamy color, with very light cross bands passing between figures in which a fertile fancy may trace the decorative symbols of earth, air, and water in an orb, a butterfly, and certain waving lines. It may be remarked here that it is only on a ceiling that any forms, even in such abstract shapes as these, are admissible. Here they are noticeable only if one is lying flat on one's back and gazing upward, in which case, especially if invalidism be the cause, some outlines of a dreamy kind are not without their value. Moreover, any designs when raised to the ceiling require to be larger than similar ones on the floor or line of the eye, in order that they may be at all similar in effect. The plan of covering or coloring the ceiling has a good foundation in the fact that a mere white wall overhead conveys the sorry impression that the house is left naked in every corner and spot not likely to be gazed at. The ceiling in Mr. Smalley's drawing-room exemplifies, however, one important fact: although a mere color placed on a ceiling depresses it, a good pattern has just the contrary effect. By good pattern I mean one that shows a double ground—the lower one being open work, through which a farther ground is seen. Mrs. Smalley, whose taste has been the life of the ornamentation of her house, tells me that when this ceiling was being painted the decorated part appeared to rise more than a foot higher than the blank part.

The wood used in Mr. Smalley's drawing-room is ebonized, and of it are several cabinets—one displaying some fine specimens of china—bracket-shelves, and two remarkably beautiful chimney-pieces supporting beveled mirrors, framed with shelves which display porcelain and other ornaments. The recess which has been mentioned is what might be better understood, perhaps, if described as a bay-window. Its chief object is to hold a large window, in five contiguous

sections, which admit a toned light, and have each a cluster of sunflowers at the centre. This little room has a broad divan covered with stamped green (Utrecht) velvet running around, and its wall is decorated with gold-tinted leather, on which are two bright tile ornaments. The large opening into this recess is adorned by two antique bronze reliefs of great beauty, and the whole is related to the drawing-rooms by an open drapery of greenish-golden curtains—a velvet of changeable lustre—uniform with the other hangings of these beautiful rooms.

It is remarkable, indeed, how much may be accomplished with rooms inferior in size to those we have been visiting by the skillful use of curtains. If a gentleman in London enters a house with the intention of decorating it in accordance with principles of art, his first work, probably, will be to tear away folding-doors, or single doors, which divide the drawing-room. For these he will substitute a draping, which, having in itself an artistic effect, shall make what was a barrier into beauty. Nothing is better understood than that no square angles should divide a drawing-room, and the curtain is more graceful than any arch or architraves for that purpose. The accompanying sketch may convey some idea of an effect which has been secured in Townsend House, Titchfield Terrace, residence of the distinguished artist Mr. Alma Tadema, though the impression can be but feeble on account of the exquisite use he has made of the colors, which must be left to the reader's imagination, with a warning that they are as quiet as they are rich.

The question as to the best color for a wall one of whose chief objects is to show off framed pictures is a vexed one. Messrs. Christie and Co., the famous art auctioneers, have their rooms hung with dark green baize from floor to sky-light, and certainly the result justifies their experience; but I think any one who enters the hall of Mr. F. Leighton, R.A., will see that there may be a more effective wall color to set off pictures than green, not to speak of certain other effects of the latter which really put it out of the question. It is difficult to say just what the color in Mr. Leighton's hall is. It is a sombre red, which at one moment seems to be toned in the direction of maroon, and at another in the direction of brown. It has been made by a very fine mingling of pigments; but the general result has been to convince me that there can be no better wall for showing off pictures, especially in a hall with a good deal of light, than this unobtrusive reddish-brown. I remember that when the Boston Theatre was first opened a wall of somewhat similar color added greatly to the brilliancy of the scenery. But there are many eyes to which this would not be a pleasing color or shade

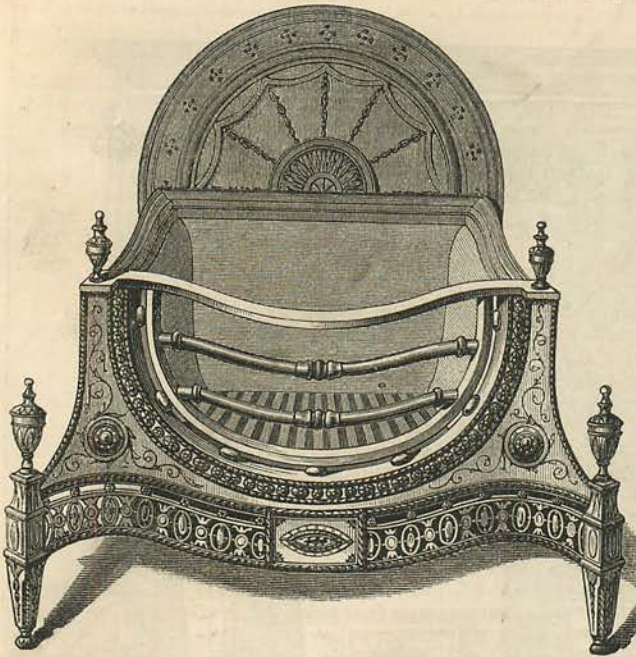


DRAWING-ROOM IN TOWNSEND HOUSE.

even for a hall—it would hardly be beautiful in a purely domestic room—and such will do well to try some of the many beautiful shades of olive or sage-gray. Mr. W. J. Hennessy, the eminent American artist, has made his house in Douro Place remarkably charming by a careful use of such shades throughout. His quiet rooms are restful as they are pervaded by refinement, and each frame on the walls has a perfect relief, each picture a full glow.

The house of Mr. Leighton, in Holland Park Road, is, in the first place, a remarkably interesting house architecturally, and

shows plainly that Mr. George Aitchison has not only been in classic regions, but imbibed their spirit. In this house, which he has built for the artist who beyond all academicians displays the most sensitive sympathies with various styles, there is nothing foreign, and yet the whole feeling about it is classic. The little balcony would have done for the sweet lady of Verona, and yet there is as much of Shakspeare's England in the substantial arches at the base of the wall. It is rare, indeed, that any house built in England in recent times has about it as much elegance and simplicity as



A GRATE OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

this! Entering the house, the impression conveyed at once is that it is the residence of an artist. He has employed decorators, indeed, but he has watched over them, and he has secured thereby this—that there is nothing ugly in his house. A great merit! Many rooms upon which large sums have been lavished have something lugged in that makes all the rest appear vulgar or pretentious. It is a large part of the art of decoration to know what not to have in a house. In this house is also realized the truth of the old French saying, *Peu de moyens, beaucoup d'effet*. For example, the doors are of deal, painted with a rich black paint; on each jamb there is at the bottom a spreading golden root, from which runs a stem with leaves; half-way up the stem ends in the profile of a sunflower in gold; another stem then passes up, ending in the full face of the sunflower, which at once crowns the foliage of the jambs, and makes a noble ornament for the capping of the door, which also has a central golden ornament. This black door, with its black jambs and its golden flowers, varied on other doors to other conventional forms, has an exceedingly rich effect. The hall also bears witness, notwithstanding its mosaic floors, marquet chairs, and the grand old stairway that runs with it to the top of the house, that the wealth of knowledge and experience has done more for it than riches of a more prosaic kind, though there has been no stint of the latter. One thing in the hall struck me as especially ingenious, and at the same

time beautiful. Just opposite to the entrance from the vestibule into the hall the stair begins to ascend beyond large white pillars. Now between the first and second of these pillars there is a little balcony, about as high above the floor as one's head. On examination it is found that this balcony is made out of an inlaid cabinet chest, the top and farther side of which have been removed to make way for cushions. These cushions have been finely embroidered with various delicate tints upon a lustrous olive satin by Miss Jekyl, and the little balcony, with pretty ornaments on it here and there, be-

comes a main feature of the hall. There are several other pieces of Miss Jekyl's work in the house, one of the most beautiful being a red table-cloth in the dining-room, upon which she has worked four figures of pots, whose flowers converge toward the centre. This cover is appropriate to the red color which prevails in the dining-room—a color which I do not much like in a dining-room, though here it well sets off the large ebonized and inlaid sideboard, which is adorned with a great deal of the finest Rhodian porcelain. Mr. Leighton on returning from his recent visit to the East brought back a whole treasury of china and tiles, and he has also brought from Egypt a large number of beautiful arabesque mouldings, with which he is making an Egyptian room. Mr. Dillon, an artist, has for some time had a studio in which every article came from Egypt, even to the inscription from the Koran (Sura 91) which makes its frieze—

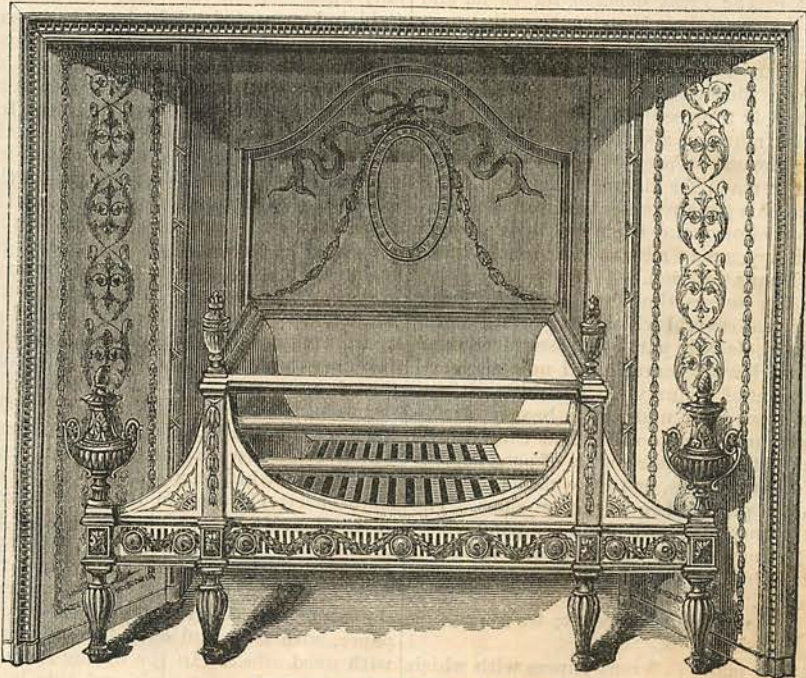
“By the brightness of the sun when he shineth,
By the moon when she followeth him,” etc.

Mr. Leighton's chief room is his studio; it covers more than half of the whole area of the top floor of the house. The walls are hung with stuffs from many countries—tapestries, rugs, ancient Japanese silks—which fall from the cornice to the floor. There are some fine ebonized book-cases and cabinets, designed by Mr. Aitchison and Mr. Leighton together. The roof is arranged with sky-lights and sliding curtains of various descriptions, so that there is no kind of

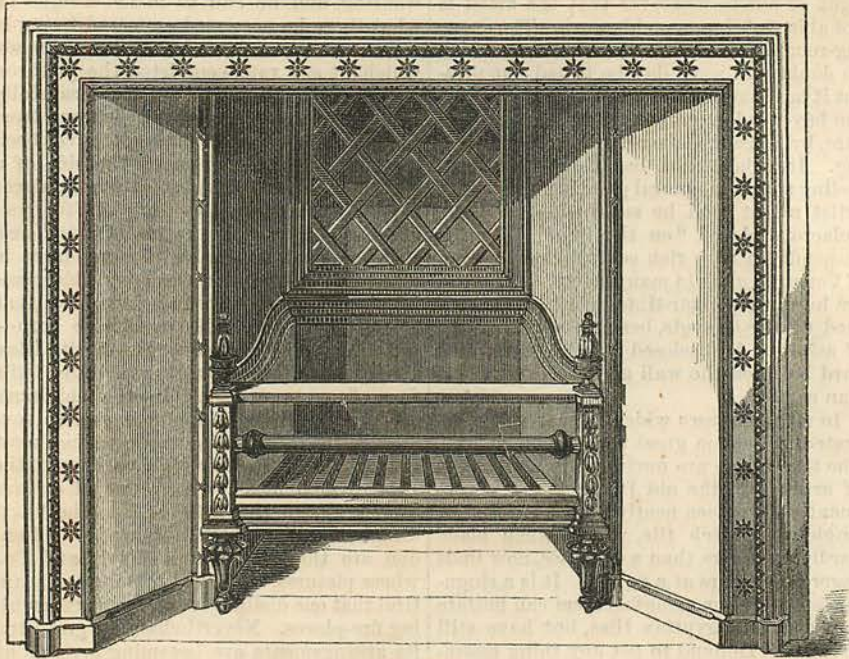
light or shade whatever that the artist is not able to bring upon his work. The drawing-room has a white coffered ceiling, which no doubt will some day be tinted; at present it has some neat mouldings, which above the bay-window gather round a fine oil-picture, by Eugene Delacroix, fixed in the ceiling. It is beautiful, but I could not help feeling that some mural painting by another artist might well be substituted, and the Delacroix placed "on the line." There is suspended a very rich central candelabrum of Venetian glass in many colors. The walls are hung with cigar-tinted cloth, with modified *fleur-de-lis* spots, beneath which a floor of ash-blue is disclosed for the width of a yard between the wall and the bright Persian carpet.

In all the houses which are carefully decorated in London great use is made of tiles. The tiles which are unrivaled in the esteem of artists are the old Dutch, which consequently have been nearly all bought up. A single old Dutch tile, which when made hardly cost more than a sixpence, now finds eager purchasers at a pound. It is a singular fact that our manufacturers can imitate Persian and Egyptian tiles, but have still to send to Holland to get any thing resembling the old Dutch, and even there they can obtain but an approach to the rich coloring and quaint designs of old times. Mr. Stevenson obtained a large number of these old tiles, which when put together formed large pictures; but several of them were

wanting, and he had to make designs of what those he possessed appeared to imply were on the others. He had tiles made which, at any rate, completed the pictures, and though the new ones were carefully made, they may be easily picked out from the old. These tile pictures have been placed by Mr. Stevenson on the side of a sheltered entrance that leads from the street across the front-yard to his beautiful residence in Bayswater. Inside of this house there are many beautiful things, but it is chiefly remarkable for the admirable mantel-pieces on the ground-floor and that above it—in the hall common to both—which show rich old carvings set with tiles, chiefly Persian and Dutch, which are built from floor to ceiling. In the children's school-room there is a chimney-piece covered with Dutch tiles representing most quaintly all the most notable scenes in the Bible, which must be a source of endless amusement to the little ones. The finest designs for tiles which I have seen in London are those of Messrs. Morris and Co., whose pictures, however, are often so beautiful that one dislikes to see them ornamenting fire-places. Nevertheless, the grate and its arrangements are becoming matters of serious importance in every room, and a walk through the establishment of Messrs. Boyd, in Oxford Street, will show that the "warming engineers" have not been behindhand in providing stoves, tiles, and grates that may be adapted to any variety of dec-



GRATE MADE FOR BARON ROTHSCHILD.



BOYD'S GRATE.

oration. These gentlemen tell me that they are continually on the watch to get hold of old grates, fenders, fire-dogs, and so forth, that were made a hundred years ago, on account of the great demand for them, and that they reproduce them continually; nevertheless they believe that they can produce a prettier grate now than could have been made in the last century. The engraving on page 42 represents a grate found in an English mansion about one hundred years ago. The one on page 43 represents a grate recently made for Baron Rothschild. The one on this page represents a grate and fire-place designed and made by Messrs. Boyd, which appears to me one of the most beautiful I have yet seen.

In the houses thus far described I have mentioned several which have been decorated in whole or in part by Messrs. Morris and Co., but have reserved until now a special treatment of their style. Their decorations, apart from their undeniable beauty, derive importance from the fact that they can be adapted to the requirements of persons with moderate incomes, or to the needs of those who are prepared to pay large sums. The firm in question—as befits a company whose head is one of the most graceful of living poets—has mastered the Wordsworthian secret of

“the eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony.”

Of the many different papers with which they hang rooms, only one has appeared to

me unsuited for the purposes of a refined decoration of almost any room, that being an imitation of square trellis-work, with a bird sitting in each opening; that I have only once seen on the walls of a bedroom (which, I suspected, might have been originally intended for a nursery; in which case I am not prepared to say that it might not have appeared in place), where it was not pleasing, and it has appeared to my eye frivolous in sitting-rooms. Nor do I altogether like their lemon-yellows, which are so well placed in corridors, to find their way (as they sometimes do) into drawing-rooms, as that color, however adapted for daylight, suffers bleaching by candle or gas light. But generally their wall-papers are of beautiful grays—pearl, sage, or even darker—and, while full of repose and dignity by day, light up well under any artificial light. This firm also does the finest wall mouldings in relief that I have met with. A remarkable instance of this may be found in the Grill Room at the South Kensington Museum, to which reference has already been made. And a somewhat similar moulding is still more effectively used in the drawing-room of the Hon. Mr. Howard, in his house at Palace Gardens—a willow pattern, with buds, on a cream-colored background, which rises to a deep frieze of green. In two rooms of the same mansion the light pomegranate paper, with shut and open flowers, is used with good effect. In the dining-room the general hue is faint pink, and this is also

pleasing. In the nursery there is an exceedingly beautiful paper of wild daisies on a mottled ground. Mr. Howard is not only an artist himself, but a collector of pictures and other objects of art. His walls have in a great measure been decorated with the idea of adapting them to the purpose of displaying to the best advantage the quaint old cabinets which he possesses, and the many fine pictures of pre-Raphaelist art which adorn his walls. On one of the landings of the stairway there is a fine organ, on which Mr. Burn Jones has painted a charming picture of St. Cecilia playing on her keys. This picture sheds light and beauty around, and shows how much may be done in a house by having such objects brought into the general system of ornamentation adopted in the house. It is hardly enough to bring into the house furniture of a color which is vaguely harmonious with the wall-paper; by a little decoration even the piano, the cabinet, the book-case, may be made to repeat the theme to which the walls have risen.

Although the hangings of Morris and Co. do not imply a lavish, but only a liberal, expenditure, they do not readily adapt themselves to a commonplace house inhabited by commonplace people. There must be thousands of these square-block houses with square boxes for rooms which would only be shamed by the individualities of their work. The majority of houses attain the final cause of their existence when the placard inscribed "To Let" may be taken down from their windows. No doubt the decorative artist might do a great deal toward breathing a soul even into such a house if it were inhabited by a family willing to pay the price. But there are houses built with other objects than "to let," built by or for persons of taste and culture, and to such the decorations of Messrs. Morris and Co. come as a natural drapery. Mr. Ionides, who has just entered a new house in Holland Park Villas, has shown, by adopting in its decorations similar to those of the smaller house he has left, that, after many years, the hangings of Morris and Co. still appear to him the most beautiful; and it is significant of the spirit in which he has carried out his own feeling in both cases that he has steadily refused to let the house his family had outgrown to all applicants who proposed to pull down its papers and dados, and convert the house into the normal commonplace suit of interiors. He prefers to retain for the present, at a loss, that which he and his artistic friends built up with so much pains, rather than have it pass into inappreciative hands. In the new residence of Mr. Ionides he has found a beautiful hanging for his drawing-room in a Morris paper of willow pattern, with two kinds of star-shaped blossoms, white and yellow, which harmonizes well with the outlook of the room into a

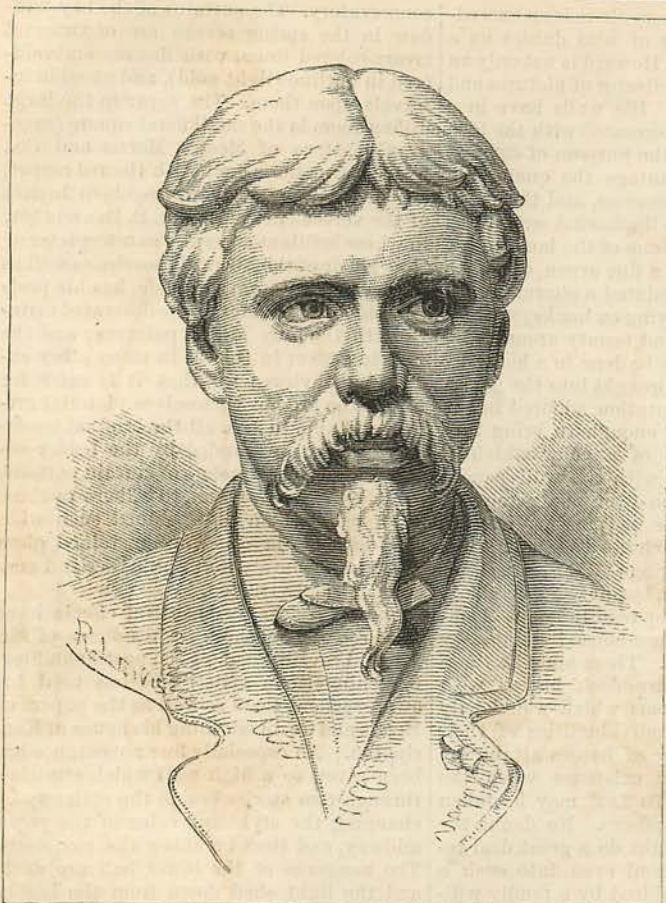
conservatory. The curtains of the bay-window in the spring season are of Oriental cream-colored linen, with flowers embroidered in outline (light gold), and at wide intervals, upon them. The paper in the large dining-room is the small floral square (sage-gray) pattern of Messrs. Morris and Co., which harmonizes well with the red carpet, the pictures, and the green-golden lustres of the velvet curtains. Mr. E. Danrenter, in whose brilliant successes as interpreter of the "Music of the Future" America as well as Germany has reason for pride, has his pretty residence in Orme Square decorated mainly with the gray Morris patterns; and the pleasing effect in this as in many other examples convinces me that it is safer for those who are not themselves pictorial artists, and able to give all the original touches which are demanded by the bolder designs and brighter colors of certain patterns made by the same firm, to adhere to those quiet ones which have gained such wide and deserved favor. As for stained glass and tiles, certainly no firm in England may be more safely trusted.

Some remarkably beautiful effects have been secured in the villa residence of Mr. Edward Sterling, son of the poet John Sterling, himself an artist, who has used his own excellent taste as well as the papers of Morris and Co. in adorning his house at Kensington. An especially fine appearance has been given to a high wall which stretches through two stories beside the stairway by changing the style and color of the paper midway, and thus breaking the monotony. The hangings of the lower hall are dark, and the light shed down from the higher wall is thus heightened. In this, as in the majority of beautiful houses, the first effect at the entrance is that of shade. The visitor who has come from the blaze of daylight is at once invited to a kindly seclusion. Beyond the vestibule the light is reached again, but now blended with tints and forms of artistic beauty. He is no longer in the hands of brute Nature, but is being ministered to by humane thought and feeling, and gently won into that mood

"In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened."

That mood, my reader will easily understand, can not be secured by the papers of Morris and Co.; but where a true artist is able to find such artistic materials as theirs to work with, he is able, as in the case of Mr. Sterling, to weave them on the warp of his own mind and sentiment into a home which shall not fail to distribute its refining and happy influences to all who enter or depart.

Perhaps the most complete rendering of the effects at which William Morris and Burn Jones have aimed in their efforts at

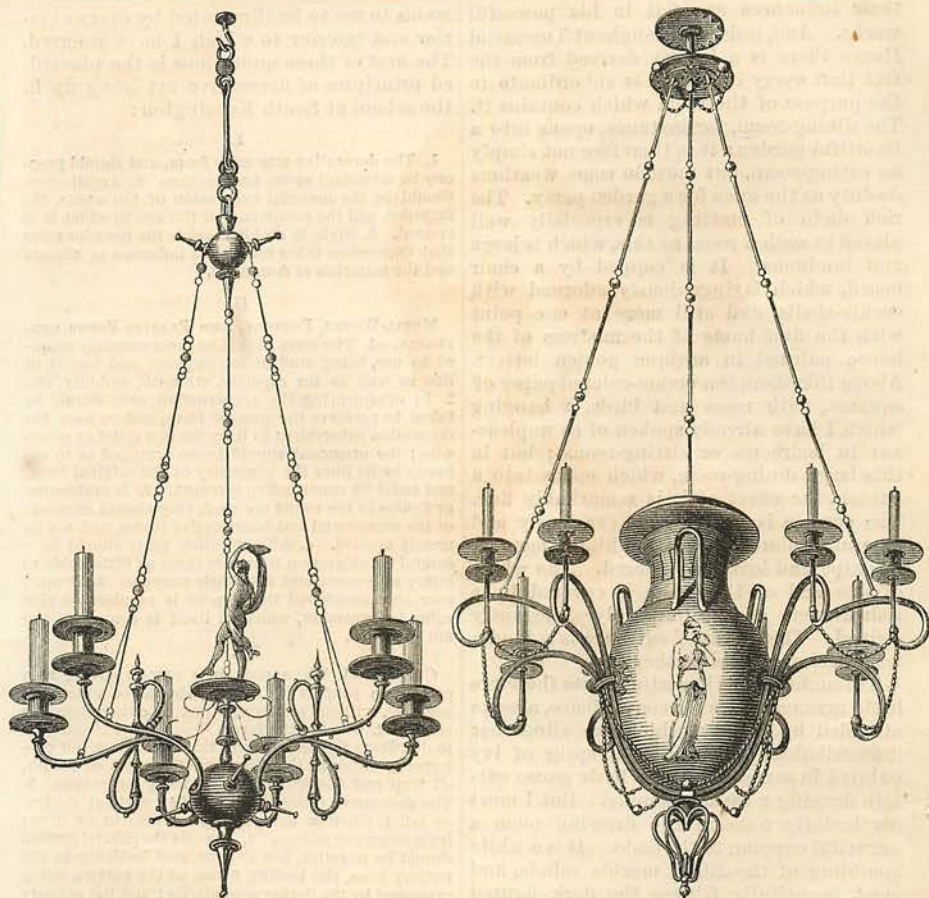


L. ALMA TADEMA.—[FROM A BUST BY J. DALON.]

beautifying London households is to be found at Townsend House, to which I have before alluded. Mr. L. Alma Tadema, the finest colorist, has of course been as one of the partners of the firm so far as his own home is concerned, and the touches of his art are met with at every step in it. Passing beneath the cheery "Salve" written over the front-door, we at once meet with a significant piece of art. On each side of the rather narrow hall is a door; one leads into a parlor, the other into a library, and as they are just opposite each other, the doors are made to open outward, and, when open, meet. Now, when it is desirable, the two doors when open make a wall across the hall; this extemporized wall has its panels painted, and thus a pretty passage is made to connect the separate rooms. One thing in Townsend House is very peculiar: the ceilings are generally covered with the same paper as the walls. There is a dado of matting with touches of color in it, or else painted in some color related to the paper, but of deeper shade, and above this a uniform pa-

per with but slight frieze (most of the rooms being comparatively small, a deep frieze would be out of place). I confess that I have some misgivings about this continuance upon the ceiling of the wall paper. It would certainly answer very well in rooms that were of very high pitch, for the heavier the color on a ceiling the more it is depressed to the eye. But here the sense of comfort and snugness secured — important as they are in this moist, chill climate, which often makes one willing to be folded up in a warmly lined box — is paid for by a sense of confinement. A ceiling ought not to be white nor blue, which, not to speak of the quickness with which they become black from the chandeliers, convey the feeling of exposure to the

open air, but there should be above one a lighter tint and shade, lest the effect should be that of being in a cellar. The underground effect nowhere occurs in Townsend House, because therein true artists have been at work, but one might not be so secure if the papering had been left to less judicious decorators. The corridors have the creamy pomegranate paper, which carries a cool light through them. A small back-room on the first floor has been Orientalized into a charming place by a skillful use of rugs, skins, etc., on the floor, and on the Persian divans fixed against the wall, which is covered with a silvery and pinkish paper. The chief bedroom in the house presents the novelty of walls entirely hung with a rich dark and reddish chintz, with wide stripes flowing from ceiling to floor, the effect being a grave Persian. The bed is hung and covered with the same stuff, and the lower part of each window is made into a cushioned seat of the same. The ceiling in this case is of a pearl-white, and there is plenty of light. This room appeared to me,



CANDELABRA—TOWNSEND HOUSE.

though at first a surprise, one that was suggestive of every kind of warmth and comfort; it was, indeed, an entire room made into the appropriate environment of a bed. In another bedroom I observed how beautifully the light may be regulated by the use of double curtains, one of dark green when darkness is desired, the other of a fine tracing cloth, which is more snowy than the glass of an astral lamp, while it similarly softens and diffuses light.

Mr. L. Alma Tadema, a fine bust of whom by J. Dalon appears in the Royal Academy this year, has contributed as his picture of the season an admirable representation of his own studio with a number of his friends looking upon a work on his easel, the back of which is turned to the spectator. But one can readily imagine those friends of his dividing their attention between the picture and the rich ornamentation of the room they are in. An artist's studio is apt to be, and ought to be, as such a picture as any work of art born in it, but it hardly comes within the scope of this article to describe

rooms that are expressions of individual genius and purpose; yet in every house where cultivated persons are found, individual aims are found also, and there will be the effort to give to each of these its fit environment. The first point to be secured in the study, or studio, or workshop, is that every thing in it shall be related to the work which is its end and *raison d'être*. When Carlyle was engaged in writing his Life of Frederick he had prepared a special study apart from his library, whose walls were covered with books and pictures of which each one, without exception, was in some way connected with the man of whom he was writing. They who are not, even for a time, specialists may nevertheless follow his example so far as to take care not to surround themselves with distracting objects. That which is beautiful in a studio may be ugly in a study. The studio of Alma Tadema sympathizes in its minutest object with the artist, who is so much at home in all the ages of art. Touches of Egypt, of Pompeii, of Greece, of Rome, blend in the decorations of his studio, as

their influences are felt in his powerful works. And, indeed, throughout Townsend House there is a beauty derived from the fact that every ornament is subordinate to the purpose of the room which contains it. The dining-room, for instance, opens into a beautiful garden; it is therefore not simply an eating-room, but must in some weathers do duty as the *salon* for a garden party. The rich dado of matting is especially well placed in such a room as this, which is large and luminous. It is capped by a chair board, which is ingeniously adorned with cockle-shells, and still more at one point with the first name of the mistress of the house painted in antique golden letters. Above this there is a cream-colored paper of squares, with roses and birds, a hanging which I have already spoken of as unpleasant in bedrooms or sitting-rooms; but in this large dining-room, which opens into a garden, the effect of it is remarkably fine. The cornice is Easter-eggs (variously and carefully colored) beneath a higher member of grape and leaf, also colored. The whole of one end of this room is covered by a rich drapery of fine Indian dyes, elegantly striped. The servants' entrance is behind a large screen of gold leather.

Throughout this beautiful house there are little arrangements for convenience, always attended by beauty, which are altogether indescribable—a head or a sprig of ivy painted in some panel, or a little gauze curtain draping a casual opening. But I must particularly note in the drawing-room a beautiful capping to the dado. It is a white moulding of the Elgin marble reliefs, and most beautifully fringes the dark-colored stuff of the dado. I have already described the fine drapery of this room. I need only now say that Mr. Alma Tadema has designed some candelabra which appear to me most beautiful. The reader will, I fear, be but little able to obtain from one of the drawings an idea of the rich minglings of the bronze with the rose porcelain egg-shaped centre-piece, and the figures painted upon it. Both of the candelabra which I have selected as specimens are for rose-colored candles. In the houses of many artists ancient oratory (suspended) candelabra are used for the centres of rooms, and also brass repoussé scones bracketed with beveled mirrors. The English upper classes have never been reconciled to the use of gasaliers in their drawing-rooms, and the artists have pretty generally opposed the use of gas, which is believed to be damaging to oil-pictures.

In concluding this account of the most interesting examples of decorative art with which I am acquainted in England, I add, in preference to any general observations of my own, a few extracts from very high authorities, affirming principles whose truth

seems to me to be illustrated by every exterior and interior to which I have referred. The first of these quotations is the placarded principles of decorative art hung up in the school at South Kensington:

I.

1. The decorative arts arise from, and should properly be attendant upon, architecture. 2. Architecture should be the material expression of the wants, the faculties, and the sentiments of the age in which it is created. 3. Style in architecture is the peculiar form that expression takes under the influence of climate and the materials at command.

II.

METAL-WORKS, POTTERY, AND PLASTIC FORMS GENERALLY.—1. The form should be most carefully adapted to use, being studied for elegance and beauty of line as well as for capacity, strength, mobility, etc. 2. In ornamenting the construction care should be taken to preserve the general form, and to keep the decoration subservient to it by the low relief or otherwise; the ornament should be so arranged as to enhance by its lines the symmetry of the original form, and assist its constructive strength. 3. If arabesques or figures in the round are used, they should arise out of the ornamental and constructive forms, and not be merely applied. 4. All projecting parts should have careful consideration to render them as little liable to injury as is consistent with their purpose. 5. It must ever be remembered that repose is required to give value to ornament, which in itself is secondary and not principal.

III.

CARPETS.—1. The surface of a carpet, serving as a ground to support all objects, should be quiet and negative, without strong contrast of either forms or colors. 2. The leading forms should be so disposed as to distribute the pattern over the whole floor, not pronounced either in the direction of breadth or length, all "up and down" treatments being erroneous. 3. The decorative forms should be flat, without shadow or relief, whether derived from ornament or direct from flowers or foliage. 4. In color the general ground should be negative, low in tone, and inclining to the tertiary hues, the leading forms of the pattern being expressed by the darker secondaries; and the primary colors, or white, if used at all, should be only in small quantity, to enhance the tertiary hues and to express the geometrical basis that rules the distribution of the forms.

IV.

PRINTED GARMENT FABRICS, MUSLINS, CALICOES, ETC.—1. The ornament should be flat, without shadow and relief. 2. If flowers, foliage, or other natural objects are the *motive*, they should not be direct imitations of nature, but conventionalized in obedience to the above rule. 3. The ornament should cover the surface either by a diaper based on some regular geometrical figure, or growing out of itself by graceful flowing curves; any arrangement that carries lines or pronounces figures in the direction of breadth is to be avoided, and the effect produced by the folding of the stuff should be carefully studied. 4. The size of the pattern should be regulated by the material for which it is intended: *small* for close, thick fabrics, such as ginghams, etc.; *larger* for fabrics of more open textures, such as muslins, baréges, etc.; largely covering the ground on delaines, and more dispersed on cotton linens.

In all the beautiful effects which I have observed, the ornamentation has been in more or less accordance with the fundamental principle of these rules, namely, the subordination of decoration to use. Many persons of taste and culture have had to wage a sometimes unequal conflict with architecture whose object was a low one—

to sell; but they have been rewarded just in the proportion that they have regarded the principles just quoted. It will be especially observed that realism, in the sense of exact imitations of nature, is entirely repudiated. Conventionalism, precisely because it is a degradation in human character, is a first necessity in ornamentation. The *rationale* of this is admirably given in a little book on the Oxford Museum, by Dr. Acland and Mr. Ruskin, not likely to have been seen by many American readers. The following remarks by Mr. Ruskin, taken from it, constitute my second extract:

"The highest art in all kinds is that which conveys the most truth, and the best ornamentation possible would be the painting of interior walls with frescoes by Titian, representing perfect humanity in color, and the sculpture of exterior walls by Phidias, representing perfect humanity in form. Titian and Phidias are precisely alike in their conception and treatment of nature—everlasting standards of the right. Beneath ornamentation such as men like these could bestow falls in various rank, according to its subordination to vulgar uses or inferior places, what is commonly conceived as ornamental art. The lower its office and the less tractable its material, the less of nature it should contain, until a zigzag becomes the best ornament for the hem of a robe, and a mosaic of colored glass the best design for a colored window. But all these forms of lower art are to be conventional only because they are subordinate; not because conventionalism is in itself a good or desirable thing. All right conventionalism is a wise acceptance of, and compliance with, conditions of restraint or inferiority. It may be inferiority of our knowledge or power, as in the art of a semi-savage nation, or restraint by reason of material, as in the way the glass-painter should restrict himself to transparent hue, and a sculptor deny himself the eyelash and the film of flowing hair which he can not cut in marble. But in all cases whatever right conventionalism is either a wise acceptance of an inferior place, or a noble display of power under accepted limitation; it is not an improvement of natural form into something better or purer than nature herself.

"Now this great and most precious principle may be compromised in two quite opposite ways. It is compromised on one side when men suppose that the degradation of the natural form, which fits it for some subordinate place, is an improvement of it, and that a black profile on a red ground, because it is proper for a water-jug, is therefore an idealization of humanity, and nobler art than a picture by Titian. And it is compromised equally gravely on the opposite side when men refuse to submit to the limitation of material and the fitnesses of office, when they try to produce finished pictures in colored glass, or substitute the inconsiderate imitation of natural objects for the perfectness of adapted and disciplined design."

I was much struck on a recent occasion with an illustration of how little the principles thus explained by Mr. Ruskin are understood even among the learned. It was at the Anthropological Society, where archaeologists, antiquarians, metallurgists, and experts of various kinds were examining a collection of specimens of the gold-work of the Ashantees. One of the leading authorities present gave it as his opinion that the specimens, though of a fineness which English workmanship could not rival, nevertheless represented a degradation of art and of civilization among the Ashantees; and

the reason assigned was that the ornamentation indicated that an original imitation of forms—some natural, others of European design—had been departed from till the significance of the forms had been lost. Of course the argument really proved a progress in art among the Ashantees, and a fine perception of the laws that must govern all work upon gold. But it is of great importance that no one should confuse conventionalism in the decorative flower or other form with conventionalism in the use of them in any house or on any object. The houses of the millions are indeed conventionally decorated now, and they are ugly; the individual taste will convert the commonplace forms and colors into individual expression, as his soul has previously transmuted the commonplace clay into a physiognomy like and unlike all others.

But it were a serious error to suppose that the words "conventional," "heraldic," "decorative," etc., employed to express those ornamental forms which are derived without being copied from nature, really express the significance of those forms. They do represent the spirit of nature. In the extract with which I conclude the growth of such flowers and forms in a fairer field is most subtly described. It is from the best existing work on the genesis and evolution of the decorative arts, Mr. Scott's *History and Practice of the Fine and Ornamental Arts*, now used as a manual and official prize-book at the South Kensington School of Design:

"Taste is that faculty by which we distinguish whatever is graceful, noble, just, and lovable in the infinitely varied appearances about us, and in the works of the decorative and imitative arts. The immediate impulse in the presence of beauty is to feel and admire. When the emotion and the sentiment are strong we are compelled to imitate. We can not make ourselves more beautiful physically than Providence has decreed, but we wish to see again, to feel again, what caused in us so vivid a pleasure; and we attempt to revive the image that charmed us, to re-create those parts or qualities in the image that we found admirable, with or without those other parts or qualities which did not touch us, but which were necessary to its existence in a conditional and transitory life. Hence a work original and peculiar to man—a work of art."

