tions. Artists afford evidence of this truth as much as the common observer; and the great man who is the subject of this little essay is a striking example in proof. With powers superior to most men,—with an earnest study and scrutiny adopted by few,—with abundant opportunities, David Wilkie remained untouched until *impression from living examples* was about to be converted into knowledge, applied and reduced to practice. It is not intended to be said that pictures had done nothing for this great aspirant in Art,—one whose greatness was built upon reflection; but in comparison it was nothing, since, taking for example the article of colour, forty years of exposure to impression, aided by study, failed to achieve that which, among the living examples in the East, took place in six months!

In the largest collection of pictures existing in the world, and in such a one as it would be vain to expect should ever be got and held together for any efficient purpose of study, there would still be but few examples of chromatic combination, when compared with what takes place in one single hour, where the lesson comes from life and nature—from the real living and existing ingredients fortuitously combined. Something in the way in which we may suppose it to take place in a kaleidoscope, could the particulars and ingredients be of the true and varied character, such as is found in life and nature among the people, who in themselves and the costumes they wear present the required combinations and effects. But here, of course, only a very imperfect result would take place. As regards pictures, it is clear that a picture can offer but one example, where, for the purpose of instruction, thousands are required; and thus it happens, as has been said, that the applied and practised thing teaches but in a very small degree. An ordinary collection of pictures constitutes no important school for artists, and beyond mere matter of amusement is utterly useless to the public. It may be regarded as a great misfortune to the interests of taste that David Wilkie never put this important fact, deduced from his practice, into ordinary language; but it may be fearlessly said that the character of his genius and the course he pursued in Art proclaimed this to the world in language as plain as that in every day use. Wilkie knew all Art, yet it had but small influence upon his practice; one short and hasty journey to the East, among the people and the scenes reflecting new and varied elements of colour, changed his whole being as a colourist, and would, had he lived, have made him one of the highest examples that ever adorned Art. Colour was the *forte* of Wilkie rather than any other quality of Art. It was not *humour*, for he had in that but a very confined scope—compare him with Tom Hood, as far as they can be compared. Certainly, he was without the remotest conceptions of beauty or grace—think of Raphael. Even in character he was very confined, whilst in expression he was great, and in what he attempted a perfect master. His "Columbus" exalts him far above all modern competition, while the keenness, scrutiny, and suspicion depicted in the figure and face of the old gentleman to whom the letter of introduction is presented, the female looking into the tea-pot, and the boy with the cut finger, are examples rare indeed, perhaps matchless. Expression is excellent everywhere, but Wilkie's true power was in colour. The loose, free style he adopted in the middle period of his career, especially in his "Cotter's Saturday Night," is beautifully calculated by its unmixed, its disunited tinting, to give cleanness, brightness, and effect to colour. Wilkie was also a man of deep and serious reflection in his art, so that the influence of his instruction would not have acted and subsided in one single or in a few specimens, as often happens with artists who make an accidental hit; it would have been absorbed, and assimilated, and become a part of him, and nothing he produced would have come forth unadorned and unexalted by his newly-acquired power. When one reflects on the cold leaden treatment all subjects received in the conventionalism of English Art, and that this never affected Wilkie, we have reasons to feel certain that he would have become, not only a regenerator, but the Titian of native art.

It was perhaps twenty years after my first memorable interview with Wilkie that I met him one evening at the house of Allan Cunningham, a sadly altered and a shattered man. He was then about to start for Spain, where he rallied, and returned laden with the newly-acquired riches of his keen and close observation. At that time an intercourse with the world had taught me something, and I listened to the clear, deep, and learned remarks which fell from him with a full sense and conviction that such powers of intelligence carried into Art, where unfortunately there is so small a stock, could not fail to achieve great and extraordinary things. Irving the preacher, Barry Cornwall, and other choice spirits were there, but their brilliancy in no way eclipsed the solid, steady light given out by Wilkie: perhaps I admired him beyond his claims that he was an artist. Wilkie was of tall stature, angular and bony, but now rather stooping and emaciated. His head was of the round type, and his hair sandy. The upper part of his face broad, with cheekbones high; eyes light and grey, and with an expression severe and searching. His nose rounded and compact, with mouth spreading, but closing firmly. On the whole, there was nothing pleasing or inviting in his aspect. Amongst his compeers he was marked by a kind of dry, cold humour, and, judging from the anecdotes told of him, he would submit to be joked, and sometimes venture upon a witticism, or a repartee. It seems that the severity seen in his outward man produced only a simple seriousness and quietude within. The statue of him in the vestibule of the National Gallery resembles him more at the age of thirty than at that at which he died; but, on the whole, conveys a tolerably correct impression of his personal appearance.

ENGLISH HOMES:

AS THEY ARE, AND MAY BE, IN FURNISHING AND DECORATION.

THE homes of this country present many phases of attraction, and furnish abundant scope for reflection. The moralist sees them from one point of view, the statesman beholds them from another, the social reformer fixes his gaze upon their ills, and the state educator dwells upon *the* want to which all ills are supposed to be attributed. These and many others, enlightened and benevolent, are doing good service to the people and their homes, and should have all honour for their intentions and their works. Still, every section has its *specialitie*, and the *Art-Journal* will prove itself a help rather than a hindrance, to all interested in the general refinement and elevation of Englishmen, by first glancing at what homes are, and then showing what they might be made, by a little popular knowledge on matters connected with taste and decoration. A rapid sketch of homes as they are, from the cottage to the palace, compared with homes as they might be, shall, therefore, form the subject of this and following papers; and while principles shall not be ignored, how practically to secure more pleasure-giving and instructive homes shall be the chief object sought.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the general influence of home education upon children—among the thoughtful of all ranks that is fully appreciated. Neither is it necessary to insist upon the difficulty of outrooting false prejudices, or habits of thought contracted in youth; nor can it be doubted that the example of all around is carrying on an involuntary education of the mind, which is bending it silently, but more powerfully, than the precepts of parents or the lessons of teachers; and from these admitted truths, the homes of England may be first glanced at. If this involuntary education be going forward almost exclusively through the eye, and if everything seen is leaving some impression on the mind, how few parents and guardians are alive to the duty of providing that these impressions shall be those only of taste, elegance, and beauty! The present notion is, that anything is good enough for the nursery: the cheapest paper-hangings cover the walls, and the cast-off furniture from all other rooms is good enough for children to destroy; but those who so act forget that such decisions have most important bearings on the optical and mental education of their children; and those nursed and nurtured amidst distorted forms and vulgar incongruities of colour, cannot be blamed for being what their education makes them. Parents wisely secure the best nurses and teachers within their means, as most advantageous to the children; but how few appreciate the fact that everything around, whether home be a cottage or castle, is daily impressing indelible lessons of elegance or vulgarity upon the minds of children—that the chairs in every room, and the carpets on every floor, the ornaments on the mantel-shelf, and prints or pictures on the wall, are each educating the eye more successfully, and forming the minds more surely, than the lessons of the schoolroom, the books in the library, or the admonitions of the parlour. With this feeling emerging into a recognised truth, it is not wonderful that increased attention to taste and domestic embellishment should be considered essential to the full development of home influences, and the due discharge of parental responsibilities.

The multitude suppose (for they cannot be said to believe what they have never examined or thought over) that everything pertaining to taste and style in the "doing up" of a house is the exclusive inheritance of the rich; and the working classes are especially prone to that listlessness of feeling on such subjects which would throw the burden of teaching children elegance and taste on the shoulders of the wealthy. The cotter or the artizan supposes, and acts on the supposition, that to teach a son to distinguish between good and bad forms, belongs to the same class of accomplishments as French or fencing, and that while all may be included in the education of a gentleman, the children of the working classes cannot expect indulgence in such luxuries. Nor is this feeling confined to the working classes, although, as shall be shown, it is more destructive to them and their children than to their richer neighbours. The influences of home and parental responsibilities are not confined to the richer classes of society; and if the surroundings of home be perpetually educating the eyes of children in lessons of elegance or the reverse, it will not be difficult to show that peculiar responsibilities rest upon those whose children must be trained to labour, and who will live comfortably just in proportion as that labour is increased in value through increased taste and skill. As has been demonstrated at length elsewhere,* this subject of home embellishment and taste may be a matter of pleasure to the rich, but it is a matter of wages and comfort to the labouring classes; and to them one half of what they receive as education, small as that may be, is worthless as a means of living, compared with the money advantages that would accrue from having the young mind trained to familiarity with fine forms and harmonious arrangements, but which, unfortunately, both for parents and children, are the kinds of instruction most neglected both at home and in the school-house. Take a cottage as it was twenty years since, and what were the daily lessons it enforced on children in matters of taste? Even low walls and unceiled roof did not extinguish the inherent love of home decoration which is found to be universal. When the walls were of mud, and the floor brick or clay, the honest, thrifty couple had their mantel-shelf decked with what cost money taken from their scanty store. The familiar stucco parrot, blotched over with dabs of green and red, or a shepherd and shepherdess, attached to some tree or tower, occupied the post of honour, while one or two "jolly tars," or buxom "haymakers," still worse in taste and execution, supported the principal article of humble *virtu*. The girls were educated in taste by hideous dolls, whose one qualification was that they did not break; and the boys, inured to symmetry through horses formed of four square pegs, supporting a horizontal half-round block, with something attached to the one end for a head, and a smaller something placed at the opposite end for a tail: everything in the form of ornamentation was on a level. If prints were added, the Woodman, or Black-eyed Susan, Peace and Plenty, or the Seasons, drawn without reference to form, and coloured without regard to outline, kept the mantel-piece ornaments from blushing at their badness; while in better houses, in town or country, the children's toys were as bad, the ornaments made of delft, perhaps, instead of stucco, but not better in quality, while "Black-eyed Susan" and the "true

* Paper on the Advantages of Art-teaching in Common Schools, read by Mr. Stewart before the Social Science Conference at Liverpool, in 1858.

British Sailor" would probably be superseded by "Courtship" and "Matrimony," with a couplet under each—

> "The youth in courtship hands his lass
> Over a stile a child might pass,"

and the love-sick swain was helping his Dulcinea accordingly; but matrimony changed this state of anxiety—

> "But now she is a wedded dame,
> Tumble or not, to him 's the same;"

the husband being represented as walking off, while the wife was left to scramble over a five-barred gate as best she could. The other efforts at decoration did nothing to redeem the character of ornaments then so common; and it is some consolation to know that we have got beyond that dreary night of taste-destroying darkness. And what has succeeded? What usually fills the transition from ignorance to knowledge,—the incongruous, the grotesque, and the picturesque. In Art-knowledge generally, the people of this country are passing through the picturesque period of thought; and the still increasing light will as surely lead them, in all pertaining to Art, decoration, and design, from the picturesque to the really beautiful, as increased knowledge has already led those who revelled in the romances of Mrs. Radcliffe, while in their "teens," to wonder now how they could then be delighted with such works.

And while the change has been passing over other classes of society, has it done nothing to elevate the poor? It has not done a tithe of what might, even with present means, be accomplished; but it has, nevertheless, transformed nearly every article in the cottage, and, with few exceptions, for the better. It is true that the fine forms of many of the old spinning-wheels, and other occasional pieces of cottage antique furniture, have disappeared, and have not been replaced with articles equivalent; but compare the ornaments on the cottage mantel-shelf, or the pictures on the cottage walls, or the illustrations on cottage book-shelves, with what these were even ten years ago, and how Art has influenced the dwellings of the industrious will be conspicuously apparent. Instead of the old parrot, or the more expensive Shepherd and Shepherdess, —ornaments so called, which could only pervert the taste and vulgarize the minds of all whose eyes were suffering education from such objects,—the cotter can now secure vases of respectable forms, some of them beautiful when compared with the parrots of the last generation; and figures of almost exquisite symmetry can be purchased at less than the cost of the Shepherd and Shepherdess.

And if this is true of the art of the statuary, which has been less encouraged, how much more is it true of engraving and its cognate branches, on which the greatest amount of popularity has been bestowed? Compare the prints which used to adorn the parlours of even respectable houses, —the Peace and Plenty which well-intentioned, industrious people, with gropings after Art, used to hang up on each side of the mantel-piece ornaments already described, to support the mirror, decorated by crossed peacock's feathers (and these are the only old cottage ornaments that we should care to see preserved); or even the Four Seasons, as they are still to be seen in the back parlour of an old-fashioned country inn; or glance back at the Woodman, or the Sailor and his Lass, and others of the same class, and which but comparatively a few years since were manufactured in thousands, and spread over the country like a pestilence, perverting by their presence those lessons which might have been learned by the more susceptible minds from the silent teachings of natural beauty. Or go a few steps higher, and compare expensive cottage prints, which in their day cost some shillings each, with those now issued by many of the newspaper proprietors gratis, or with any of the better class of illustrated cheap publications, as, for example, the woodcuts after Turner in the *Illustrated Times*, or the portraits of the *Illustrated News of the World*, and it is difficult to convey in words the progress Art has made in this direction. Twenty-five years ago, many pictorial publications had a large sale at high prices, the prints of which would not now find admission into the cheapest illustrated serials, and really great works, like Turner's "England and Wales," were left unappreciated, as dead stock in the market. Thirty years since, prints, for which boys paid sixpence each, were greatly inferior as specimens of Art to anything which now appears in the *Illustrated London News*; and the caricatures of Gilray and his cotemporaries, which sold at from five shillings to a guinea each, are quite equalled by those of *Punch*, at one-twentieth part of the cost. The rate of progress in the same direction is at present more rapid than ever. And why? Not because the British population have been taught to draw, or have received systematic instruction in the Fine Arts, but because the public eye has been involuntarily educated up to the appreciation of a higher style of illustration, and the supply and demand are acting and reacting on each other, in raising the quality of popular Art devoted to periodical publications.

The same kind of attention, devoted to other branches of the same educational agency—to the combination of inexpensive elegance with the necessities and comforts of home—would exercise the same kind of influence for good over the entire people. And how much might not the rich assist the poor, by aid which would return ample interest for the outlay? What an air of comfort would a few shillings, judiciously laid out on paper-hangings, throw over hundreds and thousands of the cottages of England? Even where the money is not required, what might not be effected by a lady of taste and kindly spirit assisting, by words in season, the cottage housewife to adorn her humble dwelling? If the village matron knew that a warm-toned, harmoniously-coloured paper on her walls would not only educate the eyes of her children in useful lessons of taste, but would also save fuel, by the increased appearance of comfort given to the apartment, and that certain combinations of colour give her more light at less cost for lamp-oil, the person offering such knowledge would be looked on as a friend, and not as an officious intermeddler; and if further told that green was a cold colour, even with red roses on it,—that red itself was most difficult to light up, and "salmon-colour" would never appear comfortable if the bed-curtains were light blue, she would receive information really to her advantage. But if, in addition to this negative information, the lady could also say—or, what would be far better, show—that the various modifications of "colour" are those best and cheapest for saving light and diffusing a feeling of warmth and comfort over cottage apartments, the daughter of the matron so instructed would not repeat the error of her mother, by choosing light blue bed-curtains when she was required to assist in furnishing her own cottage. And what is true of paper-hangings and bed-curtains is in principle applicable to everything within and around the cottage.

But while the poor would be undeniably benefitted by such knowledge, would there be no reversion to the rich who qualified themselves to be instructors? Would the village labourer or mechanic be less ready or neat-handed, that the amenities of home had been increased? Would the girls be less tidy when sent out to service, because their home looked more comfortable than the houses of their neighbours? or would the boys be less likely to find employment, or make inferior workmen, because their eyes had been educated by congruity, if not elegance, rather than by ugliness? The reverse of these questions would more truly represent the experience of such a family; and they would not only be better themselves, but their influence would be felt among their neighbours. The rich would reap a large share of benefit from such improvement of those whom they must employ, either as in-door or out-of-door servants; so that, as already said, kindness bestowed with knowledge in this direction would yield a high return, both of satisfaction and profit, to those among the rich, willing and qualified to become, in domestic decoration, the helpers and advisers of the humblest sections of our industrial population.

Glance now at the home of the artizan, the clerk, or the small tradesman,—men who by education, or persevering plodding or ingenuity, have raised themselves, or have been raised, above the cottages in which they were most generally born. The number is small compared with the mass of ordinary workmen, but large in proportion to any other class above them, and specially important, as from this class the tradesman class is most generally and successfully recruited. These heads of families, with incomes varying from £100 to £200 a-year, have been more impressed by the transition state of home embellishment than those below them. Generally, with more power of discrimination, they have used that power more continuously, and have been more strongly stimulated by that love of the picturesque, than any other section of the community. They have been among the first to appreciate that growing excellence which has characterized the cheap illustrations of literature. They probably began as readers of the *Penny Magazine*, and have enjoyed, watched, and encouraged the best illustrated serials ever since. It was this habit of seeing and appreciating better things from worse that made them what they are—men looked up to by their fellows for their superior intelligence, or placed in offices of trust by discriminating masters. Home decoration with them is a practical matter, and that only. Accustomed to have value for their money, they carry this principle into everything, house furnishings included; and value with them means something that will fill the eye. They act upon the maxim of making all show that will be show, and upon this inherent falsity satiate their eyes and startle their neighbours, at the expense of everything like taste. The love of gaudy colour imbibed from infancy is not subdued, although its development has been changed: the crude brilliancy of the old parrot on the mantel-shelf is transferred to the paper-hangings on the parlour walls, while the hideous forms of the old tree-stump or round tower, which supported the Shepherd and Shepherdess, or the Knight and his true Love, are transferred to equally hideous carvings on the mantel-piece mirror or the chiffonier, the side-board or the sofa.

Considerable noise has been made in the Art decorative world against "imitations," that is, against the not uncommon practice of imitating woods and marbles on houses, the rents of which admit of such expenditure. This question of imitation shall be dealt with in due time, but the homes now under consideration have none or ought to have none of these, for the simple reason that the price which can be afforded out of rent or general means for doing such work, cannot secure its being well done, and of all styles of decoration, bad "imitations" are the worst. The builders of houses for this class supply the interior ornaments for walls and wood-work, and although they are nominally responsible for the atrocious want of taste so often displayed, still, they supply a demand that exists, or self-interest would speedily compel an alteration in style. The greatest show for the lowest cost is the trade motto, and unfortunately it fully coincides with the opinions of the class who become tenants. The furniture, the hangings, the ornaments, the pictures, and, as a rule, everything is selected on the same principle, and the usual result is gathering together a mass of vulgar incongruities, enough to corrupt the taste of any, and all but universally fatal to the development of those appreciations of delicacy and beauty, with which children are so generally endowed. The accustomed fondness for show, strengthened through a perverted or neglected education in the parents, is in time perverting the children's minds in a similar direction, transferring, it may be, that perversion from one class of objects to another, according to the fickle foibles of fashion. Still the spring is poisoned at its fountain, so that its pestilential influence is the most prominent characteristic of the stream whichever way the waters flow. Nor is that influence confined to home: it extends far and wide throughout the homes of England. No class in the community has so much practical influence over general house embellishment as that comprising artizan's foremen, managing clerks, and those in similar positions; they influence the workshop and the customers more than the employer can; and even masters are more influenced by their managing subordinates than by any other individual cause. If these, then, are content, and prefer inhabiting houses the walls of which are covered with paper-hangings which words cannot describe, but which may be seen in the shops of fourth or fifth-rate paper-stainers, and the furniture, carpets, and etceteras, are selected from corresponding furniture dealers, what can be expected in the houses of the general public, which

are very much what this class suggest they should be? Other commercial causes conspire to perpetuate this state of things, and it would be mere affectation and cant for those interested in elevating the people's homes, to overlook or ignore those commercial influences which must be encountered and overcome before success in the promising work can be achieved. Men with families and limited incomes, whatever their position in the counting-house or workshop, must have a certain amount of accommodation at a limited rent; and the builder cannot both furnish large houses and expensive decorations for small quarterly instalments. Family necessities would seem, therefore, to stand as an insuperable barrier between the foreman or the clerk and a tastefully-arranged home. Happily, this root of the whole evil is a delusion, which growing knowledge will dispel as effectually as the belief in witchcraft. Money would be saved by altering the proportions in which it is distributed. Mere money is not the real want, but that discrimination which shall pay more to the Art-workman and less to the manufacturer of blazing reds and poisonous greens, more for the elegance of form than for the vulgar fantasms of so-called "carved work." Now, vulgarisms are made for the million, and therefore showy things are cheap; but chair-makers have shown that increased elegance of form has no necessary connection with increased price, and a paper-stainer could lift and impress an elegant design as cheaply as a block disfigured by John Gilpin, or those ships, towers, and trees, which rise above each other in worse arrangement than any Chinese landscape ever seen. The want of general demand makes the more refined class of goods higher priced, but this kind of reduction, increased consumption would immediately effect.

Another difficulty under which both tenants and builders of this class labour, is the wholesale style in which blocks of building are run up, and the frequency with which houses change tenants. It is impossible that every house should be done to suit each new occupier, and when work requires to be done to price, no amount of detailed information would help in the production of general harmony of effect; but there are general principles which, if understood and applied, would destroy half the crudities that now exist in such rank profusion. First, it may be taken as a settled point that in houses of few rooms, all in general use, the prevailing tone should be that of genial light and warmth, and this would infallibly destroy the popular but mistaken dogma that "dark papers wear best." The reverse of this opinion is nearer the truth, for although it is essential for profitable wear that patterns should be properly distributed and distinctly pronounced, yet that has as little connection with darkness of colour as depth has with blackness in the pleasure-giving effect of a picture. By contrast and combination the tones of paper-hangings may be so arranged as to be nearly all of one depth, and yet secure decision of pattern and harmonious effect, combined with more substantial wear. Another obvious general principle is, that the style adopted in such blocks of buildings should have reference both to aspect and general situation. Who wants to look out on green meadows, radiant with sunlight, from a room redolent of arsenic green? or upon a garden of living flowers from a room covered with bad imitations in dead distemper? The simple mention of such anomalies shows their absurdity, not only from the bad being made worse, but also by the annihilation of that variety and contrast from which so much of optical pleasure is derived. The same principle is true, but in the opposite direction, when applied to houses situated in the centre of great cities; and it would be as pedantic in decorative architecture to exclude flowers, which awaken such universal delight when well executed, as it would be to cover a garden wall with the choicest productions of De la Cour or De Fosso. Whether flowers should be introduced as they are at present, is a subject reserved for after discussion.

Another general principle applicable to all houses, but more especially to houses of the class now treated, is that paper-hangings which look best in piece or in pattern, seldom look best upon the walls. The effect is almost invariably felt, but the cause is little understood; and hence the same round of disappointment and complaint goes on from year to year, and threatens to descend from sire to son, if additional attention to such subjects prevent not. This arises from one of three defects, and not unfrequently from all three combined. The first and most common is an inharmonious ratio of colour, which escapes the unpractised eye when seen in small quantities, but which forces itself on attention when too late; the second cause is that false distribution of colour, which has the same general resemblance to truth which a gilded farthing has to a sovereign, and whose showy worthlessness so often baffles and disappoints the uninitiated. The third cause is what would popularly be called over-elaboration of form. The art of concealing Art is wanting, and the design which is elaborated into a perfect pattern in the piece, expands into unpleasing lines and spots upon the wall. A striking example of these defects may be seen where it might not have been expected, except, indeed, as a beacon warning the unwary of the danger. In the lecture hall of the Kensington Museum is a specimen of paper-hanging, marked "No. 47," where the combinations are green, brown, and white (so at least the latter appeared in gas-light), but where, from the drawing of the pattern without reference to the distribution of colour, alternate stripes of white run across both red and green in a most disagreeable style. Nothing so readily displays poverty of grasp in a designer as this inability to distribute the volume of forms in proper relation to the distribution of colours, and nothing is more essential to the agreeable aspect of a room than that these relations should be consistently sustained. Experience proves that those paper-hangings whose forms are least complete and attractive in the hand, make the best embellishments for walls; but although this rule be true, experience alone can teach how far the truth is applicable to each individual pattern. Without the selection of paper-hangings, when these are used, upon what practically amounts to the recognition of general principles guiding the choice, congruity and harmony when these embellishments are used, will be found all but practically impossible. Another general truth in decoration, and one specially applicable to the smaller class of rooms and houses, is that the appearance of size is greatly affected by the style of paper-hanging used. At best, the rooms of moderately rented houses are always small enough; and although their real area remains unchanged, their apparent size may be expanded or contracted almost at the will, or rather by the ignorance, of the builder. Nor is it either necessary or expedient to have paper-hangings all of one shade to give an enlarged appearance to an apartment, because the result does not depend on uniformity of tone, so much as on the uniform depth or intensity of the colours used.

Another important practical truth essential to decorative success in such houses, is that the colour used upon the wood-work should be in tone consistent with the walls. This may be effected either by repeating those on the paper-hangings—the most common and easiest way—or by using the wood as a connecting link between the carpet, the furniture, and walls. When that is impossible or inconvenient—as in the case of wholesale builders—a very great improvement in general harmony of home decoration could be effected by picking in the mouldings of doors, shutters, and cornices, to suit the furniture rather than the walls.

Another class of influences tend to perpetuate present evils: stocks must, if possible, be cleared out, and the older goods are, and the worse they are in taste, so much more anxious are many sellers to dispose of them. A master tradesman, taking a broad view of his own interests, may hesitate to press the sale of such articles, wisely judging that reputation is more valuable than immediate profit; but zealous servants have not the same responsibility, and clearing out old shop stock at remunerative prices, seldom goes without a meed of encouraging approbation. Such influences act as checks upon rapid change, but they cannot prevent decided progress. Neither nations, nor sections of nations, can be "crammed;" knowledge with them must be a growth; intelligence must be digested and assimilated to themselves, to be influential in affecting national habits and modes of thought; and such checks as have been indicated may prevent the car of knowledge from being driven rapidly forward, but they also prevent it from losing ground.

John Stewart.

THE ROYAL PICTURES.

DRACHENFELS, FROM BONN.

J. A. Hammersley, Painter. R. Brandard, Engraver.
Size of the Picture 2 ft. 2 in. by 1 ft. 6 in.

Byron, in his "Childe Harold," has offered an elegant tribute to the beautiful scenery represented in this picture. Every traveller who has journeyed up the Rhine must have remarked how the interest of the voyage increases after passing the small, but not unimportant town of Bonn; it is here that the beauties of this picturesque river really commence. From the ramparts of Bonn, not very distant from the spot where Mr. Hammersley made his sketch (it was taken, we believe, from the garden of the Hotel Royal), the view is magnificent; the Rhine is seen winding a course of several miles through a flat, fertile country, above which, in the distance, rises the range of hills known as the *Siebengebirge* or the "Seven Mountains," among which the *Drachenfels* is conspicuous; several of them are crowned with some ancient ruined tower, or other edifice. Byron thus eulogizes the scene:

> "The castled crag of Drachenfels
> Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
> Whose breast of waters broadly swells
> Between the banks which bear the vine,
> And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
> And fields which promise corn and wine,
> And scattered cities crowning these,
> Whose far white walls along them shine,
> Have strewed a scene which I should see
> With double joy wert *thou* with me.
> * * *
> The river nobly foams and flows,
> The charm of this enchanted ground,
> And all its thousand turns disclose
> Some fresher beauty varying round;
> The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
> Through life to dwell delighted here;
> Nor could on earth a spot be found
> To nature and to me so dear,
> Could *thy* dear eyes, in following mine,
> Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine."

Mr. Hammersley, the painter of this picture, has for a considerable time most efficiently occupied the post of head-master of the Manchester "School of Art." When the Prince Consort visited the late Art-Treasures Exhibition in that city, he embraced the opportunity of seeing also the exhibition of local Art then open in Peel Park; and it was Mr. Hammersley's duty, as chairman of that successful undertaking, to accompany his Royal Highness through the galleries, where, we believe, some of the artist's works were hung. The commission for the picture arose out of this interview, and was sent to Mr. Hammersley, through Sir Charles Phipps, after the Prince had returned to London. The view was selected by him as being that of a locality with which he is very familiar; his Royal Highness studied at the University of Bonn, which bears a high character in Germany, owing to the discipline maintained among the students, and to the discernment exercised by the government in the appointment of professors.

Soon after Mr. Hammersley received the commission, he went over to Bonn for the purpose of studying and sketching the scenery. He has treated the subject in a simple, unpretending, but very pleasing manner: there is no attempt to enhance the beauty of the pictorial representation by any of those scenic effects in which many artists are apt to indulge, and which, in a view like this, offering few, if any, points of striking picturesque beauty, might advantageously be introduced; such, for example, as a passing thunder-shower, a brilliant sunrise, or a glowing sunset. The whole range of country is seen under the effect of a bright clear day—the early part of it, perhaps. A few clouds are floating beneath the blue sky, throwing their shadows over the distant part of the landscape, and causing an agreeable variety in the tints and colours. The "castled crag of Drachenfels" towers above the level plains, clothed in a robe of purple grey, while the rapid, yet tranquil Rhine, bearing on its bosom some indications of the commercial industry of the country, reflects in subdued tones the colour of the sky, as the river flows onward through verdant banks, and ripe cornfields, and vineyards yielding the luscious and cooling grape. On the right bank of the river, in the distance, is the pretty village of Godesberg, standing about a mile from it; and beyond the village is the Castle of Rolandseck, an ancient ruin.

The picture is in the collection at Buckingham Palace.

THE STUDY OF THE "FIGURE."

THE observations which have been made at different times, but more particularly on the 26th of July, by Lord Haddo, in the House of Commons, on that part of Art-education which his lordship termed the "exhibition" of the nude, have drawn the attention of all well-wishers to the progress of Art in this country. To every figure painter the study of the nude subject is a matter of such importance as to render, in these days of precision, utterly illusory any hope of even a modicum of success in his profession without such a course of practice. But to deal fairly with Lord Haddo, a repetition of what he did say is necessary. "He called attention to the *exhibition* of nude living models in the government schools of Art. He had, on one occasion, been accidentally a witness of the mode of study pursued in government schools of Art, and he felt bound to say that he had never witnessed a more painful or scandalous exhibition. He brought forward the subject with feelings of shame and disgust, but after what had passed under his own observation he could not conscientiously agree to the vote for this object, unless the studies were placed under proper restrictions. As far as Art was concerned, he believed it was the opinion of the best writers on the subject that the introduction of the voluptuous school had occasioned the decay of Art and the decline of public taste in ancient Greece, and that of the age of Phidias and Pericles not a single example of an undraped female figure was known to exist. It was quite unnecessary to give public aid to a mode of study which was evidently so attractive and remunerative as that to which he referred. The claims of morality were more important than those of Art, and, if the two were inconsistent, the latter ought to give way. Seeing £100 put down in the vote for what was called 'professional assistance,' and which, he supposed, meant the exhibition of the nude female figures; he moved that the vote be reduced by £100."

The explanations which followed these remarks showed that the "professional assistance" meant was for additional aid in the instruction of the classes. The employment of the nude could never be called "professional assistance," nor could the words ever be fairly interpreted as in anywise allusive to the model. Lord Haddo's proceeding, therefore, compels the belief that he seized on this item as a text for his gratuitous and extremely indecent attack upon the entire body of the profession of Art. If his view of the matter, being supported by a specious pretext, were at all likely to be realized, the result would be all but the suppression of painting by act of Parliament. It is the "immorality" of the study on which Lord Haddo dwells. Now, the study of painting has always been pursued necessarily in the same way, and there has existed an academy for the figure, to go no farther back, for a hundred years, and during that period the system has been amply tested, but yet painters are not worse than other men. But this impression seems to have been made on Lord Haddo's mind; and any earnest inquirer into the matter would be most anxious to know what the particular instances may be, that in detailed consideration of the subject, Lord Haddo must adduce in support of his argument. The presumed evil has been long enough extant to have maturely fructified. Such a protest in the senate of the nation is an outrage not only on painters, but also on patrons of Art, for according to Lord Haddo's implication every lover of painting is an abettor of immorality. In reference to working from the life we are brought at once to a consideration of the practice pursued by the Royal Academy, where, during a certain term, the model is set daily; and under the superintendence of a visitor—one of the Academicians, the study proceeds, during the two hours, certainly with as much decorum as, and perhaps with more earnestness than, if the assemblage were a congregation rather than a school; and so entirely do students, from habit, regard a figure purely according to its beauty or pictorial grace, that no impure conception finds a place in the mind. Before aspirants are admitted to the life-school, they have prepared themselves by a lengthened course of drawing from the antique—that is, from the statues in the British Museum, and an acquaintance with these educates students up to a full appreciation of the human figure, insomuch that on admission to the life-school they are in nowise affected, save by the pictorial merit or demerit of the figure. There are, in all academies, rules for the preservation of decorum, but during an acquaintance of twenty-five years with life-schools in England, France, and Italy, we remember no occasion on which it became necessary to enforce them. In our own schools we have never heard any observation in direct reference to the model much louder than a whisper, and none in signification otherwise than simply critical. Even in Paris, the most licentious capital in Europe, we have seen assembled in an entirely irresponsible atelier (Boudin's), year after year, twenty or thirty students without any result, either immediately or remotely, such as Lord Haddo imputes to study from the life. Again, an intimate acquaintance of many years with one of the most useful of our own private schools has afforded us ample opportunity of knowing every step of the career of a long list of distinguished men who have been educated entirely at this school, and to those, by whose acquaintance we are honoured, we can point as persons of life most exemplary.

All our best painters have worked for years from the life, and which of them does Lord Haddo signalize as illustrative of the taint that he attributes to Art-study? In the atmosphere in which he himself lives and moves, is the proportion of failing humanity less than in the circles of Art? It were inexpedient here to enter on an analytical consideration of the physiology of Art-study, otherwise it would not be difficult to show that its tendencies are the reverse of demoralizing. The allusion to what is called the "voluptuous school" in antique art is by no means happy; we know not of the existence of any "voluptuous" school in the best times of Greek art; the nearest approach to anything like voluptuousness has been made by the modern French school. This is at once declared by a comparison of results. In the Venus de Medicis there is nothing "voluptuous." On looking at the statue, we enter at once into the feeling of the artist. Call the statue what you will—a Phryne or a Venus—it by no means embodies the character of either of these ladies, but, as well in feature as in action, is an impersonation of retiring modesty; and if this be the Cnidian Venus, we may congratulate ourselves that we are (with the exception of Lord Haddo) more advanced than the Cnidians themselves. The Greek schools, like everything terrestrial, had their culminations and their declensions. We agree cordially with Lord Haddo, that there is nothing voluptuous in the best Greek art; the decadence could not be therefore owing to this disqualification. The decay was natural, and voluptuousness was a consequence, not a cause, of the decay. The grandeur of the antique succumbed to the grotesque and ribald poetry; but it never fell to the utter grossness and sensuality of the Roman school of sculpture, of which there are extant examples in the private cabinets at Florence and Naples, that far out-distance every base conception of later times. Lord Haddo extols the Phidian period, but it may not occur to him that every female figure on the friezes of the Parthenon was modelled from the life, before draped, and the same method of execution was necessarily observed with those on the frieze of the Phigalian temple of Apollo; and had not drapery been an indispensable element of composition, they might have been presented undraped, like the male figures. That the study of the nude is indispensable to the profession of Art is conceded at all hands, where any knowledge of the subject exists; but that it has a demoralizing tendency we fearlessly deny, and are in a position satisfactorily to demonstrate. We know, for the last twenty years, the history of a life-academy (that to which we have already alluded), whence have risen very many members of the profession, whose works are all-honourable to our school. To defend such men from the imputation which Lord Haddo indirectly casts on them, were to insult them beyond the outrage already inflicted.

Of Lord Haddo we know nothing, beyond the proclamation he makes of his own deficiencies; but if he have a desire to assist the cause of Art, we should be glad to afford him an opportunity of disabusing himself of a most mischievous and absurd impression.

ENGLISH HOMES:

AS THEY ARE, AND MAY BE, IN FURNISHING AND DECORATION.

PART II.

IN the last number of the *Art-Journal* the general advantages of elegance in home furniture and decorations were indicated, and one or two principles were stated, having an obvious bearing on all interior embellishment, although the examples then given in illustration were taken from the working man's cottage, and houses generally occupied by foremen, clerks, or the smaller class of tradesmen. These principles pertained more especially to paper-hangings, and the arrangement of forms used in such fabrics, and particularly to the relations of colour, and its adaptation to the production of unity, variety, and general effect. Some principles, more especially applicable to form, as that is developed in furniture or other outlines, which are not dependant on colour for pleasing character, or the reverse, may now be stated; and we may begin with chimney-pieces, as these form an important part of the landlord's decoration, being, from their prominence and structure, a kind of connecting link between the walls and furniture. There is no part of a house around which so much interest centres as the fire-place of the majority of the apartments. There the sober, hard-working labourer or artizan finds his chief social and domestic delight, listening to his wife's "wonderings," tales of precocious wisdom, her own half-hinted wants or wishes, or the sayings and doings of her little world for the day, while he encourages the prattle of his babes as the sweetest relaxation from his toil, and its amplest reward. Around a more expensive, but not necessarily, therefore, a more elegant chimney-piece, the city Dombey and his household play out their several domestic parts. In the aristocrat castle the fire and its surroundings excite the same attractive influence on the inmates both of drawing-room and hall; and from the palace to the mud cabin the fire, through a large portion of the year, forms the most potent object of attraction. But notwithstanding this general fact, the majority of chimney-piece constructions are found to become less beautiful the longer they are looked at, and the more closely they are studied. Smoke would seem to be beyond the province of these papers, but as there is little use in wasting money on the decoration or furnishing of smoky houses, a few words here on smoke may be pardoned. It cannot, of course, be expected that architects should become smoke-doctors, because that department has long since been handed over to the chimney-sweep; but as fires are necessary, and it is impossible to live comfortably without getting rid of the smoke, this should be considered one of the most essential ends of skilful and tradesman-like house construction. If without consideration vents are chiefly placed in positions where the wind most strongly blows, which, unfortunately, is too often the case, what can be expected but volumes of smoke with every squall or gale? If chimney stacks are placed where wind must catch the smoke above, it will be next to impossible to prevent that greatest of all domestic nuisances but one—a smoky house. But smoke may be retained from below, or intercepted midway, as well as dashed down from above, and in either case faulty construction is the sole root of the evil; and above all other faults is that of not making the fire-place in proportion to the size of the apartment. An æsthetic as well as a constructive blunder is the most conspicuous, and the oftenest repeated, so that an ill-proportioned fire-place almost invariably inflicts a doubly baneful influence upon the ornamenting of an apartment.

Whether the Greeks had mantle-pieces is of little consequence to us. They may be glad they lived so early, and died soon enough to have escaped the suffering inflicted upon this latter age, from perpetual gazing on the uncouth shapes which surround so many distorted modern grates. The forms and fashions of mantle-pieces have changed, and are changing, and it is joyfully conceded that in some quarters elegance of proportion and purity of outline is giving place to the bald disfigurements, or cumbrous, ornate compounds of wood, marble, and "compo," which but recently were so familiar. But change of fashion is not necessarily improvement in style, and chimney-pieces are at present

constructed at vast expense where the forms are as false, and the accumulating of compounds as frightful, as anything known in the worst days of our Art-history. More specific reference to the style of these vagaries of the vulgar rich will be made when treating of the decorations suitable for the interiors of our merchant princes. At present it is enough to say that the simplest wooden ogee moulding, placed round a set of well-proportioned stone facings, is more elegant, and in truer taste, than those huge, incongruous chimney-pieces which resemble nothing so much as the older monuments in the more aristocratic burying-grounds. If—as Benthen asserts—"we are the ancients," the ample stone chimney-pieces erected in houses hundreds of years since, show that the children were wiser than their fathers. The massive stone jambs, topped with an arched or square lintel, had often pretensions to decoration, but they were always in keeping with the character of grates, chairs, and tables then in use, all partaking of the same breadth of style. And it would be better to have that style restored than suffer the perpetual presence of those gimcrack things or impertinent monstrosities which are now so often introduced into rooms. In a room measured a fortnight since, in Belgravia, we found the area 20 feet by 16 feet, the doors 7 feet 6 inches high by 3 feet 4 inches wide, windows 11 feet high, and only 5 inches wider than the doors, the mantle-piece nearly 6 inches wider than its height, and the white marble pilasters 5 inches wide equal at bottom and top, and only 1 inch broader than the styles of the doors! No power of ingenuity could render such a room pleasing, whatever the character of its decoration or furnishing; and, as shall be shown immediately, the first step towards pleasing harmony is proportional construction in the permanent features of a room. Like other faults, this one may be partially hidden by means of subordinating defects to the prominence of better qualities which shall attract the eye, but the defect can never be eradicated or overcome.

There are other and more expensive methods of destroying rooms with mantle-pieces, and one of these may also be described in a new house which cost a handsome sum to build, and in which there was nothing the proprietor was so pleased with as his dining-room marbles. They were made of what is technically known as "black and gold"—black marble veined with yellow. The scrolled outline was not destitute of character, and the proportions of the parts were respectable, and elaborately ornamented. The owner pronounced them the most expensive set that the marble cutter had ever made, and that was evidently one grand reason why he valued them as "so very handsome." It is undoubted that various coloured marbles have always been used, and may still be used, with effect, but the records of Art will be searched in vain for covering strongly-marked marbles with sculpture, or even carving. What would a Greek have thought of a pair of cupids on a centre in imitation of the projecting key-stone of an arch, but where no arch was—the one cupid having his body cut by a broad yellow vein of irregular form, which, after passing through him, divided his comrade's legs in two, by an oblique line, severing the knee of the right and the ankle of the left leg from their respective parts, while the faces of both children were scarred with white and deeper yellow crossings? The other "carving" was to match. In the acanthus leaf formed into the scroll neither "eyes" nor "thorns," nor "bears'-feet," could be seen for the more brilliant "veins" which crossed and recrossed the leaf. It may safely be affirmed that the most untutored helot could not have endured such solecisms in Art, although the well-pleased proprietor may never muster Christian virtue sufficient to forgive this reference to his much-admired and costly chimney-piece; nor would the reference be justifiable were no general principles involved in the absurdity. One of the clearest deductions of common sense—often a very scarce commodity in Art—would seem to be that in carving or sculpture, where the effect depends exclusively upon form and light and shadow, the labour should only be bestowed on materials in which these qualities can be brought prominently out. It is impossible to secure effect from light and shade when the constituent characteristics of the woods or marbles used are more brilliant than the light or shadow which can be produced on them. If surfaces are to be kept flat, then "inlays" both in wood and marble may be used with effect, but it is essential for ornaments in "relief" that one-coloured mediums be employed, if effect from relief be the object aimed at. What is true of woods and marbles is still more true of imitations, and when this truth becomes appreciated, the first effort of many will be to get their imitation marble chimney-pieces pulled down or repainted.

In mantel-pieces, the object of first importance, as in all such constructions, is utility, and it matters little what the abstract forms may be, if they are useless for the practical purposes intended. In the room already mentioned, the flat slabs five inches broad, which do the duty of pilasters, are covered by a shelf exactly the same width, and, as that is found useless for holding any ornament commensurate with the general size and appearance of the room, the ingenious expedient of covering the marble with a board about double the width has been adopted, and green cloth with a fringe three inches deep covers up the wood. Nor is that all—to insure the indispensable necessity of fire-dogs, the outside perpendicular slabs are joined by one bevelled at about the angle of 45°, so that should the poker or tongs be placed against the sides upright, they can but slide and disparage the edges of the outside marbles in their fall. That this has often taken place, these marbles bear abundant evidence. Nor are such mutilations in chimney-pieces at all uncommon. And how often do we hear the remark, that this or that ornament is very handsome, but "our" mantel-piece is not made to hold such things? Utility first, then, and ornamentation afterwards, and it may be taken as a great general truth, applicable to all ornamental and decorative success, that forms most useful will be the easiest to render ornamental. Now, chimney-pieces have settled down into two general forms—the ordinary pilaster, and what is called the "continued" style—that is, reaching to the ceiling; and as the former size, under one modification or another, is that which must, as a matter of cost, remain in general use, he who would diffuse new life and thought into this important section of a room would confer no small advantage on the domestic and involuntary Art-education of the country. Our fathers tried to substitute the pillar for the pilaster, or, rather, they placed pillars before the pilaster; but, although these pillars were not better than the present form, former failure ought not to put the idea of pillars entirely out of court. It may be difficult to prove that what Dorus of Achaia selected for the Temple of Juno were the forms best adapted for "my lord's" dining-room chimney-piece, yet any order would be preferable to the disorderly constructions that now too often surround the grates of the noble, and descend by accelerated deterioration to the dwellings of the humble. The Exhibition of '51, the French Exhibition, and increased thought devoted to such subjects, have made it certain that no mere copies of antique architecture will be successful in domestic decoration; and that no mere reduction of "orders" to scale, however grand the proportion and effects for out-door architecture, can be defended as equally appropriate or effective when made in different materials and to a diminished scale. In every department and in every apartment new necessities demand new combinations and proportions, and there seems no reason why some new modification of the pillar should not divide professional attention with the present modifications of what is inherently a poorer, meaner form. The Tuscan and Italian faith was that of all the orthodox, and it is still believed that any "order" can be most successfully used when the measurements of Palladia are most strictly adhered to in the process of reduction; but heretics to the present style of chimney-pieces, and other interior architecture, may be forgiven for doubting the æsthetic truth of this very orthodox conclusion. Chimney-pieces are still to be seen made on this principle. The elevation consisted of two pillars on each side of the fire-place, the distance between each being such as to admit of triglyphs coming regularly over the axis of each column, allowing a metope of the proper proportions between them. The frieze was also made to rule, and the ornaments were unimpeachable in classicality, and the only deficiency was the poor, thin, meagre appearance of the whole. Had the two pillars been formed into one, although against the letter of the order, their effect would have displayed more of its spirit, besides allowing full benefit to have been taken of different coloured marbles—a source of ornamentation in abeyance only from the want of skill to use it. If two well-proportioned pillars were each surmounted by a marble figure, with a well-considered rest for a time-piece between them, it would probably make as imposing and effective a dining-room or drawing-room chimney-piece as either of the other styles now in exclusive use, besides opening up a new path for decorative sculptors, at little, if any greater cost than is often lavished on the present forms.

Before going over the practical details of other parts of furniture or decoration, there is one general principle all important to the intelligible treatment and intelligent comprehension of the subject, and whether our treatment of the principle be considered philosophically right or wrong, it will at least indicate the kind of standard by which forms and detail shall be practically tested.

Men, in whatever trade or business, know the value of first principles, or facts which practically answer the same purpose. Those who work in colours know that red warms up the tone of other colours, and knowing this, painters use red to produce the warm colours wanted. Painters seldom bother their brains about what red is, and why it should produce warm hues, and not green ones—they accept the fact which experience has taught, and act on it. All engaged in Arts and Manufactures may treat beauty in the same way. It would be mere child's play with words to invite men to produce things beautiful, and ask them, as a parental duty, to surround their children with these, without indicating what objects are, and what are not, beautiful. Philosophers must be left to deal with the speculative mysteries of this question—it is enough for useful every-day life to catch glimpses of its realized existence. To the metaphysician the investigation of beauty may furnish an exciting intellectual exercise, but to be useful to the operative, it must be brought out of that misty atmosphere—to be serviceable, he must be able to put his finger on beauty, and say, That's it; and only then will he be able to use it as the colourist uses red. A state of society is imaginable when the people were so ignorant of the qualities of iron as not to believe that it was harder or stronger than wood, but the ready answer to these doubters would be "Try it?" So our population are generally so ignorant respecting the qualities of beauty, that many believe there is no material and intrinsic difference between that and ugliness, except as a matter of opinion. The simple practical answer to such doubters is, "Try them." Compare the ill-drawn with the well-drawn square, or the elegant oval with a notched or dimpled circle, and their own sensations will be another testimony to the universal judgment that some forms are beautiful, and others are not. Who ever saw or heard of one who doubted the beauty of the "Venus rising from the Sea," and the lines and combinations which are beautiful in that will be equally beautiful everywhere, in proportion as they predominate, either in a statue or a chair. Having found such a fact—a principle realized—the fact will become important in proportion as those whom it may concern shall use it and incorporate it with all forms, just as the men of colours use their primary pigments. All who have written or thought on the subject have concluded that one quality of line is the most beautiful, and that is present practical perfection to the many, whether it perfectly satisfies the philosophic few or not.

Modern philosophers have perplexed themselves and others with the question, What is beauty? just as the sceptics of old did with the query, What is truth? The greater minds have been content to know that beauty exists. Plato did not discourse of beauty in the abstract, but of "this beautiful world." "The Creator," said he, "desiring that all things should be good, and nothing bad, brought it (the world) from a state of disorder into a state of order, thinking this in every respect better than that."* And out of this flowed the theory of pro-

* Discourses by Plato, appended to Professor Blackie's recent work on Beauty, which should be carefully studied by all interested in the production of things beautiful. There are other works to which reference might be made with advantage.

portion and symmetry, as the principal elements of beauty. Out of this has also arisen the modern notion, that anything to be beautiful must have the attributes of a plural number, although how these would be found in the outline of a new moon—one of the most beautiful objects in the world—we cannot understand. What Plato evidently meant was, that, in the arrangement of the world, proportion was the basis of composition, so to speak, while "symmetry" applied to the individual forms; but he never said anything so foolish as that beauty must always be a plural quantity. The singular or linear quality of beauty has an important bearing on the artizan. Plato asks his scholar how women, horses, lyres, and pitchers can all be beautiful, and he receives no satisfactory reply; but as universal decision has declared the human form most beautiful, other objects will be so in proportion as they display those characteristics which are pronounced beautiful in man. That curved and flowing outline, so conspicuous in the human frame, is also the leading characteristic of external nature. Winkleman and Hutchison substantially affirm that this line is reflected from all nature on the surface of the mind, and they conclude that this reflection produces the pleasure which makes the spectator call the reflected objects beautiful. We accept the admission of the fact, but doubt the inference, because pleasure cannot be derived from that mental passivity which the supposed reflection implies. There can be no pleasure in the mind acting as a mere mirror to external nature, because the active flow of animal life pants with restless eagerness for objects which will so stimulate sensation as to produce pleasure. Indeed, there is such a natural love for this kind of excitement, that the mind prefers being stimulated by unpleasant emotions, rather than remain in the dreary void of passive insensibility—a feeling not confined to sensations excited by external nature, but one which has its counterpart in social life, where the rich will undergo much that is unpleasing to interrupt that more unsufferable *ennuie*, with which idle people are afflicted. The beauty in any object captures the feelings before it appeals to the intellect. The sensations taste the pleasure, and the reason examines into the cause which produces this effect, and the connection between this pleasure and the object which produced it is the basis of beauty. This seems to reduce beauty to simple sensation, but that is produced by definite qualities, as in form, and therefore the beauty is as truly in the form as in the sensation. If, therefore, the line most characteristic of man be that which permeates and encircles creation, this line, which Hogarth and all other writers on the subject have agreed in calling the line of beauty, and which the greatest artists adopted to express the most beautiful, before the written theory existed—Raphael, for instance, in his cartoon, "The beautiful gate of the Temple,"—if this be that line which yields to our organization the greatest amount of satisfaction, then ought this to be most largely developed in all things beautiful. Sentient existence is itself pleasure, and to live apart from fatiguing effort is enjoyment. The minnow in the pool, the insect in the sunbeam, the lambkin in the meadow, and the baby in its mother's arms, all testify that the simple sensation of life produces pleasure. So, whatever stimulates this sensation, produces that pleasure which leads us to pronounce the object beautiful. The feeling of beauty finds its root in life, as the feeling of ugliness finds its root in death. The handmaids of Homer's hero brought

> "Limpid water from the living brook,"

as opposed to the quiescent pool, and in proportion as forms or objects represent life, so do they stimulate sensation. A straight line is to the eye a calm monotony, and suggests the type of death; an undulating line becomes the type of life, from the sensation awakened in following its curves; and according to the agreeable smoothness, or the broken angularity of that flowing line, will be the measure of delight experienced. If, then, there be lines which excite pleasure from the eye following their forms, how essential for all engaged in industrial art to know what these lines are, and equally important that ornaments invented to please should be drawn in those forms which yield the highest gratification. What these are has been already indicated; but it cannot be too strongly impressed upon the mind, that man is the most beautiful created form; and that while the mountains and the weeds, the delicate gazelle and the eddies in the rill from which it drinks, the loveliest flowers and the dashing billows, all partake of the same characteristic outline, yet the highest beauty is only to be found in the most perfectly developed humanity, and the curves most peculiar to man must therefore be the most beautiful. The necessary conclusion is, that the highest style of Art, whether ornamental or pictorial, will only be reached through laborious study of the antique statues and the living model, although a garner may be filled with invaluable knowledge for industrial design by the earnest student of the lower manifestations of natural beauty.

As there are various qualities of sweetness, the sugar-plum being different from a Lisbon orange, and a Normandy pippin different from both, so there are various phases of beauty, and this should be kept steadily in view by all who would think or work on this domain. At present we only deal with beauty as displayed in lines. In ordinary life nobody doubts that lines have (partly, no doubt, from the tuition of the eye, whether conferred or involuntary) certain defined and fixed characteristics. A perpendicular line suggests the idea of stability, and if a horizontal line be added, the angle gives the characteristic of decision and increased strength. From these two combinations the oak has become an emblem of strength, while the ash and weeping willow, from their graceful form and falling curves, have become types of elegance or grief. These are not arbitrary popular conceits, but the ideas these several emblems express are inherent in the lines which form the specialities among the trees of the forest. The same facts are equally visible among the beasts of the field. Square angular forms, whether in a building or a lion, express the idea of strength, while the motion of a peacock's tail, or the spike of a flower, as surely suggests elegance without strength.

Hundreds of examples might be found of different sensations produced by different forms, and the study and realization of this difference is the beginning, middle, and end of successful design. If, then, the flowing curves characteristic of man are the lines displaying the highest proportion of beauty, designs containing the largest proportion of these distributed in similar ratio will be the most beautiful. But repose is as essential to pleasure as excitement, and, in successful design, the eye will not be fatigued even with pursuing beauty. In the middle ages, there was often incredible skill and labour bestowed upon complications of beautiful lines; but they were often so involved, that the eye became wearied in tracing them. It is as true in design as in mathematics, that a whole must be made up of its parts; but it is equally true, that although sensation, stimulated up to a certain pitch, produces pleasure, yet when that point is passed, even the pursuit of beauty becomes fatigue, and that in Art is equivalent to the production of imperfect forms. How to avoid this fatigue, without producing equally unpleasant sensations, is one taxing the highest skill of the designer; for there is as much difference between a mere broken line and a rest for the eye in ornament, as there is between a broken nose and a beautifully-formed mouth. It is easy to cut short a flowing line, but is not so easy to insert one horizontally, so as to increase, instead of diminishing, the value of the flowing form. And hence the advantage, to say nothing of the reduced expense, of only keeping linear curves up to, without allowing them to overstep, those limits which the eye can follow with pleasure, without verging on fatigue. Under diet is in all circumstances preferable to a surfeit, and in none more than when dealing with ornamentation. But although all beauty is based on the flowing curve, the beauty of the object designed will depend upon the fitness of the curves employed to express the idea intended. The same curves which would be beauty in a Venus, would not produce grandeur in a Jupiter. The quality of the form is permanent, but the quantity is variable; and when this quantity is consistently carried out, successful effects can be produced in very small space, and at a great reduction of expense.

JOHN STEWART.

ANCIENT BOOKBINDING,

AS EXHIBITED IN THE LIBRI LIBRARY.

THANKS to the continued increase of printing, books are now so common that very ordinary buyers possess small libraries, which, though looked on contemptuously by "collectors," who desire quantity and rarity, yet rival in one of these qualifications the libraries of kings during the middle ages, when a dozen or two of volumes was a wonderful collection, each one of which was guarded jealously. In 1364 the Royal Library of France did not exceed twenty volumes; and that redoubtable polemic, our King Henry VIII., could not display a larger number. It was not unusual in monastic libraries to find the volumes, so assiduously obtained for general use, endorsed with denunciations against all who should surreptitiously abstract them; and cases are on record of loans of books, where all kinds of legal restrictions guarded the loan, even when kings were the borrowers, so jealously were books kept. When we consider the vast and continuous labour of years devoted to a folio volume, ere the plain sheets of vellum were covered with carefully constructed letters, and enriched by ornaments in gold and colour, and elaborately executed miniatures depicting the events recorded, we shall then, and then only, comprehend the intrinsic value of ancient books. Dear as fine manuscripts may appear to us, they are all now sold at much under what the cost of their construction would be if paid for as hand labour. The cheapness of modern books, and their abundance, totally unfit a modern reader for valuing them as the ancients esteemed theirs.

When books were finished by the weary manipulation of years, they were bound sumptuously and strongly, sometimes with a lavish display of ornament outside; this was particularly the case with the sacred books. Antique cameos and precious stones were inserted in the wooden covers; occasionally Roman dyptichs, or plaques of sculptured ivory, formed them. In the middle ages, embossed leather became fashionable; and the noble library of M. Libri, sold during the last month at Messrs. Sotheby and Wilkinson's rooms, contained a matchless historic series of bookbindings, which it was sad to feel would be scattered over Europe, after they had been thus assiduously gathered.

The luxury of private book-collecting and costly bookbinding, originated with the merchant princes of Italy, such as the Medici, the Della Roveres, the D'Estes, and other wealthy families. Upon such works the best artists were employed; many of the designs came from such men as Giulio Clovio; and M. Libri informs us "there were literary men whose employment was solely to supply people with such emblems and devices as were to be apparent on their dresses, on their books, and on all the articles of their furniture." The *salamander* of Francis I., and the *crescent* of Diana of Poictiers, are instances: M. Libri's collection furnishes curious examples of both. Sometimes the arms of the proprietor were magnificently emblazoned amid the gold tooling at the sides. Occasionally painting added its beauties to the work, and the edges of the leaves obtained their share of decoration.

The most celebrated of ancient book-collectors was Jean Grolier, of Lyons, one of the four treasurers of France during the reign of Francis I., and ambassador to Rome. With scholarly liberality he stamped upon his books the words, "Jo. Grolierii et amicorum," to show that they were at the service of his friends as well as of himself. The binding he adopted was remarkable for the fine character of its interlaced ornament, which is said to have been designed by himself in moments of leisure. "Blind tooling," or decoration impressed by stamps without gilding, was also fashionable at this period, and we often find scenes in sacred and classic history embossed on book-backs. The old binders seem to have taken a pride in their work, and it is not uncommon to find their names impressed among the ornaments, sometimes with an inscription in Latin to declare that "in honour of God" they have "well and truly" bound them.

Early in the sixteenth century, when the learned ladies of England made themselves famed among European scholars, and the daughters of Sir Thomas More, and the Lady Jane Grey, received the homage of such men as Erasmus and Ascham, they em-

historian has never been made the rival of the poet, and the cold imitator and the copyist have never taken precedence of the inventor. Yet in Art the painter who will repeat, in forms and colours, all the incidents in "Don Quixote" or the "Vicar of Wakefield," claims as much honour as if he were the inventor of the stories themselves. It must certainly be a very barren world, and the growth of passions and feelings must have ceased to be available, in their originality at least, whilst observant men can find subjects for their thoughts, and new interests awake at every turn, and yet the artist can find nothing to paint. Thus it is that the great volume of life and nature has remained a sealed book, to the great disgrace and detriment of the Art.

For a long time Bird continued to paint subjects from common life, and, perhaps, would have continued longer, but that he found they gave him great trouble, and that, when produced, the world cared little for them. I have often heard him despairingly and disparagingly remark, "One might as well paint the story of Goody Two-shoes, as take the trouble to hunt for subjects in real life." Bird had, certainly, good reasons to complain, especially in referring to the labour and loss of time that it cost to find the models alone, without laying the plan, and making the necessary study in the mode of telling the story, and inventing incident and episode to illustrate it. When chapter and verse supply the subject, little more is to be done than to follow out the description, to omit nothing, but introduce every item provided for you, without any concern to provide anything for yourself. The merit of history-painting is often little more than to follow out what is described; whereas, in original and inventional art, the description is given, and not followed, by the painter. Wilkie, I suspect, took to historical art for the same reasons as Bird—to save himself labour and difficulty, the fag of searching for subjects, and the inconveniency of using them when found, as well as for the few pictorial advantages they offer in colour and form, and in ordinary and every-day costume. In history, a painter revels in colours and masses of any size or shape; and as for dignity, grandeur, and such like qualities, the difference is often in no more than the name. The Madonnas of Raphael are to be found, at this hour, in abundance in the common life of Rome, in that quarter of it called *Trastevere*, from which he took so many of his models; and the best which has been produced by him and all other painters of the "divine" and "angelic," is infinitely eclipsed in the genuine maternal tenderness and look of affection, with which every mother in nature and in life regards her child. Raphael, neither here nor anywhere else, could rival the Creator, either in the outward form, or in the manifestations made from within; whatever the dreamy theories of the learned connoisseurs in Art may put forth in their schemes for mending nature, and improving upon God's creation. Bird was, of course, one of the aspirants that denounced a fact so repugnant to his practice; and when the *beau ideal* was talked of, and the practice of nature-mending referred to, he at once cut the matter short by saying, "Let me first come up to nature, before I talk of mending her." It was clearly this desire of coming up to nature, that gave the soul to his efforts, and enabled him to attain so near to the desired end.

It must, however, not be overlooked, for truth's sake, and for the love of Art, that Bird neglected a great deal which belongs peculiarly to Art, and which Art demands of its votaries. There is not only a long and laborious difficulty, and a close course of study necessary in what the eye sees, but, perhaps, as much in the study of the mode in which objects are seen by the eye. Perhaps of the two provinces, this is the more difficult one, demanding not only close study, but natural fitness, to qualify a painter for his multifarious task. Nothing can prove more forcibly the purblind weakness and absurdity of Ruskinism, in which raw aspirants are told and tempted to study one portion of a difficult and indivisible art, to the total neglect and obstinate rejection of another. Bird, like certain of the architectural exhibitors at the Royal Academy exhibition, who provide *three* vanishing points for the lines of a square, never took the trouble to learn perspective, of which an hour's serious application would have put him in possession, but committed some notable blunders, at which he himself was ever ready to laugh with any friend that pointed them out; in fact, he did not care for so small a matter, in comparison with greater things. He also remained deficient in colour; his love of thinking for himself stood resolutely in the way, not only of consulting with the colourists in Art, but with himself, upon the subject. I think it may be said, not that he was incapable of colour, but that he took no pains with it; all that belongs to processes, and the production of texture and transparency, Bird was indifferent to, and regarded as so much quackery; and any attempt to lead him to the consideration of them excited division, and raised his choler. In short, Bird neglected much that belongs legitimately to the province of Art, and which, to unprofessional readers, would not be intelligible; but what he neglected, rather belongs to the body than the soul of Art.

In a paper which was read before an artistical society, I ventured to define a certain combination of intelligences, on which, I believe, the true interests of the exaltation of Art depends. This combination I named the *Mutual Faculty*. It consists in the association of the patron and the painter, and assumes that, had all the pictures which have been painted and sold by artists, since the time of Reynolds, left their places upon the easels of the painters, and the walls of the exhibition rooms, and the money paid for them had been deposited in their places, the painter having no other connection with the patron, Art would never have arisen to the grade of a liberal profession, but would have been now where it was in the time of Reynolds. In short, it is assumed that the cold connection between buyer and seller is altogether insufficient to encourage and sustain Art. I mention this because at the time I am speaking of, there existed in Bristol a society for the express association of the patron, the amateur, and the artist. The party met ostensibly to sketch, and many pictures, which afterwards made some noise in the world, originated there. It was composed of men of high standing, and of the highest qualifications in intellect, science, and acquirement; and it is unquestionable, that Bird, and others I could name, profited by this; and thus, by a means at once rare and efficient, became possessed of power they carried into Art, without conviction, or, perhaps, consciousness of the means by which they were obtained.

Poor Bird died at the age of about fifty years, and lies buried in the cloisters of Bristol Cathedral, under a stone placed *in memoriam* by his daughters: it has the following inscription engraven on it:—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
EDWARD BIRD, ESQ., R.A.,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
NOV. 2, 1819,
AGED 45 YEARS.
HIS DAUGHTER CAUSED THIS STONE TO BE PLACED
AS A TESTIMONY OF RESPECT AND AFFECTION
FOR HER REVERED PARENT.

ENGLISH HOMES:

AS THEY ARE, AND MAY BE, IN FURNISHING AND DECORATION.

PART III.

The general principles stated, and perhaps proved, in former articles, were, first, that the aspect, whether east, west, north, or south of an apartment, ought to determine the general tone of wall decorations; that harmony did not mean monotony, but the proper balance of colour; that the apparent size of apartments is greatly dependant on the tones of colour adopted; and, second, that there were certain fixed qualities of outline essential in things beautiful. Bearing these general principles in remembrance, another step of the home ladder may be ascended; and, having shown the defects, and what, if adopted, would be improvements in the houses of the foremen, clerks, and small tradesmen, the houses of the city men, the larger tradesmen, and merchants, next claim attention. The mansions of the merchant princes form a different class of dwellings; those more especially referred to at present are houses rented at from £120 to £200 a-year, and are not unfrequently situated a few miles from town. As a rule, this tradesman and merchant section of the community are the great customers for the better class of French paper-hangings; and without meaning to reflect upon this section of the population wholesale, it may be affirmed, without offence and without fear of contradiction, that among them are the monied admirers of the most highly-priced monstrosities that are to be found in home-decorations. An Irishman has somewhere said, that it takes three generations to refine a man into a gentleman; and, in spite of the bull, the statement contains the stamina of a great practical truth. So it may be said, that it takes generations to refine wealth into taste; or, rather, to give the accumulators of riches that peculiar knowledge, which will enable them to surround themselves with objects of genuine merit. Nor need this be cause for wonderment, all circumstances considered. The busy tradesman or thriving merchant has, as a rule, had nothing but deteriorating education in such matters. Not unfrequently from the country, his humble paternal home offered no means of educating his eye, except for show; and now that he is engaged in the whirl of business, and finds that he is accumulating money, it is not unnatural that he should like to see his success reflected in the only form of magnificence with which he is familiar—the subdued magnificence of barbaric pomp and show. As a rule, this class marry before they are what may be called successful; and as, with occasional exceptions, the wife has been trained under the same domestic ideas, on such points, as the husband, they more naturally agree upon house decoration than perhaps upon other matters at least equally important.

An amusing chapter might be written upon the house furnishings of such a pair; but, without going over the scenes of consultation between interested mammas and equally important spinster aunts, as to what would or would not be proper and genteel,—that is, fashionable for the time being,—these consultations usually end in a compromise of opinions; and how great the joint-stock ignorance becomes, the ill-assorted dwellings of the newly-married pair too often forcibly, though silently, proclaim. Strong incentives are not wanting to stimulate the folly. There is an opinion abroad that articles are valuable or beautiful, in proportion as they are costly; and all having goods to sell have the strongest interest in supporting the delusion. Nor does taste grow with wealth, because there are many proofs that this section of the body politic makes the breadth and brilliancy of their drawing-room border the indicator of their growing prosperity and riches. When they began housekeeping, their drawing-room paper-hanging had, probably, but a narrow border, with a few simple-coloured flowers; but the breadth of border has kept pace with the weight of purse, till the drawing-room has become appalling through excessive glare, everything palling before the profusion of Dutch metal, mis-named gold, and the carnations and greens of monster roses, the lilacs of immense irises, and the exaggerated forms and tones of other flowers. The drawing-room of a city man may be described as almost invariably papered, chiefly because in paper-hangings he can get most show for the money. He and his wife and daughters must, moreover, have everything in keeping, and the general effect may be thus described. The border of the paper-hangings has, probably, been chosen first, and solely on account of its breadth and brilliancy, as seen in a paper-stainer's pattern-book. It is, of course, French, and has, therefore, all the manipulative and harmonial beauty for which our neighbours are celebrated. As a piece of block printing, it is not only unimpeachable, but fascinating to the uninstructed, and leads the city man with his household captive. It has a stripe of intense crimson, a marroon or green on each side, an inch and a half broad, with a number of metal lines on a buff ground or grey, and a tremendous wreath of enormous flowers fill up the centre, with plain or "T" corners to match. The tints on the flowers are dazzling in their strength, and this, with plenty of gold, "relieved" by the dark stripe of flock, is a most popular border. This fixed and determined on, a filling requires to be selected for the centres of the panels,—for such a drawing-room is supposed nothing, if not panelled, and as this style costs

most, it is always declared in fashion,—and the family, having done their spiriting in the border, begin to think it time to have a little quietness in the other parts of the walls, and, accordingly, a filling is selected not too showy, but very genteel. Fillings of this character are always in stock, but as nobody in their senses ever kept stock of such borders—the French only making them for this peculiar English market, and never for themselves—the border has to be ordered from Paris. In the meantime the curtains and carpets are selected, the purchaser describing the shade of the filling as near as recollection permits, and the seller always having something that is exactly suited for the description. If the ladies have a partiality for curtains and furniture of rose colour, lemon yellow, or light blue, for crimson, drab, or "giraffe" colours, the preference is gratified, under the fullest assurance that it will "go" most admirably with the paper-hangings, as described. The carpets, including hearth-rugs, share the same fate: there are flowers in the border, and therefore there must be flowers in the carpet; there are gold lines in the border, and there must therefore be yellow lines in the carpet—imitation gold; and scrolls, being more showy than straight lines, are preferred, both scrolls and flowers being in proportion to those on the walls, which means being very much larger, both in combination and individual parts. The so-called gold on the paper-hangings must of course be repeated on the cornice and ceiling ornaments, and also on the mouldings of the doors and windows, which will probably be grained imitation maple. Everything goes on satisfactorily till these decorations are brought together, and then every individual part seems to be asking its neighbour in amazement what it is doing there. The border kills the "filling," and reduces the room in appearance to half its actual size, both in height and area; while the carpet, when laid down, destroys without subduing the border, the deep richness of the dyes only bringing out the essential rawness of the distemper colours into more conspicuous prominence, while the curtains and furniture, instead of being a connecting link, form only a new and aggravated element in the discordant mass. The only consolation left is, that the chairs, piano, and cheffonier will hide the greater part of the border below; but what hides the border only breaks the dark stripes which "relieve" the panels on the walls, and the scrolls which constitute the most attractive portion of the carpet.

What is the practical result? What no one doubts, need not be concealed. Such drawing-rooms are chiefly wanted by judicious mammas and prudent papas, to bring out their families, and especially their daughters. The general public have no idea of how the visits of the daughter's "friend" directs parental attention to the necessity of "doing up" the drawing-room; although, if parents did but know it, there is no way in which they inflict so much injustice on these daughters as by subjecting their fair faces to competition with masses of colours, which must make the most beautiful complexion and the finest flesh carnations look dingy, pale, or sickly. The consequence of this violation of common sense is obvious—disappointment with the drawing-room after it is done. How should it be otherwise, when the decorations violate all the purposes for which such rooms—or, indeed, any decorated rooms—are wanted? There are people, doubtless, who furnish rooms not for use, but for their friends to look at and admire, and such individuals look on their apartment as a savage does on his brass buttons or glass beads—as glittering curiosities; but the great majority of those who spend money on decorations, mean their drawing-rooms to be used as well as looked at. When in use, they surely mean the ladies and gentlemen assembled to be the principal objects of attraction; and, if so, the walls of the room should be as much a background to the living figures as the background of a picture would be to each individual portrait. Suppose the admirers of such paper-hangings and borders as are now used by many, have their own and their wives' portraits painted,—what would they think if the artist introduced stripes of roses so intense in colour, as to withdraw attention from the face? If that would not be tolerated, is the appearance and expression of the living original less important than the aspect of the portrait, or should ladies be less just to themselves in their drawing-rooms, than the artist is to them on canvas? Asking such questions is sufficient to excite a smile; and but for the every-day experience of thousands moving in respectable society, it would be impossible to believe that ladies would permit false and essentially vulgar decorations to detract, in this wholesale fashion, from their own more delicate beauty.

There is nothing more beautiful than flowers; but rows of roses, or stripes of irises, hollyhocks, dahlias, and sunflowers, fastened together no one knows how, and combined together no one sees why, were never meant to divide room-walls into compartments, any more than imitation brass scrolls were meant to walk upon, or have their forms broken and disturbed by tables, chairs, ottomans, and foot-stools.

The remedy for these incongruous anomalies shall be noticed, after glancing at the city man's dining-room and library. As a rule, the best and most harmonious room in this style of house is the dining-room,—dark red walls, more or less ornamented with gold mouldings, the cornice tipped with gold, and the wood-work painted imitation oak. Of the walls nothing requires to be said, except that the choice of tone—that is, whether the walls should be brighter or deeper in colour—depends so entirely upon considerations of aspect, furniture, &c., as to render generalized specialities practically useless. But in these dining-rooms the question of the rightness or wrongness, the utility or inutility, and the æsthetic value or worthlessness of "imitations," is everywhere encountered, and it may as well be dealt with now as afterwards. Many may never even have heard of the agitation against imitation woods and marbles for purposes of decoration, which has been carried on for years by a section of the *cognoscenti*. For a time, that agitation was of little consequence either way, because, although one here and there believed, the public, as such, knew nothing, and probably cared as little, about the matter. During Lord Derby's recent administration, and with Lord John Manners at the Board of Works, the question of imitations became more important; and when it was officially announced throughout the government works all over the country, that "the first lord objects to all imitations," the grounds and value of the objections acquired sufficient importance, from the position of the objector, to entitle them to full consideration. The late "first lord" gave no reasons, so that Lord John Manners may not be fully represented by, or accountable for, others who have hazarded reasons against this recent but rapidly-improving branch of decoration.

Mr. Ruskin thus discourses on the subject:—"Touching the false representation of material, the question is infinitely more simple, and the law more sweeping; all such imitations are utterly base and inadmissible. . . . . Exactly as a woman of feeling would not wear false jewels, so would a builder of honour disdain false ornaments. The using of them is just as downright and inexcusable a lie. You use that which pretends to a worth which it has not; it is an imposition, a vulgarity, an impertinence, and a sin. Down with it to the ground; grind it to powder; leave its rugged place upon the wall rather; you have not paid for it; you do not want it; you have no business with it. Nobody wants ornaments in this world, but everybody wants integrity. All the fair devices that were ever fancied are not worth a lie. Leave your walls as bare as a planed board, or build them of baked mud and chopped straw, if need be, but do not rough-cast them with falsehood." There is more in the same strain, and on the same subject, but after reading and re-reading this paroxysm of indignant virtue, it is difficult to help asking why the language is so stormy, and the logic so weak? And especially why the reasons for the condemnation are so meagre. As usual, too, Mr. Ruskin's language may suit both sides of the question; because "the false representation of material" is as applicable to bad imitations, as the good representation of marbles with an intention to deceive. To assume the sin, is to beg the question, and ride off on a cheap and worthless cant. Imitations, as parts of decoration, may be expedient, or the reverse; but, instead of "lies," they are specimens of Art as real and true as the imitation of onions and mussel-shells, commissioned by Mr. Ruskin from Mr. Hunt. Nor is it easy to see how imitating the bark of a tree should be declared a good work by him who proclaims that imitating the centre wood of the same tree is a great sin. Imitation is not proof conclusive of deceit, or Mr. Ruskin's Art dogma of "select nothing, regret nothing," must add the crime of an immoral sham to the weakness of a delusion. Calling the imitation of marble on a shop-front, or of oak on a dining-room door, "a lie" and "a sin," can only be accounted for by an ambition to startle, or a confusion of ideas, and the one quality which could make their utterance endurable, is sincere impartiality; but a writer who promotes and procures imitations of shells on white or coloured grounds* for himself, and denounces as sin and falsehood those who prefer shells on black grounds, in the form of "shell marble," is not sufficient evidence of this impartial virtue. But who pretends that the imitations of woods or marbles on or in his house are real? The supposition is a mere indignant sham, used to hang up pretensions to superior conscientiousness. Did any one but Mr. Ruskin ever suppose that the Trustees of the British Museum (the illustration which he quotes) intended to deceive the public by the imitation granite used in that building? It is evident, at a glance, that it was not because it was granite, but because it was a good colour for the purpose required that it was adopted; and the sound reasons, which guided the Trustees, are those which influence nineteen-twentieths of all who adopt imitations in preference to plain colours. They are in almost no cases used as "lies," with an intention to deceive; and, therefore, they are not "sins"—except in the opinion of writers who yesterday declared perfect imitations of apple-blossoms, or shells, or bark of trees, the highest style of Art, and to-day pronounce imitations of woods, marbles, &c., daring lies and damning sins!

But although there may be no moral obliquity visible to admiring minds in imitation oak doors or granite pilasters, there may be sufficient æsthetic impropriety to prevent the continuance of the practice; and if so, it would be a great public benefit, could that be shown in distinct, intelligible terms. The public are thoroughly practical, and while willing to listen to abuses or defects in anything, Art and Architecture included, it is not unreasonably expected that those who condemn all that is, should be able to point out clearly what ought to be. There have been surfeits of "fine writing," and dreamy rhapsodies, and scathing abuse of "imitations;" but the great want still is a plain statement of what ought to be substituted, and intelligible reasons why the one should be preferred to the other. It is useless, in such a case, to heap glowing words over the abuses of imitations; everything has been abused, even the power of writing; and the public have a right to complain of this abuse especially, if it results in nothing more practical than brilliant fault-finding. The conclusion of Hood's scorching ode to Mr. Rae is quite as applicable to the denouncer of imitations, so far as these gentlemen have yet carried their agitation; and although it is quite permissible for any to apply the objections taken to Dr. Fell, and upon the same grounds, the privilege of denunciation should be used with moderation, until reasons have been offered sufficient to leave the wayward or ignorant without excuse. No such reasons have been, or can be, offered against the use of imitations, either in internal or external decoration; while many reasons appear on the surface why, under proper restraint, the use of them should be encouraged. To talk of their being a waste of time, is only another phase of that cant which seeks to hide all uncharitableness in the smoke of sacrifice offered to vain-glorious conceit. No honest, earnest study of nature can be a waste of time; and it seems as reasonable to imitate the inside wood as the outside bark of trees; and a rock polished, so that it can be seen as it really is, looks as worthy of attention as its outside roughness. But, besides, imitations have advantages of utility and colour, which will defy all assaults upon their use; while this so-called waste of time has literally educated some of our most successful artists, and those so educated have been peculiarly remarkable for delicacy of feeling in their

* See last catalogue of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, where some imitation shells are exhibited by Hunt, as commissions from Mr. Ruskin.

higher art. Richer colour, and greater durability, and better general effects for the every-day tear and wear of hard knocks and often cleansings, can be got in imitations than in plain colours, and these substantial advantages will defy the assaults of all who object to imitations, simply because they don't like them. Mr. Ruskin objects to imitations, as in his British Museum example, because they are good: objections might be more strongly urged against imitations when they are bad; and, instead of sharing the scorn heaped upon all by turns, it can be shown, by all the principles upon which Art rests,—although, of course, to an inferior degree,—that such men as Moxton and Kershaw—the one in marbles, and the other in woods—are as truly artists in their imitations as half the picture-painters in the country, and display more genius in their work. But while there are many exceptions, of more or less celebrity, among "grainers" or imitators, the imitations too generally prevalent can be characterized as nothing else than vile defacings of better colour. And the worst among the bad may not unfrequently be found in the oak paper, which covers the walls of the well-to-do man's "library," or the room which goes by that name in the family. If imitations are defensible elsewhere, there is no abstract reason why they should not be used on walls as well as on wood-work; and whether painted on paper, and put up, or painted on the wall, is a mere question of convenience. But there are insurmountable objections to the deformities with which such papers are loaded, in the form of ornamentation. Impossible dogs sprawling after contorted antlers through meaningless brown and ochre scrolls for corners, with heavy mouldings for borders to match, are fair representations of what are called oak decorations. The taste which produces such rubbish, costly though it be, is as deplorable as the want of thought which permits its use; for if those who prefer oak walls would only think, they would see that a simple imitation inlay pattern, although in plain black, would not only be cheaper, but more in keeping, and therefore better in effect, than all the imitation carving which the combined paper-stainers of France and Britain have produced. JOHN STEWART.

COLOURING MATTERS,

ESPECIALLY THOSE OBTAINED FROM COAL.

ANILINE COLOURS.

THE NEW COLOUR "MAUVE," OR PERKINS'S PURPLE.

PERHAPS there never was any colour which was so readily adopted by the leaders of fashion, and through them, by every class of society, as the so-called *mauve*. This is due to some two or three peculiarities. 1st. It is essentially a new colour, although we have long been familiar with colours which in tint approach the *mauve*,—such as lilac-blossom, peach, plum, &c.; yet no one of them possesses the peculiar hue of the new colour. 2nd. All those colours which were compounded of red and blue in any proportions were, under the best possible conditions, fugitive. Ladies could not wear in sunshine peach or blossom-coloured ribbons in their bonnets for a day without discovering that the colour had suffered by the exposure. The ingenious and the economical renewed the colour from time to time by dipping their ribbons in soda-water; but this was troublesome, and the brightness and beauty of a new trimming was fleeting. The *mauve* is singularly permanent in its most delicate tintings; it bears exposure to the brightest sun. 3rd. In addition to its extreme beauty and its permanence, the aniline colours are very remarkably perfect tinctorial agents. They impregnate the fibre to which they are applied with great readiness, and give rise to very considerable intensity of tint; hence they offer great facilities to the manufacturer and the dyer. This has done much for its introduction.

The dyer has been dependant for his colouring matters on certain natural productions; that is, but very few of them have been the result of any artificial combinations of colourless bodies, as is the case with the Aniline series. Colouring matters occur in the vegetable kingdom abundantly: we find them in the root, the wood, the bark, the leaf, the flower, and the fruit. In many cases they undergo a change in the process of manufacture, and in some the colour obtained is different from that which appears in the plant; since the colour, for example, of flowers is frequently the result of the combination of two or more distinct colours. Dr. Schunck informs us that if we treat the petals of an orange-coloured variety of the *Tropæolum majus* with boiling water, we extract a colouring matter which imparts to the water a purple colour. The petals so treated appear yellow; and if they are digested in boiling spirits of wine, a yellow colouring matter is extracted, and the leaves become white. Similar results are obtained when the petals of the brown *Calceolaria* are successively treated with boiling water and spirits of wine. Many other flowers exhibit the same conditions. Light, under some conditions, has the power of eliminating the colours of which the prevailing hue is formed. Mrs. Mary Somerville has shown us that, if we wash paper over with the juice which has been obtained by bruising the petals of the dark purple dahlia, and expose that paper to the action of the *parathermic rays*,—that is, of those rays which are associated with the heat rays in the lower portion of the prismatic spectrum,—that one set of these rays develops a blue, and another set a red colour. The vegetable kingdom is the only source from which we can obtain a pure green; all others are combinations of blue and yellow. *Chlorophyle*, or the green colouring matter of leaves, can be extracted as a pure green; and we are recently made acquainted with another vegetable green, called *Chinese green*, which has been extracted from many of the Buckthorn tribe.

Some colouring matters are derived from the animal kingdom. Although the skin and the hair of animals, the feathers of birds, and the scales of fishes, possess an almost infinite variety of colours, yet there are but a few of them with which we are acquainted; and a still smaller number which have been applied in the Arts. The cochineal insect has yielded us beautiful carmines and lakes, and the murex, amongst the mollusca, gave to the ancients the celebrated Tyrian purple. A few other colours, derived directly from the animal kingdom, might be named, but the above are the most important. It is true that the constituents of blood and bones yield us chemical agents, which, in combination, produce most intense colours,—as, for example, Prussian blue, and other cyanogen compounds,—but they are not to be regarded as natural combinations.

The mineral kingdom is rich in colour, and many of the combinations of cobalt, of copper, of manganese, of iron, &c., are employed by the dyer and the calico-printer. All the colours obtained from the inorganic world are physically and chemically different from those to which it is desired more especially to direct attention. In considering the question of the production of colour, as leading up to the preparation of those colours which have been discovered and are manufactured by Mr. Perkins, some few peculiarities may still be noticed.

In numerous instances the colouring matters exhibit, in an uncombined state, an entirely different colour from what they do when they enter into combination. The colouring matter of litmus is, when uncombined, red, but its compounds, with alkalies, are blue. The alkaline compounds of alizarine, obtained from madder, are of a rich violet colour, while the substance itself is reddish-yellow.

Dr. Schunck, to whom we are indebted, more than to any other man in this country, for the investigation of colouring matters, informs us that colouring matters, restricting this term to vegetable and animal dyes, consist either of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, or of those elements in addition to nitrogen. The exact relative proportions of these constituents, however, is known in very few cases; and in still fewer instances have the chemical formulæ of the compounds been established with any approach to certainty. This proceeds, on the one hand, from the small quantities of these substances usually present in the organs of plants and animals, and the difficulty of obtaining sufficient quantities for examination in a state of purity; and, on the other hand, from the circumstances of their possessing a very complex chemical constitution and high atomic weight. Only a small number of colouring matters are capable of assuming a crystalline form; the greater number, especially the, so-called, resinous ones, being perfectly amorphous. Among those which have been obtained in a crystalline form, may be mentioned alizarine, indigo blue, quercitrine, morine, luteoline, chrysophan, and rutine: it is probable, however, that when improved methods have been discovered of preparing colouring matters,—and we are now advancing rapidly in this direction,—and of separating them from the impurities with which they are found so often associated, many, which are now supposed to be amorphous, will be found to be capable of crystallizing. Very little is understood concerning the action of light on colouring matters and their compounds. It is well known that these bodies, when exposed to the rays of the sun, especially when deposited in thin layers on, or in fabrics made of, animal or vegetable materials, lose much of the intensity of their colour, and, sometimes, even disappear entirely, that is, they are converted into colourless bodies; but whether this process depends on a physical action induced by light, or whether, as is more probable, it consists in promoting the action of oxygen and moisture on them, is uncertain. The most stable colouring matters, such as indigo blue, and alizarine in its compounds, are not insensible to the action of light; others, such as carthamine, from safflower, which was used for dyeing silk, poppy, *nacarat* (a bright orange red), cherry, rose colour, and flesh colour, disappear rapidly when exposed to solar influence. Colours produced by the mixture of two colouring matters are often found to resist the action of light better than those obtained from one alone. In one case, that of the Tyrian purple, the action of light seems to be absolutely essential to the formation of the colouring matter. The leaves of plants remain colourless if the plants are grown in darkness; though in this case the formation of the green colouring matter is probably due to a physical state, induced by the luminous power of the sunbeam, and not the result of any influence of the chemical rays.

The action of heat on colouring matters varies very much according to the nature of the latter, and the method of applying the heat. A moderate degree of heat often changes the hue of a colouring matter and its compounds, the original colour being restored on cooling—an effect which is probably due to physical causes. Sometimes this effect is, without doubt, owing to the loss of water. Alizarine, for instance, crystallized from alcohol, when heated to 212° F., loses its water of crystallization, its colour changing at the same time from reddish-yellow to red. At a still higher temperature most colouring matters are entirely decomposed, the products of decomposition being those usually afforded by organic matters, such as water, carbonic acid, carburetted hydrogen, empyreumatic oils, and, if the substance contains nitrogen, ammonia, or organic bases, such as *aniline*, the subject of the present paper. A few colouring matters, as, for example, alizarine, rubiacine, indigo blue, and indigo red, if carefully heated, may be volatilized without change, and yield beautiful crystallized sublimates, though a portion of the substance is sometimes decomposed, giving carbon and empyreumatic products.

Colouring matters, like most other organic substances, undergo decomposition, with more or less facility, when exposed to the action of oxygen; and the process may, indeed, be more easily traced in their case, as it is always accompanied by a change of hue. Professor Dr. George Wilson, of Edinburgh, has some most interesting and instructive experiments upon the influence of light on colouring matters, enclosed in perfectly dry gases, which confirm the above statement. There are many other points of much interest in connection with those colouring matters which are derived from the vegetable kingdom, that is, which may be regarded as variable compounds of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen, but our space will not admit of their being considered at present. We must now proceed to the examination of the new colour, which is, like those already named, derived from, although not actually existing as a colouring matter in, the vegetable world.

We are now obtaining this beautiful dye from coal tar, and it cannot but be instructive, especially to such as are not familiar with chemical combina-