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English Furniture Designers

of the

Eighteenth Century

Frontispiece. GALLERY AT HAREWOOD HOUSE, YORKSHIRE.

English Furniture Designers

of the

Eighteenth Century

by

Constance Simon

London

A. H. Bullen

47, Great Russell Street

1905

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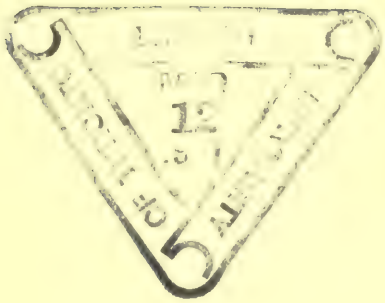

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TO MY DEAR PARENTS

I DEDICATE THIS

BOOK

PREFACE

IN the present volume I have endeavoured to trace the history of English furniture from the reign of William and Mary to the early years of the nineteenth century. The illustrations (most of which have not appeared before) present choice examples of the Queen Anne School, the brothers Adam, the Chippendales, Sheraton, Shearer, and Hepplewhite. I have not reproduced any fanciful designs from the illustrated catalogues issued by eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, but have preferred to give illustrations of pieces that were actually made and are to-day the cherished possessions—by inheritance or purchase—of time-honoured families or discriminating collectors.

My thanks are especially due to the Earl of Harewood for allowing me to reproduce excellent specimens of the art of Robert Adam and the great Chippendale from the collection at Harewood House, Yorkshire. In the most generous manner Sir Henry Hoare, Bart., Mr. James Orrock, Mr. Burghard, Mr. J. E. Schunck, Mr. James Ivory, Mr. Sidney Letts (for whose help I cannot be sufficiently grateful), Mr. Alfred Davis, Mr. Stenson

Webb, and the late Mr. S. T. Smith allowed me to make illustrations of their finest pieces. To Mr. Guy Dawber, whose knowledge of the minutiae of the subject is unsurpassed, and to Mr. Dan. Gibson I am much indebted for assistance in the technical portion of the book. Mr. James Orrock's views on old furniture, in Chapter XIII, cannot fail to be of interest.

For the biographies many new facts have been gleaned from parish registers, the records at Somerset House, and other original sources. The careers of the second and third Thomas Chippendale have been traced to their close; while the identity of the hitherto elusive Hepplewhite is for the first time satisfactorily established. In collecting the biographical material I have received valuable help from Mr. Gordon Goodwin.

November, 1904.

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INTRODUCTION

IN Norman and Plantagenet times, except in the houses of the nobility and the very wealthy, domestic furniture was but sparingly used in England. Until the second half of the sixteenth century most examples show rude and coarse workmanship, and were designed more with a view to utility than beauty; the chief decorative woodwork of the Middle Ages was made for ecclesiastical purposes only. In the Elizabethan age there was a great artistic development, entirely attributable to the influence of the Italian Renaissance. The old feudal houses, which had depended chiefly upon tapestry and other wall hangings for their decoration, soon began to change their appearance, and oak panellings, friezes, screens, and furniture, were embellished with elaborate and beautiful carvings.

The Restoration brought us into close connection with the continent, and about that period furniture was sent to this country in large quantities from Flanders, Holland, France, and Spain. This foreign work was largely copied, and for a time, at least, English productions possessed no very distinct national character of their own. It was then that

chairs first came into general use. Until the middle of the seventeenth century they had been reserved only for the master of the house or for some honoured guest, and persons of less importance had to accommodate themselves with stools, benches, or settles.[1] With the accession of William and Mary in 1689, came a new development in furniture design. Many influences contributed to this result, but at first the most potent was the great popularity acquired by Dutch models. The style of furniture in the Netherlands was very striking and characteristic, and when historical reasons favoured the general acceptance of Dutch types in this country, our native cabinet-makers were quickly stimulated with a desire to improve upon the foreign methods.

It was thus that the great artistic movement of the eighteenth century began. Through a long cycle of years, dating from about 1689, various styles, each having distinctive features, followed one another in quick succession, and though the different classes or schools of design naturally overlapped, they may be approximately divided into the following periods:

The Queen Anne School, about 1689-1730.
The Chippendale School, about 1730-1770.
The Adam School, about 1760-1790.

[1] *Settles* were simple chests, to which upright backs and sometimes arm-pieces were added.

The Hepplewhite School, about 1785-1795.
The Sheraton School, about 1790-1806.

It is unfortunate that there is no large national collection of English furniture. There are a few fine pieces of eighteenth-century work at the Victoria and Albert Museum, but the best examples can only be seen in large country houses, or in the hands of dealers and collectors here and in America. The numerous books of design issued as trade catalogues (there is almost a complete collection in the Museum Art Library, South Kensington) show the different styles of the eighteenth-century craftsmen, and are thus a valuable guide to a knowledge of their work. But with the exception of Robert Adam's designs and some of Hepplewhite's, very few sketches in the illustrated catalogues were actually carried out. Most of the drawings were probably intended merely to show what could be executed if required. "Book-pieces"—made to order from the plates—are very rare, and the greater part of the old furniture now in existence must have been produced from designs which have disappeared.

In the present volume, the illustrations have all been taken from actual examples, and wherever possible the pieces chosen represent the finest or most characteristic types of each school.

ENGLISH FURNITURE DESIGNERS

OF THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER I

THE QUEEN ANNE SCHOOL (ABOUT 1689-1730)

"QUEEN ANNE" is the name generally given to the furniture produced from the time of William and Mary till the opening years of the reign of George II. The changes brought about by the prevalence of French fashions were observable early in the eighteenth century, but the style which finally culminated in that known as "Chippendale," retained at first so much of the "Queen Anne" character, that it has been found simpler to regard the furniture of the transitional stage as "late Queen Anne" and "early Chippendale," than to treat the early Georgian types as a separate class by themselves.

One of the most important characteristics of the Queen Anne period was the general adoption of the Dutch "cabriole" or bent-knee leg. In country districts Jacobean square-framed chairs and tables still

lingered on for another fifty years, but in towns and cities *bombé* curves superseded the old rectangular shapes, and walnut veneers and delicate carving were employed for decoration. Whenever supports of any kind were needed, the cabriole leg was nearly always used; the bulbous Dutch outlines were soon toned down, and in the types of this period we find once more a national school, truly English in feeling and workmanship.

Another influence, that of the architects, is rarely taken sufficiently into consideration. The mouldings, ornaments, and outlines of furniture were largely based on the researches and work of those who erected our public and private buildings. Architects designed the panelling, chimney-pieces, corner cupboards, console-tables, and many other details of the apartment. They were men of much learning in their profession, and early in the eighteenth century began to publish books of decoration for the interior of houses. Their ideas were freely borrowed by the cabinet-makers; the architectural character of bookcases, cabinets, and many other pieces, goes far to prove—indeed, proves conclusively—that it was primarily due to the architects that the great bulk of our beautiful eighteenth-century furniture ever came into existence.

At the close of the seventeenth century Sir Christopher Wren was rebuilding St. Paul's and many of the city churches, besides erecting a large

number of houses and other edifices throughout the country. His style of work was based upon classical models very freely interpreted and modified by his own personality. He established a school of craftsmen, among whom Grinling Gibbons (1648-1721) stands out pre-eminent as a carver and modeller. Thus Wren's school—with Gibbons as chief exponent—combined with Dutch influences, produced a distinct class of English carving.

The woods which formed the carcass or foundation work of Queen Anne furniture were walnut, oak, and chestnut, the finer qualities of walnut being reserved for veneers. At the beginning of the eighteenth century mahogany was but sparingly used; the first large importations of this timber from Cuba, San Domingo, and Honduras, were made about 1720—at the opening of the Chippendale era. Ebony and the native woods, holly, pear, box, and yew were all employed for banding and inlay: marquetry (in intricate geometrical or leaf patterns) which had long been fashionable, was generally carried out in light yellow upon a walnut ground. The shading was obtained by placing the grain of the wood in various directions, also by means of a hot iron, hot sand, or artificial staining. Dutch furniture was inlaid in a very similar manner, but the work was invariably coarser than the English.

Lacquering and painting in black, gold, and other

colours was also a favourite mode of decoration. Not only inlaid panels, but whole pieces of furniture were ornamented in this manner by English and Dutch workmen who imitated Chinese methods.

Brass-work in the form of hinges, key-escutcheons, handles, angle plates, nails, and ornaments were hardly ever seen on English furniture until this period. Now, however, metal-work began entirely to supersede the old wooden knobs and handles.

Chairs

The chairs were very quaint in form with wide seats, high backs, broad splats—or centre panels—and cabriole legs. This bent-knee leg in various shapes was common to many parts of the continent, and in all probability was of very ancient origin. It may have been derived from the goat's leg, to be seen in the furniture of primitive races. Another characteristic of Queen Anne chairs—the lion's or eagle's "claw-and-ball" foot—has been traced to the "Dragon's claw and pearl" of the Chinese; a similar device was employed by the early Egyptians, and is found on the base of old Roman tripods. The various European races adopted the antique designs, and varied them according to their national taste; the English, too, borrowed from country after country, but ended by nationalizing every type. And here lies the great interest and attraction of

our eighteenth-century schools; the inspiration was taken from many different sources, yet the hand of the English craftsman can hardly ever be mistaken.

In some examples of Queen Anne chairs the carving was slight, consisting of a leaf, shell, or scroll on the top rail; the same design appeared on the "knee" of the leg, on a "drop" ornament on the front of the seat and on the under-framing. In these simple chairs the splat was a solid, curved and hollowed or spoon-shaped panel, sometimes with a small piercing, and often decorated with marquetry. The side uprights almost invariably curved into the top rail, and the stuffed seat was let into a rebate or groove. There were, besides, numerous examples of elaborate carving in which the ornamental details were principally drawn from the architectural decorations of Gibbons and his fellow craftsmen. The splat was pierced with various openings and the spaces were filled in with fine carving; the whole framework, the legs, and the arms, were decorated with acanthus leaves, with Gibbons's favourite riband and forget-me-not pattern, with cord and tassels, and egg and tongue mouldings. At the beginning of the eighteenth century marquetry rapidly went out of fashion. The chair-backs were made lower and wider, and the pierced splat gradually developed into an open back cut into wide sections. Dragons, lions, and birds of

prey were frequently introduced, and the escalop shell, though still used occasionally, was no longer the principal ornament. Side and cross under-braces, which had characterized nearly all the earlier chairs, were now omitted, and sometimes only a single rail was employed to join the back legs.

The foot accompanying the cabriole leg was made in several different shapes, of which, besides the "claw-and-ball," the conventional "hoof," the "club," and the "scroll" foot were the chief.

The chair in illustration I is an example of the earliest Queen Anne style, which came very much under Dutch influences. It is executed in walnut; the shaped splat is inlaid with ivory and various light coloured woods in a floral design. A leaf pattern is carved on the top rail, and on the "knees" of the cabriole legs. With the exception of the legs, the whole frame is inlaid with coloured woods. This chair is one of a suite once in the possession of Mr. James Orrock. The design of the marquetry varies in every piece.

The walnut chairs in group II, formerly in the possession of Mr. Orrock, are very fine examples of Queen Anne carving, dating from about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

In chair A the splat is pierced with small openings, and has a little scroll and leaf-carving on either side. The top rail is ornamented with an escalop shell, and this is again repeated on the knees.

Fig. 1. QUEEN ANNE COURT CUPBOARD.

Fig. VI. DESK AND CHAIR—QUEEN ANNE.

To face page 6.

A B C D

QUEEN ANNE CARVING

Fig. II.
To face page 6.

Eagles' heads appear at the juncture of the side uprights and top rail, and also at the extremity of the arms. The feet are club-shaped, and the upholstery of the seat is drawn over the seat-frame.

Chair B exhibits Gibbons's influence upon the cabinet-makers of his day. On the top rail carved drapery is interwoven with cord and tassels. On either side a vulture's head is depicted and the claws of the same bird appear as feet. The side supports and splats are ornamented with foliage and flowers; a leaf design is carved on the knees and arms, and a shell on the front rail of the seat. The lower end of the splat is formed into two rolling scrolls, and there is a squab seat.

In the large armchair C, Gibbons's style of ornamentation is again noticeable in the flowers of various kinds which are intermingled with the carved foliage. In the centre of the top rail a large shell is combined with leaves and scrolls. The foot is a lion's claw-and-ball.

Chair D resembles in size and general outline the earliest Queen Anne chairs with a solid spoon-shaped splat, but in this example the whole back is elaborately pierced and carved. The details are chiefly acanthus leaves, honeysuckles and scrolls. There is a large acanthus leaf on the knee and on the front rail of the shaped cross-stretchers. The foot is a conventional hoof.

The armchair in figure VI, which is in the

possession of Mr. Guy Dawber, belongs to the late Queen Anne period. It is lower and broader than an average Chippendale chair—the height is 3 ft., the width of the seat in front, 1 ft. 11 in., depth, 1 ft. 6 in. from front to back. The splat is formed of broad bands representing a scroll-design, the top rail bows slightly and the protruding corners terminate in a rolling scroll. There is some delicate leaf-carving on the top rail, on the knee of the cabriole legs, and on the arm supports. At the lower end of the splat are two small carved tassels and a row of forget-me-nots. The arms end in conventionalized claws which are further ornamented on the inner side with roses. The upholstered seat lies in a rebate; the foot is an eagle's claw-and-ball; a single rail joins the back legs.

The large chairs in illustration III, owned by Mr. J. E. Schunck, were known as drunkard's chairs, probably because their large size enabled our forefathers to repose comfortably therein after an evening's carouse. The height is 3 ft. 1 in. (back, 1 ft. 9½ in.); the width of the seat in front is 2 ft. 9 in., the depth, 1 ft. 10 in. The wood is mahogany; the pierced splat is unornamented, but the top rail has four scrolls rolling outwards. The arms, also quite plain, are curiously twisted. The front cabriole legs have some delicate leaf-carving on the knees, and end in a spiral scroll.

Though chiefly limited to country districts, "slat-

Fig. III. DRUNKARDS' CHAIRS.

To face page 8.

back" chairs[1] were very popular. Three, five, or six cut and shaped slats—sometimes perforated—extended from side to side across the upright back. These chairs had a rush seat, a "turned" foot and leg, and the side uprights, which were often "turned," ended in small rounded terminals. Similar chairs were made throughout the century, but those of the later periods were more elegant in form. Both the slat-back and the picturesque Windsor chairs were generally carried out in home-grown woods.

Three-cornered chairs, with two splats and a semicircular top rail, corresponded in their general details with the ordinary Queen Anne chairs. Illustration IV represents A a large-sized Queen Anne three-cornered chair, executed in mahogany. It has an extension-top or headrest, shaped splats, and an escalop shell carved upon the knee of the front leg.

In B is shown a mahogany armchair with a spindle-back, a pierced top rail, and a cane seat. It is one of a set of six, of Westmorland make—date about 1745. It runs on small lignum rollers which are fixed in the bottom of the side rails. Chairs of similar shape were produced about the same period in other parts of the country. In an old house in Devonshire, for example, are two beech and sycamore chairs, painted white, with wooden seats, in shape exactly like that in the illustration.

The armchair C is also of Westmorland manu-

[1] Called in Lancashire "laggan" or ladder-backed chairs.

facture, and although the Queen-Anne-shaped splat is employed, the centre panel is supported by two side rails instead of being joined into the framework of the seat. It is unusual to find a chair of this type with arms; the single chairs of a similar style may often be met with in that district. The date is probably 1735, but may have been much later in the century, since the old shapes lingered on for a long time in the country districts. All three chairs are owned by Mr. Dan. Gibson.

Stuffed-backed and open-backed settees[1]—a development of the old "settle"—as well as couches, with headpiece only, were designed to harmonize with the prevailing style of the chairs.

"Grandfather" stuffed-back chairs had been in use for some considerable time, many fine examples date back to Jacobean days. Even at the beginning of the eighteenth century the legs of such chairs were often "turned," not cabriole, and had curved stretchers between them. The coverings were either tapestry, or velvet and silk brocade. The arms rolled outwards in a graceful sweep, and many specimens had well-shaped wings on either side of the back.

Tables

Tables, in common with every kind of furniture, went through various phases of evolution. The

[1] Also known as Darby and Joan chairs.

A B C

Fig. IV. COUNTRY-MADE PIECES.

To face page 10.

A B C

Fig. V.
To face page 11.

COUNTRY-MADE PIECES.

earliest type of table consisted of a simple board placed upon folding trestles and removable at will. At the beginning of the Queen Anne period, however, fixed table-tops were almost universal, and were generally supported by heavily "turned" legs. With the advent of Dutch fashions lighter and more elegant tables were executed in large quantities. Flap-tables, round, square or oval card-tables and small writing-tables were all in general use. The gate dining-table, with its elaborate underframing and numerous "turned" legs, was a common type in country districts. But, as a general rule, tables were provided with cabriole legs either plain or slightly carved.

Illustration V represents three tables: A and C are country-made oak tables of the early Queen Anne period with "turned" legs. They are good types of the furniture produced in Westmorland, Cumberland, and North Lancashire about the last quarter of the seventeenth century. The table B is of mahogany and of somewhat later date. The cabriole legs and claw-and-ball feet are beautifully formed and of fine workmanship: the mounts also are of excellent finish. The elegant little stool is of walnut. All four pieces are in the possession of Mr. Dan. Gibson.

The court-cupboard in group I (formerly in the possession of Mr. J. Orrock) is an example of the fine English marquetry in walnut and boxwood, which

was at its best at the time of Charles II and William and Mary. The court-cupboard is the old traditional shape which had been executed, with little alteration in form, since the Elizabethan period. The doors are veneered and inlaid with delicate intertwined foliage. The two sides of the cupboard, the inside of the doors, as well as the interior drawers and small cupboard are similarly decorated, but in a somewhat coarser manner. The same two colours are employed in a border round the doors, and in the marquetry on the shelves which brace the lower part. Here, however, the inlay is dark on a light ground. The ormolu drop-handles are pear-shaped and hollow at the back.

Writing-Tables

The square "Scriptor" or bureau writing-desk with a slanting top, appeared far more graceful upon its new bandy legs. Another form of writing-bureau had a bookcase or cabinet top, with doors of glass or wood, and drawers below reaching almost to the ground. The interior or well of the desks was fitted with numerous small drawers and partitions, and both the outside and inside were often banded and inlaid.

The desk, illustration VI, in the possession of Mr. Guy Dawber, is an excellent example of the early Queen Anne type. The wood is oak, and the inlaid

centre plaque and stars on the lid are of ebony, box, holly, and walnut; the banding round the top and the drawers is of walnut. The interior, of stained oak, is fitted with six drawers of varying sizes—three on either side and pigeon-holes in the centre. When opened the desk top rests on two slides which draw out. The cabriole legs are very typical of the period; the knees form a rolling scroll and bulge outwards and upwards. Legs of this shape seem to afford so little support to the framework above, that only perfection of workmanship can account for the number of pieces of this type which are still in good preservation at the present day.

Corner Cupboards

A type of Queen Anne furniture common to nearly every house was the "corner cupboard." This was often framed into the panelling and treated as a structural part of the room. The lower part had two folding doors, and the upper and larger portion had a recess of open shelves for the display of china. These shelves were curved to follow the shape of the back and were sometimes inclosed either by a single or double door (glazed or solid). The top was often finished with a large shell in the form of an apse and with little or no pediment above.

Such cupboards designed by architects, together

with the panelling and other fittings, were afterwards copied by the cabinet-makers and adapted to form a separate piece of furniture. A Queen Anne corner cupboard is illustrated in the chapter on lacquer work.

Chests of Drawers

The chest had, from time immemorial, been put to a greater number of different uses than any other article of furniture. It had served as a receptacle for clothes or goods, as a seat, a table, a desk, and even a bed. A chest of drawers—that is, a chest to which one or two long drawers were added below—was a variation adopted in England during the seventeenth century; it was made to stand on small square or rounded supports. The Dutch "high boy" or "tall boy" was first introduced in the Queen Anne period, and these quaint articles were executed in slightly varying styles throughout the eighteenth century. The pediment, mouldings, handles, escutcheons, and supports are the main guides as to the date of manufacture. The shape was that of an upper set of drawers placed upon and fixed to a lower set. In the earliest examples the lower part usually had only one long drawer, or three small ones placed side by side, and the set above—which was finished with a moulded or (later) a broken scroll pediment—ended at the top with

two small drawers also side by side. The ornamentation often consisted of a large single or double moulding upon the frame around the drawers. The brass handles were either solid pear-shaped drops, generally hollowed at the back, or small drooping handles forming a section of an oblong ring. Some chests had six "turned" legs with stretchers between, and others had four cabriole legs with two "turned" drops on the lower edge of the front framework. The dressing-tables, now known as "low boys," were made to correspond with the chests of drawers, and consisted practically of the lower part of a "high boy" with a flat table-top. The toilet-glass was rarely attached to the dressing-table.

Clock-Cases

About 1680 an important change took place in the shape of clock-cases. It was at this time that the pendulum, in connection with weights and chains, first came into general use for the regulation of clocks. The pendulum required protection, and a long wooden case was devised for the purpose. All the early clock-cases had been made of metal, and it was only at the time of the Restoration that wooden hoods were provided for "bracket clocks." Both tall clocks and bracket clocks were divided into "hood," "waist," and "base," and these main features were retained throughout the eighteenth century. The

details of moulding and ornamentation varied according to the fashions of the day, but the beautiful outlines and proportions seem to have been determined upon at a very early date.

The grandfather clocks of the Queen Anne period were tall and severe; narrow in the waist and without any strongly marked base. The hood was treated in the classical style, with architrave, frieze and cornice (later cornice only), supported by columns—often twisted—at the angles, and was sometimes surmounted with a domed top. The door in the trunk was square-headed; it was finished with a plain half-round moulding, and a small glass, circular or oval, was let into the woodwork just opposite the pendulum. The ornamentation consisted of brass work, perforated or *repoussé* (later fretted wood), in the frieze; brass balls or cups attached to the hood; and engraved or *repoussé* cupids and foliage on the spandrels (or angles of the face). Until the middle of the eighteenth century the numerals were rarely cut directly on the dial itself; an hour-circle of silvered brass was fixed to the face of the clock, and on this the figures were blackened to contrast with the chased or engraved brass groundwork below. The hands of the early clocks were elaborately shaped, carved, and pierced. At first the framework around the dial was square, and the name of the maker was inscribed in Latin immediately below it, or, a few years later, on the

lower portion of the clock-face. The frame of the dial-circle next received an arched top, and the maker's name was engraved in English, after about 1715, on a name-plate within the arched space. Some clocks were marked with the name of the owner, or had a motto or crest in lieu of a name. In many instances dolphins appeared on either side of the name-plate.

Bracket clocks also had a square case, and the earliest examples had a dome top of perforated metal with a handle in the middle. When an arch was introduced into the upper part of the dial-frame, the dome gave place to a bell-shaped or curved top.

The wood of both grandfather and bracket clocks was usually oak, or oak veneered with beautifully figured walnut and inlaid with rich marquetry. A great many clocks also had their oak cases covered with English lacquer-painting.

Mirror Frames

Hanging-mirrors with wooden frames first came into general use in Italy during the sixteenth century. These frames began to be imitated both in England and France about the close of that century, but it was not until the time of the Restoration that decorative mirrors were produced in any quantity in this country. Our early wood-frames were architectural in character and were generally used to

inclose a space, such as the panel over a chimney-piece. Occasionally the gilded frames of Charles II period were almost exact facsimiles of the stone-work frames (with entablature and supporting pillars) which encircled church memorial tablets of the time. The only difference was the ornamentation, the memorial frames having skulls and bones instead of shells, festoons, or masks. The early Queen Anne frames were of much simpler construction, often consisting only of a narrow moulded margin of walnut, either square or oblong, and shaped, at first at the top, later both top and bottom. The glass was nearly always bevelled, and the outline of the bevel followed exactly the graceful curves of the inner frame. Owing to the small size of the early Vauxhall plates, the mirrors were frequently divided into two separate pieces. The upper panel was then finished with a dull surface, figures or patterns were cut in the back of the glass, the coating of mercury showed through from the front, and an effect was thus produced which resembled intaglio or gem-cutting (see illustration LIV). In other examples two or three plates were framed together and the joints were hidden by bands of metal or strips of coloured glass fastened with metal or glass rosettes.

The wide frames carved by Grinling Gibbons had a very distinctive character, they were executed in lime or other soft woods and gilded. The chief

ornaments were fruit, flowers, and knots of ribbon carved in bold relief.

Plate XLI shows a Gibbons mirror-frame of beautiful workmanship. It is of gilded limewood, size 3 ft. 3 in. high by 2 ft. 9 in. wide. The carvings of flowers and fruit are wonderfully realistic. They are executed in high relief and deeply undercut. An animal's head appears in the centre of the upper margin, and on the corresponding portion of the lower border is a cluster of flowers and some fruit; many other objects are wreathed around the frame, and form graceful lines and curves. Grapes, pears, figs, and pomegranates are the most noticeable among the fruits, and the chief flowers are the rose, the sunflower, and the convolvulus. In low relief are numberless leaves and small forget-me-nots. The mirror itself is an old piece of Vauxhall glass, without a bevel at the edge. This frame belongs to Mr. Alfred Davis.

The French Huguenot workmen, who fled to England after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, greatly stimulated the taste for frames in the style of Louis Quatorze. There are many examples of the work of these refugees at Hampton Court Palace. About this time, also, a quantity of French mirrors were imported ready framed and glazed with plate-glass from the works at St. Gobain.

Even before the beginning of the eighteenth

century frames covered with old English lac were by no means uncommon. Illustration LIV shows a mirror thus ornamented.

About the time of the first two Georges, mirror-frames of gilded pinewood or mahogany were made in many different shapes. The one perhaps most often met with consists of a flat, wide margin cut into fantastic outlines. A long-beaked bird, which appears to be flying through a hole in the top, is introduced by way of ornament. The glass, often bevelled, has a simple moulding round it as well as a small inner member, which is carved and gilt.

CHAPTER II

THE CHIPPENDALES

THE eighteenth century is still so near to us that it seems hard to imagine that men of any note at the time could have lived, worked, and died without leaving any record of their existence. Yet greatly as we appreciate the work of the designers of this period we know but little of the personality of the workers. They were seldom considered worthy of notice by chroniclers in their own day, and their books of design contain very few autobiographical details. It is only by a diligent search of old newspapers, registers, and wills that it is possible to obtain any information on the subject of their history. Those craftsmen who did not publish their designs, and others who did publish, but omitted to sign their drawings, cannot now be identified even by name.

J. T. Smith in his gossiping volumes on "Nollekens and his Times," 1828, gave an amusing account of a neighbour and contemporary of Chippendale's, a cabinet-maker named Cobb, who was frequently employed by George III. He lived at No. 72, St.

Martin's Lane, and was said to have brought into fashion a table with a rising desk for drawing, writing, or reading while in a standing position. He was "perhaps one of the proudest men in England, always appeared in full dress of the most superb and costly kind, in which state he would strut through his workshop giving orders to his men."

But of Chippendale himself Smith was unable to give any character sketch, though his reference to him is not without interest. "The extensive premises, No. 60," he writes, "were formerly held by Chippendale, the most famous upholsterer and cabinet-maker of his day, to whose folio work on household furniture the trade formerly made constant reference. . . . As most fashions come round again, I should not wonder, notwithstanding the beautifully classic change brought in by Thomas Hope, Esq.,[1] if we were to see the unmeaning scroll- and shell-work with which the furniture of the reign of Louis Quatorze was so profusely encumbered, revive, when Chippendale's work will again be sought after with redoubled avidity, and as many of the copies must have been sold as waste paper, the few remaining will probably bear rather a high

[1] "Anastasius" Hope, of Deepdene, near Dorking, author of "Household Furniture and Interior Decoration" (1807), a folio for which he made most of the drawings, and "procured classic models and casts from Italy."

price." After the lapse of about fifty years, during which a great decadence took place in furniture design, Smith's prophecy came true; Chippendale's book and Chippendale's work were sought after and treasured by countless lovers of the beautiful. Smith's words are of especial value as an additional proof of the high position Chippendale held among the craftsmen of his day.

Besides this notice and a passing allusion in Sheraton's "Drawing Book," the only reference to the great cabinet-maker within fifty years of his death appears to be that in George Smith's "Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide" (1826): "The importation of it [French taste] into England changed the whole feature of design as it related to Household furniture. This taste continued almost unchanged through the reign of George II and the earlier part of George III. The elder Mr. Chippendale was, I believe, the first who favoured the public with a work consisting of designs drawn from this school with great merit to himself however defective the taste of the time might be."

Details of Chippendale's life and personal surroundings can only be gleaned from fragmentary passages scattered here and there in records of his time. Many new facts, however, have thus been brought to light which enable us to follow his career and that of his son with more accuracy than has been possible hitherto.

The first Thomas Chippendale known to history was a carver and picture-frame maker of considerable standing in Worcester during the last half of the seventeenth century. There his son, the celebrated Thomas Chippendale (Chippendale II) was born and spent a part of his early life. Both father and son settled in London before the year 1727 and Chippendale (I) continued his former work with great success in the metropolis. According to Redgrave ("Dictionary of Artists of the English School," 1878), Chippendale (II) first found employment in London as a joiner, and, by his own industry and taste, became in the reign of George I a "most eminent cabinet-maker and carver." At Christmas, 1749, Chippendale (II) took a shop in Conduit Street, Long Acre, and in 1753 removed to the larger premises, No. 60, St. Martin's Lane, with which his name was henceforth to be associated. It is not known when Chippendale (II) started business on his own account, but by the time of his removal his trade had already grown so extensive that he was obliged to take over the three houses adjoining his own. The rent and taxes on the four houses amounted to a considerable sum for that period. The Parish Register for 1755 records an appeal he made against an overcharge on his rates. On 19th May, 1748, a marriage is recorded in the Parish Register of St. George's Chapel, Mayfair, between Thomas Chippendale and Catherine Red-

shaw of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.[1] The identity of this Thomas Chippendale with the cabinet-maker is extremely probable. Chippendale is by no means a common name and it is unlikely that there were two Thomas Chippendales living in the same parish. Following the example of a few enterprising competitors, Chippendale resolved to publish his designs, and by the aid of a number of subscribers, he was enabled to issue his original sketches in book form. "The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director" was what would now be known as a trade catalogue, but with its long and totally extraneous introduction dealing with the five orders of Architecture, it evidently aspired to be quite an elaborate work on houses and their furniture. The book was announced among the "New Publications" in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for April, 1754:

"Thomas Chippendale published the 'Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director,' £2. 8. 0."[2]

There were one hundred and sixty engraved plates. The list of subscribers appended to the "Director" proves that Chippendale had patrons and customers in all classes of society. From the preface—an address to his customers—something of the writer's character can be inferred. Pushing,

[1] Register (Harleian Society).

[2] It may be mentioned that the present value of this edition is about £25.

energetic, conscious of his superiority over his rivals, full of the self-assurance due to a knowledge of his powers, an excellent business man—such is the rough sketch of Chippendale as he showed himself in this, the only writing of his that now exists. Genius as he was from an artistic point of view it is evident that in general culture and education he was not above the class to which he belonged.

His book of designs attracted much attention, the public appreciated his work and seems to have bought largely, but the true greatness of his productions was not recognized until nearly a century after his death. It is a curious fact that the greater portion of the furniture bearing the impress of his genius, or known to have been designed and made in his shops, is not illustrated in any of the three editions of the "Director." The elegant ball-and-claw foot which is seen so constantly in connection with his chairs and tables is conspicuous by its absence, nor does this design appear in any of the illustrated works published by his contemporaries.

Furniture is now made for the most part in large factories, machinery taking the place of the skilled craftsman. Designers leave to others the execution of their ideas. It is not the object of this chapter to discuss the technical qualities of the Chippendales' work, but it must be remembered that they themselves not only designed but carved much of the

best furniture that left their workshop. Their workmen who were not employed as draughtsmen made every chair, table, etc., by hand, under their masters' guidance.

About four years ago a curiously carved doorway was left temporarily standing near the site of No. 60, St. Martin's Lane, though the premises themselves had been pulled down. This doorway once formed the entrance to the Chippendales' house and shop. Even that last relic of the old days has now disappeared, and the home of the famous cabinet-makers has given place to a pile of tall red-brick buildings.

The year 1755 brought calamity to the Chippendale shop and its inhabitants—a calamity which may have threatened its very existence.

"Saturday, April 5th, 1755.

"A fire broke out in the workshop of Mr. Chippendale, a cabinet-maker, near St. Martin's Lane, which consumed the same, wherein were the chests of twenty-two workmen."—*Gentleman's Magazine.*

Such is the simple announcement, and unfortunately no further details appeared in the daily papers. Nevertheless even this meagre account of the fire is of interest, as it shows the condition of the Chippendale business at that time. There is no means of ascertaining how far the damage went, nor whether the shop itself was burned. All that

can be known for certain is that the disaster had no permanent results.

A second edition of the "Director" was published in 1759, and a third, with 300 plates, in 1761 (price £3 3*s*.). The bookseller, T. Becket, of Tully's Head, in the Strand, advertised the second edition among his new books in the daily papers. Thus:

"Sept. 4. 1760.

"Chippendale's elegant designs for Household furniture."

A more elaborate advertisement appeared in 1766:

"Household Furniture—being the completest book of the kind extant.

"This day is published in one large volume, folio, price £3. 0. 0. bound. The 'Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director:' containing 200 Copper Plates elegantly engraved from designs of the most useful and ornamental Household Furniture: consisting of Chairs, Beds, Bookcases, Library Tables, Cabinets, Organs, China-Cases, Candlesticks, Pier-glasses, Chandeliers, Girandoles, Chimney-pieces, Stove-grates and other Ornaments in the newest and most fashionable taste.

"By Thomas Chippendale, Cabinet-Maker in St. Martin's Lane. Printed for the Author and sold by him at his House in St. Martin's Lane."

In the year 1760 Chippendale was elected a member of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce. This useful body, generally known as the Society of Arts, was founded in 1754, and is still flourishing. At the end of the eighteenth century it enrolled many of the greatest men in the world of art, literature, and science. In a small volume containing the autographs of the earliest members, Chippendale's name appears beside those of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Edward Gibbon, Richardson, Dr. Johnson, David Garrick, Horace Walpole, the Earl of Bute, and John Wilkes. The Society, when Chippendale was elected, had its quarters in the Strand, near Beaufort Buildings. The house it now occupies in John Street, Adelphi, was built by Robert Adam, also a member, in 1774. One cannot help speculating as to the terms upon which Chippendale stood with his fellow members. However certain of his powers as a craftsman he must have felt ill at ease in the company of men of learning and distinction. He continued in the Society until his death.

In 1766 a change took place in the Chippendale firm, owing to the death of a partner, a Scotsman named James Rannie.[1]

[1] Rannie died very well-to-do. His will, as "of the parish of Saint Martin in the Fields . . . upholder and cabinet maker," was made 17th and proved 21st January, 1766; it is registered in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 32 Tyndall.

On Monday, 10th February, 1766, the following announcement appeared in the "Public Advertiser":

"Whereas by the Death of Mr. James Rannie late of St. Martin's Lane, Cabinet Maker & Upholder, the Partnership between him & Mr. Thomas Chippendale, dissolved at his death & the Trade will for the future be carried on by Mr. Chippendale on his own account. All Persons who have any Claim on the said Partnership are desired forthwith to send in their Accounts up to the 20 January inclusive, to Mr. Thomas Haig at the House of Mr. Chippendale. And all Persons indebted to the said Partnership are desired to pay the Same to the said Thomas Haig, who is lawfully authorised to receive the Same."

In the following month a great sale of stock was held. Between March 3rd and 24th this sale was advertised nearly every day in the "Public Advertiser" as follows:

"To be sold by Auction by Mr. Pervil.

"Some Time this month on the Premises in St. Martin's Lane.

"All the genuine Stock in Trade of Mr. Chippendale and his late partner Mr. Rannie, deceased, Cabinet-makers, consisting of a great Variety of fine Cabinet-Work, Chairs and a Parcel of fine

seasoned Feathers; as also all the large unwrought Stock consisting of Mahogany and other Woods in Blank Boards and Wainscot, of which sale timely notice will be given in this and other Papers.

"The Business to be carried on for the future by Mr. Chippendale on the Premises upon his own Account."

On Monday, 17th, the day of the auction was fixed for the 24th of that same month, and some further items were added to the original announcement:

"A great Variety of fine Mahogany & Tulup (*sic*) Wood, Cabinets, Desks, & Bookcases, Cloaths Presses, double Chests of Drawers, Commodes, Buroes, fine Library, Writing, Card, Dining and other Tables, Turkey & other Carpets, one of which is 13 feet by 19 feet, Six fine Pattern Chairs with sundry other Pieces of curious Cabinet Work. . . .

"The whole to be viewed on Friday next to the Hour of Sale (Sunday excepted) which will begin each day punctually at Twelve.

"Catalogues to be had the Days of Viewing at the Place of Sale & at Mr. Pervil's, the Upper End of Bow Street, Covent Garden."

The Sale appears to have lasted three days, during which time it was advertised daily.

The exact year of the death of Chippendale (II)

has been ascertained for the first time from the following entry in the burial register of St. Martin's Church:

"1779.

"November 13. . . . Thomas Chippendale."

No age is given. The fact that a man so business-like and practical should have left no will seems to point to a death of some sudden nature. Appended is the entry relating to his estate in the Administration Act Book, Prerogative Court of Canterbury:

"*December* 1779

"Thomas Chippendale.

"On the sixteenth day, administration of the goods, chattels and credits of Thomas Chippendale, late of the parish of Saint Martin in the ffields in the co. of Middlesex, deceased, was granted to Elizabeth Chippendale widow, the relict of the said deceased, having been first sworn duly to administer."

Another grant was made in January, 1784, and from this later record we are able to complete the account of the Chippendale family. Chippendale (II) left four children, Thomas, Mary (spinster), John, and Charles. If the marriage register at St. George's be taken to refer to the cabinet-maker, Elizabeth must have been the second wife. She administered to her late husband's "goods, chattels & credits" until

her death, which occurred previously to 1784. A certain Philip Davies was then appointed as administrator in her place in order to "attend and confirm proceedings then impending in the Court of Chancery."

The said proceedings were for the recovery of a long outstanding debt of the Chippendale firm. The debtor was no other than the notorious singer and entertainer, Theresa Cornelys, of Carlisle House, Soho Square. According to John Taylor[1] (of "Monsieur Tonson" fame), she was known at one time "as the empress of the region of elegance and fashion." Subscription concerts, balls, and masquerades patronized by royalty and half the peerage were held at her house. These entertainments were said to be of "unparalleled splendour," but she encountered much opposition from the proprietors of the Italian Opera House and theatrical managers, and lost money year by year. In November, 1772, she was declared a bankrupt. For some time before her death she made shift to live as a "vendor of asses' milk, trailing a small hand-cart from door to door"; but she ended her days in the Fleet Prison in 1797. Upon her bankruptcy she had assigned her estate and property to Chippendale and various other creditors. Subsequently it was discovered that the greater part of what she owned had been previously mortgaged to a certain Arthur Jones.

[1] "Records of My Life" (1832).

The final result of the law-suit between these contending creditors is not known; but since Jones, as mortgagee, had the prior claim, it seems unlikely that the Chippendales recovered much of their debt.

On the death of Chippendale (II), his eldest son succeeded to the business.

The third Thomas Chippendale entered into partnership with Thomas Haig, a Scotsman, who had been bookkeeper to James Rannie, and also one of executors. Haig probably had no practical knowledge of upholstery. Rannie's widow, Grizzle, who survived her husband for many years, lent Haig money, which he put into the business. According to the directories the firm from 1779 to 1784 was styled "Chippendale and Haig"; but in 1785 Haig appears as the senior partner. Haig withdrew from the firm in 1796, and made his will on 1st October of that year. He left many liberal legacies, including one of £1,000 to his "very old friend and late partner Thomas Chippendale." Unluckily these generous bequests, together with all debts and "incidental expenses," were to be paid, so Haig directed, "out of the Monies secured to me on several Bonds of Thomas Chippendale, my Successor in Business, and to be so paid and drawn out according to the Tenor of such Bonds." As Chippendale still continued a defaulter, Haig in a codicil dated 16th August, 1802, directed his executors to take such measures for the recovery of the money, immediately

after his death, as they might see fit, the legacy to Chippendale to become null and void unless he settled within a twelvemonth.[1]

In 1814 Chippendale opened a shop in the Haymarket—No. 57—and for four years carried on the old St. Martin's Lane business simultaneously with the new venture. In 1821 he removed to 42, Jermyn Street. Like his father he was a member of the Society of Arts; his name appears on the list of members from 1794 to 1814. George Smith (1826) says of him that "he was known only amongst a few . . . but possessed a great degree of taste with great ability as a draughtsman and designer."

This Chippendale devoted himself not only to decorative, but to fine art as well, and exhibited five pictures at the Royal Academy.

In 1784, "A Gang of Gypsies," and "Mirth in Low Life."

In 1785, "A Watchman," and "An Orange Girl."

In 1801, "Inside of a Prison with the effect of lamplight."

[1] Haig died unmarried 23rd May, 1803, in St. Martin's Lane in his seventy-sixth year ("Gentleman's Magazine," June, 1803, p. 598). In his will, proved 2nd June following, he described himself as "of Saint Martin's Lane, gentleman," and desired to be buried in the vault of St. Martin's church "near to the Body of my late revered and venerable Master Mr. Rannie who lays there interred" (Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 536 Marriott). His cousin and one of his numerous legatees, John Haig, cabinet-maker, of the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, may have been in Chippendale's business.

His will, of which the following is an abstract, was dated from 61, Regent Street, Vincent Square, Westminster, 2nd December, 1822.

"I being of sound mind, but considering myself in a dying state give and bequeath to Sarah Wheatley, wife of Henry Wheatley of Regent Street aforsaid, the whole of my personal property of whatsoever description I may die possessed of, for her whole and sole use independent of her husband and I hereby constitute her my sole executrix."[1]

The will was proved by Sarah Wheatley on 28th January, 1823.

From time to time the Chippendales received orders to furnish large country houses, and this proved a considerable source of profit to them. Chippendale (II) worked at Harewood House, Yorkshire; at Lord Poulett's seat, Hinton St. George; at Rowton Castle, Salop; and probably at Stourhead, Bath. In each case documents or bills have been preserved which prove that the great cabinet-maker was present in person to supervise the work.

Chippendale (III) and his men spent some months at Lord Townshend's country place, Raynham Hall, Norfolk. In a letter dated 3rd July, 1819, Lord Townshend informed Chippendale that he had put the sum of £1,200, "in payment of work

[1] Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 11 Richards.

done," to the cabinet-maker's credit at Messrs. Bartlay and Co., bankers, Aylsham.

Some original sketches by Chippendale (II) are preserved in the Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum. Three of the drawings have the subscription "T. Chippendale" written in ink at the foot, and are perhaps the only diagrams now in existence which bear his autograph signature as designer. These were the original designs for some of the new plates in the third edition of the "Director," 1761.

The circumstances under which the portfolio was presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum are a sufficient proof of their authenticity. In 1862 Mr. George Lock contributed a number of pen-sketches by eighteenth-century designers to the Edinburgh section of the International Exhibition. Of these, seventy were by Chippendale's contemporary, Matthias Lock (the grandfather of the exhibitor); and twenty, representing chandeliers, glass and picture-frames, tables, etc., were by Chippendale himself. When the exhibition was over, Mr. George Lock's whole collection was sent as a gift to the Museum.

It is interesting to observe from the amount of detail given in these diagrams, that Chippendale did not, as so often asserted, roughly sketch his ideas and leave to the engraver the task of working out his suggestions. The drawings are all executed in Indian ink, a "brass-pen" was used for the out-

lines and a "hair-pencil" for the curves and delicate shading. In many of the Chippendale designs which are not signed, the names of the subjects depicted are noted in a handwriting identical with that of the signatures.

At some time between 1820 and 1834, eleven plates, without the name of either designer or engraver, were issued as "Chippendale's Designs for Sconces, Chimney and Looking-glass Frames, In the Old French Style," etc. These have lately been proved [1] to be a mere reproduction of sketches by Thomas Johnson. Again, in 1834, John Weale, a well-known publisher, of No. 59, High Holborn, brought out another book of supposed Chippendale designs (if, indeed, he was not responsible for the first), calling it "Chippendale's One Hundred and Thirty-three Designs of Interior Decorations in the Old French and Antique Styles." But it has been clearly shown that this also was a forgery, since the drawings were all by Johnson and Matthias Lock. The signatures of the real designers were stoned out and that of Chippendale substituted at the foot of each plate—the object being probably to make the book more saleable. In 1858-9 a second edition of this book, with additional sketches, was published by Weale as "Old English and French Ornament."

[1] Cf. "Thomas Chippendale," by R. S. Clouston, Part III, in "The Connoisseur" for September, 1903.

CHAPTER III

MATTHIAS DARLY

AMONG the numerous designers of the second half of the eighteenth century, Matthias Darly has a place apart. He devoted himself to two distinct branches of art, the designing of ornament and the drawing of caricatures. As a designer of ceilings, frames, brackets, and panels for decorative carving, he was second to none of the great masters of the period, and he was equally well known as a caricaturist and printseller. The greater part of his productions were etched, coloured, or engraved by his own hand, and in the capacity of engraver he was employed by Thomas Chippendale.

Owing, no doubt, to Darly's remarkable versatility it has been hitherto supposed that there were two designers and engravers of his name. Darly the publisher and caricaturist was held to be a very inferior decorative artist[1] and an altogether different man from Darly the designer of note (author of the "Ornamental Architect"). After a careful comparison of style, dates, addresses and

[1] To this Darly was attributed "A New Book of Chinese Designs" (1754).

signatures, it is now certain that the two Darlys were in fact one and the same person.

During the first part of his career Matthias (or Matthew) Darly (spelt also Darley) often removed from one part of the Strand to another—sometimes his business was carried on at two or three branch depots simultaneously, but his shops were always known by the sign of the "Acorn" or "Golden Acorn." An address was printed on all his publications, and by tracing him from shop to shop it can easily be seen that the same class of productions was issued from each fresh address.

Darly is supposed to have begun life as an architect, afterwards giving up his profession to start as a publisher with a partner named Edwards. His first known publication was an engraved caricature partly coloured by hand, "The Cricket-players of Europe" (Edwards and Darly, 1741, "The Acorn," opposite Hungerford Strand). By the middle of the eighteenth century a distinct English school of satirical drawing had come into existence. Shops were opened for the sale of caricatures, which afforded a most profitable trade. Darly in the Strand and Carrington Bowles in St. Paul's Churchyard were the best known of these printsellers. Thus, in a print entitled "Ecce Homo" (1775), a rival publisher was shown attacking Darly's shop windows with a cane. Another view of his windows, with their display of caricatures, was given in "The Macaroni

Print Shop" (1772); and in a print dated 1762, "The Hungry Mob of Scribblers and Etchers," Lord Bute was represented as distributing money from the steps of a portico, while the publisher himself and Dr. Johnson were among the spectators of the scene. The importance of Darly's shop at the time is further shown by J. T. Smith, who, in his entertaining book "Nollekens and his Times" (1828), wrote of Richard Cosway, R.A.: "So ridiculously foppish did he become that Matth. Darly the famous caricature print seller, introduced an etching of him in his window in the Strand as the 'Macaroni Miniature Painter.'"

Among the marriage registers of St. George's Chapel, Mayfair (Register, Harleian Soc.), there is an entry on 1st April, 1750, which records the marriage of "Matthias Darly and Elizabeth Harold of St. Martin's in the Fields." This is in all probability a record of Darly's first marriage.

In 1754 Darly issued his earliest book of decorative drawings. It was entitled: "A new book of Chinese designs price 4/- (published by Edwards and Darly and sold by the Authors, first house on the right Northumberland Court, Strand, and also in Westminster Hall)."

In the same year Darly engraved many of the plates in Thomas Chippendale's "Director." It is known that he and Chippendale were personal friends, and as Darly was an architect, the supposi-

tion is probably correct, which credits him with having made the draughts and plans for many of Chippendale's designs.

Between 1757 and 1763 Darly and Edwards published a highly interesting series of political prints. They were issued separately on small cards and also bound together in book form under the name: "A Political and Satirical History." Each year a new edition appeared in which fresh plates were added to the series.

This history represented accurately the state of party feeling at the close of George II's reign and the opening of George III's. It might be said to form a set of illustrations for Horace Walpole's "Letters," so exactly did it verify the facts and details there recorded. The habits and peculiarities of the Duke of Newcastle were vividly portrayed, and Holdernesse, Anson, Henry Fox, as well as George III's hated favourite, Lord Bute, all figured in some grotesque form. A number of the best caricatures were by George, Marquis Townshend, who, under the *nom de plume* "Leonardo da Vinci," passed his spare time in satirizing his fellow statesmen. Other acting politicians of the day also contributed to the volume.[1]

In 1756 Darly and Edwards removed from

[1] The five editions of this book, as well as the spurious copy issued under the title "England's Remembrances" are in the British Museum.

"Northumberland Court," and returned to the Strand "Opposite Hungerford." A second address also: "The Acorn, Ryders Court (Cranbourne Alley), Leicester Fields," was given in the "History" and was printed on most of Darly's publications for a period of ten years (1757-1767). Mary Darly, evidently the second wife of Matthias, appears to have been the manager of this branch. She advertised in the daily papers in her own name as "etcher and publisher," and from the year 1762 onwards brought out many well-known caricatures. There is a small engraved portrait of Mrs. Darly in the Print Room, British Museum, under the title "The Female Connoisseur" (February, 1772), where she is represented as examining a caricature sketch. Another print (July, 1772) called "The Female Macaroni"[1] undoubtedly depicts the same woman. It was published by "M. Darly, 39, Strand."

Darly was a member of two Art Societies, "The Incorporated Society of Artists" and "The Free Society of Artists": both[2] had sprung out of the

[1] Macaronies came into fashion about 1764 and flourished between 1770 and 1772. They were young fops—foolish rather than vicious—who affected ridiculous costumes. They wore false hair which hung down to their shoulders in a huge bunch, and absurd hats that lay on their heads and did not cover them at all. Their coat-sleeves were very tight and so were their breeches, which were generally white or striped. The female Macaronies wore huge towering *toupées*.

[2] A few years after the foundation of the Royal Academy both societies ceased to exist.

Old Academy in St. Martin's Lane. Their Exhibitions were held respectively in "Spring Gardens, Charing Cross," and at "Christie's Great Rooms, Pall Mall."

In the Exhibition catalogue of the "Incorporated Society" are the following entries:

(1765. *M. Darly, Cranbourne Alley.*) "A section of the Gallery of Mr. Wyndham's house at Hammersmith."

(1766. *M. Darly, Cranbourne Alley.*) "Front of the Mansion House—Section of Ditto," (from Drawings of Mr. Dance).

(1767. *M. Darly*, 39, *Strand.*) "Elevation of the Duke of Bedford's house in Hampshire."

(1768. *Darly*, 39, *Strand.*) "A specimen of vases and brackets for embellishing print-rooms."

(1770. *Mr. Darly, Strand.*) "Sketches of vases & other antique ornaments."

From the Free Society's Catalogue:

(1771. *Mr. Darly professor and teacher of ornament, No.* 39, *Strand.*) "Fifty-six vases in imitation of the antique for the different manufacturers of great Britain, etc."

(1775.) "A profile etching of M. Darly" (caricaturist), 39, Strand.

Of this likeness of Darly by himself, shown in illustration VII there are two copies in the Print Room. Two other portraits are in the Print Room

M DARLY. *P·O·A·G·B.*

Fig. VII.
To face page 44.

collection of caricatures. One depicts a stout man wearing a wig, and is marked "M. Darly, P.O.A.G.B." (Professor of Ornament to the Academy of Great Britain)—a title in all probability of his own invention. It is dated 1771, and also bears the words "Print-seller and publisher, Strand." This affords a further proof of the identity of the publisher with the designer of "Ornaments." The second full-length portrait (undated) signed on the border "Matt Darley," shows a placard with the words "The political designer of pots, pans & pipkins." Two of his business cards are in the same collection.

The fashion of designing vases in the classical style was shown in Darly's publication of 1767, "Sixty Vases by English, French, and Italian Masters," and the book was followed by the exhibition, as mentioned above, of similar studies in the two following years.

A caricature of 1763 gives the publisher's name and address as "M. Darly, Mays Buildings, Coven' Garden Place." After this year there is no longer any mention of the partner Edwards, who had by this time either died or left the firm. In 1766, Darly took the house and shop, No. 39, Strand (corner of Buckingham Street), where he lived for the next fifteen years.[1] In 1777 he had a branch shop at

[1] Coloured views and plans of this house as it was in Darly's time are in the British Museum Library.

120, New Bond Street, and another in 1780 at 159, Fleet Street.

"The Ornamental Architect, or Young Artist's Instructor," Darly's greatest book of original designs, appeared in 1770-1. A few of the plates had been published separately as early as 1769. In another edition (1773) the title was changed to "A compleat body of architecture embellished with a great variety of ornaments." The dedication (by "the author and publisher, Matthias Darly, Professor of Ornament, and engraver, 39, Strand") is in reality a short essay on the art of design:

"To the Artists, Manufacturers & mechanics of Great Britain & Ireland"—"Ornamental drawing has been too long neglected . . . this kingdom is more indebted to a Richd. Langcake (neglected by his own country, is now teaching the French the art of design . . . they having not his equal in all France) than to a Godfrey Kneller and we must own that some of the present architects of this nation by their introducing the ornaments made use of by the ancients, have done more good than all the other polite artists put together. Witness the pottery of this kingdom; there is now performances in clay which will make the heavy-handed silversmith blush. . . ." He further explained that his book of 102 plates had "something in it adapted to every profession."

About this time (1770-1) Darly was the means of

first bringing Henry Bunbury's humorous sketches to the public notice. Several of this famous artist's drawings were produced in the volume "Twenty-four caricatures by Ladies, Gentlemen and Artists." The designs in this book as well as the six volumes of "Characters, Macaronies and Caricatures," which began to appear in 1771, were obtained by advertisement. Darly announced that any satirical drawings that were sent to him should be "engraved or etched on copper plates and then published." In 1776, Mrs. Darly (address, 39, Strand) brought out "Darly's comic prints of Characters, Caricatures and Macaronies," by Bunbury, Darly, Sandby, Topham and others, price £4 4*s*., dedicated to D. Garrick, Esq. Two years later Darly himself advertised that he was about to hold a "comic exhibition, admittance one shilling."[1]

John Williams, who under the name Anthony Pasquin was afterwards famous as a dramatist and miscellaneous writer, studied in his early days in Darly's studio, for with all his other work, Darly found time to give lessons in "dry-needle engraving" and "dry colouring"; indeed, he often advertised for pupils. He engraved plates for the illustrated catalogues of other cabinet-makers besides Chippendale, and was constantly engaged in designing and executing bookplates (Ex Libris). Among

[1] See Redgrave's "Dictionary of the English School."

the most interesting of his engravings were the illustrations for a quaint book of 1764, "The Savages of Europe."

Darly was several times brought into close connection with the political movements of his time. His zealous partisanship of the famous John Wilkes is illustrated by two letters given below. In 1763 he was the means of saving the life of that popular hero from the would-be assassin, James Dunn. Darly's letter was read in the Court of King's Bench, where he appeared to bear witness to the facts.

"Dec. 7th, 1763.[1]

"SIR,

"I should not do my duty if I did not acquaint you that the young Scotch Officer that wanted entrance at your house is a villain and his intentions are of blackish dye. I had been in his company for near four hours. That part of our conversation that relates to you, consisted chiefly of his intentions of massacreing you the first opportunity and that there were thirteen more Gentlemen of Scotland of the same resolution, and confederates of his, who was resolved to do it or die in the attempt. Last night when your trial was over the Gentlemen at the Coffee-House quitted the room that I was in (on account of the shouts in the Hall)

[1] From "Lloyd's Evening Post and British Chronicle," 9th and 12th December, 1763.

and left the Scotch Hero & I together but I abruptly left the room, and went after the people to Great George Street and on hearing a noise at your door, I went up, and to my great surprise saw the Scotsman a-trying for entrance; I knocked and had admittance, which enraged the hero so much, that he swore revenge against the servant, and was very troublesome; when I went out, I heard a Gentleman taking him to task about his vowing vengeance on you or your servant, upon which I told the Gentleman a small part of what I knew, and he put him in the hands of two Watchmen, and ordered him to the Round-house, but at the corner of Great George Street I am told, he was rescued, and ran away. There was conversation passed between him and the company that is not safe to communicate by letter; his principles and zeal make it unsafe for such an abandoned wretch to be at large. Your own discretion, I hope, will guide you to prevent anything that may be intended.

"I am, with all respect, Sir, yours,
"M. DARLY,
"Cranborn Alley,
"Leicester Fields.

"TO MR. WILKES,
"Great George Street."

This episode was illustrated in a caricature entitled, "The Scotch Damien" (1763, Mary Darly, publisher).

The second letter was an address on "General Warrants."

"No General Warrants
Matt Darly Citizen and Clock Maker,
To his Brethren the Worthy and
Independent Livery of London

"Gentlemen,

"In the Year 1747 a General Warrant was issued from the Secretary of State, to *apprehend*, *seize*, and *take*, all such *persons*, *papers*, &c. &c. that the acting messenger then in vogue should think proper; when (with sundry other persons) the said messenger did, in my absence, enter my house, and, by *force*, did *search* and *examine* my premises, but did not, at that time, take or carry anything away; but two days after the said messenger did forcibly enter the said premises, with a great number of *thief-takers* and other infamous assistants, and did take away in bags, part of my *stock in trade*, my *private papers*, and other *things* of value, which goods were never returned; and part of them was sold by one Reele, an *assistant* to the Said Messenger. Upon such *treatment* and *open violence* on the *body* and *property* of a Citizen, let every liveryman of London reflect, and make the case his own; consider his situation, to be torn from his family, *imprisoned* for fourteen days without *examination*, his property taken from him and not re-

turned, roughly handled by an Attorney General, though honourably acquitted by the judge of the Court of King's Bench, as he not seeing any cause of complaint. At that time of day, the bare mention of a Secretary of State's Warrant, or the appearance of a King's Messenger, was the *terror* of every *Englishman* that should chance to come in their way, they not knowing how to get redress, till the late valuable and glorious decisions obtained by the *Patriotic* and *Inflexible* MR. WILKES shewed the People of *England*, that their *Persons*, *Cabinets*, *and Property*, was not *to be taken away by arbitrary and nameless* GENERAL WARRANTS.

"MATT DARLY.

"No. 39, Strand."

A copy of this document is in the Guildhall Library. It is not dated, but was probably called forth by the strong popular feeling manifested on the occasion of Wilkes's candidature for the County of Middlesex in 1768. Darly called himself a "liveryman and clockmaker"—apparently his right to join the Clockmaker's Guild must have been as a designer of clock cases.

The exact date of Darly's death is not known. All that can be ascertained is the fact that his shop, No. 39, Strand, was let to a new tenant in 1781, and that he issued no caricatures after October, 1780.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHIPPENDALE SCHOOL

NO Queen Anne cabinet-maker appears to have stood out among his fellows; not one at least is accredited with having established a school of design, and the high place accorded by tradition to Thomas Chippendale must have been due to some very special skill in the combined arts of carving and furniture making.

There is much difference of opinion among connoisseurs on the question whether Chippendale was the first to introduce into England the style which bears his name, or was simply one of the craftsmen who best succeeded in crystallizing and putting into concrete form the floating ideas fashionable at the time. Furniture of a specific school, known as "Chippendale," was executed all over the kingdom during a great part of the eighteenth century. A similar type of decoration was adopted by silversmiths, potters, and engravers, and the English designs were widely imitated by contemporary craftsmen, both in our American and other colonies. In Ireland, also, much beautiful work was produced

during the Chippendale period, and though no doubt based on the designs of the London makers, the Irish style of carving showed marked individuality. On the whole it was heavier in design than the English, and had a flatter surface.

Chippendale's sketches, published as trade advertisements in the "Gentleman's and Cabinet-maker's Director" (1754), contained some of the most beautiful examples of this "English Rococo" style, and though there can be no historic proof that the style itself owed its existence to his genius alone, it is certain that his sphere of influence was greater than that of any of his contemporaries. Not only was he "the most famous cabinet-maker of his day,"[1] but had the reputation of being one of the finest carvers also.

During the eighteenth century French taste pervaded the decorative art of nearly every country in Europe, and the more refined influences of Italy were kept in the background. The mirror-frames made in England by Huguenot refugees have already been noticed, and there is no doubt that this work helped greatly in popularizing French designs. Just as Dutch models had been modified through the influence of Wren's classicism and of Gibbons's carving, so ornamentation of a gay and almost dramatic inventiveness now began to take the place of the classic. Before the eighteenth century had far

[1] J. T. Smith's "Nollekens and his Times" (1828).

advanced, the massive Louis-Quatorze decoration and the more extravagant shapes of the Louis-Quinze period had grafted themselves upon every kind of furniture. But Chippendale designs were composed of many elements, and the great craftsmen showed their skill by so blending and harmonizing as to evolve from a number of different types a beautiful and architectural whole. The passion for all things Chinese was greatly stimulated by the researches of Sir William Chambers (1726-1796), who returned to England from his travels in the East Indies, China, and Italy in 1755. His "Designs of Chinese buildings, furniture, dresses, machines and utensils," published in 1757, undoubtedly gave a great impulse to the Chinese craze. Yet, before Sir William Chambers began his work, both Chippendale's "Director" (1754) and Edwards and Darly's book of Chinese designs, buildings and furniture, which appeared the same year, prove that the adoption of Chinese forms in furniture decoration was already very popular in this country. In France, during the period of Louis-Quatorze and Louis-Quinze, Chinese devices entered very largely into the scheme of rococo decoration. Watteau, one of the greatest masters of the rococo age, contributed largely to the Chinese movement. When the English adopted the French style of ornamentation at the beginning of the Chippendale era, the French "Chinoiserie," might very naturally have

been borrowed also. Yet the large importations, even in the seventeenth century, of Chinese screens and cabinets, the popularity of English lacquer-ware in imitation of the Chinese style, as well as the many fine collections of Chinese porcelain, all point to an independent "Chinese craze" on this side of the Channel. It was imitative of, but not necessarily copied from, the French.

The Gothic revival, ardently encouraged by Horace Walpole, showed itself in Chippendale furniture by the introduction of pointed curves, trefoils, and sunken panels. In spite of occasional breaks, the Gothic style, from its first appearance in the twelfth century, was always a radical constituent of English decorative art. And although "Chippendale-Gothic" had little in common with its prototype in the middle ages, the recurrence of certain Gothic motives in work of this and even of the Adam period was not a mere affected imitation, but a direct consequence of the national tendency to repeat the elemental and original types. Furniture fanciers are much inclined to depreciate such chairs and cupboards based on Gothic forms because curves, arches, and ornaments were introduced which were unknown to any period of Gothic architecture. Nevertheless, if the general effect alone be taken into consideration, it will be found that the finest examples display not only beauty and originality, but are perhaps more truly national in

their ornamentation than any productions of the Chippendale school.

Lastly, there was the influence of the architects. As during the Queen Anne period, so throughout the Chippendale era the main outlines, especially of the larger pieces, were entirely architectural in form.

The principal men who issued books of design in the Chippendale style were Mayhew and Ince, Johnson, Manwaring and his fellow members of the "Society of Upholsterers," Lock and Copland.

J. Mayhew and W. Ince's publication was entitled "The Universal System of Household Furniture" (undated). The plates were engraved by M. Darly, and the letterpress was both in French and English. William Ince, cabinet-maker, appeared among the list of subscribers in Chippendale's "Director" in 1759; and the firm, "Mayhew and Ince, cabinet-makers, upholders, dealers in plate and glass, Broad Street, Carnaby Market," was given in the "London Directory" for 1776.[1] They and their sons continued the business until 1812. Want of proportion and exaggeration characterized a great deal of their published work; but there are existing specimens of chairs distinctly traceable to these makers which exhibit much artistic feeling and a beautiful flow and movement in the ornamentation.

[1] And 20, Marshall Street, 1781-1812.

Thomas Johnson, carver, Westminster, was the author of two books of design (1758 and 1761). His sketches for frames, girandoles, and clock-cases were very extravagant types of rococo and Chinese-Chippendale. They seem to have been intended to advertise his skill as a carver—to show that no curves, twists, scrolls and ornaments, however fanciful, were beyond his powers of execution—and can hardly have represented furniture which was actually made. A few of his small mirrors and hall-lanthorns, however, were simple and graceful in design. Some earlier plates giving sketches of "Twelve girandoles," dated from "Queen Street near Seven Dials 1755," were inserted in his publication of 1758, and these also were less extravagant than the majority of his work.

Robert Manwaring, chair-maker and cabinet-maker, issued between 1765 and 1766 two books of furniture-design. A number of his plates, depicting chairs of all kinds, were also reprinted in the second edition of a publication brought out about 1766 by the "Society of Upholsterers," of which Manwaring was a member. In spite of many exaggerations, his style was, as a whole, typical of some of the best work of the period. He gave numerous drawings of chairs showing plain, graceful scrolls, conceived very much on the same lines as those of Chippendale himself. In the preface to Manwaring's "Cabinet-maker's and chair-maker's real friend and com-

panion" (Haymarket, 1765), there is a quotation from Chippendale's "Director," and Manwaring was doubtless considerably influenced by that master. The Chinese chairs in Manwaring's books were, in many instances, extremely elegant. A small bracket between the top of the leg and the front rail of the seat, may be regarded as especially characteristic of this designer.

Matthias Lock and H. Copland were the authors of numerous decorative designs which were published between the years 1740 and 1770. In Copland's first book, called "A New Book of Ornaments" (1746), he was assisted by Bucksher, and these two men seem to have been in partnership in Gutter Lane, Cheapside. The title-page of a subsequent volume of ornaments which appeared in 1752, gave the names Copland (of Cheapside), and Matthias Lock (of "Ye Swan, Tottenham Crt. Road"). Both were well-known cabinet-makers, and from that time onwards they continued to publish together. Their work, which can be studied at the South Kensington Museum Art Library from a number of original drawings as well as from their published books, belonged not only to the Chippendale school, but also to the later Adam, or Classical school. Their productions in the Chippendale style, to which class all their earlier designs belonged, were in many cases overladen with ornament, the multiplicity of lines and curves being often quite without meaning. In

their later work, however, such as "A New Book of Ornaments" (1768), the frames, girandoles, and decorations were in purely classical taste.

Matthias Darly, designer, publisher, engraver and caricaturist, like Lock and Copland, identified himself, as far as decorative art was concerned, with both the Chinese and the Classical movements of the eighteenth century. The book of Chinese designs which has already been mentioned, contained fantastic Chinese ornaments adapted to pier-tables, frames, and girandoles. The style cannot be described as Chippendale-Chinese, for the sketches in no way resembled Chippendale's treatment of similar subjects. A few girandoles, and a couple of mirror-frames, not too overcrowded with detail, are the only examples worthy of serious consideration in that part of the book devoted to furniture. The great value of the publication, as stated in Chapter XII, lies in the numerous designs suitable for lacquer work.

By the year 1766 Darly had abandoned Chinese ideas in favour of classical subjects. This is clearly shown by his "Book of Vases," which came out the following year, and by his *magnum opus*, "The Ornamental Architect" (1769), in which the tripods, mirrors, panels, ceilings, and fireplaces were severe and chaste, both in outline and decoration. It is evident that he had imbibed all that was noblest in the classical methods of Adam and Pergolesi.

The best work of the Chippendale period was characterized by dignity, strength, and well-proportioned lines. The carving, though often of a different type, was quite as beautiful as that of Gibbons and his school. The greatest attention was paid to the laws governing the arrangement of masses. A varying play of light and shade, a soft transition from one surface to another, and an absence of sharp angles and raw edges is always perceptible.[1] Spanish mahogany of the finest quality and curl, dark in colour and very heavy, was the wood principally employed as a veneer for every kind of furniture. The black-brown shade of this timber is very noticeable; it was much deeper than that used by later craftsmen. No inlay of any kind was employed; carving, fretting, gilding, and a little brass-work were the only forms of ornamentation. Many specimens of lacquered furniture also belong undoubtedly to this period. But as such pieces were probably only constructed in Chippendale workshops, and decorated elsewhere, they will be considered in a separate chapter.

Chairs

The chairs of the Chippendale era displayed a taste and individuality of expression which have

[1] The ordinary tools used for oak and lime wood-carving would not cut mahogany; special highly-tempered blades were therefore manufactured for working the newly imported timber.

never been surpassed in this class of work. The evolution of the chair from the designs in use at the close of the seventeenth century can be perceived in the treatment of the splat. First, a shaped panel, solid or pierced with a small opening; then a larger opening and more elaborate piercing; next, a division of the splat into broad bands or sections. Finally, in Chippendale chairs the old panel shape, joined into the framework of the seat, was still retained, but in many cases a finer division of the woodwork imparted a new lightness and grace. The backs were slightly lower and broader than those of the late Queen Anne period, and the side uprights, instead of rounding into the top rail, usually ended in a carved and projecting angle. The great beauty of these chairs consists in the elegance of the back, for the construction of the lower part often appears too heavy for the delicate treatment displayed in the splat.

Several modifications of the cabriole leg were in use. Some were of Louis-Quinze type, and others a modification of Queen Anne, with a "ball-and-claw," a "club," or a "hoof" foot. The square legs of the period were quite a new feature, and were sometimes plain or fluted and sometimes elaborately carved. They were pentagonal, not quadrangular as would at first sight appear, for the inner angle was planed off to form a small fifth side. This peculiarity is almost invariably noticeable in the so-

called square leg of the Chippendale school. The fact is very little known, but is a valuable guide in the recognition of a genuine piece.

Whereas most Queen Anne chairs had been made with a back rail only, or with side rails joined together by a shaped stretcher in the middle, Chippendale cabinet-makers oddly enough reverted to Elizabethan and Jacobean models, and in the square-legged chairs we often find four rails all tied together. The wide stuffed seat, mostly carried on the traditional method of being separate and dropping into a rebate, and the frame surrounding it was either carved or left plain. Sometimes, however, the upholstery was drawn over and secured to the woodwork by closely-studded, brass-headed nails.

The covering is thus fastened down in chair A, illustration VIII. This interesting example of a Chippendale chair, with legs in the French style, is in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts. The splat is pierced and carved with foliage, and leaves are also used to decorate the knee, the foot, and the seat rail. The wood is mahogany.

Chair B, also owned by Mr. Letts, is of chestnut. The open-work splat is carved with an elegant design of leaves, and a conventional flower in the centre. There is a suggestion of the Gothic arch in the spaces. The square legs, frame, and braces are enriched with carved ornaments. The seat in this example is let into a rebate.

A B

CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS.

Fig VIII.
To face page 62.

Fig. IX. CHIPPENDALE CHAIR.

Fig. X. CHIPPENDALE-GOTHIC CHAIRS.

To face page 62.

Collectors, following the method suggested by Chippendale himself, class his chairs according to the motives which predominate.

Where French influences prevail, the principal ornaments were: the Louis-Quatorze ribbon-pattern, or looped-bows; the curled endive leaf inseparable from the style of Louis-Quinze; crinkled shellwork, or "coquillage," often used on the outer edge of back or splat; scrolls of various shapes and sizes, and, in the earlier pieces, a large shell. Illustration IX shows an unusually fine example of a mahogany Chippendale armchair, with carving of the rococo type. The design is chiefly foliage, with a shell in the middle of the top rail, and a drooping flower in the centre of the splat and of the deep seat frame. The side uprights and arm supports are also richly decorated with carving. The feet are composed of a massive lion's claw-and-ball.

In Gothic chairs Louis-Quinze ornamentation was often mingled with Gothic forms. The legs were generally square. Illustration X depicts two mahogany Gothic chairs which are characteristic types of this class of work. The chair, with projecting scroll-corners, is ornamented with carved foliage. There is also some carved decoration above the pointed arches, both on the back and arm supports. The legs are square and fluted, and the seat lies in a rebate. The outlines of the oval-backed chair are more undulating than in the last example. The

front legs are fluted, have carved cross-bands, and are further enriched at the top—this is most unusual—with Gothic arches to correspond with the chair back.

In Chinese examples the space between the back uprights was crossed and recrossed by bars and rails, but Chinese straight lines were often varied by French curves and ornaments. As a rule a Chinese back was accompanied by a square leg (often fretted) in similar style.

Illustration XXI depicts a beautiful Chinese Chippendale chair once in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts. It is of mahogany and is very finely proportioned. The pierced splat and arm supports are composed of elegant arches and cross-pieces; the uprights and top rail are carved and moulded, and a pagoda-top ornament appears as though resting on the protruding corners. The centre ornament of the top rail, and a similar device on either side of the splat, also represents a pagoda-top. The legs are in separate parts, joined together by bands; they are further ornamented by curved brackets. Both the arms and the seat frame are plain, and the contrast this presents to the decorated portion of the chair is most pleasing.

Upholstered easy chairs were wide and roomy, and were carved or fretted on the legs, the frame, and the end of the arms. The exquisite "petit-point" embroidery used for chair coverings was a

Fig. XI. PETIT-POINT CHAIR AND SCREEN.

Fig. XII. FRENCH CHIPPENDALE CHAIR.

To face page 65.

very important feature of the period. The pattern was generally a checquer design, and was worked in many-coloured wools and silks on a canvas ground. The materials were so strong and durable that the work is often found in a perfect state of preservation at the present day. In the opinion of well-known experts, these covers, as well as certain kinds of silk damask and thick velvet, are the only examples of upholstery which have been able to withstand the wear and tear of time. Horsehair or leather covers, and cane seats, being very perishable, are probably never "original." The seat coverings, mentioned in the "Director," were "Spanish leather . . . damask . . . tapestry and other needlework"; and for ribbon-back chairs, red morocco.

The Queen Anne easy chair, illustration XI, has a covering of very fine "petit-point" embroidery set in a beautiful framework of mahogany. The cabriole legs have a carved shell on the knee, and are finished with a club foot.

In illustration XII we have a good type of French Chippendale.

Many of the armchairs, as well as a few tables and heavier pieces, were fitted with leather casters. These curious old rollers were formed of wide pieces of leather or hard wood, with brass mounts at either end; they were often sunk so deeply into the woodwork of the foot as scarcely to protrude beyond the surface level. It was not till nearly the end of the

century that brass casters, more like those of modern times, began to be made.

Illustration XIII shows a Chippendale mahogany settee, once the property of Mr. James Orrock, which is fitted with leather casters. The open-work back is boldly carved with knots of ribbon, tassels, scroll foliage, and shellwork; the cabriole legs are also carved. The settee forms part of a suite of eleven chairs.[1]

Sideboards

The sideboard as designed by Chippendale was merely a serving table or carving board. The stand consisted of a rail some four or six inches deep, generally widening in the centre where a lion's head or coat of arms was carved in relief. The supports were four cabriole or square legs, the former with carved, the latter with fretwork ornamentation. In the majority of examples the top was formed of a slab of marble which fitted into a groove in the framing; occasionally, however, mahogany was used instead of marble. The sideboard of that date thus provided no storing place for wine or crockery, though most oak buffets, even in Jacobean times, had been constructed in the form of a cupboard or dresser with drawers.

An interesting fact in connection with Chippen-

[1] Sold at Christie's, June, 1904, for 1,800 guineas.

Fig. XIII. CHIPPENDALE SETTEE.

Fig. XIV. IRISH CHIPPENDALE SIDEBOARD.

To face page 66.

dale sideboards is a record in the old books of John Broadwood, the famous piano maker. The entry states that in March, 1790, a piano was sold to "Mr. Chippendale; to be put in a sideboard." It was by no means uncommon, both in France and England, to combine a spinet or a piano with some useful piece of furniture, a writing-bureau being perhaps most frequently chosen for this purpose.

The sideboard, illustration XIV, owned by Mr. Burghard, is of especial interest, as it is a fine example of Irish-Chippendale. The peculiarity of the carving is its extreme flatness, even the flower-basket in the middle being in quite low relief. The festoons of foliage on either side of this central subject-piece present a very graceful effect. It will be observed that the leaf ornamentation on the cabriole legs extends very far down, and that the claw foot is surmounted by leaves. The side of the table, hardly visible in the illustration, is enriched with a large flat escalop shell as well as leaf scrolls and flowers matching those in front. The whole piece, including the top, is carried out in mahogany.

Pier-tables were very similar to the sideboard tables, but rather smaller, as they were designed to correspond with the width of the pier-glass beneath which they stood. Bracket console-tables were often very elaborate in their ornamentation, and both these and the pier-tables were usually gilded and burnished.

Large Pieces

Bookcases and cupboards were architectural and classical in outline, and generally had triangular or broken pediments. The ornamentation was often very elaborate, and in many cases was made to form a part of the construction itself. As in the case of the chairs, either Gothic, Chinese, or French types entered into the scheme of decoration, but probably not in a single instance was an absolute unity of treatment preserved. The cupboard doors were of plain glass, looking-glass, or wood. The panel or frieze borderings on all such pieces as well as on chests of drawers and writing-desks were generally executed in low relief. Interlacing ribbons, the twisted ribbon and rose, the rose and strap, interwoven leaves, or the egg and tongue, were perhaps the most usual of these border patterns. Frequently, however, frets were employed instead. Corners and hanging-borders were often enriched by carvings in bolder relief, and, in a few instances, hanging festoons in the Grinling Gibbons style were made to depend from a pediment or other prominent part. Carving of this type is seen in the splendid mahogany china cabinet, illustration XV, a very rare piece in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts. The upper portion is comparatively plain except for a leaf bordering and carved flowers at wide intervals on the mouldings around

Fig. XV. CHIPPENDALE CHINA CABINET.

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Fig. XIV. DETAIL OF CHIPPENDALE CHINA CABINET.

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Fig. XVII. HANGING CUPBOARD.

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Fig. XVIII. CHIPPENDALE-GOTHIC BOOKCASE.

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the glass panels. But the carved work on the stand and legs is of quite unusual beauty. The middle leg and part of the festoon on either side, is shown in detail in illustration XVI. In the centre is a crest—that of the nobleman for whom the cabinet was originally made. Although the flowers and fruit are deeply undercut, and are treated somewhat after the manner of Gibbons, there are also distinct traces of rococo influence, which point to a later date for this piece than the time of that celebrated carver. Those who concur with Mr. James Orrock's views, as stated in Chapter XIII, will be inclined to ascribe this style of work to carvers who directly followed in the footsteps of Gibbons rather than of Chippendale. The hanging cupboard, illustration XVII, is of much earlier date than the last example, and belongs to the late Queen Anne or the earliest Chippendale era. The shallow carved borders of the egg and tongue, of the ribbon and rose, and of the leaf design, are most delicately worked; there are many who consider such fine borderings to be of more artistic beauty than all the twists and twirls displayed in most examples of Chippendale. The heads on either side of the pediment, and the one used as a supporting bracket below the cupboard, are carried out in brass.

The Gothic bookcase, illustration XVIII, is of solid dark mahogany. The egg and strap mouldings round the glass doors, which intersect so as to form

Gothic arches, produce a most pleasing effect. This bookcase, one of a pair, was probably designed for a Gothic room in which all the furniture was of a similar type. But even apart from its original surroundings it loses but little of its charm; there is something poetically imaginative about this style of decoration, even though the Gothic is of a debased type. The fretted cornice is of a different character from the remainder of the work.

The mahogany bookcase, illustration XIX, is in the possession of Mr. James Ivory. It is thoroughly architectural in character, and the broken scroll pediment, with its open-work carving, is a good example of Chippendale's use of this ornament.

The coin-cabinet, illustration XX, lately in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts, has an interesting history. It was made for Horace Walpole's house at Strawberry Hill, Twickenham (built between 1753-1776), and was sold by auction with the other contents of that historic mansion in 1842. The cabinet appears thus in the sale catalogue: "Tenth day—lot 104. A very handsome carved mahogany cabinet for coins, pair of folding doors enclosing 60 trays and 6 deep drawers on finely carved antique frame, locks and key." A further record states that it was bought by Charles S. Bale for £9 9*s*.

The antique frame above referred to is a magnificent example of the Chippendale school of carving. The design represents a lion's head in bold

Fig. XIX. CHIPPENDALE BOOKCASE.

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Fig. XX. COIN CABINET.

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Fig. XXI.
To face page 70.

CHINESE CHIPPENDALE GROUP.

relief in the middle, grouped with a conventionalized hollyhock and other flowers. On either side the outlines are equally fine—here the central carving is a large rose in full bloom. The feet are lion's claws.

Small cabinets, hanging shelves, and ornamental tables intended for the display of china relied mostly upon Chinese ornamentation for their effect. The cabinets, small and light in construction, had pagoda-tops or fretwork friezes, and glass or wooden doors to inclose the shelves. Illustration XXI represents a fine cabinet of this type in mahogany. The stand has a fretted pattern of scrolls and curves, and on the legs both tassels and Gothic arches are cunningly introduced. The cabinet itself has a single glass door with a plain fretted border, and is surmounted by a deeply-fluted pagoda-shaped top. Secretary writing-desks, with three or four drawers, were frequently made with similar china-cabinets above. The small tables had a carved or fretted border round the frame, and were often finished with a rim of pierced brass or woodwork. They were supported either by a pillar and claws, or by four firm but slight legs finely carved. Larger tables had flaps which could be let down, were fitted with drawers —ornamented with brass handles—and had square or cabriole legs. The pillar and claw was not used for large tables until almost the close of the century. Group XXI includes a folding table: the frame and

legs are decorated with fretwork; on the legs this decoration is broken here and there by the introduction of carved foliage.

Card-tables on an extending frame with a folding top, were lined with green cloth or fancy embroidery. The ornamentation of the frame and of the legs (square or cabriole) was either carving or fretwork.

The card table, illustration XXII, belonged to the late Mr. S. T. Smith. The carving around the frame, as well as on the knee and foot, is of the most delicate type. The design represents curling leaves and rococo curves, while the lower border is composed of crinkled shellwork. The graceful lines of the legs are worthy of special notice.

Writing-tables were made in many different shapes, generally with a knee-hole or wide space which separated a row of drawers reaching to the ground on either side. Sometimes cupboards were used instead of drawers, and many very wide tables were fitted both at the front and back.

Dining-Tables

The dining-tables, from the beginning of the eighteenth century and throughout the Chippendale period, consisted of two centre-pieces with wide flaps on either side and two semicircular end-pieces, all four divisions being joined together or separated

Fig. XXII. CHIPPENDALE CARD TABLE AND FRAME.

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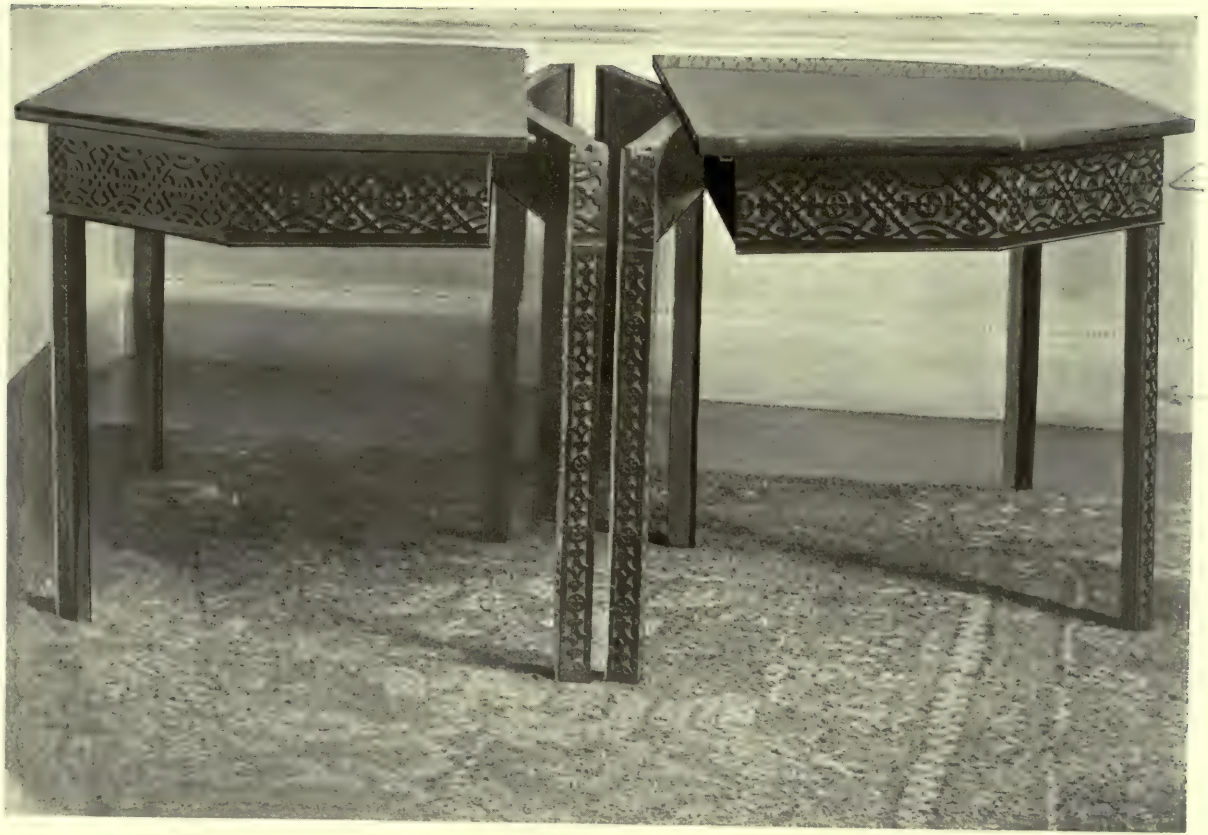

Fig. XXIII.
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CHIPPENDALE DINING TABLE

at will by means of small brass adjustments. Each of the two larger portions stood on four cabriole legs, and the semicircular pieces on two legs only; the latter, when not in use, were pushed up against the wall and served as side-tables.

But what, it may be asked, has become of these old dining-tables beneath which our ancestors were wont to repose in drunken slumber? They are, in fact, very rarely met with now in their entirety, for the various parts have often in the course of time been separated from one another; they are thus regarded as single tables, and few collectors realize the original use for which they were intended.

The fine example in illustration XXIII is in the possession of Mr. Burghard. It is another variety of a Chippendale mahogany dining-table, the extension being obtained by means of additional leaves in the centre. These leaves are intended to be fixed to the octagonal ends by small rods of brass which fit into grooves made for the purpose, and are further supported by an adjustment of the movable legs. These legs are beautiful specimens of Chippendale's Chinese fretwork. The whole frieze of the table is enriched in a similar manner.

Firescreens, single or double, were mostly Louis-Quinze in style—low frames inclosing fancy embroidery on small curved supports. There were also screens on a pillar and claws elaborately carved (see illustration XI), besides a few examples which

were composed of solid masses of carved mahogany with small glass panels in the upper portion. These latter were doubtless designed for special rooms and ornamented in harmony with the general character of the chairs. In houses where the original Chippendale furniture still remains intact this fact is very noticeable.

Not only the furniture of the dining-room and drawing-room, but that of the bedroom also was more elaborate than in former days. The old shapes were varied and improved. Toilet-tables for ladies and shaving-tables for men were well fitted with cupboards and drawers and provided with swinging glasses. The bedposts which supported the large canopy bedsteads were delicately "turned"—almost the only instance of turning in furniture of this era. "Tall-boys" became more ornamental and were often decorated with a swan-necked pediment, open-work frets and carving. Commodes or cupboards were sometimes supported by a stand and square legs in the Chinese style; in other instances the lower portion consisted of a deep drawer with a *bombé* curve. Many plain models of bedroom furniture were illustrated in the "Director," and pieces are often to be found without any ornamentation whatever.

Clock-Cases

Clock-cases displayed hardly any carving at all, and the fantastic designs which were published by some of the cabinet-makers seem never to have been executed. F. J. Britten in his "Old Clocks and Watches" (1897) remarks upon the slight resemblance which the clocks illustrated in the "Director" bear to those now attributed to Chippendale. There can be no doubt that the question of the actual origin of so-called Chippendale clock-cases is wrapped in the same obscurity as that of other pieces of furniture. The designs were based upon the Queen Anne shapes, and displayed the influence of the prevalent rococo curves and ornaments. Chippendale may very probably have been one of the most popular case-makers, but there seems little reason to suppose that he alone was responsible for the special types which bear his name.

"Pillars and pilasters rising at the front corners of the case from the plinth to the entablature under the hood"; the bases and caps being generally of metal and the shafts fluted; a high hood ending in a pediment finished with two outward curves or two horn-shaped terminals curving inwards. Such are the main features noted by Britten as characteristic of Chippendale grandfather clocks. The

principal wood used was fine, dark mahogany, relieved by pierced frets in the hood and occasionally by a little carving round the door or at the corners. Within the space inclosed by the arch in the upper portion of the dial-frame there frequently appeared a painted picture which by a mechanical contrivance was set in motion. Ships heaving on the sea were favourite subjects for such decorative paintings.

The mahogany clock, illustration XXIV, has the characteristic fluted shafts, curved pediment, and fretted ornamentation of the Chippendale style. The capitals of the lower columns are of brass. The face is white enamel, and the hours are painted black. The maker's name "Sam[l] Toulmin, Strand, London," appears within the arch. He was a member of the Clockmakers' Company from 1765 to 1783.

The bracket-clocks often had pagoda-tops and Chinese fret decoration. In other examples the hood was plain, and the lower portion decorated with foliage and similar carved ornamentation.

Mirrors

Gilded mirror-frames, picture-frames, and girandoles were in bolder relief, and required ornamentation of a more massive character than most pieces of mahogany furniture. Louis-Quinze *repoussé* scrolls and the endless convolutions of the Louis-

Fig, XXIV. CHIPPENDALE CLOCK.

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Quinze order were combined with pagoda-tops, Oriental figures, rockwork, dripping water, flowers, bones bound together, cherub-heads or long-beaked birds. Large plates of glass were only within reach of the wealthy classes, and most mirrors were made up of two or more small plates of Vauxhall glass framed together. The joints were hidden by minute pilasters and gilt mouldings, and the bevelled edge, almost universal at the beginning of the century, was often omitted altogether. Mahogany and walnut frames in this style are rarely met with ungilded.

Chippendale's picture-frames seem often to have been designed with a view to the picture they were to inclose. Frames, enriched at the sides and corners with trophies of war were, according to the "Director," intended for a war picture; if emblems of the sea appeared in the carving, the painting was to be some nautical subject.

A Chippendale mirror-frame is seen in illustration XXXIX, and a picture-frame in illustration XII.

The door in illustration XXV was taken from an old house in Soho. It is a splendid piece of carving in the manner of the Chippendale school. The wood is dark mahogany, and the carving is executed in relief. The ornamentation on the side pilasters is of stucco, stained and painted to match the rest of the work. The broken pediment is en-

riched with a design of scroll foliage and egg and tongue mouldings, and the frieze is left plain. The pilasters, curiously enough, although alike in their general proportions, have their capitals and shafts each decorated in a different way. The panels of the door itself, however, match one another exactly. The design represents exotic birds, figures, and fish amidst flowers, scrolls, leaves, and fruit. The birds are no doubt adapted from Oriental lacquer-work.

Fig. XXV. CHIPPENDALE DOOR.

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CHAPTER V

THE BROTHERS ADAM

BY far the largest portion of eighteenth-century architecture still to be seen in London was the work of Robert Adam. And though most of his houses have, during the last fifty years, been remodelled, or partially rebuilt, even the little that remains of the original design is sufficient to show the transformation he wrought in the appearance of our squares and terraces.

The Adams were a Scotch family of good social position. Robert, the most famous of the four brothers—John, Robert, James, and William—was born at Kircaldy, co. Fife, 3rd July, 1728, and was educated at Edinburgh University. His father, William Adam, of Maryburgh, co. Fife, also a distinguished architect, held the office of King's, or Master mason in Edinburgh. His mother was Mary Robertson, of Gladney, co. Fife. William Adam, the elder, probably gave his sons their first architectural training. Robert's juvenile drawings, dating from his sixteenth year, are in the Soane Museum. Among his early friends were Adam

Smith, William Robertson, Adam Ferguson, David Hume, and the dramatist John Home. William Adam, senior, died in 1748, and his son John succeeded him in his office and also carried on his business.

Robert, full of ambition and high ideals, determined to strike out a new path for himself by some years of study in Italy. Old Roman architecture appealed to him just as Greek architecture appealed to James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, who, at the time of Adam's journey, were exploring the ruins of Athens. All three sought to find among classic models the inspiration they required to bring about a reform in English architecture.

From Robert's sketches at the Soane Museum we are able to follow him first to France—Nîmes—December, 1754, then to western Italy, 1755, and to Rome in 1756.

During three years of travel and hard work he made much progress, but he had not yet attained the main object of his search. He wished to examine a private dwelling-house of the old Romans, in order that he might apply their ideas to domestic architecture in this country. At that time the excavations at Pompeii had barely begun, and at Rome, and indeed throughout Italy, the ruins were all those of public buildings. Adam therefore decided that only a voyage to Venetian Dalmatia would serve his purpose. Accordingly, on 11th July,

1757, he set sail from Venice with the French architect, Charles Louis Clérisseau[1] and two draughtsmen, and in eleven days arrived in sight of Spalatro. Magnificently situated, with a great terrace overlooking the sea — Adam's description is most graphic—were the remains of Diocletian's palace. At last he had found what he sought; the noble ruins were to influence all his future work. The vast structure, nine and a half acres in extent, or about the size of the Escurial in Spain, was a villa residence which the Emperor Diocletian had built for himself on his abdication in A.D. 305. Within the inclosure were private apartments, regimental quarters, and several temples. On the death of the Emperor the Palace is said to have been used as a cloth factory, and later the inhabitants of Spalatro took a portion of the building material of the original edifice in order to erect a town on the old foundations. It was thus no easy task which Robert Adam had set himself—to reconstruct in imagination all the missing parts.

It has been related that at Spalatro Adam's sketches were confiscated and he himself imprisoned as a spy. It is strange that this story should have arisen, since Robert's own account of his journey appears in the introduction to his book. This folio work was brought out in 1764 as "Ruins of

[1] Author of "Antiquités de la France," Paris, 1778, folio, of which Part I ("Monumens de Nismes") only appeared.

the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro in Dalmatia," with engravings by Bartolozzi and others from the designs of Adam and Clérisseau, price £3 10*s*.

The following is Robert's story of his difficulties. The architects' permit from the Venetian Senate had not arrived, and the Governor of Dalmatia, being unaccustomed to the visits of strangers, thought that under pretence of taking views and making architectural plans they were actually surveying the fortifications. Accordingly he sent an officer to command Adam "to desist." Fortunately the commander-in-chief of the Venetian forces, a great lover of the arts, happened to be in the town, and was able to interpose on Adam's behalf. The artists were allowed to continue their work and the only precaution taken by the Governor was the appointment of an officer to attend them each day. By dint of great industry the sketches were all completed in five weeks.

The next biographical note to be found among the volumes at the Soane Museum is a drawing marked "Done since my return to England—1758," and signed Robert Adam. He settled in London, and immediately began many important works. The sketches for the Admiralty screen, Kedleston, and Sion, or Syon, House are all dated between 1759 and 1762.

In the "Library of the Fine Arts," a short-lived monthly, there appeared in October and November,

1831, a "Journal of a tour in Italy in 1760-1763," printed from the original MS., and wrongly ascribed to Robert Adam. It was, in fact, written by James Adam. This is amply proved by the evidence of James's signed sketches at the Soane Museum. One of these bears the date, "Venice, Aug. 24th, 1760, and Rome, 1762." The diary opened on 1st October, 1760, in Venice, where the writer was staying with Clérisseau and the painter Zucchi. It is evident that he had already been there some time, as the first pages of his chronicle contain descriptions of visits to neighbouring cities of northern Italy. He proceeded to Rome in 1761, then to Naples, and then back again to Rome in November of the same year. The remainder of the journal was not printed, but we learn from the editorial summary of it that Adam had been unable to visit the Levant, as the vessel sent out for the purpose by his brother William had been taken by Spaniards, and detained in the port of Algiers. He commenced his route homewards in May, 1763, returning by Florence, Bologna, and Parma.

The diary is written in homely language, and was clearly not intended for publication, but it leaves a remarkable impression of the writer's untiring industry and perseverance. Every day was devoted to architectural study. To cite one instance:

[Friday the 20th November, 1761.] "We went by sea to Pesto. There are here the remains of two

Basilica, and one temple of the Doric order. Of these . . . we made two views that can enter into the work."

The personal notes are few: [Monday 30th November, 1761]. "The same evening received Betty's letter, informing me of Bet's interview with the King." This refers to his sister Elizabeth.

[Tuesday, 17th November, 1761]. "Clérisseau took this opportunity to talk to me of his situation, and seemed to dread the uncertainty of his share of the designs." It was arranged that the architect was to receive a fixed annual salary in return for his designs and general assistance.

A further proof of the authorship of the "Tour in Italy" is that the designs for the "New Parliament House," which appear in James's name in the Soane Museum, are spoken of in the "Journal" as being the work of the writer.

Robert Adam appears to have leapt quite suddenly into fame, and in 1762 was appointed architect to the King. His nomination to this office occasioned some bitter comment among those who hated his great patron, Lord Bute, and resented Scotch favouritism in general. In libellous pamphlets Adam was accused of "bringing his hungry Scotch kinsmen in his train"; nevertheless, he continued to rise in the public estimation, and became the most popular and fashionable architect of his day.

He had learnt in Italy a recipe for making

"composition ornaments," and the secret of this preparation was a great factor in the prosperity of his career. This "compo," used to the present day for decorating doors, ceilings, mantles, etc., was cast according to various patterns in wood-moulds, and then applied direct to the wooden framework it was intended to cover. Being far cheaper than wood-carving, or the plaster carving which had until then been executed on the wall or ceiling itself, the new process was invariably used by Adam for his graceful effects of festoon and tracery. The same substance was of sufficient strength and hardness to form hanging-ornaments unsupported save by wire. Neither *carton-pierre* nor any similar material was known at that time in England, and Adam determined to keep the monopoly of his innovation. The Italian artisans whom he had brought over for the purpose, were made to work in locked rooms, and during Adam's lifetime, the secret of the "compo" was never divulged. A clerk of the works named Thomas Jackson, who had penetrated the mystery, set up in business for himself when Robert died, and managed to obtain nearly all the latter's original wood-moulds. These are still in daily use by Jackson's descendants, Messrs. Jackson, of Rathbone Place.

Robert was a man of considerable culture; his work on Diocletian's palace showed a wide knowledge of the Latin writers; he was a Fellow of the

Royal Society, of the Society of Antiquaries, and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. In 1768 he entered Parliament as member for Kinross-shire, and was in consequence obliged to resign his office at Court, in which he was succeeded by his brother and partner, James.

From this time onwards the firm, besides executing numerous private orders for noblemen's houses throughout the country, began to undertake speculative building on a large scale. Their greatest enterprise of this kind was the design of the Adelphi (the brothers). In this work all the brothers participated.

On the low-lying ground known as Durham Yard, between the Strand and the river, had once stood a palace which Queen Elizabeth presented to Sir Walter Raleigh. This had given place to a terrace of houses, in one of which David Garrick lived before he became an actor, with "three quarts of vinegar in the cellar, calling himself a wine-merchant."[1] These houses were now pulled down, and an Act of Parliament having been obtained for the purpose in 1771, a series of underground arches, two stories in height, were constructed to raise the land above the level of the Thames. The plan of the magnificent Adelphi Terrace over the river-wharf was suggested to Robert Adam by the terrace at Dalmatia. Here Garrick, already famous, and Topham Beauclerk, the witty friend of Dr. Johnson, very soon

[1] Samuel Foote.

took houses. Robert and James also lived for many years in Robert Street, Adelphi.[1]

The bill was not allowed to pass through parliament without encountering much opposition from the Corporation of London. "They have stolen the very river from us," was the burden of a set of verses directed against the brothers. It was not, however, the opposition of their enemies, but the expense involved in the vast sub-structures, which made the work a commercial failure. The Adams were almost ruined, and in 1773 another bill was passed, allowing the whole property to be disposed of by lottery. The tickets were £50 each, and the prize-winners were to have the houses equally divided between them. David Garrick, in a letter to John Wilkes, states that his "friends and neighbours the Adams" have asked him "to desire Wilkes's interest with the Lord Mayor that they may be permitted to draw their lottery in the Guildhall."[2]

Another letter from Garrick (printed in Hone's "Every-Day Book")[3] written a few years earlier,

[1] There is a story told of a City dinner at which two royal princes were present. As the princes were brothers, one of the company, wishing to show off his scholarship, toasted them as "the Adelphi." "Now that we are on the subject of streets," retorted a jocular alderman, "I beg leave to propose 'Finsbury Square.'"

[2] Report of Royal Commission on Hist. MSS., Appendix IV, p. 402.

[3] Edit. 1838, vol. i, p. 327.

shows the terms of friendship which existed between him and the brothers, and as it refers to the building undertakings in the Strand, may be quoted here. It contained a request that the Adams should assign the corner house of Adam Street—then in course of erection—to Thomas Becket, the well-known bookseller of the Strand, whose name appears as the publisher on the title-page of the Adams' "Works in Architecture," though the authors bore the sole cost of production.

"Hampton. Monday, 8.

"My Dear Adelphi,

"I forgot to speak to you last Saturday about our friend Becket. We shall all break our hearts if he is not bookseller to y^e^ Adelphi, & has not y^e^ corner house that is to be built. Pray, my dear & very good friends, think a little of this matter, & if you can make us happy, by suiting all our conveniences, we shall make his shop, as old Jacob Tonson's was formerly, ye rendévouz for y^e^ first people in England. I have a little selfishness in this request—I never go to coffee-houses, seldom to taverns, & should constantly (if this scheme takes place) be at Becket's at one at noon, & 6 at night; as y^e^ monkey us'd to be punctual in Piccadilly. . . . Make y^r^ peace w^th^ heav'n by an act of righteousness, & bestow that corner blessing (I have

mention'd) upon Becket & his family—this is y^e^ pray'r & petition

" of y^r^
" affectionate
" &
" devoted
" D: GARRICK."

Needless to say, Becket had the "corner blessing" conferred upon him.

We are constantly brought face to face with the fact of the rapid growth of the outlying districts of London, but it seems hard to realize that one hundred and thirty years ago Bloomsbury was a small suburb, and Marylebone a country village. A great part of the Adams' work lay in the building up of these districts.

The mere enumeration of the streets in which most of the houses were built by Robert Adam shows the great extent of his labours in the metropolis. We cite from the list given by Mr. Fitzgerald: the Adelphi (R. and J. Adam), Portland Place (James Adam's work, with the exception of No. 25, which Robert built and decorated for his own use), Mansfield Street, a portion of Harley Street, Stratford Place in Oxford Street, Finsbury Square, portions of Dover Street and Grafton Street, Spring Gardens, one side of Portman Square, Portman Street, Hamilton Place, George Street

(Westminster), Bedford Square, Gower Street, Cumberland Place, Seymour Street, Bryanston Square, mansions in Whitehall, Gwydyr House, houses in Berkeley Square and Hart Street, Upper and Lower Phillimore Place (Kensington), Fitzroy Square, York Place, houses in Weymouth Street, also in Devonshire Street and Manchester Square, the late Duke of Cambridge's house in Park Lane, houses in Bruton Street, Soho Square, and Russell Square, terraces in the Old Kent Road, in Walworth Road, and in Kennington.

Besides Lansdowne House, Harewood House (London), Montague House, and Osterley House, there were mansions and public buildings (such as the North British Coffee House) throughout London and the neighbourhood. Robert's work is to be seen in Edinburgh, Dublin, Glasgow, Newcastle, Bath, and many other parts of the United Kingdom. Kedleston, which he built for Lord Scarsdale, was probably the largest of his noblemen's mansions. Most of the houses erected by Robert Adam were decorated and furnished from his own designs. The chimney-pieces, cornices, doors, chairs, tables, cabinets, mirrors, the wall-papers, chair coverings, door-knockers—even once, for the King, a counterpane—no part of the house and its contents was too insignificant to be included in his sketches. Everything was carried out in the same style, a style which combined comfort with elegance.

There is no doubt that Robert was greatly helped in his decorative work by Michele Angelo Pergolesi,[1] who came over with him from Italy. Angelica Kauffmann, Cipriani, Zucchi, and Columbani also contributed painted plaques and ornamental designs of many kinds. A great deal of "Adam" decorative work is wrongly attributed to Angelica Kauffmann. According to Miss Gerard,[2] Angelica was employed by Adam on her return from Ireland in 1771 until 1781, when she returned to Italy. James Adam does not appear to have been a furniture designer, but merely an architect pure and simple.

In 1773 appeared the first part of the Adams' magnificent volumes, "The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam Esquires." The book came out in folio numbers between 1773 and 1778, and a fifth, or posthumous, part was published in 1822. The descriptive portions were printed in parallel columns in French and English. The plates, 125 in number, consisted of views—of the exterior and interior of great mansions—Sion House, Luton House, Caenwood, or Kenwood, Shelburne (now Lansdowne) House, and many public buildings. Sixty-four of the plates contained

[1] Author of "Designs for Various Ornaments on Seventy Plates," 1777-1801, folio.

[2] "Angelica Kauffmann: a Biography," by Frances A. Gerard (1892).

designs for furniture, cabinets, mirrors, and other carved work.

In 1773 the Adams purchased the patent of a special cement for covering the exterior of a building. This preparation, which had all the appearance of stone, and was yet flexible, was the invention of John Liardet, a Swiss clergyman resident in London. Rival builders often infringed the rights, and the account of one of the prosecutions which ensued was printed as a pamphlet.[1] The defendant's case is most amusing: "Unless the walls of houses are to be coated with porridge, almost any mixture might be construed into counterfeiting, imitating, or resembling that of Liardet":—"Messrs. Adams' patent, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up all the rest";—such were the main arguments in the defence. There are many examples of façades and pillars covered with Adams' patent stucco which prove it to have been the most lasting material of the kind before the use of Portland cement.

Considering the amount of work which Robert Adam undertook, it is indeed wonderful that he should have found time to practise landscape-painting. Yet even in this branch of art, he was regarded as a water-colour painter of considerable merit.

[1] "Observations on Two Trials at Law respecting Messieurs Adams' new-invented Patent-Stucco. By a Practical Plaisterer," 8vo (1778).

Four of his water-colour sketches with pen outlines are in the Print Room, British Museum.

(1) "A Rocky Landscape and Castle."

(2) "Landscape with Figures," depicting a raised road winding away under trees.

(3) "A Castle in a Mountainous Landscape."

(4) "Landscape with Figures," representing a sunset among trees on the shores of a lake. A cottage stands on the further bank.

All the paintings have a certain stiffness and want of freedom. They have rather the appearance of coloured etchings, but this effect is probably due to the pen outlines and the subdued tones of the colouring.

Robert died on 3rd March, 1792, at his house, No. 13, Albemarle Street, hardly a fortnight after the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds. He was buried on the ninth in the south transept of Westminster Abbey. The "Gentleman's Magazine," in an obituary notice, thus compared him with Reynolds:—"It is difficult to know which excelled most in his particular profession. Sir Joshua introduced a new and superior style of portrait-painting. It is equally true that Mr. Adam produced a total change in the architecture of this country, and his fertile genius was not confined to the decoration of buildings, but has been diffused into almost every branch of manufacture." On 11th March, a short sketch of Adam appeared in the "Morning Advertiser," one of the

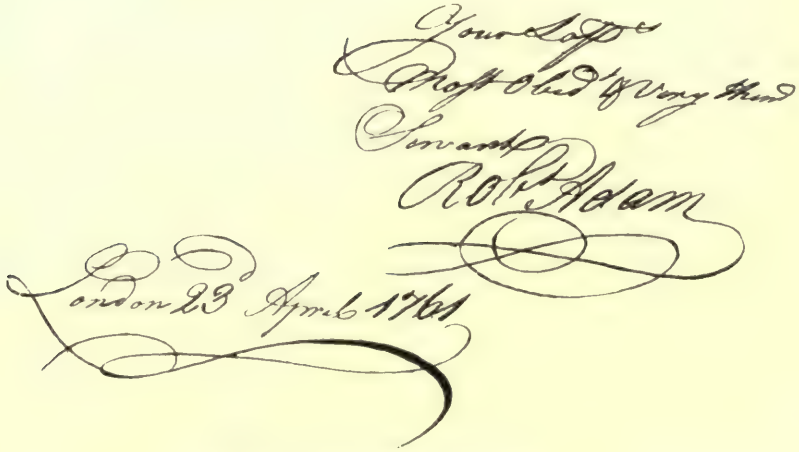
most important daily papers. It was there stated that the year preceding his death he was engaged upon eight public and twenty-five private buildings. The list of his pall-bearers was given as follows: the Duke of Buccleuch, the Earl of Coventry, the Earl of Lauderdale, Viscount Stormont, Lord Frederick Campbell, and Mr. Pulteney.

Robert never married. In his will, signed the day before his death, he left all he possessed to his two unmarried sisters, Elizabeth and Margaret Adam, and appointed his brothers, James and William, as his executors.

He was a very popular man, had a high moral character, a kindly disposition, and sweet manners. He won the affection of all his friends. Among his many admirers the Italian architect, painter and engraver, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, should not be forgotten.

A posthumous volume of Robert's drawings appeared in print: "Designs for vases and foliage composed from the antique" (1825),—thirteen plates engraved by Pastorini. His decorative designs are best seen in the fifty-five volumes of original sketches (by the brothers Robert and James), which are preserved in the Soane Museum. These drawings were put up for auction in Edinburgh after the death of William Adam, the last of the four brothers, in 1822. They were bought by Sir John Soane for about £800, a fourth of the sum at

Fig. XXVI. ROBERT ADAM—PORTRAIT.



ROBERT ADAM—SIGNATURE.

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which they had been valued during the authors' lifetime.

James Adam died in Albemarle Street on 20th October, 1794. He, too, remained single. By will he directed his property to be equally divided among his brother William and his two sisters Elizabeth and Margaret. He published two octavo volumes of "Practical Essays on Agriculture . . . carefully collected and digested from the most eminent authors, with experimental remarks" (1st edition, 1789, 2nd edition, 1794), and at the time of his death was engaged upon a "History of Architecture," which he left unfinished. He held the office of architect to the King, until Burke, in bringing about the reform of the Board of Works, abolished the post. He was likewise master mason to the Board of Ordnance in North Britain. The descendants of John and William Adam number many well-known men, including the Right Hon. William Adam (1751-1839), Lord Chief Commissioner of the Scottish Jury Court; Admiral Sir Charles Adam (1780-1853), and William Patrick Adam (1823-1881), Liberal "Whip" in the House of Commons, and afterwards Governor of Madras.

The signature, illustration XXVI, is from a letter addressed by Robert Adam to Lord Scarsdale of Kedleston, and is reproduced by kind permission of the present Earl.

CHAPTER VI

THE ADAM SCHOOL

THE short-lived classical revival which overlapped the close of the Chippendale era, is distinctly attributable to the Adam brothers. A reaction from the rococo to a severer style of decoration took place almost simultaneously in France, and French classicism had a considerable influence upon our cabinet-makers at the end of the eighteenth century. But the Adams, basing their designs upon their studies and researches in Dalmatia and Italy, were the first to re-establish the taste for Roman and Grecian architecture and ornamentation in this country. Robert Adam extended the province of his art to include interior decorations, fittings and furniture, and thus brought about quite a revolution in furniture design. "The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam Esquires," which began to appear in 1773, comprised a large number of decorative designs, and assisted greatly in establishing the Adam style by enabling cabinet-makers and others to grasp with accuracy the details of the new ideas.

If there was a certain monotony in Adam methods and decorations, this was due to the recurrence of the same kind of ornamentation in every part of the room. The pattern of the carpet often repeated exactly the design of the ceiling, and the walls, either in "composition" or paper, were made to correspond. The furniture, for which Robert Adam provided the sketches, harmonized both in colour and general treatment with its surroundings; every piece was specially made for the room, and for the particular part of the room for which it was intended. Adam's work was always richly embellished, yet the ornaments did not appear to be introduced merely for the sake of ornamentation, but in order to give expression to some specific idea in an artistic, logical, and intelligible form. The details were never confused, and were full of movement and animation.

"Grotesques"[1] from the walls of old Roman baths, or from Raphael's ceilings at the Vatican; Greek and Roman altarpieces; the Palace at Spalatro—all these proved fruitful sources of inspiration to the talented brothers, but the mode of treatment they adopted was quite original. Their designs were never slavish copies of the antique, and might, perhaps, be best described as Anglicized adaptations.

[1] *Grotesques* are fantastic ornaments representing winding stalks and conventionalized foliage interspersed with flowers, fruit, birds, and other ornaments or human figures. The name is derived from the old Roman grottoes, or subterranean chambers, on the walls of which such designs were painted.

A great difference between the work of the Chippendale school and that of the Adams lay in the fact that while the former was essentially a "carved style," the latter was a "painted style rendered in relief." This contrast has been clearly defined by Mr. Hugh Stannus: "The beauty of carved ornament was that it covered over the surface rather than showed the interspaces; in the well-known Trojan scroll, for instance, the spaces between ornament were much less than the ornament itself. That was the characteristic of carved ornament—much ornament and little ground. But in painted ornament, there should be light, delicate work, with little bits of colour laid on with a brush; and such was Adam's decoration."[1]

Thus the bold sinuous lines of Chippendale gradually gave place to a stiffer, if more elegant and correct, class of design. Furniture returned once more to strictly architectural lines under the influence of a movement more classically correct than that of the Queen Anne period. Conventional festoons composed of drooping bell-flowers or husks, or the graceful honeysuckle-spray replaced Chippendale's rock and shellwork and curled endive leaves. A radiating ornament was greatly used by Adam both in exterior and interior decorations. It figured in arched spaces, over doors, spandrels, and ceilings, and on furniture took the form of a fan, or rising

[1] "Journal of Society of Arts," 2nd February, 1894.

sun. The idea was no doubt a survival of the earlier escalop shell—but classically treated. Thin swags of drapery, wiry metal stars, medallions, and the fans also, were said by Mr. Hungerford Pollen to have been suggested by the fine metal-work of Pompeii. Other ornaments which Adam brought into constant requisition were rosettes, wreaths, and bulls' or rams' heads to catch up the festoons; acanthus leaves, cupids, caryatides, griffins, sphinxes, lozenge-shaped panels, knots of ribbon, and Greek, Roman or Etruscan vases.

Plaques, on which classical subjects were depicted by well-known decorative artists of the day, were frequently used for the ornamentation of Adam's furniture. Figure subjects were also inlaid and so delicately executed that at a short distance they appear to be paintings. Satin-wood was introduced into England from the East Indies about this period and added a new note of colour to houses where mahogany or gilded furniture had so long reigned supreme. At first the new wood was mainly used for inlaying purposes.

Adam is supposed to have employed Capitsoldi as well as other Italian and French metal-workers for the making of gilt bronze mountings. Occasionally the work was fine and delicate, but as a general rule metal ornaments on English furniture were not equal either in colour, design, or execution to those of Gouthière and Caffieri in France. Even

Sheraton, who thought so highly of our native cabinet-making, acknowledged this fact when in his "Dictionary" he expressed the wish that "we might have as elegant brasswork for cabinets cast in London as they have in Paris. It is in this article they excel us."

Chairs

The chairs were carried out sometimes in mahogany, but more often in painted or gilded wood. A favourite design was an oval upholstered back and seat, with a very ornamental framework—the covering being specially designed to accord with the room. Adam was probably the first to make use of a splat in the form of a lyre, a style much copied later by Sheraton. Square backs with small panels in the top rail, classical foliage and scrolls carved in low relief, sculptured griffins introduced between the splat and the back of the seat—all are characteristics of Adam chairs. The roll-back arms of both chairs and sofas were often supported by classical figures ending in claw feet. The old cabriole leg with its ball-and-claw, club, scroll, or hoof foot was now entirely superseded. The legs were round or square and tapering (turned or fluted). The flutings were in many cases filled in with husk ornaments, and as this was a notable feature in Louis-Seize furniture, it is probable that Adam copied the idea from the French. The "dipped" or scooped-

Fig. XXVII. ADAM CHAIR.

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out seat was also an innovation of the middle eighteenth century.

The chair in illustration XXVII is of gilded wood. It is a very typical example of Adam's work, in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts. Between the back and the seat are two large scrolls decorated with leaf carving. The arms form similar scrolls and terminate in animals' heads. The legs are round and tapering, with beading and acanthus leaf ornamentation.

The sofas had gracefully curved backs, often surmounted by a medallion of a honeysuckle and scroll design. They usually stood on six legs, of which four supported the straight front of the seat. In other examples, classical figures were used instead of legs.

Sideboards

Robert Adam's sketches for sideboards with pedestal cupboards surmounted by urns are the earliest examples that have come down to us of this type of furniture. It is therefore very likely that he was the first to conceive the idea of thus elaborating the simple serving-table of the earlier part of the eighteenth century. A beautiful Adam sideboard is shown in illustration XXX. The pedestals were sometimes fixed to the centre framework, and sometimes detached. The sideboards were often fitted with a brass rail at the back in order to support the

silver plate. Some of the finest examples of Adam's work are to be found in his designs for decorative silver. The chief wood of which the sideboards were made was mahogany; the ornaments were wood-inlay, carving, stucco, and brass. Adam's dining-rooms frequently had a carved recess at one end with a concave vault above, and he then designed a sideboard with a curved back exactly to fit this recess.

Ornamental Side-Tables

Pier- and console-tables were of mahogany or gilded wood, and the top of marble. The railing was ornamented by hanging festoons or similar decorations, either inlaid or executed in relief (brass, stucco, or gilt-wood). The tables sometimes stood on four or six square tapering legs (console-tables having wall brackets), but in many instances more elaborate supports were used—rams' heads or caryatides, ending in animals' feet. Illustration XXVIII, shows an Adam side-table upheld by rams' heads, the property of Mr. James Orrock. It will be observed that similar supports were employed for sofas, chairs, and sideboards, and that the same idea was again repeated in the bookcases or commodes.

Larger Pieces

In such larger pieces the classical figures were introduced to subdivide the panels and uphold the

Fig. XXVIII.
To face page 102.

ADAM SIDE-TABLE.

cornices. In some cases, fluted pilasters were used in place of the figures. The cornices were surmounted either by urns or sculptured figures.

Cabinets

Most of the cabinets and commodes were semi-circular in shape, and finely inlaid. Sometimes they were further ornamented by painted plaques representing pastoral scenes, classical figures, or musical instruments.

Mirrors

Adam's airy fancy literally revelled in designs for mirror-frames which repeated the scheme of ornament used in the chimney-piece or side-table above which they were hung. They were either of gilded "compo" or gilded wood, often oval in shape, and surrounded by a bordering of husks and of hanging festoons, upheld by cupids.

Examples of such mirrors are seen in illustrations XXXIII, XXXV, and XLV.

The globe, illustration XXIX, is one of a pair in the possession of Mr. Burghard. The mahogany stand is carved with various running patterns—ribbon and rose, leaves, husks, and rosettes. The feet are lions' claws. The beautifully carved heads represent the four continents, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. The carving of the heads is foreign in character, and it is probable that these were made

by Italian workmen in Adam's employ. Each of the globes is inscribed with the name of the maker "Adams." At the close of the eighteenth century several improvements were made in the construction of artificial globes, which were first manufactured in England in 1592.[1] George Adams' invention was described in the "Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences," 1772:

"The ingenious Mr. Adams, mathematical instrument maker to His Majesty, has constructed a new pair of Globes with very considerable improvements." A long and exact description followed, and there was also an illustration showing the terrestrial and celestial globes on heavily "turned" stands. George Adams of No. 60, Fleet Street, had a world-wide reputation, not only as a maker of globes, but also as the author of scientific works. He died in 1773.

The globes and stands, one of which is here depicted, are supposed to have been made expressly for George III, and to have been stolen from the palace at the beginning of the last century.

As we have already said, the eighteenth-century furniture makers were greatly indebted to the architects who built the apartments intended to hold the chairs, tables, and sideboards designed for the owner's comfort. In the next chapter it is proposed

[1] The first English globe, made by Molyneux in 1592, is in the Library of the Inner Temple.

Fig. XXIX. ADAM GLOBE.

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to illustrate this close alliance between the arts by giving a description of Harewood House, near Leeds. This mansion is, with the exception of Claydon House, co. Bucks, the seat of the Verneys,[1] probably the only example now remaining in which the art of Robert Adam, the designer of the rooms, was brought into intimate connection with the work of the second Thomas Chippendale.

[1] At Claydon there are no documents to prove the identity of Chippendale's work.

CHAPTER VII

HAREWOOD HOUSE, YORKSHIRE. STOURHEAD, BATH, AND ROWTON CASTLE, SALOP

A WRITER has recently remarked that probably few people realize the extent to which objects of art have been accumulating in this "the only country which for the last two centuries and a half has never seen a town sacked, a country mansion fired, or more than a temporary interruption of the quiet accumulation of wealth which our laws, unlike the Code Napoléon, do not force every father to divide equally among his children." Numerous are the Elizabethan mansions which remain practically intact; the panelling of the walls, the bed in which Queen Elizabeth slept having been handed down with pride from generation to generation. The works of artists and craftsmen of the Georgian schools were bought almost exclusively by English nobles and wealthy merchants, who alone at that time appreciated the true merit of those native productions which are now prized throughout the length and breadth of Europe. Pictures, china, and plate, brought together in houses built by Wren, Inigo Jones, and the brothers Adam, have in innumerable instances been

preserved as they were a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago. Unfortunately, however, during the Early Victorian and Middle Victorian eras a curious distaste seems to have arisen for the designs of the furniture of the previous century. People filled their houses with the productions of the cabinet-makers of the day and stowed away their older furniture in cellars or boxrooms, whence it sometimes drifted to the neighbouring cottages. With the gradual return of good taste and a renewed feeling for art, the beauty of Queen Anne and Chippendale work was once more recognized. Choice examples—scattered in all directions, and having suffered much ill-usage in the interval—were eagerly sought after by collectors. Once again the old masterpieces in wood occupied an honoured place in great houses—but not necessarily in the houses for which they had first been made. Possibly owing to the high social position held by the architect-designer, Robert Adam, "Adam" sideboards and suites in gilded or painted wood had a better fate, and were often suffered to remain undisturbed. But taking into consideration the wonderful durability of the work, and the fact that mansions furnished by makers of the Chippendale school must have been numerous, comparatively few houses of that date will be found to have preserved their original furniture.

If the word Chippendale be taken literally as

denoting work executed by him or under his immediate direction, the matter is more difficult still. It is not sufficient to find examples of his style and period, for such furniture may have been the production of some other maker. Documentary evidence of Chippendale's workmanship—either in the form of an entry in a steward's ledger or an actual bill—can alone prove the identity of the master cabinet-maker. Such proof is extremely rare. In many cases the old household accounts no longer exist; and a cabinet-maker's bill, dating back a century and a half, is even less likely to have been kept. But at Harewood House these precious documents are preserved, and through the courtesy of the Earl of Harewood we are thus enabled to illustrate some of Chippendale's actual productions.

Harewood House stands on the summit of a hill about halfway between Leeds and Harrogate, and overlooks the woods and groves of romantic Wharfedale. The river Wharfe, after passing Bolton Abbey, flows through the vast grounds and the pleasure gardens which were laid out for the first Earl of Harewood by the famous eighteenth-century landscape gardener, "Capability" Brown. Some of the finest muscat grapes to be found in England still ripen in the vinery planted in 1783; the stables were designed by Sir William Chambers; the model village on the estate has scarcely been added to since it was first built about the same

period. In fact, with the exception of the ruins of old Harewood Castle—erected in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—everything within Lord Harewood's domain, including Harewood House itself, is an example of eighteenth-century workmanship. The foundation stone of the house was laid on 23rd March, 1759, by Edward Lascelles, afterwards first Earl of Harewood. The architect was John Carr of York (1721-1807); the elegant structure, consisting of a centre and two side wings, adapted from the Corinthian style, has been classed by Fergusson as a nobleman's residence of "a thoroughly English type." The interior of the house was entrusted to Robert Adam, as decorative architect; to Thomas Chippendale as cabinet-maker and carver; and to Rose, Zucchi, Rebecci, and Collins as decorative artists.

In 1843 Sir Charles Barry made some improvements in the exterior of the building, and ten years later a certain amount of re-decoration and upholstery was carried out in the interior. But in its main features the mansion remains still in the same condition as when first inhabited in 1771. The door shuts behind us, and we are in another world. Even though a modern note is struck here and there, the imagination refuses to listen. If the electric light in the old lanthorns, or the various additions made by successive owners of the property, would seem to recall the lapse of time, we have but to turn to the

gilded mirrors and side-tables, to the walls and ceilings—those triumphs of eighteenth-century art—and before us we see only a nobleman's country seat in the days of Adam and Chippendale.

The association of these two masters in executing the furniture and decorations of Harewood is a fact of unique interest. Chippendale, the central figure of a great artistic movement, was called upon to make or to superintend the making of furniture, most of which was probably designed by the initiator of a rival school.

Coloured sketches of ceilings, mantelpieces, mirrors, and doors for many of the rooms, are among Robert Adam's original drawings at the Soane Museum: "A Chimney-piece for the Hall, 1762"; two alternate designs for the "Music Room Chimney-piece, 1767"; two for "the drawing room"; two for "the Second Drawing room"; one for "the State bed-chamber"; one for "another bed chamber"; one for the "Principal Gentlemen's Dressing-room"; four for the chimney-piece of the gallery, dated 1774, 1776, and 1777, and five others for rooms which are not named. There are three drawings of decorative mirrors, one oval and two square-shaped. The sketches for the ceilings are dated 1767, 1768, and 1769, and comprise three for the drawing-room, one for the State bedroom, two for the gentlemen's dressing-room, two for the gallery (one completed and a duplicate unfinished), and

two alternative designs for "The Dressing Room," presenting views of the whole side of the room with two carved doors. Dressing-rooms in those days were evidently apartments of much importance; the painted ornamentation shown in the two sketches above named being as elaborate as that of the State Reception Rooms.

The general scheme of decoration is certainly carried out in conformity with Adam's notion of unity in ornamental detail, yet an occasional console-table, frame, or girandole of pure Chippendale type shows that the author of the "Director" was permitted to introduce his favourite "rococo" amidst the Adam classicism. Too little is known of Chippendale's actual work to say with any certainty that he never designed in the Adam style. About the years 1765-71, during which Harewood House was being furnished, the rococo school was already fast going out of fashion, and there is no proof that Chippendale, who had so far followed the many vagaries of public taste, may not also have adopted the classical methods which prevailed at the close of his career. No fourth edition of the "Director" was issued to tell us of Chippendale's latest productions, but it would seem that the prosperity of his business could hardly have continued had he failed to keep pace with the times. These are, however, mere conjectures, for though Adam's drawings at the Soane Museum contain no specimen of the furniture at

Harewood, it is most likely that all the pieces of distinctly Adam type were of his own design, while, with a few exceptions, Chippendale on this occasion worked chiefly in the capacity of master cabinet-maker.

The group shown in illustration XXX represents a side of the dining-room. The walls are divided into panels by means of stucco mouldings, and hung with pictures by English eighteenth-century masters. There are two sideboards in the room, and the one here depicted is a magnificent example of an Adam design. The wood is mahogany, enriched with delicately chased brass-work. The pedestal cupboards for wine and crockery on either side stand a little apart from the central portion, and are surmounted by elegantly shaped urns which served in the old days either as knife-boxes, or for the reception of hot and cold water. The oval wine-cooler in the middle adds greatly to the decorative effect of the whole. The details of the ornamentation consist chiefly of chains of bell-flowers caught up by rosettes, quaint masks, bows, and clusters of leaves. The rail is bordered by a leaf and scroll pattern, and a rose and scroll border encircles the wine-cooler and urns. In grace, colour, and beauty of workmanship, the brass-work rivals the best French examples. The chairs form part of a large suite. The vertical frame, the tapering legs, the "dipped" seat, and the form of the splat are clearly Adam in style. The

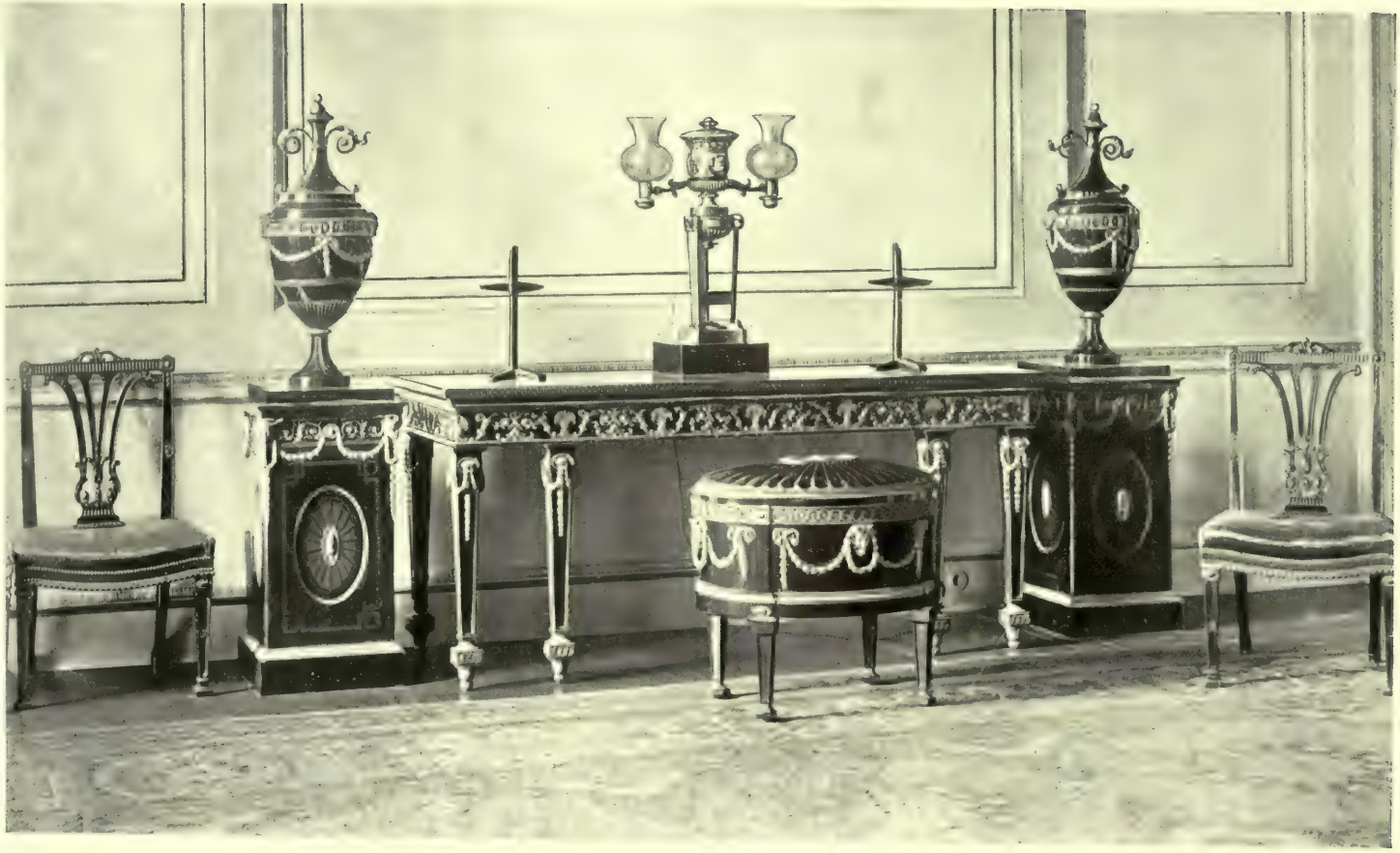

Fig. XXX.
To face page 112.

DINING ROOM, HAREWOOD HOUSE

carving, however, is very fine, and was no doubt executed by Chippendale.

The dining-room leads into the music-room, where the ceiling—painted by Zucchi—is subdivided by stucco mouldings into large circular divisions. The whole pattern of this relief work is exactly reproduced in the carpet, which is still in an excellent state of preservation. From here we pass into the Gallery—the great State-room of the house, size 80 ft. by 24 ft.—where, in 1835, a dinner was served to one hundred and thirty guests, on the occasion of the visit of the late Queen, then Princess Victoria, who, accompanied by the Duchess of Kent, spent the night at Harewood. One can picture the scene—the long tables "groaning beneath the weight of the gold and silver services of plate with which they were loaded,"[1] while no less brightly in the background shone the gilt frames of the pictures and mirrors, all masterpieces of carving.

The windows are decorated by a cornice and drapery in carved and painted wood; the wonderful effect of which is shown in the illustration that forms the frontispiece. In a very scarce Yorkshire book entitled "The Tourist's Companion," by John Jewell of Harewood (1817), there is a minute description of Harewood House and all its apartments. In the author's account of the Gallery is the following: "Over the seven windows are some rich mock-

[1] "History and Antiquity of Harewood" by John Jones (1859).

curtains hanging in festoons and apparently ready to let down at pleasure, formed of wood carved and painted under the directions of Mr. Chippendale in so masterly a manner as to deceive every beholder." The cornice, the hanging floral wreaths, the tassels and fringes are in gilded wood, and the imitation drapery, which has all the appearance of silk or wool, is of wood painted a deep, dark blue. Between the five windows along the side of the room are mirrors with gilt-wood frames described by Jewell as "four most superb French looking-glasses nine feet by seven feet six." They are surmounted by coloured medallions, cupids, and floral wreaths. Below each mirror is a gilt-wood side-table, one of which is seen in illustration XXXI. "Four elegant sideboards with two (*sic*) slabs of marble, each by Fisher, and the frames by Mr. Chippendale of London." Jewell wrote only forty-six years after the completion of the house, and his detailed account, containing as it does the names even of local artists and artizans who were engaged upon different portions of the building and decoration, proves beyond a doubt that the author had at his command the fullest and most accurate information. Thus the side-tables with their ram's head and wreath decoration—a purely Adam conception—are shown to have been carved by Chippendale himself. And although the book merely mentions—without naming the maker—"two library tables" in the same

Fig. XXXI.
To face page 114.

SIDE-TABLE, HAREWOOD HOUSE.

room, richly inlaid and ornamented with rams' heads to correspond with the console-tables, these —according to the bills—were also made by Chippendale, or under his direction. In front of the windows are six gilt Adam tripods supported by sphinxes.

The wall facing the windows is covered with paintings by our great eighteenth-century masters, and several of the frames are so manifestly rococo in character that the traditional account which calls these frames "Chippendale" is probably correct. "The ceiling is of the Palmyran taste and the stucco-work by Rose is esteemed the first of its kind in England. The paintings are admirably executed by Rebecca (*sic*) and represent the seasons of the year intermixed with figures from heathen mythology." About ten years ago part of the Gallery caught fire, the lead melted which secured the painted plaques to the ceiling and, in consequence, all the ornamental panels fell to the ground. Fortunately only one was destroyed, and when the stucco-work was restored by the Leeds School of Art, the panels were replaced in their original position. Adam's two coloured sketches for this ceiling at the Soane Museum bear the date 1769.[1]

No description of this interesting apartment would be complete without mentioning the splendid

[1] This date proves that the ceiling was not the work of Angelica Kauffmann as is generally supposed. See Chap. V.

collection of porcelain. The Sèvres and Oriental ware has been valued at £100,000.

The room which is now Lady Harewood's sitting-room was once the State bedroom. Here the Czar Nicholas I of Russia slept when, as Czarowitz, he stayed the night at Harewood in 1816; it was again occupied by Princess Victoria nineteen years later. The furniture in former times was upholstered in green and gold; the bed was "hung with green damask bordered with gold" and had a canopy supported by Ionic columns. But nothing of all this remains, although the ceiling, by Rose, some of the furniture and the mirrors, are still as they were in the old days. Illustration XXXII shows an inlaid cabinet writing-table. The radiating ornaments, husks, scrolls, and acanthus leaves are executed in various coloured woods, and both wood and ivory are used for the plaques on the cupboard doors. Within the cupboards are numerous small drawers; there is a large drawer above the knee-hole and two others on either side. In its outline, curves, and graceful decorations this piece constitutes one of Adam's finest designs for furniture. It seems difficult to imagine that Chippendale can have had any share in such a production, although the old bills prove that he was employed to superintend its execution.

Another graceful example of an Adam mirror in gilded wood hangs on the side wall and is shown

Fig. XXXII. INLAID WRITING TABLE, HAREWOOD HOUSE

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Fig. XXXIII. ADAM MIRROR, HAREWOOD HOUSE.

To face page 116.

Fig. XXXIV. DOOR, HAREWOOD HOUSE.

To face page 116.

in illustration XXXIII. The ornamental portion, composed of a painting encircled by hanging festoons and with an oblong vase and winged horses below, springs from the top of the oval glass and reaches to the ceiling. There are garlands and plaques on the upper part of the mirror-frame itself, together with caryatide figures on either side. Wreathed foliage, husks, spreading leaves, rams' heads and bows of ribbon complete the design.

A plainer Adam mirror-frame, composed of chains of husks, a vase, and a bow of ribbon, is fixed to the wall above the chimney-piece. But strangely enough the accompanying girandoles are typically Chippendale, with pagoda-tops and pronounced rococo ornamentation. The door of this room, illustration XXXIV, is one of seventy-six similar doors in various parts of the house. They are of solid mahogany and four or five inches in thickness; many of the doors are double—one opening behind the other with a small recess between—and thus form a very stronghold against draughts. The carving of the panels varies; the door seen in the illustration has a key pattern, corner rosettes, and small beadings. The treatment of the handle-plate, filigree brass-work in a scroll design uniting the keyhole and handle, is eminently characteristic of an Adam door.

Illustration XXXV, which depicts a side-table and mirror, is another curious example of the associa-

tion of Adam and Chippendale. A glance at the gilt-wood table is sufficient to show that it is a very fine specimen of a Chippendale design. On the deep frame leaves and scrolls in Louis-Quinze style are mingled with grapes and foliage in high relief; elaborate winged figures resting on square blocks form the feet, and the carving in the centre shows the animal's head, which is thus placed on nearly all Chippendale sideboards. The simplicity, classical severity and general grace of the mirror and sconces above, form a remarkable contrast. The chains of husks, the cupids supporting a vase, the delicate scrolls and honeysuckle, repeated so often in Adam's work—though always with charming variation—leave no doubt of the designer's identity. But probably nowhere else is an Adam mirror to be found in connection with a rococo pier-table.

The hall lanthorn of gilded wood, illustration XXXVI, is evidently another Adam design. There are a number of similar but smaller lanthorns at Harewood. Chippendale himself is said to have executed this beautiful piece, and the delicate cupid heads and wings were certainly produced by the hand of a master carver.

The old ledgers of the Hoare family at Stourhead, Bath, contain several entries which prove that a great deal of the furniture for this mansion was made by the firm of Chippendale. "Paid Chippen-

Fig. XXXVI. HALL LANTHORN, HAREWOOD HOUSE.

To face page 118.

dale £1,000," "Paid Chippendale for making library-furniture," are two extracts from these ledgers, kindly supplied by Sir Henry Hoare, Bart. Owing to a great fire which took place at Stourhead two years ago, the original documents have been mislaid, and further details, as well as the date of the extracts, cannot now be obtained. It is known, however, that one of the Chippendales worked at Stourhead for a considerable time, and not only the library furniture but the bedroom and dining-room suites also, were made by Chippendale or under his direction.

The chair A, illustration XXXVII, is one of a set in the library. It is distinctly "English Empire" in style as are also the writing-desks in the same room. In the desks the angles are ornamented to correspond with the sphinx-headed legs of the chairs. About the year 1800 Sir Richard Colt Hoare added the library, and this date (together with the style of the furniture) shows that the third Chippendale was employed to furnish it. It is almost certain that the great Chippendale also worked there some twenty or thirty years previously, but unfortunately the documents in proof of this have not yet been brought to light.

Chair B is one of a large suite acquired by the owners of Stourhead during the early part of the nineteenth century. It is said that these chairs were actually designed by Chippendale (II) for Queen

Marie Antoinette. But with the exception of six which were bought by the French Government for the Musée Cluny, the whole set have apparently found their way back to this country. Some from Roehampton House were exhibited recently at the Victoria and Albert Museum. A few are in the possession of Mr. Sidney Letts, and the remaining twenty-four single chairs and two armchairs are still at Stourhead. The leaf and scroll carving is very delicate.

The very characteristic mirror, illustration XXXVIIA, was made by Chippendale (II) for Rowton Castle, Salop. The original bills for this, as well as for much of the Chippendale furniture at Rowton, have been preserved there to the present day. This mirror, with its ornaments, is a delightful example of rococo Chippendale. A similar mirror, unfinished and ungilded, was lately found in a box-room at Rowton, where it had doubtless been stowed away unnoticed since the days of Chippendale.

A B

Fig. XXXVII. CHAIRS, STOURHEAD.

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Fig. XXXVIIA CHIPPENDALE MIRROR FRAME—ROWTON.

To face page 120.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HEPPLEWHITE SCHOOL

THE furniture of the Hepplewhite School gained its name from the folio collection of designs entitled: "The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide" (three editions, 1788, 1789, and 1794), published under the name of "A. Hepplewhite and Co., Cabinet Makers," and from the ten designs bearing the signature "Hepplewhite" or "Heppelwhite" in "The Cabinet makers London Book of prices and designs of Cabinet work" (two editions, 1788 and 1793). In the last-named publication, issued by the "London Society of Cabinet Makers" the majority of the plates were by Thomas Shearer and a few by W. Casement.

By dint of patient research at Somerset House we have found that administration of the goods, chattels, and credits of George Heppelwhite (*sic*), late of the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate, London, was granted on 27th June, 1786, to his widow, Alice.[1]

[1] Administration Act Book, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1786.

Accounts were passed in December, and again in June, 1787, showing that the effects were of considerable value.

George Hepplewhite undoubtedly established the upholstery business in Cripplegate, which was carried on after his death by his widow Alice and a "combine" under the style of "A. Hepplewhite & Co." Hepplewhite was not buried in St. Giles's church.[1] He may have been a countryman of Sheraton's, for the name still survives in the county of Durham.

In the "Guide," which was issued nearly two years after George Hepplewhite's death, the writer of the preface took occasion to disparage the designs of other craftsmen, more especially those of Chippendale and Sheraton. With calm superiority he remarked: "English taste and workmanship have, of late years, been much sought for by surrounding nations, and the mutibility (*sic*) of all things, but more especially of fashions, has rendered the labours of our predecessors in this line of little use; nay, at this day they can only tend to mislead those Foreigners who seek a knowledge of English taste in the various articles of household furniture."

Sheraton replied scornfully in the preface to his "Drawing-Book" (1791). "This work" (the "Guide"), he wrote, "has already caught the decline, and perhaps, in a little time, will suddenly die in

[1] Information from the vicar.

the disorder. The Book of Prices," he continued, "which appeared the same year certainly lays claim to merit and does honour to the publishers. Whether they had the advantage of seeing Heppelwhite's book before theirs was published I know not, but it may be observed with justice that their designs are more fashionable and useful than his in proportion to their number."

The "Cabinet Makers London Book of Prices" was subsequently republished as the "London Cabinet Makers Book of Prices," in 1811 (third edition, 1837). The plates in the new edition were mainly examples of early nineteenth-century dining-tables, but two designs as well as the frontispiece were reproduced from the older book. In the later work the prices were naturally brought up to date.

Collectors are of opinion that there is now in existence a larger quantity of Hepplewhite furniture than there is of any of the other eighteenth-century schools. The most expert craftsmen must have been employed in its manufacture, for it was often wonderfully contrived to combine extreme lightness with durability. The chief fault was a want of proportion, especially in the chairs, a fault which even graceful lines and perfect workmanship could not disguise.

Delicate carving was a great feature of the Hepplewhite style, and this was in some instances combined with inlay in coloured woods, very sparingly

used. But as a general rule a carved piece was not inlaid, and *vice versa*.

Hand-painted furniture was also a speciality, particularly a form of decoration styled in the "Guide" "japanning." It was not the ordinary wood-lacquer in imitation of Oriental-ware, but a fashion which sprang up towards the close of that century for painting a design in varnish-paint on a black or white ground. In "Knight's Penny Cyclopaedia" (1833), this, or a similar process, was thus referred to: "A good deal of common wood-painting is called japanning which differs from the more ordinary painter's work, by using turps instead of oil to mix the colours with, bedsteads, washhand-stands, bedroom chairs, and similar articles of furniture are done in this way."

Very few pieces of Hepplewhite japanning have come down to us in their original condition, for the varnish-paint soon wore off and left only a discoloured surface. There are many fine examples, however, which were painted in the usual way on a plain coloured ground to tone with the room. It is probable that some of the decorative artists who painted furniture for Robert Adam were also employed by cabinet-makers of the Hepplewhite school as there is a great similarity between the two schools in this form of ornamentation. Hepplewhite furniture was often placed in an Adam house and in such cases was evidently specially designed to

harmonize with its surroundings. Nevertheless even the decorative ornaments by no means exclusively followed the lines laid down by Adam; many ideas were taken from Louis-Seize types, and numerous examples showed, especially in outline, marked originality of treatment.

Curiously enough, Hepplewhite cabinet-makers made use of what might be called "stock-decorations," certain special motives, few in number, which were carved, inlaid, or painted on all their productions. Thus ears of corn, accompanied by swags of drapery, and pointed fern leaves are to be seen on most specimens of their work. The "Prince of Wales's feathers" was also a favourite device, and one to which the firm of Hepplewhite and Co. asserted their right by stating that several of their designs had been executed for the Prince himself.

The chief wood employed was mahogany, satin-wood in actual examples of this school being used more for inlay than for structural purposes. In the "Guide," satin-wood was only mentioned as a suitable base for knife-boxes; in the "Book of Prices," however, it was spoken of in connection with all kinds of furniture. The following is a list of other woods for inlaying which were given in the "Book of Prices": manilla, safisco, havannah, king, tulip, rose, purple, snake, alexandria, panella, yew, and maple. Some of these, evidently trade names of the time, cannot now be identified.

Chairs

The size of Hepplewhite chairs marked the great change in the fashions at the close of the eighteenth century. Ladies' hoops were gradually disappearing; a woman no longer occupied "the space of six men," and the old wide seats were accordingly superseded by smaller and neater shapes. Some chairs, both of the Adam and Hepplewhite classes, belonged to a transitional stage—having a broad seat combined with a light back and slight taper legs—and such examples almost invariably appeared ill-balanced.

The following quotations will show the difference between the average chair-measurements given in Chippendale's "Director" and those in Hepplewhite's "Guide."

	Director.	Guide.
Height of legs	1 ft. 4 in.	1 ft. 5 in.
Height of back	1 „ 10 „	1 „ 8 „
Width in front of seat . . .	1 „ 10 „	1 „ 8 „
Depth of seat	1 „ 5 „	1 „ 5 „

The most characteristic Hepplewhite chairs had "shield" and "heart"-shaped backs; wheel, oval, square, and slat backs, however, were also produced in considerable quantities. Thin moulded ribs drawn into a medallion at the lower end of the splat; urns combined with scrolls and conventionalized foliage; Prince of Wales's feathers, wheat-

A B C

Fig. XXXVIII SHEARER CABINET, HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS.

To face page 127.

ears, and swags were forms brought into constant requisition. Other details were pearl-beadings which took the place of Chippendale's shell or leaf work as a border ornament; carved husks, and oval, round, or semicircular rosettes.

Most chairs were either carved, painted, or "japanned"—in the manner above described, but occasionally the decorations were inlaid. The legs, whether square or round, tapered, and were ended in a tapering toe. Delicate turning was often employed, and sometimes fluting; reeded or grooved arms were also a noticeable feature of these chairs. The splat, as a rule, was supported by the side uprights, and did not run down into the back of the seat.

The three chairs in group XXXVIII are all executed in mahogany. In the shield-back armchair B the bars meet in a medallion at the lower extremity, and swags of moulded drapery are slung across from side to side. The front legs and the arms are surrounded by a slight double moulding; at the juncture of arms and legs is a carved design of pointed leaves and rosettes. This chair is very well proportioned; unlike most examples of this class, the lower portion corresponds well with the upper, both as regards size and shape. In the oval-backed chair C, although the general effect is good, a closer examination shows that the various parts are not so well balanced as in chair B. The splat runs down

into the frame of the seat—rather unusual for Hepplewhite—and this fact, combined with the bracing of the legs, seems to denote that the chair was made at a period which came more within the Chippendale influence. Wheat-ears are carved at the top of the splat; the front legs are square and fluted, and only very slightly tapering.

Chair A has a heart-shaped back, surmounted by Prince of Wales's feathers and a bow of ribbon. The splat is further ornamented by the characteristic swags. The legs are tapering and quite plain.

In illustration XXXIX the graceful splat is composed of finely-carved Prince of Wales's feathers, a bow of ribbon, and a shell. Rosettes, the fluting of the legs, and fine mouldings complete the ornamentation. This example shows the wide seat of the transitional chairs and the cross stretchers of the Chippendale period.

The Hepplewhite Warden's chair and shorter chair, illustration XL, in the possession of Mr. J. E. Schunck, came originally from Ireland, and the royal emblems, taken in combination with the Biblical subjects depicted on the painted plaques, point to the fact that these chairs were evidently designed for some politico-religious society. It is possible that they were made for the first lodge of the Orangemen opened in 1795.

The chairs are of immense size—one has to climb up to the Warden's chair by means of a stool.

Fig. XXXIX. HEPPLEWHITE CHAIR.

To face page 128.

Fig. XL. HEPPLEWHITE WARDEN'S CHAIR.

To face page 128.

The height of this larger armchair is 6 ft. 8½ in. (back 4 ft.); the width of the seat in front, 2 ft. 7 in., and the depth, 1 ft. 10½ in. The shorter chair is 5 ft. high (back, 2 ft. 9½ in.); width of seat in front, 2 ft. 2 in.; depth, 1 ft. 8 in. The wood is very dark Spanish mahogany, magnificently carved, and both the execution and design are extremely fine. The outer framework is delicately moulded; the splat joins the seat at the back; the legs are square, fluted, very slightly tapering, and braced together by double side and back rails, and a single front rail; the moulded arms curve gracefully. The top rail of the taller chair is surmounted by a pine, ears of corn, and acanthus leaves. The splat has at the top a bow of ribbon, rosettes, and leaves, and for its central design huge Prince of Wales's feathers waving above a jewelled coronet. At the base is a cluster of pointed fern leaves flanked by conventionalized foliage in graceful lines. In the inlaid plaques, although the colouring is somewhat dulled, the pictures are still quite distinct. The design of the smaller chair is slightly different, the principal omission being the coronet and the ornaments on the top rail.

As regards coverings, it is stated in Hepplewhite's "Guide" that mahogany chairs should have either seats of horsehair, plain, striped, or chequered, or else cane-seats covered by cushions of linen, or leather. Japanned chairs were to have "linen or

cotton cases," and easy chairs covers of horsehair or leather. Easy chairs usually had curved legs in Louis-Quinze style, and graceful side-wings similar in general outline to Queen Anne grandfather chairs. A settee with a carved back, consisting of several shield- or heart-shaped splats, generally formed part of a Hepplewhite suite. An upholstered window-seat, a long bench with a curved front and upright ends rolling outwards, was also especially characteristic of a Hepplewhite room. These seats were sometimes made of painted satin-wood, though in the "Guide" they were spoken of as seats of "mahogany or japanned wood," with coverings of "taberray or morine."

Firescreens

Hepplewhite's firescreens were either "pole," or "horse"-shaped. In the pole screens a small, round, oval, or square frame of mahogany, or other painted wood, was suspended on a pillar, and supported either by a firm stand or spreading claw-feet.

The screen depicted in illustration LIII is of this class. The base is painted mahogany, and the screen itself, a piece of eighteenth-century wool embroidery and painting on a silk ground, represents a well-known picture of Angelica Kauffmann, "Una and the Lion."

Horse firescreens were of larger size; the screen-

panel itself was generally oval in shape, and was made to slide up and down in grooves cut on the inner side of a square frame.

Tables

Pembroke tables, small ornamental tables with inlaid tops and brackets to support the two side-flaps, were very popular at the close of the century, and the "Guide" contained several examples.

Pier-tables were either circular or serpentine in shape, and stood on tapering legs.

The dining-tables—fully described in the "Book of Prices"—were made in a number of different shapes. Perhaps the most curious was the horse-shoe table, having an average length of 7 ft. when closed, but extending to 10 ft. by means of flaps which folded back over the top of the table. The width was 2 ft. 6 in. There were, also, semi-circular tables with folding flaps of the same size as the table itself, the whole supported by three "fly" legs; and smaller flap-tables, to be joined together, each on four tapering legs. Lastly, there were "pillar and claw" dining-tables—also to be joined together.

Frames

Frames were simple, both in outline and ornamentation, and displayed neither the exuberance of

Chippendale examples nor the extreme fancifulness of those of the Adam school. Pier-glass frames, oblong or oval, were still made of the same width as the pier-table. They had simple mouldings and were ornamented on the upper part with delicate leaf scrolls, an urn, or an eagle; chains of husks or drapery hung over the sides, and on the lower border there was a very slight carving of husks, foliage, or a bow of ribbon. A pair of candlesticks was often attached to the sides, or coupled together on the lower edge. The frames were carried out either in gilded wood—the flower and leaf ornaments being often made of plaster wired at the back—in mahogany inlaid, or in other woods, "japanned" and painted. Gilded girandoles were more fantastic in style. The back- or wall-piece to which they were fixed consisted of white or coloured cut glass, gilded urns, or a mirror combined with scrolls and foliage. Oval convex and concave mirrors were also much in demand about this period.

Sideboards

The sideboards were either serpentine or straight fronted, and stood on four or six long, tapering (sometimes fluted) legs. If the sides curved, the angle of the leg was made to correspond exactly with the curve of the framework above; thus the legs were often placed cornerwise with one of the

angles turned towards the front. The fittings consisted of a centre drawer, flanked by two deep drawers or cellarettes. These side drawers were often so divided on the outside as to present the appearance of two drawers, one above the other. In Hepplewhite's "Guide" we are told that the drawer on the left hand was to be lined with lead, and, as it was intended to hold water to wash the glasses, must have a valve cock or plug to let this water off. Straight-fronted sideboards, without drawers, were often supplemented by Adam pedestals and vases and brass-hooped cellarettes. The top was mahogany, sometimes bordered by a narrow inlaid band. There was no brass rail at the back and but little ornamentation, except for vertical flutings, circular rosettes, fans, a vase, scrolls or husks in the centre of the rail. In many instances the sideboards were decorated by fine carving only; other examples were inlaid, but the inlay was always very slight. A type of Hepplewhite sideboard specially mentioned in the "Guide" had an oval-shaped back to fit into a recess; such pieces were, no doubt, intended for dining-rooms designed by Adam or his followers. Shearer's sketches included a pedestal sideboard, elaborately decorated with hand-paintings and with an ornamental wall-piece of wood—in place of a brass rail—at the back. This is the only example of Shearer's work in which he departed from his rôle of extreme simplicity.

Illustration XLI depicts a mahogany Hepplewhite sideboard belonging to Mr. Alfred Davis. The serpentine front measures 5 ft. 9 in. by 2 ft. 8 in. straight across, and is fitted with a long middle drawer and two smaller drawers on either side. The front legs are placed with the angle turned towards the front, corresponding with a similar angle in the curve of the frame above; all four legs are fluted. The top is inlaid with a band of king-wood and a line of satin-wood. The three panels in the front are of satin-wood, and the festoon of husks is of stained holly.

The wine-cooler below, also a Hepplewhite design, is mahogany inlaid with satin-wood. The knife box of the same materials has a silver key escutcheon and a small silver ring handle above.

If Hepplewhite himself be taken as the central figure of the school which bears his name, Thomas Shearer must be regarded as one of its chief exponents. Shearer's designs in the "Book of Prices," were, with two or three exceptions, issued in a separate publication entitled "Designs for Household Furniture," in 1788. The sketches for bureaus, bookcases, sideboards, and bedroom furniture were very elegant, having beautiful mouldings and simple ornamentation. There were no chairs included among his drawings, and, as Sheraton informs us that chair-making was generally a trade apart from that of cabinet-making, we may conclude that Shearer

Fig. XLI. HEPPLEWHITE SIDEBOARD, GRINLING GIBBONS MIRROR.
To face page 134.

was a cabinet-maker only. The legs of all his pieces were plain, square, and tapering, and in this respect he differed from Hepplewhite, who made great use of turning and fluting. Shearer's principal ornamentation consisted of lines and bands of rare woods. One decorative detail not seen in the work of other designers was the introduction of a whole sheaf of corn carved in relief.

Both Hepplewhite and Shearer devised many specimens of folding furniture. Shearer's arrangements for the partitions, sliding shelves, and drawers not only of writing-tables, but of dressing- and shaving-tables, were perhaps the most ingenious of any produced during that century.

Hepplewhite bookcases and cupboards had straight moulded cornices, occasionally surmounted by an urn or scroll-work. The cornices in Shearer's drawings were slightly arched or curved, but neither of these makers favoured either the "swan-neck" or "broken" pediment.

The china-cupboard, illustration XXXVIII, in the possession of Mr. Alfred Davis, is a choice example of a Shearer design. The mahogany is ornamented by mouldings and beautiful carving on the pediment. The sheaf of wheat-ears which appears in the centre is most realistic. A similar decoration occurs on a wardrobe in Shearer's "Designs for Household Furniture," which is again reproduced in the "Book of Prices." The cupboard

(XXXVIII) is 3 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. wide. Three small vase-shaped pinnacles are missing from the pediment.

Writing-tables and dressing-tables often had sliding "tambour" doors. Such doors were, according to Sheraton, made of narrow strips of mahogany glued to and laid upon canvas, "which binds them together and suffers them at the same time to yield to the motion their ends make in the curved groove on which they run, so that the top may be brought round to the front and pushed at pleasure to the back again when it is required to be open."

From the frail nature of these reeded slides, it is a matter of astonishment that so many should have come down to us.

The best specimens of turning were to be seen in the bed posts, frequently converted nowadays into lamp- or flower-stands. Banded reeding, with fern-leaf ornamentation, was a special feature of these posts.

CHAPTER IX

THOMAS SHERATON

THOMAS SHERATON, the last of the great eighteenth-century furniture designers, had a very chequered career. He wrote a number of technical treatises, and though he illustrated them with his masterly diagrams and designs, not one of the books proved commercially successful, and his days were passed in poverty. Born at Stockton-on-Tees about 1751, the son of a father of the same names, Sheraton evidently came of very humble stock, for he had no regular education. He learnt the trade of cabinet-making and in all his spare time taught himself perspective, drawing, and geometry. In early life he was a member of the Church of England, but ultimately became a zealous Baptist. He occasionally preached in Baptist chapels, and wrote some religious essays. His first publication was a pamphlet of this nature, entitled, "A Scriptural Illustration of the Doctrine of Regeneration . . . To which is added, A Letter on the Subject of Baptism" (Stockton, 1782). In this tract he describes himself as a "mechanic, one who never received the

advantage of a collegial or academical education," and refers to a short stay he made at Norwich.

About 1790, Sheraton came to London to seek fame and fortune, just as Chippendale had done more than half a century before him. In 1793 he was living at No. 41, Davies Street, Grosvenor Square; two years later he is found occupying No. 106, Wardour Street, Soho; finally, he settled at No. 8, Broad Street, Golden Square, where he had a house and shop.

His first (and best) book of decorative designs was issued in quarto parts, 1791-4, under the title: "The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book," with an "Appendix" and "Accompaniment." The first edition contained 111 copperplate engravings. A second edition appeared in 1793 with 119 plates, and a "third and revised edition," complete in one volume, "with 122 copperplates," in 1802. The four sections of the "Drawing-Book" were divided as follows: 1st, geometrical lines; 2nd, perspective; 3rd, furniture designs; 4th, mouldings and the ornamental parts of furniture. The chapters devoted to perspective contain a long dissertation on the subject of light and shade. "A short View of the Nature and Principles of Shadows caused by the Sun coming in different Directions to the Picture" (p. 326) is a typical heading. The descriptions of the furniture illustrated in the third section combine minute directions for the working cabinet-

maker, with an explanation of the exact use of each object. This last information is of special interest, as so many articles described as fashionable at the time are quite unknown in our modern houses.

To this work Sheraton prefixed a lengthy list of subscribers, which included the names of almost all the principal craftsmen in London and the provinces. A German translation was published at Leipzig in 1794 as "Modell- und Zeichnungsbuch für Ebenisten, Tischler, &c.," 2 vols., with 95 plates.

There seems little doubt that when Sheraton first came to London he carried on his former trade as a journeyman cabinet-maker. It is very likely that he had not enough capital to establish a good business and to employ the necessary skilled workmen to help him. Whatever may have been the reason, he soon gave up the practical side of his craft altogether and devoted himself to the writing of technical treatises. In his introduction to Part III of the "Drawing-Book" he stated his conviction that it was a man's duty to give the whole world the benefit of his knowledge, and not to be affected, as so many people were, by the thought that others would become as wise as himself. A veritable altruist Sheraton appears to us now-a-days. A poor, working furniture-maker, who had learnt, probably by long nights of study, the theory of design in order to perfect the creations of his imaginative brain, he never rested until he had im-

parted to his brother craftsmen a knowledge of those principles which alone could make their work as perfect as his own.

Thus Sheraton devoted himself entirely to authorship, and for some years his designs were much in demand. He is supposed to have originated both the furniture and decorations of a Chinese drawing-room at Carlton House for the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV. Two views of the room are given without a comment in Sheraton's "Accompaniment" to the "Drawing-Book," and are dated 1793. This royal residence was in 1783 entrusted to the architect, Henry Holland, to be remodelled, decorated, and furnished, a large sum of money being voted by Parliament for the purpose. Among the official accounts and papers for 1791 an exact record is given of the details of expenditure together with the names of the craftsmen employed, all of whom signed a petition for increase of pay. In this list Sheraton's name does not appear, and—unless the omission was purely accidental—it is evident that Sheraton had no actual share in the work.

In respect to his commissions from the general public it seems highly probable, since the great beauty of his furniture lay in the perfection of its workmanship, that he himself employed the cabinet-makers, upholsterers, etc., who were to carry out his ideas. "In conversing with cabinet-makers," he

said, "I find no one individual equally experienced in every job of work." And in describing his method of gaining exact information he added: "I have made it my business to apply to the best workmen in different shops to obtain their assistance in the explanation of such pieces as they are most acquainted with." But, alas, even if at first Sheraton's orders were profitable, his prosperity was of short duration.

In 1794 an exhortation from his pen, entitled "Spiritual Subjection to Civil Government," was appended to "Thoughts on the Peaceable and Spiritual Nature of Christ's Kingdom," a pamphlet written by his friend Adam Callander, the landscape painter. It was reprinted separately the following year with additions.

An article of Sheraton's, "Recentes Decores," appeared in "The Designer's Magazine" (No. 1), in 1796.[1] This publication evidently had a short existence. No copy has been traced.

During 1802 and 1803 Sheraton published in fifteen parts, "The Cabinet Dictionary, containing An Explanation of all the Terms used in the Cabinet, Chair, & Upholstery branches, containing a display of useful pieces of furniture," illustrated with eighty-eight copperplate engravings. The illustra-

[1] Cf. Jeremias Davis Reuss' "Alphabetical List of all the Authors actually living in Great Britain from the year 1770-1803" (Berlin, 1804).

tions were very ingeniously introduced. When such words as bed, couch, sideboard, table, came up for definition in their alphabetical order in the text, designs for the articles in question appeared on the opposite page. In the introduction he pointed out that "all the designs are capable of being finished exactly as they appear in the engravings, for I have not figured away with my pencil on a baseless fabric as some have done without consulting whether the particulars out of the common way were or were not workable by a good mechanic."

The "Dictionary" contained a supplement with articles on drawing and painting. There was also a list appended of "most of the Master Cabinet-makers, Upholsterers, and Chair Makers," 252 in number, who were then living in and about London.

By this time Sheraton felt the sting of poverty. "Though I am thus employed in racking my invention to design fine and pleasing cabinet-work," he wrote, "I can be well content to sit on a wooden-bottom chair myself, provided I can but have common food and raiment wherewith to pass through life in peace." In an address to his patrons—or subscribers—he informed them that the expenses involved had been so great, that he had been unable to make any profit out of his publications. Nevertheless he worked on resolutely to the last. In the "Dictionary" he announced that he was preparing

an encyclopaedia which was to be completed in 125 folio numbers.

Next year (1804) he began the publication of this ambitious undertaking; he died after the issue of the thirtieth number, having reached the letters CAP.

"The Cabinet-maker, Upholsterer, and General Artists' Encyclopaedia"—so the book was called—is not merely technical as the title would imply, but a source of general information. The articles embrace biography, history, geography, even science. Designs for furniture and for effects of drapery were introduced in the same manner as in the "Dictionary," and such subjects as astronomy and botany were illustrated by suitable plates. More complete descriptions of the furniture designs were given separately.

In the compilation of this book, Adam Black, the future publisher of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" and Macaulay's colleague in Parliament, gave Sheraton some slight assistance.

In the autumn of 1804, Black, who had served his apprenticeship in Edinburgh as a bookseller, came to London in search of work. He called at 8, Broad Street, found that Sheraton wanted assistance, and agreed to write articles or do anything else that might be required of him. The following is Black's description of the Sheraton household: "He (Sheraton) lived in an obscure street, his house, half shop, half dwelling-house, and looked himself

like a worn-out Methodist minister, with threadbare black coat. I took tea with them one afternoon. There were a cup and saucer for the host, and another for his wife, and a little porringer for their daughter. The wife's cup and saucer were given to me, and she had to put up with another little porringer. My host seemed a good man, with some talent. He had been a cabinet-maker, was now author and publisher, teacher of drawing, and, I believe, occasional preacher."

Black remained with Sheraton for about a week, writing articles and trying to put the shop in order. Not only were all the surroundings exceedingly humble, but also dirty and ill-kept. The assistant received half a guinea for his week's work. "Miserable as the pay was," he wrote, "I was half ashamed to take it from the poor man." Black then added a sketch of Sheraton himself, who might well be a character from the pages of Dickens: "He is a man of talents, and, I believe, of genuine piety. . . . He is a scholar, writes well; draws, in my opinion, masterly; is an author, bookseller, stationer, and teacher. We may be ready to ask how comes it to pass that a man with such abilities and resources is in such a state? I believe his abilities and resources are his ruin, in this respect, for by attempting to do everything, he does nothing."[1]

This rather pitiless, but no doubt accurate state-

[1] "Memoirs of Adam Black," 1885, pp. 31-33.

ment, makes Sheraton's position clear to us. Unlike Chippendale he evidently had very little business capacity. On the other hand he certainly met with a great deal of bad luck. Not only orders for designs, but his stationer's shop and his pupils would have brought him in a certain income. To account for his extreme poverty we must therefore infer that he lost very heavily through his publishing enterprises.

The designs with which he illustrated the "Encyclopaedia" were very inferior in style to those of his "Drawing-book." Public taste, say some critics, began to decline even before the dawn of the early Victorian era, and the needy artist was obliged to meet the demands of his customers by forsaking his earlier ideals. Others assert that the exaggeration—even ugliness—of Sheraton's later productions was the cause, not the effect, of his failure.

In 1805 Sheraton published "A Discourse on the Character of God as Love."

On 22nd October, 1806, he died of over-work, at the age of fifty-five. In an obituary notice, which appeared the following month in the "Gentleman's Magazine," the writer stated that Sheraton had "left his family, it is feared, in distressed circumstances." "He was," added his biographer, "a well-disposed man, of an acute and enterprising disposition." He had been for many years "a journeyman cabinet-maker, but since 1793, supported a wife and

two children by authorship." In order to increase the number of subscribers for his "Encyclopaedia," he had journeyed to Ireland, and had there obtained the patronage of the Lord-Lieutenant and the Marchioness of Donegal. At the time of his death, "nearly 1,000 copies had been sold."

A series of plates which Sheraton had been preparing for publication appeared in 1812 in a folio volume, with the title "Designs for Household Furniture, exhibiting a variety of Elegant and Useful Patterns in the Cabinet, Chair, and Upholstery Branches on eighty-four plates. By the late T. Sheraton, Cabinet-Maker." Most of these plates were reprints from the "Cabinet Dictionary" and "Encyclopaedia."

CHAPTER X

THE SHERATON SCHOOL

THE cabinet-makers of the Sheraton school still continued to produce furniture in accord with the Adam style of decoration, for in London especially, where houses built by Adam or his followers had been erected by the score, designers of furniture were obliged to follow out the great principle of unity in ornamentation which marked the work of the architects. During the progress of the nineteenth century this sense of unity quickly disappeared, and a single room was made to exemplify a dozen different styles. But the schools of both Hepplewhite and Sheraton are sufficient proof that until the end of the eighteenth century at least, the same idea or cast of thought was reproduced in the furniture and ornamentation of every room. Thus style in those days acquired an authority and dignity which would have been impossible to mere isolated ideas, and decorative art attained the ideal which Ruskin claimed for it, "being fitted for a fixed place, and in that place related, either in subordination or in command to the effect of other

pieces of art . . . forming part of a great and harmonious whole."

Adam classicism underlay much of Sheraton's ornamentation, yet the influence of the classic movement on the other side of the Channel was hardly less perceptible. Louis-Seize models furnished the design for many of his outlines, and when a few years later the Empire types began to change the trend of French decorative art, Sheraton, with very poor success, still continued to follow the French fashions.

His earlier work, however, was quite free from fantastic conceits, and was characterized by severe lines and subdued ornament. Like his predecessors, he borrowed and copied largely, but his work was none the less individual and distinctive. Sheraton invented quite a number of new types of furniture, particularly those of a mechanical nature. His influence was greatly felt throughout the country, and a quantity of refined and quiet work was the result.

Sheraton's best furniture was the very embodiment of elegance; severe in form, yet always light, graceful, and perfectly balanced. Decorative details were introduced to emphasize the purely architectural outlines, or were employed to enrich a perfectly finished piece, but ornamentation was never used as a fundamental part of the construction. Vertical lines contrasted with curved surfaces;

graceful sweeps afforded a varying play of light and shade; and fine inlay, painted patterns, and sometimes a little delicate carving in low relief, added variety and charm to the whole.

The speciality of this school was the employment of satin-wood veneers. Certainly the greater part of English eighteenth-century work carried out in satin-wood can be classified as belonging to the Sheraton period. In his "Dictionary" (1803), Sheraton, describing the different kinds of "Sattin-wood" employed by cabinet-makers, stated that this timber had "been in requisition above twenty years." The East India wood was hard in texture, and of small, rich figure, the finest specimens being straw-coloured. West Indian wood was bolder in figure, less hard and sometimes of a very pale shade; the logs, however, were often wider than those from the East Indies, and thus proved more generally useful.

Hair-wood was a great favourite for the manufacture of small ornamental tables. For inlay, the same woods were employed as those already named under the Hepplewhite period, and, in addition, ebony, mahogany, and various light woods stained green, yellow, and brown.

The ornamental details consisted mainly of husks, rosettes, fans, urns, floral wreaths, festoons, acanthus leaves, and classical figures. In general it may be said that plentiful decoration, though of a

chaste and subdued nature, vertical lines, lightness of colour, and delicacy of workmanship, are the chief distinguishing characteristics of this school.

In common with other cabinet-makers of his day, Sheraton published designs for window cornices and drapery based mainly on French models. He gave also a number of Greek and Roman mouldings and beautiful plaques in the classical style for painted panels or table-tops.

After about 1800, Sheraton's work became more and more an exaggerated imitation of the Empire, and was often cumbrous, clumsy, and grotesque. Realistic representations of animal forms, carved heads and feet of griffins, sphinxes, lions, profuse brass inlay, and heavy mountings were everywhere observable. Thus the very master whose watch-words had been grace and delicacy ushered in the dawn of an era in which elegance and good taste were almost unknown.

Chairs

The chairs were of satin-wood or mahogany, light and graceful in design and perfectly proportioned. The framework of the back was usually rectangular, though the top rail often had a slight curve. The legs and side uprights appeared to form a single line, and in most examples a cross-bar

supported the uprights a few inches above the seat. The splats varied greatly: a lyre, borrowed from Robert Adam; a vase with flowers; carved pillars with capitals and bases; rails, balusters, curved bars, and cross bars, and occasionally shield and wheel backs similar to those of Hepplewhite. In the later chairs the top rail of the back was broad and hollowed, rolling slightly backwards. The upholstery was nailed to the framework—the old drop-seat having gone quite out of fashion. The legs, whether square or round, were fluted, turned, or twisted, and always tapered. They ended in a "therm" foot, and often had brass casters; under-framing was rarely employed. The ornamentation of back, legs, and seat-frame, consisted of carving, cross-fluting, reeding, inlay, sunk panels, and hand-paintings. A feature often to be observed was the introduction of an acanthus leaf in the slenderest parts of the arms or legs. Wedgwood medallions were sometimes added to the other decorations, but the ornamentation, though elaborate, was carried out with such care and judgement, that it never seems excessive.

The chair coverings which Sheraton considered most suitable for parlour chairs were "printed silks" or "printed chintzes."

Stuffed chairs and couches were borrowed largely from Louis-Seize types.

The chair of the Sheraton school, illustration

XLII, is in the possession of Mr. Dan. Gibson. It is one of a set of seven single and two armchairs. The material is mahogany, with small carved pateras in the corners, swags on the top rail, and flowers and husks on the splat. The receding mouldings of varying sizes, and the whole workmanship show perfect finish and care.

The mahogany Sheraton chair, group LIII, has a splat in the form of three bars finely moulded and carved. The upper portion of each bar consists of a cluster of leaves, and the bases have similar leaves inverted. The middle bar is also ornamented with a design of husks, while the bars on either side are fluted. The legs are plain and tapering, and have a square, tapering foot.

In figure XLVI is a Sheraton chair (now in the possession of Mr. Burghard) which originally came from George III's palace. It is of painted satin-wood, with a cane seat.

Bookcases

Bookcases were of oak or mahogany, and were veneered either with mahogany or satin-wood; occasionally the carcass was also of satin-wood. In the shape of the pediment there was much variety of treatment. Although a very graceful swan-necked pediment was chiefly characteristic of this school,

Fig. XLII. SHERATON CHAIR.

Fig. XLVI. SHERATON KIDNEY TABLE AND CHAIR.

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Fig. XLIII. SHERATON BOOKCASE.

To face page 152.

broken and curved pediments, as well as plain oval cornices with vase-shaped terminals were also constantly produced. The panels of glass—if the cupboards had glass doors—were edged with fine lines of moulding, which often assumed the form of an urn. In other examples the mouldings were drawn round a central panel of painted glass or wood. Lattice doors, or, as Sheraton called them, "wire-worked" doors, with "green, white, or pink silk, fluted behind," were very fashionable, especially, as Sheraton wrote, when the cupboards had "a part of their ornaments gilded." Inlaid lines, bands, and ornaments were the most usual decorations. Sometimes a little carving was also introduced.

The bookcase in illustration XLIII, is the property of Mr. James Ivory. Apart from its fine proportions and excellent workmanship, this piece is particularly interesting, since the initials of the maker, Thomas Sheraton himself, are cut in the wood. Numerous as were the masterpieces produced by eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, it was only in the rarest instances that the craftsmen inscribed their names upon their productions. Occasionally a dealer has come upon the "address label" of some little-known maker lying under the drawer of a cabinet, but only three or four cases are known in which a piece of furniture has been found marked with the letters "T. C."—for Thomas Chippendale, or, as in the bookcase here depicted, "T. S."

for Thomas Sheraton. The initials in this example are engraved on the inside of one of the drawers.

The mahogany bookcase in illustration XLIV, now owned by Mr. J. E. Schunck, came from a country seat in Yorkshire, where it had remained since the eighteenth century. It is of very large size, consisting of a centre and two side wings very finely proportioned. The middle part is surmounted by an elegant swan-necked pediment and a vase; chains of husks and leaves are inlaid in satin-wood round the frieze. The wings are ornamented by carving in low relief.

Sideboards

Sideboards were plentifully provided with cupboards and drawers. The cupboards which reached to the ground still took the form of pedestals surmounted by vases, but these were often supplemented by short cellarette cupboards and drawers, extending only part-way to the floor. A rail, with fine brass scrollwork, often with candelabra attached, was used to support the plate, and added greatly to the decorative appearance of the piece. The front was straight, serpentine, or oval, and, if very long, frequently had a deep recess in the middle. Hollow-front sideboards were a speciality of Sheraton's, and were intended to enable the butler to reach across,

Fig. XLIV. SHERATON BOOKCASE.

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Fig. XLV. SHERATON SIDEBOARD, ADAM MIRRORS.

To face page 154.

and therefore to serve more easily. Sheraton also pointed out other advantages: a hollowed front occupied less space than a straight one, and the curve took away from the appearance of undue length.

The legs were long, slender, and tapering, and, like the chair legs, were often set into a rosette at the top. This device, however, does not belong exclusively to the Sheraton school.

The sideboard in illustration XLV, the property of Mr. Sidney Letts, is of inlaid satin-wood, with large oval panels on the side cupboards; and with swags, a vase and various scrolls on the middle portion. The inlaid taper legs end in a "therm" foot.

Writing-Desks

Many of the writing-desks and tables had elegantly carved backs, in order that the piece might look equally well in any part of the room. Of such ornamental tables the most decorative as well as the most original was that known as the "kidney-" shaped table, used for a writing-table or a lady's work-table. It generally had a double set of drawers with a knee-hole between, or else a single row of drawers and an undershelf.

The kidney table in illustration XLVI, the property of Mr. Burghard, is of mahogany, and the top is inlaid with a band of rosewood and a line of satin-

wood. The back is surrounded by a brass rim. Noticeable are the curiously carved handles and the wheel casters.

There were also writing-tables with an adjustable sliding screen to protect the face of the writer from the heat of the fire; and secretary writing-tables with bookcase tops, shelves for china, or an ornamental wall piece.

A beautiful satin-wood cabinet writing-desk, illustration XLVII, is the property of Mr. Sidney Letts. The whole piece is inlaid with dark woods in a design of vases, foliage, scrolls, and has a large oval subject-picture in the centre. The scroll rail, the carved head at the top, the ornaments at the angles, and all the handles are of brass. In the lower portion are two side cupboards and three long drawers; above these are two doors which slide back into a recess and disclose a desk fitted up for writing purposes. By means of some ingenious mechanism the desk-shelf, together with its accompanying small drawers and pigeon-holes, can be drawn forward when required for use.

A similar piece—with the exception of the ornamental top—was depicted in Sheraton's "Cabinet Dictionary." It was called a "Gentleman's Secretary."

Illustration XLVIII shows another Sheraton cabinet writing-table. It is veneered with satin-wood and charmingly painted on both front and

Fig. XLVII.
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SHERATON WRITING DESK.

Fig. XLVIII. PAINTED CABINET WRITING TABLE.

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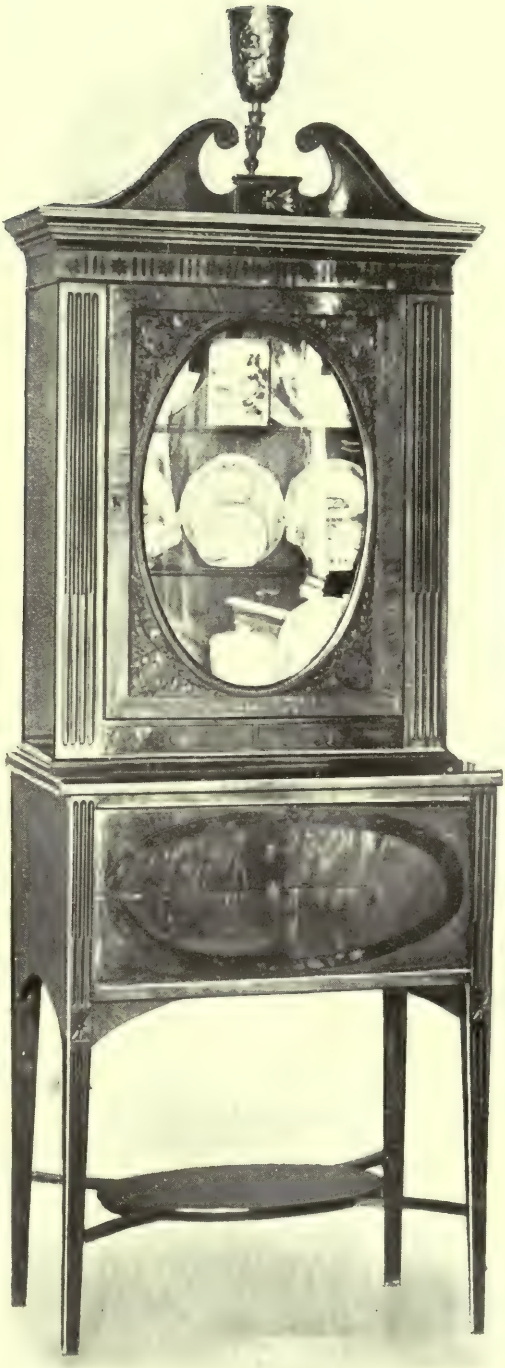

Fig XLIX. INLAID WRITING CABINET.

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sides with classical designs. The roll-top of the desk folds back and discloses a number of partitions and other interior fittings. There is besides a draw-shelf which can be used as a writing-table, and below this again are two drawers. The upper part or cabinet has glazed and finely moulded doors inclosing shelves for the display of china.

The cabinet, illustration XLIX, is of satin-wood inlaid with mahogany. It has a swan-necked pediment, fluted corners—both in the upper and lower portions—and fluted legs, springing from a rosette. The stretchers between the legs support the typical Sheraton undershelf. The spandrils, or triangular corners around the glass, are decorated with carved foliage in low relief. (These two cabinets, XLVIII and XLIX, belong to Mr. James Orrock.)

Other Tables

In designs for ornamental table-tops, Sheraton displayed his utmost skill; radiating ornaments, floral wreaths, scrolls, and arabesques were the most usual subjects either for inlay or painting. Many Sheraton tables, as well as cabinets and other pieces, had an undershelf supported by side braces. As a shelf of this kind was not represented in Hepplewhite's book, it may be regarded as especially characteristic of the later master.

The Sheraton Pembroke table in group LIII,

owned by Mr. Alfred Davis, is of mahogany veneered with hair-wood of beautiful figure. It is banded and lined with satin-wood, and also with various other woods stained red and green. The oval plaques in the top, the sides, and the two flaps, are carried out in amboyna-wood. The size of this graceful little table, when open, is 2 ft. 8 in. by 2 ft. The brass casters which give such a delicate finish to the tapering legs are original.

Very typical of the period are the three tea caddies. That on the left is in ivory with banding and stringing of whalebone and a silver monogram plate. The caddy on the right is made of hair-wood, banded with king-wood, lined with satin-wood, and has a festoon of stained holly inlaid in the front. The miniature octagonal caddy placed in the middle of the table measures only $3\frac{3}{4}$ in. by $2\frac{5}{8}$ in., depth, $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. It is so small and dainty that, except for the fact of its lead lining, one might suppose it to have been a snuff-box. The wood is mahogany, veneered with satin-wood, inlaid with rare woods and delicately painted on every part. The top opens by means of a double spring.

Work-Tables

Ladies work-tables, called by Sheraton "pouch tables," with a bag or pouch of drawn silk, were an important feature of a Sheraton room. They were

Fig. L. POUCH TABLE.

Fig. LI. DRINKING TABLE.

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often fitted with drawers and a sliding desk, which drew forward from beneath the table-top. A satin-wood pouch table of this kind is shown in illustration L. This dainty piece is in the possession of Mr. Stenson Webb.

Group LIV also depicts a Sheraton work-table of a different shape. It is mahogany, inlaid with satin and tulip woods, and is most elegant, both in proportion and design.

Dining-Tables

At the beginning of the Sheraton period the most common form of dining-table seems to have been the pillar and claw shape. A central leg (the so-called pillar) with projecting feet (the claws), was fixed to a block, and upon this the table-top was hinged. This principle was very generally adopted on the Continent during the seventeenth century; in England, however, until quite the last part of the eighteenth century, only small ornamental tables were made according to this pattern.

Sheraton tables usually had four claws to each pillar, and brass casters; "A loose flap fixed by means of iron straps and buttons"[1] was placed between the separate tables when they were required to be joined together. At the beginning of the nineteenth century a great change was brought about

[1] Cf. Sheraton's "Dictionary."

by the invention of the "telescopic" dining-table. Three or four patents were taken out for tables to be extended by means of slides moving in grooved channels. This system, which obviated the necessity for placing several small tables together, quickly became popular. The best patent was that of Richard Gillow (1800), and his invention—with but slight improvements—is the one universally employed at the present day.

The mahogany drinking-table, illustration LI, is in the possession of Mr. Burghard. It is in the shape of a horseshoe, and in the old days was placed in front of the fire, the curtain at the back serving to screen off the heat and glare of the flames from the festive group who sat around the table. At ordinary times an oval leaf fitted into and covered the middle of the table; but when the leaf was taken out, the net and movable bottle-holders (seen in the illustration) were disclosed. These sliding wooden rests were pushed from hand to hand and the net held the empty bottles and overturned glasses. The legs are fixed to the table by means of a brass screw; the brass curtain-rod and pillars, as well as the brass casters, are original.

Cabinets

The models of many Sheraton cabinets and commodes so closely resembled those produced in

France during the Louis-Seize period, that the English pieces can only be distinguished from the French by a careful inspection of the decorative details. A certain number, however, can be traced more directly to Adam's influence, while the later examples were Sheraton-Empire.

The richest and most effective cabinets were inlaid. The designs, either for inlay or hand-painting, represented fruit and flowers, subject-pictures based on the work of Angelica Kauffmann, Cipriani, etc., landscapes, and Watteau-like figures.

It is often said that Sheraton furniture was painted by Angelica Kauffmann. But the fact that this artist left England for Italy with her husband, Zucchi, in 1781, proves conclusively that all such paintings were executed not by Angelica herself but by other artists in imitation of her style.

A favourite shape for ornamental cabinets was the oval-convex front, one of which, from the palace of George III, is shown in illustration LVII. The satin-wood is finely veined, and is inlaid with oval panels representing a piping nymph, cupid, vases, and foliage, in coloured woods. The top is inlaid with a vase in the centre, and the Royal Cipher, G. R., for Georgius Rex, in oval panels on either side. The fluted corners and ribbon ornaments are of mahogany; the width is 74 inches. This cabinet was lately the property of Mr. James Orrock.[1]

[1] Sold at Christie's, June, 1904, for 470 guineas.

Firescreens

Sheraton designed "horse" and "pole" fire-screens as well as more decorative pieces. His lyre-shaped horse-screens were very effective, also the pole-screens with a small under-shelf between the tripod claws. There were besides folding screens and sliding screens.

Bedroom Furniture

Sheraton bedroom furniture was extremely decorative and embraced many beautiful examples of painted and inlaid satin-wood. A single piece was often adaptable to a number of different uses: a washstand, when closed, would appear as an ornamental cabinet; similarly the looking-glasses attached to a lady's dressing-table could be folded inwards, leaving only painted panels in their place. The satin-wood dressing-table shown in illustration LII, the property of Mr. Letts, is delicately ornamented with marquetry in various coloured woods. The top is elaborately fitted with partitions and recesses to hold the various articles of a lady's toilet. In the centre is a mirror which is lifted up when in use and made to rest on sliding supports. In the lower part of the toilet-table are cupboards and drawers.

Fig. LII. DRESSING TABLE, SHERATON.

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Clocks

The Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton schools produced a considerable change in the treatment of clocks. The square form of dial-case gradually changed to the circular, that is to say, the wooden and metal cases were made to fit closely around the clock-face, and the spandrils at the corners, which had been one of the chief decorative elements in the early clocks, were now almost invariably omitted. The dial itself was generally plain white enamel or silver, and the hours were engraved upon it in Roman numerals; it was entirely without ornament, and even the maker's name rarely appeared. But these simple dials were set in a framework superb in outline, proportion, and workmanship. The hood, which had hitherto afforded great scope for diversity of ideas, was very much simplified. Broken pediments, scrolls, and complicated curves gave place to severer and more restrained forms. The wood used was oak, with a mahogany or satinwood veneer. Inlay or banding with different woods afforded an opportunity for presenting delicate contrasts of colour. Painted ornamentation was also by no means uncommon, the clock doors being often decorated with painted figure subjects. Sheraton clocks occasionally had side wings, or ornamental projections on either side of the clock-waist. In the

earliest Queen Anne clocks the sides had sometimes been extended to admit of the swing of the pendulum, but in Sheraton clocks the addition was purely an ornamental one.

The hoods of bracket clocks were also made with an oval-shaped arch, ending on either side with a short horizontal line. Quite at the close of the century the balloon, or, as it is sometimes called, the banjo-shaped clock, came into fashion. It had a plain round dial-case and a short curved projection below; it was usually made to hang on the wall.

The clock, illustration LIII (height 7 ft. 6 in.), is owned by Mr. Alfred Davis. In its shape, its beautiful proportions, in the arrangement of the wood encircling the face, the tapering waist, and spreading base, it is typical of the best work of the Sheraton school. The dial-frame narrows below; the clock-face itself has black numerals painted on a silver ground. The arched canopy is supported by fluted and "cabled" Corinthian columns, of which the cabling is in satin-wood and the capitals and bases in brass. The whole case is oak, veneered with deep red Spanish mahogany of very fine figure. The finials are of brass; and a circular fan above the door, chains of husks at the angles, and similar enrichments on different parts of the hood are inlaid in satin-wood. The subdued ornamentation imparts a pleasing effect thoroughly in keeping with the

Fig. LIII. SHERATON CLOCK, TABLE AND CHAIR.

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severity of treatment noticeable in all the best English grandfather clock-cases of the eighteenth century. The clock bears the name of the maker, J. Brooks, London.

CHAPTER XI

LACQUER-WARE

DURING the seventeenth century a quantity of lacquered screens and cabinets from China and Further India were imported into Holland, France, and England. Japanese lacquer was also well known, although after 1638 Europe was denied all direct commerce with Japan except through the medium of the small Dutch factory on the island of Deshinia, near Nagasaki. So great was the demand for Oriental lacquered panels, that the large pieces were often broken up in order that they might furnish decorations for articles of home manufacture. In "A Treatise of Japaning and Varnishing" (folio, 1688) by John Stalker of the Golden Ball, St. James's Market, London, and George Parker of Oxford, the authors quaintly refer to "some who have made new Cabinets out of old Skreens. And from that large old piece, by the help of a Joyner, make little ones, such as Stands or Tables,—but never consider the situation of their figures; so that in these things so torn and hacked to joint a new fancie, you may observe the finest hodgpodg and

medley of Men and Trees turned topsie turvie, and instead of marching by Land you shall see them taking journeys through the Air, as if they had found out Doctor Wilkinson's [*sic*] way of travelling to the Moon;[1] others they have placed in such order by their ignorance as if they were angling for Dolphins in a Wood, or pursuing the Stag and Chasing the Boar in the middle of the Ocean."

It is generally supposed that a certain number of clocks and other pieces of furniture were sent out on the tea ships of the East India Company to be lacquered in China, although this procedure would necessarily have been a lengthy and a very costly one. The sea voyage in sailing vessels round the Cape, the delay in China, and the return journey must have occupied so long a time that years would often have passed before such a piece could be completed. It is indeed questionable whether there are in existence any specimens of English furniture which can be proved to have been lacquered in the East.

The first imitation of Oriental japanning has been attributed to a Dutchman named Huygens, in the seventeenth century. But the English, French, Italians, and Americans, speedily adopted

[1] Our authors meant to refer to John *Wilkins*, Bishop of Chester, who to the third edition (1640) of his "Discovery of a World in the Moone" added a "Discourse concerning the Possibility of a Passage thither."

similar methods. The first use of lacquer varnish in this country was by the author of "The present state of England" (1683, Part iii, p. 93)[1] traced to the year 1633. "That Lacquer Varnish (which imitating the gold color has saved much cost formerly bestowed on the gilding of Coaches) was in this year 1633 first brought into use in England by the ingenious Mr. Evelyn of Says Court near Deptford." Stalker and Parker in an "Epistle to the Reader and Practitioner" prefixed to their delightful folio already cited, stated that as trade in lacquer ware with Japan was prohibited, both the "English and Frenchmen have endeavoured to imitate them. . . . As for our Undertakers in this kind they are very numerous and their works are different; some of them have more confidence than skill and ingenuity, and without modesty or a blush impose upon the gentry such Stuff and Trash for Japan-work that whether tis a greater scandal to the Name or Artificer, I cannot determin. Might we advise such foolish pretenders, their time would be better imployed in dawbing Whistles and Puppets for the Toy-Shops to please Children than contriving Ornaments for a Room of State." Many of these unskilled japanners, it seems, professed to teach the art to young ladies, greatly to the indignation of Messrs. Stalker and Parker. They therefore offered

[1] Quoted by Adam Anderson in "Historical and Chronological Origin of Commerce" (1764), vol. ii, p. 48.

to show amateurs how the work should be done. "If any Gentlemen or Ladies having met with disappointments in some of the Receipts . . . they may for their satisfaction (if it stands with their convenience) see them tried by the Author according to the very Rules set down."

From time to time tradesmen advertised their japanned work in the "London Gazette." Thus in the number January 16th-20th, 1689: "At Tho. Hulbeart at The Ship and Anchor over against Gun-Yard in Hounditch London, several sorts of screwtores, Tables Stands and Looking-Glasses of Japan and other work"; while a certain John Gumley in the number for March 1st-5th, 1693, clearly defined his wares as "Japan Cabinets Indian and English." Such advertisements were common during the following century.

Another seventeenth-century book on the subject of English lacquer was published in London in 1697, with the title, "Art's Master-piece, or A Companion for the Ingenious of either Sex. By C. K." It contained, with many other notable things, "The newest Experiment in Japaning, to immitate the Indian way, Plain and in Speckles, Rock-work, Figures, &c." This tiny booklet attained the dignity of five editions. The author gave a number of recipes for lacquering woods and metals, and regarded the art as a most useful accomplishment by means of which any who followed his directions could

decorate their tables, chests of drawers, or mirrors for themselves.

J. Peele, in 1735, issued: "A new and curious method of Japanning upon glass, wood or metal from the M.S. of Mr. Boyle," dedicated to Lady Walpole, "distinguished for your excellent performance in painting, japanning and other curious arts." Again, the intention was merely to describe a mode of decorative painting for home use, and we seek in vain in these pages for information on lacquer-work considered as a trade.

The few encyclopaedias which appeared in the first part of the eighteenth century such as Ephraim Chambers' "Cyclopaedia" (1728, second edition, 1738), and the "Dictionarium Polygraphicum, or whole body of Arts" (1735), contained long treatises on various methods of japanning. The article in Chambers' book was taken from a work by D. Rust, volume I (book not traceable), but an additional note explained that, "Parker gives ampler and better instructions."

By the middle of the century—perhaps earlier—Birmingham, which had long been the chief centre of metal-japanning, became famous for similar work in wood, and later in papier-maché also. The "Modern Dictionary of Arts and Sciences" (1774) pointed out that the Birmingham wood-lacquer was greatly superior to the French, owing to the omission of an undercoating of size. The French sized

their wood because it filled up the inequalities of the surface, saved the quantity of varnish, and gave a hardness and firmness to the ground. Nevertheless it caused both varnish and colour to crack and peel off in strips if subjected to any violence. Thus the work of the Birmingham makers, who treated wood as they had long treated metals, and used no size, was far more durable than the French. But the French lacquer-work of the Martins, inventors of the varnish known as "Vernis Martin," was probably the most famous of any European japanning of the eighteenth century. In 1730 Simon Etienne Martin obtained a twenty years' monopoly, renewed in 1744, from the French government for all kinds of lacquer work, and in 1748 the Martin family had three factories for this class of work in Paris. Their earlier productions were Oriental in character; but afterwards they employed a variety of colours for the ground, especially pale golds and greens, and the painted designs became purely French in style.

The essential difference between the lacquer of the East and of the West is the composition of the varnish. The Chinese employ the sap of their native gum-trees—chiefly the "Tsi"—and the Japanese that of the "Rhus Vernis." This juice must be used as soon as it is drawn from the tree, for it speedily dries and becomes quite hard. Thus the Oriental varnish which imparts such a wonderful lustre can

never be imported, and Europeans have vainly tried, by using other resinous substances, to produce a similar effect. But a coating formed of lac, copal, anime or mastic gum, however carefully prepared and polished, can never equal, either in durability or brilliance, that of China or Japan. Among the eastern nations many of the most accomplished artists were engaged upon the work, and the lacquer-ware of Japan has from the earliest times been unrivalled in the whole world. The colour of the ground is more brilliant than in Chinese ware, especially the golds and reds; the ornamentation is bolder, and the varnish itself is stronger and able to withstand higher temperatures.

In England a mixture of gum and lac or copal was found to exhibit the best results, and the last substance is the chief ingredient of our present-day wood lacquer. Stalker and Parker devoted an important chapter to the subject of raised-work. This was produced by means of a paste of gum, whiting and bole-ammoniac, dropped onto the wood according to pattern from a stick with a taper end; and the paste, when hardened, was cut, scraped and carved into shape with a sharp steel instrument before being varnished. It is in such relief lacquer that old English work shows its most glaring defects. In many cases the paste appears to have been dropped almost at random upon the picture and then left in coarse blotches, neither "carved" nor "cut."

According to E. Chambers—following the method of D. Rust—the flat, coloured grounds, after the application of a layer of varnish, were obtained as follows: "Incorporate the colour of the ground with seven times the quantity of varnish, and apply it with a pencil (*i.e.*, a camel's hair pencil), going over it three times each a quarter of an hour after the other. Two hours after polish with a pestle or Dutch reeds." The colours to be employed were:

For red grounds: "Spanish vermillion with a fourth part of Venice lacque."

For black: "Black of ivory calcined between two crucibles."

For blue: "Blue ultramarine and twice as much varnish as colour." "Green is difficult to make fair and lively therefore seldom used." Lastly a venturine ground was obtained by gold-wire reduced to powder, and this required special manipulation.

Another early mode of laying the ground, although not mentioned in the oldest books on the subject, is worthy of note as throwing fresh light on eighteenth century japanning. The process was known as the "dip": "Small quantities of coloured varnish were dropped in a trough of water over which it spread in curious and beautiful ramifications. Into this the article was dipped; the colour thus transferred to the work was afterwards varnished and polished in the usual way."[1]

[1] "Penny Cyclopaedia."

Old English lacquerers seem to have derived their designs for painted ornamentation almost exclusively from Oriental models, although they treated the wonderful eastern art with but scant respect. Stalker and Parker gave a series of designs for cabinets and various kinds of furniture as well as for powder and patch boxes, the backs of combs and brushes, looking-glass frames, boxes, etc., in Indian or Chinese style. After a perusal of their preface it is clear that the curious blending of western ideas with Oriental subjects, noticeable in so much of our early lacquer-ware, was no mere accident, but a deliberate attempt to improve upon the original examples. "Perhaps," they write in the "Epistle" referred to, "we have helpt them a little in their proportions, where they were lame or defective, and made them more pleasant, yet altogether as Antick."

Not only the books on the subject but the early dictionaries published designs for japanning in Oriental taste. Before the middle of that century the Chinese craze made itself felt in all departments of art. From the year 1740 onwards quite a number of plates were published illustrating ornaments, shields, bookplates, mirrors, pier-tables, pavilions, and bridges after Chinese models. In some cases, as for instance in "The First Book of Ornaments by De la Cour" (1741), Indian and Chinese figures appeared side by side with classical columns and ornaments. By far the most interesting book of that

period containing, besides furniture designs, pictorial illustrations suitable for lacquer painting, was that issued by Edwards and Darly in 1754. There can be no doubt that these drawings by Matthias Darly were largely copied by japanners of the day. Although Chippendale stated in the "Director" that several of his models, hanging China shelves and ladies' dressing-tables, were intended to be japanned, he gave no designs of the kind published by Darly for the decoration itself.

Stalker and Parker were evidently right in their low estimate of their fellow artists in this branch of decorative art, and the work of succeeding generations, though interesting, can rarely be called strictly beautiful. In many cases the ground is dull, the design indifferently drawn, and the subject pictures badly modelled. The want of lustre is probably due in many cases to the effects of time—that which now appears merely a layer of black, red, or brown paint, no doubt had a bright surface when first produced two hundred years ago. Much of the work appears to have received an insufficient number of coats of varnish, for really fine examples still have a ground so brilliant that they might have been executed but yesterday.

Stalker recommended olive-wood, walnut, yew, box, lime, and best of all, pear-tree wood as a base for japanning, because of their close smooth grain. Deal and oak, and rough grained woods, entailed a

more troublesome and expensive method of treatment. The work actually produced during the Queen Anne period was almost invariably executed upon oak or pine. For this reason one seldom sees a piece of early lac furniture which is worm-eaten. Towards the end of the century the lacquerers used wood of the beech and plane or sycamore trees, and this later work is generally full of worm holes. Furniture of every kind was ornamented with lacquer, but cupboards, long clocks, chests of drawers, mirror-frames, and tables are more frequently met with than lacquered cabriole chairs.

In quite a number of early examples a dual workmanship is apparent in the manufacture of pieces intended for japanning. It will often be observed that while the shape and general construction is Dutch, the mounts and ornaments are of English origin. Those who have made a study of lacquered furniture are therefore of opinion that a great deal of the early work came to us from Holland, and that even late in the Queen Anne period, lacquered panels were imported from the Low Countries and were then made up here into various articles of furniture.

The corner cupboard, illustration LIV, is in the possession of Mr. Dan. Gibson. It is a very fine specimen of English lac dating from the early years of the eighteenth century. The upper panels are of unusual size, 4 ft. 6 in. by 1 ft. 4 in. The wood is

Fig LIV. LACQUER CORNER CUPBOARD AND MIRROR; SHERATON TABLE,

To face page 177.

Fig. LV. LACQUER CUPBOARD.

To face page 177.

oak, except the upright frames, base, and circular headed cornice, which are of red pine. No doubt the lacquer ground was originally black, although now faded to a shade of deep brown; the figures, beasts, birds, ducks, and foliage are gilt, with a touch of coral and chocolate brown added here and there. The scene depicted is some fable, evidently very carefully copied from the Oriental. But although the work is distinctly better in quality than the majority of English lacquered pieces, it is still greatly inferior to the Oriental.

In the same group the long mirror has a frame lacquered on a soft wood ground—probably pine. The narrow border, the double plate—of which the upper one is engraved—the broad bevel following the outline of the frame, all point to the very beginning of the century as the period of its manufacture.

The lac cupboard, illustration LV, from Mr. Gibson's collection also belongs to the first part of the eighteenth century. The ground is black, and the piece is painted all over with Chinese subjects in yellow, touched here and there with gold. The whole work is, as far as can be known, an English production.

The cabinet in illustration LVI is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the lacquered doors being the only examples of old English japanning preserved in the Museum. The cabinet itself is of south German origin, and dates from the beginning of the

seventeenth century; it is of pine and oak veneered with Hungarian ash and walnut. A remarkable fact in connection with this piece is that it was made up in England into its present form about 1690. The sides, the top, the bottom drawer of the interior and the outer doors were added at the latter period in this country, and were here covered with black lacquer enriched with gilded designs after the Chinese style. The brass mounts were also English, as well as the openwork stand of pine, stained black, which is carved in a manner thoroughly typical of the Wren school of design. The height is 5 ft. 4½ in., width 3 ft. 10½ in., depth 1 ft. 11½ in. It was purchased for the Museum in 1899, for £60.

Fig. LVI.
To face page 178.

LACQUER CABINET.

CHAPTER XII

OLD ENGLISH LOOKING-GLASSES

MIRRORS of Vauxhall glass were such an essential feature of the decoration of English houses during the Queen Anne and Chippendale periods, that a short account of the origin of old English looking-glasses and of the various processes of manufacture cannot fail to be of interest. The first looking-glasses were made in Venice about the thirteenth century, earlier mirrors having been constructed of metal only. Small glass-mirrors—intended chiefly to hang at the girdle—were exported from Venice to all parts of Europe, and until the sixteenth century the south Germans alone—who produced little convex glasses known as bulls-eyes—were competitors of the Venetians in this class of manufacture. During the sixteenth century the process of silvering, which gave a bright, luminous surface to the glass, was brought to a high state of perfection at the glass-houses of Murano, and mirrors of larger size and elaborately framed began to be employed for wall decoration. At the close of the sixteenth and beginning of the century follow-

ing, Venetian mirrors were imitated in France, Bohemia, Bavaria, and England; the methods of the older factories were improved upon and the Venetian trade gradually decreased until, in 1772, only a single glass-house in Murano continued to make looking-glasses.

Sir Robert Mansel, in 1615, obtained the first patent for the manufacture of mirrors in this country. The following is an extract from the petition which he addressed to the House of Commons in 1624 for the renewal of his patent.

"Sir Robert Mansel did bring into the kingdome many expert strangers from forraigne parts beyond the seas to instruct the natives of this kingdome in the making of looking-glass plates for the grinding, polishing, foyling and casing of them, being all several professions which were never before made nor done in England."[1]

The material was flint or crystalline glass, brittle, and of inferior quality, and until after the Restoration, metal mirrors were far more generally employed in this country than those of glass. About 1663 the manufacture of looking-glasses was greatly improved. The Duke of Buckingham, Dr. Tilson and others applied for patents, and as Tilson's productions were the best, both as regards colour and quality, the monopoly was granted to him. But it was the Duke of Buckingham who, a few years later,

[1] Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, James I, 152 (63).

brought about the most important change in English mirror-making, by the establishment of a plate-glass factory at Lambeth. There is no means of ascertaining the exact change in the materials in use, since no account of the process of manufacture appears to have been written, but several writers of the time testified to its excellence. The Duke had strong scientific tastes, "he dabbled in chemistry and had a laboratory of his own"; and it was probably owing to his personal efforts that plate glass was substituted for flint.

Evelyn in his "Diary," under date September 19th, 1677, writes of a visit to Lambeth as follows:

"We also saw the Duke of Buckingham's glass-works, where they made huge vases of metal as clear, ponderous and thick as crystal; also looking-glasses far larger and better than any that come from Venice."

In "The present state of England," published in 1683, the writer dated the establishment of the factory from 1673. "The first glass plates for looking-glasses and coach-windows were made about ten years ago at Lambeth by the encouragement of the Duke of Buckingham" (Part III, p. 94). This statement is quoted in the "Historical Origin of Commerce" by A. Anderson, who fixed the date about three years earlier, 1670. "About this time it was that the Duke of Buckingham sent for the best glass makers, glass-grinders and polishers

from Venice; which public-spirited design has since so well succeeded, as to be now enabled to send to that very place and to every other part of Europe and to Asia, Africa and America the very finest glass of all sorts that the world can produce."

Lastly, Allen, in his "History of Lambeth" (1827), gave the whole history of the new undertaking: "Among the various manufactures carried on in this part of the parish, none have been so celebrated as Vauxhall Plate Glass. In the thirteenth century the Venetians were the only people who had the secret of making looking-glasses; but about the year 1670, a number of Venetian artists arrived in England, the principal of whom was Rossetti; and under the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham, a manufactory was established at Foxhall, and carried on with amazing success, in the firm of Dawson, Bowles, and Co. so as to excel the Venetians, or any other nation in blown plate glass. The emoluments acquired by the proprietors were prodigious; but in the year 1780, from a difference between them and the workmen, a total stop was put to this great acquisition and valuable manufactory, and a descendant of the above Rossetti ungratefully left in extreme poverty. The site of this celebrated factory is Vauxhall Square."

When Buckingham's factory first started, a Venetian law forbidding the exportation of rough

plates of glass—to be ground and silvered elsewhere —gave a great impetus to the English manufacture. Mirrors made entirely in this country could be produced at a cheaper rate than if imported from abroad, and though the trade in foreign looking-glasses continued, in spite of Charles II's proclamation (1664) forbidding the importation of any glass whatsoever, looking-glasses of Vauxhall Plate appear to have been in great demand. It was not long, however, before the new manufacture was hampered by heavy duties. These were first imposed in 1695, repealed three years later, re-enacted in 1745, and only finally abolished by Sir Robert Peel in 1845.

The methods in use at the various glass-houses were kept secret as far as possible, and the chief fact known in connection with the Vauxhall works is that the glass was blown in the same manner as in Murano. The mirrors produced were of small size, not exceeding forty to fifty inches in length. They could not be made of larger size since the plate became too thin to bear the process of grinding if blown to a greater length. There were often bubbles and other defects in the glass, which was of a blueish or steely tinge. The metal coating or silvering never adhered very firmly to the surface, and could be easily scraped away with a knife; indeed, unless carefully handled it would often fall away in pieces. The bevelled edge, or "diamond

cut" as it was called, one of the most characteristic features of the old mirrors, was very shallow and generally about an inch in width. In cases of a double bevel, each division was somewhat narrower. Scarcely any ridge marked the beginning of the bevel, so slight was the angle of inclination. There is some difference of opinion as to the manner in which the "diamond cut" was wrought. Hungerford Pollen, in his "Ancient and Modern Furniture and Woodwork" (1875), stated that the workman held the plate over his head, and the edges were then cut by grinding, "thus giving a prismatic light to the glass." François Haudicquer de Blancourt also, in describing the processes of the French glass-houses, wrote: "The diamond cut is done by grinding the glass with drift-sand and water."[1] On the other hand, some of the first modern glass experts hold that many of the old bevels show undoubted indications of having been produced by pressure when the glass was in a molten condition, and not by grinding when it had become cold. The probable solution of the problem no doubt is that both methods were employed at different periods.

The "blowing," "grinding," "polishing," and "silvering" of mirrors were clearly defined in the "Dictionarium Polygraphicum" (1735), and in E.

[1] "De l'Art de la Verrerie" (1697). Our citation is from the English translation, published in 1699.

Chambers' "Cyclopaedia" (1728, 1738), etc. The two accounts were almost in the same words; and although the methods depicted were not identified with any factory in particular, they were in all probability those employed at the Vauxhall and other contemporary glass-houses:

"The melting pots where the materials to be blown are fixed are 38 inches in diameter and 35 feet high. After the materials are vitrified by the heat of the fire and the glass is sufficiently refined, the master workman dips in his blowing-iron once and again till he has got matter enough thereon. This done he mounts a kind of block, or stool to be more at liberty to balance it as it lengthens in the blowing. When after several repeated heatings and blowings the glass is at length brought to the compass proper for its thickness, they cut it off with forces at the extremity opposite to the iron in order to point it with the pontil. The pontil is a long, firm piece of iron . . . in the manner of a **T**. To point the glass they plunge the head of this **T** into the melting-pot and with the liquid sticking thereto they fasten it to the extremity of the glass before cut off. When it is sufficiently formed they separate the other extremity of the glass from the blowing-iron and instead thereof make use of the pontil to carry it to the furnace appointed for that end and where by several repeated heatings they continue to enlarge it till it is equally thick in every part. This

done they cut it open with the forces not only on the side by which it stuck to the blowing-iron but likewise the whole length of the cylinder. After that giving it a sufficient heating it is in a condition to be entirely opened extended and flattened."

For grinding: "The plate of glass is laid horizontal on a stone in manner of a table and to secure it the better fastened down with mortar or stucco. To sustain it there is a strong wooden frame an inch or two higher than the glass. The bottom, or base of the grinding engine is another rough glass about half the dimensions of the former. On this is a wooden plank cemented thereto and upon this are proper weights applied to promote the triture; the plank, or table being fastened to a wheel which gives it motion. This wheel which is at least 5 or 6 inches in diameter is made of very hard but light wood and is wrought by two workmen placed against each other who twist and pull it alternately, and sometimes when the work requires it turn it round. By such means a constant mutual attrition is produced between the two glasses which is favoured by water and sands of several kinds bestowed between, sand still finer and finer being applied as the grinding is more advanced; at last emery is used. We need not add that as the upper or incumbent glass polishes and grows smoother it must be shifted from time to time and others put in its place. It is to be noted that only the largest size glasses are thus ground

with a mill, for the middling and smaller sorts are wrought by the hand to which end there are four wooden handles at the four corners of the upper stone or carriage for the workmen to take hold of to give it motion."

For polishing: "The plate is laid down on a stone placed horizontally and in a bed of plaster of paris calcin'd and pulveriz'd very fine and sifted; which being made into a sort of paste by water and plaister'd up the edges of the plate dries and hardens and so keeps it immovable. Then the workman fixes a strong bow of yew or some other tough wood to a board fixed up to the ceiling of the room, fixes also the other end to a pole made in a wooden parallelopiped of about four inches long, covered with a sort of coarse woollen cloth well drench'd with Tripoly tempered with water, works it with his blocks and bow all over by strength of arm till the plate has got a perfect politure."

The process of silvering was as follows: "The plates being polished a thin blotting paper is spread on a table and sprinkled with fine chalk; and this done, over the paper is laid a thin lamina or leaf of tin, on which is poured mercury, which is to be equally distributed over the leaf with a hare's foot, or cotton. Over the leaf is laid a clean paper and over that the glass plate. With the left hand the glass plate is pressed down, and with the right the paper is gently drawn out; which done the plate is

covered with a thicker paper and loaden with a greater weight that the superfluous mercury may be driven out and the tin adhere more closely to the glass. When it is dried the weight is removed and the looking-glass is complete." It is interesting to note that this process is the same as that described by G. B. della Porta ("Magiae Naturalis" libri xx, edit. 1651[1]) in his account of the method of silvering practised at the factories of Murano.

The French were greatly in advance of the English in their looking-glass manufacture, owing to their discovery of the art of casting plate glass like metals by throwing the molten material into an iron or copper table and then rolling it out into a plate of equal thickness. Instead of a mirror of 45 to 50 inches in length, looking-glasses were produced 84 by 50 inches, to the "universal astonishment and admiration" of the public. In 422 A.D., St. Jerome mentioned plates of glass—probably used for windows—which were cast upon a flat stone. There is no further record of the use of this process till the end of the fifteenth century, when it was rediscovered by an accident. A workman, while melting the contents of a crucible of molten glass happened to spill a little upon the ground. The liquid ran under one of the large flagstones with which the glass-house was paved, and

[1] An English translation, as "Natural Magick . . . in twenty bookes," was published at London in 1658.

when the workman raised the stone he found that the glass had assumed the form of a flat plate superior to anything which he could produce by blowing. Whether or not the man worked out his invention further is not known, and nearly two hundred years elapsed before the art of casting was seriously considered. In a letter dated 1662, Louis XIV granted to one Bernhard Perotto "the pleasure of enjoying the fruits of his work and expenses undergone on account of his curious researches in the matter of the new invention of casting crystal on a table like metals."[1]

Thus Perotto was the first in the field, but Louis Lucas de Nohan is generally accredited with the invention, as it was he who established the famous plate glass works of St. Gobain in 1695.

There is no doubt that the process of casting plates was adopted very early in England, although it has generally been supposed that all the mirrors produced at Vauxhall were of blown glass.

A patent, dated 1691, granted a licence to "Rob. Hooke and Christ. Dodsworth to exercise and put in practise the new invention . . . of casting glass, particularly looking glass plates much larger than were ever blown in England."

The "Dictionarium Polygraphicum" amply proves that at the date of its publication the art of casting was commonly practised: "The method of

[1] Quoted by Mr. Albert Hartshorne in "Old English Glasses," 1897.

running and casting large looking-glass plates has been considerably improv'd by our workmen in England. . . we can cast all kinds of borders, mouldings, etc." The same authority explained that a frequent cause of threads and other defects was the adulteration, by the Spanish producers, of one of the principal ingredients of plate glass—barillia, which was obtained from Alicante in Spain.

An interesting book on the subject of glass-making was issued in 1755, entitled "The Plate-glass book," by "a Glass-house Clerk."

The object of the publication was to give a list of prices for mirrors of various sizes, both finished and unfinished, as produced at the Vauxhall factory and at the factory of Blackfriars, "lately removed to Fleet Street." The plates at both factories were described as being "founded" and prices were quoted for sizes up to sixty-six inches in length.

The most important looking-glass works of the close of the eighteenth century were those established at Prescott, Lancashire, by a company of "British Plate Glass Manufacturers." Here the plates were cast after the French methods, and a great deal of the machinery was brought over from France. The old process of blowing plates was still continued, however, at some of our factories till 1845, and the tedious hand-grinding and polishing was not superseded by the introduction of steam power till about 1830.

CHAPTER XIII

HINTS TO COLLECTORS AND OPINIONS OF AN EXPERT

THE great interest taken in eighteenth-century furniture has led to its reproduction on a colossal scale, and many imitations are executed so cleverly that even experts find it difficult to distinguish a genuine from a spurious antique. There are well-known dealers who would be incapable of disposing of their wares under false pretences; if they offer reproductions for sale they are sold as copies, not as "old" pieces. Some of the most skilful craftsmen of modern times are thus employed to copy the eighteenth-century models in old wood. Beautiful designs are in this way brought within the reach of those of moderate means, and the cause of art and beauty in our homes is thereby furthered. On the other hand, there are numberless "fakes" or fraudulent reproductions passed off as genuine antiques by dishonest—or sometimes merely ignorant—tradesmen; and much of this so-called "old" furniture will be found on close inspection to be but a very poor imitation. It is often ill-made and en-

riched with ornamentation in the style of one period, while the main outline is characteristic of another.

At auction sales a rare piece is almost invariably bought by dealers, either for stock or for collectors on commission. Many of the large houses join together to form what is known as a "knock-out" in order to prevent any outbidding by private purchasers. It is a good advertisement for a big firm to pay a "record" price, and they find little difficulty in reselling at a small profit. Indeed, the sums given of late years for choice examples have reached such a high figure that unless the collector has an almost unlimited purse, he will have to spend his time hunting for specimens in out-of-the-way corners where their value is not recognized. Even then his opportunities will be few and far between, for the larger dealers have expert travellers all over the country searching for such bargains.

The would-be collector will thus find his path beset with many difficulties. But the greatest, without doubt, is the quick-sand of deception, and some knowledge of the tricks resorted to by fraudulent vendors has become a matter of necessity.

We will imagine that the collector has left the highways and is starting out upon a tour of discovery in the by-ways. He examines a quantity of supposed eighteenth-century furniture—but a great deal of it offers no special attraction from the point of view either of beauty or of elegance. Ultimately

he comes upon an example—let us say a chair—which he deems worthy of closer examination. Under the framework of the seat are a number of little worm-holes, for many of the old woods are worm-eaten although the worm itself is dead. But if by the insertion of a pin the holes are found to be straight and uniform, they must at once be regarded with suspicion; the making of artificial worm-holes is an industry upon which whole families are brought up. In the same manner neither perished glue nor loosened tenons can be regarded as certain signs that the piece is genuine. As a general rule the surest guide is the patina, or bloom on the surface of the wood. A little study of antiques in a fine state of preservation will accustom the eye to observe the fine effects of tone and colour which age alone can impart.

There are also indications by which old surface wood can be infallibly recognized. No copy, however faithful, can reproduce the infinite number of microscopic bruises and indentations with which time covers the face of even the most carefully preserved furniture. Again, if a small piece be sliced off with a penknife, in a part where such a cutting could not be observed, the presence of new wood can at once be perceived. Age always darkens and hardens wood, and its fibres become shortened. In doubtful cases the purchase ought to be made subject to the above trial.

The old mahogany came from San Domingo, Cuba, and Honduras. That from the West Indies was known as "Spanish" and was, according to Sheraton, hard in texture; the Cuban, which was generally used for chairs, was close and straight in grain and of a rosy hue; San Domingo yielded a great deal of mahogany during the first part of the eighteenth century, but Sheraton stated that in his time it was very little in use. Honduras mahogany, he said, was the one chiefly employed. It was of an open nature, the best kinds being free from speckles, of a flashy figure and dark gold hue. This wood was obtained in planks from 12 to 14 ft. long and 2 to 4 ft. wide, in rare instances even 6 to 7 ft. wide. Since Sheraton's day a great change has taken place. The wood imported is almost entirely obtained from comparatively young trees; it is lighter both in colour and in weight, poorer in figure, and narrower in width.

The same remarks apply to modern satin-wood. Whereas a single plank in the old days was often found sufficient for the front or side of a cabinet or for a table-top, present-day copies, if carried out in new wood, have to be joined many times in order to attain the width of the model. Also the colour and figure are greatly inferior to that found in eighteenth-century work.

The fraud most difficult to detect is the one made of old wood. Panels from old houses or valueless old furniture are broken up and then cut, planed,

and carved in imitation of well-known designs of the great cabinet-makers of the past. On the other hand there are genuine specimens which have been "restored" so carelessly that they might at first sight be mistaken for reproductions, and in some instances have actually been sold as copies. "Pickling," that is washing over with an acid and then polishing, a process still frequently regarded as essential for bringing out the original colour, grain, and figure of the wood, cannot be too resolutely discouraged. There are also several forms of cleaning and varnishing hardly less injurious. Against these mistaken ideas lovers of antique furniture have made a long and effective protest. In a copy made up from old wood, manufacturers seek—though with poor results—to imitate by artificial means the wonderful surface-tone of the model. The natural bloom, however, can never be replaced. Thus any method of so-called cleaning which destroys the beauty of the patina reduces a genuine antique to the level of a reproduction, and but little then remains to distinguish the modern from the old work. If collectors sufficiently realized that not only the artistic, but the actual value of a piece is materially lessened by such ill-advised restoration, a great deal of beautiful furniture might still be saved from permanent injury.[1]

[1] A very safe method of cleaning and burnishing old furniture is no doubt that of which Sheraton gave a description in the

To proceed with the inspection of the chair: if the wood itself proves satisfactory, close attention should next be paid to the carving. Here many devices are resorted to in order to deceive the unwary. Sometimes the splat is quite modern, although the framework belongs to a genuine old chair; for if the splat, dating from the eighteenth century, happens to be very plain, it will often be cut away and a new and more attractively carved piece inserted in its place. Much modern carving is done by machinery, the effect being hard, mechanical, and quite wanting in that delicacy of feeling which the hand of a master craftsman alone can impart. The machine used is composed of a number of vertical spindles. A "template," or model of the work to be carved, is fixed to a rigid bench, placed directly under one of the spindles. This pilot-spindle has a point which is guided by the hand of the workman over the undulating surface of the template, while the other spindles geared to, and travelling at the same speed as the "pilot," reproduce in wood the exact design of the model. The work is then put into the hands of an experienced carver, who adds a few finishing touches. The results obtained are often very effective, but even the merest amateur should easily be

"Cabinet Dictionary": "Chairs are generally polished with a hardish composition of wax rubbed upon a polishing brush with which the grain of the wood is impregnated with the composition and afterwards well rubbed off." Turpentine is also harmless.

able to distinguish a machine-carved from a hand-carved piece. It will be observed that Chippendale chairs were always carved in separate parts, and then put together afterwards.

If the chair has arms these also may be modern additions, since armchairs are as a rule considered more saleable than "single" chairs. In cases where the leg and the arm support form a single piece, this portion will generally be original, as it is unlikely that entirely new arms and legs would be added.

The foot ought to show the marks of wear and tear, but—once again—this effect can be artificially produced.

In the examination of an inlaid or painted piece there is the same necessity for caution. Cabinets, bookcases, side-tables, and chairs are often newly inlaid and inordinately decorated with paintings. Nearly all decorated pieces were veneered; but sometimes a specimen, originally plain, in which the wood was coarse or of poor figure, will be found to have been veneered at a recent date. The art of inlaying was so perfectly understood by the great masters of the Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton schools, that imitations as a rule are of much poorer workmanship. The lines of different coloured woods were extremely fine and were laid very close together; in banding and stringing the outlines were always regular, and the mitres and joints made to

meet most accurately. In painted decoration the colours should naturally be dull and mellow, and somewhat sunk into the woodwork; the surface, thus ornamented, should also show signs of wear.

In the drawer of a bureau or bookcase the ordinary fake but seldom displays the same care and accuracy of detail as a genuine piece. The wood was so well-seasoned and was made to fit so exactly, that, after the lapse of a century or more, there is no sign of warping nor of that expansion—or contraction—which is rarely absent in a modern piece. The drawers of a "real" Chippendale or Sheraton bureau slide backwards and forwards as though over an oiled surface. The sides and bottoms are very thin, the wood being generally about a quarter of an inch in cross section.

We will imagine the collector to be next in search of a clock-case. Here an inspection of the ornamentation is of the first importance, for it is safe to say that all elaborately carved clocks—though perhaps more particularly those of the "Grandfather" type—are of modern workmanship. Chippendale's and Johnson's books represented clocks with the most fantastic ornamentation; but few specimens made from these designs are at present in existence, and it is probable that such sketches were only intended to be attractive advertisements. It is a remarkable fact that when so much skill was bestowed upon the carving of furniture and

interior fittings, the wooden clock-cases, actually made during the Queen Anne and Chippendale periods, were either plainly moulded or very slightly carved around the door or the angle shafts. In fakes the carving displayed is curiously enough often Elizabethan or Jacobean in character —types of decoration no longer in use—when long clocks were first made in this country. Not seldom a genuine old clock is stripped of its veneer and then carved either in a too antiquated or in quite modern style. In previous chapters it has been shown that English eighteenth-century clocks were simple in structure and depended for their effect upon their lines, curves, mouldings, and proportions. The decorations consisted of a little fretwork and brass in the wood, marquetry, japanning, and—at the close of the eighteenth century—a veneer of painted satin-wood.

A maker of reproductions on a somewhat large scale once explained to the writer the process of manufacture. When an exact copy had been made of an eighteenth-century model, the work was held over a fire of wood shavings until all the sharp edges and corners had been burned away. Lastly, the piece was broken up into several parts and glued together again. Thus was the "real antique" prepared for the market.

Opinions of an Expert

One of the best authorities on antique furniture is Mr. James Orrock, R.I., and his opinions on this subject should be of value to collectors. Artist, collector, and enthusiast, such is the best definition of Mr. Orrock, who for half a century has made a study of the Renaissance period of English art in all its many branches. Above all he is an expert, and to be an expert in these days when fraudulent imitations are so numerous calls for exceptional powers of discrimination and exceptional knowledge.

As regards plain, carved, or inlaid furniture, there are, he considers, many ways of recognizing a genuine piece. Old wood has, in his opinion, a semi-transparent look, and resembles a jelly-like substance rather than a solid and opaque mass. "Furniture," in Mr. Orrock's words, has indeed a "poetry of its own," and there can be no doubt that in the eyes of a true enthusiast the sunshine lights up not only the visible portions of a piece of Chippendale mahogany, but seems to penetrate to its very depths.

In order to detect a clever imitation of eighteenth-century hand-painted furniture the collector must, according to Mr. Orrock, be something of an artist; apart from the colour, tone, and texture of the work and the softening effects of time, the greatest charm

of the original consists in the manner of treatment —the special individuality of the eighteenth-century artist—and this it is which can never be successfully reproduced.

Mr. Orrock is a great believer in the power exercised by one art upon another, and traces the great art movement of the eighteenth century to the influence of the painters, sculptors, and architects upon the cabinet-makers, potters, and silversmiths. Taking furniture-making apart from its sister crafts, he considers the work produced in England during this period unrivalled by that of any other nation; no foreign cabinet-work, in his estimation, can vie with ours either in design, carving, or other ornamentation. He also holds the opinion that although our craftsmen undoubtedly borrowed from Dutch, French, Italian, Gothic, Chinese, Greek, and Roman sources, they nevertheless so welded the different styles together—taking a curve here, a line there, altering, improving, blending—that they produced an entirely new and distinctive style—an English style. Again, each of the English schools had such a marked influence on those which followed, that it is often very difficult to classify them separately.

For the Queen Anne period, with its quaint shapes, so often said to be wanting in grace, Mr. Orrock has nothing but praise. "The picturesque style," he calls it, and its defects seem to merge into

its beauties at the spell of the word. He quite negatives the theory that the carver Grinling Gibbons had any direct influence upon the work of Chippendale. He holds that not only the ornamentation but Gibbons's style of carving is quite different from the work of the Chippendale school. Gibbons relied largely upon undercutting for his effects, so that the portions in relief completely stand out from the mass to which they belong and appear indeed "to float in a sea of shadow." His foliage, flowers, fruit, and birds were faithful and exact copies of nature; his leaves were so lifelike that they were said almost to rustle in the wind. Chippendale carving, on the other hand, was often executed in low or semi-relief, and the designs, as a rule, were classic, architectural, and conventional rather than realistic.

Mr. Orrock finds great beauty in Adam's designs, and admires particularly his mantelpieces and silver plate. In Adam's furniture it is the hand-painting of Angelica Kauffmann, Cipriani, Zucchi, Pergolesi, etc., which attracts him, for although he does not place these decorative artists in the highest rank as painters, he thinks their work very fascinating.

He believes Pergolesi to have designed a great deal for the various houses built by Adam; chairs, cabinets, mirrors, and chandeliers by Pergolesi should be easily recognized by their florid, French style. Mr. Orrock likes variety in an Adam room,

Fig. LVII CABINET THAT BELONGED TO GEORGE III.

To face page 203.

and prefers it to be furnished—as indeed is often the case—with Hepplewhite, Sheraton, Pergolesi, and even Chippendale models, rather than exclusively from the designs of Robert Adam himself.

Hepplewhite pieces are, in his opinion, more elegant than those of any other eighteenth-century craftsmen.

As a matter of course Mr. Orrock prizes only Sheraton's earlier productions—the delicate marquetry and painted ornamentation. He has no doubt that this great master in satin-wood designed furniture for George III. Mr. Orrock possesses two carved caskets as well as a satin-wood cabinet, which all bear the inscription "G. R." (Georgius Rex), either carved or inlaid in the wood. And these pieces—in all probability looted from a royal palace during one of King George's long illnesses—Mr. Orrock attributes to Sheraton himself. The cabinet (described on p. 161) is depicted in illustration LVII.

Mr. Orrock's house in Bedford Square, built by Robert Adam and with the original Adam decorations still intact, has been for many years the fitting background for a unique collection of eighteenth-century work.[1] The eye is met at every

[1] Many of the Orrock treasures were sold at Christie's in June, 1904. The settee and suite of eleven ribbon-back Chippendale chairs were sold for 1,000 guineas. The marqueterie cabinet with the royal cipher G. R. fetched 470 guineas. The total collection of furniture and china realized £20,838.

turn by paintings from the hands of the great English masters of that time—Gainsborough, Reynolds, Lawrence, Turner, and many others, with only here and there a foreign picture introduced by way of contrast. All the furniture throughout the house—including the clocks, mirrors, and chandeliers—was made in English workshops of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On the ground floor—in the hall, the dining-room, the library, and studio—the principal pieces are of walnut and mahogany, and represent the periods Queen Anne, Chippendale, Adam, and Hepplewhite. Some examples of the Queen Anne furniture are illustrated in Chapter I. A Chippendale bookcase and suite of ribbon-back chairs, a dining-room set of shield-back Hepplewhite chairs and settee, and an Adam sideboard might be singled out for their special beauty. On the first floor the great drawing-rooms are literally ablaze with satin-wood and light painted pieces. The glitter and gorgeous appearance of the satin-wood, which in the eyes of many connoisseurs far out-rivals French gilded furniture, can nowhere be seen to greater advantage. The chief designers represented are Sheraton and Pergolesi—the painted chairs, settees, and cabinets by the last-named artist being very noteworthy examples of his work.[1]

[1] The illustrations are reproduced by kind permission of Mr. Orrock.

Fig. LVIII. PERGOLESI SIDE-TABLE.

To face page 205.

Fig. LIX. PERGOLESI CHINA CABINET.

To face page 209.

The chairs shown in illustrations XLVIII and LVIII are part of a suite of chairs, side-tables, and cabinet made by Pergolesi for the then Marquis of Stafford.

The framework is of white painted wood ornamented with gilt heading, rosettes and foliage in low relief. In these chairs the great beauty is their painted covering—a classical design, carried out in blue upon a white silk ground and almost certainly executed by the artist himself. After 120 to 130 years the colouring is scarcely dulled by the lapse of time.

The side-table with china shelves, in illustration LVIII, also has a framework of gold upon white, with fluted, turned, and tapering legs to correspond to those of the chairs. A painted panel is inserted in the centre of the front rail, and the top, which is of satin-wood, has an outer banding of mahogany. A floral design, forming a second band within, is painted in colours upon a white ground; a style of work especially characteristic of Pergolesi. Whereas Sheraton's designs were nearly always painted on the satin-wood itself, Pergolesi first laid on a flat tint for his ground and then painted upon that.

The Pergolesi cabinet in illustration LIX also belongs to the Stafford suite, but is of a somewhat different character from the other pieces. Except for the side panels, which are of a delicate

gray-green shade, the ground is white. The cupboard below curves outwards in a graceful sweep, and all the proportions are extremely elegant. The inspiration for this beautiful piece seems to have been derived almost entirely from French sources; the drapery upon the front and side panels, the delicate basket of flowers, the floral wreaths and plants show little or nothing of the Adam influence. The framework is outlined with gilded mouldings.

Illustration LX depicts a cabinet designed by Pergolesi, probably for a house in Brighton. The general colour is green, although the two panels upon the middle shelf are white. The three landscapes and three subject-pictures with which the cabinet is ornamented, are dainty examples of the hand-painting of the period. The quality and execution of such pictures, which were to have for their only setting the furniture they were intended to decorate, is a remarkable proof of the high esteem in which cabinet-work was held during the eighteenth century.

The ormolu and glass chandelier, illustration LXI, is another example of Pergolesi work. The brass band round the centre is pierced with a graceful floral design. The idea of glass drops hanging thus in chains and festoons was in all probability derived from some very early productions of the Venetians

Fig. LX.
To face page 206.

PERGOLESI CABINET.

Fig. LXI. PERGOLESI CHANDELIER.

To face page 206.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Architrave.	The lowest mouldings of an entablature.
Banding.	Broad band of inlay.
Bead.	A round moulding.
Braces.	Wooden rails used to bind the legs of a chair or table.
Cabled flutings.	Flutings filled in with a convex bead to about one-third of their height from the base.
Cabriole.	A bent-knee leg.
Club-foot.	A thickening and slight shaping of that part of the leg which rests on the ground.
Cornice.	(In joinery) the projecting and crowning mouldings.
Curl.	The curled markings in mahogany.
Entablature.	Those mouldings which include the architrave, frieze, and cornice.
Escutcheon.	The ornamental brass-work around a key-hole.
Figure.	The markings in wood.
Finials.	Terminal ornaments or pinnacles.
Frieze.	The flat portion of the entablature which lies between architrave and cornice.
Hoof-foot.	A horse's foot slightly conventionalized.
Lining or stringing.	A fine line of inlay.
Marquetry.	Inlaid work with wood of different colours, ivory, brass, etc.

Mask.	A moulded projection resembling a grotesque head.
Mitre.	A join at an angle of 45°.
Ormolu.	Brass made to imitate gold.
Patera.	A circular ornament carved in relief.
Patina.	The bloom on the surface of old wood, a proof of age.
Pediment.	A triangular decoration above the cornice.
Pilaster.	A square pillar.
Pinnacle.	A small pointed top.
Rabbet or rebate.	A half channelling or groove made in the edge of a piece of wood in order to receive some other piece of wood.
Rail.	A bar or band of wood extending from one support to another.
Slats.	For slat-back chairs, horizontal slips of wood extending from one side support to another.
Spandril.	Triangular space between a rectangle and the curve of an arch which it incloses.
Splat.	The part of the back of a chair which lies within the outer rails.
Squab-seat.	Loose, stuffed seat.
Stringing.	*See* Lining.
Tabberay or tabaret.	Stout satin-striped silk.
Therm.	Tapering (Sheraton's "Dictionary").
Veneer.	A thin cut slice of superior quality wood laid down and glued upon inferior wood.

APPENDIX

The following is a list of the engravers employed by Chippendale in his "Director":

Matthias Darly.
I. and T. Müller.
Hemerick.
I. Taylor.
I. Miller.
B. Clowes.
E. Rooker.
W. Foster.
Morris.
Hulett.

Of these Darly, I. Müller, B. Clowes, E. Rooker, and W. Foster, were designers of bookplates.

Those who engraved for Sheraton were:

I. J. Newton.
J. Barlow.
G. Terry.
I. Caldwell.
Thornthwaite.
Towes.
G. Walker.
G. Barrett.

J. Barlow, G. Terry, Thornthwaite, and Towes, were bookplate designers.

The following is a list of the engravers whose names appeared in "The Works in Architecture of R. and J. Adam":

*F. Bartolozzi (1725-1815).
I. Miller.
*E. Rooker (1712-1724).
*P. Mazell.
Alex. Finnie.
T. and C. White.
V. and B. Pastorini.
J. and I. Roberts.
I. Zucchi.
P. Begbie.
Nenton.
T. Vivarez (about 1735-1788).
Dom. Cunego.
*R. Blythe.
T. White.
Caldwall.
F. Patton.
*Ch. Grignion (1754-1804), pupil of Cipriani.
J. B. Piranese (1713-1785).
J. Record.
Norval.
Roe.
T. Morris.
Romee.
B. Malpas.
Harding.
Jas. Caldwall.
*F. Jukes (1746-1812).

Of these both Rooker and Miller engraved for Chippendale. The designers of bookplates are marked with a *.

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