THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION

BY

HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN
ABBOT McCLURE
AND
EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY

WITH 7 PLATES IN COLOUR, 283
IN DOUBLETONE, AND A CHART

PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON
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THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION.—BY HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN, ABBOT McCLURE and EDWARD STRATTON HOLLOWAY. J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, Publishers.

This is essentially what its name implies—a practical book of interior decoration house furnishing, etc. The first half is devoted to a historical survey of the several periods which must of necessity serve as a background for any study of this subject. The second half, which by the way is a little more than half, deals with the problem in its present day aspect, treating in successive chapters, color and color schemes, walls and backgrounds, floors and their covering, windows and their treatment, furniture and its choosing, decorative textiles, artificial lighting and lighting fixtures, pictures and their framing and decorative accessories. The chapter on pictures and their framing is particularly interesting, and the examples of picture mouldings which are given as illustrations are of an admirable type. This chapter is in a way typical of the whole and illustrates how very definite and enlightening it all is. It is a thick volume of about 450 pages and contains numerous and most excellent illustrations—illustrations which literally illustrate and which have undoubtedly been chosen with extraordinary care and judgment. For every home maker and for those interested in interior decoration as an art this book can not fail to be of great value. MAR

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THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION. By Harold Donaldson Eberlein, Abbott McClure and Edward Stratton Holloway. J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1919.

To quote from the authors' foreword, "it is hard to understand why someone has not written such a book as this before." It answers a need in modern life for information and direction in the matter of interior decoration, set down in a form useful equally to architects, decorators and interested laymen.

The subject matter falls naturally into

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION

PLATE 1

FOREWORD

It is hard to understand why someone has not written such a book as this before, a book covering the three great needs of anyone approaching in any capacity the matter of household decoration.

History is a treasure house of the crystallised experience that has slowly evolved in past ages, a treasure house ready for us to draw upon as we will. The limit of our taking from its stores is marked only by our capacity to receive. This is especially true in the case of so concrete a subject as interior decoration where many enduring examples of the best achievements of former generations in that field have been preserved for us practically intact.

The truest and sanest originality is the product of a gradual evolution and rational adaptation to present needs of the most obvious and applicable precedents established by our predecessors and tried by the searching test of time. Such originality, too, is largely an unconscious product. The agent is scarcely conscious that he is aiming to be original. Deliberately self-conscious originality that casts aside and contemns all precedent and strives, above all else, to create something the like of which has never been done before, may indeed be original to the extent of being unique, but the chances are ninety-nine out of an hundred that it will also be gauche and crude and without any merit to entitle it to permanence. It wins notice only because it is a curiosity and a freak.

If there were no guiding principles and traditions, if Interior Decoration were to begin to-day, it is probable that furnishing—even of the simplest cottage—would be a chaotic thing. Successful decoration and

home-making is a matter not merely of "feeling" or even of taste, if these necessary qualities be without knowledge. Decoration is both an art and a science; it is the result of long centuries of loving thought and high craftsmanship based upon unalterable principles of beauty and of use. What wonder is it that the usual brisk and light-hearted "jumping into" the furnishing of the home is productive of a result causing the judicious to grieve! Notwithstanding an improvement in recent years, the utter waste of money and of effort, the absence of any praiseworthy result in thousands of modern homes is still appalling.

Knowledge therefore must come first, and nothing can be more absorbing than to see the beauty and the fitness evolved, both from elaborate and from simple materials, through the various periods of Decoration and to apply them to our own needs. It would, then, certainly seem wise to provide the professional decorator, the home-furnisher and the allied professions and trades with a convenient, thorough-going and well illustrated account and description of the work of the great decorative periods, since their beginnings, and of the principles which informed them.

In the first part of this volume the authors have endeavoured to give a consecutive and synoptic picture of the art of interior decoration as it has been practised in England, in France, in Italy, and in Spain since the beginning of the sixteenth century, adding thereto such comment as seemed necessary upon American modifications of British usage during the Colonial and early republican periods. This includes the decorative practice of the Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Neo-Classic systems, and it may be added that in no other one volume can such a fully described, illustrated and digested account be found.

In the second part of the volume is made the direct application to modern requirements of the lessons to be drawn from the historical exposition in Part I. As it is manifestly impossible, even were it desirable, to give specific and categorical directions for decorative procedure to suit every case, it has been the policy to set forth *principles* as well as to explain *practice,* and to leave considerable discretionary latitude in which the reader may exercise his or her choice of action. In this way it is believed the utility of the book will prove flexible enough to meet all sorts of needs, both simple and elaborate.

Each age has its own conditions, requirements and developments, and any volume on Modern Decoration that did not take these fully into account would be imperfect. The treatment of the Practical side of Decoration, in Part II, will be found so simple and straightforward as to be readily understood by any intelligent furnisher of his own home, and, while this Part is primarily addressed to him, it is felt that a fresh view of the subject from a point other than the traditions of trade may be of distinct interest to the professional decorator and dealer as well.

The plates constitute a most vital feature of the book and the reader is urged to study carefully the illustrations in connexion with the text in the manner indicated by the text references. Without such comparison and cross reference the purpose of the volume will be in great measure defeated. It will be seen that instant reference may thus be made to any particular feature of the work.

We are living in an age of catholic appreciation which we are optimistic enough to believe is increasing. We believe, also, that with this catholic tendency to appreciate and to lay hold of whatever is intrinsically

good in the work of any period, there is rapidly growing an healthy constructive ability on the part of the householder which prompts the individual to beautify his or her home, either through the offices of a decorator or through personal effort.

Our twofold purpose is, in the first place, to stimulate intelligent coöperation with the decorator, to encourage appreciation of what the decorator does, and to afford a sound basis of discriminating criticism and judgment; in the second place, to aid the householder who may elect to achieve either a limited decorative improvement or the execution of an whole constructive scheme. It is also felt that the decorator and the dealer will find in this volume much information compactly arranged for instant reference.

Whether or not the services of a decorator be retained, may we urge the wisdom of not trying to hasten unduly the completion of a scheme. It is infinitely better to proceed deliberately, to accomplish at one time what is unquestionably sound and then to wait for a while, if it be necessary, to secure exactly what is needed, rather than to push for immediate completion at the risk of incorporating features that afterwards prove undesirable and make us rue our impatience.

We have reminded the reader that this is an age of catholic appreciation of whatever was worth while in the practice of the past. In this connexion, it should be pointed out that while it is perfectly permissible, if the householder so chooses, and may at times be thoroughly desirable, to decorate and furnish a room in strict accord with some particular period style, we do not urge such a course. Meticulous reproduction of this sort is apt to savour too much of decorative archæology and to result in a stilted, artificial effect, quite incompatible with a desirable expression of the owner's

individuality or with the exercise of rational originality. The outcome is likely to be dead and "correct" instead of being instinct with vital quality as it ought.

It is better to think, to consult principles, which we believe the reader will find lucidly enough set forth, and to employ a rational liberty of selection when attacking a problem of rearrangement or of new composition. The room will then reflect the occupant's personality, a condition that will afford vastly more interest and lively charm than any amount of simian exactitude in reproduction.

No one questions the value of period furnishing, but the question as to how it is to be used in our modern days has been the subject of much discussion indeed. On the one hand we find, in practice, the narrow adherence to one period and one country; on the other, a jumble of everything under the sun from the fifteenth century to the twentieth and from China to Portugal. In Part III of this book is for the first time formulated a logical system of decoration which avoids both the narrow limitations of the one-period method and the pitfalls of eclectic furnishing.

Without wishing to claim undue credit, the writers are under the impression that this volume is the first of the kind to formulate a definite body of decorative *principles* that are applicable under any conditions likely to arise. Scattered precepts and general observations upon the effects attained in individual instances are agreeable and helpful, so far as they go. It is more serviceable, however, to have a digest of principles explaining the "how" and "why", principles simple and flexible enough in their working to be readily applied to meet the varying requirements that may from time to time confront the reader.

It will be seen upon perusal that a great deal of

space and attention have been devoted, both in the historical section and in the sections upon application, to the architectural background and the fixed decorations. The vital importance of this part of interior decoration cannot be overestimated. Without it all efforts in other directions will be robbed of their legitimate result and the expense bestowed will not count for its full value.

The architectural background and the fixed decorations really supply the foundation for which all else is the superstructure. When building an house, no sane person would dream of constructing an elaborate and costly superstructure upon insufficient or poor foundations. It is quite as fatuous to expect a room to look well and to do justice to the pains spent upon it without adequate preparation of the background, or, in other words, the foundation for the subsequent movable decoration. If it be necessary to economise anywhere in the erection of a structure, the economising is not done at the foundation, which cannot be changed later, but above ground in the matter of details that can be subsequently added. In precisely the same way, if there be any limitation in carrying out a decorative scheme, do not stint the background, which has a strongly permanent quality, but postpone completing a part of the movable equipment, which can be added at any time.

The work of interior decoration is not a task that can be undertaken in a haphazard manner and accomplished with creditable results. Nor can it be achieved by the whimsical following of fads. It requires thought, judgment, calm planning and sanity. In the past it has always been a dignified occupation in which the greatest architects and artists have not hesitated to labour assiduously. Its ultimate object, to enrich and beautify the home which is the nucleus of social life and the cornerstone of the state, is a service in which architect and

artist, decorator and householder alike may engage with justifiable pride.

In conclusion, the authors wish sincerely to thank all the many who have materially assisted in the preparation of this work, and for numerous courtesies extended to acknowledge their indebtedness, especially to the following: —— the editors of *House and Garden,* of *Good Furniture Magazine* and of *House Beautiful* in arranging for the use of material that has appeared in substance in their pages; to Messrs. Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, Edmund B. Gilchrist, Willing and Sims, Mellor, Meigs and Howe, Sir Ernest Newton, Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin, George Leland Hunter, William Lawrence Bottomley, the Misses Hewitt, the Misses Owen, Mrs. Abbot Thorndike and Mrs. William Thorndike, the Honourable Jefferson M. Levy, Wolstan Herbert Dixie, Durr Friedley, E. S. Dodge, and Henry Chapman Mercer; to W. H. Ward's "Architecture of the French Renaissance" and George P. Bankart's "Art of the Plasterer"; to the C. M. Traver Co., William Helburn, Inc., B. T. Batsford, Ltd., Messrs. L. Alavoine & Co., Carvalho Brothers, Nicholas Martin, Montillor Brothers, Messrs. Litchfield & Co., Radillo & Pelliti Co., Woodville & Co., the Chapman Decorative Co., Messrs. Robinson and Farr, R. W. Lehne, *Vogue,* the *Architectural Record,* the *International Studio,* Waring & Gillow, Ltd., Edwards & Sons, Bartholomew & Fletcher, Speelman Brothers, Story & Triggs, C. J. Charles, the Aschermann Studio, Newcomb-Macklin Co., A. H. Notman & Co., Edward I. Farmer, Ramsey, Lyon & Humphreys, Inc., Alfred Villoresi, Karl Freund, Mrs. M. Orme Wilson, John Wanamaker; American Art Galleries, Anderson Art Galleries; the Pennsylvania Museum and School of Industrial Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum, and the

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PHILADELPHIA, July, 1919

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PART I

HISTORIC PERIOD DECORATION IN ENGLAND, ITALY, SPAIN AND FRANCE

Finally, there should grow the most austere of all mental qualities; I mean the sense for style. It is an æsthetic sense, based on admiration for the direct attainment of a foreseen end, simply and without waste. Style in art, style in literature, style in science, style in logic, style in practical execution, have fundamentally the same æsthetic qualities, namely, attainment and restraint. The love of a subject in itself and for itself, where it is not the sleepy pleasure of pacing a mental quarter-deck, is the love of style as manifested in that study.

Here we are brought back to the position from which we started, the utility of education. Style, in its finest sense, is the last acquirement of the educated mind; it is also the most useful. It pervades the whole being. The administrator with a sense for style, hates waste; the engineer with a sense for style, economises his material; the artisan with a sense for style, prefers good work. Style is the ultimate morality of the mind.

But, above style and above knowledge, there is something, a vague shape like fate above the Greek gods. The something is Power. Style is the fashioning of power. the restraining of power. But, after all, the power of attainment of the desired end is fundamental. The first thing is to get there. Do not bother about your style, but solve your problem, justify the ways of God to man, administer your province or do whatever else is set before you.

Where, then, does style help? In this, with style the end is attained without side issues, without raising undesirable inflammations. With style, you attain your end and nothing but your end. With style, the effect of your activity is calculable, and foresight is the last gift of gods to men. With style, your power is increased, for your mind is not distracted with irrelevancies, and you are more likely to attain your object. Now style is the exclusive privilege of the expert. Who ever heard of the style of an amateur painter, of the style of an amateur poet? Style is always the product of specialist study, the peculiar contribution of specialism to culture.

"The Organisation of Thought"
By A. N. Whitehead, Sc.D., F.R.S.
London: Williams & Norgate
Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.

THE PRACTICAL BOOK OF INTERIOR DECORATION

PART I

HISTORIC PERIOD DECORATION IN ENGLAND, ITALY, SPAIN AND FRANCE

CHAPTER I

INTERIOR DECORATION IN ENGLAND PRIOR TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION. — Sixteenth century England will ever be endued with a glamour all its own in the eyes of those over whom history exerts a fascinating hold or in whose mental background a strong sense of love and reverence for our Mother Country and a just pride in our great heritage of English blood and traditions count as potent factors. The vigour, freshness and *naïveté* of the period, added to the full-blooded stability of English characteristics and traditions, combine to cast a subtle spell over the imagination. Even the misdoings of that old reprobate and rapacious spendthrift, Henry VIII, seem to fade into a half-pardoned state of unreality and grow less reprehensible in the enshrouding haze of glowing splendour that radiates from the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and when we think of the marvellous delights of Nonesuch or of the 2600 tapestries that adorned the walls of his palaces we are all too apt to forget whence came the

funds to compass the building of the former and that many of the latter he either stole from the monasteries he so ruthlessly pillaged or filched from the possessions of Cardinal Wolsey.

Notwithstanding all this bravery of gorgeous display, there was comparatively little upon which, for our present purpose, we may profitably centre our attention until we come to the days of Queen Elizabeth. During her reign the building of country houses advanced by strides and gave scope for the art of furnishing to develop to a truly national extent. In all this work, which progressed continuously during the rule of Elizabeth and her Stuart successors, the spirit of the Renaissance was the controlling influence, but that influence arrived in England through various channels and manifested itself under varying forms, as we shall presently see, so that it is necessary to divide the epoch embracing the last half of the sixteenth century and the whole of the seventeenth into three phases—the first covering decoration in the time of Queen Elizabeth and during the reigns of King James and King Charles I, a period of consistent, logical and uninterrupted development; the second covering the dour years of the Commonwealth; the third covering the Restoration period, with all its influx of fresh and divers tendencies, and terminating in the medley of Baroque and Oriental fashions that flourished vigorously all through the reign of William and Mary.

In the Elizabethan period the chiefest part of the architectural and mobiliary Renaissance inspiration came into England through Flemish channels. While a powerful Renaissance influence had taken deep root in Flanders and wrought abundant results, nevertheless the Flemings, like the French, had retained a large

measure of late Gothic tradition and their interpretation of Renaissance principles was strongly tinged and modified by this residuary leaven of an earlier mode so that the composite result was unmistakably local and individual in character. This body of Flemish forms, upon its transition to England, was grafted upon a stock of British growth and precedent and the pure Italian Renaissance element in it was still further diluted by British conceptions and methods of execution on the part of craftsmen who, then as now, were conservative and retentive of the manner of technique and forms of decorative expression instilled by early training. In spite, however, of the dominating Flemish bias imparted to the Renaissance mode in England, distinct traces of a subsidiary but unadulterated source of Italian inspiration recur again and again in the work of the period, showing that the direct connexion with Italian cultural influence was far stronger and more intimate than is generally supposed. We may the more readily credit the existence and potency of this bond when we look into the literary history of the age and find that between the accession and death of the Virgin Queen there were published in England no fewer than 394 translations from the Italian into English and 72 texts in Italian and Latin. When Italian literature found such a receptive audience as these figures prove, when we remember how closely the arts were interrelated in England, when we study the evidence of trade and imports, and when we consider the presence of not a few able Italian craftsmen, whose continued residence and activity in England are matters of historical record, we may be very sure that Englishmen were not insensible to the enlivening impetus of direct contact with Latin sources in matters of decoration.

We also see in this condition a further link in the powerful chain of evidence showing a wide internationalism in art, an internationalism that we are altogether too prone to ignore in the past and assume as a development of modern times.

Under the Commonwealth we find a period of comparative stagnation and arrested growth in matters of English decoration. Certain Baroque tendencies, it is true, came more into evidence than at an earlier date, but, for the most part, it was an era of drab monotony; the minority who still cherished taste and refinement were in too great trouble or weighed down by disabilities too heavy to permit them to give much encouragement to any form of art, and the greater part of the nation, under the impulse of that strange mania that impelled the rue-faced Roundhead ranters and gloomy Puritan religionists to contemplate in fascinated dread the flaming terrors of hell and to prophesy with savage satisfaction the unalterable damnation of all their kin and neighbours, was much too engrossed in the orgy of morbid introspection to pay much heed to the amenities of architecture or decoration. A few wealthy "worldlings" did indulge in "wicked and unedifying extravagances," but their example did not produce an appreciable effect.

At the Restoration, the pendulum swung to the other extremity of its arc and the arts of architecture and interior decoration gained all the impetus that usually attends long pent up energy suddenly let loose in a congenial and hitherto forbidden field of activity. The impetus was further intensified in London by the necessity of replacing the ruin wrought by the Great Fire. The large numbers of refugees returning from exile on the Continent in the train of the King brought with them not only a fresh set of polite tastes, require-

ments and broadened conceptions but also a very considerable quantity of household furnishings and luxurious garniture. Court circles and the people of the country at large alike welcomed all the new and newly invigorated influences — French, Italian, Flemish, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and Oriental—that successively made their way into England as a result partly of political alliances, partly of expanded trade relations, partly through the immigration of foreign artificers, and partly, though by no means in the least measure, through a new cosmopolitanism that was gradually spreading throughout the country and supplanting the old insularity that had received a mortal wound when King Charles the Martyr was beheaded and got its *coup de grace* when King Charles the Scapegrace, as the Merry Monarch might well have been called, came back from overseas to "enjoy his own again."

The architecture of this complex Restoration period was catholic enough to employ inspiration derived from French, Flemish and Italian interpretations of the Renaissance spirit and also to incorporate Baroque elements when there was occasion. In the field of interior decoration we find an opulent medley of Renaissance, Flemish, Baroque, East Indian and Chinese influences that combined to diversify the mobiliary manifestations of the period to an hitherto unwonted degree.

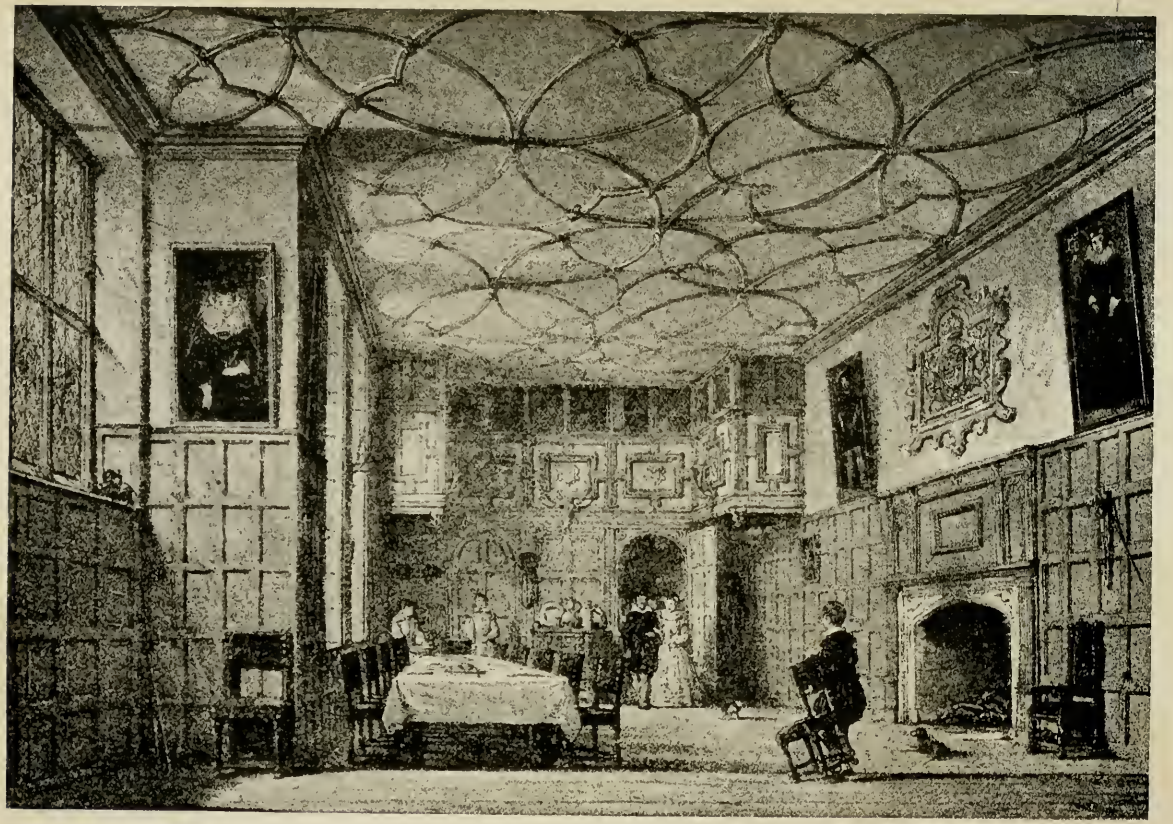
Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—Allusion has already been made to the domestic architecture of the age of Elizabeth, which was largely a composite of Flemish Renaissance forms grafted upon an English stock of late Gothic provenance. One might characterise the style as a Gothic body with Flemish Renaissance features and clothes.

The rooms and galleries were large, or at the very least commodious, and the ceilings were frequently though not invariably low in comparison to the other dimensions, unless there was an open timbered roof. The window openings were large and might consist of a range of three or more leaded casements separated by upright posts or mullions of wood or stone, or might rise to a great height, filled with tiers of leaded casements (Plate 5) separated both horizontally and vertically by mullions. Again, the whole end of a room might be filled by one great bow window with the mullion divisions, as in the previously noted cases. In any event, the mullions were an invariable as well as a distinctly characteristic and decorative feature. The casements were glazed with small quarries or with little lozenge-shaped panes leaded together. While the leading alone served as an agreeable decoration, heraldic blasonings and other devices in colour, in the centre of a casement, were often employed to lend additional glow and interest.

The walls were panelled with small oaken panels (Plates 3, 4 and 5), separated by broad stiles and rails, for either their whole height or else for the greater part of it, and when any part of the upper wall was left uncoated with wainscot it was plastered. At the top of the panelling was often a carved and moulded frieze. Projections from the panelling, such as door frames and pilasters, were carved in low relief.

The fireplace and its superstructure always formed an highly significant and much decorated feature of the room. The opening of the fireplace was of generous size and the surround was of carved stone (Plate 4), while the massive superstructure or chimney piece might be either of richly carved stone or of wood (Plate 3) carved with an equal degree of elaboration.

PLATE 2



THE HALL, FRANKS, KENT

Note Mullioned Windows, Wainscotted Walls and Plastered Ceiling with Moulded Rib Decoration, Distinctive of the English Renaissance
From "The Mansions of England in the Olden Time," by Joseph Nash

PLATE 3

DINING ROOM IN ENGLISH RENAISSANCE STYLE (EARLY STUART PHASE)
Note Oak Wainscot in Small Panels, Carved Chimney Piece and Moulded Parge Ceiling
Table Jacobean: Chairs Baroque
Courtesy of Mrs. Lyman Kendall, New York City

LIVING ROOM OF STUART TYPE

Wainscotted Walls in Small Oak Panels, Moulded Parge Ceiling and Stone Fireplace Trim

Courtesy of Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, Architects

PLATE 5

LIVING ROOM OF STUART TYPE
Wainscotted Walls in Small Oak Panels and Moulded Parge Ceiling
Courtesy of Wilson Eyre and McIlvaine, Architects

Whether of wood or of stone, the further enrichment of colour and gilding was often added. Equally significant with the fireplace as a conspicuous item in the Elizabethan and Stuart interiors was the staircase, the newel post and the side railing beautifully carved and fretted, which rose by broken flights and landings to the upper floor, sometimes ascending directly from one of the larger rooms, sometimes from a hall or gallery.

Doorways, too, were objects of rich ornamentation (Plate 2), both at the sides, in the shape of either carved pilasters or semi-engaged pillars, and at the top with elaborate carving and moulding, often in the form of armorial bearings with casque, mantlings and supporters. In not a few instances, the actual entrance was surrounded by an elaborately carved and panelled screen extending from the floor part way to the ceiling. The door itself not infrequently bore the adornment of wrought-iron hinges and bands with scrolls. The floors were of stone, of tiles and of wood, the latter being most used. Occasionally simple decorative devices were essayed with stone or tile paving, but as a rule the paving was without any pretense at ornamentation.

The ceilings were of beamed wood or of plaster or else there were open timbered roofs. The beamed ceilings commonly displayed the amenity of chamfering and moulding on the beams and frequently the addition of carving. Colour, too, was apt to play a part in the decorative scheme. Open timbered roofs might or might not be plastered between the timbers and characteristic ornamentation of carving and colour sometimes adorned the woodwork, while decoration was also extended to the plaster surfaces.

The plastered ceilings were either flat or barrel vaulted or coved. In some cases *stucco-duro* or parge (Plates 3 and 4) ornamentation was used for the ceiling

and consistent decoration in the same media extended to a portion or to the whole of the wall surface above the oak panelling. The over-mantel decoration, too, often consisted of a *stucco-duro* or a parge composition instead of carvings in stone or wood. The art of working in *stucco-duro* was introduced into England in the time of Henry VIII and was executed by Italian workmen who continued to ply their craft during a great part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and they taught some of the more capable English artificers to work after the same fashion. For various reasons, however, the art decayed and was eventually supplanted by the simpler substitute of parge work which, while it required less skill of execution, was also limited in the scope of delicacy and the range of *motifs* which might be executed therein. The *stucco-duro* ceilings were beautifully decorated with moulded ribs and panels, floriations and other devices, while the plaster portions of walls above the panelling often bore most intricately and deftly wrought friezes of hunting scenes, mythological or historical subjects. The same style of device was likewise used for an over-mantel embellishment and well-moulded strapwork was employed freely. It was not at all unusual further to augment the decorative effect of this carefully wrought *stucco-duro* work by polychrome treatment in tempera colours.

After the hand of the average English plasterer had somewhat lost its cunning and it became necessary to descend to the cruder parge work, the modelled decoration continued to be applied in the same places as previously noted, but the *motifs* were necessarily simpler and the execution far less delicate. For a full explication of *stucco-duro* and parge work, for the methods and *motifs* employed, and for numerous excellent illustrations, the reader is referred to George P.

Bankart's admirable book, "The Art of the Plasterer."

When all the resources of fixed decoration just enumerated were fully utilised, the interior of many an Elizabethan or Stuart room was so replete with decorative variety and interest that it gave the impression of being furnished, even before a stick of movable furniture was put in place. This fact deserves close attention for the emphasis it lends to the reasonable contention that interior decoration is not alone a matter of selecting and arranging an aggregation of movable pieces, but comprehends the creation of an whole and complete composition, a conception of the art that too many are unfortunately disposed to ignore.

The interiors during early Stuart or Jacobean times were substantially the same in their principal features as the Elizabethan rooms already described. Certain *motifs* of carved decoration, such as Romayne work or heads carved on roundels or medallions, fell out of fashion while other *motifs* came into vogue. The differences, however, were not sufficient to require minute elucidation here and may be satisfactorily explained in a subsequent paragraph. During the Commonwealth there was little architectural or decorative activity and it is not until we come to the Restoration that we find another fully distinct interior type of a widely increasing prevalence.

Beginning with the immediate Restoration period and thence onward to the end of the century, two separate and well-defined types of interiors must be taken into consideration. The one was the type with which we are already familiar, substantially the same as the Elizabethan or Stuart interior, which came down as an heritage from the past with only a few minor evolutionary modifications; the other was a type for which we are indebted to the agency of Inigo Jones, followed,

after the Restoration, by the work of Sir Christopher Wren and his contemporaries, who designed in a vein of much purer Renaissance inspiration than was apparent in the Elizabethan houses, the creations of Wren, however, being perceptibly tinged by a strong French influence, while the earlier designs by Jones were based directly upon Italian precedents. An infusion of Baroque interpretation entered into the composition of this style as well as the basis of Renaissance precedent.

The most signal points of difference between the old Elizabethan and early Stuart type of interior and that of the newer mode were that in the houses of more recent fashion the ceilings were higher: there was a more general regard for symmetry in the dimensions of rooms which, as a rule, were now broader in proportion to their length than formerly and designed to be approximately square rather than oblong: the window openings were taller and not so wide, double hung sashes instead of leaded casements appeared, and panes of glass considerably larger than the old quarries and lozenges, that had been held in place by strips of lead, were now set in substantial wooden muntins: the panelling of the walls—and this was one of the most momentous changes—was made with far larger divisions (Plate 6) and the mouldings surrounding the panels were of wholly different contour and far bolder: finally, in the treatment of both the plaster ceilings and the wooden floors, the spaces involved were regarded as opportunities for coherent and finished composition in decorative design rather than as bare surfaces to be covered with a relieving pattern.

While oak was still used extensively for panelling, pine, deal or Scottish fir, and even cedar were coming rapidly into fashion for the same purpose. This was the age of Grinling Gibbon, when the art of decorative

DRAWING ROOM PANELLED IN OAK, WILLIAM AND MARY PERIOD
Note Large Panels Defined by Raised Mouldings, Carved Door Trims (Showing Baroque Influence), Carved Cornice and Decorated Plaster Ceiling
Courtesy of Mrs. Lyman Kendall, New York City

wood carving reached the acme of perfection. For the new style of carving with all its realism, delicacy and undercutting, oak was too hard and open-grained a medium to be worked with the same ease or with the same dexterity of finish as the other woods just mentioned. Delicate carving in low relief was often employed freely on the mouldings of cornices and the surrounds of panels (Plate 6), while for overdoor ornamentation and still more for the enrichment of the chimney piece swags and drops of flowers, fruit and foliage, with human figures, *amorini,* baskets, urns, birds and other devices in a free and flowing style, with high relief and much undercutting, all together constituted one of the most characteristic aspects of the new mode. These finely wrought carvings were often executed in lime or basswood, which admitted of even more ingenious manipulation than pine, deal or cedar. While the beauty of the woods just mentioned, in their natural state, was fully appreciated, it was also a common practice to paint all the woodwork, carving and all, white or some colour such as grey, greenish grey or blue green and occasionally to apply gilding to mouldings and portions of carving. This practice was especially common towards the end of the century.

Doorways, and very often window casings, were made the objects of decorative wood carving: fluted pilasters with carved capitals, heavy cornices with carved mouldings, overdoor embellishments of an architectural character or panels with carved drops and swags were much used. The overmantel or chimney piece was even to a greater degree the object of careful decorative elaboration. The fireplace surround, with bold bolection mouldings, was sometimes of wood, sometimes of stone or marble. There was no mantel shelf and the chimney piece, reaching all the way to the

ceiling, consisted either of a distinctly architectural treatment in classic and Renaissance *motifs,* sometimes with Baroque features also, or else of a large panel surrounded with heavy mouldings and flanked and surmounted with carved flower, fruit and foliage swags and drops in the characteristic Grinling Gibbon manner. In many instances either a portrait or else a decorative still life painting would be framed in the panel. This empanelling of portraits was not confined to the chimney piece, but was likewise practised to some extent for the walls. Toward the end of the century painted panels for overdoor adornment, too, came into favour and now and again decorative niches with coved or shell tops, for urns, vases or sculpture, were introduced into the panelled walls when there was a good opportunity for such symmetrical composition. Another feature of fixed wall decoration also frequently resorted to towards the end of the century was the setting of mirrors into wall and door panels, a device now made readily possible in England, as well as the employment of larger panes for glazing windows, by the establishment of glass works at Lambeth under the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham.

Just as the panelling of the walls had been proportioned and varied in size, according to the space to be filled (Plates 6, 7 and 8), so also was the ceiling space treated with one consistent and sufficient design (Plates 6 and 137) calculated to satisfy the whole area. Cornice, corner and centre ornaments were conceived in one mode and proportioned to the scale of the room. The devices used were ropes and garlands of laurel, flowers and fruit in bold relief cast in plaster as distinguished from the old *stucco-duro* work and the parge work that succeeded it, in which latter the relief or ribbing and flower pats were comparatively low (Plate 3),

the designs being worked in the raw *parge* or plaster *in situ.* Colour and gilding were in many instances added to this cast plaster decoration. Decorative paintings also often occurred in the flat surfaces.

While most of the floors were of well-joined boards without ornamental device, the practice was not uncommon, in the more elegant houses, of inlaying or parquetting the floors in patterns wrought in different coloured woods. In her diary, Celia Fiennes alludes to the floor in a cedar room, of the Restoration period, "inlayed with cyphers and the coronet." Geometrical patterns in divers coloured woods were likewise used, "often radiating from a star in the centre of the room." To some such design Evelyn evidently refers in his Diary in an entry anent the Duke of Norfolk's "new palace at Weybridge" when he notes that "the roomes were wainscotted and some of them parquetted with cedar, yew, cypresse, etc." He also notes of another house that "one of the closets is parquetted with plain deal set in diamond exceeding staunch and pretty."

Furniture and Decoration.—During the sixteenth century and the early part of the seventeenth the articles of furniture in common use were somewhat restricted in number. Chests of all sizes and of all degrees of ornamentation were to be found everywhere and may be regarded as the standard mobiliary unit of the period. It was not until the early days of the Stuarts that tables became really common; prior to that time long boards on trestles often served in lieu of the long, narrow refectory tables with heavy legs, underframing and stretchers close to the ground. The wall furniture comprised hanging cupboards, credences or buffets (Plate 136) and hutches in the earlier days and, in the greater houses, there were often cabinets

of more or less elaboration in the matter of carving. Bedsteads with heavy carved posts supporting cumbrous panelled and carved tops were the most imposing items of mobiliary equipment. The seating furniture consisted mainly of backless benches or forms and joint stools. Chairs, most commonly with arms, panelled backs and carved cresting, were few in number and usually reserved for the heads of families or for guests of honour. It was not until the fore part of the seventeenth century, during the reigns of James I and Charles I, that there was much variety in the kinds of pieces in general use or that houses were furnished in at all an adequate manner according to our notions. Both in the time of Queen Elizabeth and also through the reigns of the first two Stuarts and the Commonwealth period the furniture, almost without exception, was heavy in structure, robust in its proportions and rectilinear in contour, in all of these respects coinciding very fully with the architectural background (Plate 136). So universally was this the case that the mobiliary creations of the period have been not inappropriately referred to as being, for the most part, a kind of movable architecture. While the paragraphs immediately following are to be understood as applying mainly to the furniture of the first sixty years of the seventeenth century, they may be taken as applying also to the furniture of the sixteenth century so far as the pieces therein discussed existed during the earlier period. It is, however, necessary to remember that certain items of decorative detail and ornamentation that had been characteristic in the time of Queen Elizabeth either almost or entirely disappeared very early in the reign of King James. Such an item of difference, for example, was the "Romayne work." This consisted of human heads carved in relief on roundels

or medallions and was popular in the sixteenth century but virtually disappeared at the beginning of the seventeenth. Human figures in ornamentation also dropped almost completely out of fashion.

The pieces of furniture in common use during the reigns of James I and Charles I and the period of the Commonwealth were cupboards of various sorts, cabinets, buffets and dressers, chests, hutches, bedsteads, day-beds, tables of many varieties the most characteristic of which, perhaps, were the long narrow refectory tables, settles and settees, chairs both with and without arms, forms or backless benches, joint stools and footstools. The wood of which these pieces were made was almost invariably oak, although other less durable woods were occasionally used for furniture in humbler houses. The decoration consisted of carving, panelling, inlay or marqueterie, painting and, towards the middle of the century, the application of turned ornaments such as oval bosses, lozenges, split balusters and maces, and the formation of intricate geometrical panels by means of applied mouldings.

Carving of several sorts was used (v. pp. 55 and 56, "Practical Book of Period Furniture": Eberlein & McClure), but the most usual kind was in low but strong relief, often on a sunk ground. The *motifs* included strapwork, diaperwork, *guilloche* patterns, lunettes, tulips, hearts, roses and rosettes, acanthus leaves, foliated and floriated scrolls, grapevines with fruit and leaves, gadrooning, channelling, reeding, fluting, nulling, lozenges, laurelling, palmated chains, pomegranates, notching, "jewelling," geometrical designs and similar devices, all of which were practically echoes of the *motifs* employed in connexion with the panelling or in the embellishment of one or another part of the fixed woodwork.

The inlay or marqueterie of divers coloured woods and bone was of simple but effective execution and generally showed an adaptation of some of the *motifs* already mentioned. The aid of colour was more frequently resorted to than many imagine. The carved headboards and panelled canopies of the bedsteads were often enriched with heraldic blasonings and the same form of ornamentation was also applied in other places. There was comparatively little upholstered furniture and such as there was in the early part of the century may usually be traced to a Continental origin; after the principles of the Commonwealth had swept aside tradition regarding the use of chairs and they had become plentiful, we find both seats and backs frequently covered with either leather or "Turkey work." For a full discussion of all the furniture during the first sixty years of the seventeenth century, the reader is referred to Chapter II, "Practical Book of Period Furniture": Eberlein & McClure.

With the access of new and varied influences attending the Restoration and profoundly affecting cultural conditions during the rest of the century, there was not only a vast growth in the taste for luxurious and ample household furnishings but also a perceptible increase in the kinds of articles that came into common use. While the furniture of former days continued in use along with the newer types in a majority of the houses, and while the former styles continued to be copied in country districts, the new modes exercised a far-reaching and modifying effect, completely transformed and enriched the average interior where they had been adopted along with the substantial residuum of earlier equipment, and in houses where only *le dernier cri* of fashion was heeded to the exclusion of all previous vogue—as in the establishments of some of

the king's mistresses—produced a revolution in the art of interior decoration.

In addition to the tale of articles previously set forth as usual items of equipment, we must now mention chests of drawers on stands, highboys and lowboys, cabinets with doors on high stands, Chinese lacquered cabinets, with or without doors, on carved stands, chests of drawers without stands, desks or bureaux, bureau bookcases, presses, bookcases, mirrors, tall case clocks and a great assortment of small tables for one special purpose or another. In the matter of contour, we may note that while the old rectilinear principle continued to be strongly felt, the curvilinear influence made its appearance and rapidly gained favour. This curvilinear influence manifested itself plainly in Baroque tendencies and we have such plentiful examples as scrolled legs, hooded tops to cabinet work, curved contours of chair backs in the Portuguese fashion and the beginnings of cabriole leg dominance.

The decorative processes employed included carving, painting and gilding or parcel gilding, veneering, inlay and marqueterie and lacquering. The vogue for lacquered furniture became a positive passion and not only did the importation of numerous Oriental pieces indicate a potent infusion of "the Chinese taste" in interior decoration, but the rage for this species of polychrome embellishment led amateurs to engage extensively in the process and the results of their endeavours often achieved an high degree of excellence. The style of carving that now came into fashion was realistic and wholly different from the methods that had previously prevailed. Much elaborately carved or turned furniture was made of pine, lime, beech, birch and other soft woods and then painted and parcel gilt or wholly gilded. The art of veneering was developed

to an extent hitherto unknown and produced admirable results in whose composition were considered not only the pleasing effects to be gained from the contrasting colours of different woods but also the divers agreeable effects of grain and the pattern employed. Akin to veneering, but involving greater scope for the exercise of decorative design and the properties of multi-coloured woods, was the process of marqueterie which, in England, reached the high-water mark of its most skillful expression towards the end of the century. The value of upholstery as a decorative accessory was now fully understood and a great many chairs, settees and stools were covered with needlework of *gros point* and *petit point,* with velvets and brocades, with silks and even with printed linens and chintzes.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—In no country has skillful needlework ever commanded more sincere admiration or counted a greater number of proficient devotees than in England. It is not surprising, therefore, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to learn of the high esteem in which the decorative products of the loom and of the embroidery frame were held and of the extent to which they were utilised in the adornment of houses. Allusion has already been made to the 2600 tapestries which Henry VIII had in his possession. Nor was he by any means alone as a collector. England was always regarded as a good market for Continental tapestries and an enormous number crossed the Channel to be hung up in English halls and bring brilliant colour into sombre oak-panelled rooms. During the reign of James I the Mortlake looms were set up and the exportation of English-made tapestries from the island was several times forbidden.

Besides numerous tapestries a great many other

hangings were used to liven the walls; velvets with *appliqué* devices, embroideries, and large pieces of the curious multi-coloured zig-zag needlework which we are accutsomed to associate with upholstered seats and chair backs rather than with the adornment of walls. When we remember that needlework was one of the principal occupations of ladies of position and quality, we can more readily understand the abundance of this sort of decoration. Besides the hangings for doors and windows, which were often enriched with embroidery, there were the bed hangings and bedspreads by which so much store was set that they were specifically bequeathed by will as important items of inheritance. These hangings and spreads were not only made of costly material, but were enriched with the most lavish and exquisite needlework as well. In the simpler rooms window hangings and bed hangings were occasionally of printed linen with striking patterns and brilliant colouring.

In addition to the woven and embroidered hangings that decked the walls of oak-panelled rooms, another resource for polychrome decoration was to be found in the stamped, tooled, coloured and sometimes gilded leather that was hung or else fastened tight upon the wall surface. Other wall adornments no less effective were portraits and occasionally other paintings. When neither paintings nor hangings graced the wall, the surface was oftentimes relieved by antlers, heads, fox masques and other trophies of the chase.

Of course, there were numerous small accessories such as candlesticks, sconces, candelabra, and fire dogs, the last named of which were often large and of imposing design. Besides these, such objects as silver and pewter tankards, bowls and platters, pieces of brass and copper, the small brass fireside ornaments and

fittings and brass bracket clocks lent welcome spots of interest and lustre.

While many of the floors were strewn with rushes, especially in the fore part of the period under consideration, it was not at all unusual to have rugs made of rushes woven by hand. In the wealthier houses Oriental rugs were by no means unknown.

After the Restoration curtains and draperies assumed an importance in the scheme of furnishing (Plate 1) previously unknown in England. The most splendid fabrics imported from Venice and Genoa, and afterwards made in England, were used for this purpose. Curiously enough, although the Mortlake looms continued in operation during the Restoration period and tapestries were still imported from the Continent, the vogue for this particular sort of wall decoration somewhat languished and abated in use and manufacture, in large measure, no doubt, owing to the new styles of decoration by means of more pretentious panelling, the use of niches, and the inserting of decorative paintings as panels and overdoor embellishments—a change for which Wren and his school were to a great extent responsible. Bed hangings and bedspreads maintained their wonted hold on public taste. Linens and calicoes printed in gay colours and fascinating designs, many of them of Oriental origin, took the place of the more expensive fabrics for draperies and hangings in rooms of simpler equipment.

Mention has already been made of the use of mirrors set in the panelling as a means of wall decoration. Mirrors in wonderfully wrought frames were no less esteemed as an effective factor in furnishing elegantly. Since the establishment of glass works at Lambeth and Greenwich it had become possible to obtain the best glass and of a much larger size than formerly and English decorators were not slow to avail themselves of

this new resource. Some of the mirror frames were made of coloured, bevelled and engraved glass and were exceedingly rich in appearance. This glass of excellent quality was also turned to account in making large, cut lustres or crystals for the admirably designed chandeliers and sconces that now became common. Other chandeliers were made of brass, of iron embellished with colour and gilding and of wood painted and parcel gilt.

Paintings, both portraits and pictures of a decorative character, afforded a constantly used resource. And to all this rich array, we must add the colour and grace of form conveyed by the Oriental porcelains the collection of which had become not only a fashionable hobby but an absolute passion among the people at large. Here, again, the power of Chinoiserie showed itself plainly in the history of decoration. The Dutch were not slow to emulate the Chinese and their Delft soon came to hold nearly as high a place in the esteem of English people. What with porcelains, lacquer and other odds and ends of Eastern luxuries that constantly found their way into England, Oriental influence made a deep impression on the modes of the period.

Materials and Colour.—Up to the end of the Commonwealth period oak had been the staple wood of England for all purposes architectural and mobiliary, although, of course, there were plenty of occasional departures from this precedent and exceptions to the rule. Nevertheless, the period mentioned must be considered *par excellence* the "age of oak." About the time of the Restoration walnut came into popular use, being partly imported and partly derived from native sources which became plentifully available at this time. In addition to walnut, which may be considered the staple wood for fine furniture after the Restoration, other woods were employed for inlay and marqueterie purposes and oak

continued to have an accepted position, especially in country districts.

Owing to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and, to some extent, to a certain tide of immigration into England before that event, great numbers of silk workers came over from France and began to ply their craft in England. They soon made brocades and velvets the equals in gorgeous colour, graceful pattern and excellent texture of the fabrics that had previously been imported in vast quantities from Venice and Genoa.

Throughout the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the English colour sense was fresh and vigorous (Plate 1) and, despite the somewhat sombre hue of oak panelled walls, English interiors did not lack for colour and plenty of it. This passion for colour reached its culmination in the latter part of the seventeenth century, so that by 1700 the country was in a very riot of rich, virile, scintillating colour, a condition that was perfectly compatible with good taste because the massive, strong, and rather dark backgrounds of the architectural setting made such treatment not only permissible but absolutely necessary.

Arrangement.—During the earlier part of this period the architectural arrangement was rather fortuitous than formal, and the arrangement of the furniture units was much the same. The units themselves were not overly numerous, so that it was not difficult to place the important pieces in the broad spaces where they would be most effective. The fireplace, of course, was always a centre about which a number of movables would naturally be grouped.

In the latter part of the seventeenth century furniture items were far more numerous and notions of symmetrical arrangement, brought back by the refugees, imparted to the rooms an aspect of orderly and balanced composition.

CHAPTER II

INTERIOR DECORATION IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND THE FIRST THREE DECADES OF THE NINETEENTH

INTRODUCTION.—In England and America, the eighteenth century and the first three decades of the nineteenth, which really belong to the preceding century through stylistic affinities and as a directly logical outcome of influences well under way before the year 1800, constitute a period of the greatest complexity as well as of the greatest interest. It will be understood that what is said in this chapter applies to the American Colonies and the infant republic, after its severance from the Mother Country, as well as to England. But it must also be distinctly understood that all the evolutions of the styles considered reached their full and richest fruition only in England and that they were reflected in America in less elaborate renderings. This statement does not mean to asperse in the slightest degree the culture or taste on our own side of the Atlantic, but the estates that were able to support the expense of the highest decorative achievements of the age were comparatively few in number, and although there were not wanting instances of the greatest elegance and most lavish expenditure in furnishing of various town houses in Philadelphia, in Boston, in Charleston and New York, and of some country houses in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina, the majority of people, from force of circumstances, were obliged to be content with the simpler

though not less admirable interpretation of modes that attained an hitherto unparallelled development in the British Isles.

At the very beginning of the eighteenth century we have the heritage of Baroque inspiration remaining over from the seventeenth century. Following close upon it came the severe and somewhat heavy classicism of which Kent was the chiefest and most able exponent. With the middle of the century we find an utterly new influence that was expressed in England by the Brothers Adam and those that followed in their wake, and in France, a little later, by the architects and designers who imparted to the style we know familiarly as "Louis Seize" its peculiar grace and refinement.

The Adam influence was of classic derivation as was also the heavier scheme of interpretation practised by the Kentian school, but it expressed classicism in its more attenuated and refined forms and laid emphasis, as a rule, rather upon the elegancies of decoration than upon the bold masses and the marshalling of vigorous structural or semi-structural members by way of embellishment. Adam delicacy, in turn, was in course of time supplanted by the robust and often severe forms of the Classic Revival, in which the sterner Greek modes and the more heroic Roman phases that at times savoured of bombast were stressed with insistence.

Besides all these well-defined influences, there was "the Chinese taste," which recurred again and again in one form or another throughout the century, adding its charm to the manifold factors that contributed to make the eighteenth century one of the most opulent as well as varied decorative epochs in English history.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—One fact of tremendous importance in the art of interior decoration has already been noted in

PLATE 7

EARLY GEORGIAN ROOM WITH PANELLED AND PAINTED WALLS
Removed from Norfolk, England
Composite English Furniture, Queen Anne Mirror
By Courtesy of Messrs. Litchfield & Co., London

the Foreword, but too much stress cannot be laid upon it, and we therefore repeat it here. That fact is that *interior decoration does not consist merely of selection and arrangement of movable furniture and garnishings; the architectural background and the fixed decorations are every whit as vitally essential to a successful and complete composition,* and it is impossible to attach too much emphasis to this truth, a truth that some professional decorators too often minimise while not a few amateurs are even more prone to ignore it. In Part III special attention is paid to the treatment of plain walls where the occupancy of rented quarters, apartments and the like makes it impracticable to effect far-reaching structural changes in the background. In the paragraphs that follow, special attention will be devoted to an analysis of backgrounds and fixed decorations.

The opening years of the eighteenth century witnessed virtually the same features of interior architecture as were in vogue during the last years of the seventeenth century, features of which, however, we shall now give a somewhat more detailed description. There were spacious, high-ceilinged rooms, symmetrically designed with window and door openings so disposed as to contribute to the air of regularity. The window openings were large and high, while their trims were often made the objects of formal ornamentation. Doorways also shared a distinctly decorative and usually architectural treatment, traces of Baroque influence being more or less discernible in such features as continuous segmental pediments or interrupted pediments with urns. (Plate 7.)

The panels of the walls were large (Plates 7 and 8) and were often bounded by boldly profiled (Plate 138) bolection mouldings. In size the panels were graduated

according to the parts of the room; shallow and broad panels would be placed between door or window heads and the cornice, tall and narrow panels between windows, a single panel for the chimney piece (Plate 137), whatever its dimensions and shape might be, while the ordinary wall panels were of generous proportions. Elaborate naturalistic carving of foliage, fruits, flowers and figures in swags and drops (Plate 137), wrought in high relief or undercut in the manner of Grinling Gibbon, were still used and were supplemented in many instances by sundry supporting architectural scrolls and by conventional *motifs* in low relief, such as acanthus foliage on a cyma moulding (Plate 6), classic laurelling, and all their well-known affinities.

Very fully developed and elaborate cornices adorned such rooms, and the plaster coves and ceilings, wrought with the utmost dexterity of the plasterer's art, echoed the flowers, fruit, foliage (Plate 137) and figures to be seen in the decorative wood carving. The floors, while usually of plain boards, not infrequently exhibited parquetted patterns, in the manner already mentioned in the preceding chapter, or else a device in chequered tiles of stone or marble.

It is safe to say that there was never a time when interior architectural woodwork was carried to an higher point of development or displayed more admirable characteristics. Even in the simpler houses, where three of the walls of a room would ordinarily be plastered, there was almost invariably some well-proportioned panelling above the fireplace or even covering a greater part of the whole of the wall on that side of the room. For many of the elaborately carved and panelled interiors, the wood used was oak, cedar, deal or pine. The oak and cedar were left unpainted; deal was sometimes merely waxed, or slightly stained and waxed,

and sometimes painted; while pine was ordinarily painted, although not invariably, and, when left in its natural state, assumed a mellow golden brown tone from the action of the atmosphere. In at least one instance known to the authors, the panelling of a late seventeenth century house in Pennsylvania, belonging architecturally, however, to the category under discussion, consisted of pine and poplar together. Neither paint nor stain of any kind were ever used upon it and all of the wood took on a rich ginger brown hue of great beauty.

When the panelling was painted, white, which was much favoured in Holland at the time, was sometimes used, but by no means so universally as many people seem to imagine. Grey, grey green, buff, brown, pale yellow, blue, green and green blues of great beauty were in common use and imparted a richness and warmth that strongly commend a wider employment of similar treatments at the present day. These painted interiors were very commonly further embellished with gilding applied to mouldings and carving.*

In the latter part of the seventeenth century, as previously stated, the taste for lacquer became a positive passion. Much lacquer was imported from the East, but the importations could not begin to supply the demand; much furniture was lacquered both by artisans and by amateurs, who regarded skill in this direction

* At Graeme Park, Horsham, Pennsylvania, for instance, the home of Sir William Keith, the first coat of paint given the woodwork was a greenish grey, and no other colour has ever since adorned the panelling and the door and window trims. At Stenton, Northern Liberties, in Philadelphia, the home of James Logan, on the other hand, "the taste of the occupants dictated a change of colour from time to time and we find a good deal of variety in the successive coats" of paint. For these instances and other observations anent the practice in America *v.* "The Architecture of Colonial America," p. 149: Harold Donaldson Eberlein; Little, Brown & Co., Boston, 1915. See also "Architectural Record," *passim.*

as an eligible and polite accomplishment. The vogue for lacquer endured throughout the reign of Queen Anne and even lasted for some time afterwards. What with the universal admiration for lacquer in an especially colour-loving epoch, and the very considerable proficiency in lacquer processes attained by British craftsmen, it is not surprising to find lacquered decoration occasionally extended to the fixed woodwork in rooms and not reserved solely as a method of mobiliary embellishment. It is worth noting that this architectural employment of lacquer has been revived in a few instances and on a limited scale in our own time, with admirable results.

In the more sumptuous interiors of this type, the fireplace surrounds and facings were of carefully chosen marble or stone, while in the simpler interiors the surrounds were of wood and the facings frequently of glazed tiles, sometimes plain, but more usually of Delft make with monochrome blue or rose devices or else with polychrome decorations. The surround commonly consisted of a bold bolection moulding and there was generally no mantel shelf or else only a very narrow one.

The fixed decorations were rich and adequate. There were mirrors empanelled in the walls or set in the doors, decorative paintings set in panels over doorways, in chimney pieces and in central positions on the sides of walls. There were cupboards (Plate 7) built into the woodwork, usually in corners, with coved tops carefully scalloped and enriched with carving and sometimes parcel gilt, or with smooth surfaces in the coving covered with decorative painting. Coves and the flat surfaces of ceilings, likewise, in addition to the rich cast plaster reliefs, were often adorned with paintings.

When the walls were not fully panelled, they were

PLATE 8

BED CHAMBER IN QUEEN ANNE MODE WITH PANELLED PAINTED WALLS
Courtesy of Mrs. Lyman W. Kendall

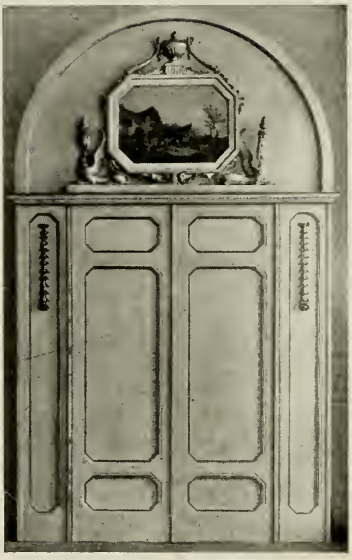
PLATE 9

DINING ROOM OF GEORGIAN TYPE WITH HEPPLEWHITE FURNITURE AND ADAM SIDEBOARD
Panelled Walls Painted a Grey Green
Courtesy of Edward Browning, Esq.

PLATE 10

THE BANQUETTING ROOM, CROOME COURT, WORCESTERSHIRE, BY ROBERT ADAM
Characteristic Wall and Ceiling Treatment
From "Robert Adam and His Brothers," by Courtesy of B. T. Batsford, Ltd.

PLATE 11



ADAM DOOR AND OVER DOOR DECORATION

Courtesy of Mr. Karl Freund

sometimes painted, sometimes covered with wall paper in highly decorative and bright-coloured patterns, and sometimes hung with rich fabrics tacked tightly in place. Occasionally the panels of the doors themselves were embellished with mirrors or with decorative paintings.

Sconces, lanthorns and chandeliers of varied forms in plain brass, in wrought-iron painted and parcel gilt, in wood richly carved and gilt or painted and parcel gilt, and in brass or cut glass profusely hung with crystals added greatly to the rich effect of the permanent background.

Such were the possibilities and characteristics of the fixed architectural interior settings during the reign of Queen Anne and in the years immediately following her demise.

Early in the Georgian period, under the influence of such men as James Gibbs, Sir John Vanbrugh, Sir William Chambers and, above all, Sir William Kent, there was a clearly marked departure from the freedom and flexibility of architectural and decorative interpretation, as practised by Sir Christopher Wren and his immediate school, and a reversion to what was fancied to be a purer and more scholarly presentation of classic principles as set forth by the great architectural exponents of the Italian Renaissance. For this reason the work of Inigo Jones evoked a renewed measure of praise and admiration but, quite apart from any enthusiasm for the achievements of earlier Engish architects, the men of the day, one and all, placed themselves at the feet of Vitruvius, Vignola and Palladio and followed the precepts of these great men of the past with the most meticulous and sometimes simian precision. To the votaries of the new school Palladio was especially dear and they so generally accepted him as their standard and so glorified his work and precepts that

they " raised him in their time almost to the position of a demigod." Actuated as they were by this narrow and almost fanatical admiration for merely one individual's explication of classicism, it is scarcely to be wondered at that they were "unreasonably prejudiced against the work of the Wren period by the discovery that, although classic in principle, the rules laid down by the great architects of the Italian Renaissance had by no means been strictly adhered to." This attitude, quite apart from any other agency, explains in large measure "the prejudice that existed against Sir Christopher at the close of his brilliant career and the exaltation of the earlier work of Inigo Jones." Wren had both displayed a perceptible tinge of French influence and also shown not a little personal independence in his interpretations, and this damned him in the eyes of the early Georgian purists who "accepted so fervently the principles of Italian classicism as the only form of true culture that all buildings which exhibited variations were regarded by them as beneath notice or consideration." In their zeal of archæological solicitude—to quote Sir Horace Walpole, architecture had "resumed all her rights" and buildings were designed "in the purest style of antique composition"—they often produced work that savoured of pedantry and missed the spontaneous inspiration and elastic quality necessary to give it the vital significance of an understanding contemporary expression.

At the same time, while the spirit of classic purism was dominant, there were numerous successful and acceptable adventures into the realm of Baroque design, as witnessed, for instance, by some of the creations of James Gibbs, but it was restrained and chastened Baroque, conceived and executed in the light of classic severity. Notwithstanding the rigidity of ideals and

the conscientious exactitude with which the foremost architects held themselves to precedent, a great proportion of the early Georgian work possessed merit of an high order and exhibited both dignity and charm. It is an enduring memorial to the skill and good taste of the designers and also equally a striking testimony to the intelligence and appreciation of a clientele that made possible the realisation of such designs. It was, indeed, a golden age of appreciative interest and liberal patronage on the part of wealthy laymen in the persons of the great nobles and landed gentry, who found that the "court of the first two Georges offered" them few attractions and that there was little "scope for competion in politics during the long and all-powerful sway of Walpole." Furthermore, in the entire absence of foreign hostilities, there were no openings for gaining distinction in military or naval careers and, consequently, "it would seem that numbers of these great nobles and men of leisure embraced the study of art as the principal occupation of their lives. The particular branch of art which interested them most keenly was the pure classic architecture of Ancient Rome," and their extensive diversions in this field of research rendered them both capable critics and enthusiastic patrons.

The interiors of the great houses then erected displayed a sense of architectural composition that has never been surpassed in English domestic building and even the less pretentious dwellings of the period clearly reflected the prevailing sense of symmetry and architectural amenity that had permeated all ranks of society. So thoroughly had Palladianism and a feeling for elegant proportions taken hold of the popular imagination that they may truly be said to have become endemic among English-speaking people of that day.

Both inside and out, houses were planned to convey the impression of symmetrical balance and the same care for symmetrical composition was observed in the treatment of the individual rooms, which were, as a rule, approximately square and high-ceiled. Structural features, that is to say, doorways, windows and fireplaces, were symmetrically placed so as to emphasise the effect of balance (Plate 9) and were given such architectural adornment that they constituted an important item in the decoration of the room and to a great extent dominated the placing of the movable furnishings and determined their character.

The details were vigorous in line and classic in fashion—fluted pilasters with appropriate capitals, correct architectural entablatures, pediments of several types, accurately designed friezes and cornices and bold, well-considered mouldings. Doorways frequently were graced with superimposed pediments (Plate 7), either straight, or interrupted with a central urn or bust, and the same *motif* was apt to be echoed in the chimney piece which extended all the way or almost all the way to the ceiling. When there was no pediment above the doorway, the note of decorous architectural formality was often sustained by a fitly conceived panel with suitable embellishments. The overmantel panel with its imposing architectural setting was made a central feature for the reception of a portrait (Plate 7) or a decorative painting or, when the chimney piece was less structurally elaborate, a mirror in a frame of strongly architectural design, perhaps with the additional decoration of a painting in the head or in side panels, might be placed directly above the mantel shelf. The mantel-piece itself was of wood or of marble (Plates 7 and 137), often elaborately carved with devices inspired by designs of classic provenance pourtrayed in the

works of the Renaissance exponents of Greek and Roman antiquity.

About the middle of the century, under the influence of Sir William Chambers, the elaborate chimney piece, reaching nearly to the ceiling, which had received the sanction and best efforts of previous architects, gradually fell into disfavour and gave place to a newer mode of Continental fashion (Plate 9).

"When he [Sir William Chambers] returned to England in 1755 [from the Continent], he was accompanied by Wilton and Cipriani, afterwards so well known as an artist and decorator. He also brought Italian sculptors to carve the marble mantel-pieces he introduced into English houses.

These were made from his own designs, and the ornament of figures, scrolls and foliage was free in character. Strange to say, these mantel-pieces, designed and made by an architect, were yet the means of taking away this important part of interior decoration from the hands of the architect altogether and causing it to become quite a separate production, made and sold along with the grates.

In former times it had been an integrant portion of the room, reaching from floor to ceiling, balanced and made part of the wall by having its main lines carried round in panelling and enriched friezes. It was the keynote of decoration, and the master builder of the times grew fanciful and exerted his utmost skill upon its carving and quaint imagery, centralising the whole ornament of the room around the household shrine.

Mantel-pieces had gradually come down in height, though still retaining much of their finer proportions and classic design. Many causes had contributed to this, the chief being the disuse of wood panelling and the preference given to hangings of damask, foreign leather and wall-paper. In the reigns of Queen Anne and the Little Dutchman the custom of panelling was partially kept up. . . . At this time the upper half of the chimney piece was still retained, but only reached

about half way up the wall [in many instances]. Gibbs, Kent, and Ware kept the superstructure as much as they could, but Sir William Chambers dealt it the most crushing blow it had yet received by copying the later French and Italian styles and giving minute detail more consideration than fine proportion. He discarded the upper part altogether and helped to make 'continued chimney pieces' things of the past."—(*Warren Clouston's "Treatise on Chippendale."*)

Window trims, while vigorously designed, were comparatively plain and nearly all of the carved and moulded architectural enrichment was bestowed upon the overdoor decorations, cornices and friezes and, up to the time of Chambers, the chimney piece. The window openings were tall and sufficiently wide and were often somewhat recessed with carefully panelled jambs and soffits. The sashes themselves had heavy muntins and the rectangular panes were the same size or slightly larger than those in use during the Queen Anne period.

During much of the early Georgian era the walls continued to be fully panelled with large panels (Plate 9), frequently of the bevel flush type (Plate 7), separated by broad stiles and rails with thumbnail mouldings. Very often a moulded chair rail separated the base panelling from the upper panels. The panels were generally of a uniform size, but were graduated to the exigencies of space when there was occasion. Cupboards and buffets, and occasionally niches with coved and scalloped tops, continued in many instances to be built into the panelling at appropriate places and were generally given an additional enrichment of intricately wrought mouldings and other carving of a character to correspond with the ornate cornices that not infrequently exhibited a wealth of carved foliation, egg and dart *motifs* or similar devices. It will thus be seen that the carved and panelled woodwork was an highly im-

portant item in the decoration of an early Georgian room (Plates 7 and 137).

The ceilings, though sometimes comparatively plain, were also occasionally embellished with lavish foliated and floriated bands and mouldings and other designs, wrought with all the dexterity of which the highly skilled plaster craftsmen were capable. On such ceilings colour and gilding were likewise wont to play an important part. When the walls were not fully panelled—the abandonment of full panelling, as already noted, became more common as the century advanced—they were apt to be covered with rich fabrics, wall-paper or, sometimes, with fine leather appropriately decorated.

It is most important, in our process of visualising the panelled rooms of the early Georgian period, to bear in mind that the use of unpainted woodwork was abandoned comparatively early in the century. We have seen that the earlier architects and decorators, when they did use paint as a variant to the deal, pine, cedar, oak or walnut panelling, did not confine themselves to white or cream white, as people sometimes fancy, but resorted very frequently to colours such as those already mentioned. In the early Georgian epoch, while not eschewing white—white, it is true, was more commonly used in the American Colonies than colours—they quite as often or oftener employed full-bodied tones of cream, cream yellow, green, blue green, drab and brown and these tones contributed materially to give the appearance of richness and "comfort for which the rooms of the period are noted. Frequently additional grandeur was obtained by gilding or partly gilding some of the carving."

In addition to the fixed decoration supplied by the rich woodwork, the stately chimney pieces and the plas-

ter adornment of the ceilings, decorative paintings were often incorporated in the scheme where a suitable overdoor or other similar space invited their employment, mirrors were permanently affixed in suitable positions and choice specimens of sculpture were placed in niches especially provided for them or upon pedestals where their presence would contribute to the general aspect of balanced dignity and elegance.

While surveying this particular period of eighteenth century decoration, we must not fail to take due note of two influences that marked a wide and striking departure from the prevailing Palladianism—the "Chinese Taste," fostered by Sir William Chambers, and a fanciful pseudo-Gothic manifestation largely abetted by Sir Horace Walpole. The former movement coincided with and gave especial emphasis to one of the periodic recrudescences of unusual interest in things Oriental whose recurrence in the history of English and Continental decoration afforded an agreeable and inspiring note of variety and gave rise to many features of permanent worth; the latter movement was not happy in its conception, was taken up as a fad by *dilettanti* who were not in sympathy with the Gothic spirit and did not really understand it, and produced no results of lasting importance. The Chinese work of Sir William Chambers, and of those who imitated or emulated his endeavours, was in the main performed in an honest and legitimate manner, created an interesting and not unwelcome relief to the predominant classicism of the period, and extended its application to movable equipment as well as to fixed decoration. The Gothic work of the day was palpably a piece of affectation and even, at times, grotesque in its forms and we may be thankful that its ephemeral course left no momentous traces behind it.

Shortly after the middle of the eighteenth century,

an entirely new architectural influence became paramount and as the introduction of this influence was due almost wholly to the Brothers Adam, and as they and their contemporaries and imitators were its accredited exponents, we shall be justified in calling the second half of the century, and, indeed, the first decade of the nineteenth, the Adam Age. Impelled by their extended studies of classic art and architecture at fountain head, and realising clearly what their architectural predecessors in England had completely failed to realise—that classic precedents were susceptible of a far wider and more elastic interpretation than had hitherto been given them, that architecture and the decorative arts in the golden ages of Greek and Roman development had not been straitly confined by an unalterably rigid set of rules and interpretative conventions whose authoritative exposition was to be found only in the works of Vitruvius, Vignola and the other dogmatists to whom Kent and his school had tightly pinned their faith, and that classicism, without being adulterated or distorted and robbed of its fundamental genius, was susceptible of a previously undreamed of urbanity, refinement and even playful exuberance of expression—the Adelphi proceeded to refine, enrich, revivify and even revolutionise the architectural and decorative conceptions of their day and generation. They not only introduced the epoch-marking notes of attenuation and slender grace, along with a more exuberant, lively, diversified and elegant system of decorative *motifs,* all derived, however, from classic precedent, but, at the same time, they also showed how classic architectural interpretation could be thoroughly domestic, intimate and lively in tone as well as ponderous and monumental. When they began to practise, domestic architecture in England had fallen somewhat into a groove and was in

danger of becoming narrow, rigid and pedantic. Without sacrificing any principles of classicism, they rendered it human, infinitely more interesting, and elastic in scope.

The Adelphi were no less formal in their modes of expression than their predecessors, but their formality was vastly more varied, richer and intensely genial. There was a *finesse* and a polish about their conceptions that fully accorded with the spirit of the day, a period which someone has aptly termed the "age of the drawing-room." Indeed, they may be regarded as in no small degree responsible for the creation of that spirit. One of the eminently pleasing forms in which their humanised formality found a fresh outlet was in the varied shapes of the rooms frequently introduced into their compositions. Hitherto, although rooms were designed with a due regard for satisfying symmetry in their proportions, they were habitually rectangular in shape. Not content with confining themselves to the monotonous convention of rectangularity, the Brothers Adam made the very shapes of their rooms fulfill a decorative purpose and frequently designed circular, semi-circular, octagonal, oval and elliptical apartments or rooms with semi-circular, arc-shaped, tribune or arcaded ends when they deemed that, by so doing, they could enhance the elegance, vivacity or interest of their creations. At the same time they made the ceilings (Plates 10 and 159) and floors enter into a comprehensive and inter-related scheme of decorative unity that had rarely before been equalled.

To a greater extent, perhaps, than had ever been done previously, they treated the walls of their more important rooms as architectural compositions (Plate 10), distinct and complete in themselves, with a due and ordered disposition of panels (Plate 10), pilasters, cap-

itals, pediments, friezes and cornices. All of these features were usually in low and rather flat projection so as to emphasise the sense of space and prevent them from seeming unduly obtrusive, unless the apartment was so large that it could easily stand a succession of bold projections without their becoming oppressive or destroying the aspect of spacious freedom. The decorative details, both upon these architectural members and upon the panelled or other intervening flat surfaces, were refined and delicate in scale and in low relief. Pilasters, pediments and other dominant projections were sometimes fashioned in carved wood, but more frequently were executed in plaster; the low relief wall panels and other ornamental details were almost invariably done in plaster or compo. Never before had the art of the plasterer or of the worker in compo been given so ample an opportunity to display its manifold possibilities and charms.

The panels, or successions of panels, were often covered with a complete and sufficient decorative design of airy arabesques, urns, pateræ and other *motifs* in low relief and the effect of this rich mural adornment was generally further enhanced by the use of a pale-coloured background in order to throw the raised work into sharp contrast. At other times the wall panels exhibited no plaster or compo relief but were painted, upon a solid body colour, with devices similar to those employed in the reliefs just mentioned.

Even with their plainer and less pretentious walls, on which there was no display of architectural features, decorative panels, either in relief or painted, were used to good effect and constituted a valuable item of fixed embellishment. On walls of a still less elaborate type—walls in the Adam mode varied from the utmost exuberance of detail to the opposite extreme of classic auster-

ity—countersunk panels and niches were introduced, either in conjunction or separately, and were so disposed that the most striking results were obtained from the agreeable alternation of light and shadow, for the Adelphi were masters in the management of this simple but often neglected and misapplied resource, as they also were in their handling of low relief. On the plainest walls, whose surfaces were unbroken by either projections or depressions, the rich and delicate detail of the cornice (Plate 69), along with the decoration of door and window trims, was skillfully manipulated to present an elegant contrast between concentrated ornament and foil. Wooden panelling entered little if at all into the interior decorative schemes of the Brothers Adam for they were too deeply imbued with the ideals they had formed during their travels and researches in classic lands to be much enamoured of this method of wall treatment, notwithstanding the great body of previous English precedent and the materials at their disposal. Instead of wooden panelling, they occasionally employed marble, but their methods of treating plaster were capable of such agreeable variety that there was little need to resort to other means of interior finish. In a great number of cases, especially with the plainer walls, a chair rail or moulding was carried around the room, thus creating the appearance of a base for the treatment above. In some instances, also, fabrics and wall-paper were used, but painted walls seem to have accorded more nearly with the spirit of Adam interior backgrounds. The system of colouring commonly employed will be more fully discussed in a subsequent section, but it seems advisable at this point to call attention to what an extent the *ensemble* of Adam interiors was dependent upon the light, delicate and often pale tones of the flat wall surfaces.

Decorative paintings of landscapes (Plate 159) and architectural subjects, in the Italian manner worthily represented in England by Cipriani and others of his fellow-countrymen who had heeded the invitation of the Adelphi, were plentifully used and were set either in countersunk panels or in flush panels surrounded with plaster or compo mouldings in the fashion of a frame. These panels were introduced with great frequency and in various shapes over (Plate 11) doorways, above fireplaces and wherever else decorative expediency dictated. Wedgwood plaques (Plate 159), with designs by Flaxman or Lady Templetown, were often made the central features of arabesque panels, and large plaster or Wedgwood medallions, with heads or with classic figures in low relief, frequently occurred either with an accompaniment of flowing arabesques to enrich a large wall or overmantel panel, or else in a severely chaste composition as the sole enrichment of one of the smaller countersunk panels already mentioned. Busts or other pieces of sculpture (Plate 10) were sometimes strikingly used for wall decoration and so placed that the shadow of a niche behind them supplied a most impressive background against which they were silhouetted.

Mirrors fulfilled an important function in the fixed decoration of many Adam rooms and were set above mantels, over consoles in symmetrical placings or sometimes in the panelling of doors, the gilded frames being designed to accord with the light and airy interpretations of classicism elsewhere in evidence. Not a few door heads contained semi-elliptical fan lights, filled with clear glass or with mirrors, and traversed with delicately moulded leaden tracery. The effect of these door heads was singularly rich and beautiful.

Mantel pieces, as might be expected, were the objects

of no less solicitous care (Plates 10 and 69) than was lavished upon all the other permanent accessories. They were of the finest white marble carved in the characteristic Adam *motifs,* consisting of urns, swags, drops, flutings and the like, sometimes with a central panel above the fireplace opening exhibiting a Flaxman or a Templetown design in low relief, and frequently yellow (Plate 69), buff, black or green Italian marbles were so combined as to throw the carved devices into conspicuous relief, or else the whole mantel structure was of wood carved in the same refined and delicate fashion or with the more intricate detail modelled in compo and applied to the wooden ground before painting. There were few architectural superstructures or attached and "continued" chimney pieces, as in the days of Kent, and the chimney breast above the mantel shelf was adorned with a mirror or in some one of the other ways previously indicated. For many of the fireplaces, grates of burnished steel or of brass were designed in a fashion to coincide with the rest of the decoration.

The woodwork of doors and of door and window trims (Plate 69) displayed refined mouldings of rather low relief and the same chaste and delicate decorative detail, sometimes elaborate, sometimes simple, as already noted in the wooden mantels and other permanent features. Straight door heads often carried a considerable degree of elaboration and occasionally central panels in the manner shown in Plate 69. The refining effect of flutings and of other close parallel lines was especially well exemplified in Adam woodwork. As the century advanced the size of window panes gradually increased and, although there was no approximation to the horrors of large sheets of glass with which we are now sometimes afflicted and which utterly de-

stroy the character of a window, the lights were perceptibly larger than they were during the first half of the century. The muntins, also, were appreciably pared down in dimensions. Wrought ironwork, while used chiefly in exterior embellishment, also often made its appearance in the composition of stair rails and balustrades and was fashioned in graceful, light and frequently attenuated devices to correspond with the interior *ensemble*.

The ceilings (Plates 10, 69 and 159), designed by the Brothers Adam were among the most beautiful and finished of all their exquisite compositions. The Adelphi not only had a goodly heritage of plaster tradition behind them in the work of English designers and artificers, but they also had constantly in their mind's eye the wonderful ceiling enrichments of the classic precedents upon which they drew so freely for inspiration. In the matter of physical execution they were able to avail themselves of the services of skilled plasterers, adepts in every minute detail of their craft, and also, in addition to this, they made extensive use of a newly perfected process of applying compo ornament in large moulded sections. The low reliefs, which the Adelphi knew how to employ with such marvellous effect upon walls, they used to no less advantage in the decoration of their ceilings. *Motifs* of the same description as those already noted were, of course, employed in ceiling treatment. Sometimes the ceilings were uncoloured, sometimes there was a pale ground colour to throw the low reliefs into sharp contrast, and sometimes whole surfaces were covered with painted panels or frescoes, polychrome enrichment and gilding. A great many of the ceilings were flat, but it was not uncommon to find them coved and still others domed and vaulted. Some of these vaulted and domed ceilings

were quite plain except for the ornamentation around the cornice and, we may add, were exceedingly beautiful and effective, one of their great merits being the perfection of their proportions. There was the same relative gradation between the elaboration of ceilings and the elaboration of walls, some of them being exceedingly ornate while others were quite simple, but even where the walls were almost devoid of ornamentation there was usually some attempt at more decorative amenity on the ceiling, especially if it was a flat ceiling and had not the interest of curving lines to fascinate the eye.

Floors were made of both wood and marble and a certain degree of restrained decoration was sometimes employed, but in most cases the floor was either regarded as a plain foundation for the rest of the composition or else intended to be carpeted so that a fixed decoration thereon would have been lost. The increasing vogue of full-sized carpets or rugs, both of which were often especially designed and woven for the rooms in which they were to be used, discouraged the elaborate ornamental parquetting of floors, a fashion that had obtained at an earlier date when large floor coverings were not so numerous.

A survey of the elements entering into the fixed decoration of Adam rooms, as indicated in the foregoing paragraphs, shows that a hitherto unprecedented degree of refinement and completeness had been attained—indeed, we may say that it has never since been excelled—and that punctilious care was bestowed upon the least as well as upon the greatest factors comprehended in a decorative scheme. That this thorough and painstaking care was contributory in a great degree to the success of the Brothers Adam in their domestic work we need hardly emphasise.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, although the architectural and decorative influence of the Adelphi was still strong and far-reaching and constituted a force to be reckoned with, other influences were beginning to creep in from France as a reflection of the Empire mode, a mode altogether heavier and less inspired than the creations of the Adam Brothers. Architecturally it may be termed the style of the "Greek Revival"; in mobiliary and decorative parlance we know it as the Empire mode. In England the process of architectural change at this time was not so clearly marked as in America. Architectural traditions were, perhaps, more firmly established or, at least, more widely established; and, in the second place, there was not the widespread building activity that occurred at the very end of the eighteenth century and in the first three decades of the nineteenth in the recently established republic, where population was rapidly increasing and where a great many men, rejoicing in a fresh burst of prosperity and new-found wealth, were erecting for themselves homes commensurate with their affluence. We might, indeed, say that in England the architectural change was chiefly to be observed in a gradual falling away from those vital and blithesome qualities that had distinguished the work of earlier days and a slipping into a more sombre, stolid and inelastic form of expression. It was as though both architecture and interior decoration were suffering from an incipient hardening of the arteries. Details grew heavier and more pompous, there was less variety in the forms employed, and the numerous enlivening devices of fixed decoration, that had so glorified and characterised the hey-day of Adam influence, one by one dropped out of fashion until we come to a full realisation of the archi-

tectural and decorative bathos in the prevailing vision of great rectangular rooms wth plain plaster walls, whose monotony was now and then relieved by a niche; door and window trims heavily detailed in severe and rather monumental Greek and Roman *motifs,* among which the key fret and the anthemion were conspicuous; plaster cornices echoing the same inspiration, heavy plaster ornaments to match around the edges and in the centres of ceilings; and plain, vigorously moulded black marble mantels without any fixed architectural adornment above them on the chimney breast, a place that seemed now to have become sacred either to a family portrait or else to a large mirror set in a heavy gilt frame. Altogether, it will be observed, the ground had become well prepared for the final plunge and slump into Victorian desolation, dullness and materialistic commercialism without a ray of imagination to lighten and redeem the benighted epoch.

In America, the Adam influence had borne ripe fruit and continued to make itself felt in a somewhat modified, but nevertheless beautiful, form through the work of such men as Samuel McIntire of Salem. Adam expression, however, had never attained the far-reaching spread that it had in England and in the very late eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth, when there was so much building to be done along the whole Atlantic seaboard, building both public and domestic, in order to keep pace with the access of a newly stimulated national expansion, and when, moreover, there was the greatest enthusiasm everywhere throughout the country for all things French, it is not surprising that the style which we know as the "Classic" or "Greek Revival," echoing the current phase of French architectural sentiment should have taken deep root and achieved a wide development, modified, it is true,

PLATE 12

From a photograph by J. E. H. Post

THE DINING ROOM AT "MT. AIRY"

From "Colonial Virginia: Its People and Customs," by Mary Newton Stanard
Eighteenth Century (late) Plain Walls as a Suitable Background for Paintings

by local conditions and necessities, but unmistakable in its parentage.

The interiors in this new evolution of domestic architecture were commonly characterised by a great deal of solid dignity and decorum, an impression materially assisted by the customarily spacious dimensions of the rooms, without much enlivening imagination or decorative resourcefulness to give to the *ensemble* that vitality that had always radiated from the background of a room conceived by the Brothers Adam or by the men who professedly followed their lead. The walls were plain, unrelieved expanses of smooth plaster (Plate 12) extending from baseboard to cornice and were either painted or tinted some pale, cool colour—grey, pearl, drab, buff, and a light green inherited from Adam usage, were in high favour—or else they were covered with wall-paper, usually of a very excellent quality and meant to last.

About the end of the eighteenth century and in the very beginning of the nineteenth, the landscape papers were extensively used alike in rooms and in halls and many of them, both polychrome and monochrome, were both beautiful and dignified and lent a peculiar charm and breadth to the rooms in which they were hung, a charm that nothing else has ever quite taken the place of. In addition to these landscape papers, papers with striking Chinese *motifs* of figures, animals, pagodas, bridges, birds and flowers, frequently in vital colouring, enjoyed some vogue. There were, also, the monochrome French papers printed with carefully cut wood blocks from cartoons by David * and other equally noted contemporary French artists. These papers pourtrayed scenes from classic mythology and were designed as panels to be hung in a sequence. Of all the

* These papers are now being reproduced from the original blocks.

early wall-papers, they were, perhaps, the finest in both conception and execution.

A little later on in the nineteenth century, when these beautiful wall coverings had either passed out of fashion or were no longer obtainable, their place was taken by papers designed to represent moulded panels, or by paper marbled, mottled and veined and laid off in vertical and horizontal lines to simulate the joints of masonry. The best of these masonry papers—and some of them were by no means bad—contained cartouches in the centre of each oblong block and within the cartouches were small monochrome scenes of classic or historical provenance. Some tone of grey was usually chosen for the execution of such papers and, it may be added, the masonry papers were as a rule hung in halls where their pattern did not conflict with the movable decorations and where their pictorial note lent a touch of interest in default of other features to arrest or amuse the eye.

Door and window trims were bold and heavy in detail and, when any attempt was made at ornamentation beyond flat, rectangular mouldings, Greek key fret and anthemion *motifs* generally appeared and also square thistle or acanthus leaf pateræ at the angles. The panels of doors and shutters were small, with the occasional exception of large panels in the lower halves of doors, and were defined by a number of small, flat mouldings which often gave them a complex appearance. The woodwork was usually painted white, although such pale colours as pearl or light grey were now and then used by way of variety. Green, or sometimes white, Venetian blinds were much in fashion at this period and added a touch of decorative interest to the windows which otherwise they would not have possessed. Floors were of plain boards without any

essay at adornment. In hallways marble tiles were sometimes used, either solid white or black and white chequered.

Plaster decoration consisted of moulded cornices and of ceiling borders and central ornaments that echoed the *motifs* of the woodwork in the manner already mentioned as occurring in contemporary houses in England. Ceiling borders were not invariably used, but the central ornaments in the larger and more important rooms were rarely omitted as they formed a point of departure from the ceiling for the imposing chandelier which had by now come to be regarded as an almost indispensable adjunct.

Mantel-pieces of black or dark grey veined marble, oftentimes with two plain pillars supporting the shelf, were in common use. White marble and wood painted white, and fashioned in the same pattern, were also much used. In some of the more elegantly equipped rooms the low mantels of white marble were elaborately carved in the current French style and in some instances displayed griffin or caryatid side supports instead of the pillars just alluded to. These latter pieces of sculpture were really very beautiful and imparted an air of elegance and distinction to any room in which they were placed, quite sufficient to redeem any impression of heaviness conveyed by the other items of fixed equipment.

The architectural and decorative mode that followed the Classic Revival, which, indeed, grew from it and into which the Classic Revival gradually declined when its period of decadence set in, is discussed in Chapter IX.

Furniture and Decoration.—In the early part of the eighteenth century—the last years of the reign of William and Mary and the reign of Queen Anne—every

article of furniture that we now have was in use and, besides this, there were some things that we have since allowed to fall more or less into oblivion to our own great decorative loss. While many of the mobiliary fashions of an earlier date persisted to some extent—the panelled oak pieces and the more elaborate walnut creations of late Stuart times and the walnut, marqueterie and lacquer achievements of the William and Mary era—and especially in the provincial towns and country districts, a new and powerful influence in furniture design was everywhere apparent. This new element has been called the *curvilinear* influence and was particularly manifest in the prevalence of cabriole legs for seating furniture, tables and cabinet work, shaped aprons for tables and wall furniture, shaped and curving tops or cresting for bureau bookcases, cupboards, cabinets, highboys and other pieces of wall furniture, shaped heads with cyma curves for panelling and mirror tops, and even the introduction of curved lines into structural features such as the fronts of *bombé* or "kettle-front" cabinets and chests of drawers. This influence came into England directly through Dutch channels, but was only one instance of similar concurrent influences prevailing throughout Europe which may be attributed to a complex and mixed Baroque and Oriental parentage.

Although oak continued to be used to some extent for furniture making, the favourite and fashionable, and we may also say the standard, wood was walnut, either solid or as a figured veneer laid on over a base of oak or of some other wood. The cabinet makers of the period, however, did not restrict themselves in their finer work to the expression of their talents in walnut alone. They made considerable use of other woods which increasing commercial facilities were placing

within their grasp; they freely employed marqueterie in the more refined "sea weed" patterns which had superseded the larger multi-colored floral and foliated *motifs;* they continued to produce many pieces of lacquer, admirable in colour—red, green, cream, yellow, blue, brown, silver and black—and in decoration; they decorated not a few pieces with paint and parcel gilding; they strained various fabrics over carved and moulded wood bases; and last, but not least in significance, under the impetus of designs furnished by such men as Kent and his school, who required pieces of a certain scale and pomp to accord with the stately interiors then being created, they executed massive and heavily carved tables and consoles, coated with *gesso* richly gilt and topped with slabs of marble or vari-coloured *scagliola,* as well as other pieces in a similar monumental vein to match.

About 1720 mahogany began to be used and the advent of this wood as a material for furniture construction opened the way for developments in both structure and ornamentation that would not have been possible in any of the previous *media.* Before speaking more explicitly, however, of the changes induced by the popularisation of mahogany as a cabinet wood, attention should be called to what has aptly been termed "Architects' Furniture," a species of mobiliary equipment that exercised a profound effect upon the appearance of a great many interiors during the first half of the eighteenth century. Architects were designing stately rooms with lofty ceilings and broad wall spaces on a scale and in a style hitherto unknown in England. For these spacious interiors the "small calibre" furniture of the familiar "Queen Anne" pattern was totally inadequate in scale and often unsatisfactory in the minutiæ of style. The want of something more imposing was

partially filled by the heavy carved and gilded pieces * of which mention has already been made, but there was still an obvious need for something further in the way of large case work. And this further need was met by the architects who proceeded to design large bookcases, cupboards, presses and cabinets in a scale commensurate with the positions they were to occupy and in a style that was distinctly architectural in conception, even to the details of ornamentation, free use being made of pillars, pilasters, entablatures, pediments of various types, urns and cornices whose every feature was transferred from architectural to mobiliary usage. This was one step farther than, and a logical development from, the built-in cupboards and buffets previously discussed. This "architects' furniture" was constructed either in the natural cabinet woods current at the time, chiefly walnut and mahogany, or else was made of pine or deal and painted to accord with the fixed woodwork of the room in which it was placed.

During the early Georgian period, and synchronously with the carved and gilt Kentian pieces and the "architects' furniture," a great deal of the other furniture underwent a process of elaboration that was more observable in decorative details and the amount of decoration applied than in structural forms. It began with what is known as the "Decorated Queen Anne" type and progressed through the heavily, and often overly, embellished creations of chair and cabinet makers up to the rise of Thomas Chippendale into prominence as the arbiter of furniture fashions. About the middle of the century there had been a recru-

* These imposing carved and gilt tables, consoles and the like began to be popular in the latter part of the 17th century, thanks to the influence of Marot, whom William of Orange brought to England.

descence of the "Chinese taste" in the Oriental and pseudo-Oriental forms inspired by the designs of Sir William Chambers. It was left for Chippendale to temper and correct the excesses of design that had prevailed prior to his *régime,* to adapt and improve upon the precedents that he found previously established, and to introduce new elements by which he sought to elevate mobiliary taste of his day and, needless to say, this he succeeded in doing.

The heritage of English precedent that Chippendale found ready to his hand, he refined and, in many cases, elaborated with the utmost skill, displaying his genius and originality, not in the futile effort to create something utterly different from all preëxistent fashions, but through a sane and reasonable adaptation to contemporary requirements as he conceived them and as the means at his disposal prompted him. The "Chinese taste" he interpreted in a manner perfectly consistent with the needs and environment for which he was working; the "Gothic style" in its undiluted form, though obviously an anachronism and a piece of affectation, altogether out of keeping with the architectural settings then being created, he handled with tactful address and contrived to keep it from being aggressively offensive; the Rococo inspiration, derived from current French models, he translated successfully into an English body and, although there was nothing in any of the phases of British architectural and decorative backgrounds to which it in any way corresponded, managed so to express the style that it did not conflict with its environment. But it was in what might be called his "composite" work, in the expression of which he freely drew from various sources and commingled elements Chinese, Gothic and Rococo in the same piece along with traditions of earlier English derivation, that he

achieved his most signal successes as a great master of style. Whatever diversities of origin such pieces might reveal upon close and searching scrutiny, there can be no question that their *ensemble* was in full and harmonious accord with the architectural environment of the day.

Early in the second half of the eighteenth century, under the revived classic impulse imparted by the Brothers Adam, the whole spirit of furniture design underwent a radical change and the mobiliary equipment of the period was created with the avowed and patent intent of close coincidence with the newer phase of architectural expression. Emphasis was laid upon straight structural lines and the decorative details were of obviously architectural provenance. The attenuation and restraint discernible in architectural forms were communicated to the structure of the furniture and also visibly affected not only the *forms* of the ornament employed but also the *amount* of ornament and the manner of its distribution. While Chippendale, so long as he followed the bent of his own inspiration, worked almost exclusively in mahogany and carried the manipulation of his chosen medium to the highest development of which even so facile and accommodating a material was susceptible, the access of Adam influence popularised a great diversity of materials which, while they did not displace mahogany as a cabinet wood, were freely used concurrently with it and vastly added to the resources of colour possibility and contributed to the general lightening effect of contemporary interior decoration. Satinwood especially came into high favour. At the same time painting and inlay were exploited to the full extent of their capabilities as decorative factors. Hepplewhite, Shearer, Sheraton, and also the lesser lights who wrought at the same time and

followed in their wake, were all profoundly influenced by the new ideals of which the Adelphi were successful protagonists and the work of all these cabinet makers and designers exhibited a kindred regard for and observance of the reversion to purer classic principles with the attendant attenuation of proportions and dominance of straight lines as well as the use of *motifs* of more or less immediate classical provenance.

At the very end of the century we discover the classic forms merging gradually into the "Directoire" phase of expression, while early in the nineteenth century—a period synchronous with the very apparent decadence of Sheraton design—we find the more bombastic manifestations corresponding to the Empire fashion in France for, notwithstanding the abhorrence of France and of French politics, French styles were as potent and pervasive as ever. For a detailed discussion of Empire forms, as well as for the minute particulars of all the furniture variations during the period included in this chapter, the reader is referred to the "Practical Book of Period Furniture," Eberlein and McClure.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—During the early part of the eighteenth century, the tapestries which had played so important a part in the decorative composition of former times, retained somewhat of their pristine popularity and remained to a certain extent in evidence, although they did not constitute one of the distinctively characteristic features of the time.

Hangings for windows consisted of either brocades, damasks or velvets in bright colours and strong patterns, much like the fabrics used for covering upholstered furniture, or else of printed linens and chintzes of agreeably bright colouring and in designs similar to those shown in the illustration. Both kinds of hang-

ings were used either with or without valances and were often hung from box heads which were covered with the same material strained over the wood.

In large rooms chandeliers were often used; sometimes they were made of carved wood, painted and parcel gilt, sometimes of brass, sometimes of wrought iron which was occasionally embellished by colour and gilding, and sometimes of glass with large crystal pendants. Sconces, too, were conspicuous items of decorative equipment and were made in the manner just noted in the description of chandeliers as well as with various other devices of embellishment.

In addition to the mirrors employed in fixed decorative treatments, great numbers of mirrors, both large and small, were in common use. Some were tall and narrow, others were long and low, while others still were quite small. It was quite a usual thing for a mirror to be made in several divisions. The edges were often bevelled, even where the head of the mirror was elaborately shaped, and it was not an uncommon thing for the surface of the glass to be adorned with shallow cutting where such decoration would not interfere with practical utility. Then again, side panels in large tripartite mirrors were frequently adorned with polychrome paintings in reverse, in the Chinese manner, which added greatly to their decorative value. A number of the early mirrors were framed with bevelled glass of a different colour, very often a rich deep blue, although other colours were used. Most of the mirror frames, however, were of walnut and were either adorned with marqueterie or were carved and parcel gilt; or they were of pine or some other soft wood, carved and coated with *gesso* and wholly gilt; or else they were of lacquer with gilt, and also sometimes with polychrome decorations. Sconces, when not of metal

or of carved wood, painted and parcel gilt, were often made in combination with small mirrors and were framed in the manner just indicated. A number of mirrors, especially those intended for overmantel decoration, were framed in combination with decorative paintings, the mirror forming the lower part of the composition and the painting the upper portion.

Pictures—portraits, landscapes and decorative paintings of fruits and flowers or of combined architectural and landscape subjects—constituted another valuable and much used decorative resource, and likewise framed prints, both plain and coloured, were extensively employed.

Sculptures, especially in marble but to some extent also in bronze, were much in vogue and were placed either on pedestals or in niches designed to receive them. These marbles and bronzes were often in the form of urns and vases as well as busts, figures and groups. Porcelains, in the shape of urns, vases, jars and other articles, both large and small, especially during the China-mad days in the early part of the century, were freely employed as decorative adjuncts.

From the middle of the century onward, when the Adam influence had become dominant, the same decorative accessories as just enumerated continued to be used, but their forms naturally underwent such modifications as rendered them in keeping with the altered conceptions of elegant design. With the ornate wall surfaces of many of the Adam rooms, there was less opportunity to use the tapestries which earlier in the century had continued to enjoy at least a certain curtailed degree of favour. The method of draping window hangings was often more involved and the cornices surmounting them frequently assumed more preten-

tious forms than had hitherto been common. Chandeliers were lighter in line and more intricate in design and there was a preference for metal with numerous pendent glass prisms rather than for wood painted and gilt or for brass alone in its more robust but graceful designs. Sconces, too, reflected the same trend toward attenuation and were quite generally adorned with cut glass drops and pendent prisms which greatly added to the brilliance and lustre of the illumination when the candles were lighted. The sconces, also, not uncommonly displayed, along with mirror frames, the airy surmounting or surrounding ornaments wrought in gilt compo supported on wires. In the heads of mirrors were often inserted paintings with classic *motifs* or designs in gilt relief on a ground of plain colour or else devices painted in reverse on the under side of the glass.

Materials and Colour.—In the early part of the century the woods chiefly used were oak, walnut and, for panelling, deal and pine and fir also. About 1720 mahogany, while not wholly displacing the others, came into use for cabinet purposes and grew more and more popular. *Gesso* laid over a pine foundation and gilt was also an important source of decoration.

The fabrics were brocades, velvets, plain and with cut pile figures, brocatelles, damasks and silks. The simpler fabrics were printed linens, muslins and chintzes. In both cases the colours were strong and vigorous and the designs usually bold and often large in detail. As the century wore on the diversity and brilliance of colouring became less pronounced. Pale and delicate pastel colours were freely employed and stripes had a tremendous vogue. The patterns on the brocades were refined in scale and often attenuated in

accord with the prevalent trend of contemporary style. Even when the colours used were fairly vigorous, they were so disposed in quantity that their emphasis was appreciably modified. Needlework in *petit point* and *gros point* also played a prominent part for the covering of furniture.

After the middle of the century and all through the period of Adam ascendency, while mahogany retained a place of honour, satinwood and other light coloured woods, such as sycamore or harewood, maple and similar light toned materials enjoyed huge popularity, for the whole tendency of the time was toward a lighter and more cheerful and blithesome colour scheme. Not only was furniture very commonly made of light coloured wood or painted some light tone, but the fixed woodwork also was painted in various pale hues, as were the walls and ceilings. The scale of the earlier work, both in architectural usage and in furniture contours and decorative *motifs* was heavier and required heavier colours; the lighter scale and refined, attenuated *motifs* of the Adam period demanded lighter colours and would have looked utterly out of place with the full-bodied tones of an earlier era.

The same thing was true of fabrics. The silks, damasks, brocades, velvets and other stuffs used for hangings and upholstery were light in colour and refined in the details of their pattern. At this time also Aubusson tapestry, by the nature of its colour, design and texture, came into vogue for furniture covering and also for rugs and carpets.

Arrangement.—During the earlier part of the century, while symmetry and formality of arrangement were duly considered in the disposition of the movable furnishings, there was still a certain amount of the cas-

ual latitude of earlier days to be seen in the placement of the principal articles that entered into the composition of a room. Under the Adam *régime,* however, the principles of formality and balanced symmetry were caried to their fullest limit. It was the period of the dominance of pairs. It might be pairs of consoles, or pairs of sconces, or pairs of sofas, or pairs of candelabra—but wherever there was an opportunity to introduce the element of balance by the use of duplicates, the opportunity was seized and made the most of.

CHAPTER III

INTERIOR DECORATION IN ITALY PRIOR TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION.—The golden age of Italian wall decoration, furniture making and furnishing began about the middle of the fifteenth century and continued through the sixteenth and seventeenth. It was veritably a golden age in point of virility, freshness and fertility of conception and the national genius was manifested in the vigorous design of the furniture, in the way in which it was disposed and in the preparation of the background as well as in other important branches of art. Added to the native well springs from which flowed a copious stream of Renaissance inspiration was the powerful impetus derived from the *diaspora* of Byzantine culture resulting from the fall of Byzantium before the Ottoman onslaught in 1453.

Prior to the period at which we begin our consideration of interior decoration in Italy, wars and rumours of wars, petty though they were compared with the magnitude of modern military operations, chiefly occupied the minds and energies of the princes and the rulers of the small republics and there was almost incessant strife between two or more of the various independent states or civil jurisdictions among which the Italian peninsula was parcelled. Under the unstable conditions consequent upon the chronically disturbed state of society there was comparatively little opportunity for either the accumulation or spending of private wealth and it is scarcely to be wondered at that a native taste for household luxury and refinement found

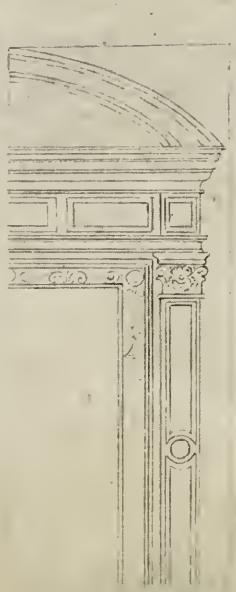
scant scope for gratification when the development of the arts of domestic embellishment was so seriously retarded. In the majority of cases men's minds were either almost wholly centred upon political and military affairs or else their mental and physical activities were directed into ecclesiastical channels. Cultural development in the secular world was badly handicapped.

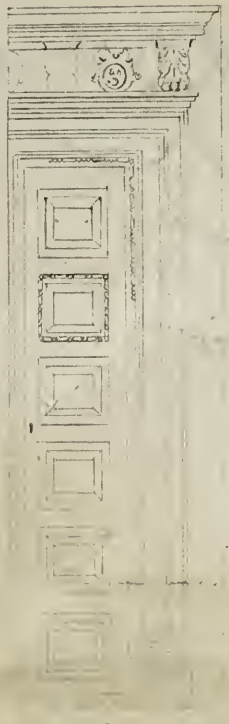
With the advent of an era of greater political stability, however, commerce revived and flourished apace, personal and civic wealth accumulated, the resources of the municipalities were less constantly drained by the heavy exactions of internecine warfare, and the spirit of creative art, never wholly dormant even during the times of greatest strife and turmoil, came quickly into its own again, drawing renewed inspiration from the abundant treasures of Italian antiquity and deriving likewise a quickening impulse from the culture of Byzantium, the remnants of whose rich heritage were brought to Italy by the numerous refugees from the fallen capital of the Eastern Empire. The rebirth of art, in all its phases, experienced the strong impetus of natural reaction after a period of repression. Domestic and industrial arts blossomed and throve in new-found security. Private wealth fostered the efforts of artists and craftsmen while princes and potentates vied with each other in liberal patronage of the arts both fine and applied. The story of the Medici in Florence affords an illuminating commentary on this phase of Italian cultural history and the story of many other great contemporary families might likewise be appropriately cited to the same end.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—In this golden age of restored tranquillity, stately villas, that often rivalled the splendours of their ancient Roman prototypes, rapidly succeeded to grim

PLATE 13

CHAMBER IN SECOND FLOOR PALAZZO DAVANZATI, FIRENZE, FIFTEENTH CENTURY
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.





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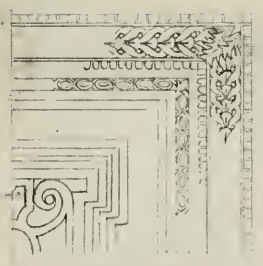

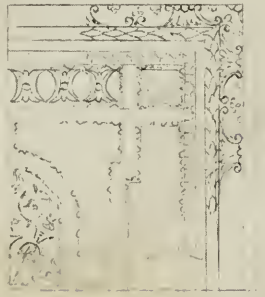

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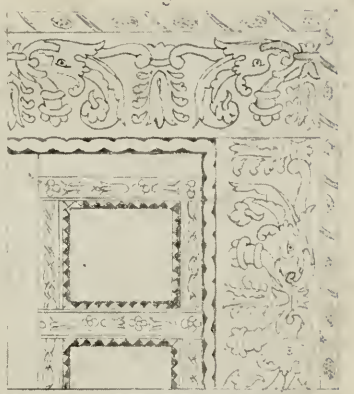

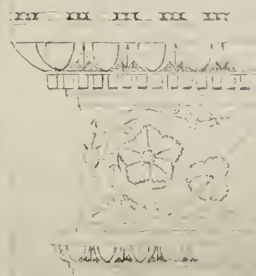

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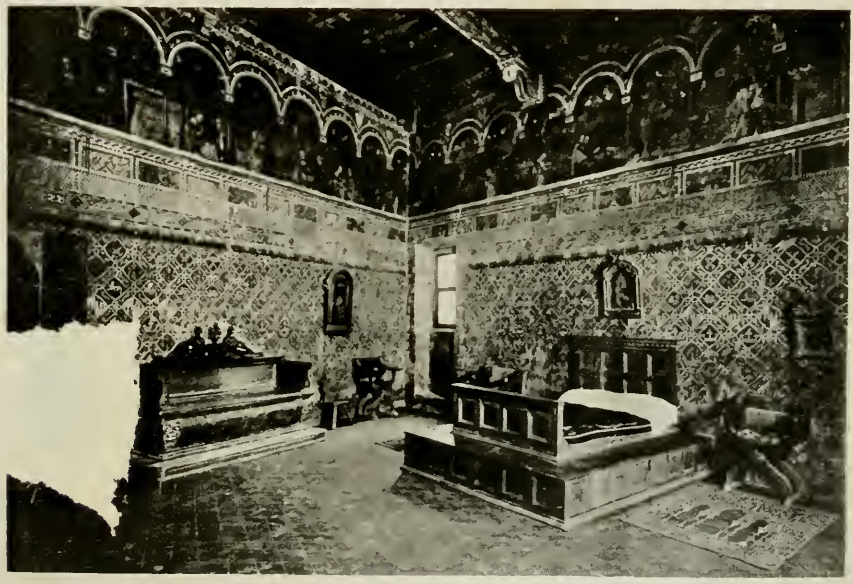
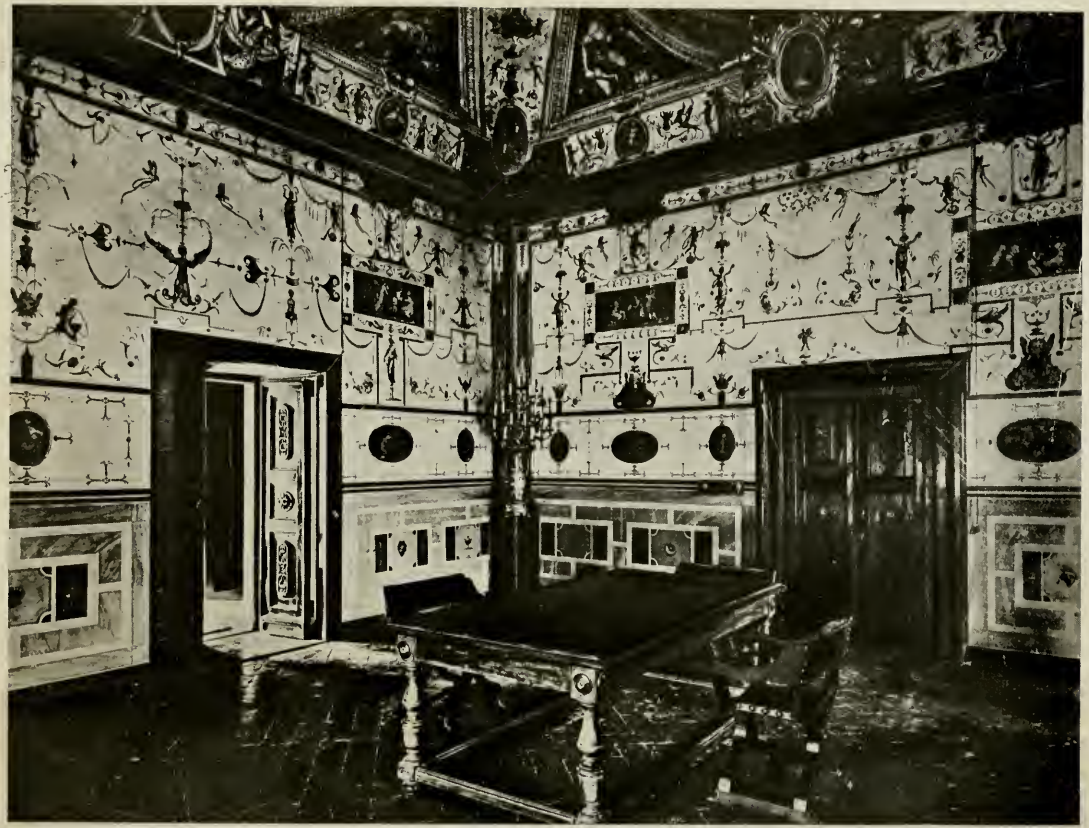
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE DETAILS

A SALON ON FIRST FLOOR, PALAZZO DAVANZATI, FIRENZE, FIFTEENTH CENTURY
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



B. BED CHAMBER, PALAZZO DAVANZATI, FIRENZE, FIFTEENTH CENTURY
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



CHAMBER IN PALAZZO VECCHIO, FIRENZE, SIXTEENTH CENTURY
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

castles and fortified houses. Nobles and wealthy merchants and landowners felt free to forsake the crowded restraint of urban life for the larger liberty of residence among the groves and gardens of their estates. The abodes they built, with the aid of the best architects of the day, were broad and lofty and fully expressive of the urbane, though withal vigorous, elegance of the age. The rooms were commonly of great dimensions and their height is one of the most impressive features of their proportions. It was, indeed, the era of the great hall (Plate 13) and princely salon. Such were the habits of domestic life that the small drawing-room and intimate boudoir had little place in the household scheme and the personal requirements of the immediate members of the family were easily satisfied with the simplest of provisions. Classic conceptions of design were everywhere asserting themselves and we find a strong rectilinear emphasis (Plate 13) predominant in nearly all of these imposing apartments. There were, of course, plenty of round vaulted ceilings (Plate 20 A and B; Plate 18) and round arched windows or doorheads enriched by a countersunk semi-circular tympanum (Plate 15 A) above them. But, notwithstanding all this and the occasional presence of round-arched arcades, the dominant emphasis was rectilinear and this same quality was reflected in the contour of the furniture that was designed to equip these spacious interiors.

In the matter of fixed decoration and interior enrichment, Italian interiors of the period under consideration may be divided into two classes. The first class is composed of the interiors where all or a great portion of the background—walls, ceiling and floor—was highly decorated and rich in colour (Plates 15 B, 16, 18, 19 and 139). The second class is composed of interiors

where only a minor portion (Plates 13, 15 A, 20 A and B, and 127) or none of the background is decorated and where the physical setting presents an aspect of severe restraint and, sometimes, even of austerity. In the first class belong the rooms whose walls and ceilings are gorgeous with frescoes and gilding (Plates 16, 18 and 19), the encrustation of coloured marbles or the polychrome and parcel gilt enrichment of diaper work (Plate 15 B) and heraldic blasoning, while the floors accord with the rest of the scheme in their display of multi-coloured marbles (Plates 18, 19 and 139) or mosaic. In the second class belong the rooms whose walls and vaulted ceilings are severely plain and whose floors are of plain stone, tiles (Plates 13, 15 A and B and 16) or boards. The points of architectural embellishment are the carved fireplace (Plates 15 A and 20 A and 111 C) and its hood or chimney piece, the doorways (Plate 14, 1; 15 A, 18 and 19) and, if there be a flat wooden ceiling instead of vaulting, the beams and corbels (Plates 13, 15 A and B and 127). Occasionally, also, a niche (Plate 127) with doors to enclose a shrine might be given architectural emphasis. In such interiors colour was frequently introduced on the doors themselves (Plate 14, 2), in a countersunk tympanum above the doorway, if perchance this bit of diversity were added, on the beams and boards of the ceiling (Plates 13; 14—3, 4 and 5; 15 A and B) and on the inside shutters of the windows. It need scarcely be pointed out that such an interior provided an admirable foil for the advantageous display of hangings and furniture (Plates 13 and 15 A and B). No matter, however, whether an interior was elaborately ornate or severely simple, the Italian furniture of the period possessed such flexibility of character that it looked equally well against either background and to this peculiar

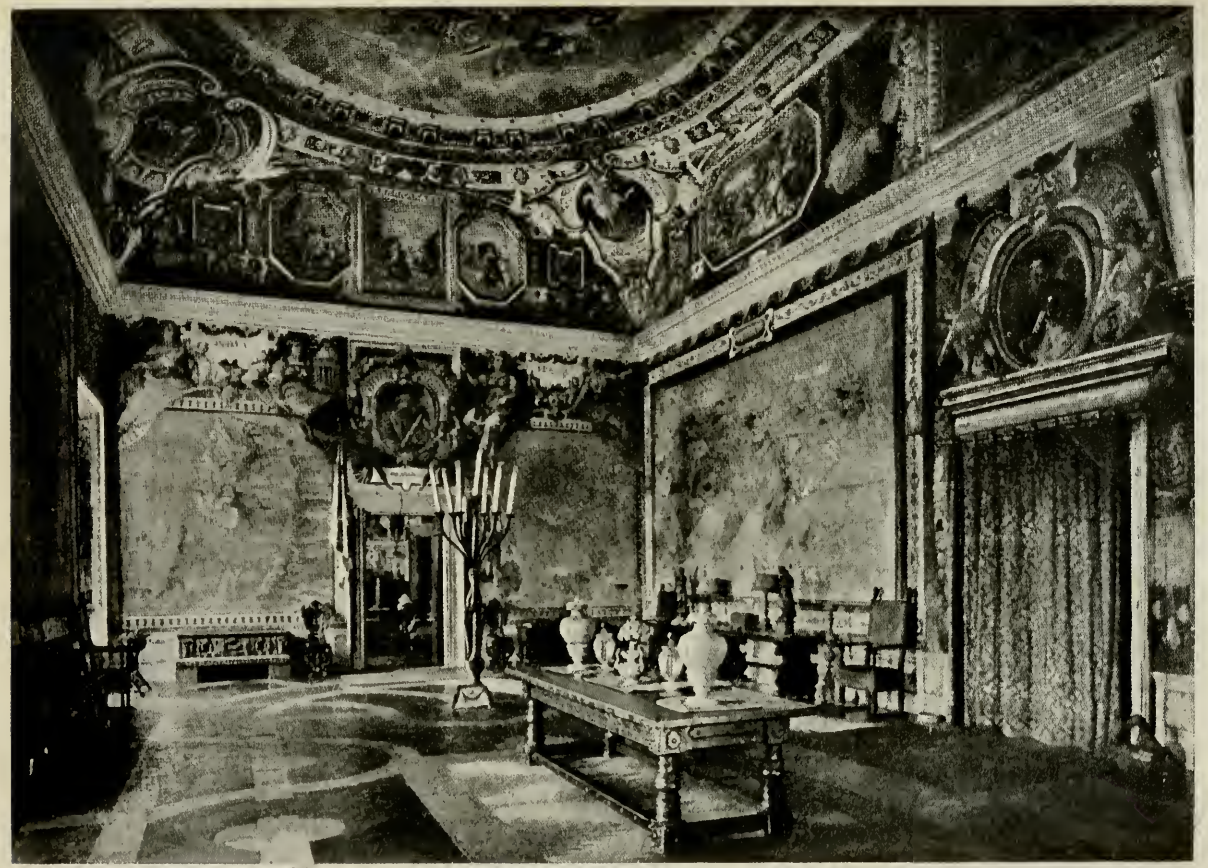
THRONE ROOM—PALAZZO QUIRINALE, ROMA

Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

Photograph from Anderson, Rome

THE HALL OF HERCULES, PALAZZO FARNESE, CAPRAROLA
Middle Sixteenth Century
By Courtesy of "Vogue"

PLATE 19



Photograph from Anderson, Rome

PALAZZO FARNESE, CAPRAROLA

The Great Maps Painted Upon the Walls Give Evidence of the Far-reaching Interests of the Farnese Family

By Courtesy of "Vogue"

quality we shall have occasion to refer more at length in a subsequent division.

Furniture and Its Decoration.—From the middle or latter part of the fifteenth century onward, the display of movable furniture in the regal rooms of Italian palaces and villas, and in the scarcely less regal rooms of the lesser country houses and town dwellings of the well-to-do citizens, was scanty when judged by modern standards. "When the walls of the galleries and saloons were covered with frescoes (Plates 16, 18 and 19), or hung with arras, tapestry, brocades (Plate 17), rich velvet from Genoa, or with stamped and gilt leather; when the ceilings were painted (Plates 16, 18 and 19) or heavily carved and gilded; when the floors were inlaid with the choicest marbles and mosaics, many objects about would detract from the magnificence of the whole and leave a confused impression on the mind. This the unerring taste of the sixteenth century decorators fully realised. The few pieces of furniture that were admitted, however, were in keeping with their surroundings, and are marvels of workmanship. Every kind of splendid material was employed in their manufacture and adornment." The chests or *cassoni,* which from the earliest times were conspicuous and highly significant pieces of furniture in Italian furnishing schemes, placed in the halls and corridors or salons, "were used to preserve tapestries, clothes, plate and most of the valuables used by wealthy Italians." Carved with scrolls, foliage and figures in high relief or richly embellished on the front and cover with paintings, "either illustrative of the lives of saints, scenes taken from classical mythology or historical incidents" and blasoned in the proper tinctures with family armorial bearings, the *cassoni* were indeed impressive pieces of furniture and well calculated to compel and centre attention. They

were often lined inside with linen or even with gorgeous silks and brocades strained tightly over the wood. The *cassone* was one of the most valuable presents given to a bride, and when it fulfilled the *rôle* of a dower chest it was generally adorned by picturing some incident taken from one of the well-known love tales. To some, indeed, it may seem that these *cassoni*—and, for the matter of that, not a few of the other articles of Italian Renaissance furniture—were "almost overpoweringly decorated" without ever giving the eye a single spot on which to stop and rest. Many such profusely ornamented pieces placed in the same room, it is true, would have been unbearable. But the Italians did not so use them. The *cassone* was designed and decorated with a clear perception of the principle, so characteristic of much of the best Italian and Spanish work, whether architectural or mobiliary, of concentrating enrichment in one spot and isolating it against a background either simple, at times to the extent of austerity, or else so fully covered with elaborate repeats (Plate 15 B) that it assumed the quality of a richly coloured texture of virtually neutral action in affording the necessary contrast to whatever clearly defined object, whether simple or elaborately adorned, might be placed against it. There was wealth in the golden age of the Italian Renaissance to devote to a liberal patronage of the decorative arts and the patronage bestowed encouraged the development of furniture design and execution by the most eminent craftsmen and artists of the period. They deemed it worthy of their best efforts to design a single piece of furniture and execute it with the utmost study and care as an independent and complete work of art. Under such circumstances the making of a *cassone* was a finished and marvellous achievement in itself. Among the painters of panels for *cassoni* may be mentioned such

masters as Botticelli, Andrea del Sarto, Pesellino, Pietro di Cosimo and the most capable of their pupils while, for the carvers of these same amazing chests, Jacquemart reminds us that we must seek among the foremost sculptors of the day—Donatello, Bernardino, Ferrante, Canozzo and others of equal renown. So far as furniture was concerned, they were the Adams, the Chippendales, the Hepplewhites, the Angelica Kauffmanns and the Cipriani of their era, but far greater; only, unlike the Adelphi, they did not merely draw designs for others to work from but they worked at the furniture with their own hands and thought no shame of the task. They esteemed the making of a chest or cabinet an honourable and legitimate work of art and that is why so many of the pieces from their hands are surpassingly beautiful and full of finished grace. Before passing on, it will be as well to note that there was not a little variety in the forms of the *cassoni* so that their decorative furnishing potentiality was increased thereby: some of them were merely rectangular chests, with or without feet, and being flat-topped served for seats as well as receptacles; some were shaped like a sarcophagus and had either flat or rising tops; some were low enough to sit upon comfortably; some were as high as consoles, and some were raised on stands.

While *cassoni* (Plate 13) were undoubtedly the most omnipresent, the most conspicuous and the most lavishly decorated pieces of cabinet work, there was besides a wide variety of wall furniture that went to make up the mobiliary equipment of sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian rooms. There was the *madia,* a hutch-like cupboard with doors, and perhaps several shallow drawers above them, the whole structure supported by trusses at each end. This piece of furniture was often used for the stowage of food in much the same

way as the dole cupboards and kindred articles in England. There was the *credenza* (Plates 20 B and 15 A and 89 B), an imposing and much used article about four feet high and of varying length, with doors in front and with or without shallow drawers above the doors. In composition and decoration it was an object of distinctly architectonic value. It served the purpose of a sideboard or buffet or, in apartments not used for dining, it answered equally well the office of a console. Occasionally a superstructure was added at the back with one or more shelves and in this form it was really the historical precursor of the very ugly nineteenth century sideboard. In this connexion it is worth noting that the furniture designers of the nineteenth century, who perpetrated so many of the painful monstrosities of the Victorian era in black walnut, were not an *ignorant* set of men unacquainted with historical precedents. They did know somewhat of furniture history, but with their knowledge they combined an amazing degree of colossal bad taste which impelled them to choose the least-inspired models of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century Italian, French and Spanish provenance and add thereto their own fantastic aberrations of contour and embellishment. Illustrations of some of the Victorian "chefs dœuvre" parallel with other illustrations of their Continental prototypes would constitute a body of the most damning evidence.

Akin to the *credenza* in its general scheme of structure was the small console or cabinet with doors, about three or three and a half feet high by two feet or a little more in width. It served as a stand on which to place a casket or some other article of decorative significance. The exact reverse of this was a similar piece of cabinet work, with a small drawer *beneath* the doors instead of above them, and this was set upon a table

or stand; in other words, it was the forerunner of the larger cabinet, with doors and drawers, upon a stand which figured so prominently in furnishing schemes of a much later date. A combination of these two pieces sometimes occurred in a two-storey structure with doors in both the lower and upper parts. This double cabinet was somewhat wider than the console first mentioned and the upper part was not quite so broad as the lower. Altogether it was a dignified and desirable article in any well-appointed room.

Not dissimilar to it in general appearance was the writing cabinet, of which examples occurred at an early date, with doors in the lower part and a falling front in the upper which, when let down, provided a place to write. A related piece of writing furniture was the cabinet with falling front which stood upon a table or stand. There were also various wider and larger cabinets and presses, either divided in two by lower and upper sections or with full length doors, in the latter case being virtually wardrobes, as we understand the term. Chests of drawers, very like in disposition to the analogous article of the eighteenth century, were by no means unknown.

Bedsteads, as was the wont of the period, were oftentimes ponderous affairs; others, again, were not of cumbrous proportions. The larger bedsteads were frequently raised a pace or two above the floor on a dais (Plate 15 B) and were both of the post and canopy (Plate 21 B) or tester type and also of the sort that had headboard and lower footboard but no canopy. Another piece of wall furniture that was not seldom elevated on a dais to give it greater state was the *cassa panca,* a kind of ceremonial bench (Plate 15 B) that was invariably given a position of prominence and seems to have been the forerunner of the drawing-room sofa of

a later date as regarded certain points of etiquette in seating honoured guests. The *cassa panca* was really a long chest with high, solid, massive arms and back, the seat, which was hinged at the back, being the lid. Occasionally there was an high, throne-like back and sometimes the arms were wanting. The former type, however, was the more usual. A specimen in the Metropolitan Museum is eight feet, ten inches in length, twenty-one inches in depth, has a back and arms rising nineteen inches from the seat and stands on a dais nine and a half feet long and five inches high.

From both their structure and design it is quite obvious that not a few of the *banconi* or tables with drawers were intended to stand against the wall and many of the long tables, analogous to the English refectory tables, were likewise so placed and are, therefore, under sundry circumstances to be reckoned as wall furniture. Clothes hangers and mirror frames were objects of careful design and workmanship and are not to be overlooked in an enumeration of wall pieces. The mirror frames were small as only small mirrors were available at all and these were scarce. Great care, nevertheless, was bestowed upon the frames and they possessed considerable decorative importance.

Besides the long tables, already alluded to, and the smaller wall or writing tables with drawers in them, there was the greatest variety in shapes and sizes, as might be expected in an age of exuberant invention, and all the occasional requirements in the matter of tables were well supplied. (For a detailed discussion of the sundry varieties of sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian tables and other pieces of furniture *v.* "The Practical Book of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese Furniture," Eberlein and McClure; now in preparation.) Chairs, settees, stools and benches were of nu-

merous types, but all were dignified and impressive and well calculated to furnishing ideals in which dignity, as well as grace, was an indispensable requirement.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—The actual movable furniture in a sixteenth or seventeenth century Italian salon did not by any means comprise *all* the furnishing of the apartment. The walls and ceilings, as mentioned before, might be gloriously chromatic with frescoes or mosaic and, in addition to many-hued and rich-toned pigments, there would be the glow of gilding bestowed in appropriate places. In case the walls and ceilings were not so adorned with fixed decorations on the surface, there was the universal delight in tapestries (Plate 13) and other large hangings of needlework which were prized doubly on account of the pleasure and satisfaction to be derived from the devices thereon depicted and likewise because of their wealth of mellow colour. Besides tapestries as suitable enrichments for plain walls, there was always the resource of pictures. Then, furthermore, there were the polychrome maiolica mural ornaments and mural ornaments consisting of wood carvings (Plate 15 A) painted and gilt. This wooden mural sculpture was an highly developed art and justly prized. Another decorative resource lay in the pieces of marble sculpture, always dear to the heart of an Italian, and in various pieces of pottery of agreeable shape and colour. Nor must we forget the carved, painted and gilt wooden candlesticks (Plate 19) and candelabra, some of them of great height; nor the iron candelabra (Plate 15 A), gracefully wrought and likewise coloured and gilt in their embellishment.

Equally effective in the matter of lending interest to the composition were the fixed decorative accessories such as the paintings upon the doors themselves, paint-

ings in the tympana above doorways, paintings upon the wooden inside shutters or paintings upon the beams of the ceilings and the corbels that supported those beams. On the doors and shutters the painting and gilding might be only partial, to enhance the tone of the wood, or it might be in a continuous diaper pattern or, again, some mythological, historical or religious subject might be fully depicted. The painting of the ceiling beams was done in a purely conventional manner and was meant merely to give the relief and warmth of colour and gilding.

Oftentimes, when not much colour appeared on doors or shutters, interest was centred there by devices executed either in studding of iron nails (Plate 13) or by wrought iron, sometimes parcel coloured and gilt, applied in a rich and delicate decorative pattern. The sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian smiths were masters in their craft and their decorative creations are among some of the most treasured relics they have left us.

Last, but by no means least, as an item in the composition of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Italian interior was the carved mantel and likewise the carved chimney piece that so often accompanied it. These were wrought in stone and in marble with the utmost finesse and displayed all the characteristic decorative *motifs* of the period, including foliage, fruits, flowers, arabesques, grotesques, masques, *amorini* and the human figure. The carving was usually in high and bold relief.

Materials and Colour.—For the fixed architectural background, the materials most commonly used were stone, inlaid and multi-coloured marbles, tiles or wood for the floors. For the walls they employed plaster, either rough or smooth, or else encrustations of marble

or mosaic. When the walls were to be painted they were coated with a smooth, hard plaster; hard plaster was likewise used when moulded decorations in relief entered into the decorative scheme. These moulded decorations in plaster were often further enriched by the addition of colour. When *sgraffito* decorations were desired several successive coats of different-coloured plasters were laid on. For the ceilings either plaster or wooden beams, frequently carved and painted, were the usual materials. Cypress, oak, pine and walnut afforded the chief wood resources, although other kinds were occasionally put to use. For polychrome decorated doors it was customary to use pine, cypress or some similar soft and easily worked wood as a foundation. The surface was then carefully coated with *gesso* to give an absolutely smooth and suitable ground for the application of the pigment and gold.

For furniture, walnut was the staple wood just as oak was in England. For *cassoni* and other pieces, however, that were to be embellished with paint, polychrome decoration and parcel gilding it was customary to use pine or cypress and cover it with a preparatory coat of *gesso* before the paint and gilt were put on. If there was any carved relief, the carving was apt to be crudely done and the fine modelling was left for manipulation in the *gesso*. For furniture that was not to be adorned with gold and colour, oak, chestnut, acacia and other suitable woods from time to time made their appearance with the occasional introduction of sycamore, pear, rosewood and sundry other materials for purposes of inlay or marqueterie.

For upholstery, velvet of a full, rich red was perhaps the most favoured material. Besides this we find cut pile velvets, brocades, brocatelle and damasks of various colours as well as *gros point* and *petit point*

needlework. Leather, both plain and decorated, was also used for the backs and seats of chairs. Much attention, too, was paid to fringes and gold galons which were freely employed. For the lining of *cassoni* and caskets it was not uncommon to use silks and brocades of divers colours strained upon the wood.

Nothing contributes more to the enrichment of an apartment than the use of hangings on the walls. In old Italian interiors hangings were freely used and these hangings consisted of tapestries, brocades (Plate 17) or damasks with embroidered orphreys or borders at the sides, velvets enriched with gold embroidery and needlework designs in bold *motifs* appliqué, and large pieces of multi-coloured needlework in floss or silk thread on background of silk, satin, damask or velvet. Cloth of gold and silver were also employed.

From a purely practical point of view, with reference to modern practice, it is to be noted that the old Italians fully realised—they had doubtless found out by trial and experience—that when hangings were used on the walls back of large pieces of furniture, whether those pieces were of carved or plain panelled walnut, or of a gorgeous polychrome and gilt exterior, the very nature of the furniture in design and material demanded the association of a fabric of full colour and depth, of texture, such as tapestry or heavy red or purple velvet, and that thinner or flatter textures looked jejune and unsuitable. These pieces might, with perfect propriety of effect, stand against an austere and bare wall, but if fabric was added it had to be of warm hue and full texture.

In the choice of colours for interior decoration there was universal employment of strong, full-bodied tones and vigorous contrasts. While the reds were very red

and the blues very blue, the combinations and gradations were blended into a most agreeably mellow *ensemble.* An examination of old Italian interiors and a close scrutiny of the methods the sixteenth and seventeenth century decorators used makes it quite evident that it was the practice to concentrate enrichment whether of objects or of colour at strategic points. It is also to be noted, with reference to their lavish use of gold, that they well understood that a great mass of gold is quiet and neutral, that a little gold at carefully selected places is quiet, refined and enriching, but that small amounts of gold distributed here, there and everywhere produce a flashy, cheap and noisy effect.

Arrangement.—One of the most striking things about fine old Italian interiors is the absence of crowding and fussiness. The decorators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries seem fully to have realised that a few important pieces, well and logically placed, are all that are needed to make a room. If there are too many large pieces the effect of all is spoiled and the eye is apt to ignore the individual excellences of every object in the cluttered hodge-podge. Accordingly, a comparatively few pieces, properly distributed, were relied upon to produce the desired result. Unless a room was exceptionally large, and oftentimes even then (Plate 17), it was the custom to keep the centre of the floor clear of all obstructions. In some instances a long table (Plates 13, 15 A, 18 and 19) would be placed down the middle of a very long room or, instead of this, the length might be broken by several smaller tables placed equidistant from the ends of the room, with their appropriate accompaniment of chairs or stools in close proximity. The arrangements almost invariably displayed a due regard for principles of symmetry and

yet, at the same time, there was a great deal of elasticity and very little inclination to methods of stiff and oppressive formality. The inborn habit of symmetrical placement might be seen in such a grouping, for instance, as a long wall table flanked at each side by two tall-backed chairs. This was a very common arrangement but very typical and serves well enough as an example. The brummagem ideal of stuffy and cluttered "cosiness" did not appeal to them and would have been utterly abhorrent to their conceptions of dignity and elegance.

CHAPTER IV

INTERIOR DECORATION IN ITALY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION.—As the period before the eighteenth century had been an era of spacious dimensions, of great and lofty rooms, of dignified splendour and splendid dignity, of intense virility and vigour however rich and exuberant in the manifold manifestations of architectural setting and mobiliary equipment, of unmistakably masculine interpretation in all the phases of decorative art, so the eighteenth century was essentially a period of femininity in decorative conceptions, of intimate boudoirs and highly elaborated drawing-rooms punctiliously appointed with all the polished refinements of which fecund invention bent upon achieving an almost sybaritic degree of luxury was capable, of minute elegancy, of graceful pliability, of sunny, blithesome polychrome merriment. If the imposing amplitude and sweep of a former generation were absent, and if the foundations of decorative conception were less serious, the happy domesticity and facile playfulness of the prevalent genius, amounting at times to pure inconsequent frivolity, were very human and very fascinating and, withal, sincere, in that they faithfully mirrored the spirit of the age. The genius of the preceding age, notwithstanding all the gorgeousness of colouring and wealth of inventive ingenuity, was a trifle sombre; the genius of the eighteenth century, not less opulent in its own fashion, was fundamentally gay and debonair. Potency of colour and subtlety of form were no less keenly felt and no

less assiduously courted than in former years, but their application was in a lighter vein.

In a measure, the eighteenth century was a decadent period, for the quality of sturdy creative originality, which had so strongly characterised the work of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, was almost wholly dormant. Italy was borrowing back again the inspiration she had so lavishly poured forth in earlier centuries for the benefit of other countries and the inspiration thus borrowed back was become, in the course of transition, an indubitably second-hand commodity, bereft of fertility and *verve* so far as creative vigour and the divine spark of originality were concerned, like an outworn garment that has grown threadbare through the usage of its temporary possessor. And yet, despite this promiscuous borrowing back, the eighteenth century Italian decorators, designers and craftsmen succeeded in imparting an abundant measure of national individuality to their interpretations so that their work stands quite apart from the performances of their contemporaries in other lands and is easily recognisable by its qualities of charm which the local genius rarely failed successfully to impart. While it is undeniably true that greatness of conception, architectonic dignity of contour and strong originality of design were usually wanting, the native fertility of the Italian craftsman temperament was constantly in evidence through the wealth of decorative *motifs* and the multiplicity of decorative processes lavished on surface embellishment, a wealth that asserted itself on every hand with an indomitable persistence comparable to that of tropical vegetation. These characteristics were equally to be seen in the fixed architectural decorative background and also in the execution of the movable furnishings.

A. HALL, VILLA CURONIA, FLORENCE
Showing Vaulted Ceiling, Plain Walls and Decorated Corbels
Courtesy of E. S. Dodge, Esq.

B. ROOM, VILLA CURONIA, FLORENCE
Tiled Floor, Plain Walls, Vaulted Ceiling. Note Treatment of Doors and Arrangement of Furniture
Courtesy of E. S. Dodge, Esq.

A. DETAIL OF MIRROR GALLERY, PALAZZO DORIA, ROMA
Eighteenth Century, Baroque Transition to Rococo
Courtesy of Radillo-Pelitti Co.

B. BED CHAMBER, CASTELLO VINCIGLIATA
Courtesy of Radillo-Pelitti Co

A. BEDCHAMBER, VILLA CURONIA, FLORENCE
Showing Fabric-Covered Walls
Courtesy of E. S. Dodge, Esq.

B. ANTECHAMBER, VILLA FABBRICOTTI, LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY
The Heavy Baroque Furniture is out of place with this Classical Background
Courtesy of Radillo-Pelitti Co.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—The diluted Baroque manifestations that had been observable in the latter part of the seventeenth century continued into the early part of the eighteenth (Plate 21A), to be succeeded, in due season, and in circles likely to be affected by new fashions, by the lighter, more playful and more involved Rococo influences patterned after the modes current in France, though slightly modified in the course of transition by the action of local traditions and local preferences of interpretation, traditions and preferences that were exceedingly subtle and difficult of definition but nevertheless very real and, in the aggregate, very perceptible. In its own time, virtually synchronous with a like prevalence in other countries, came the absorbing vogue for "the Chinese taste," and it left a strong impress of Orientalism on the work done in the immediate period of its duration, while agreeable traces of its quondam ascendency and its enduring appeal could be detected here and there long afterward.

In sharp contrast to all this stylistic medley, the middle of the century witnessed a vigorous revival of classic feeling (Plate 22 B)—the swing of the pendulum to the opposite extremity of the arc—in precisely the same way that we see the rise of the Adam influence in England and the transition to the Louis Seize mode in France. The Italian reversion to classic forms and precedents was not less vigorous in its expression than the contemporary comparable movements elsewhere, but again, as on former occasions, the local exhibition was tinged by local conception and local methods of adaptation.

The close correspondence of these successive phases of design in the several countries, and their almost exactly contemporaneous procession, reveal to us, in

a particularly striking manner, the internationalism of decorative art.

In the eighteenth century the Italian salons and galleries were not less splendid and stately than they had been during the preceding era, but there was far more ample provision for the smaller and more intimate boudoirs and drawing-rooms as well. And whether we are called upon to consider the great salon, the smaller drawing-room, the boudoir or the sumptuously appointed and dainty bedroom of the eighteenth century grandame or beauty, we encounter the same general method of decorative treatment. The more permanent features, such as frescoes and encrustations of mosaic and inlay (Plate 21 A), and also the more enduring movables of the background such as tapestries and other gorgeous hangings of large extent, remained, but there was an added sumptuousness and fullness of appointments that had not hitherto existed. It is true that the earlier classification of fixed architectural backgrounds—richly ornate on one hand, and austere on the other—still held good, but the severely simple backgrounds were very apt to be much enhanced by the addition of numerous movables. In not a few instances walls were covered with fabrics (Plate 22 A) frequently held in place by mouldings fastened on so as to form panels. Then, again, there was to be seen an extensive introduction of *boiserie,* analogous to French and English practice, with the panelling (Plate 21 B) embellished with carving and appropriately painted and parcel gilt. In many instances, large painted panels, sometimes on canvas, sometimes on wooden grounds overlaid with a smooth coating of *gesso* according to traditional Italian practice, were set into the walls and surrounded with mouldings. The subjects were warm-toned landscapes with prominent architectural features

in the manner of Piranesi, pastoral scenes in emulation of the French creations of Watteau, episodes or scenes from classic mythology, fruit and flower devices or gaily coloured and sometimes gilt Chinese *motifs*. Not seldom, also, were mirrors introduced into the panelling as an highly effective decorative device. In the tale of mural resources must likewise be reckoned wall-paper, printed from wood blocks, with landscape, architectural and classic subjects executed in either polychrome or monotone effects. Nor should we forget another expedient sometimes resorted to, especially for the embellishment of *loggie* or partially open-air apartments—the use of canvas hanging friezes and panels painted with classic *motifs,* fruits, flowers and landscapes. By every available means the sumptuousness and multi-colored gaiety of the background were ensured.

The tall and elaborately ornamented chimney piece, reaching from the mantel to the ceiling or nearly to the ceiling, gradually disappeared as an inseparable structurally incorporated factor of the permanent background and was succeeded by lower mantels and fireplace surrounds reflecting in their decoration the successive Baroque, Rococo and Classic modes of the period that held sway in the procession of fashions already enumerated. These mantels were made of carved stone, carved wood and carved and inlaid marble, the latter sometimes displaying an exquisite combination of colours in conjunction with the most delicate intaglio work. Above the mantels were set carved wooden panelling, paintings, hangings or elaborately framed mirrors.

Carved, panelled or inlaid doors still formed important parts of the fixed decorative background, but the methods of carving, panelling and inlaying all re-

flected the successively prevailing stylistic phases of the age. The doors were often divided into many panels of different sizes and each panel contained a different subject. Sometimes the doors were wholly without panels on one side and painted with a continuous polychrome landscape, while the obverse displayed numerous panels each one of which exhibited a landscape with an architectural feature or else, in the very small panels, a decorative repeat. The obverse of these interesting and characteristic doors is also a valuable study in mouldings. Again, there might be several large panels of Rococo outline enclosing polychrome and gilt decorative *motifs*. Doors of this description often bear eloquent evidence to the all-prevalent popularity of Chinoiserie during a certain epoch of Italian interior decoration. On the gold background are painted Chinese figures and sundry other Oriental *motifs*, but, curiously enough, the connecting arabesques are of unmistakably Renaissance provenance and betray the peculiarly local Italian touch of interpretation. No matter what method of ornamentation might be employed for the embellishment of doors, the Italian decorators were fully alive to the importance of the door as an effective means of enrichment and they failed not to make the most of their opportunities in this direction, a practice that we in our day are only beginning to appreciate.

Along with the decoration of the door, and closely related to it, was the use of the overdoor panel wrought with some painted *motif* or else the employment of some sculptured overdoor embellishment in wood or stone or marble. The painted overdoor panels showed much the same kind of treatment as was to be seen on the painted doors themselves or on the painted panels inserted in the walls and surrounded with mouldings.

During the eighteenth century vastly more attention was paid to carefully draped and hung door and window hangings than had formerly been the case. As a suitable capping to these hangings, carefully designed lambrequins and valances were often used and lent an additional touch of elegance.

Furniture and Decoration.—As furniture design is always more sensitive to stylistic changes than is architecture, and registers them much more promptly, we are prepared to find the eighteenth century Italian mobiliary record showing all the characteristic indications of the age (*v.* illustrations in Part III), which have already been noted in the introductory section at the beginning of the chapter. The femininity of the period manifested in a variety of forms that were obviously designed to win the approval of feminine patronage; the urbanity, subtlety and opulence of contour as contrasted with the strength of line, boldness and dignity of aspect, proceeding from vigorous conception, observable in the former centuries of heroic ability and originality; the plenitude of decoration and the diversity of decorative processes utilised—all these peculiarities figured prominently in the mobiliary *ensemble* of the era. While furniture proportions ranged all the way from studied elegance to downright dumpy stodginess reminiscent of the physique of some of the *contadini,* it must be conceded that even the frequent stoutness of dimensions was generally coupled with great suavity, grace and subtlety of line. In almost all cases, the furniture of the day possessed the admirable quality of domesticity alongwiththe amiable,sunny urbanity of its genial makers. And just because of its pliability of character and its easy domesticity it lends itself with peculiar readiness to modern uses in manifold environ-

ments where the architectural background is not insistently rigid in its emphasis.

If we miss the well-nigh heroic qualities and vigour of so much of the earlier work, yet we are to some degree compensated by an ingenuous and companionable informality, a measure of adaptability not there before, a frequent dash of refreshing playfulness and a facile decorative value. Whether eighteenth century Italian furniture was daintily elegant or most informally domestic, it was always polite. The table manners of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were vigorous and effective, but not pretty nor pleasant; lacking what we nowadays consider the indispensables of table appointment, people fell back upon first principles, used their fingers freely, got greasy chins and even picked their teeth at the table. In the eighteenth century table refinements had very appreciably advanced and, though folk somewhat came short of the straightforward creative virility of an earlier day, their manners were vastly more elegant and agreeable. Furniture has always faithfully reflected the social life of the period. Eighteenth century Italian furniture was no exception to the rule and, though it may be accused of occasional artificiality and the lack of marked originality of design, it invariably exhibited that urbanity of aspect that was suited to the politer habits of the generation that used it.

At the very beginning of the eighteenth century, the last traces of old Italian vigour and individuality were observable in the lines of furniture that closely corresponded with a well-known contemporary William and Mary type in England—the type presenting straight, tapered legs, square, octagonal or round, and shaped stretchers—an heritage from the Baroque school of influence. This type was soon succeeded by forms of

conspicuously curvilinear dominance (Plate 22 A) corresponding pretty closely with the Queen Anne and early Georgian manifestations in England. The mellowness of contour in much of this furniture is singularly commendable and engaging.

As to the great variety of contours to be met with throughout the century, it is well for the reader to remember that analogies in form between Italian furniture and contemporary types in England and France were sufficiently close to enable anyone with a fair knowledge of French and English mobiliary developments to classify Italian pieces chronologically and to understand their affinities and concomitant decorative phenomena. Whatever we find in English and French furniture—Queen Anne forms, evidences of "the Chinese taste," Chippendale elaborations, Adam, Hepplewhite and Sheraton refinements, Louis Quinze frivolities, Louis Seize classicism, the pedantic literalness of the Directoire or the pomp and occasional bombast of the Empire—that we are almost certain to find echoed also in the Italian furniture of the same date.

The least happy and prepossessing of all the eighteenth century Italian furniture manifestations were the adaptations of the Louis Quinze Rococo extravagances and exaggerations. The French prototypes, when once they escaped from the discreet and cunning hands of master designers, might descend—a fact we have all too often been obliged to witness—to shallow weakness, flippancy, or even positive imbecility. The Italian emulators of the less inspired Louis Quinze models might arrive at any of the faults just mentioned and, in addition, complete the *débacle* by achieving a result either grotesque or simperingly flaccid. The foregoing strictures, of course, do not apply to well-executed pieces patterned after worthy Louis Quinze models—and

there were such, endowed with real beauty. Unfortunately, however, the ill-favoured kind were in the majority.

Of altogether different calibre was the type of furniture that succeeded when the revival of Classicism made itself felt about the middle of the century. Thence onward there was genuine and almost universal artistic merit in the handiwork of the Italian chair and cabinet makers. The square-backed seating furniture is worthy of special praise and either originals dating from this time or reproductions are among some of the best decorative assets to which the present generation has fallen heir. A great proportion of the contemporary cabinet work was not less lovely both in point of refined contour and in the matter of the decoration bestowed. The later Directoire and Empire manifestations likewise were dignified in contour and highly agreeable in their decoration.

It must be remembered that the eighteenth century Italians were an highly polished and cultured people, habitually accustomed to all the elegancies and refinements of life. In this respect they were second to none. It was at this period that the sons of the English gentry and nobility were customarily sent to take the "grand tour," after they had completed their course at the universities, as an indispensable crowning touch to their education. Their stay in Italy was regarded as peculiarly conducive to a humanising result and their intercourse with educated Italians was deemed a *sine qua non* to the broadening of their intellectual outlook. Under such conditions, then, it would be folly to imagine that the Italians should in any wise fall short of the most punctiliously complete sumptuary equipment. The eighteenth century, so often referred to in English history as the very heyday of fine furniture making

and refinements of domestic art, was an age indeed when everything in the realm of furniture was highly specialised and when every requirement was satisfied by a piece of furniture especially designed to meet it. This condition, with which we are all more or less familiar in its English aspect, was quite as prevalent elsewhere and a fully itemised tale of all the furnishing accessories commonly made use of in the equipment of a well-appointed Italian household of the period would make a list far too long to give in this place. Nor is there any real need to do so. (For detailed information on this subject the reader is referred to "The Practical Book of Italian, Spanish and Portuguese Furniture," Eberlein and McClure, now in preparation.) It will suffice if we direct attention to some of the most characteristic pieces. Under the general classification of wall furniture, besides the standard complement of bedsteads, wardrobes, secretaries, bureau-bookcases, bookcases, chests of drawers, dressing stands, chests, cabinets and cupboards to be found in use in every country, especial heed should be paid to the numerous forms of corner cabinets, to the sundry types of bedside tables, to the *credenze,* console cabinets and consoles, to the *prie-dieus,* to the writing tables and to the spinet cases. Under the head of seating furniture and tables we meet with an uncommonly rich diversity of chairs, sofas, window seats, stools, benches and a great variety of tables, many of them of exceedingly ingenious contrivance for occasional or special uses.

The quarter circle corner cabinets or cupboards, hanging or standing upon legs; the *bombé* front corner cabinet; the shaped front full length corner cupboards; the highly decorated wardrobes; the Venetian *credenze;* the large and small consoles and sets of consoles;

the bedside tables and manifold other special small tables—all of these are fascinating in themselves and should be especially investigated because they impart a distinctly characteristic local note to eighteenth century Italian interior decoration and also because they will prove fruitful sources of inspiration by which we may profit in our own present-day decorative ventures.

The decorative processes commonly employed to enrich the furniture of the eighteenth century were inlay of woods in contrasting colours, inlay with mosaics and marbles, inlay of engraved bone—an heritage from Spanish precedents and also from Venetian practice based upon examples imported from the East—marqueterie, lacquer, polychrome painting, gilding both in combination with the natural wood and in conjunction with painting, inlay in conjunction with traced and painted devices, *sgraffito* painting with gilding—a practice, which, however, had become almost obsolete—the application of printed and coloured paper devices upon a painted or lacquered ground, the application of panels painted on canvas to a painted ground and, finally, carving, the latter being one of the most important decorative resources, as was universally the case in all European countries. Nearly all of these processes were conducive to the production of brilliant chromatic effects and we are quite justified in regarding Italian furniture of the eighteenth century as one of the strongest and most facile exponents of the intense national sense and love of colour. In considering the mobiliary productions of the period a convenient division may be made of those pieces in which the natural colour and grain of the wood appear; and, secondly, of those in which the whole body is covered with an applied ground of colour. (Full details of all the aforementioned processes are contained in "The Practical Book of

Italian, Spanish and Portuguese Furniture," already mentioned.)

The decorative devices used as *motifs* in the application of the foregoing decorative processes were numerous and widely varied but seemed to enjoy periods of special favour and follow each other in cycles of fashion. Very early in the century we find a predilection for the fine-leaved foliated scroll inlay, somewhat analogous to the seaweed marqueterie of the late William and Mary epoch in England, but derived from precedents of Venetian provenance. There were also Baroque scrolls, cockleshells and cartouches which afforded fruitful opportunities for adaptation. Early in the century, also, about the time when "the Chinese taste" was exerting a powerful influence upon popular fancy, we find the decorators having recourse to tea houses, bridges, pagodas, mandarins, coolies and ladies of Cathay adopted bodily without other alteration than was inevitable from an Occidental touch in the process of execution, and, still more did the Italian decorators levy upon the *motifs* taken from Chinese vases in the shape of light panels, reserved on a deeper ground of another colour, and an infinity of small polychrome flowers. These small flowers of obviously Chinese inspiration were also plentifully supplemented by small flowers and leaves of a more naturalistic European source in drawing and colour. Many of these floral decorations were minute in scale and, abundantly spread over the surface to be decorated, gave the effect of a powdered design. The Venetians, even late in the century, manifested a marked fondness for this type of embellishment.

The Italians have always evinced an attachment to stripes and chequerings, and stripes and chequerings, ingeniously and effectively disposed and often with

the greatest delicacy, recur again and again, very frequently along with herring bone borders of alternating colours, throughout the period. Foliations of various sorts, *guilloche* bands, rosettes and sundry forms of acanthus had an almost uninterrupted vogue, especially in carved work.

With the return of a strong Classic impetus about the middle of the century there was naturally a reversion to Classic *motifs*. From this time onward we find concurrently employed not only the devices drawn directly from the pure well-spring of Greek and Roman antiquity but also the more mixed devices of the Renaissance—arabesques, grotesques, masques, amorini, chimæras and the like along with acanthus and other foliated forms. Late in the century we come to the vogue for griffin and military attributes that marked the Directoire and Empire phases. During the whole period landscapes of one sort or another were in continuous use, from the pastoral subjects of the mid century, in emulation of Watteau, to the strangely diversified paper *appliqué* creations that remind one of decalcomanias.

Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations—In this fully furnished century, so amply provided with all other items of movable equipment, the sundry accessories of furnishing are correspondingly numerous and divers. In their tale are to be reckoned carpets and rugs, pictures, the most elaborate and varied sconces, mirrors and girandoles, hangings not only such as tapestries, embroideries and decorative *appliqué* on fabrics of rich colour and texture but also the hangings of silks, brocades and velvets along with embroidered and *appliqué* valances, all of which belonged more definitely in the realm of upholstery; sculptures in the shape of statuary and beautifully modelled urns and vases,

Chinese porcelain jars and vases, multi-coloured maiolica plaques and bright-hued jars of large size, candelabra, standards and other objects of deftly wrought ironwork enriched with parcel colouring and gilt, and ornate chandeliers which in the eighteenth century had begun to assume an importance and popularity in decorative schemes far beyond the wont of earlier periods. Surely a goodly array of resources to aid the interior decorator!

Materials and Colour.—The materials called into service for furnishings included woods of many varieties and colours along with bone, mosaic and marbles for inlay and the metal mounts employed; ironwork in sundry forms; marble for the stately benches and other monumental and exceedingly formal articles of furniture used in halls and also the marble used in sculpture and for table and console tops; the costly textures for tapestries, hangings and carpets; and an almost endless list of silks, velvets, brocades, satins, brocatelles and other fabrics used for upholstery and hangings.

Among the woods walnut seems always to have retained its ascendency, although mahogany enjoyed a vogue by no means inconsiderable. In addition to these we find a frequent recourse to sycamore, rosewood, lemon wood and a long list of other woods of more or less rarity which were in demand for their striking colour or beautiful grain. For the painted furniture, cypress, pine and similar so-called "meaner woods" were used, although it is by no means an uncommon thing to find decorations painted over a ground of walnut or mahogany.

Among the textures in use, apart from the tapestries, probably the most striking and the most indicative of the spirit of the century were the Aubusson carpets, while the fabrics for upholstery from the looms

of Genoa, Milan and Venice ranged through every possibility of colour and pattern which one could imagine.

In the matter of the use and distribution of colour, it is to be noted that while full, rich and vivid colouring was in favour at the beginning of the century, a taste for lighter, paler, more subdued colours and less vigorous contrasts became apparent as the century progressed, although the Italian colour taste, even at its most restrained period, cannot be said to have been at all anæmic. The same phenomenon was to be witnessed in the decoration of painted furniture, much of which at an early date exhibited a body colour of vigorous tone, while the later pieces almost invariably displayed a ground of lighter hue, there being observable a marked preference for pale greens, lavender, whitish yellow, pale blue or bluish white against which the designs stood out in strong relief. It may be noted also that the Venetians showed a partiality for the lighter toned furniture, while painted furniture of Roman or Tuscan origin often showed an heavier and deeper ground colour.

Arrangement.—Considering all the wealth of resources at hand, the temptation to forsake early principles and the practice of restraint can at least be understood if not sympathised with. Though overdressing was not an invariable fault of the eighteenth century, and especially late eighteenth century, Italian rooms, it must be admitted that they often contained an unfortunate surplus of fitments and that popular taste too often seemed to revel in the satisfactions afforded by individual pieces rather than in the qualities of the composition as an whole. The foregoing criticism is not to be taken as an unqualified condemnation of all the methods of the period or even of a majority of the

decorative practice. There was frequently exhibited a genuine sense of restraint, a distinct appreciation of simplicity and a due reverence for symmetrical arrangements and there were many admirable examples of good taste and judgment furnished, but it is unfortunately necessary to admit that the eighteenth century, despite all its marvellous excellence, saw the beginning of the inclination to condone tawdriness which has spoiled so many really admirable Italian things of subsequent date.

CHAPTER V

INTERIOR DECORATION IN SPAIN PRIOR TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTERIOR decoration in Spain prior to the eighteenth century presents a curious combination of Moorish characteristics, on the one hand, and of Renaissance and Baroque features on the other.

In considering this subject, one must bear in mind the peculiarly conservative character of the Spanish people, their almost religious attachment to time-honoured usage and precedent, and their fixed aversion from change, especially when the change has no stronger sanction than the mere compliance with a newly-set fashion.

The wherewithal to have what other nations of the period would have deemed fully furnished and even sumptuous interiors was not lacking. The inclination, however, was towards a paucity of movables. For generations, people had been wont to sit upon cushions on the floor. This was a Moorish custom, to be sure, but Moorish customs had permeated Christian Spain and Christians held to the custom with the same tenacity as the Moors themselves, among whom the usage had more or less religious obligation.

Therefore chairs and seating furniture in general were not so commonly used as in other places. Consequently, there was one factor accounted for that contributed to the comparative austerity and bareness of the Spanish interior. It was a matter of principle with the Moors not to cumber their apartments with articles they did not definitely need. And they were simple

in their habits and did not need much. Here, again, was another cause for the characteristic austerity and restraint of the Spanish interior.

Let the reader not imagine, however, that a sixteenth or seventeenth century interior in Spain lacked either richness or interest. Both characteristics were present in a pronounced degree. Concentrated enrichment, and the interest attaching thereto, gathered intensity by contrast with an austere environment which acted as a foil.

In studying Spanish exterior architecture of the early Renaissance, one cannot fail to be deeply impressed by the wonderfully rich effect of the intricate, lace-like carving of a doorway set in a severely plain wall without a trace of other decoration to break its expanse. Much the same phenomenon of sharp contrast was repeated inside the houses where the marvellous cabinets, for which Spain was deservedly famous, had their sumptuous splendour accented by the complete absence of all elements that could in any way detract from their preëminence. The eye was involuntarily focussed there and compelled to take in what was presented to it.

Another factor contributory to interest and enrichment was the frequent use of expanses of gorgeously polychrome tiling (Plate 23 B), at times almost barbaric in its bewildering splendour of colour and pattern. This heritage of Moorish civilisation was incorporated with the Renaissance forms that prevailed in the sixteenth century.

Architectural Background and Fixed Decoration.— If the sixteenth and seventeenth century Spaniards had not the frescoed or marble-encrusted walls of the Italians of the same period, nor the wood-panelled walls of the French and English, and had instead plain plas-

ter walls (Plates 23 A and 24), or walls relieved for a portion of their height by multi-coloured tiling or by dados of painted canvas or cloth, their rooms, nevertheless, were by no means lacking in mural interest.

Love of strong colour and of vivid contrast and trenchant design is deeply implanted in the Spanish disposition and this chromatic taste was amply satisfied by the variety of hangings with which they adorned the walls of their apartments in lieu of embellishment incorporated in the actual wall structure. No nation, perhaps, was ever more addicted to the profuse display of wall hangings.

There were, to begin with, tapestries, for tapestries were the common possession of all civilised countries and were esteemed alike in all. There were "fine Italian hangings," which meant brocades, damasks and velvet, the last named of which materials, when hung as a wall embellishment, was usually enriched with embroidery in the form of *appliqué* medallions, cartouches and the like, with an appropriate accompaniment of scrolls, tendrils and arabesques of gold thread or gold galons. When the ground was a rich crimson or a full, brilliant green velvet, this form of wall decoration, often enlivened with armorial bearings as a part of the *appliqué* needlework, was both dignified and effective.

There were painted canvas hangings which presented both vivid colour and emphatic design. There were painted and scalloped canvas friezes or scalloped velvet frieze hangings rich with gold braid and fringe. There was—and this was peculiarly distinctive of Spain, although the fashion afterwards spread to other countries—the gorgeous stamped and engraved leather, polychromed and, later on, polychromed and gilt. The skins were either sewed together to make hangings or

A. SPANISH RENAISSANCE INTERIOR
Plain Plaster Walls with Moulded and Panelled Door Trims. Baroque Influence Showing in Door at Left
Courtesy of "Vogue"

B. WALLS PARTIALLY ENCRUSTED IN SPANISH MANNER WITH POLYCHROME GLAZED TILES MADE AT TALAVERA 1600–1700
Courtesy of Henry Chapman Mercer, Esq., Font Hill, Doylestown, Bucks, Pennsylvania

SPANISH RENAISSANCE ROOM WITH PLAIN PLASTER WALLS AND PILLARED CHIMNEY PIECE
Furniture Renaissance and Baroque
Courtesy of "Vogue"

else the pieces of leather were applied directly to the wall. Add to these, "India fabrics," doubtless brought in from Portugal, "delicate summer hangings," Toledo cloths, red and yellow and Roman linens, and it becomes quite plain that the Spanish interior, although it might display certain evidences of austerity, at times, and a sparseness of movables as compared with the fashions of other countries, was by no means void of interest.

In the seventeenth century, the Italian "domino" paper, in small sections, was sometimes applied to the walls, as it was also in Italy and France, its mottled or marbleised pattern and colouring having always found favour in the Iberian peninsula.

Fireplaces showed practically the same lines of structure and ornamentation as were to be noted in Italy and France during the same period, there being, of course, some evidences of national interpretation in the matter of details. In this connexion it should be noted that the brasier was so essential an item of equipment that it may almost be regarded as a part of the fixed outfit. The brasier was generally an ornate specimen of brass craftsmanship, chased, engraved and embossed, supported either on an high stand, so that the hands might conveniently be warmed at its rim, or on a low stand where feet could be toasted. The stands were of wrought iron or of turned and carved walnut.

The beams of the ceilings and the panels of doors Plate 23 A) were especially favourite objects of decorative enrichment and were often intricately carved or inlaid. The facility for working in small panel divisions, with telling decorative effect, was an accomplishment learned from the Moors, and the practice was retained and elaborated with happy results. The carving on doors and on ceiling beams was not seldom enhanced by the application of colour and gilding as well. The

floors were of tiles, stone and wood. During the seventeenth century some gorgeously coloured hard woods were brought from the Spanish colonies and incorporated in the parquetted floorings.

Wrought ironwork, in the form of grilles for windows and openings and as handrails, frequently added a decorative emphasis of strong character. The design and workmanship of these bits of ironwork were admirable. Colour and gilding were generally added to them.

Furniture and Decoration.—The two most significant and characteristic items of Spanish Renaissance furniture were the chest and the *vargueño* cabinet (*v.* illustration in Part III). There were chests of all varieties and shapes and contrived for all purposes. There were no less than seven distinct classifications into which they could be divided. Of these, the bride's chest was deemed an absolutely indispensable piece of household equipment—very much like a marriage certificate, in fact—whatever other chests might or might not be represented in an inventory of possessions.

In addition to the chests, which usually manifested conspicuous marks of national taste, there were the *vargueño* cabinets and the *papeleras,* both of which were set on stands. The *vargueño* cabinet had a drop front, hinged at the bottom, which could be used to write upon, and the inside contained tiers of small drawers. It was, in a word, the direct ancestor of the later drop front secretary. The inside of the *vargueño* was generally a splendid blaze of bone inlay, brilliant colour and gold. The *papelera* (Plate 140) was a cabinet of small drawers but had no drop front. It, likewise, was often decorated in a gorgeous and colourful manner.

Besides these, there were hanging cabinets or cupboards, massive walnut tables (Plate 24) of many varieties, settles, benches, stools and chairs. Some of the chests were covered with velvet strained tightly over the wood—bright green was a favourite colour—with gilded iron mounts and ornamental bands or studding.

The characteristic contours and *motifs* of decoration indicated the gradual transition from Renaissance, or Renaissance mingled with Moorish, forms to Baroque conceptions. The dimensions and structure of the period were bold and substantial. Walnut was the staple and favourite material, although oak and chestnut were used also in cabinetwork and occasionally pine likewise.

The mounts and studdings, both of brass and of wrought iron, gilt or plain, were especially indicative of sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish form conception and added a very appreciable share to the rich and striking effect of the interiors of the period.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—Tapestries and other hangings were discussed in the section dealing with fixed decoration because their function was permanent rather than otherwise. It is only necessary to add, with respect to hangings, that canopies of green or crimson velvet or brocade, fringed with gold, often played a conspicuous rôle when they were hung over seats or tables of state. Damask, velvet and lace for table covers, embroideries, Cuenca green cloth, Spanish carpets and Turkey carpets, as items in the inventory of fabrics afforded considerable resources of vivid colour.

Large pictures, both portraits and religious paintings, occupied a prominent place in decorative schemes. Porcelains came in through Portuguese trade with the

Orient and were highly prized; maiolica pottery of admirable colour, design and shape, was made in considerable quantity in Spain as well as the glazed tiles; glass vessels of large size and good shape, cut, engraved and sometimes gilded, were also made in Spain and had distinct decorative value; finally, the Spanish smiths were unsurpassed in their manipulation of brass and iron, from which they fashioned candlesticks, candelabra, sconces, chandeliers (Plate 24), brasiers and a host of lesser accessories for various purposes, all of which, in both metals, were wrought with a fascinating invention.

Materials and Colour.—The texture of materials, their contrast with their structural background, and the emphasis of their colour, were such essential parts of the *ensemble* in the composition of a sixteenth or seventeenth century Spanish interior that one can scarcely dissociate them from the actual architectural structure.

The velvets, plain and figured, the brocades and damasks, and the linens, imported from Italy were supplemented by Oriental fabrics brought by Portuguese traders from India and China, and by the gay-coloured cloths and carpets woven at Toledo, Cuenca or Alcaroz.

The colours were vivid and rich to the fullest degree. This applied to the leathers as well as to textiles. As to pattern, it should be noted that while the vigorous and somewhat large figures, so generally to be found in Italy, in France and in England, and which were quite consistent in scale with the colouring in which they were interpreted, were also approved in Spain, at the same time, the Moorish tradition for fine interlacing pattern and compact distribution and the Indian tendency toward attenuation with a certain openness

of design, both disposed the Spaniard to an appreciation of refinement as well as vigour in pattern.

Arrangement.—The one important lesson in arrangement to be learned from Spanish interiors is that their restraint in the number of objects employed, and the consequent necessity of wide open spaces for pieces to stand alone, contributed to dignity and served also to enhance the decorative balance of each object when there was nothing to detract from its individual effect.

CHAPTER VI

INTERIOR DECORATION IN SPAIN DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE eighteenth century so far as Spanish invention in architecture or decorative art was concerned was a singularly barren period. Spain had nothing to contribute beyond a few evidences of national interpretation of styles she had borrowed, mainly from France, but to some extent from England and Italy also.

It is scarcely too much to say that the well of Spanish invention, which had contributed so handsomely and so generously to the common international sum of decorative art in former centuries, was now pumped dry and that a period of creative stagnation followed. The Rococo and Neo-Classic phases of Spanish decoration were but reflections of what was going on in France, in Italy and in England.

Style development simply followed the procession and added only a few local touches in the matter of unimportant details. In the east of Spain and in the Balearic Islands, regions most in contact with active trade relations, the craftsmen added certain delicate elaborations to patterns that came from other sources, but, considered by and large, Spain had nothing new of great consequence to give.

Architectural Background and Fixed Decoration.— Spanish conservatism held on to precedents that had prevailed in former centuries and the architectural backgrounds, influenced by this tenacity of usage, presented much the same features as mentioned in the previous chapter. Tastes remained the same; the mode

PLATE 25

SPANISH INTERIOR WITH BAROQUE AND ROCOCO FURNITURE (CHAIR IN ARCHWAY, EMPIRE)
Courtesy of "Vogue"

of expression only was modified to meet the sway of current fashion.

Plain walls (Plate 25) with their applied fabric decorations or hangings continued. The love of vivid colour was unchanged and the facility for compounding striking contrasts, without falling into the snare of garishness, was little abated. Stamped and polychromed leather for wall embellishment passed out of use and this was a loss to be deplored.

Fireplaces and chimney-pieces suffered the same subduing process they underwent in other countries. During the Rococo period, mirrors as a factor in wall decoration came into play for panelling and for incorporation as overmantel features.

Doors were still decorated in a somewhat distinctive manner and the plastered ceilings were painted and gilt without the same success of restraint as similar decorations usually exhibited in France. In many of these exotic features, which the Spaniards had borrowed, they showed an unfortunate tendency to exaggeration. They were not dealing with things akin to their genius and they made frequent mistakes in consequence.

The flooring materials were the same as in the foregoing centuries, except that the various-coloured woods from the Spanish colonies came more and more into use and that wood was preferred to the sterner materials for flooring purposes.

Furniture and Decorations.—Practically every phase of furniture known in England, France or Italy during the eighteenth century was represented by an analogous Spanish type (Plate 25 and illustrations in Part III). The items in use and the amount of equipment employed virtually corresponded to what would

be found in any well-appointed establishment in other countries.

The general design of the individual pieces of furniture was the same as elsewhere, but there was a distinct tendency to enlarge the proportions and make the structure heavier and even, at times, a bit stodgy. Bulk, therefore, did create a minor point of difference.

Also, the fashion happily persisted of covering chests and other similar receptacles with strained fabric and using thereon somewhat ample and elaborated mounts. The elaboration and diversity of mounts, however, never equalled the mark set by Spanish cabinet-makers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries nor the performance of contemporary French designers.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—An inventory of these items would tally almost precisely with the items of a similar inventory prepared in France, England or Italy, and as most of the articles of *vertu* were now imported, or if made by native craftsmen, were copied from foreign models, there is little that was distinctive to point to, with a few trifling exceptions, such as the Bilboa mirrors with the marbleised *gesso* frames.

Materials and Colours.—Precisely similar conditions of decorative stagnation obtained with reference to materials and colours, except that Spanish colonial possessions supplied the mother country with some exceptionally fine decorative woods, which the cabinet-makers fortunately availed themselves of now and again.

As to all else, the Spanish taste of the time is to be gauged merely by what it selected; and as, in many cases, the Spaniard was working with materials and colours not germane to his peculiar national genius, he

often failed to make the happiest choice or effect the most felicitous combinations.

Arrangement.—Spanish decoration of the earlier period was distinguished for its wholesome reticence in the number of articles used and by the really strategic manner in which they were disposed to compass the greatest effect.

Eighteenth century ideals of arrangement, being borrowed along with all the material properties, failed to exhibit that erstwhile happy trait and Spanish rooms unfortunately often fell into an unedifying condition of tawdry formality.

CHAPTER VII

INTERIOR DECORATION IN FRANCE PRIOR TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION.—The story of interior decoration in France prior to the eighteenth century begins with a phase in which the body was Gothic and the clothes Renaissance; it ends with the full development of Baroque grandiosity and elaboration in what was known as the "Grand Manner" under the lavish patronage and control of Louis XIV, who evinced an extraordinary interest in decoration and regarded decorative pomp and magnificence as indispensable adjuncts of his court.

The military farings of Charles VIII into Italy, at the end of the fifteenth century, opened the door to a great influx of Italian Renaissance influences into France and fostered an appetite for the refinements of Classicism in decoration and architecture, a vivid recollection of which the returning expeditionaries brought back with them. The motives of the expedition were military; the chief results were cultural. Further expeditions into Italy on the part of the French kings who succeeded Charles had the same outcome. Kings, nobles, and soldiery alike had gazed upon the fruits of the Italian Renaissance only to become enamoured of them and imbued with a determination to emulate them in their own land and for their own behoof.

Besides the returning nobles and soldiery, other important factors that served to spread the Renaissance influence in France were the missions and embassies to Italian courts, Italian missions to the French

court, and a growing influx of Italian bankers and merchants who brought in their train sundry articles of "goldsmiths' work, medals and cameos, books, pictures, furniture and intarsias, casts and bronze work, terra-cottas and majolica," all of which "helped to accustom French eyes to Renaissance forms." The sincere admiration of French travellers and ambassadors for what they saw in Italy is typically voiced in the words of Philippe de Comines who, in 1495, conducted a mission to Venice which he described as "the most triumphant citie that ever I sawe" and enthusiastically wrote of the Grand Canal, "Sure in my opinion, it is the goodliest streete in the world and the best built."

But even more important than the agencies just mentioned, in completing Italy's peaceful conquest of France, were the lessons French artists learnt in Italy and the things that Italian artists and artificers taught in France. During the fifteenth century there were comparatively few Italians in France; "but from its closing years onwards a continuous stream of architects and engineers, decorators and all manner of artificers poured across the Alps, beginning with Charles VIII's colonies at Amboise and Tours, and continued by that of Francis I at Paris and Fontainebleau."

Generous royal patronage and, to some extent, the patronage of great and wealthy nobles played a significant part in the Renaissance development of the decorative arts in France. The colonies of Italian artificers established and maintained by Charles VIII and Francis I were only the first instances of this royal interest and support. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the crown, either directly or else indirectly through its ministers, gave substantial encouragement to decorative progress. This whole

architectural and decorative development in France during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries may be divided into five phases of style. The dates are to some degree approximate as there were necessarily overlappings and survivals.

The Style Louis XII, 1495–1515 (Charles VIII, 1483–1498; Louis XII, 1498–1515; contemporary rulers in England, Henry VII and Henry VIII) embraced the beginnings of Italian Renaissance influence—the decking of the Gothic body in Renaissance clothes—and marked the incorporation of a few of the delicate characteristics of the Tuscan school, a school marked by a "certain austerity . . . and a rather minute type of ornament, evolved by a race of architects of goldsmith training." The Style Louis XII was only a preliminary phase, a feeling of the way.

The second phase is known as the Style of Francis I, 1515–1545 (Francis I, 1515–1547: Henry VIII contemporary ruler in England) marked the complete fusion (Plate 26) of the native French elements and the Lombard Renaissance forms, the latter representing a style of eminent "charm and delicacy" exuberant with the devising of new features and impressive both from its wealth of ornament and the "beauty of its detail."

The Style Henry II, 1530–1590, the third stage of development (Henri II, 1547–1559; Francis II, 1559–1560; Charles IX, 1560–1574; Henri III, 1574–1589; Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, contemporary rulers in England), which followed in close succession, saw the assimilation of the Roman phase of the Renaissance, that phase which took shape in Rome during the last quarter of the fifteenth century and continued dominant during the first quarter of the sixteenth. The mature Roman phase, inspired by a more

systematic study of ancient monuments, and "pruned of earlier exuberances," "became bolder, surer, more balanced in its composition, gaining in calm monumentality and masculine strength what it lost in youthful vitality and variety of decorative motives."

The three foregoing phases belong wholly and purely to the Renaissance in all their characteristics of style except in so far as chance Gothic traits survived here and there. Of the two that follow, the former embodied the beginnings of Baroque influence and its commingling with the ripe Renaissance conceptions; the latter comprised the full fruition of the Baroque mode and its complete ascendancy over the purer and more restrained forms of Renaissance provenance.

The Style Henri IV and Louis XIII, 1590–1660 (Henri IV, 1589–1610; Louis XIII, 1610–1643: Elizabeth, James I, and Charles I, contemporary rulers in England) was a phase of fusion when curvilinear forms and bolder, heavier detail began gradually to make their progress into popular favour.

The Style Louis XIV, 1640–1710 (Louis XIII, 1610–1643; Louis XIV, 1643–1715: Charles II, James II, William and Mary, and Queen Anne, contemporary rulers in England) marked the apotheosis of ponderous curves and scrolls, singly and in combination, of pomposity, redundance, oftentimes heaviness of detail and all that conceptions of superabundant splendour could devise to create the "Grand Manner." What was naturally imposing, the exponents of Baroque essayed to make more so and did not hesitate to create structure for the sole purpose of carrying their massive decorations which were, it is true, mightily imposing but could scarcely be called logical. The exaggerations of this period belong to the earlier portion (1610–1650). Directly the influence of Louis XIV began to make itself

felt there was far more restraint and the style was perceptibly tempered by an infusion of Classicism and a more studied sobriety in composition.

During all this period of five phases there was a steady and rapid development in the technical mastery of decorative processes and resources which combined to make the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in French decorative art one of the most resplendent epochs in history.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the rooms of French *châteaux* and houses were commonly of large size. Indeed, they were often oppressively so, especially in the formal and grandiose days of Louis XIV. As was natural, and in fact necessary under the circumstances, the fixed or architectural background formed a vitally important part of the composition. The ceilings were lofty.

Style Louis XII.—In the interiors of the Style Louis XII the embrasured windows were of good size, had either square heads or very flat elliptical arches, and were usually two lights wide, divided in the centre by a substantial vertical stone mullion, intersected by one or more transverse mullions or transomes. The casements were of metal. In the less important rooms oiled linen or oiled paper were used; in the better rooms the casements were glazed with roundels or with small quarries set in lead. Inside shutters were used and, in some cases, the lower lights had also perforated outside shutters. Door heads, like window heads, were square or had flat elliptical arches.

Walls were sometimes panelled, either wholly or in part, with small panels, but were more commonly of stone or plaster, which might be painted or frescoed, but they were more frequently relieved by hangings

of painted cloth or canvas or by tapestries and embroideries. *Complete* schemes of permanent decoration were rather exceptions than otherwise but gradually came more and more into vogue under spreading Italian influence. The *motifs* used in the panelling, medallions and other carved, sculptured or moulded features of door and window trim or wall decoration were a medley of Gothic and Renaissance details.

Fireplaces, with their surmounting chimney-pieces, afforded an opportunity for rich and imposing structure and a wealth of carved detail. Some of the structures left the fire largely exposed at the sides, the hood receding upwards from a bold vertical mantel whose weight was carried on half-piers or corbels; other overmantel structures consisted of an elaborate pilastered and panelled architectural composition carried up vertically part or all of the way to the ceiling and resting on a vigorous vertical mantel which, in turn, was supported on a pillared substructure that left only the front of the fireplace open.

Ceilings were either vaulted, with a more or less complicated system of ribbing, or else of wooden construction with the timbers, as a rule, exposed to view. At times the timbers were concealed by temporary cloth or tapestry testers attached by hooks. In other cases, the ceiling timbers were boarded in the manner of a barrel vault with wooden rib divisions. Panelled wood ceilings, with square, hexagon or octagon-shaped panels, affixed to the under side of joists gradually appeared as a result of Italian influence and were frequently enriched with colour and gilding.

Flooring consisted of stone slabs, of bricks, of encaustic tiles and also, as a direct outcome of Italian teaching, of maiolica tiles and of parquetted wood.

Style Francis I.—The most numerous type of win-

dow in the Francis I style was square-headed. An occasional variation was the rounding of the shoulders. This detail, however, chiefly appeared outside and did not affect the interior aspect. Besides these, there were also in lesser number round-arched windows and windows with flat elliptical-arched tops. The windows were generally large, two lights wide, and divided vertically by a mullion which was crossed by a transverse mullion or transome, nearer the top than the bottom, thus forming a cross, hence the name *fenêtre croisée*. There were also smaller windows without mullions, square-headed, and filled by two full-length casements. Besides the leaded quarries or roundels in the metal casements, stained-glass cartoons were occasionally introduced. Door heads corresponded in shape to window heads and above the door heads carved or sculptured decoration was often added.

As in the preceding style, walls were panelled wholly or in part (Plate 26), stone-faced, or plastered. At times the plaster surface above the panelled wainscot was embellished by reliefs in stucco-duro (Plates 26 and 27). Paint and fresco adornment, as previously, were sometimes employed, but *complete* permanent decorations were still, for the most part, to be found only in the houses of the very great and very wealthy and it remained a common practice to deck comparatively austere walls with tapestries or with painted cloth and canvas hangings that could be taken down at will and moved elsewhere. The chief features of the rooms, however—fireplaces, overdoors and the like—were accorded rich permanent treatment.

The panels for wainscotted walls and for other interior woodwork were generally small (Plate 27) and very frequently square in shape, defined by mouldings of low profile, in a manner strongly reminiscent of

WOODWORK AND PLASTERWORK, GALLERY, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE FRANCIS I

From "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

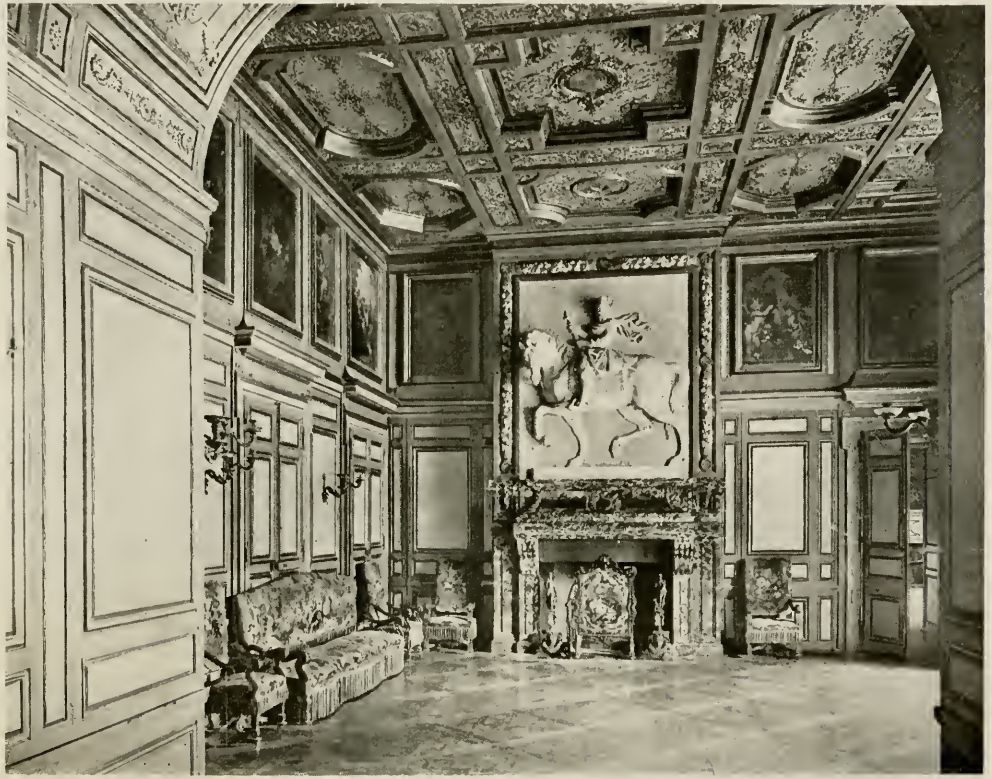
LONG GALLERY, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE FRANCIS I
From "Librarie D'Architecture and D'Art Decoratif," Armand Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

PLATE 28

FIREPLACE AND CHIMNEY PIECE, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE HENRI II

From "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," Guérinet

Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



HALL OF ST. LOUIS—FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE HENRI IV–LOUIS XIII
From "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

North Italian Renaissance panelling of an earlier date. The *motifs* with which the panels were often enriched, as well as other decorated woodwork and interior stone carving, included arabesques, pateræ, monograms (Plate 27), initials, emblems, mottoes on ribbon scrolls, cockleshells, ox skulls, plant forms and human and animal forms and heads. Gothic details had quite disappeared. All of these just mentioned, and others of similar nature, appeared more especially in chimney-piece carvings and in door trims and overdoor enrichments, where also one might find divers classic orders, of different scale, brought into the same composition without reference to classic precedent; capitals combining cornucopiæ, fanciful volutes and heads; and panelled pilasters enriched with arabesques, interlacing scrolls or strapwork, or with circles and lozenges, the former and latter of which were especially characteristic of Francis I decoration. The relief of all carved (Plate 26) ornament was almost invariably low and restrained, and the detail exceptionally refined.

Fireplaces were quite generally surmounted with a distinctly architectural chimney-piece composition carried up vertically to the ceiling. The chimney-piece of sculptured stone or carven wood displayed niches, canopies, pilasters, panelling and sculptured devices in impressive array above a suitable corresponding mantel carried on piers, corbels or caryatides.

Vaulted and stone slab ceilings were used in places that readily admitted their construction, but ceilings with exposed timbers and panelled ceilings were steadily becoming more and more the rule. The beamed and panelled wood ceilings were often divided up into small panels (Plate 27) and enriched with delicate carving or with colour and gold.

Stone, marble and encaustic tile floorings continued

in use, but parquetted wood floors (Plate 27) were winning wider and wider favour as were also the floors of Italian enamelled or maiolica tiles in bright colours or with divers subjects in colour on a white ground.

Style Henri II.—The Style Henri II marks the very height and flower of the French Renaissance, the climax to which all previous development was only preparatory. It is logical and straightforward in all its characteristics and its creations carry a sense of satisfaction and conviction unequalled by the work that preceded or followed. The composition of a room in this style possessed unity of conception and did not represent merely a more or less unrelated group of fixed decorative items.

Windows to a great extent retained their mullioned and transomed divisions and their two-light width, although mullions and transomes were not invariable, and square-headed windows without them and with two full-length casements were not uncommon. Round-arched windows also occurred to some extent. Panelled inside shutters were used. Door heads were of corresponding shape to window heads and over-door decoration often took the form of a pediment, either rectilinear or arc-shaped, with appropriate accompaniments.

While movable hangings, such as those mentioned in the review of the preceding styles, continued to some extent in use, permanent *complete* decorations (Plate 28) were much more common. Walls were often panelled, either wholly or in part, and the panelling, which tended to become larger and more diversified (Plate 28) in the shapes of its divisions, was not infrequently embellished with carving and gilding and sometimes also "with marqueterie of coloured woods, and inlays of ivory, ebony, precious metals and even of marble."

Oftentimes walls that had an high-panelled dado (Plate 28) were of decorated and moulded plaster above, with colour and gilding applied to the plaster relief, or else there were frescoes (Plate 28) framed in moulded plaster cartouches with all their attendant scroll embellishments. Again, whole wall surfaces were frescoed, or were hung with tapestries or decorated leather hangings which were framed in with stucco or plaster frames wrought in high relief and embellished with scrolls, strapwork and figures in the round. Wall coverings were also made from embossed and stamped leather decorated in the Spanish manner, polychromed and gilt in repeat patterns, and affixed to the wall. A much less pretentious wall covering, but one nevertheless capable of agreeable decorative effect when wisely used, was the Italian motley marbleised paper made in small squares and applied to the walls. This paper, similar in pattern to that used for book covers, was called "domino" paper and was made in Italy from the fifteenth century on.

The *motifs* employed for the sundry wall decorations—this includes likewise the adornments of the chimney-pieces and door trims—showed, for one thing, an increased use of the orders (Plate 28) in a systematised and consistent arrangement with due recognition of their proportions and parts. The combinations of members and forms were somewhat more restricted in variety than previously by a more conscientious attention to classic rules. Capitals, for instance, adhered more nearly to traditional types (Plate 28) and the variations from precedent were chiefly in minor matters such as the incorporation of monograms, sprays of foliage and the like. *Bay, olive, myrtle, oak, acanthus* and *palm* were the usual sorts of foliage. It was very significant and characteristic that pilasters were *fluted,*

or now and then *wreathed,* instead of being *panelled* and adorned with *arabesques* or with *circles* and *lozenges,* a treatment thoroughly indicative of the Francis I style. Strapwork, scrolls, interlacings, frets and running borders were among the "properties" in evidence.

While the profiles of mouldings and the cutting of all enrichments were cleanly and incisively wrought with extreme delicacy, a larger scale in general was adopted, patterns were less complex and "in the treatment of doors, shutters, panelling, and indeed all features, larger and bolder patterns were preferred, with a tendency to make of each a single, centralised design with one dominant feature, while the characteristic of the best rooms is the manner in which all the features were combined into a consistent whole." In other words, whereas the earlier styles had been largely methods of enriched decoration of spaces with small enrichments, the style of Henry II was far more architectural in its feeling and in its well-rounded scheme of composition.

The general contour and structure of the chimney-piece, which still continued the most significant single feature (Plate 28) in the room, remained substantially the same as previously. The only notable differences were that its composition was more closely governed by classic precedent and that it was not seldom executed in coloured marbles as well as in the stone or wood of former times.

Plaster ceilings had now come into high favour and were wrought with all the mastery of design and delicacy of finish of which the best Italian and Italian-taught French plasterers were capable. To the rare artistry of pattern and modelling these ceilings added the living glory of colour and gold in brilliant and glow-

ing schemes. In addition to flat and coffered plaster ceilings, there were simple and intersecting barrel vaults and domes. The wooden ceilings also glowed with rich colour and gold and were beamed and panelled or coffered in hexagons, octagons and the like. Oftentimes the beams were encased in panelling. Occasionally the wooden ceilings were inlaid instead of being painted and gilt.

While the formerly mentioned flooring materials were still employed, carefully laid wooden floors, enriched with parquetting, were more than ever in high esteem. Likewise, glazed polychrome tiles, now made in France after the inspiration of the Italian maiolica tiles, played an important part as flooring materials.

Style Henri IV and Louis XIII.—In this style of decoration Baroque influences, and especially Flemish Baroque influences, began to make themselves more and more conspicuous. The crisp delicacy and restraint of the Style Henri II were supplanted by a more bulbous, obtuse and ponderous conception of line and design.

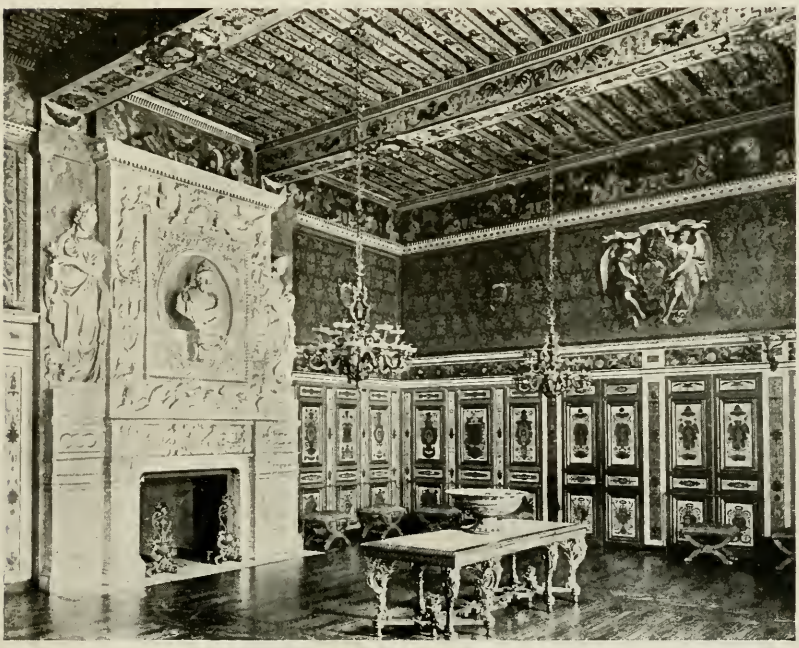
Windows under Henri IV grew larger and longer but, generally speaking, kept their stone mullions and transomes, making the divisions previously noted. The openings were commonly square-headed but were occasionally varied by round-arched heads. The two-light width remained unchanged. Later in the period, under Louis XIII, many windows were further increased in size, so that they extended nearly all the way from floor to ceiling. About the same time, also, stone mullions and transomes began to fall into disuse, being replaced by wooden substitutes or by wooden casement frames with broad stiles and rails. Door heads, as usual, followed the fashion of window openings.

Save in the most sumptuous rooms, the bare plaster

of the walls was exposed, thus leaving a broad expanse to be decorated with frescoes or treated with "domino" paper as indicated in the previous style. While, of course, tapestries were plentifully used, they no longer formed an inseparable adjunct to the general scheme as indicated by the earlier plaster or stucco mouldings, especially contrived to frame them. A low-panelled dado or wainscot, with small divisions (Plate 31 B), was often used and embellished with painted decorations of landscapes, flowers, foliage and the like.

The prevailing *motifs* for mural decoration—in which may also be reckoned the carved wood, stone or modelled plaster adornments for chimney-pieces (Plates 29 and 30 B) and overdoor enrichments (Plate 30 A), where they were especially prominent, included the "cartouche" form (Plate 30 A), one of the most ubiquitous and important—with its surrounding "scrolliage" pierced and slashed, and pulpy strapwork, heaving convex cabochons, masques, pudgy cherubs, which one wit has humourously dubbed "pukids," volutes, conucopiæ, ovoid bulging shields, massive draperies, scrolls, rectilinear pediments, arc-shaped pediments (Plate 30 A), and both kinds of pediments interrupted, scrolled pediments, and several kinds of pediments combined in a redundant medley, swags and drops of foliage and flowers, palm branches, laurel leaves, human figures, caryatides, quadrangular term-shaped pedestals or pilasters tapered toward the base, along with the various other characteristic Baroque "properties" which found an analogue to their thick, pulpy gobbiness in the contemporary big-scale, fat women painted by Rubens. The same conception of the properties of line was back of both. Mouldings, as contrasted with their sharp crispness and incisive delicacy in the Henri II style, now appeared obtuse and

A. VESTIBULE D'HONNEUR, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE LOUIS XIII (EXTREME BAROQUE)
From "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



B. SALLE DES GARDES, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE LOUIS XIII. (TRANSITION FROM HENRI II)
From "Le Palais de Fontainebleau," A. Guérinet
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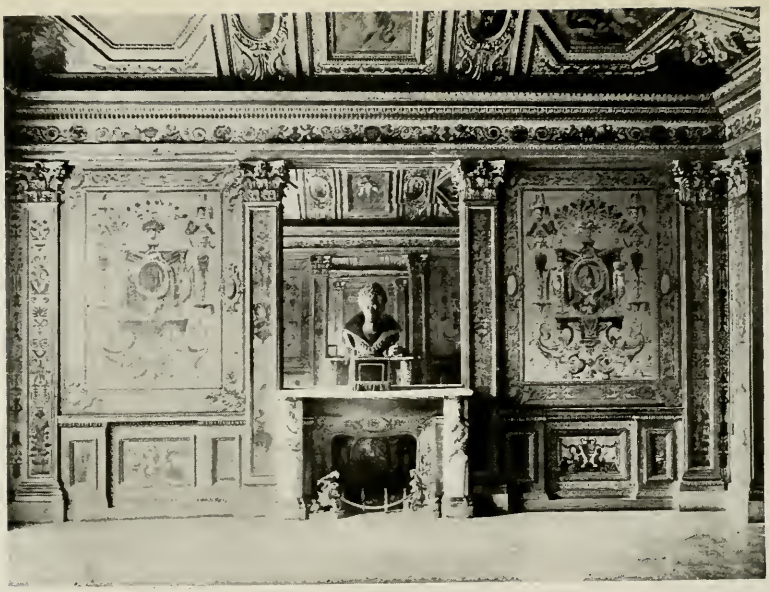
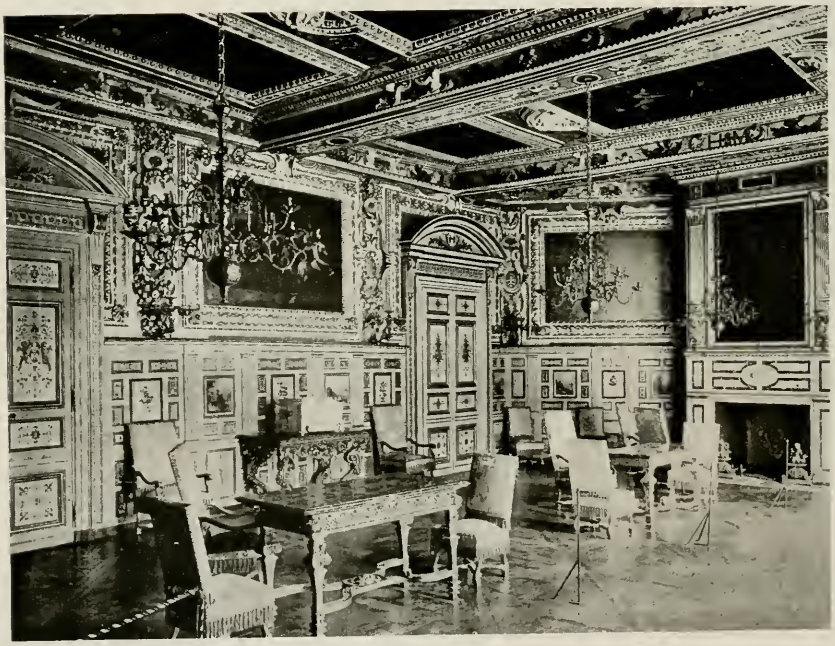
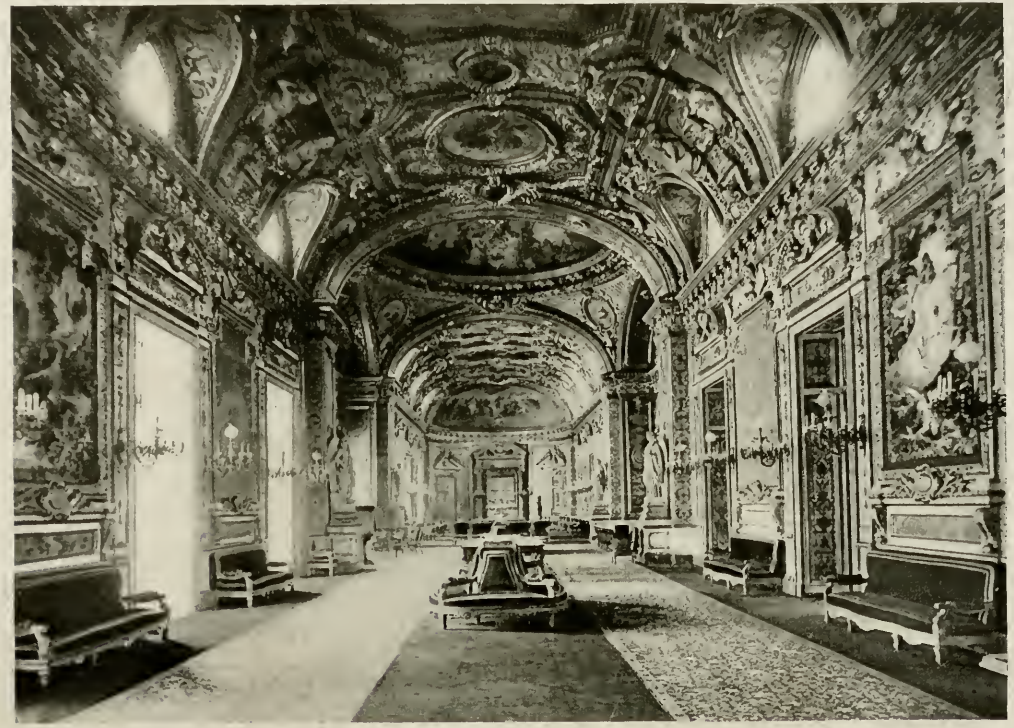


A. SALON, MARIE DE MÉDECIS, LUXEMBOURG PALACE. STYLE LOUIS XIII
From "Le Palais du Luxembourg," A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

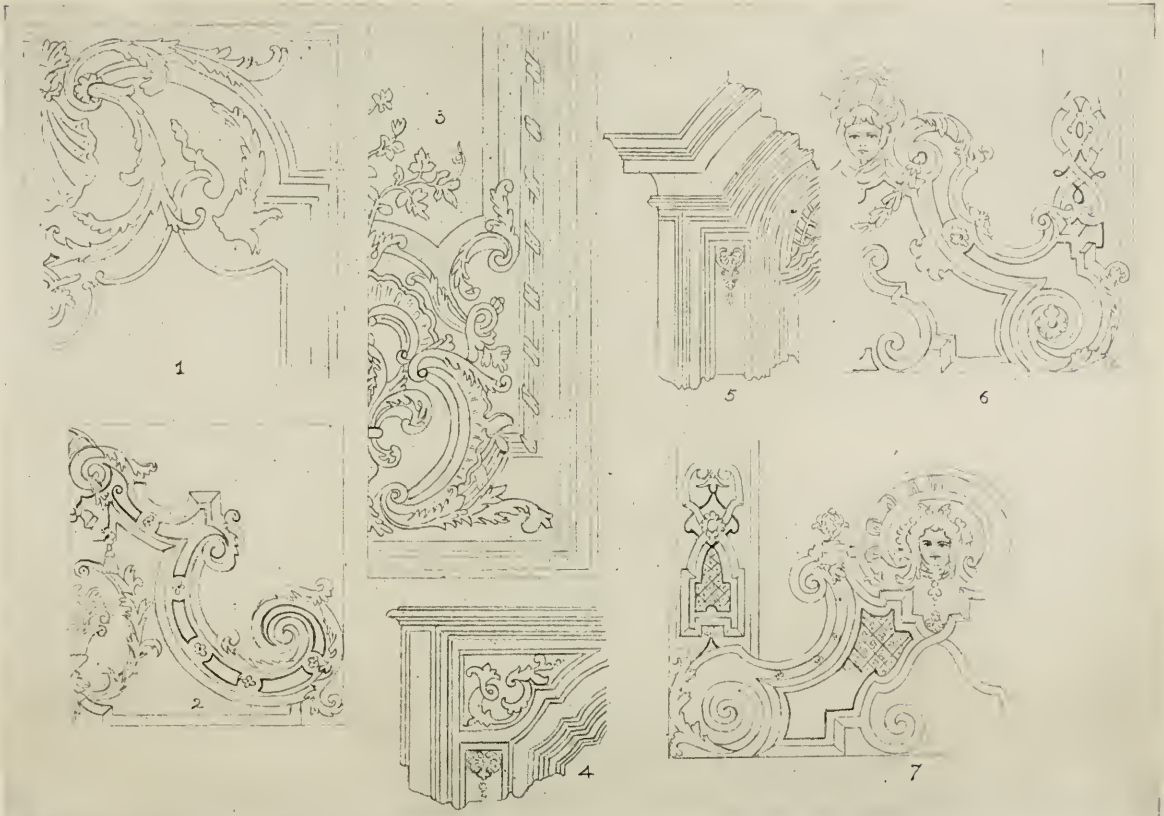


B SALON, FONTAINEBLEAU. STYLE LOUIS XIII
From "Le Palais de Fontainebleu," A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

PLATE 32



THRONE ROOM, LUXEMBOURG PALACE. STYLE LOUIS XIV
From "Le Palais du Luxembourg." A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



CHARACTERISTIC BAROQUE DECORATIVE *MOTIFS* FROM PANELLING, OVERMANTELS AND ELSEWHERE

1. Section of Louis XIV Panel Head. 2 and 3. Sections of Louis XIV Panel Ornament. 4 and 5. Corner Sections of Louis XIV Panel Heads. 6 and 7. Details of Louis XIV Overmantel Ornament

blunted (Plates 29 and 30 A) as well as rotund and massive. And yet, notwithstanding the tumid pomposity and exaggerated emphasis of the Baroque style, its often grotesque conception and lack of refinement, we must concede that it could be both imposing and distinguished and, when discreetly managed, was not without a certain agreeable quality of charm. It should be added that in France the tendency to extravagance of expression was generally kept within bounds, thanks to the national trait of moderation.

Although the fireplace openings began to be appreciably reduced in size (Plates 29, 30 B and 31 A), the chimney-piece superstructure extending to the ceiling lost none of its pristine importance and was duly embellished with all the decorative assets of the time. The scheme usually included some central feature—a decorative panel or picture—surrounded by a composition of some of the *motifs* just enumerated. The whole composition might be in stone, wood or stucco.

Ceiling beams (Plate 30 B) were often decorated with painted and gilt patterns as were also the enclosed panels (Plate 31 B). Sometimes the panels were of stucco wrought and coloured. Again, the whole ceiling was an elaborate production of the plasterer's art (Plates 29 and 31 A) with heavy stucco details and gorgeous colouring.

The formerly mentioned flooring materials continued in use in varying degrees of popularity, but marble tiling and parquetted wooden floors (Plates 29 and 30 A and B) were regarded with most favour.

Style Louis XIV.—In his admirable summarisation of characteristics that dominated the style of Louis XIV, W. H. Ward (Architecture of the Renaissance in France) says, "No government, however powerful, and no monarch, however good his taste—and within cer-

tain limits that of Louis XIV was excellent—can create an art or a literature to order. Success was achieved in virtue of a coincidence in aim with the artistic tendencies of the century and a skillful choice of agents." To put the matter a little differently, one might say that the almost universal prevalence, at any one given period, of a great wave of popular taste or, in other words, the vogue of a particular style, may be likened to the on-sweeping epidemic of a contagious disease that few or none can wholly escape. One person, for instance, may have a light case of small-pox and be apparently little affected by the disorder; another may be severely ill with all the attendant symptoms fully developed. But the same influence has been at work in both cases. So is it in the matter of falling under a style of influence and so is it that the epidemic of a *style* merges into a clearly defined and crystallised *fashion.*

Thus was it also in the case of the Style Louis XIV. There were certain antecedents back of it whose presence, in the new style development, could not be ignored and from whose influence there could be no complete escape, no matter what fresh elements came into play, unless there was to be an absolute and drastic revolution in all conceptions and in all methods of style expression. And such a sweeping revolution it would have been exceedingly difficult to compass even had it been desirable or desired. As a matter of fact, it was not desired and the obvious solution, therefore, was a compromise with the infusion of a large and vigorous new element of ideals. The Style Louis XIV was just such a compromise. It was a full coördination of the elements that had gone to make up the Henri IV–Louis XIII style with something added—a very appreciable addition, indeed. In architecture, and to a very much

BED CHAMBER OF LOUIS XIV. VERSAILLES. STYLE LOUIS XIV
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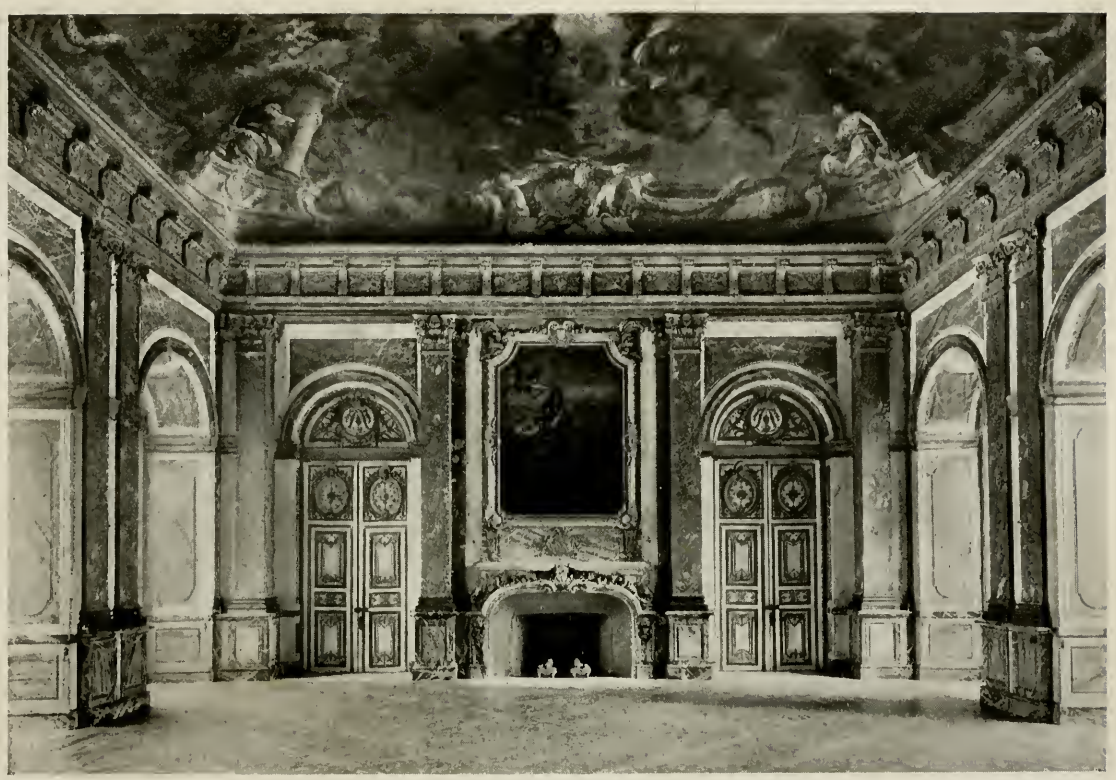
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



HALL OF HERCULES, VERSAILLES. STYLE LOUIS XIV
From "Librarie Centrale d'Art et d'Architecture"
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

A. DOORWAY, LUXEMBOURG PALACE
STYLE LOUIS XIV

B. THRONE ROOM, LUXEMBOURG PALACE
STYLE LOUIS XIV

From "Le Palais du Luxembourg, A. Guérinet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

greater extent in decoration, it was a compromise, and on the whole a sane and satisfying compromise, between Palladianism—the scholastic interpretation of Classicism as formulated during the late Italian Renaissance —and Baroque tendencies. The result was Baroque idealised, purged of its grossness and abnormal, swollen heaviness, presented in a tempering and restraining setting of Classicism (Plate 35), a rationalised style that incorporated what was best in the preceding episode and added positive elements of fresh provenance. Its physical affinities were Baroque, a chastened and reasoned Baroque; its spiritual affinities were Classic and Renaissance.

The foremost artists and craftsmen of the age—and it was a truly great age, despite certain defects—encouraged and assisted by the king, aided in making the Style Louis XIV one of the most sumptuous and impressive that the world has ever seen. Simon Vouet, Eugene Le Sueur, Nicholas Poussin, Charles Le Brun, Le Pautre, Marot, Francesco Romanelli, Berain, Jacques Sarrazin, Laurent Magnier, these are a few of the names of men who added lustre to the decorative work of the period, their association with the practice of their several *metiers* proving a guarantee of the excellence therein realised.

If the cartouche and all its satellite entourage of auxiliary *motifs* was the "trade-mark" of the Style Louis XIII, the rayed sun, the Gallic cock, along with the shaped panel (Plate 33, Figs. 1–5) and all its kindred variations, may be regarded as the badges of Louis XIV decorative expression. Other distinguishing traits were the impressive applied orders (Plates 34, 35 and 36 A), the general architectural composition of interiors (Plate 35), the full convex sections of mouldings (Plates 32, 34 and 35) and projecting mem-

bers, often deeply undercut, the frequent use of the torus and of the *cyma reversa,* reticulated diaperwork (Plate 33, Fig. 7) in otherwise unoccupied spaces such as spandrels, and the striking use of shadow. It was, in short, an opulent, masculine and magnificent style.

Windows and doors were commonly square-headed (Plate 36 A) or round-arched (Plate 35), the former being far more numerous. The divisions of casements and panes were, as a rule, much the same as in the preceding style. Mouldings of door frames were full and often richly ornate, and above important doorways was generally an imposing architectural and decorative composition (Plate 34) in bold relief, subsidiary features of the decoration not infrequently extending to the floor on either side. The doors themselves were richly panelled (Plates 34, 35 and 36 A) and decorated in relief or colour or both.

Order and organised symmetry were two of the most characteristic traits of the style and the wall spaces, vast as many of them were, afforded opportunity for impressive architectural composition with the use of orders of pilasters and rich panelling between. The whole *ensemble* represented "symmetrical and careful scheme, distributed into large well-defined divisions, and these sometimes subdivided into smaller compartments." The tops of panels were commonly shaped (Plate 33, Figs. 1–5), or rounded, and angles were apt to be softened into quadrants.

Where orders of pilasters were not used, walls were, nevertheless, divided into compartments or broad rectangular panels (Plate 32), extending from floor or dado to cornice, with enriched borders, "the centre either plain or containing a tapestry, a picture, a relief, a carved or painted arabesque, or octagonal panel in the centre."

The *motifs* and "properties" most in evidence, besides those already mentioned, were the lion, eagle and griffin among animal forms, normal and robust human figures quite different from Rubens's specimens of unwholesome obesity; and, in the vegetable types, oak, laurel and olive in full, close-packed and be-ribboned wreaths, acanthus, heavy swags and drops of fruit and foliage. Shells and scrolls, cherubs and masques (Plate 33, Figs. 6 and 7), were used to break the centres of lintels or arches; while the cartouche, in conjunction with architectural mouldings and pediments, was reduced to "its original function of framing a shield or panel." Architraves and kindred members forming "frames to panels and openings were broad and bold, and carved with close-packed foliage or other enrichments."

When tapestries were used, it was a common practice to stretch them in a fixed frame like a painting or to empanel them. Wall adornment also often consisted of modelled stucco (Plate 32), of paintings or frescoes (Plate 32), and of inlays or coatings of various and richly coloured marbles. Mirrors also began to be employed for wall panelling and for incorporation in chimney-pieces. The colour schemes were full and vigorous and gilding was freely called into service.

Fireplaces with their accompanying overmantel decorations were focal features in the composition of the room (Plates 35 and 36 B), although the chimney breast was now often disguised in the thickness of the wall and, instead of the fireplace and chimney-piece constituting an architectural projection, it became a massively detailed and impressive piece of applied decoration. The overmantel embellishment, whether a picture empanelled in an ornate and heavily moulded

surround, or some other feature, usually extended to the cornice.

Cornices were distinctly architectural (Plates 34 and 35) in their interpretation. Ceilings, which were frequently plastered with a flat surface throughout their expanse, were commonly enriched with heavily moulded plaster or stucco ornamentation of an elaborate character to which the additional touches of colour and gilding were added. The larger panels of the ceilings were often the vehicles for gorgeous frescoes. At other times the beams were visible and coloured and gilt decoration was added to coffered panels and projections. Barrel vaulted (Plate 32), domed and coved (Plate 35) ceilings were used as well as flat. The floors were of various-coloured marbles, of tiles and of wood, plain or parquetted in patterns.

Furniture and Decoration.—During the sixteenth century, Renaissance forms of furniture completely ousted any remaining traces of Gothic design. Gothic influence, however, persisted for a time in the high-backed, stall-like seigneurial chairs of state. Oak and walnut were the staple cabinet woods and yielded a ready medium for the interpretation of Renaissance ideals, especially the latter, which was much more responsive to the carver's efforts.

The chief articles of furniture (*v.* illustrations, Part III) were chests and cabinets, a few chairs of state—the use of a chair was still a mark of distinction and rank—and tables, either of the draw or refectory variety. Contours were bold and structure heavy, although the lines were graceful, for French artisans had proved apt pupils and shown themselves alert to grasp the new ideas of style and oftentimes to improve upon them. Upholstery, more as a bit of elegance than for comfort, was introduced fairly early in the century,

but it was not until the latter part of the century that it figured to any appreciable extent. Carving was the chief decorative resource and the *motifs* used by the carver, as well as the structural contour of the objects, closely reflected contemporary architectural features.

From about the beginning of the seventeenth century, the progress of French mobiliary art made rapid strides. The variety of articles in use increased, structure became lighter, contours more graceful, decorative processes more diversified, and altogether the characteristics of a politer age, or at least a more luxurious age, were unmistakable. Indeed, the French cabinet-makers and carvers of the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth quite equalled in skill and taste their Italian preceptors and, in addition to other excellences, they succeeded in imparting a very distinct touch of national individuality to their handiwork. By this time Baroque influence had perceptibly affected French mobiliary design and we find curvilinear structural elements, such as scrolled legs, arms and stretchers, profusion of ornament, and detail in vigorous relief, in distinction to the rectilinear, flatter and more reticent qualities that marked the earlier styles.

Under the lavish patronage of Louis XIV, the making of furniture attained a degree of finish and perfection hitherto unprecedented in any country. Furniture, likewise, branched out into various new phases. Besides employing the staple oak and walnut, rare woods of divers colours and ornamental grains were freely drawn upon for veneer, inlay and marqueterie. One of the most significant developments was the introduction of the wonderful Boule inlay of tortoise-shell and brass. To set off properly this extraordinarily rich combination, elaborate *ormolu* mounts

and metal *appliqués,* cast, chiselled and engraved, were profusely resorted to. Painting, gilding, lacquering, and carving also played their respective parts, but there were so many decorative processes now available that carving lost its paramount position. Although Baroque scrolls and curves had long since established themselves, structural lines, especially in cabinet work, were mainly rectilinear. Cabinets and armoires were among some of the most resplendent examples of this resplendent age.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—Throughout the sixteenth century there poured into France choice products of craftsmanship from Italy and the East—ivories, intarsias, goldsmiths' work, maiolicas, small mirrors from Venice curiously set, and divers objects of like nature—which, however, came more in the capacity of curios and cherished personal possessions than as accessories to decoration. Apart from the wrought-iron or brass candelabra and sconces (Plate 32), and the banners, arms and trophies of the chase, the chief decorative accessories were such as have already been noted in connexion with the fixed background.

In the seventeenth century the story was quite different. Besides the tapestries, hangings and pictures whose presence was mentioned in discussing the fixed decorations, foreign trade had brought porcelains and bronzes from the Orient, zeal for classic research had stimulated the use of sculpture in marble and bronze, and lacquer from the East was beginning to count as an appreciable item. The brass founders and the smiths were contributing chandeliers and sconces of admirable design and these were employed to the full extent of their decorative as well as utilitarian capacity.

During the reign of Louis XIV all of the aforemen-

tioned accessories were multiplied in number and the recently started manufacture, in France, of mirrors of greater size than heretofore contributed another item of effective decoration, while the metal workers excelled their past performances in the fashioning of lamps, candelabra and sconces, which performed a more conspicuous function in the decorative schemes than ever before. Glass and crystal lustres for chandeliers and sconces also helped to create brilliant results.

Materials and Colour.—The materials of furniture and the fixed decorations have been noted in preceding paragraphs. The fabrics employed during this period, besides embroideries and tapestries, numbered silks, satins, brocades, damasks, brocatelles, velvets plain and figured, and printed linens. Copious importations from Italy were later supplemented by the excellent products of the French looms. Throughout the period the colours were rich, full and varied, and the patterns were, for the most part, vigorous and large.

Arrangement.—During much of the sixteenth century the arrangement of furniture was determined more by considerations of convenience than by notions of symmetrical composition or systematic grouping. By the end of the century principles of formal balance were beginning to be heeded and by the middle of the seventeenth century, in the reign of Louis XIV, conceptions of formalism and symmetry in arrangement had reached their full fruition and pairs of objects were symmetrically disposed where they would produce the most impressive effect.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERIOR DECORATION IN FRANCE DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AND THE FIRST DECADES OF THE NINETEENTH

INTRODUCTION.—The story of interior decoration in France during the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth is not only dramatically fascinating from the merely human point of view, and intensely suggestive of innumerable precedents susceptible of modern application with the most felicitious results, but it is also thoroughly illuminating to the student of *how* and *why* things were done and of the methods of composition and design manipulation. The French were then, as they always had been, such consummate masters in the art of assimilating divers elements and of evolving therefrom, with rare selective insight, new combinations and striking forms of expression that a careful survey of their processes well repays investigation. Indeed, it is indispensable as a part of preparation for dealing successfully with modern requirements in the decorative field.

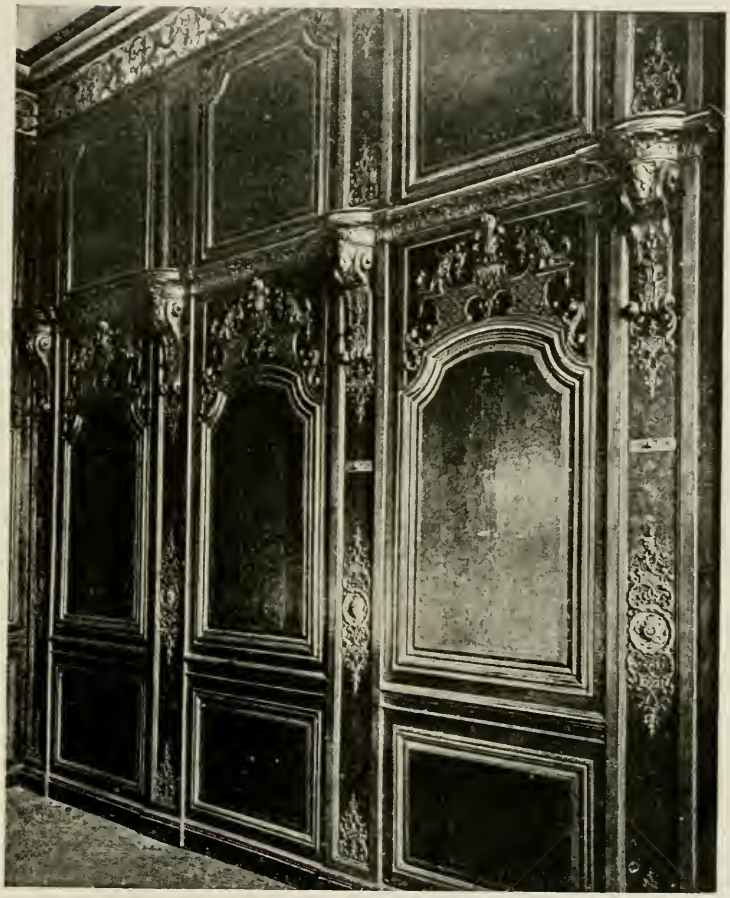
It will suit our purpose best and conduce to a truer and more coherent estimate of the character of the period if we begin our discussion with the accession of Louis XV in the year 1715. The earlier years of the century really belong to the preceding period, although the influences that blossomed forth in full force upon the demise of the *Grand Monarque,* and the letting down of the restrictions and conventions that had been rigorously upheld during his lifetime, had been at work for a number of years prior to that event. The year

1715, so far as any one specific date can signalise a line of demarcation between two styles, which are nearly always necessarily of gradual growth and are wont to overlap each other in their course of progress, marked the final breaking away from the old spirit of ponderosity and oppressive formalism which had been rigidly maintained, in theory at least, with a sense of almost religious obligation, so long as the "Roi Soleil" sate upon the throne. Once the restraining force was removed, reaction set in as swiftly as a bow flies back when the arrow is shot.

One phase of the revulsion materially affected the very character of the houses and influenced not only such building activities as were newly undertaken but set in motion a significant train of alterations and readjustments in the palaces, châteaux and houses that already existed. The people were determined to be rid of the palatial atmosphere of the old *régime* that had grievously weighed upon their spirits and irritated their nerves. "The chilly splendours of the vast and imposing halls, which had persisted in the last century, might be an admirable setting for state pageants, but they no longer answered the wants of society, whose chief requirement was a congenial *milieu* for intimate gatherings, combining cosiness, daintiness, and gaiety. The age of the withdrawing-room and boudoir had arrived." Outwardly, indeed, the architectural character of the newer domestic edifices exhibited little if any noticeable departure from former precedent. "Many of the chief monuments erected at this period might, except for relatively unimportant details, belong equally well to the periods which preceded or followed; the majority of its buildings betray their Louis Quinze character externally, if at all, only by the few features which were carved or otherwise enriched."

It was *inside* that the notable changes took place. People preferred smaller houses, it is true, and built smaller houses, and, in the country, the *petites maisons,* where they could quickly escape from all tedious formalities, were often more regularly occupied than the châteaux to which they belonged, but the people likewise fell to breaking up large apartments into suites of smaller ones—the precedent for this had been set at Versailles—and prepared themselves an environment in which to *live* rather than a setting in which to be *on parade.* And it is with the interiors of such houses and apartments, "devoted to pleasure and social life," that we are here concerned, with their decorations and furnishings to which, under their various guises, we apply the generic term, *"Style Louis Quinze."*

In a broad, general way, when speaking of the great decorative styles, the term *Rococo* is usually regarded as synonymous with the Style Louis Quinze. And for purposes of convenience and the sense of identity that has sprung up, we may let it go at that. In doing so, however, we must make this reservation for the sake of historical accuracy. The early years of the Regency, while the Duke of Orleans held the reins of government, saw the development of a style commonly termed *Régence,* which marked the transition between the "Style Louis Quatorze" and the later full-fledged Rococo. We must also add, and insist that the facts be kept clearly in mind, that the Rococo style, in the larger signification of the term, had really struck root in the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV and that it had run its full course long before the close of the Fifteenth Louis's reign. Furthermore, we must call attention to the fact that the neo-Classic style, with which we are wont to associate the name of Louis Seize when speak-



RÉGENCE PANELLING IN CARVED OAK, PARCEL GILT
Collection Lelouz
Courtesy of Messrs. L. Alavoine & Co.

A. LOUIS XV (ROCOCO) OVERMANTEL MIRROR WITH PAINTING IN HEAD
Courtesy of Mr. Karl Freund

B. PAINTED PANEL BY LANCRET, ROCOCO
Ancien Hôtel de Boullougne, Paris
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris"
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

ing of French decoration, had already been well developed and established for years in popular favour when the last-named Louis ascended the throne.

Rococo, using the term in its more comprehensive sense, was of two kinds, good and bad. It may be likened to the proverbial little girl with the curl. When it was good, it was very, very good, instinct with grace and delicacy and full of a most refreshing, blithesome *naïveté* of conception and a remarkable *finesse* of execution. Altogether, it was a decidedly agreeable and optimistic style to live with and radiated a kind of decorative sunshine. Quite on the other side of the picture, when it was bad, it was excessively horrid. Nothing, in fact, could have been worse, more offensively vulgar, more nauseatingly saccharine, more distorted, more extravagant. Adjectives, indeed, completely fail adequately to describe the thoroughly odious and inconsequently vicious character of the strumpet phase of Rococo decoration.

That Rococo should have run to irresponsible extravagance was, perhaps, not unnatural when we remember the rigid "centralised systematisation" of "life, thought," and of every kind of decorative expression that had previously confined all efforts within strait and prescribed limits. The change was not merely a rebound; it was an out and out rebellion, and that any of its fruits should have been tempered with common sense and artistic judgment is cause for wonder rather than otherwise. That it was so is a tribute and testimony to the innate mental balance and logical attitude of the French people.

There was the utmost diversity of expression in this newly dawned era which may be regarded as a period of free-thinking and anarchy in decorative art, despite the many really fine things it produced. Some one has

characterised it as a "hot-house period"; whether this be quite justifiable or not, it was certainly exotic. It was an era of flux and changing ideals. The quest for novelty was the one constant element that seemed dominant. Everything was grist that came to the Rococoist's mill. The subjects that might be used with high approval as inspirations for decorative treatment were drawn indiscriminately from the "country, animal life, the customs of foreign lands," Oriental art and every other conceivable source. There was the utmost freedom in the use of all manner of naturalism. "The subject, indeed, was indifferent, provided it was novel in itself, and that its artistic presentment had *esprit* and invested it with *le bel air*. . . . All known rules of architecture might be set aside with impunity, if the result had but style, piquancy and perfect technique."

When the course of decorative license had run to its utmost limits, it was to be expected that a revulsion of feeling should ensue. And this reaction came in the form of the neo-Classic style. While the decorative forces let loose in the early part of the reign of Louis Fifteenth had "undoubtedly pushed defiance of Classical traditions further than any other period since the Renaissance," they ultimately "reached a climax beyond which no further advance in the same direction was possible," and a "fresh return to the sources" became not only necessary but inevitable. The impartial student of the work of the Rococo age "cannot but recognise that it has never been surpassed for finish, both of design and execution, for sparkling elegance and coquettish playfulness—in a word, for complete adaptation to the life of the age which, with all its faults, had many delightful qualities"; but the impartial student will likewise recognise that it had not in

it the element of permanence. While it was often most agreeable it was, nevertheless, essentially ephemeral. It was also essentially restless. And the time had come when there was a common craving for something more restful in decorative expression.

By fortunate coincidence, there had gradually grown up a widespread disposition toward archæological research. Perhaps it may have been partly due to the skeptical spirit of the age which was unwilling to accept without question the standards and conceptions that had been handed on to it by preceding ages. At any rate, the fact remained that antiquarian studies and appreciation, hitherto unparallelled except in the beginning of the Renaissance period, if indeed then, exerted a most compelling influence upon the popular mind. The ruins of the palace of Diocletian at Spalato had been not only explored and sketched but accurately measured and drawn to scale by the Brothers Adam and the results of their labours were in due course published in several volumes. The ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii had been excavated and most thoroughly studied and the publication of the results of this work exercised an enormous influence. Similar undertakings, dependent upon a freshly awakened ardour for antiquarian research, were also pushed forward elsewhere in Italy, in Greece and in other portions of what had once been the Roman Empire.

The outcome of all this activity was that there soon followed a consciousness, growing into an overwhelming and general conviction, that the models of ancient architecture and ancient decoration, and the principles deduced therefrom, once acclaimed as standards by the fathers of the Renaissance and their successors, did not by any means represent *all* the architectural and decorative wealth of Classic antiquity nor even, neces-

sarily, what was *best.* The full realisation of this larger horizon with its larger liberty of interpretation, along with such rationalistic attacks upon the affectations of Palladianism as that put forth by the Abbé Langier, spelled the doom of Vitruvianism, which quite collapsed. Architects and decorators disregarded the earlier norms that were thus proved to be artificial and arbitrary, and not infallible as they had once been supposed, and went back direct to fresh springs for inspiration.

This new influence was felt not only in France but also in England and all throughout the Continent. In France it assumed a concrete form that we know as the "Style Louis Seize." It was architecturally and decoratively consistent and there was no longer any tolerance shown for that earlier compromise between Palladianism and Rococo, strict architecture and free decoration, an anomalous pairing off that was very like condoning a Saturday night drunk on condition that the Sabbatarian inebriate would remain sober the rest of the time. Along with the renewed ascendancy of straight lines in architecture and decoration, characteristic of the Style Louis Seize, and along with a certain degree of Classic severity, we can see also the addition of many elements of local grace, tempering blithesomeness and restrained naturalism, the latter due in great measure to the influence of Rousseau, which taken all together gave the style its peculiar individuality.

It was the elimination of many of these added graces and amenities and the pushing of certain influences to a logical and somewhat puristic conclusion that resulted in the Directoire Style. The urbanity and mellowness of the old *régime* were now taboo and a kind of archæological mania seemed to have possessed

men's minds and impelled them to find their highest satisfaction in discerning parallels between their own ideals and practice and the precedents afforded by a certain period of Roman public and domestic life. To such an extent did they carry the infatuation that, not content with reproducing as nearly as circumstances would permit the architectural and decorative background of their chosen prototypal Roman period, they even tried to emulate Roman peculiarities of costume and domestic usage and, arrayed in tunics and togas, would sit or recline to eat a meal from a tripod table, doubtless with more archæological than bodily satisfaction.

While the Directoire Style was professedly a revolt and a departure from the Style Louis Seize, it was in reality a development from it or, at any rate, a development from the same parent stock, pushed to extremes and a little attenuated and formalised in the process. In its best manifestation, the Directoire Style was pure and graceful, but the very rigidity of archæological interpretation to which its sponsors seem to have been unalterably committed, would soon have proved its undoing had it not, ere long, been completely supplanted by the Empire Style. Contemplating the two together it seems hard to understand how two modes, drawn as were both Directoire and Empire, from much the same well-spring of inspiration could have turned out so different in their final developments.

The determination to make a clean break with all traditional backgrounds, so far as French history was concerned, and to give the people a new system of art and architecture as well as a brand-new political organisation resulted in Napoleonic fiat authorising Percier and Fontaine to devise an entirely unprecedented system of decoration which they based, indeed,

upon Classic models, but upon that aspect of Classic models most calculated to appeal to aggressive militaristic ideals. Military trophies and symbols, and the emblems of imperial pomp, were freely and preponderantly introduced among the properties of their schemes of decoration along with the more graceful forms that had characterised Roman decorative art in the early imperial period. Their system, though often overloaded with ornament and excessively profuse, was, nevertheless, impressively rich and sometimes displayed considerable grace and charm despite its obvious opulence. In the earlier stages of the Empire Style there were frequently manifestations worthy of sincere commendation. That was, however, before the style became heavy, debased, vulgarised and bombastic to suit the tastes of a body of rich parvenus who had taken the place of the old *noblesse*. This phase of the style merits only condemnation.

In architecture what is known as the Greek Revival parallelled the Empire Style in decoration. Its interpretation was usually stolid, pompous and heavy, but its saving grace was that it was generally simple and fortunately took its direction mainly from an archæological bias of inspiration.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—In the preparation of the fixed architectural or interior decorative backgrounds of the Louis Quinze or Rococo style of decoration, using the latter term in the sense previously explained, we find certain general characteristics common to all the phases that come under that comprehensive heading, whether or not we choose to attach to those phases the names *Régence, Watteau, Boucher* or *Rocaille*. These characteristics, which betokened an amazing fluidity of conception and manipulation in all the aforesaid varieties,

were the *studied avoidance of everything formal or ponderous;* the neglect, or rather the deliberate defiance, of all strict Classical canons or rules; the elimination of deep shadows (Plates 37 and 39 A), the disuse of straight, especially of horizontally straight, lines and of right angles, and a consuming "delight in caprices and surprises, playful forms and piquant combinations." Everywhere was studied irregularity and complication of *motifs* and the whole system of decoration may be said to have been reduced to a fluid state and, occasionally, to a frenzy of anarchistic riot. After the rigidity of the Louis Quatorze period, everything was undergoing a process of mollification.

The *architectural* foundation upon which the Louis Quinze episodes of *decoration* were grafted was essentially symmetrical in its genius and so it remained. Even during the period of utmost license in decorative practice, the French mind had too sincere a perception of fundamental values and too profound a respect for constructive sanity to make any radical departures from the *structural* principles and usages of the preceding age. Rooms, therefore, still retained their symmetry of form and were well proportioned in respect of their usually symmetrical disposition of doors, windows and other distinctly architectural features.

There was a tendency to accentuate the size of windows, and the window openings, in a great many cases extending all the way to the floor, had square- or arc-shaped heads or else terminated in either round-headed arches or arches very much flattened at the top. It was a common thing for the upper part of the windows to contain some heavy wooden tracery with curved flowing lines or else to be separated from the larger and lower part by an horizontal mullion or transome, and the small casements of the upper portion opened indepen-

dently of the long casements under them. Door heads, like the tops of windows, were square, arc-shaped, round-arched, or flat-arched.

In some cases, by the manipulation of the interior trim, there was a tendency to bound even door and window openings, especially at their heads, not by lines of geometrical regularity that would indicate their limits as structural features, but by a succession of curves, retaining only the chief vertical lines. Such exaggerations of treatment, however, exaggerations that justified the accusation that the Rococo style was naught but a series of "tormented and broken lines," were to be found rather in extreme cases and were not the rule, as the limits of structural features were ordinarily clearly defined in a reasonable manner. The contours of mouldings and other members of door and window trims, in accordance with the prevailing practice, although frequently ornate and complicated in line, were almost invariably flattened (Plates 41 and 47 A) so that the openings did not assume the aspect of dominant features, as they often had done in preceding periods.

The treatment of walls in the Louis Quinze style was a matter of paramount concern. The Classic orders, which had hitherto played so conspicuous a part in the make-up of the architectural background, were now adjudged quite too formal as a dominant element in decoration and were either left out altogether or else so radically disguised by fantastic treatment that they could scarcely be recognised at all. In the wall scheme for important rooms, pilasters and rectangular architraves yielded place to elaborate framing and bordering of panels.

Panelling, indeed, was the chief resource (Plates 37, 38 B, 42, 43, 44 and 46) by which the momentous

item of wall treatment was compassed. Wood was the favourite and most universally satisfactory medium for this purpose and was used both in its natural state and likewise painted or painted and parcel gilt. When the natural wood was employed (Plate 37), it was frequently oak or light-coloured walnut, and its users had the sanity to let it alone and not smear it over with any artificial darkening mixture. Other natural woods than the two just mentioned also occurred.

When paint and gilt played a part in the scheme of decorative foundation, one favourite combination was white and gold, the flat surfaces being painted white and the mouldings and other carved projections gilt. White and gold, however, were by no means preponderantly in vogue. Colours were freely used (Plates 38 B, 40, 41 and 42), either by themselves or in conjunction with gilding. As a rule the colour schemes, as judging from the social character of the times we might fancy they would be, were prevailingly light and gay—light green, citron, tender pink, green blues and blue greens, yellow or buff, light warm greys, fawns or putty tones and occasionally graining. Sometimes deeper tones were used, such as fairly dark blues or greens, sufficiently greyed, and the necessary lightening was supplied by a judicious addition of gilding.

Again, when wood was not used throughout for interior finish, the panels were often executed on canvas and then the canvasses were defined and held in place by wooden mouldings. Besides these *media* of execution, the panelling was sometimes wrought in plaster and then painted and gilt. In some cases, too, while the mouldings were of wood, the elaborate scroll, shell, leaf and other decorations were wrought in compo which, indeed, supplied a better base for gilding than

wood, which had first to be gesso-coated before applying the gold leaf.

The panels were large and vertically oblong in their emphasis, extending all the way from a low dado to the cornice (Plates 40, 41, 42, and 44, Fig. 3). The width varied according to the exigencies of the room and the distribution of openings. Some of the panels were very narrow, others were fairly wide (Plates 40, 41 and 42). They were always spaced and balanced with a sense of symmetry despite the tendencies to irregularity elsewhere manifested.

These panels, notwithstanding all their "enrichment and complication," by force of sheer height acquired a value in vertical emphasis equal to that of the erstwhile conspicuous pilasters that had been suppressed. This process of flattening out or completely suppressing the major members of wall projections was consistently carried out in minor details. For one thing, the projections of all mouldings were substantially reduced (Plate 39 A and B), a marked departure from the practice of the Louis Quatorze style. Not only did the contours of all mouldings become appreciably flatter and slimmer, but all other projections likewise were radically modified; cornices (Plate 39 A and B) and pediments that had cast bold and vigorous shadows were replaced by "gentle coves (Plates 40, 41 and 42) and graceful volutes," sculpture in the round or trophies and emblems in high relief yielded precedence to paintings, while massive carven and moulded fruit and foliage swags and drops or similar features of imbricated laurel leaves were cast aside for "dainty wreaths of roses and fluttering ribbons." Everywhere the forces of flattening out and attenuation were simultaneously in operation with the dominant curvilinear force.

Attention has already been called to the general aversion from straight horizontal lines and the tendency to bound spaces "not by geometrical figures, but by a series of curves and to retain only their main vertical lines, while consoles and the pedestals were diversified by gentle swellings and taperings." In accordance with this all-prevalent impetus, the *bottoms* (Plates 40, 41, 42, 43, Figs. 7 and 8; 44, Fig. 3, and 47) as well as the tops of panels were often curved and broken, while "angles and junctions of all sorts were managed by means of scrolls, flourishes and other softening devices." It was quite the common thing for the only horizontally straight lines in a room to be the top of the dado below and the cornice at the top (Plates 40, 42 and 47), and sometimes the latter was encroached upon by flamboyant *motifs* (Plate 41) that climbed from the wall or sprawled over the ceiling. In the more exaggerated phases of the style, even the vertical bounding lines of the panels were not free from occasional curvilinear interference. Ordinarily, however, vertical boundaries of panels and of door and window openings were allowed to retain their customary emphasis modified only by curvilinear treatment at panel tops and bottoms or, perhaps, by small superposed interruptions in the forms of leafage or floral sprays or entwinements (Plate 38 A).

The curvilinear shaping at the tops and bottoms of panels, or above doors and windows, might be symmetrical (Plates 42, 43, Figs. 2, 4, 5 and 6; 44, Figs. 2 and 3, and 47), in such cases usually centring in a shell (Plate 43, Figs. 1 and 4) or some similar *motif.* Again, and this was peculiarly characteristic of the *Rocaille* episode, it might be altogether *asymmetrical,* depending upon adroitly counterposed flexures to convey to the eye a sustaining and satisfying ultimate

sense of balance. Here, too, a centring was frequently made by a shell, a cartouche or a mascaron and the general treatment was apt to be somewhat flamboyant in the rapid action of its curves.

Before speaking specifically of the character of the decorative *motifs* customarily employed in Louis Quinze decoration, it seems advisable to say a word about the manner of distribution. In a period of such license and breaking away from all previous canons of restraint, it is not surprising that decorators should have given free rein to their fancy and indulged in the utmost exuberance. It often seemed as though a space left undecorated was abhorrent to them and that every space carried with it an obligation to lavish thereon some kind of ornament. If one may be permitted to paraphrase the advice of the bellicose old Irishman to his son who was about to set out for the Donnybrook Fair: "Mike, wherever you see a head, hit it!" one might say that the motto of the decorator of this epoch was, "Wherever you see a space, decorate it!" Not by any means *all* of the work of this period was thus decorated to excess. Some of the simpler things showed admirable restraint and reticence. The more elaborate creations, however, and especially during the *Rocaille* stage, often laboured under a redundancy of ornament.

One of the most characteristic *motifs* employed—we should not be far amiss in calling it the "trade-mark" of the *Rocaille* phase of Louis Quinze decoration, just as the scroll composed of interrupted curves had virtually been the trade-mark of Baroque decorative design—was the *shell* (Plate 38 A). It was often shaped very much indeed like a large oyster shell, more elongated than the usual Baroque cockle or escallop shell and much flared at the top with clearly defined

flutings, scallops or frillings of surface and edges. Along with rockwork, it was one of the stock *motifs* of the *Rocaille* system and was worked for all its might and main, being constantly in evidence under a wide diversity of guises but always recognisable. By cutting out all the body of the shell (Plate 43, Figs. 1 and 4) so that only the outer rim was left they derived a cartouche form which they sometimes employed for small mirror frames and for sconces as well as for the centres of decorative compositions.

Sinuous leaf and vegetable *motifs* (Plate 40), which lent themselves readily to expression in flamboyant curves, along with sundry scrolls and flourishes were likewise everywhere in evidence as were also ribbons, scrolled or tied in loose bows, wreaths and bunches of roses and other flowers, divers naturalistic details and masques.

One important resource of decorative enrichment, of which the Louis Quinze decorators fully availed themselves, was the use of chequered, latticed and other geometrically diapered groundwork (Plate 43, Figs. 4 and 8) to fill in the spaces between the rectilinear lines of panel heads or sides and the multiplex curving forms of other bounding lines; to fill in the distance between curving boundaries; and, finally, as a base upon which to superpose free groupings of decorative *motifs*. This device was a direct reflection of Spanish influence, derived by the Spaniards, in turn, from the Moors. The effect of this closely chequered or latticed diapering, with its seemingly endless succession of uniform repeats, was, as it always is, to produce a rich *texture* rather than to convey any conscious impression of *pattern*. Furthermore, it served as a medium to blend and pull together diverse forms into an united composition and helped to modify the sharpness of contrasts

that, without some such tempering influence, might have seemed too incisive.

One evidence of the naturalistic tendency of the period in decoration is to be seen in the popularity of pastoral *motifs* (Plates 38 B and 42) of which Watteau, Fragonard, Lancret and other artists of scarcely less note were the chief exponents. Besides making use of the familiar shell, scroll and foliated accessories, they introduced into their panel paintings dainty, elegant dames and slim courtly beaux in gay attire, or masquerading as shepherds and shepherdesses, disporting themselves in the most fanciful pastoral scenes furnished forth with hedges, trees, flowers, fountains, birds and animals and the additional accompaniments of grilles, lattices and trellised arbours. Panels of a different tone, but in the same vein of elaborate and refined execution, were painted by Francois Boucher and his school who decorated both boudoirs and salons with voluptuous and erotic scenes from Classic mythology (Plates 38 A and 41).

All manner of Chinese *motifs* were combined into genial compositions for panels and other features, and from these graceful Chinoiseries it was but a step to the playful singeries or representations of apes and monkeys in human costume engaged in sundry pranks. *Chinoiseries, singeries, bergeries* and other pastoral scenes were commonly incorporated with and surrounded by freely rendered arabesques, many of which were even more open and slender in composition than were Bérain's, and more modern and naturalistic in the subjects depicted.

To the foregoing stock of properties of the Louis Quinze decorator we must add the complement of *palms, cartouches, ribbons, amorini,* sprigs of "slim spidery foliage" of nondescript genus, along with a

medley for ceiling adornment consisting of gods and goddesses, blue skies, birds, scattered flowers, butterflies, and rosy clouds inhabited by chubby cherubs.

Mirrors were immensely popular as decorative factors (Plates 38 A, 39 A and B, 40, 41 and 47) and were freely used in panels and incorporated in doors, as well as occupying an important place over mantels. Indeed, they were used to such an extent that, between them and the painted panels, there was little chance for pictures most of which, as a matter of fact, were of distinctly decorative character and were customarily empanelled as overdoor decorations or set into the heads of empanelled mirrors (Plates 38 A, 39 B, 41 and 42).

In not a few rooms, coved niches were provided at appropriate places for the display of sculpture or of carved urns, porcelain vases or other similar items of adornment.

As a natural accompaniment to the many mirrors there were numerous sconces (Plates 39 A and 40) elaborately wrought in chiselled *ormulu,* affixed to small mirrors of cartouche shape, or made of glass and crystal with pendants to catch and reflect the rays of the candles. Chandeliers also (Plates 39 B, 42 and 47), either in *ormulu* or made of glass and crystal, were objects of ingenious design and finished workmanship.

Fireplaces were low in dimension (Plates 39 A and B, 40 and 47) and sometimes wide, with low mantelpieces of wood, marble or stone carved in *motifs* consistent with the rest of the curvilinear decoration. The low mantel shelf terminated the decorative construction of the fireplace; there were no structural "continued chimney-pieces." The front of the chimney jamb above the mantel shelf was graced by a mirror or by panelling and treated in a manner precisely similar to the rest of the walls.

Cornices were low in projection (Plate 39 A), but were frequently coved (Plates 39 B, 40, 41, 42 and 47) and sometimes of considerable width. It was not an uncommon practice to divide the cornice into oblong panels with groups of decoration centred in them thus, in a way, echoing the treatment of the walls. Then again, as previously noted, the cornice decoration occasionally climbed up and encroached upon the ceiling (Plates 39 B, 40 and 41). Ceilings were frescoed or else decorated with a certain amount of relief in plaster which could be coloured or gilt.

While marble-tiled floors might now and then be employed in galleries and a few large apartments, wooden floors were almost universally prevalent and were very commonly parquetted with varicoloured woods and divers patterns.

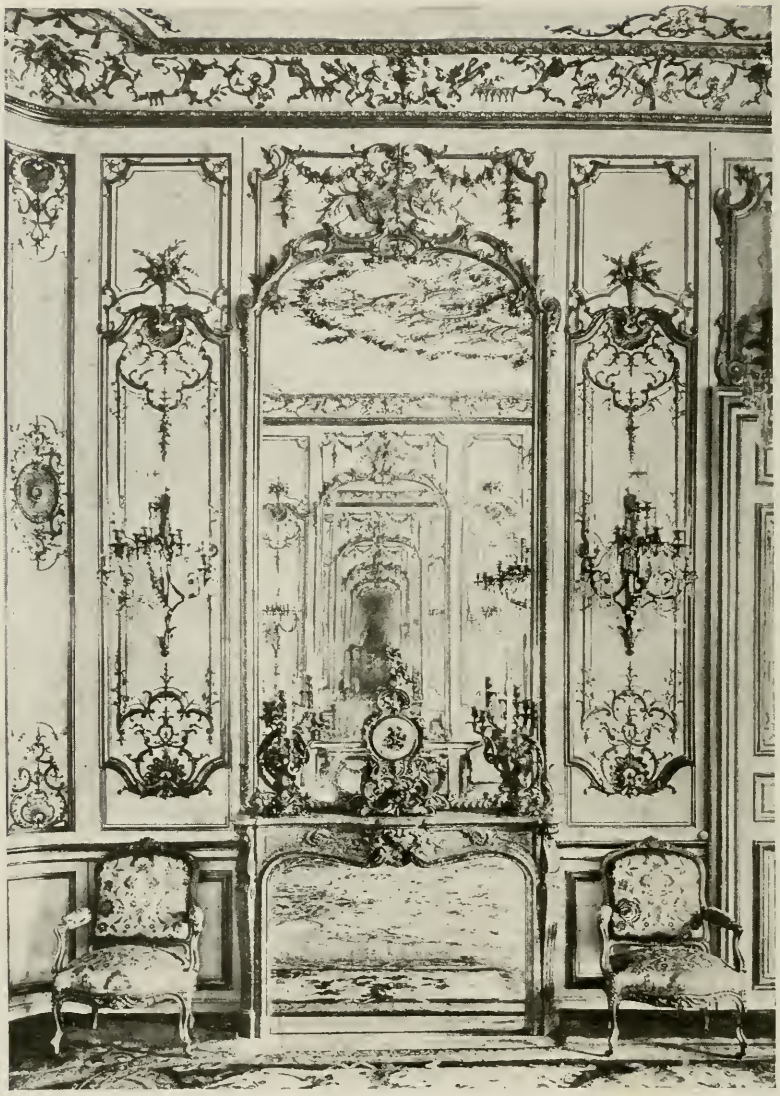
In contrast with the "Style Louis Quinze," the "Style Louis Seize" was marked architecturally by a "four-square sobriety" and decoratively by a return to classical purity of expression and more restraint in the quantity and distribution of ornament. Both architecture and decoration became perceptibly simpler and more reserved, though not severe. There was no diminution in refinement of design nor in rendering, but there was a readier disposition to acquiesce in the "guidance of antiquity." There was no longer an "architectural tendency pulling in one direction and a decorative tendency pulling in another." Architecture and decoration were again wholly consistent the one with the other and the Style Louis Seize, with reference to both architecture and decoration, was unquestionably a "more completely homogeneous style than any of those which had obtained since Henri II."

For the chief specific characteristics of the Style Louis Seize and items of contrast with the preceding

A. SALON, HÔTEL DE BRETEUIL, PARIS
STYLE LOUIS XV (SIMPLE ROCOCO)

B. SALON, HÔTEL DELISLE-MANSART, PARIS
STYLE LOUIS XV (SIMPLE ROCOCO)

From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

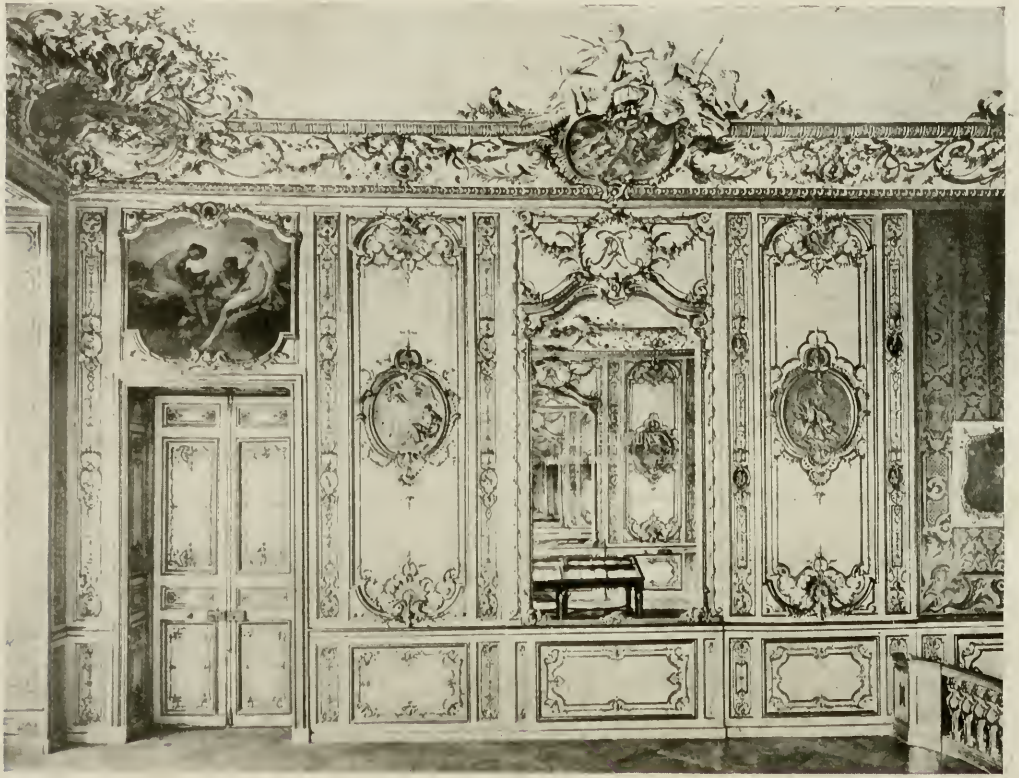


CHIMNEY-PIECE, HÔTEL DE MATIGNON, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XV (EXTREME ROCOCO)

From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet

Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

PLATE 41



BED CHAMBER, DECORATED BY BOFFRAND, HÔTEL DE SOUBISE, PARIS. EXTREME ROCOCO
From 'Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

APE ROOM, DECORATED BY HUET. HÔTEL DE ROHAN, PARIS. EXTREME ROCOCO
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

style, we may point to the *reassertion of the principles of symmetry* and of *rectilinear* and *rectangular treatment* (Plates 44, Fig. 1, and 46); the general *avoidance* of *curved forms* with the occasional exception of simple circles and ellipses which, however, were always kept subservient to the rectangular environment; the carrying through of straight lines with the least possible interruption; the inclusion of such arched forms as were used within a rectangular panel or recess (Plates 48 B and 49); the use of undisguised and unrounded angles (Plate 46) except occasionally in the framing of panels whose corners were modified by square re-entering angles, the space thus formed being filled by a rosette (Plate 46) except occasionally in the framing of panels cornices, friezes, balustrades and lintels uninterrupted by cartouches, ornate keyblocks or sculpture.

Rooms were scrupulously symmetrical and well proportioned in their dimensions and in the balanced disposition of windows and doors. Windows commonly extended all the way to the floor and even those that did not had low cills. They were almost invariably of the casement type with wooden muntins, stiles and rails and were frequently divided vertically by a mullion and horizontally by a transome, the upper section, when such divisions were made, being smaller than the lower, and, of course, opening independently. Window and door heads were commonly rectangular (Plates 47 A and B and 48 A), or, when round-arched (Plate 48 B), straight lines and rectangular elements were so disposed as to maintain the rectilinear predominance.

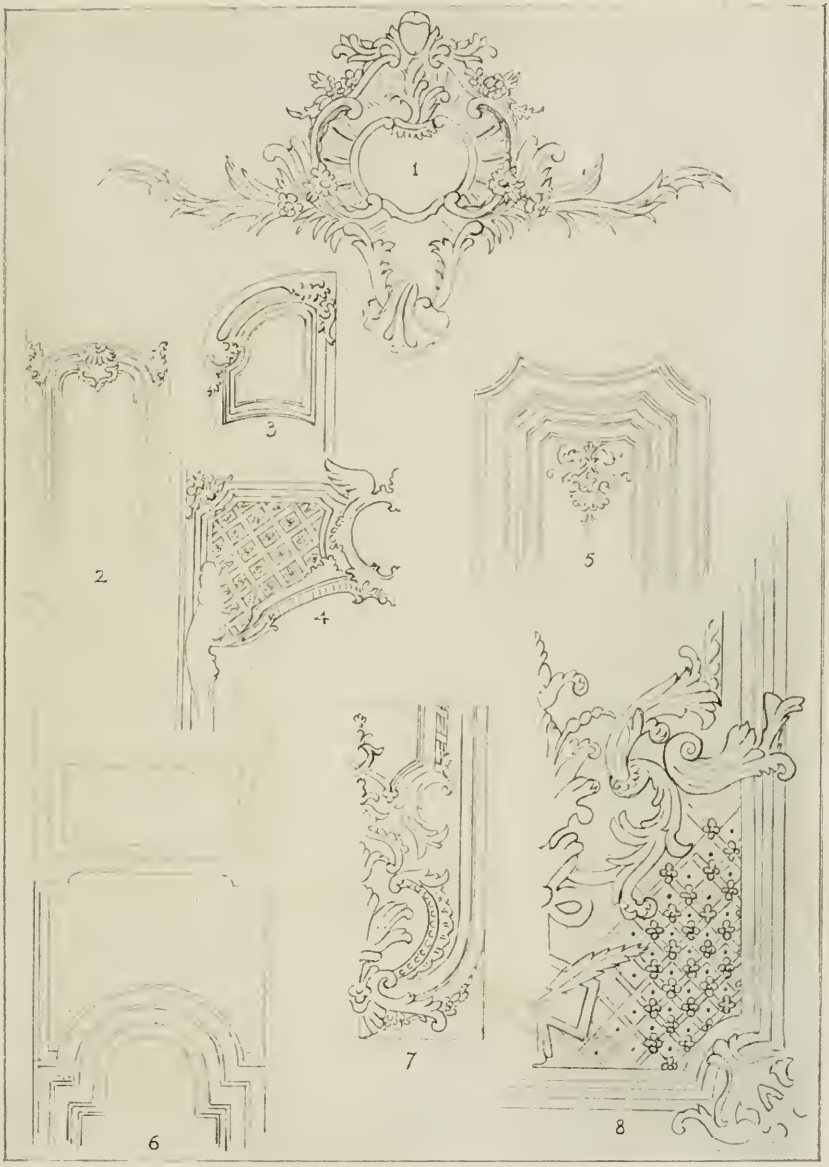
Trims for doors and windows were of low projection and refined contour (Plates 47 B and 48). They were also of far more restrained design and of rectilinear emphasis. Wherever any curved features were retained in door heads (Plate 45, Fig. 1) or in overdoor

treatment, they were always subordinated to the rectilinear note in composition as in all similar instances to which attention has already been called. Classic pilasters often framed door and window openings in the larger and more important rooms, while in smaller rooms, where it was desirable to keep the scale down and to flatten projections, the pilasters were not seldom replaced by thin strips (Plate 44, Fig. 1). All mouldings and projections were derived from Classic precedents and maintained the aspect of purity and severe restraint consistent with their source of inspiration.

Walls were both panelled (Plates 46, 47 B, 48 and 49) and plain of surface. Panelled walls were executed in wood, either in its natural finish or painted, the latter being the more usual. They were also executed in plaster with mouldings of plaster or compo or of wood applied to the plaster background. Small ornaments of more or less intricate character in themselves were sometimes moulded in *carton pierre* or in compo and then applied.

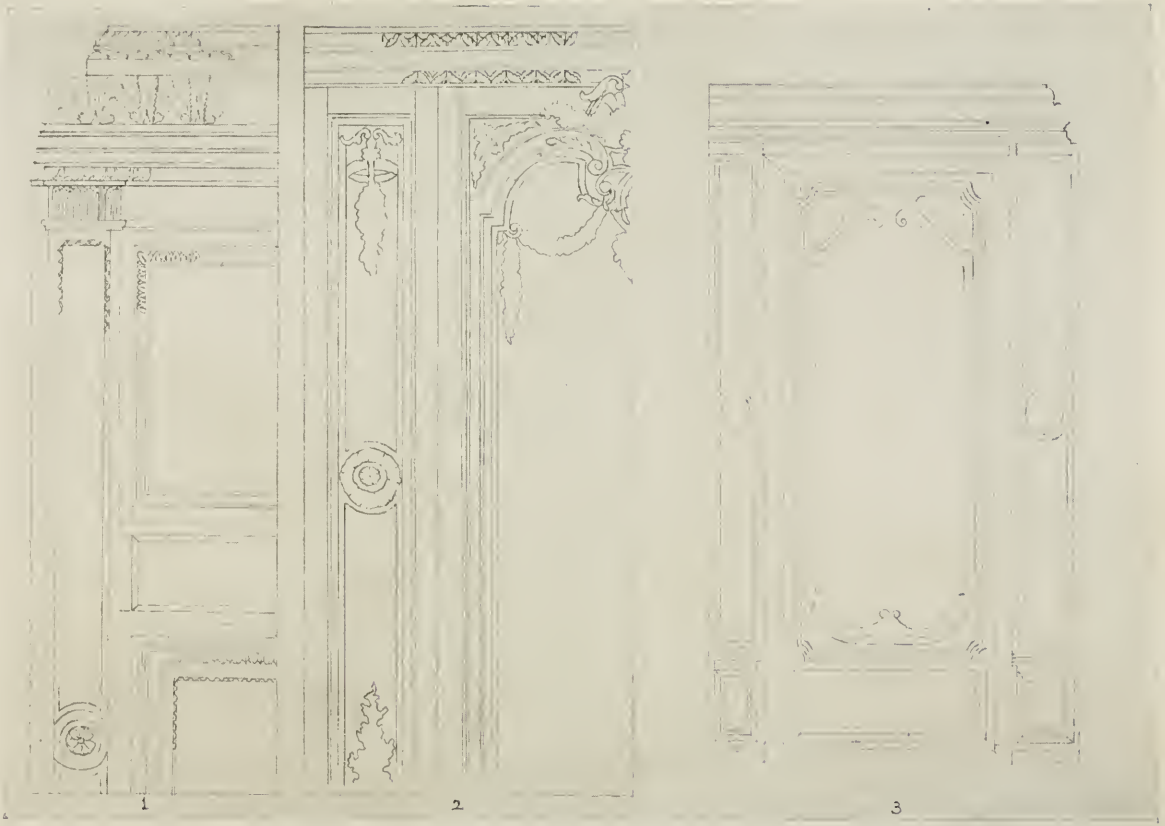
The plain walls might be covered with wall-paper or with fabrics strained over their surface. For this purpose brocades, silks, reps, poplins, printed linens, chintzes and other appropriate fabrics were employed. Wall-paper, up to the latter part of the century, was printed with hand-blocks upon sheets about three feet long by a little more than a foot wide. About 1790 it began to be made in rolls.

It was customary to divide the walls horizontally by a dado about two and three-quarters feet to three feet high (Plates 46, 47 B, 48 and 49). This relieved what might otherwise sometimes have seemed too strong an emphasis of verticality, especially in the case of panelled walls where a number of the panels were



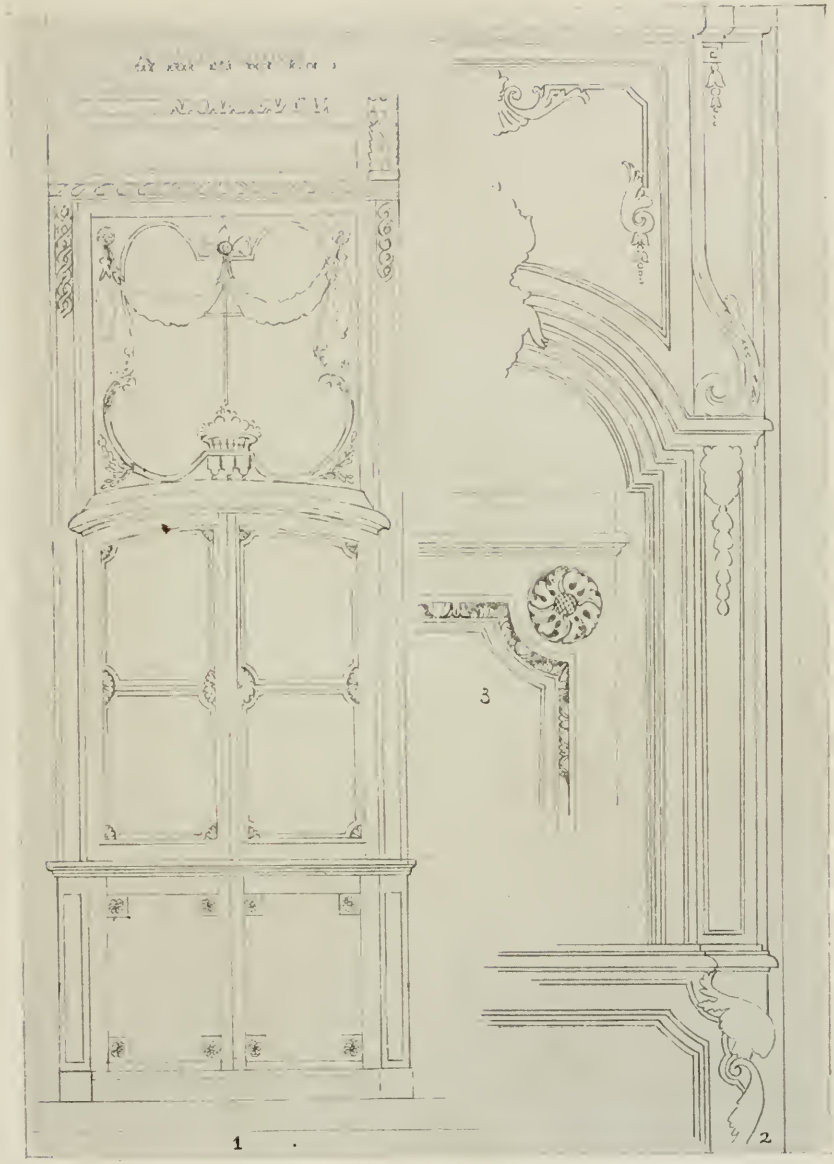
CHARACTERISTIC ROCOCO DECORATIVE *MOTIFS* FROM PANELLING

1. Rococo Pierced Shell *Motif*. 2, 3, 5 and 6. Panel Head Details. 4 and 8. Sections of Characteristically Diapered Ground. 7. Section of *Motif* from Panel Base



CHARACTERISTIC ROCOCO AND NEO-CLASSIC PANEL *MOTIFS*

1. Louis XVI (Neo-Classic) Style. 2. Restrained Louis XV. Rococo Transition to Neo-Classic. 3. Restrained Louis XV. Rococo



CHARACTERISTIC NEO-CLASSIC PANELLING *MOTIFS*

1. Full Section Louis XVI Cupboard Panelling. 2. Section of Overmantel Detail. 3. Louis XVI Panel Corner Detail

BOUDOIR, HÔTEL DE LA FAYETTE, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI
From "Les Vieux de Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
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tall and narrow. It likewise added an architectural note to the composition. Niches for sculpture, for urns and for large porcelain vases were now and then introduced into the walls of large rooms where such features of decoration were becoming.

Panels were large and vertically oblong and varied in width. One very common treatment was to alternate broad and narrow panels (Plate 47 B), and this alternation of panel widths, corresponding with the widths above, was often continued in the dado or immediately below the chair rail. The panels were regular in shape with straight sides, tops and bottoms, and all ornament was strictly confined within the limits imposed by the frames of moulding. Furthermore, the panels were either entirely rectangular or else relieved at the corners by square re-entrant angles, as previously mentioned, rosettes or some similar small device being introduced to fill out the vacancy thus created.

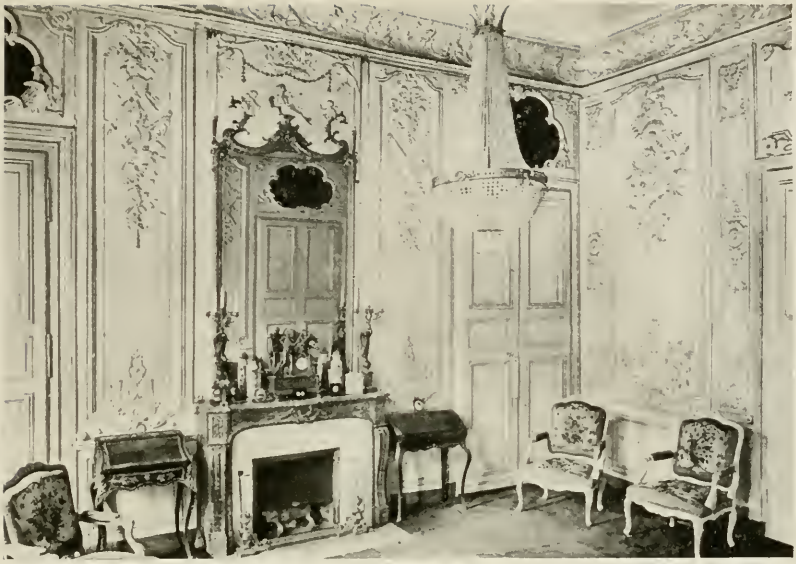
Colour was quite as important a factor in Louis Seize interiors as it had been in those of the preceding mode, although the schemes were somewhat differently managed. The prevailing colours were cool and generally receding in character and soft in tone. White and gold figured to some extent, but more characteristic of the spirit of the period were silver rose, pearly grey, tender blues and pale greens and putty colour. The colours just mentioned, of course, were chiefly employed for backgrounds and served as foils for the decorations subsequently painted thereon and the other items entering into the furnishing schemes.

During the preceding epoch mirrors had proved too valuable a decorative accessory to be dispensed with and they continued in high favour for the spaces over mantels and likewise for insertion in panels (Plates 46 and 48) at other appropriate positions in rooms,

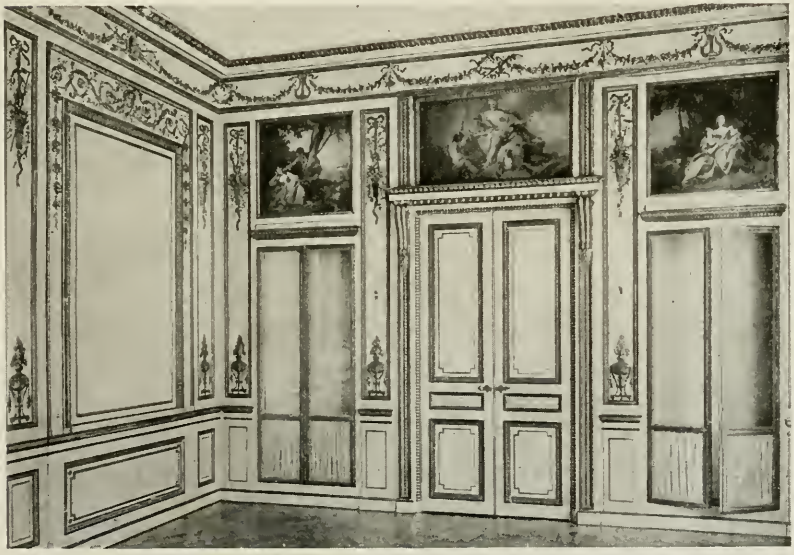
although, in this latter capacity, they were not, perhaps, utilised to such an extent as they had been during the Louis Quinze period. Decorative landscapes (Plates 46 and 47 B) and other decorative subjects on large canvasses were to a certain degree employed as panel embellishments, but the favourite devices for ornamentation were arabesques, classical subjects introduced in the form of medallions or tablets, groupings of trophies or attributes, enriched or decorative bands, and floral compositions in the shape of pendants, swags, garlands, interlaced wreathings and borders (Plates 47 B, 48 and 49). The disposition of all ornament was well-ordered and logical and the compositions were always confined within geometrically regular boundaries.

Decorative paintings that filled whole panels were chiefly of two sorts, landscapes and architectural subjects in the eighteenth century Italian manner, which were also largely employed at the same time in England under the Adam influence, or else paintings apotheosising rustic life, these latter inspired by the influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau. In some cases, whole panels, usually of small dimension, were filled with classic subjects executed in monochrome.

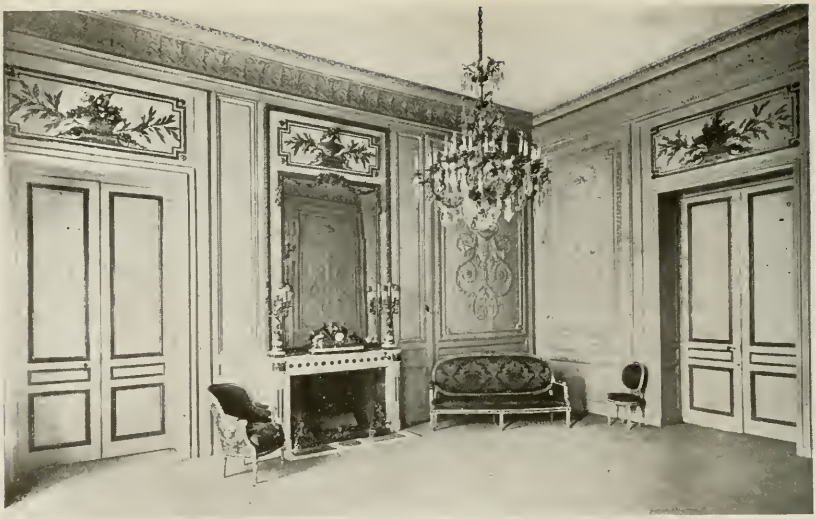
It was more customary, however, to use the classic figure *motifs* in the smaller form of medallions, plaques and tablets, wrought in the fashion of cameos, which made integral parts of arabesque compositions, or else executed as low reliefs on plaster walls. Arabesques were commonly of the Pompeiian type or patterned after those of the Vatican Loggie. They were quite as delicate in execution and as full of imagination as were those of the preceding period, but more restrained and occasionally less vigorous, and they were decidedly lighter in scale than those of the Louis



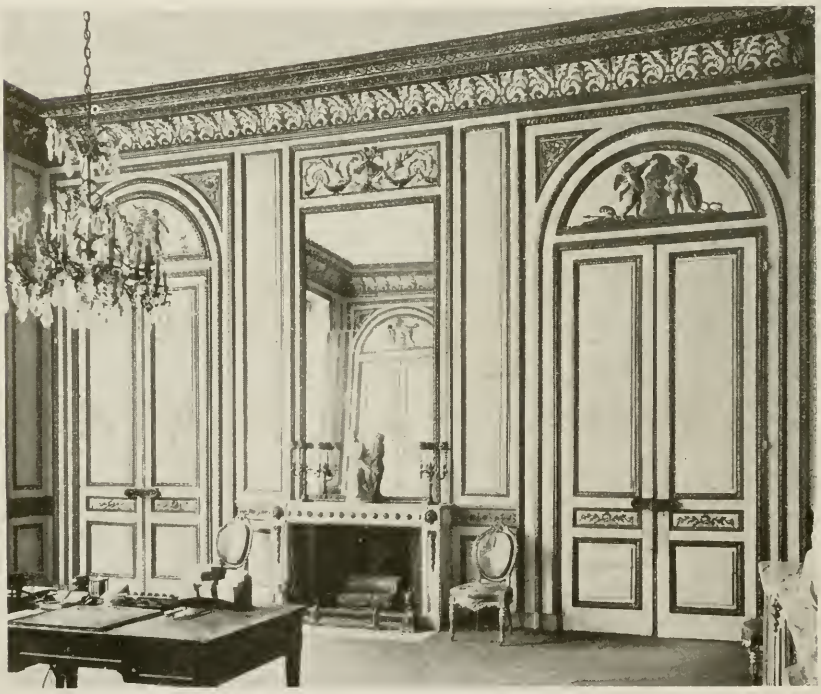
A. SALON, HÔTEL GOUFFIER DE THOIX, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XV (ROCOCO)
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris." F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



B. SALON, HÔTEL BAUDART DE ST. JAMES, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



A. SALON, HÔTEL DU CHÂTELET, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



B. SALON, HÔTEL DU CHÂTELET, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

PLATE 49

SALON, HÔTEL DE LA FAYETTE, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI (PART OF FURNITURE LOUIS XV)
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

Treize or Louis Quatorze styles. The groupings of trophies or attributes included a diversity of subjects, but there seems to have been a special predilection for musical emblems, rustic *motifs,* such as wheat sheaves, bundles and baskets of vegetables or fruits (Plate 48 A), agricultural or horticulural hand implements, hay-makers' hats and beehives, or distinctly "sentimental emblems, such as burning torches, quivers, pierced hearts, and billing doves." The floral and foliated treatments occurred as pendants falling nearly the full length of a panel, as swags and garlands; as pairs of light and long sprays of such small-leaved plants as myrtle or ivy or jasmine, "interlaced to form a series of vesica shapes, or else with a series of tassel-like knots of foliage or bell-flowers issuing one from the other"; or as loose bands of bordering. The flowers and blossoms themselves—roses, marigolds, daisies, anemones, forget-me-nots, bell flowers, and many more —were almost invariably small in size and dainty in execution.

Besides the *motifs* and classes of *motifs* just enumerated, ribbons played an important part in much of the painted and modelled decoration of the period and were closely associated with flowers and foliage. They were generally closely pleated throughout their length and, as well as appearing in bow knots and wreaths, were used in the foliage banding of panels or for spiral coilings or intertwinings round staves or mouldings. Swags and drops (Plate 45, Fig. 1) of imbricated leafage of bay, olive and myrtle appeared in carved, moulded and painted expression. Drapery festoons sometimes took the place of foliated and floral swags. Among the purely naturalistic items must also be mentioned birds, insects, and single knots of fruit, foliage and flowers. Diapers or chequerings were

retained for occasional background enrichment. The honeysuckle pattern was much in evidence as were also urns and vases, successions of Vitruvian scrolls in the "wave" *motif*—"postes," as the French call them—many kinds of *guilloche* (Plate 45, Fig. 1) or meander, pateræ, rosettes and sundry other small classic architectural *motifs,* besides the usual stock complement of tripods, sphinxes and lyres. In the depiction of human figures, classic apparel rather than modern was to be seen.

Sconces, which were extensively employed, were of brass, of carved and gilt wood, of compo painted and gilt, and of crystal. In design, rectilinear feeling was dominant and in their general purity of *motif* and restraint of treatment they fully conformed to the prevailing spirit of the style. The same observations apply to chandeliers anent which it is merely necessary to add that crystal was peculiarly in favour owing to brilliance and the manifold reflections.

Fireplaces remained low (Plates 46, 48 and 49) and there were no "continued chimney-pieces," the overmantel space (Plate 45, Fig. 2) being customarily filled by a large mirror (Plates 46, 48 and 49). If the ceiling was very high, a decorative panel might be included in the space between the head of the mirror and the cornice. Mantel shelves were low and, in the design and structure of the whole mantel composition, right angles, straight lines and parallel sides took the place of the flowing curves that had previously been in vogue. The depth and breadth of the fireplace itself were somewhat decreased by placing decorative metal side and back plates within the wood or marble trim. Mantels were made of carved and painted wood, of carved stone, or of carved and sometimes inlaid marble. The frieze

beneath the shelf was supported on scrolled consoles or brackets or else upon *termes* or term-like columns.

Ceilings were much less frequently coved than formerly and were quite commonly flat, an occasional exception being made for flat elliptical vaulting. Unbroken cornices with strong horizontal accent mark (Plates 46, 47 B, 48 and 49) the boundary between walls and ceiling and are distinctly architectural in the character of their members. Not a few of the ceilings were quite plain, while others were enriched with formal plaster mouldings, bands of imbricated foliage and other devices that conformed with the generally classic architectural tone of composition. The mouldings and foliated bands often divided the ceiling into symmetrically panelled spaces. These plaster decorations, standing forth in relief, were frequently coloured and parcel gilt. In the more elaborate ceilings, the flat surfaces were not seldom frescoed or else embellished with classic *motifs* in low relief which were intensified with subdued colour. The frieze of the cornice might be filled with *motifs* of purely architectural derivation or else with swags, festoons, wreaths and other items of semi-architectural or of conventionalised naturalistic origin. These latter might be in moulded relief and coloured or gilt or they might be wholly painted on a flat surface.

Floors were usually of wood and it was customary to enhance the entire decorative *ensemble* of the room by introducing geometrical patterns parquetted (Plate 49) in several woods of different contrasting colours. Marble and marble-tiled floors were also occasionally used in the larger and more formal rooms.

The Directoire mode embodied an ideal altogether different from that which had actuated the architectural and decorative practice of the Louis Seize period.

In Louis Seize manifestations, French individuality and the fecund spirit of the time, although deriving the major part of their inspiration from classic antiquity and incorporating pure classic forms into current composition, nevertheless added thereto an abundant body of graceful and often playful amenities of detail of modern and local devising. Adaptations, likewise, were freely made, but always in a spirit consistent and harmonious with the underlying classic ideals. These additions and adaptations were responsible for the piquancy and blithesome vitality of the "Style Louis Seize."

The Directoire mode was a deliberate and intentional piece (Plate 50) of decorative archæology. From the classic body it remorselessly sheared off all the accretions of blithesome grace and vivifying invention which the Louis Seize designers and craftsmen had imparted to their handiwork and confined itself to a rigidlly literal reproduction of antique practice. It was Louis Seize stripped naked and reduced to the lowest terms. Nay more, whenever opportunity permitted, not satisfied with meticulous adherence to the *spirit* of a long dead and gone past, its interpreters strove with all their might and main to *reproduce "particular monuments* or as large portions of them as could by any possible means be made to accord with modern requirements." "Thus the letter took precedence over the spirit with the usual unsatifactory results and, while the details and composition of antiquity were more accurately copied, they were used to less purpose." Such forms of ornament as were retained in the new system had the specific sanction of exact historic prototypes. The process of elimination and restraint produced a fashion in many respects altogether admirable.

The Directoire style at its best excels in chaste simplicity and grace and possesses a very distinct charm worthy of sincere emulation (Plate 51). The weak point about it all, and the feature open to unfavourable criticism, was the narrow conception of its originators and fautors, a conception that absolutely limited it within the straitest bounds, stifled imagination, arrested legitimate growth and forbade development, a conception, indeed, that effectually suppressed real creative instinct and deprived it of the vitality necessary to endurance and perpetuation, a conception, in short, that embalmed the style and insisted upon putting it on exhibition instead of using it.

It was well enough for the people of the time, if it pleased their fancy, to conceive that "the ancient republics enjoyed a *régime* of pure democracy and individual liberty, and that their citizens were models of all the austere and simple virtues"; it was well enough, too, for them to light their rooms with Pompeian candelabra, to place Etruscan vases on their chimney-pieces, and "to breakfast at tripods, seated on curule chairs," but to insist upon these domestic equipments *and these only,* to the exclusion of all else, was an attitude that did not conduce to wholesome growth and a logical interpretation of precedents to meet the living needs of the day. In other words, the ultra purist promoters and adherents of the Directoire style seem to have esteemed its real elegance and graceful beauty less than its symbolism of a social condition which, to them, it seemed to embody. They made it an empty simulacrum of their political aspirations. They shut their eyes to its real value and meaning as an expression of art and reduced it to the level of a fad. Under the circumstances, it is not to be wondered at that it was soon strangled and obliged to give way before the more

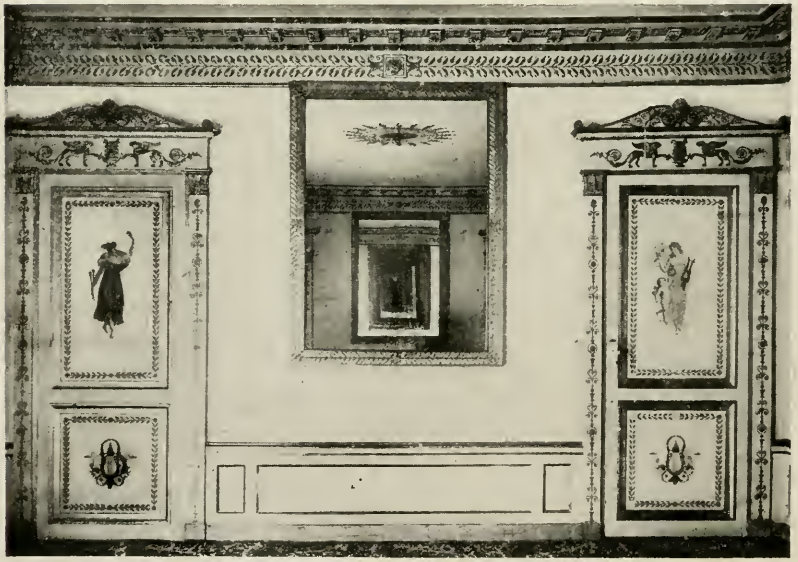
robustly insistent Empire mode which was shortly to follow it.

It goes without saying that the rooms were entirely symmetrical in their dimensions and regular in the disposition of their openings when there was everywhere such zeal for exact archaeology. Window and door trims were much simplified and were often bereft of their former architectural features. Indeed, the openings for doors frequently had no architraves, columns nor pilasters, and when columns or pilasters were used, they had no bases. There was a mere apology for capitals, and pillars very often carried only lintels and not entablatures. Windows were divided into fewer and larger panes and the panes were set in narrower muntins. In some cases windows had semicircular, instead of square heads, and also a few window openings were semicircular or lunette shaped. The panels of doors were shallower and the surrounding mouldings flatter. In shape the panels were horizontally rectangular and of fairly small size, or else of lozenge shape and large. The taste for lozenge-shaped panels seems to have been akin to the fancy for intersecting diagonals wherever they could be introduced in balconies or lattices.

The time-honoured custom of panelling walls was in many cases represented by painting on a flat plaster ground (Plate 51), the decorating being done in the Pompeian style, long, narrow panels alternating with broader divisions. Again, panels or divisions approximating panels would be filled with strained fabric—the *toile de Jouy* linen with its classic *motifs,* elongated octagons, ovals, circles, cameo designs and lyres, all connected by a series of arabesques, or else a linen printed in some restrained and small-sized Chinese *motif.* An even more characteristic treatment was to

DINING ROOM, HÔTEL CHANAC DE POMPADOUR, PARIS
DIRECTOIRE INFLUENCE MERGING INTO EMPIRE
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

A. SALON, HÔTEL DE GRAMMONT, PARIS. STYLE LOUIS XVI—DIRECTOIRE FURNITURE EMPIRE
From "Les Vieux de Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.



B. SALON, HÔTEL DE MAILLY, PARIS. STYLE EMPIRE
From "Les Vieux Hôtels de Paris," F. Contet
Courtesy of William Helburn, Inc.

apply paper in panel forms, using for this purpose the hand-blocked designs of classic subjects in large size, done in monochrome from cartoons prepared by David. These were exceedingly beautiful and dignified and within the past few years the present owners of the blocks have again begun to make impressions from them, which are not at all prohibitive in price. Then, again, plain walls were often covered with simple paper of small design or with landscape paper in monochrome or in subdued tones. When walls had a plain papered or painted surface it was not at all unusual to introduce a deep frieze below the cornice and to dispense, on the other hand, with the dado, there being nothing but a low washboard at the base of the walls.

Mantels of marble, stone or wood, were low and severe in line (Plate 50); there was a straight lintel, and the shelf was supported on simple round columns, on elongated scroll brackets or upon caryatid figures (Plate 51). There was no set overmantel decoration, but a large mirror or painting usually occupied the space.

Ceilings were flat, separated from the wall by a restrained cornice, and they usually carried some moulded geometrical or severely classical plaster decoration around the edges and, perhaps, in the centre; or else the ceilings were concaved to a flattened arc or formed into a barrel vault. These latter ceilings might be frescoed, or, when the arc was flat enough to make the treatment effective, they might be embellished with plasterwork squares, octagons, circles and hexagons enclosing classic figures, the whole scheme being wrought in very flat relief. Floors were of marble tiling or of wood, in the latter case frequently parquetted in geometrical devices.

The key to the genius of the fully developed Empire

style is found in two factors, one political, the other social. The first was the emphasis intentionally laid upon every element that savoured of militaristic pomp and imperial display; the second was the ascendancy of a ruling class composed in the main of *parvenus,* who, " after their kind, liked pretentious display, and were not restrained, as the old aristocracy had been, by hereditary culture and a mode of life which amounted to a continual training in elegance and good taste," a condition that resulted in a " coarsening in tone of the work carried out for them."

The better examples of the Empire style were of two sorts, the elaborate kind that was executed with punctilious regard for a certain type of classic precedent and was both inspired by ideals of the utmost magnificence and supplied with means to realise the ideals with thorough elegance; and, on the other hand, the simpler sort of Empire work that exhibited a decorous reticence in the use of the current *motif* and materials. The less desirable examples, which unfortunately predominated numerically, were characterised by thorough-going ostentation and bombast.

Symmetry was one of the prime requirements and all openings were regularly disposed. Window and door openings were usually square-headed or round-arched. Trims were broad and of flat profile. Door-heads had straight, flat lintels, sometimes in the form of a very much simplified cornice supported on modillion brackets. Door and shutter panels were large, rectangular and flat, with flat moulding profiles.

Walls were almost invariably plain. The more elegant walls were covered with strained fabrics or frescoed; the simpler walls were painted or papered. The dado dropped out of fashion and the frieze became general.

Fireplaces were low and without fixed chimney-piece decoration, and the space between mantel shelf and ceiling was usually occupied by a mirror of corresponding breadth. A straight lintel, often without any decoration, topped the fireplace opening and the mantel shelf was supported by plain round columns or by caryatid figures.

The high ceilings were flat, the cornices were modest, and the moulded plaster ornament around the edges and in the centre was in geometrical or heavy classic *motifs*. Floors were of wood, plain or parquetted, and, in halls and some of the more sumptuous rooms, of marble tiles.

Furniture and Decorations.—Both wall and seating furniture, at the beginning of the reign of Louis XV, was more abundant and varied than had been the case during the preceding reign. It was a period of polished manners and luxurious habits, and once the restraint of Louis XIV formality was removed and the door opened to greater freedom of social habits, mobiliary art was quick to reflect the change in the increased number of intimate, domestic and luxurious forms introduced.

Louis Quinze furniture faithfully mirrored the dominant traits of contemporary fixed decoration as noted earlier in this chapter. The curving line was supreme. Nearly all furniture dimensions were smaller and lighter in line, a change indicative of the abandonment of pompous, stately forms in favour of greater convenience and bodily comfort.

While all the usual types of bedsteads, cupboards, or armoires, tables and seating furniture were fully in use, there was an appreciable increase in the number of forms and refinements introduced in writing furniture and in console cabinets or commodes. These latter

were used upon every conceivable occasion and in every conceivable place. Besides these, there were contrived numerous small stands, tables and cupboards to meet specialised demands.

While walnut was the staple wood, all sorts of rare and highly coloured woods were freely employed for veneer, inlay and marqueterie. Much of the furniture, also, was painted, painted and parcel gilt, or lacquered. The colours used were generally light. When it was possible to introduce panels painted with arabesques, pastorals, singeries or Chinoiseries, it was done. To add to the mobiliary grace and elaboration, *ormulu* mounts were lavishly employed on cabinet-work.

With the neo-Classic period, returned the dominance of rectilinear emphasis in furniture. The cabriole leg made place for the straight fluted and tapered leg; the *bombé*-fronted console cabinet with its swelling, undulating contours, yielded to a successor whose right-angled restraint of line was in sharp contrast. The kinds of articles and the amount of furniture used did not appreciably change; the difference was wholly in contours and *motifs* of decoration. Light colours in painted, painted and parcel gilt, or lacquered furniture continued in favour, as did also the great variety of multicoloured woods for veneer, inlay and marqueterie. Likewise continued the fashion of numerous metal mounts for cabinet-work, the design, however, being altered to suit the revived classical spirit.

Directoire movable furniture, like Directoire fixed decoration, was virtually a reduction of the corresponding Louis Seize elements to their lowest terms. The Empire style, while retaining a good deal of rectilinear severity, nevertheless, occasionally flourished out into flamboyant and grandiose contours, especially where seating furniture, bedsteads and, to some extent,

tables, were concerned. During the Empire phase of the neo-Classic style, while painting and parcel-gilding of furniture continued to a limited degree, the favourite material was mahogany, which made an admirable foil for the elaborate filigree and embossed ornamental *appliqué* which enjoyed such vogue. Empire contours were almost invariably substantial and robust, and, at times, became even gross and clumsy.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—During the dominance of the Rococo style, tapestries of the old pattern continued in use to some extent where large, formal rooms or galleries left a place for them. Other accessories, however, had usurped most of their function. Hangings at doors and windows were made of silks, taffetas, brocades, damasks, velvets and printed linens, light colours and dainty patterns being most in favour. Door and window heads were very commonly adorned with shaped valances or loopings, and the hangings were frequently draped back. Pictures for the walls of many of the rooms were not at a premium (*v.* paragraph on the use of mirrors). Porcelains, both Oriental and of Western fabrication, were in great demand, and, along with pieces of bronze or marble sculpture, were introduced with great frequency. Many of the Oriental porcelains, such, for instance, as some of the finer Chinese ginger jars, were carefully set with ornate *ormolu* mounts.

Chandeliers of crystal, brass, or of *ormolu,* depended from the centres of ceilings in the more elegant and important rooms. Sconces of chiselled *ormolu,* in graceful, flowing designs, were hung in symmetrical positions on the panelled walls. Candelabra were designed to accord with them.

During the period of neo-Classic influence, while

the love for the old tapestries never quite died out, there was a perceptible turning toward the newer Aubusson tapestries of paler, lighter hue and more blithesome pattern for such wall surfaces as required a large hanging. Door and window hangings were of practically the same fabrics as noted for the Rococo period. Light colours and dainty patterns also remained in favour, with the addition of a well-defined vogue for stripes. At door and window heads there were both straight and shaped valances, and likewise looped draping or else shirred ray-like folds centring in a button, the two latter treatments being suitable for round-arched windows. Valance mouldings or boxes were likewise in use and added a distinct note to the composition. In accordance with the prevalent rectilinear emphasis, door and window hangings generally fell in straight folds.

Pictures regained the position from which they had been temporarily ousted during the most mirror-loving days of the Rococo period. The disposition of rooms was not less symmetrical or ordered nor was the extensive use of mirrors discontinued, but it became the fashion either to hang pictures within panels that accorded with their dimensions or to remove them from their frames and empanel them. Porcelains and other objects of *vertu,* whether Oriental or Occidental, found abundant appreciation and were freely employed. In addition to the taste for Oriental forms and European fashions of recent date in ceramics, there was keen interest in revived classic forms in pottery and porcelain. At the same time, with the re-awakened classic sense, bronze and marble sculpture enjoyed increased favour. What was said of lighting appliances for the foregoing period applies with equal force for the neo-

Classic, the only significant difference being the substitution of Classic for the Rococo design.

Tapestries in the Empire period were distinctly out of place. They were tolerated where they had to be retained, but their presence was not sought as a factor in decorative schemes. Hangings of silk, satin, brocade or velvet were voluminous and impressive by their ample folds and by their shaped valances and cornice mouldings or by their intricate loopings at window heads. Pictures had more leeway in decorative practice, as many of the wall surfaces were unbroken by panel boundaries. Porcelains and sculpture were popular in their imposing and heroic dimensions, and where they aided vigorous contrasts of strong colour. To chandeliers, sconces and candelabra, many of which were of exceedingly beautiful design and workmanship, in glass, marble, crystal, brass, bronze and *ormolu,* must be added the lamps for mantel garniture, usually of bronze, with etched or cut-glass globes and pendent prisms. The fire iron and hearth accessories of the period also aided the *ensemble* with their polished brass fittings.

Materials and Colour.—The fabrics and other materials in use at the successive periods have already been more or less fully noted. To what has been said it is only necessary to add that during the Rococo and neo-Classic periods a great use was made of Aubusson tapestry for furniture covers and that in the Empire period a great deal of heavy brocade, brocatelle, damask, velvet and rep was used not only for hangings but also for wall coverings, likewise that haircloth, figured and plain, began to occupy an appreciable space in upholstery calculations. Throughout both the Louis Quinze and Louis Seize styles there was a marked preference for cheerful and light colourings, whether

in woodwork, furniture or fabrics. At the same time, delicacy of pattern was a *sine qua non.* These characteristics were well exemplified in the Aubusson and Savonnerie rugs and carpets so much used at this date. During the Directoire episode, while the colouring occasionally became more vigorous in emulation of Pompeian precedent, the design was so restrained and shapely that there was no oppressive impression of heaviness. With the full blossoming of the Empire style, the whole colour preference changed. Strong and heavy reds, greens, purples, yellows and other vigorous hues in raw and often combative tones came into high favour and the patterns reflected the militaristic and imperial tone observable in all other decoration.

Arrangement.—Throughout the Rococo and neo-Classic periods a balanced, orderly and symmetrical disposition of furnishings and decorations was considered indispensable to a well-appointed interior. The modes might change, but the conception of order remained unaltered.

CHAPTER IX

NINETEENTH CENTURY EPISODES AND AFTER

INTRODUCTION. — Howsoever wonderful the nineteenth century may have been as an era of phenomenal material progress and of unprecedented mechanical, engineering and scientific achievement, it was distinctly *not* a period kindly to architecture or to any of the allied arts, and the art of interior decoration fared worse, if such a thing were possible, than any of the others. After about 1830 architecture, furniture design and the practice of decorative furnishing slumped into a dismal vale of barrenness or of revolting vulgarities and simpering inanities; a deplorable state with almost no bright spots at all to relieve the artificiality, dreariness and stupidity. From the day of the so-called "carpenters' Classic" style in domestic architecture and the synchronous gobby, clumsy and tumid mahogany-veneered travesties upon the Empire style in furniture, both of which spread over the United States about the date above mentioned, there was a dreary procession of one abnormality after another until near the very end of the century—in architecture, the Gothic revival with its wooden crenellations painted and sanded to simulate stone, and jig-saw tracery and fretwork, the mansard roof episode with its attendant bastard Rococo enormities of decorative detail, the still more atrocious whimsicalities of the Centennial fashion with bird-box masses and details that were a most unhappy medley derived from Gothic tracery, Moorish fretwork and Hamburg edging, and next fol-

lowing this nightmare the aberrations of the "dreadful 80's"; in furniture, the rosewood fantasticalities, the black walnut perversions when designers so frequently adapted and parodied the least inspired eighteenth century Italian and Spanish precedents—an exhibition not of ignorance but of abysmal bad taste—the Eastlake trivialities, the golden oak brutalities of unhappy memory and still more unhappy survivals; and, to complete the tale of iniquities, the shocking "art nouveau" demonstrations of what an utterly unbalanced and depraved, and we might add starved, imagination could descend to. Even in the last decade of the nineteenth century and after the beginning of the twentieth, when the invitable but long delayed reaction against all the preceding abominations had set in and the trend towards reasonable taste and sane furnishing had gained appreciable impetus, occasional discouraging reversions to mobiliary imbecility were to be noted and, along with them, reversions to decorative imbecility as well. Witness the extravagances and faddish, inane gaucheries perpetrated under the inspiration of Viennese influence.

Bad as things were in America, conditions were little if any better in England or on the Continent. As a fit accompaniment to the ill-shapen furniture, the acme of decorative effort in Great Britain seems to have been reached in a very orgy of kakochromous needlework in Berlin wool and a dolorous achievement of dexterity in decalcomania plastering, to be followed slightly later by a succession of equally unedifying performances. Like absurdities made their appearance locally elsewhere. And in all this mad age, which seems to have run riot in a delirium of delight over the fancied possibility of creating art by purely mechanical processes, there was a drab, unmitigated monotony of

decorative horrors relieved only by such infrequent and sporadic episodes as the Biedermeier period in Bavaria or some of the better efforts of William Morris and his contemporaries in England. One of the most deplorable and pathetic features of the period was the universal self-satisfaction and the universal striving to attain the smug and genteel—*verbum horribile!*—result. There was no lack of mental capacity among decorators and designers—would that there had been! The outcome might have been less appallingly hideous, but the mental capacity was prostituted to the pursuit of copious and banal activity wholly devoid of imagination and of worthy ideals. The minds of those who should have created worthy things were grovelling in a moil of the grossest mechanical materialism.

Architectural Background and Methods of Fixed Decoration.—During the period of "carpenters' Classic" ascendancy there is little that can be said, in a positive way, of the architectural background. Its qualities were chiefly negative. Apart from the rectangular door and window openings with their rectangularly detailed and perfunctory trims and rectangularly detailed, perfunctory and flat fireplace surrounds and mantels to match, there was little that could be dignified by the name of interior architecture. The best that can be said of these items of equipment is that they were simple. The rooms were apt to be lofty and of fairly good proportions and the door and window openings were generous; so that, despite the lack of any real spirit of inspiration, there was a certain amount of dignity because there was no great pretense. To be sure, it was the dignity of a large box, an altogether passive and negative dignity. The soul of the room was often throttled by blocking up the fireplace and substi-

tuting an hot-air register to serve in lieu of the living fire. The walls were merely expanses of white plaster above an insignificant baseboard and the cornices, while respectable, were neither impressive nor of any positive decorative value.

Succeeding this period of "carpenters' Classic" dominance, when the woodwork was customarily painted an unobtrusive white or cream and the walls were either painted or else papered in banal or even worse than banal taste, came an era of the same barren walls which offered an expansive opportunity for the display of atrociously hideous wall-paper, soulless registers set beneath vulgarly proportioned marble mantels, and pompous, tumid, ill-detailed woodwork executed either in expensive walnut or else fashioned from some humbler wood and painted white or dirty chocolate brown or grained. The finishing touch to this delectable interior would be a grotesque and pretentious chandelier dropping out of a no less grotesque and pretentious cast plaster centre-piece affixed to the middle of the ceiling. At this same time we often find doors and windows with heads either semicircular or else showing the segment of an arc, supposedly conveying a bit of distinction, and, when affluent vulgarity was minded to splurge in elaboration of woodwork, there were sometimes added borders of heavy machine-carved flowers, thick rope mouldings and heavy gadrooned edges, borrowed unintelligently from eighteenth century Italian models of not the best type. City houses of the brown-stone-front vintage supply plentiful examples of these depressing items.

The next phase of ugliness was the Centennial episode with nothing new or better to contribute to the architectural background and only a variation in the matter of fretted gingerbread woodwork more plenti-

fully diffused, besides the supplementary horror of so-called frescoes consisting of awkward designs printed on paper and pasted on ceilings. An Eastlake spirit also manifested itself in the woodwork. Next came the dreary, ponderous and stupid period of the 80's with its attendant monstrosities of wainscot, grotesque galleried and fussy mantel-pieces and overmantels with mirrors; stair rails and grilles with multitudinous spool and globular turnings; panels and fireplace hoods with muscular griffins and caryatides and a maze of foliations and grisly masques derived from clumsy mediæval German *motifs,* all substantially wrought in golden oak or, perhaps, in red-stained mahogany. A frequent *piéce de résistance* of fixed decoration at this time was a terrifying composition in "stained" glass of virulent colouring or else a bewildering maelstrom of much be-leaded fragments of thick white glass, set in unusual shaped windows on stair landings or above sideboards. Almost synchronous with this hectic era was the "Art Nouveau" craze with its attenuations, its contortions and its misshapen sinuosities that closely resemble hanks of molasses toffy being pulled at a candy frolic.

From all this moil of aberrations there was bound to be a revulsion of feeling and a recrudescence of sanity; the human mind had done its worst and the pendulum was due to swing back to better things. The day of better things had dawned, there were searchings among the saner precedents of the past and considerable progress had been achieved when there arose a brief reversion to anarchy in the extravagant gaucheries of the ultra-Viennese school, an isolated ebullition, however, which endured in vigour for only a brief season and did not serve to stay or seriously hinder the

course of decorative progress to which we have since held.

Furniture and Decoration.—The furniture properly cognate to the "carpenters' Classic" phase, in the matter of architectural background, was of the swollen and clumsy late American Empire type, which was usually of solid mahogany or else veneered with crotch wood over the tumid proportions. There is so much of it still extant, and unfortunately some of it is being extensively reproduced and palmed off on the unenlightened in out of the way regions, that it is unnecessary to describe it in detail. This mobiliary type was closely followed by the rosewood furniture with much meaningless sinuosity of members and profuse carving of details. Such pieces as *étagères* or "what-nots" flourished in polite drawing-rooms as did also marble-topped tables, oftentimes surmounted with coloured wax flowers under glass domes as becoming central features of ornament. The rosewood period gave place in due season to the period of black walnut, a time in which mobiliary design made no improvement and only succeeded in debauching sundry eighteenth century Spanish and Italian *motifs* and making them infinitely worse than they were originally. Upon the heels of black walnut came the procession of golden oak with its tedious ponderosity and revival of loutish German mediæval details, there being but a brief episode of Eastlake creations in walnut before the toffy-coloured tyranny became universal. After the chief vogue of golden oak, with its monstrous sideboards and ungainly tables, a medley of styles began to crop up. Then the dry bones were stirred and towards the end of the nineteenth century there began to be a revival of sane design in furniture which has improved steadily to the present day without serious let or hindrance, save for

the "Art Nouveau" and ultra-impressionistic modern Viennese furores which, however, soon ran their ephemeral course and subsided into deserved obscurity. There were, undoubtedly, analogies during all this sterile and misguided period between the design of furniture and the architectural characteristics, but in a time when there was little domestic building that deserved the name of architecture and little furniture of any merit, it would be idle to point out correspondences of glaring imperfection.

Other Decorative Accessories and Movable Decorations.—During nearly the whole of this dreary period of progressive horrors, which may be said to have reached its culmination in the Turkish cosy corner with all the grotesque and inappropriate accompaniments thereto appertaining, the "decorative accessories" were not decorative but quite the reverse and their room would have been better than their presence.

There were wall-papers, which were usually bad, and there were numerous draperies and fringes, which were generally far worse, about as bad, indeed, as perverted and fantastic imagination could make them. Carpets there were, and rugs, ingrain, Brussels, Wilton, Axminster and sundry other weaves, physically admirable but, for the most part, either poor or actively objectionable in colour and pattern. It was *de rigueur* as a rule to have the carpets cover every inch of floor space. Later on, towards the end of the century when there began to be a taste for parquetted floors of hard wood and ornamental (?) designs, rugs came into greater vogue, especially after the impulse given towards the collection of Oriental rugs by the Centennial.

Barring these and shocking bad lighting fixtures and very mediocre sculpture in marble or bronze, with occasional excursions into the least inspired phases of

Sevres, Royal Worcester and other ceramic productions, the period was barren of decorative accessories and movable decorations. The wall-papers designed by William Morris and the Japanese bronzes and some of the porcelains that appeared after the Centennial ought not to be unconditionally included in this category of condemnation, but their influence went only a little way towards mitigating the otherwise objectionable tone of the era.

Materials and Colour.—Reference has already been made to the woods used for furniture and interior finish. It remains only to mention the materials employed for upholstery and hangings. Haircloth, both plain and patterned, enjoyed great popularity at the beginning of the period and deserved furniture of better design on which to be applied. Velvets, both plain and figured, brocades, damasks, brocatelles, poplins, satins and silks of the best quality were lavishly used for upholstery and draperies but, as a rule, far more could be said for their quality than for either their colour or their design. Carpets, likewise, were of the best possible quality but shared the same limitations regarding colour and pattern as the other fabrics.

The colours most favoured were either sombre and dull or else vigorous and full, in the latter case being employed without the requisite knowledge of their properties and relations to do them justice. The Viennese episode, almost coincident with cubism and post-impressionism in painting, launched into riotous excesses of both colour and design, if much of it can be called design, with an utter disregard for chromatic psychology. Perhaps the psychology involved was Teutonic, which would account for its inscrutability.

Arrangement.—This was essentially the period of the "what-not" and the centre table—it might be more

proper to spell it Centre Table with capitals as indicating the almost religious veneration paid it—of grim, sumptuous, uncomfortable and depressing formality and "genteel," middle-class propriety in arrangement without consideration for either practical utility or comfort. One cause, perhaps, for all the dreary, expensive banality and lack of either humanity or a modicum of taste was the fact that it was a period of preëminently material prosperity and rapid accumulation of wealth which brought to the fore a vast crowd of *nouveaux riches* who had neither the knowledge nor traditions back of them to impel them to better things. They allowed themselves to be outfitted by purely commercial purveyors who were enjoined to make the establishments of their patrons thoroughly respectable and *au fait*. And unfortunately those who, from their antecedents, should have known better, allowed themselves to be infected by the ill example of the vulgarly affluent majority.

During the last few years a new movement has arisen. As it has gained a very considerable following, particularly among those who are strongly individual in their tastes and preferences, it is desirable that a separate section be given to its consideration.

THE "NEW" DECORATION

AN EXAMINATION OF THE "MODERN" METHOD

When a new tendency or movement first reaches the attention of the public, and particularly if in some of its manifestations it be rather startling, several attitudes of mind immediately become evident. One temperament shrinks from the unusual, sometimes with repulsion and hard language, while another, with equal

lack of examination, runs to embrace it as *le dernier cri;* still another regards that as everything else with a tolerant smile of amused indifference, while it is reserved for a fourth class to weigh merits and demerits before passing judgment.

As it is to this last group that the readers of this book will doubtless belong, they will probably be glad of a consideration of this comparatively new movement in household decoration which shall be at once sympathetic and impartial.

WHAT IT IS

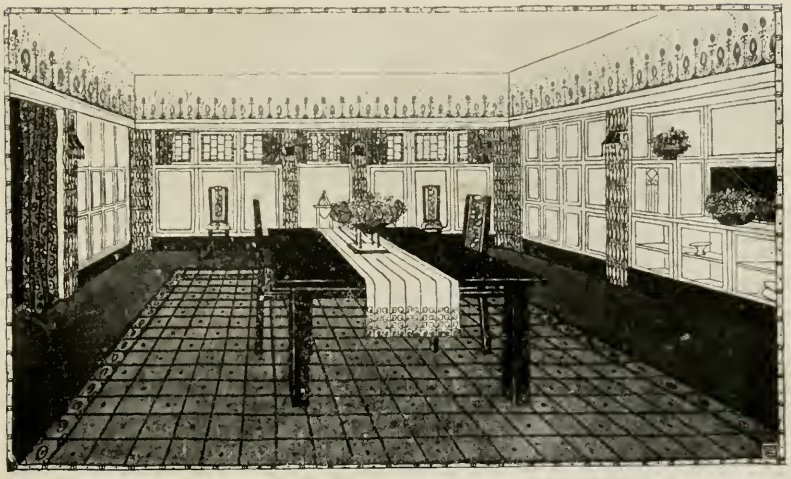
While the newer tendency is derived from the Modernistic Movement abroad, it would be fairer to say that its American manifestation is a *reflection* of that influence rather than a continuation. The European movement, developed in its turn from the Austrian Secession, a recognised school so long ago as the closing years of the last century, is decidedly iconoclastic and will be referred to later. We do not think that there has been a great deal of this spirit shown in household decoration here, and, with the exception of the work of a few exponents of European origin, what has been done in this direction has probably been by way of interesting experiment. We need hardly look for any outbreak of erratic tendencies, and the conservative need not therefore greatly concern themselvs at the few manifestations of *outré* decoration which have appeared. There naturally will be some in every movement who go further than others, so that we may expect to find here as elsewhere all shades of opinion and practice, from decided innovation to comparative conservatism.

The movement is the product of a number of clever minds, and there is no organisation for the promulga-

OFFICE AND RECEPTION ROOM: AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF "MODERN" WORK

Walls, Blue-green Divided into Panels by a Rich Dark Rose Band and Black Line; Base, Chair-rail and Picture Moulding, Black; Partitions, same as Walls; Ceiling, Grey; Carpet, Plain same Rose as Walls; Furniture, Black; Draperies, Rose Linen with Appliqué in Grey, Black and Rose Velvet; Draperies in Reception-room, Rose Linen with All-over Design in Green, Red-violet and Blue.

By Courtesy of the Aschermann Studio, New York



SCHEME FOR A DINING-ROOM IN "MODERN" STYLE

Walls, White Enamel; Ceiling and Walls above Woodwork Painted White; Baseboard, Black; Pilasters, Marqueterie, Black and White; Furniture, Ebony Finish; Draperies, Upholstery and Rug, Intense Blue and Black; Lighting-fixtures and Bowls, Hammered Copper.

By Courtesy of the Aschermann Studio, New York

MODERN BRITISH COTTAGE INTERIOR WITH BUILT-IN FURNITURE AND MOVABLE PIECES OF CORRESPONDING TYPE

By Courtesy of Messrs. Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin, Letchworth, Herts.

PANEL INSERTS OF JAPANESE PAPER, LAMP AND SIMPLE TABLE, ALL APPROPRIATE TO "MODERN" DECORATION

William Chester Chase, Architect

tion of certain principles: the tendency here seems simply a reaction from "Period" furnishing and the supplying of another method of treatment which shall be more in accord with our life to-day. How well and how fully it does this is the aim of this section to enquire.

If we interpret aright the movement in this country its ideal—and what a fine one it is!—is to teach use, convenience and beauty by way of simplicity and balance on the one hand and fine, frank, cheerful colour on the other. Now there is nothing very "new" about all this—and it is none the worse for that. It is what many of us have "been after" for many days. As the thing which comes nearest to their solution of the problem is Peasant Art (including the British Cottage) this has largely been the inspiration of the new movement. The humorous side of this is that while some at least of the new movers have been scathing in their criticisms of Period Art as unable to embody the spirit of to-day, Peasant Art is as much Period Art as any other. None of us, however, is entirely logical and we need not stress this, especially as mingled with this older inspiration is the use of anything from any source which will aid in the realising of the object desired.

In itself the use of varying materials is also unobjectionable, providing they can be welded and harmonised into a complete and beautiful whole. It is in the definition of the aim to be realised that we come to our first question.

If the Modern Movement is an effort to realise, and to provide homes in correct relation to, human life to-day, it is evident that the result will depend upon the conception of what that life is.

WHAT IS OUR MODERN LIFE?

It is undeniable that there is in our present existence (and those whose disposition it is to ignore the past are invited to remember that there has also been in most ages) an element which is hectic, freakish, anarchistic and unwholesome. In Europe before the war this tendency was growing to an alarming extent and many brilliant but erratic minds so stressed this phase of our existence as either wilfully to deny its other elements or so to dislike them as to wish them begone. The extreme wing of this group would have liked to cut loose from and abolish the past with its lessons and make all new after its own devices. It is little wonder that we have seen an outpouring of cubism, vorticism, futurism, attempts to depict emotionalism and movement without sufficient regard to the basis of form, strident and discordant colour, and the more hectic and immodest tendencies in woman's dress.

We do not say and we do not think that this spirit has entered to any great extent into decorative art in America and probably the war has eradicated it abroad.

Here, we may well believe, the movement in general simply recognises the variety, the virility, the elasticity, yes and the restlessness and excitability of modern life and attempts to meet and interpret it. Whether it would not be better to endeavour to *neutralise* the latter phases is a question worth the asking.

With the difference in aim comes the difference in result, and consequently we shall find examples which continue with the fine qualities of simplicity and strength of line the stiffness and want of home feeling which somehow prevails in much of the Vienna Secession; other houses a bouquet, with rooms in colour-schemes representing various and unrelated flowers;

and still others in which the unities are rightly kept and which have the cheer and charm and freshness of simplicity and beautiful colour beautifully used.

VERVE AND FRESHNESS

That the injection of these qualities into our homes would be an exceedingly desirable thing was effectively borne in upon the writers when for selective purposes they had the task of going over some three hundred photographs of the interiors of tasteful houses. With few of them could particular fault be found (otherwise the photographs would not have been taken), *but in less than a quarter of this number was any particular individuality shown.*

Most tasteful Americans are unduly conservative and too content to follow precedent, and a movement which awakens and "gives them to think" is decidedly at present a needed spur. It does not follow that we must rush to adopt the new decoration, but it is well to consider it carefully, for it has much to offer. In addition to providing many hints even to those who prefer the old it certainly affords at much less expense than period furnishing a method of decoration well adapted to modest houses, cottages and some apartments, which is simple and at the same time artistic, bright and attractive.

There is no obligation to adopt its more *outré* features if unsuited to our temperaments, for it presents alternatives from which to choose. In order that full consideration be given this method its detailed characteristics have been treated in Part II in the chapters on Colour, Walls, Floors, Furniture and Fabrics.

A very practical question is: How far is it adapted to the possessions we already have? If, upon examination, we find this spirit or ideal appeals to us, can we

avail ourselves of it wholly, or to what extent, without an entire redecoration and refurnishing of our homes?

To those who own handsome Period Furniture and furnishings it may be said that such things will not be superseded by this or any other new method which may arise. The "modern" method, charming as it may be at its best, is in any event rather limited to small houses or apartments, and indeed not to all of these. It is an excellent sign that many Americans of the better and more thoughtful class are taking account of something other than *size*. Small families often wish to eliminate the care and continual bother large properties involve and are moving into apartments or smaller houses, even erecting smaller country abodes as well. The tastes of these people may be highly formed and rather luxurious, and merely simple and charming houses would reflect neither their personalities nor their lives. They may then wish these abodes to be jewel caskets enshrining gems in the way of rare furniture, textiles, vases and pictures, and there should be none to say them nay in their desire to surround themselves with beauty. In such cases the new decoration obviously does not apply.

Then, too, if the colouring in any house is rather attenuated it is plain that patches of brighter hue cannot be introduced without working havoc with all that remains; so that in such instances again one must either take or leave it—redecorate or let all remain largely as it is.

But there are many houses furnished in non-committal style, and others containing period furniture, but which are generally eclectic in character, and these may sometimes be greatly helped by hints from this newer method. As the simplicity of spaciousness is one of its finest features, there may be some elimina-

tion, and the improvement wrought by the mere removal of cumbersome and less desirable pieces is often immeasurable.

The colouring of a room generally exists in the walls, rugs and fabrics. If the walls are good and are neutral they are perfectly adapted to this new style, and if they are "fussy" they are not adapted to *any* style and should be changed. If they are in poor condition they may be renewed either in the neutral or more colourful vein.

Of rugs much the same may be said. If neutral they are perfectly correct, and so if they are colourful, provided they are not restless in pattern or contrast. If objectionable, bare floors would be better with any style of decoration. An expanse of bare, well-polished floor with a few simple rugs in good solid colouring, or two tones, or bordered, is always attractive. Good Oriental rugs will do excellently well if the new colouring to be introduced is made to accord with them.

Now with the simple change of upholstery, hangings and cushions wonders may be done in the vivifying of such a house. But before *anything* is done plan the whole. Consult the section on "Unity and Variety" and the Peasant colour-combinations given in the chapter on Colour, and scheme out what is to be done in each room. If there is a large couch its cover may be colourful, but let it be of solid colour and then use pillows of decidedly ornamental character, with one of black.

For upholstery stripes always have an intrinsic style of their own, and these may be strong and varied, or plain strong tones may be chosen, or printed linen or cretonne.

If there is great variety in the other furnishings

keep the portieres and window curtains in solid colour. If variety is lacking it may be introduced here.

Much may be done by Oriental, Batik, or other decorative hangings, screens, lamps, vases, and the like.

The probability is that in most houses many of the pictures may be discarded to advantage. Those that are retained should be good in themselves and for the decorative purpose for which they are used, and their frames should be fitting and unobtrusive.

Merely nondescript homes may be made coherent and attractive by following the plan outlined in the preceding paragraphs with the addition of an overhauling of the furniture. Badly designed, tortuously carved or machine-impressed pieces should be simplified or discarded. "Foolish" bric-à-brac, calendars, photographs and general litter should especially be weeded out. Better a few good things than much which is distracting and inharmonious.

Regarding the new decoration we may then finally say that in its saner forms it is attractive, practical and inexpensive. As to its more *outré* aspects one could not close more fittingly than to quote the words of Mr. Aymar Embury regarding strained and eccentric effects in general: "Whatever fascination this wayward cleverness may afford at first sight is not lasting, but is sure to dwindle and become a weariness when once the novelty has given place to the habit of familiar contrast day after day."