

a ruler. The appearance of the tail was as if produced by legions of large stones traveling in the planetary space independently of the comet, and having no other connection with it than that of being temporarily lighted by the rays which its atmosphere had caused to deviate from their natural route. These myriads of remnants of worlds would, therefore, produce the same effect as dust lighted by a ray of sun admitted into a dark room through a crevice. M. Fonvielle insists that it is to this cause that the zodiacal light is in all reasonable probability to be attributed. The brilliancy of the light which the comet showed when the balloon arrived at the height mentioned, increased in a very large proportion, notwithstanding the transparency of the atmosphere. It seemed that the brilliancy had increased about half beyond its normal brilliancy as seen from the earth. By the aid of the electric lamp the records of the instruments could easily be read. M. Fonvielle very properly insists that hereafter astronomical investigations should include ballooning.

## Architecture, etc.

### THE "EASTLAKE" STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE.

This modern idea of architecture is of comparatively recent origin, being the outgrowth of conceptions originating with Mr. Charles E. Eastlake of England—not as a style of house architecture, but in connection with house furniture and internal decorations, as contained in a published work by Mr. Eastlake, entitled "Hints on Household Tastes." Its peculiar features, however, soon became popular, not only in the sphere of the mechanical arts to which it was first applied, but in the external embellishment of buildings. This popularity, to a greater or less extent, has spread throughout all sections of the United States, and is now being greatly sought after upon the Pacific coast.

Unfortunately, it is simply a "style"—not a classified "order" of architecture, with defined principles of treatment, and rules of application and delineation. It is so unrestrained in its requirements, that the wildest conceits of the uneducated pretender may be imposed, and the most absurd and distorted features defended as "in keeping with the style." Delineated with accurate taste and good judgment, its application in the construction of a certain class of buildings may be made pleasing to the eye; but the excessive *gaucherie* indulged in by a class of reckless adventurers, who abuse the integrity of this new idea by extravagant, unsightly and ill-conceived creations of their own, is calculated to render it offensive and repulsive to those enjoying a fair degree of refinement in the aesthetics of architecture; this may cause its rejection even as a "style," except by a limited number who prefer oddities and peculiar things because they are such.

Could Charles E. Eastlake behold some of the extravagant delineations covered by his name, he would doubtless cry to the gods to blot out the monstrosities as hideous deformities. Judicious liberties and combinations are excusable in all orders and styles of architecture; but when they run rampant, with no regard to consistency, beauty or harmony, the doctrine and rules of propriety cease, and disorder and distraction ensue. The tendency of the "new style" runs in this direction, as it provides the basis upon which unqualified men may operate, and find a defense for their stupid creations.

"All can't invent and imitate,  
No more than those who clothe us can create."

And so it runs with the Eastlake style. Those who can invent nothing meritorious in architecture can imitate the new idea; that is to say they can scribble up something that looks peculiar, and give it the name of Eastlake.—*California Architect.*

### THE MAGNETIC PHOTOMETER.

The magnetic photometer recently invented by M. Coulou consists essentially of a radiometer bulb, with aluminum needle, hung by a silk fibre, and having two vanes and two pieces of iron acted on by an exterior arching magnet which can be slid up and down on the upper tube. When the instrument is not in use, the needle is let down to rest on the mouth of a tube a little below it; this being done by moving a spring runner, from which the fibre is hung, by means of a magnet outside. The instrument is sensitive at once to heat, light, and electricity, and so may serve as a thermometer, or electrometer, as well as a photometer. To measure one form of energy the others are rendered constant. The graduation will be guided by direct experiment.

## Fine Arts.

### ART IN WALL PAPERS.

At an exhibition of designs for wall paper, which was opened in New York on the 17th of October, some sixty original designs were displayed. About one-third of these came from England, Germany and France. Taken as a whole, the display was good, including many tasteful and well-wrought designs, betraying the hand of the professional. Those from abroad rather surpassed in execution the American designs, as might be expected, since this branch of art has long been taught in the technical schools of Europe, while in this country it is new. American artists have found it heretofore more profitable to paint landscapes, and commercial art has been neglected. The combined artistic and technical requirements of the industry are yet to be learned by many who would be glad to contribute to such an exhibition. The foreign designs, while carefully worked out as regards technical details, harmonious combination of color, etc., lacked originality; they seemed to be repetitions in another form of patterns with which the public is already familiar. The American designs were often original in conception although poorer in execution. One design had for its theme the poem of Poe's raven, and was wrought in gray, silver, gold, black, white, red and purple. A unique geometrical pattern therein contained conventionalized representations of such flowers as the apricot, convolvulus minor, purple hyacinth, heath, rosemary, adonis flos, locust, blue bell, white poppy and many others. This use of flowers was intended to express the sentiments of the poem. The trieze had a bust of Pallas, with the well-known raven perched on top. Altogether this original idea was well carried out. Two other striking designs had respectively the sea, and the honeycomb for themes. In the first a pretty result was obtained with broad bands of deep green, and bluish green sea water, shells, fishes and sea plants. The field of this design represented a broad expanse of water, in two colors, seen through a silver net. The honeycomb pattern had a field of silver honeycomb cells, outlined with gold, some of which were filled with gold to represent honey. This served as back ground, against which clover blossoms and bees were thrown in an artistic distribution.

The four successful contestants for the prizes offered proved to be women. The first prize of \$1,000 was awarded Mrs. T. C. Wheeler, for the "honeycomb" design; the second prize of \$500 went to Miss Ida T. Clark, for the marine motive; the third prize of \$300 was taken by Miss Caroline Townsend for a design in roses and lilies; and the fourth prize of \$200 went to Miss Dora Wheeler, for a very pretty study of pink peonies. The prizes were evidently awarded for their originality, and the happy medium shown between artistic and conventional designs, as well as for a new departure in wall paper art.

This being the first exhibition of the kind held in New York, too much should not be expected of it. If others follow, this will serve as an educator, and in a short time good, and desirable work may be expected, quite equal to that which now comes from Europe. Any attempt to encourage home production and liberate American manufacture from foreign dependence is to be commended as a step in the right direction.

### A FRENCH PHOTOGRAPHIC SALON.

A handsome salon on the first floor is a fitting reception room to a studio, which of late years has attained such a high reputation, both in Paris and in Milan, as that of MM. Benque et Cie. Fluted columns, draped with rich maroon curtains, are at the entrance to this apartment, into which not a ray of direct sunlight enters. All is soft and sombre within. There are extensive windows, but these are hidden by loosely festooned drab silk, so that while there is plenty of illumination, it is subdued and yet refulgent. The walls are of chocolate brown, the damask, chairs, and furniture gold and black, the fittings rich and handsome. This fine carbon portrait in frame complete, standing a meter high (39 inches), is a specialty of the firm Benque et Cie., and sells for a thousand francs. These pictures on the table are what is termed "Paris portrait," similar in height to the panel or promenade, but half an inch broader, a very attractive size, but still, to our thinking, not so elegant in its proportions as the promenade. Of cabinets, there is also a collection, not large, for we believe that there are not more than a score of photographs in the whole salon. Two or three cartes are here also, but during the past three months, our host tells