

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNING is literally the application or adaptation of art to industry: the preparation of designs for industrial purposes, and these designs may be for a beautiful vase or the ornamentation to be placed upon it, the cover of a book, an iron gate, a carpet, a wall paper or a handsome article of furniture. Indeed, it would seem that the field in which the designer labors is unlimited and that he must introduce into his works principles of construction as well as of proportion and beauty. This is true, but in order to narrow the subject somewhat, it is supposed for the purposes of this little book that the term is applied only to the preparation of decorations, without having anything to do with the construction of the objects decorated.

When entering upon the study of this subject, as in all similar subjects, we should have before us some standard with which to compare our productions and thereby judge of their excellence, and measure the extent of our improvement.

Unfortunately for us, we have no such standard in modern decoration, as by far the greater number of designs with which our homes are decorated are foreign to all principles of art or beauty. This being the case we must seek elsewhere for our measure, and as very few who will read this are familiar with historic ornament it is deemed advisable to furnish the student with a set of principles upon which the most perfect designs extant are based, and thus put into his hand a measuring rod with which he can measure all decorative work, whether ancient or modern, and judge for himself which is worthy of imitation or rather emulation, and which should be avoided or ignored.

We do not fully realize the injury that has been done by some of the late fashionable styles of decoration, because the matter has not been sufficiently studied. As a general thing, anything that is fashionable is considered by the masses to be beautiful, even if people have to make an effort to smother their inherent good taste to enable them to think or say so. People in their blind trust in and admiration of the designer's works accept with gratitude and admiration whatever he sees fit to give them, and very often what is most admired by the public generally is most truly ugly and vulgar.

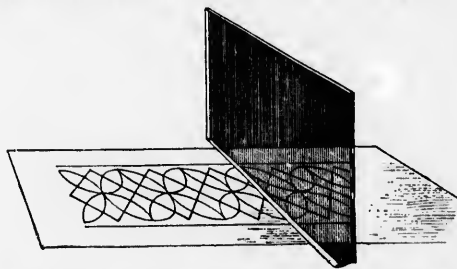
The writer claims that every educated person possesses a natural instinct which if let alone will lead him to a just appreciation and proper choice of the beautiful and true, but false educating influences, by which we are all surrounded, have perverted this instinct until he really has no taste or judgment of his own, or if he has, it leads him to admire what he would otherwise see is not worthy of even his notice. Let it be hoped that our eyes will be opened and that we will all be self-appointed critics, and educate ourselves and others to discriminate between the good and bad in design.

The pupil will find on the third page of the cover the principles upon which all designs should be constructed and which are simplified as much as possible. In connection with them he should apply to each design originated by him a test consisting of three questions. Is it

beautiful? Is it appropriate? Can it be improved by either omissions, alterations or additions? If any improvement can be made, it should be made, and when as perfect as his skill at the time renders possible, the design should be put away to be afterwards used for the purpose of comparing it with subsequent productions and thus showing what progress he is making in his study.

It is not supposed that the work of designing should be made an exercise in freehand drawing any more than is absolutely necessary, and therefore all repetitions of ornamental units should be effected by mechanical means. Having decided on the form of one-half of the unit a piece of tracing paper is placed over it and a tracing made with a soft pencil. This tracing is then laid face down in the proper position and the back rubbed with the thumb nail or some hard, rounded substance. A slight impression is thus left on the paper and when strengthened with the lead pencil leaves the unit perfectly symmetrical. The complete unit can then be treated in the same way until it is repeated the requisite number of times.

Sometimes before proceeding to repeat the unit it is wise to ascertain the effect of its repetition by means of two pieces of looking-glass hinged together by means of a piece of cotton cloth. In the case of a border one of the pieces of glass should be placed upright with its silvered side corresponding either to a line of division of the pattern or a line of symmetry, as shown in the accompanying illustration.



If the unit is to be repeated radiately the looking-glasses can be placed at the proper angle so as to include it. This method of testing the utility of an ornamental form saves much time and well repays any slight trouble and expense in obtaining the looking-glasses. They need be only about three inches wide and four inches long and should be hinged on the short edges.