

that the inhabitants of countries where bright colours abound in nature, and are introduced into apparel, furniture, and other articles are remarkable for great animation and liveliness of manner.

In France, and Italy, in many parts of Germany, and even in Holland the humblest domiciles are painted outside and inside in the brightest colours. The more pretentious edifices, especially the ancient buildings, are coloured on the brick and stone work, and occasionally gilded in a highly artistic style. It is often a subject of remark by those who have resided sometime on the continent of Europe, and have become accustomed to colour on buildings and in the dresses of the people, that the absence of colour strikes them on their return as extremely dull and gloomy.

It is surprising with how little apparent effort a pleasing and harmonious effect may be produced, by the judicious application of a few simple colours. Our parlours, drawing rooms, and halls, might, at half the expense of the dull oak graining, be enlivened by a few simple touches of chromatic penciling. It would be far from an undignified employment for those members of families who sometimes occupy their time in painting fire-screens, making wax flowers, &c., to pencil, or stencil in some light running ornament or simple diaper on the panels and architraves, after the woodwork had been previously stained or coated by the house painter. A simple wash of size, coloured with amber or other pigment, on the woodwork is all that would be required previously to the diapering or penciling with colour.

Good examples of this kind of decoration may be found in the illuminations of ancient manuscripts and missals: but there are also many specimens of this art from ancient edifices to be found in modern publications. A few books of an elementary kind treating on the subject may be seen at the *Free Library of the Board of Arts and Manufactures* at Toronto, where catalogues of others may also be found.

The house painter would find an infinite variety of interesting study in prosecuting this most beautiful art. He would have free scope for his imagination. He would not be tied down, as he now is, to the formality of vile oak graining, and marbling, and such like shams; but, while retaining the effect of the ancient work, every variety in the detail might be obtained, and a local interest be imparted to it by working in our beautiful Canadian foliage, where it might be introduced with propriety and effect.

The human figure is doubtless a grand and dignified subject to introduce into mural decoration, but this can only be done effectively by first-rate artists, and should not be attempted by ordinary painters. It is generally admitted that figures in

modern costume are inadmissible as wanting in pictorial effect, and being rarely applicable in a symbolic sense. The painter's choice, therefore, lies between the Heathen Mythology and the Christian Calendar. It is questionable whether we, as christian people, are strictly justified in our general preference for the sensual deities of the Pagans; but it is nevertheless true that we invariably adopt them in the embellishment of our music halls, and similar temples of amusement. Christian art admits into its composition angels and saints more modestly clothed generally, and, perhaps, on this account less objectionable than the heathen figures; but we cannot evidently disunite them from particular phases of christian worship, else they would, perhaps, form a better class of subjects for our purpose. Unless for devotional purposes, however, it may be doubted whether there is much advantage in the use of figures in mural painting. They are rarely well executed. The requirements of taste in this respect are, perhaps, better met by pictures in the usual way.

Legends, or quotations from the poets, or other inscriptions illuminated in the manner of the ancient manuscripts would fill up the panels of our Music Halls quite as effectively as figures of pagan goddesses. They would besides convey generally more intelligible meanings. Any one who has seen good specimens of this kind of writing, can easily imagine how rich and beautiful it could be treated for decoration on a large scale. It might with propriety take the place of meaningless scrolls, which are not unfrequently set up as ornaments for their own sake, not having the least connection with the main subject of the design. This kind of ornamental writing is capable of adaptation to almost every species of decoration—to churches, halls, theatres, saloons, and to private dwellings. Appropriate scriptures, sacred or profane, may be easily selected and represented in endless variety of forms and ornamentations.

#### THE MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENT OF THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION.

There are many circumstances connected with the Arts and Manufacturing Department of the Provincial Exhibition, which call for serious attention. We look in vain through these annual expositions of our industry, for a representation of that progress in our manufactures which might have been expected, and which we know to have taken place at London. It is not difficult to account for the absence of many names among the exhibitors, who, if the Exhibition had been held at Hamilton, Toronto, or Kingston, would have been well represented. Manufacturers do not like to send their best specimens to a considerable distance, subjecting them to the three-fold risk of injury by railway carriage to