

THE VALUE OF DESIGN.

(From Walter Crane's "Claims of Decorative Art.")

THE real secret of Continental influence in design upon us is no doubt to be found in the fact that the severance of the arts and handicrafts has never been anything like as complete in other European countries as in industrial England. Our great industrial rival, America, shows the same want of originating power in artistic design, the same tendency, but in a more marked degree, to avail herself of Parisian modes in art. However degraded the taste of the designer, or debased in type the design, the French or the Italian designer remained thoroughly in touch with the craftsman, and understood the technical conditions of the work thoroughly, so that his working drawings would be perfectly adapted to the method of manufacture. We have here, at any rate, one reason why our manufacturers have given preference to French designs, and have been so much in the habit of crossing the water for new supplies.

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THE VALUE OF ART.

(From the "Art Interchange," July, 1902.)

THERE are many who say, "We know nothing about art." This implies that they know little about life, that is, in its rounded sense. Then let us advise such to use the eyes God has given them, to look about them, to look at the first mother and child they meet, on the daily round, and then at a photograph of the Dresden Madonna, and see how art interprets that first woman's face upturned in the ecstasy of prayer, and then at the face of the Madonna of the "Assumption," and see how Titian interprets the relation of man to God.

Many of us, born in cities, learn to love beautiful nature through beautiful pictures, and to understand the beauty of the human form only through the artist's loving appreciation of it. Do not consider it too curiously, or trouble yourself with the cults and isms of art, but use your common sense and assume bravely your responsibility in the matter. If you find in the Dresden Madonna something more than mere paint, accept art as an interpreter of true religion. The fault is in ourselves if we are not receiving the consolation and inspiration of art. I would advise everyone to live constantly in the light of some great masterpiece, let it be but a small photograph of the Dresden Madonna or the "Assumption," and try its effect upon his life. You will find in this companionship something greater than you have yet imagined.