

clearly defined types is almost as pronounced as that of the Asiatic rug-weaver, who makes the same patterns as his remote ancestors sold to the ancient Greeks.

The village cabinet-maker's work knows no sequence of ages of oak, walnut, mahogany, and satinwood. His wood is from his native trees. His chairs come straight from the hedgerows. His history can be spanned in one long age of oak, intermingled here and there with elm and yew-tree and beech. The early days of primitive work go back to the marked class distinction between gentles and simples, and the end came only in the last decades of the nineteenth century, when the village craftsman was obliterated by the rapid advance of factory and machine made furniture.

It may at first be assumed by the beginner that cottage and farmhouse furniture is throughout a weak and feeble imitation of finer pieces. But this is not so. The craftsmen who made this class of furniture formed for themselves special types which were never made by the London cabinet-makers. For instance, the Jacobean gate-table, the Lancashire wardrobe, the dresser, and the windsor chair, have styles peculiarly their own. In many of the specimens found it will be seen that the village cabinet-maker displayed very fine workmanship, and there are clever touches and delightful mannerisms which make such pieces of interest to the collector.

In early days of the villeins, furniture was limited to a stool, a table, and perhaps a chest. Nor was the use of much furniture at the farm or in the cottage