

we know could not carry of itself, or a stone bay window corbelled out in seeming violation of all principles of the centre of gravity. How much better would it not be in the first place to show the steel beam with an appropriate treatment and painted to match the stone with a slight difference of shade just to show that it is not pretended to be stone; and secondly, what an improvement an oblique arch would be whilst in the last no amount of tying in with steel work to the interior construction can justify the unnatural projection in the front.

Speaking of truth naturally raises the question, should materials ever be counterfeited, i.e., should an inferior material be made to look like a superior one? I would say, yes, but it must be conventionally true, that is the richer material if preferable must be such as would naturally be in that place; for instance, I see no objection to marbling a column, providing you do not make a monolith such as is not to be found in the world, or if found, could not be quarried, and provided again that a marble column itself would be suitable in the position of the imitation one. We must remember that art is the imitation of nature, and all that is required of it is that it be conventionally true, but a flimsy material should never be placed instead of a solid one where the solid one only would suit; how ridiculous a tin battlement looks on a house. In the first place a street front in the castellated style is out of place; although the law says every man's house is his castle, they are not made to stand a siege of snowballs, about the only use the mock battlements could be put to.

I have touched on some of these details not in a spirit of criticism, but merely to illustrate the fact that in small things as well as great, there is merit in consistency. We cannot always work in great things or in the channels to which our ambition would lead us, but we can take care that what we do shall be conscientiously and carefully done.

MODERN ORNAMENT.

FROM time to time attempts have been made to develop and foster new schools of ornamentation, and to throw off the tendency to copy older forms and to substitute new and presumably original designs. Although written more than thirty years ago, the following portion of the concluding chapter of Owen Jones' Grammar of Ornament contains much sound thought upon this subject, especially in view of the extending application of Art to household work.

"Although ornament is most properly only an accessory to architecture, and should never be allowed to usurp the place of structural features, or to overload or disguise them, it is in all cases the very soul of architectural monument.

By the ornament of a building, we can judge more truly of the creative power which has been brought to bear upon the work. The general proportions of the building may be good, the mouldings may be more or less accurately copied from the most approved models, but the very instant that ornament is attempted, we see how far the architect is at the same time an artist. It is the best measure of care and refinement bestowed upon the work. To put ornament in the right place is not easy; to render the ornament at the same time a superadded beauty and an expression of the intention of the whole work, is still more difficult.

Unfortunately it has been too much the practice in our time to abandon to hands most unfitted for the task the adornment of the structural features of buildings, and more especially their interior decorations.

The fatal facility of manufacturing ornament which the revived use of acanthus leaf has given, has tended very much to this result, and deadened the creative instinct in artist minds. What could so readily be done by another they have left that other to do; and have so far abdicated their high position, the head and chief.

How, then, is this universal desire for progress to be satisfied—how is any new style of ornament to be in-

vented or developed? Some will say, a new style of architecture must be found, and we should be beginning at the wrong end to commence with ornament.

We do not think so. We have already shown that the desire for works of ornament is coexistent with the earliest attempts of civilization of every people; and that architecture adopts ornament, does not create it.

The chief features of a building which form a style, are first, the means of support; secondly, the means of spanning space between support, and thirdly, the formation of the roof. It is the decoration of these structural features which gives the characteristics of style, and they all follow so naturally one from the other, that the invention of one will command the rest.

It would appear at first sight that the means of varying these structural features had been exhausted, and that we have nothing left but to use one or the other of the systems which have already run their course. Let us not despair; the world has not seen, most assuredly, the last of the architectural systems. If we are now passing through an age of copying, and architecture with us exhibits a want of vitality, the world has passed through similar periods before. From the present chaos there will arise, undoubtedly, (it may not be in our time) an architecture which will be worthy of the high advance which man has made in every other direction towards the possession of the tree of knowledge.

To return to the subject, how is any new style of art or of ornament to be formed, or even attempted to be formed? In the first place, we have little hope that we are destined to see more than the commencement of the change; the architectural profession is at present too much under the influence of past education on the one hand, and too much influenced by an ill-formed public opinion on the other; but the rising generation in both classes are born under happier auspices, and it is to them we look for hope in the future. It is for their use that we have gathered together these works of the past; not that they should be slavishly copied, but that artists should, by an attentive examination of the principles which pervade all the works of the past, and which have excited universal admiration, be led to the creation of new forms equally beautiful.

We believe that if a student in the arts, earnest in his search after knowledge, will only lay aside all temptation to indolence, will examine for himself the works of the past, compare them with the works of nature, bend his mind to a thorough appreciation of the principles which reign in each, he cannot himself fail to be a creator, and to individualize new forms, instead of reproducing the forms of the past. We think it impossible that a student fully impressed with the law of the universal fitness of things in nature, with the wonderful variety of form, yet all arranged around some few fixed laws, the proportionate distribution of areas, the tangential curvature of lines, and the radiation of a parent stem, whatever type he may borrow from nature, if he will dismiss from his mind the desire to imitate it, but will only seek to follow still the path which it so plainly shows him, we doubt not that new forms of beauty will more readily arise under his hand. than can ever follow from a continuation in the prevailing fashion of resting only on the works of the past for present inspiration. It will require but a few minds to give the first impulse: the way once pointed out, others will follow, readily improving, till another culminating point of Art shall be again reached to subside into decline and disorder. For the present, however, we are far enough removed from either stage."