

# An Oratory in a Montreal Residence

THE problem given the architects was to design an oratory to go in a small room adjoining the principal bedroom on the first floor of a residence, which they had planned.

The floor space available was six feet wide by ten feet six inches deep, lighted at the end by a small metal casement window. The problem included introducing a figure of the Virgin, three feet six inches high, and it was agreed that at some future time the figure might be replaced by a carved one of smaller size, and greater sculptural interest. It was quite obvious that refinement of detail and scale would have to be adhered to, and owing to the size of the Virgin, destined to go in the centre of the composition, no caropied niche treatment could be made use of to provide a setting for the figure.

The style adopted was Gothic, but in its development there is very little adherence to any specific period. The ceiling is of plaster, vaulted in form, and covered with a Japanese grass cloth of silvery quality. A stencil with a pattern based on the square, yet possessing a distinct diagonal motif, was used for the decoration of the material; the predominating colors being blue, a rather primrosy yellow and the silver background of the cloth which contrasts agreeably with the water color stencilling. The blue note is repeated more firmly in the velvet curtains and the woven rug with a narrow decorative border recalling in a lower key, a simplified repetition of the ceiling color scheme.

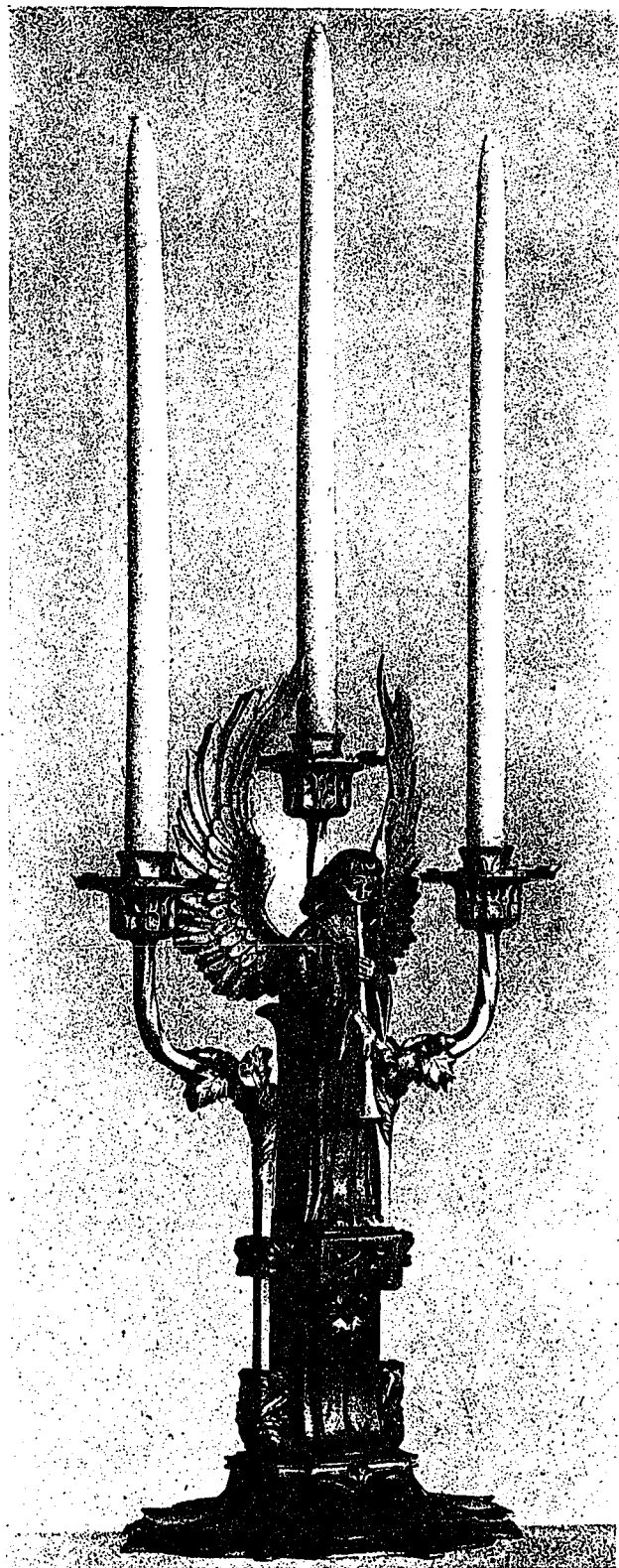
The waxed oak woodwork is finished in an unassertive silver grey, and the carved figures of pine are polychromed, closely following some sixteenth century ones in the architects' possession.

The casement window has been excellently designed and executed by Mr. Archibald Davies of the Bromsgrove Guild, the Virgin and Child being the motif.

In the execution of the work a sufficient amount of money was available to permit the selection of craftsmen who were considered entirely suitable for the execution of the work. Every detail was carried out locally, with the exception of the stained glass window, and the rug was woven in Ireland from the architects' design.

The lighting scheme consists of a suspended fixture carved out of walnut, stained quite dark and with mountings of pierced and wrought silver. The interlacing band has a background of blue velvet, the same material being used as in the curtains. The indirect light furnished is very agreeable and not brilliant. The effect of light on the ceiling is agreeable and the pattern is much less strongly marked than the flashlight photograph indicates.

Two candelabra of carved walnut go on the altar table either side of the statue of the Virgin. The illustration of the interior shows a smaller Virgin than the one the architects had to accommodate, and the two vases of flowers stand where the candelabra are now placed, as



ALTAR CANDELABRA.