

Arabs, which was entirely composed of geometrical forms.

The names of the old masters of sculpture and painting and the wide knowledge of their productions makes it unnecessary to mention many, and we must pass by some of the most notable to reach those names connected particularly with the mural decoration of the Renaissance. Michael Angelo, Raphael and Leonardo, will, probably, best serve our purpose among the painters, the former being equally sculptor and poet. The frescoes of the Sistine chapel are the most typical of his power as painter, and the works of Raphael, as everyone knows, are the glory of the Vatican. Leonardo's greatest work in Mural Decoration was the Last Supper, in Milan.

When we return from the period which has been characterized as the golden age of painting, we are almost dazed by the vast numbers of schools which came out of it. The movable or easel picture became more and more the fashion, and though much wall-painting was still done, the best efforts of the painters were directed to the more commercial type of painting. If we think of the great painters of the various schools of later Italian painting, those of the Flemish and German schools, the Dutch, Spanish, and, later, the French and English schools, we find that this tendency was ever towards the painting of the easel picture, and when a large work was attempted it was still a movable thing with a frame, not intended to suit any particular style of architecture. This tendency was doubtless due to various causes. The inventing of oil painting, which aided the artist in the painting of larger panel pictures by the use of canvas as a surface to work on, the growth of the private patron as distinguished from the Church or the State, and the development of portraiture, all combined to create a demand which diverted the mind of the artist from the decoration of architecture. The commercial aspect of the question must also have been a factor in wean-

ing the artist from the production of works of a monumental character, and as we have already seen, the influence of mechanical processes left the painter only that field of private patronage, which is but sufficient to develop the power of execution on a small scale.

The works by which we know the painters of the 16th century to our own time, are almost entirely of this class just mentioned. The labour which the earlier Italians spread over great wall surfaces was contracted more and more till we reach the minuteness of the later times, as illustrated in the work of the Flemish painters. It must not be supposed, however, that the easel picture was entirely disassociated from Mural Decoration. The easel picture, though but a piece of furniture, has always been used to greater or less extent to grace wall spaces by the harmony of its colour and the appropriateness of its subject.

Throughout the period under our notice a very important element contributing to keep alive the more monumental character of decoration was glass painting and tapestry weaving, and a revival which has set in is, to a great extent, an enlargement of the field which they have occupied. Harmonies of colour and line are more than ever the necessity of modern decoration. These, connected with the demand for more important subject-matter in our mural decorations, promise to elevate that branch of painting from the trivialities of stencilled and wall paper designs, especially in our public buildings, and cause the term "decoration" to mean more than the thoughtless, tasteless jumbling of things which at present makes the interiors of our buildings more like museums than dwellings.

The evidence of this revival of Mural Decoration is spread over nearly all the countries where modern art activity exists, and the special requirements of decoration are being shown in the smaller pictures now painted. The movement in Great Britain, of which Morris and Burne-Jones were perhaps