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THE
TREASURY
OF
ORNAMENTAL
ART

Illustrations of objects of Art and Vertù.

Photographed from the originals
and drawn on stone by
F. BEDFORD.

with descriptive notices by
I. C. ROBINSON, F.S.A.

*Curator of the Museum of Ornamental Art
of Marlborough House.*



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INTRODUCTION.

IN originating this series of Engravings, the intention has been to reproduce, as completely as the means and appliances of Art at the present day would admit, a class of works of art which, for want of any better generic title, must be designated by the some what trite terms, “ornamental” or “decorative.”

It should be observed that the prejudice which, in our own times, virtually assigns an inferior *status* in art to every production which, strictly speaking, is neither a picture nor a statue, not only renders it difficult to find any adequate appellation for such works, but likewise, in reality, tends to the prejudice of art itself, inasmuch as artists of genius and ambition are naturally unwilling to devote themselves to the production of works, which, whatever may be the amount of art-power manifested in them, are regarded only as “objects of *virtù*” or curiosities, and held to be beneath the attention of the real connoisseur. To combat these narrow and erroneous ideas, to show the æsthetic value and practical utility, as well as the national importance of collections of such productions, is a principal object of the present undertaking; whilst the employment of Photography in aid of the greatly improved processes of Colour-printing, has been relied on for the production of transcripts of objects which, it is believed, will be found to be of hitherto unequalled accuracy.

The selection of objects illustrated has been made on the widest possible basis, in order to respond to every phase of connoisseurship, antiquarian interest, and practical utility to the art-student,—in short, a complete “Museographic” work has been projected, the further continuance of which, so as ultimately to represent, in an adequate manner, the varied acquisitions of the public and private collections of this country, will depend on the success of the present volume.

The greater number of the objects now illustrated are to be found

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in the National Collection, which has been in course of formation, during the last four years, at Marlborough House, and which in that brief period has gradually attained a *status*, admitting comparison with continental collections, many of which have resulted from the slow accumulations of centuries. The remainder are from objects which have been from time to time temporarily deposited on loan at Marlborough House, in accordance with a valuable regulation, by which fine works of ornamental art in private hands are thus, by the liberality of their possessors, rendered accessible to the general public.

As the present work was suggested by the Marlborough House Collection, and represents similar aims and intentions, it will perhaps be desirable to give a short account of the origin and progress of that Institution. An official Report,* issued in 1852, states that "the formation of a Museum of Manufactures, of a high order of excellence in design, or of rare skill in art-workmanship, had long been considered desirable, as well for the use of schools of ornamental art as for the improvement of the public taste in design; and the Great Exhibition of 1851, affording a favourable opportunity for obtaining suitable specimens, the Board of Trade requested a committee to recommend articles for purchase." The funds allowed by the Treasury for this purpose were limited to 5000*l*. This amount, although very inadequate to the end proposed, sufficed for the purchase of upwards of four hundred specimens, chosen from every class of ornamental manufactures, both European and Oriental. The objects thus acquired, although of the most diversified character, were nevertheless similar in one respect, being all alike of modern origin, and so representing, as it were, but one phase of art; but it was evidently not the intention of the founders to restrict the collection within these narrow limits, and thus later additions, which have increased it nearly tenfold, have mainly consisted of works of bygone periods. The objects acquired in the first instance may now indeed only be considered as a nucleus, around which additions of the most varied and interesting character have rapidly accumulated. The celebrated collection of the late Mr. Bernal, brought to the hammer in the spring of 1855, and which consisted chiefly of works of mediæval periods, alone furnished a much more

* First Report of the Department of Practical Art, p. 229.

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extensive series than the original selection, upwards of eight hundred specimens having been obtained from that source; and, more recently still, from the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1855, a further selection of modern works has been acquired, at least equal in extent to that of 1851. At the present time the Museum contains nearly four thousand specimens, comprising works of all periods and countries, from the earliest dawn of art down to the present day.*

As might have been expected, however, from the rapidity with which the collection has been formed, and from the nature of the opportunities which have occurred, certain classes of works have been more extensively developed than others; some, indeed, have attained great importance. Thus the section of Ancient Italian Majolica Ware, so important a manifestation of the industrial art of the Renaissance, is now perhaps more fully represented at Marlborough House than in any other collection, either in England or abroad: that of Glass Manufactures has likewise been extensively developed, and is particularly rich in the rare and beautiful products of the old Venetian and Bohemian furnaces; whilst a collection of Textile Fabrics has now, for the first time perhaps, been formed on a comprehensive basis. The various classes included under the head of "Works in Metal," are scarcely less completely illustrated, and several distinct series of objects may be found, which have never before been systematically represented in museums.

It will thus be seen that an ample store of materials may be gleaned from the Marlborough House Museum alone, should the present undertaking meet with sufficient success to warrant its continuance; but, in that case, it would not be confined to that collection. Setting aside the many interesting works of decorative art contained in other public museums and libraries, and in the collections of corporations and learned

* The following enumeration of the classes of objects comprising the collection is extracted from the Museum Catalogue:—Sculpture,—comprehending carvings in marble, stone, alabaster, wood, ivory, and other materials, art-bronzes, terra cottas, and models in wax. Painting.—wall decoration, designs, &c. Glyptic and Numismatic art. Mosaics. Furniture and general upholstery. Basket-work. Leather-work. Japanned or lacquered work. Glass painting. Glass manufactures. Enamels. Pottery. Works in metal (this section comprising many subdivisions). Arms, armour, and accoutrements. Watch and clock-work. Jewellery. Textile fabrics. Book decoration.

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bodies, both metropolitan and provincial, there remains the vast field of private collections. And here it may be observed, that the forthcoming gathering of art treasures at Manchester will afford an earnest of the immense riches, scattered far and wide throughout the land, in the mansions and galleries of the wealthy amateurs of England; and, judging from the liberality with which these precious works are even now being placed at the disposition of the public, warrant the confident expectation, that permission to execute transcripts, such as are now offered, will be freely accorded.

The explanatory notices which accompany each plate in the part now issued, whilst rendered as brief as was consistent with the full description of the objects, have in some instances been extended by critical and theoretical remarks; and so little having been written on some of the classes of specimens now illustrated, it was thought that occasional reference to abstract principles of design would prove acceptable, and, moreover, not be without use, by showing that the arts decorative require as extensive an acquaintance with the rules of art, nay, even a wider range of acquired knowledge, for their successful practice, than even the fine arts of painting and sculpture; and so tend to re-establish those juster perceptions of the relative value of works of art which undoubtedly prevailed in times gone by.

It now only remains to allude to the means by which these engravings have been produced. The chief difference betwixt the present and previous works of the same description, consists in the extent to which photography has now been made use of in securing accurate reproductions of the several objects. Every specimen was specially photographed for this work, the unerring fac-similes thus obtained being then copied on stone, with an amount of care and attention dictated solely by the endeavour to carry the art to its extremest limits. How far this end has been attained is now left for an impartial, though, in matters of art, increasingly fastidious, public to decide.

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SILVER-GILT FRAME ENRICHED WITH TRANSLUCENT ENAMELS,
ITALIAN QUATTRO-CENTO WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

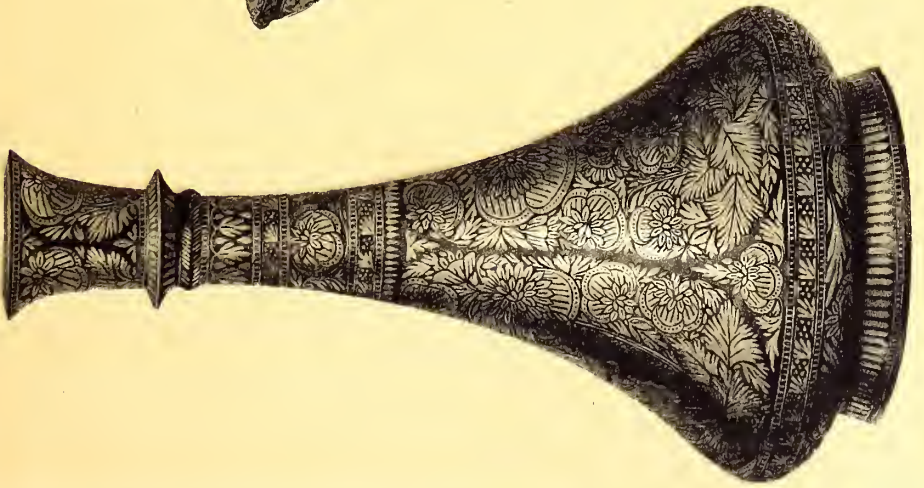
THE ornamental border, which surrounds the title of this work, is a copy of a small frame in chased silver of ancient Florentine work : dating in all probability somewhere about the year 1460.

It is of the very commencement of the Italian renaissance, and is singular as exhibiting a mixture of "Gothic" and classical motives, denoting the struggle of opposing systems of art, at a period when, in every other country except Italy, "Mediaevalism" reigned entirely undisturbed.

The arms and device in the circular medallions, wrought in proper colours in translucent enamels, greatly add to the interest of the work; the escutcheon is that of the Medici family, charged with the well-known "palle;" and the device, which represents a finger-ring set with a pointed diamond and three divergent palm branches, is an "impresa" or badge of the early Dukes of Urbino. There can be little doubt, indeed, that they are respectively the bearings of Pietro de' Medici and of the celebrated Duke Federigo of Urbino, the staunch ally and Captain of the Florentines; and it is not unlikely that we have here preserved a specimen of the work of the great Florentine goldsmith, Pollajuolo.*

The rarity of works in the precious metals of this early period is extreme, and the present specimen is probably quite unique of its kind. The use of the frame can only be conjectured; a probable supposition is, that it was intended to display one of the large portrait medallions so popular at this period. It may, on the other hand, have contained a fine enamel or niello plaque, or even have been the case or frame of a reliquary. At all events, it is evidently complete as a frame. Nothing can surpass the delicacy and spirit of the chasing; and the enamels, which are in perfect preservation, are exquisite examples of a most beautiful style and process.

* Dennistoun records that the Florentines presented Duke Federigo, on his triumphal entry into their city, after his successful campaign of 1472, with "a silver helmet studded with jewels and chased in gold by the masterly hand of Pollajuolo, and many other rich gifts."—DENNISTOUN: "*Dukes of Urbino*," vol. i. p. 202.



A. AND B.—RECENT INDIAN VASES IN OXYDISED PEWTER, ENCRUSTED OR DAMASCENED WITH SILVER. C.—TAZZA IN WROUGHT IRON, INLAID WITH SILVER. MODERN BELGIAN WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

ALTHOUGH of such widely different origin, the resemblance of the decorative processes illustrated in these specimens, and the fact of their having been simultaneously contributed to the Great Exhibition of 1851, will explain why they are grouped together in one plate. There is, moreover, a certain similarity of style between the Oriental and European specimens, the Belgian tazza having a marked Asiatic character in design.

The two Indian vases, manufactured at Hyderabad, are most elegant examples of a species of work in every-day employment in India for objects of use, such as hookah-bowls, water-bottles, drinking-cups, boxes, &c. The metal of which they are composed is pewter, or some similar alloy—the surface, by some chemical process, probably the action of sulphur, being made to assume a deep black tint; the damascened ornaments are in silver-foil, rendered adherent by pressure to the surfaces of the pattern, which are previously engraved on the metal ground.

The conventionalised floral designs, which enrich the present specimens, are in the best possible taste; the details of the ornament, as well as the contrast, both in quantity and arrangement, of the differently coloured metals, being most skilful.

The plainer one of the two, surrounded by zones or bands of ornament round the neck and the lower bulbed part, will almost bear comparison, in point of abstract beauty, with the black glazed pottery of ancient Greece; although totally different in character, the delicately drawn outline of the piece, no less than the simple beauty

of the ornamentation, are scarcely surpassed even by the antique. Both systems were the result of an innate perception of the beautiful in form, unsophisticated by fashion or the mere craving for novelty, and their productions are always original, pleasing us indeed from the simple fact that they are devoid of all appearance of effort.

The tazza was executed by I. Falloïse of Liège, the style of design being termed by the artist "Renaissance." As we have already remarked, however, the ornament has a marked Asiatic character, which may be accounted for on the supposition, that the author has tacitly imitated the Italian 15th-century works in this *genre*, in which the Arabic or Turkish element of the Renaissance is always strongly developed. The workmanship of this example is of a much more solid and durable character than that of the ancient specimens: the incisions in the metal ground into which the silver inlay is inserted are much deeper, the ancient specimens being little more than superficially hatched or scored with the graver. In the present work the incised cavities are bevelled, or undercut, so as to hold the inlay much more firmly—the silver, instead of a mere thin leaf, consisting of solid wire hammered into the grooves. The collection at Marlborough House contains other examples, both of Oriental and European manufacture, in which gold, copper, brass, &c., as well as silver, have been inlaid; the ancient Arabic and Italian specimens there preserved presenting varieties of process or design, which it is most interesting to compare together.



LID OF A CASKET IN CARVED SANDAL-WOOD. RECENT INDIAN
WORK. EXECUTED AT MANGALORE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

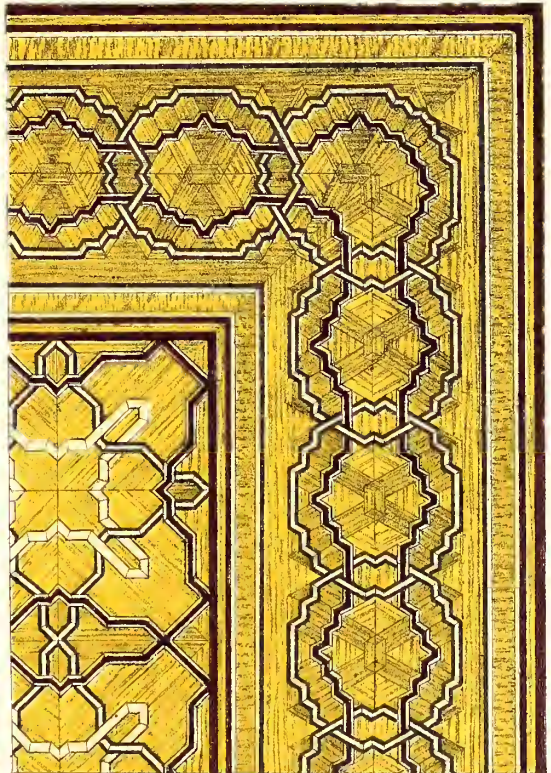
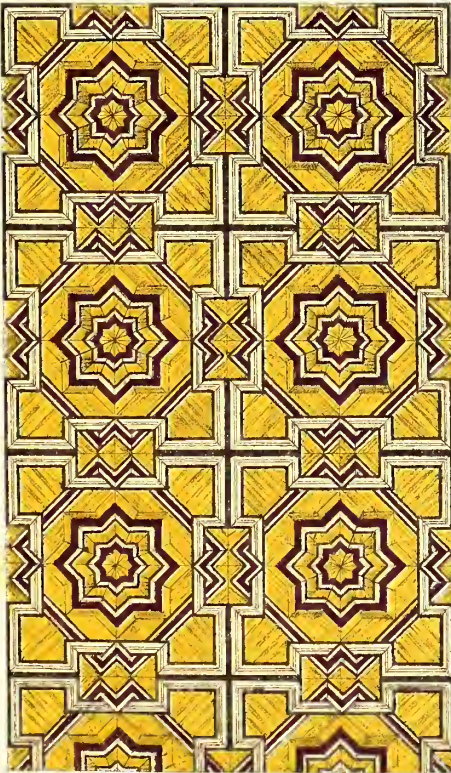
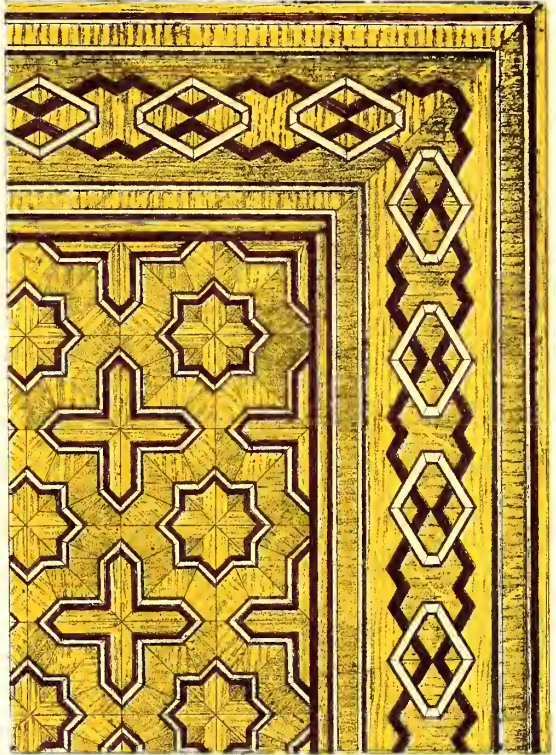
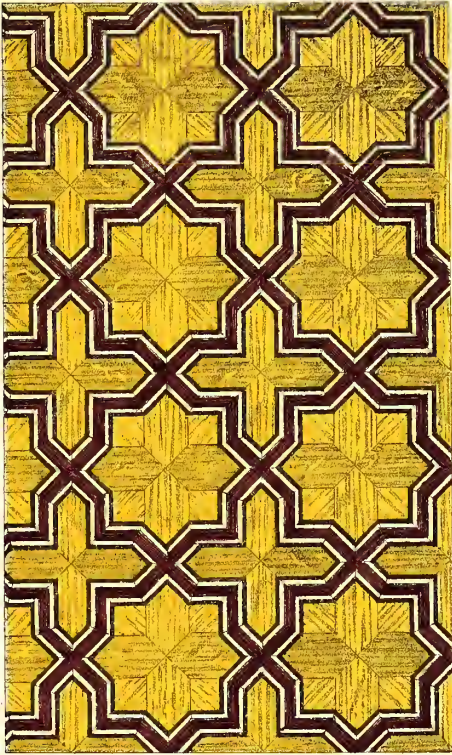
THE box, the upper surface of which is here represented, formed part of the contribution of the East India Company to the Exhibition of 1851, and was purchased by the Committee, entrusted by Government with the task of selecting specimens for the Museum of Art, afterwards founded at Marlborough House. Every part of the box is covered with elaborate incised ornament, skilfully distributed as well on the plane surfaces as on the numerous mouldings. The fragrant wood of which it is composed, from its rich *mat* colour and open texture, is particularly adapted for this species of work, its use furnishing an instance of that sagacious perception of the true decorative employment of natural materials, so constantly displayed by Oriental artisans. It should be observed, that this specimen represents a well-established style or branch of Indian industry, currently carried out in numerous minor objects of utility, in all of which the same principles of design and execution may be remarked. The peculiar richness and delicacy of the ornaments, rather engraved than carved, and always cut down *from, i. e.* below the level of the surface, seem indeed almost peculiar to oriental objects in sandal-wood. In analogous carvings in materials susceptible of polish (such as ebony, for instance), a much larger and bolder style is usually seen; the ground spaces on which the ornamental details are raised or detached, in the latter case, are of greater extent, and the mouldings, borders, &c., often left unadorned for the sake of displaying the deep lustrous tint of the wood. In the sandal-wood carvings, on the contrary, a style of treatment is adopted, which may almost be compared with flat decoration in colour, the resultant effect of the repetition of simple units of decoration, brought out by sharp,

decisive delineation, as it were, in light and shade, being very analogous to that of the diaper patterns of the textile fabrics; both are alike characterised by great richness yet perfect simplicity and breadth of effect.

In the present example, the decoration is admirably subordinated to the leading lines and members of the composition. Even the three Hindoo deities, under arcades in the centre panel, being so conventionalised in treatment, as to appear to blend insensibly into the surrounding floral ornaments.

The system of simple surface-carving, here so well illustrated, is deserving of study by the decorative artist in its manifestations at various epochs, and in different countries.

Ancient, Oriental, and Aboriginal nations, have most affected this peculiar method of plastic decoration. The earliest Greek and Etruscan sculptured ornament will be found to have a marked leaning to low relief and repetition of simple forms. The Egyptian hieroglyphic system, Arabic and Moresque decoration, the early ornament of Northern nations, Runic, Anglo-Saxon, Irish, early Norman, with their interlacings, zigzags, simple incised wall-diapers, &c., will be further brought to mind, whilst the almost invariable system of Polynesian and other savage ornament is comprised within this variety. It is scarcely necessary to refer to the amazingly elaborate carvings of the Chinese in ivory, soapstone, &c., inasmuch as they are nearly allied to this specimen. It is sufficient to indicate, that it is in such objects, that the artist may advantageously trace out the workings of those natural perceptions, which, in the course of time and by the concurrence of innumerable individuals, result in certain fixed and definite conditions, in which true and immutable laws of design are often formulated.



SPECIMENS OF MODERN FRENCH ORNAMENTAL WOOD FLOORING.
("PARQUETAGE EN MARQUETERIE.")

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE four specimens, represented on a reduced scale in the accompanying plate, were executed by Marcellin of Paris, and were purchased at the Paris Industrial Exhibition of 1844. The same manufacturer was favourably noticed for his similar contributions to the Great Exhibition of 1851 of equally excellent design and workmanship.

It is scarcely necessary to explain, that the process here illustrated consists of a mosaic or marquetry of small pieces of differently tinted wood, arranged in juxtaposition in various geometrical designs. This kind of ornamental flooring has long been in general use in France, where carpets are of comparatively rare occurrence. Such floors are kept carefully waxed and polished, and, when partially covered with Oriental rugs or skins, have an excellent effect. The costliness and permanent nature of this mode of floor-decoration give it a certain importance, which, it may be incidentally remarked, is quite in keeping with the somewhat scanty, but architectonic, furniture of the higher class of Continental houses. The designs now illustrated are good and consistent, their rectilinear geometrical character being perfectly in accordance with the nature and mode of working wood. They are evidently based on mediæval Italian examples of geometrical tarsia work, which, in turn, were often derived from the Arabic or Saracenic interlaced patterns, which had become familiar to the Italian artists in other vehicles.

The antique mosaics offer an infinity of beautiful patterns suitable for reproduction in wood; indeed, there can be little doubt but that a similar method of flooring was in current use amongst the ancients, although no vestiges have come down to us.

The simple flat treatment of these designs is commendable, especially when the unfortunate facility for the simulation of geometrical forms in relief, which this process affords, and which is a very common defect of analogous antique mosaic patterns, is taken into account.



SILVER CHALICE IN THE STYLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY,
DESIGNED BY PUGIN AND MANUFACTURED BY
J. HARDMAN AND CO. OF BIRMINGHAM.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS beautiful imitation of an ancient Gothic chalice formed part of the interesting series of Ecclesiastical plate, exhibited by Messrs. Hardman in the Mediæval Court of the Exhibition of 1851. The material is silver parcel gilt, enriched with Champ-levé enamels and garnets. Both in design and execution, mediæval motives and processes were strictly and minutely followed; and it would be difficult to select a more favourable specimen of that delicate and complete appreciation of the ancient Ecclesiastical styles, which gave the well-known author of this design an European reputation. It is no exaggeration to say, that for purity and perfect consistency of style, the present and similar works from the same source were, and still are, quite unapproachable by any foreign competitor.

In knowledge of the mediæval style, indeed, England is unquestionably far in advance of the Continent; and the recent Paris Exhibition of 1855, although abounding in works of this nature, from France, Germany, and Belgium, has served to show, that our superiority in this respect, so marked and incontestable in 1851, has been retained to the present time.

This chalice was made entirely by hand, the bowl, knop, and foot being executed by hammering, the various ornaments similarly executed "*en repoussé*," being afterwards carefully chased in the sharp decisive style of the ancient works. The period of style chosen may be supposed to be about the year 1400.



ANCIENT GILDED CHALICE. SIXTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

OUR present illustration represents a veritable ancient work, of a more recent period of style than that of the previous example. This beautiful piece of church plate is probably of Spanish workmanship, of about the year 1570. The bowl only is in silver, the stem being in bronze; both, however, are richly gilt. Although very elaborate in design, it was clearly not a costly specimen; the rich ornaments of the stem and lower part of the bowl are left almost as they came from the mould, scarcely, if at all chased, every part, except the plain bowl, being cast. Notwithstanding this roughness of finish, however, the piece has a magnificent and imposing effect, professedly in accordance with the striking ceremonial of the Roman Church. Its beautiful outline and well-balanced proportions, together with the exuberant richness of detail shown in its various parts, afford a most instructive lesson, demonstrating the efficiency of good design in imparting value to the commonest material, and the most expeditious workmanship. Nothing can surpass the skill with which the various mouldings are grouped and contrasted with each other. The profile of the stem is full of variety, each member being adorned with the richest and most elaborate details, which, nevertheless, are kept entirely subservient to the main outline, giving richness and diversity without in any way impairing the unity of the composition. The knop and base of the Chalice may at first sight appear disproportionately large; the proportions, however, have evidently been designed with a view to its appearance when posed on the altar or credence table, rather than for its effect or convenient use in the hands of the priest. The height and magnificence of the stem give it altogether somewhat of the stately monumental aspect of a candelabrum.



VASE OR HANAP WITH COVER, IN SILVER GILT, ENAMELLED AND
SET WITH JEWELS. RECENT FRENCH WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS vase, executed by Marrel, frères, of Paris, was purchased from the Exhibition of 1851 for 100*l.* The interlaced arabesque ornaments in dark blue, on the bowl, are in translucent enamel, encrusted or inlaid by the Champ-levé process, and the jewels are Oriental garnets cut *en cabochon*; the various ornamental details, small statuettes of Amorini, &c., are carefully and minutely chiselled, the entire work, indeed, being most artistically elaborated by hand.

The general form of the cup has somewhat of a Venetian character, as seen in works of the beginning of the sixteenth century; but the ornamental details, though ostensibly in the style of the Cinque-cento, have a decidedly modern French aspect. Although not an inelegant object, there is a certain thinness and poverty in the ornamentation, contrasting most forcibly, for instance, with the massive richness of the previous example. As a specimen of careful and dexterous workmanship, however, this piece leaves nothing to be desired; it is likewise in all its parts consistently treated in the true direction of the material. On the whole, perhaps, a more characteristic specimen of French taste in goldsmiths' work, as displayed in 1851, could not have been selected.



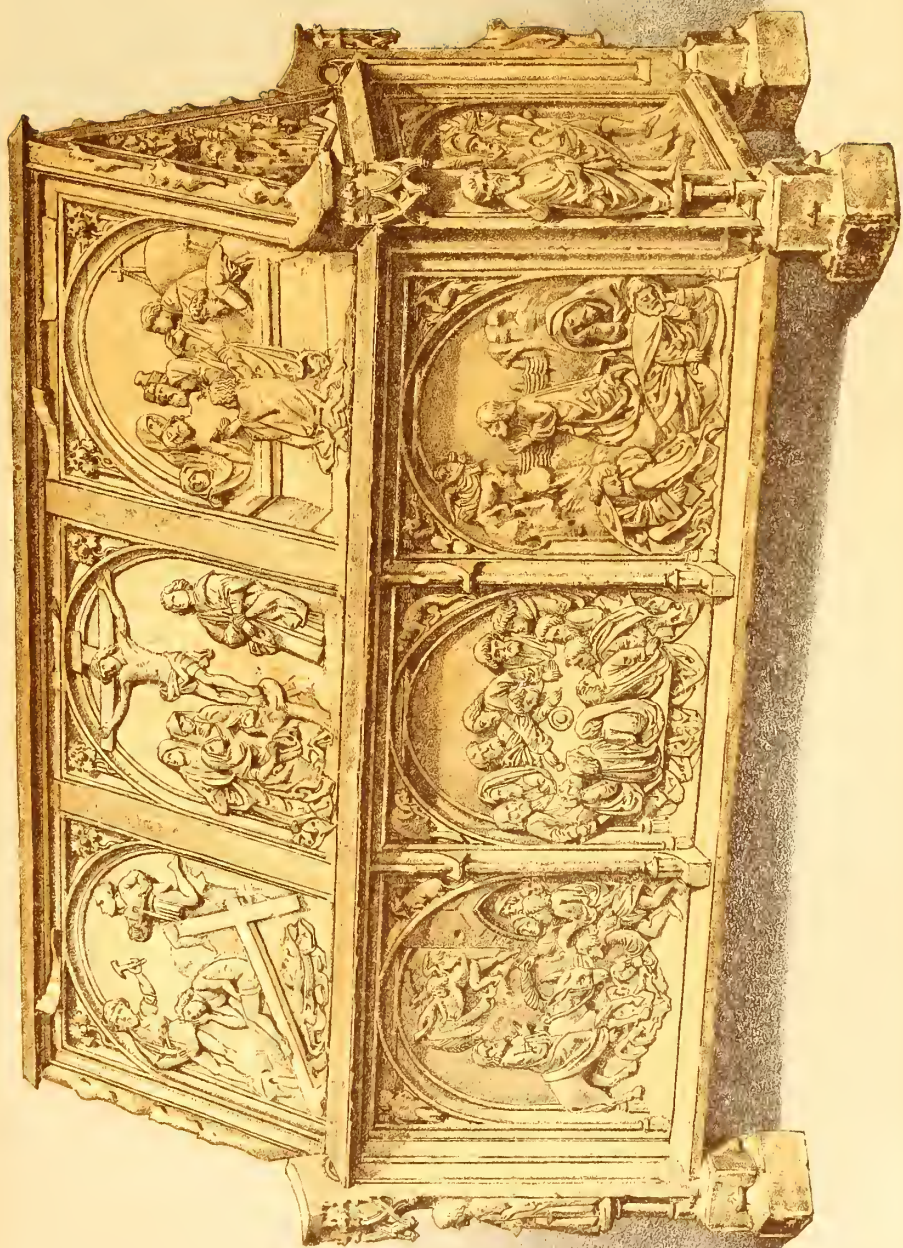
EWER, ENAMEL ON COPPER, IN THE MANNER OF THE ENAMELS
OF LIMOGES. RECENT FRENCH. MANUFACTURED
AT SÈVRES, 1851.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

FRANCE may justly boast of having excelled all other countries in the art of enamelling on metals. At a very early period of the middle ages even, this superiority manifested itself in the products of the famous industrial city of Limoges; and at the present day, no further evidence, than that of the beautiful specimen of the art here illustrated, is needed to prove that this superiority is still maintained. This ewer is of large dimensions, elaborately decorated with arabesque ornament, in the style of the Renaissance, painted in grey heightened with gold, on a dark-blue ground. It was one of the earliest specimens of the revival of enamelling on copper, executed at the national porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, where, during the last few years, systematic endeavours have been made for the complete resuscitation of this art as anciently practised.

It would be interesting to trace the gradual steps by which, throughout the middle ages, the perfection exhibited in this specimen, which however is not, technically speaking, more advanced than the finest works produced during the 16th century, was achieved, and fortunately the history and archæology of enamelling have been so well worked out by recent French writers, that it is very possible to do this. Without dwelling on what may be termed the "Archaic" varieties, the Cloisonné and Champ-levé enamels, it will be sufficient to say, that the painted enamels, to which class our specimen belongs, were apparently not known, at least in France, much before the latter years of the 15th, or the beginning of the 16th century. It is probable, indeed, that in

this phase of the art Italy, was somewhat in advance of France, some small specimens of painted enamels, probably of Florentine origin and of extreme rarity, being apparently earlier in style than any French examples. If the process of painting in enamel (properly so termed) on metals was really of Italian origin, it was probably immediately derived from the kindred art of Majolica painting, or enamelling on earthenware, which, there is every reason to believe, was currently practised in Italy as far back at least as the first half of the 15th century. The *technique* of the present specimen is, in every respect, exactly similar to that exhibited in the well-known works of Leonard Limousin, Pierre Remond, Jean Courtois, and the other famous enamellers of the Renaissance. The body of the vase is formed of thin beaten copper, covered with a uniform coat of translucent vitreous enamel, of a deep-blue colour; the arabesques are entirely executed in white enamel, painted on the blue ground; the various gradations of tint or shading of the ornaments, figures, &c., being very simply produced by varying the thickness of the white enamel, the semi-opaque pigment allowing the blue ground to show through, in the exact ratio of the strength of the tint. In this manner a complete scale of tints, from the darkest shadows, scarcely removed from the ground-colour, up to the full white of the high lights, is produced with the utmost ease and certainty. Several auxiliary processes, however, are adopted in enhancement of this method, the most obvious of which is etching with a needle-point through the graduated white enamel tints down to the ground, which in the strokes stands exposed in its brilliant dark colour, producing the effect of the lined or hatched tints of an engraving. In the present example, the grisaille ornaments are relieved by gilding, whilst the handle and other mountings are executed in or-moulu. The extreme height of the piece is 23 inches, and the price paid for it was 88*l*.



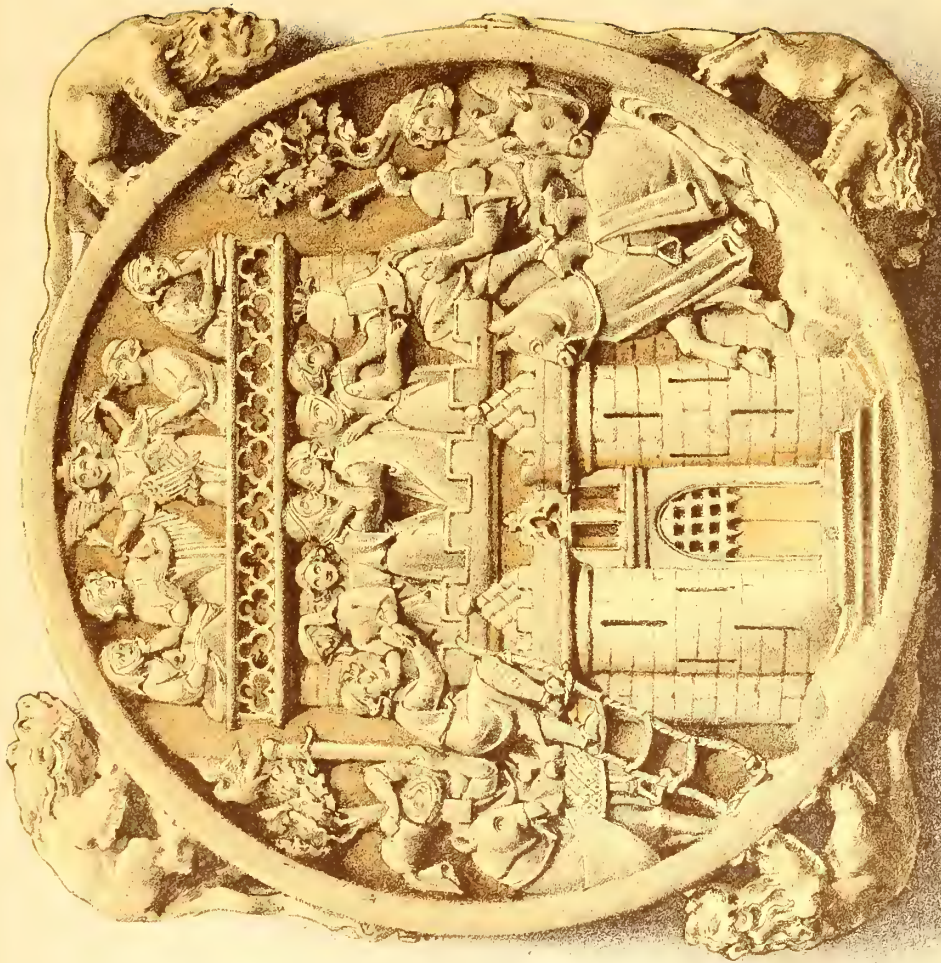
CHÂSSE, OR RELIQUARY, OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, IN
CARVED AND GILDED WOOD.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS interesting specimen of ecclesiastical sculpture belonged originally to the Church of the Franciscans at Constance, and is said to have contained the relics of St. Boniface. A curious tradition, moreover, connects it with an important historical event, namely, the great Council held at Constance in 1414, during the continuance of which the Popedom falling vacant, the members of the council proceeded to elect a Pope (Martin V.) by ballot. The present Châsse, singularly enough, has been for a very long period reputed to have been made use of on this occasion as a balloting-box, and in evidence of this, there are several parchment labels affixed near the ridge of the roof, on which are written, in characters apparently as old as the sixteenth century, the names of the five nations, or colleges, which took part in the election. These labels may be observed in the engraving underneath the moulding which surmounts the roof of the Châsse. Unfortunately, the archæological knowledge of the present day obliges us to reject this story, for there can be little doubt, judging from numerous peculiarities of detail, and from the general style of the object, that the work is at least some sixty or seventy years less ancient than the date of the great Council aforesaid; it is evident, however, that its having been used for this purpose was implicitly believed in during a long series of years. The Châsse has undergone some little mutilation in the more salient parts of the work, but the relievo subjects, &c., are in excellent preservation, and retain the ancient gilding, with which indeed the entire surface is still more or less covered. The principal loss seems to have been in the open-work cresting, which doubtless ran along the summit, and of which

CHÂSSE, OR RELIQUARY.

there are indications in the holes for the wooden pins with which it was fastened on. The triangular gables at each end are likewise enriched with beautiful crockets, which unfortunately are also very much mutilated; and it is also probable that the summits of the canopies at each angle were originally surmounted by the symbols of the Evangelists carved in full relief. The bas-relief subjects are sixteen in number, and represent the events of the passion of our Saviour. Although marked by the usual mannerism of the period, they possess great merit in design, and are of the most careful and finished workmanship; they will, in fact, in every respect sustain comparison with the works of Wolgemuth or Israel de Mecken. The Châsse is about 3 feet long, by 1 foot 6 inches wide, and 2 feet in height.



MIRROR CASE OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY, IN CARVED IVORY.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

OF the many specimens of mediæval mirror covers that have come down to us, the present is by far the finest. It forms part of the Marlborough House collection, and had, previously to its acquisition by the nation, been for many years in this country, having been engraved in the "Archæologia" in the year 1808. The subject is a favourite one with mediæval artists, and is known as "The Assault of the Castle of Love." The composition represents a fortress with an advanced gate, or barbican, with portcullis and circular flanking towers. On the summit of the donjon, which is surmounted by a beautiful balustrade of open-work trefoil panels, Cupid crowned and represented with six wings is seen wounding two maidens with his darts, whilst two love-sick damsels are reclining in attitudes of melancholy. On the rampart, lower down, a party of damsels are eagerly assisting mailed knights to scale the walls, which is being effected on one side by means of a rope ladder; the action thus represented is evidently that of the rescue of the maidens from the power of the tyrannical deity. The date of this piece, judging from the costume of the mailed figures and other indications, is about the year 1330, a period which seems to have been unusually fertile in works of this kind. It is the lid, or upper half of the cover, and was originally fitted on to the lower part, containing the metal mirror, by means of a thread or screw round the margin.

The rich collection of Andrew Fountaine, Esq. contains a specimen, complete with both its sides, which is probably unique.



STATUETTE OF THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, IN CARVED BOXWOOD.
FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

THE original of this exquisite statuette is in the collection of M. Carrand of Paris, our engraving having been made from a careful cast. Like the preceding example, it has been chosen for illustration as the most beautiful, and, at the same time, equally characteristic specimen of a class of works of art, in which the fourteenth century particularly abounded. It belongs, indeed, to the highest and purest period of development of mediæval, or, to use a more expressive phrase, "Christian Art," and is probably not later in date than about 1350.

Replete with earnest religious sentiment, it is at the same time entirely free from the mannered style in design, which set in at a somewhat later period in the north and west of Europe. This work of an unknown artist, probably French, will bear comparison with the best productions of Italy at the same epoch.

The right hand of the Virgin, now lost, probably held a sceptre, the mother of our Saviour being here represented in her glorified character as "Queen of Heaven." Her head was, doubtless, also encircled by a coronet or diadem in silver gilt, and that of the Child by a nimbus.



DIPTYCH IN CARVED IVORY, OF FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WORK,
REPRESENTING THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI
AND THE CRUCIFIXION.

British Museum.

THIS specimen, formerly in the possession of W. Maskell, Esq., has recently, with the rest of the fine series of sculptures in ivory collected by that well-known amateur, been acquired by the British Museum. It is a production of the same school as the two preceding examples, although apparently of a slightly more recent date. Tablets of two leaves (diptychs), or of three folding compartments (triptychs), are of very frequent occurrence in ivory sculpture of this most prolific period of the art, and are to be found in almost every collection. They were intended as aids to private devotion, and were, in fact, miniature altar-pieces, similar objects being in use even at the present day in the Russo-Greek Church.

Ivory has always been a favourite vehicle for sculpture, and a singularly complete and connected view of the history of art may be gained, from the study of works in that material. The attention of collectors and archæologists has latterly been particularly directed to this branch of art, and the facility with which the various objects may be multiplied by moulding, has admitted of the most important monuments, scattered about in various public and private collections, being thus virtually brought together and compared with each other, to the great advancement of archæological science generally.

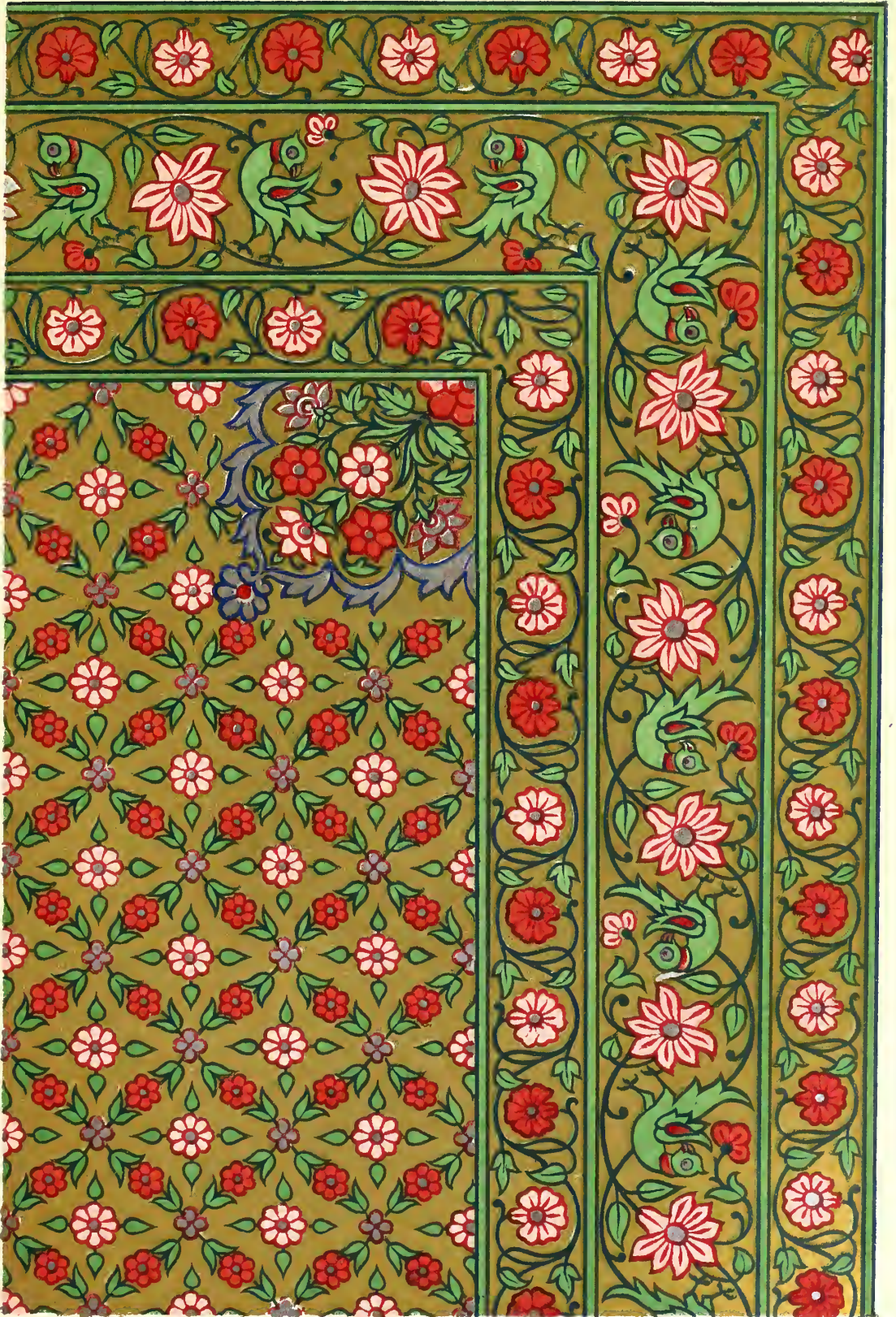
It may not be uninteresting to give a rapid sketch of the most prominent development of this art at various periods. The researches of Layard and others have revealed numerous specimens of ivory carvings of Assyrian and ancient Egyptian origin. Specimens of the latter origin, indeed, were previously to be remarked in collections. Of the ancient Greek and Roman periods there are many more examples extant, chiefly consisting of fragments of caskets, small statuettes, tesserae or carved counters, combs, handles of weapons and utensils, and in particular the very remarkable "Consular Diptychs." The origin of these diptychs was undoubtedly the ordinary writing tablets, which, when covered on their inner surfaces with wax, written on with a

stylus, bound round with thread and sealed, were sometimes sent as letters. In the time of the Emperors, the custom obtained amongst the consuls, on the occasion of their elevation to office, of sending presents of sculptured ivory diptychs to public corporations, and to their private friends, serving to commemorate the year to which the consuls gave their names. These diptychs are generally elaborately sculptured with a portrait of the consul in his robes of office, and with various representations and allegorical devices, inscriptions, &c. After the establishment of Christianity, they were frequently presented to the churches or to ecclesiastical dignitaries, by whom likewise they appear to have been sometimes issued. The Greek artists of the Byzantine Empire made still more frequent use of ivory. Dating from about the ninth century, it was particularly employed in ecclesiastical utensils and appliances. Diptychs, similar in form to those in use in Pagan epochs, were still made, being however sculptured with scriptural subjects; likewise book-covers, crosses, pastoral staffs, coffers, reliquaries, &c.

Carving in ivory and bone was soon equally affected in the rest of Europe, particularly in France and Germany. Throughout the mediæval epochs we have innumerable tablets, diptychs, triptychs, &c. of a devotional character, shrines, coffers for relics, statuettes of the Virgin, saints and apostles; and for secular use, mirror cases, combs, pommels and hilts of daggers, caskets, &c. &c.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, with the "Renaissance," objects of secular use are found to predominate; such as statuettes and groups, bassi-relievi of classical subjects, hilts of knives and forks, tankards, cups, snuff-boxes, pommels of canes, &c.; whilst in the church the ivory crucifix, permanently placed on the altar, superseded the earlier triptych or retable.

In the 17th century the most renowned ivory sculptors were Flemings or Germans, who had either studied in Italy, or who had formed their style on Italian models. Ivory carving became a distinct branch of the sculptor's art. Fiammingo (1594-1643) is esteemed the chief of this well-known school. At the present day several of the French sea-port towns, notably Dieppe and La Havre, are celebrated for the manufacture of decorative objects and fancy articles in ivory.



HINDOO PRAYER-CARPET, IN SILK AND GOLD BROCADE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

AMONGST the beneficial results of the Great Exhibition of 1851, probably nothing more important can be specified, than the influence exercised on industrial design, by the splendid collection of Oriental manufactures exhibited on that occasion. The superlative artistic merit of many classes of objects, more especially the textile fabrics of India, was then, perhaps, for the first time fully recognised; and it was at once admitted, that in respect of beautiful and ingenious arrangement of patterns, and harmony of colour, these Asiatic fabrics were infinitely superior to anything Europe had to show. In these the rule was excellence: the obvious and undeniable beauty with which observers of every condition were at once struck, when inquired into by the artist, was found to be based on a complete and well-defined system of design; and it became evident, that there were traceable in these works certain universally followed laws or rules, which, when formularised, assumed the force of obvious truths. One fundamental principle it may be allowable to allude to here, and it cannot be better expressed than in the words of Dr. Waagen:—"In the fabrics of India, the correct principle already laid down, namely, that patterns and colours should diversify plain surfaces, without destroying or disturbing the impression of flatness, is as carefully observed as it was in the Middle Ages, when the decoration of walls, pavements, and carpets, was brought to such perfection by the Arabs. But it is not only the observance of this principle which distinguishes the Indian stuffs in the Exhibition; they are remarkable for the rich invention shown in the patterns, in which the beauty, distinctness, and variety of forms, and the harmonious blending of severe colours, called forth the admiration of all true judges of art."

And Mr. Owen Jones has further well remarked :—

“ We have here no artificial shadows, no highly-wrought imitations of natural flowers, with their light and shade, struggling to stand out from the surfaces on which they are worked, but conventional representations founded upon them, sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to the mind without destroying the unity of the object they are employed to decorate.” And again, “ With them the construction is decorated : decoration is never, as with us, purposely constructed.”

The Prayer-Carpet forming our present illustration, manufactured at Ahmedabad, was chosen for the Museum of Ornamental Art as one of the most faultless of these Indian productions. Although rich and gorgeous in the extreme, nothing can be further removed from gaudiness. The two principal colours, red and green, harmonise naturally with each other, and are further subdued by the darker lines with which the ornamental details are edged ; whilst the points of silver, equally distributed over the surface, not only form a beautiful contrast with the richer metal of the ground, but serve to relieve the entire design from heaviness, without detracting from the sober richness of the general scheme of colour.





INDIAN EMBROIDERED SATIN STUFFS FOR DRESSES.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THESE beautiful fabrics are embroidered by hand on grounds respectively of amber and black satin. They were manufactured at Cutch. In the specimen on the yellow ground it will be observed, that the flowers and leaves of the diaper pattern and border are all edged or outlined with black, whereby an increased richness and depth of tint is obtained, whilst the pattern is, at the same time, more forcibly detached from the ground. The reverse of this expedient is generally observable in diaper patterns when the ground is of a dark colour; in the latter case, the very constant rule is to surround the forms of the pattern with a white or lighter coloured outline. In either method the result is to give additional clearness of tint and greater general effect to the pattern.





TWO INDIAN EMBROIDERED SATIN APRONS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THESE specimens were likewise manufactured at Cutch, and the beautiful border and palmette ornament in the corners are embroidered by hand with narrow silk braid. In these examples the lighter coloured edging, alluded to in the remarks on the preceding specimen, may be noticed—especially round the larger flowers. Without this the ornaments would in many places have been almost lost in the dark ground, whilst the details in lighter tints would have consequently had a spotty, isolated appearance, destructive of the unity of the design.

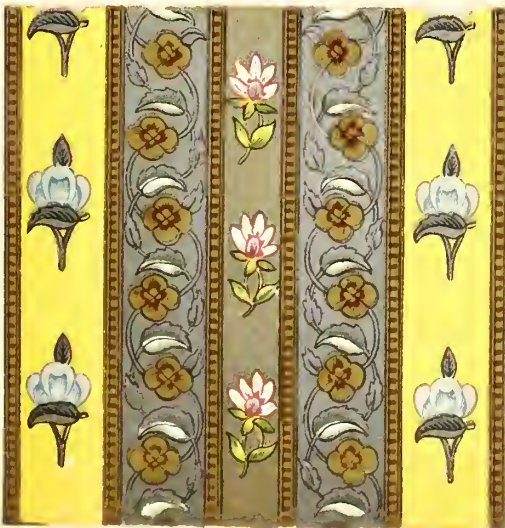


SHEET OF DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS, REPRODUCED FROM
THE PATTERN-BOOK OF A PERSIAN DESIGNER.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

Not the least interesting of the varied acquisitions of the Museum of Ornamental Art, is a volume containing several hundred designs for textile fabrics. Although complete, and in its original Oriental binding, the book does not contain any written text, so that there is no clue to its authorship. It is supposed to have been a manufacturer's or designer's pattern-book, and is clearly of Persian origin. The several designs are skilfully painted in distemper colours on silk paper, and are profusely enriched with gold and silver, sufficiently denoting the costly nature of the tissues they are intended to represent. The volume appears to be of some antiquity, probably dating as far back as the 17th century; but from the prescriptive permanence of Oriental art, nothing definite on this head can be gathered from the designs themselves. The beautiful patterns, grouped together with such profusion in our plate, are based on the soundest principles of design. The forms and leading lines of the ornamental details are in themselves most graceful, and the colours are well contrasted and perfectly arranged as to quantity.

Persian ornament, whilst based on precisely similar rules, differs in many essential respects from the other main Asiatic styles, and has a distinctly marked national character—conventionalised floral ornaments, directly based on natural types, being of constant occurrence; whilst the gaiety and freshness of the colouring, in which pink, fresh pale greens, scarlet and brilliant yellows, are the prevailing tints, impart a delicate, and if it may be so designated, feminine character of grace and refinement to the compositions.



PERSIAN DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

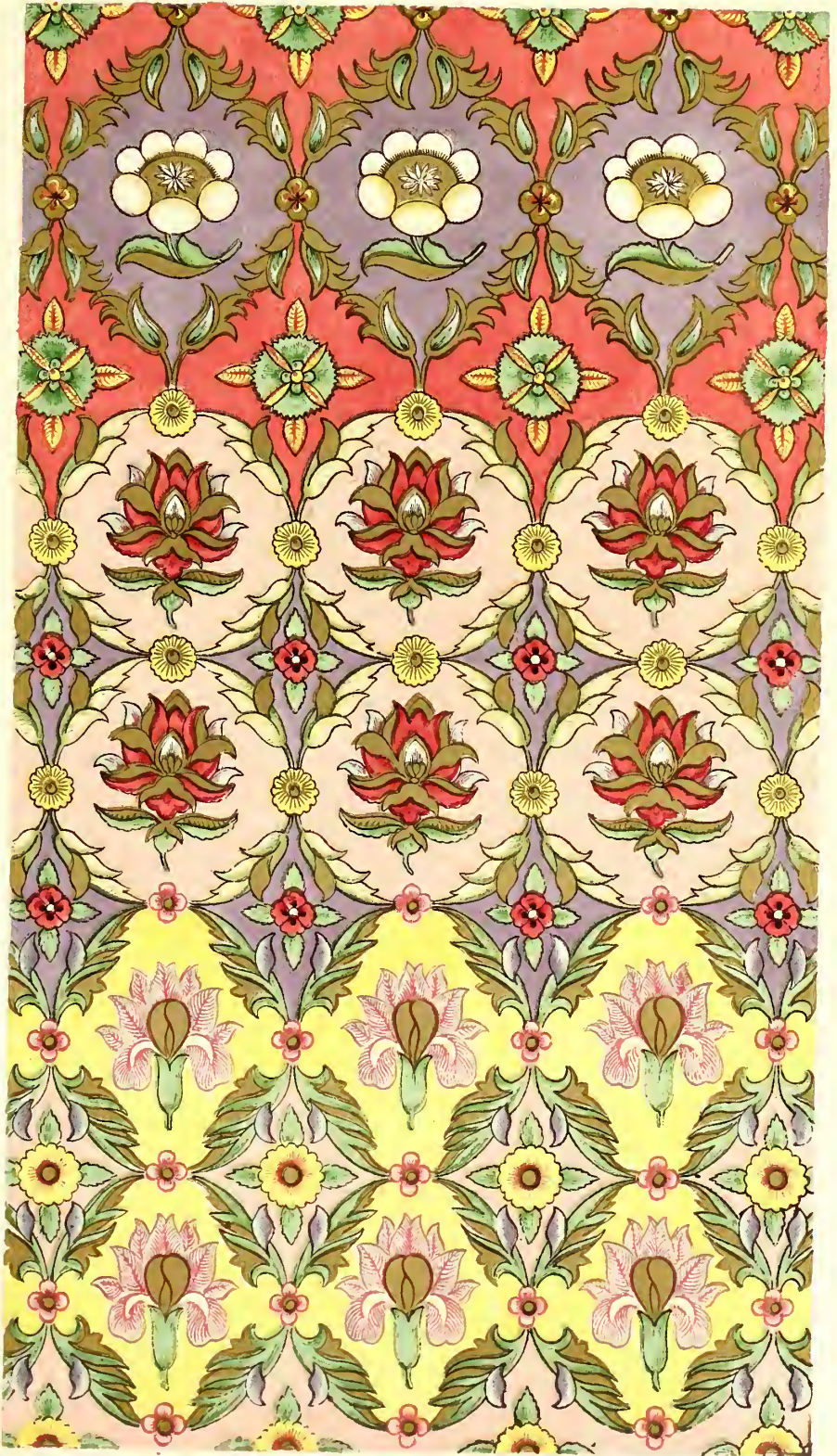
THIS plate contains a series of designs for rich tissues, arranged in "column," as it is termed—*i. e.* the pattern distributed in vertical bands or stripes—a mode of design which, although familiar enough to us in European stuffs, is essentially an Oriental treatment. They are from the same source as the specimens already described.



DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS, REPRODUCED FROM THE
PATTERN-BOOK OF A PERSIAN DESIGNER.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

IN the design shown in the upper part of this plate may be seen another excellent example of the proper treatment of a natural floral type in ornament; whilst in the lower one the variety of the sprigs or bouquets of flowers—each panel containing a different one, both in design and colour, but all, nevertheless, in perfect harmony with the ground tint—manifests alike the exuberant fancy of the artist and the inexhaustible fund of materials at his command. In the hands of genius, indeed, every natural organic object may be made to yield some new form or hue of beauty.



PERSIAN DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE designs here illustrated are all based on the principles already alluded to. An examination of the colours introduced will disclose a perfect acquaintance, perhaps intuitively acquired, with the immutable laws of harmony and contrast; whilst the mode in which the separate tints are made to produce their due and proper effect is of the simplest, yet, at the same time, most scientific nature. It will be observed in these, as in all the designs from the same source, that the broad principle of the flat treatment of conventionalised ornament, as applied to textile fabrics, is invariably adhered to;—thus, whilst the several floral designs introduced are immediately referable to natural types, there is, at the same time, no attempt at a deceptive rendering by light and shade, or the simulation of relief.

The designs on this sheet may, indeed, be taken as perfect examples of simple floral diapers, æsthetically correct in principle, and with a resultant beauty obvious even to the most uneducated perception.



PERSIAN DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

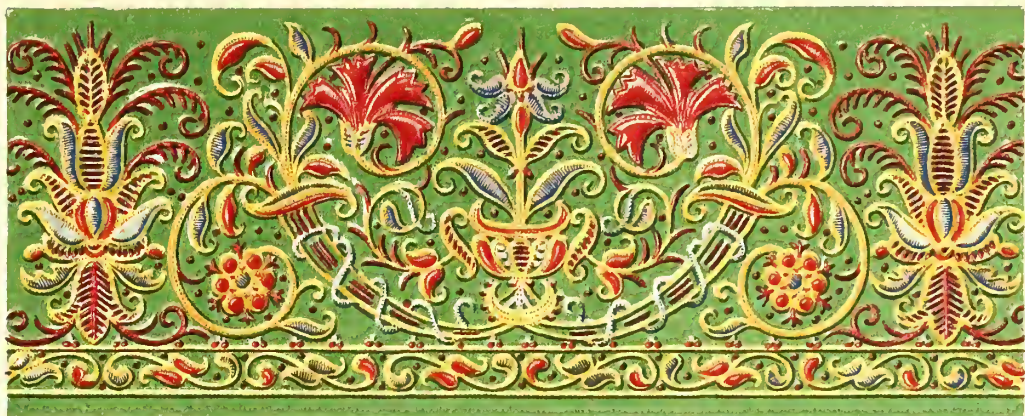
THE beautiful decorative motive shown in several variations in the present plate, offers a most characteristic example of Persian floral diapered ornament. Although the symmetrical balance of the several parts of the design is strictly observed, there is little of that rigid architectonic severity which prevails in European mediæval, and to a less degree in Indian diapers, in many respects so similar; the peculiar gay and cheerful expression of Persian ornament, which has already been alluded to as a national characteristic or style, being here very noticeable.



PERSIAN DESIGNS FOR TEXTILE FABRICS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

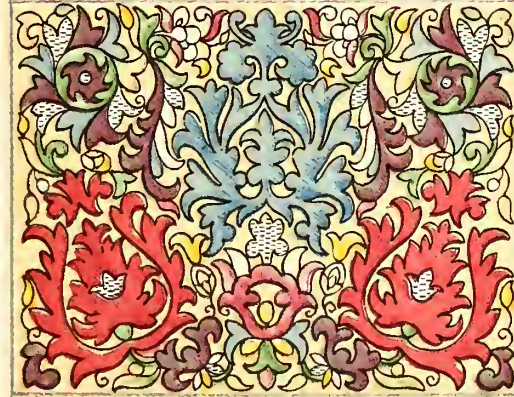
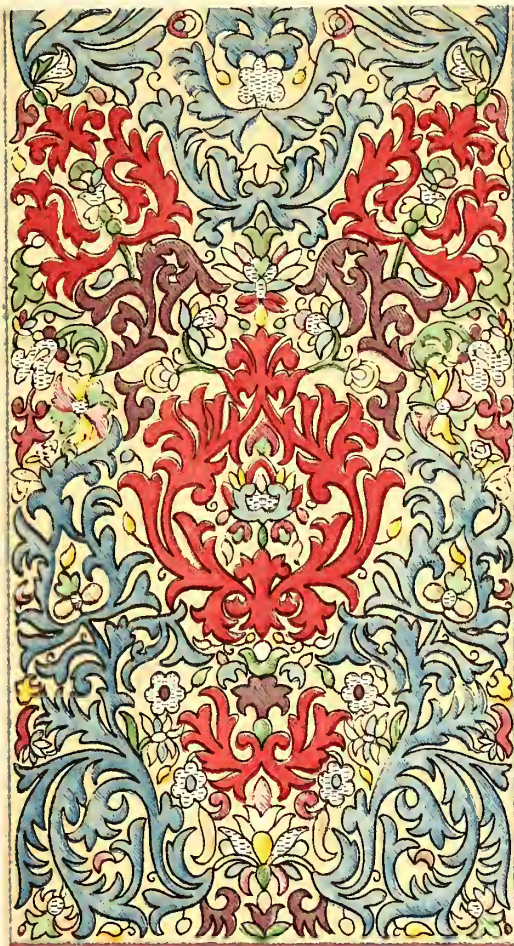
THESE designs, taken from the same source as the preceding, are apparently conventional ornamental arrangements of a species of iris. In both it will be noticed, that the graceful irregularities of the leaves and petals of the plant are even studiously rendered; whilst, at the same time, the proper symmetrical balance of the several details—characteristic of an ornamental as opposed to a merely natural representation of the type—is perfectly achieved. The natural peculiarities of the growth of the plant selected, are, indeed, made by the skill of the designer to yield beautiful decorative suggestions, instead of being, as is too often the case in European design, violated in the most incongruous manner.



ITALIAN CINQUE-CENTO EMBROIDERED SILKS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE piece of silk embroidery represented in the upper part of the accompanying plate, was originally part of the covering of a chair-back, whilst the lower one appears to have been the border of a table-cover. Both are Italian work of the second half of the 16th century. The embroidered pattern is formed by silk braid or cord, stitched down to the ground, and the filling-in of the leaves and flowers in the smaller example is in appliqué work of small pieces of silk or velvet. These designs have a marked architectonic character, thoroughly distinctive of the Renaissance, and were evidently the invention of artists of a much higher grade than are usually employed in upholstery-work at the present day. Their beauty and high artistic merit, brought about by such simple means, suffice to show what a wide field for the display of true taste is open to ladies' fancy-work—without drawing too largely on the inventive faculties of our fair work-women, an infinity of elegant and appropriate designs might be found in the various publications on ornament now so easily obtainable, if only a knowledge of the history and true principles of decorative art were more generally sought to be acquired. With the slightest judgment in selection and adaptation, beautiful and consistent ornamentation might be made to give a peculiar charm to drawing-rooms and boudoirs, where too often ladies' fancy-work serves only to offend the eye by its glaring and obtrusive deformity.





A.—LINEN SCARF, EMBROIDERED WITH SILK,—RECENT MOROCCO
OR TUNISIAN WORK. B. AND C.—ANCIENT EMBROIDERED
SILK TABLE-COVER,—CHINESE OR JAPANESE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

WE have here specimens of embroidered fabrics of widely different origin, but of equal excellence. The scarf is a rich and elaborate specimen of Moorish art, and although not of ancient date, most probably exhibits a style of ornamentation, which has varied but little during many centuries; the archaeologist will notice the strong resemblance, which this specimen shows to the Italian textile ornamentation of the 15th century. This interesting analogy may be explained by the fact, that during the 15th and early part of the 16th centuries, the Oriental designs of the various Levantine tribes were often literally reproduced by the Italian artists, the precious tissues and other ornamental manufactures, then largely imported into Europe through the Italian states, having had a stronger and more legitimate influence on European design than has been exercised by Oriental productions in our own day, inasmuch as the correct principles of Oriental art were then immediately felt and appreciated by artists working in a kindred spirit.

The table-cover is of ancient Chinese or Japanese manufacture, probably dating as far back as the 16th or 17th century; the grace and elegance of the scroll ornamentation is worthy of all commendation, whilst the intricate fringe border is a perfect study of ingenious and appropriate design.



RELIEVO IN CARVED IVORY—THE VIRGIN AND INFANT SAVIOUR
ADORED BY ANGELS. FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

THIS beautiful relievo has evidently formed the centre tablet or leaf of a diptych; and judging from the general style, and more particularly from the decorative details, the date may be referred to about 1340. Like the mirror cover previously engraved, this piece may rank among the most beautiful and finished works of its class. The original ivory is believed to be in the possession of a private collector in Paris.



POWDER-FLASK IN STAG'S HORN, MOUNTED IN SILVER GILT.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE Museum of Ornamental Art possesses an interesting series of powder-flasks of various dates, and in almost every variety of material susceptible of decorative use. The present example, perhaps on the whole the finest of this series, is of German origin, dating about 1530–40. The relievo subject, but more especially the ornamentation of the metal mountings, recalls the style of Aldegrever. It is difficult to discover any fitness or propriety in the relievo subject, which represents the fall of man, and it may be presumed to be a mere caprice on the part of the artist, as more commonly utensils of this kind are decorated with subjects relating to war or the chase. The initials of the original owner may be seen in the arched panel in the upper part, together with a blank shield surmounted by a princely coronet.

TANKARD IN CARVED IVORY, MOUNTED IN SILVER GILT.
FLEMISH. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

In the Possession of H. Bedford, Esq.

THIS beautiful tankard is one of the most perfect works of the Flemish School of sculpture in ivory, which attained such universal repute in the 17th century. The relievo subject on the drum or body of the vessel represents a continuous frieze, or Bacchanalian procession, conspicuous in which may be observed the drunken Silenus supported by his attendant fauns. The influence of Rubens is visible in every detail of this admirable work ; a style of execution, even, having been adopted, responding perfectly to the florid modelling and impasto of the great Flemish painter. The manner in which the texture of flesh is imitated is indeed marvellous ; although, in truth, rather painterlike than sculpturesque. The beautiful little amorino which surmounts the metal cover, on the other hand, is in the manner of Fiammingo, and is in every respect worthy of that well-known artist. It is replete with a graceful style, such as the study of the great Italian masters could alone have imparted. There is, however, no reason to suppose that more than one hand was employed in the execution of this piece. In the inventory of the works of art in the possession of Rubens at the time of his decease, several costly ornamental vessels in carved ivory are conspicuously noted. And in Michel's *Life of Rubens* it is stated, that the greater part of these works were executed by Lucas Faydherbe, of Malines, who, having studied in the school of Rubens during several years, ultimately turned his attention to sculpture, and succeeded in embodying the designs of his master in ivory, with such spirit as to entitle them to an honourable place in the cabinet of the great painter himself. It is very probable that the present example is a work of the able artist here mentioned.



TANKARD IN CARVED IVORY, MOUNTED IN OXYDISED SILVER.

In the Collection of Wm. Goldsmid, Esq.

THIS florid and imposing decorative object is of two distinct periods, the drum or body, in carved ivory, being of Flemish 17th-century work, of the same school as the preceding example, whilst the mounting, in oxydised silver, is the work of a modern French artist of great and deserved celebrity—Antoine Vechte, well known for his admirable works contributed to the Great Exhibition of 1851, and more recently to the Paris Exhibition of 1855. The silver mounts are entirely executed *en repoussé*, *i.e.* hammered or punched, and finished with the chisel, and are an extraordinary instance of the great technical ability of the artist. The difficulties overcome in the complex process of soldering, &c., requisite to the completion of the figures in full relief, are not more remarkable than the ease and exuberant facility, exhibited in the carrying out of every detail, the work having rather the appearance of being moulded from some soft and ductile substance, yielding to every touch of the modelling tool, than hard metal requiring to be laboriously hammered into shape. The expression of this very facility, remarkable as it is, is perhaps even a drawback, the true rigid character proper to metal-work being somewhat lost sight of.



SILK CARPET. MODERN INDIAN. MANUFACTURED AT CASHMERE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS carpet, which is of considerable size and very thick, is entirely composed of silk, which, by its natural lustre, adds greatly to the gem-like brilliancy of colour. It was purchased from the Exhibition of 1851. The pattern approximates in style to Turkish examples, the rectilinear character of the diaper, and its somewhat fantastic, irregular disposition, being different from the usual style of Indian carpet decoration. Whilst referring to this difference, it may not be uninteresting to observe, that the peculiar angular irregular details of the Turkish patterns were probably, in the first instance, derived from the great use in early times of the Arabic written character in ornamental arrangements. In this specimen, the quaint picturesqueness of the Turkish style is agreeably modified, by the more beautiful and flowing character of Indian art. Mr. Redgrave, R. A., in his report on Design, as displayed in the Exhibition of 1851, has made some excellent remarks on Oriental carpets, and as the proper appreciation of the latter and the promotion of better taste in this class of English goods is very desirable, we cannot do better than extract a few of his observations on this head:—

“ A most careful examination has confirmed a strong feeling as to the great superiority of the designs of Indian and Turkish carpets, both in the arrangement and general tone and harmony of the colours and the flat treatment and geometrical distribution of form. The Turkish carpets are generally designed with a *flat* border of flowers

of the natural size, and with a centre of larger forms conventionalised, in some cases even to the extent of obscuring the forms—a fault to be avoided. The colours are negative shades of a medium, or half-tint, as to light and dark, tending rather to dark, with scarcely any contrast, and therefore a little sombre in character. Three hues predominate and largely pervade the surface, namely, green, red, and blue; these are not pure, but negative, so that the general effect is cool, yet rich and full of colour. The colours, instead of cutting upon each other, are mostly bordered with black; the blue has a slight tendency to purple, and a few orange spots enhance and enliven the effect. The distribution of colour in these fabrics is far simpler than in those from India, which last have sometimes a tendency to foxiness, from a larger admission of warm neutrals, as brown and brown purple; they also admit of a much greater variety of colours than the Turkish. The colour of the Indian carpets, however, is so evenly distributed, and each tint so well balanced with its complementary and harmonising hue, that the general effect is rich and agreeable; the hues all tend to a dark middle tint in scale, and white and yellow are sparingly introduced to define the geometrical arrangement of the forms, such arrangement being the sound basis of all Eastern ornament.”



INDIAN SILK AND GOLD TISSUES.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE present designs represent Indian silk and gold tissues manufactured at Ahmedabad, intended for the woman's dress called "sarree."



INDIAN GOLD-TISSUE SCARF.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE magnificent Indian gold tissue, part of which is here represented, is a scarf or shawl worn by men. It was manufactured at Benares, and was purchased from the Exhibition of 1851 at the price of 50*l*. The deep border and the corner of the scarlet centre-piece exhibit beautiful varieties of the favourite Oriental motive, termed, for want of a better name, the “Pine Apple Ornament, Palmette, or Shawl Pattern.” It is difficult to decide what can have been the origin of this singular form, which is of constant occurrence both in Persian and Hindoo art, and has long been naturalised in Europe. There can, however, be no doubt, but that it is of extreme antiquity, and as little, that it must originally have had some symbolic meaning.



INDIAN SCARF IN PURPLE MUSLIN, WITH PATTERN IN GOLD
PRINTING.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS illustration represents part of a scarf in purple muslin, with gold-printed decoration, manufactured at Kotah, in Rajpootana. The pattern is elegant and well distributed for effect, the palmette ornament being introduced in the border, as in the previous example.



INDIAN GOLD TISSUES.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THESE designs do not seem to require any addition to our previous remarks on the characteristics of Indian textile design; they are both, on the whole, very beautiful, being distinguished by a subdued splendour of effect.

The lower design, however, almost verges on heaviness, whilst in the upper one, the arrangement of the pattern in oblique bands or columns is a novelty of somewhat questionable taste. The elegance of the running scrolls, and the frequent contrasts of colour in both specimens, however, atone for these drawbacks.





VASE IN SILVER REPOUSSÉ WORK, THE SUBJECT REPRESENTING
JUPITER WARRING WITH THE TITANS. EXECUTED
BY ANTOINE VECHTE FOR THE FIRM OF
HUNT AND ROSKELL.

AMONGST the reputations made or confirmed by the Exhibition of 1851, there were none more fairly earned than that of the author of this piece. The number and importance of his works there exhibited bore testimony to the extraordinary productive powers of this artist, who in dexterous facility would seem even to surpass the impetuous exuberance of a Cellini. We have already, in a previous notice, alluded to the merits and demerits of M. Vechte's style; it is sufficient to observe, that the production now illustrated is one of the most important works of the master, being of great size and high finish.



SILVER EWER, EXECUTED IN REPOUSSÉ BY VECHTE FOR
MESSRS. HUNT AND ROSKELL.

THE relievo subject of this elaborate specimen represents a Bacchalian procession; the character of the composition, as well as the ornaments, resembles the style of the early German goldsmith engravers—the Behams, Binck, Virgilio Solis, &c. It is a marvel of dexterous execution, and, like the preceding piece, may challenge comparison, at any rate as far as technical ability is concerned, with the most renowned ancient works extant.

FLAGON IN SILVER, PARCEL GILT. MODERN WORK, IN THE
GERMAN STYLE OF THE BEGINNING OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS fine piece of decorative plate, imposing from its size, (24 inches in height), was manufactured by Messrs. Lambert and Rawlings of Coventry Street, for the Exhibition of 1851, and was purchased under the original grant for the Museum. It is entirely executed in hammered or repoussé work, and is a successful revival of a characteristic style and period of goldsmiths' work. The raised oak foliage is treated in the conventional manner, the execution being artistic and completely in the feeling of the style adopted.



TAZZA IN ORIENTAL ONYX, MOUNTED IN ENAMELLED GOLD.
MODERN, IN THE STYLE OF THE CINQUE-CENTO.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE costly object now illustrated was executed expressly to show, that the class of works in precious materials, with which the name of Benvenuto Cellini is almost identified, can, at any rate as far as technical processes are concerned, be equally successfully produced by the modern goldsmith—Messrs. Morel and Co., of New Burlington Street, by whom this tazza was executed, having contributed to the Exhibition of 1851 a series of similar productions, avowedly in rivalry of ancient examples. The processes of fabrication of such a work as this are in themselves difficult; but when it is considered that there is literally no demand at the present day for precious trinkets of this kind, the merit of the producers is additionally enhanced, inasmuch as, being entirely out of the usual line of manufacture, want of practice in the workmen, artists, &c., engaged, would naturally render the real difficulties of manipulatory processes still greater. Messrs. Morel were, therefore, justified in taking credit to themselves for having virtually revived the art of enamelling on the precious metals in *ronde bosse* (full relief), and their pretensions were confirmed by the verdict of the Jury of the Great Exhibition, as expressed in the Report on the 23d Class, in which it is stated, that “The principal object of the Jury’s approbation is the rich and handsome series of chalices and cups of various kinds in precious materials, ornamented with enamels, exhibited by Messrs. Morel and Co.”

The bowl of this cup is composed of one piece of Oriental onyx, and the mounting is in fine gold, richly decorated with opaque and translucent enamels, and set with jewels:—the figures, in full relief, which, it will be observed, represent Sea-nymphs, a Triton, Amorini, &c., are enamelled on the nude parts with proper flesh-tints. The design was by a French artist, A. Carrier, for several years resident in England, and the work was acquired for the nation at the price of 210*l.*





GROUPS IN TERRA-COTTA—BACCHANALIAN SUBJECTS BY
CLODION. PERIOD OF LOUIS THE SIXTEENTH.

In the Possession of George Field, Esq.

A RAPIDLY increasing posthumous reputation has of late years accrued to the author of these masterly groups. For nearly half a century the productions of the brilliant but licentious epoch, which immediately preceded the great Revolution of 1789, were treated with a blind contempt, dictated by the far more objectionable mania of pseudo-classicality in art, which attained its height in France under the first Napoleon: the present generation, however, is already emancipated from this lifeless phase, and as a consequence, the great masters of the immediately antecedent school are beginning to be more justly estimated. Amongst the prominent names of the Louis XVth and XVIth epochs, few have attained to a higher place than that of Clodion; although, from the little that appears to be personally known of this able artist, his works are as yet his best biography. He appears to have been pre-eminently a decorative artist, engaged in modelling groups and ornamental details for the Parisian bronzistes and cabinet-makers, the numerous highly-finished terra-cottas further attesting that he must have found a ready demand for these his capital works.

Clodion's compositions are admirable for the life and animation they display; his figures are nearly always full of movement; momentary attitudes of the most truthful character are rendered with such evident freedom from effort, as to prevent the full power and mastery of the artist from being at first recognised. His groups, as may be seen in the present examples, are admirably composed, as regards the agreeable arrangement of lines and masses, so important in sculpture; whilst the drawing and modelling of the nude, although influenced by the mannerism of the epoch, display consummate ability. The rendering of the texture and surface of flesh in sculpture was never, perhaps, achieved with greater art; this characteristic, indeed, is carried so far, as to militate against the abstract character of sculpture, the peculiar manipulation of the clay suggesting rather the brush than the chisel or the modelling-tool.





TWO FRIEZES IN TERRA COTTA. TRITONS AND SEA NYMPHS BY
CLODION.

In the Possession of George Field, Esq.

THESE beautiful compositions are modelled with all the elegance and masterly facility displayed in the preceding groups. The subjects are purely ideal or decorative, void of any intellectual significance, and intended simply to display the beautiful forms of the nude, in as great a variety of well-contrasted attitudes as possible ; they should therefore be considered as purely decorative works of a high order.





CAMEOS IN OLD WEDGWOOD WARE.

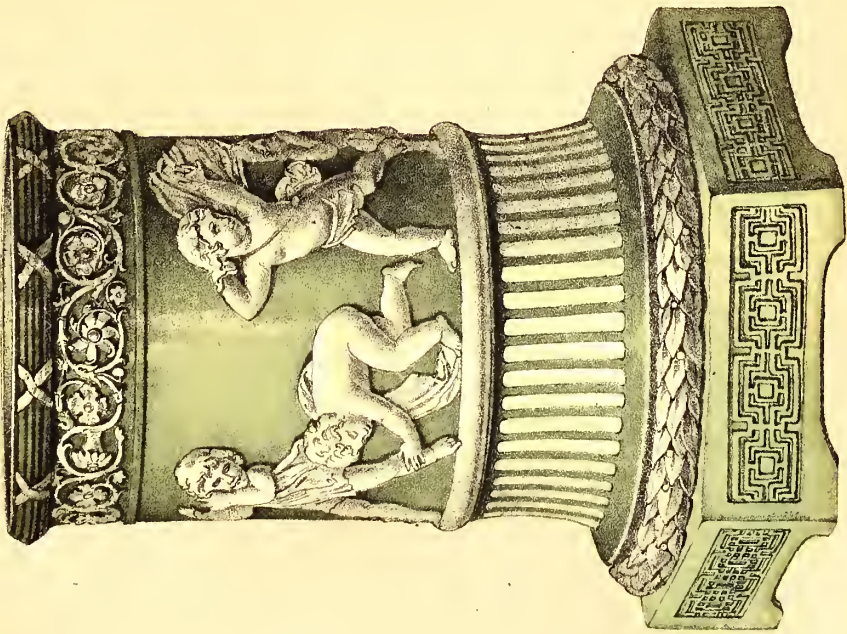
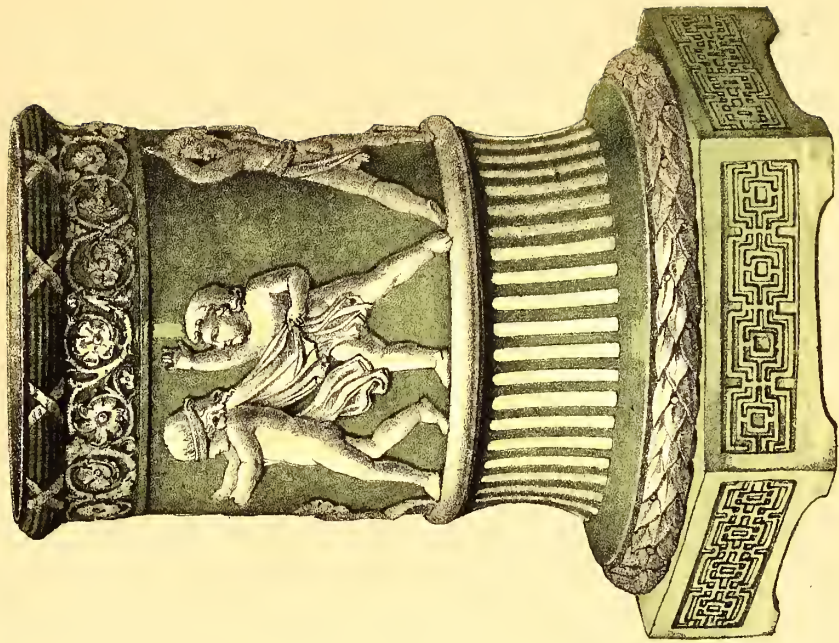
Museum of Ornamental Art.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, (born at Burslem in 1730, died 1795,) is unquestionably the greatest name in the annals of the Ceramic art. The varieties of pottery, invented or perfected by his individual agency, are perhaps, on the whole, the most excellent art-manufactures this country has yet produced. These varieties are very numerous, and the present remarks apply in particular to the well-known Jasper or Cameo wares; in every kind, however, we see a perfection of manufacture and refinement of taste, far in advance of antecedent efforts. The relievio pottery of Wedgwood had been preceded, and in part perhaps suggested, by earlier and ruder varieties of Staffordshire earthenware; but it was matured chiefly by the sight of the celebrated Portland Vase, an attempt to imitate which was the first step towards the success ultimately achieved. During the latter part of the last century, moreover, a passion for antique gems prevailed amongst the wealthy amateurs of England, than which, it should be observed, a more refined and beautiful class of works of art has never since engaged the attention of collectors; and Wedgwood, whose knowledge and feeling for art were those of an artist, seems to have specially studied these exquisite works of antiquity, and with the instinct of genius, to have soon found a way of making them practically subservient to his manufacture. In addition to the vast collections of casts, published by Tassie and others, he seems to have lost no opportunity of procuring impressions from antiques, in the possession of noblemen and wealthy connoisseurs, with whom he had an extensive intercourse. His copies, in the many varieties of his celebrated Jasper-ware, became immediately popular throughout Europe, and an immense demand arose for

cameos and intaglios, not only on the part of collectors, but likewise for employment in objects of use and decoration. It would be impossible to specify a title of the purposes to which fashion adapted these beautiful objects, — brooches, shoe-buckles, bracelets, ear-drops, plaques for chimney-pieces, and cameos of large size for inlays into decorative furniture, clocks, and time-pieces, the lids of snuff-boxes, &c. &c., are, however, a few of the more prominent instances.

A natural property of fictile materials here also came in Wedgwood's aid. It may have been noticed, that the same design is often to be found in a great number of sizes; that a cameo, for instance, of two inches in diameter, is also to be met with reduced to one, or even half-an-inch, every line and form being nevertheless identical in design. This is accomplished as follows: the cameo or other object is found to be reduced in size, during the process of firing, by the natural contraction of the clay; a fresh mould is therefore made on the reduced piece, the casts from which, when fired in turn, are found to be correspondently diminished; as their reduction can thus be made in a certain constant ratio, nothing is easier than to vary the sizes at will, and it should be remarked, that the very fact of reduction increases the apparent finish and elaborate delicacy of the work.

Wedgwood's endeavours were not confined to reproductions of antiques; many of the first artists of the epoch were employed by him, on the most liberal terms, in the production of original compositions, and amongst others our greatest sculptor, Flaxman, executed many works, the beautiful oval cameo in the centre of our plate being one of them.



CIRCULAR PEDESTAL IN OLD WEDGWOOD COMEOWARE,
DESIGNED AND MODELLED BY FLAXMAN.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

IN Flaxman's works executed for Wedgwood, and Stothard's designs for the firm of Rundell and Bridge, the highest artistic talent this country has ever produced may be seen in intimate alliance with manufacture, and the example of these great names alone ought to be sufficient to ennoble the practice of industrial design. The beautiful pedestals in Wedgwood ware now engraved are the work of the former of these celebrated artists; they are executed in the cameo or jasper ware, the ground being of a light sage-green colour, and the figures in relief in white. They were probably produced somewhere about the year 1780.

Wedgwood wares of this high class have been gradually rising in estimation ever since the period of their production, and although their pecuniary worth is at present far above their original cost, it may safely be predicted, that the increasing appreciation of the really beautiful in art will ultimately give to such specimens as these an almost fabulous value.



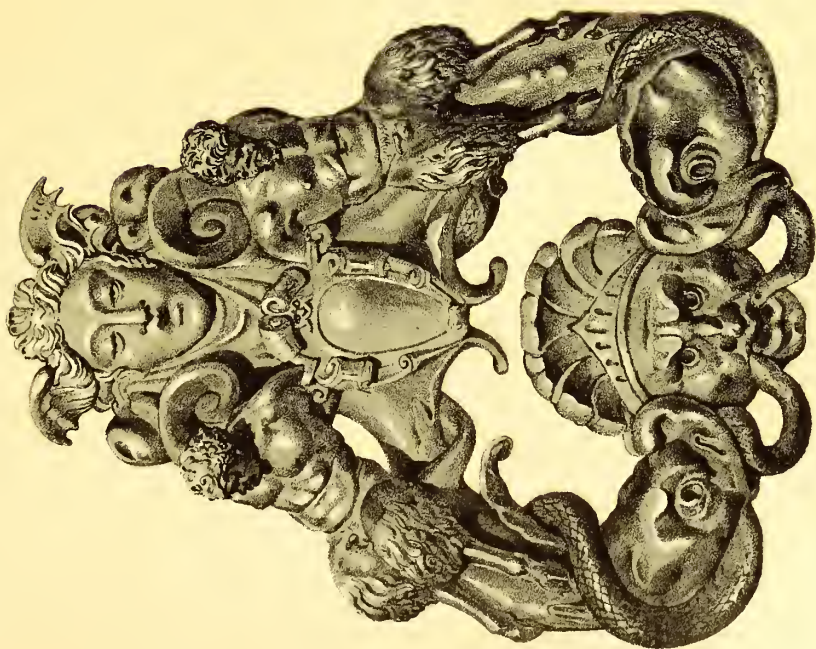
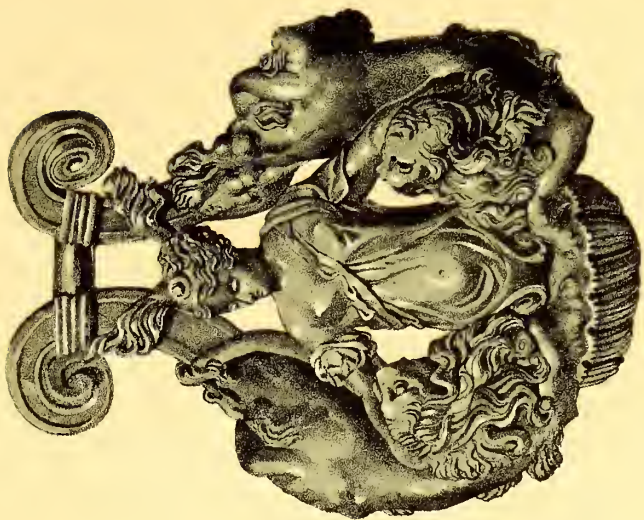
ITALIAN CINQUE-CENTO BRONZE VASE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE elaborate relieve ornamentation of this vase evidently refers it to the earliest cinque-cento style, and it is probably not later in date than about 1500.

The piece requires to be placed above the eye to be properly seen, in which position the admirable grouping of the mouldings, and the beautiful form of the piece generally, are displayed to great advantage.

The work is cast, and finished by spirited chasing.



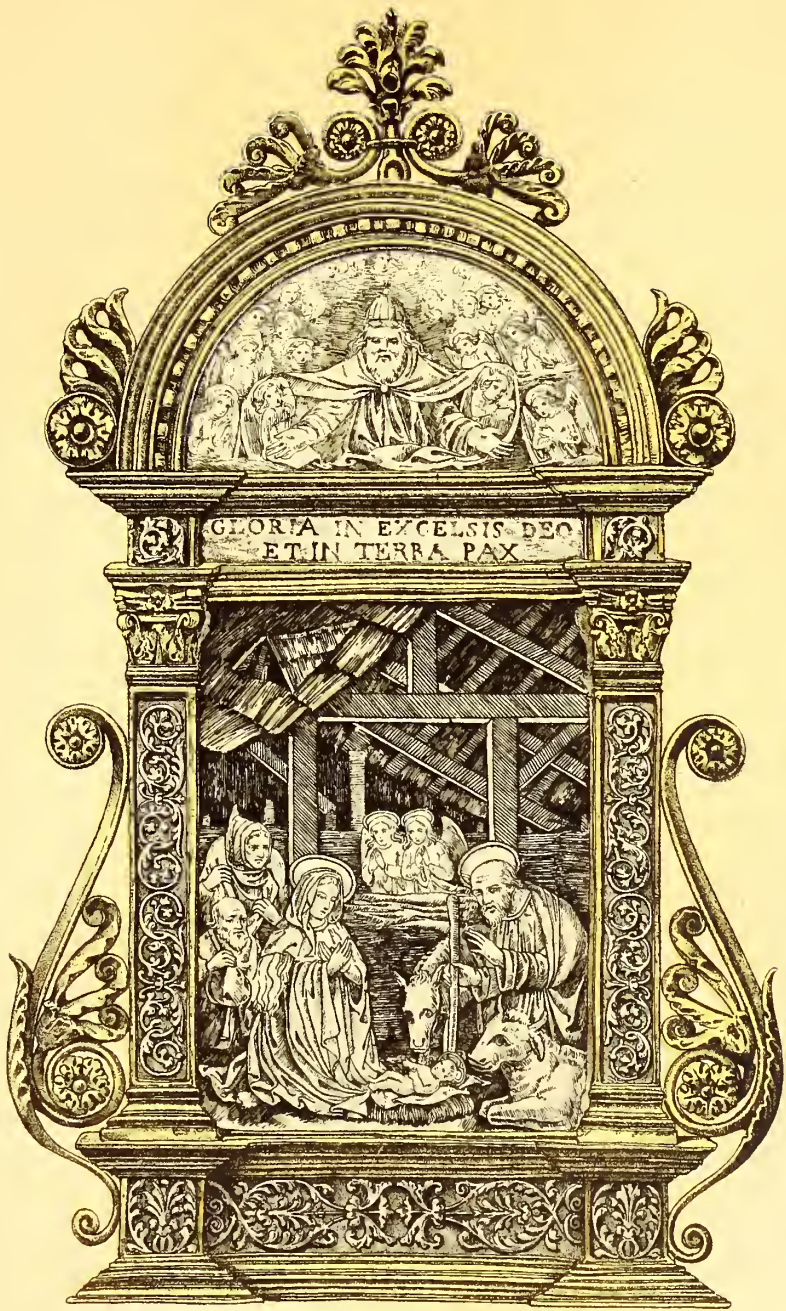
ITALIAN CINQUE-CENTO BRONZE DOOR-KNOCKERS.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE larger of these door-knockers is believed to be the work of the sculptor Giovanni Bologna, and the smaller one is said to have been formerly affixed to the door of the Palazzo Pisani in Venice.

They are both massive bronze castings, artistically chiselled by the artists themselves. Very few specimens of these fine Italian knockers now remain *in situ*, although formerly they were to be found on the gates of almost every palazzo.

Knockers appear to have been a very favourite utensil for the display of ornament, and it is evident that they were generally the production of artist sculptors, and were regarded as integral parts of the architectural scheme of the edifices to which they were affixed.



NIELLO PAX—ITALIAN. FIFTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

NIELLO work is line engraving, usually on silver, filled in with a black metallic substance. The process is one of great antiquity, known to, and frequently practised by, the ancients; and it would seem to have been in use, without interruption, ever since.

During the middle ages, Italy and the Eastern empire were the principal seats of the art; and it is interesting to note, that the popularity of niello working amongst the Mediaeval Greeks has borne fruit down to this time even; the cities of Southern Russia, the inhabitants of which may perhaps be regarded as the most complete inheritors of Byzantine arts and customs, being at the present day the headquarters of the art.

The most interesting development of niello working, however, unquestionably took place in Italy during the fifteenth century, the period to which the object now illustrated belongs, and the engraving of a pax very similar in style to the present example suggested to its author, Maso Finiguerra, a Florentine goldsmith, the first idea of copper-plate printing. The process at this period is described in detail in the important, but little-known, technical treatises of Benvenuto Cellini,* and may be briefly stated as follows:—

The niello composition consists of one part of silver, two of copper, and three of lead, melted together in a crucible; this alloy, whilst in a state of fusion being cast into an earthenware vase or bottle, partly filled

* "Due trattati—intorno alle otto principali arti dell'oreficeria, &c. &c. 4to. Florence. 1568.

with powdered sulphur. The substance which results is then reduced to a granular powder, and spread over the surface of the engraved plate. Heat is then applied, when the composition is speedily melted, filling all the incised lines, and of course covering the entire surface of the work, and entirely concealing the design. When cold, the superfluous niello is scraped or filed away, nearly down to the surface of the silver, a thin film only being left, which is in turn removed by gentle friction with fine tripoli and charcoal: the design then appears in a brilliant black tint, in the strongest possible contrast with the pure white of the silver ground.

The ancient artists were in the habit of taking copies of their works by various mechanical contrivances, and it is very interesting to trace the gradual steps by which these processes ultimately led to the discovery of copperplate printing; a discovery second in importance only to that of printing from movable types.

The earliest method seems to have been to take a cast in sulphur previous to its being filled in with the niello. The incised lines of the plate were first filled with a black unctuous pigment, which in turn was transferred to the sulphur east, the lines of the design in the latter, of course, being in relief and in black. Some few sulphur impressions of ancient nielli have been preserved, and are most highly valued. A further step seems to have been the obtaining impressions on paper from these sulphur casts, which for this purpose may be considered analogous to wood engravings—block-printing having probably suggested this process. These impressions were obtained by rubbing the back of the moistened paper placed over the surface of the sulphur mould or block, the lines of which had been previously inked; impressions of this kind have also come down to us, but they are only a degree less rare than the sulphur easts. Finally, impressions on paper were taken direct from the incised niello plates, likewise by rubbing, and the art of copperplate printing was discovered.

The pax now illustrated is a fine example, probably of Florentine work, dating about 1490. It was formerly in the Denon collection.





PENDANT JEWELS IN GOLD, ENAMELLED, AND SET WITH
PRECIOUS STONES. SIXTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE three costly jewels now illustrated are works of the second half of the sixteenth century, most probably of German origin. They are fine examples of a style of jewellery, which is now again beginning to be revived. The small statuettes and strap-work ornaments are all carefully chiselled into shape, their sharp and decisive style of execution forming a great contrast to that of modern chasing. They are beautifully enriched with transparent and opaque enamels, the colours of which serve as a foil or support to the stones. The process of enamelling small figures in full relief, on this minute scale, is one of great technical difficulty; it has, however, been successfully revived by modern French jewellers, — Froment Menrice, Weise, Rudolphi, &c. having each exhibited a numerous series of jewels similarly adorned at the Paris Exhibition of 1855. The backs of the specimens now engraved are also elaborately enamelled. The stones are diamonds, rubies, and pearls.



QUIVER AND INDIAN FAN. MANUFACTURED AT JODHPORE IN
RAJPOOTANA.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

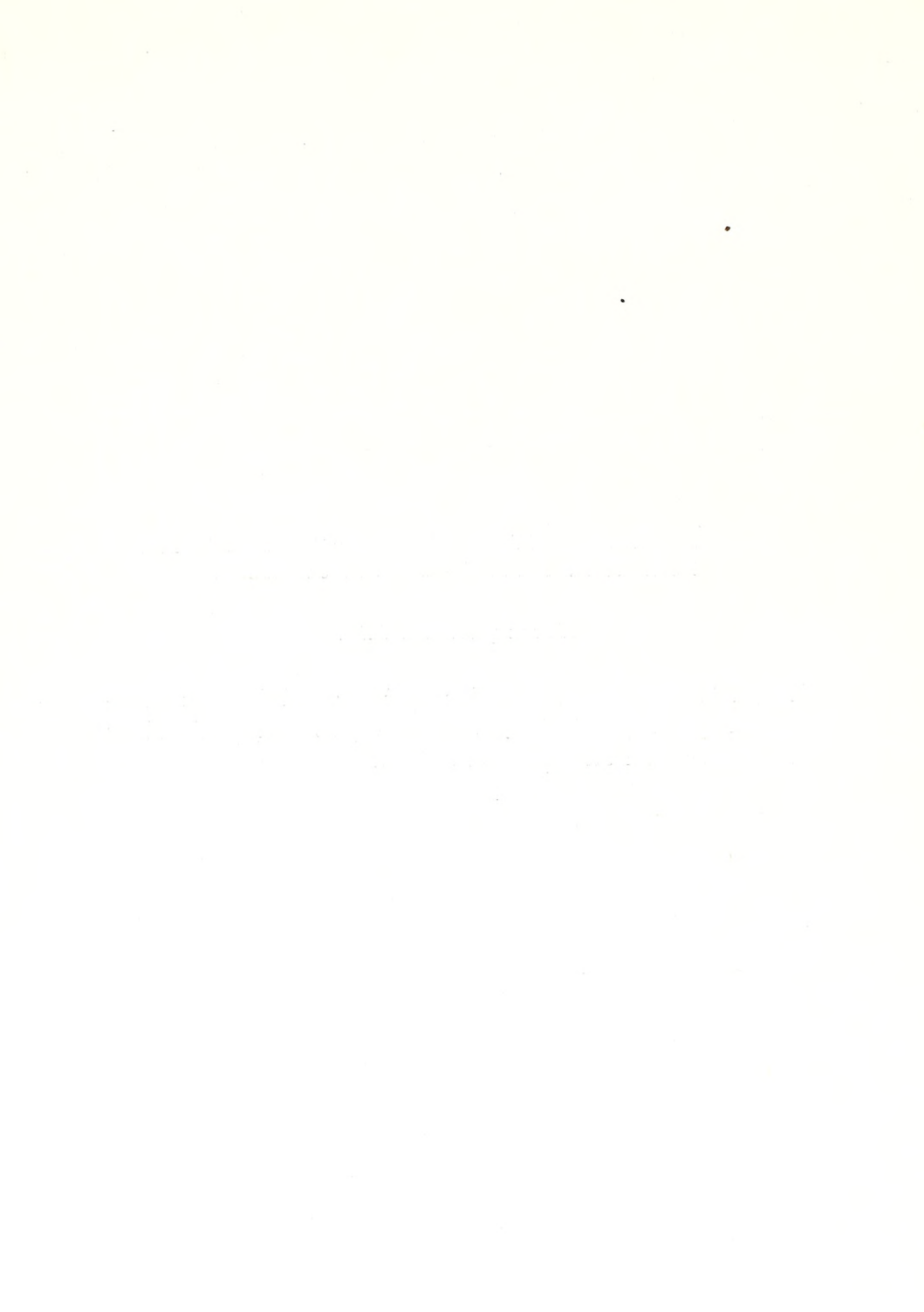
THE pattern on these objects is executed in raised embroidery of gold thread on blue velvet; it has all the usual taste and decorative propriety of Hindoo textile ornamentation.



INDIAN POWDER-HORN AND THREE PIECES OF MATCHLOCK
FURNITURE. MANUFACTURED AT JODHPORE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

SIMILAR in style to the preceding specimens, and doubtless manufactured by the same individual. These objects were purchased for the Museum from the Exhibition of 1851.





PATTERNS OF INDIAN LACQUERED WORK FROM WRITING-
BOXES. EXECUTED AT LAHORE.

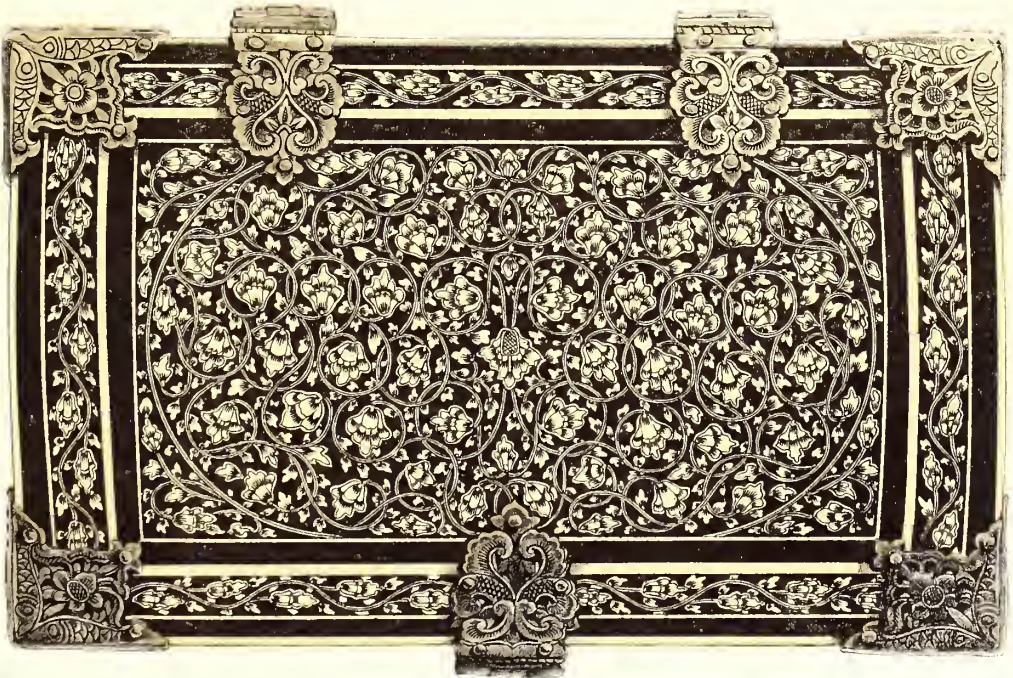
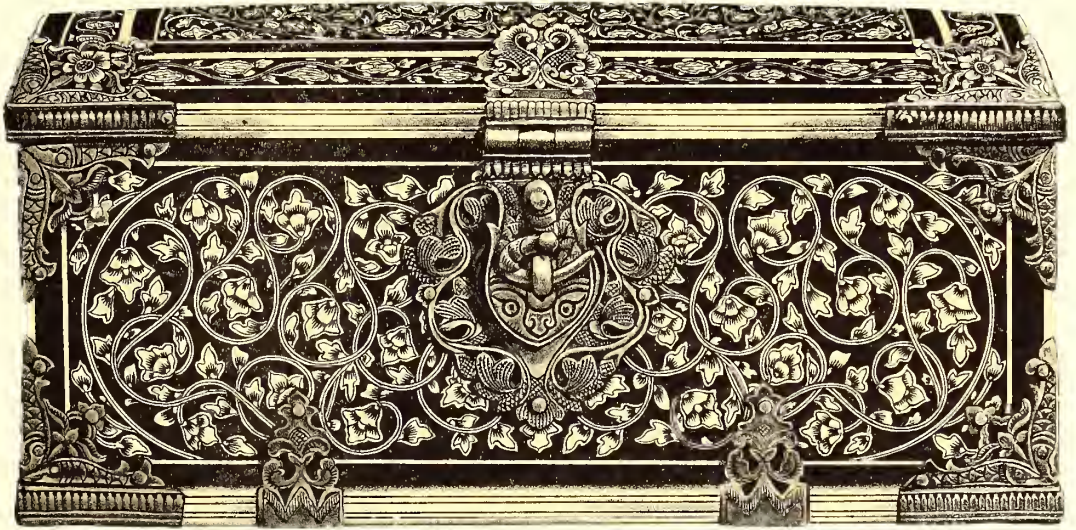
Museum of Ornamental Art.

INDIAN lacquered works, although less remarkable in technical respects than the Japanese wares, are in point of art unquestionably superior to them.

Whilst the celebrity of these latter is evinced in the mere fact of our language having, in the ordinary phrase "Japan work," adopted the name of that country as a generic term for all kinds of lacquered wares—every single piece imported into this country, it should be observed, being through the agency of our ancient maritime rivals the Dutch, it is not a little singular that the existence of an extensive and highly developed manufacture of the same nature in our own dominions should, until the last few years, have remained almost entirely ignored; and even now, although eminently capable of being brought within the usual conditions of commerce, cheapness of production being one of its most remarkable features, that no market for these beautiful productions should as yet have been found in Europe.

The distinctive style of the Indian lacquered works is well exemplified in the specimen now engraved; they manifest a perfectly consistent mode of decoration, based on true principles of design. The motives are purely ornamental, refined and beautiful both in form and colour, and rendered simply as abstractedly agreeable forms destined to cover, in the most ingenious and tasteful way, prescribed decorative spaces.

The present designs are taken from oblong boxes intended to contain writing implements; they were manufactured at Lahore, and were presented to the Museum of Ornamental Art by Her Majesty the Queen.



TOILET-BOX IN EBONY, INLAID WITH IVORY, AND MOUNTED WITH SILVER. ORIENTAL WORK. BATAVIAN. (?) SEVENTEENTH OR EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE process and style of decoration exemplified in this object are seen carried out in many other articles of utility, all evidently of similar origin and period. It is not unusual to meet with chairs, bedsteads, couches, tables, &c., of the same work, still preserved in ancient mansions, both in this country and on the Continent. The palaces of Hampton Court and Windsor contain beautiful specimens; those in the former place, and most probably also those at Windsor, dating back to the reign of William III. There can be little doubt, indeed, that this peculiar manufacture was carried on in the East, especially for the European market, and that the products were a current Dutch importation of the 17th century.

The process consists of a simple marquetry inlay of ivory into a ground of ebony, the markings or details of the floral ornaments being produced by engraved lines or hatchings, into which a dark-coloured substance is rubbed or painted. This mode of work is of extreme antiquity, and an interesting specimen, executed in precisely the same materials, may be seen in an ancient Egyptian chair of the age of the Pharaohs, now preserved in the British Museum; whilst in the middle ages some varieties of the Italian inlays, generically termed "tarsia work," (*Intarsiatura*,) were all but identical. The style of decoration shown in this specimen has a marked Oriental character, graceful and elegant in detail, consisting of little more than the repetition of a few conventionalised forms of leaves and flowers united in a species of scroll-diaper, the elaborately ornamented surfaces being relieved or contrasted with plain marginal bands and a flowing scroll border. The silver angle-plates, hinges, lock, &c., are beautifully chased, and contribute greatly to the rich effect of the piece. It will be observed, that the almost invariable Oriental law of flat conventionalised decoration for plane surfaces has been strictly followed in this instance.

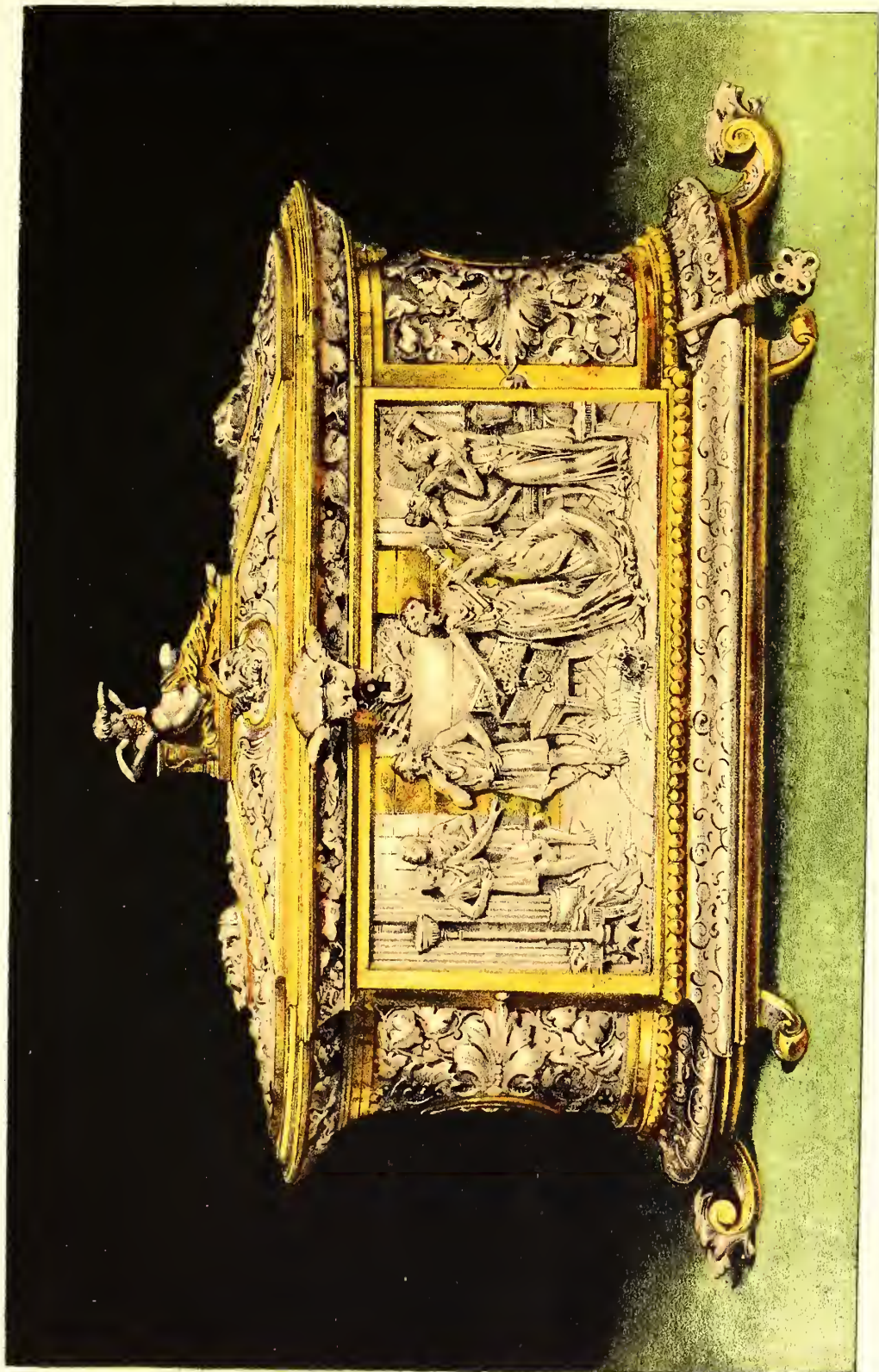


HUNTING-SWORD, WITH HILT AND SCABBARD IN SILVER AND
GILT BRONZE. MODERN FRENCH WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

MARREL, frères, of Paris, the producers of this work, have shown themselves worthy of a place among the most distinguished armourers of France. The magnificent weapons, contributed by them to the Universal Exhibitions of 1851 and 1855, would indeed bear comparison with the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the Piraubes, Laroques, and Boutets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In England there is but little taste for richly ornamented arms, and, consequently, decorative art of a high class is seldom enlisted in the service of the armourer, whose standard of beauty with us is of another description, and whose ideas of extreme excellence take the practical shape of the most highly elaborated workmanship, and perfect adaptation of the weapon to its uses. In France, on the contrary, there has always been a widely-spread taste for "*armes de luxe*," as they are styled; and in no class of productions were the different national characteristics of the two countries more strongly exemplified, in the two Universal Exhibitions of 1851 and 1855.

This magnificent knife was executed expressly for the former of these occasions, and was purchased thence by Government at the cost of 200*l*. The design illustrates the story of St. Hubert, the patron saint of the chase, the hilt or grip being formed by a kind of shrine containing a statuette of the saint, with a hound at his feet; the cross-guard is enriched with relief figures of various wild animals, and the bas-relief at the top of the sheath represents the legend of the saint, being the moment when the hunt is interrupted by the apparition of the miraculous crucifix betwixt the horns of the stag. The style of the ornamentation has somewhat of a Byzantine character, and the execution of the work leaves nothing to be desired for delicacy and spirited finishing. The whole of the ornamental details were in the first instance modelled in wax, then cast in plaster, and highly wrought up in that material previous to being cast in metal; and, finally, the work was terminated by the most careful and artistic chasing by the artist himself.



CASKET IN OXYDISED SILVER. MODERN FRENCH WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

MANUFACTURED by Gueyton of Paris, and purchased from the Exhibition of 1851 for 36*l.*



CUP, OR CHALICE, IN ORIENTAL ONYX, MOUNTED IN
ENAMELLED GOLD. MODERN FRENCH.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

ALTHOUGH somewhat thin and disconnected in design, this work is not without merit, an attempt having been made to imitate the style of the thirteenth century, avoiding, at the same time, the character of ecclesiastical rigidity so distinctive of that epoch.

The bowl in onyx is probably of Oriental workmanship; the stem of gold, enriched with enamels and set with rubies and turquoises; and the circular bulb or "knop," in the middle of the stem, is in rock crystal.

It is the production of M. Rudolphi of Paris, having been executed by him for the Exhibition of 1851.



TAZZA, WITH COVER, IN SILVER SET WITH JEWELS.
MODERN FRENCH WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE shape of this cup was probably suggested by one of the ancient Limoges enamelled tazze; it was executed by Marrel, frères, of Paris, and contributed by them to the Exhibition of 1851, and may be considered as a favourable specimen of the modern French revival of the Renaissance style. The jewels are rubies, emeralds, garnets, and turquoises. The price paid for the piece was 72*l*.



ITALIAN EMBROIDERED SILK HANGINGS. SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

In the Possession of the Earl of Carnarvon.

THIS engraving shows the upper and lower portions of a vertical panel, supposed to have originally formed a pilaster or border to a piece of tapestry. It is executed in hand-embroidery of silk and gold thread. Although clearly Italian, the exact locality of its manufacture can only be conjectured. The celebrity of the silk and velvet fabrics of Genoa, considered in connexion with a certain florid character in design in this specimen, quite in accordance with Genoese art, would, perhaps, justify its being ascribed to that city. These characteristics of design, however, hold equally good of Venice, the massive strap-work and foliated scroll ornament being also quite in keeping with the style of the gorgeous furniture so largely manufactured in the latter place. But whether stripped from the walls of some palace of the renowned "Queen of the Adriatic," or of her superb rival of the Mediterranean, this piece is certainly a relic of a kind of splendour to which our modern style of house decoration affords no parallel. In the olden time fortunes were lavished on the walls of a palace, but the outlay sufficed once and for all; the work once done lasted for centuries, generation after generation lived and died amidst the slowly waning glories of those splendid homes. In this age of wall-papers and whitewash, we can form but a faint idea of the extraordinary magnificence of the saloons of the great Italian palaces—the few that have still escaped the ravages of the "Black Band," as our Continental neighbours term the horde of dealers, who for half a century have not ceased to overrun the Continent, tearing down and scattering piecemeal the noblest works of ancient architects, have faded and mouldered away to but a shadow of their original beauty. But even in decay

there is a prevailing stamp of architectural greatness, which impresses us from the contrast it affords to the triviality and obvious want of permanence of modern works. Ceilings and cornices in carved wood, or scarcely less costly stucco-work, blazing with gold or painted by the masterly hand of a Veronese or a Tintoret; the walls covered with precious tapestry, the floors of parquetage or rare marbles; chairs and curtains all gilding and velvet; cabinets, candelabra, tables, mirrors, all designed and wrought by artists, each piece an integral part of the entire decorative scheme,—How different this is to the petty, crowded, comfortable style of English furnishing! Englishmen are apt to sneer at the faded magnificence of Continental houses, as the shabby-fine style, forgetting that, although faded, it is not common, and unconscious that our own habits in this respect are more really vulgar.



LAMP-STAND, IN GILT BRONZE. ITALIAN CINQUE-CENTO WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

IN the absence of any other indication, the three winged lions, which form a prominent feature in this object, would have pointed to Venice as the locality of its production.

Setting aside the grandiose character of the design, the spirited execution of the pieces, especially the style of chasing, forms a remarkable contrast with the habitual tame and smoothly-finished surface of modern works in or-moulu. The lower part of the stand, when in use, would be seen only in a kind of half-light, and its bold and dexterous chiselling would then produce a much better effect than a more elaborate but less striking style. The date of the work is about 1570.



SMALL MIRROR FRAME, IN CARVED AND GILDED WOOD.
VENETIAN. CIRCA 1700.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

VENICE, like Paris at the present day, seems in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to have been the principal centre of production of decorative furniture; the Venetian carved and gilded work of the Louis Quatorze epoch, excelling even the similar productions executed in France at the same period. The ornament of the second half of the seventeenth century, or, as it is more generally termed, the "Louis Quatorze" style, is seen to greater advantage in purely decorative objects such as this, than in strictly useful articles, in which similar displays of florid detail are too apt to induce structural inconsistencies. The present specimen is characterised by a playful ingenuity in the distribution of the details, which, though demanding no great exercise of art-power in the designer, is not to be set down as mere upholsterers' or carvers' and gilders' work. Although it belongs to a period and class of objects often decried as "overcharged," "licentious," &c., this specimen would be found to contrast most advantageously with the average of modern works of a similar kind, exhibiting in reality far more simplicity and repose, with, at the same time, more truly rich and gorgeous an effect.



PANEL OF PAINTED GLASS. ST. CATHERINE. MODERN GERMAN
COPY FROM AN ANCIENT WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS panel, executed at the Royal Glass Painting Establishment at Munich, was contributed to the Paris Exhibition of 1844, from whence it was purchased by the Council of the School of Design. It is a copy of part of an ancient window from a church in Nuremberg.

It is in every respect a characteristic specimen of the old German style; the draperies full of angular folds, doubtless resulting from the imitation of the thick brocades then so much in use, and the floral scroll diaper on the background, which manifests in the details of the foliage some faint resemblance to the classical acanthus, are unmistakable indications of the school and period to which the work belongs. The date of the original window is about 1500.



CHALICE, IN THE STYLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, IN SILVER,
PARCEL GILT AND ENAMELLED. MODERN ENGLISH WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

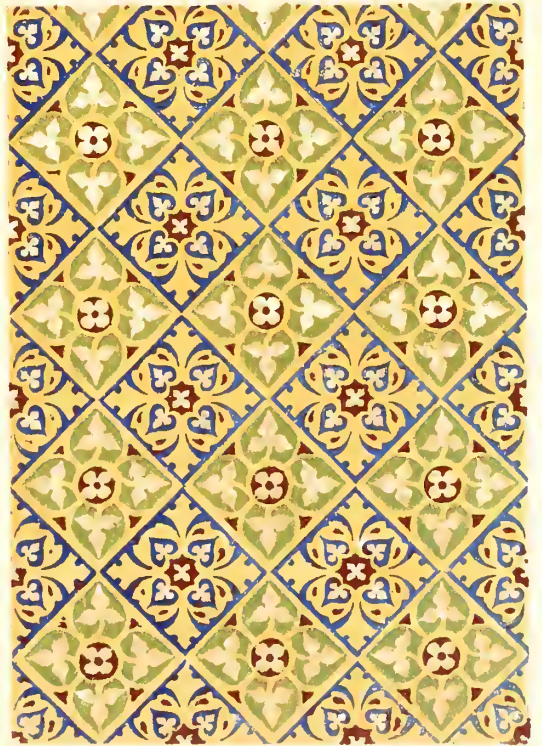
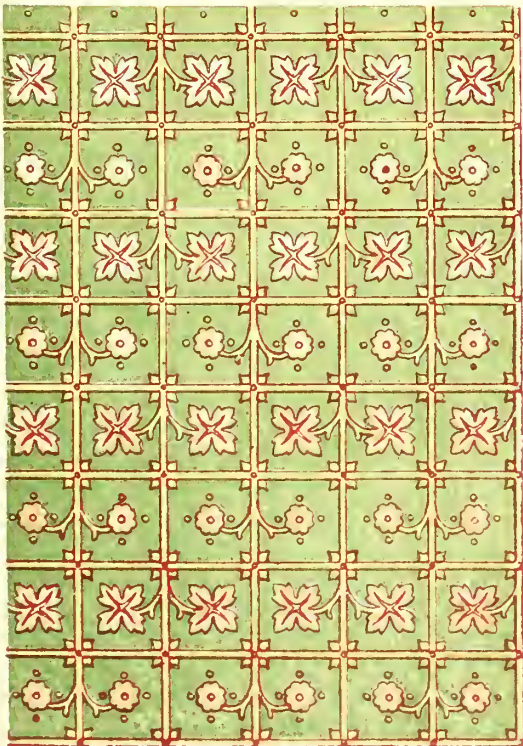
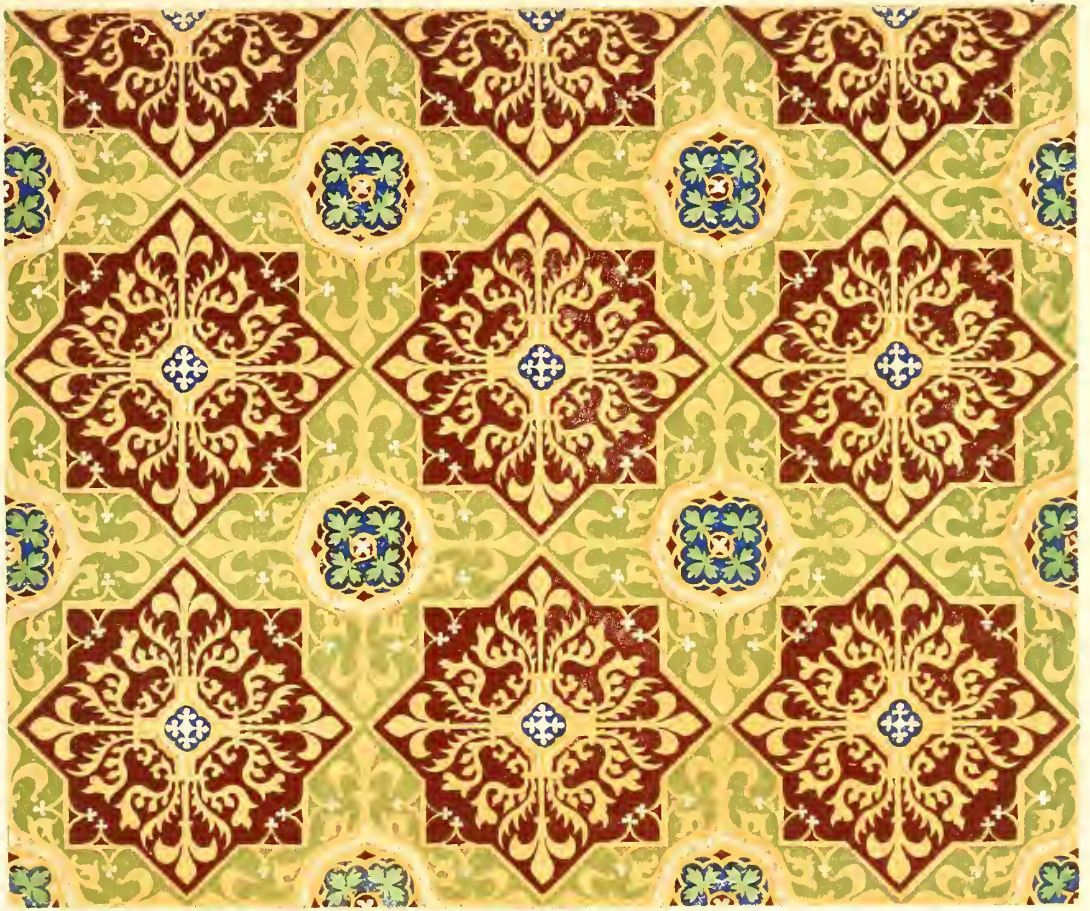
MESSRS. HARDMAN and Co. of Birmingham were the producers of the present chalice, which, like the one already engraved, was executed from the designs of the late Mr. Pugin. The rosettes round the base are in *Champlevé* enamel, and the knop is set with amethysts cut *en cabochon*, *i. e.* with a smooth rounded surface, instead of the usual facet cutting, which latter is very rarely found in mediæval jewellery.



BROCADE FOR UPHOLSTERY WORK, AND WALL PAPERS, IN THE
STYLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. RECENT
MANUFACTURE.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE design in red is a reproduction of a favourite mediæval pattern, commonly known as the pine-apple diaper; it is worked out in a mixed cotton and woollen fabric suitable for curtains, wall-hangings, &c.; and the two other patterns, represented in the same plate, are copied from flock papers: they were all specially manufactured from the designs of the late Mr. Pugin for the New Houses of Parliament, where they may be seen in work.



ENCAUSTIC OR INLAID TILES, IN THE MEDLEVAL STYLES.
MANUFACTURED BY MINTON AND CO.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

FROM an early period in the Middle Ages, tiles similar to these, but of much ruder workmanship, were employed in the pavements of ecclesiastical edifices, and to all appearance nowhere more universally than in England. The attention of antiquaries and artists having long been directed to them, it was natural to expect that the revival of the taste for Gothic architecture in this country would suggest the reproduction of so characteristic a species of decoration; and accordingly, the master-spirit of that movement, the architect Pugin, availing himself of the intelligent co-operation of the firm of Minton and Co., soon succeeded in re-establishing a manufacture, the results of which needed only to be seen to become at once generally popular. The process of manufacture of both ancient and modern specimens is identical in principle, but widely different in practice; modern mechanical appliances having allowed of a facility and perfection of execution formerly quite unattainable.

As the method of production of these tiles is somewhat interesting, it may be as well to sketch out the respective processes, both ancient and modern.

The mass or body of the ancient tiles is composed of common red brick clay, and the designs were stamped or impressed, most probably with wooden moulds. Into the cavities or sunk outlines of the design, white clay in a liquid state was poured, so as to fill up all the forms of the pattern level with the surface of the tile. When dried in the sun, the tiles thus inlaid were fired in a kiln of rude construction, and glazed with the ordinary glazing, produced most likely from powdered lead ore. The ancient examples thus offer only two tints, those of the red and white clays; the colours, however, were changed or heightened

by the transparent glaze, which being of a warm yellow tone, converted the red to a rich orange brown, and the white to an amber tint. In the modern specimens coloured elays of almost every variety of tint can be introduced at will, and the tiles are rapidly manufactured from slightly damped clay in a state of powder, which is compressed with iron moulds in a powerful press. It is highly probable that the manufacture of the ancient tiles was carried on by the monks, as indications of the existence of kilns, together with numbers of imperfect specimens spoiled in the firing, have been found within the precincts of several ancient abbeys.

It is difficult to ascertain the period of the first introduction of this interesting manufacture, specimens having been found which are undoubtedly as old as the thirteenth century, and perhaps much earlier; whilst in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries their use was evidently universal. Of the latter epochs a great variety of beautiful designs have come down to us. They appear to have been in general use in France, and perhaps also in Germany; whilst in Italy and Spain, on the other hand, painted tiles, although much less durable, are found employed in the same manner.



“JEWELLED BOTTLE” IN PORCELAIN. MANUFACTURED BY
COPELAND AND CO., STOKE-UPON-TRENT.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS really elegant and tasteful work affords a curious instance of modern eclecticism in ornamental design, inasmuch as it is entirely composed from motives and decorative processes borrowed from several distinct sources. In the first place, the form of the piece is taken from an ancient glass bocal, the handle exhibiting unequivocal marks of this origin, in being evidently simply moulded from the glass without the least change or adaptation; and for this reason it is the least successful detail of the work. The superadded decoration is also copied from a specimen of ancient Italian jewelled embroidery on velvet, engraved in Richardson's work on Ornamental Design; whilst the idea of applying this species of ornamental decoration to porcelain is just as felicitously taken from the so-called “jewelled porcelain,” executed at Sèvres under Louis XVI. In spite, however, of this composite origin, the *ensemble* is rich and effective; and although by no means an infallible test of excellence, the extended sale, which the design has met with, has at least evinced the public opinion of its merits: we must, therefore, regard the work as one of those instances, in which the sagacious perception of an accomplished designer has been able to make effective use of existing materials. The arrangement of the composition is due to Mr. Thomas Battam, to whose taste and judgment so many successful works produced by the well-known firm of Copeland and Co. is owing.



SILVER-GILT SALVER—DUTCH OR FLEMISH, SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

In the Collection of W. Goldsmid, Esq.

THIS effective piece is an example of good and suggestive design of a period and country not remarkable for excellence in that respect. It is obvious that it is entirely of a decorative character; and it is remarkable what a rich effect has been obtained by a simple and consistent, and at the same time inexpensive, mode of treatment. In this example the most has been made of an expensive material; a cheap magnificence having been achieved, which, at the same time, is really refined taste.

The piece is composed of thin sheet metal, the ornaments being executed *en repoussé*—*i. e.* hammered or embossed from the back—in a style which, from its freedom, and crisp, sketchy execution, is adapted to display the metal to the best advantage. The true principles of design in goldsmiths' work are indeed well exemplified in this piece; the variety of surface, and contrast of sharp and carefully modelled forms of details, allowing of an infinite play of light and shade. It is probable that parts of the work—the handles, and scroll ornament in the centre, for instance—were executed by a mechanical process of stamping; light metal work so executed, of similar design, having been largely employed about that time, (*circa* 1670), in Holland and Germany, in appliqué incrustation of picture and mirror-frames, the decoration of cabinets, coffers, clocks, &c. There can be no doubt but that modern mechanical skill would easily devise methods for the cheap execution of decorative plate in this style; which, by the way, might be recommended to Birmingham stamped-metal manufacturers, as an excellent model for their imitation, especially as to treatment of relief.



EWER IN SILVER, PARCEL GILT. SPANISH OR ITALIAN.
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

ALTHOUGH florid, and even coarse in detail, this piece displays a consistent style of treatment in keeping with the character of metal-working, as distinguished from any other vehicle; and this fact of natural harmony of design, with the peculiar nature of the substance manipulated, in the absence of any other excellence, would always constitute a claim for admiration; just as, on the other hand, wrongly-directed labour, however beautiful or surprising the actual details of the work produced may be, will as certainly fail to give any pleasure to the cultivated taste, whilst even the ordinary observer will, for the same reason, although unable to account for it, most likely experience an indefinite feeling of dissatisfaction sufficient to counterbalance his first impression of admiration; and yet this perverse imitation of the characteristics of style proper to one material, in another and incompatible one, is a leading vice of modern decorative art. Formerly, when individual labour and hand-work were the only means of production, every substance was naturally wrought in the simplest and most expeditious manner. Now, on the contrary, that all difficulties arising from the nature of the material are overcome by the use of mechanical processes, no such check on the untutored imagination of the producer exists; and the consequence is, that a system of blind copying is carried on in industrial design. For instance, a vase such as the one represented would, if likely to sell, be immediately reproduced in pottery, regardless of the entire incongruity of the design when embodied in a fictile material.

It may here be objected, that as modern mechanical appliances have overcome all difficulties of this nature, there can no longer be

any inconsistency in treating the material entirely *ad libitum*; *i. e.* that the natural resistance of the material to certain modes of working, or certain forms of design, should no longer be taken into account. This, however, is a fallacy—the mind will always demand, that there should be a natural harmony betwixt the design and the vehicle of embodiment. Thus, pottery ornamented in high relief, in the style of the goldsmith or the silver-chaser, will ever be an obvious absurdity; just as silver plate in the rigid geometrical style of the Etruscan vases, however pure and beautiful may be the form of the pieces, or classically sparing the decoration, will be equally unsatisfactory, because an equally evident mistake. Carpets with huge bouquets of flowers in brilliant colours, highly relieved by natural light and shade; and furniture carved all over with forests of natural foliage; gas-burners and chandeliers simulating lotus flowers, and twining convolvulus stems on frail acanthus scrolls, are all alike inadmissible, for this one reason of want of fitness. These remarks have been somewhat extended, because the error is one which, although tacitly felt by almost every one, is not generally referred to its true cause. In conclusion it should be observed, that the contrary characteristic, as a general rule, holds good of design of former epochs, and in many cases, even when positive merit of every other kind is wanting, this one important quality will suffice to give the work a claim to our notice and respect.



COVER OF A GERMAN PRAYER-BOOK IN SILVER-GILT.
AUGSBURG WORK. Circa 1720.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS elaborate specimen of goldsmiths' work is a production of the later period of the Augsburg School. It displays a vigorous and original style, and the execution is of correspondent merit.



PEWTER FLAGON. ANCIENT GERMAN OR SWISS WORK.
CIRCA 1530.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THE great size and unwieldiness of this massive piece seem to preclude the possibility of its having been intended for use, at any rate except on rare occasions of ceremony. It is not elaborate enough in workmanship to have been executed as a *pièce de maîtrise*, or pattern specimen of technical skill; to which intent so many of the decorative utensils preserved in collections were fabricated. The probability therefore is, that it was a species of *vidrecome*, or loving cup, of some ancient guild or corporation. It is a fine specimen of the pewter wares, which were in such universal demand in ancient times; and of which the last lingering vestiges in the shape of trenchers, dishes, &c. for the table have only fallen into entire disuse within the present generation.

The material is one that lends itself readily to relief-decoration of a cheap and expeditious kind, by the processes of stamping and casting; and the genius of the Renaissance artists found in it a favourite vehicle for the most elegant decoration. Ornamental embossing in pewter seems first to have become general in Germany and Switzerland in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the present piece being a notable specimen of this epoch: whilst in the latter part of the same century, François Briot in France made himself a great name in art mainly by his works in this material. The specimen now illustrated is enriched with two bands or friezes of allegorical figures, in relief; each of which appears to have been stamped separately on a square plaque of metal, and afterwards adjusted to the piece by soldering. In the centre space, or drum of the tankard, are three shields in relief, formerly ornamented with armorial bearings, now, however, defaced. The mouldings of the cover and base are enriched with minute ornaments executed with punches. The entire height of the piece is eighteen inches.



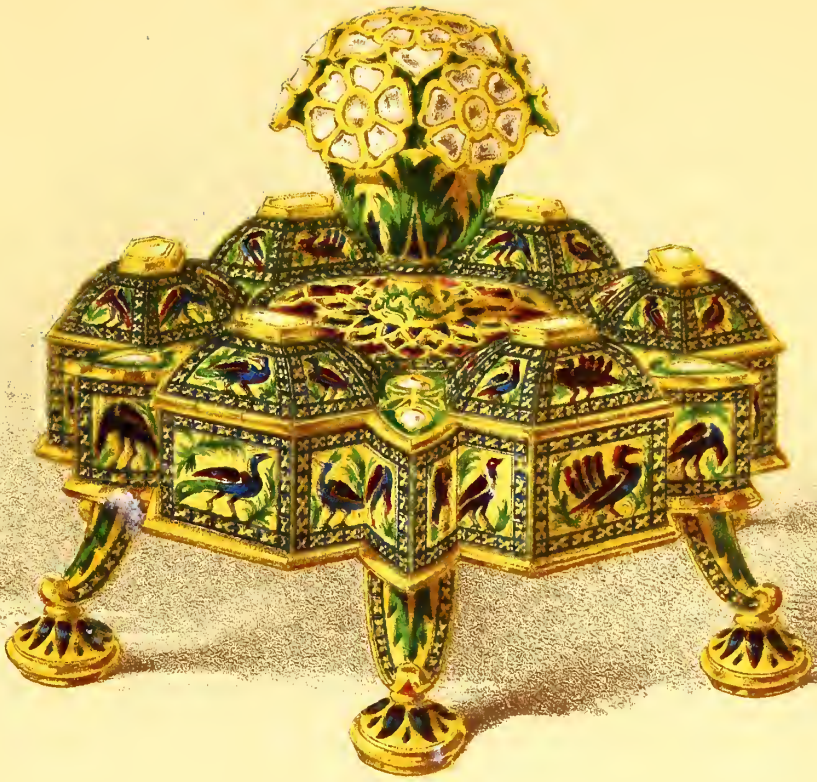
ROSEWATER BOTTLE, OR SPRINKLER, IN SILVER GILT, AND
ENAMELLED. RECENT INDIAN WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

It is interesting to note how completely the love of colour pervades all Indian art; vessels, seemingly the least adapted for its application, are made to receive it in an infinity of ingenious methods, and it would appear evident, that a particular aptitude for chromatic decoration is inherent in the race. In ornamental metal-work, for instance, wherever enamel can be introduced, consistently with the use of the object, we are pretty sure to find it employed in preference to any other mode of decoration,—“damasquinerie,” the essential characteristic of which is contrast of tints, being in scarcely less general estimation.

In enamelling on metals, the Indians display especial intelligence; the depth of tint and liquid brilliancy of jewels seem alone to have been considered equal in effect to gold; and consequently we almost invariably see translucent enamels overlaying, but not destroying, the lustre of the metal. In enamelling on silver, on the other hand, we see an entirely different quality of tints employed; opaque colours are here perceived to be more in harmony with the comparatively crude tint of the recipient metal—opaque orange, turquoise, green, &c. being in this latter case just as frequently employed as the rich transparent ruby, deep emerald, violet, &c. on gold.

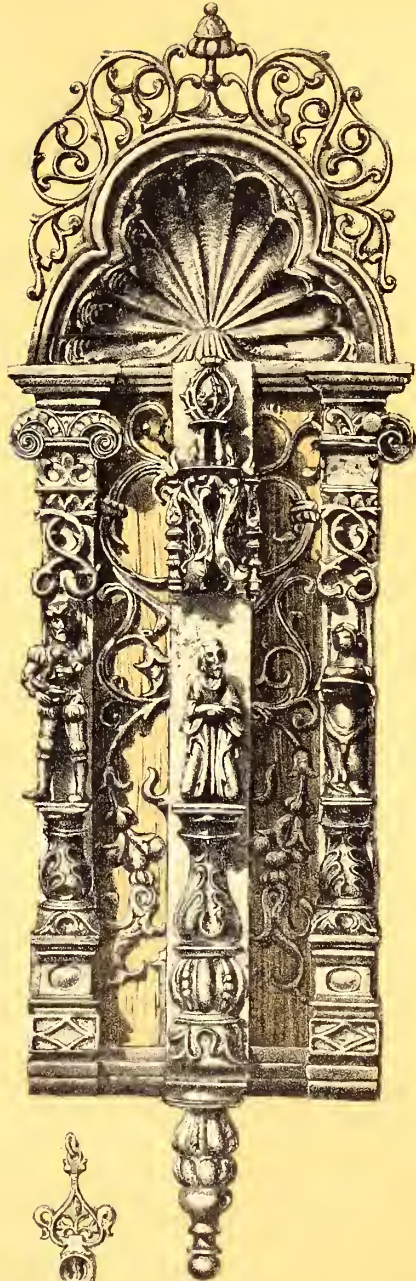
The beautiful vessel now illustrated is an example of the richer kind of enamel on a ground of gold, and is in every respect a most characteristic example of Hindoo taste; it is of recent origin, and was executed at Dholepore, in Rajpootana. The process employed is of the simplest description, being in fact the most ancient and rudimentary method of enamelling, viz. the “Champlevé” process; the various ornamental forms being engraved or hollowed out below the surface, and then filled in with fusible enamels, which, when submitted to the action of heat, melt into a transparent glass. In the elegant form of the piece a fanciful resemblance to the root, bulb, stem, and flower of a bulbous plant may be traced, which is not unlikely to have been intentional on the part of the designer.



SPICE-BOX IN SILVER GILT, ENRICHED WITH TRANSLUCENT
ENAMELS. RECENT INDIAN WORK.

Museum of Ornamental Art.

THIS richly-decorated object is of the same origin as the rose-water sprinkler previously described, having been manufactured at Dholepore, in Rajpootana. Both the decorative processes and style of design are similar: additional lustre is, however, given to the upper part, by the cut crystals which are set in the end of each compartment, and the cluster of flowers forming the centre knob or handle.



KNOCKER, IN WROUGHT IRON. FRENCH OR GERMAN WORK.
CIRCA 1500-20. AND DAGGER IN CAST AND CHISELLED IRON,
MODERN, IMITATION OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY WORK.

THE knocker is one of the best specimens of artistic iron-work that has come down to us from the early Renaissance period; it was entirely executed by hand with the file and chisel, and is just such a work as the famous blacksmith, Quentin Matsys, may be supposed to have produced. The small statuettes represent John the Baptist, the executioner, and the daughter of Herodias with the charger. It was formerly in the possession of the architect Pugin. Beneath it, in the plate, may be observed a small key, also obtained from the same collection; it is an exquisite specimen of fifteenth-century work, alike perfect in design and execution.

The dagger is a modern imitation, or reproduction of an ancient Swiss or German weapon.

The knocker and the key, but not the dagger, are in the Marlborough House collection.



CHISELLED STEEL KEYS OF THE SIXTEENTH AND
SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

In the Collection of Arthur Tupper, Esq.

THE careful and expensive elaboration of the minutest details of ancient decorative works, as a general rule, is in nothing more strongly evinced than in keys and lock furniture. The scutcheons of locks, it is true, form an integral part of the design of a piece of furniture: but keys of elaborate design, as they are seldom left in the locks, can either only have been intended for the gratification of the few persons using them, (in which case the labour and expense bestowed on them seem more than commensurate with this intention), or were so elaborated simply to gratify an abstract sense of perfection. The latter, indeed, is probably the true explanation.





IRON SHIELD EXECUTED IN REPOUSSÉ OR HAMMERED WORK.
SUBJECT, THE APOTHEOSIS OF ROME. AUGSBURG WORK.

DATED 1552.

THIS extraordinary work is undoubtedly one of the most important specimens of art, displayed in alliance with the armourer's craft, now extant. It was entirely executed by hand from a sheet or disk of malleable iron, the composition being beaten up from the back with hammers and punches, and the surface afterwards chiselled and finished with the burin. The artist has recorded his name and the date of the completion of the work, in the following inscription engraved around the Medusa's head, which forms the boss or umbo of the shield:—“Georgius . Sigman . aurifex . Auguste . hoc . opus perfecit . anno Domini M.D.LII. Mense August, die xxvii.”

The author was thus one of the famous old goldsmiths of the imperial city of Augsburg, and there can be little doubt but that the shield was executed for some great historic personage of the 16th century. It was obtained for the Marlborough House Museum from the Fejervary collection, having been formerly in the celebrated collection of Count Wiczay, of Hungary.

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