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ANTIQUE FURNITURE

FIG. 41.—WALNUT CHAIR, UPHOLSTERED.

FIG. 42.—WALNUT SETTEE. IN petit point. PERIOD 1710-1720.

(*In the Galleries of Waring & Gillow. Ltd.*)

ANTIQUE FURNITURE

BY
FRED. W. BURGESS

AUTHOR OF "CHATS ON OLD COPPER AND BRASS," "HOUSEHOLD CURIOS," "OLD COINS," ETC.

WITH 126 ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

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PREFACE

Much interest has been shown of late years in all things appertaining to the home surroundings of past generations. Collectors' hobbies have multiplied, and things which have in times gone by been discarded as worthless have been placed in honoured positions as venerated curios.

Every piece of household furniture has had a beginning, and has either evolved from some very early object of domestic use, or it has at some period more or less remote been created to meet the requirements of a special need which has then arisen. It is very natural that every householder should wish to know more about his home, and the home comforts by which he is surrounded; and as he pursues his investigations he becomes more and more interested, for there is a veritable romance about most of them.

Many books have been written about furniture—mostly by enthusiasts who have confined their attention to a very limited range; indeed, none have hitherto attempted an exhaustive book of reference about the furniture of all ages and of all peoples. It has been felt, however, that there is a real need for a handy book of reference, one in which the vital issues in the stories of furniture are consolidated. In compiling "Antique Furniture," and in gathering together reliable information about the furniture likely to come under the purview of the home connoisseur, it has been my aim to confine myself to what is calculated to be of real service to my readers. Such a book should need no introduction, for it ought to find a ready welcome from those who possess at least one or two pieces of old furniture, which have come down to them from former owners, as heirlooms, perhaps, yet without record of their actual age or of the names of their makers.

In bringing this volume under the notice of readers it is especially desirable to lay stress upon the "home connoisseur," to whom "Antique Furniture" appeals, in that it is only the first volume in the "Home Connoisseur" Series, which is intended to cover the whole field of household curios. As each volume makes its appearance the value of each separate unit will be enhanced, and little by little other objects than bare household furniture will be discussed. It is, however, desirable to point out that "Antique Furniture" is complete in itself, as will be every other volume in the series, thus like the expanding bookcase the library will grow, and the delights of the collector and home connoisseur will be unfolded.

In preparing this work I have had access to many collections, as well as to public galleries, in which representative pieces are housed. None the less interesting has been my examination of isolated, and sometimes curious and antique, specimens in private dwellings, especially in old houses, where such pieces have been since they were first made. I have been fortunate in securing some excellent photographs, which have enabled me to reproduce a fairly representative selection of examples of the types of old furniture usually met with in "homes."

My thanks are due to the owners of the pieces I have illustrated in this volume, and I gladly acknowledge their courtesy in giving me permission to do so. I would especially mention Messrs Waring & Gillow, Ltd., of Oxford Street, W.; Messrs Gill & Reigate, Ltd., Soho Galleries, W.; Messrs Mallett & Son, of Bath; Messrs Mawers, Ltd., of South Kensington; Messrs Phillips, of the Manor House, Hitchin; Mr A. Amor, of St James' Street, S.W.; and The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques. I have also received some valuable information and illustrations from the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.

The peculiar charm about old furniture—genuinely antique—fascinates those who study it; and my earnest hope is that this volume may be the means of adding to the ranks of those who wax enthusiastic about collectors' hobbies, and that they may by the interest they take in everything that is old, help to increase that atmosphere of refinement which hangs about the environment of a "home connoisseur."

FRED. W. BURGESS.

LONDON, 1915.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ANTIQUE FURNITURE

CHAPTER I

THE FURNISHING OF THE HOME

Making the home—Changing conditions—The relationship between architecture and furniture—Ecclesiastical influence—The arrangement of collections.

There has ever been a halo of romance about furnishing the home, and the pieces of furniture belonging to a past age must always be associated with family life. The dwelling of man, from ancient British homes and far-off days to the present time of luxury and comfort, has always been the gathering ground where household necessaries and comforts have been found. Half the pleasure in possessing old furniture lies in the memories it revives, and the realism with which ancestral homes can be pictured. The home connoisseur points with pride to his possessions, and harps back to the "good old times" when his forbears commissioned some local carpenter or joiner to make them a chest, a chair, or perchance a buffet; and if his family cannot boast an ancient lineage he is content with pointing with pride to the "genuine Chippendale chair" or other object he secured at a bargain at some well-known sale.

The furnishing of the home has occupied the attention of young couples of different social grades for centuries. To each of them the uncertain sea of matrimony was untried, but they were agreed that the joiner, and in more modern days the cabinet-maker, had first to be visited, for a house, however costly and pretentious, was not "home" until at any rate its rudimentary furnishings were installed.

Making the Home.

In days gone by it was not possible to "furnish throughout," and most of the homes from which old furniture comes were furnished by a slow process. House furnishing in the Middle Ages and even in Elizabethan times—the times from which come the older carved oak of which the owners are so proud—was chiefly confined to the wealthier classes. The common people had but scantily furnished homes, and were content with the rough stools and benches village carpenters could make. In the eighteenth century, when the middle classes were gaining ground, the making of the home took time; moreover, furniture was bought as the growing needs of the household required; and when the fortunes of the family increased first one new piece of more costly design and decoration and then another were added.

Furniture in the past was good, solid, and lasting; chairs, chests, cupboards, and bedroom furniture served several generations, and as each succeeding young couple took their toll from the old home, and completed their furnishing in newer style, the household goods became mixed. It is true in the larger and wealthier homes there were rooms furnished throughout in well-defined styles—some had been retained in their entirety for generations, and others had been fitted up by successive owners, thus here and there rooms were distinguished by the names of the styles in which they were furnished, such as the "oak room," the "Carolean room," or the "white and gold room" filled with Empire furniture.

The furnishings of the home are seldom swept and garnished, for to part with family relics is breaking faith with those who handed them on with the remainder of their worldly possessions to their heirs. There were many who made special bequests of their furniture, and one of such would write in his will: "To my dearly-beloved nephew, John, I leave my mahogany bureau-desk and the tea china in the cupboard over it." Can we imagine nephew John's grandson or great-grandson parting with that beautiful Hepplewhite bureau-bookcase or cupboard full of priceless Worcester china because his dining-room or library is furnished in modern fumed oak or late Victorian incongruities? No! the home connoisseur values his family possessions.

The furnishings of the home contribute towards its comfort and happiness. To understand home furnishings, and especially those things the present day use of which differs from that to which they were originally put, is a laudable study. It is a delightful pastime, too, for interest grows as the research is continued, and sidelights are thrown upon the aim and objects of old-time furnishers.

In times when men had no settled habitations goods and chattels were few in number, and when huts of wattle and daub had been replaced by more permanent dwellings tribal wars and pillage prevented much increase of household goods. The chest or coffer was at hand when the overlord or chieftain desired to move on to his next domain, so that the produce of the estate could be consumed. There came a time, however, when the chest, although capacious, failed to accommodate the furniture of the home. The collector looks in vain for anything earlier than the wood coffer which gradually became a receptacle in which smaller boxes could be stored. To the chest were eventually added drawers, and from the chest evolved a chest of drawers, and perchance in later years a sideboard or a cabinet, a cupboard, or some more important piece of furniture. In the history of furniture we see the story of the development of social life, and although the connoisseur is puzzled at times over what may be called transition pieces, these connecting links are exceedingly valuable, in that they help to fix more definitely the fully accredited periods and stages.

At first no doubt the sideboard was literally a board fixed against a wall for convenience; in common parlance, a shelf. To give it strength it had front legs; in time it had back legs added, and it became independent. This board, or buffet as it was called later, afforded the possessor of wealth opportunities of display, and it was on the buffet that the work of the pewterer and the silversmith was displayed. The same simple principle may be applied to the cupboard; a simple shelf, another shelf added, a door covering the contents of the two, a framework, and an extension, and the closed-in cupboard, at first plain, afterwards panelled, then carved, finally enriched with inlays, became from the simple shelf a thing of beauty, an ornamental and decorative piece of furniture such as collectors to-day value and admire.

As late as the fifteenth century even those who possessed more than the average wealth, and who had walled dwellings and securely guarded castles, had but few articles of furniture. The primitive stool or bench and the necessary trestle tables, were the chief objects supplementing the chest or coffer, and perchance the cupboard. Gradually ornament crept in, and the living-rooms became enriched with the work of the needle-woman and the metal worker. The painter added to the scenic splendour of the surroundings of a great feast, and the wood carver and the sculptor chiselled away at wood and stone. Here and there, as art progressed, the affinity between the architect and the cabinet-maker was seen.

FIG. 1.—INTERIOR, SHOWING FLEMISH PANELLING AND JACOBEAN FURNITURE.
(*A corner in the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 2.—FOUR-POST BEDSTEAD,
SHERATON STYLE.
(*In the possession of Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

As is well known, the earliest dwellings consisted of one large open hall. There were frequent signs of feasting, and the table groaned with an over-loaded board. The smith had contributed at an early date to the comfort of the dwelling, for he had fashioned andirons, and provided for the logs of timber to burn brightly on the hearth. The chimney had taken the place of the open flue, and the rafters were no longer blackened daily by smoke. Under somewhat more refined conditions it was possible for the furnishings of the home to be more elaborate. In the sixteenth century as yet there had been no idea of lightening the massive oak, although the plainer panels and beams were carved over. There was, however, a development going on in that bed-chambers were provided, and curtains divided off the sleeping apartments of the women from the men. Beds became common, but the furnishings of the bed-chamber and of the retiring-rooms were simple in the extreme in France, England, and in other countries which in the sixteenth century were coming under the sway and influence of the coming art.

It is said, however, that even as late as the beginning of the sixteenth century the necessity of transport still existed, and the furniture was made to take to pieces. Beds were jointed, and their columns took down. Tables were put up on trestles, but the "cabinets," so called, were small, and could, on occasion, be enclosed in a large chest or a trunk. Even some of the chairs folded not unlike modern camp furniture. The hangings on the walls and the curtains running on poles could be taken down and removed. That seems to have been the position at the beginning of the sixteenth century, a fact which the student of furniture should remember, enabling collectors to recognise features in antique specimens which would otherwise be difficult to explain. When things became a little more settled, certainly towards the close of the sixteenth century, the growing needs of a more domesticated home had been forced upon the architect, and the builder had provided accordingly. In many a turret, and in many a homestead, there were attics or garrets, the garret in the mansion being called "the wardrobe-room"; and it was to those places, sometimes containing secret chambers, that much of the house furnishings were taken when the household removed, and were perhaps absent for months at a time, to be restored to their original places when their lord returned. Even at that period the dwellings of the lower classes, the craftsman and the labourer, were furnished in a very primitive way, although it would appear that their settles and chairs and cupboards and dressers reflected somewhat the progress then being made in the higher branches of art.

The Relation between Architecture and Furniture.

It has been truly said that the furniture of the home has throughout the ages been subservient to the builder's craft, and also that as civilisation spread, and the wants of the people increased, the builder and the architect have had to provide for the necessities of more furniture and a greater number of comforts in house furnishing and the surroundings of the home. The affinity between architecture and furniture has always been very close. The alliance is realised by the collector when he visits some of the more important palaces, and those buildings which retain their original schemes of decoration, and have but to a small extent been altered to suit so-called modern requirements. Nowhere is this affinity between architecture and architectural decoration, and the furniture used in such buildings, more clearly seen than in those wonderful palaces in France furnished by her kings and emperors. The history of French furniture of those days seems to be bound up with the kings who were to a large extent patrons and supporters of art. A trip to Versailles even to-day shows the architectural influences which controlled and governed the makers of furniture and those luxuriant furnishings which give such a distinctive character to antique French furniture. A visitor to Versailles, who had the advantage of being conducted over the famous palace by the architect attached to the building, in very graphic terms described how realistic the scenes which had been enacted in the Revolution seemed to be. As an enthusiastic collector of furniture he began to understand more than ever not only the general effect of those magnificent pieces of furniture which were at one time assembled in the palace, but he realised that the whole Court atmosphere and influence in those days was such as to inspire the great artists, and to make them, as it were, run riot in the extravagance of their decoration.

In viewing those great apartments at Versailles it is no difficult matter to people them in imagination with royal personages, and obsequious courtiers in gorgeous costumes, and as fitting accompaniments in such scenes to recognise the furniture which would be appropriate to such surroundings. In these prosaic days, when viewing individual pieces of French furniture of the Empire period, we are apt to look upon their rich colouring, almost extravagant decorations and carvings and wealth of gilding, as being unnatural, superfluous, and out of place in the furnishing of any apartment intended for human beings to live in; but when viewed in the light of the architectural buildings which had to be furnished in keeping with their style, we see at once that anything less gorgeous would have been inappropriate. Thus it is that whether viewing architectural efforts of the French Empire period, or the furniture that once filled those apartments and halls, we must view them with full cognisance of the gorgeous apparel of those days, and not from the standpoint of everyday clothing, and what would be suitable furnishings in a London suburban villa in the twentieth century.

Ecclesiastical Influence.

Before entering more fully into the styles and types and individual characteristics of collectable furniture, there is an important influence which at all periods seems to have exercised control, and to some extent has given the lead to private needs and requirements, and to the house furnishings of every home throughout the ages, which must be taken into account. That influence may well be termed ecclesiastic. Whether we turn to the religions of the Orientals, the Jewish traditions of the East, to those later religions which for so many centuries influenced Eastern Europe, or to the stronger

influences of the Christian religion, we find that this ecclesiastical influence dominates art and craftsmanship. The great interchange and spread of art through the touch of the western nations with the eastern during the Crusades had a marked influence on art. There were collectors of antiques, and especially of what we should nowadays call curios, even then. The cult of the collector seems to have been inborn in Englishmen, for some of the most treasured curiosities in our National Museums, if not actually furniture, but closely allied to house furnishings, are relics of the Crusades. The carvings upon the mother-of-pearl shell, the amulets and the talismans brought back by the Crusader, as well as the heraldic devices on the arms of the knights who fought in those religious wars, and borne by their descendants to-day, show traces of the influence of Eastern ideas; and the carver and the wood-worker of the Middle Ages used those emblems, and sought to discover in those foreign trophies something new with which to embellish his early furniture. It is, however, from the great Gothic Renaissance of art and the influence of the monks of old that we get the strongest ecclesiastical inspirations.

It must be remembered that there was a time when even the vessels used on the cathedral altar, and later in the parish church, were not always exclusively employed for ecclesiastical purposes. Many of them were but the cups and tankards in daily use in the household, and the platters and alms dishes were either what were, or what had been, used for secular purposes. From this we understand more clearly the interchange of ideas, and the commoner use of what nowadays we should regard as sacred symbols, and inscriptions only suitable for ecclesiastical vessels, applied by the metal worker and the wood-worker on furniture and house furnishings. It is a mistake to look among the treasures which were originally made for the use of kings and wealthy ecclesiastics for types of the domestic furniture of any given period. It is equally as inappropriate for the collector of richly carved wood-work to seek for types of the chairs, reading desks, alms boxes, and the like commonly used in parish churches among the records and the examples associated with the great cathedrals and abbeys. There was always an appropriateness in furnishings, and in past years less of that extravagance and evident inappropriateness which is sometimes conspicuous even in model villas to-day.

The Arrangement of Collections.

Another very important point in the history of furniture which should be remembered by the collector is that a vast change has passed over the approved style of arrangement of museums during the last few years, and that change for the better should influence collectors in their selection of specimens and in their arrangement of the art treasures they are able to secure from time to time. In the South Kensington Museums a great effort has been made to classify objects of interest. Different galleries have been apportioned to various articles. No doubt the system of classification could with advantage be still further extended.

In Lancaster House, the home of the London Museum, a chronological scheme of arrangement has been attempted, and the arrangement aims at giving the visitor an opportunity of realising the progress made in home life from the earliest times. There is the dug-out canoe telling of prehistoric men who inhabited the marshes near by the site on which London town was eventually to rise; there are rooms in which relics of Roman, Saxon, and early Norman London are shown in proper sequence; the household curios of mediæval, Tudor, and later days are beautifully arranged; until at last the furnishings of the present day are made evident, and the costumes as worn by Londoners represented. That, up to a point, is an admirable arrangement. It gives, however, but a very poor idea of the condition of the home of the Englishman when the articles of furniture collected by the connoisseur were in everyday use. The reproduction—or, better still, the reconstruction—of some well-known building, or of some of the chief rooms removed from houses now demolished, filled with the correct furniture of the period, just as may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, seems to be an admirable scheme of arrangement. The collector may be more cosmopolitan in his tastes, and may see much to admire in objects giving him a more casual survey of household furnishings, as they have been used in this country at different periods. There is, however, a strong plea put forward by those who, whilst connoisseurs of art and collectors of the antique, are believers in appropriateness of arrangement.

The modern architecture of to-day reproducing some old English styles, such, for instance, as the black and white Elizabethan dwellings, once such noted features in many English counties, seems to provide the collector of old furniture with ample means of display. Some of these rooms can be quite appropriately panelled with old oak, the richness of the linen folds of which would give the choicest setting to oaken furniture of the Tudor or Elizabethan periods. There are rooms, too, very appropriately designed to show off to the best advantage the work of Thomas Chippendale, and the later periods when the Brothers Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton founded styles and designs which have been much copied, but never excelled. In rooms furnished in keeping with the furniture collected, not only are the objects of interest to the

furniture collector housed in appropriate settings, but they may be enriched by the collection of contemporary ceramics, tapestries, needlework, and other antiques.

The term “house furnishings” is of a somewhat elastic character, and those who stop short at simple wooden furniture do not get the full delight of the more complete collector, who includes in house furnishings everything that has at any period been a necessary part of the domestic surroundings essential to home comfort. As an example it may be mentioned how very incomplete an old Welsh dresser is without its accompanying array of pottery and porcelain. There is something wanting in a scheme of arrangement of an old oak chest, cupboard, buffet, or similar antique without a few pieces of copper and brass or contemporary pottery to suggest its contemporary surroundings; and surely the floral decorations which delight the housewife to-day would look better in vases of priceless china and bowls with a wealth of colour, rather than in modern vessels, when antiques are displayed in the same room. Once again, the collector who revels in the old walnut furniture of the reigns of William and Mary, and Queen Anne would fall short of his realisation of what a collection of furniture should be if it were unadorned by a few pieces of Delft, or the blue and white of the Kang-He Chinese period, at that time being imported. Collectable objects overlap, but the connoisseur may well decide to specialise on some given period, and when collecting furniture add appropriate supplementary objects.

Fig. 1 represents how old furniture in a room suitably fitted up can be made very realistic, and how by providing an appropriate setting the value of antique furniture to the home connoisseur can be considerably increased. The illustration shows the interior of one of the rooms at the Manor House, Hitchin, in which there is some fine old Flemish panelling. The old paintings, hung on walls covered with wall paper of rich colouring, are in keeping. There are Jacobean caned chairs of several well-known types, and there is an excellent gate-legged table, in the centre of which is a branched candlestick suggestive of the days when such a room was lit up by candles. This photograph is reproduced by the courtesy of the owner.

Fig. 2 is suggestive of the grandeur of the bedroom in all its glory when the four-poster was such a conspicuous object.

The furnishing of the home in the eighteenth century included some fine pieces of decorative furniture, such as the one shown in Fig. 3, which is a finely carved Chippendale pedestal writing table, on the top of which are appropriate homelike furnishings. This beautiful table was recently in the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.

FIG. 3.—PEDESTAL WRITING TABLE,
CHIPPENDALE STYLE.
(*In the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

FIG. 4.—OAK CUPBOARD AND CHAIRS,
17th CENTURY.
(*In the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 5.—CARVED WALNUT CHAIR,
JACOBEAN.
***Circa* 1689.**
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

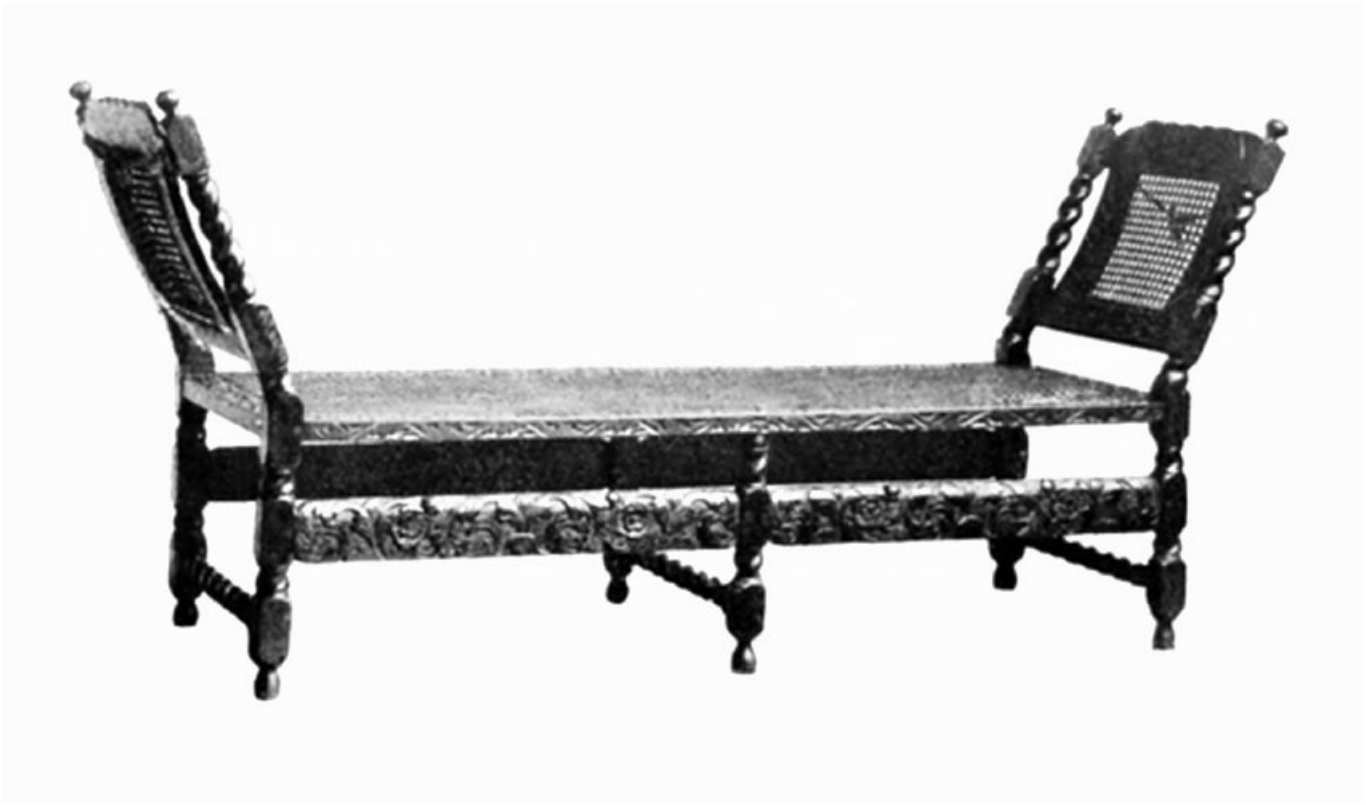

FIG. 6.—CHAIR BED,
PERIOD 1670-1680.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

CHAPTER II

PREVAILING STYLES

Well-defined styles—Gradual and yet complete changes—Some definite features.

Before considering in detail the furniture of the different periods in this country's history, and tracing the evolution of household furniture from remote ages, together with the influences which have governed its progress, it will be well to point out briefly the styles which have predominated.

When the principal styles which have prevailed at different periods have been grasped, the home connoisseur is prepared for the more difficult study of the minor details of design, which mark different periods and the more gradual changes in intermediate styles.

Well-defined Styles.

From the very commencement there appear to have been well-defined styles. At first they were very primitive, and related chiefly to form. Then followed decoration and ornament; as these were controlled by a varying quality in the artist's work there was less conformity to approved plans, and at each point when some one struck out on new lines there were varied interpretations of that style by copyists who followed it. There were, however, at every period plenty of followers, but few leaders. Therefore, when one man showed greater originality combined with strength and determination of purpose, he forced a new style of ornament until it became general.

Again style progressed according to the circumstances of opportunity. Style changed as new materials came into vogue, because not only did certain woods, inlays, and veneers give greater scope to artistic minds, but the effect was different. In the Age of Oak there was plenty of scope for the strong and vigorous cutting of the carver; those were mediæval days, followed by the Renaissance, which gave many opportunities to the genius of the artist-carver. The Age of Walnut, which produced a smooth surface, yielded different results, and brought into being another style. Then when mahogany became known the carver of those marvellous scrolls, of which Chippendale was the chief exponent, revelled in the new material, which builders had rejected as "too hard to cut."

Some Governing Influences.

Style was frequently controlled and directed by the affairs of State and by Court intrigues. The habits and customs of the people as they became more defined brought about the necessity for a new style. As an instance, the feeling of greater security produced by civilisation gave rise to many changes. This may be seen in the widening of the dining-table in the days of the Restoration, when it was no longer necessary from considerations of safety to sit at meat with back against the wall and sword in readiness. The table was then made wider, and it was placed in the centre of the room so that servants could move freely round it and wait upon the guests.

As will be seen in a subsequent chapter, the incidents of travel gave the cue to the artist who carved or painted the ornament upon chests and coffers—and especially marriage coffers—in early days.

At a still earlier period in Egyptian times the style of ornament evolved from the materials at hand, and from those substances which were brought to that country by native travellers and merchants. There was a plentiful supply of ivory and ebony for overlays, and artists who painted and ornamented wooden furniture found ready at hand a model to copy in the lotus flower growing on the banks of the Nile. Right along the line, through the history of the furniture trade, style was chiefly formulated and controlled by the prevailing influences and surroundings of the day; the materials selected were those at hand, although when there was a variety of materials those chosen were selected to produce ornament by contrast. New styles in furniture resulted from changes in material, and from altered design and ornament in other things. The architecture of the day influenced style in furniture, but outside, or what may be termed foreign, influence, often effected a complete change.

Gradual and yet Complete Changes.

Style changed from the plainest of primitive furniture made for practical use, without any suggestion of ornament, to the more elaborate and extravagant styles, by a gradual process. At every stage in the development, however, there was a cause to which this change was attributable. At the time of the Commonwealth, after the downfall of the Royal cause, all things appertaining to the older order of things were swept away, and a severe style came into being. Again, at the Restoration, the carving as well as the fashioning of the new furniture was a strong contrast. At one time there was French influence, at another Italian; then for a time Eastern designs were popular, followed in due course by periods of carving, of inlays, and of painted design.

Sometimes there does not appear to have been any special reason for a change of style, other than that the change occurred to some one suggested from some common object with which the wood-worker would be familiar. Thus when an ornate oak panelling was desired to replace the plain panels, many of which had been painted after a fashion not then popular, two styles came into vogue; one the *parchemin*, cut in imitation of rolls of parchment upon rods, the other the linen-fold, which is said to be emblematic of the veil covering the chalice at the consecration of the Host in the Catholic Mass. There are some beautiful examples of this early wood-work at Hampton Court Palace and in other old buildings, although these styles were in vogue but a short time.

Other Influences at Work.

The dole cupboard would never have been made had it not been for the bequests and sympathies of religious houses and pious persons, who "remembered the poor." There would have been no court cupboard or buffet if the habits of the people had not become more choice. Styles changed as times became more luxurious, and increasing refinement called for greater comfort. The hard wood seats and backs did not then satisfy, and chairs with cushions, and wing chairs with easy upholstered backs, were welcomed. The splendid decorative furniture of early French art palled in the reign of Louis XIV. The King wanted something suggestive of life and activity. He gave the signal for advance when he sent the famous instructions to his architect, Mansart, to whom he wrote saying, "Something must be changed. The subjects are too serious, and youth must be introduced into what is to be done . . . childhood must be widespread everywhere."

The change in style in each individual piece of important furniture is noted in the review given in chapter xxi. to chapter xxvi., and the changes in style appertaining to decoration and ornament in relation to furniture used in conjunction and combination are specially pointed out in chapters v. to xi.

The modern tendency to "furnish throughout" according to one style, which may be that of the present day or one of the older styles not altogether new, is no great novelty, for it has been practised in times gone by. The only difference is that in copying what has gone before we have to-day many styles from which to choose—all of the older ones are reproduced either as they were originally made or as modern adaptations—whereas in the past it was rare for makers to depart from the then prevailing style. It is well that collectors should remember that, as it gives greater confidence when buying antiques.

Reproductions of antiques, although not altogether unknown in the past, are the result of a modern craze.

The styles prevailing in this country at certain periods do not always coincide with the art of other countries at those times. In this work, although greater space has been devoted to English furniture, some attention is given to the antiques of other countries, especially of those continental peoples whose arts materially influence the craftsmen of this country. England has always received some lead from the artists and craftsmen of Italy, France, Holland, and a few other countries. The style of early English furniture was the result of the presence of the Romans in Britain during the first four centuries of the Christian era. That gave rise to a well-defined style, and others followed.

Certain characteristics to be found only in certain countries, or perhaps in some few towns, enable us to trace the evolution of style throughout the ages, and to note the adaptation of advanced workmen, either in the purposes of ornament, or when some new piece of furniture or object of household decoration or utility was being fashioned. There are what are called by some primitive styles, the styles which remain intact when stripped of all superfluous ornament and superadded decoration. It is in the simpler designs and the ruder forms and ornaments that the purity of style is discovered. To take a few examples of the styles prevailing in countries where the earlier peoples were found, and especially those countries where primitive conditions prevail, we find in what is known as the Mahometan style, which emanated from the manner of life of the people, a strong kinship between architecture and furniture, and between

architecture and actual necessity. The decoration of the oriental in its purer and earlier form has closer alliance with the inside of the dwelling-house than with the outside. In many dwellings of early Mahometan architecture, while everything was plain on the outside the interior was richly decorated. The most ornamental part of the buildings was found in the porticos surrounding the open courts. In the early furniture, as in the architecture of those countries subjected to Arabian influence, there are three different forms of arches found in arcades, doors, and windows. There is the pointed arch consisting of curves, slightly more elliptical than the Gothic style which developed in the West, found in Egypt and Sicily. In Persia and India the keel arch prevails, differing from the pointed arch in that the ends of the curves at the apex are bent slightly upwards. In Spain the horse-shoe arch prevails. In no place do we find a characteristic style retained so tenaciously as in Persia, for Persian art does not appear to have been influenced by contact with other nations. The strongest influence of foreign design upon Persian art is traceable to the Chinese porcelain, which was introduced into Persia in the sixteenth century. The Arabian influence spread west through Spain, but it is probable that Arabian art had its origin in Persia, for it is well known that Persian workmen erected and decorated many Mahometan mosques. It was from such striking characteristics observable in the Mahometan style and Persian art that the grand Gothic of Western Europe evolved. Its characteristics in its full development are, of course, its pointed arches, pinnacles, and spires, and bold and lofty vaulted roofs and profusion of ornament. Many valuable specimens of the cabinet-maker's art are enriched with pure Gothic designs, such, for instance, as coffers and cabinets which so closely resemble in design and style the architectural features of contemporary cathedrals and abbeys.

Some Definite Features.

Gothic influence predominated in mediæval days, and French designs became interwoven with those of English origin in the sixteenth century, and intermittently in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dutch influence and art, especially that of marqueterie, was seen during the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne. The consorts of English kings and queens were responsible for the introduction of foreign art, and for the encouragement of foreign artists, all tending to prevent any one insular style outside foreign influence becoming developed. Thus the wood-workers of this country have been peculiarly cosmopolitan, and they have in turn worked after different styles, favouring a variety of materials and finishes.

The home connoisseur thus meets with many varieties of style in family relics, and discovers side by side the wonderful lacquer cabinets from the Far East and the japan work of English artists; Chinese curios and useful pieces of English-made furniture ornamented in the Chinese style; beautiful French chairs in rich Genoa velvets, along with English-made couches, beds, and cabinets, showing the strong influence of the days of Louis XIV. and the later time of Louis XVI. Collectors may well confuse genuine Dutch marqueterie with the marqueterie cases of grandfather clocks made in this country, just as they do the Italian carving of the Renaissance, and the English-made carved stands of Charles II., frequently surmounted by English lacquer cabinets.

Some may desire a concrete example of distinctive evidence of style which can be easily separated. As an example then let us take the simple distinction in the styles in the chair backs of the eighteenth century. The walnut chairs of the period when Dutch influence was strong had a solid central supporting splat from the chair frame of the seat rising to the top of the back, which under Chippendale's chisel was cut through and became ornamental, joined to its bow-shaped top. Both these splats, the solid and the decorative, touched the seat-frame. Then came the shield-shaped backs of Hepplewhite, which came down almost to the upholstery of the seat, but the point of the shield did not touch the wood-work; the backs of Sheraton chairs, square at the top and rectangular in form, had almost invariably an open space between the rail of the back and the seat. Yet these chairs were all upholstered, although the Cromwellian chairs had loose cushions!

English cabinet-makers were less dependent upon continental artists in the eighteenth century, when the makers and designers, some of whose work has just been mentioned, issued their own pattern books, although even the designs in the books published by such men as the Brothers Adam, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton showed unmistakable signs of the influence of other schools. Thus Robert Adam travelled in Italy and became imbued with classic ideas; Chippendale took his rococo from French styles; the designs of Sheraton, perhaps, showed more originality, although he was not free from taint. In subsequent chapters special attention is drawn to local styles which evolved from those more generally practised. Thus in due course a local style sprang up known as Irish Chippendale; the Welsh wood-workers evolved characteristic pieces of Welsh furniture, and as the outcome of their separation from the Mother Country the colonists and settlers in America gradually evolved distinctive styles, although partly based on old-world models.

The chief styles which are reviewed fully in subsequent chapters include as follows:—First, there are the older or primitive styles evolving from imitations of natural furniture, such as might be found in cave and forest; then follow the styles of the older civilised nations—Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Byzantine, and afterwards continental styles and those copied or adapted in our own country. Of these there are the Romanesque, followed by the Gothic; the early French school of Louis XII. and Henry II.; the French Renaissance; the Spanish Renaissance; and the later French Empire and regal styles and those of the Republic.

In England, following one another in proper sequence, there are the styles which succeeded the mediæval, mostly known by the names of the reigning sovereigns and their houses. These are commonly called Tudor, Elizabethan or late Tudor, Cromwellian, and Jacobean or Restoration styles. With the end of the Stuarts came the Dutch influence in the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne, followed by early Georgian adaptations and developments from which sprang the much-collected furniture distinguished by the names of the founders of specific designs, among them the Brothers Adam, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton. Under those and minor distinguishing titles the collector separates his furniture and classifies his collections.

As indicating different styles of furniture, and showing the rapid change in the seventeenth century, during which period several distinct styles prevailed, the accompanying illustrations, Figs. 4, 5, and 6, indicate the progress made in wood-carving during a comparatively short time. In Fig. 4 are shown an oak cupboard and two chairs. The oak cupboard is of early seventeenth century workmanship, crude and yet decorative. It is a cupboard of the type which might have been expected to evolve from a chest or coffer. The two chairs are such as were in vogue about 1705, quite early in the eighteenth century, and show the early form of the cabriole leg (*see* chapter ix.). Fig. 6 represents one of the beautiful day-beds which came into vogue when the privacy of the bedroom was respected; the bed was then no longer in the living-room, and, therefore, not available as a seat or lounge, the chair-bed, or day-bed as it was frequently called, becoming a favourite piece of furniture and a comfortable lounge. The one shown in Fig. 6, of the period 1670-1680, is handsomely carved, the rail being exceptionally so. There are double ends, although in some instances the day-bed was made with only one (*see* Fig. 105). Before the seventeenth century closed more decorative carving had been applied to chair backs and a definite style evolved, the carved walnut Jacobean chair of 1689, illustrated in Fig. 5, upholstered in velvet, with fringed border, being an excellent example.

CHAPTER III

EARLY EXAMPLES

Eastern influence—Early Egyptian—Assyrian—Ancient Greece—Roman furniture—Pompeii and its treasures—Byzantine art—Anglo-Saxon furniture.

The furniture of the ancients is scarcely recognisable in collections and art galleries. Only here and there do we come across specimens which by some accident of good fortune have been preserved throughout the centuries. In these few isolated examples, however, we can realise that many of the nations possessed home lives, if such they can be said to have had, more complete in necessary comforts than we have hitherto imagined. In estimating what those necessaries consisted of, surrounding influences and the degree of civilisation attained, and especially the arts and crafts understood and practised, must be considered. In written manuscripts, picture paintings, in sculpture and pottery, are discovered not only the types of furniture in use in ancient countries, but their actual form, decoration, and colour.

It is due to religious beliefs and superstitions that many of the best preserved specimens have been handed on to us. The tombs around which so much superstition lingered for centuries, although rifled in modern times, were held sacred by the Ancients for many centuries, and knowledge of their contents was unknown until the present race of men, thirsting for greater knowledge of the past without fear of the consequences, took such relics from their resting-places, and placed them in museums and in private collections. It is obvious that the art of past peoples regarded in the light of modern research and knowledge of art and science, is separated widely from art as it is understood to-day. That early art, so-called, is again subdivided into prehistoric, ancient, and barbarous. Everywhere we look for remains of early races, and for indications of their methods of living; and when we have discovered the relics they have left behind we are apt to judge of these people's status in civilisation by the knowledge of this more enlightened age.

Commencing his chapter on prehistoric furniture the author of a very interesting work says:—"Mother Earth originally sufficed for bed, chair, and sideboard." That is true indeed, for the most primitive furniture must have been the outcome of the dissatisfaction of man, who as he ate the more of the "tree of knowledge" was no longer content with Mother Earth as universal provider.

It is probable that all primitive nations left alone and untrammelled by outside influences advanced, although slowly, as time went on. The advance would be controlled and guided by their surroundings and gradually acquired habits, together with the progress suggested by their discoveries of natural resources. We know that was the case in our own country, for the relics of the so-called Stone Age are far behind those of the Bronze Age. From the Bronze Age onward there was always some communication with other tribes and with people of more advanced civilisation, and from that time the progress was more or less influenced by contact with others. The craftsmen of the Western World have from very early days received some inspiration from the influences of a greater civilisation eastwards.

It may be interesting to discover from the furniture collector's point of view what the conditions prevailing in this country were before that outside influence was felt.

In order to gain a clear insight into the actual domestic surroundings of early tribes, it is advisable wherever possible to secure reliable data from actual remains. During the last few years some important excavations have been made in England, resulting in an additional store of reliable knowledge of how the early inhabitants of Britain lived at given periods of history. Not long ago accounts were published of excavations at Hengistbury Head, in Hampshire, where a large number of flint implements, mostly of the Neolithic period, have been found. The barrows on the Head have yielded fine examples of Bronze Age pottery. Excavations have, however, revealed the site of an important settlement, showing that the people lived in huts made of wattle and daub, the floors being of beaten clay. As indicating domesticity and a degree of skill in weaving, it was found that large jars had been sunk in the ground, apparently for the storage of corn, and there were quite a number of loom weights and spindle whorls, but of whatever there might have been in the way of furniture, as we understand the term to-day, all traces had disappeared, notwithstanding that there were unmistakable indications of the occupants of the huts possessing some knowledge of the refining of iron and the working of bronze and tin. In the remains of such early days we have to be content with crude pottery, as indicating domestic furnishings.

Eastern Influence.

The arts and crafts of ancient Egypt came from farther East. Biblical records tell of Assyria and Babylon, and of Judea and Persia. Modern discoveries confirm those accounts of an ancient civilisation with furniture and luxurious upholsteries, such as were possessed by kings and their courtiers, but the richness of the palace furnishings of those Eastern potentates contrasted with the scantiness of the surroundings of their followers and dependents.

The Chinese developed an art almost entirely their own; contact with neighbouring countries spread its principles, and early influenced the arts and crafts of Europe. Ancient Greece caught the infection, and raised art to a higher pitch, by the better knowledge of human form possessed by Grecian artists, who added to Chinese art by more realistic and less conventional ornament.

Classic art spread; the artists of Greece were carried captive to Rome, so that they might teach the Roman workmen, and so the knowledge of art went West. Wherever Roman legions conquered the arts and crafts of Rome followed and were practised. Thus when Britain was occupied, the manufactures of this country were replicas of those objects with which Roman generals were familiar at home.

Notwithstanding the influence brought to bear by other nations, and the interchange of commerce which has at all times spread knowledge of commodities hitherto unknown, there have been always the modifying influences of environment, and thus styles have been created, and new requirements peculiar to certain peoples and countries have stimulated the genius of makers, and enabled them to set up national designs. Here and there new schools of design have been created as the outcome of national ideas. Thus there has been an independent art in India throughout the centuries, although in its application there are traces of early Greek and Mahometan influences, and in more modern days native art in India has been influenced by contact with the Western World. Near at home there have been strong evidences of national thought influencing styles to a greater extent than outside influences. Thus in Ireland independent lines have been taken by craftsmen, and styles evolved quite different to those which have sprung into existence in Great Britain, although traceable to the same sources.

Early Egyptian.

It seems natural that we should look for some guiding influence on the furniture trade among the numerous remains of ancient Egypt, and although the result of one's research is somewhat disappointing, and the few examples possessed in the British Museum scanty in the extreme, there is abundant evidence that the people of Egypt in early times possessed far handsomer chairs and seats than other nations then in an advanced state of civilisation. As judged from those specimens in the British Museum most of the seats and stools used by the early Egyptians were without backs, although cushions seem to have been provided at a very early date. Folding stools of wood, richly inlaid, have been met with among the relics of ancient Egypt, some beautiful examples having been brought from Thebes. According to statues and other records during the later dynasties backs were added to the chairs of State. They were at first quite upright, but afterwards slightly sloping.

We owe the preservation of much that is interesting among the relics of ancient Egypt to beliefs not unlike some of those which caused the ancient Britons to put in the burying-places of their chiefs replicas of the common objects of everyday use. The Egyptians believed in a future state, and had a deep-seated faith in the literal return of the spirit to the body. It was for that reason that the Egyptians mummified their dead and provided actual supplies and furnishings, or in some instances miniature copies of household necessaries, which they interred with the corpse. It is from these and the paintings preserved by that wonderful climate that more is known about the home life of the ancient Egyptians than of any other races of antiquity.

In the British Museum there are quite a number of chair legs and couch ends, but the examples in the Cairo Museum are far more numerous, and consist of a greater variety of form and ornament. In the British Museum there are a few examples of well-preserved chairs and stools, and from them we are satisfied that the Egyptians aimed at solidity, and to a certain extent at comfort. Their ornament was copied from the human figure, and those living organisms, animal and vegetable, with which they were familiar. To them their symbols were quite understandable, for they were drawn from Nature. The Egyptian artist was familiar with his much-loved Nile, and the plants growing on its banks. What more natural than that he should take the lotus flower and carve or paint it upon the chair he was fashioning. This he did, taking his model in its different stages of growth, from the bud to the opened flower. He placed a jar of reeds and palms by his

side as he worked, and in his colouring he ever kept in mind the sand and the mud, baked hard and dry on the sun-kissed banks of the Nile.

In the tombs of Egypt we find the earliest examples, and many of these have been removed for greater safety to the Museum at Cairo and to museums in other countries. In the British Museum may be seen the remains of the throne of Queen Hatshepsut—looking very much like the frame of an old weather and time-worn chair, its legs not unlike the human leg in form—a valuable relic indeed, for it is said to be the oldest piece of furniture in the world. In the same case where it is displayed there is an inlaid stool in very good condition, and a squaretopped taper frame or stand of painted wood. There are also some minor pieces and sundry remains of chairs and couches.

It is, however, from other resources of research that we are able to affirm with certainty that Egyptian furniture included folding stools and couches with seats of leather and plaited rushes, over which were thrown skins of panthers and other animals. The artists of Egypt and Nineveh understood painting, turning, inlaying, veneering, and cane work, and they were by no means far behind craftsmen who achieved fame in those arts thousands of years later.

In addition to the furniture from Egypt and Babylon there are interesting relics of the tools by which they were made, for under the foundations of many temples have been discovered the votive offerings of workmen; when laying foundation stones those who were to work upon the buildings to be erected thereon placed under them tools to propitiate the spirits of the temple, who were asked to assist the craftsmen who were working then, and who would work in years to come.

Assyrian.

The furniture of Assyria has all perished, and it is only from sculptures that any of it can be reconstructed. Furniture pictured on paper only, or in the form of a reconstructed model, is of very little interest to the home connoisseur, and yet it is worth while to enquire into the furnishings of the homes of all nations, past and present, in order that the inspirations which have governed the artists of more modern days may be fully understood, for as we have seen the Far East and the art of Asiatic nations influenced Grecian artists, and from Greece art flowed westward.

From sculptures it would appear that the King's throne in the palace of Nimrod, B.C. 880, was not a particularly comfortable seat. It was without back, but the seat itself was probably upholstered or covered with skins. This seat or chair was well built on square legs which ended in moulded tapering feet, and it was ornamental, the ram's head being the chief design incorporated in the decoration. The Assyrians favoured cedar wood, but in Nineveh and Judea, at the time of King Solomon, ebony, teak, and Indian walnut were used, and they were frequently overlaid and inlaid with ivory. Biblical records of the furniture of Judea are especially interesting. Solomon is said to have possessed a bed of cedar wood, with pillars of silver and a golden bottom. The furnishings of a homely residence in the time of the prophet Elisha are recorded in Scripture, for Elisha was provided with a bed, a chair, a table, and a lamp in the guest chamber in which he was entertained.

In the Book of Esther the luxuriant upholstery and textiles of the Persians in the fifth century B.C. are referred to in the following terms:—

> "White, green, and blue hangings fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble. The beds were of gold and silver."

Ancient Greece.

The knowledge of Greek furniture comes from sculptures, paintings, and from the somewhat scrappy information of the furnishings of Greek houses, obtained from Grecian writings. Some of the most interesting bronze or wooden chairs from ancient Greece are depicted on the Parthenon frieze which may be examined in the British Museum. There are statues there, too, some of which are seated in chairs framed in square bars, the horizontal pieces being morticed into the upright stays. The bars and frames of chairs and the footstools and pedestals used in Greece were often of cedar wood, inlaid with carved ivories. Representations of Greek furniture may sometimes be noticed on old coins and medals. The paintings on the vases in which the British Museum is so rich are, however, the most reliable. The vases were interred with the dead because of their belief in another world where life was to be lived on a higher plane. Scenes in domestic life were frequently pictured, and although the actual objects have perished there are indications of comfort and refinement in Greek homes. Upon one of the Hamilton vases there is a representation of a bed or couch on which were

evidently cushions well stuffed and ornamental in texture. Carving, painting, turning, and inlaying were all used by Greek artists.

Roman Furniture.

The Romans used chiefly cedar and veneered their furniture with olive, box, ebony, Syrian terebinth, maple, palm, holly, elm, ash, and cherry. They are said also to have used tortoise-shell, horn, and ivory in their more decorative inlays. Summarised, Roman furniture consisted of the *curule* chair, a square seat with X-shaped legs; the *bisellium*, or double seat; the *solium* or special chair for the use of the head or ruler of the household; footstools; *scamnum*, bench, the *cathedra*, a chair used by women; table (*mensa*); bed (*lectus*) and couch (*lectus triclinium*); and cupboard (*armarium*). Couches were frequently covered with tilts and curtains, arranged so that they could be carried as litters by slaves. Many articles of furniture were of bronze.

Among the historic furniture treasured by nations and religious bodies an especial halo of romance surrounds the "chair of St Peter," a solid square seat with pedimental back which is panelled with carved ivory. It was encased in bronze by Bernini in the fourth or fifth century. Legend suggests that the chair was originally in the possession of Pudens, an early Christian convert, and that it had been given to him by St Peter. This remarkable chair is now the throne of the Pontiff of Rome, and its age is undoubted, if not its legendary ownership.

Pompeii and its Treasures.

We owe much to Pompeii for our knowledge of Roman civilisation, the fulness of which has only in recent years been realised. Although the chief objects of furniture which have remained uninjured by their long burial beneath the ashes of Pompeii and Herculaneum are of bronze, among the relics of those ancient cities are remains of the wood-worker's craft. In researches among the remains of Pompeii it has been made clear that a much advanced art was practised by its workmen. There may be seen rows of houses and shops owned probably by citizens—well to do perhaps—not altogether by rulers and nobles. Therefore, the examples of ancient furniture found may be regarded as of the common order and not like some of the exceptional pieces which alone remain to us as examples of the art of some ancient countries. One of the finest pieces discovered is a table, evidently from a Pompeiian temple. The rooms in the houses in that ill-fated city were light and airy, some open to the sky. The upholsteries used are apparently in many instances luxurious, and were probably embroideries and rugs from Eastern looms.

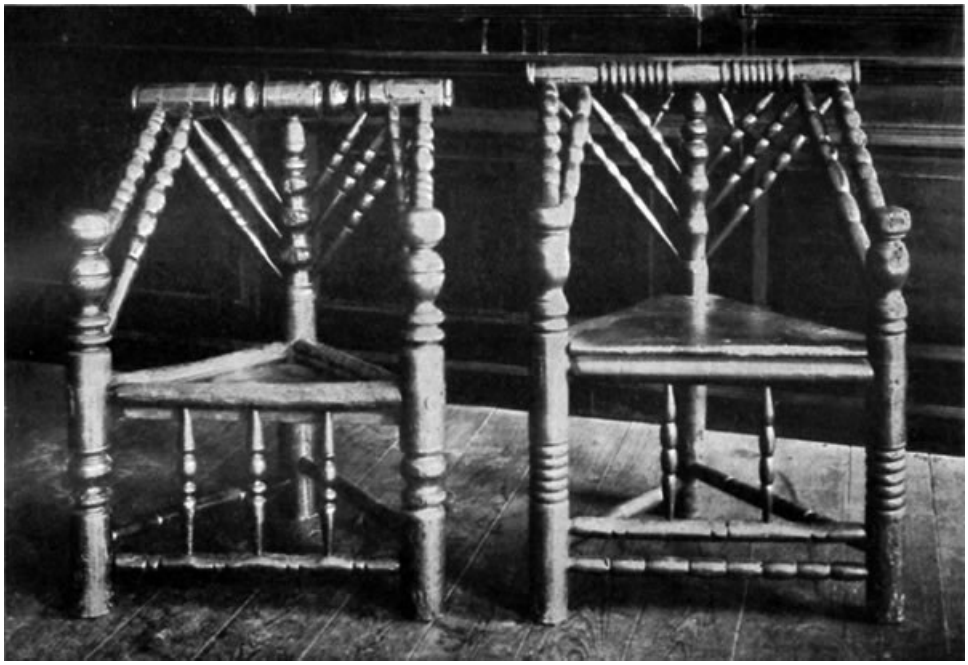

Fig. 7.—TURNED SPINDLE-BACKED OAK CHAIRS,
PERIOD 1500-1550.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 8.—OAK CHEST,
EARLY 17TH CENTURY.
(*Mawers, Ltd., South Kensington.*)

FIG. 9.—REMARKABLY FINE CHEST OF DRAWERS.
(*In the Victoria and Albert Museum.*)

Byzantine Art.

Like the Chair of St Peter, representative of the earliest known European craftsmanship, Italy possesses another chair, known as that of Saint Maximian, at Ravenna, which dates from the sixth century in the Christian era. It is a remarkable piece of early craftsmanship, being overlaid with panels of ivory carved with scenes taken from the life of Joseph. It will be remembered that the Byzantine period began when Constantine removed his seat of empire to Byzantium, A.D. 321, and continued until the year 1204, when the city was taken by the Latins.

Customs which influenced manufacture as well as art were at work during the Byzantine period, for it was then no longer correct style to recline at meals; therefore the couch which had hitherto been used in Rome gave place to chairs at meals. In the decoration of furniture at that time the influence of religious beliefs was seen, for the Mahometans were forbidden to copy the human figure or form. Hence the absence of that which had been so conspicuous in Greek designs and architecture, and in the Roman furniture which had been influenced or wrought by Greek artists. In lieu of the realistic life and figure which had hitherto prevailed floral and geometrical designs were prominent when the Moslems ruled in Southern Europe, for they had destroyed the classic art they found in Constantinople at the time of its overthrow.

Anglo-Saxon Furniture.

Anglo-Saxon art was derived from two sources—the Continent of Europe and from Ireland. Thus it was that the classic art of the old Roman Empire which had prevailed in Britain during the Roman occupation passed away. A new inspiration came from France, Germany, and some other parts of Italy, and Anglo-Saxon workmen, by no means devoid of artistic tendencies, copied the new styles which were springing up in Europe whenever they had an opportunity of doing so. We can quite understand how when freed from the Roman rule they would discard the inspirations they had received from their conquerors, and if possible they would wish to make new departures. Reference has already been made to the independent line of thought prevailing in the Sister Isle. Celtic art was something apart, independently nourished, and even in Anglo-Saxon days moulded from other influences than those which governed English craftsmen. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Irish cabinet-makers developed the style which became known as Irish Chippendale, rather from its similarity to English cabinet-work than to the source from which it came. Celtic art in the Anglo-Saxon period was sufficiently strong to influence British workmen, and we find that much of the jewellery and art metal work of that period was Celtic in design. Indeed, some furniture, by no means unimportant, indicates another origin to that which influenced so-called Continental inspirations. There is little or no Saxon furniture left. There are a few chests, it is true, mostly preserved in old churches. One of the most reliable examples is a chest of St Beuno, in Clynnog Church, in Wales. It is little more than a tree trunk hollowed out and bound with iron. There is another not unlike it in Wimborne Minster.

Just as the Chair of St Peter is one of the earliest examples of wooden furniture in Italy, so that of Venerable Bede is one of the earliest examples of English chair-making. Of other early chairs there is, of course, the Coronation Chair, which was made about the year 1300, still showing traces of colouring and gilding. In the Pyx Chapel, in Westminster Abbey, may be seen a coffer which tradition says belonged to Edward II. An example of secular furniture is the Dunmow Chair, in which the winners of the Dunmow flitch of bacon are annually chaired according to the custom which began in the reign of Henry III. That chair, however, is of Gothic design and may possibly have once had a place in Dunmow Church.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEDIÆVAL HOME

The castle and its furniture—Early influences upon craftsmen—Symbolism and legend—Some examples.

In tracing the ancient furniture which once served the needs of the people we are brought face to face with the materials they had at hand. We have to realise that in all the early trades of this country local supply sufficed for local demand. It is true there were travelling pedlars, and merchants who sent their wares long distances from the seaboard inland by a packhorse train on mere trackways over hill and dale. Such methods of supplying the commercial requirements of village traders, and isolated dwellers in castle and hamlet were, however, practically useless to the workers in wood, and especially to the makers of furniture. The materials for such things were at hand, and wood-workers had access to the forests of Britain, which gave a plentiful supply of oak—the chief wood employed. Rooms were panelled, and furniture was made of well-seasoned timber as time went on, but not until years after the days of the accession of the Norman kings.

It is difficult to point out the exact time when the carpenter and joiner separated, for they eventually became two crafts, and the cabinet-maker no longer took part in builders' wood-work. In quite early days men would differ in their abilities as craftsmen just as workmen do now. The carpenter who hewed the beams for the wooden framework of smaller dwellings, and for the flooring of the upper rooms of castle towers, built the chest which was destined to be carried from place to place in mediæval migrations. He built it strongly to resist joltings over rough roads and forest tracks, but he probably called to his aid one who was more skilled than his fellows to carve those curious devices upon it. The panelled work and the smaller divisions in the coffer would be relegated to the joiner, the prototype of the man who was destined to become a cabinet-maker. The decoration of these early chests or coffers differs, according to the ability of the local craftsmen. At times it was merely a few almost meaningless cuts, or at most a fantastic symbol, at others it was really decorative. The artist in wood worked for his feudal lord, and sometimes very cleverly depicted the scenes with which he was familiar, and not infrequently represented episodes in which the chest was destined to figure (*see* chapter xxi.).

Some early examples of store chests and movable cases, which have been facetiously referred to as the prototypes of the modern pantechnicon van, were elaborately carved. Some of the scenes depicted represented knights with their men-at-arms on the march. Others the forest tracks then common in rural England, and in a few instances women are shown accompanying their lords, and the chest containing much of their household goods—the latter always finding a place in the caravan or cavalcade. The smith's art does not appear to have been applied in conjunction with that of the wood-worker (with the exception of wrought iron hinges and hasps) until the thirteenth century. There are, however, a few earlier examples of iron-bound coffers which legend has it are of still earlier date, such, for instance, as the treasure trunk in Knaresborough Castle reputed to have been brought over to this country by William the Conqueror. It is an ancient box with arched top and heavily banded, there being no less than eleven hinges with straps on the cover. There is another chest at Knaresborough known as the Castle Records chest, said to have been made originally for Queen Philippa, to whom the castle was presented in 1333. Most of the early mediæval furniture, of which there are any authentic records, has in some way or other been associated with feudal times, and in most instances probably belonged to the feudal lord.

The Castle and its Furniture.

To form some idea of the few pieces of furniture required in early mediæval days, it is necessary to picture the castle, tower, or occasional residence of the baronial lord in those days when England was in a somewhat disturbed state, for petty warfares between powerful chieftains were of common occurrence. Those were times when the furnishings of the home were of small account. They were rough and ready days, and the knights of old had no time or inclination to trouble much about the comforts of home life. The furniture used when the lord and his retainers were in residence was scanty indeed. It was necessarily so, for life in such a place, excepting perhaps in the larger and more important strongholds and the Royal residences, of which there were comparatively few, was uncertain—it changed frequently.

The great hall was in turn the place where feasting and sumptuous entertainment went on, the scene of battle and riot, the meeting place of conspirators, and often a deserted building left alone amidst the solitary grandeur of stone walls, turrets, and courtyards, outside of which were woods and forests, often the dwelling-places of outlaws. We can picture in the mind's eye the hall of feasting, with its simple trestle tables, ranged above and below the salt. They groaned often with the weight of meats, not always too choice. There was drink in abundance, and a somewhat noisy crowd occupied benches and stools, or stood in attendance upon those who were feasting at the table. The lord of the castle would sit in his chair of state, and his men-at-arms were ready to do his bidding. At such times the bare walls of rough stone were obscured by skilfully worked arras, hung on hooks driven into the walls for that purpose; pikes and bows, and perchance armour, would be piled in the corners and against the walls. The floor was covered with rushes, and as the feast proceeded some one or other frequently became quarrelsome, and misdirected blows often left marks upon the scanty furniture of oak. In a moment the scene might be shifted, for at the signal given by the watchman on the tower the feast would be hurriedly cleared away, and the few pieces of wooden furniture and vessels of metal and leather would be carried in haste up the stone stairs to a place of safety in the towers. In the hall, which had a few moments earlier been the scene of feasting, stern men-at-arms would await the attack of some stronger invading party, or they might man the walls, knowing full well that the great hall of the castle would be where they would make the last stand.

Again, from some urgent reason the lord and his family, and perhaps most of his retainers, would journey over rough roads to some far distant castle. On those migrations the walls were stripped of their tapestries, which were bundled into the chests, soon to be taken along with the cavalcade, and for a season the strong walls of the mediæval castle would be left almost as the masons had left them. With such conditions prevailing in the residences of the nobles we can well imagine that the homes of the retainers, mere mud and plaster shelters within the walls of the outer keep or clustering round them for protection, would be scanty indeed in their furnishings. Such conditions explain the reason why there are so few remains of the earlier mediæval days in England left, and that this period in English cabinet-making is only represented by a few chests and coffers, and here and there by an old chair preserved because of some special interest which clung to it.

The so-called historical chests and seats other than purely ecclesiastical furniture are limited in number, and of the few pieces, the authenticity of which is proved, scarcely any are without evidence of having been added to or restored in later days.

Early Influences upon Craftsmen.

In the earlier mediæval days there was a sharply defined line between fixed and movable furniture. The connection between the architect and the furniture maker was then very real, for the man who worked upon the interior wood-work, and as time went on endeavoured to make the bare rooms of a mediæval castle more homelike, likewise erected the less portable fixtures and the rough benches (some of which were afterwards carved), and no doubt made the oaken trestles and loose table tops. When we come to search for examples of furniture of that period the result is disappointing, for the little there was has long ago, with few exceptions, been "chopped up."

In ecclesiastical buildings some few pieces have survived, but domestic furniture of English make dating from mediæval days is extremely rare. The Victoria and Albert Museum, at South Kensington, where there are large galleries full of old oak, seems to be the place where one would search for English furniture of olden time; but while the Museum possesses some excellent examples of contemporary art on the Continent of Europe there are comparatively few of very early English manufacture. The collector, therefore, has to be content with those few examples, and comparing them with mediæval furniture of other nations thereby discovers as far as possible the few characteristic English "trade marks."

The architectural connection between the builder and the furniture maker is still more apparent, as mediæval art advanced, for then the influence of Gothic architecture and style was supreme, and the wood carver was taught to apply that style of design to his works. The "house carpenter" rarely restricted his efforts to furniture, correctly so called, for he worked upon statues, busts, masks, and figure subjects which were applied alike to fixed and portable furniture. The decorations of the interiors of ecclesiastical buildings and mediæval castles consisted of carved ornament, and the same designs were cut upon the solid oak frames or stiles and the panels of chests and settles. Some of those carvings in their earliest use were supports and necessary to architectural designs, but not always so in furniture. In those early days it should be noted that the interior of chests, cupboards, and the like was always plain. The carved ornament was applied to the exterior, whereas in later days much attention was given to the interior of coffers and cabinets.

It was the Gothic perpendicular in architecture that had such a far-reaching influence upon furniture designers, for at

that time architectural carvings became upright, and in that form were more readily applied to furniture; carving seemed to be the most appropriate decoration. In reference to the ornamental carving of the later mediæval houses it has been pointed out that although castles, manor houses, and most of the churches and ecclesiastical buildings were of stone and brick, the dwelling-house was chiefly of timber. The timber beams gave abundant opportunity to the decorative carver, who made use of the corner posts and lintels as fitting places for the use of his chisel. Entire towns and villages were built in this way, and in some places entire streets presented a gallery of carvings, and in the fifteenth century the wood-work of the interior had become a reflex of the exterior.

Among the architectural features of mediæval days fine Gothic open roofs have been much admired, especially when the change to the perpendicular came. There is, however, one remarkable example of the time before the perpendicular had become general. It is the roof of Westminster Hall, which was reconstructed in 1399.

Although old houses of this early period are fast disappearing, attempts are being made to retain especially interesting buildings as show places, and where that is not possible considerable portions of carved exteriors are being removed bodily from old houses to the more important museums. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are some splendid carved beams, and others showing the opportunities which the intersection of the beams gave to the wood-carver of applying simple ornament in relief. Where the beams met he added bosses, and then carved them with leaf ornament, or shaped them as shields upon which the family arms could be carved or painted. These ornaments were in time appropriated by the furniture maker, and the root idea is traceable throughout the ages which followed.

As it has already been suggested, ecclesiastical influence in the Middle Ages was so great that it controlled—indeed it taught and perpetuated—art. The church Gothic of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries has always been much admired for its plain severity, although the artists of the fifteenth century achieved more lifelike and realistic work. The "tabernacle" style of fully-developed Gothic began in the fourteenth century, and its influence remained until Tudor days, as may be seen on mediæval coffers. The canopied stalls of cathedrals and abbeys were taken as the designs from which to carve the fronts of muniment chests, and the same men who worked for laymen would seek their inspiration in the church to which they were attached.

The grotesque carvings on bosses, the clever masks on the walls of mediæval castles, and the ornament on the more portable furniture, were not without their parallel in the grotesque carvings with which the monks delighted to cover the stone and wood of abbeys and private churches. Many of the monks (often skilled craftsmen) were comical old fellows; very wonderful and even dreadful were their conceptions of the pains and punishments of mortal man. As time went on, however, the plain severity of the seats (if any) for the common people, gave place to the more ornate, and the tediousness of the long hours of service in churches found some relief at the hands of the wood-carver. The miserere seats, of which there are such fine examples in Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster Abbey, are often pointed out as having tickled the humour of the carver, and induced him to design the most grotesque and sometimes ridiculous characters he could think of as ornaments (*see* "Miserere seat" in Glossary).

The screen, such an important feature in old churches, was richly carved during the period when Gothic influence was exerted. At a still earlier period the chancel had been divided from the nave by a textile veil; then by a stone screen with quite a small opening. In the thirteenth century, however, wood screens were introduced, and it is the ornament of the Gothic oak screen that was so closely followed by makers of chests, chairs, and other pieces of furniture.

The wood panelling in the older houses is a great attraction to the collector who sees in it a fit setting for the furniture he collects, especially that of Tudor and Jacobean days. It may be pointed out, however, that some of the panelling takes us back to mediæval England. The most beautiful of all panelling is the much praised linen-fold, examples of which may be seen in the older rooms of Hampton Court Palace, and in some of the old black and white manor houses of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. It is a style thought to have been introduced from Flanders. It had a comparatively short popularity, for although first carved in England about 1470 it was rarely cut later than 1550.

In fully understanding the use of Gothic ornament on the furniture of the Middle Ages, it is necessary to recall the very close alliance between ecclesiastical furnishings and domestic furniture. Many of the wealthiest nobles were ecclesiastics. The abbots and priors of the powerful religious houses surrounded themselves with many luxuries, and their furniture was made on the same lines as the carved stalls, the rich canopies and the wonderfully framed windows and stone tracery of the abbeys. In later days the dwellings of the clergy were either in conjunction with or in close proximity to the religious houses which became parish churches; and when additional churches were built after the Reformation the rectories and vicarages were frequently semi-ecclesiastic in style of architecture, and very often the furniture followed the style of building. Thus, we have a great deal of furniture intended for household use, and yet

purposely designed on ecclesiastical lines. Some of the chairs in museums and private collections are distinctly models of church stalls. There are replicas in wood of traceried windows, arcades, and screens; there are ornaments copied from the miserere seats, and there are Scriptural subjects carved in relief upon the backs of settles. Even some of the seats in inns and taverns are replicas of refectory benches, and some of the old furniture in village inns and country farmhouses may very well from its style and appearance have been discarded when newer and more imposing furniture was made for the village church.

It is said that in France in the thirteenth century there was a great improvement in tools, and that led to a division of the workmen. Woodworkers henceforward became carpenters and joiners. The carpenters seem to have been distinguished by their massive works—utility having been their first object. The joiners had advanced somewhat and were almost allied to the sculptors; and became famous for their elaborate Gothic ornament, tracery, and floral patterns, one particular section of them devoting much attention to carved reproductions of persons and scenes in both sacred and profane history. In England these craftsmen became an important guild. Chaucer refers to the carpenter's craft as being distinct from any other workmen, and the records of the City of London as far back as 1271 show that there were then two master carpenters in London under city control, each of whom employed a considerable number of operatives.

These men were wood-workers intimately connected with the building of houses; and it must be remembered that the houses of mediæval days consisted chiefly of a framework of wood filled in with other materials. The making of furniture was then in the hands of the carpenters, and from that we can readily understand its close association with the structural part of the home, and also that the carpenter and the joiner were not only builders of the house, but its furnishers. They made the interior fittings and furniture for the religious houses and for the dwellings of rich and poor. Notwithstanding this there are some separate crafts, mostly of a local character, such as chair-makers, which will be referred to separately.

The Carpenters' Company like many other city guilds was a brotherhood, and fulfilled many charitable acts towards the commonalty of the freemen. They had also powers under their Charter subsequently granted by James I. "to search, correct, and govern all the workers in carpentry." It is to the old trade guilds who were possessed of such exceptional powers that we owe much, for they secured the quality of work which we admire in antique furniture and old wood-work. Those old guildsmen were no mean craftsmen, for they had a beautiful hall built in 1429, and they added a "new parlour" in 1500, priding themselves on their garden, which contained arbours, walnut trees, a sundial, and a bowling alley. Closely akin to this Company was the Joiners' Company, their Guild having existed from 1309; and it is with the joiners that the old cabinet work is chiefly associated, for whereas the carpenters cut and fashioned the wood-work of the building and the roof, the making of cupboards, bedsteads, tables, and chairs fell to the joiner. He, too, was the maker of the famous old chests of which there are so many extant. More than two and a half centuries after the foundation of the Guild, Queen Elizabeth granted the joiners a Charter, under the title of, "The Master, Wardens, and Commonalty of the Faculty of Joiners and Ceilers or Carvers of London." It will thus be seen that the joiners had then added to their craft the art of carving. They had become sculptors in wood, and they adorned the interior of buildings, carving timber work on the roofs, the over-doors, mantel-pieces, and the panels of the walls; and they carved furniture.

Among the minor Companies associated with the making of furniture there is the Turners' Company. Wood turnery from a very early period was used in the adornment of furniture, as well as many of the main braces of furniture being fashioned in the turner's lathe. There are turned chairs and stools of ebony in the British Museum, the work of Egyptian turners 1500 years B.C. The throwing upon the potter's wheel is simply another form of turner's lathe. It was indeed an appliance known and used in England from very early days, for the art was practised in Britain during the four centuries of Roman occupation. But Roman and early British wood turnery has perished. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wood turnery, which had chiefly been employed in connection with architectural and building work, was once more applied to household furniture. As a separate art turnery is still maintained, although the craft is frequently practised by cabinet-makers, upholsterers, and other wood-workers.

There is still one other of the old City Guilds which enters into the field of the antique furniture collector. It is the Upholders' Company, founded in 1460, given a coat of arms by Edward IV., and granted a Charter by Charles I. in 1626, empowering them to supervise all work executed by the craft. The term "upholder" is synonymous with upholsterer, and the aid of this craftsman was frequently invoked by the carpenter.

The old City Companies are courted by the connoisseur on account of their beautiful halls, and the treasures contained therein. Many lost their halls in the Great Fire of London; others never seem to have possessed halls of their own, but most of the Companies have some antiquarian relics, either silver plate, or other objects connecting the present

halls and their furnishings with the past. The wood-carvings in the halls themselves are beautiful, and the panelling is frequently enriched with shields of arms, emblems, and other embellishments. The buffets, over-mantels, and side-tables of oak are suitable settings for plate and other treasures when displayed thereon. There are many fine carved chairs, too, especially the Master's chair. One of the most interesting possessions of the Fishmongers' Company is a massive ancient chair made of stone and wood taken from the foundations of Old London Bridge. The Salters' Company is also in possession of a valuable chair made for the Master in the eighteenth century—a handsome piece with shaped legs and massive claw feet, the seat and back being upholstered in leather; the upper portion of the back is heavily carved with the arms of the Company. In Vintners' Hall there is richly carved wainscot, the decoration representing fruit and leaves, and a noble screen at the east end on which are carvings representing Bacchus between fawns, as well as the figure of St Martin, their patron, and numerous coats of arms. One of the most valued treasures of the Vintners is a piece of ancient tapestry representing St Martin on horseback, cutting in two his cloak with his sword to share it with the beggar man. The Vintners have also a purple velvet state pall enriched with cloth of gold.

In the vestibule of the Hall of the Clothworkers' Company there is a strong box or chest in which the muniments and treasures of the Company were once encased. The treasure chest was doubtless at one time an important feature in the furnishing of the Halls, but many of these perished in the Great Fire and were not replaced.

One of the treasured possessions of the Broderers' Company is a handsome oak chair, formerly used as the seat of the Master at important functions. It is valuable in that it dates back before the Great Fire, and when in use on State occasions on either side of the chair repose the porter's staff and the beadle's staff, the silver heads of which were hall-marked in 1628. The tapissiers or tapestry makers mentioned by Chaucer were subsequently absorbed in the Broderers' Company, the members of which "wrought silks of divers colours, rich altar cloths, vestments for the clergy, dresses for the ladies, and hangings for their chambers." The Broderers had oversight over all tapestry weavers. The Joiners' Company possess an old Master's chair, along with some plate. The Shipwrights' Company have, alas! no longer a Hall, but their archives are preserved in a very ancient chest, one of the few muniment chests belonging to the Companies to-day, for most of their treasure-chests have perished.

Symbolism and Legend.

The Middle Ages were not alone in giving evidences that workmen were much influenced by legends and superstitions. Many of these had been handed down from earlier peoples, but they were seldom forgotten, and the symbols which were associated with them were materialised by the carver. The wood-worker and sculptor of mediæval days have done much to keep up the traditions of earlier times. They have also invented symbols which were fully understood then, and are not altogether ignored in the present day. The days of knighthood, chivalry, and the Crusades were days when symbols, badges, crests, and coats-of-arms were as well known and understood as the names of persons and places, and they were used by carvers when decorating furniture for their patrons. The emblems of Tudor days are emblems of cultured and highly educated nations to-day. The *fleur-de-lis* of France, the rose within a rose of the Tudors, the Scotch thistle, and the Irish harp are still well-known emblems, cut and carved, sculptured and painted. The plumes of Wales and the escallop shell of the Crusades have been revived again and again in ornament. There are, however, numerous other suggestive symbols in ornament, which we accept as the basis of design in many styles, but we do not always understand their *motif*.

Some Examples.

The collector seeks for the purest styles with which he can compare his treasures, and he looks anxiously at the finish of the work lest he should have been deceived. In this connection it may be convenient to state that early oak was originally left unpolished. Hence much of the decay and injury owing to exposure and the absence of any polishing materials or preservatives. Then came polishing by friction (elbow grease) after an application of wax and oil. Following this a kind of varnish was used, and lastly French polishing, a method opportunely devised about the advent of mahogany. The older methods of polishing were effected by a slow process of hard work, but the result was all that could be desired. The unfinished oak acquired its beautiful appearance and tone by a process of usage and exposure, and it is in that state collectors aim at securing examples. Writers upon mediæval furniture have found much difficulty in finding examples worthy of special note other than the historic pieces, some of which have already been mentioned. Among the *Specimens of Antique Carved Furniture*, drawn and published by Mr A. Marshall, A.R.I.B.A., some years ago, some interesting details of early mediæval furniture were given. He referred to an old cabinet then at Nottingham,

which he described as “a fine specimen of fourteenth-century work.” Its first use had evidently been that of a church cabinet or credence. The credence table was usually a small stand placed near the altar, on which remained the bread and wine until consecration; but the cabinet referred to by Mr Marshall was somewhat exceptional, in that it had a drawer and a small cupboard—convenient receptacles for the sacramental vessels and the altar linen.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are some early German coffers, the front of one fourteenth-century piece being covered with Gothic ornament. Another from Reda in Westphalia, is noticeable because of its exceptional bands or straps, which are uniform in design with the hinges which have ornamental ends. Unfortunately, there is no English furniture previous to the reign of Edward III., except, possibly, chests and a few odd chairs.

The old spindle-backed turned oak chairs of the sixteenth century are now rarely met with, the two shown in Fig. 7 being exceptional examples. They were made probably between 1500-1550. For further reference to the early types of chairs, *see* chapter xxiii. The chest, such an important feature in mediæval days, has been referred to in this chapter. The one shown in Fig. 8 is of a somewhat later date, probably early in the seventeenth century. It is of rather unusual length, and was doubtless made to fit in some recess, especially as the ends are quite plain, the only decorations being on the front, which is well carved on the panels as well as the stiles.

CHAPTER V

THE RENAISSANCE

Its origin and the new interpretation—Italian Renaissance—The new art in Spain and Portugal—German Renaissance—The Netherlands—French Renaissance—The English Renaissance.

The Renaissance, or new birth, in architecture and art, involving in its course a revival in the arts in every direction, began in Italy. Having taken root and given rise to a new order of things in wood-working, and particularly in the interior wood-work of castle and palace, together with their furnishings, the Renaissance spread. The new movement permeated the Netherlands, Germany, and Spain. It gradually became recognised in France, and then made its way into England, the Renaissance which eventually superseded the Gothic and mediæval art reaching this country in the reign of Henry VIII.

The Renaissance came at a time when the nations of Europe were ready to receive and adopt a new and much improved class of building and superior fittings and furnishings.

Its Origin and the New Interpretation.

The old order of things was fast passing away, and ancient institutions were crumbling. The world was ripe for a forced march onwards. The idea of reconstructing the very foundations of a new art was welcomed, and the cleverest men of the times sought for inspiration among the ashes of the civilisation which had existed long before. They found what they needed in the ruins and relics of ancient Greece and Rome.

The fundamental principles of the Renaissance were accepted and passed on from country to country, but the artists of each country, and in some instances of small isolated areas, interpreted the inspirations they received and the ideals given them as models differently. Hence it is that the new birth took shape in different forms, and the Renaissance affected the peoples of the several countries through which it passed, and those remoter districts it eventually reached in various ways. Thus it is that English, Flemish, French, German, and Italian wood-work of the later years of the fifteenth and the earlier years of the sixteenth century present such striking differences; and in each of those countries it is evident from authentic specimens in museums and private collections that the art of those countries developed on different lines.

The architecture of the Renaissance underwent a rapid change, for many stately homes were taking the place of feudal castles, and the carver aided the carpenter and joiner in embellishing the interior wood-work as well as the portable furniture. The old order of things was passing, and artistic decoration and design as interpreted by the exponents of the new art or Renaissance, influenced the handiwork of sculptors, workers in wood, metal, clay, and glass. The Renaissance brought with it applied ornament of various kinds, so that wood-workers and carvers learned to use embellishment which necessitated the arts of other craftsmen, and the use of materials other than those which had been employed by mediæval wood-workers. Such architects as Andrea Palladio in Italy in the sixteenth century, and nearly a century later Inigo Jones in England, did much to establish styles in architectural decoration, which could very appropriately be carried out in the furniture intended to be used in the buildings they erected.

Italian Renaissance.

For the first glimpse of the new art produced under such favourable conditions in Europe we turn naturally to Italy where the Renaissance took its rise. In earlier times Grecian ornament had influenced Roman and early Italian art. In Rome and Naples there were many existing monuments, serving as object lessons for later artists. In the fourth century Byzantine art was in the ascendency, influencing makers of furniture as well as architecture. Then came the mediæval or Gothic which to some extent was incorporated or embodied with the classics with which Roman artists were imbued. Then came the days of darkness when art was at a standstill. It was the same everywhere. There was an air of anticipation abroad, however, and Italy, the home of so much that was great and glorious in the past, found the base-line of her Renaissance among the ruined splendours of the old. In the fifteenth century the great teachers of architecture recognised the grandeur of the Grecian and Roman schools of art which had been almost forgotten; and then came the Italian Renaissance in its full force.

It was a time of great revival of early inspirations in which classical influence was strong. Doric and Ionic columns were made use of, the style evolved being a re-creation of the ancient on lines more adapted to the architecture of the Renaissance, and better suited to the wood-work then required. It was a splendid revival of art, and those who had greater opportunities of studying its possibilities, and living amidst different surroundings, used the new art to wider purposes than were possible in the more restricted age in which ancient art flourished.

This newly-developed art was applied in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by such artists as Palladio, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and Cellini. In the fulness of its glory splendid tapestries, velvets, and gilded leathers, adorned the walls of the rooms wherein was to be found furniture of Italian walnut and chestnut, which then supplemented cypress and other soft woods. Then a little later came the magnificent inlays and veneers of marble, ivory, and ebony, which helped to make some of the furniture of the Italian Renaissance so grand. The workmen of Milan, Venice, and Florence made exquisite inlays of stone and marble, adding mother-of-pearl and metal.

The inlays of the Renaissance are often compared with the mosaics of Pompeii and of ancient Rome, so many of which are to be seen in the Museum of Naples, the comparison not always redounding to the credit of the workers of later times. It is noteworthy that Florentine mosaics are bold, but they lack the minute detail of the older work. The real beauty of Italian and especially of Florentine mosaics lies in the careful selection of various coloured stones, and in their clever grouping. The artists by the use of these materials formed vases of fruit and flowers and typical pictures like that of the well-known group of Vatican pigeons.

The remarkable effects produced by the use of gesso (plaster) coloured and gilded are very noticeable upon the early coffers and marriage chests. Of these there are some beautiful examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum, more particularly referred to in chapter xxi.

It was in bold and striking designs, and sometimes grotesque carvings, that the wood-workers of Venice struck out such a distinctive line. About this work there are some characteristic features which make it very remarkable. The small carved chairs are especially pleasing, and they show great individuality both in design and workmanship. The wood-carver's art was applied in many ways, and it was directed in household objects to cabinets, tables, mirror frames, and even to the domestic bellows. Some of the chairs with X-shaped frames were upholstered with Genoa velvet and other costly textiles from Venice and the Levant. Walnut was much used, and was introduced with especially pleasing effects. The wood-carver had a free licence, and elaborated beautifully modelled female figures as supports and columns, intermingled with elaborate scroll work. In addition to walnut the Venetian cabinet-makers used other woods as the groundwork for their inlays and veneering, in which they employed costly materials; the chief woods thus used for the foundation of furniture, carved and overlaid, were willow, sycamore, and lime. Brown walnut, although much used by the carver, was frequently inlaid with ivory and bone by a process known as *certosina*, for which Milan was famous. Artists in wood-work also made use of ebony and ebonised woods which they inlaid with ivory, producing many remarkable effects.

It is noteworthy that most of the grandest specimens were carried out by workmen under the direction of superior designers, many of whom were architects; indeed throughout the Italian Renaissance architecture was the dominating influence upon furniture designs, just as throughout mediæval days ecclesiastical influence had prevailed, causing the use of Gothic design in furniture for secular purposes as well as for the embellishment of cathedrals and churches.

The Italian towns where furniture was chiefly made at that time were Florence, Pisa, Bologna, and Siena. Museum specimens indicate the furniture then in use, although the exceptional pieces which are to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum (*see* Fig. 9) and in some of the more important collections in this country, and in the museums on the Continent of Europe came mostly from the palatial halls of Italian nobles and prelates, and do not indicate the furniture of the lower or middle classes—if such can be said to have then existed.

The beautiful Florentine folding chair of **X**-like form was the forerunner of the seigneurial or state chairs, which were in many instances but replicas of the stalls in Italian churches. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a folding chair dated 1560, and another with leather seat and back of black walnut of an earlier date, probably about 1530. Some of the pretty carved chairs are very dark with age, being almost black, especially so those from Venice. In the same museum there is a remarkable chest of drawers of rather later date than the Renaissance period. It is a fine example of the wood-worker's art, embellished in high relief with panels representing statuettes of warriors and workmen, and a group of mounted soldiers. The handles, too, are especially interesting, as they are in the form of grotesque boys seated on dolphins.

The tables were at that time oblong, and richly carved, like the cabinets which had evolved from chests. The beds

were either an elaborate four-poster which usually stood on a raised dais or they consisted of a simple couch bed. The mirrors, too, were mounted in beautifully carved frames, of which there are many delightful museum specimens. Those who wish to follow up the study of Italian furniture as it was at a late period will be delighted with the early eighteenth-century Venetian furniture bequeathed to the Victoria and Albert Museum by the late Alexander Barker, Esq. The chairs, bed, and couches of this remarkable suite are indeed gorgeous with their gilded carvings, and rich needlework, upholstery, and hangings. The art achieved during the Italian Renaissance was so splendid, and it so worthily reproduced Greek art in its purest and best forms, in its applied crafts, that a writer summing up the art of that period says:—

> "So dazzling was the Renaissance by its brilliancy, so confusing by its changes, that moral distinctions were obliterated in a blaze of splendour, an outcome of new life."

The rebirth of art in Italy was indeed far-reaching, as is seen in the influence at work upon the art of other countries. Not only did it inspire artists in every branch of craftsmanship, but it stimulated the Reformation in Germany, inspired Columbus, the discoverer of a New World, and it is said to have turned men from war and savagery to the more peaceful arts and the developments of their respective countries. Such was the Italian Renaissance destined to affect the arts and crafts of the world.

The New Art in Spain and Portugal.

In considering the story of the spread of the Italian Renaissance as it moved onward we must always bear in mind the countries it passed through in its march to its ultimate goal; and when examining examples of the wood-work of each of those countries we should recall the additional influences of locality and proximity to countries having distinctly different artistic feelings. This is very noticeable in the Renaissance of Spain and Portugal, which made itself felt towards the end of the fifteenth century—in its fuller development not until after the reconquest of Granada.

A very noticeable feature in the wood-work of Spain is the Moorish influence; but the Spanish Renaissance was governed chiefly by the peculiar political status of the country. At that time the power of Charles I. of Spain was exceptional. He not only ruled Germany, Austria, Sardinia, and the Netherlands, but he claimed the New World. That was the splendid position of Spain when the Renaissance of art was in progress.

It is very interesting indeed to learn what kind of furniture the proud nobles and grandees of such an influential nation as Spain then possessed, and what were the domestic ambitions of the people. Mr Foley, in his book of *Decorative Furniture*, tells us in reference to Spanish beds that

> "the bed grew larger and more and more sumptuous. . . . Hangings of satin, brocade, and rich skins were used in conjunction with gold and silver embroidery, whilst a triptych or a driptych containing the sacred images was placed at the head end; balustrades of wood heavily silvered were set around it, and steps of silver were provided in order that it might be entered without loss of dignity."

These beds, he tells us, were usually placed in one corner of the apartment; in an opposite corner was the writing- and dining-table laid out with napery and the usual appointments.

Early Spanish chairs like some of the Italian chairs were of **X**-like shapes, and richly carved; ladies, however, used low stools. The upholstery and hangings of the chief apartments were especially chaste and rich, owing to the use of the gilded and painted leathers of Guadames, in Africa. There are few collectors of Spanish furniture specialising on that alone, most of the rarer examples being locked up in public collections.

The galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum are well stocked with examples, such as the finely fitted cabinet formerly containing plate and relics in the Carthusian Convent at Saragossa. The chairs, of which there are many in the museum, include a remarkably fine chair of carved chestnut partly painted and gilt, and back and seat being covered with painted and gilt leather; and on the back of this beautiful sixteenth-century chair are the arms of the Franciscan Order.

German Renaissance.

The Empire of Germany as an empire did not exist in the days of the Renaissance. The peoples of the States now embodied in Germany and Austria chiefly included in the so-called Holy Roman Empire (which one writer on furniture says was neither holy nor Roman), were distinctly mediæval in their tastes, and their architecture, furniture, and all

constructive arts retained some of those tendencies during the Renaissance which came to them after France and England had caught the inspiration. The furniture of the Renaissance of German origin is, therefore, very unlike the furniture of the same period made in Spain or Italy, or those countries which followed more directly the Italian lead.

German makers appear to have been much influenced by Flemish artists, as is seen in existing pieces. The cabinet-makers of the German people were at that time in advance of the wood-workers of many other nations, in that they had made use of the printing-press, and some of them had brought out books of designs, thereby supplying standards which could be copied by others. Some of these were evidently made use of by English furniture makers during the Tudor period.

Perhaps one of the chief departures made by German makers is seen in the wealth of wrought iron work, with which they covered their chests and furniture. Their metal-workers became famous for beautiful lock plates, handles, and hinges, which were often of extravagant styles. This characteristic is seen when the cupboards and chests of German make in the Victoria and Albert Museum are examined. There are many fine pieces there. Among the more recent acquisitions is a large oak chest of South German make—probably of sixteenth-century date—given by the executors of the late John Russell, Esq., of St John's, Sutton-at-Hone. Its chief beauty lies in the parqueterie decoration. Another remarkable piece is a fifteenth-century oak cupboard in four compartments, each of which is furnished with a separate lock, the plate of which is a most decorative piece of wrought iron work. The hinges, too, are especially attractive smiths' work.

The bed was a formidable piece of wood-work in Germany and in other countries at that time. Indeed, rather more so, for the testers at that period were enclosed on three sides.

The Netherlands.

There was a close commercial connection between Flanders and England during the sixteenth century, and a consequent interchange of merchandise, resulting in the same influences being at work in arts and crafts. Many of the Flemish pieces in our museums are not unlike Tudor oak, and no doubt the Renaissance affected the Netherlands much as it did this country. Moreover, the Flemish artists worked on similar lines to those followed by French wood-workers. The Continental love of colour is seen in some of the Flemish carvings which were often painted. Among the more important examples of Flemish work, possessed by this country, is a splendid piece of mediæval carving in rich red-black oak. It is a sideboard or credence table, the panels and doors of which are deeply recessed, and carved with the figures of saints and small heads. Unfortunately, the old locks have been removed. This beautiful piece in the Victoria and Albert Museum is staged along with others coming from the Netherlands. A very early example is a small oak cupboard on high legs, the tracery of the side panels being of Gothic design, and in the centre of the panels there are deeply carved monks' heads. It is a typical fifteenth-century piece.

Dutch Furniture.

The history of Dutch furniture is closely allied to English furniture making, and especially to English furnishing, and in the chapter on the Age of Walnut Dutch influence is referred to, showing the way in which the Dutch furniture makers supplied English buyers with furniture during the close of the Stuart period and during the early days of William and Mary.

Dutch makers were influenced by the Renaissance just the same as wood-workers in the Netherlands and in other Continental countries. The wood-workers of Holland had gained much reputation by the splendid carvings of their churches and town halls. Their domestic furniture, too, had received attention, and its makers had caught the same inspirations. They understood the true spirit of the Gothic style, and in a similar way as time went on they learned to make the most of the art of the Renaissance. The furniture which may be regarded as typical of their best efforts was made by Flemish artists and shipped to England and other countries. Dutch merchants became the patrons of Dutch wood-workers, and as traders were becoming wealthy in the early seventeenth century they employed them to carve the furniture for the imposing dwellings then springing up in Holland. The time soon came when Dutch furniture, even of a less elaborate character, gained notoriety for its excellent qualities and ornamental finish, and many fine pieces crossed over to England as the household treasures and heirlooms of the families which came over with William and Mary.

Among the Huguenot refugees, who were compelled to leave their country in 1685 on the Revocation of the Edict of

Nantes, were many skilled cabinet-makers. Some settled in Holland, others in England, and they did much to inspire Dutch artists.

The Dutch furniture which has gained the greatest notoriety among the present-day collectors is the remarkable marqueterie which changed in form in England after the death of Queen Mary. The Dutch inlays of ivory and mother-of-pearl also marked another stage in the decorative enrichment. Unfortunately many pieces of the so-called Dutch marqueterie offered in curio shops to-day are merely copies or duplicates. The fakers have been at work in every direction. Old Dutch furniture of poor appearance and of no special value has been covered with modern marqueterie of still poorer workmanship. The great revival in art which affected so many countries undoubtedly left its mark among the wood-workers of Holland.

French Renaissance.

The French Renaissance produced a marvellous effect upon the art of the country. The inspiration of French artists came direct from Italy. It was after the expedition of Charles VIII., who had crossed over into Italy and there seen the wonders of the Italian Renaissance. He had been brought under its spell. The result was that Italian artists were brought to France, and set to work adorning and refurnishing the palaces of kings and nobles. The gradual unfolding of French Renaissance, and the styles which followed at the different periods of French art are fully set forth in chapter x., in which the story of the Renaissance and its progress is recorded.

The English Renaissance.

As it has been pointed out the Renaissance spread westward through Italy, France, Spain, and Germany. Its full force was not felt in England with the same rapidity that it had been in some of the other countries, for it took shape slowly. The change from the mediæval Gothic came about in the reign of Henry VIII., and in due course developed into what we call the Tudor style (*see* chapter vi.), the full effects of which did not appear until the reign of Elizabeth.

In the cabinet-making or furniture trade much good work was accomplished locally. The Italian artists, and those who had come under the influence of the Renaissance in other countries, laid the foundations. We were fortunate, however, in having one who could take up the position of leader, for in Inigo Jones was found one entitled to the title of "The Father of English Revival." It was Horace Walpole who wrote of him,

> "Inigo Jones who, if a table of fame were to be formed for men of real and indisputable genius in every country, would save England from the disgrace of not having her representative among the arts. She (England) *adopted* Holbein and Vandyck; she *borrowed* Rubens; but she *produced* Inigo Jones."

That the Renaissance in England was influenced directly by Italian art, rather than that of the nations through whom the Renaissance had come, is fully recognised, for Henry VIII. encouraged art and craftsmanship. He sent to Italy for workmen, and those who came taught Englishmen in the arts in which they were deficient. Although the oak of the forests served to provide the wood of which most Tudor furniture was made it was supplemented by apple, pear, box, chestnut, walnut, holly, and pine. It is affirmed that the general interpretation of the Renaissance in England was almost the same as the view taken of Italian designs by the artists in France where Francis I. then reigned.

The monument erected in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Henry VII. is said to be strong evidence of the influence of Italian art, and its erection undoubtedly strengthened the Renaissance of art in wood-carving in this country. The decorative furniture of mediæval England was almost entirely confined to churches and ecclesiastical houses and the houses of the barons. During the Renaissance there was an improvement in the position of the citizen, and the real regeneration or rebirth going on in other countries found its counterpart in the greater comfort of the homes of English people. Early traces of the general improvement going on are seen in the comparatively few authentic pieces of fifteenth-century handicraft. The internal porches or entrances like that in the remarkable room from Sizergh Castle, now at South Kensington, referred to fully in chapter vi., are of Continental origin, and were no doubt Flemish. Several others are known in old English houses. There is one very interesting example at Broughton Castle on which is carved a motto which "Of what used to be, the memory pleases but little."

CHAPTER VI

THE TUDOR PERIOD

Good old English oak—Architectural furniture—The quality of carved oak—Distinguishing marks—Some curious pieces.

It is by no means easy to distinguish between the furniture made during the late Gothic period, or the time when the influence of Continental Renaissance was still strong in England, and that made when the Tudor sovereigns were seated on the English throne.

Few of the very early pieces are dated, and even when dates are found carved on antique oak they are not at all reliable, for they have sometimes been carved at a later date on earlier furniture. Such dates have frequently been carved in all good faith, in that to their owners they would indicate the time when the furniture came into possession of some member of the family, whose initials are carved thereon. To present-day owners and collectors such evident errors of date are apparent when the style of the lettering does not correspond with the designs of the carving, or the form of the piece of furniture. Dates which have been carved thereon in recent years to enhance the antiquarian value of the piece are not so easy to distinguish, for when placed there for that purpose the carver has tried to imitate the correct style of lettering, and has dated the piece according to his estimate of its age. Whilst many dealers are experts there are, however, many who never can grasp the points which enable the experienced dealer or collector to fix with tolerable certainty the period to which any given piece belongs. Such dealers very frequently overreach the mark, and spoil what would otherwise be good pieces, although made at somewhat later dates than they have given to them.

FIG. 10.—COURT CUPBOARD,
STUART PERIOD.
(*In the collection of Messrs. Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 11.—OAK HUTCH OR STORE CUPBOARD,
TUDOR.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

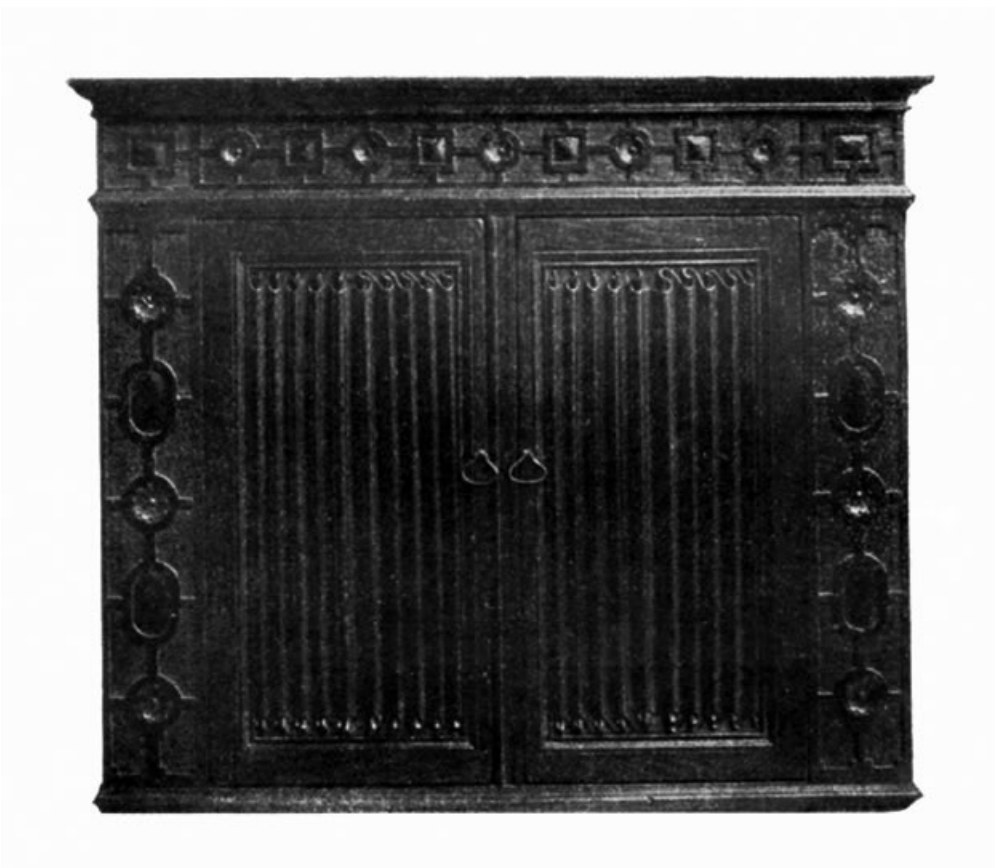

FIG. 12.—STORE CUPBOARD WITH LINEN FOLD PANELS,
ELIZABETHAN OR LATE TUDOR.

The collector divides his periods in several ways, but always tries to avoid the inevitable overlapping of styles. Writers upon this subject differ much in their mode of distinguishing the different periods of early oak, but all aim at putting some landmark in the history of furniture, and giving collectors indications by which they may fix their specimens in some well-defined period, although the mixing of styles and the gradual development which took place during the Tudor and early Jacobean periods gave rise to many nondescript pieces which cannot easily be said to belong to either one or other of the subdivisions of the Tudor period. In this and the following two chapters English furniture is referred to as "Tudor," "Elizabethan or late Tudor," and "Jacobean," using the latter term in the narrowed sense of the period after the Restoration. It may not be an ideal classification, but it is a convenient one, although some prefer to speak of the time from the commencement of the reign of Henry VII. to the close of that of Elizabeth as "Tudor," and then of the period terminating with the reign of James II. as "Stuart." In this work, however, the writer has chosen to divide chapters vi., vii., and viii. as follows:—

Tudor	Henry VII.	1485-1509
	Henry VIII.	1509-1547
	Edward VI.	1547-1553
	Mary	1553-1558
	Elizabeth	1558-1603
Elizabethan and Early Stewart	James I.	1603-1625
	Charles I.	1625-1649
	Commonwealth, (a brief period sometimes described as Cromwellian).	1649-1660
Jacobean Or Restoration	Charles II.	1660-1685
	James II.	1685-1688

Good Old English Oak.

Just as the days of William and Mary, and Queen Anne became known as "The Age of Walnut" in the furniture trade, so oak—good old English oak—cut from the heart of the tree from the branches down to the roots—continued to be used in Tudor days as it had been in early times, and became the Age of Oak, that is to say, the oak so beautifully carved and wrought so decoratively in architectural wood-work, like the panels of the linen-fold.

When bluff King Hal reigned the makers of furniture used the best possible oak for panelling, for chairs and benches, and for tables and four-post bedsteads, as their ancestors had chosen the best English oak for beams and architectural work in the days before much furniture was made. In early Tudor times, and even more so in late Tudor or Elizabethan days, the wood-carver was of paramount importance. The furniture, roughly cut and none too well smoothed, although strong and very substantial, needed the embellishment of the chisel and the carving tool to give it that imposing grandeur which makes "old oak" so attractive to the collector and the connoisseur.

Reference has been made to the strength and beauty of oak furniture in mediæval days, and in those later times when the Continental Renaissance was making itself felt in England. Now the admirers of old English furniture are invited to study some of the characteristics of Tudor oak, which will help them to identify any family relics they may possess. As this period is the one *par excellence* when oak shone (literally as well as figuratively) and its rich brown colour and its markings enhanced its beauty, it is easy to understand that its use was general, and that Tudor architects made use of it to add to the appearance of what up till then were plain looking Tudor buildings. Such houses must not be confused with the mediæval castles and strongholds which remained until after the Civil War. They were the houses and manors contemporary with the later castles, but not intended as places of defence, many of them being merely moated for

protection. It is the old moated granges of the Tudor, and still more so of the late Tudor or Elizabethan period, that furnish object lessons of the caskets which once contained the richly carved oak furniture which home connoisseurs treasure.

As it has already been suggested, the wood-work of the builder and the craftsmanship of those men who gave us decorated furniture cannot well be separated, and in discussing the style of the furniture of any one period it is almost necessary to consider the house in which it was used, and for which it was eminently suited—this affinity between the two was especially close during the Tudor period and the years which followed immediately afterwards.

Architectural Furniture.

Those who have visited some of the old Tudor and Elizabethan houses in Cheshire, Lancashire, and other counties where black and white houses of that period are still standing, will understand the connection, and enthusiastic collectors of old oak long for one of those Tudor manor houses, many of which have been converted into farmhouses, and, sad to relate, in many instances allowed to fall into decay. Perhaps one of the best known black and white timbered houses is Old Moreton Hall, in Cheshire, one of the show places visited by Americans and others who are anxious to learn what the moated granges of England were like in the sixteenth century. When wandering through the now deserted ballroom of that grand old pile, and when treading the creaking boards of similar relics of long ago, we can realise how Tudor England looked, and understand how well the oak furniture of that day suited the decoratively carved buildings, as well as the purposes of its sturdy owners.

English oak presented to the wood-carvers an ideal material upon which to operate, and as its colour darkened with age and exposure and shone with the polish of honest labour, its beauty increased. Such old oak has come down to us in varied conditions. Sometimes the collector acquires it almost new, after the necessary cleaning process it has undergone, or when many layers of Georgian and Victorian paint have been removed. At others it is almost black (sometimes suspiciously so, having been assisted at some period by a darkening process), and although connoisseurs prefer the rich golden brown or brown-black they do not object to the "colour of age" and the polish imparted by frequent rubbing.

The lasting qualities of wainscot oak are due to the lavish hand of the wood-cutter who picked the very best timber, and that marked as indicating it was indeed "heart of oak." The timber was not sawn, it was then customary to rive it. Sometimes panelling was inlaid and even carved, and the furniture often built to fit recesses was *en suite*. The way in which furniture and panelling were made to harmonise, probably under the supervision of one man, is seen in the magnificent relic of early Tudor days from Sizergh Castle, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. It consists of an entire room brought from the old castle in Westmorland, and reconstructed. The ceiling is a fine piece of Tudor plastering; the walls are of panelled oak, inlaid with holly and bog oak. The white and black upon the brown oak, although darkened by age and frequent polishing, produces a marvellous effect. This room—a bedroom—is approached by a curiously contrived entrance which is recessed into the room. There is also a deep window seat, and the entire wood-work is covered over with a design characteristic of early Tudor decoration, the inlays being cleverly effected and some portions carved. In connection with the exhibit there is the great State bed belonging to the room, its framework inlaid with the same woods to match. The massive grandeur of this piece must be seen to be fully appreciated. No doubt chairs and tables and other objects of furniture were at one time used in conjunction with the bedstead, and presented a grand object lesson of the close connection between the furniture maker and the architectural wood-worker.

The Quality of Carved Oak.

The quality of some of the carvings on early Tudor furniture is very noticeable, the more so because it is sometimes seen upon what would otherwise be quite plain uninteresting pieces, not always giving the impression of skilled workmanship. This is due probably to the not infrequent practice of employing local workmen to make the furniture and afterwards foreign carvers—of whom there were many in this country then—to decorate it. There is no doubt much of the work, such as the carvings on the fronts of chests, cupboards, and even chair backs, was done after the furniture was made, and not as it would be nowadays during the process of manufacture.

The characteristics of early Tudor ornament as seen on furniture are useful to note. In the early part of the period there were heads or medallions ("Romayne" work) clearly showing Italian influence.

The painted and gilded ornament of the Renaissance fell into disuse during Henry VII.'s reign, and was but little practised in the reign of his son. Indeed, in Henry VII.'s time inlays came into vogue, not only for the larger pieces and panels like the room from Sizergh Castle, but for smaller objects also.

It is said the dolphins found upon work executed about the middle of the sixteenth century were adopted as a form of decoration by English workmen after the visit of Henry VIII. to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the dolphin being the device of the Dauphin; undoubtedly such a display as that which history has recorded would make an impression at that time, and as the news of its grandeur spread through rural England, the importance of the event, the *entente cordiale* of Tudor days, would sink into the minds of craftsmen as well as of their patrons, and when designing furniture the dolphin would be welcomed as a new and appropriate symbol of the friendship between the two countries. The *guilloche* was another adaptation of the idea coming from the Continent.

In realising what the furniture of Tudor days looked like, and when reconstructing a well-furnished room with such pieces as are available, it should be remembered that although oak was the principal timber used, it was supplemented by other woods, although they were mostly employed as inlays, and for ornament upon a base of less costly material; the supplementary woods of that time were ebony, holly, yew, pear, and cherry.

The need of a secret chamber or of a safe hiding-place was felt in Tudor times, and the furniture, especially the architectural furniture, was often designed to assist in the deceit. There were sliding panels in the wainscoting, and secret entrances through the heads of beds, and through wardrobes and cupboards, all of which pieces were attached to the walls or fixed in some permanent position. Sometimes there was a false back or double panelling, so that the secret chamber could be approached from behind the bed; and recesses and doorway entrances were made to look like pieces of furniture, whereas they were but disguised entrances to stairways and secret chambers, or to lofts above.

Distinguishing Marks.

The simplest plan to adopt when wishing to understand the chief features of Tudor furniture is to note carefully isolated pieces which have been obtained from different parts of the country, to compare their designs, and when approximate dates are known, or can be fixed with some degree of certainty, to familiarise oneself with the points of advance in the evolution of chair, table, or other object (*see* chapters xxii.-xxv.)

It will be convenient here to mention points of interest noticeable in Tudor days. The chair, practically the earliest domestic piece of furniture, seems to have retained the solidity of the Middle Ages until the Tudor days were well advanced. It was, however, even in the earlier Tudor period, further decorated by bolder and more frequent carvings, not always adding to its comfort, especially so in the case of the Master's Chair or chair of honour.

As in earlier days the benches (*bancs*) used as seats were plain, and so were the stools. About the middle of the sixteenth-century Italian chairs became popular in England. They were without backs, but velvet or some other material was stretched across the spaces between the arms which were formed of semicircular pieces of wood, the legs being of similar shape, inverted. The small settles or benches with backs were favoured somewhat, a feature of this time being the monk's bench, which was a small settle, the back of which folded over so as to form a table top.

The tables of early Tudor times are grand in their solidity, and are imposing pieces of antique oak. The legs are bulbous, the bulb affording the carver an exceptional opportunity of giving bold strokes with his chisel. These legs—four in number—were joined by stout rails, and there was generally a rail between each pair of legs, crossed again by a middle layer. Carvings are seldom met with either on the tops or the panels, the legs affording the chief ornament.

The four legs of the oak tables are suggestive of the four bulbous supports of the massive beds of that day. The tester was then large and heavy, and the cornice often equally as massive. Strength and solidity were indeed striking characteristics of such furniture.

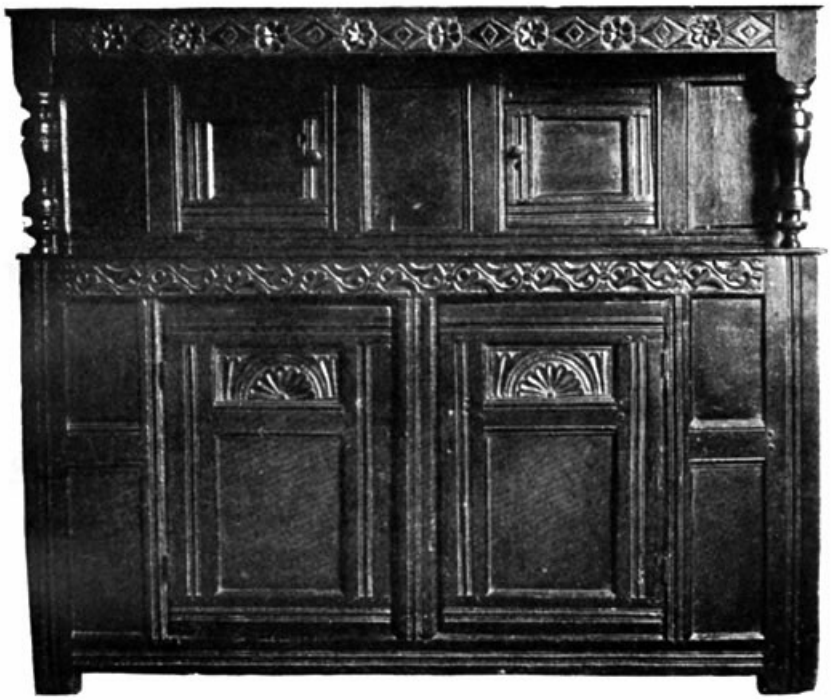

FIG. 13.—COURT CUPBOARD, OAK,
ELIZABETHAN.
(*Phillips. Hitchin.*)

FIG. 14.—CARVED OAK BUFFET,

ELIZABETHAN.
(*Gill and Reigate. Ltd.*)

FIG. 15.—CARVED OAK CABINET,
PERIOD 1610-1620.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

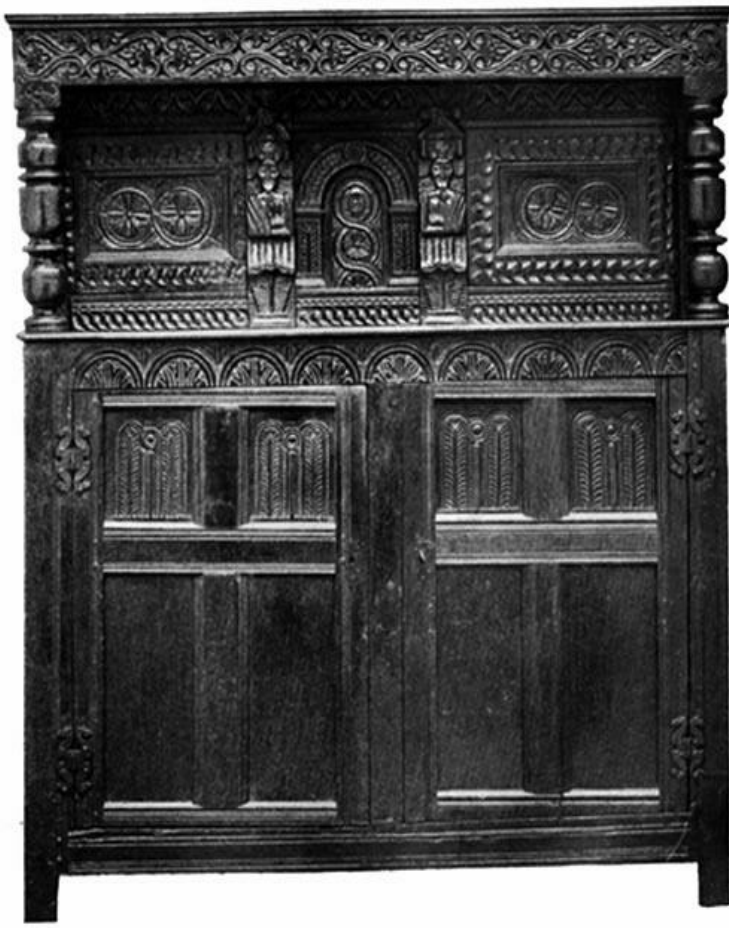

FIG. 16.—CARVED OAK BUFFET,
DATED 1640.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

The livery cupboard is essentially a relic of the sixteenth century. According to Parker the livery cupboard was owned by those who did not possess little ambries, and was chiefly used for placing the dishes upon as they were brought into the hall. In the livery cupboard, however, cups were hung in rows on hooks, and there was usually a ewer and basin provided for washing them after use. The "cup" board was originally open; that is to say merely shelves on which to place cups and similar articles; the addition of doors was an afterthought. Some authorities say that the cupboard doors were first added to the dole cupboards, on the shelves of which were placed the fragments of the feast which were afterwards given to the poor. It is not at all unlikely that servants and others who had access to the victuals would be tempted to make too free with them, and the doors upon which there were strong locks would act as a deterrent. It is noticeable that many of the older cupboards still remaining can be traced to ecclesiastical buildings. Hence the prevalence of Gothic design in the dole cupboards.

SOME CURIOUS PIECES.

Some of the food lockers, as they were called, which were used during the Middle Ages and through Tudor days, have perforated doors—mostly Gothic in design—which were originally lined with cloth to keep out the dust, although the material would admit a certain amount of ventilation.

The old custom of giving away bread to the poor on certain days in churches and other ecclesiastical establishments gave rise to their frequent use in churches; the dole cupboard or almery, as it was called, had a somewhat open front, so that the contents would be visible. Indeed a rail or a very open trellis alone prevented access to the contents. There are several fine examples of dole cupboards in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in several instances they can be seen in the churches and buildings for which they were originally made. Indeed, the ancient custom has not yet quite died out, for there are existing bequests under which the trustees continue periodical gifts of bread to the poor, and in some few instances use ancient dole cupboards. There are no less than three almeries in a Norman recess in the south transept of St Alban's Abbey. They are used every Sunday, the ancient dole having been distributed weekly in St Alban's Abbey for upwards of three centuries. These shallow little receptacles are quite small, holding about a dozen loaves each; one of the cupboards is of somewhat later date than the others, indicating by its decoration the style of the period of Charles I., when brackets and strap ornaments were in vogue. It has been pointed out that court cupboards as distinct from any other form were originally short cupboards, the name being derived from the French word *court*, short, thus distinguishing them from standing cupboards of the *dressoir* type. They were originally in two divisions, the upper being recessed and covered with a cornice which was supported by a turned column standing on the lower division. In later years the support became a pendant drop, frequently of acorn shape.

There is one other piece of furniture which should be noted in Tudor antiques, and that is the *armoire*, which was originally made to protect armour from dust and rust. When armour became obsolete the *armoire* became a cupboard in which to hang dress equipments. In it we have the early wardrobe.

Fig. 11 represents an oak hutch or store cupboard, such as those already referred to. It is a very fine piece in excellent preservation, and together with Fig. 12 was lately in the possession of Mr Phillips, of Hitchin. This latter example, Fig. 12, is a Tudor store cupboard with well-carved ornament, the chief characteristics being the beautiful linen-fold of the door panels.

CHAPTER VII

ELIZABETHAN AND EARLY STUART

The days of Queen Bess—The marked development in style—Some splendid examples—The furniture of the early Stuarts—When the shadow of Civil War loomed dark—Cromwellian oak.

When Queen Elizabeth reigned in England, and visited so many country houses, the Gothic influence which had lingered long had entirely disappeared. It is probable that many of the traditional rooms in which Queen Elizabeth is said to have slept were never occupied by that august sovereign. Nevertheless it is true that the Virgin Queen honoured many of her subjects with visits, and when making one of her lengthy tours, or when paying a visit to one of her more distant towns, she would rest by the way at many country manor houses, as well as at the more imposing stately homes of England. Travelling by road was slow in those days, and the stages taken on such occasions were short. Hence it is that there are so many wonderful beds in which "Elizabeth slept." The news of her coming, although heralded in advance, would be too short to allow for any new furnishings to be done—for there were no house-furnishing emporiums where such an order could have been placed. Commissions took long to execute—especially the manufacture of a state bed, or one of the more important pieces of furniture for the great hall—hence *all* those courtiers who hoped sooner or later to receive a visit from the Queen had to be in readiness. To that cause is attributable, perhaps, the activity among the cabinet-makers of that day, and the many fine pieces of oak furniture which bear undoubted evidence of having been made during the Elizabethan period.

The Days of Queen Bess.

The beautiful Elizabethan wood-work of the Charterhouse, Gray's Inn Hall, and other contemporary London buildings, gives us a very good idea of the interiors of rooms for which the oak furniture of the days of Queen Bess was made.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are many rooms and fragments of rooms which have been removed from old houses. Reference has been made in the previous chapter to the insertion of dates on Tudor furniture at subsequent periods. There are few genuine dated pieces before the time of Elizabeth, but of her reign there are many, although the dated pieces are still more numerous later on in the seventeenth century.

The famous front of the house once belonging to Sir Paul Pinder, in Bishopsgate Street, built about the year 1600, is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. It shows the remarkable lattice windows and front which are so characteristic of the architecture of that day, and which must have influenced furniture designers and makers in their styles and schemes of decoration. Sir Paul Pinder was ambassador from James I., at Constantinople 1611-1620, but his mansion had then been built, so that there can be no suspicion of an Oriental style influencing him. Sir Paul's house front had doubtless many replicas in London then, but they are nearly all gone! Another example which is well known is the reputed palace of Henry VII., in Fleet Street—a typical early Tudor town house.

FIG. 17.—OAK CUPBOARD,
EARLY 17th CENTURY.
(*Phillips. Hitchin.*)

FIG. 18.—OAK GAME CUPBOARD,
EARLY 17TH CENTURY.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 19.—OAK TABLE BENCH.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 20.—OAK SETTEE,
EARLY 17th CENTURY.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

THE MARKED DEVELOPMENT IN STYLE.

The Gothic style having been got rid of, designers were free to strike out new lines of ornament. It has been said that the Elizabethan style was influenced by the classical, but not so much as either the early Tudor or the later Jacobean.

Another characteristic of the period is the strap or interlaced strap, some of the finest examples of which are to be seen at Haddon Hall, which was built during Henry VIII.'s reign.

The small scoop moulding given to the edges of chairs and cornices, carried to an extreme in its too free use in later times, began to be used in Elizabethan days. The panels were then rather small, but the mouldings were large in proportion, and sometimes wide as well as deep. Bedstead heads were then panelled, the earlier ones with linen-fold, which is said to have been very useful to conceal secret doors which were sometimes found in the head of the bed.

The introduction of inlays which had begun a few years before was continued, and their use extended. The broad mouldings gave opportunities of ornamental inlays, and the small panels on furniture, walls, and chests were suited to the purposes of the inlayer. By means of different woods inlays produced light and shade, and enriched the beauty of the so-called jewel work. What is technically known as strap and jewel moulding was much favoured, also geometrical patterns; conventional flowers also made their appearance about that time.

Elizabethan wood-carvers were more skilled than the carvers of earlier days, and they acquired a lighter touch. Moreover, they adopted figures and decorations instead of the somewhat meaningless ornament of an earlier period. They carved supports and columns in the form of caryatides, which, although first culled from the classic figures of the Italian type, were altered at the will or whim of the carver, who sometimes saw greater possibilities in savage or sylvan men.

The acorn-shaped ornament found favour with the wood-carver. The round arch is another feature often noticed upon the backs of armchairs made in Elizabeth's day; and a flower—something like a sunflower—is frequently seen on chair backs and chests of the period. The round arch is common, too, and the arch, pillar caps, and other ornaments are sometimes built up upon the flat surface of the carcass of the chest or Court cupboard on which they form the decorations, piece by piece. They thus form an architectural building upon the surface. In later times similar designs were followed, but incised instead of being built up of separate pieces. This produced a flat effect in the inferior work, showing but little relief, and without the clear-cut appearance of the older method.

It has often been noticed that the most striking innovation in the furniture of Elizabethan days was the fuller development of the Court cupboard, which then differed from the flat cupboards of the early Tudor in that the upper part was recessed. The ledge thus provided not only served a useful purpose, but it made the court cupboard a much handsomer piece of furniture, the recess of the cupboard at a convenient angle offering further opportunities of effective ornament. The jewelled bulbs of the balusters supporting the canopy were especially bold and pleasing. Indeed, the jewelled bulbs of the pillars are the principal characteristics of design in the Court cupboards of Elizabeth and during the earlier Stuart period, especially in the reign of James I., when many fine cupboards were made.

Some Splendid Examples.

We seek for the finest examples of Elizabethan furniture in the old English halls of the older aristocracy where they have remained from the days of Elizabeth, and may, for aught we can tell, have been examined and admired by her. They are mostly furnishings of the homes of which their owners are proud, and, like the Tudor mansions themselves, precious heirlooms. Alas, changes have come over rural England during the last few decades, and almost every season some old home is broken up, and connoisseurs and dealers bid against one another in the auction mart for the coveted pieces—genuine antiques.

The prices paid for such relics show that the supply is far short of the demand. Some fine examples cross over to American soil and join the treasured English furniture taken over to the States in the eighteenth century (*see* chapter xviii.), and others are placed in private collections and museums.

There are several well-known dealers who have acquired fine old historical houses, in themselves worth a visit, wherein they house the collections gathered together. In such fitting places buyers can fully appreciate the value of the antiques they are securing. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are many choice pieces. As an architectural piece it would be difficult to find anything finer or more suggestive of old English town houses than an oak staircase taken from a house dated 1646 which formerly stood in Great St Helens. As typical of the interior wood-work of a good provincial house there is the panelling of carved oak, probably made about the year 1600, from a house near Exeter. The colour is rich dark brown, the panels are divided by pilasters beautifully carved and capped with the heads of grotesque monsters. The doors fit in their frames quite flush with the panels, a noticeable feature being the old latches and wrought iron hinges of **H** pattern, the straps of which are of fancy design; the handles on some of the doors are of simple Suffolk latch pattern. The furniture shown represents the characteristics of the different pieces already referred to.

The accompanying illustrations are taken from noted collections, and include some very fine examples of Elizabethan furniture.

Fig. 10 is an exceptionally fine Court cupboard of the late Tudor or Stuart period. There are two beautifully carved figures supporting the upper corners. With the exception of the lower panels of the doors of the cupboard this piece is carved all over. The split turned ornament, a feature in later Jacobean furniture, is noticeable, as well as the finely carved rosettes on the cornice.

Fig. 13 is another Court cupboard with turned columns, a plainer piece, but somewhat larger. It is a genuine antique in the condition many of the old Court cupboards are met with. Fig. 14 represents a buffet with large bulbous supports, so frequently met with in the time of Queen Elizabeth—an exceptionally fine piece in the possession of Messrs Gill & Reigate Ltd. of Oxford Street. The carving is excellent, and it is in a good state of preservation.

By the courtesy of Mr Phillips of Hitchin, we are able to illustrate a very similar piece showing the panelled ends, and the somewhat lessened size of the bulbous supports. In this buffet there are small trusses under the cornice, and drop handles to the doors. In both this and the former piece the circular arches are well defined and the design carefully carried out.

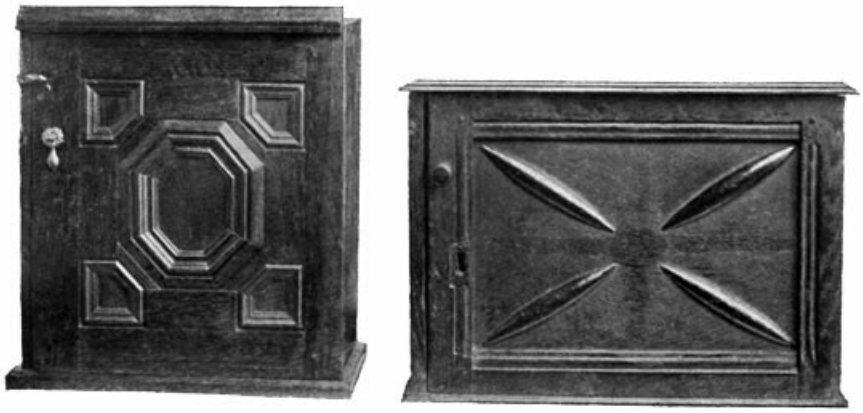

FIG. 21.—TWO OAK SPICE CUPBOARDS,
TUDOR OR EARLY ELIZABETHAN.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 22.—OAK CHEST OF DRAWERS,
***Circa* 1660.**
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 23.—CROMWELLIAN GATE-LEGGED TABLE, OAK.
(*Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

FIG. 24.—GATE-LEGGED TABLE, CHERRYWOOD.
(*Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

Fig. 15 is slightly more decorative in its scroll ornament. Another exceptionally interesting carved oak buffet is illustrated in Fig. 16. In this the scroll work predominates, and there are no arches. Instead of bulbous supports there are pendant drops, and, what is still more interesting, it is a dated piece, the date 1640 being carved in the centre of the cornice. The lower panels of the cupboards of this buffet are also decorative; the leaf ornament in the upper long panels of the lower cupboard being somewhat unusually clear and distinct.

Fig. 17 is a well preserved oak cupboard, early seventeenth century. Fig. 18 is an exceptionally interesting piece, being one of the rare early seventeenth century game cupboards. Its height is 2 ft. 10 in., width 3 ft. 11 in., and depth, 1 ft. 8 in. The doors are perforated, and the centre panels too are covered over with a perforated design, the stiles of the cupboard being well carved. The top is plain, but there are two turned pinnacles.

Many benches and rough oak tables were made in the seventeenth century, as well as the more decorative pieces, in which the carver's art is seen to such perfection. Fig. 19 represents a table bench, strong and serviceable, and Fig. 20 illustrates an old oak settle, one of those which were so commonly in use at that period, and even at a later date. Fig. 21 shows two smaller oaken cupboards, technically called spice cupboards, and no doubt they were found very useful in Tudor and Elizabethan days; those illustrated, by the smallness of their panels and the depths of the moulding, indicate a somewhat later period. The split ornament is also used. The dimensions of these cupboards are as follows:—21*a*, height 1 ft. 5 in., width 1 ft. 2½ in., depth 7½ in.; Fig. 21*b*, height 1 ft. 2 in., width 1 ft. 7½ in., depth, 11 in. The last illustration representative of this period, Fig. 22, shows an oak chest of drawers of Cromwellian or late Stuart type, probably made about 1660. The drop handles are a special feature as well as the panels and moulding of the front. The bracket foot is also worthy of special note. This strong and useful chest measures 2 ft. 9½ in. in height; its length is 3 ft., and depth 1 ft. 9 in.

THE FURNITURE OF THE EARLY STUARTS.

When James VI. of Scotland ascended the throne of England, as might reasonably have been expected, some Scotch emblems were introduced. This was done, especially in the North of England. The Scotch thistle is noticeable on the panels of the oak chest shown in Fig. 77. This chest, upwards of three hundred years old, is almost black with age, although when viewed in the sunlight it presents a rich brown-black hue. The panels are larger than those made in the

time of Elizabeth. Indeed during the reign of James I. the panels were enlarged, but the mouldings were reduced in size until they often became narrow fillets of shallow ogee moulds.

The chests of Stuart days were essentially architectural in design. As the mouldings were reduced the effect was not so good, and a much flatter decoration lessened the height of the relief. By degrees the panels were regarded with less favour, and plain ends were substituted for panelled and moulded ends, in some instances the tops or lids becoming quite plain also; yet curiously enough some of the chests which would have otherwise been of small interest were exceedingly well cut upon the fronts (*see* chapter xxi.).

It should be noted that tables underwent a change in the early Stuart days, many being made quite small and often square, some of these Stuart tables having small drawers in them. The Court cupboard became less decorative, and eventually, towards the close of the reign of Charles I., the use of caryatides disappeared altogether. It was in the reign of James I. that Inigo Jones exerted so much influence upon decorative wood-work, and later, when he was appointed Surveyor of Works to Charles I., his influence was still further extended.

When the Shadow of Civil War loomed Dark.

The Civil War in England cast a gloom over the land. In those districts where battles were fought craftsmen thought more about sharpening their swords and forging their pikes than grinding their tools for the pursuit of peaceful arts. The supporters of the King's cause gave their gold and their plate to support the army. They had no orders for furniture to give. Then came the manning of the walls and the fierce defence of the ancestral home. Of those sad times a picture could be painted dark and lurid with fire and shot. Ancient oak furniture was piled up as barriers to delay a little longer the inroad of the invaders, and sad indeed were the fires that destroyed those baronial castles and moated granges in which so much furniture of priceless value to the connoisseur perished.

Strongholds were dismantled and royal palaces rifled, and more old oak fed the fires which were intended to purge the land. Then came the end, and the King was no more. The Ironside Cromwell endeavoured to satisfy the country with a new order of things. Under his stern rule Peace spread her wings over villages, and homesteads were reared once more. Furniture was needed, and little by little new chairs, tables, and other articles, necessaries mostly, were fashioned. By Cromwell's order the furniture and other appointments of nineteen royal palaces were either sold to foreigners or destroyed. That accounts perhaps for the fact that no Tudor furniture is to be found in Windsor Castle.

Cromwellian Oak.

There was an undoubted decline in decorative art in the days of Cromwell, for all things plain—Puritanical—took the place of the ornamental carved furniture of an earlier period. In the furniture made during the Commonwealth there is evidence of a steady movement towards severity, and few original ideas are traceable. Bevels and raised geometrical designs seem to have been mostly favoured. One writer on the subject described this form of decoration as having

> "the similitude to the ground plans of fortresses, as if the battles of the Civil War had been indelibly stamped upon the minds of cabinet-makers, whose chisels followed the lines of encampments and the embattlements, and the ground plans of castellated fortresses which they had attacked and perchance laid low in the days when they had left their workshops and donned armour and carried pikes on behalf of the Parliamentary forces."

It is noteworthy that the addition of a drawer to the chest began in Cromwellian days, for it is very rare to find any chests with drawers previous to the death of Charles I. There are many old chests on tall legs which have had a drawer fitted at a later date; the addition, however, can often be recognised, in that the decoration is not always in keeping. In some of the inventories prepared in early Restoration times, such then modern innovations were described as "an oak chest with a drawer," and later, when two drawers were added, "a chest with drawers," eventually the term becoming "a chest of drawers."

FIG. 25.—GATE-LEGGED TABLE, OAK.

FIG. 26.—OAK CHAIR, STUART PERIOD.

(*In the collection of Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 27.—CARVED OAK VESTRY CHAIR,
JACOBEAN.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 28.—CARVED WALNUT CHAIR,
JACOBEAN.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

The chairs of Cromwell's days were supported by rail stretchers which from the middle of the century were raised somewhat from the floor, and in some cases set far back under the seats. The upholstery took the form of low padded backs which were covered with brocade or leather. Brass-headed nails were then much used, and were the chief ornament round the upholstery. The chair backs left an open space between the back and seat which was sunk to facilitate the use of loose cushions. Although no doubt Cromwellian chairs were locally made, it is said that most of the so-called Cromwell chairs were imported from Holland. Even then Dutch furniture was coming over to this country, although it was at a later period that so much of the beautiful Dutch marqueterie became the fashion in England.

CHAPTER VIII

JACOBEAN OR RESTORATION

Influences at work—Characteristics of designs—Furniture of the Restoration—Distinctive types sprang up.

The furniture treated on in this chapter is that which was made soon after the Restoration, and the style that continued to be followed with more or less change and development during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., in fact until Dutch influence made itself felt and an entirely new phase came about in the history of the furniture trade.

In order that the home connoisseur may rightly understand the chief points of distinction in the several periods in which he directs his researches, it is most important that he should bear in mind the conditions under which the changes which mark the boundaries of those periods were made.

In French furniture the revolutions and changes of monarchy through which the country passed, and was experiencing, had a remarkable bearing upon the characteristics of design and ornament. As we have seen, the Continental Renaissance had an immense influence upon the wood-workers' craft in this country, and as will be gathered from a perusal of a subsequent chapter Dutch influence, the result of a change in the line of the reigning sovereigns, was brought to bear upon the furniture which was made in England during the Age of Walnut.

English people were tired of the Commonwealth and gladly welcomed the son of the King they had executed; so glad that the people looked with an indulgent eye upon his weaknesses and allowed what a few years before would have been sternly condemned to influence trade and commerce, and further to influence art, design, and even the purpose of domestic furniture. Royal favour was extended in many directions, but no one will take exception to that given to Grinling Gibbons, who found in Charles II. a patron.

Influences at Work.

The "discovery" of Gibbons was a great event. Evelyn tells us that the King saw some of the work of Grinling Gibbons at Whitehall. He was so pleased with it that he showed it to the Queen, who was delighted, and as the direct result some commissions were given forthwith for decorative carving for Windsor Castle. The ruthless destruction of old furniture after the downfall of the royal cause, and the subsequent trial and execution of Charles I., had stripped royal residences of much that was rare. The loss, however, gave Charles II., an opportunity of furnishing anew, and the influence of his example was followed by many royalists, who thought to retrieve their fallen fortunes and to restore the dignity of their homes—many of which they began to rebuild.

Grinling Gibbons, having been brought into notoriety by the patronage accorded to him by the King, was soon busy. Sir Christopher Wren employed him to carve some of his wonderful floral festoons, fruit, and flowers, some of which it is said were so delicate that they would shake with the vibration of passing vehicles. Gibbons' handiwork may be recognised in St Paul's Cathedral, many of the London churches, Windsor, Studley Royal, Lowther Castle, Trinity College, Oxford, and the Bristol Old Library. So much carving is attributable to the chisel of Gibbons, that probably much of it was done by his pupils, or by those wood-carvers who had caught his style, and had been brought under his influence.

The mistresses of Charles had great influence over him, and appear to have had much to do with the changes that came about in royal favour, and in art and craftsmanship, in such rapid succession. The "Fair Castlemaine," who was created Duchess of Cleveland, set the fashion during the first half of Charles II.'s reign, for she was then his chief favourite, and he willingly conceded her every whim. Then later, when her rival came into power, French influence was brought into the English Court. It was then that Louise de Queronalle became Charles's mistress, and was eventually created Duchess of Portsmouth, her son being made Duke of Richmond. This lady's influence was remarkable, and some of the cabinet-makers of the day were commissioned to make new furniture for the King—for it is said that the extravagance of the Duchess of Portland demanded that her rooms should be refurnished several times—and they sought to please the royal mistress by taking their inspiration for new designs of ornament in French art. French tapestry was favoured, and the apartments of this lady soon resembled those of the French Court in the days of Louis XIV. Her rooms

were also filled with Japanese cabinets, screens, and tables, the cabinets being placed upon stands carved not unlike the Italian art of the Renaissance.

It may be pointed out here that although oak was still used it was in the reign of Charles II. that walnut was noticed, its smooth surface being regarded a merit in itself, influencing in no small measure its use.

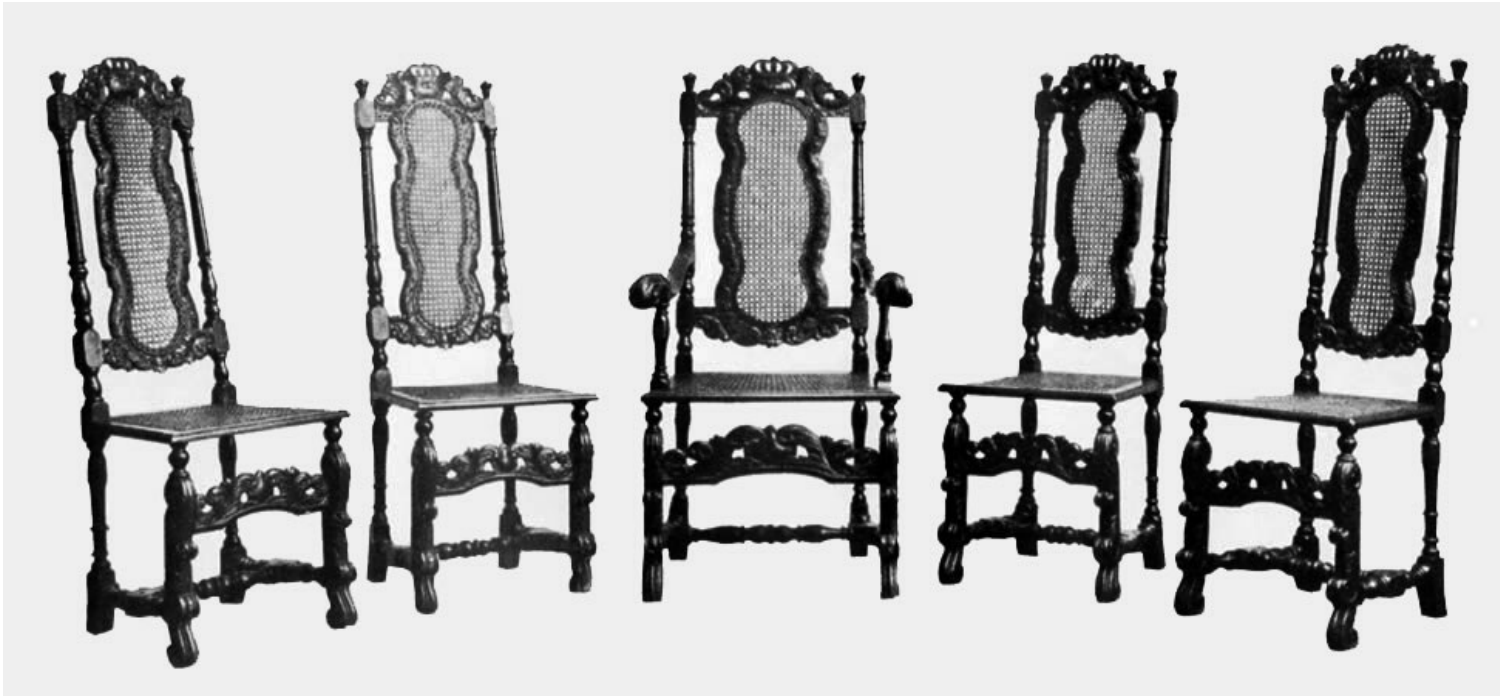

FIG. 29. SET OF FOUR SMALL AND ONE ARM CHAIR,
***Circa* 1686.**
(*In the collection of Gill & Reigate, Ltd.*)

FIG. 30. PANELLED SIDE TABLE, OAK,
***Circa* 1700.**
(*In the collection of Mallett & Son, Bath and London.*)

The loyalty of the Royalists was shown by following every change in the mode at the Court, and the chairs and other pieces of furniture which were gradually introduced were duplicated; one and all became a part of the Restoration,

which influenced Society in this country at that time.

Another reason why so much new furniture was made in the reign of Charles II.—furniture makers must have been very busy then—was because the revulsion of feeling against the Commonwealth and the rule of the Lord Protector showed itself in an anxiety to discard everything that bore the stamp of the plain Puritanical order of things, and to substitute the new or Restoration style.

Charles II., and those who had shared his banishment, could not readily forget the countries where they had spent their exile, neither could they look with other than favour upon the objects to which they had grown accustomed. Thus it was that foreign fashion and French, Italian, and Flemish styles were welcomed, and English artisans were encouraged to copy them.

Characteristics of Designs.

The collector finds some noticeable characteristics in the designs followed by chair-makers during the Restoration period. The spiral turning of the legs is very remarkable. This beautiful method was practised with good effect by the leading chair-makers, but we find much contemporary work not so good; indeed, it is evident that many tried to copy the peculiar style of turning without having proper tools or appliances to produce the best effects. In reference to the spiral twist, it is said that this peculiarly characteristic ornament was of Eastern origin, travelling westward and coming to this country by way of Portugal and Holland.

The solid wood backs of the chairs of Elizabethan days were continued right up to the end of the Stuart period, but they were used side by side with the handsomely carved chairs with caned backs, which became so famous at that time, also in conjunction with larger chairs which were so effective with their richly coloured upholsteries. The carved and pierced work of the chair backs and front rails was very decorative. The horizontal back rails and uprights were deeply carved, and although much of the wood was cut away there was sufficient left to make them substantial. At that time the backs became higher, affording greater opportunities of decorative carving in the upper portion; the crown surmounting the tall carved frame of the caned back chairs was then a conspicuous feature (note examples illustrated in this chapter).

The free adoption of the Dutch style of carving became a growing influence, increasing in its use, and eventually predominating in the designs of the period. There are marked characteristics about the decorative ornaments of the chests *of* drawers, and the chests *on* drawers which became cupboards. Pendant decoration is a decided feature; it was produced by turned ornament split and laid on. At that time chests on stands with twisted rails and supports were mostly of oak; but walnut was coming, and when it came it did so with a rush. The moulded panelling, a distinct feature in the furniture of Charles II., is one of the characteristics of the closing years of the Stuart era. These panels arranged in geometrical lines took the place of the inlays of Elizabethan days (these inlays are, of course, in no way associated with the Dutch marqueterie, which is referred to more particularly in another chapter).

The large lock plates and straps of an earlier period gave place in Charles's time to fancy decorative escutcheons. It was then that the chest of drawers finally evolved from the simple chest with a drawer under it, and became such an important piece of furniture.

Furniture of the Restoration.

It is difficult to distinguish what have been called characteristics of designs from the objects themselves. It may be taken that the prevailing style of ornament was applied with more or less success to all decorative furniture. The chests of drawers were the most noticeable in that there had been some considerable developments in form as well as in decoration and ornament. The drawers and cupboards and canopied tops assumed the form of the chests of drawers as made during the last quarter of the seventeenth century and onwards, although the cupboard underneath was often retained. It was at that time that the high boys, or "tall boys," as they were called later, came into being, and their popularity continued throughout the whole of the eighteenth century. It is noteworthy that the legs under drawers and chests were superseded by a bracket foot about the year 1680; an example of the foot is seen in Fig. 22, in which the bracket is conspicuous.

The style of the room in which furniture of this period was used may be gathered from inspection of the panelling removed from one of the rooms in an old house in Clifford's Inn, now reconstructed in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was taken from a house built in 1686, and is of the style then prevailing. Such old rooms, or reconstructed rooms, are

indeed fitting places in which to show off to the best advantage Jacobean furniture, and collectors are wise in preparing a suitable casket in which to enclose their gems. Fortunate indeed are those who have an old house at their disposal, a ready-made museum.

The gate-legged tables with spiral twisted legs which collectors so much admire are of that period. The table is usually oval, the top being made in three pieces, two of which are flaps which can be raised or lowered by moving the gate-leg supports under them. Such tables are mostly of oak, although not of that wood in every case. For instance, Fig. 23 represents an oak table in its original condition, whereas Fig. 24 indicates a gate-legged table made of cherry-wood, the legs in the latter case being turned, in the former spirally cut.

It is interesting to note here the greater width of the dining-table used from Restoration days onwards. It was due, it is said, to a greater strength of security enabling the guests to be served from either side of the table, which was then placed in the centre of the room, whereas at an earlier time, the guests sat with their backs to the wall, facing the servers who moved about in front of narrow tables.

Many of the older London halls of the City Companies contain fine examples of Jacobean furniture, which were made after the rebuilding of the halls which had been destroyed in the Great Fire. Specially noticeable is the Master's Chair of the Brewers' Company; the fruit and flowers with which it is ornamented is a masterpiece of carving. At Dalkeith Palace there are some fine chairs which were given by Charles II. to his son, the Duke of Monmouth.

The dresser underwent some changes at this time, and some important developments which gave rise to a distinct local characteristic are referred to in another paragraph in this chapter.

FIG. 31.—OAK DRESSER TABLE,
JACOBEAN.
(*At the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 32.—CARVED OAK BUFFET,
JACOBEAN.
(*In the collection of Gill & Reigate, Ltd.*)

The day-bed or couch of the second half of the seventeenth century is an important departure. Of these there are several in the Victoria and Albert Museum, one of them having beautifully carved rails, the head being supported by figures carved in the framework. The upholstery used has evidently been renewed, for the needlework with which it is covered is of a somewhat later date. The illustrations of day-beds or couches shown in Fig. 6 and Fig. 105 are specially interesting, as they are exceptionally fine examples of different types.

Fig. 25 illustrates another gate-legged table of oak with deeply cut spiral legs. It is a fine example of the Stuart period. Fig. 26 is a chair of the same period, upholstered in leather and studded with brass nails. Both these examples were lately in the antique galleries of Messrs Waring & Gillow Ltd.

As it has already been suggested the solid oak chairs which had been in use in this country for so many years, continued to be used and also made during the Jacobean period. It is not an uncommon thing to find such chairs made for public corporations and ecclesiastical purposes still in use, having served the object for which they were made nearly three centuries. Fig. 27 represents an oak vestry chair in splendid condition. Similar chairs are met with in many old church rooms and vestries. The decorative carved chairs with caned seats and backs, so special a feature in the reign of Charles II., are typified in Fig. 29, in which are illustrated four small chairs and one armchair, the style of carving suggesting an early date, probably about 1686. A somewhat different style of armchair is shown in Fig. 28, which represents a carved walnut Jacobean chair, of the period 1689. It has both caned back and seat, the caned back extending to the outer frame. The Jacobean tables and dressers gradually assumed a distinct style, the moulding of the drawers having already been referred to. The drop handles also became characteristic of the period, as well as the larger and more ornamental escutcheons.

Fig. 30 represents one of these panelled side-tables made, probably, about 1700. Its height is 2 ft. 8 in., the length 7 ft., and the depth 1 ft. 9 in. In Fig. 31 is shown an oak dresser-table of the same period, there being six drawers and a centre cupboard. At the Manor House, Hitchin, it is placed against oak panelling on an old oaken floor. The

characteristic drops superseding the bulbous and turned supports to the canopies of the Court cupboards and buffets were general in the Jacobean period. Two very fine pieces representing slightly different styles, yet all characteristic of the period, are shown in Figs. 32 and 34. The first of these, Fig. 32, is a carved oak Jacobean buffet, dated 1689. There are cupboards at either end of the upper portion with an unusually large double panel, exhibiting beautiful carved scroll work in the centre. Below there are two doors, and the lower panels of the doors are decoratively panelled.

Fig. 34 is another carved oak buffet, dated 1677, the initials upon it being "R. A." The upper portion is more ornamental than the lower section, which almost suggests an earlier piece.

Among the sundry furniture of this period are quaintly carved wood cradles of oak. There is one in the Victoria and Albert Museum dated 1691. Some are quite plain on the panel sides but have ornamented heads; others are carved on the rails. There are also some pretty and useful linen presses of oak and walnut, and it is not an uncommon thing to meet with a massive carved oak case for a towel roller, such pieces being fairly common late in the seventeenth century.

Distinctive Types sprang up.

In concluding this chapter which brings to a close the period of Jacobean or Stuart influence, it may be pointed out that styles change slowly. Although the leading furniture makers, and those in touch with the Court and its courtiers changed the styles of the furniture they were making according to intrigue and influence brought to bear, local furniture makers—and there must have been many men making furniture for their patrons in remote districts—continued to make chairs, chests, and tables according to the patterns with which they had been long acquainted; and although they might in part copy newer styles, they were long in doing so in their entirety. Hence it is that many genuine antiques puzzle dealers, and especially home connoisseurs by whom they may be owned.

Moreover, during the seventeenth century distinct local types sprang up. One of these is the Welsh dresser or buffet. It was often three tiers in height, the upper one being merely a shelf supported by pillars. It is a distinctive piece rarely met with beyond the borders of Wales, excepting in a few of the border towns. The high-backed dresser is another local development, peculiar in one particular form in the West of England. One writer, referring to the curious styles becoming very local in their use, mentions the brass-studded chests of the Eastern Midlands as a peculiarity. On these chests the initials of their owners and sometimes the dates when they were made are recorded by the use of small brass nails, varied by inlays of lead or pewter.

CHAPTER IX

THE AGE OF WALNUT

Some examples of royal palaces—Furniture of the period—Characteristics of the chair—Upholstered furniture—Walnut tables and cabinets—Other furniture of the Age.

Although we are accustomed to regard the Age of Walnut as dating from the accession of William III., as has been stated in previous chapters, walnut was used in England and in Holland during the reigns of the later Stuarts. Thus when William III. ascended the English throne in conjunction with Queen Mary, English cabinet-makers were prepared for the walnut furniture which was for some years afterwards to partake of Dutch characteristics, just the same as art in other directions was influenced by the King, who had strong natural prejudices in favour of all things Dutch. He had been accustomed to different surroundings, and a life quite at variance with the gorgeous and somewhat riotous court of the last of the Stuarts. He came over to England, and had not been established on the English throne more than a short time before Society discovered the new influence which was making itself felt at the royal palaces.

FIG. 33.—WALNUT STOOL,
PERIOD 1690-1695.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 34.—CARVED OAK BUFFET OR COURT CUPBOARD,
DATED 1677, WITH INITIALS R. A.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 35.—WALNUT TABLE WITH SPIRALLY TURNED LEGS.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

When William III. came over the magnificent palaces of Whitehall and St James's were furnished in the extravagant splendour with which the apartments of the mistresses of Charles II. had been supplied. Windsor was also the seat of great magnificence. Indeed, the furnishings of the castle outshone those of Whitehall. Then when Whitehall Palace was burnt down in the reign of William and Mary, and only the great banqueting hall left, Windsor gradually came under the spell of Dutch influence.

In order to understand the furniture then introduced it is necessary to recall the historical architecture of that day. Hampton Court was being added to, and the great galleries and apartments remained to be furnished in accordance with Dutch taste. It is said that while the King concentrated his efforts upon the architectural side, taking a keen interest in the building of the new wings and frontage of Hampton Court, which, in the opinion of architects and antiquarian experts of the present day, so ruthlessly destroyed the beauty of the pile of Tudor architecture, Mary was giving her whole-hearted attention to the furnishing of the palace. It is in Hampton Court, among the relics of the old furniture there, that we look for some of the finest examples of the Age of Walnut.

We do not overlook the Court influence nor the patronage given by Royalty to cabinet-makers. Indeed, we regard that as very important in that there is evidence that those who came over with the King and Queen had many partisans in this country, and they would not be long in making known the peculiarity of their sovereigns' taste. They would explain the domestic tendencies of the Queen, and give Society a very good idea of what would be done in London and in centres which came under Court influence.

Although we are apt to regard the cabinet-makers of London as the chief exponents of fashions and art, we must remember that there were always many persons who were wishful to employ local talent. For centuries English oak was wrought in the same way, and the style of wood-carving changed at a slow pace. Things were quickening, however, and during the Age of Walnut the pace advanced. The use of walnut spread rapidly, and the style of furniture which Dutch

influence and Dutch interpretation of art and upholstery at that time encouraged became very general. The number of pieces—especially chairs—which were made early in the reign of the new King showing the "correct" style, indicated that as soon as makers caught the inspiration the furniture of the Stuarts would be put on one side and the newer furniture would be in the ascendency.

Some Examples from the Royal Palaces.

Connoisseurs of old furniture, always keen on learning the chief characteristics of antiques of an early period from the examination of authentic specimens, have the satisfaction of knowing that there are examples of the Age of Walnut during the reigns of William and Mary and of Queen Anne which are not only authentic but pure in style. As it has already been stated, Dutch influence was in the ascendency when Hampton Court Palace was being refurnished, and it is well known that the furniture supplied to the palace was the best that could be obtained, and in accordance with the accepted styles then developed in English furniture made under Dutch influence. Most of this furniture has remained at Hampton Court, and can be examined by any one who wishes to study the peculiarities of that style. The earlier examples were made about the year 1690, and were made for household use. They were for the rooms which were to be occupied by the King and Queen in their new home, for Hampton Court Palace was intended as a residential palace, not as a show place. It was distinct from either the traditional grandeur of the great Norman castle of Windsor, or the Court of St James's in London.

In the great hall at Hampton Court there is to be seen a set of ten chairs, originally twelve. They are of walnut; the high open backs are carved and interlaced with scroll ornament. The seats are supported by cabriole legs with hoof feet, and there are scrolled stretchers between the front legs and horizontal serpentine stretchers connecting the back with the front. We are told that Queen Mary spent much of her time in needlework, and her ladies-in-waiting were to be seen every day producing the beautiful coverings with which the new furniture of the palace was to be upholstered.

At Hampton Court Palace there are indeed many examples of upholstered chairs, including some very beautiful armchairs, which were probably made within the first few years of William III.'s reign. The upholstery at the present time is that of the days of Queen Anne, when the chairs were probably recovered with the large patterned velvet corresponding with the bed hangings which Queen Anne ordered for her bed-chamber and for other apartments of the palace. It has been pointed out in connection with these chairs that there is a great similarity between the stretchers and those appertaining to the later Restoration days. That indicates that they were made early in William's reign, before any striking alteration had been made by the Dutch influence which gradually altered the characteristics of the walnut furniture of the reign of William and Mary.

The upholstery of much of this early furniture (*see* chapter xxxi.), is of English-made velvet, such as came into vogue soon after the commencement of the eighteenth century. There was a strong attempt then to prevent the importation of foreign silks and velvets, and English makers began to do a large trade in so-called Genoa and Venetian velvets. Although these were made in this country, like many other goods they retained the name of the place of origin. Thus English textiles were often sold under the name of foreign localities, just the same as English makers to-day produce English counterparts of foreign goods.

As it has been stated, William III. was much occupied in building operations. He had also the affairs of State to deal with. Queen Mary, therefore, had to bear the responsibility of setting the fashion. This she certainly did, both in furniture, the manner in which it was displayed in her home, and in her handiwork. It is said that Queen Mary was specially fond of china, and that she covered the tops of her marqueterie cabinets and chimney-pieces with blue and white Kang-He china and Dutch delft ware and other ornaments. At Hampton Court she had set apart for her own use, where she could retreat from the affairs of State, "a set of lodgings," and Defoe, writing about those lodgings, says they were exquisitely furnished, and "there was a fine chintz bed, a great curiosity." "There, too, she had fine china ware, the like whereof was not to be seen in England." Bishop Burnet, referring to her handiwork, tells how the Queen wrought with her own hands, "with a diligence as if she had been compelled to earn her own bread with it." It was thus that she set the fashion to the beautiful *petit point* needlework, so much of which is to be seen on old walnut furniture of her day. The Queen died in 1694, and it seems as if in sympathy a change passed over the ornamental marqueterie, for the white jasmine flowers and green leaves gave place to the endive-leaved acanthus and the so-called seaweed marqueterie of the later years when William reigned alone. Although the Age of Walnut still lingered on, and in later years was revived in another form, the Georgian era is to be distinguished by the advent and fuller treatment of mahogany rather than of walnut.

In previous chapters the chairs of Jacobean days have been described, also those of the later Restoration days, which with their glorious carving contrasted with the more substantial and plainer chairs fashioned under Cromwellian influence. Walnut had already come to the front, and many of the finer examples of walnut-carved furniture were made before the Restoration period. The smooth-surfaced cabriole-legged Dutch chair is, however, essentially a feature of the Age of Walnut as understood during the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne. The Flemish chair, it is true, although generally of walnut, is sometimes of maple or beech, but when walnut once became the popular wood it retained its hold on the furniture trade until the days of mahogany. It is said that when William came he brought with him the latest Dutch fashions, which included the scrolled Flemish legs and the cabriole knee accompanied by the hoof, which eventually became a Dutch pad or club foot.

We can understand what an impetus was given to trade, especially import trade, when the nobility and the leading politicians and country gentry discovered the style which was acceptable to the new King, and they quickly refurnished, put on one side Carolean chairs, and superseded them with chairs made after Flemish and Dutch patterns.

It is noteworthy that although the Dutch chairs of William were Flemish in design they were introduced into this country at a time when Flemish design had received much of its inspiration from Spanish sources. Thus the Flemish chair, which came in the reign of Charles II., out of Italy, through France, and out of Spain, was more decorative, and had more exaggerated mouldings than the Flemish Dutch chair which had received Dutch influence on the way. Now we have to remember that however Dutch the chairs of William and Mary were, those which were made in this country received an English interpretation. At that time Englishmen were making square oaken wainscot chairs. When the English workman made a Flemish chair he gave a squareness to the frames which were to be caned; otherwise he modulated the pattern he had before him.

The examples of walnut furniture of this period are very numerous, and fine examples are to be found in many old English homes besides those on view at Hampton Court. The treasures of Boughton House, in Northamptonshire, in the possession of the Earl of Dalkeith, have recently been brought under the notice of the public, in consequence of the splendid exhibition of these antiques, which by the kindness of the Earl were on view at the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington quite recently. These well-authenticated pieces of furniture, and tapestries and embroideries shown with them (*see* chapter xxix.), were got together by Lord Montagu, the Master of the Great Wardrobe to William III., who was created Duke of Montagu by Anne in 1705. He enlarged Boughton House, which had been purchased by his ancestor Sir Edward Montagu in 1528. The Castle is rich in many early Stuart and Jacobean pieces of carved furniture, as well as those made in the reign of William. There is a fine carved walnut stool covered with flame embroidery in floss silks and ornamental edging; one of carved walnut covered with pale blue damask; and one in velvet which has a large floral pattern in colours on a cream-coloured ground. There are several curious armchairs of walnut with seats and backs covered with flame embroidery in floss silk and trimmed with decorated silk edging; one very remarkable armchair is upholstered with brocade showing a rococo design of canopies, trees, vases, and other objects in silver on a cream-white ground; and another evidently of the closing days of the seventeenth century is covered with a brocade of floral pattern in silver on a pale blue ground. Of the same period there are marqueterie tables and some gate-legged tables veneered with walnut.

During the last few years dealers and connoisseurs have been amazed at the money value of old furniture still remaining in private houses. On several occasions pieces of furniture which have been in the possession of the families, for whom they were originally made, in an unbroken line of succession, have been brought under the hammer and dispersed. There is always greater interest in a sale of such family relics than in the dispersion of even more valuable pieces which have been collected and got together from a collector's view point rather than that of actual utility, which was, of course, the purpose of the buyers in olden time. Many will recall the famous dispersal of the Holme Lacy treasures, so many of which were rare and were snapped up by wealthy collectors; in not a few instances the coveted treasures passed over from this country to the New World, where any genuine antique of the period when their forefathers were crossing the Atlantic and founding that great nation which was to grow up on American soil, is greatly appreciated by the millionaires of the States.

Some of our readers will recall the important sale of old furniture at Madryn Castle, Carnarvonshire, a few years ago. Among the old furniture then dispersed were a number of pieces made during the Age of Walnut. There was a pair of William and Mary high-backed chairs, with elaborately carved backs in leaf and scroll ornament and graceful spiral columns. The seats and backs were upholstered in needlework of a contemporary date. The beautiful cabriole legs

terminated in claw-and-ball feet. There was a set of six William and Mary marqueterie walnut chairs with broad splats inlaid with vases of flowers and birds. The cabriole legs were ornamented with marqueterie, too, and these handsome chairs, which had been in use in Madryn Castle since the time when Dutch marqueterie was in vogue, were in excellent condition, the old crimson figured velvet upholstery being well preserved. Corresponding with this beautiful suite was a marqueterie-topped walnut table, further enriched by inlays of ivory and mother-of-pearl. There was another fine example of Dutch marqueterie of the William and Mary period, a magnificent bureau chest with three long drawers, the fall-front enclosing a beautifully fitted secretaire. This also was decorated in marqueterie with vases of flowers. It was supported by claw-and-ball feet, and there was a profuse use of chased ormolu mounts.

In conjunction with these beautiful examples of marqueterie there was a table on shaped tapered legs, fitted with a drawer to which was attached chased ring drop handles. The marqueterie ornamentation was exceedingly good.

The illustrations given here represent several distinct types. In Fig. 33 is seen one of a pair of exceptionally fine walnut stools of the period 1690-1695. The needlework and the way in which it is nailed on can be seen very clearly. The table illustrated in Fig. 35 is a pleasing example of a walnut table with twisted legs strongly braced together.

FIG. 36. **FIG. 37.**

CARVED BACK WALNUT CHAIRS,

PERIOD 1689-1690. **PERIOD 1685-1689.**

(***In the collection of Mawers, Ltd., South Kensington.***)

FIG. 38. WALNUT EASY CHAIR,
***Circa* 1710.**
(*Gill & Reigate, Ltd.*)

We have already referred to the early introduction of walnut, and to its frequent presence in Restoration days. The high-back French chair of James II.'s reign was strongly Flemish in its characteristics. The cresting was usually hooped and carved, and was dowelled on to the side uprights or balusters, whereas at an earlier period the top rail had been tenoned. The legs were not mortised to the seat rail as they had been in earlier Restoration days. They were simply let in to the seat framing.

In chairs made in provincial towns there are often slight discrepancies and indications that local workmen were prejudiced in favour of former methods. Hence there is much composite workmanship in some of the chairs which have come from old country houses. It was at the commencement of James II.'s reign that the cabriole leg became a feature, and right through the Age of Walnut it was a distinctive mark.

In William III.'s reign the older Flemish styles changed, and the back instead of being separated by balusters was

caned right across to the outer framing. Upholstered chairs were in a similar way upholstered across the back with cut-pile velvet trimmed with narrow braid or tasselled fringes, and sometimes the material was fastened with brass nails.

Fig. 36 and Fig. 37 are carved walnut chairs typical of the early use of walnut. Fig. 36, of late Jacobean type, 1689-1690, has a well-carved back, the seat being upholstered. Fig. 37 is one of the carved back chairs of the period 1685-1689, the cross braces being absent; the feet, too, are somewhat unusual.

One important feature during the Age of Walnut was the introduction of marqueterie, which is fully dealt with in chapter xx. The marqueterie of English furniture and of furniture imported into this country forms such a distinctive class of cabinet work that it cannot with any degree of fairness be treated upon exhaustively in the different periods when it was in use concurrently with other styles. Right through the Age of Walnut marqueterie crops up. In the Tudor it is met with, to be seen again during the Restoration period, and at a later date, when Dutch influence predominated in this country during the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne. It changed in its characteristics as different materials were available. It was applied to English walnut and to French and Italian walnut, and many of the beautiful cabinets made of English straight-grained walnut were inlaid with marqueterie. The processes changed when the hot caul and press were used. Veneering with the hammer was another process, and as the English and foreign cabinet-makers acquired different experience we find the marqueterie of the Walnut Age undergoing many changes, enriching cabinets, tables, bureaus, and chests of drawers with decorated inlays. For examples of these various pieces of marqueterie work (*see* chapter xx.); also Fig. 38, which is a fine walnut easy chair of the Queen Anne period, *circa* 1710, with marqueterie legs, upholstered in *petit point* needlework. It was lately in the galleries of Messrs Gill & Reigate, Limited.

Referring to the technique of the construction of furniture made shortly after 1690 an expert says:

> "Several improvements with regard to construction of furniture are noticeable after 1690, being in all probability introductions from Holland. Drawer sides are nearly always dovetailed to the fronts, the 'pins' being usually coarse—seldom less than a quarter of an inch in the thickest part. The Stuart mortise is nearly always carried through the stile with the tenon wedged on the end and pinned through the front; the joint being made without glue. In Queen Anne furniture the mortise is stopped, the tenon 'shouldered,' and the framing secured with an adhesive, probably 'cheese-glue' made from milk curds. Shelves and partitions are frequently slot-dovetailed after 1700. Flush-panelled frames for doors and the writing flaps of fall-front escritoires and bureaux—that is, with the panel rebated on the front to bring it level with the surface of the framing—are also usual features at this period, and it bears good testimony to the care with which the wood was seasoned, that the panels, although often very wide, are rarely found shrunken or cracked."

The Characteristics of the Chair.

Before proceeding to examine some of the best known examples in which the chief characteristics of the Age of Walnut in chairs are seen, it would be well to point out the new features introduced under Dutch influence, and to call attention to the marks of identity by which genuine specimens of walnut chairs of that period may be known. Dutch chair-makers and English makers who were taught the necessity of conforming to the new style soon realised that the frames of the Stuart period were unsuited to the backs they were required to fashion, and that they must accept Dutch ideals in their entirety. To begin with, the chair leg became cabriole in form, frequently terminating with a hoof. There was a stretcher of scroll-like form between the front legs, with serpentine stretchers between the front and the back legs.

The cabriole has been likened unto a leg with a bended knee, that is a shaped curve terminating with a narrow ankle and a foot, the graceful hoof-foot in time becoming a club foot, and losing much of its characteristic beauty. The back of the chair was comfortable in that it was fitted to the shape of the human back, a great improvement on the old flat upright which, however, had been upholstered or caned in the days of the Stuarts.

Another important feature to take note of is that the ornamental carved and cut through splat did not come down to the chair frame, but was supported by a stretcher connecting with the curved uprights of the back. In course of development this stretcher was done away with, and when the club foot, which came in at the commencement of the eighteenth century during the reign of Queen Anne, appeared, the stretcher disappeared and the splat was connected with the frame. Another important departure in the chairs of the Age of Walnut influenced by Dutch art is that the front stretcher is recessed back,

that is to say, it is not in line with the front legs which themselves are curved inwards. The back legs with square bases were at first scrolled in the Restoration fashion. As the period advanced the carving on the top of the leg was cut back into the frame, doing away with the square corners of the earlier period.

The first point to observe is the cabriole leg, which commands so much attention in that its introduction marked a distinct departure from traditional lines. The inspiration is said to have come from the East, just as the claw-and-ball foot was Eastern (said to have been an adaptation of the Chinese legendary dragon, which was reputed to hold in its claw a pearl).

The ancient cabriole was used by the Greeks who got it from the Egyptians, and it can be traced further back to the Assyrian nation. The cabriole came into modern cabinet-making in the days of Queen Anne, or perhaps a little earlier. In conjunction with it there were many beautiful innovations in the foot. There were lions' feet, eagles' claws and talons, rams' hoofs, and heads of animals used as terminals of legs and arms. Another important characteristic is the Flemish ornament on the curved knee, usually indicating an early date, as the ornament gradually disappeared. The undecorated splats accompanied by the undecorated cabriole date from 1710 to 1730. The legs were at first joined by stretchers or under-braces, but the stretchers disappeared altogether about 1730, so that those chairs in which the stretchers are absent may be placed between 1730 and 1750.

In the days of Queen Anne the so-called Hogarth chair became popular. Although severe in form it is by no means without beauty, and was certainly comfortable. There are authentic examples of this chair at Hampton Court, and in many collections of walnut furniture, for as King William's reign advanced the houses of the nobility had been refurnished, and in the days of Queen Anne Dutch furniture had almost entirely superseded the Restoration furniture. The Hogarth chair was then popular. The sweeping away of the square corners of the seat toward the end of William's reign had for a time been popular, but the corners became square again when the Hogarth chair was made. In some of these chairs is seen the development from the hoof to the club foot.

In pronouncing the accomplishment of the evolution of the chair resulting in the Queen Anne or Hogarth chair of the commencement of the eighteenth century, we may reiterate the process of development which so rapidly conformed the new accepted style to English ideas or interpretations of the Dutch, and which as the outcome of Dutch influence modified the Hogarth chair which evolved. When Queen Anne came to the throne the smooth fiddle-shaped splat with a plain top to the back predominated. The cabriole leg was chiefly made with a club foot, the more ornate hoof foot having been passed over or seldom used.

To the cabriole leg is due the gradual abolition of cross stretchers. More refined conditions made it possible for the occupants of the chair to place their feet underneath. Cleanliness was coming to the floor, and there was no longer any need for the deep and low cross stretcher. The turned rails disappeared along with the carving of the Restoration. No doubt there were several influences at work, one of the most important being that Dutch predilection for inlaying, which suggested the beautiful marqueterie which was to follow. The Hogarth chair in its fulness was smooth, light, and graceful. The back had outer upright supports, and there was a splat to support the back of the sitting person. Above the splat there was a convex curve, said to have been fashioned to fit the nape of the neck, so that any one reclining against the tall upright back could rest the head, the shoulders falling naturally into hollow curves. The decorativeness of the Restoration chairs had gone, and with it discomfort. The stages in the evolution have been passed, and the Queen Anne chairs of the Age of Walnut became an acceptable feature in English house furnishing. It is said that this chair of the so-called Hogarth or Queen Anne style was the first in which the furniture maker had carefully considered human anatomy.

Another feature in connection with the Dutch chair is that the seat was very broad, the front being wider than the back.

Coming to the question of ornament, one of the characteristics of the chairs of this period is the carved escallop shell on the knee of the cabriole leg. The acanthus leaf continued to be used in some of the more decorative chairs. The splat was seldom pierced, but there was a change going on in its form which gradually developed a spoon-like shape and eventually a fiddle back.

Fig. 39 is a fine upholstered William and Mary chair, with claw-and-ball feet to the handsomely carved legs.

Fig. 40 is one of the winged sleeping chairs of the same period, the cabriole legs terminating in claw-and-ball feet.

FIG. 39.—UPHOLSTERED CHAIR,
WILLIAM AND MARY PERIOD.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

FIG. 40.—WINGED SLEEPING CHAIR,
WILLIAM AND MARY PERIOD.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

FIG. 43.—BUREAU BOOKCASE,
QUEEN ANNE PERIOD.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

The days of Queen Anne are noted for the introduction of the cosy or grandfather chair, also for the rush bottom Dutch chair and the Windsor chairs. Upholstery became the vogue, and in the course of development the foundation was being laid to the settees and couches of later days with which the names of love-seats and grandfather chairs are generally associated. The connoisseur of furniture, however, must disassociate these from his mind when studying the

Age of Walnut as seen in the furniture of Queen Anne's reign, and the years which immediately preceded it.

The love-seat or double chair of those days is something quite different to the light and attractive double chair or settee formed of two or more chair backs of the light and decorative Chippendale and Hepplewhite periods. The cabriole-legged love-seats, with plain stretchers with smooth surface upholstery, with arms and back, were long enough to accommodate two persons. The convenience of these chairs caused their development into longer seats, the term love-seat only being applied to the smaller sizes, for when they would seat three or more persons they became sofas or couches. These upholstered seats were covered with needlework, the fashion for which was set by Queen Mary.

Side by side with the double love-seat the upholstered chair with the higher back, the so-called "grandfather," developed. Many of the old chairs are found, when the needlework is removed, to have been first covered with a silk case or slip. When a new chair was made it was probably covered with a temporary covering, during the time the owner would be occupied in working the needlework cover.

It is not often that sentiment has been introduced into the furniture trade. We can, however, discover in the Age of Walnut more than one influence which can be traced to sentimental objects, and episodes in which love enters, governing its progress. In the Stuart days, the early days of walnut, the love affairs of the sovereign, by no means creditable, proved very useful to the furniture maker, who owed many profitable orders to the demands made upon the royal purse by Charles II'.s mistresses.

At a later date, when the habits of Society had changed somewhat, and there was a different atmosphere at the Court, Cupid again influenced furniture designs. The large and richly upholstered chairs were possibly large enough for two—on occasion—but they were inconveniently small when fashions demanded much space. Men and women wore garments which were stiff and bulky. The ladies of Queen Anne's day wore heavily brocaded and largely hooped dresses, their skirts being covered with frills and pleatings. Another fashion of the day was sacque backs and large panniers. Then it was that double chairs were called for, and many of them were literally so, for they were fully double in the capacity of the seating accommodation and in the width of the backs. Otherwise the "chair" maintained its individuality.

Towards the close of Queen Anne's reign wooden double seats were made as well as upholstered seats. They were the love-seats which in time became the fashion, developing into the light and delicate and beautiful love-seats or ornamental small settees of the Chippendale era. The love-seats of Queen Anne's day certainly looked like two wood-backed chairs with cabriole legs joined together in single upholstery and furnished with one pair of arms. They set the fashion, which continued throughout the reigns of the Georges.

When we come to the end of what may be termed the Age of Walnut, and note the gradually developing and altering style in the carving of the legs of chairs and tables, we discover the overlapping which at all periods inevitably occurs. One of the characteristics of this time, about 1735, was the introduction of the heads of satyrs and lions in the carving of legs and other portions of the framework. It is noticeable at the end of the walnut period, and it is equally indicative of the beginning of mahogany. This feature in the carver's art is seldom seen after 1740.

Upholstered Furniture.

In many pieces of furniture dating from 1680 to 1690 the upholstery is the most conspicuous feature. As a matter of fact the framing of the chair or settee is a minor detail, and the consideration of such pieces seems to come under upholstery rather than cabinet work. The majority of the large high-padded chairs were doubtless intended for the bedroom, then, as it has been pointed out, one of the chief reception rooms of the house. Settees were used with equal frequency in the bedchamber and in the state rooms. There came a time later when the best efforts of the needleworker and the upholsterer were found in the drawing-room, but in the days of Charles II. greater attention was given to the furnishing of my lady's bed-chamber, where according to the custom of the age privileged guests assembled. The large settees and chairs were chiefly covered with *petit point* needlework, the patterns of which were extravagantly large, and in some instances appear to have been specially woven for the furniture, in other cases to have been indiscriminately chosen. Sometimes settees upholstered in embroidery, velvet, and tapestry are made grotesque by the use of these large designs, which oftentimes cut into the figure and leave an unfinished design on the back of the settee or chair, the remainder of the pattern disappearing behind the cushion of the seat, and in some instances going over the head and being hidden at the back. In the same way cushion seats limited in extent by the framework of the chair were not sufficiently large to display the pattern to full advantage. In a lesser degree the large patterns of woven damasks lost their effect when used on the ends of couches and settees or on smaller chair arms. The variety of patterns during the reign of

William and Mary were as numerous as the variety of materials, and the colourings were not always happily chosen. Some were most gorgeous, especially the green damasks, crimson velvets, and the blues of the tapestries and embroideries. Striking contrasts were to be seen in many of the houses where their owners could not afford to entirely furnish a room *en suite*, but indiscriminately used such furniture and materials as they might possess. Undoubtedly while French Huguenots, and those whom they taught, were working away at Spitalfields the needlework hobby was extending, and hand-worked furniture, upholstery, and coverings were being made everywhere by the lady of the household and those she employed.

Although reference is made in the foregoing pages to the fine examples of upholstered furniture found in the homes of the wealthy and in royal palaces, the middle classes and those who were engaged in commerce were furnishing their houses with walnut furniture. Their upholstery was of a more homely kind, but it was none the less handsome in proportion to the other surroundings of the house. Ladies everywhere were plying the needle. It was indeed the age of needlework and the beautiful *petit point* or tent stitch. In some cases flowered damask sufficed for the coverings of the broad and copious backs of the walnut-framed chairs, but in nearly every household needlework was wrought, and little by little favourite chairs were covered with home-made embroidery. Large patterns continued popular, but when ladies had work on hand without any intention of buying new furniture, they usually worked a piece suitable for the chair they had already, and which they intended to re-cover with the labour of their hands.

In Fig. 41 is shown an early walnut chair with upholstered seat and back, and some carving on the arms and feet. Fig. 42 is a walnut settee, 1715-1720, also upholstered in *petit point* needlework with brass studs, the legs being quite plain cabriole design.

A new era in house furnishing came in with the advent of wall papers. The age of oak had been famous for the rich panelling of the walls with wood, for inlays and carvings, just as at an earlier date tapestries, covered the walls. The first patent for the manufacture of printed wall paper was granted in 1691 to W. Bayly. At that time it was of course very expensive, and was seldom used excepting in the homes of the wealthy; indeed until the commencement of the nineteenth century whitewash and the colouring of the walls by lime and dry colours sufficed in many houses.

Walnut Tables and Bureaus.

The gate-legged tables, so popular in the reigns of Charles II. and James II., remained the type generally met with in English homes during the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne, and even in George I.'s day; but during the reign of Anne there was a change which gradually caused the gate-legged table to be received with less favour. It was then that a Dutch or club-footed table, supported by cabriole legs without stretchers, came in. It was found suitable for flap leaves, and could be made either square or oblong. The new style became the groundwork of the beautiful walnut Queen Anne card-tables, which, covered with baize, served such a useful purpose, and could be extended by the addition of five flaps. Although walnut was used at first, mahogany was found equally as suitable, and when that wood came into general use the Dutch style was continued. Smaller tables became the vogue, and many were used as side-tables. Then when the day came for more refined bedroom appointments similar tables were used as dressing-tables.

Chests of drawers and bureaus were made during the days of Queen Anne, surmounted by bookcases and cupboards, a typical example shown in Fig. 43 being recently in the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques. The divisions of the interior were well made, and the brass handles and escutcheons strong and serviceable. In the example illustrated the candlestick slides should be noted, also the inlays and carved ornament.

Other Furniture of the Age.

Contemporary with the Age of Walnut commoner chairs were made in this country; the kitchen furniture of the days of Queen Anne and the early Georgian period consisted largely of locally-made chairs and tables. The most popular styles of chairs were those known as "Windsor" and "rush bottom," and from these two base-lines many minor developments took place. The early eighteenth-century chairs were made by village carpenters and local chair-makers, and as the middle classes evolved they were for a long time satisfied with such furniture as they could obtain near at hand. The evolution of chairs, other than those made of walnut, already referred to, is a very interesting study, and collectors who desire to obtain chairs contemporary with the period they are specialising upon, or to identify any old chairs they may have that have come down to them as heirlooms, will find some useful hints given in the somewhat exhaustive account of chairs (*see* chapter xxiii.).

Walnut furniture continued to be made for some time after the days when walnut was the chief wood used. At that time there were many screens, stools, and sundry articles of furniture made for the needlework so many ladies were working. Generally speaking, there was not much activity among cabinet-makers during the last few years of the walnut period. There were, however, some new pieces introduced, for it was then that the rage came in for china cabinets and bureau-cabinets. Architectural ornament was then being introduced in the pediments of bureau-cupboards and bookcases. The same influence was at work when room decorations were contemplated. At that time, too, houses were being erected in large towns on sites which had hitherto been unoccupied, and in London on sites which had been vacant from the time of the Great Fire; for those houses some new furniture was required. A change was taking place in outside architecture, frontages were being beautified by the erection of over-doors and carved porticos, incidentally influencing the carving of over-doors in the houses. There was also quite a rage for fine wrought iron work, such as railings and gates. It was about that time that Tijou published a "New Book of Drawings," showing a variety of designs for architectural work. This artist's work was much sought after, for he had then completed the magnificent gates and screens of wrought iron at Hampton Court Palace.

Those who are wishful to examine more fully the carver's art, and also the beautiful wrought iron work of the period, may do so at the Victoria and Albert Museum, where there are many examples in the wrought iron gallery. In the same museum there are some especially interesting examples of walnut furniture of a late date. There is a settee with walnut-wood arms which curl over and terminate with the heads and beaks of eagles. The cabriole legs are distinctive in that they have the cabochon-and-leaf decoration upon the bend. That latter ornament is indicative of the early Georgian period which is described in chapter xi.

CHAPTER X

FRENCH FURNITURE

Gothic to Renaissance—Louis XIII. and Louis XIV.—Boulle's inlays—French-Chinese lacquer—Furniture of the Regency—Louis XV. period—Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI.—Vernis Martin lacquers—The directoire—The first empire—Napoleonic furniture.

The furniture of the people who lived in France in early mediæval days was simple in the extreme. It was even meagre in the fourteenth century, and there was little that could be called furniture excepting in the castles of the nobility wherein the great hall trestle tables and rough benches sufficed, contrasting, however, with the seigneurial chair, which in some instances was over-topped with a gilded canopy.

The coffers or hutches as in England were store chests, and made for removal from place to place. In the small rooms at the tops of the castle towers might have been found a bed, a *faldstool*, and a clothes' chest, not much else.

Gothic to Renaissance.

The Gothic influence which spread so rapidly over Europe, filling the minds of ecclesiastics with high ideals of architectural grandeur, resulting in the upbuilding of many beautiful cathedrals and religious houses, also affected the wood-workers and carvers who wrought such marvellous works. The beauty of the stone tracery was reflected in the wood-carving of the interior of both cathedrals and the houses of ecclesiastics. There seems, however, to have been a marked difference between the adornment of religious houses where the Gothic influence was so strong, and the rough furnishings of the homesteads of the people. Yet in those few objects that have been presented to us Gothic influence and design is apparent. The influence that architecture had upon the wood-worker's efforts inside the dwelling-house as well as upon the designer of furniture and those who fashioned it, may be recognised when one of the few ancient buildings of France is inspected. Some of the interior wood-work of Continental houses dating from about the year 1500 is preserved in our museums, one of the finest examples being a truly remarkable staircase of carved oak removed from a house in Morlaix, in Brittany, presented to the Victoria and Albert Museum by the late J. H. Fitzhenry, Esq. It is a circular staircase giving access to four floors, each of the stair treads being cut out of a block of solid oak, shaped to the required angle. Leading from the staircase to the rooms on each of the floors there is a galleried passage, the fronts of which are covered with beautiful linen-fold panelling, such as may be seen in some of the older rooms in Hampton Court Palace. The central supporting column of this remarkable staircase is carved to imitate a pine tree, and marking the stairway at each floor there is a carved figure of a saint or ecclesiastic, and midway between them small shields of arms.

As already mentioned, the coffers or hutches used in France at the commencement of this period were store chests, and when in use as furniture were supplemented at a little later date by cupboards, tables, and seats; but when chairs became more commonly used the seigneurial chair was a feature quite apart from those seats used by other than the seigneur or chief guest. It was a high-backed chair known as *â haut dossier*. The *sellette* or *scabelle* were names given to simpler forms of stools. In the reign of Henry IV. the bed, which had hitherto been made up in a recess in the wall, gave place to the four-poster, in which the *ceil* or tester was an important feature.

The wood-carving of French artists was of excellent quality, and in its faithfulness to the prevailing style in stone, so fully seen in the tracery of windows, screens, roofs, arcades, and doorways, is still much admired in the relics of early furniture. Those artists in wood who had achieved such heights in Gothic design paused when the Renaissance began in Italy. It is said that they welcomed the new departure, in that they had done all they could in Gothic design, and were ready to found a new school of design, the inspiration for which they found in Italy. At that time the habits of the people in France as in England were changing, and necessitated more comfortable furniture, and French artists saw in the Italian Renaissance just what they needed to evolve a style far removed from the Gothic, and one which would be acceptable to their patrons.

Charles VIII. had seen for himself the Renaissance in Italy, and on his return to France brought Italian artists to Paris. The progress in art spread, and was extended during the reign of Francis I. Decorative wood-work was produced for the palaces in the Loire Valley, and after the sack of Rome in 1527 more Italian artists found their homes in Paris. The

architectural additions to the Louvre by Francis I. were further enriched by the magnificent carvings of Jean Goujou; the woods being worked at that time were oak and cedar, both of which were used in France and Burgundy, but they were supplemented a little later by chestnut and walnut.

FIG. 44.—AN EXCEPTIONAL PIECE OF MARQUETERIE.
(*In the Victoria and Albert Museum.*)

FIG. 45.—SECRETAIRE,
LOUIS XVI.
(*In the possession of Mr. Albert Amor.*)

LOUIS XIII. AND LOUIS XIV.

At the commencement of the reign of Louis XIII. the furniture was sound, and the armchairs were generally upholstered in tapestry from the Beauvais looms. There was a distinct onward movement. Art was entering into the lives of the people, and there was a desire to possess more than strength in the furniture they purchased. New purposes were discovered for domestic furniture, and cabinets with doors—*cabinets à porte*—were made; in their ornamentation some marqueterie was introduced, and the panelled doors were frequently decorated with flowers and baskets of fruit.

To understand the rough and even gaudy carving and decoration of Louis XIII. furniture, the architectural ornamentation of the rooms in which such furniture was used should be examined. Fortunately English collectors have such an opportunity at South Kensington, for in the Victoria and Albert Museum one of the greatest treasures in French wood-work is the late sixteenth-century panelling of a room, principally of oak, painted in oil colours and richly gilt, taken from a farmhouse near Alençon. This wonderful room, so gaudy and grand, may scarcely be considered a typical example of French decoration at that period. Its style and design, however, are those in vogue at that time, although in a few instances, perhaps, supplemented by the paintings and ornaments introduced into this room, which is supposed to have been used by Henry IV. either as a hunting lodge or during the siege of Alençon. The panels on the walls are of old Spanish leather painted in rich colours, contrasting with the painted scenes on the panels, which are for the most part on a chequered ground of red and gold. The ceiling is covered with the same magnificent ornament, and many cupids and

painted vases are shown in relief, over the mantel-piece being a painting of the Nativity.

The furniture used in conjunction with such decoration was not always as decorative as might have been expected, for the age of gold had not then come about, although there were indications in the architectural ornament of the coming style. Among the early pieces of French furniture is a remarkable cabinet or *dressoir de salle-à-manger* (*circa* 1560). Of the same period there is a rather light coloured walnut wood cabinet from Lyons, and a small chair, the latter being much injured by the ravages of time. Perhaps one of the most remarkable examples of sixteenth-century carving is a French sideboard of walnut wood, executed in the middle of the century, the figures standing out in deep relief. In the centre there are representations of Mars, Venus, and Cupid, and on the door panels are Mars and Mercury. The front rails are inlaid with other woods; not only are the supports magnificent examples of carving, but the under portion is richly decorated. In the same gallery there are also many sixteenth-century walnut wood chairs from the South of France. In the Wallace Collection, too, there is a fine *dressoir* of carved walnut wood enriched with bold carving of foliated scroll work. Cabinet-makers appear to have shown more than unusual activity; and although the wood-carvers were still pursuing their art, and giving forth to futurity examples which can never be surpassed, there were indications on every side of that coming change, when Louis XIV., the Grand Monarch as he has been styled, would sit upon the throne of France, and a new order of things would come about.

The richness of the Renaissance decoration seems to have made its last stand in the achievements of the carver and perforator of ivory. All the grandeur of the larger pieces of Renaissance work in cabinet art seems concentrated in the miniature ivories introduced in ebony furniture. French artists excelled in the work, and in seeking for still further enrichment joined with the Florentine artists in using choice mosaics in stone and gems. In the reign of Louis XIII. of France the prevailing taste was for gilded furniture with real mosaics, but in that development many of the characteristics of the carved ebony which had been hitherto enriched with ivory were retained. The introduction of stones and gilding marked a change in style, and seemed to open up a new departure, which was eventually to become the more decorative style of the so-called Louis periods.

The accession of Louis XIV. was the signal for more decorative art to be introduced. This was fostered, no doubt, by the Palace of Versailles, which was such a pretty place in which to assemble glittering wood-work adorned by gold, polished brass, and elaborate inlays. Louis XIV. was himself a lover of art, and liked to surround himself with artists and craftsmen. He was seconded in his efforts to improve artistic tastes by Colbert, the French Minister of Finance, who gave fresh impetus to the *ébénistes'* (cabinet-makers') art. With the King's approval and support he founded the Gobelins' works, where he hoped to encourage the manufacture and sale of art treasures. He secured the services of a celebrated artist, M. Le Brun, who became the director of the Manufacture Royale des Meubles de la Couronne.

In the royal factories furniture was made for the Palace of Versailles and other royal residences, as well as for those of the nobles of France, gradually becoming more luxuriant and brilliant in its decoration.

The magnificence of Versailles when in the height of its glory can now be only dimly realised. The connoisseur to-day is not concerned with the army of attendants who waited upon the King, but rather with the relics of the furnishings of that palace, which cost in its equipment 13,000,000 francs, exclusive of pictures. The furniture which was once housed there is for the most part beyond the ordinary collector's reach, but it serves to typify the style and taste which actuated the makers of the less gorgeous pieces, some of which are found in private houses, belonging to those whose ancestors were, although perhaps in a humble way, patrons of French art in the reign of Louis XIV.

The artists, so many of whom worked in the royal workshops, gained their inspiration from classic art, Le Brun making free use in ornament of the mask, the sun, and the lion's skin. Among the strongly marked characteristics of the style were the dead or burnished gold, the trellis-work closely interlaced and filled with *paterœ*. In many different ways the Royal cipher was introduced; the double L was generally inset upon a true oval, marking the difference between the cipher of Louis XIV. and that of Louis XVI., which was generally shown upon an egg-shaped ground.

As in previous reigns architectural wood-work of the period typifies, as well as in its day influenced, the ornament of interior furnishings. The collection of art treasures at Hertford House, better known as the Wallace Collection, includes the grand staircase of magnificent balustrades of the Louis XIV. period. There is in that collection a very fine transitional piece showing the lingering influence of the Renaissance, even in the reign of Louis XIV. It is a high-backed *dressoir* of carved oak, with the central panel of pierced and foliated ornamentation, distinctly transitional. Some of the carved oak wardrobes of the earlier days of Louis XIV. were very large, their lofty doors being richly carved, the pediment or arched frame of the wardrobe being ornamented with carved masks. It has, however, been well said that the reign of Louis XIV. is best remembered as the "triumph of gilded wood." It was then that the chairs, settees, and

gorgeously upholstered furniture were made the more brilliant by overlays of gold. It was the age of Florentine mosaics and marble tops and costly consoles, with frames of the pier glasses gilded, and festoons of flowers painted and enriched in colours and gold, ornamented with festoons. The state bed was perhaps the most important feature in the ceremonials of the French Court of Louis XIV. That luxurious monarch possessed upwards of four hundred beds, about half of them being distinctly decorative, and some only used for State ceremonial when the King received his chief officers and members of the Court reclining on his couch. The varieties of beds at that time are described as the *lit de parade*, a state bed on a platform; the *lit clos*, a recessed bed in a cupboard; the *lit d'alcove*, a bed in a recess, semi-privacy being obtained by balustrades or columns; the *lit d'ange*, a canopied bed; and the *lit de camp*, a by no means unimportant piece of furniture.

Finer and more minute ornament was introduced in French furniture in every grade, but it was the bedroom furniture that received so much attention. The application of gold ornament was applied in every way, and we find numerous screens in gilded frames filled in with needlework panels and figures in *petit point*, against a background of coarser weave. Chinese influence was also seen in the days of Louis XIV., the style being known as *la chinoiserie*.

Boulle's Inlays.

André Charles Boulle was one of those artists who now and then in the history of a country's craftsmanship stand out as the initiator of some new process. His invention or method by which he beautified cabinet work by the introduction of foreign substances, was quite new—it was something that had not been thought of by any one else. This famous artist was a worker in ebony, gradually improving his work by inlays and clever coverings with ornaments of brass and other metals. His great success, however, was inlaid tortoise-shell, cut out and encrusted with arabesques, and ornaments of thin brass and white metal, many of which were elaborately engraved, as well as being inlaid. Boulle appears to have been a man of many abilities, for in royal patents granted to him in respect of his inventions and processes he is described as: "Architect, painter, carver in mosaic, artist in cabinet-work, craftsman in veneer, chaser and inlayer, and designer of figures." Briefly describing the most popular of his processes, it may be explained that his work in tortoise-shell and brass was effected by cutting the two substances together in fanciful fretwork, and then pressing the cut-through materials together, thus forming an inlay. After this process had been carried out the metallic portions of the inlay were surface-engraved, the graver's tool thus giving life to the object. Objects so decorated in some instances represented insects and animals, in others his ornament was merely decorative scroll-work or fanciful design. The colouring of Boulle work differs, sometimes it is brown, at others red or black, the colouring matter being placed under the tortoise-shell inlay.

Most of the Boulle pieces were very massive, such objects as commodes, bureaus, and desks being further enriched by the free use of handsome metal handles, and corner ornaments. Boulle also made smaller tables and cabinets for private houses, together with caskets, inkstands, bookcases, and cupboards. He was an artist who was much copied, and connoisseurs are reminded that comparatively few of the pieces met with in dealers' shops, or coming under the hammer, were made by the great master or in his workshop. Some of his imitators used horn instead of tortoise-shell, adding blue or vermilion paint, until some of the work became extravagant and almost ludicrous. Inferior Boulle work was made up of the portions cut out of the metal and tortoise-shell sheets which had been first operated upon in the construction of the better pieces. The name given to this second quality by French artists was *coutre partie*, as distinct from the *premiere partie*, that consisting of the original fret or inlay. Many of the collectors' pieces which come into the market nowadays are found to be defective, and others have been indifferently repaired at an earlier date, such pieces being "restored" by those who have not had the experience of the original maker.

The finest and most reliable examples of Boulle work which may be inspected are those met with in the Wallace Collection, and the few very choice examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum, especially a Boulle cabinet in the Jones bequest, which is said to have cost its owner £5,000. One of the most beautiful examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum is the commode in the style of Bérain, bequeathed by the late Mrs Julia Bonnar. It was formerly in the possession of her father, Captain Charles Spencer Ricketts. The top of this beautiful commode is covered with brass and tortoise-shell inlays, enriched by the addition of mother-of-pearl and green and blue enamels. These are wrought into mythical designs in which Cupid and Psyche figure. In the Wallace Collection there are two cabinets of ebony with marqueterie of tortoise-shell and white metal on yellow metal, and mounts of gilt-bronze cast and chased after the style of the Louis XIV. period, but said to have been made by a skilful imitator in the reign of Louis XVI. There is also a cabinet of ebony and marqueterie of the same materials, in the metal being set a medallion of Henry IV., King of France.

That cabinet is also of the style of Louis XIV., but probably made later. Another well-known example in Hertford House is a cabinet of ebony with panels decorated with floral designs in marqueterie of various woods; the ornamental bands and plaques are in marqueterie of metal, ebony, and tortoise-shell. The style is closely allied to the earlier period of Louis XIII., but the tentative marqueterie work denotes a transition to the style of Louis XIV., and presents the curious characteristics of that peculiar work of the *ébénisterie* of André Charles Boulle. A prominent feature of this magnificent cabinet is the crowning decoration of gilt-bronze, consisting of a military trophy, in the centre of which is a medallion of Louis XIV. in his early manhood. In the same collection there is an *armoire* in ebony, also by Boulle. It is enriched with marqueterie of metal and tortoise-shell, the mounts of gilt bronze being cast and chased. The central ornament of the face of the *armoire* is a nymph and young satyr, at the sides being plaques in low relief, symbolising Summer and Autumn. Another piece of Boulle's work is a *coffret de mariage* (marriage casket) in ebony, standing on a base of the same wood. Both are decorated with the usual marqueterie and gilt bronze ornament. There is a second marriage chest in the collection, the special feature of which is the peculiar red tortoise-shell of the inlays.

Collectors need not be disheartened on account of the many fine pieces named as representative of the style, for minor examples are often rich in marqueterie and inlay, some of which are made up of *bois du roi* ("King wood"), the name given to a species of West Indian wood which is somewhat darker than mahogany.

French Lacquered Furniture.

It was when China and Japan had sent over their wonderful productions in lacquered wares that European connoisseurs became interested in this, to them, new art. As a natural consequence, cabinet-makers in France and afterwards in England commenced to manufacture the nearest approach to Oriental lacquer or varnished wares they were able to produce. To a large extent they were successful, but they had to contend with the natural difficulties of producing a gum or lacquer to take the place of the Oriental lac which could only be applied under conditions which prevailed exclusively in the country where the trees from which the lac was obtained grew. The most celebrated exponents of European lacquer work, as applied to furniture and household furnishings, were the Martins, who about the middle of the eighteenth century produced some of their marvellous works of art in the "Royal Manufactory," the title given to their factories and cabinet works, one of which was in *faubourg* Saint Martin, another in the *faubourg* Saint Denis, and the third in the *rue* Saint Magloire. The French Dauphin purchased many cabinet specimens, and other members of the royal house of France added to the nation's treasures. Some of these choice examples are still stored at Versailles. The Martins were specially famous for their black lacquers, and they applied their special varnish, closely copying the Chinese, upon all kinds of metals and woods, as well as on leather and pasteboard.

In the reign of Louis XV. porcelain was evident everywhere. A room was considered incomplete unless filled with priceless china. It was a time when the potters of Saxony had discovered the art of making a hard paste like the Chinese. In the reign of Louis XVI. there were some additions to the furnishings of the palace. Then delicate paintings became evident, and Sèvres porcelain was in the ascendent. Many of these delightful ceramics were introduced, harmonising with the rosewood veneers. The dead gilding of the bronzes incorporated in furniture was relieved by Sèvres plaques and panels. Those combinations formed a happy relief to the wood-work and took off some of the extravagance of ornamentation, just as the porcelain of China and Japan relieved the severity of the marqueterie and bronze of the Louis XIV. period. Undoubtedly the Sèvres panels and porcelain were fittingly appropriate to the furniture of that day, for they would not have been suitable on Boulle cabinets of Louis XVI.

Furniture of the Regency.

There is not much to note about the furniture made in France during the Regency, other than that it was in keeping with the art prevailing in the reign of Louis XIV., the style being continued. Some few characteristic pieces made during the Regency can, however, be fixed with some degree of certainty, in that carvers then introduced heads and busts, wearing the peculiar head-dress of the times. These they pictured in their marqueterie designs. There are not many distinctive examples in furniture galleries showing the Regency period, although no doubt the change that was coming was already creeping on. It has been said that the grandeur that had marked the homes of the Louis XIV. period was enhanced by that produced during the Regency and the earlier years of Louis XV.; but it was not until the young King came of age that there were signs of the rococo (so named after rocks and shells), a style influenced by Eastern art. The work of André Charles Boulle was continuing, but the use of ormolu increased, and was evidently used to a greater extent than marqueterie. Among the workers of that day were Charles Cressent, who had been appointed *ébéniste* to the

Regent; Jules Aurèle Meissonier, whose elaborate decoration of combinations of shell work and florid foliage was a feature; and Jacques Caffieri, who worked at the Louvre with Boulle and others. Another famous worker was Riesener, whose name is associated with the remarkable commode, begun by Oeben and completed by Riesener in 1760, known as the Bureau du Roi, described in another paragraph, in which it is referred to as having been copied by Dasson, the copy being now in the Wallace Collection.

Of the work of Charles Cressent, who had been appointed *ébéniste* to Philip of Orleans, there is a fine commode in the Wallace Collection, specially interesting in that it has been looked upon as a transitional piece between the *Régence* style and the *rocaille* phase of the Louis XV. style.

Louis XV.

When Louis XV. reached his majority the decorative work of Caffieri, who made such beautiful ornaments in bronze, was being applied by French cabinet-makers. Among the more important departures of the Louis XV. period, to which the attention of collectors is called, are the *canapé*, or sofa, to seat three persons; the *causeuse*, for two persons; and the *chaise-longue*, long chair or lounge. The *bonheur du jour* made at that time was a small cabinet table for a lady's boudoir, and the *cartonnière*, a table in which papers could be kept. The ordinary chairs in a well-furnished apartment in the Louis XV. period were six single chairs or *chaises*, and two *fauteuils* or armchairs. There were also many pretty little occasional tables with gilt mounts, such as were still more extensively made in the reign of Louis XVI.

French cabinet-makers were not left altogether without guidance at that time, for several Continental publishers of designs brought out important books. One of those was Neufforge, of Liège, in Belgium, who designed cabinets, buffets, *armoires*, and console tables, some of his later designs being the commodes and other pieces which became popular at the time of Louis XVI.

Of the examples of Louis XV. furniture which may be viewed by connoisseurs wishful to identify their own examples, there are some typical pieces in the Victoria and Albert Museum; one small piece, a beautiful little chair given by Lord Howard de Walden, has carvings depicting love scenes and rustic pictures. There is a beautiful French commode, made of oak veneered with tulip wood, ornamented with marqueterie of harewood, sycamore, and other woods, the mounts of ormolu. In the centre of the front of this beautiful piece of work, executed towards the end of the reign of Louis XV., is an exquisite inlay of a basket of flowers. This commode was bequeathed by the late Mrs Julia Bonnar. In the Wallace Collection there is a commode by Jacques Caffieri, inlaid with various woods with mounts and ornaments of bronze, cast, chased, and gilt. It is said to be the most remarkable piece ornamented by this famous *ciseleur* (metal-chaser) who represents the earlier Louis XV. style (style *rocaille*). Another piece in Hertford House is a writing-table in pale green lacquer and bronze by J. Dubois. This table, which was made at the end of the reign of Louis XV., originally came from the collection of Prince Kourakin at Petrograd. It may be briefly described as the supports being figures of sea nymphs or sirens in gilt bronze, bearing cushions on their heads, and garlanded with festoons of oak leaves and acorns; around the upper part there is a series of frieze-like panels of classic ornamentation, also in gilt bronze. Another example of this period in the same gallery is an upright bureau of tulip-wood, the mounts being of gilt bronze, supplemented by plaques of apple-green Sèvres porcelain, painted with flowers on a white ground. It is surmounted by a clock of gilt bronze by Julien le Roy, at the summit being cupids of dark bronze, and on either side curved flambeaux springing from foliated scroll work. Connoisseurs of French art furniture at this period will recognise the work of the family of Martin, the choice Vernis-Martin panels being appropriately introduced in decorative ornament.

Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI.

Louis XVI. is said to have been weak of will and constantly under the influence of his wife or his brother, his reign ending in his compulsory flight from Versailles in 1789, and in 1793 his trial and execution. Queen Marie Antoinette, however, exercised considerable influence over French art, and a plainer and somewhat severer style came into vogue, the style which she adopted in dress being reflected in the furniture of the period. It was then that the cabriole leg was superseded by plain tapered legs, and instead of so much gilt the furniture was frequently painted white, gilt ornament being used as a relief rather than the base of the decoration.

One of the best known artists who left his mark on the cabinet work and decorative ornament of the period was Jean Henri Riesener, although many of the examples retained in museums and art galleries may be regarded as connecting links between the Louis XV. and the Louis XVI. periods. In the Louvre Museum there is an earlier piece dated 1769. It is

a cylindrical desk ornamented with marqueterie of flowers and trophies indicative of Poetry and of War; the bronze ornaments on the bureau are said to be the work of Philippe Caffieri, but were designed by Duplessis and Winant. There are also many fine pieces by Martin Carlin in the Louvre Museum, showing the peculiar delicacy of style for which this artist is remarkable. Another famous artist, by name Ranson, was noted for his floral and pastoral trophies, looped garlands of roses and love-birds, quivers of arrows and shepherds' crooks hidden amidst the foliage. G. Benneman made two buffets for Marie Antoinette, which are now in the Louvre.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum among the famous Jones' Bequest there is an *escritoire à toilette*, which is believed to have been made for the ill-fated queen. Its style, however, indicates the transitional period between the rococo and that which prevailed in the reign of Louis XVI. Its workmanship is generally assigned to Claude Saunier. There is a wealth of ornament about this piece, the central panels of which are so beautifully inlaid. Under the middle panel is a mirror, and at either side divisions lined with silk. On one side there are pin-cushions, powder-puffs, and boxes, and on the other side compartments fitted with scent bottles and numerous toilet accessories used in heightening the charms of female beauty. Perhaps one of the most magnificent relics of that period when Queen Marie Antoinette ruled that gay throng at Fontainebleau is her gilt state bed and the *chambre à coucher* in that palace; the bed hangings of Lyonnais silk were designed by Philippe de Lassale. Among the minor relics of the Court is a jewel cabinet in the Palace of Versailles, formerly belonging to the Queen. It is of mahogany, and inlaid with painted plaques of the Wedgwood-Flaxman type, gilt figures representing the Seasons.

Visitors to the Victoria and Albert Museum can form a very good idea of the splendour of French boudoirs during the reign of Louis XVI. There is a reconstructed sitting-room, removed from a house in Paris. Originally it is said to have been erected under the superintendence of Marie Antoinette and her friend and lady of honour, Madame de Serilly, during the temporary absence of that lady's husband, who was Paymaster of the Forces under Louis XVI. The measurements of the room are 14 ft. 6 in. by 10 ft. 6 in., and the total height 16 ft. The sides are formed into four arched recesses, the pilasters of which are decorated with paintings in panels, as are the lunettes within the sweep of each arch. These last-named spaces are filled with subjects of Grecian mythology. The side on the left of the entrance doorway shows a representation of Juno, reclining on the clouds, and attended by her favourite peacock. Opposite the entrance the lunette is filled with a nude water god seated on a precipitous rock, down which a stream pours from his arm. A rudder in his hand is emblematic of a navigable river, and is probably meant for the genius of the Seine. Above the fireplace in this remarkable room Pomona is seen, and over the door there is Vulcan with his anvil and hammer. Lastly, a medallion figure of Jupiter rides upon the clouds in the centre of the low domed ceiling. These paintings, together with the small figure subjects on the pilasters, were executed by Jean Siméon Rousseau de la Rottière. The chimney-piece is of grey marble, the work of Claude Michel Clodion, a celebrated sculptor of the period; the gilt metal ornaments are by Gouthière, one of the best metal workers of his day. The beautiful gold ornaments and decoration of the room form an appropriate setting for gilt furniture of the Louis XVI. period. The furniture suitable for such a room is represented by several pieces in the museum, including a settee, the framework of which is of gilt wood; the covering is of Beauvais tapestry, of the same period, 1774-1793.

In the Wallace Collection there are some fine examples of furniture upholstered in Beauvais tapestry, including several carved chairs made in the reign of Louis XVI., but upholstered in tapestry which had been woven at an earlier date, such, for instance, as a set of chairs, armchairs and sofa upholstered in tapestry designed by Jean-Baptiste. Upholstered in the same material there is a very charming *causeuse* or small cushioned sofa, of wood carved and gilt, the tapestry being of the period of Louis XV., but the framework is of the time of Louis XVI. This little sofa is part of a suite which includes large sofas and armchairs. In the Wallace Galleries may also be seen an *armoire* of carved walnut wood in two sections, crowned with a broken pediment, adorned with fine figures, and an inlay of green veined marble. The subjects, which are in low relief, represent Venus and Diana, and the arms are those of Leon-Castille-Sicily.

An important historical piece in the Wallace Collection is an armchair of carved and gilt wood, covered with silk brocade, bearing a monogram composed of the letters M and T, interlaced. It belonged to the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, mother of Queen Marie Antoinette of France, and is of French design of the Louis XVI. period. In the same museum may be seen a *secrétaire* of amboyna wood, decorated with plaques of Sèvres porcelain bearing the monogram of the Queen, a beautiful piece of work by Adam Weisweiller. There are also several work-tables—one an especially fine piece of marqueterie work with mounts of bronze, cast, chased, and gilt. The top is formed of a decorative plaque of Sèvres porcelain, with turquoise blue borders, enriched with scroll and diaper work in gold; in the centre is painted a fanciful subject with foxes and exotic birds in a landscape.

Of the late ornament used towards the close of Louis XVI.'s career, the slender ovals in wood, porcelain, and

ormolu are specially noticeable; in conjunction with these are bows of ribbons and flowers. At this time finer and more minute ornament was introduced. Classic characteristics are also to be observed. The woods employed were mahogany, rosewood, tulip, amboyna, amaranth, kingwood, ebony, pear, and holly. The painted and gilded ornament which eventually became so extravagant was well suited to the introduction of magnificent upholstery enriched by beautifully worked scenic pictures in silk. The bedsteads were hung with silk damask or flowered calicoes.

Many dainty pieces were made for reception rooms. In the furniture of such rooms the decoration became lighter, too, and the chairs included some novelties to provide for the exigencies of popular fashion. Most notable among those special features was the *voyeuse* chair, with its stuffed top rail and lyre-shaped back, an invention which permitted the dandies of that day to sit astride, and when resting their arms upon the chair back to display their handsome coats. Such were the fashions which prevailed at the end of the period when the Monarchy was suspended, and the career of the King and his unfortunate Queen cut short.

Fig. 45 represents a Louis XVI. *secrétaire*, with finely chased and gilt ormolu enrichments, the cylinder fall being inlaid with various woods, in the centre a beautiful group of flowers. On the cabinet are shown suitable contemporary ornaments; there is a Louis XVI. clock by Lelievre à Paris, of exquisitely chased workmanship, the ornaments being of gilt ormolu, standing on a white statuary marble base. There are also two Louis XVI. candelabra formed of bronze cupids, holding ormolu branches, standing on circular pedestals of dove-coloured marble with ormolu enrichments. This very beautiful *secrétaire*, so typical of the workmanship of Louis XVI. period, was lately in the possession of Mr Albert Amor, of St James's Street, London.

Vernis-Martin Lacquers.

It may be convenient here to draw attention to the remarkable invention which made Martin's varnish so famous. It was at the beginning of the eighteenth century that so many pieces of Chinese lacquer work were being imported into Europe, and European cabinet-makers tried hard to discover a process by which they could, if not actually copy foreign lacquer, which was produced by natural means, at any rate produce something which would answer the same purpose. A Dutch inventor named Hans Huyjens made a varnish very like the Oriental in the finish he was able to produce with it. One of his workmen was a French-polisher named Guillaume Martin. He learned the secret, and it is said was able to improve upon it. He had four sons who worked with him, and the varnish they produced became the rage in Paris, where they settled. The Martins applied their varnish, which became known as Vernis-Martin, to all kinds of furniture, and they were especially successful in the ornamentation of fancy boxes, and even quite small objects like snuff-boxes. In 1740 the brothers Martin secured a Royal patent, and Vernis-Martin became the rage not only on the Continent but in England. (For further reference to Lacquers, *see* chap. xix.)

The Directoire.

The furniture made under the Reign of Terror or the Directoire was controlled by the Jury of Arts and Manufacture, at whose instigation many fine relics of ancient France, as it was under its kings, were destroyed by fire. This act of vandalism was performed under the Tree of Liberty in the forecourt of the Gobelins Factory. Not only were many priceless objects destroyed but other royal treasures were dispersed. Thus at that time many pieces of furniture, which had been made for kings and nobles, passed into the hands of commoners of other nations.

As the period defined as that of the Directoire indicates the time when the French people had for a time discarded kingly rule, so it also indicates to the connoisseur of furniture a period when a different influence was brought to bear on the trade and commerce of the nation. It is noteworthy that the names of French sovereigns, patrons of art at their respective periods, have assisted in defining periods in French art. Such periods are very appropriate in that French rulers were mostly great supporters of art, and the peculiar changes which came about in French art and furniture and other things is generally noticeable at the commencement of a new reign or era. Royal influences being very intimately associated with the art of a nation, we may look to some indication of change in the Directoire period and during the Revolution in France, the time immediately preceding the First Empire. Makers who had introduced the royal monogram and regal ornament on furniture and in textiles suddenly discarded those emblems of sovereignty and substituted griffins, caryatides, and some classic ornament.

The sphinx came later, after Napoleon had returned from Egypt. There was then the torch for victory, and bay leaves symbolical of the praise meted out to the Conquerer. The honeysuckle or anthemion then introduced was an Egyptian

ornament borrowed from ancient Greece.

The First Empire.

The Battle of the Pyramids, fought in 1798, bore fruit in architectural design and furniture decoration. It was after Napoleon returned from Egypt that Egyptian ornament, with an admixture of Greek and Roman, was used. Mahogany was the wood employed by cabinet-makers at that time, and they carved it in the form of classic figures. They cut the sphinx and the lion, and in some instances painted and inlaid them. Thus it was that a change was brought about in chairs, beds, and couches, all of which had to conform to the new fashion. It is said that ladies' work-tables were then frequently replicas of sacrificial altars taken from Greek models. The full force of the new influence was felt in the year 1804, when the Empire was proclaimed. The style then formulated lasted about twenty years, during which period its chief exponents were Percier and Fontane. Their designs were incorporated in a book entitled "Empire Furniture," which was published in 1809. Describing the Empire style Molinier writes:

> "Only one thing allows us to pardon the furniture of the first Empire for its incoherence of form and decoration, and that is the excessive conscientiousness that presides over its execution; from a technical point of view the cabinet work and the bronze work are irreproachable. But at this point we should stop the eulogies that have been given too long to what may be called a caricature of the French style in the second half of the eighteenth century."

In describing the chief characteristic of the style it has been said to be cubic and rectangular, with an enormous scroll in evidence. The carved figure of a swan is often the chief charm of the arm of chair and couch and sides of beds.

George Smith, who held the appointment of "Upholsterer Extraordinary" to the Prince of Wales, published a book of designs mostly copied from French pattern books in 1808, and his recommendation of the Empire style probably did much to popularise it in England. Napoleon patronised cabinet-makers like the kings of France had done before him, when in 1810 he ordered new State furniture to be made for the *chambre â coucher* and other rooms in the palace which were being redecorated for his bride. It was during the first Empire period that cheval glasses, or *psychés*, as they were called in France, were introduced.

Napoleonic Furniture.

French art has ever been a prominent feature in the commerce of that great nation, and there are many connoisseurs of art in this country who delight in the curios and antiques which have been made in France, and collectors search Parisian shops for examples of the furniture made by the *ébénistes* of that country. The art treasures of the palaces of the early French kings and the museums which now contain so many fine examples of cabinet work, also include French furniture made during the Napoleonic period. Much of that furniture has found its way into Great Britain. The later styles, when the antique was giving way to the modern furniture of the present day, was exhibited at the Great Exhibition of 1851, and at exhibitions of art which have been held in Paris there have been many fine examples showing the influence of those days when Napoleon III. ruled in the Empire of France, and connoisseurs know full well that although France is a Republic again art is still prominent in that country.

CHAPTER XI

EARLY GEORGIAN FURNITURE

The beginning of mahogany—Architectural influence—Decorated—Lion and mask period—The cabochon-and-leaf period—The furniture of the period.

It is very difficult to draw a hard and fast line between styles of furniture which overlap, and although there have been times when a change of sovereign produced an immediate difference in art and commerce, like those periods which followed immediately after the restoration of the Stuarts, and the accession of William and Mary, bringing with them Dutch influence, there have been other occasions when trade and commerce have gone on without interruption. One of these periods across which we draw an imaginary line is the accession of George I. on the death of Queen Anne. George was the first sovereign of the House of Hanover, but his German connections did not in any way affect the English cabinet-making trade, which at that time was passing through a slow and steady process of progress and development.

The chairs of walnut which continued to be made during the first years of the new King's reign were of what has been termed the Decorative Queen Anne Period; that is to say, the decorative ornament and upholstery of the end of the Queen's reign was continued throughout the Age of Walnut, as represented by the furniture made at the commencement of the reign of the House of Hanover. Some very beautiful armchairs and decorative settees and double chairs were made, and many exceptional pieces in the collections of connoisseurs show indications of the coming change. Already the carver's art was being applied, and the wood-carver was, as it were, waiting for the newer material which was destined to have such a far-reaching effect upon the English cabinet-making trade.

It is said that the accession of George I. marks an important departure in that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in the eighteenth century, until the death of Queen Anne, royal favour had been the chief factor in promoting change and setting the fashion. George I. cared little about English society or English trade, and by no stretch of imagination can the early Georges, even by their most enthusiastic admirers, be regarded as patrons of art. The time had come when the artist and the trader were to set the pace, and it is a noticeable thing that from the commencement of the reign of George I. fashion changed, and even took its distinctive characteristic names from craftsmanship and designers and not from royal patrons. We speak readily of the style of Queen Anne, but when describing subsequent styles we use the generic term of "Georgian" as indicating the era or period, but certainly not as covering any definite style, for thenceforth such names as those of Adam, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton were to be descriptive of the style of the age.

The Beginning of Mahogany.

The most important departure in early Georgian days came through the introduction of mahogany, said to have been known to some extent at an earlier period, but not used in England until that time. (*See* chapter xxxvii.) Mahogany, which grows in many parts of Central America, Cuba, Honduras, and the Bahamas, varying in quality and in marking, was put to practical purposes between 1715 and 1720, but at the latter date its use was fairly general, and leading cabinet-makers were offering their clients furniture in the new wood. That chosen by the chair-maker was plain and without carving, by no means as handsome as the figured walnut. The carver found in mahogany a suitable material, and the plain surfaces of the walnut furniture of an earlier date soon gave way to the gradually developing style which was soon defined by its great exponent, Thomas Chippendale. There is no doubt that before Chippendale's activity there was a gradual tendency to carve mahogany, and to enhance the effect.

It has been pointed out that some of the early work was on Grecian or Roman models. Then in sequence came the escallop, and the honeysuckle or the French palmette.

During the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century Spanish mahogany was chiefly used. It was chosen because of its freedom from knots, and each piece was very carefully selected, the tortoise-shell or curved figure being reserved for moulded panels. Its beauty served to supply the need of something to follow the inlaid work of an earlier period. The gradual supersession of marqueterie by mahogany is due to the beauty of some of the finely-figured pieces which early Georgian cabinet-makers chose for their panels. In the Georgian era much of the homely furniture which we associate

with the commoner varieties of mahogany was made. It is an unfortunate and almost inevitable fact that when writing on furniture, or describing so-called typical pieces of well-known makers, the examples quoted and referred to, and even illustrated, are exceptionally fine specimens. Some of the illustrations in this book have been chosen because they are typical of the actual furniture used in middle class homes throughout the eighteenth century rather than for their exceptional grandeur and suitability as show pieces in a museum.

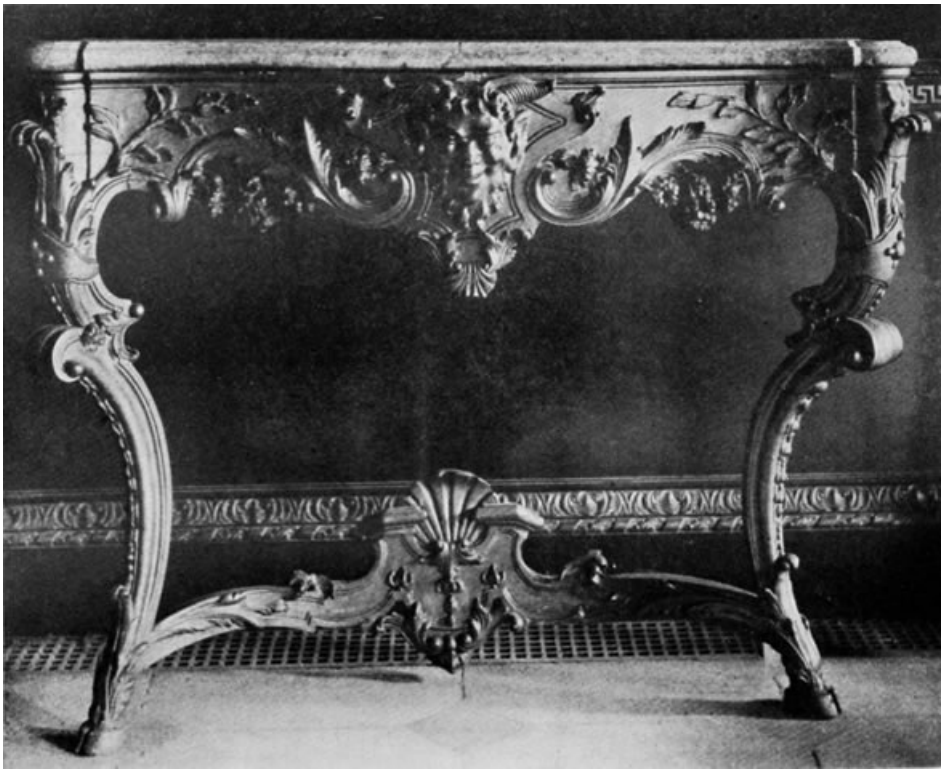

FIG. 46.—CONSOLE TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP,
GEORGIAN.
(*At the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 47.—WALNUT TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP,
PERIOD 1715-1720.

FIG. 48.—TABLE WITH DRAWER,
PERIOD 1720-1740.

Mahogany had been used as a veneer chiefly during the later years of Queen Anne's reign, but by 1720 solid mahogany was used for chairs, tables, and other furniture. Finely-figured walnut continued in use for veneering purposes as specially marked wood was too brittle for solid furniture. By degrees makers learned to appreciate the higher qualities of mahogany, which was lighter than oak and more durable than walnut; moreover, the rich red-brown colour of mahogany made walnut look dull by comparison.

It was only natural that those who worked the newer material should have endeavoured to produce different effects to those which had been secured when working walnut. Hitherto moulding and edging had been framed in accord with the smooth surface of walnut, but decorated frames, bands, and fillets were introduced as well as carved panels, especially in the case of cabinets and wardrobes. Thus when mahogany became the vogue in the reign of George I. it is not surprising that considerable impetus was given to the furnishing trade, and cabinet-makers began to make solid-looking useful bookcases and chests of drawers. The brass metal work on bedroom chests of drawers, as well as on bureaus, was strong and serviceable, but the plates were not as large as those used in the days of Queen Anne. (*See* chapter xxxiv.)

Many attempts have been made to divide the furniture of the first two Georges, and to classify that which was made before such exponents as Chippendale had established their respective styles. Probably the one adopted by Mr Cescinsky, in his exhaustive work on English furniture of the eighteenth century, is the simplest and best for home connoisseurs to follow. These periods naturally overlap, as in each case a few years elapsed before any new style superseded a former one. The divisions roughly are Decorated (1714-1725), the Lion Period (1720-1735), the Satyr-mask (1730-1740), and the Cabochon-and-leaf (1735 onward). The last period extends until that referred to in chapter xiii.

Some add architects' furniture, which is certainly an important feature in the wood-work of Georgian days, and must be treated separately. Its great exponents, however, were the Brothers Adam, whose designs are explained in chapter xii.

ARCHITECTURAL INFLUENCE.

Connoisseurs do not always take into account sufficiently the influence architects exerted over the furniture trade

during the first half of the eighteenth century. At that time they were very active, such men as the Brothers Adam and Kent being destined to exert a far-reaching influence, for the schools of architecture they followed seemed to call for more suitable furniture for the new designs they were planning—something which in its decoration would render it harmonious and give greater beauty to the decorated rooms in which it was to be used. The architectural influence at that time exerted was due to the greater attention architects then gave to the interior fitments of the houses they were building for their patrons. It was a time when many finely decorated buildings were being put up. Classic influence was exerting itself. The mouldings or ornament of the furniture took shape from the more important buildings. Many cupboards and lesser pieces of furniture were, like our modern landlords' fixtures, part of the fitments arranged for by the architect or builder. Greater attention was given to mantel-pieces, corner cupboards, console tables, and other pieces, and they were made to accord with the wood-work.

Many men were building mansions for which new furniture would be required. In 1722 Sir Robert Walpole commenced the erection of Houghton Hall, in Norfolk. The furnishing of that mansion found work for many of the leading cabinet-makers of his day. He favoured furniture made under French influence, architecturally in keeping with the more classic designs then being produced. The console tables and gilt furniture were in accord with the building designed by Kent. In connection with the building of Houghton, which had a considerable influence on the style of architecture and appropriate furnishings for it, it may be pointed out that Sir Robert Walpole's new house was built by Ripley, and designed by William Kent, who worked in conjunction with Isaac Ware, another architect of great repute. It was Ware who was Clerk of the Works of the Tower of London in 1728; he was also Master of the Carpenters' Company in 1763. His book, entitled "Complete Body of Architecture," contained illustrations of another fine building, Chesterfield House, in Mayfair, which was built for the Earl of Chesterfield in 1749, and afterwards furnished. Thomas Ripley also published a book entitled "Houghton," and in it he described interior decoration and chimney-pieces which he and Kent had designed for Houghton Hall. Mahogany was very much employed. The library of Houghton was wainscoted with it, and, curiously enough, Ripley seems to infer that in an alcove in the room was a bed of mahogany hung with painted taffety. He also refers to a drawing-room which was hung with yellow cassory, and the chief saloon which was upholstered in crimson-flowered velvet. The chimney-piece of the saloon was of black and gold marble, and the same marble served for the table tops. In this very remarkable residential house there were several splendid chimney-pieces, and over some of them pictures in keeping with the decoration. Thus in the coffee-room there was a framed landscape with dancing figures, by Swanivet. Over the mantel-piece in the "common parlour" were very skilfully executed carvings by Grinling Gibbons. The hangings in the "velvet bed-chamber" were of green velvet, and there were tapestries and other rich furnishings. William Kent, who was born in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in 1684, according to Walpole, felt the emotions of genius. Houghton Hall took years to build and furnish, and it cost a fortune, for Sir Robert Walpole spent fully £200,000 upon the house and its furnishings. This remarkable statesman did much indeed to advance architectural and furnishing art. He placed great reliance upon Kent, who was not only an architect and a painter, but an ornamental gardener. The latter quality was by no means a small matter, for during the years which followed, houses, and incidentally their furniture, suffered from the narrowed and cramped lay-out of the restricted areas of town gardens.

Kent also drew from the pen of Horace Walpole many eulogiums, for he wrote of him:—

> "Kent was not only consulted for furniture, as frames of pictures, glasses, beds, tables, chairs, etc., but for plate, for a barge, for a cradle, and so impetuous was fashion, that two great ladies prevailed on him to make designs for their birthday gowns."

Architectural influence was at that time indeed strong, and there was an intermixture of architectural furniture and furnishing with an overlapping of the work, for in the reign of George I. Gibbons was exercising his influence over decorative ornament. It was of his work that Walpole wrote:—

> "There is no instance of a man before Gibbons who gave to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers and changed together the various productions of the elements with a free disorder natural to each species."

Decorated.

The decorated furniture which ranges in date from 1714 to 1725 began during the reign of Queen Anne, and continued to be made after the accession of the Hanoverian Prince George to the English throne. It is important to note the coming change in the chair leg which began when casters were first used. They were very small, and furnished with

leather rollers instead of metal, or, as in later years, vitrified bowls; the socket or horn was of brass. It is only from small details of construction that the furniture of this period can be distinguished, especially when the material is walnut. The heavy duty on the importation of the new wood mahogany restricted its use at that time, some concessions being made in the reign of George II. It has been pointed out that one of the characteristics of the early years of the Georgian period was the introduction of eagles' heads on the arms of the chairs, a device seen on both walnut and mahogany; the eagles' beaks usually turn outward.

The escallop shell was often introduced, as may be seen on the knees of the cabriole legs as well as on the fronts of tables. During this period the richly upholstered gilded furniture, decorated and ornamented after French taste, was chiefly noted for its console tables, which were so prominent in all the more important rooms. The elegant console tables lost some of their decorative appearance, when in 1725 more flattened ornament was introduced, and decorated borders and carved mouldings of lighter taste came into use. The decorative character of chairs and other furniture makes it difficult to distinguish between some of the furniture of this period and that which was made a little later, when Chippendale began to exert his influence, for it was no doubt from the earlier decorated furniture that he secured his first model.

It is sometimes supposed that most of the best furniture of the gilded decorated type made under French influence came from abroad or was carried out by foreign workmen. That, however, is not quite correct, for there is abundant evidence that English workmen not infrequently decorated and finished furniture which had been imported in the rough.

Lion and Mask Period.

A distinction is made in the decoration of furniture in the first half of the eighteenth century between the lion and satyr mask ornament which came into being at a slightly different period, but which overlapped considerably. The lion period, as it has been stated, extended from 1720-1735, whereas there are few traces in the satyr mask having appeared before 1730, but it extended to about 1740. Those were the days when the heads and feet of lions were characteristic ornaments, and when masks were cleverly carved on the fronts of console tables, and on the legs of furniture. The lion head or mask had been used at an earlier time by German makers, who ornamented some of their Renaissance furniture by introducing them into carvings. Masks and heads are seen on the knees of cabriole legs with very realistic feet, both in walnut and mahogany furniture of that period. They are characteristic features of mahogany stools and settees. The mask took many forms in the course of its development. Satyr heads in high relief were frequently carved in the midst of conventional honeysuckle, and winged satyrs are seen in conjunction with lions' and claw-and-ball feet. Some of the lions' legs with bold feet are very effective, and they sometimes serve as the supports of tall chests of drawers.

The satyr masks and lion heads were frequently used in conjunction with the acanthus leaf, which continued to be used by cabinet-makers for light decorative treatment. The acanthus ornament was no new thing, for as one writer puts it, "from ancient Greek to Sheraton the acanthus has curled itself round every mode within reach of its scrolls." The legend of this Greek ornament is one of those interesting myths which we delight to remember, and to pass on as reminiscent of the mysteries of Greek faith and belief, as well as of the legends of the ancients. The story tells how a Greek vase was thrown upon a maiden's grave, a wild acanthus plant springing up and curling itself with natural artistic beauty round the vase. This new design furnished by Nature appealed to the heart of Kallimachus, the maiden's lover, who was a skilful sculptor, and forthwith applied the inspiration to the carving of a column which gave forth to the world the ornament of the Corinthian capital, which has all these centuries been incorporated in architectural ornament.

The Cabochon-and-leaf Period.

Following the lion and satyr mask period came the cabochon-and-leaf period, which was, of course, a French ornament. This very characteristic design is recognised immediately by the connoisseur, enabling him to locate chairs made during that period, which extended from 1735-1750. The cabochon, often set in a frame accompanied by leaf ornament, is usually seen on the knees of chairs and legs of tables. This novel and interesting representation of a polished jewel (*see* Glossary) is recognised at once, constituting a distinct feature, although often used in conjunction with lions' feet and the claw-and-ball and other styles made in conjunction with it.

It is said that Chippendale was a great copyist of earlier models, and that he favoured much the cabochon-and-leaf ornament, his earlier designs at any rate showing no trace of any attachment to the lion and satyr mask ornaments. Some of Chippendale's early designs show the leaf of large size enclosing a beautifully modelled cabochon, which, when

polished by long years of frequent rubbing, closely resembles a jewel.

The Furniture of the Period.

To sum up the furniture of the period under review it may be pointed out that the different styles of ornament which had been introduced during the Queen Anne and early Georgian days formed the groundwork on which the cabinet-makers, freed from royal patronage and the governing influence of any foreign country, based their own English ideas, which gave to the furniture world characteristic styles expressing the individuality of the designer and master cabinet-maker. Mahogany was in the ascendency, and was used freely by architects. There were many remarkable doors and over-doors of the beautifully figured wood, fine wardrobe fronts, and chests of drawers with figured panels. There were mahogany side-tables and, later, sideboards. Card-tables were made in great numbers, especially those with lion decoration, produced in mahogany and walnut between the years 1720-1730. Bedsteads, which had hitherto been of plain designs, were carved and turned from solid mahogany. Side by side with the flat-fronted chests, serpentine and bow-fronted chests were made. So-called clothes' cupboards took the place of oak wardrobes, and gradually superseded the "commode cloth presses" of the days of Queen Anne and George I. Many people were employing local cabinet-makers to produce desks and writing-tables, and among some of the historic pieces now carefully preserved are quaint old tables and desks made in the early days of the eighteenth century. In the Victoria and Albert Museum, among recent acquisitions, is a writing cabinet of solid walnut wood, said to have belonged to Dean Swift. It has a fall-front and beautifully inlaid small drawers and compartments. The break-front desk is surmounted by a cupboard which has glass doors, such desks with bookcases over them becoming popular. From 1720-1735 mahogany cabinets or curiosity cupboards were made, but they were mostly used for china. A little later many of these cupboards were supplied to those who were already securing beautiful tea-sets and oriental porcelain.

A distinct advance was made about 1740, greater harmony in style being seen in the treatment of the design. Legs of chairs corresponded with the design of the chair-backs, and ornamental splats were in keeping with other ornament.

At that time scagliola tables superseded marble, the material being an excellent imitation and much cheaper. Slabs of this new material, which was composed of calcined gypsum, isinglass, and Flanders glue, coloured to imitate marbles, were shipped from Italy about 1735. This imitation gave an impetus to the manufacture of tables, for it was less expensive than marble, and very effective, being used on carved mahogany frames which were sometimes parcel-gilt.

The day had dawned for the personality of makers to show itself, and in the following chapters such men as the Brothers Adam, Thomas Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton are shown to be prominent factors in the styles of English furniture therein illustrated and reviewed.

As illustrative of the Georgian period the accompanying reproductions of photographs are helpful to the home connoisseur. They represent the different kinds of ornament used on the console tables then in use. Fig. 46 is a very beautiful console table with marble top; the mask in the centre is finely cut and supported with appropriate scroll work. The cabochon-and-leaf ornament of the legs is rather unusual and especially effective, the legs terminating with hoof feet. In the centre rail is seen the typical shell.

Fig. 47 represents a handsome walnut table with claw-and-ball feet, and shell ornament in the centre; the feet are exceptionally good. This beautiful piece, with marble top, is of the period 1715-1720. Fig. 48 is another handsome table with drawer, with fine handles and large escutcheon. There is a beautiful shell in the centre, and the legs show an unusually bold display of satyr masks and carved claw feet. It is of the period 1720-1740. The Georgian mahogany bookcase (shown full of beautiful old china), illustrated in Fig. 49, has a pleasing carved cornice, and is of a much later period than that referred to in this chapter, probably about 1790. The bracket foot and central double bracket support are well represented. It is an excellent example of the serviceable furniture made during the closing years of the eighteenth century, and also during the years in the nineteenth century preceding the Victorian era.

FIG. 49.—MAHOGANY BOOKCASE,
PERIOD 1790.
(*Gill & Reigate, Ltd.*)

FIG. 50.—MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD,
PERIOD 1795-1800.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 51.—UPHOLSTERED SETTEE,
SHOWING ADAM INFLUENCE.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

CHAPTER XII

THE BROTHERS ADAM

Family history—Robert Adam's career—Adam's architectural influence—Furniture designs—Practical application—The style and its motif.

The Adam influence, or the inspiration of the Brothers Adam, upon art from the middle of the eighteenth century to the present day is recognised by all thoughtful connoisseurs. Many speak of the Adam vogue with an indistinct knowledge of the source from which it emanated, and a lesser number know anything about those men who created, as it were, a new inspiration in decorative art. The Adam style, as it was called when it had become more pronounced, influenced the designs of such clever furniture designers as Hepplewhite to a remarkable extent, and what is more noticeable, the Brothers Adam gave a distinct style of ornament to architecture and to the interior ornament of rooms and buildings, so much so that they found it necessary to specially design the furniture to be used in such buildings. The Adam inspiration claimed uniformity in art in many directions, and metal workers, masons, wood-workers, and artists with brush and chisel adopted its chaste style.

Family History.

Who, then, were the men—for it is obvious there were more than one—who brought about this "new thought" into art? is a question which may very fairly be asked. William Adam, the father of the brothers, was an architect of some note at Maryburgh. He also held the somewhat important position of King's Mason in Edinburgh. In that capacity he carried out many public works and designed notable buildings. He was responsible for Hopetoun House, and the old Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh. We learn that this worthy man had four sons—John, Robert, James, and William. When William Adam, sen., died in 1748, he was followed in his professional work by his eldest son, John. It was, however, with the two brothers Robert and James, that English artists and furniture makers of that day had to do. It was Robert Adam who made his mark upon the architectural history of his day. James was in partnership with his brother, and their names were often coupled together, especially about the year 1764, but each seems to have had a separate career, and to have worked professionally independently, although in union. In 1765 some of the drawings submitted to clients were signed "R. Adam, Architect," but soon afterwards the curious signature "Adelphi," a classic play upon their name, was adopted. The origin of the term "Adelphi" in connection with the brothers should be explained in that their connection with the district, which took its name from them, and which even now owes so much to their enterprise and architectural skill and design, is a matter of some importance. The brothers used the Greek rendering of "brothers" in naming the district on the south side of the Strand, where their offices were situated, and where they built much property. Their offices were at that time in Robert Street, and the brothers became the "Adelphi" of Adelphi. In conjunction John, Robert, James, and William obtained a lease of land on which they built and made streets, the district they named The Adelphi, ultimately comprising Adelphi Terrace and Adam, John, Robert, James, and William Streets. Most of the buildings in those streets stand to-day much as the brothers left them, a monument to their beautiful architectural work and scheme of decoration.

Mr Cescinsky, in his valuable work on "The Furniture of the Eighteenth Century," referring to the influence of the Brothers Adam, says:—

> "Their architectural work and designs for furniture have so much in common, always with a distinct leaning in the direction of bricks and mortar, and especially stucco, that the latter, both in material and *motif*, can often only be styled furniture by straining a definition."

In this he is undoubtedly right, for many of the pieces of furniture they designed have a strong resemblance to architecture, and the patterns give one the impression of having been prepared by an architect's draughtsman rather than a furniture designer. The business enterprise which resulted in the building of so many houses in an undeveloped district presented an object lesson to followers of the Adam style. The cost of this property investment was a severe drain upon the resources of the brothers, and they resorted to a remarkable method of raising money, one which would certainly not

be open to speculative builders in financial difficulties to-day. In 1773 they were able to obtain an Act of Parliament, authorising them to offer the whole of the property by public lottery, securing thereby the actual loss of building and about £1,500, an allowance towards the expenses of the lottery. Four thousand three hundred and seventy tickets were issued at fifty guineas each, and there were 110 prizes of an estimated total value of £218,500. The tickets were sold in Robert Street, Adelphi, every day, Sundays excepted, from 10 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night, and in that way no less a sum than £228,425 was realised, a remarkable testimony to the love of gambling and lotteries so strong at that time. In the lottery, it may be mentioned incidentally, houses were described "as fourth, fifth, or seventh west of Adam Street," none of the houses in London being numbered at that time. One of the houses included in the lottery was described as being in the occupation of Robert and James Adam, the two brothers living together and paying an annual rental of £230 per annum—a considerable rental in those days.

The Brothers Adam appear to have combined in themselves the work of building speculators, architects, and designers of furniture. They were also mixed up with designs for house furnishings, including textiles.

Robert Adam's Career.

Robert Adam was born at Kirkcaldy on 3rd July 1728. He was educated at Edinburgh University, and seems to have possessed an attractive personality, for he was on friendly terms with such noted men as David Hume, Dr William Robertson, Adam Ferguson, and others.

In 1754, having gained manhood's estate and some considerable experience in architectural design, Robert Adam determined to visit other countries, and we hear of him in France, Italy, and on the eastern coast of the Adriatic. It was while on that tour that he fell under the spell of classic design. He spent much time in Western Italy in 1755, and in 1756 we hear of him in Rome itself. Robert Adam was not content with viewing the ruins of ancient Rome, as were most of the travellers then visiting that historical and classical country, but he studied carefully the dwelling-houses even more so than the palaces, and his companion at that time was Charles-Louis Clérisseau, a French architect. The Adam style was founded on classical art, of which during his tour Robert Adam had so many opportunities of studying. He prepared plans and published in book form the result of some of his researches. One of his first efforts consisted of a series of drawings and sketches of ancient architecture which he had made when visiting the palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro, in Venetian Dalmatia. Afterwards he went to Venice, taking with him Zucchi, the painter, and Clérisseau, the architect. He obtained permission to sketch and make plans, but, unfortunately, owing to the Venetian Senate having failed to notify the Governor of Spalatro of the permission they had given, Robert Adam was arrested as a spy; but no doubt he regarded that as but an episode in his tour, for he was soon released and continued his work for about a year, when he returned to London.

The experience gained by Robert Adam during the years he spent in travel proved of incalculable value to him in later days. Indeed, he was helped by them to formulate that style which he was able to apply so extensively in after years. During his researches in Italy, Adam had learnt the recipe for making composition ornaments. His secret proved of immense value to him, for he applied it to architectural work, and soon became very expert in designing ceilings, brackets, and panels upon which this composition set extremely hard, enabling him to render them decorative. All through their careers the Brothers Adam made great use of what became known as *scagliola*, in the composition of which gypsum and Flanders glue were used; it was a substance which coloured well, and was often made to imitate the rarer marbles.

Robert Adam was brought into touch with Piranesi, who had already published a series of drawings of ancient buildings, and many of the details of antique Roman and Grecian ornament which had been drawn by Piranesi were made use of by Adam, both for exterior and interior decoration, and extensively applied in his adaptation of these styles to furniture.

Robert Adam was materially helped by his brother James, who had also travelled, and there are some of his sketches in the Soane Museum, several of them being dated from Venice, which James Adam visited in 1760. Two years later James made a number of sketches in Rome, and as the result of his tour published a book entitled "Tour in Italy."

Adam's Architectural Influence.

The influence upon furniture exerted by the Brothers Adam came through their architectural works and the fame they

won as designers and decorators. Indeed, the influence they exerted on the furniture of the period was remarkable, in that only a very small quantity of furniture could have been made under their own direction. They are known to have placed commissions for furniture in keeping with their architectural designs with the smaller working cabinet-makers, and it is very probable that they did so with the more important firms. Indeed, it is well known that Hepplewhite and some of his contemporaries were strongly influenced in their work by the architectural designs prepared by the Brothers Adam. It was in 1773 that they published the first parts of their important book entitled "The Works in Architecture of Robert and James Adam, Esquires," a book which came out in folio numbers, the first appearing in 1773, the last in 1822. During that long period the style the brothers formulated was gradually spreading, due probably to the novelty of their designs and the crisp freshness which they imparted to them. In the preface to their works they say:—

> "We have not trod in the path of others, nor derived aid from their labours. In the works which we have had the honour to execute we have not only met with the approbation of our employers, but even with the imitation of other artists to such a degree as in some measure to have brought about in this country a kind of revolution in the whole system of this useful and elegant art. These circumstances induced us to hope that to collect and engrave our works would afford both entertainment and instruction."

They further explain the position they took up in connection with their work, and the motives which governed them in design, in another paragraph, in which they state:—

> "If we have any claim to approbation, we have founded it on this alone. That we flatter ourselves we have been able to make use of, with a fair degree of success, the beautiful spirit of antiquity, and to transfuse it with novelty and variety, through all our numerous works."

The Brothers Adam were fortunate in securing the co-operation of many noted artists who worked for them, among those of greatest fame being Angelica Kauffman, Zucchi, and Cipriani; and also Pergolesi, who they brought from Italy. Among the ornaments chiefly made use of in Adam design were lozenge-shaped panels, ovals, hexagons, octagons, circles, ribbons, wreaths, many mythological subjects, the sphinx, griffins, and other classic motives.

Furniture Designs.

There can be no doubt that the Brothers Adam effected a complete revolution in style. In applying the designs primarily architectural to furniture Robert Adam seems to have been more anxious about obtaining uniformity in design of decoration rather than in altering the contour of the articles on which he operated. He left chairs and tables much as he found them, in the early days of his career contenting himself with adding new ornament; but as he found that the Chippendale leg or the French chair-back was unsuited to the new decoration, he conformed them somewhat so as to correspond with his walls and panelling, mantel-pieces, and over-mantels. Adam took a sideboard as he found it, and on the sideboard—or more correctly side-table—he placed an urn, or he assembled together pedestals and urns, and so formed a much grander sideboard than had hitherto been attempted. Then we find Adam paying attention to the utility of the piece of furniture he was evolving, and later instead of a movable cellaret underneath the table, one of the pedestal cupboards suggested by the still earlier pedestal was transformed into a cupboard for hot plates. The other end of the sideboard became a convenient receptacle for wine. In detail he carried out his suggestions by adding a stand for a heater into the plate cupboard, not unlike those which had been used in earlier days for the heating of tea-urns. Some of the cupboards formed convenient racks so that the plates could be put on edge. The urns at first decorative, so characteristic of the Adam style, were lined with metal. Some served the purpose of knife receptacles, others became cisterns for iced water or for hot water for washing spoons and forks. Then we find the assembled pedestals, urns, side-tables, and cellarets braced together in one newly-designed piece of furniture, ornamented and improved by the addition of a brass rail, on which there were sometimes brackets for candlesticks. The designs of Adam became more ornamental as time went on, and in about 1770 inlays and colour schemes were introduced, and here and there some little gilding. The Brothers Adam do not appear to have intended their designs for wood-carvers. They favoured the plaster composition, which had proved so useful. It was applied to most of their designs, and had a remarkable similarity to wood-carving. Some of the extremely decorative panels in old houses which have been painted for many years, thought to have been wood, when examined are found to have been made of the plaster, the manufacture of which was so long held a secret.

Practical Application.

When we realise that the Brothers Adam revolutionised architectural design and caused it to be applied so generally to the manufacture of furniture, which could be appropriately used in Adams' buildings, we naturally wonder how they accomplished the practical application of this new style to household furniture. To discover this is the more important in that we know that although publishing designs for furniture, and frequently providing their customers with special plans, so that they might have suitable furniture to correspond with the interior decoration of their rooms, the brothers of the Adelphi did not make furniture in their own workshops, other perhaps than some few important pieces required for special purposes, and those mostly of an architectural character. The Brothers Adam, however, employed existing firms, and took care that their own style was carefully carried out. It is said that Chippendale worked for them, and it is quite clear that the Hepplewhite firm executed some of their commissions.

Robert Adam, who was the member of his firm coming closely into touch with his clients, took much trouble to give them satisfaction. He does not appear to have experienced any great difficulty in persuading buyers that the older styles of furniture had had their day. It was an opportune time, and there were many wealthy people who were open to buy, for in the middle of the eighteenth century people were expected to fill their apartments with a greater variety of ornamental furniture than formerly. Robert Adam was a consultative architect-builder, and had numerous clients wishful to buy furniture such as he could recommend to them as suitable for their newly-decorated, if not newly-built, houses. The founder of the new art style took care that his fashionable clients had furniture made by men who knew how to follow his directions. That Robert Adam was at that time keen upon securing furniture appropriate to his style of interior is evident from the number of original drawings he produced. Those originals are still preserved in twenty-six folio volumes at the Soane Museum. Their value to-day must be considerable, for so important were they at the sale of his effects that they were purchased by Sir John Soane for £800. Among these architectural drawings are many devoted to furniture and household appointments. Quite a number are beautifully coloured, and they are mostly dated and signed.

The Soane Museum, although so closely associated with Adam, in its library has but one piece of furniture of the Adam style. That example, however, is a specially interesting window seat with scroll ends and straight legs, an almost identical piece being illustrated in "The Guide"; it is probable it was made by Hepplewhite, and the pattern afterwards included in his book of designs.

The Style and its

To realise the true style founded by Robert Adam, it is advisable to examine carefully examples of that style to be seen in museums and private collections. Most of his furniture was made of mahogany, carved and sometimes gilded in French style. Satinwood also was used, relieved by urns and oval *paterœ*. Sometimes his furniture was painted so as to harmonise with room decoration. In the more important pieces Wedgwood medallions were frequently introduced. His object throughout was to provide furniture in harmony with his style of house decoration; as in his architecture early classic Italian art influenced his design. French art also influenced some of his decorative work, especially that in which he introduced miniature paintings and plaques. Constructively, no doubt, Adam was indebted to Chippendale in his early works, but he soon deviated from the style or *motif* of existing furniture. It is said that Robert Adam shared Thomas Chippendale's preference for rich-toned Spanish Cuban mahogany. In his earlier works he seems to have been somewhat indifferent to the coverings of his furniture, but later he designed special textile fabrics, and recommended them as being suitable for his own style.

To briefly refer to some of the characteristics of the Adam style as applied to furniture, it may be pointed out that Robert Adam was the first to make use of a splat of lyre form, a style of ornament which was much copied by Sheraton in later years. In Adam chairs, which are mostly of square form, small panels in the top row are noticeable. Griffins are sometimes introduced between the splat and the seat. There is also some low relief carving of classical designs. Classical figures form the supports of the roll back arms of chairs. Chair legs became round or square, tapering downwards, often fluted.

Robert Adam introduced a honeysuckle design, found on many pieces of furniture. Adam sideboards with pedestal cupboards surmounted by urns have already been referred to, and it is noteworthy that they were very appropriate to his style of architecture which frequently included suitable recesses, that suggested the use of a larger table than the older side or carrying tables which at one time sufficed. Cabinets were extensively designed, and some very beautiful inlaid commodes in which painted plaques were introduced are among the choicer specimens of Adam furniture. Another

feature worthy of note is found in the sphinxes and classical figures which give the Adam style such characteristic decorative form. In addition to these commoner forms of furniture, Robert Adam paid much attention to fire-screens, clock-cases, bedsteads, mirror-frames, and organ-cases, and as time went on the style he propounded was applied to many smaller ornamental objects, for his main object seems to have been to provide the householder with furniture and household requisites of every kind in harmony with the home surroundings.

Fig. 50 illustrates the Adam influence in design upon a very handsome mahogany sideboard of the period 1795-1800. There are the beautiful fluted legs on square plinth feet, the oval ornament and handsome cellarets, the brass rail being suggestive of the style adopted generally in later years.

Fig. 51 is a settee of Adam design upholstered in crimson damask of the period. The chaste ornament of the legs and the central design in which an urn figures, are all characteristic of the scheme of decoration so often adopted by the Brothers Adam.

Many of the beds made at the time show traces of the Adam influence, the posts were well carved and fluted, and the lower portions decorative; the hangings, too, being in keeping with the style then prevailing.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHIPPENDALE STYLE

The Chippendales—Furniture of the period—Materials used—From Chippendale's workshops—Chippendale's early work—"The Director"—Characteristics of the style—The rococo or French style—Gothic influence—Fretted furniture—The Chinese taste—Irish Chippendale—Tripod furniture—Chairs, settees, and tables—The sideboard—Bookcases and bureaus—Bedsteads and commodes—Mirrors and pier glasses.

In attempting to distinguish between the styles which in the eyes of collectors mark separate periods of manufacture, we are apt to forget that at no one period of art or craftsmanship has there ever been a sharply-defined line. Especially is this so in the furniture trade, for the change from one style to another has always been gradual, although there have been times when national events, such as a change of government, the fortunes of war, or the accession of a new sovereign have accelerated those changes. In passing from one stage to another in the manufacture of household goods once common, now antiques, time must necessarily have elapsed in the full operation of those changes. There are few really original devices, for whenever even a great master mind strikes out a new course his thoughts, actions, and the handiwork he achieves are influenced by his experience; and the experience gained by some master cabinet-makers in certain directions is much greater than in others.

Sometimes, in consequence of special opportunities, a man hits upon an idea, but will produce something quite different in its accomplishment; it may be the difference will lie in the design and appearance of the article, or possibly in the object or purpose of its use, but in arriving at the perfection of a new idea, or successfully launching a new ideal, there will necessarily be stages of development, and the newer method of design will be the result of evolution from something that has gone before. Hence it is that the style known to-day as Chippendale was the result of gradual although rapid development, and there are traces of what are now regarded as the characteristics of Chippendale noticeable in some of the earlier works of other makers. Indications of coming changes are to be observed in many of the pieces of walnut furniture made at the time Thomas Chippendale came on the scene; and in the earlier works with which the name of Chippendale was associated there is to be observed more of the earlier Georgian style than of the characteristic design, which would in the opinion of a connoisseur justify the inclusion of such works in a catalogue of Chippendale furniture.

In tracing such developments we must bear in mind that the chairs and tables of the earlier period—the days when the Chippendale business was but in its infancy—were of walnut, and that they bear only slight indications of the trend of events, and of the predominating influence of the carver's art that at least one of those bearing the name of Chippendale excelled in. There are, therefore, many objects which, although classed as early Georgian, may have been made under the direction of Thomas Chippendale—father or son—or, perchance, made by his own hands. It is among such early pieces we look for traces of the coming fancy, and when genuine and well-authenticated antiques come into the market, they should not be passed over lightly because they chance to bear evidence of a change of thought, and to be not quite pure in style; for to the student they may be precious connecting links between the two periods.

The Chippendales.

For close upon a century the family of Chippendale exercised an influence on the furniture trade of this country in a marked degree, and the products of the Chippendales' workshops were looked upon as priceless treasures, sets of chairs, twelve singles and two easies, of by no means elaborate designs, changing hands at prices ranging from 1,000 to 1,500 guineas. It is remarkable that the reputation of one firm who occupied the arena for but one century outdistanced to such an extent all other makers of contemporary and other periods! The influence the Chippendales exerted was so far-reaching that it is impossible to say what English furniture of the middle and the later half of the eighteenth century would have been like had the Chippendales not lived.

There were three Thomas Chippendales, father, son, and grandson—founding, building up, and continuing the business enterprise which promulgated the peculiar style they gradually evolved. It was a style that influenced craftsmen in many materials, for not only did carvers in wood copy the style they formulated, but stonemasons, engravers, and metal workers imitated the designs of the Chippendales, and their style became the vogue in architecture, and during the

latter half of the eighteenth century gave form and ornament to almost every object of household use.

The founder of the well-known firm was a cabinet-maker, or, more correctly described, a joiner, working in Worcester. He was also a picture framer, and his son, Thomas Chippendale, destined to become the famous chair-maker and cabinet-maker of subsequent fame, was early taught the art of carving, in which he soon excelled; he became a designer, too, of no mean order. Father and son removed to London prior to 1727, commencing business in Long Acre. After his father's death, which took place in 1753, the great Thomas Chippendale removed to 60 St Martin's Lane. By that time Chippendale had won fame, and had executed many fine pieces, his renown as a chair-maker had spread far and wide, and his ambition carried him beyond making chairs, and he soon had dreams of greater things, contemplating the adaptation of his new style to almost every kind of household furniture. His fame spread, and Thomas Chippendale soon had three shops in St Martin's Lane, wherein he employed many skilled journeymen. It was in the year 1754, the year following his removal from Long Acre, that the first edition of that noted book, "The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director" was published. A year later a fire occurred, destroying Chippendale's workshops, and, probably, some finished goods as well as much valuable material. From the account of the fire we learn that the workshops contained twenty-two workmen's chests of tools, so that with a fair allotment of apprentices such a staff, large in those days, enabled the master cabinet-maker to turn out much furniture. At one time Chippendale had a partner, James Rennie, and soon after his partner's death he instituted a sale of surplus stock. Realisation sales so common in these days were not unknown in the eighteenth century, for "sales" were much in vogue; but it was the auctioneer who was in such frequent request. Traders' prices were not then always based on actual cost to the same extent as they are to-day.

This sale seems to have marked a point in Thomas Chippendale's career, for it would appear that his popularity was fast growing. He was a trader and an excellent man of business, as well as an artist and a craftsman. His book of designs had already made him famous, and they were much copied, the "new" style rapidly spreading. All through his career Thomas Chippendale maintained an adherence to quality and good workmanship, well meriting his claim to be one of the great artists of his day. Connoisseurs fully recognise the superiority of the work carried out in his workshops under his own immediate supervision, and although there are many fine examples of the Chippendale style, which had been made by his contemporaries in London and in the provinces, there is a peculiar finish about those goods which must have been made under his own immediate direction, or by one or other of those men who ultimately became master cabinet-makers, after having served some time in Chippendale's workshops as journeymen.

Thomas Chippendale was a member of the Society of Arts, in which body were many great men of his day, among them dukes, earls, and admirals of the fleet; Cipriani the painter, Garrick, Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson, Hogarth, and the Brothers Adam, fellow exponents of a new style applied to architectural and household furnishing decorations. Chippendale was undoubtedly a man of genius, possessing brilliant ideas, and a splendid aptitude for adaptation. How far he was helped by his men we do not know, but we are forced to the conclusion that such a master mind would pick out the cleverest men he could find, and that some of his workmen must have contributed to the success of his new style, which was used with so much skill in the decoration and oftentimes necessary reshaping of existing models.

Of the private life of Thomas Chippendale we know very little; indeed, neither he nor his father left behind them anything other than the style of furniture design associated with their name. In the old graveyard of the Parish Church of St Martin's in the Fields is to be found the burying-place of the great cabinet-maker, whose death took place on 13th November 1779.

Chippendale's son, also named Thomas, apparently learned the art of cabinet-making in his father's workshops, and soon after his father's death entered into partnership with Thomas Haig, his father's book-keeper. The two men, one presumably a business men, the other a practical cabinet-maker, continued to manufacture household furniture in the old workshops. They removed to the Haymarket, where we find they carried on business from 1814 to 1821, in which year they removed to Jermyn Street; the death of Thomas Chippendale, the last of the family, occurring in 1823. The fame of Chippendale's style spread, for during the three generations many journeymen cabinet-makers came and went. Some founded businesses of their own in London, others in provincial towns. Trained under the eye of the great master they understood his style, and either copied the patterns they found in "The Director" or adapted them to furniture of slightly different form. Thus the Chippendale period was extended, and its fame spread in many directions.

Furniture of the Period.

The advanced connoisseur is apt to become somewhat narrow in his views, in that as he gradually discards first one piece and then another in favour of finer specimens he loses interest in the pieces that delight a less advanced collector.

In that way he gets out of the common work, and eventually seeks pleasure only in extravagant expositions of style, or in the specimens of which there are few, and probably never were many, examples.

FIG. 52. FIG. 53.

CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS, PART OF SET,
SHOWING CHINESE INFLUENCE.
(*Mawers, Ltd., South Kensington.*)

FIG. 54A.—CHIPPENDALE CHAIR, IN CHINESE TASTE.

FIG. 54B.—CHIPPENDALE CHAIR, IN FRENCH TASTE.

(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

The home connoisseur who regards his hobby from the level of the possibilities of securing typical examples of the furniture of the period of which he is collecting, wants to know what the furniture of a well-appointed home of the period under review consisted of. We shall not find it, as might be expected, in Chippendale's "Director" (more fully referred to in another paragraph), but rather in museums and private collections, and among the more isolated and often more typical furniture of the Chippendale period in old English homes, where it has been treasured since the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the "style" became established, and many country, as well as London, cabinet-makers were copying it.

From a perusal of "The Director" we learn that certain articles were included in Chippendale's list, but from their names only (*see* p. 187) we know nothing of the types, and not much about their uses. Of the more elaborate designs in "The Director" many were never executed, being only suggestive. Indeed, the designs as illustrated in "The Director" do not indicate the Chippendale furniture which eventually became the vogue of the middle classes.

In the "best parlour," in the middle or latter half of the eighteenth century, there would be much furniture bearing traces of Chippendale influence, if not altogether pure in style. In such rooms there were single chairs and upholstered easies, sofas and tables, and in many instances card-tables. The bookcase or bureau-bookcase was deemed an essential piece of furniture, and was much used. The china cupboard or cabinet was also favoured, and in the best parlour were to be found those beautiful little tripod tables and stands now so much admired. Clothes' presses, commodes, side-tables (not sideboards), and wine-coolers were popular; there were also fire-screens, pier-glasses and carved picture frames. In the libraries of the middle-classes and wellto-do folk at that time were writing-tables and bookcases, open and closed. The bedroom furniture was solid, but the bedstead, while still a four-poster, was much lighter and more decorative in appearance than it had been in the early Georgian, and still earlier Jacobean and Tudor periods. Such bedsteads, like the very beautiful example illustrated in Fig. 2, with their hangings, were imposing pieces, and added splendour to the bed-chamber. Chests of drawers of various forms, more particularly those designated commodes, bow-

fronted chests, and tall-boys, with ornamental handles and rosettes, were then frequently to be seen. To-day the bow-fronted chests are much scarcer than those with serpentine-shaped fronts. Thomas Chippendale made some very beautiful little shaving-tables and basin-stands. And it may be noted that even in the height of his popularity for high-class works he did not despise the less important commissions, for he stated in his "Director" that his patterns were "suited to the fancy and circumstances of all persons in all degrees of life."

The collector is always interested in the later extravagances of Chippendale designs. The two chairs shown in Figs. 52 and 53 represent chairs in which the Chinese influence is seen in the legs and pierced rails, a noticeable feature being the *appliqué* fret ornament on the legs; the backs are of very graceful ornament, although somewhat unusual—these chairs are part of a set of twelve in the possession of Messrs Mawers, Ltd.

Fig. 54*b* is a Chippendale chair in the French taste, one of rare type, made about 1760. Fig. 54*a* is another Chippendale chair of rather unusual type, in which the Chinese influence is strongly marked, the true Chippendale riband being scarcely in keeping with either the Chinese perforations, *appliqué* ornament, or cluster legs. This chair, one of a set in the possession of Messrs Mallett and Son, of Bath, was made about the same date as Fig. 54*b*.

In Fig. 55 is seen a remarkably fine settee or double seat of the Chippendale style, slightly Gothic in design, with Chinese fret brackets, made about 1760.

Fig. 56 is a handsome Chippendale mahogany bookcase, in which Gothic influence is seen in the fret ornament of the pediment. The fret inlay under the cornice is an adaptation of the frets of Chinese design.

Fig. 57 is an early Chippendale knee-hole dressing-table (*circa* 1755). The toilet mirror on the dressing-table is of contemporary date.

Materials used.

It is recorded that Chippendale chose the best materials for his work. That we can readily understand, for the lasting qualities and beautiful workmanship of the genuine antiques of his day show no traces of careless selection of materials or of hurried workmanship. In his early days Thomas Chippendale was doubtless accustomed to carve the walnut then in vogue; but when his matured experience was ripe for the newer style of design another and more suitable material was at hand. It was indeed an epoch-making event in the furniture trade when the first log of mahogany was shipped to this country. The story of its importation reads like a romance. In the year 1720 the logs of mahogany, an unknown wood to either builders or cabinet-makers, made their appearance. It seems ridiculous to us now, knowing the valuable uses to which mahogany has been put during the last two centuries, when we learn that a candle-box was the first domestic article manufactured of the new wood. It was made by a cabinet-maker named Wollaston for Dr Gibbon, whose brother, a West Indian sea captain, had brought the timber over. He had intended it for the beams of a new house his brother was building, but it was discarded by the builders as being unworkable, but eventually a piece of the wood was put to a practical purpose, as has been already suggested.

The incident related records the introduction of mahogany into this country, but it was some time afterwards before cabinet-makers discarded walnut in its favour. Chippendale was one of those who saw in the new wood a material well suited to the wood-carver's art. The mahogany at that time used for cabinet work, and especially for chair-making, was mostly obtained from Central America, the West Indian Islands, and Mexico. It was straight, hard-grained wood, free from knots, shakes, or sap, and did not warp. Such wood was exceedingly durable, and took a high polish. It varied, however, and gave the worker opportunity of selection—indeed, the selection of the wood according to its suitability for the work to be performed was a matter of importance. It was in this careful selection that Thomas Chippendale and his contemporaries excelled, and it is owing to their knowledge of timber and its possibilities that so many fine examples of Chippendale chairs and tables have come down to us in excellent condition, and free from the breakages which faults in the timber would have occasioned.

The preparation of mahogany required attention, such personal attention as Thomas Chippendale gave to the materials he used. The fine rich golden brown finish was obtained without staining, although where it was thought necessary it could be shaded from a red to brown-red black by using bichromate of potash in water. The mahogany of Chippendale, however, was nearly all left a natural colour and polished. It has become darker with age, and in many instances has lost the brilliance of its original polish in course of the many cleanings it has undergone.

It should be noted that the finest old "Spanish" mahogany used in the later portion of the Chippendale period came

from Cuba. The San Domingo curl and finely-figured mahogany was seldom used before 1775.

From Chippendale's Workshops.

It would be very interesting indeed to trace the different hands through which genuine specimens of Chippendale furniture have passed. Alas! but few are authenticated, and the identity of many pieces which obviously bear traces of the great master's art as a carver has been lost. There are, however, some sets of chairs and other pieces of furniture still in the possession of descendants of the original owners who commissioned Thomas Chippendale to work to his own designs, and to furnish them with examples as portrayed in his famous book "The Director."

The chief customers of the St Martin's Lane cabinet-maker were found in London, among the merchant princes of the city. The last half of the eighteenth century was a time when business men were laying the foundations of commercial houses, and of families who afterwards owned country seats, and subsequently became famous. Those were the days, however, when even the merchant princes lived in town houses; their residences were in London squares, many of which have changed in their residential and commercial character, although in some instances the exteriors of the homes where Thomas Chippendale's furniture was housed have altered little. The business men of London in the eighteenth century were by no means stingy in matters of house-furnishing, and when they refurnished or bought new chairs and tables they did so in accord with the fashionable mode, and took care that those things they bought were soundly made, and of lasting quality. The furniture of Thomas Chippendale was never cheap, and the sound workmanship and good quality of that made by contemporary makers, and those who had learned their art under him, indicate that there were no common imitations of the great master's designs.

Much of the furniture outlined in the designs prepared by Thomas Chippendale was made for middle-class homes, and included comparatively insignificant pieces, as well as the more important furniture. These smaller, and some might consider trivial, pieces of furniture were extremely beautiful and ornate, showing the influence of the prevailing style on even the less important articles. Working cabinet-makers appreciated the motive of the "new" style, and adopted it in their workshops. It is, however, well known that Chippendale was not only a designer but a large maker, and from the number of hands he employed in his workshops in St Martin's Lane there is little doubt that many of the objects which are put on one side to-day as being unauthenticated were made by Thomas Chippendale or his men, although there is no means of identifying them. It is clear that as "The Director" served the purpose of a trade catalogue of designs it would be shown to customers, and orders would be taken from it in preference to the preparation of special designs. It is, therefore, only fair to assume that there were many copies of the less important and more frequently required objects, just as the more popular goods made by a modern cabinet-maker of repute are duplicated.

Thomas Chippendale could not have been narrow-minded in his views, nor could he have wished to retain the sole copyright of his designs, for his book was sold with the avowed object of inducting other master men in the designs he was wishful to popularise. That many such pieces of furniture were made in accord with the designs he prepared is evident from the examples which come into the market from time to time, but as many of these goods were made by men less experienced than Chippendale, or the men he employed, it is quite understandable that some of these examples are by no means clever copies, or designs which Chippendale prepared and executed in his own workshops. Referring to some well-known examples of noted sets made by Chippendale, Mr Cescinsky, in his work "English Furniture of the Eighteenth Century," mentions a set of chairs said to have been made for Marie Antoinette on a model which was evidently repeated more than once. He also mentions other pieces of undoubted Chippendale furniture; but as their location is now uncertain it is useless to repeat their descriptions.

Some writers have given illustrations of chairs and furniture made and supplied by Chippendale; but unfortunately antiques are frequently changing hands. Examples which have been in the hands of the same families from the time they left the workshop in St Martin's Lane until quite recent years from time to time come into the hands of collectors whose taste changes, and thus it is that specimens are sold to be replaced by others, or an entire collection comes under the hammer and is dispersed. Unfortunately, few of these pieces can be inspected while they remain in private hands. There are the galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum which have already been referred to, but although those galleries contain many very fine examples of early English furniture, there are comparatively few following the Chippendale style, and the authorities, always careful to give accurate descriptions of their art treasures, describe them as "after the style of Chippendale." None of the examples in the galleries are directly stated to be the work of Thomas Chippendale himself. In those galleries, however, as in the sale-rooms and the galleries of dealers in London and the provinces, the connoisseur may learn his lesson, and the collector, by becoming familiar with the characteristics of any period of

furniture he specialises upon, will be enabled to distinguish between correct copies of Chippendale's work and those of later days, which differ in materials, construction, and workmanship.

Chippendale's Early Work.

When the founder of the firm of Chippendale came to London with his son, and in the still earlier days when he worked in Worcester, and taught the carver's art to Thomas Chippendale, who was destined to become a great power in the furniture trade, he would naturally work upon the materials he had been taught to regard as best for chair-making. No doubt in the country, although walnut would be used for chairs, settees, and other pieces of furniture, such as those found existing to-day as examples of cabinet-making in the Walnut Age, when the Chippendales founded their business in Long Acre they would naturally look about them for what they would hope would prove the most acceptable goods to sell; for the Chippendales were undoubtedly in business to make money, and not to expound any new theory or style for the mere love of art.

The early examples made by Thomas Chippendale, the elder, doubtless followed the prevailing fashion, although, perchance, he may have added improvements peculiarly his own, even in quite early times. The authentic records of this noted firm begin, however, when Thomas Chippendale, the son, removed his business to St Martin's Lane, and soon afterwards published his book. The well-defined style represented throughout the pages of "The Director" confirms the opinion that for years previously the style now known as "Chippendale" must have been gradually acquired. The great Thomas Chippendale must have been a most successful and enterprising salesman, for few could have so entirely altered popular fancy in such a short time. It is noteworthy that in all subsequent styles, and in the furniture of later dates, there are traces of earlier styles. Thus in "Chippendale" furniture the expert can trace development from earlier designs, and those who follow the developments of draughtsmanship point out in seventeenth-century furniture indications of the coming change.

It is stated on good authority that the ease with which Thomas Chippendale revolutionised the designs of the cabinet-makers of his day was to some extent due to his power of adapting existing objects and designs, and making them subservient to his ideals, without destroying accepted models. The prosperity that attended his efforts and the growing demand for his furniture was doubtless attributable to the activity in commercial life, and to the prosperity of English merchants, in his day; many of them were at that time prepared to refurnish and spend money on the new taste. Thomas Chippendale took, figuratively, the heavy Queen Anne furniture which had been in vogue, and which had undergone but slight change during the reigns of the early Georges, and enriched it with free application of the carver's tool. But he was not content with transforming stiff and formal furniture of English cabinet-makers, and that which had been modelled under Dutch influence, but he made free use of French designs, making the Louis furniture then in vogue in this country more like the English he was making in his workshops by adding to the French style that which was rapidly becoming a style of his own. It was from surrounding influences added to the groundwork of his experience in his early training as a practical cabinet worker and carver, to which must also be added the knowledge his men had of the furniture required by customers, that he was able to evolve a new style and to make it popular.

Some detailed reference is made in another paragraph to the characteristics of Chippendale's style. It may be mentioned here, however, that before that style became pronounced there was a great demand for card-tables, and Chippendale produced quite a number of the claw-and-ball type in his early days. That style, however, was discarded before 1754, when the first edition of his book was published, for we do not find that type of card-table illustrated in "The Director." Another indication of Chippendale's early work in making card-tables is seen in the sunk circular corners, which were made for the reception of tall silver or metal candlesticks. Again, as indicative of the early period, there is the cabriole table leg which waned in popularity, and disappeared about the year 1755.

Collectors should note that possibly some impetus was given to the cabinet-making trade, and to the conformity to some accepted style, about the time when Chippendale's early work was made, contributing, perhaps, to the rapid growth of his business; for a change took place in trade practice in 1740. Up to that date chair-makers, that is, makers of chairs, settees, and stools, worked distinct from makers of so-called architects' and wall furniture, in which category were included cabinets and bookcases. Chippendale in his earliest days was not a cabinet-maker in the accepted sense of the term, for he only commenced making furniture in the year 1747, his efforts before that date being chiefly directed towards the manufacture of chairs, and as a practical wood-carver he had greatly altered the styles of the chair backs, adding ornament to the frames, and gradually shaping the legs according to the style he was formulating.

Of early authenticated pieces of the work of Thomas Chippendale there are few, and many of those reputed to have

been made in his own workshops have changed hands several times, until the continuity of their pedigree is frequently unsubstantiated. The Kateshill walnut chair has been referred to frequently in books touching upon the early work of Thomas Chippendale, but it is held to have been made by the founder of the firm when he worked at Worcester. Mr Cescinsky describes this chair, and tells us that:

> "the curves of the back, sweeping round into scrolls, the vase-shaped central splat carved with a conventional rendering of the escallop shell, the curved top-rail of the back, the cabriole legs crested over the seat framing, and the acanthus-carved seat-rail, are all of the fashion of 1730-1735, and point to the date of the early London career of the Chippendales."

Seekers after the early period should note carefully chests of drawers, and fine bow-fronted chests with handles and rosettes, of the type which is scarcer than the serpentine-shaped fronts, for in many of these there are traces of departure from the accepted designs then in vogue.

"The Director."

As an exponent of a new style—one evolved from small suggestive features in existing styles, and from outside influences coming from greater commercial knowledge of the work of other nations—it was appropriate that Thomas Chippendale should give the world a book of designs. This book—to give it its full title, "The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director"—has had so much to do with the promulgation of the Chippendale style and the maintenance of the reputation of the "House of Chippendale," as such a firm would be styled in modern parlance, that it calls for special mention and explanation. It is probable that no catalogue has ever gained such notoriety, although it does not stand alone in the furniture trade of that day. It was published at a time when the publication of such books was of rare occurrence, however, and costly to produce. The illustrations were executed by the aid of a copper-plate engraver, who in some instances was designer and draughtsman, too. It is here that the debates as to the origin of the designs wax hottest. Thomas Chippendale assumed the authorship of the designs as publisher, but he probably used the suggestive illustrations of other artists and designers; indeed, there is much evidence that such was the case.

"The Director" was intended to be "a guide, counsellor, and friend" to the trade, and to the furniture-buying public, as set forth in the full title which reads in its entirety "The Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director, being a Large Collection of the most Elegant and Useful Designs of Household Furniture in the most Fashionable Taste." Chippendale further explained that the illustrations were "calculated to improve and refine the present taste, and suited to the fancy and circumstances of persons in all degrees of life." It is noteworthy that the object of the book, as put forward by the author, together with the character of the work, made it something more than a trade catalogue, for it gave "proper directions for executing the most difficult pieces, the mouldings being exhibited at large, and the dimensions of each design specified." That it proved a useful trade compendium and exponent of the style is evident from the fact that the subscribers (it was published by subscription) included cabinet-makers, carvers, joiners, enamellers, upholsterers, engravers, and other craftsmen and artists who evidently intended to make use of its contents.

Thomas Chippendale had an eye to the commercial value of the publication, and as he had only just transferred his business to St Martin's Lane, it was evidently intended to use it as an advertisement, as well as a book defining and explaining his style; making clear the correct forms of the style he had evolved, and showing by some of the extravagant designs included in the book heights to which that style could be carried.

The first edition of "The Director" was published in 1754, the second in 1759, a third edition being brought out in 1761. Original copies of "The Director" are scarce and costly to procure, but recent reproductions of the later editions have familiarised collectors with the contents of the work, and given them an insight into the style of the various articles Chippendale made. The following list of the more important contents of "The Director" is useful to the collector, containing as it does a summarised outline of the collectable objects showing Chippendale influence in their construction —

Basin stands	Dressing-tables
Beds and couches	Fire-screens
Bedsteads	Frets
Bookcases	Girandoles

Brackets	Lanthorns
Cabinets	Organ cases
Candle-stands	Pier-glasses
Chairs	Shaving-tables
Chimney-pieces	Sofas
China cases	Tea-kettle stands
China shelves	Terms for busts
Clock cases	Toilets
Desks	Writing-tables

The omission of certain patterns and the more common styles of chairs and furniture from Chippendale's book does not imply that he did not make such articles. His repute as a maker would be sufficient to warrant him in excluding from his book of designs well understood goods, and it would be sufficient for him to make only brief reference to goods of everyday sale. The sale of the first edition of "The Director" was soon followed by another, so that the author's most sanguine expectations must have been exceeded. Makers evidently welcomed the book, and freely utilised the suggested designs, which embodied a unique display of curious forms and decorative ornament as applied to furniture.

Underlying most of the designs was usefulness of purpose, for although it is contended that many of the designs, as drawn, were unworkable, there was a commercial value in the suggestions—idealistic and accomplished. It is scarcely conceivable that Thomas Chippendale, who was a thoroughly practical man, would include designs which he deemed to be useless. The disputes in reference to the authorship of some of the designs and their engravers may appear to be of small importance to the collector, but "The Director" is so bound up with Thomas Chippendale and the work he performed that it is almost impossible to separate them. It is only fair to assume that while Chippendale used the book as a guide to buyers of high-class furniture, he did not expect that it would convey exact details of construction, or indicate the full beauty of his carving and upholstery to his customer. It was intended rather to enunciate his style; and just as fashion plates are published by costumiers, as picturing the effect rather than the actual designs of the goods, so Chippendale in his book did not purport to represent simply stock patterns. Many of his designs were inspired by the drawings of earlier designers and cabinet-makers, especially by the exponents of the art of French cabinet-makers during the reign of Louis XV.

Chippendale probably evolved some of his best designs by studying the works of others, and incorporating in their schemes of design and ornament his own peculiar style. The patterns in his book were designs rather than illustrations of existing pieces. Moreover, many of them were obviously the work of a draughtsman and engraver, executed before the completion of the work by a practical cabinet-maker, otherwise they would have been made workable, as some are not. The interest in the designs as engraved warrants special reference to the engravers. In the first edition the engraving was chiefly done by Matthias Darly and T. Müller. The plates mostly bear Thomas Chippendale's signature, as was customary then to secure copyright. Darly was, however, something more than an engraver, in that he was evidently the designer of nearly all the patterns, although he may in some instances have merely carried out in detail designs suggested by some of the rough sketches of Thomas Chippendale. Further, an expert examination of the engravings shows that the plates could not in every instance have been specially engraved for "The Director," for many of them show traces of being much worn, even in copies of the first edition, which was by no means a large issue. It is thought that Chippendale purchased some of the plates and used them as suggested designs. In a third edition other engravers assisted Darly and Müller, there being ten engravers' signatures to the plates, six of them showing quite distinctive work; but whether they simply interpreted original or borrowed designs differently, or were given a free license in matters of detail and ornament, is not known. There were at that time other books of design in the hands of cabinet-makers, including "Ince and Mayhew's Household Furniture," which was published in 1748, and "The Genteel Household Furniture in the Present Taste by a Society of Upholsters," published in 1743. Chippendale's book, which followed soon afterwards, quickly took first place, and its reputation was maintained, notwithstanding the fact that Chippendale himself recognised its imperfections. Moreover, he was not altogether satisfied with the designs he published, or in the manner of their presentation, for in his introduction he wrote:

> "And I am confident I can convince all Noblemen, Gentlemen, or others, who will honour me with their commands, that every design in the book can be improved, both as to beauty and enrichment, in the execution of it, by their most obedient servant, THOMAS CHIPPENDALE."

The Characteristics of the Style.

As it has been seen in the preceding paragraph, Chippendale's designs were suggestive, rather than drawn to scale or given in detail for the cabinet-maker to work to. Many of them were fanciful, and in the execution of them much latitude was allowed to the carver to fit in the figures, birds, and other shapes; and in the execution of the work the result achieved would depend very much upon the skill and the free carving of the artist. Nevertheless, in carrying out Chippendale's suggestions, the carvings, if not conventional, were at any rate restricted, and some of them were engraved more after the style of a copy set by a drawing master than would be the case in working drawings given to a craftsman.

In studying the characteristics of Chippendale's designs it must be remembered that even after Chippendale had formulated and established his style, he had frequently to deviate in the execution of furniture for which he received orders. Many of his customers would have preconceived ideas, and as he was a good tradesman as well as an artist, Chippendale would naturally, as far as possible, fall in line with the views of his clients.

There are three distinct styles noticeable in Chippendale's chairs, and as he was a chair-maker before anything else, we are safe in looking to the chair for his purest characteristic design. His chairs may be divided in their design and decoration as follows:—

(1) Upright centre bars, which eventually became "riband" backs;

(2) All-over patterns including the so-called "Chinese" and "Gothic"; and

(3) Horizontal rails.

The first type (1) were usually cabriole-legged, and the splats or centre bars were pierced and scrolled. The later development of the first type was intended to imitate ribbon, not at all an easy task in wood. The "all-over backs" (2), as their name denotes, were practically all filled in; they had square legs, perforated or incised. The "ladder backs" (3) seem to have taken their name from their resemblance to the rungs of ladders. From these evolved the change into the Chinese taste, and as a side issue into Gothic ornament. The Chippendale Gothic was light and lacy in its tracery, and the ornament of the legs in keeping, much of the solid appearance of church Gothic having been eliminated from the designs for domestic furniture.

It is convenient to tabulate the dates when certain developments in style took place. These briefly are as follows:—

1725. The earliest departure from then existing styles.

1735. French influence apparent, marking in its adaptation by Chippendale a new style.

1745. More floral devices, and early traces of Chinese taste.

1750. Chinese taste more prominent. A lighter appearance, and more French decoration.

1760. Gothic designs. A greater extravagance in design and decoration.

The style that eventually became known as "Irish Chippendale" was used in the homes of English landowners, who had become possessed of large estates in Ireland.

The period in which Chippendale's best work was made was undoubtedly that in which carving predominated. His work was not always pure in style, for many collectors' pieces are obtained which are composite in design. Thus in Clouston's book on "The Chippendale Period in English Furniture" there is a screen illustrated showing in combination the three chief characteristic styles already referred to. This screen, with the simple frame scarcely admitting of much individualistic treatment, indicates easy changes, by which the artist was able without any clashing of design to bring in French influence and Chinese and Gothic types. In some of his best works Chippendale made free use of Dutch designs. Perhaps, however, the greatest evidence of outside influence in Chippendale's work was that brought to bear by the Chinese taste of his day, which caused him to evolve that peculiar and characteristic style which marks "Chippendale according to Chinese taste."

The Rococo or French Style.

The influence brought to bear upon Chippendale's work by his study of the French manner made itself seen in some of his later work. The most conspicuous feature was that the more Chippendale introduced rococo and French ornament his own stamp of individuality was weakened. Fortunately Chippendale did not approve of marqueterie, French painted ornament, or the introduction of ormolu metal work. Therefore, even the furniture in which he introduced French designs in his later years was distinct. Indeed, in the third edition of "The Director" Chippendale admits French influence, and describes some of his patterns as French models. One important feature to note is the introduction of the French leg, and in a few instances the chased or gilded brass of fittings, handles, and handle-plates of ormolu are undoubtedly of French style. Chippendale further conceded to French taste by the use of marble tops to some of his commodes made between the years 1770 and 1780.

Gothic Influence.

It cannot be said that Gothic designs were ever very popular in this country for domestic furniture. In most rooms such designs would have been out of keeping. There were, however, exceptions, especially where the dwellings were brought under ecclesiastical influence. Church Gothic was adopted by some architects in the eighteenth century, and Gothic furniture suitable for rectories and the dwellings of some of the dignitaries of the church would doubtless be a welcome innovation, although it has been reserved for twentieth-century householders to insist upon furniture in keeping with architecture.

It is said that the Gothic style was introduced by Batty Langley, who in 1747 published a book entitled, "Gothick Architecture Improved by Rules and Proportions." Critics have said that Langley never showed any true Gothic spirit or understood the influence of cathedral wood-work as shown in the carvings of mediæval days. It was Horace Walpole who did much to popularise the so-called eighteenth-century Gothic style, but unfortunately in adapting Gothic designs to furniture the freedom of Gothic became cramped and warped. Gothic influence in furniture was not altogether confined to Chippendale design, for a book was published in 1765 by R. Manwaring, entitled "The Carpenters' Compleat Guide to the Whole System of Gothic Railing." It is contended that notwithstanding the patronage of Horace Walpole, and the adaptation of Gothic ornament in Chippendale's "Director," the style never became popular. There is an undoubted comparative rarity of existing specimens, and contemporary cabinet-makers do not appear to have found the style sufficiently attractive to have warranted them in following Chippendale's lead in this particular direction, and in a very short time Gothic Chippendale gave place to the interlacing splat which undoubtedly afforded the carver and the wood-worker greater opportunities, and made it possible to render the chair or other piece of furniture attractive and saleable.

Fretted Furniture.

Fretted furniture is closely allied with the so-called "Chinese taste," but although it may have been influenced by, and in its full development unquestionably became a part of, the Chinese ornament, Chippendale and others adopted it in its earlier and simpler application as a distinct form of decoration. In its primary use fretted ornament is seen in the beautiful light gallery tops of tripod tables. In that application it followed the "pie crust" edges, but in many of its uses fretted ornament was contemporary with other styles. Fret-galleries do not seem to have been used much before 1760, and the style did not remain commonly in vogue more than about ten years.

This fretted ornament, a really tasteful form of decoration, was produced by laborious cutting by hand, and must be in no way confused with the machine-cut frets which had a running in the furniture trade between 1870 and 1880. The eighteenth century gallery-topped tables made up of small spindles produced a somewhat similar form of decoration, and although generally employed a little later were favoured by some cabinet-makers in preference to the fretted ornament. This latter style was used as a convenient rail ornament on the friezes of oblong tables, and the more fragile cuttings were laid over the solid wood. Mahogany was almost exclusively the material employed for that style of ornament, both that and the open fretwork being soon afterwards applied to chair backs and legs. Then came the added effect produced by the carver's art, and the fuller aspect of the style as seen in the "Chinese taste."

Specimens of fretted rail-top tables are not uncommon, and the smaller tripod stands with square tops and raised fronts are pleasing collectors' pieces. Of these there are several good examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, where there are also hanging shelves and fretted furniture of the more advanced Chinese taste.

The Chinese Taste.

The fuller development of fretted furniture came when an impetus was given to Chinese taste by Sir William Chambers, who added architecture—and afterwards interior ornament—in Chinese style to the attractions of the East, as exemplified by Chinese ceramics and metal work, so much of which was then being imported into this country. This impetus was given by the publication of a book entitled "Book of Chinese Buildings," in which Sir William Chambers, who was a great authority on such matters, gave to the world the story of life in the land of the Celestials, and pictured many of their wonderful buildings, palaces, and houses. From the accounts there given of the interiors of Chinese houses at that period, as seen by Chambers during his visit to China, we learn about the different objects, which collectors of the Oriental antiques—and copies of the Oriental style made in England at that time—may hope to secure.

In describing the movable furniture of such a home in China, Chambers says,

> "The movables in the saloon consist of chairs, stools, and tables, made sometimes of rosewood, ebony, or lacquered work, and sometimes of bamboo only, which is cheap, and nevertheless very neat. When the movables are of wood the seats of the stools are often of marble or of porcelain, which though hard to sit on are far from unpleasant in a climate where the summer heats are so excessive. In the corners of the room are stands, four or five feet high, on which they set plates of citrons and other fragrant fruit, or branches of coral and vases of porcelain, and glass globes containing gold fish, together with a certain weed, somewhat resembling fennel; on such tables as are intended for ornament only, they also place little landscapes, composed of rocks, shrubs, and a kind of lily that grows among pebbles covered with water."

Such was the glowing picture painted by Sir William Chambers after his visit to China. He was enthusiastic about the buildings he had seen, and longed to introduce the Chinese style in English architecture. No doubt his views were in accord with those of Chippendale, who in his book in reference to the Chinese style, wrote: "If finished according to the drawing and by a very good workman, I am confident it will be very genteel." The opportunity came to Chambers when he secured a commission to design ornamental buildings for the gardens of the Royal Palace at Kew, at that time occupied by Augusta, the Dowager Princess of Wales. The outcome of the appointment was the famous pagoda at Kew. It set the fashion, and not only were summer houses built upon that pattern, but a demand sprang up for furniture in keeping with that peculiar style of architecture, so entirely new in this country.

Thomas Chippendale was aware of the coming craze. His book had already promulgated the style. The chairs designed after the "Chinese manner" were described by him as "very proper for a lady's dressing-room, especially if hung with India paper."

Sir William Chambers evidently associated furniture designing with the work of an architect, and on many occasions designed furniture for wealthy clients, one of his most noted works being a remarkable cabinet for Charles IV. of Spain. The taste, although destined to be shortlived, set in, and Chippendale and other contemporary cabinet-makers adopted the Chinese style. They made galleried tables on which to display Chinese porcelain. They also designed pagoda stands for the same purpose, one of Chippendale's designs being a most elaborate affair with a covered top terminating with a carved dragon. There were mantels and over-mantels in the Chinese taste, some very extravagant in style. There were also many hanging cabinets, chiefly used for the display of porcelain; one very remarkable hanging cabinet ornamented with masks, griffin ornaments, and imitations of dripping water is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Among the carved ornaments introduced into the Chinese taste are mandarins, umbrellas, long-tailed and long-billed birds, lions' heads, dolphins, and, curiously enough, subjects taken from Greek mythology. It has already been intimated that Darly engraved many of the fanciful designs in "The Director." Evidently Darly was well acquainted with the Chinese taste, for in conjunction with another engraver, named Edwards, he published a book in which he gave a remarkable selection of Chinese ornaments, which might be used and adapted by the wood-carver, and perhaps by the metal worker. Among the objects referred to there, in addition to those already mentioned as being included in this style of decoration, are bridges, water summer houses, porticos, palisades, and water flowers, and little scenes associated with tea drinking, and with fishing with birds and nets.

Irish Chippendale.

Although Irish Chippendale is somewhat of a misnomer, the name which attaches to that peculiar style as well as its general contour suggests the appropriateness of its inclusion in this chapter. It was the work of cabinet-makers in Ireland,

and of those who made for the Irish market at a time when Thomas Chippendale was influencing to such an extent the productions of his contemporaries. It was, however, apparently formulated to some extent independently, and even earlier than it was possible for the influence of Chippendale to have spread so far afield. Hence it is that the name of the style, distinctive although strongly marked with Chippendale environment, is not a happily chosen one. Mr Cescinsky says: "None of the furniture of this type possesses, even remotely, any of the characteristics of the work of Thomas Chippendale." He considers that the influence of the St Martin's Lane cabinet-maker could not then have reached across the Channel. We have to remember, however, who were the buyers of such furniture, and to recall that they would be familiar with Chippendale's designs, and through their influence were in a position to create a demand for such a style in Ireland sooner than the popularity of Chippendale's work would otherwise have done.

Whatever may have been the origin of the so-called Irish Chippendale, whether made in London, in provincial towns, or in Ireland, such furniture had a sufficiently characteristic style running through it as to give it individuality. It is apparent that there is a suggested Dutch influence upon the Chippendale characteristics. There is also a somewhat heavy foliated carving of the rail, chiefly shown in tables. There is, as it were, the "spirit" of Chippendale in the designs, but for the most part wrongly interpreted, and to some extent there is a suggestion of a lingering attachment to an earlier style. These marked differences between Irish Chippendale and the Chippendale furniture with which collectors and home connoisseurs are familiar, seem to indicate that the exponents of the style, if not the designers, were of another school, and not as yet familiar with the newer style in which they were working.

Tripod Furniture.

The tripod furniture in vogue between 1750 and 1765 is illustrated very sparsely in the first edition of "The Director," from which it is evident that it was only then in process of introduction, and apparently unapplied to tables. The few illustrations given were confined to tripod banner screens and candlestick stands. Later, however, the principle was extended to tables, it being found that the tripod gave great rigidity to the table or stand. Some of the examples found in collections evidently of rather late dates, are very beautifully executed, special work being put into the stands, many of which are delicately carved. The carving of the claw-and-ball feet, and also of the stem, is chased, and the rim of the table top is frequently of great beauty.

Candle-stands were much in use when tall silver and Sheffield-plate candlesticks and candelabra took the place of wall girandoles and candles on brackets. They were much called for in conjunction with card-tables, so many of which were made at that time. When the candle-stands had become general the dished places for the candles on the card-tables were discarded, the portable stands being found more convenient.

Another development of the tripod stand came about with the growing popularity of tea drinking, which had then become the fashion. The tripod tea and coffee tables were put forward by Chippendale and his contemporaries and their successors as novelties. As business men those cabinet-makers, like tradesmen to-day, watched every new mode and change of fashion, and took advantage of them to introduce new goods—specially to popularise additional articles of furniture.

It is interesting to trace in the increase of the varieties of furniture introduced from time to time the altered and advanced taste of the age which in nearly every case gives the tradesman and craftsman some new opportunity of which he is not slow to make use. The increase in production is mainly made up of the advance and progress which bring new desires and create fresh needs. It is seldom that older objects disappear altogether—although there are some instances in which this is the case. Older goods change in purpose, and from them evolve new styles more in accord with modern necessities; but when once they are in daily use they mostly become permanent although changed. All the time, however, new objects are needed, and it is thus that the cabinet-maker's craft has grown from small beginnings, the tripod table being an example of an added luxury, in its application to fire screens, candle-stands, and coffee-tables.

Even when some of the older purposes declined, and the need of a tripod table or stand lessened, and to some extent disappeared, the tripod table continued to be required for other purposes. It became a cabinet for curios, in the form of a table with a covered top; or it was used as a display table for silver and trinkets, and when its use became general for the latter purpose a further opportunity came for lacquer ornament, and for the use of inlays with appropriate decorative treatment of the stem and top.

The piecrust top is the distinguishing name given to a special form of decorative rim or border used round the top of more elaborate tripod tables. That, however, preceded the carved or fretted gallery and the Chinese style.

Another development of the tripod came when later in the eighteenth century the principle was applied to basin stands. It will be remembered that most of the bedroom washstands of Chippendale's day were small. They were literally washstands, or stands for the basins and ewers such as Spode and other famous potters turned out towards the close of the eighteenth century.

Perhaps one of the most popular applications of the tripod stand to the more ornamental and artistic furniture of the period is seen in the pole screens which have been much sought after by collectors of late years; such screens varied in height, ranging from about 4 ft. 6 in. to 5 ft. 6 in. The screen itself was usually oblong, a favourite size being 2 ft. 8 in. by 2 ft.—other screens are met with almost square. There does not appear to have been any standard size either for the frame or the needlework. The smaller screens, however, are mostly of a later style, and do not come within the range of Chippendale tripods. It may be well for collectors to remember that many genuine antiques have been spoiled by the substitution of inferior modern tapestry or needlework in lieu of the *petit point*, the style of needlework popular when the screen was made, this so-called restoration being due to the original needlework having perished.

Chairs, Settees, and Tables.

Chair-making, as already intimated, was at one time a separate craft, but most of the noted cabinet-makers of the period under review received their early training at the chair-maker's bench. Thomas Chippendale was familiar with the craft, and as a wood-carver understood the necessity of using the right materials and designing chair backs so that he could adapt his new style to chair-making. He worked on existing types, and then altered the backs, so that the shapes prevailing in the reigns of Queen Anne and the early Georges gradually disappeared. At first he retained the claw-and-ball foot, but the perforations in the plain bands which he made was an innovation which gave the older style quite a new appearance. Then the legs of the chair underwent some change. The claw-and-ball became a lion's paw, and lions' heads and paws were introduced into the more decorative arms and legs of the chairs he then made.

Fig. 55.—MAHOGANY SETTEE,
CHIPPENDALE STYLE, *circa* 1760.

(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

FIG. 56.—MAHOGANY CHIPPENDALE BOOKCASE.
(*In the possession of Mr. Albert Amor.*)

FIG. 57.—KNEEHOLE DRESSING TABLE,
***Circa* 1755.**
(*Mallett & Son.*)

It has been pointed out that in the best chairs of the Chippendale period the bold sweep of the curves of the backs entailed the use of much wood. Thus a chair frame of delicate design may look as if it were only two or three inches thick, whereas the wood from which it was carved must have been at least four or five inches in substance. In the fashioning of such a chair back much expert skill was needed, and the designs of those chairs now met with bear evidence of quality of material, and of the superiority of the workmanship in their execution.

In Chippendale's description of three patterns of beautiful ribbon or "riband-back" chairs, we have confirmation, if it were needed, that many of the patterns in "The Director" were suggestive, and designs which had not been carried out; for in reference to these chairs he says:

> "Three riband-back chairs which, if I may speak without vanity, are the best I have ever seen (or perhaps have ever been made). The chair on the left hand has been executed from this design, which had an excellent effect, and gave satisfaction to all who saw it. I make no doubt that the other two will give the same content, if properly handled in the execution."

In the third edition of his book Chippendale alters the footnote, and intimates that "*several sets have been made which have given entire satisfaction.*"

A development of the chair leg, sometimes applied also to tripod tables and screens, was that known as the dolphin head leg; in some rare instances the dolphins' tails being carved right up the leg. That pattern was chiefly in vogue from 1755 to 1760.

Concurrently with small chairs larger ones with arms were made and upholstered by Thomas Chippendale and his contemporaries. In the earlier examples of those chairs, such as would be made during the first half of the eighteenth century, the arms were carved, and cabochon ornament was used on the legs. This style changed about 1755. Then,

again, the arms of the armchairs were altered somewhat by Chippendale—being projected a little. Later another change is noticeable in that the carved connecting piece between the legs disappeared. Comparatively early, either in 1754 or 1755, Chippendale introduced carved frilling under the seat rail, that feature adding ornament, varied in its effect by its different exponents. Genuine chairs in good condition, whether from the workshops of Thomas Chippendale or his contemporaries, command high prices. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are several exceptional examples of the style, but with their usual caution the authorities label them "after the style of Chippendale," and do not credit the chief designer of the style with having made any of them. One of these examples is an exceptionally fine mahogany armchair made during the first half of the eighteenth century, a beautiful piece with pure riband-back design; it has short arms and carved ornament to the seat rail, the legs terminating with claw-and-ball feet. It is covered with brocade velvet of an earlier date, probably seventeenth century.

Museum authorities are glad to secure fine examples of furniture which, while exemplifying a given style, carry with them historical interest. One such chair may be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, specially beautiful with its very fine lion's head projecting handles to the arms, curved outwards. It is the chair of the President of Lyon's Inn, an old Inn of Chancery, formerly in Newcastle Street, Strand. On the back of the chair is a shield of arms, inlaid and gilt, surmounted by a lion rampant, gilded. The upholstery is red morocco.

The corner chair was an innovation of the Chippendale period, although not shown in "The Director," and it is probable that such chairs were added in small numbers to a set of chairs of ordinary shape and size, the ornament of the corner chair corresponding to those of the set both in ornament and in the interlaced scroll splats. As an unusual example of the Chippendale style mention may be made of a pretty little child's chair of carved mahogany, somewhat composite in style, the legs square with Chinese fret ornament, tapering down to claw-and-ball feet, the back being after the earlier style of Chippendale. Another example is a small chair for quite a young child. Both these interesting pieces are in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

There is a distinct difference between the generally accepted form of couch or sofa and the settee of Chippendale's day. Such settees which closely resemble an adaptation of two single chairs, are commonly called "love-seats" or "Darby and Joan" seats. They are sometimes known as bar-backed sofas, the French term *confidente* being applied to the smaller love-seats. Although the settee back was usually formed of two or more chair back designs it was not always so, for in those in which there was room for three or more persons the centre was frequently different, or an adaptation of a style of ornament of the so-called "chairs." The backs of the settees gradually assumed an individual style, and were eventually quite separated from the chair. The chief decoration of such settees lies in the back, but many of the seat rails are extremely ornamental, the later ones showing an adaptation of dragoon edges.

The dining tables of Chippendale's day consisted of two centre pieces with wide flaps on either side, and two semicircular end pieces, all four being joined by small brass clips. The two larger pieces stood on four cabriole legs, and two semicircular pieces on two legs. It was these latter portions which formed useful side-tables when not in actual use as dining-tables. When Chippendale's Chinese style was applied to table fronts, rails, and legs, the oblong tables assumed a more distinctive character. Many of the examples met with are veritable side-tables which had been made for wall recesses, and are more correctly described as sideboards. Many of the side-tables were made to carry marble tops.

Reference has already been made to card-tables, of which there are so many beautiful examples of Chippendale designs extant. Many of the tables of this period are distinguishable by the sunk places for candlesticks used on the tables before the tall candle-stands were introduced. In addition to those circular cavities, two hollows are frequently seen, one on either side of the table. In some instances these scooped-out spaces were inlaid and polished, at others lined with cloth. They were, of course, receptacles for the guineas which changed hands at the tables.

The Sideboard.

The sideboards, which served a useful purpose in the days of Chippendale, were not sideboards as they were understood in later years; more correctly styled they were sideboard-tables, to which reference is made in the preceding paragraph. In the earlier examples they were without table drawers, but those useful accessories were subsequently added. The earlier varieties had legs cabriole in shape, and mostly with claw-and-ball feet. The form of the legs, however, changed in accord with Chippendale's later developments—the days when he introduced Chinese taste and Gothic style. The carver's side-table was an innovation, and many of these tables appear to have been made to fit recesses, some being of extraordinary length. Then, again, there are the scarcer types of the oblong side-tables, with ornaments all round, evidently intended to stand in an open space.

In connection with the sideboard tables the wine-cooler was an indispensable adjunct, and was frequently placed under the side-table. There are numerous varieties of form and ornament, the wine-cooler being generally in accord with the table with which it was used. Another important side-table accessory was the tea-chest or caddy—many of the old caddies being more massive than the choice inlaid examples of Sheraton and Hepplewhite designs. The true Chippendale caddies were somewhat massive looking, and a favourite style appears to have been a French design showing Louis XV. influence. Such caddies rested on ogee feet, or upon brass claw-and-ball or French cabriole supports.

Bookcases and Bureaus.

The term library case was frequently applied to the bookcases of Chippendale's day. Many old families are proud of their bookcases with Chippendale fronts; and justly so, too, for the bookcase offered Chippendale and his contemporaries many opportunities of introducing that light tracery which eventually evolved into Gothic design, which, when glazed, had such a charming effect. The pediment of the bookcase, too, offered many opportunities of introducing those somewhat extravagant ornaments which eventually became the taste. In many of the older bookcases the doors to the lower portions were plain, enclosing useful cupboards, the shelves on which books reposed in the cupboard above protected from harm by glass being arranged over them.

The bureau-desk, surmounted by a bookcase, and in some cases a pier-glass, was also one of the finest pieces on which the cabinet-maker could work, for the front of the bureau as well as the fronts of the drawers were highly decorative, their beauty being increased by the ornamental brass work. Such bureaus were often used in bedrooms, as well as in boudoirs and libraries.

Many of the bureaus and bookcases appear to have been specially designed for the rooms in which they were to be used, and Chippendale himself must have received some important commissions for these beautiful pieces of furniture. Those who have examined some of the masterpieces of that day have been somewhat disappointed when looking over the pages of "The Director," recognising that some of Chippendale's best designs are absent from his book. That is explained in that in those days there was a strong prejudice against the reproduction of any special pattern or design that had been carried out for a wealthy patron. Such prejudice was more strongly marked in Chippendale's day than it is now, in that we are accustomed to machine and factory-made goods, of which there are many duplicates, and makers' pattern books represent standard designs. In the eighteenth century furniture and indeed most household goods, were entirely hand-made, and although the general outline might conform to some accepted principle, details were altered according to the whim of the artist-craftsman, and in doing so no great additional cost, if any, was incurred.

Bedsteads and Commodes.

The most imposing piece of furniture in an eighteenth-century house was the state bed, which occupied such an important position in the state bedroom. In Chippendale's day the massive four-poster of Jacobean and earlier times had been displaced in favour of the light and graceful four-poster, with its beautiful decorative columns or posts, handsomely carved back and foot rail, and often gorgeously decorated canopy and cornice. Chippendale offered his patrons many remarkable designs in his "Director"; one state bed to which he called special attention was, he said, "submitted to the judicious and candid for their approbation. In it," he continued, "were magnificence, proportion, and harmony." It was evidently a design he had not executed, for he proceeded to explain to the would-be artist who should make it how to go about the work. He says:

> "A workman of genius will easily comprehend the design, but I would advise him in order to prevent mistakes to make first a model of the same at large, which will save both time and expense."

Referring to another very beautiful bedstead engraved in his book, Chippendale says:

> "The crane at the top of the canopy is the emblem of Care and Watchfulness, which is not unbecoming a place of rest."

The full decorative value of such an important piece of furniture as the four-post bed, is only realised when it is seen in the full glory of its bed hangings, upholstery, and cover. The bed hangings usually fell inside the cornice, thus exhibiting the decorative work of the carver, and sometimes of the builder. The four-post bed has gone, and in modern replicas of

Chippendale furniture, and in the suites of so-called Chippendale style, the bedstead which takes its place in no way indicates the remarkable imposing beauty and grandeur of an eighteenth-century state bedroom, with its fine four-post bed and hangings. Nowadays fresh air is preferred, and much of the bedroom draperies have disappeared, for sleep is not courted within a narrow enclosure, and the drawn curtains of the eighteenth century are not deemed idealistic conditions of dreamland.

In the days of Chippendale there was more architectural wood-work, such as the carved cornices of the windows, than there is in present-day houses, and many of these beautiful cornices have perished, in that they are scarcely collectable objects. Even the four-posters have gone, their beautiful columns and posts only being retained, but in many instances put to other uses. In like manner it is not an easy matter to meet with good examples of canopy beds, with curtains and valences drawn up in the day time and lowered at night. Couch beds and Chinese sofas were not uncommon. Such a sofa could be converted into a bed, the front part of the seat drawing forward, the sides folding when not in use, the curtains in a similar manner being drawn forward and let down to form a tent.

Although many of the fine commodes of Chippendale's style were in reality drawing-room chests of drawers, combining usefulness with beauty of ornament, they were made low so that tops could be utilised for the display of fine porcelain. There were, however, commodes of plainer types which found their resting-place in the state bedroom, and others of still less imposing appearance from which no doubt evolved the ordinary chests of drawers of later days.

Mirrors and Pier-glasses.

The pier-glasses with Chippendale frames are very fantastic; they afford the wood-carver an opportunity to let his wildest ideas run riot. The simpler base design was mostly made up of shell-shaped and broken-scroll ornaments, many presenting French characteristics; from these came additional details of ornament, and eventually long-beaked birds, dripping water, rock-work, pagodas, and little figures were added. Copper-plate engravers revelled in Chippendale designs as the style became more pronounced. They frequently adopted mirror frames for traders' cards, the frontispieces of books, and ball tickets. Mirrors were very fashionable then, and those of Chippendale types showed two extremes of decoration and ornament, the elaborate gilt mirrors and those of plain mahogany carved with foliated designs. The cost of mirrors was then considerable, but Chippendale used the best glass he could procure. Those fitted with Vauxhall glass have a somewhat pink tint, and the handground bevels are somewhat narrow and flat. The glazed mirror girandoles were exceedingly ornamental, and many pier-glasses were placed over side-tables of the console type. Then, again, Chippendale over-mantels surmounted the mantel-pieces of his day. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a remarkably fine carved mantel-piece in the Chippendale style, surmounted by a mirror carved in pine-wood, and painted white. The decoration of such mirrors was frequently emblematical, Music being often chosen for allegorical designs. Other frequently used emblems were those relating to Abundance and trophies of the Chase and War.

In Smaller Things.

The perfection of the Chippendale style is often observable in the smaller things of household requisites and furnishings. Indeed in miniature work some of the artists who followed Chippendale's lead seem to have excelled, and no doubt many of the beautifully designed sundries which are shown in "The Director," and books of designs which were published about that time, were welcomed by those who followed the taste of the period. There were many charming little gallery-topped tables specially made for the display of *bijouterie* and snuff-boxes, some of the more delicate gallery-tops being strengthened by the addition of brass bands—especially those galleries of the peg-top order. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a charming artist's table of carved mahogany after the Chinese style, and there are ornamental tables, the tray tops of which are covered with needlework and silk embroidery, being afterwards glazed. The dumb waiter was an innovation of that time, and some of these pieces were beautifully carved.

The so-called wig-stands providing puff-box and powder, and a ewer of rose-water and a bowl, essentials to a gallant of that day, are extremely interesting. These little basin stands frequently stood in some convenient corner on the ground floor of a mansion, and to a certain extent served the purpose of a modern lavatory basin in days when there was no town water supply. On a little platform under the basin, or in a small drawer, the puff and powder were conveniently at hand, and after adjusting his wig and dusting it with powder the gentleman caller dipped his fingers in rose-water.

A word of caution to collectors may be given in that there is extreme difficulty in separating the work of Thomas

Chippendale and the men who received their inspiration direct from him, and that of other makers who were in business on their own account throughout the whole of the time Chippendale was founding his style. Naturally the latter were influenced by the popular taste, and if they did not actually copy, as some did, the designs in "The Director," they caught Chippendale's theme in their draughtsmanship. Mr Litchfield in his book entitled, "How to collect Furniture," mentions as active contemporaries of Chippendale, France, who lived near by in St Martin's Lane, Charles Elliott, Campbell and Sons, Thomas Johnson, Robert Davy, and Mathias Lock. To these must be added such men as Manwaring, who left their marks upon the trade, and who created styles of their own. Of the men whose names have been mentioned some held Royal appointments to the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York. Thomas Johnson was a carver of some repute, for he published a book of drawings entitled "Twelve Girandoles," in 1755, and another book a few years later.

CHAPTER XIV

HEPPLEWHITE'S FURNITURE

The craftsman—His small models—Characteristics of Hepplewhite's works—"The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide"—The firm's work—Some Hepplewhite examples.

In considering the furniture of the Hepplewhite style, and when buying pieces which have unmistakable signs of being in accord with the principles he laid down, we must remember that Hepplewhite died in 1786, having worked for many years, and founded the reputation of the work afterwards carried on in the Hepplewhite workshops. We have also to bear in mind that Hepplewhite's death by no means signalled the decline of his business, neither are we justified in affirming that the firm of which his widow was the active head relied solely upon the patterns in the book they published (most of which would doubtless be prepared and some of them made up in the time that George Hepplewhite was alive), for they probably designed others. We must also bear in mind that the style of Hepplewhite had "caught on," and had a large following in London and in provincial towns. It is, therefore, probable that vast quantities of furniture of Hepplewhite's patterns, and in line with the teaching of the school he founded, were made between the years 1780 and 1800; that is to say, for several years previous to Hepplewhite's death, during the whole career of the firm of A. Hepplewhite & Co., and for a few years later; in fact, in many places until the fame of Hepplewhite had waned, and public taste, ever craving for something new, fancied Sheraton or some other mode his patterns would be reproduced.

The Craftsman.

George Hepplewhite is known to have been in business as a cabinet-maker somewhere in the parish of St Giles', Cripplegate. The period in which he lived and worked seems to some extent to fill up the gap or time of lessened influence between the days of Thomas Chippendale and Thomas Sheraton, although he must have been steadily making a name for himself, and gaining publicity for his designs when Chippendale's productions were still in vogue, and also when Sheraton's designs were even then being eagerly copied as a marked advance on the former school.

Hepplewhite's real contemporary was Thomas Shearer (whose work is referred to in chap, xvi.) and the Brothers Adam, whose chief inspirations were at that time architectural, and mostly applied to mantel-pieces and larger works than the chairs in which Hepplewhite revelled.

That Hepplewhite received his real inspirations from the influences at work in his day none will deny, although most connoisseurs—not all—admit that from those sources he evolved that which was entirely new. The style that influenced him most was the decorative French style—the style prevailing during the reigns of Louis XV. and Louis XVI.

FIG. 58.—TWO HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS (ONE ARM CHAIR), PART OF SET.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

FIG. 59.—HEPPLEWHITE LADDER-BACK CHAIR, PART OF SET.
(*The Manor House, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 60. **HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS,** FIG. 61.
SHOWING FRENCH INFLUENCE.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

His Small Models.

Hepplewhite does not appear to have had any great love for the massive and grand. He preferred smaller and more delicate objects, and tried to reduce the size of chairs and settees and other articles of furniture without impairing their usefulness or lessening their beauty. Most of the ornaments George Hepplewhite used were well adapted to the chairs of lessened calibre, and also to the small and tasteful articles of furniture which he provided for the dainty drawing-rooms and boudoirs of his day. In describing his small models—and, indeed, Hepplewhite's work generally—chairs seem to come quite naturally into the greatest prominence, for it is his designs of chair-backs which present such striking characteristics, and show his chief development of the style he was formulating. It was in making chairs that he struck out on new lines. The shield became one of the chief attractions of Hepplewhite chair-backs. Sometimes it was inverted, at others it became a demi-shield, nicknamed the "camel-back," from its so-called hump in the centre of the design. Sometimes the camel-back is independent of the shield, being separately supported. Now and then we notice remains of Chippendale's school in the Cupid bow-top. Some of Hepplewhite's chairs based on Chippendale's designs are carved in relief, the graceful backs which he evolved making them especially suitable for low relief decoration. Many of the pierced backs are interlaced with ribbon; others have beautiful festoons, and here and there classical vases of the Adam school are introduced. The Prince of Wales' ostrich plumes tied with ribbons was a favourite departure, and Sheraton was successful in introducing this design. He completely altered the legs of his chairs, making them straight or tapering, often exquisitely reeded; sometimes so-called thimble toes form the finish to the delicate legs, and later turned legs and arm posts are seen on chairs and settees, especially those made after 1735. Hepplewhite made chairs for many purposes, some of his hall chairs with oval shields and classic urns being exceedingly attractive. As a rough guide to collectors, it may be stated that the designs as standardised in "The Guide," published after Hepplewhite's death, measure about two

inches less in width, and stand lower in the back than those made during Hepplewhite's earlier career. As a rule, Hepplewhite chairs are a little longer in the legs than those of Chippendale. Indeed, some appear to be much too high for the low backs, which look rather dwarfed in consequence.

Characteristics of Hepplewhite's Work.

As it has been seen, the most notable feature in the chairs made by Hepplewhite when he was advancing from the models he had before him, as given in earlier and contemporary schools of design, was their lessened dimensions. The materials used by makers are always important, because they indicate their motive in ornament, and sometimes influence the style of their work. Mahogany was used by Hepplewhite just as it had been by Chippendale and his contemporaries, and his mahogany chairs were enriched with fancy veneers. Satinwood, however, was much used also for inlays and additional ornament. It has been pointed out by Mr Wheeler in his book on "Old English Furniture" that Robert Adam used "a fine dark deep-toned old Spanish mahogany, yielding with age a nice patina," whereas Hepplewhite used "the light-toned mahogany," which was then being employed by many others, and yet Hepplewhite received his best inspirations from Robert Adam!

The hand-painted furniture mentioned in "The Guide" as japanning (not to be confused with lacquers in imitation of the ornamental lacquers then being imported into this country) is characteristic of Hepplewhite, and although the popularity of that particular finish came later on, towards the close of the eighteenth century, it is more than probable that that characteristic style was made before his death.

The methods of working, as well as the materials used and the finishes imparted, are worthy of special note when forming an opinion of the characteristics of any style pronounced or only in an embryo state, and some one of the characteristics which distinguish any style are generally observable in all the pieces of furniture designed at that particular time. In Hepplewhite's furniture we notice the grooving and reeding plane in constant use. Indeed, at that period a marked change was creeping over production, in that mechanical aids and labour-saving tools and machines were being gradually brought into the workshop, and economic conditions of working are observable in much of the work carried out. The difference in style between the designs of Hepplewhite and Robert Adam, and those of Thomas Chippendale, make this possible, for in Chippendale's day the carver's tool worked by hand was the chief instrument. Hepplewhite's top rails and side posts were deeply channelled, and beaded patterns were introduced.

Reference has already been made to the shield and heart-shaped backs which are so characteristic of Hepplewhite's designs. To these, however, must be added the wheel-back and other curious patterns in which ovals and squares are noticeable. In some of the designs there are beautiful urns and conventional foliage. Little medallions are fashioned in the splat, the Prince of Wales' feathers and wheat-ears are seen in many of the designs, and these took the place of Chippendale's shells.

The beautiful tables which Hepplewhite made show traces of his handiwork; there are quite a number of examples illustrated in "The Guide," especially those charming ornamental tables with inlaid tops and bracket supports. There are also semicircular tables with folding flaps of equal size, the centre table being supported by three fly legs. These tables when joined make up the dining-tables Hepplewhite so carefully planned, and so satisfactorily carried out. To these must be added claw dining-tables, also joined together by clasps and slides.

Hepplewhite designed many oval and oblong pier-glasses, mostly of equal width to the pier-table, for which they were originally intended, the one being used in conjunction with the other. Such frames are of gilded wood, but sometimes the leaf ornaments are made of plaster, strongly wired together at the back, the whole being afterwards gilt.

The ornament used at any period—especially if it is a distinctive ornament or badge—is always a useful guide to the prevailing influence at work, operating upon the design of craftsmen. In Hepplewhite's frame there are usually leaf scrolls, chains of husks, and often an urn, or perchance an eagle. As time went on girandoles became more fantastic in shape, the chief departure in Hepplewhite's time being the introduction of white or coloured cut glass.

The patronage bestowed upon Hepplewhite by the then Prince of Wales accounts for the somewhat obsequious use of the plumes or Prince of Wales' feathers in many of his designs, especially in chair backs and the backs of settees. Hepplewhite made many richly upholstered easy chairs, some of the more luxurious being commonly called "forty wink" chairs. His chief successes, however, were in his very beautiful inlaid suites, and in his decorative settees—a marked departure was the sofa which Hepplewhite evolved from the French sofa-bed. The dainty furniture this clever cabinet-maker made was so well suited to ladies' rooms that its success was well assured, and as the parlour became a

fashionable rendezvous for ladies and their admirers, the charming inlays and light decorative furniture of Hepplewhite, and those who followed his style, became the rage. In a similar way this famous maker designed numerous dainty screens and accessories for parlour and boudoir, as well as for the retiring chamber.

"The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide."

In addition to those articles of furniture mentioned as indicating the characteristics of George Hepplewhite's style by which collectors and connoisseurs may identify their antiques, there are others which might be quoted as truly setting forth his handiwork. Many of the more important pieces designed by Hepplewhite, and in many instances executed in later years by his firm, are illustrated in "The Guide," and a description of their chief features applies just as much to the craftsmanship of the firm by whom "The Guide" was published, therefore they may appropriately be mentioned in a review of "the firm's" work, without in any way disparaging the work of its founder.

First of all reference must be made to "The Guide" itself, which it should be clearly understood was not published until after George Hepplewhite's death, which occurred in 1786. It was Hepplewhite's widow Alice and her partners who, under the firm style of A. Hepplewhite & Co. published "The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide" in 1788. Many of the designs, although taken, probably, from original sketches by George Hepplewhite, were not engraved until the year before the actual publication of the book, for they bear dates varying from July to October in the year 1787. Incidentally, the run on the book is indicated by the publication of a second edition in 1789, and again after a lapse of a few years, during which the Hepplewhite firm was gaining increased popularity, a final edition was published in 1794.

This remarkable book, to give it the full descriptive title appearing on the front page, was "The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Guide; or, Repository of Designs for every Article of Household Furniture, in the Newest and Most Approved Taste." The authors then reiterated the chief contents of the work, which were as follows:—

> "Chairs, Stools, Sofas, Confidante, Duchesse, Sideboards, Pedestals and Vases, Cellarettes, Knife-cases, Desk and Bookcases, Secretary and Bookcases, Library Cases, Library Tables, Reading Desks, Chests of Drawers, Urn Stands, Tea Caddies, Tea Trays, Card Tables, Pier Tables, Pembroke Tables, Tambour Tables, Dressing Glasses, Dressing Tables and Drawers, Commodes, Rudd's Table, Bidets, Night Tables, Basin Stands, Wardrobes, Pot Cupboards, Brackets, Hanging Shelves, Fire Screens, Beds, Field Beds, Sweep Tops for ditto, Bed Pillars, Candle Stands, Lamps, Pier Glasses, Terms for Busts, Cornices for Library, Cases, Wardrobes, etc., at large, Ornamental Tops for Pier Tables, Pembroke Tables, Commodes, etc., etc."

After the manner of the day the publishers made an apology for their work, and also commented on the difficulties of the task they had undertaken, concluding with the following words:

> "To unite elegance and utility, and blend the useful with the agreeable, has ever been considered a difficult but an honourable task."

FIG. 62.—HEPPLEWHITE MAHOGANY SETTEE,
SHOWING ADAM INFLUENCE.
(*Mawers, Ltd., South Kensington.*)

FIG. 63.—SATINWOOD CABINET,
INLAID WITH COLOURED WOODS.
(*In the possession of Mr. Albert Amor.*)

First of all A. Hepplewhite & Co., in publishing what is, perhaps, more than most of the other books of that day, a trade catalogue, endeavoured to explain the advantages of uniform and, as far as art entered into house furnishings in those days, artistic surroundings. They pointed out two of their plates illustrating the complete appointment of a room (copies of "The Guide" together with the design books of Chippendale, Sheraton, and others, are on view at the Print Room in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and may also be seen in the British Museum Library), about which they say:

> "Having gone through a complete series of suite of Household Furniture we were strongly advised to draw out a plan which should show the manner of properly disposing of the same: with this intent, aided by the advice of some experienced friends, we here show, at one view, the necessary and proper furniture for a Drawing-room, and also for a Dining-room or Parlour, subject to the following

> variations: If the object of this plan was a Drawing-room only—on each side the Chimney-piece there should be a sofa, and on the opposite side instead of a sofa, should be a confidante: the sideboard also should be removed, and an elegant commode substituted in the place: the remaining space may be filled up with chairs. For a Dining-room, instead of pier-tables, should be a set of dining-tables; the rest of the furniture and the general *ordonnance* of the room is equally proper, except the glass over the sofa, which might be omitted: but this is a mere opinion, many of the Dining Parlours of our first nobility having full as much glass as here shown. The proper furniture for a Drawing-room, and for a Dining-room parlour being thus pointed out, it remains only to observe that the general appearance of the latter should be plain and neat, while the former, being considered a state room, should possess all the elegance embellishments can give."

It is quite evident that A. Hepplewhite & Co. at that time were wishful to secure Continental trade, and no doubt many of their lists, or more correctly copies of "The Guide," found their way to France and other countries. In an explanation of the view held by English makers, the authors of "The Guide" say:

> "English taste and workmanship have of late been much sought for by surrounding nations, and the mutability of all things, but more especially fashion, has rendered the labours of our predecessors in this line of little use; nay, at this day, they can only tend to mislead those foreigners who seek a knowledge of English taste in the various articles of household furniture."

There seems to have been an injudicious method of attracting attention by running down other maker's products, prevailing among the publishers of eighteenth-century catalogues. Sheraton, in his "Drawing Book," referred to in another chapter, has something to say about "The Guide," published by A. Hepplewhite & Co. Writing in a somewhat sarcastic and derogatory vein, he says, "This work ('The Guide') has already caught the decline, and perhaps in a little time will suddenly die in the disorder." He then goes on to refer to another book published in the same year entitled "The Book of Prices," saying that the designs in that book were "more fashionable and useful" than those in "The Guide," "in proportion to their number." With such a book in the hands of their clients it is not surprising that Mrs Hepplewhite and her partners continued to progress, and that we have to-day so many beautiful pieces indicating the general excellence of Hepplewhite's designs, and of the craftsmanship practised in his workshops, notwithstanding the adverse criticism of other makers.

The Firm's Work.

From the foregoing descriptions and extracts from "The Guide" we can form a very fair estimate of the basis upon which Mrs Hepplewhite and her colleagues continued to work after her husband's death. In order that the home connoisseur may identify genuine Hepplewhite designs, it is convenient to refer to some of the descriptions given in "The Guide." As already indicated, Hepplewhite furniture was mostly inlaid, beautifully figured woods being used as veneers, the edges being generally banded. It is noteworthy, too, that few mouldings are seen on the fronts of drawers. Reference has already been made to the beautiful chairs, so many of which can be identified by their oval and shield-shaped backs.

In some of the earlier examples of Hepplewhite's chairs brass nails were used, but of course they were very much lighter and smaller than those indicating an earlier period of brass nail ornament. Referring to the upholstery in the instructions given in "The Guide," it is said: "Mahogany chairs should have seats of horsehair, plain, striped, and chequered at pleasure." The dimensions of chairs are given as—width, 20 in.; depth of seat, 17 in.; height of the seat, 17 in.; the total height of the chair 37 in. It has already been pointed out that Hepplewhite's chairs are on the whole lower in the back than those of his predecessors. The high-backed winged chairs, restful to the head, were looked upon as draught-excluding seats, and were much patronised at that time. The Duchesse seat is explained in "The Guide" as "two French Burjier chairs of proper construction with a stool in the middle," forming a Duchesse 6 to 8 ft. long.

At the time when Hepplewhite's were making so much household furniture, the sideboard was undergoing a transformation. The sideboard-tables of Chippendale were no longer acceptable in that they did not provide sufficient accommodation, and the idea which had been put forward by Robert Adam suggested a more complete sideboard with cellarets and convenient cupboards. At the time we are referring to the sideboard was either serpentine or straight-

fronted, and was supported on four or six taper legs, sometimes fluted. The pitch of the leg was a point to note, as the angle at which it was placed was carefully arranged to carry the weight. There was often a centre drawer, and two deep drawers or cellarets, the latter frequently designed to represent two dummy drawers. The left-hand compartment was lined with lead, and was frequently used for washing glasses, sometimes a plug or water tap being added for the convenience of emptying. Some of the earlier Hepplewhite sideboards were made without drawers, being used in conjunction with pedestal cellarets, in some cases the centre drawer was supplemented by a short drawer at both ends. In all these designs there were inlaid ornaments. Describing these pieces of furniture, Hepplewhite says the long drawer in the middle is adapted for table linen, adding that their sideboards can be made to any size so as to fit in recesses. The portable or separate cellarets known as *gardes de vin*, made in mahogany, were hooped with brass, and divided into partitions to hold bottles of wine. They were, as already indicated, used in conjunction with sideboards without drawers.

Hepplewhite's bedroom furniture calls for special note, as some of the pieces are among the best examples of this cabinet-maker's work. The different kinds of bedsteads illustrated in "The Guide," and described therein, are referred to as "Venetian, or waggon-top," "dome-top," "square dome-top," and "press-beds." The press-bed folded up, formed a wardrobe, and was regarded as a convenient bed for use in a small room, or in a room which was occasionally required for sleeping purposes. In addition to these ordinary household beds there were "field beds," both single and double headed, an adaptation of the French *lit â tombeau*.

Hepplewhite's designs for dressing-tables showed an advance, and many of them were ingeniously arranged for the convenience of their users, there being many little fittings and compartments for toilet requisites, perfumery, and trinkets. Some of Hepplewhite's shaving tables have been regarded by experts as remarkably convenient. The chests of drawers made by Hepplewhite include the useful tall-boys, which contained so many drawers. Some of these were really quite inconveniently high, many measuring 5 ft. 6 in. or more in height, so that the two top drawers, which were very shallow, were practically useless, as the only use to which they could be put was for small articles of dress; and they were so high that ladies could not see inside without using a chair to stand upon. Perhaps the most satisfactory way of realising the beauty of Hepplewhite's designs, and the chief characteristics of his work, is to examine a good collection of furniture of that period, and to note carefully the chief points of interest in their construction.

Some Hepplewhite Examples.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington there are comparatively few examples of furniture of the eighteenth century, and Hepplewhite is represented by but few. Some private collections are, however, rich in examples of this period, and several of the leading furniture dealers in London and elsewhere have some very interesting examples in their galleries. In the accompanying illustrations a few pieces are shown.

Fig. 58 represents two Hepplewhite chairs (one arm), part of a set of eight in the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques, a set in excellent condition. Mr Phillips, of Hitchin, has some excellent Hepplewhite chairs of similar design, his ladder-back suite, one of which is illustrated in Fig. 59, being especially handsome and typical of that particular type.

Quite another style is seen in the chairs shown in Figs. 60 and 61, in which French Empire influence is strong. Both these examples are parts of suites in the extensive galleries of Messrs Waring & Gillow, Ltd.; they were made probably between 1780-1785.

The Hepplewhite mahogany settee shown in Fig. 62, *circa* 1790, is indicative of the Adam influence; the workmanship of this piece is exceptionally good.

There is always something pleasing about a cabinet of old china, and the interest attached to the beautiful ceramics, so fitly exhibited with genuine antiques, is vastly increased when the cabinet is a thing of beauty too. The example shown in Fig. 63 is such an one. It is of satin-wood, and is inlaid with various coloured woods, the urns or vases in the door panels being conspicuous objects; the inlays of the break-front and cornice are also exceptionally effective.

CHAPTER XV

THOMAS SHERATON'S BOOK OF DESIGNS

Sheraton's early career—His life in London—The influences governing Sheraton's designs—"The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book"—The reception of the book—Materials and inlays—Typical pieces—Chairs and tables—Bureaus and bookcases—Sideboards and cabinets—Bedsteads and bedroom furniture.

In that there is but little evidence that Thomas Sheraton ever worked as a master cabinet-maker, although he had undoubtedly some practical experience of the craft, his influence upon the trade of his day can only be judged by his books. The book of designs prepared so laboriously was published by subscription, and was so well supported that his scheme of construction and design, which formed such a marked advance, and gave to the cabinet trade such distinctive schemes of ornament, quickly became the rage. The fact that something like ninety per cent. of the original subscribers to the work were either cabinet-makers or directly connected with the trade is sufficient evidence that Sheraton's designs were very widely circulated, and that most of the copies of his book went into the hands of practical men who had opportunities of carrying out those designs, and consequently of introducing them to customers. In the revival of eighteenth-century art, which has made such an impression upon the trade of the present day, Sheraton's designs have been reproduced, and the inspiration of Thomas Sheraton is probably as keenly felt in the cabinet-making trade of the twentieth century as it was shortly after the publication of his famous "Drawing Book." In modern reproduction the necessities of the present day have to be regarded. Hence it is that modern copies do not always follow the directions met with in Sheraton's book, rightly interpreted by the eighteenth-century cabinet-makers, who followed his instructions. In some of the articles, however, reproductions of the antique so closely resemble the originals that it is not always easy to distinguish them. Home connoisseurs may unwittingly fall into traps, and when securing under the hammer fine sideboards, cabinets, or other articles of furniture may be under the impression that they are buying antiques, whereas they may turn out to be but modern replicas. Notwithstanding the so-called copyist, however, there are genuine examples of the cabinet work of the eighteenth century to be found in many English homes, especially in those old houses where the furniture of the eighteenth century has descended from father to son, and it is among such well-authenticated pieces that we can note the chief characteristics of those remarkable designs prepared by Thomas Sheraton.

Sheraton's Early Career.

Thomas Sheraton was born at Stockton-on-Tees about the year 1750. It would appear that he received little education in his boyhood, and probably like many of that day was early apprenticed, and taught the art of wood-working. We read of him as a journeyman cabinet-maker, after he had mastered the craft. Apparently, however, he took what opportunities came his way to acquire some technical knowledge of draughtsmanship, and it would seem that the designing of furniture was more to his taste than the practical application of those designs. That he regretted the few opportunities he had had of acquiring knowledge in his early days is apparent from his writings, for he describes himself as a mechanic "who never received the advantages of a collegial or academic education." He became a writer, however, as well as a draughtsman and designer. He seems to have early shown some aptitude as a teacher, for while yet in his native town he made his appearance as a preacher, taking up such doctrinal subjects as "Spiritual Subjection" and "Baptism" and "Regeneration." He had been a member of the Church of England in his earlier days, but adopted the tenets of the Baptist denomination. He left Stockton in 1790, taking up his abode in London, where he hoped to have greater scope for his energies. He commenced issuing tracts shortly after his arrival, and soon became noted as a preacher in Baptist chapels. Although not altogether neglecting his career as a furniture designer, he appears to have been so imbued with religious sentiment that in some of his earlier commercial books he discanted upon religious topics and Bible history. Having once become established in London, the great work of his life, that for which he is best known to-day, was, however, commenced in real earnest.

His Life in London.

Sheraton's life in London seems to have been threefold—that of preacher, teacher, and publisher. Financially, Sheraton was a failure, and he appears to have lacked the business qualities which would have enabled him to put to

practical use the ideas he had conceived, for although he had many brilliant suggestions to give forth to the world he was content with designing and writing out specifications, leaving others to reap the commercial benefits which would probably have been his had he applied his technical knowledge and research in the same practical way Chippendale did some years before. Sheraton lived at a somewhat unfortunate period, commercially. In France the struggle was going on between King and people, and the National Convention was at that time disposing of the confiscated treasures of the nobility. The closing years of the century, too, were overclouded by the coming conflict between England and France. Sheraton was struggling on, but his publications were bringing him more fame than money. He became narrowed in his views, and, it is said, soured by adversities. As an author, a bookseller, a teacher of drawing, and a preacher, he laboured under considerable difficulties. Adam Black was one of the few men who seem to have understood Sheraton, and to have appreciated his qualities. The tribute he paid to the famous designer in his "Memoirs" was: "I believe his abilities and resources are his ruin, for by attempting to do everything he does nothing." Undoubtedly Sheraton was a visionary, and in his school of design, and in the books he published, while carefully preparing the educative work he was following, and in giving to cabinet-makers a style to follow, he gained many of his inspirations from designs that were actually being formulated and worked by other men; but, curiously enough, there were some he ignored, among them the Brothers Adam, who were then exercising considerable influence in architectural decoration. Yet Sheraton was able to create a style, notwithstanding the borrowed sources of some of his suggested schemes, and he exercised no little influence in the promulgation of "The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book."

Thomas Sheraton was modest in his requirements, and was content with small things, for describing himself he said:

> "Employed in racking my invention to design fine and pleasing cabinet-work, I can be well content to sit on a wooden bottom chair myself, provided I can but have common food and raiment wherewith to pass through life in peace."

Of his life in London, Adam Black, who never lost touch with Sheraton, wrote of him:

> "He lived in an obscure street, his house half shop, half dwelling-house, and looked himself like a worn-out Methodist minister, with threadbare black coat. I took tea with them one afternoon. There were a cup and saucer for the host and another for his wife, and a little porringer for their daughter. The wife's cup and saucer were given to me, and she had to put up with another little porringer. My host seemed a good man *with some talent*. He had been a cabinet-maker, was now author and publisher, teacher of drawing, and, I believe, occasional preacher."

After a week in Sheraton's house, Black continued:

> "Not only were all the surroundings exceedingly humble, but also dirty and ill-kept."

Such, then, was the man who was at that time publishing the efforts of his research, and giving the benefit of his experience as a designer to the cabinet-making trade. He was careful in his publications to give detailed descriptions of how his work could best be carried out. Sometimes he seemed almost querulous, and had a grievance against everything and everybody. In the preface to "The Drawing Book" Sheraton tells of his aims and also of his ambitions. He says:

> "I find some have expected such designs as never were seen, heard of, nor conceived in the imagination of man; whilst others have wanted them to suit a broker's shop, to save them the trouble of borrowing a basin-stand to show a customer. Some have expected it to furnish a country wareroom, to avoid the expense of making up a good bureau, and double chest of drawers with canted corners, etc., and though it is difficult to conceive how these different qualities could be united in a book of so small a compass, yet, according to some reports, the broker himself may find his account in it, and the country master will not be altogether disappointed; whilst others say many of the designs are rather calculated to show what may be done, than to exhibit what is being, or has been, done in the trade. According to this, the designs turn out to be on a more general plan than what I intended them, and answer beyond my expectation the above various descriptions of subscribers."

Sheraton's ambition was to make a name for himself as a teacher and instructor of the cabinet-maker's trade, and in his book he often gave information which advanced cabinet-makers of the present day would consider to be superfluous.

Modern practice is in favour of using thoroughly seasoned timber, and many manufacturers, both in the past and in the present, have placed great reliance upon seasoned materials, which, combined with skilled workmanship, make their products famous. Sheraton, however, either had to deal with men who were apt to use raw material, or he deemed it necessary to suggest some methods of meeting such a contingency should it arise. Thus in his book he points out that panels should stand to shrink as much as possible when tongued and fitted, adding,

> "They should stand for some time at a moderate distance from the fire, for if such methods are not pursued the panels will shrink, and their joints draw down."

The Influences governing Sheraton's Designs.

Sheraton's designs as set forth in "The Drawing Book" gave evidence of much careful study and preparation—his book was the work of years. Although in his earlier days Sheraton was a practical worker, in his later days—the time when he was preparing his book—he had become a teacher and an author. He wrote descriptively, and gave what he deemed to be helpful if not actually necessary directions for the making of the furniture he designed. In some cases he admitted consultation with men of small positions in the trade, but being somewhat narrow-minded, and afraid of giving publicity to competitors, was most careful to ignore any reference to the source of those designs which had undoubtedly been influenced by the work of the leading cabinet-makers of his day.

The success of Sheraton's book, numerically, and the names of the leading cabinet-makers who subscribed to it, show that it was eagerly anticipated, and it is probable that the inspirations he had received from other makers of repute were tacitly acknowledged by him personally, if not in his written accounts of their source. The designs he drew show traces of the influence of the teacher he was, and his technical explanations tell of his study of geometry. He outlined definite principles of geometry, on which he asserted all successful design was founded. First he gave attention to the constructive side. Then he began to show his preference for painting and decoration in low relief; these characteristics he took from the surrounding influences of the times in which he lived. Classic Renaissance impressed him. The French school of artists influenced Sheraton's work, and many of his designs were specially drawn so that painted panels and ornament of the type Angelica Kauffmann and Bartolozzi had made popular might be used; indeed, his painted furniture was a notable feature, and his plans were prepared for such schemes of decoration.

In Sheraton's day Hepplewhite & Co. and the Brothers Adam were doing all they could to make the furnishing of the home accord with architectural ornament, and their efforts must have influenced Sheraton, who was a clever draughtsman and promulgator of a style rather than an originator. It is important to remember that previous to the publication of "The Drawing Book" pattern books had been published by Thomas Chippendale, Johnson, Chambers, the Society of Upholsterers, Ince & Mayhew, R. & J. Adam, Shearer, and Hepplewhite & Co.; all these books would be available, and must have influenced Sheraton, giving him a basis to work upon.

The French style favoured freak designs, and it is said Sheraton tried to outdo French artists on their own ground, for he planned chairs composed of a griffin's head, neck, and wing, united by a transverse tie of wood, over which was laid drapery. In his later chairs Sheraton introduced legs and bodies of dromedaries, camels, and lions. Yet, curiously enough, before these outside influences affected him he had other views, for at one time he wrote:

> "The general style of furnishing a dining-parlour should be in substantial and ordinary things, avoiding all trifling ornaments and unnecessary decoration."

Possibly the materials Sheraton favoured had an important bearing upon his designs. He liked the hard East Indian variety of satin-wood—or, as it was then sometimes spelled, *sattin*-wood—with its delightful figure and fine straw colour, producing a cool and pleasant effect. "Harewood" (chestnut or sycamore stained with water to which oxide of iron was added to produce the effect known as "eyre-wood" or "harewood") and amboyna were used, but only as veneers, both materials being too costly to be used otherwise; hence, again, another influence upon the designer, who was forced to some extent to be governed in his designs by the materials the craftsmen who had to execute them had to use.

It was at a time when Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and the Brothers Adam had exhausted the possibilities of mahogany that Sheraton came upon the scene. If he did not actually introduce inlays of a new form of ornament, the suggestions he had received from so many quarters influenced him to such an extent that he became the great exponent of the method, and his name was destined to be associated with that class of decoration in the future.

The inlaid decorations of Sheraton's style were often mechanical, and the making of shells and *paterœ* became almost a trade of itself, so great was the demand for such forms of ornament. Thus it will be seen that popular taste and the original work of others who had preceded him had considerable influence on Sheraton as a designer.

"The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book."

The whole story of Thomas Sheraton, and the influence he brought to bear upon the cabinet-making trade of this country towards the close of the eighteenth century, terminates in "The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book," which he published as an instructive work, intending to gain fame and a lasting name as a designer of furniture and as a teacher. This book differed from works that had already been published, and also from the catalogues of contemporary makers, in that Sheraton had apparently no thought of entering to any great extent into competition with those who purchased his book. He was an exponent of the new style rather than a man destined to leave his mark upon the world as a clever craftsman. The first quarto parts of "The Drawing Book" were published within a year or so of Sheraton's settlement in London. He must have worked wonderfully hard as a writer, an engraver, printer, and publisher, for not only did he produce the book, but he secured seven hundred and seventeen advance subscribers. How those subscriptions were obtained is not quite clear. Those were not the days of extensive circularisation, and postal communication was costly. Many of the subscribers, especially those in London and the neighbourhood, were doubtless secured by personal canvas. In some instances Sheraton credited specialists with being the originators and best-known makers of certain goods, such, for instance, as his mention of J. Lane as a maker of knife-cases. How the subscribers were induced to purchase a book, the contents of which did not appear altogether from the title, we do not know. The main point seems to be that it was explained that the book was a book of new designs, and, fortunately for the publisher, it came at a time when new designs were needed.

There were six sections in "The Drawing Book" filled almost entirely with general information and a treatise on geometry. Then came fifty-six more pages dealing with the five orders of architecture; following these introductory matters there was another portion, consisting of one hundred and seventy-three pages, purporting to explain perspective and to give some lessons in reference to it. It was not until the latter portion of the book was published that the practical cabinet-making, which would interest most of his readers, was touched upon. All throughout Sheraton's work there was a certain amount of spleen, back-handed compliments, and innuendoes which could serve no useful purpose. It was scarcely the way in which to win fame as judged from present-day views. Speaking of the work of his contemporaries, and more especially of those who had published books before his day, he says:

> "As I have alluded to some books of designs it may be proper here just to say something of them. I have seen one which seems to have been published before Chippendale's. I infer this from the antique appearance of the furniture, for there is no date to it; but the title informs us that it was composed by a Society of Cabinet-makers in London. It gives no instructions for drawing in any form, but we may venture to say that those who drew the designs wanted a good share of teaching themselves."

Speaking of Chippendale's book the author of "The Drawing Book" says:

> "As for the designs, they are now wholly antiquated and laid aside, though possessed of great merit, according to the times in which they were executed."

According to such a statement, it is evident Sheraton possessed great confidence in the continuance of the styles from which he was drawing his inspiration, and still more so in the permanence of the new style he was endeavouring to create.

The third part of Sheraton's book was devoted to furniture design, accompanied, it is thought, by unnecessary descriptions of how to make the furniture, for "The Drawing Book" was intended to be used by practical cabinet-makers.

The Reception of the Book.

As "The Drawing Book" was brought out in parts, it is probable that a considerable number of those who originally subscribed did not complete the purchase of the work. We can only gauge the reception of the book by examining its contents, and ascertaining how far the designs Sheraton prepared became general. There is no manner of doubt that

Sheraton's designs were acceptable at that time. They met a universal need—they were designs in accord with a popular fancy, and were clever adaptations of the evident leaning of cabinet-makers and those who bought furniture, in that they were sound, useful, and practical. That Sheraton's scheme of ornament was workable and adaptable is undeniable from the number of pieces of antique furniture modelled upon those lines, and if further evidence were necessary, from the popularity of the style as reproduced by modern cabinet-makers. His methods of decoration by painting furniture have not proved altogether lasting, for among antiques, although friction and wear and tear have given an added beauty to some of the carved pieces, they have often spoiled the skin-deep beauty of painted furniture. Of the decorative character of such ornament most connoisseurs are aware, and the high prices genuine antiques in good preservation command testify to the admiration in which they are held. Festoons and roses, tulips, and other flowers were applied to chair and settee backs and table tops, often in conjunction with medallions. These characteristics were pleasing to the eye, and were accepted at once by makers and dealers as being likely to meet with general favour.

Sheraton's styles gave an impression of lightness which accorded with the popular fancy, influenced by the beauty of ornament of French designs. There were many novelties which would also cause his book to be welcomed, for they were in accord with the tastes and habits of the times, such, for instance, as the "conversation" chairs and sofas, suitable for gentlemen who chose to sit astride, with the backs of their chairs facing the seat of honour.

Sheraton's furniture was exquisite in form, shape, colour, and decoration, and it is said that there were many contrivances carefully planned for the comfort and convenience of the users without spoiling the effect of the design. There were novelties which caught the popular fancy, such, for instance, as his noted drawing- or writing-table, although that was not his invention, for the club-footed oak table made years before his time was planned much on the same lines. The screen table and folding library steps was a novel suggestion of Sheraton, as well as his toilet-table, with mirror swung on pivots, held in position by springs attached to the doors upon which they were hung. Such innovations would be welcomed by cabinet-makers of his day, and go a long way towards making them look favourably upon "The Cabinet-maker and Upholsterer's Drawing Book," which, it should be noted, passed through three editions.

Materials and Inlays.

Sheraton's designs were intended to be worked chiefly in mahogany, but in nearly every case Sheraton did not depend upon the base material. Whereas Chippendale had used the carver's tool to enrich the mahogany he fashioned so skilfully, Sheraton delighted in the inlays of rare woods and costly veneers. He ornamented his work with fans, scrolls, and wreaths of flowers, and employed satin-wood from Ceylon and the Coromandel Coast, East Indian satin-wood having been used at a somewhat later date. The wonderful designs for card and occasional table tops and commodes were conceptions which only a clever draughtsman could portray, and he recommended such inlaid marqueterie or painted designs, making them an essential in the fulfilment of the style he was propounding. His graceful festoons and ornaments for panels suggested the necessary accompaniment in upholstery, for the festoons wrought in his inlays made it almost compulsory for the upholstery to be in keeping, and the textile manufacturers and those who supplied cabinet-makers with upholsterers' trimmings must have welcomed the ornate style which called for such rich bed hangings, cornice trimmings, and curtains. Sheraton's sofa beds with dome tops and French drapery suggested rich silk trimmings and upholstery; and many materials hitherto unknown in the cabinet-maker's art were introduced in the drawings of state beds, which found a place in Sheraton's book. The decorative ornament of the metal work, beautifully chased handles, and the knobs Sheraton used, more particularly referred to in another chapter, no doubt gave great impetus to the cabinet brassfounders' trade. The interiors pictured in his book were suggestive of the best of everything, and quality in finish as well as in design was aimed at by the designer, who was no doubt proud to see his suggestions carried out and his drawings executed carefully, and by the use of the best materials and the richest inlays.

Such pieces have been made use of by modern cabinet-makers as models to copy, and thus Sheraton's styles have been perpetuated.

Typical Pieces.

As it has been shown, Thomas Sheraton was a designer rather than a craftsman, and he excelled in making working drawings and engravings, and in giving instructions about the accomplishment of his ideals, rather than in carrying out the work. The admirer of Sheraton's designs, and the collector who searches for the purest examples of his style, find typical examples in those pieces which most nearly come up to his standards, and in the construction of which the

working cabinet-maker has caught his style.

There are many beautiful pieces in museums, art galleries, and in the shops of dealers of antique furniture, which are typical of Sheraton style; or, more correctly, of one of his styles. He introduced so many varieties of ornament, and used different woods and inlays in the varied designs he prepared, that it is difficult to point to any one chair, cabinet, bookcase, or other object as being a complete exponent of his style. A writer on antique furniture asks the question: "What is meant by old Sheraton furniture?" and answers it by saying that there are four meanings—(1) work actually produced by Thomas Sheraton; (2) work not produced by Sheraton, but by craftsmen who studied with him, perhaps making the furniture from Sheraton's own designs; (3) the term may refer to furniture generally of that period, bearing traces of influences which were commonly known by his name; and (4) it may be used fraudulently. Sheraton had an eye for colour, and in his inlays and decorative paintings there is often a strong contrast to the darker foundation. Even in his light wood furniture that is veneered with satin-wood, its decorative treatment gives relief, and inlaid panels, medallions, and paintings show it up by contrast. The satin-wood of the best period, like his choice mahogany, is veneered upon oak, and in use with the satin-wood collectors note inlays of green-wood, harewood, or tulip-wood. satin-wood inlaid with rosewood is not usually typical of the best period, and when examining so-called antiques critically the connoisseur should satisfy himself that the carcass of the piece is really old, and that the veneer is satin-wood of genuine quality. Some of the so-called antiques are in reality Queen Anne furniture restored with new satin-wood of a bad colour, toned down to look like old. There are many such bureaus met with, there being two reasons—in that they sell freely, and also that there were at one time many old bureaus needing restoration before they were saleable.

The number of master cabinet-makers working in London and vicinity, according to Sheraton, was two hundred and fifty-two at the time he published his famous book, and a very large number of these would compete with one another in carrying out the designs Sheraton had made for them. They would all have "The Drawing Book" in their hands, and take their inspiration from Sheraton's work, although they might not all follow the directions he gave. Thus it is that when genuine antiques, undoubtedly copied from Sheraton's designs, are met with, it does not follow that they are identical in minute detail.

Chairs and Tables.

It seems quite natural for collectors and admirers of old furniture to turn first of all to those examples they have about them, or have easy access to, when searching for typical examples and traces of characteristics of genuine pieces of any one style. The chair or seat has from quite early times been a necessary article of furniture. It is true that until the days of the Restoration a stool or bench served as a seat for the common folk; but as soon as the "best parlour" was an institution in English homes the cabinet-maker endeavoured to render the chair all that was beautiful. It was especially so towards the close of the eighteenth century, when Sheraton was designing furniture, and he at once turned his attention towards the decoration of chair backs. He restricted the use of mahogany to dining-room, library, and bedroom chairs with carved backs. His drawing-room furniture of his earliest days was white and gold, rosewood, satin-wood, or wood painted and japanned. Silk and satin with medallion designs or pretty stripes were used for the coverings of his seats.

Sheraton was in favour of a lower back than most of Chippendale's patterns, and an outstanding feature of his chairs was the bottom rail of the back, which ran horizontally between the uprights supporting the central splat. To these were added side-rails at right angles. It has always been admitted that the principle upon which these chairs were made was sound constructionally, the rail knitting the framework together and keeping the back rigid. Sheraton's chair legs were, of course, lighter than Chippendale's; they varied in form, being sometimes square or round, tapering to a fine point, or at others they were hexagonal or octagonal. The two latter forms admitted of the use of choice inlays, and favoured the style Sheraton was cultivating. They also admitted some carving, which formed a pleasing variant in the decoration. Three well-known varieties are obtainable, the square pattern known in the trade as the "Marlborough," the "thimble-toe" or "spade," and another variety in which a band of ebony or dark wood encircled the finely-tapered extremities.

Early Sheraton chairs are met with having three or five perpendicular splats, the central splat being larger, and admitting of greater ornament. Sometimes, however, when five splats were used the three inner ones were woven together, and some very beautiful effects in decorative ornament, in festoons of flowers, and classic design were thus introduced. In Sheraton's easy chairs there were perpendicular arm supports, mostly replicas of the leg or frame, affording an opportunity for a more extended scheme of ornament. It may be remarked here that between 1795 to 1800 turned legs and arm supports displaced the square-shaped designs which had hitherto been favoured. Especially was this the case at the time when festoons of roses and strings of ornament were applied to tapered legs. The ladder-back chairs

of Sheraton were a development of the fiddle-back. Later, however, about 1800, X-rails and diagonal latticing were in vogue. Among sundry varieties Sheraton introduced a Grecian squab or long chair.

At the commencement of the time when Sheraton influence was exerting itself the pillar of the dining table was a special feature. The table top was hinged upon a central leg or pillar with usually four supporting claws. Ornamental tables, however, are those chiefly sought after by connoisseurs. Those with small and often curiously shaped tops afforded ample opportunities to the designer of ornamental inlays. In such inlays Sheraton showed great skill, and produced designs from wonderful scrolls and arabesques, floral wreaths and painted panels. His pier-tables had inlaid tops of harewood or satin-wood, and many of his charming kidney tops have been reproduced during recent years. Like Chippendale and other cabinet-makers of his day, Sheraton made card-tables, and some beautiful little tables for a lady's boudoir, among these were work-tables with silken bags or pouches, some being fitted with sliding trays and drawers.

Bureaus and Bookcases.

When Sheraton's book was published the bureau which had been so popular in earlier times was not much in demand. Sheraton designed, however, some elaborate writing-tables and cabinets, which to some extent were more ornamental, and yet served the same purpose. The bureau-bookcase began to be a feature, and in many instances an adaptation of the bureau was surmounted with a bookcase with glass doors. Although technically called bookcases, many of them served as receptacles for the best china, and as cabinets were inlaid and ornamented in typical Sheraton style. It is said that the larger bookcases were not among his happiest efforts, for Sheraton had had but little experience in what may be termed architectural furniture, and his methods of decoration were not always successful when applied to the larger furniture. In smaller bookcases he used the swan-neck ornament, and his glazed doors were split up into many panels by narrow mouldings, the earlier lattice forms being extended and beautified in the lighter and elegant tracery of his designs.

Sideboards and Cabinets.

Sheraton's sideboards were a distinct advance upon the earlier sideboard tables. They incorporated in their construction useful drawers, cellarets, and some of the receptacles which had been absent in the dining-room. The table top was enriched with a brass rail, and many of the mahogany sideboards, dating from 1795 to 1800, were further decorated by the use of lion's head and ring handles. Indeed, at that time the brassfounder's art was made to serve the purposes of the designer's scheme of decoration. For instance, in some of the painted furniture a beautiful ribbon and wreath ornament would terminate in appropriate ring handles. The legs of the sideboard were either square or fluted. It is said that one purpose of the brass rail was to prevent the knife and spoon boxes then used in conjunction with the sideboard from injuring the walls when they were opened. The form of the front varied, sometimes being straight or concave; at others convex or serpentine.

In Fig. 64 is shown a well made Sheraton sideboard (without rail) with sunk brass circular ring handles, shaped front, and typical ornament.

Sheraton, in describing his drawing-room cabinets, says:

> "The use of this piece is to accommodate a lady with conveniences for writing, reading, and holding her trinkets, and other articles of that kind. The style of finishing them is elegant, being often richly japanned, and veneered with the finest satin-wood. The manufacturing part is not very difficult, but will admit of the following remarks. The middle drawer over the knee-hole has a slider to write on, and those on each side are plain. The doors under them are hung with pin hinges, and in the inside there is one shelf in each. The cupboard within the knee-hole is fitted up in small drawers, and sometimes only a shelf. The pilasters, or half-columns, are put on after the carcass is made. The corner ones are planed square first, and then rabbeted out to receive the angle of the carcass, and afterwards deal is glued in a slight manner into the rabbet, that it may be easily taken out after the column is turned. The centre door of the upper part is square at the top, opening under the astragal, which finishes the cover part. The pilasters are on the door frame, and the drapery is formed and sewed to the silk, and both tacked into a rabbet together.

Behind the silk door are sliding shelves for small books. The wings are fitted up as shown in the design on the top, or with more small drawers, having only two or three letter-holes at the top."

FIG. 64.—SHERATON MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD.
(*Mr. Albert Amor.*)

FIG. 65.—MAHOGANY WARDROBE CHEST,
SHERATON STYLE.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 66.—SATINWOOD WRITING TABLE,
BY GILLOW IN 1780.
(*This interesting piece is now in the possession of Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 67.—MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD,
PERIOD 1780-1790.
(*Mallet & Son, Bath.*)

The knick-knacks and sundry furniture of the "parlour" were in keeping with the style Sheraton adopted for his larger pieces. The library then becoming an important feature even in the homes of the middle classes, contained writing-tables such as Sheraton delighted to design. He also made some reference in his book to library steps, giving friendly reference to a speciality which had been made by Mr Robert Campbell, of Marylebone Street, upholsterer to the Prince of Wales, saying of these steps: "They are highly approved by the King, as in every way answering the intended purpose."

BEDSTEADS AND BEDROOM FURNITURE.

Sheraton style has been applied so much to modern bedroom furniture that connoisseurs feel a little disappointment in the genuine antiques which rarely come up to their preconceived ideas of Sheraton bedroom furniture. The most

notable pieces are the mahogany wardrobes, or those richly inlaid with satin-wood, chiefly made about 1790. Constructionally, they may be described as cupboards with double doors surmounting a chest of drawers. The winged wardrobes are a modern innovation. Many of these chests of drawers are fitted with slides, baize covered, originally used as writing slides. The dressing-tables were small, and many of them comparatively insignificant—in many instances the small corner washstands sufficing.

It is the bedstead that was such a conspicuous object in bedrooms in the eighteenth century, some beautiful examples being preserved in old houses. The one shown with hangings complete, in Fig. 2, is a four-post bedstead of Sheraton style, with carved and inlaid cornice and fluted posts. This choice example, complete with appropriate hangings, is in the possession of Messrs Waring and Gillow, Ltd.

Fig. 65 represents a fine old Sheraton mahogany wardrobe-chest with four drawers (two long and two short), over which is a cupboard or wardrobe with two doors with oval panels, surmounted by inlaid pediment. The height of this piece is 72 in., width 4 ft. 2 in., and depth 1 ft. 11 in. The fancy rosettes to the handles are rather unusual.

CHAPTER XVI

OTHER FURNITURE MAKERS

"Gillows"—Ince & Mayhew—Robert Manwaring—Thomas Shearer—Sir William Chambers—Lock & Copeland—Thomas Johnson.

In briefly reviewing the work of other manufacturers of furniture in the eighteenth century, and those later firms who traded at the commencement of the nineteenth century, it must not be inferred that their work was in any way inferior to contemporary makers of greater fame. Indeed, there is abundant evidence that some of the makers referred to in this chapter, not only carried out the designs of Chippendale, Sheraton, and others who published books of patterns for the use of the trade at large, with great skill, but it is obvious to connoisseurs who possess specimens of their work that in some instances, at any rate, they showed great individuality. Some of the lesser-known makers had special designs in which they prided themselves; and locally they gained fame, not only for the quality of their workmanship, but for the designs they executed. None of them, however, created a style to the same extent as those better known manufacturers of furniture who have already been referred to in previous chapters.

Collectors must expect to find composite styles in the work of cabinet-makers whose workshops were situated in provincial towns, because they would to a certain extent adopt the designs of London makers, and having no special interest in that particular style, would probably incorporate some of their own ideas. Then, again, local cabinetmakers had not always access to the same materials employed by the larger firms, and the woods selected by the lesser makers were not always in accord with those used by the propounders of some new style. The minor fittings are found to differ too, sometimes, as, naturally, brass handles, hinges, and the like would be obtained from a variety of sources. Bearing these facts in mind, the collector will perhaps be enabled to satisfy himself as to the correctness or otherwise of the origin of certain pieces offered by dealers, and will be able to reconcile apparent discrepancies, which sometimes indicate that the style of an earlier master has been followed at a later date by some admirers of his work.

"Gillows."

Away back at the beginning of the eighteenth century we find records of Gillows being at work as cabinet-makers. The present firm, under the guise of Waring & Gillow, Ltd., of Oxford Street, London, possess documentary evidence of the early handicraft of the founders of Gillows, who have worked in this country since the reign of William III. During the two centuries or more of their career they have had the names of many who have figured in history upon their books, included among them such notable characters as the great Lord Clive and Warren Hastings.

Robert Gillow is known to have been a joiner of Great Singleton, in the parish of Kirkham-in-the-Fylde, about two miles from Poulton-le-Fylde, afterwards removing to Lancaster, where he commenced business on his own account. He worked steadily at his trade, making money as a craftsman—for he was one who understood his business, rather than publishing books of designs—and by skill in draughtsmanship endeavoured to win fame. Curiously enough, in the methods of Robert Gillow we learn something of the trading of that day, for we find him working as a carpenter, and undertaking many commissions, accepting payment in kind in lieu of money. He exported those commodities from the then flourishing port of Lancaster, and became a merchant. He shipped furniture to London, and as early as 1744 opened a London branch, making an entry in his ledger in reference to it, describing his new speculative move as "The Adventure to London." The business was carried on under the firm name of Gillow and Barton, but who the partner was is not quite clear, and it would appear that Robert Gillow's son Richard had then joined him. According to records of the firm the partnership dated from 1st of January 1757, when Richard was twenty-three years old. According to extracts from their books Gillows had material comprising mahogany, walnut, oak, deal, and beech to the value of £240, and furniture ready for sale then valued at £140. Thomas Gillow, another son, is mentioned as having been at work on behalf of the firm in 1758. At that time Gillows were not only furniture makers, but they were masons, slaters, and plasterers, and carried out some important contracts. Their workshops were in Thames Street. The next move was to the Oxford Street site, where for so many years they were destined to carry on business. That was in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the population of London did not exceed three quarters of a million, and beyond Bloomsbury Square there was open country, giving an uninterrupted view of Hampstead and Highgate, which, along with Islington, were detached

villages, reaching through meadows and country lanes. Links boys conducted people about at night, and sedan chairs were in use. Many of the objects made in Gillows' workshops then have become obsolete. Business flourished with the firm, however, and they had soon to add to their workshops. The business was then carried on as Gillow & Taylor, and an important business in upholstering as well as cabinet-making was done. Mr Taylor's death occurred about 1778, and the trade was continued under the name of Robert, Richard, and Thomas Gillow. In 1790 it was Robert Gillow & Co., and in 1811 it became G. & R. Gillow & Co. These particulars are useful, as they enable us to realise the position of the firm during the period when so much was happening in the furniture trade of the country. It is recorded that their furniture was solid and of sterling quality, and was much sought after.

There is little doubt that Gillows carried out important commissions for furniture after the manner of the then fashionable styles, and their own designs would naturally follow the changes going on. Thus, were we able to identify the numerous examples extant, we should find that many of the antique styles so well known to collectors were represented in the furniture emanating from their workshops. Of actual examples and authentic specimens of their work there are not many obtainable. Fortunately, through the courtesy of Waring & Gillow, Ltd., who may be regarded as still carrying on the old business of Gillows, we are able to illustrate a table in satin-wood made by Gillows about 1780 (*see* Fig. 66). This beautiful authenticated writing-table is signed "Gillow's, Lancaster." It is decoratively inlaid with tulip-wood and box, as well as ebony. This remarkably interesting antique is now in the possession of the firm.

There is plenty of evidence that Gillows carried out commissions for the Brothers Adam, and, as Richard Gillow was an architect of some note, he adopted the Adam style on several occasions. He was the inventor of the telescopic dining-table, and is also the reputed maker of the first English billiard-table. It was a very primitive affair, for the slate bed had not then been introduced. The cushions were stuffed with wool, and were called banks. The lighting of the billiard-table in those days was by means of candlesticks made of wood; the pockets of the tables were called purses, and the players used masts as well as cues. Ivory was cheap then, for the cost of an ivory billiard ball was only two shillings.

There has been some difference of opinion in reference to the inventor of the shield-back chair, and Richard Gillow seems to have had some claim to the design. Some very beautiful chairs with shield backs were made by Gillows for Mr de Trafford in 1789. Many of the eighteenth-century chairs made by the Gillow House show traces of both Gothic and Chinese influence; some, too, are almost identical with Hepplewhite's, but the influence of the Brothers Adam predominated in their work.

Ince & Mayhew.

Ince & Mayhew, or Mayhew & Ince, as they are sometimes described, published "The Universal System of Household Furniture" about the year 1762. They traded at 20 Marshall Street until 1812, when the firm ceased to exist. From the introduction to their book we learn something of their aims, especially from the following paragraph:—

> "In furnishing all should be with propriety—elegance should always be joined with a peculiar neatness through the whole house, or otherwise an immense expence may be thrown away to no Purpose, either in Use or Appearance; and with the same Regard any Gentleman may furnish as neat at a small Expence as he can elegant and superb at a great one."

Experts agree that although Ince & Mayhew designed some elegant chairs possessing characteristics of their own, most of their designs show traces of Chippendale influence. This may be due partly to the fact that Darly, who engraved so many of the illustrations in "The Director," also executed upwards of ninety of Ince & Mayhew's plates. Credit is given to Ince as the designer and draughtsman of most of the number, which exceeded three hundred. In the preamble of the book they are described as being in "elegant taste, both useful and ornamental, finely engraved, in which the nature of ornament and perspective is accurately exemplified." The preface of the book is given in English, but the explanations, like the title-page, are duplicated in French.

Robert Manwaring.

We learn of the work of Robert Manwaring, who was in business in the Haymarket late in the eighteenth century, from his publications. He appears to have spent much time in giving to the public books of designs, in which there is

much to suggest the influence of his contemporaries. In nearly all his drawings there is a marked similarity to those of Chippendale. His chief competitors appear to have been Ince & Mayhew, whose business was much in line with his own. The connoisseur of furniture can only be sure of the origin of the specimens he possesses, and of the details of their workmanship, by a careful scrutiny of Manwaring's publications. It should be remembered that Manwaring's best work showed artistic taste in its treatment, and there was much attention to the detail of ornament.

Robert Manwaring was one of the leading spirits of the Society of Upholsterers and Cabinet-makers, which published "One Hundred New and Genteel Designs, being all the most approved Patterns of Household Furniture in the Present Taste." In this book there are many designs probably obtained from different sources, the members of the Society contributing examples of their best work; about twenty-eight plates of chairs, however, are attributed to Manwaring. In 1765 this well-known member of the Society brought out a book of his own, the full title of which is "The Cabinet and Chair Makers' Real Friend and Companion, or the Whole System of Chairmaking made Plain and Easy." This was republished in 1766, under the title of "The Chairmakers' Guide, by Robert Manwaring and Others." In that edition twenty-eight of the designs from the earlier publication were selected, forty-seven new plates being added, all with one exception being unsigned. From the prevalence of chairs in the designs attributed to Manwaring, it is evident that he was essentially a chair-maker. In his book, "The Real Friend and Companion," he illustrates a choice selection of eighteen chair backs, to each of which he gives a separate bracket. It will be remembered that Chippendale also used a bracket, but only in conjunction with his Chinese and Gothic designs. Perhaps the best indication of the style which may be said to be Manwaring's own is obtained by a perusal of his little work "The Carpenter's Compleat Guide to the whole System of Gothic Railing."

Thomas Shearer.

It is difficult to distinguish the work of Thomas Shearer, for outside influences were brought to bear on his designs, and some furniture which was undoubtedly his work, is attributed to Hepplewhite or Sheraton, owing to its similarity to their respective styles. Shearer wrote in 1788 the "Cabinet-makers' London Book of Prices," but it appears to have been published under the authority of the London Society of Cabinet-makers, and its printers were W. Brown and A. O'Neil. It passed through several editions, but underwent some changes, for Shearer's designs, which appeared in the editions of 1788 and 1793, were left out in the later ones. The last edition, which appeared in 1825, had a wide circulation in the provinces, where it was known as the "London Book." This book had a somewhat different purpose to the ordinary pattern book of designs, in that, as it is set forth on its title-page, it was intended as a guide as to the cost of producing certain specified pieces of cabinet work. The publishers confined their selection of examples to first-class goods, explaining that they had inserted no plates of common furniture, which they considered their readers thoroughly understood.

Shearer appears to have given some attention to writing-tables, bookcases, dressing-tables, and bureaus, and he is noted for the number of small fittings he introduced. He worked at a time when secret drawers were popular, and he cunningly devised little drawers and compartments, access to which was known only to the owner. Shearer worked in woods chiefly used by Hepplewhite and Sheraton—mahogany and satin-wood—and these he inlaid with coloured woods, such as maple, zebra, kingwood, rosewood, and tulip-wood.

Sir William Chambers.

The career of Sir William Chambers has much to do with the influence he exerted in architectural work, and in architectural furniture, for it is generally admitted that the work of Ince & Mayhew and others was largely influenced by him, and, as already stated in a previous chapter, his glowing accounts of the lands he visited in the Far East, and the inspiration he received there, had much to do with the introduction of the Chinese taste in the later works of Thomas Chippendale. Chambers was born at Stockholm in 1726. He was descended from a family who held a French title, but his father owned an estate at Ripon, in Yorkshire, and young Chambers was educated there. He entered the Swedish East India Company's service in 1742, and made several voyages to China. It was during his Chinese excursions that he acquired so much knowledge of Chinese life. He was clever with his pen and pencil, and took every opportunity of sketching Chinese buildings and gardens; some of his pictures of the houses in Canton, and of the furniture used therein, were very useful to him in later years. William Chambers' connection with the East India Company was of short duration, for we hear of him as being in Rome in 1744, making measured drawings of Roman antiquities. His love of art was further fostered through his marriage with the daughter of Wilton, the sculptor. He was fortunate in his appointment

as tutor to George III. during that monarch's minority, and afterwards he obtained an appointment as architect to the King, and also to Augusta, the Dowager Princess of Wales.

William Chambers, as he was then, published in 1757 a book entitled "Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, and Utensils." He was assisted in reproducing the drawings by Rooker, Grigion, and other engravers of note. Chambers gave some very interesting descriptions of Chinese houses, telling of the wonders he had seen, and minutely describing the movables of the saloon, the chief room of the house wherein he had found chairs, stools, and tables—rosewood and ebony being frequently made use of. The bamboo furniture, so light and inexpensive, had evidently aroused his interest, and Chambers had been attracted by the lacquer work, of which he had seen so many fine examples. He appears to have been somewhat struck with the magnificence of the beds, which in China were regarded as important pieces of household furniture. Writing of them he says: "The beds are sometimes magnificent, much like ours, of carved rosewood and lacquered work."

In compiling his book Chambers was particularly careful to select patterns which would be suitable for reproduction in this country. Referring to those he had engraved, he says that his Anglified designs were selected from "furniture taken from such models as appeared to be most beautiful and reasonable; some are pretty, and may be useful to our cabinet-makers."

Chambers continued to practice as an architect, introducing the Chinese style wherever practicable. His appointment from the Dowager Princess of Wales brought him to Kew Palace, where he worked from 1757 to 1762, designing and erecting those curious buildings which are admired and criticised in turn by visitors to the Royal Gardens. He was responsible for the erection of an imitation of a mosque, a building suggested by a Gothic cathedral he had seen, and another known as the Theatre of Augustus. His crowning effort, however, was the famous pagoda. There are also buildings suggestive of Roman temples. In 1771 Chambers came under the notice of the King of Sweden, who created him a Knight of the Polar Star, and a few years afterwards, in 1775, Sir William Chambers was appointed architect of Somerset House, at a salary of £2,000 per annum. This noted architect's designs produced an undoubted influence upon the furniture makers of his day, an influence which is distinctly traceable in Thomas Chippendale's "Director."

Lock & Copeland.

Among the lesser-known publishers of pattern books and works for furniture designers and makers are the names of Lock & Copeland. Lock was associated with the publication of "Original Designs for Furniture," which appeared at intervals between 1740 to 1765, and also a book published in 1769 entitled "A New Book of Pier Frames, Ovals, Girandoles, Tables, etc." It would appear that Lock traded in conjunction with Copeland, for in 1768, in a book entitled "A Book of Tables, Candlesticks, Pedestals, etc.," it is stated that "all the genuine works of Lock & Copeland may be obtained at 53 Fleet Street."

Matthias Lock had at one time a furniture workshop near "Ye Swan" in Tottenham Court Road, employing several workmen. He was clever with his pen and pencil, and understood the technique of colour, being also an etcher, engraving his own plates. Perhaps one of the most useful books brought out by this cabinet-maker with diversified qualifications was the "Book of Ornaments" in which were engraved some remarkable mirror frames, showing the introduction of quaint and curious ornaments. He was not content with simple mirror frames, for he is known to have been a designer of chimney-pieces, chiefly following the style of the Louis XV. period.

Thomas Johnson.

The last reference to individual makers of furniture which it is desirable to make is that in connection with the work of Thomas Johnson. He, like many traders and master cabinet-makers in the eighteenth century, is chiefly known by the books of designs he brought out. His first work, published in 1758, was issued in monthly parts. It was a book of designs for picture frames, candelabra, and ceilings, being dedicated to one of his patrons, Lord Blakeney. In referring to the designs which were evidently intended to be carried out under his own guidance, or by those who purchased his book, he says: "When honoured by the hand of the skilful workman, they will give entire satisfaction." The second book he published in 1761 appears to have consisted largely of reproductions from the earlier work, to which, however, he made some notable additions. The title of that book was "One Hundred and Fifty New Designs of Ceilings, Chimney-pieces, Slabs, Glass and Picture Frames for decorating Ornamental Furniture in the Present Taste."

FIG. 68.—MAHOGANY TALLBOY,
LATE 18th CENTURY.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

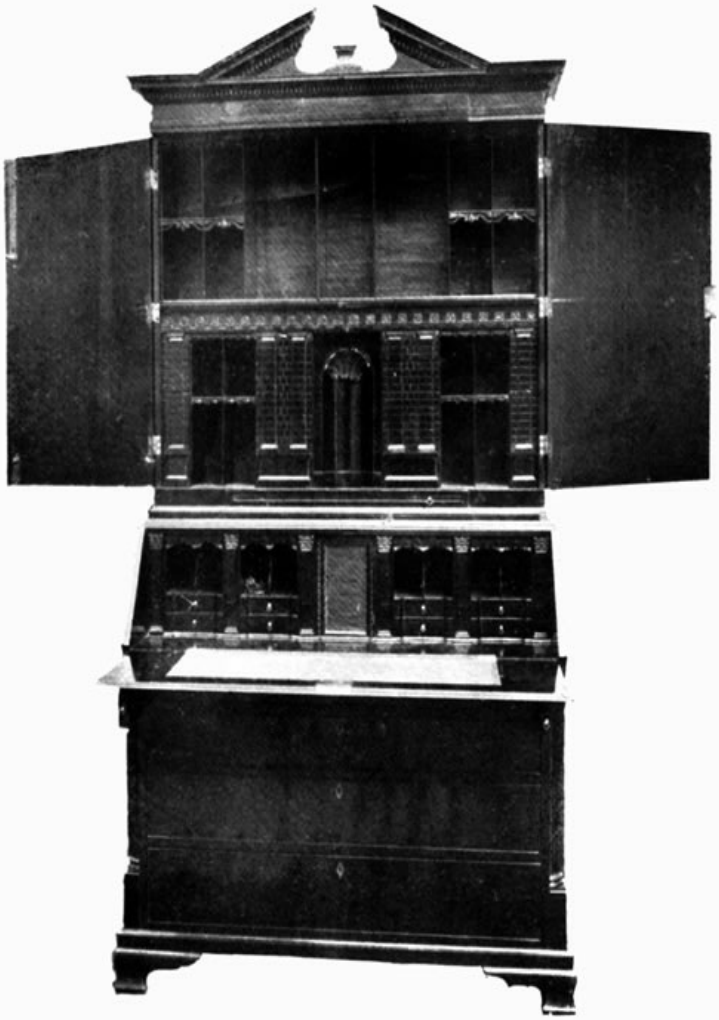

FIG. 69. MAHOGANY BUREAU DESK AND WRITING CABINET,
1790-1800.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 70.—LACQUER CABINET,
ON CARVED STAND.
(*The Manor House, Hitchin.*)

The illustrations Figs. 67, 68, and 69 are examples of late eighteenth-century work, and of work carried out by provincial cabinet-makers early in the nineteenth century. The dining-room sideboard without brass rail is of large size, and is supported by eight legs—four in the front—thus dividing the two celleret compartments and cupboards. The turned legs and applied pilasters are also unusual. This mahogany sideboard is probably of the period 1780-1790. It was lately in the possession of Mallett & Son, of Bath (*see* Fig. 67).

The fine mahogany tall-boy shown in Fig. 68 is of late eighteenth century, and is a very good example of one of those chests in which the top row of drawers (three in number) consisted of drawers which, although narrow, were fairly deep—some of the top drawers of the tall-boys are very shallow and of comparatively little usefulness.

Fig. 69 is a very fine mahogany bureau-desk and writing cabinet, showing unusual architectural influence in the design. The small drawers of the interior are divided by fluted columns, and the central compartment has a decorative inlaid door; the inlays of the interior are also exceptionally good. This bureau-desk and cabinet, which is of the period 1790-1800, is in the possession of Messrs Waring & Gillow, Ltd.

CHAPTER XVII

VICTORIAN FURNITURE

Sentimental appreciation—Homelike decorations—A general awakening.

The home connoisseur is influenced by curios of Victorian furniture and house furnishings by other motives than those which actuated him in buying ancient oak and the beautiful furniture of Chippendale and Hepplewhite. The furniture made during the reigns of the Georges rarely inspires sentiment, although it may create feelings of patriotic delight when the connoisseur recollects that it was made by wood-workers in times when English craftsmen were learning to understand the achievements of Italian artists, and to practise the arts which Flemish weavers and Huguenot refugees had brought over with them, and which they were teaching to those who would learn how to practice them. Antique furniture is valued on account of its workmanship, or the materials of which it is composed. There is no sentiment in regard to its manufacture, and little in its possession, although it may have been handed on from generation to generation, for those for whom it was made have been forgotten. They have no personal touch with present-day owners.

Sentimental Appreciation.

A very different feeling is experienced when the home curios of the Victorian Age are admired. The furniture itself is mostly plain and indefinite in design—that is to say, the style is often conglomerate, and one that can never command admiration, but it is homelike. Therein it appeals to the home connoisseur, who recognises the familiar form of the furniture of his youth, and when examining early Victorian furniture sees much in it to remind him of relatives and friends he once knew and loved, but who have gone where the furniture they used so long is no longer needed.

There is undoubtedly a sentiment which cannot be expressed adequately, yet it governs those who retain old Victorian furniture. At the time when the young Queen came to the throne there had been a stagnation in progressive cabinet-making for many years past. The middle-class homes of English people presented a very mixed appearance. They contained many pieces of eighteenth century furniture which had been passed on as family possessions—not heirlooms. They were merely chairs and tables and bedroom furniture, consisting of useful pieces which had served one, two, or more generations, and if they received the same careful treatment it was assumed that they would last for many years to come. In an early Victorian home might have been seen Georgian chests, possibly a tall-boy, very likely a Queen Anne table, and almost with certainty a bureau, the shell or other typical inlay upon the fall-front marking it at once as Sheraton. Genuine Chippendale was never common, but furniture made upon Chippendale and Hepplewhite models was not infrequently in everyday use in early Victorian days. The old grandfather clock most assuredly ticked loudly in the entrance hall, house-place, or living room; and in the parlour there were stools and screens upholstered in old needlework, probably in eighteenth century frames, the screens having beautifully carved tripod legs.

The early days of Queen Victoria were rich in antiques, then only in the making. The Georgian furniture had as then little or no antiquarian value. Such furniture was among the common things of everyday life.

Homelike Decorations.

The young ladies of the Victorian days continued to ply the needle for decorative work, as their mothers and grandmothers had done when George III. was King. They no longer worked *petit point* needlework, newer and even more effective stitches were being taught in the schools, and they still used their wooden needlework frames, but worked in them more pleasing pictures than the older samplers and the still more remote tapestries and needlework, some of which were of doubtful taste in colour and design. Such needlework as the ladies of the first half of the nineteenth century produced was destined to fill screens with frames of carved mahogany. The needles were plied for the upholstery of rug-work chairs; many small chairs were at that time made of somewhat nondescript styles embellished with carving wrought by an untrained hand compared with that of Thomas Chippendale or his followers; indeed, few of the Victorian chairs can claim to rank with art wood-work, and they have no claim to retention in the home of the

twentieth-century owner, other than that of sentiment.

The sofa of Victorian days was an abomination, and the easy chairs were not always easy. Those were the days when horsehair was used, and that sombre upholstery was in no way relieved by the inartistic frames of solid mahogany. The cabinets or whatnots then made have mostly been condemned to destruction, or are still perpetuating a period when true art was not, in the cottage home of some one far removed in social status from the original owner. It is in the smaller house furnishings and among the sundries that collectors find more to interest. There were few traces of art in the drawing-rooms of that day, but the leather-work bracket, wax flowers arranged in a Parian marble vase, framed baskets of seaweed, and little porcelain figures added something to the inartistic colouring of the reddish magohany, crude in form and finish.

A General Awakening.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 gave some impetus to the revival of art, desired by those who were then awakening to the need of change in English homes. It was long, however, before it bore fruit, although sculpture and painting and music were among the arts revived. The wood-worker moved on slowly until in course of time there was a revival of old styles, an era of reproduction, and the day of the new art dawned.

The furniture of modern days does not come under the notice of the collector of antiques, although the home connoisseur rejoices in the possibility of possessing a better furnished house; one in which form and colour do not clash; one in which replicas of older styles are good substitutes for antiques of every chosen period or style—furniture, too, which can be exchanged for genuine antiques when occasion permits.

The new art which has been in vogue some years may in time to come become a style on which collectors of the future will specialise. At present it is difficult to imagine an appreciation in the commercial value of such goods made by machinery and repeated *ad lib*. Hand work may be at a discount in years to come, but collectors still find their desire satisfied when they add to their galleries antiques from periods earlier than even the days of Queen Victoria, the memory of whose long and glorious reign will never fade from the recollections of the present generation.

CHAPTER XVIII

AMERICAN FURNITURE

The New World in the making—British colonial influence—Dutch and Flemish furniture—American furniture makers—Some historical relics—Purely American types.

The early furniture used in America before the Declaration of Independence is frequently denoted as "Colonial." After that date it is distinguished as American, although in few instances was any distinct American characteristic developed until, of course, modern times. There were, however, some national characteristics, the result of separation by thousands of miles from the nations of Europe, and the materials which were at the disposal of American furniture makers.

It is a known fact that in many parts of the States, until quite recently, much old furniture was in use, although chiefly in the Northern States and in a lesser degree in the Southern.

There have been many admirers of antique pieces among American citizens, but it is only during recent years that collecting has been taken up in the United States of America. The first impetus to the collection of antiques was given at the Centennial Exposition in 1876, after which American visitors to Europe sought out antiques, and many of Europe's best art treasures, among them some very beautiful pieces of furniture, found their way across the Atlantic. The art museums of the States contain some very interesting specimens, especially historical, and numerous private collections are rich in examples of American furniture. The purely American furniture, that is to say that which has been made in America, although much of it must now be regarded as antique, must in the following pages be distinguished from that made in Europe and imported, although much of it was made under the direct influence of the art of those countries with which the early colonist was familiar.

The New World in the Making.

The American civilisation of early days was under Spanish influence, and whatever was made on American shores was then fashioned either at the direction of Spanish discoverers and colonists or by those who, as the civilisation of Europe took hold upon them, copied the models they had seen, or followed the directions they had received.

The early connection between Spain and the New World is suggestive of the Spanish influence of the days of the Renaissance on the Continent of Europe. Charles I. of Spain claimed to exercise dominion over America by right of discovery, and also in consequence of having received a grant of the "Continent of America" from Pope Alexander VI.

Spain received much treasure from the New World, including jewels and metals, and they were used to enrich the splendid pieces of furniture then being made in Spain. Doubtless some of that early cabinet work crossed the Atlantic, but American home connoisseurs of recent days have drawn their supplies of antiques from European countries.

There is especial interest in the early authentic American antiques, which include those chests and coffers which crossed over in the *Mayflower*. The still earlier shipments of furniture from European sources were few, for the Spaniards did not take with them furniture in their earlier expeditions; at any rate, not to any appreciable extent. Neither did Sir Walter Raleigh take furniture with him when he tried to plant settlements in North Carolina and in Pennsylvania in 1584.

Among the curiosities in the Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, there is a chest covered with pierced iron bands which are suggestive of Spanish workmanship, although that ancient relic is reputed to have been brought over by Swedish colonists who settled upon the Hudson River.

Among the earliest objects indicative almost of the birth of a nation is the rocker cradle of wicker at Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, reputed to have been the veritable cradle in which Peregrine White, the first English child born in the New World, was rocked. The cradle was taken over by the Pilgrim Fathers in the *Mayflower*, and was thus ready for the first recorded addition to their number. There is another old cradle in the same hall, but it is of oak, and probably of seventeenth-century make.

At one time seventeenth-century furniture was plentiful in New York, New England or Massachusetts, and early collectors had opportunities of securing genuine early American antiques. In the South such furniture had disappeared at an earlier date. The inventories of the contents of old houses, preserved in so many instances in America, tell the tale of the furniture used in them. They give us glimpses of the habits and customs of those early settlers, and they supply well-authenticated records of what a settler's home was like. Moreover, the old inventories or valuations give us the relative values of second-hand furniture at certain periods, mostly before the collector came on the scene—certainly before furniture had acquired those inflated prices it now commands.

From those old inventories, then, the foremost advantage gained is the possibility of compiling a list of what the articles then in use were. Such lists, however, are not always reliable, because the names used in those inventories may not convey the same meaning to us as they did to their owners, or those for whom the inventories were written. The matter of price, although interesting, is still less reliable unless we have actual knowledge of the prime cost of the furniture, as obviously the mere mention of a sideboard or cupboard is no guide, for it is price that governs quality in the making, and quality of workmanship and material governs inventory value.

The probate records of the days when the states and the nationalities of the New World—North and South—were in the making, make mention of many closed receptacles, such as court, livery, standing, and hanging, cupboards. There were also presses and painted cupboards. But few of these inventories mention ornament or carving, and there is reason to believe that plain and far from decorative furniture was the rule rather than the exception. The prices named range from 5s. to 25s. each cupboard, and in a few instances the seventeenth-century cupboards and similar pieces of furniture, evidently of superior quality, were valued as high as £4 to £5—a long price in those days. One writer mentions a "court cubbert" at Boston, valued in 1681 at £4.

In early inventories there are few references to chairs, which in the seventeenth century were of the simplest forms, inventory references describing them as "joyned stools" or "joyned chairs." Stools were then more frequently used, and handsomely carved chairs were comparatively rare. In reference to "wainscott" chairs, it is said that they were fairly common in the South but scarce in New England. Such chairs were, of course, more expensive to make, and of greater value than the turned wood chairs then mostly in vogue.

British Colonial Influence.

It is quite evident that the early furniture of the settlers consisted of replicas of what they had been accustomed to use in their own countries. The English colonist was anxious to reproduce the home he had been familiar with in his earlier days. The same spirit influenced the Dutch settlers, who were desirous of making New Holland a replica of the Holland they had left behind them. If they could not reproduce the Dutch landscape dotted over with windmills, they could at least build their houses and furnish them in a homelike way.

There is every reason to suppose that much of the furniture used by the Colonial settlers in the eighteenth century was taken over from England or was afterwards exported. The Southern or Virginian planters carried on a steady trade with England, and bought chairs, chests, court cupboards, and other articles direct from the Mother Country. Kitchen furniture and the commoner and rougher pieces were made by colonial carpenters, of whom there were many.

At a still earlier date we learn that when the West India Company sent out upwards of thirty families of colonists in 1625 they supplied them with the furniture it was then deemed that they would need in making themselves homes in the New World.

The influence of colonial settlers—that is to say, the influence of their earlier lives and training—is seen in the furniture itself, which resembled the older types of British furniture. Those were the days before so-called foreign and American conditions had caused makers to depart from traditional styles. If we take a few examples of American furniture as then used in the settlers' homes we shall discover this affinity to the English homes like those the settlers had left—perhaps years before, for their recollections of English life remained, and even as time went on the memories of what they had known in the past were unchanged.

Some of the seventeenth-century chests of drawers met with among American antiques are of Jacobean types; geometrical designs having been faithfully copied, although most of those made by American colonists were cut flatter, and the designs a little more formal, than those made in England. Such chests of drawers were evidently locally made, many of them being of pine wood. Others of English oak appear to have been exported from the Mother Country, and to have been faithfully copied by American wood-workers. Chests of drawers or chests with drawers appear in New

England inventories as early as 1645. The old panelled oak chest preserved by the Plymouth Society, of Plymouth, is an interesting example of an English-made chest with drawers under it, the ornament upon it being undoubtedly Cromwellian in style.

Settles seem to have been among the earliest pieces; one is mentioned in a Boston inventory of 1643, and several others in inventories made a few years later. Chairs of different kinds were often mentioned, especially Windsor chairs, which, so popular in England, found their replicas in American homes, although there does not appear to be any evidence that the so-called Windsor chairs were made in the American colonies until Georgian days had well advanced. The "style" was of course imported, and a copy of what colonists had been accustomed to use, and possibly to make, in their native villages in Buckinghamshire.

The old trestle table used in England from quite early days was very appropriate for colonial purposes, and in many American seventeenth-century inventories mention is made of trestles and "table board and joyned frames." Those tables were not the trestles of early types, but a later development of the same idea and principle. Such tables were often found in the older homes of New England and Pennsylvania.

There is no doubt that many of the old sideboards made in the States in quite early days were made under the superintendence of those who had used, if not actually made, English sideboards and tables. Instead of being made of oak, however, they were of pine and veneered.

Dutch and Flemish Furniture.

As the English colonists influenced the furniture makers who supplied them with chairs and other necessaries for their new homes, and sought to obtain replicas of English furniture, so the Dutch settlers aimed at securing replicas of their own peculiar styles.

The houses of Holland, with their wonderful carving, were impressed upon the minds of Dutch and Flemish settlers, and if they could not reproduce those marvellous houses in their entirety they could at least make themselves furniture in keeping with their traditional prejudices and preferences.

It is said that for years after the English occupation of New Amsterdam the inhabitants of Dutch extraction clung to the use of furniture which showed strong Dutch characteristics. They also cultivated a taste for furniture imported from the Indies. In districts where the Dutch were the chief settlers the houses they built were suggested by those with which the first Dutch settlers had been familiar. They had low ceilings and wide and roomy chimney corners in which they continued to use the older fashioned early colonial furniture. In some cases they had the actual beds which had served their forefathers in their native land. It has indeed been truly pointed out that the commercial methods and religious views of Holland were reflected in the homes of the American settlers during the seventeenth century.

It will be remembered that there was then much trade and commerce carried on by Dutch traders, who were safe in the protection their warships afforded them when on the High Seas. At that time the settlers on the Hudson River had access to the wealth and merchandise of Spain and Italy, where so much beautiful furniture was being made during the heyday of the craftsmanship which the great Renaissance of a century or so before had given them.

Holland and England were then trading, and their settlers came in for a fair share of the spoil. Curiously enough, although Flemish chests were made and shipped to many lands, there do not appear to have been many in use in New Amsterdam; possibly they were not found altogether the most desirable pieces of furniture for colonial purposes.

Much as the Dutch trade and influence was exerted over the furniture used and made in America during the seventeenth century, it increased at the close of that century, and gained in strength during the early years of the eighteenth century. When we come to enquire carefully into the actual pieces of furniture in which that influence is strongest, we begin to understand what an American home was like. The chests which were built as serviceable store-chests and for transport were not usually carved and panelled like those replicas made under English influence; early inventories in New York refer to the Dutch chests being made of pine, and often painted. There is a bill of lading extant dated 1711, which refers to an early kas or chest packed with fine linen which was sent over from Holland by the father of Dr Samuel Johnson.

The Dutch chests from 1680 onwards began to assume the form of a chest of drawers just as they did in the old country in the seventeenth century. Nathaniel Hawthorne, writing in reference to the developed chests of his day, says:

> "The moderns have invented nothing better in chamber furniture than those chests, which stand on four slender legs and send an absolute tower of mahogany to the ceiling; the whole terminating in a fantastically carved summit."

High chests were fairly common in New York from 1685 onward, and they were plentiful in New England. An age of luxury was coming, and those who had been accustomed to the plainest of early colonial furniture were anxious to obtain more elaborate and ornamental house furnishings. They were divided in their choice between those which were influenced by the cabinet work of Holland and the Eastern furniture, especially cabinets and chairs, which were coming to New Amsterdam in Dutch vessels. It is said that alcove beds, common in Holland and Germany early in the eighteenth century, came into Pennsylvania. The American cabinet-maker was even then becoming a specialist and producing the furniture the people craved for, imparting to it American characteristics. A trader named William Atlee advertised in the eighteenth century:

> "Any person willing to have a bed-stand in an alcove, which is both warm and handsome, may have the same hung in the most elegant manner, customary in the best houses in England."

Dutch artists in a similar way undertook to produce furniture in accord with the views of Dutch settlers.

American Furniture Makers.

What we mean by American furniture makers is that there were men who broke the traditional influence and settled down to produce furniture suitable to American surroundings and conditions, giving those who had abandoned the idea of returning to their own countries, and had become Americans to all intents and purposes, furniture in accord with their new environment. These makers were no longer slavish copyers of styles which were more suited to the Old World than the New. At this point then we are brought into the consideration of furniture which, while following older forms, became distinct in style. English chests imported into America were mostly of oak. The American, however, were then made chiefly of pine. Those prevailing in houses furnished when the settlers and colonists had become Americans, were of several kinds. There were chests covered over with carvings, but their forms differed in that it was found more convenient to make the carving shallow. More care, too, was shown in this low relief ornament than the rougher and deeper carving which had formerly prevailed, and which the artists had been accustomed to use on the other side of the Atlantic. American chests are seldom more than 18 in. in height when without drawers, but when they became chests of drawers, or had drawers in the chest, 4 ft. was a common height, the length being sometimes as much as 5 ft. The values placed upon such chests in the middle of the seventeenth century, according to old inventories, varied from £1 to £2, 10s. Some of the best chests were made of oak ornamented with panels and turned pieces of other woods. About 1690 we read of a chest of drawers on a frame, and towards the close of the first quarter of the eighteenth century high chests of drawers became a regular feature. It should be clearly understood, however, that painted imitations of the inlaid ornament used at a previous date became common.

As it has been pointed out, Windsor chairs were taken over to America, but they are seldom met with in inventories before the middle of the eighteenth century. There is abundant evidence that American furniture makers were producing Windsor chairs, and that their suitability to the American market was greater than imported chairs is indicated by an advertisement published in New York in 1763, in which the trader offered "Philadelphia-made Windsor chairs." There is a difference between the English Windsor chairs and those which became an American adaptation of the style. English Windsor chairs usually had a solid or pierced splat in the centre, with the usual accompaniment of spindles or plain rods as the case might be. Some American chairs were made with straight spindles across the back, a somewhat curious projection acting as a head-rest. The head-rest became known as a comb-back. An expert describes another form as a chair in which the curve of the back is bent into the arms with the backs supported by two spindle braces fastened into an extension of the seat. Another American chair of Windsor type is known as the fan back. American chair-makers used hickory or maple for the turned colonial chairs which were so much in vogue in the early days. Wainscot chairs have already been referred to. They were similar to the Cromwellian leather-seated chairs of English make.

As time went on new styles were introduced, and there were many minor developments in design and decoration. The eighteenth century gave rise to much originality in construction, but there were, of course, indications of an earlier influence.

There are some interesting pieces of old American bedroom furniture in existence. Many specimens show traces of

having been painted, and some japanned after the English style. By way of indicating what American furniture makers were doing at the commencement of the eighteenth century, the following extract from the *Boston News Letter*, of 1715, is interesting. It reads:

> "Looking glasses, cabinetts, escrutoires, chests of drawers, tables, beaufetts, bookcases, with desks . . . and all sorts of Japan work, done and sold by William Randle at the sign of the cabinett and looking-glass shop near the Town House, Boston."

Some Historical Relics.

The historical relics of the great men who have founded and made America what it is are especially interesting to American collectors. It is rare indeed when such pieces come into the market, and authentic examples are being rapidly incorporated in national collections and museums. The very early examples of seventeenth-century furniture brought over by the early settlers or made in America for their use, are exceptionally scarce, and, needless to say, much valued. The Connecticut Historical Society are the fortunate owners of what is probably one of the earliest turned chairs in America. There are also two others in Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, known as Elder Brewster's and Governor Carver's chairs, said to have been brought over in the *Mayflower*. In the same collection there is an oak cradle of contemporary design.

Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, owns a richly-carved chair of Italian style, approximately of the style in vogue about 1640.

The Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, contains a Spanish seventeenth-century chair with a high back covered with scrolls, birds, and figure work. It is of chestnut, and the carving shows Saracenic influence in its design.

In the Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, there is a walnut table used in the Council chamber by Governor Winslow in 1633. There is also a Bible box belonging to the Connecticut Historical Society, which is inscribed "M S 1649." Apparently it is in the style in vogue in England at that date.

To Americans, remembering one of the great founders of the United States, the relics of George Washington are of exceptional interest. Some of these are in the City Hall, New York; others in the Washington Museum. In the latter collection there are two chairs—one a fine armchair with characteristic shield back, the other a plain Sheraton design. Along with these chairs there is an entrance hall lantern from Mount Vernon, the home of the Washingtons. A desk used by George Washington in 1789 may be seen and admired in the Governor's room in the City Hall, New York. It is a good example of Sheraton furniture, with small drawers and typical brass handles. It is indeed an historic relic. The Independence Hall, Philadelphia, has a couch at one time the property of George Washington.

When Chippendale furniture was being made in England similar designs were being worked out in America, but the claw-and-ball foot, a feature of the early days of Chippendale, is seldom seen in American-made furniture.

A peep into the inventories, wills, and probates of old American families is exceedingly interesting, in that it reveals much that has been forgotten. The mother of George Washington, under will dated 1788, left various articles of furniture and personal possessions to her relatives, and her lands to her son General George Washington, to whom she also bequeathed her best bed, bedstead, and Virginia cloth curtains, and *her negro boy George* (a forcible reminder of slavery); to her grandson, Corbin Washington, she gave her "riding chair" and two black horses; and to her grandson, Fielding Lewis, her bookcase, oval table, one bedstead, six red leather chairs, and half her kitchen furniture. Bettie Curtis, a grand-daughter, came in for "my largest looking glass, my walnut writing desk and drawers, a square dining table, one bed, bedstead, bolster, and pillow." Thus was broken up and dispersed the old home where George Washington, the founder of the great American nation, was reared.

America has many remembrances of the furniture trade of the eighteenth century. It is noted that one Joseph Cox was well known as an upholsterer in New York, being established at Dock Street, and afterwards in Wall Street, where in 1778 he is said to have had, along with furniture, fire screens and "voiders" (crumb trays), and "a few very handsome tassels for hall lanthorns" to sell.

The will of the owner of the "Black Horse Tavern," of Salem, Massachusetts, records the furniture he left behind him. He mentions "1 standing bedsted and fether bed and beding," which was valued for probate at £6 (this bed is said to have stood "in the parlour"); "1 trundle bedsted, fether bed and beding; 1 long table and forme, 1 cupboard (also in the parlour); 8 chairs, 1 wainscot chist and box and one warming pan." All these—the cupboard, 8 chairs, chest, box,

and warming pan—are put down as being worth £1, 10s. only!

Purely American Types.

The creation of purely American types was a matter of slow but gradual development. That is to say, the household furniture built up upon the old models with which the Pilgrim Fathers were familiar, and those later styles which came over as time went on from Great Britain and the Continent of Europe, were supplemented by purely American types. The conditions of living in America changed rapidly after the colonists had become established, and of course still more so after the Declaration of Independence; but while the different pieces of furniture were slowly changing and becoming Americanised, so much so that in the details of construction and materials of which they were made and in the ornament with which they were embellished, they were scarcely recognisable as being the same as the furniture from which they sprang. Side by side with these growing developments and altered conditions, which involved changes in construction, there sprang up the need for American furniture of altogether different types, something unknown in the Old World, household goods, however, which had no counterpart in the earlier lives of colonial settlers. It is these purely American styles and types to which collectors sometimes turn their attention. Naturally they are few in number, because the time during which they evolved or sprang into existence was limited, for collectors of the antique must perforce draw the line at late Georgian styles; or at any rate, early Victorian days, and the periods which represent them in America.

It has been mentioned that the colonial Windsor chair took the fan-back form, a fine example of which is the historic chair used by Thomas Jefferson when drafting the Declaration of Independence. Another distinctly American characteristic is found in the use of American woods, many of which were unsuitable for polishing or finishing in the same way that pertained in other countries. Thus, an American type of finish was created when the colonial furniture maker hit upon the happy plan of staining furniture green, and the painted furniture to which reference has already been made was so distinct a characteristic that it produced an American type. It is true that there were not many independently developed changes, but all will admit that the black and gilt of the so-called American Sheraton was a type without counterpart in other countries.

Rocking-chairs are peculiarly American, and in more recent days they had become an important feature in American furniture.

We can well understand that the old settle was peculiarly suitable to colonial life. An American addition was the ear or wing pieces which protected the occupant from a draught, very necessary in olden time in the days of wood houses and log huts. Some of these settles were made with lockers underneath. In many instances the back of the settle was raised higher and a shelf was added. There are various tables, all more or less a development of earlier forms, but the so-called butterfly table is essentially American.

The *kas*, or *kasse*, was derived from the Dutch name for a cupboard. It became an important feature in colonial homes, and among early American furniture some very special types sprang into existence, owing to the exigencies of local conditions. Some of these cupboards were very large. They were distinguished in old inventories as plain cupboards, great cupboards, and great presses. The materials of which some of them were made were indicated by such names as walnut cupboards, cedar cupboards, and painted cupboards. Thus there were varieties of the *kas*, in which household goods of various kinds were stored. Sometimes the *kas* was fitted with shelves, and not infrequently it was fashioned in two parts. There was a long drawer underneath, and a large cupboard with two drawers above. The *kas* frequently stood on large ball feet, giving it a distinct characteristic. No court or livery cupboards appear to have been used in some of the States, but where there was an absence of the court or livery cupboards the *kas* was always to be found.

CHAPTER XIX

OLD LACQUER

Eastern lacquers—English and Continental—The processes of lacquering—Museum and representative specimens.

The collection of old lacquer brings the home connoisseur very near the borders of curios, and those minor objects which while not strictly furniture are closely allied to it. Among the more important objects worthy of the furniture collector's notice are cabinets, cupboards, tables, dressing- or toilet-tables, clock cases, tea-caddies, and work-boxes. Old lacquers were brought over from the East by traders in the seventeenth century, and such wares were imitated in Europe and in this country a century later. In practically all cases the style of these English and European lacquers was oriental, the models taken by all the imitators being curios imported from China, Japan, and India.

Lacquer cabinets from the East found their way into England as early as the days of Henry VII., at a time when Spain and Portugal had almost a monopoly in Asiatic waters. English and Dutch merchants carried on much trade with the East early in the seventeenth century, but English commerce with Eastern countries ceased in 1637. The Dutch, however, continued to ship large consignments, and sold much beautiful oriental lacquer ware to English buyers. At that time the trade route was by the Cape, and it took a long time before goods arrived in this country. Hence it was that few commissions were given; the objects were brought over and sold by speculative merchants who had taken out goods to Eastern countries and brought back oriental wares, including lacquer cabinets, Chinese porcelain, and Imari vases and tea china from Japan. These beautiful wares eventually became the models from which eighteenth-century potters produced the beautiful china and porcelain which was so appropriate to display on the lacquer cabinets from Japan. Many of the oriental wares which came over from the East were eagerly bought up, for there was nothing in this country like the Chinese blue and white of the Kang-He period, so many rare examples of which may be seen at Hampton Court. The art of lacquering became a popular amusement as early as the reign of William III. It was then known as the art of japanning. At that time, in 1688, John Stalker brought out a book with the following explanatory title:

> "A Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing, being a compleat discovery of those Arts. With the best way of making all sorts of Varnish for Japan woods, Prints, Plate, or Pictures. The Method of Guilding, Burnishing, and Lackering with the art of Guilding, Separateing and Refining metals, and the most curios ways of painting on Glass or otherwise. Also rules for counterfeiting or Dying Wood, Ivory, etc. Together with above an hundred distinct patterns of Japan Work, for Tables, Stands, Frames, Cabinets, Boxes, etc. Curiously engraven on 24 large Copper Plates. By John Stalker, September the 7th 1688. Licenced R. Midgley, and entered according to order. Oxford Printed for and sold by the Author, living at the Golden Ball, in St James Market, London in the year MDCLXXXVIII."

It is due to the hobby then followed by the amateur that now and then collectors are puzzled to find indifferently decorated pieces although the style indicates a knowledge of how such work should have been executed.

Eastern Lacquers.

It is generally conceded that the Chinese were the first to use native lacquer. The Japanese, however, early discovered the art, beginning to make it in the third century after their memorable expedition to the Corea. The famous furniture, cabinets, and ornamental wood-work produced in those countries, and introduced into Europe early in the eighteenth century, owe their notoriety to the gum lac which even modern scientists and chemists have been unable to rival. The natural gum, set and hardened, produced a material which in the process of drying and hardening was peculiarly suited to the reception of other decorative ornament. The Chinese used *tsi* and the Japanese *rhus vernicifera*, liquid gums, applied fresh, drying hard and glossy. In the production of these oriental lacquers some twenty different colourings were employed, but the remarkable white lacquer of the fifteenth century is a lost art, and cannot be duplicated. The decorations of oriental lacquer were often very English in appearance, owing to the artists of Japan in

the days of the East India Company having studied their markets carefully, and specially prepared goods for England.

There are two important sections of decorated lacquer work—painted and carved, and encrusted. In the manufacture of these goods foreign substances such as mother-of-pearl, ivory, lapis lazuli, and jade were employed. The commoner form of ornament is the ordinary black lac, upon which a wealth of gold was expended. Another type coming chiefly from China was of a brilliant vermilion red, finely pencilled with gold. The richest examples of the so-called Pekin lacquers were made in Japan by Chinese workmen. The older examples are almost in every instance the richest and most beautiful. The manufacture of the raised work of the older and more costly pieces was very slow, the raised ornament being applied coat after coat, the lacquer being used with oxide of iron. It cannot be too clearly understood that whereas the Chinese and Japanese used the natural gum, the European japan was produced by the mixture of oils, resins, and turpentine or copal. The carved red lac, sometimes called Pekin lac, is almost entirely a Chinese process.

Indian cabinets were the rage in fashionable circles in England and France during the eighteenth century. French collections contain many very beautiful pieces which were once owned and valued by Queen Marie Antoinette, and by Madame de Pompadour. Such pieces represented the quality of work valued and appreciated by Englishmen. Some, however, preferred Chinese cabinets, so many of which came over from the East in the ships bringing tea and other merchandise.

It is interesting to note that there have been instances in which the comparative values of old and modern lacquers have been tested, showing the superiority of the former. As an instance the S.S. *Nile* foundered in 1874 near Yokohama. She had on board a large quantity of old as well as modern lacquers. When the vessel was recovered a year or so afterwards the old lacquered wares and antiques were intact, whereas the more modern pieces were irretrievably spoiled.

English and Continental.

It is not always easy to distinguish English from foreign lacquers. The figures introduced show the chief point of difference in the ornament, for they are unlike those of oriental artists. Black was the ground colour used for most of the work carried out by English lacquerers, although a light buff ground was occasionally used with the object of imitating the polished light woods of contemporary marqueterie. In nearly all cases the ornament is thrown up in yellow or gold. Such lacquers appear to have been made between 1670-1710.

As an instance of the way in which these old wares were marketed in this country, the following extract from the *London Gazette*, of 16th January 1689, should be of special interest:

> "At Tho. Hulbeart at The Ship and Anchor over against Gun-Yard in Hounditch London, several sorts of screwtores, Table Stands and Looking Glasses of Japan and other work."

Much of the English work has lost its brightness, although a little "polish restorer" works wonders upon genuine antiques. The foundation of lacquer work as made in England was mostly pear, box, lime, yew, walnut, and olive, as these close-grained woods were more suitable for coating with lacquer. At a later date lacquered furniture was again made, it being fashionable in the days of Hepplewhite, who makes some reference to English systems of lacquering or japanning on wood, saying in his book:

> "A very elegant fashion which has arisen of late years of finishing (chairbacks) with painted or japanned work which gives a very splendid appearance to the minuter parts of the ornaments which are generally thrown in by the painter."

The "vernis Martin" varnish or lacquer which became so popular in France in the eighteenth century was made at the royal manufactory where the Martins carried on important works (*see* chap. x.)

The Processes of Lacquering.

The art of lacquering on wood and metal in this country never reached an equality with that of the oriental artist, although many determined efforts were made to produce satisfactory work. As it has been stated, amateurs became fairly expert lacquerers, the art being a fashionable accomplishment. In addition to the books published dealing with this subject, there was an interesting treatise by J. Perle, entitled: "A New and Curious Method of Japanning upon Glass,

Wood, or Metal." This book ran through five editions.

The oriental lacquer was effected by a slow process. The native gum having been applied, the object treated was placed in a moist, warm, and air-tight cupboard for several hours. Then another coat was applied, sometimes as many as thirty being required to produce the beautiful gloss. The colourings of the native gums were produced by colouring matter; gambouge was used for the fine yellow transparent lac upon which gold was applied; cinnabar and colcothar produced red, whereas orpiment made greenish-yellow; black being secured by the addition of iron and charcoal to the purified lac. The surface was afterwards rubbed with rice paper and a powder of Imari clay and calcined horn.

English lacquer work is frequently denoted as japanned, taking its name, of course, from Japan, where so much of the earlier work came from. The process adopted both in the early days and in later revivals of japanned work was based upon an imitation of the product of the natural gum. Similar processes of applying an artificially-made lacquer, and then allowing it to dry hard, were gone through. Sometimes plain black or red was the groundwork, at others greens and other colours; heated and allowed to set hard, then rubbed with finely powdered rotten stone, another coat was applied, and so on, until the last, when the final surface was produced by rubbing with oil alone. Then came painting and ornamenting with gold, until about 1760 all the lacquer made in this country was Eastern in character, the ornament consisting of birds, trees, flowers, and oriental figures. In later days more English designs were introduced.

Japanning was applied to ladies' work-boxes and work-tables, toilet-tables and cabinets, tea-caddies and fire-screens, and when the industry was continued on a metallic groundwork instead of wood, many small household articles, like candlesticks, trays, and useful boxes, were made. Pontypool became one of the early seats of the japanning industry, which was afterwards removed to Birmingham. In Victorian days there was much japanned ware placed upon the market. Early in the nineteenth century *papier-mâché* was introduced as the groundwork of lacquer and japanned goods, the process of japanning being much the same. Among these various household commodities there are many antiques which furniture collectors add to their more utilitarian cabinet work.

Museum and Representative Specimens.

The old Chinese and Japanese lacquers are very different to the modern oriental. The difference is obvious to those who carefully examine old pieces and compare the differences of the workmanship with those modern works of art, such as householders are accustomed to see in the numerous shops that have been opened up of late years in most of the large towns in this country. The oriental lacquers chiefly applied to wood and similar materials imported from the East in olden time are again different from the English-made lacquers referred to in previous paragraphs. Undoubtedly the best way to become familiar with the characteristics of these various productions, the line of demarcation between which is sometimes very fine, is to examine carefully representative collections in our national museums. In several of the courts of the Victoria and Albert Museum extremely interesting collections of oriental furniture and household curios are arranged, among them many articles of furniture, mostly made in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, which, of course, represent the antiques, but shown in the same galleries are comparatively modern art treasures, among them lacquers produced during recent years, some replicas of the antique, so that this collection, although by no means exhaustive, offers collectors an excellent opportunity of judging of the lacquers from China, Japan, and India.

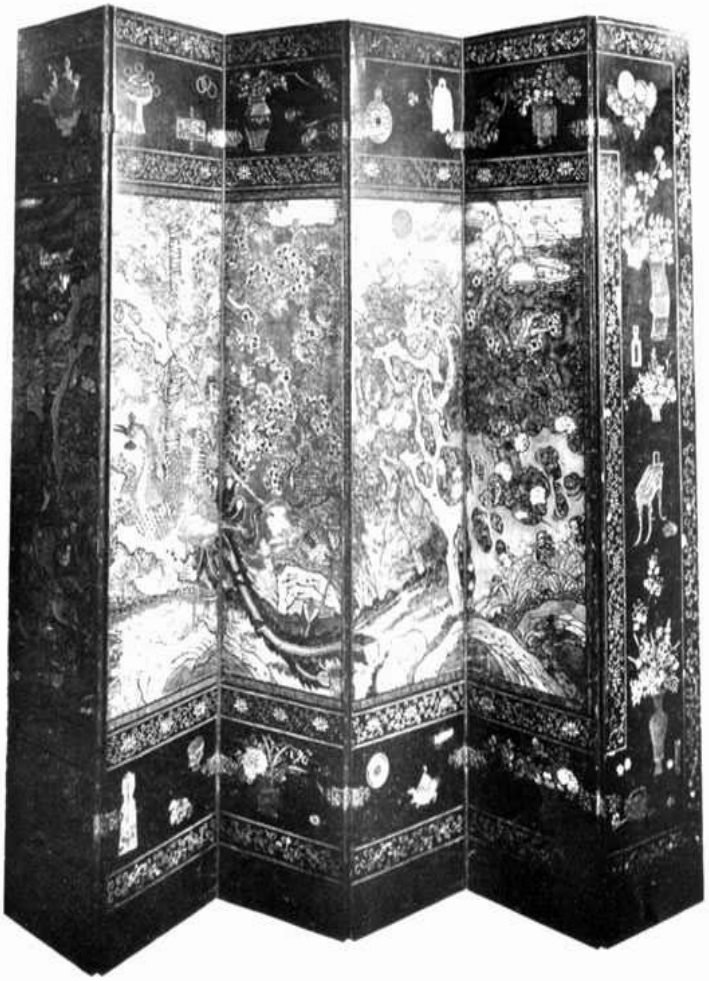

FIG. 71.—ORIENTAL SIX-FOLD SCREEN.
(*In the collection of Mr. Albert Amor.*)

FIG. 72.—ORIENTAL FOUR-FOLD
(*In the Hatfield Gallery of Anti*

FIG. 73.—LACQUER CABINET,
ENGLISH, IN CHINESE TASTE, *circa 1680.*
(*Mallet & Son, Bath.*)

FIG. 74.—LACQUER COFFER,
ON WILLIAM AND MARY STAND.
(*The Hatfield Gallery of Antiques.*)

In the furniture galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum are some early oriental lacquer cabinets, mounted on stands of the Restoration period. During the reigns of Charles II., James II., and William and Mary, some magnificent cabinets were brought over to this country direct, or were imported by Dutch merchants. Those cabinets were not always mounted on stands in keeping with the lacquer, but both cabinets and stands have now become valuable antiques in their several ways. In some instances the stands are of richly-carved Italian designs; in others Carolean carvings, which were

silvered or gilt, and in a few instances painted in colours. One exceptionally fine cabinet of oriental workmanship in the Victoria and Albert Museum has English brass mounts; the stand, which is Carolean, is silvered. It is not much unlike a fine cabinet which came from Chirk, near Ruabon, and was recently in the possession of Mr Phillips, of Hitchin, who kindly lends the photograph, which is reproduced in Fig. 70.

Additional interest centres round historical pieces, such as an exceptionally handsome black and gold lacquered coffer, beautifully inlaid with gold and mother-of-pearl, which is on view in the Museum. This piece, which is stated to have belonged to Napoleon I., is ornamented on the front with views of the Imperial Palace of Pekin; on one end is an autumn scene, with the Shinto shrine and carriages; on the other end there is a hunting scene; and on the back a tiger hunt is depicted. The mounts of this remarkable piece, which was made in the seventeenth century, are of brass, gilt and chased; the lock, too, is ornamented, and is fitted with a key with a finely chiselled bow, in the design of which are incorporated the arms of a Duke of Mazarin.

There are many beautiful lacquer cabinets of early nineteenth century workmanship; especially handsome is one from the Corea lacquered in red and inlaid with mother-of-pearl, producing fine designs in which are birds and flowers, the handle plates and corners being made of a white metal alloy.

Domestic shrines received special attention from Japanese artists of the old school. Some of those on view in the Victoria and Albert Museum are full of little compartments and fittings inlaid with rare materials in beautiful designs. There is an old corner cabinet or cupboard of inlaid lacquers, in the decoration of which various inlays of pearl, ivory, and silvered glass are introduced. There is also a wonderful work-table of black and gold lacquered wood, the fittings and reels being of ivory. There are also some cabinets, screens, and other pieces of furniture from early Japanese homes. There are but few examples of chairs; one, however, calls for special attention; it is a piece made for the Anglo-Japan Exhibition in 1910, an exact replica of a folding chair of the period of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), the original being now in the Imperial Museum at Kyoto.

The remarkable six- and twelve-fold screens, lacquered and deeply incised, giving such pleasing effects, are much prized by collectors. The splendid screen shown in Fig. 71 is suggestive of the kind of screen collectors should look out for. Its six folds, although quite complete in their scheme of decoration, at one time probably formed a part of a larger twelve-fold screen. Such examples as the one illustrated through the courtesy of Mr Albert Amor, of St James's Street, W., have all the characteristics of good workmanship so fully exhibited in a magnificent twelve-fold screen now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. A description of this latter piece should be of interest to all students of oriental lacquer. The black lac is relieved by incised and painted designs in gold and colours—green predominating. On the front of the screen is a scene representating Taoist genii (*hsien*) worshipping Shou Lao, the god of longevity; on the back are landscapes and the apparatus of the four liberal arts—writing, painting, music, and chess—and emblems of the Taoist and Buddhist religions. On the lower border of the front are the flowers of the twelve months, another series of flowers occupies a similar position on the other side. The border of phœnixes and longevity characters suggests that the screen was made for an empress of the period.

The screen shown in Fig. 72 is another very remarkable one—four-fold—which is now in the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques. The different symbols used in the ornamentation are very suggestive and deserving of close study.

Cabinets of oriental type, in lacquer, such as those already referred to, are of extreme interest and value; but far more so are those of English lacquer, such as the magnificent cabinet decorated in Chinese taste shown in Fig. 73. The doors are exceptionally well executed and enriched with beautifully chased hinges, lock plates, and mounts. The interior is well fitted with drawers, the fronts of which are decorative too. This delightful piece, the date of which is about 1680, is mounted on a finely carved wood and gilded stand. The total height of this piece is 5 ft. 1 in., the length 3 ft. 3 in., and the depth 1 ft. 5½ in. It is in the possession of Messrs Mallett and Son, of Bath and London.

Another cabinet of quite different type, now in the Hatfield Gallery of Antiques, is illustrated in Fig. 74. It is of exceptional length, giving the artist ample opportunity of scenic display in the decoration of black and gold; it stands on a plain stand of walnut wood. The specialistic collector finds ample variety in decoration among Chinese and Japanese lacquers, and in their study becomes acquainted with many of the myths of oriental religions and legends. In the English lacquers the pictures are not so reliable, as they are for the most part copies of the oriental without accurate knowledge of the essentials of the mystic scenes or legends they are intended to depict.

CHAPTER XX

DECORATIVE MARQUETERIE

Intarsia—Marqueterie—Italian work—Dutch and German—French influence—English inlays and veneers.

The practice of enriching the flat or plain surface of woods by the addition of other substances or varied colourings of similar materials dates from very early times. It is from the East that we get those wonderful mosaics, metallic inlays, porcelain *cloisonné* effects, and damascened curios. Such works have been produced throughout the Middle Ages, and even in our own times; and such curios and antiques ranging over several centuries in the period of their manufacture continue to be brought to this country. It is to the East, too, that we turn for ancient inlays, some of which are found in Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. In early times in those countries clever craftsmen used ivory, ebony, and vitreous substances, as well as precious stones and marbles, in the decoration of their halls, their thrones, and their seats of state.

Sometimes foreign substances and overlays have been used for strengthening the carcass, but in furniture marqueterie overlays and additional ornament have been used as secondary for the purposes of enrichment. The ancient arts in which inlays were applied to furniture were under a cloud during the Middle Ages; but they broke out in full power and glory during the Renaissance. The Italian Renaissance provided artists with plenty of scope for their skill; and during the revival, which dates from the thirteenth century, extending to the seventeenth, some magnificent pieces were ornamented; and special talent was expended upon the inlays of wood stalls and panelling in Continental cathedrals and churches. The processes adopted in this work have been divided into two distinct methods. The one intarsia, and the other marqueterie. Briefly, the distinguishing marks between them might be summed up into intarsia as patterning the groundwork by incising or cutting it away, and inserting other substances, and marqueterie as patterning two thin materials, and then using them as veneer upon a stouter body or frame.

The root meaning of the word intarsia is found in the Latin word *interserere*, to insert, and refers chiefly to the damascened or inlaid metal work, such as is met with in Eastern countries.

Intarsia.

The intarsia work is older than marqueterie, and is traceable to craftsmanship which flourished several centuries before the Christian era.

The metal intarsia is represented by many fine examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and also in the inlays and enamels of Anglo-Saxon days. Greek artists inlaid their chairs, seats, beds, and other objects with precious metals. The Greeks also used a variety of woods—some very rare even in those days.

Marqueterie.

The second process more commonly understood, known as marqueterie or marquetry, comes from the French word *marqueter*, to mark. This process is quite easily performed by cutting through two or more layers, and then pressing or fitting into the cut portion of one layer the corresponding piece of the other.

That process serves in simple marqueterie, but in the more elaborate designs and those in which there are colour effects, like the older mosaics, more intricate methods are necessary.

Italian Work.

As it has been stated, the more important early inspirations in inlays came from Italy, although at a much earlier period inlays had been the special province of Eastern nations. The Italian artists took up marqueterie as early as the twelfth century. It then took the form of marble inlays, in which table tops and other pieces of furniture were ornamented with tiny pieces of marble and other substances, arranged so as to produce pictorial and other effects by the right shading and colour secured by careful choice of materials.

Siena became the seat of the industry, and from that town many fine ecclesiastical pieces came. Eventually the mosaics, which have since gained such fame, were made in Florence. It is from that city that so many wonderfully inlaid chests have been brought. Scenic views and quaint and effective designs were produced by the use of different substances and rare woods. Mr F. Hamilton Jackson, in his handbook on "Intarsia and Marquetry," relates an interesting story of Leonardo d'Antonio da Majano, a master in wood and stone work, who was one of the most noted fifteenth-century workers. This clever inlayer had made two chests, and ornamented them with wood mosaics. He sought Royal favour, and when they were completed they were packed safely, as he thought, and the intrepid wood-worker set sail with them for Hungary to show them to Matthew Corvinus, King of Hungary. On his arrival, after a somewhat tempestuous voyage, he was received by the King with much favour, and ordered to unpack the chests and bring them into the King's presence. Alas! the sea water had damaged the package in its voyage, and the moisture had softened the glue, so that the inlays fell in a heap. Nothing daunted, the craftsman started to repair the injury, and in due time restored the chests, and when completed showed them to the King, who was well satisfied with the result.

The names of many famous artists have been preserved, among them Francesco di Giovanni di Matteo da Firenze and Guido da Seravallino, both of whom made furniture for Pisa Cathedral. In 1486 we learn Christophano d'Andrea da Lendinara and Jacopo da Villa made a seat for the choir. Some of the most interesting pieces still to be seen in the cathedral are the work of Giuliano da Majano. They are described by Mr Jackson, in his exhaustive work upon the subject as follows:

> "One represents King David with his harp in one hand, and with a label in the other hand 'Laudate Pueri Dominum.' The other two figures are prophets, and have scrolls, 'Benedicam, benedicam,' and 'Ve qui condunt legem.'"

The stalls of the Cathedral of Lucca were the work of Leonardo Marti; they were removed in 1620 to the Church of the Reformati of S. Cerbone, where they remained for some two hundred years, until they became carefully preserved museum curios. The examples of the marqueterie of the Renaissance, which have been handed on either as museum specimens or kept intact in their original positions, are but fragments of the wealth of marqueterie representing such an enormous expenditure of labour in the days of the Renaissance. It is difficult indeed to realise the time that must have been spent upon such work, and the cost which must have been considerable. In 1519 the Chapter of the Cathedral at Lucca renewed their contract for marqueterie decoration, which was not completed until 1525, the later work being carried out by M. Angelo Discaccia of Cremona, the gilding being effected by Baldassare dalla Viola and Albertino dalla Mirandola. Describing this wonderful example of the patience and skill of Italian marqueterie workers, Mr Jackson in his book says:

> There are three rows of seats, 132 in all, and the episcopal throne in the middle. The upper row is of 56 seats without the throne, the middle one is forty-two, and the lowest thirty-four. Originally there were 150, but in the alterations of 1715 nine from each side were taken away, as the high altar was then placed further within the apse."

The intarsia shows drawings of sacred objects and perspectives of fine buildings drawn from various parts of the city. Two of the best preserved portions show the ducal castle and the ancient ducal courtyard with the still existing staircase constructed by Ercoli I. in 1481.

There is much fine work in St Mark's, of Venice; and in the cathedral at Siena there is the splendid work of Antonio Barili, who was born in Siena in 1453. Some of his work, extending over a period of twenty years, was performed with very simple tools, consisting chiefly of a folding pocket-knife, a long-handled knife, and a square-handled gouge. Mr Jackson describes the wonderful beauty of the intarsia in the splendid palace of the Duke of Urbino, which was built between 1468 and 1480, at a cost of 200,000 golden scudi. He says:

> "Among the decorations of the Palace which still remain is the panelling of a small studio on the *piano nobile* close to the tiny chapel, which was entirely surrounded by an intarsia of the finest description, which represents in the lower part a seat, something like the misereres of choir stalls, surrounding the apartment, some parts of which are raised and some lowered. In the spaces rest some portion of the Duke's arms, a sword, a mace, etc., leaning in the corners, and on the lower parts of the seat are musical instruments, fruit, and sweetmeats in dishes, cushions, and books. The upper panels show cupboards with doors partly opened, showing all sorts of things

within in the usual fashion, and there are four figure panels inserted at intervals, containing the portrait of the Duke, and the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, which he strove to exemplify in his life. At one end of the room are two recesses divided by a projecting pier; in the one to the left the armour of the Duke is represented as hanging piece by piece on the wall. In that on the right is shown his reading desk made to turn on a pivot with books upon it and around, and on the pier between a landscape seen through an arcade with a terrace in front upon which are a squirrel and a basket of fruit. Close to the reading desk is a representation of an organ with a seat in front of it, upon which is a cushion covered with brocade or cut velvet which is most realistic, and on the organ is the name of Johan Castelano, which is supposed to be the name of the intarsiatore."

In the study of another palace of Duke Guidobaldo, some of whose intarsia is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, there were emblematic representations of music, literature, geography, and war; bookcases, or rather cupboards, with their contents, among which there were a ship, a tambourine, a cage with a parrot in it, and other ornaments. Many of the palaces of Italian nobles were similarly decorated, and some very interesting fragments are to be seen in the South Kensington Museum, among them panels covered with inlays of bone in Hispano-Moresque geometrical designs on chestnut, the bone in several instances being coloured green. Another interesting piece in the museum is a cabinet, on the sides of which the inlays represent the story of the Flood, very grotesque looking animals being shown entering the ark, under the direction of Noah.

Dutch and German.

Marqueterie and various inlays from Continental towns are to be found, not only in museums, but in several instances in the actual buildings for which they were made. The mosaics of coloured woods made at Augsburg in the sixteenth century became noted, the marqueterie workers there giving special attention to the ornamentation of cabinets. Some of these decorations took the form of ruins and architectural scenes, as well as well-executed arabesques. Dresden was the home of several inlayers in the early portion of the seventeenth century, and some fine marqueterie was executed for the town halls of Lübeck and Dantzig; and from other parts of Germany some interesting examples have been collected together in the Berlin Museum. Schleswig-Holstein is said to be full of fine inlays, the work of men whose names have been preserved in the State archives. Among others are Andreas Sallig, who was Court joiner in 1608, and Jochim Rosenfeldt, who was carver, and a year or two later Hans Preuszen, a carver, and Adam Wegener, a figure-cutter. Many small objects were decorated in the seventeenth century in South Germany, such as musical instruments, jewel boxes, and cabinets; but marriage chests were made the chief subjects of inlays.

The best Dutch marqueterie was made towards the close of the sixteenth and during the first few years of the seventeenth centuries. Dutch inlays followed those of Venice, but came before the work of French artists. Dutch influence made itself felt in England, and the chief designs of the Dutch workers are referred to in a subsequent paragraph.

French Influence.

Jean Macé, of Blois, who learned his craft in Flanders, was one of the early inlayers in France, having brought the marqueterie of the Netherlands to that country. It was his daughter who married Pierre Boulle, in 1619, and one of their sons was Paul Boulle. It was André Charles Boulle, however, a nephew of Pierre Boulle, who was born in 1642, who became so famous for the wonderful metal work inlays he so cleverly executed.

There have been many German invasions—commercial and otherwise—one of these was in the middle of the eighteenth century when many craftsmen settled in Paris. Among the most noted was David Roentgen, who was born in 1743, and was in business at Neuwied am Rhein, in 1772. He was eventually appointed *ebéniste méchanicien* to Queen Marie Antoinette. In a few years he founded a new style in marqueterie, in which the shades were neither burnt nor engraved nor darkened with smoke. This clever inlayer gained fame all over Europe, receiving commissions from Catherine of Russia, and from the King of Prussia, who bestowed upon him the title of Secret Councillor, and made him "Royal Agent on the Lower Rhine." Having left France at the time of the Revolution David Roentgen's effects were sold.

The earliest English inlays occurred about 1625, when those who wrought such beautiful wainscots caught the inspiration of Hispano-Moresque design. There was some difference in the way of interpreting it, some producing monotonous diaper patterns, others giving it a more decorative effect. The chief influence during the reign of Charles I., however, was Italian, an influence which governed most English inlays until the days of the Restoration.

FIG. 75.—FALL-FRONT BUREAU,
INLAID WITH MARQUETERIE. 1690.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

FIG. 76.—TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP,
MARQUETERIE INLAY.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

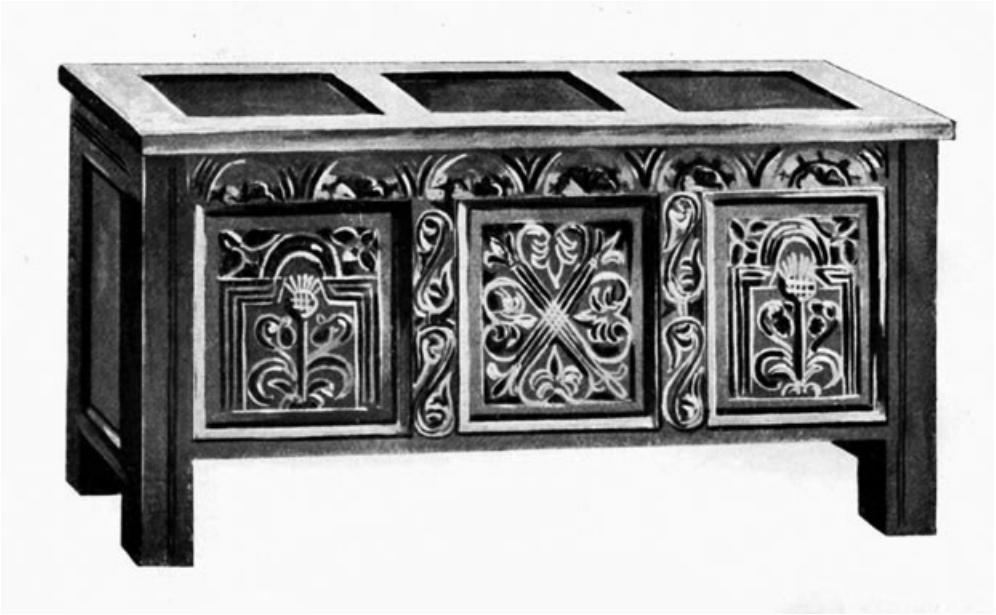

FIG. 77.—CARVED OAK CHEST,
17TH CENTURY.
(*Author's Collection.*)

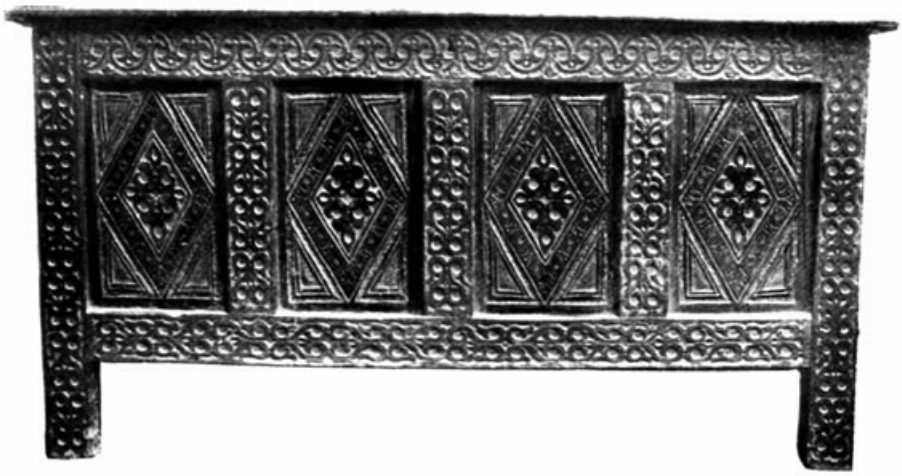

FIG. 78.—OAK CHEST,
17TH CENTURY.
(*Phillips. Hitchin.*)

The chief features worthy of note in the inlays of that period were the acanthus-leaved arabesques and birds grouped in conventional designs. In these the acanthus (endive) leaves usually ended in a flower; the birds were mostly of the parrot type, although an eagle-like bird is not infrequently recognised. Such features were the chief characteristics of English marqueterie until about 1680, when there was a stagnation for a short time.

With the Restoration under Charles II. inlays revived, and a new style of ornament, which included floral embellishments and more lifelike birds and more realistic sprays, sprang up. The colours used were much brighter, and from that time onward Dutch influence was observable. In addition to the more sombre-coloured woods hitherto used woods brightly stained were intermixed with bone and ivory. The floral designs became more definite, and jasmine flowers were conspicuous. The arrangement of the sprays and of the ornament was altogether more realistic.

Although following Dutch lead English marqueterie was more delicate, and some English inlayers were copying Dutch styles, and, borrowing their decorative ornament, were able to render them more effective and pleasing. There was greater attention to detail—for instance, the acanthus leaves were more sharply pointed or piked, and there was a much more successful attempt at shading.

In Fig. 75 is shown a splendid fall-down bureau, the interior of which is fitted with quite a number of small drawers and pigeon-holes inlaid with marqueterie in ivory and coloured woods. The exterior is exceptionally well decorated with marqueterie. The double panel falls down, forming a writing-desk. It is the work of a skilled artist, and was evidently made about 1690.

Fig. 76 is a well made table with twisted legs and a beautifully inlaid marble top; the stand is inlaid with marqueterie.

An impetus was given to English marqueterie in the reigns of William and Mary, and Anne, for although many Dutch pieces were imported English marqueterie workers were encouraged. There was a grander style in ornament, too, especially so in table tops, drawer fronts, and in the falls of the bureaus. The designs of tables made at that period chiefly consist of a large oval flanked at the four corners by corner patterns. These corners were filled in with flowers, black being the groundwork upon which the inlays were worked. The oystered veneers had already come into general use, the style being so denominated because cross-cut walnut or lignum vitæ was used, giving the appearance of oyster shells. After the death of Queen Mary seaweed patterns took the place of the earlier types. Cross-banding, feather-edging and herring-boning were freely used, along with enclosed panels, and may often be seen on chests, bureaus, and the cases of grandfather clocks, many of which were completely covered with marqueterie work.

In connection with the change going on in marqueterie, it should be noted that at that time a great change was taking place in drawer handles; large brass handles and handle-plates were being used instead of wood knobs or carved

handles. It was at that time, too, that handle-plates, key escutcheons, and brass nails of large size were conspicuous in the decorations.

During the reign of Queen Anne there was a general disposition to make everything quite plain, and to avoid superfluous ornament. Marqueterie fell into disfavour, and was for a time discontinued. It was not until about 1765 that public taste changed once more, and with the change in design and style, largely under the inspiration of Adam and Sheraton, marqueterie was once more desired. The large and coarse marqueterie of earlier days was abandoned, and the new arrival was of quite a different type. The marqueterie then produced was used to decorate mahogany and satin-wood furniture of the styles in vogue during the last half of the eighteenth century. Such inlays were mechanical in design and oft repeating. Some of those used by the Brothers Adam were, however, decorative in the extreme, and consisted of inlays of ebony, harewood, and kingwood, as well as holly, which was stained in a variety of colours. Later there came the painted inlays, and the use of delicate panels, on which were pictures by or after Cipriani and Angelica Kauffman. Finally, under the inspiration of Sheraton there were the delightful ovals with beautifully inlaid shells so delicately shaded and realistically painted.

To go back for a moment to the reign of George I. the connoisseur is invited to examine the narrow herring-bone inlays which relieved the mahogany and walnut furniture of that day. That kind of ornament, which was more or less a success, continued right on until the close of the eighteenth century, and even early in the nineteenth century, as decorative borders or edgings. Marqueterie then fell into disuse, and was unknown as a practised craft during the greater part of the Victorian Age. In quite recent years reproductions of marqueterie have been made free use of in modern furniture, replicas of old styles; and in order to cheapen the cost much machine work has been introduced.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CHEST OR COFFER

The foundation piece—Many varieties—The marriage coffer.

The marginal difference between a chest or a coffer is slight. It would appear, however, that while the chest, known in England at an earlier period by some variations of the word, was primarily an uncovered box—that is to say, a box with a lid, but not covered over with skin or any additional protective covering—the coffer was regarded as of somewhat greater importance in that it was chiefly the receptacle for valuables. Hence the coffer is the name more frequently associated with the dower-chest or marriage cassone. The chest, although in early days serving the purpose of a marriage coffer, was essentially a portable piece of furniture, and associated with many a weary march. It may well claim to be the most venerated of antiques. It takes precedence of all other pieces of furniture, in that most of the other furnishings of the home sprang from it. It has served in turn as a seat, a couch, a bed, as a travelling trunk, and in its later developments as a general receptacle for household goods and personal effects. As a curio and antique the chest ranks second to none, although in almost every position assigned to it in the modern collector's home it seems out of place. It is so obvious that it belongs to a former generation—almost an older race. It is a superfluous furnishing, although with a curious irony of contradiction it is a useful receptacle for bedding and luxurious textiles and upholsteries, a safe place in which to keep the textiles of olden times.

The chest has no counterpart to-day, for although the foundation from which so many things sprang, it has outlived the intermediate connecting links, which have long grown beyond their original forms. Modern chests are an abomination, for they are such obvious replicas of the antiques they purport to represent, so much so that no modern maker has yet made a chest to deceive the greatest amateur unless he is wilfully blind or quite ignorant of the elementary methods of ancient joiners and of modern cabinet-making.

The treasure chest was not unknown to older nations. The Romans had their *arca*, which stood in the *atrium* or hall. Sometimes the *arca* was fastened to the floor, attached to the wall. It was a chest of iron or very hard wood strengthened with bands of bronze. It was a veritable treasure chest in which money and valuables were kept, and as such it was held in respect and carefully guarded. The Roman chest of that type may be regarded as the forerunner of modern treasure chests, which is exemplified to-day in the fireproof safe. From such a chest we have derived the modern term "war chest," indicating the treasure kept in reserve for such an emergency.

The chest is associated with the life history of all civilised races. It was the treasured piece of furniture in which the possessions of a tribe or a household were conveyed. In Western Europe the old treasure chest was covered with ox-hide, and sometimes contained a smaller box, which was securely locked and bound with iron. We can well understand its importance in the Middle Ages, and why such heavy chests were fitted with iron handles or rings, so that they could be the more conveniently carried about. The chest was taken over to the New World by the Pilgrim Fathers, and was given a safe and honoured place in their new homes.

The Foundation Piece.

The chest is indeed a foundation piece, for it has been the beginning of many a home, and from it have been evolved many grand pieces of furniture. Some of the very early chests were roughly hewn. They were cut with the adze or the axe, and their framework was shaped and fastened together with oaken pegs. Solidity was a necessary consideration, and very massive indeed were some of the chests made during the Middle Ages. They were used under all conditions. Richard III. slept on his military chest at the "Blue Boar" at Leicester on the eve of the Battle of Bosworth. We have heard of the treasure chest brought to this country in the retinue of William the Conqueror, and of many famous coffers used in the Middle Ages. Such chests were made of wood, put together with oaken pegs, and their covers or lids were bound with iron.

The addition of the arched top was a somewhat later innovation; originally the chest was a travelling package, a box sufficiently strong to hold its well-filled contents, which consisted of household valuables, metal wares, textiles, and other properties. It was made of the most useful shapes for transport, and was carried on poles thrust through the rings

which were provided, or in the more simple chests through holes in the sides. Chests in the Middle Ages were made by special craftsmen known as chest-makers, doubtless many of them members of the Carpenters' Guild. They were made of many different sizes, according to the purposes for which they were to be used. Travelling merchants' chests were carried on the backs of their pack-horses. It is said they used them as seats when they were negotiating a sale, and perhaps that use had a double meaning, for they would thereby keep guard over their money and valuables contained therein.

In old wills chests are spoken of, and carefully described as being "bound with yren," or merely mentioned as a "bound kiste." In old documents the word is spelled in various ways, and met with as *chist*, *chiste*, *cheste*, *cheist*, and occasionally as an ark; "k" is used now and then, thus *kyst*, *kyste*, *kyrst*.

At first, no doubt, the chest was without ornament. Afterwards it became one of the most beautiful objects, enriched with deep carvings, and inlaid with rare woods and even metals. The ornament of the chest was then of some importance, for it assisted identification. As early as the fourteenth century it is recorded that chests of oak were taking the place of iron chests, and the iron bandings on wooden chests were being discarded as they interfered with decorative carvings. The carving of the panels is a guide, too, to the modern collector, in that by the style of ornament he is able to fix with some degree of certainty the period when it was made. The date of the first appearance of the *fleur-de-lis* on oak chests is not accurately known, but on the early chests it is quite clear that the use of the French emblem ceased in 1558, when Mary lost Calais. The decorative chests, which appear to have been first made on the Continent of Europe, are the most interesting to collectors because of their beautiful workmanship, but those who prefer old English carvings will appreciate the somewhat crude attempts to reproduce mediæval scenes such as were enacted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Sometimes so-called tilting coffers are discovered; knights in armour being the chief features in the carved panels. There is one very beautiful little chest in the Victoria and Albert Museum, on which two knights tilting in the field are observable.

When James I. ascended the English throne the Scotch thistle became a common form of ornament, and was often used in the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is said there was a tulip mania in this country about 1630, every one who had a garden cultivating the plant. The village carpenter seized upon the new flower, and successfully transferred it to wood.

Many Varieties.

There are many varieties of chests collectable, yet all the outcome of the initial coffer. There are two distinct classes which seem to have sprung into existence at an earlier period, the one the ecclesiastical chest, the other the treasure chest of the layman. Many of both these types have been preserved. The muniment chests in old cathedrals, abbeys, and churches, some of them having come from the religious houses suppressed at the Reformation, seem to have suffered much from neglect and exposure, and perhaps from fanatical hands. When examining carefully one of these old chests, carved with figures and scenes, it is no uncommon thing to discover that some of the figures have been mutilated. The necessity for such chests for the preservation of church records and valuable plate is not so great as in former days, for there are more modern methods for their protection. Uses, however, are found for the old chests, which are often receptacles of vestments and similar portable objects.

The chest used for the conveyance of household goods in early days frequently contained a small tray or division in one corner for jewels or valuables. Indeed, it became a chest of chests, and when the fixed drawer was added it ceased to have that distinctive characteristic which separates the chest from the more modern type of furniture.

There is much to be admired in the cedar-wood chests, which, although large and cumbersome, were good store places before every household owned cupboards, chests of drawers, and wardrobes. Cedar-wood chests were mostly imported from Holland, many being brought over in the days of Queen Anne. They were rarely panelled, but the fronts and sides were decorated by line carving filled in with a kind of cement, the ornament being cut with a V-shaped tool. The designs took the form of curious animals and monsters, some of which had a bird's head, an animal's body, and a fishlike tail. Such chests were said to have possessed some curious properties, for the wood, while keeping moths out of textiles, caused brass or copper to discolour and even corrode, and when printed fabrics were stored the peculiar characteristics of the timber caused the ink to run or blur.

In the southern counties of England, where many chests were made, the lids were almost always quite smooth, whereas those made in the North of England were panelled. Chests filled the need for a useful and capacious receptacle,

and even when the original purpose was superseded by more modern methods of transport and the pieces of furniture which evolved from the chest, they served as useful seats in deeply-recessed windows. The day of adversity came, however, and chests were relegated to the kitchen or bedroom, and finally banished from the house altogether. They were put into stables to serve as corn-bins, into sheds as tool-boxes, and in gardens, where the beautiful old oak was often painted green. They were bleached by the hot sun, twisted and warped by rain and sunshine, and every indignity heaped upon the luckless chest, until in more modern times chests have been searched for by collectors.

The two illustrations shown here are very fine examples. Fig. 77 is a handsome Jacobean chest deeply carved, and in fine condition; Fig. 78 is another chest in which the whole of the front is carved—it has a plain lid, whereas Fig. 77 is panelled, illustrating the two distinct characteristics already referred to.

The Marriage Coffer.

The distinctive use to which coffers were put in early days calls for special mention apart from the oaken chest, from which evolved so much useful furniture. The coffer presented to the bride, and conveyed with great ceremony to her new home, became a feature in household economy at an early date. The trousseau and her dowry of household linen, finely-wrought embroidery, and jewels, were enclosed in that precious casket. The chest intended for such a special use, to be regarded afterwards as an heirloom of great value to the bride's descendants, would naturally be an object upon which the artist and decorator would bestow their best efforts.

The cassone, or marriage coffer, was probably looked for with pleasurable anticipation, for in the Middle Ages property was stored "in kind," and the extent of the bride's possessions would be gauged by the richness of the chest and its contents. Many remarkable chests have been preserved and handed down as heirlooms in old families. To the collector they are doubly interesting, because of their intrinsic value as specimens of the carver's or decorator's art, and of the way in which they tell by their carvings of the scenes associated with marriages in older time. Sometimes such chests travelled far, and they are often referred to in history as indispensable features in the marriage preparations. Catherine de Medici had her cassone in her baggage when she travelled with her cavalcade from Tuscany to France. Catherine of Aragon brought her marriage chest along with her personal possessions, which were shipped to England, where the fickle Henry awaited his bride. Another royal lady of that name, Catherine of Braganza, carried a cassone among her Indo-Portuguese treasures when she journeyed to Whitehall.

Although the styles of such beautiful chests differed, there was often something about the marriage coffer which indicated a special character. Its inlays and other ornaments in *gesso*, or carved wood, were of the richest. Now and then the cassone would be overlaid with velvet and costly needlework. The painter and the carver vied with one another in rendering such coffers beautiful. Many very elaborate pieces were made in Italy, France, and Spain during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; in Spain the *cuir boulli* process of leather ornamentation was much favoured. The subject matter of the ornament is, however, the chief consideration of the connoisseur who inspects marriage coffers. In museums and private collections there are many interesting specimens. One notable chest has an inlaid panel picturing a room in which are a matron and maid, both seated, while standing near is a youth, the attitude of the young couple indicating a betrothal ceremony. In some schemes of ornament a cavalcade (in which the chest itself figures) indicates the arrival of the bride and her retinue at the home of the bridegroom. Other carvings represent the departure of the bride from her old home. On one notable chest the bridegroom's mother is seen embracing the young wife in the presence of an assembled company. Through an open doorway in the distance there is a mule laden with the baggage of the newly-married girl.

There are some fine old marriage coffers in the Musée Cluny in Paris. The museum is a wonderful place, well worth visiting. Its associations are so full of interest to the collector and antiquarian. In the old Latin quarter, the historic site where once stood a Roman palace in 1331 passed into the possession of the Abbots of Cluny in Burgundy. There a palace was built, and in it James V. of Scotland and the daughter of Francis I. of France were married; their daughter was Mary Queen of Scots. The so-called Hôtel, now a museum, contains upwards of twelve thousand art treasures, and many wonderful examples of old furniture are among them. One fine marriage coffer, dating from the sixteenth century, is worth inspecting. Its decoration is *paté appliqué* in relief upon a gilded surface. The moulding is remarkably well executed and extremely effective.

In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are several beautiful Venetian coffers of cypress wood of fifteenth-century make; there are also some walnut cassones, and others ornamented with gesso. One of these pieces of sarcophagus shape is of walnut, and afterwards painted; another is of black walnut deeply carved in high relief—it is purely architectural in design, and has some fine mouldings surrounding figures of cherubs and angels. An Italian fifteenth-century marriage

coffer is almost entirely covered with scenes representing processions of knights and dames. The carving is in low relief, and much of the ornament is filled in with stucco, painted and gilt, the ends of the coffer being enriched with damask work. Among the coffers, which are essentially marriage chests, is a very fine cassone of Italian (Florentine) style, made about 1550. Upon it are carved the triumphs of Love, Chastity, and Death. On the front are Pyramus and Thisbe, and on the sides Narcissus. In the allegorical carving Cupid is shown bound to the central car of Chastity, which is drawn by two unicorns; on another portion of the chest there is a funeral car bearing Death, with his scythe, standing on two coffins.

The chest underwent many changes in the manner of its decoration, as we have seen. In the early days there was the simple coffer; later the sarcophagus form became the popular type of the marriage chest. In Italy decorative ornament began, and some of the most beautiful effects were produced in gesso, which was a mixture of whiting and glue, spread over the surface of the carved wood, forming the basis of gilding. The chests of Spain were ornamented in a similar way, although the *cuir boulli* leather coverings were often used, especially for coffrets or small coffers.

There is a special interest in the highly-decorative marqueterie work, which readily groups itself into several distinct classes. This method of decorating furniture by inlay, and by processes of overlay, takes its origin in very early days. Pliny, under the name of *cerostrotum*, refers to a combination of wood with inlays of horn. The *intarsiatori*, or marqueterie workers, were first heard of in Italy in the thirteenth century. It is not, however, until we come to the fifteenth century that the more famous works of well-known artists are recognised. Among the names of Italian marqueterie workers may be mentioned those of Giuliano da Maiano, Baccio Pellini, Guido del Servellino, and a little later the several brethren of the Carthusian Order made this kind of work popular. They adopted scenic and landscape decoration as well as geometrical designs, combining with coloured woods ivory, and in some instances metal, many of the smaller coffrets being enriched with precious stones. Italy was the chief country celebrated for the manufacture of furniture in *piqué*, but some of it was produced in Portugal. In many instances the decorated wood-work is further embellished with pierced copper ornaments and fancy bands and hinges. This class of work, although somewhat distinct from marqueterie, as it is generally understood, is often used in conjunction with it. The most common type of *piqué* work is Indian; but such fine mosaic inlays seem to have originated in Persia. The Indian work, however, is somewhat similar, and Persian cabinets were much copied in Venice.

CHAPTER XXII

CHESTS OF DRAWERS, BUREAUS, AND BOOKCASES

The chest of drawers—The tall-boy—The commode—Bureaus—Bookcases.

In the previous chapter the story of the chest has been related. Its strictly utilitarian purposes, its sentimental associations, and its position as a primary piece from which so many articles of furniture evolved, have been explained. It remains now to trace those developments as they are seen in the years which followed the first departure from the simple chest. The marriage coffer, as already pointed out, became extravagantly decorative in its treatment. Under Spanish and French influence the Renaissance of art touched the one-time simple chest or coffer, and it became a thing of great beauty, an object upon which a wealth of inlay and costly carving, and even painting, was expended. It is, however, in its utilitarian progress that the real change going on in social life and domestic arrangements is so noticeable; and it is when the chest became no longer an empty box with large capacity, but with no convenient division spaces, that the collector of furniture begins to realise its primary importance.

The Chest of Drawers.

The chest was furnished with a drawer in Cromwellian days; it then became a chest *with* drawers, and a little later a chest *of* drawers. It is obvious that the convenience of the drawers, when the chest had become a handy storing place for bed-linen and clothing, and no longer needed for frequent transport, was appreciated.

The trunk was still used by travellers, but it parted company with the chest, or evolved on distinct lines from it, when the chest became a chest of drawers, and a more permanent piece of furniture.

When the Restoration came about, and Charles II. was crowned king, the first great stage in the evolution of the chest was complete—the Cromwellian chest had become a chest of drawers.

The old style of carved ornament seen upon the fronts of chests and upon double-chests, when the upper parts opened like cupboards, was quite unsuited to the fronts of drawers. The panels, therefore, were made smaller, in accordance with the depths of the drawer fronts. The stiles and the fronts were left plain, uncarved, in keeping with the plainer fronts of the Cromwellian chests of drawers. The cabinet-makers of that day were equal to the occasion, and saw possibilities of a new style of ornamentation in the decoratively arranged panels they introduced on the shallow drawer fronts, not unlike the dresser or table drawer front then being made. The ornaments with which these fronts—stiles and panels—were decorated consisted of split turned pieces, which formed a distinctive feature and characteristic ornament of that period.

It was not long before chests of drawers were dividable into two classes—those on raised stands on twisted supports or legs, and those standing on the ground, from which they were raised somewhat by large ball or bun-like feet.

The period beginning with the year 1675 marked a great change in decorative ornament. The panelled fronts of drawers, and the framework of chests, were destined to give place to a new order of things. This was the direct result not only in a revolution in style or change of thought, so much as from the new material used. The smooth-surfaced walnut was not so well adapted to the panels which had been so well suited to the treatment of oak. A new method of ornamentation was called for, and an inspiration came from an unexpected quarter. The period beginning 1675 coincides with the flat stretcher, early marqueterie, and lacquer. It was a time, too, when metal-workers were busy, for brass handles and key-plates had been found more suitable for a smooth walnut front than the wood knobs which had been used hitherto. But none of these styles suited the Frenchwoman, Louise de Queronalle, who had just been created Duchess of Portsmouth. Her power at Court was then supreme, and she set the fashion by filling her rooms at Whitehall with furniture of French style (*see* chapter x.).

At that time chests of drawers on stands were often mentioned in old wills as “chests of drawers and tables.” It must not be supposed that the change in style at court produced an immediate change throughout the country; indeed, the split-turned ornaments on moulded panels were continued in many places after the stands had been lowered, for the tendency to shorten the legs was quickly developed. Of that period there are many beautiful examples extant.

Styles overlap, and newer types of feet or legs were added or substituted. Indeed, it is sometimes noticeable that feet and legs are not in keeping with the upper portion of a piece of old furniture, such later additions being recognised by the expert without difficulty. About 1680 S-shaped scroll-legs were made; quite distinct from the cabriole leg of a later date. Wooden knobs were then correct—a point worth special note—in that when knobs were broken they were at a later period replaced by drop handles, again producing a source of trouble to the amateur.

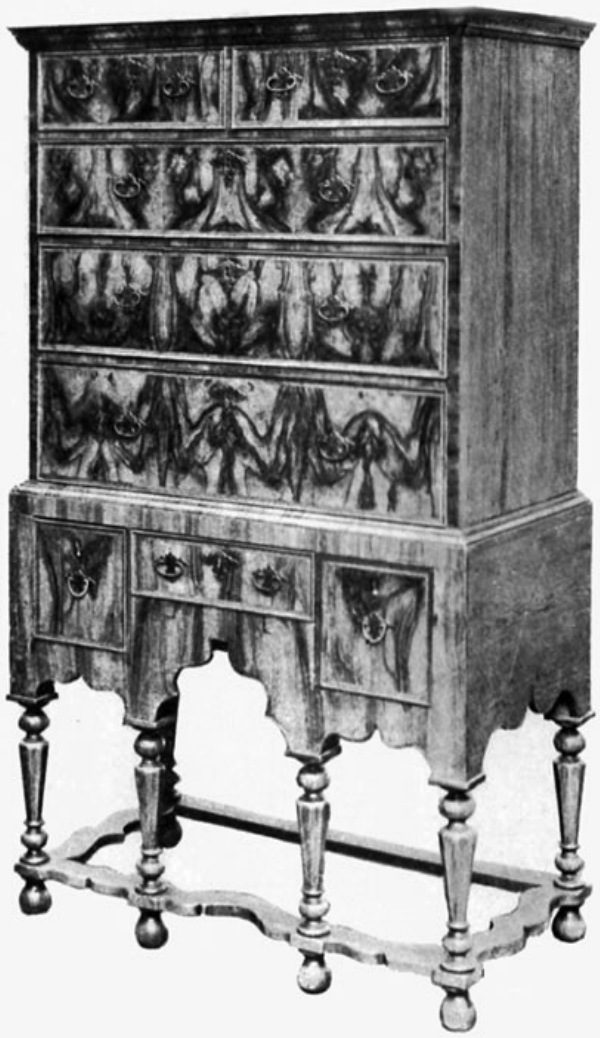

FIG. 79.—WALNUT CHEST OF DRAWERS, 1700.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 80.—MAHOGANY TALLBOY SECRETAIR 18th CENTURY.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 81.—OAK CHAIR,
1687.

FIG. 82.—CARVED OAK VESTRY CHAIR,
17th CENTURY.

Chests of drawers on stands, such as have been referred to, continued to be made well into the early years of the eighteenth century. There were exceptions, however, for although twisted legs prevailed during the last few years of the seventeenth century, some of the stands are more correctly defined as “cupped and turned.” The chests of that day were

not large, consisting usually of two long drawers and two half-length drawers of varying depths—sometimes a shallow drawer was added in the plinth of the chest.

As it has been stated, although there were chests on stands, especially among the more decorative pieces, there were others on ball or bun feet. In course of time ball feet became damaged, and there are many chests, now fitted with bracket feet, which had probably ball feet when first made late in the seventeenth century or early in the eighteenth century.

The marqueterie chests, fully described in chapter xx., form quite a distinctive class, the style of their ornamentation changing slightly as time went on. The types were taken at first from natural flowers and leaves, then the acanthus leaves became stereotyped, and intertwined with conventional patterns constituted another style, to be superseded a little later by foliated scrolls, having little affinity to the realistic forms of the earlier types.

The lacquered chests (Oriental, Dutch, and English are referred to in chapter xix.), so beautifully ornamented with metal plates and handles, are said to have awakened in the minds of English cabinet-makers a dormant taste for better decoration. Years before, wrought-iron hinges and lock-plates had been discarded in favour of carving. The oriental metal work, however, of later date, caught the popular taste, and brass plates were to follow.

There seems to have been a pause in cabinet-making towards the close of Queen Anne's reign; the war in which this country was then engaged had been long and tedious, and had drained the purses of the middle classes; merchants and others economised in their buying of furniture as well as in their household expenditure. It was then that the women began to wear calico instead of silk, and to use printed calico hangings for their beds instead of heavy textiles. A sign of the economic building and furnishing was also seen in the appreciation of the newly-invented wall papers, which were then taking the place of wainscot and tapestry and more costly materials.

The chest of drawers became an institution later in the century, gradually assuming larger proportions. The plain fronts were then relieved by serpentine shapes. When the Walnut Age had passed away, and mahogany had taken its place, the chest of drawers was veneered, inlaid, and ornamented, according to the styles prevailing, under the respective influences of the Brothers Adam, Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

From such chests as those described evolved other departures, and some of them evolved independently. In all the stages of progress made by the wood-worker during the eighteenth century metal handles and handle-plates were used. In course of time the chest of drawers became essentially a piece of bedroom furniture, whereas in former times it had been one of more general household usefulness.

There is an example of an exceptionally fine early walnut chest on stand shown in Fig. 79. It was probably made about 1700. It is in the possession of Messrs Waring & Gillow, Ltd.

The Tall-Boy.

The chest of drawers in course of time became too small for growing needs, and by an easy process of development the tall-boy or double-chest came into being. The earlier double-chests seem to have developed independently from the original chest or coffer, but it was not until the reign of William III. that the double-chest (drawers only) appeared. The early double-chest consisted of a deep drawer on tall cabriole feet as the lower portion, with a full chest (three long and two short drawers) for the upper. The tall-boy became a complete piece of furniture with cornice and moulding, made in two portions, a plan retained chiefly for the convenience of lifting off the upper chest or section in case of removal, or for other purposes. Some of these beautiful tall-boys have been referred to in previous chapters, and an example is given in Fig. 68.

The Commode.

The commode is the name given to a chest of drawers designed chiefly in French style, although not necessarily so. In chapter x. (French Furniture) special reference is made to the beautiful chests ornamented with metal mounts and inlays, produced in France or under French influence during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Some of Boulle's best work is seen on the commodes he decorated. The bureau was not infrequently a development of the commode rather than of the English type of chest of drawers. The decorative French commodes of the eighteenth century and of the still earlier seventeenth century are notable examples of the higher achievements of the cabinet-maker's art, as seen in some representative collections. The commode was an attractive piece of furniture at the Court of Louis XIV., and of his

immediate successors. In the time of Louis XIV. the *espagnolette* (the name given to the female head with plaited ruff), so often seen on furniture of that day, was a noticeable ornament on much of the furniture. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a commode of unusual type decorated in marqueterie of Dutch style, upon the model of the seventeenth century French piece. It was formerly in the Castle of Montargis, and was given to the National Collection by the late Miss Margaret Coutts Trotter.

Bureaus.

The diversity of chests of drawers, bureaus, commodes, and the like, sold at one stated period, is seen in the trade lists and labels of cabinet-makers. Such labels, which are extremely interesting, are scarce, but they are occasionally found pasted upon the backs of antique pieces. Here is one of them:—

> "John Knowles, Cabinet Maker and Sworn Appraiser, at the Cabinet and four Coffins in Tooley Street, Southwark, maketh and selleth all sorts of cabinets and joiners goods, Viz. Cabinets, scruetores, desk and book cases, bewrowes, chests of draws and all sorts of tables as wallnut tree mehogny, wainscot and japan'd. All sorts of corner Cubbords, looking glasses and sconces, and all other joiner's goods made and sold both wholesale and retail at reasonable rates. Likewise funerals decently furnished."

It will be seen from the above that cabinet-makers were providing for a variety of wants; further, that Mr Knowles and his printer were not very particular in their method of spelling.

The bureau was the distinct outcome of the need for a writing-table or stand which combined all the advantages of a desk, cabinet, and a safe place in which to lock up letters and documents of importance. It was the beginning of more businesslike habits, and the bureau was to the middle-class householder and man of small private means what the library table and writing cabinet were to the wealthier patron of the cabinet-maker.

The bureau had, however, quite an early beginning, for it was the name given in 1650 to a small box with drawers with a flap to let down. The term is correctly applied to any desk or writing cabinet in which there is provision for writing upon—like a flap or draw-out desk. There is, however, a distinction, especially from the cabinet-maker's view point, between bureau-desks and secretaires over desks with drawers, some of which were made about 1700. The fall-flap of the former was very deep, and covered a cupboard-like space filled up with small drawers almost flush with the front. The bureaus and bureau-cabinets which followed were quite distinct, although under an upper cupboard or cabinet, which was raised above the bureau top. Below such cupboards, and over the bureau, there were frequently small draw-out flaps, intended as rests or stands for candlesticks. The bureau flap, hinged at the bottom, falls back in a sloping direction, and is locked with a specially-made slanting lock, known as a sloping bureau-desk lock; the brass hinged supports to the flap, supplemented later by draw-out slides or supports, are important features to note.

Bureau-cabinets have often arched pediments, some double-arched. Scroll-shaped pediments are found on bureau-cabinets made between 1720 and 1740, frequently supplemented by carved *pateræ*—these were used in lieu of moulded cornices. The fittings of the cabinets differ, some being almost entirely filled with really useful and carefully planned divisions (far more appropriate to the methods of book-keeping, the keeping of accounts, and the filing of papers, then in vogue, than the divisions in most of the modern roll-top desks are to modern needs and systems). The little cupboard door in the centre of the bureau-cabinet, when opened, usually disclosed little drawers, which were more or less correctly designated secret drawers. There were, too, many curiously contrived places for holding papers and trinkets, which were unknown to any but the owner, and many such old bureaus have kept the secret until by chance they have been discovered many long years after the treasures in those hiding-places were concealed.

The escritoire, secretaire, or secretary, is defined as a writing-table or desk, the term being used indiscriminately in designating a writing place other than a bureau with a sloping top. The term suggests the original meaning, which implied secrecy, or a piece of furniture in which secrets were hid. Many of the secretaire cabinets which have now clear glass doors, making them so well adapted to the display of old china, had originally silvered glass fronts. The architectural treatment of such pieces gradually became more imposing, the pediments and hoods over the cupboards being frequently too large, although offering many opportunities of decorative treatment in accord, of course, with the style then prevailing. It is evident that many of these cabinets or cupboards, which had originally silvered glass fronts, and some with clear glass lined with textile material, were intended for bookcases as indicated by the grooves for shelf-

adjustment.

The carving and inlays of the period further indicate the type of correct ornament on bureaus. Hepplewhite made cylindrical-fronted bureau-cabinets which were then popular. The fronts were often profusely decorated with painted flowers. The designs of Sheraton provided for shell inlays and bandings, and after that well-figured mahogany veneers were edged with lighter woods. It would be difficult indeed to find anything more beautiful and rich than a well-preserved bureau desk; than a fall-front of well-marked Spanish mahogany, with a beautifully designed and coloured oval inlay shell ornament, in the centre of the flap. Fig. 80 represents an exceptionally fine tall-boy secretaire of late eighteenth century make. The inlays of stringed ornament are very effective, also the inlays on the central door, concealing secret drawers in the secretaire, and on the bottom drawer of the chest. The handles and escutcheons are of old style, and in keeping. The chamfered fluted edge of the front of the chest is well executed and relieved with inlay.

Bookcases.

The earlier bookcases were glazed with Vauxhall silvered glass, but the material did not stand the test of time, and having become spotted no longer enhances the beauty of the furniture on which it was used. Like so many old mirror frames, bookcase doors have been re-glazed, mostly with clear or transparent glass. Bookcases, as such, were rarely made at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but there are many converted cabinets or china cupboards which later in the century served as bookcases, their silvered glasses having been removed and transparent glass substituted. That accounts for the apparent contradiction in the style of some of the so-called bookcases.

From 1790 onwards bookcases were then called for, for the middle classes were beginning to buy books—very dry theological, historical, and scientific works. The type of bookcase changed in after years; surmounted on a cupboard with, usually, two doors, an intermediate long drawer between the glazed bookcase and the cupboards was introduced. In course of time the clear glazed doors were ornamented by decorated astragal-patterned wood-work, which made the glazed fronts of bookcases so attractive, and showed much skill in the cutting of the astragals. The divisions of such bookcases were irregular, however, having been built up without having been properly set out. The bookcase in detail may not be striking, but when the general effect of case, pediment, under doors, and astragel divisions of a well-filled bookcase are taken into account, it would be difficult to find a more interesting or useful piece of Georgian furniture for the collector or home connoisseur to treasure.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHAIRS AND SETTEES

Before the Christian era—A thousand years—The fifteenth century and earlier—Sixteenth-century seats—Seventeenth-century chairs—Eighteenth-century seats.

The evolution of the seat—chair, stool, couch, and settee—is one of the most fascinating romances connected with antique furniture. It is obvious that tired humanity quickly learned the need of resting its weary limbs, and although the couch provided by Mother Earth was the first upon which human limbs were stretched and the primitive tribes reclined in sleep, artificial resting-places followed quickly. At what stage in the onward march man (and woman, too) began to sit upright, we know not; it is clear, however, that like some of the brute creation, even the primitive savage soon learned to vary his resting posture, and sat as well as reclined.

Fallen rocks, boulder stones, and water-worn seats by river banks were Nature's chairs, and when the fallen tree provided a wooden seat the first stage in chair-making had been reached. The stone hatchet, and later the bronze celt, cut off superfluous branches and trimmed suitable logs. Many cromlechs and the great trilithons of Stonehenge tell of the early mechanical and architectural balancing of a slab of stone crosswise on two upright stones. The prehistoric dweller in mud hut had before him a model to copy, and a chair or stool of large size from which he could make a primitive seat of wood or stone. From that beginning the seat supported by legs or feet often fashioned in human form may well have been evolved. The evolution of the seat was one continued triumph of the chair-maker's craft, for it revealed his identity, his close connection with what was going on around him, and his impressionable nature which received fresh impulses from passing events in his own and other countries, and especially so from his environment.

In mediæval England the Joiners' Company made chairs and other furniture. In the division of the work of the carpenter and the joiner, the latter was apportioned "rayles, sealinge boards, wainscott clapp-boards, and bed timber," as materials from which to make furniture. But those joiners only followed in the footsteps of others, who in the course of centuries had separated themselves from kindred craftsmen. Like the carpenters the joiners of the Middle Ages believed in strength and solidity.

Before the Christian Era.

For seats of shapely form preserved in museums, sculptured on lasting tablets and monuments of stone, and painted on sarcophaguses of the dead we must turn to ancient Egypt. From a tomb of the fourth century before the Christian era comes a carved wood chair, having legs like those of a lion. That, the oldest type, was reproduced on more modern lines and upholstered and cushioned in France under the New Empire.

Mention is made in another chapter of the chair which once belonged to Queen Hatshepsut, of the 18th Dynasty, now on view in the British Museum. It bears the royal cartouche, and is still magnificent in its decay. It is of rosewood, and its legs are carved to resemble those of bulls; a gilded cobra entwines itself around each leg, and there are other emblems and carvings of great merit adorning this ancient chair. Other Egyptian chairs or thrones were fashioned like running lions, from which they were doubtless modelled. In the paintings of the walls of tombs are seen many such chairs and a plenteous supply of skins. Such seats were for those in high degree, and were not used by dependents, who sat about on the ground, but they tell of an art achieved, and point to a lost period of chair-making, representing a still earlier age, during which the development of the craft from primitive seats as exemplified in nature to those perfected by Egyptian artists went on.

Greek artisans from the earliest recorded accounts were clever makers of chairs, too. Some few ancient examples are extant, and far more are rendered familiar by paintings on Greek vases. The *thronos* was a seat of honour occupied by gods and wealthy citizens alike. Temple seats were of marble and beautifully carved, but wood was the material employed in making the Greek domestic high seat or chair over which skin rugs were thrown, and in connection with which cushions were used. The chief Greek chair besides the *thronos* was the *diphros*, a cross-legged seat or stool with a webbed seat. It was a folding chair upon which some art was expended; and the decorations were of special interest. The *diphros* was eventually lengthened, and became a reclining couch without head- or foot-rest. To this was added a

side or back, and a head, and in that there was a model for cabinet-makers to copy centuries later when they contrived a sofa.

Another Greek chair named *klismos* had a comfortable sloping back with a bar, forming a rest for the shoulders. That, too, was not far behind modern chairs in elegance and comfort. Many illustrations of Greek *thronoi* may be noted in the frieze of the Parthenon in the British Museum, and in sculptures showing bronze chairs damascened with gold and silver made during the last two centuries preceding the Christian era.

In Rome replicas of Greek chairs were made by Greek workmen whom the Romans employed. Low-railed chairs accommodating three were used at meals, at which the men reclined but the women sat. The *sella curalis* was the folding-seat placed in the chariot and used at the baths and in lecture halls; and as time went on the use of more luxurious seats grew apace.

A Thousand Years.

A thousand years in the history of chair-making seems in the light of present day progress an impossible period to compress into one short paragraph. Yet so little is known of the intermediate stages of the evolution of the chair—if such can be said to have then existed—that there is very little indeed to chronicle. The authentic examples of domestic furniture used prior to the Norman Conquest are few indeed. Roman civilisation spread, but the artisans of that great Empire moved slowly out of their accustomed ruts. Wherever the legions went the same rule was established, and Roman generals sought to plant towns and cities on the model of Rome. They built baths and houses with porticos, irrespective of the climate of the conquered countries in which they settled—and they made chairs and tables on the patterns they and their ancestors had used in the Imperial City. It was so in Britain all through the four centuries of Roman occupation. The curule chair mentioned already was the type of chair represented as St Edward's seat in the Bayeaux tapestry, made more than a thousand years after the style had been formulated.

In Saxon days stools were used which in their plainness contrasted with the heavily underframed chairs of state or honour. The importance of the state chair has come down to us throughout the ages, and we still attach some honour to the man who "occupies the chair." The chairman sitting in a chair somewhat larger and more imposing than those occupied by his friends around him claims attention. When there are cries of "Chair! Chair!" its occupant feels a reflection of the dignity of the throne.

There are a few chairs of historical renown still extant, which were made during the first thousand years of the Christian era. Among them the chair of St Peter in the Vatican, supposed to have been made prior to the fifth century; that of St Maximian at Ravenna; the seventh-century chair of Dagobert, now in the Musée des Souveraines at Paris; and the chair of the Venerable Bede.

A development in seats was made in Saxon days when fireplaces were built. The stool or bench had been lengthened into a seat for three or more; a back had been added, and thus a settle was formed. The settle was a portable seat often placed at right angles to the fire (as in the ingle-nook), and was in later times winged to prevent draughts.

FIG. 83.—CHILD'S HIGH CHAIR, OAK.

FIG. 84.

CARVED WALNUT CHAIRS,
PERIOD 1685-1689.

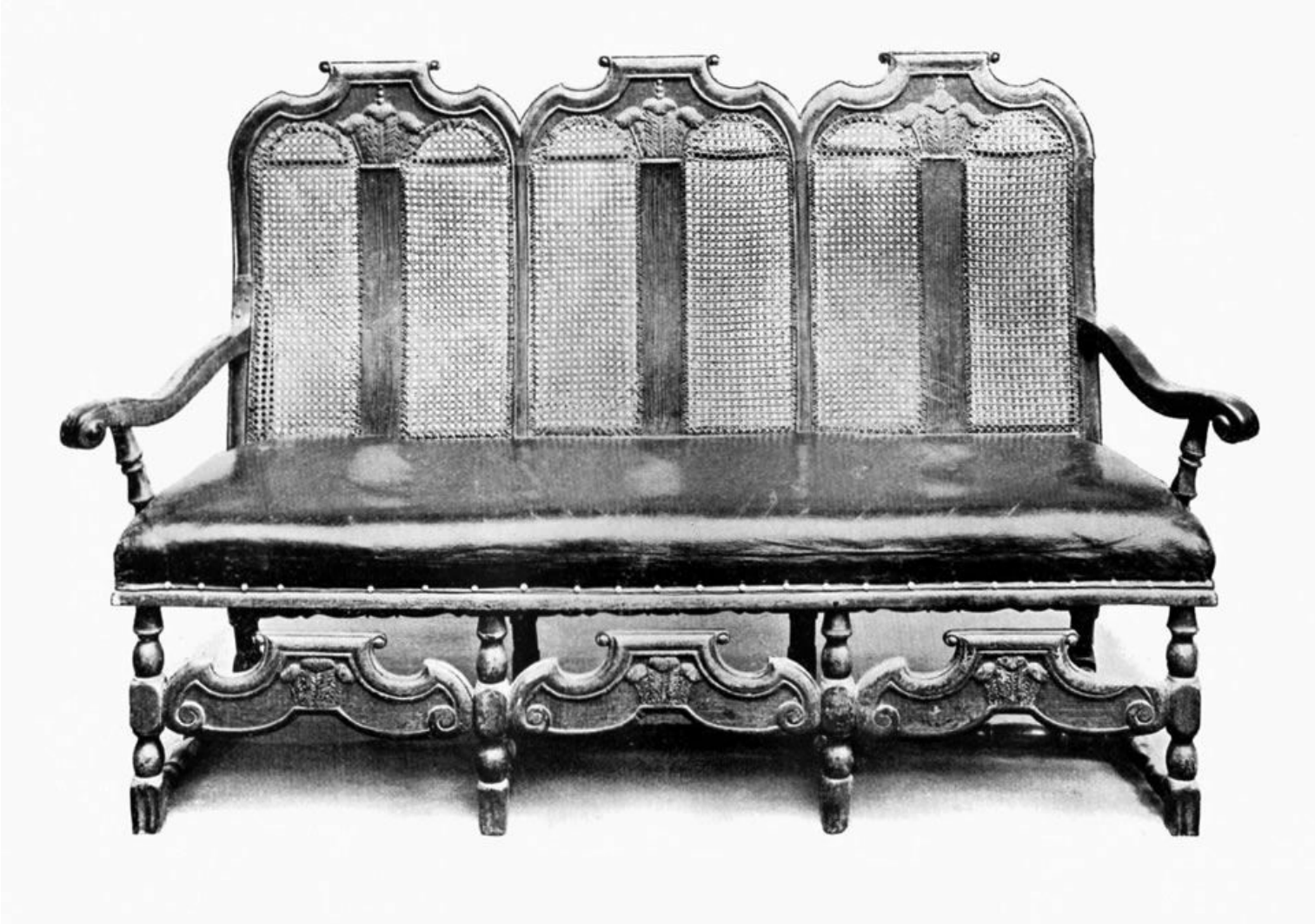

FIG. 86.—WALNUT SETTEE WITH CANED BACK, 1686.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY AND EARLIER.

Another long spell, and historians have little to tell about chair-making. In the four hundred and some odd years which elapsed between the Norman Conquest (an epoch-making landmark in British history), until the close of the fifteenth century, only a few, a very few, chairs of historic fame were made destined to remain to the present time. Yet there is one chair that can never be left out of the story of British history and furniture making, for it is closely allied to the great changes in Royal houses, and is a part of the crowning ceremony of our kings. The worm-eaten shabby old chair now in Westminster Abbey, in its place of honour near St Edward's tomb, is visited by many who travel miles to gaze upon the relic, beneath the seat of which is the stone shrouded in mystery, yet one which Englishmen have treasured for many centuries. The Coronation chair was made for Edward I. in the thirteenth century; it has a gabled and crocketed back, panelled with tracery work, and it rests on a stand flanked by gilded lions. The chair itself contains under the seat the Coronation stone, which, according to legend, is itself a seat, a relic of far-off times when the ancient kings of Ireland were crowned seated upon it. Fabled history tells of this inaugurative seat of stone having been carried from Ireland by Fergus, the son of Eric, who led the Dalrieds to the shores of Argyleshire. That may be a myth, but accredited history tells of its removal from Scone by Edward I., and of the stone being the rude seat of the Kings of Scotland, who, prior to its removal, swore fealty to their country's laws upon it. British sovereigns are Kings of Scotland as well as of England, and the old chair, and the still older stone seat, in Westminster Abbey, will be preserved as long as Britain's rule:—

"Unless the Fates are faithless found
And Prophet's voice be vain

Where'er this monument be found
The Scottish race shall reign."

A stone seat was the Coronation "chair" of Saxon days, and now exposed to wind and storm, the crowning place of many Saxon monarchs, that ancient seat may be viewed in the main street of Kingston-on-Thames surrounded by iron "spears" to protect it.

It is not all English kings since the time of Edward I. who have been crowned upon historic seats of honour. A plain unpretentious oaken chair long preserved in Plaxstok Castle, near Coleshill, according to a brass plate upon it, was a chair in which Henry of Richmond was crowned King on the battlefield of Bosworth, after the defeat of Richard III.

In the Middle Ages chairs were few. They were still the seats of honour; coffers and benches and stools were used by others. At that time there was, however, a gradual inclination to add to the number of chairs of state, and less decorative and smaller seats modelled on the form of the larger ones were provided for guests and those who held high positions in the household of the baron. Panelled chairs became lighter and some turned or thrown chairs were introduced, several of which may be seen in Hereford Cathedral (*see* also Fig. 7). The travelling outfit still included furniture, but folding chairs were freely introduced. Leathern cases for furniture were not infrequently used at that time during household removals.

From Continental history we learn much about the furniture of the period earlier than the year 1500. In Italy velvet-covered chairs were being made, but there was not much change in the solid wood-work of the Middle Ages, during which the chair remained a seat of honour, of authority, or of justice. In every household the Master's chair was placed between the bed and the chimney, with its back to the wall. It frequently stood on a low dais, and the seat was often hinged, a useful box being provided under it.

Many graceful and yet substantial chairs of Gothic design were made in Germany in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the carving being usually in low relief. There was an improvement, however, a century later, when the carving was better executed. During the Middle Ages some of the German seats were sexagonal and even octagonal. The folding wood chair, however, retained a strong hold. One of the greatest relics of that period is the folding wood chair of Salzburg claimed to be the oldest piece of furniture in Germany. It is a quaintly decorated chair painted red, and enriched with ivory lions' heads and feet serving as supports; it was given by Eberhard II., Archbishop of Salzburg, to the Abbess Gertrude II. (1238-1252). Human figures and animals were often carved and served as ornaments, relieving Gothic tracery and floral relief. Biblical scenes were chosen for such decorations.

Sixteenth-century Seats.

The high-backed bench gave place to the curule-shaped chair which became popular about 1530, having been reintroduced into England by Italian workmen, who were brought over to this country in the reign of Henry VIII. Early in the sixteenth century painted chairs were commonly in vogue both in England and on the Continent of Europe. The Spanish chair was a favourite type, its high back and carved arms, turned legs, and connecting rails distinguishing it from earlier styles. The chairs were then of three general types—the **X**-shape, the thrown or turned, and the "seeled" (enclosed by panels). The last-named variety came in when, after armour had been discarded, there was no longer need for heavy or strong seats or stools. The "seeled" or closed chair was merely an adaptation of the ecclesiastical seats or stalls then in churches, which were ready at hand to copy or adapt. The Spanish cathedrals furnish some of the best examples. From the ornamentation on many of these it is assumed that their makers derived their inspiration from German sources. That was due, probably, to wood-workers and carvers from the Low Countries settling in Spain at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The decoration of those chairs was mostly intarsia (explained fully in chapter xx.). There are still many fine sixteenth-century chairs in the Cathedral of Toledo. In the Treasury of St Mark's in Venice there is a high-backed walnut chair, reputed to be an ancient Doge's throne.

Women used cushions and sat on the floor during the sixteenth century. To the City of Pisa belongs the credit of having founded a new style in 1587, when light chairs with rush seats, especially suitable for women, were made. Not long afterwards in France some pleasing little chairs were modelled. One of these, the *coquetoire*, was much used by ladies for sitting upon in front of the fire, thus taking the place of stools or cushions which had been used previously.

All through the sixteenth century it was customary to place armchairs for those entitled to sit at the high places at table, benches and stools being used by others. This custom prevailed in France and in other Continental countries. Towards the close of the century stools and benches gave place to chairs, and household furniture became more uniform,

owing, probably, to the gradual division of the servants and retainers from the family, all of whom had at an earlier period feasted in the common hall.

In Flanders leather-covered seats were used towards the close of the sixteenth century; in England stools continued in common use. They were to be found everywhere. Such seats were usually "joyned" stools with simple turned legs, the framework being sometimes ornamented with strap decorations. When the swelled bulb or melon bulb became fashionable in Elizabeth's time that form of ornament was applied to the legs of stools, as well as to other furniture.

In the dining-hall the joint or carver's stool came into vogue. It was referred to by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which we learn that when Capulet's Hall was being cleared for the dance, the serving man cried, "Away with the *joint stools*, remove the court cupboard, look to the plate." Chairs were not common in Elizabeth's reign, but they were more freely introduced. They were solid looking, carved with floral decorations, and inlaid with rare woods in conventional designs. Those were the days when the farthingale was in fashion and large chairs were needed.

There are some relics of note belonging to the sixteenth century, among them Queen Mary's chair, reminiscent of her marriage with Phillip of Spain, kept in Winchester Cathedral (this **X**-shaped chair was used at her wedding). There are other examples of sixteenth-century seats and many benches, but few possess reliable pedigrees. Mr F. Harris Mitchell, of Chard, possesses a fine old Gothic bench, recently loaned to the Victoria and Albert Museum, which for many years was in the Green Dragon Inn, at Coombe St Nicholas, in Somerset. It is a grand old piece with linen-fold back and many interesting features, although time and rough usage have injured much of the decorative carving.

Seventeenth-century Chairs.

The beginning of the seventeenth century was marked by the commencement of colonisation. Those who landed in Virginia and formed settlements carried only bare necessaries. They did not take furniture with them.

In 1620 the *Mayflower* sailed, and the first seats made in New England homes were settles (*see* chapter xviii.). Those most favoured were made with ear or wing pieces at the end, and lockers were provided under the seats. Some had shelves for candles at the back. In connection with the seats used in New Holland churches it is said the Dutch vrouws were provided with footstools on which were painted pictures of the Last Judgment.

In England the substantial furniture of the earlier period was still favoured, but many of the chairs were lighter and more decorative. The box settle or monk's bench was deemed a useful seat, its movable high back folding over and making it a table rendered it useful in a small house. The ordinary settle might have been seen in almost every home in rural England at that time; as the century advanced there was a general lightening of the framework of the settle, and a shallower relief in the carving. The chair mostly favoured during the first half of the century was plain, simple, and stunted in appearance. It was frequently upholstered. In the reign of James I. many richly covered farthingale chairs were made; one of these in walnut, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of the period 1603-1625, is covered with woollen cloth, decorated with applied embroidery in coloured silks on canvas.

Charles I. gave much encouragement to some of the fine arts, and during his reign the taste for richly upholstered chairs increased, much labour being expended on the needlework.

Many valuable and what would have been now much-prized antiques were destroyed during the Civil War, when so many castles and their furniture were demolished. It was about the time of the Commonwealth that spiral turnery was introduced from Holland, although that kind of work had been known at a much earlier date, as was evidenced by the turned or thrown chairs previously referred to (*see* Fig. 7). The so-called Cromwell chairs were doubtless of Dutch origin, too. They were mostly upholstered in leather.

FIG. 87.—MAHOGANY ARM CHAIR.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 89. FIG. 90. FIG. 91.

HEPPLEWHITE CHAIRS, MAHOGANY,
PART OF SET.
1770.

CHIPPENDALE CHAIRS, MAHOGANY,
PART OF SET.
1755.

The greatest change of the century in chair-making came after the Restoration. Italian and Spanish influence were noticeable in the artistic mode prevailing during the reign of Charles II. The new style in chair-making originated in the introduction of Flemish front rails, Spanish feet, and the inclusion of Italian cupids holding and supporting English crowns. At that time there came an influx of Chinese and Eastern influence in design, for Bombay was the dowry of Queen Catherine, and thenceforth England was brought into close commercial touch with India and the Far East.

Walnut was at that time much used, although oak was still preferred for tables and heavy furniture. Walnut was better for the carvers of the Restoration, and more suitable than oak for the turned and twisted rails and legs and the carved backs of the upright and caned chairs.

To fully understand the coming of walnut it is necessary to remember that although walnut trees had been planted in England in Queen Elizabeth's reign it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that the new timber was ready for the woodman's axe.

Once again we have to refer to the Dutch influence in furniture which made itself felt so forcibly in the days of William and Mary. It has been said that the Restoration style was "not English," and consequently did not survive Court influence after the death of Charles II. and the abdication of James II. The same might be said of the Dutch style, except that the Hogarth chair, which developed in the reign of Queen Anne, became an accepted English style.

The refurnishing of palace and mansion during the reign of William and Mary continued to perpetuate the style which had been introduced under Dutch influence; it also brought the marqueterie, which rendered chairs and other furniture so ornamental at the close of the seventeenth century. The delightful effects produced by marqueterie and inlays were also applicable to the altered shapes of walnut chairs with their broad splats and backs so well adapted to that kind of decoration (*see* chapter ix.). When the century closed art decoration was under a cloud; Queen Mary was dead, and even the designs of the marqueterie had been changed.

The accompanying illustrations show the variety of chairs in use during the century—previous to those made during the reign of William and Mary. Fig. 81 is a plain chair, dated 1687; it is of the type which had been in use for many years, and was such as were made by country joiners—a good substantial chair suggestive of the period when coffers were made, and contrasting strongly with the more ornate carved chair, shown in Fig. 82. That is one of those commonly called a "vestry chair," although there is nothing ecclesiastical about it. It is, however, one of dignity, well suited to the worthy who would preside over parish meetings; the arms are unusually high and strong, and it is of an earlier date than the plain chair shown in Fig. 81. Fig. 83 is an interesting piece; it is a child's high chair with turned legs and rails, showing the position of the foot-rest and front rail. Very different, indeed, are the two handsome carved walnut chairs, of the period 1685-1689, shown in Figs. 84 and 85; they are truly a beautiful pair, the carved backs being exceptionally good, and the upholstery and fringe in excellent condition.

The splendid carved settee, of walnut wood, with carved back, illustrated in Fig. 86, is of Charles II. period—*circa* 1686; this rare piece is in the possession of Messrs Waring & Gillow Ltd.

Eighteenth-century Seats.

The eighteenth-century furniture, especially chairs, includes a very wide range of style. It brings the collector face to face with the antique and early collectable period of valuable pieces at its beginning, and at its close brings before him furniture suggestive of what he is using every day, for at the present time there is much that in design and decoration reminds us of the furniture of a hundred years ago. At the commencement of the eighteenth century the high-backed narrow chairs were seen side by side with the Dutch chair. The "Hogarth," as the chair was afterwards called, was supported by cabriole legs, that is legs springing outward like a bent knee, then curving gracefully downwards, tapering towards the foot, which was often of hoof-like form. The stretcher, which was retained for a time, was a relic of the Restoration period, but it was set further back, indicating an important departure from hitherto approved principles of chair-making. In a very short time the cabriole leg with hoof-foot was modified somewhat, and terminated with a club-foot, which remained one of the characteristics of the "Hogarth" chair of Queen Anne's days, and for some years after

her death. All traces of the "Spanish foot" and "Portuguese stretcher," had then gone. The uncomfortable upright back of the Restoration was a thing of the past. The new chair was smooth and comfortable, especially so when the seat was upholstered or cushioned. The seat itself was wide; the central splat and two uprights forming the back were shaped to fit the occupant of the chair—a most important feature. The evolution of the Dutch design was complete, and an English style had been produced (for upholstered chairs, *see* chapter xxxi.).

Along with the "Hogarth" chair the settee, which looked like two or three chairs combined, became popular, this new seat continuing to hold its own, and the love-seats of that and subsequent reigns continued throughout the century.

As it has been pointed out marqueterie ceased, and the backs of the chairs were made lower. They were not all plain, for as the century advanced delicate carvings were introduced, and the basis of the style which afterwards became Chippendale's pattern, was firmly established. The stuffed seats of the chairs formed an important departure. A new style was created by the introduction of three-cornered chairs, the backs of which consisted of two splats and a top-rail of semicircular form.

In France progress was made, the *lit de repos* or *chaise longue* was fashionable in the reign of Louis XIV. The four-sided tapering legs of the chairs were ornamented. Sometimes they were inlaid with marqueterie, and at others painted or gilded. Towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. an armchair with curved and arched back became fashionable. Then came the painted white and gold chairs of the Louis XV. period, which were often made of beech wood; and towards the end of that period the *causeuse*, which was a comfortable armchair, and the upholstered *fauteuil*, appeared. Both the *fauteuil* and the *bergère* were referred to in the pattern books of English makers at that time. The cane-backed gondola chair of Louis XV. and little gondola sofas and ottomans were very decorative, and were frequently richly although gaudily upholstered. Later came the change in ornament brought about by the use of Sevrès china and painted medallions. At that time a full suite of French decorative furniture included six *chaises*, four *fauteuils* or heavy armchairs, two *bergères*, a *canapé* or couch, a *chaise longue*, and a footstool (*see* chapter x.).

Much French furniture was imported into this country during the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. The influence was strong, and we can trace it throughout the whole of the century, French design being noticeable in the work of Chippendale and other famous cabinetmakers who flourished during the last half of the eighteenth century.

Chippendale's work is fully dealt with in chapter xiii. The chief characteristics of his style as relating to chairs may here be briefly pointed out. The commoner form of chair leg was square, but in the more advanced forms cabriole legs terminating with claw-and-ball feet are striking characteristics. Their decoration and carving differed. The cabriole was sometimes ornamented with carved husks; at others the ram's head or mask upon the knee was conspicuous. The feet varied, too, for the hoof was often superseded by the lion's claw or the eagle's talon. The ribbon back of Chippendale's chairs was capable of much variation, and gave scope to those carvers who were especially skilful in its interpretation. The ornament adopted by Chippendale differed considerably, according to the influences he allowed to prevail. The ribbon or looped bows were derived from Louis XIV. influence, whereas the endive-leaf of a later period was frequently in evidence. Shell ornament or *coquillage* was employed, and is very noticeable on some of the splats. The ribbon pattern was not new, for it was an idea conceived by Jean Bérain, who carved knots of ribbon on chair backs as early as 1663.

The Gothic designs and Chinese styles introduced by Thomas Chippendale were altogether different to those made under French influence. They had truly an oriental appearance, but the chairs never became quite as extravagant in style as mirrors, cabinets, and some of the more decorative sundries of Chippendale furniture.

Upholstered chairs in the middle of the eighteenth century were of several kinds. Some of the seat covers were drawn tight and secured by brass nails; others had loose seats dropping into a frame. The corner or round-about chair was then a novelty, and the upholstered chairs of the grandfather type gave the carver special opportunities to ornament the bold legs and under framework. Many of the settees and window seats at that period were influenced by Adam designs. Hepplewhite, whose furniture is referred to more particularly in chapter xiv., had quite a number of variations in the backs of chairs illustrated in his book of patterns. The standard size, which seems to have been very generally adopted at that period, was about 3 ft. 1 in. in height; to the seat frame it measured 17 in., the depth of the seat itself being also 17 in. It is noteworthy that the legs were never connected by stretchers; they tapered downward, ending in the spade or Marlborough foot. The shield or heart-shaped back was the chief characteristic of Hepplewhite chairs. Some of the armchairs made at that time had cushioned arms, and nailed upholstery was not infrequently used. A bundle of reeds bound together with ribbon is said to be a strong characteristic form of some of the chair legs. Stools were made at that time to match chairs, and they were upholstered with the same materials, or with needlework specially worked for them.

Small window sofas, called window stools, were then fashionable. In Hepplewhite's book he said:

> "Their size must be regulated by the size of the place where they are to stand; their heights should not exceed the heights of the chairs."

Much has been written about the designs Sheraton brought out. Immense quantities of chairs after his style must have been made, and they were mostly made in sets. The decorations suggested in Sheraton's book included twisted flutes and fillets, the husk or bell flower, lyre, lotus, vase, column, urn, and patera. The joining of the frames was mostly concealed by one or other of those decorative ornaments. Drawing-room chairs and settees were frequently in accord with the French taste then prevailing. Sheraton upholstered sofas to match the chairs, and two of them went with every suite of chairs.

The chairs made during the early years of the nineteenth century were on the same lines as those prevailing at the close of the eighteenth century. Between the years 1804-1807 Sheraton designed a special chair to celebrate the victory of Trafalgar; the paintings of the panels being suggestive pictures of battleships. Such mahogany chairs were purchased as late as 1830, for memory of Nelson's great naval victories lingered long.

The French Empire chairs with slightly curved backs and arms terminating in a dolphin's head or the head of a swan were favourites even later. The *pouf* or puff was fashionable until the middle of the nineteenth century; but such seats can hardly be called antique, and with later examples of Victorian furniture must be passed over by the collector of old furniture.

The chief characteristics of the chairs illustrated in Figs. 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, and 94 have already been referred to. The mahogany armchair shown in Fig. 87 is a nice old piece in excellent condition. There is always a peculiar charm about the chairs of the latter half of the eighteenth century; the two shown in Figs. 88 and 89 are of the Hepplewhite style, *circa* 1770, the slightly lower backs than those of Chippendale standing near them being noticeable. Figs. 90 and 91 which are, of course, Chippendale, are very decorative, the detail of the carving being exceptionally good; they are of the period *circa* 1755. Both of these pairs form parts of sets lately in the hands of Messrs Mawer, Ltd.

The next three illustrations represent three good types of eighteenth-century chairs. Fig. 92 is a Hepplewhite chair in mahogany, *circa* 1790, suggesting the style of the wheel-back which evolved from it; Fig. 93 is a mahogany chair of Chippendale style, and Fig. 94 another Hepplewhite chair, *circa* 1775—all three are parts of sets in the possession of Messrs Waring & Gillow Ltd.

Windsor and other Chairs.

During the periods when costly and decorative furniture was being made in England, carefully modelled on what were then deemed fashionable styles, a cheaper class of furniture was being made at various local centres. It would appear that the London cabinet-makers confined their attention to the better and higher branches of chair-making, leaving chair-makers in the country to supply the demand in cottage and mansion for the chairs which were used by the common people. The so-called Windsor chair, with its decorative splat, which was the central feature in the back, caught its inspiration from the Dutch chairs of Queen Anne's day; but still earlier chairs had been made after the fashion of the turned chairs of the period 1500 to 1550, and the rush-bottomed chairs with turned spindles and framework, made in a primitive lathe, which existed in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

FIG. 92.—MAHOGANY CHAIR,
HEPPLEWHITE STYLE.
1790.

FIG. 93.—MAHOGANY CHAIR,
CHIPPENDALE STYLE.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 94.—MAHOGANY CH
HEPPLEWHITE STYLE.

FIG. 95.—MAHOGANY GATE-LEGGED TABLE.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 96.—MAHOGANY SIDEBOARD,
1780-1790.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

High Wycombe was the centre of the industry. The wood best adapted for chairs grew about the town, and its pliability was very suitable for the bent-wood work which shaped the top-rail and other portions of the armchairs of that day. Besides those chairs made in High Wycombe local chair-makers seem to have prospered in many places. There were some in the North of England and some in the Bristol districts; and many small villages boasted of wheelwrights and others who were able to make chairs, and from their early efforts sprang chair-makers who handed on the craft until entire families became noted chair-makers. It is an undoubted fact that the kitchen or Windsor chairs of the seventeenth century were mostly made by village carpenters and wheelwrights. The ladder-back and the fiddle-back were two important developments. There are many legendary stories of the derivation of the name which became so universal, one being that George I. took a fancy to one of the locally made chairs he found in a cottage home, and ordered one like it to be sent to Windsor Castle, where he not infrequently used it in preference to the more luxurious chairs which British cabinet-makers had designed for their royal patrons. The railed Windsor chairs appear to date from about 1760. The painting of such chairs was common, and many Buckinghamshire cottagers own antique beechwood "Windsors" which have been painted green, receiving many coats from their different possessors. The rush-bottomed chair was doubtless an early institution, a kind of "upholstery" which dates from the sixteenth century. (For further particulars in reference to kitchen chairs, *see* chapter xxvii.)

CHAPTER XXIV

TABLES AND SIDEBOARDS

The trestle board—Dining-tables—Side-tables—Sideboards—Tea-tables and tripods—Writing and library tables —Consoles—Decorative tables—Card-tables—Drawing-room tables—Dressing- and toilet-tables.

The table must of necessity have been one of the earliest objects of household furniture, following closely, if not contemporary with, the primitive chair. At what time man learned to sit or recline at meat with the table in front of him we know not, but as soon as he had left the savage state and made himself chairs, he would feel the need of a table, although merely a board or plank of wood raised from the ground might serve as the initial step in the march of civilisation.

Egyptian tables were very simple, their plain forms being relieved by painting and occasionally by inlays. The tables used by the Romans and Greeks who reclined when eating were exceptionally low. Their couches were arranged round three sides of such tables, the fourth being left open for the servers to wait upon them. The Romans used a variety of material when fashioning their tables, the handsomer and more decorative ones having metal frames with marble tops, some of them being richly inlaid mosaics. The Byzantine tables of bronze were supported by columns, often terminating in lions' feet. Other tables of that period were quite small, used probably as stands for Etruscan vases and other purposes, their supports being a single stem with a tripod foot. Several examples of these early tables have been discovered amongst the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

The Trestle Board.

The tables on which meats were first served in England were merely boards laid on trestles. They were easily put up in the great hall of feasting, and as quickly removed. Trestle tables continued to be used until the fifteenth and even early sixteenth centuries, and were usually designated "the board." Great oaken planks placed upon strong trestles groaned beneath the weight of the meats and heavy dishes in the hall of feasting; not infrequently boards hinged against a wall, supported by trestles placed under them, supplemented the dining board.

In mediæval days the dining-table was arranged down one side or across one end of the banqueting hall; the chief guests sitting with their hosts with their backs to the wall, the serving being done in front, consequently they were narrow and of conveniently portable lengths, the boards taking up little space when not in actual use, the trestles being readily removed from the hall after the feast.

When times became more settled, and the Renaissance in art was being applied to furniture, the oaken tables were beautifully carved, but even when they became stationary they were modelled after the fashion of trestles with boards securely fastened upon them. Such models served in this country until the days of the Tudor kings. In France they were used during the reign of Louis XIV.

Dining-Tables.

The fixed table became a lasting institution. The dining hall was no longer furnished fully without a central table, and in the castles and mansions of the aristocracy before the Commonwealth there was a lavish expenditure of carving upon the solid table or board, which retained its shape throughout the changes going on in society. Even to-day the rectangular dining-table is an essential feature, although during the last few years we have gone back to the gate-legged tables of an intermediate period.

As it has become customary to look for a lead on the Continent of Europe for all early styles in furniture development, we may turn for early examples of splendid dining-tables to the feasting days of Germans and Scandinavians. Their tables were strong, massive, and substantial like those of English Tudor days. As early as the tenth century there were well-made tables, both rectangular and semicircular, the legs being either upright or X-shaped. Round and oval tables were used as early as 1150, but by the time the thirteenth century had been reached the rectangular table was firmly established, and it remained the type of the English dining-table for many years.

The model mostly favoured was a table on four feet joined by stretchers. The tables of the Renaissance were extremely decorative, and the frame and the band or stretcher joining the legs together were carved. At that early period stone tables were sometimes used in castle banqueting halls.

French tables in the seventeenth century were supported by spirally-turned legs, but as the century advanced the tables were made lighter but more decorative. The supports were carved as well as turned; the legs with heavy bulbous feet being coupled up with straining rails quite near the floor. Some of the legs were swollen out into the form of acorns. At that time draw-out tables were made for the insertion of leaves which fell into place, and could just as easily be removed and closed up again. Plain spirals were then adopted, giving the table a light appearance, although remarkably strong proportionally to its size.

Some of the tables with legs in the form of acorns were ornamented with picked-out black threads. The many-legged table became fashionable, and some of the smaller gate-legs terminated in curious hoof-like feet, although otherwise quite plain. A very interesting specimen of such a table is shown in Fig. 95.

Reference has been made in another chapter to folding benches or bench tables which were very convenient, and served the double purpose. Among early examples of old tables is one in the Hall of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, dated 1606, an exceedingly pleasing table and handsomely carved. Until Cromwellian days the tables remained narrow, generally about 2 ft. 4 in., after that they were made wider, and stood away from the walls.

The dining-table does not appear to have been viewed favourably by decorative cabinet-makers as suitable for ornamentation, but as times advanced, and the dining-table served other purposes when not actually used for its original purpose, the “shining mahogany” was carefully preserved. The days of rough usage were past, and the dining-table, the decorative loo table, and the rectangular table supported by four legs were alternately preserved by the use of a cloth, or displayed with pride, because of ornamental inlays and other decorations introduced when marqueterie came into vogue, and at a later date when Hepplewhite and Sheraton produced ornamental parlour tables, which on occasion served in the dining hall. From the beginning of the eighteenth century, and throughout that period, the dining-table was extendable, centre pieces and wide flaps at either end, and semicircular ends being coupled together when a large table was required, such tables answering the purpose of side-tables when not in use. Indeed dining tables may then be said to have been made in sets, and as such they were described by Hepplewhite, a set consisting of a central square table, and two semicircular tables. The semicircular tables served as pier-tables and side-tables, and were well suited to the requirements of the latter end of the eighteenth century.

Sheraton favoured the round and oval dining-tables supported on a central pillar with claw feet. These mahogany tables were used along with mahogany chairs, and were in vogue when the side-table had become a sideboard.

Many schemes have been devised by which dining-tables could be lengthened or lessened at will; the modern dining-table opens out with a screw, leaving a space for the insertion of leaves. One of the earliest inventions, resulting in the perfecting of the dining-table, was made by Richard Gillow in 1800, when he patented a telescopic arrangement described as “an improvement in the method of constructing dining and other tables calculated to reduce the number of legs, pillars, and claws, and to facilitate and render easy their enlargement and reduction”—a truly valuable invention. Perhaps another invention should be mentioned, one described by Hepplewhite. It was a horse-shoe table, the length being given as 7 ft., extending to 10 ft. when opened by means of flaps which folded back over the top of the table. The width of this dining-table was 2 ft. 6 in. Sheraton hinged his table-tops, the hinged or folding-up round and oval tables being very commonly used in England in the eighteenth century. They had been used on the Continent at an earlier date, although comparatively few early examples are met with.

FIG. 97.—OAK DRESSER,
JACOBEAN.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 98.—CARVED OAK BUFFET,
1730.
(*Mallett & Son.*)

FIG. 99.—CARVED OAK BUFFET,
JACOBEAN.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

FIG. 100.—MAHOGANY SIDE TABLE,
1735.
(*Mallett & Son.*)

The side-table proved a very useful innovation made by all the furniture makers in the eighteenth century. Such side-tables followed the then prevailing style of decoration, and were made either to stand against a wall or for use in a more open space, the former being decorative and even shaped on the front and ends, but left quite plain on one side or back, whereas the latter were ornamented equally all round. Among the very early side-tables is the carver's table, a plain, useful, and substantial table. Then there were the tables for recesses, made to fit the full length of such recesses. Some of the side-tables or dressers were strictly utilitarian and fitted with useful drawers, some made during the Jacobean period, indicating the source from which dressers of the Welsh dresser type sprang. It was from the useful side-table that the sideboard eventually evolved. At one time the table was quite plain, occasionally having one drawer. Upon it stood the knife urns and boxes, and under it the wine cooler.

It has been suggested that the furniture builder, of which the Brothers Adam are such splendid types, looking at the table and admiring the sundry dining-room furniture used in association with it, conceived the idea of putting urn cases, wine coolers, and then a useful cupboard; then arranged them in a group into one piece of furniture, the outcome of the sideboard, which from the flat-fronted table became serpentine, broken-fronted, and in other ways ornamental in form. The ends were conveniently fitted up as cellarets, cupboards, and knife-boxes. The rail was added, and in due course the full sideboard evolved. Fig. 96 represents a characteristic mahogany sideboard of the period 1780-1790, before the rail had been added. It has delightful lion-head ring handles, and the richly marked mahogany is relieved by the dainty shell ornament and string band inlays of tulip wood. Several minor developments in the dining-table and dining-room appointments were made by eighteenth-century furniture makers, notably the *table servante*, which became popular in France during the reign of Louis XVI. It is a combination side-table and dumb waiter with drawers and shelves, intended to contain all necessary table appointments, and proves a very useful piece.

Dressers, Court Cupboards, and Buffets.

It is necessary to go back a little in order to point out another development of the table, and to refer briefly to several pieces of "old oak" which are described in their respective places in the review of the periods during which certain articles of furniture were used. The fully-developed sideboard of Georgian days, which was directly evolved from the side-table, had a counterpart in much earlier times, but those earlier pieces had been evolved on different lines, and are more closely allied to the chest than to the table, although their after use makes them more suitable for mention here

The dresser (French, *dressoir*) dates from quite early times. It then stood in the baronial hall, and was a stage with tiers of degree on which plate could be shown. Such dressers were in reality stands, with small drawers in which could be placed linen cloths and other table appointments. The height or number of shelves and divisions denoted the position claimed by the owner, for in France and in England there were well-defined lines or stages, thus, two shelves were the allotment of the baron; an earl claimed three; a princess was allowed four; and a queen five tiers. The dresser had in fact become a court cupboard of magnificent proportions. It is difficult to draw the line between what should be correctly termed a court cupboard or a buffet, as the earlier piece—dresser or table—had become a more imposing piece of furniture. It is sometimes said that although the *armoire* had other uses, the lower part of the dresser or buffet of the sixteenth century was in fact an *armoire*.

The court cupboard was at an earlier stage in its evolution a low cupboard deriving its name from *court*, short. The livery cupboard was primarily a food receptacle for servants' rations or for broken food, in which latter use it nearly approached the dole cupboard or hutch, the latter usually ventilated by holes or open fronts with pillars to protect the contents. The livery cupboard was afterwards installed in bedrooms where food for light refreshment was taken. In old houses such cupboards became known as "bread and cheese" cupboards.

In Jacobean days side-tables or dressers, such as the one shown in Fig. 97, were common. The dresser, however, quite disappeared towards the close of the seventeenth century, its place being taken by the handsomer court cupboards or buffets. The splendid massive carving of the Tudor days was absent in those pieces made during Jacobean reigns, but the quality of finish and better-made stiles and supports were noticeable. Little drop handles of iron began to be used, and later the half-turned baluster ornament.

Fig. 98 is an oak buffet of the reign of Charles I., *circa* 1730, the panels with sparse inlay being a special feature. This fine buffet is 5 ft. high; 6 ft. 1½ in. long, and has a depth of 1 ft. 8½ in.; it is now in the galleries of Messrs Mallett & Son, of Bath. Fig. 99 is another fine piece of old oak, a Jacobean buffet in the possession of Messrs Waring & Gillow, Ltd.

Tea-tables and Tripods.

The tea-table, as distinct from any other table then in use, became an institution between 1760 and 1765, when the fashion for drinking tea came in. Tea had been drunk at an earlier period, but only as a novelty, and no special provision had been made for tables for accommodating the beautiful china that was then being made for the new beverage. But from 1760 onwards many small tables were made, some being known as tea-tables, others as coffee-tables. They were mostly of the tripod form, a decorative stem, supported by three cabriole legs; so excellent was this device that long after the cabriole leg had been superseded for chairs and other furniture, it remained in vogue as the chief support of the tea-table. Some of these little tables made during Chippendale's career have beautifully carved tripod legs or feet terminating with the claw-and-ball. Such tables, it should be noted, were made at a slightly earlier date, and were useful as candle-stands. They became very decorative, a special feature being a frequent change in the form of the rim or edge. Some had quite a plain mould, some show the edge shaped and moulded, others have shell ornament introduced; some have the well-known piecrust edge, and when the Chinese influence was in the ascendent a rather deep Chinese or Gothic rail was carried round the edge, forming quite a gallery. The fret-galleried top came into vogue about 1760, after which some very extravagant edges were cut. The round tops were varied with square or broken corners, and some were spaced out in circular compartments for the tea-cups, the centre of the table being ornately carved. Some of the little tripods were no doubt intended as stands for ornaments, and served to add tone to the drawing-rooms in which they were used.

Writing and Library Tables.

Some very curious writing-tables were made in the middle of the eighteenth century. They have movable tops, and can be raised or lowered in a convenient position for writing purposes. The library was deemed an important room from quite early times. It was there the master of the house transacted his business, and in the library table stored papers of importance. Such tables were frequently fitted with cupboards for books, and the tops were lined with leather or cloth. Some beautiful tables were made in the eighteenth century, and are regarded with much favour by connoisseurs. Now and then we come across writing-desks which have belonged to historic personages, and occasionally presentations are made of writing-tables as souvenirs of great events.

When King Edward VII. signed the South African Act of Union he used a handsome table of Empire style which was then in his library, and as a graceful act shortly afterwards presented the table, the inkstand, and the pen with which he signed that historic document to the Union, these interesting souvenirs being sent over to South Africa along with the Commission conveying the Royal Assent to the Act.

Consoles.

The French word *console* means a bracket, and thus indicates a table standing or leaning against a wall in bracket fashion. Console tables were greatly used in France in the reign of Louis XV. The frames were usually gilded, and pier-glasses rested on marble tops. Some during the Empire period were very elaborately decorated in white and gold. In many instances the glass was almost a part of the table, resting and attached to the framework. By an ingenious arrangement the table frequently appears double when viewed from a little distance, the reflection through the pier-glass giving it a most delusive yet pleasing effect. Sheraton insisted that pier-tables were indispensable in the drawing-room, and he offered his patrons an ample selection in his pattern books. Console tables became very popular in this country, and under the inspiration of the Brothers Adam, Chippendale, and Sheraton became very varied, the pier-glasses (*see* chapter xxvi.) adding much to the appearance of the rooms or hall in which they were used.

Decorative Tables.

It is a moot point as to which are the most decorative materials employed in making tables. In quite early days bronze and gilded metals were considered the most effective. Carved oak tables were massive and impressive, but they can scarcely be called pleasingly decorative. The Florentine mosaics were used upon tables of wood and marble, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries intarsia work was the chief ornament of decorative tables. One of the most magnificent specimens of such mosaic work is a table of the *chateau de* Richelieu in the Louvre Museum, said to have cost 900,000 francs. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are some magnificent specimens of decorative tables, especially in the

Jones bequest. Such decorative tables were made in France during the reign of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., and served as models for English makers. Most of the cabinet-makers in the latter half of the eighteenth century gave special attention to the making of tables. In Hepplewhite's pattern-book considerable space is allotted to library tables, card-tables, pier-tables, and ornamental tables as candle-stands, and for vases and other ornaments. The little Pembroke tables were specially described by Sheraton, who advocated their use as breakfast- or writing-tables. Fig. 100 represents a useful Georgian side-table, but one which must be regarded as ornamental, for its enrichments in the centre, and on the legs, which are gilded, are very ornate. Its date is about 1735.

FIG. 101.—SIDE TABLE,
ADAM STYLE.

FIG. 102.—CARD TABLE, MAHOGANY,
CHIPPENDALE.
(*Waring & Gillow, Ltd.*)

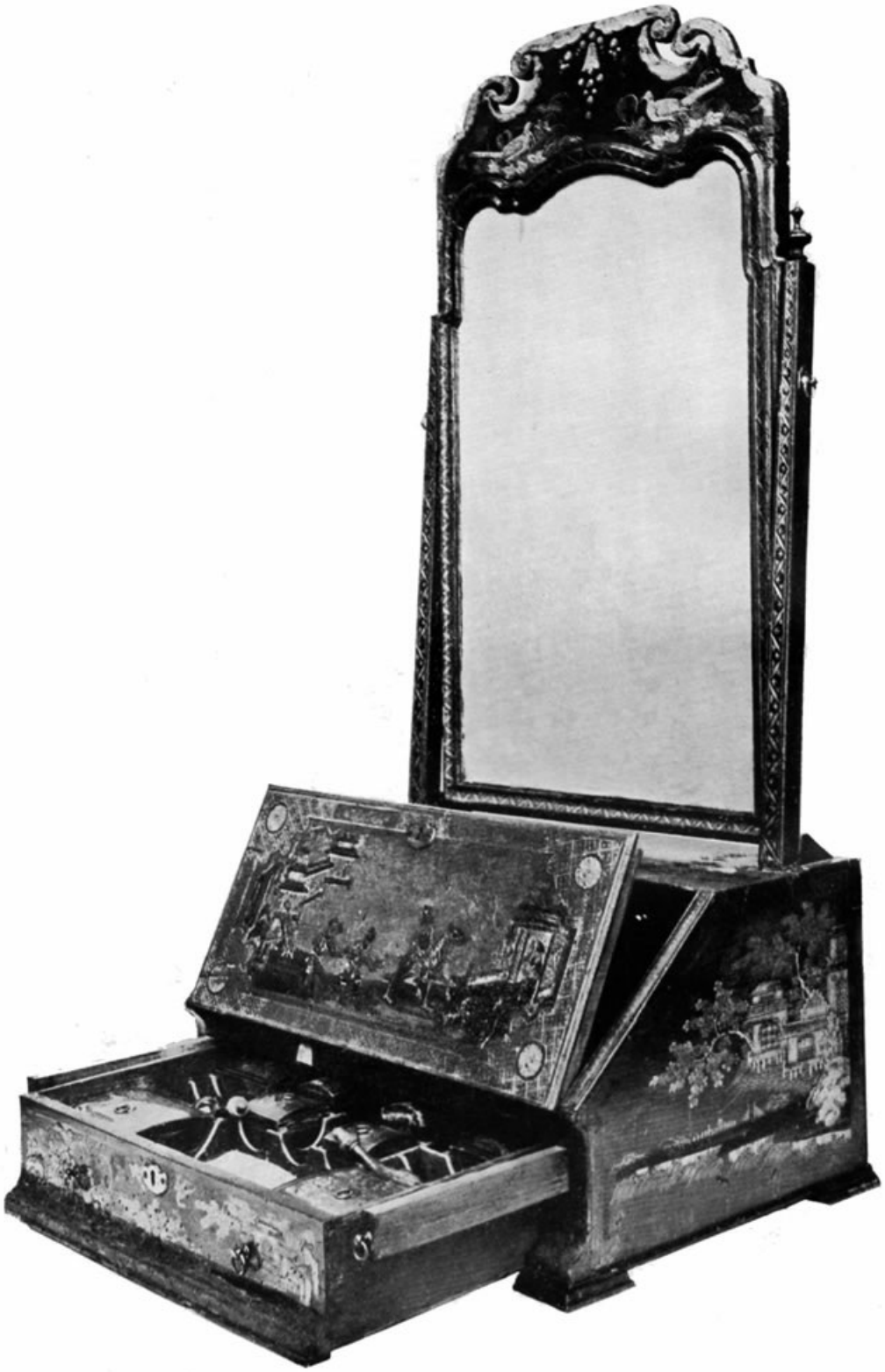

FIG. 103.—LACQUERED DRESSING TABLE.
(*In the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.*)

CARD-TABLES.

Tables for games, especially for chess and backgammon, were made as early as the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but specially-made tables suitable for card playing were seldom made before the beginning of the eighteenth century. These were made with spaces for the counters, the commoner form being the folding top table, which when not used for cards

served so well as a side-table. Two examples are shown in Figs. 101 and 102, Fig. 102 representing a table with beautifully shaped legs and ornamental carvings; the other, Fig. 101, being a Hepplewhite design with Adam influence. Chippendale made a card-table with an extending frame, using both fretwork and carving as ornament.

Drawing-room Tables.

The drawing-room table which prevailed in France during the Empire period, was either oval or round, standing on four legs, the ornament being either lions' heads or sphinxes. Similar styles were adopted by English makers, but most of the drawing-room tables, other than those which were purely decorative, were of the pillar-and-claw type, already referred to. Early in the nineteenth century drawing-room centre tables were made larger, frequently inconveniently so. They occupied prominent positions in the room, and were covered over with various knick-knacks, a somewhat imposing ornament often occupying the centre position on the table.

Dressing- and Toilet-tables.

Dressing-tables only came into vogue late in the eighteenth century, although some very charming tables or stands had been brought over to this country from abroad. Fig. 103 is a toilet-table with looking-glass and a drawer in which a number of little boxes form convenient receptacles for toilet requisites, the folding flap of the table providing a table top. These quaint little tables were lacquered and ornamented in different styles, the ornamental style being frequently copied by English makers. The lady's dressing-table, as designed by Chippendale, took the form of a small commode. Hepplewhite's dressing-tables are chiefly noted for the ingenious arrangements of little drawers and convenient glasses. Hepplewhite had a speciality he called "Rudd's dressing-table," which he describes as the most complete dressing-table ever made (it took its name from a once popular character by whom it was said to have been invented). Chippendale had some very interesting sundry toilet appliances, such, for instance, as a shaving-table with folding top, the glass rising out of the table when moved by a spring catch. Describing a lady's dressing-table Chippendale refers to "the large drawer which is full of conveniences for dressing, and to the dressing-glass which comes forward with folding hinges. On either side of the glass there is a small cupboard with either silver or transparent glass; inside the cupboard quite a number of small pigeon holes." As Chippendale says, "this design has been made in rosewood and gave entire satisfaction."

He illustrates another dressing-table made during the period when Chippendale design had run riot. The description reads: "On the top is a large looking glass which comes to the front with joint hinges, and over it a compartment; and on each side-end parts with doors that represent drawers." The ornaments were gilt, and the drapery silk damask with gold fringes and tassels.

CHAPTER XXV

BEDSTEADS AND CHAMBER FURNITURE

Bedsteads in Tudor days—More four-posters—Bedding—Day-beds—Other furniture.

The bedstead is surely the most important as well as being, as it was at one time, the most imposing piece of household furniture. Around it centres the romance of domestic life; it was the resting-place of tired humanity. It is in the evolution of the bedstead that the connoisseur tries to picture the domestic home life of the ages which have gone. He pieces together the story little by little, but he finds the evidences left scanty. The old four-posters fill us with awe at their grandeur, and their faded hangings tell of times which were not on all fours with those in which we now live.

The root idea of the four-poster is found in distant days when conditions were strangely different to those prevailing now, and yet in the four-posters of the Middle Ages and Tudor days there is nothing new, for they have their counterpart in the simple bed in the middle of the tent, or a little private apartment with its central couch, in a larger room. The early beds of the Middle Ages were just that—a canopy and tester covered with curtains, and a plain bed in the middle; sometimes the tester or tent was affixed to a ceiling hook or beam. In earlier times the beds were of straw or chaff placed on the floor, or laid upon an oak chest or bench. Recesses were built into the walls, and curtained off in late Saxon and early Norman days. The roofed bed seems to have come in soon after the Norman Conquest. The furnishings of that time differed much according to the position of the householder. As a rule they were plain enough, and the bedsteads and bed furniture meagre; but there were exceptions. The bedstead of Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror, was set amidst beautifully wrought pictorial hangings of needlework, representing the conquest of England. Her bedstead was ornamented with groups of statues indicating Philosophy with Music, Astronomy, Arithmetic, and Geometry; Rhetoric with Logic and Grammar; and Medicine with Galen and Hippocrates. The ceiling of the bedstead imitated the sky, and upon it were seven planets and constellations. The mosaic floor represented a map of the world with seas, rivers, mountains, and the chief cities.

Bedsteads in Tudor Days.

The Middle Ages have left no bedsteads behind. The fare of the people other than the wealthy was poor, and the sleeping accommodation far from luxurious. There was no privacy. Writing in reference to old beds Harrison, the historian, says:

> "Our fathers have lien full oft upon straw pallets, or rough mats, covered onlie with a sheet, and under the coverlets made of dogswain, with a good round log under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow. As for servants if they had one sheet above them, it was well; for seldom had they anie under to keep them from the pricking straw, that ran oft through the canvas of the pallet and rased their hardened hides."

The Tudor bed has been referred to in chapter vi. It was panelled head and foot, and often had a massive tester of wood supported by the four posts, the two front ones being handsomely carved. Not infrequently part of the floor of the bed-chamber was raised, the bed standing upon a low dais, the two front posts being handsomely carved. The state beds described in old documents as "beddes of tymbre" differed from the "truckle" bed of the attendant. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Falstaff's room is said to have held a standing bed and a truckle bed. Low truckle beds on wheels when not in use were wheeled or trundled away, often being placed under the large standing bed. They were used by servants or children, and when in use stood at the foot of the larger bed, and were often curtained round.

Wayside inns contained bedsteads on which wayfarers could rest, but travellers of importance carried their own beds with them. They were stuffed with swansdown, and when placed on the bedstead were hung round with curtains, which were drawn by the occupants when "in bed."

The bed in Elizabethan times was often a fixture attached to the fabric of the Tudor mansion; and now and then a hiding-place was contrived in the tester top, which was double, and often the panelling of the bed head gave access to a secret chamber or a priest's cell. The bedsteads were of oak and often inlaid, like that from Sizergh Castle (*see* p. 71) and other old bedsteads in the Victoria and Albert and other museums. Mention has already been made of the great bed

of Ware, of historic renown, referred to in *Twelfth Night*, a bed capable of accommodating twenty-four persons. Other beds were of enormous size, and many very costly.

More Four-posters.

In each succeeding period wood bedsteads were made in accord with the then prevailing style. They became in turn decorative, plain, and richly upholstered. Sometimes the hangings, as in the extravagant periods of Louis XV. of France, and Charles II. of England (*see* chapter xxxi.), were of more importance than the bedstead, at others the furniture was held to be of greater value than the upholstery.

Fig. 104.—MAHOGANY FOUR-POST BEDSTEAD.
(*At the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

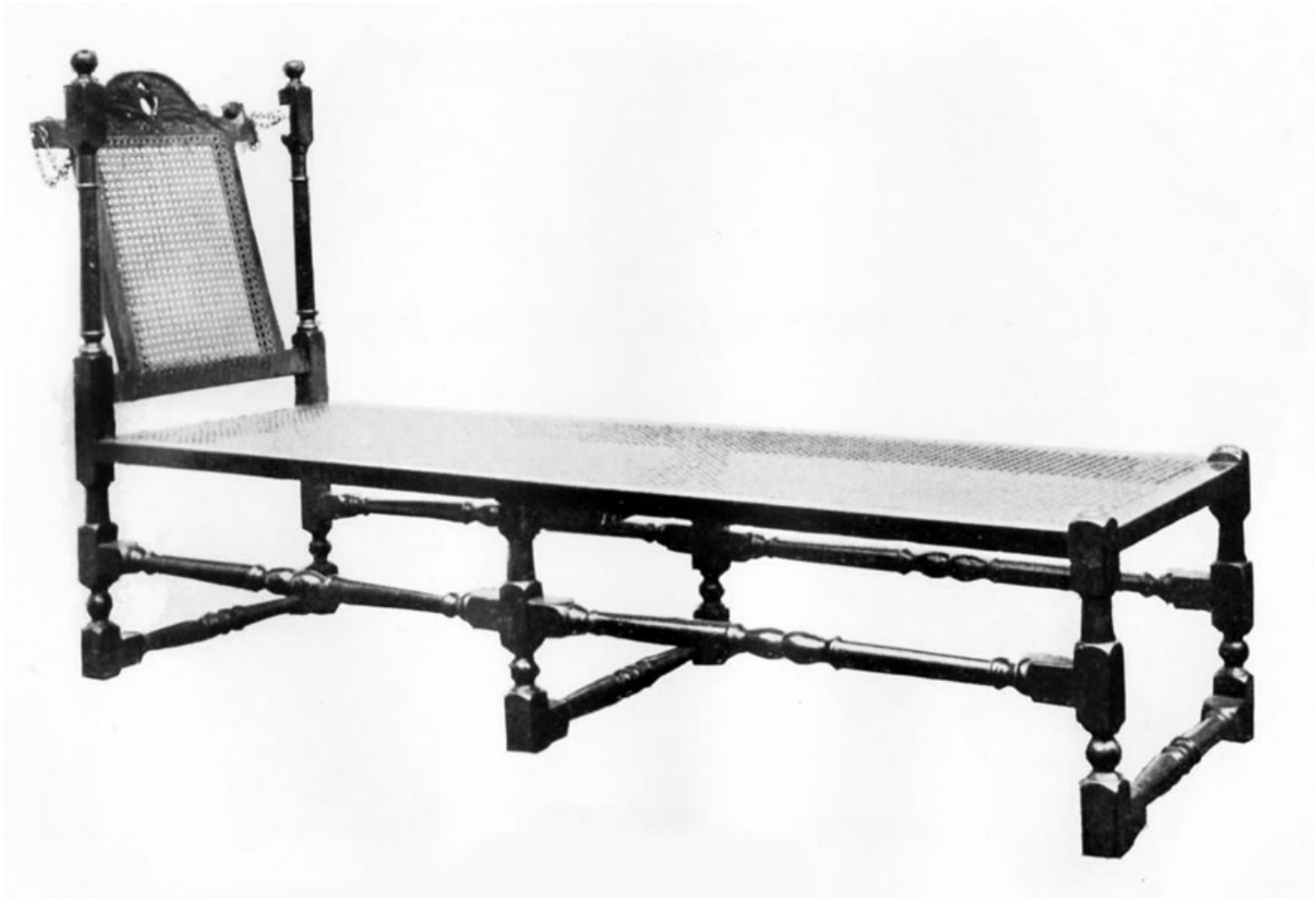

FIG. 105.—OAK DAY-BED,
PERIOD CHARLES II.

When English furniture makers began to issue pattern books they had something to say about bedsteads. Chippendale very fully described those he illustrated; about one design he says: "The bedstead should be six or seven feet broad, seven or eight feet long, and the whole height fourteen or fifteen feet." This magnificent bedstead, for which he advocates such massive proportions, was to be made with pedestals, pillars, cornice, and the top of the dome gilt with burnished gold; and in reference to the pattern, the sizes and details of construction of which were left to the artificer, he naïvely adds: "A workman of Genius will easily comprehend the Design."

About 1750 the bed columns were mostly fluted shafts, and not infrequently rested on spirally fluted bases. If any carving was added it was of the acanthus-leaf type; in some of the finer examples the front columns were supported by cabriole legs, and sometimes by lions' paw feet. When Chippendale introduced Chinese taste fretted squares served as legs. Running floral patterns or ornaments were seen on the cornices of 1760. A little later the mahogany shafts of the four-poster were eight-sided or reeded, if carved the ornament consisted of wheat ears or husks, and there were square terminations to the columns.

The relative cost of furniture at different periods is not easy to ascertain, because of the change in the buying power of money. As an instance, at the present time it varies considerably from that of a century or two ago. Then wages were low, and men worked long hours, thus cabinet-makers earned twopence per hour in 1775, and worked twelve hours per day. In another quarter of a century, in the year 1800, wages had risen to threepence per hour, and ten and a half hours were deemed enough for a good day's work.

BEDDING.

The cost of a four-post bed fully equipped with hangings was excessive in the eighteenth century. In the light of the expenditure upon bedding and bed hangings to-day—having regard also to the buying power of money then—it is difficult to understand the lavish expenditure of our economic ancestors upon their beds. It is true the bedstead and its hangings constituted the chief cost of the bedroom furniture; but even allowing for that the bill for a complete bedstead

must have been an eye-opener to the young couple who might well put off the furnishing of the spare room or guest chamber until a later date. In analysing old accounts the difference in the cost of things is very startling, and the figures placed against certain materials contrast strongly with the cost of manual and skilled labour. Textiles were costly, very costly, especially cotton and linen cloths—all bedding was expensive, and out of proportion to the prime cost of the bedstead. In a bill paid in 1770 a mahogany bedstead with fluted posts was charged £4, 4s.; for that bedstead a large feather bed and bolster and flock mattress were charged £11, 11s., and one hair mattress £3, 3s.; blankets were then £1, 10s. a pair, and a white calico quilt was charged £4, 4s. Then came the upholstery, including 34 yards of printed cotton at 6s. 6d. per yard (adding about £14 on the cost), the whole totalling, with other necessary bedding, nearly £45.

In another case 33 yards of printed cotton at 4s. per yard, and 35 yards of lining at 2s. per yard were used in upholstering another bed. Truly, bedding and bed hangings were costly!

In Fig. 2 and in Fig. 104, two very beautiful bedsteads, complete with antique upholsteries, are illustrated. Fig. 2 is a bed of Sheraton style with carved and inlaid cornice, with fluted posts and acanthus-leaved terminations and square feet. The upholstery is of the typical large pattern with fringed valences.

Fig. 104, of mahogany, is a similar four-poster, measuring 7 ft. in length by 5 ft. 6 in. in width, and 7 ft. 7 in. in height. It is now at the Manor House, Hitchin.

Day-beds.

In times gone by there was not much privacy in the bedroom; indeed the bed was often placed in the chamber where receptions were held. It was used by day as well as by night, and therefore when a change came about in social and domestic arrangements, and the bedstead was installed in the sleeping or retiring chamber, it was no longer available as a couch in the living-room. This took place in the days of the Stuarts, and as people could not suddenly break themselves off the habit of using a bed as a couch, or of reclining during the day, there came into being those beautiful day-beds, which have already been referred to in an account of the furniture of the Stuart period. Many of the day-beds were extremely ornamental, the rails being carved, and in the later examples much ornamental turning and decorative embellishment was applied to the caned heads and foot rails, and also to the reclining couch upon which cushions were used.

Fig. 105 is an oak day-bed of the time of Charles II. It has turned rails, slightly carved head with lowering chains, and caned seat and back.

Other Furniture.

As it has been pointed out, the chest which eventually became a piece of bedroom furniture was not confined to bedroom use; neither was it used exclusively for clothing and bed linen. The linen presses of old England were zealously guarded, and the store of household linen—table and bed—was replenished from time to time, its purity and freshness being assisted by sweet lavender freely distributed among its folds. Old linen presses are rare; their place in the home was, however, in the house-place rather than in the bedroom, although linen presses frequently stood upon landings.

The wardrobe of modern days can be traced to the chest, it having evolved on somewhat different lines to those on which other types of chests of drawers, tall-boys, and the like, travelled. The early armorie has been described as “a chest upon a chest”; some say the early armorie began with shelves in a recess over a chest, such shelves becoming an armorie when shutters or doors were added. When military or armed men no longer needed a cupboard in which to keep their suits of armour other uses were found for the armorie which became a wardrobe.

The wardrobe, referring rather to the clothing of a person than to the place wherein the wardrobe was kept, is the more modern use of the term. Originally, the wardrobe meant a room and then a cupboard, a cupboard in which clothing was stored. The Keeper of the King’s Wardrobe was an important official. Edward III. bought a house in Blackfriars which had previously belonged to Sir John Beauchamp in 1360, and he turned it into “The Wardrobe.” For centuries the clothing worn by English kings was stored there—what a hunting ground it would have been for the London Museum Keeper! James I. appears to have been disgusted with so many “old clothes,” and he gave the contents of the wardrobe to the Earl of Dunbar, by whom they were sold; and it is said they were “re-sold and re-re-sold until many fortunes were made thereby.”

The sundry furniture of a bedroom was scanty indeed, and the toilet arrangements were primitive, in olden time. The daily tub was not appreciated, and our ancestors were content with very scanty ablutions. The small washstands or basin-stands of the end of the eighteenth century only held a very inadequate jug and basin. The collector delights in those jugs and bowls of blue and white oriental taste made by Spode, and in the highly coloured wares of Mason of Lane Delph. Collectors are now and then able to obtain a rare jug and basin—those of genuine oriental make, especially the *famille rose* porcelain of about 1723; but most of the ewers and basins of oriental origin used in this country on basin-stands of mahogany during the last few years of the eighteenth century were of the Keen-lung (1736-1796) period.

Some of the stands were made with little drawers and trays, and were more correctly defined as wig stands—not stands for wigs as often wrongly imagined, but basin-stands with glasses before which wigs could be adjusted and powdered by the gallants of the eighteenth century.

The small chests, often on high feet, standing perhaps 2 ft. 7 in. high, were used as toilet chests, and on them were placed the looking-glasses with small drawers, so many of which were made according to the patterns and designs of Sheraton and other noted cabinet-makers of his day. Some of these chests had long clothes' drawers, others were made with two half-length drawers, mounted on high legs. For further mention of toilet-tables and mirrors, *see* chapter xxvi.

CHAPTER XXVI

MIRRORS AND GIRANDOLES

Ancient mirrors—English glass—Toilet mirrors—Girandoles.

The history of the discovery of glass-making and its application to practical uses is one of the great romances of commerce. There are many who specialise upon the collection of antique and even ancient specimens of glass blowing, finding in their hobby much to occupy their attention, for glass has been made by many peoples who in their several ways have advanced in the art. The furniture collector meets with old glass in various forms; its use is by no means restricted to silvered glass mirrors. Sometimes glass has been used for reflective purposes, and at others for purely ornamental and decorative effects. Coloured glass, too, has been employed, and some remarkable results produced by its introduction in candelabra, girandoles, and mirror frames. In more recent years the so-called cathedral glass has been much used in furniture decoration; and as more powerful illuminants than candles are used in lighting entrance halls, cathedral glass with its softening tints has been used in hall lanterns; moreover, coloured glass is employed for decorative shades for gas and electricity.

The Ancients delighted in mirrors, and regarded them as essential toilet requisites long before the reflective silvered glass was known. Many stories have been told of the mirrors of maidens who had realised the reflective power of Nature's looking-glass, and who had craved for a mirror of steel or silver to supplement the clear shining pool.

Ancient Mirrors.

The earliest known metal mirrors are those which have been found in Etruria, dating from about B.C. 400; they are of bronze, slightly convex on one side and polished, and of much the same size as modern hand-mirrors. On the face of these old mirrors was originally a coating of silver or an amalgam of metals, which, when they were made, had a reflective power. The engraving or decoration of the backs chiefly took the form of Etruscan figures, such as those which were painted on old Greek vases. There is a very early example of an Etruscan mirror in the British Museum, which is quite plain but attached to a stand, fashioned in the form of a draped female figure, above whose head are two cupids.

The Roman mirrors were small; the examples in the Guildhall Museum, which are of bronze, are circular, measuring about 4 in. in diameter; several of them were dug up in Whitechapel some years ago.

There were English-made metal mirrors in Anglo-Saxon days; but most of those which have survived are of later date, the examples in the British Museum and other London galleries being chiefly of mediæval days. From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries small circular mirrors not unlike the Roman mirrors in size, made of polished steel or other metals, were carried at the girdle or about the person, but for their safe keeping in unscratched condition they were often enclosed in small boxes of ivory or wood, and were frequently handsomely carved.

There is an authentic account in the inventory of the contents of the Palace of Westminster, made in 1542, of a round "looking-glasse" (probably a piece of polished metal over which was a plate of glass) which belonged to Catherine of Aragon. In the inventories of the Duke of Burgundy in the fifteenth century mention is made of a *verre â mirer*, or looking-glass.

The amalgam of mercury and tin, which enabled makers to produce a "silvered" surface, was not known until the sixteenth century. The first real glass or mirror-making industry was founded in Venice, and the secrets surrounding the manufacture of that glass were jealously guarded. The privilege of the exclusive right to make mirrors in Venice had then been granted to the two brothers Murano—it was to continue for a term of twenty years. The works where the Venetian mirrors were made, were extended, and the fame of the brothers quickly spread. Their method of making sheet glass was very simple; the glass was blown into large cylinders, and when at a white heat split and spread upon a stone, in which the so-called metal was flattened. In due course came the polishing process, and afterwards the silvering, covering over the back with a metal amalgam.

When the fashion of having large mirrors spread over Europe had extended to this country, immense sums were spent upon mirrors, and upon the costly frames with which they were cased. In an inventory of the effects of the French Minister, Colbert, mention is made of a Venetian mirror in a silver frame, which was valued at 8016 livres. Some very

fine examples of old Venetian mirrors are still to be found in some of the baronial halls of England, and those who are not fortunate enough to possess any of them may become acquainted with the technique of the glass, as well as the composition and ornament of the frames, by examining some of those which are on view in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. In some of the royal palaces, like Hampton Court, there are many fine mirrors, and at Holyrood Palace there are some early examples, notably a mirror said to have been used daily by the unfortunate Mary, Queen of Scots.

FIG. 106.—CARVED MAHOGANY MIRROR
OF CHIPPENDALE STYLE,
SHOWING FRENCH INFLUENCE.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

FIG. 107. **FIG. 108.**

EARLY WINDSOR ARM CHAIRS.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIGS. 109 and 110.—LONG-CASE CLOCKS,
ORNAMENTED IN MARQUETERIE. 1690-1700.
(*Mallett & Son, Bath.*)

English Glass.

The glass-making industry in England dates from the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Sir Robert Mansel introduced some Italian workmen, who were experts in mirror-making. The Duke of Buckingham was associated with the founding of an important glass works at Lambeth, in 1670, and there mirrors with bevelled edges in the Venetian fashion were made. Evelyn, referring to a visit to the works, says: "I found them making looking-glasses far larger and better than those that come from Venice."

The larger mirrors were then made in two or three pieces, owing to the impossibility of then making a sheet large enough for the frames or panels which it was desired to fill. At that time there set in quite a rage for large mirrors, which tended to increase the appearance of the size of the room—and at that time large rooms were already becoming popular. The arrangements of mirrors required great skill, in order that they might be set at the right angle to produce the desired reflection. At Hampton Court Palace there is a mirror over the mantel-piece of the King's Writing Closet which gives a reflection showing the interior of several rooms in the vicinity. Many of the royal apartments and state rooms at Hampton Court have exceptionally fine specimens in which the variety of ornament used in the making of frames can be studied.

Picture- and mirror-framing was an important craft, for the artist hoped by the frame to enhance the beauty and attractiveness of the mirror, and to draw attention to the painting or picture framed in glass or wood. The entire aim of the mirror-frame maker was decoration. Glass was employed in its ornamentation, blue borders and rosettes of glass being freely used. The earliest mirror frames were of ebony, walnut, and olive wood. Later came a fancy for lacquered frames, and at one time for carved wood and plaster. The carving of Grinling Gibbons was followed by that of others, who cleverly imitated garlands of flowers and scrolls and urns. It had a curious effect running down the sides of mirrors, often overlapping the glass. The introduction of Dutch marqueterie gave a distinct change to the style of mirror frames, but in no way altered the popularity of the mirrors themselves. The extravagance of the furnishings of the Restoration period were "reflected" in the mirrors of that day. It is said Nell Gwynn had her rooms almost lined with mirrors, and her lead was followed by others.

The Lambeth or Vauxhall (in olden time written Fauxe Hall) factory of Dawson, Bowles & Co., under the patronage of the Duke of Buckingham, stood on the site of Vauxhall Square. Not far away were the famous Vauxhall Gardens, and the Manor House of Vauxhall, which, from an old print dated 1800, must have been a wonderful Tudor pile, such as would have delighted the connoisseur of old furniture.

As it has been pointed out, the making of sheet glass was effected by blowing a thin cylinder, cutting it, and opening it out flat. Plate glass, however, was made by pouring the "metal" into shallow trays, and afterwards cylindering it. The silvering process was effected in several ways, chiefly, however, by floating over it a thin layer of mercury, afterwards covered with a leaf of tin. The modern process is that of covering the plate with silver foil instead of mercury. Glass bevelling was in early days done by pressing the glass when molten; cutting by the use of the sand-wheel was not known until the eighteenth century. It is sheets of Vauxhall silvered glass which are generally found in the doors of the bureau-cupboards or cabinets of the days of Queen Anne. The convex mirrors made at that time present remarkable similarity; the eagle was the chief type of ornament in the gilded frames.

Picture mirrors form a distinct class of decoration. The lower part of these over-mantel glasses is a mirror, often divided into three pieces, surmounted by a picture in needlework or an oil painting. The frames of the mantel chimney-glasses generally coincide with the period of decoration, often following the architectural style, especially during the period of Adam inspiration. At that time the wall mirrors were neatly framed. They were beautiful in their chaste designs and characteristic decoration. They were nothing, however, in attractiveness to the fantastic decorations of Chippendale and his school. The rococo ornament ran riot in the shapes and imagery of mirror frames. Many of Chippendale's best frames, however, were comparatively small. When such frames are examined the loss of wood, which must have been cut away, appears enormous. The delightful glass pictured in Fig. 106 is fancifully shaped, and cut in the French style of about 1760. It was originally gilded, its total height being 5 ft. 3 in., and the greatest width 2 ft. 3 in.

The practice of breaking up mirrors by cross bars and frames enabled makers to use up small pieces of the then expensive glass. Even prints were robbed of their margins in order that small frames might be used, and the cost of glazing lessened.

The heavy duties which were levied in 1695 hampered glass-making; they were, however, repealed in 1698. Once again the glass trade passed under a cloud, when heavy duties were imposed in 1745. It was about that time that so many small toilet glasses were made, and ornamental mirrors and girandoles were reduced in size.

The toilet glasses made at the Vauxhall factory were quite small, generally oblong, and were mounted in narrow walnut frames, mahogany being used later. Small drawers were introduced, and in some a miniature cabinet, the swinging glasses being held in position by thumb-screws. From 1710 to 1715 constituted the period during which many of the small glasses, then regarded as novelties, were made for use in bedrooms. About 1715 the cheval glass appeared (this glass, large enough to reflect the full length figure, was so-called because of its immense size).

The larger toilet-glasses were used on small chests of drawers, and were, of course, distinct from the earlier toilet glasses and toilet-tables. Note the fine dressing-table in Fig. 103, which is one of the finest examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Such glasses, usually made of fine wood, were decorated with Chinese subjects in black and gold lacquer, the red and gold varieties of lacquer being the rarer.

In the eighteenth century dealers were actively selling glasses bought from those who worked after the fashion of Chippendale and Hepplewhite, and later of Sheraton; some seem to have specialised upon such goods, and to have posed as retailers of looking-glasses only. Among such traders was Minshull, who in 1775 had a "Looking-glass store in Hanover Square, opposite the Golden Key."

As an instance of the way in which glass lustres entered into lighting arrangements of rooms a century or so ago, the following summary of a trader's catalogue, dated 1810, is given:

> "Lustres, candelabras, and lamps for suspending from the ceiling, lamps from brackets, table lamps, and chamber candlesticks with one or two sockets, and with and without glass lustre drops, candle brackets for mirrors and pier glasses, 'nossels and pans' (sockets and candle rings) and icicle lustre drops."

In another catalogue the list of contents includes candlesticks with and without drops (the cost of these glass drops was as much as a guinea a pair).

Girandoles.

The term girandole is often misapplied. Strictly defined it is an ornamental branched candlestick, and particularly refers to those elaborate candelabra made during the most extravagant period of eighteenth-century art. Girandoles of Chippendale style, without and with glass backs, were more fantastic than decorative. They served their purpose, however, and helped to ornament the walls on which candles burned, throwing a dim light around. The mantel-shelf candelabra glistened with cut lustres. They sometimes stood on pedestals, at others they were fixed on the walls, in which latter instance they were almost invariably backed with ornamental decorative work, frequently reflective silvered glass. Old girandoles are now much sought after, and when done up can readily be adapted to electric lighting. When coal-gas superseded candles girandoles were discarded, and many were broken up and the metal work melted; but a goodly number survived, and are now welcome additions to twentieth-century furnishings, especially as they are so well adapted to the new methods of lighting.

CHAPTER XXVII

COTTAGE FURNITURE

Windsor chairs—Chairs for cottage and parlour—Cottage tables—Settles, dressers, and other furniture.

It is necessary to consider briefly cottage furniture separately from the household furniture reviewed in the foregoing chapters, especially in those chapters referring to the developments of furniture following certain well-known styles, and the furniture of stated periods. The first thing to note is that so-called cottage furniture, with which may be classed much of the furniture used in farmhouses, and even in the kitchens and bed-chambers of middle-class houses, which in the eighteenth century was chiefly locally made.

The village wheelwright made much of the stout and substantial "old oak"; but the village carpenter or joiner continued to make tables and other furniture for many years afterwards—indeed, until the day came for every small town to possess a local cabinet-maker. In later years, although the village cabinet-maker made some of the furniture he sold, he bought much of it ready-made from furniture-manufacturing centres. The tendency to produce factory-made furniture, and to do so in certain localities by specialists—some making chairs, others tables and kitchen furniture, and yet others cheap suites—has not sprung into existence suddenly. It has been the outcome of steady growth of trade, in some cases until the fame of that particular town or maker became widespread. An instance of the process of development in the furniture trade is seen in High Wycombe, where so many kitchen chairs are made, and where the trade all over the country is catered for by perhaps a hundred different makers. Although High Wycombe had, like many of the villages round about in Buckinghamshire, and in other counties in England similarly situated, carried on trade as local makers of chairs, it was not until the middle of the eighteenth century that any real progress was made. In the year 1830 there were only two men making chairs there. Thirty years came and went, and at least one of the chair-makers had gained fame far from home. In 1862 one of the makers described his growing trade thus:

> "When I began to trade I loaded up and travelled to Luton. There was a scramble for my chairs; when I came home I laid my receipts upon the table and said to my wife, 'You never saw so much money before.'"

It was customary then, as at a much later period, for local chair-makers who employed journeymen and apprentices, and were thereby able to do more than supply local demand, to "load up" and take their chairs to other towns and there sell them.

Family records of a prosperous chair-maker in Manchester at the close of the eighteenth century told the same tale. When that honest trader had made a sufficient supply he loaded up one or two waggons and drove them through some of the surrounding towns and villages, selling chairs as he went, and when his stock was exhausted he returned home with many golden guineas, in lieu of the Windsor and lath back grandfather chairs he had started out with, once more to commence the making of stock, and to repeat the same process.

Windsor Chairs.

The story of local chair-makers in Bristol and a score or more of towns could be told; all had their clients, and probably their local supply of timber. The chair-making industry of Buckinghamshire flourished on account of the beech wood, the foundation material, the elm used for the seats, and the ash for the bows of Windsor chairs, all of which woods were grown there.

Wooden furniture making, mostly chairs and wood turnery, was carried on in the Chiltern district from quite early times. That perhaps accounts for the number of family surnames traceable to the wood-turnery employment, so extensively engaged in locally. As far back as the fourteenth century there were men bearing such names as Hubert Turnator and Peter le Turnur, and in later records Turner is a common name. Some say, What is in a name? Much to the enquirer into old customs and ancient practices; but the origin of most old names is very obvious, and many are associated with the various branches of the wood-working industry.

Chesham was a place where many "turned" chairs were made. Defoe, writing in 1725, tells of the beechwood growing in Chesham and used for chairs and wood-turnery. It was, however, towards the close of the eighteenth century

that the chief progress was made, and furniture of advanced types, frequently altered, was made in London and many of the chief towns in England. It was then that chairs and wood bedsteads were locally made for cottage and farmhouse. The trade of Buckinghamshire in chairs went forward, but waned during the early years of the eighteenth century, but again revived as transport improved, and there were greater facilities for marketing cheap chairs and kitchen furniture. The trade in Windsor chairs grew apace in High Wycombe after one firm had executed an order for chairs for the seating of St Paul's Cathedral. Many church chairs have been made since then; but they are not antique yet, and it is to be feared the price at which they are turned out does not admit of the same careful workmanship and strength once appertaining to old Windsor and similar cottage chairs being assured.

The two chairs shown in Figs. 107 and 108 are splendid examples of early Windsor chairs, one having a beautifully shaped central splat, the legs in both instances being of the early cabriole type. They are of the William and Mary period, *circa* 1702.

Chairs for Cottage and Parlour.

In the correct order of things, some of the older locally-made chairs have been referred to in chapter xxiii. (Chairs and Settees), especially the early carved and plain oak chairs of pre-Restoration times. Such chairs were at all periods made locally, and the village wood-worker made chairs of great strength for yeomen and cottagers, as well as for their wealthier patrons. Some of the best-preserved specimens of old oak chairs and settles, which now command high prices, have been rescued from cottage kitchens and farm outhouses. It is probable that many of the plainer types of antique oak chairs, and some of the plainer articles of furniture which collectors find difficulty in obtaining, were the state chairs of men of small estate; and such pieces of furniture, which were but poor imitations of similar pieces used in wealthier homes, were regarded as masterpieces by the village carpenters by whom they were fashioned.

Many chairs are passed over by antique dealers as of small value, because of their nondescript character, and their failure to conform to any well-known approved style. They should not be despised by the collector, for many of them are genuinely old and contemporary with the two or more styles traceable in their form and decoration. The home connoisseur often possesses such specimens, and he is induced to regard them as connecting links between certain periods, because they do not fit the description which he has learned to associate with any given period or style. That is not quite the view to take, because at all periods simple furniture has been made locally, and in almost every case the chairs used in cottage and farmhouse were procured in the neighbourhood, often made from locally-grown timber. The more expert craftsmen copied what they had seen in other places, and as time went on, when catalogues were issued by London makers and designers, local craftsmen followed to the best of their ability the designs given in such works; but they had not always the necessary materials, neither had they the expert trained skill which enabled them to grasp the technique of the master designer. Oak was used in the country long after walnut had begun to be generally employed in the towns, and many local chair-makers made more or less ineffectual attempts to copy walnut designs in oak. It was the timber available.

Chairs were made after the Restoration for the yeomen class by local makers, who had not then learned the art of caning backs and seats. They copied the shape, but filled in the backs with narrow laths of wood, and made solid seats of the same material, sometimes using a different wood, not infrequently employing elm or ash for chair seats in conjunction with oak frames. A little later chairs almost identical in style with the walnut chairs of Queen Anne's reign appear to have been made, but instead of beautifully upholstered backs, shaped splats of oak were inserted, and the seats were roughly cushioned; such chairs were used in the parlours and the house-places of farmers and others a little higher in the social grade than labourers.

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century country cabinet-makers had advanced, some of them making excellent copies of the patterns of Chippendale, such as they might have seen in the pages of "The Director." Others, less skilled, made very inferior copies, and such chairs are met with in many provincial dealers' antique shops, often to the bewilderment of collectors who not infrequently find them labelled "genuine Chippendale." The suggestion of Chippendale's back with Cupid's bow, and even the ribbon ornament, is apparent; but, oh! what a gap there is between the originals and the copy, although the latter may be almost contemporary! The Hepplewhite shield was much admired, and parlour chairs were made on that pattern; so were roughly-made ladder backs, reproduced in oak instead of mahogany, the result being far from pleasing. Still worse were the inferior copies of settees of that period.

A very common country-made chair was the spindle back, with single, double, and even treble rows of spindles; some of them had rockers, and were known as nursing chairs. Then the rush seats appeared, and they made really

comfortable and cheap chairs. Early Windsors had “stick legs,” plain and round, some slightly shaped. Then came the splat backs, and later the round-top Windsors, contemporary with the Hepplewhite period.

Cottage Tables.

Most cottage tables were very plain and small; like the chairs, they were made by the village carpenter, and often roughly finished. They were of “white” wood, locally grown and sawn. Such tables were scrubbed clean, from time to time, although the condition of many antiques, especially those old tables found in taverns and inns, indicates that the cleansing process was seldom practised, and that they were often subjected to rough usage.

There was a vast difference between town and country in the eighteenth century. Every village was isolated, roads were bad, and there were few opportunities of local workmen gaining town training; still some very fair attempts at keeping up the town work were made. Some of the gate-legged tables then used in farmhouses were stout and substantial, but instead of turned legs (lathes were not commonly owned then) they were square, relieved by chamfered edges. The legs had stout rails and stretchers at the ends, not unlike the oak stools then made by wheelwrights. In the best parlour of the farm there might have been seen in the year 1745 or thereabouts a mahogany gate-legged table with some turnery, the legs possibly terminating in a Spanish foot.

Some very interesting tables were made between 1700 and 1750, known as “cricket” tables. They were small and handy, and supported by three legs braced together in the form of a tripod. “Cricket” tables are chiefly met with in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Essex, and Cambridge.

Settles, Dressers, and other Furniture.

Country-made settles were at one time very plentiful, and as they were discarded in common use for more modern furniture they were broken up, used as garden seats, and even cut up for garden gates. Most of those originally made for cottage use were very plain. They were just an oaken seat with a panelled back, but they served their purpose as well as the more elaborately carved settles. Some were fixtures against the cottage wall, and under the seat was a capacious box. Such settles were very common in Lancashire, and are not infrequently met with there yet. From the north of England have come some very fine dressers of undoubted age, where they were used very extensively, their form being of a local type.

In a similar way Welsh dressers became important kitchen furniture. Upon them was placed an array of pottery, including grotesque pieces and the best tea china, often in very glaring colours. The cottage dresser was always useful, and in all its forms its development could be traced to the table or dresser-table, such as those illustrated in Figs. 30, 31, and 97. The shelves above the dresser grew in number, and they were eventually enclosed in a corniced frame. Then came useful cupboards, some at the ends of the dresser top, others in the centre; indeed, there were many varieties according to no standard pattern. The village carpenter followed his own ideas, and altered his pattern to suit special requirements, or peculiar environment and space. Some very good split-ornament and turned vase-shaped legs are met with, and one and all show traces of regular use and much scrubbing, and here and there of plenty of beeswaxed polish, for no doubt some cottagers were very proud of their dressers, just as much so as wealthier dames were proud of their court cupboards and sideboards.

The bacon cupboard appears to have been an institution in many homes. It was like an ungainly oaken armchair; the seat was hinged and covered a useful box. The high-panelled back of the armchair was in reality a cupboard door, which on opening revealed the home-cured flitch, the cupboard being very shallow.

The chief cottage furniture of the seventeenth century, and indeed in many instances of the early eighteenth century, consisted of little more than dresser, table, chairs, bedstead, and chest. The bedstead was often a plain stumped stand with low head rail, and upon it was placed the chaff bed.

Chests of drawers or oaken chests were luxuries in a cottage, but they were there sometimes, and very often were home-made.

The wooden cradle was an institution, and often an heirloom; it was strong and substantial, of the simple rocker type, although sometimes cottage cradles had hoods, and less frequently rocking posts. In olden days the woman sat at her spinning wheel, and with her foot rocked the cradle. The cradle stood on the hearth when the weary mother was at the

wash-tub, or surrounded by some half a dozen older children. It is a matter of no surprise that few oak cradles of that period have survived in fit condition for the collector's gallery!

The last, and yet surely not the least important piece of cottage, farm, and yeoman furniture in olden time—the days of oak—was the Bible box. The vogue of the family Bible came in with the authorised version of the "Mighty and Illustrious Prince James," during whose reign so many old family registers were commenced. The Bible was for many years *the* book, often the only book owned and read in cottages and farmhouses. The book was costly and worthy of a box, often devoutly made, much labour being expended upon its carving, although frequently very amateurish. It is said that along with the Puritanic workmanship there was often a touch of foreign design in the carving of the flat tops. The boxes were about 2 ft. 4 in. in length, 1 ft. 4 in. in width, and about 10 in. in depth. They were frequently fastened by a strong outside trunk lock with a large piped key.

CHAPTER XXVIII

FURNISHING TEXTILES

History of furnishing textiles—Specific textiles and their uses—Outside influences at work.

The textiles which are used in the upholstery of furniture, and in making the home comfortable, are varied in materials, and in the manner of their use. Such has ever been the case. The story of the first advance in furnishings of the home carries us back to almost prehistoric times, for there are very early examples of woven materials, and in the graves of people who lived in this country even before civilisation can be said to have existed, have been found spinning whorls. The efforts of the Ancients to spin flax and wool were doubtless directed towards providing themselves with clothing. Thus the fabrics they wove took the place of primitive grass mats.

The homes of early nations, when some form of furniture—a stool or a table, perchance—had been made, were yet devoid of any textile furnishings; such draperies were unknown, although possibly the cold nights of this inclement climate would call for the use of skins as coverings, notwithstanding that Britons were hardened by nature to exposure, damp, and cold.

The History of Furnishing Textiles.

Although it is probable that the inhabitants of these islands, when the British nation was but in the making, scorned upholsteries and textile furnishings, their contemporaries in other countries were even then somewhat advanced in such luxuries. The textiles used in the palaces of eastern monarchs at quite an early date were very luxurious, and from accounts which have come down to us, and from the few early relics which have been preserved, we can learn something of the skill of those eastern weavers. There are records of a purple Babylonian carpet having been spread upon the tomb of Cyrus, B.C. 529. Herodotus makes mention of textiles, chiefly as clothing, for the invading army of Xerxes. We are told, however, that Iphicrates, the Athenian general, "spread carpets upon the floor," and he lived B.C. 419-348. One of the earliest descriptive records of furniture in furnishing textiles was made by Callixenus, of Rhodes, who wrote about a banquet given by Ptolemy II., when he said,

> "Underneath two hundred golden couches were strewn purple carpets of the finest wool, with pattern on both sides; and there were handsomely embroidered rugs very beautifully elaborated with figures."

Besides this, thin Persian cloths covered all the centre space where the guests walked, having the most accurate representations of animals embroidered on them.

The Romans understood the use of textiles, and when they conquered this country established a woollen weaving factory at Winchester. Ine, King of the West Saxons, favoured the textile industries and fixed the price of wool. The sheep and its lamb were then valued at one shilling, and a fleece of wool at twopence. Edward the Elder "sette his sonnes to schole and his daughteris he sette to wool worke." Thus that wise monarch in a practical way taught the importance of his womenfolk learning to weave.

We know from history that Flemish weavers came over to England with William the Conqueror, that Richard I. regulated the sale of cloths, that in 1258 the export of wool from England was forbidden, and that in 1337 Edward III. passed laws for the benefit of the woollen industries. These, however, related to textiles used as clothing, and for household purposes other than upholstery and hangings. All that time arras and tapestry were being woven side by side with other fabrics.

France was one of the first countries in which carpet weaving became an established industry. It was founded at the Louvre in 1607, but the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which caused such a change in production, transferred the carpet trade to England, French refugees settling in Bristol, Axminster, and other towns in the south-west of England.

Carpet-weaving spread, and in later years took a strong hold in Yorkshire. In America carpet-weaving was founded in Philadelphia, U.S.A., in 1791.

There are records of some very interesting examples of early English carpets in the inventories of household effects.

Although no mention is made of the origin of textiles, it is probable that most of the early carpets were imported. In an inventory of Archbishop Parker's effects, made in 1577, mention is made of a black velvet carpet, fringed with silver and gold and lined with taffeta. Chequered matting is mentioned as being in use in England in the fifteenth century, and it appears to have been woven from that time onwards. Several attempts were made to found important tapestry works, one of the most noted being when James I. established a factory at Mortlake, where both tapestry hangings and carpets were made.

Specific Textiles and Their Uses.

The textiles, mostly woven of native wool, were, as it has been stated, used for carpets (*see* reference in chapter xxix.). These so-called carpets and other textiles were put to several specific uses, which may be summed up as follows: Floor coverings (broadly defined as carpets and rugs); wall coverings (hangings to hide rough walls, and afterwards to ornament rooms and set off the furniture used in them); curtains or hangings (used for divisions and for keeping out draughts); and textiles to cover and make more comfortable chairs, couches, and other seats—in this last category may be placed bed coverings.

The earlier textiles, rightly included in a work on furniture which embraces the furnishings of the home, and the fuller meaning of the word furniture, must of necessity include those textiles which were wrought for household decoration, comfort, and convenience. The earlier tapestries served as floor coverings, and covered the rough stone walls of monasteries, abbeys, and mediæval castles. The developments in the branches of textile art went on side by side. The tapestries covering the walls, originally woven to keep out the cold winds in winter, and perhaps to hide the unsightly walls, became less ponderous, and smaller works, including more minute needlework, were added.

From the large wall tapestries evolved the smaller pictures, and instead of the larger looms, hand frames of a more portable nature were employed, and the ladies of the household filled up their spare time in working those delicate fabrics; fragments only of many have been preserved. The finer threads, the more delicate material, and the colourings and added ornament of somewhat later times were naturally more perishable; and in our museums, which have even richer and better preserved examples, are some of the earlier tapestries of the more decorative fabrics, which added ornament to Tudor dwellings and Elizabethan homes. Carpets and rugs gave the idea to those who wished to improve upon the crude, uncomfortable, and perhaps unsightly wood-work of the older furniture, and tapestry coverings for furniture and other purposes evolved from the coarser floor coverings.

Among the early seats of tapestry-weaving may be mentioned the Abbey of Saint Florent, of Saumur, where the monks covered their tapestry with flowers and animal designs, pursuing a style of decoration, briefly described as red on a white ground, an Eastern idea which seems to have come to Europe at the commencement of the Renaissance period. One of the earliest French factories where tapestries and carpets were made was at Poitiers, where as early as the beginning of the eleventh century textiles were executed for Italian prelates. The support given to these weavers by ecclesiastics may have had something to do with the introduction of religious subjects into tapestry-weaving, for from that date onward historical and religious designs seem to have taken the place of simple floral and animal pictures with little, if any, meaning.

The Flemish factories came into notoriety towards the close of the twelfth century, and the weavers used low-warp as well as high-warp looms.

Among the early tapestry weavers whose names have come down to us, just the same as painters of pictures have transmitted their names to posterity on the pictures they painted, may be mentioned Amaury de Goire, who in 1348 executed a piece of tapestry for the Duke of Normandy; Colin Bataille, who in 1391 worked a tapestry for the Duke of Touraine, on which was pictured the history of Theseus; and Jehan de Joudoigne, who, among other works, wrought a tapestry for the Duke of Orleans on which was a representation of the Fountain of Youth, and another piece, for the Duke of Aquitaine, on which was a representation of the twelve Apostles, twelve prophets, and the Coronation of the Virgin. André Denisot and Guillaume Mesnagier, of Tours, wove a remarkable piece of silk tapestry for Charles VIII., upon it being a representation of the history of Moses. It was Francis I. who founded the tapestry-weaving shed at Fontainebleau, and the French King seems to have encouraged the development of textile art.

Outside Influences at Work.

European, political, and religious conflicts have had considerable influence on the destinies of commerce. The trade of England has often been deviated by European warfare, and also by the protection which Britain has afforded to foreigners who were suffering from bigotry and wrongly-advised sovereigns and ecclesiastics. One of the most notable instances of the way in which those influences worked was the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which caused wholesale emigration of the Huguenots of France, who sought asylum from the persecution of the Church. That occurred in 1685, when upwards of forty thousand families of weavers and textile workers came over to this country. Great Britain became their abode, and it is due to the clever craftsmanship of those textile workers that such a change passed over all industries in which textiles were used. Silks and velvets were woven, and the beauty of the designs of the exquisite fabrics produced by the refugees was appreciated by wealthy patrons in this country. The materials were forthwith adopted for all kinds of upholstery, and, incidentally, considerable impetus was given to the furniture trade.

Many of the beautiful antiques home connoisseurs possess to-day bear testimony to the skill of the weavers who in Spitalfields and other parts of England wove such delightful fabrics. Englishmen ordered new furniture that they might upholster their chairs and settees in accord with the curtains and hangings with which they were adorning their rooms. The matter, however, did not rest there, for the French refugees gladly taught the art of weaving silks and velvets to English craftsmen, and the manufacture of those goods became incorporated as a British industry, practised and followed down to the present time in many of the districts where the French refugees settled. Indeed, in some localities the silk weavers are the actual descendants of Huguenot settlers.

It must not be supposed from the foregoing paragraph that England was altogether without textile weavers before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, for at least fifteen years previous to that date French textile weavers had been gradually settling in England, a large number having taken out letters of naturalisation. The Government fostered the new industry in 1709, voting £24,000 as a subsidy. The chief fabrics in which furniture makers were interested were the so-called Genoese or Genoa velvets, and so strong was the hold they obtained in English society that the older coverings were either stripped off or covered over, although in many instances, when the velvet upholstery of what are now antiques is taken off, untouched specimens of ancient needlework in quite good condition are found underneath. Needlework, however, gained much popularity in the days of Queen Anne, when every one was working needlework such as had been introduced by the industrious Queen of William III., whose energy in refurnishing state rooms and providing needlework for her new furniture at Hampton Court has been referred to in a previous chapter.

It is interesting to trace the proper sequence of needlework in upholstery. The bold flowing designs so popular in the reign of William III. and Mary were followed by small trellis or diaper pattern in the early years of the Georgian period.

When Queen Anne came to the throne there was a decided movement in favour of English-made textiles, and British manufacturers set out to imitate the foreign silks and velvets which were used in upholstery. They were very successful in the counterparts they produced, and as may be judged from the beautiful upholstered furniture which has come down to us untouched and unimpaired from the days of Queen Anne and George I., they successfully reproduced the velvets which had formerly been made only in Genoa and Venice.

CHAPTER XXIX

CARPETS

From oriental looms—Woollen pile carpets—French carpets—English woven texiles.

The most convenient coverings of couches and floors would in early days be the easily procurable skins, the products of the chase. The use of the spinning wheel was one of the peaceful arts, and involved the expenditure of much labour. In early days the floors of the houses of the common people were of beaten earth or clay, and must have been cold and damp. In Anglo-Saxon times sand scattered over the surface was deemed a sufficient covering, but there was no warmth about it. Then came the "unmade" carpet of strewn rushes, which served until Tudor days, when wooden floors were first introduced. It is said that the Spanish envoys who came over before the arrival of Eleanor of Castile brought with them woven floor coverings, and from that time onward it would appear that the wealthier English nobles favoured woven floor cloths, at any rate for state purposes if not for common use. When Cardinal Wolsey furnished Hampton Court (the Tudor portion of the Palace) he bought sixty Damascus carpets. In those days Englishmen were dependent for their supplies of luxuries upon shipments from the East, and the art of weaving carpets had not then been taught to English craftsmen.

From Oriental Looms.

Very beautiful indeed were the carpets worked in eastern countries, where the art of weaving had been known in quite early times. Although the carpets which we deem antiques to-day are not contemporary with those brought over by Cardinal Wolsey, they are sufficiently old to create admiration at the advanced art of the Persians and other eastern peoples who have so long excelled in textile weaving. In eastern countries, from whence so many of the beautiful antiques come, carpets and rugs were originally used for sitting and reclining upon, one of their most important uses on the floor being when their owners knelt in prayer. The earliest importations of antique rugs to this country, and to the chief continental cities, were for the purpose of adorning ecclesiastical buildings, and they were placed before altars in churches, and subsequently in front of chairs of State.

The carpets of ancient Egypt which have been studied by learned authorities are said to have been woven like modern textiles with woollen threads upon linen strings. The chief beauty in these rugs is the wonderfully effective admixture of colours, and the almost barbaric designs which, although so difficult to follow, produce such remarkable effects. Some of these oriental rugs were grand in their conception and in the materials of which they were composed, like the tapestries of Baghdad "inwrought with gold and silver threads." Such carpets were copied by European high-born dames in mediæval days who worked rugs and throne carpets, and emblazoned them with heraldic designs.

Even still old carpets which have been used in oriental countries as prayer rugs are collected and brought over after long journeys by caravan routes. "The arts of eastern nations," says a writer on the subject, "have been valued in this country (England) from the days when Phœnician traders landed on the shores of Britain, and tempted British women to buy art draperies."

The villages around Smyrna are searched yet for choice rugs and carpets, but the choicest Persian rugs come from Tebriz, where they are collected from many villages, each of which is noted for some special peculiarities in the products of its looms. There are Muskabats, Guevends, Kurmans, Sorouks, Mossouls, and Hamadans, most of them having seen service as prayer rugs and carpets.

The existence of fine Chinese rugs was almost unknown until the demand of collectors caused energetic agents to search for them, with the result that quite a number of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century rugs of the Ming and Keen-lung periods were brought to light. Many of these textiles were the work of weavers in Eastern Turkestan, and have done service in ancestral shrines, temples, and monasteries. Another delightful class of textile fabrics consists of Kashmir embroidery and curtains, many of which are reproductions of old Jacobean needlework; to these must be added some gaudily embroidered Persian covers for ottomans and cushions.

Woollen Pile Carpets.

The collection of carpets acquired by the first Duke of Montagu at Boughton, and shown recently at the Victoria and Albert Museum, illustrates the varieties of woollen pile carpets of oriental makes with which furniture collectors can enliven their antique furniture galleries. In that collection are several carpets from India, probably of early seventeenth-century make. In one of these the palmette pattern is on a red ground, the border consisting of palmettes and flowers on a deep greenish-blue ground. Another handsome carpet of Persian design presents a bold pattern of conventional floral stems and cloud forms, mostly in yellow, blue, and green on a red ground, flanked by a narrow inner border with a counter-changed cresting in pale blue and yellow, a second border consisting of a repeating leaf and flower pattern in colours on a dark green ground. A Persian seventeenth-century carpet of very remarkable design shows strong Chinese influence. The design consists of panels containing fine figure subjects, such as a falconer on horseback, a standing figure giving drink to another, three-seated figures, peacocks and phœnixes, and other devices. The back, which is red, is covered with lions, tigers, stags, and goats, intermingled with trees and foliage. The most prominent features of the border are intertwining dragons on a dark blue ground.

In this remarkable collection of oriental carpets and rugs is an heraldic carpet, obviously woven specially in Asia Minor, bearing date 1584. The pattern consists of panels of deep blue on which there are floral stems, and upon three lozenges the arms of Montagu. In this famous collection are included woollen pile rugs, some bearing dates in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some were woven in Asia Minor, others in Persia. Those from the latter country in silk, gold, and silver are in arabesque patterns with leafy ornament upon a blue ground. A few embroideries exhibited along with this collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum included old bed hangings, and some seventeenth-century curtains of woollen rep, together with covers of quilted silk and wadded appliqué designs.

French Carpets.

The continental weavers were famous for their art productions, French weavers early gaining a reputation, especially so those who worked the looms set up at the Savonnerie works under the direct patronage of Louis XIV., as the result of an invention of two Frenchmen, Jehan Fortier and Pierre Dupont, who claimed to be the originators of a process enabling them to make carpets similar to those woven in Turkey. Not very long ago some of these carpets were loaned by the French Government to the authorities of the Victoria and Albert Museum, where they were on view for some months. Among those shown were many examples taken from the old palaces in France. It was at the Savonnerie works, which were founded in 1626, that so many carpets were woven for French kings. The method of producing those wonderful carpets has been compared with the building up of a mosaic by an arrangement of coloured cubes, which in the carpets are represented by the tufts of wool. The method is described in detail by an expert as follows:

> "Parallel warp threads were first arranged close together on the framework or loom, upon them the outline of a pattern was then roughly sketched. A weaver had near at hand a large cartoon showing the details of the pattern and the colours to be employed. He made the knots by hand on the warp threads, interlaced with the warp at right angles during the progress of the work. The pile produced by the knots was afterwards cut to an even level."

English Woven Textiles.

The story of the Flemish weavers who came over to this country and taught Englishmen how to make the most of their native products has often been told. They were successful in planting an important industry in England, and most of the carpets used as floor coverings when antique furniture, such as was made in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, was used, were mostly made under their direction, or as the result of their instruction. The first impetus was repeated again when Flemish weavers settled in England, and received charters in 1701, enabling them to profitably make carpets at Axminster and Wilton. Some famous carpets were made in those towns; Whitty, of Axminster, and Jeffer, of Frome, came into notoriety as the result of weaving carpets as large as 27 ft. by 17 ft.

Efforts were made to establish weaving in several places. The Mortlake factories were used chiefly for tapestries. In 1751 one Peter Parisot established a pile carpet school in Fulham, and many French weavers worked there. Brussels carpets, so-called, were introduced into Kidderminster by a Belgian weaver about 1750, the fabric being very heavy. The distinguishing marks were the same as in Brussels carpets to-day. They were formed of a ground and pile warp, the ground warp being made up of two sections, a small chain or linen thread and a "stuffer" warp of jute. Brussels pile

warp is of two, three, or more layers of worsted thread, and in commercial parlance the varieties denoting quality and texture are described as 3-frame, 4-frame, and 5-frame; the higher the quality the greater number of frames. A Wilton carpet is described briefly as a Brussels with the pile loops cut to form a velvet face. Indeed the Wilton pile is but a replica of a velvet pile, the older carpets being all cut by hand.

Needlework carpets had some encouragement in the eighteenth century, when an effort was made to improve textile arts, and the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce offered premiums in 1758.

CHAPTER XXX

WALL COVERINGS

Arras or tapestry—Continental textiles—Wood panelling and wall papers.

There is little doubt that wall coverings were among the portable furnishings carried about in chests when the lord with his retinue moved on. The builder left the walls bare, and even the interior castle walls unfinished. Those which were coated over with plaster were in early days undecorative, and needed some furnishing drapery, or rather coverings, to hide their imperfections. Thus the arras or tapestry became a necessary part of the furnishings which were then conveyed from place to place, whether the buildings occupied by their owners were temporary or more permanent homes.

Wall coverings were in turn of arras or tapestry, of wood, plain, carved, or painted; and later walls were adorned with paintings placed upon specially prepared panels. Hangings were sometimes of more flimsy materials than tapestry, and in due course the woven fabrics were replaced by wall papers.

There is much to interest and attract the home connoisseur in all these wall coverings in that in nearly all cases they signify home employment and an expenditure of artistic taste.

Arras or Tapestry.

The women of England have always been expert needle-workers, and some of their handiwork for the adornment of the home is referred to in another chapter. In quite early days kings and nobles when furnishing their castles had to seek the assistance of continental weavers, who, as history records, in due course came over and taught British workers how to produce the wall coverings and other textiles needed for house-furnishing purposes.

The wall coverings so necessary then for use in draughty towers and great halls were hung or suspended from hooks or nails driven into the walls. When the time came for removal they were taken down and rolled up for transport, being often packed in the large chests in which so much of the portable property of the owner was conveyed. It should be noted that while the arras or tapestry was primarily a wall covering many such textiles served as curtains or divisions of rooms. Textiles were used as screens for dividing off sleeping compartments of the women, and for rendering private the smaller portions of the great hall.

The large tapestries made with such labour in mediæval days were no longer removed when dwellings became more permanent. An improvement was then possible, in that the woven fabrics were specially prepared for certain spaces, and were made specific in size to cover such walls. Round towers were no longer hung so as to leave spaces “behind the arras,” and unsightly corners were filled with panels of wood, and tapestries were used as ornamental wall coverings in better furnished dwellings. The continental looms were busy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and it was from such sources that much of the tapestry which has remained originally came.

The term arras is derived from the Italian factory from which so many wonderful tapestries were produced. Paris was the seat of several important works, and notorious for some clever weavers, and it was in Paris and its vicinity that the royal tapestry works were established, the most notable being the Gobelins. High-warp tapestries were made at Lille in the fourteenth century, and there, too, were made hangings with armorial bearings, and many beautiful textiles on which were woven the white *fleur-de-lis*, the arms of the city. The guarantee mark of Lille was an escutcheon of gules with a *fleur-de-lis* argent. Most of the works produced at Lille may be classified as furnishing tapestries. Brussels was early an important seat of the industry, a factory being established there by Louis XII. The marks adopted at Brussels consist of a shield, on either side of which is a capital letter B, placed face to face. It is surmised that the device was adopted in Brussels during the government of the Duke of Burgundy. There were tapestry weavers at work in the fifteenth century at Audenarde. One famous piece, the work of Van der Goton, represents the history of Eurydice. In the first scene there is a landscape with a group of nymphs near a fountain, Eurydice having been stung on the heel by a serpent. In the second tapestry there are representations of the entrance to the infernal regions, and Orpheus is seen carrying his lyre, presenting himself before Pluto, seeking to obtain permission to search for Eurydice on the banks of the Cocytus. There were early tapestry factories at Tournay, and at Antwerp, chiefly noted for fifteenth-century productions.

The famous Flemish tapestries woven in the factory established in the reign of Louis XIII. in the house of the Gobelins have gained world-wide notoriety. The Gobelins was originally a dye-house dating from the fifteenth century. Louis XIV. added to its reputation by introducing embroiderers, goldsmiths, cabinet-makers, and chasers of metal, so that the royal factory at Gobelins became more closely identified with the manufacture of furniture and furnishing upholsteries than any of the other tapestry works in France. In an historical account of the processes adopted there, given by M. Lacordaire, it is stated that in weaving tapestry the coloured threads could not be carried from one end to the other of the warp as in ordinary figured tissues, as there would have been still greater loss of thread, and too great a thickness of the tissue. It was, therefore, found necessary to invent a process of partial weaving, economising the woollen or silken threads which formed the woof. This portion of the work was executed on looms with vertical and sometimes horizontal warp. The pieces of wood of the framework which were parallel with the warp differ, making the distinction between high-warp and low-warp looms, both looms working smooth carpets on the reverse side, raised velvet or high-pile carpets being worked on the right side only.

There was a royal manufactory at Beauvais, founded in 1664, low-warp looms being chiefly used. It was there that chair seats, curtains, and valences were woven. The mark was a *fleur-de-lis*, with various initials, frequently AC or ACC. Some fine examples of this factory are to be seen in the Wallace Collection in Hertford House.

Italian tapestries are to be seen in most of the chief museums. Ferrara was one of the oldest manufactories where tapestry was manufactured in Italy, many fine examples of fifteenth-century work being extant. There were workshops in Correggio in Modena, in 1480, and in the town of Modena Flemish workmen established a workshop soon afterwards. Tapestries were made at Florence in the sixteenth century, and also in Venice and Naples. There were factories in Rome where many splendid tapestries for the Vatican were woven. One works was established by Pope Clement XI., and improvements were made by Pius VI. in 1775. Leo VII. in 1823 made an attempt to re-establish the tapestry industry, but it was not very successful.

There is still much old tapestry in this country. In many manor houses odd panels are to be found; and it is no uncommon thing for a large piece which has occupied a prominent place in some old house for centuries to be seen in the galleries of a London dealer. Such pieces are also offered in the London sale-rooms, although much of the interest in them is lost owing to their present owners frequently being unable or unwilling to state with accuracy where they came from, for whom they were first made, or by whom they were worked. A short time ago three such panels were disposed of by one of the leading London auctioneers. The largest was 12 ft. 8 in. by 9 ft. 9 in., the work of a sixteenth-century Flemish weaver. It was a veritable picture representing a park scene with trees, animals, and birds in the foreground, and buildings in the background, its deep border being composed of vases of flowers, fruit, and cartouches, among which were intermixed small woodland scenes. This beautiful piece, so suitable for a country house, came from Anderson Manor, in Dorset. At the same sale there was a small panel of Aubusson tapestry, measuring 4 ft. 9 in. by 4 ft. 4 in., its subject being buildings and trees.

Wood Panelling and Wall Papers.

As in many other divisions of house furnishing there was concurrent use of a variety of wall coverings. When the barons who moved on from castle to castle, or retired to another stronghold when pressed by foes, continued to take with them the arras to cover walls, there were some who had advanced in architectural comfort. History tells that the walls in Windsor Castle were panelled with oak between 1216 and 1272, during the reign of Henry III. In 1233 the Sheriff of Hampshire was commanded to take care that the wainscoted chamber of the King in the Castle of Winchester “be painted with the same histories and pictures as it had been previously.” That is an early instance of painting scenes upon wooden wainscot. Many such scenes in brilliant colours, sometimes gilded, were painted, but the few remaining examples of painted wainscot are now faded, and few indicate the richness of their original colourings.

Frescoes and paintings upon plastered walls were not uncommon at an early date. Visitors to the Old Parliament House within the precincts of Westminster Abbey note fragments of the historical pageant which once adorned those walls in frescoes. In some of the earlier cathedrals and churches Saxon and Norman frescoes are visible, and many such decorations are known to have been painted in the Middle Ages when dole cupboards and ancient credence tables, such as are now among the rarer furniture antiques, were new.

The use of paint to imitate textiles upon walls was a well-known form of decoration which goes back to a very early date. Instances are given in royal records, such, for instance, one wherein it is stated that in 1236 it was ordered that the great chamber of the King at Westminster should be painted with “good green colour in imitation of a curtain, so that the

first time the King enters he shall find the aforesaid chamber and wardrobe painted and ornamented as aforesaid." Again, in 1260 it was ordered in reference to the King's chamber in Windsor Castle "and in our great chamber there on the blank wall at the head of our bed to have painted the resemblance of a curtain or hanging." Such imitations of curtains became fairly common, and while the common people coloured their walls in self-colouring or whitewash the wealthier imitated hangings and sometimes painted imitations of tapestry pictures.

The most beautiful wall coverings are those upon which paint has been unknown, although in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries some of the splendid linen-fold and parchment panelling was painted vermilion—a gorgeous setting to the sombre oak furniture, although not in accord with modern ideas of artistic decoration. It appears a vandalism now to coat with paint oak wainscot, and yet some of the richly decorated strap ornament and even inlaid marqueterie of Tudor and Elizabethan days was in late Georgian and Victorian times covered with coat after coat of paint.

Wall papers in lieu of arras or wood are, of course, a comparatively modern innovation. The leathern hangings and wall panels of Spain, where the Cordova leather work won such world-wide reputation, were of an earlier date. They were costly, although remarkably effective. The enrichment of leather for furniture as well as for wall coverings produced by the *cuir boulli* process was an art peculiarly Spanish. In modern times attempts have been made to reproduce those leathers, as well as the oriental papers of more recent date, with considerable success, but neither come up to the genuine antiques. Japanned wall papers were shipped by the East India Company, and by Dutch merchants in the seventeenth century. Early in the same century papers printed or blocked by hand were made; the process, known as block printing of paper in imitation of velvets, originated in 1634. A little later, in 1638, Christopher of London obtained a patent for leather decoration. It was not until the reign of Queen Anne that cheap printed fabrics for wall coverings came in. At that time cottons and cheap printed fabrics took the place of more costly materials.

Wall papers, as it has been stated, were imported to this country from China and Japan. In 1744 Jackson, of Battersea, produced panel pictures printed in oil from wooden blocks. Another improvement was made when Reveillon established a factory in Paris, in 1760. Wall paper, as we understand it to-day, is, however, quite a recent invention, and it was not until 1830 that it came into general use in this country, the great cheapening of wall paper taking place in 1861 after the abolition of the paper duty.

CHAPTER XXXI

UPHOLSTERY AND NEEDLEWORK

The needle-woman—The upholsterer's craft—Bed hangings—English chintzes.

The needleworker preceded the upholsterer and ranked as of premier importance in the days when tapestry and needlework covered walls, and were used, as skins had been aforetime, to cover seats and serve as floor coverings. The upholsterer came into being when more permanent furniture and furnishings were required. As it has been stated, eastern tapestries were introduced into western countries at a very early period. The Asiatics used carpets as hangings and for covering couches and beds. They made beautiful textiles of silk and wool, with gold and silver threads overworked, such rugs being produced in Asia Minor and in Persia. Textiles and rugs were made use of in Egypt in the tenth and eleventh centuries, floral decorations being chiefly chosen. Many of the Persian tapestries are particularly interesting in that the ancient religions of Persia are symbolised in the designs; one of the favourite types was the struggle ever going on between Good and Evil, symbolised by a fight between a lion and a bull, and sometimes by such unequal contests as a lion attacking a gazelle. Such tapestries were imported into European countries and further west until British women had learned the art of needlework and embroidery, and Flemish weavers had instructed English artisans in the art of making tapestry.

The Needlewoman.

The needleworker plied her needle to good purpose in the days before upholstery, as we understand it now, was practised. It was an art that became universal, although its interpretation varied according to the environment of its devotees, and the influences by which their artistic bent was controlled.

We have heard of Roman ladies and others teaching the fine arts to British women. Saxon embroidery has been recorded in history; one of the first to win fame with her needle in this country was St Ethelreda, the first Abbess of Ely, who in the seventh century was remarkably clever and embroidered many beautiful fabrics. The four daughters of Edward the Elder were noted for their skill at the loom, and the wife of Cnut, the Dane, was a famous embroiderer. It is said that the lands bestowed on Earl Godric by Edward the Confessor were given conditional to his causing his daughter to be taught the art of embroidery. Of foreign ladies clever with their needles there were Judith of Bavaria, the mother of Charles the Bald, who wrought a robe for the Queen of Denmark for her baptism, A.D. 826; and Queen Adhelais, of tenth-century fame.

The needle-woman was an early institution in British households. In Saxon and Norman days the wives and daughters of chieftains and overlords were kept busy in home affairs. Times change, but at almost every period the women of the household found employment in the custody of the linen press, in weaving home-made fabrics, and in plying the needle. Many of the female retainers in Saxon days were merely slaves, and in Norman times they were feudal retainers. The days of chivalry were times when noble ladies worked favours for their knights, and British women, then as in earlier times, found occupation in needlework. Some of our most beautiful tapestries were worked when the lord was away on crusades or in battle, and the women found employment in working those large pieces of tapestry which covered the rough walls of the Norman castle. The trade of the joiner and cabinet-maker was at a low ebb then. Rough and strong chests and simple trestle tables and seats were all that was needed. There were no *petit point* coverings required, but the needle was plied in fashioning those great pictures which have come down to us as heirlooms, and which represent the textiles of home furnishings in those far-off days. The tapestries represent battle scenes; they indicate the lives of those stormy times, and they record incidents in connection with religious struggles and historical events. They are records of the doings of the times, and yet they are just as much furnishing textiles as the covers on chairs and couches are necessary house furnishings to-day.

The use of cushions came before upholstered seats. History records a famous banquet in 1507, when the then Marshal of France gave an entertainment to Louis XII. The apartment in which this reception was held was hung with tapestries of blue velvet, on which were worked *fleur-de-lis* and stars of gold. The ladies who had been invited to the banquet were seated on five hundred stools, which were furnished with cushions of gold and crimson velvet.

As early as the reign of Charles II. attention was concentrated upon the bed hangings and curtains and the coverings of chairs and settees in the bedroom. In considering the upholstery of these gorgeous apartments the habits and customs of the time must be taken into consideration. The bedroom was the boudoir where ladies held receptions, and their admirers assembled in the apartment where the rich textiles and products of the looms of the Huguenot silk weavers were chiefly displayed. The four-post beds with their splendid carving and their imposing size offered an especial opportunity of showing the new fabrics to the best advantage. The beds were covered with these velvet hangings; below the cornice was a wide valance, often embroidered by hand, and its beauty enhanced by a silk tasselled fringe. Most of the bedsteads had a carved oak head, usually upholstered in silk, and even when the head board was of panelled oak it was covered with festooned or quilted silks. The curtains which surrounded the four-poster presented a wealth of embroidery, corresponding or contrasting with the rich coverlets on which were often applied velvet or bullion. It will be understood that this display of silk and velvet embroidery was indeed an attractive feature in the lady's chamber, and ladies of noble birth would vie with one another in rendering their informal reception rooms impressive.

The four-post bed, however, by no means exhausted the opportunities of textile display. There were large padded chairs and settees as well as window curtains. Quite a number of chairs so upholstered were set round the room. Narrow-backed chairs with walnut frames and needlework or velvet or silk upholstery were to be seen in the houses of the wealthy during the later days of the Stuart kings.

The Dutch influence upon furniture designs so apparent during the reign of William III. and Mary, although changing somewhat the fashion in upholstery, increased rather than diminished the use of art needlework. The examples which may be seen at Hampton Court Palace are sufficiently varied to indicate the several types in vogue. Great efforts were made to maintain home industries. At one time there were many enactments against the importation of foreign silks and velvets. Red velvet was at one time popular, many chairs dating from 1689 to 1700 being covered with it. Red and cream velvet was also used, examples of this fabric being seen on walnut chairs made between 1690 and 1695, now on view at Hampton Court. The Duke of Devonshire has many fine walnut chairs upholstered in contemporary coverings. There is a very interesting document in the Victoria and Albert Museum relating to the purchase of textiles in connection with the refurnishing of Hampton Court. The document bears the signature of the Duke of Montagu, who was then Master of the Great Wardrobe to William III. It is interesting to note in this connection that the Duke, then Earl of Montagu, was the builder of Montagu House, which constitutes the central portion of what is now the British Museum. In this interesting document referring to the purchase of textiles for the King we learn that in 1699 an order was placed for "40 yardes of crimson Genoa velvett for two alter clothes or carpetts; 1 large cushion, a pulpitt cloth, and desk cloth att 36s. per yard." There is also an item for "46 yardes of crimson Genoa damask for the furniture"; the price of this was 22s. per yard. Further purchases consisted of "248 ozs. of crimson silk ffrindges, at 2s. 6d. per oz." It is further recorded that the "crimson broad taffaty" for the bed curtains cost 17s. per yard. There are many references to crimson rich Genoa velvet, "tufted and twisted silk fringe," and "dyed Lynnen and curled hair" to stuff the chairs with.

Reference has already been made to the needlework of the period which was chiefly *petit point*, or as it is sometimes called "tent stitch," which may be described as a slanting stitch of silk diagonally over a single thread of coarsely woven canvas. Although the ladies of the Court helped in making the upholstery for covering the new chairs of Hampton Court, there is no doubt that much of the needlework was done by the French Huguenots of Spitalfields. Many of the wealthier patrons of textile art in like manner supplemented the needlework wrought by the ladies of their households by purchasing the work of French artists and those who had acquired the stitch.

The passion for needleworking was very strong in the reign of William and Mary. The Queen gave an impetus, not only to the working of art needlework, but to the upholstery trade, for the needlework she and her ladies wrought was of large size design, and suited to the upholstered chairs then being made. The *petit point* stitch favoured by the workers provided upholsterers with a very suitable covering for the cosy chairs, couches, and easy chairs of the period. Upholsterers frequently covered new chairs with a slip covering of silk, which, although not very lasting, served until the needlework was ready to replace or cover it.

It is difficult to describe or to classify the designs worked in *petit point* or tapestry. Some represented figures which might be better understood then than they are now. They indicated rural scenes and palace intrigues. Some were even classic in design; others were floral, and flowers and fruit in many ways were conspicuous; and again some were scenic. The backs of walnut settees in the closing years of the seventeenth century were covered with what is called verdue tapestry, which in vivid colours gives us pictures of English parks and Tudor mansions. There are forest scenes and there are village festivals. Then, later, there were the more formal patterns in which a stiff and conventional group of flowers or foliage occupied the whole of a chair back. Oftentimes the remainder of the material without any reference to

the design was used up for the seat and for the arms.

The Upholsterer's Craft.

We are apt to overlook the importance of the upholsterer's craft which gradually took in hand the work of adding comfort if not additional ornamentation to furniture. The craft, like many of the old English occupations, was subject to the control of guilds, who supervised work done, kept it up to a proper standard, and provided for the continuance of the craft in workmanlike manner by a sufficiency of apprentices.

The spinster spun and the weaver wove textiles long before the upholsterer came upon the scene. Indeed, the Worshipful Company of Upholders was not heard of until the reign of Edward VI., when they received a grant of arms from the king. Their haunts were in the neighbourhood of Cornhill, their early occupation being that of trafficking in old clothes, old armour, and beds. As times changed the upholder, apparently resourceful, developed. These wily traders made use of every opportunity to secure rich furnishings, and in the days of the Stuart kings gave much attention to covering the hitherto plain seats of chairs and providing cushions of a more permanent kind.

Kindred guilds found the materials for the "Upholders." Of the Guild of Tapissers Chaucer wrote:—

> "An haberdasher and a carpenter,
> A webbe, a deyer, and a tapisere, Were alle y clothes in a livere Of a solempne and grete fraternitie."

Another derivation of the origin of the household upholster, who was not engaged in the trade of the guild members is drawn from the upholder who held office in great households as the special custodian of the arras and tapestry. He was an important member of the staff, and as times changed became the family upholsterer.

During the fifteenth century, and the first few years of the sixteenth century, silks, satins, velvets, muslins, tapestries, and woollens were used in house-furnishing. Taffeta was made in Western Barchester, in 1560, and Flemish weavers were at work in Kent soon afterwards. An important advance was made in English tapestry weaving when the Mortlake factories were founded in 1619 by Sir Francis Crane under the patronage of James I. During the Stuart times velvets and silks were also used for upholstery. The silk trade had received great impetus when the Huguenot weavers settled in London. The tapestry weavers began to make lighter hangings for curtains which came into use towards the end of the seventeenth century. Of these a writer wrote in 1688:

> "There is a tapestry company which would furnish pretty hangings for all the parlours of the middle classes and for the bed-chambers of the higher."

Bed Hangings.

It is certain that the greatest achievement of the upholsterer of former days was found in the state bed and its hangings. The bedroom received the greatest attention, and some of the choicest treasures of needlework were to be found in olden time in my lady's chamber. Shakespeare tells us Imogen's bed-chamber was hung with tapestry of silver and silk. Rich silks and embroideries came over from oriental countries in the days of Elizabeth. Counterpanes for state beds were embroidered in India and Persia; some were painted in colours, enhancing the effect of the golden embroideries of the embroiderers.

The extravagance of royal upholsteries can be gauged by the expenditure on the state beds in the palaces. For that bed "hung" by Charles II. for his Queen at Hampton Court the upholsteries, according to Evelyn, cost £8,000. But that extravagance paled before that of the French King who prepared a gorgeous bed for Marie Antoinette. That indeed was a costly piece of furniture, the embroideries of pearls and other rare materials bringing up the total cost of the bed to 131,820 livres. Incidentally, upon the death of that ill-fated queen the French Government spent upon her coffin only 7 francs!

The upholsterer hung the four-posters of Stuart and even later days with rich hangings, and made embroidered coverlets. Curtains were deemed indispensable; "Under the curtains" was a common expression for "in bed"; and a "curtain lecture" was a phrase not unknown in Charles Dickens's day, for he wrote of Mr Caudle's misfortunes and of a lecture he could not avoid.

We are apt to look upon the luxuries of Elizabethan days as entirely confined to the wealthy. That does not appear to have been the case, for Harrison, writing in reference to the comfort of English homes at that time, says:

> "The use of costly furniture has descended even into the inferior artificers, and many farmers who have learned to garnish their joyned beds with tapestrie and silk hangings, whereas our fathers, yea and we ourselves, have lain full oft upon straw pallets . . . and a good round log for a pillow."

In the *Verney Letters* mention is made of an unusual bed made for a widow, the hangings of which were all of black. This bed, made in 1638, was truly a sad sight, for all the room hangings as well as those of the bed were black. The outfit included thirteen pieces of "blacke clothe hanginges, three yardes deepe and foure and a halfe yardes longe, and two others three yardes deepe and three yardes longe."

The Elizabethan period is a landmark in upholstery, in that it was then that *fixed* upholstery made its appearance. Previous to that time loose "quysshons" (cushions) had been used. With the newer style rare fabrics were sought, and there was much demand for the products of the looms of Genoa and Venice. Then came English embroidery, and afterwards printed chintzes and ornamental fabrics, many of the latter being used as temporary coverings until the *petit point* needlework was ready to replace them.

Some of these old materials are to be found upon the chairs for which they were originally made; one of the finest collections of richly upholstered old furniture is at Knole Park, where there is so much Jacobean carving. The collection of textiles belonging to the Earl of Dalkeith includes many interesting pieces, among them tapestry table covers finished between 1689 and 1705, quilted green silk covers with wadded appliqué design in coloured silks, embroidered with the monogram E.C.M. (Elizabeth Cavendish Montagu), worked towards the close of the seventeenth century; and curtains of woollen rep made with an embroidered pattern of stems done in coloured silks, about the second half of the seventeenth century.

English Chintzes.

One of the most enthusiastic specialists on old English chintzes is Mr F. W. Phillips, of the Manor House, Hitchin, who in the charming little booklet descriptive of these old-world upholsteries says:

> "It is difficult to write dispassionately of old English chintzes, so soft is their touch, so delicate their faded colours, and so enchanting is the old-world scent ever clinging to them, that one's tendency is to overlook their technical faults and praise them unreservedly."

It is with such feelings as those that the home connoisseur regards the faded fabrics that once made the living-room and the bed-chamber so homelike.

So beautiful and appropriate were those old Georgian chintzes that efforts have been made to reproduce them by modern processes, and very successfully has this been done. The collection at Hitchin includes many examples of these delightful prints stamped by hand with boxwood blocks by the "calico printer," whose apprentice mixed the colours for his use. Very beautiful are some of the colour prints representing Chinese taste. Those designs in which the pheasant and the peacock figure are reminiscent of the exotic birds upon Worcester and Chelsea porcelain. Mr Phillips tells of the Toiles de Joüy which, he says, may be regarded as "engravings upon cloth." They originated at Joüy in the Valley of Bièvre near Versailles, and were subsequently made at Old Ford in England. Some of these latter include charming rustic scenes, many being signed by the names of the artists who worked upon them. Such old chintzes were especially suitable for bed hangings and wall panelling, as well as for curtains and coverings of chairs. They were made from the close of the reign of Queen Anne until nearly the end of the eighteenth century. The earlier examples of English chintzes were better than those made in France at the same time. But French art advanced, and towards the close of the century excelled that of this country. There is a peculiar charm about such old fabrics, and when the collector is able to secure genuine antiques he is advised to do so when restoring an antique room or re-hanging an ancient bed. Failing that, the pleasing reproductions procured by Mr Phillips are good substitutes.

CHAPTER XXXII

HOUSEHOLD CLOCKS

Various clock pendulums—Clock mechanism—Brass lantern clocks—Long-case grandfathers—Representative examples.

The marking of time has been a necessity since quite early days, and the ingenuity of man was very early brought to bear upon the production of some automatic timekeeper, something which did not require constant attention and frequent observation. The divisions of the year, the month, and the day, scarcely come within the purview of a review of domestic clocks, but the minor divisions are undoubtedly guides in clock-making. In some of the older clocks of the grandfather type the mechanical clock-work, indicated not only the marking of time according to the usual divisions of the hours and the minutes of the day, but told the day of the month and even the phases of the moon. Scientists who early penetrated into the mysteries of the solar system did their best to divide the solar year into parts, for the ready reckoning of time; and when New Style was instituted the irregularities and discrepancies which had crept in were put right, the New Style being adopted in Britain in the year 1752, when by Act of Parliament the 3rd of September in that year was reckoned the 14th, and fresh regulations were put in force whereby leap year on a newer basis might regulate time in the future.

FIG. 111. FIG. 112.

LONG-CASE CLOCKS,

IN MAHOGANY, 1796.

(*Mawers, Ltd., South Kensington.*)

FIG. 113. CARVED WOOD BELLOWS.
(*In the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington.*)

FIG. 114. WALNUT FIRE SCREEN.
(*At the Manor House, Hitchin.*)

The Jews and the Romans, on introducing a division of the day into twenty-four hours, assigned equal numbers to day and night, without regard to the varying lengths of the different portions of the solar day. Consequently, an hour was with them a varying quantity, according to seasons and latitudes. Ultimately, the plan which has been adopted throughout the civilised world ever since the beginning of domestic clock-making is an equal division, dividing each hour into sixty minutes, and a minute into sixty seconds. It is owing to the former irregularities of the lengths of the hours and the differing of divisional periods that such old distinctions as forenoon and afternoon, and morning and evening, arose. The clock can only be termed a calendar in so far as the old long-case clocks marked the days of the month as they came and went on a separate dial, distinguishing between the month of the calendar and the lunar month by the dial plate, which indicated the rise of the moon, and its wane as the lunar month passed by.

It may be interesting before passing to the distinguishing features of domestic clocks to point out that one of the early methods of marking time was that of the candle, the ancient illuminating light of the Saxons and of subsequent inhabitants of this country. Alfred the Great caused tapers to be made for his daily use. Each taper contained 12 dwts. of wax and was 12 in. long; the whole length was divided into twelve parts or inches, and the size was so regulated that three inches would be burned in one hour, a full taper lasting four hours, and thereby in its use marking time. Incidentally, we learn of contrivances by which steady burning was secured by placing the candles in a lantern of horn. Of other early systems of marking time there have been many on record, for it is a long stride from the primitive candle to the domestic clock.

VARIOUS CLOCK PENDULUMS.

Before considering clocks and their mechanism it will perhaps be useful to give a technical summary of the primary system by which the old clocks were governed. The law of the pendulum was regarded as an important scientific fact; the problem—the solution of which put into the hands of clock-makers a principle upon which they could build up the clock mechanism—was early one of the chief results of scientific research by astronomers and others. Sir Robert Ball, in his "Story of the Heavens," referring to the law of the pendulum, says:

> "For its journey to and fro the pendulum requires a certain amount of time, which does not appreciably depend upon the length of the circular arc through which the pendulum swings. To verify this law we suspend another pendulum beside the first, both being of the same length. If we draw both pendulums aside and then release them, they swing together and return together, but if we draw one pendulum a great deal to one side, and the other only a little, the two pendulums still swing sympathetically. If the arc of vibration is increased we see the two weights occupying the same time for the swing."

Sir Robert Ball then goes on to explain that it is the gravitation of the earth which makes the pendulum swing. The greater the attraction the more rapidly will the pendulum operate. He accounts for this fact in that if the earth pulls the weight down very vigorously, the time will be shortened; whereas, if the power of the earth's attraction is lessened, then it cannot pull the weight down so quickly, and the period will be lengthened. The deduction derived from such scientific facts is that a clock pendulum swinging through its arc once in the space of a second, must be, and can only be, of one given length, with a period of half a second the length is only one quarter that of the second's pendulum. It is noteworthy, too, that the period of oscillation varies at different parts of the globe, according to the proximity to the pole or the equator, being longer at the latter and shorter at the former. Temperature also affects the time of swing of the clock pendulum. In the first instance the resistance of the atmosphere is lessened and the time is slightly shortened if the air be heated; whereas, as an irregular compensation, heat expands and lengthens the metal of which the pendulum rod is made, and thus protracts the time of the swing.

Clock-makers understand the varying vibrations of the pendulum in different latitudes. Greenwich time is taken as the basis of English calculation and time. Thus it is computed that a pendulum with a swing of one second must have a length of 39.1393 in. in the latitude of London, such measurements differing at other parallels, being at the greatest length at the pole where the attraction causes the clock to go quickly. On the other hand, the measurement is shortest at the equator.

The effective length of a clock pendulum requires a calculation. By so-called shortening of the pendulum the disc is simply screwed a little nearer the point of swing. Although technically the measurement given is correct the exact points of measurement can rarely be determined, and some adjustment of the pendulum has to be performed.

Summarised by an expert, it has been stated that the effective length of the pendulum is calculated from the bending point of the suspension spring to the centre of gravity of the entire pendulum. The centre of gravity is that point in a body or system of bodies rigidly connected, upon which the body or system, acted upon only by the force of gravity, will balance itself in all positions. The effective length being, therefore, from the point of swing to the centre of gravity, it is obvious that when the disc is removed the centre of gravity is also removed higher up the pendulum rod. The effective length is shortened, causing the clock to go faster in consequence. Such principles govern the pendulum clock. There is, however, another phase in connection with the pendulum in actual practice which requires attention by those who have under their care the regulation of domestic clocks. It is the effect of expansion by heat and contraction in consequence of cold, for as it has been explained the clock will go faster in cold weather and slower in hot.

Different clock-makers have at various periods invented pendulums to counteract atmospheric changes. Among the principal types are the mercurial pendulum of George Graham (1673-1751); the grid-iron pendulum of John Harrison (1693-1776); Ellicott's compensated pendulum (1706-1772); the wood rod regulator pendulum, in which dry pine, which is little affected by changes of temperature was used; and the ordinary seconds' pendulum common in long-case clocks. These different pendulums may be described briefly in that Graham's pendulum provided for a jar of mercury, the principle of which was that mercury inserted in the jar, accurately proportioned to the length of the rod and its stirrup, restored the centre of gravity to its original position, and thereby the pendulum was unaffected by any change of temperature. The grid-iron pendulum was composed of steel and brass rods which acted upon the disc, the principle of compensation by the employment of two metals being based upon the fact that an increase of temperature causes the steel rod to expand, and the brass rods to contract, the position of the pendulum thus remaining the same.

Ellicott's compensation pendulum was based upon expansion and contraction, the principle of construction being that

the bob rests on two levers unequally balanced, the shorter ends being acted upon by the expansion of the brass fillet attached to the front of the pendulum rod by screws. As the brass fillet expands and presses on the shorter arms of the two levers, the latter are depressed, raising the pendulum bob in an equal degree. These facts, briefly narrated, will help the home connoisseur to better understand his antique clock, and to distinguish from the outline given the different pendulums enabling him to decide into which class his own clocks must be placed.

Clock Mechanism.

The collector is scarcely expected to pose as an expert in clock mechanism, and few are bold enough to undertake the putting in order of an old grandfather clock, or of any other antique clock they possess. It is, however, useful to possess some slight knowledge of clock mechanism, and there are amateurs who have sufficient mechanical knowledge to enable them to adjust any slight disarrangement of the old works when once they have mastered the principles which underlie the work of the old clock-makers. Quite recently a connoisseur of old furniture bought a grandfather clock in a town in one of the Eastern counties of England, and returned home well satisfied with the appearance of the bargain he had secured. A few days later the clock arrived at his London residence. To his amazement the clock had been taken to pieces, and instead of the complete whole there were many parts, and even the works had been disarranged "for the convenience of packing." Had our friend possessed some little knowledge of the mechanism of grandfather clocks, of the arrangement of the weights and pendulums, and of the mechanism of the wheels and of striking parts, he would doubtless have been enabled to re-erect the old clock instead of incurring a somewhat costly visit to a local clockmaker, who evidently did not appreciate the antique, and would much have preferred selling a cheap clock.

The mechanism of clocks is not very difficult to understand, although experimental work, such as the taking to pieces of the works, cleaning the wheels, and readjusting the bell, will impart practical knowledge better than book study. Nevertheless a little technical knowledge should be helpful to the collector.

The early square dial grandfather clocks of the seventeenth century, encased in fine old oak, are of the eight-day type, and frequently have the simple seconds' pendulum, without any of the complicated compensations to which reference has been made.

There are two distinct aims in the manufacture of such a clock, the first being the correct operation of the dial hand, and the other that of the striking on the bell. The elementary work in making a clock is to assemble a set of wheels, which, properly geared, working in conjunction with the pendulum, will record on the dial by fingers or hands, seconds, minutes, and hours; in some of the earlier clocks, hours only.

The motion work, as it is called, the functions of certain portions, are incorporated. There is the pendulum which swings once in a second, the minute wheel which revolves once in an hour, and the hour wheel which revolves once in twelve hours; then, lastly, there is in most old clocks of the period under consideration the day-of-the-month wheel. Technically described, in brief, as set forth in "English Domestic Clocks," by Herbert Cescinsky and M. R. Webster:

> "The pendulum is carried on a 'crutch' which is attached to a horizontal 'arbor' or rod. To this arbor is fixed the anchor, the pallets of which engage with the escape-wheel as the pendulum swings, two oscillations of the anchor—*i.e.* two seconds of time—releasing one tooth of the escape-wheel. In speaking of revolutions of clock wheels, we are only concerned with the number of teeth in each; the size of the wheel itself can be disregarded. The escape-wheel having 30 teeth, and each requiring two swings of the pendulum to release it, the wheel must make one revolution in 60 seconds. To a prolongation of the escape-wheel pinion, beyond the face of the dial, is attached the finger of the usual seconds' dial, each swing of the pendulum impelling it forward one space on the dial. To the escape-wheel is attached a pinion of 6 'leaves,' engaging with a wheel of 48 teeth, known as the 'third' wheel. The time of revolution of the 6-leaf pinion—*i.e.*, the escape-wheel—being one minute, that of the third wheel is in the proportion of 6 to 48, and, is, therefore, eight minutes. The third—wheel pinion has 8 leaves, engaging with a centre-wheel of 60 teeth; 60 is to 8 as 7½ is to 1; the centre-wheel, therefore, makes one revolution in 8 x 7½ = 60 minutes. It is obvious that this must be the wheel to which the minute hand of the clock is attached, which makes one revolution round the dial in an hour. Before, however, considering this centre-wheel further, we will

> trace the progression of wheels to its conclusion—the main-wheel. The centre-wheel has a pinion of 8, engaging with the main-wheel of 96; the latter, therefore, makes one revolution in 12 hours. Supposing that the barrel be wound with the gut line to its fullest capacity, and that the space for the fall of the weight be ample, the clock will go for a period of 12 hours multiplied by the number of complete turns of the gut line on the barrel. This latter is grooved to facilitate the even winding of the line, and, having 16 spiral grooves in its length, the clock will go, therefore, for 8 days of 24 hours each between windings."

The collection of wheels described in the foregoing paragraph is known technically as the "motion work," which has to be connected to the striking portion of the clock. The wheel which makes one revolution in an hour has a projecting pin just the same as the day-of-the-month wheel, and this once every hour raises the lifting piece. The great wheel of the striking train engages the pinion of the pin wheel, attached to which are eight projecting pins which each in turn as the wheel revolves raise the lifting piece, causing the arbor which is connected with the lifting piece to make a partial revolution. To the arbor is fixed the tail of the bell hammer, which is raised until the pin on the wheel releases the lifting piece on the arbor, when the hammer falls and strikes the bell. In the striking mechanism there are the great wheel, the pin wheel, the hoop wheel, and the warning wheel which is adjusted so as to warn the hour one or two minutes before it is struck. The striking work is controlled by the hoop wheel between each blow of the hammer. The fly wheel acts as a governor, resisting the tendency to gather in power during the time the hammer takes to rise and fall. It may here be pointed out that there is usually a wheel placed between the main and the centre wheel, which transforms the eight-day clock into a month, being geared as 1 to 4.

There is yet another form of weight clock of some importance to the collector of old furniture, who delights in the beautiful lantern clocks with verge escapements and bob pendulums. Necessarily all weight-driven clocks require space under the dial. It was so in the lantern clocks, and in the later developments from which the long-case clocks sprang. The authors of "English Domestic Clocks" explain the principle of the bracket clock as follows:—

> "The lantern is really the true bracket clock by reason of this fact, although the term has, through custom, been used to designate the spring-driven, small, wood-cased clock of the types with which we are all more or less familiar. It is obvious that the functions of the weight-driven and the spring clocks being identical, the principles involved must also be similar. There is one point, however, which merits description. The fall of a weight suspended from a line wound round a drum is more or less constant in quantity, hence the pull on the main-wheel of the long-case clock is about the same whether the clock be fully wound or nearly run down. With a spring coiled inside a barrel, the uncoiling of which supplies the motive-power to drive the clock, this is not the case; the spring is more powerful when fully wound than when nearly exhausted. It is here where the system of the barrel and fusee comes into play. The principle involved can be readily understood from the following illustration; if we take two drums fitted on to shafts or axles so that they will revolve, the one twelve inches in diameter and the other only three, and wind a line round each, it will be found that a greater pull will be required to unwind the line by pulling the drum round in the case of the smaller than in the larger one. It is on this principle that the barrel and fusee of the spring-driven bracket clock is constructed. The winding of the clock pulls a gut line—or in the later examples a fine-linked bicycle chain—from the barrel on to the spiral fusee. The winding begins from the large end, and finishes on the smaller one. When the power of the clock is at its greatest—when fully wound—the line has to be pulled from the smaller end of the fusee; but as the spring grows weaker the fusee offers an ever-increasing diameter to the lessening power, and the rate of the going of the clock remains approximately uniform."

Brass Lantern Clocks.

Collectors are very keen on the possession of an old brass lantern clock, which having no case scarcely comes

within the scope of furniture. Being, however, practically the parent of the long-case clock, the bracket, or as it is sometimes called "Cromwellian" clock, may be admitted as having some *locus standi* among household furniture. It was necessary to place such a clock either against the wall or on a bracket in order to provide for the fall of the weights or the swing of the pendulum. The brass case clock dating from Cromwellian times continued to be made for some time after the introduction of the long-case clock. The pendulum appears to have been introduced in this country about the year 1660, and from that time onward swung below the bracket clock in many an old English home. The chief interest in these clocks lies in the beautifully fretted brasses, which formed the chief ornament round the square turret, which was surmounted by the striking dome held in position by an arched frame, usually surmounted by a spiral ornament. The older form of balance-wheel clocks are so scarce that they scarcely need be mentioned, as they appear to have been quickly superseded by the pendulum; although such clocks are to be found, dating probably from 1630-1660. Some of the pendulum clocks show signs of having been adapted from the earlier balance wheel. Unfortunately the signing of clocks at the earlier date was by no means common, and comparatively few are dated, for it was some time afterwards that the practice of signing and dating clocks became general, especially so among members of the Clockmakers' Company. Among the varieties of the older clocks are clocks which chime as well as strike; the large bell being used for the striking of the hour, and four small bells for the chimes. Some had even more elaborate arrangements, consisting of provision for musical chimes and tunes being played on a barrel. The engraving of many of the old dials is curious as well as remarkably clever. The floral scroll-work is very beautifully executed, and the fretted fingers or hands very decorative.

The production of clock hands is in itself an interesting study; those used on lantern clocks are described as falling under one or other of four separate heads, viz., the arrow head, the spear, the open loop, and the spade.

Long-case Grandfathers.

There are several points of interest in the long-case clocks, which followed in succession the lantern or Cromwellian clocks. There are those who revel in the beautiful metal-work and the mechanical construction of the clock, and others who judge their antique from the standpoint of the cabinet-maker, and point out with pride the marqueterie and inlay on their treasures. The clock dial is undoubtedly a feature of interest, either from an engraver's or an artist's standpoint, for many of the clocks were beautifully painted and enamelled, and some charming little pictures are noticeable. At the time when long-case clocks were in vogue the Clockmakers' Company was exercising control over the manufacture of clocks, maintaining a high standard of excellence in workmanship and finish. The clocks of those days were of the very best, and their lasting properties are known full well to collectors, who are proud of the excellent timekeepers they possess. It was in the year 1631 that Charles I. granted a Charter to "the Master, Wardens, and Fellowship of the Art or Mistery of Clockmaking of the City of London." As in the case of other City companies they had power to examine and destroy faulty work. Curiously enough, in olden time clocks had been made by blacksmiths. We can well understand, therefore, that when the new company was fairly launched they went ahead and did their utmost to show how clock-making could be raised to a higher pitch. Very beautiful indeed were the dials on which the artists of the Company concentrated their efforts. In the engraving and decoration, as well as in the fashioning of the dial plate, there appear to have been fashions, for certain schemes of ornament were in vogue at different periods. The more elaborately engraved dials were made between 1690 and 1705.

A marked advance was made when the minute finger was added. Indeed, finger-making seems to have been a different branch, in which the artist vied with the decorator in producing beautifully wrought fingers, some of them wonderfully delicate and remarkable achievements in wrought or perforated metal work. The spade form was generally adopted, but as time went on the simple spade became very elaborate. The next important point to note is the spandrel corners of the clock dials which were evidently obtained from brassfounders and finishers. Many of the London clock-makers supplied country makers, and as some of these would keep sets of corners in stock for some time it is possible they may have used an earlier type on clocks made at a subsequent period. Generally speaking, however, the dials made by leading makers indicate the period by the style of ornament. The earlier forms were those appertaining to wood-carving in Carolean times, the central feature being cherubs with outspread wings, and reclining cherubs holding up in their hands a crown. Sometimes a mask was held up or supported, and that gave the cue to the next development in that the larger and more elaborate corners then being used consisted of scroll work springing from a central mask. Afterwards a heavier type of ornament prevailed. In all cases some chasing is noticeable upon the cast corner pieces, which were usually finished with water-gilt.

The case is the next consideration. The evolution from the lantern clock was easy to understand, for over the bracket was placed a hood which gradually became a fixed hood, and eventually developed into the long case. Much has been written upon the subject, and a vast number of clock-makers have been recorded as occupying important positions in the trade during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The collector of furniture usually contents himself with a grandfather clock, typical of the changes in furniture which may be represented by marqueterie, lacquer, and inlay; and the variety of woods used for clock cases consisted mainly of oak, walnut, and mahogany. During the years of Charles II. some very remarkable clocks were produced, and not only was much labour expended upon the case, but the hood itself followed the trend of fashion. There were the turned supporting columns of the earlier days. Afterwards, instead of the spiral columns, there came the beautiful fluted columns, showing Adam influence. Then in the later Georgian pediments there is much to admire, some very remarkable clocks being sketched in Sheraton's "Cabinetmakers' and Upholsterers' Drawing Book."

It would be impossible here to enter into the details typical of certain makers, for the variety of ornament is considerable, even among marqueterie cases; and as makers multiplied the variety became greater, until individual characteristics were almost lost.

No doubt at first many of the marqueterie cases were imported from Holland, but it was not long before English clock-makers supervised the entire construction of the clocks they produced. The arched dial is seldom seen before 1715, and in some instances examples are met with in which the arched dial has been added to an earlier square dial, generally by riveting on behind. As in the earlier types of clocks there are some of the "grandfathers" which show curious eccentricities, such for instance those exhibiting the signs of the zodiac. The engraver, too, made good use of his opportunity, and showed his skill in metal-plate engraving in the quaint and delightful script he employed to elaborate the numerous mottoes on the dials, many of them, like *Tempus fugit*, being copied from the earliest sun-dials. As in the ornament of other furniture, marqueterie declined about 1720, when the plain walnut cases came into vogue. Lacquer work predominated from about 1735 to 1755, after which mahogany cases were in the ascendancy. The Chinese taste was applied to clock cases as to other furniture, and English lacquer followed the vogue of the oriental. The mahogany cases were frequently veneered on oak, and it was not until later years that solid mahogany doors and frames were used for the fronts. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century that inlays were much employed, and carving was somewhat sparingly applied to clock cases and hoods in the days of Chippendale.

There seems to have been no special district in which clocks were made, for clock-makers were to be found in almost every town. There are a few peculiarities of locality, among which may be mentioned the central alarm disc of the Lancashire clock dials, seldom met with on London-made clocks. There were silvered as well as water-gilt dials, and a variety of ornament which became exceedingly varied before grandfather clocks and the smaller "grandmothers" went out of fashion.

The earlier types of bracket clocks that were in vogue before timepieces as understood in modern days, were made side by side with the long-case clocks, and range from 1700-1800. There were enclosed clocks usually standing on brackets, following as bracket clocks the "Cromwellian" clocks, differing of course in that instead of being worked by weights and long pendulums they were simply pendulum timepieces, the first introduced in England being made by a Dutch clockmaker in the middle of the seventeenth century. The timepiece faces or dials and their cases were in line with the then prevailing styles. These often beautiful clocks are welcome additions to a collection of household furniture, and are fully appreciated by the home connoisseur who happens to possess one.

Representative Examples.

The collector of old clocks naturally confines his attention very largely to domestic clocks. It is difficult, however, to separate them altogether from the numerous clocks which have been erected on church towers and public buildings, and exhibited by enterprising tradesmen and others; such clocks overhang footways, and project even on brackets in many towns. Public clocks supplemented by private enterprise are still utilised as convenient timekeepers, and daily requisitioned by the public. The connoisseur of the antique takes particular notice of the old clocks on the churches and in the main thoroughfares of the chief towns. It would be impossible here to do more than mention that such curious clocks are to be seen on some of the churches built by Sir Christopher Wren after the Great Fire of London. One of these may be noticed on the tower of St James' Church, Garlick Hithe. It is surmounted by a figure of St James in pilgrim's garb, wearing a cockle hat and carrying a staff in his hand. This attitude was doubtless adopted as representing St James setting forth on a missionary expedition, as it was explained he was one of the first Apostles to undertake mission work.

In some museums there are fine examples of the old clocks, varying from the large grandfather to the quaint little pocket clocks almost contemporary with sun-dials. One of the finest collections of clocks on view to the public is that in the Guildhall Museum, loaned by the Worshipful Company of Clockmakers. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are some good bracket clocks made by English clock-makers, as well as some fine examples of long-case clocks in various cases, some beautifully inlaid with marqueterie, others with oriental lacquer cases, and several of the various types of old English wood-case clocks, plain oak, and oak inlaid with fancy woods and mahogany, some beautifully decorated after the style of Chippendale, Sheraton, and other late masters in eighteenth-century cabinet work. There is a very fine bracket clock in marqueterie case fitted with "rack" striking works invented by Edward Barlow (b. 1636, d. 1716) by John Martin of London. There is also an exceptionally tall old "grandfather" of Dutch manufacture, made by Antony Janszen, of Amsterdam. It is a remarkable clock indicating the day of the week, the day and name of the month, also the phases of the moon. The case is of oak, veneered with burr-walnut, dating from the second half of the eighteenth century. The dial-plate is partly silvered and partly enriched with painted or enamelled figures. The front of the case is decorated with ormolu castings, and is surmounted with two figures on either side of the pediment. In the centre there is a figure of Atlas carrying the Globe on his shoulders. There is another very interesting clock in the same gallery by "Mansell Bennett at Charing Cross." It is of English workmanship, and probably dates from the seventeenth century. It has a small brass dial and is finely decorated, the case being ornamented with beautiful marqueterie of flowers and birds.

In the Wallace Collection at Hertford House there are some very beautiful specimens of French clocks, among them one by Lespinasse, of Paris, which takes the form of an obelisk, standing on a pedestal. It is veneered with *lapis lazuli* and decorated with a medallion painted *en camaieu gris*. The mounts of this clock, which is of the Louis XVI. period, are of gilt bronze, one of the figures representing a recumbent figure of Ceres.

Another exceptional clock is decorated with marqueterie, probably the work of André C. Boulle, the chief motive of the scheme of ornament being the favourite one of "Love and Time." Another clock with a dark wood case veneered with tortoise-shell Boulle inlay is crowned with a group of gilt-bronze, the subject of which is described as "A Nymph with Cupid." It came from the Demidoff Collection. What may be called an historical clock of bronze, beautifully tooled and gilt, the ornament representing Minerva supporting an inspiring and youthful king, by whose side placed on pedestals covered with *fleur-de-lis* are the crown, sceptre, and hand of Justice, was presented to Louis XV. by the city of Metz, after his dangerous illness in that city in 1744.

Fig. 109 is a splendid clock of the time of Charles II. (*circa* 1680). It is ornamented with marqueterie in bone and different coloured woods on a ground of oyster-pattern inlay, and relieved by cross-banded olive wood. Fig. 110 is another long-case clock with marqueterie ornament of a somewhat later type, showing baskets of flowers very characteristic of the William and Mary period, 1690-1700. The two other clocks shown in Figs. 111 and 112 are of the Georgian period (*circa* 1795). Both are excellent striking clocks with handsome brass faces and beautifully panelled and moulded mahogany cases, showing ball-pointed ornaments on the pediment of the hood.

CHAPTER XXXIII

SEDAN CHAIRS

The origin of the sedan chair—The days of its popularity—The decline of the sedan—Some old examples.

The sedan has long been removed from the list of chairs. There was a time, however, when the sedan chair was one of the beautiful appointments of wealthy households, and ladies and dandies sat in state as their footmen and lackeys, or their chairmen, carried them about. There were other persons of modest means who hired "chairs," much the same as cabs and taxis are hired to-day.

The Origin of the Sedan Chair.

The sedan chair, which was first used at Sedan in France, soon became popular in many of the Continental towns. The Duke of Buckingham is said to have brought one over to England and thereby to have exposed himself to an attack from those who charged him with having made "his own countrymen beasts of burden." Referring to the use of these chairs on the Continent at an early date Evelyn, writing from Naples on the 8th February 1645, describes the city, saying, "The streets are full of gallants on horseback, in coaches, and *sedans*," attributing their real introduction to Sir Thomas Duncombe who had seen them in use in Italy. It appears that was in 1634, and about that time Sir Sanders, having an eye to business, obtained the exclusive right to let out on hire such chairs in London and Westminster for a period of fourteen years.

Technically described, the sedan chair is a portable chair or covered vehicle with side windows and an entrance through a hinged doorway at the front; the method of transport was by two poles carried by two men.

The Days of its Popularity.

Much has been written about the romantic side of these vehicles, and truly they have figured in many romantic episodes. Some of these incidents bring vividly to mind the conditions which prevailed in the days when sedans were in constant use. They recall streets far from cleanly and occupied by a much rougher element, notwithstanding that there was an admixture of gaily dressed men and women parading some of the chief thoroughfares.

We read of some of the principal furniture makers giving much attention to the manufacture of sedans, and of the artists who were engaged in designing furniture, planning comfortable and convenient chairs. It is recorded that Robert Adam designed a beautiful chair for Lady Williams-Wynn in 1772. Sedans were then often exceedingly decorative, and ladies vied with one another in the possession of "Coaches" of great beauty—carried on poles. In London although many owned their own sedans, others were dependent upon chairmen. A writer describing the prevalence of the sedan chair in England in the eighteenth century says:

> "In the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century, when the style of dress was highly refined, and the least derangement to the hair of either lady or gentleman was fatal, the sedan was in the zenith of its usefulness. Then was the gentleman with his silk clothes and nicely arranged *toupee* and curls, as fain to take advantage of this careful casing as he went from house to house as any of the softer sex."

The private sedan stood in the entrance hall ready for use, and when the footmen or chairmen were summoned was carried out into the street; the occupant thus called upon her neighbour in state, and, if after dark, was escorted by two links-boys who, upon their patron being ushered into the friendly portals of one of the great town houses of the metropolis, thrust their torches into one of the links' extinguishers on the rails of the gate, and in darkness awaited her pleasure, or returned home to journey thither later.

The Decline of the Sedan.

The sedan chair gradually fell into disuse in the face of altered conditions and other methods of transit. Its decline had set in even in the days of Horace Walpole, for that great statesman bemoaned its waning popularity in 1774; he was one of those who preferred the habits and customs of their youth. The sedan continued in use in many towns for some three-quarters of a century, indeed in one or two exceptional instances until living memory. Its last great stronghold was at Bath, where it was much favoured, until James Heath invented the bath-chair on wheels which rang the death knell of the sedan in Bath. It has been pointed out that the sedan was peculiarly suited for use at Bath, Tunbridge Wells, and other eighteenth-century resorts where invalids foregathered, because it could be carried upstairs into bedrooms, and was thus a welcome boon at such places. Bury St Edmunds has been mentioned as another place where the sedan was in use quite well on towards the middle of the nineteenth century; sedans were also used in Edinburgh until 1860. Sometimes old sedans have been mounted on wheels, but under such conditions the occupant travelled in somewhat undignified state. To be pushed about in a sedan chair on wheels to one accustomed to use such a carriage in the old days would create just such feelings of indignity as a motorist experiences when, after a breakdown of a motor car, some kindly soul harnesses his horse to the car and with a triumphal "Gee-up" cracks his whip and drives off, not forgetting at every opportunity to poke fun at the unlucky occupant of the car. No! a sedan on wheels loses its charms, and when the handsome cab evolved from the sedan the severance of the "chair" in which the person of rank or wealth was carried about and the domestic furniture of the home was finally severed. Thenceforth the coach-builder, and in later days the motor-car engineer, were to have it all their own way.

Some Old Examples.

Discarded sedans have been used as seats for night watchmen in some of the older houses of the nobility in London, and a few may still be seen in the halls of the City Companies.

A splendid collection of sedans was got together at the International Museum at Paris in 1860, when many examples from the Continental cities and towns were on view. Those interested in sedans, allied and yet distinct from furniture, can see several isolated examples in the London museums—many of them having been rescued from outhouses and sheds, where with old vehicles they have been for years.

The home connoisseur when inspecting these old chairs, ruminates on the altered condition of things, and then perhaps gives some attention to the ornamental beauty of their decoration. The French chairs were very beautiful, although much of their gorgeous grandeur has been diminished by age, and the delicate colourings of the Vernis Martin panels and tiny painted scenes have lost their pristine beauty. The work of the artists of the Louis XV. and Louis XVI. periods was very beautiful. It is said that in the old days at Versailles every duchess had her sedan and three lackeys, and every other lady two servants to carry her directly into the ante-chamber of those whom she was privileged to visit, and we can well understand how these ladies would vie with one another in the possession of a richly decorated chair.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HEARTH FURNITURE AND CABINET BRASS WORK

The hearth place—The mantel-piece—The grate—Andirons and dogs—Fenders and fire-irons—Locks and hinges—Furniture makers' metal-work—Door and drawer furniture.

There are many things associated with house-furnishing which are made of metal, and yet they are so closely allied to household furnishing that they must of necessity be considered by those who are interested in antique furniture. Some of these objects are artistic, and have been made for ornamental purposes. Others are essentially utilitarian, in most cases they supplement the wood-work of the builder and the house furnisher, and in some instances are used in conjunction with furniture.

The Hearth Place.

The hearth place is at once the central attraction in a well-furnished home, and much metal-work may be seen upon the hearth. The mantel-piece itself is an architectural feature, which in earlier times was of stone or wood. Upon it the carver's and the sculptor's skill have frequently been expended with good results, the decorative ornament of the fireplace enhancing the beauty of the architect's work. Indeed, the mantel-piece was regarded as peculiarly indicative of the style of interior decoration adopted by the ancient builder.

It was round the fire on a winter's night that the household gathered in the days when rushlights and afterwards oil lamps and candles gave a dim light; sufficient, perhaps, to add imaginative grandeur to the scene and to the fireplace into which all were gazing, sometimes with superstitious dread and anxiety. The legendary myths, which were then related, would be familiar to sculptors and carvers, many of whose beautiful effects were fanciful combinations of the real and imaginary; other decoration was emblematical, often loyal, and at some periods religious. Oak mantels, and afterwards the over-mantels with pictures, tapestries, and carved scenes incorporated in and upon them, gave the visitor as well as the resident something to look at; and when their purport was understood the home life of the original owner, if not that of the present, would be realised. Many of these carvings were daily noticed and admired centuries after they had been wrought, and yet years before the lover of the antique was known, or such things as mantel-pieces were connected with old furniture, or regarded as desirable objects.

During the last few years there has been a rapid appreciation in the value of such things, and almost fabulous prices have been paid for old mantel-pieces taken from ancient houses. There have been several robberies recently—extremely barefaced—in which mantel-pieces as well as more portable fixtures have been removed from empty houses. Wealthy collectors have bought old carved oak and stone mantels, and placed them in art galleries or public museums where they can now be seen. In the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington there are some fine mantel-pieces—many with coats of arms and dates; in some instances the carvings take the form of pictured incidents in the family histories of those for whom they were made. In not a few places the mantel-piece in style and decoration is in keeping with the carving by which it is surrounded, and is inseparable from the panelling of the walls, and the carving of the over-doors and windows. That is an important point for the collector to take note of in that if that view is accepted it goes to show that the home connoisseur, if the fortunate owner of an old house, should cherish the mantel-piece and the fireplace appointments of olden time as part of the scheme of furnishing; and when replacing any of them, or buying something for the fireplace which has been lost or worn out, he will then remember that it is just as important to buy that article of metal or other material in keeping with the furniture of the room as it is to have chairs and tables of the same age or style as oak presses and court cupboards.

If an old house has lost its grate, that is to say the grate that was put into the house at the time it was built, and presumably in accord with the style of architecture adopted, it has lost one of its chief charms. If such has been the case the modern atrocity or more recent replacement should be exchanged for a replica of the old style grate, upon the manufacture of which some firms specialise, and wherever necessary introduce modern hygienic and radiating systems without interfering with the original scheme or form of decoration. In short, mantel-piece, grate, hearth tiles, kerb (if any), and the remainder of the hearth fittings—fender, fire-irons, bellows, coal box and other oddments—should be in

keeping.

The Mantel-piece.

The mantel-pieces follow the architectural styles, and in olden times were mostly designed or sculptured under the superintendence of the architect; in more modern days, however, ironfounders designed grates and iron mantel-pieces in keeping with well-defined styles and made many duplicates of each pattern. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there are many remarkable examples of the Renaissance of Italian art. The over-mantels of that period were often even more imposing than the under-mantels. In English houses the chimney-pieces, as they were then mostly called, followed the style of architecture and of furniture. Those chimney-pieces, which are available to the collector, date chiefly from the Restoration, although in some of the Tudor mansions and castles earlier examples in stone and oak are extant.

Inigo Jones, who studied the old Roman ruins, had a keen perception of the thoroughness desirable in architectural style, and he rarely deputed the designing of even minor interior decoration to others; his master hand, and that of his nephew John Webb, are seen in the chimney-pieces in the banqueting hall at Whitehall, and in many of the rooms at Wilton House, Ashburnham House, and other houses of the nobility in London, in the execution of which work he employed Italian workmen. At a slightly earlier date Nicholas Stone, of Woodbury, near Exeter, was master-mason to Charles I., and he designed some very important mantel-pieces; some of them were decorated by the addition of chased metal mounts, a feature in mantel-piece ornament which is worth special note.

It was Talman who built Chatsworth House for the Duke of Devonshire, and his chimney-pieces were mostly of statuary or Carrara marble. Alabaster was also used. Sir Christopher Wren and Grinling Gibbons exercised a widespread influence on all kinds of architectural wood-work, especially so on mantel-pieces. There are many curious mantel-pieces in which there appears to have been combined action on the part of some noted scientists and a builder or architect. One of these curious chimney-pieces may be seen at Kensington Palace. Immediately over the fireplace is a map of North-west Europe—as it was then—around which are the points of the compass, with a dial hand worked from a vane on the roof, showing at any time the way in which the wind blows.

There are many wonderful chimney-pieces in old London houses, especially those dating from the reign of Queen Anne—many of them just as they were first installed, complete, in some instances, with grates and dogs. The Adam chimney-pieces, so many of which may be seen in and around the Adelphi, bring us into close touch with the furniture of the eighteenth century. The Brothers Adam were very keen upon the correct ornament of mantel-piece and grate, and exercised great influence over builders and ironfounders. They took care, in common with some builders of even a later date, that the mantel-piece should be in accord with other architectural surroundings, and they took care to advise their clients, for whom the houses were built, in the selection of appropriate furniture. These and other influences give tone and character to the room in which the hearth place is generally found in the most prominent position, as it was in Georgian days.

The Grate.

There is much to admire in the work of the old Sussex ironfounders, who at their forges heated with timber cut from the adjoining forest lands smelted ore, and afterwards cast in their foundries Sussex backs, andirons, and other fire apparatus. There are many who make an effort to secure genuine Sussex backs—not modern Dutch replicas—and in the rusty old iron, which was once consigned to the melting pot, without so much as a glance, find valuable antiques, some exceedingly interesting, too, for the patterns chosen by the Sussex ironfounders were emblematical; frequently such backs were moulded with patterns on which were cut *fleurs-de-lis*, Scotch thistles, Tudor roses, and royal and loyal mottoes. The Royal arms were frequently used, and crowns were common after the Restoration; sometimes the local magnates had specially-prepared patterns for houses on their estates, and it is no uncommon thing to find several of such backs in different farmhouses which were originally held under the same landlord. Such backs vary in size, and were, of course, used at the back of the andirons and dogs, being found more lasting than bricks.

Andirons and Dogs.

In front of the Sussex back was a pair of andirons. Andirons had been brought into use directly after wood was burned on the hearth under the hood of the chimney which became a necessity as civilisation advanced, the wood rested

one end on the floor and the other on the andiron, thereby giving a better draught through the fuel. Some of the old andirons, so many of which were made in the Sussex foundries, bear dates back in the seventeenth century, and they are often ornamented with elaborately designed patterns, and sometimes with the initials of their maker or owner. The andirons and the Sussex backs in combination were barred, the front bars being more convenient for brushwood, and afterwards for the consumption of sea-borne coal, readily suggesting the basket of the grate which became a feature in eighteenth-century houses. The evolution of the grate is somewhat outside the scope of this work, although it is an interesting study, and not far removed from household furniture.

Fenders and Fire-irons.

During the last few years there has been an energetic search among old household ironmongery for the beautifully pierced brass fenders, which were once polished so bright, and added such comfort to the hearths of eighteenth-century homes. Pierced fenders were sometimes deep, measuring quite 12 in. in depth; at others they were shallow, but in nearly all cases they were extensively perforated, sometimes in geometrical patterns, at others in ornamental scrolls. Possibly the original motive was that of admitting the warm rays of heat through the deep fender front, against which so many feet were warmed in olden times when chairs were drawn up to the hearth. When a bottom plate was added to the fender fret or front, which was to some extent equivalent to the modern fender kerb, in that the hearth was exposed, the front of the fender was raised on small feet. These were frequently of an ogee pattern, varied by lions' paws and ball feet. The fender-plate, with a stop in the centre, formed a convenient rest for the fire-irons or brasses, which had hitherto leaned up against the chimney-corner beside the grate.

The fire-brasses have seldom remained intact, for although pokers with much worn wrought-iron bits, and tongs, are often met with the set is generally minus the shovel, for the shovel-pan which was perforated like the fender front, was in many instances worn out long ago. Metallurgists who have studied this point explain that the brass used in the eighteenth century was of much softer type than that at present employed for fenders and fire-brasses. There was more copper in the alloy, and considerably less hard metal in its composition. Hearth sets are considered complete in modern days when the grate, mantel-piece, fireplace, fender, and fire-brasses have been purchased. In olden times, however, there were a few other appointments considered indispensable on the hearth. Bellows were decorative objects, on which the wood-carver's skill was expended in no small degree. Choice pieces of wood-carving embellished the very useful and even necessary means of blowing up the fire in an age when there were neither slow-combustion grates, nor grates with regulating canopies by which sufficient draught could be obtained just as required. Wrought-iron and brass stools, or footmen as they were called, stood on the hearth; the brass trivet was frequently on the bars, and the toddy kettle sang on the hob. These and many other hearth appointments gave a cheery look to the eighteenth-century fireplace, and now provide collectors of furniture with many attractive sundries to add to their collection.

Locks and Hinges.

The metal-work applied to architectural and builders' fittings and to furniture overlaps; in both cases it has formed a very important part of the trade in hardware—a branch known as cabinet brass- and iron-foundry. Locks and hinges constitute part of this metal-work, and the way in which they are made, and the amount of hand work in finishing them off, determine to some extent their age and appropriateness to the furniture on which they are found. Both locks and hinges wear out, so that in course of time there have been many replacements, and it very often happens that locks and hinges have been changed and repaired; and in the past such replacements were seldom done in regard to the correct style suitable for the antique furniture undergoing restoration.

The locks on old furniture are chiefly cupboard locks, till locks, chest locks, trunk locks, and desk locks. Cupboard locks in olden times were always made "handed," that is to say "rights" and "lefts," but now many of the commoner cupboard locks are known as "straight" cupboard locks, and are screwed on to the wood inside the door without cutting any portion of it away, the bolt shooting both ways, so that "straight" cupboard locks can be used for either right or left hand doors, that is to say for doors hinged either on the right or the left hand stile of the door. "Cut" cupboard locks were let in flush with the wood back or frame of the inside of the door. For such locks escutcheons, either plain, "thread," or "fancy," were used. Cupboard locks have been made in both iron and brass, and they have for many years been screwed on, but in the days of oak they were frequently nailed with strong tacks or small "clout" nails, both of which were wrought, *i.e.*, hammered by hand.

The "till" lock, so-called, was the lock used on drawers, the name having been derived from its first employment in a tradesman's till, which appears to have been the earliest type of drawer locked with an inside lock. Till locks have been invariably let into the wood-work of the inside of the drawer flush, and nailed or screwed from the inside, the bolt of the lock shooting into the rail or frame holding the drawer, oftentimes being made doubly secure by the use of a plate of metal let into the underside of the frame.

The heavy trunk lock with hasp, cut in and fastened on the front of a chest or box, was an early form of fastening, and to some extent suggested, doubtless, by a hasp and staple fastened by a padlock. Following the trunk lock came the chest or box lock with its "link-plate," which was let in to the inside of the box or chest, not fastened on the outside, as in the case of the trunk lock. An ordinary desk with a sloping top requires a desk lock of ordinary type (the same as a chest lock but with a sloping edge and link-plate), but a bureau, the flap of which lets down, requires a lock with an inverted slope, such a lock being known in the trade as a sloping bureau-desk lock.

Such, briefly, are the locks found on old furniture. The early lock makers used large "pins" requiring massive keys with large bore "pipes." To make such locks secure the "bits" of the keys were cut to pass intricate wards. The number and variety of the wards and the curious twist or curl of the bit, together with its size or oddity of form, were matters relied upon for security. There were in olden time no levers or pins or other systems by which the chances of duplication could be reduced to a minimum, and mathematically calculated, as is the case nowadays. Attempts to put modern locks on old furniture end disastrously, both in effect and appearance—it is like "putting a new patch on an old garment."

Many of the ancient lock-plates were very ornate—especially those on doors. The best wrought-iron ornamental metal work on furniture is found on cupboards and chests, some of the straps of metal used in conjunction with strap hinges, and alternating with them on the covers of chests, being extremely decorative. Cupboard hinges have altered much during the last half a century. Those used on old cupboards and still older armories, court cupboards, and similar pieces were H or HL (H L) shaped, and the wings were often S or scroll-shaped, frequently cut and filed, and even engraved by hand. The same features are seen on brass locks and hinges, much used during the eighteenth century, the ornamental metal-work formerly confined to lock-plates, hinges, and escutcheons, gradually increasing and becoming more decorative as metal ornaments were used by cabinet-makers, and handles and handle-plates became known.

Furniture Makers' Metal-work.

Some interesting side lights are thrown upon the brass metal-work of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the inspection of a collection of trade literature, dating back some hundred years or so. In the author's collection there are many examples of metal-workers' cards, loose pattern sheets, frontispieces (many were detached from catalogues to prevent the names of makers being known to the customers to whom they were shown), and catalogues. From these and from some of the old traders' catalogues, exhibited in the Department of Engraving of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the following list of metal-work sold to furniture manufacturers has been culled. The notes given in italics are added as explanatory:—

Bed Caps.—*Covers or caps to place over the sunk screws in wooden bedsteads.*

Bed Pull Grips.—*The grips of the cord pulls or ropes attached to crank bells, usually hanging by the side of the bedstead.*

Brass Furniture Ornaments.—*Such decorative ornaments took the forms of eagles, bunches of grapes, animals' heads, etc.*

Casters.—*The earliest form of caster was that with leathern bowl or roller, used on furniture in the days of Queen Anne. These were followed by all-brass casters, decorative socket casters, and other varieties.*

Chimney Hooks.—*Hooks were fixed in the chimney corner or on the chimney jamb or alongside the grate, on which were hung fire-implements.*

Claw Feet.—*Brass caps or feet were used on furniture both with and without under-casters.*

Clock-Case Furniture.—*Sets of clock-case furniture included the gracefully modelled figures in pairs, and separate figures for the centre of clock-case pediments, as*

well as ball and other decorative ornaments.

COMMODE HANDLES.—*The varieties of handles were illustrated in makers' pattern books, those following the French style being usually priced in French moneys and charged "per douz" or "paire."*

COMMODE SETS.—*A complete commode set consisted of six handles, three escutcheons, one frontispiece, two large ornamental pieces, two short pieces, and two strips.*

KNOBS.—*There were many varieties of spires and screw-knobs for pediments, as well as knobs for doors and drawers.*

MASKS.—*Brass metal mounts for console and other tables, the varieties including lions' heads, dolphins, and rams' faces.*

SCREEN FITTINGS.—*The metal poles and rods for making up needlework fire screens.*

TABLE SLIDES.—*The brass slides for fastening or clamping dining-room tables.*

TRENCHERS.—*These were plate-casters, often made of iron with brass frames and wheels.*

TULIP CASTERS.—*The special name given to casters, the sockets of which were decorative with acanthus-leafed ornament.*

DOOR AND DRAWER FURNITURE.

The period—1690-1730—during which walnut was the chief wood used calls for special notice, and it was during that time that many changes were made in door and drawer furniture. To commence with, drawer handles superseding the hitherto used wood knobs were of ordinary types, and apart from the handle-plates were of simple forms. The handle was slightly moulded square, gradually becoming rounded; and although generally plain, now and then there was a break or turned ornament in the centre. The handle-plates on drawers were quite plain and smooth from 1690-1705, although in a few instances a little engraving was introduced in the centre of the plate; in all cases the shape of the plate was irregular and ornate. Pierced or fretted handle-plates did not appear until about 1710, their use being general until 1730, makers continuing to sell them freely in country places until about 1740. After that as stocks were exhausted newer designs took their places. Such handle-plates were fastened by brass pins, not screws.

Drop-handles and handle-plates were used in conjunction with keyhole escutcheons. When such handle-plates were used on small drawers requiring only one handle the handle-plate served as an escutcheon, or in combination with it. The attachment was by split and flattened iron wires, bent or keyed-in at the back. A change was made, however, about 1710, when roses were used under the handles, and the wire fastenings gave place to the bolt which passed through the door, and was screwed by a nut. The handles made during the first half of the eighteenth century were expensive, as shown by the prices quoted in makers' catalogues. At that time much hand labour was expended in their finish, and file marks can still be noticed on the edges of the perforations, and on the backs of the plates. The escutcheon plates of 1695-1725 were larger than those which followed later.

It may be well to note here that brass has at different periods varied in its composition. The metal is, of course, an amalgam, copper being the foundation metal. The alloys used early in the eighteenth century were much lighter and whiter in colour than those employed at the close of the century. The colour of the old handles when cleaned and polished is, therefore, to some extent a guide as to their age and genuineness.

The brass drawer furniture made about the middle of the eighteenth century, from 1750-1765, showed a marked change. Handle plates were seldom used, the drop handles being made in pairs (handed), for at that time the style of ornament was after the Chippendale fashion, and the rococo shells and scrolls, almost invariably introduced, necessitated a reverse pattern, making the two handles different in the detail of their design. At that time both handles and the escutcheons which were used in conjunction with them were extremely decorative, many of the handles being finely chased, and both handles and handle-plates gilded. Chippendale, however, adopted the handle-plate, and evolved from the willow of Queen Anne's day a highly-fretted plate of extremely ornamental appearance, in accord with his Gothic and Chinese taste, with which the fretted plates were generally used.

Another change came about 1770, when the screwed handles, without plate or escutcheon, were attached and ornamented by the use of the small circular plate under each screw of the bail handle. Sheraton used oval handles, which were in general use between 1780-1790. The oval plates were placed horizontally, and formed an attractive background for the bail handle which was suspended, dropping into a groove. Then followed the ring drop-handle which continued in use till about 1800. The ring drop-handle differed from those which had gone before, in that it was attached with a single screw, and in order that the ring plate might be fixed in the centre of the drawer the screw hole had obviously to be made out of the centre. Therefore by examining the drawer of a piece of old furniture, whatever modern substitutes may have been put on, it is easy to determine whether ring drop-handles or other varieties were used by the original makers, and they may be taken as some guide to the age of the furniture under examination.

Now we come to the ring and rosette brass handle which followed, a style dating from about 1800. It continued a favourite pattern in the Empire days, and its decoration was somewhat similar to the prevailing style. In the more massive pieces the ring plates were in the form of lions' heads.

Glass knobs took the place of brass furniture between 1815-1820. The wood knobs (mahogany and other woods) came in during the first few years of Queen Victoria's reign, and lasted for thirty or forty years. It is said that whereas many beautiful old drop and ring handles were taken off old furniture, those of a still earlier date escaped, because of the two holes which had been made for the willow brass of the early period, and which could not be covered over by the Victorian knob. The restorer has at all times committed acts of vandalism, by putting genuine sets of old handles with willow handle plates upon Sheraton or Hepplewhite furniture, covering up the marks left by the knob or rosette. A careful scrutiny of antique furniture before purchasing a doubtful piece is strongly advised.

To summarise the foregoing notes in reference to cabinet metal-work, it may be pointed out that the carpenters and wood-workers who made oaken furniture in pre-Restoration times used wood knobs, sometimes of oak, often of yew. The pear drop-handles of brass and iron appeared towards the close of the Restoration period. About 1700 the bail handle came in, and was fastened to the extreme sides of the ornamental handle-plate by brass wire loops. In Queen Anne's reign the method of fastening was changed, round screws being bolted through the door. It was then that plain willow plates were in vogue. The willow plates became decoratively pierced during the first half of the eighteenth century; extremely large about 1760. In 1770 came the circular or oval rosettes, and through them the bail ends were fastened to the drawer. Between 1780 and 1790 the oval plate was used. From 1790 to 1800 ring drop-handles were commonly employed. In 1800 rosettes were added to the ring drops. In 1815 glass knobs became the fashion, and later wood knobs and china knobs painted and ornamented came into use.

CHAPTER XXXV

OLD MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Old pianos—Old harps—Old violins.

There is scarcely an old home without one instrument which although cast on one side as out of date from a musician's standpoint possesses a peculiar charm for the collector. The delightful spinets, virginals, and pianos of a century or more ago are so near akin to furniture, following in the decoration of their cases the furniture taste of their day, that they cannot be disassociated from it. Some of these quaint old instruments, without such modern improvements as iron frames and overstrung wires, made when musical instrument builders were ignorant of mechanical devices by which pianos could be played by unskilled hands, gave forth music when played by master instrumentalists. It is true all players on those old instruments which are now museum curios, and valued only for their delightful cases, were not possessed with the power of a Handel or a Bach; but few attempted to play who had no ear.

In all ages music in the home has been appreciated. Indeed, to many it is essential. Its value was pictured in a musical dream-like vision at an exhibition held in London some little time ago. A music room filled with the very soul of Music was constructed. In it music reigned to the exclusion of every other thought or inspiration. In that veiled room the designer had made the central ideal of his theme "space," amidst the serenity of moonlit water. The furnishings of the room were blue, a velvet pile carpet of turquoise blue stretching up to a piano throne. Over the instrument hung a silver lamp, and the piano itself was silver painted. Its legs were fashioned like Greek columns, and near by was a stand on which was a silver vase. The piano chair was shaped like a lute; its cushion was of shimmering steel and black silk. To suggest the movement of water at night the windows were screened by a light silk net, encrusted with jet, arranged so as to move with the slightest breath of air. Such was this wonderful room which was intended to inspire its occupants with music.

Perhaps the great artists of old caught their inspirations from the wonderful paintings with which their instruments were adorned, and from the decorative ornament of the cases. The environment of instrumentalists has much to do with the inspiration of the artists. A collection of old furniture seems incomplete without some musical instruments of contemporary date, and an old spinet, harp, or violin is out of place in a room in which there is no trace of the antique, or of those house furnishings inseparable from the right environment of the quaint instruments which conjure up visions of those Georgian or still earlier costumes worn by the players who delighted to bring soul-stirring music from them.

Old Pianos.

There are some beautiful old instruments in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington, from which those interested in this side-line of furniture collecting can realise how fascinating such instruments can be to those who possess the spirit of Music.

The connection between the subject chosen for painted scenes on instruments and music a century or two ago, is not always apparent. For instance, there is a virginal on a carved oaken stand signed, "John Loosemore, fecit 1655," on the inside of the lid there are scenes depicting Adam and Eve in Paradise, a sea fight, and a hunting scene representing the chasing of deer.

The virginal, like the spinet, resembles a square piano. It is, however, arranged with one string, a jack and quill to each note. It is so named because it was the instrument used by nuns when "virginising" or singing hymns to the Virgin Mary. In the Museum is a five-sided spinet or virginal, which was once owned by Queen Elizabeth, who was an expert player upon it. There is another fine virginal on which are the arms of the Duke of Cleves; the keys are of walnut wood, and monsters' heads are carved on the front panels, the chief decoration being scroll work; on the bridge is the inscription, "Musica Turbatas sensus animasque removet." A very fine spinet in the same gallery is dated 1574; its chief merits being remarkable inlays of marbles and stones. The keys are of wood, also beautifully inlaid with marble and ivory. There is another fine instrument there, too; one which was made for the Queen of Bohemia. A curious old harmonium exhibited, made by Müller, of Paris, was formerly packed in a leather case for transport, when it was taken on board the royal yacht, where it was in frequent use. It has been loaned to the Museum by the King, who also lends an

early upright grand piano made in 1808, the label upon it reading: "R. Jones, upright, grand, and square pianoforte maker to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, No. 11 Golden Square, London, W." That instrument was evidently made for the Prince Regent, who became George IV. Its decoration is Gothic.

One of the finest collections of old instruments is to be seen in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City; some four thousand instruments of all kinds—the Crosby-Brown Collection—are there arranged. There are spinets and harpsichords, one of the latter having been the property of one of the Popes. There is an instrument made by Andres Stein, built in 1789, having a shifting foot pedal by which the keyboard is moved, so that the hammer strikes but one or two of three unison strings. The name of Broadwood was associated with the piano trade of a century or more ago, just as it is to-day, and many of the instruments, now curios, bear that name. In the Crosby-Brown Collection there is a square piano introduced into England in 1760, by one Zumpe, whose action was then used by Broadwood.

Messrs Broadwood possess a very fine collection of quaint old instruments, many of their own make. Among those which they have on view in their showrooms there is one of Zumpe's pianos; it is said that it was the merits of that instrument that induced John Broadwood to take up the instrument he so well improved and eventually perfected. Some of the most interesting instruments in the Broadwood collection are a clavichord in gold lacquered case of English manufacture of the "taste" of about 1770; a spinet by Hitchcock of London, made in 1710; and a two-manual harpsicord by Burkat Schudi, dated 1771, an instrument formerly owned by Barbara Broadwood, and used by Moschelles as late as 1837.

Much might be written about the beautiful old instruments found in old English homes, and also sad tales related of long neglected spinets and early pianos, which are well worth doing up, not restoring in the modern sense, but carefully cleaning on account of the beauty of their cases, their delicate paintings and inlays, and other charms, not the least being their stained and much worn keyboards, which could they speak might tell so many tales and reveal secrets which are buried for ever.

Briefly summed up, the story of the development of the piano began with the monochord, the prototype of the piano, an instrument which was first made as early as B.C. 582; the clavicytherium, the strings of which were arranged in a triangle or harp form, did not make its appearance until the thirteenth century; from that evolved the clavichord, which was popular during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In the meantime Giovanni Spinnetti, of Venice, gave to the world the spinet in 1503; and soon afterwards the upright harp with a keyboard—the virginal—made its appearance. With the advent of the harpsichord, in 1531, there came the outline of the grand, which was destined to be so well known in the future.

Old Harps.

An easy instrument to learn, provided that the player has a real ear for music, the harp was in olden time one of the most favoured instruments. The splendid harps seen in museums, and now and then in antique furniture galleries, are the perfected instruments far removed from primitive harps, which can be traced back to very early days. The harp of the Psalmist was, doubtless, a much simpler instrument than that represented in quaint pictures in which King David is shown gorgeously apparelled, wearing a golden crown, playing upon his harp.

In Dr Stainer's work entitled "The Music of the Bible," there is an interesting and instructive account of instruments which were akin to the harp and which were often mentioned in Biblical records. He tells of the kinnor, probably a Syrian instrument, of the lyre of Babylon, of the Egyptian lute, and of the psaltery. From those ancient Eastern instruments we are led on to the true Irish harp, one of the oldest known being that of Brian Boiroinhe, a famous king or Irish chieftain, in Trinity College, Dublin. Two forms of small harps appear to have been used in Ireland and Scotland, too, before the bagpipes came. The Welsh harp—the telyn—was larger. All the various harps were in use in some small degree before the eighteenth century. It was, however, in 1810, when Sebastian Erard made such a marked improvement in harps, that they became the fashionable drawing-room instrument. It is the harps of the first half of the nineteenth century which are now found—often in a shockingly neglected condition—in old English households.

Old Violins.

The story of the violin attracts many; that of those wonderful instruments—often overrated—produced by master makers who were themselves players of great talent. Fabulous prices have been paid for old violins, which, alas! have

been much fabricated, and their labels forged in recent years.

The fashioning of the wood body of the violin has so much to do with the success of the artist that the wood-worker and the admirer of old furniture respects the shape and even the ornament of the violin even more than the harp or the constructional parts of a pianoforte.

The list of celebrated makers of violins is too long to give here. There are a few who cannot be overlooked, however, and their names must be mentioned even in the most cursory glance in the story of the violin. The famous Italian violin makers worked at Cremona, Mantua, Venice, and Milan. The early models were crude compared with those perfected at Cremona and Venice. One of the most famous artists was Andreas Amati, of Cremona; but his two sons, Antonio and Geronimo, if anything, excelled him. Painting and inlaying were the decorations often employed; but it has been said of the violins made by the Amati family that they held that construction should be decorated, and the decoration itself should be constructive. Antonio Stradivari, who lived from 1649-1737, founded the true Cremona pattern, and those of other makers were mostly modelled according to their established types. It is said that what is called the higher model made by Jacob Stainer was the pattern chiefly followed by the makers of England and Germany in the middle of the eighteenth century; but it fell into disuse owing to the superior qualities of the Cremona violin. The English violin makers at one time worked in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, but they afterwards removed to Soho. John Holloway, whose shop was in Gerrard Street, and Morrison who lived in Princes Street, Soho, made violins in 1760. It was in Soho Street that Senor Andreoli lived, and in Wardour Street that other violin makers established themselves. The collector of household furniture keeps a keen look-out for any kind of ornamental and decorative wood-work, and in his search in the shops of old instrument dealers he is not disappointed.

CHAPTER XXXVI

MISCELLANEA

Bellows—Carved picture frames—Cradles—Fire-screens—Knife-boxes and urns—Miniature furniture—Spinning wheels—Tea caddies—Wood-turnery—Work-boxes—The value of old furniture—The romance of collecting.

In the broader and more expansive phrase "furnishing of the home," many smaller objects which go towards making up the sum total of antique furniture are suggested. The furnishing of the home is not completed when bare furniture is purchased; that is the experience of all who set up housekeeping, and it was ever the same. In olden time household goods were accumulated by a slower process than that which appertains at the present time—but by degrees completeness was approached.

The collector of furniture delights in these smaller accessories, which he gathers together partly on account of their beauty, rarity, or unique characteristics, and partly because they are so near akin to the furniture upon which he specialises. To the home connoisseur such objects have an especial interest, in that they give a real purpose to the furniture he possesses, and help to throw many a sidelight upon the somewhat obscured developments which took place at certain periods. A few of these will serve to illustrate the point. The advent of the knife-box, with its sloping lid, which for convenience and ornament was placed upon the side-table or sideboard, suggested the addition of a rail which prevented the lid of the knife-box from opening back against the wall or injuring the paper or other wall-covering. The use of coffee urns necessitated a portable table or stand; hence the beautiful little tripod tables which collectors search for. The general acceptance of tea as a beverage brought in its train the charming tea caddies and tea trays. It also gave another use for the table, and caused many changes in the appointment and furniture of the drawing-room or parlour where tea was served. The popularity of a game brought about the need for card-tables—old packs of cards are curios of another type, but although they gave rise to an important series of tables they are not included even in the miscellanea of antique furniture.

BELLOWS.

The domestic bellows was an object upon which much skill in carving was expended, in the days when the bellows were hung by the fireside and served a double purpose—that of use and ornament. The earlier bellows, some of which were of unusual size, came from Holland, where Dutch wood-carvers cut deeply and effectively. Some came from Germany, where the bellows appears to have been specially seized upon as a domestic object suitable for decorative effective carving. In this country, too, the wood framework of the bellows was frequently carved in low relief, much of the ornament being imparted by the brass nailing of the leather work; brass nails, too, were employed for ornamental decoration on the wooden sides. The pair of bellows illustrated in Fig. 113 is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. There is also a case filled with bellows, some of German origin, others Italian. Many sorts of ornament have been used by the carver, masks of various kinds being much favoured; the one illustrated, which is cut in walnut, shows a remarkably effective mask in the circular design.

—MAHOGANY FRAMED SCREEN, CHIPPENDALE STYLE.

FIG. 116.—MAHOGANY POLE SCREEN, 1750-1775.
(*Phillips, Hitchin.*)

FIG. 117.—OBLONG POLI
(*Waring & Gillow, L*

FIG. 118.—NEEDLEWORK BOX,
PERIOD CHARLES I.
(*In the Collection of Gill & Reigate, Ltd.*)

Carved Picture Frames.

The painting of pictures upon wooden panels was followed by pictures on wood, separately framed. The old portraits, painted by the Dutch masters, were in quaint black frames, far from beautiful. But when ornamental carving surrounded doors and pier-glasses, carved picture frames came into vogue, and it was soon realised that they helped to frame or set off the pictures they enclosed to advantage.

There were many early framers of pictures, the most noted decorative works being those of the Florentine framers, who excelled in carved wood. There were many who devoted their time to such work in this country, and in the early days of the eighteenth century the father of the great Thomas Chippendale had gained fame as a carver and picture framer, and it was at his bench that his son learned his trade. In course of time other materials than wood were used, and newer and more effective processes of decoration were practised. The wooden frames gave place to less expensive methods adopted by the moulders of plaster, and special preparations by which wood-carving could be cleverly imitated. These were gilded, rich effects of the golden frames being recognised by artists, who found in them appropriate settings for pictures—frames in accord with the frames of pier-glasses and the gorgeous furniture of the French Empire periods. Picture framing is quite a distinct art from that of the furniture maker, but in the furnishing of the home they are very closely associated, and connoisseurs are wise in hanging appropriate pictures on their walls, and in obtaining, as far as possible, frames in accord with the furniture they collect. There is a fashion in picture-frames as in furniture.

Cradles.

There are many interesting old cradles to be met with in the attics of some old houses. The earlier examples had open tops, and were simply boxes slung from end posts, so that they could be “rocked”; later came the rocker cradle. Both types are met with half-covered, with a hood at the head end. The oldest cradle of royal fame is that of Henry V., now in the London Museum at Stafford House. In it was rocked the infant prince, who was born in 1388 at Courtfield, near Monmouth, where the child was in charge of Lady Montacute, a grand-daughter of Edward I. The cradle of James I., which was on rockers and slung from rocking posts, is also extant. Hinged lids were added to cradles in the seventeenth century. Many of these old relics are inscribed with initials and dates, probably indicating the date of the birth of the eldest child. Such cradles were used by successive members of the family, and were handed on to succeeding generations, for the comparatively limited number of cradles of antique type point to these family heritages.

Fire-screens.

The fire-screen usually occupies a peculiar place in art, in that it is claimed as belonging to the carver, the painter, the needleworker, and the enameller, as a piece of household furniture to which each can lay special proprietorship.

The Chinese screen is seen at its best in lacquers, although many admire greatly the marvellous carving of picture screens, cut and chiselled in relief, and afterwards coloured in that peculiar way which cannot be copied by craftsmen of Western nations. The idea of an oriental screen, which is uppermost in the minds of many, is that of an immense six- or even twelve-fold screen covered over with richly-coloured pictures, illustrative of Chinese or Japanese history; of their fables and beliefs, or of their family deeds or prowess achieved in the past. There is, however, a smaller class of screens commonly designated fire-screens, which are equally as beautiful, and often represent far more delicacy of ornament and carving. Many of these smaller screens are remarkable for their wonderful frames of teek-wood and ebony, sometimes inlaid with mother-of-pearl and jade. The screen itself, carved, lacquered, or of embroidered silks, is often commemorative of some great event in the family; such screens are deemed appropriate gifts to newly-married couples.

The greater interest to collectors of old English furniture lies in the screens made in this country, the needlework with which they are covered being in accordance with the textile art of the period when they were made. The earlier ones are of walnut, and have turned frames and stands, the upper portion of the framework often being enriched with carving, such as the fine screen illustrated in Fig. 114.

The Georgian screens sometimes took the form of that illustrated in Fig. 115, which is of mahogany, and shows Chippendale influence. Many collectors specialise on the pole-screens with tripod feet. These are specially interesting, in that they are so readily adjustable, and keep off the glare of the fire, which in the days when the screens were made were often much larger than we are accustomed to nowadays, for logs of timber were not infrequently burned on the

open hearth, although the dog-grate had gone out of fashion. A very beautiful little pole-screen is illustrated in Fig. 116; the needlework, it will be noticed, is in a very narrow frame, but the beautiful tripod stand, with Chippendale carving and gracefully formed feet, is much in evidence. Fig. 117 is a somewhat larger oblong screen with stouter tripods, the chief beauty of which lies in the carving on the top of the leg and in the claw-and-ball feet. Such screens were almost invariably of needlework, the earlier ones being of *petit point*, the later ones of needlework of other stitches, floral sprays being favoured. There is a much lighter type of screen, and apparently less serviceable, for the shield or little oval filled with some delightful piece of embroidered silk is small in size. Some of the screens of Adam decoration are of painted wood, the back being of pleated coloured silks.

French influence is seen in some of the screens, many of which were made in France during the Louis XIV. period, when *petit point* figures were worked on a coarser background, and in later days during the Louis XV. and XVI. periods, when Boucher subjects and charming little Watteau scenes were painted and embroidered, the frames being gilded in accordance with the furniture of the period.

Knife-boxes and Urns.

Knife-boxes and urns, or more correctly speaking, urn-shaped knife-boxes, were usually made in pairs, and stood on sideboards, side-tables, or on specially designed pedestals. The custom of providing such receptacles for table cutlery, and the consequent making of pedestals on which they could stand, had much to do with the development of the sideboard, and in course of time urn-like vases were sold in conjunction with complete sideboards in which the pedestal and the table were conjoined. Independent knife-boxes and urns were usually made in pairs; but the knife-boxes are occasionally met with in sets of three, the centre box being smaller than the pair. The decoration of the exterior of both urns and sloping-topped boxes followed the manner of the veneer inlay and marqueterie ornament of the times, most of them being made during the days when Sheraton influence was so strong, although variously interpreted by local cabinet-makers. Such urns and boxes were fitting companions to the tea caddies and the bottle cabinets, which were similarly constructed wooden cases for the rare cut-glass spirit bottles then so frequently in use.

The interior fittings of the knife-boxes varied; some contained spaces for a dozen knives and forks and a pair of carvers. Others had larger capacities, and held more of the small knives, and sometimes a greater number of larger knives or carvers. Others again were spoon-boxes, and held the table plate. It is beyond the scope of this work to describe in detail the knives, so many of which have been worn out or lost; unfortunately there are very few complete sets in existence now. When the furniture collector, however, is able to secure a set of knives for his case, or perchance has been lucky enough to meet with a few examples left in the original case, he will realise how beautifully quaint the table upon which such cutlery was displayed must have looked. The blades of the knives were thin, narrow, and pointed; the forks were usually two-pronged, and the handles were mostly round or oval. The handles alone are treasures not to be despised. Some were of ivory, occasionally stained green; many were of porcelain, beautifully painted with those delicate floral sprays and other emblems by which the collector of ceramics at once recognises the products of Chelsea or Bow. Some were of Worcester china; others blue and white. Those of Wedgwood cameo decoration were delicately chiselled, the medallions after the style of Flaxman's modelling being perfect gems. There is an exceptionally fine display of old table cutlery in the Victoria and Albert Museum, where a large gallery has recently been devoted to such things. There, mounted on velvet, kept from careless handling, in glass cases, are many valuable examples of Sheffield and London cutlers' crafts; incidentally, it may be remarked that the home connoisseur ought to be well acquainted with knives and forks, silver plate, and the priceless porcelain which was once in common use on the dining-table, and displayed on the sideboard of a householder of a century or more ago.

Miniature Furniture.

Some attention has been given to collecting miniature furniture, which is so suitable for display on cabinets, and in some instances may be arranged on modern over-doors. Years ago there was a great demand for miniature furniture, strong and serviceable, for the children's nursery. The playthings of the girls of those days were replicas of chests of drawers and other articles, beautifully made, strong and solid. They were educational in their way in that they taught of the household duties and perhaps cares to which the children in after life would be subjected. There were "grandfather" chairs with round spindle backs and tiny rocking-chairs, replicas of those which were used by the great-grandmothers of the present race, also dolls' chairs and dolls' wardrobes and chests of drawers; such articles, after having afforded many an hour's amusement, were carefully preserved, and have often been handed on as heirlooms, some resting in

museums, testifying to the solidity of the furniture of a few generations past.

There is another view of miniature furniture, in that it is said that such pieces were originally 'prentice models, made during the days when apprentices were being taught the art of cabinet-making. Such models may also have been made by skilled workmen, for others to duplicate on a larger scale. In some instances these miniature pieces of furniture were experimental goods, from which measurements could be taken and larger pieces fashioned. They were good substitutes in the days when draughtsmanship was seldom practised in the furniture trade, and when men preferred to work from actual models or to copy some piece of furniture which had been made at an earlier period, rather than to work from scale drawings.

It is probable that some of the pieces of miniature furniture now to be seen in curio shops were the work of amateurs, who amused themselves in days gone by just as amateur wood-carvers, fret-workers, and wood-workers do to-day. There is great credit due to the makers of genuinely old miniatures, in that most of the pieces were made with care and faithfully represented—often in every detail; the larger pieces would serve as models to the amateur, just as it is assumed the workshop models in miniature served the professional workers as patterns for the larger furniture, and possibly enabled the dealer to take orders in advance.

Spinning-Wheels.

Spinning wheels may be said to date from the fifteenth century in their more modern forms. Such wheels are of two kinds—those worked by hand, and the spinning-wheels operated by the foot by a pedal attachment. Both kinds are to be seen in furniture museums and in many private collections. The spinning-wheel is doubly prized by the home connoisseur, for it has been in the family from the time when it was in daily use. These relics of the days when home-made yarns were spun are very different in make and finish, although in all of them the same principle seems to have been adopted by their makers. They followed the hand distaff and spindle, and were the first forms of mechanical spinning which were in after years to transfer spinning from the cottage to the factory. Some of the spinning-wheels were made of turned spindles, and from the remarkable ingenuity shown in their fashioning, and the obvious patience and time expended in their decoration, they must have been labours of love, certainly not mere commercial undertakings. The romance of the spinning-wheel is very real, as is indicated by the wealth of the wood-turnery, and in some cases of inlays and marqueterie, making the simple spinning-wheel even more ornamental than utilitarian.

Tea Caddies.

The cult of the tea caddy has been a favourite theme with some writers, who have expatiated at great lengths upon the mysteries of tea-making, and pointed out how the caddy was kept under lock and key. The only means of access was in the hands of the housewife, who at tea-time blended the leaves of China and Ceylon teas, perhaps using a little of the so-called green, and with the silver spoon, an accompaniment of the caddy, carefully measured out the portion of costly leaves for the daily tea-drinking. The name of the caddy is, of course, derived from the Chinese word *kati*, which was the small box or chest holding about 1¼ lb. of tea, in which the then rare and fragrant leaves were sent from China to this country. The high price of tea, frequently a guinea a pound, had much to do with the fashioning of the handsome caddy which stood upon the sideboard in most houses during the later years of the eighteenth century, and well beyond the middle of the nineteenth century. The caddy is a box or chest in which are usually two beautifully-made hinged boxes, fitting perfectly into spaces or divisions made for them, the boxes being lined with tinfoil, and the lids fitted with specially-made long brass hinges. In the centre of a caddy there is usually a space filled with a glass sugar basin, and on the lid of the box, or in some convenient place, provision for the quaint little silver spoon in which the tea was apportioned. The date of the caddy can often be approximately fixed by the hall-mark of the silver spoon.

It was formerly customary to buy both black and green teas; and although the latter was used in smaller quantities the boxes or compartments in which the leaves were kept were almost invariably identical in size. The form and ornament of the caddy followed the style of the period, beginning with the days of Chippendale design, but the greater number of caddies show Sheraton influence in style and ornament. The box was usually of mahogany, and the ornament was in light or coloured woods, shell designs being favourite decorations. The escutcheon, ring, or lion's head handles, and ball feet were of brass. The adjustment of the hinges to the lids of the caddies was so good that when closed the case was almost, if not quite, air-tight. Such caddies were fitting ornaments on Sheraton sideboards, and were used in conjunction with knife urns or boxes. A little later, in Victorian days, rosewood caddies, inlaid with ivory, and others made of mother-of-

pearl, were fashionable. Again there were some of metal, ornamented with Chinese characters, some being of tin, many japanned at Pontypool, and later such caddies were the work of Birmingham artists.

Wood-turnery.

There are many small objects of household use, made at different periods, which were the work of the wood turner. Before lathes were known—or at any rate, before they were generally possessed—some fine spiral work was laboriously cut by hand; but when it was found that a simple lathe enabled the workman to cut wood spirally, and in other forms by holding a chisel or other tool against the wood, this method of ornamenting furniture was very readily adopted. Among other household goods some beautifully turned candlesticks—some of them floor candlesticks—have come down to us from Jacobean days (they have been much copied recently, and both the larger floor candlesticks and the smaller table candlesticks have been imitated).

There are some beautiful stands for urns and bowls, and many quaint little stools and sundry furniture like linen presses, of exceptional interest, the chief decoration, indeed the whole of the framework, consisting almost entirely of turned work. Even table appointments were often made of wood when oak was plentiful in Old England. The wood-turner was an important individual when platters and trenchers, and wood cups and bowls, were in daily use. For the kitchen also he made wood coffee-crushers and pestles, and assisted by the carver produced wood nut-crackers and many of the choice little domestic objects. The wood-turner was requisitioned in the making of bowls and the numerous vessels required in the dairy and by the agriculturist, and in conjunction with the cooper almost furnished the house with wood-work.

Work-boxes.

There is an especial charm about old work-boxes which are to be met with in various stages of decay, and mostly with their once beautiful ivory or mother-of-pearl fittings injured or lost. The earliest boxes are doubtless made of stout oak, and possibly carved. As there is abundant testimony that women ’broidered and stitched at very early times, there is very little doubt that their sewing materials, and their embroidery silks and golden threads were kept in some fitting receptacle—a veritable work-box. Many very beautiful work-boxes were covered with embroidery in Stuart days. Some of these have been preserved. A very fine example of a Charles I. box, covered with the peculiar scenic needlework of that period, is illustrated in Fig. 118. Some curious devices both in needlework and painting were used for decorating such objects. There is one in the Victoria and Albert Museum embroidered in colours, depicting the story of David and Bathsheba; there are others covered with scenes, which were intended to illustrate events in English history.

The work-boxes in gilt and gesso, the work of Italian artists during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were especially grand. The fittings of many old work-boxes were distinctly useful, and are now charming souvenirs of the clever wood-worker’s craft, like lace bobbins and other sundries are of needlecraft.

The Value of Old Furniture.

Those who possess a few pieces of old furniture are often anxious to ascertain their market values. Nothing is more deceptive than a schedule of prices which have been realised for certain pieces, which in a catalogue or schedule are described as “a Jacobean court cupboard,” “a carved buffet,” or some other simple definition. There are so many attendant circumstances, and such a diversity of quality and historical surroundings, that the price realised for one piece is but little guide to the market value of another piece having similar characteristics. Dealers assess the value of antique furniture from different standpoints; indeed, much depends upon the demand at the time, and especially upon what commissions dealers hold for such pieces.

In some excellent books on furniture authors have given long lists of so-called guides to values, but such lists have been very misleading, for they usually indicate the prices realised for special pieces, sold at different auction rooms and under vastly different circumstances—local and otherwise. At such sales, held in different towns, noted dealers and collectors may have been present in force, or, on the other hand, there may have been a marked absence of both classes of purchasers.

Without wishing to give any such misleading values, it is recognised that it may be helpful to quote a few prices in

order to indicate an approximate scale of relative values of antique furniture of some one or more well-known periods. For this purpose, in order that the conditions and the attendance of buyers should be identical, the following auction prices have been taken from one sale report—a sale of antique furniture, the contents of an old manor house where the furniture had been gathered by different owners in succession throughout the periods represented. The sale was in the country, and it was attended by dealers from many towns and by a few well-known collectors. The prices realised were fair, and such as might have been expected at an auction sale conducted under average conditions. None of the prices quoted can be called bargains, neither were any of them unreasonable:—

	£
Oak buffet (fifteenth century)	40
Oak coffer (fifteenth century) French	99
Oak buffet (sixteenth century) Tudor	125
Oak marriage chest, dated 1545, exceptionally well carved	80
Oak chair, period 1564, handsomely carved with arms of a well-known family	60
Oak armoire, with folding doors carved in parchemin panels	66
Oak standing double hutch, Tudor ornament (original locks)	150
Oak chest (Gothic) panelled front and sides, with tracery depicting the Crucifixion	70
Oak chest, quite plain panels with simple Gothic decoration on the stiles	14
Oak chest, Tudor period, well carved	33
Oak drawer top table, exceptionally handsome type (pedigree piece)	150
Oak armoire (Elizabethan period) handsomely carved and inlaid	32
Oak table (Elizabethan period) bulbous carving	34
Oak marriage coffer, German	40
Oak livery cupboard, period James I.	27
Walnut grandfather clock, brass dial, dated 1660, case inlaid in marqueterie	36

Close investigation of present-day market prices points conclusively to the steady increase in the value of genuine antiques in almost every branch of art. There is an accruing value which makes it worth while to accumulate antiques with the sole object of selling them again at a later date. Art in furniture, as it is exemplified in absolutely perfect specimens, in which the purity of some given style is exhibited, is appreciated to a high degree by connoisseurs, and those who attend auction sales often marvel at the prices paid by collectors. Quite recently at a London auction room four Chippendale chairs, exquisite in the completeness of their design and lovely in their condition, realised £525, and a suite of Chippendale chairs, somewhat faulty, fetched £255. But these prices are small compared to those which exceptionally fine sets command. It is no uncommon thing for as much as 2,000 guineas to be asked for a complete set of two armchairs and twelve single chairs of the finest period of Thomas Chippendale's work. Finally, it may be mentioned that a remarkable set of five Hepplewhite mahogany chairs realised £78 under the hammer quite recently. It would be interesting to know what a full set of similar designs would have realised.

The restoration of old furniture sometimes destroys, at others enhances, its selling value. Stories are told at times of sadly neglected old furniture perishing from want of attention, which when restored carefully, and by an acknowledged expert, becomes beautiful and priceless. A recent instance of long neglect has been made public in the old furniture discovered by a recent Lady Mayoress of London, who found quantities of eighteenth-century furniture stowed away in attics and in use in the servants' bedrooms—apparently none of her predecessors took any interest in the antiques of the Mansion House!

The result of the discovery was that the furniture, after having been "done up," was for a time on view at the Mansion House. Among other gems displayed were two chests of drawers, two dressing glasses, and a cheval glass in satin-wood and tulip-wood of the period 1780; a bedroom suite in satin-wood in late Sheraton style; no less than six chests of drawers of mahogany (1760-1780), ascribed to Chippendale; and several armchairs of Sheraton design—all said to be priceless, and yet a short time ago so utterly neglected.

The Romance of Collecting.

The concluding paragraphs in this work may fitly have reference to the romance of collecting, more especially so as "Antique Furniture" is the first volume in a series of books treating upon the collection of various curios in which the home connoisseur is interested. There is a romance of intense delight in accumulating household curios of every kind. The romantic collector tries hard to acquire a knowledge of personal reminiscences about the varied objects he secures, the historian looks for confirmation of history and folklore in the tangible furnishings of the home he is enabled to gather together, and the man of business, always keenly alive to a bargain, finds additional interest and pleasure in the accruing value of those antiques he obtains when prices were low, or before the real worth of his treasures had become known.

There are many instances on record of the rapid increase in the market values of antiques; there are also records of the amazing neglect and want of appreciation of old things. Fortunately for the preservation of such treasures, there have ever been men who were keen hunters, and did not lose an opportunity of rescuing genuine antiques, and carefully putting them in order, in many instances to their own and their families' future benefit.

Many side glimpses into the romance of collecting were afforded at the sale of the antiques gathered together by the late Rev. Reginald Gatty, recently dispersed. One day the reverend gentleman discovered a fifteenth-century livery cupboard in use in a farmyard as a hen-roost. He secured it for a £5 note. At the sale of his effects it was bought by a noble earl for 75 guineas. The same nobleman bought a Jacobean refectory table, which Mr Gatty had found in a barn, paying for it in open competition 270 guineas.

Such incidents are by no means exceptional; indeed every enthusiastic collector can point to some bargain he has secured by his close observation and as the result of his carefully retained store of information. "Knowledge is power," and it is a power indeed to the collector of antiques.

CHAPTER XXXVII

WOODS USED BY CABINET-MAKERS

The woods which have been used by furniture makers at different periods are described in this chapter.

Alder.

The English alder tree, the *Alnus glutinosa*, grows in wet and marshy soil. It has been much used for Windsor chairs of the hooped pattern, which in the eighteenth century were made with carved or fretted splats of alder.

Amboyna.

The amboyna wood, *Pterospermum*, comes from Amboyna and New Guinea. It is very hard and durable, and is not at all unlike bird's-eye maple, but it is of a somewhat browner colour. It was much used in Stuart days for inlays, and in the eighteenth century for veneers, panel inlays, and bandings, by the Brothers Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

Ash.

The varieties of ash are the *Fraxinus excelsior*, the common ash of England, Europe, and North America; the *Pyrus aucuparia*, the mountain ash of Britain, Europe, Asia, and North America; the *Fraxinus Americana*, or American ash, chiefly grown in North America; and the *Pyrus sorbus*, the true service brown ash, grown in the South of England. The last-named variety is very fine in the grain, and somewhat heavy. Ash is tough and pliable, and when polished somewhat resembles oak.

Among the earlier uses of ash was that of making lances and staves. In more recent years much furniture was made from the timber, especially the hooped-back Windsor chairs. Ash is also used for veneers and inlays.

Beech.

The *Fagus sylvatica*, the white or common beech, grows all over Europe. The *Fagus ferruginea*, or red beech, grows in North America. Both varieties are tough and hard, the trees growing to a height of 100 ft., the most noted specimens in England being at Burnham Beeches. Beech was used in Tudor days for chairs. It is still employed throughout the High Wycombe chair district for common kitchen chairs and other furniture. Sheraton and his contemporaries used beech for making chairs which were to be painted or gilt.

Birch.

The European birch, the *Betula alba*, grows throughout Europe; the black birch, *Betula lenta*, and the red birch, *Betula rubra*, are met with in North America. The wood is easily worked but not very durable. It was sometimes used in the eighteenth century as the groundwork for satin-wood veneer. Some portions of the wood present a beautifully rippled appearance when polished, not unlike East India satin-wood.

Box.

The *Buxus sampervirens* or boxwood grows in Europe and in some parts of England. It is extremely hard, smooth, and tough. It was used as a veneer by the Romans, and at different times has been made use of in small quantities in this and other countries; but it has never been ranked among the favourite woods for inlays by furniture makers.

Cedar.

The most familiar cedars of practical use are cedar of Lebanon, *Cedrus libani*, grown in Asia, chiefly in the famous grove at Lebanon, where many of the trees are said to be upwards of two thousand years old; the Indian cedar, *Cedrus deodara*, grown in the Himalayas; Mexican cedar, *Cedrus odorata*, from the West Indies and Honduras; and the West Indian cedar, *Cedrala toona*, from the West Indies and from India. Cedar is very brittle and easily worked. It was used for inlays in Tudor times, and later was made use of for carvings by Grinling Gibbons. Pencil cedar was used for the bottoms of small drawers by many of the cabinet-makers who fitted up bureaus, desks, and cabinets with small compartments and fittings. Many cedar trees were planted in England in the seventeenth century, having been given popularity by the Earl of Pembroke who brought them to England in 1640. Some beautiful cedars have been grown in Wilton Park.

Chestnut.

The two varieties of chestnut are the *Æsculus hippocastanum*, horse chestnut, which grows in England; and the *Castanea vesca*, Spanish chestnut, growing chiefly in Southern Europe. The colour of the wood varies much and darkens with age. Much of the old chestnut Renaissance furniture of France looks like walnut, but the grain is coarser. Chestnut was used in England in the eighteenth century instead of satin-wood. The Spanish chestnut originally came from Asia Minor, and was brought to Europe by the ancient Greeks on account of its fruit.

Ebony.

The true ebony, *Diospyros ebenum*, grows in Southern India and Ceylon, and the *Diospyros melanoxylon* in India. Ebony is close grained and very heavy. It is not much used in furniture other than for veneer, although there are some exceptional pieces of ebony furniture inlaid with ivory. Its chief use was in France, Spain, Italy, and Holland in the sixteenth century.

Elm.

The *Ulmus campestris*, or English elm, grows freely in England, Scotland, and throughout Europe, sometimes attaining a height of from 60 to 80 feet. From its peculiarity as being very durable in damp places it is much used for coffins. In furniture the seats of Windsor chairs are made of elm, and in the eighteenth century it was used for constructional work. The *Ulmus montana*, or wych elm ("witch hazel") grows in Scotland, and in some parts of England. Its peculiarity lies in the gnarled protuberances of the trunk which are knotted and produce pollarded elm.

Holly.

The English holly, the *Ilex aquifolium*, is a white wood with a speckled grain. The *Quercus ilex* is somewhat darker than English holly. The holly has been used by marqueterie cutters from Tudor days, especially for inlaying small panels.

Laburnum.

The laburnum tree, *Cyticus laburnum*, has been cultivated in England from the end of the sixteenth century. Its chief use by cabinet-makers was during the reigns of William III. and Anne, when it was used for veneering, chiefly in "oyster" pieces.

Lime.

The large-leafed lime, *Tilia platyphyllos*, and the small-leafed lime, *Tilia parvifolia*, both of which flourish in England and throughout Europe, were at one time much used by furniture makers. The lime was used in Tudor days for the panels of beds, and the constructional portions of furniture. It was afterwards selected by Grinling Gibbons as being peculiarly appropriate for carving. The European variety is white and soft, and without cross grain. The American lime is known in the timber trade as American white wood or bass wood, and has a somewhat greenish tinge. It is, however, free from knots, and, as the trees grow to a large size, it is procurable in wide boards.

Mahogany.

Although not introduced into this country until 1595 mahogany soon became the favourite wood of the cabinet-maker. The varieties which have been chiefly worked are Honduras mahogany, and *Swienia mahagoni*, from Central America. Most of the mahogany used in the eighteenth century by Chippendale and others came from Cuba. There are several varieties, the noted curl mahogany not appearing before 1750. When polished in the natural colour mahogany is of a golden brown shade. It is often stained with bichromate of potash, in order to give it a reddish tinge, some of the old figured mahogany being almost black. The dark staining seems to have come into use about 1830, but the old furniture now so dark has mostly been blackened or darkened with age.

Maple.

There are many minor varieties of the maple tree, including the *Acer pseudo-platanus*, which grows in the British Isles and throughout Europe; and the Acer *saccharinum*, or sugar maple, more commonly known as "bird's eye," obtained from Canada and North America. The bird's eye variety, which is so much valued by cabinet-makers, is really that portion taken from the knotted parts of the tree. This maple was used by the Romans, and in later days by late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century cabinet-makers. The *Acer striatum* is a North American variety, which has been much used by marqueterie workers. The figured maple known as sycamore is stained to produce harewood veneer, and was employed by Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

Oak.

The oak tree has gained more notoriety than any other wood of commercial use, and its splendid properties have become synonymous with strength, vigour, and force:—

"Their hearts were made of English oak."

There are about two hundred and fifty species of the genus *Quercus*, or oak; the varieties best known in this country as British oaks are the *Quercus robur*, *Quercus sessiflora*, and *Quercus pedunculata*—all of which grow freely in Britain. The forests of Britain provided the timber for the "Age of Oak," which lasted until the time of the Commonwealth. English oak is of a somewhat yellow-brown colour, assuming a rich black-brown with age. The oaks used in more recent times are derived from other sources. There is the Baltic oak, of Poland and Danzig; the Austrian or wainscot oak; and the Bavarian oak. The American white oak, *Quercus alba*, the Canadian oak, and oak from the United States of America, are straight-grained and more easily worked than the English oak, especially more so than the pollarded oak.

Pine.

The *Pinus sylvestris*, or Scotch pine, was used in the eighteenth century by cabinet-makers. It is straight in grain, easy to work, and tolerably free from knots.

Rosewood.

There are three varieties of rosewood used in cabinet-work. These include the *Triptole* from Brazil; *Palisandré* wood and *Dalbergia nigra*, from the West Indies and Ceylon; and *Dalbergia latifolia*, from India.

Rosewood was used as an inlay in Stuart days, and later by the Brothers Adam and Sheraton. The name is derived from the peculiar scent it gives off, a scent not unlike that of the rose.

Satinwood.

There are two varieties of satin-wood, the *Chloroxylon swietenia* (a name said to have been derived from the Greek words *chloros* meaning green, and *xulon*, wood; the second name is that of Swietan, who was physician to Maria

Theresa of Austria), grown in Central and Southern India and in Ceylon. The *Zanthoxylon* is a West Indian satin-wood. There are said to be nine genera and twenty-five species included in satin-wood.

The chief characteristics of the wood are its straight grain and hard texture. When first cut it is pale in colour, but when exposed it becomes darker, and in time assumes a rich golden brown or orange hue, making it very suitable for veneers and ornamental inlays. This decorative wood was much used by the Brothers Adam, Shearer, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

Sycamore.

The Acer *pseudo-platanus* is a variety of maple known as sycamore. It was much used for the interior of small cabinet-work in the days of Hepplewhite and Sheraton. Sycamore was also used in making harewood.

Tulip-wood.

The West Indian tulip-wood, *Physocalymma floribunda*, grows in Brazil and Peru. Its appearance is not much unlike satin-wood. It is technically described as yellowish brown with longitudinal stripings of a pinkish red. Its use is for inlaying or friezing, and it was much favoured by the Brothers Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton.

Walnut.

There are several varieties of walnut-wood trees, those employed in the cabinet-making industry being chiefly of two species. The *Juglans regia*, the English walnut, which was introduced into England about 1565, was the variety much used for furniture at the time of the Restoration, the so-called "Walnut Age" of furniture, continuing through the reigns of Charles II., James II., William III., and Anne. The Romans are reputed to have introduced walnut trees into Britain, but much of the timber used by furniture makers in the period referred to was imported. The *Juglans regia* finds its true home in the Himalaya, from whence it travelled westward. The timber grown in England is distinguished by experts in that it is somewhat lighter in colour and more open in the grain than that grown in foreign countries. The so-called Italian walnut chiefly grows on the borders of the Black Sea.

The second variety known in furniture is the *Juglans nigra*, or American walnut, which is met with in North America, and has been largely used in Victorian and more recent days in the furniture industries. In olden time there was a proverb:—

"A woman, a spaniel, a walnut tree,
The more you beat 'em, the better they be."

This old couplet took its rise in the Italian custom of beating the walnut trees to loosen the fruit when gathering.

Yew.

The yew, *Taxus baccata*, grows naturally in Britain, many of the trees attaining a great age. There are many known to have been planted more than a thousand years ago; and there was a general planting of yews in the reign of Richard III., at a time when they were held to be invaluable, as they supplied the material for the bows of English archers. The chief use of yew in Tudor times was for inlays and decorative ornament by chair-makers.

GLOSSARY

Anthemion.—An Egyptian style of ornament borrowed from ancient Greece.

Arcade.—In furniture as in architecture an arcade denotes a series of arches with columns or piers supporting them. In some cases the work is cut through, in others superimposed upon a plain surface.

Architrave.—A term denoting the lower moulding running under a frieze as in a mantel-piece or other piece of furniture. It is used in the same way as in architectural ornament.

Armoire.—The more general meaning of this word is indicative of a cupboard in which armour was formerly stored, and when armour was discarded the armoire by an easy process became a wardrobe, or a cupboard for apparel. Armoire is also the Italian name indicating cupids such as those seen upon the painted decorated furniture and decorated panels of English and of French makes.

Arras.—Primarily a rich fabric with figured subjects, the name being derived from Arras, the capital town of Artois. Arras usually denotes the tapestry screen or hangings formerly used in mediæval halls.

Baluster.—The pillar or support of a handrail, the same term is used to denote supports in furniture, and the supports or balusters introduced as decoration.

Bank.—An old name for a seat or bench. It is of German origin, allied to the French, *banc*. It is also the correct name of the bench or seat upon which judges sit in the law courts. At one time it was the name given to the bench on which rowers sat in a boat.

Boulle, Boule, or Buhl.—The marqueterie of tortoise-shell and metal produced by André Charles Boulle is indicated by all three forms of spelling, words derived from the name of the inventor. Boulle flourished in the reign of Louis XIV., and for many years afterwards continued to produce decorative cabinets and commodes, and other pieces of ornamental furniture, using this special form of marqueterie.

Break-front.—The term denotes the front line of a sideboard, wardrobe, or other piece of furniture, broken by the centre portion being advanced or recessed. The same term is applied to a broken pediment.

Buffet.—The name (of French origin) usually applied to a display sideboard; many of the older buffets contain small drawers for napery and plate.

Bureau.—A chest of drawers with sloping top, falling forward, and thus forming a desk. The bureau usually contains a number of small drawers and compartments.

Cabochon-and-leaf.—The cabochon ornament follows the style of polishing a precious stone (cabochon) with rounded convex surface without facets. The cabochon is often framed and laid upon a "leaf" in carving.

Cabriole.—The literal meaning of cabriole is a curvet or a leap. In furniture the term is applied to a curved or shaped leg, usually showing a knee with a convex bend, and an ankle with a concave sweep. Cabriole legs were much used on chairs, settees, and tables, during the eighteenth century.

Camel-back.—The nickname given to the demi-shield-shaped chair backs of the Hepplewhite period.

Cartel Clock.—The clocks of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. styles, of flattened shape, such as were fixed upon a panelled wall without a bracket.

Caryatides.—The Greek name of the priestesses of Diana at Caryæ, a village in Laconia. As an architectural term it is spelled caryatids. Such figures were used as supports and ornament during the Jacobean period of oak furniture.

Cellaret.—The French *garde de vin* or cellaret, mostly of mahogany, was divided into compartments to hold a number of bottles of wine. Cellarets were important pieces of furniture during the Georgian period, usually standing under the side-table or sideboard. The cellaret was afterwards found in one of the side wings or cupboards of the sideboard.

Certosina.—A process of inlaying with bone and ivory, chiefly practised in Milan.

Chaise-longue.—A French term descriptive of the long couch or sofa made up of chairs and stool or seat. The

chaise-longue was a feature of the First Empire furniture.

Claw-and-ball.—The claw holding or grasping a ball, which in later years became a lion's paw with ball, was an Eastern inspiration. It is said to have originated in the legendary figures of the Chinese dragon, which is usually represented as holding a large pearl in its claw.

Club-foot.—A term denoting the thickened foot under a rounded leg, such as was used for furniture at the close of the seventeenth century. It was not unlike the Dutch foot, and less graceful than the hoof foot of the cabriole leg.

Commode.—A French word descriptive of a chest of drawers, very ornamental and decorative, such as those mounted with brass and ormolu handles and ornaments during the Louis XIV. period.

Console.—The name indicates a bracket, and was consequently applied to a bracket table such as those extensively used under pier-glasses. The decoration and ornament of the console table chiefly showed French influence. (*See* chapter xxiv.)

"Cricket" Tables.—Small tables supported by three legs braced together in the form of a tripod.

Dole Cupboard.—The cupboard wherein fragments of meat were placed for distribution to the poor. Dole cupboards were similarly used in churches for storing bread and other doles for distribution.

Escallop.—The escallop shell ornament, which was such a favourite with Chippendale and others, was derived from the escallop shell which was a sign or badge of the Crusader, who wore it to indicate that he had been on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Escutcheon.—A plate, usually a keyhole plate of metal, not necessarily ornamental. In the larger sizes and upon the more important pieces of furniture the escutcheon was shaped and decorated *en suite* in accord with the ornament of the handles and handle-plates. An escutcheon proper was a small shield used in Gothic design.

Faldstool.—A folding stool or portable seat not unlike a camp stool. It was a common type of early seat; in more modern times the name is applied to the Litany stool or desk in churches.

Farthingale.—The farthingale chair had no arms; it was a seat of necessity in Queen Mary's reign when hooped petticoats of enormous size were introduced into this country from Spain.

Finial.—An architectural term for an ornamental pinnacle or terminal on a roof or painted gable. The finial is met with on architecturally designed pediments, and is noticeable on the pediments of bookcases and on old grandfather clocks. An urn-shaped vase, a pointed ball, or a classic figure often served as a finial in ornamental furniture design.

Garderobe.—A French term used synonymously with wardrobe.

Gesso.—A fine plaster, which becomes very hard when set, and is especially adapted for painting or gilding upon. The plaster was usually spread over the surface of the wood, as in marriage coffers. It was then, while soft, moulded or pressed into the desired form of ornament or base relief, and when hard and dry was coloured or gilded.

Girandole.—A bracket candlestick. The term girandole was applied to the beautiful and elaborately carved branched candlesticks, often with mirror backs, so popular in Chippendale's days.

Glastonbury Chair.—The name given to the commonly accepted form of ecclesiastical chair with sloping back, X-shaped legs, and arms sloped to allow the cope or priest's vestments to rest in the dip of the arms.

Guilloche.—In architecture and architectural design in furniture guilloche is an ornament in the form of two or more bands or strings twisted in a continued series which produce circular openings, afterwards, usually, filled with round ornaments.

Honeysuckle Ornament.—*See* Palmette.

Intarsia.—The Italian decoration of inlays of ivory or bone, mostly in geometrical designs. Intarsia was the favourite Italian ornament employed in Venice in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The design having been incised in some foreign substance, wood or otherwise, the surface was smoothed and polished, the incision having first been filled in. In the Victoria and Albert Museum there is a chest of cypress wood made in 1350, the incised spaces having been filled in with black mastic. The intarsia of the Renaissance consisted chiefly of woods in relief. There is a fine example of intarsia work in the Sizergh Castle room in the Museum. In some of the early work intarsia was made up of

walnut and maple, some of the wood being stained green by the use of verdigris, and red with cochineal.

Joint-stool—A joint-stool was a high stool usually used by carvers in cutting up the joint at table.

Linen-fold.—The term denoting the beautifully shaped carving of early Tudor panels imitating folds of linen. Linen-fold is said to have been emblematic of the veil which covered the chalice used at the consecration of the Host in the Roman Catholic Mass.

Livery Cupboard.—Such cupboards were common in Tudor days. They were handy for placing dishes on when brought into the hall, and they were often fitted with rows of hooks for hanging cups or tankards on. They were usually provisioned for a ewer and a basin for cleansing the vessels after use.

Miserere Seat.—The miserere seat in the stalls of some of the older churches, folded or hinged. On its underside there was a group of quaint designs or carved ornament. This narrow or secondary seat was in reality a rest for worshippers during the long standing periods, or tedious portions of the church service. The finest series of carved miserere seats extant is in Henry VII.'s Chapel in Westminster Abbey.

Mitre.—The mitre is the line or point of contact of a succession of mouldings forming a mitred corner, generally at right angles. The mitre is employed in the mouldings of panelled and other work in furniture.

Ormolu.—A metal compound of an alloy of brass made to resemble gold by the use of more copper and a smaller quantity of zinc than usually forms the composition of brass. The rich golden colour was partly obtained by means of golden lacquers and the use of acids.

Palmette.—The floral ornament common in Greek architecture, applied to furniture, and as such frequently called honeysuckle ornament.

Parcel Gilt.—This is the name given to decorative plating work in colours or relief, effected by painting a portion of an object with a non-conducting varnish, thereby preventing that portion from being gilded. Afterwards the varnish is removed, and another metal of a different colour deposited.

Parchemin.—An old form of wainscot cut in imitation of rows of parchment upon rods.

Parquetry.—French *parqueterie*, is a species of inlay applied to wood-work, more especially to flooring. It consists of inlays of wood in geometric and other patterns, generally in different colours. When applied to furniture it differs from marquetry (French, *marqueterie*) in that *parqueterie* is geometric in design, whereas marqueterie is principally floral.

Patera.—Literally the round ornament or boss in classic relief work. Pateræ appear in architecture, and to some extent in furniture from 1765 onwards; this form of ornament having been revived by the Brothers Adam, who, however, at times changed the shape, using oval pateræ and others in diamond form.

Pediment.—An architectural term applied to furniture, indicating an ornament surmounting a cabinet, bookcase, or other piece of furniture, usually of triangular form.

Petit Point.—The needlework indicated by *petit point*, sometimes called tent stitch, is a slanting stitch worked in silks, chiefly over a single thread of coarsely woven canvas. Most of the furniture of the "Walnut Age" is upholstered in *petit point*.

Polishes.—The polishes used on furniture are of different kinds—in the present day they consist of French polish, brush polish, and varnish. In Tudor and early Stuart days the oak was either left its natural colour, or polished by using a solution of beeswax and turpentine. Long use of such polish with a plentiful admixture of elbow grease has, of course, imparted a rich brown, in some cases almost black (in many instances the furniture now black has been assisted at some time or other) colour. Some pieces bear evidence of having been varnished even at that early period; but subsequent rubbing and varied treatment have imparted a thick coating of super-polish. The Tudor varnish was composed of gum copal from the *rhus copallinum* (South American) dissolved in boiling oil. The polish used during the early years of the eighteenth century, chiefly on walnut, was composed of gum lac, *coccus lacca* dissolved in alcohol. It was applied with a brush.

It has been pointed out that many of the most beautiful pieces of Queen Anne furniture were coated with this polish, which was of rich amber colour. It has now become very hard, and can readily be cleaned, if necessary, and rendered very beautiful, but it must not be scraped, otherwise the value of the antique is lessened—it becomes repolished

furniture, and modern French polish can never be made to look like old.

Quarrel.—The square or diamond-shaped panes of a door. The quarrel is a term also denoting the traceries of eighteenth-century bookcases and cabinets.

Rococo.—The decorative French style of the Chippendale period known as rococo takes its name from French words indicating rocks and shells. Its chief feature is a fanciful arrangement of scroll and shell work in which acanthus-like sprays are often introduced. Chippendale embraced rococo ornament and incorporated it in many of his most extravagant designs.

Romayne Work.—A method of ornamentation in which heads of medallions, chiefly Italian, are introduced.

Satyr Mask.—The head or face of a satyr has been much used in furniture and architectural ornament. According to classical mythology the satyr was a sylvan deity or demi-god, always represented as part man and part goat, characterised as partaking in riotous merriment.

Splat.—The central portion of the chair back, connecting the outer extremities of the framework, a conspicuous feature in Queen Anne and Hogarth chairs.

Strap Ornament.—Strap work is a kind of ornament consisting of a narrow fillet or band folded, crossed, and interlaced.

Tallboy.—A double chest of drawers, in the simpler form one chest set over another. The ornamental cornice over such chests formed a decorative finish, and gave a completeness to the double chest, the upper portion of which was often removable as a matter of convenience.

Terebinth.—A Syrian wood used for inlays.

Upholder.—The old name for upholsterer (*see* chapter iv., p. 47).

Urn Stand.—A small table, usually on four tapering legs, made as a stand for urns in the eighteenth century. Some of the tables have small slides intended as rests for the tea-pot when placed under the urn.

Vauxhall Glass.—The glass made at Vauxhall, used extensively in the mirrors of the eighteenth century, has a bluish tinge about it. The bevels were hand made, and pressed while the glass was hot.

Vernis Martin.—The name given to the varnish or lacquer used by Simon Martin in his imitation of the natural lac of China or Japan. The process used by Martin is said to have been similar to that afterwards adopted by coach-builders.

Wig Stands.—These were in reality small basin-stands, fitted with little drawers holding powder and other cosmetics. Before them, with the aid of a glass, gallants adjusted their locks and powdered their wigs. (*See* chapter xiii.)

INDEX

B

D

F

G

H

K

L

W

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Hyphenation has been standardised.
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