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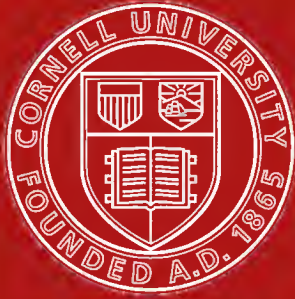
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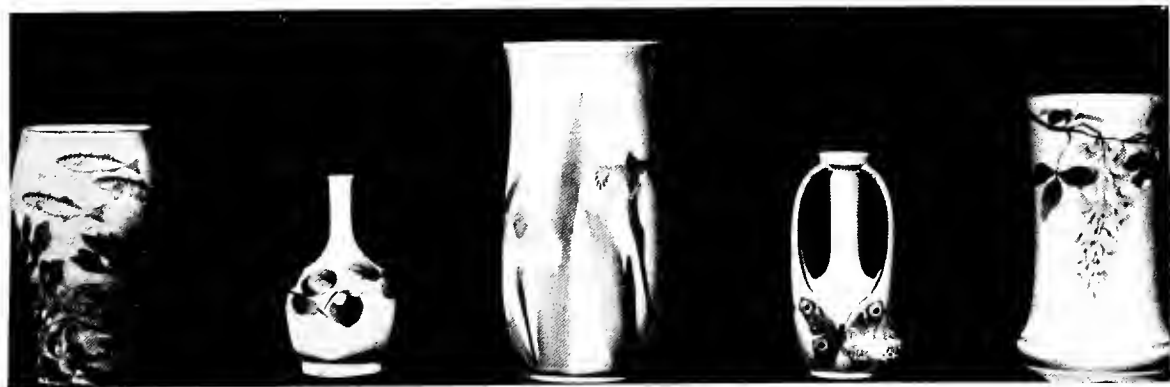
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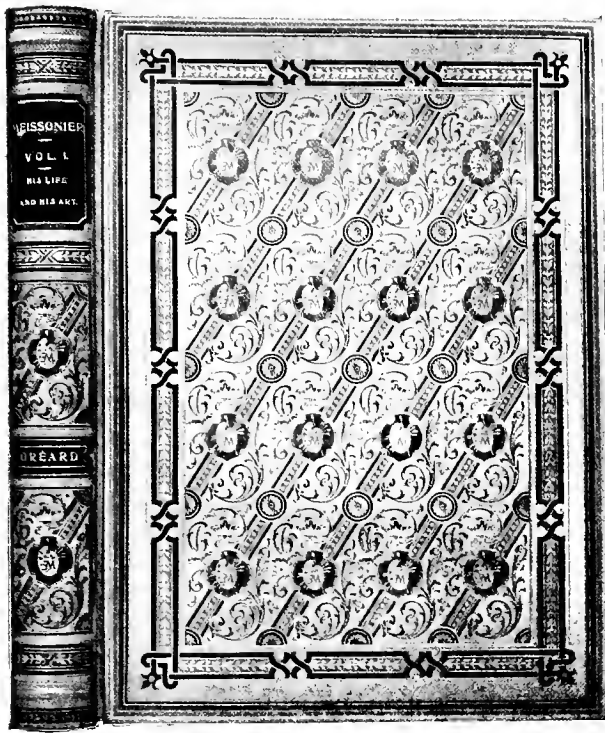
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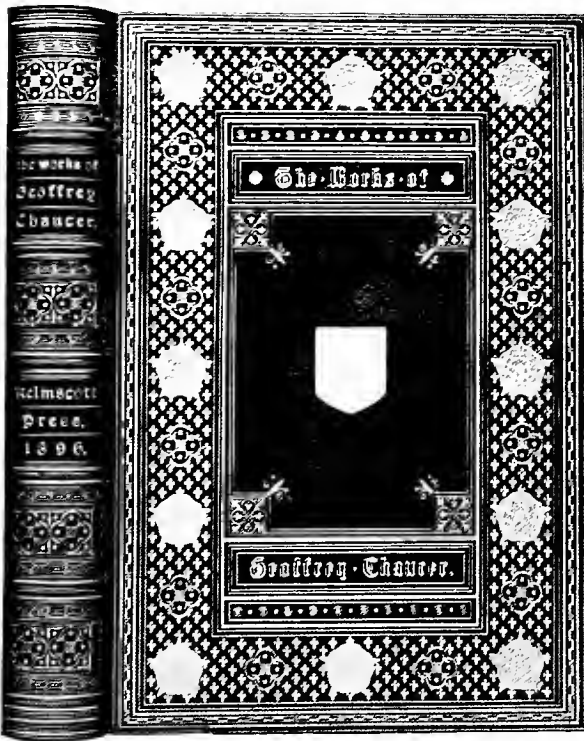


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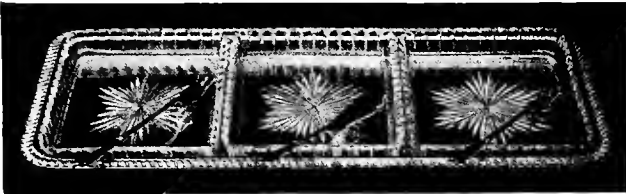
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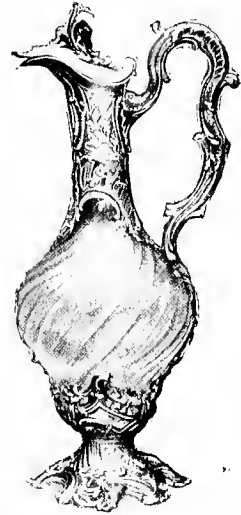
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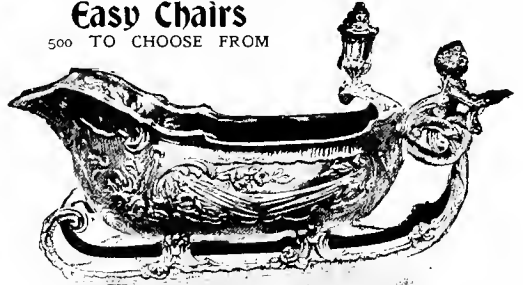
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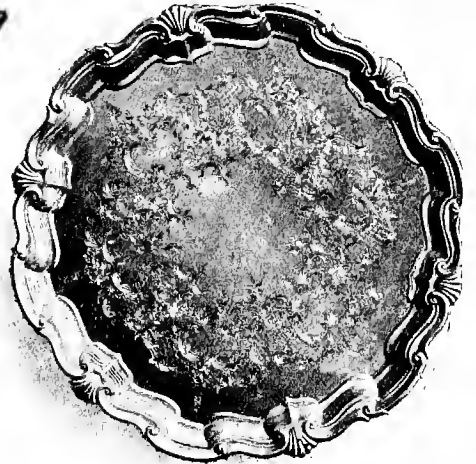
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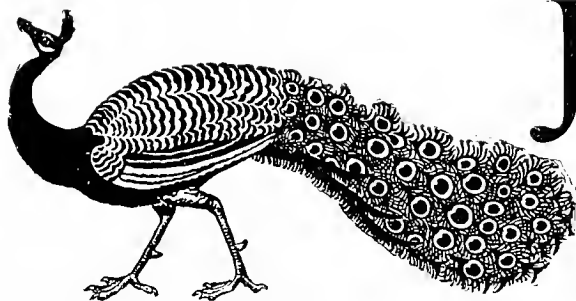
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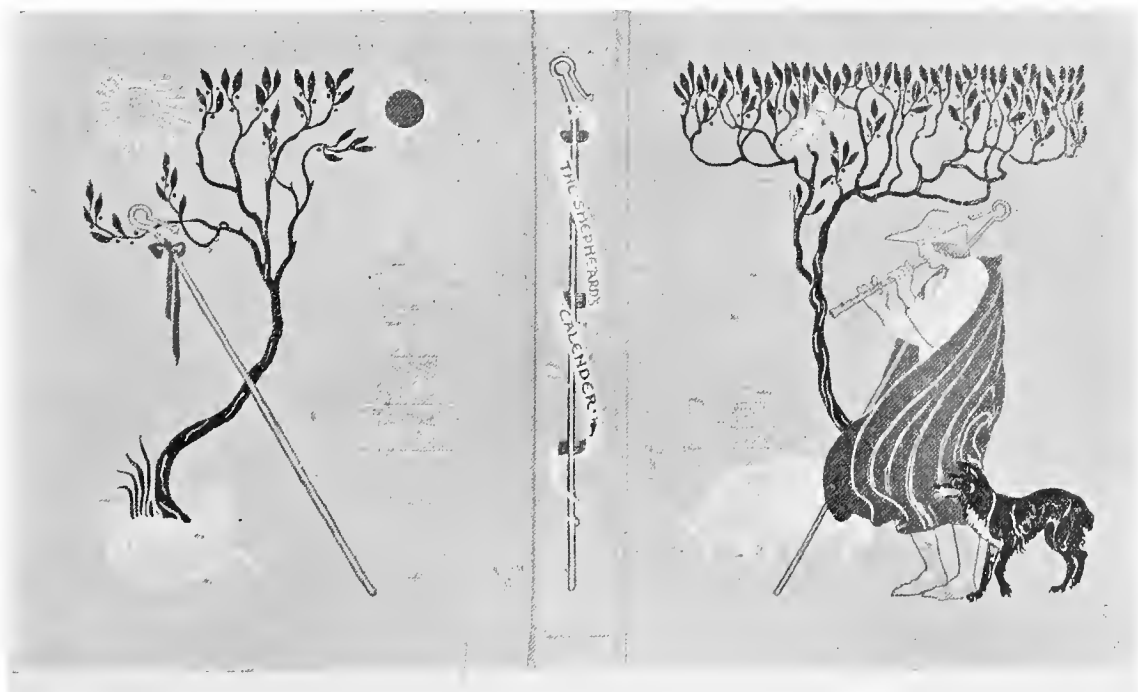
MODERN BOOKBINDINGS AND THEIR DESIGNERS

BRITISH TRADE BOOKBINDINGS AND THEIR DESIGNERS. BY ESTHER WOOD.

Books hold a distinct place among the subjects of applied art. Whatever beauty they may claim in form and ornament belongs to an order quite their own. They bear no relation to what are commonly called the necessaries of life, though no true book-lover would ever admit them to be less essential to his being. "Books are my tools," says the poor student who stints himself of food to gain what he deems more urgent means of development. "Books are my best friends," says the recluse when he shrinks from the keen interplay of wit with living men, and seeks the sympathy of those that ask no questions and drive no comments home. And

whether as the instruments of knowledge, the delight of quiet hours, or supremely as the channels of the wisdom and aspiration of the past, books appeal to us for a certain decorative homage as temples wherein is enshrined the living sacrament of wisdom, the most immortal of mortal things.

The nearest analogy to the art of bookbinding is that of dress. The apparel we associate with some gracious personality, the garments of ceremonial of daily use and wont, have their counterpart in the covering and adornment of books. These demand a treatment quite other than that of even the choicest furniture, and different again from that of pure decoration, which needs only to harmonise with the general tone and quality of its setting, and is not governed by a preconceived idea. The art of the bookbinder is to contrive a garb becoming



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to the author and to the nature of his work, just as the art of dress is to express in some degree the character and function of the wearer.

To express—or at least to suggest—a personality other than his own, the artist must belong, not to the first order of great original and creative minds, but to the order of interpreters, which sometimes calls forth qualities of insight, of analysis and synthesis, hidden from genius and revealed to an exquisite intuitive talent, a scrupulous and discerning taste. Nor does this general distinction bar genius from the art of cover-design: on the contrary, there have been modern instances in which the cover has been greater than the book. But binding is essentially a collaborative art, requiring the most quick and delicate sympathies, like the task of the accompanist to a singer. In other arts and crafts a complete unity of achievement is sometimes possible: a Cellini may design, and forge, and

carve, and finish his own works, from giant iron to golden filigree. Few authors are inclined or able to print, bind, and decorate their own books. Thus the most subjective and intangible things are laid under the hand of the practical craftsman: colour, form, and ornament are brought to bear upon the offspring of the mind.

For literature itself is the most human and personal of the arts, and brings us nearer than any other to the knowledge of the individual man and woman. Painting and sculpture, steeped in the spirit of an age, or eloquent of a mood, a vision, of a master, never seems to give us so intimate a revelation of the heart and mind. Next to the actual magnetism of a voice and presence, no power can rival the influence of the written speech, in which emotion, intellect, and imagination have equal sway.

The history of bookbinding is the history of the

passing of literature from the stage of a private trust to that of a public possession. The wisdom of books has emerged from the custody of the priest and the law-giver and become the inheritance of the common people. Copyright works—by which, broadly speaking, is meant current literature—only represent a portion of the bookseller's stock, and not usually the portion in which the best bindings are found; for in spite of much vital and characteristic art bestowed on new publications in the matter of cover-designs, it is among books of assured fame and value that developments must chiefly be looked for on the main lines of the craft. The cover of a new book should naturally be rather a tentative and experimental thing. The book itself comes among us on probation, to find only



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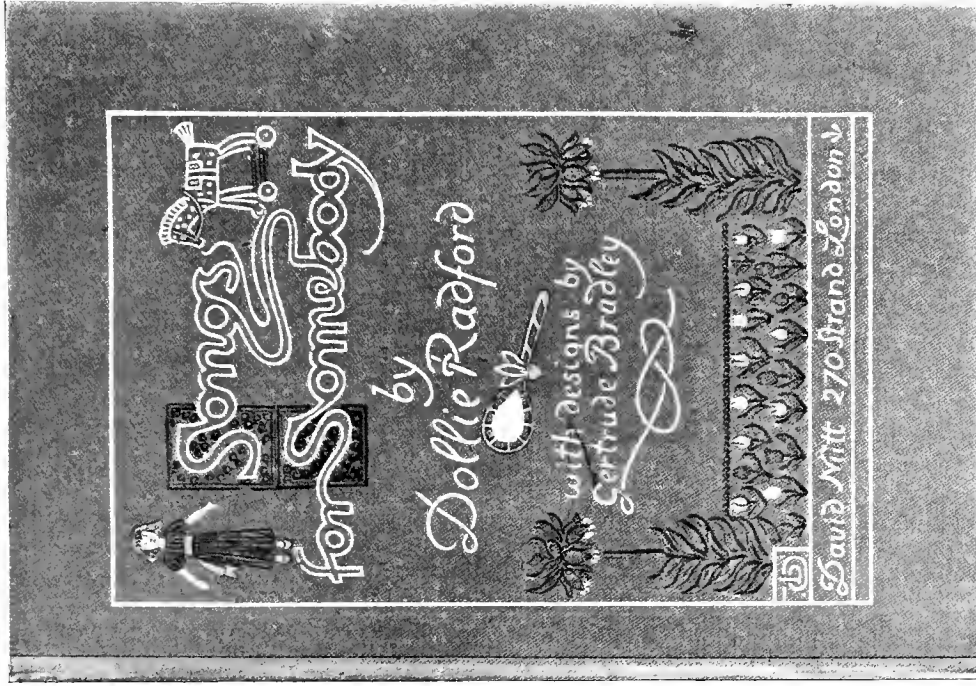
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gradually its proper niche upon our shelves. So it seems right that the dress in which it first appears should be simple rather than elaborate, though not so modest as to be insignificant and fail to attract notice; on the contrary, it may well afford some challenge, and even be curious and fanciful, exciting interest in its title and contents. For this reason the designing of modern covers for the trade borders very closely upon poster-work, a questionable tendency at the best, and only admissible into ephemeral products, but quite intelligible in the light of modern conditions of sale. The cover in such cases has to serve the purpose of an advertisement, suggesting and commending, as far as possible, the contents of the volume to the buyer. It is only when the book itself has become approved and loved, or has

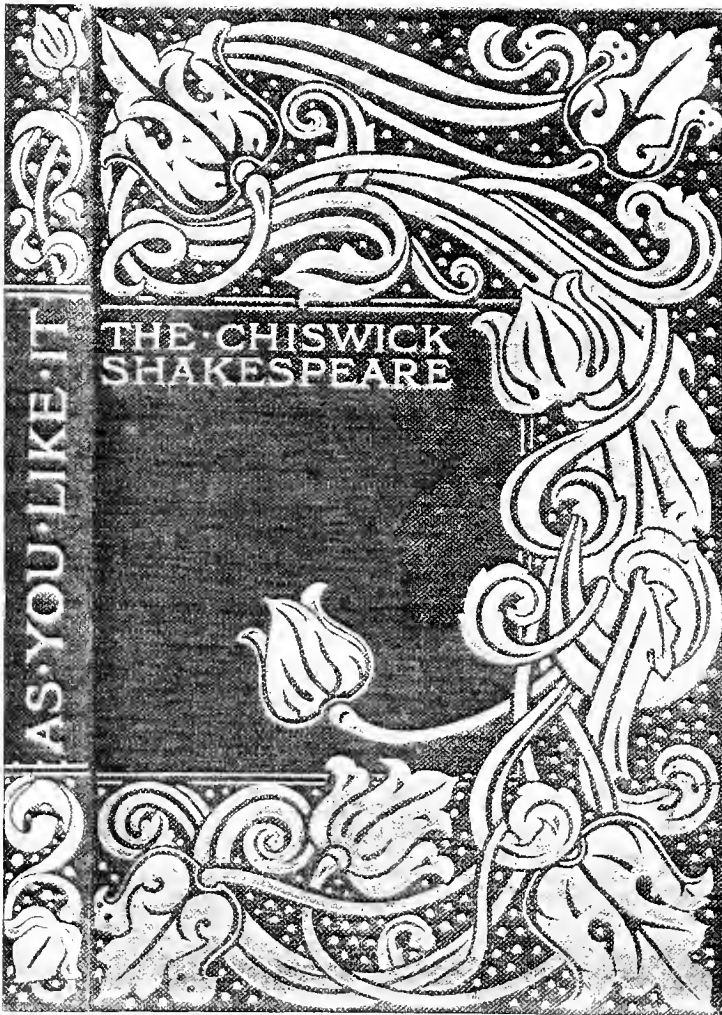
approached in some degree to the measure of a classic, that it lends itself fully to hand-work, is promoted from the gown of cloth to that of leather, and generally passes at the same time from the unfeeling impress of machinery to the more human and responsible touch of tools.

For the popularizing of literature means that bookbinding, as an art and handicraft, has long since ceased to keep pace with the demand for books. To place them within the reach of average purses was inevitably to bring machine-production to the bookseller's aid. Either the whole world of literature was to remain closed to nine out of ten of the community, or the fine handicraft of bookbinding must be supplanted for all ordinary purposes by low-priced machine-made covers. For a century or so the English public accepted the

latter alternative. It is only within the last decade that a new question has arisen: a question which would have seemed almost impious to the first eager pioneers of handicraft revival, but which has steadily forced itself upon open-minded critics and craftsmen. Must all machine-work, under all circumstances, be hopelessly vulgar and commonplace? Have we pronounced a final anathema on everything short of handicraft for applied art? Is it possible to infuse at any point some genuine artistic spirit into what is called trade work?

To this question the cynic might, perhaps, put another: Have we in England any considerable public that cares at all whether we do so?

It cannot be denied that the modern world has developed, through the fecundity of books, a sort of cheapness fatal alike to intellectual and æsthetic discernment. The half-educated man, esteeming himself a bibliophile on the strength of the Penny Poets and a pirated Ruskin, and thinking the covers of such productions quite good enough at the price, unconsciously



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lowers the standard of beauty, of choiceness, both on his book-shelves and in his mind, asking, Why buy good books when cheap reprints go almost a-begging?—just as the indiscriminate Wagnerian says, Why go to Bayreuth when the Carl Rosa Opera Company will play “Lohengrin” to sixpenny seats?

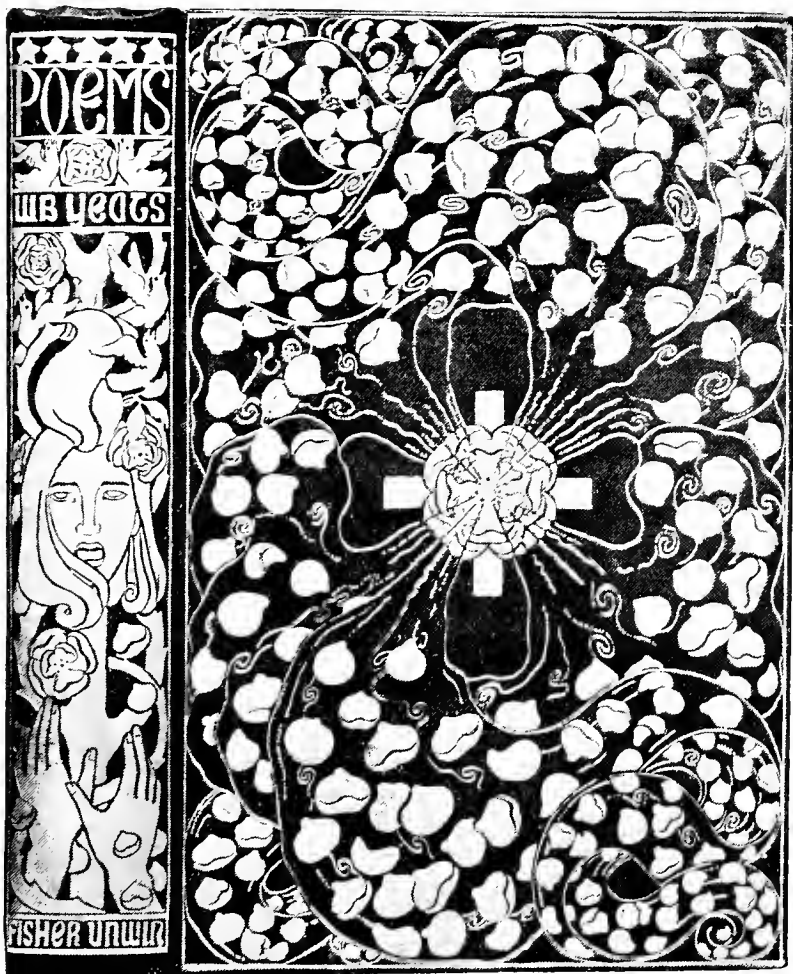
Yet these questions have been partially answered, and in a hopeful way, by the rise in England of a small but distinct school of designers at work upon the covers of machine-bound books. The unique Beardsley can hardly be bracketed among them, though his influence upon all decorative draughtsmanship is now beyond dispute, and he was closely associated, in the *Keynotes* Series and other Bodley Head publications, with some of the earliest efforts to improve trade binding in this country. But the names of Charles Ricketts, Laurence Housman, H. Granville Fell, Charles

Robinson, F. D. Bedford, Alice B. Woodward, Talwin Morris and A. A. Turbayne occur to us among others as typical of the new departure on these lines. With these must be reckoned men already famous in larger and more original forms of art—Walter Crane, bringing over something of the Kelmscott traditions of beauty, and William Nicholson at the opposite pole of feeling, quickening and modernising design by his brilliant impressionist portraits, bordering upon the poster and upon caricature.

The treatment of a cover-design—or, as our American friends aptly call it, a “cover-stamp,” thus clearly marking it off from tooled work—seems to fall naturally into three methods. It may be symbolic, suggesting in imagery the subject and spirit of the book, or it may verge on the pictorial, and point the contents in an illustrative manner, or it may seek pure decoration, and concern

itself only with the beautifying of a given space; subject, however, to the principle already laid down, that the decoration of books must always bear some direct intelligible relation to the literature within. We arrive thus at a rough-and-ready division of our cover-designers into symbolists, impressionists, and decorators: a classification which may be modified and enlarged as we come to consider more closely the individual manner and work.

The revival of book-binding on the side of handcraft is, of course, but one phase of that great movement in decorative art of which William Morris was the leader. But the modern development of the art of design in relation to trade bindings owes nothing directly to Kelmscott House. No account of that development can be fairly given



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(*Fisher Unwin*)

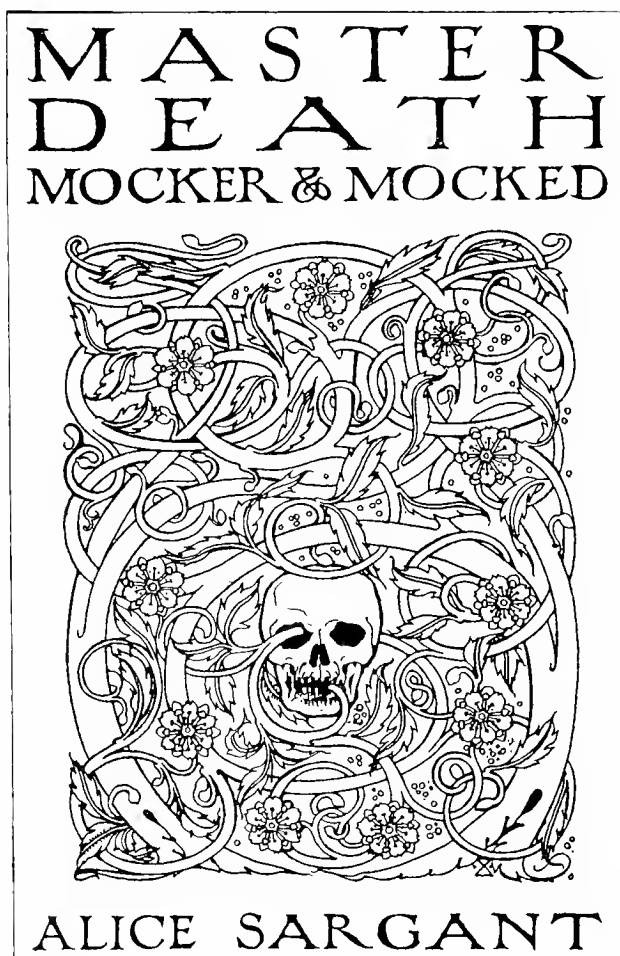
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without at least a cordial recognition of the stimulus it received through the enterprise of two young men from Harvard University, who, with the rare combination of wealth, culture, and youthful enthusiasm, went into business as publishers, and set themselves to create and foster a new taste in book-cover designs. The hint found quick response, and was thrown out almost simultaneously in Europe by the publishers who first staked a reputation on Beardsley and his colleagues of the *Yellow Book*.

But the effort towards novelty, towards sincerity and vigour, did not confine itself to the audacious and peculiarly "new" art of the *Yellow Book* school. It represented also much serious and independent work that was being done by English designers both of high promise and of established fame. Firms of assured position were roused to set a higher standard of binding and decoration

for their books, and gradually gathered round them groups of artists ready to give some of their best energies to cover-design. Further than this, the designers formerly identified with pure handicraft began to welcome a larger public for their work, and such names as those of Walter Crane, Henry Holiday, Selwyn Image, Herbert P. Horne, Louis Davis, and W. H. Cowlshaw, with others of the Kelmscott lineage, entered the publishers' lists. The advance, it is needless to say, only represents a section of the English trade; and while welcoming a few of the first-fruits—here illustrated—of the efforts of its more enterprising and judicious pioneers, it would be vain to blind ourselves to the unreclaimed wilderness of cover-space, choked with the veriest weeds of draughtsmanship, which still runs to so vast an acreage in the booksellers' shop. Some clue to the long estrangement between merchant and artist may perhaps be gained from the admission shamelessly made the other day by a well-known publisher, that he never gave more than half-a-guinea for a cover design.

Perhaps the first condition of merit in cloth-bound books is that they shall make no affectation of a higher origin than their own, or of a treatment proper to leather. Their beauty must always lie in design, in plan and conception, rather than in finish, though this at least may be neat, serviceable and sincere. They should indeed be wholly and obviously distinguished from those bound by handicraft, for the problem of bringing art, however indirectly, to bear upon commercial products is never solved by making machinery imitate the work of tools. The cover-design should be unmistakably printed or stamped, and not wrought or painted—half of the degradation of art in the present century has occurred through a false shame about processes, and a desire to get, by a quick method, an effect only honestly got by a slow one. Glue and wire, inadmissible in the ideal method, may be quite legitimate in the lesser. The cloth had better be left plain, or merely stamped with the title and its attributes, than have the quality of its surface frittered away by trivial or showy ornament. Only a good texture, however humble its nature in the scale of values, can hold a good design.



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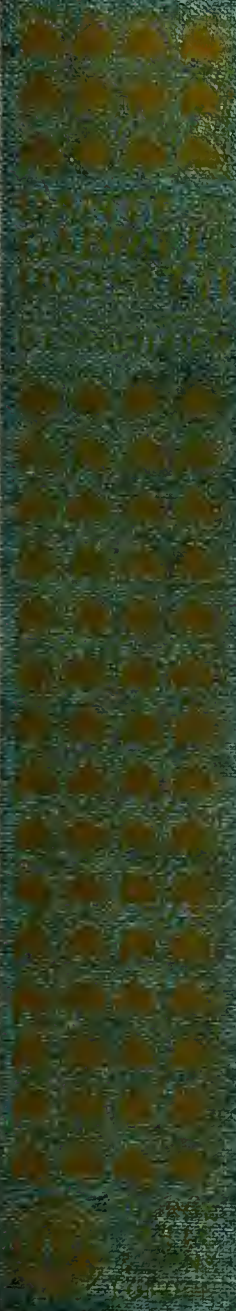
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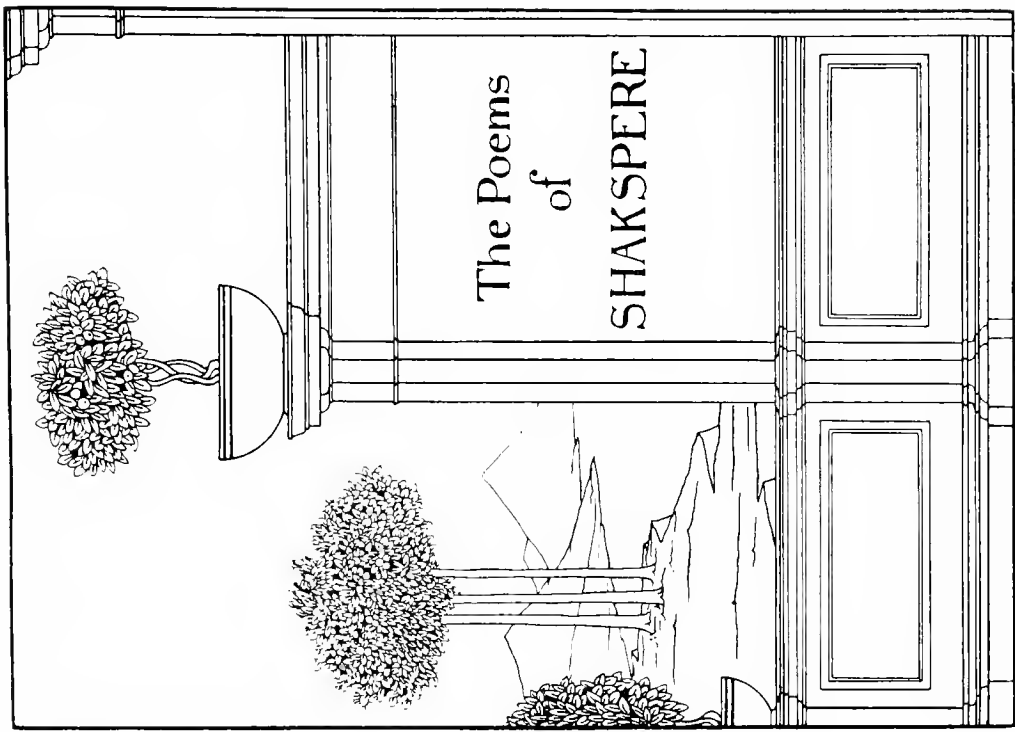
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(George Bell & Sons.)



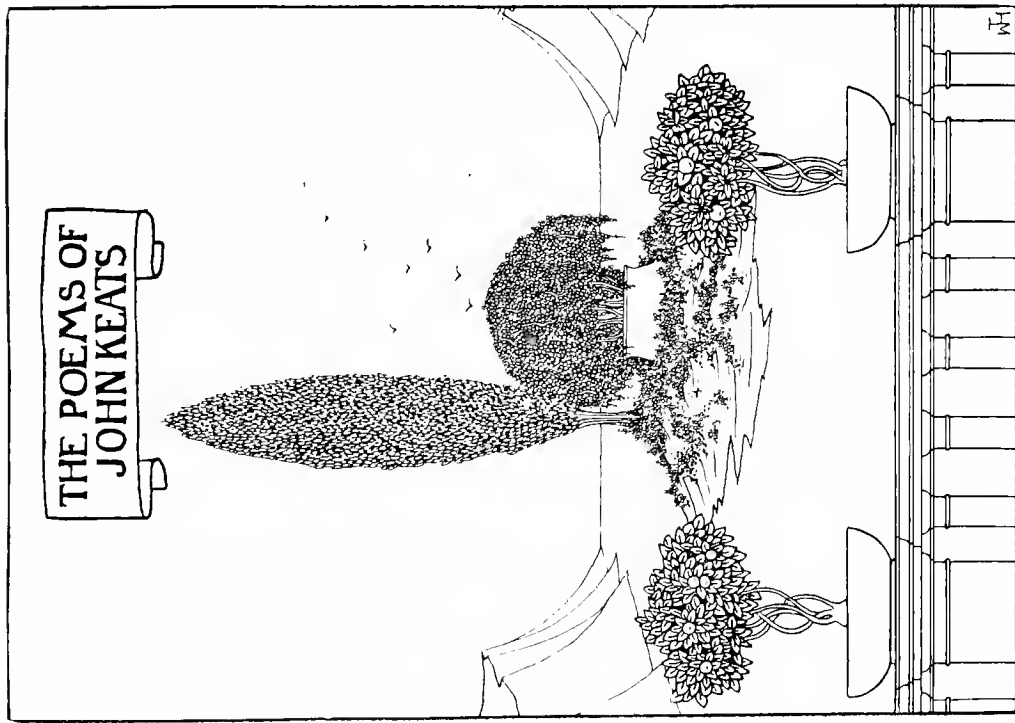
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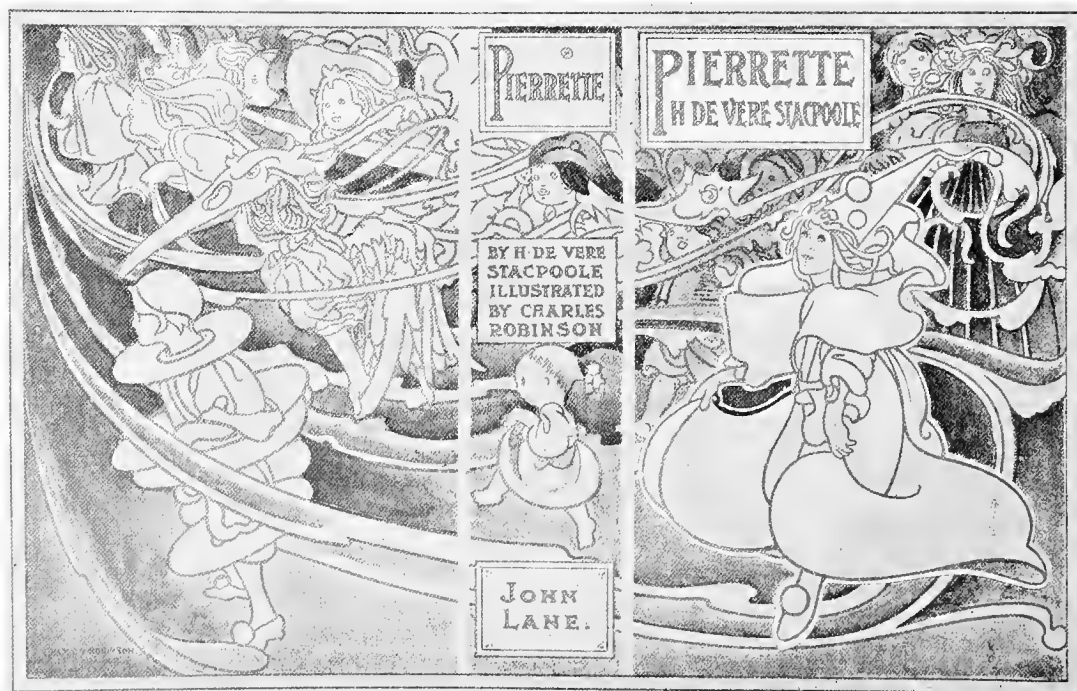
It follows that artists accustomed to designs for reproduction will have an advantage in entering this field. The name of Walter Crane has always stood high in modern black-and-white illustration, and in decorative cartoons, textiles, and wall-papers. The buoyant Elizabethan atmosphere that charged his *Triumph of Labour* with such convincing dignity, vitality, and grace is hardly less distinctive in his book-covers. With such material as Spenser's *Shepherds Calendar* he is thoroughly at ease, and the breezy pastoral spirit of the original lends itself perfectly to the play of his own. A lighter but similarly congenial task has been fulfilled in *A Floral Fantasy*; and, although the latter is hardly more than a high-class nursery picture-book, it is, perhaps, in that aspect that it should be especially welcomed, for no branch of art is more potent for the future than that which appeals to the young, and sets more fixedly than we realise the taste of the coming generation.

The work of Louis Davis must be given the highest credit for its influence in this field. Enabled by temperament to lose himself more wholeheartedly in child-lore than Walter Crane—whose creations are more self-conscious, less convincingly artless and naive—he has given us, perhaps, the most winsome children to be found in modern black-and-white. It has often been said with

regard to literature that what seem to us the most powerful studies of child-life are by no means those that commend themselves most favourably to little readers. So in art we can never be sure that our favourite pictures of children will become popular in the nursery. But there is in the designs of this artist a peculiarly bright and sympathetic touch, which keeps his subjects well within the child's own world, and lights them with the near light of common interests and ideas. In Mrs. Dollie Radford's *Goodnight*, he has been fortunate in collaborating with an artist of kindred spirit and charm; and the cover-design harmonises well with the poems within.

To the same school, but to a somewhat more austere and serious temperament, belongs the work of Selwyn Image, of which a slight but favourable example is given in the cover for *Representative Painters of the Century*. It is essentially the work of a mature, highly cultivated, and perfectly disciplined imagination, neither lacking in freshness nor losing strength in over-refinement and subtlety of thought. The volume comes from a publishing house which has long been associated with books about art and artists, and is therefore looked to for some worthy lead in the decoration of their covers.

In considering the excursions thus made into



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(John Lane)

"DESIGN FOR BOOK COVER"

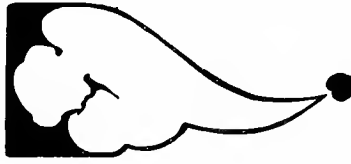
BY GRANVILLE FELL.

(G. M. Dent & Co.)





THE
IMAGE
BREAK-
ERS
GERTRUDE
DIX



HEINEMANN

DESIGNED BY CHARLES E. DAWSON

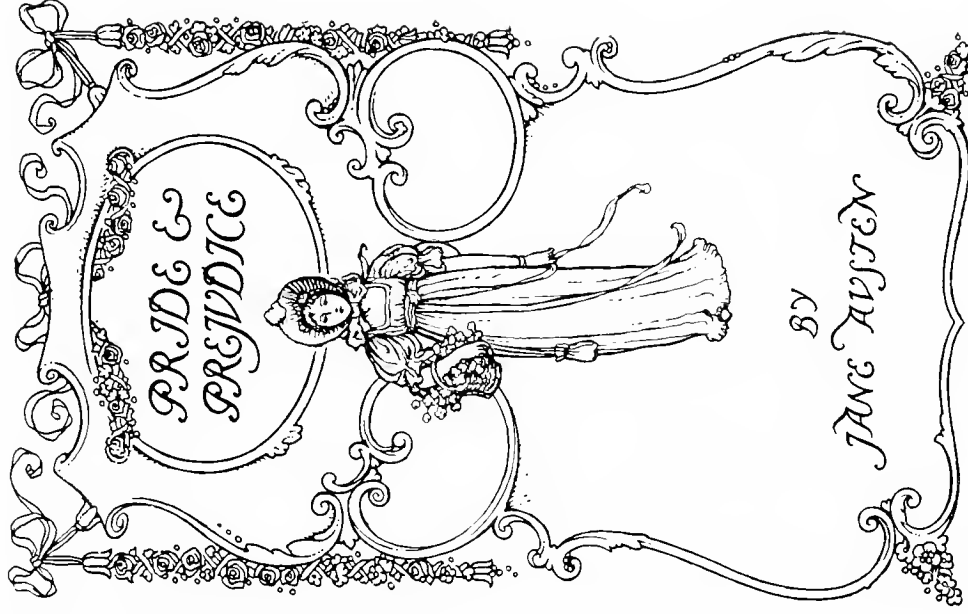
(William Heinemann)



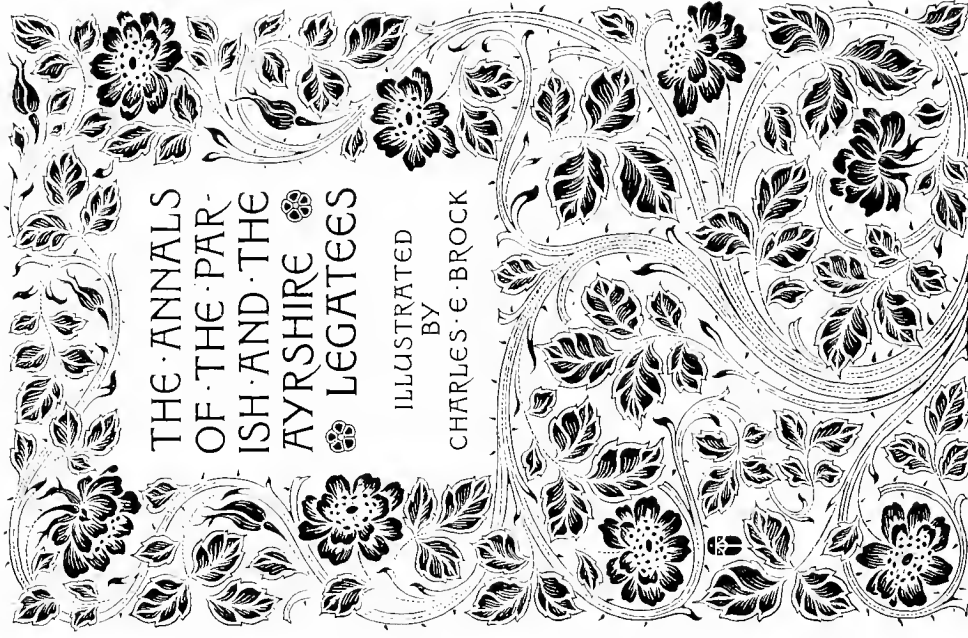
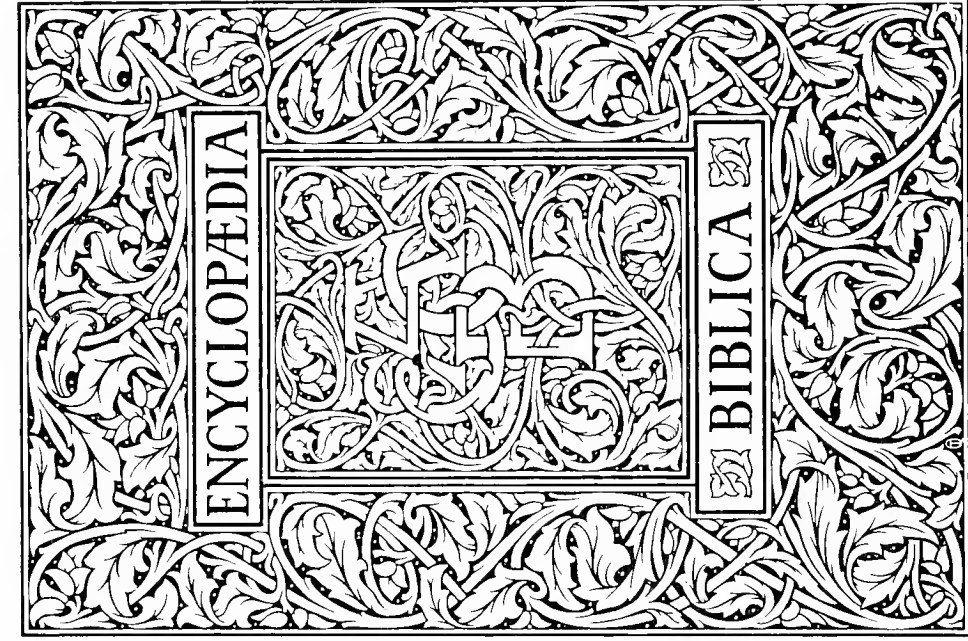
DESIGNED BY PAUL WOODROFFE

(Dent & Co.)

PRIDE
&
PREJUDICE
BY
JANE
AUSTEN



MDCCLX
& CO

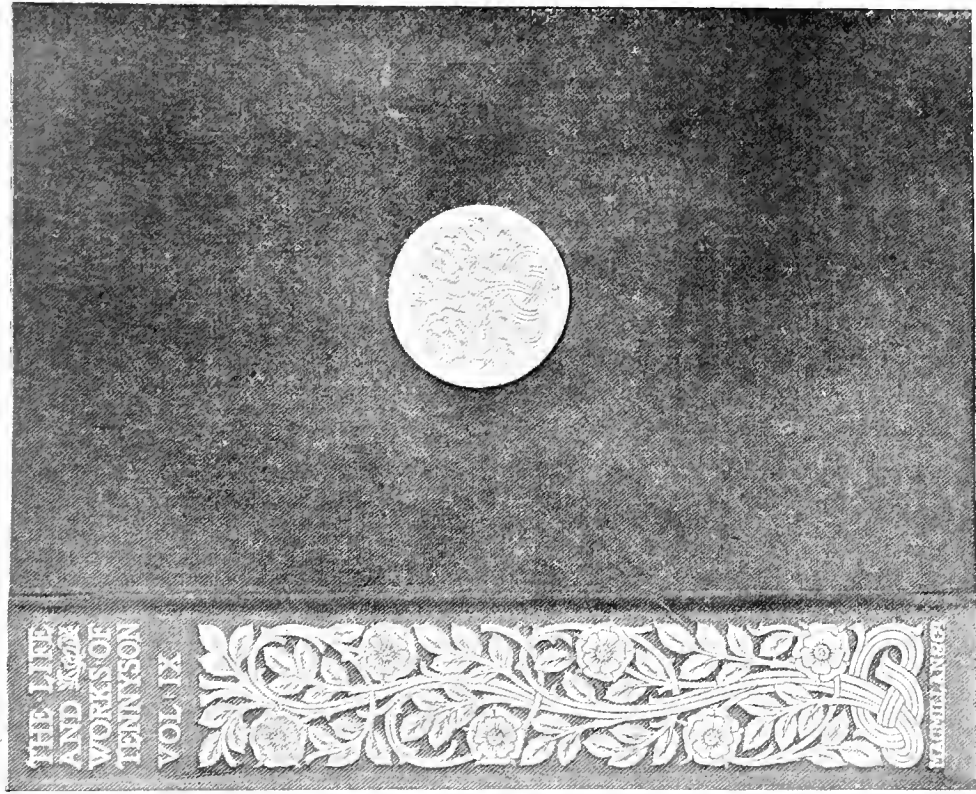


DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE

(A. & C. Black)

DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE

(Macmillan & Co.)



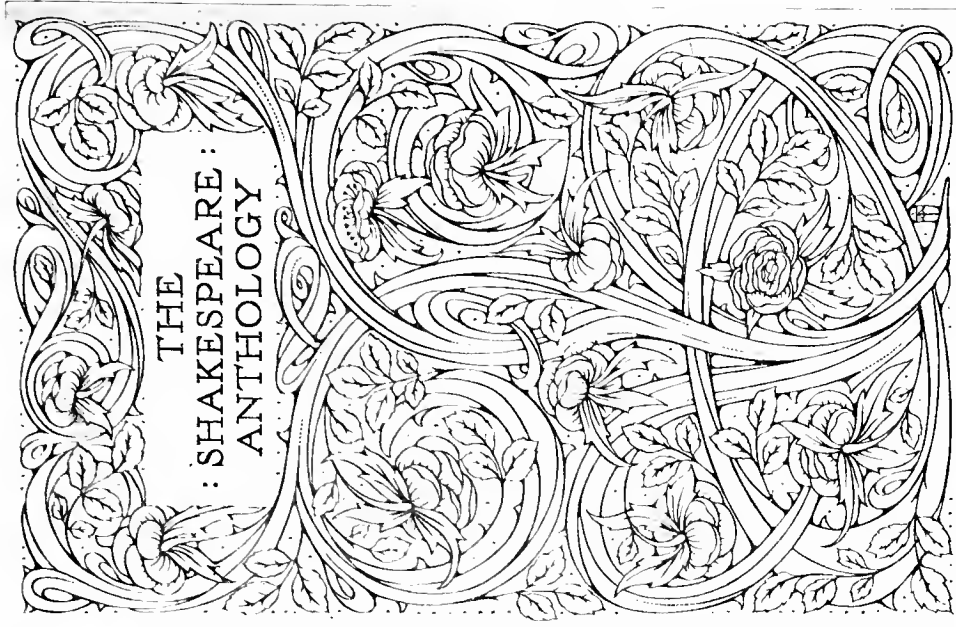
DESIGNED BY A. A. TURRAYNE

(Macmillan & Co.)



DESIGNED BY A. A. TURRAYNE

(Oxford Press)



British Bookbindings



DESIGNED BY TALWIN MORRIS

(Blackie & Son)

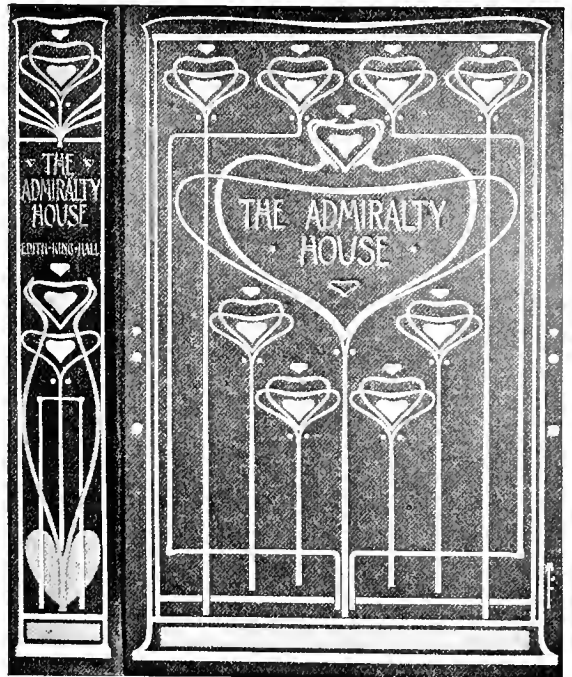
trade-work by those whom we generally associate with William Morris and his circle, it would be unjust to omit the name of W. Harrison Cowlshaw, who, though chiefly distinguished in architecture and the larger branches of design and handicraft, has contributed by the neglected art of illumination to the beautifying of hand-bound books, and has given us one or two cloth cover-designs of agreeable memory.

Near, but yet clearly distinct from the Kelmscott group, is the delicate and highly poetic talent of R. Anning Bell. Though finding its fullest and happiest expression in gesso, it has been abundantly fruitful in decorative black and white, in exquisite illustrations and title-pages, and in cover-designs which fascinate us, not by power, but by a rare simplicity and purity of conception, a subtle and ethereal grace. The artist belongs to the line, perhaps, most sure of its succession—the line of those who concern themselves with beauty, and beauty alone; for whom no real or apparent conflict between truth and beauty ever disturbs the serenity of vision, in a world peopled with forms all tender and joyous, pensive and ideal.

Charles Ricketts and Laurence Housman

represent a more robust and virile imagination, working through individualities strongly distinct, both from the preceding designers and from each other. The former, though he has made his mark most widely in black-and-white illustration, is even more admirable, and certainly no less original, in cover-designs, of which his *Silver-points* occurs to us as the best illustration. In this dainty and wonderfully fit design, the decorative use of vertical lines, popularised by Aubrey Beardsley and imitated by Louis Rhead and others of the trail left by that meteor in the wake of his genius, is most effective. The art of Laurence Housman, which has over-run design into literature, has been largely associated with that of the pre-Raphaelites, from his cover of Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* to that of the newest volume on her brother's work. This last—the cover-design for Messrs. Bell's handsome volume on *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*—fulfils its decorative purpose with dignity and charm. It belongs to the successes of pure ornament; rich in conception, strongly composed, and congruous with the temperament of the author.

It is in this vein that Laurence Housman's work becomes most satisfying to the mind and eyes. In



DESIGNED BY TALWIN MORRIS

(Blackie & Son)

“DESIGN FOR BOOK COVER”

BY LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

(John Lane)

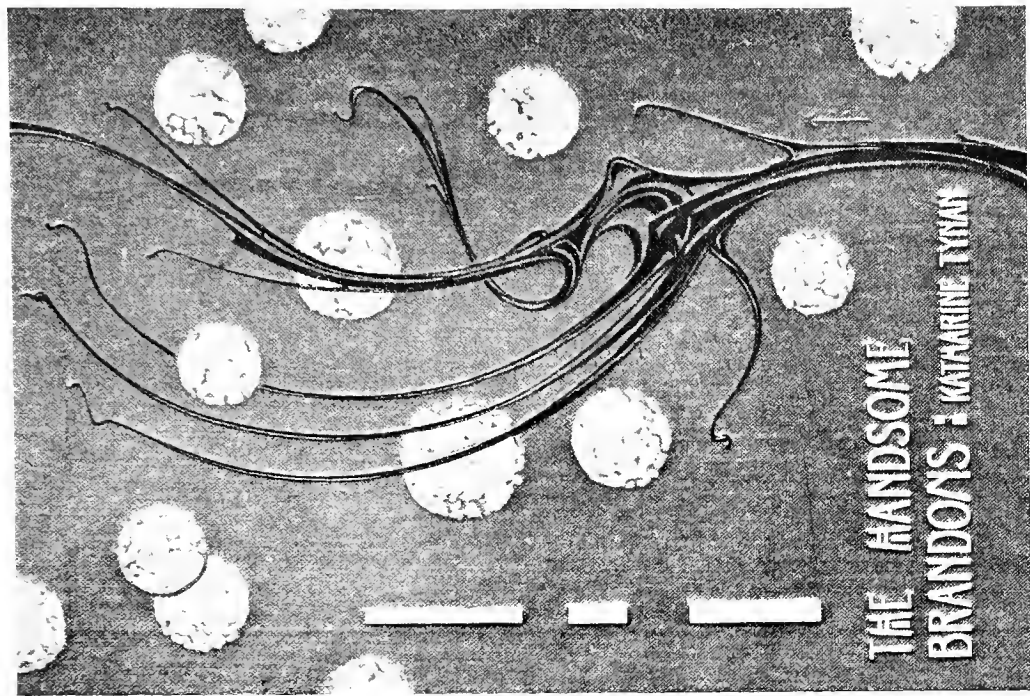






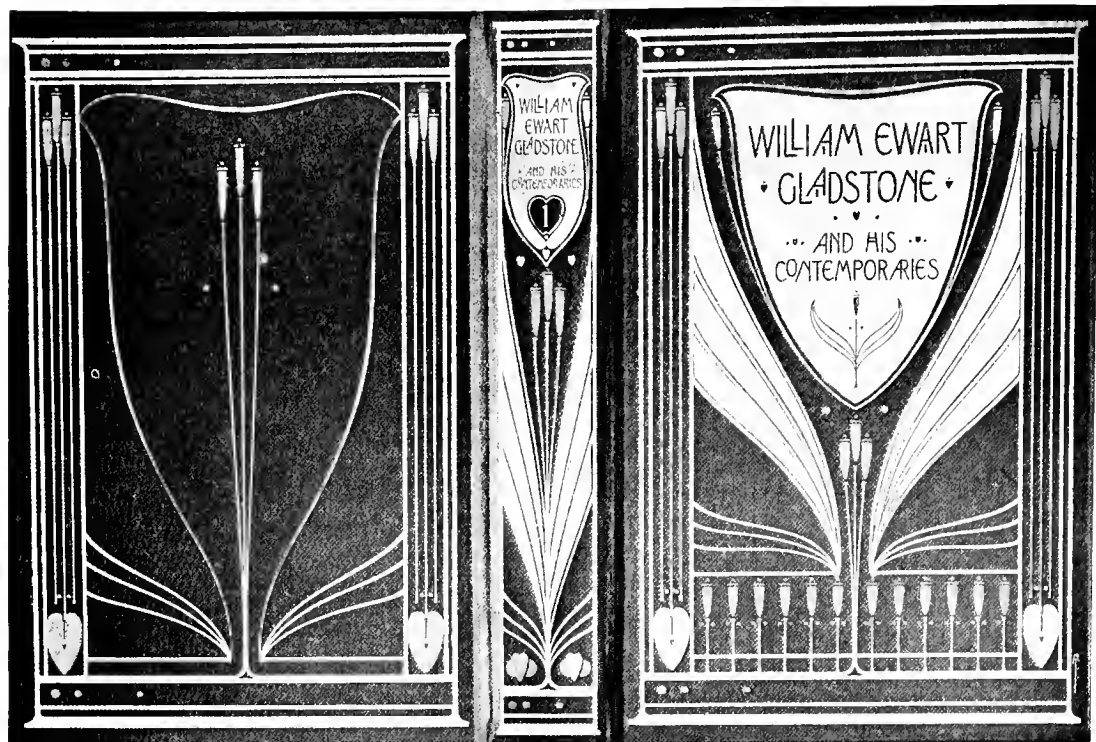
DESIGNED BY TALVIN MORRIS

(Blackie & Son)



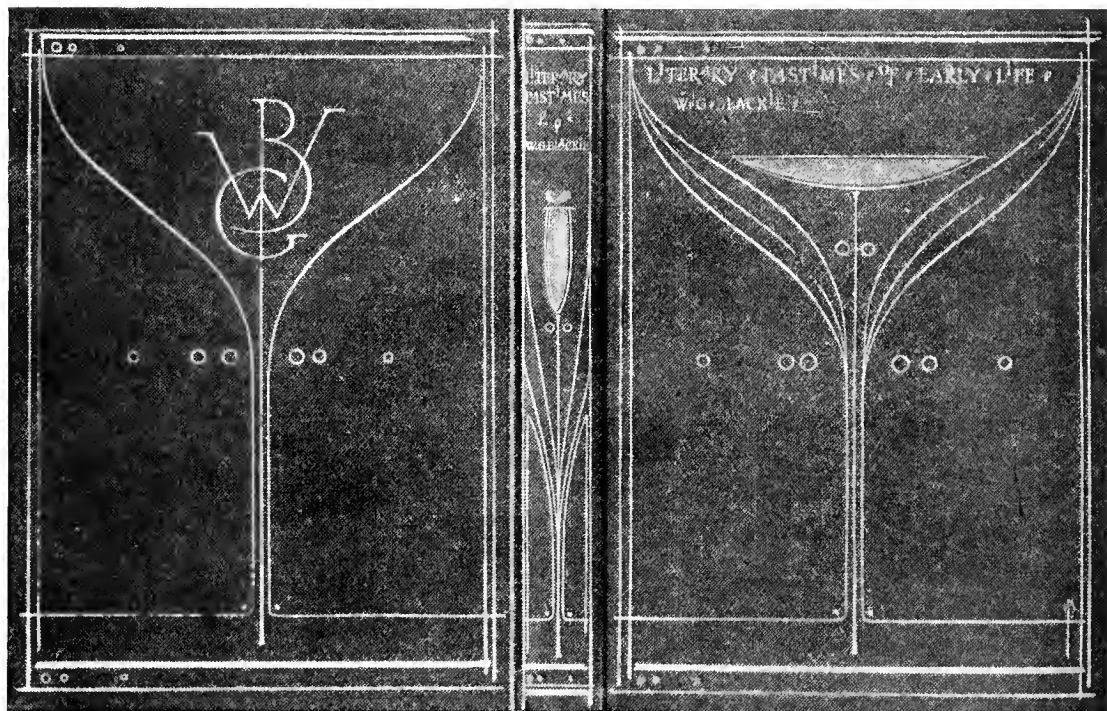
DESIGNED BY TALVIN MORRIS

(Blackie & Son)



DESIGNED BY TALWIN MORRIS

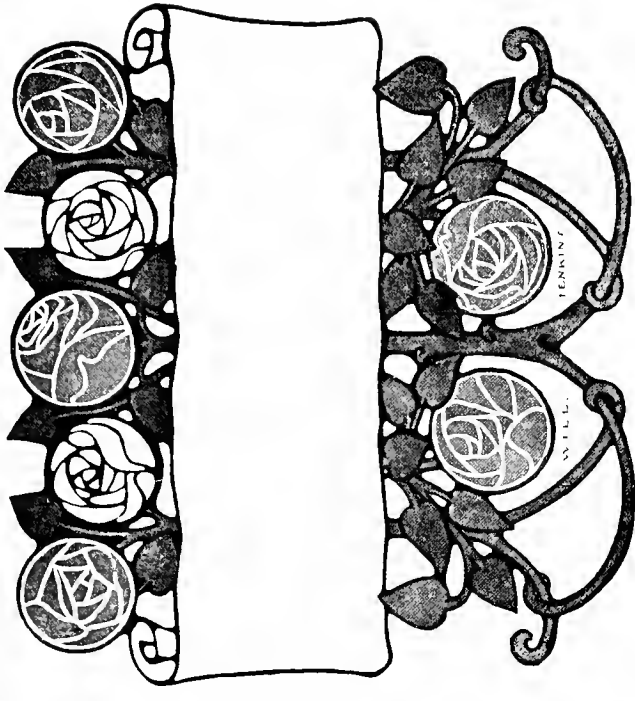
(The Gresham Publishing Company)



DESIGNED BY TALWIN MORRIS

(Blackie & Son)

GIOVANNI BATTISTA

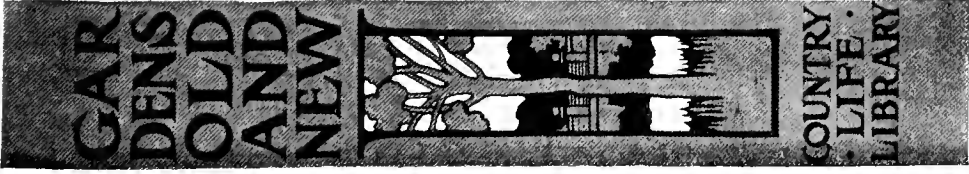


(Unpublished)

DESIGNED BY W. JENKINS



(George Warriss & Co.)



DESIGNED BY W. JENKINS

British Bookbindings

figure-drawing his power verges continually on the grotesque—as perverid, convulsive, riotous, and restless almost as that of Blake; but, as with so many on whose spirit the burden of romantic feeling presses hard, it is in the beauty of the earth itself that “the heavy and the weary weight, the burden of the mystery,” is lightened; and by the choice and use of natural forms a richly sensuous fancy attunes itself more perfectly to artistic ends. Alike in Laurence Housman and in Charles Ricketts, the pre-Raphaelite tradition persists in spite of and alongside of their own individual gift. The work of the latter, indeed, may be said to form a link—theoretically inconceivable, but actually undeniable—between the pre-Raphaelites and Aubrey Beardsley. Much of his black-and-white drawing is curiously reminiscent of Frederick Sandys at his best, in the period, say, of *Danae in the Brazen Chamber*, with its audacious paganism

of spirit and sumptuous decorative detail. Yet, on the other hand, Beardsley himself was hardly more exotic, more conventional, in the treatment of the human figure. In the creations of Charles Ricketts we have the very antithesis of pre-Raphaelitism, if by that we mean in any sense a return to Nature, to simplicity, to the passionate dignity of a free and ardent life. His cover-designs for the most part represent a phase of his art distinct from anything he has done or sought in illustration. More spontaneous and simple in style, and indisputably more beautiful. His symbolism here becomes more chastened and less laboured, and is always subservient to decorative effect. Thus he shares with Laurence Housman the title of a decorative symbolist, seeking beauty supremely, but pursuing it by devious and fanciful ways, mystic, suggestive, and full of intellectual motive and idea. In both of these, as in another draughtsman of their

kindred, C. H. Shannon, the curious pedigree hunter in art may trace the influence of Blake—still so subtle and inestimable a force that, after the lapse of a century, the teeming chaos of his world of vision has been reduced in the third generation to some æsthetic coherence.

In the work of H. Granville Fell we come upon one of the most sincere and graceful of modern designers. Allied on one side to the foregoing artists in decorative intent, he breaks from them in a certain largeness and leisure of handling which they miss in intensity of idea. Less original and less inspired than either, he yields less permanent interest and satisfaction but more immediate pleasure. Seeking a wider world to conquer than those to whom mediævalism is the last



DESIGNED BY MRS. MACDONALD EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS



DESIGNED BY MRS. MACDONALD

EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS

word of the ideal, he has attained more dignity and sobriety of power than any contemporary of equal decorative skill. It is doubtful if any other available illustrator would have surpassed Granville Fell in his designs for the *Song of Solomon* and the *Book of Job*, both of which have been justly reckoned among the "books of the year." This, it will perhaps be urged, is not saying very much, considering the poverty of the present decade in subjective art, given over as it is to external impressionism, and lacking in any such constructive thinkers as Rossetti, the early Millais, and Frederick Sandys. But the refined and judicious quality of his talent finds singularly congenial scope in the most idyllic love-song of Judæa, and the great dramatic masterpiece of Hebrew literature—the tragedy all the more exacting to the interpreter because of the fragmentary and "bowdlerized" condition in which its successive editors have handed it down. The artist has made the best use of an academic training in which a "knowledge of the figure" is the sole ideal, and has done for himself what such students are left to do—to gain independently their knowledge of design. The same credit must be given to

another academically sound draughtsman—Gerald Moira; gifted perhaps with a stronger sense of beauty, especially in colour, and incarnating it in more vigorous and distinguished types. His cover for the *Chiswick Shakespeare* is a rich and satisfying decoration, frankly modern, yet just sufficiently choice and austere to be worthy of its association with our greatest English name.

Poets have suffered much at the hands of their interpreters—illustrators, decorators, commentators of all kinds, by pen, brush, or pencil. Keats has been a specially favourite mark of aspiring designers. Shelley seems to have escaped with but a few random shots. Omar Khayyam may be said to have died daily of inconsequent binding, and Tennyson has borne the brunt of experiments with Rossetti and W. B. Yeats. One of the most distinctively "new" men—W. T. Horton—has lately thus spent himself upon the English classics, though not always with such failure as we have hinted at in the matter of artistic results. Still, it must be said that a spirit steeped in that weird and fantastic beauty which is closely akin to ugliness is hardly the spirit in which to approach Shakespeare or

British Bookbindings

Keats. True, the positively offensive features of the Coleridge book-cover—accountable, if not pardonable, in relation to the author of *Christabel*—are absent from the two we reproduce. There is, moreover, a certain grave, elusive charm in the designer's use of quasi-classic, quasi-renaissance landscape, in spite of its obvious derivation from Beardsley, and its naïve botanical blunders—the same conventionalized tree having a straight stem when it grows in the ground and a crooked one when it is put into a vase or pilaster. Though identified very closely with what is called the Celtic revival, represented in Ireland by W. B. Yeats and in Scotland by two distinct "schools" at Glasgow and Edinburgh, the art of W. T. Horton is as yet too vagrant to be "placed" and classified, and seems at first sight curiously remote from the passionate and wistful Celtic twilight so charged with mystic colour and the poetry of dreams. Nothing could be colder and more austere in feeling than these two cover-designs for *Shakespeare* and *Keats*, or in greater contrast to the tender human pathos and poignancy of *The Secret Rose*. Other designs, however, which we have seen from the same hand reveal a nearer if a still uncanny beauty, a wonderful delicacy of decorative line which might find much more successful inspiration in the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe.

The name of Patrick Geddes, so honourably associated with the intellectual and æsthetic life of modern Edinburgh, is also largely representative of the revival of creative art in that centre, of which the publication of *The Evergreen* was a pleasing and hopeful witness. The cover-designs for that delightful and too deciduous issue must not be forgotten in a mention, however brief, of those vigorous young designers who share, with a similar group in Glasgow, the honours of the renaissance in the North. But it is in Talwin Morris that we find at once the most typical and prolific of the Celtic school of design. With an original, but as yet undisciplined, imagination he unites a fastidious, if somewhat uncertain, taste; and the results, if not equally inspired, are always interesting and characteristic of individual feeling. Among the examples which we reproduce, the covers for *The Handsome Brandons*, *Literary Pastimes*, and *The Admiralty House* are the most successful. *The Eagle's Nest* might reveal still higher qualities of design were it not spoiled somewhat in the photograph by the emphasis given to the white. But there has been an effort to repeat at all costs on the back the decorative formulæ employed on the face of the volume—an illustration of a sound

principle too literally employed. The ideal of the back design should be to form an organic total, if we may so express it, rather than a summing up of details: an end almost perfectly achieved by another artist, Chas. E. Dawson, in his cover for *The Image Breakers*, which shall be presently described. Talwin Morris, indeed, has come well within sight of it in the *Literary Pastimes* above mentioned. His free and facile decorative line is here used with the most admirable reserve and refinement; while in *The Handsome Brandons* a more romantic and naturalistic figure is no less happily introduced. The richly eclectic talent of this artist has led him, perhaps almost inevitably, to absorb certain mannerisms which have crept into modern design, through the opening up of so many sources of knowledge and inspiration from the art of the past. Never in the history of æsthetic expression was the work of past ages and all lands laid so widely under contribution to the work of to-day. From the Greek vase and the Egyptian papyrus to the Indian lotus and the bamboo of Japan, from the symbols of human passion to those of heavenly light and fire, there is hardly a decorative convention that has not been borrowed, adapted, degraded, and restored again in succeeding generations till neither the individual nor the age, if even the nation, can claim them as its own. The formula which we may call the "compressed heart" is a special favourite with the decorators of the present decade. We have it in our carpets, our wall-papers, our inlaid wood, our beaten metal, in every form of wrought, woven, stamped, or printed ornament, and in the book-covers of Talwin Morris it greets us yet again. His use of it in *The Admiralty House* is very ingenious, if not quite pleasing,—whether set upon a wicket at the back of the book, or on a pikestaff in the front of it. The proportions of the design are beautiful, the lines delicate and strong; and if the grouped dots are a little superfluous, the dainty affectation of the signature, or cryptic "mark," of the designer is very pardonable, and, indeed, in keeping with his style. The cover for *Her Friend and Mine* has probably lost something, both in the first and in the second reproduction. The lettering both in this and in *The Admiralty House* is excellent in character, in proportion, and in suitability to the nature of the design. The use of italics—so very rarely harmonious with a conventional decoration—is agreeably and skilfully managed in *The Eagle's Nest*. In the volume on *Gladstone* the end cover is more restful and satisfying than the front; while the back affords, as it should do, a good *résumé* of



DESIGNED BY MRS. TRAGU'AIR
EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS



DESIGNED BY MRS. TRAGU'AIR
EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS

British Bookbindings

the two. Of this artist it may be said that even his failures are clever failures, and carry with them a certain wayward charm far more to be welcomed than the successes of the merely orthodox and correct.

The design for the *The Image Breakers*, by Chas. E. Dawson—a young artist already known in the realm of posters—seems to owe less than any other recent book-cover to the work of more experienced craftsmen. It is at once symbolical and decorative, summing up in a few finely-conceived outlines the purport of the book—a story of two souls seeking each other in the garden of life, and brought together in the chastening fires of experience and love. The plan and proportions of the design are bold and good, and a wise judgment and reserve have saved the symbolic from lapsing into the pictorial, and losing thereby its subtle and suggestive charm. On the back the decoration, based upon the human form, unites an almost primitive simplicity of line with a distinctly modern quality of emotional expression. The æsthetic effect of the few slender curves by which the artist has suggested the embracing figures rises almost to the order of music. The technical efficiency of the design is fortified by a knowledge of reproductive processes which allows for something less than perfect printing, and yet maintains unimpaired the essential quality and spirit of the drawing.

With the cover of *Gardens Old and New* we may welcome another new-comer in design—W. Jenkins, a young Canadian, whose work shows great promise and admirable achievement, in strength and dignity of composition and in a certain warm and mellow beauty of colour. This decoration, with its bold and simple letters and its singular harmony of parts, forms one of the most satisfying book-covers of the year.

Side by side with the leaders of the younger generation, there are always certain men whose rich equipments of taste and culture serve to balance the lack of any strong inspiration or originality in their art. Individuality they may have, and an imagination more stable, if more limited, than that of the symbolists; giving us, indeed, some of the most exquisite forms of pure decoration. To this important group belongs the judicious and perfectly ordered talent of A. A. Turbayne. In him, the poetic quality of Tennyson finds an almost ideal interpreter, and his cover for the *Life and Works* of the late laureate affords a handsome series of volumes, decorated at the back with a singularly rich and dignified design, and on the face with a simple medallion, of which the only criticism that

suggests itself is that it might be brought a trifle nearer to the optical centre of the book. The *Shakespeare Anthology* is adorned with an adroit convention from the typically English rose. Intricate and obscure, it does not weary us by a perplexing challenge to the eye, but fulfils very happily the aim of a pattern; not thrusting its detail upon us, but revealing it gradually as a pleasant surprise. Here, as in the *Tennyson*, the title is well set, the lettering is good, and the space provided for it occurs well in the decoration, forming, as it should do, an integral part of the scheme. Yet, even among such meritorious designs, it may not be out of place to remember that the development of pattern, however beautiful, has always a tendency to lead to the undervaluing of the quality of *space* in design, and the consequent neglect of the material which the pattern adorns. Certainly, our contact with the Japanese has done much to correct this tendency in the younger generation, but we may still observe, even in designers of such calibre as the one now under discussion, this characteristic timidity in the matter of empty space. The habit of filling up blanks among the lettering by small decorative figures is by no means universally appropriate, and even in the *Tennyson* cover just referred to the ornament following the “and” is not only superfluous but quite irrelevant to the rest of the design. A similar difficulty has occurred around the second word of the title *Encyclopedia Biblica*, and one cannot but think that it might have been more boldly handled than by merely filling up the panel in which this is set. On the same book-cover the publishers’ initials—A. & C. B.—might have been made into a simpler monogram. As it stands, the eye seeks a fourth letter on the left to balance the C, but is only half satisfied by what may possibly be intended for the “ampus and.” Obscurity of detail is pardonable in pattern, but in lettering never. This, if it cannot stand out quite legibly among the decoration, had better be entirely separate.

The mention of Japanese influence in relation to English draughtsmanship—an allusion in which a whole new world of criticism is opened up—suggests the name of at least one cover designer who has felt that influence strongly, and responded to it without any loss of native and original power. We refer to J. D. Batten, whose work in the direction of colour-prints has long been familiar to readers of THE STUDIO.

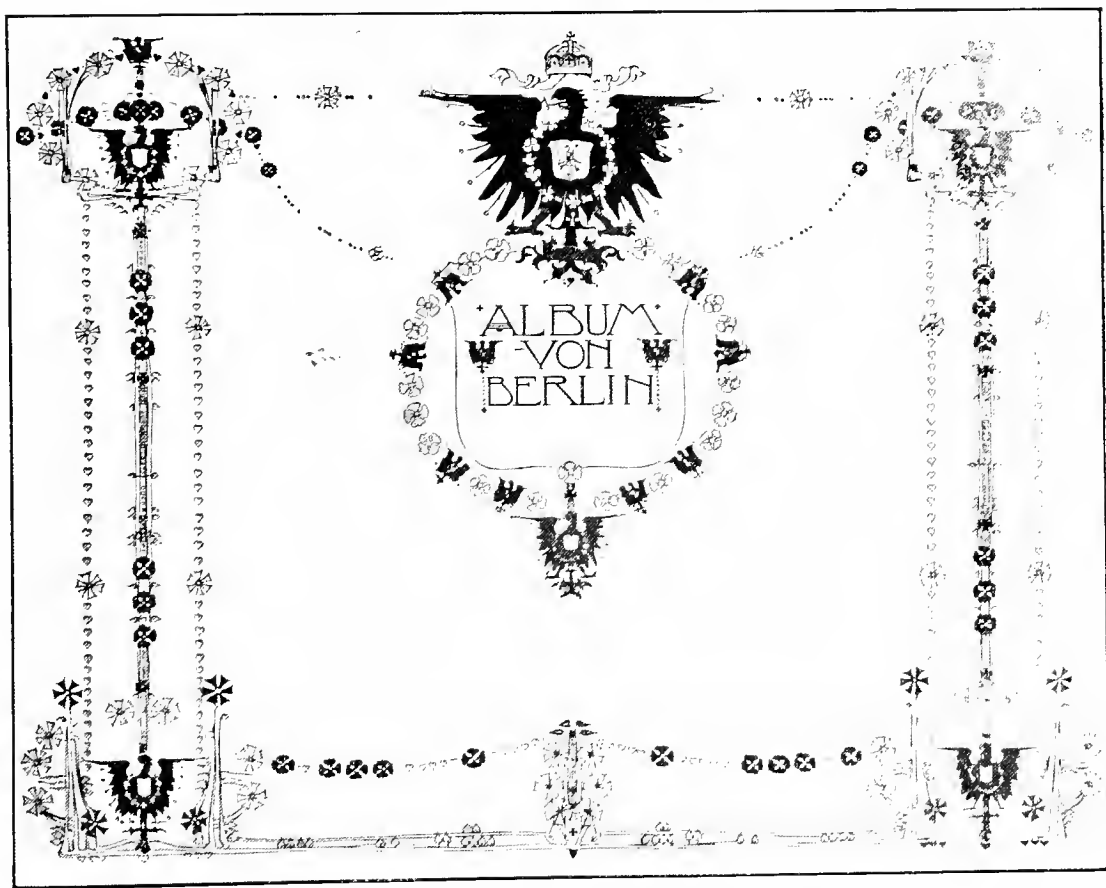
The work of Edmund H. New stands equally alone in delicate fancy and an inspiration wholly English, and largely eighteenth-century, in character.

British Bookbindings

Though hitherto known chiefly by his dainty little architectural and landscape drawings in black-and-white, his book-plates, similar in subject-matter, and his illustrations to *Isaac Walton*, this artist has recently entered the field of cover-design, and with full justification in the beautiful edition of *White's Selborne*, the preparation of which was among the many worthy labours of the late Grant Allen's life; and also in a pretty little garden-book, *My Roses*, by Helen Milman, which he has decorated in cloth of red. In work of this kind, all that is choicest in the eighteenth-century spirit is enshrined; purged of its artificialities, and seen through a medium of a sincere temperament, it becomes almost genial in its grace and leisure, its trim and careful ease. Paul Woodroffe, following with more blithe and playful mien in the footsteps of that somewhat idealistic draughtsman, also celebrates the Jane Austen period and that little social world which, though covering several later decades, belongs essentially to the last century's life. His design for *Pride and Prejudice* is conceived in an equally

sympathetic spirit, and with an added buoyancy of touch.

It was in the delineation of this half-historic, half-imaginary world of tripping maidens with poke-bonnets and short waists, of pastoral sweetness and innocent town gaiety, that women—such as Alice Havers and Kate Greenaway—began to enter the paths of illustration and cover-design. That delightful humorist Hugh Thomson did much to maintain the wholesome and kindly treatment of the Georgian age, which is the very antithesis of the conception nurtured by the more modern and cynical school. Among the younger women designers Chris Hammond may be cordially recognised as having kept the more rose-coloured vision in her illustrations to books of this period, and shown a fresh and delicate talent in her covers for *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility*. Gertrude Bradley stands honourably among the designers for children's books, and her name will be found associated not only with the covers, but also with the inside decorations of several delightful new children's books. In



DESIGNED BY MISS JESSIE KING

EXECUTED IN FOUR COLOURS AND GOLD ON PAPER BY HERR WERTHEIM.

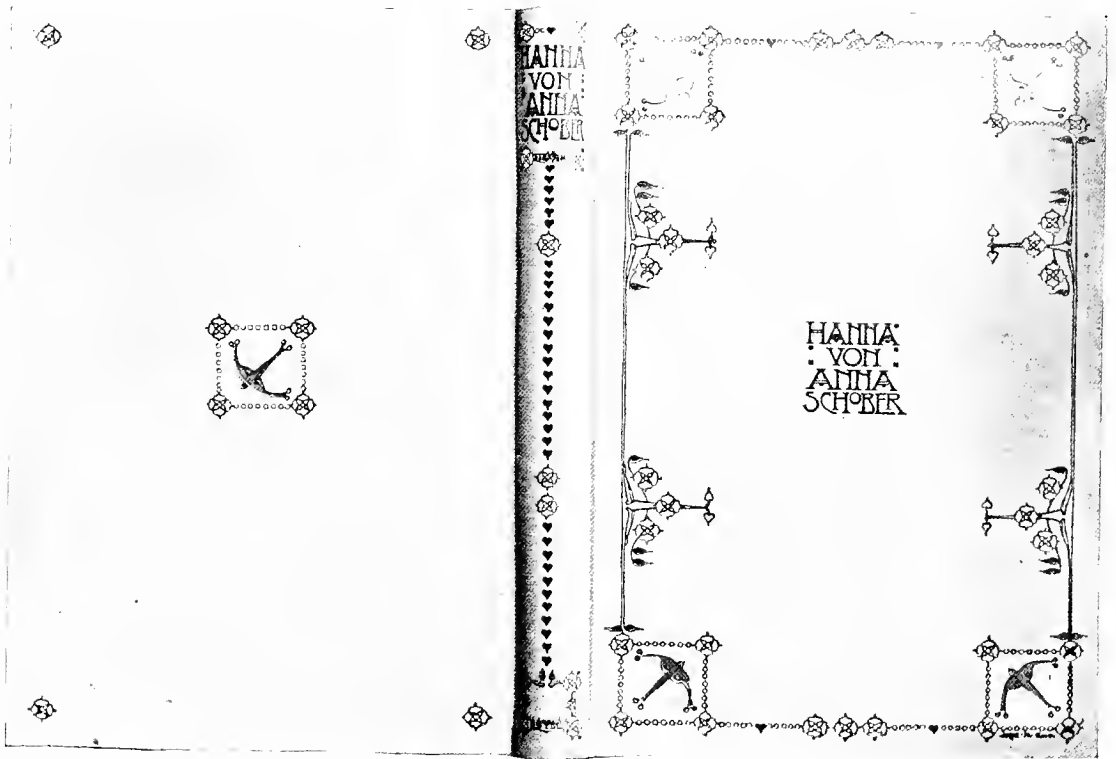
British Bookbindings

Alice B. Woodward we have an artist of more robust and original quality, already acknowledged in the front rank of women designers, and gifted, perhaps, with a finer sense of composition in draughtsmanship than any of her peers. Yet another young designer of remarkable, but wholly different, endowments remains to be mentioned. The name of Althea Giles belongs properly to the neo-Celtic school, and her cover for the *Poems of W. B. Yeats* is highly characteristic of a sombre, mystical, and weird imaginative power, expressing itself through a talent still vagrant and diffuse.

Some sins of omission will doubtless be charged against this brief survey of recent cloth book-covers, but at this point one or two of them may find correction. The example which we give of Althea Giles calls to mind a somewhat similar, though more immature, effort by Reginald Knowles in the cover for Alice Sargent's *Master Death*. In the lettering lies the most conspicuous weakness of this design; and poor lettering is less pardonable on a book than poor decoration. From the ranks of more mature and competent draughtsmen the names of the brothers Robinson also occur to us, in connection with some of the most pleasing covers of recent years. Everyone will remember the

pleasure given last Christmas by Charles Robinson's *Child's Book of Saints*. His new cover for *Pierrette* takes us frankly from the religious to the pagan world, and the sumptuous pageantry of the former work gives place to the humorous revels of a fairy pantomime. This is a very successful instance of a semi-pictorial decoration carried right across the cover, including the back, and consisting of three well-composed and satisfying parts, which, when seen together, form a still more complete and pleasing whole. Two graceful designs by T. H. Robinson, for Gray's *Elegy* and Thackeray's *Esmond*, and one by W. H. Robinson for *The Talking Thrush*, must also be reckoned in the roll of praise.

Quite other traditions govern the work of the "decorative impressionists"—if we may so describe such men as William Nicholson, J. Hassall, Cecil Aldin, and Dudley Hardy, known chiefly to the public through their posters and kindred pieces of broad and pictorially "sketchy" art. Whatever success they may achieve in cover-design can only be fitly associated with "books of the hour"—for railway reading, for summer holidays, and every kind of occasional interest, pertaining distinctively to journalism rather than to literature. This

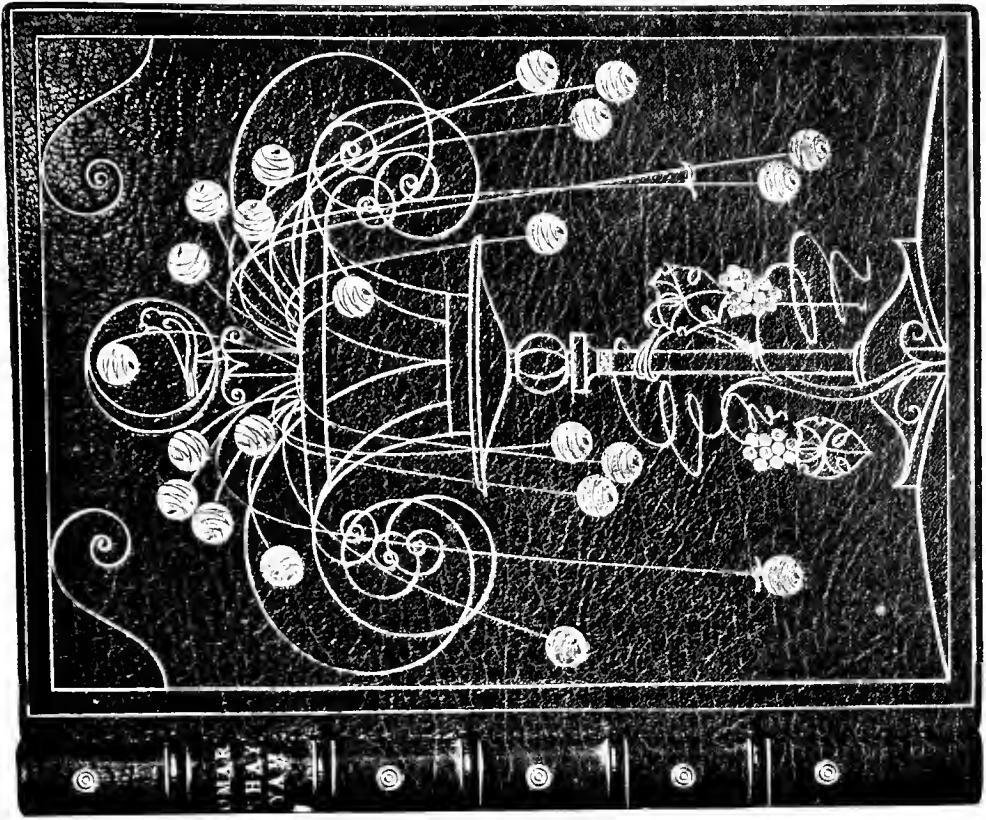


DESIGNED BY MISS JESSIE KING

EXECUTED IN FOUR COLOURS AND GOLD ON CLOTH BY HERR WERTHEIM

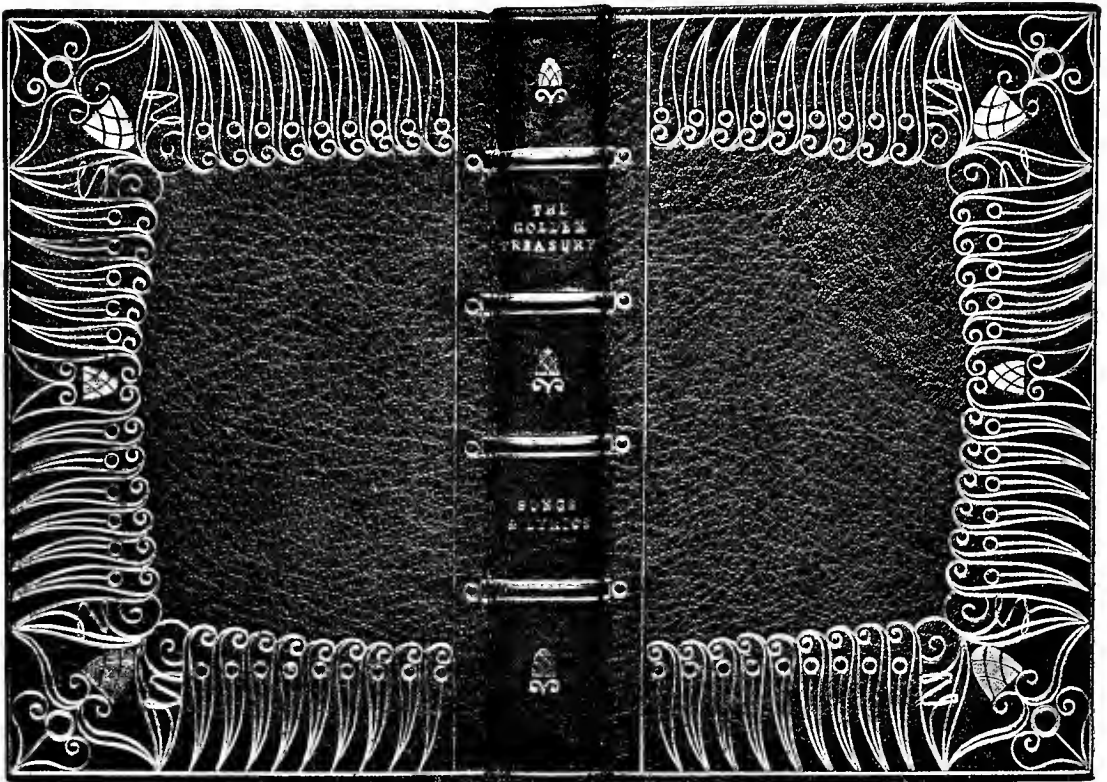


MANUSCRIPT CASE DESIGNED BY D. S. MACCOLL, EXECUTED BY MISS E. M. MACCOLL



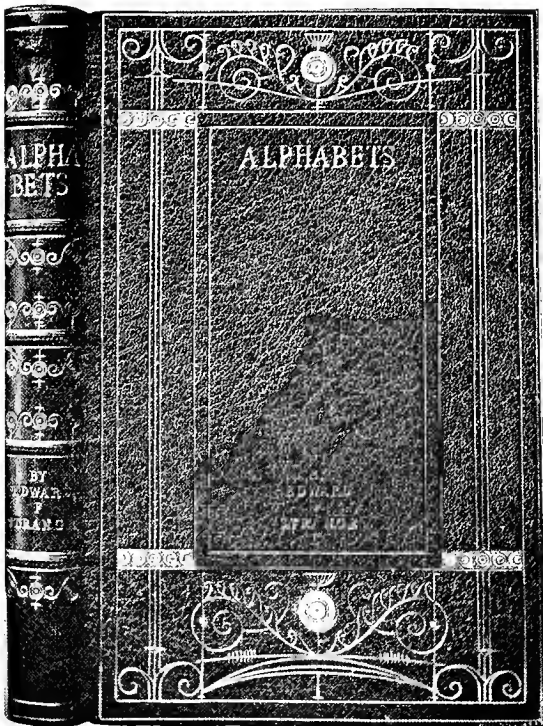
DESIGNED BY D. S. MACCOLL

EXECUTED BY MISS E. M. MACCOLL



DESIGNED BY D. S. MACCOLL.

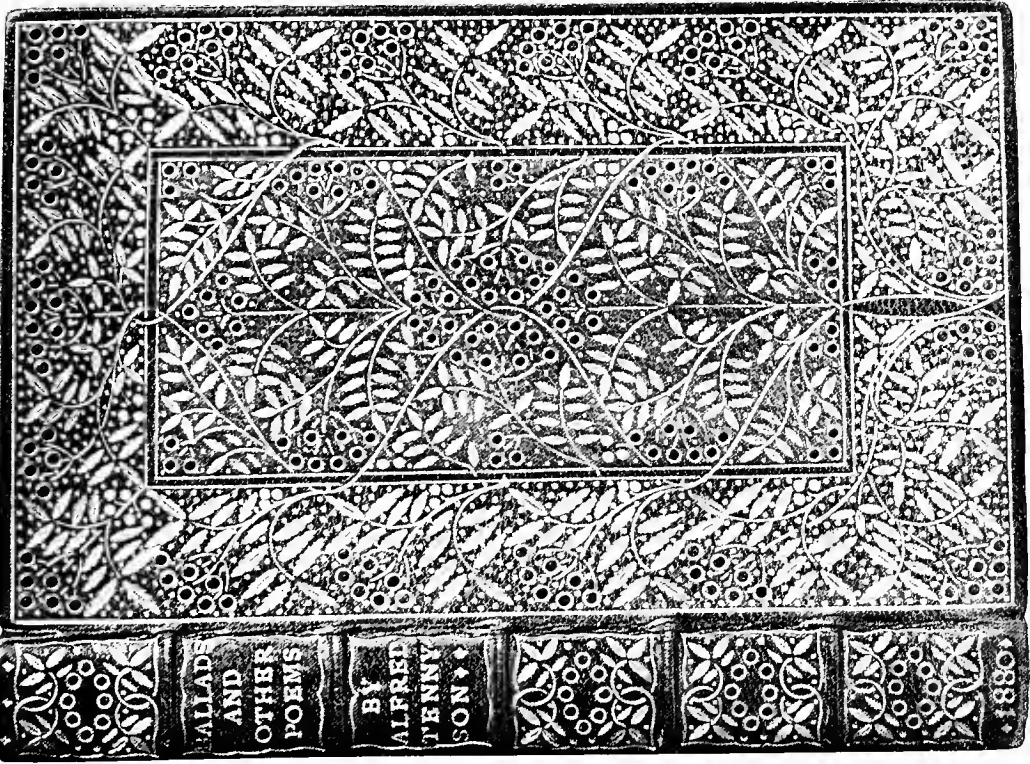
EXECUTED BY MISS E. M. MACCOLL



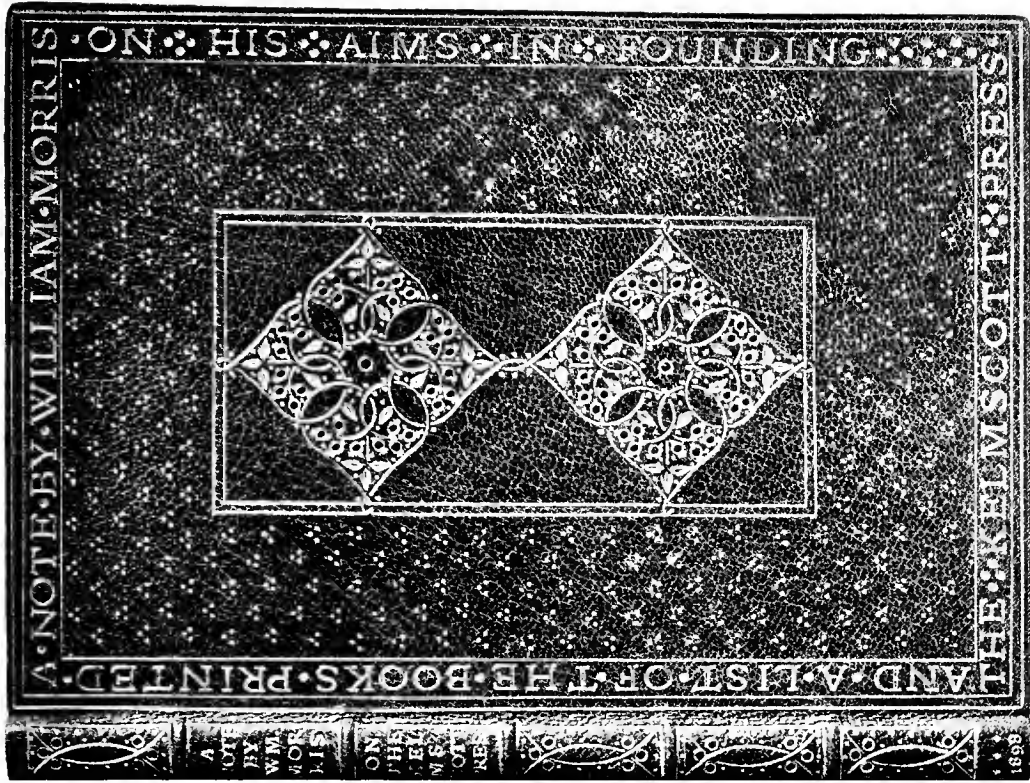
DESIGNED BY D. S. MACCOLL.

EXECUTED BY MISS E. M. MACCOLL

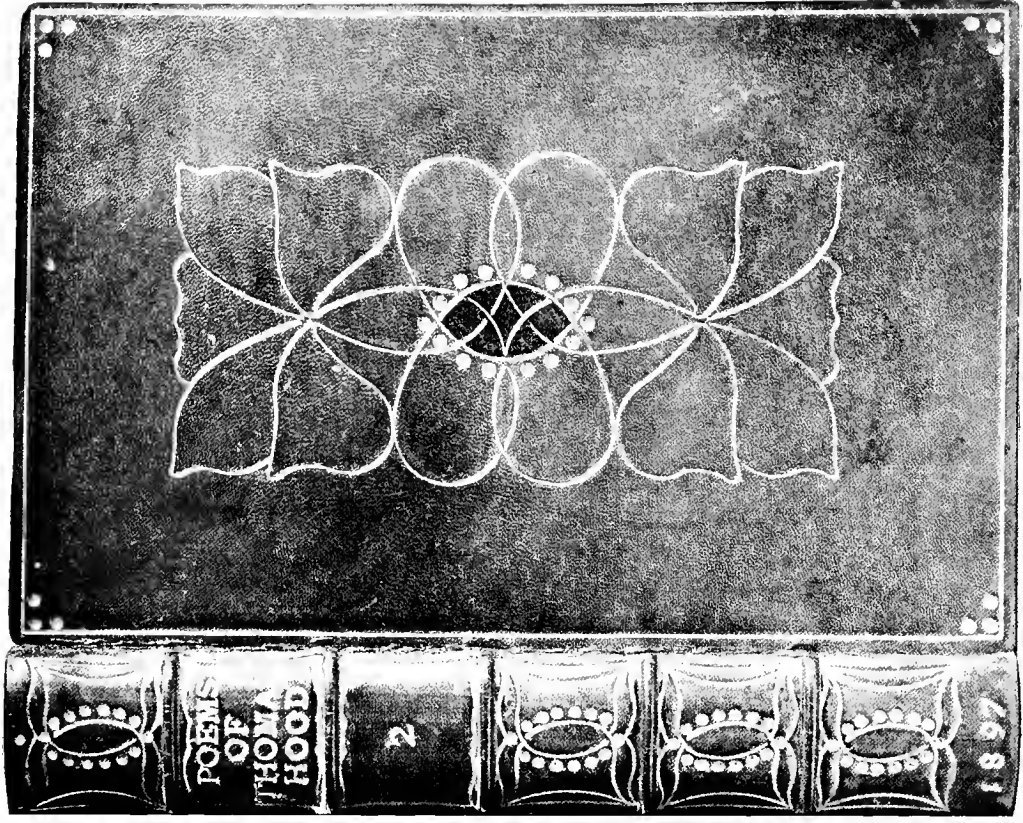
definition does not preclude the application of very genuine and admirable art to uses which assume the nature of advertisements, serving, as we have already said, to attract the purchaser of the volume by a vigorous impressionistic hint of its contents. The cover of William Nicholson's *London Types* reproduces one of the most effective of his clever colour-prints (to use the phrase without too accurate intention) which form the substance of the book, and are aptly "illustrated" by the quatrains of W. E. Henley: one of the most loyal of London's sons. This cover, so thoroughly efficient for the purpose it is meant to serve, shows us perhaps the best that can be done with art of this unique and limited kind. On a smaller scale, and with more traces of the Japanese in composition and colouring, are the charmingly piquant little covers by J. Hassall for *Two Little Friends* and several other children's books, as eloquent of the nursery as Nicholson's is racy of the streets. Both Cecil Aldin and Dudley Hardy have also brought the poster-style to bear upon book-covers; the former with admirable taste and charm in



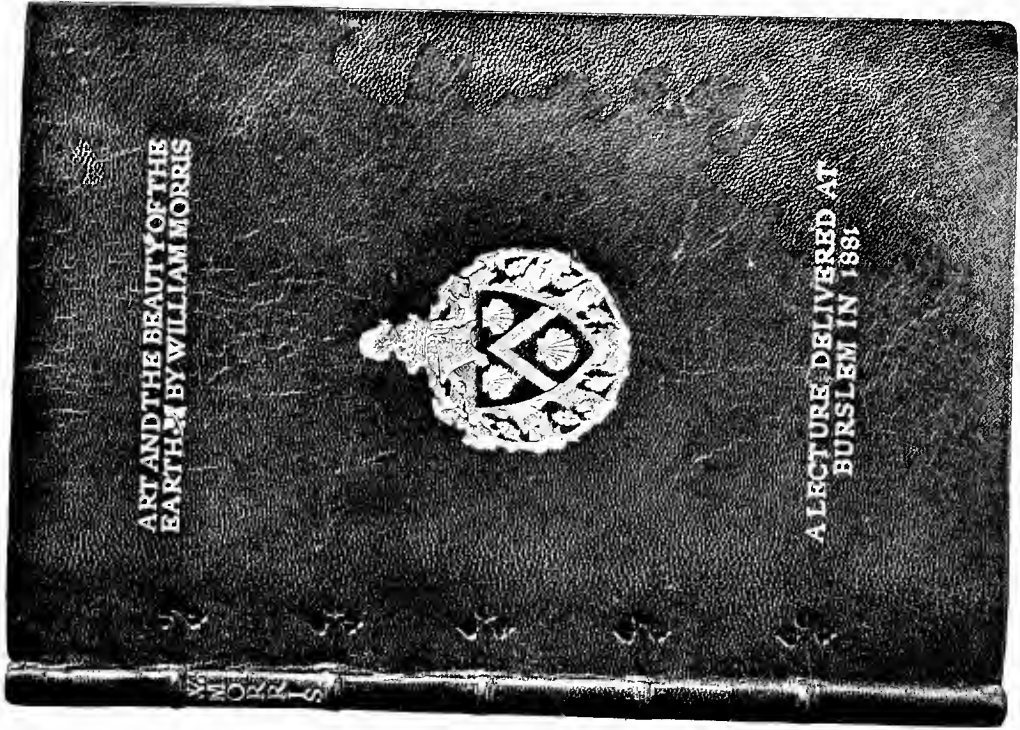
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DOUGLAS COCKERELL.



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DOUGLAS COCKERELL.



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DOUGLAS COCKERELL.

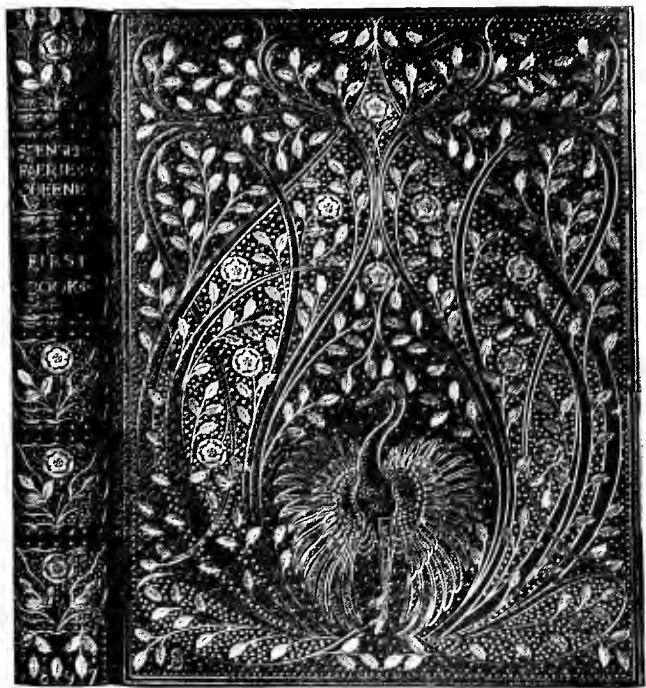


DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DOUGLAS COCKERELL.

British Bookbindings

his *Two Little Runaways*, published last year.

To pass from these to the adjoining field of paper covers would be beyond our present task, but a word may here be said as to the better ideals now coming into force for the treatment even of paper-bound books. It often happens that a deterioration in one branch of art—or, let us say, the degradation of a certain material—results in the higher development of the next thing beneath it in order of worth. The abuse of gold and silver leads to a renaissance in copper and iron. A glut in the silk market reacts favourably on homespun and cottons. In the same way the recent profuse and feelingless turn-out of cloth covers with so little distinction of design, so little care for the texture itself, as in the great bulk of machine-bound books, has produced the inevitable reaction towards paper. In America, especially, cover-papers are now prepared which, in colour, substance, and the surface they present to the touch, are very far to be preferred to cloth of the ordinary quality.

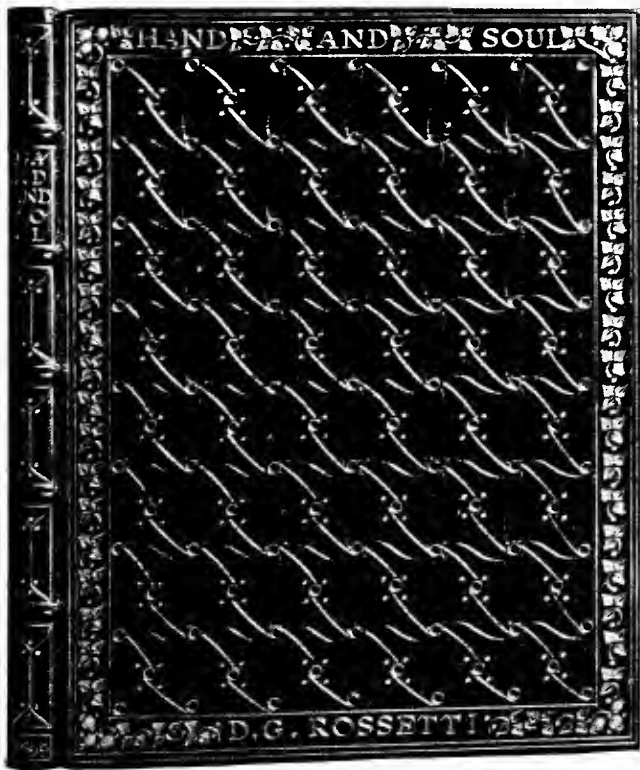


DESIGNED BY A. A. TURBAYNE EXECUTED BY W. T. MORRELL

Already these papers are being imitated by the English trade, and will probably continue to improve

until cloth in its turn shall have been pulled up to the same artistic level. The increased attention given to paper, both for the printing and binding of books, cannot fail to re-act well upon every use to which it is put. Endpapers for the lining of the cover itself and wrappers to protect a delicate binding, deserve a separate chapter to themselves, so rich are they in opportunities for fine and even exquisite decoration and colouring.

In closing a general record of efforts to raise the standard of beauty in trade design, one name not hitherto mentioned demands a specially honourable place. Only those in close and deep sympathy with new artistic ideals know how much nearer they have been brought to us all by the author and designer of *Modern Illustration*. The cover of this book is a worthy expression of a spirit at once so catholic and eclectic, so sincere in art and so just in criticism, as that of the late Gleeson White. A retrospect, however imperfect, in the closing year of this century,



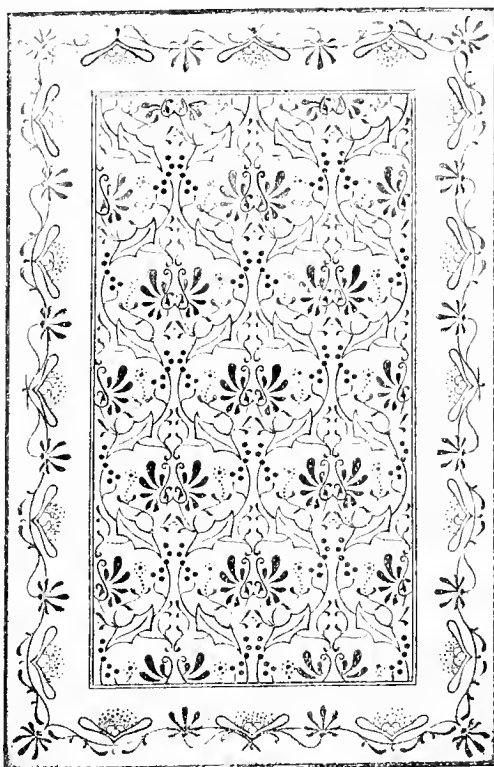
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DOUGLAS COCKERELL

of one out of the many branches of applied art which he so strenuously served, seems to yield a fit opportunity to acknowledge a debt, not only of appreciation, of work accomplished, but also of the highest personal regard.

B RITISH TOOLED BOOKBINDINGS AND THEIR DESIGNERS. BY ESTHER WOOD.

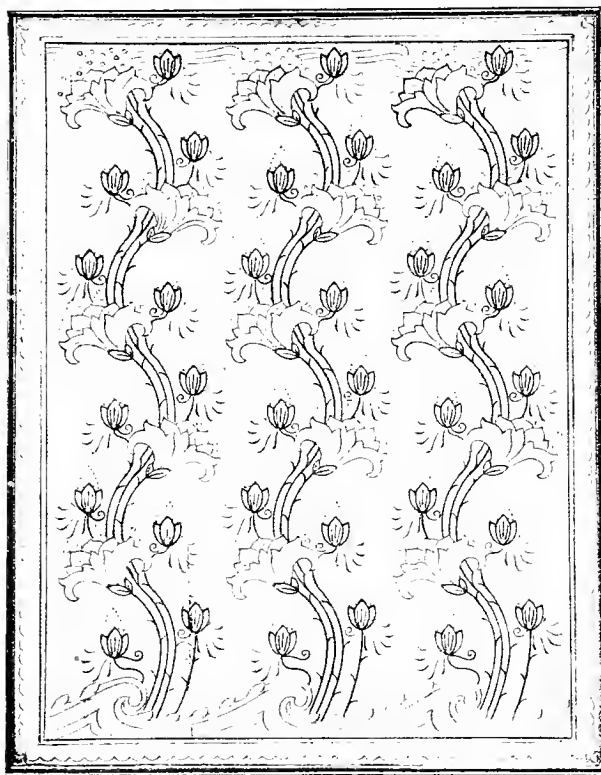
IN the best books there is always something of the nature of a pilgrim's scrip; a treasured burden intimately borne; a precious roll inscribed with the wisdom of life, and bound or tied up, as the simpler word expresses it, for our counsel and solace by the way. In this aspect, bookbinding becomes one of the most poetic of the arts and handicrafts, yielding rich opportunities for the expression of personal feeling, and for honouring by a beautiful and worthy setting the words of the great writers of all time.

Machine-bound books, as we have said, fulfil their purpose by being temporarily serviceable, businesslike, and neat. Only in those that receive



"SUTHERLAND" DECORATION

DESIGNED BY LEON V. SOLOX



"SUTHERLAND" DECORATION

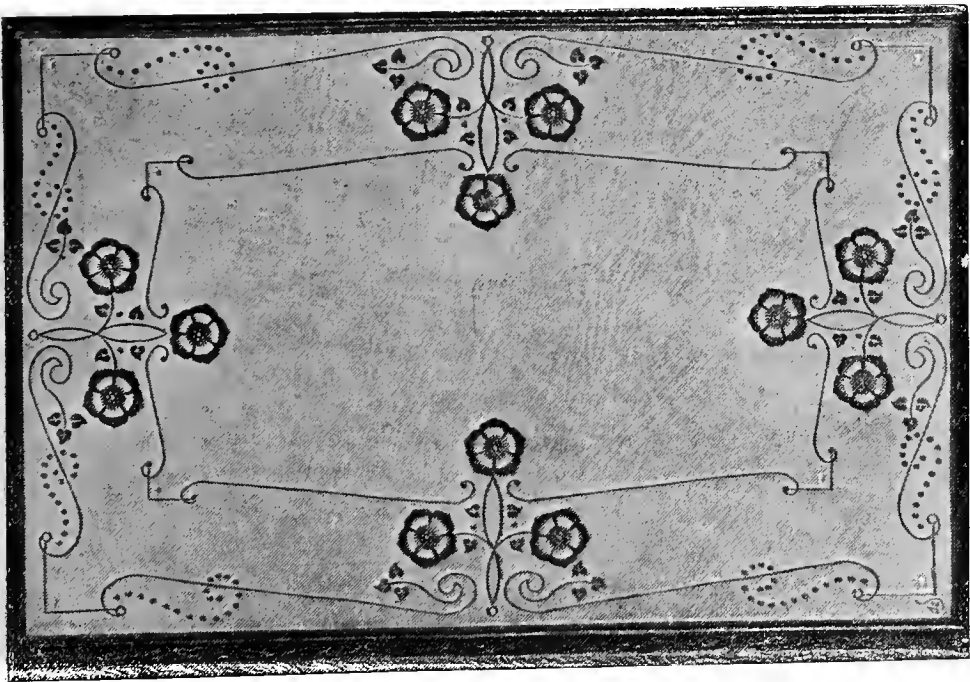
DESIGNED BY LEON V. SOLOX

the homage of hand-labour may the results be indefinitely durable, elaborate, delicate, and fanciful in character. As regards the first quality, it is not too much to demand that a hand-bound book shall last as long as the fibres that compose it. All grace of construction, all finely-wrought ornament, must subserve that quality to the utmost. No earthy adulteration of paper can be permitted between leather-covered boards; the beauty of the forwarding and finishing must be of a kind that will stand constant wear: in the case of books for daily reference and companionship it may even approach that impregnable nature which a modern advertiser has quaintly hinted at, in announcing his wares to be "built for abuse." Yet here the instincts of good taste correct the comparison, and remind us that the abuse of strength means the death of beauty, and that all fair handiwork claims the same just and temperate use that we would give to all "the beauty of the earth."

Such phrases recall once more the name



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY A. DE SAUTY



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY A. DE SAUTY

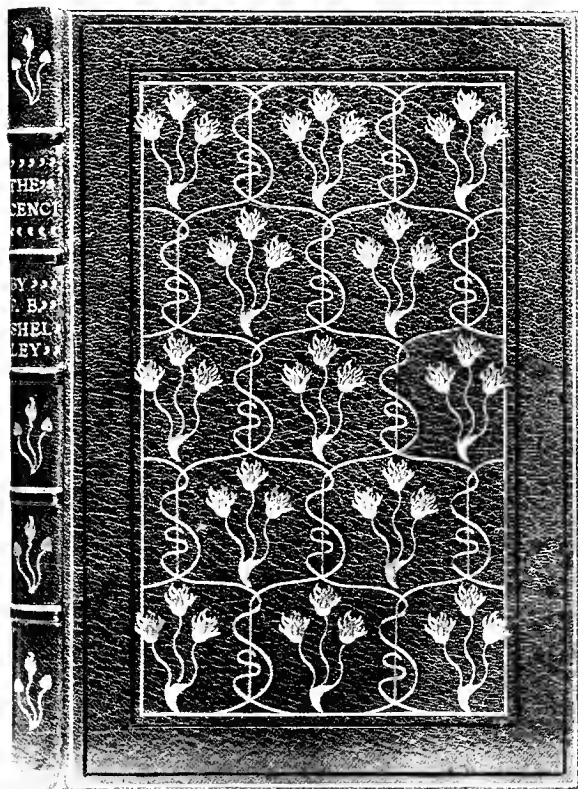
British Bookbindings

of William Morris, and the debt that bookbinding and the kindred handicrafts owe to him in relation to the Kelmscott Press. But he himself would have been the last to claim exclusive inspiration of the men who worked by his side, and in such craftsmen as Walter Crane, T. J. Cobden-Saunders, and Douglas Cockerell—though immensely influenced by the Morris tradition—the Kelmscott circle has given us independent and original thinkers in design. Many very choice examples of their work have been on view during the past two months at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition, together with that of other bookbinders who in various centres have developed the handicraft on their own lines.

Some of the front rank of designers, such as Walter Crane, and, in a different school, A. A. Turbayne, have exercised their talent both upon cloth-bound and tooled books. The covers by Walter Crane for Spenser's *Shepherds Calender*



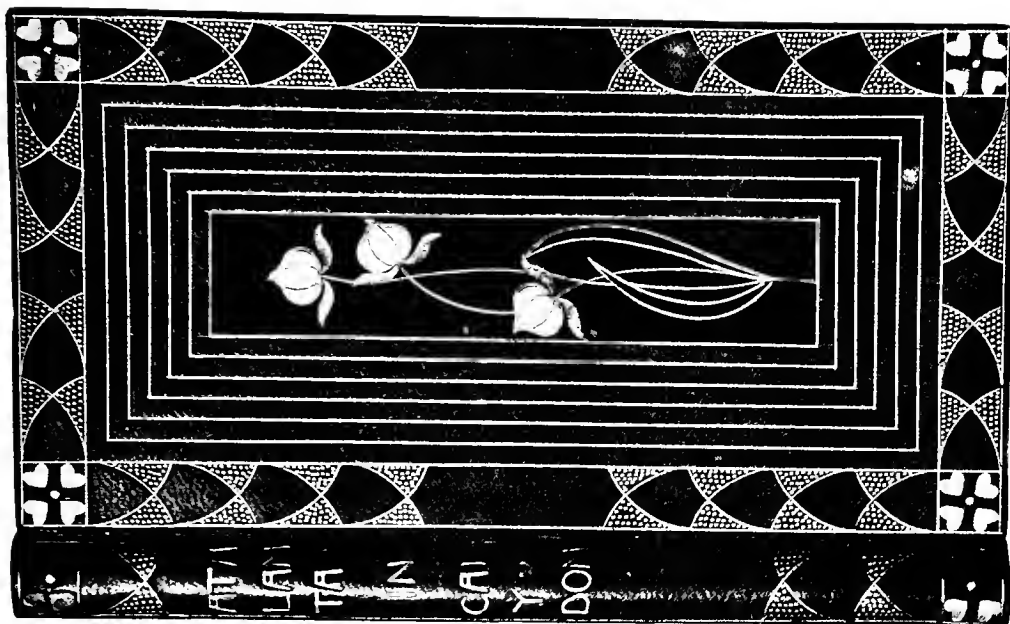
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY MISS S. T. PRIDEAUX



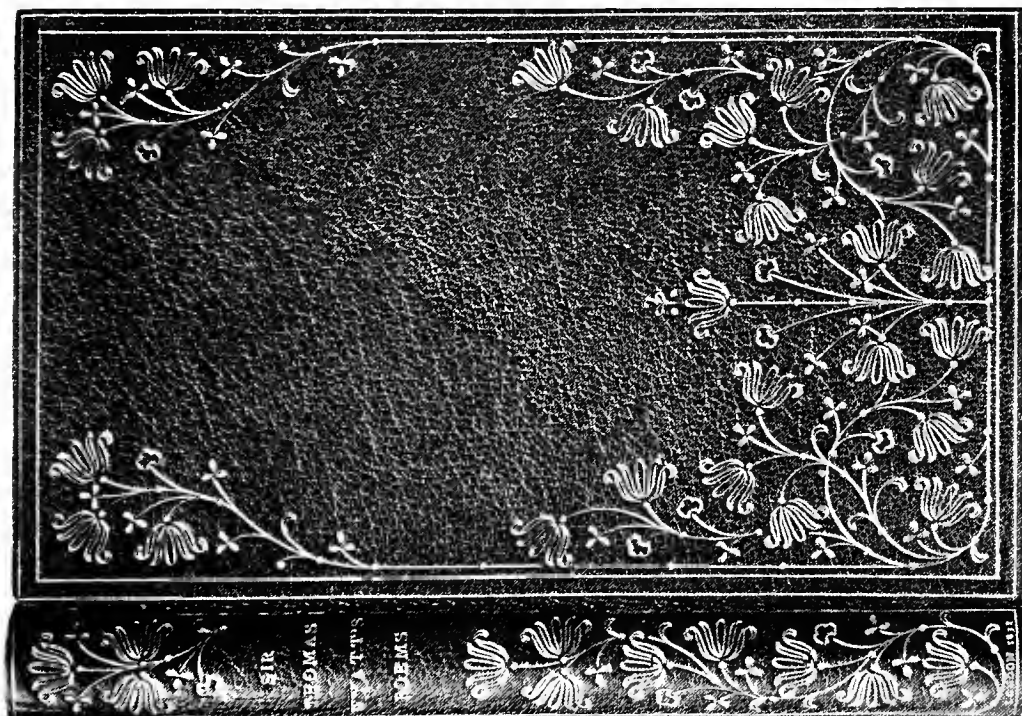
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY MISS S. T. PRIDEAUX

and *A Floral Fantasy* have already been mentioned; and among the leather bindings at the "Arts and Crafts" we notice the singularly rich and beautiful "peacock" cover designed by A. A. Turbayne for Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, tooled in this instance by W. T. Morrell. This is an entirely satisfactory instance of harmony, both in the working out of the design itself and in the proportions of the book and its parts; the planning and decoration of the bands and "between-bands" at the back is specially good.

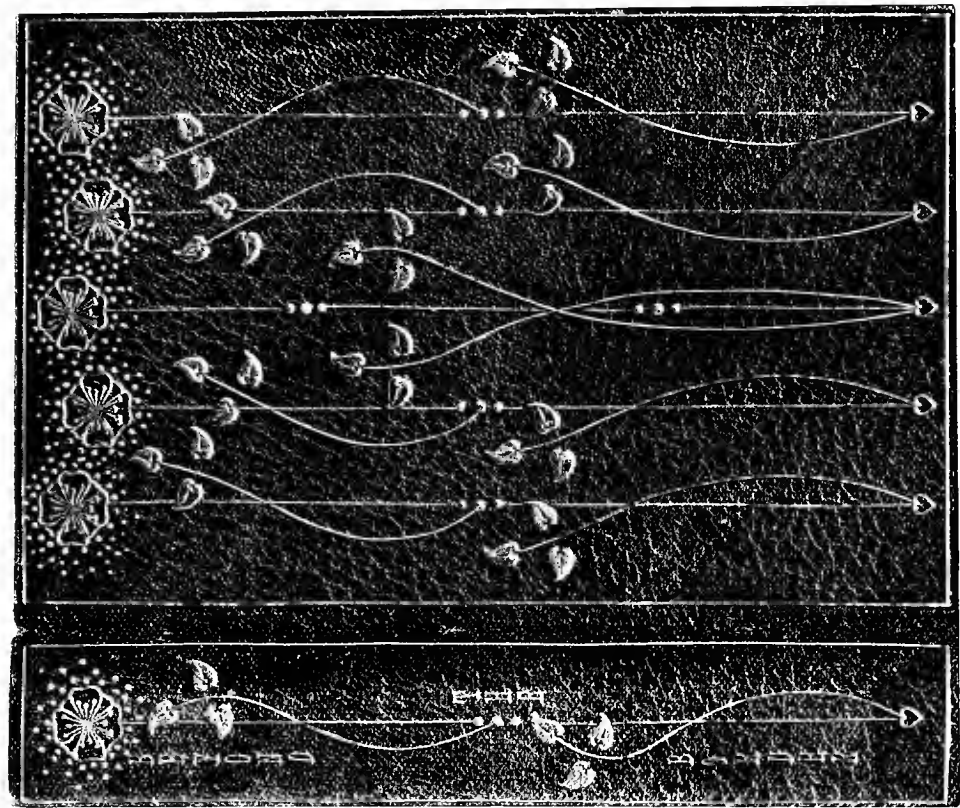
Of those who have devoted themselves entirely to hand-work, Douglas Cockerell is one of the most cultured designers and finished craftsmen. His bindings of Rossetti, Tennyson, and Thomas Hood—poets of widely diverse temperaments—are models of restrained but highly sympathetic treatment. In the decoration of Rossetti's *Hand and Soul*, the diagonal lines have received undue emphasis in the photographic light. A closer examination shows this graceful pattern to be more normally balanced than the reproduction suggests at



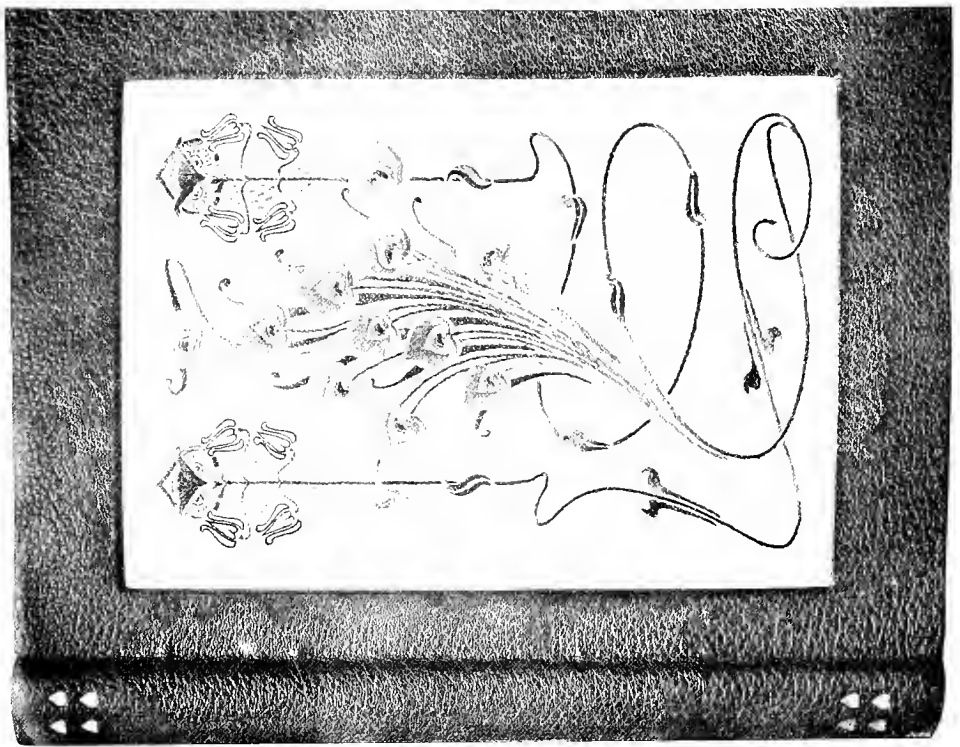
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY MISS BIRKENRUTH



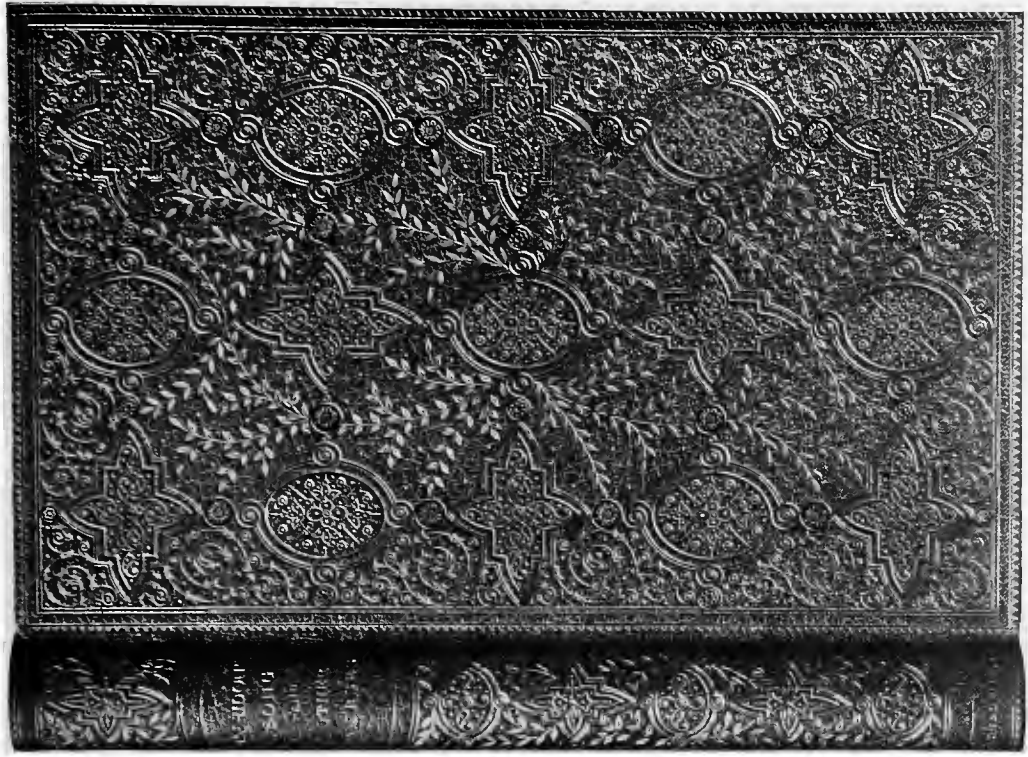
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. W. ZAEHNSDORF



DESIGNED BY MISS CONSTANCE KARSLAKE
EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS



DESIGNED BY G. M. ELLWOOD
CENTRE PANEL WORKED IN EMBROIDERY
ON PARCHMENT BY MISS J. E. RAVAISSON



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. W. ZIMMERSHOE



DESIGN, BINDING AND TOOLING BY
MISS BIKKERUTH

LEATHER PANEL BY MISS MARY HOUSTON



DESIGNED BY MISS JOCKEL EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS.

To Miss S. T. Prideaux belongs the honour of being the first woman book-binder in this country, and two examples of her very thoughtful, refined, and intelligent work, both in design and craftsmanship, are illustrated here. With a sure and versatile decorative power, she unites a fine feeling for material and a deft and efficient use of tools. Her own volume on bookbinding is a standard history of the craft, and her design for its cover has previously appeared in these pages. Of her pupils, three claim special mention—Miss E. M. McColl, Miss Adams, and Miss Nathan, whose excellent tooling is the delight of many connoisseurs. Miss McColl, as is well known, has perfected a tool of her own, and some of her brother's designs seem chiefly planned to give it exercise. The cover for her *Omar Khayyam*, for instance, gives an unpleasing

first sight. Another very beautiful example of handicraft is a half-binding finished with clasps, and with the boards left plain: a style too rarely adopted to-day, and offering by its very simplicity an opportunity for a more austere but hardly less exquisite taste. Almost as simple is the binding of Hood's *Poems*, with its broadly-tooled decoration on the side. That this artist is equally successful in broad and spacious design as in fine and intricate detail may be seen by comparing these two volumes with the Tennyson's *Poems and Ballads*, where the tooling is exceedingly delicate and almost lacy in effect. A good instance of lettering carried round the border—a method familiar enough in old books, but not always easy to follow—occurs in his binding of Rossetti's *Hand and Soul* and of Morris's *Note on the Kelmscott Press*. *Art and the Beauty of the Earth* is suitably marked with the arms of Burslem, where Morris's lecture under that title was given.

impression of fireworks, or balls of string tossed wildly about—an effect altogether out of keeping with the spirit of so dreamy and contemplative a poet. This is, doubtless, an exceptional instance of a design which does an injustice to the talent of the executant, and sets one longing for some less clever but more judicious invention of her own. The design for *The Golden Treasury*, though still a little fulsome, is more orderly and restrained, and its adaptation to the corners of the book is very prettily contrived. The decoration of the *Alphabets* is well proportioned and much more pleasing, and the manuscript case *To W. H. C.* is admirably simple and quiet.

The highly poetic and imaginative work of Mary G. Houston has already been noted in THE STUDIO, and her binding of the *Kelmscott Chaucer* at the New Gallery is one of the most interesting exhibits of the year. Her handling of her material

British Bookbindings

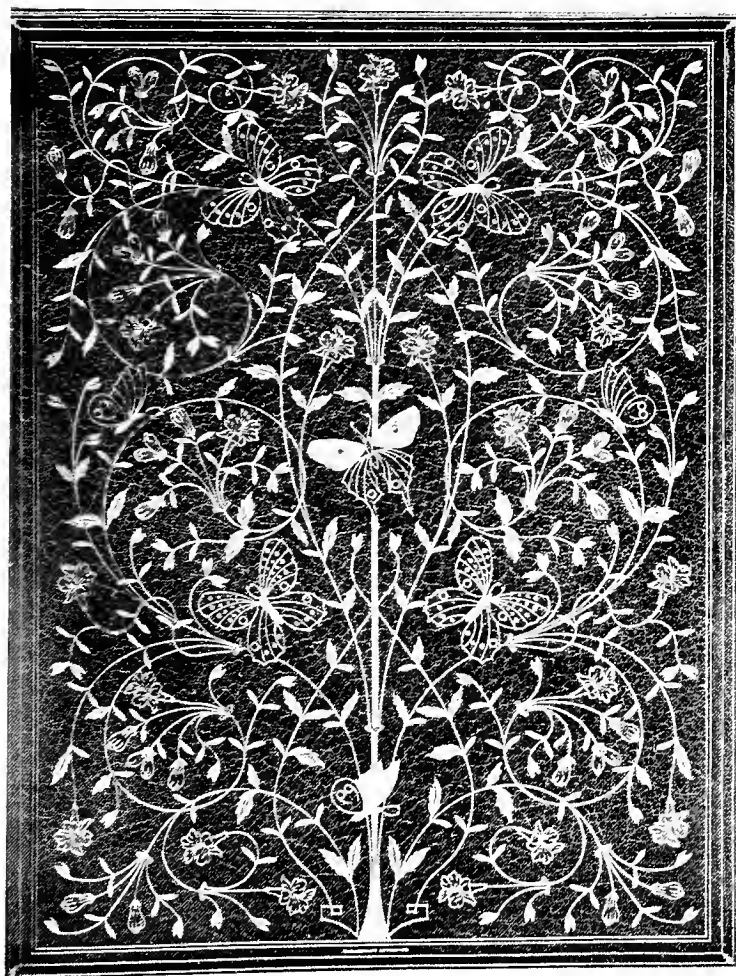
is at once delicate and bold, and her expression of idea and feeling by apparently simple means is of a rare order. By the insertion of a charmingly embossed panel in the binding of *The Little Mermaid* her work is associated with that of another excellent craftswoman, Miss Birkenruth, whose binding of *Atalanta in Calydon* is quite original, and pleasant both to sight and touch. Criticism might perhaps be made of the division of the word *Calydon*, and of the corner-pieces as having no relation to the rest of the border; also of the seven lines which frame the centre ornament with the effect of a receding surface, out of keeping with a decoration on the flat. It is, however, generally desirable that good executants should, by such sincere endeavours, perfect themselves in design.

In J. W. Zaehnsdorf we have a more mature and experienced worker, who has kept closely in touch

with modern feeling, while retaining a refined and cultured individuality in his art. The binding of Sir Thomas Wyatt's *Poems* is a fairly representative example of a talent admirably disciplined and full of sober grace and charm. Besides much independent achievement, this designer has been associated with Charles Ricketts in his fruitful enterprise of the Vale Press.

From Glasgow, amid much else that comes worthily from the hands of women designers, we get the exquisitely dainty bookbindings that bear the name of Jessie King—familiar in these pages as those of Mary Houston and E. M. McColl. It would be a pity if so distinctive and facile a talent were to spend itself in mere prettiness, and not develop more robust and versatile forms; but the inventive faculty shown even in the slight decoration of *Hanna von Anna Schober* should certainly escape a peril of that kind. The cover for the

Album Von Berlin errs a little towards poverty and discursiveness of detail, in spite of its general harmony and grace. Somewhat similar in style, but larger and more virile in handling, is the binding by A. de Sauty for the *Poems of Keats*. The design is one that grows upon us in charm, rather than making an immediate impression, and commends itself by familiarity with its beauty of composition and line. The only fault that can be found with it—and this is an essential one—is that it is a little too ethereal and thin to represent the rich and passionate sensuousness of Keats. *Beyond the Border*, by Constance Karlake, is a happier adaptation of the setting to the words. The decoration is pleasantly simple and yet elf-like in its remote and elusive spirit, and is well carried out, except that a title is very rarely tolerable when dropped vertically down the back. Harold Karlake's binding of *Songs for Somebody* has a quaint little design duplicated



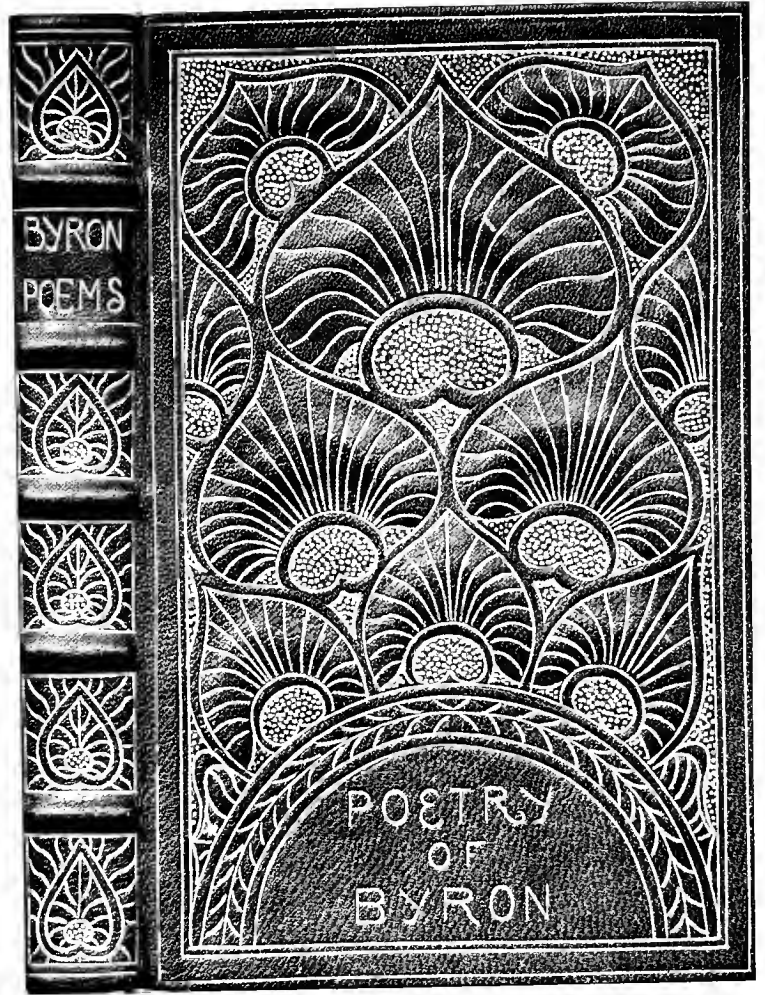
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY JOHN FAZAKERLEY

on each side of the book. Another and far superior binding by the same craftsman is curiously like that of the *Kcats* volume just mentioned, and is further interesting by reason of a very beautiful tooled and coloured *doublure*, which forms a sumptuous substitute for the endpaper, repeating on the lining of the boards the essential decorative features of the cover.

The idea of these rich *doublures*, and of coloured tooling, has been developed with very noteworthy results by a Newcastle bookbinder, Mr. G. T. Bagguley, and specialised under the name of the "Sutherland" Binding. The process has already attracted much criticism, and is of course open to that which scents from afar the danger of vulgarisation, which besets every highly ornate and costly handicraft. But there seems no reason why the application of colour to leather should be less artistic than gold, or why it should not be applied, like gold, by tooling, as well as by paint, stain, or inlay.

The method seems to demand white vellum for purity and delicacy of effect, and consequently to be more fittingly applied to *doublures* than to the outer cover of the book. Two tasteful designs by Leon V. Solon, which are here reproduced, have been executed in this way, and form a new and striking addition to the binder's craft.

Another style of "extra" binding consists in embossing the design on the leather to such a depth as to assume almost the nature of bas-relief modelling. Here another danger—the temptation to "stuff" the cover—comes in sight, and an almost austere restraint is needed to save the art from that most fatal lapse—the simulation of an effect proper to another material. But that some quite legitimate and artistic bindings may be carried out in very considerable excess of the usual treatment of leather covers is evident from such work as that which we illustrate, from the hands of Miss Jockel,



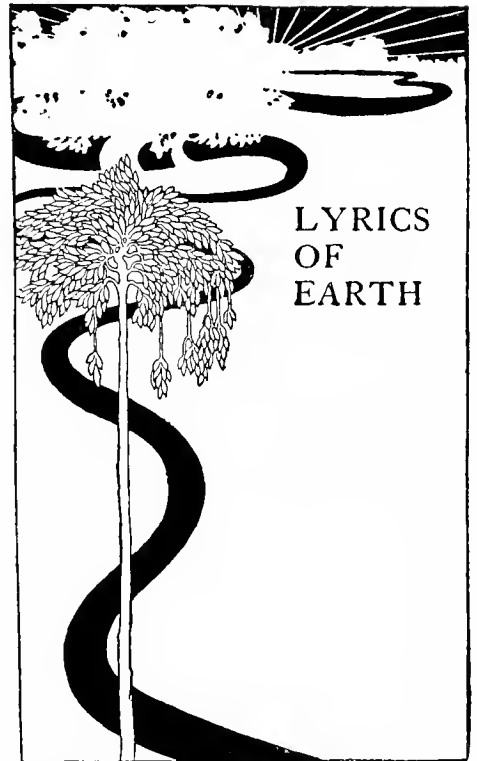
DESIGNED BY MISS JOCKEL EXECUTED BY THE GUILD OF WOMEN BINDERS

Mrs. Macdonald, and Mrs. Traquair. The last-named lady shows a powerful and fantastic imagination in her treatment of *The World at Auction* and *Religio Medici*, in which the decoration forms a curious and obscure medley of symbolism verging on the grotesque. The lettering is the most satisfactory portion of these designs; it is archaic, but congruous and clear, and its disposal round the border and along the back of the volumes harmonises with the large and leisurely spirit in which the work is approached. These are not books for hasty reference, but for quiet enjoyment in hours of ease, or contemplation in the midst of some devout and seemly ritual. Of similar spirit is the strongly Celtic design of Mrs. Macdonald for the volume bearing the inscription *Amor Lachrymosus*, and the poems of the two ladies known by the pseudonym of "Michael Field." Miss Jockel assumes a more conventional style of decorative

American Bookbindings

pattern, excellently wrought in leather, for *The Ballad of Beau Brocade*. Her *Byron* scarcely comes within this group, but it is very boldly designed and tooled. The *Decorative Heraldry* by A. de Sauty is an interesting example of "unconventional" convention, if that paradox may serve to indicate the construction of the panel. The volume embroidered on parchment by J. E. Ravaisson, from a design by G. M. Ellwood, deserves inclusion for its unique conception, and the very delicate and sympathetic touch with which an exacting task has been accomplished. Critically considered, the propriety of working a harsh material with a very soft one may perhaps be open to question.

There is, however, no limit to the decoration of books save that which is set by the material of their covers and by the consideration of their uses. It may be generally said that the more steadfastly the idea of use, of intimate companionship, is kept in view, the more likely shall we be to get a beautiful binding. To banish books wholly to the sphere of ornaments—this is the last treachery that art can show to literature. We need to be brought back continually to the more simple and primitive conception of a bound book—as of a friend's letters tied up carefully and conveniently for reading while he is far away.



DESIGNED BY W. H. BRADLEY
(Copeland & Day)



DESIGNED BY JOHN SLOAN (Copeland & Day)

American Bookbindings. BY EDWARD F. STRANGE.

THE cloth book-cover is of British origin. Five or six years ago it was possible for the Americans—looking chiefly at a few delightful examples produced by E. A. Abbey and Howard Pyle—to claim that they were well in advance of the productions of any other country. But that is a long period in the development of a new phase of art; and to-day it is more than difficult for them to maintain the position. Whether the falling off—for there is one—is due to the apathy of publishers, or to lack of skill on the part of artists, is a question that can hardly be discussed in an essay dealing with the general aspect of the case. But after a careful review of the principal book-covers produced during the last few years in the United States, I am driven to the conclusion that no progress has been made, that the designs, when not comparatively feeble and ineffective, are imitative of work done on this side of the Atlantic; and that the typical examples selected for the illustration of this essay compare somewhat unfavourably with those in the reviews of similar designs by artists of British and other nationalities, which accompany it.

American Bookbindings

To turn to the consideration of some particular cases, one is compelled to reiterate a somewhat well-worn story, that of the wide-spread and curious influence of Aubrey Beardsley. The cover designs by Bertram G. Goodhue are often full of it—Beardsley's earlier manner of the *Morte d'Arthur*; but of all Beardsley's disciples the one who has more closely approached to him in method is Will H. Bradley. The binding of the *Romance of Zion Chapel* is a typical example of this somewhat common tendency. Here we have another version of the "Avenue poster" type of decoration; with, however, not a tithe of the marvellous success of the latter in indicating form and drapery by judiciously balanced flat masses. In Mr. Bradley's design the gold is over-done, and the hard boundary lines to which it gives rise spoil the effect of the decidedly clever distribution of the upper part of the cover. There is also too much work on the back. The same artist's *Lyrics of Earth* wants balance; the serpentine line is rather too heavy, and not very gracefully

distributed, although the tree is well rendered and just in its proper place.

A very pleasant treatment of a conventional landscape is that adopted by Mr. Louis Rhead, in *Meadow Grass*. The use of a picture pure and simple for a cover, instead of some arrangement of ornament, is a new and dangerous device; and it requires powers of no uncommon order to secure for it the success obtained by Mr. Rhead in this instance. He has preserved a perfectly intelligible natural feeling, without adopting any over-obtrusive conventions or losing the indispensable decorative quality. He has, in fact, given to this book-cover the points of a good poster; and it is as such, within the peculiar limitations of the circumstances, that we must consider this class of design.

Another "poster-cover" is that for *Cinderpath Tales*, designed by John Sloan. In this case the subject is not so well managed as was Mr. Rhead's cover; but, nevertheless, it forms a striking and appropriate advertisement for the contents of the book.

From the two last specimens we may not inappropriately pass to the design of F. R. Kimbrough for *Miss Ayr of Virginia*, for it is the only remaining attempt at a use of decorative landscape with which we have to deal on the present occasion. This binding depends for its success almost entirely upon its colour, the paper sides being printed in black and shades of grey, while the pleasantly arranged cloth back is in apple-green on white. The result is fairly good, although the design by itself is not important. At the same time, it must be remembered how important a part the colour-scheme plays—or should play in these bindings. It is never fair to judge them entirely from a black-and-white reproduction. Before leaving this cover, the badness of a portion of the lettering must be noticed: the words "Miss" and "of" are quite inexcusable; and all the more so in comparison with the very fair spacing and writing of the other two words of the title.

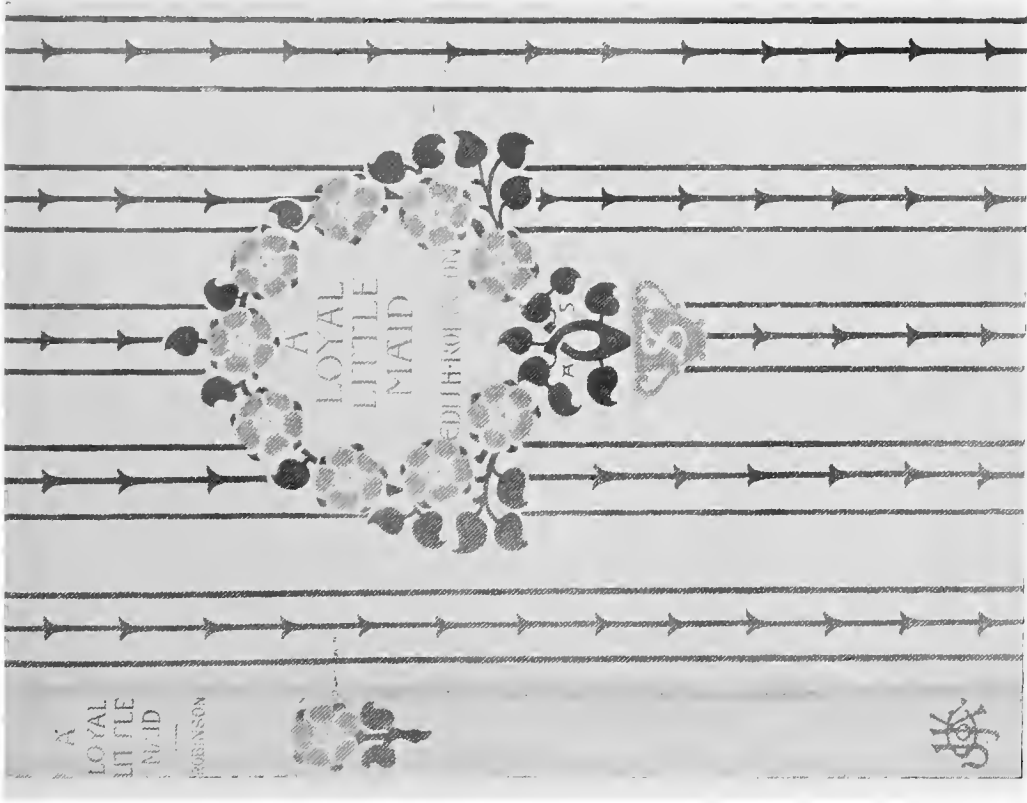
Mrs. John Lane has made a quaint and pleasant setting of simulated Dutch Tiles for *Kitzyk Stories*, an idea especially appropriate to a series of tales of Old Holland. The designs are quite prettily done, and make a charming cover.

Another allusive—if we may borrow the word—book-cover has been made by Margaret Armstrong for *Love-letters of a Musician*. It is good in colour, the rare subordination of the two lines of floral diaper giving a pleasing effect, but the head of St. Cecilia, done on an inlay of vellum in slight relief, and the border of



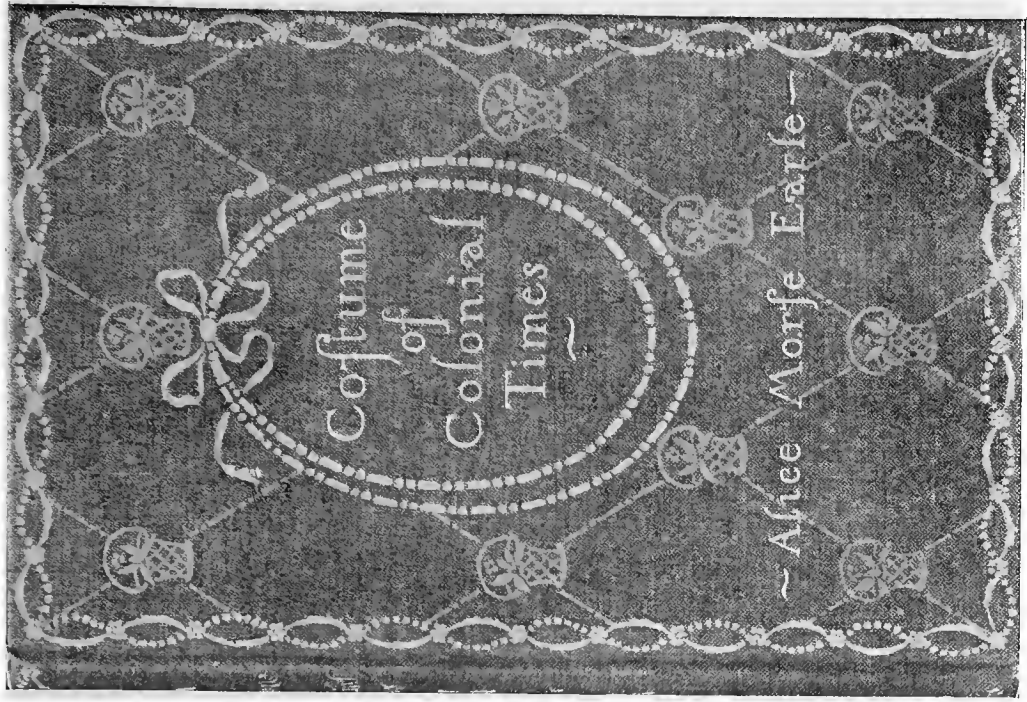
DESIGNED BY LOUIS J. RHEAD

(Copeland & Day)



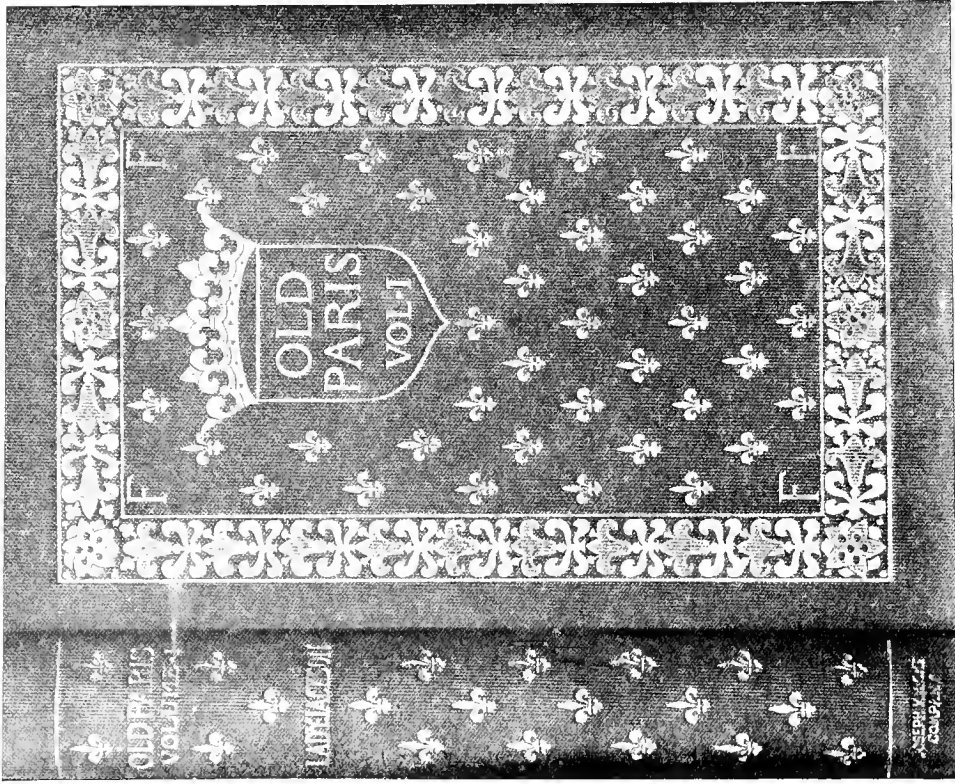
DESIGNED BY AMY M. SACKEF

(Joseph Knight & Co.)



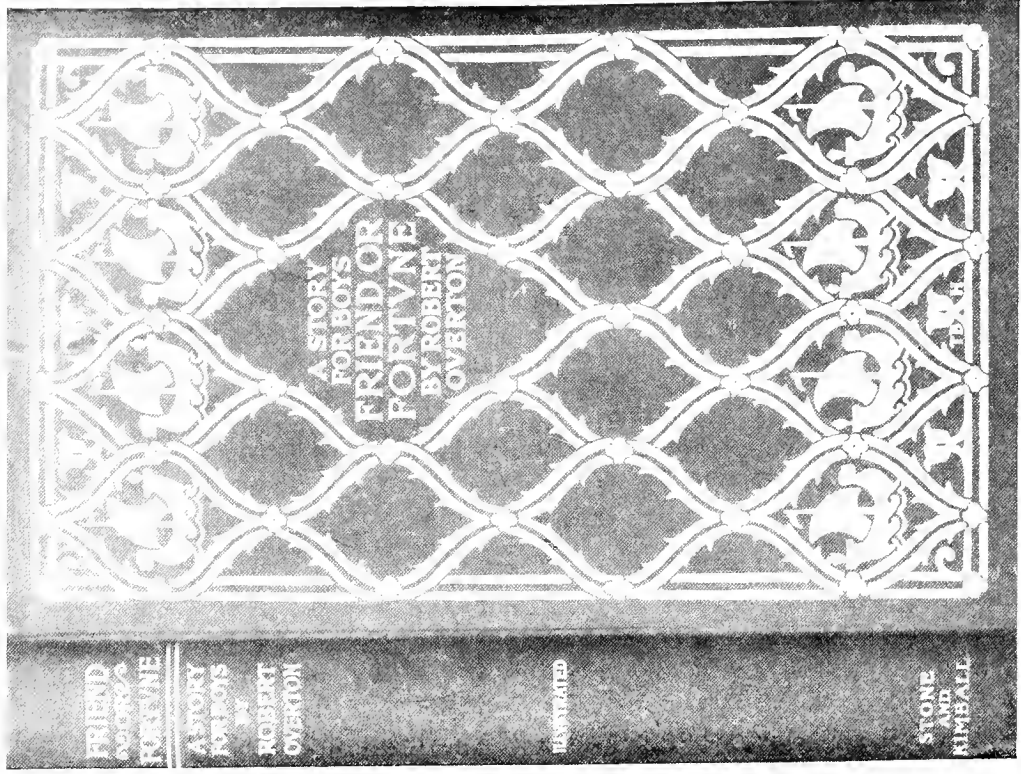
DESIGNED BY MARGARET ARMSTRONG

(Charles Scribner's Sons)



DESIGNED BY AMY M. SACKER

(Joseph Knight & Co.)



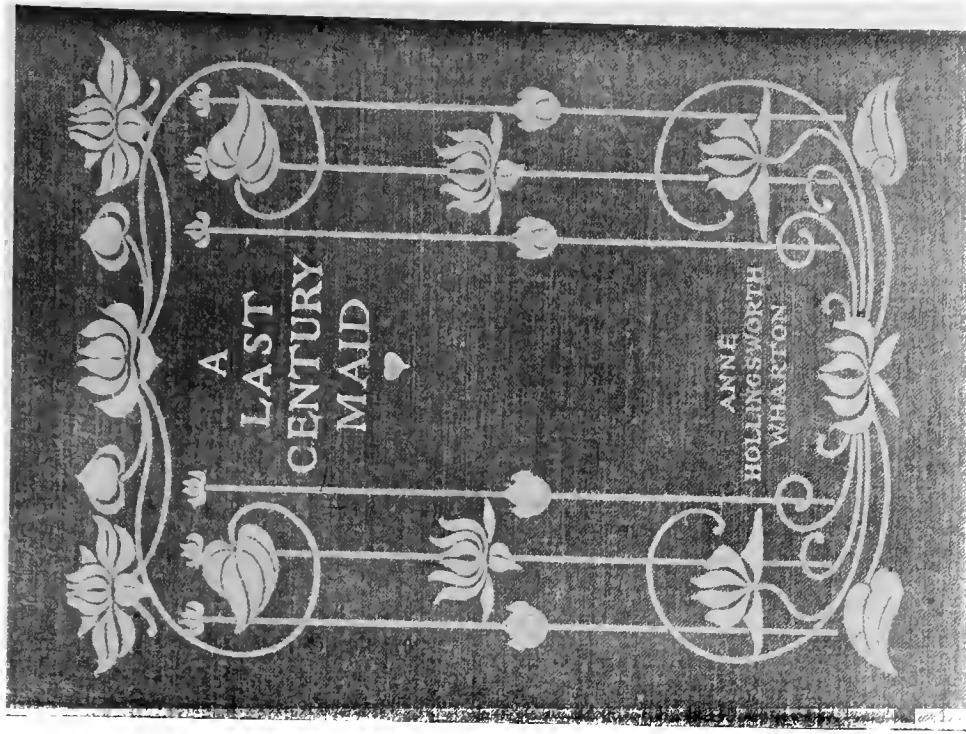
DESIGNED BY T. P. HARGOOD

(Stone & Kimball)



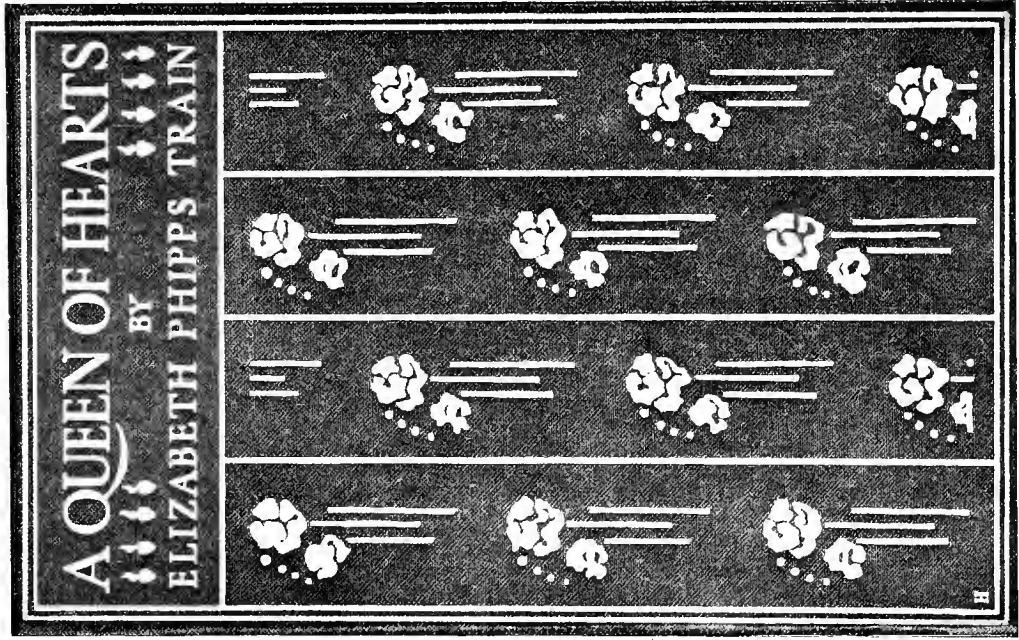
DESIGNED BY F. G. GODDARD

(John Lane)



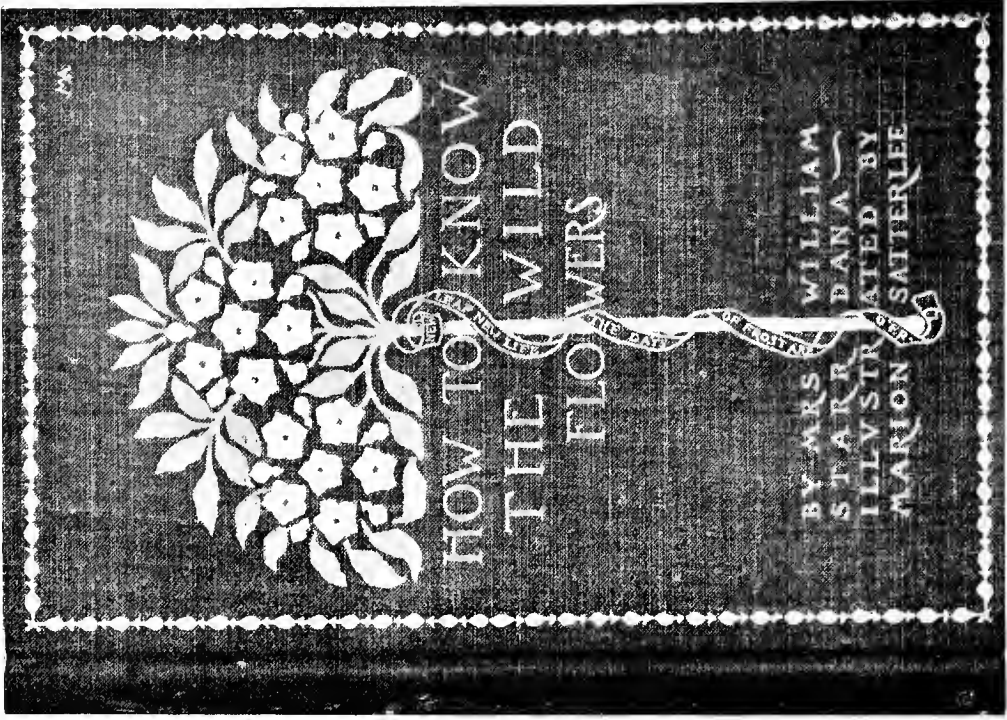
DESIGNED BY E. S. HOLLOWAY

(J. B. Lippincott Company)



DESIGNED BY E. S. HOLLOWAY

(J. B. Lippincott Company)



DESIGNED BY MARGARET ARMSTRONG

(Charles Scribner's Sons)



DESIGNED BY MRS. JOHN LANE

(The Century Company)



DESIGNED BY F. R. KIMBOROUGH

(H. S. Stone & Co.)



gold which surrounds it, seem rather forced and over-wrought. This portion of the decoration would have been better if it had been carried out in colours harmonising more with those of the ground. It is pleasant to note that this cover bears the monogram of the designer, for the importance of signed handicraft-work cannot be insisted on too strongly or too frequently. We congratulate both the artist and her publishers on the breadth of view that permits so simple and reasonable a piece of straight dealing. The same artist has produced an effective composition of poppies and pipe-stems in crimson, light green and gold, on coarse white canvas, for Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*. This is, one would imagine, a good "saleable" cover, though, from the critical point of view it must not be too closely considered, and the lettering cries aloud for condemnation.

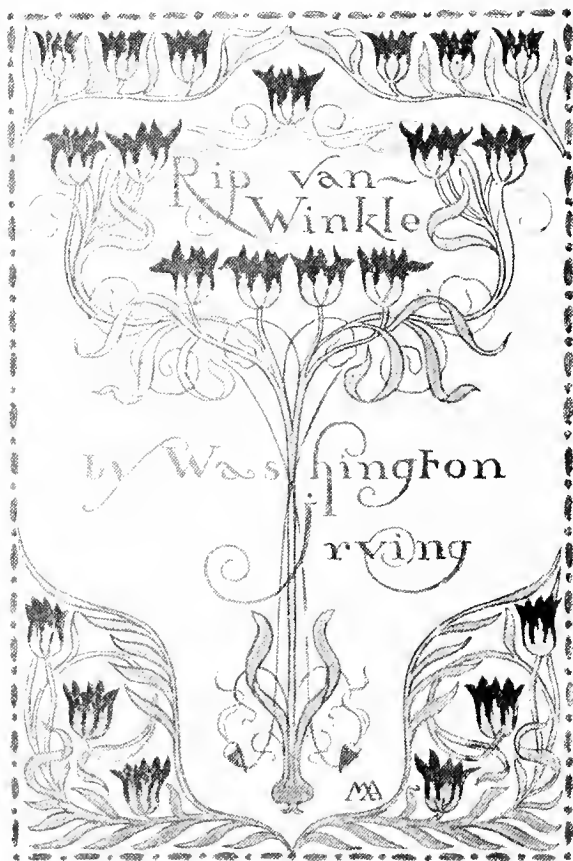
Among covers of which the ornament can be discussed with no especial reference to the contents of the book we illustrate yet another, by Margaret Armstrong, *Costume of Colonial Times*. This is a pretty binding in a useful combination of grey and green, with gilt lettering; and is fitly reminiscent of the eighteenth century in pattern. The same artist is also responsible for the design of *How to know Wild Flowers*, the cover-paper of which, in green and pink, is far more satisfactory to the eye than the grey, silver and brown of the cloth. The ribbon encircling the stem is weakly treated, and the device on it by no means well done.

E. S. Holloway has produced an excellent exercise in modern ornament for *A Last Century Maid*, though, perhaps, we might have appropriately classified it with those showing the

Beardsley influence. But that influence is now so widely spread that, short of an approach to imitation, it has passed almost into current use and should be so accepted. The colour in this example is good, and, altogether, the result is quite pleasing.

W. S. Hadaway was perhaps a little aware of the same sources of inspiration in a design for *A Queen of Hearts*. But, all the same, it is a good cover and excellent for its purpose. He is also successful, from the commercial point of view, in that for *A Bad Little Girl and Her Good Little Brother*; though the copy before us might have been more effective if more brilliant colours had been selected.

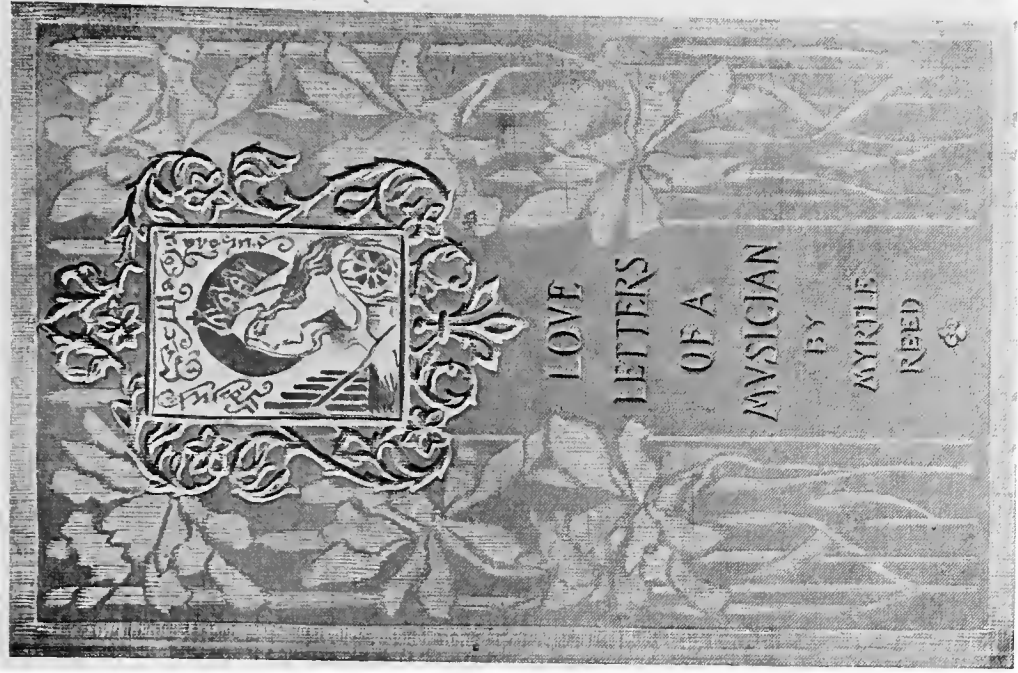
Quite one of the best of the series in our hands is the design by Amy M. Sacker for *A Loyal Little Maid*. It is graceful, not overdone, and well-spaced; it shows, moreover, that quality of reticence which is too often lacking in the productions of the modern American school. Another design by the same artist, that for *Old Paris*, Vol. I., brings us to another category entirely. Here the inspiration is drawn from tooled work, and this cover is a very good exercise in the style from every point of view. It is high praise to say that it is quite sound enough to deserve to be carried out by the





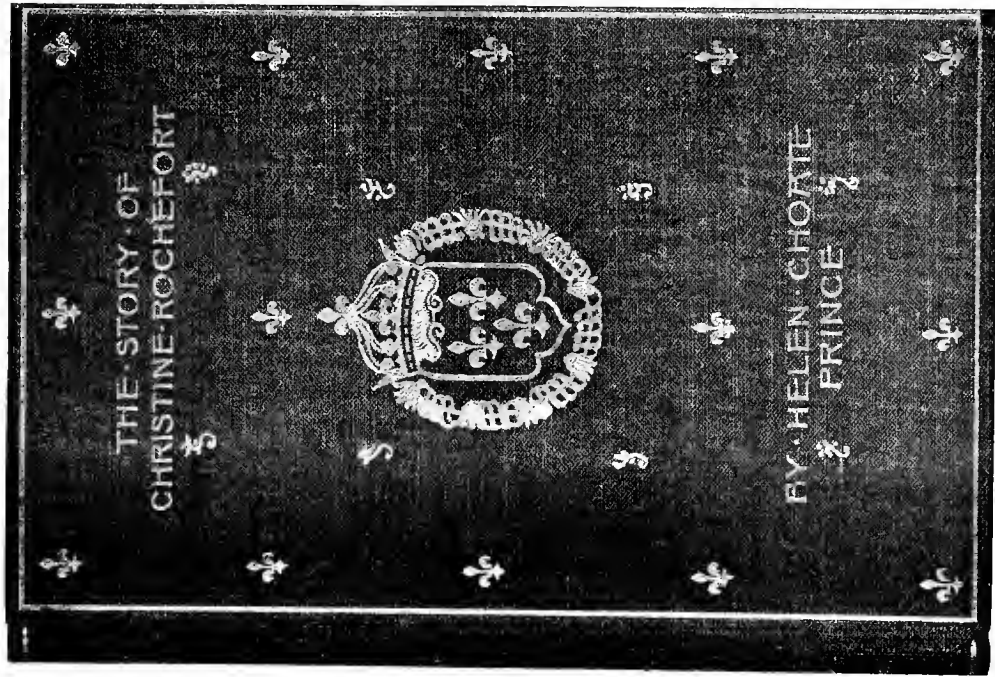
DESIGNED BY W. S. HUDDAWAY

(S. P. C. K.)

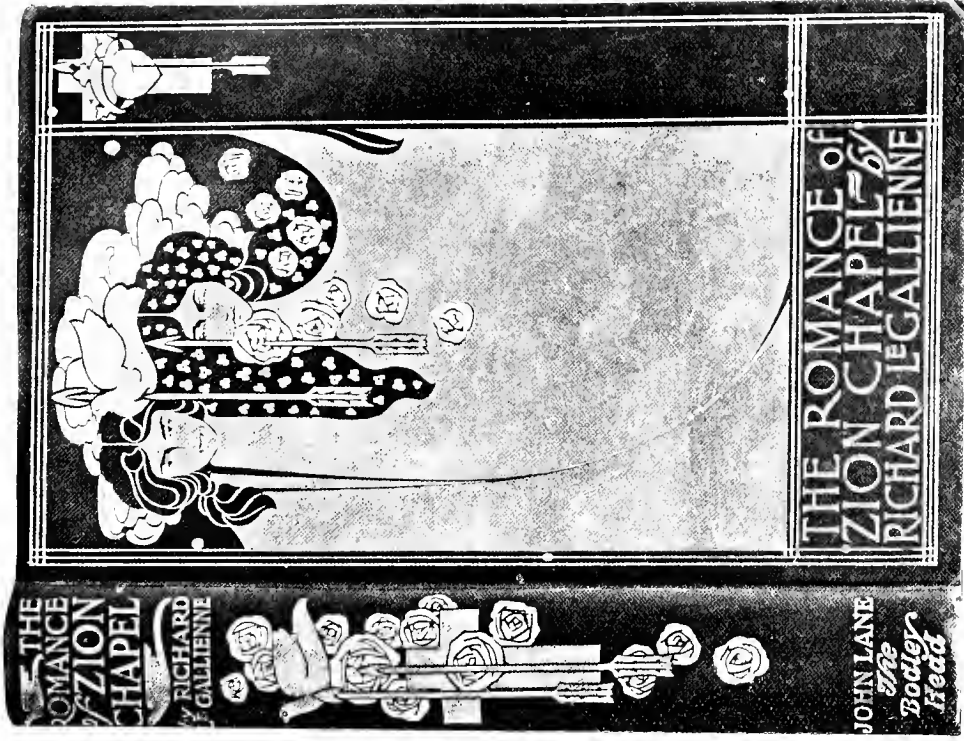


DESIGNED BY MARGARET ARMSTRONG

(G. P. Putnam's Sons)



DESIGNED BY MRS. HENRY WHITMAN (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.)



DESIGNED BY W. H. BRADLEY

(John Lane)

French Bookbindings

old processes. Somewhat akin in elements and treatment, but altogether weaker, is Mrs. Henry Whitman's design for *The Story of Christine Rochefort*. Still, the result is by no means to be despised and the cover has distinct merit.

T. B. Hapgood, Junr., has been able to attain to a very creditable mingling of the old and the new, in *Friend or Fortune*. The introduction of the conventional ship at top and bottom of the trellis is well managed, and the back has been judiciously let alone in order to assist the effect.

On the whole, we may say that American designers are still producing good work, if they have dropped from their earlier pride of place. But the whole thing is really in the hands of the publishers. If they will only condescend to understand that one cover may conceivably be better than another,

and worth paying for accordingly, the standard will soon rise. For there is now no reason why the art of designing for cloth book-covers should not get its share of the best talent available among those artists who consider decoration seriously.

FRENCH BOOKBINDINGS. BY FOCTAVE UZANNE.

THERE have been, and there are still to be, written whole books devoted to the history of modern French decorative binding. For my own part, I have published two volumes and a numerous series of articles on contemporary art binding and on the external adornment of books.

The subject is far from being exhausted, however, for we are in the midst of what may be termed an "ornamental movement," and the art of gilding on morocco, long dormant, or, at best, carried on in dull, traditional, vulgar fashion, had hitherto been afforded no chance of developing side by side with other industries. Now, however, ardent and ingenious innovators abound, and one cannot foresee any limit to the imagination they display, or to the variety of their styles and methods. We have the *reliure-tableau*, which reveals a symbolic, symphonic, emblematic spirit: and also the *reliure sculptée en bas-reliefs*, modelled on leather and relieved by colour—knick-knack binding, in a word, which, as a rule, must be kept under glass, and is in no way suitable for work whose place is on the library shelves.

This was the form in which binding took its place some eight years ago in the "Objets d'art" section of the Champ de Mars, thanks to the



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER

French Bookbindings



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY A. LEPIÈRE

exertions of two distinguished artists, MM. Victor Prouvé and Camille Martin, who at that time had, as executive collaborator, M. René Wiener, of Nancy. At first the public was surprised and puzzled, while the professional book gilders protested indignantly that this was not real binding at all but a sham, clumsily contrived, and lacking in all the essentials requisite for the proper handling of morocco and the employment of high-class gilding. From their own fastidious point of view these professional workers, imbued with the marvellous principles of the brothers Eve, Le Gascon, Derome, Bozerian, Du Seuil and Thouvenin, were certainly right, for to their eyes a profane, new-fangled, revolutionary style was invading the sacred temple wherein, for centuries past, there had accumulated all the master-pieces of good taste, exquisite in style, perfect in technique and execution. All that was apparent to them was a gross evidence of decadence, with none of the attributes which had constituted the glory of their craft: good cutting, elegant mounting, a thorough mastery of the *rogature*, the delicate work with the *petits fers*, the beauty of the gold, the difficult line work—all the subtle details, in fact, which showed the cunning hand of the skilled workman trained in the old methods. Instead, they saw with dismay a strange new style, aiming solely at

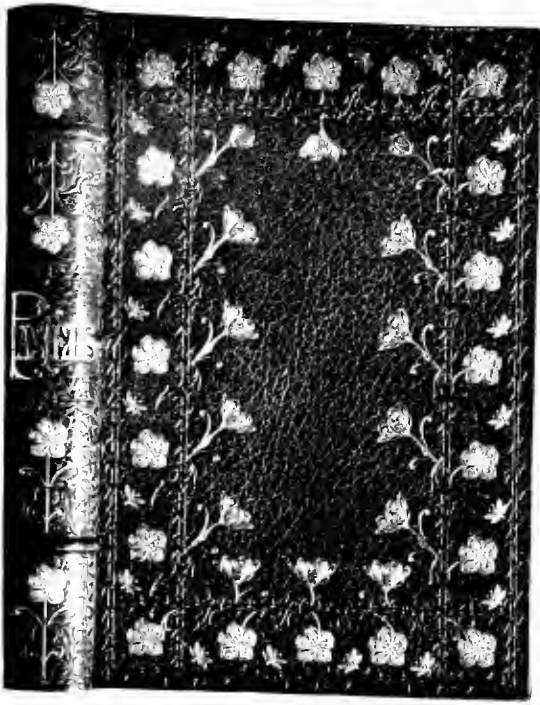
effect, ignoring finish, caring nought for minute detail, regarding only the general aspect, the *ensemble*. All the old formulæ were cast to the winds by the innovators, or else adapted beyond recognition.

To all these objections and criticisms the newcomers had the not illogical answer: "We are artists, not trade binders. We are bent on enlarging the scope of a superannuated art, for ever confined within certain narrow limits. We bring new formulæ, we aim at expressive ornamentation with boundless possibilities, and with our *artistic* binding we give new life to a craft which hitherto had been bound up in technical restrictions, and had consequently remained very primitive in its forms. We know nothing of the industrial side of the question; but clever craftsmen are not lacking, and when we join forces with them they will devote their practical knowledge, their precision and their finish to the carrying out of our purely æsthetic and imaginative work. When they need mechanical assistance in their labours, painters and sculptors and artists generally know where to obtain it, and how to employ it. Why should it not be the same with regard to book-binding? When we have succeeded in convincing the public, and gradually made clear and established our principles of decorative beauty, we shall find in the binder's workshop all that is

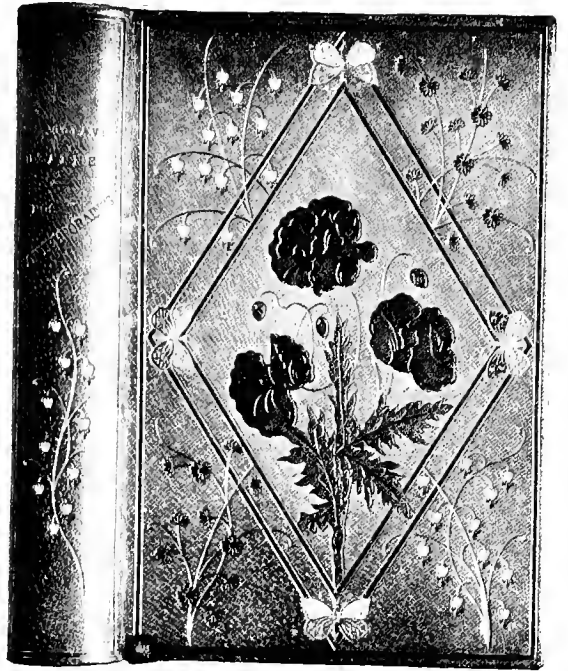


DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY P. RUBAN

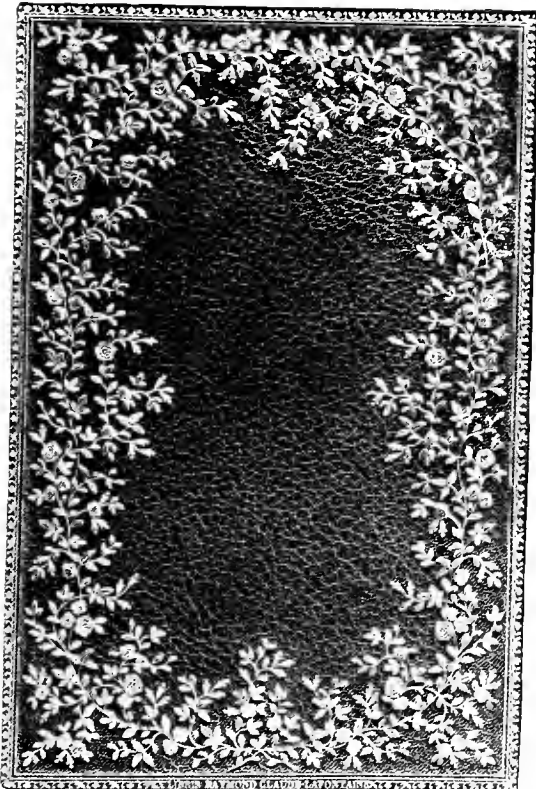
French Bookbindings



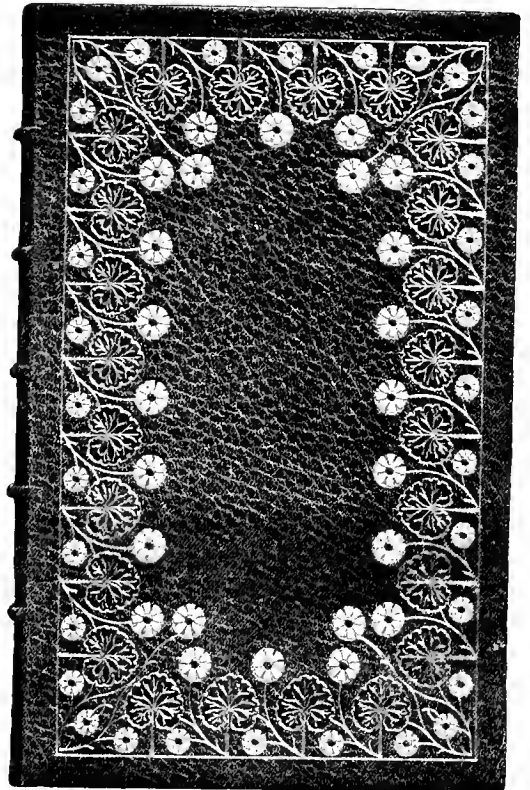
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY CHARLES MEUNIER



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY CHARLES MEUNIER

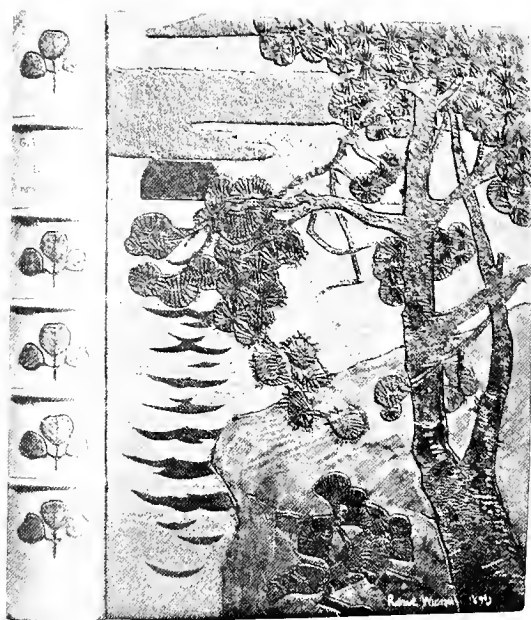


DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY P. RUBAN



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY P. RUBAN

French Bookbindings



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER

required to curb our exuberances, by working on lines at once more scientific and more severe."

About the year 1880 there existed but one binder really anxious for innovation, independent in idea, moreover, and imbued with the true decorative spirit—his name was Amand. Among those who gave him encouragement to the best of their ability were Philippe Burty, Charles Asselineau, Edmond de Goncourt, Paul Arnauld, and the writer; but the solemn, musty old bibliophiles shunned him like the plague, while he was neglected by his colleagues, and black-balled by the judges when entering for the binding competition. Now that success has crowned these daring beginnings it is well to remember the name of Amand, but lately deceased, for he was the precursor of the artist-binders of the present day.

The decorative evolution of the book in its polychrome illustrated cover, together with a general tendency towards colour, symbolism and boldness of design, naturally began to have an influence on an art hitherto more restrained, more classic, more subject to the limitations of the ornamental binder; thus the progressive movement, aided by the skilful technique of the old binders, rapidly gathered force.

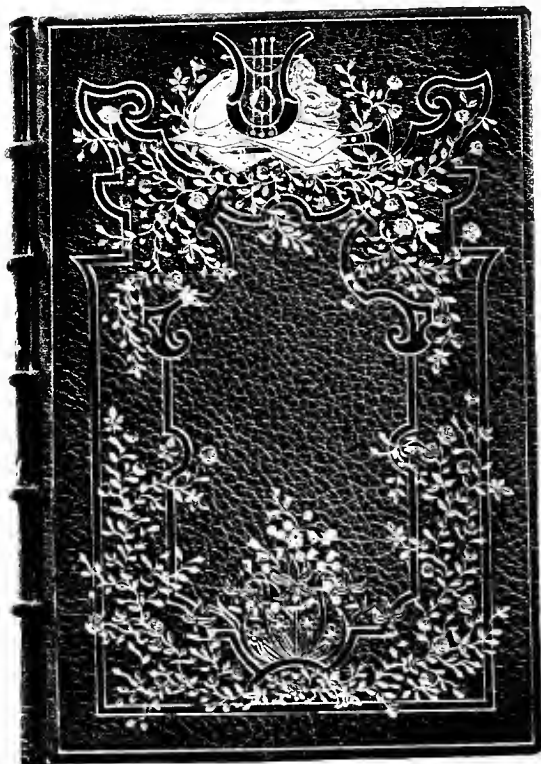
The adherents of symbolism and of the symphonic polychrome mosaic style exhibited also in the "Objets d'art" sections, side by side with

Martin and Prové and Wiener, some at the Champ de Mars, others at the Champs-Élysées. There they were by no means unrecognised, and soon found themselves reinforced by a number of amateurs and independent spirits, such as Mme. Waldeck-Rousseau, Mme. Antoinette Vallgren, and that skilful draughtsman, Eugène Belville, together with several ladies who adopted the external adornment of books as a new employment for their time and taste.

Since then the two Salons have opened their doors to the most eminent artist-binders of the day. Let me dwell on some of these experiments—many of which have arrived at full realisation—and endeavour to pick out a few of the best among these courageous artists.

A distinct place must be reserved for Camille Martin, untimely removed, alas, before he could complete to his entire satisfaction a long career full of research, and poetry, and fancy. His bindings, which were admirably composed, and at times attained high-art effects, found completest realisation in morocco colourings, without the aid of gold to set them off.

Camille Martin's experiments were not wasted.



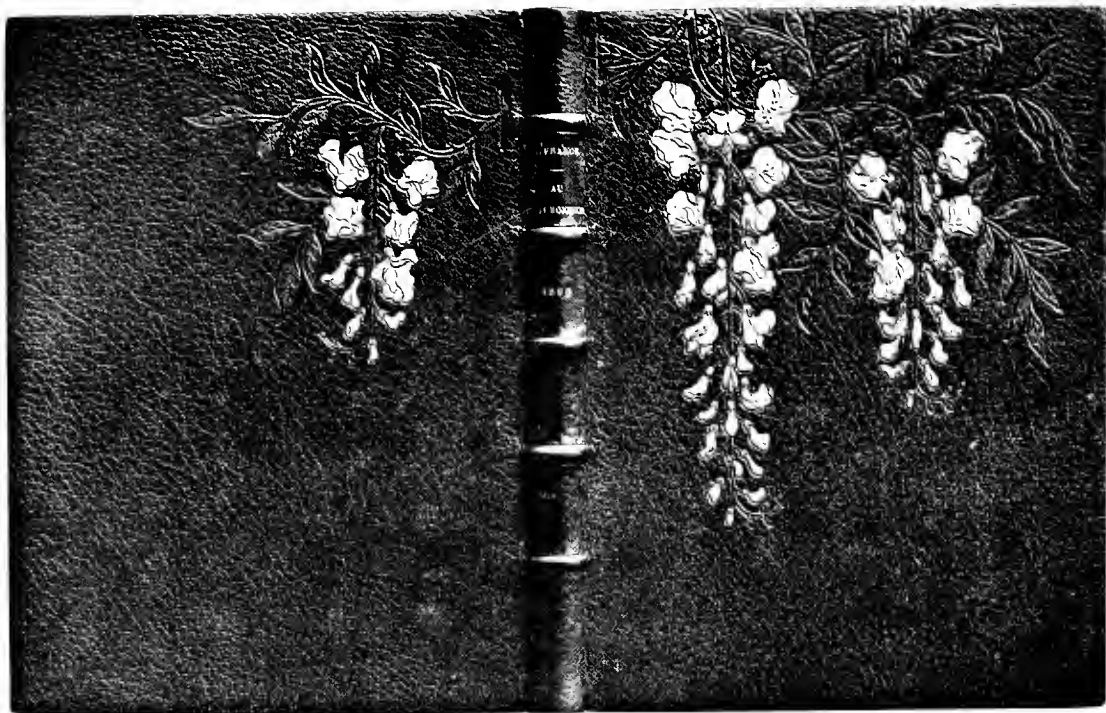
DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY P. RUBAN



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENE WILNER



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY A. CUZIN

M. Victor Prouvé, his friend and collaborator, has carried on the tradition, and preserved it with all honour. Painter, sculptor, etcher, leather-worker, M. Prouvé, who seems better endowed than any other artist of the day with genius of ornamentation, lost for so long, had done much remarkable work. The *Femme au Paon* which adorned the cover of *L'Histoire de l'art décoratif*, by Arsène Alexandre, together with the designs for the *Symbolistes*, *Salammô*, *Le paradis perdu*, and *Le Japon*, by Gonse, are wholly his. He also had a share in the *Livre d'or*, presented by Lorraine to the Emperor of Russia.

It was under the auspices of MM. Prouvé and Martin that M. René Wiener made his first appearance at the Salon du Champ de Mars, in 1893. Since that date his success has been great each year, whether working alone or in collaboration. After labouring independently for some time M. Wiener made an open request for designs for bindings to several "modernist" artists, among them MM. Guingot, Toulouse-Lautrec, Georges Aurion, Léon Rudnicki, H. Christiansen, and Georges de Feure, who agreed that he should interpret their works in leather.

To keep together in a group the impressionist binders—"the Claude Monets, the Degas and the

Toulouse-Lautrecs of Bibliography,"—let me now draw attention to the leather work done by Mme. Waldeck-Rousseau, who three years ago delighted us with her chestnut leaves raised in green and red on a ground of citron-coloured morocco. Her decorative composition for Edmond Haraucourt's *Effort* and the symbolical figure she designed for the cover of Baudelaire's *Fleurs du Mai* also remain fresh in our memory. Mme. Thaulow, wife of the painter, and Mme. Jeanne Rollince have also achieved good results, while Mme. Antoinette Vallgren is the producer of a delightful *bas-relief* on *repoussé* leather for Georges Hugo's *Souvenirs d'un matelot* and also of a decorative design to be engraved and stamped on leather for the binding of James Tissot's *La Vie de Notre Seigneur Jésus Christ*.

Mme. Antoinette Vallgren is assuredly in the front rank of these women-artists. Herself the wife of the celebrated Finnish sculptor, she brings to bear on her own work incomparable delicacy and distinction. This year she exhibited at the Salon du Champ de Mars a cover for Flaubert's *Le Saint-Julien l'Hospitalier*, a low-relief on leather, delightfully treated; and also a scene of women weeping at the sound of chimes, for Jean Lorrain's *Sensations et*

French Bookbindings

Souvenirs, which is one of the most interesting thing in *repoussé* leather that has recently been exhibited.

M. Pierre Roche, ever in quest of something novel in applied art for everyday purposes, has devoted himself for the past six or seven years to what he terms *reliures églomisées* in which the effects are obtained through translucent, coloured surfaces, somewhat in the style of the old painted enamels, or *verres églomisés* to be seen at the Louvre, in the Gallery of Apollo. This ingenious idea has proved successful, and is henceforward at the disposal of all binders.

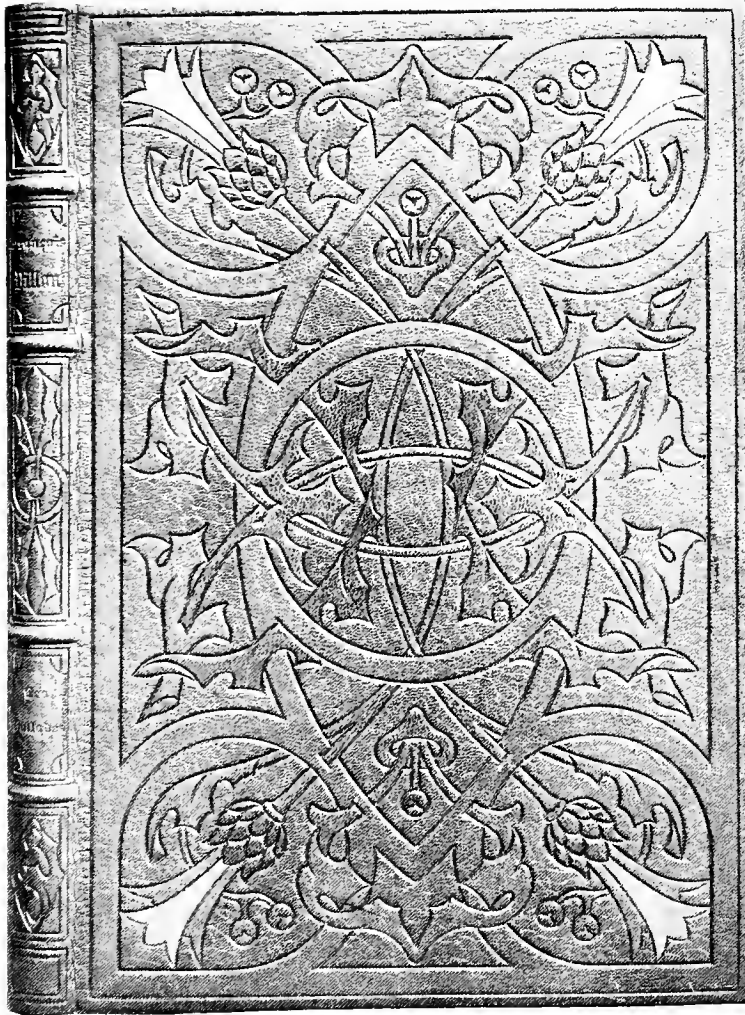
A word must also be said for a new leather worker, an artist of originality and research, M. Rudaux, who has not yet exhibited at our Salons, but for whom a great success is in store when he shall decide to display his work before

the bibliophiles and artists of Paris. Already we have had from him a binding for Villon's work, inspired by the famous *Ballade des Pendus*, the composition and delicate, precise execution of which are worthy of all praise.

MM. Marius Michel and Charles Meunier bring us back once more to "binder's binding," to the real professional work, in which the ornamentation forms part of the actual book, in which everything is solidly, skilfully sewn, mounted and finished according to the laws and traditions of the trade. We are no longer called upon simply to admire a decorative scheme on a leather-covered cardboard panel; here we know that the panel is bound fast to the volume, the cording genuine, and everything done in the most careful and workmanlike manner, to form one concrete and substantial whole.

M. Marius Michel has recently produced specimens of art binding, excellent in taste, and technically most creditable. For several years past he has been making steady progress. Two years ago his *Salon* surprised and delighted us by the harmonic delicacy of his mosaics, the distinction of his *sertissures à froid*, and the splendour of his gilding. His bindings were indeed quite extraordinary in point of execution.

Of M. Charles Meunier it has again and again been my privilege to speak in the terms of admiration he deserves. He is the model binder of the period, the progressist who ever seems to pursue a medium course, midway between the radicals of bookbinding on the one side and the opportunists on the other. It is now ten years since he started working as *relicur-décorateur*, and notwithstanding his fertility, which might well have suggested some remission of labour, he still perseveres in his art, ever improving, inventing, scheming to do something new. The various bindings for the *Trophées* of de Hérédia and the *Lys Rouge* of Anatole France are



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY MARIUS MICHEL

French Bookbindings

works of which the owners may well be proud, for they are and will remain among the most perfect specimens of *reliure mosaïque* produced at this end of the century.

Next we come to Pétrus Ruban, a true professional, who achieves a triumph every year at the *Artistes Français*. Ruban, Marius Michel and Meunier form the triumvirate standing unchallenged at the head of the modern art-binding movement. Ruban seeks and discovers his ornamental *motifs* in all directions—in the world of flowers, in architecture, in Japanese art, or in ornithology. He is an eclectic binder, with no fixed theories, welcoming advice when he can see its force, and, once convinced, working with marvellous natural capacity. With regard to the disposition of the decoration in his mosaics, Ruban, who at the outset was somewhat garish, has now become quite master of himself and of his method.

Mercier, the legitimate successor of Cuzin in the art of costly and elaborate binding and gilding, is an artist of note, but lacking hitherto in originality. It will suffice to note the admirable covers designed by him for the *Trophées* of de Hérédia, and Bourget's *Pastels*.

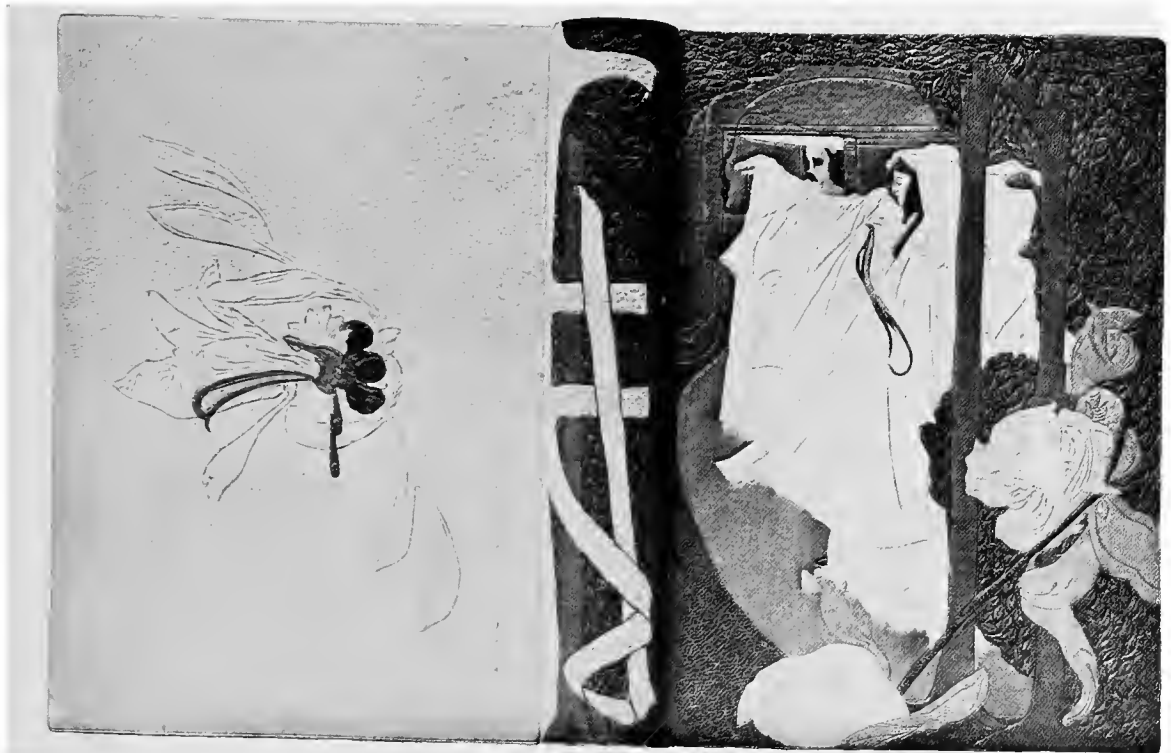
Mention must also be made of Rapartier, R. Petit, Léon Gruel and A. Lepère, the wood engraver, who is also a marvellous chaser of leather. These complete a rapidly - compiled catalogue of the best binders and decorators of skin in France to-day.

When one looks back, and remembers the parlous state of the bookbinder's art only twenty years ago, there is ample cause for satisfaction in the evidence abundantly manifest in France to-day of a strong renovating spirit. Maybe the fanciful side of the art has been somewhat exaggerated. There was lately a tendency perhaps to make the leather and the morocco express more than they were designed to express. But extravagances are often necessary in art, for they reveal the limits beyond which one may not go, save at the risk of becoming ridiculous. At the present moment decorative binding has become more restrained and sober, while the *tableau de genre* style shows signs of disappearing. Such, however, is far from being the case with leather, whether modelled, chased or repoussé. Many surprises are in store with regard to this process, which is attracting the attention of some of our



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER

French Bookbindings



DESIGNED BY G. DE FEURE

EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY RENÉ WIENER

Dutch Bookbindings

most delicate sculptors. Certainly the 20th century opens full of promise for the binder's art. Already I could mention several remarkable manifestations of the new style of exterior decoration for books which will be seen at next year's Exhibition.

OCTAVE UZANNE.

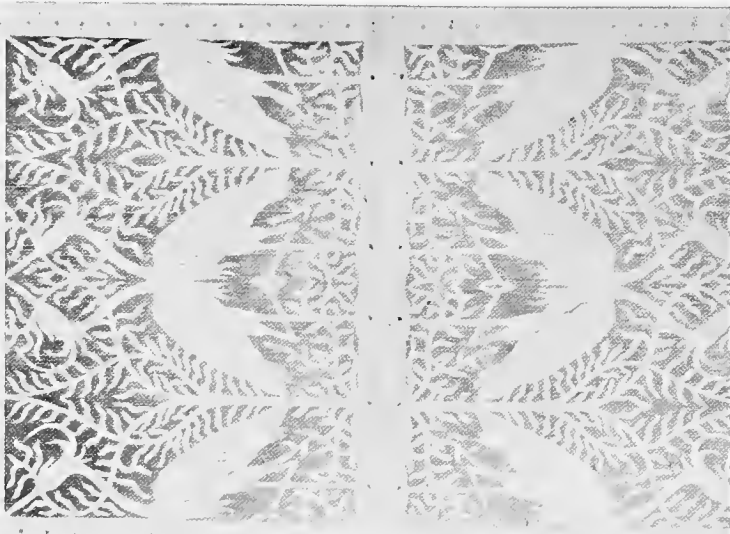
DUTCH BOOKBINDINGS. BY GABRIEL MOUREY.

IN a country like Holland, where for centuries past Applied Art, based on the innermost life of the people, has manifested itself in so many frank and delightful forms, it is curious

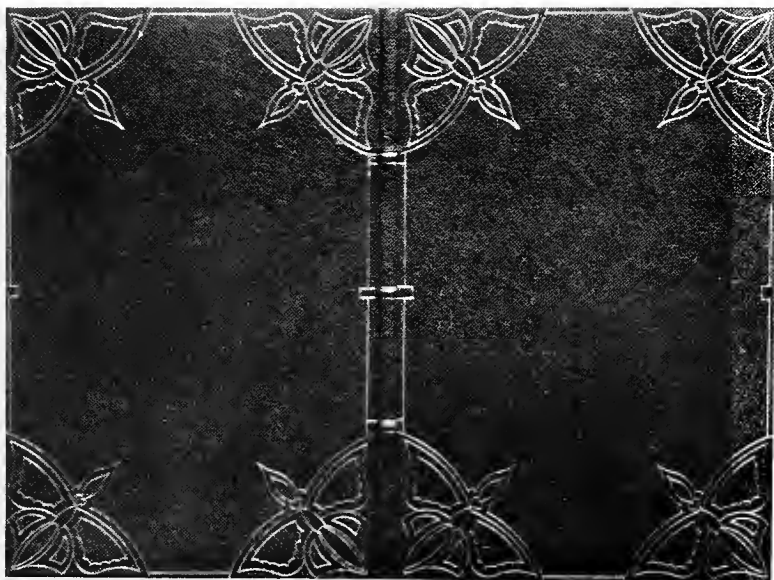
to note the development of that modern Decorative Movement which is now stirring all Europe; curious, too, to watch the birth and growth of the new manner of seeing and understanding, among the young artists who are striving so bravely to obtain recognition of their aims and ideas.

The Decorative Art Movement in Holland is already responsible for much interesting work, and, thanks to architects such as M. Berlag, to decorators like MM. Nieuwenhuis, der Kinderen, Dijsselhof, Lion Cachet, and Duco-Crop — to name but a few among many whose works deserve all praise — there can be no doubt that the Netherlands will soon figure prominently in this universal renaissance.

"The Art of the Book"—that is, the art of ornamenting books, both as regards the interior and the exterior—is making rapid progress there. Publishers of the stamp of MM. Scheltema and Hoytema, and C. M. Van Gogh, of Amsterdam, P. Gouda Quint, of Arnhem, and Kleinmann, of Haarlem, have boldly started on the new road. Among the productions bearing the

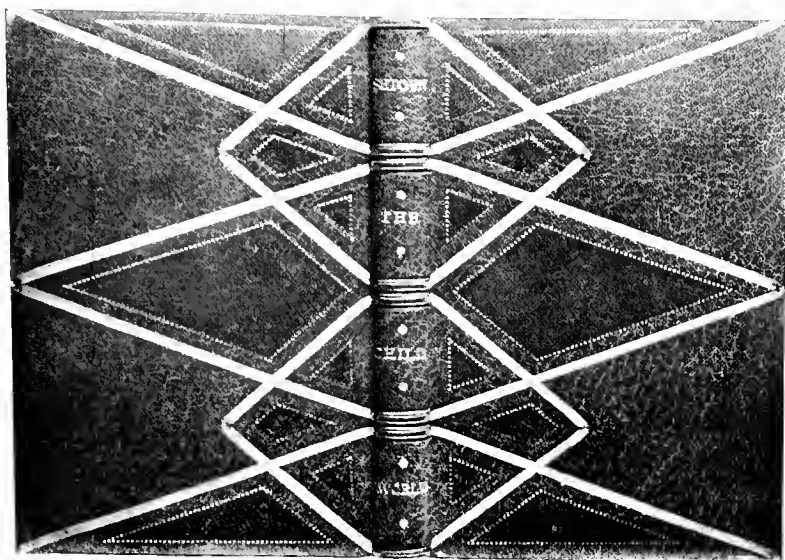


DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. A. LOEBER

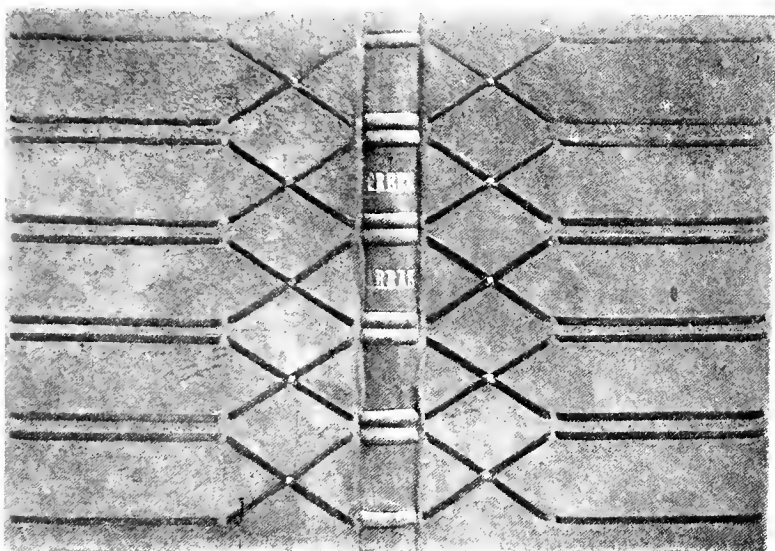


DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. A. LOEBER

Dutch Bookbindings



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. A. LOEBER



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. A. LOEBER

impress of the new movement must be noted several book-covers by M. Dijsselhof for *The Claims of Decorative Art*; also those of M. Veldheer for *Woord en Beeld*; of M. Bazel for *De Architect*; of M. Nieuwenhuis, for his Calendars, and for *Hilda van Suylenburg*; of M. Hart-Nibbrij, for *Le Chariot de Terre Cuite*; of M. Th. Molkenboer, for the works of Viollet-le-Duc, not forgetting the delightfully modern albums by M. T. van Hoytema.

As regards bindings, however, the output has

been very slight, especially in regard to the best and most thoughtful sort of work, which departs from the beaten track without rushing into extremes of imagination and fancifulness.

In this connection I have come across nothing in Holland more interesting than the bindings of the young Leyden artist, J. A. Loeber. The few specimens reproduced here show how strictly logical, how scrupulously appropriate, is his treatment of his material. It will be seen that he is careful, above all things, to show the very structure of his binding—that is to say, its essential parts. From the very threads or twists which attach the back of the book and bind the leaves he evolves a decorative purpose at once novel and intelligent. Instead of hiding them he leaves them exposed on the surface of the cover, utilising them to form a simple decoration in which their object is never disguised. He cuts the leather in order to accommodate these slender thongs, which go backwards and forwards across the cardboard, thus adding to the solidity of the whole volume.

Nothing could be more simple and reasonable, and nothing more charming. According to my own taste, at least, this is a thousand times preferable to the complicated combinations which many people regard as the perfection of the book-binder's art.

Mr. Loeber has not confined himself to leather bindings, but has essayed a very novel method with cloth, which he decorates, not with irons but with the stencil, the ornamentation being simple and well designed, as the process demands.

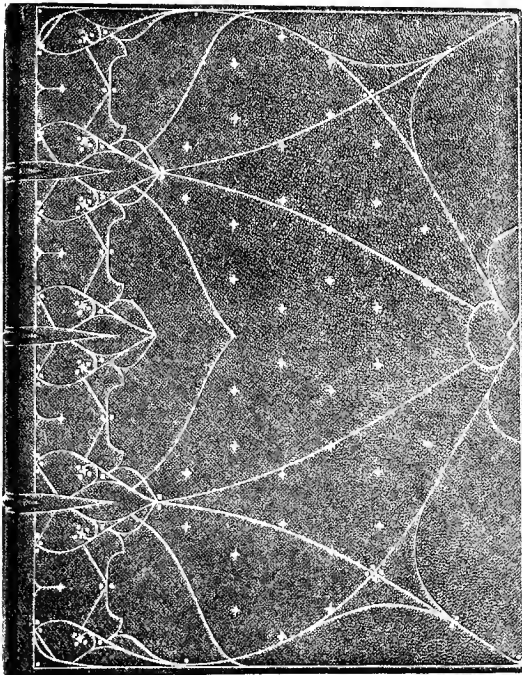
Belgian Bookbindings

Sometimes he obtains the most charming and unexpected effects, which are quite unlike those of the ordinary cloth bindings. The truth is, he is constantly endeavouring—as becomes the true decorative artist—to devise novel combinations, novel not so much in point of material, which is open to everybody, as in regard to the harmony and the sense of proportion on which they are based.

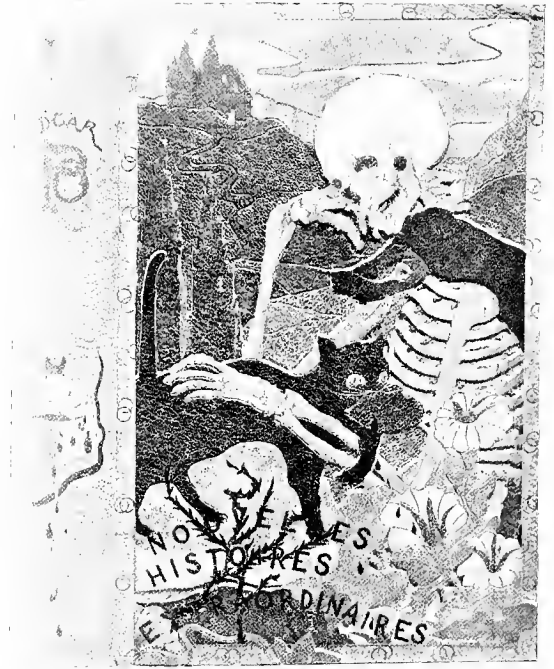
As I have already said, these seem to me to be the most interesting and the most successful attempts in the way of modern bookbinding that Holland has produced. Let the reader study closely the reproductions now given, and compare them with the work which proceeds from other countries where the general movement in the direction of decorative art is even stronger and more intense. He will admit, I am fain to believe, that they stand the test of comparison with the best productions from any other art centre.

BELGIAN BOOKBINDING. BY FERNAND KHNOPFF.

At the Antwerp Exhibition of 1885, the important exhibits of Josse Schavye were summed up in the catalogue in the following terms: "Specimens of binding illustrative of the



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY J. A. LOEBER

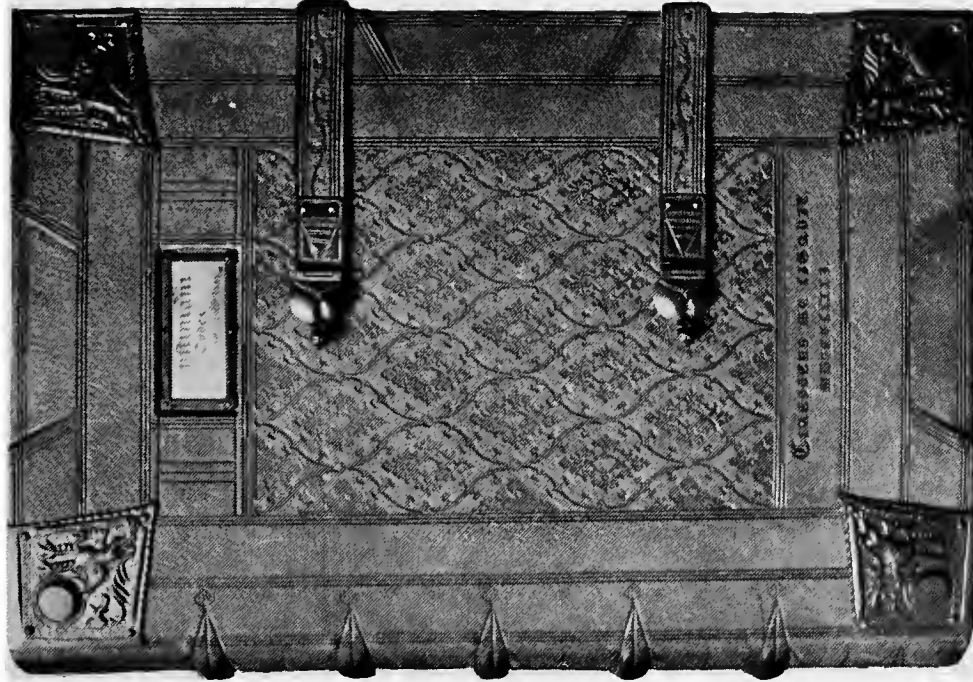


DESIGNED BY H. OTTEVAERE EXECUTED BY RYCKERS

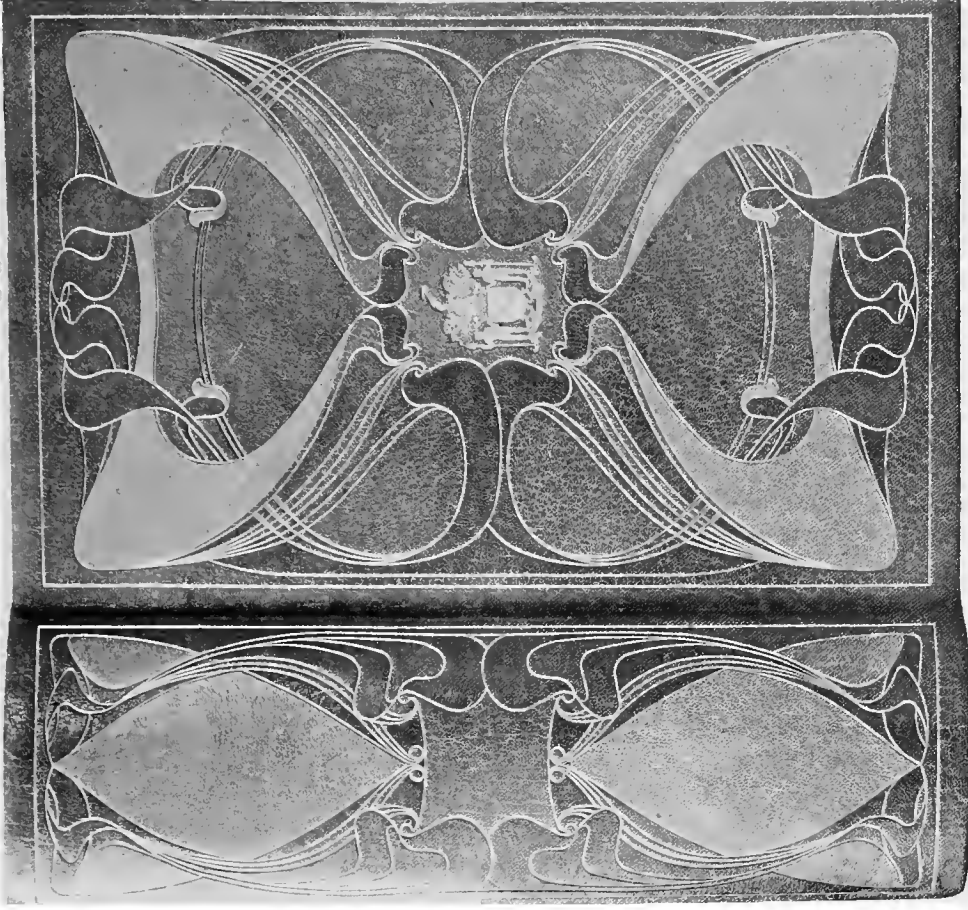
various epochs of development of the art from the beginning of the Christian era to the present day, including varnished boards, bindings in filigree, with antique appliqué work in ivory and uncut gems and what are known as *catenati*, the covers of alms boxes, purses, and jewel cases, dating from the sixteenth century, ladies' reticules, etc."

The delegate appointed to report on the Exhibition pronounced a regular eulogy on this quaint assortment of articles, winding up in the following terms: "The reproductions of ancient bindings by Josse Schavye are full of character and in admirable condition; it is, however, very much to be regretted that he did not see fit to complete the series with examples of modern and contemporary bindings."

Amongst the few pupils who learnt their art in the atelier of Josse Schavye who have gained distinction, the best known are Messrs. Desamblanx and Waekesser, who have recently won very favourable notice from those most competent to judge, for the excellence of their workmanship. The elder Schavye, father of Josse, was also rather reluctant to receive pupils, and very few binders of note learned their trade, or rather their profession, in his atelier. To atone for this, however, he exercised a very considerable indirect influence on the binding of his day, setting, moreover, a most wholesome



EXECUTED BY L. CLAESSENS, PÈRE



DESIGNED BY H. VANDEVELDE

EXECUTED BY P. CLAESSENS

Belgian Bookbindings

example of a life devoted to art and to good works. In fact many young craftsmen owed much to his counsels, for he was ever ready to give them his advice without fee or reward. He himself knew from experience how valuable such help was, for in his own young days the well-known collector of books, M. De Jonghe of Brussels, aided him greatly by his encouragement and timely counsels. From 1845-1850 P. C. Schavye was constantly with M. De Jonghe, for whom, to the last, he had a great affection and respect.

Another noted binder contemporary with the elder Schavye was Charles Duquesne, whose beautiful book covers in pigskin are amongst the treasures of the library at Ghent, and he too found a faithful friend and patron in the learned and warm-hearted bibliophile, M. F. van der Haeghen, of Ghent, who extended to him the same kind of help and encouragement as M. De Jonghe had given to the more celebrated Schavye. The first half of the nineteenth century was indeed rich in patrons who took a direct and intelligent interest in the development of bookbinding, looking upon it as an art, not what it so often becomes in these later days of keen competition and over-production, a mere mechanical craft.

Speaking at the "Conférence du Livre," held at



DESIGNED BY H. OTTEVAERE EXECUTED BY M. JACOB



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY G. RYCKERS

Antwerp in 1890, the Minister, J. van den Pcreboom, whose competence as a judge of bookbinding is recognised by all, made the following well-founded remarks:—

"The progress of the art of binding in Belgium has of late made rapid strides. P. C. Schavye had a pupil who surpassed his master. This pupil was Claessens, of Brussels, side by side with whom I worked myself for no less than ten years. I have got him to bind some of the volumes of my collection of books, notably my *incunabula*. I said to him, do not let us attempt to do better than the old masters of binding; let us be content with imitating them. This was what he did. He imitated old bindings; in a manner which can only be called brilliant, and his work has been exhibited at Ghent, at Paris, and at Brussels. Although, perhaps, his bindings in morocco leather have not yet attained to the perfection of those produced by Parisian craftsmen, they run them very close. In fact he takes quite the highest rank in his reproductions of fifteenth-century bindings, not only in the opinion of his fellow countrymen, but of foreigners. I have seen bindings executed by the most skilled craftsmen in Paris and elsewhere, by no means superior in richness of design to those of Claessens."

Belgian Bookbindings

In 1850 Claessens founded a binding atelier, and soon after that Oliver and Van Trigt started the libraries bearing their names, forming with the studio of Claessens a kind of triumvirate, under the auspices of which grew up many of the most unique collections of books of the present century, now, alas! most of them dispersed. Amongst the libraries which owed their initiative to Claessens, Oliver, and Van Trigt, were those of the Duke of Arenberg and of Messrs. Capron, Koffoed, Veydt, Vergauwen, René della Faille, Thomas Westwood, the Chevalier van Havre, M. van den Peereboom, and many others. It was, in fact, a golden time for collectors of ancient books and of illustrated works dating from the eighteenth century. To give but one instance of the prices realised, the so-called *Patissier Français* fetched 4,500 francs at the Capron sale, held on the premises of the bookseller Oliver mentioned above, whereas now the highest

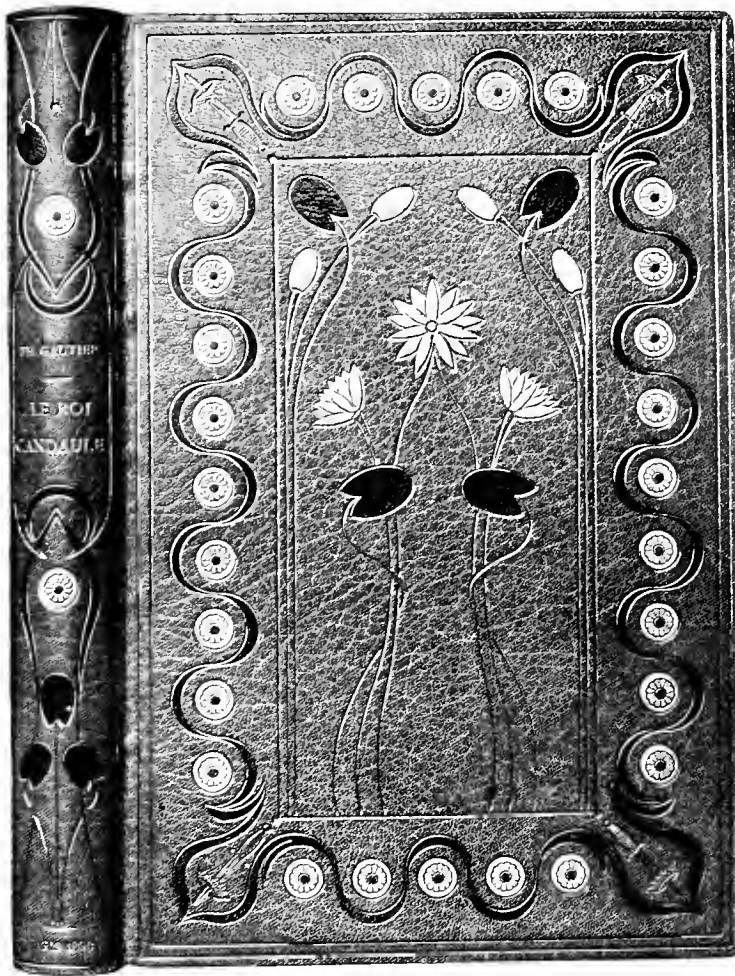
sum which would be likely to be given for it would be from 500 to 1,000 francs.

For some thirty years Claessens has been engaged in the production of an important series of works of the highest artistic value, which are greatly appreciated by connoisseurs who had previously preferred to go to French craftsmen for their bindings.

In 1878 the elder Claessens was joined by his son P. Claessens, who proved a worthy coadjutor of his father, and praise could certainly go no further. Together they worked for many happy years, giving special attention to the reproduction of ancient designs, but at the same time never failing to keep their eyes open to the tendencies of the day, for they recognised that the art of binding, like every other decorative art, was approaching a new departure with which it behoved every intelligent craftsman to be in touch.

Many well-known and most successful artists were much attracted by the work of the elder Claessens, and he interested them greatly in his methods. Amongst them may be especially mentioned that most modern of modern decorators, H. Van de Velde, who made many clever and beautiful binding designs for the master craftsmen, some of which have already been described in *THE STUDIO* for October, 1896. Other artists of note who have worked for or with Claessens are G. Lemmen, who made many good drawings for reproduction by him and the painter, O. Coppens, for whom the great binder has executed various bindings after original mosaic designs by the artist himself.

At the "Conférence du Livre" of 1890, already referred to, M. P. Claessens, in conjunction with M. J. Destrée, expressed an earnest desire to witness the foundation at Brussels of a school of binding conducted on the same lines as the ateliers already in existence in Paris,



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY DESAMBLANX AND WAEKESER

Belgian Bookbindings

London, Berlin, and Copenhagen. With a view to the realisation of this most worthy ambition, the well-known binder gives up all his evenings to an institution of the kind which is still in its infancy, and is, of course, set about by all the difficulties inseparable from the inauguration of any enterprise. From it, however, great things are hoped, alike for the leaders and the craftsmen of what may now be justly called the profession of binding.

It is only fair to add in this connection that the question of the giving of competent instruction to binders has long occupied the attention of another great Belgian master of the craft, the well-known E. Bosquet, who won universal recognition at the Industrial Exhibition of Brussels in 1874, and at that of Paris in 1878, by the very fine examples shown by him of bindings produced in his atelier. He devoted himself especially to the technical

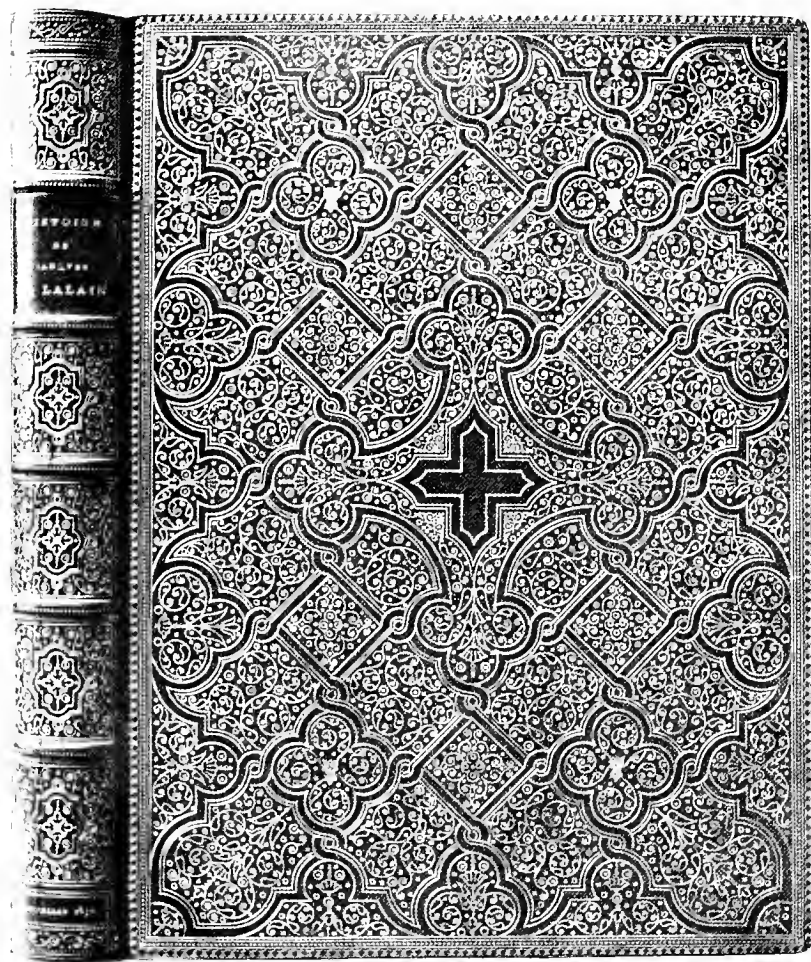
difficulties connected with the production of good work which are, as every practical binder knows, many and great, though few outsiders, who only see the decorative designs shown under glass at exhibitions, realise what skill is needed to produce a thoroughly satisfactory piece of work. M. E. Bosquet's two books *L'Art du Relieur*, published by the Polytechnic Library, and *La Reliure*, with the sub-title *Étude d'un Praticien sur l'art du relieur d'or*, are ranked by specialists as the very best works of the kind which have hitherto been issued.

The son of this accomplished scholar and craftsman, M. P. Bosquet, has, since 1885, successfully carried on the atelier founded by his father, and at the Antwerp Exhibition of 1885, and that of Brussels of 1897, it was very well represented by some twenty volumes in diverse styles, the beautiful designs and fine workmanship of which were most justly admired.

Amongst other fine designs M. P. Bosquet has produced many bindings with what is technically known as pyrographic ornamentation, notably those of the cover of *La Dame aux Camélias* and of the album presented to M. Seguin, the popular actor of the part of Wotan in the "Waldküre" at the Théâtre de la Monnaie.

Another very celebrated binder of Belgian nationality is Desamblanx, who bound the beautiful edition of "Salammbó" illustrated by the equally well-known artist Titz, which is now in the fine library of the American De Forest, and is alluded to in terms of the highest praise by H. Pène du Bois in his very interesting and brightly written book, *Four Private Libraries of New York*.

As will be readily remarked in the illus-



DESIGNED BY P. CLAESSENS

EXECUTED BY L. CLAESSENS, PÈRE

Belgian Bookbindings



DESIGNED BY H. VAN DE VELDE

EXECUTED BY P. CLAESSENS

trations accompanying this article, what specially distinguishes the work of these two skilled craftsmen is the appropriateness of the design to the book to which the binding belongs, the ingenuity of the ornamentation, and what may perhaps be characterised as a well-chosen symbolism.

The Belgian house known as that of G. Ryckers is now managed by the son of the founder, and it has been very well represented at the various exhibitions which have taken place between 1880 and 1897, the interesting work shown winning many medals. Some of the designs were of a very complicated character, and the workmanship was in every case of a high class. To give but a few examples: the binding of Levy's *History of Painting on Glass* of some of Octave Uzanne's charming volumes, and of *La Dame aux Camélias* were especially noteworthy. One copy of *La Frontière* was actually bound in human

skin by Ryckers for M. J. Clarétie, the French flag, worked in mosaics, forming the design, after a drawing by the painter H. Ottevaere, who made the cartoons for two volumes of the works of the eccentric genius Edgar Allan Poe, which were bound in morocco leather, with mosaic designs in relief. The painter himself executed the pyrographic work, in which the tooling is done with a heated tool to quote his own words: "with an electric pencil connected by a copper wire with a battery, and insulated by means of a glass tube." A later cartoon by Ottevaere for the binding of *Blanche, Claire et Candide*, illustrated by Am. Lynen, was recently executed by Jacob. An illustration of this somewhat remarkable binding appears on p. 70.

In concluding this hastily written *résumé* of the principal art binders of Belgium, I must quote yet another sentence from the speech of the Minister Van der Peereboom at the Antwerp "Conférence du Livre," already more than once referred to. "Hitherto," he said, "we have had absolutely no history of the binding of our country. I hope that one of you now present may some day write such a history. Perhaps, when I am myself free from the multifarious duties now occupying me, I may accomplish a brief account of it."

As a matter of fact, that time has already come, for M. Van der Peereboom is now no longer so overworked, and I heartily supplement his hope with my own that he may be induced at no distant date to supply the want he so justly deplures.

FERNAND KHNOFF.

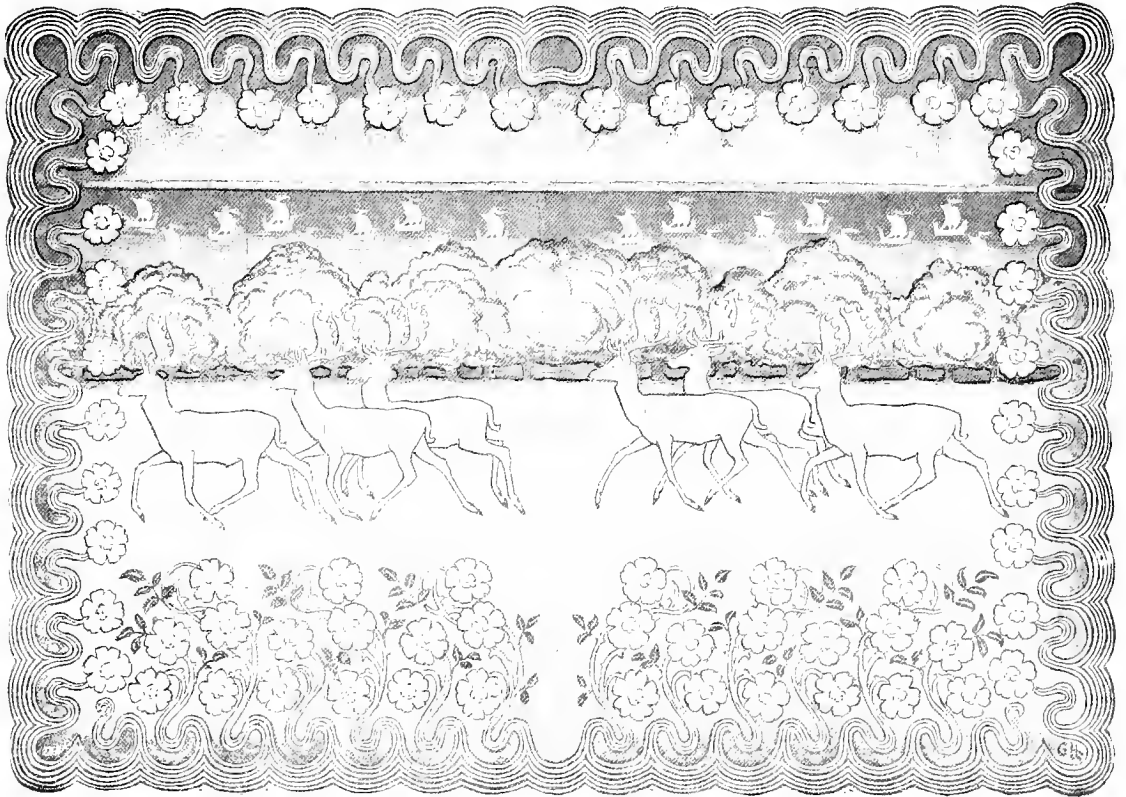
Danish Bookbindings

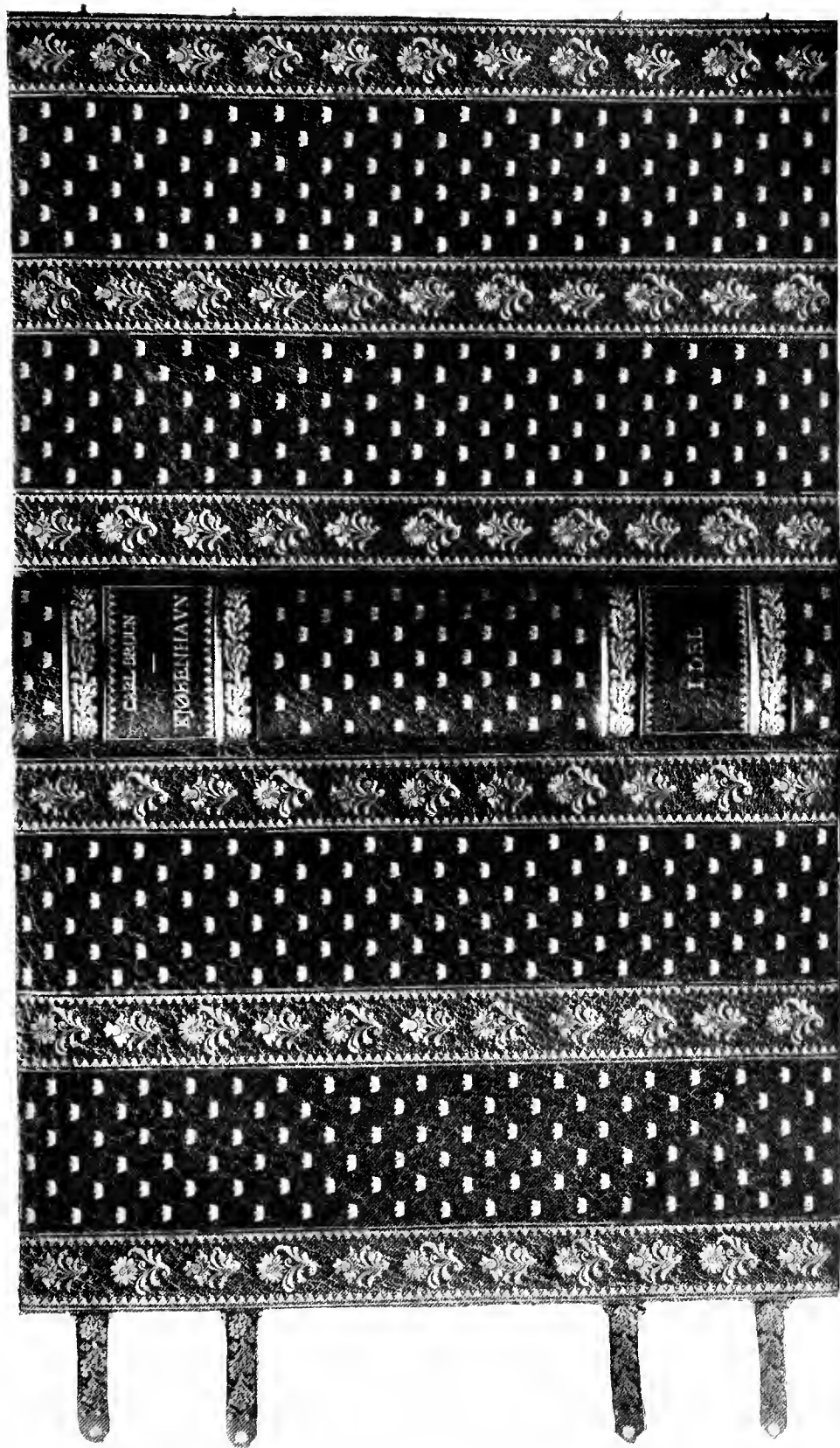
DANISH BOOKBINDING. BY
GEORG BROCHNER.

OF late years there has been what virtually amounts to a renaissance in the craft of bookbinding in Denmark. Apart from a revival of some of the best traditions of the past, entirely new and genuinely artistic influences have been brought to bear upon the whole question, and the Danes are to be much congratulated upon the vast strides which everything connected with the binding of books has made during the latter part of the present decade. Designers of rare and original talent have worked hand in hand with able and enthusiastic craftsmen, and the excellent results of this co-operation has already more than once been commented upon in *THE STUDIO*. The new movement is characterized, not only by freedom and originality of design, but also by the introduction of a decorative variety in colour, hitherto unknown, which has, perhaps, more especially benefitted the less elaborate and costly bindings. The sensitive and sober good taste of the Danes has also shown itself in this

connection, and it is somewhat surprising that we do not find even the faintest trace of that weakness for a rather vulgar overloading which is so much in vogue in a neighbouring country.

A peculiar form of binding, or rather cover, now in general use in Denmark is a paper cover, especially designed for each individual book and forming part and portion of the same. Collectors nearly always retain these particular covers on their volumes. They are often striking and highly ornamental, and act as a sort of miniature poster, making the bookseller's window attractive in more than one sense of the word. I am not sure whether Denmark has not in a way originated this pretty idea—at the same time artistic and inexpensive—but in any case Danish covers of this description can vie with those of any other country. As a rule, the nature of the ornamentation of the cover is in close harmony with the contents of the book, and it is the exception, that it is of a purely decorative nature. Gerhard Heilmann, who is nothing if not decorative, has done a number of very charming covers of this





DESIGNED AND EXECUTED
BY J. L. FLYGE

Danish Bookbindings

kind, one or two additional colours generally sufficing to produce a capital effect.

Kund Larsen, one or two of whose pictures have been reproduced in *THE STUDIO*, has also designed some very pretty covers. Both his letters and ornamentations are full of style and originality.

In everything connected with the outside of books—to say nothing of his exquisite and marvellous illustrations, Professor Hans Tegner holds an unassailable position. A faultless style, often coupled with a fine sense of humour and satire, has set its hall-mark on all his work, and he is the author of innumerable delightful covers of various kinds. Prof. Tegner has also designed a number of the popular cloth and leather bindings, most of which have emanated from the old and well-known establishment of Immanuel Petersen.

Immanuel Petersen has the credit of a fine binding of *The Contention between the two famous Houses of Lancaster and York*, designed by Frøstrup, under his direction. Another, of a totally different stamp, is worthy of mention; it is a white parchment cover, the whole of which is ornamented with branches of laburnum, yellow flowers and green clover, and with title in gilt letters.

J. L. Flyge has done much and good work as regards artistic and ornamental binding of books,



DESIGNED BY G. HELLMANN EXECUTED BY I. PETERSEN



DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY ANKER KYSTER

and he is a true lover of his craft. Among other bindings, a prominent place should be given to that of *La Reliure Française*, which he has himself designed, and the whole of the gilding is done by hand. The cut of the leaves is beautifully done, in very faint relief, in gold and ornamentation in various colours.

Last, but certainly not least, comes Anker Kyster. Possessed of originality and a considerable invention, and with a keen appreciation of the eternal fitness of things as regards the harmony which *should* exist between the book itself and its garb, he has, although a young man, already



DESIGNED BY FRISTRUP
EXECUTED BY J. PETERSEN

attracted much and flattering attention. Kyster prefers to strike out new lines of his own, and he has done this in more than one direction. First and foremost, mention should be made of his hand-made paper, used with great effect for the outside of the cover as well as for the inside. These papers are equally excellent in design and in colour, green, white, blue, violet, yellow, brown, pink, etc., being blended with the most charming effects.

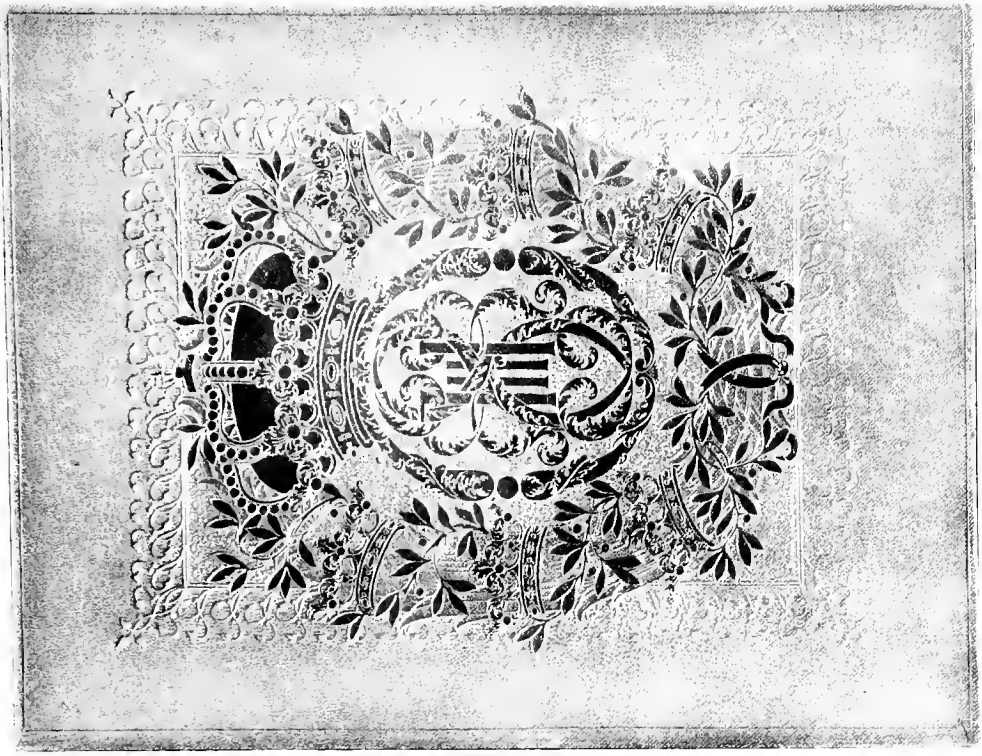
It goes without saying, that numerous excellent bindings have emanated from Kyster's workshop from designs by Bindesböl, Tegner, H. N. Hansen, Heilmann, and other artists, but Kyster himself is an able draughtsman and has devised many charming bindings. He is fond of simple designs, and of giving to the material what is due to it; he often uses lines with much effect, and for the back generally prefers a single decorative design of modest dimensions to the excessive application of gilt, in which so many binders indulge. The result is, that Kyster's leather bindings, as a rule, possess a simple and restful beauty.

GEORG BROCHNER.

BOOKBINDING IN SWEDEN, NORWAY, AND FINLAND. BY SUNNY FRYKHOLM.

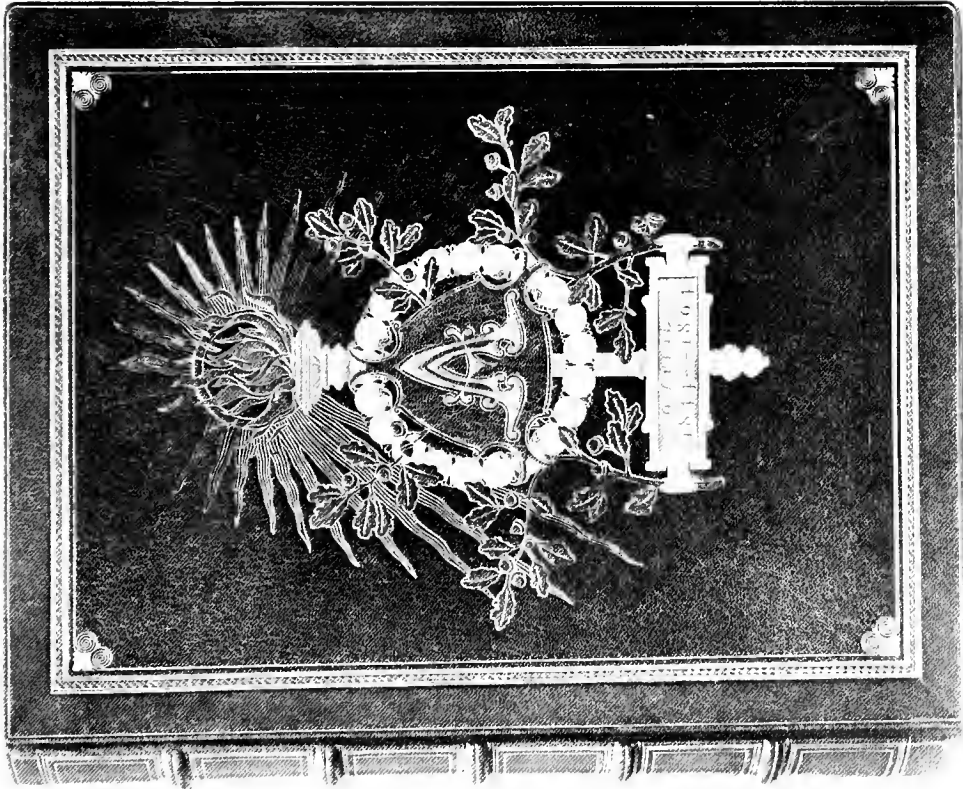
IN the rich art-production of the northern countries of earlier date, conspicuously in the line of handicraft, the art of bookbinding appears very late in comparison with Europe generally, and Italy and France in particular; for bookbinding is an art wholly influenced by a superior culture which could not reach the far North till a later period. The influence of the highly refined Eastern bookbinding, which reached Europe as early as the thirteenth century, by the aid of the Alders of Venice, and which soon spread to the cultured France of that time, did not reach the North before the sixteenth century, and then only in a very imperfect state; and the result of this late arrival of the different styles is that no strict lines can be drawn between them, such as is the case in countries where one style developed after another in due chronological order. We can simply state that in the sixteenth century is first traceable in the North any bookbinding which is worthy of being called a craft.





EXECUTED BY G. HEDBERG

DESIGNED BY A. LINDEGREN



EXECUTED BY G. HEDBERG

DESIGNED BY E. ROBERG

Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish Bindings

What makes the history of Swedish bookbinding especially interesting is the fact that the craft in many families was inherited, so that even the widows kept up the business. In the case of one family, which still has members in the craft at Stockholm, the ancestor came over to Sweden from Germany about the middle of the seventeenth century.

It is to be regretted that the history of bookbinding in Sweden has been but scantily dealt with, though Dr. Eickhorn, a connoisseur who died before he had the opportunity to complete his difficult task of collecting the records, has left us some very valuable information relative to this complicated study. Dr. H. Wieselgren is an interesting and conscientious guide to the collections of the Royal Library at Stockholm.

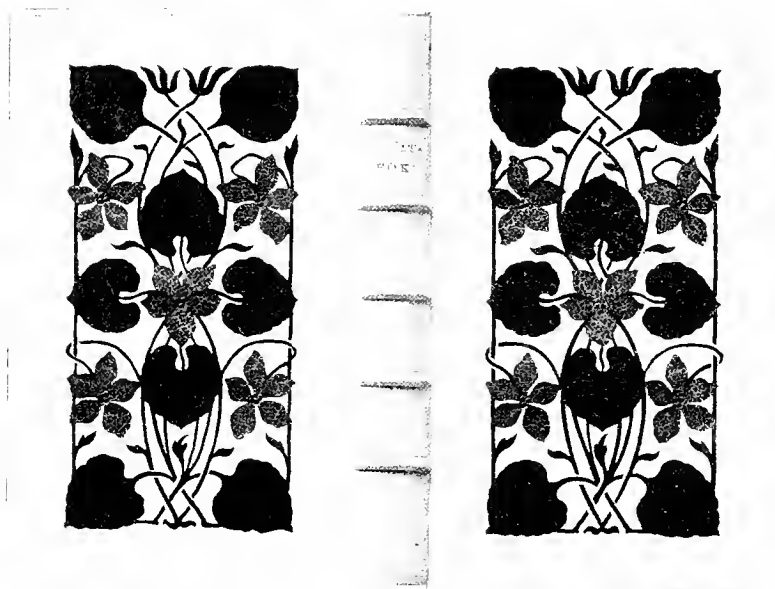
After the continual wars of the beginning of the eighteenth century, which entirely impoverished the country, the interest for art in general died out and was not revived until Queen Louisa Ulrika, the learned sister of Frederick the Great, once more brought universal European interests into her new country. One of her sons, King Gustavus III., carried on the good work, all the fine arts enjoying his special favour; a great literature flourished in his time, and bookbinding became once more a prominent art.

Thanks to this influence good work was still produced in the earlier part of the present century, though the craft had begun to decline. Favour-

able mention, must be made of Mr. F. Beck, the father of Mr. V. Beck, who has done much during later years to revive good workmanship. Although Mr. Beck always makes use of the designs of a very able lady artist, Miss Gisberg, his work still bears the stamp of a craft, and not of art, a fact which he much regrets himself, as he could certainly do better things if he could procure the necessary designs. His principal method consists in leather embossing, after designs in the style of the Renaissance, sometimes too profusely mixed up with coats-of-arms and emblems. His mosaic is much admired by his brother craftsmen, although the Austrian style he has adopted, which consists in applying the leather for the mosaics without stamping it with gold, is opposed to that of France; and some find fault with him also because he makes use of a brush for his gilding instead of burning the gold in with the tools. Mr. Beck's work shows that nothing is wanting in Sweden as regards skill in technique, but the Swedish artists must learn to take this craft more seriously, and the public must be taught to value artistic designs.

In assisting the development of Swedish bookbinding, Mr. G. Hedberg, of Stockholm, has worked wonders during the last few years. Brought up among the tools, he had the opportunity to go to Paris and study there for four years, his great interest in bookbinding having aroused the attention of an old lover of books who

helped him in various ways. After these years of conscientious study he returned to his own country, and firmly made up his mind to try to make the public understand the great possibilities for developing bookbinding into a fine art. With unflinching power over different methods, and a rare knowledge regarding historical styles, Mr. Hedberg is a man in every way fitted to succeed in his purpose. He realised from the first that he needed good artistic assistance in order to obtain designs worthy to be worked out by



DESIGNED BY MISS GISBERG

EXECUTED BY V. BECK



DESIGNED BY A. LINDEGREN

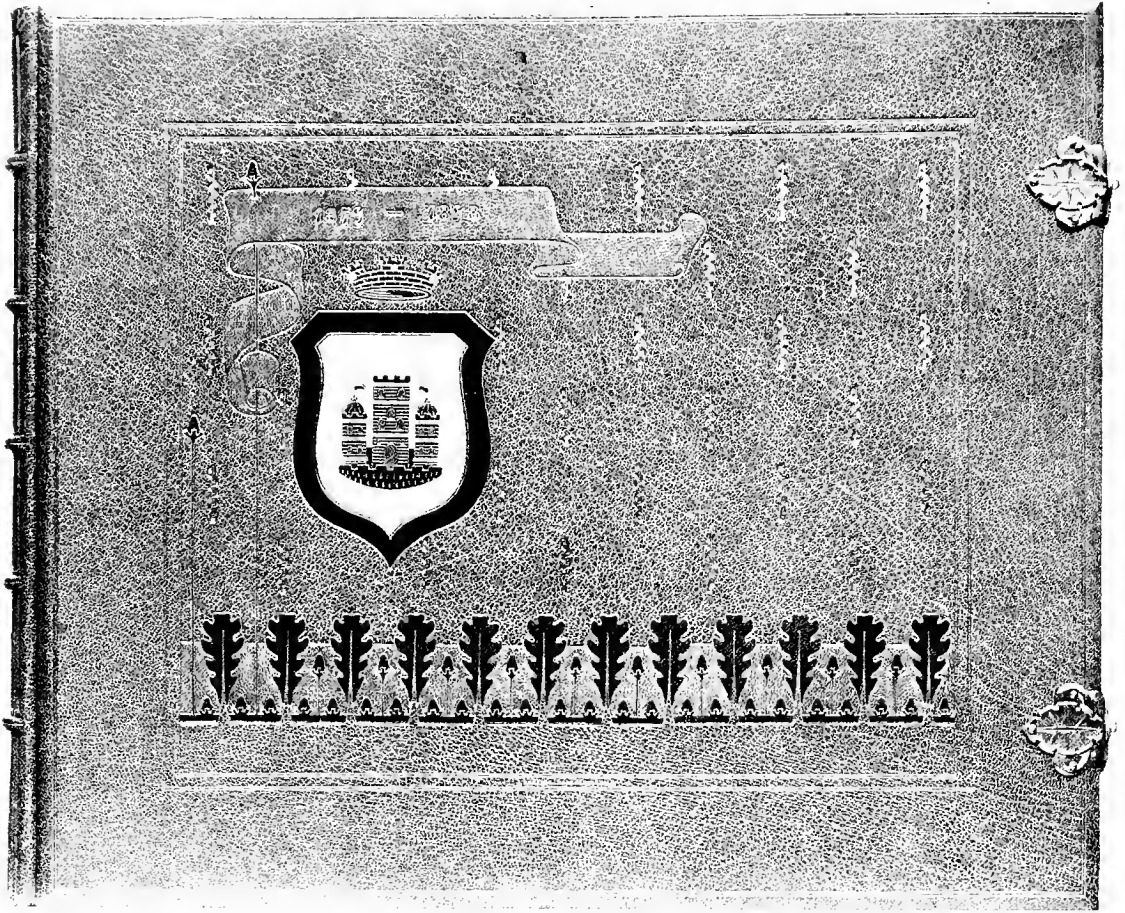
EXECUTED BY G. HEDBERG



DESIGNED BY MISS GISBERG

EXECUTED BY V. BECK

Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish Bindings



DESIGNED BY GISELA HENCKEL.

EXECUTED BY G. HEDBERG.

his exquisite methods, so he appealed to an artist whom we have mentioned before, viz., Mr. A. Lindegren, who is quite as rich in ideas as he is skilled as a worker. He has also had some very good designs by Mr. G. Wennerberg, and lately by Mr. F. Boberg.

Mr. Hedberg's work became favourably known abroad in 1897, when his cover for *King Florus*, designed by Mr. A. Lindegren, was one of those selected at the "International Exhibition of Bookbinding at Caxton Hill," for the illustrative catalogue, and lately he has had an offer from an English lover of books to make artistic bindings for some exquisite English literary works.

Although it is generally considered in Sweden that Norway does not possess any artistic bookbinding, the Norwegians themselves would fain not allow Mr. Refsum and Miss Maria Hansen to be forgotten in any general treatise upon bookbinding in the North, while Mr. Gaudernak, the skilful artist working for Mr. Andersen, the gold-

smith of Christiania, has enriched a few Bibles with some of his beautiful ornaments in the old Scandinavian Romanesque style.

From Finland nothing else has appeared but the admirable designs by Countess Sparre, which are generally worked out by Mr. G. Hedberg.

In conclusion, it may be said that if any art is apt to express the culture of a country it is that of bookbinding. In all the other arts we can find clever men of different periods who create works of imagination which more or less appeal to the public, generally by reason of the love of ornament, which is not necessarily an evidence of a cultured mind: but in bookbinding the connection between the work of art and the owner is more intimate and therefore more characteristic. Other products of artistic industry are not deemed out of place in the possession of anyone having plenty of money, but a library consisting of choice books provokes ridicule against any owner who does not possess the culture the books assume.

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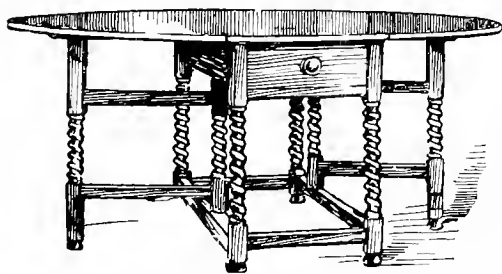
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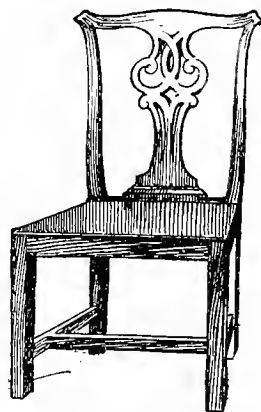
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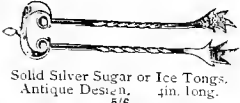
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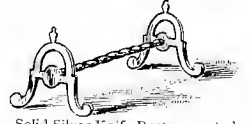
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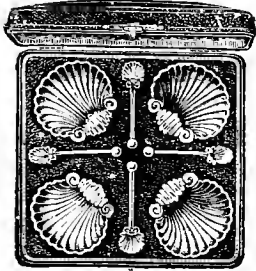
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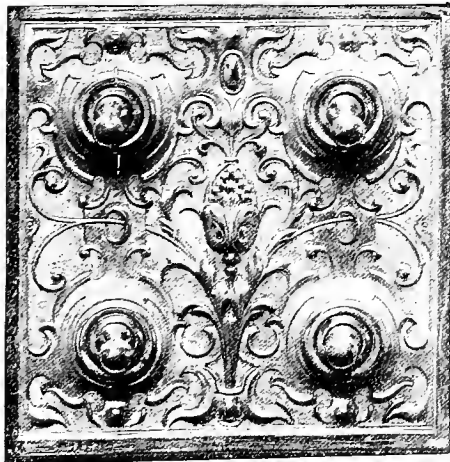
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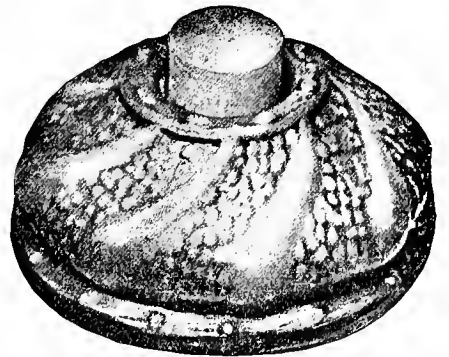
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