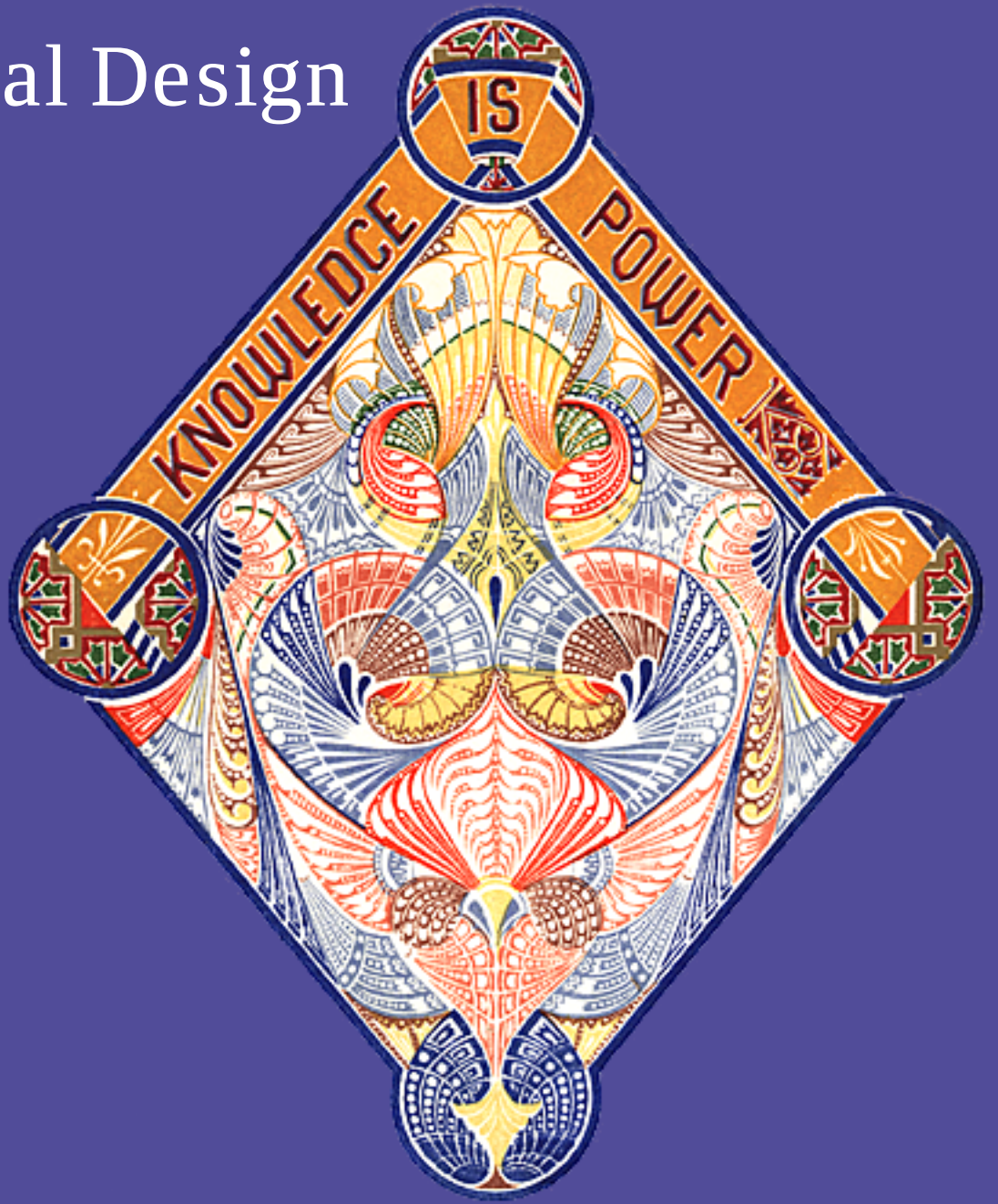
Father of Industrial Design

The Works of

Christopher Dresser



Art of Decorative Design

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Christopher Dresser, Father of Industrial Design

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Introduction

Christopher Dresser was always enthusiastic about new ideas. He made every effort to keep pace with his times. It seems especially appropriate that he should be the first historic designer to appear on interactive CDRom. He always strove to encourage creativity in others and it is reasonable to claim that Dresser would have approved of the creative potential of this new medium.

Users of this disk will have the opportunity to view an extensive collection of Christopher Dresser's work as a designer. Much of what he wrote is also reproduced here. These are interactive documents which will serve as aids to those who wish to design and experiment with pattern. They will also be found to be far more comprehensive than any exhibitions, or exhibition catalogues, could ever conceivably be.

Christopher Dresser was the first modern designer. He designed many different kinds of products for the manufacturers of his day. Most of these were British, but there were many European and even some American manufacturers too. His work is still being reproduced. The Italian

Figure 1. Dr. Dresser at home in his famous garden, c. 1900.

Figure 2. Designs by Christopher Dresser in production by Alessi s.p.a. under the Officina Alessi trade mark. From the Officina Alessi catalogue, 1993.

manufacturers Alessi, of Crusinallo, have reproduced a range of Dresser's tableware designs - a decanter, two elegant teapots, an oil and vinegar set....which first appeared in the 1870s and 1880s (Fig. 2). They would not seem out of place in the most modish contemporary household. Alessi also produces one of Dresser's brilliantly coloured sugar bowls (c. 1870) in plastic. It graces the display cases of smart design shops - probably only a few of its purchasers are aware of its designer.

Dresser supplied leading manufacturers with an infinity of designs for fabrics, wallpapers, carpets, linoleums, silver and plate, copper and brass ware, cast iron, ceramics and furniture. He also designed many interiors. He was also responsible for book covers, letter-heads and other forms of graphics. The Dresser office also produced some architecture - two houses survive and there may well have been other buildings. The bulk of the output of the Dresser office, however, would have been pattern design - for fabrics, wallpapers, carpets and the like. And, as with so many nineteenth century designers, this is what Dresser and his assistants excelled at.

Many examples of Dresser's designs are to be found in museums and private collections, although it is quite evident that we are unlikely ever to know the full extent of his work. Fabrics and wallpapers are especially ephemeral and there are few surviving examples of these which can, with absolute certainty, be attributed to Dresser. No Dresser carpets have so far been traced - but machine-made carpets have never been highly valued by collectors or by museums - until recently, that is. Interiors, too, are particularly vulnerable to the ravages of time and only two examples of Dresser interiors seem to survive.

Dresser's office record books, which would have been able to answer many of our questions, were in the hands of his daughters until the 1950s. These were the books which were seen by Nikolaus Pevsner in the late 1930s. Unfortunately, these precious documents were destroyed by Dresser's last-surviving daughter shortly before her death - perhaps in the state of embitterment which sometimes accompanies old age. But, unlike most designers, Dresser was a prolific writer. We therefore know a great deal about what he thought on many matters relating to design.

He ran an office which was in many ways like a modern office. He employed at least a dozen or so assistants. It is quite certain that many of the designs coming from his office must actually have been by these same assistants. Dresser also took on articled pupils - just as architects used to do. He always appears to have rigorously controlled the output of his office, however.

It is possible, also, to describe some nineteenth century designs as "School of Dresser". His published designs must surely have inspired many imitations. All the works on these CD Roms, however, unless it is described otherwise, are known, with certainty, to have come from Dresser's office and it would, inevitably, have been authorised by him.

Above all, it should be remembered that Dresser was designing for a society the prosperity of which depended upon the ceaseless and seemingly exponential growth of industrialisation. For the greater part of his designing career, the society for which Dresser was designing was becoming richer and better educated. Traditions, which had previously regulated taste, were being thrown aside. One can find many entertaining descrip-

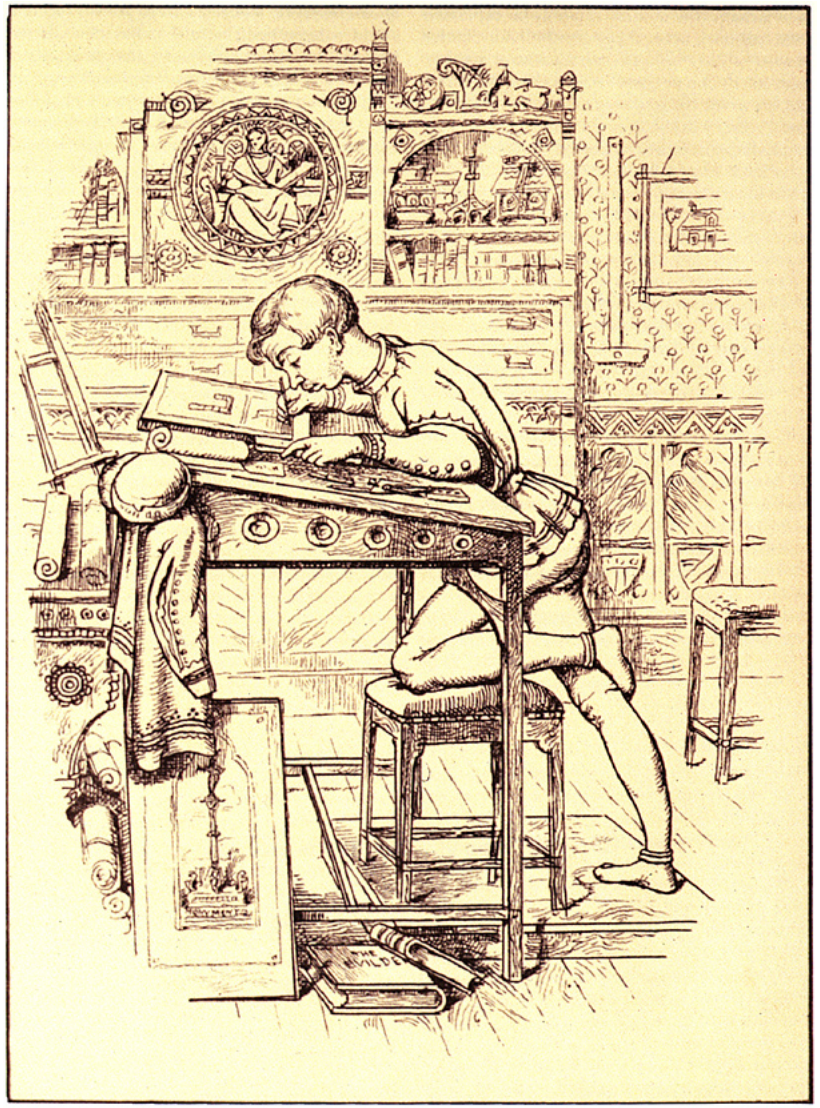


Figure 3. J. Moyr Smith's illustration from *Studies for Pictures*, 1868. As this book is dedicated to Dresser, one can assume that the scene depicted refers, if somewhat fancifully, to Moyr Smith's time in Dresser's employ. The sideboard is like the one which Dresser illustrated in *The Furnature Gazette*, 31 January, 1880.

tions of how what was new and brash was displacing the modesty of the pre-industrial era. The writings of Anthony Trollope, or Wilkie Collins, will yield many accounts of this early process of the modernisation of the households of the middles classes.

Dresser was fully aware of the anarchic and unconstrained quality of the taste of his times. He tried to formulate a design aesthetic to counteract this. His writings and his design need to be viewed in this light. His ingenuity and his brilliance will be found invariably present.

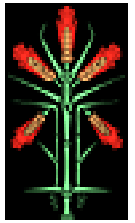
Dresser's Family Origins

Christopher Dresser was born in Glasgow, Scotland, on 4th July, 1834. His family came originally from Yorkshire and his father, who was also called Christopher, had been posted to Glasgow as an Excise Officer. His mother was, before her marriage, a Mary Nettleton. She, too, came from a Yorkshire family. The Dressers had been yeomen farmers - farmers who had tilled their own land for many generations. We know very little about Dresser's childhood or his family, although we have a complete record of the career of Dresser senior in the Excise Service. He would have had a secure and reasonably well-paid career.

There appear to have been six children born to Christopher and Mary - John, who was born in 1830, Martha, Christopher, our subject, Mary Elizabeth, Joseph, who died in his youth, and Annie. Although an Excise Officer would undoubtedly have ranked rather lower in the social hierarchy than a clergyman in the established church, or a doctor, the Dresser family was "respectable", as people in the last century might have said. (The Scottish poet Robert Burns, 1759-96, became an excise-man after the failure of his farm.)

The family would have moved with each new posting that Dresser senior received. In 1842 he was posted to Bandon, in County Cork - a pleasant, grey, but entirely provincial small town. Bandon was a small English-speaking enclave surrounded by an Irish-speaking Catholic rural population. Bandon was then largely Protestant - the Established Church, Methodists, Quakers, Presbyterians and Unitarians were all represented. It was half-a-day's coach ride to Cork City and the railway did not come to Bandon until 1849. Young Christopher would have been at Bandon between the ages of eight and eleven. In an obituary it was claimed that it was at Bandon that Dresser received "all that little school teaching he ever had". Probably he attended a dame school and then, very likely, went on to Bandon Grammar School.

On an annual income of two hundred and fifty pounds - rather under four hundred dollars - the Dresser family would have been able to live well. As far as one can translate this sum into contemporary monetary terms, an annual salary such as this would have placed the Dressers within the ranks of the middle classes. Christopher Dresser senior was appointed Collector of the Halifax Division of the Inland Revenue in 1853 - a post he held until his retirement in 1860. He died on 18th February, 1868 at the age of sixty-two. His career can be gauged to have been far more than averagely successful. There were, in actuality, only few opportunities for promotion to the exalted ranks of Collector. To judge from his will, he appears to have left comparatively little in the way of either capital or worldly goods.



A Recollection of his Childhood by Dresser

Dresser said very little which tells us much about his personal life. But in 1871 - in reply to a critic of one of his lectures - he did write :

> "As a child, I spent a large portion of my time in drawing and painting in the manner of a child, and I was never happy without a paint box... I once got into trouble for exchanging a box, which my father had given me to lock my little treasures in, for one of the old-fashioned two-penny paint boxes. That I was intended by nature as an artist I doubt not ...."

This suggests an ability in art which his parents must surely have noticed, however ill-informed they were regarding such matters.

The Government School of Design

We know nothing about Dresser's education from the ages of eleven until thirteen. At this age he was sent to the Government School of Design at Somerset House in the Strand, London. The normal age for admission to the school was fifteen - the authorities there must have noticed an uncommon ability in the boy.

In 1847, the Government School of Design was housed at Somerset House in the Strand - the handsome Palladian building by Sir William Chambers, 1723-1796 (Fig. 4). This was also where the Royal Society met. The School of Design had been founded in June 1837 as a Government response to an investigation which had begun in 1835 into the state of the arts in Britain, in particular those relating to the manufacturing industries. There was "no want of talent" in the country, but there was a "want of encouragement".

It had been at last recognised in Government circles that there was a desperate need for proficient designers for industry. Fear of ever-increasing industrial competition from abroad was the prevailing reason for this. Germany, in particular, was making rapid progress in manufactures and Britain was becoming increasingly aware that her industrial ascendancy was no longer assured. If nothing was done to improve national standards of design, it was believed, Britain's manufacturing industries would suffer and be eclipsed. In consequence of this burgeoning sense of national insecurity, branches of the School of Design had been hastily set up throughout the country. The first decade of the venture had been stormy, both politically and academically.

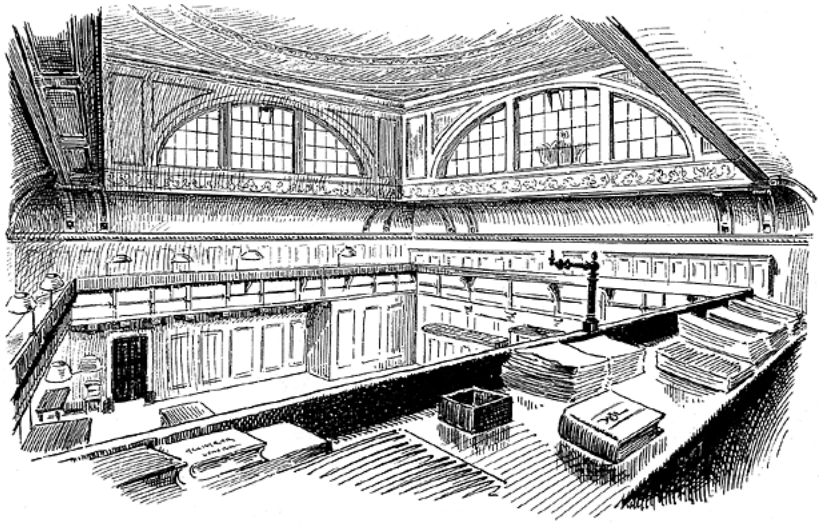


Figure 4. Pen sketch of Somerset house room.

In 1850, when Dresser was fifteen or sixteen, he would have been principally studying ornamental design at Somerset House. He would have copied ornament from books in the library, or he would have drawn examples of ornament from plaster casts. In this same year the following subjects - divided into five areas - were taught at Somerset House:

Ornament -
copying outlines from books of plates of ornament
drawing the outlines of ornament from selected plaster casts
copying shaded ornament from books of plates
drawing from actual examples of ornament with shading
copying examples of ornament in colour
modelling ornament

Geometrical and perspective drawing -
copying from books

Plants - Fruits, and Flowers
copying in colour from books
drawing from nature
painting from nature
modelling from nature
drawing in outline from books of plates

The figure - *drawing from plaster casts*
painting from plaster casts
modelling from plaster casts

Composition and applied design[1]

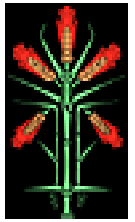
Most of the ornament which Dresser studied would have been Roman or Greek. The endless copying of historic examples would, to us, amount to drudgery. But, as a result of such a disciplined approach to the subject, Dresser and the other ornamentists of his generation were able to design and organise ornament with a fluency and elegance which seems to have been lost by later generations.

Dresser would also have studied examples of mediaeval and even Islamic ornament. There was, at the time, a great deal of enthusiasm for the decorations of the Alhambra at Granada in Spain - the most accessible of the great Islamic buildings. Owen Jones' and Jules Goury's handsome colour plates of the decorations of the Alhambra, which were published from 1836 onward, were to be found in the Somerset House library. (See : Jones, O and Goury, J, *Plans, Elevations and Sections of the Alhambra* ....1842-45; publication of the work began in 1836. See also Fig 11, below.) Dresser would have discovered Eastern decoration at this time - possibly through this very work. The geometrical decoration of the Alhambra was to have a profound influence upon his decorative style.

Dresser also learned how to paint the sprays of flowers which were sent weekly to Somerset House from the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Representations of plants, of course, were employed in every conceivable form of decorative manufacture - particularly in fabrics and ceramics. As they had been since time immemorial. Botanical drawing and painting drew Dresser to scientific botany itself and he was to establish a considerable reputation for himself as a botanist, as we shall see.

1. The wording in which the programme was described originally has been slightly modified to make it immediately comprehensible to the modern reader.

An atmosphere of seriousness and high sense of purpose prevailed at the School of Design as an extract from the rules shows: “Diligence and earnest assiduity are required of all who attend the School .... No unnecessary talking, or other cause of disturbance, is permitted; and the Students are expected .... to maintain at all times order, decorum and propriety.”



School of Design Influences

It is certain that the leading authorities associated with the School of Design exerted an influence upon Dresser’s thinking as well as his practice. For it was these practitioners and theorists who developed what can be considered to be the earliest modern design philosophy - although the word “philosophy” might be a little misleading. The expression “canons of design for industry” is probably more appropriate.

The principal authorities associated with the School of Design who contributed to the formulation of these aesthetic rules were: the painters William Dyce and Richard Redgrave, the architect and champion of Gothic, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, and the architect and orientalist, Owen Jones. Henry Cole, (later Sir Henry), an ambitious civil servant, was also to play a major part in the reforms in official design education - but it was as an administrator of great brilliance, rather than as a theorist or practical teacher, that he should be considered.

Link to School of Design Head Master’s Report

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William Dyce, 1806-64

William Dyce was a Scot with a wide range of intellectual and scientific interests. Dyce was responsible for devising the early teaching methods at Somerset House. He was particularly impressed with what he saw at the Gewerbe-Institut in Berlin, which had been founded in 1826. Here, the "paramount object" was to create "a race of intelligent and highly cultivated artisans". This was to become Dyce's own attitude towards design education. He firmly believed that a distinction should be preserved between painters and designers. Designers were required to be no more than intelligent artisans. Painters, on the other hand, were expected to be part of and to contribute to cultivated society. This attitude, which had very wide currency, was to offend Dresser when he had established himself as a successful professional designer. He was to become the most outspoken, and indeed the earliest, nineteenth century champion of design as a profession. Dresser called for designers to be educated to a higher level than mere artisans - no matter how "cultivated".

His Drawing Book of the Government School of Design, 1842, was published when he was Director of the institution. In this book, Dyce set out, with the aid of simple diagrams, to show how ornament could be generated by those with no proven ability for artistic invention. Dyce provided students with symmetrical skeletal outlines which could be clothed with foliage - these were to be known to generations as "Dyce's outlines." There was, obviously, no great novelty in this idea. It could readily be claimed that this was the method by which carvers in classical times had organised ornament on buildings or sarcophagi. But, for all that, Dyce's book was one of the very first to have been addressed to the new generation of designers who would be faced with the insatiable demand for novelty that industrialisation had brought in its wake.

Henry Cole, 1808-82

Cole was a figure of great importance. He was a confidant of Albert, the Prince Consort, and was to play the major rôle in the successful organisation of the Great Exhibition of 1851.

He was instrumental in the founding of the South Kensington Museum - later the Victoria and Albert Museum - which was the earliest museum of applied art. Cole's Journal of Design and Manufactures, 1849-52, was the first British publication to seriously consider the matter of design for industry. It was Cole, incidentally, who was the inventor of the Christmas card.

Figure 5. Sir Henry Cole

Richard Redgrave, 1808-88

Richard Redgrave, 1808-1888, was a painter whose works share something with those of the Pre-Raphaelites. He was able, with great skill, to adapt and synthesise the ideas of the thinkers who were associated with the School of Design. Redgrave's thinking was to be encapsulated in his A Manual of Design. The book, though not in fact published until 1876, gives an accurate impression of the ideology upon which underpinned School of Design teaching

Redgrave claimed in A Manual of Design:

> " ....style implies some dominating influence reflecting the mind of the age in all its works, and therefore presumes a certain character throughout .... the primary elements of style are constructive .... the design of a work must have regard to construction, and consequently to proper use of materials, prior to the consideration of its ornamental decoration .... as construction necessitates a proper consideration of materials, and as each material has its own mode of manufacture .... design must be bad which applies indiscriminately the same constructive forms or ornamental treatments to materials differing in their nature and application ...."

Redgrave's language, it is true, is evidently not the language of the twentieth century functionalist. Nor was ornament to be discarded from the designer's vocabulary - as it was to be, in such a peremptory way, by the modernists. But here, in Redgrave's theoretical pronouncements, are the essential foundations of Dresser's thinking about design - one calls to mind the Latin adage "out of nothing comes nothing". Dresser's approach to design most definitely has its roots firmly in the Redgrave era.

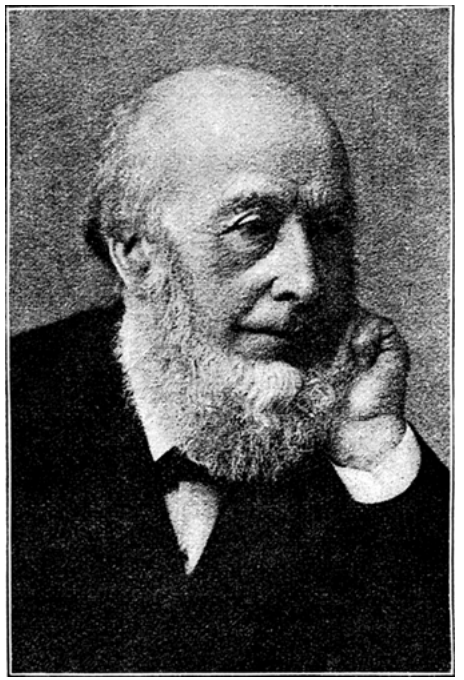

Figure 6. R. Redgrave, C.B., R.A.

Figure 7. (Left) The Supplementary Report on Design was published after the Great Exhibition of 1851 in order that the principles of good decorative design could be disseminated. The authorities at the Government School of Design felt that much of the British design at the Great Exhibition was inferior to that of foreign countries. Redgrave - under the influence of Owen Jones, no doubt - particularly admired the fabrics of India. Indian design was copied by students for a generation. It is quite certain that Dresser was influenced by the designs illustrated here.

Figure 8. (Top) Design for a woven fabric, c1870. Based largely on an Indian design illustrated in Redgrave's *Supplementary report on Design*, 1852, p12.

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Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin, 1812-52

Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin was the most outspoken polemicist of the revived mediaeval style. His satirical drawings in Contrasts: or a Parallel between the Noble Edifices of the Middle Ages, and the corresponding buildings of the present day; shewing the Present Decay of Taste, 1836, of what he saw as the enervated Classicism of the architecture his era, won over many of the best young architects of the times to the Gothic style. He was a recent and impassioned convert to Roman Catholicism. A missionary zeal informed this and, indeed all, his writings.

Dresser's early floral decoration - of the kind found in his *The Art of Decorative Design*, 1862, is obviously closely modelled upon the plant motifs found in Pugin's Floriated Ornament, of 1849, in which Pugin had based his mediaevalising designs upon the wood-cut representations of plants in an early printed German herbal. (Jacob Theodor Bergzaben's Eicones plantarum .... omnis generis, 1590.) Though Dresser would have no truck with mediaevalism, Pugin, together with Owen Jones, must be accounted as the two greatest influences upon Dresser the designer.

Figures 9a-d are from the Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, 2nd ed. Pugin's book, which went into a number of editions, was one of the most influential publications to have come out of the whole of the Gothic Revival. It was in the School of Design Library and Dresser is certain to have known of it. Towards the end of his career, Dresser used to speak very highly of Pugin.

Figure 9a. Frontispiece of Pugin's Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume

Figure 9b. (Top Left) Design for church decoration with the monogram of the Virgin Mary. The authorities at the School of Design, where Dresser was trained, followed Pugin's - and Owen Jones' - insistence that decoration should be "flat" and never naturalistic or "imitative".

Figure 9c. (Top Right) Flat, "conventional", decoration for a church interior. Such motifs could also be used for vestments. (From *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*.)

Figure 9d. (Left) The end piece of Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume. Pugin's ecclesiastical decorations for Roman Catholic churches were very widely influential, even beyond the Catholic church. George Gilbert Scott, William Butterfield and, much later, the Arts and Crafts architect C F A Voysey, were among his admirers. These plates are taken from the second edition (1846), published in London by Henry G Bohn. The first edition is dated 1844.

Owen Jones, 1809-74

Owen Jones, 1809-74, was also an architect. He also published prolifically. Among his many books was the finest collection of ornament to appear in the nineteenth century - The Grammar of Ornament, 1856. Jones is generally said to have been the originator of the "illuminated book". These were books printed in colour, by the chromolithographic process, and elaborately decorated, or "illuminated". Books to be treated as art-objects rather than books to be read. (Holman Hunt, in his moralising painting "The Awakening Conscience", 1853, in which a young "kept woman" contemplates the abandonment of her sinful life, includes such a book as a symbol of degeneracy and vulgar ostentation.)

Dresser was a great admirer of Jones' illuminated pages. Some of the plates in his *The Art of Decorative Design*, though far from unoriginal, pay evident homage to Jones. Unlike Pugin, Jones drew his inspiration principally from the decoration of the Eastern nations - the Islamic world, India, China .... Jones was to call for an "intelligent and imaginative eclecticism". This would solve the dilemma of finding a style which was appropriate for the nineteenth century.

Owen Jones died on April 19th, 1874, at the age of sixty-five. He was undoubtedly the most important single individual to influence Dresser. Dresser must have known him personally - he would certainly have met Jones at the time he was preparing plate XCVIII for Jones' Grammar of Ornament (Fig 13a). Jones was a personal friend of the writer Georg Eliot (Mary Ann Evans), 1819-80 and her consort G H Lewes, 1817-78. Owen Jones moved in far more intellectually exalted social circles than Dresser.

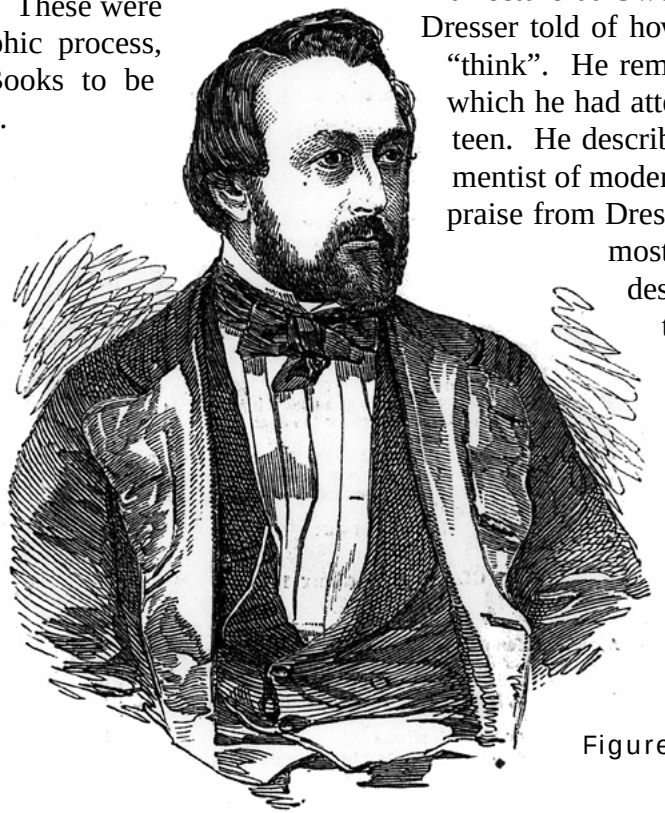


Figure 10. Owen Jones

In a lecture at Owen Jones' Memorial Exhibition, Dresser told of how Jones had first taught him to "think". He remembered five lectures by Jones which he had attended in 1849 when he was fifteen. He described Jones as the "greatest ornamentist of modern times" - this was indeed great praise from Dresser who was himself one of the most accomplished ornamental designers of the nineteenth century. Dresser purchased a number of Jones' drawings after his death which were sold - after his own death - to the Victoria and Albert Museum where they can now be studied in the Print Room.

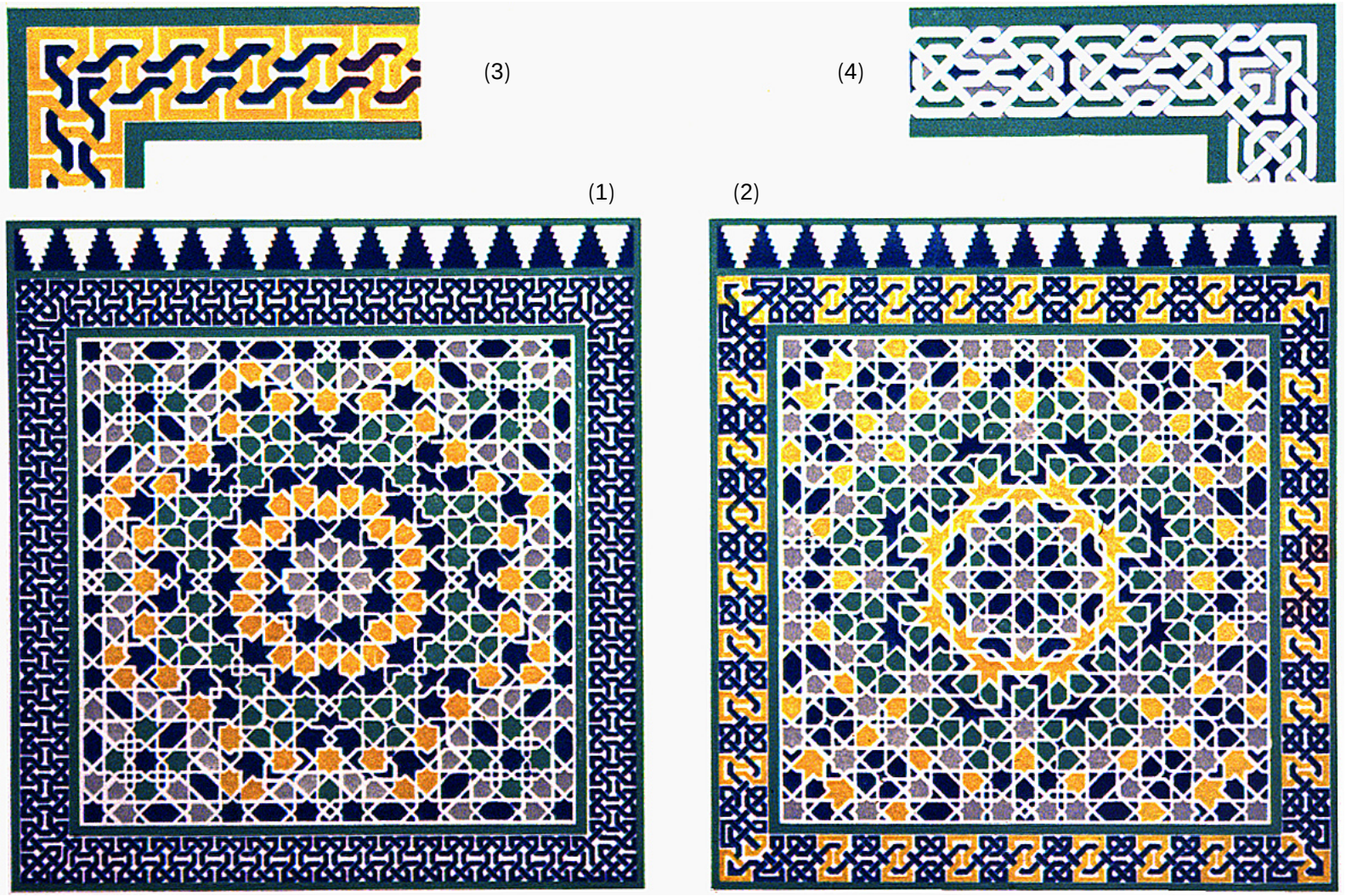


Figure 11. Plate 24 from the "Alhambra" by Owen Jones. Jones' and Goury's documentation of the Alhambra was the first systematic study of a major Islamic building. Although the publication, done at Jones' own expense, was a commercial failure, the large two volume book was greatly admired. Ruskin, predictably, disliked Islamic decoration, which he thought too mechanistic. The authorities at the School of Design - where Dresser was trained - purchased a copy of the work. It seems likely that he would have known it in his youth. From *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, published by Owen Jones, 1842-45, London.

Original caption reads: "Plate 24 Salón de Comares. (1) Ceramic *alicatado* dados on the W wall (see Figs. 169, 191–194). (2) Ceramic *alicatado* dados on the E wall (see Figs. 172, 173, 185–190). (3) and (4) Borders of the dados in the Salón de Comares. (See Chapters 19, 20)"

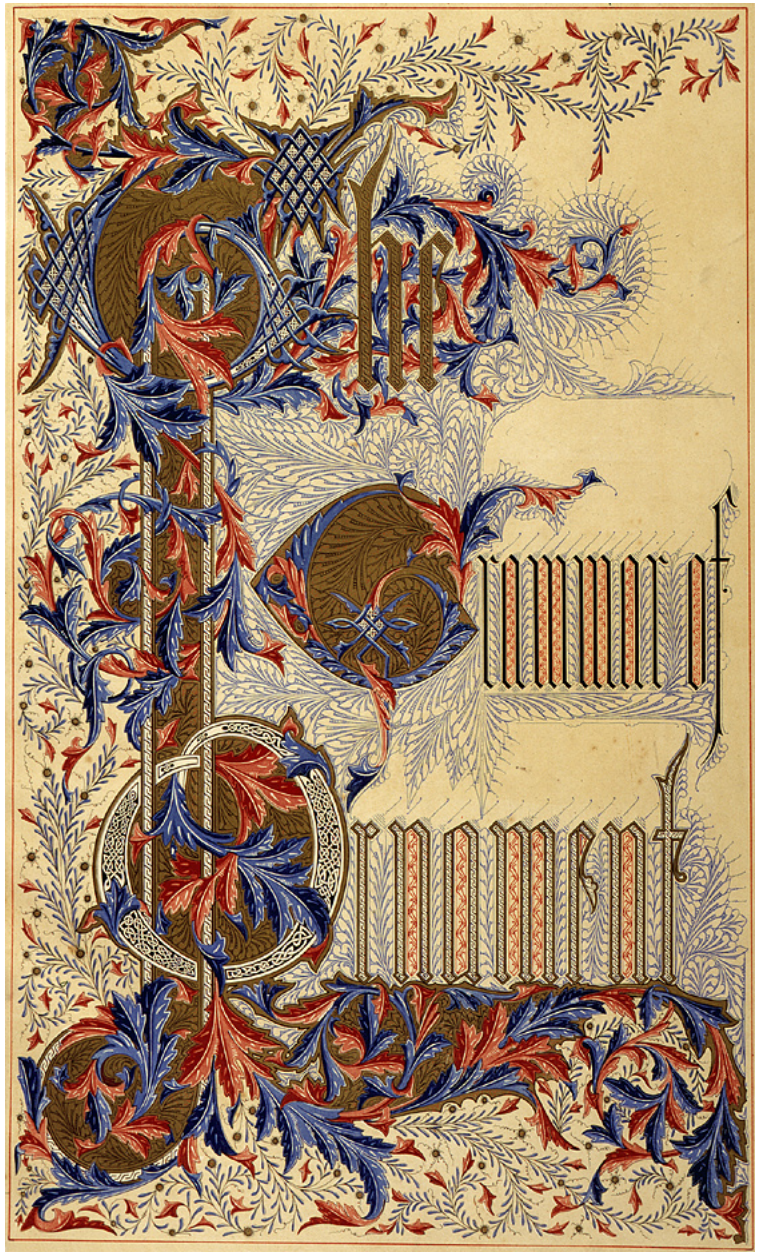


Figure 12a. Frontispiece, Grammar of Ornament

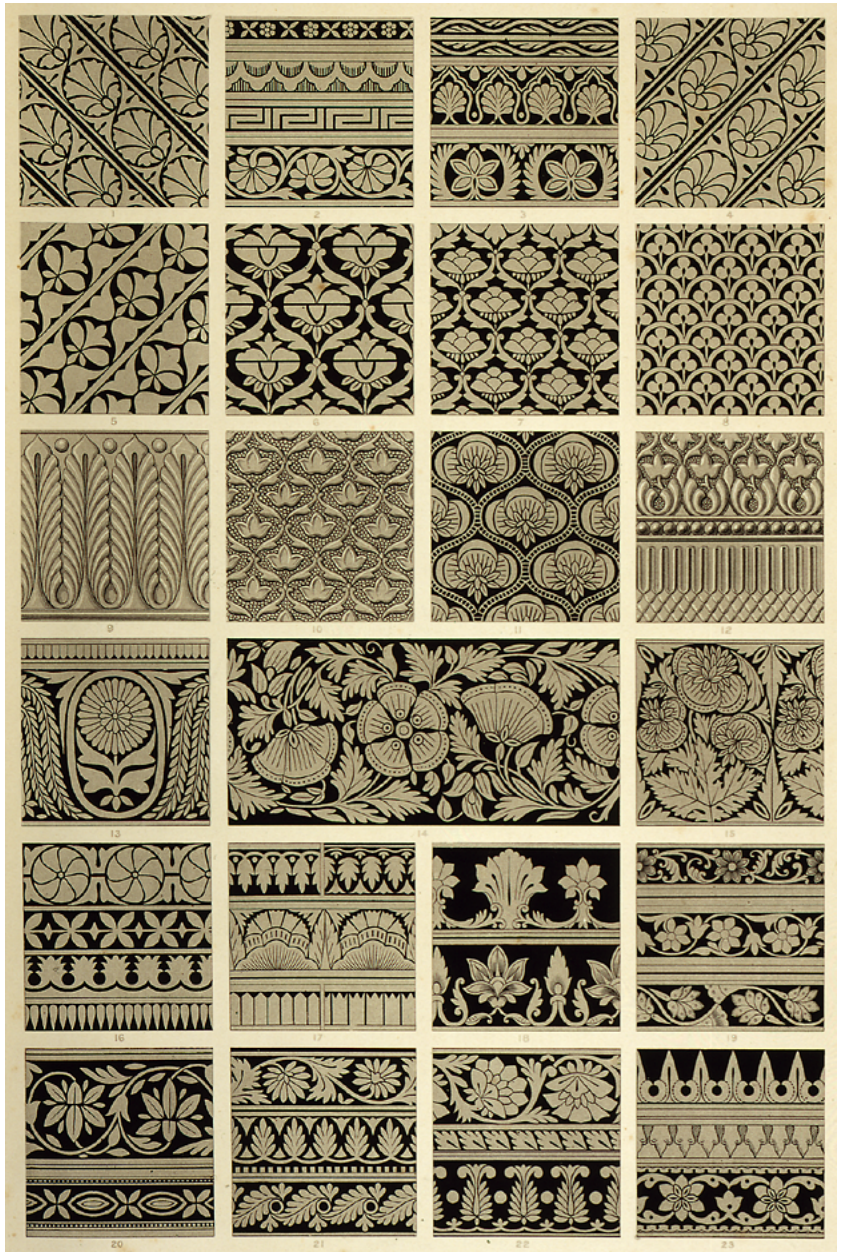


Figure 12b. Plate IXL (Indian No. 1), Grammar of Ornament

Dresser's Marriage to Thirza Perry

Dresser was one of the most successful students at the School of Design and he was the winner of many prizes and a number of scholarships and showed great promise. He would certainly have envisaged a successful career for himself. He married before he was twenty - not the action of a person so evidently ambitious one might have thought. He married Thirza Perry, who was three years older than he was, on May 24th, 1854, in the Parish Church of Islington - he was living in the same parish at this time. A child was born to them less than three months after the marriage and it can be surmised that Thirza's family insisted that a marriage took place. Her family came from Shropshire, but she was apparently residing in London where her father was a "City Missionary". City Missionaries were men - invariably from ordinary social backgrounds - who worked as lay missionaries amongst the urban poor. They were interdenominational evangelists. They warned of the evils of alcohol, spoke of familial obligations and extolled the joys of salvation. They were not allowed, however, to administer the sacraments and were actually dismissed if they did so. The Perrys were a family closely associated with missionary work and no less than four Perrys had served with the London City Mission. We can assume Christopher and Thirza's marriage, despite the fact that it probably an enforced one, became a happy one. Thirteen children were to be born to them - five boys and eight girls. Thirza outlived Christopher by some years and died at the age of eighty in Nassau Road, Barnes, after having been cared for by her daughter Nellie.

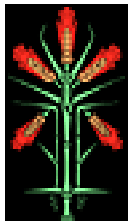
Botany

On his marriage certificate Dresser had described himself, perhaps optimistically, as "artist". This might well be thought of as positive evidence of where his true ambitions lay. Soon, however, in 1855, he was to be teaching scientific botany to design students. The modest income from this activity would have provided a young couple enough to live on in reasonable comfort.

How Dresser actually came to teach botany needs some explanation. He had, of course, painted the flowers which the other aspiring designers had at Somerset House. We know that he was singularly gifted at this. But there is more to botany than an ability to make attractive pictures of plants. It is known that Dresser collected plants for Kew Gardens - rare examples of native British plants, in particular. He did not travel abroad until much later. He was never, in fact, to take part in a botanical surveying expedition.

It is inevitable that Dresser would have met the Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, - Sir William Jackson Hooker, 1785-1865, who was Director between 1841 and 1865. He would also have encountered his son Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker,

1817-1911, Assistant Director of Kew from 1855. Dresser, as one of the most accomplished of School of Design students, would have undoubtedly come to their notice, or even come to them with fulsome recommendations.



Dresser as a Scientific Botanist

Dresser was almost certainly encouraged to take up scientific botany by the Hookers. They could well have permitted him to consult such botanical reference books as there were at Kew. In the 1850s, it should be remembered, it was possible to study a science without attending a university - indeed there were very few institutions in Europe at which botanical science could be studied. The era of the self-taught, dedicated, amateur scientist was far from over. Charles Darwin, no less, who had attended Edinburgh University for merely a couple of years, was to observe in his Autobiography : "there are no advantages and many disadvantages in lectures compared with reading". Dresser, like Darwin before him, must have read, and read avidly.

Dresser's speciality in scientific botany was morphology - "the science of form". This has a specific meaning within the context of nineteenth century natural science. Dresser was interested, like many contemporaries, in the relationship of the organs of plants, one to another. This was precisely the area of botany which had fascinated J W von Goethe, 1749-1832, the

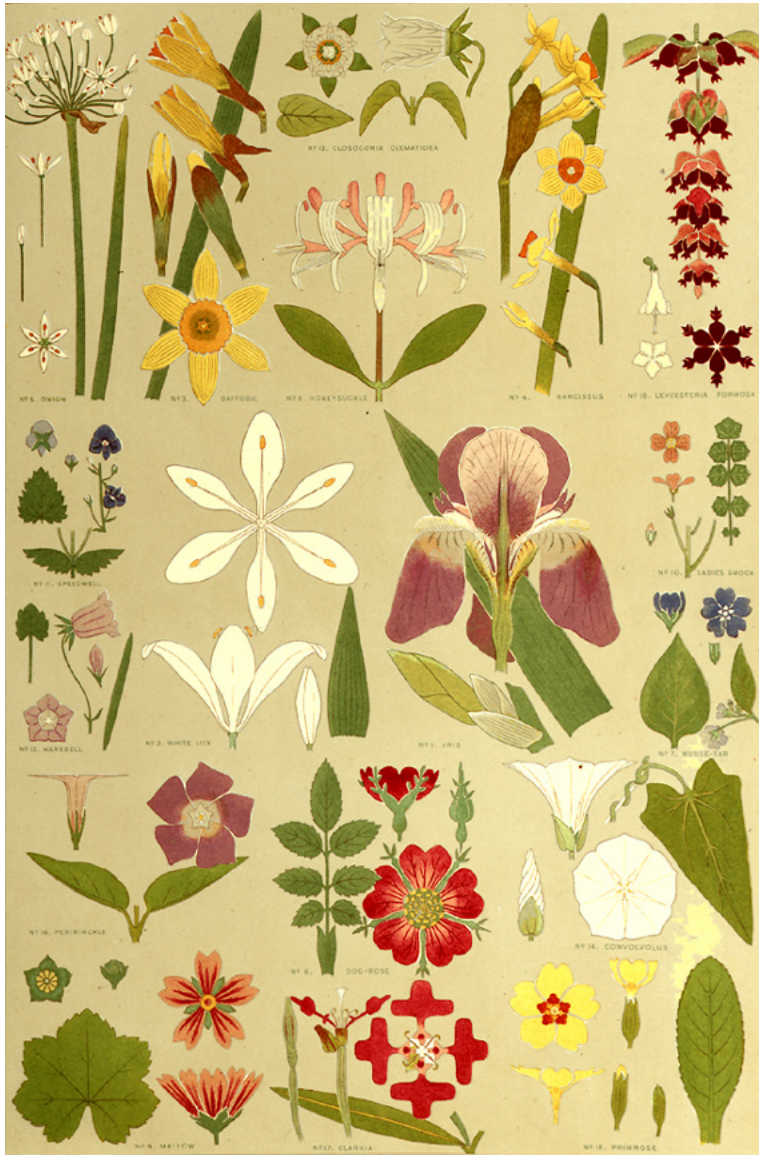


Figure 13a. Plate 98, Grammar of Ornament.
(prepared by Dresser for Owen Jones)

greatest of the German romantic poets. Goethe told of how flowers were actually leaves which had metamorphosed - as if, perhaps, to fulfil some divinely ordained destiny. Metamorphosis had both a literal and a metaphorical meaning for Goethe.

The concept of Goethean metamorphosis was widely accepted and had a liberating influence upon the thinking of naturalists. It could be argued that the notion of plants and other living creatures being subject to transformations and modifications over time prompted people to observe the similarities in the skeletal and anatomical structures of different species. The development of the fœtus - through its varying successive stages - could also be viewed as a form of metamorphosis. It is evident from his earliest writings that Charles Darwin was greatly exhilarated by the possibility of profound and fundamental affinities across the boundaries of species. He cited, in an essay of 1842, such significant parallels as the skeletal structure of the wing of a bat and the hand of a human being. Darwin was to go on, from such modest initial speculations, to build one of the most revolutionary and influential of all theoretical constructs - evolution. In Darwinism, however, blind forces - random mutation and the survival of the fittest - were to be factors of far greater significance than some unknowable divinely-inspired will to form.

Dresser, on the other hand, was to engage in no more than small-scale morphological speculations. Among these was his theory that the leaf was actually “a modified branch” (1859). Observe, however, the more than passing similarity between this and Goethe’s thinking.

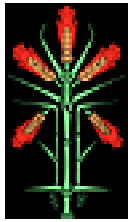
Figure 13b. Plate 99, Grammar of Ornament.
(Possibly by Walter Fitch)

Dresser's Doctorate From Jena

Dresser, for all the rather archaic quality of his thinking, was an able botanist. He wrote three successful books on botany and presented several papers before the leading scientific societies of the day. He was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society as well as the Edinburgh Botanical Society. In 1859 he was awarded a doctorate by the University of Jena, in Eastern Germany, which had the most advanced botanical faculty in Europe. This was, by any standards, a considerable honour, for it was at Jena that the renowned Mathias Jakob Schleiden, 1810-82, - perhaps the most influential of nineteenth century scientific botanists - held the Chair. (Schleiden was, with Theodor Schwann, the first scientist to recognise the existence of the plant cell.) Dresser was awarded the doctorate in absentia (this indicates that he was not a student at Jena) for his two books on botany - *The Rudiments of Botany* and *Unity in Variety*, both of which had been published in 1859 and a comparatively short dissertation on morphology. Dresser's dissertation can be seen, to this day, in the archives of the University of Jena. Dresser also held professorships in medical botany at two important London teaching hospitals. In the nineteenth century, it should be explained, all medical students were required to recognise the different species of plants used in medicine as well as to understand their therapeutic properties.

The Chair of Botany at University College London

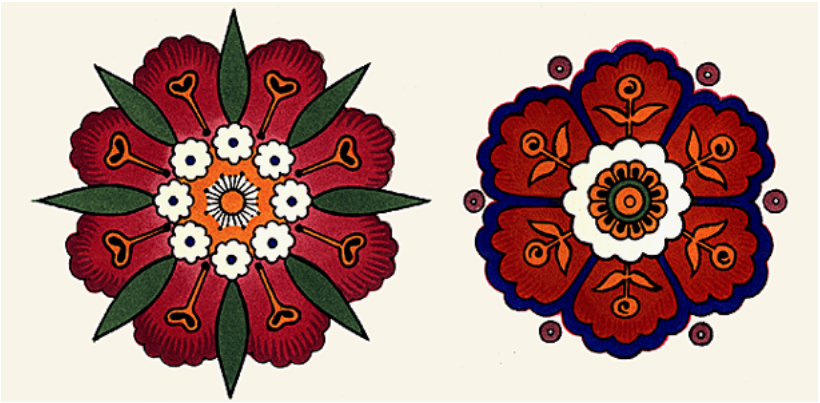
Dresser was in 1860, to apply for the Chair of Botany at University College London and, in his pursuit of this, assembled a most impressive portfolio of testimonials from leading scientists, including the Hookers of Kew. The Chair went to Daniel Oliver, 1830-1910, who was far closer to the Hookers than Dresser was. It is indeed fortunate for us that Dresser was unsuccessful in his candidature. It was, probably, this balking of an ambition - and we know that he was always highly ambitious - which prompted Dresser to take up design to the exclusion of his other activities.



The Importance of Botany in Dresser's Career

What impact did the botanical episode have upon Dresser's career? The study of different varieties of plants would certainly have supplied him with an inexhaustible supply of decorative motifs. No contemporary designer had quite this advantage. On another level, the almost infinite variety of plant species would have suggested to him that he could himself emulate nature in her fecundity of invention. In *The Art of Decorative Design*, 1862, he was to write:

> "The designer's mind must be like the vital force of the plant, ever developing itself into forms of beauty, yet while thus free to produce, still in all cases governed by unalterable laws ...."



The acquisition of a scientific methodology, through his botanical studies and through his associations with major scientists, was also of great value to Dresser. In a very real sense he approached design as a scientist - as the following remark, which is also taken from *The Art of Decorative Design* reveals:

> "In ornament, as in science, it is necessary to have recourse to an analytical method ...."

On the most mundane level, teaching botany - and Dresser had, as we have seen, several professorships at prestigious institutions - would have given him a financial security which would have given him the opportunity to formulate his theoretical stances on design. Most of his fellow designers would have been too preoccupied with the task of earning a living to speculate upon the theory or the methodology of design. Dresser's reputation as a theorist would have preceded his reputation as designer. His writings would, no doubt, have drawn manufacturers to seek his services.

Figure 14. Plate XII, figures 2 and 3 from T*he Art of Decorative Design*. These were used to illustrate the principle of alternation, in which the leaves of successive concentric rings fall between, not over, each other. These flowers show the presence of the principle in the design motifs of other cultures (Indian).

The London International Exhibition of 1862

Although the 1862 Exhibition was much larger than the Great Exhibition of 1851 it was never destined to become part of national folklore. Nevertheless, the exhibition is extremely important in the history of design. Morris and Company exhibited for the first time at the 1862 Exhibition. And here the British public had their first opportunity of seeing Japanese manufactures exhibited by Sir Rutherford Alcock, the first British Consul in Japan. Dresser was to observe later that he had purchased a number of Alcock's exhibits. His interest in Japanese design can be traced to this.

Figure 15. Part of Rutherford Alcock's Japanese collection which was shown at the 1862 Exhibition. This was the first occasion at which the British public could see Japanese manufactured goods. Designers and architects were impressed - important architects like William Burges, E W Godwin and W Eden Nesfield especially so. Dresser purchased many of Alcock's exhibits and was to retain a lifelong enthusiasm for Japanese design.

1862: The Beginning of Dresser's Career as a Designer

In an article "*The Art of Decorative Design*", in The Builder, of March 1862, Dresser made the following revealing observation:

> "While attempting to illustrate the possibility of embodying knowledge in ornamental forms, the author.... must ask every indulgence, as he is not professionally engaged as an ornamentist, though at special request he

has furnished many designs to the manufacturers .... for the forthcoming Exhibition - perhaps as many as any individual; yet, as he has to meet the requirements of an active scientific life, it cannot be expected that he presents thoughts clothed in the best garb or decorative forms. He must content himself with giving forth a few ideas for others to clothe in the richness of their knowledge."

This suggests that Dresser's career as a commercial designer probably began at about this time. Although, even by 1858, he is known to have designed carpets for an important furnishing company - Jackson & Graham of Oxford Street, as well as a wallpaper for John Woollams of Marylebone Lane. (See *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Works of Art exhibited by Students of the Schools of Art* .... London, 1858). As the father of a young family Dresser would have been prudent enough to continue with his career as a lecturer in botany. It is worth noting, however, that he wrote nothing on botany after 1860.

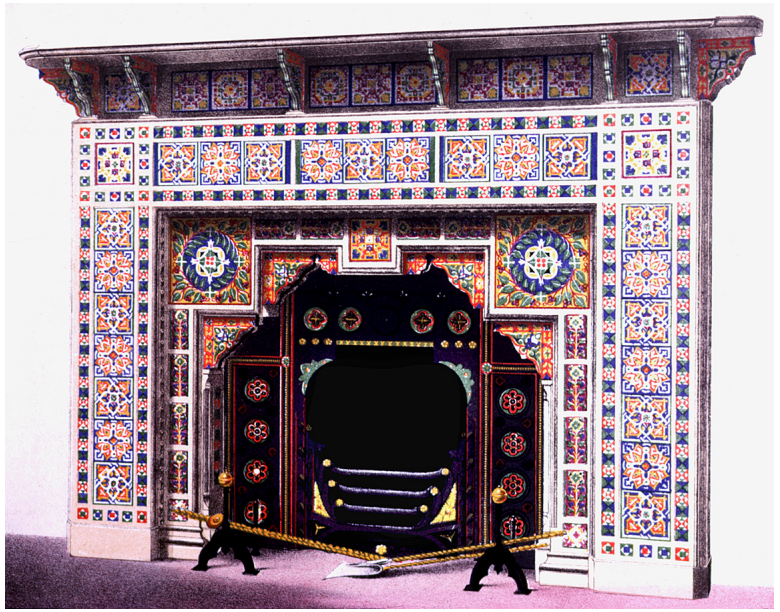


Figure 16.
Fireplace designed by Matthew Digby Wyatt, 1820-77. Wyatt was a leading architect and a member of the Owen Jones circle.It is not inconceivable that Dresser - young and virtually unknown - collaborated in this design. From J B Waring: *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition*, 1862. London, Day & Son, 1863.

Figure 17.
A carpet by Lapworth and Company. Possibly by Dresser. From J B Waring: *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition*, 1862. London, Day & Son, 1863.

The Launching of Dresser's Career as a Writer on Design

Dresser launched himself as a writer on design in 1862. He perfectly understood that the International Exhibition would focus a good deal of attention upon design. He was thirty-one and known principally, at the time, as a professor of botany. He published *The Art of Decorative Design* and *The Development of Ornamental Art in the International Exhibition* .... to coincide with the exhibition.

The Art of Decorative Design, 1862

The *Art of Decorative Design* is probably the first book in which an author was to suggest how ornamental motifs could actually be invented or originated. Earlier books on design, like Owen Jones' incomparably beautiful Grammar of Ornament, 1856, are invariably compilations of historic examples -"pattern-books" as they were often described. Historicism, though generally of a far less sophisticated kind than Jones', characterised much of nineteenth century design.

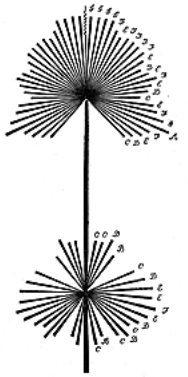


Figure 19.
The God Save the Queen Anthemion

Figure 18. Cover, *Art of Decorative Design*

There is little in *The Art of Decorative Design* which could be described as having been borrowed from the past. Dresser, innovator that he was, suggested basing designs on simple scientific observations. He illustrates, for example, an anthemion based upon the lengths of strings needed to play "God Save the Queen". (The anthemion is rather like the palmette, or palm leaf, which formed a part of many friezes. Figs 19, 20a.) Dresser also suggested observing the pattern of the eddies produced by resting a tea-spoon on the surface of a cup of tea and reproducing these as decoration.

Figures 20a, b. 18a shows a more typical specimen of an anthemion (Plate 11-2). 18b is perhaps inspired by the patterns seen on a vibrating Chladni plate (Plate 10-4). Both plates taken from *The Art of Decorative Design*.

Dresser suggested another source of motifs which derives from Chladni's popular experiments in which an infinite variety of mysterious and delightful symmetrical patterns could be produced when a square brass plate, covered with light sand, was stroked with a violin bow. (Chladni, a German, was a late eighteenth century pioneer of acoustic science.) Another of Dresser's suggestions was to use mirror writing to generate motifs. Some of the ideas in *The Art of Decorative Design* may seem quaint, or even naïve. But, in a number of ways, they are not altogether unreminiscent of the creative games which Paul Klee advocated in his Bauhaus *Pädagogisches Skizzenbuch* (Pedagogical Sketchbook) of 1925. Here we see "an active line on a walk", "the water wheel and hammer" .... etc.

Dresser's analysis of tessellation was one of the earliest to have been published. Here he demonstrated how decoration can be built up out of a variety of repeated interlocking units. An important aspect of *The Art of Decorative Design* was that it served to demystify the whole process of designing.

The Athenaeum, an important critical journal, thought rather well of Dresser's book:

> "Those who desire to have a concise exposition of the principles of decorative design, such as are held at this period will find Dr. Dresser's book a genial aid. His style is simple. The reader may make himself master of the leading points of the subject, and be enabled to decide what is good or bad in decorative art according to the received canons .... that taste is not a mere chance-work or haphazard any reader of this book may satisfy himself ...."

The Art-Journal was far less than enthusiastic:

> "Admitting that decorative art of the best and truest order has its foundation in botanical forms, we are bound to admit that Dr. Dresser's theories .... startle us; they are so opposed to everything we have been accustomed to regard as beautiful in ornament ...."

Dresser's innovations seldom pleased contemporary critics. It is thus the more remarkable that he continued to publicise his experiments in design.

Figure 21. Thomas Moore's poem of the Peri's return to paradise was very popular with Victorians. (A Peri is a celestial, super-human, being in Persian mythology - initially malevolent, the Peri came to represent goodness as well as beauty.) "Illuminated" compositions by Jones had a profound influence upon Dresser. The form and style of compositions such as "The Evening Star" in Dresser's *The Art of Decorative Design*, 1862, (plate XVI), strongly support this assertion. Owen Jones (and Thomas Moore, poet) Paradise and the Peri. London, Day & Son, nd, (1860) Pages illuminated by Owen Jones with illustrations by Albert Warren

Development Of Ornamental Art at the International Exhibition, 1862

Dresser also published a critical account of the manufactures on display at the 1862 Exhibition - the ponderous title of the book indicates its nature : *The Development of Art* at the International Exhibition, being a concise statement of the laws which govern the production and application of ornament, with references to the best examples. It was a slim paper-covered book, priced at a shilling, which visitors could take with them to the exhibition and read Dresser's comments with the exhibits in view. The anonymous *Athenaeum* critic spoke of it as adapting "it may be a little conceitedly, the propositions of Mr. Owen Jones and others". This is partly true. Dresser's theoretical utterances are, for the most part, typical of his era. It is the radical application of prevailing principles in his designs which distinguishes Dresser from his contemporaries.

Link to The Decoration of Flat Surfaces

1863-1867

There is really not very much precise information about Dresser's life or career between these years. Three children, it is true, were born to Thirza Dresser - her fifth, sixth and seventh children - Rosa Ada, May 1864, Florence Maud, December 1865, and Stanley Lewis, June 1867.A large family would have meant that Dresser would have had to work hard to keep them in reasonable style. His earnings from lecturing on botany to the design students at South Kensington, which were about eighty pounds for 1863, would have supplemented his income from supplying designs to manufacturers. On Stanley Lewis' birth certificate, interestingly, Dresser still described himself as "Professor of Botany".

An article by Dresser - "The Decoration of Flat Surfaces", based on a lecture of May 1864 which he had given at the Architectural Exhibition - was reproduced in the monthly magazine The Art-Student. He pointed out the desirability of designs being "adapted" to their needs - "adaptation", said Dresser, "is one of the first laws of nature". He does not, of course, openly refer to Charles Darwin, whose theories were still highly contentious in the 1860s. But one still feels that Dresser's brand of functionalism was very likely to have been reinforced by Darwinian thinking and, in particular, the conception of the "survival of the fittest". (This well-known term was Herbert Spencer's incidentally.)

1867: The Paris International Exhibition

Dresser visited the 1867 Paris Exhibition to find out what was in vogue in the most fashionable of all cities. He fully understood the need to see what other designers were producing. The great nineteenth century international exhibitions were to play a very important rôle in influencing taste. In the microcosm of the international exhibition it was possible to observe what was then thought of as the most unlikely juxtapositions of cultures - China, Japan, India, the Middle East and, as the century drew towards its end, Latin America, Polynesia and Africa. There was, even by 1867, a developing awareness of the fact that the most diverse human artistic and industrial productions were regulated by consistent, if generally unwritten, rules. Owen Jones, of course, in his universal *Grammar of Ornament*, 1856, was the first person to have recognised this.

Dresser probably went to Paris on his own account and, after studying the exhibits, suggested a series of short critical and descriptive articles to the publisher of *The Chromolithograph* -

Figure 22. Cylindrical vase manufactured by Mintons, 1867. The bronze base is not original and is clearly not by Dresser who abhorred such literal transcriptions of natural forms. This technique of manufacture was described as cloisonné – Mintons were one of the leading exponents of cloisonné ceramics. Elkington & Company, with whom Dresser was also closely associated, produced imitations of Chinese cloisonné in the 1870s by means of a closely guarded secret process.

a topical weekly magazine. It was something of a novelty as each issue of *The Chromolithograph* had coloured illustrations. It was probably the first British weekly to appear in colour. Colour printing - by chromolithography - was labour-intensive and expensive. The publishers of *The Chromolithograph* showed some daring in publishing in colour.

The Paris International Exhibition was one of the most extensive and impressive of all the nineteenth century exhibitions. Something like eleven million people visited it - more than twice the number of visitors to the Great Exhibition of 1851. The 1867 Exhibition was housed in an innovative structure which was elliptical in plan. Sixteen radiating "streets" - the rue d'Afrique, the rue de Flandres .... - traversed the concentric galleries.

Dresser's critical opinions are highly formalistic and this aesthetic approach can be seen to derive largely from Owen Jones' Propositions in *The Grammar of Ornament*. It must also be mainly from Jones that Dresser's quasi-scientific principles derive. One series of remarks, however, in his second article, in which he discussed a candelabrum at the exhibition, by the Parisian makers Miroy Frères, is worth reproducing:

> "Angularity .... is stimulating: rounded forms are soothing. The crispness of the thistle-leaf is exciting, while the rounded forms of the banana-leaf are soothing." Dresser concludes of the candelabrum: "..... it is graceful .... it manifests vigour and vitality, analogous in ornament to life in animals and plants .... its parts are judiciously 'massed' .... we have a touch of the grotesque which appeals to the sense of humour."

In these remarks, which might appear arcane at first reading, are encapsulated some of Dresser's most cherished enthusiasms - the lessons of nature, associationism - forms generating emotional responses that is, the evocation of vigour and vitality - as a representation of his era, one conjectures. There was also the introduction of humour - via the grotesque - into design. How much more complex is the real Dresser than a mere harbinger of modernism - as some historians have misguidedly seen him.

The writer George Augustus Sala (1828-1895), now largely forgotten, was well known during his time for his wit (Humor, it seems seldom survives a generation.). In 1868 he published a guide to the Paris Exhibition of 1867 entitled "Notes and Sketches of the Paris Exhibition" in which he spoke highly of Dresser:

> "I must not omit to mention these Indian Adminsters of Brinton and Lewis - to whom a Gold Medal was deservedly awarded- can be manufactured at about one-half the price charged for real Indian carpets ....the designer of these beautiful and Luxurious carpets is Dr. Christopher Dresser, a gentleman whose name, it is true, does not appear in any one of the exhibition catalogues, although it might fairly be affixed to a score of the most remarkable productions in the Champ de Mars. For some years past the taste and skill of Dr. Dresser have been put into requisition by some of the leading manufacturers both of England and the Continent; both as a designer of models and patterns, and as a general 'art adviser' ...."

Here we have the first reference to the fact that Dresser was designing for an international clientèle. He must, surely, have been the earliest designer to do so.

1869: Tower Cressy, Campden Hill, Kensington

In this year Dresser acquired a large six-floor house on Campden Hill then, as now, an expensive quarter of London. Tower Cressy was distinctly ostentatious and suggests that Dresser was all too happy to advertise his commercial successes with an obviously costly house. It was a four storey Italianate building which had been built in 1854 by Thomas Page, the bridge designer. A neighbour was the wealthy banker W C Alexander, who lived at nearby Aubrey House -Alexander was an important patron of James McNeill Whistler. The Dressers lived at Tower Cressy until 1882, when, as yet inexplicably, his fortunes appear to have declined. It was destroyed by bombing during the Second World War. (Fig 23.)

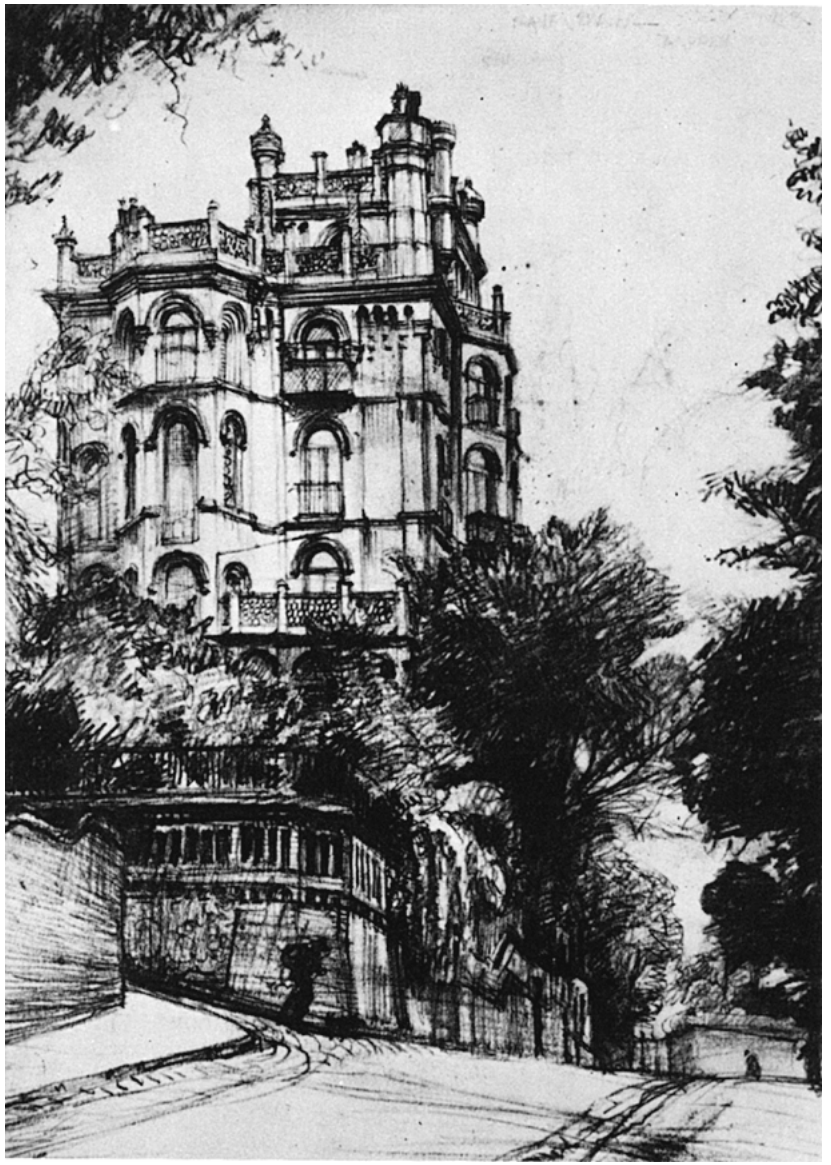


Figure 23. Dresser's house, Tower Cressy, in Aubrey Road, Campden Hill. Built in 1854 by Thomas Page (1803-77), who was the architect of Westminster Bridge. Dresser lived there between 1869-82. Drawing by Frank L. Emanual (reproduced by kind permission of Kensington Public Library).

1871: "ORNAMENTATION CONSIDERED as HIGH ART"

This was the title of a lecture delivered before the Royal Society of Arts on 8th February 1871. This was Dresser's most original contribution to aesthetic theory - although there are certainly elements in the lecture which may seem somewhat simplistic to us. Dresser daringly argued that ornament should be accorded a higher status than pictorial art. Pictorial artists copied nature, he claimed, while ornamentists relied upon the imagination. The faculty of imagination was demonstrably higher, declared Dresser, than the imitative faculty. It is possible to argue that, by this statement, Dresser can be claimed as a very early prophet of abstractionism. Certainly some of his ornamental designs transcend the merely decorative and actually engage the mind. (For example, the composition which evokes nightfall - the Evening Star, plate XVI, *The Art of Decorative Design*, 1862.; Fig. 24, below.)

Figure 20 shows a decorative composition by Dresser which probably dates from the late 1860s. Dresser published this, however, in The Furniture Gazette of 20th November, 1880 - at which date he was Art Editor of the journal. The semi-pictorial composition illustrates a verse by W B O Peabody, a minor poet, whose works are now largely forgotten.

The moon is up;
How calm and slow
She wheels above the hill.
The weary winds begin to blow,
And all the world lies still.

The influence of Owen Jones' "illuminated" books is clearly apparent. So, too, is the influence of Japanese pictorial and decorative composition. But one of Dresser's main intentions appears to have been to use the lecture to call for a greater recognition of the importance of the designer by modern society. Nevertheless, when studying some of the decorative compositions in Dresser's *Studies in Design*, 1874-76, for example, one can not but recognise that at least some of Dresser's ornamental compositions are potent works of non-figurative art. There is a vital, energetic, quality in his ornament - almost the qualities one would expect to find in some of the works of the early twentieth century Italian Futurists, or the British Vorticists, perhaps[1].

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1. Vorticism was the first manifestation of 20th century modernism in British Art. It was essentially the brainchild of Persy Wyndom Lewis (1882-1957). Although he had a number of important cohorts, the Vorticists were in opposition to the Futurists – who they considered essentially naive in their adulation of modern technology. Never the less, the Vorticists adopted some of the mannerisms of the Futurists. The Vorticists "General BLAST" (their periodical) which appeared just before the outbreak of World War I, had a typographic style that is clearly based upon Guillaume Apollinarie's own Futurist manifesto, the *l'Antiradition Futuriste* of 1913. The content of some the first issue of the BLAST is also based upon this manifesto. Vorticist art was angular and mechanistic - although elements of the Futurist art can be seen in it. Affinities between Vorticist art and the stylized ornament of Christopher Dresser are often quite marked. Such affinities, however, are probably best explained by the coincidence, rather than by direct influence.

Figure 24. Plate 16 from *the Art of Decorative Design*, showing the Evening Star.

Figure 25. Shows a decorative composition by Dresser which probably dates from the late 1860s. It was published in *The Furnature Gazette* in 1880. The original is to be found in the Dresser Sketchbook and is one of the few semi-pictorial designs to have survived.

1871 - Design

A number of published references to Dresser's work as a designer exist for this year. He appears in *The Art-Journal Catalogue of the International Exhibition*, 1871, as the designer of a brocades for JW & C Ward of Halifax, Yorkshire. In the accompanying article it is noted that he had also designed carpets for Crossley & Sons, another Halifax manufacturer and the leading British producer of machine-made carpets. Nikolaus Pevsner, in his article "Minor Masters of the XIXth Century: Christopher Dresser, Industrial Designer", in The Architectural Review, volume LXXXI, 1937, recorded that he had, in fact, sent, in 1871, 142 designs to Crossleys. This activity alone would have provided Dresser with what would have amounted to a very decent income for the 1870s.

Dresser, according to Pevsner, was able to command exceptionally high fees for his designs - four guineas (a little over six dollars) for the designs for a cup and saucer - from Mintons, a leading pottery manufacturer (Fig. 26). For carpets he could ask fees of between three guineas (just under five dollars) and ten guineas (just under fifteen dollars).The House Furnisher of July 1, 1871, noted that Dresser had designed a considerable number of wallpapers for the Scottish firm of Catto and McClary.

Figure 26. Cup and saucer manufactured by Mintons (c. 1875), attributed on stylistic grounds to Dresser. Mintons produced a considerable number of designs that were in imitation of Chinese cloisonné metal-work. Owen Jones illustrated many examples of this work in his *Examples of Chinese Ornament ....*, 1867.

Some of Dresser's designs for cast-iron are also shown in the Art-Journal Catalogue. These suggest the collaboration of J Moyr Smith, who had some ability as a designer in the Gothic manner and was also able to draw the human figure with some proficiency. Dresser could never "draw the figure" as a contemporary once observed. Moyr Smith was definitely working for Dresser, or collaborating with him, in 1868. Moyr Smith dedicated his *Studies for Pictures* .... 1868 to Dresser. Ruskin found this book anathema and inscribed "keep this as an example of distortion in (the) modern mind" on the fly-leaf of his own copy. There can be no doubting that Ruskin could have said much the same thing of Dresser's ornament - Moyr Smith was, at this stage, a young disciple of Dresser.

Ruskin would certainly have also disapproved of Dresser's eclecticism, his love of oriental design and, transcending all other criticisms, his all too apparent obsession with machine-like precision. The machine, thought Ruskin, had a dehumanising influence - mechanical-looking design was, in consequence, hateful and to be spurned. Dresser would have been for Ruskin, as Charles Dickens was, a member of what he described, in a

Figure 27. (Above) Copper tray with silver inlay, Benham & Froud, c1885. The formalised peacock is by Moyr Smith (one of Dresser's designers).

Figure 28. (Left) Sweet-meat basket in silver, produced by Hukin & Heath, 1884. Notice its clean modern lines, illustrating Dresser's extraordinary versatility as a designer.

letter of 1870 to his American friend Charles Eliot Norton on Dickens' death, as "a pure modernist" and a representative of what he disparagingly called "the steam-whistle party".

Dresser's earnings must have been considerable by the standards of the early 1870s. He had to support at least ten children, a wife and also pay several servants. (Census returns indicate that there were four servants in Tower Cressy) He also had to pay his assistants. And to maintain a large, expensive, house.

Link to Minor Masters of the XIXth Century

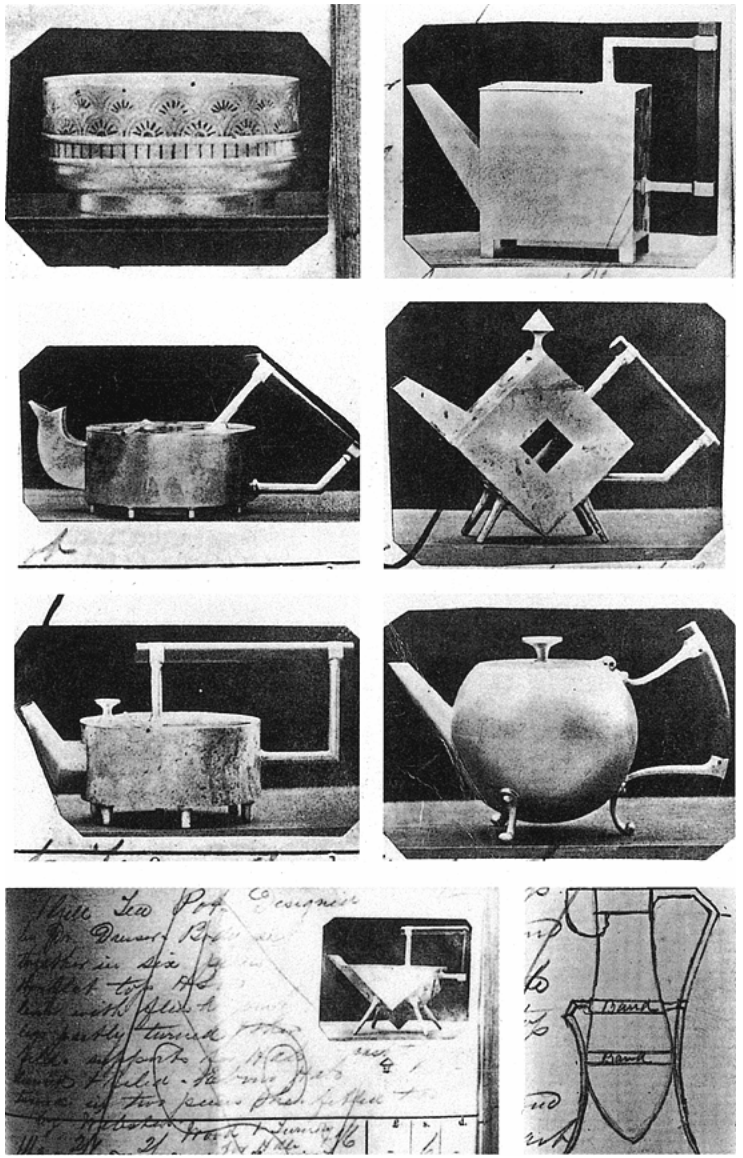

Figure 29. Photographs of designs for silver-plate from the Costing Book of James Dixon & Sons, Limited, Sheffield, c1880. The second tea-pot down on the left exists in at least a single version (Landes Museum, Stuttgart). So, too, does the second tea-pot down on the right hand column (private collection, London), and the top right hand tea-pot (British Museum). The third tea-pot down on the right hand column is known to have gone into limited batch production. The second tea-pot down on the right is now being reproduced by Alessi.

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Production Notes
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About Direct Imagination
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1870-72: The Technical Educator

In his series of 31 articles for *The Technical Educator* Dresser attempted to explain the rudiments of design to a wide audience - ambitious working people or artisans who, for the most part had probably never before given the subject a moment's thought. The articles were later published in book form as *The Principles of Decorative Design* in 1873. The fact that this latter publication appears to have gone into four editions indicates that Dresser must be accounted successful in his aims. Reviewing *The Principles of Decorative Design*, the contents of which had come in its entirety from the *Technical Educator* articles. The *Athenaeum*, of 29th November, 1873, had the following to say.

> "Dr. Dresser enunciates what are called the conventional principles of decoration - those, for the most part, which were laid down by Mr. Owen Jones. The text is a popular one, and its instructions may be useful as an introduction to the simpler principles of art - as applied within very moderate limits, to the decoration of houses, furniture and utensils. The readers of the book will be quite safe following its council."

It can also be said that this is almost certainly the first time that anyone had attempted to explain the processes of design to the general public. If Dresser had achieved nothing else this in itself would have been no mean achievement.

The Technical Educator was a publication which came out in parts - this was a popular nineteenth century publishing ploy which enabled people of modest means to buy fairly lengthy educational works quite cheaply. *The Technical Educator* was a companion publication to T*he Popular Educator* which had begun life in 1850 as *The Working Man's Friend* - "a school, an academy and a university in one". This, of course, was the era of Samuel Smiles and the gospel of "self-help". And it is in this light that Dresser's articles for *The Technical Educator* should be judged.

Dresser was deeply interested in colour. He had learned and imbibed all the elaborate theory of colour-harmony which Owen Jones set out in the 39 Propositions in *The Grammar of Ornament*. Dresser also carried out his own experiments in colour - undoubtedly in a search for variant colour-ways. Some of the highly original colour combinations of the designs in the plates of *Studies in Design* must derive from his colour experiments. He gives us some clues as to what these could have been in *The Technical Educator*:

> "With a review to refining the judgement in colour, get a good colour top (not the so-called colour or chameleon top sold in the shops during the last winter, but the more scientific top procurable of opticians....) and study its beautiful effects. See also the gas tubes illuminated by electricity, as sold in the opticians' shops, and let the prism yield you daily instruction. Soap bubbles may be also be blown and the beautiful colours seen in them carefully noted. These and any other means of cultivating the eye should constantly be resorted to, as by such means only can we become great colourists...."

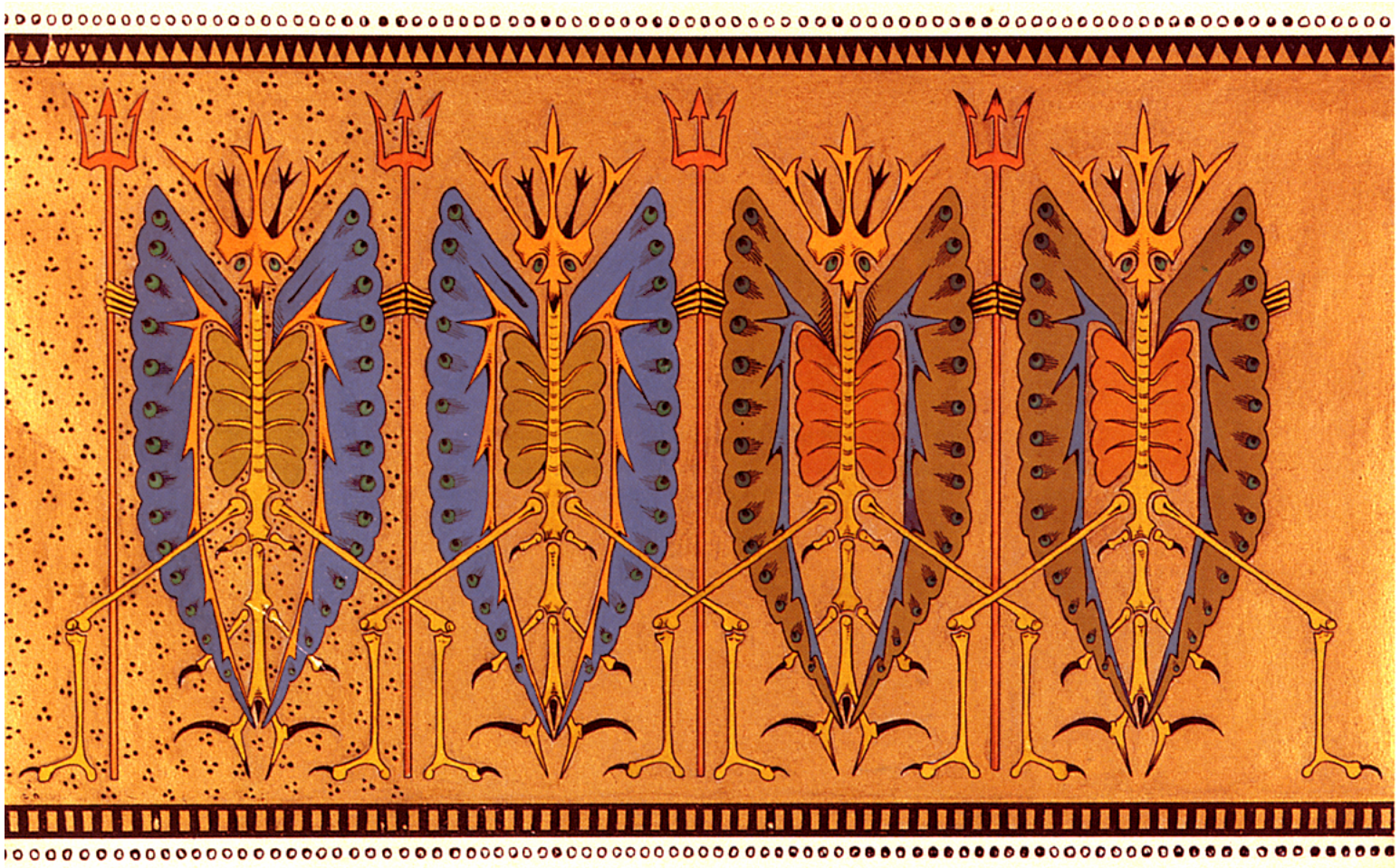

Figure 30. Decoration for cylindrical vase in water-colour and gouache, for Mintons, c1867 (only the central band is shown). The motif, which Dresser called 'an old bogey' is illustrated in his *Technical Educator* articles of 1870-72. Dresser had a great fondness for grotesques, which he illustrated in a number of his publications. Although grotesques, often in the form of gargoyles, abounded during the era of the Gothic Revival, Dresser contrived original and sometimes idiosyncratic versions.

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1874: Studies In Design

This is certainly among the most remarkable of nineteenth century "pattern-books". It could also be claimed that it is unique. Other chromolithographic pattern-books are invariably compilations of historic designs - even Owen Jones' incomparable *Grammar of Ornamen*t, 1856, which aspired to universality, falls into this category. Pugin's *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament*, 1844, and his *Floriated Ornament*, 1849, are based upon mediaeval decoration, although the designs are Pugin's interpretations of mediaeval originals. The same is equally true of E E Viollet-le-Duc's magnificent *Peintures Murales des Chapelles de Notre-Dame de Paris*, 1870, in which Viollet-le-Duc, the greatest champion of the Gothic in Continental Europe, demonstrated, like Pugin, a remarkable capacity to invent in a mediaeval decorative idiom. (Viollet-le-Duc's decorations still survive in the side-chapels of Notre Dame, but time and the smoke of votive candles have dimmed their original polychromatic brilliance.)

Both Pugin's and Viollet-le-Duc's ornament is unequivocally historicist. This is certainly not the case with Dresser's *Studies in Design*. Here, Dresser boldly claimed he had "striven to attain newness". He sought, with rather unconvincing humility,

> "the indulgent criticism of those who seek fresh ideas in this work; for the efforts of realising what is new must ever be attended with the danger of being extravagant and the risk of being eccentric."

There are, it is true, some ornamental pages in *Studies in Design* which could indeed be described as "eccentric" - but there are many which have comfortably stood the test of time. One frequently marvels at Dresser's inventiveness and the geometrical sophistication of his work. It should be noted, that the designs in *Studies in Design* would have been sketched by Dresser himself and rendered in colour - water-colour or gouache - by his studio assistants. Some of the designs were,

Figure 31. Plate 31a from Studies in Design, illustrating a pattern that was likely inspired by the colours and patterns that could be observed in gas-filled electrical discharge tubes.

as Dresser himself noted, by these same assistants as well as his pupils. Not very many, of course, and Dresser's individual, idiosyncratic even, approach to ornament is in evidence throughout the work. On one or two plates, however, one senses the hand of J Moyr Smith who was to go on to become a successful designer in his own right.

Dresser declared that *Studies in Design* had been prepared "during the last fifteen years". If this is the case - and there is no reason whatsoever to doubt the claim - the earliest designs must actually date from 1859, when he was twenty-five and still functioning principally as a professional botanist. They are the more remarkable for their early date and the fact that, although the early designs can not be specifically identified, all the designs in the book differ quite substantially from contemporary historicist work.

It should not surprise us that *Studies in Design* received what can only be described as "mixed reviews". The *Athenaeum* of 19th December 1874 spoke of it, shortly after its publication had begun in parts, as "in the mode of Mr. Owen Jones". The *Athenaeum* criticism, whether we concur with it or not, is worth hearing at greater length:

> Dresser's designs were "scientific rather than artistic; the result is .... mechanical, and however ingenious and self-consistent the patterns may be, they pall on one and lose their attraction when they cease to be novelties .... The work may improve .... "

The Art-Journal, which had encouraged Dresser at the very beginning of his career his by publishing his series of articles, "Botany as adapted to the Arts and Art Manufactures", in 1857, saw *Studies in Design* as promising to be of great service to manufacturers and everyone engaged in the decorative arts. But there was the caveat - a sting in the tail: "Dr. Dresser has some peculiar notions on the subject that engages both his pen and pencil ...." Dresser did not quite fit into any of the categories which his own era entirely recognised or which it wholeheartedly approved.

Figures 32a, b. Studies in Design Plate 56. Left, with original colouring. Right, recoloured, showing the possibilities available to a modern designer using an EPS rendition of the plate.

1876: Philadelphia

While travelling to Japan Dresser visited the United States. After staying a short while in New York he attended the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition. His publications as well as his appearances in the Art-Journal had brought him some fame in advance of visit. While in Philadelphia Dresser visited the factory of Wilson & Fennimores. He studied their production methods and supplied them with some 30 wallpaper designs. He must have taken these designs with him - was this a speculative venture on his part, or had he been in contact with the company while he was in London? He was also asked to give a series of three lectures by the Philadelphia Museum and School of Industrial Art.The first of these lectures was delivered on the occasion of the founding of the Pennsylvania museum.

In his first lecture Dresser expressed his admiration for the American entrepreneurial spirit. He hoped that America's increasing self-confidence as a nation would encourage her to abandon all protectionism. He told his Philadelphia audience that in during the time of the Great Exhibition of 1851 Britain's art-manufactures had been inferior to those of the other industrialised nations, but the government legislation which had introduced design education to Britain had been very effective. So, too, had the setting-up of museums of applied art - the South Kensington Museum, in particular. The lesson for the Americans was altogether clear.

Later in the same lecture he declared that he had seen some good recent design in America. He spoke of examples ornament which "for energy and power surpass anything I have before seen". As Dresser claimed that the best American ornament came from the hands of architects rather than designers, it seems very likely that he was actually speaking about the ornament of the Philadelphian architect Frank Furness, 1839-1912. Furness was a strongly individualistic Gothic Revivalist who produced bold and inventive buildings - among them the recently dedicated Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. This is in a forceful Gothic style - more muscular, but no less accomplished, than some of the work of William Burges. Furness evidently enjoyed designing ornament and it is more than likely that he knew Dresser's books. It is, indeed. none too difficult to detect affinities between Furness' architectural ornament and Dresser's work. Furness was the designer of the temporary Brazilian pavilion at the Centennial Exhibition. It was in a rather flamboyant and inappropriate in Islamic style - a little suggestive of Owen Jones' recreation of the Alhambra. It must have taken Dresser's fancy.

In an interesting aside in his third Philadelphia lecture, Dresser talked of the affinities he felt existed between colour and music. When he heard "fine harmonies of sound" harmonies of colours came to him in his mind's eye. (This phenomenon, which is known as synaesthesia, was first described by Francis Galton, 1822-1911, author of *Hereditary Genius*, 1869, and the founder of the so-called science of eugenics.) Dresser's colour-sense was indeed very highly developed. It was both cultivated and intuitive. He had fully imbibed Owen Jones' canons of

polychromatic harmony - as set out in the *Grammar of Ornament* - and they seem to have become part of his very being. Users of this CD will have many opportunities to observe Dresser's remarkable feeling for colour.

Dresser discussed the status of the designer of ornament in his final Philadelphia lecture. It is safe to say that no other nineteenth century championed design with such vigour.

> "If you can found an institution on the model of a University, and should ultimately confer honorary degrees upon ornamentists and certain honorary distinctions upon such manufacturers as produce ennobling works, and thus bring honour to their country, I think you would do well in doing so, for men will work hard to achieve honour as well as to secure wealth."

Figure 33. Bushloe House, Wigston Magna, Leicestershire. The house was rebuilt in about 1880 for Dresser's solicitor Hiram B Owston. The Dresser office undertook architectural commissions and this is, almost certainly, one of them. While in philadelphia, Dresser visited the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, en route for Japan. He saw and admired there the work of Frank Furness, 1839-1912. Bushloe House bears a passing resemblance to some of Furness' work - the Thomas Hockley House, 235, South Twenty-First Street, of 1875, for example.

1877: Dresser's Visit To Japan

Dresser had an unbounded enthusiasm for Japan and its art and people. He could first have met Japanese diplomats and been introduced to Japanese craftsmen during the building of a Japanese village - for the delight of Londoners - at Alexandra Park in 1874. Dresser never lost his enthusiasm for Japan and he was immensely proud of his Japanese collection until his death.The preparations for the visit to Japan must have taken up a great deal of Dresser's time - he was probably assisted in the organisation of the coming visit by his male private secretary (Churcher - I have no information about him beyond his name.) It should be remembered that, in the 1870s, trvelling was a good deal more complicated than it is now. Was it courage, obsession, or the thought of commercial opportunities which prompted Dresser to leave his successful practice - to say nothing of his numerous children - to embark upon the potentially hazardous Japan voyage? At all events he made his first will before leaving.

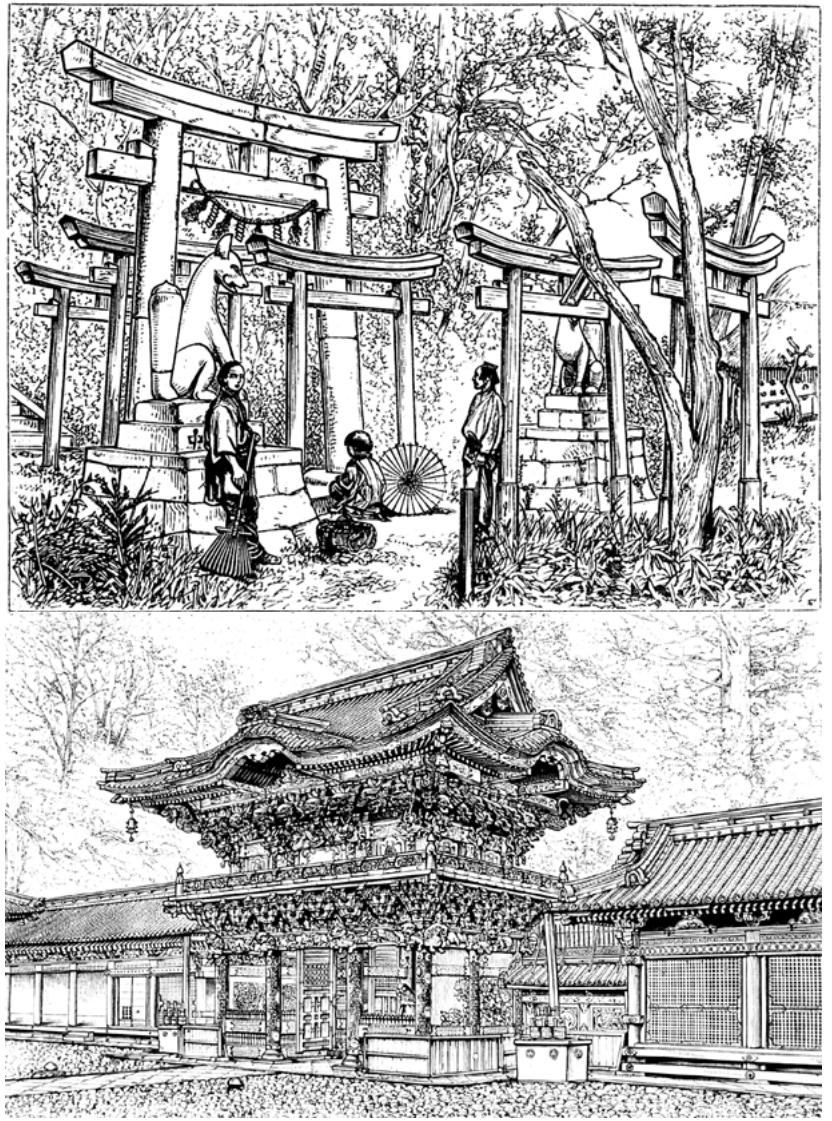

Figure 34a. scene at the entrance to a shrine. From Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures. Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882.

Figure 34b. gateway to a shrine at Nikko. From Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures. Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882.

Figures 34 and 35. (Above and Following). Illustrations taken from *Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures.* Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882.

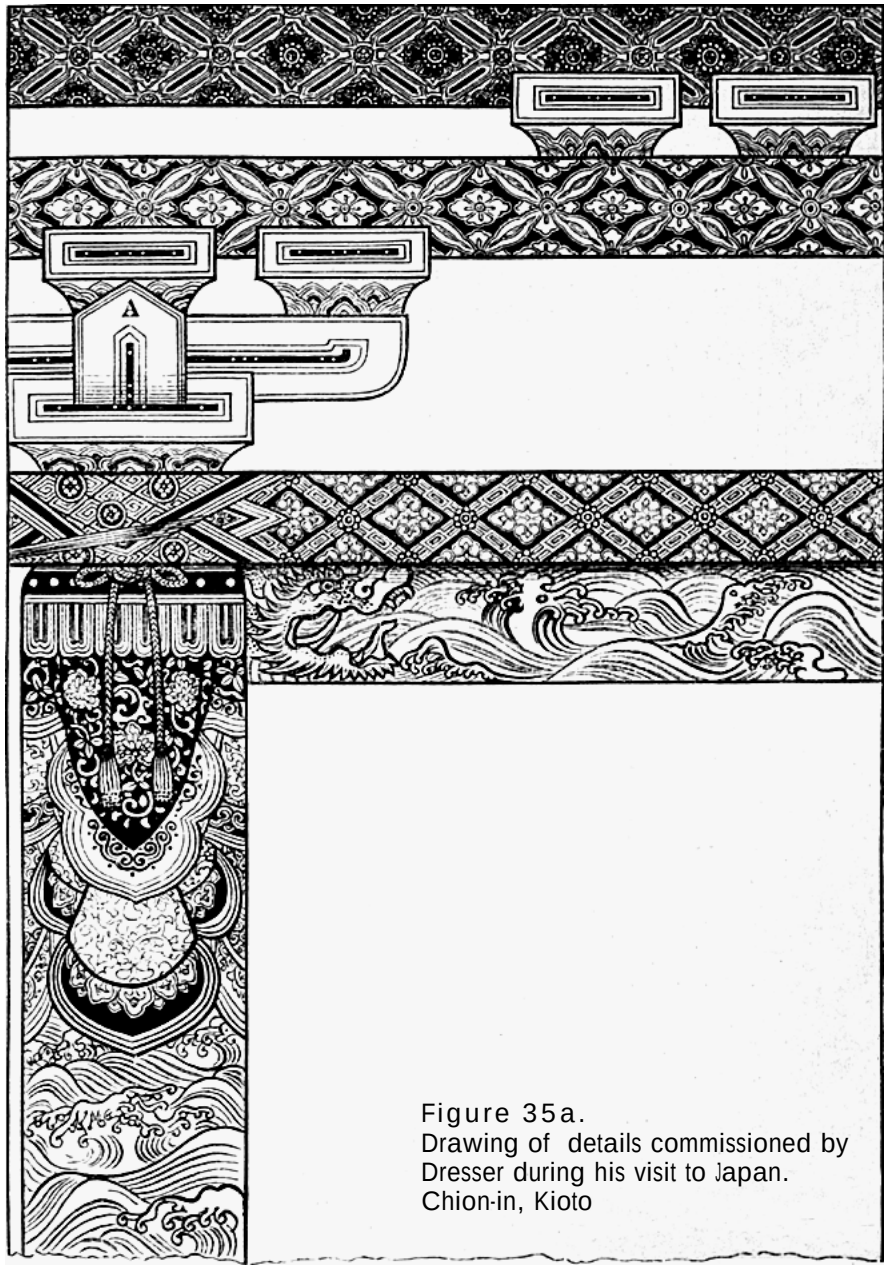

Figure 35a.
Drawing of details commissioned by Dresser during his visit to Japan.
Chion-in, Kioto

Dresser was forty-two when he embarked for New York en route for Japan. He left Liverpool for New York on 26th October 1876 and after the visit to Philadelphia crossed the United States to embark from San Francisco for Yokohama. He told the audience at a Royal Society of Arts lecture of January 30th, 1878, of how he had come to be interested in Japanese applied art. The lecture was chaired by Sir Rutherford Alcock, 1809-90, the first British Consul General in Japan. It was, in actuality, Rutherford Alcock's collection of Japanese goods which had been exhibited at the London International Exhibition of 1862 which had first aroused Dresser's interest in Japan. He purchased a "fair selection" of Alcock's exhibits, but, perhaps more significantly, he made some 80 or so drawings of them. Dresser was, in 1862, more or less at the beginning of his career as a professional designer and undoubtedly very impressionable. It is inconceivable that Japanese ideas did not become part of Dresser's vocabulary - the kind of vocabulary which is lodged in the unconscious of everyone who designs.

Despite the passionate enthusiasm for things Japanese which was reflected in the work of many of his contemporaries no European or American designer of any real standing appears to have visited Japan before Dresser. Among the more important British designers influenced by Japan can be included: Walter Crane (1845-1915), E W Godwin (1833-86), William Burges, (1827-81 - a Gothic Revivalist who delighted in Japanese decoration), Thomas Jekyll (1827-81, the designer of the fittings of Whistler's famous "Peacock Room" - one of the most notable examples of Japanesery), W Eden Nesfield (1835-88), and, on occasions, Bruce Talbert (1838-1881). Dresser spent three months in Japan - the first three months of 1877. He was a

Figure 35b. iron kettle with bronze details

indefatigable and perceptive observer. He travelled some 1,700 miles, saw a hundred or so Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, visited 68 potteries and had 1,000 photographs taken for his records by Japanese photographers. He was also received by the Emperor to whom he presented a collection of contemporary British manufactures. (These are said to be still in the Imperial Collection - if this is the case the collection would be an incomparable record of the most sophisticated British applied arts of the period. It is also almost certain that Dresser would have included many examples of his own designs in the collection.)

Dresser described his visit to Japan in *Japan, its Architecture, Art and Art Manufactures* which was to be published in 1882. It was based upon a detailed diary which he kept during his visit. It is a most delightful book and far less stilted in its tone than his other writings. (His studio assistants used to say that his friend the writer George Augustus Sala helped him with the Japan book - but this sounds no more than the kind of mildly malicious whisperings that most young men engage in matters concerning their employers.) The book is written with wit, sympathy, and a feeling for the details of everyday life. It can be accounted at least a minor classic amongst nineteenth century travel writings. The Japan Dresser saw was not the quaint and picturesque nation which outsiders believed it to be. By 1877 Japan was emerging as a modern industrial nation - Dresser was able to observe this with the eye of someone whose very existence was dependent upon industry. He noted efficient railway systems, a telegraphic system which was the equal of any in Europe and an insatiable desire of on the part of

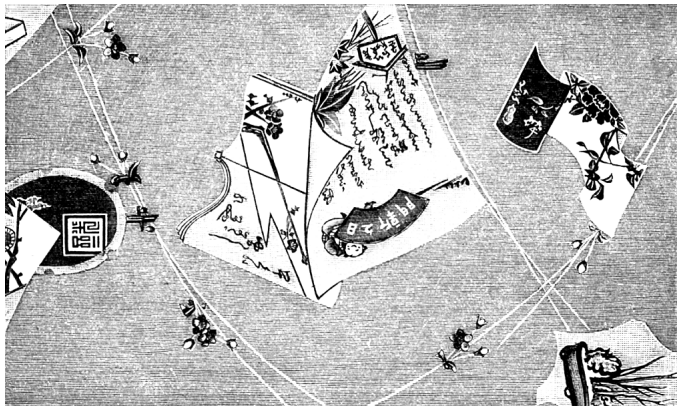

Figure 35c. fabric with telephone insulators used as decorative motif

the people of Japan to learn about the latest developments in technology. He was aware that much of what he was seeing would soon pass away. His observations of a society in transformation give his book not only a certain poignancy but a particular value to historians.

Japan, its Architecture, Art and Art Manufactures was generally well received critically. The book must have done a little to restore Dresser's reputation which had been in decline since the arrival of a new generation of designers like Walter Crane (1845-1915), a collaborator of William Morris and Lewis F Day (1845-1910), who, in 1884, had been a founding member of the Art Workers' Guild in 1884. Both, of course, though Arts and Crafts designers, are now also associated with the fashionable Aesthetic Movement which came into prominence in the late 1870s.

Dresser counselled against the direct imitation of Japanese design as the following passage taken from his Japan book demonstrates - he is writing about Japanese drawing : "I do not wish to destroy our national art, and substitute for it the Japanese style. I merely wish that we should avail ourselves of those methods which are in advance of our own; not minding where they originated. Art, to be of value, must be national .... we may borrow what is good from all peoples, but we must distil what we borrow through our own work."

It is difficult to assess the influence of Japanese design and art upon Dresser. He was able to synthesise modes of designing from a very wide range of sources. His oeuvre, in fact, epitomises Owen Jones' ideal of an "imaginative and intelligent eclecticism".

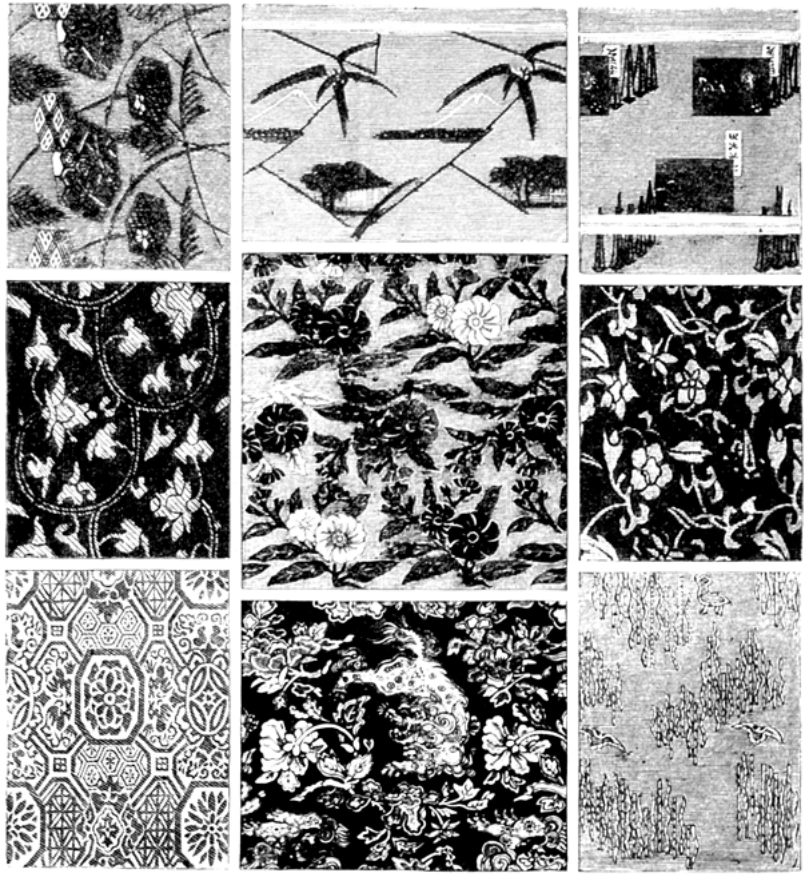

Figure 35d. Japanese fabrics.

The Art Furnishers' Alliance

This was an ambitious commercial venture which was founded in 1880. Dresser was appointed "Art Manager" Although he appears to have put little money into the project there can be little doubt that the idea was largely his. This was the time when Morris & Company were venturing into the domestic market - their new premises were at 449, Oxford Street, within a short walking distance of The Art Furnishers' Alliance which had its showrooms at 157, New Bond Street, another fashionable street. Manufacturers, who would have been well known to Dresser invested in the project - James Dixon & Sons, Sheffield, makers of silver and silver-plate, Charles Nevill, a calico printer of Manchester, William Cooke, a wallpaper manufacturer of Leeds, two ironmasters, Theodore Fry and James Kitson, even Arthur Lazenby Liberty, whose rival establishment in nearby Regent Street, founded five years earlier, was an investor. The idea was in many ways a sound one. The moment seemed right and the prospects of success good. The so-called Aesthetic Movement was in ascendancy, when taste seemed to be a surrogate for religion. Art, in the Aesthetic Movement era, was principally to be concerned with elegance and surface. Whistler had painted the decorations of the famous Peacock Room - for a decidedly reluctant client - and he was promulgating his doctrines of an art which should transcend such matters as morality. Art "should stand alone" and it should not confound us with "emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism, and the like." Oscar

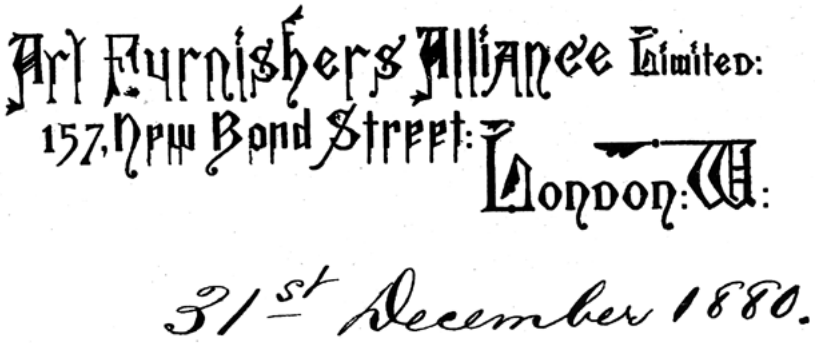

Figure 36. Headed notepaper of the Art Furnishers Alliance, 1880

Wilde, the arch-apostle of aestheticism, was soon to be lecturing on "Art and the Handicraftsman" and "House Decoration" during his American visit in 1882.

The *Cabinet Maker and Art Furnisher* of 1st September, 1880, was unstinting in its condemnation of the Art Furnishers' Alliance: "if pretension goes for anything, this company ought to pay untold dividends."

The anonymous writer of the article on Dresser in The Studio of 1898, endeavoured to recall the enterprise:

> "So far as memory may be trusted, the average work was very good .... that the enterprise did not succeed is partly due to the fact that it was before its time .... it was alone in its mission of addressing a popular audience."

The expression "a popular audience" is a little misleading - what must be meant is a less exalted section of the affluent middle class than would have constituted the Morris & Company clientèle.

The Art Furnishers' Alliance was to fail. Possibly it had been undercapitalised. (Only 382 shares valued at £1,910 had been purchased.) There was also something of a depression in the early 1880s. The Art Furnishers' Alliance stock was sold off by the liquidators in August 1883.

Link to The Studio: "The work of Christopher Dresser".

Figure 37. (Right)
Japanese art metal work imported by Dresser & Holme. This was a partnership which lasted a comparatively short time during the height of the enthusiasm for Japanese goods. Published in The Furniture Gazette, 1880, when Dresser was Editor

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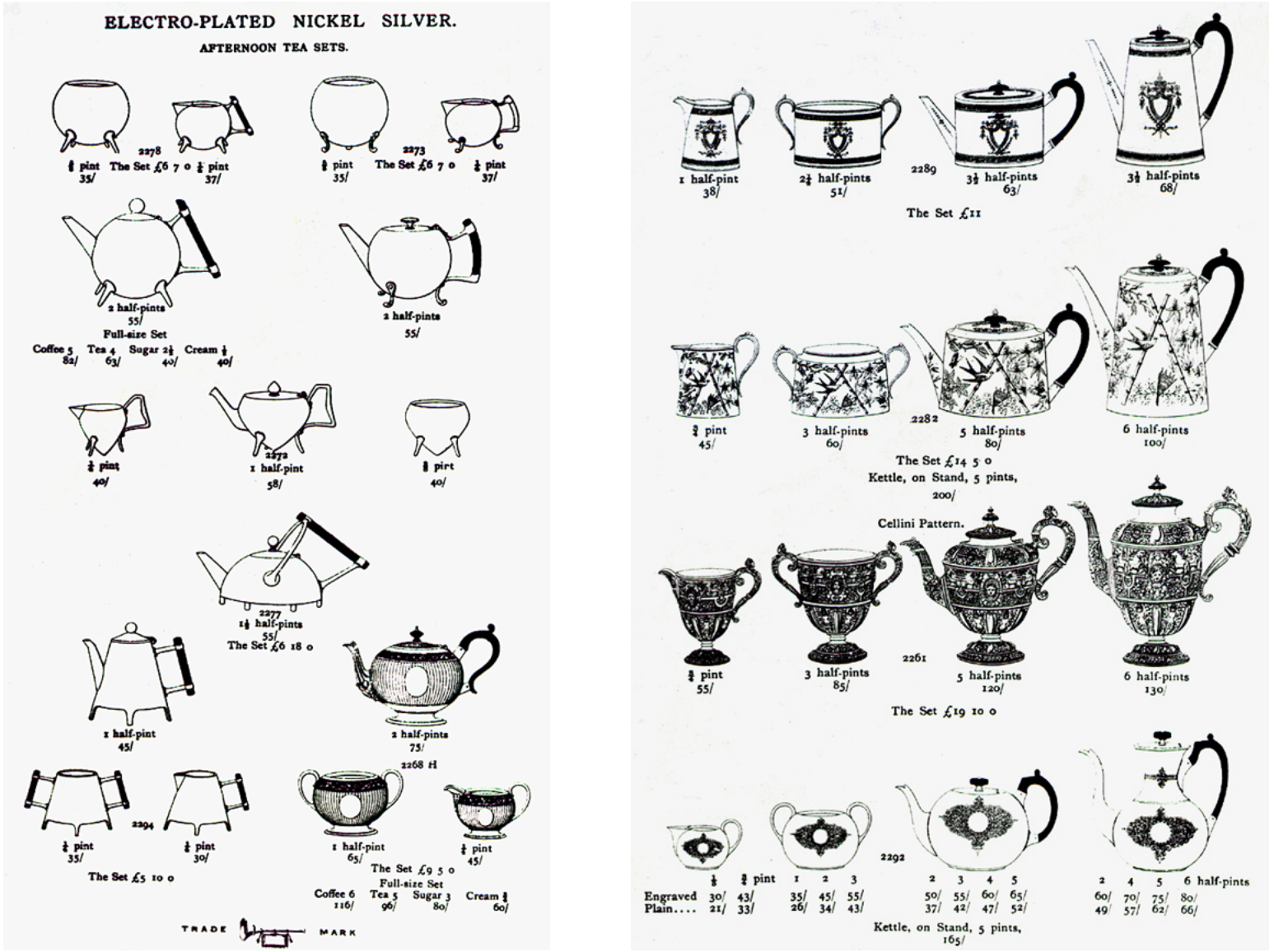
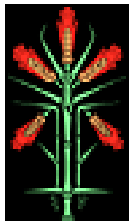


Figure 38a, b. Pages showing designs for 'afternoon tea-sets' from Dixons' 1885 catalogue. Dresser's designs can be seen here in their real context, i.e. elegant variations upon familiar themes. All of the tea-pots in 38a (left) are by Dresser, except for the small group of three in the lower right hand corner.



1886: Modern Ornamentation

This was the last of Dresser's books. As with his earlier books, this was a part-work. It was illustrated with olive, grey or terra-cotta photo-lithographs. By the 1880s chromolithography had become too expensive in Britain - nearly all major colour printing work was done in Germany or France. (Only themes relating to Japan seem to have been worthy of colour in Britain in the 1880s.) The vogue for Dresser's characteristic ornament - at its height in the 1860s and 1870s - had already passed. A more modest and hence economical approach to presenting his work seems to have been considered suitable by his publisher - Batsford.

Tastes were changing. The unnamed reviewer in The Athenaeum, of 26th June, 1886, had the following, somewhat damning, criticism of Modern Ornamentation: Dresser's designs were:

> "decidedly flat, flabby and jejune, or ungraceful and inharmonious .... for the present we should recommend Dr. Dresser to copy old instances decorative art and not give us any more of his own."

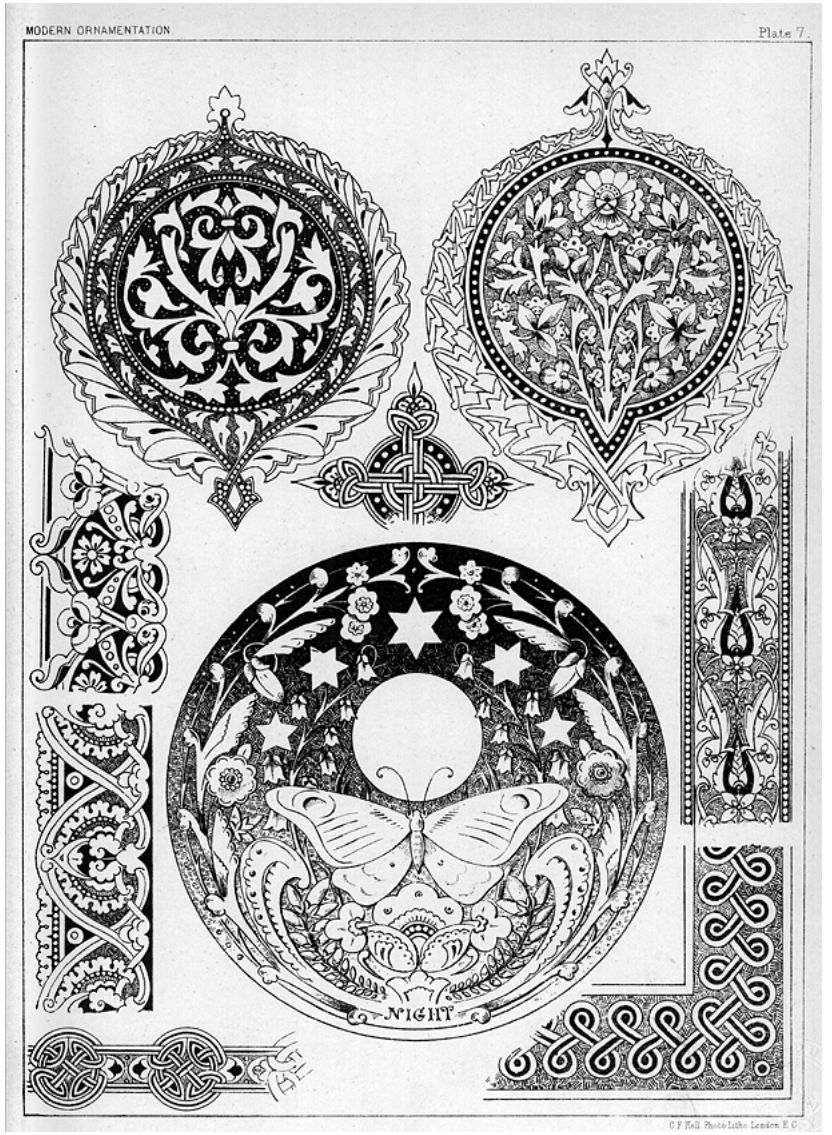
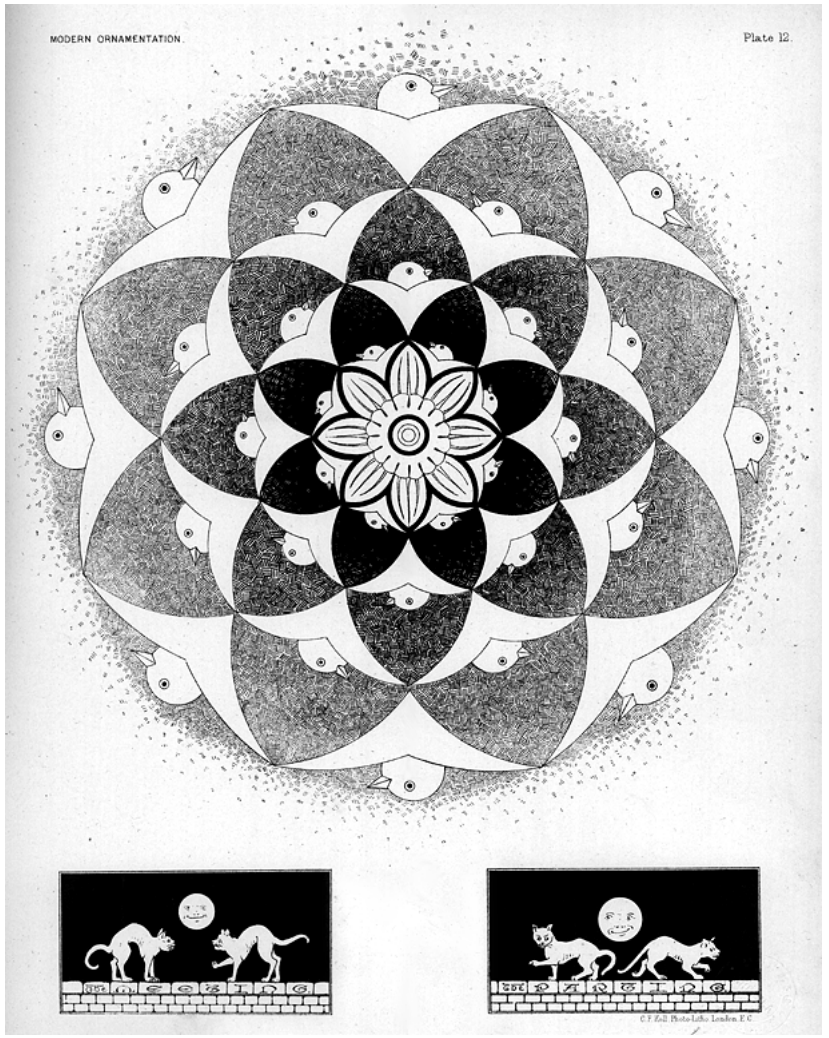


Figure 39. Plate 7 from *Modern Ornamentation, 1886*. "The two top circular ornaments are pure Persian in style: the two borders at the left side are Gothic; the little cross in the centre of the sheet, the little border at the bottom on the left side, and that in the angle at the right, are Celtic in character; the other border is not in any pure style, while the large circular ornament is a mere fancy composition, intended to give an expression of night."



The truth is, that Dresser was to design very little himself towards the end of his career. He mainly concerned himself with selling the productions of his studio.

Trade journals thought better of the collection of designs The Plumber and Decorator, after its reviewer had seen the first two parts of Modern Ornamentation, felt able to say:

> "If Dr. Dresser can make subsequent parts equal to these, his book will indeed be a priceless addition to our decorative literature." The book possessed "a voluptuous richness, an elegance of taste, and a wealth of detail .... which call for our heartiest congratulations".

But a favourable review in a humble trade journal suggests that Dresser's designs were no longer - if indeed they ever had been - of interest to the world of high fashion. Walter Crane (1845-1915) and Lewis F Day (1845-1910) were the fashionable designers of the 1880s.

Figure 40. Plate 12 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "The large circular figure is Japanese." This motif could have come from any one of a number of popular books on Japanese Heraldry that were available at the time.

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1886: Oliver Wendell Holmes - A Reference To Dresser

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-94) in his *One Hundred Days in Europe*, made a brief reference to Dresser. He had visited London in 1886, when he was 77. He is, perhaps, best remembered for his *Professor at the Breakfast-Table*, 1860. Holmes is said to have charmed London, as he has done Boston. Holmes, one must assume, already knew something of Dresser's work. One can safely assume that he was well-known in the United States.

> "Bond Street, Old and New, offered the most inviting windows .... I greatly admired some of Dr. Dresser's water-cans and other contrivances, modelled more or less after the antique, but I found an abundant assortment of them here in Boston, and I have one I obtained more original in design and more serviceable than any I saw in London ...."

Holmes, almost certainly, is referring to Dresser's extraordinarily innovative copper and brass designs for the manufacturers Benham and Froud - "water-cans" must be literary licence.

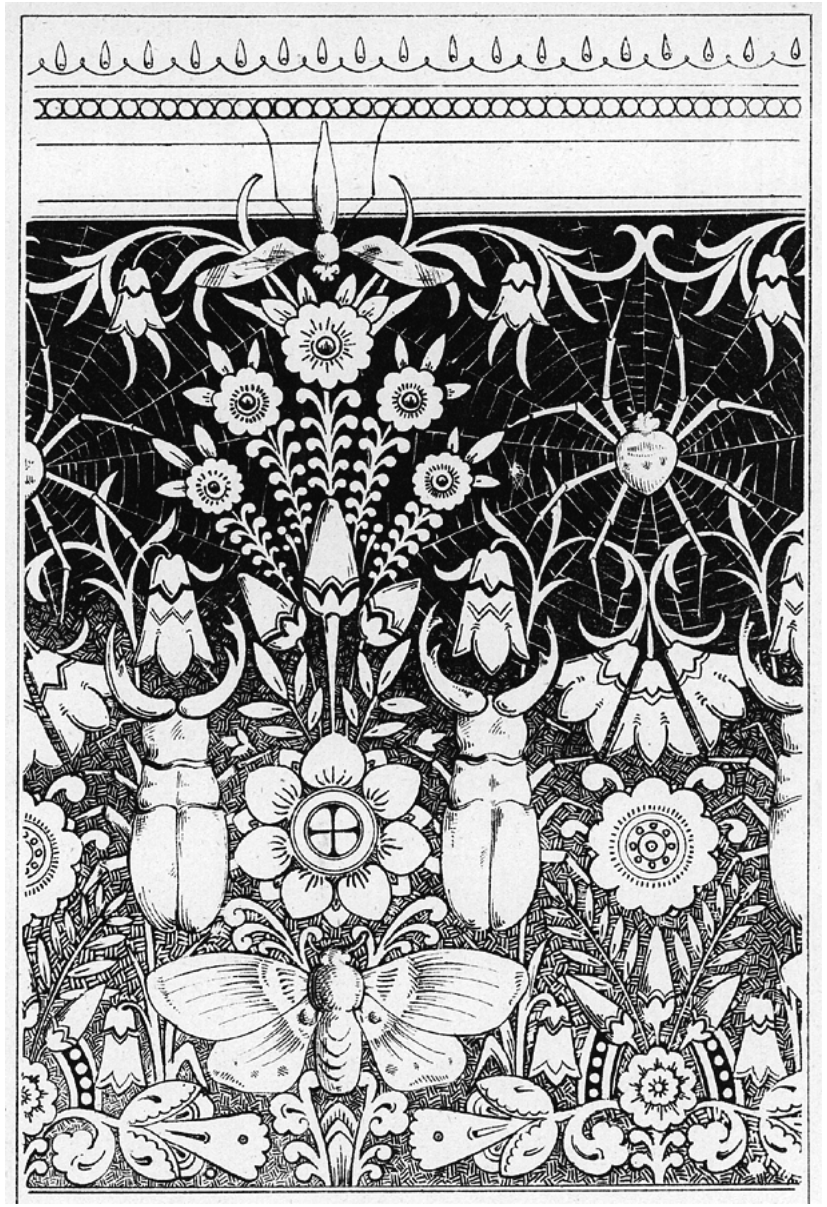

Figure 41. Top of Plate 26 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "In no historic style. The upper figure is intended to give the idea of evening ; ..."

Recollections of Dresser in the 1890s

Just before the opening of the Exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts in 1952, the organiser Peter Floud received a letter from Cecil Tattersall who had been articled to Dresser in 1894. It was this pioneering exhibition, incidentally, which set in motion the reappraisal of the achievements of the nineteenth century in the applied arts - and set in motion the questioning some of the vainer assumptions of the Modern Movement.

Tattersall wrote :

> " .... I was an Articled Pupil for 5 years from January 1894 and remained with (Dresser) a further five years, making ten years in all, which terminated with his death, when the studio staff was cut down .... During the whole of the ten years I was with him, he did no designing himself, but maintained a studio and mainly concerned himself with the sales .... You can take it that he was doing business with every firm manufacturing wallpapers and cretonnes at that time. He also did Bedspreads and Tapestries. At one time he had a contract with F Steiner of Manchester for cretonnes .... When the Wallpaper Combine was formed he went to Germany and did extensive business with that country which he visited at intervals."

A particularly valuable letter was sent to Peter Floud by Alan V Sugden, joint author, with John Ludlam Edmondson of the monumental *History of English Wallpaper*, 1509-1914, (1925) :

> "I remember Dr. Chr. Dresser's visits to the Lightbown factory at Pendleton between 1893-1899 to sell designs to my grandfather, Henry Lightbown .... That tranquil 'country house' and its smaller private office were always affected as if a small cyclone had visited them. Even the most matter-of-fact ledger clerk was aware that a personality was present: one who could strike the humdrum everyday existence with the elixir of magic .... My grandfather, a small autocrat, enjoyed the change from the conventional routine of buying designs to being told what he must buy and what he could not have."

> "Dresser never posted designs on approval - he attended to their disposal in person and was very particular whom he supplied. I believe Potters and Lightbown alone were so favoured outside London. I particularly remember one of the last occasions when the great man returned from one of his frequent visits abroad to find inspiration, this time from Egypt, when most of his subjects were based on the scarab, treated decoratively and conventionally. Lightbowns were permitted to buy some half-dozen of these - at what my father felt was an outrageous price - and I can still dimly see the strange shapes they presented to the wallpaper world of the day. I remember they were not successful in the commercial sense .... My recollection of Dr. Dresser's appearance is not clear, but there was a tail-coat, a Jove-like manner, a voice of authority and an aura."

The Recollections of Frederick Burrows - The Dresser Studio in the late Eighteen Nineties.

Frederick Burrows was almost certainly the last surviving link with Dresser. He was introduced to this writer in 1969. He was then ninety-one. He had joined Dresser's studio as an articled pupil in 1899 - when he was twenty-one. Burrows was to later abandon design for a successful career in art education.

The Dresser studio was in a stuccoed Victorian-Palladian house of the eighteen fifties, called Elm Bank, facing the river Thames at Barnes, which is about six or seven miles from central London. Dresser and his wife, as well as the unmarried Dresser daughters, lived at Elm Bank. It was very conveniently situated next to Barnes Bridge railway station, which was on the London and South Western line. This must have been important to Dresser as he would have spent a considerable part of his time travelling by railway in Britain - and in Europe - on visits to manufacturers selling the designs from his studio. There were twelve or so assistants or pupils who actually did the work of the studio. The studio at this time appears to have been entirely involved with producing designs for textiles and wallpapers.

Figure 42. Plate 47 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886.
"This is a form of Italian Renaissance ornament."

Frederick Burrow's memory was good. He thought very carefully about everything he said to me. Dresser seemed to him a typically authoritarian figure. He was someone who had dragooned his unmarried daughters into performing the administrative tasks of the studio - accounts and record-keeping. But Dresser had come to represent for Burrows an era which he increasingly came to despise - as did so many of the generation who were in their middle age caught up in the Modern Movement. He seemed a little surprised that anyone should be interested in a Victorian like Dresser. Burrows knew nothing about Dresser's innovative designs for metalwork, glass or ceramics. They seem never to have been mentioned in the studio. Contrary to the beliefs of some design historians these must have been no more than sidelines of the studio.

Frederick Burrows had clear remembrances of Dresser and the Elm Bank Studio :

> "He had a tremendous knowledge of manufacturing processes and would bring reference books into the studio containing descriptions of machinery .... We always addressed him as 'Doctor Dresser'. He used to talk occasionally about Pugin and had a great respect for his work. When he was dissatisfied with an assistant's drawing he would gently, but firmly, smudge it with his finger, and then sketch how the design should be executed .... Dresser would always give a cough like a foghorn before he entered our studio - to let us know that he was coming. He was a bucolic, genial, sort of man and a fine talker ...."

"He used to say that machines dictated both manufacture and design. He used to look at our drawings and say things like: 'That will never print properly'. All the time he imposed his own personality upon the designs. Dresser was fond of saying 'maximum effect with minimum means'. He never permitted technical limitations to inhibit his designing and his technical knowledge was a byword amongst his assistants. Dresser had a quite unique hold upon manufacturers in France and Germany and could command as much as twenty pounds for a design ...."

"I think Dresser lived beyond his means. He always gave us the impression of being hard-pressed for money .... Dresser drank a good deal, and would, when drunk, lecture on art to the busmen waiting at the 'White Hart'. If he got drunk, a cabman would bring him home, and receive a five shilling tip... He was at the top of his profession .... a tremendous personality ...."

The Death of Christopher Dresser, 1904

Dresser died at the age of seventy in Mulhouse, Alsace, on 24th November, 1904. He died at the Hotel Central in his sleep of heart failure. He was there with his son, Louis Leo Dresser, now aged forty-three, selling the designs of the Elm Bank studio. Mulhouse was an important textile manufacturing town.

Did Dresser have to drive himself until his constitution finally rebelled? Or did he desperately need to work in order to maintain his family in some sort of reasonably comfortable style? Of course, we shall never really know. But Dresser's will tells us that he possessed very little capital. His house, his collection of Japanese art and the goodwill of his business - in the event valueless without him - were his principal assets.

Dresser left a little over two thousand pounds. If this is translated into contemporary monetary terms - although one ought to be a little wary of such calculations - it amounts to something like three hundred thousand pounds, or four hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Not a great sum, one might think, for the leading designer of his generation.

In his obituary in *The Architect and Contract Reporter*, of 2nd December, 1904, Dresser was seen as a figure from an early twentieth century standpoint, when, in Britain certainly, the

Figure 43. Design for cretonne (Steiner & Co.). From "The Work of Christopher Dresser", *The Studio*, 1989.

values of the Arts and Crafts Movement were dominant. The Victorian era seemed to be receding rapidly.

> "At one time the sudden death of Christopher Dresser, PhD, in Mulhouse, would have caused a larger amount of regret than at present. Forty years ago he was prominent as an ornamentist .... To some extent he was a follower of Owen Jones. He believed in conventionalism and flatness... His name, however, will be recalled if ever anyone should have the courage to write a history of ornament since 1851 ...."

The obituary in *The Builder*, of 10th December, is rather more generous in its tone - one imagines that the anonymous writer might have actually known Dresser.

> "In his last years he spent most of his time in preparing designs for manufacturers and in the enjoyment of his garden and flowers .... He was a most genial companion and interesting talker, and never tired of discussion of art and the habits of the nations of the East, trying to trace their histories by their ornamental forms as a philologist does by their language ...."

Rosa Ada Dresser, forty and unmarried at the time of Dresser's death, told the editor of *The Builder* that she would continue to run the business. But the harsh reality was, without Dresser, the Elm Bank studio, could not survive. Within a couple of years Elm Bank was sold and a block of middle-class red-brick mansion flats erected on the site. They are there still. Dresser's fine garden was destined to become no more than a local folk-memory.

When Dresser died it seemed that he would soon be forgotten. The profession of design - unlike architecture - had as yet developed no sense of history. Designer heroes came and went with the changing fashions. There was no professional association of designers, although there were associations of craft-workers such as the Art Workers' Guild. But these were idealistic - sometimes almost amateur groupings - of people involved in the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Nikolaus Pevsner rediscovered Dresser in the late1930s. He

Figure 44. Design for cretonne (Steiner & Co.). From "The Work of Christopher Dresser", *The Studio*, 1989.

admired him because he considered him a proto-modernist. Robert Schmutzler in *Art Nouveau*, 1962, (English edition 1964), made much of Dresser, because he felt his work represented a category which he called "proto art nouveau". Only now are we beginning to come to terms with Dresser as he was - a complex, occasionally contradictory, nineteenth century figure. And only now are we beginning to recognise the scale of Christopher Dresser's achievement as the first designer for industry.

Figure 45. (Next Page) Examples of 'Clutha" glass manufactured by James Couper & Sons, Glasgow, c1890-95. These are from the catalogue of the exhibition of work by Christopher Dresser organized by Richard Dennis and John Jesse of The Fine Art Society, London, in October 1972.

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Figure 1. Dr. Dresser at home in his famous garden, c. 1900.

This is the only known picture of Mr. Dresser. (Courtesy of Stuart Durant)

Figure 2. Designs by Christopher Dresser in production by Alessi s.p.a. under the Officina Alessi trade mark. From the Officina Alessi catalogue, 1993.

Alessi has recently begun reproducing these pieces by Christopher Dresser. They may be reached in Italy at:

Officina Alessi
Crusinallo, Italy

39 - 323 - 868611 (Phone)
39 - 326 - 641605 (Fax)

Figure 3. *Studies for Pictures*, J. Moyr Smith's, 1868 (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 4. Pen sketch of Somerset House room where many of the lectures were given to the art students. Illustration taken from "The First National School of Design in England" by Ralph Leslie, *Science and Art and Technical Education*, Edited by John Mills, F.R.A.S., The New Series, Volume I., 1894. Published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall. pp. 14-16, 42-43 (Courtesy of Stuart Durant)

Figure 5. Sir Henry Cole. Taken from "The First National School of Design in England", by Ralph Leslie, Volume 1, 1898, p.16 (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 6. R. Redgrave, C.B., R.A. Taken from "The First National School of Design in England", by Ralph Leslie, Volume 1, 1898, p.16 (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 7. Richard Redgrave *Supplementary Report on Design*, London, for the Royal Commission, 1852

The *Supplementary Report on Design* was published after the Great Exhibition of 1851 in order that the principles of good decorative design could be disseminated. The authorities at the Government School of Design felt that

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much of the British design at the Great Exhibition was inferior to that of foreign countries. Redgrave — under the influence of Owen Jones, no doubt — particularly admired the fabrics of India. Indian design was copied by students for a generation. It is quite certain that Dresser was influenced by the designs illustrated here (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 8. Design for a woven fabric, c1870.

Based largely on an Indian design illustrated in Redgrave's *Supplementary report on Design*, 1852, p12 (The Fine Art Society and Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 9a-d. Augustus Welby Nothmore Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume.*

London, Henry G. Bohn, 1846 (Second edition. The first edition was printed in 1844). The Glossary was an encyclopedic work on the patterns and dress of the Catholic Church. Vestments had been illegal since the Reformation, and were only allowed after the Catholic Emancipation. Pugin believed in Gothic design with the fervor of a religious conviction (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 9a. Frontispiece of Pugin's *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*. The book, which went into a number of editions, was one of the most influential publications to have come out of the whole of the Gothic Revival. It was in the School of Design Library and Dresser is certain to have known of it. Towards the end of his career he used to speak very highly of Pugin.

Figure 9b. Design for church decoration with the monogram of the Virgin Mary. The authorities at the School of Design, where Dresser was trained, followed Pugin's — and Owen Jones' — insistence that decoration should be "flat" and never naturalistic or "imitative".

Figure 9c. Flat, "conventional", decoration for a church interior. Such motifs could also be used for vestments (From Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume).

Figure 9d. The end piece of *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume*. Pugin's ecclesiastical decorations for Roman Catholic churches were very widely influential, even beyond the Catholic Church. George Gilbert Scott, William Butterfield and, much later, the Arts and Crafts architect C F A Voysey, were among his admirers. These plates are taken from the second edition (1846), published in

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London by Henry G Bohn. The first edition is dated 1844.

Figure 10. Owen Jones (1809 - 1874), author of the *Grammar of Ornament*. Illustration taken from his Obituary, *The Graphic*, May 2, 1874.

Figure 11. Plate 24 from the "Alhambra" by Owen Jones. Jones' and Goury's documentation of the Alhambra was the first systematic study of a major Islamic building. Although the publication, done at Jones' own expense, was a commercial failure, the large two volume book was greatly admired. Ruskin, predictably, disliked Islamic decoration, which he thought too mechanistic. The authorities at the School of Design — where Dresser was trained — purchased a copy of the work. It seems likely that he would have known it in his youth. From *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, published by Owen Jones, 1842-45, London (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

The original caption reads: "Plate 24 Salón de Comares. (1) Ceramic alicatado dados on the W wall (see Figs. 169, 191-194). (2) Ceramic alicatado dados on the E wall (see Figs. 172, 173, 185-190). (3) and (4) Borders of the dados in the Salón de Comares. (See Chapters 19, 20)".

Figure 12a. Frontispiece, *Grammar of Ornament*. Published by Day and Son, Lithographers to the Queen, London, 1856 (Original Folio Edition Courtesy California State University at Northridge, California, USA).

Figure 12b. Plate IXL (Indian No. 1), *Grammar of Ornament*, Folio Edition, 1856. Original Folio Edition Courtesy California State University at Northridge, California, USA. The plate's description from the *Grammar of Ornament* is excerpted below:

The ornaments on Plate XLIX. are chiefly taken from Hookhas, of which there was an immense variety exhibited in 1851, and all remarkable for great elegance of outline, and for such a judicious treatment of the surface decoration that every ornament tended to further develope the general form. It will be seen that there are two kinds of ornament, the one strictly architectural and conventional : such as Nos. 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, which are treated as diagrams ; and the other, such as Nos. 13, 14, 15, in which a more direct imitation of nature is attempted : these latter are to us very valuable lessons, showing how unnecessary it is for any work of decoration to more than indicate the general idea of a flower. The ingenious way in which the full—blown flower is shown in No. 15, in three positions in Nos. 14 and 15,

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the folding back of the leaf in No. 20, are very suggestive. The intention of the artist is fully expressed by means as simple as elegant. The unity of the surface of the object decorated is not destroyed, as it would be by the European method of making the flower as near like a natural flower as possible, with its own light and shade and shadow, tempting you to pluck it from the surface.

(Note: None of the original grammar, spelling or punctuation has been changed from the Folio Edition)

Figure 13a. Plate XCVIII, *Grammar of Ornament*. Prepared for Owen Jones by Christopher Dresser. The plate's description from the *Grammar of Ornament* is excerpted below. In this passage, we see some of the ideas that influenced Mr. Dresser to be so bold and innovative, when most of his peers were still copying the masters (Original Folio Edition Courtesy California State University at Northridge, California, USA).

"As in the chestnut leaf, Plate XCI., the area of each lobe diminishes in equal proportion as it approaches the stem, so in any combination of leaves each leaf is everywhere in harmony with the group ; as in one leaf the areas are so perfectly distributed that the repose of the eye is maintained, it is equally so in the group ; we never find a disproportionate leaf interfering to destroy the repose of the group: This universal law of equilibrium is everywhere apparent in Plates XCVIII., XCIX., C. The same laws prevail in the distribution of lines on the surface of flowers ; not a fine upon the surfaces but tends more surely to develop the form, not a line which could be removed, and leave the form more perfect, and this, why ? Because the beauty arises naturally from the law of the growth of each plant. The lifeblood, the sap, as it leaves the stem, takes the readiest way of reaching the confines of the surface, however varied that surface may be ; the greater the distance it has to travel, or the weight it has to support, the thicker will be its substance. (See Convolvulus, XCVIII., XCIX.)

On Plate XCVIII. we have shown several varieties of flowers, in plan and elevation, from which it will be seen that the basis of all form is geometry, the impulse which forms the surface, staring from the centre with equal force, necessarily stops at equal distances ; the result is symmetry and regularity.

Who, then, will dare say that there is nothing left for us but to copy the five or seven—lobed flowers of the thirteenth century ; the

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Honeysuckle of the Greeks or the Acanthus of the Romans,? That this alone can produce art ? Is Nature so tied ? See how various the forms, and how unvarying the principles. We feel persuaded that there is yet a future open to us ; we have but to arouse from our slumbers. The Creator has not made all things beautiful, that we should thus set a limit to our admiration ; on the contrary, as all His works are offered for our enjoyment, so are they offered for our study. They are there to awaken a natural instinct implanted in us, a desire to emulate in the works of our hands the order, the symmetry, the grace, the fitness, which the Creator has sown broadcast over the earth."

Figure 13b. Plate 99, *Grammar of Ornament*. Possibly by Walter Fitch

The flows labeled No. 1 are Honeysuckle, and those labeled No. 2 are Convolvulus, full size (Original Folio Edition Courtesy California State University at Northridge, California, USA).

Figure 14. Plate XII, figures 2 and 3 from *The Art of Decorative Design*, by Christopher Dresser. These were used to illustrate the principle of alternation, in which the leaves of successive concentric rings fall between, not over, each other. These flowers show the presence of the principle in the design motifs of other cultures (Indian).

(Book Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London)

Figure 15. Part of Rutherford Alcock's Japanese collection, which was shown at the 1862 Exhibition. This was the first occasion at which the British public could see Japanese manufactured goods. Designers and architects were impressed — important architects like William Burges, E W Godwin and W Eden Nesfield especially so. Dresser purchased many of Alcock's exhibits and was to retain a lifelong enthusiasm for Japanese design. He latter journeyed to Japan and brought back a very large collection of handicrafts (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 16. Fireplace designed by Matthew Digby Wyatt, 1820-77. Wyatt was a leading architect and a member of the Owen Jones circle.It is not inconceivable that Dresser — young and virtually unknown — collaborated in this design. From J B Waring: *Masterpieces of Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition*, 1862. London, Day & Son, 1863.

Figure 17. A carpet by Lapworth and Company. Possibly by Dresser. From J B Waring: *Masterpieces of*

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Industrial Art and Sculpture at the International Exhibition, 1862. London, Day & Son, 1863 (Courtesy of Stuart Durant).

Figure 18. Cover, *Art of Decorative Design* (Book Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 19. The "God Save the Queen" Anthemion. This figure shows the great imagination of Dresser. From the *Art of Decorative Design* (Book Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 20a,b. Anthemions.

Figure 20a. Shows a more typical specimen of anthemion (Plate 11-2).

Figure 20b. Perhaps inspired by the patterns seen on a vibrating Chladni plate (Plate 10-4). Both plates taken from *The Art of Decorative Design* (Book Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Chladni patterns are formed by drawing a Violin bow across the edge of a flat plate. This causes standing waves to form, and sand that has been placed on the surface vibrates into a specific pattern. The pattern changes, depending on the shape and thickness of the plate, and the location and speed of the bow. Violin makers have used this technique for centuries to test the quality of both the wood and their work. Dresser saw it as a source of new and untapped source of natural patterns.

Figure 21. Thomas Moore's poem of the Peri's return to paradise was very popular with Victorians. A Peri is a celestial, superhuman, being in Persian mythology — initially malevolent, the Peri came to represent goodness as well as beauty. "Illuminated" compositions by Jones had a profound influence upon Dresser. The form and style of compositions such as "The Evening Star" in Dresser's *The Art of Decorative Design*, 1862, (plate XVI), strongly support this assertion. Owen Jones (and Thomas Moore, poet) *Paradise and the Peri*. London, Day & Son, nd, (1860) Pages illuminated by Owen Jones with illustrations by Albert Warren (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 22. Cylindrical vase manufactured by Mintons, 1867. The bronze base is not original and is clearly not by Dresser who abhorred such literal transcriptions of natural forms. This technique of manufacture was described as cloisonné — Mintons were one of the leading exponents of cloisonné ceramics. Elkington & Company, with whom Dresser was also closely associated, produced imitations of

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Chinese cloisonné in the 1870s by means of a closely guarded secret process (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 23. Dresser's house, Tower Cressy, in Aubrey Road, Campden Hill. Built in 1854 by Thomas Page (1803-77), who was the architect of Westminster Bridge. Dresser lived there between 1869 - 82. Drawing by Frank L. Emanual (reproduced by kind permission of Kensington Public Library).

Figure 24. Plate 16 from *the Art of Decorative Design*, showing the Evening Star (Book Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 25. Shows a decorative composition by Dresser which probably dates from the late 1860s. It was published in *The Furniture Gazette*, 1880. The original is to be found in the Dresser Sketchbook and is one of the few semi-pictorial designs to have survived.

The semi-pictorial composition illustrates a verse by W B O Peabody, a minor poet, whose works are now largely forgotten.

The moon is up;
How calm and slow
She wheels above the hill.
The weary winds begin to blow,
And all the world lies still.

The influence of Owen Jones' "illuminated" books is clearly apparent. So, too, is the influence of Japanese pictorial and decorative composition (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 26. Cup and saucer manufactured by Mintons (c. 1875), attributed on stylistic grounds to Dresser. Mintons produced a considerable number of designs that were in imitation of Chinese cloisonné metalwork. Owen Jones illustrated many examples of this work in his *Examples of Chinese Ornament*...., 1867 (Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 27. Copper tray with silver inlay, Benham & Froud, c1885. The formalised peacock is by Moyr Smith (one of Dresser's designers) (Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 28. Sweetmeat basket in silver, produced by Hukin & Heath, 1884. Notice its clean modern lines, illustrating Dresser's extraordinary versatility as a designer (Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

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Figure 29. Photographs of designs for silver-plate from the Costing Book of James Dixon & Sons, Limited, Sheffield, c1880. The second tea-pot down on the left exists in at least a single version (Landes Museum, Stuttgart). So, too, does the second tea-pot down on the right hand column (private collection, London), and the top right hand tea-pot (British Museum). The third teapot down on the right hand column is known to have gone into limited batch production. Alessi is now reproducing the second teapot down on the right (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 30. Decoration for cylindrical vase in watercolour and gouache, for Mintons, c1867 (only the central band is shown). The motif, which Dresser called 'an old bogey', is illustrated in his Technical Educator articles of 1870-72. Dresser had a great fondness for grotesques, which he illustrated in a number of his publications. Although grotesques, often in the form of gargoyles, abounded during the era of the Gothic Revival, Dresser contrived original and sometimes idiosyncratic versions (Courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 31. Plate 31a from *Studies in Design*, illustrating a pattern that was likely inspired by the colours and patterns that could be observed in gas-filled electrical discharge tubes (Book courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 32a,b. *Studies in Design* Plate 56. Left, with original colouring. Right, recoloured, showing the possibilities available to a modern designer using an EPS rendition of the plate (Book courtesy of Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 33. Bushloe House, Wigston Magna, Leicestershire. The house was rebuilt in about 1880 for Dresser's solicitor Hiram B Owston. The Dresser office undertook architectural commissions and this is, almost certainly, one of them. While in Philadelphia, Dresser visited the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, en route for Japan. He saw and admired there the work of Frank Furness, 1839-1912. Bushloe House bears a passing resemblance to some of Furness' work — the Thomas Hockley House, 235, South Twenty-First Street, of 1875, for example (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 34,35. Illustrations taken from *Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*. Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882 (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 34a. Scene at the entrance to a shrine. From *Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures.* Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882.

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Figure 34b. Gateway to a shrine at Nikko. From *Japan, its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*. Christopher Dresser, London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1882.

Figure 35a. Drawing of details commissioned by Dresser during his visit to Japan. Chion-in, Kioto, Japan.

Figure 35b. Iron kettle with bronze details.

Figure 35c. Fabric with telephone insulators used as decorative motif.

Figure 35d. Japanese fabrics.

Figure 36. Headed note paper of the Art Furnishers Alliance, 1880 (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 37. Japanese art metal work imported by Dresser & Holme. This was a partnership which lasted a comparatively short time during the height of the enthusiasm for Japanese goods. Published in *The Furniture Gazette*, 1880, when Dresser was Editor (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 38a,b. Pages showing designs for 'afternoon tea-sets' from Dixons' 1885 catalogue. Dresser's designs can be seen here in their real context, i.e. elegant variations upon familiar themes. All of the teapots in 38a (left) are by Dresser, except for the small group of three in the lower right hand corner, which were probably by Dixon's drawing office. These more common place designs should be compared against Dresser's elegant ones (Courtesy Stuart Durant).

Figure 39-42. *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. (Book Courtesy Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

Figure 39. Plate 7 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "The two top circular ornaments are pure Persian in style: the two borders at the left side are Gothic ; the little cross in the center of the sheet, the little border at the bottom on the left side, and that in the angle at the right, are Celtic in character ; the other border is not in any pure style, while the large circular ornament is a mere fancy composition, intended to give an expression of night.

Figure 40. Plate 12 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "The large circular figure is Japanese." This motif could have come from any one of a number of popular books on Japanese Heraldry that were available at the time.

Figure 41. Top of Plate 26 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "In no historic style. The upper figure is intended to give the idea of evening; ..."

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Figure 42. Plate 47 from *Modern Ornamentation*, 1886. "This is a form of Italian Renaissance ornament."

Figure 43. Design for cretonne (Steiner & Co.). From "The Work of Christopher Dresser", *The Studio*, 1989 (Courtesy Sturart Durant).

Figure 44. Design for cretonne (Steiner & Co.). From "The Work of Christopher Dresser", *The Studio*, 1989 (Courtesy Sturart Durant).

Figure 45. Examples of Clutha* glass manufactured by James Couper & Sons, Glascow, C1890-95. These are from the catalogue of the exhibition of works organized by Richard Dennis and John Jesse of *The Fine Art Society*, London, in October 1972 (Courtesy Michael Whiteway, Haslam and Whiteway Limited, London).

*. Clutha glass is a type of glass with air traps and specks of Aventurine**, patented in the 1890s by James Couper, Christopher Dresser, and George Walton. An Air Trap is an air-filled void, which may be of almost any shape. Air traps in stems were frequently tear shaped or spirally twisted. They could also diamond shaped. These were created by blowing a gather of glass into a mold with projections of the desired design, withdrawing it, and covering it with a second gather, which traps pockets of air in the indentations. This technique was patented by W. H., B. & J. Richardson of England in 1857.

** Aventurine (from French aventure, "chance") is a translucent glass with sparkling inclusions of gold, copper, or chromic oxide, first made in Venice in the 15th century. Aventurine glass imitates the mineral of the same name, a variety of quartz spangled with mica.

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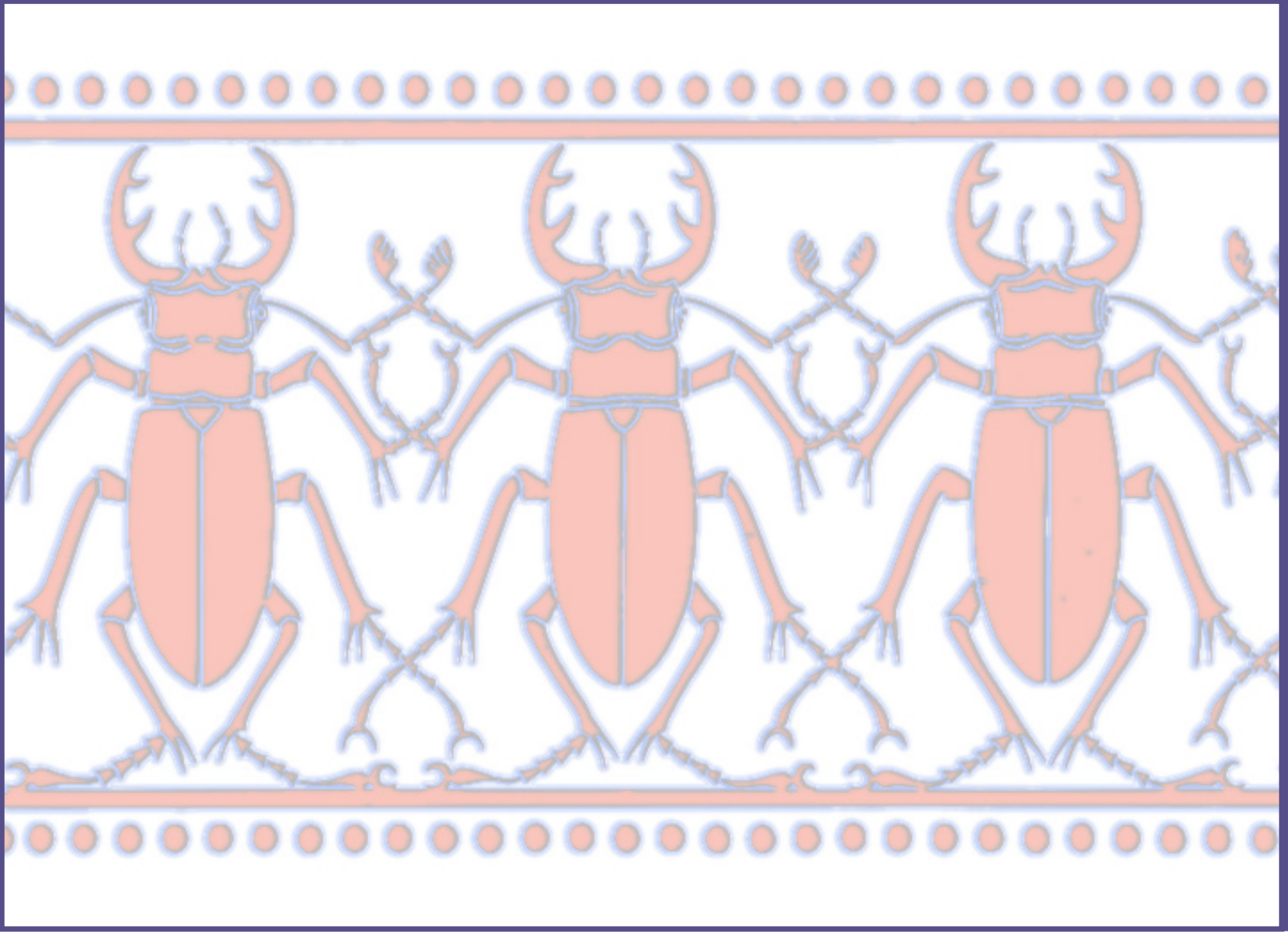

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"On Decorative Art", *The Planet*, London, 1862 (Dresser also designed the cover of this magazine).

"The Prevailing Ornament of China and Japan", *The Building News*, London, 1863.

"The Paris Exhibition 1867", *The Chromolithograph*, London, 1867-68 (a series of 12 articles on art manufactures in the International Exhibition of 1867).

"The Decoration of Ceilings", London, 1868 (privately printed).

"General Principles of Art, Decorative and Pictorial with Hints on Colour, its Harmonies and Contrasts", London, 1868 (privately printed).

"Principles of Design", *The TechnicalEducator*, Casselll, London, 1870-72 (published in book form as *The Principles of Decorative Design*, London, 1873).

"Ornamentation Considered as High Art", *Journal of the Society of Arts*, XlX, London, 1871. (This paper attracted a good deal of correspondence, which is reproduced in later issues of the journal - this is of particular interest.)

"Hindrances to the Progress of Applied Art", Journal of the Society of Arts, XX, London, 1872.

"Eastern Art and its Influence on European Manufactures and Taste", *Journal of the Society of Arts*, XXII, London, 1874.

G Phillips Bevan (ed), "Carpets", *British Manufacturing Industries*, 1876.

I "Art Industries", II "Art Museums", Ill "Art Schools", The Penn Monthly, Philadelphia, 1877.

Dresser contributed a number of articles to The Furniture Gazette between 1874 and 1882.

III Books on Botany by Christopher Dresser

The Rudiments of Botany, Structural and Physiological, London, 1859.

Unity in Variety as Deduced from the Vegetable Kingdom: being an attempt at developing that oneness which is discoverable in the habits, mode of growth, and principle of construction of all plants, London, 1860.

Popular Manual of Botany, Edinburgh, 1860.

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IV Published Articles on Botany by Christopher Dresser

"On a New System of Nature Printing", Journal of the Society of Arts, V, London, 1857. ("Nature printing" was a simple process for printing accurate representations of plants directly from specimens. This was one among numerous variations of the basic method.)

On the Morphological Import of Certain Vegetable Organs", *Transactions of theEdinburgh Botanical Society*, VI, Edinburgh, 1859.

"On the Stem or Axis as the Fundamental Organ in the Vegetable Structure", Transactions of the Edinburgh Botanical Society, VI, Edinburgh, 1860.

V Manuscript Writings on Botany by Christopher Dresser

"Contributions to Organographic Botany", read before the Linnean Society, April 1858.

A paper on Morphology submitted to the University of Jena as part of the requirements for a Doctorate. ("The Rudiments of Botany, Structural and Physiological", 1859, and "Unity in Variety as Deduced from the Vegetable Kingdom", 1859, were also accepted as part of the submission.)

VI Selected Books and Articles Relating to Christopher Dresser

The Aesthetic Movement and the Cult of Japan, London, 1972. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Fine Art Society.

Anonymous, "The Work of Christopher Dresser", The *Studio: An Illustrated Magazine of Fine and Applied Art*, XV, London, 1899 (pp 104-114).

Isabelle Anscombe, "Knowledge is Power": The Designs of Christopher Dresser", The Connoisseur, London, 1979 (pp 54-59).

Elizabeth Aslin, *The Aesthetic Movement, Prelude to Art Nouveau*, London, 1969.

Birmingham Gold and Silver; 1773-1973, Birmingham, 1973. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

JF Blacker, *Nineteenth Century English Ceramic Art*. London, 1911.

All Boe, *From Gothic Revival to Functional Form*, Oslo, 1957.

British Parliamentary Papers: IndustrialRevolution Design, I-IV, Shannon, Ireland, 1968-70. (Facsimiles of documents relating to official design policy and the Schools of Design. With these it is possible to piece together Dresser's design education.)

Shirley Bury, "The Silver Designs of Dr Christopher Dresser",

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Apollo, London, 1962 (pp 766-770).

Shirley Bury, *Victorian Electroplate*, London, 1971.

Michael Collins (ed), *ChristopherDresser* 1834-1904, London, 1979. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Camden Arts Centre, London and the Arkwright Arts Trust, Middlesburgh.

Michael Darby, "Owen Jones and the Eastern Ideal" (an unpublished PhD thesis for the University of Reading).

"The Decoration of Flat Surfaces",
London, *The Art Student*, Hall, Smart and Allen, Volume I, June 1, 1864 pp. 91-92

Christopher Dresser, *1834-1904*, London, 1990. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Fine Art Society (in association with Haslain & Whiteway Limited, London).

Dr Christopher Dresser, London, 1981. Catalogue of an exhibition organised by
Dan Klein Limited.
Richard Dennis and John Jesse, *Christopher Dresser*, 1834-1904, London, 1972. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Fine Art Society (introduction and chronology by Stuart Durant).

Ann Dumas, *Ceramics and glass by Christopher Dresser in an English collection*. The magazine Antiques, June 1988 v133 n6 p1344 (10)

Ann Dumas, *Victorian modern: the metalwork designs of Christopher Dresser*, C.R Ashbee, and Archibald Knox 1880-1910. The magazine Antiques, June 1985 v127 p1343 (10)

Stuart Durant, "Aspects of the Work of Dr Christopher Dresser, 1834-1904, botanist, designer and writer" (an unpublished MA thesis for the Royal College of Art, 1973).

Stuart Durant, *Ornament: A Survey of Decoration Since 1830*, London, 1986. (Dresser's ornamental design can be seen here in a contemporary context.)

William Dyce, *The Drawing-Book of the Government School of Design*, London, 1842.

Martian Filler, *Dresser's successes*. House & Garden, NOvember 1987 v159 p32 (4).

Peter Floud (ed), Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts, London, 1952. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum (see section H: Bruce J Talbert and Christopher Dresser).

Deborah Gimelson, *The astonishingly modern vision of Christopher Dresser*. Architectural Digest, March 1991 v48 n3 p40(4).

Graham Oxley, Yorkshire Potteries, Pots and Potters, York, 1916.

Widar Halen, "Christopher Dresser and the Cult of Japan" (an unpublished PhD thesis, Oxford University, 1988).

Widar Halen, *Christopher Dresser*, Oxford, 1990 (contains a detailed listing of manuscript sources).

Widar Halen, Christopher Dresser and the aesthetic interior. The Magazine Antiques, January 1991 v139 n1 p256 (12).

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Chales Handley-Read, *Design* 1860-1960, London, 1968. (Report of the sixth conference of the Victorian Society.)

Malcolm Haslain, *English Art Pottery*, 1865-1915, Woodbridge, 1975.
John Heskett, Industrial Design, London, 1980.

F Edward Hulme, *A Series of Sketches from Nature of Plant Form*, London, 1868. (Hulme was taught by Dresser - his teachings on plant-based ornament are reflected here.)

Le Japonisme, Paris, 1988. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Galeties Nationales du Grand Palais (contains an excellent bibliography relating to Japonisme).

Simon Jervis (ed), *Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Art, The Handley-Read Collection*, London, 1972.

Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Otnament*, London, 1856.

RudigerJoppien (ed), *ChristopherDresser. Eine viktorianischerDesigner* Cologne, 1981. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Kunstgerwerbemuseum (includes an essay on the nature of Dresser"s botanical thought by Stuart Durant).

Jonathan Le Vine, The Linthorpe Pottery: An Interim Report, Teesside, 1970.

Fiona MacCarthy, *A History of British Design*, 1830-1870, London, 1979 (first published as "All Things Bright and Beautiful", 1972).

Frederick J Mayers, *Carpet Designs and Designing*, Benfleet, 1934. (It appears likely that Mayers worked in the Dresser office.)

Minton 1798-1910, London, 1976. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

Arthur Moreland, "Linthorpe: A Forgotten English Pottery", *The Connoisseur*, London, June 1914.

Richard Oakley, "A Notable Yorkshire Family", *The Dalesman*, XIX, no 11, Yorkshire, February, 1958, (on the Dresser family).

Linda Parry, *Textiles of the Arts and Crafts Movement*, London, 1988.

Nikolaus Pevsner, "Minor Masters of the XIXth Century: Christopher Dresser", *The Architectural Review, London*, 1937 (pp 183-186).

Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of the Modern Movement: From William Morris to Walter Gropius*, London, 1936 (first reprinted as *Pioneers of Modern Design*, New York, 1949).

A Welby Pugin, *Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament . . .* , London, 1844.

A Welby Pugin, *Floriated Ornament*, London, 1849 (Dresser's ornament in *TheArt of Decorative Design*, 1862, is clearly influenced by the work in this book).

Richard Redgrave (ed), *Reports of the Juries: Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations the Great Exhibition of 1851*, London, 1852 (contains Redgrave's Supplementary Report on Design).

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Richard Redgrave, On the Necessitty of Principles in Teaching Design, London, 1853.

Richard Redgrave, *Manual of Design*, London, nd (1876).

Judy Rudoe, *Decorative Arts* 1850-1950: *A Catalogue of the British Museum Collection*, London, 1992.

John Ruskin, *The Two Paths, being Lectures on Art and its Application to Decoration and Manufacture*, London, 1859.

George Augustus Sala, *Notes and Sketches of the Paris Exhibition*, London, 1868 (on the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867).

Tomoko Sato and Toshio Watanabe (ed), *Japan and Britain: An Aesthetic Dialogue, 1850-1930*, London, 1991. Catalogue of an exhibition at the Barbican Centre, (contains an excellent bibliography relating to Japonisme).

Herwin Schaefer, *The Roots of Modern Design*, London, 1970.
Robert Schmutzler, Art NoUveau, London, 1964.

J Moyr Smith, *Studies for Pictures: A Medley*, London, 1868 (dedicated to Dresser, these illustrations establish that Moyr Smith collaborated with Dresser on occasions).

Cecil E Tattersall, *A History of British Carpets*, London, 1934 (Tattersall was employed in the Dresser office for a number of years).

Adrian Tillbrook, "Christopher Dresser"s Designs for Elkington & Co", *Journal of the Society of Decorative Arts*, no 9, London, 1985.

Hugh Wakefield, *Victorian Pottery*, London, 1962.

Patricia Wardie, *Victorian Silver and Silver Plate*, London, 1963.

Michael Whiteway (ed), *The Birth of Modern Design*. Catalogue of an exhibition curated by Michael Whiteway at the Sezon Museum of Art, 1990 (text in Japanese).

VII Citations for Articles in the Archives Folder

1 Schools of Design
Reports and Returns relating to Head and Provincial Schools
British Parliamentary Papers
1850 (730) Vol. XLII, pp. 2-6

Headmasters' Report on the HEAD SCHOOL for the year ending July 1850

2 Schools of Design
Reports and Documents exhibiting the State and Progress of the Head and Branch Schools of Design during the last Twelve Months
British Parliamentary Papers
1850 (731) Vol. XLII, pp. 60-62

Prospectus of the Government School of Design, Somerset House, London

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3 Schools of Design
Reports and Documents exhibiting the State and Progress of the Head and Branch Schools of Design during the last Twelve Months
British Parliamentary Papers
1850 (731) Vol. XLII, pp. 74, 78

p. 74
HEAD SCHOOL, SOMERSET HOUSE
List of students who received prizes at the EXHIBITION of WORKS in January 1850

This appears to be the first record of Dresser receiving a Government Scholarship. The precise amount is not known.

p. 78
It would seem likely that Dresser received the prize for the group of six designs which follow (- nos. 509, 517-521)

4 Schools of Design
Reports and Documents exhibiting the State and Progress of the Head and Branch Schools of Design, in the Year 1850-1850
British Parliamentary Papers
1851 [1423] Vol. XLIII pp. 40, 41, 51

p.40
HEAD SCHOOL, SOMERSET HOUSE - PRIZES AWARDED TO THE STUDENTS IN MARCH 1851

Abstract of Payments to Students in the Head School (Male Class) for Prizes awarded in 1851

p.41
List of Exhibitioners in the Head School, Somerset House, in 1851

p.51
Schools of Design
First Report of the Department of Practical Art with Appendices
British Parliamentary Papers
1852-3 [1615] Vol. LIV, p. 297

5 Schools of Design
First Report of the Department of Practical Art with Appendices
British Parliamentary Papers
1852-3[1615] Vol. LIV, pp 230-232

Owen Jones' Observations in the Catalogue of the Museum of Manufacturers, May 1852.

These observations, which precede the Catalogue, can be seen as a rehearsal for the Propositions which were to appear in the Grammar of Ornament, 1856. Dresser, as an eighteen year old student in 1852, would have been caught up in the enthusiasm for Indian design. Undoubtedly, his later decorative work was influenced by a study of the collection of Indian fabrics and metalwork which was acquired for the Museum of Manufacturers. The Department of Practical Art - which succeeded the School of Design - had been given the sum of £5,000.00 by the Treasury from the profits of the Great Exhibition for the purchase of exemplars to improve the taste of design students. Significantly, just under a third of this sum was spent on Indian designs. Dr. Gustave Waagen, who contributed the footnote, was the Director of the Royal Gallery in Berlin and a close friend of Albert, the Prince Consort.

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6 Schools of Design
First Report of the Department of Practical Art with Appendices
British Parliamentary Papers
1852-3, Vol. LIV, p. 237

Owen Jones' note on this elaborate Indian textile (for a turban) is of particular interest. Here we can see an attempt to apply a scientific analysis to the study of colour combinations. Dresser emulated this approach and his aesthetic canons have their origins in Jones' theories

7 School of Design
First report of the Department of Practical Art with Appendices
British Parliamentary Papers
1852-3 Vol. LIV, P. 241

A passage reproduced from Redgrave's Report on Design - also from the same Catalogue. Redgrave here advocates simplicity in design. Dresser must have heeded this advice and many of his best designs are remarkable for their simplicity.

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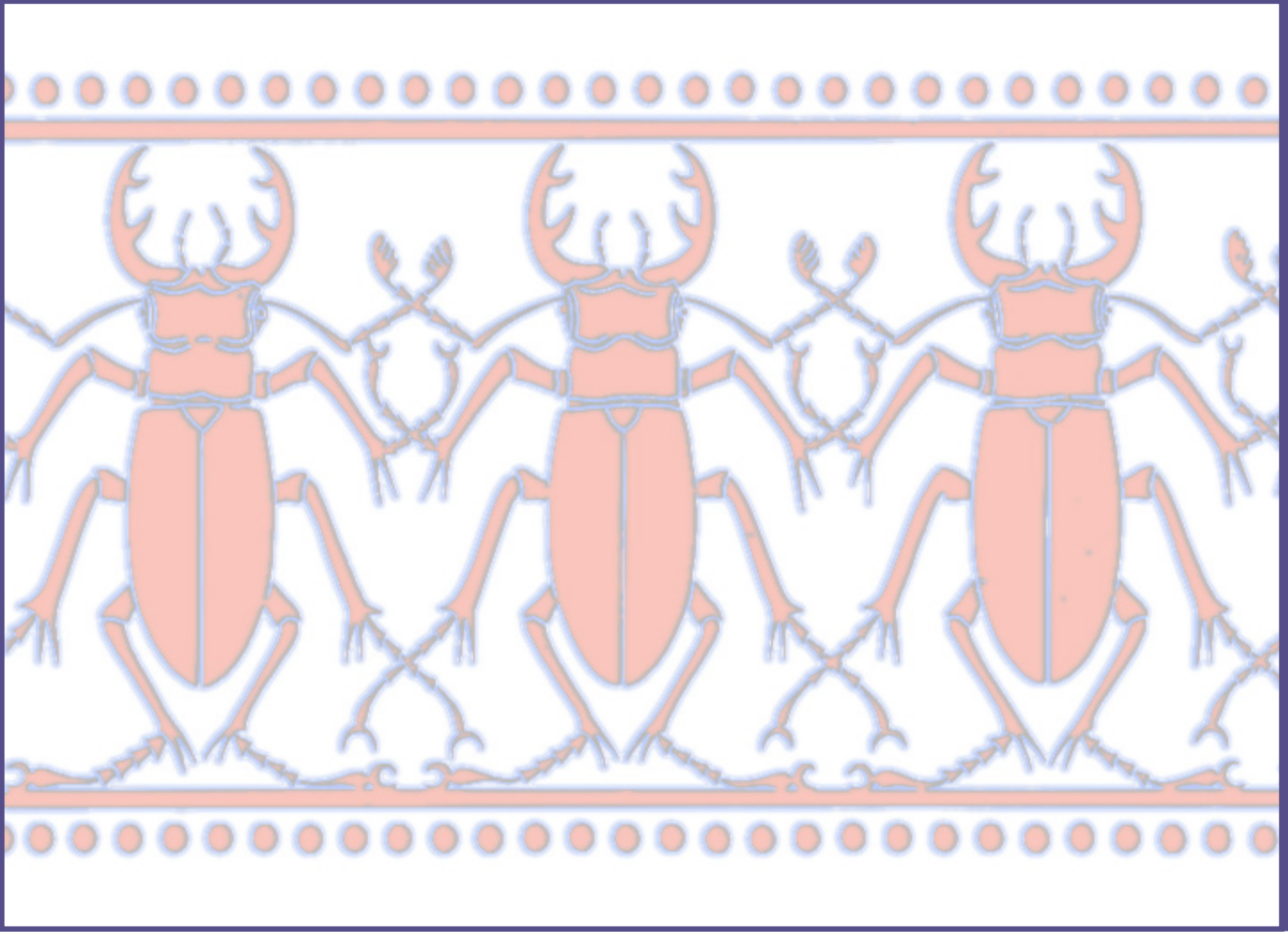

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Father of Industrial Design

Other works by Stuart Durant

Stuart Durant

Reader - School of History of Art and Design,
Kingston University

MA The Royal College of Art (MA by Thesis)

Supervisors: the late Charles Handley-Read and Hans Brill, Tutor Librarian of the Royal College of Art.

My writing was principally concerned with the contributions to botanical morphology of Dr Christopher Dresser, FLS, 1834-1904. In order to do this, I had to familiarize myself with late eighteenth and early nineteenth century German and French botanical literature - the writings of Caspar Friedrich Wolff, Goethe and Schleiden; as well as those of De Candolle, Richard, etc.. I also had to study contemporary British writers on morphology - Robert Brown, John Lindley etc., etc.. Senior botanists at the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, advised me on botanical matters.

Selected list of Publications

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Books:

Victorian Ornamental Design

London, Academy Editions and New York, St. Martin's Press, 1972

The Theory of Colour

London, B Weinreb, 1973
This was published in a limited edition. It is an annotated catalogue of a collection of the books (and other material) which was to form the basis of the Royal College of Art Colour Collection.

Ornament. A survey of decoration since 1830

London, Macdonald, 1986
Also published simultaneously in an American edition by Abbeville, New York and in translation - **French** by Arthaud, Paris, 1987 (trans. Carole Naggar); **Japanese** by Iwasaki Bijutshu-sha, Tokyo, 1990 (trans. Haruhiko Fujita); and **Spanish** by Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1991 (trans. Paloma Munoz-Campos Garcia).

Dr David Brett in the bibliography of his ***On Decoration***, Cambridge, 1992, described ***Ornament*** as "a survey of style, done in great detail and with great learning". The chapter on "Le Culte du Japon" in the French edition of ***Ornament*** was used extensively in the preparation of the exhibition **Le Japonisme**, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, and the National Museum of Occidental Art, Tokyo, 1988. An English paperback edition of ***Ornament*** is planned.

The Decorative Designs of C F A Voysey. From the Drawings Collection, The British Architectural Library, The Royal Institute of British Architects
Cambridge, The Lutterworth Press, 1990
Also published in an American edition by Rizzoli, New York. A Japanese edition is planned.

C F A Voysey
London, Academy Editions and New York, St. Martin's Press, 1992
On Voysey's architecture - published in the Architectural Monographs Series. A Japanese edition is planned

Christopher Dresser
London, Academy Editions and Berlin, Ernst und Sohn, 1993
The text consists principally of the biographical material from a projected larger work. There is, however, a shortened exegesis of Dresser's theory.

Palais des Machines - Ferdinand Dutert
London, Phaidon, 1994
In the **Architecture in Detail** Series. This is the first publication to deal specifically with the Palais des Machines, which was the first steel-framed building. Nikolaus Pevsner and Henry-Russell Hitchcock present it within the context of the Modern Movement. Here, the Palais des Machines is seen as an outcome of the culture of the Ecole des Beaux Arts amalgamated with Viollet-le-Duc's modernized medievalism. I commissioned Angus Low, MA, CEng, MICE, an Associate Director of Ove Arup and Partners, to produce a "structural appraisal" of the Palais des Machines - this is probably the first publication in which an historic structure has been subjected to sophisticated computer analysis.

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Catalogues:

Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Art: The Handley-Read Collection
London, The Royal Academy of Arts, 1972
Various contributions include the whole of the section on Christopher Dresser.

Weltkulturen und moderne Kunst. Die Begegnung der europaischen Kunst und Musik im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert mit Asien, Afrika, Ozeanien, Afro- und Indo-Amerika. Austellung veranstaltet fur die Spiele der XX. Olympiade Munchen 1972
Munich, Bruckmann Verlag, 1972
Various contributions

Christopher Dresser, 1834-1904
London, The Fine Art Society Limited, Richard Dennis and John Jesse, 1972
Introduction and chronology

The Aesthetic Movement and the Cult of Japan
London, The Fine Art Society Limited, 1972
Editor, designer and principal contributor

Christopher Dresser, 1834-1904
London, Camden Arts Center and Middlesbrough, 1979-80
Contributions

Ornament. A collection of books and original designs
London, Sims, Reed & Fogg Limited, 1981
A complete antiquarian bookseller's catalogue with detailed notes - this was to form the basis of ***Ornament***, 1986.

The Decorative Designs of C F A Voysey. From the Drawings Collection, The British Architectural Library, The Royal Institute of British Architects
Cambridge, The Lutterworth Press, 1990
This is also listed as a book - it was used as the catalogue of the exhibition ***The Decorative Designs of C F A Voysey***, RIBA Drawings Collection, 1990.

Architecture and Childhood
London, The British Architectural Library Drawings Collection, RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1993
Editor and designer - the exhibition was jointly curated with Elizabeth Darling.

Reviews:

I have written reviews for the following publications:

The Architectural Review, ***Architectural Design***, ***Art and Design***, ***Design***, ***The Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, The Journal of Heritage Studies, Modern and Contemporary France***, etc.

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Articles:

"Ornament in an Industrial Civilization"
The Architectural Review, CLX, September, 1976
This was the first occasion during the Post-Modern debate in which architectural ornament was specifically discussed.

"*Nulla dies sine linea*. Viollet-le-Duc's Drawings"and "The Notre-Dame Murals"
Eugene Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. Architectural Design Profile
London, Architectural Design and Academy Editions, 1980
Two essays on the work of Viollet-le-Duc. Other contributors to this publication included Sir Nikolaus Pevsner and Sir John Summerson.

"William Morris and Victorian Decorative Art"
William Morris & Kelmscott
London, The Design Council, 1981
(Catalogue of an exhibition)

"Christopher Dresser und die Botanik seiner Zeit"
Christopher Dresser, ein viktorianischer Designer, 1834-1904)
Cologne, Kunstgewerbemuseum Stadt Koln, 1981
(Catalogue of an exhibition)

"The Austrian Werkbund"
Vienna Dream and Reality. Architectural Design Profile
London, Architectural Design and Academy Editions, 1986
(Edited by Hans Hollein and Catherine Cooke)

"Christopher Dresser und die Arts and Crafts-Bewegung"
Von Morris bis Mackintosh - Reformbewegung zwischen Kunstgewerbe und Sozialutopie
Darmstadt, Institut Mathildenhohe, 1994
(Catalogue of an exhibition)

Exhibitions:

Weltkulturen und Moderne Kunst (World Cultures and Modern Art) Munich 1972 (Advisor)

The Aesthetic Movement and the Cult of Japan, The Fine Art Society, Bond Street 1972 (joint organizer and editor of catalogue)
Christopher Dresser, The Camden Arts Center and the Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough 1979-80
(Consultant)
The Decorative Designs of C F A Voysey, The Heinz Gallery, The Drawings Collection, RIBA, 1990
(Curator)

Architecture and Childhood, The Heinz Gallery, The Drawings Collection, RIBA, 1993 (joint curator and editor of catalogue)

C F A Voysey, The Design Museum, 1994 (principal advisor)

Christopher Dresser, The Design Museum - date to be agreed (curator)

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Contributions to publications by other authors:

E H Gombrich
The Sense of Order. A study in the psychology of decorative art
London, Phaidon, 1979
(Picture research)

Philippe Garner (editor)
The Encyclopaedia of Decorative Art, 1890-1940
London, Phaidon, 1979
"Industrial Design" (chapter)

The International Design Yearbook 1985/86
London, Thames and Hudson, 1985 (also published in New York and Amsterdam)
I was the originator of this publication and general editor of the first issue. I contributed much of the text. In subsequent issues I have acted as design consultant. ***The International Design Yearbook*** is now in its tenth year.

Ben Farmer and Hentie Louw (editors)
Companion to Contemporary Architectural Thought
London and New York, Routledge, 1993
A lengthy essay: "Architectural Form and Ornament"
Other contributors include: James S Ackerman, Geoffrey Baker, Sir Hugh Casson, Sir Norman Foster, Michel Foucault and Patrick Nuttgens. My essay includes three of my own illustrations.

Mel Byars
The Design Encyclopedia
London, Laurence King, 1994
Consultant. The other consultants are: Arlette Barre-Despond, Design Historian, Paris, Milena Lamarova, Umeleckoprumysolove Muzeum, Prague, David Revere McFadden, Decorative Arts Historian, New York, Professor Gillian Naylor, The Royal College of Art, Dr Penny Sparke, The Royal College of Art and Josef Strasser, Die Neue Sammlung, Munich.

Current Projects:

Architectural Drawing Monographs
Academy Editions and Ernst und Sohn
Originator and advisor etc. So far, monographs on the drawings of Lutyens, Erno Goldfinger, William Burges and Philip Webb are projected. All the material will be taken from The British Architectural Library, Drawings Collection, RIBA Heinz Gallery. The study of Lutyens' drawings will be published very shortly.

The Audio Archive for Architecture
Founder. This is run by the "The Royal Institute of British Architects", Drawings Collection, Heinz Gallery, 21, Portman Square, London W1H 9HF in collaboration with Kingston University. The purpose of the Archive is to record the voices of architects for posterity. Taped interviews will eventually be transferred to permanent and stable digitalized discs. One copy of each recording will be lodged at the RIBA Drawings

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Collection, the other with the Faculty of Design, Kingston University. In the first instance, distinguished elderly architects will be recorded. The primary intention is to obtain detailed and personalized biographical information. It is expected, that as the project develops, the Archive will be expanded to include visual material. (In the form of video interviews etc.) It is also intended that the archive will ultimately become fully international. Several important architects, whose career began in the 1930s, have already agreed to be interviewed and recorded. The business of the Audio Archive for Architecture is organized by an Advisory Committee which includes: Dr Neil Bingham, Deputy Curator, The RIBA Drawings Collection, Stuart Durant, Jill Lever, Curator, The RIBA Drawings Collection and Professor Peter Jacob, Head of the School of Architecture. The first interviews have already taken place.

"Digital Archives"
The Lutterworth Press, Cambridge (Lutterworth Multimedia) and Eidetica
Editor. A project using CD Rom technology. The first project will consist of the complete archiving of five important magazines of the 1890s - *The Studio, The Yellow Book, The Savoy, The Dome and The Evergreen.*
An original interface has been devised. Other themes and collaborations with museums are planned.

Consultant work:

Academy Editions (now Academy Editions - Ernst und Sohn)
42 Leinster Gardens

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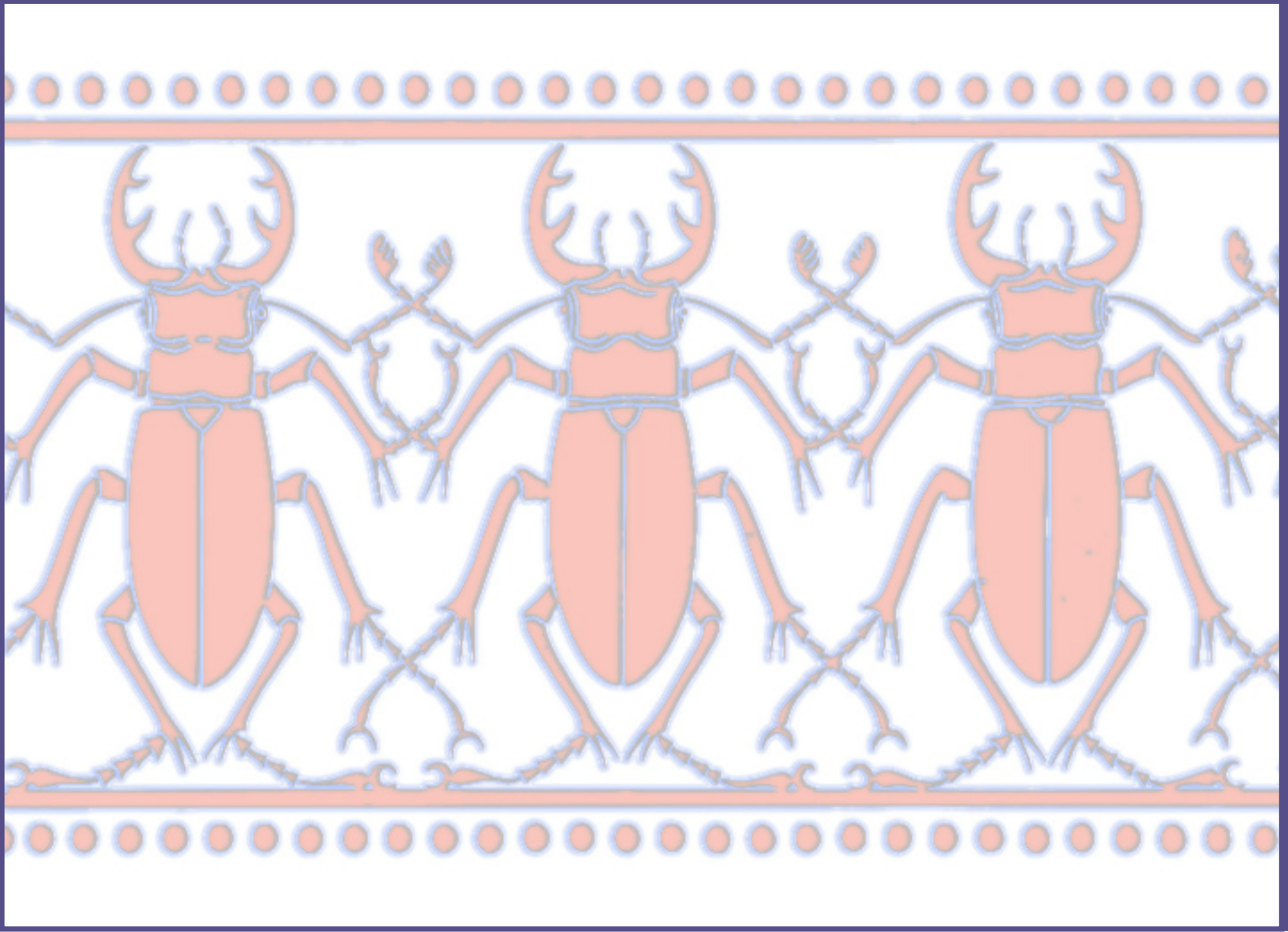

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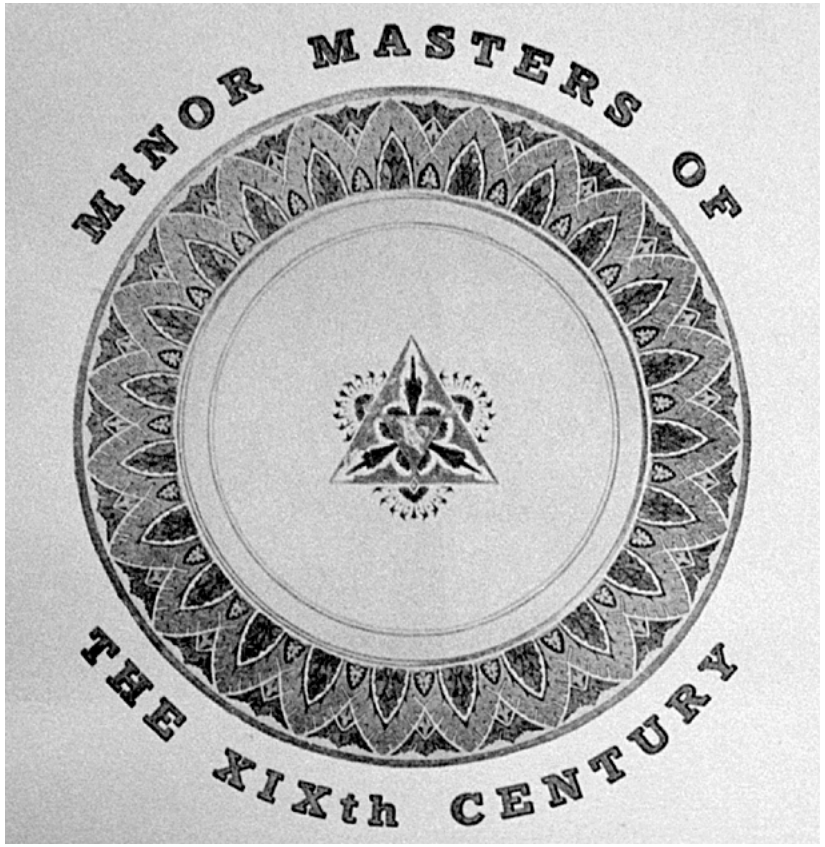

IX. Christopher Dresser Industrial Designer

By Nikolaus Pevsner

If you look into the usual textbooks, you will get the impression that the history of the applied or decorative arts in the nineteenth century consisted of remarkable achievements of handicraft up to about 1820 or 1830, followed by the abominations of Albert's Great Exhibition of 1851, and then by the revival of the Arts and Crafts initiated by Morris and spread by his followers. Of industrial art proper some words might be found in connection with Josiah Wedgwood, but that would be all, hardly anything on design for industry during the decades of the industrial revolution or the Mid-Victorian boom. And yet, looking back from our position today, a position at the same time extremely complicated and alarming, it is evident that any information as to the appearance, the aesthetic quality and the methods of producing designs at that time of victoriously progressing mass-production would be of value. Are there no industrial designs prior to 1890 worth recording? Even the names of the designers seem completely forgotten.

While engaged in research on the origins of the Modern Movement, quite by chance I cam across the name and two isolated examples of the work of Christopher Dresser. The two pieces, two cruet sets, 2 and 4, which I subsequently illustrated, were of a surprisingly high standard, so I tried to obtain some more particulars about their designer. This, however, proved almost impossible. Dresser's name appears neither in the *Dictionary of National Biography* nor in the *Thieme-Becker*, the great German encyclopaedia of artists. The *Studio* once published an

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article on him,[1] but that was all I could discover. The library of the Victoria and Albert Museum contains his books, and the department of ceramics two rather disappointing pieces of pottery designed by him. Not even the dates of his birth and death were known. It was only after a good many inquiries among such veterans of the Arts and Crafts Movement as I had the pleasure of meeting, that, in a roundabout way, I was led on to the right track. I heard that the Misses Dresser, Christopher Dresser's daughter, lived in a North Down village and would in all probability be prepared to help me. They received me most kindly, and the majority of the data on Dr. Dresser contained in the following pages is based on the information they gave me.

The Dresser family is of Danish origin although it has resided in England since the seventeenth century. Christopher Dresser was born in 1834. After leaving school he studied botany, and soon became a lecturer on the subject in the newly founded Department of Science and Art at South Kensington. He published a book called *Rudiments of Botany* in 1859, and another book *Unity in Variety* in the same year. At about that time, or slightly later, an honorary degree was conferred on him by a German university.

In spite of this academic success, he made up his mind to give up botany and embark on industrial design—a step that may appear a little less surprising if it is added that he had been teaching the botanical drawing classes at South Kensington. At any rate, in his first book on applied art, he already mentioned those "eminent manufacturers" who kept asking him for designs. This book, *The Art of Decorative Design*, was published in 1862. To Dresser, truly Victorian or rather truly nineteenth century to this extent, decorative art is tantamount to ornament. He is dealing with ornament exclusively which, according to his definition (p. 1) is "that which, superadded to utility, renders the object more acceptable through bestowing upon it an amount of beauty that it would not otherwise possess." He is by no means averse to the beauty of past styles, but does not deny either that there are contemporary products of high decorative value, above all in the work of Owen Jones at the Alhambra Court and the Greek Court of the Crystal palace and at St. James's Hall in Piccadilly. Nevertheless he teaches (p. 10) that, for modern use, "a repetition of ancient forms is not appropriate; for ornament, like architecture must

Figure 1.

1. Vol. XV, p. 134, 1898

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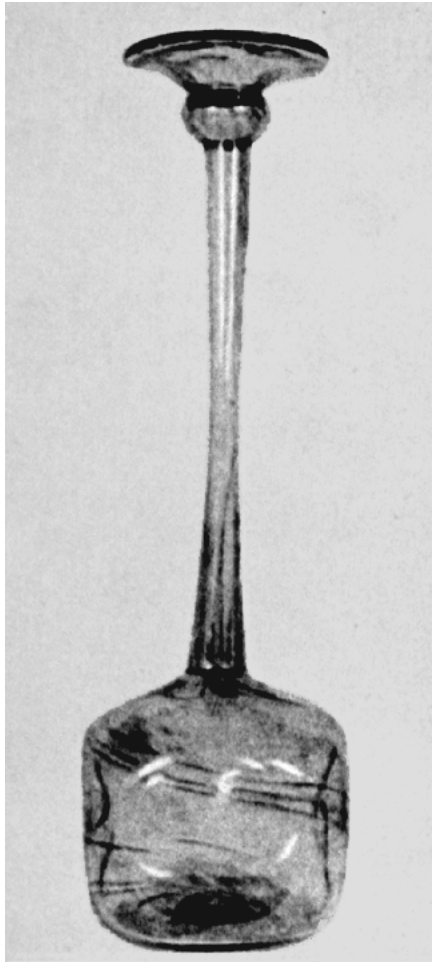

Figure 2.

express the sentiments of the age in which it is created." Pagan temples, he says, cannot become Christian churches, and medieval cathedrals are unsuitable for Protestant service. It is therefore of vital importance that our architecture and ornament should express "in a new form the refinement of our age." The task which Dresser has set himself is to define those laws which underlie the creation of all ornament and which should therefore be familiar to everyone concerned with decorative art. He firmly believes in the existence of such laws, as is to be expected from an author brought up and living under the tradition of Victorian rationalism. He therefore discusses a great number of rules of varied value and interest. By far the most extensive section of the book, in fact its central feature, is the one headed Adaptation. Here the author says (p. 116): "In order that art become lovable in the eyes of the people it is necessary that it in no way militate against the utility of the object which it adorns," and he sums up his theory of Adaptation by writing (p. 117) that "perfect regard to finesse can alone save art from suffering condemnation."

Strange as it may at first sight appear, it is this principle of "regard to fitness" that relates Dresser's theory of ornament with his original study of botany. In the structure and the growth of plans he sees the laws of utility and adaptation working to perfection, and descriptions and illustrations of flowers and leaves are for this reason frequently used to explain axioms. But he does not encourage any copying of actual plans for ornamental purposes. On the contrary, Dresser is most strongly opposed to what he calls "the Natural School." What he really wants to encourage is the study of flowers in order to grasp the principles underlying their shapes and the application of these principles to abstract or "conventional" ornament, be it of simple or complex form.

Though many of Dresser's arguments and also the appearance of his own ornament are clearly dated, there are some remarks amongst those quoted which seem strikingly ahead of their time. While one is quite prepared to admire Dresser's genius in putting forward such a good case for "regard to fitness" more

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than fifty years before "fitness to purpose" became the slogan of the supporters of a twentieth-century style in industrial art, it would be historically incorrect not to look first for a possible derivation of this revolutionary-sounding doctrine of Dresser's. It is unnecessary to say that William Morris's lectures cannot be regarded as such. Morris did not begin to speak in public before the seventies, and had only just produced his first ornamental designs ("The Trellis" 1861, and "The Daisy" 1861), when Dresser's book came out, but there are the writing of other great English theorists of art who were older than Morris and Dresser and undoubtedly influenced Morris, above all those of Pugin and Ruskin.

On the title-page of Pugin's *Contrasts*, that admirable pamphlet which he published in 1836, there are mock advertisements such as these: "Designing taught in six lessons, Gothic, Severe Greek and mixed styles"; "A large quantity of Gothic cornices just pressed out, from 6d. per yd."; "Compo Fronts forwarded to all parts of the Kingdom"; "An Errand Boy for an Office who can design occasionally"; "Wanted person to do showy foregrounds for competition drawings." Apart from the profound foresight with which Pugin denounces conditions even more topical today than they were in his own time, it must be said in our connection that Dresser's abhorrence of thoughtless copying of old ornament may well have been influenced by these and similar indictments of Pugin's. It may also be well to compare what Dresser teaches on the function of ornament and

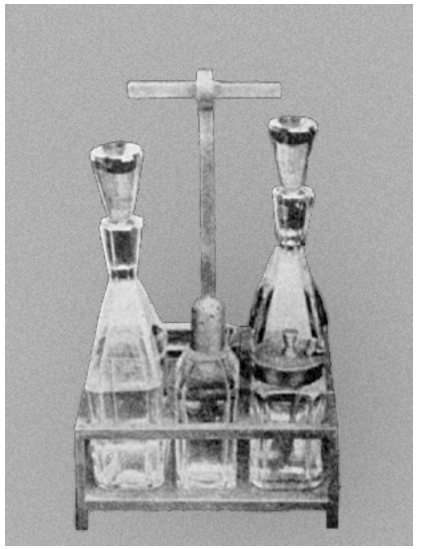

Figure 3.

on its fitness with the following quotations from Pugin's *True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (1841). "There should be no features about a building," Pugin writes, "which are not necessary for convenience, construction or property." Every detail should "serve a purpose." Ornament should "beautify, and not disguise," and these points are even exemplified by remarks on textile and wall-paper design.

Of Ruskin's works published before 1862, Dresser may have regarded *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) as particularly stimulating. Here he could find the idea that the beauty of architecture lies in ornament more than in construction, and that the beauty of ornament is "derived chiefly from the external appearances of organic nature," and here also the dislike of the use of Pagan forms for Christian churches, and the interpretation of architectural values as a "vivid expression of the intellectual life which has been concerned in their production."

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However, on the whole, Dresser's matter-of-fact style is wholly different from that of Ruskin's sonorous sermons. Dresser wants to set up laws of immediate use to the practical designer, Ruskin expatiates upon "principles of right." His *Lamp of Truth* and his *Lamp of Obedience* are not there to enlighten the architect or designer but to edify the general public. Ruskin pleads for only a few styles as able to achieve the salvation of architecture, whereas Dresser is as catholic in his taste as any successful designer of his age could be.

This as well as many other qualities point to a direct influence on Dresser by Owen Jones, the architect whom he mentioned with great respect right at the beginning of his book and whose words he keeps quoting in the most important pages of the chapter on Adaptation. On Owen Jones (1809-74) it is not necessary to say much here, as tribute was paid to his eminently advanced theories by Mrs. Gray in the February issue of The Architectural Review. It may, however, not be amiss to single out those points which were especially relevant to the formation of Dresser's ideas. They can all be found in a series of lectures delivered by Owen Jones at the Marlborough House School of Practical Art in June, 1852, immediately after its opening.[2] Jones proceeds from a description of what contemporary design seems to him to be like. "Chaos and disorder" (p. 2), is what the Great Exhibition of 1851 has revealed everywhere. Now industrial art would not have declined so badly had it been supported by a sound architectural style; for "architecture is the great parent of all ornamentation" (p. 4), and decoration "should properly be attendant upon Architecture" (p. 4). As to architecture, Jones says (and Dresser almost literally repeats) that it "is the material expression of the wants, the faculties, and the sentiments of the age in which it is created" (p. 5). It is therefore—and this argument too has passed into Dresser's book—"vain and foolish to make the art which faithfully represents the wants, the faculties and the feelings of one age, represent those of other people under totally different conditions" (p. 8). The reason for which Jones recommends the study of the past corresponds once more exactly with Dresser's aims set forth ten years later: "The Principles discoverable in the works of the past belong to us; not so the results" (p. 39). Our goal should be a new style of our age; knowledge of the laws embedded in historic ornament is supposed to be necessary to attain this. After these introductory theses, Jones goes more into details, and there

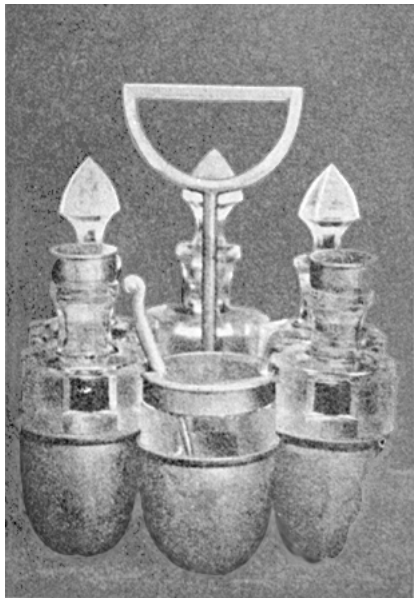

Figure 4.

2. Published in 1863 under the title *The True and the False in the Decorative Arts.*

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again Dresser follows him. Proportion is discussed, and Dresser asserts exactly like Jones that of two proportions the one which it is more difficult for the eye to detect will always be preferable. Thus 5:8 will be better than 4:8, etc. (Jones p. 24, Dresser p. 102). Dresser's attacks on contemporary carpet and wall-paper design also find their model in passages from Jones's lecture. His prescription is—to give a final instance of the complete accord between Jones and Dresser—that "flowers and other natural objects should not be used as ornament, but conventional representations founded upon them" (p. 36).

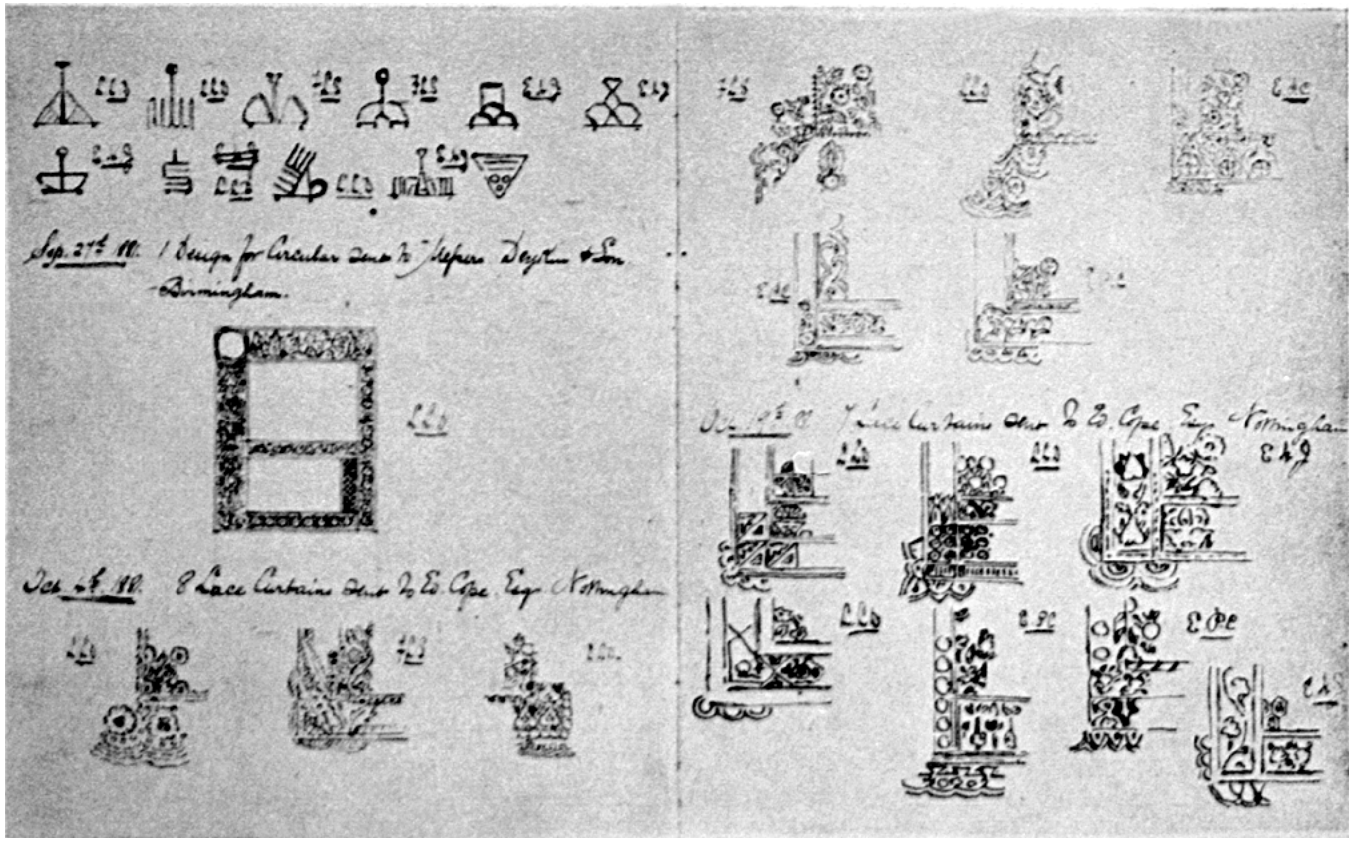

Figure 5.

These two points, however, make it necessary to introduce into our procession of theorists one more man, the great architect Gottfried Semper (1803-79), whose two epoch-making treatises on Polychromy in Greek architecture came out in German in 1834 and 1851. He had to leave Germany after the breakdown of the revolution of 1848. In 1851 he was commissioned by Mr. Shadwick to arrange

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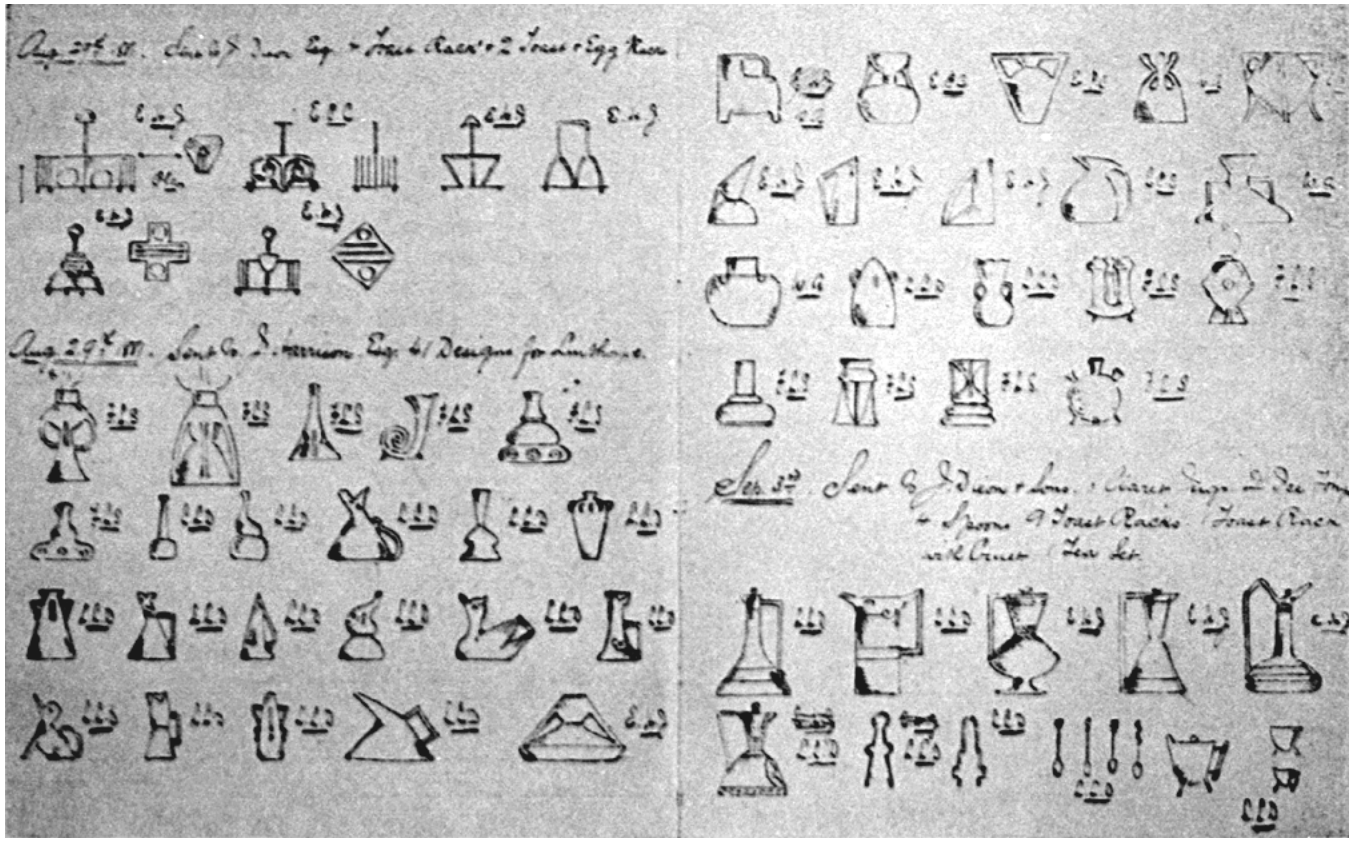

Figure 6.

the Canadian, Egyptian, Swedish and Danish sections of the Great Exhibition. He did this and laid down his impressions of the exhibition in a brilliant pamphlet published in Germany under the name of *Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst* in 1852. This book greatly impressed Prince Albert and, owing to his wish and that of Henry Cole, Semper was appointed Professor of Metallurgy in the New School of the Department of Practical Art. Of his lectures nothing survives. Of his extensive plans, which were of prime importance in the foundation of the Victoria and Albert Museum, an interesting manuscript is preserved at the library of the museum called *Practical Art in Metal and hard materials, its technology, history and styles.* Semper also contributed an essay on Polychromy to Owen Jones's *Apology of the Greek Court at the Crystal Palace* (1854). But as he left London in 1855 to follow a call to the new Technische Hochschule in Zurich, it is not easy to analyse the effects on England of his ideas on industrial art. It appears most probably that Owen Jones received as much inspiration from Semper as Dresser received from Jones.[3]

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After this discussion of Dresser's theories an account must now be given of his practice. As was said before, he began to supply designs to manufacturers between 1859 and 1862. In similar to what ornament there is in his early books, and also to his *Studies in Design*, a portfolio of the seventies. Qualities to be stressed are a peculiar sombre colour—scheme of night-blue backgrounds with olive-brown, olive-green and gold, and certain spiky forms of willful expression, which have scarcely any dependence on the past. This is also what makes some of the pottery which he designed in the same decade look so unusual amongst the ordinary period imitation then in fashion. There is no doubt a strong will and an original brain behind these designs.[4] The colour is harsh and rather crude, with unblended blues, greens, reds and gold.

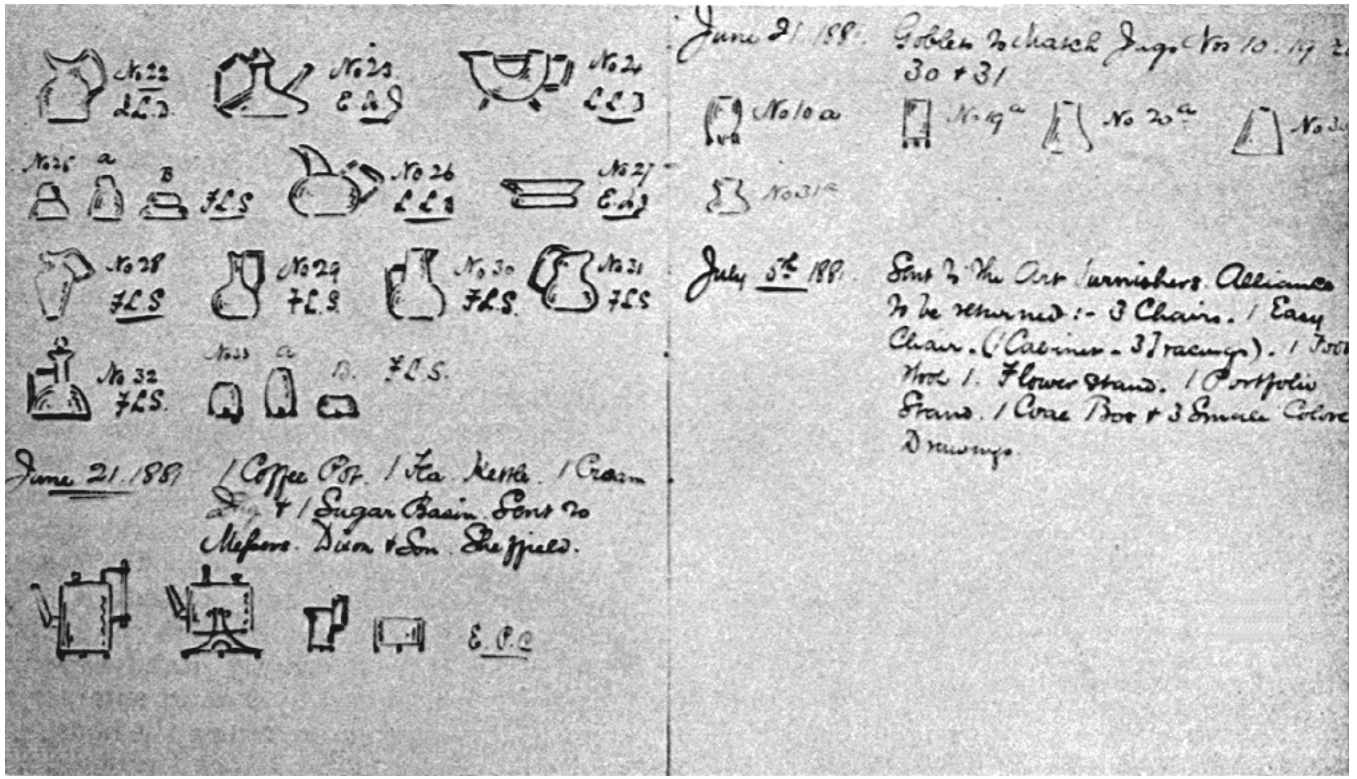

Figure 7. Designs by Christopher Dresser. 1, teakkettle in copper. 2, vase in "Clutha" glass, about 1880-1890. 3-4, Cruet sets 1877-1878. 5-7, pages from Dresser's account books 1880, showing designs for lace curtains and metal work. The headpieces on page 183 is a dinner plate design, about 1870-1880.

3. In Dresser's book Semper is quoted only once (p. 129). "Professor Semper used to say that the history of a nation can be read in the form of the water-vessels."

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The same harshness and willfulness, not to say ruthlessness, is expressed in Dresser's designs for metal-work. I said before how much I was impressed by two cruet sets which he did for Hukin & Heath's, 3 and 4.[5]

The Back-to-Fundamental attitude of these square and uncompromising shapes is unexpected in the seventies, and a group of sketches in the account book 5-7 shows that he was all the time we are in 1881 now experiencing with new shapes. Many of them are odd, some are decidedly ugly, some are

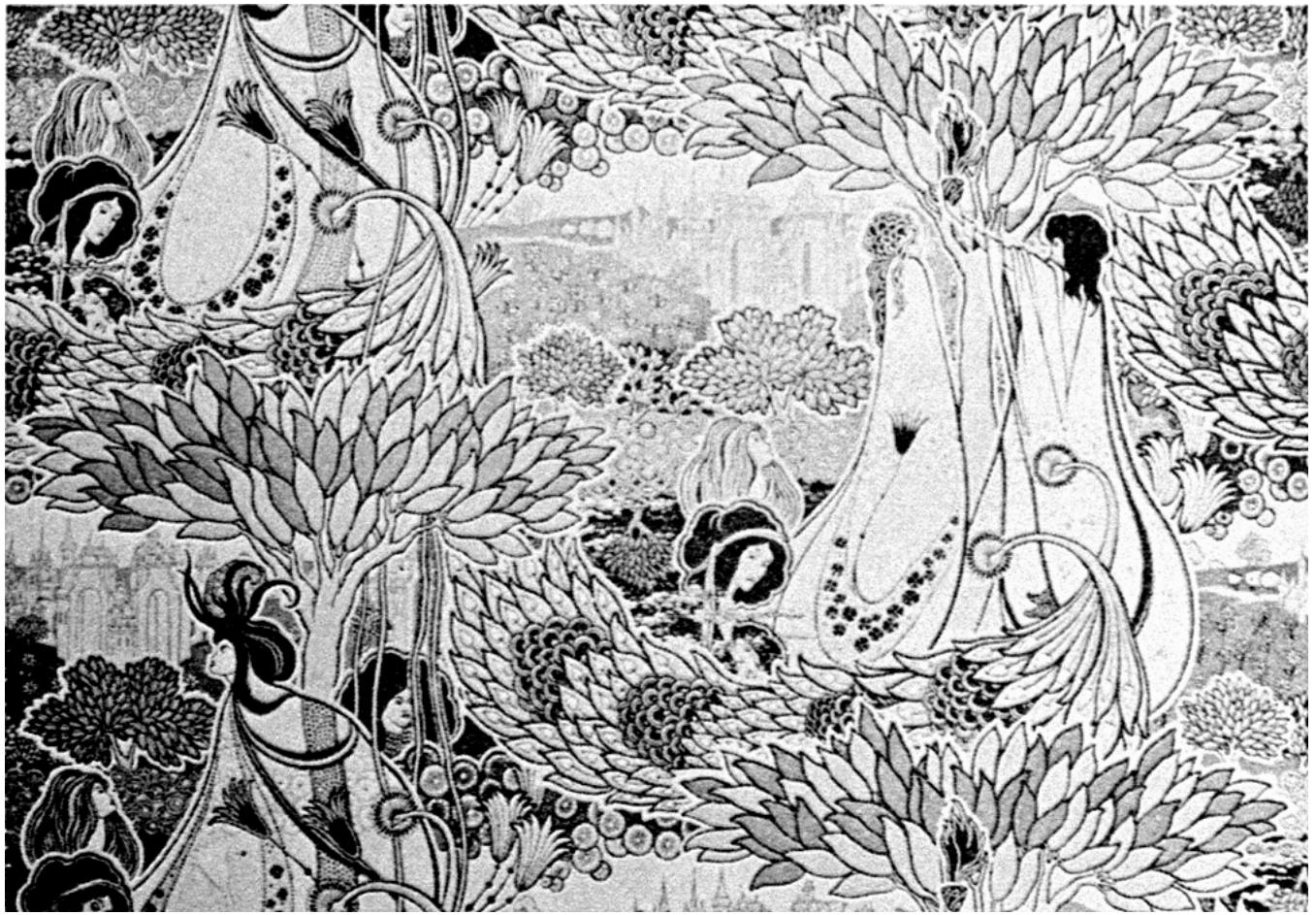

Figure 8.

Figures 8-9, Ttextile designs dating from about 1890-1904, showing two of the may changes in fashion during these years as reflected in the work of a free-lance designer.

4. I cannot say that I have found the same appeal in what I have seen of Dresser's production for Mr. Harrison's Linthorpe Pottery at Middlesbrough for which he worked in the late seventies and the early eighties.

5. These I discussed in my book on *The Pioneers of the Modern Movement*, p. 63. The designs were according to the account books posted to the manufacturers on 24 Oct., 1877.

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extremely interesting as endeavors to-wards functionalism, but scarcely any are conventional or dull. And again in a copper kettle such as the one illustrated 1, we find that same strong sense of individuality.[6] One has only to follow the weird curve of the handle with its pre-Art Nouveau rhythm opposed to the firm roundness of body and neck and the queer angularity of the spout to convince oneself of the exceptional character of Dresser's art. A further corroboration can be derived from chairs of his in a stern Neo-Empire and others of a lighter and more independent style, and from vases, 2, which he designed during the eighties for James Cooper & Son, of Glasgow, producers of "Clutha" glass. There is some period influence in these no doubt, but how boldly it is treated. Some of the spirit that led Morris, when he made his first crude and heavy pieces of furniture, seems to live here too.

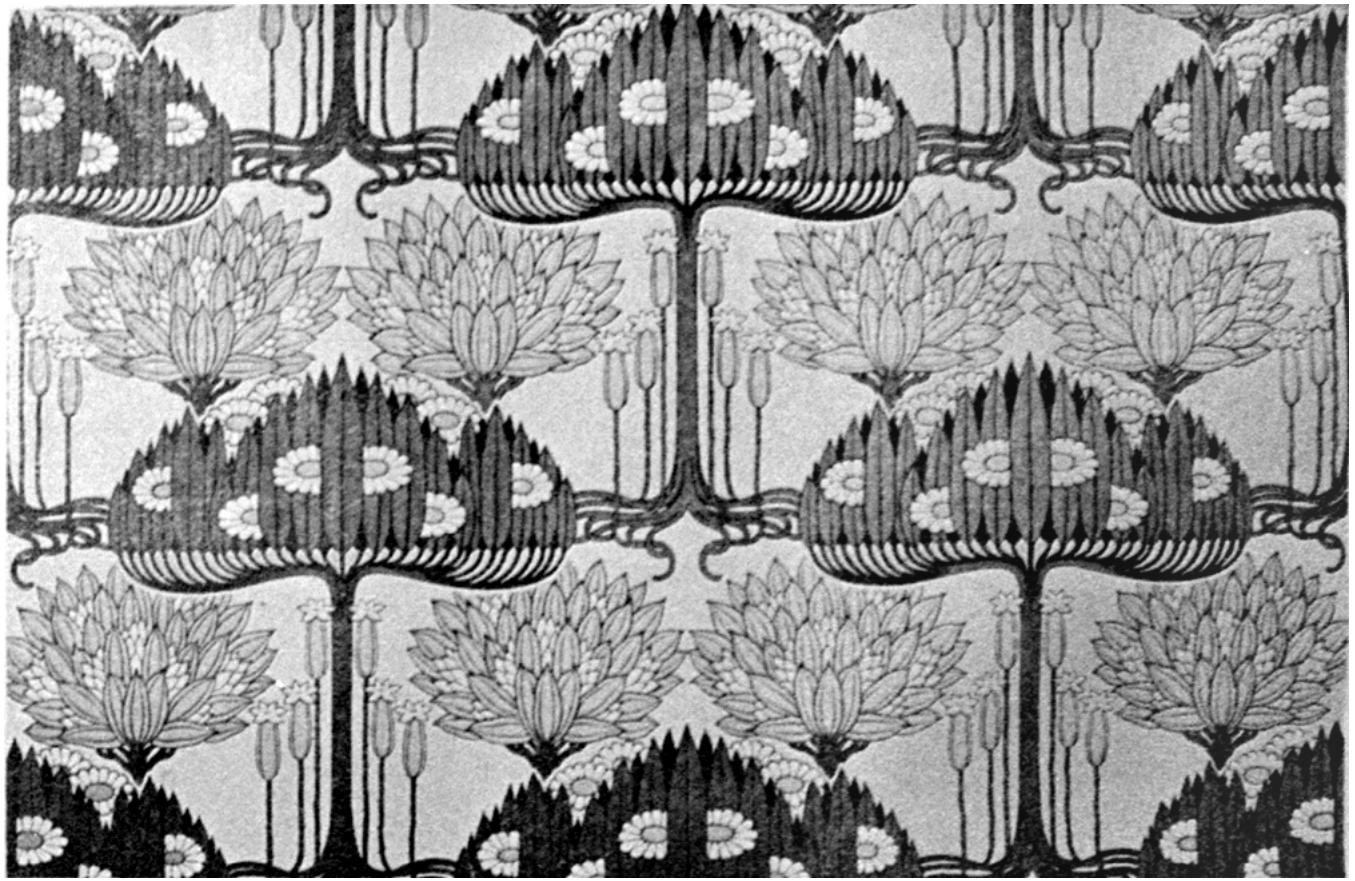

Figure 9.

6. I understand that his designs for copper were carried out by Benham & Froud's of London.

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However, Dr. Dresser grew older, he passed the age of fifty, and found an ever-increasing market for his designs. So he settled down, specializing more and more in textile designing and by degrees giving up his search of originality and function.[7] The illustrations from fabric designs of his can only serve to show how an accomplished draughtsman reacted to the various phases in the development of style which took place during the nineties and the first years of our century. There is a charming pomegranate and peacock pattern inspired by English textile traditions; there is a chrysanthemum pattern decidedly Morris or rather Crane in type; there is Beardsley looming large in another design, 8. This above all shows how far mere imitation has now replaced Dresser's previous directness of approach. On the other hand a series of patterns illustrating the Days of the Creation still contains something of that genuiness which one must admit and may admire in his earlier work. Then fashions follow each other more rapidly, and Dresser can be seen under the influence of Voysey, 9, of Mackintosh and of Co-penhagen porcelain. Most of these designs are as competently set out and as well drawn as Dresser's work of years before. Yet success seems to have deserted him at the end of his life. When he died on a journey at Mulhouse in Alsace, the *Architect* in a short obituary note[8] only stated that "he believed in conventionalism and flatness." That was all, and at that time it was meant to be derogatory. It is no longer so now. On the contrary, this faith of his should by itself suffice to secure him a niche—though not a particularly prominent one—in that queer and mixed pantheon of fighters against the spirit of the nineteenth century.

7. Fig. 5 shows that earlier textile designs of his were also far more traditional and less significant than his contemporary designs for metal-work.
8. Vol. LXXII, p. 360.

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Publisher's Notes:

(1) Introductory Figure is from Josiah Wedgewood & Sons dinner plate, March 19, 1867. Nikolas Pevsner Pa-pers, Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles, California.[9]

(2) Electroplated Cruet set with glass containers is by Hukin & Heath. It was designed in 1877 and registered with the Patent Office Design Registry on July 31, 1878. Nikolas Pevsner Papers, Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, Los Angeles, California.[10]

(3) The fabric is a 'Ladies Smock' cretonne. By F. Steiner & Co. e. 1902. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.[11]

9. Christopher Dresser by Widar Halen, Phaidon Press Limited, 1990, Pg 127.
10. Christopher Dresser by Widar Halen, Phaidon Press Limited, 1990, Pg 154.
11. Christopher Dresser by Widar Halen, Phaidon Press Limited, 1990, Pg 97.

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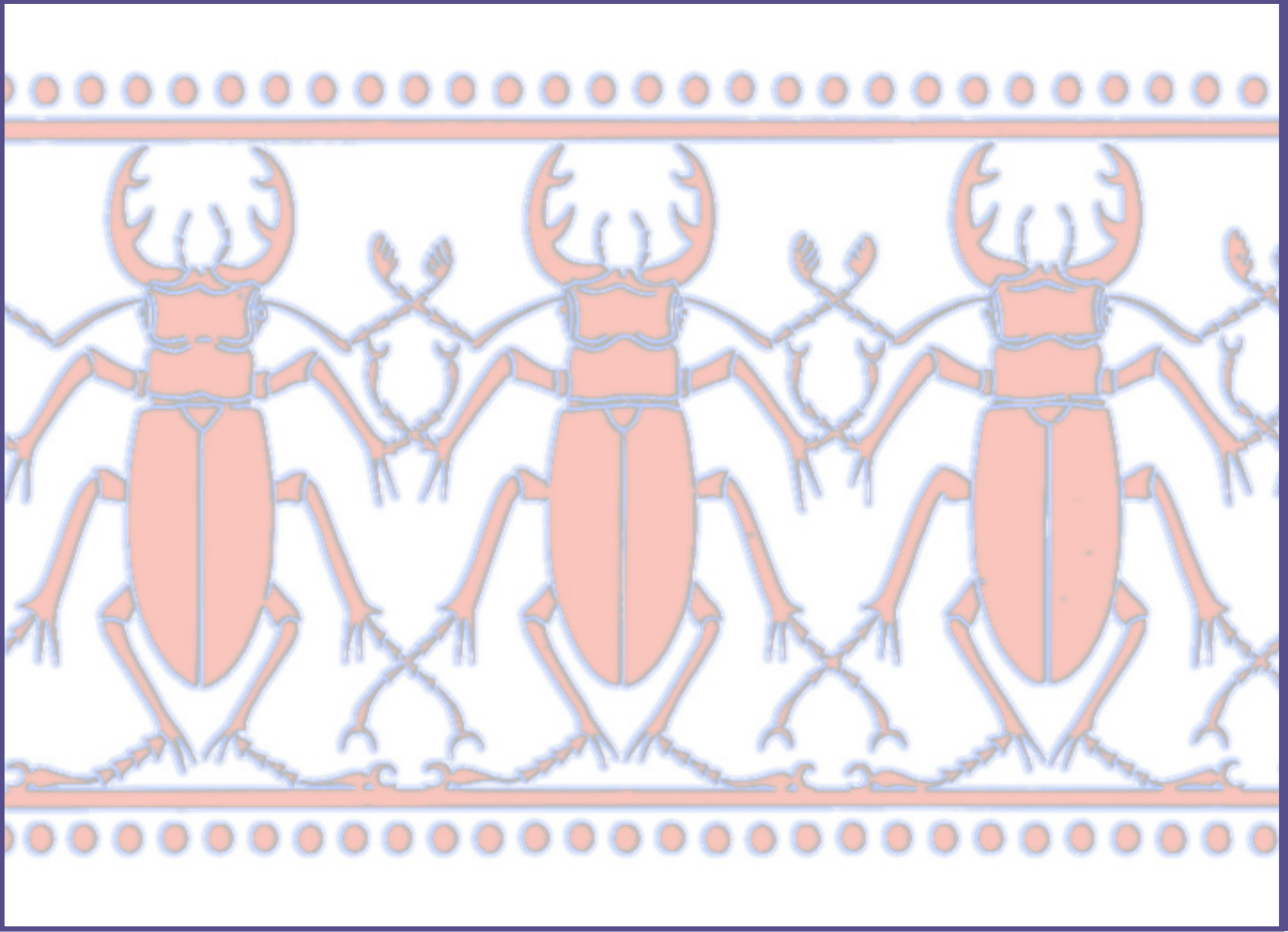

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Volume Fifteen

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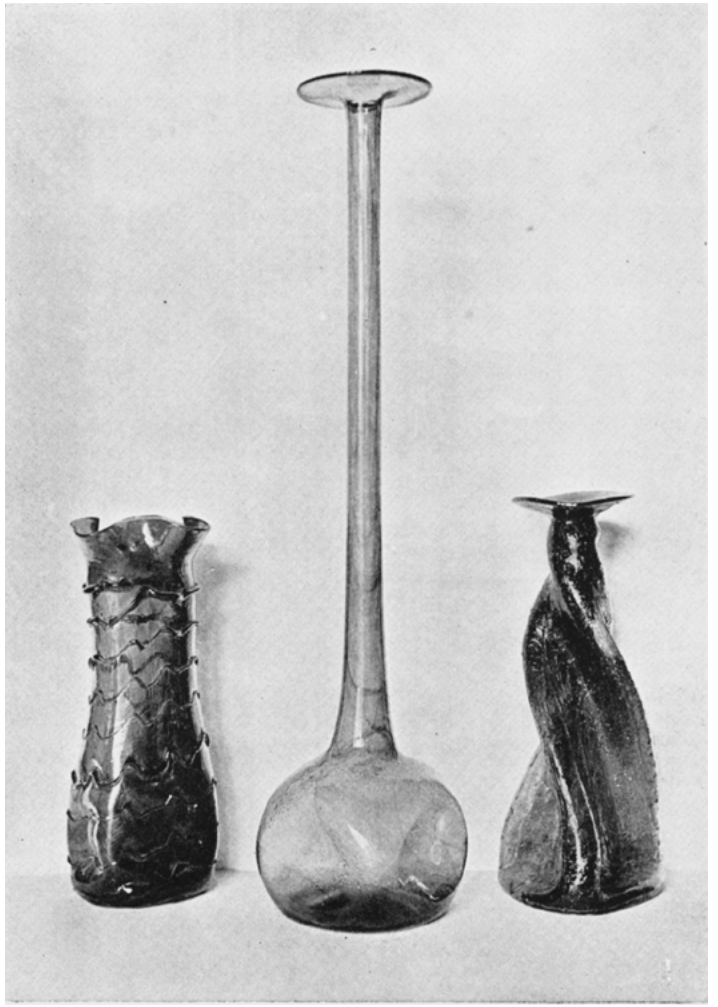

GLASS VESSLES DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

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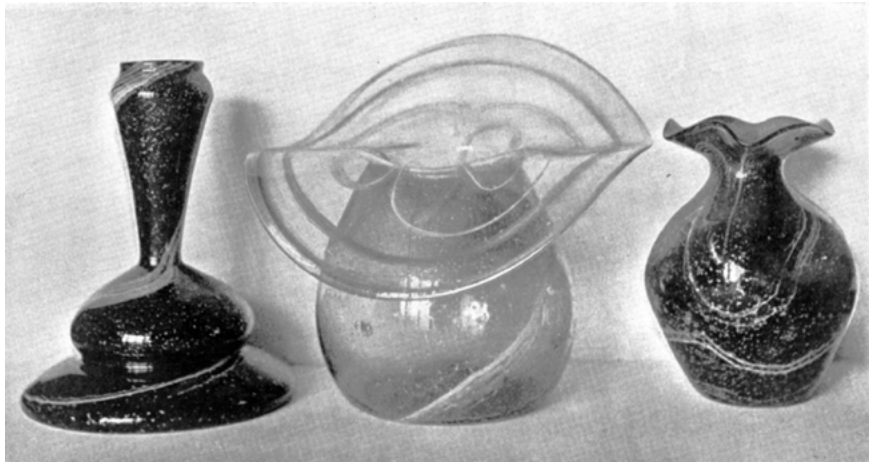
The work of Christopher Dresser.

It is possible that many people, even those who believe themselves wholly unprejudiced in the criti-



GLASS VESSELS DESIGNS BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

cism of current design, are unconscious of an insidious danger. Because much of the finest work of the new revival has come from non-commercial hands, because much of it was started with little thought or hope of profit, and because the standard set by amateurs awakened possibilities in a degraded craft notably above the level of the market, we are tempted to be unjust to work produced under the ordinary conditions of professional supply and demand. We do not ask if the firm of Morris & Co. became before many years a commercial and, as we believe, a profitable concern. We are unconcerned whether Mr. Cobden-Sanderson's bindery does or does not yield him a profit, because we know that these, in common with other industries, were started for art's sake, and still maintain the standard first set up, even if the personal handicraft of the founders has ceased, or is less frequent. Yet to refuse to allow that worthy things may not come from a firm existing ostensibly as a business enterprise, or from a trained artist whose livelihood depends on the sale of his designs, is illogical. In fact, the whole question is one we are apt to beg, or dismiss with gener-

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alities. Beyond doubt those who have to earn their daily bread must sometimes accept commissions which are not wholly to their taste. But lookers on who have the unpopular habit of seeing both sides of a question do not find a ready answer to a common protest from men thus situated when they ask, "If we try to make every design that leaves our hands a little better than the commercial taste requires, or indeed, accepts without demur, are we not helping on your crusade?" If the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before is the ideal benefactor of his species, surely we who replace wholly bad designs by others not wholly bad are entitled to your sympathy." It would seem that even the least of these should be counted for artistic righteousness; and when, as in the case of Christopher Dressler, we have not the least but perhaps the greatest of commercial designers imposing his fantasy and invention upon the ordinary output of British industry, it would argue blindness or prejudice to decline to recognise him in a very loyal friend of the cause we have at heart. There is a dog-in-the-manger attitude which is apt to infect all parties of men who are in the minority working for advance, whether it be in politics or in art, and although it is chiefly expressed by the less worthy members, it sometimes finds utterance from more important lips. We have heard people condemn vigorously the American efforts to imitate (perhaps plagiarise were the better word) the Kelmscott type. Yet if the ideal of the printed page which Morris championed so nobly be worthy of imitation, are not those who are trying to follow it to be counted as friends rather than foes? Sentiment is noble, sentimentality is mawkish; and no respect for a Gladstone, a Morris, or any other abnormally great man, justifies injustice. If indeed, any cause is so weak that imitation kills it, let it die! A

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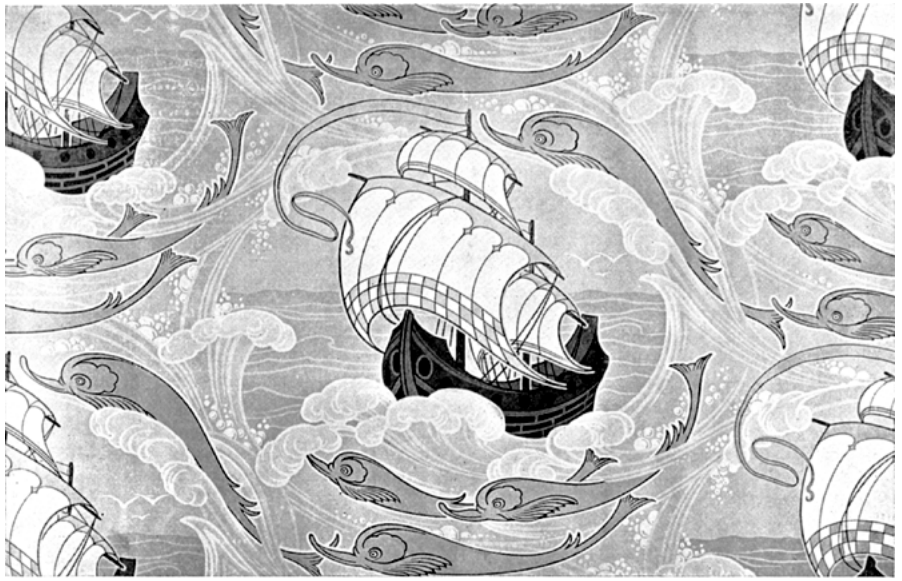
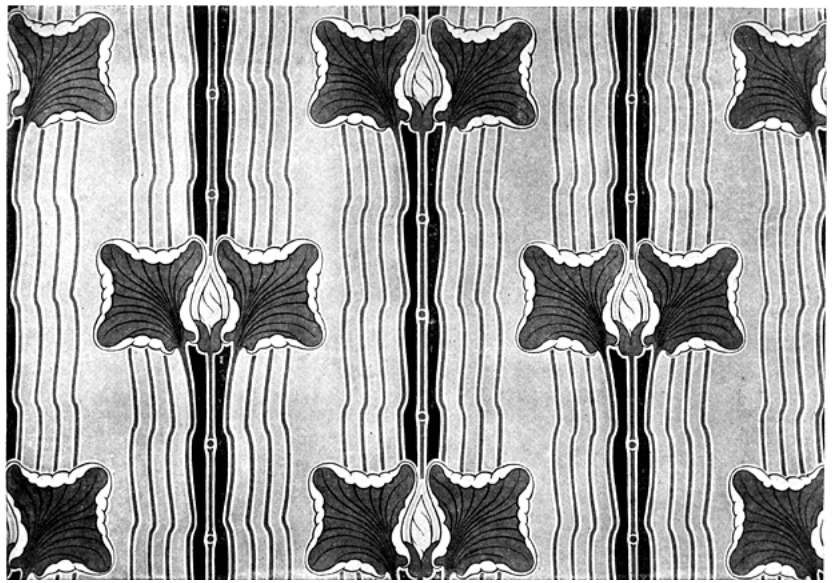


DESIGN FOR CRETONNE DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
(By permission of Messrs. Steiner & Co.)

really great thing can defy the assaults of imitations as lightly as the more innocuous attacks of pronounced foes. If all we deem worthy - the limitations of the material to the design, the careful distinction between picture and pattern, the effort to produce new combinations of accepted motives in their certain well-established lines, the ordering of shapes and forms to beauty while at the same time fulfilling the "n'th" degree of utility - can only be admired when emanating from a certain few we have learned to accept as masters, then let us own we are but champions of a clique, and in our hearts care less for principles than for partisans; or else that we accept the parrot cry of a few captious critics, and declare the finality is at last reached, and any new attempt is flat unprofitable heresy, that design has said its last word, and that "art stopped short at the cultivated court" of the particular hero under whose banner these critics range themselves.

To put forward this view as a preface to a consideration of the labours of Mr. Dresser is not to suggest that his work demands



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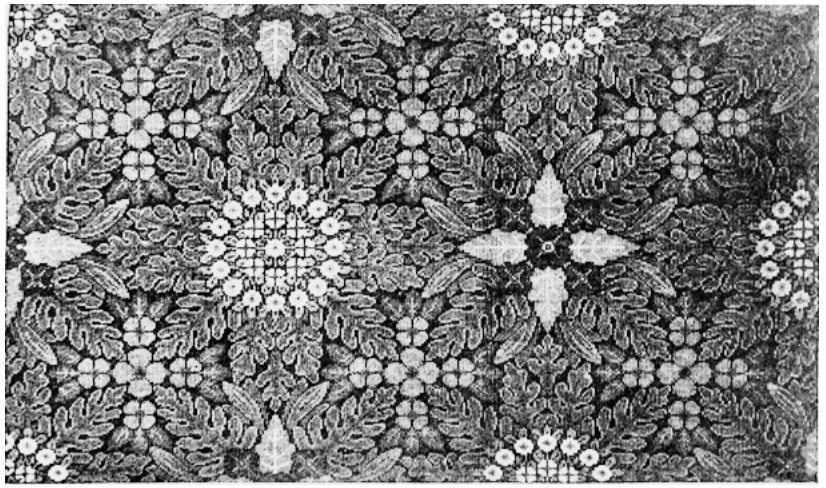
special pleadings on its behalf. A dozen other designers would supply the same reason for its pertinence. But Mr. Dresser is in a way the figure-head of the professional as opposed to the quasi-amateur designer, and is familiar to the outer world while the very names of some of his worthy contemporaries never have been and never will be known outside trade circles. Yet despite the fact that Mr. Dresser is a household word to people who are interested in design, it does not follow that they appreciate his sterling work at its right value. He has experimented sometimes without carrying conviction of success; he was among the first to throw over the bondage of dull stylists, and seek in nature new motives, instead of believing that all foliage must hark back to the acanthus, and all pattern find its prototype in certain recognised schools.



DESIGN FOR A CARPET BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

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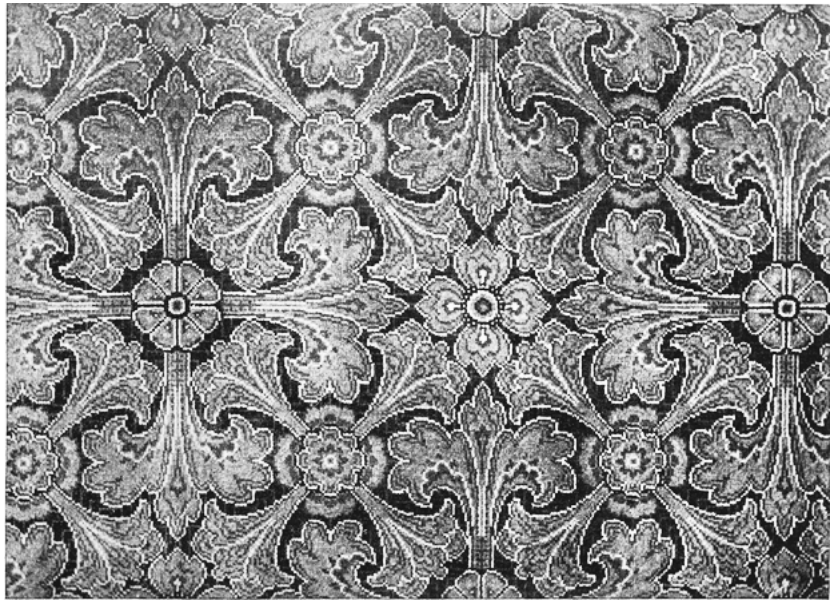

DESIGN FOR A CARPET BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

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In this age of publicity the unrecognised genius is probably as frequent as ever. He may not starve in a garret, his name may be flaunted until it is well-nigh a by-word; and yet all the same we keep our eyes steadfastly fixed on the "dummy we have set up of the trade designer, a poor slave to commerce," and do not see that the artist is there behind the sham figure. It is true that one whose influence is most widely admitted - William Morris - is unlikely ever to be deposed, and in claiming that others, Mr. Dresser included, helped nobly the work he had at heart,

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one casts no stone at his memory, nor even at some of his indiscreet satellites who think to honour their hero by belittling all others. But there is danger lest the work of many a good ally many be forgotten if the cuckoo cry that Morris was not only the greatest but the only leader of the movement is left without occasional protest. The most loyal subjects of the many-sided leader are those who recognise that few movements are carried through single-handed, and that working apart, and in ways apparently unrelated, most valuable service to the ultimate conquest of ignorance and bad taste may be rendered.

DESIGN FOR CRETONNE BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
(By permission of Messrs. Steiner & Co.)

The strenuous efforts of Mr. Dresser to raise the national level of design, not by producing costly bric-à-brac for millionaires, but by dealing with products within the reach of the middle classes, if not the masses themselves, deserve very hearty recognition.

DESIGN FOR CRETONNE BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
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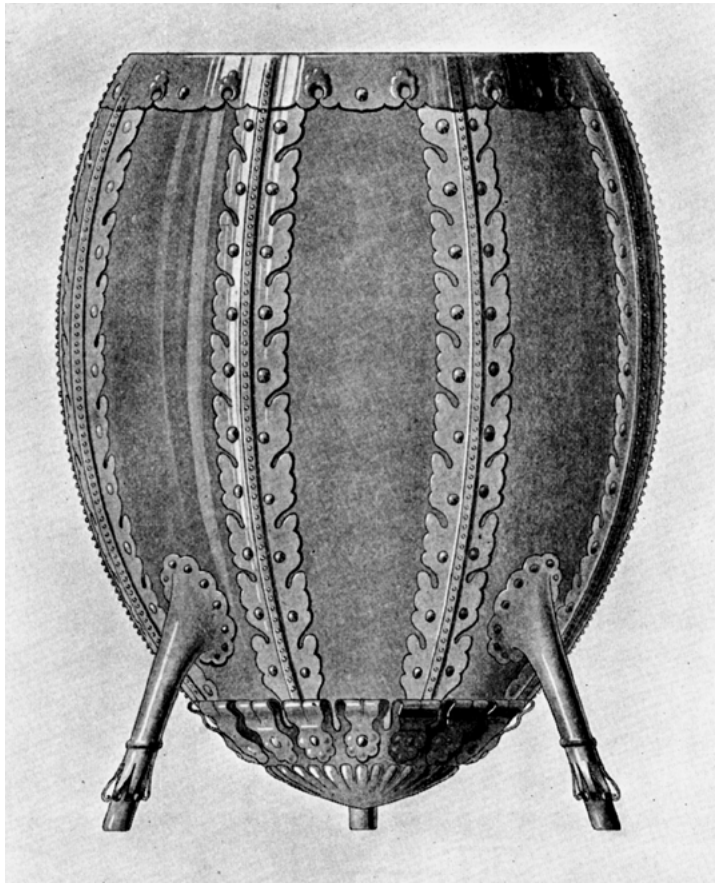
The Continental approval of late-nineteenth century design in Britain might never have come about had not the mid-nineteenth century designers prepared the way. Therefore while some are yet among us, let us not forget those who fought bravely against the Philistine - not, it may be, in the position which the public deems the forefront of the battle, but in subduing outlying foes, in cutting off supplies, and in a hundred ways no less vital if less obvious. In those days, Philistia was in open rebellion, and with its curiously keen instinct protested against the milder efforts to raise its taste far more openly and blatantly than it now rebels against the most severe efforts. There is a pretty little maxim we all subscribe to at present, which tells us that new designs not formally attributed to the actual creator should be regarded as "suspect." Yet half the ancient things we worship are honestly referred to "the school of so-and-so," or but dubiously labelled with great names of designers who may or may not have seen or worked upon them.



FLOWER-POT HOLDER BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
(By permission of Messrs. Benham & Froud)

Most readers of contemporary literature on art are familiar with several works by Mr. Dresser. One entitled "Studies in Design," a volume of plates in colour reproduced by chromo-lithography, may fail to please us as fully to-day as it did when newly issued. Looking at some of these designs again, a certain spiky uncomfortability impresses one as their least admirable feature; yet even now they may be justly credited with vigour, originality, and perfect regard for the materials for which they were designed; while, in the case of some of the designs for ceiling papers, it is doubtful if any patterns of more recent years are so appropriate and admirable. How far this book and other works by the same hand affected the mood of

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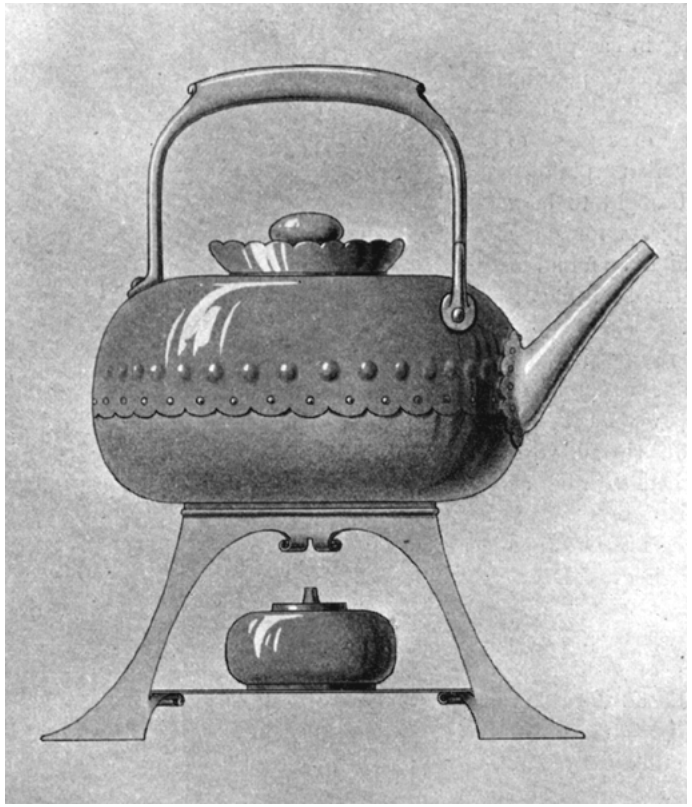
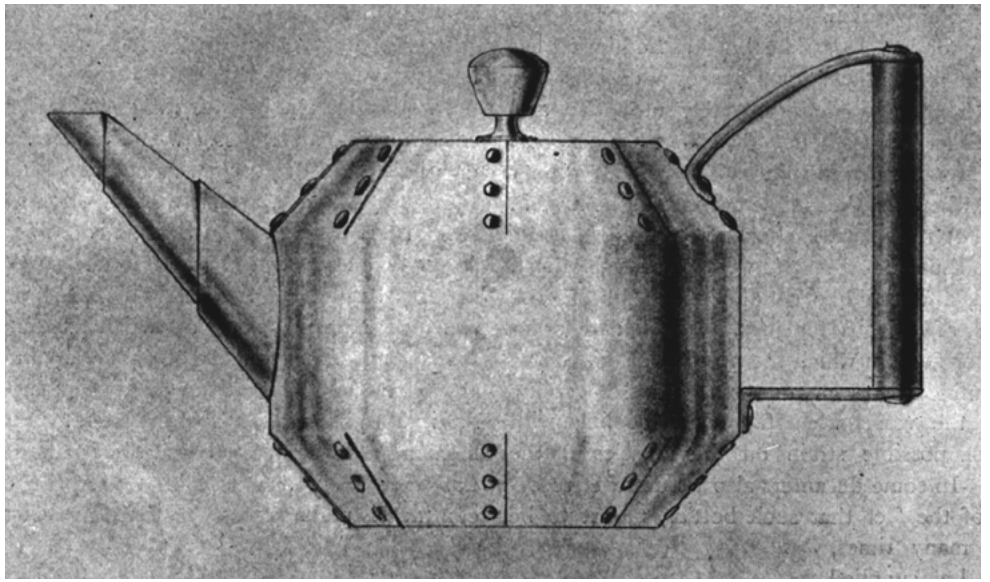
later designers is difficult to estimate, even as a mere hazard; but if the fondness for angularity, and a slight lack of attention to the detail of patterns, distinctly admirable when regarded as complete designs, cause us to be less interested in work we really admired



KETTLE BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

(By permission of Messrs. Benham & Froud



TEAPOT BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

(By permission of Messrs. Benham & Froud)

some years ago, this holds good only with regard to a few of the patterns; for the rest, there are many which have stood the test of years and command unstinted applause to-day.

Above all we see that Mr. Dresser, while founding himself on Owen Jones and avowing his respect for past styles, dared, nevertheless, to assert his own personal manner, and dared ofttimes successfully. Such courage from one who was for some time official lecturer on historic ornament (at South Kensington) is

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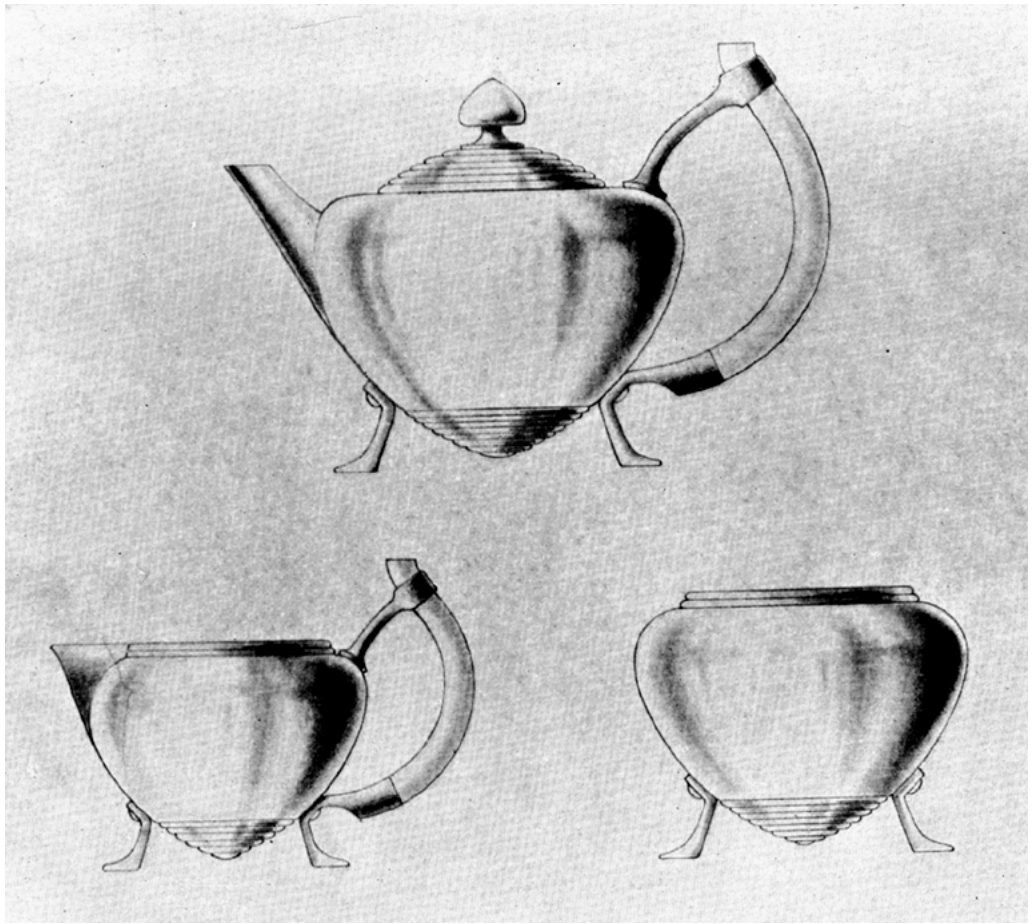

SILVER TEA SERVICE BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER

(By permission of Messrs. Elkington & Co.)

surely most unusual, and even if we do not always agree with his experiments, we can but approve their ingenuity, the fertile invention they display, and their wise respect for precedent which seeks to revere the spirit of past styles while discarding the letter.

Mr. Dresser has influenced younger men by active example no less than by didactic advice. He has a marvellous knowledge of past styles allied with extraordinary acquaintance with the practical details of modern industries. The two are rarely found together, and to these he adds distinctly vivid invention. He seeks novelty, however, not only for novelty's sake but - as he himself has shown in annotations upon his own designs - for definite reasons, sometimes purely utilitarian and sometimes wholly aesthetic. A few instances selected almost at random will suffice. The first, a dinner service, where, by the simple addition of hollows in the rim of the plate, such as a potter might make with his thumb, receptacles were provided for salt, mustard, and the like condiments. The second, a series of designs for jugs, teapots, and other vessels for fluid, in which the position of the handle is determined by observance of the laws of gravity, so that the vessel when full could be held with the least possible strain on the muscles of the holder. In some decanters also we discover recognition of the fact that such bottles, meant to be refilled many times, should be supplied with funnel-shaped mouths -

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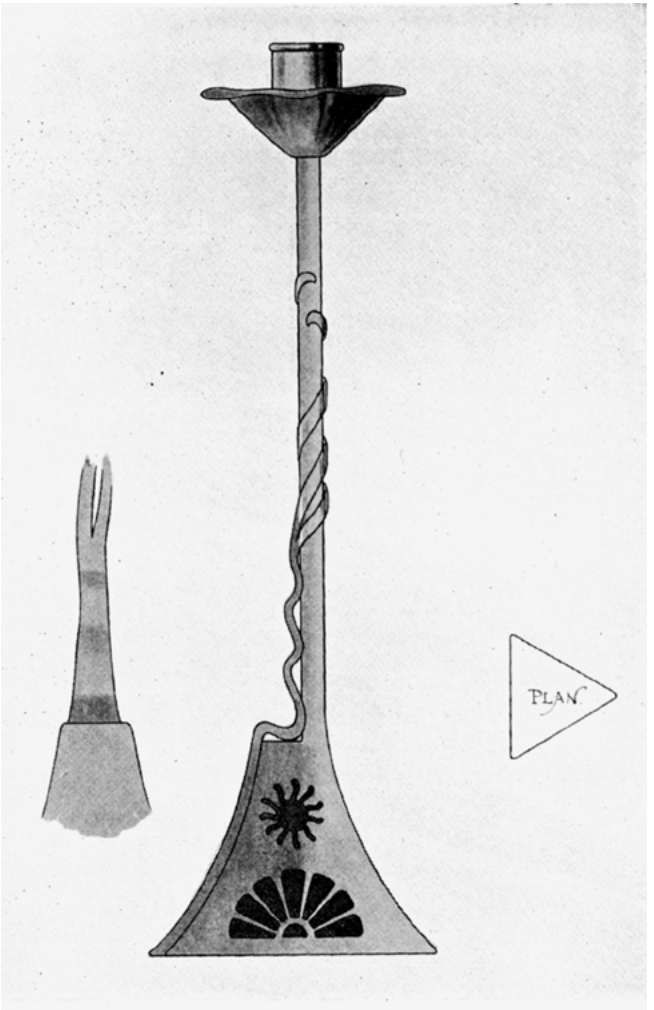
the funnel serving the double purpose of conducting the liquid into the bottle, and guiding it in a proper stream for pouring out. A hundred other examples of Spencerian philosophy brought to bear on objects for daily use might be found in Mr. Dresser's handiwork.

In recognising the advance made of late years, we must not forget those who preached as well as practised. On re-reading Mr. Dresser's "Principles of Decorative Design," one finds scarce a single theory of good taste that he advances , or a single piece of advice that he offers, but is as sound and as pertinent to-day as then. If space permitted one might quote page after page and not find not a line, scarcely a word, that would not be endorsed by the most critical member of the Arts and Crafts Association to-day.

In other matters besides design, or



Candlestick in Brass and Copper
(By permission of Messrs. Benham & Froud)

publications concerning it, Mr. Dresser was a pioneer. In the eighties he was the originator of the so-called Art Furniture Alliance, which opened show-rooms in New Bond Street for the sale of metal-work, pottery, glass, fabrics, and other things, the majority being designed by Mr. Dresser himself, or executed under his supervision. Attendants robed in many aesthetic costumes of the period, in demure art colours, added a certain air to the place, which set it absolutely apart from a shop. So far as memory may be trusted the average work there was very good, and that the enterprise did not continue is perhaps partly owing to the fact that it was[AG1] before its time. For it was alone in its mission in addressing a popular audience. It is true that Morris & Co. were known to a few, and that one or two manufacturers of beautiful things for the house could be found by searching, but no window in a pupular thoroughfare was supporting the movement destined to assume such large proportions later. Liberty's at that time was almost entirely a Japanese warehouse, and the ordinary upholsterer, ironmonger, or other

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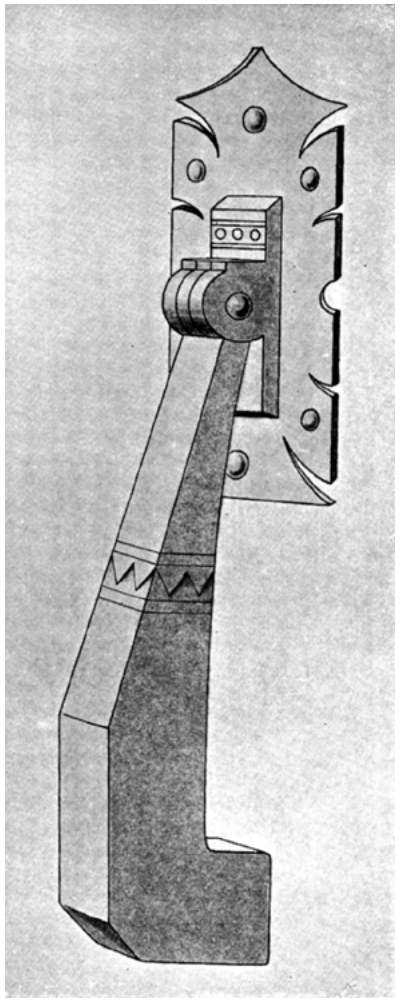
furnishing tradesman kept little, if anything, that was in harmony with the new ideals in domestic appointments.

Speaking roughly, most of the professional designers who have influenced popular taste, from Morris downwards, have been creators of flat ornament only; the invention of objects in the round (except in the comparatively rare instance of an Alfred Stevens, or other sculptors and architects producing designs for manufactured articles) has been, as a rule, left to the trade designer. And unless, by peculiar knowledge of the working and limitations of porcelain, pottery, glass, metal, and other substances, a designer can think (as it were) not in pen-and-ink, or even in perspective drawings, but in the material itself, it is best that the craftsman should evolve even a poor thing of his own rather than translate another artist's sketch. But in not a few cases Mr. Dresser has proved that an artist may so master the materials and the processes of manufacture that he can project himself, as it were, to the potter's wheel, the loom, the metal-smith's forge, or the calico printer's, and evolve beautiful and novel things in most perfect accord with the process that is destined to translate them into being.

The designs for metal-work here illustrated explain even to a novice the principles of construction; rivets are boldly accepted; pieces to be spun are obviously planned accordingly; if to be wrought, strength is not forgotten.



DOOR-KNOCKER
DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
(By permission of Messrs. Benham & Freund)

The carpet designs, illustrated upon page 108, lose much in the reproductions through absence of colour. Absolutely orthodox in design, they possess the useful quality, exhibited by many Oriental carpets, of according with almost any style of wall decoration or furniture. The designs for cretonne (pp. 107 and 109) show the modern note, and one with a quaint ship and weird fishes recalls Japan. And here one is almost tempted to digress beyond all limits of space, to refer to Mr. Dresser's visit to the Land of the Chrysanthemum, and to his readable and admirable volume upon its art industries, and to tell of the treasures he brought back to his house by the Thames near the railway bridge at Barnes, notably of a full-sized replica of part of the famous lacquer ceiling of one of the Temples of Nikko, made for him by order of the Japanese

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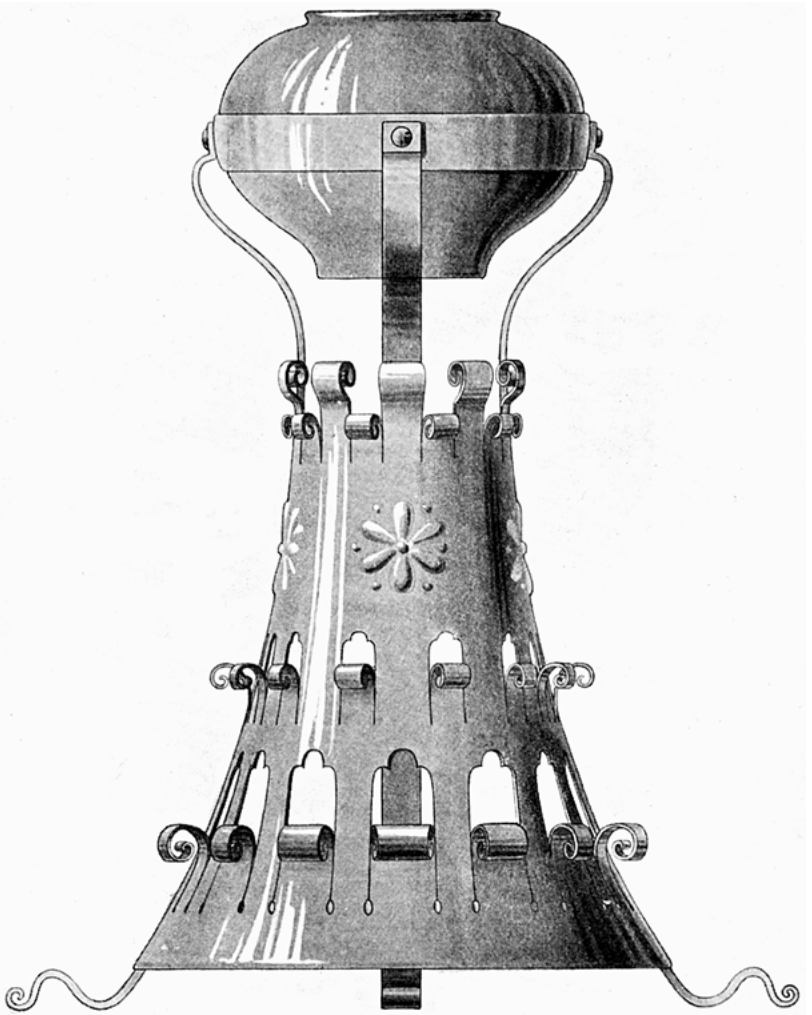
Government. But to do so would be to throw the subject out of scale.

It is strange that one so steeped in Japanese art has not become a mere adapter of Eastern motives, yet the reverse is conspiciously true. Look at the curiously original shapes for glass vases here reproduced, and you will them as novel to Japanese eyes as to ours. In pottery, or in metal, the forms might be considered a little outré; but in glass they are essentially a glass-blower's fantasy, and whether you like them or not, they are vitreous in essence as in substance. To give even a small representative selection of Mr. Dresser's designs would need hundreds of illustrations, and many, deprived of their colour and texture, would fail to be convincing.

The designs selected for illustration are principally examples of his later style. Those who desire to become acquainted with his earlier manner cannot do better than refer to his published works referred to above.



LAMP IN COPPER AND BRASS
DESIGNED BY CHRISTOPHER DRESSER
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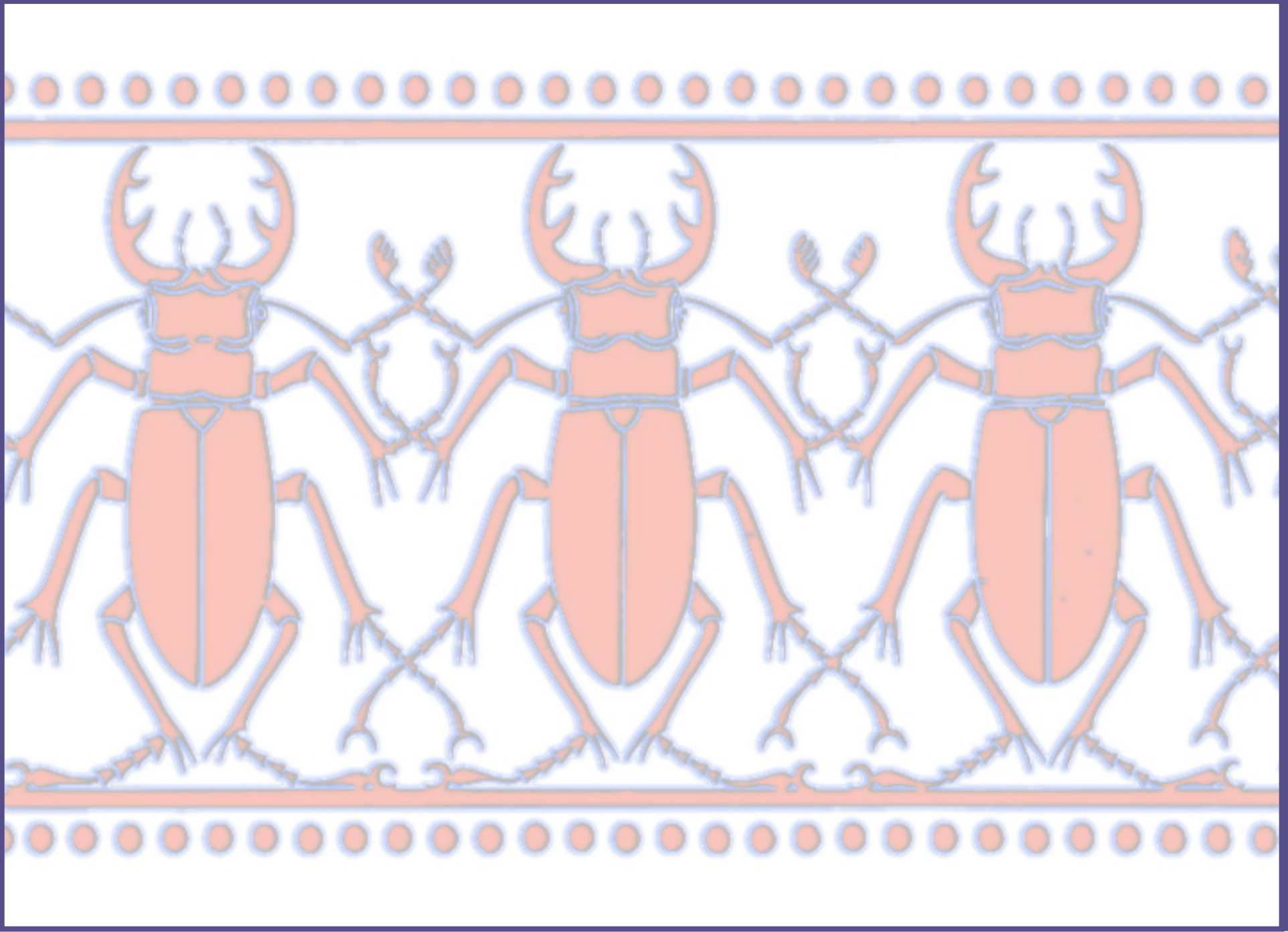

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DECORATIVE ART

THE DECORATION OF FLAT SURFACES. *

PLANTS may be regarded as a type of ornamental art; they have always been used for ornament, and we are quite right in using them; but we must not consider a mere copy as any ornament at all. The practice of drawing ornaments from plants is to be advocated, as plants are always great favourites with people, and there are very few who do not admire flowers.

Ornament, however, should not consist of imitated plants. Bear in mind the difference between pictorial and ornamental art: a pictorial artist seeks to produce a plant and tries to make it something more than a mere form, but still he tries to imitate, and that man is the greatest artist who can endow a picture with the qualities contained in the object which he portrays. The ornamentalists, however, have not to imitate, but to produce something adapted to the purpose for which it is intended. If an artist intended to decorate a wall, he should not copy a plant as a picture, but adapt it to the wall so as to make that wall more beautiful, for unless the mind of the artist is obviously in the work, it cannot be regarded as an ornament.

Without thinking that ornament should consist of a copy of plants, we may yet deduce some important ideas from their natural peculiarities. We are apt to think plants do not grow according to any law; this is a mistake. Order is apparent in the outward manifestation of every plant; for instance, when a plant produces leaves in pairs, they invariably cross each other; the leaves in this case had obviously arrangement and order. Goose-grass again, or, as the country boys call it, "whip-tongue," has leaves which grow in rings. Sometimes these have three or four rings, but the plant will grow until there are eight. This is a principle of the law of order in their growth. All plants do not, however, produce leaves in this way. Leaves apparently grow in a confused way; but it is not so actually. If we take plants as a type of ornamental art, then, to provide that ornament, it must be subject to the same law as govern such plants.

Plants are made up of a number of similar parts; the plant first produces one leaf, then a little more stem, then another leaf and more stem, and so on, so that it is growing and repeating itself; and however long it continues to grow, it is always on the principle of repetition. There are two or three forms of

* Condensed from a Lecture, delivered by Dr. Dresser, at the Architectural Exhibition. May 10.

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this repetition; the elongated repetition, and then the radiated repetition. Another principle in the growth of plants is what botanists call alternation of parts. Notice, too, the manner in which plants are adapted to the circumstances in which they exist, and fulfil the purpose for which they are intended. Select one special case. If we take a plant and place it in a valley, and afterwards plant it on a mountain top: when in the valley, it has large leaves; while on the mountain top, it has comparatively smaller leaves. The reason of this is, that on the mountain top, it is exposed to the wind and storm; while in the valley, the foliage grows without danger, being sheltered. The cedars, especially those of Lebanon, are adapted for growing on a mountain. The cedar leaves are made up of a number of large flat surfaces, the leaves being so fine that they look like (what Germans call them) "needle leaves." The wind, therefore, cannot shatter them in pieces. The leaves of these cedars have elastic stems; they are also closed together in table-like masses, so as to offer the greatest resistance to the winds. Adaptation is, therefore, one of the first laws in nature, with regard to plants; and, if we are to produce ornament from plants, let it be thoroughly adapted for the purposes for which it is intended. If we are going to have a drinking-fountain, let us produce one of the most adapted for its object, and afterwards put on the ornament, remembering the principles of repetition and alternation of parts.

However, to speak, of the decoration of flat surfaces; we first of all refer to the decoration of walls. Plants have a right and a wrong way upwards when they look straight forward. The same should be the case in the decoration of flat surfaces. The French discard this principle much more than the English. A great many French patterns are founded on the square, and there are a few plants which have the same formation. Relative to the treatment of ornament on walls, walls being flat, it should be held as a principle that the ornament ought to be truthful in all cases. As the wall is flat, the ornament ought to express that flatness, and not only express it, but rather emphasize than attempt to conceal it. The ornamentalist is not to make it look something else than a wall, but to make that wall beautiful. So much have things changed within the last few years, that it was now fashionable for people to have flat wall papers. Ten or twelve years ago, when Owen Jones's papers were first produced, there was a great outcry against them; but now relief decoration is confined to the lowest class of papers. We followed the French, and copied their patterns, so the French led us in this direction. But, mark the result, we now *supply the French market with ornament.* Flatness of treatment prevailed whenever art reached its zenith; the Greeks employed flat ornament on their walls, so did the mediaeval Gothicists.

As to the modes we employ in producing relief wall papers, there is the flock paper, a system which originated in the desire to produce an effect like damask. If that is the idea to be conveyed in flock paper, it was objectionable, but if the idea is to give richness of effect, then it is open to consideration. Flock papers are going down, because odours are liable to collect in them, which tend to spread disease. But to printed flock there is no objection. It can be printed, reprinted, and reprinted, until it is in relief. The cost of this would be three times that or ordinary flock paper, but it would last a lifetime. Mr. Dresser has recently patented an invention, the object of which is the production of relief wall decoration at the smallest cost; and it will be brought out by Mr. Cato, of Thames Street, both in England and France.

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If ornament is to be used in any particular style, it should agree with style in which the building was erected. Gothic wall paper for instance should not be supplied to an Italian house.

Graining is an absurdity that none but Englishmen would perpetrate. The wood is first made smooth, then painted to hide the material, and afterwards grained to make it look like wood again. If we are to use paint to hide the defects of the material, let us use the colour as a colour, and not make it look like a bad imitation of wood. As to the setting out of walls, which is a fashion among paper-hangers, this setting out should be done by an architect. With reference to the colours of walls, primary colours should not be used, but neutral tints. There are two or three ways of producing a neutral, instead of a dirty effect. It is essential that a wall should be comparatively low in tint, because it is a background. The ladies are the principal ornaments in a drawing room, of course, and not the paper, although Englishmen are very apt to forget this. A neutral tint also makes the furniture more attractive. First the persons in the room are to be the most prominent, then the furniture, and after that the walls. A drawing room should be rather light; and first they should have form and then colour, the latter being added as a charm. White and gold is objectionable. In the dining-room, we should make it a point to fix attention on the dining-room, we should make it a point to fix attention on the dinner, and, therefore, put dark colour on the walls. White tablecloths are objectionable as out of harmony, and should be toned. No room should be very dark if it is badly lighted; and a bedroom should always have a pattern placed on the walls which is soothing and inoffensive in character. As to the carpet, it should of course be different from the wall paper. Carpet patterns have a right and a wrong way and the pattern should run equally in every direction. The treatment of the room should be flat; first, because it is truthful, and, secondly, because it is more pleasant. We do not walk in the fields on furze bushes. As to the colour of the floor, it should be darker than the wall, to give a sense of security. The ceilings may be covered with a lighter colour, and a stencil pattern which is not expensive. There is a growing taste for the colouring of cornices, but not of ceilings; if we want a strong primary colour, cornices may be used.

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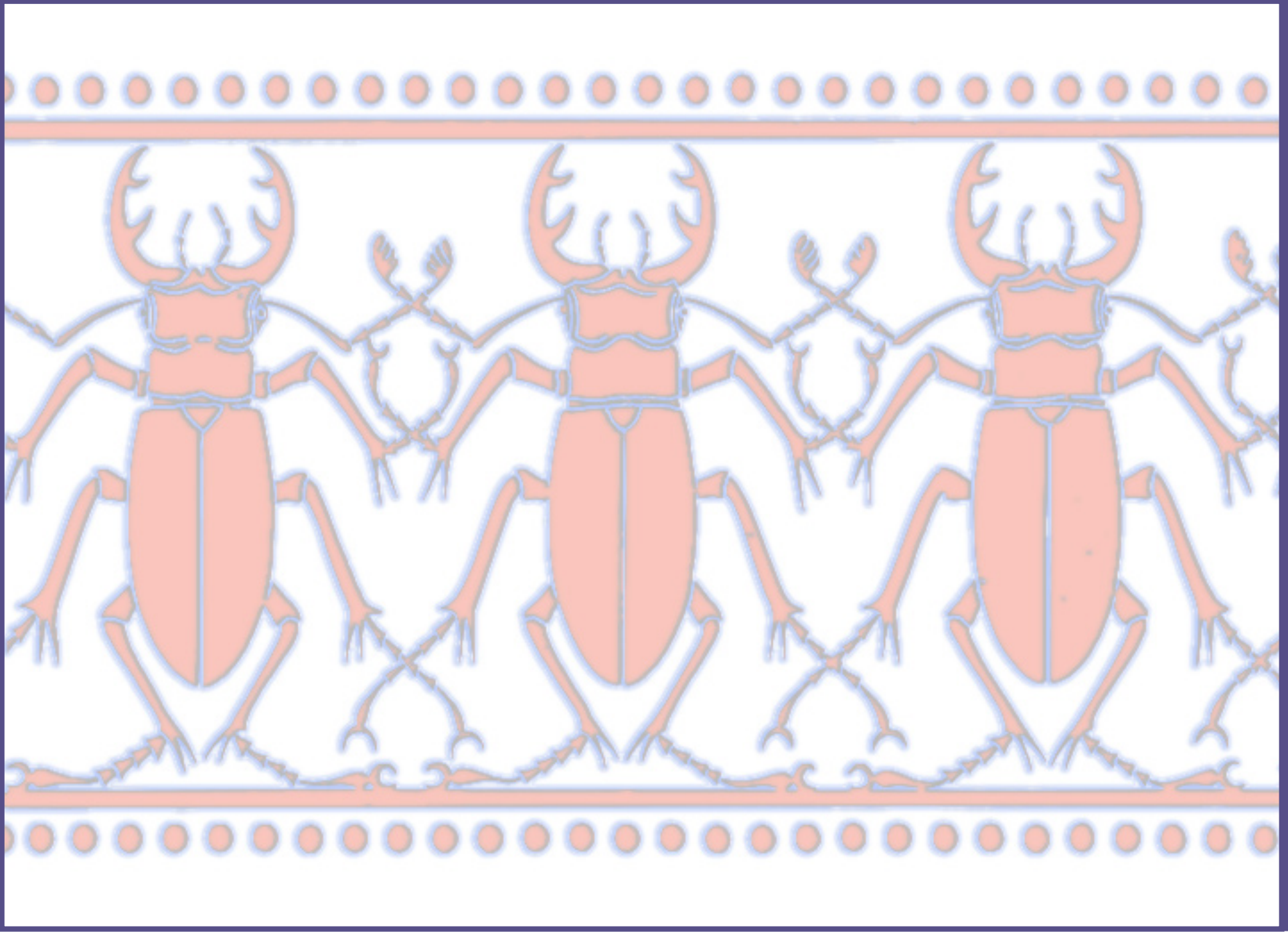

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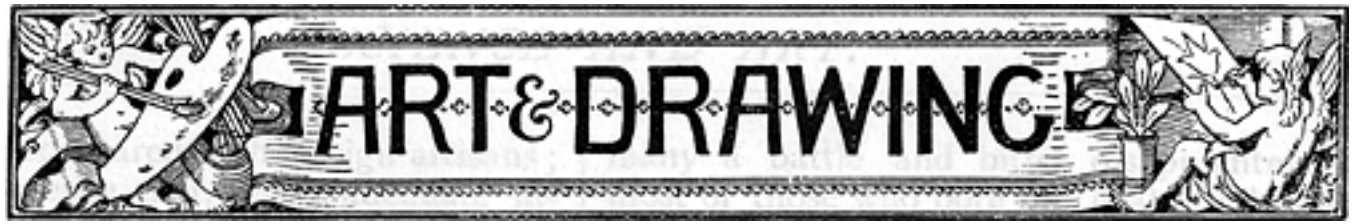

THE FIRST NATIONAL SCHOOL OF DESIGN IN ENGLAND.

By RALPH LESLIE

ON the 19th December, 1836, half a dozen gentlemen were hurrying along in the direction of Whitehall. Half an hour later you might have found them assembled at Her Majesty's Treasury, and engaged in solemn conclave with the Right Hon. C. Poulett-Thomson, President of the Board of Trade. The anxious faces of the little party were fully justified by the seriousness of the business. A great revolution was under consideration - a revolution which was meant to change the whole character of English art, and to depose the foreign autocrats who had so long controlled our industrial centres with a rod of iron. This was, in short, no other than the very first Council called. 'in consequence of the present low condition of art in this country,' to discuss the establishment of a Government School of Design. A. W. Calcott, R.A., E. R. Cockerell, R.A., E. L. Eastlake, R.A., Sir Francis Chantry, R.A., H. B. Ker, Esq., Apsley Pellatt, Esq. - these were the men who fought the first battles in this great art revolution, and paved the way for a better system of education, not perfect, perhaps, but immeasurably above and beyond anything that preceded it.

This month a new era is inaugurated in the annuals of Science and Art, and in launching this new and improved volume of the journal, it appears that a retrospective glance at English Art might not be in appropriate. At any rate, the story of our National Art Training School, now of South Kensington, but born at Somerset House, and originally baptized 'The Government School of Design,' must surely, at all times, be of keen interest to every art student.

As you have gathered, art was at a pretty low ebb in this country in 1836. The Continent already boasted many schools of design; but in England public taste was anything but high, and the all-prevailing notion that artistic excellence was only obtainable from Continental workers did not conduce to progress. We had given our own dog a bad name, and persuaded ourselves he could not compete with foreign hounds. The proverb says we might as well have hanged him; and this we realised to our cost when the first efforts were made to utilise British art in manufactures, and so break down the conventions of centuries. Our national cautiousness had, no doubt,

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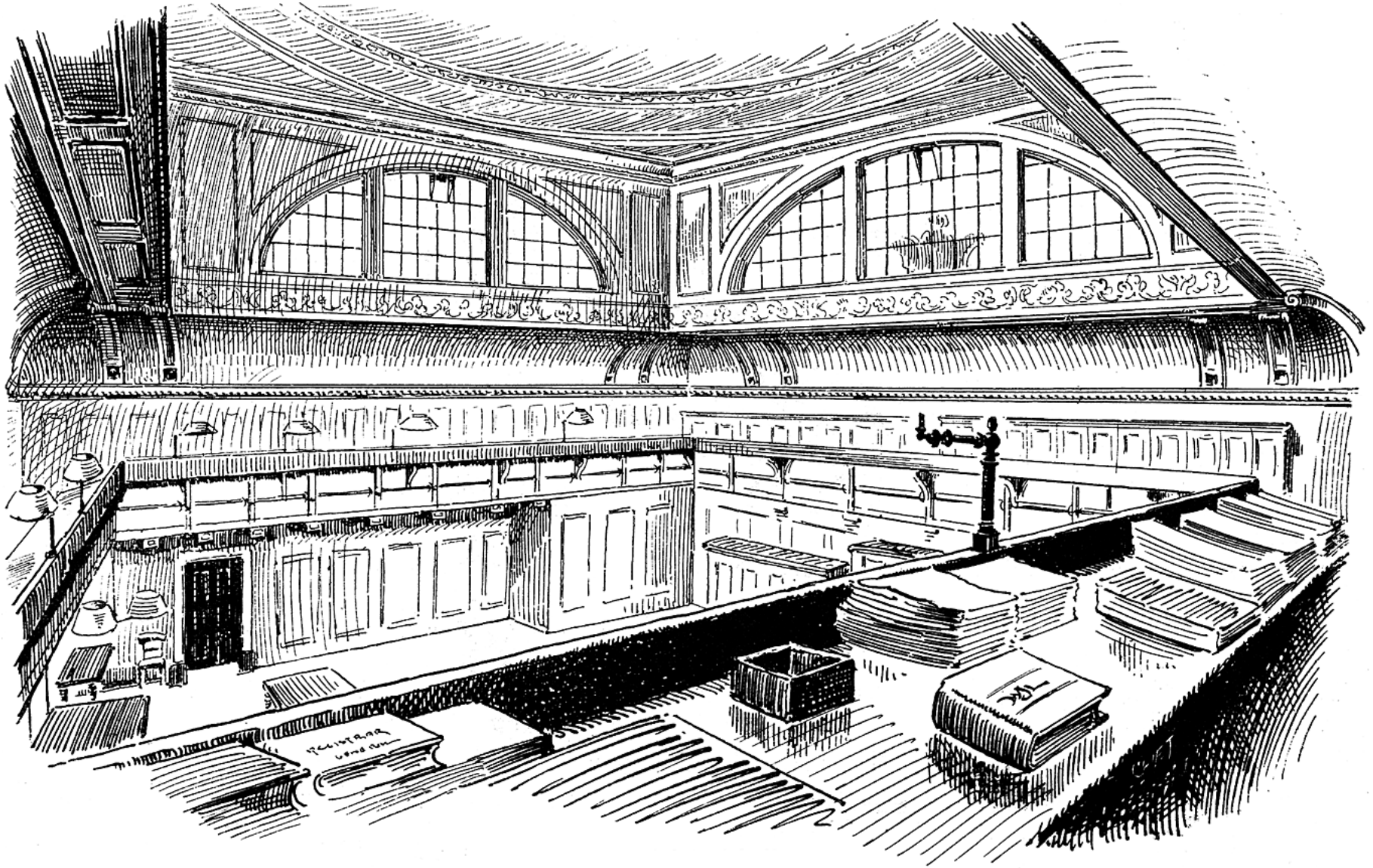

Pen Sketch of Somerset House Room

much to do with our slow recognition of the need of art training schools. It is all very well to pooh, pooh ! the aërial flights of our more imaginative neighbours, but we English are just a little too matter-of-fact sometimes. The present sprat seems a big bait to risk for the prospective whale, and, while we deliberate, somebody else steps in - and down goes the hammer! A little more imagination, and a little less deliberation, would long ago have pared the laws of French *lions*, and shut the mouths of leeches of more than one nationality which have been draining us dry for generations; and Spitalfields, Coventry, Sheffield, Kidderminster, and Nottingham would not have suffered by the procedure.

Things did take a turn at last, however, when, in 1835, a Select Committee of the House of Commons inquired into the knowledge possessed, or obtainable, by British art-craftsmen. The investigation disclosed a deplorable deficiency in English as compared with foreign artisans; yet there was every evidence that, given adequate instruction, the former could compete favourably with the latter.

Autotype portrait of Alfred Stevens

But France had over eight schools of design, most of them free; Bavaria, thirty-three; Prussia and Switzerland nearly as many; whereas England did not possess one. Foreign governments published valuable art books for the instruction of workmen, while here the *Penny Magazine* and *Mechanics' Magazine* were all the available literature of most artisans. This was handicapping with a vengeance, and the need of immediate remedy was undeniable. In August, 1836, the British Government proposed, for the first time, a vote in the estimates for the establishment of a Normal School of Design, and the Treasury promptly granted 1500*l* for that purpose. The gentlemen we have seen safely into Whitehall were thereupon convened by the Board of Trade to take proceedings. By the end of January, 1837, the fittings, &c., in the apartments in Somerset House, which had been appropriated for the new school of design, were surveyed and reported on. On April 14th a Director was elected (Mr. Papworth), and a little later in the same month the first staff was appointed: *Head Master*, Mr.

Sir Henry Cole, K.C.B.

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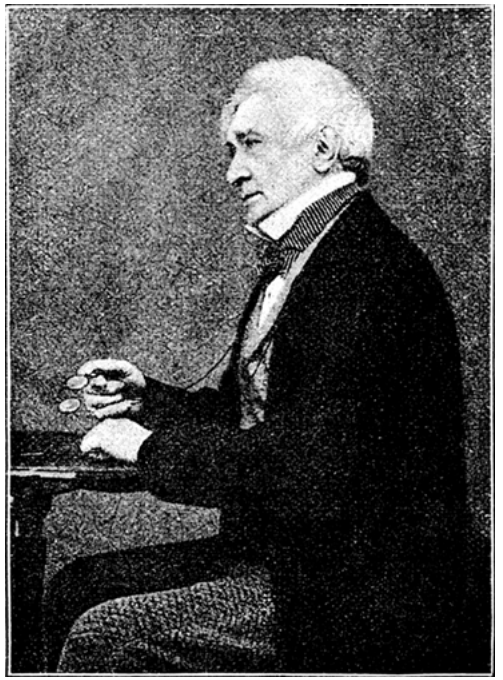
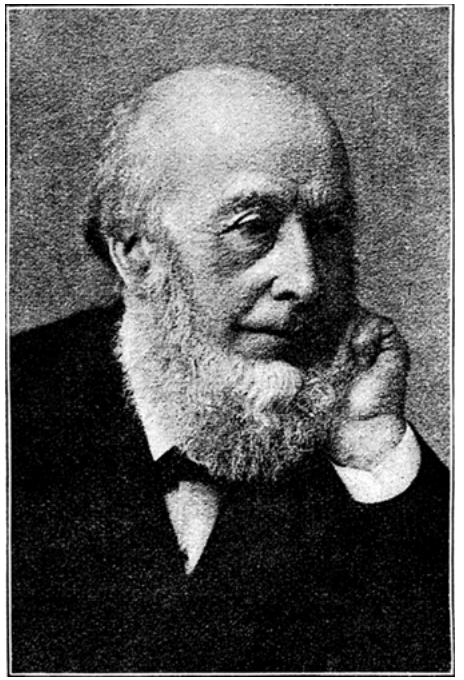
Lambelette; *Assistant Master*, Mr. Spratt; *Modeller*, Mr. Leigh; *Secretary and Librarian*, Mr. Papworth, jun. They were certainly not much for their services, these early workers: Mr. Lambelette's salary being fixed at 200*l*., Mr. Spratt's at 150*l*., while Mr. Leigh was to have 70*l*., and the librarian a like sum. Nor had they much respite from their labours, for the schools were fixed to remain open the whole year, the masters taking holidays one at a time. But the movement was new and promised well, and hopes ran high of future emolument, perhaps even of fame. Well, these hopes *have* been fulfilled beyond all expectation, but, as usual, only after many a battle and bitter disappointment, and when most of those who bore the heat and burden of the day have gone to rest.

On June 1st, 1837, the new School of Design was opened with twelve students, in rooms formerly occupied by the Royal Academy at Somerset House. Fees for morning students were fixed at 4s. weekly (afterwards 12s. quarterly), but evening classes were commenced in August at 1s. weekly (afterwards 6s. quarterly), and by December there were fifteen morning and forty-five evening students attending. The fittings of the school could not have been elaborate, for in the minutes of June 5th, 80*l*. is stated as the sum paid for the furniture, and in July we find the Council debating whether gas might not be afforded for evening classes. Finally the great room and staircase were ordered to be so lit. All drawing from human figure was forbidden; but the Council seemed pretty much at its wit's end at this period to decide what *was* the best course of instruction, and Mr. William Dyce, afterwards, R.A., was directed to proceed to the Continent in search of information. The primitive nature of existing methods of art teaching is amusing apparent from a letter read in a committee by Mr. Cockerell, R.A., a moth after the school opened. We give a few extracts:—



Ambrose Poynter



R. Redgrave, C.B., R.A..

'Gentlemen, — I beg to invite your opinions on a method of study... advantageous to our school, and which, by permission of our Director, has already been introduced. It is simply a preparatory exercise of hand and eye in *white chalk on a black board*. ... This is practised by painters of the French School, and is favourable to health, the attitude being erect, the hand extended, and the eye exercised at greater distances. ... I shall be glad to explain ... the formation

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of the tablets (blackboards) should the Council sanction the adoption of this method of instruction.'

It is worthy of note that the Council *did* approve this new departure, and blackboards were thereupon introduced into English art teaching. Besides being the godfather, so to speak, of the blackboard, Mr. Cockerell was the donor of the first prize - offered to students who had attended the school for three months - for the best design for a frieze. Similar donations followed, and on July 2nd, 1838, the first awards were made :—

Best design for frieze, 5*l*. 5*s*. W.C. T. DODSON. Best design for ribbons, 5*l*. 5*s*., John MOGFORD. Best design for carpet, 5*l*., C. GARDINER. Best design for tea-cup, &c., 5*l*. 5*s*., J. PAPWORTH. Best design for chintz, &c., 5*l*., 5*s*., T. INGHAM. Best design for silk hangings, 10*l*. 10*s*., W. CHESELING WILD.

Mr. Horsley, R.A. (in 1843).

How amply the two gentlemen at the top of the list fulfilled this early promise we all know. Mr. Dobson has long been one of our worthiest R.A.'s., and Mr. Mogford became a noted R.I. before he joined the great majority.

On Mr. Dyce's return from the Continent, he was appointed Director of the Schools, which he entirely rearranged, introducing a loom and Jacquard machine for instruction in silk manufacture. The human figure was also now studied for the purposes of ornament, and freehand drawing was provided by Messrs. Chapman & Hall, June 1st, 1842. In 1840 the Government granted 10,000*l*. towards establishing schools of design in manufacturing districts. Manchester and York were the first to be formed (1842), and Nottingham, Coventry, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Newcastle followed in 1843. The first travelling studentship was awarded to Mr. Octavius Hudson (August 30th, 1841), who wished to visit Munich. The Council instructed him that they would, on his return, expect a full account of all schools, &c., visited; they then presented him with the sum of 10*l*.! A female class was opened (Monday, October 24th, 1842) under the management of Mrs. McIan, the preparations for which were more curious than sumptuous: a carpet, rug, set of fireirons, a washing-stand, and a coal-scuttle, for Mrs. McIan's room; and for the schoolroom, basins, towels, bonnet-pegs, umbrella stand, one desk with drawers, twenty wicker chairs, four tressel tables, four portfolios for copies, forty half-cylinder blocks, and a thermometer, being what Mr. Dyce deemed full equipment!

Six exhibitions of 30*l*. each were granted in 1843, exhibitioners to attend the School for any period considered necessary for their education, whether two, three or five years, and all drawings done during that time to be the property of the

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Council. This year also saw Mr. Dyce appointed first Inspector of Provincial Schools, his Directorship at Somerset House being given to Mr. C. H. Wilson. Under this gentlemen's rule we find the primary object of the schools clearly expressed: 'No student to be admitted who is studying fine art solely for the purpose of being a painter or sculpture; every student to state, within the first three months of his attendance, to what department of manufacture or decorative art he intends to applying his studies.'

[Following is part 2 of the article, contined from p. 16.
It began on p.42]

IN 1845 serious difficulties arose between Mr. Wilson and Mr. Herbert, R.A., roaster of the modelling class, and a complete mutiny of the students ensued (now spoken of by them as the Rebellion of '45). Eventually Mr. Herbert left the school, and Mr. Horsley, R.A.,[1] was elected to the vacant post. Mr. R. Burchett, then a student, and afterwards head master at South Kensington, acted as champion and spokesman for his fellow students in this civil war, and the chief cause of complaint seems to have been misdirected teaching. Mr. Dyce now resigned his Inspectorship of Provincial Schools, and, was succeeded by Mr. Ambrose Poynter. At this time also we find the marvellous genius of Alfred Stevens exercised here in teaching 'Architecture, perspective, modelling, and painting' if required, for five hours daily, at 150 *l.* a year! During 1845-6 it became evident that the schools were not fulfilling their original object, and, in consequence of very strong letters from Mr. Buchett, Mr. Redgrave, R.A., and Mr. A Poynter, a more systematic course of study was arranged, embracing the theory and principles of design, and the application of these to industries, This, it was hoped, would foster *original* design among the students. In April, 1848, the Council was abolished, and the direction was vested in a management committee of six, the educational executive consisting of three head masters—Mr. Dyce, R.A. (ornament), Mr. Horsley (colour), and Mr. Townsend (form).

There were now fourteen schools besides those in London, and, since 1835, 15,000 students had been under training. The total expenditure was 80,8141 *l.*, of which 55,278 *l.* was Government grant, 8426 /. fees, and 17,110 /. local donations, A second Select Committee, in 1849, found the Schools still unsatisfactory, though many witnesses, notably Mr. Henry Cole, afterwards so prominently identified with this great work, spoke strongly of the latent artistic talent of English artisans. The task of reorganization was entrusted to Mr. Redgrave, R.A., Mr. Herbert, R.A., and Mr., Townsend, with assistance from Mr. A. Poynter in the provinces. But the prejudice of manufacturers, who held that as long as they could make what would sell it was better to try no new experiment,' seriously tried their patience. The show of students' work at Marlborough House in 1851 was full of promise, and the Great Exhibition of the same year gave a stimulus which was as timely as it has been lasting. Certain defects in management, however, were still apparent, and in 1852 the 'Department of Practical Art' was created, with Sir Henry Cole, C.B., as General Superintendent and Mr., Redgrave, R.A., as Art Superintendent.

1. *By an inadvertence, the portraits of Mr., Horsley, R.A.; Mr., Redgrave, R.A. Mr. Ambrose Poynter; Sir Henry Cole, C.B. and Alfred Stevens, A.R.A., were inserted in the first portion of this article which appeared last month.

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For some years the art works acquired for the students' use had been accumulating, and at the Great Exhibition of 1851, 5000*l.* were expended in the purchase of modern examples, selected by Mr., Pugin, Mr. Owen Jones, and others. This collection, the nucleus of that magnificent display now found at South Kensington Museum, yet once so small as to be easily stowed away in a cupboard formed in the recess of one of the windows of the large class-room at Somerset House was now thought worthy of lodgment in Marlborough House, and was first exhibited there in 1852. Many were the heartburnings occasioned by one at least of the Marlborough House exhibitions, however, for there came a time when a 'Chamber of Horrors' was included in the entertainment. It was very profitable to the student, no doubt, to inspect the chintzes, carpets and principles paperhangings labelled 'False principles', 'Helter-skelter lines', 'Productions under the influence of a nightmare,' which were collected therein for his disapproval, and for the delectation of an amused public ; but the manufacturers could not be expected to see the joke, and the experiment was questionable in policy as in taste ; to the credit of all concerned, it was not repeated. In August, 1853, by permission of Her Majesty, the Schools were transferred from Somerset House to Marlborough House, where female classes were already in operation, and the School of Mines, the Museums of Geology and of Irish Industry, the Geological Survey, and the Department of Practical Art were united into one great organization—THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND ART. By the new scheme Government no longer appointed masters or paid salaries ; the system of payment by results was inaugurated, and each locality could now—certain conditions being satisfactory—decide for itself whether it would have a school or not, the whole management, including control of finances, being given over to the local committees. Great stress was laid on elementary drawing, and students were stimulated by the offer of prizes, medals, and certificates. The Schools were removed to South Kensington in 1856, and when, in 1857, 'the Education Department' was constituted, the Department of Science and Art was detached from the Board of Trade, placed under the Lord President of Council, and its business thenceforward transacted at South Kensington—changes mainly due to the untiring zeal of Sir Henry Cole, who is justly regarded as the creator of South Kensington. 1857 is memorable also as the year in which was established those national competitions, a place in which is now so eagerly sought and so untiringly worked for by students in every part of the country, and 1858 witnessed the first public exhibition of art works—wood-carving, silks, carpets, glass, ceramics &c.—distinctly illustrative of the teaching in the Schools. The advance in art as applied to industries was undeniable, and manufacturers now found it worth their while to employ students. All honour is due to Messrs. Minton for taking the lead in this, and their example was speedily followed by ninety-four other firms.

But the improvement was even more strikingly displayed in the International Exhibition of 1862, when we find the most eminent foreign critics admitting that 'the amazing progress made in British art industries bids fair to leave France far behind.'

During the twenty-five years which we have so briefly reviewed, the first English School of Design has undergone a complete transformation. Its location and its character have changed more than once; its very name has disappeared, and its history is now merged into that of the more modern institution

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at South Kensington, with which we are all so familiar. No changes of a vital nature have been made since 1863 when the system of payment on results, after having formed part of the remuneration of art masters for ten years, was adopted *in toto*, the principle being applied to all instruction given in, or through, the means of art schools.

We cannot, however, close this account of the early history of art training in England without a tribute to those gentlemen who laboured so long and so faithfully, amid difficulties which only *they* will ever fully appreciate, to instil into English youth those principles of art, and especially of art as applied to industries, which were so sorely needed, and for which the nation first provided the means in 1836 : —Mr. Horsley, R.A. (a portrait of whom, in last issue, was specially photographed for us by Mr. Dixon, of Albany Street, from a miniature in Mr. Horsley's possession) ; Mr. Dobson, R.A. ; Mr. Herbert, R.A. ; Alfred Stevens, A.K.A. for whose portrait in last issue we are indebted to his biographer, Mr. Hugh Stannus, F.R.I.B.A) ; Mr. Wornum ; Mr., R. Burchett, one of the most successful exponents art has ever had, and whose memory is still green among his old students; Mr. Charles Slocombe, for thirty years connected with art-teaching in these schools and whose portrait has been kindly sent us by his brother, Mr. Fred Slocombe); and many others, of whom space forbids even a mention. For the portraits of Sir Henry Cole, C B., Mr. A. Poynter, and Mr. Redgrave, R.A., who so ably directed much of the early movement, we are indebted to Mr., Alan Cole, Mr. E. J. Poynter, R.A., and Mr. G. Redgrave respectively, to all of whom, with Mr. Horsley, Mr., Stannus, Mr., Sparkes (the present Principal at South Kensington), and the Registrar General, Somerset House, we tender warmest thanks for valuable assistance in compiling this sketch.

MR. CHAS. P. SLOCOMBE

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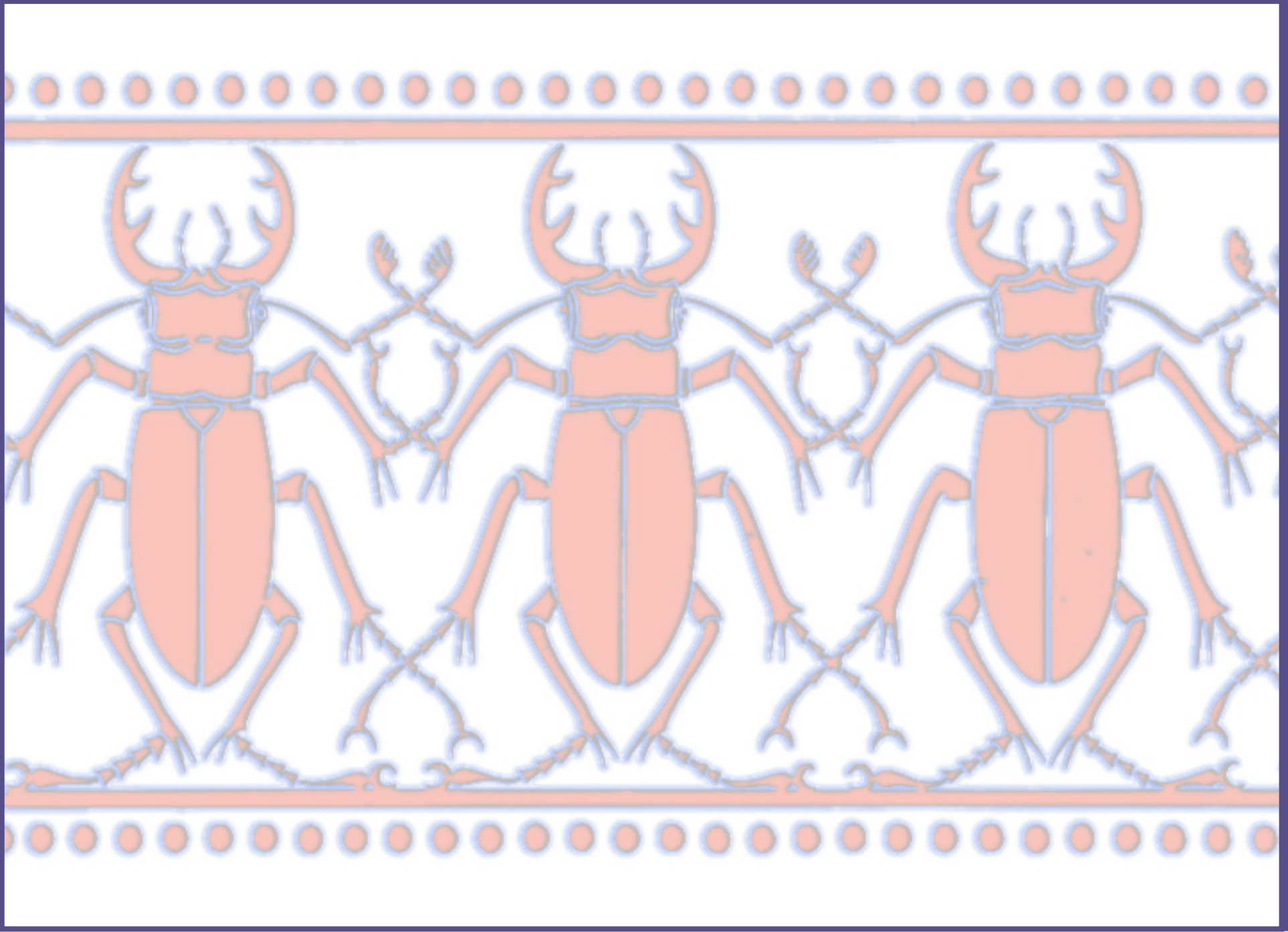

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX I

Nature of Instruction Afforded.

On the Nature of the Instruction afforded by the Department, being extracts from the Address delivered by Mr. Redgrave, R.A., the Art-Superintendent.

Elementary Instruction

IT has been determined to adopt a mixed system of instruction, and to divide elementary teaching into two short courses. The first from flat examples, wherein the pupil will have set before him for imitation, and to train his hand, *drawings* of forms taken from objects which in themselves are superficial, or whose general aspect is flatness ; so that he will not be imitating entire abstractions, but be reminded at the same time of a known object. Thus, in order to commence with right lines in various positions, of various proportions, and at various angles, the right-lined letters of the alphabet, simply drawn of a sufficient size to exercise and strengthen his hand, will be used as examples, as **I L H A V** together with the forms of other superficial right-lined *objects*. As he proceeds to curved-lined forms, the first examples will be from the curved-lined letters, **C S O** &c. ; following these, other superficial-cured forms will be used ; and afterwards, drawings of the *symmetrical* forms of leaves, such as the laurel, ivy, plane, horse-chestnut, sumach, &c., to accustom him by *geometrical imitation*, to proportion, balance of parts, and beauty of curve ; the whole forming a first course of geometrical free-hand imitation, preparing him, if his future occupation renders it desirable, to take up a further course based on the more abstract curves of ornament, and leading to admission, if it is required, into the elementary schools of Ornamental Art.

First Stage Flat examples.

Mechanical geometry

As a completion to this first flat course the student will be led through a short course of mechanical geometry, with the use of instruments, to give him thereby a precise knowledge of superficial forms, and that means of accurately measuring and setting them out which is so valuable to *all*, and

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especially to the workman. Thus armed with some amount of hand power, some training of the eye, and a degree of knowledge of *technical terms*, the pupil will be prepared to enter upon the elementary course from *solid examples*. In this course *solid objects* only will be set before the student, the master giving such verbal instructions, and such illustrations on the black board to the pupil, as will enable him to proceed, step by step, from a line seen perspectively, to a plane surface forming solids, and their perspective change to the eye of the student: afterwards passing through spherical solids, until objects of beautiful contour, such as vases, shells &c., are set before him for imitation, his perceptions being trained, step by step, to comprehend and interpret the various difficulties that arise. To complete his real knowledge in this section, a short course of linear perspective, with the use of instruments, will be prescribed to the student, to give him a theoretical knowledge of the cause of the apparent change in the form of objects relatively to the surface on which they are delineated, and the points from which they are viewed;—the course terminating in *his being taught* the most effective means of producing the appearance of light and shade and relief by black and white, by the use of crayons and the stump on tinted drawing-paper.

Solid examples.

Linear perspective

Such a combined course of elementary instruction as has been described will, when completed, have given the student a power of close and refined imitation from the flat, a knowledge of the elements of practical geometry and perspective, and the power of drawing from objects themselves, preparing the student, if desirous of further progress, or whose business in life requires further instruction, to enter the Government Schools of Ornamental Art.

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To enable the masters in national and other public schools, not yet able to afford or to obtain the assistance of a regular drawing teacher, to make use of the drawings and models which we are about to supply, and to carry on, at least temporarily, the course of instruction, I have just explained to you, it has been found necessary to appoint a "teachers' training master." His instruction will be verbal and explanatory, the black board being used for illustration. For instance, he will begin with showing the value of horizontal and perpendicular lines; and, first making the masters aware of the necessity of thoroughly explaining these terms and all other terms used in the most simple language, will

Training Master.

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show that in geometrical imitation these lines are entirely governed by the sides and bottom or top of the paper, slate, or board used by the pupil: he will them explain their value as a means to measurement an proportion, and for determining the direction of oblique or slant lines. He will proceed to show how readily linear forms are drawn, when the constructing lines are first attended to, and what a ready means these constructing lines are of giving the pupils a sense of balance, proportion, and symmetry of parts. This will lead him to explain the nature, properties, and relative proportions of the various forms, and the structural lines by which they may best be geometrically imitated, ever impressing upon his class that, in their capacity of teachers they must use the most simple language, and carefully abstain from the use of technical or scientific terms. The training master will next explain the method of teaching from model forms. First taking into his hand a rod of wire, he will show the class its change of form relatively to its changed position in respect to the draughtsman, from appearing as a mere point, when presented directly to his eye, to its being seen of its real length when parallel to him. The class will then be shown how the same changes take place in a superficial square,—from its appearances, as a mere line when its edge is placed towards the eye, to its perfect equal-sided right-angled form where the front of the object is directly opposed to the spectator. After this, the changes in the form of a cube will, in the same manner, be explained and illustrated,—from its appearance as merely a superficial form to the development of first, two, and then three, sides, as it is variously placed before the draughtsman.

After leading the class to comprehend the course adopted and the methods to be followed by the teacher in using the examples, those who are training in this peculiar class will next be required to explain verbally, and with rough diagrams on the black board, the problems of practical geometry, and some of the simpler problems of linear perspective ; thus instructed, and with the aid of a “Manual for Teachers,” which is in course of preparation, we may hope to meet the immediate pressure on the Department, until masters more thoroughly qualified can be instructed for such duties.

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Qualification for entering Schools of Practical Art.

Up to the present time, the general education of students entering these schools has had no consideration; but it is intended to require in future from all who seek to enter the morning classes a certain proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and some of the simpler geometrical problems. The instruction in these schools is arranged under four heads: Drawing, Painting, Modelling, and Composition; these four sections being subdivided into twenty-two stages: not that each student must pass through all these stages, but that such a course affords complete instruction in the technical means of drawing, painting, and modelling, and include some insight into ornamental composition.

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Stages of Instruction

The stages are usually classed as under:

			Stage
		Geometrical perspective and architectural detail	1
Drawing Course	Ornament	Outlined from flat examples	2
		" " the round	3
		Shaded from flat examples	4
		" " the round	5
	The Figure	From flat examples	6
		Outlined from the cast	7
		Shaded from the cast	8
		Anatomy	9
		Flowers, outlined from nature	10
Painting Course	Ornament	In monochrome	11
		In colours	12
	Flowers	From flat examples	13
		" nature	14
		Compositions of objects as studies of colours	15
	The Figure	From casts	16
		In colour	17
Modelling Course		Ornament	18
		The figure	19
		Flowers and objects from nature	20
		Studies from the life	21
Composition in Design		Elementary design	22

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I must, however, remark upon stage 1,—geometrical and perspective drawing, that although placed as the commencing stage,—geometry being the basis of all ornament-in practice it is rather the second stage, and should change places with stage 2; the student really commencing with a severe course of ornamental drawing in outline from flat examples, which experience has proved to be a very efficient means of giving the fullest power to the hand and correctness to the eye; the first being obtained by drawing the long, flowing, and graceful curves of ornament,-such study correcting the one-handed direction of lines, if I may so describe it, which has resulted from writing; the other,—correctness of eye,—arising from the nicety required to imitate the pure curves of ornament, and its symmetry, and exact balance of parts; qualities not usually found in natural objects, as seen and drown perspectively.

You will at once perceive that the same system prevails in this as in the before-described elementary course; and here, at least, we have the experience of some years of success to support us in the value of practising from flat examples before the use of *solids* and *objects*, but with immediate recourse to the *objects* on the student attaining hand-power to execute them.

Models

Thus you will notice that stage 2 is ornament outlined from flat examples, while stage 3 consists of ornament outlined from the cast, or from solid forms; and in this stage solid objects, such as the models of Dupuis and Williams, are used, as well as casts of ornament. Here, also, the previous study of practical geometry and linear perspective aids the student in comprehending the changes of form which take place on any change of his relative position as to the object he is drawing from, and which, to draw it correctly, he must now understand. Then, again, stage 4 is shading from flat examples, while stage 5 consists of studies from the round, or from casts in relief; and so on throughout the course from the figure to flowers and fruits,—in painting, as in drawing, the same system prevails. In the painting stages practice is commenced in light and shade by black and white only, and, having learnt to overcome some of the first difficulties of execution without colour, the student then has coloured examples set before him. As his powers of execution improve, he makes separate stud-

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ies of flowers, fruit, &c., first from flat examples, and afterwards from nature, proceeding in the end to group and arrange coloured objects as a study of composition.

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Painting.

All are taught to paint in transparent water colours, in tempera or body colours, and in oil; and, where such special means are necessary, in encaustic and in fresco also. In passing through the painting stages, the pupil is required to answer any questions that may be put to him on the laws of colour, its harmonious arrangement, and the relative quantity of tint or hue which is agreeable to the eye on any general distribution; and he is thus prepared to enter upon the study of Ornamental composition, in stage 22. If future business of the student requires modelling for its expression, rather than painting; after he has passed through the first ten stages, he begins to work in clay, and models first from reliefs or round examples, and afterwards, as he acquires facility and power, from flat examples; as, for instance, from prints and drawings, rendering their apparent into real relief, thus reversing the mode of study in the stages of drawing and painting. The study in this section is conducted, first from ornament, then from the figure, and afterwards direct from nature, as in fruit, flowers, and from the human figure and animals.

Elementary Design

Having thus acquired a competent share of technical skill, the student is prepared to enter upon Elementary Design,—the twenty-second stage of progress. Hitherto the study of the pupil has been strictly imitative; that is to say, he has obtained technical skill in the use of his tools and materials by means of exact imitation, and, in this respect, the route of the artist and the ornamentist has been so far the same. But in this stage the special direction of the latter, which had as yet only been suggested by the examples used for the purposes of study, becomes real; and the ornamentist enters upon the consideration of the fundamental principles wherein his Art differs from *Fine Art*; the latter continuing to rely on a selected imitation of nature, pictorially and perspectively treated, as his means of expression; whilst the former,—the ornamentist,— is taught to make use of whatever is beautiful in nature, either in form or colour, irrespective of imitation or actual combination; nay, often designedly rejecting them: choosing the general expression of objects, rather than likeness: symmetry of parts and balance of quantities, rather than variety; the normal rather than the individ-

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ual form; beauty of line, rather than peculiarity of structure. In this stage the ornamentist has explained to him the leading characteristics of styles and periods of ornament, and the laws which ought to govern its application to various materials. His formerly-acquired knowledge of linear geometry enables him to regulate the distribution of the quantities of his ornament over large surfaces. He is taught how to conventionalize and reduce natural forms to ornamental ones; to arrange colour on given spaces, according to the laws of harmony and right proportional quantity, and strength of tint, hue, or shade; and having, during his progress through the prior stages of the Schools or Ornamental Art, had opportunities of attending the lectures of the Department on styles and periods of ornament, and their general characteristics, he ought to be prepared to give his knowledge some specific direction, by entering into some one or other of those special classes which are yet to be described.

Education of Masters.

Before passing from these schools, however, I must notice a valuable additional class which has been formed for the education of masters for the elementary schools. In this class, after having passed through the first six stages of the before-named course, modified to suit their peculiar wants, these candidates for masterships have themselves a class to teach, to which they give verbal instructions and illustrations on the black board in geometry, perspective, and the method of drawing from models, in order to prepare themselves for their future duties as masters. In the performance of this duty they are required to use the simplest terms of explanation, so as to make themselves intelligible to the most uneducated, and to endeavour to interest the minds of the students in their work by apt illustration and intelligible language divested of technical terms.

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Artistic Anatomy.

There are two classes at Marlborough House which, in some degree, are supplementary to the course of instruction, in the Schools of Practical Art at Somerset House. The first of these is, the *Class of Artistic Anatomy.* This class (together with that for Architectural Details and Practical Construction) is complementary to the instruction given in the Schools of Ornamental Art, and is required to have been passed, or, at least that its studies should have been commenced, before the student can enter into some of those special classes hereafter to be described;—such, for instances,

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as those for metal working or china painting. It combines the study of the human figure with that of its anatomical structure. Occasional reference is also made to the comparative structure of animals. It is necessary that the student, before entering, should have attained proficiency in drawing and painting, or drawing and modelling, either in one of the schools of Practical Art, or otherwise; so as to be able to benefit immediately by the special instruction of the Professor. The plan adopted is that of analysis. The student commences with making careful drawings in outline from casts of the head or extremities of the human figure, and afterwards, under the instruction of the Professor, describing within that outline, in their true position, first, the bony support of the parts, ne the form; finally, he completes a study in light and shadow from the object, in the same position. After studying the extremities, he proceeds to the complete figure from the antique; first outlining the figure, then placing the bony framework within the outline, and afterwards the forms of its outer layer of muscles; the Professor explains those more deeply seated, and remarks upon the action of both as motors of the figure studied; and the same figure is afterwards carefully studied by the pupil in light and shade. This method is adopted also for the student of painting and modelling. In due course the modeller is taught also the principles of relief, both high and low; while the painter has explained to him the various technical modes of flesh painting.

From time to time the living model is set in *pose* by the Professor, for the pupils to study, and explanations of the position, and of the muscles called into action by it, are given during the period the model sits. The studies in this class, also, are either by drawing, painting, or modelling, and after each *pose* is completed, the figure is analysed by the student, who follows the method before described in his antique studies.

Occasionally, a limb, or some other portion of the structure of an animal, is dissected and demonstrated to the pupils, and compared with the same portion of the structure of man: as, for instance, the pectoral muscles of birds, which are largely developed to assist in flight, are compared with those of men, or with those of quadrupeds, such as the horse or deer, wherein the action of the fore limb is simply progressive. The pupils are expected to make drawings of such dissected portions, after the

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clinical demonstration by the Professor.

The *Class of Architectural Details and Practical Construction*, as well as that of Artistic Anatomy, is in some measure complementary to the instruction given in the Schools of Practical and Ornamental Art.

Architectural details and construction

The student on entering the class of Architectural Details is required to go through an extended course of practical geometry, and is afterwards taught to apply it to the purposes of practical construction, in laying down the lines for, and setting out, carpenters', joiners', masons', smiths' work, &c. He is taught, for instance, to make drawings of constructive carpentry, including the framing of roofs, floors, partitions, staircases, &c.; the modes of obtaining the moulds, of groin angles and intersections, the stretchout of soffits, and generally whatever will enable him to prepare accurate working drawings of construction for the craftsman in any trade.

He then enters upon a course of architectural details, such as the sections and forms of mouldings, cornices, architraves, &c., the proportions of the various classic orders, the details of Gothic architecture, and the methods of finding the structural lines and centres of Gothic tracery. Plans, elevations, and sections of apartments, and portions of known buildings, are laid down, from drawings or written dimensions, to scale measurement. The student proceeds to an extended course of linear perspective, to enable him to delineate buildings, furniture, or utensils, to scale measurements from their plans, elevations, and sections. In the progress of his studies he is taught the scientific projection of shadows, applied to architectural drawing, as well as the methods of tinting required to complete such studies. Where necessary, isometrical perspective is added, and thus all may be more or less prepared for their duties in life, or for entering those special classes, which I shall now explain.

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Of these Special Classes, five are already in operation.

A Class for Wood Engraving; at present, for females only.
A Class for Chromo-lithography; at present for females only.
A Class for Woven Fabrics and Paper Hangings; for both sexes.
A Class for China Painting; for both sexes
A Class for Metal Work; open only to male students.

Special classes.

In these classes the student will be able to obtain information; first, as to all the principles of fitness and choice which should govern the application of ornament to the special fabric or manufacture; and, secondly, as to all those peculiar processes of manufacture, whether by the hand or the machine, which are to control and regulate his labours, together with all improvements, chemical, mechanical, or manipulative, which from time to time arise to change the laws of production. The student is first set to copy the rare works in the museum of the Department, either those which are the property of the public, or those which may be lent from time to time for the purposes of study.

He has explained to him the peculiar processes used in their production, as well as the excellences of design or workmanship they display; and he then proceeds, under the instruction of the Professor, to exercise his invention or even his manipulative skill in the production of like works, embodying those excellences and those principles which he has learnt in the previous study, and employing all the ornamental knowledge and knowledge of the laws of construction and colour which he obtained in the schools. From time to time he visits the manufactories in company with the Professor, who there explains the actual processes and machinery, and points out the causes which must limit and modify the inventive powers of the designer. To stimulate his industry, a series of prizes are offered for designs for the ornamentation of the special fabric or manufacture, in which designs those conditions are to be observed that the Department consider should regulate the application of ornament to its decoration.

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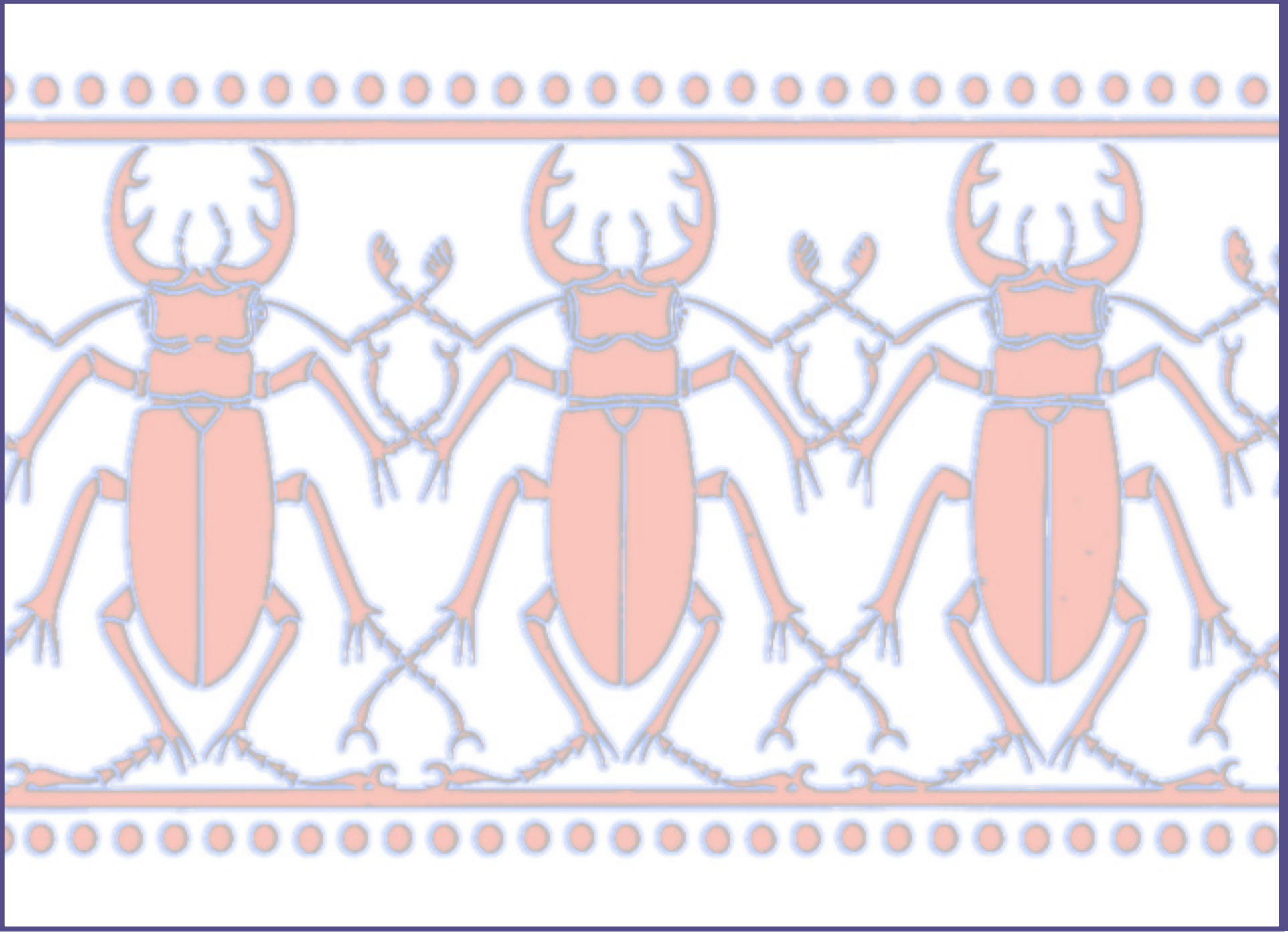

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OBSERVATIONS BY OWEN JONES, ESQ.

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Observations by Mr. O. Jones

IN examining the Collection of Articles purchased from "The Great Exhibition of 1851," for the purposes of the "Department of Practical Art," the attention of the Student and inquiring Visitor is more particularly directed to the "Indian portion," the most important, both from the variety and beauty of the articles themselves, and as furnished most valuable hints for arriving at a true knowledge of those principles which should regulate the employment both of Ornament and Colour in the Decorative Arts.*

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They are the works of people who are still as faithful to their art as to the religion, habits, and modes of thought which inspired it: whilst those objects in the Collection which are of European workmanship exhibit only the disordered state of art at which we have now arrived; we have no guiding principles in design and still less of unity in its application.

A mere glance at the European portion of the Collection will show, that the objects are reproductions of the most varied extinct styles, more or less slavishly copied; that what is true in principle in them arises rather from their adherence to the models from which they have been copied, or by which they have been inspired, than from the result of true feeling in the artist's mind; who would otherwise not so often in the same work have mixed up the true and the false.

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*." In the fabrics of India, the correct principle already laid down, namely, that patterns and colours should diversify plain surfaces without destroying or disturbing the impressions of flatness, is as carefully observed as it was in the Middle Ages, when the decoration of walls, pavements, and carpets was brought to such perfection by the Arabs. But it is not only the observance of this principle which distinguishes the Indian stuffs in the Exhibition; they are remarkable for the rich invention shown in the patterns, in which the beauty, distinctness, and variety of the forms, and the harmonious blending of severe colours, called forth the admiration of all true judges of art. What a lesson such designs afford to manufacturers, even in those nations of Europe which have made the greatest progress in industry!"—WAAGEN.

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In the Indian Collection, we find no struggle after an effect; every ornament arises quietly and naturally from the object decorated, inspired by some true feeling, or embellishing some real want.

The same guiding principle, the same evidence of thought and feeling in the artist, is everywhere present, in the embroidered and woven garment tissues, as in the humblest earthen vase.

There are here no carpets worked with flowers whereon the feet would fear to tread, no furniture the hand would fear to grasp, no superfluous and useless ornament which a caprice has added and with an accident might remove.

The pattern of their shawls, garments, carpets, are harmonious and effective from the proper distribution of form and colour, and do not require to be heightened in effect by strong and positive oppositions.

We have here no artificial shadows, no highly wrought imitations of natural flowers, with their light and shade, struggling to stand out from the surfaces on which they are worked, but conventional representations to the mind without destroying the unity of the object they are employed to decorate.

With them the construction is decorated; decoration is never, as with us, purposely constructed.

With them beauty of form is produced by lines growing out one from the other in gradual undulations; there are no excrescences; nothing could be removed and leave the design equally good or better.

Their general forms are first cared for; these are subdivided and ornamented by general lines, the interstices are then filled in with ornament, which is again subdivided, and enriched for closer inspection.

Appendix V.

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CATALOGUE OF MUSEUM OF MANUFACTURES

Observations by Mr. O. Jones

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In their conventional foliage, in all cases we find the forms flowing out from a parent stem, so as to cover the space to be filled, with the most exquisite skill; we are never offended, as in modern works, by the random introduction of ornament, the existence of which cannot be accounted for; every flower, however distant, can be traced to its branch and root.

In the management of colour, again, the Indians, in common with most Eastern nations, are very perfect; we see here the most brilliant colours harmonized as by a natural instinct: it is difficult to find a discord; the relative values of the colours of ground and surfaces are most admirably felt.

When gold ornaments are used on a coloured ground, where gold is used in large masses, there the ground is darkest; when the gold is used more thinly, there the ground is lighter and more delicate.

When a gold ornament alone is used on a coloured ground, the colour of the ground is carried into it, by ornaments of hatchings worked in the ground colour on the gold itself; of this the Student will observe many examples.

When ornaments in a colour are on a ground of a contrasting colour, the ornament is separated from the ground by an edging of lighter colour, to prevent all harshness of contrast.

When, on the contrary, ornaments in a colour are on a gold ground, the ornaments are separated from the gold ground by an edging of a darker colour, to prevent the gold ground overpowering the ornament.

In other cases, where varieties of colour are used on a coloured ground, a general outline of gold, of silver, or white or yellow silk, separates the ornament from the ground giving a general tone throughout; in their carpets and low-toned combinations of colour, a black general outline is used for this purpose.

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Their object appears to be (in their woven fabrics especially) that each ornament should be softly, not harshly, defined; that coloured objects, viewed at a distance, should present a neutralized bloom; that each step nearer should exhibit fresh beauties—a close inspection the means whereby these effects are produced.

In the following list an attempt has been made to show, as far as the limits of a Catalogue will allow, how each article in the Collection is in accordance with or departs from these general principles, and others more particularly expressed. In conclusion, let the Student bear in mind that these objects have been gathered together for his instruction, and that he might by their contemplation obtain a *knowledge of principles* which have pervaded all the perfect efforts of artists in all times, and which we may now presume to be discovered truths, and are therefore not wisely to be rejected; let him, on the other hand, *carefully avoid any attempt to copy or reproduce them;* that which most faithfully represents the wants, the sentiments, and faculties of one people, is inadequate to express those of another people under totally different conditions.

The principles belong to us, not so the results; it is taking the end for the means; if this Collection should lead only to the reproduction of an Indian Style in this country, it would be a most flagrant evil.

The temporary exhibition of the Indian and other Eastern Collections in " The Great Exhibition of 1851," was a boon to all those European artists who had an opportunity of studying them; and let us trust that the foresight of the Government, which has secured to us a portion of those collections as permanent objects of study, will lead to still higher results.

***May* 1852**

OWEN JONES.

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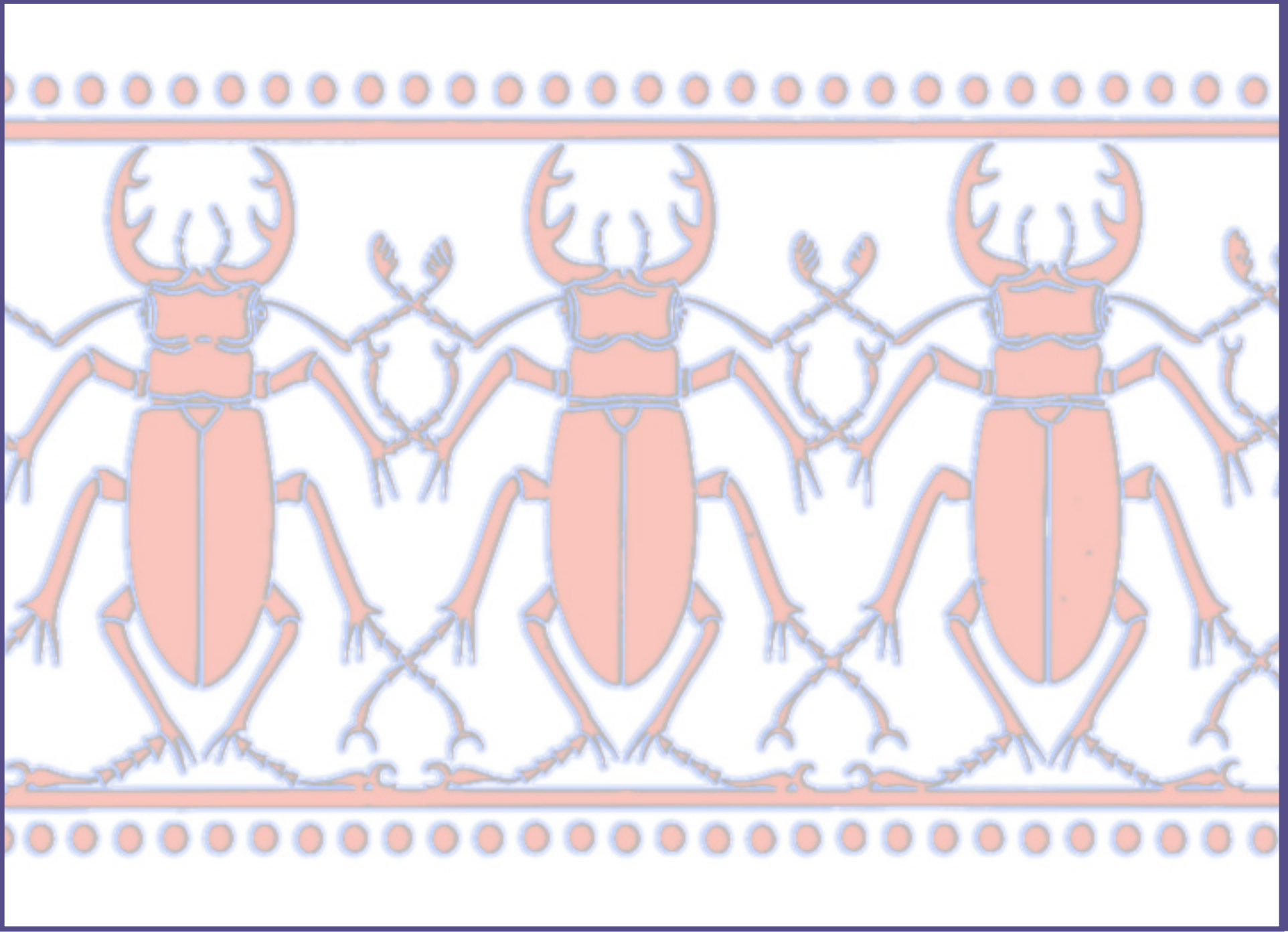

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REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE HEAD AND BRANCH SCHOOLS OF DESIGN

Prospectus.

Government School of Design, under the Directive Authority of the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade.

Secretary and Curator—Walter Ruding Deverell, Esq.
Clerk to the Secretary—Mr. Henry Lipsham.
Office, Somerset House.

HEAD SCHOOL, Somerset House

Head Masters and Curators—John Rogers Herbert, Esq. R.A.; Richard Redgrave, Esq. AR.A; Henry James Townsend, Esq.

Second Masters—Charles J. Richardson, Richard Burchett, William Denby, Robert W. Herman, and Walter Howell Deverell, Esqrs.

Lecturers—Ralph N. Wornum, Esq., and others, occasionally.

Attendants—Mr. Charles Comyns; Mr. Andrew Imrie; Mr. John Macdonald.

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE HEAD AND BRANCH SCHOOLS OF DESIGN

THE COURSE OF INSTRUCTION comprises—

ELEMENTARY Freehand Drawing, from the flat and from the round.

Shading, from the flat and from the round.

Geometrical Drawing and Perspective.

Figure Drawing, from the flat, from the round, and from the life, including Anatomical Studies and Drapery.

Modelling of Ornament ; and of the Figure as applied to Ornament.

Painting in Water Colour, Tempera, Fresco, Oil, and Encaustic, from examples of Ornamental Art, and from Nature ; Landscape, Animals, Foliage, Flowers, Fruit, &c.

Exercises in Composition, and Original Designs, for Decoration and Manufactures.

Lectures on the History, Principles, and Practice of Ornamental Art.

Page 61.
Forms of Reports, Circulars, &c.

Origin and Objects of the School.—The Government School of Design was opened at Somerset House in 1837, as a national institution, under the superintendence of the Committee of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Trade, to offer, at a small individual expense, Instruction to all who desire to obtain a knowledge of Ornamental Art, and to supply a complete and systematic course of education, in relation to every kind of decorative work ; more especially to such persons as are, or intend to be, engaged in the preparation of Designs for the various Manufactures of this country.

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE HEAD AND BRANCH SCHOOLS OF DESIGN

Drawing, Painting, and Modelling are therefore taught, with a view to the acquisition of knowledge and skill in Ornamental Design and Decoration. This forms the essential and characteristic business of the School, by which it is distinguished from other Schools of Art. Accordingly all the exercises of the Students are required to have reference immediately, or ultimately, to the purposes and requirements of Ornamental Art.

In regard to these objects, the attention of Manufacturers, Professional Ornamentists, Decorators, and all who are interested in the improvement of our national taste, as displayed in the various and innumerable productions to which artistic skill is applicable, are invited to visit the School, and to avail themselves of the means which it offers, in its collections of Examples of Art, and Books of Prints, for supplying information relative to Ornamental Art, and for educating Workmen and Designers to elevate the character of this class of Art in our country. The Masters, and the Secretary who resides at Somerset House, will always be glad to communicate with and to afford assistance and information to such parties, on any day except Saturday.

The advantages provided by Government for the Students include, for their use, Paintings from the Royal Gallery at Hampton Court, for the study of Flowers and other appropriate subjects; and specimens of Plants and Flowers are supplied from the Royal Gardens at Kew. By the kind permission of the Managers of the Royal Botanical and Zoological Societies, free admission is granted to Students in the advanced Classes to sketch in their gardens; and every well-conducted Student is allowed to take to his home Books from a Lending Library, containing upwards of 1,000 volumes of works of Art and instructive Literature, printed catalogues of which can be obtained of the School Attendants.

Premiums and Prizes are periodically awarded for the best productions of the Students; and, as a further incentive to exertion, such of their works are purchased as are deemed worthy of being used

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for examples in the Branch Schools.

Exhibitionerships.—To aid the continuance of advanced Students in the School, and to promote attainment of the special objects of the Course of Instruction—knowledge of Principles, and skill in the Practice of Ornamental Art—several Exhibitions are established, varying from 10*l*. To 40*l*. Per annum, renewable yearly; and to individual students such other assistance is granted as the Board of Trade may deem expedient.

Admission.—Printed Forms of Application for Admission (to be addressed to the Secretary), and Copies of this Prospectus, are obtainable of the Hall Porter, Mr. Baucutt.

No applicants under the age of 15 are admissible, unless by special permission, to be obtained of the Secretary, or Head Masters.

The first three months after a Student's admission are considered probationary; and the further continuance of his name on the books will depend upon his manifesting the requisite qualifications and aptitude for the studies of the School.

The present means of accommodation at Somerset House permit the admission of 400 Students, of whom the class for Elementary Drawing, in the room on the ground floor, comprises about 150, who are admitted on probation, and are transferred to the advanced classes in the upper rooms as they give evidence of the requisite proficiency.

Page 62.

Fees.—Morning: Two Shillings a Month. Evening: Two Shillings a Month. Fees.—

Hours of Attendance.—Morning: Elementary Class, from Ten to One. Advanced Classes, from Ten to Three. Evening: All the Classes, from Half-past Six to Nine.

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The daily attendance of each Student is registered; and any irregularity of attendance is required to be explained, to ensure the continuance of his name upon the Books.

Vacations.—Saturday in every week; Six weeks at Midsummer, from the 15th of July to the 31st of August; Two weeks at Christmas, from the 25th of December, and Easter Week.

Female Class.—The department of the Head School, which is devoted to the instruction of Females, is conducted by Mrs. McIan, under the inspection of the Head Masters, in a building opposite the entrance of Somerset House, 330, Strand, where about 70 Students are received, and where Prospectuses and Printed Forms of Application for Admission to that department can be obtained.

Branch Schools.—In relation with the Head School at Somerset House, a system of 18 Branch Schools is established throughout the kingdom; in Spitalfields, Manchester, Birmingham, Coventry, Nottingham, Norwich, Sheffield, Stoke, Hanley, Leeds, York, Huddersfield, Newcastle, Glasgow, Paisley, Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, which, with the Head School at Somerset House, are conducted under the directive authority of the Board of Trade, and contain a total of about 3,000 Students. Aid is also afforded to various Mechanics' Institutes.

Walter Ruding Deverell, Secretary.

Somerset House June, 1850

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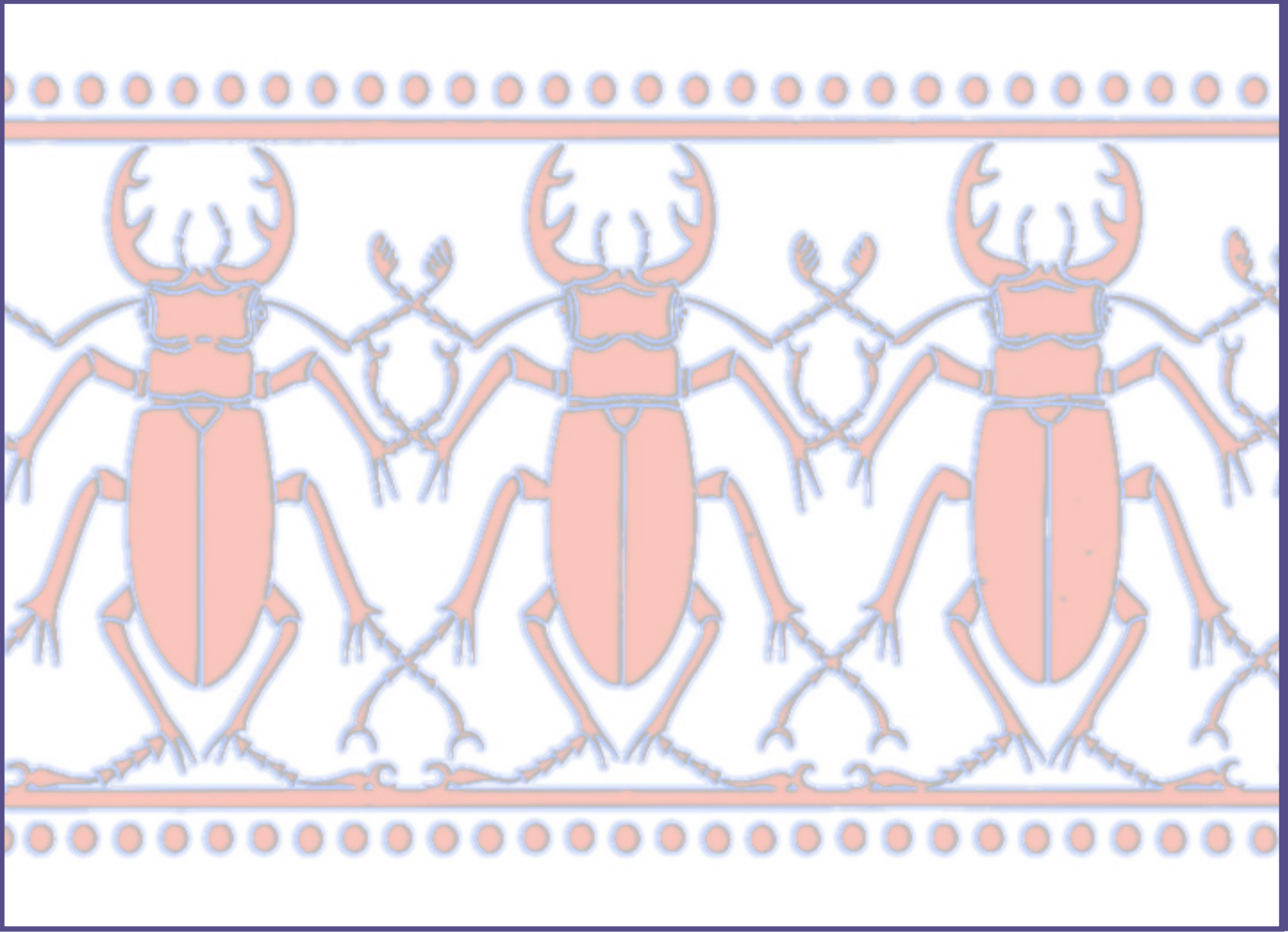

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I.—Head Masters' Report on the HEAD SCHOOL, for the Year ending July 1850.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL OF DESIGN

REPORT on the Head School, for the Year ending July 1850, addressed to the Lords of Her Majesty's Committee of Privy Council for Trade, by the Head Masters of the School.

My Lords,

Page 64.

We have the honour to lay before your Lordships a Report of the progress of the head school at Somerset House for the 12 past months, during the whole of which time the altered arrangements, which followed upon the late Parliamentary inquiry into the constitution and management of schools of design, have been in operation.

Although the school during this period has laboured under considerable difficulties, arising from very defective accommodation, (on which subject we have from time to time memorialized your Lordships,) as well as from those impediments always consequent on new arrangements, we have great pleasure in being able to state that the progress has been highly satisfactory, and such as to warrant us in the hope that a steady continuance in the course now followed will gradually lead to those valuable results which the Government and country have expected from the foundation of schools of design.

In support of this opinion, we beg to refer to the secretary's statement of the number of students attending the morning and evening classes during the last year together with the amount of fees received (page 37), from which it will be seen that the amount of both is higher than it has ever been

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since the establishment of these schools. This number (as we before stated to your Lordships in our Report in January last) might be greatly increased (even with the same staff of instructors) in both schools, if more adequate accommodation were provided ; and thus that public want would be more effectually supplied, which is evidenced by the foundation of local schools not in connexion with the Government establishments.

Moreover, under the new management,—the three head masters communicating directly with your Lordships' Board,—the studies of the school-operate harmoniously in the fulfilment of their various duties, and any disunion which may have heretofore prevailed in the school has we trust been entirely banished.

The female school, ably superintended by Mrs. M'Ian, having been lately placed by your Lordships under the inspection of the head masters, we may state that it is gradually assimilating its course of study to that of the male school, is steadily progressing in efficiency and usefulness, and is producing a succession of able scholars, of whose acquirements we can scarcely speak too highly.*

In both schools, that which has been at various times so much remarked upon, viz. The want of instruction in, and production of, original designs for manufacturers, will be found no longer a cause of complaint. In the exhibition of the works of the two schools in January last, out of the number of 6,642 works produced in the head school, 345 were studies in design, and original designs for various manufactures ; of which 182 were by the students of the male, and 163 by those of the female school.† So that while a sound elementary instruction is most carefully attended to, the design sec-

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*. *See* statement of the superintendent (page 72).

†. *See* Tables, p. 18, in Reports, &c., in printed Returns to Parliament on Schools of Design, 15 August 1850.

tion of the school is steadily increasing, and obtaining the notice of our manufacturers. This is more especially evidenced by the numerous applications made by manufacturers and others to obtain assistance from students educated in the school. Among these may be named the following parties, from whom various students in the school have received commissions for designs, or permanent engagements as designers :—

Mr. John Bell (the sculptor). Page 65.

Messrs. Wilkinson – – – –
— Woollams – – – –
— Ackerman – – – –
— Trollope – – – –
— Cundall – – – –
— Haseldon – – – –
— Gill – – – –
— Whitwell – – – –
— Underwood – – – –
— Wilson – – – –
— Brown & Son – – – –
— Clay – – – –

} Manufacturers

The three last have offered prizes for works, to be competed for in the school.*

These practical inquiries into the powers of the students, together with applications from various educational establishments for the recommendation of competent teachers, denote an awakened interest in the working of the school.

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*. See names of students employed by manufacturers (page 73).

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A list of those manufacturers and others who have sought assistance from the students of the female school will be found in a statement appended to this Report.*

The prizes offered by Messrs. Wilson, and by Messrs. Brown, for damask table-cloths, have been fully responded to ; 21 large and well-studied designs have been produced in competition, five from female, and 16 from the male school. Designs for tea-trays in competition for a prize offered by Mr. Clay, are yet in progress.

In the more elementary sections of the school the progress made has been marked and satisfactory. Accuracy has been cultivated in the student by careful outline drawings of ornament, and of the figure, as well as from plants and flowers ; classes for geometry and perspective, under the superintendence of Mr. Burchett and Mr. Richardson, are well attended, and are productive of continuous good results. Anatomy, applied to the study both of the antique figure and the life, is most efficiently taught, and forms the basis of sound instruction in the knowledge of, and power of drawing, the human figure ; the various modes of painting, also, and the laws regulating the harmonious arrangement of colour, are imparted to the students as they advance in their studies ; whilst the modelling class contains a number of talented students, who produce works highly creditable to themselves and to the school. These remarks are evidenced by the exhibition of January last, and the tables appended to our January Report† to your Lordships, will show, by the works tabulated, the full operation of all the classes in the school.

During the present year a valuable class has been formed for the elementary teaching of design. The results have proved most successful, leading progressively on to the more advanced study of

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*. See names of students employed by manufacturers (page 73).

†. See Reports, &c., in printed Returns to Parliament on Schools of Design, 15 August 1850.

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design applied to manufactures. We have proposed to Mrs. M'Ian the establishment of a similar class in the female school ; and, from a sense of its value in the head school, we would strongly recommend its adoption in the provincial schools also, as likely to prove a more satisfactory means of education than crude attempts at design for manufactures by students ill prepared for such efforts.

Your Lordships, acceding to our suggestions, appointed Mr. Jopling to give a short course of demonstrative lectures on the laws regulating the production of true curves by two-centred motion. That gentleman has just completed his course, which has been suggestive to the students of many new curves, and promises to lead to further and important results.

To increase the efficiency of the schools, and to enable students progressing in art knowledge to remain for further study, your Lordships this year determined to extend the number of exhibitionerships, and set apart 200*l.* for that purpose for the male school*. Eleven students have been appointed to exhibitions varying in amount from 10*l.* to 40*l.* £. 60 has also been allotted to the female school, divided into four exhibitions. Of the value of these gratuities we are enabled to speak most highly ; by such means a number of well-trained advanced students remain in the school to continue their studies and receive the full benefit of the institution at the time when they are most capable of appreciating it. These students raise the standard of study, and ensure emulation in their companions ; and they are enabled to undertake works of more importance than can be expected of those students whose attendance is of a more fluctuating character.

Page 66.

At the annual meeting in January last, your Lordships were pleased to sanction the distribution of 236*l.* 5 *s.* for prizes, the president and vice-president of the Board of Trade generously increasing the sum by a gift of 30*l.* This amount, 266*l.* 5 *s.*, was awarded among the students of the various

*. See list of exhibitioners (page 74).

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classes, 208*l.* to the pupils in the male, and 58*l.* 5 *s.* to those of the female school.* A list of prizes for the ensuing year, which has been laid before your Lordships and obtained your approval, is appended to this Report (page 68). It appears likely to excite the strenuous emulation of the students.

In our Report of January last, your Lordships received statements of the public exhibition which then took place of the works of the head school, a list of which we append (page 75). We have also this year carefully examined the works of the branch schools, forwarded to the head school for that purpose, and have, at your request, reported thereon for your Lordships' information in our Report of December last.† It has also been notified to us, that in future the selected works of the branch schools shall, at the commencement of each year, be sent for inspection, and for joint exhibition with those of the head school, a plan which we think likely to be highly useful and instructive. We trust that your Lordships will, within due time, provide suitable accommodation for such exhibition.

Demonstrative lectures have been delivered from time to time by the masters, and by Mr. Joseph Jopling, as before mentioned. Valuable public lectures have also been delivered by Mr. George Wallis ; and by Mr. Ralph Wornum, who has continued his highly instructive course on the history of ornament.

We have great pleasure in conveying to your Lordships our sense of the valuable assistance rendered to us in our duties by the second masters, the various sections of study being most efficiently attended to. Their great care in imparting sound elementary knowledge was well exemplified in the exhibition of works before spoken of, to which they also contributed designs connected with their

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*. See List of prizes distributed (page 74).
†. See Returns to Parliament referred to on preceding page.

special departments. Mr. Richardson continues ably and carefully to instruct the evening classes of architectural drawing, geometry, and perspective ; Mr. Burchett and Mr. Denby carry out efficiently the superintendence of the sections allotted to them ; and we receive from all very valuable suggestions as to management, and most active co-operation in the duties of instruction ; while Mr. Herman and Mr. Walter Deverell, conducting the morning and evening elementary drawing classes, keep the school continually supplied with proved and well-grounded students. We desire to acknowledge that all have rendered much assistance beyond the strict requirement of their duties. We have invited from each any suggestions they may desire to offer for your Lordships' information.

Before concluding this Report, we have several suggestions to lay before your Lordships for increasing the efficiency of this establishment ; among these, the first consideration must still be given to the want of room. The school has no apartment in which to exhibit the various beautiful casts and examples which belong to it ; the crowded galleries are the source of continual destruction of property ; the great room wherein lectures are delivered has been reported dangerous ; the students often leave the school from the extremely defective accommodation for the higher classes of study ; models, worked with the greatest care, and are not unfrequently destroyed by accident ; there is an absolute impossibility of classifying the students in such a manner as would be desirable, from the same cause ; and there can be no museum wherein objects of study might be arranged. These, with a total want of any accommodation for the masters, so often promised to us, for retaining the works of the students in the school until proper inspection and exhibition, or even for the official duties which devolve upon us, are most serious hindrances to the progress and usefulness of the establishment.

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In the female school the accommodation is equally inadequate. The rooms are badly lighted, small, and unhealthy ; so much so, that a number of the female students have waited on us, as a deputation, to request us to urge the subject on your Lordships, and to complain that by medical advice some of their number have been obliged to leave the school. Mrs. M'Ian also continually and prop-

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erly urges the subject upon us at our periodical inspections.

We have already reported this to your Lordships, and suggested that, even with the same staff of teachers, the number of students, might be greatly increased; and we would again most emphatically request your attention to these wants.

The greatly increasing public demand for instruction, evidenced by the establishment of a local school for drawing and modelling at Camden Town, now largely attended, and by other applications to us, induces us, in addition to the foregoing remarks, to suggest the propriety of taking measures to secure local elementary instruction, under suitable inspection of the head school, in various metropolitan districts (as recommended in former Reports), either by aiding mechanics' and literary institution, or by direct foundations connected with the Government. And while on this subject, we are led to suggest that the great number of applicants for instruction in the female school, whom at present it is impossible to accommodate, might, with better premises, at a comparatively small increased expense, be provided for, by opening an evening school, under the superintendence of Mrs. M'Ian, and instructed by Mr. M'Ian, whose assistance is so valuable in the morning school.

Since the term of the premises now held for the use of the female school shortly expires, we would request your Lordships' consideration as to the desirableness of renewing the same, and as to whether more suitable premises might not be found in the immediate neighbourhood, wherein perhaps, by means of a separate entrance, the male elementary school could be accommodated, and a further increase of room be thus obtained for the most pressing wants of the advanced classes of the head school.

The supply of *growing* plants and flowers is still a desideratum, being very imperfectly provided for, though of the greatest importance to the success of the school. It would greatly improve the efficiency of several of the classes if the supply could be more adequate to our wants; but this is

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incumbered with many difficulties; and although we have to acknowledge the obliging attention to our wishes evinced by the curator of the Royal Gardens at Kew, in the supply of *cut* flowers, the crowded state and heat of our rooms destroy these too speedily to afford proper means of study. We would propose for your Lordships' consideration the advisableness of some means being afforded to us of sending a number of students, not by permission, but (if such means can be obtained) by subscriptions on the part of Government, to study in the gardens of the Royal Botanic Society in Regent's Park, as being the nearest locality for that purpose; and it would be very valuable to the school if the same privilege could also be obtained with regard to the gardens of the Zoological Society; at the same time we desire to express our best thanks to the managing bodies of those institutions for their kind free admission of our advanced students.

In conclusion, we beg respectfully, and earnestly, to bring before you the position of the head masters in the school. Your Lordships, in the appointments with which you have honoured us, required from us, as head masters, five attendances per week, of two hours each, for the duties of instruction; but it is hardly necessary to remind you that our position has since become greatly altered. We now undertake, at your request, duties for the head school which formerly were fulfilled by the committee of management. Thus an increasing correspondence is devolving upon us, both with the Board, and more especially with regard to the numerous querists who write for information and advice on subjects connected with our duties in the school. Your Lordships have required from us, moreover, the inspection from time to time of the female school; the careful examination of, and reporting upon, the productions of the branch schools, a duty we believe of paramount importance, in order that the system and operations of all the schools may be in harmonious correspondence. We have the additional duty of the selection of examples and the joint responsibilities of the curatorship. These duties, more especially under the present state of defective accommodation, call upon us for a greatly increased amount of time and thought. Referring to the fact, that in all Government establishments the faithful discharge of duties of whatever kind is stimulated and rewarded, either by an

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annual increase of salary or the prospect of a final retiring allowance, while no such arrangement exists for any officer in our institution, we feel that duties such as ours, requiring a long previous training, and performed at times and under circumstances often very trying to the health, must have the strongest claims to the favourable consideration of your Lordships' Board. We feel a confidence in urging this upon you, grounded on the successful results now apparent in the school, which this Report will bring before your notice.

We have the honour to be, &c.
(signed) *Rich^{d} Redgrave,* A.R.A.
Henry James Townsend
J. R. Herbert, R.A.

July 1850.

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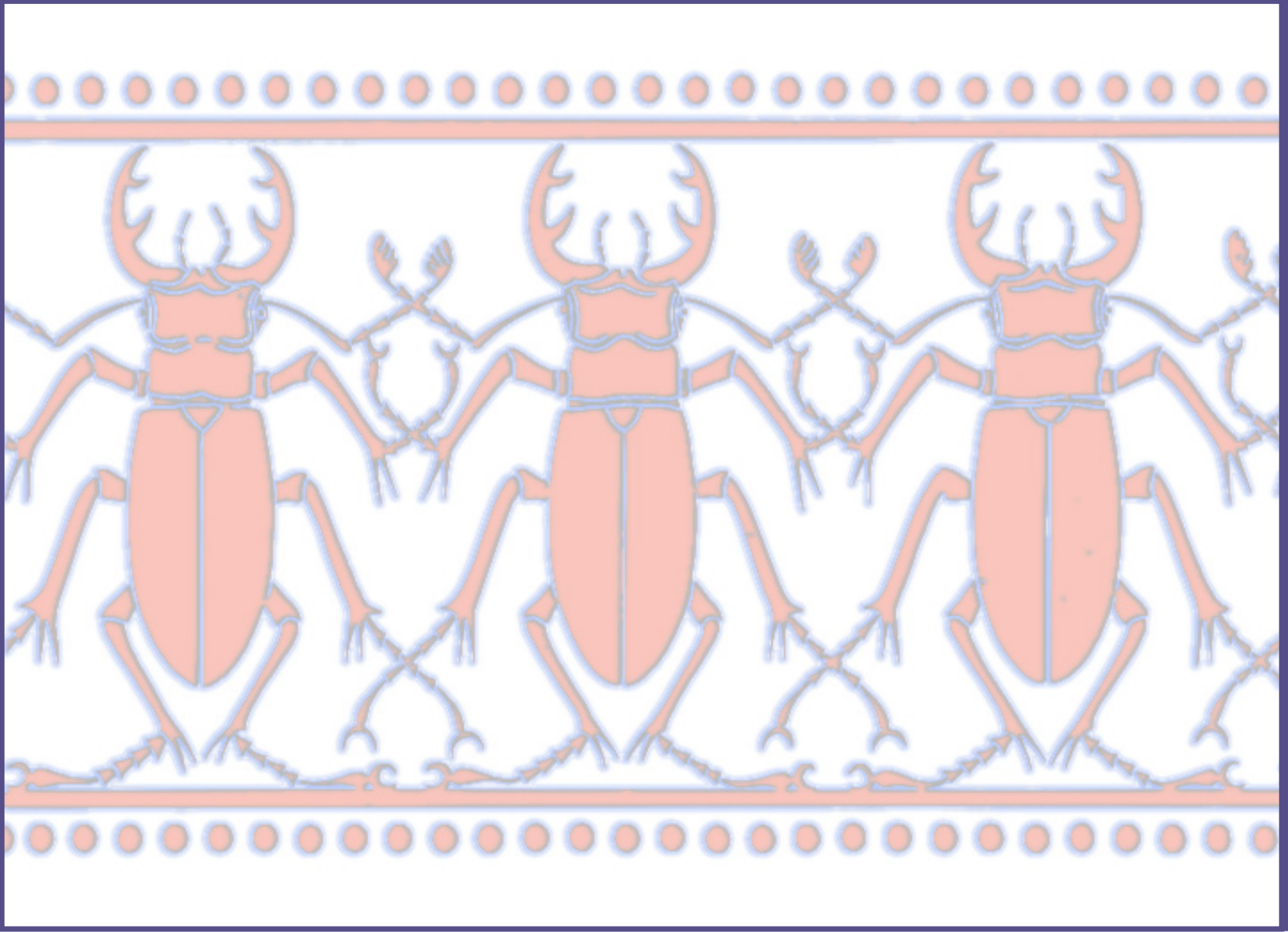

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W 22.-KINGHOB BUENGUNEE, or PURPLE KINKHOB

Manufactured at Benares.

Purchased at £38 10*s*.

Observations. - Gold running ornament in stripes, on ground of orange red, pink and pale pink, pale green and dark green, pale blue and dark blue, on a general purple ground. The general effect is full of harmony; and it is very instructive to see how this effect is produced. -The colours of the grounds of the leaves are arranged in the following order :-

Light pink	Dark green	Dark pink	Light green
Dark blue	Light pink	Dark green	Dark pink
Dark pink	Dark blue	Light pink	Dark green
Light blue	Dark pink	Dark blue	Light pink
Orange red	Light blue	Dark pink	Dark blue
Dark green	Orange red	Light blue	Dark pink
Dark pink	Dark green	Orange red	Light blue
Dark blue	Dark pink	Dark green	Orange red
Dark pink	Dark blue	Dark pink	Dark green
Light blue	Dark pink	Dark blue	Dark pink
Orange red	Light blue	Dark pink	Dark blue
Light green	Orange Red	Light blue	Dark pink
Dark pink	Light green	Orange red	Light blue
Dark green	Dark pink	Light green	Orange red
Light pink	Dark green	Dark pink	Light green

Thus we have a succession of harmonies in each direction; both horizontally, vertically, and diagonally. -The width of the ornamental stripe, compared with the plain ground, is as 14 to 6, *i.e.* each stripe is separated from the next by 3-14ths of the stripe. -*O.J.*

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W 23.-KINKHOB BEYLA, or ORNAMENTAL KINKHOB.
Manufactured at Benares.
Purchased at £32.
Observations. - Selected for the harmonious arrangement of a variety of colours interwoven with gold. The principle of the continuity of the leading lines from which the flowers spring, may readily be traced. The pattern is slightly crowded by the weaving.

W 24.-ROOMAL CHARBAGH, or SQUARE HANKERCHIEF.
Manufactured at Benares.
Purchased at £19 16*s*.
Observations. - This Scarf is divided into four parts; the colours of the juxtaposed grounds are well chosen; these shawls in use would probably be rolled up as head dresses, when the change in colour would add to the effect. The distribution of the flowers on the ground is well balanced. The general border is defective in arrangement; and the palmettes at the angles seem out of place, and unworthy of the other portions of the scarf. Altogether this is not so perfect a work as most of the others: it was selected for the tasteful arrangement of colours.

W 25.- DOPUTA PETAMBAREE, or COLOURED SCARF (Worn by Men)
Manufactured at Benares.
Purchased at £19 16*s*.
Observations. - Scarf, with pale blue centre and crimson border. The broad border at the ends of this scarf is made up of palmettes, and conventional representations of birds and beasts in gold; the individual
to the black ground particularly abrupt; the centre especially is defective in arrangement.

W. 70.- CHINA SILK SCARF
Purchased for 18s. at public sale.
Observation. - A study for quiet richness of colour.

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W. 71.- CHINA SILK SCARF, WORKED IN GOLD.
Manufactured at Delhi
Purchased for £5
Observation. - The ornament well balanced and equally distributed.

W. 72.- CRIMSON BODINET SCARF, EMBROIDERED.
Manufactured at Delhi
Purchased for £5.
Observation. - Graceful arrangement of conventional foliage; the colours in several leaves and flowers well contrasted; the general edging of gold and yellow silk, outline the whole, most valuable.

W. 73.-GOLD EMBROIDERED SCARF
Manufactured at Delhi
Purchased for £7 14*s*.
Observation. - Conventional ornament, well wrought in embroidery. The blue, red, and green bands in the border, most harmonious in juxta-position. The open character of the embroidery, which allows the ground to appear through, is most judicious in the treatment.

W 74, W 75, W 76, W77, W78. - FOUR CHINTZ SHAWLS and HANDKERCHIEF.
Purchased for £3 13*s*. 6*d*. at public sale.
Observation. - These articles afford suggestions from their quiet graceful simplicity. The distribution of the quantities in the forms and colours is excellent.
Mr. Redgrave, in his "Report on Design" in the Exhibition of 1851, remarks:-
"In designing for garment fabrics, it will generally be found that the simplest patters are in the best taste. The efforts, however, both of designers and manufacturers, have been too often directed to difficulty and complication, rather than to produce the greatest effect with the least possible means. Thus

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we find the number of blocks used in printing any pattern, or of colours in weaving, or the number of cards required to produce a certain design, dwelt upon, rather than the excellence of the design itself, and gaudiness and ugliness are esteemed, if expensive and troublesome in production, rather than beautiful simplicity. As simplicity is one of the first constituents of beauty, it will often happen that simple patterns are far the most beautiful, and that one printing, or weaving in one colour, is in good taste, while every multiplied difficulty becomes further removed from it. It has before been said, that calling undue attention to the ornament is a great error in designing for garment fabrics: there needs, in the larger masses of the dress, a sense of what a painter calls breadth or repose, which is only attainable by great simplicity, by flat or diapered treatments of small forms, by uncontrasted light and dark, and delicate tints of colour: those difficult patters of many parts are too apt to offend against the above requirements, and to cause the figure to stare upon the ground and attract attention to itself, to the destruction of the true decoration of such fabrics."

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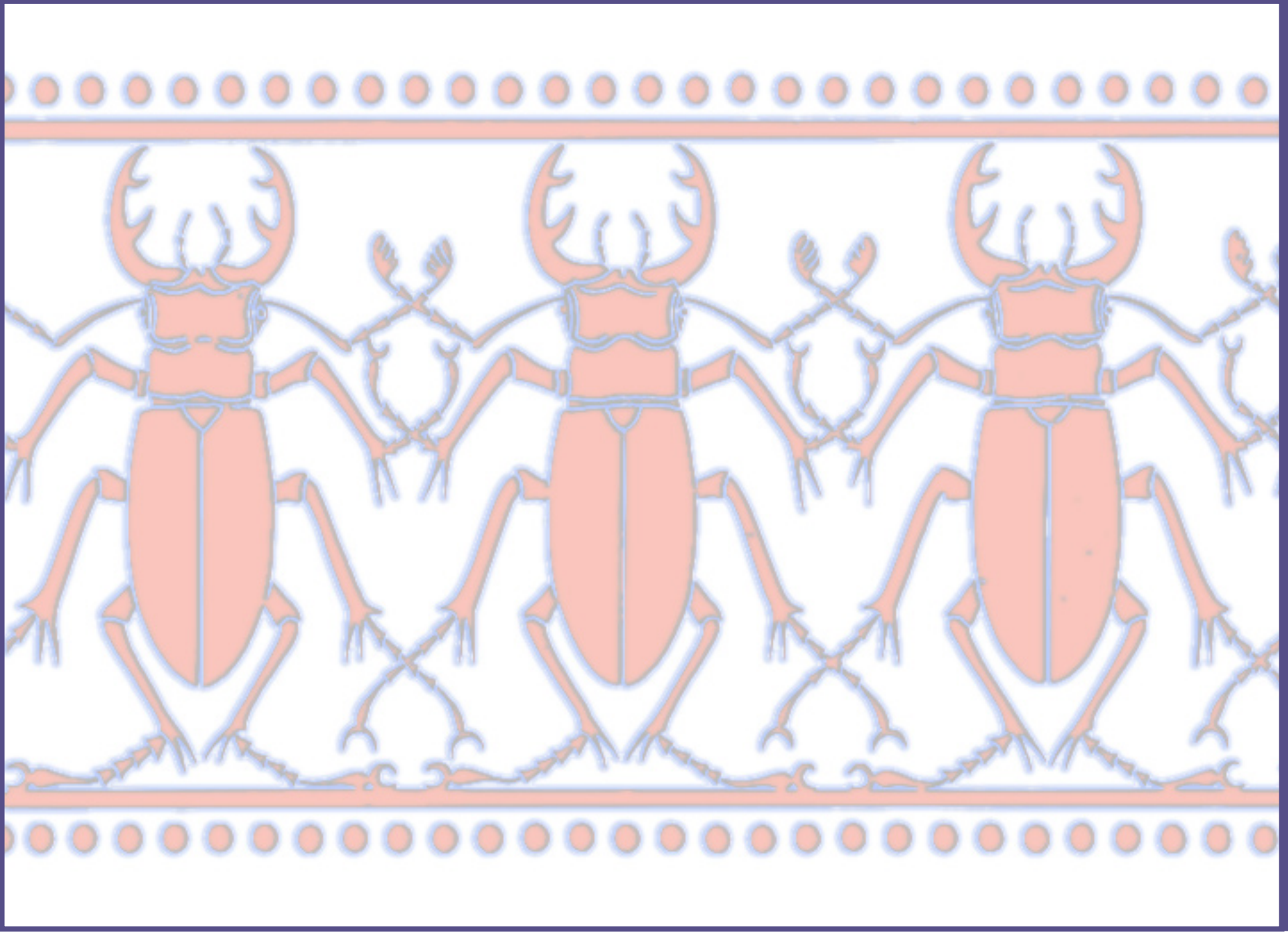

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Forms of Reports,
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REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE

HEAD SCHOOL, SOMERSET HOUSE.

LIST OF EXHIBITIONERS for 1850-51.

Male (Total Sum distributed, 200L)

Mr. Charles Phillips Slocombe.	Mr. Herbert Samuel Wardell.
Mr. William Alldridge.	Mr. Adam Town.
Mr. joeseph Rawlings.	Mr. William Ford.
Mr. Charles Daswell Hodder.	Mr. Christopher Dresser.
Mr. John Speckley Cuthbert.	Mr. John Grove

Female (Total Sum distributed, 60L):

Mss Eiliza Mills.	Miss Anne Carey.
Mss Alice West.	Miss Lousia Gann.

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Head School, Sommerset House
List of students who received Prizes at the Exhibition of works in January, 1850.

	L.	s.	d.
Mr. John McDonnall	2	-	-
Mr. C. Dresser	2	-	-
Mr. W. Moore	1	-	-

511 Ornament, from Round, In Sepia -		Blackburn, --
512 Ditto - - - -		Hickling, H.
513 Ditto - - - -		Town, A.
514 Ditto - - - -		Burgess, T.
515 Ditto - - - -		Ives, W. B.
516 Ditto - - - -		Cuthbert, W.
517 Ditto - - - -		Dresser, C.
518 Ditto - - - -	------	
519 Ditto - - - -	------	
520 Ditto - - - -	------	
521 Ditto - - - -	------	
522 Outline, from the Tround, in Chalk		Breeze, J.

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ABSTRACTS OF PAYMENTS TO STUDENTS IN THE HEAD SCHOOL (MALE CLASS)
PRIZES AWARDED IN 1851

	L.	s.	d.
C. Dressert	6	0	0
J. Cuthber	3	10	0
E. M. Edmonds	2	0	0

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LIST OF EXHIBITIONERS IN THE HEAD SCHOOL, SUMMERSET HOUSE, IN 1851.

Male School:-	Charles P. Slocombe.	C.H. Whittaker.
	William Alldridge.	Christopher Dresser.
	Charles Hodder.	William Ford.
	Charles Armytage.	William Wills.
	Adam Town.	J.C. Lanchenick.
	James Cuthbert.	Edwin Ireland.

Total sum distributed, 200 L.

Female School: -	Miss West.	Miss Carey.
	Miss Gann.	Miss Burrows.
	Miss Mills.	

Total sum distributed, 65 L W. R. D.

Table 1:

Names	Where	Classes they each study in
J.S. Chubert	Metropolitan Head School	Artistic anatomy, panting, furnature, & etc.
Chris. Dresser	Metropolitan Head School	Textile fabrics and painting, Sommerset House.
W. Ford		Artistic anatomy and painting on porcelian.

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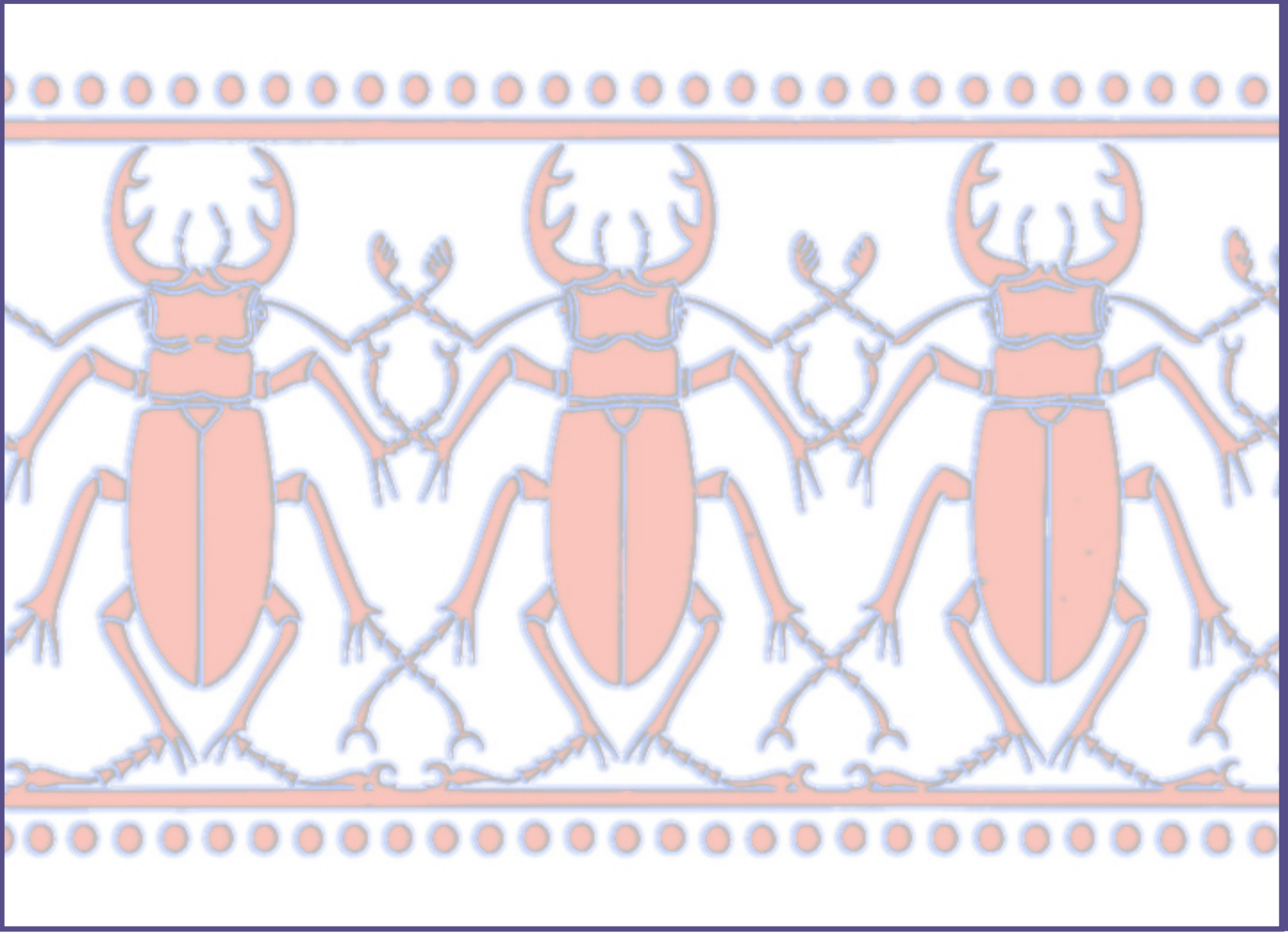

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