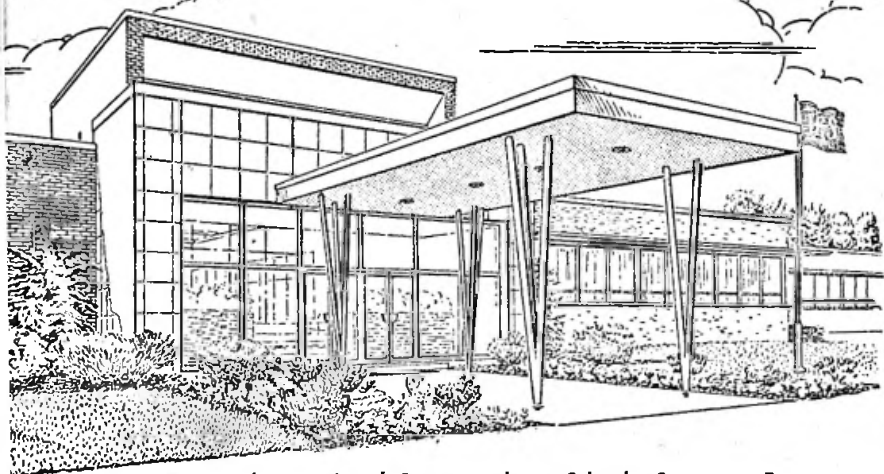


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# Architectural Interiors

Prepared Especially for Home Study

By

**DAVID T. JONES, B. Arch.**

Director, School of Architecture  
and Building Construction

International Correspondence Schools  
Member, American Institute of Architects

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"I find in life that most affairs that require serious handling are distasteful. For this reason, I have always believed that the successful man has the hardest battle with himself rather than with the other fellow. To bring one's self to a frame of mind and to the proper energy to accomplish things that require plain hard work continuously is the one big battle that everyone has. When this battle is won for all time, then everything is easy."

-Thomas A. Buckner

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## What This Text Covers . . .

1. **DEVELOPMENT OF INTERIOR DESIGN** . . . . . Pages 1 to 6  
*The relation between architecture and interior design and decoration is explained. Historical, political, and economic factors that influence style are discussed. A concern for the comfort of the common man began with the Gothic period. Gothic interiors and furniture are described.*
2. **THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY** . . . . . Pages 7 to 20  
*Modern interior decoration began with the Renaissance in Italy. The Renaissance in Italy produced such great figures as Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael. A description of Italian interiors and furniture is included.*
3. **THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE** . . . . . Pages 21 to 39  
*How the Italian Renaissance filtered into France and became a distinct style is described. Periods of the French Renaissance in art and decoration are identified by the names of the reigning monarchs.*
4. **THE RENAISSANCE IN ENGLAND** . . . . . Pages 40 to 52  
*Before the Italian Renaissance reached England, it had been modified by the influence of the surrounding countries, France and the Netherlands. The development of the Georgian style, which later continued in the American colonies, is described.*
5. **CONTEMPORARY INTERIORS** . . . . . Pages 53 to 72  
*The development of contemporary design is described. Design should express structure. The honest use of materials is an important part of interior design. Furniture and decorative objects are discussed.*

# Architectural Interiors

## Development of Interior Design

### Interior Design and Architecture

1. The interior design of buildings consists in so arranging rooms, areas, and their furnishings that they function properly; and in so treating their materials, color, and furniture as to give the occupants an impression of beauty.

Architecture is the art and science of building. It includes the interior design of a building; the interior design should not be considered as a distinct and separate art. Nor should the exterior design and erection of a building be divorced from the treatment of the inside. Interior design begins with the location of beams, windows, doors, and partitions — all of which must be determined before construction is started. The architect, when he designs a building, must visualize the building as it will be used by its occupants when completed. The architect is the fundamental planner. The function of the interior decorator, who specializes in such things as color, furnishings, and furniture, is to supplement the architect. In fact, many successful interior decorators have been architects who specialized in interior decoration.

The fact that the interior decorator has some knowledge of architecture does not mean that he should dress up the interior of the building in some style of architecture. Rather, the interior design of a building should express the way the

occupants live. The design should provide for utility and at the same time should express the mood of the occupants, whether gay, leisurely, or studious.

Closely related to interior design is the design of furniture. In each period of history the furniture that has been developed to meet human needs and to utilize new materials has reflected the current architectural style. And in each period it has reflected the society that used it. The story of beds, tables, and chairs is a fascinating one.

### **Purpose of This Text**

2. Many persons besides architects and decorators are interested in interior design and furniture. In fact, the arrangement of rooms and the selection of furniture is undertaken at one time or another by most of us. A knowledge of interior design and furniture is useful to the architect, the interior decorator, the draftsman, and the dealer in home furnishings. For many persons a study of furniture provides a fascinating hobby. For any person it can be a source of enjoyment.

True artistic growth has always proceeded by evolution, by gradual development. The purpose of this text is to give you an understanding of the development of interior design and furniture through the great periods of the past to modern times, to show you how each period of design solved the problems of everyday living, and to help you cultivate your own good taste in evaluating problems of interior design and furniture.

In our study of the interiors and furniture of bygone ages, we may find details that appear to meet our own needs. There is nothing wrong in adapting such details to present-day decorating. It is wrong, however, to try to create an artificial background or stage setting for these details. Instead, we should use them as best we may, against a contemporary background.

### **Factors That Influence Style**

3. In considering the great historical styles, let us keep in mind the general history of each period. Many political and economic factors are involved in the development of any style, together with such influences as climate, manners, living habits, materials available, and shop procedures. The austere conditions under which the Pilgrims lived, for instance, are apparent in their interiors and furniture. The extravagance of the court of Louis XV is reflected in the interiors and furniture of the period.

### **Early Styles**

4. The need for shelter is, of course, as old as man. The earliest decorations of interiors date back to the cave paintings of prehistoric man. These paintings satisfied a craving for beauty that has always been an essential part of human nature.

The early Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations made great contributions to sculpture and architecture. Egyptian architecture was concerned mostly with temples and tombs; Greek architecture was devoted to temples for the various gods; and Roman architecture was occupied principally with temples, tombs, triumphal arches, and public buildings. These ancient civilizations have provided valuable motifs for furniture and decoration. But their domestic architecture was perishable, and with the exception of some of the Roman villas, such as those of Pompeii, the ancient civilizations have left us little basis for inspiration or comparison in such matters as interior decoration and furniture.

The dissolution of the Roman Empire was followed by a thousand years of confusion. In northern Europe the classic Roman style developed into the primitive Romanesque. In parts of southern Europe, classic and Oriental influences combined to produce the Byzantine, a style that was characterized by color and mosaic. The Saracenic invasion in-

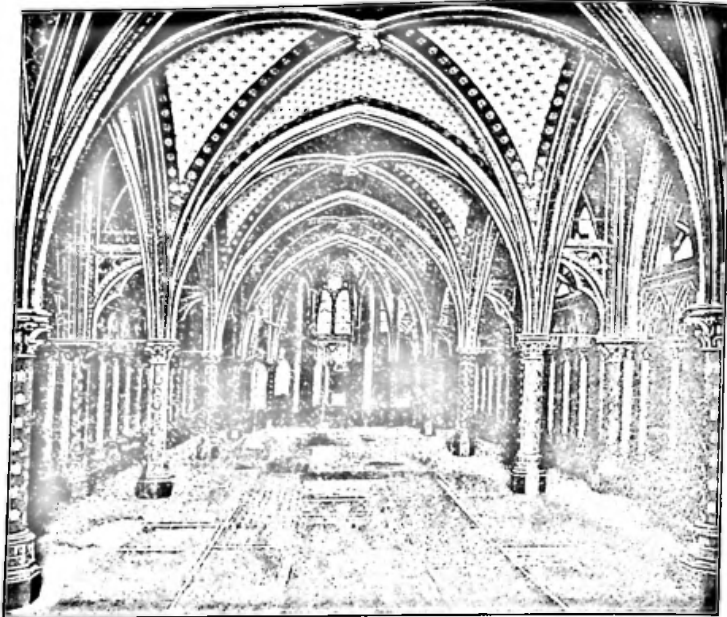


FIG. 1. VAULTED GOTHIC CEILING

troduced an Oriental influence which spread far into northern Europe and which left an indelible imprint in Spain.

By the year 1100 a new style had developed — the Gothic.

### The Gothic Period

5. The Gothic style originated in France and spread southward into Italy and northward into England. The style grew in a period of great religious fervor. Communities rivaled each other in building such great cathedrals as those at Amiens, Paris, Chartres, and Rouen. These cathedrals are characterized by high vaulted ceilings and pointed arches, inspired by the vaulted forests of northern Europe. A vaulted ceiling characteristic of the Gothic style is shown in Fig. 1, which shows the crypt of the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.

The great forests that exist in northern Europe do not

exist in Italy, and this is one reason why a true Gothic style never developed in Italy. There was also the classic influence of ancient Rome, which was still strong. Besides, the Italian climate, with its brilliant sun, did not lend itself to the large windows that were a part of the Gothic style. The climate demanded cool, dim interiors, small windows in thick walls, and the use of color. Interiors became spacious, with large wall surfaces on which the Italian artists developed the arts of fresco painting and mosaic.

### Gothic Interiors

6. After the great churches were built, religious fervor diminished and wealth increased through industry and commerce. During this period, secular architecture made great strides. The medieval towns became filled with high-gabled houses, elaborately carved and painted. The countryside was dotted with villas and chateaux. Woodwork assumed an important place in building; and wood paneling, carved stone, and painted walls characterized the interiors. During the later periods the bare walls of the Gothic interiors were often hung with tapestries.

Gothic architecture, superb as it is, offers us little for our study of interiors.

### Gothic Furniture

7. The Gothic interiors were bare, with little movable furniture. What furniture there was, was designed more for utility than comfort. The beds of the period were usually constructed as large wooden boxes with huge mattresses filling them, or were designed as horizontal shelves in a wall over which curtains were hung. Later the bed, though still a fixture, was placed in a corner or against a side wall, and posts were attached to each side at the ends to carry curtains that could be drawn around it and thus hide it from view. Finally

the bed became a movable piece of furniture. The four posts, at first plain and severe, gradually became ornamental details and served as supports for curtains on four sides. The bed became a room within a room. The occupant of such a bed slumbered in a state of semisuffocation.

Chairs consisted of hard, flat seats and perpendicular backs that reached far above the shoulders, and sometimes they had a canopied top. There was no upholstery and no inclination of the seat or back to add to comfort.

Furniture was usually carved with the same tracery and linen-fold decorations that were used in the architecture of the building.

### Comfort for the Common Man

8. Until the Gothic period there was little concern for the rights or comforts of the common man. Architecture concerned itself with such structures as tombs, temples, churches, and public buildings. But the Gothic period in England saw the signing of the Magna Charta, which marked the beginning of civil law in England and reflected a growing consciousness of the rights of the individual — a consciousness which spread during the period of the Renaissance that followed and which made itself felt in the fields of interior design and furniture.

### Summary

9. Interior design is closely related to architecture and cannot be divorced from it. The work of the interior decorator should supplement the work of the architect. The ways in which people have solved their problems of living as shown by their interiors and furniture make a fascinating study.

The interiors and furniture of other times often provide motifs for contemporary design. Some of this antique furniture may fit our present-day needs. But an artificial setting

should not be created for such furniture. It should be used frankly in a contemporary setting.

Up until the Gothic period, architectural effort was devoted to such structures as tombs, temples, churches, and public buildings. The Gothic furniture was bare, sparse, rigid, and uncomfortable.

It was the Gothic period that saw the first concern for the rights of the individual. This concern grew in the period of the Renaissance that followed. The transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance marks the beginning of modern times and the beginning of interior decoration as we know it.

## *The Renaissance in Italy*

### Beginning of the Renaissance

10. The period known as the Renaissance began in Italy. Perhaps the best way for us to understand the Renaissance is to glance backward at the Roman Empire.

At the zenith of its power, the Roman Empire extended into Britain, Asia, and Africa. Rome was the center not only of world empire, but also of culture and learning. It was the bearer of western civilization.

The barbarians who sacked Rome were interested in plunder, women, and wine. They had no appreciation for the intellectual treasures of Italy. Anything that they did not understand they destroyed. Libraries were burned, works of art defaced and overturned. Here and there a manuscript was saved, a precious statue preserved. But for the most part, the ruins of stately buildings lay under heaps of rubbish. Weeds and grass grew above them and hid them from sight. Ignorance descended like a pall. The five centuries that followed we know as the Dark Ages.

The first glimmerings of a new consciousness were not manifested until medieval times, that is, during the Gothic period.

We have seen how the Gothic movement in Italy was half-hearted due to the Italian climate and the persistence of the classic tradition. And then, during the fourteenth century, near the end of the Gothic period, there occurred in Italy an extraordinary mental and spiritual rebirth. Although the movement began in Italy, we know it best by the French word Renaissance. It gave art, literature, and freedom of thought to our modern society, and it marks the beginning of modern times.

11. The link between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance is provided by Dante, who cast aside Latin, which had been the written language of the Middle Ages, and wrote in the Italian tongue. And with the invention of printing, learning became accessible to all men.

The period of the Italian Renaissance extends from about 1400 to 1600. At a time when the English and French nobility scorned the ability to read and write as beneath the dignity of a man of action, the Italian universities, such as those of Padua and Bologna, were packed with students from every corner of Europe. From among them emerged many great, vigorous personalities. In the field of art, men such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Raphael, and Cellini produced a flood of works which, in the history of art, only Ancient Greece can equal.

### Renaissance Architecture

12. The Italians had never understood or accepted the Gothic method of construction. Instead, they had applied the Gothic forms decoratively to structures that were essentially classic. Now they turned eagerly to the classic traditions and to the forms of Greece and Rome. Here and there old fragments were dug up and carefully measured. Monasteries were ransacked for old drawings and manuscripts. The refinements of Greek art and the majesty of Roman architecture

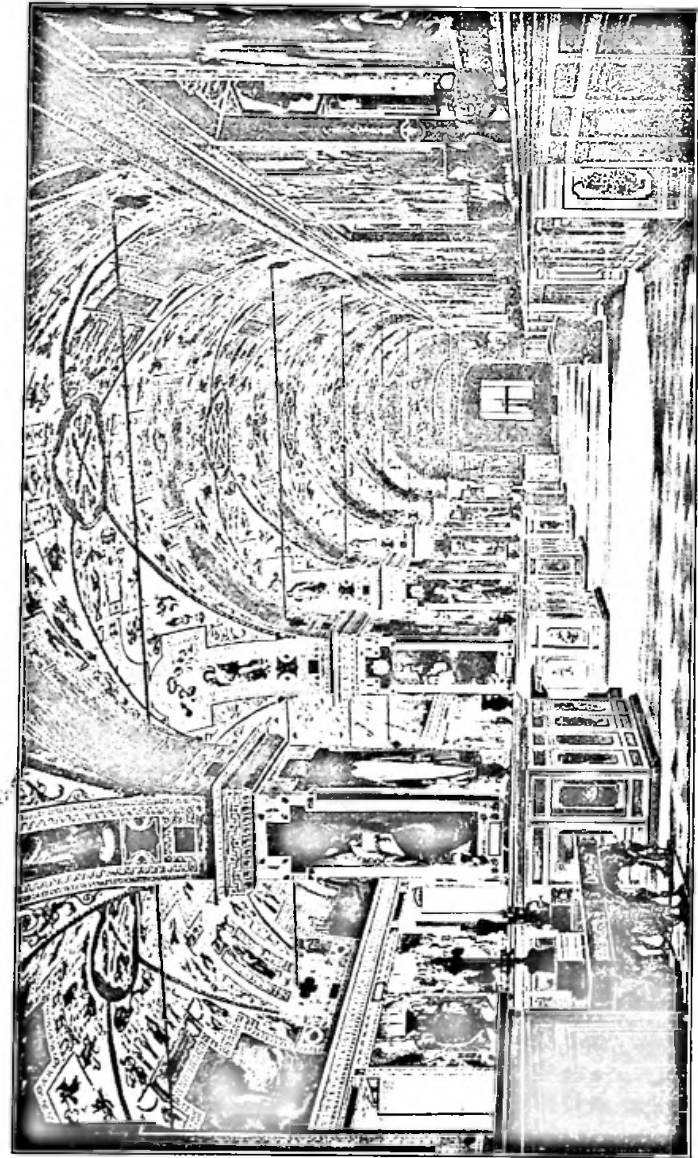


FIG. 2. VAULTED ITALIAN RENAISSANCE CEILING

were rediscovered. The old forms were re-used, but with an intense individualism that is one of the characteristics of the Renaissance.

### Characteristics of Interiors

13. The early Italian interiors had simple walls and high raftered ceilings. The walls of many of these early interiors were hung with tapestries. The walls of the later interiors had carved wainscotings, leather, and squares of marbled and other rich fabrics.

As such great cities as Rome, Florence, and Venice prospered, Italy grew rich. As the result of her great wealth and the work of such artists as Michelangelo, Raphael, and their contemporaries and successors, the mural decorations of Italy became the finest in Europe. The paintings were characterized by intense colors and gold, and therefore stood out in the subdued light of the interiors. Pictorial wall and ceiling decorations became an outstanding feature of the Italian Renaissance style.

### Mural Paintings

14. Michelangelo's chief work as a painter was the decoration of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican. This work covers the entire ceiling and side walls and represents the story of Genesis. It occupied four years of the artist's life. Raphael painted many panels in various rooms of the Vatican, but he executed no single work so extensive as the frescoes in the papal chapel.

In Fig. 2 is shown the Vatican library. Every inch of the walls is covered with elaborate mural paintings showing historical portraits, religious scenes, and intricate arabesques. The amount of work represented is stupendous, and the color effect is so rich as to be bewildering. The groin ribs of the intersecting vaults are not emphasized here as they are in the

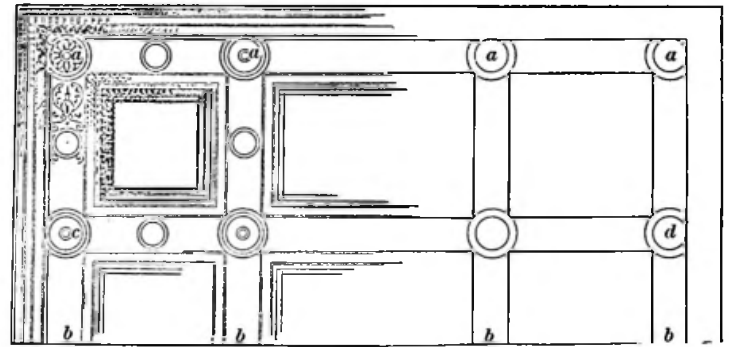


FIG. 3. BEAMED CEILING BASED ON STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

Gothic work, but the soffits are subdivided into panels that contain portraits and allegorical figures, while the field space is elaborated with cupids, mythical animals, and arabesques.

### Beamed Ceilings

15. The early Italian ceilings consisted of simple rafters. Like the Gothic ceilings they were purely structural, with no attempt at alterations for decorative purposes.

Fig. 3 shows a Renaissance design that is based on structural principles, but with the beams and girders all one size and spaced and framed into each other to form square and rectangular panels of various sizes. The construction of the ceiling is independent of the real floor supports, but conforms to structural principles, for the beams *ab* could be so placed, and the crossbeams *aa* and *cd* so framed into them, as to produce a basis for this decorative effect and at the same time support the floor.

Unlike the design of Fig. 3, the design shown in Fig. 4 is purely decorative and independent of structural supports. None of the beams extend entirely across the room; they are, therefore, not supported at both ends. Structural principles have been ignored in order to produce a variety of panel



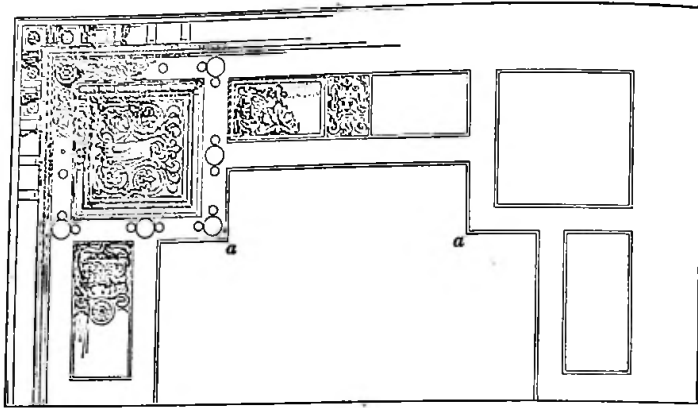


FIG. 4. BEAMED CEILING BASED ON NONSTRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

widths along the sides and to secure a crucial panel in the center. The intersecting beams produce an overhanging angle at *a* that would not support any weight, and the design is really a plaster device built up under the real floor supports.

For a fine example of a highly decorated Italian Renaissance ceiling, let us turn to Fig. 5. In this ceiling, which is from the Church of San Paolo in Rome, the panels, or coffers, as they are termed, are varied in size. This illustration shows clearly the general scheme that was followed in designs for deeply coffered, or paneled, ceilings in the Renaissance style. Around the four walls of the room is carried a rich cornice which supports the beams forming the panels. This cornice is indicated at the top and bottom of the illustration.

### Flat Ceilings

16. Flat ceilings were introduced where the undersides, or soffits, of the floor beams were plastered over so that they presented an unbroken surface the full size of the room. The tendency, however, was to divide these flat surfaces into panels by means of heavy moldings and then to decorate the

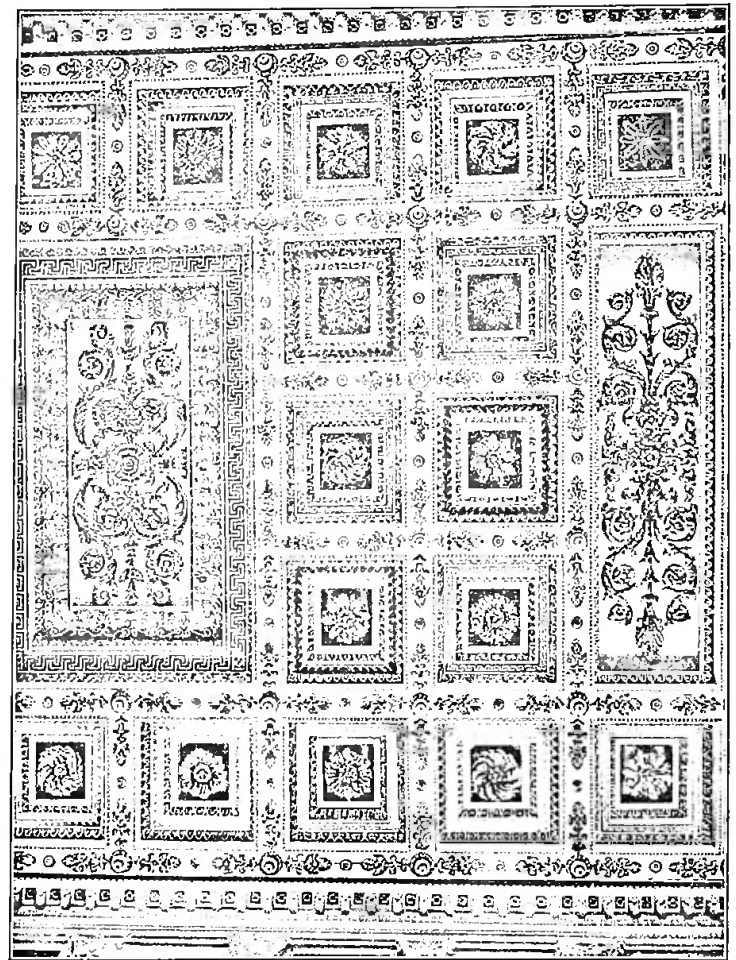


FIG. 5. TYPICAL COFFERED CEILING

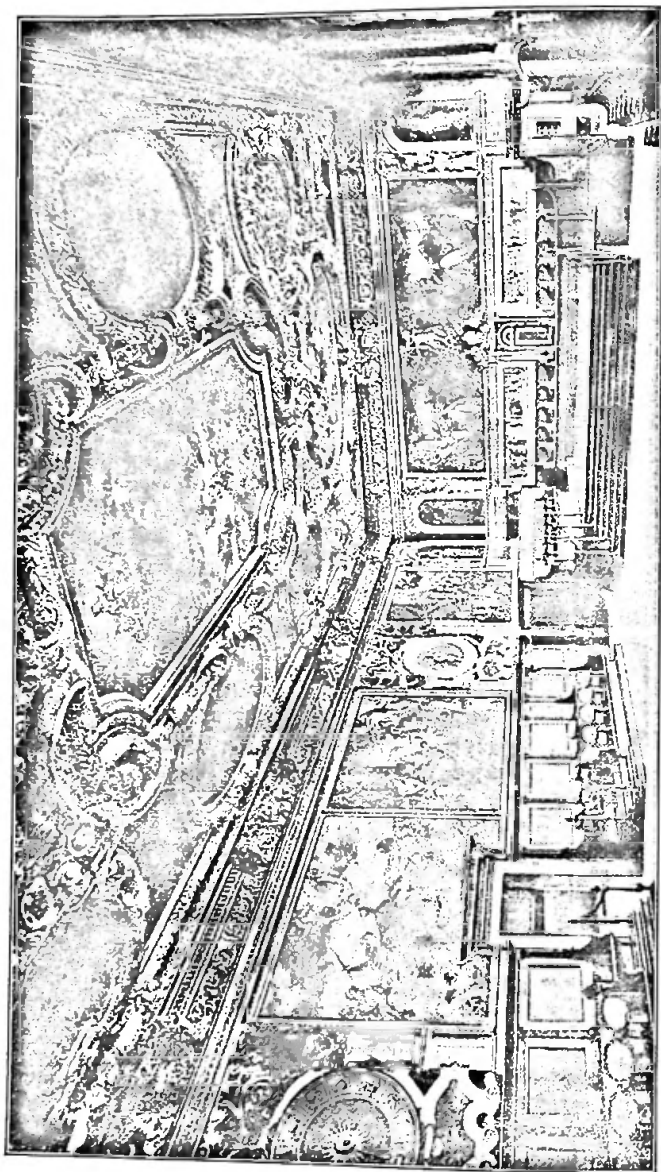


FIG. 6. CEILING OF THE BAROQUE PERIOD

panels with fresco or oil colors. At first the moldings of the panels were not deep and heavy, as was the case with the coffered ceilings, where an attempt at structural effect was made, but served as frames to set off the subjects that the designers wished to portray.

During the late period of the Italian Renaissance, known as the baroque period, the moldings enclosing the decorations became very heavy. They were also richly gilded, giving a luxurious effect which, though rather bizarre, was thoroughly in keeping with the pompous ceremonies of the day.

Fig. 6 shows the senate chamber of the Palace at Venice. The ceiling and side walls are decorated with paintings of elaborate themes by the most noted artists of the period. The frames of these paintings consist of heavy plaster moldings, burnished with gold.

### Vaulted Ceilings

17. Many structural vaulted and domed ceilings were constructed during the Italian Renaissance. Other similar ceilings were constructed of plaster. The vaults were not ribbed as in the Gothic style, but were constructed to look like the old Roman vaulting. Elaborate paintings were applied to their soffits and spandrels, as we have seen in Fig. 2. Here each spandrel, whether semicircular or triangular, is filled with decorative details designed to fit the space that receives them. The breaking up of the ceiling in this manner into a number of small surfaces makes it impossible to obtain the large realistic or allegorical pictures that can be obtained, for instance, with a dome or a barrel vault.

In one of the state apartments of the Villa Medici, the four sides of the room are arched over to form a cloistered vault. The sides of this vault, if rolled out to form a flat surface, would present a set of spandrels of the form shown in Fig. 7. Each of these sides presents a triangular surface on which a



FIG. 7. PLAN OF CEILING AT VILLA MEDICI

design can be painted. The design must be planned so that its edges will meet the bordering edge of the triangle next to it. The details of one of these designs, as proposed for the Villa Medici, is shown in Fig. 8. This design is characteristic of the style of wall painting of the later Renaissance.

Where the barrel vault was used over an apartment, a continuous decorative scheme could be carried out, as in the Riccardi Palace at Florence, Fig. 9. Here flat pilasters divide the side walls into panels under an elaborate baroque frieze. The panels themselves are decorated with paintings or elaborate arabesque designs in relief. The ceiling is painted with an allegorical scene so composed that the darker portion of the design lies next to the frieze. The ceiling is lightened in tone toward the crown of the vault thus giving an impression of lightness and height.

### Furniture

18. The first furniture of the Renaissance was not far removed from the Gothic furniture. The great hall of the Italian

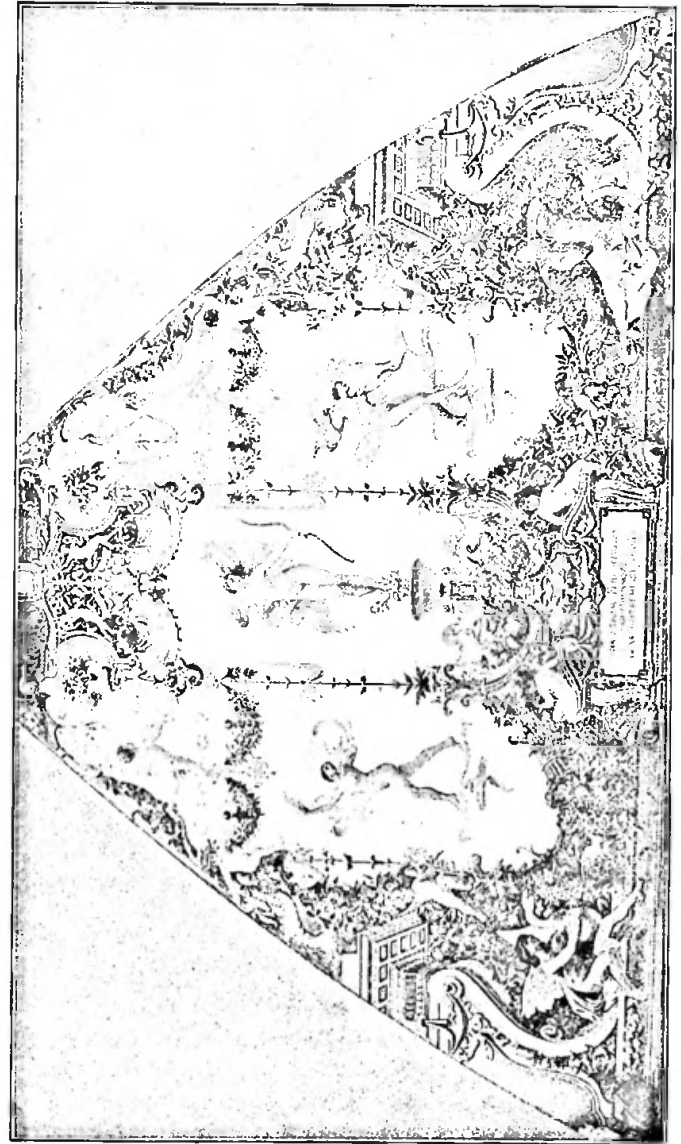


FIG. 8. TYPICAL ITALIAN RENAISSANCE CEILING DECORATION

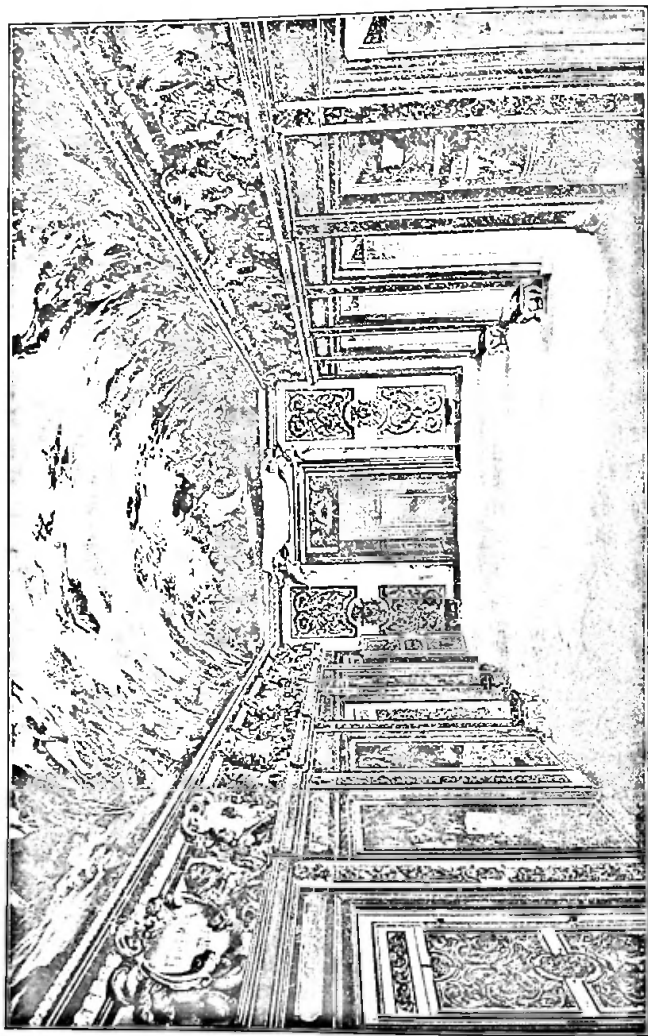
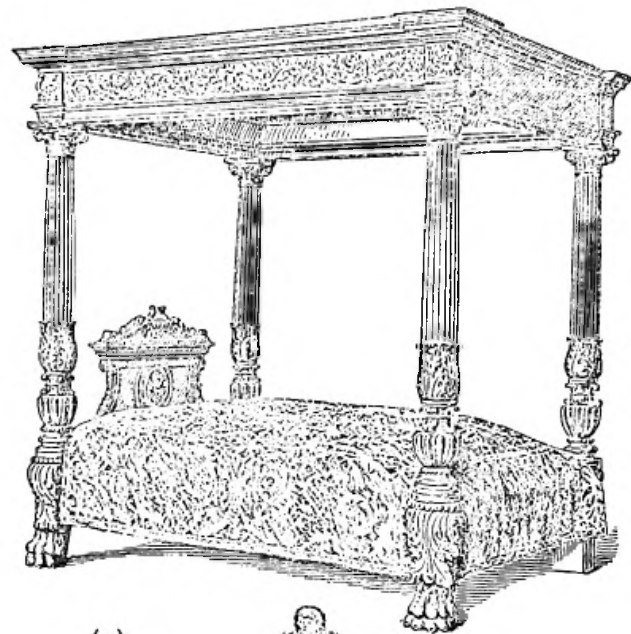
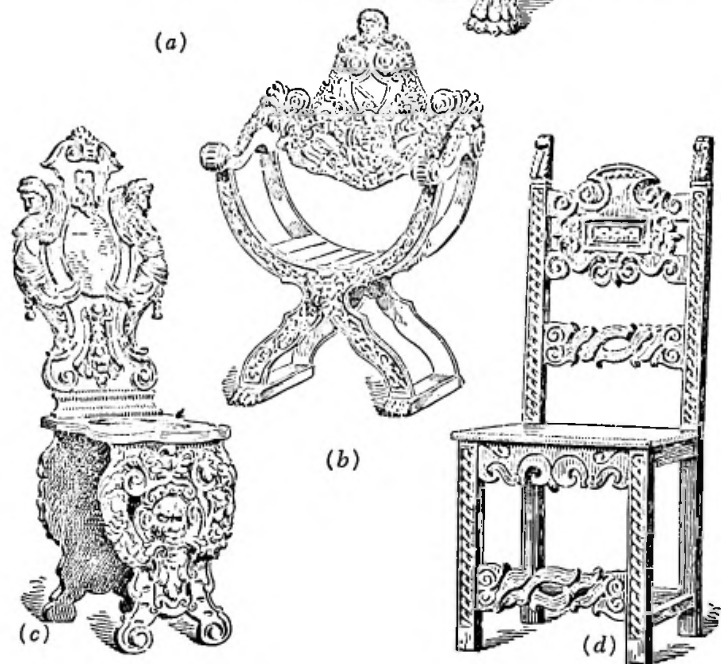


FIG. 9. OVERALL TREATMENT OF CEILING



(a)



(b)

(c)

(d)

palace contained a dominant table, stiff rectangular chairs, and cabinets. The cabinets served as both seats and storage compartments. The few pieces were rigidly and simply constructed. Later furniture was characterized by the same elaborate wood carvings that were a part of the paneled wood walls.

The later bedsteads became a part of the decorative scheme of an apartment. The four posts became classic columns, and the curtain rods were concealed behind an entablature. Fig. 10(a) shows a typical sixteenth-century Renaissance bed; and Fig. 10(b), (c), and (d) show some of the chairs of this period. On these chairs, every available space except the seat is richly carved. As you might suspect, none of these chairs is particularly comfortable to sit on.

The woods most widely used were oak and walnut. Gilding and polychrome were employed extensively. Strong colors were used everywhere. The lovely softening of these colors that we find on museum pieces is due to the patina of time. It was not a part of the originals.

Up to 1650 the general character of the Italian furniture was rich but restrained. The period after 1650 is known as the period of the baroque. This is a period of overornamentation characterized by broken pediments, huge scrolls, a general exaggeration of line and color, and an emphasis on the decorative and theatrical.

### Summary

19. The Renaissance movement that started in Italy saw a mental and spiritual rebirth that marked the beginning of modern times. In art and architecture, the Gothic forms were discarded and artists returned to the traditions of Greece and Rome, but with a new approach to the classic forms.

The early Italian interiors had simple walls and high raftered ceilings. The later interiors were decorated with

carved wainscotings, leather, and rich fabrics. The period of the Italian Renaissance is a period of great painters, and mural paintings are a characteristic of Italian Renaissance decoration.

The early furniture had many of the characteristics of the Gothic furniture. It was simple, rigid, and rectangular. Later furniture was elaborately carved and colored in polychrome. The period after 1650 is marked by a general theatrical exaggeration of line and color in interior decoration and furniture.

You should keep in mind that Italian Renaissance interiors were for the ruling class. We know little about lodgings for most of the people. The buildings and interiors with which we are familiar express splendor and magnificence, with a tendency toward the pictorial. They are large in scale. The designs cannot be scaled down successfully for present-day use.

From Italy, the Renaissance spread into France.

## *The Renaissance in France*

### **The Renaissance Filters into France**

20. The Renaissance filtered into France in the same way that the Gothic had filtered into Italy. It arrived in bits and finally became an individual style.

Throughout the Renaissance France was an absolute monarchy. The periods of architecture and interior design reflected the taste of the reigning monarchs, and are usually identified by their names. The first period of the French Renaissance developed during the reign of Francis I.

### **Francis I Period**

21. Renaissance architecture was introduced into France during the reign of Louis XII, when Gothic architecture was on the decline, but while Gothic forms were still strongly

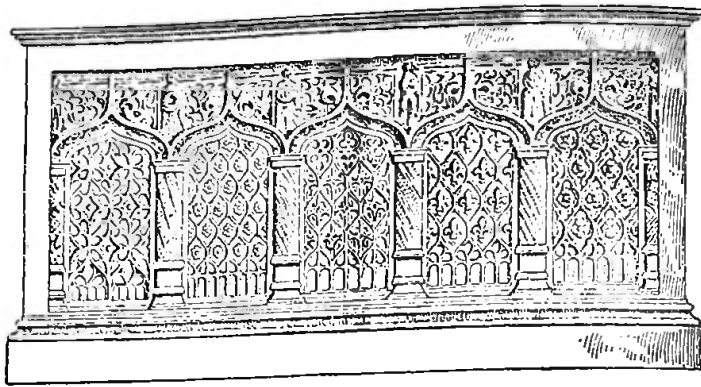


FIG. 11. GOTHIC WOODWORK

fixed in the art of the country. The grandeur of the classic style pleased the French patrons, but the French designers, while adopting the Italian details, could not forget the Gothic traditions. In the beginning, the classic forms were used only decoratively. By about 1530, however, a clearly developed style was evident in the chateaux that Francis I built at Blois, Chambord, and Fontainebleau. The style of Francis I was characterized by classic grace and unique carvings.

Wood paneling was retained on the side walls, as in the Gothic period, but the pointed panel tops and carved diaper work, such as shown on the chest in Fig. 11, gave way to simple rectangular panels of classic severity, or were decorated with carvings. The carvings were composed of scrolls and foliations into which were introduced grotesque and mythical figures borrowed from the Italian style.

Tapestries still covered the bare stonework above the wood paneling, for the influence of the great wall decorations of Raphael and Michelangelo at Rome had not yet been felt. Carved chair backs, wainscots, and wall cupboards no longer presented crockets and quatrefoils, but showed symmetrical scrolls, wreaths, and garlands. The walls were subdivided into panels and carved in arabesques and spindle forms

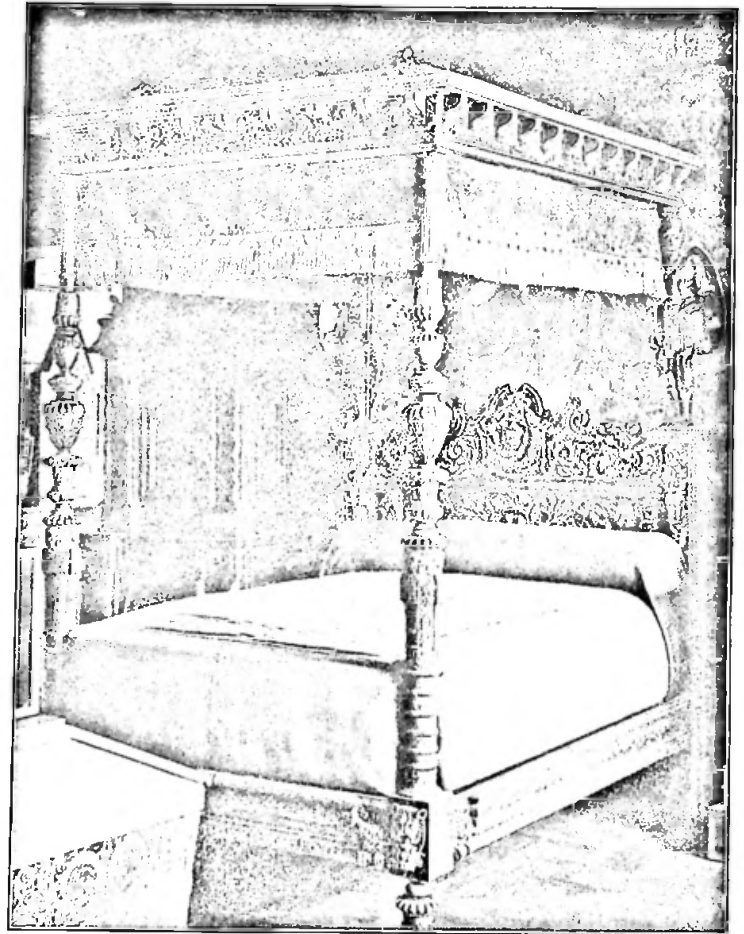


FIG. 12. BED OF FRANCIS I PERIOD

similar to the carving of the stone panels on the exterior of the building. Stamped leather was used to fill some panels, or it was used to cover the walls entirely. There were decorated ceiling beams above. Columns and spindles became fluted and frequently took a long, attenuated vase form, or a combination of several vase forms one above another.

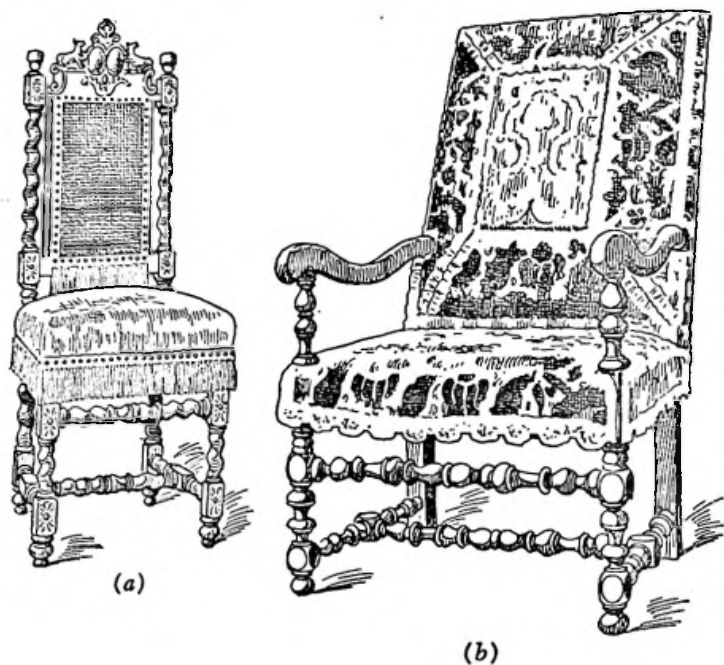


FIG. 13. CHAIRS OF FRANCIS I PERIOD

Flat pilasters were planted against the wall to divide it into panels, but the faces of these pilasters, instead of being fluted as in the classic orders, were paneled and richly carved. Dancing cupids bearing wreaths enclosing medallion portraits were introduced into the friezes, which were widened far beyond the proportions of the classic style. These same characteristics were carried out in the furniture.

22. Fig. 12 shows a bed of the Francis I period. The supports at the foot of the bed are carved in a series of superimposed vase forms, which are surmounted at the top by a fluted column. At the head, two Roman warriors act as caryatids to support the cornice. The cornice, while pretending to be classic in character, is composed of few moldings,

and its upper member is supported on corbels on a wide frieze. It is evident that this cornice is derived from a design similar to that shown in Fig. 10(a). But there was no understanding that these forms were fixed by classic rules. Actually the forms here are graceful and delicate and far more suited to their purpose than the heavy architectural details of the Italian design. The chairs used by Francis I were at first straight-backed, as in Fig. 13(a), and upholstered on the seats. Later the backs were inclined, so as to add to comfort, and were also upholstered, as in (b).

#### Periods from Francis I to Henry IV

23. From the Francis I period to that of Henry IV, the French Renaissance became more Italian in character. French artists studied under Italian masters, and the richness of display increased as the wealth of the nation grew.

The Italian Renaissance was copied as servilely by the French architects as the classic had been by the Italians. This was largely due to the fact that Catherine de Medici, queen of Henry II (successor to Francis I), and mother of Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III, was an Italian. Her influence dominated the court throughout this period, and the style continued into the reign of Henry IV.

Richness of display continued throughout the latter part of the reign of Henry IV and the early part of that of his successor, Louis XIII. Rich Italian marbles were imported for use as bases and door trims, and the wall panels were filled with the most elaborate paintings that the artists could devise. Columns and pilasters of enormous proportions were introduced to subdivide the walls. Heavy, projecting entablatures supported an elaborately paneled ceiling.

#### Louis XIV Period

24. The period generally known as Louis XIV began in



FIG. 14. ROOM IN THE PERIOD OF LOUIS XIV

the reign of Louis XIII and extended into the reign of Louis XV. It was during this period that the great Gobelins tapestry works were founded by the French government, and many of the great palaces and royal residences were built.

The grotesque forms that had characterized the early Renaissance were abandoned and the detail became more symmetrical and better balanced. The walls and the openings were hung with rich Gobelins tapestries. Some of these are shown in one of the smaller rooms of the palace at Versailles, Fig. 14. Expensive woods were used in the furniture, which was rich and massive.

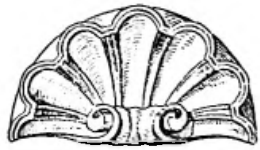
Shell forms were introduced in the acanthus ornament and were also used in a semidome form over niches and other recesses, but these shell forms were used sparingly and with dignity.

The Louis XIV period was characterized by an honest effort to produce a style of decoration clearly based on the Italian Renaissance, but without grotesque and meaningless detail.

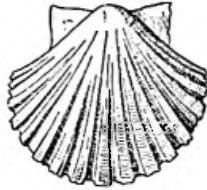
#### Louis XV Period

25. Art has a way of holding up a mirror which truthfully reflects the life of a period. The reign of Louis XV, for instance, was one of great extravagance and luxury, and the decorative work of the period reflects these characteristics quite clearly. The period of Louis XV is usually known as the rococo period. The term rococo is derived from a French word meaning shellwork. The well-balanced and symmetrical ornament that had been cautiously introduced in the Louis XIV period, and that had been executed with studied symmetry, was, during the Louis XV period, twisted and contorted into meaningless forms without beauty. Lack of symmetry was sought rather than avoided. Cartouches and panels, instead of being elliptical or rectangular, were outlined by a





LOUIS XIV SHELL  
(a)



NATURAL SHELL  
(b)



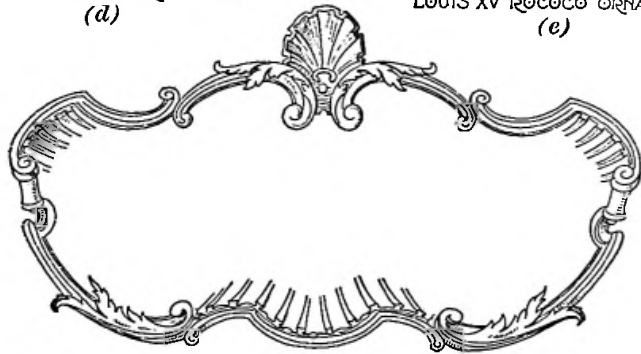
LOUIS XIV SHELL  
(c)



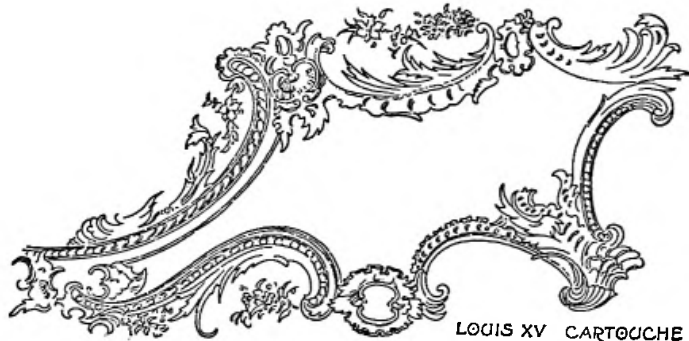
LOUIS XIV SHELL ORNAMENT  
(d)



LOUIS XV ROCOCO ORNAMENT  
(e)



LOUIS XIV CARTOUCHE  
(f)



LOUIS XV CARTOUCHE  
(g)

FIG. 15. TYPICAL DECORATIONS, LOUIS XIV AND LOUIS XV

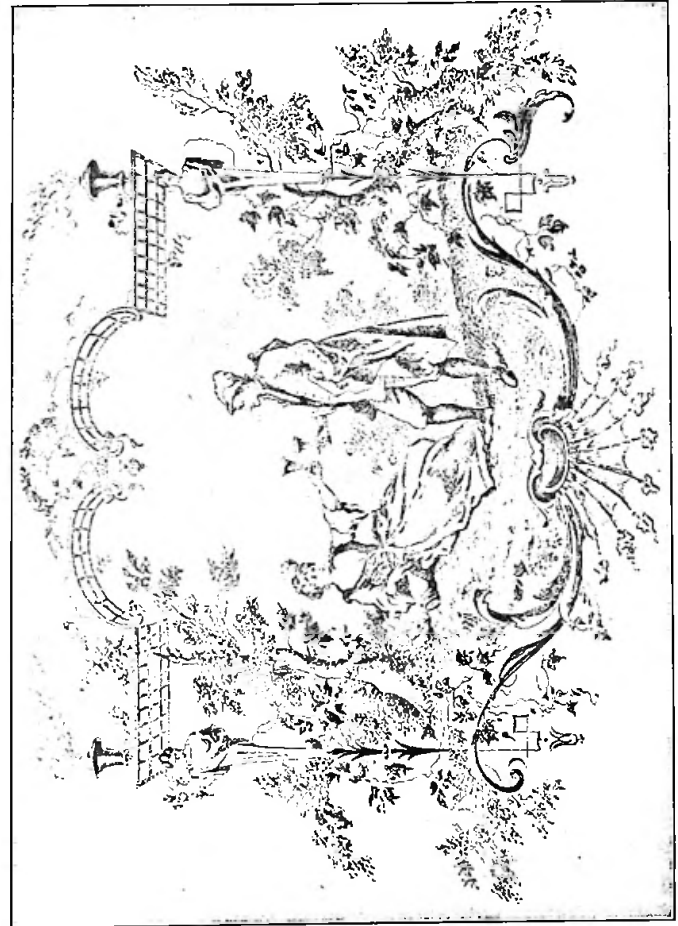


FIG. 16. PAINTED PANEL OF LOUIS XV PERIOD

series of convex and concave curves and surrounded by network and flamelike scrolls. Where a design presented scrollwork on opposite sides, one scroll was turned up and the other down, thus destroying the symmetry entirely. This deterioration in ornament from the period of Louis XIV is shown in Fig. 15. To give the ornament greater prominence, it was richly gilded, and details of its scrolls stood out boldly, like nuggets of gold. The term rococo finally stood for all that was vulgar and ostentatious.

During the rococo period the celebrated artists Watteau, Boucher, Tessier, Jacques, and others, who had designed tapestries during the Louis XIV period, executed frescoes and wall paintings. These were sometimes varnished over with a transparent enamel as hard as porcelain. Panels of woodwork in furniture were painted by Watteau. These presented dainty pastoral scenes, in which impossible shepherdesses in short satin skirts attended toy flocks, or, as shown in Fig. 16, richly gowned rural maidens reclined on the ground sipping wine with equally impossible peasants. These paintings, which were framed with conventional designs of foliage, lattice, and rococo work, became characteristic of the period. Their merit lay not in their appropriateness, but rather in the beauty and delicacy of their execution.

26. One of the king's favorites, Madame de Pompadour, introduced a style of upholstery work that bears her name. This willful woman, becoming tired of the carvings on the furniture and frescoes on the walls, had them entirely covered with tufted fabrics of a yielding character. And for a while it was a fad to cover the chair frames and wall decorations—all beautiful examples of the artist's skill — with tufted silk or other expensive materials.

Madame de Pompadour was succeeded in the king's favor by the Countess du Barry. Du Barry endeavored to outdo

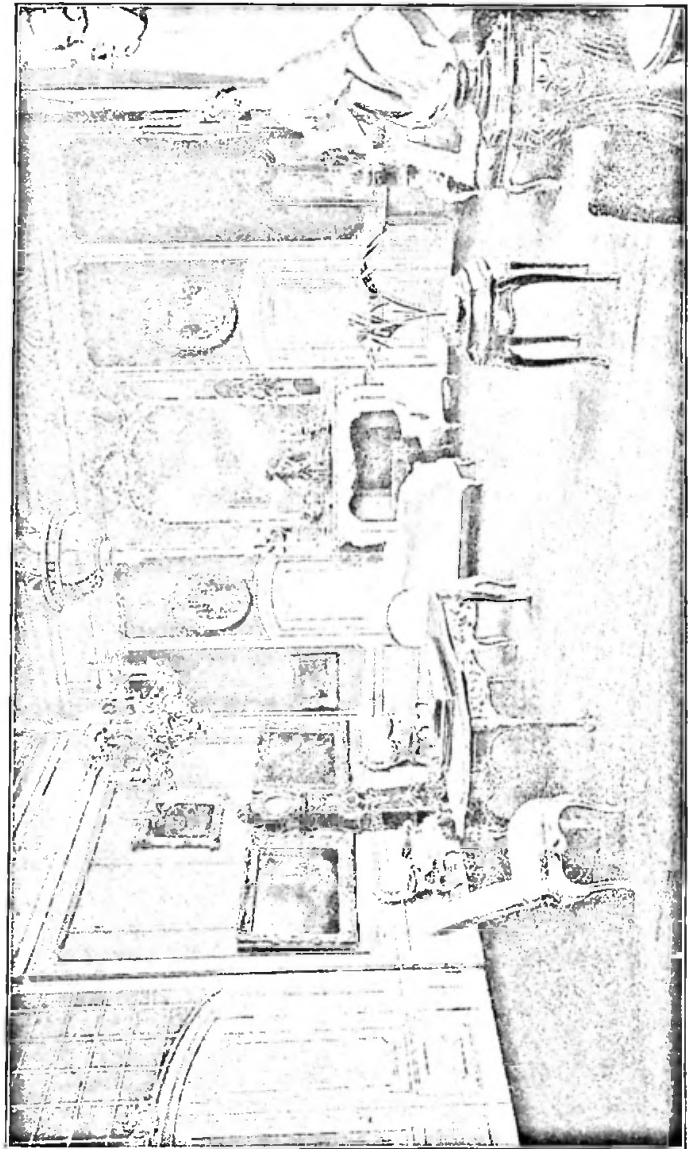


FIG. 17. ROOM IN PERIOD OF LOUIS XV

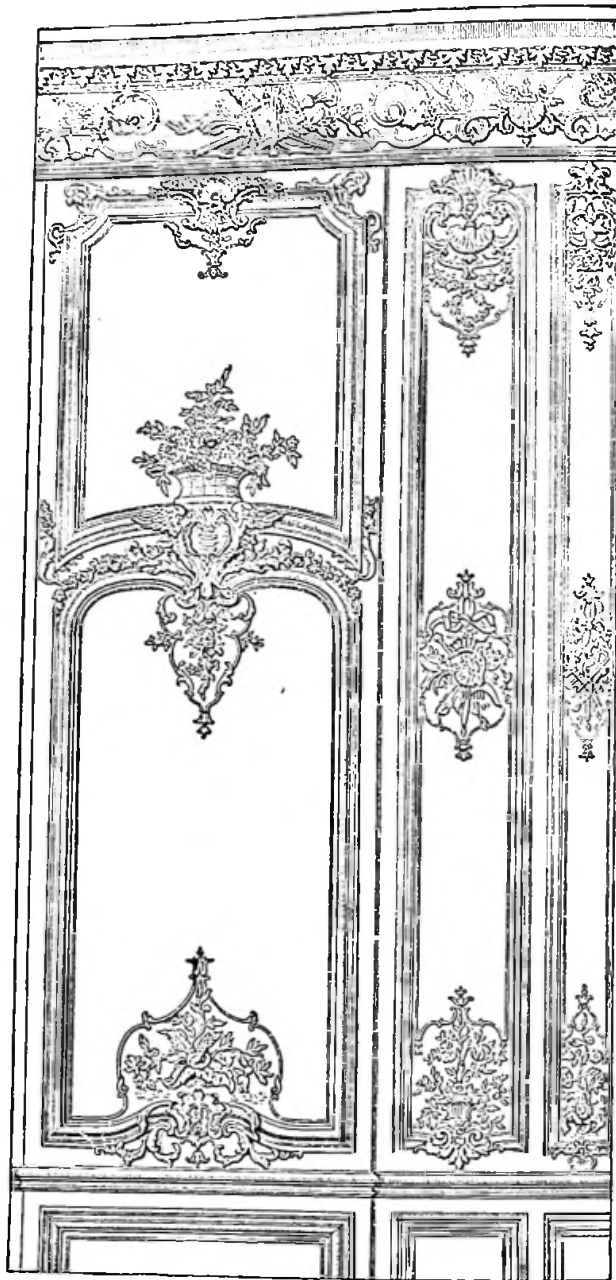


FIG. 18. TYPICAL WALL PANEL OF THE LOUIS XV PERIOD

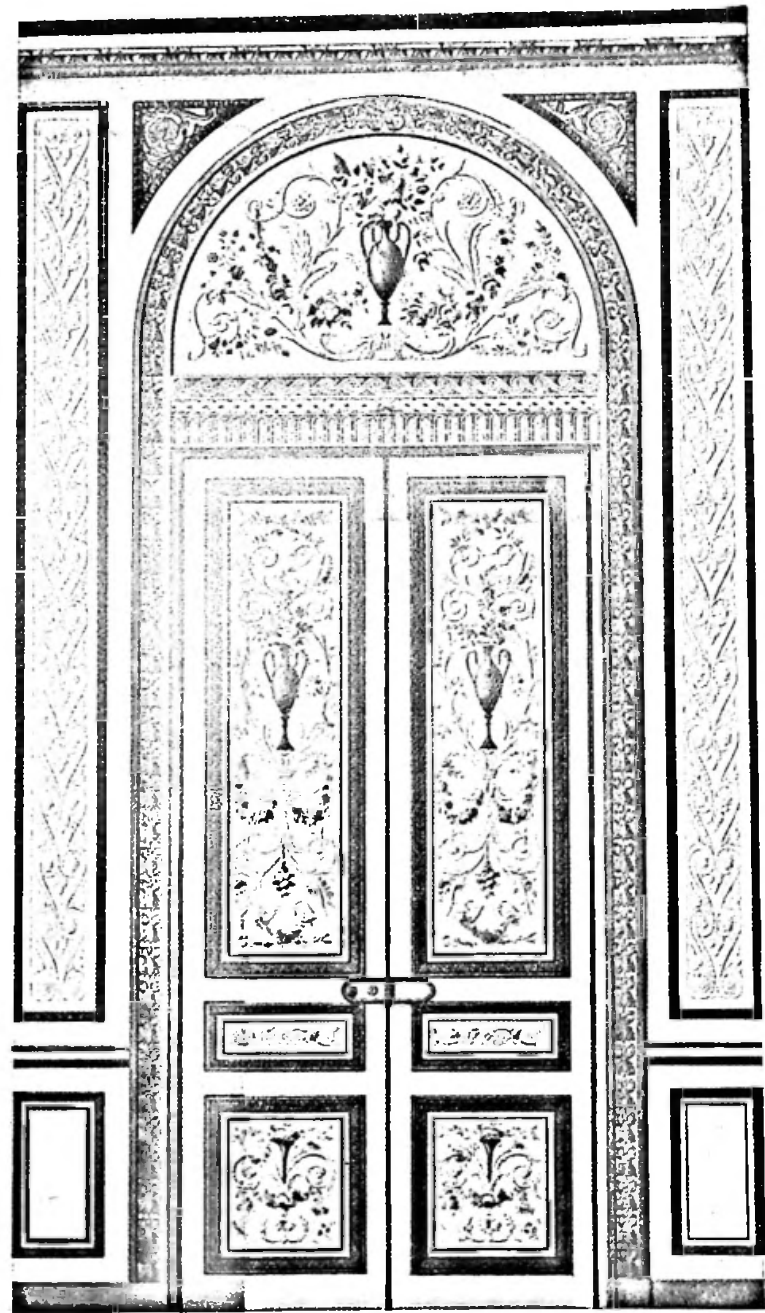


FIG. 19. DOORWAY OF THE LOUIS XVI PERIOD

her predecessor in extravagance, and her tastes dominated the decorative art during the latter part of this reign.

In Fig. 17 is shown one of the smaller apartments in the palace at Versailles. The walls and ceiling of this room are divided into panels and decorated with the rococo ornament characteristic of the period, as is also the furniture. But here the ornament is not carried to the extremes that characterized the latter part of the reign of Louis XV. This room has been restored since the days of the extravagant king and much of the excess removed. The mantel and mirror, however, as well as the chandelier frieze and angles of the ceiling, still retain the meaningless scrolls, while the furniture, with its bandy legs and gold decorations, pronounces the period unmistakably. More characteristic of the period than this room are the wall panels shown in Fig. 18, which terminate in rococo forms in which floral and symbolic devices are introduced in raised designs.

The period of Louis XV is characterized by vulgar, ostentatious display, rich gilding, elaborate work in brass and bronze, and a blaze of color in painting and decoration — an elaboration and extravagant excess of all that Louis XIV had introduced. It is interesting to note that all of this pomp and extravagance was carried on in an age that lacked the simple convenience of indoor plumbing.

### **Louis XVI Period**

27. Louis XVI was a weak monarch. He lacked the courage to carry out the various reforms that his queen, Marie Antoinette, considered necessary in view of the impoverishment of the nation, which had been brought about by previous reigns. There was, however, a reform in the decorative style of this period, which is known both as the Louis XVI style and the Marie Antoinette style. Credit for the reform in style must go to Marie Antoinette.

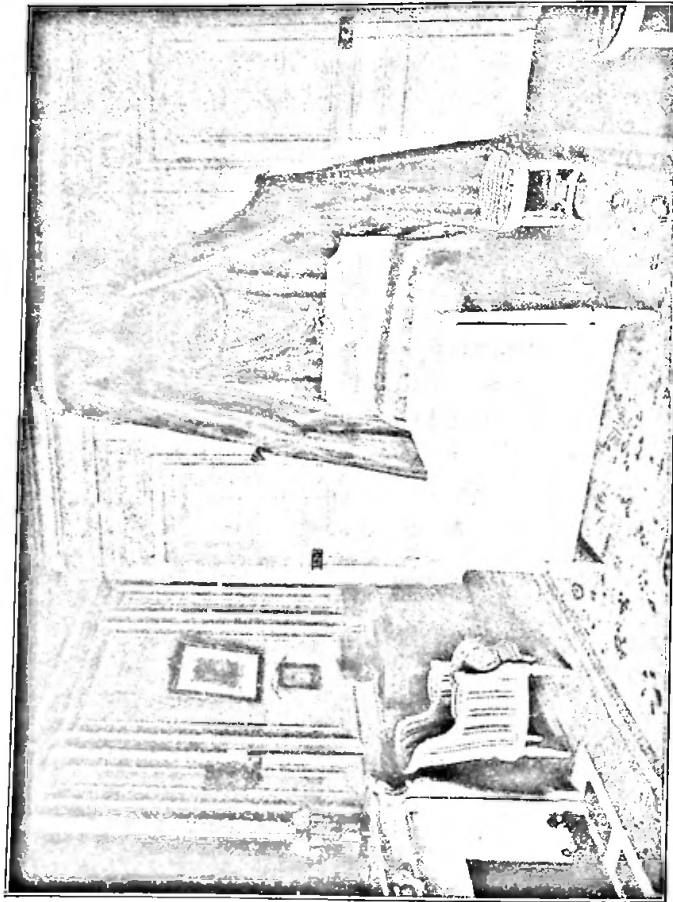


FIG. 20. ROOM IN PERIOD OF LOUIS XVI

The Louis XVI period was characterized by a charming simplicity of detail, in contrast to the extravagance that had prevailed. Expensive luxuries were eliminated. The elaborate paintings of Watteau and the extravagant tuftings of Pompadour were replaced by simpler panels of plain and inexpensive fabrics. The elaborate furniture inlaid with tortoise-shell was replaced by simple designs in white and gold. The Marie Antoinette style rejected all rococo ornament, all the expensive metalwork, and all the extravagant tuftings of rare fabrics. Fabrics were used extensively, but only in place of the more elaborate panel decorations that disappeared with the previous reign. Marie Antoinette decoration impresses one with its delicacy, simplicity, and good taste.

Where wall panels were painted, the designs were simple and much less expensive than they were in the reign of Louis XV, but beautiful and delicate effects were obtained. Fig. 19 shows a painted doorway of this period. The walls of the room were divided into similar but larger panels, and were ornamented with floral arabesques of various designs.

28. The Louis XVI period was a period of distinct reform, freed entirely of the burdens of overelaboration that had characterized the French style for hundreds of years.

In Fig. 20 is shown a characteristic Louis XVI interior from the palace at Versailles. The plain paneled walls and the simple furniture contrast strongly with the elaborations shown in Fig. 17. The chairs are simply upholstered in a striped fabric with a figured background, and the footboard and headboard of the bed are enameled in white, with slightly raised ornaments. Sometimes the footboard also was covered with cloth to match the other furniture.

### Empire Period

29. The reign of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette was terminated by the French Revolution. After this period of

bloodshed and terror, everything pertaining to royalty was unpopular. Designers, therefore, endeavored to create a style that would contain nothing to recall the previous centuries of monarchy. Purely Roman forms could not be used on this account, so the efforts of designers were directed from the Roman to the Greek, and from the Greek to the Pompeian, which was more Greek in feeling than Roman. The Pompeian style as adopted by the French designers expressed a daintiness and delicacy that at once gave it popularity.

Pompeian art forms were limited owing to the lack of knowledge concerning the buried city. But with the few forms obtainable, and with the Greek Ornament made familiar in that day by the publications of scholars, a style developed. The Greek style of dress became popular, and the palmette, honeysuckle, and fret ornament were introduced into schemes of decoration.

This period was first called the Directoire period, but there was really no Directoire style, since the Directory ruled only four years in all. Afterward the style was called Empire, since it was adopted and encouraged by Napoleon when he became emperor, although it had been created long before Napoleon was ever heard of. No detail in the Empire period was introduced by Napoleon himself, except the laurel wreath and the crowned letter N.

30. The characteristics of the Empire period lie not so much in the designs themselves as in the application of the ornamental details. These details were executed in brass or in gold, and were applied against a dark ground of hardwood, such as mahogany, thus presenting sharp contrasts of color. There was little carving, and the metal appliqué of Greek and Pompeian design, with the laurel branches, wreaths, torches, bees, and the crowned letter N, constituted about all the ornamental devices that were used. These devices were

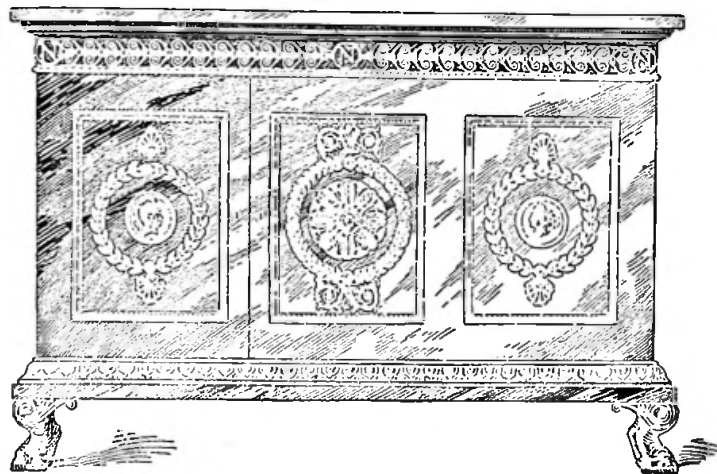


FIG. 21. CABINET IN THE EMPIRE PERIOD

also woven into the fabrics, and in some instances were painted or inlaid in the wood.

Generally the walls were divided into long panels reaching to the ceiling, and were decorated either with rich arabesques of Pompeian origin or with light festoons of laurel or flowers with pendant wreaths. Greek ornament and fretwork were also used as borders for wall decoration and as inlay in furniture.

31. The cabinet work of the Empire period was left plain, being simply decorated with wreaths and festoons in applique metal. The lines of the molding were sometimes gilded, and often they were worked in solid metal, as in Fig. 21. Broad, unbroken panels, mostly in mahogany, are characteristic of the style. Tables and chairs were supported on straight and square legs or on turned and tapering legs. Sometimes tables were supported on lyres, eagles, or grotesque figures. The arms of chairs were sometimes formed of Greek sphinxes, and the seats and backs were upholstered in brocade silks. Furniture of the Empire period is shown in Fig. 22, (a) to (d).

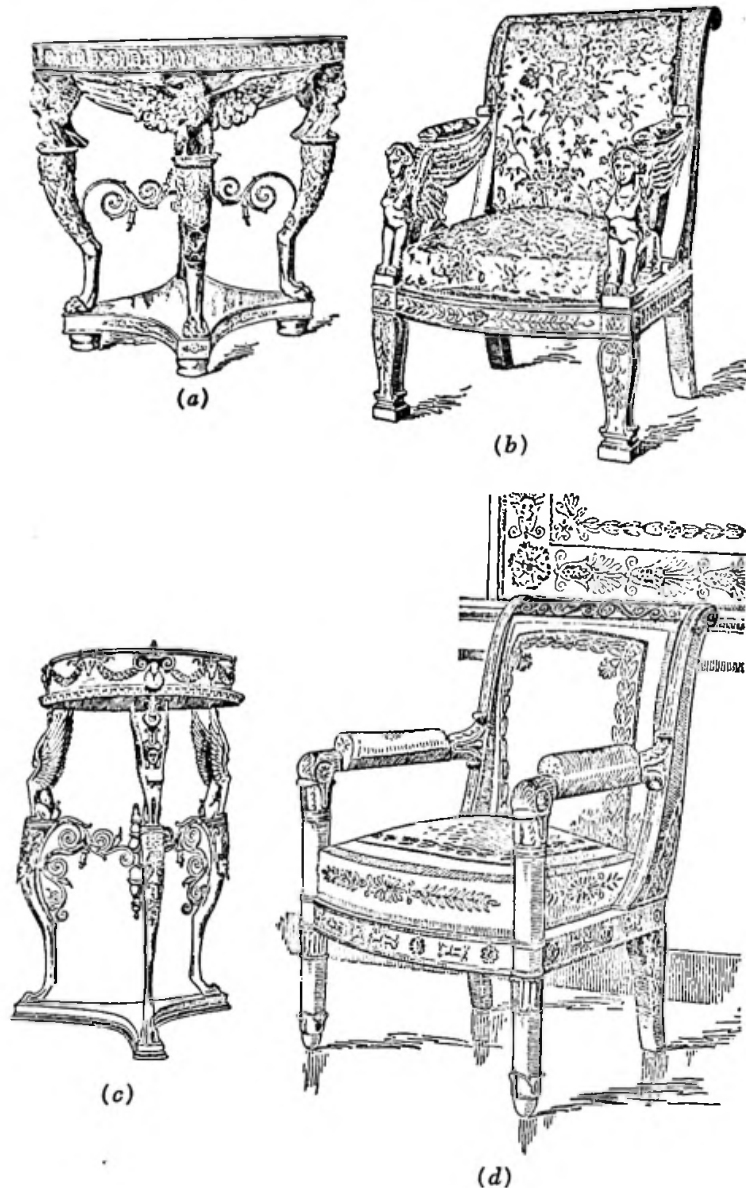


FIG. 22. FURNITURE OF THE EMPIRE PERIOD

The lower portions of the table legs in Fig. 22(*d*) are modeled after a goat's leg, and suggest the origin of the bandy leg so characteristic of the furniture of this and the previous period.

### French Provincial Styles

32. While the king and his court, and Napoleon and his court, were adapting the style of the Renaissance to their tastes, the rich merchants and townspeople were creating small imitations of the court styles. In the northern provinces that were farthest removed from the court and the Italian influence, the provincial style acquired a distinct, informal character of its own. Only the superficial details of the Italian Renaissance were adopted, and these were modified to suit the simpler tastes of the middle classes.

But whether in the north or south of France, the living rooms took on the domestic character by which we know such rooms today; they had a sense of being lived in. The planning was direct, the decoration was spontaneous. The typical furniture included sideboards, cupboards, tables, armchairs, benches, and stools. Many chairs had rush-bottom seats and either lyre backs or curved ladder backs. This furniture was usually of oak, was soundly and simply made, and combined sturdiness and grace.

### Summary

33. Periods of architecture and decoration during the Renaissance in France are identified by the names of the reigning monarchs. In the early periods Gothic and Renaissance details were intermingled, but gradually definite Renaissance styles developed. By present-day standards these styles were in most respects profuse and elaborate, characterized by carvings and rich fabrics. They were for a monarch and his court. There was, however, a gradual trend toward smaller and intimate rooms. Furniture became smaller in scale and

more comfortable. And in the provinces, some interiors and furniture evolved that were honestly and simply designed and that combined sturdiness and grace.

## *The Renaissance in England*

### **The Renaissance Reaches England**

34. The beginnings of the Renaissance in England helped to make the reign of Elizabeth one of the most brilliant periods of English history. This was the golden age of literature and drama in England — the age of Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, and a host of others. The Italian influence is reflected in their writings.

Much of the Renaissance influence reached England by way of France, Flanders, and Holland. During this early period, England was more a copyist of the art and architecture of surrounding countries than of Italy, the home of the Renaissance. In art and architecture, the Gothic influence persisted and the Elizabethan style shows an intermingling of Renaissance and Gothic details. The Elizabethan style is a transitional style.

### **The Elizabethan Period**

35. For us to appreciate fully the character of the period known as the Elizabethan period, which really began in the reign of Henry VIII and extended into the reign of James I, let us turn back to the latter part of the feudal ages, when England was emerging into her modern civilization. With the invention of gunpowder, the castle had gradually grown into a residence; and with the education of the Renaissance, the residence developed into the English country house, with its warm air of domesticity. The old walls were still hung with the Gothic tapestries, or they were paneled in rectangular

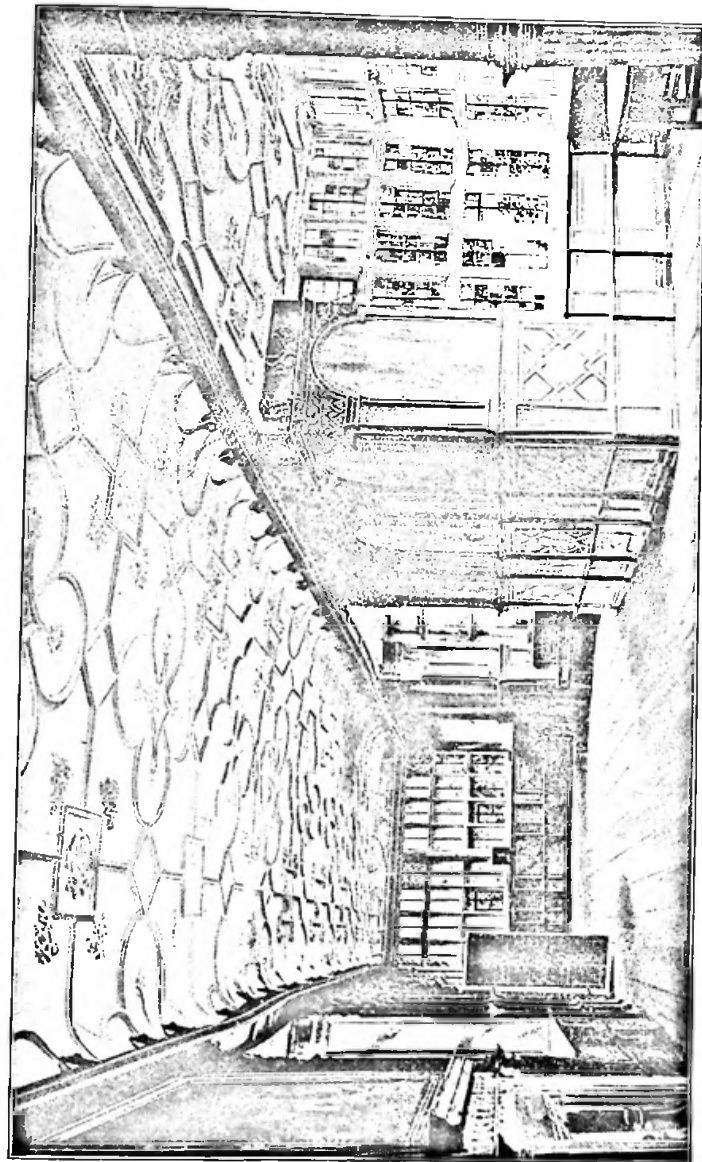


FIG. 23. AN ELIZABETHIAN INTERIOR

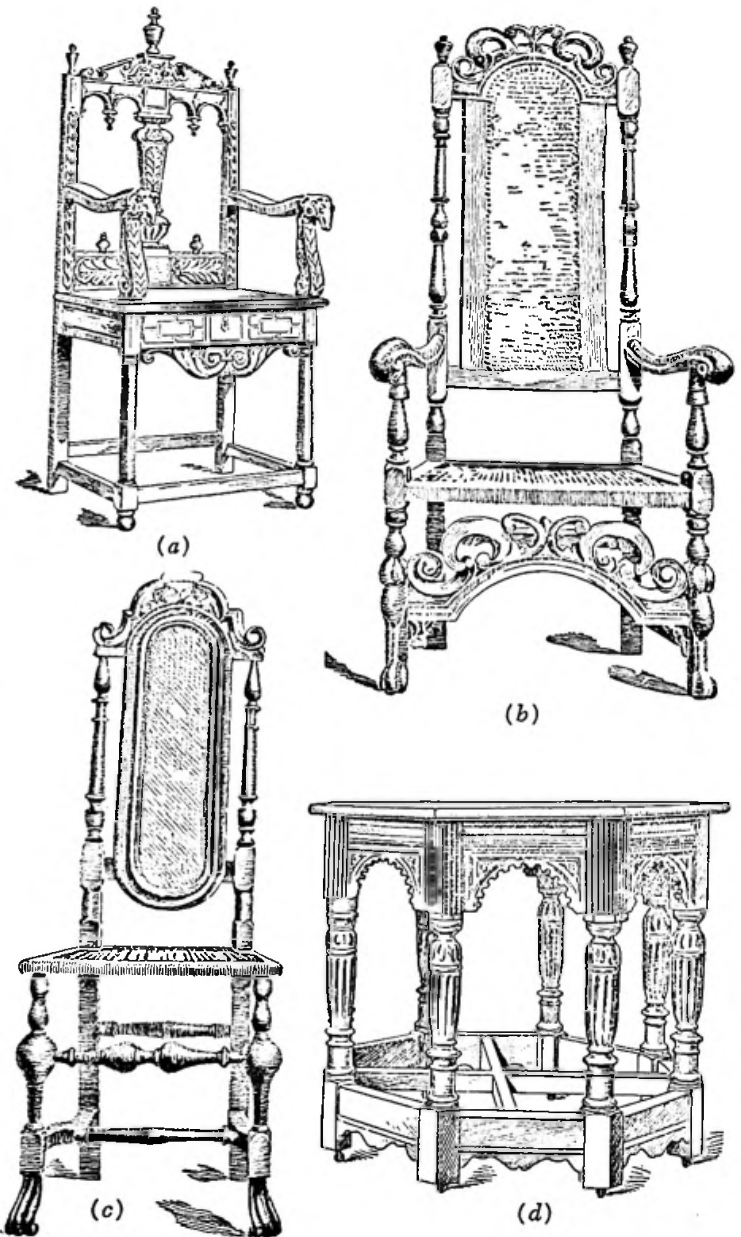




FIG. 24. ELIZABETHAN STAIRWAY

bays, with columns, pilasters, and moldings based on classic ideas borrowed from Holland.

In Fig. 23 is shown the long gallery in Haddon Hall, England, with its broad mullioned windows, and its arched panels between short, stumpy pilasters having paneled faces. The bases of the pilaster pedestals taper downward, like the leg of a table, and the lower panels are divided into rectangular forms. This tapering of pedestals, newels, and balusters was



characteristic of the period, and frequently these elements were richly carved in arabesque patterns and strapwork, as shown in Fig. 24. Grotesque figures holding heraldic shields surmounted the vaselike newels, and wooden-framed grille work often served as a balustrade.

36. Beds which had four posts supporting an entablature, and which were enclosed by draperies, found service in the rooms. These beds were based on Dutch models. The chairs and tables, examples of which are shown in Fig. 25, were curious combinations of ideas borrowed from both France and Holland, and though quaint and picturesque in design, they were at first exceedingly uncomfortable. Rush seats were used more for chairs than was upholstery, and straight, high backs prevented a reclining position or an even rest for the spine.

The Flemish chair, Fig. 25(a), presents the leading characteristics that are found in the furniture of the Elizabethan period, and, while the Jacobean chairs shown in (b) and (c) retain many of the Dutch characteristics, they show progress in the direction of ease and comfort. The seats of the earlier chairs were usually high because the absence of suitable floor covering made it desirable to keep the feet off the floor. A plain stretcher between the two front legs was introduced as a suitable place to rest the feet. The Elizabethan table at (d) shows the characteristic heaviness of the style.

The architectural woodwork and the furniture of the Elizabethan period were executed in oak. The age of Elizabeth may be termed the age of oak.

#### William and Mary Period, and Queen Anne Period

37. Between the Elizabethan period and the William and Mary period there was a break of several years during which England was under the rule of Cromwell and the Commonwealth. During this time England was in a state of perpetual

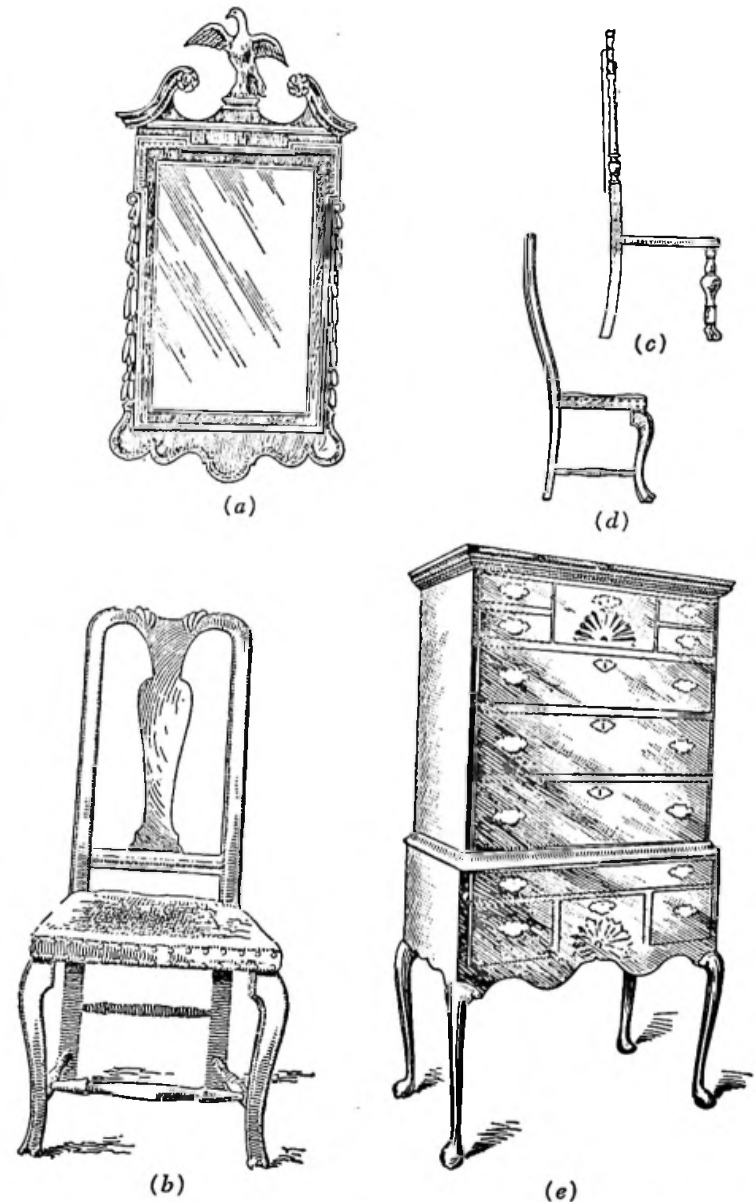


FIG. 26. FURNITURE OF THE WILLIAM AND MARY PERIOD AND THE QUEEN ANNE PERIOD

turmoil. Little encouragement was given to the fine arts and little progress was made in decorative design. The Puritans of the English Civil War of 1649 were of the same group as the Puritans of the Plymouth Colony in New England. Their homes and furniture were simple, severe, sturdy, and uncomfortable.

The monarchy returned to England with the restoration of the Stuarts in the persons of James II and Charles II. But in 1688 the Stuarts were dismissed and William and Mary came from Holland to rule England. Mary, a daughter of James II, has been married twelve years to William, who was governor of the Netherlands. While living in the Netherlands, William and Mary had enjoyed the best that the country could afford in the way of luxuries. The furniture and decoration that they introduced into England were a Dutch development of the Italian and late French Renaissance.

During the reign of William and Mary, architecture became more classic in detail and interior decoration followed suit. Wardrobes, bookcases, and other pieces of furniture were crowned with an open pediment, as were also doorways, window frames, and wall mirrors. An open pediment at the top of a wall mirror is shown in Fig. 26(a). Fabrics for curtains and for upholstery work were of Dutch manufacture, since there were no English weavers of note during this period.

William and Mary were a domestic couple, and the style of this period assumed a domestic quality which made the rooms livable and intimate. Ceilings became lower and furniture more comfortable and usable. Colors were warm and subdued.

38. Elizabethan furniture, which was made of oak, had been ponderous and heavy, since it was not yet realized that durability could be obtained without massiveness and great strength. Dutch furniture, though also strong and durable,

was comparatively graceful and slender. Walnut came in as the principal wood. The nobility and gentry hurried to their cabinetmakers with orders for furniture in the new style. Dutch furniture was imported by the shipload, and English craftsmen were forced to imitate the Dutch style or go bankrupt.

The one detail in the Dutch furniture that caused the greatest amazement was the *cabriole*, or *bandy leg*, Fig. 26(b). It had existed in France for years and was also known in Spain, but this was its first appearance in England, and, by itself, it revolutionized the style. Another innovation was the curved chair back. The Elizabethan chair, shown in (c), had a perpendicular back of straight lines only, but the back of the Dutch chair, shown in (d), was curved to fit the sinuous line of the human spine, and inclined backwards.

The highboy, Fig. 26(e), was a development of the William and Mary period. It consisted of a bureau supported on four cabriole legs, although its Dutch prototype stood on six legs turned in the characteristic bulbous style of the Netherlands craftsmen, like the legs of the chair shown in Fig. 25(c).

An increase in literary taste introduced an improved form of desk. The desk known to this day as the *Dutch desk* was introduced during this period. It developed from the bureau. A top was added and pigeonholes and drawers were placed behind a slanting cover that turned down and thus formed a writing table.

39. During the William and Mary period, Holland employed a great deal of marquetry and inlay, and the Italian Renaissance scrolls were worked out in England with inlays of sycamore, maple, holly, and mahogany. Oak, chestnut, and walnut were also used extensively. It was during this period that Louis XIV of France revoked the Edict of Nantes, which had given Protestants throughout France an equal

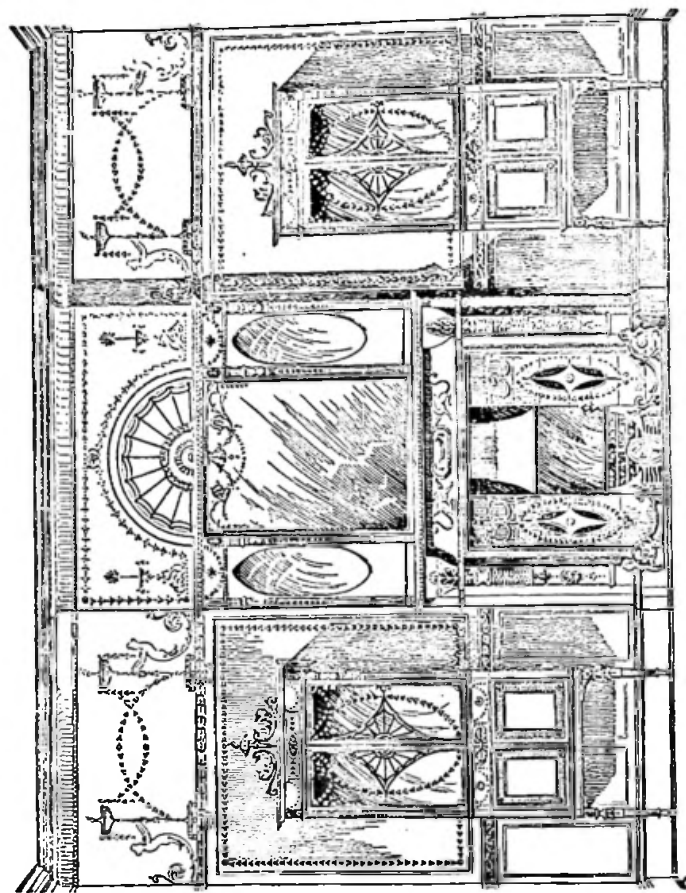


FIG. 27. INTERIOR IN THE ADAM STYLE

standing with the Catholics. As a consequence, many thousands of skilled Protestant craftsmen fled to England and lent their skill to the development of the Renaissance in England. One of these Protestant Frenchmen produced the grandfather's clock, which has survived to the present day.

William and Mary ceased to reign in 1702 and were succeeded by Queen Anne.

Room architecture continued to be domestic in scale. Mantels became lower and the woodwork became white. The Queen Anne period is the mother style of much of the American colonial style. The simple classic designs rendered in wood, enameled with white paint, characterized the homes of the American colonists.

### Georgian Period

40. The style that prevailed from the late William and Mary period through the Queen Anne period influenced the style of the early Georgian period. The Georgian period began with George I in 1714 and continued with the second, third, and fourth Georges into the time of American independence. This period covered a century of English culture. It was a period of popular rather than of royal taste.

That part of the Georgian period which was dominated by the designs of the Adam brothers is of particular interest to Americans since these designs were the prototype of many fine interiors of the American colonial period.

Robert Adam, the second and most famous of the four brothers who were in business as architects, visited Italy about 1754. On his return, the Roman and Pompeian influence became evident in the works of all the brothers. The Adam style became popular, and the Adam brothers erected many buildings during the reign of George II.

Fig. 27 shows a characteristic Adam side wall with a mantel and cabinets. The ornament is delicate and atten-

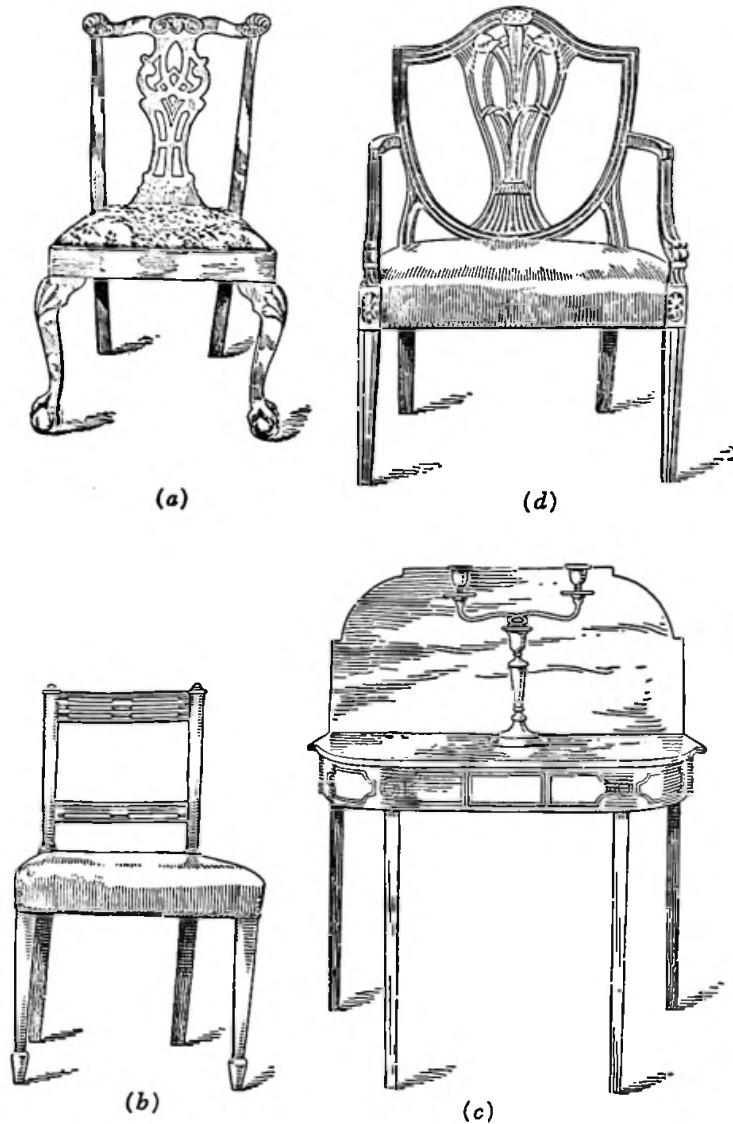


FIG. 28. GEORGIAN FURNITURE

uated, retaining the delicacy of the Pompeian and the richness of the Roman ornament. The anthemion, the scroll, the wreath, the honeysuckle, and the fan were used lavishly as motifs. Ornament was contrasted against its background by variations in color, using delicate shades of blue, red, and green, together with the sparing use of gold. The Adam style presented many characteristics that afterwards featured the Empire period in France.

### Georgian Furniture

41. Some of the greatest designers in the history of furniture flourished during the Georgian period. Chippendale, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and the Adam brothers produced designs that are still widely used today.

Chippendale adopted the cabriole leg of the Dutch chair and added to it the characteristic back of the French, as shown in Fig. 28(a). Chippendale's designs were in mahogany, which at the time was a new and strange wood.

The chair shown in Fig. 28(b) and the table shown in (c) are designs by Sheraton. The round tapering leg with a conical foot, as in (b), is similar to some of the designs of Marie Antoinette; some of these tapering legs were fluted or reeded, as in the French style. But many of the legs designed by Sheraton were square, as in the table shown in (c). In fact Sheraton, who was a worker in marquetry and inlay, often introduced square legs in his furniture to provide suitable surfaces for inlay.

Hepplewhite, like Sheraton, followed the lines of the Louis XVI furniture, but he was not an imitator of the Sheraton style. Hepplewhite introduced the shield shape to the back of his chair, which was rarely upholstered, but instead formed an open frame for a central carved or pierced design, as in Fig. 28(d). The shield back of the Hepplewhite chair was closed at the top with an even sinuous curve. Sheraton, who

also used shield backs occasionally, used a broken rail for the top rail of the back. Hepplewhite's central shield was varied in each design, usually following the classic and occasionally inserting the simple upright slats, in the same manner as Chippendale's designs. The legs of the Hepplewhite chair were usually square and tapering, but they were not inlaid as they were in Sheraton's designs, nor were they painted as were those of the Adam brothers. Hepplewhite's furniture was usually executed in mahogany, and in this respect, as well as for some of the treatments he applied to the backs, he undoubtedly borrowed ideas from Chippendale.

42. The furniture of the Adam brothers was an adaptation of the French Louis XVI style. The chairs were small and delicate, with low, narrow backs. The legs were usually straight, but occasionally they had an outward curve. However, the legs of these chairs never had the compound curve of the Dutch cabriole. Although the sofas and backless couches were based on Greek ideas, they retained the same delicacy and frail appearance as the chairs. Because Chippendale worked almost exclusively in mahogany, Adam adopted satinwood as his favorite material. This wood was new to the public of the period and it became popular.

A characteristic of the Adam furniture was the painting of classic designs on the golden surfaces of the varnished satinwood. The designs were painted after the manner of inlay, but without any attempt at imitation or deception. The designs were executed in fine lines of classic detail and in soft colors, and were charming in their delicate simplicity. Occasionally, woven cane was introduced into the chair backs, with the strands running to conform to the outline of the panels, whether oval or rectangular.

### Summary

43. The Renaissance reached England by way of France

and the Netherlands during the reign of Henry VIII. In the reign of Elizabeth that followed, the Renaissance blossomed forth in literature and drama with such figures as Shakespeare and Marlowe. In architecture and decoration the Gothic style was firmly entrenched, and the first effects of the Renaissance appeared in decorative details, modified by French and Dutch influences. Afterward, through the reigns of William and Mary, Queen Anne, and the Georges, a distinct English Renaissance style evolved — the Georgian. This style had a profound effect on the architecture and decoration of the early American colonies.

The interiors and furniture of the Elizabethan period were characterized by the use of oak, and the Elizabethan period may be termed the age of oak. With the development of the Renaissance in England, walnut replaced oak as the principal wood, and the period of William and Mary and Queen Anne is sometimes termed the age of walnut. Mahogany became known during the early Georgian period, and was employed by such notable designers as Chippendale, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton. The early Georgian period is sometimes termed the age of mahogany.

English interiors and furniture were domestic in scale. Ceilings were low, and furniture was designed for the comfort of the common man. The rooms of this period conveyed the impression of being lived in, and were the prototypes of many of today's interiors.

## *Contemporary Interiors*

### **The Nineteenth Century**

44. The nineteenth century produced nothing worthy of note in the way of a new style until its closing years. The Empire period had died in France with the downfall of Napoleon and the restoration of the monarchy. Designers turned

again to the scrolls and shells of Louis XV as being less obnoxious to the royalists than the style of the Emperor. In England an attempt was made to revive the Gothic style and modify it into a style characteristically English. About the same time machinery had been developed for the manufacture of furniture and other decorative details. And with the introduction of machinery much of the individuality of the designer and craftsman was lost. The designs of the day became meaningless and ugly.

Toward the beginning of the twentieth century, an effort was made to overthrow the hideous conceptions of the preceding fifty years and to establish something entirely new. This effort first showed itself in London, in what was termed the "aesthetic craze." A small group of enthusiasts turned to nature for inspiration, and produced designs in floral and other natural forms that were as inappropriate as they were novel. This group advocated the abandonment of all prevailing forms, even in dress, and recommended limp, flowing gowns and studied poses. The decorative surroundings were to be in trailing, inert lines and in the palest of colors. This idea was too absurd to gain popularity, but it had the beneficial effect of diverting the public mind from copying the past. William Morris, the pioneer of the new style, designed all manner of details in forms that were based on nature, and that had no historic precedent except in underlying principles.

45. William Morris' idea was to turn to nature for inspiration instead of copying and recopying something that some person had done before. His designs were based on natural forms, but they never pretended to portray these forms naturalistically. Morris lectured, taught classes, wrote books, and gained many followers. The *Morris style* in England, the *Craftsman style* in America, the *L'Art Nouveau designs* in France, and the *Secession style* in Austria were the outcome

of this same idea of turning to nature. All four countries were working on the same principle, but they produced different results because of the different traditions that had influenced their history and the development of their crafts.

The style of the late nineteenth century can be summed up as a craftsman's style, no matter what its local application. Whether in England, in France, or in Austria, it was based on the fundamental theory of designing to suit the material, purpose, and decorative possibilities of the article to which it was to be applied. Taken all in all, the best results of this style were the training of the artist to be a craftsman, and the education of the craftsman along the lines of true art.

### Beginnings of Contemporary Design

46. The 1920's were years that saw the birth of a new design consciousness. At the beginning of this period the "functional" idea was greatly overworked. As a result, the first attempts at contemporary design were often mechanical, harsh, and even crude. With the passage of the years, however, the realization developed that a round corner is just as functional as a square corner, and makes chairs much more comfortable to sit on. And so the modern style gradually became more congenial and more refined.

The keynote of the contemporary style is simplicity. The style is further characterized by plain surfaces, few moldings, and honest use of materials, an appreciation and use of color, an increased use of natural light, and a closer relation to the outdoors.

### Development of Contemporary Design

47. In the development of the contemporary house, two factors which have contributed toward simplicity have been 1) the Japanese influence, fostered by such architects as Frank Lloyd Wright, who spent a considerable time in Japan, and



From Better Homes & Gardens  
FIG. 29. CONTEMPORARY USE OF GLASS

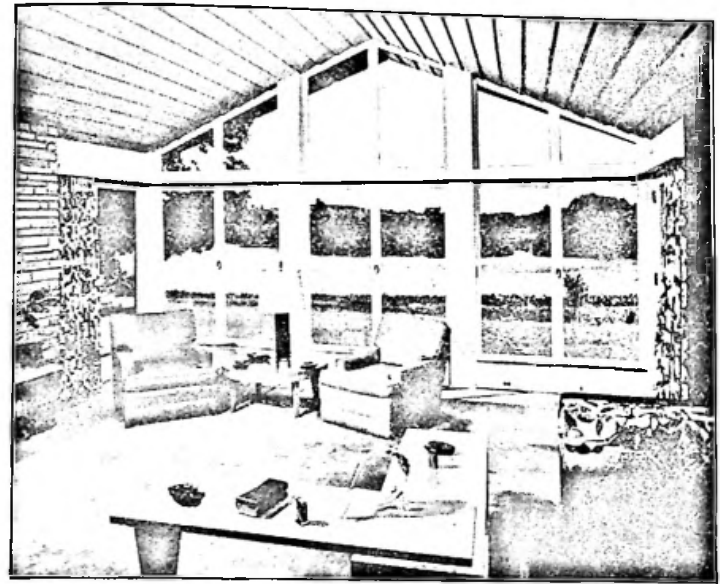


FIG. 30. COORDINATION BETWEEN INDOORS AND OUTDOORS

2) the high costs of labor and material, which have produced correspondingly high costs of enclosed space.

Up until 1940 space was not too expensive, and most houses consisted of a series of self-contained rooms connected by halls. Each room was used for a specific purpose. Today's high building costs do not permit us to use space so lavishly.

Instead of self-contained, inward-looking rooms, the space in the modern house is arranged for multiple use as required by convenience in living. Living, dining, and kitchen areas, for instance, can be combined, with no distinct line dividing these areas. This need for flexibility has resulted in the widespread use of curtains and folding partitions.

In the development of contemporary interiors, no factor has played a larger part than the improved heating systems, which have made it possible to heat every room in the house



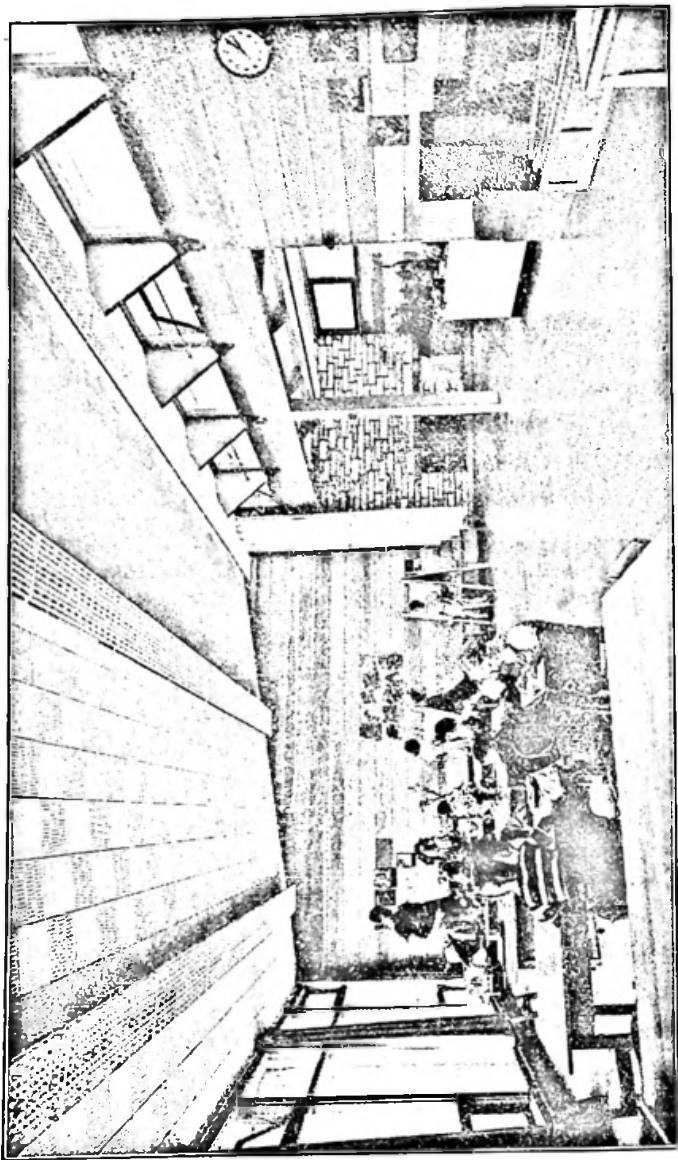


FIG. 31. INTERIOR OF SCHOOLROOM

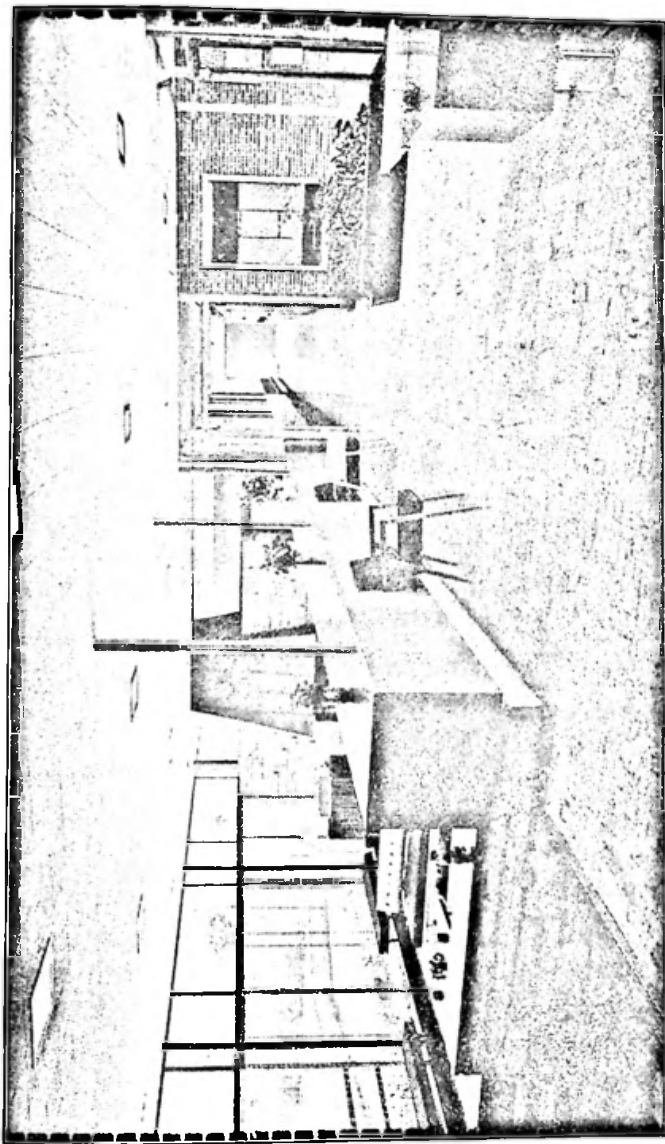


FIG. 32. INTERIOR OF COMMUNITY HOUSE

without difficulty. And with double glazing and insulation against heat loss, it has become possible to use more glass in northern climates. The liberal use of glass brings more light into the house, as shown in Figs. 29 and 30, and makes the view from the indoors more important. This liberal use of glass also makes possible a closer coordination between indoors and outdoors.

Of course, contemporary interiors are not restricted to homes. Fine interiors are being produced in all types of buildings. Fig. 31 is a view of the interior of a schoolroom and Fig. 32 is a view of the interior of a community house. In both views, notice the large glass areas and the simplicity of treatment.

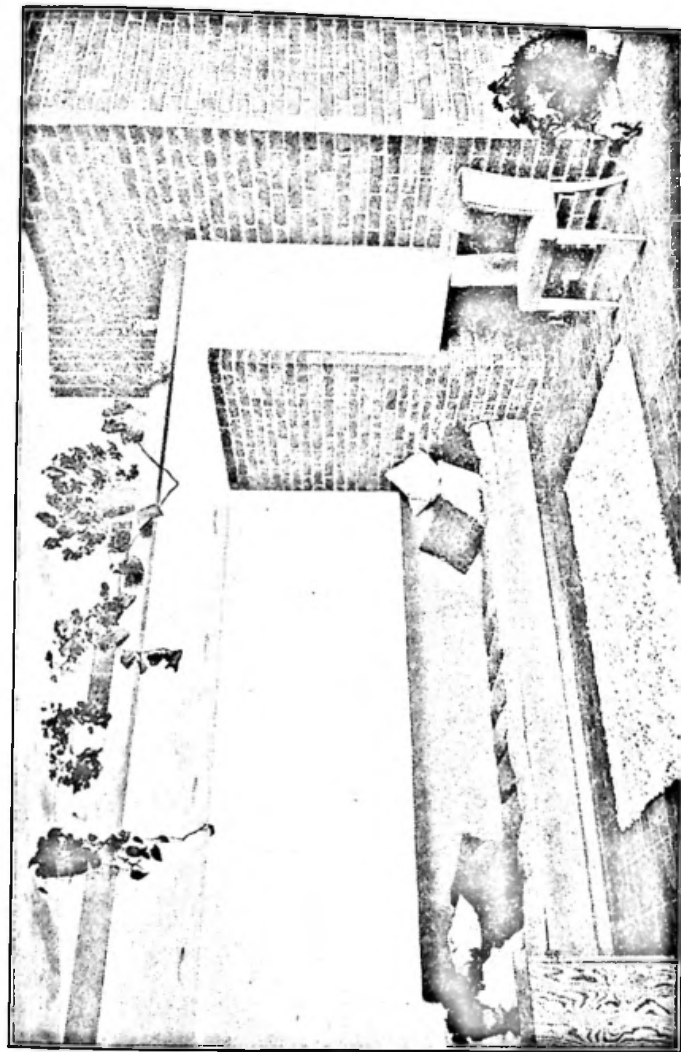
### Design and Structure

48. It is difficult to arrive at an understanding of interior design without understanding the form and growth of the frame or shell. This understanding is perhaps best achieved by considering the modern house, since it is in the modern house that interior design has its most varied applications.

A house is not modern merely because it has a flat roof, picture windows, and ranch-type design. It is modern because it provides a suitable frame for modern living. The modern house, therefore, is designed with such factors of modern living in mind as radiant heating, bridge, television, entertaining, reading in bed, air conditioning, the use of plywood, and the need to do without servants.

In the modern house the plan is informally organized to suit the way of life of its inhabitants. The modern house sometimes uses furniture as a built-in part of the structure, as shown in Fig. 33.

The background for interior design is always structural. Decoration thus becomes a matter of practical and agreeable compositions. Such compositions utilize the functional ele-



Alden B. Dow, Architect

FIG. 33. BUILT-IN FURNITURE

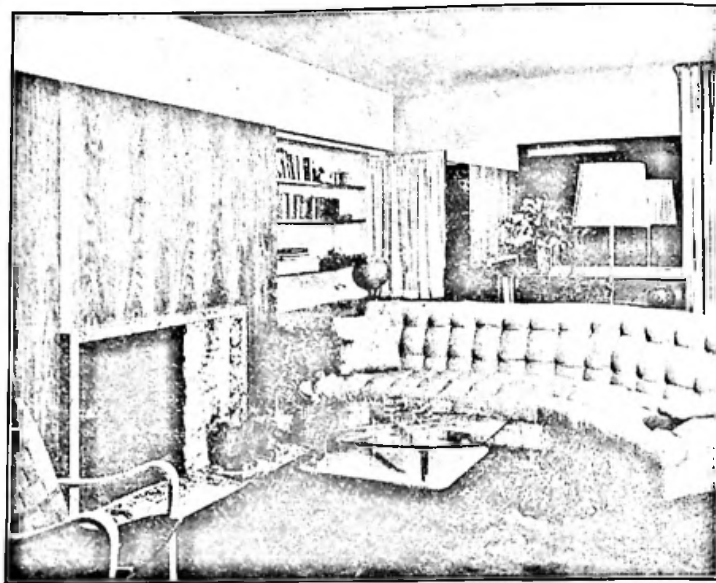


FIG. 34. USE OF DRAPERIES

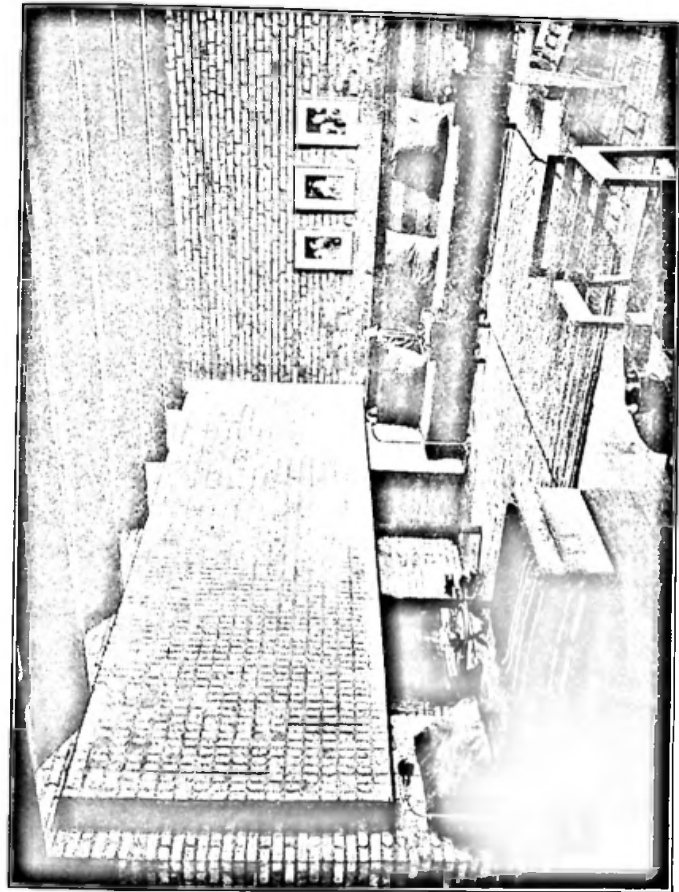
ments of a room and its furniture, together with such decorative features as sculpture, pictures, and plants.

### Use of Materials

49. A characteristic of the best modern design is the honest use of materials. Structural materials such as brick, stone, and wood are used frankly; and these structural materials provide a contrast for more finished materials, such as plastics, aluminum, and plywood. Contrasts and harmonies are obtained by emphasizing the natural textures of different materials. All materials are used with the minimum amount of finish required for preservation and maintenance.

### Draperies

50. The introduction of large glass areas has brought more light into buildings. The necessity of controlling light and of



Paul Schweiker, Architect  
FIG. 35. BRICK WALLS IN A LIVING ROOM

providing privacy has been responsible for the widespread use of draperies. Draperies are also used to define areas and to provide flexibility in the use of space.

Draperies can be used as a strong element in decoration. Transparent draperies provide an illusion of both depth and separation. Other draperies may be used to apparently enlarge an end wall, to soften the hard texture of adjoining walls, and to create interest in a specific area. In contemporary design, draperies are treated as a wall mass when ever possible. Draperies as a part of the decorative scheme are shown in Figs. 30 and 34. In Fig. 34 notice the contrast between the rich marble and the plain wood surface.

### Use of Color

51. Today's designers, because they have been forced to be cost-conscious, have been quick to recognize the possibilities of color, since color can do more at less cost than any other single element in design. The response to color is an emotional one, and the effective use of color in appealing to the emotions has been furthered by scientific research. The information obtained from this research has been made available to designers.

While color is still obtained in the usual ways, through the use of paint and varnish, draperies, and furnishings, more and more dependence is being placed on the natural color of structural materials, such as brick, stone, tile, and wood. This is illustrated in the living room in Fig. 35.

To have color it is, of course, necessary to have light. Colors should be studied under both natural and artificial light. Samples that are attractive under one light may look radically different under another.

### Furniture

52. In today's house there is very seldom space for a



FIG. 36. METAL FURNITURE

complete suite of heavy upholstered furniture. Usually furniture is either built in, as shown in Fig. 33 or, if it is freestanding, it is designed to be as light and open as possible so that in appearance it will create the effect of occupying little space. Metal furniture which is light in appearance and which can be used, outdoors or indoors has a wide use. Such furniture is shown in Fig. 36.

In all furniture design, the nature of the material must be taken into account. The historical furniture that has survived did so because it used material honestly. The best modern furniture avoids stunts and gadgets; it is natural and is based on simple forms. You can use such furniture in interiors of any style or no style.

In your selection of furniture, the furniture should be subordinated to the composition of the room.

### Decorative Objects

53. While objects such as pictures, paintings, sculpture, vases, and curios are not directly related to interior architecture, you can use them effectively for their decorative and utilitarian value. As decoration they help to relieve the effect of long lines, sharp angles, and flat surfaces. The extent to which such objects are valuable because of personal associations is, of course, outside the scope of interior decoration.

Sometimes the decorative object, if it is important enough, may be permitted to influence the color scheme of a room. For instance, the color scheme of a room may be based on a large object or painting in the room. And there may be spaces in a room that will be greatly improved by the use of a picture as the center of a composition. Pictures that have a related theme may be grouped together rather than hung singly. It is unwise, however, to buy pictures to go with the color scheme of the room.

On the other hand, do not be afraid of blank walls. The Japanese custom of hanging pictures only on stated occasions has some merit. If you do not like pictures do not hang them.

Such objects as sculpture and vases should be considered in relation to their base or support and in relation to their background. The surroundings should not take attention away from the object that is to provide the center of interest.



FIG. 37. USE OF PLANTS AND SCULPTURE

Sculpture that is executed in the round should be visible from several angles. As a rule, a piece of furniture provides a more satisfactory base for sculpture than does a formal, mortuary type of pedestal.

54. The screen, to serve its purpose as a utilitarian object, should be fairly easy to move and it should be solid when placed. In most cases screen are opaque, although many of the modern screens are translucent or see-through, providing an illusion of both separation and distance.

The screen may blend with adjoining walls or, if its function is primarily decorative, it may be finished in strong colors and contrasts. In either case, it should be considered in relation to the overall scheme for the room.

Fixed screens are often used in modern rooms to take the place of real partitions. Frequently they have shelves or cupboards on one side to add to their usefulness.

The broader use of glass areas in the home has established a closer relation between indoors and outdoors and has led to the use of plants inside the room to create a continuous effect with the plants outside, as shown in Fig. 29. The use of living plants in pots or boxes tends to relieve and soften the manufactured forms that make up most rooms, as shown in Figs. 33 and 37. In Fig. 37 notice how the decorative objects have given a sense of luxury to a plain interior.

### Use of Drawings

55. The solution of any except the simplest problem in interior design will frequently require the preparation of drawings. Without drawings it is usually impossible to anticipate the various minor problems that must be solved to achieve a harmonious color combination and a satisfactory grouping of all the elements that enter into an interior design. Such drawings will include the plan, or layout of the room, which

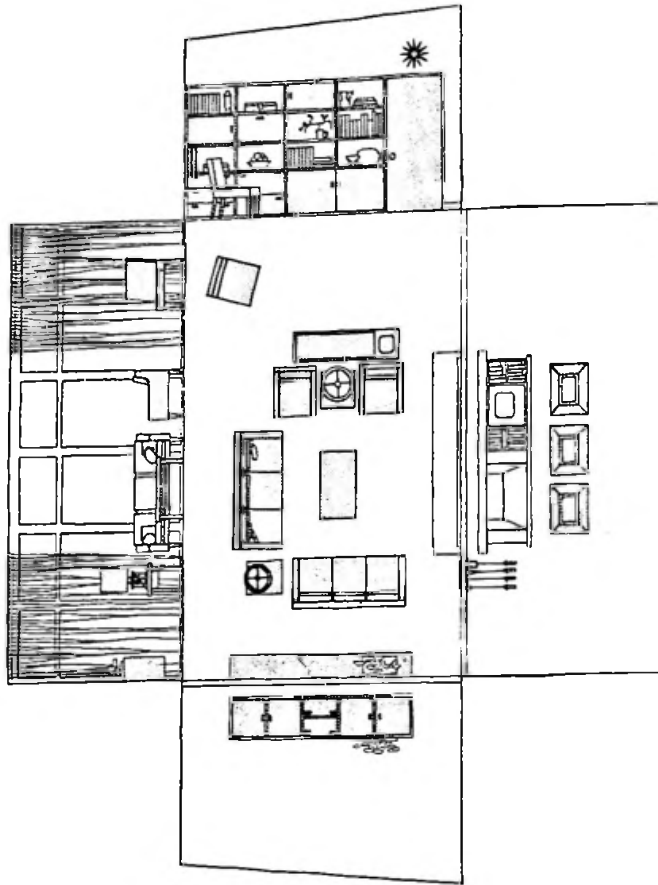


FIG. 38. PLAN OF LIVING ROOM

will show the grouping of the furniture, and the elevations which will show the treatment of the walls. A ceiling plan may be necessary where an involved ceiling treatment is required.

In Figs. 38 to 42 are shown drawings that have been prepared for the design of a large living room. The room layout is shown in Fig. 38. Elevations of various walls are shown in

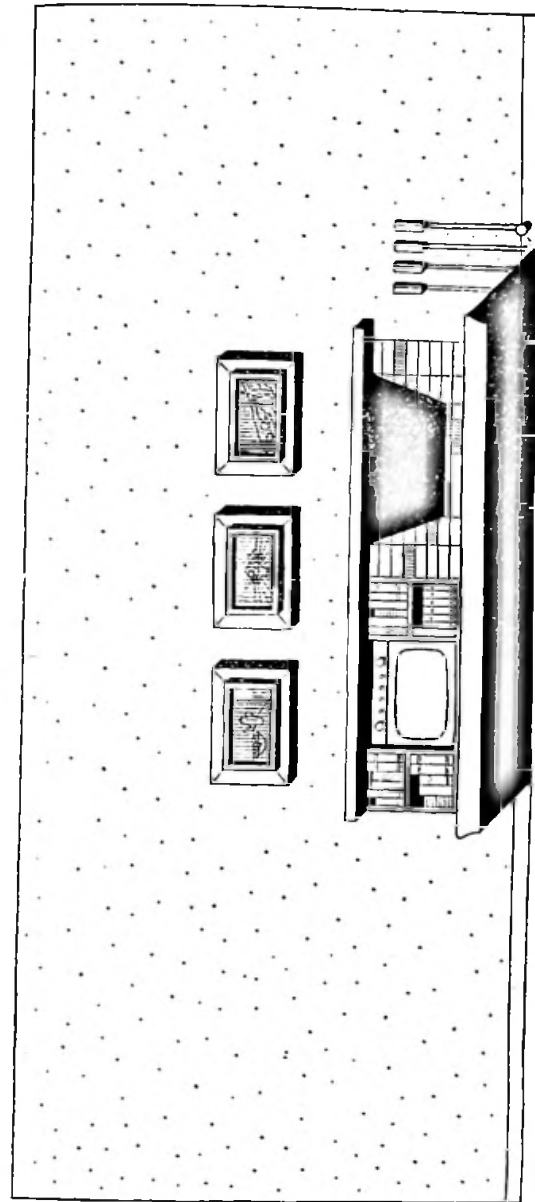


FIG. 39. ELEVATION IN LIVING ROOM SHOWING FIREPLACE

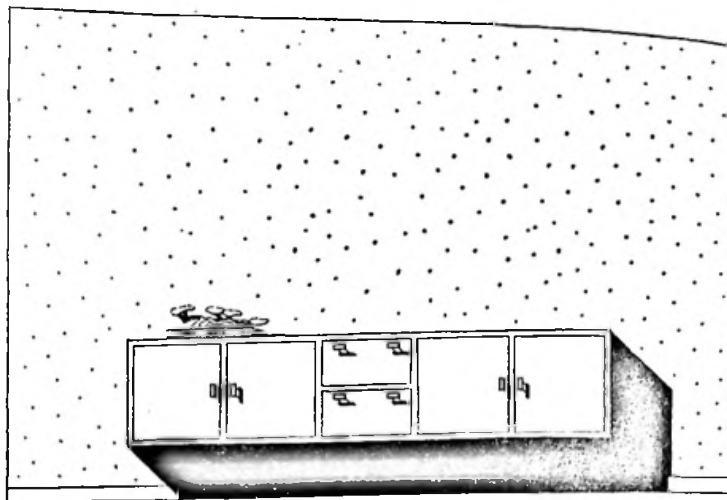


FIG. 40. ELEVATION AT END WALL SHOWING CABINET

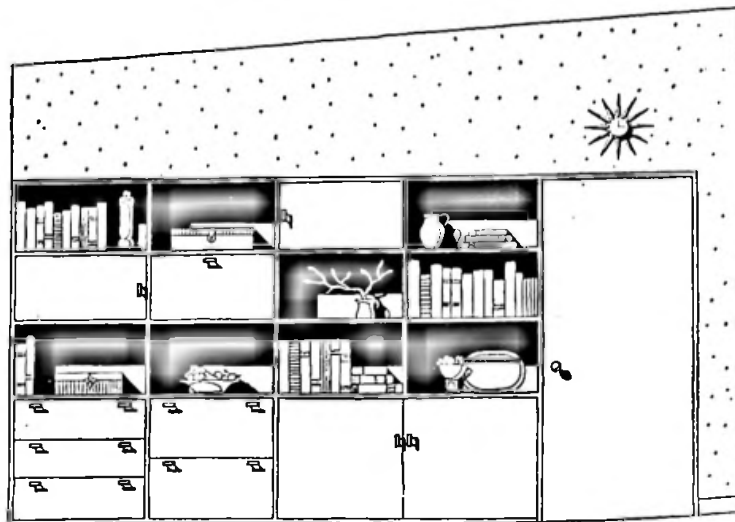


FIG. 41. ELEVATION OF STORAGE WALL IN LIVING ROOM

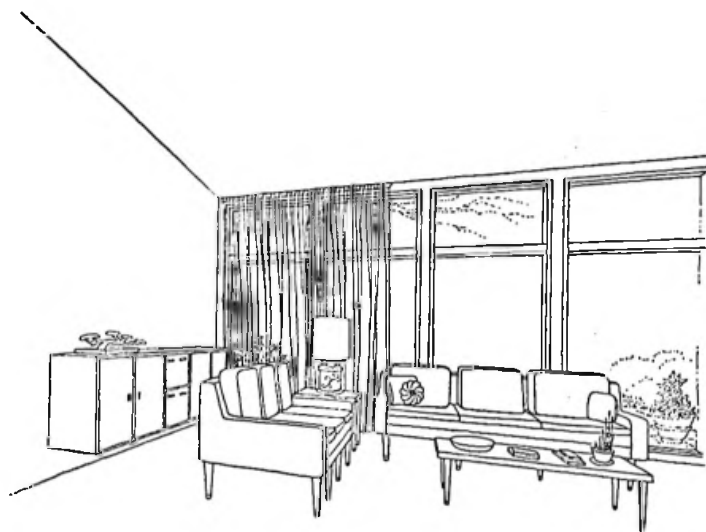


FIG. 42. PERSPECTIVE VIEW IN LIVING ROOM

Figs. 39, 40, and 41. A perspective view looking toward the windows is shown in Fig. 42.

### Summary

56. There is no fixed contemporary style. Modern design is still in the process of development. But in a general way we may list the characteristics of modern interior design as follows:

1) Simplicity in both interior design and furniture design, with a real concern for individual comfort. Clean, straightforward surfaces with few or no moldings. The decorative aspects must not interfere with the function of the room or the furniture. Antiques are combined with modern furniture.

2) A tendency toward lowness rather than height. Low lines are relaxing.

3) An appreciation and a conservation of space. Much space is designed for multiple use.



4) Rooms that are not crowded with furniture. Much furniture is built in. Furniture that is not built in as part of the wall is made easy to handle and maintain. Freestanding furniture is made as light and as open as possible. The furniture is subordinated to the composition of the whole room.

5) Kitchens are becoming more decorative, larger, more inviting, and more livable. A kitchen can look well and also work well.

6) A broad use of glass, resulting in more light and a closer relationship between outdoors and indoors. Outdoor rooms are now living and entertaining areas. They combine the verdancy of the garden with the comfort of leisure furniture. The result can be as attractive as any interior room.

7) An awareness of color—not only applied color, but also the natural colors of such materials as wood, stone, brick, and iron. Color is the greatest single unifying factor in decoration. By learning the characteristics of colors you will be able to use them skillfully to achieve the effect and atmosphere you want.

8) The use of materials in their most natural state, with only the minimum amount of finish required for preservation and maintenance. Contrasts and harmonies are obtained by emphasizing the natural textures of fabrics, wood, metals, and other substances.

For all except the simplest problems in interior design it is impossible to achieve the best results without the use of drawings. Such drawings will include a plan, or layout, and elevations showing the various wall treatments, and frequently a perspective view and ceiling plan.

## Architectural Interiors

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### *Examination Questions*

Notice to Students.—Study this instruction text thoroughly before you answer the following questions. Read each question carefully and be sure you understand it; then write the best answer you can. You will profit most if you answer the questions in your own words. When you complete your work, examine it closely, correct all the errors you can find, and see that every question is answered; then mail your work to us. **DO NOT HOLD IT** until another examination is ready.

1. What influence did artists such as Michelangelo, Raphael, and Boucher have on the interior decoration of their time?
2. With what period of architecture is the Adam style associated? What were the characteristics of this style?
3. As an architect, you have a client who wishes to have an apartment decorated to conform to the period of the French Renaissance, but in a restrained manner. What style would you recommend to your client?
4. What influence did each of the following individuals have on the interior decoration of the time: Marie Antoinette, Countess du Barry, Madame de Pompadour, Catherine de Medici, William Morris, Napoleon Bonaparte, and William Chippendale?
5. Define the following: rococo, cabriole, highboy, and baroque.



**I O S**