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TRADITIONAL METHODS OF
PATTERN DESIGNING
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE
STUDY OF DECORATIVE ART
BY ARCHIBALD H. CHRISTIE
WITH NUMEROUS EXAMPLES
DRAWN BY THE AUTHOR AND
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



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PREFACE

In the following pages a short account of traditional methods of designing patterns is attempted. The great phases through which the art of decoration has passed are pointed out and the evolution of the idea of decoration as it is now understood is discussed. A survey is made of a considerable number of the most common examples of patterns, and those which seem to have intimate relationship to one another are grouped together in order to show the development of the most important decorative ideas, and to analyse the means by which these are expressed.

A number of questions, in themselves of great importance, such as the symbolism of patterns, their geographical and historical distribution and so forth, are left untouched, or but briefly dwelt upon, as being outside the scope of the present undertaking.

The illustrations are, with few exceptions, taken from examples of ancient art. They are drawn from a great variety of sources, which are acknowledged in the lists at the beginning of the volume. A number of impressions from an interesting series of Indian

PREFACE

cotton-printing blocks in the Victoria and Albert Museum are reproduced, and thanks must be expressed to the Director of the Museum for permission to obtain prints from these and to include them among the illustrations. Thanks are also due to Mr. J. H. Taylor, M.A., who has kindly read the proofs, and to Mr. G. H. Palmer, who has rendered much valuable assistance in various ways. The photographic Plates representing objects in the Victoria and Albert Museum are reproduced by permission of the Secretary of the Board of Education.

A. H. C.

Ewell, Surrey.

December, 1909.

CONTENTS

	CHAPTER	PAGE
THE ORIGIN OF DECORATION	CHAPTER I	25
THE DEVELOPMENT OF TYPICAL FORMS OF ORNAMENT	CHAPTER II	45
THE CLASSIFICATION OF PATTERNS	CHAPTER III	68
POWDERED DESIGNS FORMED OF FLORAL ELEMENTS	CHAPTER IV	86
FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF FLORAL ELEMENTS	CHAPTER V	108
GEOMETRICAL DESIGNS	CHAPTER VI	128
DESIGNS FORMED OF GEOMETRICAL AND FLORAL WORK COMBINED	CHAPTER VII	152
ANIMAL FORMS USED IN DESIGNS	CHAPTER VIII	171
DESIGNS FORMED OF STRAIGHT PARALLEL BANDS	CHAPTER IX	182

CONTENTS

	CHAPTER X	PAGE
DEVELOPMENTS OF BAND DESIGNS	196	
	CHAPTER XI	
BORDERS AND CRESTINGS, AND SURFACE DECORATION DERIVED FROM THEM	231	
	CHAPTER XII	
DESIGNS FORMED BY IMPOSING ONE PATTERN UPON ANOTHER	261	
	CHAPTER XIII	
DESIGNS FORMED BY COUNTERCHANGING ELEMENTS	282	
	CHAPTER XIV	
INTERLACING BAND-DESIGNS AND KNOT-WORK	299	

LIST OF PLATES

At end

- PLATE I. Carved wooden panel from Bokhara, fifteenth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.
- II. Wall slab carved in low relief with sacred tree and
attendant genii, ninth century B.C. British Museum.
- III. Printed chintz from Masulipatam, Indian, nineteenth
century.
- IV. Chinese painted wall-paper.
- V. Persian silk velvet. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- VI. Leaf of a pulpit-door from Cairo, fifteenth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.
- VII. Silk brocade, Byzantine, eleventh or twelfth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.
- VIII. Woven silk fabric, Byzantine, seventh to ninth century.
Vatican, Rome.
- IX and X. Pierced stone windows, West front of St. Mark's,
Venice.
- XI. Inlaid marble slab, twelfth century. Church of Santa
Prassede, Rome.
- XII. Inlaid marble panel in the pavement of the Baptistery,
Florence, thirteenth century.
- XIII. Silk brocade, Italian, fourteenth century. Victoria and
Albert Museum.
- XIV. Carved marble panel. Museum at Athens.
- XV. West front of the Church of Santa Chiara at Assisi,
thirteenth century.
- XVI. Persian glazed earthenware rice dish. Victoria and
Albert Museum.
- XVII. Printed cotton, Indian, nineteenth century.
- XVIII. Carved marble panel, St. Mark's, Venice, twelfth
century.
- XIX. Silk velvet, Italian, sixteenth century. Galleria degli
Arazzi, Florence.

At end

- PLATE XX. Silk brocade, Italian, sixteenth century. Galleria degli Arazzi, Florence.
- XXI. Painted vase and stand, Hellenic, sixth century B.C. Musée du Louvre, Paris.
- XXII. Silk velvet, Italian, late fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- XXIII. Printed linen, Rhenish, fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- XXIV. Silk velvet; Italian, sixteenth century. Museo Nazionale, Florence.
- XXV. Recessed seat lined with tile-work. Alhambra, Granada.
- XXVI. Indian ewer and cover of chased metal. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- XXVII. Panel of the bronze door of the Baptistry, Florence, by Andrea Pisano.
- XXVIII. Detail of a picture by Capanna Puccio at Assisi.
- XXIX. A. Cover of circular brass, Saracenic. Victoria and Albert Museum.
B. Bronze bowl cover, Persian, fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.
- XXX. Carved marble slab, St. Mark's, Venice, twelfth century.
- XXXI. Ornament of woven tapestry from a tomb in Upper Egypt, Egypto-Roman, third to ninth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

ERRATUM

Plate XXXI: *for third to ninth century read first to third century*

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

FIGURE		PAGE
1.	Design incised upon a chalk drum from Folkton Wold, Yorkshire. <i>British Museum, Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age</i> , 1904, p. 91	26
2.	Magical device incised upon a piece of bamboo from the Malay Peninsula. A. C. Haddon, <i>Evolution in Art</i> . Walter Scott, London, 1895, p. 243	27
3.	Woven fabric of linen and wool. Victoria and Albert Museum. French, seventeenth century	28
4.	Two designs produced by arrangements of bricks	29
5.	Mosaic pavement. Maison-Carrée Museum, Nîmes. Roman	30
6.	Design formed of interlacing bands	31
7.	Inlaid marble panel from an ambo by Laurentius Cosma in the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, Rome. Thirteenth century	32
8.	Initial letter from an illuminated Bible in Winchester Cathedral. English, late twelfth century	33
9.	Wooden balcony railing from the old King's Head Inn, Southwark. Philip Norman, <i>London vanished and vanishing</i> . A. and C. Black, London, 1905. Plate 10	34
10.	Fragment of a carved marble slab. From the Palatine Hill, Rome	34
11.	Silk brocade with inscription in Arabic. Victoria and Albert Museum. Sicilian, late twelfth century	35
12.	Painted panel from the margin of a frame in the Accademia delle Belle Arti, Florence. Italian, fifteenth century	36
13.	Carved and painted panel from a wooden door in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Le Puy-en-Velay. French, twelfth century	37
14.	Design inlaid in cut bricks. From the external wall of the Church of Saint Luke of Stiris in North Greece. Eleventh century. R. W. Schultz and S. H. Barnsley, <i>The Monastery of Saint Luke of Stiris in Phocis</i> . Macmillan, London, 1901, Plate 11	37
15.	Drug Jar. Victoria and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fifteenth century	38

FIGURE

PAGE

16.	Detail from design in Fig. 17	39
17.	Woven fabric. Thirteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>Ornament of Textile Fabrics</i> . Bernard Quaritch, London, 1883, Plate 159	40
18.	Two carved marble panels. Details from ambones in the Cathedral and Museum at Ravenna	40
19.	Design from the border of an Oriental rug	40
20.	Design from the border of a silk brocade. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, sixteenth or seven- teenth century	41
21, 22.	Border designs. From painted glazed earthenware tiles. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, seventeenth or eighteenth century	41
23.	Portion of an embroidered cover. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, eighteenth or nineteenth century	42
24.	Silk brocade. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	43
25.	Dish of painted glazed earthenware. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	44
26.	Carved stone pilaster, from the West door of the Cathe- dral of Saint-Étienne at Sens. Late twelfth century. Viollet-le-Duc, <i>Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architec- ture française</i> , Paris, 1875, vol. viii, p. 223	46
27.	Painted decoration from a stone vault in the Church of Saint Julien at Petit-Quevilly, Rouen. Late twelfth century. From a drawing by Mr. Matthew Dawson	47
28.	Initial letter from an illuminated Bible in Winchester Cathedral. English, late twelfth century	48
29.	Carved stone capital from the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Saint-Dié. Eleventh century	49
30.	The Svastika	50
31.	Cross formed of four gammas	50
32.	Design from a vestment in a mosaic in the Cathedral of Cefalú. Twelfth century	51
33.	Cross carved upon a stone lintel in the Church of Saint Luke of Stiris. R. W. Schultz and S. H. Barnsley, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 27	51
34.	Cross carved upon a stone slab. Musée Lapidaire, Arles	51
35, 36.	Designs formed of Svastikas	52, 53
37.	Scheme of design from a cast of a carved stone panel from Birbal's palace at Fatehpur Sikri. Victoria and Albert Museum. Mogul, sixteenth century	54
38.	Design from the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	54
39.	Analysis of the design in Fig. 38. From a drawing in the same collection	55

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

11

FIGURE

PAGE

40.	Design formed of the unit given in Fig. 38 repeated six times, in outline	56
41.	The design given in Fig. 40, filled in with colour	57
42.	Pierced stone window from the West front of the narthex of the Church of Pomposa. Twelfth century	58
43.	Inlaid Marble pavement from the Church of San Miniato, Florence. Thirteenth century	59
44.	Engraved seal-cylinder. Assyrian. Count Goblet d'Alviella, <i>La Migration des Symboles</i> . Ernest Leroux, Paris, 1891, Plate V	60
45.	Engraved gem from Mycenae. Arthur J. Evans, 'Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult,' <i>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> . Macmillan, London, vol. xxi, p. 156	60
46.	Carved stone capital from the Temple of Athenè Polias at Prienè, Asia Minor. British Museum. Fourth century B.C.	61
47.	Design from an embroidered vestment in the Treasury at Vienna. Sicilian, dated A.D. 1181. F. Bock, <i>Die Kleinodien des heil. Römischen Reiches deutscher Nation</i> , Vienna, 1864, Plate XXVI	61
48.	Carved stone capital from the West front of the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre at Angoulême. Twelfth century.	62
49.	Border design of Phoenician workmanship carved in ivory. From Nineveh. British Museum. Eighth century B.C.	63
50.	Carved grave-stone head. Hellenic	64
51.	Six border designs from Attic painted vases. British Museum. Attic, fifth century B.C.	64
52.	Painted cornice moulding of the portico of the Thersilion at Megalopolis. R. W. Schultz, <i>Excavations at Megalopolis. Architectural description</i> . Macmillan, London, 1892, Plate XIII	65
53.	Carved cornice moulding from the North door of the Erechtheion at Athens	66
54.	Border designs from fresco in the Lower Church of San Clemente at Rome. Ninth century	66
55.	Five border designs from Attic painted vases. British Museum. Fifth century B.C.	68
56.	Design from the background of a miniature in an illuminated manuscript. French, fourteenth century .	69
57.	Six designs from textiles in a picture by Barnaba da Modena. Museo Civico, Pisa. Fourteenth century .	70
58.	Draped figure from an Attic painted vase	71
59-64.	Twenty-one designs from the draperies, etc., represented in compositions upon Attic painted vases. British Museum. Fifth and sixth centuries B.C.	71-4
65.	Design formed of straight parallel bands	75

FIGURE		PAGE
66.	Design formed of chevrons	76
67.	Design formed of waved bands	77
68.	Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	77
69.	Design formed of crossed bands	78
70.	Design formed by powdering elements over a surface	78
71.	Design formed of semi-disks powdered over a surface	79
72.	Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	79
73.	Design from an Attic painted vase. British Museum. Sixth century B.C.	80
74.	Vase decorated with incised ornament, from a marsh-village at Glastonbury. Iron Age. <i>A Guide to the Antiquities of the Iron Age in the British Museum</i> , 1905, p. 127	81
75.	Carved stone capital from Khorsabad. Assyrian. V. Place, <i>Ninive et l'Assyrie</i> , Paris, 1867, Plate 35	82
76.	Border design carved in wood. Victoria and Albert Museum. English, seventeenth century	82
77.	Egyptian scarab	82
78.	Border design painted on a glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	83
79.	Portion of a carved stone pilaster. The complete pilaster is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. From the ancient city of Gaur, Bengal. Fourteenth century	84
80.	'Texture' decoration	87
81.	Design formed of groups of points	89
82-85.	Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	90, 91
86.	Woven silk fabric. Italian, sixteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 158	91
87.	Woven silk fabric. Italian, sixteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 154	92
88.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	93
89.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Persian, sixteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 156	94
90.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Galleria degli Arazzi, Florence. Italian, sixteenth century	95
91.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum. Italian, sixteenth century	96
92.	Ornament of woven tapestry from a linen vestment. Victoria and Albert Museum. Egypto-Roman, second or third century	97
93.	Detail from a painted glazed earthenware tile.	97

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

13

FIGURE

PAGE

	Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	98
94.	Jug of painted glazed earthenware. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	99
95-98.	Details from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	100-2
99.	Carved stone capital from the triforium of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Laon. Late twelfth century	102
100.	Detail from an embroidered linen hanging. English, seventeenth century	103
101.	Inlaid design from the <i>mīhrāb</i> of the Mosque of el Muayyad, Cairo. Early fifteenth century. J. Bourgoin, <i>Précis de l'art arabe</i> . Ernest Leroux, Paris, 1889, Plate 36	104
102.	Panel of glazed earthenware tiles from the Mosque of el Ainy, Cairo. Fifteenth century. J. Bourgoin, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 3	105
103.	Inlaid marble panel from a house at Cairo. Fifteenth century. J. Bourgoin, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 20	106
104.	Inlaid wooden panel from Sizergh Castle. Victoria and Albert Museum. English, sixteenth century	107
105.	Border of woven tapestry. Musée de Cluny, Paris. Flemish, fifteenth century	109
106.	Illustration engraved upon wood. From Carolus Clusius, <i>Rariorum Plantarum Historia</i> , Antwerp, 1601, p. 7.	110
107.	Detail of design of a painted leather screen. English, eighteenth century	111
108.	Portion of an illuminated miniature in a manuscript. French, fourteenth century	113
109.	Design from a textile from the background of an early German picture. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 85	114
110.	Carved stone bas-relief from the Temple of Karnak. Mariette Bey, <i>Karnak, Étude topographique et archéologique</i> . J. C. Hinrichs, Leipzig, 1875, Plate 31	115
111.	Painted vase from Crete. D. G. Hogarth, 'Bronze Age Vases from Zakro,' <i>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> . Macmillan, London, vol. xxii, p. 333, Plate 12	116
112.	Portion of a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Syrian, fifteenth century	117
113.	Jug of painted glazed earthenware. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	118
114.	Portion of a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, fifteenth or sixteenth century	119
115.	Detail from a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	120

FIGURE

	PAGE
116. Detail from a painted glazed earthenware dish. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	120
117. Portion of a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	121
118. Portion of a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Syrian, seventeenth century	122
119. Detail from a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, fifteenth or sixteenth century	123
120. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Museo Nazionale, Florence. Italian, sixteenth century	124
121. Detail from a carpet from the Mosque of Ardebil. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, dated A. D. 1540	125
122. Detail from a carpet. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, seventeenth century	125
123. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Saracenic-Italian, thirteenth or fourteenth century. Julius Lessing, <i>Gewebesammlung des Königlichen Kunstgewerbe-Museums zu Berlin</i> . Ernst Wasmuth, Berlin, 1900	126
124. Detail from a painted rood-screen at Ranworth Church, Norfolk. English, fifteenth century	127
125. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Museo Nazionale, Florence. Italian, sixteenth century	127
126. Design formed by powdering disks over a surface	128
127. Design formed by powdering squares over a surface	129
128. Two paving tiles. Victoria and Albert Museum. English, fourteenth century	130
129. Design from a pavement in an early Italian picture	131
130. Wall decoration represented in a fresco by Giotto in the Bardi Chapel, Church of Santa Croce, Florence. Thirteenth century	131
131. Inlaid marble panel from ambo by Laurentius Cosma in the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, Rome. Thirteenth century	132
132. Detail of an inlaid marble panel from an ambo by Laurentius Cosma in the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, Rome. Thirteenth century	133
133, 134. Geometrical designs for tile work. Developed from working drawings in the collection formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	134, 135
135, 136. Working drawings of geometrical designs for tile-work. From the Collection formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	137
137. Analysis of the design of a painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Saracenic	138

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

15

FIGURE

PAGE

- | | | |
|-----------|---|----------|
| 138. | Painted wall decoration. Coptic, fifth or sixth century.
Jean Clédat, 'Le Monastère et la nécropole de Baôuit.' <i>Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie orientale du Caire</i> | 139 |
| 139. | Panels from key-pattern borders on Attic vases.
British Museum. Attic, fifth century B.C. | 140 |
| 140. | Design from the embroidered vest of Assur-bani-pal.
From an Assyrian bas-relief. British Museum,
seventh century B.C. | 140 |
| 141. | Figure of Saint John Chrysostom in mosaic. From
the Baptistry of Saint Mark's, Venice | 141 |
| 142. | Woven fabric, eleventh or twelfth century. F. Fischbach,
<i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 159 | 142 |
| 143. | Design from a woven silk fabric. Byzantine. Paul
Schulze, 'History and development of Pattern
designing in Textiles.' <i>Journal of the Society of
Arts</i> , London, vol. xli, p. 534 | 143 |
| 144. | Pierced stone window from the Cathedral of Grado.
Sixth century. Raffaele Cattaneo, <i>Architecture in
Italy from the sixth to the eleventh century</i> . T. Fisher
Unwin, London, 1896, p. 65 | 145 |
| 145, 146. | Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria
and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century | 146, 147 |
| 147. | Design from a painted glazed earthenware tile. Afghan.
<i>Journal of Indian Art</i> , London, vol. v, p. 90 | 148 |
| 148. | Scheme of a design carved in plaster in Hakim's
Bath at Fatehpur Sikri. Mogul, sixteenth century.
E. H. Hankin, 'On some discoveries in the
Methods of Design employed in Mohammedan
Art,' <i>Journal of the Society of Arts</i> , London, vol.
liii, p. 461 | 148 |
| 149. | Design painted on glazed earthenware tiles. Victoria
and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fifteenth
century | 149 |
| 150. | Design formed of overlapping disks | 150 |
| 151. | Design from a painted ceiling. Ippolito Rosellini, <i>I
Monumenti dell'Egitto e della Nubia</i> , Pisa, 1834,
vol ii, Plate LXX | 150 |
| 152. | Design inlaid in marble. From a panel from Volterra.
Victoria and Albert Museum. Italian, fourteenth
century | 151 |
| 153. | Design of paving tiles. Fourteenth century. A. de
Caumont, <i>Abécédaire d'archéologie</i> , Le Blanc
Hardel, Caen, 1886, p. 674 | 151 |
| 154. | Design from a tomb. Lower Church of San Francesco
at Assisi | 151 |

FIGURE

	PAGE
155. Rice dish of painted glazed earthenware. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, fifteenth to seventeenth century	152
156. Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	153
157. Silk damask. Victoria and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fifteenth century	155
158. Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	156
159. Rose-window. South Transept. Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris. Thirteenth century	157
160, 161. Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	158, 159
162. Scheme of Oriental border design	160
163. Scheme of Persian panel decoration	160
164. Design of a panel. From the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	161
165. Portion of a set of painted glazed earthenware tiles. Victoria and Albert Museum. Syrian, fifteenth century	162
166. Painted glazed earthenware tile. Afghan. <i>Journal of Indian Art</i> , London, vol. v, p. 51	163
167. Panel from the inlaid marble pavement of the Baptistry, Florence. Thirteenth century	163
168. Design from a textile in an early Italian picture. Museo Civico, Pisa	164
169. Design from a textile in a picture by Fra Angelico. Palazzo del Municipio, Perugia	165
170. Diagram showing construction of a decorative element. The element is from a textile in an early Italian picture in the Museo Civico, Pisa	166
171. Elements from primitive painted pottery from Rhodes. British Museum	167
172. Carved stone cross from a grave-stone, British Museum. Coptic	167
173. Carved stone cross. From a drawing by Mr. R. W. Schultz. Byzantine	167
174. Carved stone moulding. Museo dell' Estuario, Torcello. Byzantine	168
175. Carved stone panel. Assyrian. G. Perrot and C. Chipiez, <i>La Chaldee et l'Assyrie</i> . Hachette, Paris, 1884, p. 317	168
176. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum. Byzantine or Syrian, seventh to ninth century	169
177. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert	169

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

17

FIGURE

		PAGE
	Museum. Byzantine or Syrian, fifth to seventh century	169
178, 179.	Details from an enamelled glass lamp. Cairo	170
180.	Woven silk fabric. Saracenic, twelfth or thirteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	172
181.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Sicilian gold tissue of the eleventh century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 12	173
182.	Device engraved upon wood. From a Venetian printed book. Fifteenth century. F. Ongania, <i>L'Arte della Stampa</i> , Venice, 1894, vol. i, p. 99	173
183.	Antefixa of terra-cotta from Cumae. Victoria and Albert Museum. Italo-Greek, second or third century B.C.	174
184, 185.	Bird and beast from wall-paintings. Rossellini, <i>op. cit.</i> , vol. ii, Plates XIII and XXIII	175, 176
186.	The English heraldic lion. From a drawing by Mr. Gabriel Bunney of an example formerly in the Painted Chamber of the Palace of Westminster. English, thirteenth century	178
187.	Gorgon's Head, from an Attic painted vase	179
188.	Woven fabric. German, thirteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	179
189.	Woven silk fabric. Sicilian, eleventh or thirteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	180
190.	Mosaic panel from the ambo of the Cathedral of Ravello. <i>Revue de l'Architecture</i> , Paris, 1855, vol. xiii	181
191.	Detail from a woven silk fabric. Italian, sixteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 89	181
192.	Design formed of vertical bands	183
193.	Design formed of diagonal lines	184
194.	Design formed of horizontal bands	184
195.	Painted vase from Crete. R. M. Dawkins, 'Pottery from Zakro,' <i>The Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> , Macmillan, London, vol. xxiii, p. 253	185
196.	Scheme of decoration of band-work by interchange of parts	186
197.	Band designs decorated by interchange of parts. From the inlaid marble pavement of the Baptistery, Florence. Thirteenth century	186
198.	Transverse division of bands	187
199.	Design decorating a pair of shoes. English, fourteenth century. Dr. Rock, <i>The Church of Our Fathers</i> , London, 1849, vol. ii, p. 240	187
200.	Scheme of border design from a cast of a carved stone panel from a palace at Fatehpur Sikri. Victoria and Albert Museum. Mogul, sixteenth century	188

FIGURE

PAGE

201.	Painted decoration from the Church of Chanoux, Vienne. Eleventh or twelfth century. P. Gelis- Didot and H. Laffillée, <i>La Peinture décorative en France du XI^e au XVI^e siècle</i> , May et Motteoz, Paris, 1888-91	188
202.	Three painted glazed earthenware tiles from Toledo. Victoria and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fifteenth century	189
203.	Carved stone panel from the destroyed cancellum of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame-du-Puy. Musée Crozatier, Le Puy-en-Velay	190
204.	Schemes of decoration of band-work, longitudinal divisions	191
205.	Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	192
206.	Band design. Ornament of woven tapestry from a linen vestment. Victoria and Albert Museum. Egypto- Roman, second or third century	192
207.	Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	192
208.	Guilloche ornament carved in stone	193
209.	Detail from an embroidered cope. English, fourteenth century	193
210, 211.	Border designs from painted glazed earthenware tiles. Victoria and Albert Museum. Syrian, seven- teenth century	194
212.	Border design from a painted glazed earthenware tile chimneypiece. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, dated A.D. 1731	195
213.	Border design from the Corale di Gian Galeazzo in the Church of Sant' Ambrogio, Milan. Italian, four- teenth century	196
214.	Detail of a carved stone capital in the Chapel of the Archbishop's Palace, Ravenna	197
215.	Corinthian capital in the portico of the Pantheon, Rome. First century B.C.	198
216.	Detail of ornament from a carved marble column. Door of the Baptistry, Pisa. Thirteenth century .	199
217.	Inlaid marble panel in the Church of San Vitale, Ravenna. Sixth century	200
218.	Design by an Indian craftsman. From a drawing in the possession of Professor W. R. Lethaby	200
219.	Four diagrams showing construction of design in Fig. 218	201
220.	Example of free type of band decoration	202
221, 222.	Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	203, 204

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

19

FIGURE	PAGE
223. Design formed of simple foliage-bearing stem	205
224. Embroidered linen cover. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turco-Syrian, seventeenth or eighteenth century	206
225, 226. Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	207, 208
227, 228. Surface designs produced by different arrange- ments of Fig. 226	209, 210
229-231. Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	211-13
232. Design imitating the veining of marble	214
233. Design from a cotton-printing block. Indian, nine- teenth century	214
234. Woven silk velvet. Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris. Italian, late fifteenth century	215
235. Woven silk fabric. Italian, sixteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	216
236. Border design from the <i>mihrāb</i> of the Mosque of Sultan Hassan, Cairo	217
237. Surface design developed from Fig. 236	217
238. Woven textile. Italian, sixteenth century. F. Fisch- bach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 154	219
239. Woven textile. German, twelfth to fourteenth century. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 151	220
240. Woven silk brocade. Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, seventeenth century	221
241. Two decorated stem-bands. From a Damascus tile and an Italian woven silk brocade. Sixteenth century	222
242. Ornament of woven tapestry. Egypto-Roman, first to third century. M. Gerspach, <i>Les Tapisseries Coptes</i> . Maison Quantin, Paris, 1890, No. 74	223
243. Detail of carved marble panel from the Taj Mahal, Agra. Mogul, sixteenth century	224
244. Carved panel from an ebony cabinet. Museum of Antiquities, Rouen. French, seventeenth century. From a rubbing by Mr. Matthew Dawson	225
245. Design formed of shaped panels	226
246. Detail of decoration of painted glazed earthenware tiles. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish	227
247. Dish of painted glazed earthenware. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, sixteenth century	228
248. Four examples of band decoration	228
249. Mycenaean painted vase. Baumeister, <i>Denkmäler des klassischen Altertums</i> . Oldenburg. Munich and Leipsic, 1888, p. 1939	228
250, 251. Designs from cotton-printing blocks. Indian, nineteenth century	229, 230

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE		PAGE
252.	Border designs from painted wall decoration. Museo delle Terme, Rome	231
253.	Woven tapestry. Egypto-Roman, first to third century. M. Gerspach, <i>op. cit.</i> , No. 86	232
254.	Band designs painted upon mouldings of the Rood Screen of the church of Saint Botolph, Trunch, Norfolk. English, dated 1502	233
255.	Border of a mosaic pavement from Utica. British Museum. Roman	234
256.	Border of a mosaic pavement from Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli. Roman	234
257.	Frieze of enamelled bricks from the palace of Darius I, Susa. From the reproduction in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Persian, sixth century B.C. . . .	235
258.	Wall cresting. Saracenic	235
259.	Border designs from wall paintings in the lower church of San Clemente, Rome. Ninth century	236
260.	Border designs	236
261.	Fragment of moulded terra-cotta, Cathedral of Notre-Dame-du-Puy. Musée Crozatier, Le Puy-en-Velay. Roman	237
262.	Two border designs	237
263.	Border design. Saracenic, sixteenth century. Prisse d'Avesnes, <i>La Décoration Arabe</i> . J. Savoy, Paris, 1885, Plate 74	238
264.	Two border designs	238
265.	Heraldic dividing lines	239
266.	Heraldic designs	240
267.	Inlaid marble columns from the West front of the Church of San Michele at Lucca. Thirteenth century	240
268.	Design formed of decorated chevrons	241
269.	Design for a pavement. From the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	242
270.	Two border designs	243
271.	Painted glazed earthenware tile. Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, seventeenth century	243
272.	Border designs from the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	244
273.	The same designs partly filled in with colour	244
274.	Painted glazed earthenware tile. From a reproduction of a Syrian original	245
275.	Circular border design	246
276.	Two border designs from rugs in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Turkish, eighteenth century, and Persian, sixteenth century	246

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

21

FIGURE

PAGE

277-279. From inlaid friezes of painted glazed earthenware tile mosaics in the Mosque of Wazir Khan, Lahore. Col. S. S. Jacob, <i>Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details</i> . Bernard Quaritch, London, 1898, Part X, Plates 33 and 34	247, 248
280. Woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fourteenth century	249
281, 282. Analysis of scheme of design in Fig. 280	250
283. Design formed of decorated chevrons	251
284. Design (inlaid in marble) and its analysis. From the Fountain of el Bordenyeh, Cairo. J. Bourgoin, <i>op. cit.</i> , p. 39	252
285. Band design from a glazed and lustred earthenware vase. Egyptian, eleventh century. H. Saladin and G. Migeon, <i>Manuel d'Art Musulman</i> . A. Picard, Paris, 1907, vol. ii, p. 274	253
286. Painted glazed earthenware brick from Susa. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Persian, sixth century B.C.	253
287. Painted terra-cotta moulding. Athens. Max Collignon, <i>Manuel de l'Archéologie Grecque</i> . A. Quantin, Paris, p. 80	253
288, 289. Embroidered borders from vestments in the Imperial Treasury, Vienna. Sicilian, twelfth century. F. Bock, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 30	254
290. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Saracenic-Italian, thirteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	255
291. Design from a woven fabric in an early Italian picture at Pèrugia. A. Venturi, <i>Storia dell' arte italiana</i> . A. Hoepli, Milan, vol. v, p. 42	256
292. Detail of painted decoration from the rood screen of Ranworth Church, Norfolk. From a drawing by Mr. W. T. Cleobury in the Victoria and Albert Museum	257
293. Wall cresting from a Mohammedan building at Gulburga	257
294. Wooden cresting to choir stalls, Norwich Cathedral. Fifteenth century	258
295. Design from a textile in a picture by Carlo Crivelli, in the National Gallery. Italian, fifteenth century. S. Vacher, <i>Fifteenth-century Italian Ornament</i> . Bernard Quaritch, London, 1886, No. 18	259
296-299. Designs formed of crossed bands	261-3
300. Mosaic pavement from Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli. Roman	263
301. Design from a textile in a fresco by Orcagna, in the Campo Santo, Pisa. Fourteenth century	264
302. Design formed of crossed bands	265

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE		PAGE
303.	Design of a mosaic pavement. Museo d'Antichità, Trieste. Roman	265
304.	Analysis of design in Fig. 303	265
305, 306.	Designs from painted ceilings. Egyptian. Rosselini, <i>op. cit.</i> , vol. ii, Plates LXXIII and LXXII	266, 267
307.	Design from an Attic painted vase. British Museum. Sixth century B.C.	268
308.	Portion of a carved stone panel from the destroyed <i>cancellum</i> of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame-du-Puy. Musée Crozatier, Le Puy-en-Velay	268
309.	Painted glazed earthenware tile. From a reproduction of a Syrian original	269
310.	Panel from the inlaid marble pavement, Church of San Clemente, Rome	269
311.	Design from a cotton-printing block. Victoria and Albert Museum. Indian, nineteenth century	270
312.	Border design formed by imposing a design upon itself	271
313, 314.	Designs from the backgrounds of miniatures of an illuminated manuscript. French, fourteenth century	272, 273
315.	Design formed of crossed bands	273
316.	Design formed of crossed bands. From a miniature in an illuminated manuscript. Persian, sixteenth century	274
317.	Woven silk fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum, Persian, dated A.D. 1612	275
318, 319.	Two painted glazed earthenware tiles from Toledo, and analysis of their designs. Victoria and Albert Museum. Hispano-Moresque, fifteenth century	276
320.	Silk damask. Victoria and Albert Museum. Italian, sixteenth century	276
321, 322.	Designs formed of crossed bands	277, 278
323.	Design for a pavement. From the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	279
324.	Designs formed of crossed bands	280
325.	Design for a pavement. From the collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber. Victoria and Albert Museum	281
326.	Design formed by counterchanging an element	284
327.	Heraldic counterchange design. German, sixteenth century	285
328.	Design formed by counterchanging an element	285
329.	Basis of design in Fig. 328	286
330-333.	Single and double counterchange designs and bases of same	286-8
334.	Design from painted decoration, Cairo	288

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

23

FIGURE

FIGURE	PAGE
335. Basis of design in Fig. 334	289
336. Design from painted glazed earthenware tiles. Afghan. <i>Journal of Indian Art</i> , London, vol. v, p. 53	290
337. Basis of design in Fig. 336	290
338. Design formed of crossed bands	291
339. Analysis of design in Fig. 338	292
340. Design formed by counterchanging an element	292
341. Three examples of shaped panels	293
342. Exercises in counterchanging	294
343. Counterchange design decorated with floral-work	295
344. 345. Triple counterchange designs	296
346. Development of triple counterchange design	297
347. Design from a panel in a woven silk fabric. The dalmatic of William II of Sicily. Regensburg Cathedral. Sicilian, late twelfth century. F. Fisch- bach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 144	297
348. Detail from an inlaid marble pavement	297
349. Detail from a woven silk fabric. Venetian, fifteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	298
350. Inlaid marble pavement from the Cappella Reale, Palermo. From a rubbing by W. Burges, A.R.A. Victoria and Albert Museum	299
351. Mosaic panel from the ambo of the Cathedral of Ravello. <i>Revue de l'Architecture</i> , Paris, 1855, vol. xiii	300
352. Design from the background of a picture by Pinto- ricchino. Palazzo del Municipio, Perugia. Fifteenth century	301
353. Detail of a design from a vestment in a fresco by Giotto. Arena Chapel, Padua. Thirteenth century.	302
354. 355. Two wood engravings of knots, by Albert Dürer. after originals by Leonardo da Vinci. Fifteenth century. G. Hirth, <i>Album de la Renaissance</i> , Munich and Leipsic, Plates 18 and 98	303, 304
356. Design formed of interlacing bands, by Leonardo da Vinci. From <i>Il Codice Atlantico</i>	305
357. Decoration of a dome at Cairo. Fourteenth century. Prisse d'Avesnes, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 96	306
358. Knot design from a painted glazed earthenware dish. Muséede Cluny, Paris. Turkish, sixteenth century	307
359. Knot design. Turkish, sixteenth century. Francisque Pellegrin, <i>La Fleur de la science de Pourtraicture</i> , 1530, plate 52. Reprinted by J. Schemit, Paris, 1908	308
360. Two knot designs painted upon an ivory box. Victoria and Albert Museum. Sicilian-Saracenic, thirteenth century	308
361. Detail from a mosaic pavement at Constantine,	

FIGURE

		PAGE
	Algeria. From the collection of drawings of mosaics formed by Dr. Robert Wollaston. Victoria and Albert Museum	309
362.	Ornament of woven tapestry from a linen fabric. Victoria and Albert Museum. Egypto-Roman, second or third century	309
363.	Exercises in knotted line designing	310
364.	Exercise in interlacing line designing	311
365.	Exercises in knotted line designing	312
366.	Labyrinth in black and white stone from the nave of the Cathedral of Sens. Thirteenth century. Camille Enlart, <i>Manuel d'Archéologie Française</i> . A. Picard, Paris, 1902, vol. i, p. 720	313
367.	Labyrinth in black and white stone from the nave of the Cathedral of Amiens. Thirteenth century. Camille Enlart, <i>op. cit.</i> , vol. i, p. 721	314
368.	Labyrinth, from a Cretan coin. Professor W. R. Lethaby, <i>Architecture, Mysticism and Myth</i> . Percival, London, 1892, p. 153	315
369.	Woven silk fabric. Hispano-Moresque, fourteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	315
370.	Woven silk fabric. Spanish, sixteenth century. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	316
371.	Dish of lustred glazed earthenware by Master Giorgio, Gubbio. Dated 1537. Victoria and Albert Museum	316
372.	Initial letter engraved upon wood. From a Venetian printed book. Fifteenth century. F. Ongania, <i>op. cit.</i> , vol. i, p. 93	317
373.	Inlaid panel from a chess-board	317
374.	Inlaid marble panel. In the Great Mosque at Damascus. Late eleventh century. R. Phené Spiers, 'The Great Mosque of the Omeiyades, Damascus.' <i>Architectural Review</i> , vol. viii, p. 160	318
375.	Window in the central part of the Great Mosque, Damascus. Early eighth century	318
376.	Woven silk fabric. Hispano-Moresque. J. Lessing, <i>op. cit.</i>	319
377.	Woven silk fabric. Hispano-Moresque. F. Fischbach, <i>op. cit.</i> , Plate 157	320
378.	Carved stone panel from the Wekala of Kait Bey, Cairo. Fifteenth century. S. Lane-Poole, <i>The Art of the Saracens in Egypt</i> . Chapman and Hall, London, 1886, Part i, p. 114	321
379.	Analysis of design in Fig. 297	322
380.	Detail of a mosaic pavement, from the floor of the Ziza, Palermo. From a rubbing by W. Burges, A.R.A. Victoria and Albert Museum	323



CHAPTER I

THE ORIGIN OF DECORATION

Spiritual Aim of Decorative Art.—Decorative Function of Patterns.—Origin of Patterns ancient and involved.—The Informative Idea.—The Imitative Idea.—Development of the Decorative Idea.—Examples of the Evolution of Decorative from Inscriptive Work.—Evolution of Formal from Pictorial Work.—Value of Primitive Patterns.

THE art of designing decorative patterns, in the hands of those master craftsmen,—painters, carvers, weavers, and others,—who carried it to the highest perfection, attained a measure of the spirituality essential to greatness in all art. Its resplendent or delicate combinations of form and colour became the means of expressing emotions, of producing many kinds of deliberately calculated effects. A great piece of design was made to convey an impression of nobility, gravity, sweetness, or gaiety, or whatever quality the occasion of its use might demand.

However much the genius of the masters, who are our guides and authorities in the composition of patterns, may have realized or failed to attain this ideal, both they and their followers of less conspicuous ability undertook their tasks with the same fundamental intention. Their work is primarily *decorative*. To those conversant with examples such as occur in the pictures of the early Italian painters, where the intimate association of designs of the highest order with the art of the times is so faithfully reflected, it may be difficult to assume that the designing of patterns could ever have been undertaken with any other intention than that of adding some decoration to an object; but it is by no means certain that this

I.
Spiritual
aim of
decora-
tive art.

II.
Decora-
tive func-
tion of
patterns.

idea supplied the creative impulse that originally produced them. It would be impossible to point out an example certainly lacking all decorative intention, but there are many designs in which this plays a part so subordinate that it cannot have occupied the most important place in the calculations of the designers, since their attention must have been absorbed by considerations which were more essential to their understanding of the work.

III.
Origin of
patterns
ancient
and in-
volved.

The study of pattern-composition is that of a very complex phase of intellectual activity, one that has undergone continuous development from the most remote antiquity down to our own time. There have been at work moulding its course many obscure and forgotten influences, of which curious traces sometimes linger in the work of to-day. Patterns would seem to owe their origin to a variety of requirements the fulfilment of which has led their makers to pursue widely different aims, with the result that the existence of several quite distinct fundamental ideas of design can be clearly established, such as the Informative and Imitative as well as the Decorative.

IV.
The in-
formative
idea.

The rude markings traced by prehistoric man upon his personal belongings cannot be deemed the origin of any particular one of the numerous highly specialized arts that have arisen out of them. In



FIG. I.

these may be traced the beginnings of heraldic, inscriptive, and even geometrical work as well as of decoration. Marks of identity, signs, and symbolical representations affording various kinds of information, have been in use from very early times. What

is termed 'primitive decoration', for want of a better definition of its nature, had probably as often as not an information-giving or other strictly utilitarian use, to the right understanding of which we have lost the clue. The design (Fig. 1) of fantastically arranged chevrons and chequers, incised round a solid chalk 'drum', from a Yorkshire barrow, and now in the British Museum, might well be regarded as a purely decorative pattern of primitive workmanship. But upon comparing this with Fig. 2, cut upon a bamboo from the Malay peninsula, a design which has been fully explained¹ as a formalized picture-inscription, a magical charm against certain skin diseases, it becomes apparent that the English example may also possess some occult signification, since it is a design of somewhat similar composition and the product of an early stage of civilization. It must never be assumed that a design has no signification because its meaning is not immediately apparent, for information-giving patterns cannot be understood instinctively any more than spoken languages can be interpreted without study.

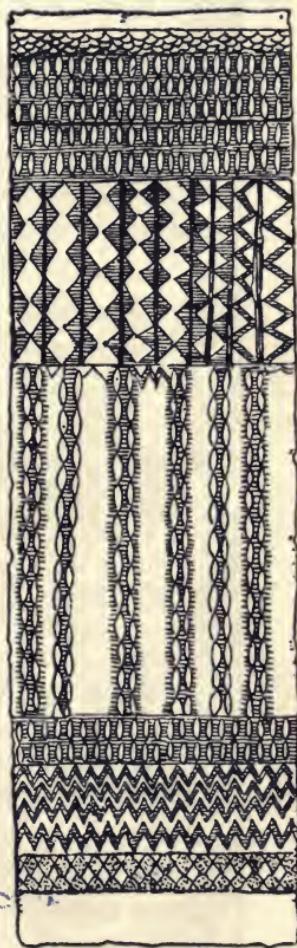


FIG. 2.

¹ Professor Haddon (*Evolution of Decorative Art*, London, 1895, p. 243) gives a description of this device, which he reproduces from an account of Mr. H. Vaughan Stevens's observations, edited by A. Grünwedel, in the *Zeitschr. für Ethnologie*, vols. xxv and xxvi.

Although designs have long since lost their information-giving function, something of this character



FIG. 3.

is found in their composition up to a very late period, perhaps up to the present day. Even during the

period when the most complete conception of their decorative use was arrived at, we find distinct examples of the survival of the informative idea, long after the development of writing had provided other means of expressing the same information. In Fig. 3 we have a design of this kind speaking plainly of a Louis, King of France, to those who understand the language it employs.

Possibly it is to the operations of the imitative faculty that the earliest examples of something akin to deliberate decoration are due. A curious habit of mind which persistently demands that everything should always present its usual appearance has impelled mediaeval and modern decorators to rule false masonry joints upon plastered

V.
The imi-
tative
idea.

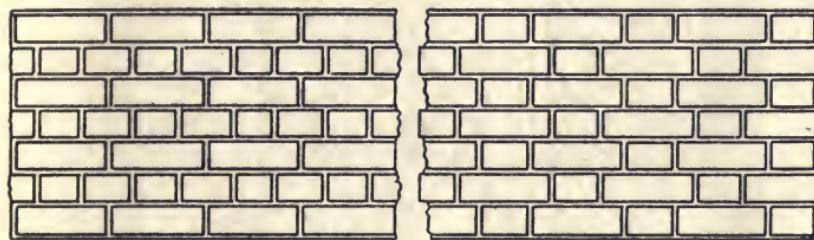


FIG. 4.

walls, and bronze-age metal workers to engrave upon the sockets of their spear-heads lines imitating the binding thongs with which their ancestors of the stone age secured theirs to the shafts. This instinct makes the craftsman aware of a blank appearance in his work and at the same time points out the way to fill it. It is still in operation, producing all kinds of strange anomalies, such as linoleum floor coverings with printed designs resembling woven carpets, and blue and white tile-patterned wall-papers.

That orderly arrangement which is more or less the accidental result of constructive processes is a suggestive basis of pattern-work which must have existed from very early times. The so-called English and Flemish 'bonds', or arrangements of

bricks, produce two characteristic patterns in wall faces (see Fig. 4) which have resulted from two different ways of putting the same units together. Such patterns,

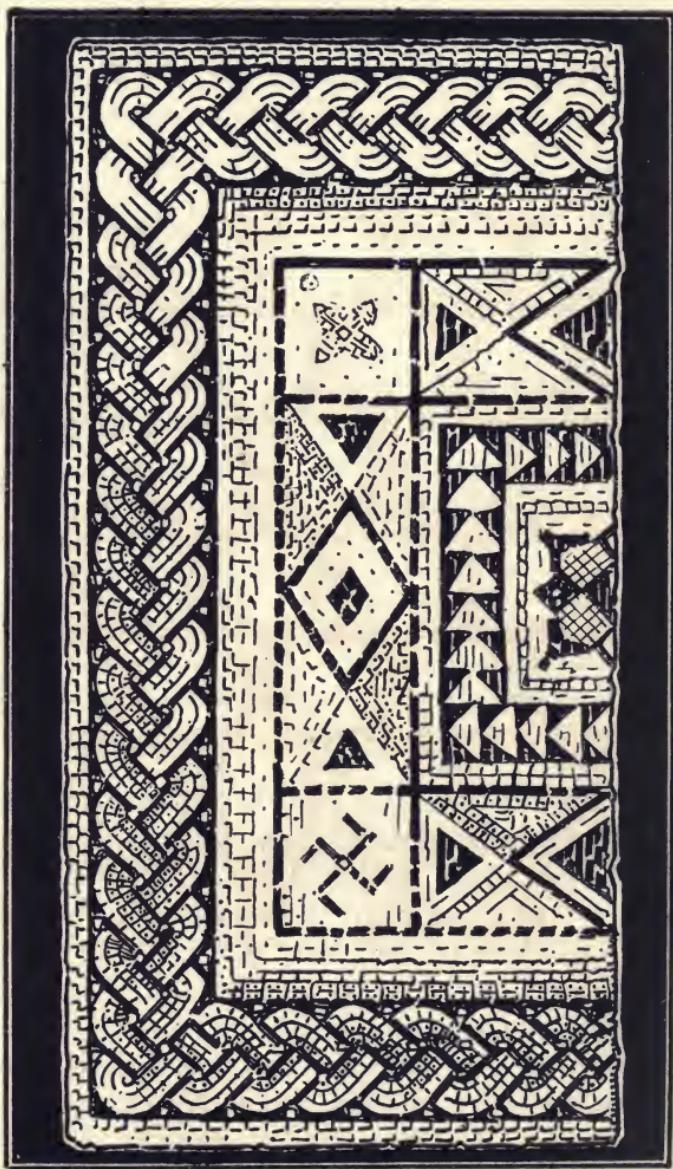


FIG. 5.

though the result of the unconscious efforts of good workmanship, form the basis of many purely decorative designs. Other patterns of the same type

represent the interlacings of plaited bands or loosely entwined knots, or reproduce the various forms of wooden lattice-work. Patterns of the former class form excellent surface decoration, gaining vigour and interest from the evenly distributed light over-and-under interweaving that seems to hold them firmly together. The plaited bands of three or more cords which are commonly found surrounding the margins

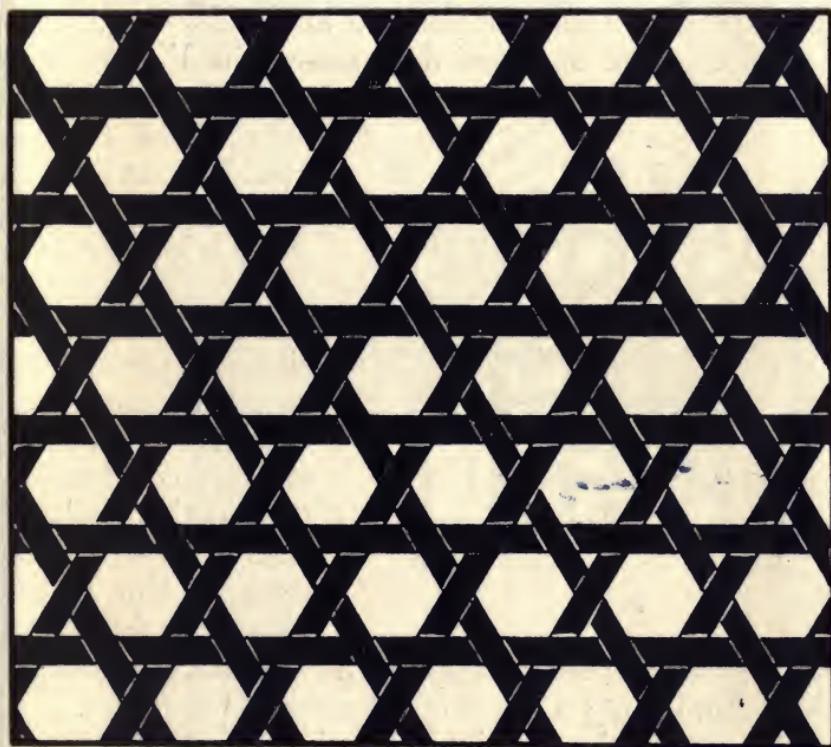


FIG. 6.

of Roman mosaic panels are good examples; the panel shown in Fig. 5, from the Museum of the Maison-Carrée at Nîmes, gives the most usual form of this border, and Fig. 6 shows a piece of surface decoration of the same character. Often very simple interlacing patterns are found used with very good effect, as may be seen in Fig. 7, the inlaid marble filling of a panel in the little carved arcade on the

base of a pulpit in the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli in Rome, a fragment of the original constructed by Laurentius Cosma early in the thirteenth century. The piece of knot-work, which so admirably enriches the fine letter on page 33 (Fig. 8), is an example of a more complicated development of this idea. It is English, of late twelfth-century design, from the great manuscript Bible preserved in Winchester Cathedral. The figure subjects occupying the interior spaces of the letter are omitted in the drawing.

Lattice-work such as that shown in Fig. 9, the



FIG. 7.

of a Roman marble slab, upon which is carved a design clearly imitating a piece of wooden construction.

Whatever the original function of design may have been, in process of time all its primitive signification became obscured, though never entirely eliminated, by the recognition and cultivation of its purely decorative possibilities. This development was furthered by the specialization of several of its diverse functions into distinct arts, such as writing and heraldry, until in due course Decoration stood alone and unencumbered as a separate art having a sphere of action entirely its own. Picture-writings, symbols, imitative representations of structural forms

or of natural objects, everything that during the earlier state of the art had been incorporated into its

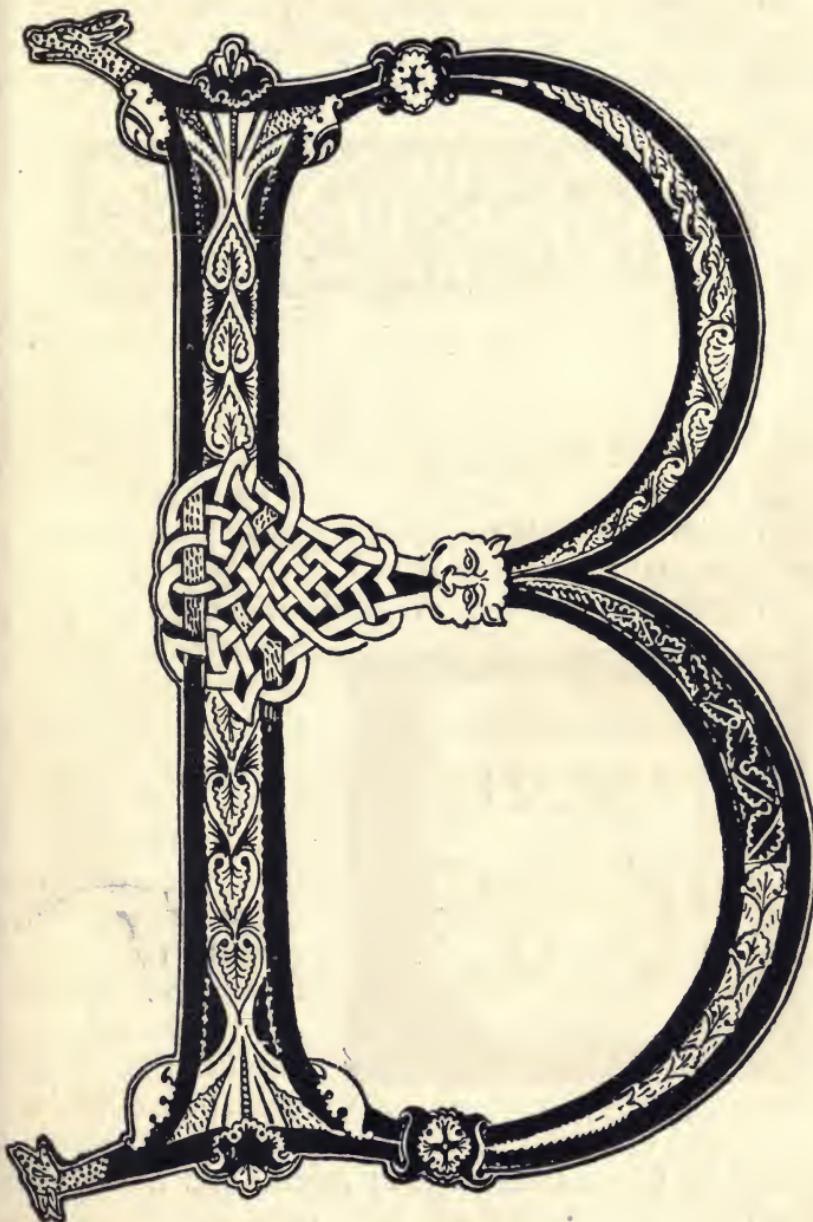


FIG. 8.

complex system, was turned to a new use by this all-absorbing decorative sense without any regard to what its original purpose might have been.

VII. Examples of the evolution of decorative inscriptive work. The decorative use of the picture-writings and magical charms of earlier times by designers who disregarded or were unacquainted with their meanings may be compared with the treatment that written inscriptions have received at the hands of decorators



FIG. 9.

of a later date. This forms a curious episode in the history of design, which can be followed out in considerable detail and be made to afford a clear illustration of one of the changes to which decorative art is constantly subjected.

The Sicilian weavers, often Saracens, who worked

for oriental markets and followed the fashions of the East in their designs, were frequently called upon to insert in their patterns pious inscriptions, names, or verses from the Koran. A piece of late twelfth-century silk brocade of Sicilian manufacture is



FIG. 10.

shown in Fig. 11 bearing, in Arabic, an inscription (reading 'GLORY, VICTORY, AND LONG LIFE !') which adds a rich ornamental flourish to the design.

The great reputation achieved by the Sicilian weavers led to the imitation of their fabrics by the rival looms of the north, where their language was



FIG. II.

little known. In these imitations the forms of the letters degenerated until they became mere meaningless scribbles, and presently little decorative passages deliberately simulating the appearance of Arabic writing were inserted in the newly designed fabrics, perhaps from a fraudulent desire of the weavers to stamp their work with the merit of Oriental origin, but probably from sheer force of habit. The curious combinations of forms on the borders edging the robes worn by figures in pictures by Fra Angelico and other Italian painters are no doubt degenerate inscriptions based upon Saracenic originals, as is also the specimen given in Fig. 12 from the frame of a painted panel in the Academy at Florence.



FIG. 12.

The use of these degenerate inscription-designs was common in the work of other craftsmen besides the painter and the weaver. The carver, the enameller, and the embroiderer also employed the same decorative device, which eventually became recognized as a perfectly legitimate piece of mysterious-looking ornament of very usual occurrence. The twelfth-century wooden doors of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Le Puy-en-Velay, carved in low relief with panels representing scenes from New Testament history, with explanatory verses in Latin, are surrounded with a border of highly ornamented Kufic characters; this may be compared with the genuine inscription inserted in the upper panel in the carved door shown in Plate I of fourteenth- or fifteenth-century work from Bokhara. Two panels showing lengths of the marginal decoration of the Le Puy-en-Velay door are given in Fig. 13. A

French archaeologist¹ states that portions of this border are legible inscriptions and reads in them the Mohammedan profession of faith.

Another interesting design (Fig. 14), formed of



FIG. 13.

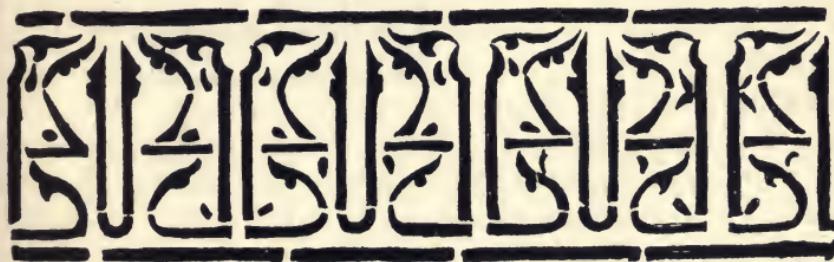


FIG. 14.

¹ M. Longpérier, in whose valuable paper, 'De l'emploi des caractères arabes dans l'ornementation chez les peuples chrétiens de l'occident' (*Revue archéologique*, 1846, p. 700), this type of decoration is treated for probably the first time.

ingeniously cut bricks imbedded in mortar, a frieze from the exterior wall of the eleventh-century Byzantine Church of Saint Luke of Stiris, in Greece, is probably derived from a Kufic inscription. It is apparently a formalized version of one of those fine bands of writing that are common on Eastern buildings, carved in stone or painted upon glazed earthenware tiles. The vigorous brushwork-design painted upon the fifteenth-century Hispano - Moresque Jar shown in Fig. 15 is a last remembrance of the fine calligraphy of a Moorish scribe.¹

VIII.
Evolution
of formal
from
pictorial
work.

The variety of the decorative elements or materials made use of in the composition of patterns is very striking, ranging from the simplest geometrical form to the most elaborate representation of a natural object. The elements of most patterns, even of many purely geometrical ones, are

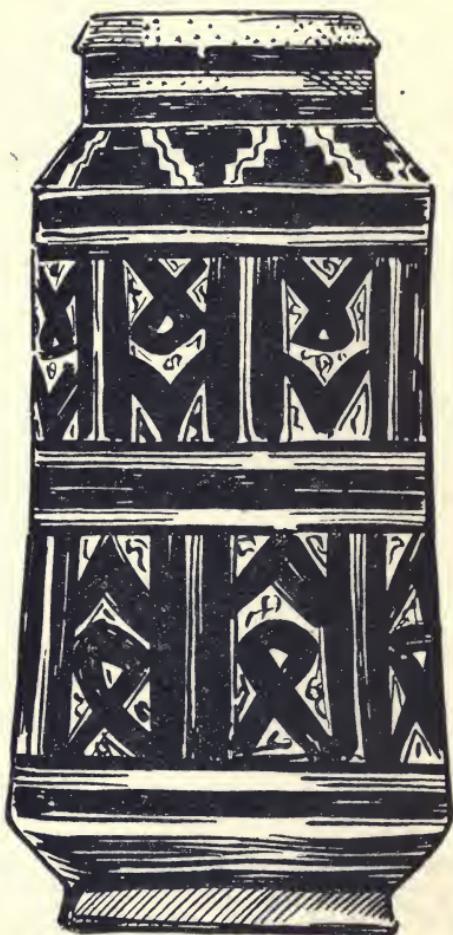


FIG. 15.

¹ Many excellent examples of the evolution of inscriptions upon woven fabrics into decorative work may be studied in the Egyptian-Roman linen fabrics, discovered in tombs at Akhmîm, in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Mr. A. R. Guest ('Arabic Inscriptions in Textiles at South Kensington Museum,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1906, p. 387) has translated many of these inscriptions and pointed out the various stages of their degeneration.

derived from pictorial representations that have from some cause or another put on a formal character. It is a curious fact with regard to the pictorial origin of signs, symbols, and elements of design, that vividly realistic pictures of animals, and even of man himself, are amongst the oldest specimens of handiwork extant. The pictorial drawings of the cave-dwellers distinctly precede the earliest attempts at formal design.

As an example of a geometrical or formalized representation of nature, let us return for a moment to the design in Fig. 2. Here the various bands of ornament stand, it is stated,¹ for the different parts of a curiously involved composition. The lowest represents a river bank with rows of frogs upon it, and an ant-hill above; from this, climbing plants spring upwards into the foliage of a tree, and so on. All naturalistic design shows a remarkable tendency to change into geometrical line-work such as this. Inexpert drawing, constant reproduction of the same subject producing a 'shorthand' version of it, unintelligent copying, and the expression of a design in new materials or by means of unfamiliar tools, are influences that introduce modifications of an original subject and tend to formalize realistic work out of recognition. The little bird in Fig. 16 from the thirteenth-century woven fabric given in Fig. 17 is an example of formalization, and Fig. 18 shows how a border of flowing ornament carved upon a marble ambo in the Cathedral of Ravenna has degenerated in a badly copied imitation preserved in the Museum of that city.

A number of races have produced very distinct designs by the facility with which they have evolved geometrical renderings of naturalistic ornament, borrowed usually from neighbouring countries. In



FIG. 16.

¹ See Professor Haddon, *op. cit.*, p. 243.



FIG. 17.

the intricate and often chaotic patterns of many Oriental rugs formal renderings of typical passages

of foliage work may often be detected. The border design in Fig. 19, from an Oriental rug, is a characteristic adaptation of a familiar theme of which three further examples are given, one from a Persian brocade (see Fig. 20) and two from tile-work at Teheran (Figs. 21 and 22).



FIG. 18.



FIG. 19.

An example of degeneration that has resulted from inaccurate copying is seen in the floral sprig

from a piece of Persian embroidery given in Fig. 23, which is evidently founded on such a design as that of the fine piece of scarlet-grounded seventeenth or eighteenth-century Turkish brocade illustrated on page 43 (Fig. 24). This design is a common one and



FIG. 20.

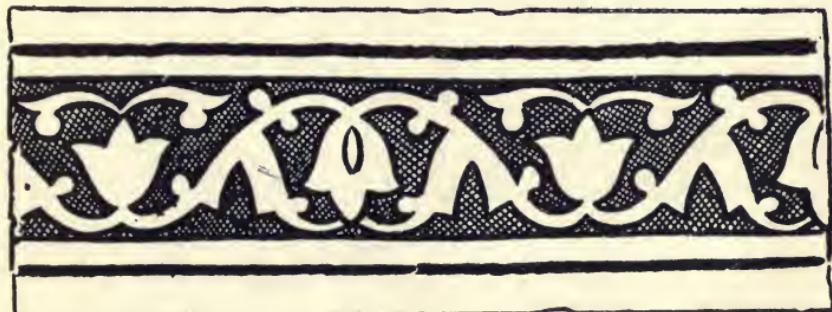


FIG. 21.

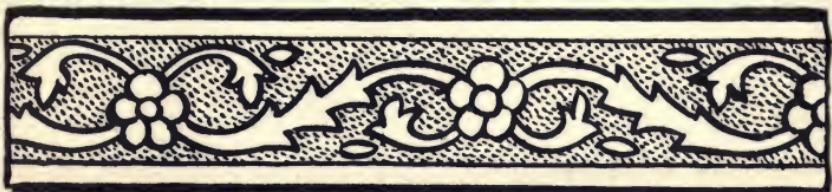


FIG. 22.

frequently occurs on carpets, and brocades, and in glazed earthenware decoration. A further example from a fine Turkish plate is given in Fig. 25.

These examples are interesting as showing some of the changes to which designs are always liable, primitive but the production of fine patterns by means of such patterns. IX.
Value of

agencies as accidental change or degeneration alone is not possible. Patterns that progress—if it is progression—by such means result in something akin to the mastery of the design over the designer, a state of things far removed from that in which work was composed in order to produce a deliberately calculated effect. The work of immature or de-

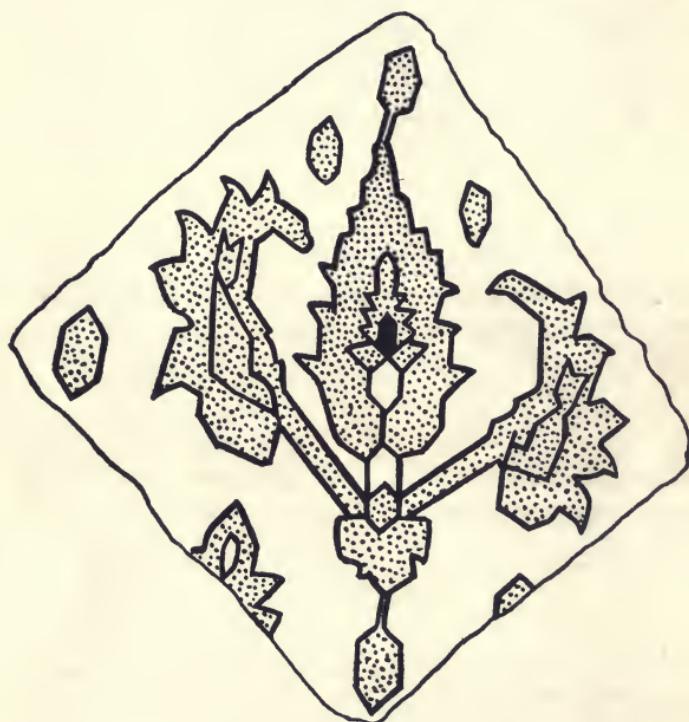


FIG. 23.

generate schools of design exhibiting accidental patterns lacking clear decorative intention is, however, by no means to be neglected. It is true that the ideas of prehistoric man and savages afford an unsatisfactory introduction to the designs of the great masters, for the principles and methods of composition employed by the latter are, if present in the primitive work, in such an elementary stage as to be valueless if studied without reference to their final developments; but early design acquires interest from the



FIG. 24.

fact that the later workers have learned so much from it and made such use of it, often incorporating its elements and materials, endowed with new intentions and vitality, into their own practice. It will help us



FIG. 25.

to understand the masterpieces of pattern-decoration if we occasionally hark back some way along the train of thought from which their designers drew inspiration.

CHAPTER II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TYPICAL FORMS OF ORNAMENT

Great Diversity of Ornament.—Distinct Kinds of Ornament not Peculiar to Particular Crafts.—Examples of Similar Ornament employed by Several Crafts.—Ornament of Wide Distribution derived from Symbolical Representations.—A Well-understood Symbol: the Cross.—A Symbol of Forgotten Meaning: the Svastika.—Examples of the Decorative Use of these Two Symbols.—Ornament derived from Pictorial Symbolical Representations.—The Sacred Tree and its Attendant Genii.—Typical Form.—Ancient Examples.—Examples showing the Geographical and Historical Range of this Ornament.—Palmette Band Designs.

An impression of bewilderment is usually produced by the examination of any large series of designs, such as may be found in a museum or a collection of examples of ancient craftsmanship. The variety of objects displayed, the diversity of technical methods employed in their manufacture and decoration, and, above all, the wealth of beautiful and fantastic ornament used for this purpose, render an orderly review of any considerable number of decorative designs a perplexing though fascinating task.

Painting, carving, inlaying, the whole thousand and one artifices which craftsmen use to enrich their work, appear so much at variance with one another that it might be thought that the designs expressed by each process must be peculiar to itself. This would, however, prove to be a very misleading point of view from which to enter upon the study of decoration, for, as a matter of fact, no design is restricted to any particular craft or method of expression. Close examination of the designs made use of by various great groups of craftsmen leaves no possible doubt that, whilst some modifications of

I.
Great diversity
of ornament.

II.
Distinct kinds of
ornament not pecu-
liar to crafts.

treatment are due to difference of tools and materials, the workers in all the various crafts carried on in a particular place at a particular period have always made

use of the same kinds of ornament. Certain general ideas were the common property of each group of workers, and these ideas varied slowly according to the influences which happened to be brought to bear upon them. The origin and development of the decoration of any nation are inseparably bound up with its history, its migrations, and its commerce. Moreover, it will often be found that the actual number of decorative elements in use at any particular time and place was surprisingly small.

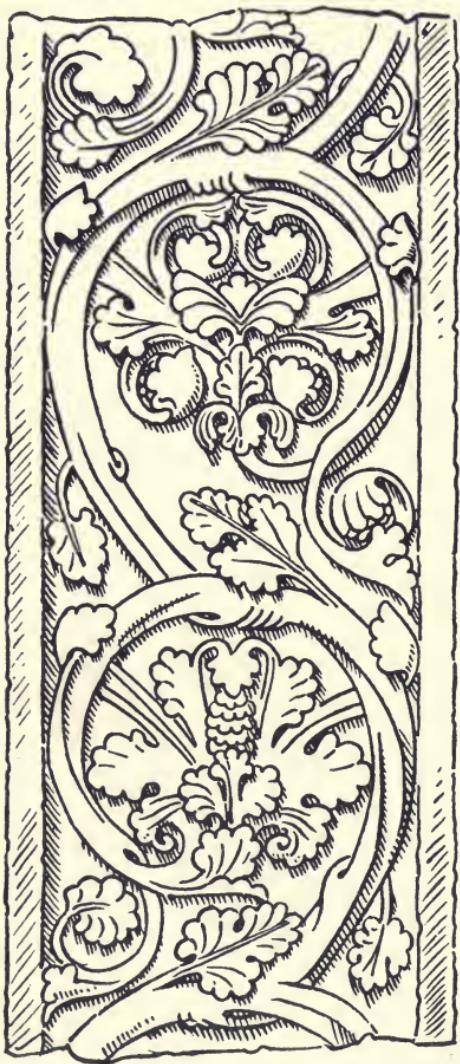


FIG. 26.

III.

Examples given locality and period is carefully studied the of similar unity of the ornament used is very apparent. The ornament employed carved stone pilaster in Fig. 26 from the West door by several of the Cathedral of Saint-Étienne at Sens, of late crafts. twelfth-century work, shows a good specimen of a type of foliage that has been made use of by several

crafts. It is characteristic of the Romanesque school of design developed by the decorators of manuscripts, painters, carvers, and metal workers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These craftsmen, produced a well-defined type of foliage which

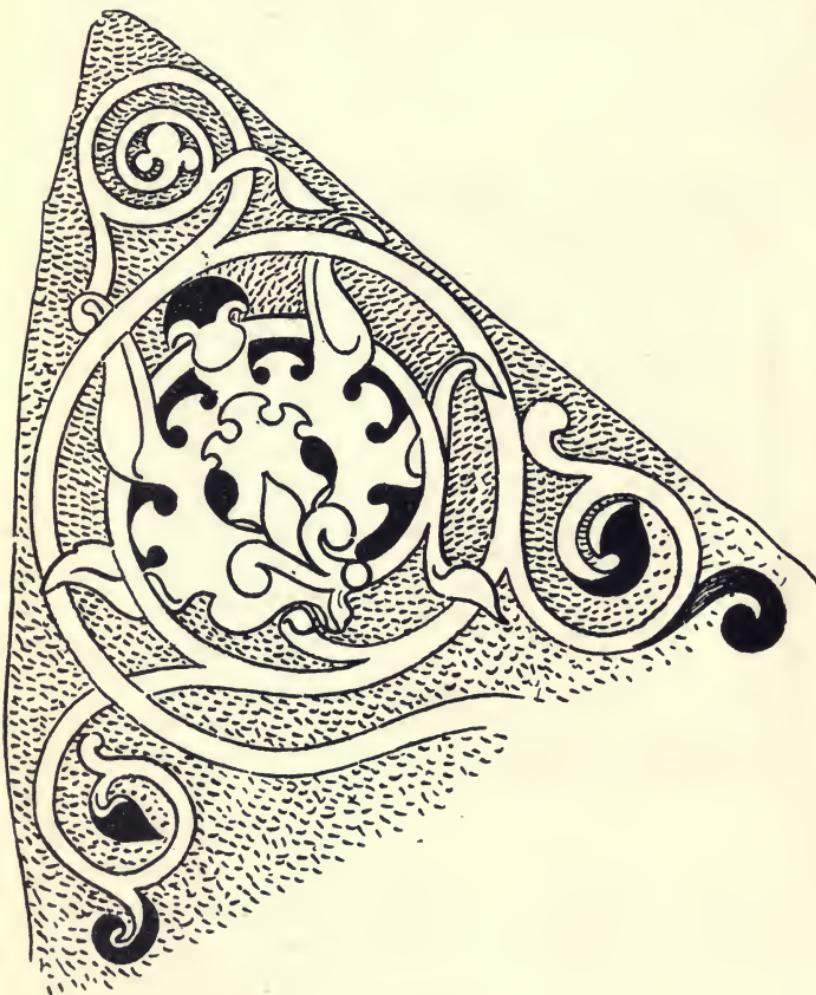


FIG. 27.

was common to all of them. Derived from the characteristic ornamentation of Roman carved friezes and mouldings it went through many variations of the original forms before its final extinction in the full development of thirteenth-century art.

A detail of the decoration of a vault of the Church of Saint-Julien at Petit-Quevilly, near Rouen (see Fig. 27), is an example of a painter's use of the same kind of foliage, and Fig. 28 shows another form of the type in a decorated initial letter from the Winchester Bible. Many examples of this kind of foliated work might be brought together, not always identical, but showing variations of a common type. The carved stone capital, Fig. 29, from the nave of

the Cathedral of Notre - Dame at Saint-Dié is a particularly interesting specimen of the work of this school. Cut in very low relief it is clearly a piece of *carved painting*, an example of the close relationship of the designs used by the two crafts. It was without doubt originally highly coloured, and it represents a transitional stage in the decoration of stone capitals of this form, one in which



FIG. 28.

the carver is coming to the assistance of the painter and lightly cutting out the ornament which it had hitherto been customary to express by means of paint alone upon these flat-sided capitals.

In addition to such ornament as that described above, which has obtained a considerable local development at some particular period, there are other kinds, the occurrence of which is of much greater range, not only geographically but in their continual persistence amongst the craftsmen of many

nations during long periods of time. These are for the most part devices of symbolical meaning, some still known, some forgotten, formal representations of ideas which have, according to the place and period of their use, an uncertain position between the information-giving and purely decorative types of designs. They are a very fruitful source of

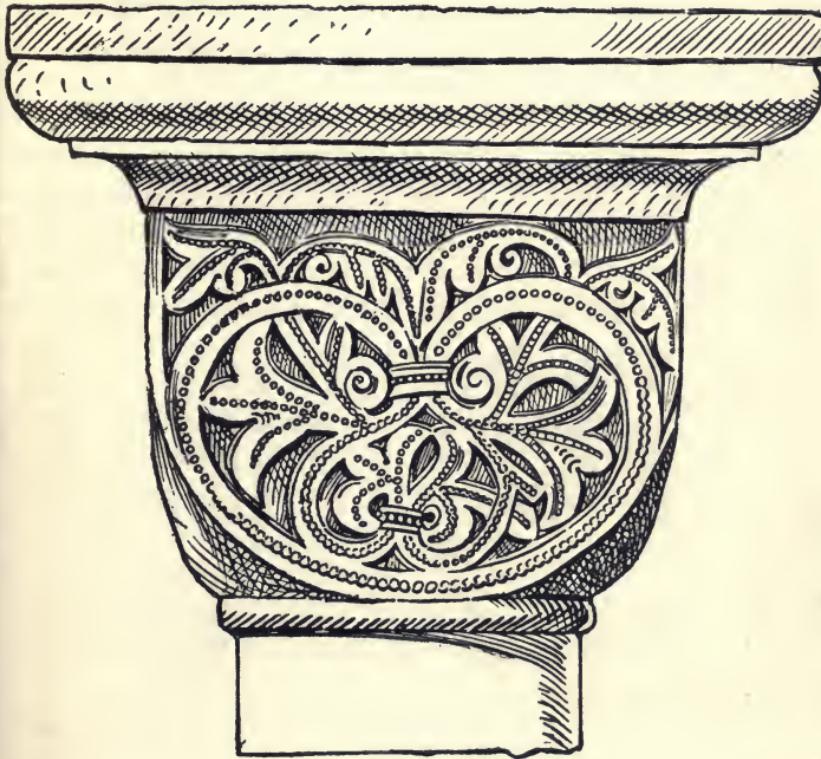


FIG. 29.

ornament, a large number of decorative elements being directly derived from them.

The cross, one of the most simple examples of this class of ornamental element, furnishes interesting matter for study. In early times, long before its adoption as the symbol of the Christian faith, it had various mystical significations. It affords an instance of how symbols may, during the course of ages, become endowed with widely different meanings. The decorative value of the element remains, its

V.
A well-understood symbol—the Cross.

significance may change or utterly pass away. The cross is the great symbolical sign left to western nations which can be understood without archaeological explanations, appealing directly to the intelligence whenever it occurs in design and in decoration. But there are other similar devices of as great, or greater, antiquity which have become firmly incorporated into the store of decorative elements, the significance of which is quite unintelligible to our civilization.

VI. The Svastika, Fig. 30, a double-armed variety of A symbol of forgotten meaning —the Svastika. the cross, full of deep significance to all ancient nations, is typical of those symbolical elements still largely used in design, but now lacking all meaning. We may use the one real symbol which still remains to us, to measure, though we cannot restore, the



FIG. 30.



FIG. 31.

interest that designs in which these forgotten devices occur must have had for those who understood them.

VII. Let us follow out the comparison in more detail by Examples of the decorative use of these two symbols. describing some designs built up of these two simple geometrical devices. Byzantine ecclesiastical vestments were often decorated with crosses formed of four right angles arranged as in Fig. 31. These angles, termed 'gammas', from their resemblance to that letter of the Greek alphabet,¹ were, by another turn of the complicated symbolism of the period, also the emblems of Our Lord as 'the corner stone' of the Church which they were supposed to represent. Repeated over a surface they form designs such as

¹ See Dr. Rock, *Textile Fabrics*, London, 1870, Introduction, p. 50.

that shown in Fig. 32. In isolated examples of the cross the four gammas were frequently connected

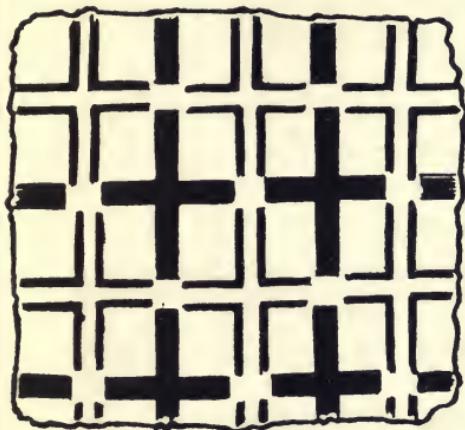


FIG. 32.

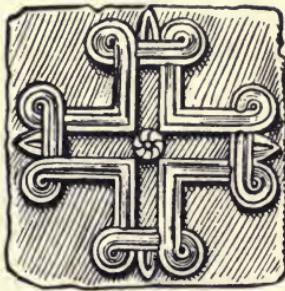


FIG. 33.

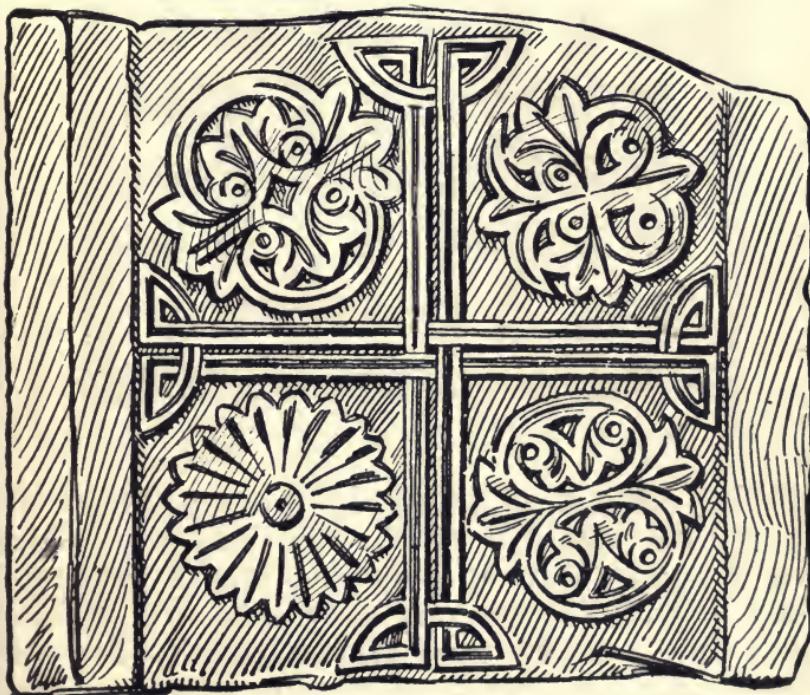


FIG. 34.

by means of loops, so that the figure could be drawn by means of a continuous line as in Fig. 33, an

example carved upon a stone lintel in the Church of Saint Luke of Stiris. This form often received more elaborate variations such as may be seen in Fig. 34 from a stone slab in the Musée Lapidaire at Arles.

The svastika has played a great part in the history of design. We are not concerned here with the symbolism of this mysterious, widely spread device about which so much has been written, but

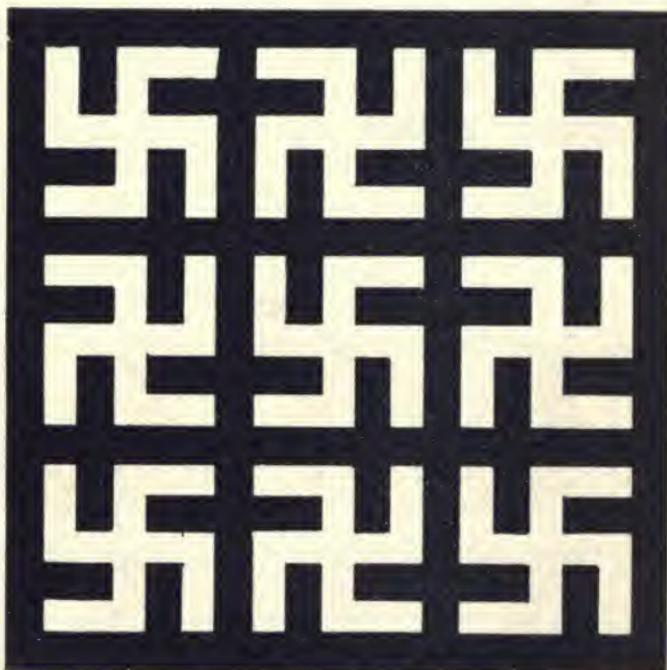


FIG. 35.

will be content with pointing out a few of its decorative uses. Patterns composed of isolated svastikas, like that shown in Fig. 35, are frequently employed in Eastern art; they seem also to have been woven, embroidered, carved, or painted in most European countries at one time or another. This design acquires, by the addition of a few lines, a new form which is capable of two distinct interpretations. In Fig. 36 are examples of this new development from a Chinese source, although the pattern is by no

means confined to that part of the East. The upper example shows an arrangement of svastikas each

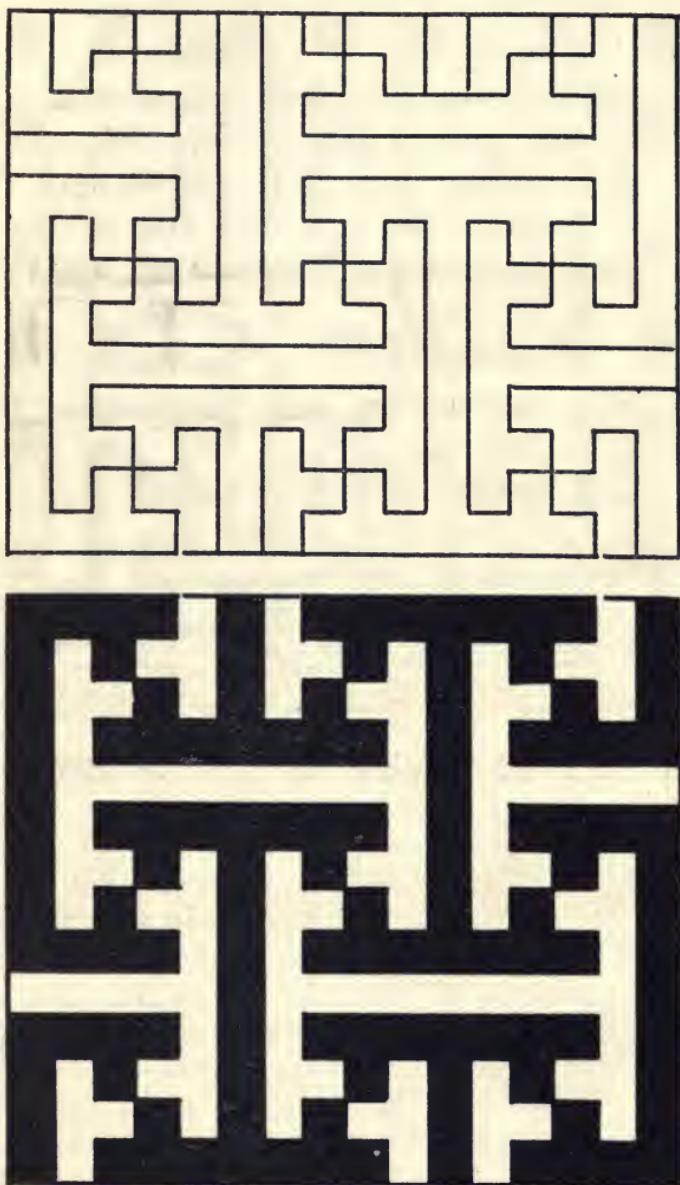


FIG. 36.

arm of each of which is provided with an additional member connected by means of a further prolongation with a member of the neighbouring unit. The

same design is repeated below, but here the alternate spaces between the lines by means of which it is

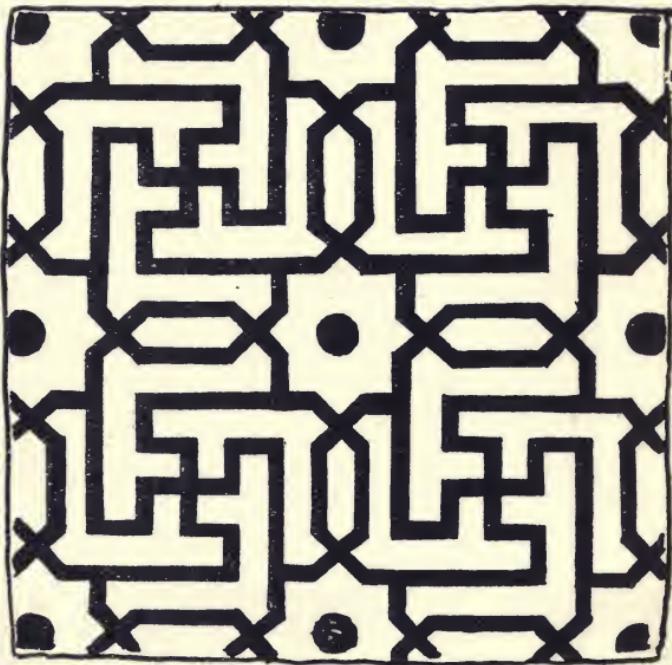


FIG. 37.

drawn are filled in with black, an addition which gives the pattern quite a new character.

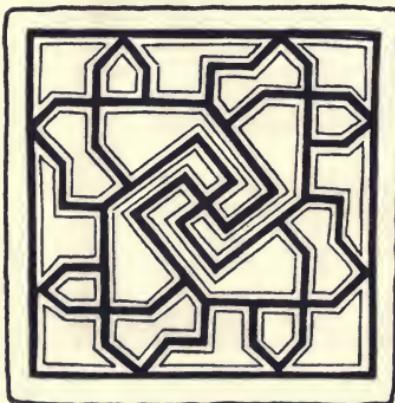


FIG. 38.

In Fig. 37 is shown a version of the same design, in which the additional members of the svastikas are each folded back upon the next. Each complete figure is placed so as partially to overlap those surrounding it, an arrangement which introduces a pleasant variety of new forms into the design. The

pattern is from a palace in the Mogul city of Fatehpur Sikri; it is carved in low relief as the filling in the

centre of a stone panel. Another variation of the same idea may be traced in Fig. 38, a little design in a collection of drawings formed by Mirza Akber, architect to the Shah of Persia, in the early part of the nineteenth century, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Fig. 39 shows the setting out of this design as given in a working drawing in the same

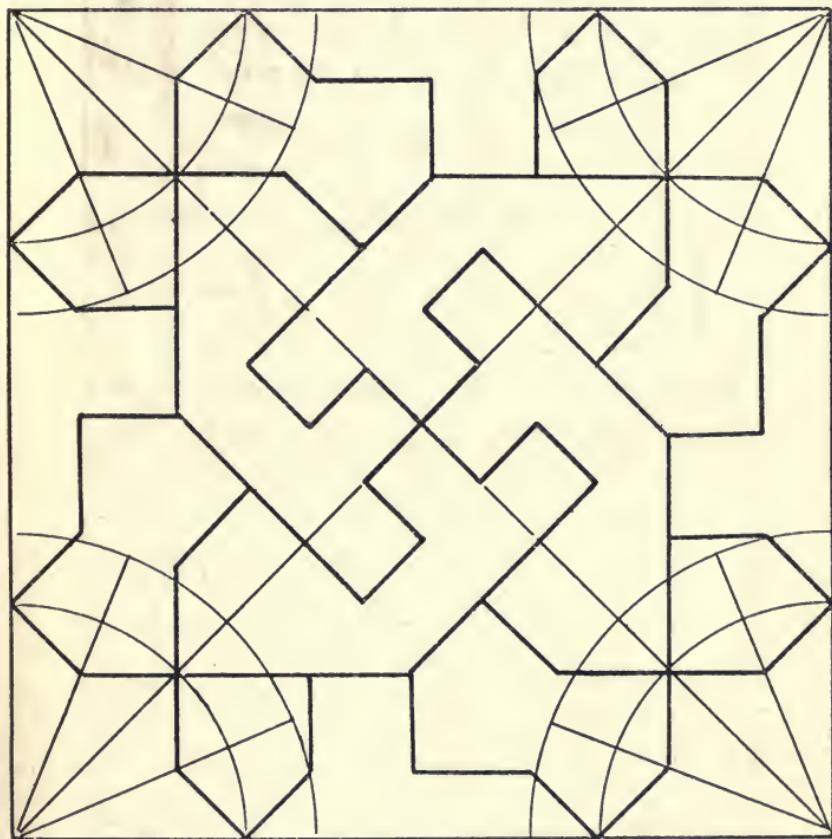


FIG. 39.

collection, and Figs. 40 and 41 show the unit repeated six times, in simple line and with the intermediate spaces coloured, as in the examples shown in Fig. 36.

In this series we have followed out some developments of two insignificant-looking geometrical devices which have a long history in the art of design as derived

from
pictorial
symboli-
cal repre-
sentations.

decorative units, and in which lie hidden deep symbolical meanings which have appealed to the imagination of many generations. Before leaving this part of the subject, we will give some further

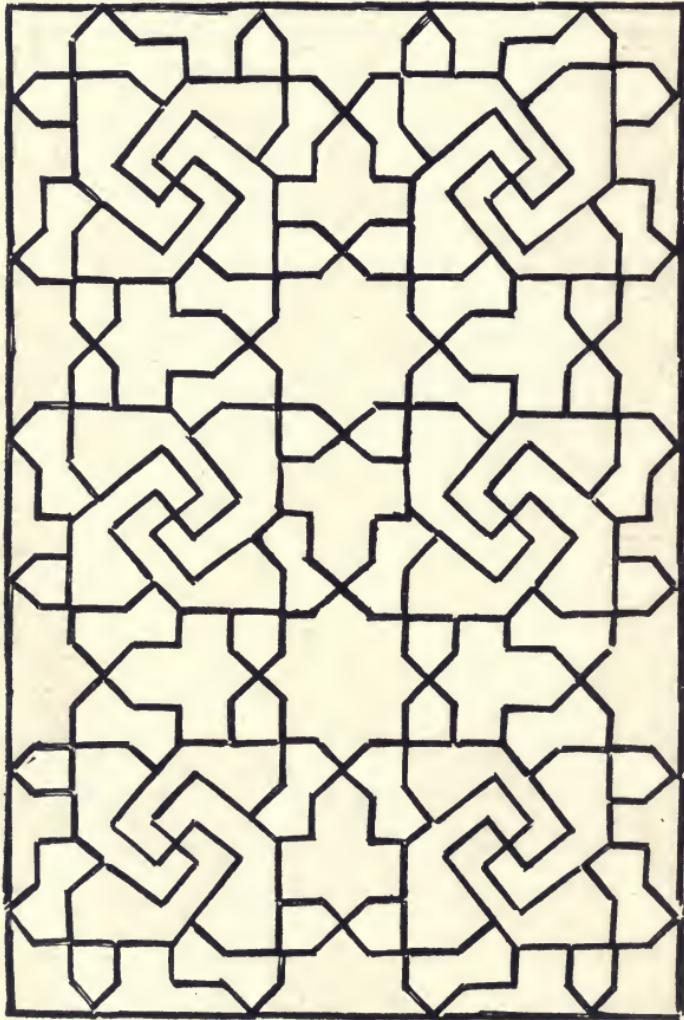


FIG. 40.

examples of another piece of forgotten symbolism, this time of a highly pictorial character. It is a device of great importance to the decorator, for it supplies him with material of the highest possible value. It occurs very persistently in the designs of

antiquity and of the middle ages, and it has not yet disappeared from those of our own time.

Upon many ancient stuffs, carvings, and paintings of European and Oriental workmanship we find a ^{IX.} _{The sacred}

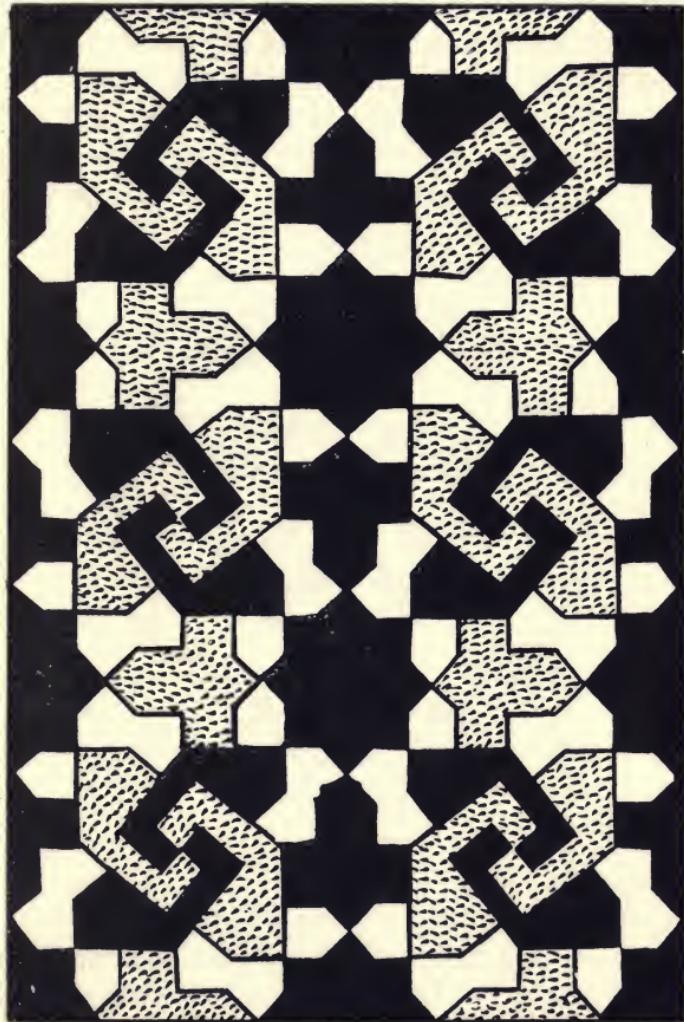


FIG. 41.

singular piece of composition. A pair of animals, tree and varying in different examples, are placed one on either side of a more or less conventional representation of a tree. These animals occur in a variety of attitudes, walking, standing erect, turning towards or

its attend
dant
genii.

away from the central foliage. They are sometimes winged; indeed it is often difficult to tell whether birds or animals are depicted, and, as in many instances birds are plainly represented in similar relationship to a tree, it may be supposed that all these designs are but variations of the same theme.

X.
Typical
form.

In the Cathedral of Pomposa is a window of pierced stone-work, which represents this group and affords a good example of the usual arrangement of the design (Fig. 42). The circular panel is divided into



FIG. 42.

two parts by the upright stem of a conventional tree bearing symmetrically-arranged bunches of fruit, to which two winged animals, placed one on each side of it, are reaching up. This example may be compared with the circular panels which occur in the thirteenth-century inlaid marble pavement of the Church of San Miniato near Florence, in which the two winged beasts are of relatively larger size, and the tree, instead of being a fairly recognizable date-palm, is reduced to a piece of formalized foliage (see Fig. 43).

In the Pomposa window and the San Miniato

pavement the textile origin of the design seems plain enough; there are many Sassanian and Byzantine fabrics still existing from which they might well have been derived. But for the first appearance of this composition we must go back to some of the earliest examples of art which have been preserved and to the traditions of one of the earliest forms of worship,



FIG. 43.

of which these are records—the tree-worship, of wide distribution.

The sacred tree with its two attendant genii is a common subject in ancient Assyrian art. It is found upon all kinds of objects from the small seal cylinders (see Fig. 44) to the colossal wall-slabs brought from the Palaces of Nineveh to the British Museum (see Plate II). In the little cylinder-design the typical

XI.
Ancient
examples.

Assyrian arrangement is shown. Two winged human forms with eagles' heads stand facing a palm-tree, to

which they present with their upraised hands objects, which reference to the large panels enables us to identify as palm blossoms, whilst each in the other hand carries a square-shaped vessel.

FIG. 44.



Above is the winged sun-disk symbol.¹ There are many ancient versions of the same subject. Fig. 45 is from a Mycenaean gem in which two young bulls take the places of the winged lions or human bird-headed figures, a variation also found in Assyrian art.



FIG. 45.

The well-known sculptured group occupying the tympanum of the 'Lion Gate' at Mycenae is a further example

¹ In these compositions the genii are engaged in artificially fertilizing the female palm with male blooms, a practice necessary for their cultivation, as may be gathered from the following passage from C. M. Doughty's *Wanderings in Arabia* (London, 1907), vol. ii, p. 65: 'His mare had strayed into the palms; and if he might find her he would ride down into the Tubj, to cut male palm blossoms of the half-wild stems there, to marry them with his female trees at home. One husband stem (to be known by the doubly robust growth) may suffice amongst ten female palms.' The conventional foliage placed between the two genii in Plate II, may possibly represent a palm grove watered by irrigating canals set out in plan, a more simple explanation of this complicated figure than that usually advanced. The same explanation may also be applied to the Assyrian versions of the 'palmette' borders. The waved bands connecting the palm-heads are often 'chevroned' as if to represent water-courses.

in which the sacred pillar is substituted for the tree.

It would be easy to demonstrate the remarkable ramifications of this ancient piece of symbolism throughout Oriental and European art of the middle ages. XII.
Examples showing the geo-



FIG. 46.

ages, for there are many well-known examples in graphical the work of all crafts. The three given in Figs. 46, 47, and 48 are important indications of its wide distribution and persistence during a long period of time, with very slight changes of form. The first example is carved upon one of the stone capitals of the Temple of Athénè Polias at Prienè in Asia Minor, built about 340 B.C. It shows (Fig. 46) two winged birds-headed lions placed one upon either side of a highly formalized palm-tree.



FIG. 47.

The second (Fig. 47) is from the border of a Sicilian embroidered vestment preserved at Vienna, dated A.D. 1181. The beasts in this example closely

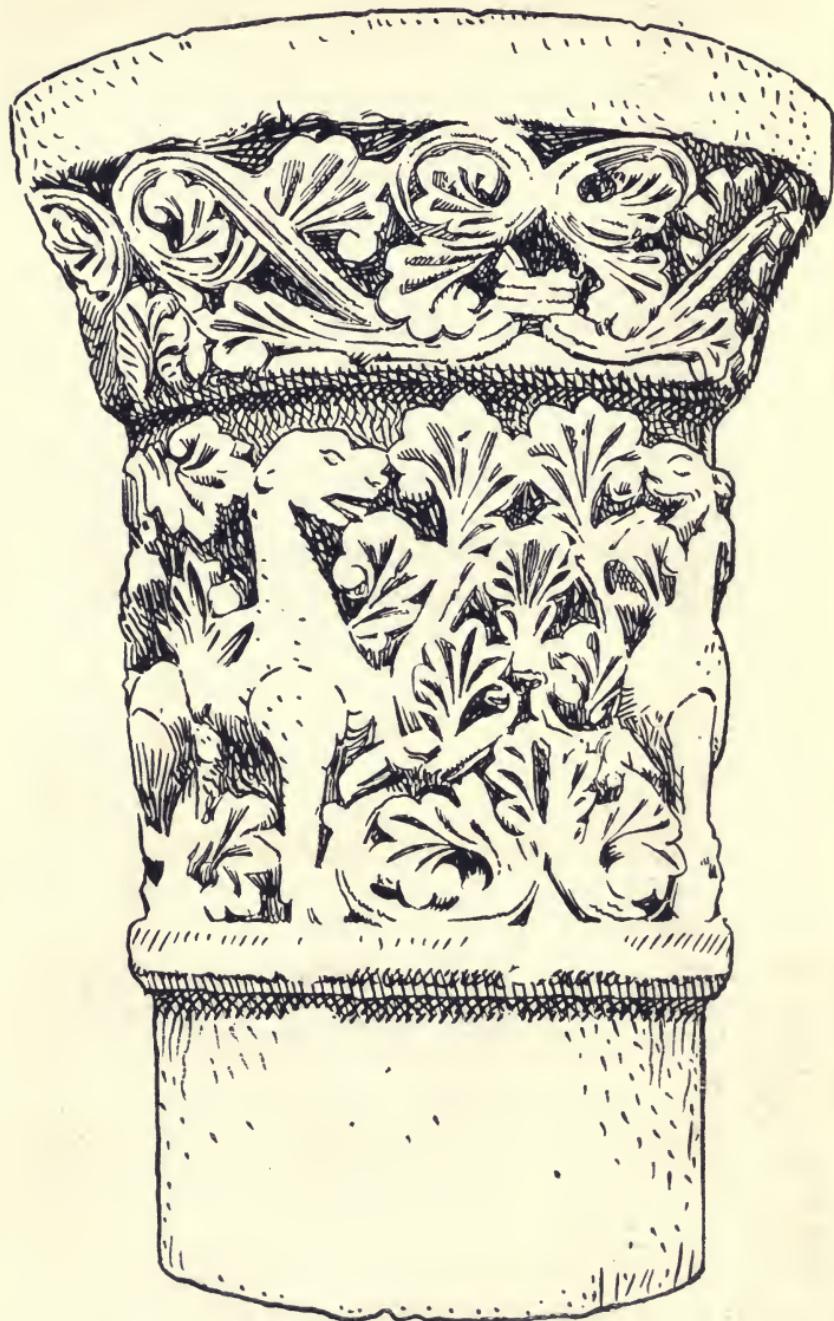


FIG. 48.

resemble those of the Prienè group; the foliage is remarkably similar, but even more conventional.

The design in this case forms an all-over pattern, the symmetrical unit illustrated being compactly arranged over the surface decorated.

The same device is again found upon a carved stone capital on the West front of the Cathedral of Saint-Pierre at Angoulême, of about the same date (Fig. 48). Here the birds' heads have completely disappeared, new forms being substituted ; the whole has still great resemblance to the last example, but it is richer in detail. These three representations of what is undoubtedly the same design have a geographical range extending right across the continent of Europe and cover a period of some fifteen hundred

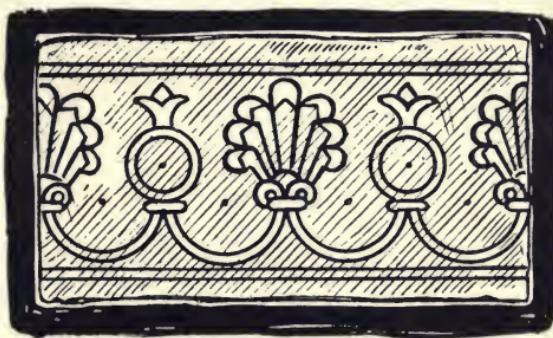


FIG. 49.

years in time. There is little doubt that the design originated in Mesopotamia and that its wide diffusion in the West was due to the importation and imitation of Eastern works of art.

But it is another series of patterns that have been most instrumental in rendering the modern decorator familiar with the sacred tree. In these the element usually occurs unaccompanied by its attendant genii, but it is often enriched by the addition of other foliated forms. In the so-called 'palmette' border, a typical Hellenic version of the sacred tree is the principal, sometimes the sole, element in the design. The origin of the palmette border is obscure. Designs of very similar type are common in Egyptian art, and

XIII.
Palmette
band
designs.

Assyrian examples are very frequently found upon the embroidered draperies and ornamental details carved upon the great wall-slabs in the British



FIG. 50.

Museum. Fig. 49 illustrates an example in which the palm alternates with what is apparently a formalized rendering of the lotus bud. It is from a carved

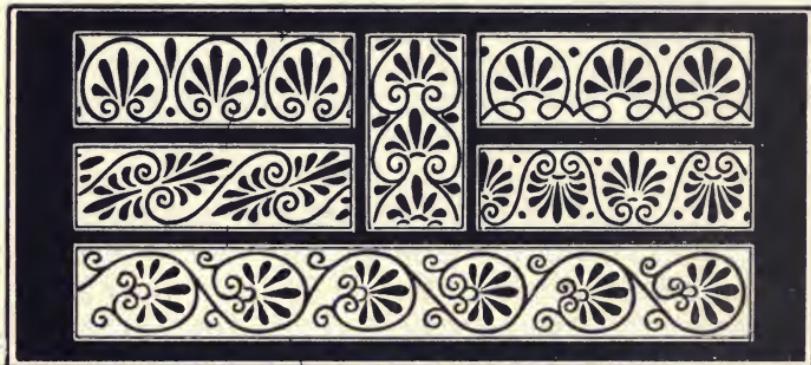


FIG. 51.

ivory found at Nineveh, of Phoenician workmanship imitating an Egyptian form; it dates from the eighth century B.C.

The elaborate piece of ornament often carved upon Hellenic grave-stones is without doubt the sacred tree. If the example given in Fig. 50 from a grave-stone is compared with the Prienè capital (see Fig. 46), it is plain that the same foliage is represented. Many very rich little borders showing a great variety of arrangements of a form of this foliage, formalized and perfected by the brushes of Hellenic painters, are to be found upon painted vases; six examples from vases in the British Museum are given in Fig. 51. Carved and painted bands of palmette ornament alternating with a conventional



FIG. 52.

lotus-like flower are common in Hellenic architectural decoration. Fig. 52 is an example painted upon a cornice-moulding of the Portico of the Thersilion at Megalopolis, and in Fig. 53 is given the very elaborate carved design which ornaments the cornice of the door of the Erechtheion at Athens.

Roman decorators continued to use many forms of Hellenic ornament, which they developed and modified; these, revived by the Italian Renaissance, have again become current in Modern Europe. In the intermediate period between the decline of classical art and its artificial regeneration we find

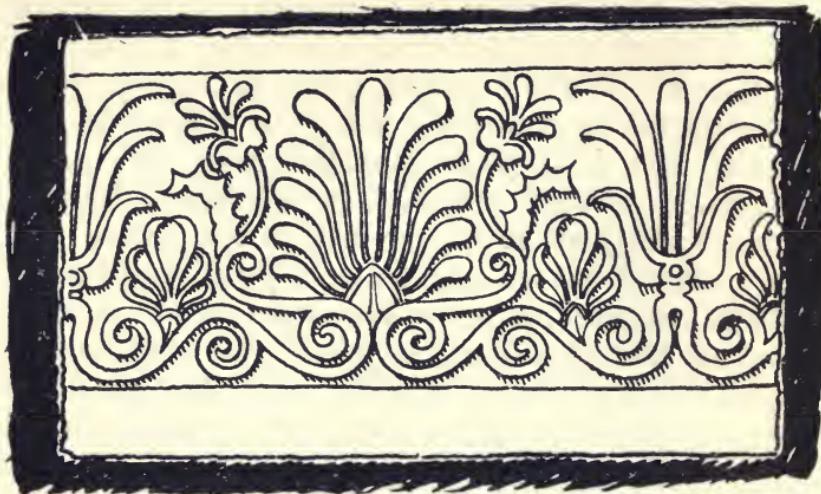


FIG. 53.



FIG. 54.

many interesting instances of the survival of Hellenic models of more or less pure form which enable us to trace their persistent influence. In Rome itself in work of the ninth century we find borders clearly

recalling the earlier Hellenic designs. The upper band in Fig. 54 shows an example closely related to the Erechtheion cornice design and enables us to measure the relationship of the lower band to that remote ancestor. Both specimens are from wall paintings in the under-church of San Clemente at Rome. The designs are executed in rapid, free brush-work by workmen who were reproducing forms with which they were perfectly familiar, and they indicate clearly the line of development which the design was taking at this period.

These developments of the sacred tree symbol, used as an ornamental element, have been discussed at some length in order to show the far-reaching influence which it has exerted upon the work of designers who lived many hundreds of years after its original appearance in Art. It is the best possible example of the wide-spread employment of a pictorial-decorative idea of symbolical origin, and, as it is one to which we shall constantly have to refer all kinds of elements of widely different appearance, it is necessary to show clearly the original forms from which these have been developed.

CHAPTER III

THE CLASSIFICATION OF PATTERNS

The Working-out of Given Problems in Designing.—Examples from Ancient Work.—Simple Geometrical Patterns.—Attic Examples.—Process of Formation of Groups of Allied Patterns.—Analysis and Classification of Groups of Patterns.—Difficulty of Exact Classification.—Geographical Distribution of Patterns.—Independent Origin in Several Countries.—Suggestive Value of Systematic Study of Classification.

I.
The
working-
out of
given

REAL progress in the art of pattern designing becomes possible only when limitations, possibly quite arbitrary, to govern its composition, are distinctly laid down and acknowledged. A few experi-

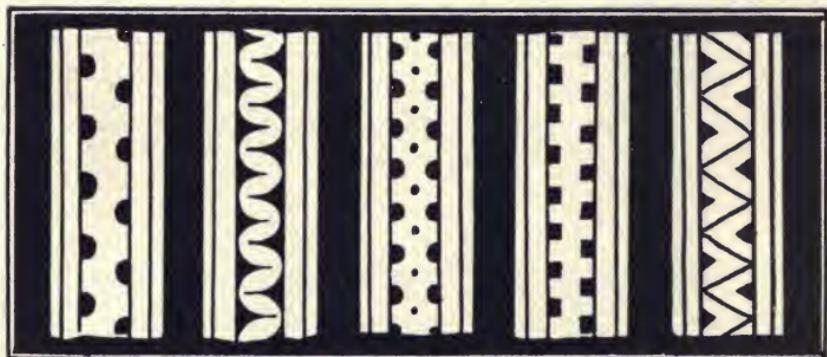


FIG. 55.

problems in design. ments will enable the designer to ascertain the extra-ordinary value of definite restrictions, outside which he will not permit himself to roam, as factors in the evolution or discovery of new patterns. If he is required to work out such changes of a given piece of design as are possible within the narrow circuit of a few rigid limitations, he will certainly attack the problem with more systematic concentra-

tion and produce more varied combinations than a wider latitude of thought would arrive at.

The work of all schools of design shows examples of such experiments, and an intelligent examination of these will suggest a number of problems for solution. The five decorated little bands in Fig. 55 taken from Attic painted vases of the fifth century

II.

Examples from ancient work.

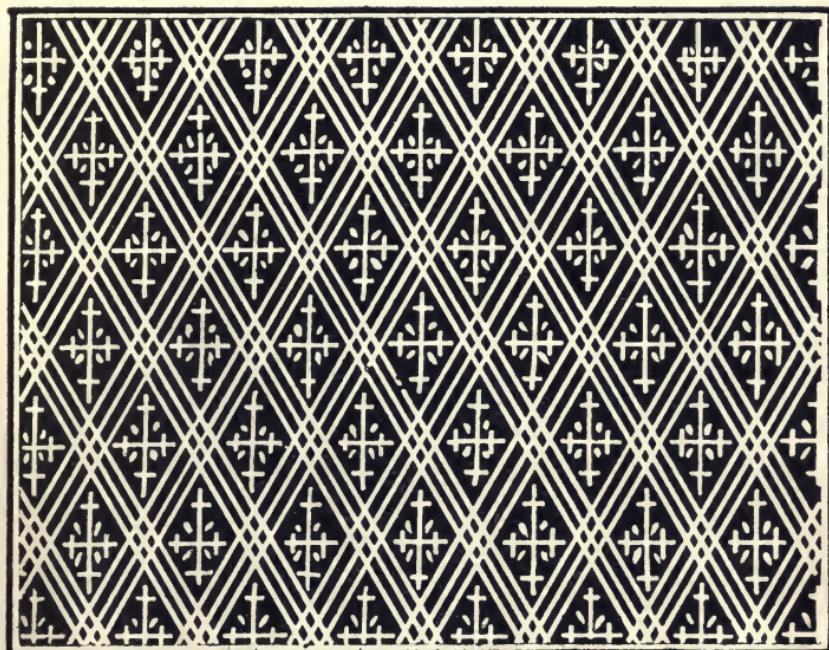


FIG. 56.

B.C. are examples. They are constructed by projecting masses of colour of various forms from either margin of the band towards the centre. The designers have systematically made use of semi-circular, square, and triangular-shaped units and have ascertained the effect of additional enrichment produced by line and point work. The results are elementary specimens of a type of decoration capable of developments which will be followed still further in another chapter.¹

¹ See chapter xi.

III.
Simple
geometri-
cal
patterns.

The study of designs formed of many combinations of simple geometrically-formed units such as points, circles, or crosses is a useful introduction to pattern making, for in these designs simple examples of planning are presented in a very clear way. Most schools of design afford some specimens of work of this kind in which an effect is produced which is quite remarkable when measured by the small amount of decorative material and labour expended upon them. Brilliantly coloured examples occur very frequently upon the backgrounds, costumes, and

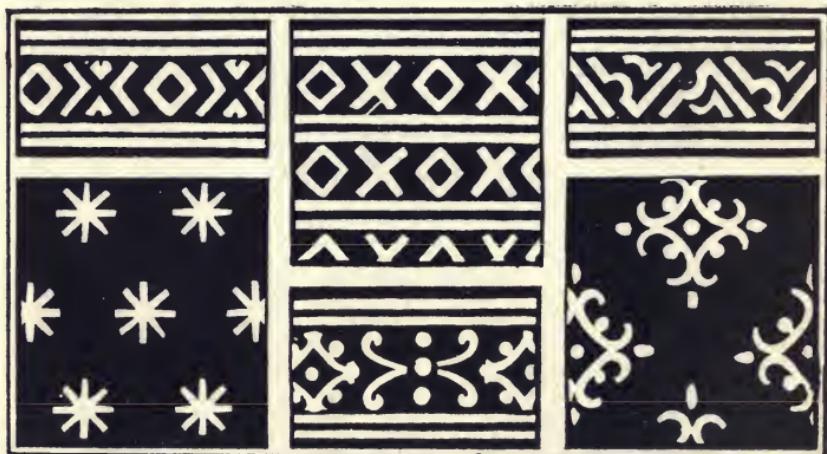


FIG. 57.

accessories painted in the miniatures of Mediaeval illuminated manuscripts and in other early paintings. Fig. 56 decorates the background of a French miniature of the fourteenth century, and in Fig. 57 six other varieties of this kind of pattern are given from the robes and draperies in a picture of the Virgin and Child by Barnaba da Modena in the Museo Civico at Pisa.

IV.
Attic
examples.

A number of early examples of geometrical patterns are to be found upon Attic painted vases, for the most part upon the draperies worn by the persons who appear in the scenes that form the usual decoration of these vases (see Fig. 58). These

patterns are worthy of attention for several reasons. They are the almost sole records of the customary ornamentation of woven fabrics of the period. In spite of the small scale upon which they are executed and the extremely simple method of representation adopted, as they are the work of observers of consummate penetration and masters of great technical ability, we may suppose that they represent the patterns of the Athenian woven, painted, or embroidered stuffs as truthfully as the Mediaeval miniatures produced by painters working under very similar conditions represent those of their time.



FIG. 58.

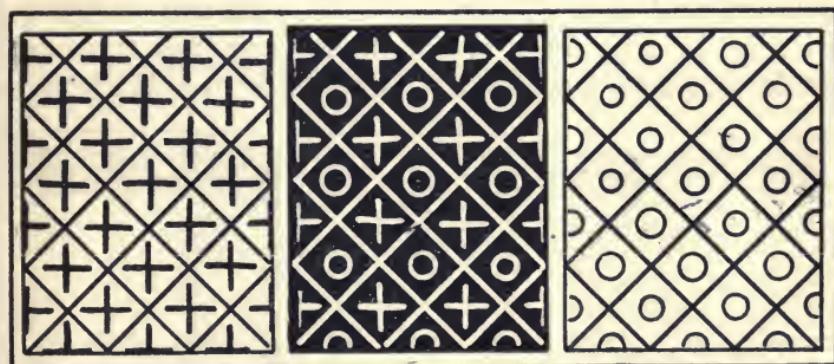


FIG. 59.

But apart from their value as possible records of textile decorations the designs are of sufficient interest as showing how this kind of pattern work was practised by the vase painters, Athenian artists of the great period of Hellenic art. Some examples of these textile patterns, together with a few used in the ornamentation of the vases themselves, are brought together in the next few specimens. They

show (Figs. 59 and 60) experiments in diagonal spacings with plain X and O-enrichments, resembling the game of 'noughts-and-crosses', and with highly enriched examples of the same units. In Fig. 61

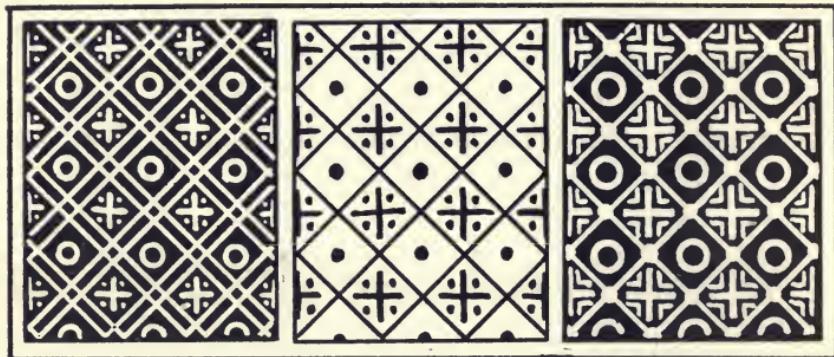


FIG. 60.

the same spacings are repeated with a variety of fillings. Striped designs ornamented with points, crossed, and zigzag lines, as in Fig. 62, are common. Finally, in Fig. 63, a set of those characteristic line-work borders known as 'key-patterns' is given.

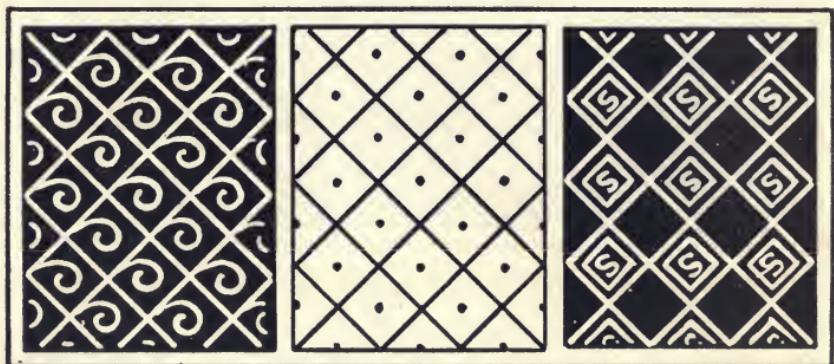


FIG. 61.

Examination of any series of Attic painted vases will discover scores of little patterns like those given above, which may be readily gathered together into groups, each showing many variations of a single theme.

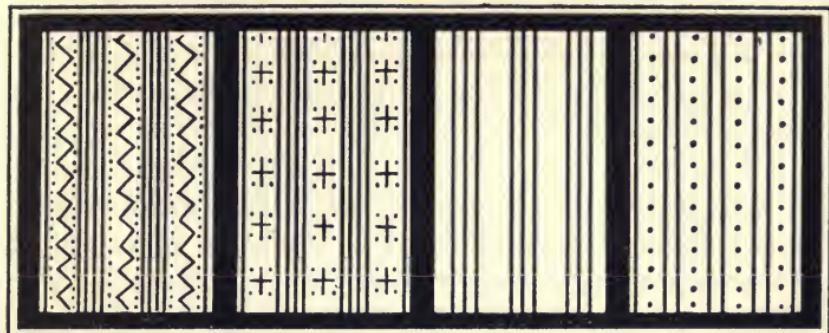


FIG. 62.

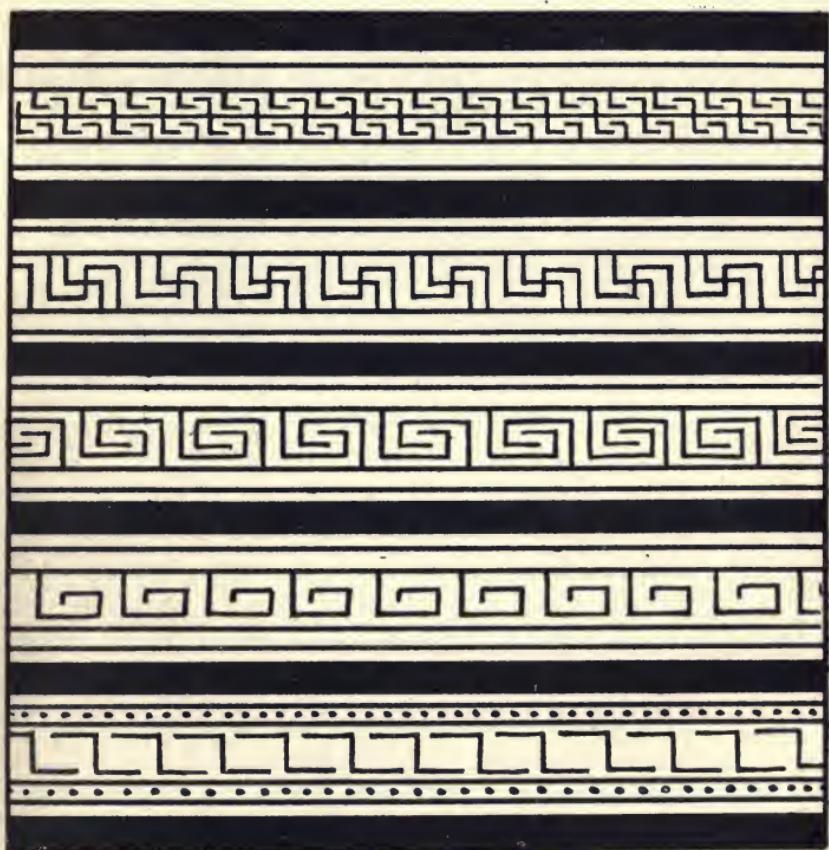


FIG. 63.

Groups formed of a number of patterns obviously related to one another afford good illustrations of the working of the process by means of which ^{V.} _{Process} _{of formation}

groups of decorative designs can be deliberately multiplied. allied patterns. The designer of each of the five bands in Fig. 55 has made a pattern different from the remaining four by using an element of another form or adding a point or a line wherever a vacancy in the design seemed to suggest room for enrichment. The fundamental plan is the same in each; some model common to all has suggested the possibility of repeating the idea over again with a difference.

It is by this process that the possibilities of a given idea are worked out and set down for

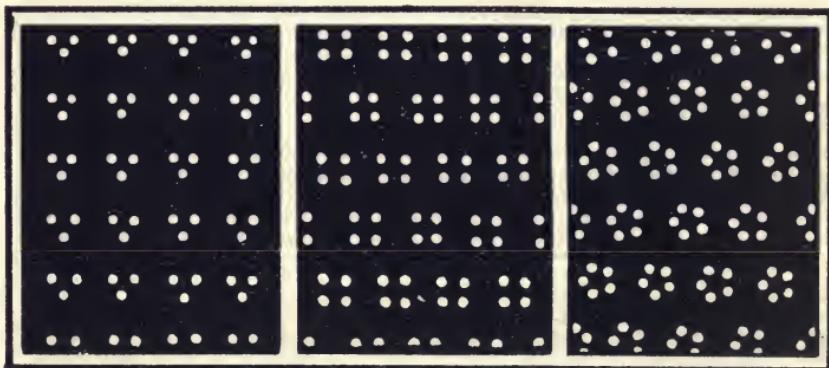


FIG. 64.

inspection, criticism, and perhaps revision; for whether a result will be pleasing and useful, or the reverse, cannot be ascertained without trial. And let it be noted that the failures are in no wise less educational than the successes. Each new essay has its origin in some existing design, either of the designer's own workmanship or of another's, to be developed according to the degree of his insight into the possibilities of the case. As it is not possible or desirable to combine an indefinite number of experiments in a single design, a large series will arise from one original, like the branches of a genealogical tree, from a common root. Thus a series of studies of the possible changes of a pattern will produce a large group of closely allied designs.

Groups of patterns can be easily analysed, their essential characteristics described, the units of which the individual members are composed catalogued, and their variations tabulated. The study of designs reveals the existence of natural orders and families of patterns which may be compared to those which a systematic review of the world of plants and that of animals has enabled the botanist and the zoologist to characterize. We may distinguish as a group of first class importance those patterns in which a decorative unit, either of great



FIG. 65.

simplicity or extreme complexity of form, is 'powdered' sparsely or compactly over the surface to be enriched (see Fig. 64). Another group, of equal value, will contain those patterns whose elements are bands either straight and parallel to one another (see Fig. 65), moving in zigzag lines (as in Fig. 66) or meandering in parallel or in opposed curves (see Figs. 67 and 68). The majority of designs may perhaps be referred to one or the other of these two important groups, but we might proceed in the same way to point out others, setting them out in orderly relationship to one another until the tale of all the patterns which have ever been invented had been completed.

Any attempt to classify patterns will be productive

VII.
Difficulty
of exact
classifica-

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76 CLASSIFICATION OF PATTERNS

tion of
speci-
mens.

of surprises; examples difficult or apparently im-
possible to place will often be encountered, others

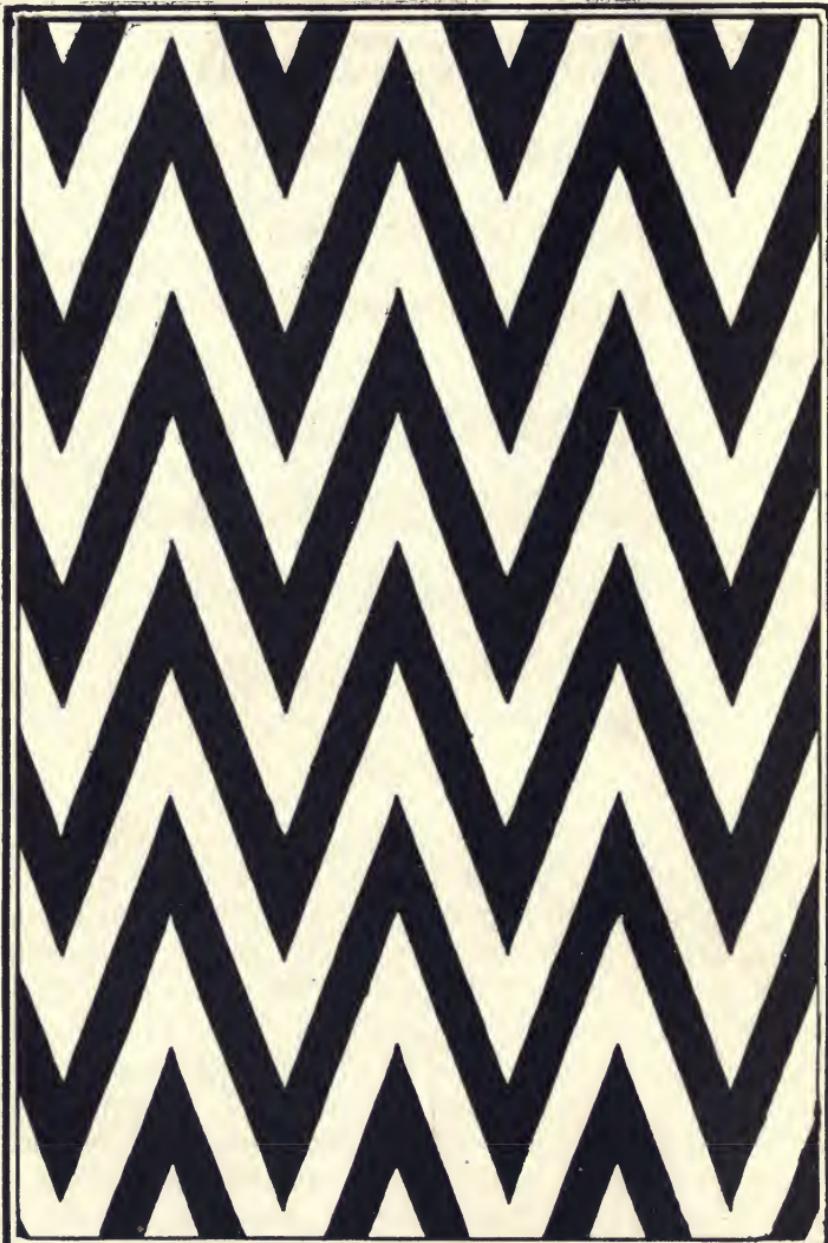


FIG. 66.

may seem to belong to several groups. One of the latter class is the familiar cross-band pattern shown

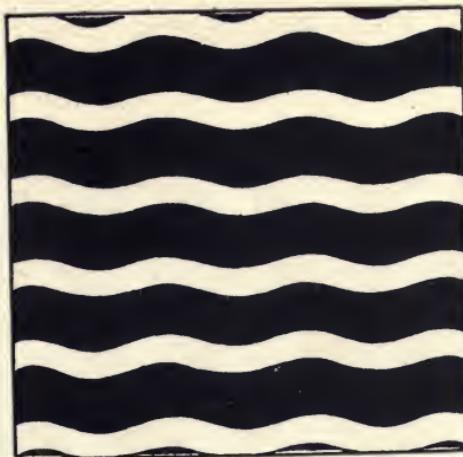


FIG. 67.

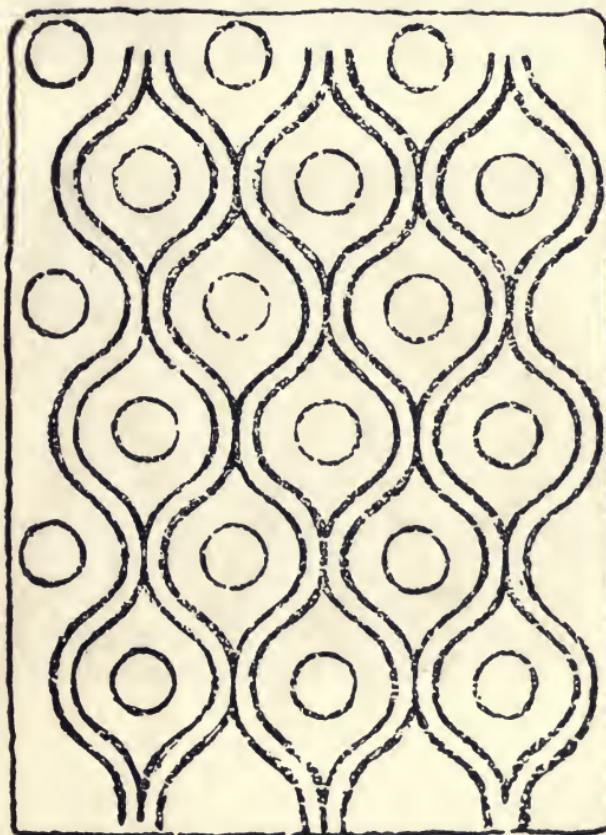


FIG. 68.

in Fig. 69. This may also be considered as a regular powdering of small white squares upon a black ground. If a little decoration be added to

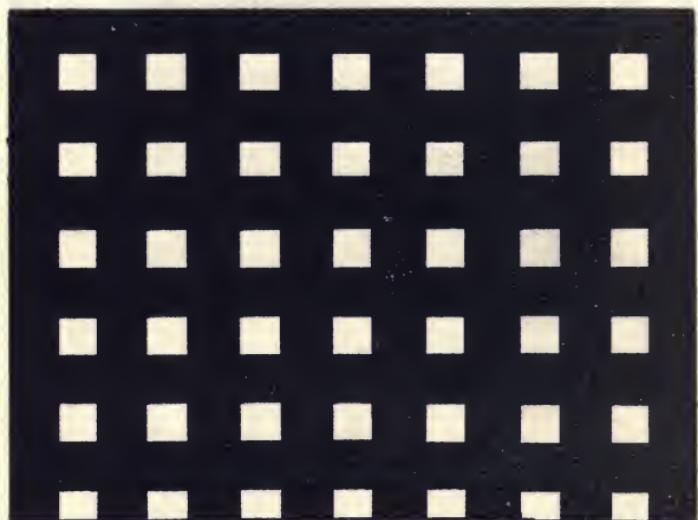


FIG. 69.

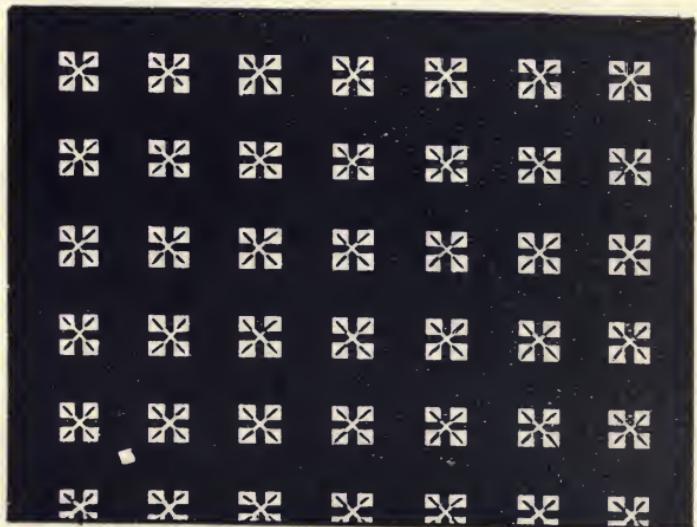


FIG. 70.

the white patches this second interpretation is brought out with greater prominence (see Fig. 70). Another unexpected relationship will be discovered

by examining the two examples Figs. 71 and 72 : the first, a design of Roman and Mediaeval times found in

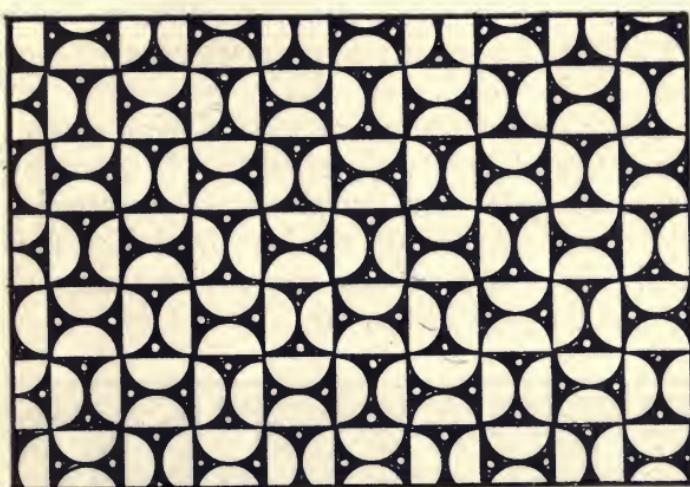


FIG. 71.



FIG. 72.

mosaics and wall-paintings ; the second, an impression from an Indian cotton-printing block in the Victoria and Albert Museum. In the four last figures we

see, first, how a design made by drawing two series of parallel bands so as to cross each other at right angles can also be made by powdering a unit regularly over a surface, and, secondly, we ascertain what a slight change is necessary to resolve a design formed of half-disks regularly powdered over a ground into one made up of meandering cross lines. But since the object of classification is to enable the designer to gain, for purposes of comparison, a general idea of an otherwise unwieldy mass of material the study of the more obscure analogies should not be pushed too far.

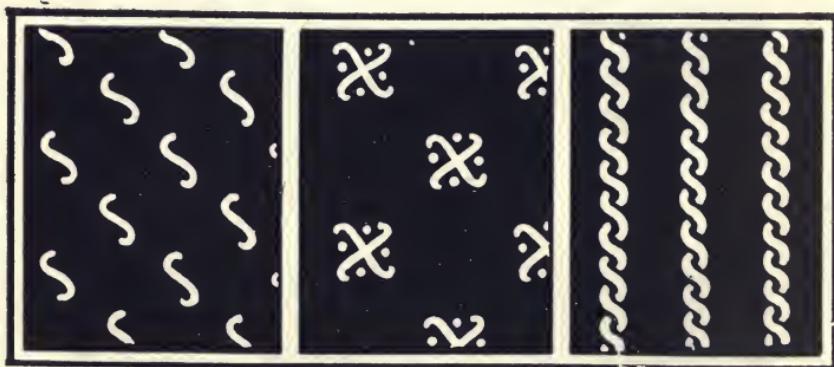


FIG. 73.

The method of arrangement of the units composing a pattern should always be the basis of classification, and not their nature, since it is obvious that with a given element several distinct types of design can be formed. This may be seen in the three examples from Attic black-figured vases in Fig. 73, where the S-form is used to compose very dissimilar patterns.

It is sometimes interesting to study the geographical distribution of individual specimens of a group of patterns, and also their occurrence at various periods. If, for instance, the various Attic examples which have been described are compared with examples of the same kind of pattern employed by Mediaeval illuminators, it will be found that

there are some amongst those of the latter school which were for some reason or another not made use of by the Hellenic designers. A search amongst the vases in the British Museum has failed to discover the apparently very obvious combination of lines forming the pattern given in Fig. 56, the design from a French manuscript of the fourteenth century. It is therefore possible to label certain varieties as Athenian and not Mediaeval, others as Mediaeval and not Athenian, and to distinguish a few as used by both schools.

IX.
Inde-
pendent
origin in
different
countries.

Workers in different materials, situated in countries far distant from one another, are sometimes found using very similar designs. Patterns have no doubt been widely distributed by the migrations of races and the ramifications of commerce, and the records of these kept by the designer are

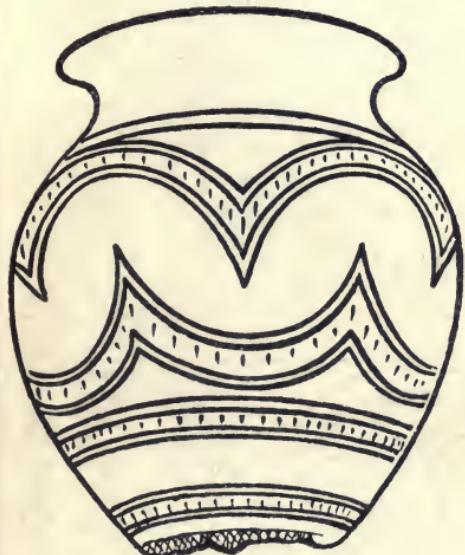


FIG. 74.

of no small value to the historian. But many strange coincidences in the occurrence of patterns might be advanced tending to show that there are only a certain number of root constructions possible in design, and that the decorative instinct developing everywhere in much the same way will often discover and make use of very similar forms of ornament in whatever country or age the designer may be placed. The close resemblance of the design on a piece of earthenware of the early Iron Age (Fig. 74) from a lake village near Glastonbury to that carved upon a limestone capital from the

Palace of Khorsabad (Fig. 75), is an instance, although this design may have been imported by early voyagers. The design in Fig. 76 shows

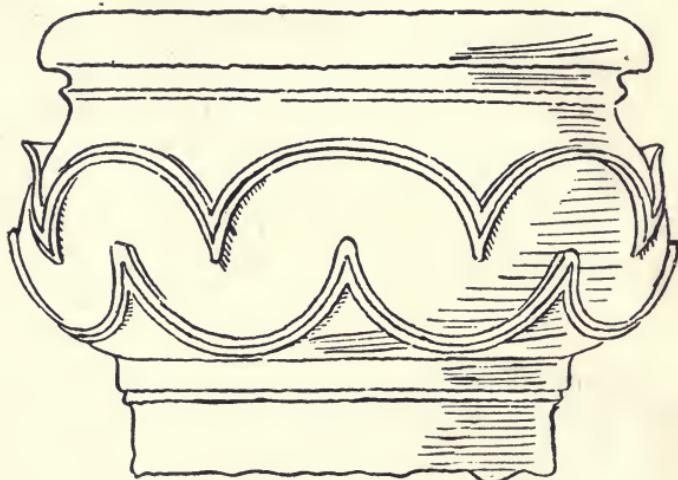


FIG. 75.

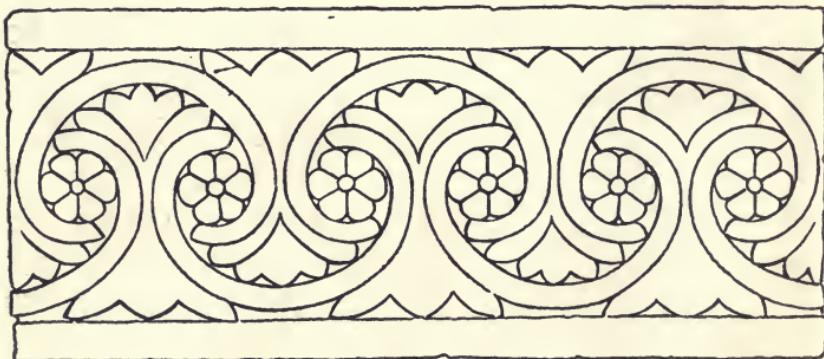


FIG. 76.



FIG. 77.

how an English wood-carver of the seventeenth century has developed the theme of an Egyptian Scarab (Fig. 77). The last two designs are obviously of the same construction as the former two, and belong to the same group.

In the last chapter several examples of foliage characteristic of the Romanesque school



FIG. 78.

F 2

of design were brought together (see Figs. 26 to 29), but it must not be assumed that ornament of this or any other special type is always the exclusive property of any particular place or period. Patterns showing finely drawn flowing forms of very similar character are found also in the East. Such a design, painted upon a Turkish seventeenth-century glazed earthenware tile from Constantinople, is shown in Fig. 78, and



FIG. 79.

the ornament carved upon a stone pilaster from the ruined Mohammedan city of Gaur in Bengal, a portion of which is drawn in Fig. 79, is of the same type.

X.
Sugges-
tive value
of sys-
tematic
study of
classifica-
tion. The examination of work done in former times is instructive and suggestive in many ways. It opens up the possibility of following out experimentally lines of thought which were touched upon but passed over by earlier schools of workers, and of developing these as original pieces of research. It is very profitable to prosecute some systematic

inquiries of this kind. The faculty of *seeing through* a design to the sources from which it originated and of speculating as to what new channels it may be conducted into, and the consequent cultivation of the imagination, are the immediate results of such studies.

The designer who studies the systematic classification and development of patterns may thus have experiences denied to the naturalist, for it is open to him to invent the interesting missing links which he is unable to discover, instead of awaiting their appearance amongst the treasures of the dredging-net or the ruins of a remote geological epoch!

CHAPTER IV

POWDERED DESIGNS FORMED OF FLORAL ELEMENTS

Introduction.—Elementary Decoration by Change of Texture.—Imitative Textures.—Development of Textures.—Simple Floral Sprigs.—Secondary Enrichment or Ornament.—Example of Ornament often Highly Enriched.—Independent Development of Secondary Enrichment.—Origin of these Examples.—Examples of Ornament always Enriched.—Further Examples of Secondary Enrichment of Ornament.—Relative Areas of Design and Ground Decorated.

I. Intro- duction.

In the preceding chapters a brief discussion of the origin, development, and classification of patterns has been attempted. The evolution of the idea of decoration as it is now understood has been traced. Some types of ornament which occur with curious persistence during many centuries have been examined, and the uses to which these have been put by the various craftsmen of different countries have been pointed out; and the laws that tend to produce groups of closely allied patterns and to make a systematic classification not only possible but necessary for their complete understanding have been discussed. We now turn to a consideration of the most important groups of patterns. Their essential characteristics will be described and the principal devices which have been employed for their enrichment will be worked out in detail, introducing in a manner as simple as possible some decorative principles of far-reaching importance.

II. Elemen- tary de- coration

The most elementary kinds of decoration are those which merely relieve the monotony of a surface by the introduction of some change of tone

or colour.¹ The additional element which brings about this change need not necessarily have any very clearly defined form or be distributed with strict mechanical regularity, for a simple 'texture' produced by means of a pen, a brush, a punch, or a chisel will often be sufficient to give the desired effect (see Fig. 80). The gold distributed in an indiscriminate fashion over the pages of Persian manuscripts, or 'marbling' as it was made use of by

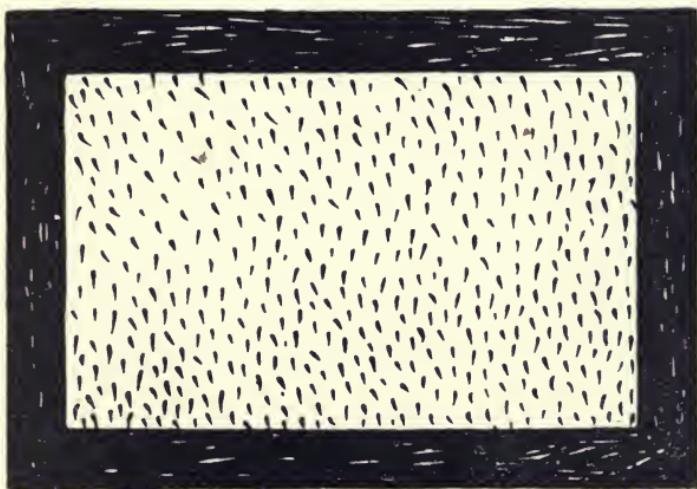


FIG. 80.

early Italian decorators, afford examples of the actual employment of this kind of work.

This method of decoration must not be regarded as deliberate falsification of material, as much modern graining and veining avowedly is, for it is but the decorator's way of using a hint borrowed from nature. He lightly touches over a dark green surface with some brighter tint of the same colour,

III.
Imitative
textures.

¹ This kind of pattern is very common upon natural objects such as foliage of variegated colouring, the wings of moths, &c. But strictly formal patterns are by no means unknown in nature. The shells of two species of molluscs, *Conus millepunctatus* and *Helix nemoralis*, afford typical examples of the two great classes of designs characterized in Chapter III.

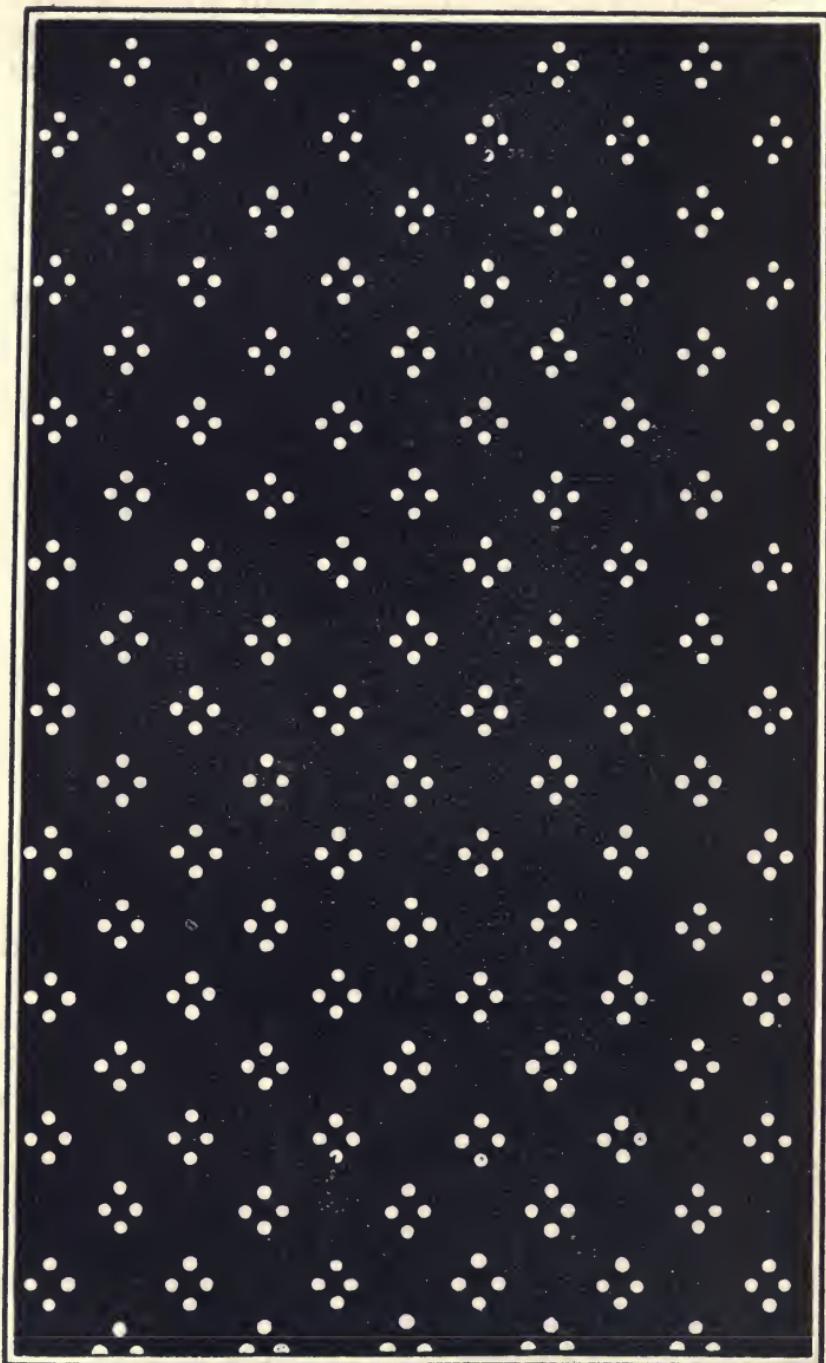


FIG. 81.



FIG. 82.



FIG. 83.

not with the intention of deceiving the beholder into the belief that he is examining that rare green serpentine to which he is indebted for the inspiration, but with the idea of imparting a similar glittering effect to a panel that would otherwise appear dull and heavy.

Painted marbling becomes more unpleasant in proportion as it more realistically imitates the accidents and peculiarities of individual specimens of the material suggested. Indeed, if any representations of natural objects or of forms used as decoration are so realistically presented as to deceive the eye, an irritating effect is produced akin to that aroused by a too close imitation of marble or wood.

But, although absolute definition of form and exact regularity of distribution

IV.
Development of
textures.

are by no means essential, even the most simple designs are usually composed of some distinct element or elements set out in an orderly manner. The number of ways in which a given element may be distributed over a surface is often very considerable. The decorative value of a pattern is not to be measured by its simplicity or complexity, but by the

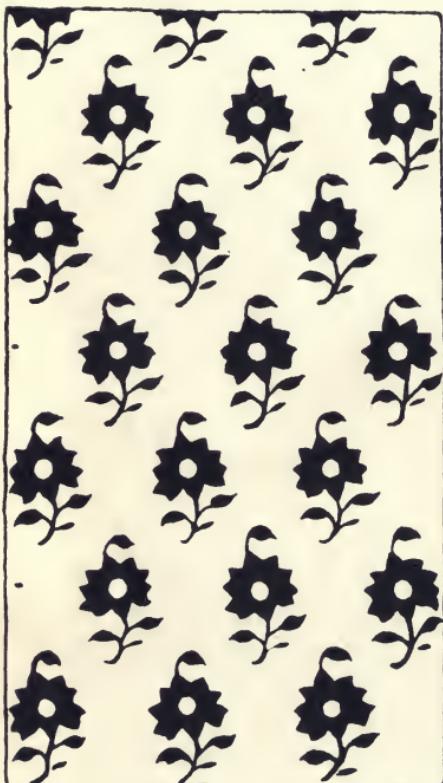


FIG. 84.



FIG. 85.

manner in which it fulfils the purpose which called for its employment. There are occasions upon which that most simple unit, the point, would be far more appropriately used than any more ornate enrichment. Many patterns useful for relieving plain surfaces or the backgrounds of elaborate designs will reveal themselves, if the task of attempting to exhaust the possible arrangements of points of gold or colour pricked singly or in groups over tinted grounds be

undertaken. In Fig. 81 is given an example of this simple form of enrichment.

From patterns such as this to that in Fig. 82 is but a short step which, once taken, leads into a field of design diligently cultivated by many schools of decorators. The element has become a little sprig of foliage and has thereby acquired a new interest and vastly extended possibilities. This development

V.
Simple
floral
sprigs.



FIG. 86.

produces in its initial stages an effect not far removed from simple point patterns, but the element may undergo any amount of elaboration until a form like that in Fig. 83 is arrived at. Examples of surfaces covered with simple sprig patterns showing elements in one and two positions are given in Figs. 84 and 85. These are, as is Fig. 83, from Indian cotton-printing blocks in the Victoria and Albert Museum. A series of examples might be arranged commencing with sprig patterns formed of



FIG. 87.

very simple elements, and showing their gradual increase in bulk and complexity until the surface to be

decorated is ultimately covered with closely fitting pieces of foliage (see Figs. 86 and 87) with merely a line of ground showing between the units. The design in Fig. 87, formed of a large-leaved sprig arranged in two positions, from a sixteenth-century Italian fabric, is a good example of this.

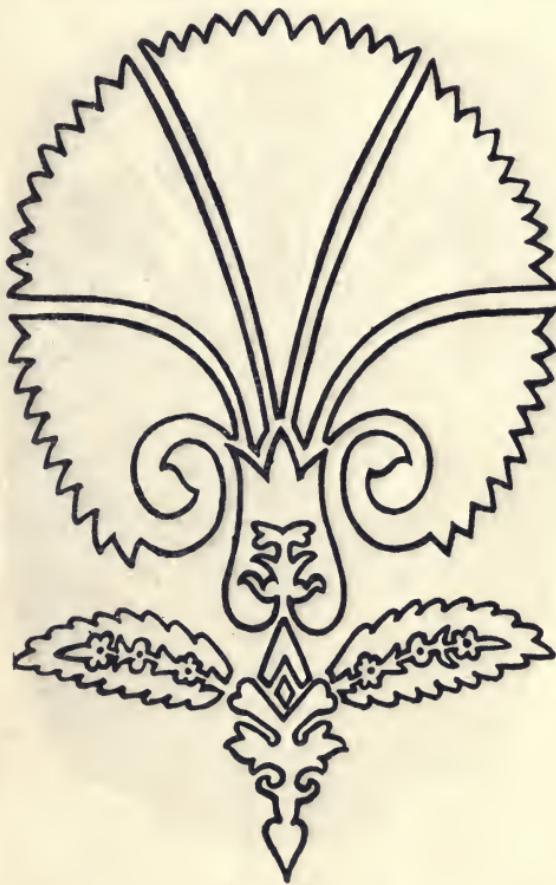


FIG. 88.

In this design a decorative expedient is used which greatly increases the brilliance of the whole. The dark-coloured sprig is itself decorated with secondary enrichment, which, whilst it follows the lines of growth and conforms to the limits of the primary element, is of quite different form. The decoration of ornament with secondary enrichment is a device that will be encountered constantly in all kinds of

Secondary enrichment of ornament.

work; indeed, there are some elements with which this device has become so traditional, that they are never found without such decoration.

VII. Example 88, is an example of an element found in all stages of ornament of decoration. It occurs, arranged in a variety of



FIG. 89.

often highly enriched. ways, upon the brocades and velvets woven at Broussa in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Richly decorated specimens, like that given in Fig. 89, in which the petals and leaves are enriched with small carnations, tulips, and other blossoms, are frequently met with. Sometimes this element, alternating with another rich flower-like piece of ornament, is found thrown into border form, recalling

a common ancient Assyrian design. Often groups of four of these carnation flowers, in which the elements are arranged so as to radiate from a centre, are found powdered closely over the surface; but most commonly the carnation is powdered singly in an upright position as represented in the examples here given.



FIG. 90.

Further developments of this carnation flower, or VIII. rather of the secondary enrichment that gives it so much additional grace and delicacy, present points of interest which must be mentioned. The bunch of flowers in Fig. 90 has the appearance of being a survival of this secondary enrichment from which the primary form has disappeared; the two stiff curls terminating the lower petals, which are such prominent features in this, being all that now Inde-
pendent development of dary enrichment.

remains. The bunch of flowers is itself undergoing the same process of modification which we have seen in action upon the original element, for it is in its turn decorated with secondary enrichment, this time of a highly conventional character, which, covered with a little chequer pattern, occupies the centre of the design. This example is from a sixteenth-century Italian velvet. In Fig. 91 is a detail of another design from a woven fabric of the same date and country in which we seem to find the final stage of these developments.

IX.
Origin of
these
examples.

There is little doubt that all these examples may be referred to a common original, and that this was derived from some representation of the sacred tree symbol. If we examine the example of this symbol given in the very ancient border design in Fig. 49, a form which Phoenician workers and traders were dis-

distributing as early as the eighth century B.C., we shall find the principal characteristics of these later developments, the plume-like upper portion issuing from between two curling horns, already reduced to a regular conventional form, and palmette elements of like construction are common motives in Egyptian and Hellenic art. The designs of the two Italian fabrics referred to above present features, distinctly Oriental, which follow models woven at that time (the sixteenth century) at Broussa and other Eastern weaving centres. The direct interchange of Oriental and Western designs has, as we have seen



FIG. 91.



FIG. 92.

G

already, gone on from very early times, so that we need feel no surprise at the suggestion of an Assyrian origin for what we have come to regard as characteristic European ornamentation.

In Fig. 92 is shown a version of the same element, from a piece of Roman Egyptian weaving, of second



FIG. 93.

or third century date. Although this is probably intended to represent a vine leaf it shows in its details a curious correspondence with the Turkish carnation (Fig. 88), indicating their derivation from a common original. The serrated margin of the leaf is repeated in the flower, and the curled horns at the base are common to both. We have in this vine-

leaf ornament, without doubt, another development of the sacred tree or palmette symbol which, under new influences, has assumed another form. The two leaves springing from the stalk of the carnation are replaced by tendrils in the Egyptian example.

Long narrow leaves with serrated margins similar |



FIG. 94.

in design to those issuing from the stem of the carnation (Fig. 88), are familiar forms in Turkish, Syrian, and other Saracenic schools of design. They are usually enriched, as in this case, with central floral sprays. Good examples of these leaves, which are sometimes of very elaborate design, may be seen in Fig. 93, two specimens from a seventeenth-century

Turkish tile. The leaves are not always associated with flowers and stems, but sometimes occur quite independently, as on the Turkish jug shown in Fig. 94.

X. The 'cone' design, a very characteristic piece of Examples Persian and Indian ornament, is another tree symbol, of orna-
ment
always
enriched.



FIG. 95.

recalling the cypress trees represented upon the sculptured wall-slabs of the Palaces of Nineveh. It is very common upon woven and printed textiles, and also in all kinds of carved, painted, and inlaid decoration. A typical example of this leaf-like ornament is given in Fig. 95, from an Indian cotton

FORMED OF FLORAL ELEMENTS 101

printing block. It is almost invariably richly decorated. We often find very beautiful elements of undoubted tree form thrown into this shape, like that in Fig. 96, from another cotton-printing block. Sometimes little birds are represented perching upon the boughs of trees, which in many cases grow out

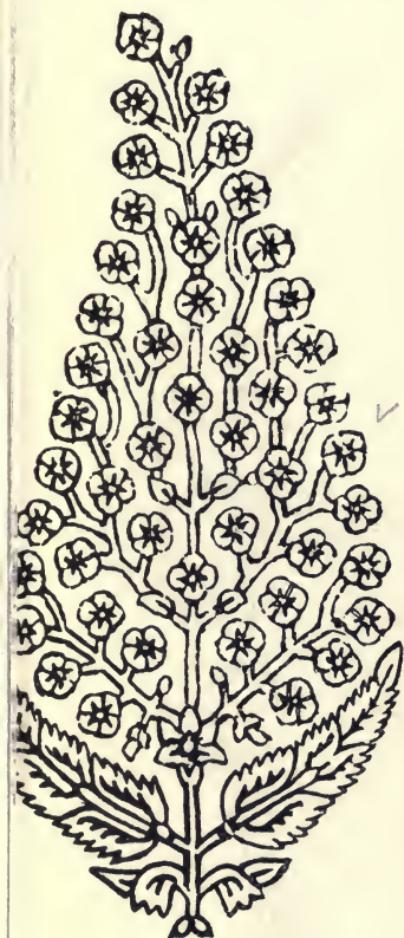


FIG. 96.

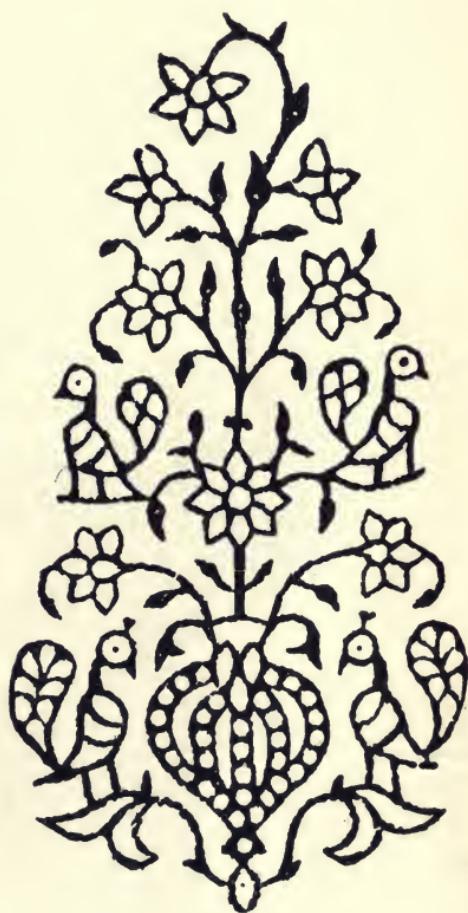


FIG. 97.

of vases. In Fig. 97 is an example of this, resembling those Indian lamp-bearing trees of brass which have birds of similar form, evidently peacocks, sitting upon their boughs. The golden trees which stood in the palace of the Emperor at Constantinople, with perching birds, which upon state occasions were

made to sing, by means of a concealed organ, belong to the same tradition. So usually is the cone enriched with secondary ornament that it has become in many instances merely a conventional form upon which a sprig of foliage is displayed, as in Fig. 98. In Plate III is reproduced a fine Masulipatam chintz closely covered with these elements arranged in two positions, and enriched with no fewer than six different floral sprays of very elaborate design.



FIG. 98.

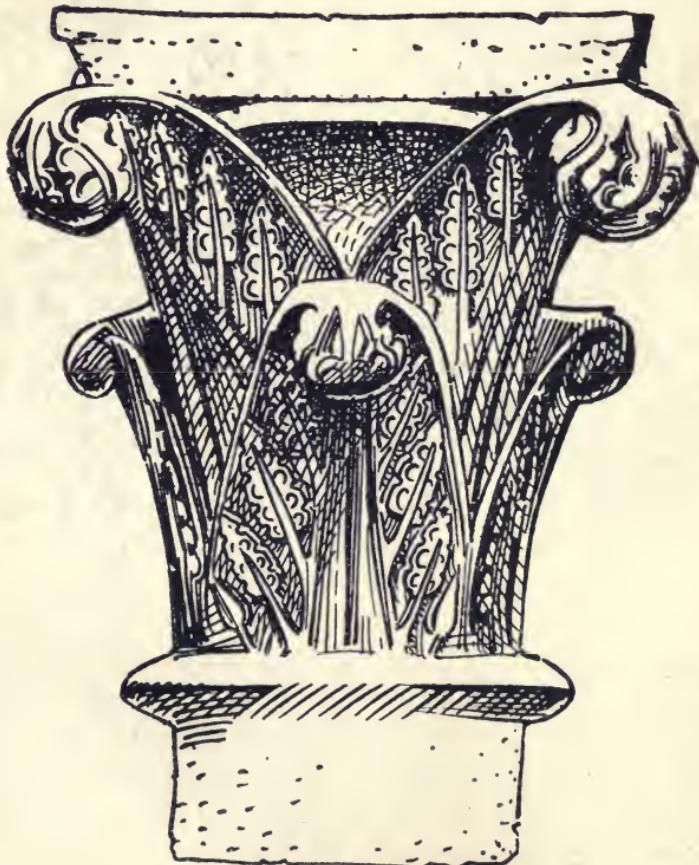


FIG. 99.

The examples of the enrichment of ornament with secondary decoration hitherto given have been taken from woven textiles and painted glazed earthenware. But the device is very generally used by many other craftsmen. Fig. 99 is an instance of its employment by the carver; it represents a sculptured stone capital of late twelfth-century date from the tri-

XI.
Further examples of the secondary enrichment of ornament.



FIG. 100.

forium of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Laon. Fig. 100 shows a characteristic leaf from a seventeenth-century English embroidered hanging, decorated with secondary foliage. These embroideries often show examples of another kind of secondary enrichment of ornament. Their leaves, worked with bold outlines, are sometimes entirely covered with little ingeniously arranged geometrical patterns which

give them a singularly massive and rich appearance. From embroideries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and from the Indian and Chinese embroidered and printed designs upon which they were modelled, many fine examples of all kinds of enriched leaves and flowers may be collected, showing the wonderful range of fantastic ingenuity expended upon this kind of decoration.¹



FIG. 101.

XII.
Relative
areas of
design
and
ground
deco-
rated.

The relative area of the decorative element to the ground which it leaves unoccupied is a matter which has received very careful attention from Mohammedan decorators. They noted the magnificent glittering effects, produced by the mathematically even distribution of two or more colours over a surface, which their strictly geometrical designs displayed, and applied the same idea to other kinds of patterns with most extraordinary results. Three

¹ Instances of secondary enrichment assuming primary importance frequently occur. The example given in Fig. 295 may be referred to. Here the primary design is reduced to a mere outline, whilst the decoration shows very strongly.

examples must suffice, for the present, to show the possibilities of this phase of design. The first (Fig. 101) decorates the *mihrāb* of the Mosque of el Muayyad at Cairo. It is inlaid with coloured marbles,



FIG. 102.

and dates from the first quarter of the fifteenth century. So skilfully are the elements of this pattern arranged, that it is impossible to say which is ground and which is design. Both are in fact identical. The second example (Fig. 102) shows to what extravagant lengths this idea was carried. It is also fifteenth-century work, from the Mosque of el Ainy at

Cairo, and is made of blue and white glazed earthenware tiles arranged so as to form an inscription in Kufic letters, an invocation to God, reading 'Ah Allah'. This is repeated many times over the surface, and is arranged in such a way that the white interstices of the blue letters form the same inscription, only reversed; so that the inscription appears in blue letters upon a white ground, or in white letters upon a blue ground according to the position of the

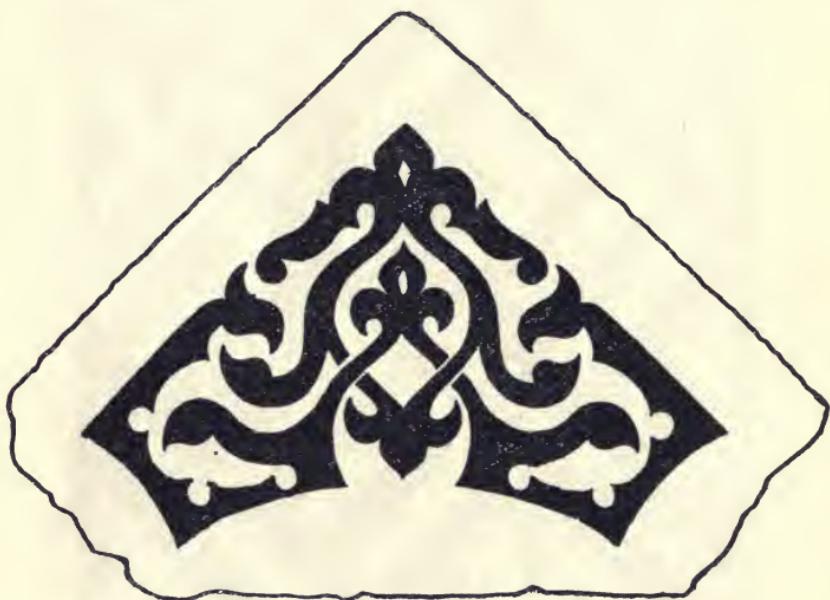


FIG. 103.

reader, surely a masterpiece of space saving calligraphy! The third example (Fig. 103) also from Cairo, is inlaid in marble in the corner of a fifteenth-century pavement. This differs from those already described, for here the ornament is formed of two coloured scrolls of different design, which are so cleverly interlocked as to produce a curious effect of uncertainty as to which is pattern and which is background. Designs of this type, essentially Mohammedan, have spread widely in the West, where examples, often debased and ill planned, are common

under the name of 'Arabesques'. Fig. 104 represents one of these designs inlaid in a wooden panel of a room from Sizergh Castle, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This is an English example of sixteenth-century date.



FIG. 104.

CHAPTER V

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF FLORAL ELEMENTS

Two Distinct Groups of Powdered Floral Designs.—Examples of Freely Designed Elements.—Their great Decorative Value.—Designs formed of Units of Large Dimensions.—Limits of this Type of Decoration.—Examples of its Use in Ancient Art.—Oriental Origin of Floral Work.—Floral Elements of the Persian School.—The Pomegranate and its Developments.

I.
Two distinct groups of powdered floral designs. PATTERNS formed of floral powderings fall into two well-defined groups. In the one, that already described, those strict ideas of formality, which are usually the result of mechanical processes of manufacture, incline to dominate the design and to treat the floral element as a more or less automatically reproduced unit. In the second, the design is produced under less exacting conditions, and for its effect relies to a greater degree upon *variety* than upon *monotony*. These patterns derive interest from the individuality of the forms employed, and tax the designer's powers of draughtsmanship and composition to their fullest extent.

II.
Examples of freely designed elements. Typical of this second group are those designs in which, whilst the characteristic distribution of the elements over the surface is fully maintained, no two are exactly alike. Such are the flowered foregrounds of fifteenth-century tapestries, and of the pictures and of the miniatures of manuscripts of this period. The intention of these is to produce a richly coloured effect by means of a brilliant mass of foliage and flowers, the individual units of which will bear the closest inspection, and at the same time not



FIG. 105.

be unduly obtrusive. Fig. 105, from the border of a panel of tapestry, one of the fine series of fifteenth-century examples in the Musée de Cluny, Paris, shows the kind of drawing and arrangement followed in these designs. The embroidered robe worn by the figure of Spring in Botticelli's picture, the *Primavera*, is another example; here the elements, although all of different design, are spaced out with the regularity of the formal type. Designs so planned enable us to ascertain the value of the breadth of treatment which results from the introduction of monotony and to compare this with the pleasant ever varying change of surface which the more freely worked varieties show.

III.
Their
great
decora-
tive value.

The charming simplicity of these designs is so captivating that they are quite beyond criticism. The direct, accurate yet spirited representations of the plants and flowers selected are absolutely free from all taint of mannerism. Plant drawing of the same exquisite type may be studied in the woodcuts of the sixteenth-century herbals (see Fig. 106 from the



FIG. 106.

Rariorum Plantarum Historia of Carolus Clusius), and in the engravings, often coloured by hand, which maintained the same high standard of truthfulness up to the commencement of the nineteenth century. Entire walls may be beautifully decorated by merely powdering buttercups and daisies in different positions over the surface. Very many fine Oriental designs, carved, painted, inlaid or woven fall into this category.

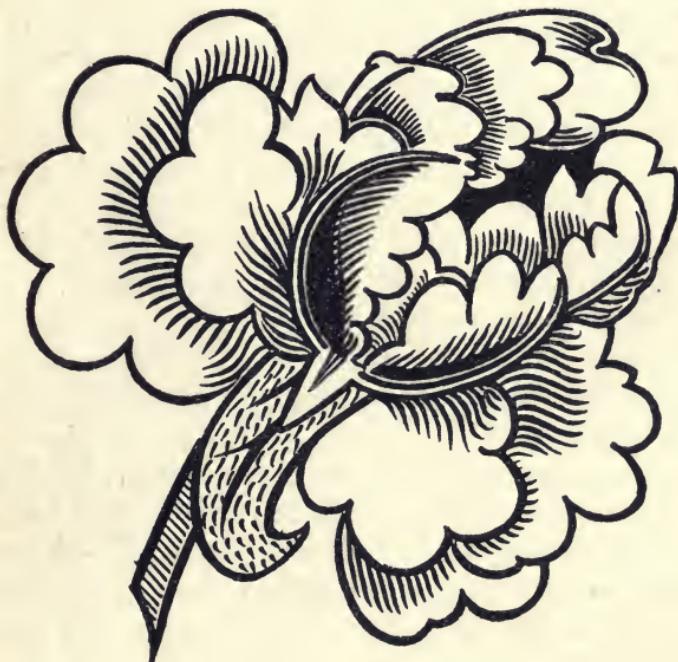


FIG. 107.

The decorators of the far East sometimes used IV. Designs formed of units of large dimensions. floral units of very considerable dimensions. Plate IV is a photograph of part of a magnificent specimen of this large-scale work, in which the use of trees and flowering shrubs of ten feet or more in height was not uncommon. It is one of those Chinese painted paper wall-hangings,—still to be found in many old country houses,—which were first brought to England in the seventeenth century, and which

are the direct ancestors of our printed wall-papers. On pale mauve or slate coloured grounds many kinds of shrubs and trees are represented laden with green foliage and white or coloured blossoms. Finely drawn richly feathered birds strut on the ground or perch among the boughs, and butterflies flit about in the open spaces. The drawing is free, masterly, and accurate, and the whole produces a wonderful effect of gaiety and lightness. Very similar designs are found upon large Chinese embroideries, which in their turn resemble the painted and printed chintzes from Masulipatam. All these were largely imported into Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and their designs had a marked effect upon Western decoration, being copied, sometimes with great exactness, in the embroideries, chintzes and painted work of that period. The peony-like flower in Fig. 107, a detail from an English eighteenth-century painted leather screen, was evidently copied from a Chinese original ; it shows the rapid, free style of brushwork adopted in this decoration.

V.
Limits of
this type
of decora-
tion.

In these examples we are closely approaching the border line that modern critics have drawn between pattern designing and landscape painting. There is perhaps no necessity to ascertain very exactly where the one leaves off and the other begins, nor, indeed, is it quite possible to do so. In the composition given in Fig. 108, a portion of a miniature from a French fourteenth-century illuminated manuscript, the artist has retained so much of the pattern tradition as to treat the sky as a background to the whole and to decorate it with a chequer design in order to obtain a certain monotonous breadth. The plan of composition is a very logical development of that shown in the Chinese and French examples given above. The ground, restricted to the lower part of the design in the former, now extends much higher up, and the floral elements, freely overlapping each

other, are laid out systematically over the surface without any regard to those principles of perspective



FIG. 108.

that would only serve to distort the even appearance of the surface decorated. How mechanical necessities have led the designer to transform a similar theme into a purely formal powdering may be seen



FIG. 109.

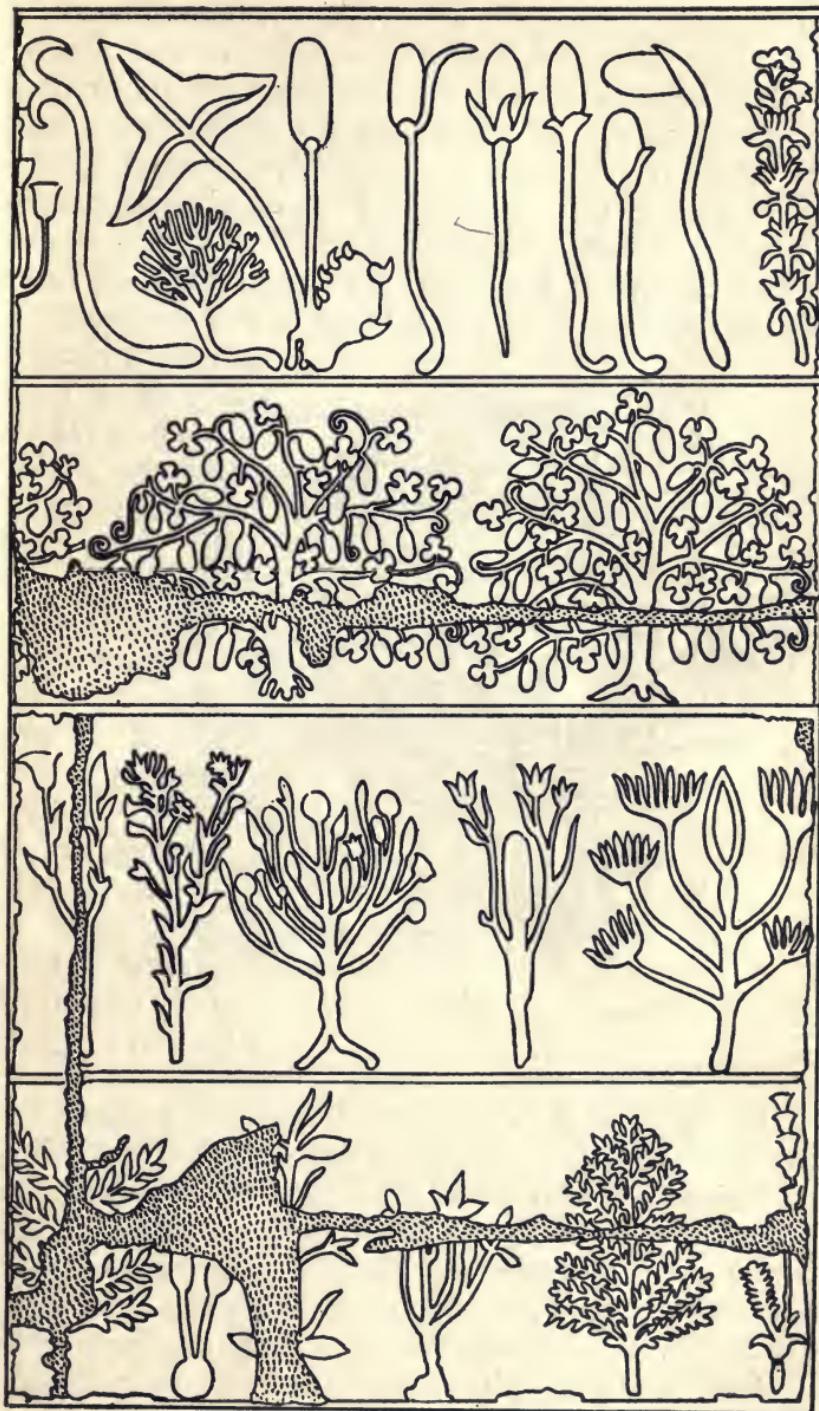


FIG. 110.

in the design given in Fig. 109, a representation of a printed fabric taken from an early German picture.

VI.
Examples
of its use
in ancient
art.

The idea of decorating surfaces with naturalistic representations of plants and animals goes back to very early times. Some ancient examples have as much of the informative as of the decorative principle in their composition, and they sometimes are actual historical records. The long rows of trees, plants, and animals carved upon the walls of the

temple of Karnak by order of King Thothmes III are an instance of this. In these sculptures (see Fig. 110) which set out in due order the products of the distant countries explored or conquered by that monarch, we have a pleasant variation from the long strings of wretched captives usually displayed.

Fig. 111 gives another kind of



early floral work characteristic of its locality and period. It shows a painted vase from Crete which is decorated with representations of what are apparently marine forms of plant life. These, once commonly employed by early schools, have given place to the field and garden flowers with which the great exponents of this kind of decoration have made us familiar by supplying so many excellent models of their use.

Although Western art can show many specimens

of floral work of native design, there is no doubt VII.
that we are indebted to the East for the original use
of flowers as decorative elements, for not only are
many of our floral patterns of Oriental form, but many
of our decorative plants are themselves of exotic
growth, many coming from Syria and Persia. Oriental
craftsmen have always been so proficient in this
kind of design, that Western decorators have been
content to follow closely their fashions and copy the
elements which they have employed, with the result
Oriental origin of
floral work.



FIG. 112.

that we can clearly distinguish Western reflections of many phases of Eastern art. We can follow very closely the development of the new ideas of design which arose in the West as a result of the rise of Mohammedanism, and we can watch the effect produced in later times by the growth of Portuguese and Dutch trade with the Indies.

A survey of the flowers which occur most frequently in Turkish, Syrian and Persian art of the great period preceding and corresponding to the European Renaissance, will perhaps be more useful school. VIII.
Floral elements of the Persian school.

than an examination of those of any other time, for here we find the originals of many forms that were used by those Western pattern designers with whose work we are now most familiar, work which has very directly influenced the decoration of the present day. The fine silk velvet of Persian manufacture,



FIG. 113.

shown in Plate V, exhibits a medley of characteristic flowers and foliage, brightly coloured irises, roses, lilies, and other blossoms upon a rich, red ground. We have the iris again in Fig. 112 from a beautiful Damascus tile of the fifteenth century. The rose and tulip, powdered over a ground decorated with a scale-work pattern, occur upon the Turkish jug

(Fig. 113), in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Both are typical forms, and are found in many stages of formalization and enrichment. Figs. 114 and 115 give other specimens of the rose and the tulip from glazed earthenware tiles. The carnation, of which a formalized and decorated example has already been given



FIG. 114.

(see Fig. 89), is a flower of common occurrence, as is also the hyacinth, often very delicately drawn (Fig. 116). The fruit blossom shown in Fig. 117, from a Turkish tile, is another rich piece of decoration often found in the floral work of this school.

It is unnecessary to dilate upon the excellence of

IX.
The
pome-
granate
and its
develop-
ments.



FIG. 115.

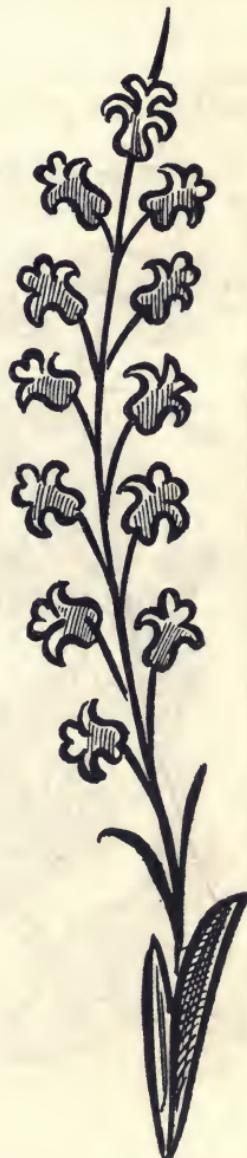


FIG. 116.

which have borrowed floral elements from it, for its pre-eminence must be manifest on a most casual examination. Before we leave this phase of Persian art there is one element to which attention should

specially be directed. This is the pomegranate, of which typical examples may be seen in the two larger flowers painted upon the fine Damascus tile



FIG. 117.

shown in Fig. 118. The pomegranate occurs with considerable variation of form, sometimes being treated very naturalistically in a beautiful free style of drawing, whilst other examples are so formalized and ornamented that there is difficulty in identifying



FIG. 118.

the foliage represented. A more or less naturalistic example of Turkish workmanship is given in Fig.



FIG. 119.

119, from a tile in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This may be compared with that shown in Fig. 120, from a North Italian silk velvet of the sixteenth

century in which the extreme limit of decorated formalism is reached. The central part of this element, the fruit, shows a constant tendency to

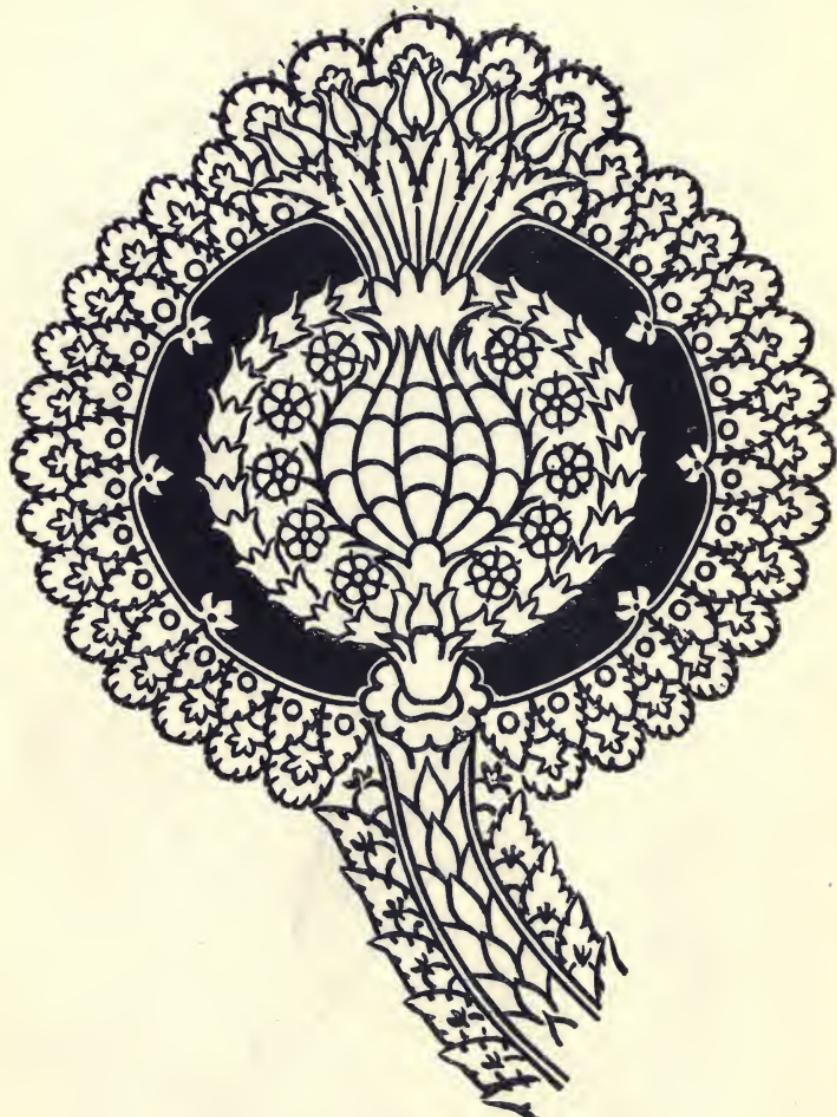


FIG. 120.

develop into a little compartment decorated with independent secondary foliage. Several stages of this process, which culminates in the Italian example, may be observed in the pomegranates occurring

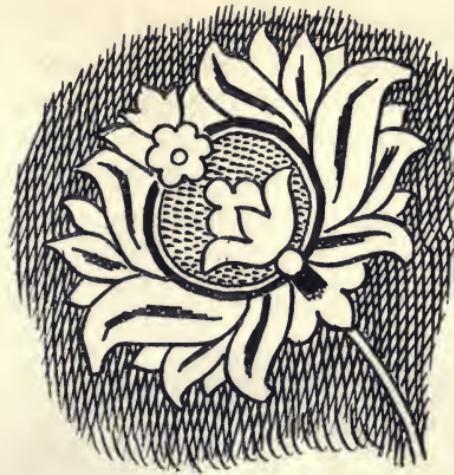


FIG. 121.



FIG. 122.

upon Persian carpets; Fig. 121 is from the magnificent fifteenth-century carpet from the Mosque of Ardebil, now one of the great treasures of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Here we see the fruit, surrounded with its ring of foliage, decorated with a little formal sprig; another specimen from a rug of later date (Fig. 122) shows the complete development of the central panel and its formalized border.



FIG. 123.

The sprig shown in Fig. 123 is undoubtedly the same motive modified under Italian influences; here the central decoration is not rigidly confined to a definite panel. It is from a Saracenic-Italian fabric of thirteenth or fourteenth-century date.

In spite of its Oriental origin, the pomegranate had considerable popularity in Western ecclesiastical decoration, in which like many other decorative elements it acquired its own symbolical meanings. It was largely used in wall-paintings and in woven

fabrics in northern Europe. Fig. 124 is a painted example used as a powdering over the background of a panel in the famous rood screen of Ranworth Church in Norfolk. The design was doubtless brought to the North upon the woven silks and



FIG. 124.

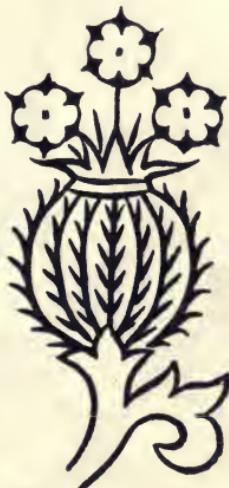


FIG. 125.

velvets of Italy¹ and the East, upon which examples similar to that in Fig. 125 are common. This from a silk velvet, of later date than the Ranworth example, is a very usual form of this often fantastically varied piece of ornament.

¹ See Edward F. Strange, 'Textile Patterns from Suffolk Rood-Screens,' *The Studio*, vol. xv, p. 241.

CHAPTER VI

GEOMETRICAL DESIGNS

Powdered Patterns formed of Geometrical Figures.—Decorative Value of Geometrical Patterns.—The Square and Triangle, and Developments of these Forms.—Geometrical Patterns constructed of Precious Materials.—Cosmati Work.—Mohammedan Geometrical Work.—The Disk.—Developments of the Disk.—Patterns formed of Overlapping Geometrical Figures.

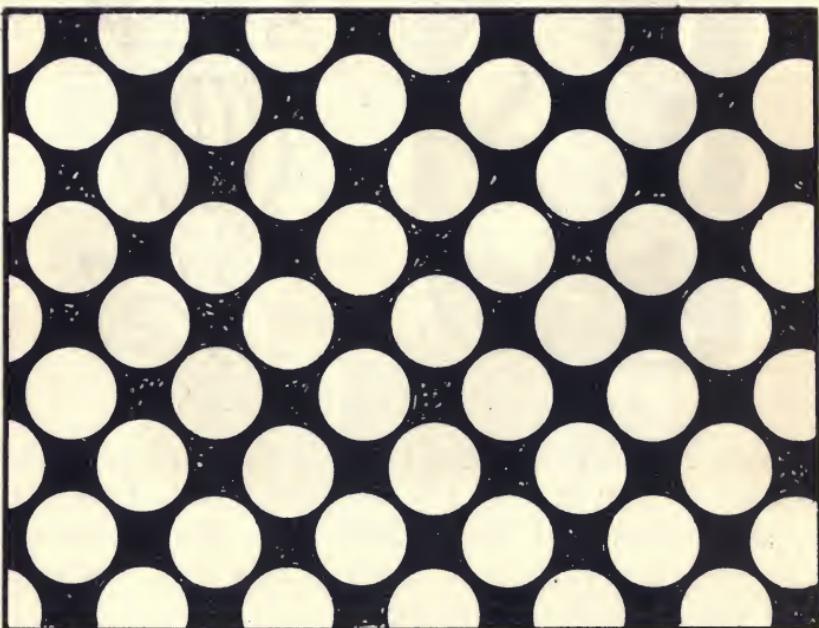


FIG. 126.

I. FROM the elementary forms of decoration, textures Powdered and point designs, described in the opening patterns graphs of Chapter IV, may be developed another formed of geometri-series of patterns quite distinct from that already cal discussed. The design in Fig. 126, of white disks figures. spaced over a black ground, belongs to this new

group. It is a development of the point design in which the unit is of vastly increased dimensions. By changing the form of the unit other patterns of the same kind are obtained, such as the chess-board pattern (Fig. 127), a design equally representative of this group, which will include patterns formed of simple geometrical figures, either plain or decorated, arranged in a variety of ways. In both these

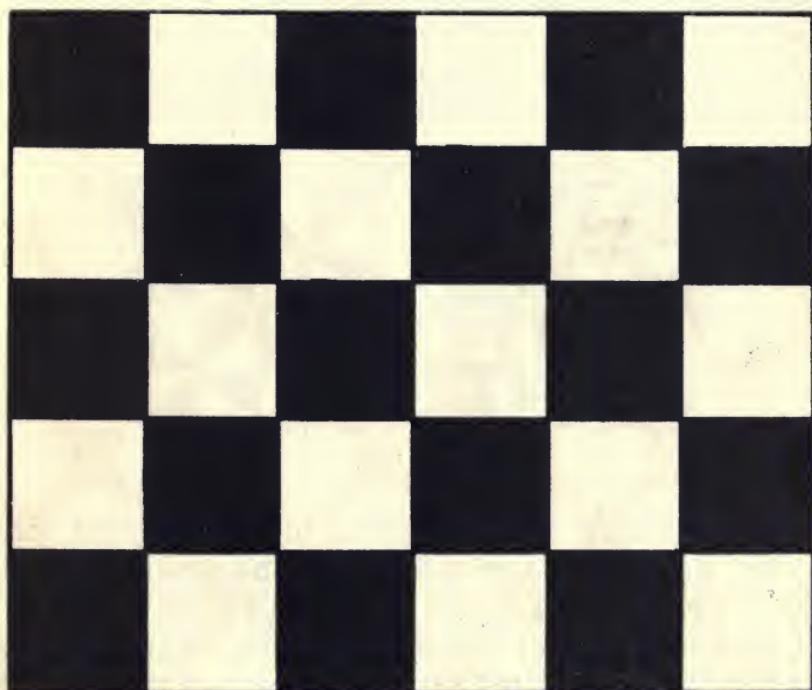


FIG. 127.

examples the elements, white disks and squares, are powdered very closely over the ground; but as the corners of the squares touch one another a background of precisely the same form as the design powdered over it is produced. This exact balance of ground and design may be avoided by reducing the size of the white units, which will render many arrangements of this element possible. One of these, the double relationship of which has already been noted, is given in Fig. 69 (see p. 78).

II.
Decorative value
of geometrical
patterns.

This apparently unpromising series of designs presents in reality a number of most interesting examples, which have been used very largely during the great periods of decorative art. The masters of former times have always recognized the strength and reticence of simple geometrical patterns, and have never hesitated to employ them, even in their most elementary forms. The elements of these patterns have undergone all kinds of subdivision and readjustment, and have been enriched by means of many ingenious changes of colouring and by the addition of floral or formal ornament of great variety.

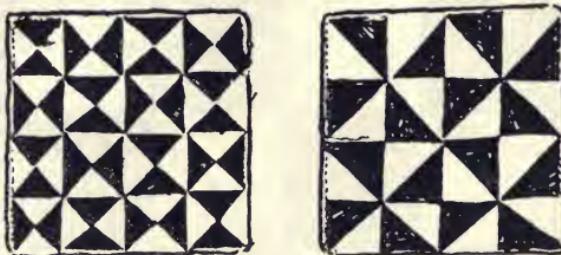


FIG. 128.

III.
The square and triangle and developments of these forms.

We will now consider some of the patterns constructed and developed from disks and squares, taking the latter first. The chess-board pattern composed of alternate squares of marble or stone of two colours forms one of the most satisfactory pavement designs yet devised. Fig. 128 shows a development of this in which the squares are subdivided into triangles. The two examples are from English paving tiles of the fourteenth century. In a fine pavement (Fig. 129) from an early Italian picture we see a design planned upon the same basis as that given in Fig. 69; in this black squares, spaced over a white ground, are decorated with white lozenges. A similar arrangement of squares decorated with brush-work foliage (see Fig. 130) indicates the possibilities of another treatment of this design. This example is by Giotto, and is from the background of a fresco in the

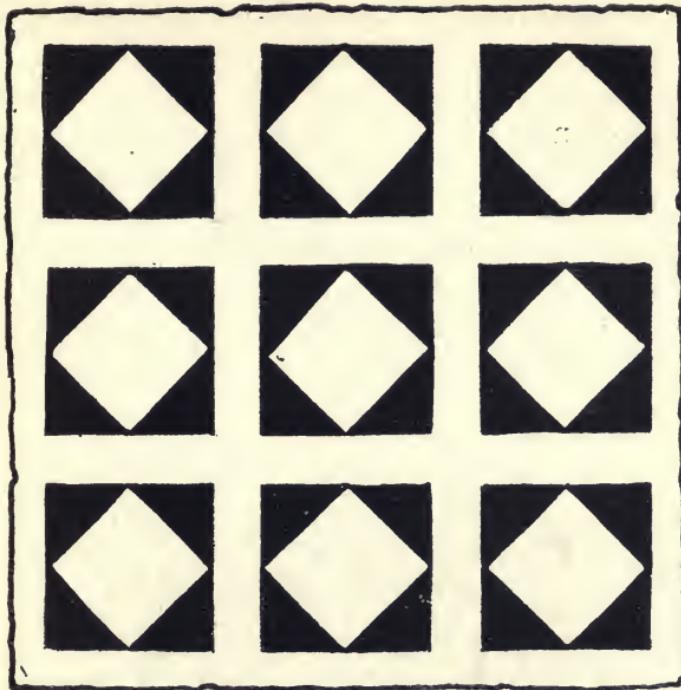


FIG. 129.

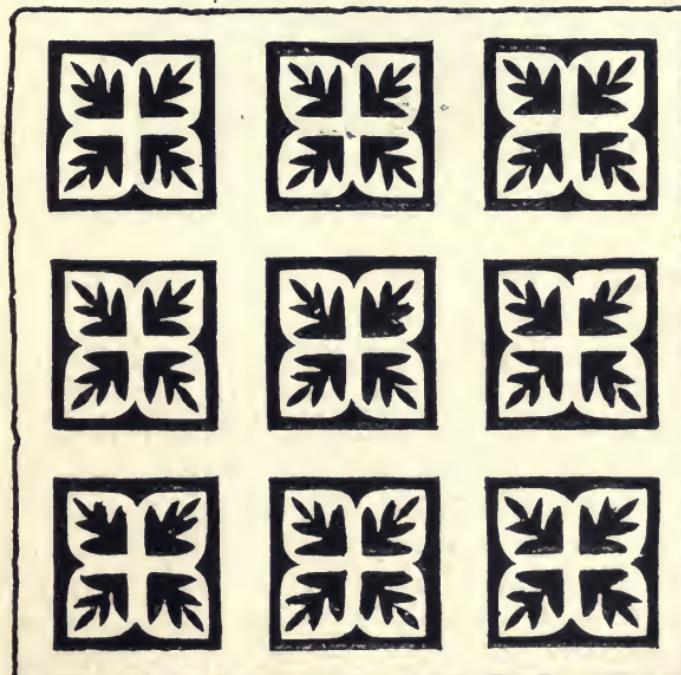


FIG. 130.

Bardi Chapel of the Church of Santa Croce at Florence.

IV.
Geo-
metrical
patterns
con-
structed
of
precious
materials.

The more simple forms are found in marble pavements and wall-linings of Roman, Byzantine, and Italian churches and palaces; the designs derive great richness from the beauty of the veining and the colours of the materials employed. Panels of rich marbles set in plainer surroundings produce solemn, noble effects that can be obtained in no other way; for the fact that the pattern is actually constructed

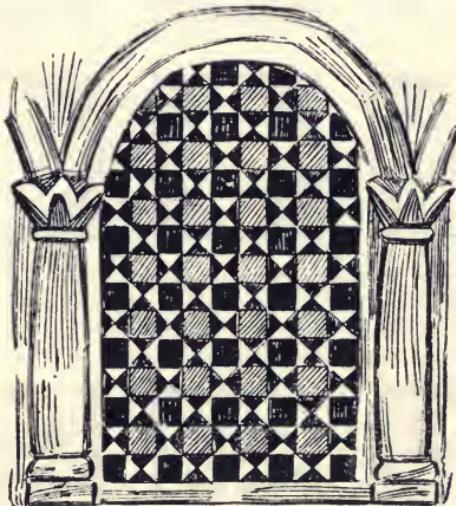


FIG. 131.

conveys an impression of lasting solidity not attainable by any other means.

Elaborate designs formed by the regular combination of several geometrical forms are common in smaller, more precious marble inlay work and also in woodwork, inlaid and veneered. A second pattern from the little decorated arcade already cited (see p. 32), a fragment of the ambo of the Church of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli, is given in Fig. 131, a characteristic design composed of two geometrical units each of which occurs in two different colours.

This ambo was the work of a certain Laurentius V. Cosma, one of the older members of a celebrated family of Roman marble-workers of the thirteenth century, from whose name the term 'Cosmati' work, by which this kind of mosaic is sometimes known, is derived. Some of the designs show traces of Saracenic inspiration, doubtless derived from Neapolitan and Sicilian sources, but this method of decorating marble is of much earlier, Byzantine, origin, and spread from Constantinople and

Cosmati
work.



FIG. 132.

Greece round the shores of the Mediterranean. It is also found much further afield, for in the thirteenth century a Roman marble-worker was employed to decorate the basement of the shrine of Edward the Confessor at Westminster Abbey with this Cosmati work, the remains of which are still to be seen there.¹

¹ See Professor W. R. Lethaby, *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen*, London, 1906, p. 319. In Figs. 107 and 118 of this work are given interesting examples of mosaic patterns 'of distinctly oriental complexion' in the Abbey.

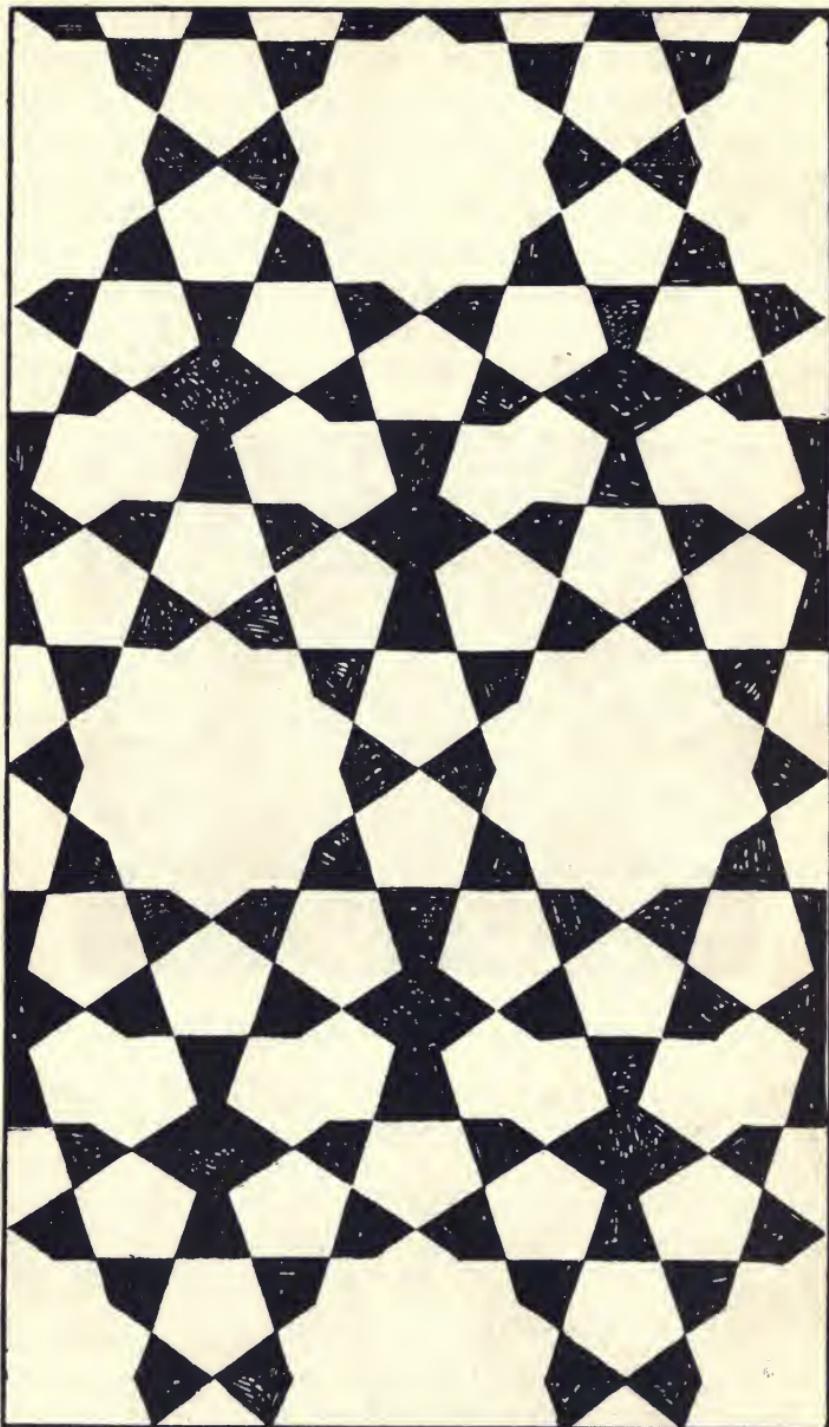


FIG. 133.

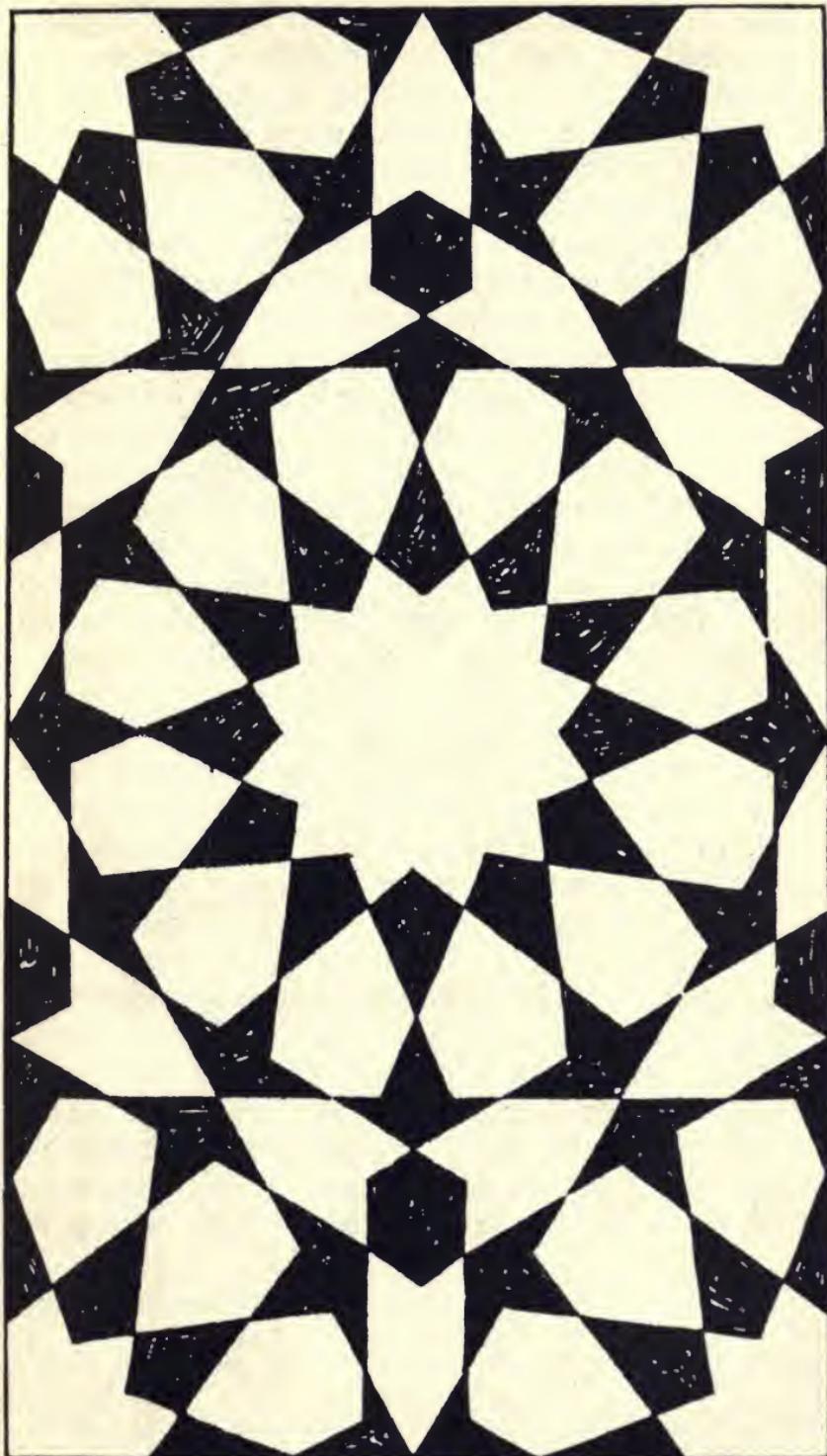


FIG. 134.

It is to the marble-workers and to the designers of glazed tile and brick decoration that we are indebted for the most striking examples of these patterns. Those craftsmen, who obtained their decorative effects by means of arrangements of variously shaped pieces of material, usually differently coloured, would necessarily develop this type of pattern to its greatest extent, since the limitations under which they worked compelled them to study geometrical problems very closely. The 'Cosmati' work, or, to give it another name by which it is widely known, *opus Alexandrinum*, panels were always decorated with these ingenious little patterns composed of geometrical units; they were formed of small fragments of variegated marbles or porphyries, to which pieces of pearl shell and gilded glass were sometimes added. A detail of another of these interesting little patterns is given in Fig. 132, also from the ambo of Santa Maria in Ara Coeli.

VI.
Moham-
medan
geometri-
cal work.

There are many very complex Oriental examples of patterns of this type; they occur frequently upon glazed earthenware tiles, and are also found, veneered, inlaid, or painted, in the art of all Mohammedan nations. Two excellent examples are given on pages 134 and 135 (Figs. 133 and 134) which have been developed from two working drawings (see Figs. 135 and 136) in the already mentioned collection of designs formed by the Persian architect, Mirza Akber.¹ In these two diagrams we have the geometrical construction of two very elaborate examples covered with mysterious sequences of interchanging geometrical forms. These designs in actual work would be enriched with a variety of

¹ Only the heavy lines in these two figures occur upon the original drawings, but if these are carefully examined the 'setting out' represented by the thin lines in Figs. 135 and 136 will be discovered lightly scratched upon the paper with some sharp-pointed instrument. The most complete analysis of this kind of design is that of M. J. Bourgoin, *Les Éléments de l'Art Arabe*, Paris, 1879.

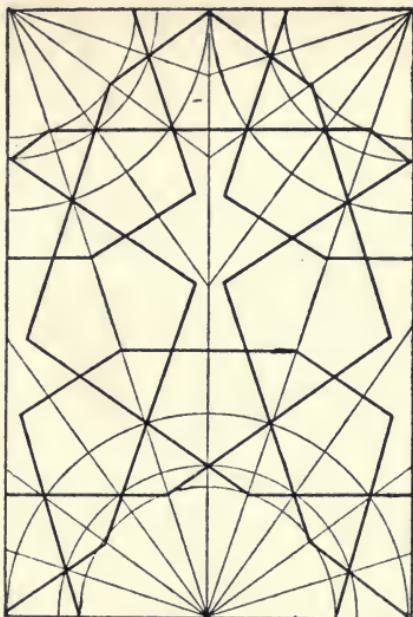


FIG. 135.

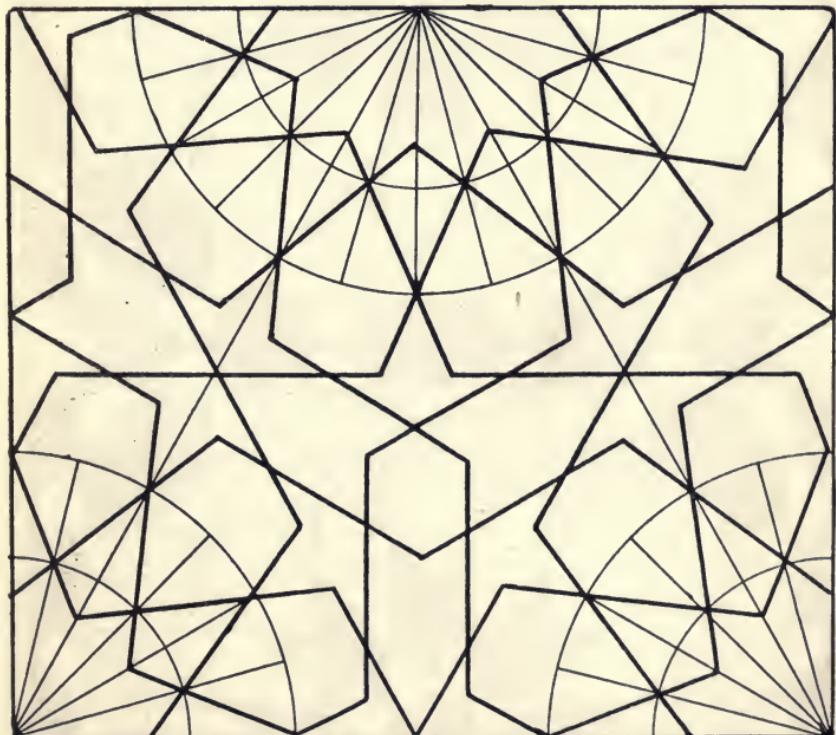


FIG. 136.

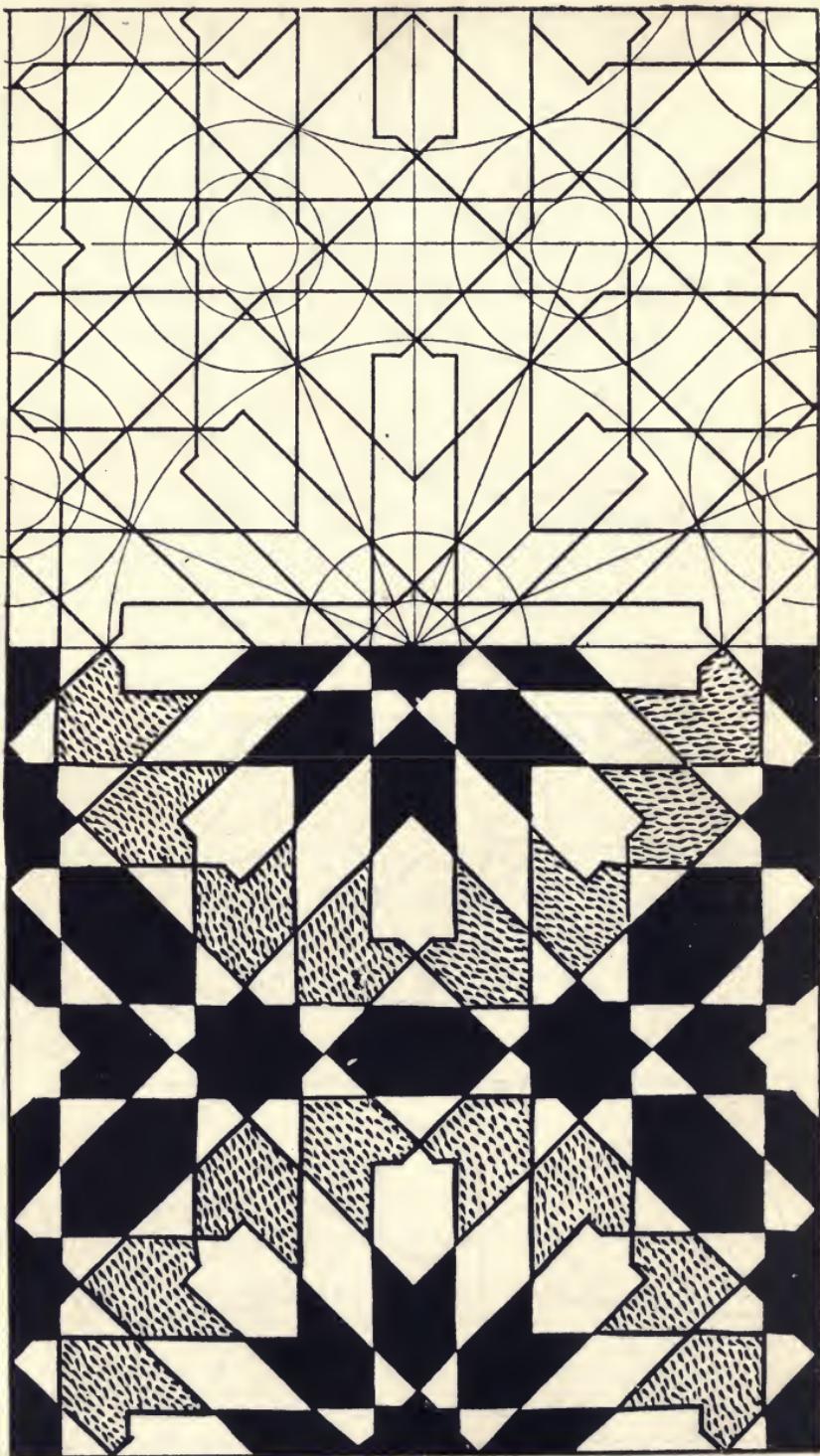


FIG. 137.

colours. In Fig. 137 the operation has been reversed and the design of a beautifully coloured glazed earthenware tile has been resolved into its geometrical basis.

Oriental carpenters, governed by climatic conditions which render large pieces of wood very liable to warp, construct panelling of shapes and sizes very different from those usual in the West. Sometimes ivory panels take the place of the wooden ones;

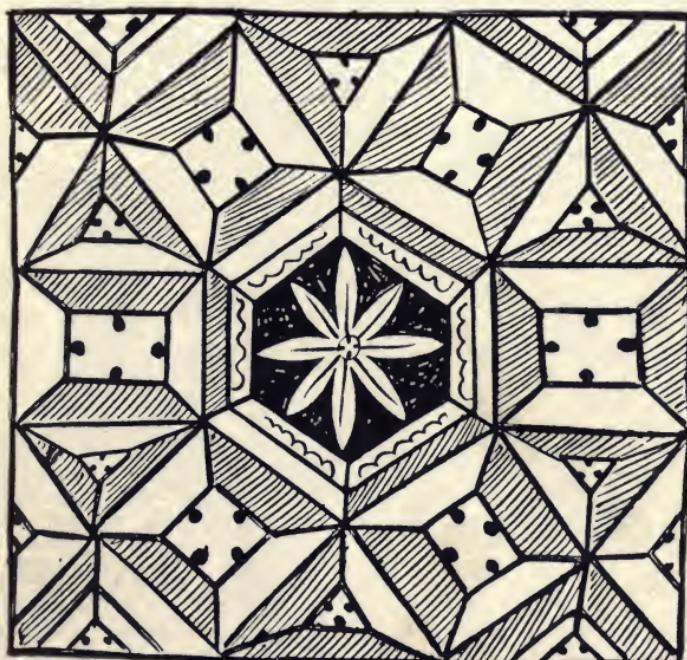


FIG. 138.

both are often richly carved, as in the example, given in Plate VI, from a pulpit, from Cairo, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. An elaborate geometrical design of this type is shown in Plate I. In that, however, the design is carved upon a plank of wood and it is not constructed. The forms employed in such Saracenic woodwork closely follow the models supplied by earlier Coptic examples, which largely influenced the development of later Egyptian carpentry. The same kinds of geometrical

designs are found in Coptic fabrics and wall paintings. Fig. 138 shows a pattern which is painted upon



FIG. 139.



FIG. 140.

a wall at Baôuit, and dates from the fifth or sixth century. In this example the very simple spot

decoration of the square or triangular panels is interesting, recalling the filling of the panels which occur at stated intervals in the key pattern borders of Attic vase painters (see Fig. 139).

The disk, variously disposed and decorated, formed a characteristic enrichment of Sassanian and By-

VII.

The disk.



FIG. 141.

zantine woven fabrics, and of the later Rhenish and Italian designs modelled upon them. The vest worn by King Assur-bani-pal in an Assyrian bas-relief, representing a lion hunt, in the British Museum, is covered with disk-like rosettes (see Fig. 140). From carved ivories and other sources we know

that the Roman consuls wore robes with similar decoration, and the Byzantine *chrysoclavus*, or golden nail-head design, was a lineal descendant of this.¹ In a mosaic in the Baptistry of Saint Mark's, Venice, is represented a figure of Saint John Chrysostom, wearing a vestment showing an ecclesiastical development of this pattern, a design formed of disks decorated with crosses (see Fig. 141).

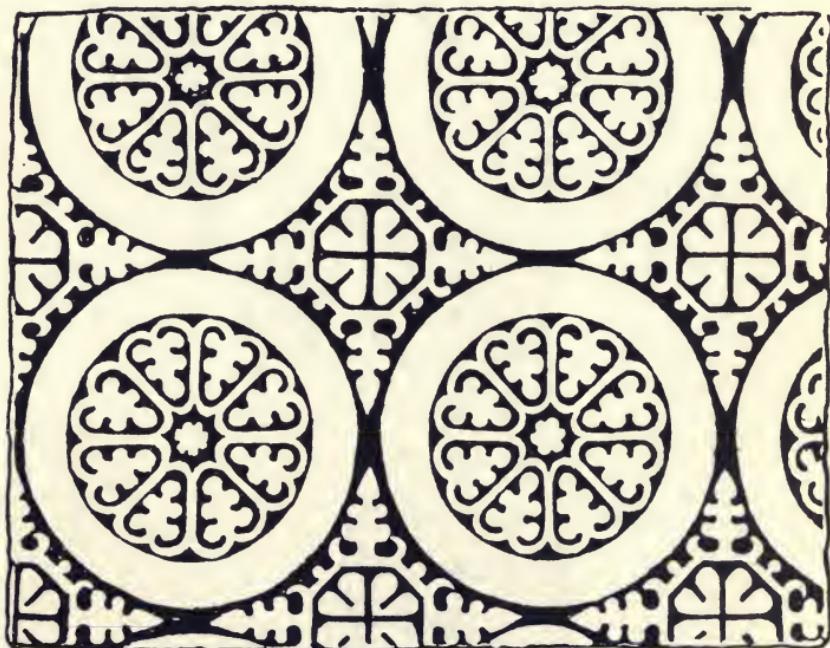


FIG. 142.

A few more of these beautiful and characteristic patterns may be mentioned. In Fig. 142 is shown a highly enriched specimen in which the ground is decorated, as well as the disks themselves, leaving the plain margin of the disk as the most prominent feature of the design. The next figure (Fig. 143), from a Byzantine fabric, is another richly decorated example in which the centre of the disk is occupied by a couple of those winged lions with which the sacred tree patterns have rendered us familiar.

¹ See Dr. Rock, *op. cit.*, Introduction, p. 49.

Birds and beasts of heraldic design are very frequently met with in Byzantine and Sassanian fabrics with this kind of pattern. The fine example in Plate VII is from an eleventh-century Byzantine silk fabric, of which a fragment is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Figure subjects representing hunting scenes and so forth, woven upon disk patterns, were not uncommon. The golden disks



FIG. 143.

of the Byzantine *chrysoclavus* design were often of considerable size, and were sometimes embroidered with figure subjects representing scenes from the lives of saints or from ecclesiastical histories. The practice of introducing circular pictures of woven tapestry into the substance of linen fabrics was common amongst the Egypto-Roman and Coptic weavers of the early centuries of the Christian era. Pictures of similar shape, arranged as patterns, are found upon woven stuffs, carved ivories, illuminated manuscripts, painted walls, and enamelled metal-work of the

Middle Ages whenever any sequence of incidents from histories or romances is introduced, as in the example¹ in Plate VIII of Byzantine work of the seventh to ninth centuries, which is decorated with a representation of the Annunciation. The fine thirteenth-century embroidered cope, known as the Ascoli-Piceno cope, affords a very remarkable instance of the use of this design which has persisted from such early times. It is covered with finely drawn pictures of circular form, stitched in coloured silks, upon an elaborate gold embroidered ground.

VIII.
Development
of
the disk.

The use of smaller disks to unite or overlap the portions of the main disks that are in closest proximity to one another is an additional feature sometimes found in these designs, as may be seen in the example in Plate VII. Sometimes the plain or decorated margins of both sets of disks are of the same size and are joined together, producing the arrangement shown in the inlaid marble pavement from San Miniato, given in Fig. 43 (see p. 59), and in the Byzantine silk in Plate VIII. A pierced stone-work window from the West front of Saint Mark's, Venice, shows the same design (see Plate IX). The magnificent inlaid marble slab which adorns the altar of the Church of Santa Prassede at Rome, a photograph of which is reproduced in Plate XI, shows a general scheme of design very often found in *opus Alexandrinum* panels, whether employed upon a small scale for the decoration of tombs or ambones, or on the wide pavements of Italian or Eastern churches. The pattern falls into the group now under discussion. Winding around disks of red porphyry and green serpentine, often slices cut from ancient columns, are plain margined bands richly decorated with little geometrical mosaic patterns. These patterns often resolve

¹ This beautiful fragment of a woven silk fabric is one of those recently discovered in the Sancta Sanctorum or chapel of San Lorenzo (*in palatio*) of the old Lateran Palace, Rome.

themselves into a series of endless straps meandering over and under one another over the entire surface. In Fig. 144 is a little stone window from the Cathedral of Grado, which, said to date from the sixth century, shows a pierced design similar to that at Saint Mark's, but having square forms decorated with subsidiary ornament, crosses and rudely carved foliage, instead of the larger circles.

Patterns composed of geometrical figures arranged so as to overlap one another form an important subdivision of the group of designs under discussion. They are often decorated and elaborated to a remarkable degree. Fig. 145, from an Indian cotton-printing block, affords a good example of the overlapping circle design, of which, from the earliest times, great use has been made by workers in many kinds of crafts. It is enriched by means of additional lines, points, and little rosettes. Fig. 146 gives a less formal, irregular variety of the same type of pattern, in which the main circles are of different dimensions; they are also more or less disguised by the addition of free branching lines bearing leaves and flowers. In Fig. 147 we have a pattern, from an Afghan tile, composed of overlapping square forms. Another pierced stone window from the West front of Saint Mark's, Venice (see Plate X), is a development of this, in which, by an ingenious arrangement, large and small circles are placed in the centres of the squares, and an enrichment of crosses is added. A curious design formed of overlapping oblong-shaped figures is shown in the next example (Fig. 148).



FIG. 144.

IX.
Patterns
formed
of over-
lapping
geometri-
cal
figures.

pattern, in which the main circles are of different dimensions; they are also more or less disguised by the addition of free branching lines bearing leaves and flowers. In Fig. 147 we have a pattern, from an Afghan tile, composed of overlapping square forms. Another pierced stone window from the West front of Saint Mark's, Venice (see Plate X), is a development of this, in which, by an ingenious arrangement, large and small circles are placed in the centres of the squares, and an enrichment of crosses is added. A curious design formed of overlapping oblong-shaped figures is shown in the next example (Fig. 148).



FIG. 145.

It is from a carved plaster panel in a palace at Fatehpur Sikri, and shows, as does Fig. 149, a stage in the development of these patterns, in which the original element is almost lost sight of in the result-



FIG. 146.

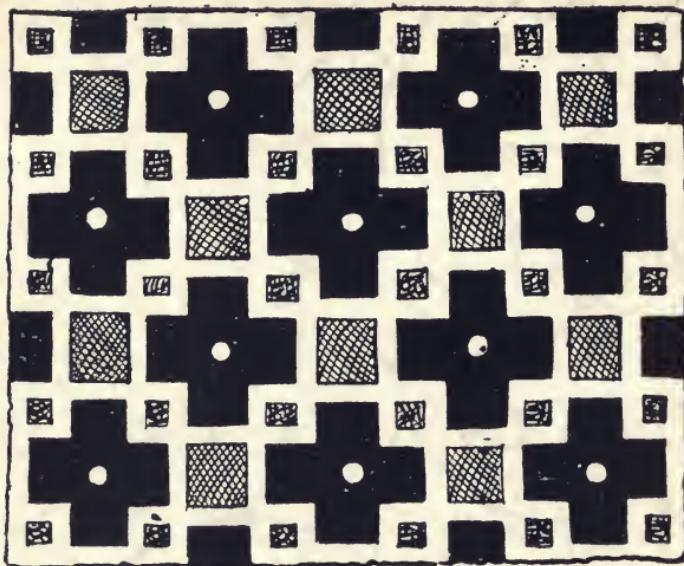


FIG. 147.

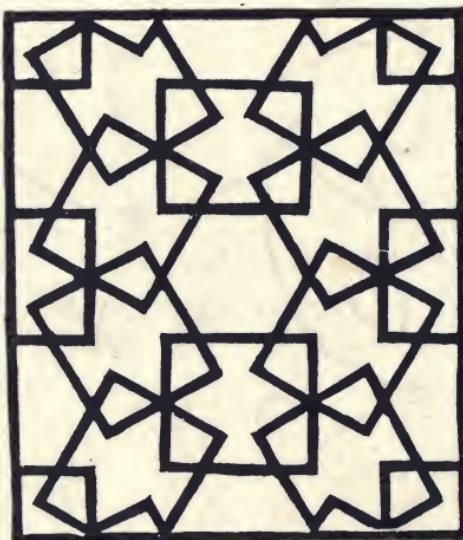


FIG. 148.

ing maze of overlapping lines. The latter example, composed of figures of octagonal shape, is from some Hispano-Moresque glazed earthenware tiles of late fifteenth-century date, in the Victoria and

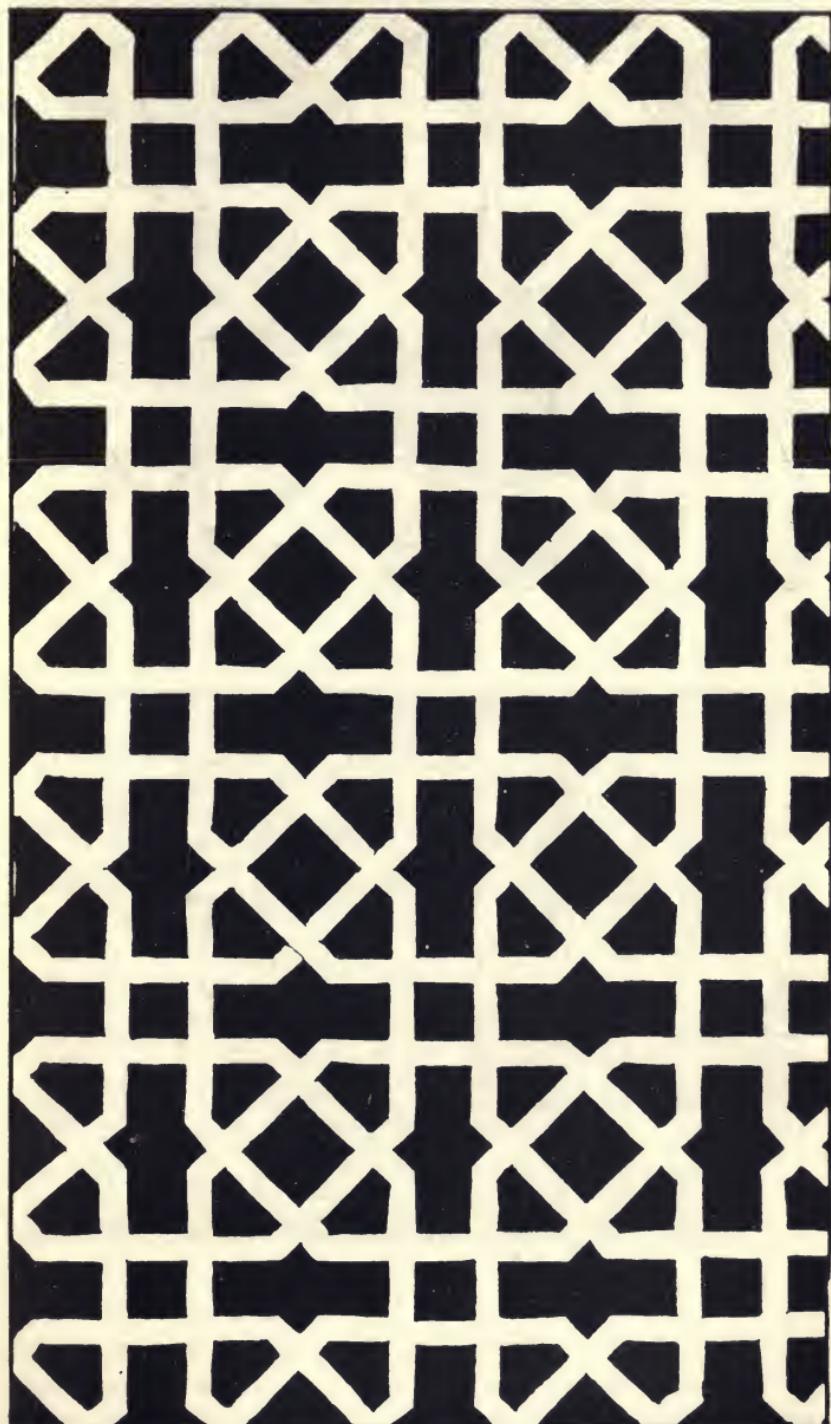


FIG. 149.

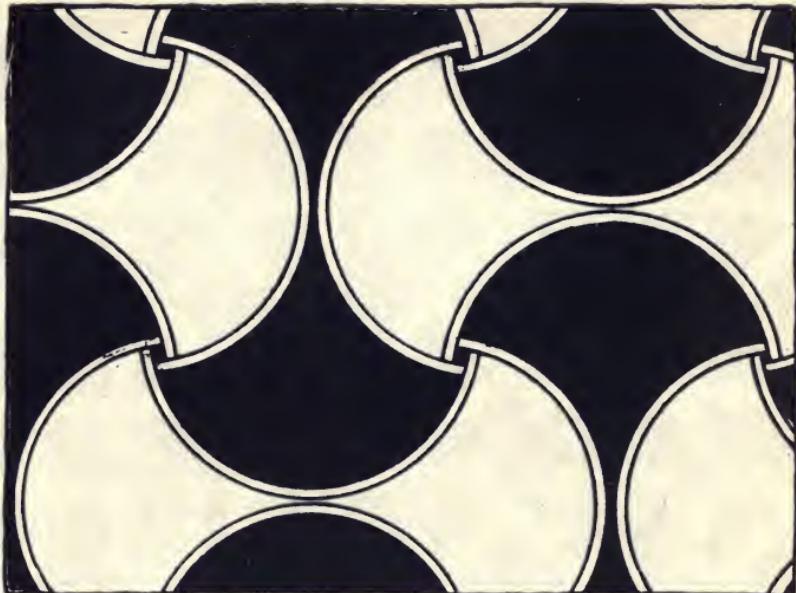


FIG. 150.



FIG. 151.

Albert Museum. In Fig. 71 (see p. 79) a design formed of semi-disks powdered over a surface has been given. Fig. 150 shows a similar pattern in which the units overlap one another. A further

development of this design is given in Fig. 151, from an ancient Egyptian wall-painting : here the 'ends' of the semi-disks, seen in Fig. 150, are drawn out into thread-like prolongations which are tightly coiled up in groups of four.

In an interesting design, inlaid in black and white

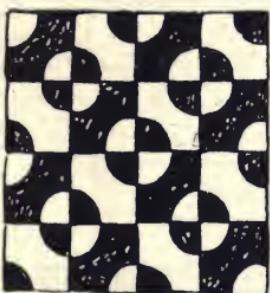


FIG. 152.

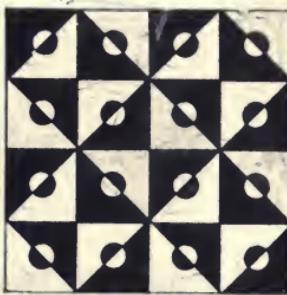


FIG. 153.

marble, which decorates the background of a fourteenth-century carved marble panel from Volterra (see Fig. 152), disks are powdered over a chess-board design ; this arrangement necessitates the division of each of the overlapping units into four quarters

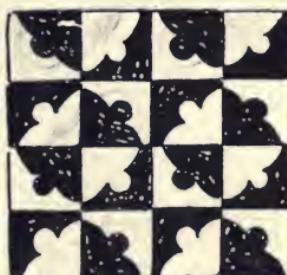


FIG. 154.

which are coloured alternately black and white in order to express the pattern. In Fig. 153, another common powdering of disks upon squares, both figures are divided and coloured differently. The design upon a tomb in the lower Church of San Francesco at Assisi, shown in Fig. 154, is a variation of the same design.

CHAPTER VII

DESIGNS FORMED OF GEOMETRICAL AND FLORAL WORK COMBINED

Geometrical Elements with Floral Decoration.—Complex Elements formed of Geometrical and Floral Work combined.—The use of Built-up Elements as Panel Decoration.—Oriental Examples. Italian Examples.—Composition of Built-up Elements.—Primitive Examples and later Developments of these.



FIG. 155.

I.
Geo-
metrical
elements
with

GEOMETRICAL and floral elements have been discussed separately as two distinct groups of designs, but instances of geometrical ornament enriched with floral decoration are very common indeed. The

fine blue and white Persian rice dish given in Fig. 155 affords an excellent example of the combination decoration of an elaborate geometrical figure with floral work, and the design in Fig. 156 shows a more simple

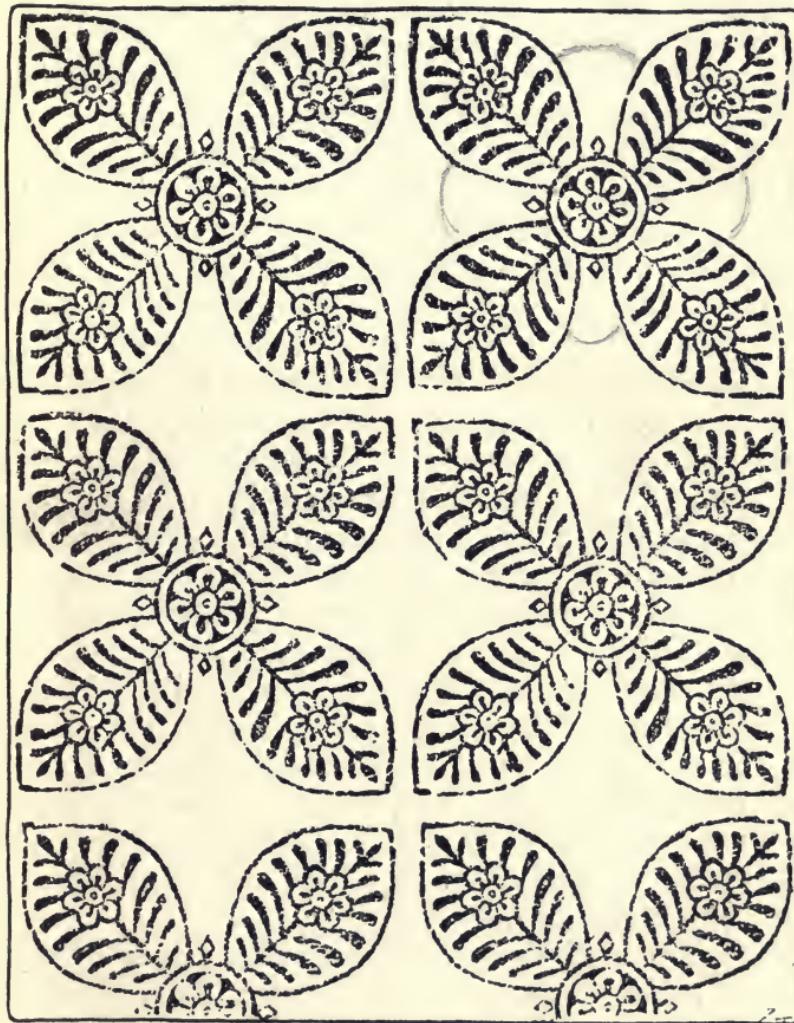


FIG. 156.

specimen obviously founded upon the overlapping circle design given in Fig. 145 (see p. 146). Other instances will be found in the carved pulpit door from Cairo, given in Plate VI.

But, in addition to the strictly geometrical and floral combinations, a great variety of elements of Complex elements

formed
of geo-
metrical
and floral
work
com-
bined.

very complex structure, allied to these, have been used as powderings for the enrichment of surfaces. These are of more or less geometrical form, or are composed of formal arrangements of lines, decorated with pure floral enrichment or conventional foliated work. They are very interesting and instructive pieces of composition; some of the characteristic examples have long histories, their evolution having been protracted over considerable periods of time.

It will be sufficient to point out some of the leading types of these elements, which are found in considerable numbers, and are used in many ways. A plain field may be powdered over with a single specimen repeated many times, or a pattern may be composed of two or more elements, designed with careful regard to their mutual relationship, either compactly set together or widely spread abroad. In Figs. 157 and 158 we have two designs, the one Hispano-Moresque, the other Indian, composed of elaborately designed units. The first example contains one element of a strictly geometrical character, and a second of a more complex nature, composed of several distinct parts, whilst a third, a little rosette, fills the vacant spaces between the larger ones. The design in the second example, also constructed of three separate units, has no very strict geometrical figure in its composition. These two patterns afford good specimens of the units to which we shall refer as 'built-up elements'.

Specimens of these elements, sometimes of very considerable dimensions, have been used often as isolated pieces of decoration. Perhaps the most noble example of this use of the element is the great Gothic 'rose window' in which a beautifully designed web-like framework of stone encloses brilliantly coloured panels of stained glass. In Fig. 159 is a drawing of one of these, the south transept rose window from the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Paris. The design of a very fine panel in the thirteenth-

century inlaid marble pavement of the Church of San Miniato at Florence is composed upon a plan



FIG. 157.

similar to that adopted in this window. In the panel the twelve signs of the Zodiac, surrounded with intricate foliated scroll-work, occupy the spaces between



FIG. 158.

the central tracery bars; the four little circles which fill up the corners of the square are decorated with four Griffins (see Plate XII). The 'rose window' design has been adopted by many craftsmen. There are some early Italian woven fabrics in which this element is used as a powdering,¹ alternating with



FIG. 159.

other forms, and on some Mediaeval glazed earthenware pavement tiles the same decoration is found.

Built-up units are very often found with elaborately designed surrounding border-work, constituting a complete piece of decoration for painted, printed, or

III.
The use
of built-

¹ Julius Lessing (*op. cit.*) gives two fine examples of textiles decorated with 'rose window' elements of Italian fourteenth-century work.

up elements as panel decoration.

otherwise enriched surfaces, as in the example given in Fig. 160, an Indian design of nineteenth-century date. Here a quatrefoil-shaped figure, filled with a twelve-pointed star and some conventional foliage, occupies the centre of a square panel, the four corners of which are decorated each with one quarter



FIG. 160.

of a second piece of ornament; the whole, with its skilfully arranged border-design, forms a very satisfactory composition.

IV. We might, however, also consider this panel as the unit of an all-over pattern, since the square, stripped of its surrounding border-work, would, if repeated many times, accurately cover a surface with examples. a pattern resembling that given in the next figure

(Fig. 161), where six repeats of a unit of similar but more simple form are placed together. The Western designer may perhaps question the appropriateness of



FIG. 161.

a piece of space-filling design which is plainly the unit of a repeating pattern, but the Oriental craftsman has never had any scruples upon this point. Borders of

half rosettes or half flowers arranged as in Fig. 162 are common in Eastern decoration. They are a logical development of the band design from a Hellenic vase shown in the first example in Fig. 55. The geometrical border-work edging the lateral and upper margins of the carved panel in Plate I shows a similar arrangement of halves of eight-pointed stars. The well-known type of panel decoration indicated in Fig. 163 is another instance of this method of space-



FIG. 162.



FIG. 163.

filling, one frequently found in Oriental work. In this the four separate quarters of the centre ornament are repeated, one in each corner of the space decorated. The figure given in this example is a common basis of design in Persian art. In the next figure (Fig. 164) the four quarters of a piece of ornament of design different from that occupying the centre of the panel are placed in the corners. This example is from a drawing in the collection of Mirza Akber in the Victoria and Albert Museum, to which reference has been made already; it shows

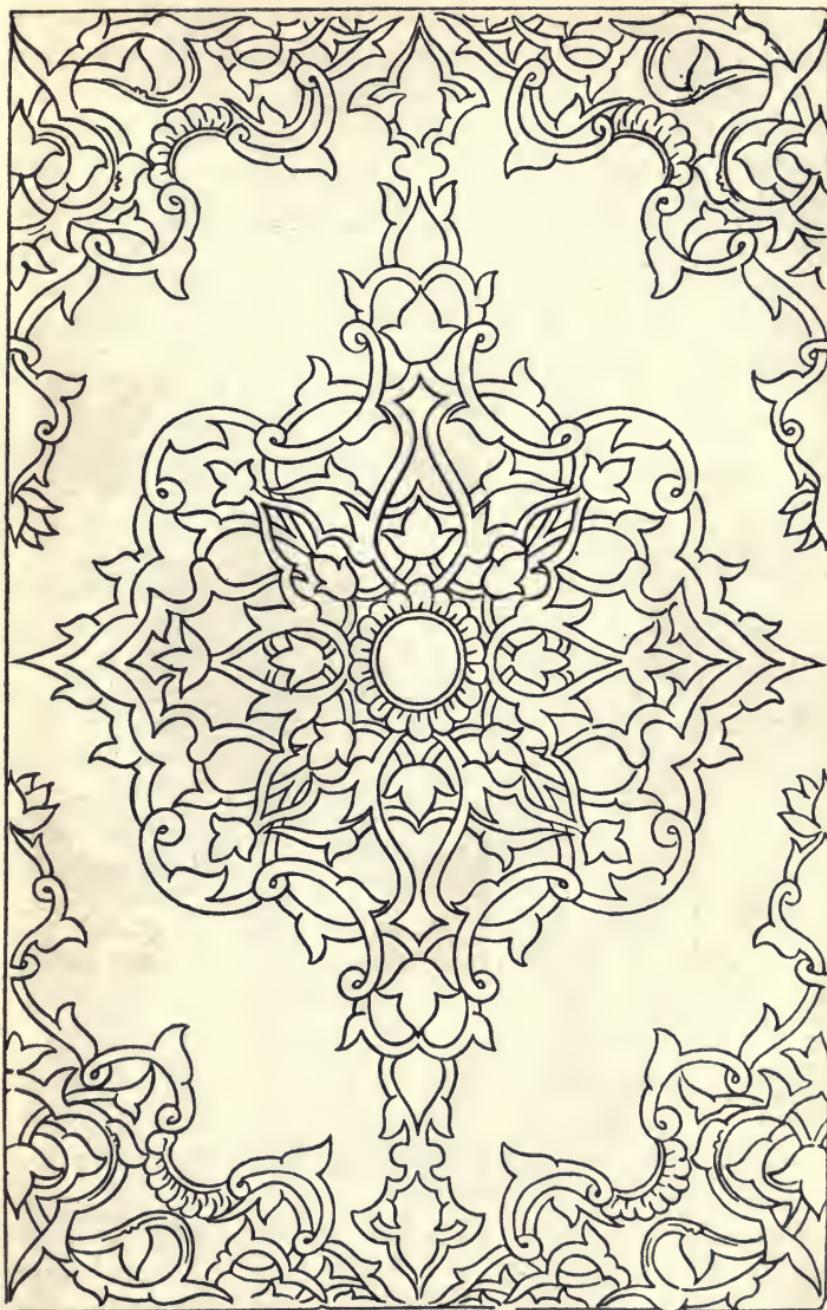


FIG. 164.

very distinctly the French influence which began to affect Persian art about the time of Louis XIV. A



FIG. 165.

very elaborate purely Oriental example of the kind of ornament of which this central element is composed is given in Fig. 165, from some Damascus glazed earthenware tiles of the sixteenth century. It is beautifully enriched with secondary floral decoration, and shows the characteristic always exhibited by these compositions, the pattern formed by the background, the spaces unoccupied by the design, being as carefully considered as the shapes of the various parts of the design themselves. A more simple rendering of



FIG. 166.



FIG. 167.

the same idea is shown in the next example (Fig. 166), a drawing of an Afghan tile.

A fine specimen of space-filling by means of a complex built-up element—one which conforms to the severest canons of those who have prejudices upon this subject—is seen upon a panel of the thirteenth-century inlaid marble pavement of the Baptistry at Florence. It is indeed a most admirable example, a perfect masterpiece of design in its way. One pattern after another appears and dissolves whilst we examine this curiously simple piece of composition. Observe the dark central cross formed of eight regular spaces of ground, each with its enlivening spot of brilliance dominating the whole

V.
Italian
examples



FIG. 168.

design (Fig. 167). The example on this page (Fig. 168), taken from a textile design in an early Italian

picture in the Museo Civico at Pisa, shows a similar unit disposed over a surface, with a little svastika-like flourish in the interspaces. In Italian paintings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries many such designs are figured upon the robes of the great personages therein depicted. Gorgeous must have been the knights and noble ladies of those times, apparelled in costumes of richly dyed fabrics glittering with a liberal display of these beautifully designed golden powderings. They are of great interest, the



FIG. 169.

diversity of their forms affording much material for study. Those which occur in the work of Cimabue, Giotto, or Gozzoli are worthy of most careful investigation, as showing the ideas of pattern-work, perhaps the actual designs, of these great decorators. In a picture by Fra Angelico at Perugia the small example in Fig. 169 alternates with another of very similar form as a powdering over a woven fabric.

The method of building up these units may be studied in Fig. 170, where the growth of one of them is set out step by step from the bare structural outline to the complete design. This is also a specimen of early Italian work, from another picture in the Museo Civico at Pisa. The drawing

VI.
Composition of
built-up
elements.

out of all the stages of the development of a complicated element in the way shown in this series, constantly repeating the whole from the beginning with the addition of some new enrichment, is an instructive exercise in the composition of ornament; for by this means the exact value of each added feature may be weighed accurately, and the critical faculties concentrated closely upon the work. More-

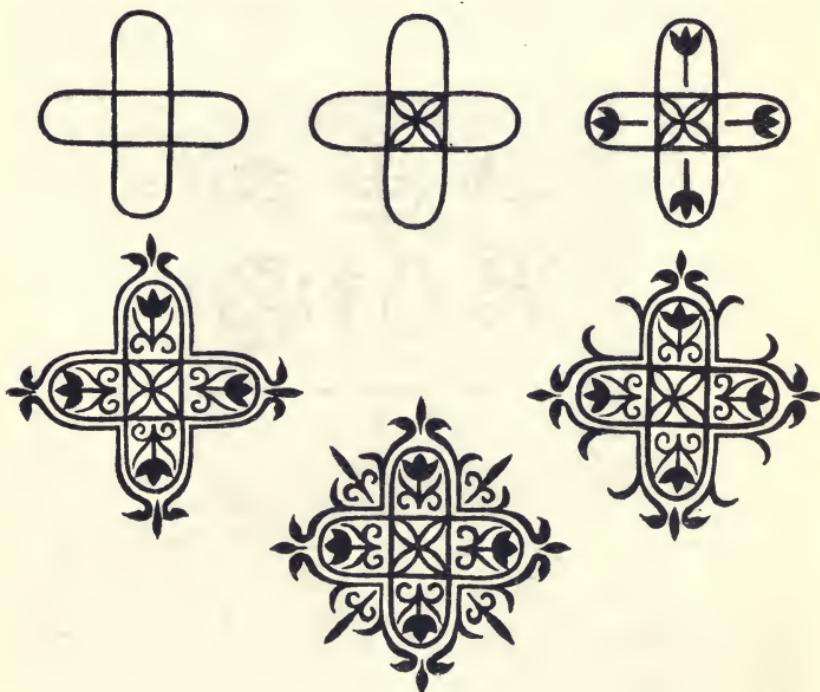


FIG. 170.

over a series of studies showing the successive stages of a design from a simple beginning to a complicated whole is much more suggestive than a single example would be, as every stage may be used as the starting-point for new alternative lines of development.

VII.
Primitive examples and later
Curious little built-up elements are common in the early art of many races. These are formed of ingenious combinations of symbols, and in many instances clearly foreshadow the more decorative

compositions of the same nature that were used by developments of later workers. In Fig. 171 we have a series of these elements collected from specimens of primitive Rhodian pottery in the British Museum. They are found distributed over the backgrounds of the figure-

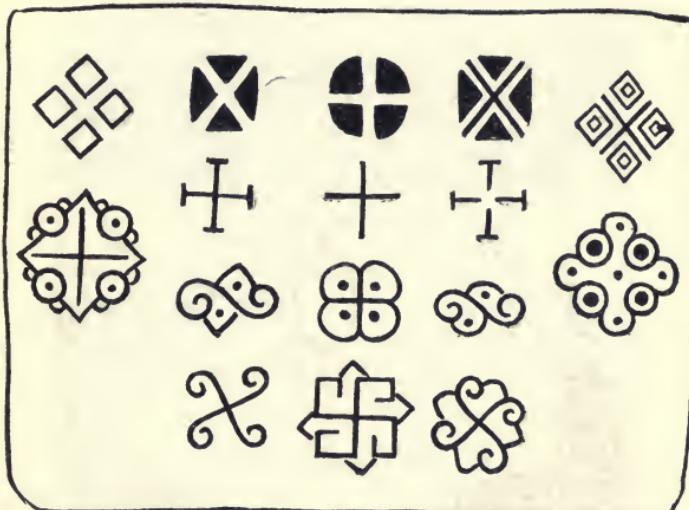


FIG. 171.



FIG. 172.

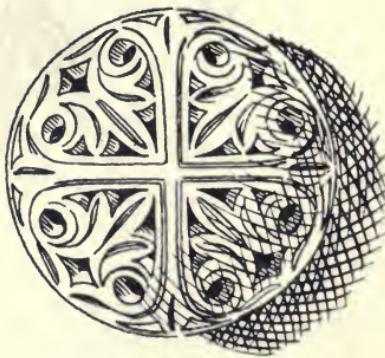


FIG. 173.

subjects rudely painted upon this ware, occupying blank spaces in the compositions. The carved cross shown in Fig. 172, from a Coptic grave-stone in the British Museum, is a decorated example of a symbolic form akin to these primitive designs. In the stone boss (Fig. 173), carved with a richly deco-

rated cross, of Byzantine workmanship, we have a typical example of the highest development of these symbolic devices, for here the decorative idea has become completely incorporated with the informative, with a very beautiful result.

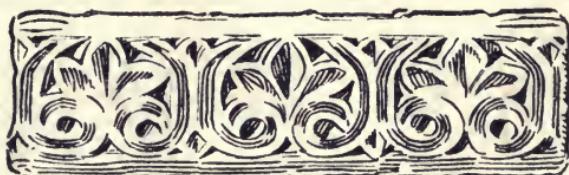


FIG. 174.

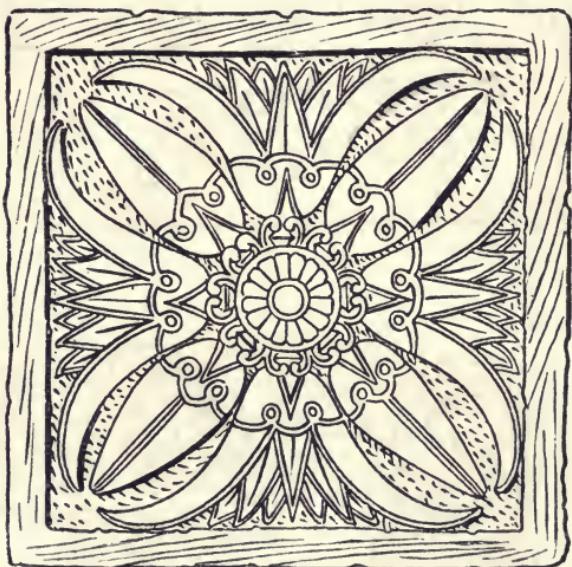


FIG. 175.

If the design of this carved boss is compared with that of the very common Byzantine carved moulding given in Fig. 174, it will be seen that both are practically the same. The design of the boss is that of the moulding, thrown into circular form. Many instances of built-up elements formed out of such readjustments of border designs might be mentioned. Fig. 175, from an Assyrian sculptured slab, is a notable example, showing a common lotus flower-and-

bud border pattern used in this way. A knowledge of this use of border designs will help us to analyse the composition of many elements, otherwise difficult



FIG. 176.

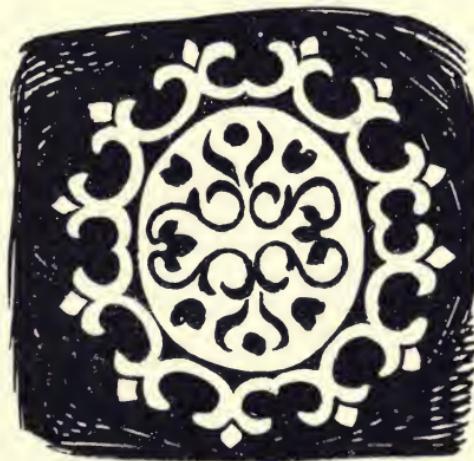


FIG. 177.

to explain. Thus the design of Fig. 176, from a Byzantine or Syrian silk fabric of eighth or ninth century date found in Egypt, is but another form of

a similar flower-and-bud border edging an eight-pointed star. Fig. 177, which is powdered in gold over a purple silk of the same period and make, is a disk bordered with a degenerate palmette border. A

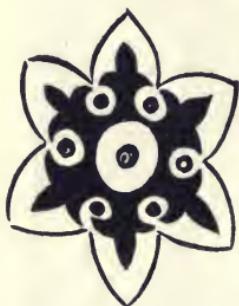


FIG. 178.

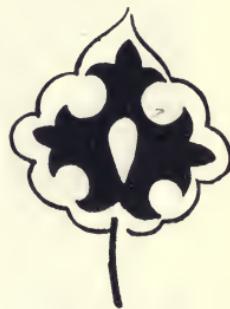


FIG. 179.

later piece of ornament (Fig. 178), from an enamelled glass lamp from Cairo, shows the border alone, the central disk being reduced to a mere spot of colour. Our final example (Fig. 179) gives a leaf form decorated with an adaptation of this rosette.

CHAPTER VIII

ANIMAL FORMS USED IN DESIGNS

Animals in Decoration and their Relationship to Nature.—Changes to which Animal Forms may be subjected.—Principal Types of Decorative Animals.—Some Modifications of Animal Forms found in Designs.—Naturalistic Representations of Animals.—The Decorative Use of Animals by the Sicilian Weavers.—The Lion and the Eagle.

STUDY of floral designs has brought before us, I. in addition to the plant forms derived directly from Animals Nature, a number of interesting highly decorative specimens which clearly belong solely to art. The birds, beasts, and other forms of animal life used by the designer bear much the same varied relationships to Nature as those which exist between the plants of art and of the garden. Certain animals have been selected, and changes of their forms, often of a very startling character, have been brought about by a variety of causes, as in the case of the floral and other elements which have been employed. The human-headed winged bulls, sphinxes, and the like, of ancient Assyrian, Egyptian, and other arts combine parts of several animals in one, in just the same way that one class of floral element combines the blossoms and leaves of distinct species of plants upon a single stem.

Animals such as these belong to the symbolical, II. information-giving phase of design. In their later use many of them have lost their original significance and have been adopted by the designer as mere decorative elements; but some few, like the imperial double-headed eagle, have still retained some meaning. The very definite system of sym-

Changes to which animal forms may be subjected.

bolism connected with animals has kept certain complex forms in use with little change for very long periods, but it must not be supposed that the birds



FIG. 180.

and beasts used in decoration have not undergone changes similar to those to which other elements have been liable. We have seen in Fig. 16 (see p. 39) a little bird putting on a geometrical form.

In Fig. 180, from a piece of Hispano-Moresque silk-weaving, we have, in the circular panel, a pair of animals in an advanced stage of degeneration. An additional stage or two may naturally result in their assuming some quite new form, perhaps in their reappearance either as a piece of conventional floral work, or as another of the complicated pieces of knot-work with which they are surrounded!



FIG. 181.



FIG. 182.

Several distinct types of animals are found in use in decorative work. There is the frankly naturalistic type, of which the two little dogs in Fig. 181, from a fourteenth-century Italian silk fabric, are examples. The fine birds and gay butterflies in the Chinese painted wall-paper reproduced in Plate IV belong to the same category. An example of another group is the Dragon, the great mythical beast of China, which is unlike anything in nature, but which every one recognizes. The phoenix (see Fig. 182), a bird which we all, like Herodotus, have heard of but never seen, might well be confounded with other birds, to many of which it has points of resemblance, but for the fact that it is represented as issuing from flames. Both examples are symbolical and mythical, but the one has a naturalistic basis.

III.

Principal types of decorative

types of decorative

types of decorative

types of decorative

Falling into yet another group are those creatures already referred to, like the sphinx and the harpy—part bird, part beast, with human heads—which are composed of parts of several animals brought together in one. Of these there is a large and interesting assemblage.



FIG. 183.

IV.
Some
modifica-
tions of
animal
forms
found in
designs.

An example of the sphinx ornamenting a terracotta antefixa from Cumae is given in Fig. 183. This dates from the second or third century B.C. and is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It shows a curious development to which attention must be drawn; a development frequently found in representations of mythical beasts in decoration. Although the panel contains the bodies of two distinct sphinxes, these are provided with only one head, placed in the centre of the group, the common

property of both. This expedient is frequently met with in the designs of woven textiles. Julius Lessing illustrates an example of an eleventh- or twelfth-century Hispano-Moresque woven silk fabric, decorated with pairs of lions placed fronting one another and with only a single head between them, alternating with pairs of peacocks placed back to back, each pair with a single tail! The pattern designer has always held, and quite rightly, that symmetry



FIG. 184.

of arrangement and simplicity of form are of more value than absolute truth to nature; hence such anomalies as these and the double-stalked flowers found in many passages of floral decoration.

Beautifully drawn, highly naturalistic representations of birds and animals have from very early times been produced continually and in great profusion in the art of all nations. Two spirited drawings from Egyptian wall-paintings are given in Figs. 184 and 185, and the bas-reliefs of ancient

V.
Naturalistic representations of animals.

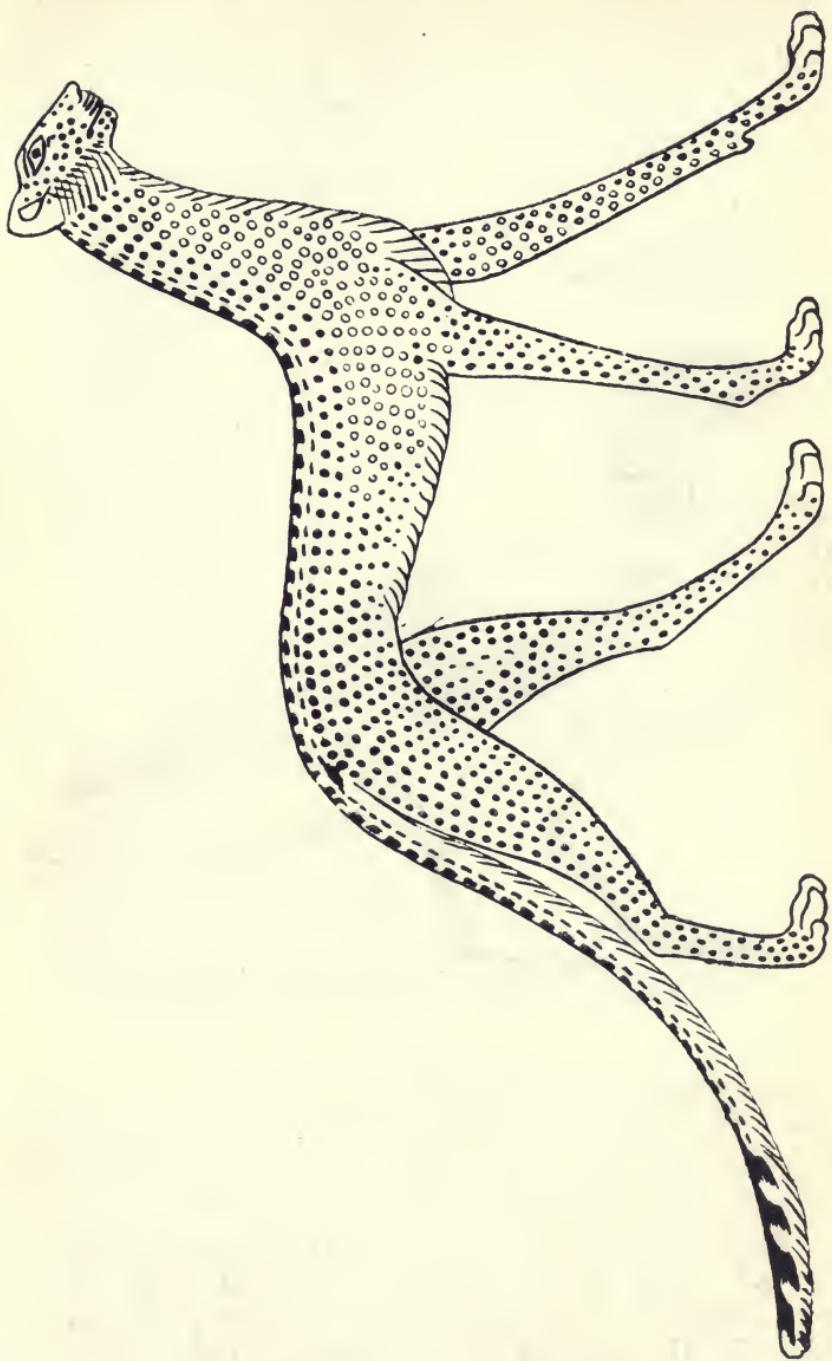


FIG. 185.

Assyria show lions, stags, and other animals most accurately studied from nature. This naturalistic work has constantly reacted upon the traditional conventional renderings of the old mythological forms and has had the effect of endowing them with renewed grace and vitality. Many of the fabulous monsters used in the decorative work of the Middle Ages show traces of the liveliest observation of bird and animal life.

Animals obviously studied from nature, but treated with a certain heraldic formality, abound in the designs of the Sicilian weavers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and in those of their Italian imitators. The patterns of the Sicilian and Italian silk fabrics of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries are extremely varied, and in these will be found the very finest material available for the study of animal forms used in decoration. These patterns mark an epoch in the history of design, for they seem to gather up the older information-giving symbolical ideas, and to launch them upon a frankly decorative phase of life. The direct influence of Byzantine, Persian, and even Chinese art can be traced in their compositions. Lions, sphinxes, griffins, unicorns, harts, eagles, geese, dragons, and characteristic Chinese birds, to name but a few of their zoological elements, are found united in strange medleys with foliage of extraordinary grace in these spirited and magnificent designs. A fine Italian example of fourteenth-century date is given in Plate XIII. The fabrics are of the finest colours and constructed of the richest materials, gold threads being lavishly used. It is to the wide distribution of these silks that much of the characteristic zoology of later European art must be ascribed, for they were eagerly sought after by northern nations on account of their excellence and beauty. There are many designs on the rood screens of Norfolk and Suffolk churches, which,

VI.
The decorative use of animals by the Sicilian weavers.

dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, show ornamental details and animal forms plainly derived from Sicilian fabrics.¹ In Plate XX is given a photograph of a piece of an Italian brocade of the sixteenth century in the Galleria degli Arazzi at Florence, showing lions and birds of Sicilian origin.

VII.
The lion
and the
eagle.

The lion has necessarily an important place in decorative art. A lion seizing its prey forms a very common element in Oriental designs. The example given in Plate XIV, from a carved marble panel in the Museum at Athens, shows the typical arrangement



FIG. 186.

of this subject. Other fine examples are found in the work of the weavers of certain kinds of Persian carpets. The subject is a very ancient one; examples showing very little difference from those of the sixteenth-century Persian representations occur on the shields of warriors in the figure compositions upon Attic painted vases. The general form and the expression of the lions of our English coat of arms are derived from the East. An example of this lion is given (see Fig. 186) from a wall-painting which formerly existed in the Painted Chamber of the Royal Palace of Westminster, of thirteenth-century

¹ See E. F. Strange, *loc. cit.*

date. That the expression which these beasts habitually wear has a long history, going back to ancient Hellenic art, reference to Fig. 187 will show. In many of the later versions of the sacred tree group, pairs of winged lions or of eagles take the place of the bird-headed human beings and winged bird-headed animals of the earlier examples, although these also persisted without change, as has been seen, to a very late date. Pairs of winged lions placed one on either side of the sacred tree symbol are found decorating the disks covering



FIG. 187.



FIG. 188.

many Sassanian and Byzantine woven silks. Figs. 43 and 143 give instances of this use of the lion, while in the example shown in Plate VII pairs of

eagles of Oriental design occur in place of the lions. The two characteristic lions in Fig. 188, from a piece of early German weaving, of the thirteenth century, in the Musée de Cluny, following another Oriental tradition, are not enclosed in circular frames; they are accompanied by pairs of little birds and dragons and by a very small representation of the sacred tree.¹ In a Sicilian example of the twelfth or



FIG. 189.

thirteenth century (Fig. 189), pairs of conventional eagles supporting trees of the same shape as that in the last example, but of greater size and more elaborate design, are distributed over the ground in a similar fashion.

The peacock is another bird often found associated with the sacred tree. Fig. 190 gives a drawing of a mosaic panel from the ambo of the Cathedral at Ravello, which shows a sacred tree and foliage

¹ Half 'trees' occur four times in the corners of the illustration.



FIG. 190.



FIG. 191.

issuing from a fountain which is flanked by two pairs of peacocks and peahens. The peacock is very common in decoration: an example of this bird from a sixteenth-century Italian silk is given in Fig. 191.

CHAPTER IX

DESIGNS FORMED OF STRAIGHT PARALLEL BANDS

Frequent Occurrence and great Variation of Striped Designs.—Elementary Examples.—Enrichment by Variation of Number and Width of Bands.—Enrichment by Division of Bands and Interchange of Parts.—Transverse Division of Bands.—Longitudinal Division of Bands.—The Guilloche and its Developments.—Examples of Complex Band Spacings.

I. We will now enter upon the discussion of that great assemblage of patterns which may be classed together under the general term of striped designs. The generic characteristic of the group, the arrangement of the decorative elements, or of the differences of colour that diversify the surface, into distinct bands or stripes laid down in parallel lines, is sufficiently obvious in the more simple examples, but there are many elaborations of these in which the typical arrangement is more or less concealed. This group will afford a large number of varied and beautiful forms of surface patterns for examination. There is, moreover, no lack of single stripes occurring as borders, margins, and so forth, which will supply further material for study. Typical examples of the many phases of band-work are very common; they have been complicated by means of so many different kinds of decorative treatment that it is possible to bring together a very instructive selection of examples which will illustrate certain far-reaching principles of design in a very simple way. An imposing collection gathered from the work of craftsmen using widely different materials may readily be formed, including patterns varying from the plainest alternating stripes of colour, the most

Frequent occurrence and great variation of striped designs.

elementary form of this group, to those band designs which are so highly enriched as to require some careful analysis in order that their correct classification may be determined.

Plain parallel bands of colour used as surface decoration may be drawn in a horizontal, a vertical, or a diagonal direction (see Figs. 65, 192, and 193). The horizontal band is perhaps the most common; it attains its greatest development in the ornamentation of buildings, for masonry constructed of alter-

II.
Elemen-
tary ex-
amples.

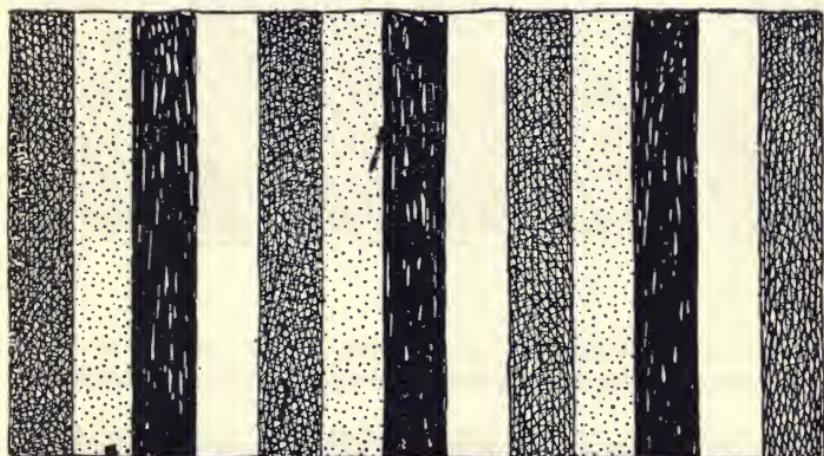


FIG. 192.

nate courses of two differently coloured stones or marbles affords what must be considered as the great representative of this kind of pattern. Its employment has added richness to numerous edifices; it is a distinctive characteristic of some schools of building. Examples of its use both in internal and external work are numerous and many might be cited, but a single illustration (see Plate XV) will suffice, a photograph of the West front of the thirteenth-century Church of Santa Chiara at Assisi. When it is used by the mason we are impressed by the obvious structural quality of the design as well as with the breadth that is always the result of monotonous repetition. Indeed it is in the more or less conscious appreciation of the

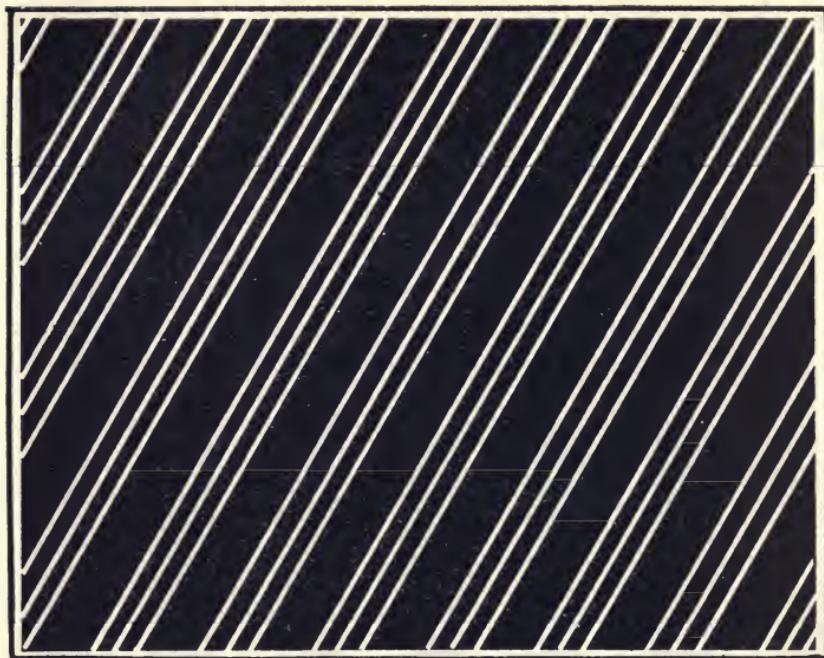


FIG. 193.



FIG. 194.

structural basis of band patterns generally, even when produced by such processes as painting or weaving, that their great decorative value lies; however much

they may be modified or disguised by further embellishment, the underlying structural notion of building up, layer upon layer, is never lost sight of.

The simple arrangement of alternate bands of two colours may be complicated by the addition of others in regular sequence, and further variety may be added by changing the widths of the bands themselves (see Fig. 192 and Fig. 194). Many new designs will arise from modifications such as these, and striking results may be obtained without the employment of any additional decoration whatever. A search but brief is required to ascertain the large number of existing designs which are formed of plain stripes arranged in different ways, and it will be found particularly instructive to observe carefully the use made of these patterns in the work of a few masters and to note the value they assume when skilfully employed. The red- and gold-striped coverlet spread over the bed of Saint Anna in the mosaic of the Birth of the Virgin, designed by Orcagna early in the fourteenth century for the West front of the Cathedral at Orvieto, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is a telling passage of rigidity and simplicity in an elaborately decorated composition. The range of the decorative utility of plain band-work is astonishingly wide. Examples, always used with effect, will be encountered constantly in the art of many schools. Fig. 195 shows an early example of the use of plain

III.
Enrich-
ment by
variation
of num-
ber and
width of
bands.



FIG. 195.

band-work, from a Mycenaean vase, in conjunction with a piece of simple floral decoration.

IV.
Enrich-
ment by
division
of bands
and inter-
change of
parts.

A common variation of plain band-work is that in which a regular interchange of the colours of two adjoining stripes is arranged, as in Fig. 196. This method of enrichment may be followed still further in the series of examples given in Fig. 197, taken

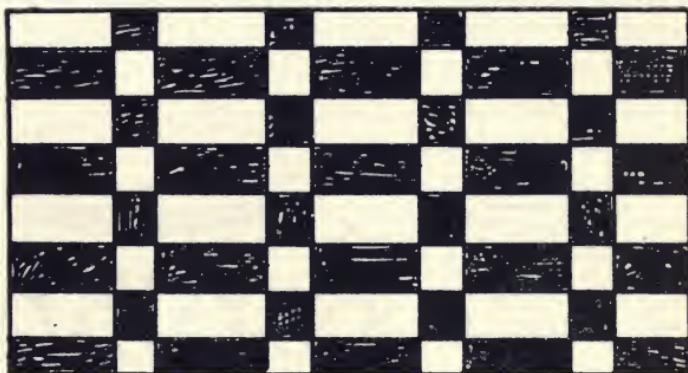


FIG. 196.

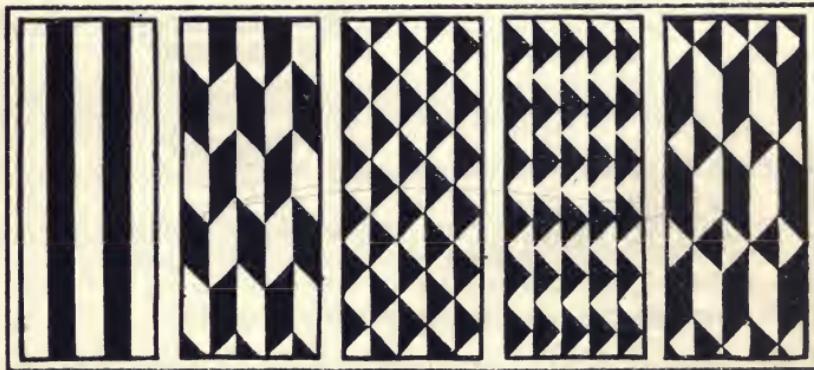


FIG. 197.

from panels of the thirteenth-century inlaid marble pavement of the Baptistry at Florence. This pavement, from which we have already drawn an example (see Fig. 167), is most marvellously embellished with specimens of formal pattern-work, and it forms a veritable textbook for students of design. In the examples now cited, instead of the

two colours which make up the designs being kept rigidly apart in parallel bands, as is done in the left-hand specimen, a certain amount of each is systematically given over to the next in such a manner that it would be apparently an easy task to re-

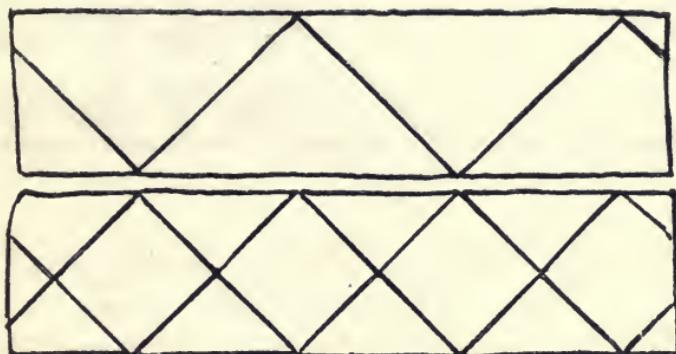


FIG. 198.

arrange each new variation into the simple form. Striped designs of this kind are valuable as fillings so long as they modify the regularity of the whole without carrying the process of disintegration to extreme lengths.

Many of the inlaid fillings of the bands and grounds of *opus Alexandrinum* pavements and panels, and of other geometrical mosaic work, belong to this group.

The division of bands into regularly recurring spaces of equal dimensions can be effected in many ways, and as this process forms the basis of much of the decoration with which these

v.
Trans-
verse
division
of bands.

designs are ornamented, it should be systematically studied. Slanting transverse lines drawn from the two margins alternately give the pattern shown in the first example in Fig. 198. The pavement of the Baptistery at Florence affords many beautiful designs built upon this basis.

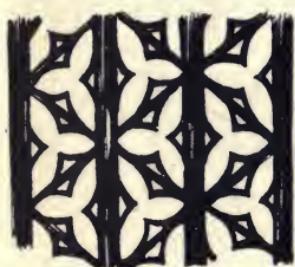


FIG. 199.

The slanting transverseline, alternating in direction from side to side of the band, is such a common basis that its development may be followed still further. In Fig. 199 is a fourteenth-century design in which



FIG. 200.

three vertical bands, divided by slanting transverse lines, have the resulting triangular spaces enriched with little cusps, which produce a pleasant arrangement of trefoils. An elaboration of the structure here used is shown in the second example, in Fig. 198, and two characteristic patterns developed from this are given in the next two examples, Figs. 200 and 201.

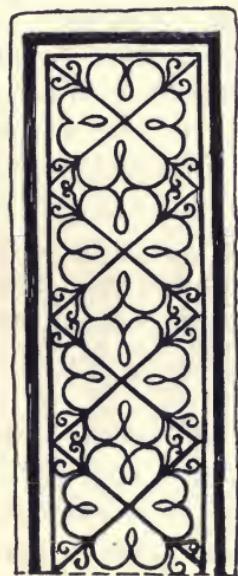


FIG. 201.

The design makes also a very effective filling pattern. It is produced by drawing an X and half an X in the centre of each lozenge and half-lozenge resulting from the spacing lines. The extremities of these figures are then joined by means of lines drawn parallel to the margins of the band. The pattern, like all these Oriental geometrical designs, is found treated both as a line and as a mass design, as shown in the example. The second specimen (Fig. 201) is painted upon the intrados of an arch in the Church of Chanoux,

in the department of Vienne. It is of late eleventh- or early twelfth-century date and is typical of another group of designs arising out of this very suggestive spacing. The basis of these is sometimes found used by itself, with little or no extra enrichment, as in the upper example in Fig. 202, where the crossing transverse lines running up and down and regularly

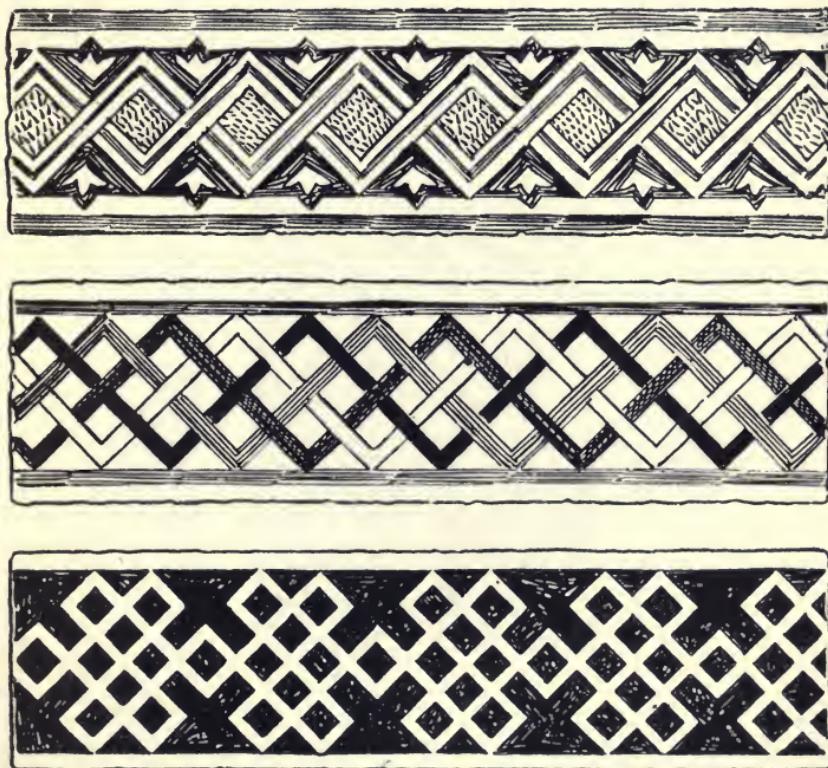


FIG. 202.

interlocking form the principal feature of the design. In the example immediately below this, which, like the other two, is drawn from a fifteenth-century glazed earthenware tile from Toledo, the enrichment is obtained wholly by the different colourings of the cross lines, the number of which is doubled. In the lowest example the cross lines undergo abrupt changes of direction, producing a very striking piece of band design. This is closely allied to many

of those formed of interlacing cords or bands which are common in early illuminations and sculptured reliefs. A good example of one of these is given in Fig. 203, a fragment of the destroyed carved stone choir screen of the Cathedral of Le Puy-en-Velay.

VI.
Longi-
tudinal
division
of bands.

Besides the transverse method of division, plain bands may be divided longitudinally by means of curved or fretted lines, as is shown in Fig. 204. In these familiar examples the meandering line either decorates the band with its own fantastic movement (as in the upper portion of each specimen) or divides it into two equal parts which are coloured differently.



FIG. 203.

Both methods form the bases of schemes of ornamentation. Fig. 205 shows an Indian border design subdivided by narrow chequered bands into three stripes. A waved dotted line divides each of the two external stripes into halves, each of which is enriched with a series of little isolated sprigs of conventional foliage. More commonly the central line becomes a stem from which leaves and flowers spring out, filling the spaces on either hand as in Fig. 206, a fine vine-leaf design from an early piece of Egypto-Roman weaving in the Victoria and Albert Museum. In this example the leaves are

the most important feature in the design, the stem-line being reduced to very insignificant proportions; it usually, however, plays an important part in the

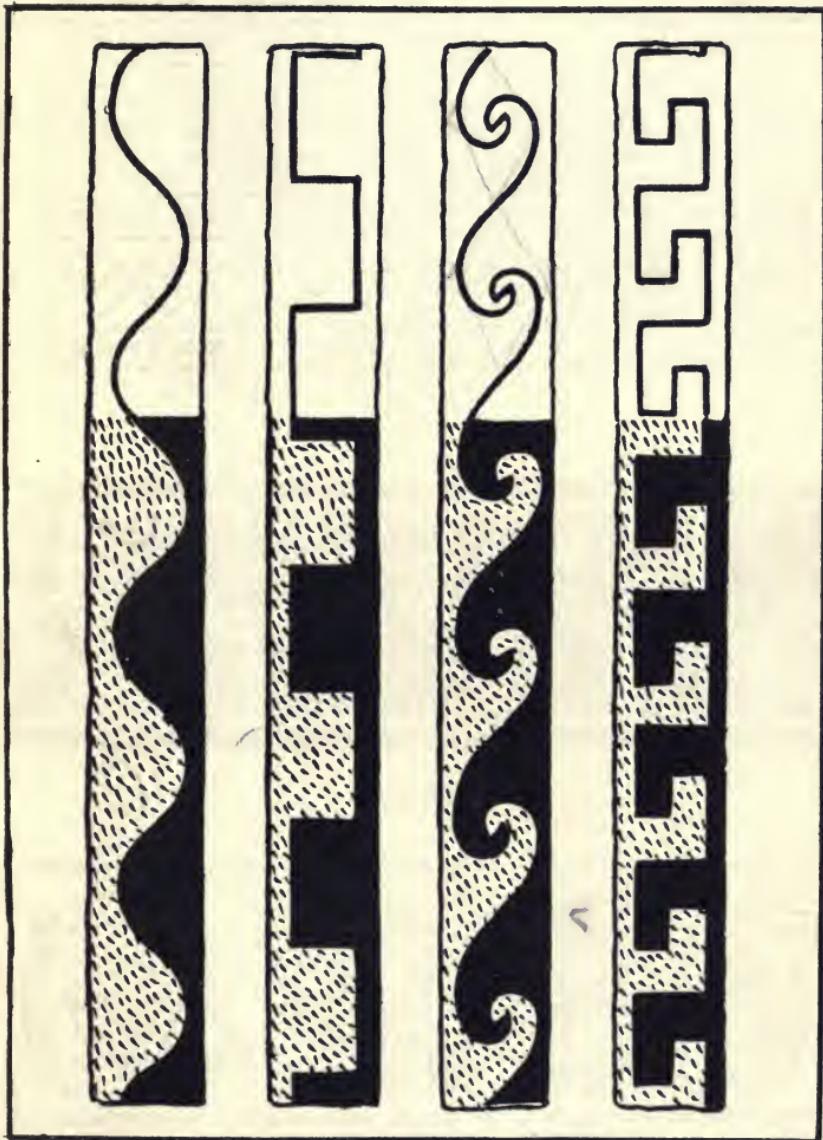


FIG. 204.

design, as it does in the next example (Fig. 207), from an Indian cotton-printing block, where the growth is more vigorous and flowers are added, the foliage taking a secondary place, merely filling out the design.

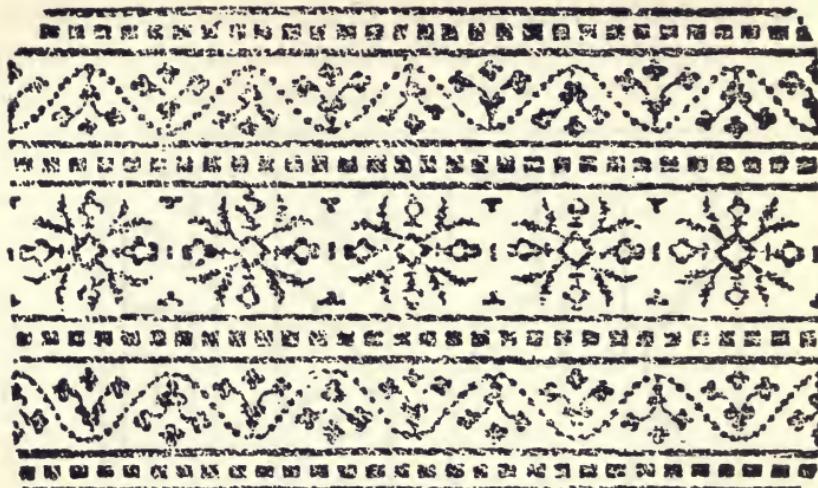


FIG. 205.



FIG. 206.

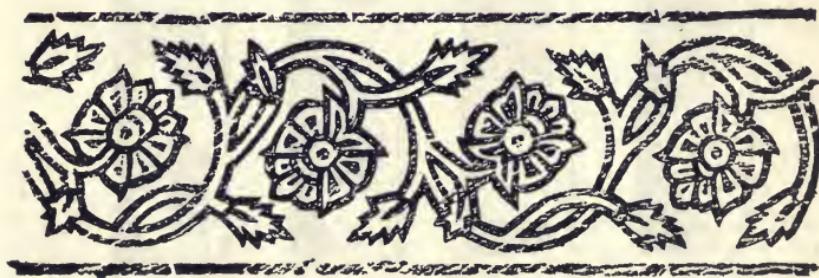


FIG. 207.

VII.
The guilloche and its development.

The plain stem-like central line, the basis of all these patterns, is duplicated in Fig. 208, the simplest form of 'guilloche' pattern. This may be compared with the angular example of the same arrangement

in Fig. 202 and also with the plaited border in Fig. 5 (see p. 30) with which it is closely connected. Hellenic art and Roman art have provided

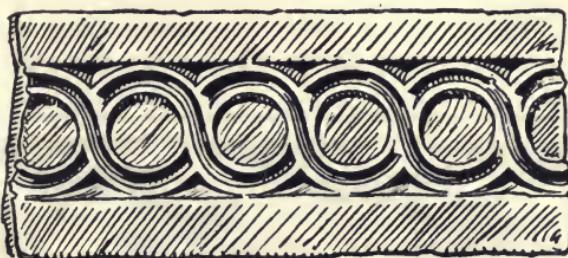


FIG. 208.

a great number of variations of this theme; many examples may be found carved in their architectural details, painted upon vases, and used in various ways in the decoration of many objects not only of classical times but also of the Middle Ages. Decorated examples occur frequently in later art. Fig. 209, from an early fourteenth-century embroidered cope of English work, shows a double stem ornamented with oak leaves and acorns, and Fig. 210 gives a loosely plaited border of three stems bearing foliage and blossoms, from a sixteenth-century Syrian glazed earthenware tile. This is a characteristic pattern of which a development, highly enriched with secondary floral work drawn in line, is to be found in the decoration of the Persian rice dish reproduced in Plate XVI.

In Oriental border designs very complex arrangements of several methods of spacing are frequently of com-



FIG. 209.

VIII.

Examples of com-

plex band found, interlocking with, or imposed upon, one spacings. another, as in Fig. 211, which is a design formed of double-waved stems and transverse lines enriched with floral work. The tile and pottery designs of Turkish, Syrian, or Persian workmanship, show much ingenuity, producing most rich and pleasing effects

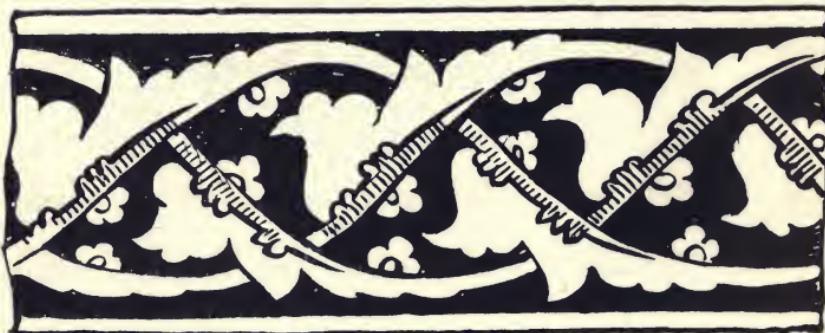


FIG. 210.



FIG. 211.

by means of a few highly systematized touches of the brush. They often recall classic models in a curious way, as may be seen in Fig. 212, which represents a border from a chimney-piece of glazed earthenware tiles from a Turkish palace at Constantinople. This chimney-piece, dated A.D. 1731, is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. In this little pattern the appearance of a plaited band and the effectiveness

of a waved blossom-bearing stem design are combined in a very skilful directly drawn piece of work, which is allied to the classical guilloche with its central rosette decoration.

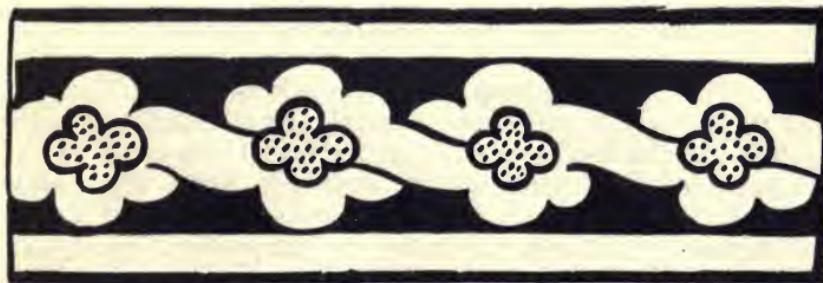


FIG. 212.

CHAPTER X

DEVELOPMENTS OF BAND DESIGNS

The Foliage-bearing Stem-Band Decoration.—Roman Examples and their Development.—Free Examples and their Construction.—Surface Decoration formed of Decorated Bands.—Typical Examples of the Development of Stem-Band Work into Surface Decoration.—Examples of Aberrant Forms.—Examples of Typical Arrangements of Stem-Band Patterns.—Independent Development of the Stem-Band and the Panel Ornament.—Elimination of the Stem-Band.—Other Examples of the Longitudinal Enrichment of Bands.

I. Of all schemes of band decoration, the meandering foliage-bearing stem with its full and vigorous growth, springing easily and without constraint into its allotted place, is surely the most perfect ever devised. In early times East and West alike adopted this

The foliage bearing stem-band decoration.



FIG. 213.

scheme, which has been moulded into two characteristic forms. The example in Plate XVII, from an Indian printed cotton, is typical of one phase of this design, that in which masses of foliage or isolated flowers or leaves spring at intervals from a central

stem; in a second version, of which an example from an Italian illuminated choir book is drawn in Fig. 213, the foliage issues from the stem throughout its entire length, the central spaces being either vacant or occupied by rosettes or flowers. In the original of the example given these spaces are filled with little shields of arms, which are omitted in the drawing.



FIG. 214.

The great Roman carved stone friezes have established a model of the latter type which has never fallen into disuse. Developments of this were employed continuously throughout Mediaeval times, as many beautiful examples show, until the decorators of the Renaissance again returned to the original sources and reverted to the traditional Roman form. The rich twelfth-century carved marble panel from Saint Mark's, Venice, represented in Plate XVIII, bears a design which, disposed in two bands, is a direct descendant of the Roman design. The foliage is of the Eastern Roman type, perfected at Con-

II.
Roman
examples
and their
develop-
ments.

stantinople; it shows the peculiar kind of acanthus leaf which is so highly developed in the capitals of Santa Sophia. The bunch of acanthus leaves from which the stems spring may be compared with those shown in Fig. 214, a detail of the lower rings of foliage of a capital preserved in the chapel of the

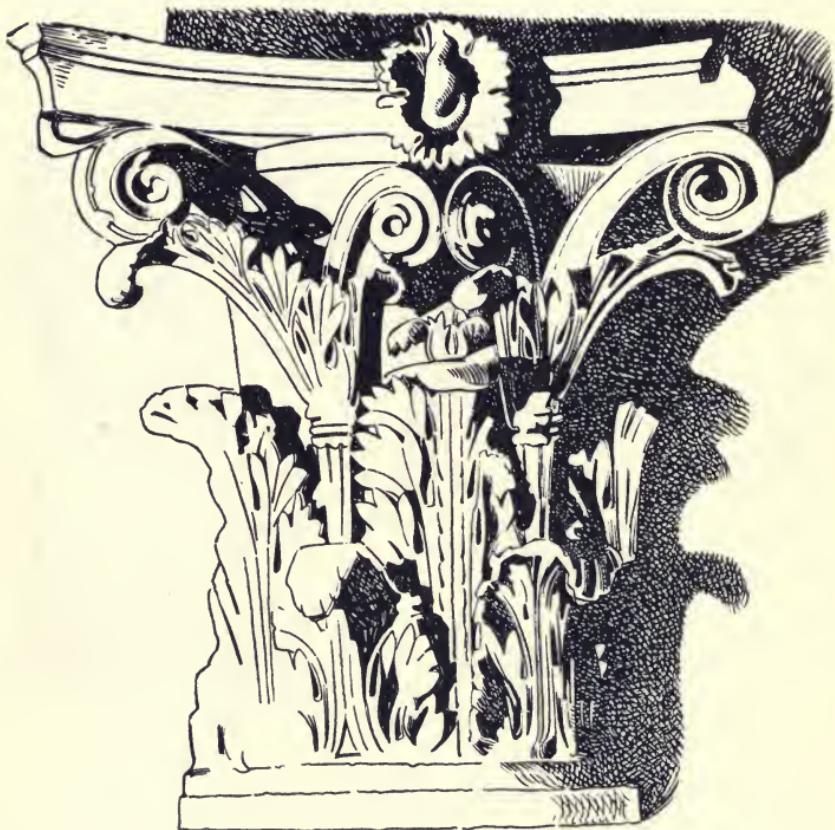


FIG. 215.

Archbishop's Palace at Ravenna. This beautiful development of the acanthus, once stigmatized as decadent, is in reality a most lively rendering of the stiff classical arrangement, which may be seen in Fig. 215, a drawing of one of the Corinthian capitals of the portico of the Pantheon at Rome. An interesting variation of the scroll-design, carved upon one of the columns of the door of the Baptistry at Pisa,

DEVELOPMENTS OF BAND DESIGNS 199



FIG. 216.

of thirteenth-century date, is drawn in outline in Fig. 216. This shows the elaborate base foliage

and the first section of the scroll-work which issues from it. The central space of the scroll is occupied by a rosette, upon which, in place of the central 'husk', sits a little figure probably representing David playing upon a harp. The usual form of the rosette, a common feature of Roman decoration, is given in Fig. 217, an inlaid marble panel from the walls of the Church of San Vitale at Ravenna.

The pattern illustrated in Fig. 218, taken from a rapid sketch made by an Indian designer, whose

III.
Free examples
and their
construction.

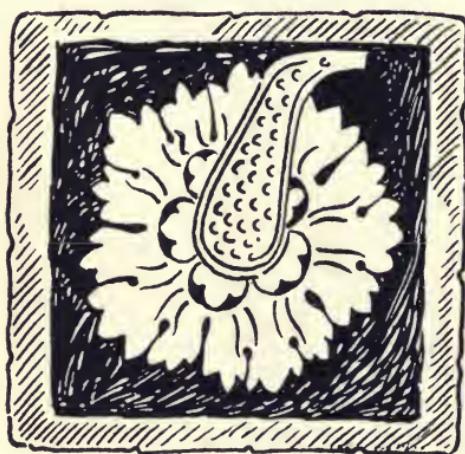


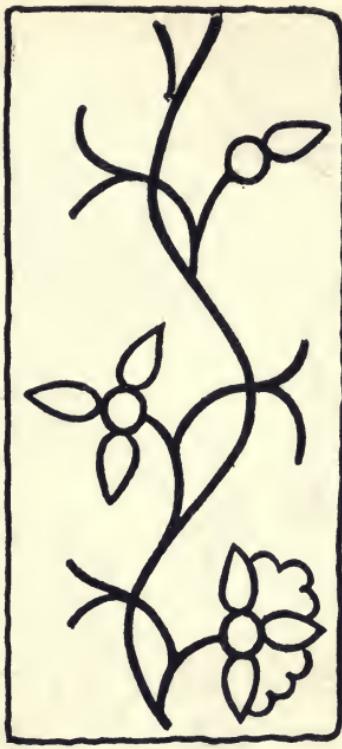
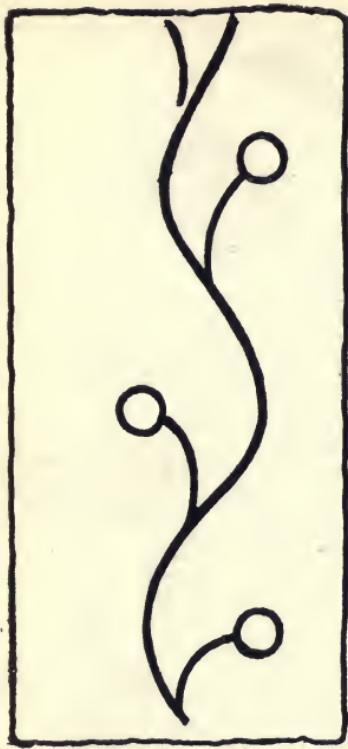
FIG. 217.



FIG. 218.

method of work was carefully observed, is interesting as an example of the construction of the lighter type of this kind of band decoration. The way in which the design was built up is explained¹ in the four diagrams on p. 201 (Fig. 219). The central waved line having been put in, the stems of the three large flowers, and the flowers themselves, were added, occu-

¹ The procedure was observed by Professor W. R. Lethaby, who has kindly lent the drawing from which the figure was traced.



V

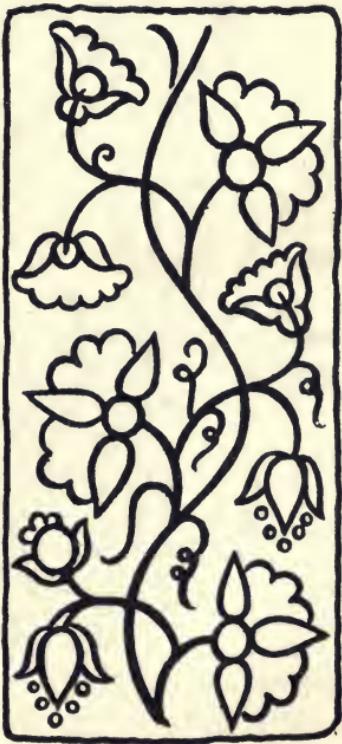
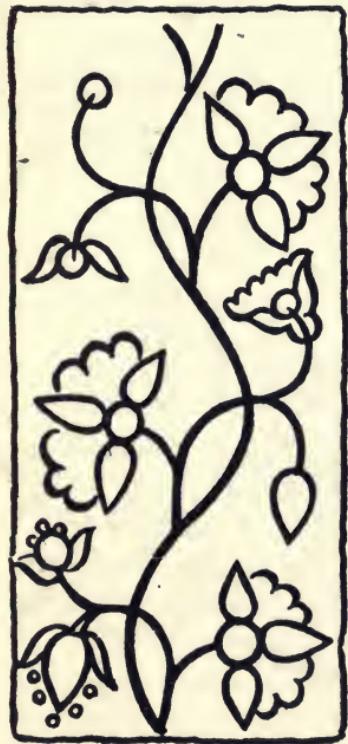


FIG. 219.



FIG. 220.

pying the greatest vacant spaces. Then followed secondary stems, ingeniously divided and directed so as to place blossoms of less importance in the spaces above and below the large flowers, and finally the intermediate gaps were filled with spirally twisted tendrils. The design, satisfactory at every stage, might have been stopped at any point had a less ornate piece of enrichment been desired.

In Fig. 220 is given one repeat of a piece of band decoration of a very free type, in which the formal arrangement is disguised as much as possible. Such

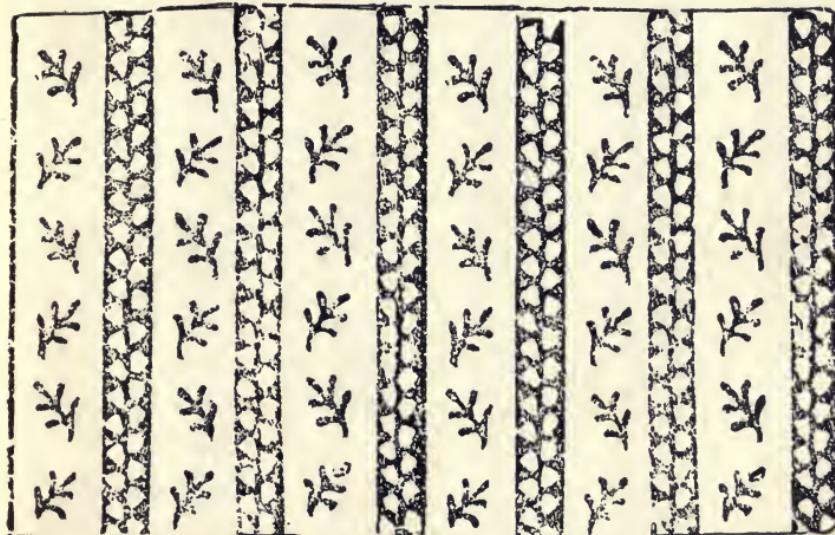


FIG. 221.

designs are very commonly found in the borders of large embroideries, in pieces of painted decoration, and generally in those kinds of work in which a certain amount of variety in the principal elements of the design can be readily introduced.

The various methods of decorating plain alternating stripes of colour, the most elementary form of band-work, lead to some interesting results, but the particular method now under discussion yields to none in the variety, decorative value, and beauty of its developments. We will, therefore, follow out some of the more important of these. In Fig. 221

IV.

Surface
decoration
formed of
decorated
bands.

is a pattern formed of two vertical stripes coloured black and white, treated with two distinct forms of enrichment. The white stripe is decorated with a little isolated sprig of foliage placed in two positions,



FIG. 222.

whilst the black is merely diversified with a series of irregular-shaped spots producing a kind of 'texture'. The next example (Fig. 222) is a more elaborate specimen of the same method. This, from an Indian printed chintz, of Masulipatam make, is composed of

four differently coloured stripes, each separated from its neighbour by a little chequered border. Two are decorated with isolated conventional sprigs, and two with a waved stem-line, bearing little blossoms. The whole forms a rich piece of pattern, a very typical piece of decorated band-work.

In these examples the coloured band may be considered as the primary element and the enrichment as secondary decoration. But there are many designs in which a series of waved foliage-bearing stems are found decorating the surface without

V.

Typical

examples

of the

development



FIG. 223.

primary colour bands, as in the design drawn in Fig. 223. This scheme is the basis of a great number of very excellent patterns. It is easy to fill the spaces between the stems with recurring ornament which, however simple it may be, derives interest from the contrasting positions in which it is placed by successive turns of the waved stem. A more elaborate example, from a piece of Turco-Syrian embroidery in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the design of which is no doubt derived from some woven fabric, is given in Fig. 224. In this example not only the flower, but also the stem is richly ornamented. In

stem-

band

work

into

surface

decora-

tion.



FIG. 224.

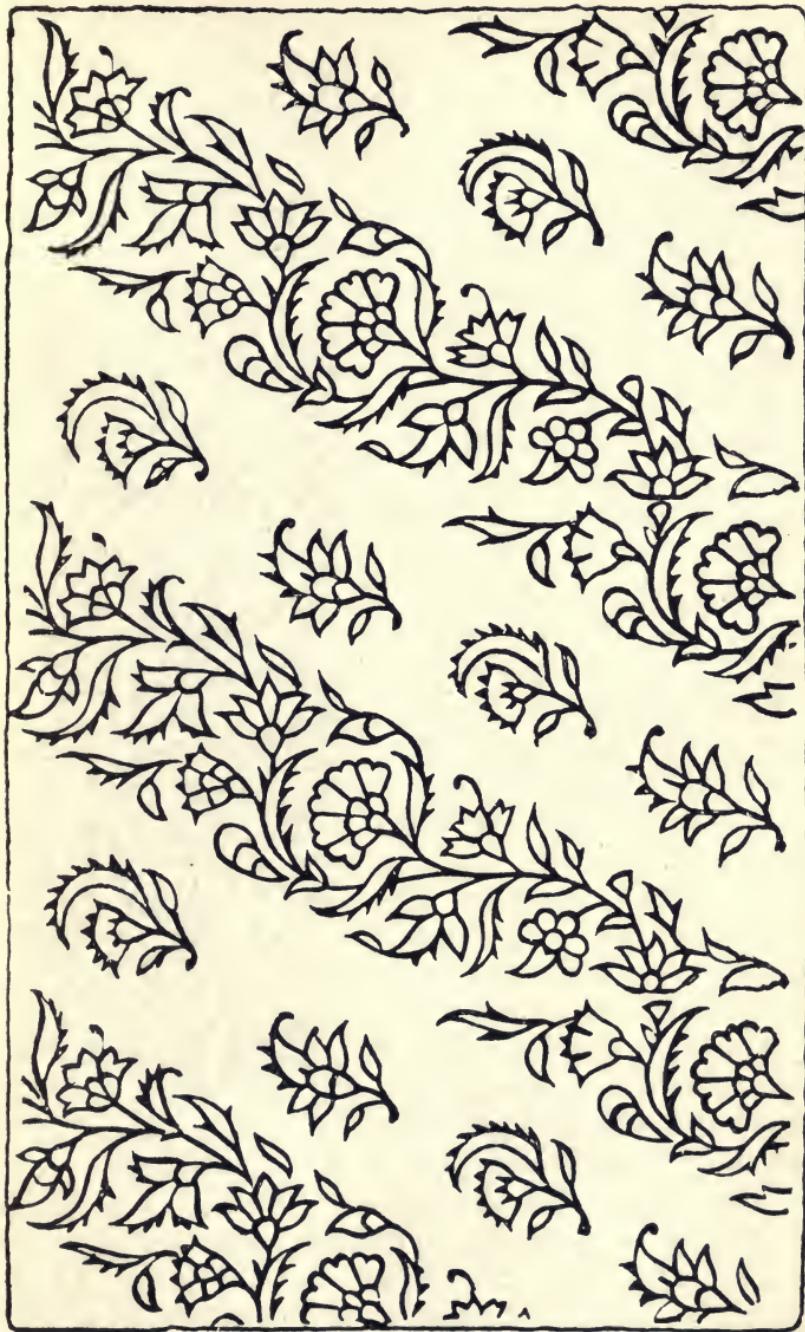


FIG. 225.

Fig. 225, an impression from an Indian printing block, we have a band of independent flowing orna-

ment placed diagonally and alternating with lines of isolated sprigs, constituting a band pattern of another type. Fig. 226, also from an Indian cotton-printing block, shows a waved stem design enriched with flowers and having light foliage issuing from the stem wherever it is required to fill out the band form. As this band decoration is not enclosed by marginal lines, experiments have been made with it (see Figs. 227 and 228) with a view to illustrating the results of the two principal arrangements to which this kind of decoration may be subjected. Slight as is the constructional difference between the two patterns, designs of quite dissimilar appearance are produced; a remarkable result, since they are products of the same unit.

VI.
Examples
of aber-
rant
forms.

In many examples of the use of waved foliage-bearing stems in the composition of surface decoration of this type, the waved stem assumes an irregular form, and the foliage decorating it encroaches upon the domain of the neighbouring band. The latter peculiarity may be seen in the ingenious design given in Fig. 229, from an Indian cotton-printing block. Here the pattern is formed of waved stems placed diagonally across the surface. Since all irregularity of composition may easily tend towards degeneration, and as we have collected a few examples which show very plainly the course of such changes, we will



FIG. 226.

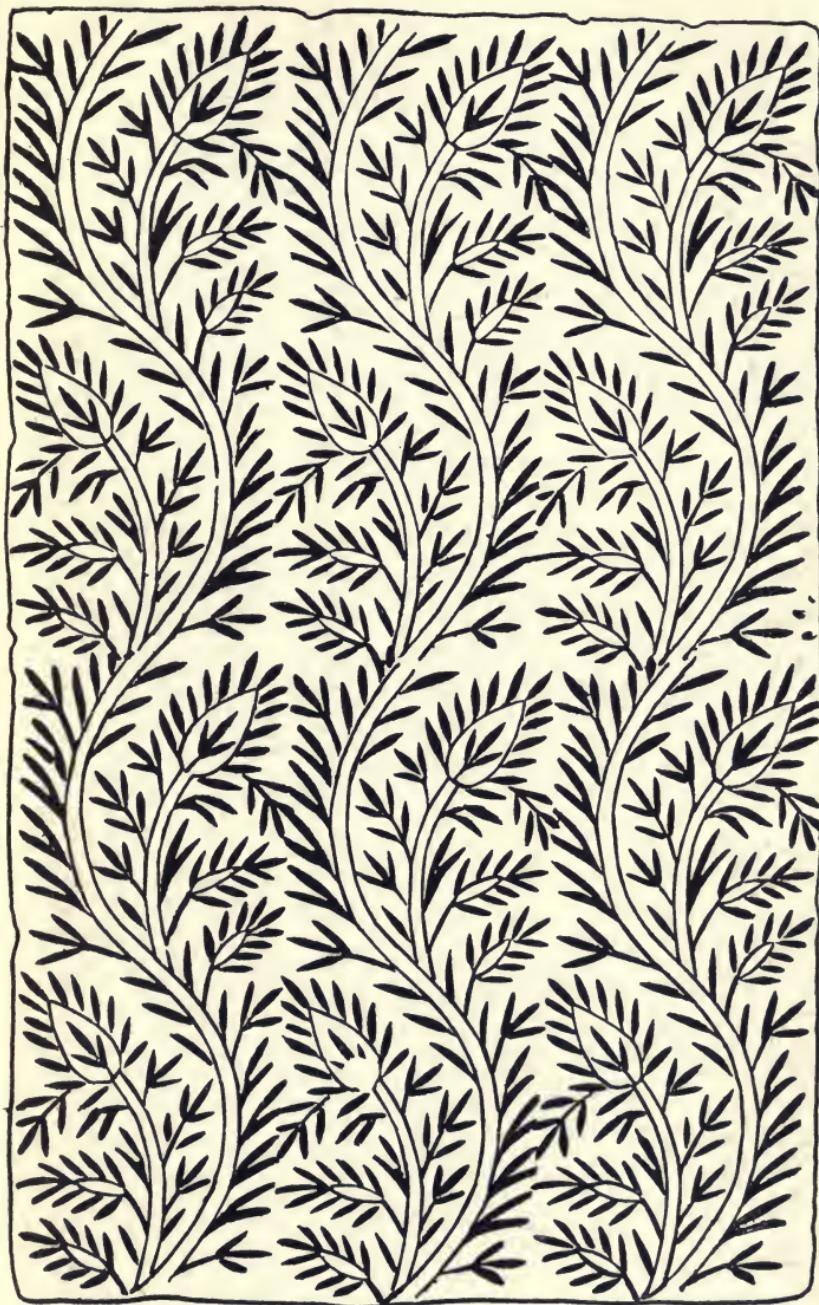


FIG. 227.



FIG. 228.



FIG. 229.

break the thread of the present discussion for a moment in order to illustrate the chaotic, though often highly decorative, results of such lapses. The whole series is, with the exception of Fig. 232, from Indian cotton-printing blocks. In the first (Fig. 230)

the design is arranged vertically and, although the stem has assumed an independence of movement

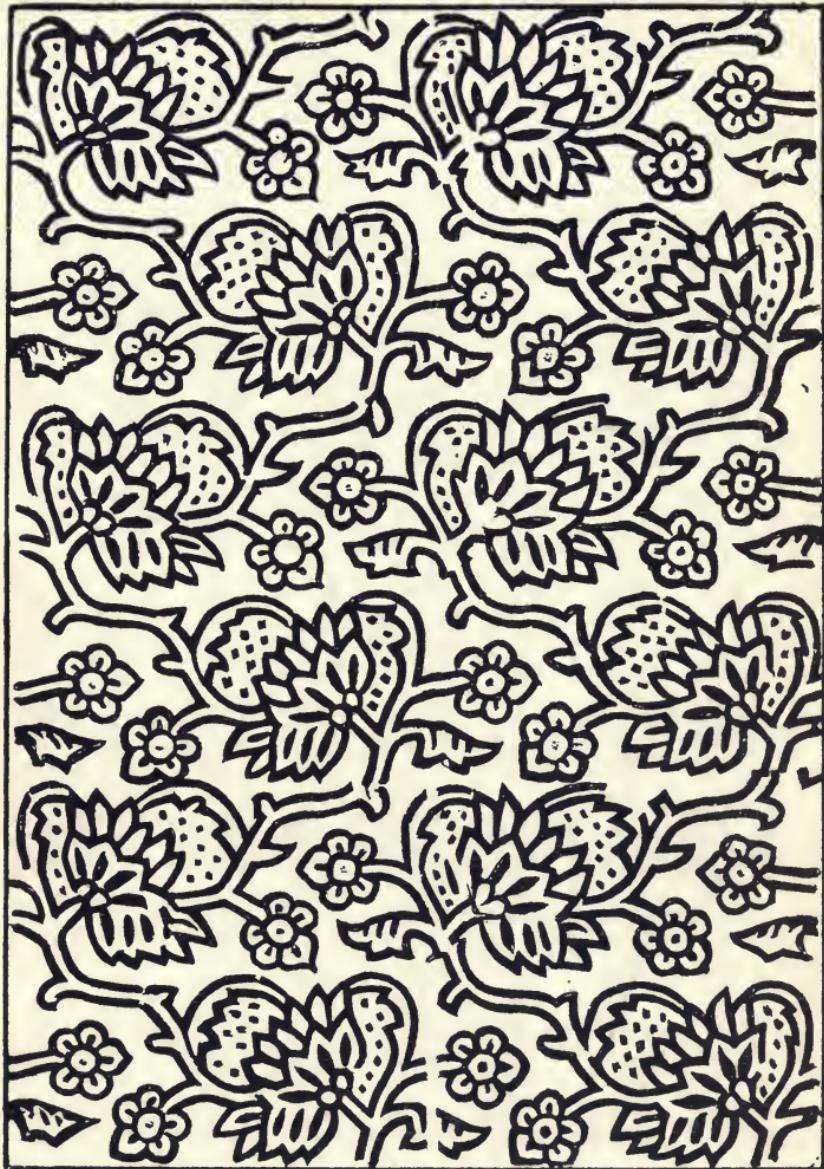


FIG. 230.

far removed from the typical form, the floral work is spirited and naturalistic enough. But the next example (Fig. 231) has thrown off all restraint, both formal and floral, although it still retains the band



FIG. 231.

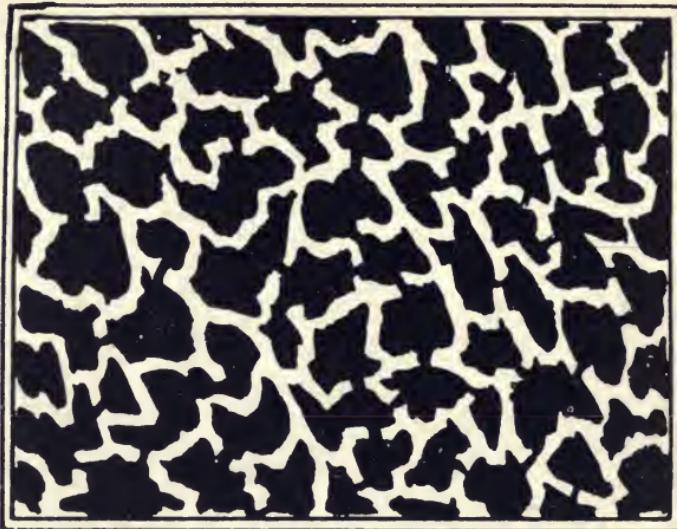


FIG. 232.



FIG. 233.

form. We are now but little removed from the imitative textures, the elementary type of decoration from which, in the fourth chapter, the discussion of

floral elements was originally developed. How short a step would it be from the design of Fig. 231 to a piece of rough marbling work as in Fig. 232! Another curiously chaotic but still very satisfactory piece of decoration may be given as a final example of this series (Fig. 233), which is typical of a group

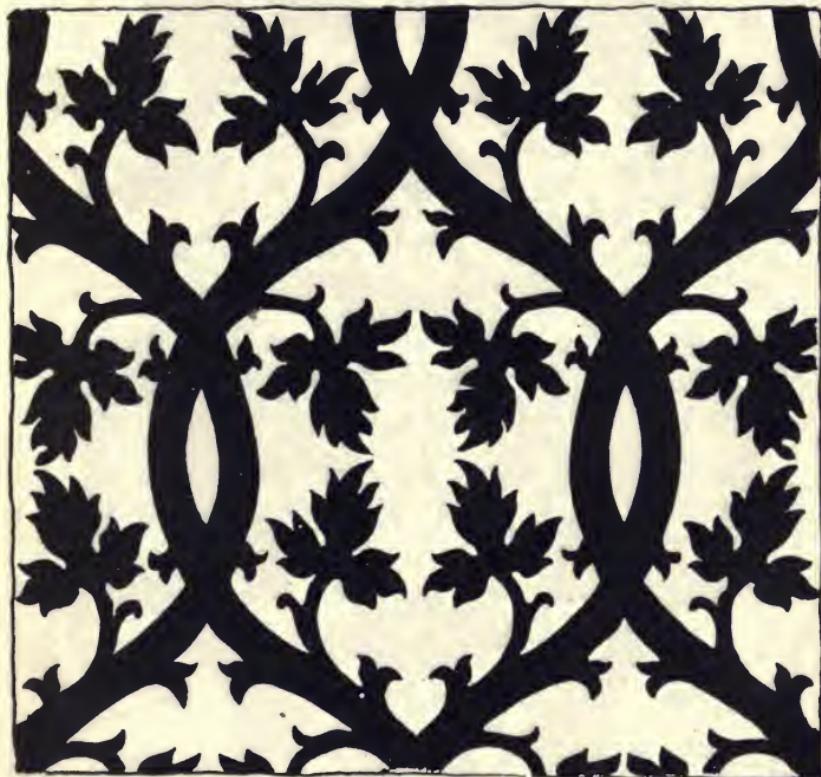


FIG. 234.

of designs largely used both in Eastern and Western art, and of which many splendid examples in bright colours and gold may be collected from early illuminated manuscripts.

Modifications of the structural scheme shown in Examples Fig. 228 have formed the basis of the designs of a very large number of the magnificent woven fabrics that were produced during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Fig. 234 is a severe, simple band design from a late fifteenth-century velvet in the patterns.

VII.



FIG. 235.

Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, in which meandering stem lines bearing vine leaves arranged upon this plan slightly overlap each other at every turn. Another velvet of sixteenth-century date, in the Galleria degli Arazzi, Florence, introduces a common variation of the design, in which the meandering stems unite at their turning points, and from the junctions spring sprigs of conventional foliage, which occupy the vacant space between the stems. This design is reproduced in Plate XIX. A much elab-

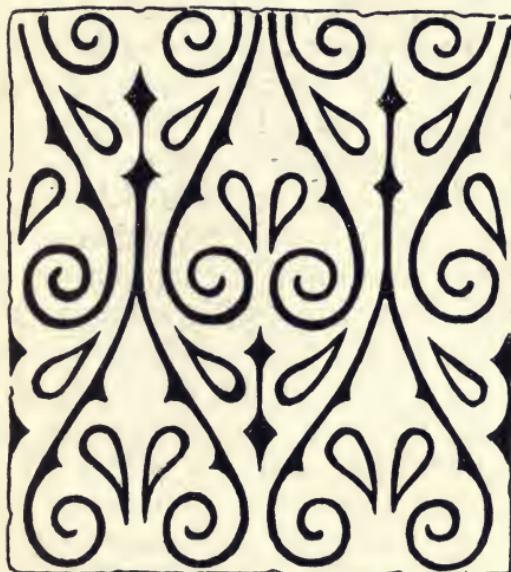


FIG. 236.



FIG. 237.

borated development of the same idea is shown in the next example (Fig. 235), from another woven fabric of the same period. Fig. 236 affords an interesting example of the development of a surface design from a foliage-bearing stem border which is given in Fig. 237. It is from the *mihrāb* of the Mosque of Sultan Hassan at Cairo. In a large series of designs, of which Fig. 238 is typical, the floral sprig does not fall entirely within the space between the stem lines but covers portions of them. The vacant spaces resulting from this uneven distribution are filled with a great variety of foliage work, which issues from the most con-

venient points and often completely disguises the structural framework of the design.

VIII.
Independent development of the stem-band and the panel ornament.

Designs in which two series of bands meandering in opposed curves are used to divide the surface into a number of panels, in which independent floral sprigs or other pieces of decoration are placed, are very common. In the example given in Fig. 239 the bands are plain except at the points of junction, which are ornamented with rosettes. The panels are decorated with two distinct types of ornament, the one a conventional sprig, the other a couple of heraldic birds. In another example of the same structural idea, from a seventeenth-century Persian brocade in the Victoria and Albert Museum (see Fig. 240) the bands are independent of one another throughout their entire course and are richly decorated. The panels contain another version of the conventional sprig found in the last example.

The stem line or dividing band, whichever function it fulfils, is often found richly decorated and is sometimes the most ornate feature of the design. Fine examples have already been given on pp. 124 and 206; and in Fig. 241 are two other specimens. In the designs of the Oriental glazed earthenware tiles of the same period as these examples, decorated bands of great beauty are used in a similar way. The first example in Fig. 241 is from a Damascus tile of the sixteenth century; the second from an Italian brocade of the same date. Designs spaced out into panels by means of two bands moving in opposed curves frequently present a curious feature which in some cases assumes considerable importance. A crown, often of elaborate design, is placed at the point where the two bands approach nearest to one another in such a way as to serve as a link, apparently to hold the structural framework of the design in position. Plate XX gives an example of this from a sixteenth-century Italian brocade, in the Galleria degli Arazzi, Florence.



FIG. 238.



FIG. 239.



FIG. 240.

This example introduces another interesting element, the vase of conventional foliage, which decorates one of the panels. It is a very highly developed rendering of a subject of great antiquity in design, one which goes back to the symbolical records of early Assyrian art. In the little seal-cylinder given in Fig. 44 (p. 60) this element occurs on the left-hand side of the composition, where it is

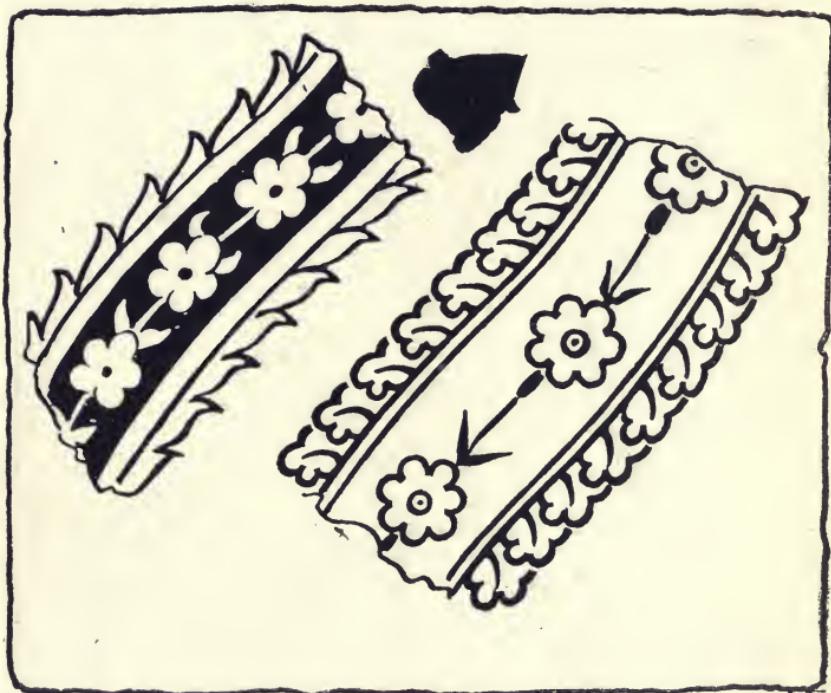


FIG. 241.

associated with a bird which soars above. The plant in the Italian design is a conventional version of the pomegranate; two eagles are perched upon the branches. The plant, no doubt, represents the sacred tree, the two attendant beasts being relegated to the second panel. The whole composition is a highly decorative rendering of the old Mesopotamian idea and it adds another striking example to our instances of the survival of symbolical devices in later decoration. In Fig. 242 is given a

Coptic example of the flower-vase element, in which a vase of very Roman aspect is taxed to its fullest capacity by the seedling which grows out of it! This method of symbolising a plant by means of a representation of a leaf decorated with a flower



FIG. 242.

and an enriched margin recalls the cypress 'cone' elements discussed in Chapter IV, to which designs this example shows remarkable resemblance.

The flower-vase element is found in great variety both in Eastern and Western art. A finely designed naturalistic example, of Mogul workmanship, is given in Fig. 243. This and others of similar design are

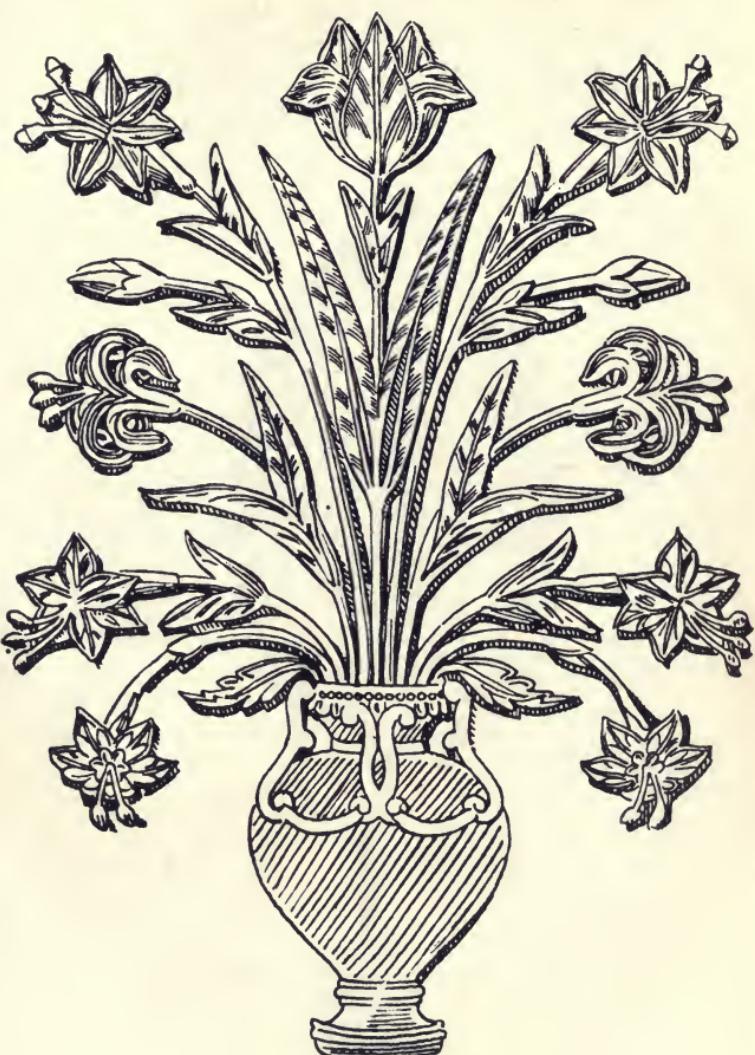


FIG. 243.

carved closely in low relief over the surface of a marble panel in the Taj Mahal at Agra. In Fig. 244 another example of the same element is drawn, from a rubbing of a carved panel of a seventeenth-century ebony cabinet in the Museum at Rouen.

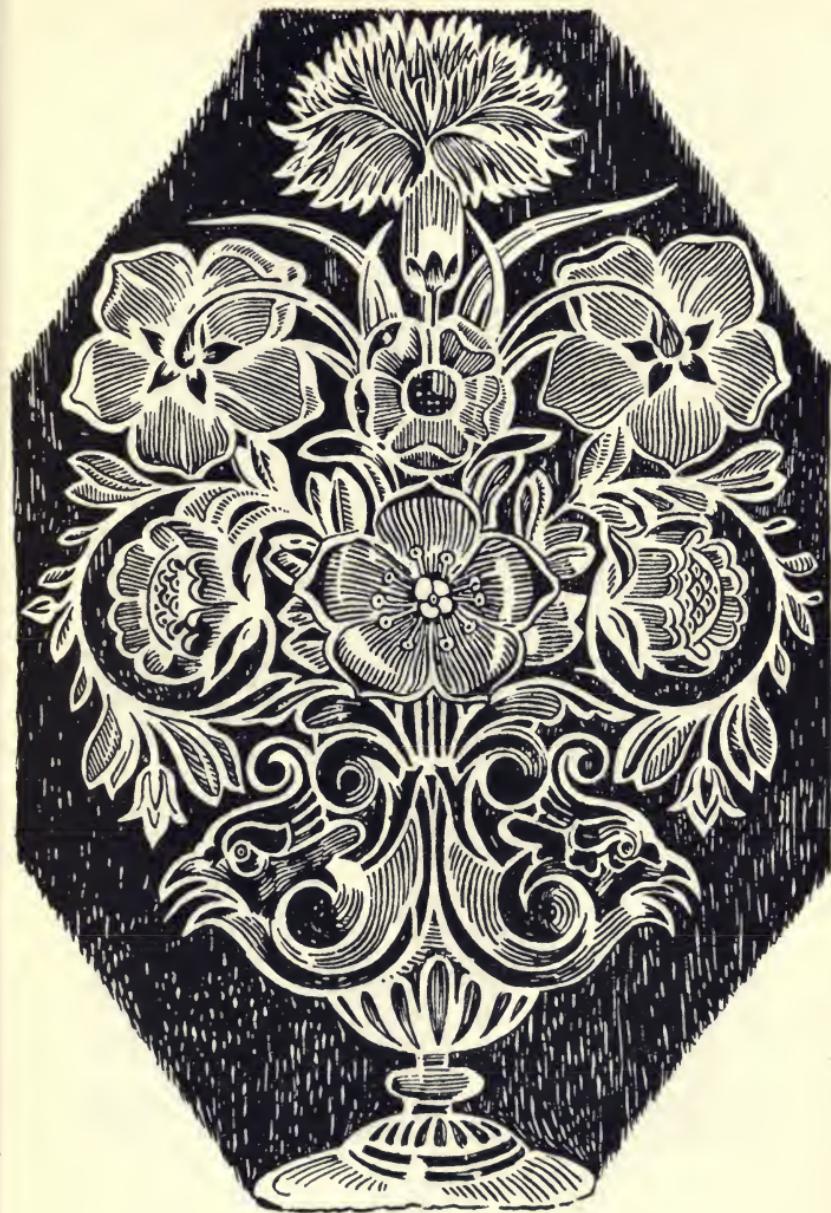


FIG. 244.

In Persian art, and in that of several countries IX.
which have followed Persian models, a somewhat Elimina-
curious way of producing these double curved band
designs is frequently adopted. This method, which tion of
is similar to that used to produce the design given
the stem band.

in Fig. 163 (see p. 160), is indicated in Fig. 245, where a number of panels shaped like those commonly produced by the typical arrangement of the bands, are laid down over the surface, leaving stripes of plain background to form the bands. Sometimes these panels are very richly ornamented, as in the

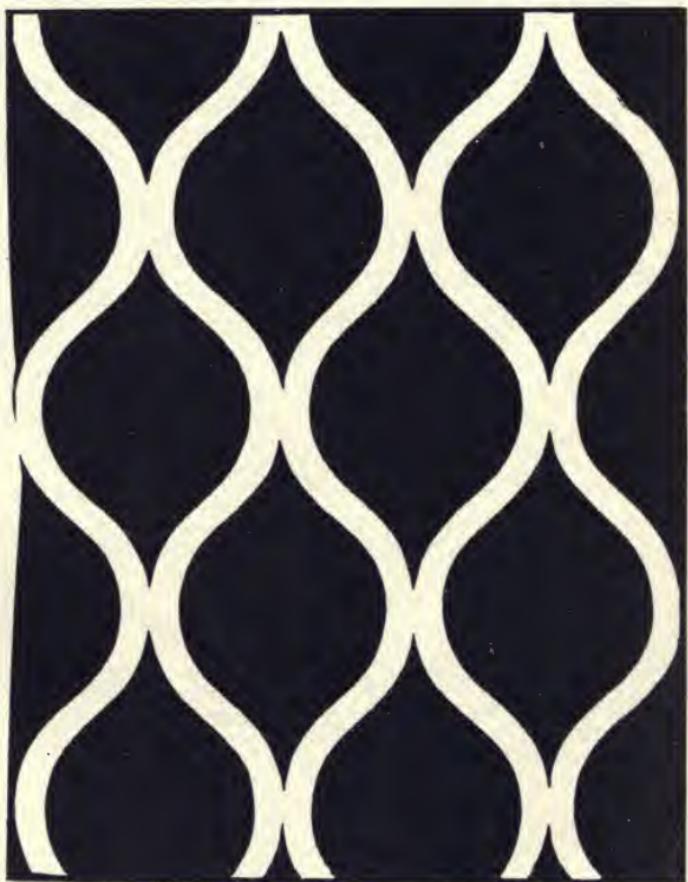


FIG. 245.

example given in the next illustration, Fig. 246, which decorates some Turkish tiles in the Victoria and Albert Museum. These pointed oval panels are often used singly in Turkish decoration; the Turkish plate drawn in Fig. 247 has such a panel used as the central ornament, surrounded by some finely drawn naturalistic flowers and foliage.



FIG. 246.



FIG. 247.

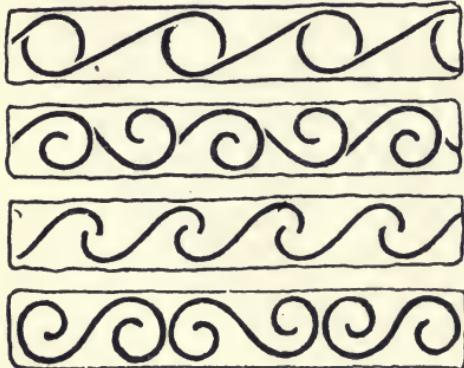


FIG. 248.



FIG. 249.

X.
Other examples of developments of which so much discussion has been devoted, there are other forms of curved lines which may be used to enrich or divide plain stripes. A

few of these are brought together in Fig. 248. They form the bases of a number of interesting borders which have undergone much the same kind of enrichment.

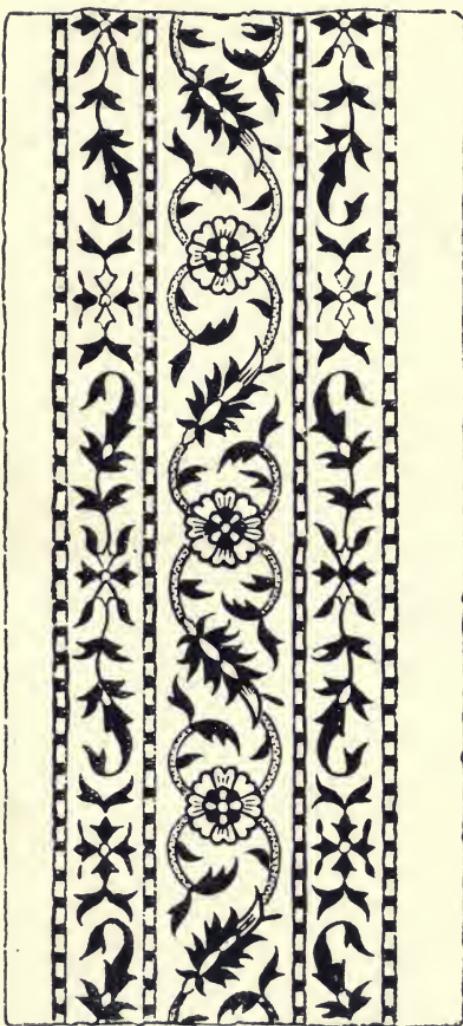


FIG. 250.

of decorative treatment as that with which the form already discussed has been enriched. Sometimes, as in the Mycenaean vase given in Fig. 249, the simplest forms are used without any enrichment. Many of them are associated with other more or less conventional decoration, always arranged on much

the same plan as in the S- and flower-design, two fine examples of which, from Indian cotton-printing blocks in the Victoria and Albert Museum, are given in Figs. 250 and 251. In Chapter I some examples of this design have already been illustrated.

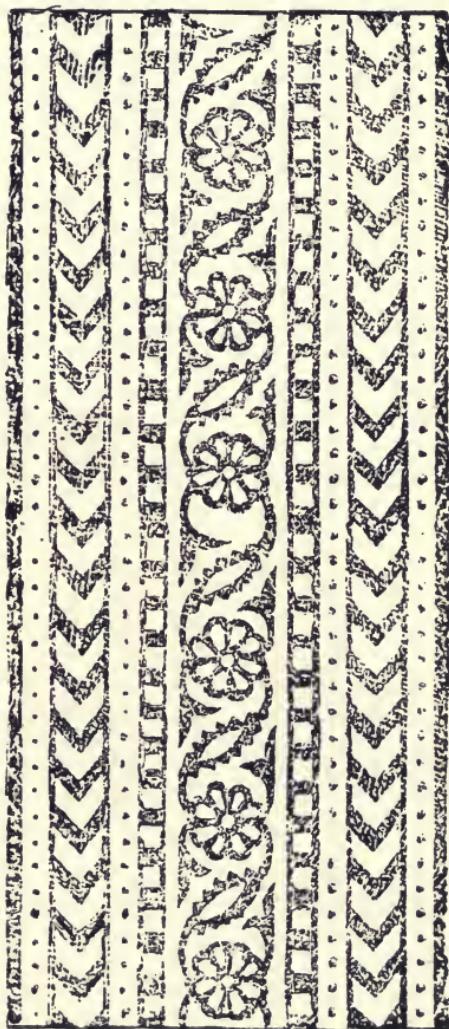


FIG. 251.

CHAPTER XI

BORDERS AND CRESTINGS AND SURFACE DECORATION DERIVED FROM THEM

Longitudinal Division of Bands into Different Coloured Halves.—Use of these Designs as Borders and Crestings.—Typical Forms.—Allied Forms of a Second Type.—Mediaeval Examples of Typical Forms—Oriental Examples.—Development of Cloud Pattern Bands into Surface Decoration.—Relationship of Cloud Pattern Bands to Palmette Borders.—Development of Palmette Borders and Crestings into Surface Decoration.



FIG. 252.

EXAMPLES of bands divided longitudinally into two equal parts, each of which is coloured differently, have already been given (see Fig. 204); and in Figs. 252 and 253, the one giving the designs of two of bands

I.
Longi-
tudinal
division

into
different
coloured
halves.

Roman painted borders, the other that of a piece of Coptic tapestry weaving, we see how patterns such as these may be developed into all-over decoration. This method of band enrichment was very usual in the work of the Middle Ages, and band decoration designed upon the same plan is also common in



FIG. 253.

Oriental art. In Fig. 254 some details are given of the painted decoration of an early sixteenth-century wooden chancel screen in the Church of Saint Botolph, at Trunch, in Norfolk. The mouldings of this screen, which are very numerous, are decorated in gold and colours, as is shown in the four examples given in the illustration. Sometimes a moulding is merely divided into two equal parts by a waving line

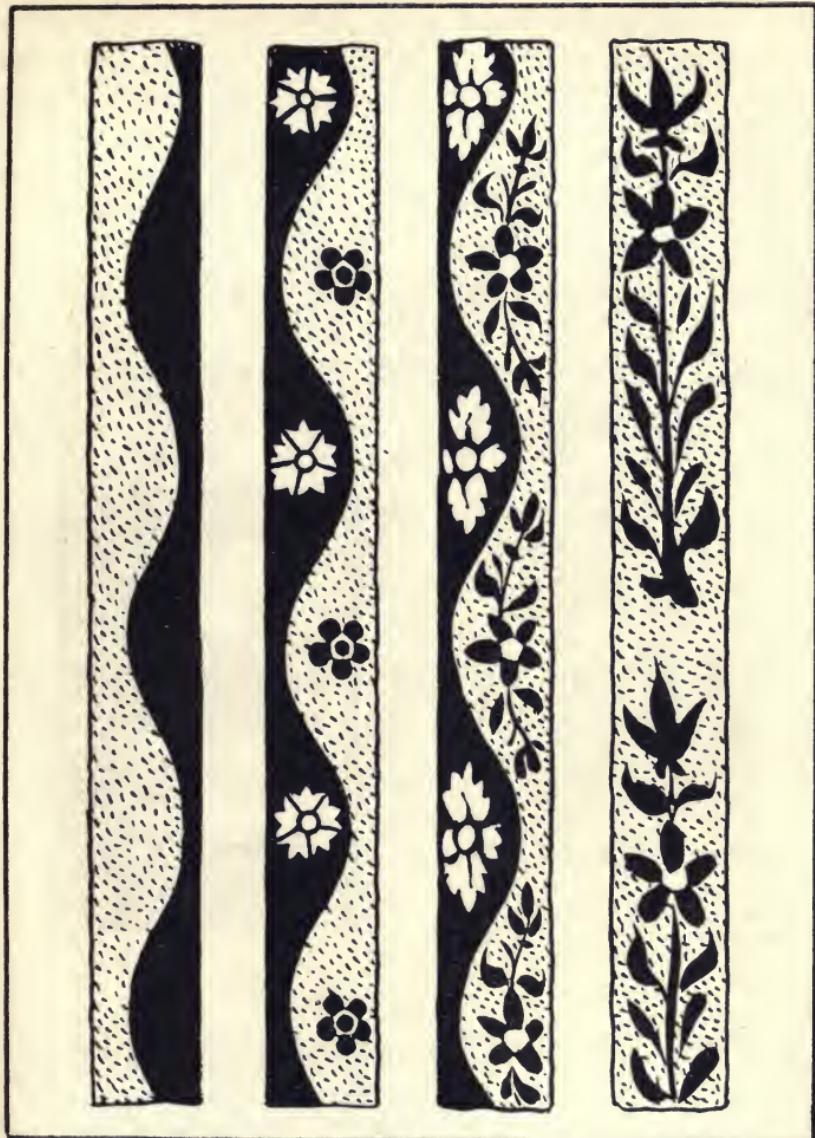


FIG. 254.

each half being differently coloured ; in other cases each half is enriched with rosettes or sprigs of foliage, and some mouldings have the last-named kind of ornament alone. The whole effect is very magnificent ; the changing forms and interchanging colours, dark green, red, white, and gold producing a most rich and glittering display.

II.
Use of
these
designs as
borders
and
crestings.

This type of band decoration has undergone curiously interesting developments which deserve careful attention. It is principally in marginal and cresting ornament that these developments will be studied, for it is in them that the peculiar characteristics of this method of design have asserted themselves. There are, however, also many examples of surface decoration planned upon this basis, some of the most interesting of which will be pointed out, in order to illustrate the development of band-work into

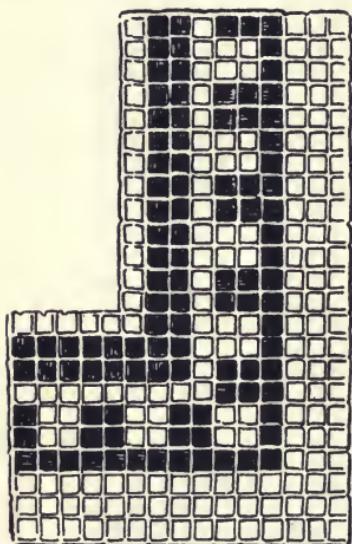


FIG. 255.

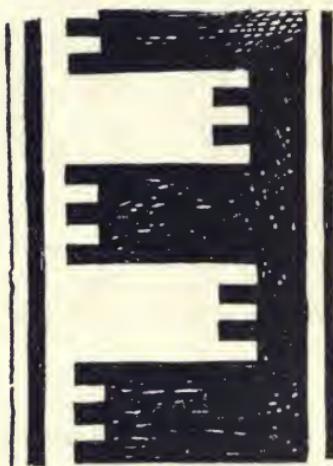


FIG. 256.

all-over decoration. The whole group will be considered in some detail, and an attempt will be made to bring out the persistence of certain ancient symbolical designs down to quite recent times, and to show their gradual evolution into formal ornament.

III.
Typical
forms.

A familiar Roman mosaic border, an example of which is given in Fig. 255 from a pavement from Utica, in the British Museum, is a simple and typical form which has been in use from a very early period. The resemblance of this design to a series of battlements was still further insisted upon in some examples, such as that in Fig. 256 from the border

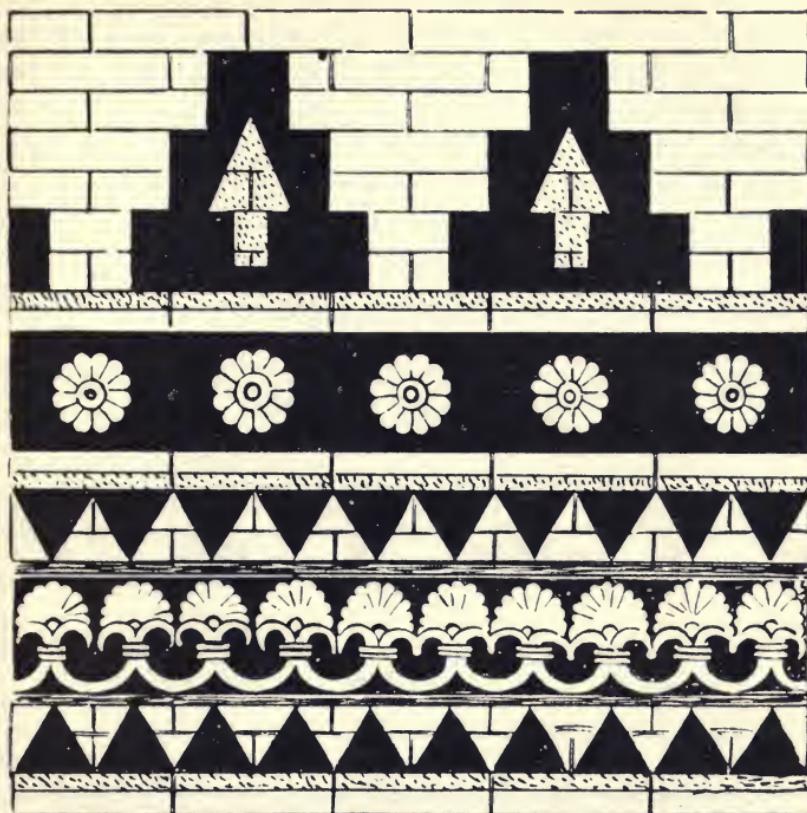


FIG. 257.

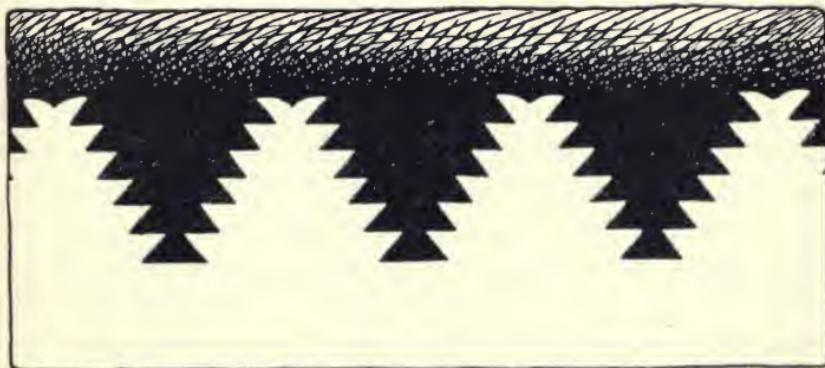


FIG. 258.

of a mosaic pavement in Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli, in which a complete wall with towers is represented. The first design in the series from the Trunch screen and the Utica and Tivoli pavement borders are all constructed upon the typical plan; in each a plain band is divided into two equal parts by means of a meandering central line and the halves are differently coloured. Real battlements surmounting the parapet

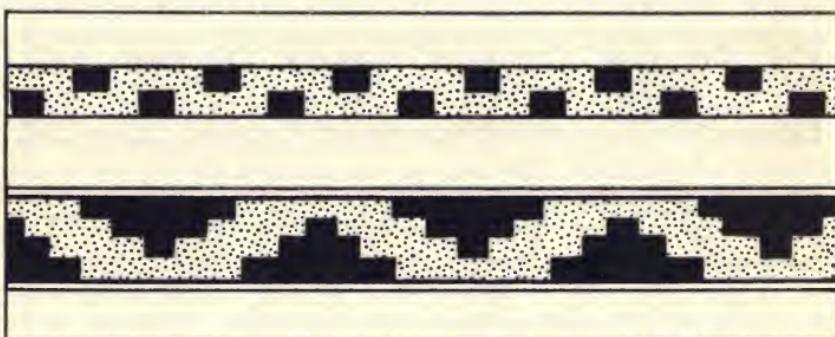


FIG. 259.



FIG. 260.

of a building are the builder's way of producing the same design by decorating the sky-line. In this case, the decoration has often had a utilitarian purpose, battlements having been intended to cover the defenders of fortified buildings. They have, however, often become merely decorative features having no defensive purpose, and in many instances they are merely painted or inlaid, or represented by some such means as decorative friezes. So used, they afford a good example of the survival of constructional

forms as decoration. The elaborately decorated frieze, formed of enamelled bricks, from the wall of the Palace of Darius at Susa, now in the Louvre, which dates from the fifth century B.C., represents the characteristic battlements of that period (see Fig. 257). A later Saracenic form of battlement, drawn in

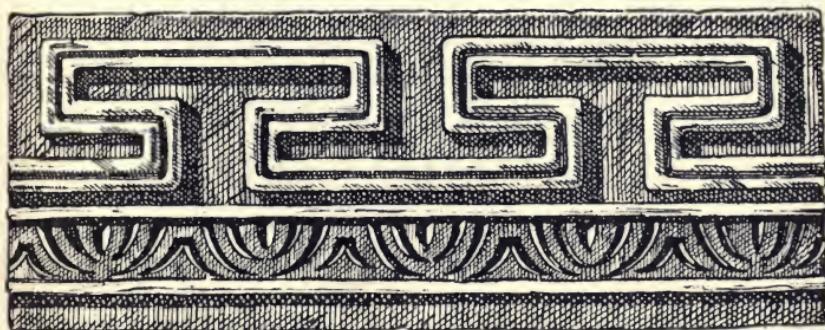


FIG. 261.

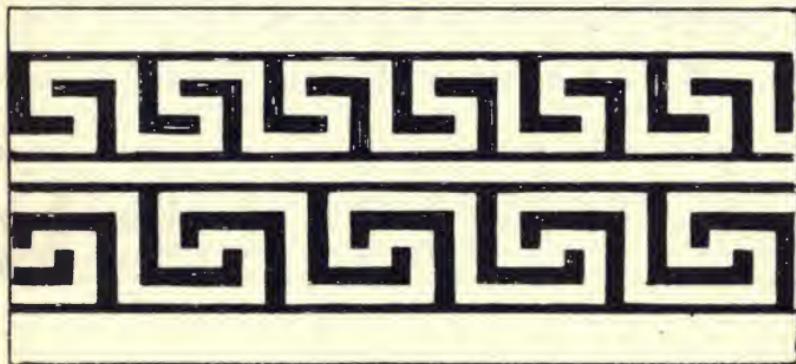


FIG. 262.

Fig. 258, is found surmounting the walls of Mosques and other buildings and also as the decoration of painted glazed earthenware tile friezes. Both examples may be compared with the first design in Fig. 252, which is the border of a Roman wall-painting; there a similar design decorates a couple of bands placed close together.

In the next examples (Fig. 259), we have two bands IV.
Allied
dis- forms of

a second type. cussion, may be considered in this place although they are constructed in a different way. They belong to a type of design already referred to in Chapter III, in which masses of colour of various forms are projected in regular order from each margin of the band towards the centre, with the result that a central



FIG. 263.

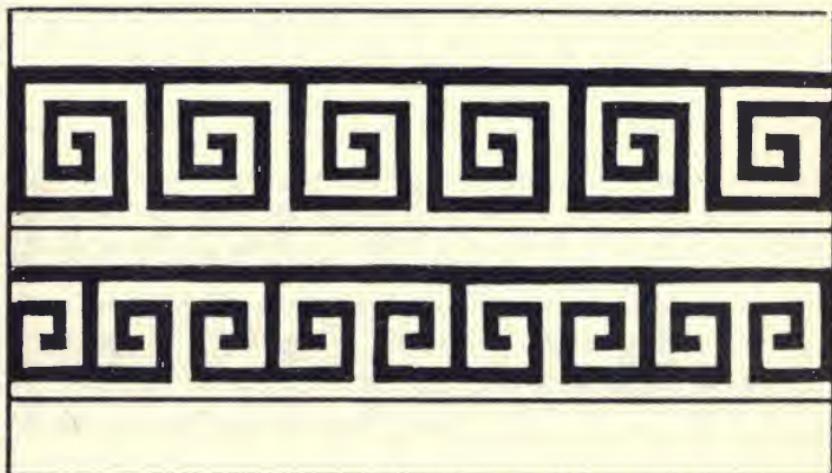


FIG. 264.

meandering line becomes the principal feature of the design, as will be seen in the two examples given, which are from the borders of wall-paintings of ninth-century date in the lower church of San Clemente, Rome. The indented margins of the lower design suggest as probable a mosaic origin of this pattern, which was largely used in painted decoration until a late period. Fig. 260 shows a further development of the same idea, in which a T-shaped figure is the element projected; it produces a more vigorously

twisted central line. This kind of design was not confined to any particular craft but was employed by workers in relief, as well as by painters and by inlayers, as the little moulded terra-cotta frieze of late Roman work from Le Puy-en-Velay (see Fig. 261) will show. Many 'key-patterns' are constructed in this way, as may be seen in the two common examples given in Fig. 262. In Saracenic art, which has pursued so many schemes of design to curious, though logical conclusions, we find elaborate patterns developed on the same lines, such as that in Fig. 263, a piece of ornament of sixteenth-century date.

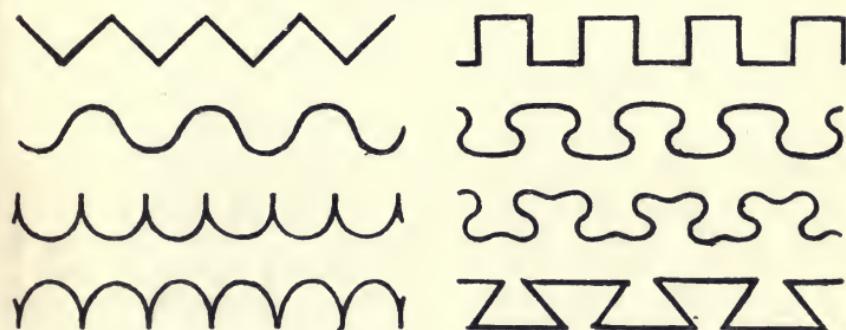


FIG. 265.

There are other patterns of very similar appearance to these, which must not be confounded with them. Fig. 264 gives instances of these. The designs, when analysed, will be found to belong to the first type, illustrated in Fig. 255, although related to the series just discussed. Border designs of the first type will be found to be ornamented by means of masses of colour projected from *one margin* towards the centre; whilst those of the second have their decoration issuing from *both margins*.

In heraldic work of the Middle Ages a number of intricate dividing lines were made use of, and to each of these a distinct name was given. Indeed this method of producing designs was highly systematized, and its value fully understood, and the results show some very remarkable effects. Some of the

V.
Medi-
aeval
examples
of typical
forms.

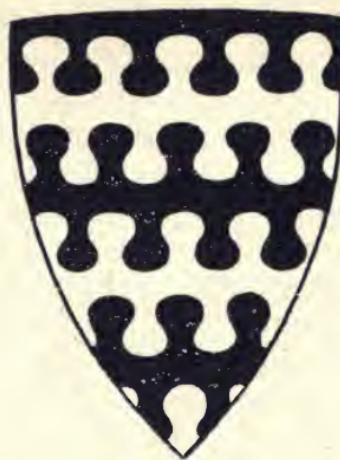


FIG. 266.

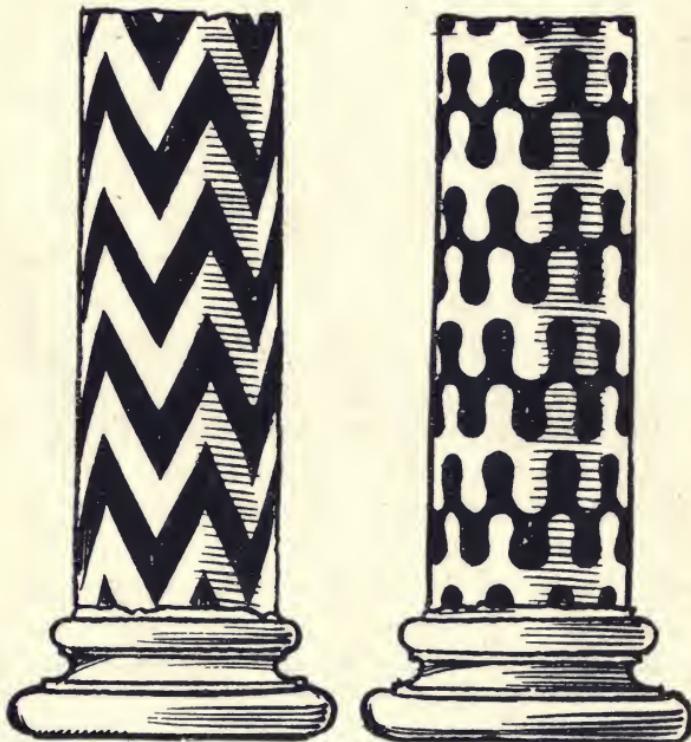


FIG. 267.

most common forms of Mediaeval dividing lines are brought together in Fig. 265, and a shield enriched with a design developed from one of them is given

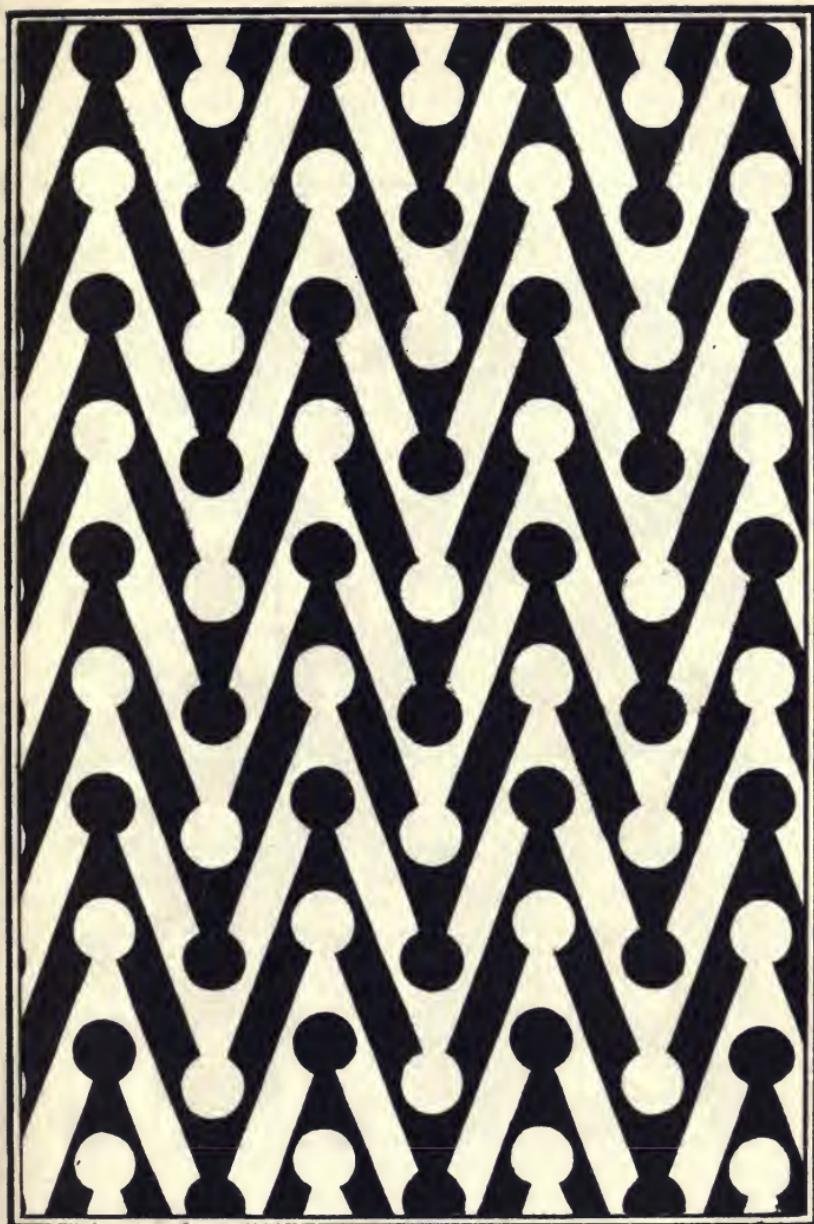


FIG. 268.

in Fig. 266. These heraldic forms were employed also in a great variety of ways in other kinds of work where rigid displays of regularly ordered colours were required. Fig. 267 shows the inlaid designs of a pair of the marble columns of the arcades of the

West front of the Church of San Michele at Lucca. They are extremely rich and effective. Patterns of this type are very often found painted upon the columns and wall surfaces of the interiors of Mediaeval churches. The design in Fig. 268, which is

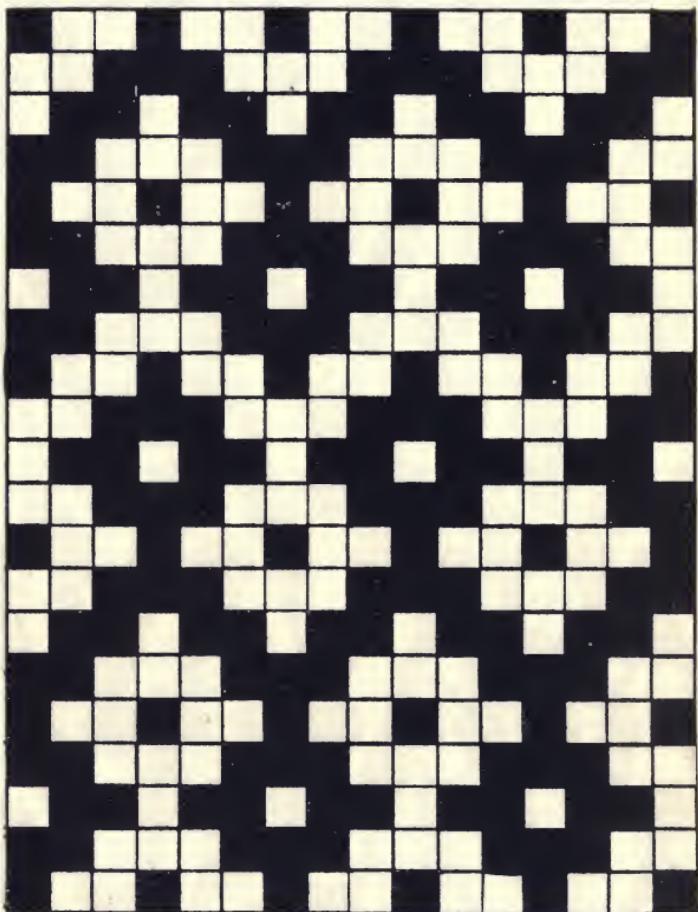


FIG. 269.

sometimes rendered in three colours—red, black, and yellow—is a Mediaeval example of frequent occurrence in painted work. It is a simple chevron (see Fig. 66, p. 76) to the points of which a circular finish is added. Another variation, on the same basis, is given in the next illustration (Fig. 269). This is a design of fairly wide distribution; the example given

is taken from a pavement design in the collection of drawings, formed by Mirza Akber, the Persian architect.

Oriental art supplies many very beautiful and sometimes very elaborate examples of curved dividing lines, and among these the 'cloud patterns', as they are called (see Fig. 270), are perhaps the most

VI.
Oriental
examples.

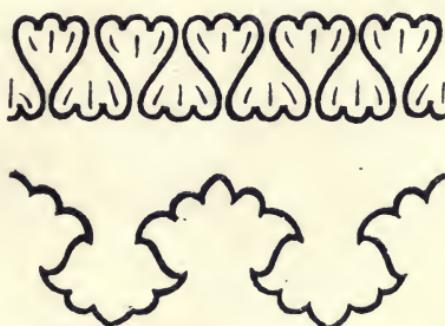


FIG. 270.



FIG. 271.

important. They are sometimes highly decorated with conventional floral work and show curious traces of the influence of other schemes of design. An example, highly enriched with conventional scroll-work, from a Turkish glazed earthenware tile, is given in Fig. 271. The same kind of arrangement is used with similar intricate decoration in a great variety of ways in Turkish, Syrian and Persian art; an example of rather more complex form is given in

Fig. 272, an outline drawing from the Mirza Akber collection. Its relationship to the type is brought out more clearly in the next illustration (Fig. 273), where the two sides of the design are differently coloured. Fig. 274, traced from a reproduction of an Oriental tile, shows a cresting design of the same

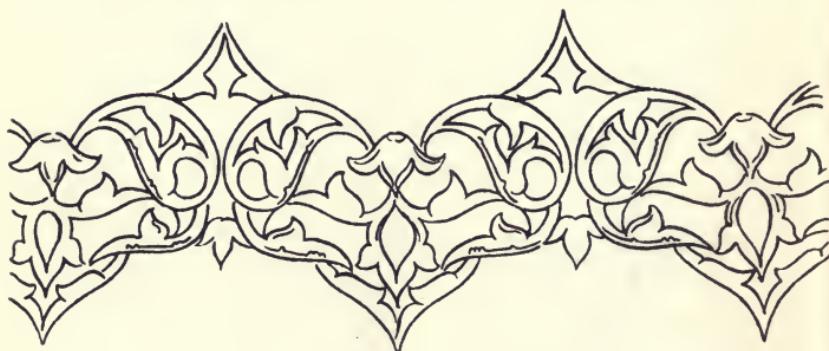


FIG. 272.



FIG. 273.

type, probably of Syrian workmanship. We find stone crestings of very much the same design surmounting the parapets of Venetian palaces and the type occurs also in the inlaid marble decoration of the interior of the Cathedral of Monreale, although in these instances the alternation of the design is not strictly carried out. Fig. 275 shows a dividing line disposed in circular form, an arrangement which has

produced many fine pieces of ornament. We have already seen the design there used adapted to the decoration of surfaces in the example given on p. 104 (see Fig. 101), which comes from Cairo and is of fifteenth-century work.



FIG. 274.

There are many other forms of cloud pattern closely allied to those already cited, such as the two given in Fig. 276 from a Turkish and a Persian rug. These borders, and more elaborate developments of the same idea, are common upon Eastern rugs. They are often richly decorated with floral work. Figs. 277 and 278 give further examples of the same series of patterns from inlaid tile friezes in the



FIG. 275.

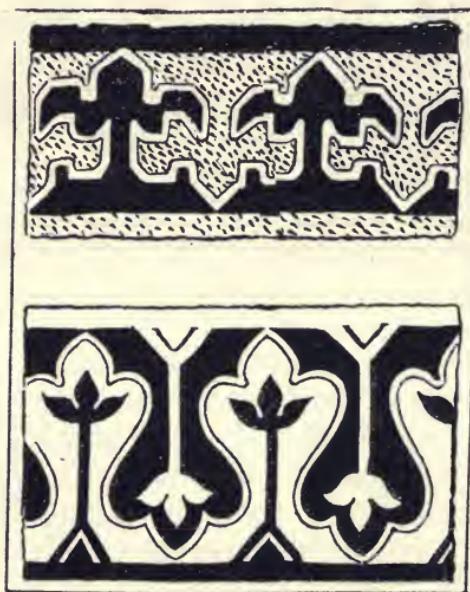


FIG. 276.

Mosque of Wazir Khan at Lahore. They are decorated with conventional foliated ornament, the exact nature of which it is difficult to determine. The second example (Fig. 278) is of very gorgeous

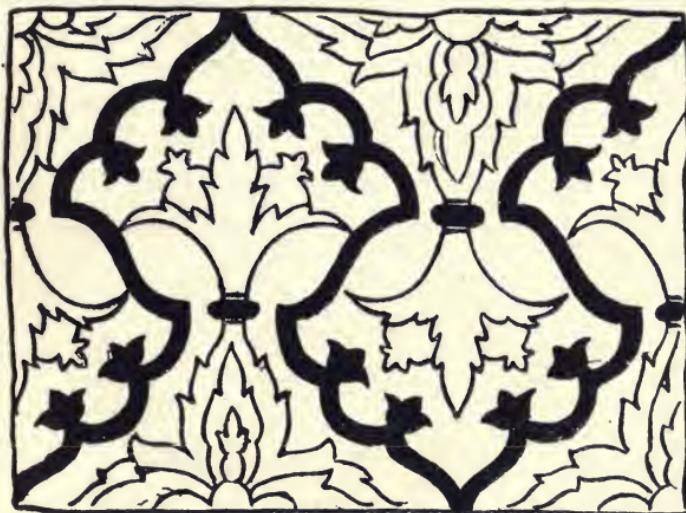


FIG. 277.



FIG. 278.

colouring; it is composed of fine combinations of blue, green, orange, yellow, and white glazed earthenware of very skilful design. Some of these designs, such as that of the next example (Fig. 279), recall the glazed brick decoration of the Susa Palace. All are made of the same kind of material and pattern as

those of the band of palmettes in the frieze illustrated on p. 235 (Fig. 257), which may with great probability have been one of the sources of the Mogul friezes.

VII.
Development of
cloud
pattern
bands
into
surface
decoration.

The skilful way in which, in some of the Mogul designs, the serrated margins of parts of the ornament are played off against the plainer passages (see Fig. 279) will serve to introduce a device, a complication of the single dividing line type of design, which has been very highly developed in some Oriental patterns. In Fig. 280, drawn from

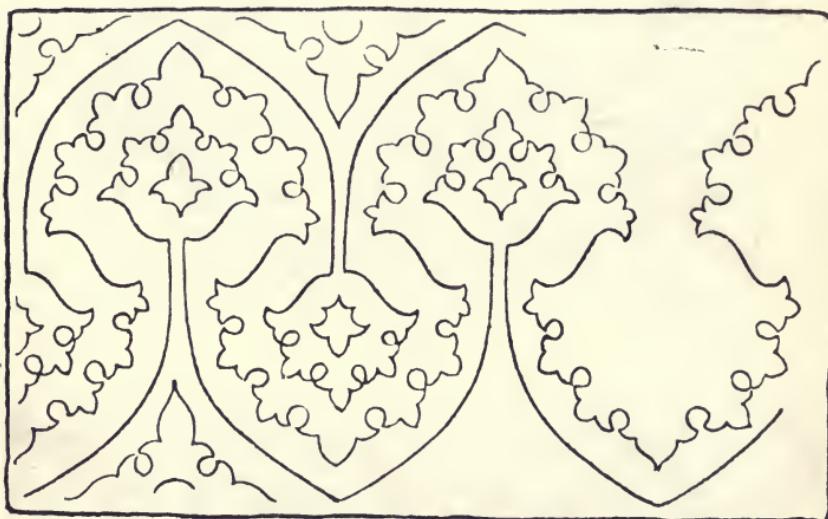


FIG. 279.

a piece of fourteenth-century Moorish silk weaving in the Victoria and Albert Museum, we give a beautiful and very elaborate example of this. By eliminating the decorated piece of chevron work, which is not essential to the scheme, the structure of the design is revealed, as shown in the diagram in Fig. 281, and it may be further analysed (see Fig. 282) into a band divided by *two* dividing lines fitting into one another and decorating and completing each other—a scheme which opens up unlimited possibilities. The next example (Fig. 283), an adaptation of the chevron design given in Fig. 268, shows a very simple form of this structural scheme.



FIG. 280.

VIII.
Relation-
ship of
cloud
pattern
bands to
palmette
borders.

In Saracenic art of the fifteenth century we find some examples of inlaid borders decorated with very complex divided band designs. The upper example



FIG. 281.



FIG. 282.

in Fig. 284, from a fountain of this date at Cairo, is a specimen of extraordinary richness which closely follows the typical form of composition. The drawing below this example reproduces its main lines, but eliminates the conventional foliated work

with which it is enriched, and so brings out its resemblance to certain forms of the palmette border, from which it was probably derived. Fig. 285 is a pattern painted upon a glazed earthenware jar, of eleventh-century Egyptian workmanship, which is an interesting connecting link between the earlier and the later palmette designs. It may be compared with the Hellenic forms given in Figs. 51 and 52, with the Persian design from Susa drawn in Fig. 286, and also with the later Turkish varieties, like the

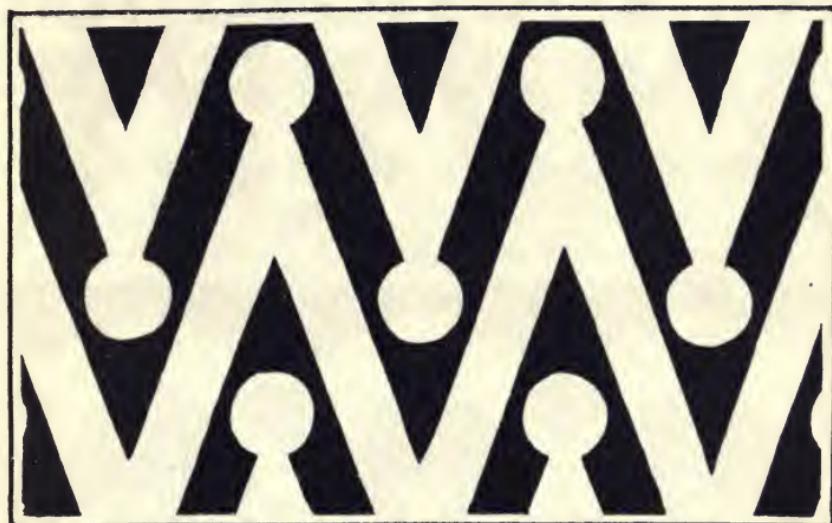


FIG. 283.

carnation sprig shown in Fig. 89 (see p. 94) which very possibly belongs to the same group. The curious terminations of the lower 'petals' of this flower sprig exactly resemble the corresponding features of the design in Fig. 284, which are the 'turnover' points of that design. This detail is a peculiar feature of the designs derived from the typical palmette, and is very persistent. It is easy to cite early instances of the complete 'reversal' of the palmette design. Fig. 287 is from a painted architectural moulding at Athens in which the palm alternates with what is apparently a lotus

flower, a design that corresponds in idea with the Saracenic example. Other beautiful variations of this Hellenic pattern are found on painted vases.



FIG. 284.

Plate XXI represents a vase decorated with bands of this ornament; this fine vase, now in the Louvre, is of the sixth century B.C. The design illustrated in Fig. 288, from a Sicilian embroidered vestment of twelfth-century date, preserved in Vienna, is of very



FIG. 285.

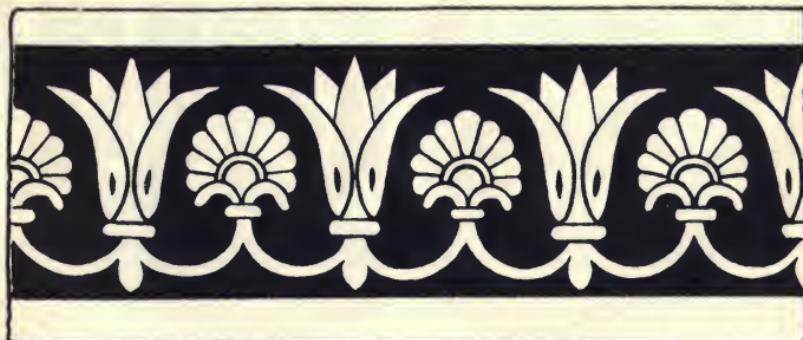


FIG. 286.

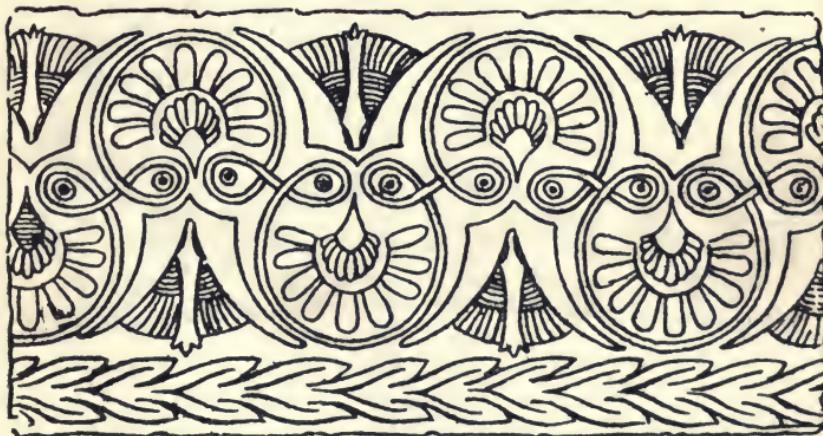


FIG. 287.

considerable interest; it is closely related to the design given in Fig. 285 from the Egyptian jar, the latter being but another version of the same theme.

The Sicilian example is a late rendering of the old Assyrian sacred tree symbol. Another embroidered example of the same design (see Fig. 289), also



FIG. 288.

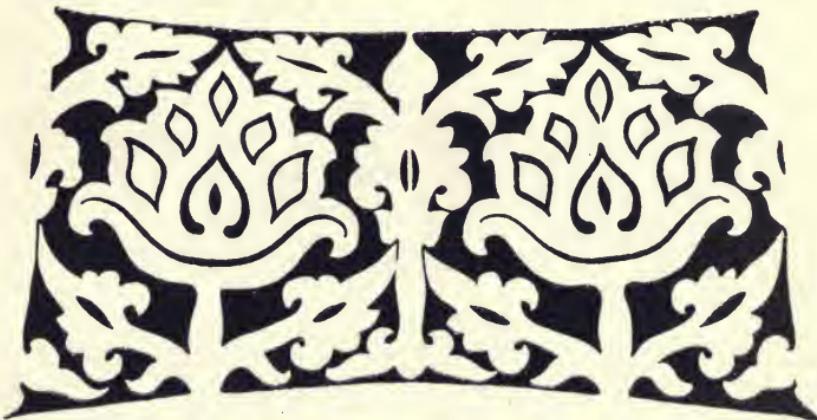


FIG. 289.

Sicilian of the same date, is instructive. The larger palm element shows some affinity to the conventional pomegranate forms of later times and probably influenced their development. There is no doubt that the foliage represented is the palm; this tree is well known in Sicilian art of this and



FIG. 290.

later periods. In Fig. 290 is drawn a fine example of a palm of curiously realistic form, a detail from a



FIG. 291.

very beautiful fabric of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, and a typical specimen of this element.

IX.
Development of
palmette

In late twelfth-century and in early thirteenth-century Italian work these palmette borders are found in process of development into a new type of



FIG. 292.

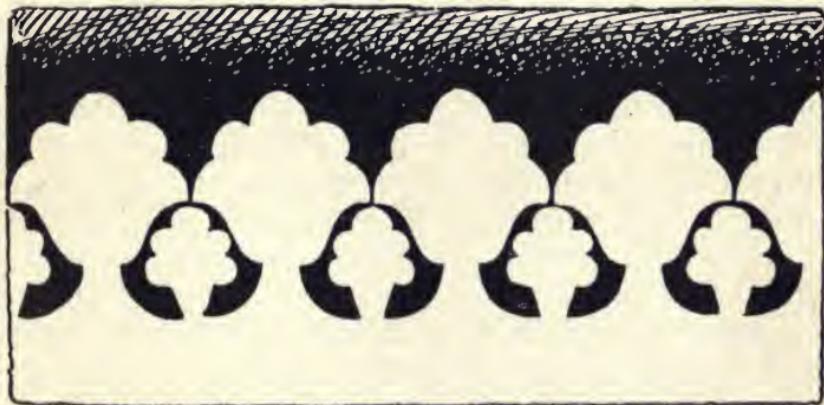


FIG. 293.

borders
and crest-
ings into
surface
decora-
tion.

surface decoration, which became very common later on, and is particularly characteristic of the woven silk fabrics produced at Broussa and Venice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In Fig. 291 is drawn a design from a fabric represented in an early picture at Perugia, of thirteenth-century date. It is an interesting very early example of this development of the palmette border, which was followed by many beautiful variations, showing remarkable changes of form as the designs were alternately copied and remodelled by the weavers of Asia Minor and North Italy. The example is

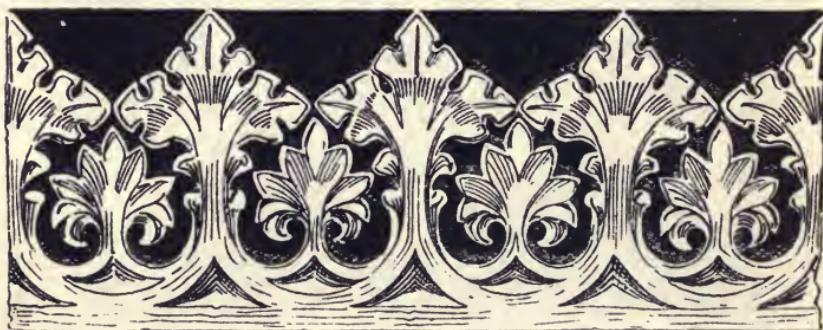


FIG. 294.

evidently in a transitional stage, for it has not yet become a quite satisfactory all-over pattern. It still retains very markedly the band form from which it originated and it bears close resemblance to the design in Fig. 289. The large palm which dominates the composition has become very formal, and seems to have a certain amount of relationship to the pomegranate form which the weavers and tile painters of Turkey and Persia developed to such an extraordinary degree. The late fifteenth-century Italian velvet reproduced in Plate XXII shows the characteristic later development of the design, of which there were many variations, in most of which the original forms are more or less clearly apparent. Fig. 292 shows two repeats of an example decorating a fabric



FIG. 295.

represented on the famous painted screen of the church at Ranworth, in Norfolk, which brings home to us the band formation and the resemblance of the arrangement of the elements to the Oriental version. To this source the occurrence of the finely rendered pomegranate forms also points.

There are many cresting designs of palmette form executed in wood, stone, and metal, which may be traced to the same origins as the series of patterns under discussion. Fig. 293 shows an Oriental example surmounting the wall of a Mohammedan building at Gulburga, whilst Fig. 294 shows the English late Gothic variety of the same idea. In some later Italian fabrics arrangements recalling the Lahore examples of cloud patterns (Figs. 277 and 278) are found decorated with the usual pomegranate forms. In Fig. 295 is given a version of this development, of late fifteenth-century date. The illustration is from a picture by Carlo Crivelli, now in the National Gallery. It retains clear traces of the band or cresting basis of the design, and is, as a matter of fact, a rather unsatisfactory piece of surface pattern-planning, although its arrangement is characteristic of a large series of designs. It is interesting to study the final phases of this series in the two examples given in Plates XXIII and XXIV, where the construction is gradually lost sight of. The ornamental pomegranate foliage becomes in the first example of primary importance, and degenerates in the second into the conventional ornamentation of what is at first sight a new type of pattern.

CHAPTER XII

DESIGNS FORMED BY IMPOSING ONE PATTERN UPON ANOTHER

Cross-Band Patterns.—Patterns obtained by imposing one Design upon another, or upon itself.—Decoration of Cross-Band Patterns.—Alternative Arrangements of Crossing Bands.—Experiments in Imposition.—The Panel Spaces of Cross-Band Patterns.—Development of the Crossing.—Development of Cross-Band Patterns by Elimination of Parts.



FIG. 296.

THE essential characteristic of the group of designs discussed in Chapter IX was the arrangement of their constituent ornamentation in parallel bands. We have now to consider a group composed of two or more sets of parallel bands drawn *across* each other at various angles, of which an example is given in Fig. 296, where two sets of slanting bands cross each other, forming a network of lines with white lozenge-shaped spaces between them.

I.
Cross-
band
patterns.

This example may be taken as typical of the group, Patterns II.
and will serve to introduce a design scheme which will obtain

by imposing one design upon another or upon itself. provide material for many experiments in patterning. A striking feature presented by these designs is the fact of their production by means of the imposition of one complete design upon another, the two, in many cases, differing only in position.



FIG. 297.

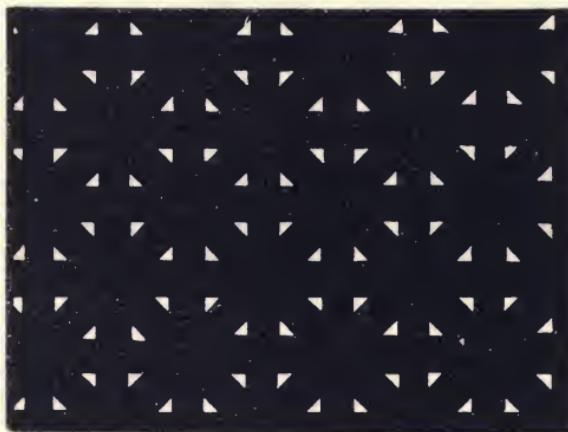


FIG. 298.

The example given in Fig. 296 is composed of a design formed of black parallel bands, imposed at an angle upon itself. In our next example (Fig. 297) we have a more complex pattern of the same class, where the same black band design is imposed upon itself twice. In Fig. 298 the same operation



FIG. 299.

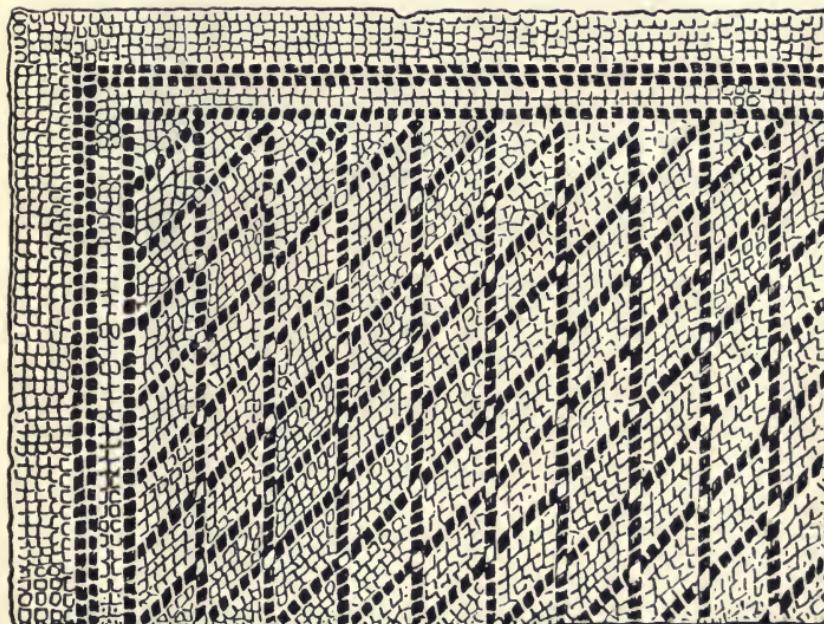


FIG. 300.

is repeated three times. Besides patterns of very regular appearance, such as those just described, there are others of more eccentric design, like that in Fig. 299, which may be seen upon a Roman pavement (Fig. 300) from Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli.

III.
Decora-
tion of
cross-
band
patterns.

Sometimes these superimposed band designs are richly decorated, being subjected to all the various expedients employed to enrich the simple parallel band patterns. The 'tartans', of which we give an example (Fig. 301), from a painting by Orcagna in the Campo Santo at Pisa, are familiar instances of cross-

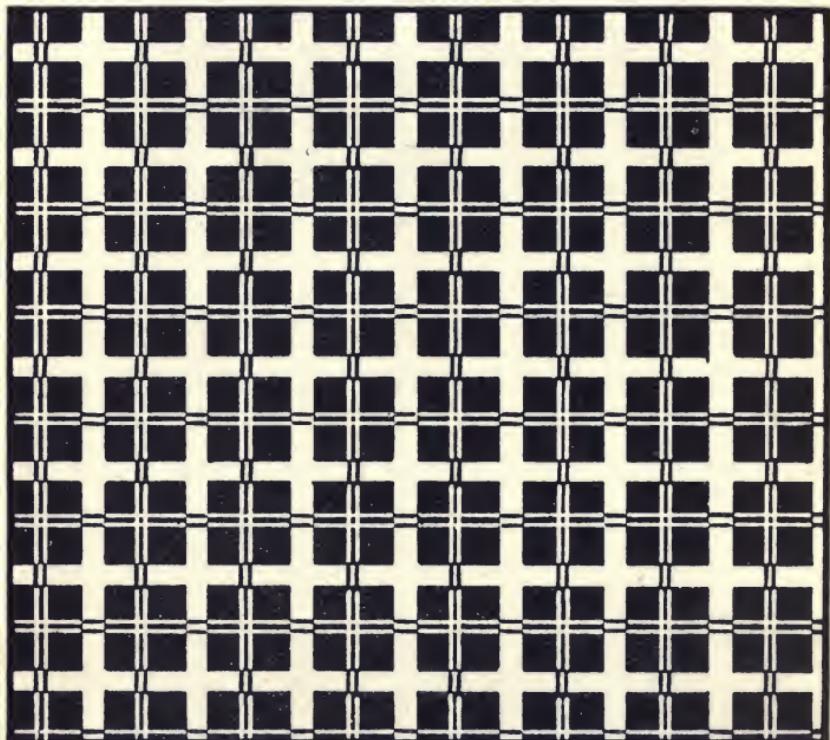


FIG. 301.

band designs enriched by means of the varied colours and widths of the bands ; this example may be easily analysed, it is but a simple band design following the same plan as that given in Fig. 194, imposed upon itself. Very frequently the tartan designs are composed of groups of narrow lines of different colours, as is shown in the next example (Fig. 302), an arrangement which produces some very happy effects.

A cross-band design enriched by interchanging portions of the black bands and the white ground,

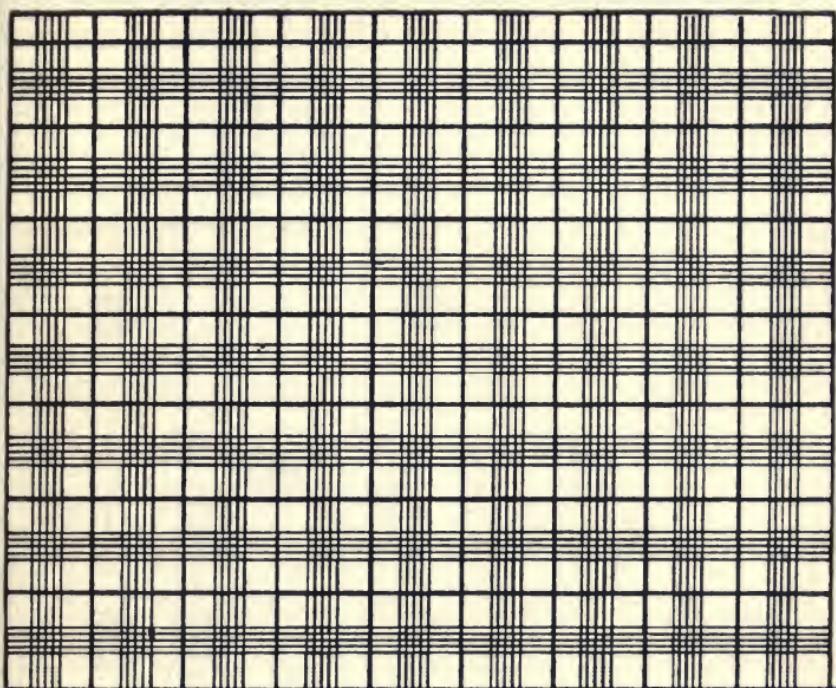


FIG. 302.

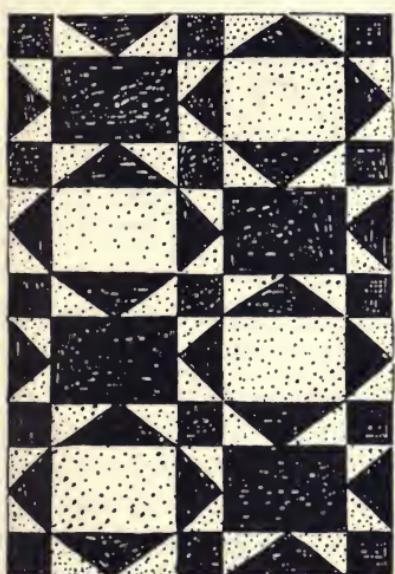


FIG. 303.



FIG. 304.

following the plan of the examples shown in Fig. 197 (see p. 186), is given in Fig. 303, from another Roman mosaic pavement, in the Museo d'Antichità at Trieste; in the next illustration (Fig. 304) we see the same design with the black portions, which had been removed from the cross-bands to the ground

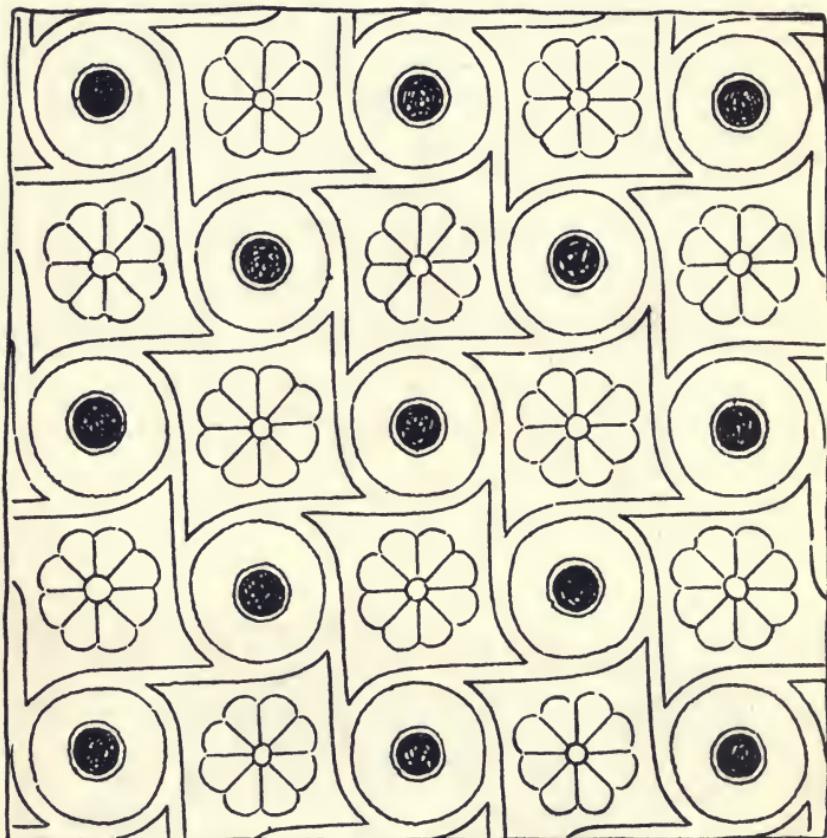


FIG. 305..

with such remarkable effect, restored to their original places. This is a good example of the great change produced in the appearance of a design by means of a very simple process. The study of the decoration of cross-band patterns explains many curious and beautiful designs which are the results of the application of the decoration used for the simple bands to new circumstances.

Fig. 305 shows an ancient Egyptian painted

pattern formed of crossing diagonal bands of spirals ; the simple form of this is given in the uppermost example of the series in Fig. 248. In the Egyptian design this spiral pattern, with its bordering lines removed, is imposed upon itself at right angles, the interstices being filled with rosettes, and spots of colour being added in the centres of the circles. Another ancient Egyptian version of the same pattern is given in Fig. 306, which is interesting as it shows how the same design may be produced by powdering concave four-sided figures over a ground



FIG. 306.

and adding little enlivening spots of colour. This method of producing designs, by working the background instead of the ornament itself, must be carefully studied. It is of great service to workers in many crafts—mural decorators, carvers, inlayers and others making considerable use of this means of ‘blocking out’ a pattern. It is often easy to produce an apparently elaborate design in this way, which is not always the most obvious one.

Designs formed of sets of richly decorated bands IV. imposed one upon the other often present problems Alternative of considerable intricacy. In producing thoroughly homogeneous surface decoration of this kind the two arrangements

ments of
cross-
bands.

plans illustrated in Figs. 307 and 308 are those most commonly followed. The example in Fig. 307, from an Attic vase in the British Museum, shows the decoration produced by imposing a series of bands composed of three black lines diagonally upon the same design and filling in the lozenge-shaped interstices with black. The bands show two distinct pieces of decoration, one part being decorated with the single central line, and the other, the 'crossing', having the enrichment which automatically results



FIG. 307.

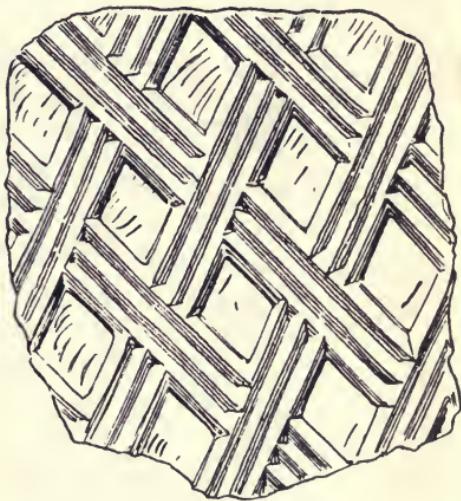


FIG. 308.

from the method of composition adopted. The crossing is the point of difficulty with elaborately decorated bands, for here the patterns of the two sets of bands must exactly coincide. But in designs following the plan of the second example (Fig. 308), which is from a carved fragment of the destroyed stone chancel screen of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame at Le Puy-en-Velay, this difficulty is evaded by interweaving the two sets of cross bands, a method which avoids all actual contact between the decoration of the bands and at the same time secures a perfectly homogeneous design. A very elaborate and beautiful cross-band design is shown in Fig. 309, a tracing



FIG. 309.

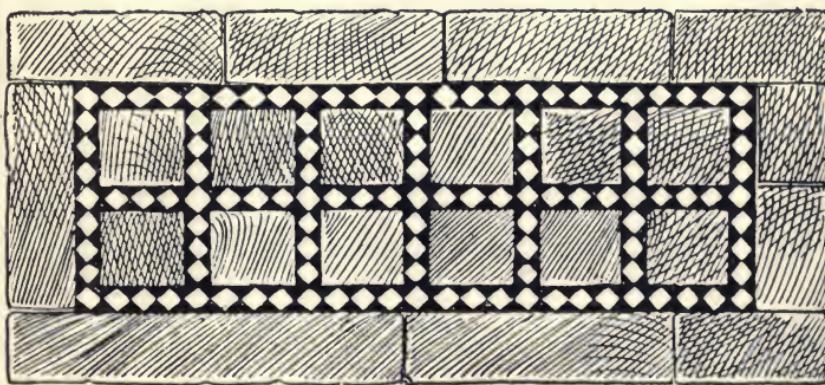


FIG. 310.



FIG. 311.

from a modern reproduction of a Syrian glazed earthenware tile. This design is a development of the Egyptian pattern given in Fig. 305, but its structure is obscured by the decorated leaves which issue from the secondary rosettes. Cross-band patterns are often found decorated with geometrical ornament. This kind of decoration is easily arranged, and is, in its proper place, a simple and impressive form of decoration. An example is given (Fig. 310), an inlaid marble panel from the pavement of the Church of San Clemente at Rome. The next example (Fig. 311), from an Indian cotton-printing block, shows another pattern of this type, in which isolated elements are arranged in order in rows.



FIG. 312.

The method of changing a design by the simple process of imposing it upon itself, or upon another design, is well worth study and experimental demonstration, for by this means many very interesting results may be obtained. Some knowledge of the results of 'doubling' patterns is, indeed, indispensable. The principle may be applied in various ways to many designs. The design in the centre of Fig. 312 is the result of imposing the Oriental cloud pattern given in Fig. 270 upon itself, upside down. The results of experiments such as this may often be studied in the intricate border decorations of Oriental illuminated manuscripts and rugs.

V.
Experiments in
imposition.

Straight parallel-band designs and the patterns developed from them cover the entire surface to be decorated with closely filling ornament, as in Fig. 222, but in the group of designs now before us we

VI.
The panel spaces of

cross-
band
patterns.

have a new element in the design, viz. the spaces between the cross-bands; panels of varying shape, changing according to the number and direction taken by the crossing lines which bound and produce them. These panels are frequently left plain, as in many examples already given, or they are decorated with simple rosettes and spots. In other instances the panels are so elaborately filled with skilfully

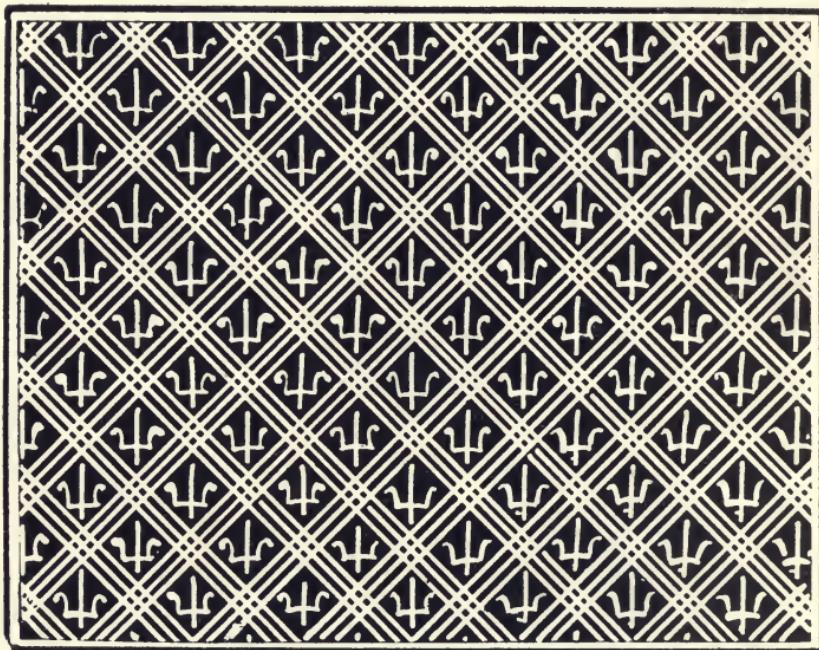


FIG. 313.

arranged ornament as to completely disguise the cross-band basis of the design, as in the Syrian design given in Fig. 309. The merest rough scribble in the panels has a wonderful effect in adding character to the design. In Fig. 313, a diaper from the background of a miniature of a French fourteenth-century illuminated manuscript, we see how a roughly drawn fleur-de-lis adds a curious dignity and completeness to the simple cross-line basis. Another example from the same manuscript (Fig. 314) shows how a very rich effect is obtained by

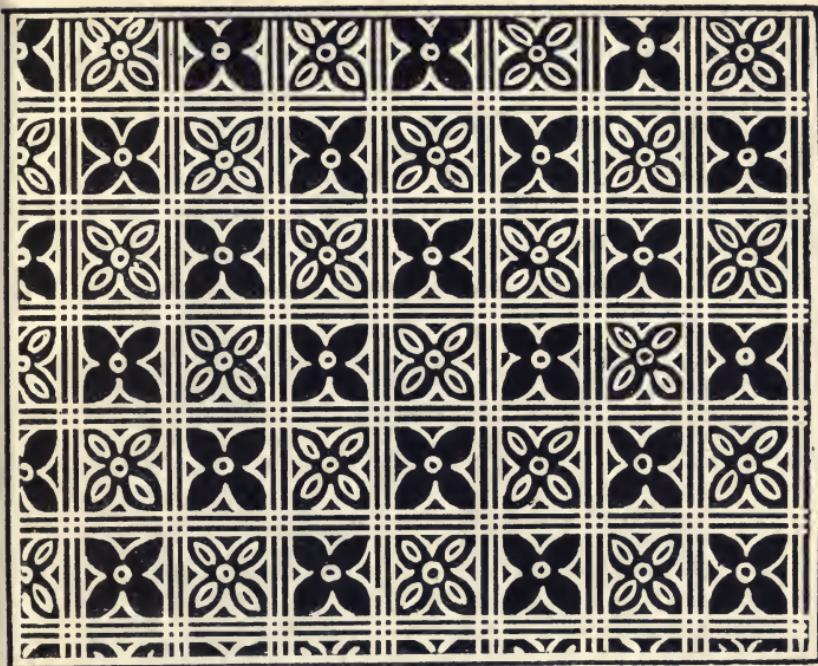


FIG. 314.



FIG. 315.

producing a series of little cusps from the sides of the rectangular panels and adding some further simple enrichment.

VII.
Development of the cross-ing. In Fig. 315 prominence is given to the 'crossing' by colouring it black. This treatment becomes especially interesting in cross-band designs formed of three or four bands, producing many very character-ing.



FIG. 316.

istic patterns, such as that given in Fig. 316, from a fine sixteenth-century Persian manuscript. The relationship of this design to the preceding one is apparent; it is the same with additional horizontal bands drawn through the crossings, producing six-pointed stars, which are also coloured black. This design and developments of it are common in Oriental decoration, being used in many kinds of work, and often display very beautiful schemes of colour. The six-pointed star, and all sorts of



FIG. 317.

elaborate developments of star-like forms, have a peculiar attraction for the Oriental decorator, who introduces them into his work in all kinds of unexpected places. The design illustrated in Fig. 317 is a characteristic instance of the occurrence of these forms. It occurs in a Persian woven silk,

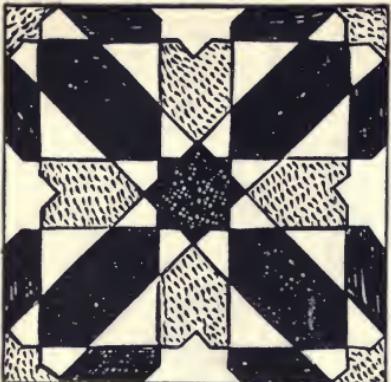


FIG. 318.

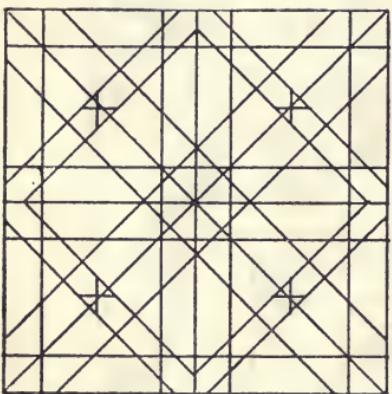
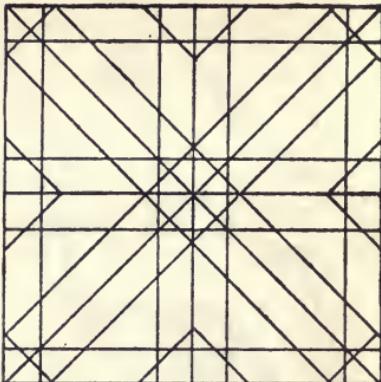
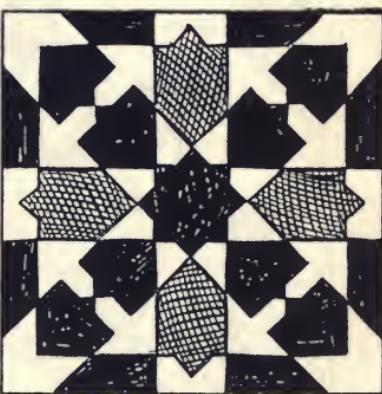


FIG. 319.



dated A.D. 1612, in the Victoria and Albert Museum. The two smaller stars in this design, each built up of four pairs of parallel lines crossing each



FIG. 321.

other, recall the design of the Persian rice dish already described (see Fig. 155). Stars of this form are the principal features of many Moorish

and Hispano-Moresque glazed earthenware tiles, two specimens of which, from Toledo, are given in the next two figures (Figs. 318 and 319). The



FIG. 322.

geometrical construction of these two designs is elucidated in the outline diagrams accompanying them. These patterns were largely employed by

Oriental craftsmen to show off the wonderful colour schemes of which they were such masters. Yellows and greens, reds and blues, violets and pinks, are combined and contrasted by means of these and other similar designs, in most ingenious

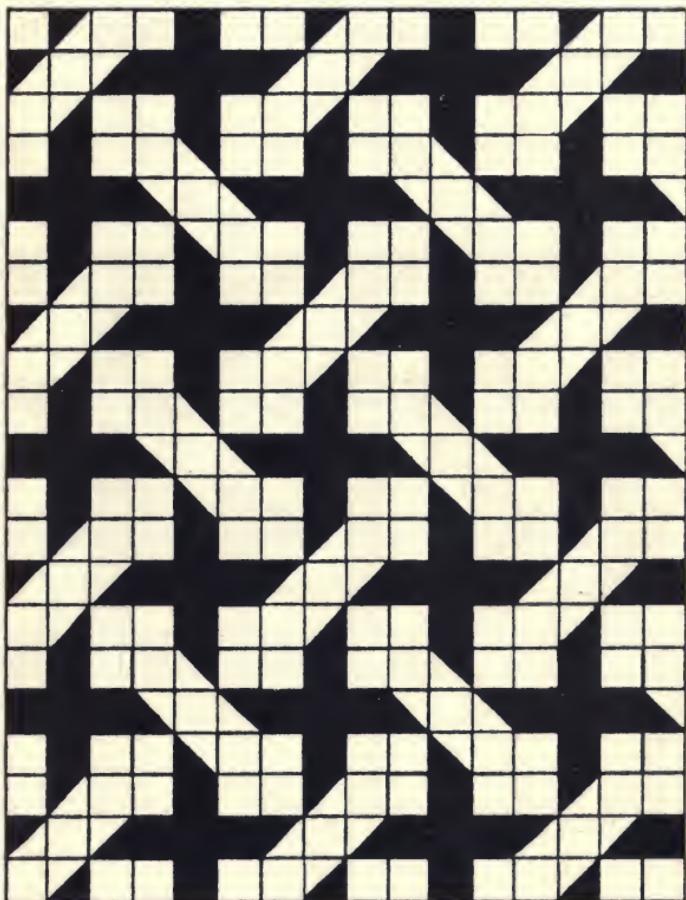


FIG. 323.

harmonies and arrangements, in the tile work and illuminated manuscripts of the East. We give in Fig. 320 a final specimen of a star pattern of this type, which decorates a sixteenth-century Italian woven textile in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Cross-band patterns may often be complicated and elaborated by the process of *eliminating* part of

cross-band patterns by elimination of parts.

the design as well as by the addition of new ornamental features. These patterns, indeed, afford the best examples of the employment of a principle by means of which many types of design may be subjected to interesting modifications. In Fig. 321 we have a fairly elaborate cross-band design formed of three series of parallel bands imposed upon one another at different angles. This arrangement forms the basis of the next design (Fig. 322), but certain portions of the lines, indicated in outline, are there

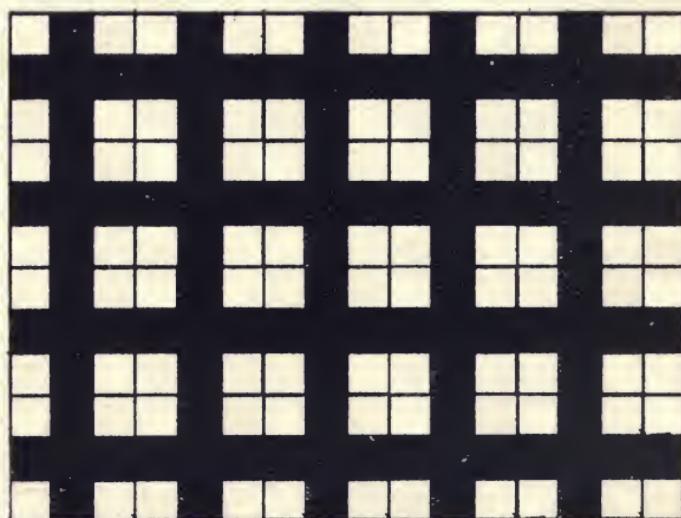


FIG. 324.

omitted, producing a design of six-pointed stars each surrounded by six hexagonal figures. Oriental craftsmen, always diligent travellers along unexplored bypaths of pattern construction, have deliberately experimented in the workings of this principle. Fig. 323 shows a design for a pavement of coloured square tiles, obviously derived from the simple cross-band pattern of Fig. 324. It is from a drawing in the collection of Mirza Akber, the Persian architect whose designs have already given us so many instructive examples. Another example of the same work, in the same collection, shows us

(Fig. 325) the pattern of Fig. 323 complicated by additional squares which produce an interesting variation of the design.

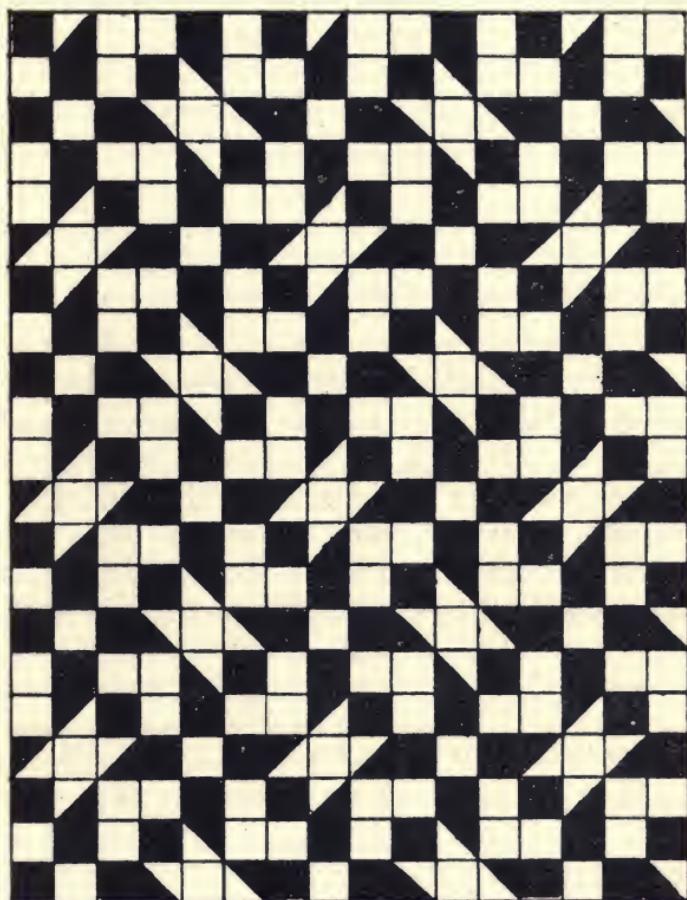


FIG. 325.

CHAPTER XIII

DESIGNS FORMED BY COUNTERCHANGING ELEMENTS

Developments of the Principle of Imposition.—Counterchanging.
—Examples of Simple Counterchange Patterns.—Double Counterchanges.—Exercises in Counterchanging.—Triple ‘Counterchanges.’

I.
Developments of
the principle of
imposition.

In the preceding chapter the results obtained by imposing parallel bands upon themselves were discussed in detail. The examples cited were taken from one group of designs, that which results from the various arrangements to which plain parallel bands may be subjected, for in the patterns belonging to this group the working out of the principle involved is most plainly apparent. But it must not be supposed that in these examples the limits of the possibilities of this method of developing designs are reached. The doubling of the Oriental cloud pattern shown in Fig. 312 is but an indication of the lengths to which this ingenious idea may be carried; we are by no means restricted to the straight band basis. In Fig. 72 will be found an example in which the bands are neither straight nor parallel. In this design two series of white lines meandering in opposed curves are imposed the one upon the other with a most brilliant effect. Designs of totally different composition may be imposed upon one another. A pattern formed of vertical bands may be imposed upon a chevron design; a floral sprig may be powdered over a piece of geometrical work, or over a design such as that given in Fig. 233. There are numberless instances of the use of one type of design as the background of another. This

kind of powdered pattern does not include those designs in which secondary ornament *surrounds* an element, as in the example given in Plate XXIV, but only those patterns in which one type of ornament is deliberately imposed upon another, which does not conform to its outline but has its own separate existence. Strange as it may seem, designs of this kind often produce wonderfully rich, homogeneous decoration.

There is no need to pursue the possibilities of the principle of design by imposition any further; another important principle of design which arises directly out of this must now be discussed. On page 272 the 'panel-spaces' which were produced by the crossing lines of the cross-band designs were alluded to. It is to the development of these that we shall now pay attention. If a number of lines, placed at regular intervals apart, are drawn horizontally across a surface and the design so produced is imposed upon itself at right angles, the surface will be divided up into a number of squares of equal size. If alternate squares are filled in with two colours, or with black and white, the chess-board pattern (Fig. 127) is produced. Figures of identical shape, but of two different colours disposed so as to cover a surface *exactly*, without any interstices, as do the squares of a chess-board, are said to 'counter-change'.

There is a great variety of counterchange designs; they form a very interesting group of patterns combining the regularity and splendid colouring of the Oriental geometrical work,—for they are often very beautifully tinted,—with the freely-drawn lines and curves of conventional foliated work. In Fig. 326 a leaf-like form is counterchanged in black and white; the black leaf has white veining, the white leaf black; there is not a single piece of black in the design that has not its exact counterpart in white. In Fig. 327 is given a little shield of

II.
Counter-
changing.

III.

Examples
of simple
counter-
change
patterns.

German design, in which a piece of conventional floral work is divided and counterchanged in black and white. We have already seen (Figs. 101 and 102)



FIG. 326.

two splendid Oriental examples of work designed on this principle, and in Chapter XI many instances of its application to band-work have been brought

together. The curious design drawn in Fig. 328 is a counterchange pattern allied to the chess-board design; it may be analysed as a design of crossing



FIG. 327.



FIG. 328.

lines which at stated intervals are twisted into S-shaped double curves (see Fig. 329), imposed upon itself at right angles.

IV.

Two counterchange patterns composed of two parallel series of chevrons imposed upon one another changes.

Double counter-

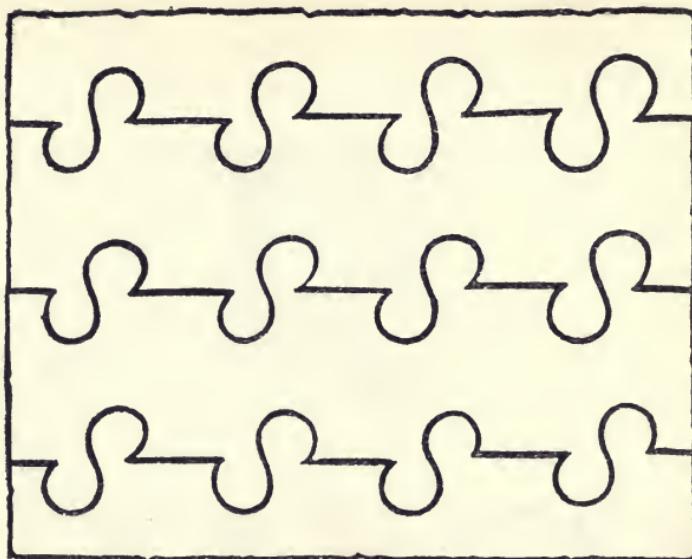


FIG. 329.

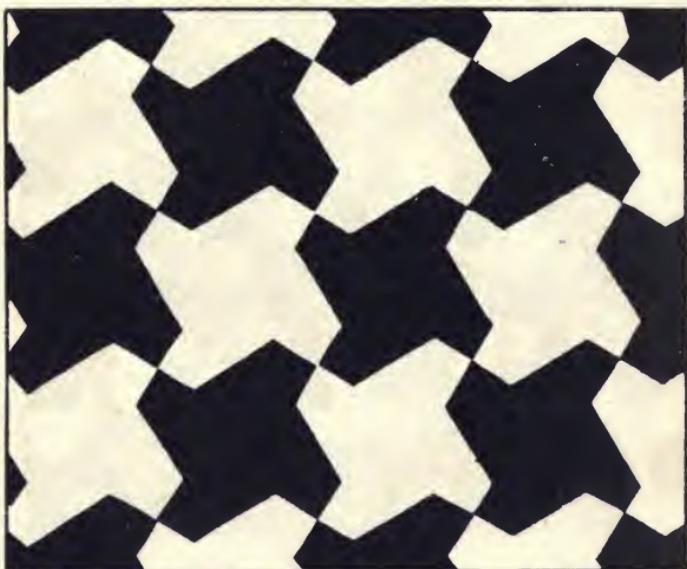


FIG. 330.

at right angles are given, with their analysis in line-work, in Figs. 330, 331, 332, and 333. These claim our careful attention, for here we meet with a new development, *double imposition*, that is, the imposition

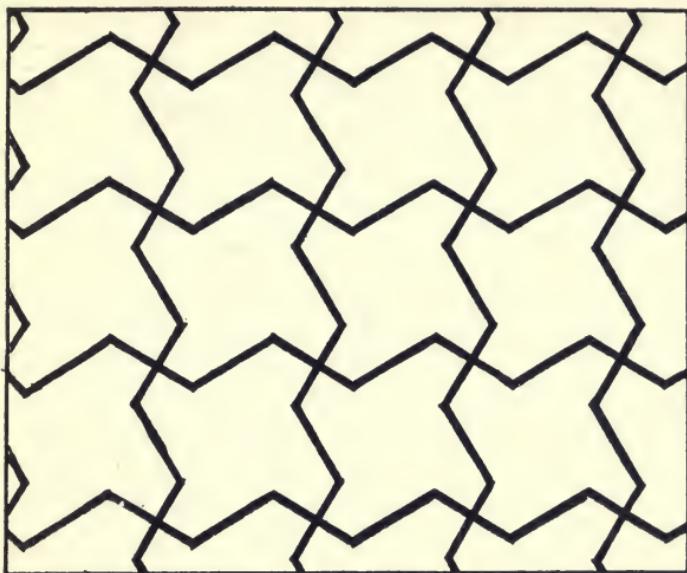


FIG. 331.

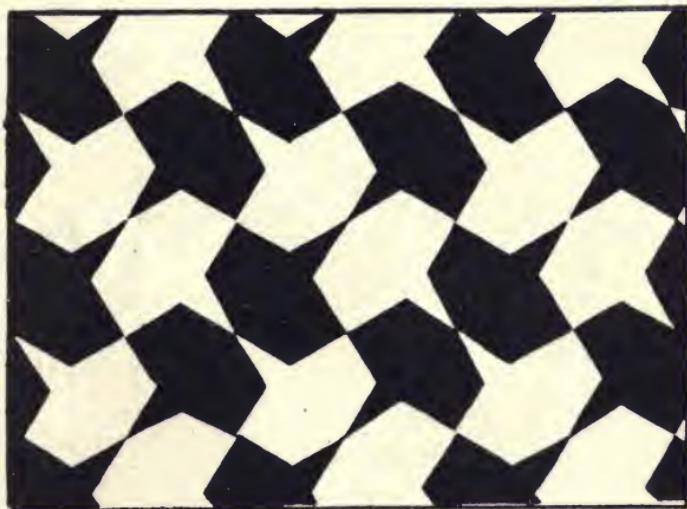


FIG. 332.

of a design which is the result of the process of imposition upon itself. Examination of Fig. 333 will show that it is composed in this way, being the double of the designs in Fig. 331. These designs are common in Oriental art; a good example of the use of that in Fig. 332 will be found in Plate XXV,

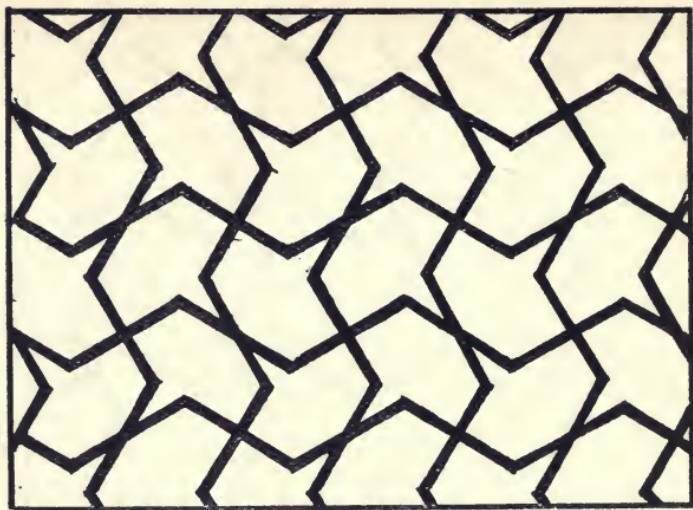


FIG. 333.

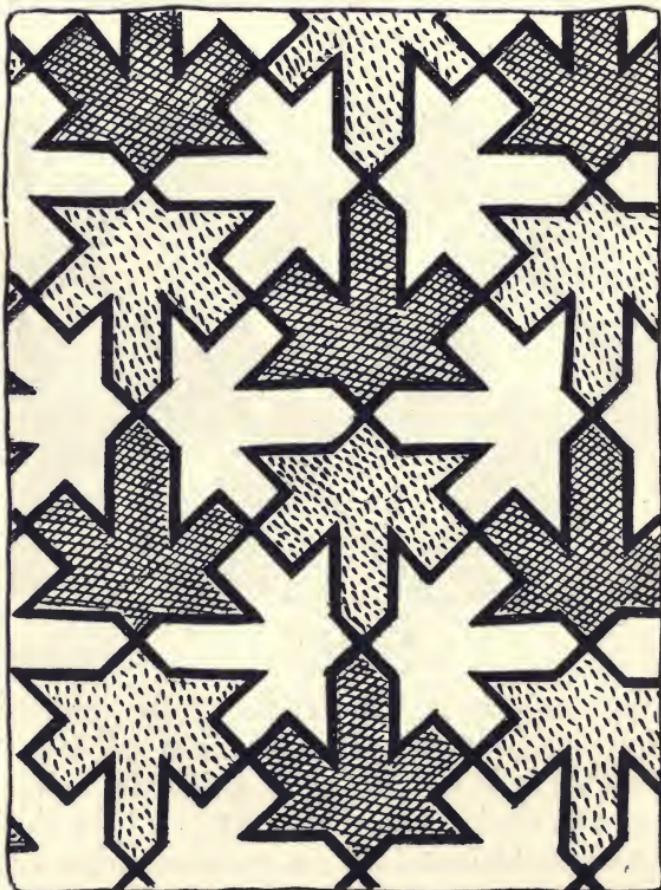


FIG. 334.

a photograph of a recessed seat lined with tiles in the Alhambra at Granada. The next example (Fig. 334) is of the same class; it is from Cairo, from painted decoration. The simple form from which the complete design results by the process of imposition is given in Fig. 335. The bases of counter-change designs are frequently not completed in different colourings as counterchanges, but decorated in other ways, as is the example given in Fig. 336, the pattern of some Afghan glazed earthenware tiles. Here the plan of a counterchange design of

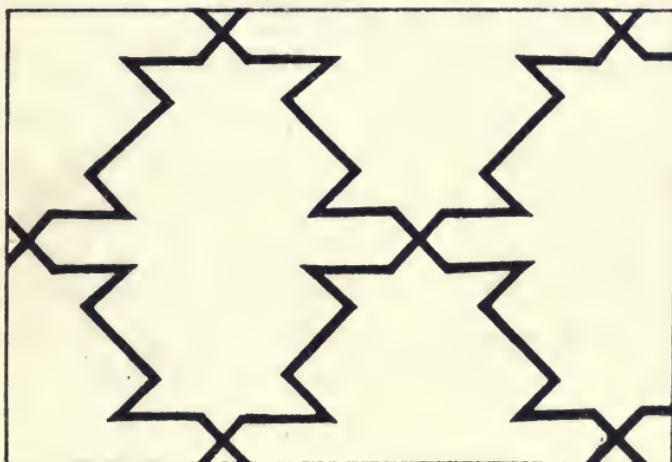


FIG. 335.

the type under discussion is enriched with foliated work and decorated with additional elements.¹ The basis from which this pattern has been derived is given in Fig. 337. The pattern on the neck of the beautifully decorated ewer in Plate XXVI would form an excellent counterchange design.

Great care must be taken in the process of imposing a single counterchange design upon itself with a view to obtaining a doubled design of this type. Only certain forms can be treated in this way. In thus imposing a design it is necessary to place it at

¹ Many fine examples of this type of ornament occur in the decoration of the Alhambra.



FIG. 336.

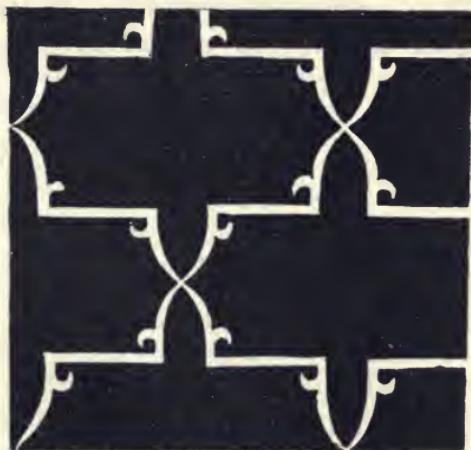


FIG. 337.

right angles to its original position and to observe that the centre of no part of the design coincides with its former position. Many designs prove upon examination to be so closely akin to the counterchange group that it would require but a slight readjustment of their design to include them within it. The student of the involved and intricate process of counter-



FIG. 338.

changing will gain no little insight into this work if some time is devoted to the work of 'correcting' these aberrant examples. Thus the design in Fig. 338, a beautiful and commonly used piece of decoration, is a very bad attempt at a double counterchange if regarded as such. We can easily resolve it into its simple form (see Fig. 339), which is very like that of Fig. 334, given in Fig. 335. The design which results, if this is properly imposed upon itself instead of being merely 'dropped', is also indicated in Fig.

339. Since the basis of the unit of the design now produced is a square, this unit can be rearranged upon the simple chess-board plan, producing a vertical

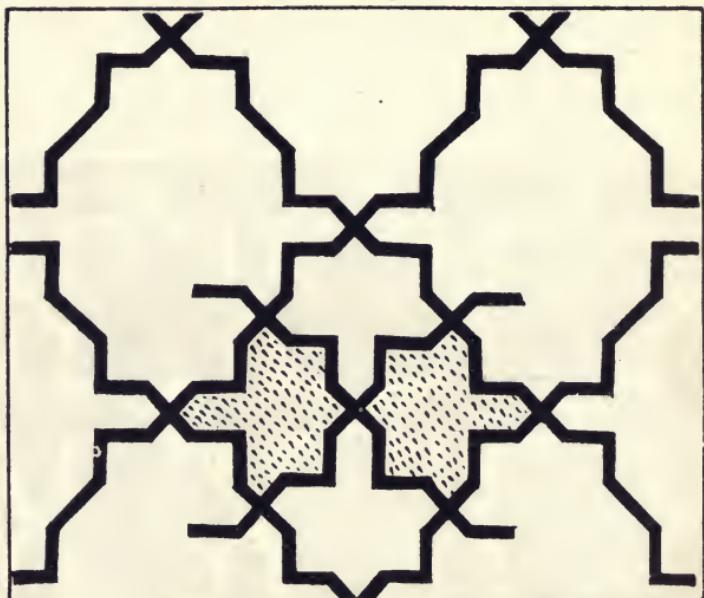


FIG. 339.

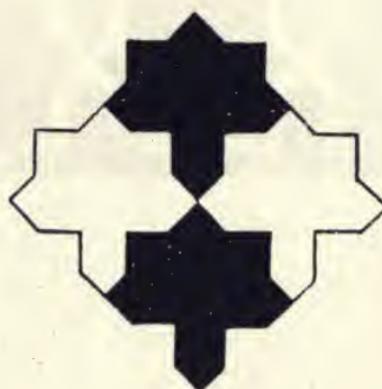


FIG. 340.

instead of a radiating arrangement (see Fig. 340). The design in Fig. 338, although by no means a counterchange, for which of course it was never intended, is a most excellent specimen of cross-band pattern. Designs of this type are often used in

Mediaeval decoration to divide up wall spaces, pages of books, textiles and so forth into panels, in which are inserted floral work, conventional ornament, or figure subjects. They form the basis of the designs of many of the fine English embroidered copes of the fourteenth century. Single panels of the forms produced by these patterns (see Fig. 341) are often used as frames to solitary figure compositions. A notable example from the door of the Baptistery of Florence, by Andrea Pisano, is given in Plate XXVII.

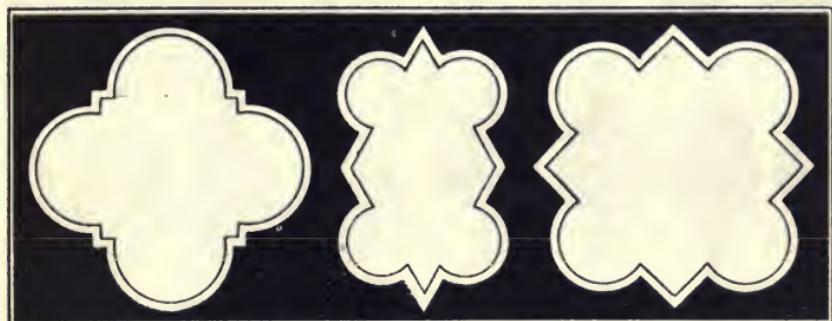


FIG. 341.

Exercises in simple counterchanging may be worked out by taking some easily drawn form and systematically following out a number of regular changes upon it, as has been done in the set of designs given in Fig. 342. Counterchange patterns may be enriched with floral work, as in Fig. 343, where the second design in Fig. 342 is decorated with a little conventional plant drawn in white upon the black spaces and in black upon the white ones. In elaborate examples of this type extremely rich effects are sometimes produced in this way, which may be carried to a still greater degree of intricacy if the counterchanging units are arranged upon the plan next to be discussed.

The basis of the set of exercises in Fig. 342 is the 'counter'-lozenge, a form produced by drawing two series of changes.

VI.
Triple

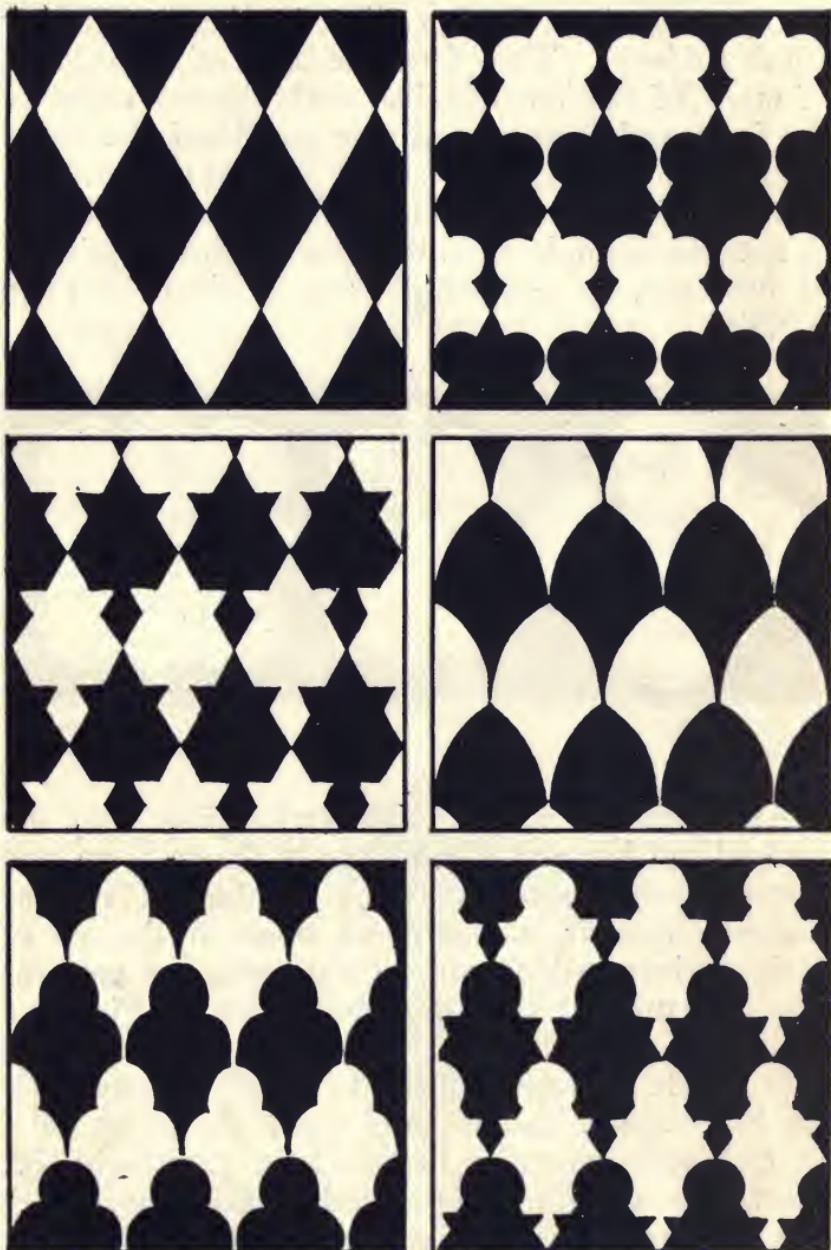


FIG. 342.



FIG. 343.

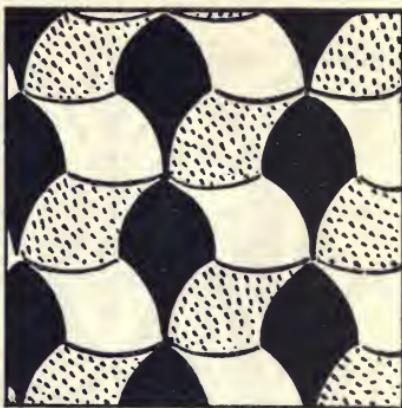
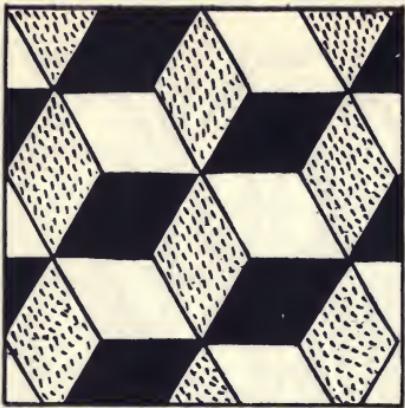


FIG. 344.

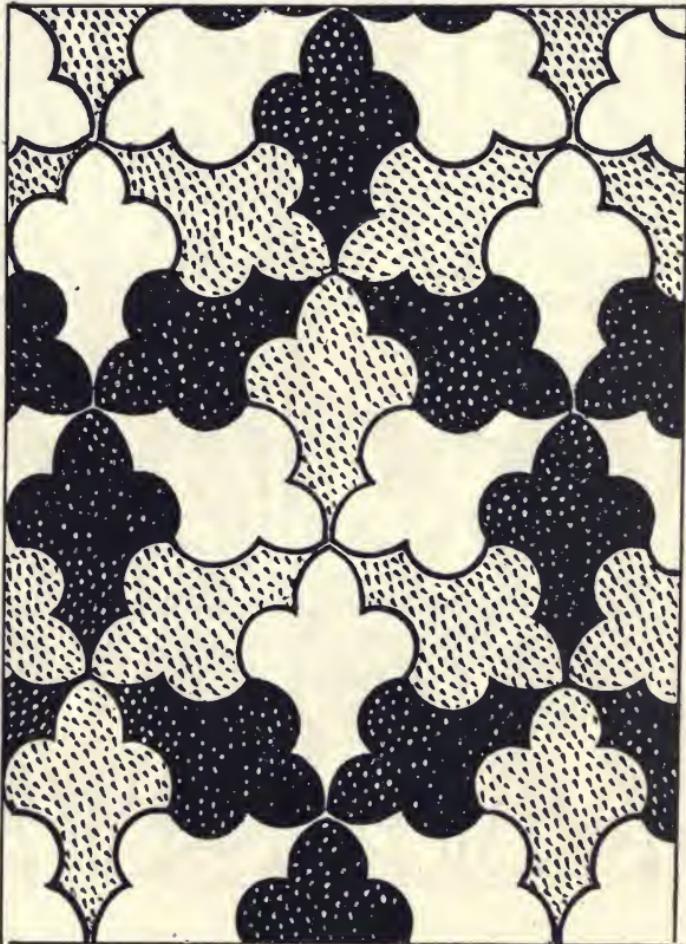


FIG. 345.

diagonal lines across one another. In the first of two examples in Fig. 344, another way of arranging lozenges so as exactly to cover a surface is given, one that involves the addition of a third colour in order to express the design clearly; in other words, an arrangement which gives a 'counter'-change of three colours. The second example indicates how all the new forms developed from the lozenge in the



FIG. 346.



FIG. 347.

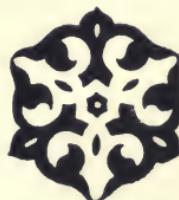


FIG. 348.

series of exercises (Fig. 342) may be adapted to this change of plan. If floral decoration of the type shown in Fig. 343 is added to these designs a great range of varied colouring becomes possible, producing a most glittering effect.

In the next example (Fig. 345) an alternative way of arranging the colouring of these counterchanges of three is shown, an arrangement which produces the effect of a powdering of three-leaved forms

radiating from a centre, each interlocking into the others in such a way as to completely cover the surface decorated. Fig. 346 gives a greatly simplified example of this pattern; and in Figs. 347 and 348 we see aberrant forms, not strictly designed, but following the same plan of arrangement. The first decorates a panel in a piece of late twelfth-century Sicilian silk weaving, the dalmatic of William II of Sicily.

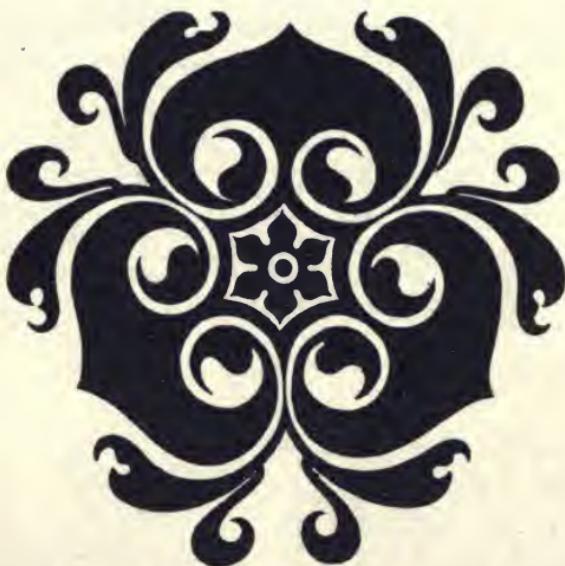


FIG. 349.

preserved in Regensburg Cathedral, and the second example, a hexagonal rosette, alternates with a six-pointed star-shaped figure on an inlaid marble pavement in Cairo. Rosettes, of Oriental appearance, which may very well be degenerate forms of the same type of composition, are found upon textiles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A typical example is given in Fig. 349 from a Venetian silk fabric of the fifteenth century.

CHAPTER XIV

INTERLACING BAND-DESIGNS AND KNOT-WORK

Relationship of Knot-work to Cross-Band Patterns.—Italian Examples.—Saracenic Origin of these.—Roman, Byzantine, Coptic, and Oriental Knots.—Exercises in the Composition of Knot-work.—Labyrinths.—Various treatments of Knot-work.—Knot-work of Irregular Design.—Relationship of Saracenic Knot-work and Geometrical Inlay-work.—Decorative Value of Knot-work.

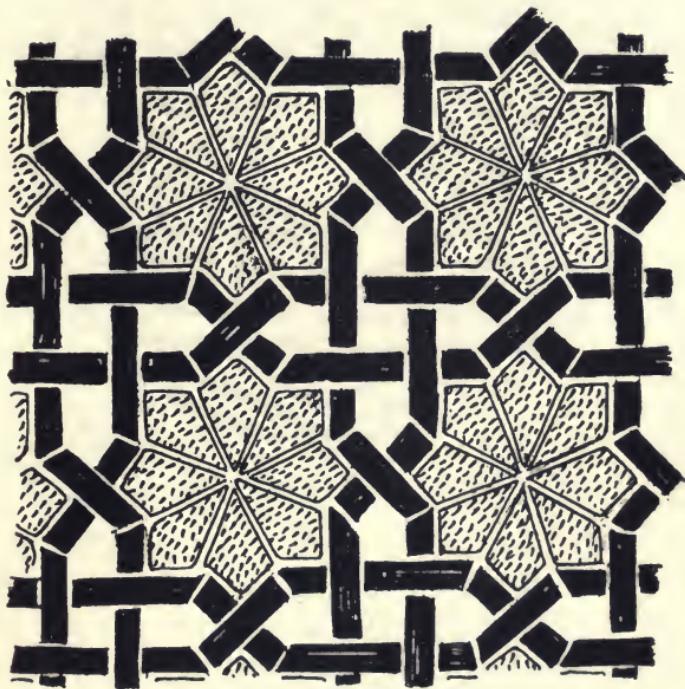


FIG. 350.

I.

INTERLACING band patterns and knots, designs formed of arrangements of interweaving cord-like lines, include many examples of extraordinary interest. Apparently somewhat difficult to classify, they are usually, as analysis of a few typical patterns.

Relation-
ship of
knot-work
to cross-
band

examples will show, closely connected with the cross-band group. Fig. 350 gives the pattern of a marble mosaic from the Cappella Reale at Palermo. If the X crossings of the double lines that enclose the star-shaped panels were removed and the lines continued parallel to each other, it is obvious that the design would resolve itself into a simple lattice of vertical and horizontal lines. By introducing the regularly repeated changes of direction and by weaving the



FIG. 351.

bands over and under each other at the crossing points, a typical interlacing band design is produced. The next figure (Fig. 351) shows an equally typical piece of knot-work; it is, as a matter of fact, but a portion of the last design adapted to fill a disk. It is from the inlaid ambo of the Cathedral of Ravello. In these two examples we see a cross-band pattern serving as the basis of an interlacing band design and of a knot. In a third example (Fig. 352), from the background of a picture by Pintoricchio in the Palazzo del Municipio at Perugia,

we have another pattern derived from the same basis. We may look upon this design as either a series of knots, constructed upon much the plan of that in Fig. 351, powdered regularly over the surface and connected with little circular bands each having four loops, or as a very complex development of the design in Fig. 350.

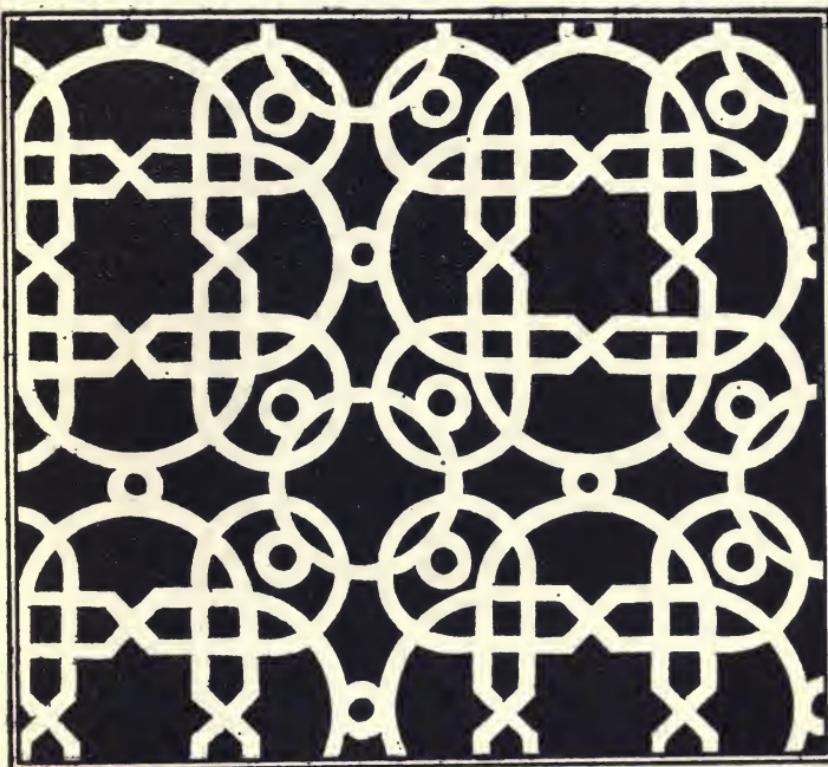


FIG. 352.

A knot decorated with floral sprigs, at first sight presenting little relationship to the Ravello example, but in reality constructed upon the same basis, is given in Fig. 353. It is the unit of the design on the robe of one of the Apostles in Giotto's fresco of the Last Supper in the Arena Chapel at Padua, and shows one of the excellent changes that have been rung upon the simple scheme now under discussion. We are indebted to Giotto for a very large number

II.
Italian
examples.

of beautiful interlacing band and knot designs. They abound on the costumes and draperies in his pictures; elaborately coloured and touched with gold, they enrich and dignify many of his finest compositions. Beautiful knot-work is common in the decorative work of most early Italian painters. These is much by Pintoricchio of a very distinctive character. To show how this kind of decoration was employed, a portion of a picture by Capanna Puccio, at Assisi, is reproduced in Plate XXVII.



FIG. 353.

In this the curtain around the head of the bed of the sleeping Saint Martin is wrought over with a fine design of interlacing lines.

III.
Saracenic origin of these. We learn from Vasari that Leonardo da Vinci designed a number of these knots of interlacing cords. No record remains of what purpose called forth these designs—Vasari merely states that Leonardo ‘wasted much time over these’—but several were engraved and prints of them have survived to the present time.¹ They gained con-

¹ See E. Müntz, *Leonardo da Vinci*, W. Heinemann, London, 1898, vol. i, p. 225, and also an article by A. M. Hind in the *Burlington Magazine*, vol. xii, p. 41.

siderable reputation and were probably widely circulated, for later on they were again engraved by an artist somewhat akin to Leonardo in speculative

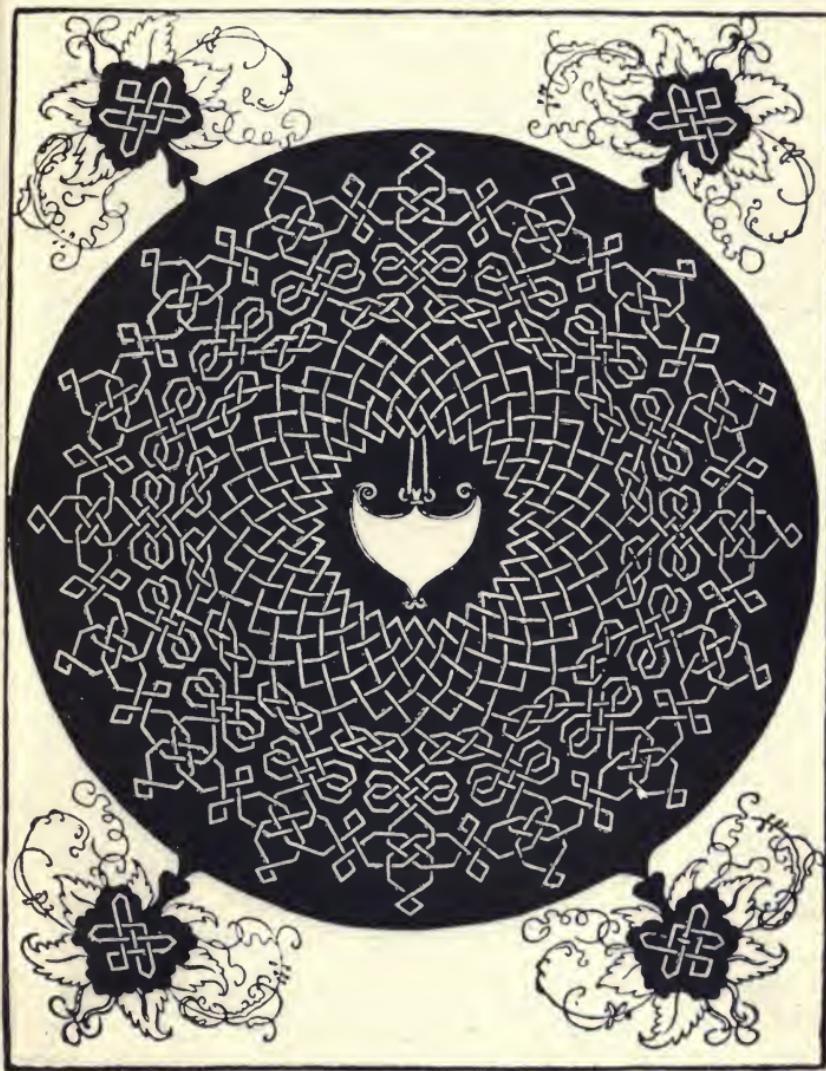


FIG. 354.

imagination—Albert Dürer. Perhaps the original prints had some connexion with those discourses upon art which Leonardo is believed to have delivered at Milan, for the whole compositions form elaborate circular borders to little central labels,

upon some of which are inscribed in Roman letters the words 'ACADEMIA · LEONARDI'. The inscriptions are omitted in Dürer's copies, two of which

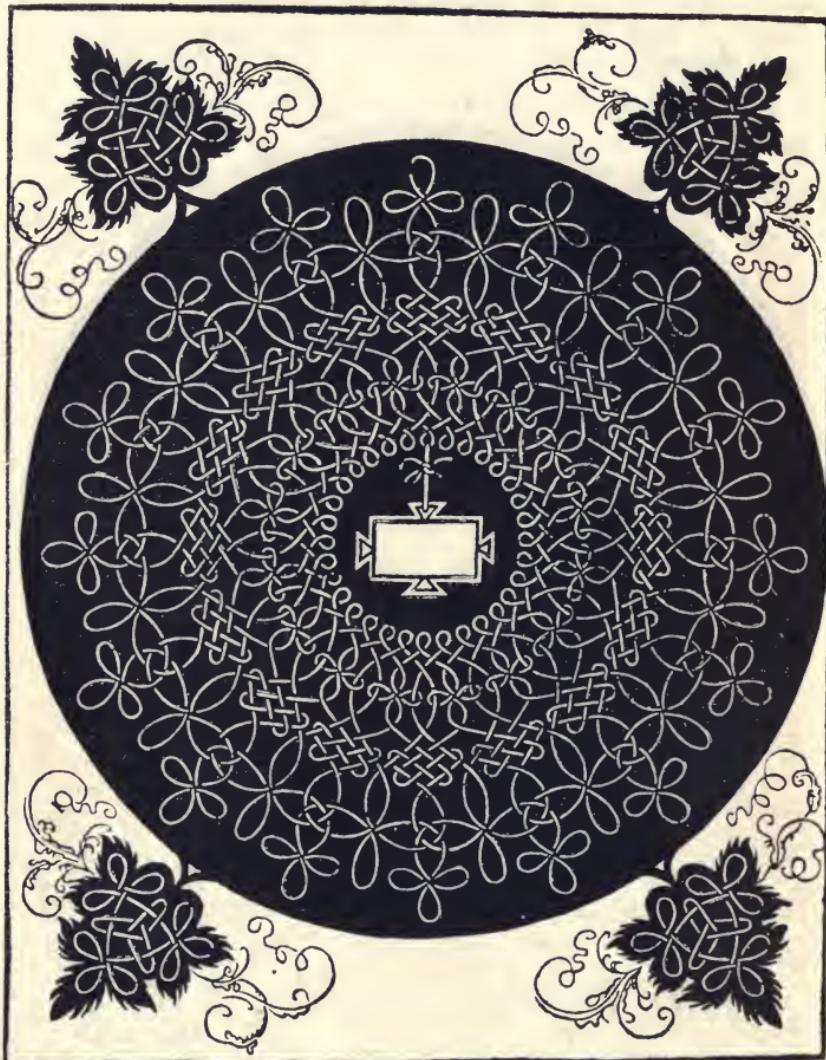


FIG. 355.

are reproduced in Figs. 354 and 355. There are further records of Leonardo's interest in knot-work designs; there is a fine painted ceiling at Milan, supposed to be his work, which is covered with naturalistic representations of boughs of trees held

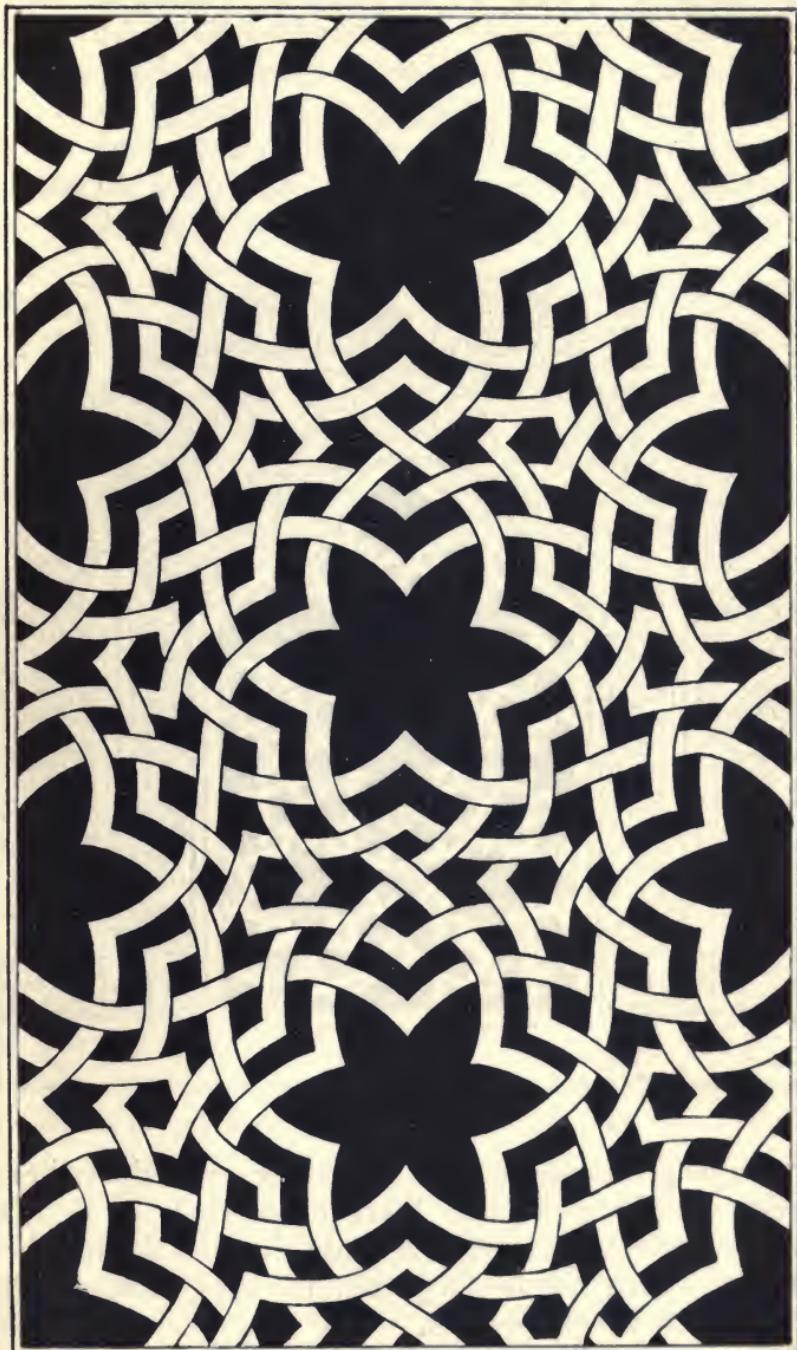


FIG. 356.

in place by a number of formally arranged knots of intricate design. In the Church of Sant' Ambrogio and in other Romanesque churches of North Italy are fine examples of borders and panels of this work, carved in stone. These, with the decorations of the manuscripts of the same style, may have served as models for the later Italian knot-work; but Oriental

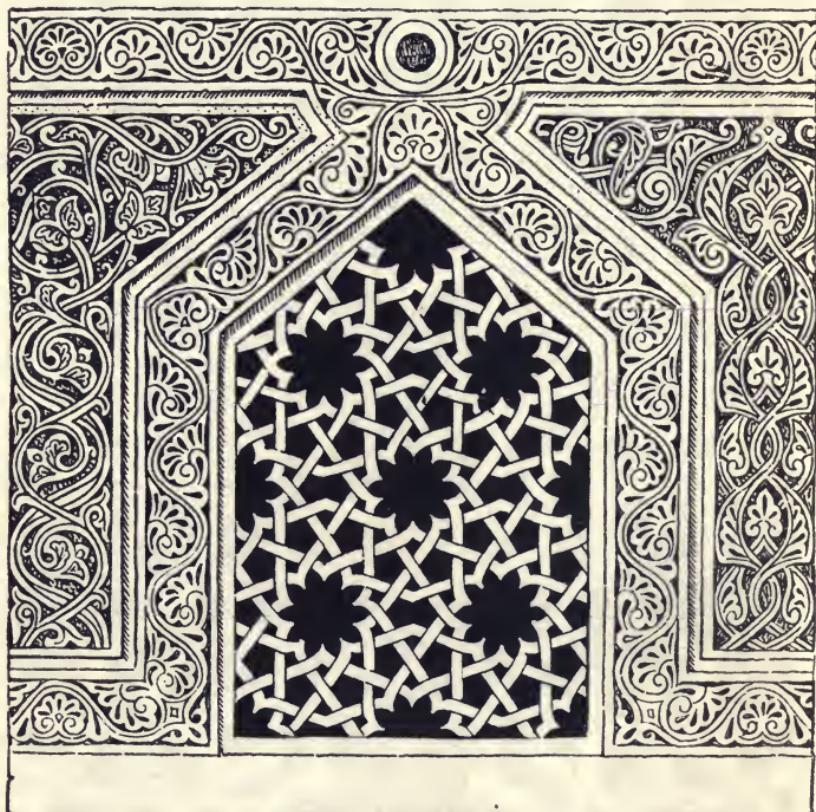


FIG. 357.

examples, supplied by Saracenic metal-workers, either working in the East or settled in Venice, where there were not a few, or derived from other sources, must not be forgotten, for they undoubtedly influenced these designs. The beautifully wrought knots of the Saracenic damascene workers have a curious lace-like character of their own, recalling those of Leonardo's designs. Typical examples of two

of these are given in Plate XXIX, covers of metal bowls in the Victoria and Albert Museum, extremely rich and varied pieces of composition. Fig. 356 shows an interlacing band pattern which has been drawn out from the rough sketch of a single repeat jotted down in one of Leonardo's notebooks preserved in the Ambrosian Library at Milan. This clearly demonstrates his close study of Saracenic examples, for its Oriental character is beyond doubt. It may be compared with a similar piece of work, a fourteenth-century panel,¹ which decorates a dome at Cairo (see Fig. 357).

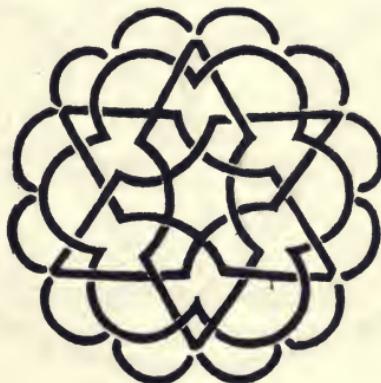


FIG. 358.

An interesting but less complicated knot, of IV. another type, is given in Fig. 358; it is from Roman, a Turkish plate of sixteenth-century date in the Byzantine, Musée de Cluny, Paris. In Fig. 359 is shown a Coptic, richly decorated version of this knot taken from and a French pattern book of the sixteenth century. Oriental The design is plainly of Turkish origin. The knots. next two examples (Fig. 360) are still simpler examples of the same type, and are painted upon a Sicilian-Arab ivory box in the Victoria and Albert Museum. A very simple knot, common in Roman mosaic work, is shown in Fig. 361, from a pavement

¹ Some detail has been omitted from this design for the sake of clearness.



FIG. 359.

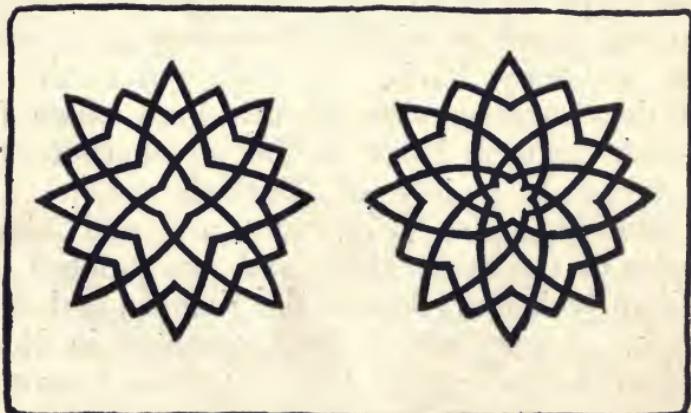


FIG. 360.

found at Constantine in Algeria. This design is sometimes found carved upon the circular 'bosses' of Byzantine marble capitals, on lintels, and so forth. A marble slab from St. Mark's, Venice (Plate XXX), gives us an example of a square-shaped knot, and a more simple one of similar shape from a piece of Coptic weaving is shown in Fig. 362. Knots and interlacing band designs attained an extraordinary development in Egypt during the first centuries of the Christian era. It has been suggested that it was from this quarter that they made their way into Europe, being brought thence and distributed far

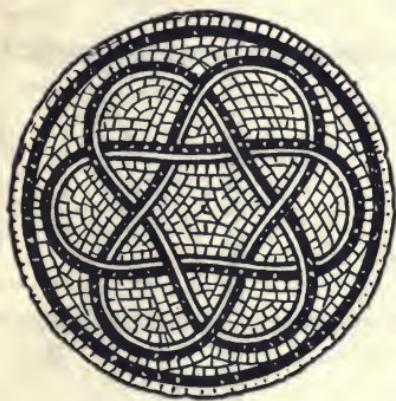


FIG. 361.

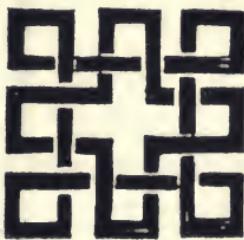


FIG. 362.

and wide by the fugitive monks and artisans who fled from Egypt after the Mohammedan conquest of that country.¹

The composition of knot-work is a useful exercise in experimental designing. By means of exercises in this work a power of laying out an involved pattern in an orderly manner is acquired, which could hardly be attained so directly by any other method. Experiments in the composition of knots, if they are to have any educational results, must be followed out in a systematic way. A method of building up

V.
Exercises
in the
composi-
tion of
work.

¹ See Professor W. R. Lethaby, 'The origin of knotted ornamentation,' *Burlington Magazine*, vol. x, p. 256.

and analysing the compositions must be adopted, at least in the first attempts, until the attainment of some skill and of a knowledge of some typical combinations enables the designer to throw aside such assistance. A scheme for the composition and analysis of knot-work is shown in Fig. 363, where

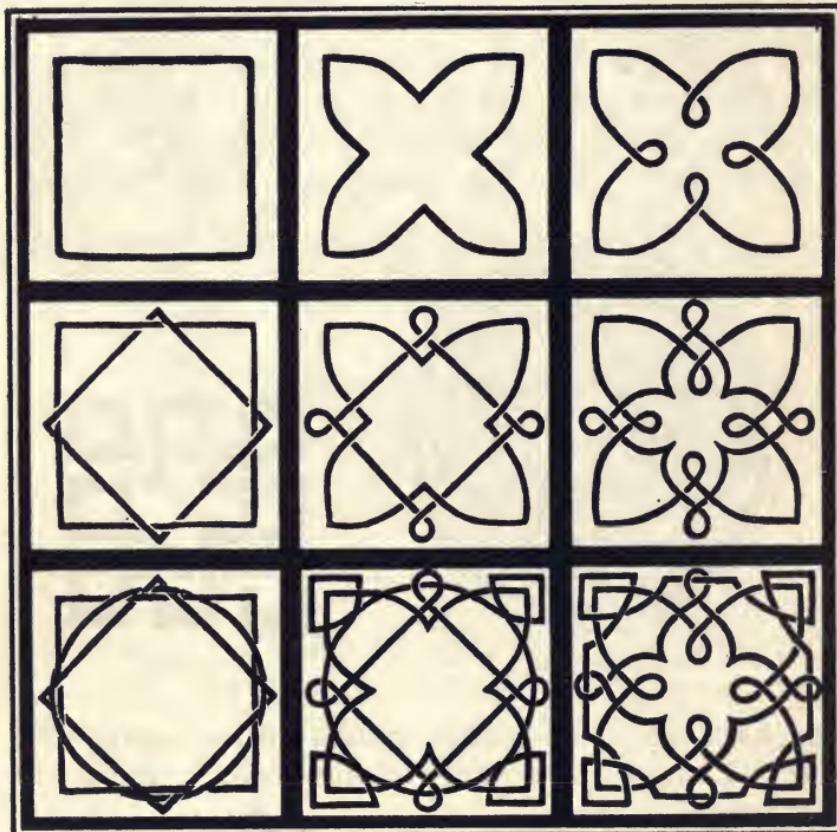


FIG. 363.

we have, in the lowest right-hand example, a complicated piece of knot-work, and in the other eight all the stages of its evolution laid out before us. In the uppermost left-hand example a continuous line is drawn forming a square-shaped figure. In that immediately to the right of this a slight change of this figure is effected, the four sides being regularly indented; the points of these indentations are de-

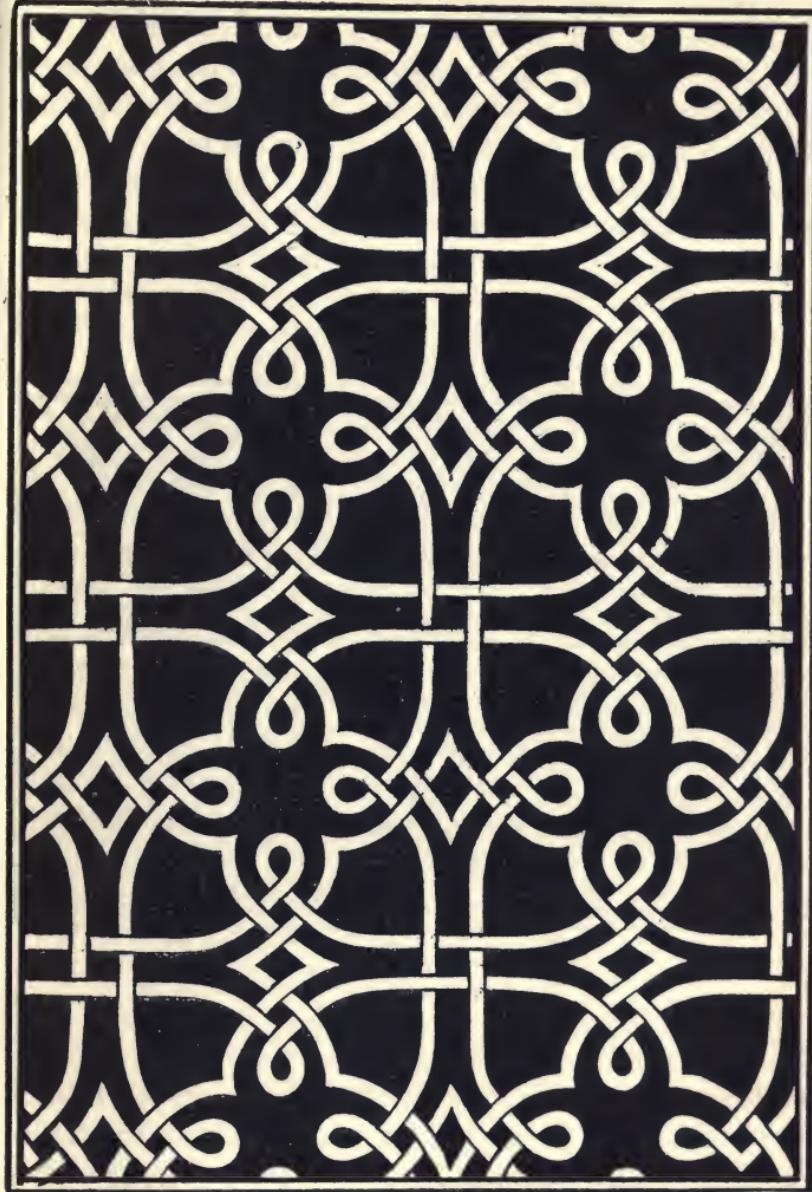


FIG. 364.

veloped into loops in the third example. Each of these three designs is exactly reproduced in the figures immediately below them, which are then elaborated by the addition of another continuous line, woven over and under like the first, and developed step by step with added complications in exactly the

same way as the original series was produced, the two series being automatically incorporated with each other. The three complete designs which result from this process are again drawn out and another continuous line, this time a circle, is added and developed as before, from which the final example results. In these exercises the forms given at the commencement, which must be continuous lines, so govern the designs that they seem to shape them-

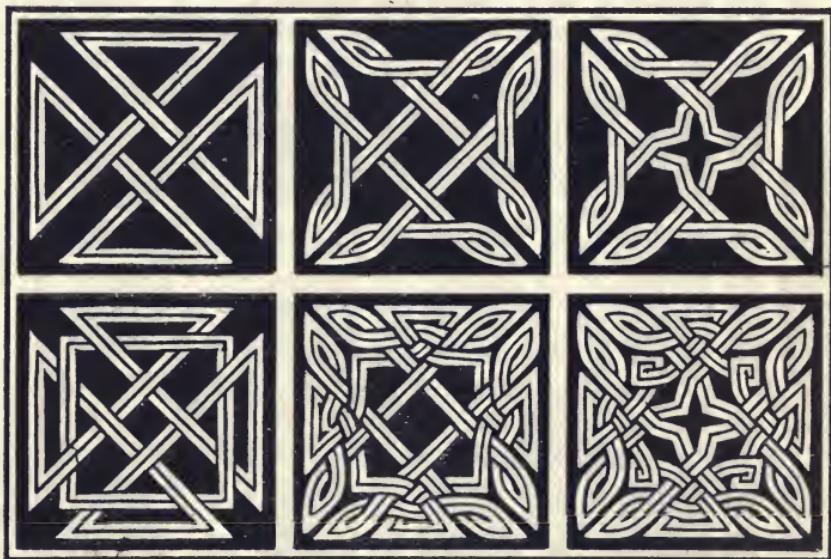


FIG. 365.

selves and may almost be said to be *discovered* rather than to be *composed*.

The experiment is by no means at an end when the ninth figure is drawn, for each of these examples may be used as the unit of a larger composition, laid out and repeated over a surface, as is shown in Fig. 364, where the sixth design of the series in Fig. 363 is repeated in this way. In a composition of this kind two of these knotted elements, alternating in due order, or more, might be used, or one might be used as the central filling of a panel and another developed as its border decoration.

Any figure of fairly simple form may be used as

the starting-point of a series of exercises such as those drawn out in Fig. 363, so long as it is a continuous line, without junctions or branches. In Fig. 365 a figure shaped like a Greek cross is developed. In this set of examples an attempt is made to eliminate the background and fill the final square with interlacing band-work. Knots such as



FIG. 366.

this resemble attempts to set out the course of a traveller, who, in exploring an unknown land, has gone over as much ground as possible, never retracing exactly the same path, but frequently crossing it.

In designs of another type, called mazes or labyrinths, which are closely allied to knots, the traveller makes a complete survey of his ground but never crosses his path. In Fig. 366 is a typical maze, of

circular form. It is inlaid in black stone upon the floor of the nave of Sens Cathedral and is of thirteenth-century date. These mazes, sometimes thirty or forty feet in diameter, were once common in Mediaeval cathedrals, but unfortunately many have been destroyed, as has been the one of octagonal form of the nave of the Cathedral of Amiens,

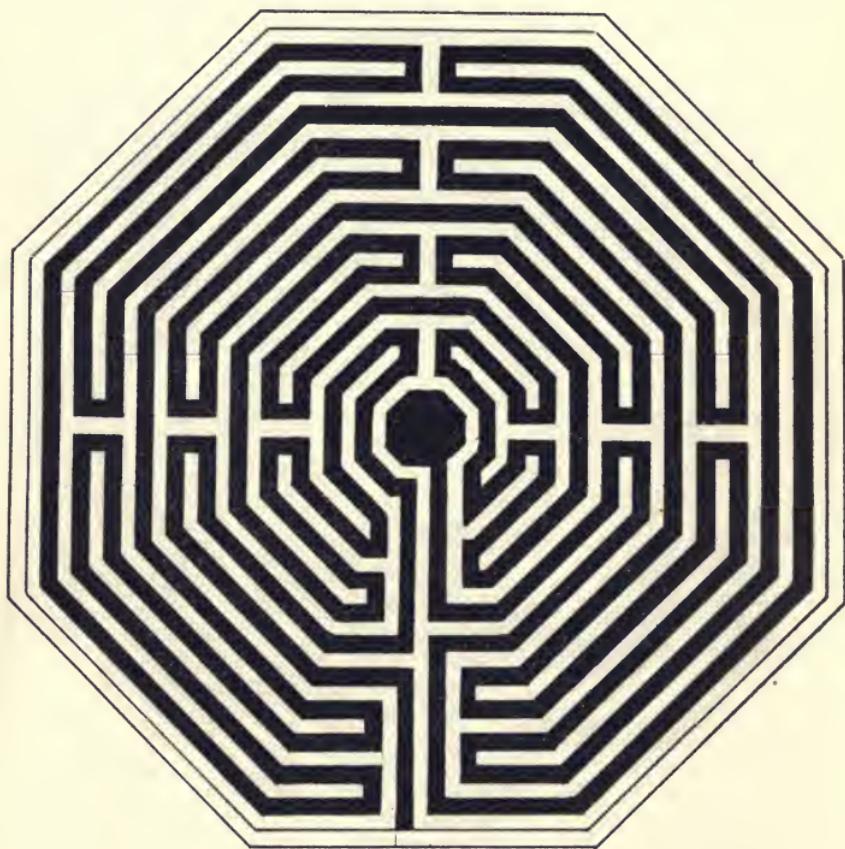


FIG. 367.

given in Fig. 367. Older examples of very similar design occur upon Roman mosaic pavements, connecting the Mediaeval labyrinths with those figured upon the Cretan coins which represent that constructed by Daedalus, in which the Minotaur was confined (see Fig. 368).

So interesting and varied are the forms of interlacing band patterns and of knots, and so wide is

their distribution throughout every form of craft, ments of that it is not possible to do more than briefly cata- knot-
logue a few of the more typical developments of work. these designs. Simple interlacing band-work occurs very commonly among the patterns decorating early



FIG. 368.



FIG. 369.

Coptic woven fabrics. Of these the design given in Plate XXXI is a good example; it is merely a rather elaborate 'cross-band' pattern. On Hispano-Moresque woven stuffs more complex varieties of interlacing band-work form a very characteristic decoration; Fig. 369 shows an example of fourteenth-century date. In the next example (Fig. 370) is a design,

of later Spanish work, of the sixteenth century, which decorates a cope. In this a light lattice work of constantly interchanging cross-bands supports a rich



FIG. 370.

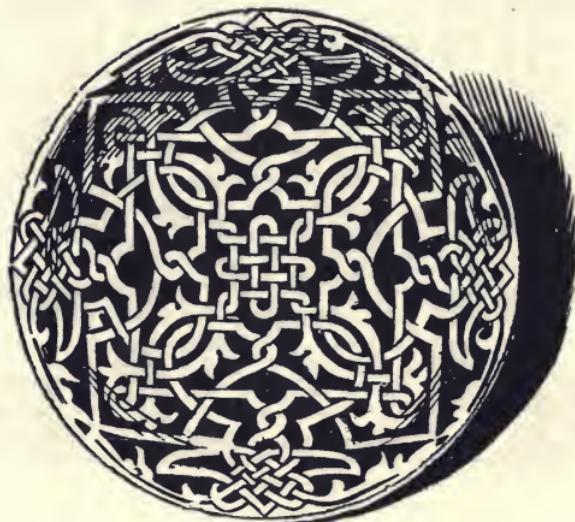


FIG. 371.

piece of knotting which completely fills the interstices of the framework.

In the design of an Italian majolica dish, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, given in Fig. 371, we enter upon a new development of this kind of decora-

tion. The interlacing bands, which are very finely knotted up, in certain parts of the design spread out into conventional leaf-like forms, a device which is carried still further in Fig. 372, a decorated initial



FIG. 372.



FIG. 373.

letter from a Venetian early printed book. Saracenic damascened designs of knot-work are commonly decorated with floral enrichment, spread over the ground. A knot of French work of fifteenth-century date, inlaid in wood and ivory, is shown in Fig. 373, an example decorated with geometrical

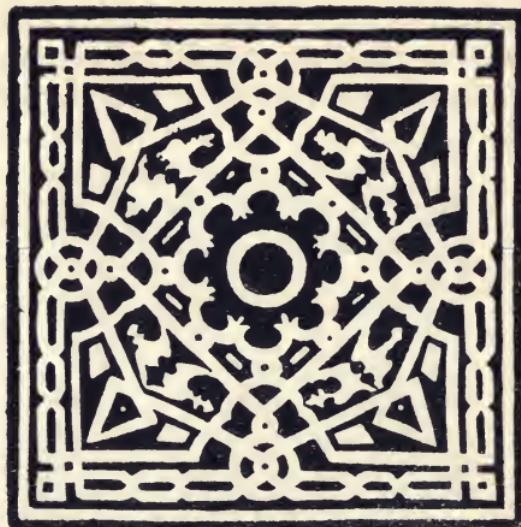


FIG. 374.

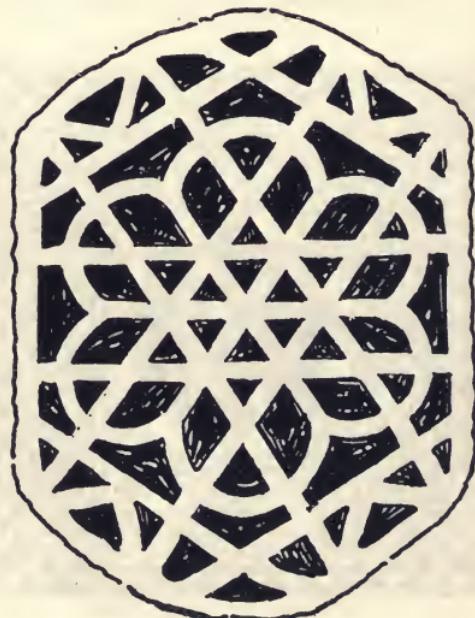


FIG. 375.

work; and another inlaid in marbles of various colours, from the Great Mosque of Al Walid at Damascus, shows a very characteristic enrichment, partly of geometrical figures and partly of conventional forms (see Fig. 374).



FIG. 376.

VIII.
Knot-
work of
irregular
design.

As may be supposed, all designers of knots have not conformed strictly to the purest forms of structure, which demand the consistent interweaving of each individual cord or band throughout the whole design. Besides lapses of continuity deliberately



FIG. 377.

introduced in order to avoid over-complication at certain points, an example of which may be seen in the border of the inlaid panel just mentioned, there are in knot-work of all periods many instances of careless composition or of ill-understood reproduction of older designs. There are some forms of

knots which lie half-way between the regular knots and the geometrical designs described in a former chapter, such as the design of the pierced window given in Fig. 375, also from the Great Mosque at Damascus. Many of the figures which have been described as 'built-up elements' are constructed upon knotted plans, like the fine central piece of decoration of a Hispano-Moresque woven silk fabric drawn in Fig. 376. A plain piece of interlacing design, used in

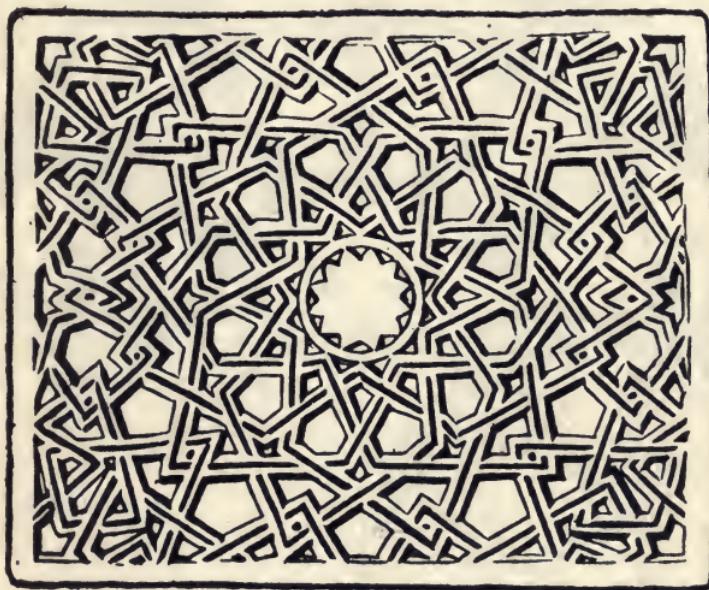


FIG. 378.

the same way, is shown in Fig. 377, from another textile.

There is a very close relationship between the IX. designs of many Saracenic knots and the geometrical Relation-patterns so characteristic of Oriental inlaid and painted glazed earthenware tiles. Some indeed are identical, as may be found by analysing their construction. Fig. 378 is a design carved in stone, in low relief, on a panel decorating the Wekala of Kait Bey at Cairo; this is of fifteenth-century date. The central knot of this panel is dissected in Fig. 379.

The lower right-hand portion gives the 'setting out' of the design, showing the way in which it was built up; the upper half gives the 'mass' treatment of the design, suitable for inlaying or painting, whilst the lower left-hand quarter shows the design carved as in Fig. 378. Fig. 380, from the inlaid marble pavement of the Zisa near Palermo, shows a curious

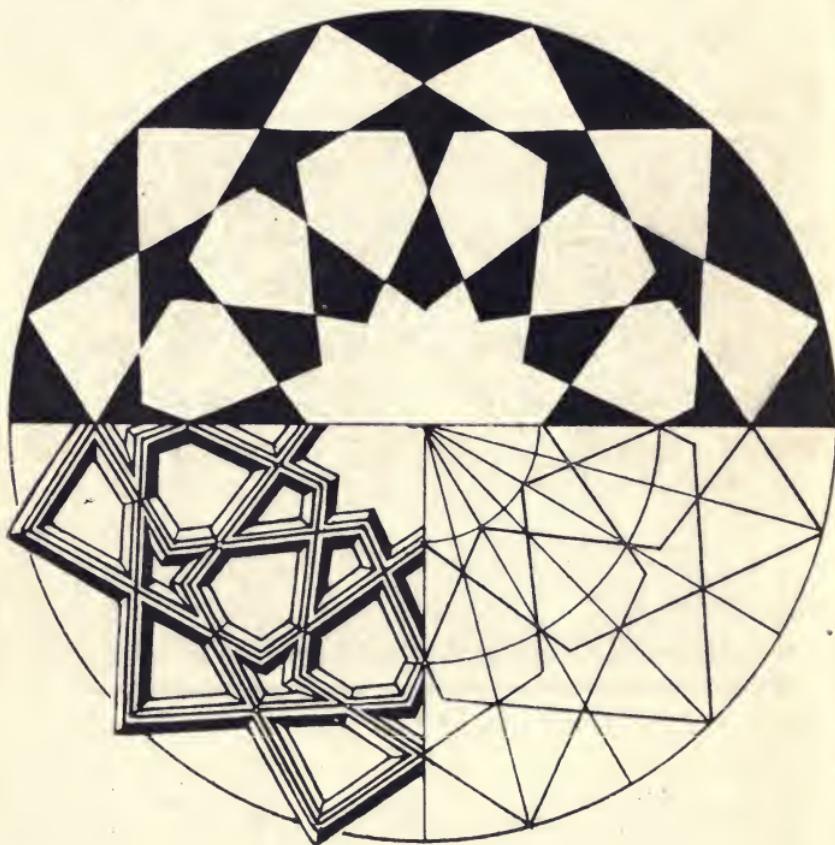


FIG. 379.

and characteristic example of the combination of the two treatments of these designs.

X.
Decorative value
of knot-work. Knots and interlacing patterns seem to have been in very general use since the first centuries of the Christian era. They are well worth careful study set out in gold upon dark or coloured grounds, inlaid in precious metal, and in rare marbles, carved in stone or in wood, enamelled upon earthenware tiles

or woven in rich silks, they have themselves decorated, or have formed the basis of much of the decoration, of the work of many of the greatest craftsmen. At times they have had a special vogue, and certain kinds have become characteristic of distinct periods. Either in their simplest forms of mere interlacing threads or developed with great freedom and dis-

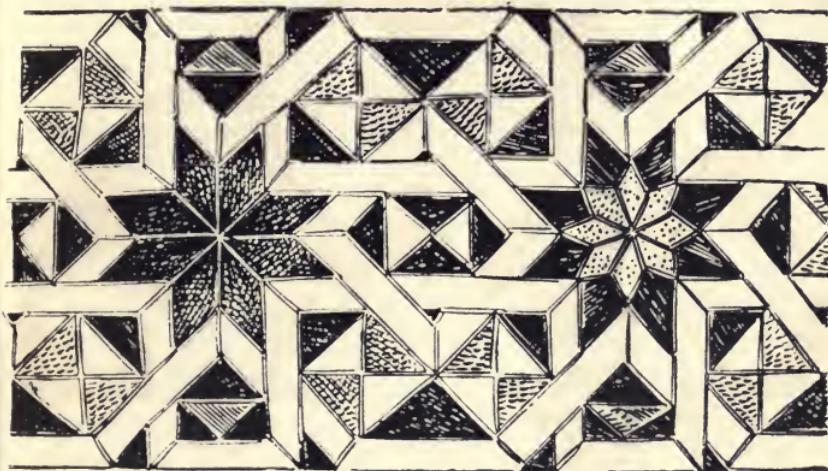


FIG. 380.

guised with all kinds of enrichment, they are equally satisfactory. They are essentially a type of design to which the student should pay special regard, for in no other is the inexhaustible variety of patterns at his disposal so plainly apparent. New and untried experiments in knot-work seem always waiting to be worked out, for no sooner has one been set down upon paper than it becomes itself the basis of a new development.

INDEX

- Acanthus**, 198.
- Animal forms**, in designs, 171; modifications of, 174; naturalistic representations of, 175; principal types of, 173.
- Arabesques**, 107.
- Band patterns**, 182; cross, 261; developments of, 196; foliage-bearing stem-decoration of, 196; interlacing, 299; straight parallel, 182.
- Borders**, 182, 231.
- Built-up elements**, 154; composition of, 165; primitive examples of, 166.
- Classification of patterns**, 68.
- Cloud pattern**, 243; development of, into surface decoration, 248; imposition of, upon itself, 271, 282; relationship of, to palmette borders, 250.
- Cone**, 100, 223; secondary enrichment of, 102.
- Cosmati work**, 133.
- Counterchanges**, 282; decoration of, 293; double, 285; exercises in, 293; simple, 283; triple, 293.
- Crestings**, 231; development of, into surface decoration, 256.
- Cross**, 49.
- Cross-band patterns**, 261; decoration of, 264; panel spaces of, 271; relationship of, to knot-work, 299.
- Decoration**, origin of, 25; spiritual aim of, 25; of counterchanges, 293; of cross-band patterns, 264; of knot-work, 317; of straight parallel bands, 185.
- Decorative function**, of patterns, 25.
- Decorative value**, of geometrical patterns, 130; of knot-work, 322; of patterns, 88.
- Degenerate**, inscriptions, 36; patterns, 39, 42.
- Dividing lines**, heraldic, 239; Oriental, 243.
- Eagle**, 171, 178, 222.
- Exercises** in arrangement of points, 88; in composition of built-up elements, 165; in counterchanging, 293; in imposition, 271; in knot-work composition, 309.
- Floral patterns**, 86; and geometrical work combined, 152; developments of, 108; of the Persian school, 117.

- Formalized** picture-inscription, 27; representation of nature, 39.
- Geographical distribution** of patterns, 80.
- Geometrical patterns**, 70, 128; and floral work combined, 152; decorative value of, 130; Mohammedan, 136; on leaves, 103; relationship of, to knot-work, 321.
- Guilloche**, 192.
- Heraldic** dividing lines, 239; lion, 178.
- Imposition**, of patterns, 261; of cloud-pattern upon itself, 271, 282; developments of the principle of, 282; double, 286; experiments in, 271.
- Imitative patterns**, 29.
- Inscriptions**, Arabic, 34; degenerate, 36; Kufic, 36, 38, 106; picture, 27.
- Informative patterns**, 26.
- Interlacing band-patterns**, 31, 299.
- Key patterns**, 72, 239.
- Knot-work**, 32, 299; by Leonardo da Vinci, 302; decoration of, 317; decorative value of, 322; exercises in knot-work, 309; Oriental origin of, 309; relationship of, to cross-band patterns, 299; relationship of, to geometrical patterns, 321.
- Labyrinth**, 313.
- Lion**, 178.
- Lotus**, 64, 168, 251.
- Naturalistic representation**, of animal forms, 175; of floral elements, 108.
- Origin**, of decoration, 25.
- Ornament**, Romanesque, 47, 82; secondary enrichment of, 93; symbolical, 48; typical forms of, development of, 45.
- Palm**, 58, 60, 255.
- Palmette**, 96; band designs, 63; borders, development of, into surface patterns, 256; borders, relationship of, to cloud patterns, 250.
- Panels**, of cross-band patterns, 271; of stem-band patterns, 218.
- Patterns**, classification of, 68; decorative function of, 25; degenerate, 42; development of, by elimination of parts, 279; floral, 86; geographical distribution of, 80; imitative, 29; informative, 26; interlacing band, 31, 299; key, 72, 239; produced by counterchanging elements, 282; produced by working background, 267. *acock*, 101, 175, 180.
- Points**, exercises in arrangement of, 88.
- Pomegranate**, 121, 222, 258.
- Problems**, in designing, 68.
- Relative area**, of design and ground, 104.
- Romanesque**, ornament, 47, 82.
- Rose window**, 154.

- Sacred Tree**, 57, 65; late examples of, 96, 222; Sasanian and Byzantine examples of, 142, 179; Sicilian examples of, 254.
- Secondary enrichment**, independent development of, 95; of cone design, 102; of ornament, 93; of primary importance, 104.
- Spiritual aim**, of decoration, 25.
- Star**, eight-pointed, 160, 170; six-pointed, 274; twelve-pointed, 158.
- Stem-band decoration**, 196; aberrant forms of, 208; development of, into surface decoration, 205; independent development of panels in, 218.
- Straight parallel bands**, 182; complex spacings of, 193; enrichment of, 185; longi-tudinal division of, 190, 228, 231; transverse division of, 187.
- Surface decoration**, derived from borders and crestings, 231; developed from cloud-patterns, 248; developed from palmette borders, 256; developed from stem-band work, 205.
- Svastika**, 50, 165.
- Symbolical ornament**, 48.
- Tartans**, 264.
- Textures**, 87, 128, 204; imitative, 87, 214.
- Value**, of monotony, 110; of primitive patterns, 41; of systematic study of classification, 84.
- Vase**, in design, 101, 222.
- Zodiac**, 155.

PLATE I



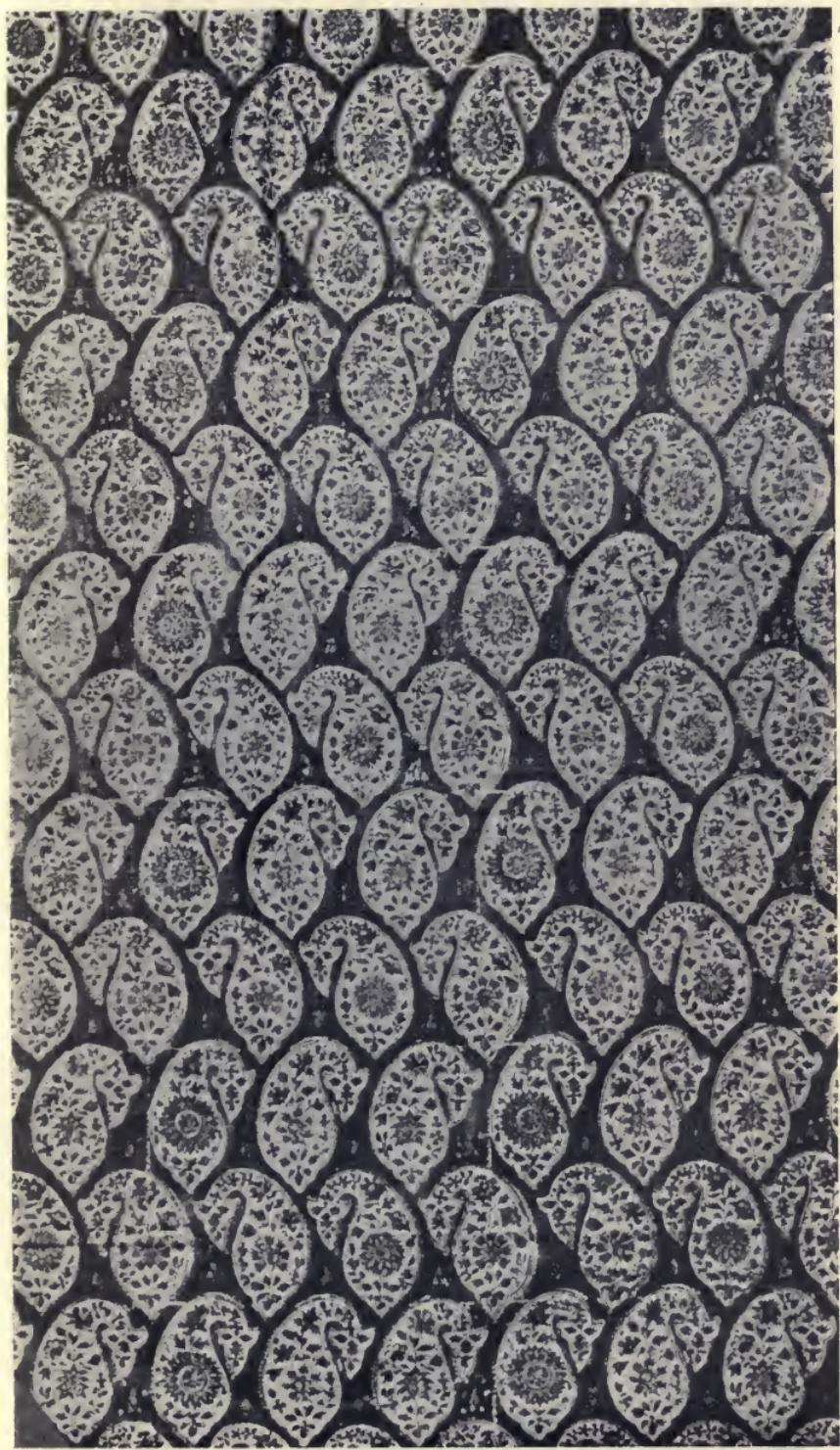
Carved wooden panel from Bokhara, fifteenth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE II



Wall slab carved in low relief with sacred tree and attendant genii, ninth century B.C. British Museum

PLATE III



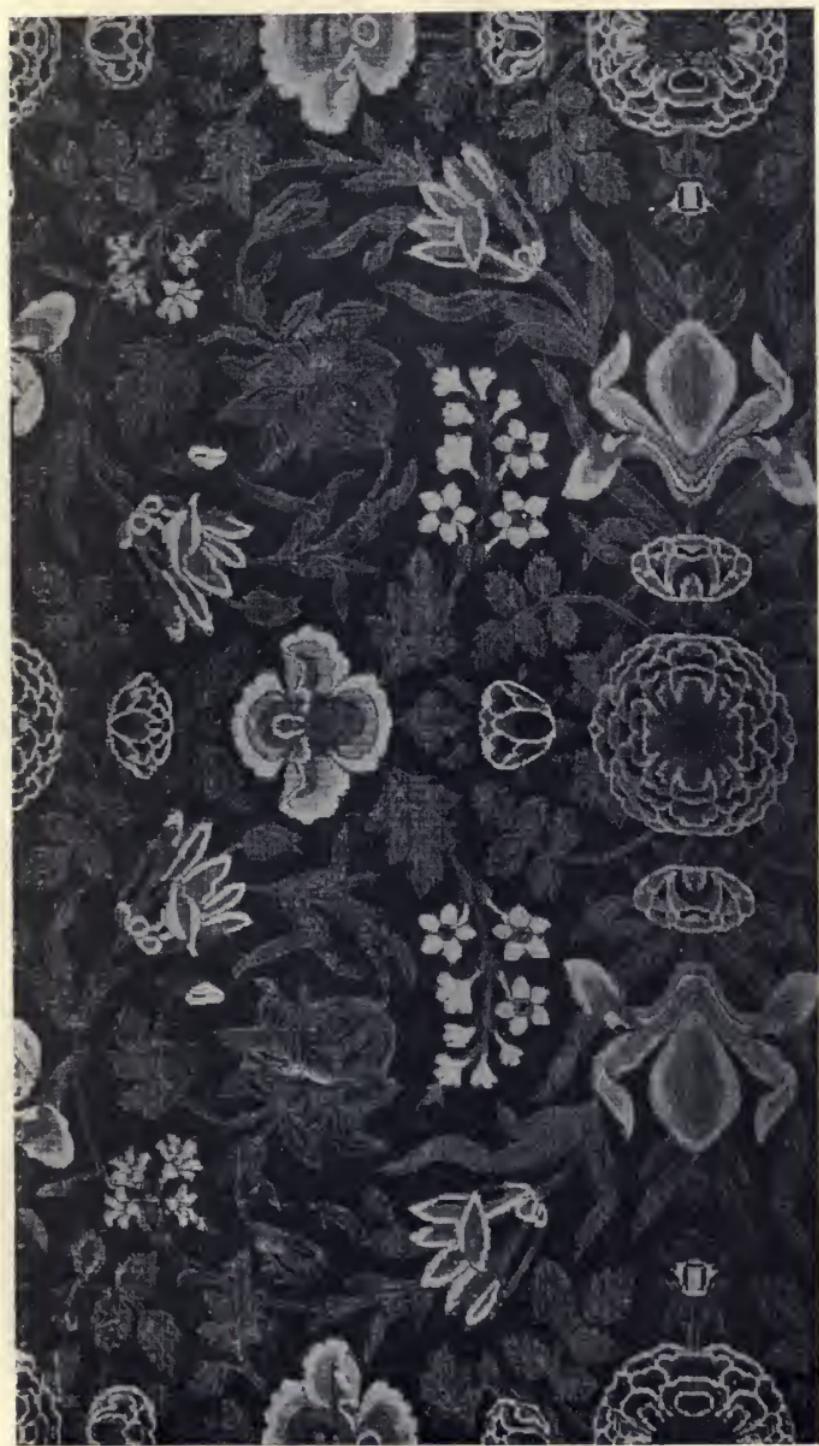
Printed chintz from Masulipatam, Indian, nineteenth century.

PLATE IV



Chinese painted wall-paper.

PLATE V



Persian silk velvet. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE VI



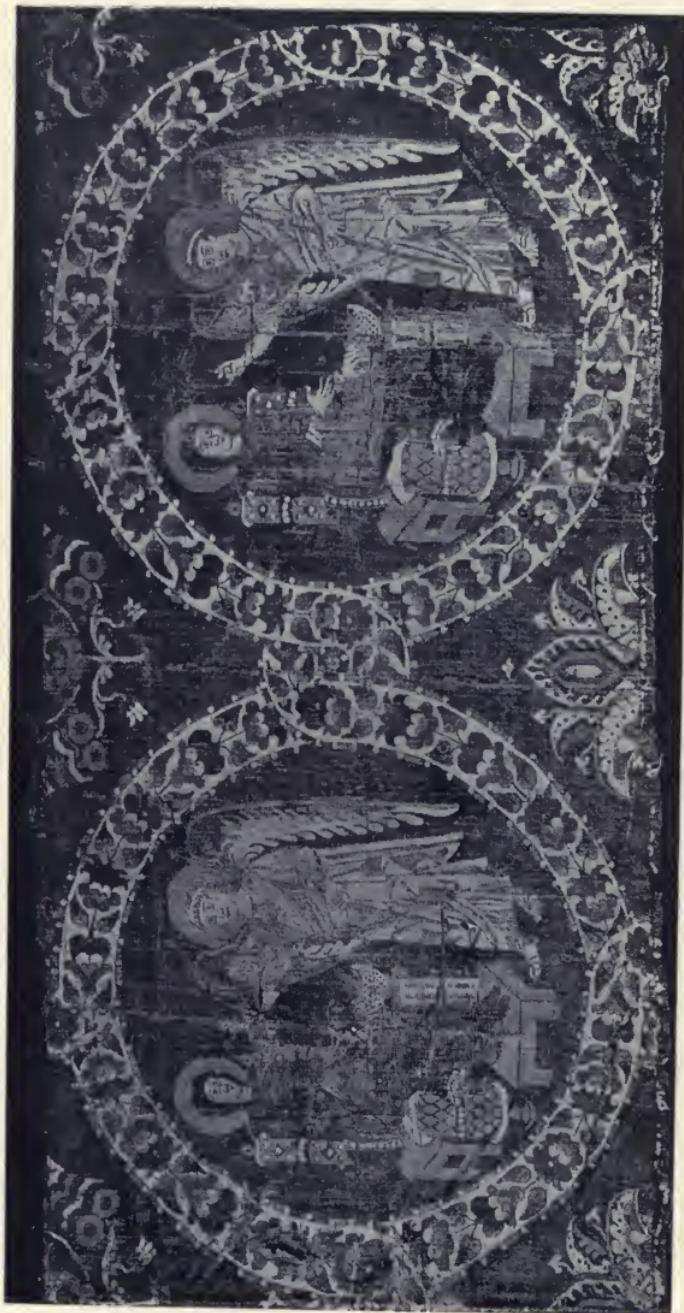
Leaf of a pulpit-door from Cairo, fifteenth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE VII



Silk brocade, Byzantine, eleventh or twelfth century.
Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE VIII



Woven silk fabric, Byzantine, seventh to ninth century. Vatican, Rome.

PLATE IX

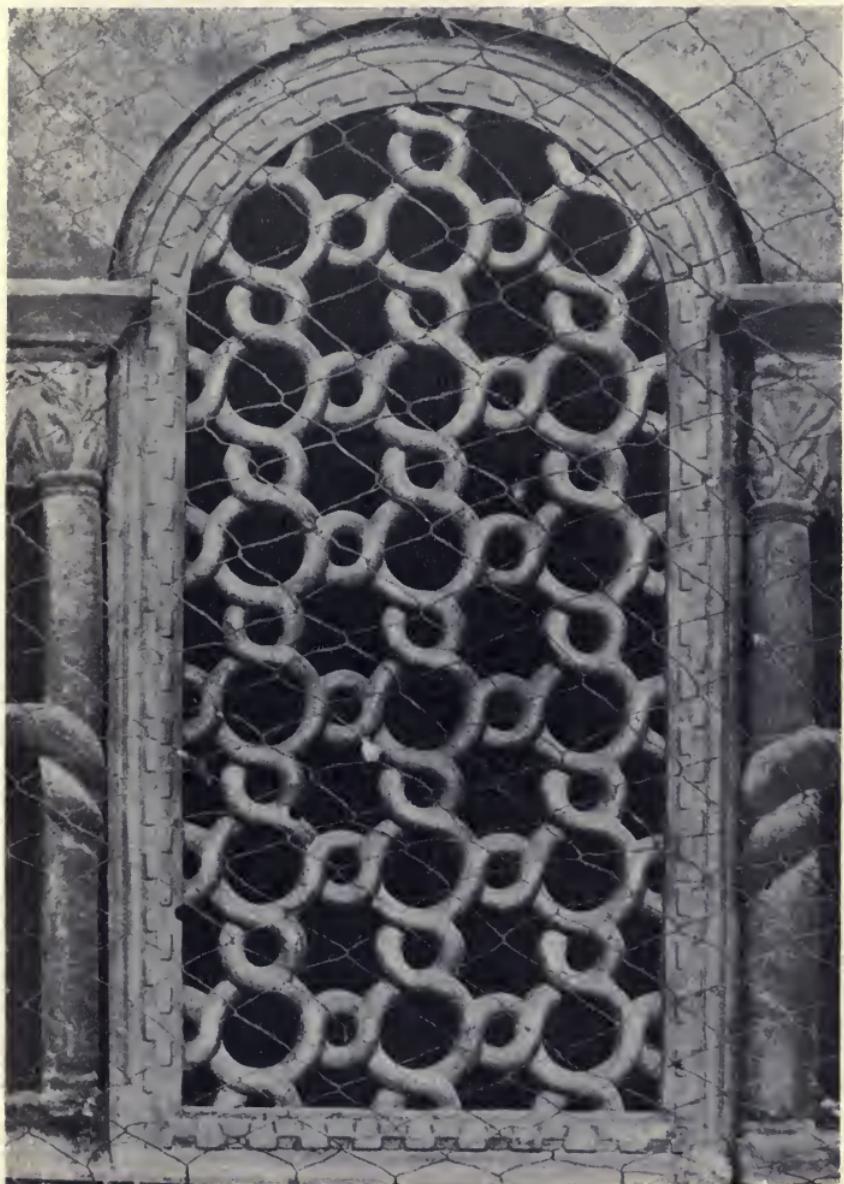


Photo by Carlo Naya, Venice.

Pierced stone window, West front of St. Mark's, Venice.

PLATE X



Photo by Carlo Naya, Venice.

Pierced stone window, West front of St. Mark's, Venice.

PLATE XI

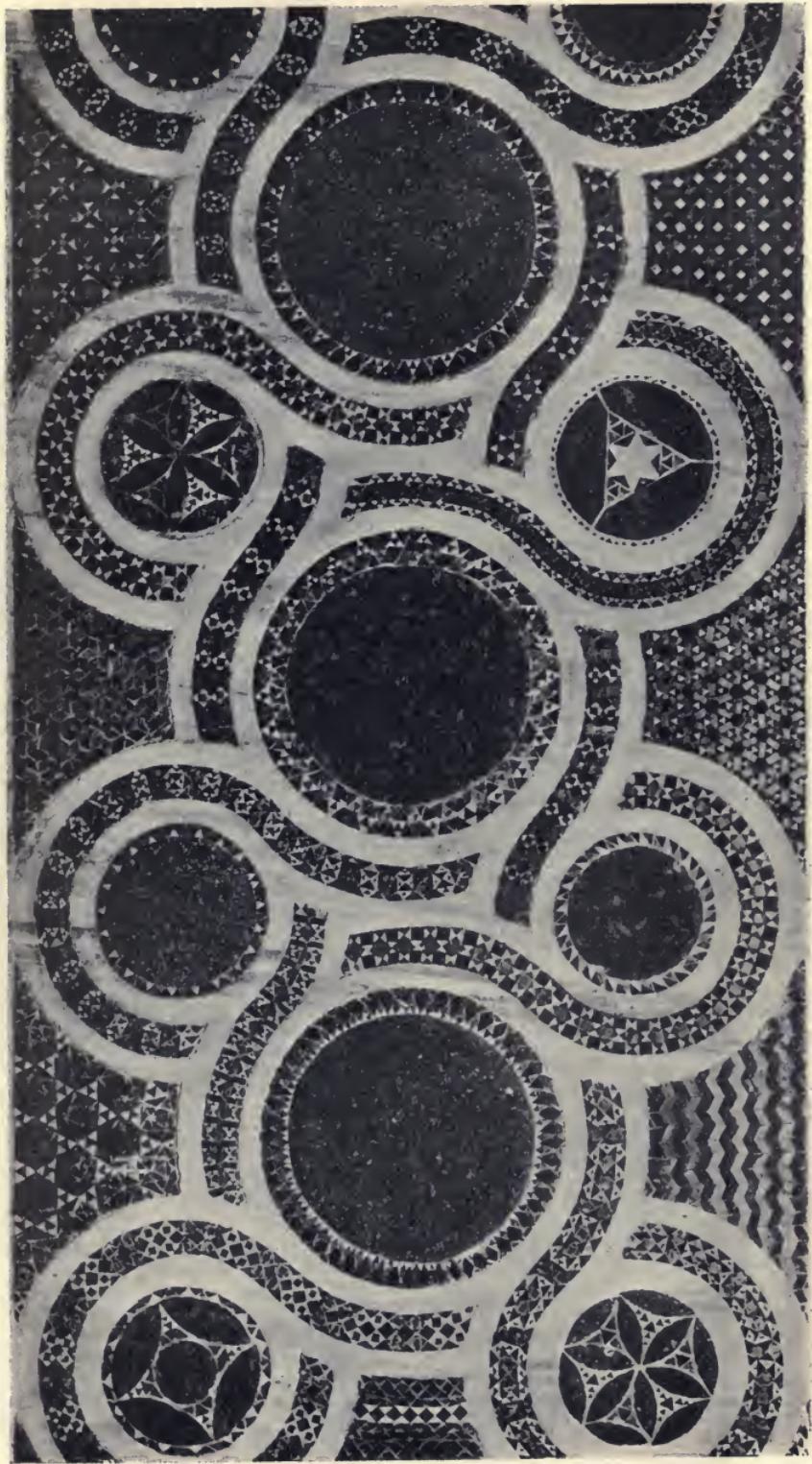


Photo by Alinari.

Inlaid marble slab, twelfth century. Church of Santa
Prassede, Rome.

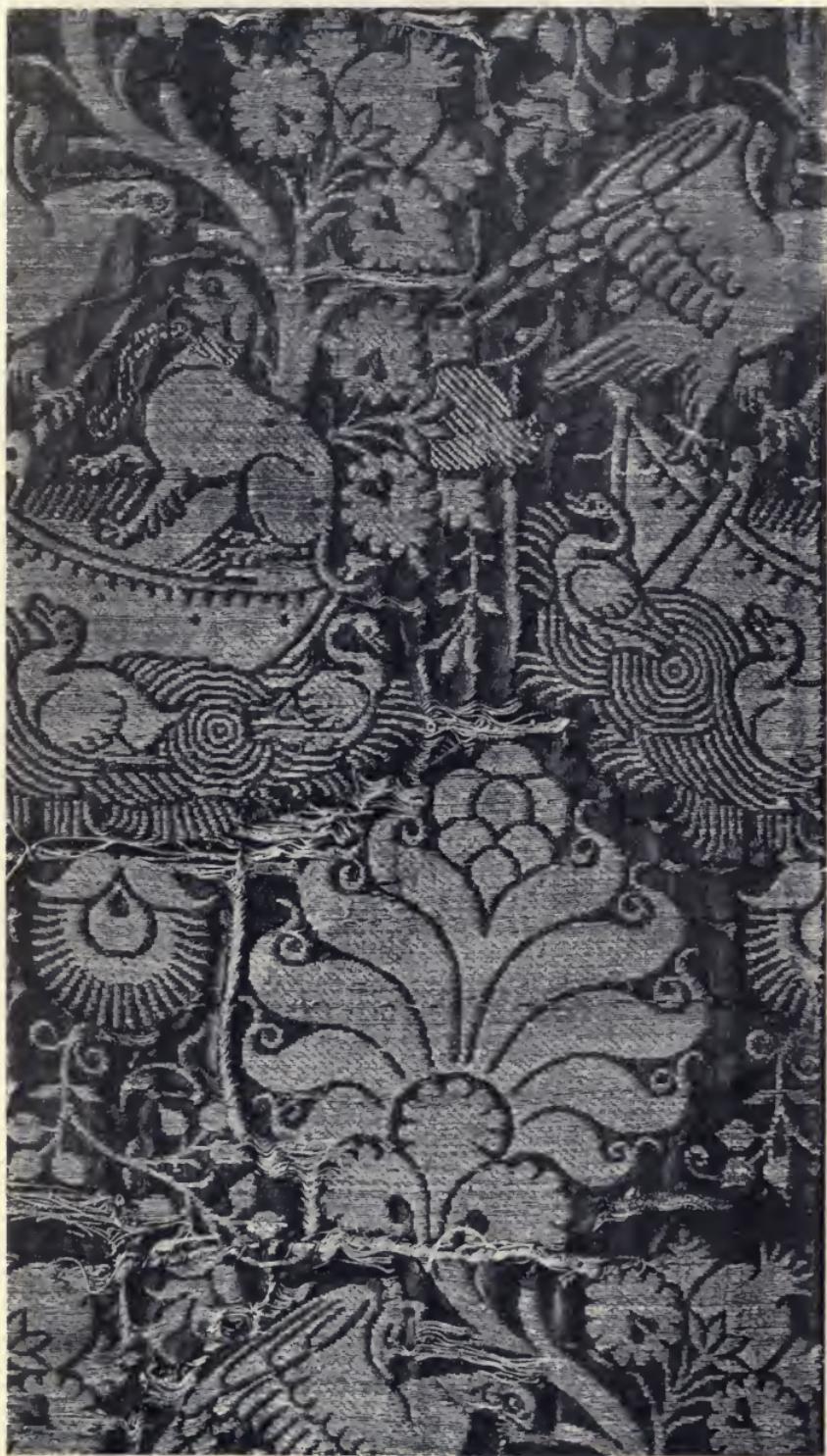
PLATE XII



Photo by Alinari.

Inlaid marble panel in the pavement of the Baptistry,
Florence, thirteenth century.

PLATE XIII



Silk brocade, Italian, fourteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XIV



Carved marble panel. Museum at Athens.

PLATE XV



Photo by Alinari.

West front of the Church of Santa Chiara at Assisi,
thirteenth century.

PLATE XVI

[7]



Persian glazed earthenware rice dish. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XVII



Printed cotton, Indian nineteenth century.

PLATE XVIII



Carved marble panel, St. Mark's, Venice, twelfth century.

Photo by Almari.

PLATE XIX



Photo by Alinari.

Silk velvet, Italian, sixteenth century. Galleria degli Arazzi, Florence.

PLATE XX



Photo by Alinari.

Silk brocade, Italian, sixteenth century. Galleria degli
Arazzi, Florence.

PLATE XXI



Photo by Giraudon.

Painted vase and stand, Hellenic, sixth century B.C.
Musée du Louvre, Paris.

PLATE XXII



Silk velvet, Italian, late fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XXIII



Printed linen, Rhenish, fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XXIV



Photo by Alinari.

Silk velvet, Italian, sixteenth century. Museo Nazionale,
Florence.

PLATE XXV

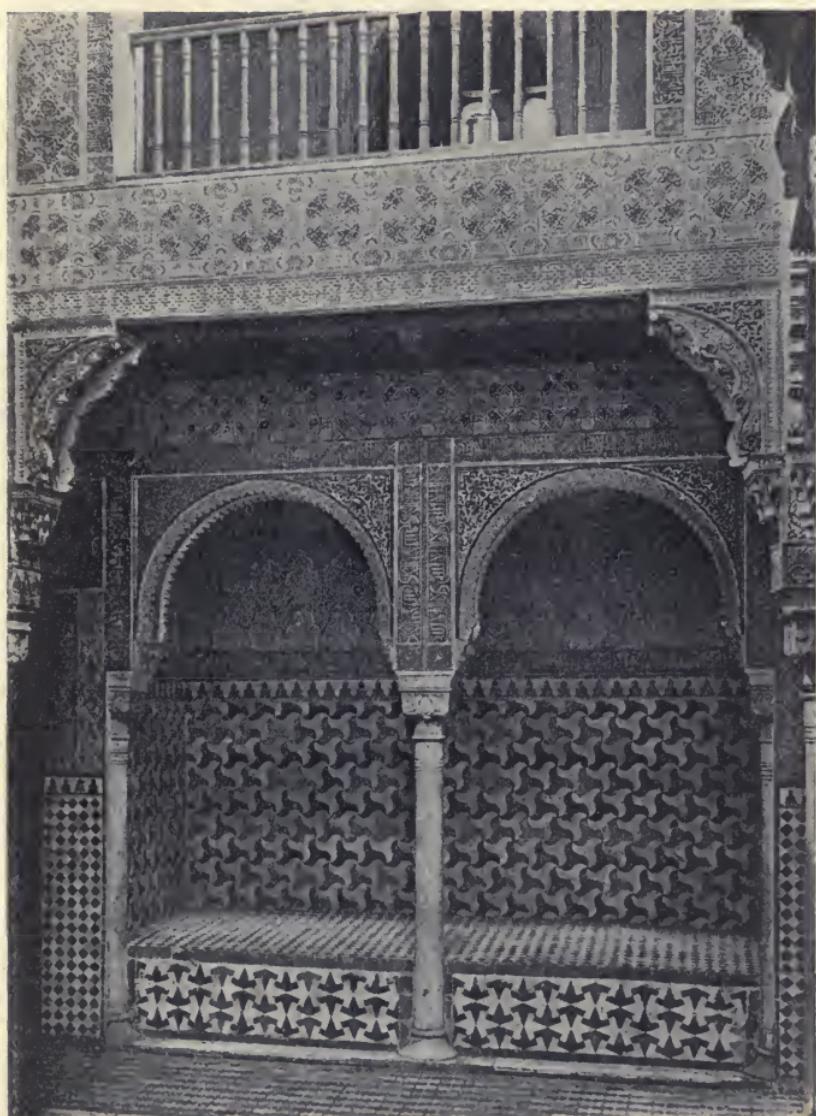
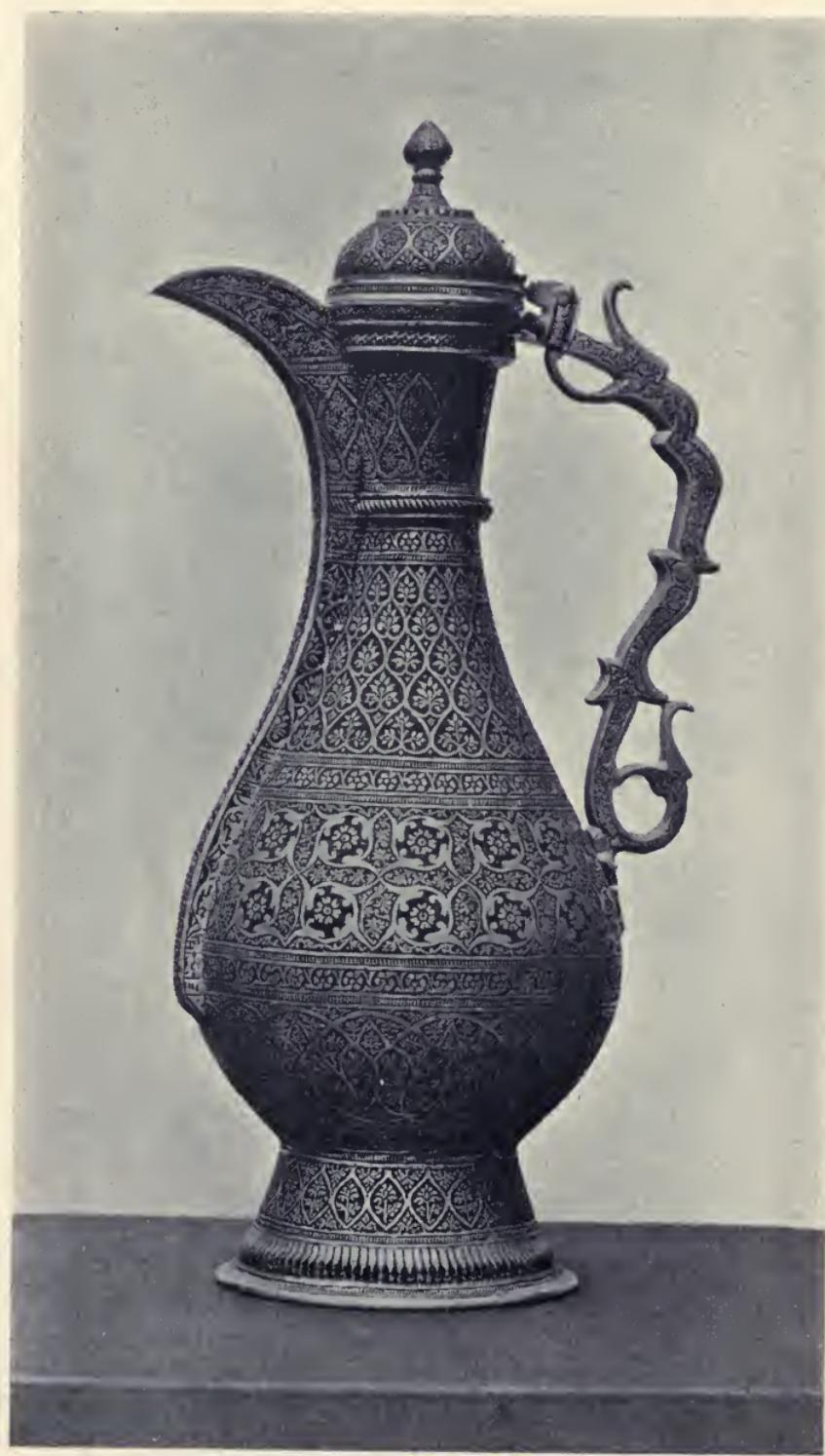


Photo by Hauser y Menet.

Recessed seat lined with tile-work. Alhambra, Granada.

PLATE XXVI



Indian ewer and cover of chased metal. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XXVII



Panel of the bronze door of the Baptistry, Florence,
by Andrea Pisano.

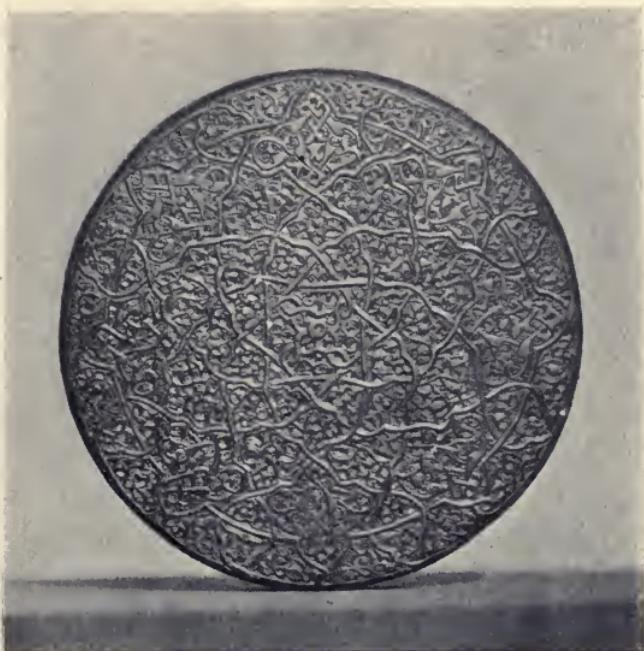
PLATE XXVIII



Anderson Photo.

Detail of a picture by Capanna Puccio at Assisi.

PLATE XXIX



A. Cover of circular brass, Saracenic. Victoria and Albert Museum.



B. Bronze bowl cover, Persian, fifteenth century. Victoria and Albert Museum.

PLATE XXX



Photo by Alinari.

Carved marble slab, St. Mark's, Venice, twelfth century.

PLATE XXXI



Ornament of woven tapestry from a tomb in Upper Egypt,
Egypto-Roman, third to ninth century. Victoria and
Albert Museum.

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