ornamental principle succumbed to pictorial treatment, and the
painted ornament, as well as much also of the ornamental
sculpture of the early renaissance, became pictorial and un-
symmetrical. This will at once be seen by anyone who examines
the bas-reliefs, or even the fruit and foliage of the architrave
of the Florentine gates by Ghiberti. Herein pictorial art reigns
paramount; the frieze which surrounds the gates is an imitative
rendering of nature, hardly disposed according to the law of

geometrical distribution; even the bas-reliefs are pictorial not
sculpturesque; many planes enter into their composition; so that
it may be said that the painter rather than the sculptor—the
artist certainly rather than the ornamentist—has composed them.
The return to classic examples stayed the innovation for a time in
sculpture of the cinquecento period; but the irregular treatment
became more dominant than ever in the 17th century.

It must be admitted that there are styles dependent for their

posely disregarded, the air us by novelty and
magnificence. Thus rich venceers, costly
marbles, finely chased or molu, with
a profusion of gilding, give a meretricious splendour
viciously alluring and dangerous to young designers. We
reproduce here a sofa (Fig. 1), from
Assilineau, to illustrate the foregoing
observations.

The opening of
Japan also has
brought the art of
this people more
prominently before
us of late; an art
which rejects sym-
metry as a principle.
But in the beautiful prod
newness of character, the English designers for hardware too often still adhere either to the contorted style first named, or they produce works composed of ornaments pirated from all times and all nations, put together without any sense of construction, without selection and without fitness. Such works are a thorough chance-medley, disgraceful to our manufacturers, and

![Illustration](image)

FIG. 7.

they make us look back to the simpler forms of the Middle-ages with respect and regret.

Let anyone examine the characteristic simplicity of the candlestick here engraved (Fig. 7), made from a design by Mr. W. Pugin, adapted as it is for use, standing firmly, capable of being handled, light yet strong, and compare it with the showy works of this class we commonly see, so ragged and tangled with ornament that
application are, to say the least, not followed by Continental decorative artists. The flat treatment of ornament on hangings, carpets, &c., is the conventional rather than the imitative rendering

of flowers and foliage, the absence of shadows, and the true relation between the ornament and the ground on which it is

wrought—all so well understood by the Orientals and by the artists of the Middle Ages—are far too much ignored in the works of modern designers, and the true distinction between pictorial
A BOOK OF STUDIES IN PLANT FORM WITH SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR THEIR APPLICATION TO DESIGN

BY A. V. LILLEY AND W. W. MIDDLETON

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STUDIES IN PLANT FORM 
AND DESIGN

CHAPTER I

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

It is clear that no student will be able to invent a presentable piece of ornament until he has learned the difference between a good line and a bad one, between a fine form and a mean one, and between harmonious and vulgar colour. And although every one possesses this good taste in some degree, there is only one way in which a designer can develop it sufficiently for his needs; he must read a little thoughtfully and diligently in Nature's infinite book of—ornament. Without this study of Nature principles are useless. But given this, they will help.

The function of ornament is to add interest to construction;
that the corner is structurally the weakest part of a frame, and
the ornament should appear to strengthen it and bind it together,
and so must be heaviest and richest there.

Fig. 54.—Canary Creeper. Flowers yellow, 1½ inches long.

We give an example (Fig. 54) of a border applied to a cup
for the purpose of illustrating how the pattern may be projected
on to a curved surface. It will be seen that there are a number

Fig. 55.—Canary Creeper border.
2-5 Representation of contrasts (see page 12)
Areas of different size and tone values are arranged in a balanced composition.
Montage of various materials. Non-sculpturally used materials can have the effect of texture contrasts like transparent-opaque, horizontal-vertical, much-less, light-dark, straight-bent. Berlin, 1926.
Collage: The City. A confusing conglomeration of multiples, of verticals, horizontals and diagonals, of small rectangles, windows, bridges, passages and forms of all kinds gives the illusion of the endless tangle of a noisy big city. The multiple standpoints and view produce a synthetic picture.

These monthly assignments, double theme of village-city, were voluntarily done at home, and students only rarely failed to bring in homework. The class discussions of the solutions were among the most valuable hours because we touched on the subject of form expression. The students were able to compare their creative powers and to find a standard for their own performance. Werner, 1921. P. Cigran.
116. Brass can. The transition from the cylindrical basic form to the spherical lid is formed by a flat ring which functions as the handle above the lid. The linear ornament repeats the ring-shaped element. Weimar, 1920. K. Auböck.

117. Brass and copper can. The basic form of cubic character is contrasted with the spherical character of the lid. The ornament consists of larger and smaller circular ornaments. The problem here was to combine various form characteristics. Weimar, 1921. Lyperos.
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