

Arts and Crafts

In the principal rooms new mantelpieces have been introduced, and some of these are very effective. That in the drawing-room is of satinwood as regards the overmantel, while the mantelpiece itself is of marble, a good effect being produced in the latter by the circular panels of marble mosaic which relieve its somewhat insistent simplicity. The overmantel is original and effective in design, the only exception I should take being the carvings in the spandrils of the arch, which, it seems to me, would have been more effective had they been altogether unrelieved. Of satinwood, too, are the mantel and overmantel of the ante-drawing-room, and here a more distinctively latter-day note is struck in the design of the carving, which symbolises learning and the sources and fruits of learning. Effective, too, is the introduction of coloured inlay, while the carving on the lower moulding, symbolising poetry, painting, designing and building, seems to me especially effective. Some good glasswork is shown in the oaken screen between the hall and conservatory, and in this the

chief decorative reliance has been placed on the leaded lines. A pleasant room has been made of the smoking-room, which is panelled with a frieze in Oregon pine, the ceiling being decorated with birds and conventional foliage on a gold ground. Perhaps one of the most successful examples of design is the dining-room sideboard (see p. 34), which has been treated in mahogany, as have also the dado and mantelpiece in the same room. There is a sort of nobility in the very direct and simple way in which this sideboard has been treated, its proportions especially striking one as entirely satisfactory, while pleasing also is the absence of fussiness or over elaboration. The inlaid panels in the doors of white, purple and green wood offer the chief relief to the broad surfaces of richly coloured mahogany. I cannot help feeling that the two carved Bacchantes on either side disturb the otherwise reposeful feeling of this piece of furniture. Somewhat novel and interesting in character are the electric light fittings throughout the house, one of the principal examples of which is here shown.

HORACE TOWNSEND.



A CORNER OF THE SMOKING-ROOM

BRITISH DECORATIVE ART IN 1899 AND THE ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION. PART I. BY AYMER VALLANCE.

It cannot have been forgotten how dark a shadow was cast over the previous Exhibition of Arts and Crafts in London by the death of the Society's President, William Morris, on the very day of the private view. Three years have gone by since then, and the time has come round again for the Society to hold another, their fifth, exhibition. It may not, therefore, be unseasonable to review the present position of the decorative arts in the kingdom with the object of estimating whether, and if so to what extent, we can claim to have progressed during the interval that has elapsed since the Exhibition of 1896.

And first, in regard to a due estimation of the nature of the arts, it is to be feared that the popular notion on these subjects is still as crassly erroneous as ever. Only the other day an applicant for instruction in dairy-farming was advised to apply to the Central School of