

Some Cottage Tablets

Here is a very simple one, out of a number to be seen at Minster, which has just the letters T. E. rudely carved, and a date 1717, apparently wedged in as an afterthought. Still I fancy you will agree



On a cottage in Poole.

with me that the little panel is, as a whole, simple, direct, and pleasant.

It was enjoyable coming across the name of "Weller." Would that I could truthfully say that it is "Samivel" and not "John" that is carved on the little panel which is to be found on the west face of the church tower at Wye (Kent) hard over the doorway. However, there it is, "JOHN WELLER," and the date 1725, and is one, amongst a considerable number, of curious tablets of the usual cottage type, but exceptional and remarkable when found on a church exterior. It would seem at any rate quite possible to imagine that Charles Dickens in his wanderings may have seen these very tablets (for Wye, as you know, is not far from his old home, Rochester). The name "Weller" may have struck him as being unusual—he may have noted it down and eventually wrought it into his immortal "Pickwick"—who knows?

I have but space left to tell you I found the last of these rough little sketches—the Poole one—in one of the slums of that interesting but unsavoury little seaport—over a cottage doorway—making my notes under difficulties, for a detachment of the great unsoaped swarmed around in double-quick time, and paid me attentions more pronounced than polite.—Always faithfully yours,

WARRINGTON HOGG.

CRESCENT LODGE, BOURNEMOUTH.

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AWARDS IN THE TITLE-PAGE COMPETITION.

A First Prize (three guineas). *Athenian*, Leon B. Solon, South Kensington.

Second Prize (two guineas). *Lucca*, Alfred W. Carpenter, 61 Falkland Road, N.W.

Extra Prize (one guinea). *Langtonian*, J. Illingworth Kay, 48 Langham Street, W.

In awarding the prizes the Judges wish to speak of the general excellence of the execution of the hundred designs sent in, but at the same time to regret the absence of merit in the lettering of the majority. Insufficient care in the actual drawing of the alphabets employed is a minor fault compared with the vicious, grotesque, and unreadable characters too prevalent. The first aim of lettering should be legibility, and this should be secured with almost equal attention to consistency of style. Not merely should each alphabet be limited to the peculiar shapes that distinguish it, but a jumble of Gothic, Roman, italic, and nondescript "ornamental" styles should not be employed in the same design.

Several competitors, despite the rules, send "cover" designs, not title-pages: a moment's thought would have shown that the "contents" of a magazine do not appear on the title-page of its bound volume, yet many have quite ignored this.

The FIRST PRIZE is awarded to *Athenian* for a good design, well conceived, with excellent symbolism and fairly consistent lettering, except in the lowest panel, which is badly placed for its purpose, and not legible enough.

The SECOND PRIZE, *Lucca*, is clear and readable, quite the best arrangement of lettering sent in, the whole well composed and well drawn, but a little tame in conception.

An EXTRA PRIZE has been awarded to *Langtonian*, for one of five admirable designs sent in; had the disposition and detail of the lettering been equal to the invention and beauty of the ornament, this would have been bracketed with the first. In each of the designs by this artist there is evidence of originality and vigour that deserve very high praise, and it was a matter for regret that the Judges felt unable to place them higher solely on the question of lettering. These remarks apply equally to *Langtonian* 2 and 3, and the two not reproduced.

Of other designs illustrated, which are placed haphazard, and *not in any order indicating degrees of merit*—

Stoneybroke. Lacks simplicity, and altogether