dark hues below to faint delicate shades above. Fig. 5, a conventional landscape, is an excellent example of a pattern that may have the reiteration of its repeat almost counteracted by judicious variety of colour—its sky may undulate from the glow of sunset to the softer shades of the eastern sky at twilight. Although all the designs illustrated were planned to display transparent pigments on light grounds, such a pattern as Fig. 7 looks excellently well in opaque paint upon a darker surface. Fig. 2 is equally effective in a low key of ruby, and in a cool scheme of olives and grey blues. These or any other colour harmonies may be so treated that they stand out here and there boldly in shaded positions, or else become much less prominent where the light falls more fiercely upon them.

The results of Mr. Silver's work have been accomplished after months of experiment. For successes are often only gained as the reward of many failures. It is not easy to exploit at once all the possibilities of an unfamiliar craft; and without in any way detracting from the worthy efforts here illustrated, it is for the promise they offer, no less than the fulfilment they hold, that one praises them for being a very important departure in decorative art.

THE MAKING OF MONOGRAMS. BY GLEESON WHITE.

Among many questions that would require years of research to obtain evidence for an exhaustive reply, and would certainly not repay the trouble, the one "Who first invented the monogram" may be left unsolved. In China, the cradle of so many arts, we should certainly find plenty of ancient instances; but its origin is probably much earlier than Chinese civilisation. In fact, the device made up of letters is so closely akin to the symbols which students of paleography agree to accept as the parents of the alphabet itself, that we might almost parallel the famous query whether egg or hen was first created, by asking if monograms preceded letters, or letters were invented before monograms. Certainly in comparatively modern times there is so great a wealth of precedents, of all periods—monograms of sacred names, the familiar IHS, for example—monograms of sovereigns, that of Charlemagne, for instance—monograms of painters, potters, and a hundred other craftsmen, that to become absorbed in their study would probably entirely destroy a chance of producing original designs. For human nature is always unconsciously influenced by the opinion of majorities, especially when as here you can find a hundred instances of a thing done in a certain way, so that it appears a dignified and admirable course to adopt if you cease from any attempt to improve it, and remain a pedantically accurate copyist.

It is no doubt true that, by experimenting recklessly, without reference to historic precedent, we are in danger of re-discovering the obvious, and unconsciously claiming the result as original, when it might be in sober truth described as aboriginal; yet even that is wiser than to merely adapt or copy ideas already worked to death.

While not a few pens have been occupied with the history of the monogram, I do not know of a single attempt to formulate a system for its making. To make this statement may possibly be a proof of the folly of discussing a subject without exhaustive reference to earlier writings. But the claim is quite unimportant; if indeed no one has tried to draw up a rough series of rules, it is probably because the subject seemed too trivial to demand it. Certainly the practice of to-day, so far as the commercial production of monograms is concerned, would inspire belief in the existence of a most rigid, if secret, formula for their manufacture. But this again may only result from habit of unconscious imitation which, fatal as it is to Art, appears to be the instinct of commerce. For the average monogram of the heraldic stationer shows singularly little divergence from a beaten track; its letters may be elongated or stunted, elaborately eccentric for a duchess, or economically commonplace for the stock-dies from which, if you purchase sufficient paper and envelopes, your monogram is embossed free of charge; but all the same, the one idea rules throughout. At its best passable, at its worst too trivial for serious criticism, the monogram in use to-day—on paper, carriages, hair-brushes, and the other places allotted to it by social custom—is certainly not good enough to leave in undisturbed possession. A device that is modestly used in place of a coat-of-arms (or is employed by those who do not feel that their right to armorial bearings is sufficiently substantiated by paying half-a-guinea to an advertising stationer), should at least be interesting. There is no reason why it must always follow one of the two popular types to which it has been limited of late. These, the Gothic interlaced letters and the Italian cypher, are both impeccable in their ancestry, and irreproachably correct in artistic hands to-day; but