

Some Recent Designs by Mr. Voysey

SOME RECENT DESIGNS BY
MR. C. F. A. VOYSEY.

It was nearly three years ago that an article on Mr. Voysey's wall-papers appeared in *THE STUDIO*. Since then his career has been marked, not merely by an increasing advance in the number and beauty of the designs issued, but by a wider recognition of their artistic merits from the general public. At that date Mr. Voysey was well known to artists of all schools, and to the comparative few who take thought for the decoration of their homes; but to the world at large he had yet to be introduced. Now a "Voysey wall-paper" sounds almost as familiar as a "Morris chintz" or a "Liberty silk." The fame which is implied by being raised from a personality to an adjective is somewhat doubtful, although "Wellington" boots and "Gladstone" bags show that at

least the intention is honourable. Only lately one saw the report of a law-suit to ascertain if a certain draper of Vienna had a right to use "Wagner" as an adjective for fabrics, and despite the odd association of ideas, the practice is widely established. But the two classes of nomenclature do not run parallel. Gladstone probably did not invent the bag, although the phrase "bag and baggage" is traceable to him; Wellington may or may not have been the first to wear high boots, and Wagner, although addicted to large-patterned dressing-gowns, is hardly likely to have designed the material for them. But the Voysey wall-paper, the Morris cretonne, the Walter Crane picture-book, is in each case the veritable handiwork of the man whose name it bears. And if a "Liberty" silk or a "Benson" lamp is not necessarily the actual handiwork of the one after whom it is titled, it is distinctly the result of individual taste and discrimination. But in all these instances the name is conferred by the public as a rough-and-ready way of showing their appreciation. Nobody troubles to trace a design he does not like to any source.

But to consider Mr. Voysey as a designer of wall-papers alone were as foolish as to consider Mr. William Morris not as a poet, stained-glass maker or painter, but merely as a planner of fabrics. Mr. Voysey is an architect first and foremost. Like a few of the younger members of his profession, he is not only attracted by the possibilities of beauty in furniture and other complete, independent objects, but is peculiarly fecund in the invention of patterns. This is shown in his construction (which is the science and essence of good architecture), and in the finest examples of his work his inventiveness is so woven into the result that it cannot be regarded as a mathematical and cold-blooded science.



DESIGN FOR WALL-PAPER

FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWING BY C. F. A. VOYSEY