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"Ganpati Procession." Wall Panel by A. A. Bhonsale

THE
BOMBAY REVIVAL
OF
INDIAN ART.

A descriptive account of the Indian Room constructed and decorated by the Staff and Students of the School of Art.

By

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with

Notes on Indian Architecture, Pottery, Arts and Crafts, and the Bombay Art Society, by well known Experts.

Illustrated by Students of the School of Art. Photographs by Messrs. Chaudhary and Shivshankar.

PUBLISHED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY.



P.V.Bodco.

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" India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun, the strange vegetation of the palm and cocoa tree, the rice field, the tank, the huge trees, older than the Mogul empire, under which the village crowds assemble, the thatched roofs of the peasant's hut, the rich tracery of the mosque where the Imaum prays with his face to Mecca, the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols, the devotee swinging in the air, the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the riverside, the black faces, the long beards, the yellow streaks of sect, the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces, the elephants with their canopies of state, the gorgeous palanquin of the prince and the close litter of the noble lady, all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James' Street. All India was present to the eye of his mind, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns, to the wild moor where the gipsy camp was pitch-

ed, from the bazaar, humming like a bee-hive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyænas. He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection at Benares, as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London."—Lord Macaulay's description of Edmund Burke in "Warren Hastings."

CHAPTER I.

BOMBAY AND THE SCHOOL OF ART.

INDIAN Art when seen in its full perspective discloses so vast a panorama that it is easy to lose one's sense of proportion. Like the view from the summit of the Jungfrau, misty and uncertain on account of the great height of the spectator, or like the first glimpses of Montblanc over the Mountain Railway on the approach to Chamonix, range after range of dim peak and vale, of vaporous torrent, or gliding glacier. It is better to take one's stand on some lowly green Alp and survey the humbler heights before one; for as the Scientist can reconstruct from a single bone the whole skeleton of the antediluvian monster, we shall glean from a survey of the one promontory an inkling of virgin and inaccessible peaks beyond.

Such a promontory in the fields of art is the School of Art of Bombay, representing as it does in miniature the simulacrum of grander forms.

Art in Europe is often a thing which one can localise, classify, and define. It can sometimes be enclosed in a catalogue, and appraised on the walls of public galleries. It has its acknowledged discreet limits, and need not intrude its existence upon the busy, or polite domains of life, except as a dinner companion—a sort of "Man from Blankleys"—to help out the conversation. In India Art is a limitless thing. It cannot be imprisoned within circumscribing walls; nor left behind us when we reclaim our umbrellas at the exit of the Museum. It is around us; it pervades—it perfumes the air we breathe; it haunts our waking hours; it spangles with a thousand stars our drab and weary dreams. It is an Idea blazoned everywhere in potent pigments, made manifest everywhere through vehicles of flesh and fabric.

This mysterious impression of unfathomable Beauty emanates like an exhalation from Bombay itself in spite of all architectural lapses, of commercial adulation, of the sacrifice of Civic glory on the altars of a pitiful opportunism. The most fevered efforts of Reinforced Concrete, of gaudy brick, and mortar have not and cannot destroy the

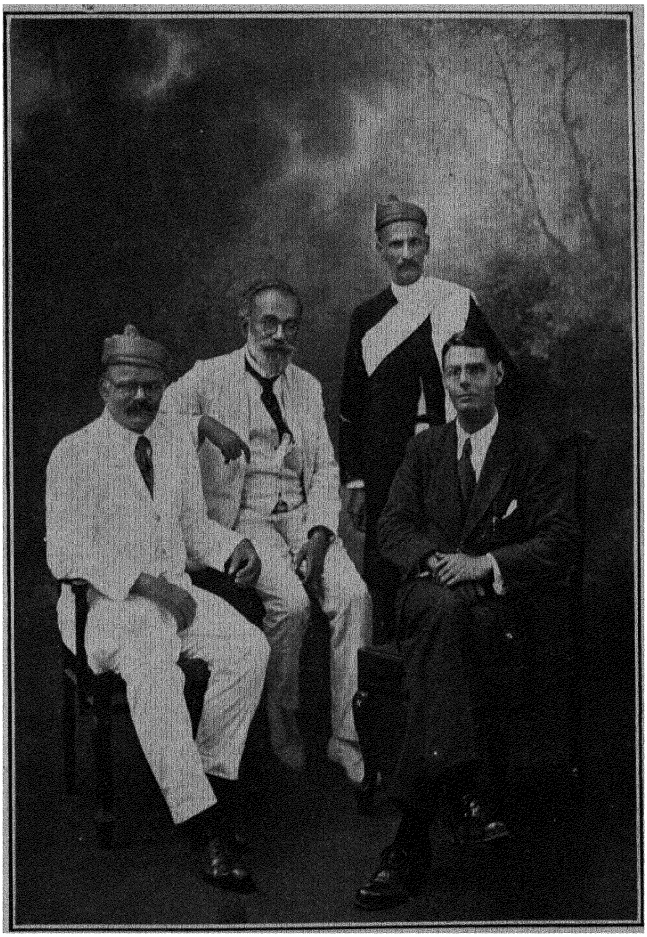
Beauty of Bombay. Seas, and Skies ; Palms and Mountains, Beaches, Islands, and Lagoons combining together for one gesture of immutable defiance have frustrated the Philistines. Like Bhanavar the Beautiful, Bombay possesses the secret talisman for the constant renewal of her charms, and rallying from every fresh degradation can clothe herself with a new fairness.

So Bombay remains still a Queen. So the traveller who has known the most world reputed cities, must yet feel his heart throb when for the first time he finds himself on her most famous view point. None of the World's great city views can excel by much that which Bombay has to offer of herself when seen from the Hanging Gardens near the Hindu Temple as she lies drowsing in the tranquil light of a late afternoon.

It is but natural that in such a city the School of Art—like another House of the Interpreter—should be a place for " Signs and Wonders"; that among its 400 students should be pilgrims from such divergent and distant States as Bengal, Burma, the United Provinces, Central India, Indore, the Central Provinces, the Nizam's Dominions, Madras, Cochin, Travancore, and Kashmir.

But to understand the "Indian Room" which has been made and decorated by these students for the British Empire Exhibition, some attempt should first be made to understand the environment in which this work was done; and to realise the fusion of æsthetic influences for which the School is a point of focus. The Fort, as the District where the School of Art stands, is called, is but the shell that encloses the fruit, and this is so truly Indian that even the Western buildings in which the different departments of the School are housed almost seem, to knowledgeable eyes, to have been draped by the hands of their Indian students with invisible "saris"*. The students do not leave the Bazaar behind them when they enter the school's gates. It is doubtful if many of them are aware of this daily transition. In the depths of their dark eyes are the fires of enlightenment, but it is a Secret of their own Country that they are engaged in unravelling in the School of Art. This secret, for which they cheerfully give up so much (as the World reckons it) cannot in its entirety be transmitted to a Western ear—still less to a Western hand.

* As the robes of the Hindu Women are called.



Some Members of the School of Art Staff.

Front Row { Mr. E. R. Fern, Superintendent of Pottery.
Mr. M. V. Dhurandhar, Head Master.

Back Row { Mr. A. X. Trindade, Superintendent, Reay Art Workshops.
Mr. L. N. Lasker, Head of Class for Drawing Teachers.



The Bombay School of Art (Main Building).

What is this hidden lore? It is partly shared by all the teeming millions of Southern India; so that the poorest Indian girl never errs when she chooses the colours of her "Choli" or "Sari"; so that on days of Festival the Mahratta maidens go dressed in tints so mingled and yet harmonised that their robes seem plumed from the wings of angels. The students, clothed in their white "Dhoties", shirts, and little caps, or coloured turbans; many of them dressed in the plain Kaddar that comes from the hand-looms of the villages, and wearing sandals that fortunately still refuse to give the wall to Civilisation, appear as the most appropriate figures that any School of Art ever had for its denizens. A glimpse at these students at work would be the best antidote for the Western pessimist about Indian Art. He cannot as he views this concourse of picturesque persons, fiery souls, and gifted hands, doubt the appropriateness of these students to their high calling, nor question the probability of an elusive Goddess permitting her graces to be once more recaptured by such as these. Indian Art is usually spoken of in the Preterite tense. One does not know why she should be regarded as a lady of a certain

age. To the artists she appears as a damsel who being of the race of the Peris is endowed with perennial youth.

And in that spirit they have constructed and decorated their Indian Room. The work has taken nine months of an effort, to which all departments of the School sent recruits; modellers, painters, designers, potters, silversmiths, enamellers carpet-weavers, shape-makers, iron-workers, carpenters, wood-carvers, decorators, and engravers—all having heard the "still small voice" (to Indian ears louder than the trumpet's call) that summoned them to make their sacrifice at the altar of Beauty.

And cheerfully they made it; responding to an inward urging, which always exacts more obedience from the Indian than the command of man, or money, the urging to go and create something beautiful. Once they began the work they were absorbed in the task, an absorption which could only end when the task itself was completed, a spell of thought and industry quite as binding as the thraldom of Hercules to Omphale. Just as the Hero went clad in women's garments, and gave his Club and lion skin into

the keeping of her whose eyes enslaved his mighty soul, which henceforth lived for them alone, so the Indian Art student surrenders himself to the grip of his compelling task. Hour after hour he will sit in front of his panel, drawing with a brush scarcely less sure in its purpose than that historic pencil which traced Giotto's famous O. We watch him start his work in the morning; and vaguely conscious all day of the fact of his presence meet him in the evening once again. He is on his way home, and we overtake him on the path to the Gate, reddened by the evening sun as it slants through the luxurious cocoa palms and banyan trees of the School's celebrated Compound. With his umbrella in one hand, some small twining flower in the other, and eyes that still seem to ignore realities and to be fixed in retrospect upon those marvellous monkeys, elephants, buffaloes, or birds that he has been engaged all day in weaving into his delightful designs, he goes on his way humming an Indian air, carrying with him to his scanty board and simple blanket the burden of that lofty thraldom which is his joy. And when his work is at last completed, and the finished

panel has been fitted* to its place on the wall or ceiling—then he is most likely to be found lurking in unlikely corners—or wandering anxiously in the halls and corridors of the School. The strained expression in his eyes is the look of the seeker. The new task must be taken in hand before those traces of the anxieties and worries of freedom can be dispelled.

The Indian Room, its paintings, and statuettes is the work of students. It would be wrong to approach it as one might the work of the artist who has his finished story to unfold.

The Room is the work of young men who have not as yet learned to measure either their own limitations or capacities. It is as it were a welter of early potentialities ; it is the citadel of Hope ; not the temple of Victory. It is full of unfinished hints and the thin ends of wedges. But the art loving visitor will read in this exhibit a message from far off India that could not be conveyed in terms of print ; one that speaks of a land

* The panels in the " Indian Room " had to be painted in oils on canvas owing to the exigencies of construction and the packing and sending to England. The students of the School of Art prefer to paint direct upon the walls.

where the Worlds of Reality and of Fancy are still united; where the oracles are not yet stilled; and where under the Palms and the Moon-flowers the Peris and Apsaras still dance out their immortal dances. A land of warm enthusiasms and warmer hearts; a land whose young men have given of their best to this work as their tribute to the *Idea* inherent in the Mighty Empire of which they are such gifted and interesting citizens.

CHAPTER II.

THE INDIAN ROOM.

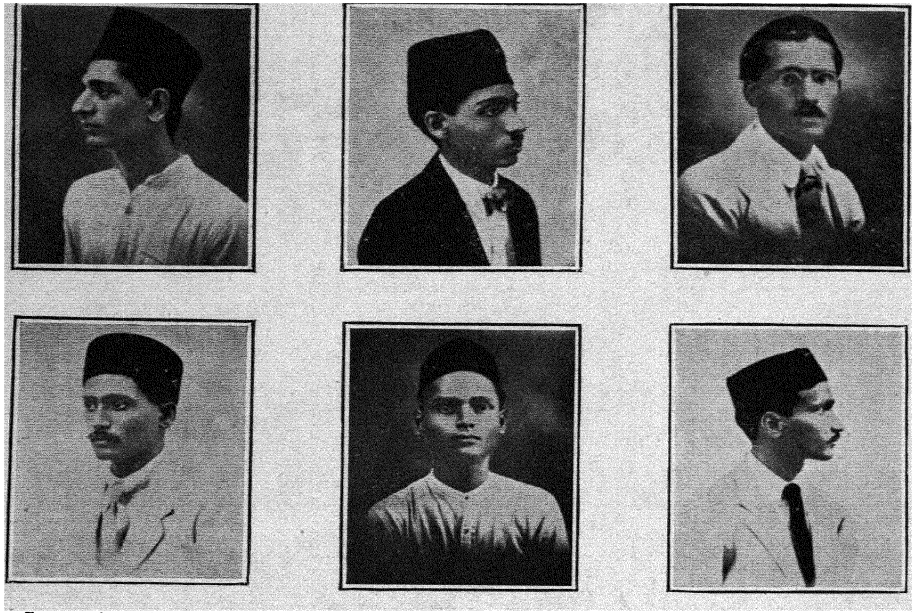
THE Indian Room measures 18 feet square and 10 feet high. It is constructed throughout of Malabar teak and is a strongly built structure. Probably the feature that will first attract the attention of the visitor will be the painted ceiling and frieze. The ceiling consists of a circular central panel and eight surrounding panels, four triangles, and a decorated border.

The subject of the painting on the ceiling is the Sun God Surya and eight planets. Surya plays a very important part in Hindu Mythology and is here shown in his chariot drawn by seven horses symbolising the seven rays of the sun.

The planets represented are, Soma (the Moon) on an antelope; Mangal, (Mars), the flame coloured figure riding on a goat; Budha, (Mercury) on a lion; Brihaspati, (Jupiter) on a swan; Rahu, (Uranus) with serpent's tail; Shukra, (Venus) on a white horse; Ketu, (Neptune) on an eagle; and Shani, (Saturn) mounted on a bullock.



The Indian Room



Some of the Students. Top Row, left to right : L. N. Joshi, A. S. Khan, S. Fernandiz. Lower Row : G. H. Nagarkar, B. G. Hatulkar, A. A. Bhonsale.

The mural panels on the wall represent efforts of the senior students. They are seven in all, including a "Ganpati Procession" by Mr. A. A. Bhonsale, which has received the special gold medal presented by Sir George Lloyd, the late Governor of Bombay and "Piety" by Mr. N. L. Joshi, which was awarded His Excellency's Silver Medal. The remaining subjects are Painting, Sculpture, Music, Industry, and Agriculture. On the floor is a carpet woven by the students of the Carpet Weaver's Class with Arabesques on a gold ground which though designed in the class are of Persian inspiration.

The furniture consists of a "Gadi" carved and upholstered in rose-coloured silk and bearing its "Chutra" of the same material; a "Chaurang" of beaten brass with reliefs taken from the paintings in the Ajanta Caves: a carved table, and cabinet; and two statuettes in white marble, and bronze. These statuettes portray the God "Siva", and an ideal figure entitled "Harmony", both executed by the students of the Modelling Class.

The latter class is also responsible for the Silver Statuette of a Goddess riding upon a tiger, and destroying a demon.

The Shrine itself is of carved woodwork, and a Canopy of Indo-Sarasenic style is affixed to the wall. In front of it, on a stand, are two silver lamps, a rose-water sprinkler, and attar-dan, and a salver;—articles which are used for worship. A fine brass lamp, by the Iron Worker's Class, hangs just above the doorway between the perforated carved windows.

* * * *

In his book on Hindu Iconography, Mr. Gopinath Rao tells us that "the nine planets, Surya, Chandra, Bhauma, Budha, Sukra, Brihaspati, Sani, Rahu and Ketu are also worshipped by the Hindus and their images are generally found in all important temples in South India". It was natural therefore that in their selection of subjects the students of the School of Art should take these well-known Divinities and enthusiastically portray them on the ceiling, in traditional sequence, and with their respective symbols and "vehicles". The centre panel represents Surya the Sun God standing in his chariot and driven by Aruna the lame charioteer of the Gods. The pose, the hands raised shoulder high, the ruby earrings, the

necklace over his chest, the garment he wears, and its colouring ; and the halo, the lotuses, and the magnificient " Kirita " (head dress) are prescribed by rules of most ancient origin. Some idea of the vast burden of ceremonial data with which the Indian Art Student has to store his mind may be gathered from the following passage.

" According to the Amsumabbheda-gama and the Suprebhedagama the figure of the Sun God should be sculptured with two hands each holding a lotus. The hands should be so held up as to enable the fists holding the lotuses to reach the level of the shoulders. His head is to be surround-ed by a halo (Kantimandalu) and his person should be adorned with many ornaments ; on his head there should be a Karanda Makuta, and the garment worn by him should be red in colour. He should wear a pair of ruby ear-rings (Kundalas) and on his chest there should lie a hara (Neck-lace).

" The figure of Surya should be placed on a hexagonal chariot drawn by seven horses fully caparisoned. The chariot should have only one wheel and be shown to be driven by the lame Aruna. On the right side of

Surya there should stand Ustra, and on the left Pratyasha, etc., etc."

When we reflect that by far the greater number of the gods of India are described with even greater particularity, we may well be astonished at the careless ease with which the "illiterate" Indian art students pursue a path that one would think the greatest pundit would find it hard to follow walking as delicately as did Agag.

On the occasion of the visit of H. R. H. The Prince of Wales to India in November 1921, the School of Art was commissioned by the Reception Committee to paint the pylons which decorated the streets with 170 figures of Deities each seven feet in height. Then indeed it was a portentous spectacle to see the marshalling of multifarious emblems, tokens, ornaments, "vehicles", and other insignia of an interminable line of Celestial Incarnations. Some of these were endowed with only the usual complement of limbs, while others flourished arms like windmills. There were triple-faced, monkey-faced, vulture-faced Deities. There were some who rode on tigers, on lions, on eagles, on snakes, and some who used the lotus as a spring board for the stars. There were some who

wore the most elaborate head-dresses, carkanets, toe rings, nose rings, bracelets, armlets, skins, and draperies, while garlands were adjusted with a bewildering fitness about arms, necks and torsos already profusely adorned, and dignified by insignia as scrupulous in its accuracy as it was ornate. The emblems and ornaments of the Gods far from being a complex burden seemed in this instance a pure joy and solace to their delineators.

During this temporary restoration of the Golden Age, the students would discuss with one another details of the iconography, and one gathered that there was sometimes room for argument, but that books were rarely required to be referred to for details.

The Indian is the incomparable example of the man who "draws out of his head". Be it understood here that he does not (as did the old Byzantine artists too often,) merely reiterate endlessly a cut-and-dried convention; but shows inexhaustible resource in adapting his composition to the exigencies of the space he has to fill, ringing the changes with "infinite variety" in spite of well defined limitations, sometimes of pose, and nearly always of colour, and accessories.

THE EIGHT PLANETS.

CHANDRA.

The figure on the antelope to the South East of Surya, the Sun God represents Chandra, or Soma, the Moon. He must partake of the nature of both sexes; and reconciles in his dual entity the Western Diana and her Endymion. This God's complexion is of silvery whiteness—the hue of Wonderment, Awe, and Mystery.

His pose has a hint of the effeminacy of Praxiteles' lizard-hunting Apollo. In his left hand he rears a banner with the device of a rabbit. Instead of a halo his head is relieved by :—

> "Astarte's dediamonded crescent
> Distinct with its duplicate horn."

The Gazelle (the Black Buck of the Deccan), a delicate mount for its dainty rider, breaks the web-like clouds with its feet, giving one glimpses of distant starless profundities.

BHAUMA (MARS).

> "There is no light in Earth or Heaven.
> But the pale light of Stars.

The first watch of the night is given
To the Red Planet Mars."

In this panel we see the Hindu image of the "Red Planet" in fiery hues riding upon his "Vehicle"—the goat. One of his four hands is drawn in its traditional pose while another holds a "Sakti" or mace. The two left hands brandish the "gada" (Club) and "Sula" (trident).

Brihaspati (Jupiter).

Next comes Brihaspati on the Swan. He is represented as yellow in colour, with corresponding draperies; and appears to relish his aërial journey .

Rahu (Uranus).

Rahu is next in the circle. There are different ways of presenting the image of this planet. Here he is shown carrying in one hand the "pustak" (book) and with the other waving a fine woollen garment.

Sukra (Venus).

Very different from Western legend is this conception of the planet "Venus". In his left hand Sukra holds the "Nidhi" (a bag full of jewels), and in the other a sacred book. The glistering silvery tones of this

Divinity, his charger, and the ornaments are all essential parts of the ancient convention.

KETU (NEPTUNE).

This planet is forcibly represented by the "gada"—bearing figure mounted on the typical Indian Kite, who appears about to hurl his weapon into space. He is always shown dark in colour and is a conspicuous figure among the nine "Grahas". Behind him lowers the gathering storm.

BUDHA (MERCURY).

Holding the "Khadga" (scimitar), the "Khetaka" (shield) and the "gada" (club), Budha is depicted riding on a fierce lion. His colour is that of the "Karnikara," a beautiful flower of the Indian Jungle.* He is purposely decked with ornaments of a special type.

SANAISCHARA (SATURN).

This planet, the last of the circular procession, is black in colour, diminutive in size, and somewhat deformed. He rides a

* The colour of the Planet is stated by some authorities to be yellow; the staff of the School of Art maintain it to be a yellowish green.

black bullock, and flourishes a "danda" (staff) and "Kamandalu" (sacred vessel).

The Ceiling Triangles.

The four triangles of the ceiling formed by the gaps between the circle and its surrounding square are the work of the same hand. They represent a style of Mural Painting essentially the same as the Indian Mural work of the 5th century, and still immensely popular with the general public.

Mr. B. V. Hatulkar—the student responsible—originally designed and painted four different panels, which were however found to be useless owing to a defect in the measurements. In no wise discouraged, he began again and painted the present series; all four being executed with great speed and certainty, from his pencil sketches.

For this act of sustained energy the young artist was awarded a certificate of Honourable Mention by the Governor of Bombay. The four panels are grotesque renderings of familiar animals, buffaloes, elephants, dogs, and monkeys. The latter are perhaps the most interesting and whimsical in design. There is humour in the two monkeys dealing with the piece of water-

melon, and the facility with which students can seize upon common facts and convert these into decorative material, no less that their inherent gift for filling wall spaces can be studied in this and its corresponding triangles.

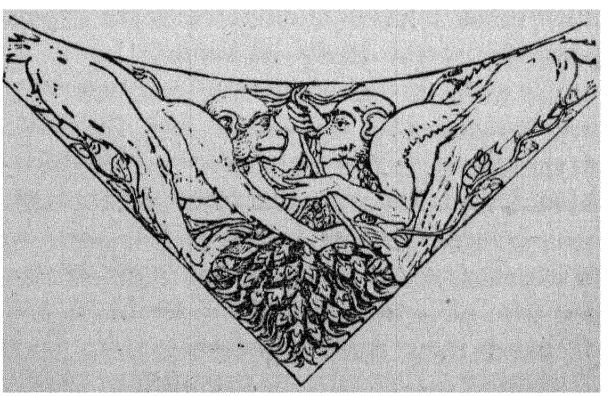
The Ceiling Border.

The floral border also conveys a good idea of the style of Indian Decorative painting, that was already an established tradition of perhaps Vedic* antiquity when the Moghuls brought into India their Persian methods of painting. The great traditional style of which this border is a modern example has resisted and survived all the weight of extraneous influences, and is understood by, and dear to the hearts of Indians.

Although the Ajanta caves furnish the earliest examples of the decorative methods illustrated by this border, yet the border is quite an original work. It was designed in pencil, then cartooned in charcoal, traced on to the canvas, and painted by the students. It has the boldness, brightness, and delicacy which are of the cult of Ajanta.

* The Vedas, are the ancient sacred scriptures of the Hindu Religion.

The square corners of the ceiling border—the elephants—indicate even better this particular natural gift. The vigorous brush work of the flowers and leaves in these small square panels gives an idea of that deftness of touch which so often delights us in the charcoal and chalk cartoons, and in the water-colour drawings of Indian students, and which is better exemplified in their decorations in "guache" than in the heavier medium of oil.



Part of Triangular Ceiling Panel.

CHAPTER III.

THE INDIAN ROOM.

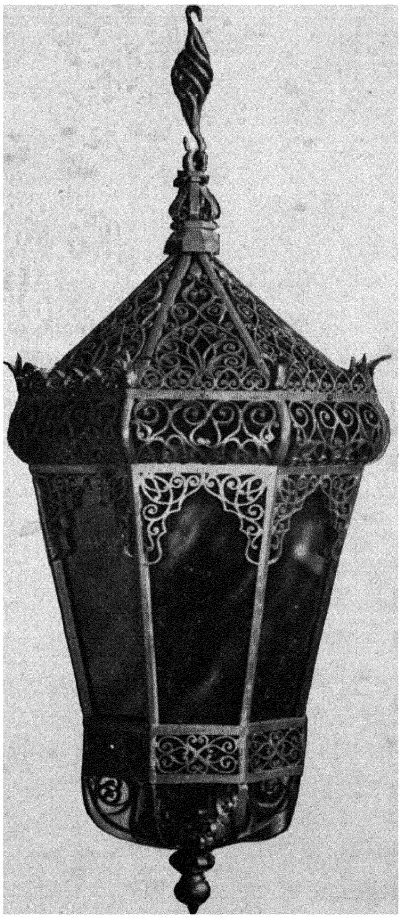
STATUETTES, FURNITURE, ORNAMENTS, AND POTTERY.

FIGURES in bronze and marble, and a group in silver are the contributions of students of the Modelling Class, and of the Silversmiths' Class in the Department of the School of Art founded by Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay. The bronze statue of a Hindu girl playing her *sittar* represents what must have been a familar Indian spectacle in the early mornings when the young women seated themselves before the Temples to play matutinal airs in honour of the Gods. The statuette in marble of Shiva is a realistic presentment of the great moon-crested Deity: its pose, its type, and its expression are those of the yogis or holy men who have abandoned the world in order to spend their lives wandering from shrine to shrine, subsisting on the simple alms of the villagers, and blazoning on the rocks or

caves where they rest the crimson trident of Siva.

This statuette furnishes an instructive hint of the possibilities for a revival of Indian sculpture on—realistic lines. Any such revival must be based upon the art of the indigenous modeller (as he may be termed) of India. There are many of these in Bombay, and South Western India in whom the sense of plastic form has descended from father to son, and who spend their lives modelling in clay life-size figures of the Gods, and national heroes and heroines. They exhibit these in the bazaar; and at periods of high festival scores of men, women and children flock to these miniature "Madame Tussaud's" to pay the two annas entrance fee which will entitle them to a wondering view of Krishna playing his magic flute before the enraptured Radha, of Ganpati in his wrestler's suit, of Sivaji the great Maharatta hero swearing to devote himself to his country's cause, or of some national ceremony, a bethrothal, or a wedding. These modellers evidently do not work for the sake of posthumous glory, for they usually destroy their models at the close of a season and spend several months in executing new

ones. The modeller is also greatly in request on certain festivals as the purveyor of portable images to the public. At Benares the writer watched such an artist modelling with great dexterity innumerable little clay images of Shiva and Krishna. These were to be sold at the ensuing festival of Sankranti after which they would be unobtainable until the next annual occasion came round. It is a frequent sight in the Deccan (or South) to see such clay models laid out by the wayside to dry in the sun. Unfortunately they are easily broken. The Indian Artist is usually a spendthrift of his genius. He is not a business man, and generally makes a bad contract with Fate. One of the most beautiful and suggestive sights that Bombay has to show is that of the Pathare Prabhu women making their delightful but evanescent sand pictures in brilliant colours on the floors of their houses on the occasion of the festival that is known as Diwali Holidays. The silver statuette shows the Goddess Mahishasur Mardini—the Demon-killer—slaying a terrible "Asura," "who having performed penance and obtained blessings from Brahma (the Creator of the Universe) grew so mighty that he conquered the three worlds



Brass Lamp (Reay Art Workshops).



Silver Articles (Reay Art Workshops).

and dethroned Indra and the other Gods. The Gods in their distress appealed to Shiva, who, pitying them, desired Parvati, (his wife) to go and destroy the giant. She accepted the commission willingly. When the battle began, the Goddess assumed a thousand arms and produced a number of weapons from her body. The Demon took the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain and approached the Goddess; but she tied his legs and with her nails tore him to pieces. He rose again in the form of a buffalo and with his horns cast stones, trees, and mountains at his adversary; "tearing up trees by the breath of his nostrils." After a terrible combat full of Protean changes she plunged her spear into the breast of the Fiend who perished miserably, much to the great joy of all the Gods.

The Carpet.

The carpet was also made in the Reay Art Workshops at the School of Art, whose staff and students besides being responsible for the Silversmith's part in the statuette of "Mahishasura Mardini" executed all the furniture, carvings, and ornaments and constructed the walls and ceiling of the room.

The carpet was woven in the Carpet-weavers' Class, one of the classes which always seems to arrest the attention of visitors to the Applied Arts Section of the School. The operation of weaving is certainly an entertaining one. Behind the loom on which the numerous colours are slowly taking shape and design, squat a row of very small boys with very bright faces and sparkling eyes. The master crouches on the ground in front of the loom poring over the squared cartoon of the carpet design which is spread before him, shouting aloud the colours and numbers of the threads which must be counted by the little gnomes, invisible of course to him. All he can see of his assistants is the puncturing of deft little fingers between the threads of his loom, (which his trained eye watches closely,) fingers that work with amazing rapidity, selecting and twisting the vegetable-dyed threads into their proper places, while a chorus of little voices echo the master's instructions. This carpet is Persian in design and woven with 200 stitches to the square inch. Carpet weaving in Bombay is unfortunately one of those beautiful Indian crafts that has fallen into the sere and yellow leaf. The class at the School of Art is the only one

where it is still taught. Most of the carpets from Southern and South Western India are made in the jails. The present foreman in the Vellore Jail (Madras Presidency) is an old student of this class.

The Divan or Gadi.

The wood carvers' class is responsible for the carving that enriches the furniture and windows. A conspicuous example of the work of this class is the "Gadi" or seat of honour, which the Rajha or the Head of the Household might use. The back of this seat, carved in Hindu style, is one of the best pieces of carving in the room. This throne is covered with rose-coloured silk, over which is the canopy or umbrella ("the Chutri"), which forms so customary a feature in the old paintings we see of the Mughal and Rajput schools.

The Writing Table.

The carving of the writing table is in the Gujerat style. The joinery is skilful and the dome flanked by "Butcha" (literally "Baby") domes, is a well known pattern, which the students thoroughly understand and delight in.

The Side-Board.

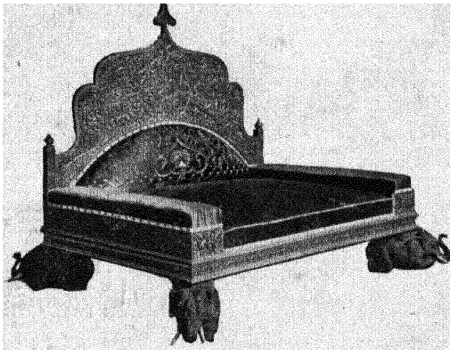
The stand which is usually utilised to hold vases, salvers, and the usual ornaments of an Indian home, is also carved with Gujerat designs of a very simple type carefully executed.

Chaurang.

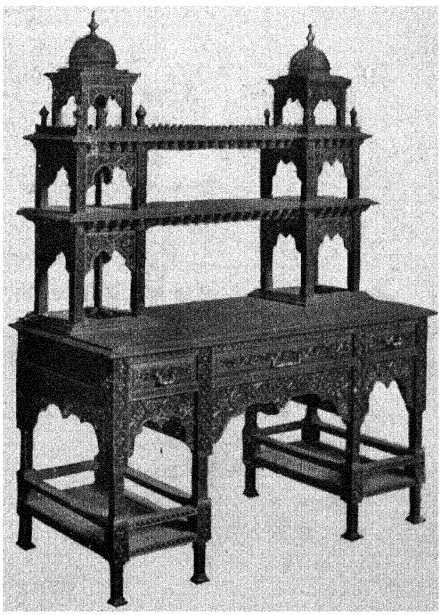
The foot-stool like object, with the top of beaten brass, is in reality a low table and is used for articles of "Puja" (worship). The brass work has been designed from details among the Ajanta frescoes, whose elephants and birds have been transposed from ceilings, and from panels and adapted by the designers to their new setting, and new medium of metal instead of paint. The lotus, birds, and animals have been executed by the metal workers with the same loving skill with which the old-time Buddhist Painters were so abundantly gifted.

The Hexagonal "Teapoy" (Table).

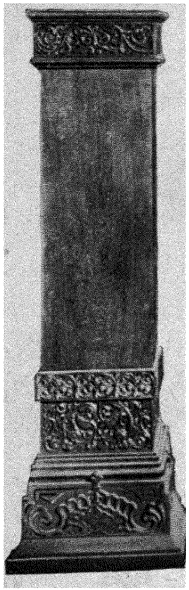
The little table of a design almost as familiar in England as in India is carved in better style than the numerous examples which are offered for sale in the bazaar of



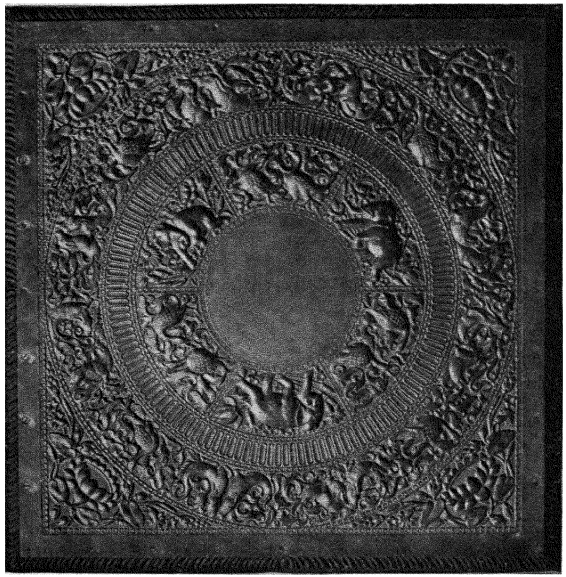
The "Gadi."



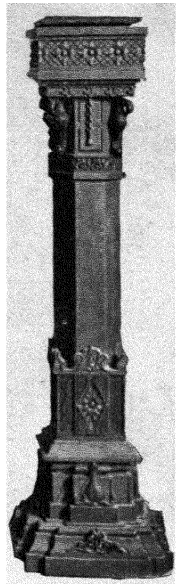
Carved Table.



Pedestal (Wood .



The Chaurang (Beaten Brass).



Pedestal (Wood).

Bombay ; and nowadays it would not be easy to purchase one as well finished.

Pedestals.

One of the carved pedestals which sports four Indian parrots shows considerable variety of carved decoration. The joinery also acclaims the diligence of the workers. The other stand is of simpler design.

Hanging Cabinet or Shrine.

In this attractive piece—so typical an adjunct to an Indian Room—we are reminded of Bijapur, that marvellous medley of domes, and minarets, of ruined shrines of saints and of kings' sepulchres. The proportions of this piece are interesting and suited to its main purpose which is to be the receptacle of the Deity before whom the family will duly perform their " Puja."

Window and Panel Frames.

Other interesting examples of carving are to be seen in the perforated windows, with their interlaced foliage in the style of Ahmedabad, which are worth study ; and also in the crisply carved frames that enclose the wall panels, each one of which has a different design—Gujerati and Mahomedan.

The Hanging Lamp.

The beautiful brass lamp suspended outside the entrance is the result of six months' painstaking work by the Iron and Brass Workers. The separate pieces are closely finished and fitted.

Silver Articles, the Salver, Sprinkler, Attardan, etc.

The large salver is a recent specimen of modern Indian silver work. How largely India is still indebted to her antiquities for inspiration is an arguable question, but that Ajanta is again the fountain from which the designs on the tray have had their source is very clear. The salver is an important item in the ritual of worship because the Attardan, Gulabdan, Chawfulla and other articles used for "Puja" are placed upon it. The Rose-water Sprinkler (Gulabdan) is also a piece that can claim many kindred in Indian collections. The design in this exhibit is also based on Ajanta. The Gulabdan plays an important part in the Wedding Ceremony, Thread Ceremony, and other national festivals. It is a symbol of affection in a gathering. The Attardan (a fascinating receptacle for holding Attar of

Roses applied to the wrist by the dainty dipper) is among the prettiest and most Oriental of trinkets. Sometimes the perfume it contains is sprinkled on cotton dips which are then placed in the outer part of the ear. The silver box (Chawfulla) with its five mango-shaped compartments (a very antique pattern) is used in religious ceremonies. It contains powder pigments in which the finger is dipped preparatory to tracing the sacred characters upon the forehead. The colours which the separate cavities contain are saffron, cunku, gulal, abeer, and shendur. The five compartments cannot be opened until the central screw is turned.

"Sumai," Table Lamps.

The two silver lamps of Cutch design have pedestals shaped like Indian corn-cobs with enveloping leaves; with their seven wicks fed by the clear oil of the cocoanut. Lighted, these lamps are much in evidence at worship and Darbar meetings.

Enamels.

The little enamel trays, very daintily designed and finished, are destined to hold fragrant spices; or the delicate varied sweet-

meats which the Indian ladies have not yet lost the art of preparing with their own wonderfully skilful hands.

POTTERY.

The Indian side-board contains some specimens of vases produced by the Pottery Department in the School of Art. They are Persian in shape, but in decorations adhere to the Sind style—itself an adaptation from the Persian. These pieces are composed of practically the same ingredients as ordinary English Earthenware; but Indian material only has been utilised. Part of the material used in the glaze is of foreign manufacture, such as White Lead, Red Lead, and a few other chemical products. The School of Art Potteries use all the processes for the production of glazed Earthenware that are in use in England, though more hand labour is perforce employed.



"Budha" (Mercury).



"Bhauma" (Mars).



"Painting" (Wall Panel).

CHAPTER IV.

THE INDIAN ROOM.

The Frieze and Wall Paintings.

THE Frieze nineteen inches wide is a variation in the Ajanta style (as this indigenous art may be termed) of the methods used in the ceiling border. The Gods whose pictures form the centre of each of the four sections, are Ganesha with the Elephant's head and having his constant companion the rat at his feet; Brahma, with the three faces (his fourth is not visible); Shiva (the Destroyer) with the crescent moon in his hair, seated on his tiger skin, and Vishnu (the Preserver) with the disc.

Ganesha.

Better known in Bombay as "Ganpati"* is immensely popular in South Western India. He is the God of Wisdom and Good Fortune and is always invoked at the beginning of any important undertaking. The story of how Ganpati came by the elephant's

* Pronounced "Gunputty."

head is variously told, but the one most often narrated is the following:—Ganpati was the son of Shiva and Parvati. One day when his Mother was bathing, she stationed her son to guard the door and the privacy of her apartment. But Shiva desiring to enter, and being refused admittance, cut off the head of his son. Parvati's grief however moved him to regret his hasty action and he called for the first head that could be found. This, which happened to be that of an elephant, he placed upon the body, which he then restored to life. In Bombay "Ganpati" is usually delineated or modelled with a head that has certain human resemblances, such as the flesh colour of the face, or the hair, or eyes. But in other parts of India he is usually shown with the true elephant's head.

Brahma.

Who occupies the centre of another section of the Frieze, is the Father of the Gods, the most exalted figure in the Hindu Pantheon. He is said to have created his four faces in order to be able to gaze upon his bride Satarupa when she sought this way and that to glide out of the way of his ardent glances. He is here painted with the conventional

emblems, and in his usual pose seated on the *lotus* (Kamala).

SHIVA.

Whose image also adorns the frieze is the Destroying Deity. He is "represented in human form, living in the Himalayas along with Parvati, sometimes in the act of trampling or destroying demons, wearing around his black neck a serpent, and a necklace of skulls, and furnished with a whole apparatus of external emblems, such as a white bull on which he rides, a trident, tiger's skin, elephant's skin, rattle, noose, etc. He has three eyes, one being in his forehead, in allusion either to the three Vedas (Sacred Books) or time past, present and future. He has a crescent on his forehead, the moon having been given to him as his share of the products of the churning of the ocean." In this picture the River Ganges is depicted as taking its rise from among his hair. This, perhaps the most famous river in the world, of inestimable sanctity to the Hindus, was brought down from Heaven to Earth by King Bhagiratha owing to the austerity of his penances. The occurrence was in this wise. What men term the Milky Way in the

Heavens is said to be the celestial Ganges, which sprang from the feet of the Great God Vishnu. When for several years there was no rain upon the Earth, the Holy King Bhagiratha besought Vishnu to send him the water he required wherewith to perform the needful ceremonies in honour of fifty of his deceased ancestors. Vishnu thereupon told Ganga the River Goddess, that she must go upon Earth and relieve with her flood the King's distress. She flew into a great rage, refused to comply, and when compelled to do so in spite of her tears and entreaties, hit upon an objection which she thought sufficient. Who, she asked, would receive her overwhelming flood which would infallibly deluge the whole Earth? Vishnu in this dilemma asked Bhagiratha to approach Shiva and request him to be the inductor of Ganga to Earth, and he promised to receive her in his hair. Enraged with fury at his audacity Ganga decided to hurl herself upon Shiva and destroy him. But he stood upon the Himalayas and spreading out every individual hair, he caught and held the furious torrent as it came down. Not a drop escaped from the hair of the God; so that King Bhagiratha still distressed, appealed to Shiva, telling him

that though Ganga had come to Earth she remained enclosed in his hair. Then parting his hairs the God permitted the waters to pour forth in three mighty rivers, which are the Ganges, Indus, and Jumna. The three together are termed "Trijrathaga" which signifies "going in three directions."

Vishnu.

The last of the three great Gods represented on the Frieze (in whose august company Ganpati has been placed by the students of the School of Art for the sake of his auspicious influence) is Vishnu the Preserver as Shiva is the Destroyer. The Mahabarata (the greatest of Indian epics) tells us :—"On a seat glorious as the meridian sun, sitting on white lotuses is Vishnu, and on his right hand is Lakshmi (his Consort) who shines like a continued blaze of lightning and, from whose body the fragrance of the lotus extends 800 miles."

The Wall Panels.

A first glance at the seven panels upon the walls in their frames of carved teak can hardly fail to suggest a certain incongruity, and one is conscious of the fact that all the panels

are different in feeling, and that only one or two of them correspond with the general style of the frieze and the spirit of the decorations. The ceiling, though the differences are not quite so marked, might also be exposed to criticism if harmony of style were the prime object aimed at by the School of Art. But the Indian Room is designed quite as much with a view of showing the versatility of young Indian artists as with the object of displaying distinctive characteristics of Indian decorative art.

The students were therefore left free to show their individual notions and methods of filling the wall spaces allotted to them. Their differences in manner and method are wide, and open up an absorbing field of promise and speculation. "Music" on the one hand, and "Piety" on the other, mark striking antithises of style. The former clearly adheres to the "Ajanta" tradition, and bears the Hall Mark of the type of Art that would universally be recognised as "Indian." Yet both are by Brahmin students, and both these students are intensely Indian in their convictions. Of the two Mr. L. N. Joshi, the painter of "Piety," is perhaps the more National in his artistic

point of view, though his panel suggests so-called "Western" influences to the observer. But it is as essentially Indian as the frieze or the ceiling border. Its subject is Indian; it is painted by an Indian; and because the young artist has followed nature and shown an appreciation of tone values, and subtle gradations of colour, besides the forms of nature, it is none the less a natural art product of the country whose artistic expression—far from being as stereotyped as is often supposed—has varieties as numerous as her races, costumes, and creeds. The art of India must not and cannot be limited to-day to any one style, or mannerism.

GANPATI PROCESSION, BOMBAY.

The long-shaped central panel (6 ft. by 3 ft.) on the wall is the work of Mr. A. A. Bhonsale, a Hindu of the Saraswat caste. For this work the young artist was in December 1923 awarded a special Gold Medal, the gift of His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, the late Governor of Bombay. Its subject is a very familiar one to dwellers in the "Second City of the Empire."

The 4th day of the Hindu month Bhadrapada is the festival of Ganpati, and

continues to be observed for five or ten days, while images of the God are carried forth from the houses by the people in processions and immersed in sea, or river, or well. They are then brought back to their places among the household Gods. While on the way to the place of immersion the crowds chant sacred hymns in praise of the Giver of Good Fortune. This famous holiday is always a great occasion of rejoicing for Hindus, especially in the Maharatta country. Bombay is then thronged with vast crowds moving by various routes to the wide semicircle of sand at the foot of Malabar Hill that is called "Chowpati." The sands themselves are ablaze with the "saris" of the women who accompany the men, and sing hymns before the images. The thrumming of the tom-toms and the rhythmic music of stringed instruments falls intermittently upon the ear, and the whole city is given over to the worship of the genial God of Intelligence. Before returning from the sea the devotees take the sand from the locality where they have dipped the images to spread in their houses as a charm against evil influences.

In Mr. Bhonsale's panel we have a decorative but highly characteristic render-

ing of this festival. The charming little maiden in the foreground carrying the incense sticks, the man pouring oil upon his torch, the painted image of Ganpati, the man blowing the conch, etc., are all truly rendered, and show the student's powers of observation and of poetising in paint.

"Piety."

Close to the Ganpati Procession, to the left of the spectator is Mr. N. L. Joshi's "Piety" which measures four feet five and a half inches by two feet three inches, as do all the six upright panels. This painting gained the Special Silver Medal for the Mural Paintings presented by Sir George Lloyd on December 1st, 1923. It gives a truthful and sympathetic rendering of that well known type of the Bombay Bazaar, the Mahomedan Fakir. He stands wrapt in contemplation with henna-stained beard (the mark of the Hajji or pilgrim from Mecca) and with strings of beads and prayer cases encircling his neck. Over his arm is slung the box with which he solicits alms from the charitably-inclined, and he leans upon a bundle of staves of different shapes and sizes. At his feet, (and the swollen ankles are faith-

fully rendered), in its little reading-stand is his copy of the Holy Koran. There is a felicitous simplicity and withal a dignified note of reverence about this subject which are distinguishing marks of the work of this young Gujerati Brahmin.

"INDUSTRY."

To the spectator's right on the same wall is the Panel entitled "Industry" by Mr. A. Kamadolli, a Mahomedan student from Hubli in the Dharwar District. The stalwart figure of the cotton spinner was also studied from the life, and will convey some idea of the excellent physique of the Maharatta workman. He is a scion of the great fighting stock that successfully resisted the grand Mogul and his hosts, and did such yeoman service in the great war. The "Charka" or spinning wheel shown in this picture is still widely used in humble homes in many parts of South Western India.

"PAINTING."

Next comes "Painting," a picture of a young Maharatta lady illuminating with her brush a metal plate by Mr. B. A. Apte, a Brahmin. She wears the "sari" the most

typical garment of all India. It is a robe of very ancient type which is wrapped round the body and firmly adjusted without the help of any pin or other fastening. A sari measures nine yards in length, and if trailing folds are desired, as much as ten yards. The colours and embroidered borders of these garments are of great variety and beauty, and the splendid bearing of most of the humblest wearers, as with pitcher or basket on head they thread the crowded streets, is one of the first and most lasting impressions of India that the stranger experiences after landing in Bombay.

The vest or "choli" which this girl is wearing may also be of the most various colours. The young artist's rendering may not be perfect, but the "choli" is in reality chosen with an unerring colour-sense which—wonderful phenomenon—even the poorest cooly woman of India possesses!

"Sculpture."

A completely different method of painting marks the panel entitled "Sculpture." But the style of which this panel is an example, more than two thousand years of age, is still the one which seems to be most popular among

Indian Mural Painters. This however does not mean that figures are always to be seen on the walls of Indian houses. Unfortunately the decline of Patronage for indigenous art has led to the disappearance of the Peris and Apsaras whose images still brighten the age-old walls of the Ajanta caves. But the flat and ornamental convention of which this subject furnishes an example, is still frequently found in many modern Indian houses in Hyderabad, Mysore, and South Western India. Figures such as these are simply a revival which comes naturally enough to those who are accustomed to look at Mural Decoration from this especial Indian standpoint. Mr. A. Sami Khan, the painter of this work, is also the chief Illustrator of this volume.

"AGRICULTURE."

The vivid panel representing "Agriculture" is a bit of bravura in which its painter Mr. S. Fernandes (an Indian Christian from Malvan in the Ratnagiri District), has treated the subject with a free symbolism that revels in colour, and wealth of ornament, and disregards restrictions as to costume, period or style. It is painted from the life,

and while the head-dress and coiffure of the girl at least are from Kashmir, the magnificent drapery is a " Rupeta " from the Bazaars of Benares.

" Music."

Most Indian of all these Indian single-figure panels in the sense that it adheres most closely to traditional methods, " Music " by Mr. G. H. Nagarkar possesses many points of interest. The young artist (a Brahmin from Central Provinces) is also responsible for the centre panel of the Sun God on the ceiling. The influence of the Ajanta Caves is strongly marked in this painting; not that it is not therefore original, but because this student sees things in the same way that the Ajanta painters saw them. The flowing outline, the single stroke of the eye-brows and eye-lids, the craftsmanship displayed in the treatment of the girl's ornaments, and the *sittar* which she is playing; the peculiarly characteristic fingers with their aspiring tips, together with the flat convention with which the subject is treated, are all intensely Indian in feeling. Had all the panels been painted in this style, they would have been more in keeping with their

surroundings. That course, however, would have meant to sacrifice, for the sake of the effect of the whole, the opportunity of showing the Public the different methods of painting of different students, all original, and all in the widest and truest sense Indian.

CHAPTER V.

MURAL PAINTING.

(Historical Sketch.)

MURAL painting must ever be a subject of absorbing interest to artists and art lovers going as it does to the root of the matter. From the grey and misty era long before History itself began, when Paleolithic man lined his first sketch of ox or deer on the rocky walls of his Pyrenean cave for the admiration of his savage spouse, the walls have ever furnished a medium of expression and as it were a touchstone of the progress of civilisation, and of the upward trend of man's mind.

The birth of art itself—its babyhood, its adolescence, its prime, its decrepitude, and its decay may all be traced on the walls of the world's buildings—no matter whether these walls are monolithic or architechtonic in construction.

The rise of the graphic arts had its origin in the decoration of wall-spaces, and Painting has until very modern times clung

to the skirts of Architecture. It was a bad day for Painting and for Architecture when the two parted company, it was an unnatural disunion of twin souls; and the restoration of art in its all pristine glory must await the renewal of that close alliance as it existed in the good old days.

All lovers of India will be keenly and deeply solicitous to see revived in that country this *entente* between painter and architect, this union, which is essential if India is to become fully articulate and to impart the message which is hers alone, to the world.

Discoveries in recent times have established the extreme antiquity of mural painting—this Parent of the Fine Arts;—an antiquity so vast that it justifies us in the assumption that art is almost as old as man himself. Before our primitive Fathers had discovered the use of fire, clothing, or implements, they had formed a desire and found a means to depict on the walls, not rough, but beautifully drawn images of the beasts of the chase, as can be seen in many a cavern in France to-day. And far later, but still long before the dawn, in darkest Ethiopia glimmered the coloured frieze, the illuminated wall, the variegated column.

And so Art was carried into Egypt, and in the very first flush of the sunrise of History we perceive mural painting as an art of long established popularity and of immensely ancient tradition.

But from the influence of Egyptian art's rigid fetters the spirit of Mural Painting at last made her escape, to fly lightly across blue Ionian seas, and to be welcomed by a people in whose warm-hearted worship of beauty its North-African rigidity and coldness melted into supple charm. It was in the Halls of Delphi, and in the colonnades of Athens that Mural Painting was first acclaimed the Queen of the Arts. The sway this art wielded over the Athenians, is too often forgotten by us to-day. The reason is not very far to seek, because of all the well-attested triumphs of Mural Painting of ancient Greece no trace that is worthy remains, so that it is only by refreshing our memories with the descriptions of contemporary authors that we realise the vast importance accorded by the Greeks to the art of painting upon the walls.

That must, in truth, have been a Golden Age of painting. "If anything were wanting," writes an eminent authority, "to

convince us of the high estimation painting was held in by the Greeks, two facts alone, namely, that Plato studied it, and Socrates was a sculptor by profession are enough." Another historian writes, " What must have been the effect on the rising youth of Greece when the Amphictyonic Council decreed that Polygnotus, their greatest monumental painter, should be maintained at the public expense wherever he went, as a mark of National admiration for his great work, the Mural Paintings in the Hall at Delphi."

Again we read that " Zeuxis " (the painter) " became very rich, grew very haughty and always appeared at the Olympic games in a purple robe with his name on the border." Apelles who came next in this great trio received if possible even more public praise and patronage than his predecessors. The greatest works of all these great artists were executed upon the walls.

But with the conquest of Greece by the Romans, Mural Painting slipped steadily downwards from its high place till under the Emperor Justinian, the art that had delighted the accomplished Athenians was finally banished from the walls and vaultings as vulgar !

Mosaic with its dazzling pretensions had ousted the purer art. It was not until the Italian Renaissance that the buildings of Europe once more received at the hands of great artists the accolade of colour.

But if that dainty spirit whose perigrinations we are attempting to trace, was wellnigh banished from Europe throughout the period of the Dark Ages, she had found a place of refuge.

In the seventh century Huen Tsang, a Chinese pilgrim, home-returned from his wanderings among the Buddhist shrines of India, told his marvelling hearers of " a great mountain with towering crags and a continual stretch of piled up rocks and scarped precipice." He told them of a wondrous monastery carved out of that dark valley; of its " lofty halls and side-aisls," deep-hewn in the solid rock, and how on these walls were painted in glowing tints living pictures illustrating the life of the Master.

Here then was the " Desired Haven " ! Here the spirit outcast from the flaunting palaces of the Cæsars, condemned to imprisonment in crypt, and catacomb; scarcely tolerated at the Court of Charlemagne, and derided by the barbarian hosts that invaded

Europe, here had she found a resting place.

It was in the caves of Ajanta, to the music of foaming cataract, and to the chant of Buddhist hymn that Mural Painting rose again as from the dead; and while Attila, the scourge of God, was sweeping the very name of beauty and art from the face of the Western World, lo! the Buddhist monks deep-buried in their mountain fastness—painting and painting, until they had indeed made the Desert to "rejoice and blossom like the Rose." The Western traveller who approaches the Cave-Temples of Ajanta should do so with feelings of reverence akin to these with which he treads the Sacred Way at Delphi, or climbs the Acropolis at Athens.

He cannot but feel that he is approaching one of the great landmarks of the world; one of those ancient external monuments that towering upward, overtop all their surroundings, like the tall rock fronting for all time the useless fury of stormy seas.

CHAPTER VI.

MURAL PAINTING.

(THE AJANTA CAVES).

THE Mural decorations of Ajanta* are pervaded by a spirit of sweet reasonableness. They are touched by no suspicion of affectation or doubt; by no shadow of pretence. They do not strut and masquerade. They are not jackdaws tricked out as peacocks. Even such work as that of the great Pinturrichio seems far removed in its conscious and almost arrogant swagger from these genuine and lovely colour dreams of lovely and genuine souls. No doubt these old Buddhist artists had one great advantage of the modern, in that they had not eaten to avidly of the fatal tree of knowledge. Hence the grateful impression of an all-pervading refreshing ease which the paintings at Ajanta as a whole make upon the spectator, and which is

* This and the preceding chapter are reprinted from a lecture delivered by the Author before the Architectural Students' Association on July 7th 1921, published in the *Bombay Chronicle's* issue of the 12th July 1921.

generically different to the oppressive effect which is so often produced by a view of even the best works of Art.

To enjoy a similar spell we should have to get right back into Pagan Greece. Certainly there is nothing in all the lofty perfection of Mural Painting in Christian Italy quite so natural in feeling—so reckless—and at the same time so wise. We will, however, leave the consideration of the comparative place in the world's art which should be assigned to Ajanta (one of the most fascinating of subjects) and endeavour to arrive at an estimate of some of the qualities which make these Mural Paintings so valuable and instructive.

One should avoid any tendency to regard the Ajanta paintings as in the nature of a *tour-de-force*, an isolated miracle of art, brought into being by mysterious forces into which it would be almost sacrilege to inquire too closely. Many admirers of these works have laid stress on their subjective qualities of character and what is called their spirituality. In a sense these works were, of course, inspired as are all works of human genius.

But to imagine that these works were produced simply as the result of a lofty

spirit of religious self-dedication and enthusiasm would be a far too limited and one sided explanation of their beauty. Religious enthusiasm no doubt did much to sweeten the toil and labour of their work for the workers, but alone it would not have sufficed. No one knows better than the decorative artist that Mural Painting cannot depend upon enthusiasm entirely for its success though it must have that strong derivative force.

There are no lucky flukes in Mural Painting. The art is too circumscribed and difficult in its technique—too purely intellectual. But if there is one emotional quality that prevails more than another in the Ajanta panels, it is to be discovered in their remarkable and abounding "joie de vivre"; the religious element is frequently conspicuous by its absence; and no where very obtrusive except in the sublime figure of the "Bodhisatva"* in Cave 1, who by the way is surrounded by some of the most charming but certainly most mundane of the lovely cave creatures.

Another still more important fact to show that the paintings were the result of profound technical knowledge, gradually

* That is, Buddha before his Great Renunciation.

acquired, is that in the Ajanta Caves we possess only one surviving example of an art that was in its day widely diffused throughout India.

The country was filled with similar indigenous Mural Paintings the sum of whose beauty may well have more than equalled Ajanta as we see it.

The monks painted these pictures in tempera, and it says much for that ancient medium that some of the earliest paintings still extant—by no means the least beautiful either—were executed 2,000 years ago. This is a point worth noting in view of the doubt sometimes expressed that Mural Painting whether in fresco, oil, or tempera, will not stand the Indian climate. The freshness of the colouring in some of the caves is truly marvellous, and where they have darkened it is either on account of the preservative coat of varnish applied in recent times, or because of pilgrim's fires and the rough handling they have undergone at one time and another.

The monks used a very restricted palette; a beautiful jade green, and occasional citron are perhaps the most vivid notes that prevail; the basis of the whole colour-scheme being

a warm earth tint. This reticence of tints—not of colour—so far from being a limitation, enormously increases the general unity of effect which successive artists managed to retain through all the variations of style during the lapse of centuries. It also tends to a broad simplicity in spite of the extremely elaborate composition of some of the panels.

But if the critic finds in this restricted range of colour merely an evidence of the paucity of pigments then existing—a theory which cannot wholly cover the facts—he cannot so explain away the amazing selective skill with which the Ajanta masters—for all their limitations of knowledge of tone values—graduated the tones of their colours.

They understood the perils of monotony, and instead of relying upon a wide variety of colours were able to achieve by means of strong contrast and skilful variations of tone all the titillation required.

Yet their scale of values also was closely and sternly limited. The sparkling high lights so dearly loved by some modern Mural Painters amount to what old Vasari might have termed "a capital heresy in the art". At Ajanta an art broad as the Indian Ocean, luminous as the Indian Night, subdued to an almost ascetic

point of renunciation of tricks of the trade, looms darkling upon our reverent gaze.

There is much at Ajanta that is naturally less worthy; and in the caves of later days there are figures as still and iron-wrought as if they were from the stilted brush of Margaritone. But the designs in the First and Second Caves are most noble. Fully did our Masters understand that the silhouette is and must ever be the basis of Mural Painting. How well they avoided geometrical symmetry in planning the points of their composition; how carefully they varied the distances and heights of the heads of their figures; how fully they realised and eschewed the damaging weakness that ever lurks in the concave line. Their drawing is expressive, virile, telling; their Arabesques full of life. Each individual figure or piece of drapery is made to yield the utmost in line and expression, that can be got out of it. Never do these old Buddhist Artists become banal—never do they call in the art of the easel painter to lend them meriticious aid; what cannot be well expressed in line or silhouette—should not be attempted by the Mural Painter, and well does the Ajanta tradition maintain this golden rule.

But the Masters did not limit themselves in regard to form any more than the restrictions of a just regard for the exigencies of space, and the control of colour, and light and shade demanded. On the contrary they revelled in humanity—the humanity of the world about them. Their delight in the decorating of naked limbs with ornaments is the naive and innocent delight of the child,* and the beauty of mortal Woman permeates their compositions, as the perfume of the moon-flower fills the Indian gardens in April.

They worked from the living model freely, constantly and with a keen appreciation of movement and gesture; and they certainly painted from cartoons and sketches. Their use of outline differs much in its treatment, it being sometimes eliminated altogether as in the four-figure panel of a lady at her toilet, where the edges of the figures are wonderfully treated, the general effect being so broad in feeling as to remind us forcibly of the later work of Giovanni Bellini.

But as a rule they relied upon a definite outline, and a very pure and beautiful line it is.

* No more perfect or imaginative use of ornament exists.

We may be sure that many of the heads are portraits ; there are many very characteristic ones which are perfect. And throughout every phase of these decorations pulses a throbbing, vigorous, energetic life, that was never yet attained by visionaries, but only by energetic craftsmen with highly developed powers of mind, of observation and of technique. The Painters of Ajanta were far from being mere visionaries. They were a band of tremendously practical hard-workers. This is a point that cannot be too strongly insisted upon to-day when there still exists a tendency to approach Indian Art from the mystical or antiquarian rather than from the genuinely artistic point of view.*

* See the Paintings of the Buddhist Cave Temples of Ajanta, by J. Griffith. Published by the orders of the Secretary of State for India in Council 1896. (Out of Print.)

Ajanta Frescoes by Lady Heringham and her assistant Humphrey Milford : Oxford University Press, London, 1915. The Rock-cut Temples of India, by J. Fergusson, London : John Weale, 59, High Holborn.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BOMBAY REVIVAL OF MURAL PAINTING.

WHAT is the lapse of a few centuries in the lifetime of a nation that has to its credit thousands of years of artistic effort? Since the old Buddhist artists vanished from the land, probably no paintings quite so entrancingly beautiful as theirs have adorned the walls of Indian buildings. But the art of Mural Painting continued under the Mughal and Rajput princes; and that wall decorators laboured throughout this period is indicated by still surviving works. Up to the present time the art of wall painting has been practised in one form or another, and a glimpse at the bazaars of any South Indian City is enough to prove that the Indian artist —though, alas, no longer the protegé of Emperors or Kings!—still revels in this great traditional form of artistic expression. It is true that the ferocious tigers, the battling elephants, the many-handed Gods, the frightful looking demons which startle one by their

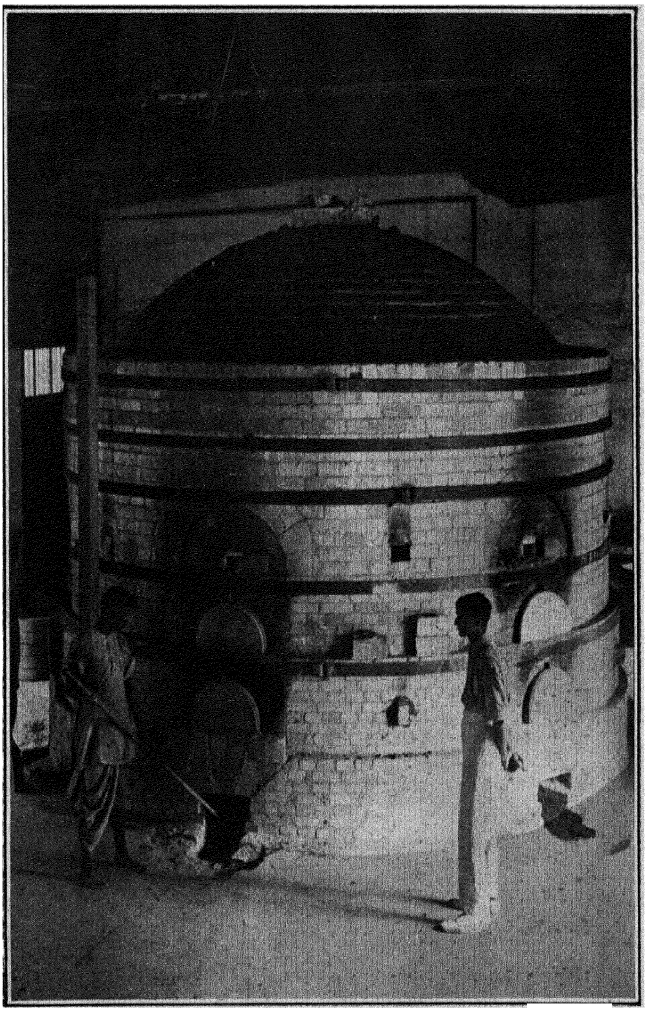
sudden appearance on wayside shrines or whitewashed chawls, impress us often as the scribblings of amateurs rather than as the works of serious artists. Still they are there, and that they are there, is significant of the universal craving for art expression which has an unique character in India and which undoubtedly finds its most popular outlet in the art of painting. In a country where we find a wealth of lore accumulated, transmitted, purged and distilled through the Alembic of centuries, it is not strange that the art student should naturally be susceptible to an uncommon degree to the influences of encouragement. Students destitute of education (as such is generally understood in the West) are yet possessed of what is probably the most magnificent equipment of spiritual and imaginative gifts with which any country has endowed her sons. Students of very poor circumstances (and Poverty in India is even leaner than she is in Europe) who are unable to speak English and whose " Education " stopped short at the 3rd Standard, will frequently be found to possess a general knowledge of Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, and even some other language. To these languages the poorest Brahmin student

adds Sanskrit. They will be found to be deeply steeped in their great Mythological Romances, which, though comparable in their effect on ardent juvenile imaginations to that of the epics of Homer upon the minds of Young England, are a more vitalising force since the Indians are still believers in them.

The Indian student can usually tell you at a glance that the Goddess Saraswati must not be shown without her peacock at her side; that Shiva must sit upon his tiger's skin; how many hands the least known Deity can boast; whether an emerald should hang upon Radha's fair brow or be grafted upon her coral ear. He can thread his way with the certitude of joyous ease among a mass of conventions that would as certainly cramp his Western brother's powers as did the iron Cage of Tamerlaine the unhappy Sultan Barjazet. He can deal with a mystifying mass of essential minutiae and, through an unprecedented litter of details, can fix a lucid and candid result upon his canvas.

With students such as these to his hand, the sympathetic European professor is indeed a man to be envied, for he can reckon upon enthusiasm to support genius. In India, the question of the revival of Painting resolves

itself in fact into one of organisation in Art Education, the bestowal upon the students of facilities for study, and, above all, opportunity for production. Art is a thing that *can* be helped or hindered by individuals and by Schools of Art; and since that is so, all lovers of India, and believers in her unique beauty, must admit the need of helping on in the race the eager competitors who are straining forward upon the starting line. The Bombay School of Art as a focus for national impulses naturally offers full scope for the work of beginning to stimulate Indian art, and when in 1919-20 a start was made by the students to decorate the walls of the School of Art, it marked a very real and definite step on the part of the Educational Department towards realising its Ideal of Trusteeship for National Genius. When on December 14th 1920, His Excellency Sir George Lloyd, the Governor of Bombay, unveiled in the School of Art, the first of the Mural Paintings which his personal patronage had called into being, the action was interpreted by the spectators in the crowded hall as one of those momentous gestures which can sometimes define the principles of National Progress more sharply than can words. That scene indeed awakened



A Furnace—Pottery Dept.



" Sculpture " (Wall Panel).

glowing reminiscences and brighter hopes for the restoration in the School of Art of that atmosphere of fervent endeavour in the artist, and of help, appreciation and recognition in his Patron, which if not the only atmosphere in which the flower of Art can flourish, is at any rate the one that has produced the finest blooms. The students of the School having whetted their desire to achieve good work upon the decorations of their own walls, and encouraged under the eye of a leader whom they respected for his exalted position, and loved for his artistic taste and interest in their welfare, were not to be denied—responsive as they are to personal aid and encouragement; so that the task of improving the School of Art which the Government of Bombay had resolved to take in hand, came to be recognised as the particular care of the Governor himself. In England where Schools of Art are rarely visited by the high and powerful of the land, it may be thought strange that an Institution meant for the production of artists, should admit such considerable indebtedness for inspiration to the direct power of influential patronage. But for an analogy to the undoubted impetus which the Indian students

have derived from this policy—of influential encouragement—we need but consult the pages of the history of France, of Italy, and of our own country.* In the West the Patron has not in modern times bulked as large in the lives of artists as he did formerly. The Ruler who wishes personally for the expansion of the artistic talents of his people, and who views this not as a fancy but as a necessity for the successful progress of the nation, can now in a manner delegate this duty to an Academy of Fine Arts. But in India there are no Academies, no Salons, no centres of Art Control, except the few Art Schools. The Art Societies, which are run mostly by amateurs, are very few and not powerful.† The position of Art in India is considerably worse than the situation of Art in Italy before Cosimo de Medici concentrated in his own munificent person the rejuvenating power of Patronage, and re-estabished that exquisite

* "I painting proudly with his treath on me.
All his court round him, seeing with his eyes.
Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of souls.
Profuse, my hand kept plying by those hearts."—*Browning's "Andrea del Sarto."*

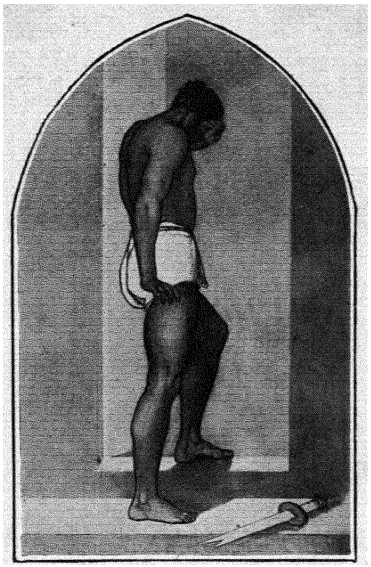
† No slight is here intended to those officials and other gentlemen who give so much of their time to the Art Societies. But facts are here stated because no fair sketch of the situation of Modern Indian Art can ignore them.





Cartoons for Mural Panels in the School of Art.





Cartoons for Mural Panels in the School of Art.

chain of fealty and devotion which can attach the young artist to the monarch. The broken links of this chain can certainly be restored in a country where discipleship is still understood, and where respect for the teacher is only next in importance to reverence for parents.*

The policy adopted by the Government of Bombay since it gave the sum of Rs. 5,000 for the embellishing of the walls of the School of Art with paintings, is one which is directed towards genuinely accelerating the revival of Indian painting, which no observer can doubt has already begun. For India is not one of those countries where as art is a matter of artificial importation rather than part of the National "Faith," the soil has to be prepared and the seed has to be sown before the plant can begin to grow. All that is required in India is to water the parched earth.

The rapidity with which the public mind has received and approved of the idea innate in the Indian Art revival as advocated by the School of Art, is so strong in its signi-

* In India the "Guru" or Teacher has a place of honour which can hardly be realised by those who have not seen him. For any Western comparison we will have to look back into Ancient Greece and see the young Alexander learning at the feet of Aristotle.

ficance that no review of the recent work of the School, however brief, can ignore it. The interest of the Governor was instantly responded to and understood as a serious factor in Indian Art Education by a very great body of public opinion. Indians of both sexes naturally enjoy pictures. To realize this truth it is only necessary to enter the Picture Galleries of the new Prince of Wales' Museum in Bombay on any public holiday when they are thronged with the picturesque if poverty-stricken people of the city, with their wives and children. Even the baby is perforce transported to this temple of Saraswati. As to whether many of the untutored visitors to Bombay's Picture Galleries and Art Schools really understand the full significance of the works they look at, is not so important as the fact that they find pleasure in looking at them. Thousands of people visited the first display of Mural Painting in the School of Art. This and other extraordinary and increasing ebullitions of public interest has been sympathetically assisted by the brilliant championship of Mr. Marmaduke Pickthall, Editor of the Nationalist Journal, *The Bombay Chronicle*, and his confrères. That Journal though frequently in op-

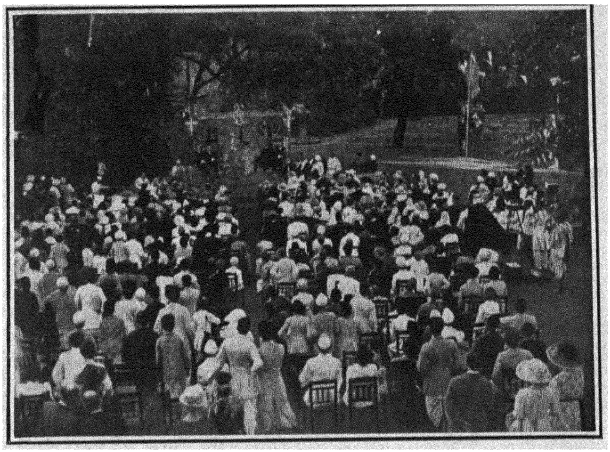
position has warmly supported the efforts of Government to help the School of Art and has helped to mould a very large section of public opinion of all creeds. The unity and weight of public approval must not be belittled merely because hitherto a comparatively limited number of individuals willing to employ the students in decorating their walls have come forward. India is a country that loves a leader. There is sufficient cause for the fact that this new cultural revival cannot expect to be fully patronised by the wealthy classes until it has unmistakeably recieved the Hall Mark of the approval of High Authority. Men of wealth in Bombay who have long been accustomed to look doubtfully upon pictures which are so easily accessible as their Indian ones, will require a little time to get used to the novelty of patronising once more as in bygone times the art of their own country. But this fact cannot be set in the scales against the great weight of popular opinion, which is welcoming the movement of the last five years as part of a widespread and genuine rebirth of National ideals and imagination.

The Indian School of Art is broad-based upon the fast foundations of the hearts of the

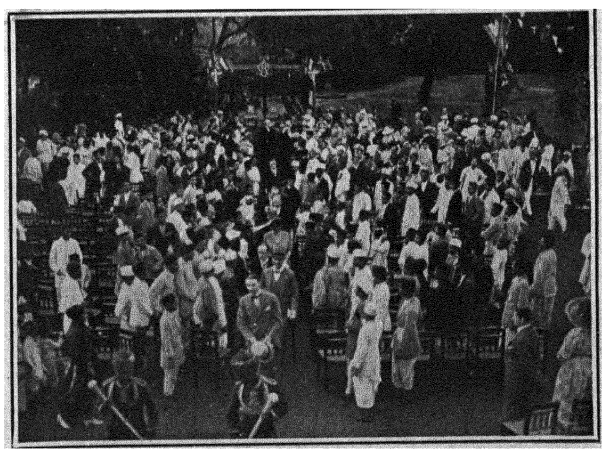
Indian people. Fabrics thus founded do not easily crumble. Erected on any support less stable no Institution that guards and fosters a National cause could hope to make itself heard by Indians at large. For the part that official patronage can play as an aid to Art must not be over-estimated—though for India it would indeed be difficult to do so.

The matter was well stated by Sir George Lloyd in his speech on the occasion of the unveiling of the first Mural Paintings at the School of Art. His Excellency said :—" From the time of Plato onwards it has been recognised that the state cannot afford to neglect the æsthetic environment of its citizens. In practice, however, it is considerably handicapped in doing what it would like for Art, because there are constantly more strictly utilitarian objects which seem to have first claim on public funds.

What Government can do is to provide opportunities of obtaining elementary instruction in technique. We can also follow this up by seeing that the best ideals of Art are presented for study in order to build up a good tradition ; but such a tradition must always depend to a large extent on the individuality of the students, their power to



Sir George and Lady Lloyd at the School of Art. The Governor delivering his address.



The Governor (seen wearing a grey hat) and Lady Lloyd, on their way to view the Students' work.

(Photos by Myers.)

assimilate the best elsewhere, and to adapt its expression to the national genius. This is the true function of the School of Art. Given the opportunity and stimulus, the rest depends upon individual effort, backed up by the patronage of the public, and historically this is the way in which modern Art is developed."



CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOMBAY REVIVAL.

TRUE to his spoken word Sir George Lloyd continued to study at first hand the needs of the School of Art and laboured with all the determination and energy that distinguished his administration to help the School in its great task. It is probable that very few among British Pro-Consuls have been seen time after time moving with an electrifying zeal among the students of an Art School while they were at work; pausing to praise the drawing of some enthusiastic young man and comparing it with a previous study; or delving deeply into the personal needs of the Indian Artists, their status, and the chances of improving it, at a period when money was scarce and the dreaded word "Retrenchment" could shatter more edifices, (whether ancient landmarks, or those airy ones built up by warm-hearted lovers of India,) than ever did the trumpets of the priests at Jericho.

Turning from the pessimists who teach that the Indian is but a copyist, Sir George preferred to look upon the latest imaginative sketches of the students for mural panels and decorative borders. When it was urged upon him that the flat convention was the most that could be hoped for from the Indian Artist, he would repair to the Life Classes of the School. There he would watch the progress of sound drawing, veracious tone values, and chiarascuro; and these most vital of all classes which his personal support had started as an experiment, were stabilised by an additional grant from Government as a confirmed success.* When told that the School of Art was but uselessly labouring to produce Artists for whom there existed no Public Demand, the Governor's voice was eloquently raised on many a public platform to "speak for those who could not speak for themselves." During his term of office he studied the theory of Emancipation of Indian Art so well, gave such telling impetus to the great artistic Ideal which he envisaged through the School of Art, that it was said of him on his retirement from Office by one of the foremost but also one of the most knightly

* The Life Classes were inaugurated in December 1919.

of his political critics, " What Lord Curzon did for Archæology Sir George Lloyd had within the limits of his jurisdiction tried to do for Indian Art."

Fortunate indeed were the staff and students whose efforts were supported and whose difficulties feelingly reduced by one of the staunchest and most intrepid friends who has ever succoured any group of hard-pressed artists.

But while His Excellency was an eager champion of the School's demand for the expansion which only opportunity can give, he was no tolerator of the Artistic theorist, and Production had to keep pace with demand. The most recent years have been years of arduous work,—but so congenial withal that the staff and students have cheerfully borne the additional labour, which the several considerable public works on which they were engaged either by the Governor or through his advocacy naturally entailed.

After the strenuous year 1919-20 when the students were busy painting their own walls, a trial effort which was to awaken (and did awaken) an apathetic city to a knowledge of the talent which had been buried when it might have been put out

to usury, came the commission to decorate the panels in the Durbar Hall, Government House, Bombay.

These were twenty in number and were all designed and executed by the students. Four of them measured 13 × 7 feet; and in these the figures had to be of the size of life. The remainder were of smaller dimensions.

True to its present creed no mere achaicisms were adopted in these panels; and as the designs were original, so were the types depicted sought for and found in that happiest of hunting-grounds for the Indian Artist, India, herself. The students decided to paint symbolic renderings of the Fine Arts, Handicrafts, and Occupations of the Deccan. The larger panels depicted Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and the Applied Arts. The smaller showed Hunting, Fishing, Gardening, Ploughing, Water-lifting, etc.

These panels were warmly welcomed and praised by the many who crowd to enjoy Their Excellencies' hospitality at Government House, both as an acquisition to the walls, and as an earnest of what might be expected of such progressive young artists.

Another big effort of the School this year was the painting of the Pylons which

decorated the streets of Bombay on the occasion of the Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. In this work the staff of the School took part aided by the students and showed what could be done by Indian methods adapted to meet the exigencies of the short time at their disposal. In consequence of the Publicity given to the School by these works, the Prize-giving Ceremony on February 14th 1922 was a brilliant function, and the verdant lawn that surrounded the decorated *shamiana* that the students had erected for Their Excellencies was crowded with friends and supporters of the School of Art. The costumes of the Europeans contrasted with the Indian dresses, and broken by a large sprinkling of white "Gandhi" caps showed emblematically the catholicity of that appeal which the School of Art ought to make to its public. For the School's compound is neutral ground where rival factions fraternally mix, where Cosmopolitan hearts beat in unison to the gentle but irresistible music of Saraswati's *Vina* which can still the pulsations of Politics, or the frettings of Commerce, as sweetly as did the harp of Orpheus the fierce prowlers of the Dorian Forests.

On this well-remembered occasion Sir George Lloyd presented a special Gold Medal and Silver Medal for the Mural Paintings, and in the course of his speech expressed his great gratification at the progress which the School had achieved since the occasion of his unveiling the first Mural Paintings ; "which," continued His Excellency, " goes to prove I think that the lines upon which the Principal and the School then chose to work were emphatically the right lines,—the lines of assimilating to the national Indian genius the best in modern Art. It is satisfactory also to learn from your Principal's speech that the number of students in the school shows a steady if not a very large increase. I am fully aware of the difficulties which students must face in attending the classes here. Government have, I am glad to say, approved, as an administrative, measure the institution of eight scholarships at Rs. 30 each and the discontinuance of four pupil teacherships at Rs. 10 per mensem each. Provision has been made for these scholarships, subject, of course, to the approval of the Legislative Council, and I feel sure that the Hon'ble Minister, who is here to-day, will, after seeing the work of the School, use all

his well-known persuasive powers to secure that approval. I wish I could tell you that other provision was possible and had been made, but unfortunately the present financial situation is absolutely prohibitive of such assurances."

Referring at length to the Painting and Modelling Classes, His Excellency continued :—" In these two classes, as in all the others, the School of Art has shown its great determination to proceed upon sound national lines. I have always held that successful art in India must be national and must be backed by national enthusiasm, and in what I have seen of the work of the School lately I have been most favourably impressed by the distinctly Indian character which shows strongly in all its productions. It is most encouraging also to see that this " Indianisation" has not taken the form of a return to a hide-bound convention, but is acquiring a real sense of form and colour, and at the same time developing the decorative instinct, which is so strongly national in character.

In all this I see the forecast of great developments in the future--developments of which the students of the School may

take pride that they . . . . . are the pioneers and forerunners."

The policy of Indianisation thus encouraged by the distinguished speaker and fortified by the new Government Scholarships continued to make such rapid progress throughout the following year that on the 27th of the ensuing February, Sir George Lloyd in opening the Exhibition of Students' work was able to tell an even more crowded audience :—"I do not think that any doubt remains now in the minds of the experts or of the general public that the objective towards which your Principal has elected to work is the right one; that the true work of the modern Indian Artist is to revive the ancient and national methods of artistic expression and to revitalise and restore them. That this is his true work is shown by the progress that is being made, and the artistic success that is being achieved by those who in this School are working to that end. That is to my mind the most important proof, indeed the only one worth having: for successful artistic work cannot be achieved without inspiration, and inspiration can come only when the artist is working on

lines natural to him, and endeared by inheritance and tradition. It is for this reason that I am not disposed to be very much impressed by analogies imported from overseas, and though I admit the significance of the revival of Mural Painting which is occurring elsewhere, I still think that for India its special importance lies in the artistic success which is being achieved by it.

And then for the opportunities available; let me say first that I welcome the invitation you have given me to-day particularly for the occasion it gives me for saying something to you on this all important subject. A year ago I said to you that national enthusiasm was one of the principal requirements for your success. And by that I did not mean mere verbal protestations of encouragement but real and practical patronage and support. In Poona last year I had occasion to state publicly the urgent need that existed for such support, and to point out the method by which the rich public of this Presidency could show their love for their country and assist in recording the culture of their time for the benefit of posterity. I am still of the same opinion and I would again impress upon the rich public of Bombay how vast is

the scope and how great the need for their assistance in this matter.

But the greatest opportunity of all is the one which your Principal has mentioned at length in his report. And let me assure you at once that I have supported and shall continue to support as strongly as possible your desire to be admitted to a part in the decoration of New Delhi. I cannot believe that those who are responsible for the construction of the new capital of India, in which the Legislative Assembly of India, and the Council of State will soon be nobly housed, will deny to the revival of Indian Art, struggling as it is against overwhelming difficulties, the opportunity which it so badly needs, deprived of which it may well sink back into the comparative obscurity in which it has lain for too long.

No one can decry the quality of the work of the Indian Art student to-day, which, as your Principal says, can stand comparison with that of the best students of Europe; or deny that in New Delhi lies a field for utilisation of that quality to which every argument points. And if they contend that to utilise trained artists of repute, for this work would be better for Indian

Art as giving it a model upon which to work, then I think they are wrong in not seeing that it is only works of art upon Indian lines which can serve as an inspiration to Indian students, and that in reality they will gain nothing by depriving you of this wonderful opportunity."

This ringing declaration by the Governor of Bombay of his support of the long-cherished desire of Indian Artists to be the painters of the walls of their New Capital marked the beginning of a new epoch for the School and for India ; heralding the near rising of the Sun after the long—the more than Arctic Night !

CHAPTER IX.

THE SCHOOL OF ART'S CURRICULUM.

THE system of tuition that is being employed in the School of Art; will interest all who believe that the future of a country is with its youth; and that a slovenly training can never turn out good artists. The necessity of good Schools of Art is admitted except by those who hold the view—so damaging to the artist—that artistic excellence depends solely on something beyond our control.

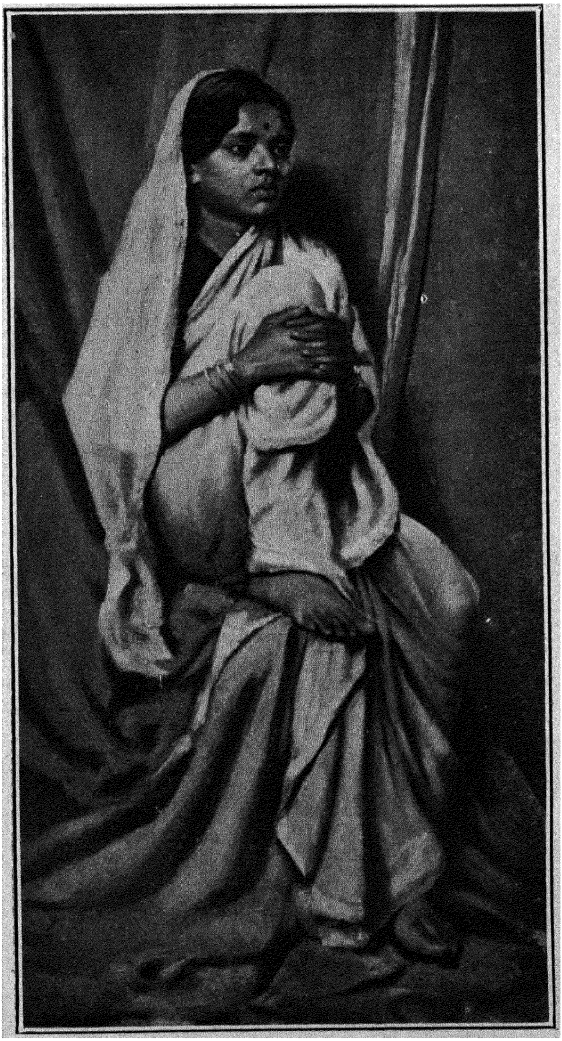
Art History the World over inculcates the necessity of assiduous study and most careful training in the Fine Arts before proficiency can be obtained; and the greatest of geniuses have ever been the most humble and diligent of students. The necessity for a School of Art having been once admitted, the question of its curriculum becomes all important.

Certain critics have been known to express the opinion that the work of the School of Art is not Indian. It is important that this

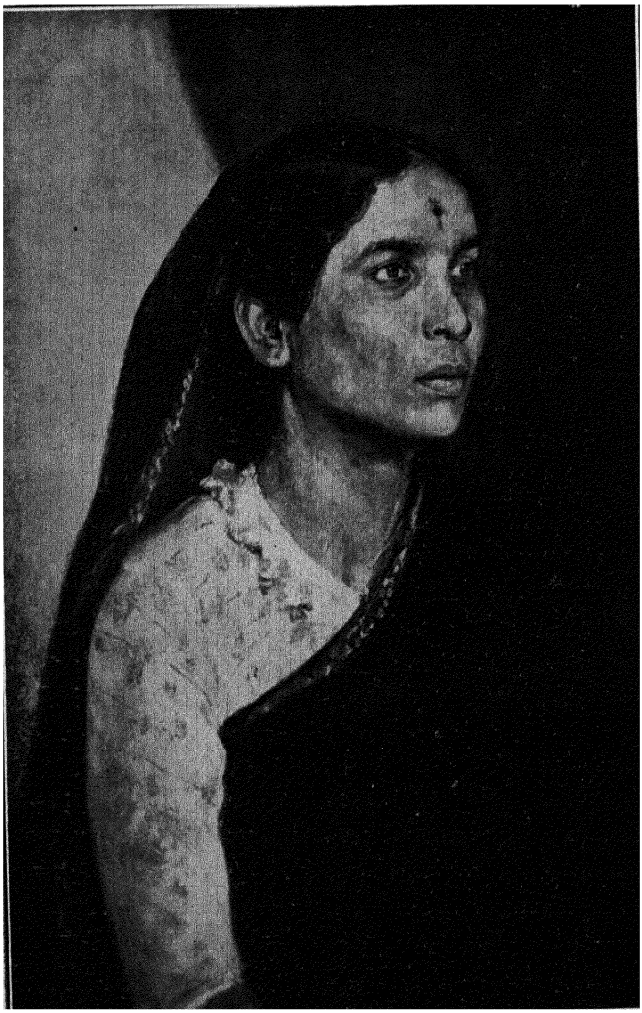
criticism should be considered because it bears directly upon the School's present productions and future opportunities. The work of the students is advancing by leaps and bounds; the continued progress in painting which they are making is indeed not an entirely isolated phenomenon but part of a general movement of advance in contemporary Indian Art; to those who enter the School and look at the classes for themselves, there exists the ocular evidence of the vigorous work it can produce. But is the work Indian or is it an overseas importation—a plant which cannot strike permanent root in an alien soil; and which even if it could, is not a desirable plant?

The young students of the School learn to see by drawing casts of heads, hands, or feet. They also draw Indian ornaments from casts, acquiring some knowledge of the principles of light and shade.

In the second year the student draws from the antique and feels himself strong enough to try to draw a head from the life. It should be remembered that the full course at the School of Art is only five years and that the students have not had that preliminary two or three years at least in an Art School,



Painting of a Draped Figure from Life. By H. P. Chowdary.



Painting of a Head from Life. By A. A. Bhonsale.

which students of the Royal Academy Schools, London, have usually completed before they enter the Academy Schools.* The second year student has also to draw a set subject out of his head in black and white, and in water-colour, so as to get some notion of the principles of pictorial composition, and decorative design.

In the Third year Class, the School of Art student finds himself set to study a draped figure from the life and a figure from the antique, in black-and-white, monochrome or colour. He has also to paint a head from the life. By the time he has finished his year in this class, he is expected to understand a good deal about proportion, tone values, and pictorial and decorative composition; all of which subjects become exceedingly important in the Fourth and Fifth Year Classes, where the head and the undraped figure are painted from life in oil-colours, or drawn in conté crayon and charcoal, and where pictorial composition is of course studied in its more advanced phases.

* To qualify for the Bombay School of Art, a student must have passed the Elementary and Intermediate examinations in Drawing.

It is from the Fifth Year Class that students are selected for promotion to the Class* of Mural Painting as it is popularly known. It will thus be seen that a student entering this class (which is a small one, all the members holding scholarships) must have a good knowledge of the principles upon which his art is based. He must be able to draw and to paint; to delineate any natural object that is put before him; and to illustrate any subject whether Historical, Decorative, or Idealistic.

In the Class of Mural Painting, he ceases to be a young student within the accepted meaning of the term, and can produce as opportunity offers the more finished work of post-graduate courses. There has during the last four years generally been some Wall-Painting to be done, whether for Government House, Bombay, for the decoration of the School of Art, or for the Indian Room of the British Empire Exhibition. It is hoped that the citizens of Bombay will see to it that there always

* The class of Indian Decorative Painting, founded in December 1919 under the personal patronage of H. E. Sir George Lloyd, Government allotted eight scholarships of Rs. 30 per mensem to this class. This is all that some of its ablest members have to live upon.

is mural painting to be done somewhere or other. It is in these paintings, done in this class, that the School of Art students are urged to apply in their own way the knowledge of Art that they have acquired, and of course it is in the application of that knowledge that we shall see the strongly marked characteristics that are so clearly non-European. The works themselves will prove that the School of Art is certainly Indian in the broadest and truest sense.

Some of the Head and Figure Studies might almost have been painted by French or British students ; but these represent but the grammar of the universal language of Art. It is the message which the students have to deliver when they have acquired that language that differs from that of their comrades in the West, and in the imaginative work of the School of Art this message appears. It is a National message and not the less so, because as the work of the School improves it is being delivered with more and more sureness, with fewer and fewer grammatical errors.

It would seem that there are two courses open in Art Education in India to-day and only two. Are Indian students to be given

the fullest possible facilities for acquiring that necessary training in the technique of Art which is essential before they can fulfil their destiny as Artists, or are they to be stopped on the threshold, turned back and told to return to the flat and archaic convention of some past phase of Art? It has been said the Indian Artists are not interested in light and shade, that they see form flat not round, and that therefore the students ought not to be taught light and shade. But apart from the erroneousness of this belief, the Bombay School of Art holds simply the faith that it is well that its students be taught everything necessary to their calling. After that they will be in a stronger position for working out their own salvation.

The Mural Paintings which the School is now painting could not have been designed by anyone except Indians, and this evident fact is their most striking characteristic. A distinguishing point of view is uppermost in all these works, and it is the Indian point of view.

But the Class work of the students of Painting is not the only method of training dopted by the School of Art. The

Annual School Excursion has lately, thanks to the increase of the Grant allotted for the purpose by Government, assumed a very important place as an educative factor. Places in the limited number of selected students are eagerly competed for, and a party under the direction of the Principal has during the last few years paid sketching visits to Ajanta, Bijapur, Delhi, Agra and Benares. In spite of climatic disabilities for the Artist, India is an ideal sketcher's country once the conditions are understood. There are few of her picturesque localities that cannot be painted during certain months of the year either in the morning or late afternoon.

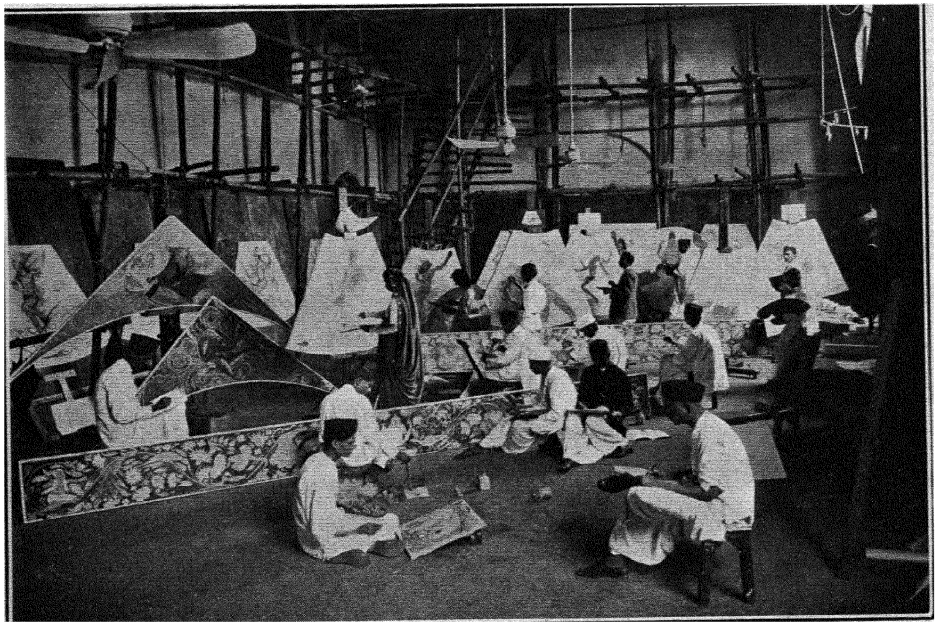
After the depression and sickness which are the scourge of the worker in Bombay during the Monsoon, the Excursion comes as a means of physical and artistic liberation. The student whose faculties are fuddled and whose hand has grown inert on account of repeated attacks of fever,* is transferred in a few hours to enjoy the sharp physical

* The climate of Bombay is the particular enemy of the Indian Artist. But some of the best work in the School of Art has been produced in October though the number of the staff and students have been temporarily much depleted by sickness. The students have no Hostel and are exposed to all the unhealthy conditions of poverty.

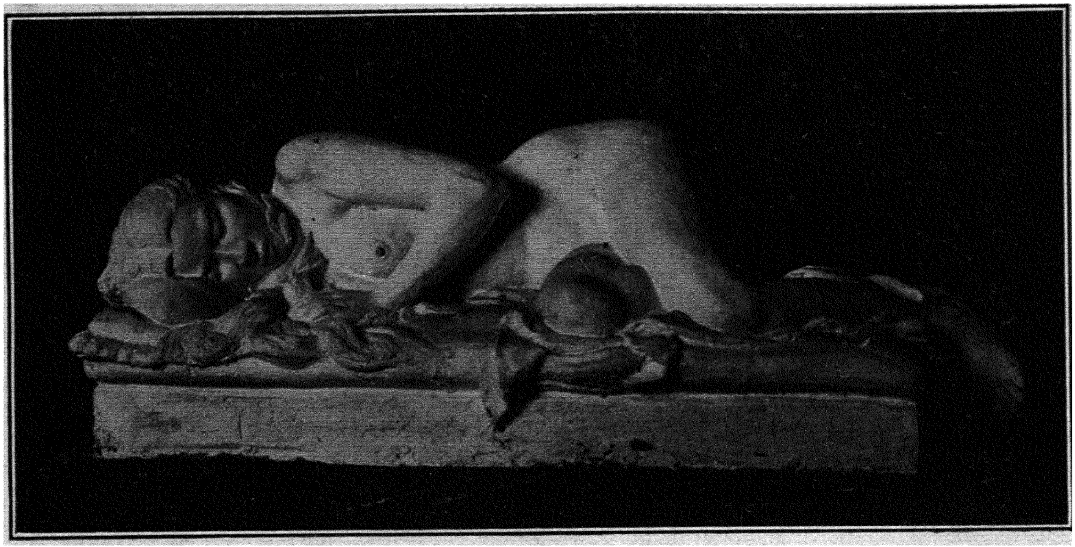
tonic of the cold weather at Delhi, or the mental stimulus and revelation of Benares. The latter,—the Sacred City of the Hindus,—was the goal of a very recent excursion party, a little jaded in body (and suffering that reaction of mind which even the ubiquitous spirit of Youth must occasionally feel) after the long-sustained work of preparing the Indian Room. Then did there fall gratefully on wearied fancies vistas of sun-flushed skies over serenely duplicating waters ; of gilded fanes, and high-banked stairways towering above the busy "ghats," and their flower-sprinkled shrines; of serpentine streets crowded with uncouth far-venturing pilgrims ; of patient burdened camels, and sacred bulls ; of worshippers and Devotees; of Yogis; and ash-covered ascetics ; of crowded river boats gliding by the portals of noble palaces ; of uncounted thousands of bathers assoiled at last from soul-polluting sin beneath the holy wave of Ganga.

Then did eager hand and eye respond to the summons, as every student again took up with enthusiasm the delightful burden of his calling.

It will thus be seen that the School of Art claims the work being done



The Class of Mural Painting.



A Figure from Life. By K. C. Roy (Modelling Class).

by its Indian students as Indian.* It would be very easy, of course, to abolish the study of life which forms the basis of all art, and to resort to the copying of old pictures, or to painting in an archaic style without the knowledge which the originators of that style had acquired by the close and devoted study of Nature. But we do not wish to see Indian Art repeating with the weakened iteration of the copy but one or two phases of its past History. We believe Indian Art to be capable of a range of expression certainly not less wide—though manifesting itself in different ways perhaps—than that of the widest National Art in existence.

But though the Indian School of Art student is *working*, many are still too prone to speak of India as though it were a great Museum. It would be more accurate to regard India as one vast School of Art.

* A view which is accepted by the Indian Public and supported by the Nationalist Press in Bombay. Surely Indians are the best judges of what is Indian.

CHAPTER X.

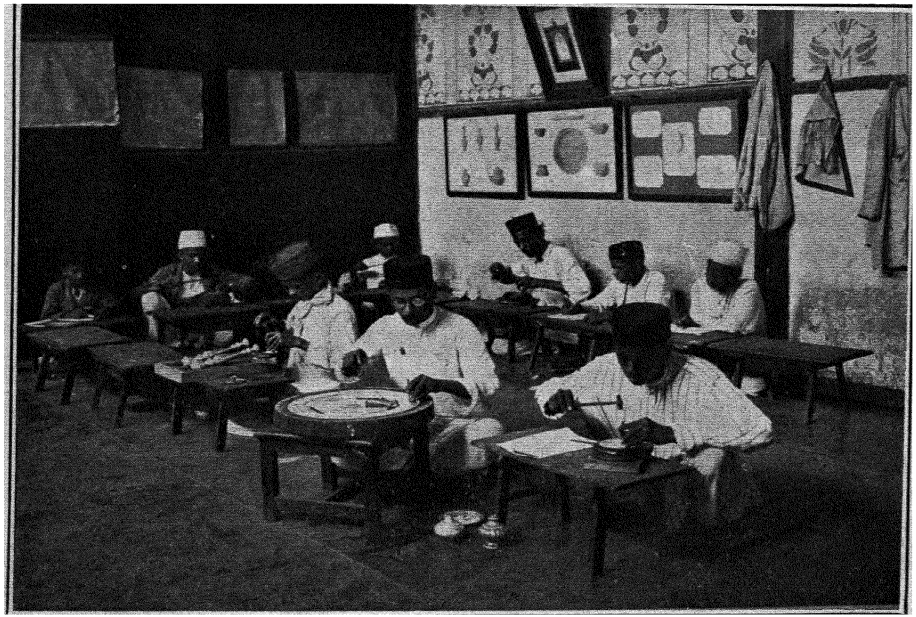
RETROSPECT.

IT is probable that of the large number of visitors who go to Bombay during that cool and beautiful season between November and March, a great many are ignorant of the existence of the School of Art; and many others who are aware that such an institution exists do not know its whereabouts. A stranger from overseas proceeding along the busy thoroughfares of Hornby Road would not, as he passes by the attractive garden which in that dusty section of the city naturally arrests the eye, suspect that the buildings which he glimpses between the palms are those of the Art School; accustomed as he perhaps may be to the gloomy corridors and grim exteriors of many of the European Schools of Art. The School of Art of Bombay and its environment are the survivals of a period, now remote, before the teeming streets of the Fort had encroached on the open spaces. It is difficult to realize

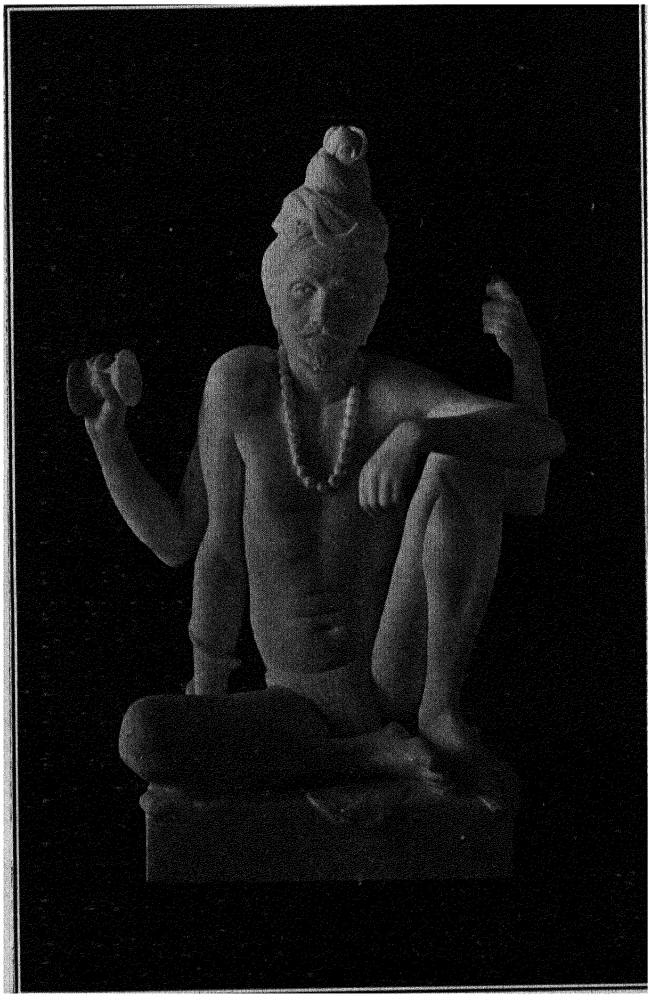
that the area was once an extensive *Maidan* and the School of Art one of several handsome buildings placed in favourable isolation. Founded as far back as 1854 by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy who offered Rs. 100,000 for the endowment of the institution, the existing School of Art is the growth that was grafted upon a very slender stem. Some Drawing Classes formed the nucleus and these were held for a few hours daily in the Elphinstone Institute. But it is significant that even in the first dawning of the idea of a National Art School, in Bombay a start was made with the elements of that branch of art which though naturally associated with the Idea of an European School of Art, by no means invariably forms part of an Indian one.

Tracing the progress of the School through its consecutive stages, when the hours of study were increased, when professors were brought out from England, when workshops and studios became essential requirements, we shall find that its growth was fairly continuous until 1865. In this year the School of Art was still being partly carried on in the old premises, but as extensions were required a larger site was obtained, and some temporary buildings were erected very near

to the position of the present School of Art. The classes in drawing, modelling, painting and metalwork were then in the hands of Mr. Lockwood Kipling, Mr. Griffiths, and Mr. Higgins. The Modelling Classes were accommodated in the present compound. Mr. Lockwood Kipling's house stood on the site of the present Principal's dwelling, and it was here that his distinguished son, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, first saw the light—a fact that has recently been commemorated by a bronze tablet. In 1869 the Drawing Classes were united with the other departments in the School compound, which were still being carried on under separate management. Mr. Terry was apparently the first to take charge of the augmented departments combined as one institution in the present building which constitutes the main section of the existing School. The latter is one of the most solidly built and handsomely finished buildings of a period when well-built edifices were well known in Bombay. It was not completed until 1878. Almost immediately afterwards Mr. Lockwood Kipling went to found at Lahore the present School of Art, where the story of his enthusiastic and inspiring labours is to-day a deeply cherished memory. Shortly



Brass and Copper Workers (Reay Art Workshops).



"Shiva" (Modelling Class).

after this Mr. Terry retired from the post of Superintendent of the School of Art but for a long time after his retirement, the beautiful pottery which he continued to produce in the School compound was widely popular both in India and Europe, and his potteries were the foundation of the present School of Pottery, which has been largely increased of late years. It would perhaps weary the reader whose interest in the School of Art of Bombay is based, not upon a past acquaintance with that city, but on a view of its students' work, to dwell at length on the story of the ups and downs of the School through the years of its youth and adolescence. By the time Lord Reay, (then Governor of Bombay) brought about the erection of the Applied Art Section known as the Reay Art Workshops in 1891, the School of Art had attained to maturity. From the modest wood engravers' classes in Shaik Abul Rehmin Street, the School had grown by degrees into a great and comprehensive institution, and though Mr. Lockwood Kipling had transferred the energy and genius which had infused life into the School in its youthful struggles to another field, Mr. Griffiths, an enthusiast on the subject of Indian Art, was a worthy successor.

The work by which Mr. Griffiths is best known, is his compendious monograph on the Ajanta Caves. These two fine volumes form perhaps the most useful introduction to the study of Indian Art that the seeker after knowledge could desire. The compilation of this book was the labour of many years during which many of the students were absorbed in assisting the Principal in his task. The story of these years, when the students of the School of Art emigrated from Bombay and took up their quarters in the valley where the Ajanta Caves are situated, forms one of the most romantic episodes in the history of any School of Art in the World. In these days the Principal divided his time between his students in their hut at Ajanta and those in the parent building in Bombay. Those who have not visited the historic caves, will find it difficult to realize the important part which this episode has played in the history of the School of Art.

The Cave Temples of Ajanta are situated in a gorge of Trossachs-like grandeur some 300 miles distant from Bombay in the Dominions of H. E. H. The Nizam of Hyderabad. The approach to the Caves is from the Rail-

way Station of Pahur whence a drive of 10 miles in a bullock cart or a small tonga (if the traveller is lucky) will take him in about two hours time to the hamlet of Fardepur four miles distant from the Shrines.

It was here that Mr. Griffiths took up his quarters; and the site of the hut that was erected for his students, may be seen on a little knoll near the entrance to the gorge overlooking the stream known as the Waghura. The latter was the bathing place for the students; and some of the most juvenile and still surviving members of the expedition can yet recall the occasion when the bathers were startled by the sudden appearance of a panther who joined the party, seating himself placidly on a flat stone by the water with the most engaging friendliness.*

The expeditionary party was usually in charge of Mr. Pestonjee Bomanjee, now the *Doyen* of Bombay Artists. For a period extending over 12 years, Mr. Bomanjee and other students worked in the shadow of one of the grandest monuments of art that the world can show. In the early morning they would start to make their way through a jungle starred with gorgeous tropical

* Panthers are still numerous at Ajanta.

flowers, and illuminated by blossoming trees and creepers—overtopped by crags that in their stark austerity seem to spurn the fairness at their feet. At last they reach the vast semicircle that encloses the head of the valley, where the path begins to meander upwards. The humming of the multicoloured insects, or the flute-like notes of wild birds is here lost in the lilt of the cascade that falls musically into the valley from its high but unseen source.

Still they ascend the path, progressing carefully along the edge of the precipice till they reach the threshold of the famous Sanctuary which Buddhist excavators hewed out of the solid rock more than 2,000 centuries ago. A little flight of steps here leads downwards to the great gallery that skirts a portion of the cliff in one gigantic curve three quarters of a mile in length. From this point the students can scan the scene of their labours.

The twenty-seven temples and monasteries which range side by side along the galleries in their scarcely marred beauty of sculptured portals and graceful arches, though divested of their garment of colour, still remain to witness silently of the genius and flawless patience of the Indian artists of those times.

The beautiful adornments of the porticos to the caves, so finely carved that their interlacings seem to transform the basalt rock itself into a series of leafy arbours were not however the chief objects for which the students of the School of Art were searching. Still that incomparably noble approach must have moved these ardent young hearts to passionate resolves of emulation. No one who has visited the Ajanta caves can for a moment doubt the value of their perennially fresh appeal. The spell they can throw over Western minds must be intensified in its effect upon Indian Artists. It held Mr. Griffiths and his students in its grip for years and when released, they left Ajanta as captives still to the unseen Deity whose mysterious presence broods feelingly throughout the Sanctuary.

The influences of the frescoes which cover the walls (which the students were daily copying) must have been tremendous ; the glow of naive and limpid colouring ; the frank and enthusiastic rendering of form ; the bewitching fantasy and alertness of all-conquering line ! The young artists who participated in this adventure would never, one may be sure, forget it. Released from their appren-

ticeship, long or short as the case might be, none of the students who accompanied their Principal in his quest in search of the artistic secrets that lurk in that famous valley failed to show in after life the benefit of the rare experience. It is interesting to notice here that Mr. Pestonjee Bomanjee is a veteran whose works have long been recognised; and have lately been purchased for the Prince of Wales' Museum in his own City; and that Mr. M. V. Dhurandhar, who at that time was the youngest of the band, is still discharging his duties of high trust as Head Master of the School of Art. Mr. Jugganath Anant and Mr. Narayan Kushaba though they have, in common with most of their comrades, gone on to seek another and a higher Sanctuary, were noted for the artistic vigour which infused their work.

In addition to the numerous copies executed by the School of Art Students, which unfortunately were mostly destroyed by fire, photographs of the frescoes taken by the late Mr. Shivashankar are still preserved in the library of the School of Art.

It may here be mentioned that it was in the time of Mr. Griffiths that India's Senior Art Society came into existence in

1888. The Bombay Art Society was founded with the object of helping artists and particularly of encouraging the students of the School of Art. During its novitiate the Society was chiefly a vehicle for the works of European Amateurs from all over India. The successful carrying off of a prize for black and white in 1892 by an Indian student, Mr. M. V. Dhurandhar, encouraged his fellow students of the School of Art to try their luck; and it was Mr. Griffiths' aim to show the best productions of his students every year as an incitement to artists to go to Nature for their inspiration. The impetus that was thus given, resulted so effectively that sister organisations came into being; and during the present time of revival new Art Societies are springing up all over the South West. Of the one hundred and ninety-two artists who exhibited in the Annual Exhibition of the Bombay Art Society in December 1923, one hundred and thirty-six were Indians, of whom thirty-six were ladies. The European Exhibitors were only twenty in all.*

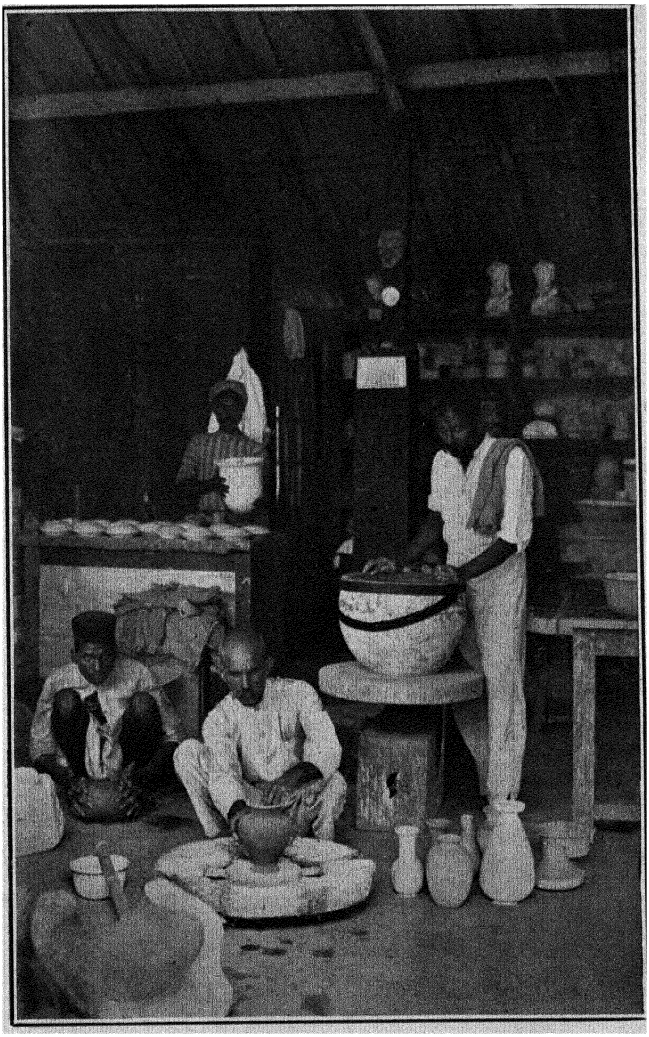
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* See the account of the Bombay Art Society by Mr. S. V. Bhandarkar in the Notes.

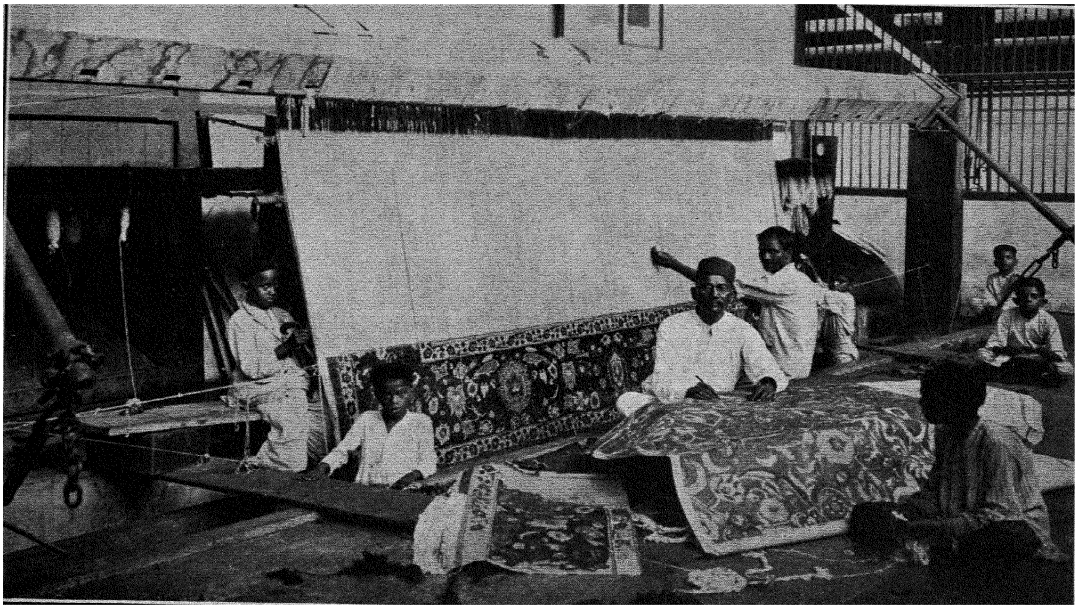
CHAPTER XI.

RETROSPECT—AND RESULTS

IN the days of Mr. Terry, Examinations were not apparently the important feature in the School of Art, which they since became.—Mr. Terry trained his students in Freehand Drawing from copies, Outline from Foliage, Outline from the cast, Light and Shade from Ornament, and from the Round, Perspective and Geometry. He transferred capable students who had successfully gone through their courses to the more advanced work of painting a head from the Life or a draped figure. The principal feature of his teaching (apart from the Pottery) was wood-engraving. Some very clever engravers were produced in the School. The story is still delightedly told that a certain Governor-General of India offered a prize for the engraving of a Rupee—actual size, which resulted in such an excellent copy of the original, that the prize-winner was gravely warned by His Excellency to eschew the art of copying rupees for the future.



The Potters' Wheel.



Carpet-Weaving (Reay Art Workshops).

Mr. Griffiths had taken over charge of the School in 1880 and had instituted a regular course of Drawing on the model of South Kensington. With the assistance of his Vice-Principal, Mr. Greenwood, a system of School of Art Examinations was introduced, First, Second and Third Grade. Candidates who had passed these educational tests, were transferred to the plane of Higher Art and allowed to study Painting, Modelling and Architecture, besides being eligible for the posts of Drawing Teachers in the Government and Aided High Schools. Drawing Classes now began to be opened in the Secondary and Private Schools throughout the Presidency.

The Drawing Classes kept up by these Schools, submitted every year an increasing number of candidates for the Grade Examinations. But the Third Grade Examination was retained as open only to School of Art Students who had studied for it. It was apparently Mr. Griffith's opinion that the principles of Light and Shade, the advanced study of Outline (from the cast and from Nature), advanced Perspective, and Solid Geometry, could be taught adequately only by the School of Art staff under the direction of the Principal.

In the scheme of work as organised by him, the Vice-Principal was responsible for the whole management of the School, including the Painting and Modelling Classes, the Principal being the authority for the general work. He allowed students (who had passed their Grade Tests) to take up the study of Painting, Modelling, and Architecture simultaneously ; and they could also enter the Class for Drawing Teachers.

It is of great interest to students of the subject of Art Education to trace these developments and to consider the working of the policy of concentrating in the person of the Principal (under the Director of Public Instruction) the chief authority for Art Education throughout the Presidency. The Principal of the School of Art was, as we have seen from the early period when the Departments were united under one head, responsible for the training in the School of Art and for what is sometimes termed "Educationist" art as well throughout the Presidency. His position has always been that of Controller of whatever Art examinations the Bombay Government were holding.

This maintenance by the Government of Bombay of unity in Art Direction was

based upon the qualifications of the Head of the Bombay School of Art as a practising Artist, the recognition of the local needs of both the artists and the drawing masters, and the ideal that the School of Art should be a genuine one, and exist *primarily* for the training of artists, but also for the training of the drawing masters. Owing to the lapse of public patronage for indigenous Indian Art, the young Indian Art student is faced with chances so doubtful that he is compelled to be a drawing master, even when he has attained by talent and training to the status of an artist. We find therefore all the best artists at one time or another among the ranks of the Drawing Masters. It is a pity that qualified and really able artists should be dependent upon teacher's posts of one hundred rupees a month,* but it is better than nothing; and had it not been for the preservation by Government of the central ideal—*i.e.*, that the directing authority in the whole field of Art Education should himself be the Principal of the School of Art, it is certain that the Artists would have been squeezed out of the Bom-

* About 1903 the starting fees of the Drawing Masters fell to Rs. 30 per mensem!

bay Presidency long before this. The School of Art would have declined to the level of the Drawing Masters—instead of raising the Drawing Masters to the level of Artists. For the basic foundations of the system are immutably fixed by the unrelenting logic of local conditions. The lack of continuity in the system of Instruction implied by the broad and simple eclecticism of the School of Art has been and will be found to be a factor for good. No two Artist-Principals are likely to teach in exactly the same way, or to stress the importance of exactly the same routine.

Thus Mr. Lockwood Kipling was as we have seen a Modeller; Mr. Terry an enthusiast for Pottery, and Wood-Engraving; Mr. Griffiths a painter, with strong Archaic tendencies, while of the succeeding Principals, Mr. Greenwood was a fine organiser of the Kensingtonian persuasion, and Mr. Cecil Burns a painter greatly interested in the Architectural and "Educationist" side oft he training. But the mutations necessarily endured by the School of Art by reason of the changes in its directing chiefs are extremely instructive, and furnish data from which vital conclusions may be drawn. One is that this

very mutability is the greatest safeguard of the School. No Principal is likely to live long enough to damage the cshool of Art irreparably but a cut-and-dried system can. This may seem a very negative form of praise! But let us compare Bombay with the Royal Academy of London, in whose Schools the Visiting Professor who teaches the higher classes is changed every month. The Academy student having strained every nerve under one Professor to grasp the method of painting with solid lights and thin shadows, is perhaps asked under the next almost to reverse the process—or at least to aim at an equal consistency throughout. By one "Visitor" emerald green is anathemetised, and banished as abhorrent from his palette; while by another he is informed of the unrivalled powers of this one colour for the rendering of essential service. One master exhorts him to the study of anatomy and to reliance upon his *knowledge* to correct the defects of the model; and another forbids all idealisation and insists on the literal presentment of only that which the eye detects and no more.

To many this system of teaching, as in other matters of Art instruction when

reviewed purely as *theory* may seem to tend towards bewilderment and chaos, but in *practice* as a matter of fact it works very well in many cases and frequently results in the absorption by the student of the best knowledge of many masters, without the danger of adopting the fads of any. Out of differing, and in some instances opposing methods, the student can extract what he needs and can lay the solid foundation of "Knowledge" on which to build the fascinating structure of "Style." Pasing through the hands of many able Artists, any tendency to precocious mannerisms is likely to be effectively checked.

If it errs at all, the method in vogue at the Academy Schools only errs in the shortness of the period allowed (for the time being) to each "Maestro."*

The Principal in the Bombay School of Art gets his chance; and the public are enabled to test within his span of service the fruitfulness or fallacy of his methods.

But these methods can only be applied, and his reliability tested, so long as he is

* The writer recalls with gratitude and admiration the free merits of the Royal Academy system of training *as he knew it.*

maintained by Government in that position of authority for the time being which he has hitherto always enjoyed. The bisection of Art Education under two Heads into two arbitary fields of "Higher" and "Educationist" art must curtail art production, devitalise the School of Art, and decimate the Artists because there exists no line of demarcation; the two being one, and indivisible. For, probing to the roots of all difficulties in Indian Art Education, we shall come upon the stark realisation of one outstanding factor,—the poverty of the Indian Artist. There is a student—one of the best in the School of Art to-day—who is dependent upon thirty rupees a month as the winner of one of the art-salving scholarships with which Sir George Lloyd's Government endowed the School. Think of it! On the strength of so small a sum rests the stability of a brilliant, cut from the gem which the School of Art is seeking to polish and which surely in the near future will prove to be among the brightest of India's cultural jewels.

Of this student's work for the British Empire Exhibition a sympathetic observer has written :—

"Luckily—for the Sir J. J. School of Arts has not always had the backing which it has received from the departing Governor—the infinite capacity of the artist is inspired by an almost unquenchable flame. No more arresting example of this heroic fortitude could be found than the case of a young student who makes a conspicuous contribution to the decoration of the Bombay Room. He came to the school as a mere boy; employed as a menial in a certain temple. He devoted all the time he could snatch from his humble duties to work in the Art School; and afterwards he would return to his lodging on the temple steps. Food was his only pay. And by the stuff that was in him and the sure impulse of his art, he eventually obtained a scholarship from which he derives thirty rupees a month. On Saturday evening this youth, Mr. N. L. Joshi, received from His Excellency the Silver Medal.*"

There is infinite hope as well as pathos in this story. For it could surely only have been written of a denizen of one of the greatest Art-Producing Nations of the World.

* * * * *

* "Times of India," 3rd December 1923. See the description of the Mural Panel entitled "Piety," Chapter 4.

It is not needful or useful within the scope of this little work to do more than sketch the School's history subsequent to the period of Mr. Griffith's work. Mr. Greenwood who succeeded him in 1895, retired owing to ill-health in 1898 and was succeeded by Mr. Cecil Burns. Among the more important of Mr. Burn's developments were the founding of the Architectural School in 1910, the extensive consolidation of the system of Government Art Examinations, and the establishment of an Inspector of Drawing and Craftwork as subordinate to the Principal of the School of Art, to assist the latter by organising the Art Examinations and inspecting the primary and secondary schools.

CHAPTER XII.

INDIAN ART TO-DAY.

DURING the greater part of the year 1923 the School of Art was very much alive. The Workshops rang with the noise of the Craftsmen's mallets and glowed in the light from its furnaces. The Painters and Modellers were also at work even on holidays, for the Indian Room for the British Empire Exhibition was in the making and every earnest student was contributing his utmost towards the work. One space of respite there was from the strain of efforts long-continued. This occurred when the Excursion Party went on its annual sketching jaunt to Bijapur.

The Indian Room was finished by the end of November, and opened to the Public on December 1st by the retiring Governor. Seated with Lady Lloyd on a daïs draped with Indian *Saris*, Sir George Lloyd was on this last occasion the recipient of a farewell address from the Staff and Students of the School which he had aided so well. Some

extracts from this message of gratitude though not here delivered in the resonant tones of the white robed Head Master, Mr. M. V. Dhurandur (who has been connected one way or another with the School for 30 years) will, better than a detailed description, convey an idea at least of the extent by which the School of Art has been benefited in very recent times :—

" YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the students and staff, heartily and respectfully welcome Your Excellency and Her Excellency to the Sir J. J. School of Art to-day. The Inspection today of the work of the students for the British Empire Exhibition constitutes the 5th official visit paid to the School of Art, by Your Excellency, a record of which we cannot but feel very proud. Since the occasion of Your Excellency's first visit, there have been many improvements in the School of Art. In the painting school, the Life Class and the Class of Indian Mural Painting were established under your Excellency's personal patronage. The latter class assisted by eight scholarships has proved a notable success and during the four years of its existence, it has produced works of public

importance among which we may specially mention the Mural Panels which Your Excellency commissioned for Government House, Bombay, the work for the Red Cross Fête, the decorations on the occasion of the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the Mural Panels in the School of Art, and the painted ceiling, frieze and panels for the British Empire Exhibition."

After mentioning the addition of two Visiting Professors to the Modelling Class, and of a Drawing Teacher to the Reay Art Workshops, describing the inauguration of a 5th year class in the curriculum of the Architectural School, and the considerable development of the Potteries, the address continued :—

"We have derived an invaluable impetus for work from our visits to the Ajanta caves and Bijapur, on both of which occasions we were speeded by Your Excellency's personal aid. Your Excellency has also presented a gold and silver medal for Mural Painting, and among innumerable other kindnesses has paid frequent semi-official visits to the School to inspect and encourage the classes at their work. For all the material and moral benefits which have been secured to the School under Your Excellency's sympathetic and

art-loving administration, we express to Your Excellency our deepest and most respectful gratitude. We recognise that the special interest which Your Excellency has taken in our welfare has laid upon us the obligation of meriting it."

Sir George Lloyd's speech of farewell is worthy of the closest study on the part of everyone who has at heart the welfare and would grasp the unique problems confronting Indian Art. He said :—

" I have welcomed this opportunity of paying a personal farewell to the staff and students of the School of Art, because I feel that I have acquired in many ways a more intimate acquaintance with their work and their difficulties than has been possible in the case of other educational institutions.

This may have been due to a great extent to the circumstance that the School of Art is more easily accessible than other schools, but I cannot help thinking that it was because you particularly were fighting a disinterested battle for a national and noble ideal, and because I felt that in that battle you deserved all the sympathy and support that could be given to you.

I think I may claim also, with all respect to the many artists present, that I have some especial sympathy with the artistic temperament. I know the high courage which it displays; I know, for instance something of the hardships which the winner of the silver medal, Mr. Joshi, has undergone in his devotion to art. And I know also how impatient it is of the restraint and the formulæ imposed by what is commonly known as Government red tape.

No one can fail to admire the former, and I myself, after my experience of the last five years, must confess to the fullest sympathy with the latter.

I have been strongly convinced, therefore, that the School of Art, in spite of, or perhaps especially because of it's being a Government Institution, needs very careful treatment, and especial consideration, if it's work is to be good; and I have always endeavoured to give it that especial consideration. As long as it remains a Government institution, it is impossible to free it entirely from the shackles of departmental control, but much can be done by care and attention to lighten the weight of these shackles and make them as little irksome as possible.

And this I consider to be especially necessary in the case of the School of Art of Bombay, because ever since its inauguration the Principals who have been selected, have been working Artists. To my mind this is a most salutary tradition for the School, and it is my earnest hope that future Governments will never depart from it. For I venture to affirm that the practice has been largely responsible for the life that has been breathed into the dead bones of Indian Art, so that it is now reviving to exercise and to transmit the inspiration of the great Indian artists of old.

It is possible of course—I speak here subject to correction by your Principal—that the working artist may find his position as a cog in the machinery of Government too cramping and irksome. But I believe, as I have said before, that a liberal and understanding attitude of mind in the authorities will counter-balance that difficulty. And I welcome the occasion offered me to-day of expressing my most earnest hope and wish that the policy which has been followed of late towards the School may be continued after my departure; so that the real success that has been already achieved in the attempt to

revive the National Art of India may increase steadily and rapidly, and not be throttled at birth by the application of a rigid machine-made treatment, or by the imposition of any such artificial devices as Advisory Boards or the like.

If the work of the School can be saved from that dreadful fate, then there will be only one thing lacking for the artists trained here, and that is the opportunity for work. Last year at your annual prize gathering I appealed most urgently to the Indian Public to provide that opportunity for the sake of their own national art, and I expressed my strong opinion that in the decoration of New Delhi lay the immediate opportunity, which should not, indeed could not justly, be denied to the students of the oldest Art School in India. That opinion of mine has remained unchanged, and to day it is infinitely strengthened by my inspection of the admirable work that has been prepared for the British Empire Exhibition."

* * * *

The withdrawal from the arena of a brilliant and magnetic personality must always leave the workers chilled and dashed

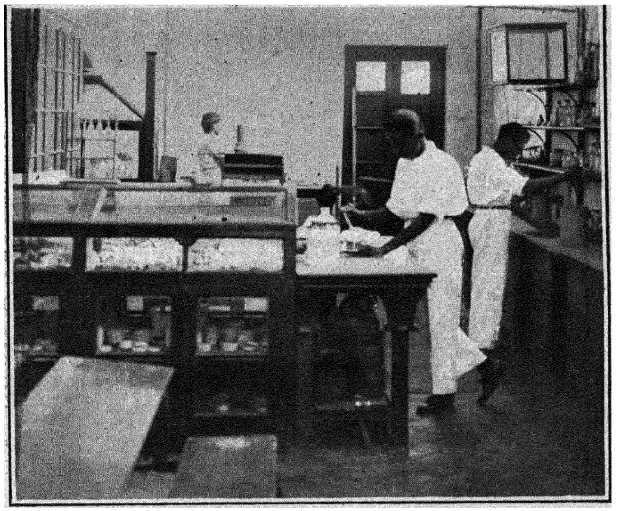
in spirit. But even the depressive dun clouds of parting are often shot with argent auguries for the young! The departure of their loved and trusted Leader was another and a severe test for the School of Art. But omens of hope were already flashing from the horizon. The new Governor of Bombay, Sir Leslie Wilson, and his Lady visited the School of Art but a few weeks after their arrival, and His Excellency expressed his deep interest in the work of the students. The Honourable Mr. Phiroze Sethna is (perhaps even as these pages are written) gallantly voicing in the Council of State the last demand of the retiring Governor for "a place in the Sun" for Indian Artists at New Delhi.

The collection—the first England has seen of *Modern* Indian Art for the British Empire Exhibition—is now on its way to Wembley Park, and everywhere one feels the vibrations of that Imminent Indian Spirit of Achievement, like the strugglings of the enormous Roc-infant, about to burst its shell.

The Indian is an Idealist. But he has learned to translate thoughts into actions. The pitfalls that beset the Idealist are usually those that have been left unguarded through

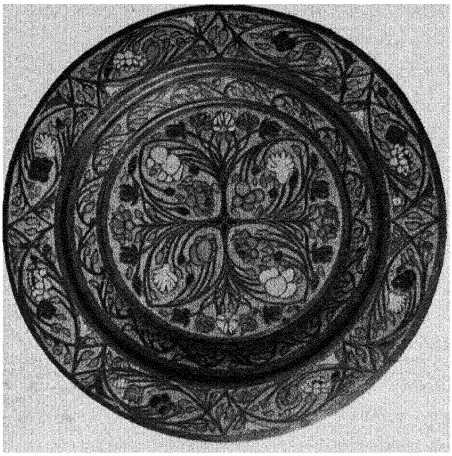
his own neglect of practical matters, and one of the most treacherous of these pitfalls is that indolence which so often renders his progress abortive. Whether this indolence proceed from the soft-woven spells (more binding and overpowering than chains) of the fascinating Goddess " Thought," or whether it be due to that lack of energy in the field of real activity which we associate with the Mystic and the Dreamer we cannot ignore the clogging influence which it has exercised over some of the greatest minds of the world, rendering resultless some of the loftiest visions of Freedom ever glimpsed by Man. This we feel assured is not to be the fate of India's artists.

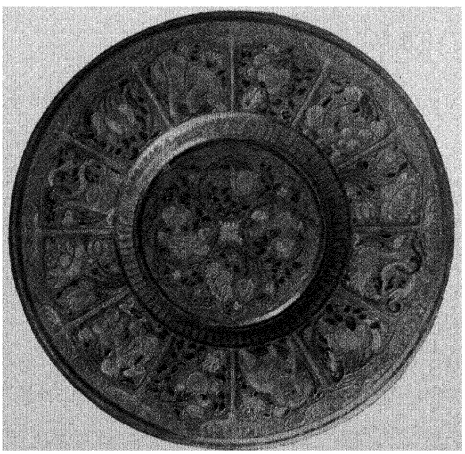
For the Bombay Art Revival to-day is a Great Sign; a visible Portent; an Oriflamme to awaken India from her apathy, as in ancient times the Fiery Cross carried throughout the country aroused the denizens of the Western glens and mountains to prepare for war. It is a beacon as bright, metaphorically, as that which, lighted on the English Cliffs, was copied and reduplicated by answering bonfires on every peak and promintory, until thousands of blazing pyres spread the news even to the far Scottish





The Pottery Dept. and some of its Vases.





Enamelled Plates (Reay Art Workshops).

Border of the oncoming of the attacking Fleets of Spain. To-day we see signals of such another and just as National an awakening—the awakening of a vast country to a sense of the value of its inherent birthright. One by one all over India to-day the sparks of her reviving art are struggling into brilliance. Everywhere Individuals as well as Institutions are becoming swiftly conscious of a new sense of power, and are striving to give that power the expression which it *must* have.

One by one the Solitaries have kindled their far-off beacons, and are gazing anxiously towards the Eternal Promintories for that answering light that shall flash to them the Message " All's Well " ; that shall speed Hope with her radiant smile to the City's inmost dwellers, sick of the soulless struggle, as to the lonely pioneer in the remotest village resisting, though appalled, the Phantoms that invade the soul of the isolated Artist. For not all the terrific truth which inspired the utterances of that Hebrew prophet, when miraculously liberated from the belly of the whale, he came into the Market place of Nineveh crying his unheeded message in the ears of its foolish populace could have been greater than the conviction which animates the Indian Artist

of to-day—the certainty that he has a story to tell the World of which not he, but a Greater than he is the Author.

The importance to India of her National Arts and Crafts cannot be overstated. It is they that in default of a common language shall interpret to the World at large the multiform aspirations of the thousand-tongued peoples of this great Peninsular. To neglect her Arts and Crafts is suicidal for India, and their encouragement must be first and foremost in any scheme for educational improvement, or for National Realisation. For India's Art is the Beautifier—the Healer—and who shall limit its power ?

NOTES.



I.

THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE OF THE BOMBAY SCHOOL OF ART.

BY S. WOODS HILL, A.R.I.B.A.,

Consulting Architect to Government, Fellow of Bombay University.

FOR facilities for Architectural education the Bombay School is more fortunately situated than any other similar school that has ever come within the writer's knowledge.

Situated as it is in the same pleasant garden as the most progressive School of Art in Asia, and working alongside it in recent times in the happiest harmony of aims and ambitions it is safe to assert that the training of the future architects of Bombay will be of a very high standard and the work produced of a notably distinguished character.

Those who are in touch with architectural education in England will know how to congratulate Bombay on the possession

of facilities which cannot fail to correct the unfortunate tendency of much modern English Architectural Education, a tendency which can be best described as the " Paper plan factory system".

Under such a system a student grows up almost unaware that architecture is an art at all, that the design of buildings is anything but a matter of numerous and frequently over elaborated drawings, and that the craftsmen in the other arts are anything but his natural enemies.

In the Bombay School of Architecture the student is consistently taught that all the arts are one, that noble and dignified buildings are essentially problems of structural sculpture and that the craftsmen in the other arts are the only people who can assist him to bring his conceptions into being.

On such a right foundation the Bombay School of Architecture lays with perfect confidence the numerous practical and scientific details of the modern architectis education.

The curriculum at present brings the student who completes the five years' course up to the standard which confers exemption from the Intermediate Examination of the

Royal Institute of British Architects and it is hoped that in the near future facilities for a sixth year course will be available which will confer complete associateship with that body. The training in architecture in India will then, in the Bombay School at least, be such that its students can hold their own in any part of the world; such as distinguish themselves will be competent to take up positions of responsibility with complete confidence and the rank and file will always be sure of that fair livelihood which sound and thorough training in any profession always confers.

The present fifth year course confers in addition a Diploma upon all successful fifth year men, a qualification which, with certain additional practical experience, is accepted by the Bombay Municipality as sufficient professional capacity to warrant the issue of licenses to such students, as qualified structural supervisors.

The scope of the school curriculum is divided into four main grades, *viz*:—

(1) Elementary grade,
(2) Intermediate,
(3) Advanced,
(4) Diploma,

each stage confers a certificate upon successful students, the certificates being issued under the auspices of the Board of Education for the Presidency, by the authority of the Director of Public Instruction.

The issue of these grade certificates is unavoidable in India at present. The conditions which prevail are such that frequently students have to interrupt the course of their studies (for financial reasons usually) since Indian Architectural students are rarely of the wealthy classes.

The certificate in each grade serves to mark the stage at which the students interrupt their studies and it is also throughout India a guarantee to employers that competency up to the face value of the certificate is possessed by the holder.

The certificates are very highly valued, perhaps no other qualification in India is considered more desirable by junior craftsmen, for students come from all parts of the Peninsula to the Bombay School knowing that the possession of even the lower grade certificates ensures a very definite market value to their services.

The school is divided into two terms of approximately four months each with a

brief vacation at Xmas. No classes are held in the hottest part of the year namely :— From May to July.

The school hours are entirely morning hours from 7-40 to 9-40, this being considered the most practical period of the day both as regards temperature and the exigencies of Indian Social Customs.

It will be readily appreciated that such an arrangement entails a great deal of discomfort on the European section of the staff and but for their loyal and consistent support under such trying conditions, it may be safely said that architectural training in Bombay would not be where it is to-day.

The staff consists of ten European and Indian Professors all engaged in the practice of architecture, ably assisted by a cadre of eight assistant teachers who are also practical men. In addition to this an interchange of Professors from the adjacent School of Art is permitted by the Principal as regards tuition in such subjects as drawing, shading, modelling, etc.

It is hoped that an even closer liason between the School of Art and the School of Architecture will be effected at an early date by the inauguration of a course of lectures on

practical Mural Decoration by the Principal of the former school, for, as already indicated, one of the chief aims of the School of Architecture is to avoid producing the artistic starvelings which are the products of too many Architectural Schools of Europe and it is only by such interchanges that the desired result can be attained.

The curriculum aims at the greatest possible practical result. It may be safely said that its chief underlying principle is to produce trained students who will be able to render skilled assistance to any employer who engages them during any part of their training.

The curriculum concludes with a course of lectures in Town Planning and Zoning and a brief survey of the elements of professional practice.

Every effort is made to keep the tuition in all sections in close touch with actual building conditions. Theory is only taught in conjunction with practical experiment and many of the lectures are delivered on the bricks, stones and mortar of buildings in course of construction.

Particular attention is paid to the practical value of experimental mechanics. The

principles underlying the numerous formulæ in everyday use regarding stresses and strains are deduced from actual model beams and stanchions under proportionate loads, the conduct of various materials being accurately recorded by the students from personal observations and the formulæ compiled from such observations.

Nothing is omitted to impress the students with the knowledge that an architect's work must eventually depend for stability and permanence on the capacity to grapple with practical structural problems and the capacity to shoulder responsibility in this respect.

The principles of architecture are taught comparatively as far as it is practically possible, that is the classic styles of Europe and India are examined collaterally.

It is safe to assume that India can take much from Greece in the development of her own incomparable Arts and every step is taken to encourage Grecian studies with this end in view.

It is believed that the more clearly the principles of Composition Proportion and General Design underlying Grecian monuments are understood the more clearly will

Indian Students be able to grasp the principles which underlie the classic works of their own country. It is felt that the future of Indian Architecture and the solutions to be solved for modern problems of architectural design by the employment of Indian motives will be based on safe and sane principles if the work of Indian architects is animated by a spirit which aims at something deeper than the more repetition of past forms however attractive or suitable these may be.

Briefly it may be stated that an intermarriage of the principles of the classic Greek and Indian styles is aimed at ; the fruit of such a union must be essentially Indian in character and should contain the strongest essentials of both.

Those who understand such matters will see how far removed are such aims from the hybrids of the past, where all that was desired was a veeneer of Indian detail on a classic conception.

It remains for the future to show how far Indian Architecture can benefit by such classic studies but it is the confident belief of the writer that greater and nobler monuments of Indian Architecture will be evolved by such means than by attempting to restrict

research to the monuments which India has produced in the past.

It will be seen from the foregoing description that the aims of the School of Architecture are broadly speaking equally practical and artistic.

To fail in either of these two aspects of architectural education is equally serious, the tendency to-day as already stated is to squeeze out the latter and under pressure of modern conditions such a tendency must increase with the most far reaching results.

The phenomenally rapid development of India to-day provides a most fertile ground for the transplanting of Western Institutions and it cannot be denied that many of the bad ones have come to finer fruition than the good.

Bombay is fortunate as regards architectural education for its stands for the best Western ideals only.

II.

THE POTTERY DEPARTMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF ART.

BY E. R. FERN,

Superintendent of Pottery,
Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay.

THE manufacture of Pottery in Bombay was started by Mr. Terry as a business between 1873-1875 in the long low building which is now used as a driving shed and godown for the pottery. Mr. Terry imported a man from Multan to do the burning, decorating, and glazing of the ware (as no glazing was done on the Bombay side), while local potters were employed to do the throwing. A number of boys were apprenticed under the supervision of a local painter to decorate the vases and subsequently this class was converted into the present House Decoration Class in the Workshops. The pottery continued as a private business concern under Mr. Terry for a few years when it was taken

over by the Bombay Government as part of the School of Art under Mr. Lockwood Kipling's direction. Later it was again taken over by Mr. Terry as a private concern; but after Mr. Terry left India the potteries were formed by Government into a section of the School of Art.

When the School of Art moved into its present premises in 1878-79 the pottery occupied the whole of the old school shed, and a temporary shed was built along-side to house the ovens and the potter's workroom. All the colours and glazes were prepared by the Head Potter behind closed doors and no one was allowed to see how the material was prepared nor how the glaze was applied.

The pottery section was worked in this manner up to a couple of years after Mr. Burns took charge as Principal. The Head Potter on his refusal to teach his pupils the secrets of pottery as defined by him was asked to resign which he promptly did. This occurred in 1902-03 and from then to the year 1908 nothing was done in the pottery line. The students were transferred to the House Decorating Class with the Pottery Painting Master in charge.

In the year 1908 the services of a man with a knowledge of the chemistry of pottery as produced in England were engaged. The new building which had been started about 1907 designed to house the pottery laboratory and machinery was incomplete, and the services of the pottery expert was employed to reorganise the working of the Reay Art Workshops, especially the methods of keeping and issuing stores.

It was not till 1910 that the Pottery building was completed and opened by Lord Sydenham, then Sir George Clarke. Teachers had to be trained and pottery material had to be investigated and assembled. The sources of the raw material used in the pottery manufacture were still to be surveyed and arrangements had to be made for the supply. It was not till 1913 that students began to be admitted and since then much useful work has been accomplished. It has been the object of the Pottery School to turn out expert potters with a thorough knowledge of the one branch of the pottery industry in which they are interested combined with a general knowledge of geology, chemistry, physics, etc., as applied to ceramics. Our motto has been "quality, not quantity"

in regard to the students passed out. Pottery being an expensive subject to teach this department has in consequence to limit the number of students admitted in order to keep within the allotted grant.

There is no similar institute in England. The Pottery School in Stoke is purely a technical School, where students are taught the theory of pottery in a series of lectures during Autumn and Winter and a part of Spring. One hour per week is devoted to these discourses and about 25 of them complete the course. Students do not come in contact with the actual material which the potter must use; they only see the raw material as it comes from the refiners. Chemistry and physics are not taught at the Pottery School. They must attend separate lectures in the technical school conducted by a separate staff if they wish to make themselves acquainted with the subject. Students gain their practical experience in the factories to which they are apprenticed or in which they are working.

It is true that there exists a Pottery School in the Royal College of Art, South Kensington, but this is for instruction in the decoration of pottery; deals in fact merely

with Art as applied to the beautifying of vases and tiles.

The courses of instruction in the Pottery School of the Bombay School of Art comprise the continuous practical work of refining and preparing raw materials for the use of the Department as well as helping in the various manufacturing activities of the commercial section of the potteries. In addition to these duties students are given regular lectures by the Superintendent on all subjects connected with the manufacture of pottery and porcelain. Advanced students are also given lectures in theoretical and practical chemistry.*

The proposal was put forward to erect a demonstration pottery factory working on commercial lines in the vicinity of Bombay where all classes of students would receive training in the various branches of the pottery industry on purely commercial lines. With this object in view the Government of India allotted Rs. 2 lakhs and the Bombay Government was to provide another Rs. 2 lakhs. This sum, however, the Government

* For full information as to the curriculum see the School of Art Year Book, published by the Government Press, Bombay.

of Bombay finally decided could not be given on account of financial stringency. Subsequently it was proposed to make use of the existing Pottery School by the addition of necessary preliminary machinery, and of a small extra allowance in the way of funds to work the Department on a semi-commercial scale. This scheme it was hoped would demonstrate that pottery can be produced in Bombay with the materials at hand. Government of course do not expect to make a profit on this interesting educative experiment. The object is to put on the market a variety of goods that are at present being imported, and thus to stimulate private enterprise. The output of the pottery School on the commercial side will be so small that it will naturally not affect the market. The artistic side of production however will perforce be modified in as much as there will not be time to devote to art production since the staff and students will be largely employed in producing only such goods as can be sold in large quantities and at low rates. It will be seen therefore that the whole scheme is one which will be watched by lovers of Art with considerable anxiety.

The principal types of art pottery turned out by the Pottery School up to the advent of the semi-commercial scheme described were decorative tile panels in majolica glazes and vases of interesting shapes and colours either Persian or Indian, which amounts to much the same thing.

There exists no pottery in the Bombay Presidency and such art pottery as is made in Northern India is purely ornamental and not in the least useful. The turquoise blue colours produced by the Sind and Multan potters are no doubt very beautiful and captivating to the eye but the vases will not hold water and the tiles will not stand any but a very dry climate without the glaze pealing off the ware.

III.

INDIAN ARTS & CRAFTS AND THE SCHOOL OF ART.

BY KANAIYALAL H. VAKIL, B.A., LL.B.

THIS is an attempt to examine, outline and suggest very briefly and broadly the future possibilities and lines of development of the Sir J. J. School of Art, Bombay, as a central institute influencing the art-crafts of the Presidency. It is evidently futile however to trace the possibilities without reference to the causes which prompted the origin of the school and have directly or indirectly guided its activities and career. The School of Art, it is well known, came into being as a tangible result of the keen popular interest in artistic goods aroused at the time of the Great International Exhibition in London in 1851. That was the time when the School of Design, the present Royal College of Art, (established some years ago as the outcome of the first governmental inquiry

in 1835 into the conditions of the artistic manufactures in England) recognising the necessity of more comprehensive and systematic efforts, reorganised and extended its scope of work. The schools of art were not unknown at the time of the governmental inquiry of 1835. But it was due to the foundation of the then School of Design and the Government grant in 1840 of £10,000 for the equipment and formation of schools of design (particularly in large manufacturing towns) that attempts were, for the first time probably, made to define their position and work. After a period of over a decade another impetus for a fresh review of the work done by the schools was supplied by the International Exhibition of 1851.

Craft work was at this time introduced in the Royal College of Art, then known as the School of Design, and was afterwards taken up by other schools. The first exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Society in 1888, the formation of the Design and Industries Association in 1915, of the British Institute of Industrial Art in 1920, and, very recently of a new scheme of encouragement in the form of competitions, prizes, diplomas and scholarships framed by the Royal Society of Arts

guided by competent committees, mark some of the distinctive phases of progress in the educative measures adopted for the development of the art-crafts in England. Those have been supplemented, no doubt, by the various instructive reports on the subject published since 1835 by Government; by various efforts towards educational reform examplified in its latest form by contributions from men like Mr. H. Wilson in the New Ideals in Education Conference; by sociologists of the scholarship and eminence of Professor Patrick Geddes and Mr. Victor Branford, by the philosophers represented by Mr. Bertrand Russell and Mr. Edward Carpenter or by Mr. Havelock Ellis and Mr. J. A. Thompson and finally by those represented by Mr. C. Ashbee, the architect-craftsman. It is not possible nor is it intended to review here all these efforts. Those who are anxious to evolve methods and institutions more actively pledged to exert the influence of art in nation-wide movements cannot and should not neglect the invaluable guidance offered by the experience and suggestions embodied in this considerable field of literature. If they study it closely and analyse it impartially it will not be long

before they will be convinced that it contains more than enough evidence to prove the truth of the statements that the arts and crafts movement, although its necessity has been universally recognised, "has had little influence upon raising the general level of design of ordinary commercial goods" and that the attitude of the English manufacturer toward art training has generally been one of "indifference and, at its worst, one of open hostility". These are not random deductions. The statements quoted are contained in an extremely useful, suggestive and authoritative report of an Industrial Art Survey published last year by the National Society for Vocational Education, and the Department of Education of the State of New York. It is an invaluable document containing a dispassionate survey of the methods and history of art institutions throughout Europe and America. The comparative failure of educative efforts; and the general indifference towards art training are therefore aspects of the question that deserve the closest attention, scrutiny and study by those seriously engaged in planning schemes of educational reform. If they could, from the guidance available, approximately estimate

the true causes of the general indifference and the failure of educative efforts they would certainly be brought nearer to the necessary remedies. It is, therefore, with a view to assist the discovery of the remedies that the causes of the disease are very briefly summarised here.

The causes here ennumerated could be easily found in the evidence afforded by the literature referred to above. The chief causes for the comparative failure of the reformers and the general indifference are:—false economic conceptions, mistaken aims and ideals of Schools of Art and similar art institutions, the practical dominance and dictatorship of Industry, the misleading distinctions between "Fine" and "Applied" arts, the vague and unrelated efforts of the strictly technical vocational institutions on the one hand and the Museums on the other, the tacit acknowledgment of the inferiority of the latter, and consequent segregation of the arts and the perfunctory attention paid to art training in the elementary schools.

The economics which sacrified quality for quantity, the school and institutions which were controlled by, and managed for Industry, could not and have not accepted

art whether as an ultimate or even as a main aim. The convenient distinction between "Fine" and "Applied" arts relegated the former to the position of an avoidable luxury for the rich and the latter to that of an insignificant subsidiary branch of Industry. Art has been either the unwanted guest of the rich or the servile beneficiary of Industry—has seldom been recognised as competent to claim an independent status. Art rarely occupies, therefore, an integral position in the educational curriculum. These conclusions, derived from a survey of educational art activities in Western countries, do not vary materially from those one arrives at from a dispassionate survey of similar institutions in India; because these have until very recently merely followed in the footsteps of their overseas exemplars. So that the causes in India that have contributed towards the general indifference of the public and the failure of the educative efforts are practically the same causes that have affected the destinies of the art-crafts in England. Only here, on account of an absolutely different environment and of conditions and traditions widely divergent from those of England, defective aims and methods have wrought, naturally

greater, and deeper havoc. The story of the decline and fall of the arts and crafts in India, despite the modern art institutions, can be read in innumerable surveys and observations by Sir George Birdwood. The first important thing, therefore, is to benefit by the mistake admitted by the West. Our second task should be to study local conditions and requirements. We must accept the independent, if not the sovereign, status of art. We must rediscover the points of contact between the " Fine " and the " Applied " arts. And, finally we must establish harmonious relations with the strictly technical institutions on the one hand and the Museums and other educational institutions on the other. If that could be done it would not be very difficult to achieve before long the position for the Bombay School of Art of a central institute actively directing the development of the art-crafts in the Presidency. The Presidency covers a vast area of provinces most of them still possessing art-crafts distinctly expressive of their own region. The Exhibition of Arts and Crafts organised by the Bombay Students' Brotherhood, probably the first venture of the kind in the city, the recent exhibitions at Baroda and Bhavnagar and the forth-

coming exhibition arranged by the Gujarat Kala Pravartak Mandal at Ahmedabad along with many minor exhibitions in the Presidency merely indicate the general awakening marked by similar exhibitions in Calcutta, Madras, Simla and Aligarh. The desire is there. It needs guidance. And, the guidance can and should be provided by the Bombay School of Art. It is true that before the School can take up its destined work it will have to consider several problems of practical importance. But is there any doubt that the time is arrived when the School must afford the inspiring environment that contact with the highest and noblest efforts in art alone can provide as an impetus to the still surviving priceless art-crafts of the Bombay Presidency? Is there any doubt that it must now begin to contemplate the scheme that would ensure the necessary environment? If there is any doubt it should be removed by the mural paintings and the craft work of the students of the School and by the persistent clamour for art expressed by the increasing public interest in exhibitions. If the School bases its work on local conditions and requirements, if it dispenses with rigid distinctions between the arts

and the crafts, if it can establish a definite and harmonious relation with the museums and other educational and strictly technical institutions, if it accepts the independent status of art and caters for quality, (that is to say the highest standards of workmanship) rather than for quantity there cannot be the slightest doubt about its future as a central institute directing the development of the art-crafts of the Presidency. There are dangers common both to the West and the East. Both must therefore guard against them. There are things that the East can borrow from the West as there are things that the West can borrow from the East. The art-crafts that modern conditions have evolved, such as process work and similar peculiarly modern applications may without restraint be taken from the West. The West may in its turn learn (as it is beginning to learn) something from the patterns that the East so lavishly offers to it by means of its known textiles, metal work, ivory, wood and other innumerable handicrafts. But each must maintain its individuality. The rich diversity which locality (that is to say the genius of different regions) imparts to the art-crafts is an indispensable asset for

the artistic wealth of the world. The dangers common to the East as well as to the West are deliberately emphasised here because until we have removed these we shall be merely repeating the mistakes we have been committing ever since 1835. The removal of the common dangers is besides the speediest method of arriving at a definite basis of reconstruction. That basis can be easily formulated on the local conditions and requirements. These can as easily be ascertained. There is already ample material available for the purpose. But all efforts for reform and advancement would be practically futile if those entrusted with the work do not benefit by the guidance afforded by the mistakes of the past.

IV.

THE BOMBAY ART SOCIETY.

BY SHIVRAM V. BHANDARKAR, B.A., LL.B.,
Hon. Secretary, Bombay Art Society.

THE Bombay Art Society was founded in December 1888 for the promotion and encouragement of Art by the Exhibition of pictures, and other works of art, by the publication of an Art Journal, by meetings and lectures, by assisting in the establishment, and maintenance of a permanent Gallery for pictures and other works of Art, and by the formation of an Art Union.

The Members of the Committee of Management, and probably the first founders of the Society as shown by the records available, and particularly by a copy of the Catalogue of the Third Annual Exhibition held in 1891 were almost all Europeans—one of whom was Mr. G. W. Terry, an eminent Artist and the then Principal of the Sir J. J. School of Art.

The Patron of the Society has invariably been His Excellency the Governor of the Bombay Presidency for the time being.

The Society has continued to hold its Annual Exhibitions of Paintings, Sculpture, and other Arts and Crafts ever since its foundation, and the last Exhibition held in November 1923 was its Thirty-third Exhibition.

For want of sufficient funds, and a suitable place the Society has not been able to carry out its other objects, *viz.*: meetings and lectures, and the establishment and maintenance of a permanent Gallery of pictures and other works of Art.

For similar reasons it has not been able to continue the publication of an Art Journal, which was started for the first time in 1910, and contained (*a*) a brief historical sketch of the Society with special reference to the period from 1906 to 1910 by Prof. O. V. Muller, the then Hon. Secretary of the Society; (*b*) a short account of the 18th Exhibition of the Society held in March 1909 with a reproduction of some of the leading pictures; (*c*) a lecture on the Rock-Cut Temples of Western India, illustrated by lantern slides delivered on 22nd of February by Mr. Shivram V.

Bhandarkar, then Assistant Hon. Secretary of the Society.

Also for want of funds, and a suitable place for its location, the desire to have a permanent Art Gallery of pictures, etc., has not been fulfilled. It was expected that when the Prince of Wales Museum was placed on a suitable foundation in its present building, a room might be found therein for such a Gallery, but this expectation has not materialized.* There can be no doubt that a most useful collection of paintings by Indian Artists might have been made during all these years, and located in the Prince of Wales Museum as a permanent record of the work of Indian Artists.

The Society, however, has been able to continue to hold its Annual Exhibitions. These Exhibitions have proved to be the best media for the encouragement of, and profit to, the Artists throughout India, and particularly in the Bombay Presidency.

For some five or six years since the foundation of the Society the Exhibits of the European Artists preponderated over those

* This year however the Trustees of the Prince of Wales Museum purchased four pictures from the Annual Exhibition of the Bombay Art Society.

of the Indian Artists as shown by the Catalogues of the Annual Exhibitions. This was natural. The Sir J. J. School of Art was then in its first stages of development, but in course of time as taste for the acquisition of art as a profession was developed under able Principals of the School of Art, like Messrs. Terry, and Griffiths, and by the publicity given to Indian Artists by the Bombay Art Society, the School of Art produced a band of Indian Artists, whose works can be compared most favourably with those of European Artists. The number of works of these Indian Artists exhibited in subsequent years at the Society's Annual Exhibition have considerably increased and have secured for many of them medals and prizes.

From the commencement of the work of the Society a special prize has been reserved to the students of the Sir J. J. School of Art. This reservation is indicative of the interest which the first promoters, and subsequent Committee of the Society took in that School.

The Society is maintained by annual subscriptions from ordinary Members, by an annual grant by the Government of Bombay and by interest on some funds, which are the accumulated savings of several years

past, resulting from efficient and economical working. The Society also awards Medals and Prizes partly out of its own funds, partly from donations from generous donors. But for the Government grant and private donations it would not have been able to carry on its work. H. E. the Governor of Bombay for the time being has throughout never failed to show his appreciation of the work done by the Society by a donation for a prize in his name.

It is hoped that the public and Government of Bombay will continue to support the Society, which has served Art so well all these years, and will take early steps to have it housed in a suitable Home.

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