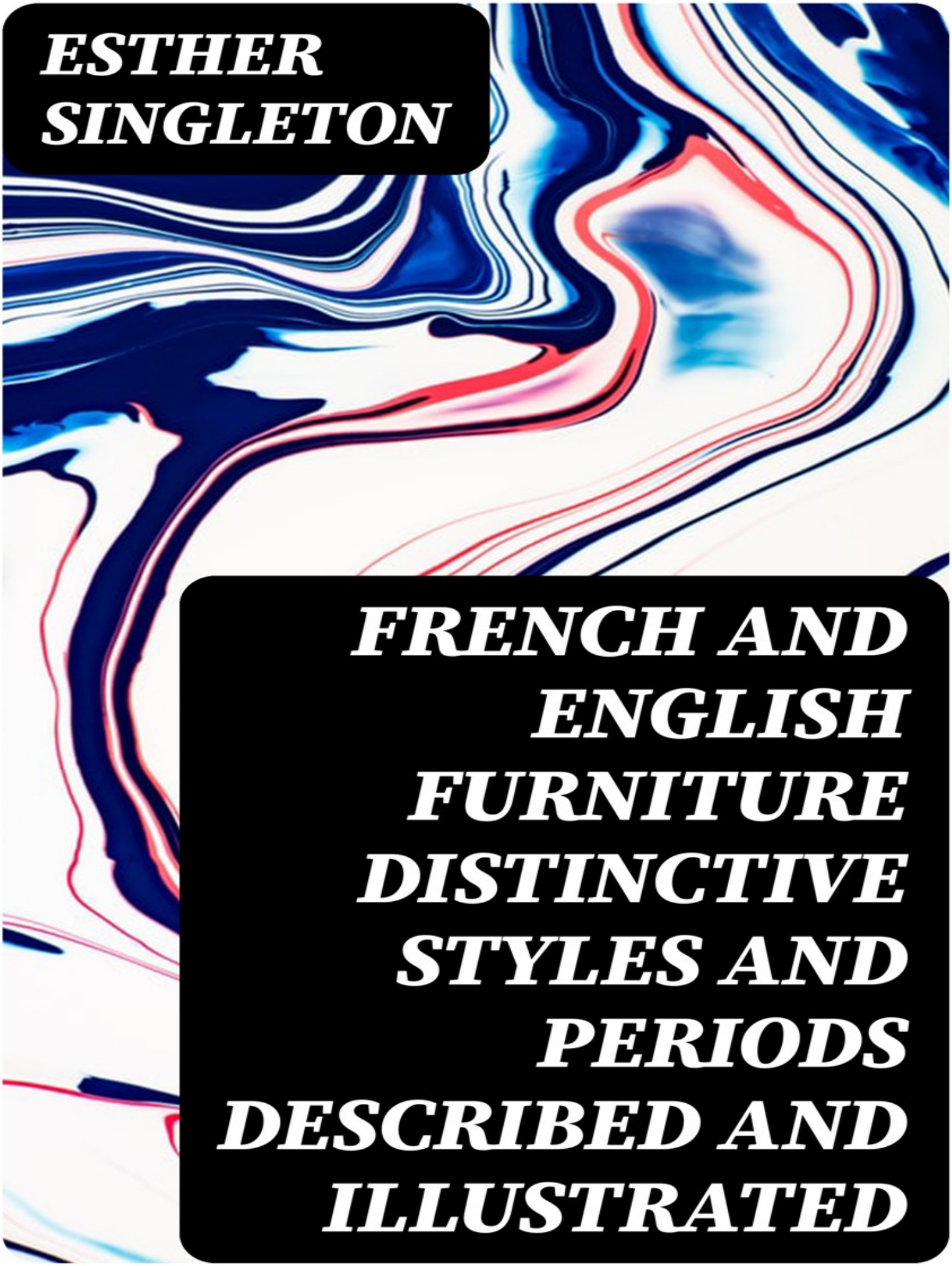
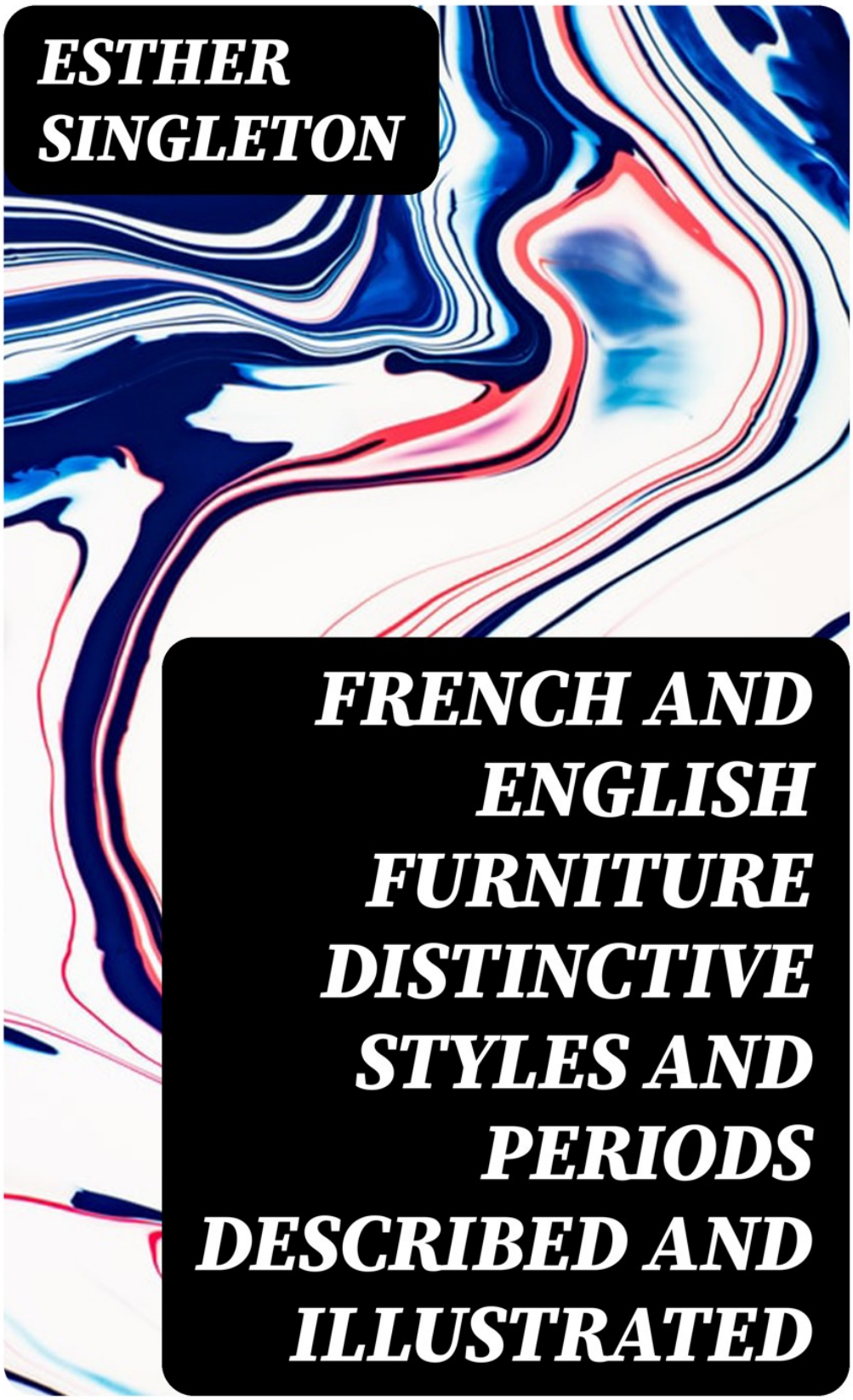


ESTHER SINGLETON

FRENCH AND ENGLISH FURNITURE DISTINCTIVE STYLES AND PERIODS DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED



ESTHER SINGLETON

FRENCH AND ENGLISH FURNITURE DISTINCTIVE STYLES AND PERIODS DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED

Esther Singleton

French and English furniture distinctive styles and periods described and illustrated

EAN 8596547036791

DigiCat, 2022
Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info

Table of Contents

DISTINCTIVE STYLES AND PERIODS DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED

BY

ESTHER SINGLETON

AUTHOR OF THE FURNITURE OF OUR FOREFATHERS

ILLUSTRATED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES

BY

H. D. NICHOLS

BY
ESTHER SINGLETON
AUTHOR OF THE FURNITURE OF OUR FOREFATHERS
ILLUSTRATED FROM ORIGINAL SOURCES
BY
H. D. NICHOLS
NEW YORK
McCLURE PHILLIPS & CO
MCMIII

Published December, 1903. N

PREFACE

Table of Contents

PREFACE

The purpose of this work is to provide all who are interested in French and English furniture since the Renaissance period with a comprehensive and detailed view of the various periods or styles. A chapter is devoted to each period, and the chapters naturally vary in size, in accordance with the importance and length of the different periods. So far as I have been able to discover in my researches, there is no work precisely of the same aim and scope as this one in existence. Many books have been written about furniture as a whole, and the history of furniture,—especially the French styles; but I do not know of one that enables the student to learn with slight expenditure of time and energy all that is necessary to know in order to fit up a room in any given style. Anyone who wants to furnish and decorate a Louis XV. boudoir properly, or a Heppelwhite dining-room, or an Empire bedroom, can

find all about it in the following pages. The collector, the student, the cabinet-maker, the upholsterer, and even the architect will find ready at hand valuable material gathered from many sources. The ceilings, wall-decorations and chimney-pieces proper to each period are described from contemporary authorities and illustrated from contemporary pictures and prints. The furniture is described from specimens existing in many collections and museums; and frequently in the words of the great makers and designers themselves.

In many instances the collector is forced to buy the survivals of whatever period he fancies, instead of being able to select for reproduction the more artistic specimens that have perished, and his rooms are filled with anachronisms because he cannot find articles to complete his set of furniture. The reproduction of a beautiful model will give more pleasure to a person of taste than a piece of furniture whose only recommendation is that it is an "antique"; and I think many persons will sympathize with me in my desire to see correct reproductions of beautiful models of furniture multiplied, as well as the textiles that accord with them.

In all periods people have given much thought not only to beautifying their homes, but to achieving the correctness of style that contributes elegance and dignity to an establishment, unconsciously following the opinion that Sir Henry Wootton gave about 1600: "Every man's proper mansion house and home being the Theatre of his Hospitality, the seat of his self-fruition, the Comfortablest part of his own Life, the noblest of his Son's Inheritance, a

kind of Private Princedom—nay, the Possession thereof an Epitome of the whole World, may well deserve by these attributes, according to the degree of the Master, to be delightfully adorned."

In order to give an even more thorough understanding of the appearance of the rooms, I have included many partial inventories of representative homes and many descriptions of separate sumptuous beds and other pieces of furniture typical of the style. Upholstery has received minute attention. Any one can learn here how to drape a bed, or a window; what valances, curtains, lambrequins, cords and tassels are appropriate, and what materials, braids and nails may be used.

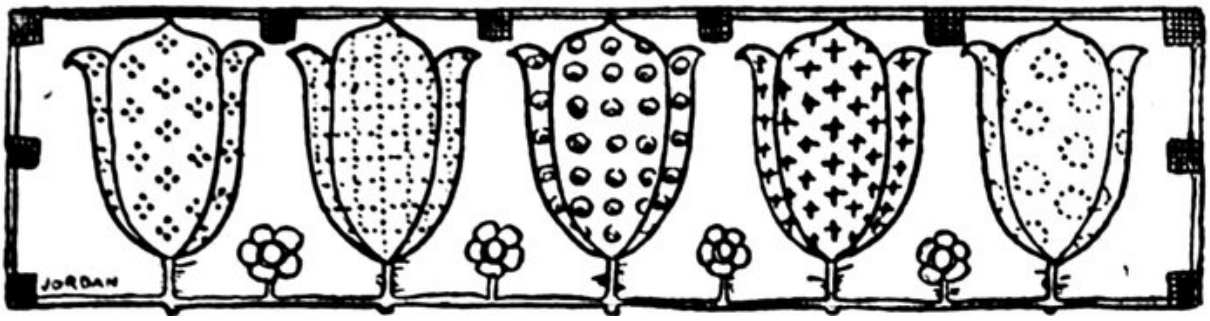
The characteristics of the decorative art of each period are set forth with some detail, and the motives of carving of the woodwork are clearly defined in the numerous line drawings and details of the many plates.

I have carefully selected the illustrations from the designs of the recognized representatives and leaders of the styles. Besides going to these fountain-heads, I have not hesitated to adopt the views and translate in many cases the words of the recognized modern authorities on French furniture. These include Alexandre, Jacquemart, Havard, Deville, and others. In the Chippendale, Heppelwhite and Sheraton styles, these writers speak for themselves.

I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Arthur Shadwell Martin for his valuable assistance in my researches for both pictures and text.

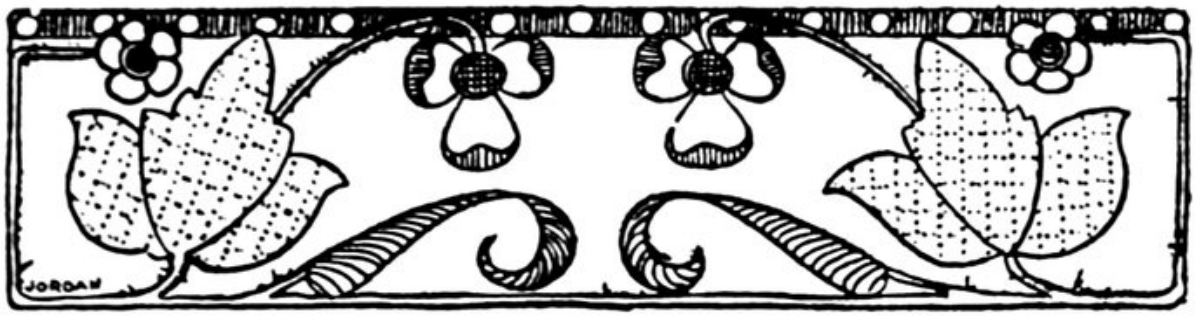
E. S.

New York, December, 1903.


JORDAN

LOUIS XIII. PERIOD

Table of Contents



LOUIS XIII. PERIOD

In decorative art, the form of Renaissance known as Henri II., which owed so much to the taste and influence of Diana of Poitiers, lasted for three quarters of a century. There was practically no change till the regency of Marie de' Medici, when she invited Rubens to Paris. In 1625, he had completed his Luxembourg works, and the commencement of his visit is generally regarded as the date of the beginning of the pure Louis XIII. style. Flemish influence, therefore, is the keynote of this modified Renaissance style. Marie de' Medici called many of her own countrymen from Italy to design the new works, and Rubens himself had spent eight years in Mantua, and therefore Italian taste is often apparent in the Louis XIII. style, but is quite secondary to that of Flanders. The great fame that Rubens enjoyed and his splendid reception in Paris gave his work unquestioned

authority with the contemporary French decorative artists. His painting affected furniture with its luxuriant, robust and somewhat heavy qualities.

A period of magnificence and lavish expenditure by art-lovers had begun. Richelieu at the beginning almost rivalled in luxury Mazarin and Fouquet at the end of this period. The Cardinal employed Simon Vouet and other artists on the decoration of his magnificent Palais Royal and the Castle of Rueil; and his expenditures in art collecting attracted such undesirable public attention that he presented a great part of his treasures to the King in 1636. Among these was a great silver buffet weighing about 1625 pounds.

Vouet, during this period, occupied a somewhat similar position to that held by Le Brun during the Louis XIV. period. It is interesting to note the importance now held by goldsmiths in decorative art. A great deal of the furniture of the day was designed by them. Architects also regarded furniture as an integral part of the interior decoration of their apartments, and therefore designed the important pieces. For instance, Crispin de Passe (1570–1642) shows, besides his chimney-pieces (which being the most important architectural feature in the room, always received careful artistic treatment from the architects), chairs and bedstead. The latter still retains a good deal of Renaissance feeling, with carved posts, open-carved colonnade in the high foot-board and bulb feet. It is somewhat reminiscent of Du Cerceau’s design.

PLATE I

Besides the names already mentioned, the goldsmiths, Gideon Legare and Carteron, the armorial designer, Jacquard, and particularly Abraham Bosse, Picart, Stella, and Lepautre’s master Adam Philippon have left stamps or engravings that how the Louis XIII. style in all its details and characteristics. The goldsmiths, engravers and designers of this period were Audran, Barbet, Berton, Betin, Betou, Biard, Bignon, Blosset, Bouquet, Boutemie, Boyceau, Brebiette,

Brosse, Caillard, Callot, Carterson, Chrestollien, Collot, Cotelle, Daubigny, David, De la Barre, Dorigny, Faber, Firens, Francard, Fornazoris, Gandin, Gautrel, Hedouyns, Heince, Hennequin, Huret, Hurtu, Jacquard, Jardin, Jousse, La Fleur, La Houe, Langlois, Le Clerc, Lefebvre, Le Mercier, Le Rou, Le Roy, Levesville, Lionnais, Loriot, Lorris, Marchant, Mellan, Menessier, Messager, Millot, Montcornet, Moriet, Mortin, Nolin, Picart, Pierretz, Piquot, Pompeus, Rabel, Rivart, Roussel, Sordot, Tavernier, Testelin, Thomassin, Torner, Tortebat, Toutin, Vignon, Vivot, Vouet and Vovert. Rabel's ornaments are formed by a species of *rinceaux* of quite a particular kind, which look like the curves of an ear. Many artists of this period were certainly inspired by this part of the human body. It is impossible to imagine more strange productions; the *genre* (auricular style) lasted only a short time in France, and was carried to its apogee by the Germans and Flemings.

The age of Louis XIII. saw the transformation of Paris, and the application of the decorative arts to private life. The new manners in this period finally break with the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It is a transitory, but decisive, period with its own originality; a period which announces the splendours of the age of Louis XIV.

Paris was so embellished, and so many houses were rebuilt and new finer ones built, that rents rose greatly, and the authorities published five abortive ordinances regulating the excessive rents between 1622 and 1649. The new luxury had to be paid for. Under Marie de' Medici and Richelieu, a new city with characteristics of utility, beauty

and magnificence arose. Corneille's *le Menteur* (1642) notes the wonderful change:

"*Paris semble à mes yeux un pays de romans;*
J'y croyais ce matin voir une île enchantée;
Je la laissai deserte et la trouve habitée.
Quelque Amphion nouveau sans l'aide des maçons
En superbes palais a changé ces buissons.
* * * * *
Toute une ville entière avec pompe bâtie,
Semble d'un vieux fossé par miracle sortie."

So Corneille tells us that the striking change in Paris was one to pomp and grandeur.

Even more than the magnificence of the dwellings, the change to comfort is to be observed. Far from increasing during the reigns of the Valois kings, comfort had suffered. Viollet le Duc says: "The excessively laboured refinement of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries and the internal luxury of the apartments of the beginning of the Sixteenth had been lost or laid aside during the long religious wars of the close of the Sixteenth Century, and the furniture of a great lord under Louis XIII. would have appeared barbarous and coarse to one of Charles VII.'s vassals. Perhaps it was better to live under the reign of Louis XIV. than under that of Charles V.; but certainly Charles V. and the nobles and middle classes of his time had better lodgings and were more comfortably furnished than the lords and common people were under the reign of the Great King."

However barbarous an interior of the Louis XIII. period might have been in comparison with one of the age of Charles VII., it certainly was changing for the better. Convenience was being sacrificed less for magnificence. There was an attempt to combine usefulness with elegance.

Mme. de Rambouillet was one of the heads of this movement; and, according to Tallement des Réaux, was the originator of it. She established her salon as early as 1608. Tallement says that she was the first to arrange suites of rooms through which guests could move easily. “Being dissatisfied with the plans submitted to her (it was in the Maréchal d’Ancre’s time) for at that time they only knew how to make a hall on one side, a chamber on the other, and a staircase in the middle, one day, after long reflection, she cried: ‘Quick! some paper! I have found how to do what I wanted.’ She drew the plan, and it was followed exactly.... She it was who taught people how to put the staircases to one side, so as to have a large suite of rooms, to make high windows from the floor up and to make high and broad doorways opposite one another.”

The decorative motives and accessories characteristic of this style are clearly defined. An analogy has been traced between the general lines of the furniture and the contemporary costume. In the latter, as shown in Abraham Bosse’s engravings, the waist line is set unusually high, giving an appearance of a short bust. This division of the figure into two unequal parts, the upper one being disproportionately short, is carried into the furniture. The characteristic chair of the period (see Plate I.) is short in the back. The larger pieces of furniture follow the same general form, being divided into two bodies by a horizontal cornice, shelf, or other line at above half the total height of the piece of furniture. The cabinets, architectural in form, have greater width than height, and rest on a frame or table with

legs turned spirally and connected. This style of cabinet was introduced early in the period.

One of the important decorative details and ornaments is the cartouche which also follows the prevailing taste: it is wider than it is high, and its field has always a somewhat exaggerated convex curve. The rounded form also predominates in the cut-work fringing the frame, and protuberance is also a noticeable feature of the balusters that are made use of in the various parts of furniture that require columns or supports. The vases also are very corpulent in form, which effect is exaggerated by their very small bases. The faces of the mascarons are very chubby, and are unusually lacking in expression. The decorative garlands, which are composed almost exclusively of leaves and fruits, very seldom of flowers, are arranged in heavy swags, almost always disposed in a semi-circle. Pears, and more especially apples, are the fruits most frequently met with. They are usually accompanied with short leaves without serrated edges. The garlands are of uniform thickness throughout; they are quite heavy. Cornucopias symmetrically disposed are often found on the frontons. It is a peculiarity of these cornucopias that notwithstanding the considerable size and quantity of the fruits overflowing their mouths, they are so slender that they might almost be taken for curved trumpets. Though rich and very abundant in detail, this ornamentation does not show much relief, because the composition, as a rule, does not present any important or dominant motive. In the decoration it is seldom that the living form plays more than an entirely accessory part. The bold round mouldings now dispense with the

ornaments and details of preceding styles. In many cases, these mouldings frame panels in which the square form predominates. When the square is extended into a rectangle, its dimensions are always greater horizontally than vertically. The hexagon, so much employed in the Henri II. style, is now supplanted by the octagon, which is frequently to be noticed.

Having now gone over the general characteristics and decorative features of this period, we may proceed to describe the separate pieces of furniture that are appropriate for a room of the Louis XIII. style.

First let it be said, however, that it is a mistake to suppose that a Louis XIII. room need be in any sense bare, cheerless, or lacking in comfort or convenience. The impression gained from the charming engravings of Abraham Bosse is one of cosiness as well as elegance.

The only sense of severity of this period in the interiors is produced by the massive chimney-pieces and the somewhat monumental forms of wardrobes, presses, cabinets, *armoires*, etc. These are usually in two tiers, the lower one usually being solid, as on Plate II., No. 4. The frame, or open lower part, however, was winning its way into favour. A good example of the latter appears on Plate III., No. 1, and the more curious and ornate transitional form in No. 4 of the same plate. Another example of the *armoire* of this period, having drawers between two compartments of doors is shown on Plate IV., No. 4, the details of which are purely characteristic of this period. The full drawing on the same plate shows a smaller cabinet with drawers beneath the two doors. This is a very handsome example of marquetry work.

The patterns of the inlaid wood under the cornice are very effective. It will be noticed that panelling plays a most important part in the decoration of these pieces of furniture. Many of them had pediments of an architectural character. These pediments were frequently broken, and in the centre on a pedestal stood an allegorical figure, or similar ornament, such as that of Justice shown in Plate II., No. 2. The panels were frequently richly carved with characteristic Louis XIII. ornaments, or with Biblical, allegorical or mythological subjects, such as Juno and the peacock, Judith with the head of Holofernes (Plate IV., Nos. 2 and 1), and Paris with the golden apple (Plate II., No. 3). The important part played by pillars, whether straight or twisted, in the decorative scheme is readily seen by a glance at the pieces of furniture on Plates III. and IV. No. 4 (Plate III.), called a credence, has three varieties of columns on the same tier. The flat bulb foot, plain or carved, so typical of this period, is also shown on Plates II., III. and IV. The buffet credence (Plate IV., No. 4) shows a peculiar combination of straight and twisted column. The shield in its broken pediment is flanked by the peculiar ear decoration characteristic of this period which has already been referred to (page 5). The winged cherub, which is so often found as a decorative accessory, appears to splendid effect on the mirror on Plate II., under the cornice of No. 4 on the same plate and on Plate III., No. 4. Several varieties of mascarons also appear on Plates II. and III.

The woods of which these massive cabinets, chests-of-drawers, etc., were made were oak, walnut, chestnut and sometimes ebony. The Dutch were bringing great quantities

of new exotic woods from the Far East, and the Spaniards were also introducing beautiful woods from the Central and South American forests and the West Indies. Mahogany, however, was scarcely known as yet in France, and was not generally used till a century later. The French, Germans, and especially Netherland cabinet-makers, however, were making full use of the advantages offered by the beautiful grains and tints of the new imported woods for the purposes of marquetry. Ebony, of course, was also extensively used for inlay and in the cheaper work blacked pear-wood was substituted. Ebony was too costly except for the richest kind of work. France was procuring it from Madagascar; the most highly-prized varieties, however, came from Ceylon, from which island green and yellow varieties were brought as well as the black. The workers of ebony gave their name to the whole craft of cabinet-making; the word *ébéniste* becomes generally used about this time.

In many of the larger pieces of furniture, the severe, rectangular and geometric character, the antique columns, pediments, broken pediments, garlands, pagan gods and goddesses, heroes, caryatides, grotesque figures, arabesques, vegetable and animal forms, imaginary beings half animal and half vegetable issuing from foliage, terms, and heads are ornaments and characteristics of the preceding reigns which have been carried over into the Louis XIII. period. The importation of Florentine and other Italian artists and workmen by Marie de Medici is clearly discernible in the great cabinets of this period. Not only were they inlaid with exotic woods, but also incrusted with precious metals and semi-precious stones. A cabinet of the

Louis XIII. period made by a Florentine artist frequently exhibits the most astonishing prodigality of material as well as workmanship. One of more than usual sumptuousness is described as being composed of three tiers and being entirely covered with shell, inside and outside. An aspect of extraordinary richness is produced by pilasters of lapis-lazuli, cornaline ornaments, plates of embossed silver, paintings and miniatures, framings of delicately *repoussé* and gilded copper and a top enriched with stones and silver figurines. Such a cabinet by its elaborate workmanship required the services of many craftsmen,—the cabinet-maker, the smith, the engraver, the lapidary, the mosaic-worker, the miniaturist, the sculptor and the ivory-worker.

PLATE II

We should naturally expect to find fine examples of Italian-made Louis XIII. cabinets among the possessions of the magnificent Cardinal Mazarin. In fact, the inventory of his goods mentions many such. One is thus described: “An ebony cabinet having a little moulding on the sides, quite plain outside, the front being divided into three arcades, in the middle of which are six niches, in four of which, in the lower row, are four virgins of ebony bearing bouquets of

silver, the said doors being ornamented with eight columns of veined lapis-lazuli, the bases and capitals of composite order in silver, the fronts of the doors and the rest of the cabinet being ornamented with various pieces, viz., cornalines, agate and jasper, set with silver; and above the arcades are three masks in jasper and twelve roses of the same mixed with six oval cornalines; the remainder is ornamented with silver let into the ebony in cartouche and leaf-work."

Another cabinet owned by Cardinal Mazarin was of ebony, the cornice ornamented with copper gilt, resting on four copper lions silver gilt, the base of lapis-lazuli with a dome between two pilasters ornamented with ten miniatures. In the centre on the door, Apollo was represented; on the front of the drawers, the Nine Muses; and, on the four corners of each drawer, a medal showing portraits of two ancient and two modern poets. These were covered with Venetian crystal and enclosed in a little cornice with festoons of copper, silver gilt. The cabinet was of two sections and stood on eight columns of pear-wood stained black. It was 3 feet, 1 inch high; 3 feet wide; and 1 foot, 2 inches deep.

Two other ebony cabinets, both known by the name of "*Cabinet de la Paix*," also belonged to the Cardinal. One of these was made by Dominico Cussey. This was of ebony inlaid with metal and was almost entirely covered with jasper, lapis-lazuli and agates. In front, it was enriched by four figures representing heroes, of bronze gilt on a background of lapis-lazuli. In the centre, there was a portico supported by two columns of lapis-lazuli with base and

capitals of gilt bronze, having on the frontispiece the arms of France crowned and supported by two angels,—all in gilt bronze on a background of lapis-lazuli. In the depth of the portico, there was a statue of Louis XIII. seated and holding in his left hand a shield with the device of His Majesty. Beneath his feet, there were a carpet and a cushion,—all in gilt bronze. In the top part of the cabinet there was a little niche which contained the figure of Peace that gave the cabinet its name. The cabinet stood upon a gilded wooden base supported in front by two pilasters on an azure background, and four figures representing “the four principal rivers of the world.” The whole was 8 feet high; 5 feet, 3 inches wide; and 19 inches deep.

The companion cabinet of the same dimensions and proportions was likewise in two parts (*à double corps*); and likewise incrusted with jasper, lapis-lazuli and agates. In the large portico, the figure was that of Queen Marie Thérèse of Austria dressed as Pallas, and above were the arms of France and Spain supported by two angels. On the sides were four figures of the Virtues in relief, standing on a base of sculptured and gilded wood, which, instead of rivers, as in the companion piece, represented the four geographical divisions of the world.

Another of Mazarin’s cabinets that had formerly belonged to his great predecessor, Richelieu, is described as being decorated with wavy mouldings (guilloches) and compartments ornamented with various flowers, masques and half figures, the frieze bearing marine monsters and the middle of the doors having an octagonal panel in which is an Amphion on a dolphin. It rested on a base of four ebony

columns united in front, and four pear-wood pilasters behind; and between the columns was a cartouche bearing the arms of the deceased Cardinal Richelieu. This cabinet was 5 feet in length; 1 foot, 7 inches in depth; and 5 feet, 10 inches in height. This was evidently an excellent typical specimen of pure Louis XIII. work, since it was made for Richelieu.

These rare cabinets were undoubtedly the origin of the Boulle furniture of the next reign, and they existed in great numbers until destroyed during the Revolution. The few that survived the ravages of the mob are preserved in museums and private collections.

The *cabinets à porte* (cabinets with doors) were, as a rule, more severe than the sumptuous articles just described. They depend far more upon the architectural form and talent displayed by the cabinet-maker and designer than upon the skill and art of the decorator. The first *cabinets à porte* date from the Renaissance, and received their name at the moment when one kind of *bahut*, placed on four feet, contested popularity with another kind that stood on a base with doors, and foreshadowed the form of those pieces of furniture called *à deux corps*. The construction of these pieces, no matter how fine the execution of their mouldings, panels, and doors, was as a rule massive, and was the work of the joiners and carvers instead of the *ébénistes* and *marqueteurs*.

One of these double cabinets is shown on Plates II. and IV., the upper part appearing in No. 2 on Plate II., and the lower in No. 2 on Plate IV. A carved oak *bahut* is shown on Plate IV., No. 1. Another walnut double cabinet is shown on

Plate II., No. 4. A cabinet of another variety appears on Plate III., No. 1. This is made of oak and cedar inlaid with rosewood, and has two doors in front with projecting panels, and an oval moulding in the centre and one outside drawer with brass drop handles.

The cabinet-makers of Southern Germany also excelled in their art, and their *Kunstschranken* were sought for presents to princes. The most famous piece of furniture of this class is known as the “Pomeranian Art Cabinet,” now in the Chamber of Arts in Berlin. It was made between 1611 and 1617 for Philip II., Duke of Pomerania. Philip Heinhofer of Augsburg designed it and it was made in that town by Baumgartner. The elaborateness of this cabinet may be appreciated from the great number of workmen employed in its construction. These included three painters, one sculptor, one painter in enamel, six goldsmiths, two clock-makers, an organ-maker, a mechanician, a modeller in wax, a cabinet-maker, an engraver upon metal, an engraver of precious stones, a turner, two locksmiths, a binder and two sheath-makers. This cabinet is 4 feet, 10 inches high, 3 feet, 4 inches wide, and 2 feet, 10 inches deep. It is made of ebony with sandal-wood drawers lined with red morocco, and mounted with silver and *pietra dura* work. It is supported on four griffins with heads and manes of silver gilt but the real weight is borne upon a large scroll. The base is inlaid with small panels of lapis-lazuli, jasper, cornelian and agate, with plates of chased silver between them. The upper and lower friezes are composed of fruit, and other ornaments consist of female figures and boys playing musical instruments. There are also medallions of silver and Limoges enamel.

A fine example of a cabinet of the Seventeenth Century was owned by Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill. This was 5 feet high and 3 feet wide, composed of ebony, rosso antico columns, lapis-lazuli and bloodstone panels, with settings of *or moulu* and precious stones. Neptune was represented in the central niche and on either side Tritons and sea nymphs sported. Beneath these were serpents and shells, horses, griffins, lions, bulls and dogs. In the panels above children were fishing with nets and rods. The whole was supported on four ebony legs ornamented with gold. Tables of the period were also most ornate.

Vasari speaks of a “splendid library” table made by Bernardo Buontalenti, at the order of Francesco de’ Medici. It was “of ebony veneered with ebony divided into compartments by columns of heliotrope, oriental jasper, and lapis-lazuli, which have the vases and capitals of chased silver. The work is furthermore enriched with jewels, beautiful ornaments of silver, and exquisite little figures interspersed with miniatures and terminal figures of silver and gold in full relief united in pairs. There are besides other compartments formed of jasper, agates, heliotropes, sardonyxes, carnelians, and other precious stones.”

The *armoire* did not lose its importance until the end of the Seventeenth Century, when it was relegated to the *Garde-Robes*; but the *armoires*, called *placards*, hidden under the panels of the room, remained. Mazarin had an *armoire* in his *Garde-Robe* 7 feet high and 5 feet 3 inches wide.

In the inventory of Madame de Mercœur, the *garde-robe* contains armoires, a bed and seats, and gives a hint of the

dressing-table by “a table with drawer, having a *housse* of red serge d’Aumalle.”

The feature of a Louis XIII. room that formed one of its chief attractions was its tapestries and other hangings. Wherever the furniture would admit of it, a gay cloth was spread or hung. The parquet, boarded, or tiled floor also was partly covered with rugs from the Levant.

It is an age of rich textiles: not only do we find tapestry with its mythological, Biblical, allegorical, historical and floral pictures, but damasks, silks, velvets, brocades, serges and Oriental goods occur in bewildering variety. Their designs have never been surpassed in effect and elegance. When the materials were of one solid colour, they were usually ornamented with embroidery, braids, passementerie and gold and silver lace in addition to fringes. The latter existed in great number. They were of various widths and materials as well as designs. Sometimes fringes of two widths were used on the same drapery, and it was not infrequent that a fringe of gold was placed directly above one of silver, or the reverse. One of the most popular fringes was the *crespine*, a very narrow fringe composed of slender threads placed close together and sometimes tufted. This was used for trimming the bed-curtains, tablecloths and chairs (see Frontispiece). Another favourite fringe was the *Milanaise* or *Napolitaine*, composed of two kinds of threads, frequently silver and a coloured silk rolled together in the form of a spiral.

The window curtains and *portières* were also trimmed with braid and fringe. They hung from cornices of oak or walnut, carved to accord with the rest of the furniture. The

centre of the cornice was decorated with a cartouche; or a figure of some kind, very frequently a mascaron, and beneath this hung the curtain or the lambrequin. The curtains were of tapestry, brocade, brocatelle, lampas (a kind of brocade), Genoa velvet or damask lined with silk or serge and bordered with braid, lace and fringe of gold, silver or silk, or worsted. The lambrequin used toward the end of the period consisted of a series of denticulated scallops or square flaps, shaped like those that bordered the tops of tents and pavilions, or in the form of the housings on which the knights' arms were emblazoned.

The bed is highly decorative. It is almost solely dependent upon its furniture for its effect, as the wood is seldom, or never, visible. The typical bed of the period is known as the *lit en housse*. It is the one that appears in Abraham Bosse's engravings. We may note in passing that the word *housse* has the some origin as the *housse* or housings applied to the coverings of the horses in the Middle Ages.

The wooden framework is of comparatively little importance, after the correct proportions have been assured. The *ciel*, or canopy, which is supported by four posts must never quite touch the ceiling of the room. The posts are covered with the same material as the curtains, or painted in harmony, and occasionally they are left plain. Iron rods surround the canopy beneath the valance for the support of the curtains, which may be drawn up or down by means of cords and pullies. When closed, the *lit en housse* has the appearance of a square box. The *lit en housse* consists therefore of the four posts, the canopy or *ciel*, the