ties upon the subject: several writers holding that it was an ordinary mercantile organization, devoid of all public power. But the weight of evidence is upon the side of Dr. Gross, who, in his learned work, "The Gild Merchant," states with much emphasis that, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the fraternity was already an official civic body, an organic and constituent part of the municipal government. Again, other students regard the body as identical with the borough constitution as a whole; maintaining that it was not a mere adjunct of a town community, but that "it occupied the whole area of municipal government, with the president of the gild for head of the borough, and the gildsmen for burgesses.

Later Mercantile Companies

An Extract from "The Gild Merchant" by Dr. Charles Gross.

"During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in England we find the old Gild Merchant resolved into the general classes of crafts, mysteries, arts or occupations, namely: those wholly of a mercantile character, and those in which the artisan still figured prominently. The former consisted exclusively of all dealers who bought and sold what others made or produced; while the latter embraced workers, who either did not sell any wares at all or only such as they manufactured with their own hands. The mercantile societies, may, in turn, be subdivided into those that dealt in only one particular line of goods, such as the drapers, leather-sellers, vintners, etc., and those that traded in a variety of articles; that is the common merchants, whose companies, in most cases, seem to have been made up mainly of grocers and mercers. The old Gild Merchant embraced both merchants and artisans; the later company of merchants contained merchants only."
Bride's Chest, in dark fumed oak; bound with wrought iron.
Table for the Hall, or the Living Room.