A Candlestick Maker  

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OF all things sought for on the cattle range and in the mining camp, perhaps the rarest are art and the artist; for life on the frontier has small time for meditation or for that which can not be achieved in haste. The American history of California is so short, so few years have passed since the world’s end lay at the Golden Gate, that many people still picture California as a land of many wonders, but as a place in which civilization has made but little progress. It is true that culture and art can make no claims to long standing in the far West; but both have a firm foothold, and both are making rapid yet sturdy growth, as was shown by some recent Arts and Crafts Exhibitions in San Francisco.

Those who cling to the wild idea of California, will find it easy to give the Butcher a place in its every-day life: for the Baker, too, they may find room and conceive a market for his wares; but the Candlestick maker they would bar out as a producer of wares for which there could be no demand. Yet this article has been written to describe the work of a maker of candlesticks whose workshop is at no great distance from the waters of the Golden Gate.

The plates show a few of the fifty or more designs which have
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originated in his workshop. The work is in brass, with the exception of a few pieces in iron. Nearly all the designs have been developed at the bench, or as one might say, in the brass itself: the work being largely done without drawings of any kind, and the design often suggested by the material at hand. Sometimes a bit of brass “junk” has been turned to good account, but the material mostly used is sheet- and rod-brass and castings specially made. Since the result desired is seldom a hard and fixed design, the workman may take advantage of any peculiarity his material presents, and so stamp each piece with the hall mark of individuality; thus a slip of the tool, or a flaw in the casting need not cause the piece to be rejected, but often leads to a new design.

In considering the craftsman side of the subject, it may be well to select one or two pieces shown in the plates, and to describe, in detail, the manner in which they were wrought. Taking for example, the three-light twisted design, shown in plate I, let us follow the material through the various processes of construction. Of the nine pieces of brass forming this candlestick we may first turn our attention to the base. This being a casting, the first process is the making of a pattern, which, in this case, is of soft wood, shaped in the lathe and rubbed smooth with blacklead and varnish. Some of the casting is done in the shop, but as a rule the pattern is sent to a foundry to be reproduced in metal. The casting comes from the foundry in the rough, and must be mounted in the lathe to be turned and polished. The turning is done with hand tools in nearly the same manner as wood turning. The base being finished, the next step is to form the central stem. For this a square rod is cut of the proper length, and after it is annealed, the twist is given to it. The ends are then fitted with screws for holding the base and the candle socket, and the stem drilled laterally to receive the piece forming the arms, which is now fastened in place, twisted, and bent into shape. The drip-pans are formed from disks of fairly thick sheet brass; the blanks being placed on a hollow block and shaped with a hammer. The sockets are castings, turned and bored in the lathe, and when screwed into place, complete the candlestick.

The heart-shaped design is made from rods of half-round brass, the bending being done with a hammer. The other designs,
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generally speaking, are built in the same way. The tall piece shown in plate II is a reproduction of an antique candlestick used in one of the old California Spanish Missions. It is twenty-two inches in height and weighs about ten pounds. All the pieces have the merit of good weight.

Plate II shows two pieces of iron left in the dull finish of the fire, without that paint or polish which is so often unhappily bestowed upon the objects of the blacksmith’s craft.

Altogether these simple, honestly wrought objects reveal a workman of the true order: one who labors equally with hand and brain, and who in his labor finds the highest degree of pleasure.
AN ATTRACTIVE SEAT

The attractive seat here represented is a product of the Gustav Stickley workshops. The wooden frame of the piece is of "fumed" oak, with the soft moiré surface peculiar to the pieces of its maker.

The cushion and pillows are of green canvas cloth, a linen fabric recently imported from England; the pillows, large and square, having their outline emphasized with hem-stitching, done with linen thread, in the natural color of flax.
A Piece of English Cabinet Making

THE illustration here shown is that of an original and beautiful piece of cabinet making, the work of Mr. J. S. Henry of London. It was shown in the Arts and Crafts Exhibition, held in Syracuse, and there attracted much admiration. It is built of light brown "fumed" oak, and is ornamented with leaded glass inserts and with wood and metal inlay; the former being in dark water-green, and the latter in bright colors with a prevalence of deep rose. A narrow band of marquetry, like a twisted cord of two colors, panels the top, sides and large drawer of the desk; thus adding interest and variety to the severe, delicate lines of the structure. The interior compartments and drawer are made from red cedar: a provision which completes a refined, beautiful and practical scheme.