unity between the furniture and the structure, in spite of the fact that every writer on the topic has insisted upon it, in the majority of instances is further from realization than it was in the Stone Age, when, by force of circumstances, harmony of manners, methods and materials was a necessity. It is not intended by this to suggest that we should return to that period, but to emphasize the fact that necessity involves simplicity and that simplicity is the key note of harmony. This furniture, while adapted with much precision to its various functions, is of almost primitive directness. It is done in oak with a pale olive Craftsman finish, and thus becomes an integral part of the bungalow.

Whatever hardware is used in connection with this furniture is of wrought-iron, in the “Russian finish,” which falls into place very readily in the general scheme.

Great care has been taken in furnishing this bungalow to omit every article that is not absolutely essential to the comfort or the convenience of the occupants, it not being intended to make the building in a small way a cheap museum to be indifferently managed by an amateur curator, as is usually the case in urban residences and frequently happens in the summer cottage, to the great disturbance of the simple life.

**INSPIRATION IN MATERIAL.**

**BY CHARLES F. BINNS.**

“All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another.”—St. Paul.

This is true, but not always logically recognized. When he who casts a metal column says: “I will paint it to resemble wood,” when the worker in glass obscures its brilliance that it may pass for porcelain, when the maker of furniture covers his woodwork with bronze, they are jointly and severally engaged in falsifying their materials and denying that bodies celestial or bodies terrestrial have any inalienable right to appear in propria persona.

A glance over the pursuit of industrial art as illumined by the light of history, will serve to show that when the creations of men were uninfluenced by the vagaries of fashion and their creators unaware of an insensate demand for novelty, the material in which they wrought was the source of their inspiration.

To the Egyptian sculptor the unyielding rock suggested massive features and solid form. His colossal figures are wrested from the granite as by Titanic force. Immobile and immutable they serve the world, suggesting a rule pitiless and unyielding, hard as the nether millstone.

Nurtured in a milder age and caressed by the hand of luxury, the Greek touched the marble with the breath of genius and it lived. The material demanded grace and detail. It responded to his very thought and the result called forth the wonder of an admiring world.

In like manner the most successful workers in metal, in glass and in wood are those who have sought their inspiration in the material itself, scornimg concealment and
asserting with persistent power the substance wherein they wrought.

The nature of this inspiration is plain. Every material which can be brought into obedient service by man has its possibilities and its limitations. One possesses beautiful color but fragile substance. One is rigid, one plastic. One is wrought with a needle, one with a hammer, and another with a chisel. One can be drawn out, another can be carved, and a third melted. And each one has a limit beyond which the craftsman cannot go. It is by an intuitive sense of these possibilities and limitations that the critic is able to discriminate between fit and unfit—to refuse the evil and to choose the good. The possibilities of production take more than one direction. A substance may be viewed as a source of beauty, strength, or utility. It may be beautiful because of form, color, or texture, or the method of its formation may lend to it a peculiar charm. This is illustrated by the special beauty of Venetian glass. The artificers gave full play to the ductile quality of the hot material, and produced results which could not have been attained in another medium. In like manner the beautiful vetro di trina, or lace glass, is an inspiration drawn from material and method. Impossible in any other substance, it displays to the full, the qualities belonging to the glass itself.

Of all the materials which lend themselves to the hand of the craftsman there is none with greater possibilities than clay. In all ages the fickle art has flourished, and the delight of working in a plastic medium has captivated the mind of man throughout the world. The inspiration of clay proceeds from many sources. The abundant material and its apparent worthlessness is in itself full of fascination. Its docility and the after possibility of permanence by fire constitute a considerable claim to notice. Clay lends itself to the inspiration of form and of color alike and there is, further, an unrivaled opportunity for individual expression.

The modern clay-worker belongs to an ancient clan. In the dim distance of the forgotten past the first potter toiled. We know not his name nor the place of his abode, but the work which he inaugurated has proved the most fertile index to the characteristics of the nations. What an inspiration is here! From Assyria to Athens, through Italy, France and Holland, the long procession comes. It numbers in its columns a Raphael, a Michelangelo, a Pallisy, beside rank upon rank of men whose names have been forgotten, but whose work is still known and beloved.

Clay is one of the most bountiful provisions of Nature. It is often of no apparent value. Vast supplies of it lie in every valley awaiting use. How estimable then is that art which seizes upon this common thing and transforms it into buildings, subways, and articles useful and ornamental. To the artist, clay affords, in a higher degree than any other substance, the inspiration of form. It leads to a realization of solid thinking and enables him to offer his ideas to the world in fact rather than in representation. The willing clay is quick to catch the spirit of the master mind. Its ready sympathy appeals to his imagination and the expression of an idea becomes easy. Form is realized through method. The built jar of the Indian is as expressive in its way as the wheel-fashioned work of the
Greek. The quality of each depends absolutely upon the means employed. In the former, there is a plastic suggestion, a vibrant irregularity of surface, which could not have been produced in any other way. The hand reveals itself in every curve and undulation, not asserted with affectation or aggressively claiming attention, but with subtile art displaying its skill.

The wheel work is equally expressive. Here quality of line and texture of surface call for notice. The result impresses one with the idea of refinement. A pure line has been conceived and its realization made possible by the method employed.

The play of color in burned clay is most suggestive and inspirational. So restful is it and yet full of variety that one is tempted to wonder why those who essay to build are always seeking for new color effects. Color effects can be easily secured by painting, but the natural variation in a brick wall cannot be reproduced by any artificial process. A craze for uniform color in roofing-tile has resulted in making some of these perfect products look like painted tin. How much more beautiful is the tile when advantage is taken of the changes wrought by fire! A gentle undulation of light flows over the whole work. The result is repose, but not monotony.

From the earliest times the natural color of clay has been esteemed: sometimes set off by a contrast, as in the Greek black glazed vases, sometimes enriched by subsequent treatment, as in the Aretine red ware. Too often artificial colorings have been demanded and it cannot be a matter for wonder that the effect is strained and unnatural. But while this is true of the clay itself, it is the glory of pottery that a surface of almost any character and quality may legitimately be added. In glaze, no color is artificial which will stand the fire, and hence a wide range of effects in color and texture becomes possible. Primarily a glaze is utilitarian in its purpose. Its function is to keep the piece of pottery from absorbing liquids and to afford a surface which shall be easily cleaned. Such a surface is, however, brilliant and pleasing. The play of light upon it affords satisfaction, and it becomes valuable by reason of quality. As soon as a comparative standard is reached, competition begins and one producer vies with another in securing the best results. An inspiration is therefore found in the glaze; and when to the quality of the surface is added color, it will be seen that supreme satisfaction is possible.

The inspiration arising from color united with a brilliant surface is quite different from that residing in the soft tones of textile fabrics. Each has its place. The latter is passive, retiring, restful, harmonious; the former is assertive, strong. The radiance emanating from it is at once expressive and individual. A piece of pottery thus becomes a leading feature in a scheme of decoration, and this fact is in itself an inspiration to the maker.

The inspiration of material consists both in possibility and limitation. The way of production is barred in one direction, it is open in another. To force the bars is to produce an unnatural result and to court defeat. To follow the line of least resistance is obvious and natural. Unhampered by technical difficulties, the craftsman can accomplish his ends and give to the world that which is fit and therefore fine.

For those who desire that their clay pro-
ductions shall be restful rather than assertive, there are great possibilities in glazes of dead surface. These must not be compared with the quality of the unglazed clay. Their texture is rather that of marble. With all the advantage of brilliant glazes as regards color, they have a charm of their own in the soft sheen which seems to radiate as light from a bright surface. One does not wonder that artists and craftsmen have assiduously sought for these textures. Whether in bold architecture or simple household goods, they are charming in their quiet beauty.

With such possibilities within his reach, the artist-potter of the twentieth century has no need to envy him of the sixteenth. With the traditions of a glorious past he may be confident of a still more glorious future when sham and shoddy shall alike be destroyed, when the emancipated artisan shall become the artist, and all things made by man shall be in very truth what they seem.

ANCIENT AND MODERN CHESTS AND CABINETS.
BY GRACE L. SLOCUM.

All furniture, it has been said, has evolved from the chest, which in its original form was used for every conceivable purpose. It was found in the houses of the poor and of the rich, in court, in church, and in hall. Placed against the walls, or elsewhere, it served as seat or wardrobe, bench or settle, for chairs were not known until the beginning of the fourteenth century; made of cypress, cedar, or ebony, it was used by the Italian maiden, to store away the linen which she accumulated against her bridal, and was the prototype of the modern article which has come to serve a similar purpose; made of old oak, clamped with iron, it was used as a treasure chest or traveling chest by kings and nobles; and it was used in churches to store rich vestments, silver and relics of saints.

The earliest mention of a chest in history is found in the story of the “Chest of