

The Window Opening in Decoration

part of the rough-hewn wall. The other sets forth the change wrought by a hunter's mis-step: a twig has broken beneath his foot and the creature is awake and on the defensive. Alive in every fibre she sits up in an attitude of suspicious attention. Each, according to the law of sculptural achievement, is a work complete in itself—well conceived and artistically rendered—but studied relatively their interest is enhanced.

Or again, turn to his *Jaguar Lovers*, a large bronze showing two great brutes resting on a rock, side by side, the lines of their lithe bodies almost parallel, their heads drooping affectionately together. Note the unity of the composition, the solidity of the massing and the rhythmical turning of the clear cut outline. Study for a moment one of his buffalo charging forward like an infuriated engine of war or pausing with half-injured expression to locate the danger which has been scented, and it will be observed that each of the groups finds its appeal as much in its artistic merit as in its sentimental suggestion.

If genius be the power to create without consciousness of method, then Mr. Kemeys indeed has genius; for, as he himself admits, his sculptures take form instinctively beneath his hands. There is, of course, back of them a tremendous fund of accurate knowledge, but the work itself is never the result of deep thought nor great labour. It grows spontaneously—readily—and herein, perhaps, lies its greatness and the explanation of its charm.

What Mr. Kemeys' work has done for the art of America and what place it will be given by future generations, we of to-day can merely conjecture, but that it is pertinent and has a mission, all who have seeing eyes must already feel assured.

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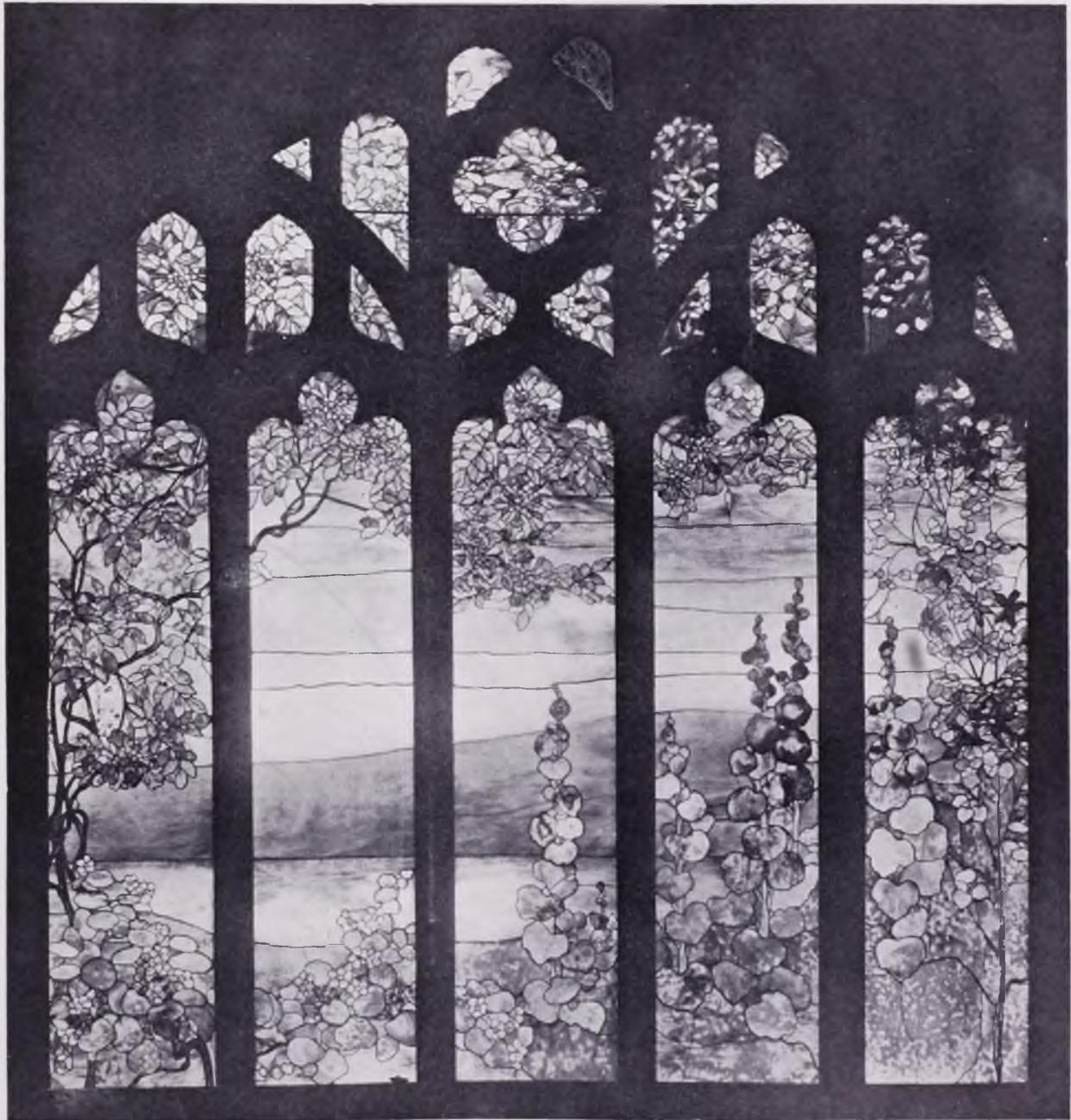
The development of plate glass has widened the breach in the walls we live behind and contributed to the impulse of the day that invites us out of doors. The opening that once served mainly the crossbow has come to frame the cross country panorama. An intenser appreciation of landscape availed itself of triumphs in glass manufacture to impress the view into the decorative scheme of the interior. If we took delight in the full sweep of the horizon or the full height of the mountain why relinquish these beauties on entering the house? Yet, though Nature presented no bills for such decoration, it had its price.

That the unimpeded window opening as an architectural device is more amenable interiorly than exteriorly is attested by the resultant loss in the handling of the important effect of mass in later day elevations frequently complained of; and the struggle with awkwardly inviolate gaps has added professionally to the popularity of the return to favour of the building styles of earlier periods, with their unnecessary panes in the sash. The whole problem is involved with the almost discomfiting readiness of our modern ingenuity, with the apparent, if unconfessed, temper of mind which would persuade us, that if a thing is worth doing at all it is worth doing, at least as an experiment, to the uttermost extreme. It is as though we saw we needed light and said, Let there be nothing but windows. Being no longer committed to the sling we can afford to live in glass houses. Within a few weeks, indeed, a Western architect, with the full courage of our tentative convictions, has been trying to persuade a National Bank in Des Moines, Iowa, to let him erect a new building for them of the so-called wire-glass, heavy translucent glass with an imbedded wire mesh, contrived to resist the effects of fire. His plans called for double walls of wire-



LANDSCAPE IN STAINED GLASS
TIFFANY STUDIOS, NEW YORK

The Window Opening in Decoration



STAINED GLASS WINDOW FOR A RESIDENCE AT IRVINGTON-ON-THE-HUDSON, N. Y.
TIFFANY STUDIOS, NEW YORK

glass separated by one foot of insulating air space and a supporting steel frame; and were particularly recommended as dispensing entirely with the need of windows proper and affording an opportunity for a most original interior plan and exterior design. If we incline to feel that this suggestion from Iowa is still somewhat ahead of the times, we can hardly say that it has pointed a new direction. A fearless mind in Des Moines has merely carried forward an impulse we have approved for homes, schools and offices, whether state or private; and, naturally,

for the coaches drawn over picturesque railway routes. If we still fail generally to respond when it comes to the church, that is for reasons which, however obvious, will bear noting for their pertinency to the use of the window space for decoration.

In some aspects a church, like a theatre, has no windows. Such as there are own a pedigree decorative rather than utilitarian, descending from the mosaics for which the Byzantine builders conceived the happy thought of translucency. This is not to pretend that in new church building to-day we

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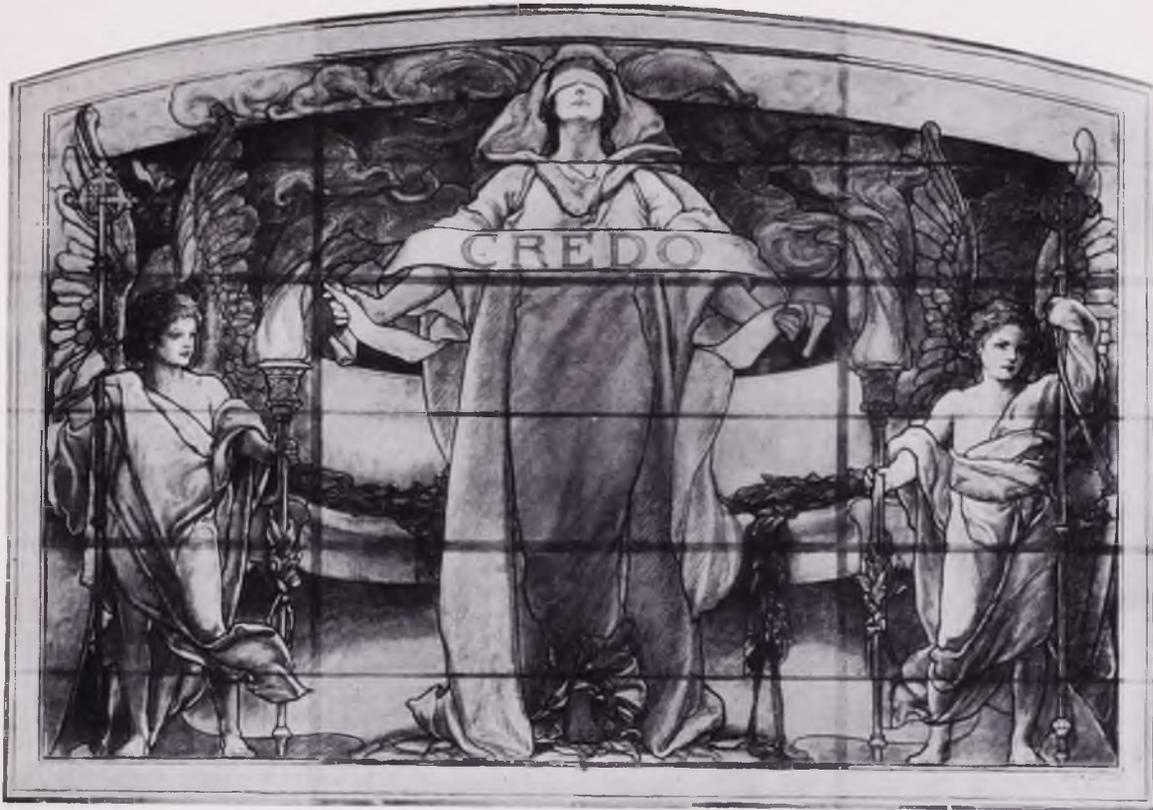
rely upon a clerestory. Perhaps we may put the matter better by saying that the function of the church window is not, even now, to afford light, but to maintain a daylong twilight, to keep in consecrated housing the time of dim but splendid colour, the tranquil hour of repose. This purpose, too, is by no means an argument of mere pretty sentiment. The commended prayer in the closet can serve only personal needs; and, in the social exercise of worship, clement weather, favouring customs and rare endowment of evangelical power are required to hold the multitudes in the open. The doors once shut, then, on the congregation, the wisdom of the old tradition becomes apparent. The garish uncovering of the routine facts of noon-day is replaced by a grateful mellowness of illumination, in which detail is overshadowed and the mind made welcome to "the old truths that we pass by." The very means, moreover, that have simplified the appeal within doors have excluded the distractions, unless of noise, without; and the instrument of this relief serves the added and original purpose of adornment, transcending in this all the other arts that aim to represent colour, by the supreme advantage of reaching its effects through the transmission of that very light for which they must seek an opaque imitation. Rarely do the limitations of an art so contribute to an appropriate usefulness.

In our churches to-day, then, we may say, we make decorative use of the window openings partly for the other ends attained, the reduction of sunlight and the protection of the environment so afforded. We set stained glass in the chapel to soften the radiance and to preserve the inclosure, as we set clear glass in the drawing room to admit no impediment to the full flood of day and to allow ourselves the view of our surroundings. To interchange the glass, if fitly placed, is to annul the charm. To choose for decorative use an opening that should be left transparent is as intelligent as making a Venus de Milo do duty for an umbrella stand. Yet it needs no ghost from the grave to tell us that the church has no exclusive divine right to the conveniences and beauties of stained glass. Even in a palace, as the Emperor said, life may be led well; even on week days we may properly take comfort in the work of our hands. If we have hardly attained an effect of Heaven in the meeting house, there is no good reason for running to the opposite end of the scale in the dwelling. And by the same token, though for centuries we have been gaining a more intelligent appreciation of the world out of doors, of the beauties not of our own making,

we still see darkly when we overlook the graces it has been given to man to contrive for himself. We may with some degree of success invite the fields over the threshold. We cannot so easily conduct a house party in the figtree. There is an episode, popular, or once popular in the Christmas pantomime that points the moral well. The harlequin settled himself before a comfortable fire inside a little cottage in the centre of the stage round which a lively snowstorm was raging, and with characteristic dare-deviltry buried himself in a copy of the morning's *Times*. Presently the cottage revolved about on one side in a semicircle and he emerged from his concentration on the news of the day to find himself taking on a coat of snowflakes; whereupon he would carry his chair back to the fire in some bewilderment, to be deserted again and again by his roof tree to the unfailing delight of the children. Unless the signs of the times are misleading we have begun to pick up our chairs and step indoors again. Certainly in the matter of windows such anachronisms, in an age of unimpeachable expanses of clear glass, as diamond leaded panes voice plainly the conviction that however loyally we may accept the beauty of nature we go wrong when we forget altogether the human charm in the sense of shelter. If the Lord looked upon his creation and saw that it was good, we may be permitted, in taking stock of our lesser devices, to conclude that they are not half bad. At all events, the two handiworks, natural and human, must, for us, do mutual service. We need the open country, and we need the boxed protection. In our houses we need the light; but we need the shadow as well. The glare of the sun beats upon the just and the unjust, and conditions not seldom make its modification devoutly to be wished in public hall and private dwelling.

And here we have a glorious art waiting to be the handmaid of the housekeeper; for there are windows in five houses out of every ten that, clear glass as they are, never are seen through, burnished like crystal though they be, never fail to obstruct the sun. Many people, indeed, who because of their acquaintance with only misguided attempts hold stained glass a delusion, will not hesitate to produce all its merely practical effects through a rigorous use of perennial curtains. The day will come with the development of our native crafts and the intergrowth of our arts and life, when we shall rather give such a window over to decoration, to decoration, as all art demands, thoroughly consonant with the surroundings, than to hang an equivalent area of decoration upon the nearby wall: for in the paint-

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MEMORIAL WINDOW FOR WOMEN'S COLLEGE
BALTIMORE, MD.
TIFFANY STUDIOS, NEW YORK



LEFT OPENING
TIFFANY STUDIOS

ing we have a work of art that serves the mind and soul, but in the window we shall have as true a work of art which, equally serving mind and soul, will take its place in the physical needs of our existence.

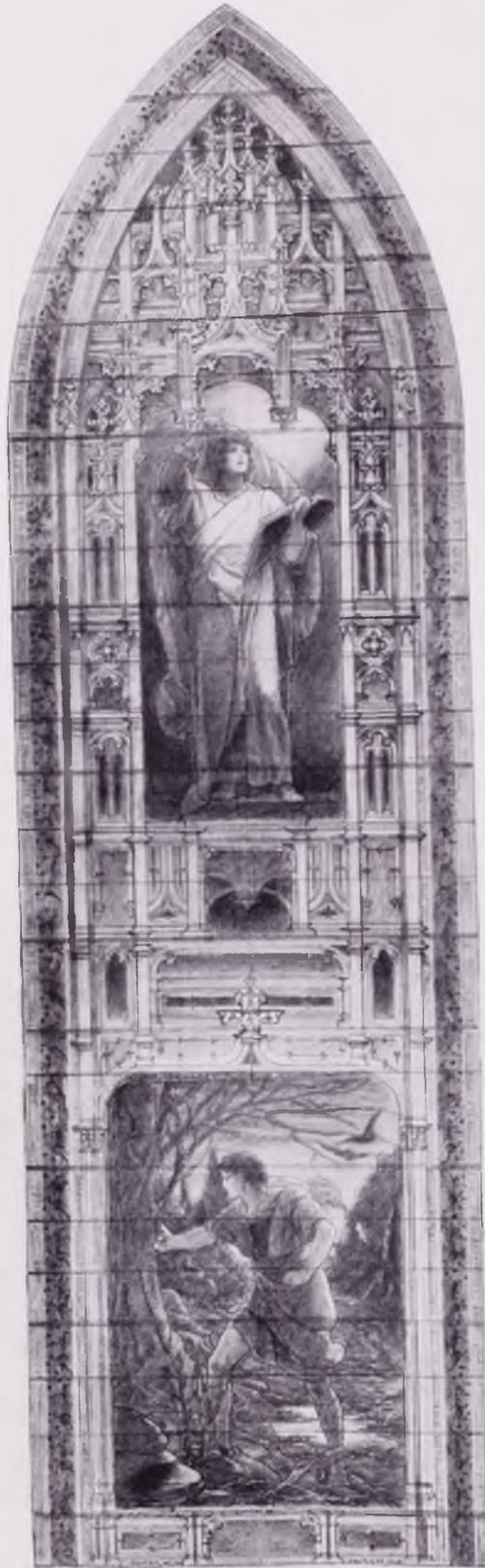
Similar necessities, again, may result from slightly altered conditions. If in some cases we need to reduce the intensity of sunlight, in others we need all the light it is possible to obtain in despite of the hindrance of unfavourable circumstances. Thus stained glass may come to the rescue of any room where as corollary to the privilege of seeing outward, we find the infliction of some irremediable eyesore, the price of illumination. And, aside from these more strictly practical uses, where the serious integral decoration of a house is undertaken there is every reason why stained glass should at least rank equally in preference with mural painting or mosaic; indeed, in a generation so earnestly seeking daylight indoors translucent treatment would seem to bid highest for favour.

This, in fact, seems to be the case. It is a fair illustration of the condition of stained glass production at the moment to take the work which the Tiffany Studios, N. Y., have now in hand. With



RIGHT OPENING
TIFFANY STUDIOS

The Window Opening in Decoration



MEMORIAL WINDOW, PITTSBURGH
TIFFANY STUDIOS, NEW YORK

the efforts of Mr. Louis C. Tiffany the development of pot metal has given results in the texture form and colour of opalescent glass never before attained, and has resulted in such a rebirth and advancement of the craft as to make it actually an American departure. The company, designing and executing all its work from preliminary sketch to the final installation, has through a course of years perfected a method of building up the glass window with superimposed cuttings carefully selected for colour, that has resulted in making a standard with which to compare other efforts. Now of the recent work of this house a good proportion has been in domestic designs. This is not to say that the most considerable work in stained glass is not still undertaken for institutional decoration. The series of thirteen memorial windows for the New First Presbyterian Church, in Pittsburgh, of one of which we show a reproduction, is a commission of the sort that could only find room in a public building. The windows stand twenty-six feet high, measuring seven and one-half feet wide. They were designed by Frederick Wilson. The one illustrated, which is yet to be installed as we go to press, is erected by the church in memory of William Miller Paxton, D.D., a former pastor, who died last year. St. John the Evangelist is shown in the design, with the parable of the sower pictured below.

Another noteworthy memorial is that being installed as we go to press in the Women's College of Baltimore. The three windows are the gift of Dr. Goucher, in memory of his wife, Mary Cecilia Goucher, who died in 1902. In position, the narrow openings shown in the illustration stand at either side of the broad and slightly arched centre opening. Faith is pictured in the centre, holding the "Credo," and stepping forth over the laurel, symbol of earthly power, blindfolded, in allusion to the Pauline text, "we walk by faith, not by sight." The figure is flanked in the same panel with child angels bearing torches and shields, in illustration of texts from the Ephesians and St. Matthew. In the left opening stands Hope with a sceptre. Charity, beautifully conceived as a woman tenderly holding a little child in her arms, appears on the right. The design was done by Mr. Wilson and executed under Mr. Tiffany's personal supervision.

At the same time that these windows are in course of preparation a large window for a domestic interior is being made ready for a house at Irvington-on-the-Hudson. The window, which we reproduce in illustration, serves to adorn a large reception room in a house, newly built, of the archi-

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LANDSCAPE WINDOW WITHOUT REINFORCING BARS
TIFFANY STUDIOS, NEW YORK

tectural scheme of which it was a definite part. The use of the river view is appropriate to the building's position on the banks of the Hudson and the accompaniment of holly-hock and wistaria perpetuates, the seasons through, the welcome suggestion of summer, which one prefers to associate with a dwelling out of town. This is one of the most important commissions for stained glass decoration for domestic purposes under way at the present moment.

The window has not yet been put in place as we go to press, some work still remaining to be done upon it in the Tiffany Studios. It will be noticed that, according with the architect's plans as a whole the window has been divided by mullions.

An interesting example of a different method of treatment we show in the stained glass study of the outlet to a lake. This window, which has been completed within the year, measures about four and one-half by ten feet, an expanse of joined glass which could not be exposed to the pressure of wind without additional support. In ecclesiastical design it usually happens that bars can be set across the back of the window, to which wire ties in the leads may be fastened, thus relieving the strain. This device will be noticed also in one of the domestic windows illustrated, showing a clump of trees on a knoll.

The effect, however, in the treatment of landscapes is not always fortunate, and, as in the case of the representation of the lake scene, it has been found possible to avoid such dividing lines by the use of what is called the reinforced process, which is a method of bracing by narrow steel strips run in the leads throughout the window.

Such improvements in method are constantly being made with the encouragement that is being given the art by the demand for window decoration in private buildings. It is hardly necessary, for instance, to note that a window used for decoration need not remain shut; and stained glass windows made to pivot are as appropriate and successful as the same device used in the older casement. Special adaptations, such as the decoration of glass book-case doors, have lately become popular, an inviting opportunity being here given for the use of book-plate designs. In instances where it is desired to shut off the view from without, the use of decoration that is attractive from within is steadily superseding the older employment of ground glass.

Within its proper limits, the art is one which is destined to grow into a greater glory of artistic achievement and a larger sphere of acceptance.

Where a window opening should not be used for decorative purpose, stained glass is and must always be a senseless intrusion; but today the realization is growing that many opportunities for increasing the charm of our every-day life and for contributing to the practical esthetic convenience of building are being lost, when the use of stained glass is passed over without consideration.

That the art has made rapid advances within the last thirty years is plain to the most casual review of its progress, and that its new stimulus is to a large extent an American achievement is cause for national self-congratulation.