



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Suggestions For The Improvement Of Sporting Cups And Trophies. Part II.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-69992](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-69992)

Sporting Cups.

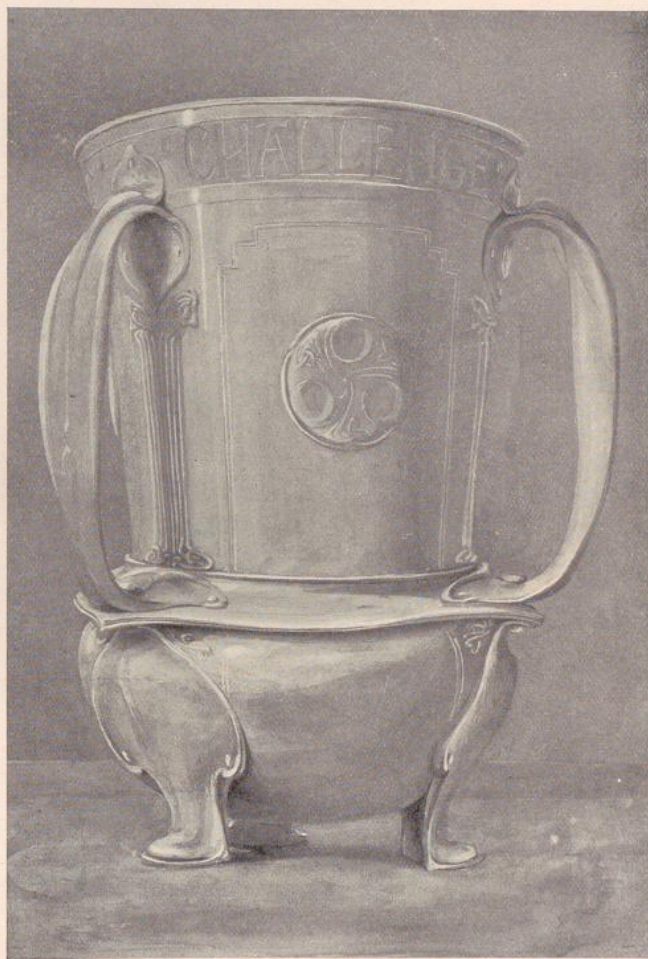
SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF SPORTING CUPS AND TROPHIES. PART II.

"*Ah, que de choses dans un menuet!*" cried Marcel, the great dancing-master; and ah, we may cry, what things go to the making of really fine sporting cups and trophies! There must be felicity of invention, knowledge of colour, justness of proportion, variety and charm of workmanship, and charm and variety of style, of *motif*, and also of material. These good things were hinted at in the first article, and some of them were thoughtfully suggested by Mr. Reynolds-Stephens, in his two modelled sketch-designs.

Connected with these designs there is one point of particular interest, and, as it happens to be associated with another one that touches the very heart of our subject we feel called upon to refer to it once more. The point in question concerns the fact that Mr. Reynolds-Stephens, in his design for a large yachting trophy, makes use of silver in combination with ivory, gold, crystal, and blue mother-of-pearl, thereby producing a very fortunate scheme of colour. Now, the importance of this feat of craftsmanship cannot be thoroughly appreciated unless we bear in mind that silver, when considered from a point of view of art, is at the present moment in bad repute. Indeed, it is now so "cheap," so aggressively common, because so ill-used by the manufacturing silversmiths, that the beauty of it is in much the same case with that of a good piece of music which

the barrel-organs have rendered hateful. To many people of taste, that is to say, it is a thing not merely discredited, but even vulgarised out of recognition; and to such persons, clearly, the art value of silver has to be rediscovered.

Something to this end may be done by every worker in silver who is gifted with a true sensibility of what is beautiful. Thus equipped, he will take advantage of the many means by which he can give to his productions an aspect that is pleasing and unfamiliar. For instance, he will avoid in his treatment of the metal any kind of surface having the least resemblance to the sleek,



SILVER LOVING CUP

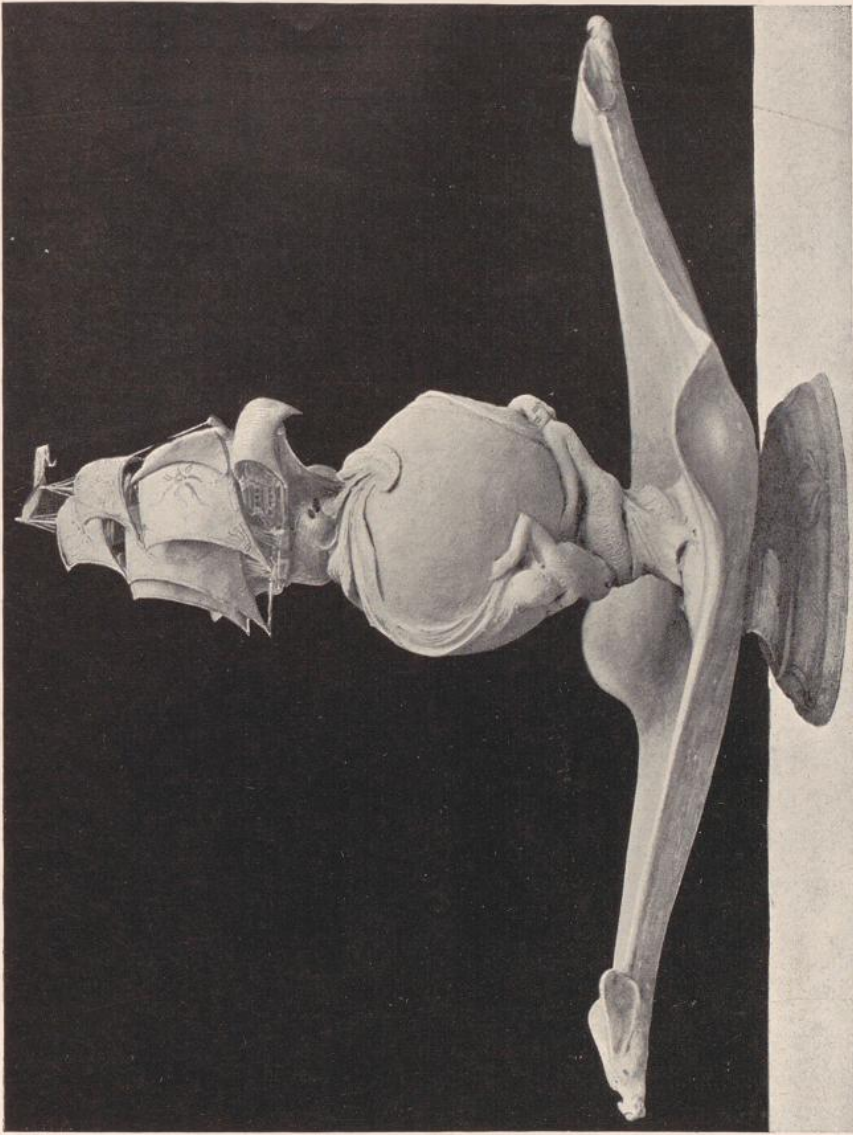
BY MARY G. HOUSTON

(Designed expressly for "The Studio." Copyright reserved by the designer.)



*(Designa expressly for "The Studio."
Copyright reserved by the designer)*

DESIGN FOR A SILVER CUP.
BY MARY G. HOUSTON



SKETCH MODEL OF A YACHTING
TROPHY. BY ONSLOW WHITING

*(Designed expressly for "The Studio."
Copyright reserved by the designer.)*

Sporting Cups.

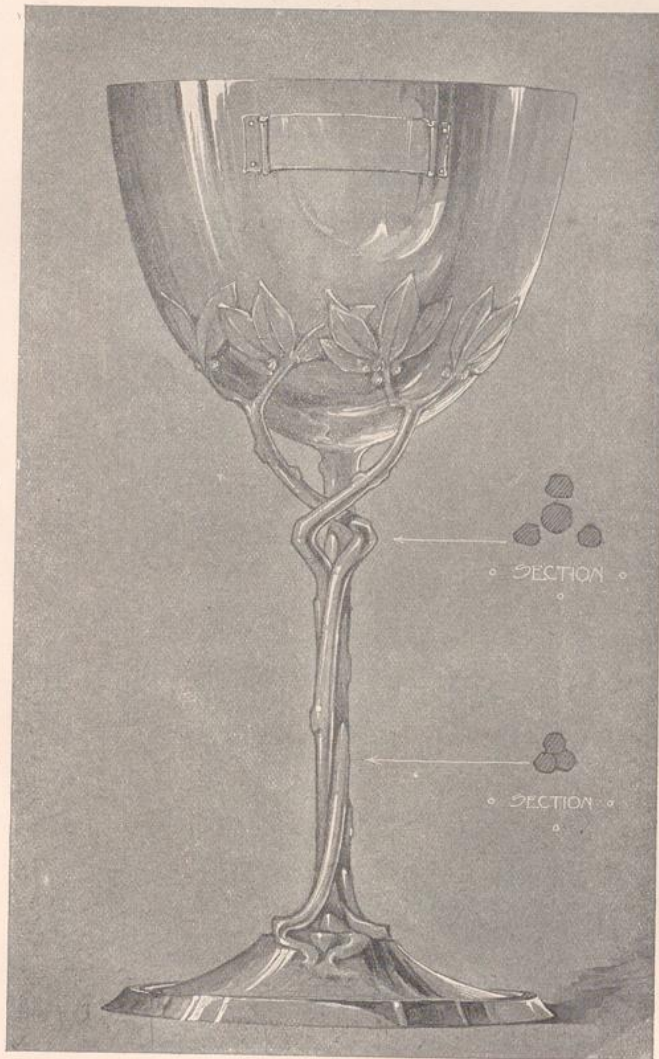
vulgar, over-polished silverwork in the shops; and by this means he will turn to the profit of his craft the fact that artistic beauty is, in this case, a matter of surface. What the enemies of silver detest most of all is the self-assertive smoothness, so devoid of tone, so pretentiously mechanical and meretricious, with which "the trade" fascinates the general public, degrading silver in art value to the level of the cheapest electro-plated ware. To avoid this result of industrial methods is to make

silver itself again, so that it seems a rare and beautiful new metal and for this reason too much attention cannot be drawn to the all-important part played by texture, by surface, in the treatment of this persecuted metal.

But this is not all. If silver is to be dissociated from all memories of bad work, and if we wish to see it freed from its present position as a drudge of the public-enslaved manufacturers, then this all-important question as to surface must be

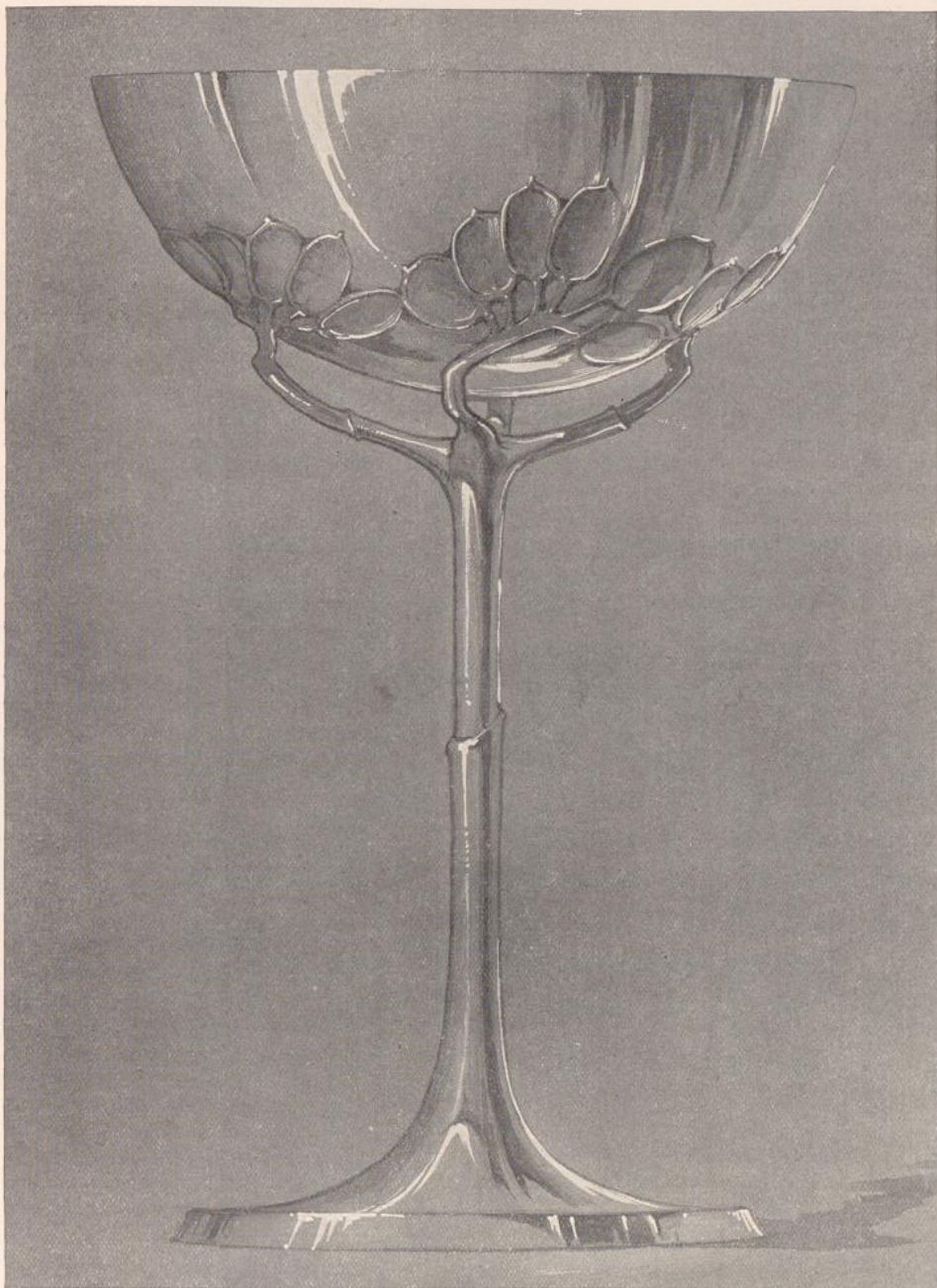
enforced upon the popular mind, and craftsmen must think of it always in connection with other things that run strongly counter to the industrial methods and finish. Thus silver, for example, must be thought of in relation to colour. There are many felicitous ways in which it may be employed with other substances, all beautiful and many-hued. This is what Mr. Reynolds-Stephens illustrates, and illustrates with much success, in his modelled sketch design for a large yachting trophy, the description of which will be found in the first article. He has remembered that in art familiar old things become new in new combinations; and it is to be hoped that his example will be widely followed.

Further, is there any reason why silver should always have a place in the making of presentation cups and trophies? We think not. There are other serviceable materials, and it certainly cannot be said that the incessant use of silver is creditable to any man's artistic enterprise and resourcefulness. The history of cups and their customs affords many helpful suggestions, and during the course of these papers



DESIGN FOR A SILVER SPORTING CUP
"STUDIO" PRIZE COMP. A XLV

BY DAVID VEAZEY



DESIGN FOR A SILVER SPORTING CUP.
FIRST PRIZE "STUDIO" COMP. A XLV.
BY DAVID VEAZEY

Sporting Cups.

we shall advocate the occasional employment of copper, and pewter, and bronze, of iron inlaid with softer metals, and also of decorative wood, as in the old Irish *methers* and the Saxon mazer-bowls. Something, too, will be said about enamel, while to-day a few remarks will be made on the use in metalwork of beautiful stones, some fairly common, others rare and expensive.

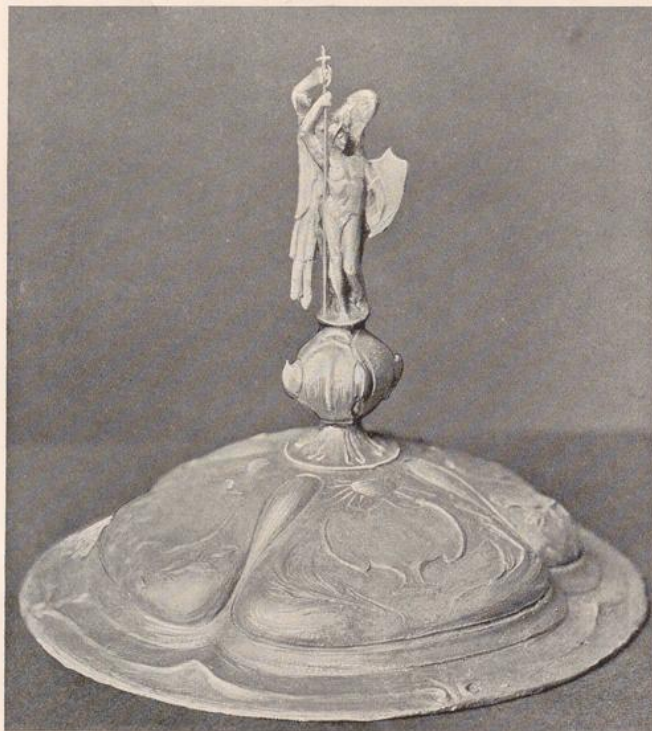
In all great periods of art such stones have been of the utmost service to metal-workers. Jewelled sword-scabbards and dagger-handles, and many other objects, including cups, are to be met with in most collections of art antiquities, both European and Oriental, and when the jewels are not squandered, when they do not produce mere glitter, their presence is a witchery to the eye. And it then makes us wish that modern metal-workers would employ these gay ornaments more often than they do at the present moment.

Here the question of expense arises, and hence it is convenient to record the fact that gems possessing slight flaws may be purchased cheaply,

as any visitor to Ceylon knows. Such gems may be despised by experts, but for decorative purposes they are often quite as serviceable as unflawed stones of the greatest purity. Remember, also, that recent discoveries have made familiar to the world at large a good many beautiful minerals, which were almost, if not entirely, unknown to our forefathers. Thus mining operations in America have brought to light the Amazon stone and labradorite, two varieties of feldspar. They are attractive, they have no great rarity, and they are sufficiently hard and dense to be of great value to metal-makers. Amazon stone, from Pike's Peak, is emerald-green in colour, while labradorite is remarkable for its lovely play of iridescent blues and greens and yellows. And mention may be made of willemite, a silicate of zinc, usually of a brilliant citron yellow. Russian rhodonite, a silicate of manganese, rose-red in colour, ought also to be remembered; it occurs in a massive form, and in carefully-selected pieces will be found as useful as sodalite, a mineral found in the Ural Mountains. Sodalite is a silicate of soda and alumina, with some chlorine,

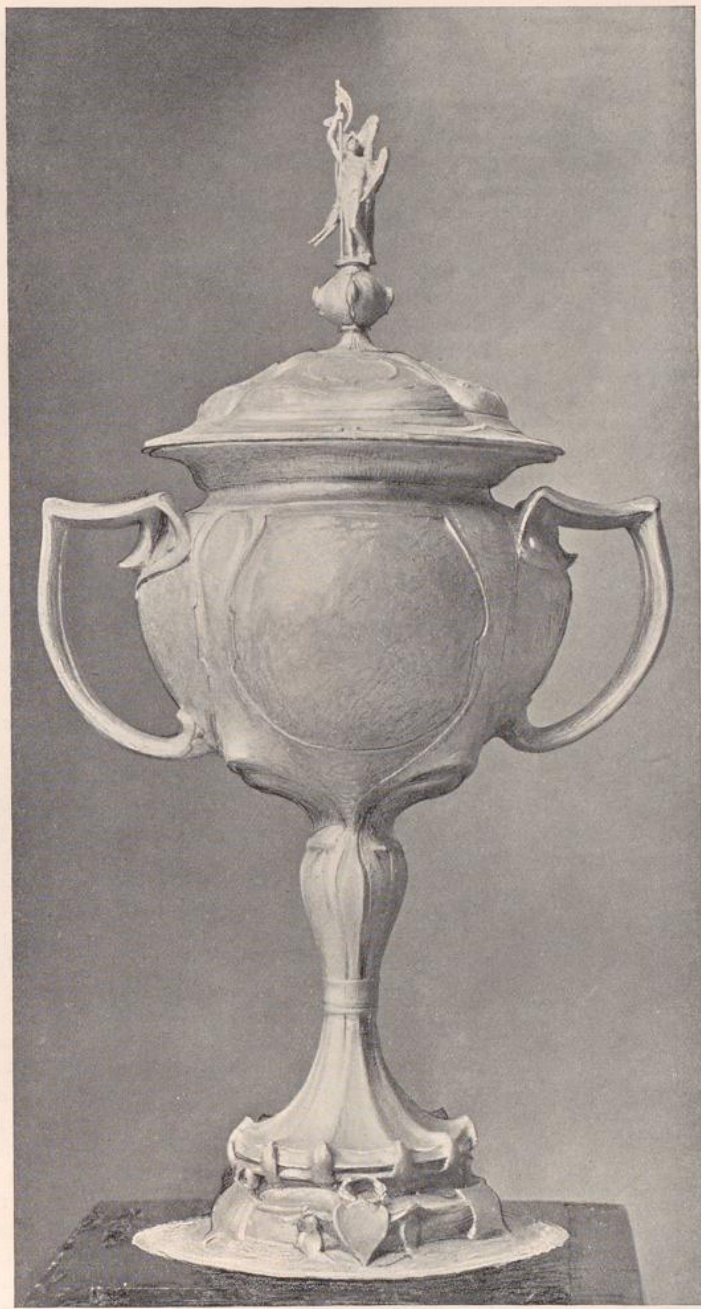
and is remarkable for its superb violet tint of blue in broken shades. Equally useful to metal-makers are the "fire" opals of Mexico, the light-green opals of Silesia, and the New Mexican variety of malachite, in which the green is banded together with the blue azurite. If we add to these the more historic stones — lapis lazuli, green jade and jasper, topaz and carnelian, amethyst, amber, chrysoprase, serpentine, turquoise (the blue Persian and the green Chinese in the matrix)—the list will be found to possess a splendid range of colour in reds, blues, greens, and yellows.

The small nacre-covered irregularities — imperfectly formed pearls — found upon the linings of certain species of bivalve shells, are frequently most beautiful in colour; and when



LID OF CHALLENGE CUP

BY F. DERWENT WOOD



*(Designed expressly for "The Studio."
Copyright reserved by the designer)*

MODEL OF A CHALLENGE CUP
BY F. DERWENT WOOD

Sporting Cups.

they are cut out in such a manner as to preserve their natural irregularity of form, they are most valuable as adjuncts to the decoration of silver-work.

We are glad to find that already one importer of precious stones, Mr. A. Wainwright, of 97 Spencer Street, Birmingham, is getting together from various parts of the world examples of beautiful minerals and cutting them in such a manner as to adapt them for use by the worker in silver and gold plate; and we wish here to acknowledge our indebtedness to him for giving us an opportunity of examining many uncommon and serviceable specimens.

A few words may be said with advantage now about the setting of stones in metal-work. The best way is to fix them firmly in simple bezels, taking care to regard them, not as mere ornamental accessories, but as dangerous tests of the competence of craftsmen, for jewels are to metal-workers what superlatives have ever been to writers; and if this fact is kept constantly in mind the mistake of employing stones so freely as to make them obtrusive, and therefore harmful

to the work which they ought to complete, will be avoided.

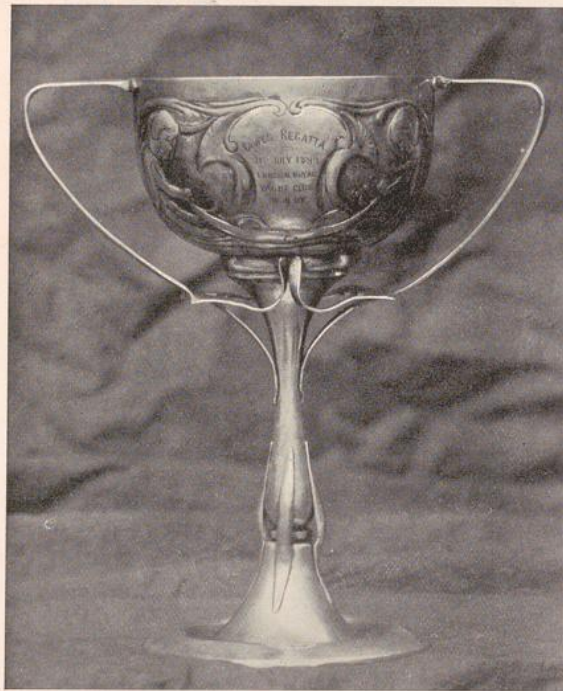
Another important thing is to turn to good account all pleasing peculiarities in the shapes of stones. By way of example, take a gem as irregular in form as water-worn pebbles are. Most lapidaries would cut it into a perfect oval or a perfect round, and by so doing would destroy much of its beauty, and of its distinctive character and charm. Natural irregularities should be retained as often as is possible; and be it noted again that flawed gems, having a fine play of broken colour, may be bought cheaply and should be highly prized by the artist who works in metal.

The illustrations this month represent designs by five artists: Miss Mary G. Houston, Miss Gertrude Smith, Mr. Onslow Whiting, Mr. D. Veazey, and Mr. F. Derwent Wood.

Place aux dames! Miss Houston has for several years been noticed as a designer of rare promise. Down till now her successes have been won in the art of decorating flat surfaces, but to-day she proves that she is no less fortunate when working "in the round." Her three-handled loving-cup has a large style, is boldly constructed, and full of a true feeling for silverwork. As to the pleasing severity of the archaic form, that comes from a Celtic source. It was suggested, not by a piece of old Welsh earthenware, but by the Dunvegan Cup, a famous Irish *metheg*, a long description of which may be found in Note M to Sir Walter Scott's "Lord of the Isles."

The other cup designed by Miss Houston has a different kind of austere form and attractiveness. The strongest of its good points will be found where most modern cups are very weak — *i.e.* in the foot. There are defects, it is true, the surface being somewhat "tight," and the waves suggested on the lid rather small in treatment; and many will think that the sail held by the little figure blows away from the rest of the design to the injury of the essential close union of all the parts. But these blemishes are matters of detail, and could easily be remedied.

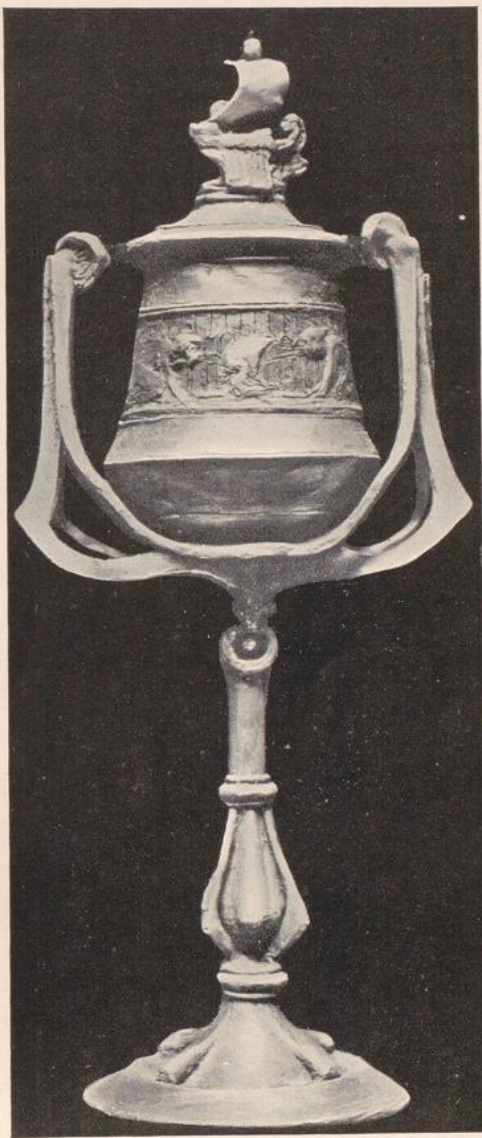
Miss Gertrude Smith is a metal-worker, and her aim in designing



YACHTING CUP IN SILVER

DESIGNED AND WROUGHT BY
GERTRUDE SMITH

Sporting Cups.



SKETCH MODEL FOR A YACHTING CUP

(Copyright reserved by the designer)

BY GERTRUDE SMITH

silver cups is to obtain pleasant shapes by the use of subtle curves, as far removed from the ordinary rounded and bossy ones as is consistent with the qualities of the metal employed. And she perceives also how necessary it is not to cover the surface with ornament, but to keep some parts of the metal unembellished so that the light

may play there freely and show up the twists and changes of plane in the modelling. On several occasions Miss Smith has executed cups for sporting clubs. Last year she made one for the Cowes Regatta, and of this yachting cup an illustration is given on page 44. Here we have a creditable piece of work, far in advance of the

Studio-Talk

trade standard; but Miss Smith complains that insufficient time was allowed her, so that she could not avoid several defects due to haste. This accounts for the somewhat cramped letters of the inscription. Why do sporting clubs forget that metal-workers cannot possibly do their best when hurried? There are times, no doubt, when cups have to be ordered in a hurry, but those which are needed for the Cowes Regatta, or for any other annual meeting, could and should be commissioned six or seven months in advance.

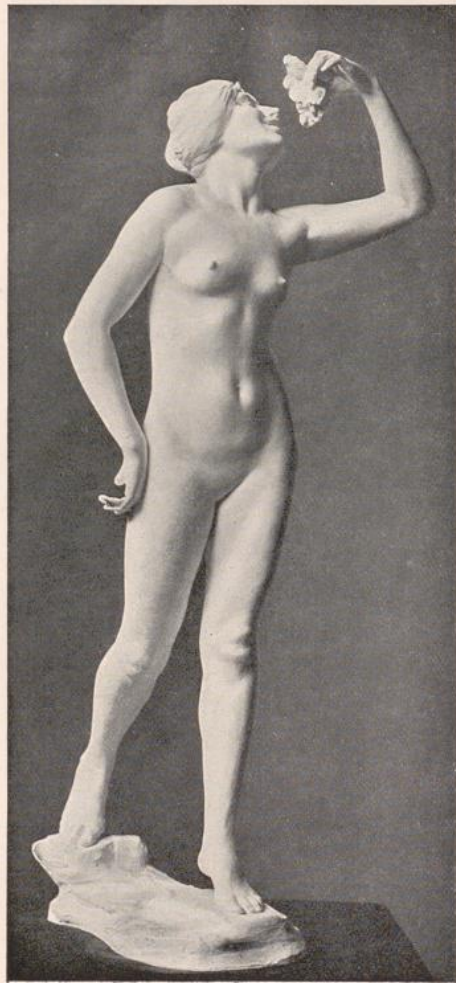
Mr. Whiting's model for a yachting trophy, represents an Elizabethan ship sailing over a globe supported by mermaids. There is room

for criticism here, if no figure in decorative art should be made to bear such a pressure from above as seems crushing in its force; but Mr. Whiting is free to say that he has many ancient and great precedents to keep him in countenance, and he certainly exhibits both thought and vim in the realisation of his *motif*. His trophy could be made entirely of silver, or the globe could be fashioned out of agate or some other beautiful stone.

The two designs by Mr. David Veazey are the result of a "Studio" competition. They are full of good intention, and should encourage Mr. Veazey to persevere. The use of leafed branches for the stems of cups needs reconsideration, as stems formed in this way would probably look brittle in silver.

Mr. F. Derwent Wood, in his model for a challenge cup, is influenced by a good old tradition of German silver-smithing. The base would no doubt be better were it less complicated, but the body and the lid are strong in character, and afford plenty of scope to any skilled metal-worker who sets adequate store by plain surfaces and vigorous lines.

(To be continued.)



STATUETTE

BY F. DERWENT WOOD

STUDIO-TALK.

(From our own Correspondents.)

LONDON.—At the beginning of May the Fine Art Society opened an exhibition of Sir John Tenniel's drawings for *Punch* cartoons. This was the second show of similar works that had been held in the same galleries, and its 161 pencil drawings formed an invaluable commentary on the course of events in European politics since 1895. The last drawing in the collection had appeared in *Punch* on April 11, 1900, so that students of Tenniel's art had an excellent chance of comparing its present-day characteristics with those of five years ago, when the great humorist was already seventy-five years old. Here and there the touch was not so strong as it had been, but in the most recent cartoons of all, and especially in those relating to the Transvaal, there was a second youthfulness of vigour that surprised and delighted everybody. If Sir John Tenniel had been affected by what Carlyle described as "the sick sentimentalism" of the age, or if he had departed in any way from his unimpassioned desire to see things truly as well as humorously, his *Punch*