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The Decorations Of The Peninsular And Oriental Pavilion At The Paris  
Exhibition.

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### *The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*

## THE DECORATIONS OF THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL PAVILION AT THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

It has been for some little time evident enough that the only thing necessary for the development of a really important school of decorative practice in this country is a sufficiency of opportunities for the men who have a true instinct for the higher forms of design. There is no doubt that a large proportion of our younger artists possess great capacities for dealing with those problems of invention and arrangement that lie outside the range of purely pictorial effort, and that these capacities, if properly encouraged, would be productive of results that could fairly claim to be reckoned among the most interesting and valuable that our native art could achieve. But, hitherto, the chances open to these willing workers have been so limited that only a very few men have been able to give more than a hint of their real strength.

However, the work that these few have already done is certainly wanting neither in significance nor in solid accomplishment. It has qualities that are well calculated to appeal to all people of sound intelligence, and to satisfy all lovers of originality and freshness; while in its technical excellence it reflects the progress that all branches of the profession have made of late years in craftsmanship. There is in it a note of the right kind of modernness that respects tradition but does not merely copy the productions of other ages and other schools, a modern feeling that recognises the debt due to the past but at the same time accepts the obligations imposed by present day conditions of thought and taste. Perhaps the dominance of this feeling is to be ascribed to the fact that most of the artists who are devoting themselves to decorative effort belong to the younger generation and have a characteristically youthful disinclination to be bound too rigidly by the rules and regulations that seem to them to have unduly limited the freedom of the older men. The desire to break



PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL PAVILION (RIVER FRONT)

T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT; G. E. MOIRA AND F. L. JENKINS, DECORATORS

*The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*



PORTION OF DOME, SHOWING POSITION OF SPANDRELS

BY G. E. MOIRA



PORTION OF DOME, SHOWING POSITION OF SPANDRELS

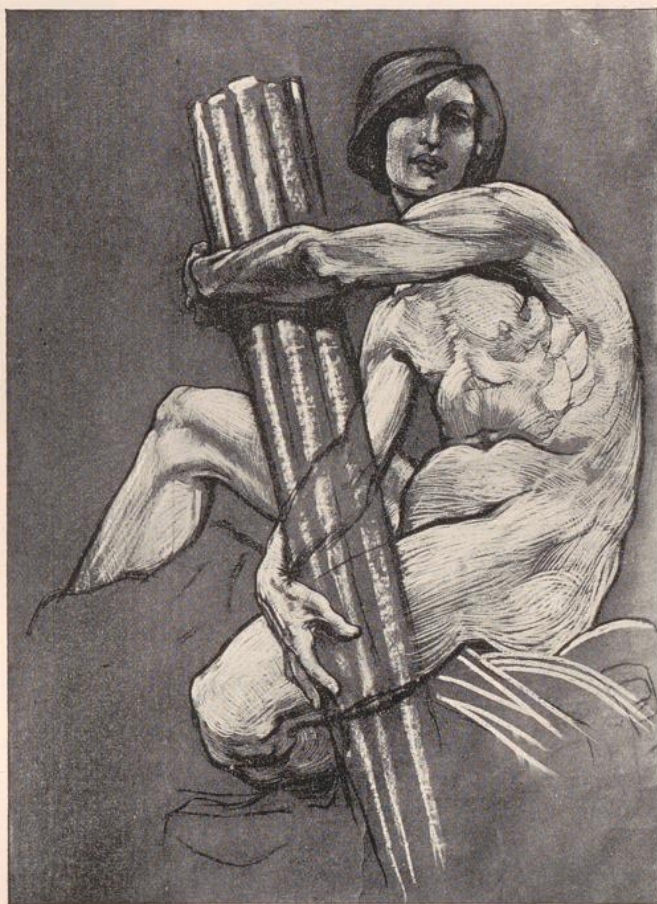
BY G. E. MOIRA

## *The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*

away from the customary direction is strong upon them, and they have a sincere wish to prove that there are ways as yet untried of asserting the principles that guide artistic invention. It is this ambition that has created for us the adaptations of old technical devices that are being used now to give shape to the intentions of our own contemporaries and to satisfy the decorative instincts of the present school of designers.

Among the most sincere and ambitious of the artists whose performances are to be taken as absolutely representative of the modern feeling, a prominent place is certainly due to Mr. Gerald Moira and Mr. F. L. Jenkins. Their collaboration has been productive of much admirable work during the last few years, and all their practice has been distinguished by the highest type of intelligence in planning, and by very real skill in execution. They have chosen a way of their own in decoration, without much dependence upon accepted authorities, and have suited their methods very discreetly to the ideas they desire to express. As a consequence there is a pleasant consistency in their efforts—a personal quality that is thoroughly persuasive by its earnestness and balance, without being either extravagant or illogical. They do not seek to advertise their views by excess of assertion, but they do strive after the sort of originality that comes from thinking things out independently and setting down the results of this thought in an individual manner. By this combination of self-restraint and independence their particular style in working has been formed, a style that is well suited to the needs of the moment, and yet one that is capable of development in response to whatever demand the future may bring.

Much of the work that Mr. Moira and Mr. Jenkins have done so far has been the result of their joint labour upon the same piece of decoration. In their coloured plaster work, for instance, Mr. Jenkins has modelled the reliefs to which Mr. Moira has added the colour, and the modelling has been from the first managed in the way most suitable for the accentuation that the colour would provide. Each artist has had to adapt his methods to the requirements of the other, and to modify his processes to avoid any clashing of technicalities that was likely to interfere with the complete expression of the idea that both had evolved. Therefore it has been almost always difficult to separate the contributions of the two collaborators in the joint result. They have



CARTOON FOR "THE SUN"

BY G. E. MOIRA

## The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion

been so much merged in one another, and have been so much actuated by a common purpose, that nobody could say where one ended and the other began; and to get them apart for exact analysis of their respective capacities was practically impossible.

In the carrying out of the decorative work by which they are represented at the Paris Exhibition this dual personality has, however, been for once divided, and the individualities of the two men can be studied separately. In this case they have been responsible for the internal and external adornments of the pavilion erected in the Exhibition grounds, from the design of Mr. Colcutt, for the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company. Mr. Moira has painted the dome and the spandrels beneath it, and Mr. Jenkins has modelled

the frieze that runs round the exterior of the dome, the panels that fill spaces between the flat pilasters that break the face of the walls outside, and the smaller panels above the arches of the entrance porch. The exterior frieze below the dome and the small panels over the porch are finished in colour, but with these exceptions there is no mixing of methods, and no juxtaposing of the painted and modelled surfaces, so that each artist can be judged on his own merits, and the value of his contribution to the whole effect can be properly estimated.

What Mr. Moira has done in the interior of the pavilion is certainly excellent in its freedom of design and delicate vivacity of colour. He has avoided any complication of detail, and has treated his motives with a dainty simplicity that is very

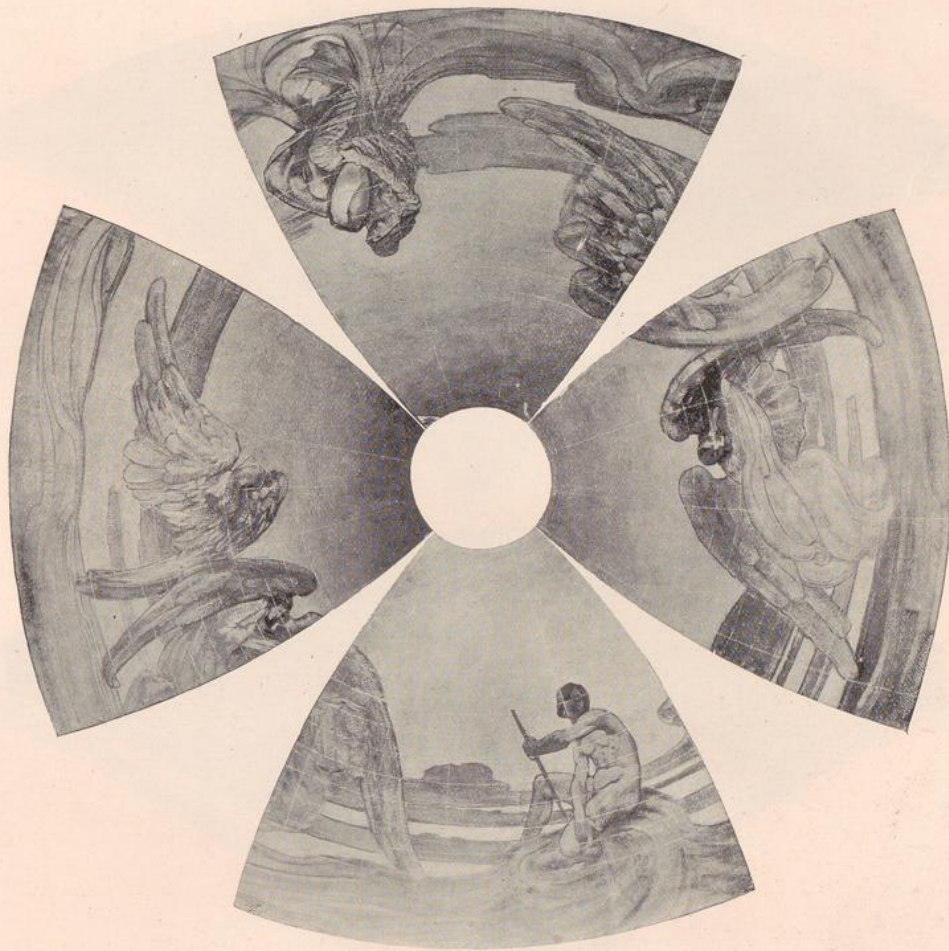
attractive in its refinement and quiet elegance. At the same time he has become neither formal nor uncertain, but has handled his materials with decisive knowledge. His draughtsmanship is as strong and sure as ever, and his use of flowing line is marked with all his usual sense of correct placing. In the dome his design is notable, especially for its largeness of feeling and for the dignity with which he has arranged the figures in relation to the space available, without crowding and without emptiness. The long lines of cloud by which the groups, typifying the sun, and moon, and the winds, are tied together are judiciously managed, and fulfil their purpose very adequately, giving strength to the composition just where it is most required and helping the perspective effect.

The spandrels are less reserved in style: they are busier and more animated—more restless, perhaps. But they take their place well in the decorative scheme, and by their animation con-



CARTOON FOR "THE MOON"

BY G. E. MOIRA



SKETCH FOR THE  
DOME. BY GERALD  
E. MOIRA.

*The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*



"THE ROCK DEVILS"

BY G. E. MOIRA



"THE CURRENTS"

BY G. E. MOIRA

trast effectively with the severe architectural lines by which they are surrounded. In the treatment of them the artist has allowed himself more realism than in the dome. He has aimed in this instance rather at the representation of dainty feminine types than at the creation of ideal abstractions, and he has carried out his aim freshly and with a good deal of fanciful lightness. At the same time he has not become trivial, nor has he passed the border between elegance and prettiness; he has only substituted for severity of manner a gaiety of view and an easy unconviction of technical method. To compare these two phases of his practice is to realise something of his versatility and adaptability, and to

arrive at a good idea of the completeness of his control over details of expression.

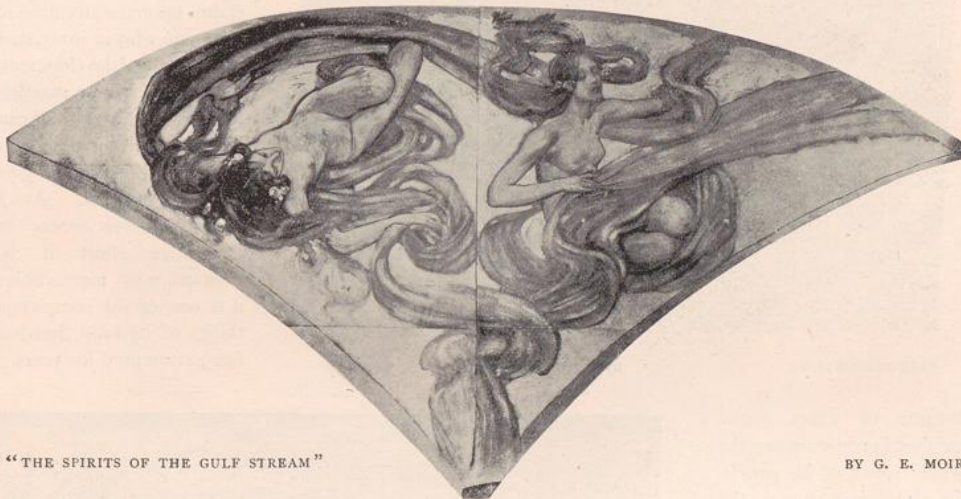
In the modelled work carried out by Mr Jenkins there is, of course, much more reserve of manner and a more obvious architectural character. The licence allowed to the painter is necessarily denied to the sculptor, who works under more restricted conditions and in obedience to more exact rules. Such redundancy of line as Mr. Moira has been justified in using in his coloured designs would have seemed quite inappropriate in the panels that are such prominent features in the exterior of the building. Mr. Jenkins, with good judgment, has kept within well-marked limitations. He has not,

*The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*



"THE FOG FIENDS"

BY G. E. MOIRA



"THE SPIRITS OF THE GULF STREAM"

BY G. E. MOIRA

however, conventionalised his work so much that it has ceased to be spontaneous, and he has not warped his decorative instincts into a commonplace groove. But at the same time he has wisely disregarded the pictorial element that has played a useful part in much of the modelling that he has done before as a basis for colour treatment, and he has turned to very good account the opportunity that he has had in this pavilion of doing what is perhaps the most scholarly work he has as yet accomplished.

The subjects of these panels symbolise the various operations carried on by the great shipping company by which the building has been erected, and summarise various details of its

working. They follow, so far as their arrangement goes, the fashion that artistic custom has prescribed, but in execution they are to some extent different from the ordinary run of modelled work. Instead of being built up from a flat surface into relief they have been treated in the reverse way and, as it were, carved out of a plain slab of clay by cutting away the parts that needed to be recessed. By this method of handling a certain level quality has been secured that is specially suited by its comparative slightness of relief for panels which form, as these do, an actual part of the wall surface. Mr. Jenkins has really applied to clay the practice of the marble carver, and a most satisfactory

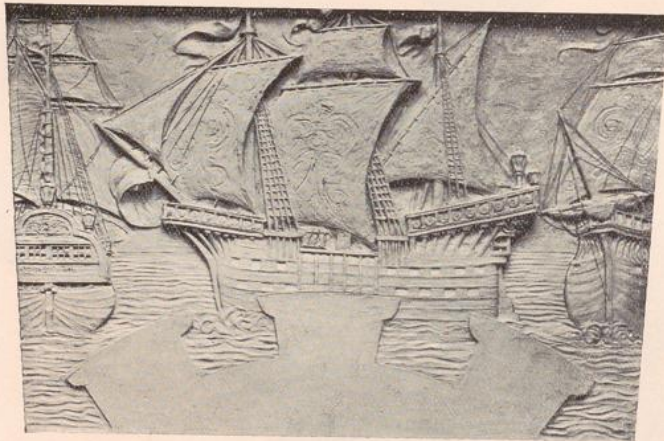


*The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*



"PAST AND PRESENT OF NAVIGATION"

BY F. LYNN JENKINS



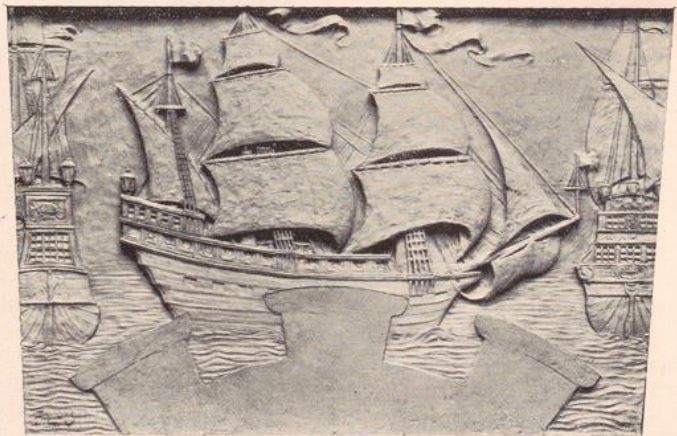
COLOURED RELIEF

BY G. E. MOIRA AND F. L. JENKINS

temporary art history, it unites harmoniously several branches of æsthetic accomplishment. It has unusual claims upon the attention of everyone who is interested in professional development, for it proves how successfully art of various kinds can be brought into agreement and combined to give adequate results. As a definite object-lesson in decorative effort it is, perhaps, most memorable; it is one of the completest things of its kind that has been attempted for years.

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Altogether, this Peninsular and Oriental pavilion can be pronounced to be an especially important example of artistic collaboration. Designed by one of our chief architects, and decorated by two of the ablest of the younger men who are busy making con-



COLOURED RELIEF

BY G. E. MOIRA AND F. L. JENKINS

"IN THE PARK"

AUTO-LITHOGRAPH BY

EMIL ORLIK



*The Peninsular and Oriental Pavilion*



"PART AND TRENT OF NAVIGATION"

BY F. LYNN JENKINS

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