

Our BOOK RACK should bear some DECORATION. In some few cases the shape alone may be sufficiently attractive, but usually some surface design is desirable. Nearly all shapes are more pleasing, in the long run, for having it, provided it is appropriate. The motif may be geometrical, floral, or even animal form. It may be applied in either oil or water color, or a more elaborate thing may be produced by the pyrographic art. Sometimes a combination, the burning-in of the main lines and oil or water color painting, is strikingly effective.

As to its form: It may be an all-over pattern or a florette, within a strong margin line; a border with fine color only in the central space, or with some symbolic device in that space; or it may be a bi-symmetrical or balanced design filling the entire space of the end. And again, the two ends, never seen at the same time, need not be exactly alike. Make trial sketches of different arrangements, giving first attention to proportion and sub-division of space. Think of the uses to which the design is to be put. The flower or other growing thing has ever been the accepted symbol of good literature. The heart, a symbol of love (for good books, in this case), may be introduced, or any monogram or other personal device.

But the style of the whole should be strong and architectural in character. The end of a book rack is not merely ornamental, it has heavy work to do. The three panels shown on this page are full of suggestive material. The first two are of Gothic design, and both are panels of carved wood. The relief in the first

one is high, that of the second somewhat lower. The third design is of a modern style, sometimes referred to as the New Art. In some ways it expresses the principles of design more clearly than the second illustration, or even the old and more conventional example. These two designs are such as you find in Germany. They are panels from the sides

of old chests. Perhaps you are already something of a wood carver. If so, you will be able to go ahead and ornament your book rack without much trouble. In the later pages of this section of this book you will find helpful information about the practice of this ancient and noble art. But if you have not studied carving you will find it rather hard to begin without help. It is pretty certain that you will not be able at first to fulfill your highest intentions. But that interesting appliance, the burning-point, offers a kind of substitute for the carving tool. With it the design may be either lightly traced in a dark line, or outlined with a very deep one. But you can also actually model the surface with it. Do not misunderstand this to mean that you are to try and make one tool do the work of another. Therefore do not try to reproduce by the burning-point such a design as the beautiful Gothic panel at the left. The myriad scorings of the burning-point would never appear like the surfaces patiently and lovingly cut out by the carver. But as applied to the deepening of such a design as shown at the right, the burning-point becomes a welcome partner to the brush and color. Such a design, drawn in light colors upon a dark ground, with the accents and deep shadows still further deepened by burning in, presents an effect not to be had by one process alone. Touches of gold paint might be used sparingly with the color, to serve as sharp accents. Or, an effective scheme would be to paint it black, two coats, or better three, each well dried and rubbed down with a pumice-and-oil cloth, and upon this fine surface paint the design in an ivory white, adding the natural tones.

Here are four more designs adaptable to the ends of BOOK RACKS. All four are of the general style of the New Art. The upper left-hand design shows a Japanese influence. The one at the right reminds us of the seal of Harvard College, the open book with its lofty inscription: "Christo et Ecclesiae."

These offer good opportunities for pyrography. The effect of the design as shown here, black upon light gray, might harmonize well with the room in which your book rack is to be placed. The design could be carried into an entirely different scheme of coloring. In the case of the heart design, a pleasing effect could be produced by having the heart red, its light accompanying drops painted in an ivory white tint, and the background of the heart burned down and colored a low rich purple. Reduce the red in intensity by mixing green with it, and use it to paint the narrow border now showing in medium gray. The broad surface between

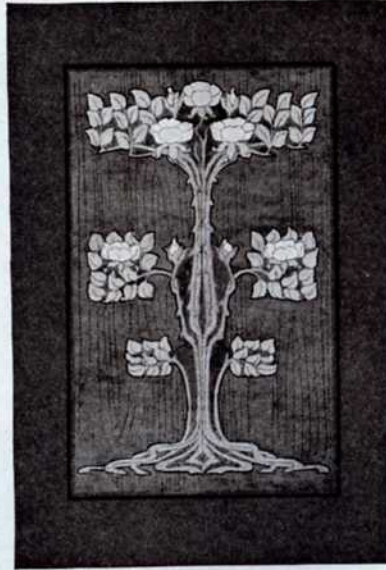
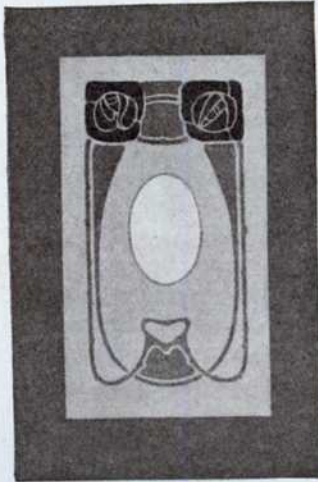
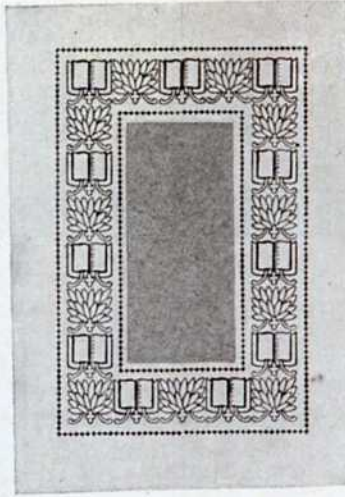
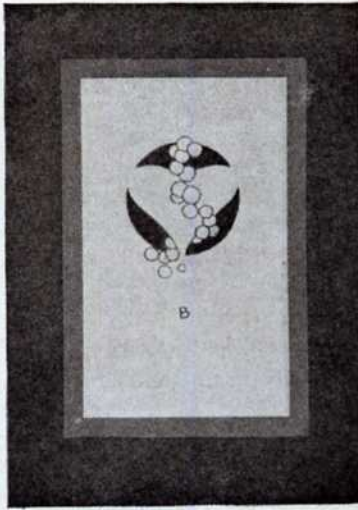


Plate P

likewise neutralized by the admixture of red. For the lower left-hand design, the greens and reds of the rose bush are almost demanded by the design itself. Initials or a monogram might be adapted to the central ellipse, but either the roses or the ellipse design should be made the stronger, lest the two elements vie with one another in attractive power and so destroy the unity of the design.

The design in the lower right-hand panel offers most of all the chance for good coloring, for it demands delicacy of treatment in color

to harmonize with its playful lines. The motif is the wild rose, and the colors most appropriate for this design are a tint of red, or a yellow with a harmonizing hue of green for the leaves. A normal green is produced by mixing about three parts of yellow with one part of blue. This may be made bluer or yellower at will. The tints are obtained by the admixture of white pigment if you work in oils, or by adding water if in water colors. Burn in the outlines and finish the background in the natural wood. Shellac the whole.