

Art And The Stove Trade

THE METAL WORKER March 12, 1881

Discussion of Mr. John R. Chapin's Paper

The following is the discussion which followed the reading of Mr. John R. Chapin's paper on "Art Principles as Applied to Stove Construction and Ornamentation," before the National Association of Stove Manufacturers at the Detroit meeting. Mr. Chapin's paper was printed in full in our last issue, but the discussion we were unable to accommodate:

Gen. Rathbone: Mr. President — I move that the thanks of the association be returned to Mr. Chapin for his able and interesting and very exhaustive paper upon the subject of stove ornamentation, and that the same be printed in our proceedings.

Carried.

Mr. John S. Perry: Mr. President — We feel very much indebted to Mr. Chapin, or any other gentleman who tells us of something we did not know before. We have heard a great deal said from time to time about meretricious ornamentation, and about nickel-plate open stoves being a meretricious ornament. I have not yet heard any gentleman explain the reasons for so considering it, and I would like to ask Mr. Chapin, as an artist, why a nickel plated ornament upon a stove is meretricious and out of place.

Mr. Chapin: In the brief time I had to give to the subject embraced in my paper, I endeavored to convey the idea by saying that the eye first catches the fire pot. Like the highlight in a picture, the grate or open fireplace is the first thing that catches the eye. The moment the eye tires of that it should run off to something that is quiet and subdued, as well as useful, because the fire is trying. I am speaking now from an artistic point of view. If the eye runs off to that which presents a glare and glitter, it has a bad effect. It disturbs and bewilders the eye, and, instead of resting the eye, it scatters attention, and the eye goes back to the original source of attraction, which is the fire. This becomes painful. There is nothing of rest in it, and hence we have called it "meretricious ornamentation."

Mr. Perry: Then I understand that the element of a fire in a stove is what leads artists to denominate nickel plate upon a stove as meretricious, and therefore nickel plate upon a stove with no fire in it, I suppose, would not be termed meretricious. I would ask Mr. Chapin if that is his meaning.

Mr. Chapin: I have only to reply to Mr. Perry, Mr. President, that we are to consider a thing in view of that for which it is constructed. A stove is constructed to contain a fire. It is constructed for the purpose of bringing the fire, or rather the heat, out into the room. We all know the enjoyment of sitting around an open fireplace, and the reason why you have put mica into your fronts, instead of closing them up, is that you may have the benefit of an open fire. The fire represents the hearthstone. The stove is constructed for the purpose of containing the fire. You put mica lights into it in order that you may see the fire, and hence we can only consider it in that light. We can not consider it in the light of standing in your warerooms

merely to be admired. We have to bear in mind that it has to contain fire, and it is generally seen when it contains a fire. In that view, if you find anything of glare and glitter which distracts the eye from the fire, or bewilders the gaze, you destroy the artistic effect. That is the only point I make in regard to it.

Mr. Perry: Then I understand it is only when the fire is lighted that a piece of nickel plate on a stove becomes meretricious. I suppose that for many centuries a high polish of silver plate has been used upon carriages and upon harness as well. Now, in that connection, is it meretricious or is it out of place! Is it in contrast with something that is black, as a nickel plated ornament is in contrast with a black stove, and I would like to inquire of Mr. Chapin, or any other gentleman of culture present, whether that is meretricious and out of place! Of course, the object is to get at the truth and not to cavil.

Mr. Chapin: I understand Mr. Perry's motive, of course. I would explain by taking up the very subject which Mr. Perry has mentioned. Take, for example, a silver plated harness, and I would ask Mr. Perry, as a gentleman of culture, if for that silver bronze were substituted, it would not be more attractive and pleasing to the eye, more restful and more in harmony with its use. Silver is out of Character on a harness; It does not belong there. It is one of those incongruities that the artist at once perceives and speaks of. But make it of brass, and it would still be too bright; make it of bronze or some dark metal, and you have something that is in keeping with its use, and in character with the combination.

Mr. Perry: Let us come to the practical question. Probably nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine one-hundredths, of all the harness and carriages that have been ornamented in the last century have been with silver plate. Now, the manufacturers of those articles make them to sell, and they produce what the people want: they don't make something to please themselves. They make what will sell and what the people desire; and the fact that ninety-nine in one hundred, I have no doubt, of all the equipages of that kind that are ornamented with any kind of plate, whether of bronze or otherwise, are silver plated, it seems to me is pretty good proof that that is what the people generally want. To come back to the matter of stoves. We do not make stoves for gentleman of the high artistic and aesthetic taste of Mr. Chapin and Mr. Bayles, the latter of whom has done everything in his power to educate us, and for which we are most certainly greatly obliged, but we make stoves for the common people as a whole, that are sold in the far West, the South, the North and other sections of the country where there is not perhaps so much cultivated taste as in some other sections more highly favored. It seems to me that it is the business of the manufacturer who is wise to make the things that the people want, without regard to what his own opinions or those of artists may be. We do not make stoves for artists; we make them for the common people as a whole. Three or four years ago the firm that I

represent had a range, and this was before nickel plate was as extensively employed as now. We put upon that range the usual amount of nickel plate. I think there were two or three other small pieces. In the sample room we placed alongside of it another precisely like it, but without any nickel plate, every piece being black, excepting, perhaps, the knobs; and we made a difference in the price of those ranges of \$4 apiece, and the cost was not half that sum. We said: "There is a range, if you please, at \$20, and another, precisely like it, at \$16." Well, those samples stood there the entire year, and we did not sell one of the black ranges—not one. We would rather have sold those, though perhaps they did not pay quite so much. Last year we advertised, and told our customers in that way and by circulars: "We make stoves so and so, and with such an ornament of nickel plate upon them. Now, we will sell you those stoves with half that amount of nickel plate upon them for so much, and without nickel plate for another price." I never heard that any man ever ordered a stove and reduced the amount of nickel plate we put on. Such being the fact, it seems to me good proof that that is what the people want. We do not add nickel plate to please ourselves; it can afford us no satisfaction surely. It is a great amount of trouble and cost. It is a perfect nuisance, as well as expensive; but it is what the people demand and like, and a stove made with these beautiful ornaments upon it, such as the gentleman has so precisely described and illustrated, might please us and might please him, but it would not be, in my judgment, the stove that would sell, except in limited quantity, and the question of sales is the one most vitally interesting and the one for which we do business. We have heard a good deal about this meretricious ornamenting of nickel plating, and I must say, if the gentleman will allow me to say it, I think too much. It would be altogether a different matter and put a different phase upon it, were we making stoves to please those gentleman, or to gratify an educated, aesthetic taste and demand. When these gentlemen will point out something which may be substituted for nickel plate, we shall be greatly obliged and indebted to them.

Col. W. P. Warren: Mr. President— My own views and experiences have been so analogous to those of Mr. Perry that I can hardly bear to allude to the matter. Last year our "Splendid" parlor, which I think for lines of beauty is perhaps unequaled (laughter) was put into the market as you have seen it. We were very anxious to reduce the amount of our nickel plating business. Our facilities were not extensive enough for the requirements of the trade, and, consequently, we put that stove out upon the market with all the nickel plating we had upon it, and then Mr. Perry put another alongside of it, with nothing but the urn and knobs, & etc., nickeled. We made a wide difference in price, and did not sell 25 of them, although we tried very hard, you may believe, to do it in order to relieve ourselves. The story comes back to us this winter that we must have more nickel plate than Mr. So-and-So's stove, and our

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travelers say Mr. Somebody out at Rome says he would like the "Splendid" if we would put as much nickel on it as the "Garland" has. Well, I don't know whether we can meet Mr. Barbour on the nickel plate business, but we are going to try. As Mr. Perry says, profit is what we are doing business for. We aim to supply the people with stoves and reap the benefit arising there from. If that is our province, I think such gentleman as the one who just read the paper ought to be employed by the association to write articles for *The Metal Worker*, which passes into the hands of the buyers, and thus try to educate the makers up to their views, and then let us follow.

Mr. Geo. H. Barbour: One question, Col. Warren: 1877 was the first year the "Splendid" came out, was it not?

Col. Warren: I don't know exactly.

Mr. Barbour: Col. Warren did not change the stove at all for the first year or so, while other manufacturers just threw the nickel right out.

Col. Warren: Not to interrupt Mr. Barbour, I would say we never changed the stove at all. The stove was run two years without change.

Mr. Barbour: I always supposed that the "Splendid" held its own on account of not having any more nickel plate, but perhaps it was dollars and cents that governed it. I don't know but he got out on the second year by having so good a sale without having any change.

Col. Warren: We never complained at all of the sale we had on the stove. I am only speaking of the general manner of nickel plating.

Mr. Barbour: If you had good success the second year without putting any more nickel plating on, that's all right.

Col. Warren: We had good success, and we have not changed the stove with the exception of a little nickel plate here and there. I am speaking merely on the abstract question. The trade call for nickel plate, and if they want it, we favor letting them have it if they pay for it.

Gen. Rathbone: I think the members of the craft will all agree with Messrs. Perry and Warren in the fact that they desire to make stoves that they can sell, and thereby make a profitable for their labor and capital. I apprehend, sir, that there are very few gentleman here present who will affirm that the large amount of nickel plate that is used upon many of the stoves at the present time is in good taste. I do not think it would require any prophetic vision to safely assert that the day will come—and that, too, within the next two years—when we shall look back upon this age of nickel with much astonishment, and shall reach this conclusion—that customers who demand, and the people who desire, these large amounts of nickel, need to have their tastes (in that direction, certainly) cultivated and elevated. (Applause.) I think that the reading of such papers as we have had presented here by the gentlemen who have been invited to prepare and present them, has been and will be of decided benefit to the members of the association. I apprehend it was not the wish of Mr. Chapin, nor has it been the wish of Mr. Bayles, to undertake to dictate as to what we shall do in reference to making patterns, but simply to throw out suggestions for our guidance—

suggestions which it is optional with us to adopt or reject. If we can educate the public taste, and, at the same time, secure a profitable return for our labor and capital, we ought to be willing to do so. I agree with Mr. Perry that we must manufacture, for the present time, the articles that are demanded by the people to whom we sell our goods; but I do hope that the time is not so very far distant when the public taste will be elevated and improved, and when we shall make stoves that will not be offensive to good taste. As to nickel plating, Mr. Warren intimates that he proposes to put more on next year. I have had very little to do with the details of the business of the firm in which I have the honor to be a partner, but I confess that, in looking upon the stoves made last year, I think it will be exceedingly difficult, if much more is done in that direction, to find a place upon which a particle more of nickel can be put, and I think, perhaps, the next best thing will be to make the entire stove of nickel. Although the public may demand it, I am sure that it is not in good taste. I am confident that the views of the public in this regard will change.

I wish further to say that Mr. Chapin has, in my judgment, done us a great kindness. I requested him to prepare the paper he has presented today, and I think the association are under a deep sense of obligation to him for the interest and labor manifested in its preparation.

Col. Warren: I would not have it understood that I depreciate in the least Mr. Chapin's paper. I congratulated him the moment he had finished, and asked that I might see him at the hotel hereafter in regard to it. I took very great pleasure in his paper, and I should like to here more in the same direction upon the subject he has presented, for I feel that we all need to be educated—at least I do—in artistic matters and upon the points to which Mr. Chapin has alluded. I hope, at another meeting of the association, that he may be called upon and will prepare another paper still further elaborating these matters, so well considered in the paper before us.

Mr. Perry: I hope, Mr. President, I have said nothing to decry the merits of Mr. Chapin's paper, which I enjoyed and fully appreciated, and I am under a great obligation to him for presenting the paper, and hope we shall hear from him again. The question of the amount of nickel put upon stoves is the question I spoke of. It is quite possible there may be too large an amount of nickel put upon stoves to be in consonance with good taste, but it resolves itself into the question whether the people demand it, and whether they wish to buy stoves so heavily weighted down with it. If they do, then there is no moral objection to their so doing.

Mr. J. C. Bayles: As I have been placed in the position of correspondent, Mr. President, I ask the privilege of the floor for a moment. A leading New England clergyman was at one time preaching upon the subject of the Lord's Prayer, and when he reached the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," he said he thought there ought to be added another petition; "Teach us to know our daily bread when we see it." I have run counter to the prejudices of many manufacturers

in advocating the more tasteful ornamentation of stoves, and especially in venturing to say that the showy stoves now considered first-class are out of harmony amid tasteful surroundings. This has been literally rendered to mean something more and different from what I have ever meant, or, in the words of a very much respected friend who differs from me very widely on these subjects, that I said that no stove now made was fit to put into any parlor. Well, perhaps my language was strong and liable to misinterpretation, so we will let that pass.

The difference between the manufacturers and self-constituted critics, like Mr. Chapin and my self, are wide, and, for the present, seemingly irreconcilable.

You say that you know what you can sell, while we do not; that we are not competent critics of what you make, and that, while our views are very well, they are not practical. If it be true that the public demand ugly stoves, or stoves not tasteful in their ornamentation, then the stove trade is unique, because there is not another line of manufacture in which there is such a public demand. In every other line it is the best and most beautiful things which can be made that command the largest market and the best prices, and I am yet to be convinced that it is to the best interests of any stove manufacturer to assume that his neighbors have solved the problem of what it is best to make, or that by following their lead and doing as nearly as possible as they do, he can make the most money.

But let us not revive this discussion, as it might lead me further than I intended when I rose. Without feeling that I have been wrong in my views, or regretting that I have given them expression, I am prepared today to recant in some degree. I feel that it was unwise to take the position I have held during the past two or three years, and I am sorry I have taken it. I do not believe the stove manufacturers are now prepared for an art progress that shall be practical. I do not believe that art objects will be made on a scale of three to five or seven thousand tons a year. I believe they are right to some extent in presuming there is a large vulgar taste that demands showy or tawdry stoves, and that probably they are now working in the direction of the greatest known profits. But I believe that, in addition to the greatest demand, which may absorb 90 per cent, of the whole product, there is a demand for at least 10 per cent, of beautiful stoves. Stoves can be made and sold without reference to what they will cost, if they are nice enough. I have a stove in my office which cost \$55 at retail, and it is not a very good stove at that. It is a poor heater, but its artistic excellence sold it, and will sell many more like it. As a practical burning stove, it is not a triumphant success. I also have one at my house which cost probably as much. I could improve it in every detail of its construction, but I would not change it for any stove in your catalogues. I know there is being imported into the country today a large aggregate valuation of stoves, simply because they are more beautiful, as objects of art, than anything produced in this country. Men of

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wealth and taste are buying these stoves, who would not take, as a gift, the most gorgeous base burner produced in this country. In view of these facts, I do believe there is a demand for beautiful stoves; That it is competent for some one to fill that demand, and that the one who first starts in and establishes a reputation for making a truly beautiful American stove will have as large a trade as he could wish, with profits such as are at present unknown in the business. It would not amount in any one case to a product of 7000 tons a year. I do not believe all the gentlemen around me could go into it and make money; but there is a demand. Once started, that demand will grow. The influence of art will be felt in this as in every other line of manufacture, and it will raise the standard of the whole stove production of the country. We shall see, as Gen. Rathbone says, a change so marked; That we shall look back in surprise at the stoves now considered first class and beautiful. But I no longer expect to see an art progress born of talk. Until you see it to your pecuniary interest to make neat, tasteful and satisfactory stoves, and to abandon the meretricious ornamentation which you despise for its own sake as much as I do, he will be disappointed who expects you to move forward any faster than you are moving now.

Mr. Chapin: I have only to add, Mr. President, that I believe that none of you have meant, in your criticism of my paper, anything but kindness and courtesy. I wanted to bring about this very discussion. I would rather have appeared here in a ridiculous light than not to have succeeded in doing just what has been accomplished here. It has set

you gentlemen to thinking I can plainly see.

Col. Warren: I have been on the floor a great deal, Mr. Chairman; but Mr. Bayles in his remarks, stated something in regards to the improvement of stoves. He certainly cannot deny that in the last 25 or 30 years there has been a marked improvement in the adornment of stoves. The other day I picked up a copy of the *Lansingburgh Gazette* printed in 1817, or about that time, and, comparing it with *The Metal Worker* that nice, clever, tidy sheet we have before us every week—I saw what a marked improvement there was. There has been an improvement in the manufacture of stoves in the last few years. It may be they do not suit the aesthetic eye of Mr. Bayles and Mr. Chapin. They do not suit mine, but that is not the point exactly. Let us try and make some money as we go along, and educate also, and if there is only 10 per cent of nice stoves to be made, it seems to me we ought to find 10 per cent, of the manufacturing interest willing to meet the demand. If no one else will, I will! I will try to anyway. In fact, I will make them all! (laughter.) There is another point in connection with it. Many decline to use nickel. If you gentlemen agree to let me use nickel exclusively, I will pay you a good large sum for the right! (laughter.) It is in the light of whether it pays us or whether it does not, that I want these remarks about nickel received. If it pays us, it is our province to use it. Just so with the *Lansingburgh Gazette*. In 1817 it was a pretty nice paper, but it does not compare today with *The Metal Worker*.

Mr. Chapin: If you will recall the progress

made in art in this country, you will many of you remember thirty or forty years ago that there was no such thing as Art in this country—nothing like art. We had artists but they were contented if they were successful in painting a scene and getting a little money to buy bread and butter, and it was all they could hope for. We had first rate artists, but as for the cultivation of art, we had nothing of the kind. We have been passing through a period of chromos. Now where is the gentleman in this association that will have a chromo in his house? I venture to say not one; and yet a few years ago it was nothing but chromos. That craze was rushed into the ground. Chromos were given for everything. Just so with nickel. The time is coming, as Gen. Rathbone has said, when you will look with astonishment and surprise at having used nickel upon your stoves as you do. It is even now going out of date. The current is setting in that direction. As Mr. Bayles remarked, if beautiful stoves are not wanted, the stove trade is the only trade which produces utensils or fixtures in the house in which there is no incentive to a higher standard of design and ornamentation than has yet been reached. As the current has been started, help it on in every possible way. If you must have nickel, let it be strictly in accordance with art principles. That is all I desire to convey and all I hope to attain in the papers I have read.

Col. Warren: When the time arrives that we are going to look back upon this age of nickel, if I can look back with my pockets full from the use of nickel, I can do it with more complacency than I could with lean or empty pockets. End



Splendid Stewart



The Art Westminster

History Brief

Many times during the past 10 years we have had occasion to express the belief that the efforts of manufacturers to attain really satisfactory standards of art in stove ornamentation would be attended with more or less unsatisfactory results until the method of producing art patterns was radically changed. We have maintained the opinion that the wood-pattern maker had no part in the art movement. His work belongs to the era of distinctively wood treatments in iron. He is a joiner, not an artist. When he attains a degree of skill as a carver in wood which would enable him to give his work such enrichment as would be suitable to a homogeneous material like iron, he could employ his time and talent to better advantage than in making stove patterns. The pattern-maker of the stove which shall possess real excellence as an object of art we have always held to be the modeler who could work out his design in a plastic material which should serve as a pattern without going through the hands of the wood-worker at any stage. This of course, applies to ornaments and surface plates. For other parts of a stove thin wood makes as good patterns as can be had.

It is not at all surprising that for years this idea was regarded as visionary. The stove manufacturer is naturally conservative, and changes his method slowly and tentatively. Modelers are comparatively scarce, and those of skill and fine taste cannot be had for the asking. Moreover, they do not work for joiners' wages by the day or week. The difficulties in the way of substituting clay for wood in patterns have been admittedly great, but not so great that they have not been gradually overcome. Two of the earlier square stoves derived much of their excellence from the work of the modeler, and bases, panels and ornaments of various kinds showed treatments new in iron, because impossible in wood. The combination of wood and clay patterns has been only measurably successful. Stoves thus made have still been suggestive of wooden constructions with plastic panels and accessories; but from what the modelers had accomplished under such adverse circumstances, it was evident that plastic art in its application to stove ornamentation promised unique advantages, and offered the only path by which a high and uniform standard of art in stove ornamentation could be reached.

This year the modelers have had a chance to show what they can do, unhampered by any of the limitations of the wood pattern shop. Of the stoves made from modeled patterns we have as yet seen but one. How this compares with the others we do not know; but of Rathbone Sard & Co.'s "Art Westminster" we can say with confidence that it comes much nearer to a perfectly satisfactory union of beauty and utility than any stove we have yet seen. As a stove it is a perfectly practical construction. It is a square, low-feed base-burner with a round fire-pot. It is well proportioned as to its working parts, and makes no departures from the shapes and relations of parts which experience has shown to be conducive to the most satisfactory results in operation. It cannot, therefore, be called an experimental stove in any sense, and, as the artist has had to do only with the outside, it possesses none of the impracti-

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cable features usually found in stoves which artists have first made and then ornamented. In point of utility it leaves nothing to be desired which can reasonably be expected in a magazine stove.

As a work of art, we are glad to be able to speak of it in terms of highest admiration. We have seen it in the iron, and found it a delight from top to bottom. A consistent, well-considered purpose pervades the entire design. It is rich without being "showy." Each part takes and keeps its proper place in the design, and we find no slighting of details in one part to emphasize the effect of other parts. We also notice with pleasure that the ornamentation is honestly carried out in every part. The plates of the back of the stove are as carefully and conscientiously enriched with ornament as those of the front, and, as a clever friend remarked, "the heels are polished, too."

It is rather difficult to describe a stove of this kind so as to convey any idea of its appearance. When the engraving is ready it will undoubtedly appear in our pages, and the trade will then have an opportunity of forming their own impressions. We may say, briefly, concerning it, that in this stove the tiles are exceptionally large and interesting, but that no dependence has been placed on meretricious ornamentation of any kind. The stove has no urn or other top ornament, and needs none. The only bright metal about it is that of the hinge-pins, the handles for opening doors and moving the draft-slide, and the end foot rails, all of which are in brass and are appropriately ornamented. There is no glitter of any kind. The beauty of the stove is inherent; art went into the sand with the patterns, and came out in the iron.

Concerning this stove as a commercial venture opinions are likely to differ widely. We have no doubt there are a great many who, while admiring it, will congratulate themselves that it was not produced will their capital. We admit that it is a venture involving considerable risk, and that one could not predict its success from the analogies of experience. We venture the opinion, however, that it has a very much better chance of success than the average stove salesman would be disposed to admit, and this leads us to say a few words to the intelligent dealer—words suggested by the "Art Westminster," but by no means intended to have exclusive application to it. We expect to see two or three art stoves in the market this season, and if they are of equal interest and merit, what follows applies to them as much as to the "Art Westminster."

The "Art Stove" has come to stay. We only wonder it did not come sooner. There is a demand for it, as there is for every article in which utility and beauty can be combined. The "Art Stove" will not please everybody, but it will please some very much, and those for whom it is adapted will want it and nothing else. We are speaking now not of one particular stove, but of any stove which may serve as a type of those combining utility and beauty in high degree. The demand for silks is not as large, measured in yards, as it is for calico, but it is just as imperative, and those who want silks will not be satisfied with calico. More bedroom sets of painted

pine are sold than of carved mahogany, but there is a demand for carved mahogany which painted pine, though cheaper, does not satisfy. So it is in all lines of trade. So also is it in stoves. There is a demand for stoves of the kind we are describing. It has existed for years, and nothing has been produced to exactly meet it. Now, it makes comparatively little difference, so far as the sale of such stoves is concerned, whether the dealer takes hold of them or turns up his nose at them. If they cannot be sold through the stove trade they will be sold through dealers in furniture and house decorations, and the stove dealers, by permitting such a division of the business. Would only build up a competition with themselves. The prudent dealer does not need to be told that it would be bad policy to order stoves of this kind by the carload. The demand for them is necessarily a smaller one than exists for cheaper goods of less interest. But it is a profitable demand to cater to, and we should not be surprised if it was found to be unexpectedly large. The intelligent dealer will also appreciate the fact that an art stove will not appear to best advantage standing shoulder to shoulder with the average run of stoves on his floor. It calls for a different treatment. Give it a window or a corner to itself. Provide a suitable background to relieve it against. Make its immediate surroundings tasteful and attractive. A diamond would be none the less valuable if stuck in a lump of sealing wax, but it would sell more readily if appropriately set in delicate fingers of gold. Treat the art stove as you would a handsomely bound book, a beautifully framed painting, an object entitled to some especial consideration. Give it a fair chance and it will benefit you in more ways than one. You cannot, friend dealer, come in contact with art without being insensibly elevated and improved by it. Your store will soon show the effect of this education of your taste; even the cheap truck you have provided for the meanest and least desirable of your customers will "brace up and put on some style" as the result of being brought into good company. You will imbibe the impression, which probably could not be imparted to you in any other way, that selling stoves is not inconsistent with the development of a fine taste, and that there is as much pleasure for you in a charming design in iron as for many of those who make more pretensions to a high aesthetic taste. But if you prefer to devote your attention exclusively to the commonplace goods of the trade, which are and will probably always remain its staples, the result will be that those who do not now sell stoves at all will take with avidity what you reject with contempt, that people of taste will go to them and not to you for their art stoves, and that, having helped to create such a competition, you will find no way to crush it, though you seek it earnestly and with tears. Every "art stove" worthy the name will be sold by somebody and find appreciative buyers; and while you are as much at liberty to exercise an intelligent judgment in this as in other lines—that is, as between competing art stoves—don't make the mistake of supposing that if you do not sell art stoves nobody will buy them. If you do, you will have sure cause to regret it. End