



HENRY FRITH, GLOUCESTER.

Wood Carver and Ecclesiastical Sculptor.

IN our reference to Gloucestershire's varied industries mention should be made of that carried on by Mr. Henry Frith, Barton Street, a widely-known wood carver and ecclesiastical sculptor. In his workrooms in Barton Street he employs a number of skilled craftsmen in stone and wood, and he himself supervises every detail of the work. While he executes all kinds of monumental and stone work, he makes a speciality of ecclesiastical art and public building decorative work, and of those branches of wood, stone and marble in which art, as well as mere technical skill, plays a large part. Through his courtesy we are enabled to present on the opposite page a few engravings which give some idea of works executed by him, and which show the completeness of detail with which they are executed. It is to be regretted that no engraving could adequately represent the delicacy of the lines and exquisite finish of the originals.

Under the supervision of some of the leading architects in the county Mr. Frith has done a great deal towards beautifying our local churches, having executed the beautiful reredos in St. Michael's Church, that in the St. Mary de Crypt, the stone-work and carving of the Barwick Baker Memorial in the Cathedral, the reredos and pulpit at Christ Church, the "Nelson Foster" memorial Fountain opposite the Wagon Works, the new oak reredos at Wotton-under-Edge Church, the stone carving etc. at the Presbyterian Church, and other works which have attracted much attention. The cemeteries throughout Gloucestershire and adjoining counties also contain many of his artistic Runic and Celtic crosses and monuments.

In addition to his ecclesiastical sculpture, Mr. Frith has in recent years done a great deal of decorative work for public buildings, having, in conjunction with his brother, executed important commissions of this character for the Government, the Admiralty, and a number of municipal corporations. At the splendid new town hall at Cheltenham all of the interior fibrous plaster decorations were executed by him, to the designs and under the immediate supervision of the architects. During the recent opening ceremony these decorative effects were the subject of the most flattering comment.

Mr. Frith's brother (a noted London sculptor) executes important art works at the Elgin Studio, Trafalgar Square, and the two have jointly carried out a number of important contracts in all parts of the kingdom.



THE PHOENIX ENAMELLED SLATE COMPANY, GLOUCESTER.

Manufacturers of Artistic Enamelled Slate Chimney Pieces.

ALTHOUGH the Phoenix Enamelled Slate Company, Quay Street, cannot be ranked among either the oldest or the largest manufacturers in Gloucester, they may still properly be classed among the best. From the date of their establishment they have consistently turned out a product of the highest class, their artistic chimney-pieces doing not a little to maintain the excellent reputation the city has always enjoyed in this article of manufacture.

The works were established in 1892 and re-organised and taken over by the present Company in 1897, having during all of that



Chimney Piece Designed and Manufactured by the Phoenix Enamelled Slate Company, Gloucester.

period occupied the same site. The premises, however, have from time to time been added to and altered to adapt them to an expanding trade. The present workrooms and storage shops are not only amply large, but are so arranged as to facilitate the carrying on of the work in all its stages. The arrangement of the buildings is particularly commendable in two respects: all of the work is done on the ground floor, thus avoiding a great deal of labour and consequent expense, and each department is so situated that in the process of transformation from a slab of slate to the finished enamelled chimney-piece there is the least possible loss of time and labour in carrying the material from place to place. It is interesting to note that the last process—that of packing the chimney-pieces—ends almost where the first began, the work having been carried around the building in quite a circle in passing from hand to hand.

The mechanical equipment is in keeping with the well-planned buildings, and includes all of the required saws, planers, grinders, and drills, driven by a Tangye gas-engine. Three enamelling ovens (or "stoves," as they are technically called) have been constructed, one of them being held in reserve for emergency. Every device or appliance is adopted by the Company in order to facilitate and get the work through in the least possible time.

It is but just to the Phoenix Enamelled Slate Company to refer, in passing, to that thoroughness and care which have given their work its uniformly high quality. Every stage is given the most careful watchfulness, as the difference of a few degrees of heat in firing, an injudicious selection of enamel or colours, or even imperfect polishing, would materially affect the result. It is owing to the repeated rubbing down and polishing, as well as to the firing and the use of enamels of a peculiar character, that the finished piece is given the depth, or translucence, of marble, which makes the imitation impossible of detection.

While the Phoenix Enamelled Slate Company have met with equal success in the imitation of every kind of colouring and veining, they have made a speciality of the "dipped" colours. These colours, as the term implies, are placed on the surface of water, which is slightly agitated, intermingling the waves or lines in a manner which the brush could scarcely imitate, even with the utmost labour. The prepared surface is then lightly dipped into the water, with the result that the colours adhere, with all

the delicate tracery that had been imparted to them by the agitated water. The simple process is a beautiful illustration of the manner in which nature may be made subservient to art.

Mr. W. McCain, the manager for the Phoenix Enamelled Slate Company, devotes his entire time to the business, constantly overseeing every detail of the work. He is fortunate in having secured the co-operation of some of the most skilled craftsmen in the trade in Gloucester—and it is well-known that in no other city have workmen attained to the same skill in the art of slate enamelling. Between the employer and employed the most cordial relations exist, and all seem to be animated with the one aim to produce the best possible work.

Accompanying this inadequate sketch of an interesting concern is an engraving showing a chimney-piece designed and made by the Company. It is to be regretted that no engraving can show the rich colours and delicate veining that distinguish the original. The Company's very attractive showrooms, which are always open to inspection, would well repay a visit. The Factory and Offices are situated three minutes' walk from the Cathedral.



—= GLOUCESTER. =—

Some of the City's Advantages as a
Manufacturing Centre.

GLoucester is one of the best railway centres in the West of England or the Midlands, being on the main lines of the Midland and Great Western Railways, with lines radiating in every direction. Its magnificent ship canal—capable of floating vessels of over 1,000 tons burden—and its splendid docks, wharves, and warehouses are among the best in England.

Owing to a large revenue accruing to the Corporation from ancient fairs, markets and Corporate estates, the rates are exceptionally low.

The Corporation provides cheap electric motive power to manufacturers in any part of the City. The Corporation also owns valuable sites for factory purposes, which will be sold or let on lease on the most favourable terms.

The City's sanitation is of the best character, and the death rate last year was but 12.1 per 1,000, as compared with an average of 15.4 per 1,000 for England and Wales.