

LINE AND FORM

“ILLUSTRATED DRAWING BOOK”

LINE AND FORM

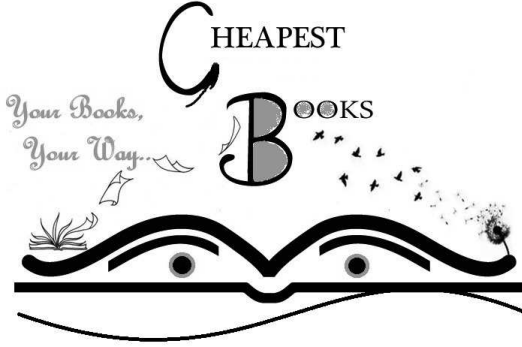
“ILLUSTRATED DRAWING BOOK”

BY

WALTER CRANE

ILLUSTRATED BY MURAT UKRAY

ILLUSTRATED &
PUBLISHED BY
e-KİTAP PROJESİ & CHEAPEST BOOKS



www.cheapestboooks.com

Copyright, 2014 by e-Kitap Projesi

Istanbul

ISBN:

978-625-6014-59-6

Copyright© Printing and publication rights belong to the author's & Publisher's own restriction, using and working. According to the law of intellectual and artistic works, without permission in part or in whole not re-produced or re-published. Welding can be done by showing short excerpts..

Table of Contents

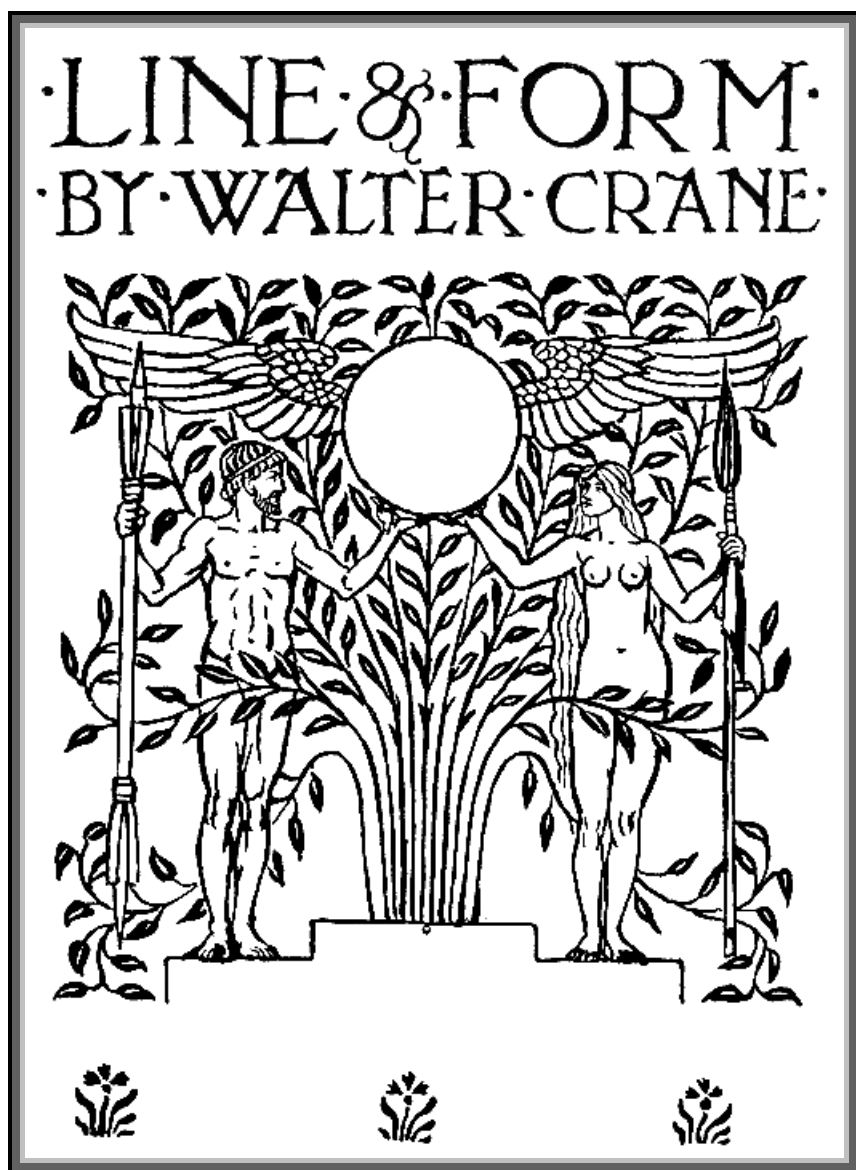
<i>LINE AND FORM</i>	1
<i>Table of Contents</i>	5
<i>Preface</i>	11
<i>Chapter I</i>	12
Silhouette	13
Definition of Boundaries	14
Formation of Letters	15
Methods of Drawing in Line	17
The Progressive Method	18
The Calligraphic Method	19
The Tentative Method	20
The Japanese Direct Brush Method	21
The Oval and Rectangular Methods	22
The Rectangular Method	23
Quality of Line	24
Linear Expression of Movement	26
Linear Expression of Textures	28
Linear Expression of Emotion	29
Scale of Linear Expression	30
Capacity of Line	31
<i>Chapter II</i>	33
Dialects	33
Scale of Degrees in Line	34
Relation of Line to Form	37
The Graphic Purpose	38
The Ornamental Purpose	42

Question and Answer in Line _____	44
Wall-Paper Design _____	46
Controlling Forms _____	47
Memory _____	49
Evolution in Design _____	49
Variety in Unity _____	52
Counterbalance _____	53
Linear Logic _____	54
Recurring Line and Form _____	55
The Principle of Radiation _____	56
Range and Use of Line _____	58
<i>Chapter III</i> _____	60
Choice of Line _____	60
Use of Line _____	61
Degree and Emphasis _____	63
Influence of the Photograph _____	64
The Value of Emphasis _____	65
The Artistic Purpose _____	70
Brush-Work _____	72
Charcoal and Pencil _____	77
The Pen _____	78
<i>Chapter IV</i> _____	80
Elementary Forms _____	80
Dog-Tooth Ornament _____	84
Filling of Spaces _____	86
Inlay Design _____	88
Grouping of Allied Forms _____	90
Grouping _____	93
Corresponding Forms _____	95

Analogies of Form	99
Typical Forms of Ornament	99
Ornamental Units	101
Equivalents in Form	102
Quantities in Design	105
Contrast	108
Variation of Allied Forms	110
Use Of Human Figure and Animal Forms	110
<i>Chapter V</i>	115
Influence of Controlling Lines, etc.	115
Origin of Geometric Decorative Spaces	120
Value of the Recurring Line	126
Adaptability in Design	132
Extension	133
Geometric Structural Plans, etc.	134
Frieze and Field	139
Ceiling Decoration	142
Co-operative Relation	143
<i>Chapter VI</i>	144
Fundamental Essentials of Design	144
Line in Organic Forms	145
Form and Mass in Foliage	150
German Roofs	152
The Mediæval City	154
Organic and Accidental Beauty	156
Formal Composition	157
Informal Composition	162
Principles of Harmonious Composition	168
<i>Chapter VII</i>	169

Three Methods of Expressing Relief _____	169
Of the Use of Contrast and Planes _____	172
Decorative Relief _____	175
Use of Diapered Backgrounds _____	178
Relief of Form by Linear Shading _____	180
Diagonal Shading _____	183
Emphasis _____	183
Relief by Light and Shade Alone _____	189
The Principle of the Photograph _____	191
Relief in Architectural Mouldings _____	191
Gothic Sculpture _____	199
Architectural Influence _____	201
Medals and Coins _____	202
Desiderio di Settignano _____	204
<i>Chapter VIII</i> _____	205
Relief in Line-Drawing _____	205
The Ornamental Aim _____	212
The Ornamental Aim _____	214
Selection _____	216
Accidents and Essentials _____	216
The Outward Vision and Inner Vision _____	220
<i>Chapter IX</i> _____	224
Mural Decoration _____	224
Fresco-Work of Italian Painters _____	226
Modern Mural Work _____	226
Mural Spacing and Pattern Plans _____	229
Scale _____	230
The Skirting _____	233
Field of the Wall _____	234

Tapestry	238
Appartimenti Borgia	238
The Frieze	241
Textile Design	242
Effect of Texture on Colour	245
Prints	245
Wall-Paper	250
Stained Glass	251
<i>Chapter X</i>	254
Relief of Line and Form by Colour	254
Clearing Coloured Forms	258
Harmony	259
The Colour Sense	259
Importance of Pure Tints	261
Tones and Planes	262
Pattern and Picture	263
Chiaroscuro	265
Van Eyck	268
Pattern-Pictures	269
Botticelli	269
Holbein	272
Carlo Crivelli	274
Perugino	275
Titian	276
Paul Veronese	278
F. Madox Brown	278
<i>Conclusion</i>	278



LINE & FORM

BY WALTER CRANE

Preface

As in the case of "The Bases of Design," to which this is intended to form a companion volume, the substance of the following chapters on Line and Form originally formed a series of lectures delivered to the students of the Manchester Municipal School of Art.

There is no pretension to an exhaustive treatment of a subject it would be difficult enough to exhaust, and it is dealt with in a way intended to bear rather upon the practical work of an art school, and to be suggestive and helpful to those face to face with the current problems of drawing and design.

These have been approached from a personal point of view, as the results of conclusions arrived at in the course of a busy working life which has left but few intervals for the elaboration of theories apart from practice, and such as they are, these papers are now offered to the wider circle of students and workers in the arts of design as from one of themselves.

They were illustrated largely by means of rough sketching in line before my student audience, as well as by photographs and drawings. The rough diagrams have been re-drawn, and the other illustrations reproduced, so that both line and tone blocks are used, uniformity being sacrificed to fidelity.

WALTER CRANE.

Kensington, *July*, 1900.



THE ORIGIN OF OUTLINE.

Chapter I

Origin and Function of Outline—Silhouette—Definition of Boundaries by—Power of Characterization by—Formation of Letters—Methods of Drawing in Line—The Progressive Method—The Calligraphic Method—The Tentative Method—The Japanese Direct Brush Method—The Oval Method—The Rectangular Method—Quality of Line—Linear Expression of Movement—Textures—Emotion—Scale of Linear Expression.

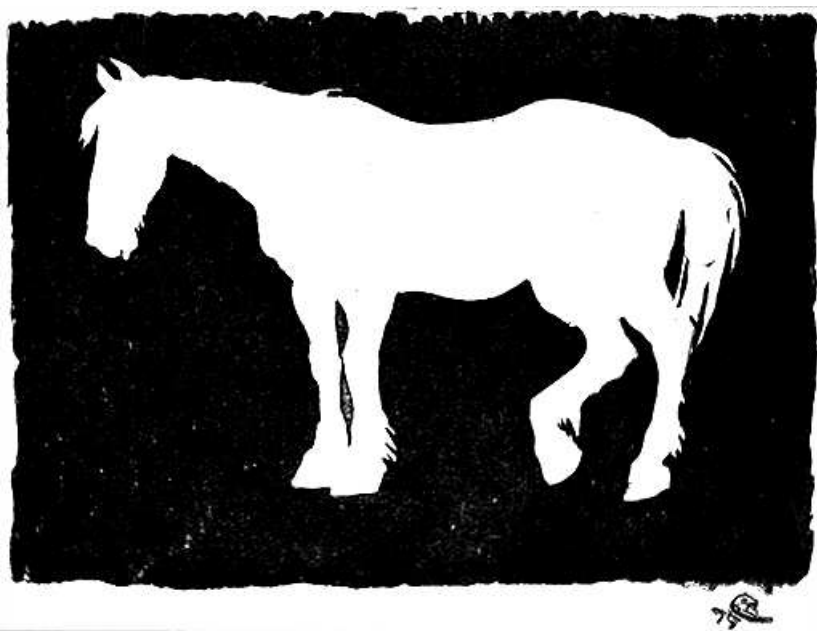
Outline, one might say, is the Alpha and Omega of Art. It is the earliest mode of expression among primitive peoples, as it is with the individual child, and it has been cultivated for its power of characterization and expression, and as an ultimate test of draughtsmanship, by the most accomplished artists of all time.

The old fanciful story of its origin in the work of a lover who traced in charcoal the boundary of the shadow of the head of his sweetheart as cast upon the wall by the sun, and thus obtained the first profile portrait, is probably more true in substance than in fact, but it certainly illustrates the *function* of outline as the definition of the boundaries of form.

Silhouette

As children we probably perceive forms in nature defined as flat shapes of colour relieved upon other colours, or flat fields of light on dark, as a white horse is defined upon the green grass of a field, or a black figure upon a background of snow.





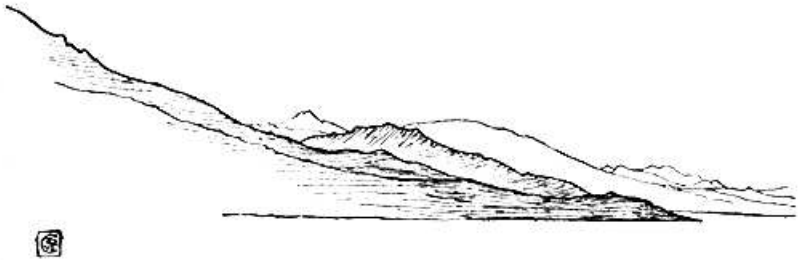
Definition of Boundaries

To define the boundaries of such forms becomes the main object in early attempts at artistic expression. The attention is caught by the edges—the shape of the silhouette which remains the paramount means of distinction of form when details and secondary characteristics are lost; as the outlines of mountains remain, or are even more clearly seen, when distance subdues the details of their structure, and evening mists throw them into flat planes one behind the other, and leave nothing but the delicate lines of their edges to tell their character. We feel the beauty and simplicity of such effects in nature. We feel that the mind, through the eye resting upon these quiet planes and delicate lines, receives a sense of repose and poetic suggestion which is lost in the bright noontide, with all its wealth of glittering detail, sharp cut in light and shade. There is no doubt that this typical power of outline and the value of simplicity of mass were perceived by the ancients, notably the Ancient Egyptians and the Greeks, who both, in their own ways, in their art show a wonderful power of characterization by means of line

and mass, and a delicate sense of the ornamental value and quality of line.



COAST & MOUNTAIN LINES
GULF OF NAUPLIA

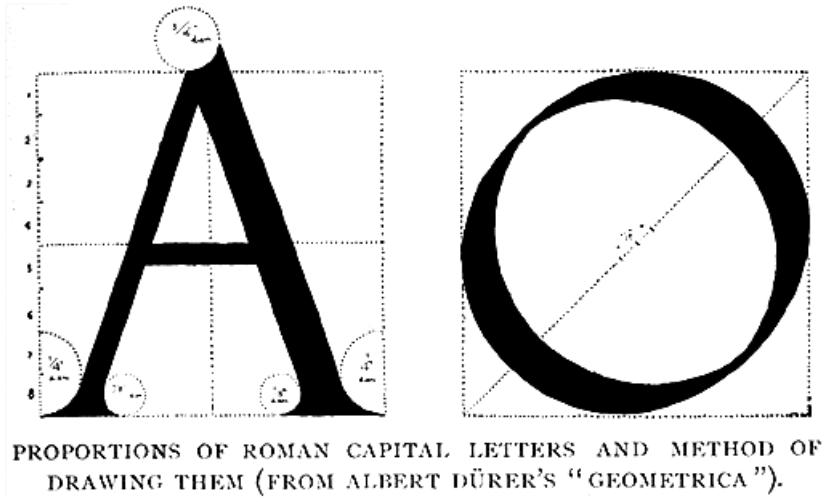


Formation of Letters

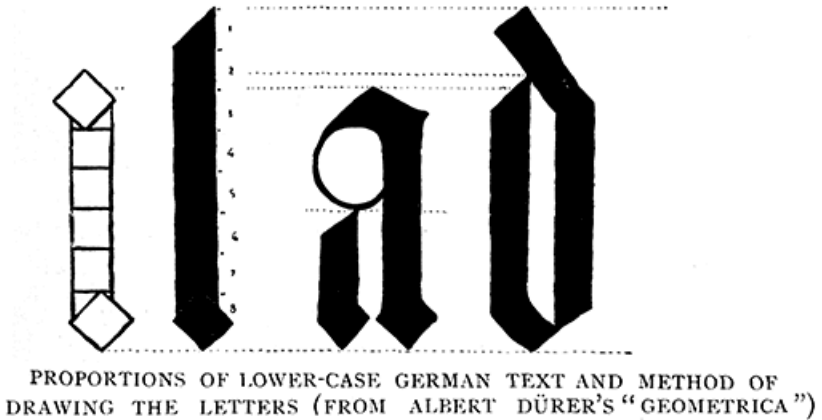
Regarding line—the use of outline from the point of view of its value as a means of definition of form and fact—its power is really only limited by the power of draughtsmanship at the command of the artist. From the archaic potters' primitive figures or the rudimentary attempts of children at human or animal forms up to the most refined outlines of a Greek vase-painter, or say the artist of the *Dream of Poliphilus*, the difference is one of degree. The tyro with the pen, learning to write, splotches and scratches, and painfully forms trembling, limping O's and A's, till with practice and habitude, almost unconsciously, the power to form firm letters is acquired.

Writing, after all, is but a simpler form of drawing, and we know that the letters of our alphabet were originally pictures or symbols. The main difference is that writing stops short with the acquisition of the purely useful power of forming letters and words, and is seldom pursued for the sake of its beauty or artistic qualities as formerly; while

drawing continually leads on to new difficulties to be conquered, to new subtleties of line, and fresh fascinations in the pursuit of distinction and style.



The practice of forming letters with the pen or brush, from good types, Roman and Gothic, however, would afford very good preliminary practice to a student of line and form. The hand would acquire directness of stroke and touch, while the eye would grow accustomed to good lines of composition and simple constructive forms. The progressive nature of writing—the gradual building up of the forms of the letters—and the necessity of dealing with recurring forms and lines, also, would bear usefully upon after work in actual design. Albert Dürer in his "Geometrica" gives methods on which to draw the Roman capitals, and also the black letters, building the former upon the square and its proportions, the thickness of the down strokes being one-eighth of square, the thin strokes being one-sixteenth, and the serifs being turned by circles of one-fourth and one-eighth diameter. The capital O, it will be noted, is formed of two circles struck diagonally.



Methods of Drawing in Line

Letters may be taken as the simplest form of definition by means of line. They have been reduced through centuries of use from their primitive hieroglyphic forms to their present arbitrary and fixed types, though even these fixed types are subject to the variation produced by changes of taste and fancy.

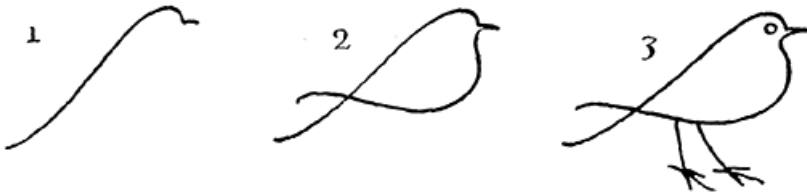
But when we come to unformulated nature—to the vast world of complex forms, ever changing their aspect, full of life and movement, trees, flowers, woods and waters, birds, beasts, fishes, the human form—the problem how to represent any of these forms, to express and characterize them by means of so abstract a method as line-drawing, seems at first difficult enough.

But since the growth of perception, like the power of graphic representation, is gradual and partial, though progressive, the eye and the mind are generally first impressed with the salient features and leading characteristics of natural forms, just as the child's first idea of a human form is that of a body with four straight limbs, with a preponderating head. That is the first impression, and it is unhesitatingly recorded in infantine outline.

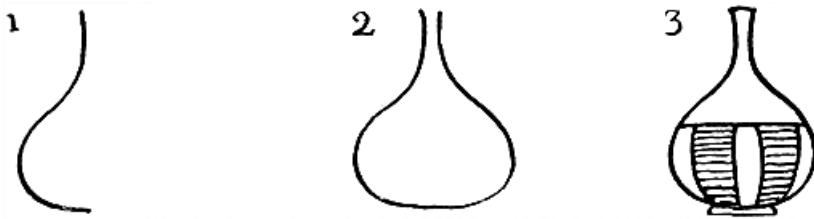
The first aim, then, in drawing anything in line is to grasp the general truths of form, character, and expression.

The Progressive Method

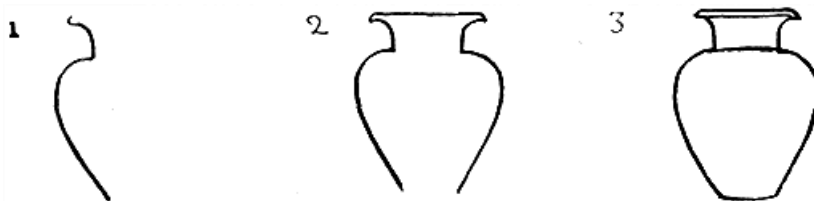
There are various methods of proceeding in getting an outline of any object or figure. To begin with, the student might begin progressively defining the form by a series of stages in this way. Take the profile of a bird, for instance; the form might be gradually built up by the combination of a series of lines:



or take the simpler form of a flask bottle:



or a jar on the same principle:

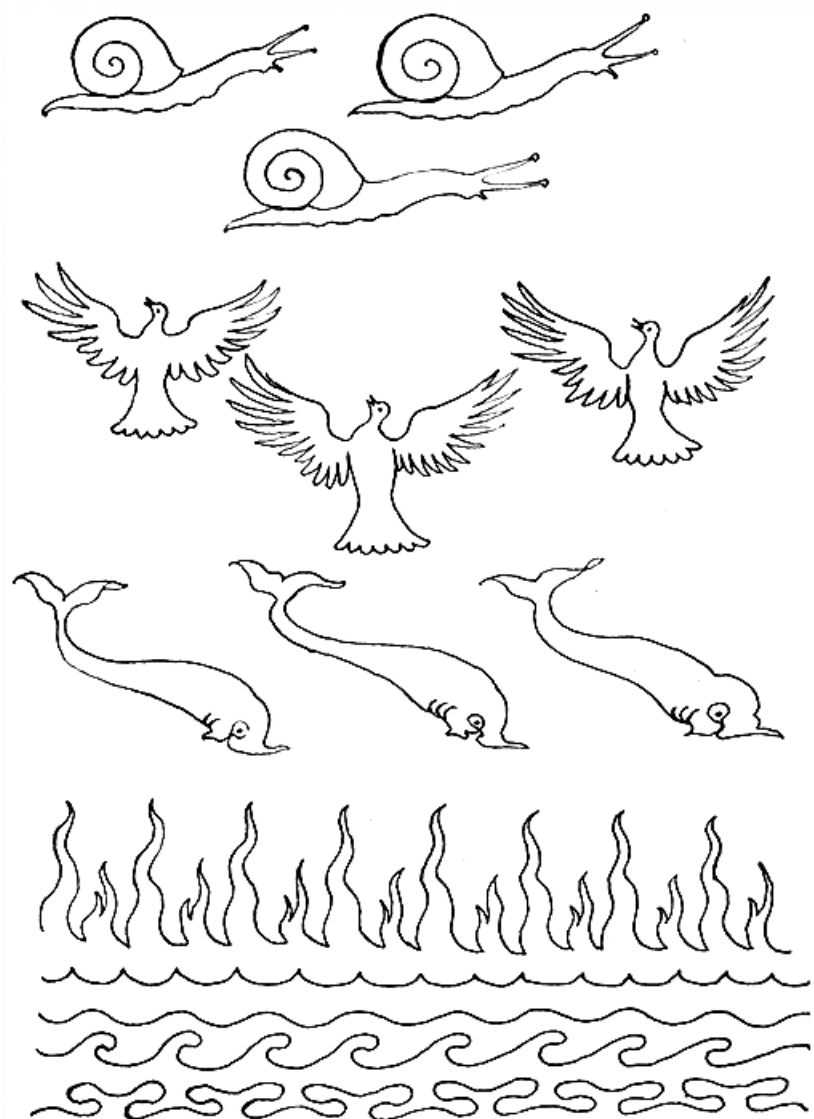


or, simpler still, a leaf form, putting in the stem first with one stroke (1):



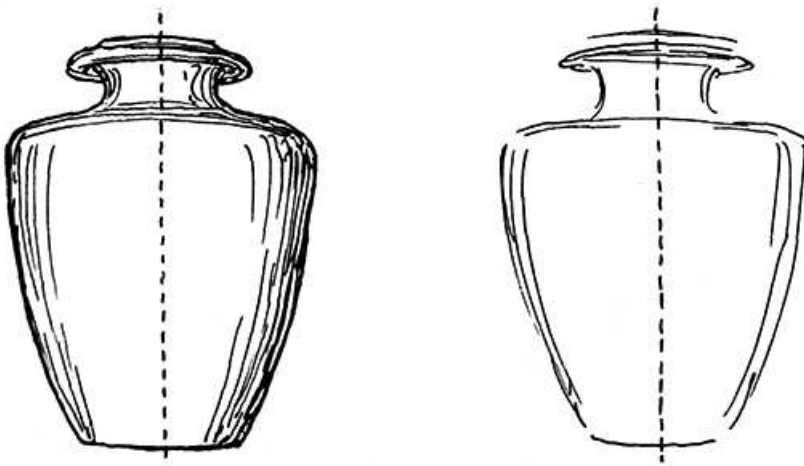
and building the form around it (2, 3).

The Calligraphic Method

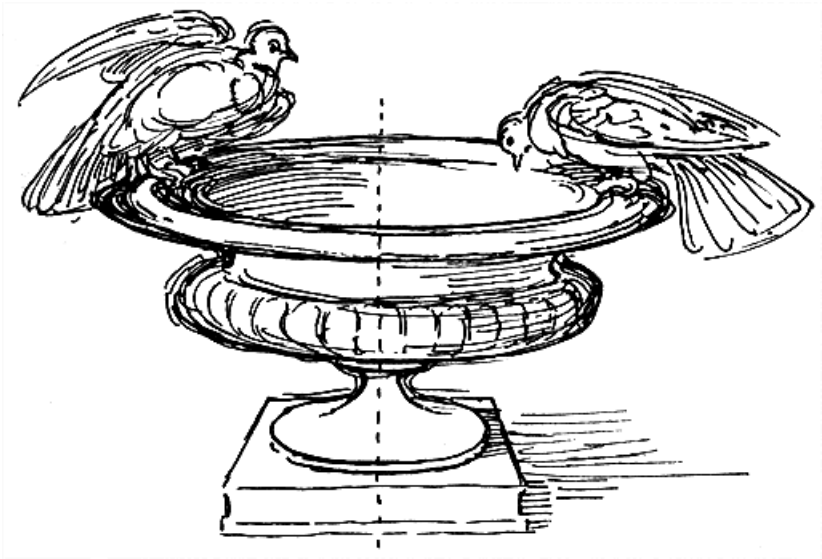


This might be termed the calligraphic method of drawing; and in this method facility of hand might be further practised by attempting the definition of forms by continuous strokes, or building it up by as few strokes as possible. The simpler types of ornament consisting of meandering and flowing lines can all be produced in this way, i.e., by continuous line, as well as natural forms treated in a certain abstract or conventional way, which adapts them to decoration.

The Tentative Method



Another method is to sketch in lightly guide lines for main masses, building a sort of scaffolding of light lines to assist the eye in getting the correct outline in its place, using vertical centre lines for symmetrical forms to get the poise right. This is the method very generally in use, but I think it very desirable to practise direct drawing as well, to acquire certainty of eye and facility of hand; and one must not mind failure at first, as this kind of power and facility is so much a matter of practice.



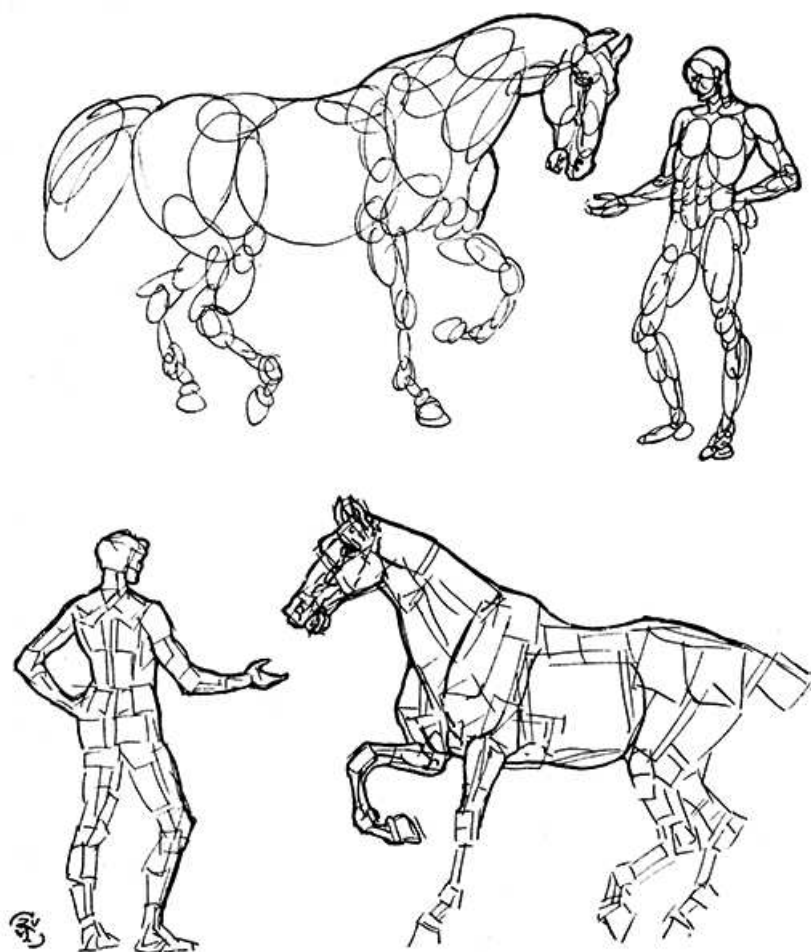
The Japanese Direct Brush Method

The Japanese, who draw with the brush, have accustomed themselves to draw in a direct manner without any preliminary sketching, and the charm of their work is largely owing to that crisp freshness of touch only possible to their direct method. The great object is to establish a perfectly intimate correspondence between eye and hand, so that the latter will record what the former perceives.

Abundant specimens of the freedom and naturalism of the modern school of Japanese artists in this direct brush method may be found in the work of Bari, Hiroshigi, and Hokusai, and in the numerous prints and books of designs from their hands. To all draughtsmen and designers they are most valuable to study for their direct method and simple means of expression of form and fact. Accidental as they frequently seem in composition, the placing of the drawing upon the paper is carefully considered before starting, and this, of course, is always a very important point.

Yet another method of drawing, more especially in relation to the drawing of the human figure and animal forms, I may mention as a help to those who do not feel strong enough for the direct method. At the same time it must be borne in mind that we can accustom ourselves to *anymethod*; and the more dependent we become upon a single method, the less facility we shall have for working in any other. But for all that it is desirable to master *one* method—that is, to be able to draw in line *freely* in one way or another—and experience and practice alone will enable us to find the method most satisfactory.

The Oval and Rectangular Methods



The Rectangular Method

This other method is to block in the principal masses of the forms we desire to represent by means of a series of ovals, as shown in the illustration, and when we have got the masses in their proper relations, to proceed to draw in the careful outline of the figure, or whatever it may be, upon this substructure of guiding lines, correcting as we go along. It would be quite possible to work on the same principle, but upon a structure of more or less rectangular masses. The real use of the method is to assist the student to get a grasp of the relation of the masses of a figure and a sense of structure in drawing; whether square or oval blocking in is used may be a matter of choice. It may be said for the oval forms that they resemble the contours of the structure in human and animal forms.

If one had a tendency to round one's forms too much, it would be well to try the rectangular method to correct this, and *vice versâ*.

After a certain facility has been acquired in rendering form by means of line, we shall perceive further capacities of expression in its use, and begin to note how different characteristics of form and natural fact may be expressed by varying the quality of our outline.

If we are drawing a plant or a flower, for instance, we should endeavour to show by the quality of our line the difference between the fine springing curves in the structure of the lily, the solid seed-centre and stiff radiation of the petals of the daisy, and the delicate silky folds of the poppy.

Quality of Line



LINES OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE FORM AND FEATURE OF
FLOWERS: LILY AND POPPY.

But, as leaves come before flowers, it would be best to begin with leaf forms and try to express the character of oak and beech, lime and chestnut leaves, for instance, by means of outline. Probably at first we shall feel dissatisfied with our outline as not being full enough: it may look meagre in quality and small in definition of form. This probably arises from not allowing enough space—from setting

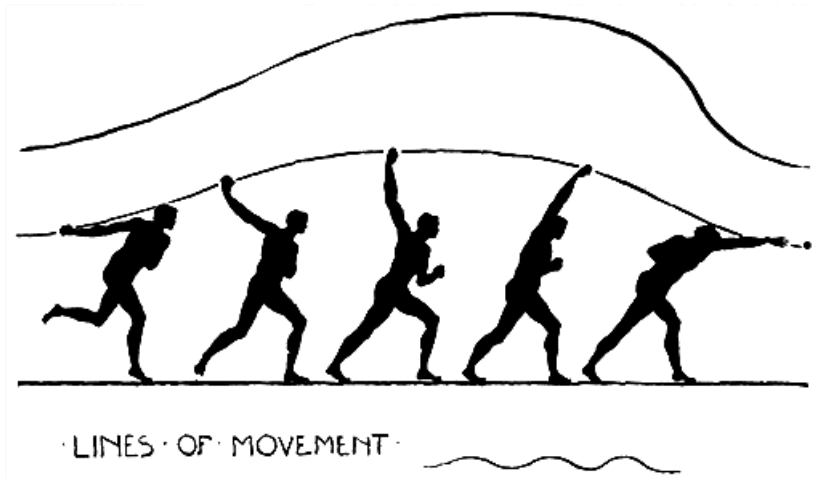
the outline too much within the boundary of the form. To correct this one cannot do better than block in the form of the object we are drawing (leaf, flower, or figure) with a full brush in black silhouette, placing the object against the light or white paper, so that its true boundary may be seen uninterfered with by surface markings or shadows, and, concentrating our attention upon the *edge*, follow it as carefully as possible with the solid black. Then, if we compare the result with our outline, it will help to show where it has failed; and the practice of thus blocking in with the brush in solid silhouette will tend to encourage a larger style of drawing, since good outline means good perception of mass; and as a general principle in drawing, it may be recommended to place one's outline *outside* the silhouette boundary of the form rather than within it; that is to say, when the figure or object is relieved in light against dark, as the line in that case defines the edge against the background. When the figure or object appears as dark upon a light ground, however, the outline should be within the silhouette, obviously, or its delicate boundary is lost.



SILHOUETTE OF BEECH LEAVES AND LINE RENDERING OF
THE SAME.

Linear Expression of Movement

Another important attribute of line is its power of expressing or suggesting *movement*. By a law of inseparable association, undulating lines approaching the horizontal, or leading down to it, are connected with the sense of repose; whereas broken curves and rectangular lines always suggest action and unrest, or the resistance to force of some kind.

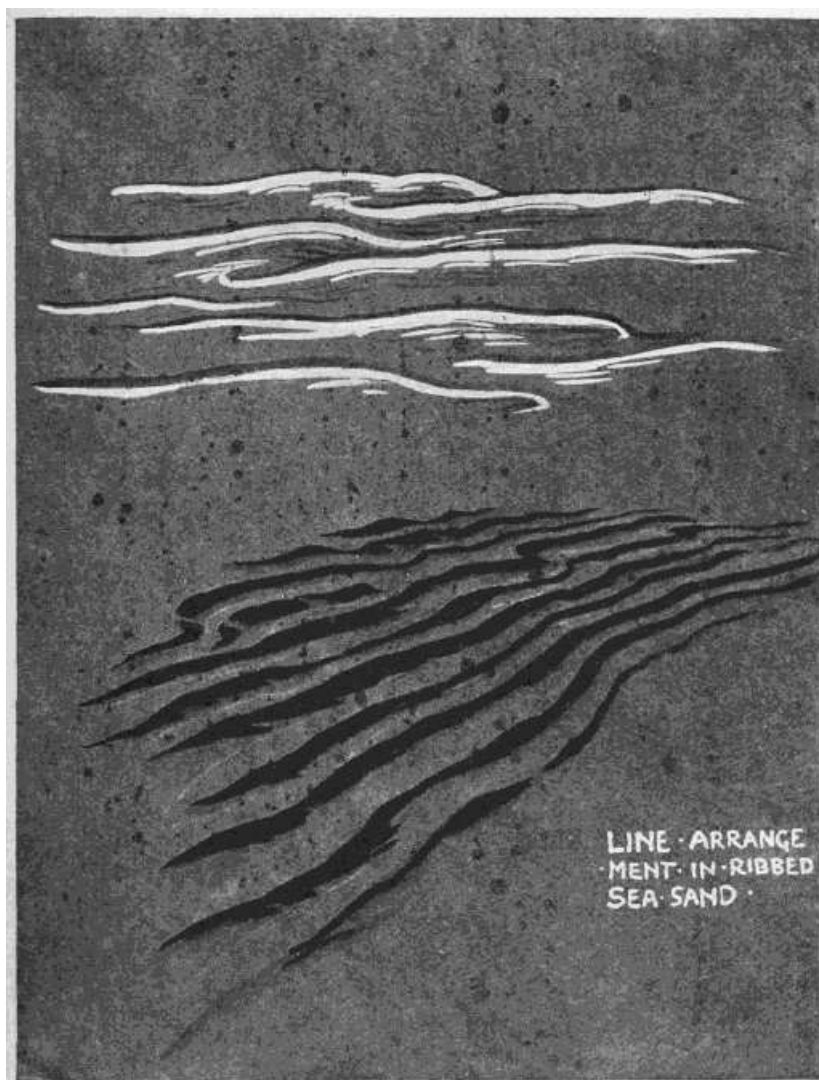


The recurrence of a series of lines in the same direction in a kind of crescendo or wave-like movement suggests continuous pressure of force in the same direction, as in this series of instantaneous actions of a man bowling, where the line drawn through or touching the highest points in each figure takes the line of the curve of a wave. The wave-line, indeed, may be said not only to suggest movement, but also to describe its direction and force. It is, in fact, *the line of movement*. The principle may be seen in a simpler way, as Hogarth points out in his "Analysis of Beauty," by observing the line described along a wall by the head of a man walking along the street. Or, as we may see sometimes near the coast, trees exposed to the constant pressure of the wind illustrate this recurrence of lines in the same direction governing their general shape; and as each tree is forced to spread in the direction

away from the wind, the effect is that of their being always struggling against its pressure even in the calmest weather; and this is entirely due to our association of wind-movement with this peculiar linear expression.



Flowing water, again, is expressed by certain recurring wave-lines, which remind us of the ancient linear symbols of the zigzag and meander used from the earliest times to express water. In the streams that channel the sands of the sea-shore when the tide recedes we may see beautiful flowing lines, sometimes crossing like a network, and sometimes running into a series of shell-like waves; while the sands themselves are ribbed and channelled and modelled by the recurring movement of the waves, which leave upon them the impress and the expression of their motion (much as in a more delicate medium the air-currents impress the fields of cloud, and give them their characteristic forms).



Linear Expression of Textures

Textures and surfaces, too, fall within the range of linear expression. One would naturally use lines of totally different consistency and character to express rough or smooth surfaces: to express the difference of value, for instance, between the ivory-like smoothness of an egg and the scaly surface of a pine-cone, entirely different qualities of line are obviously wanted. The firm-set yet soft feathers of the plumage of