

**Catalogue of the Exhibition of Pewter held in Clifford's Inn Hall Fleet
Street E.C. from February 24th to March 26th 1904**

Compiled by H J L J Massé

Extract from the Introduction of the above Catalogue – found and read to the Pewter Society on 16.10.2011 during a talk about – *Liberty and Pewter Art Nouveau to 1914* – this brief extract was found and read by Peter Hayward (Vice president of the Society).

Some few visitors to the Exhibition seemed to be astonished at the absence of specimens of pewter in the style of *L'art nouveau*. The grotesque inanities, and the intricate yet imbecile nothings that are made in Germany and finished over here (with more or less special designs) have had nearly four years in which to try to degrade the public taste. They could have had no place in any serious Exhibition of pewter. They are not beautiful, they are not honest work, as many of the users of such wares have found out to their cost, and they are not pewter of the composition best suited to daily use. The alloy used is admirably adapted to give a dear, sharp casting, to reproduce every detail of the design, to take a high polish like silver, and to try to counterfeit the more precious metal. This can be the sole reason why this meretricious stuff is labelled and sold as "New Art Silver Pewter."

Already the German manufacturers and dealers, finding their sale dwindling, have rechristened the stuff *Urania* metal, and *Orion*, and it may be expected over here at any moment, to flaunt itself for a time as another outcome of a genuine revival of the Old English manufacture. But the stuff is, fortunately, too brittle from the nature of its composition to be permanent, and this defect is further accentuated by the faulty methods of manufacture.

A sign that the rubbish has not come to stay is to be seen in the fact that it requires the additional charm of iridescent glass, - another "art" product, - chunks of sham turquoise, slabs of pearl, or insets of trumpery enamel to captivate the eye of the beholder and bring about a sale.