

SOME HINTS ON LUSTRA-PAINING.

(IN TWO PAPERS.)

FIRST PAPER.



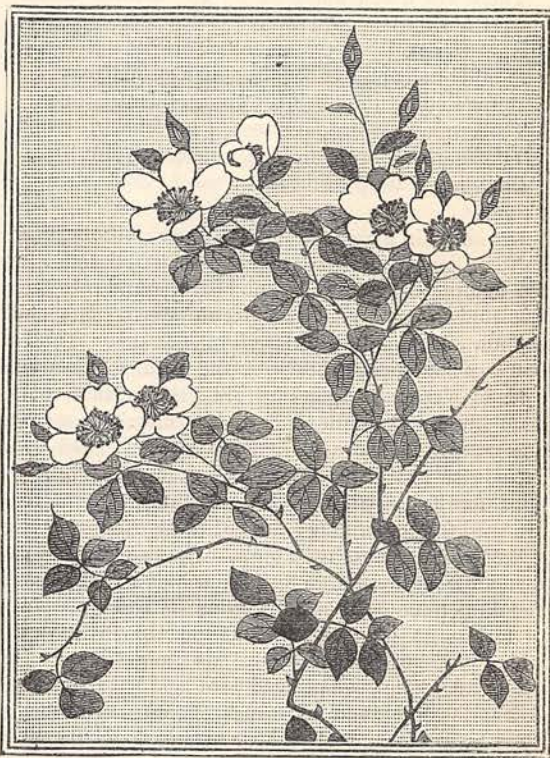
DESIGN FOR LUSTRA-PAINING.

THE Victorian epoch has seen the development of a new period in art, a renaissance in the true meaning of the word, as great as the Italian Renaissance of the sixteenth century. A complete revolution has taken place in our ideas since the days of the Georges, when our grandmothers' taste in furniture and interior decoration was hardly superior to the lodging-house keeper's of the present day. The drawing-room with its brilliant carpet, its yellow-green table-cover, with the inevitable wool-work border, the blue-green curtains, and the red velvet chairs arranged stiffly round the room, could hardly be considered conducive to that ease and grace which is an essential element in a room devoted to conversation and the fine arts. In place of the ugly house with its uglier furniture, we have substituted the Early English, the Elizabethan, and the Queen Anne styles. The artistic element has prevailed, and has influenced not only the style of our architecture and our furniture, but even the decoration of our houses, and our persons. Its influence is felt from the palace to the cottage, from Millais' last beautiful painting down to the new tea-service in the labourer's home. Let us hope that much has been done to refine and elevate the public taste, and that the sublime love of the beautiful has penetrated even into the cottager's lowly home.

There is something about art which, like music and poetry, creates enthusiasm; and, thanks to a few enthusiastic spirits, that enthusiasm has been caught by others. From the earliest ages, from the grotesque Lombard, the pre-Raphaelite, the mystic mediæval, down to the realistic school of the present day, art has had, and always will have, its votaries—men inspired by their art, who when they have accomplished one masterpiece, not satisfied with that, see their ideal before them, beckoning them on to a perfection they can never attain. Art is exacting in its laws, and one of its dictates is, that the greater the artist, the greater is his dissatisfaction with his work. The better he paints, the more he sees his defects. There is the perfection of beauty beyond, but it is unattainable. Phantom-like it ever urges him onwards with greater

zeal, with stronger impulse. The fire of the seraphic Fra Angelico, who painted on his knees, has descended to the painters of all ages, and of all schools, even to that school which is most strongly opposed to mediæval mysticism, the modern realistic school of the present day. With the increasing love of the beautiful, amateurs as well as professionals have turned their attention to the decoration of the walls, the ceiling, the doors—in a word, the general ornamentation of our dwelling-houses. Old styles of painting have been resuscitated, and new ones brought to life. Lustra-painting is one of the newest, and as such deserves to be mentioned. First of all we will describe what it is.

Lustrous means shining, and these colours shine with different shades of gold, silver, bronze, &c. They can be applied to wood, terra-cotta, paper, or silk. In their application to wood, I should recommend them to be used for figure-painting, or for back-



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grounds to flowers or birds painted in oils. Sprays of honeysuckle or apple-blossom, painted with ordinary oil paints, and filled in with gold lustra, have a very good effect for door-panels, or cabinets. We will now imagine that you wish to paint the panels of your doors. From Messrs. Stacey's, Sloane Street, procure thin panels of wood specially prepared for that purpose, and varying in price according to the size.

You will require a box of oil paints, another of lustra colours, a bottle of medium, a bottle of turpentine, two oval-shaped wooden palettes with a hole for the thumb, a palette knife, a dipper, a sheet of tracing paper and another of transfer paper, a sharp pencil, an ivory stylus, and a clean linen rag.

The oil paints are bought in tubes ready prepared for using; the tubes vary in size according to the value of the paints—thus you get a small tube of carmine or cadmium for eighteenpence, and a large tube of flake-white or burnt sienna for fourpence.

The paints that you will find necessary are contained in the following list:—

Opaque—Flake-white, a dead white, necessary for high lights, and for mixing with other colours.

Chrome yellow, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, varying in colour from a clear yellow to a deep orange.

Cobalt, a bright blue, useful for flowers and birds, and for mixing with chrome yellow, for making a bright green.

Naples yellow is used for flowers, birds, and for mixing with other colours.

There are a few colours that are neither entirely opaque nor transparent, but are called semi-opaque.

Raw sienna is a yellow-brown, useful for mixing with other colours, and for the stems of foliage.

Burnt sienna, a reddish-brown, used for glazing.

Terra verte, a green, very useful for foliage.

Transparent—Prussian blue, a deep brilliant blue.

Carmine, a deep rose-colour, much used in flower-painting.

Brown-pink, a greenish-brown, useful for foliage.

A bottle of Roberson's medium is useful to soften the paints with, if they become hard. And now for a few words about your box of lustra paints. It should contain at least nine bottles of powder colours, and a bottle of medium, to mix with the paints. They are sold in sixpenny bottles of old gold, modern gold, dead silver, and bright silver, red, bronze, blue, mauve, and green. A bottle of liquid medium is sold with them, with which they are to be mixed. The brushes used for lustra-painting are the same as those that are used for oil-painting; the red sable, Nos. 3, 4, and 5, will be enough to begin with. They should be kept distinct from those used for oils, as the same brushes should not be used for both styles. A bottle of spirits of turpentine is necessary to wash the brushes in, which you should be careful to do immediately after using, otherwise they become hard and unfit for use. After washing them in turpentine, dry them on a clean linen rag, and add a little of the oil of nuts; this will prevent their splitting, and will keep them soft and flexible. It should be carefully washed out of them before using. Of the oval-shaped wooden palettes, one is for the oil paints, and one for the lustra colours. They should be carefully scraped with a palette knife before being put away, and rubbed over with a piece of rag saturated in turpentine. The uses of the palette knife are to mix the colours, and to scrape the palette preparatory to cleaning it. The tin dipper is used for the turpentine, after it has been poured out of the bottle. The tracing paper is sold in

sheets; it is put over the design you wish to trace; and the transfer paper is to transfer the design from the copy to the material on which you are about to paint.

Having arranged your materials, seat yourself with due regard to the light. It is impossible to see which way the shadows fall if you sit far from the window, or with the light falling at different angles on your drawing. I was shown only the other day some drawings which had been done by a lady who has been having lessons during the last five years. They were carefully worked up, the form was good, the colouring excellent, but, alas! there was no shadow; positively there was a vase looking perfectly flat, without any attempt at a due proportion of light and shade! Even although the form of the vase was correct, it did not look so, from the utter absence of shadow. It seems extraordinary that people observe form and colouring, but do not seem to see which way the shadow falls. Sit near the window, and let the light fall from one window on your left side; if there are other windows in opposite parts of the room, draw the blind down that the light may fall on one side only.

Now let us set to work. Something graceful and climbing is most suitable for a door. We will imagine you have decided on the Japanese honeysuckle for the right-hand centre panel, and apple-blossom for the left-hand panel. On an inclined board or desk, place your branch of honeysuckle, with a piece of white paper behind it, in order to throw up the shadows.

The light comes in on the left side, the shadows therefore fall on the right; this you will clearly see on the white paper. Carefully draw your design, following nature as closely as possible—draw each leaf *as you see it*, leaving nothing to chance or to memory to fill in. Note the leaves that are turned over, the delicacy of the veins, the petals of the flowers, and the formation of the stamen; let nothing escape you. After you have satisfied yourself that you have sketched your spray to the best of your ability, stand back a little, and judge of the effect. You will then be able to compare it with the original. Be sure you do not get it too stiff; look at Nature, with her graceful curves, without one unbroken line, or harsh delineation. Avoid niggling, make your design clear and bold, that you may not only see the effect of your outline, but when you begin to paint you will have something definite to paint from. After you have drawn the outline, it is a good plan, but not a necessary one, to wash in the design in water-colours. By this means you will gradually accumulate a stock of designs, which you will find useful should you wish to paint a similar panel when the flowers are no longer in bloom; and you will also find that if they are coloured they are much easier to trace through. Place a sheet of tracing paper over the design, and trace it through with a finely-pointed pencil. After you have finished your tracing take your wooden panel, and on it place a sheet of red transfer paper, then the tracing, and with an ivory stylus, or a hard pencil, carefully mark over the tracing. This process will transfer the design which you are going to paint. Remove the paper, and you will see your tracing clear and distinct,

where he can keep watch on the firs, taking care the while that his gun is clear of all branches and ready for instant use, and listen. Presently he will hear a faint whistling somewhere overhead, and a flutter, and see nothing. This is the scout coming in advance to the roost. If he fumbles about in nervous anxiety to find out where it has settled, that is the surest way to frighten away the forerunner (who will warn its companions), and so *not* to have any sport. But if he keeps quiet, cautious not to step on a rotten stick, expose the gun-barrel, or make any noise, others will soon drop in, and then he may have several shots as they flutter about the branches before alighting, until the evening air is thick with the smoke of powder. Then let him pick up his trophies, carry them home, and ask the cook to take out the crops *at once*—a request which, though busy about preparations for dinner, she will no doubt be glad to grant, as it is holiday-time. To remove the crops at once is essential, as the pigeons are thereby prevented from having an unpleasant turnip flavour when they make their appearance later on at the luncheon-table.

Another way he may try—if he has patience—with

probable success. Let him shoot a wood-dove, or procure one stuffed, and take it to any wheat-stubble which the birds are known to frequent, then place it on the ground about forty yards from the hedge, propping up its neck with a short Y-shaped stick, so that it may appear in an easy attitude of feeding. He will also do well, before taking up his position under the shade of a tree up in the hedge, to be sure that no loose feathers or blood be visible anywhere about his decoy, and that it has a *natural* appearance, not looking, which is possible, as if in the agonies of an apoplectic seizure. If all is well arranged, before long the birds flying about will see their comrade, as they suppose, feeding, and fearlessly join him; not suspecting the fraud until they hear the reports which rob them of perhaps two of their number.

This, however, is a stratagem which no one should disgrace himself by adopting; for it is ungenerous to employ a mean method of compassing the death of these elegant creatures, who, with all their marauding ways, contribute so largely, in the halcyon days of summer, to give grace, charm, and beauty to our fairest woodland scenes.

A. H. MALAN, M.A.

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(IN TWO PAPERS.)

SECOND PAPER.



Now continue the instructions given in our first paper. Take your oil-tubes, squeeze out from the bottom of the tubes some flake-white, carmine, terra verte, yellow chrome, and burnt sienna. Dip your brush in turpentine, mix the flake-white and the carmine together till you get a pale pink, and begin painting the flowers; working in, while still wet, pure carmine for the dark parts, and a little cobalt mixed with carmine for the shadows. Use chrome No. 1 for the stamens, and chrome No. 3 for the pistils. Begin the leaves working downwards from the middle of the leaf, working the way of the veins of the leaf to give them a rounded appearance rather than a flat one, which would be the consequence of your putting on a flat coat all over the leaf. Use yellow chrome and terra verte mixed together for the leaves on the left-hand side of your drawing where the light falls, making the tints as varied as you can; for the leaves in shadow, use terra verte, cobalt, and yellow chrome, and brown-pink or a little burnt sienna for the after-glaze. As you are sitting with the light falling on your left side, the leaves on the right side will be in shadow, as well as all those leaves which are overshadowed either by the flowers or by other leaves. Do not use a great deal of turpentine, and put your colours on thin, with the exception of the high lights, which must be thick.

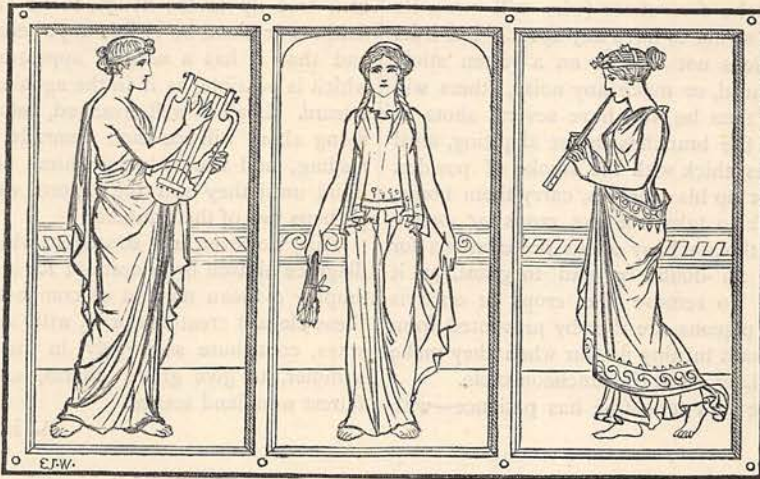
After you have got in the flowers and leaves, put in the stem of the spray with terra verte and yellow chrome at the top, and the rest of it with flake-white and raw sienna.

Having put on the first coat, cover it up carefully to prevent the dust sticking to it; for this purpose many artists turn their paintings with their faces to the wall, but if you want to keep it entirely free from dust, it is a better plan to place a lath of wood or some books at the edges of the painting, and cover it up with a piece of paper. When dry put on the glaze, that is, use the transparent colours, touching up the flowers with a little carmine, and the stem and leaves with burnt sienna and brown-pink. Do not use any flake-white or any opaque colours. You will easily see the difference between transparent and not transparent colours; for instance, the stem was painted with opaque colours, flake-white and raw sienna (the addition of flake-white makes any paint opaque), and to-day you have glazed it with burnt sienna, which gives it a far richer colour than would have been possible without the undercoat of opaque. After it is quite dry, varnish it with pure copal varnish. Your design is now ready for the background of gold lustra.

Put away all your oil paints, and take your box of lustra colours. Take your palette and pour out on it some of the gold powder, then mix with it a few drops of the medium, using your palette knife; mix till it is of the consistency of cream. Take your sable

brush No. 4, and begin your background. Paint downwards from the top, beginning at the left-hand corner. Use the paint sufficiently thick and fill in all the interstices between the leaves. The gold lustra applied in this way as a background is much less

a pool, with light feathery grasses growing round it, would look well for one panel, and the other might be treated in a very similar manner, with a humming-bird's nest in the foreground. The top panels of the door should be the same as the centre panels.



expensive than gold-leaf, and it requires far less trouble. Follow the same directions for the left-hand panel, particularly remembering to copy nature as faithfully as possible. The lower panels would look best as continuations of the centre ones, but if you prefer it you might paint them as "Autumn" and "Winter," calling the two upper ones "Spring" and "Summer." A branch of purple-red plums, or a vine-branch with clusters of grapes hanging to it, would be suitable for "Autumn;" and a branch of winter apples with the fruit growing on them would do for "Winter." If you choose fruit to represent autumn, you must have it for winter as well; but if you happen to have any good pictures of birds, either British or foreign, you will find them much easier to do, and on the whole I think they would be more satisfactory. In the decoration of houses, effect is what is desired, not minute working up, therefore it is a pity to work up a panel in the way you would a picture. The variously coloured humming-birds flying over

Cabinets can be decorated in this way; graceful Grecian figures filled in with gold lustra would have a good effect.

Having finished your door, we will now imagine that you wish to turn your attention to ornamenting your mantelpiece. For this purpose we should propose your buying some terra-cotta; if you are able to get it from the works in Devonshire, so much the better. Of the three kinds of terra-cotta, I should recommend black, as the most uncommon; the red and the cream-colour are also very popular. Black makes an excellent background, and it is by no means difficult to paint on. There is an old-fashioned book by Thomas Hope, called "Costumes of the Ancients," which is a most valuable work, and will furnish you with plenty of ideas. Perseus driving his chariot, the Graces dancing, Ceres with corn in one hand and a laurel-wreath in the other, Minerva clothed in armour, would be in character with the antique. Having





traced and transferred your subject according to the directions given above, mix your lustra colours and begin painting. Use only lustra colours, without any unlustrous ones. For figure-painting I should recommend the æsthetic colours now so much in vogue. Thus you might have a dull gold, a greyish-green, a brick-red, burnishing the edges of the vase with gold.

Having mixed your paints, fill the brush with colour, prepare it for working by a succession of slight strokes

on the palette (do not attempt to twist it to a point), and begin painting on the outer edge of the drapery, working downwards. If you are painting on black terra-cotta, paint the face, neck, arms, and feet, a dull red; if on cream-coloured or red, leave them their natural colour. For instance, in a representation of the Graces, paint their drapery, their hair, and their instruments of music, in the most artistic colouring, remembering that the Greeks studied beauty of colour no less than beauty of form.

THE BENEFITS OF TURKISH BATHING.

BY A FAMILY DOCTOR.



THE reader may remember that in previous articles I have explained the nature of all other kinds of bath—cold, tepid, warm, hot, soap, shower, and sea baths; it remains now for me to explain the nature and uses of what is undoubtedly the most beneficial of all systems of bathing.

Although it is usual, and to a certain extent correct, to designate the hot-air bath by the

title of "Turkish," nevertheless it was known and employed as a health-agent long before Turkey was a nation of any standing. It is no part of my present purpose, however, to adduce proof of the great antiquity of this bath; the reader must take this for granted, and the very fact that it has been in use in various parts of the world, from the earliest ages, shows that its great utility in preserving health, inducing comfort, alleviating suffering, and keeping sickness at bay, has been pretty generally admitted. But although the Romans themselves, at the time they held possession of England, built baths, the remains of which are still to be seen in many parts of the country, it is only of recent years that the Turkish bath has become a regular institution in our cities and towns.

The British are not pre-eminently a bathing race—would they were so!—we are terribly conservative,

conservative even of our ancient ignorance, and slow and reluctant to open the windows of our intellect to admit the glad, pure light of science. But there is this to be said in our behalf: once convinced of the utility of anything novel, we are not slow in adopting it.

"Oh! dear," I heard a gentleman once observe after having gone through, and been greatly benefited by, a course of Turkish baths, "here have been health and happiness lying before my very door, all these weary years that I have been suffering, and I never knew it."

This gentleman's case is not an isolated one, I could adduce hundreds resembling it, did time and space allow me, for not only does the bath prevent illnesses, but there are many classes of chronic ailments which yield to its use. Indeed I might go further and say that there are very few cases of complaints of long standing, which might not be benefited by a course of hot-air bathing. The Turkish bath, too, assists the action of the remedies being employed for the cure of the particular kind of ailment a patient may be suffering from. I am so convinced of this, that I conclude this paper with a hint or two about the kind of life one should lead, while taking a course of Turkish baths.

And we now stand face to face with the question, Who should and who should not use this prince of baths? I am happy to say that those who are debarred from its use, from some physical or constitutional cause, form a very small minority indeed. But, nevertheless, if you have the slightest fear that the Turkish