

that jealous complexion ;" and, once more, Violet tells the Duke, in *Twelfth Night* (Act II., sc. 4), how her father's daughter loved a man, but never told her love :—

" She pined in thought,
And with green and yellow melancholy,
She sat like patience on a monument."

In China, we note, yellow is the mystical colour—one of the five recognised in the Chinese cosmogony. Charms, therefore, on yellow paper are very common ; and we are told by Mr. Doolittle, in his "Social Life of the Chinese" (Vol. II., p. 308), how "sometimes a picture of an idol is printed or written on this coloured paper with red or black ink. It is then pasted up over a door or on a bed-curtain ; or it is worn in the hair, or put into a red bag, and suspended from a button-hole ; or it is burnt, and the ashes are mingled with tea or hot water, and drunk as a specific against bad influences or spirits."

Lastly, red seems to be the colour around which the most extensive folk-lore has clustered ; there being a regard all over the world for things red. It was once held sacred to Thor, the god of Lightning, and Grimm suggests that the robin has been singled out for worship from among birds on account of its colours. In the same way the Highland women tie a piece of red worsted thread round their cows' tails previous to turning them out to grass for the first time in the spring. It secures their cattle, they say, like the red berries of the rowan or mountain ash, from an evil eye and all kinds of witchcraft ; for, according to an old couplet—

" Rowan ash, and red thread,
Keep the devils from their speed."

It is interesting, also, to trace the same superstition abroad, as in Esthonia, where mothers put some red thread in their babies' cradles as a preservative against

danger. And in China, something red is tied round children's wrists as a safeguard against evil spirits. In the same country, red holds a prominent place in marriage ceremonies. Thus, red cloth is placed on the threshold of the bridegroom's house, over which the bride must pass ; and at betrothals, says Mr. Dennys, "there are provided, in addition to the betrothment cards, four large needles and two red silk threads, and two of the former, threaded with one of the threads, are stuck into each card." The red thread is supposed to represent that with which the feet of all mortals are in the spirit-world tied to those who are fated to be husband and wife ; in other words, it represents unalterable fate. A similar thread is employed to tie together the cups out of which the bride and bridegroom drink.

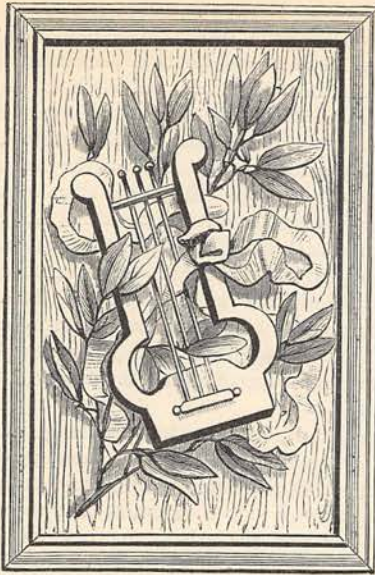
Sir Thomas Raffles, in his "History of Java," speaking of a certain tribe, tells us how, previous to the equipment of the bride and bridegroom for the nuptial ceremonies, "it is essential that their bodies be rubbed over with the ashes of a red dog's bones. Again, the antipathy to red hair may be traced to the fact that Thor's beard and hair were red : a circumstance which, it has been suggested, caused it to be regarded with extreme aversion in the early days of Christianity. Hence arose the tradition that Judas had red hair. In cases of sickness, too, red has from time immemorial been a popular colour. Thus, in small-pox, red bed-coverings were used with a view of bringing the pustules to the surface of the body. At the close of the last century, the Emperor Francis I., when suffering from this complaint, was wrapped up in a scarlet cloth. Even in the present day, a Scotch remedy for whooping-cough consists in covering the neck with a piece of red flannel ; and for nose-bleeding persons in the Eastern counties are recommended to wear a skein of scarlet silk thread.

HOW TO PAINT DOOR-PANELS.



THAT "the present age is one of progress," is strikingly illustrated by the fact that art education has made, and is making, rapid strides in this country. Girls and boys at school are no longer taught merely to produce imitations of copies, representing highly-coloured and conventional groups of flowers and fruit, and verdant landscapes, to be carefully touched up by the drawing-master, and afterwards gazed upon in wondering admiration by parents and friends ; but, thanks chiefly to the Kensington schools of drawing, they are encouraged to copy nature, to notice the growth of flowers and trees, and to aim at reproducing their exquisite tints. Even those students, however, who are real lovers of their art, are very often afraid to use it for what must surely be one of the highest purposes to

which art can be applied, namely, the beautifying of the home. There are many reasons for this. They have not learnt to design, or to paint on wood ; the paint of the woodwork is not delicate and pretty enough to decorate ; it would cost so much to have it re-painted ; the house has only been taken for a term, and it is not worth while to spend much money on another person's property. Such is the feeling, and the very natural feeling, of those who have never tried how wonderfully even a slight knowledge of art rightly applied, and only the small expenditure which a scantily-filled purse can supply, will brighten and improve our rooms. Natural, however, as it may be, it is after all a mistake, and in this paper we shall try to show one way in which any one who has a moderate amount of taste can greatly beautify our homes, at but an inconsiderable cost, by decorating the door-panels.



DESIGN FOR PANEL OF MUSIC-ROOM DOOR.

The first step required for the accomplishment of this purpose is to remedy the defect of paint utterly out of harmony with its surroundings. To do this, take some coarse sand-paper (No. 3 is best), and with it thoroughly rub the whole of the surface to be re-painted, fill up any small holes which may be found in the wood with putty, then buy a pound of white lead paint, and with a large hog's-hair brush give the door one coat. When that is dry, which will be in about three days, with fine sand-paper (No. 0) lightly rub over the surface again, after which give two coats of paint of the desired colour. In choosing your paint be very careful that it harmonises with the wall-paper. Pick out the beadings of the door with a darker colour than is used for the flat surface, or *vice versa*, and paint first horizontally and then vertically, always leaving off *the way of the grain of the wood*. Paints of any colour may be bought in tins at about sixpence per pound, and to paint the door, skirting-board, and window-sash of an ordinary-sized room, between three and four pounds of paint will be required.

Having now prepared the panels of the door, the next thing is to decorate them. The materials required for this are some oil paints, a palette, sable and hog's-hair brushes, a tube of Mc Guilp, and—most important of all—a design. Now, really good designs for door-panels can rarely be met with. Ordinary copies of flowers are not suitable, as they are too small, and the flowers are not grouped in such a way as to look well when used in decorative work. Our advice, therefore, to each decorator is, that she should be also her own designer, and this is a far easier task than most amateurs suppose. There are, however, a few rules which it will be wise to follow with care. Only large specimens of flowers and foliage should be chosen. Mountain ash, *Pyrus Japonica*, *Clematis Jacmani*,

black-thorn, Virginia creeper, ivy, and passion-flower are very useful for this. Take, if possible, accurate studies of the plants themselves, but if you cannot procure any, get a good copy of the flower chosen for the decoration, and make your design from that. It is a good plan to cut paper to fit in the panels, fix it with drawing-pins on to the door, and on that first draw and roughly paint the design; for it is extremely difficult for a beginner, when the work is on the easel, to tell what will be its effect when copied into its place.

One difficulty with which amateurs often have to contend when designing for decorative work is, that bold work, work that is large in design and treatment, is absolutely essential, whereas being accustomed to copy every leaf and flower minutely, they naturally incline rather towards delicacy and finish.

In copying the design upon the door, it is well to remember that if there should be any mistakes in the drawing, a soft rag soaked in turpentine will remove pencil-marks or wet paint without injuring the surface.

And always keep in mind whilst painting that it is *effect* and not delicate work that is wanted. A good plan is to go away from the door every few minutes and look at it from a distance. Be particular about back-ground leaves; they are valuable, but must on no account be obtrusive; paint them lightly of a dull colour, and do not let the flowers be too brilliant; the more delicate the ground paint, the softer should be the tints of the decorative work.

Water-plants, such as bullrushes and large reeds, or the common iris, look well growing from the lower into the upper panels, whilst from poppies and wheat, or a branch of apple blossom with convolvulus twining round and hanging down, good designs may be made. Birds, dragon-flies, a spider in its web, or butterflies can frequently also be introduced with effect. Avoid bringing pots or vases into the design; they are neither



DESIGN FOR DRAWING-ROOM DOOR IN LINCRUSTA.

interesting nor artistic. One soon grows weary of seeing them, and the great thing to be aimed at in all house decoration, is the production of a result so perfectly in harmony with its surroundings, that the eye does not tire of it, but becomes more rested and pleased the longer it looks.

Paint on the wood as on canvas, using McGuilp for a medium, and do not varnish afterwards, unless the work has been done in water-colours instead of oils, in which case a coating of varnish will be necessary in order to fix the paint. Work, too, only *in* the panels of the door, leaving the raised part of the door-frame untouched, and never crowd too much on to one panel; a slight design is often far more effective than an elaborate one.

A suitable and very effective design for the door of a music-room, is a representation of musical figures, as for instance, Orpheus with his lute resting on a bank or rock, or Pan with his pipes, on the upper panels, and on the lower ones a composition of small musical instruments to complete the decoration. Small landscapes also make very beautiful panellings, but for these, of course, copies will be required, and a much greater knowledge of drawing and painting than is necessary for simple floral decoration.

For the panels of dining-room doors, several different methods of decoration might be suggested. On dark grained doors, a good freehand stencilled in rich brown or black looks well. For this a long sable brush (called an inliner), and very careful work are necessary, and the freehand must first be traced or drawn in pencil on the door. Should the room be furnished in leather, pieces of leather, or American leather-cloth, of the same colour as the furniture, cut to fit exactly into the panels, and painted with a bold and rather conventional design, make a suitable and handsome decoration. The plain lincrusta is also used for this



DESIGN FOR PANEL OF DRAWING-ROOM DOOR.

purpose. It is made in several colours, and may be had at almost any artists' colourman's at about one-and-sixpence per yard; it has a rough surface and takes paint well; the same materials are required for painting on it, and on leather, as for wood.

Panels of velvet are very effective, but are more suitable for drawing or morning rooms than for a dining-room. These should be painted before being put on to the door, oil paints being used with turpentine, and a little sacrum (sugar of lead) for medium. They should be fastened on to the panels with gimps nails, and a narrow gold beading glued in will conceal the edges and make a pretty finish; this beading can be obtained at a picture-dealer's at about one penny per foot.

To those who wish to decorate their doors but have little artistic talent, the lustrolem paints are invaluable, as taste, but very little skill, is required in the use of them, and velvet, satin, and stuffs of all kinds can be painted with them. They are made in only a few colours, principally gold and greens, and are put on with a sable brush. The paints can be purchased separately, and are very easy to use, being simply laid on the material with a brush, much in the same way as gum. Designs for panels to be decorated with these paints require rather different treatment from those intended for oil paints; they should be more conventional, each panel containing a separate design. Handsome panels, too, are made with the raised lincrusta. It is to be had at about two shillings per yard, in several different colours and patterns, and is easily glued on to the door. Panels of this, grounded with gold paint, and having the flowers and patterns touched with any colours which may harmonise with the colours in the room, are particularly suitable for a dining-room, library, or study. Oil paints with as little medium as possible should be employed in painting on this material.

H. C.



DESIGN FOR PANEL OF DINING-ROOM DOOR.