

THE ART OF MAKING PICTURES IN STONE.

THOSE of our readers who have not seen an endolith will be ready to exclaim that there is a mistake in the above title; it should be *on* stone. But we venture to ask their patience whilst we prove to them that our title is literally



A PORTRAIT IN MARBLE.

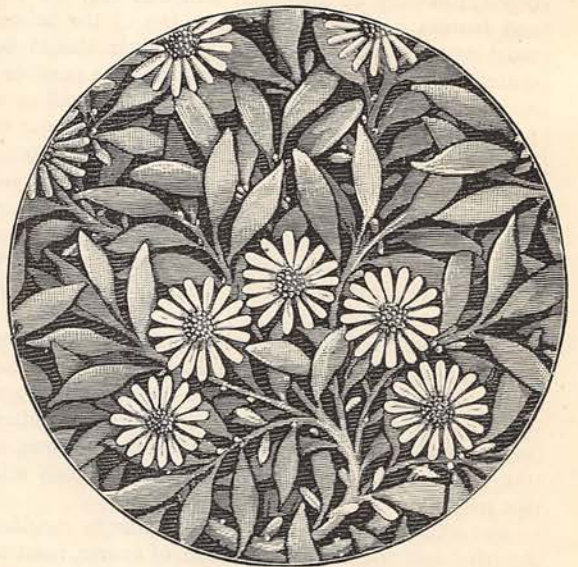
accurate. And what are endoliths? Soon we shall need a new dictionary to furnish explanation of all the out-of-the-way names given to modern inventions. The endolithic process is as simple as it can well be, but not for that the less wonderful. Marble is treated just as though it were canvas or paper, colours being laid on in any design the artist chooses; but the problem of how a line of colour may be transmitted unaltered through a slab of marble, so that it penetrates to any distance sharply and vertically without spreading, is one that has only lately been solved. Even ivory, which is more dense than marble, can be successfully treated in the same manner. The secret of the whole consists in the colours employed and in the way they are driven in.

Dr. Hand-Smith, some years ago, experimented on ivory, but was not able for a long time to obtain satisfactory results. Determining, if possible, to overcome the obstacles to success, he persevered until he found a combination of metallic oxides which answered his purpose, and now he has placed in the hands of those interested in art a method of producing imperishable paintings with which they cannot fail to be pleased. The art is described as "the development within the substance and below the surface of marble, of painting or designs in monochrome or colour, whereby the art of painting is combined with the durability of sculpture."

In house decorations, duplicates of paintings are often needed, and in these cases endoliths will be found most useful. Suppose, for instance, that you resolve to have two panels of marble let into the sides of your mantelpiece; you will paint the design on the surface of the marble, send it to undergo the "driving in" process, with instructions that a cross-section is to be cut off, and, without further trouble, you have your painting and the duplicate. And this slicing off can be repeated, the picture remaining indestructible as far as the colour has been allowed to sink in. The longer the surface is treated, the deeper the representation will sink in—that is to say, until it has reached through the entire thickness of the marble. To make our meaning clearer, if a tube of colour is turned upside-down on a slab of marble, and left so for a sufficient length of time, the colour will penetrate straight through the whole depth; after that, no more colour will leave the tube, for it will not spread outwards beneath the surface.

There are three colours which possess the property of turning the opaque marble which has been transfused with them into translucent slabs, most lovely in tint, and exquisitely varied with the natural delicate veinings. Green, especially, is noticeable for its softness, whilst the ruby is extremely rich.

We must, however, hasten on to the practical part of our subject, for such work on marble is equally suitable for amateurs and professionals. There is



DESIGN FOR TABLE-TOP.

nothing connected with it that amateurs who can paint cannot do themselves, with the exception of forcing in the colours. During this process, hot air, not more than four degrees higher in temperature than the marble, is utilised to cause the colour to

eat its way in and become imperishably combined with the stone.

Portraits may be painted in monochrome on marble, and they look exceedingly well; but, if preferred, they can be painted with various colours, and then they certainly appear more life-like, being warmer in tone: the former resemble photographs—the latter oil-paintings. Many figures may be introduced in one picture with a landscape background, or single figures which are adapted for panels. Flowers, too, may be represented either in their natural form or conventionalised. Foliage is good on the white ground, particularly if autumn-tinted branches are selected.

We will describe some subjects that may be successfully executed, as they will serve as suggestions to amateurs. Virginia creeper, clothed in the red-brown dress it assumes as the summer passes away, is very beautiful for a panel, as it can be arranged in any form the painter chooses; it cannot be surpassed for a narrow upright panel, such as might be required for filling a space between two windows. Blackberries would also do well for the same purpose.

Small tables with marble tops are not so formidable for an amateur's first attempts as larger works might be considered. It is, in our opinion, a mistake to begin any art work on a very small scale if it can be avoided. A diminutive china plaque needs much more delicate pencilling than one of a larger size, and the same may be said of all kinds of painting, not excepting miniatures. We do not mean that it is well to commence on a huge surface, such as only an acknowledged artist should attack; but there is a happy medium, and amateurs will be wise if they choose a moderate-sized marble at first.

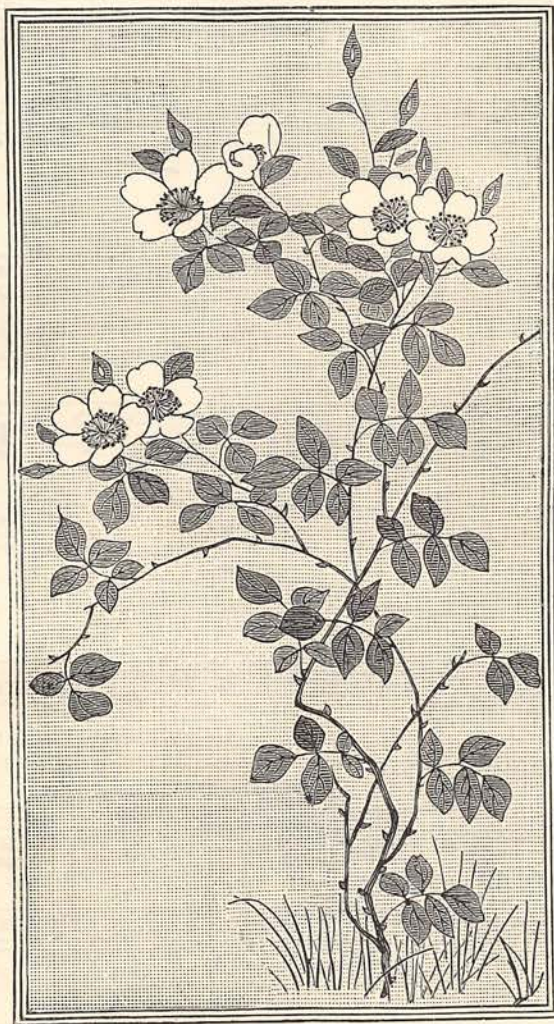
For those who care most for painting heads, a

pretty plan can be adopted as follows:—A square of marble has the centre partially hollowed out in a circular form, which is finished off with a highly-raised border carved out of the marble; in this centre a head is painted; the flat corners that extend beyond are painted green or red—or, indeed, any colour that harmonises with the tints of the painting and with the wall on which it is to be hung. This is a change from the china plates that have been so popular. Certainly, in one respect, marble-painting is far preferable to china-painting—viz., that the pieces are not subjected to the firing process which so often totally frustrates the intention of the amateur who is not quite conversant with the changes the various colours undergo, and which causes vexation even to the most initiated artist.

Now if we have been successful so far, we may allow our more ambitious desires to take shape. We may try some large panels with single figures for inserting in recesses in the entrance-halls of our houses. Foreign birds with their rich, brilliant plumage answer admirably as decorations for halls of large dimensions: the peacock and the flamingo are always favourite subjects for decorative purposes. The flooring may be done in a mosaic pattern with little trouble, for when the design

is painted cross-sections can be cut off. Outside the hall door, under the porch, tiles are often now to be seen; instead of these we could have slabs of marble ornamented with conventional designs.

For ecclesiastical purposes, marble paintings are most appropriate. Some of our readers, living in the country, may possibly be disposed to beautify the interior of their village church, in which case we would commend these decorations particularly to their notice.



DESIGN FOR PANEL IN STONE.