

walls were Pahlavi inscriptions, and others of a still older character. But no treasure of any kind was perceptible, unless that which occupied the centre of the room could be called one.

A gigantic skeleton lay at full length in that dark sepulchre. It seemed to be still in the very position which it would have naturally occupied when deposited there, a corpse, scores of centuries before. In the massive skull there was a great breach, cleft by some primæval weapon, otherwise every part was perfect. The arms were disposed close to the sides. The great shoulders had sunk partially into the floor. The strong thigh-bones were like clubs; the shin-bones were more than five spans (or four feet) in length.

This grisly treasure, which they had so strangely exhumed, had little attraction for the trembling discoverers. These briefly-stated particulars, indeed, were noted among them, and then they fled from the unhallowed tomb with much greater celerity than they had entered it. There was no doubt that the gold or jewels, or other valuables, which had been deposited in the duhmah (tomb) had vanished long before.

Nothing was to be done now but to cover in the perhaps enchanted remains before any evil should arise. They might be the relics of the "White Demon" himself. Who could say what visitation might fall upon the sacrilegious disturbers of such a dreadful repose! Accused be he who had brought them hither on such a worse than fool's errand!

So the great hole, the only result of several weeks' labour, was filled in, the labourers dispersed to their homes, the governor retired, reviling the Shah's folly in listening to every idiot's story about treasure, and the quiet glen and lofty precipice returned to their pristine tranquillity, seldom disturbed by aught save the fox and the panther. The Shah heard of this impotent conclusion with comparative equanimity, for he had just squeezed 100,000 tumáns out of a governor of Khurasán, who had squeezed about double that amount out of the inhabitants of his province.

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"And the boy," I asked; "what became of him?"

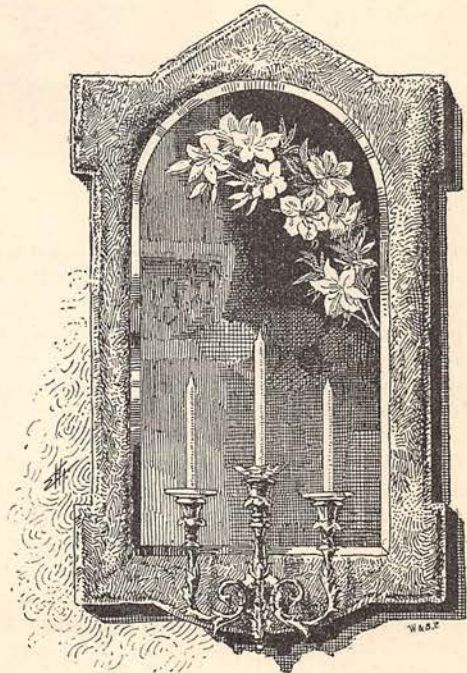
"I don't know for certain," answered Masih, "but I heard that he died in a few days of a broken heart."

MIRROR AND CRYSTALLINE PAINTING.



WHETHER or not glass is a suitable ground for painting on is a matter of controversy. Some artists disapprove of any but opaque grounds being employed, others consider that the silvered back of the mirror in reflecting the painting produces an objectionable effect; but there will always be varieties of opinion on art-matters, and one artist of note is known to have painted over a crack in a mirror, thereby hiding the blemish and creating a decoration at the same time. Certain it is that glass decorations are much admired by a large proportion of the public, or we should not see so many examples year after year. The bright showy appearance of the work is probably one of its charms in the eyes of those who like their houses to look cheery. It is no new idea to panel a room with painted glass. T. J. Gullick, in his book on the art, says that in the Colonna and Borghese palaces there are whole rooms lined with painted mirrors, the paintings in the former being traditionally attributed to Mario Nuzzi, known as Mario di Fiori through his skill in representing flowers, and in the Pitti palace there are specimens by Carlo Maratti. At Versailles a bath-room was thus embellished for Napoleon I. with fanciful arabesques, and in our own Kensington palace there is a notable example, executed, however, by a Frenchman—Jean Baptiste Monnoyer. The art originated in Italy, but there are instances of it to be found in France, Holland, and Belgium. As is usual in all decorations, flowers play an important part in the subjects chosen by the mirror painter, Cupids hold the second place, and imaginative designs are not forgotten.

To animal subjects and to landscapes executed on this ground we are decidedly averse, and flowers again answer better than Cupids unless a clever artist



GIRANDOLE MIRROR—AZALEA DECORATION.

is at work. The introduction of birds and insects is often an improvement. Scarcely any flowers of which mention can be made will be taken objection to by the painter, unless indeed they are of such small dimensions that they make no show.

English wild-flowers afford admirable subjects, and equally beautiful are groups of their foreign sisters that we can rear only in hot-houses with the greatest care. Rare orchids are exquisite for decorations; and the handsome glowing red cactus is effective, but it will not be a general favourite; its colour being so intense, all surroundings that are not chosen with a view to being placed in proximity with it will suffer. Lilac of various shades, white, mauve, and red-mauve, compose a charming piece; and the golden tassels of laburnum are not eclipsed even by delicate azalea blossoms, or sprays of silver-grey and purple clematis. But to enumerate all the flowers that are eligible would be to write a catalogue, so we desist, with the remark that it is not needful to obtain specimens from the Botanic or Kew before a satisfactory design can be conceived, for some of the commonest flowers are as well adapted for the purpose as the rarest that ever

bloomed. Conventional subjects are not agreeable for mirror painting, much as they are usually extolled for decorative work. Naturalistic treatment is alone appropriate, and a moment's thought will supply the reason for such being the case. The glass stands for empty space, there can be no background, therefore the flowers should look as though they were still growing, and birds and insects as if hovering in the air. On no account should a pot or vase be visible, for that necessitates a background at once, and something for the article to stand upon; the flowers should be as realistic as our power over our pencil allows us to make them, just as if we had copied a spray or two of a climbing plant, or caught our idea from the drooping branches of a fruit-tree rich in blossom, that promises well for an abundant harvest. A painter on glass should already possess a knowledge of drawing and the application of colours. To go over and over

the work as beginners invariably do, is to spoil it, for its great beauty consists in broad and spirited execution. Decisive strokes are telling, and free handling is imperative. Rubbing up the colours after they are laid, by trying to make alterations and correct errors, is simply ruinous, and the same thing may be said of paintings on canvas or silk. The only right plan for learners is first to be sure that the outlines of their drawings are correct, then to

mix the requisite tints and lay them on fearlessly. Half the battle has been won if amateur decorators have overcome their nervousness. That there are difficulties attending painting on glass cannot be denied, but there are also redeeming points that make up for some of the disadvantages of the work. It is not easy to lay colours on the highly-polished surface until practice has given the worker power to surmount the technical obstacles that rise in the path to perfection; on the other hand, the colours appear peculiarly brilliant when applied to silvered glass, and delicate half-tints on which so much of the luminosity and purity of all paintings are dependent can easily be rendered. The colours used should be of the best quality. Ordinary oil colours are sometimes



A LANDING.

recommended, but Mr. T. J. Gullick, who is the best-known authority on the art in England, prepares them specially for the work, and he also has introduced a medium which he considers binds the colours perfectly and preserves those that are liable to fade. There can be no doubt that it is wise to ascertain which materials are the most likely to resist the effects of the atmosphere and which will bear cleaning without injury; fugitive colours and unsuitable mediums are sorry vehicles in which to convey our conceptions of beauty to posterity. Much of the foregoing is as applicable to crystalline painting as to mirror painting; in fact the difference is only in the ground. Crystalline is a name given to glass which can best be described as frosted; but it is by no means that which is commonly known as such. It looks as if encrusted over with ten thousand frozen fern-leaves of fantastic shape such as never grew in shady wood carpeted

with the fallen leaves of past summers. Shadows of the ghosts of fern-leaves are they rather than realistic representations of living varieties; nevertheless the result attained is admirable. A reader "far from the madding crowd" of shops may picture to herself a screen made of this semi-transparent, semi-opaque glass. The three panels are framed in ebonised wood; on the first stand some tall fox-gloves, proudly assertive in their strength and vigour; on the second chrysanthemums bow their heads, by reason of the weight of their rich blooms; and on the third the lily, the flower of France, yet loved and admired by all, rears itself—stately, majestic, and chastely elegant. The whole decoration is carried out in a terra-cotta tint.

Glass paintings can be adapted to many purposes, and this alone renders it unlikely that they will cease to be popular. Take a landing on a staircase in a West-end house for example; how dull and dreary these places often look, when they might be made into fairy bowers at a small outlay comparatively. We all know that a continuous supply of growing plants and ferns is not the most economical decoration in which we can

indulge, though undoubtedly the most delightful and pleasing; but if glass decorations are employed the expense once defrayed need be thought of no more. Sprays of exotic plants, the fluttering wings of humming-birds that dart in and out amongst luxuriant foliage, birds of paradise in full plumage, the ivory-white blossoms of the *Cymbidium Eburneum*, or the drooping roseate bell-flowers of the *Bomarea Carderi*, will transport us in fancy to sunny climes where east winds never blow as they do on our shores, where snow is a stranger, and fogs are unknown. Panels can be inserted in over-mantels and in the architraves of doors; oblong panels in window-shutters and in doors. A recess may be charmingly arranged with a large glass bearing a design of rosy-purple clematis; across the top a breadth of golden-brown plush should be carelessly draped and allowed to fall down one side, on the other a handsome Madras curtain should be looped up and caught back as taste dictates. Sometimes panels are let into piano-fronts, though we cannot say they are well placed in that position. Crystalline is principally employed for photo-frames and screens.

COOKING AT SEA.

BY A. G. PAYNE, AUTHOR OF "COMMON-SENSE COOKERY," "CHOICE DISHES AT SMALL COST,"
"THE HOUSEKEEPER'S GUIDE," ETC.

IN TWO PAPERS.—SECOND PAPER.



It will be found, as a rule, that there is a great similarity between life on board ship and life in a small country village, where there are, comparatively speaking, no shops worthy of the name. In both it is essential to look well ahead in what we may call the housekeeping department. There are, perhaps, few housekeepers in England who would know what to do were they so placed that there was no laundress to whom they could send weekly, and also if the home arrangements were such that no washing could be done at home,

yet such is the fate of all those who are compelled by business or pleasure to travel by sea. In the case of a voyage to Australia in a sailing ship, very considerable forethought is necessary on this point, as the average length of the voyage may be roughly put down as three months. On the shorter and quicker voyages made by steamers, a good deal of inconvenience is experienced by passengers on this head, and it is not an uncommon thing for the chief steward or stewardess to have to explain matters to some indignant travellers, who are terribly upset by being informed for the first time that they cannot send their things to the wash in the usual manner.

So far as men's dress is concerned, I can give a few hints that may possibly be useful. It is needless to say that paper cuffs and paper collars will be found very handy. With regard to linen, old travellers generally contrive to have by them a good quantity, in that state which may be described as on its last legs, which at the end of the voyage is handed over to one of the stewards; and, as naturally there is a considerable difference of opinion among travellers as to what constitutes "last legs," sometimes these left-off articles of wearing apparel constitute valuable perquisites.

It is not, however, merely in regard to the eating and drinking that the housekeeping on board ship resembles a village, but in the social intercourse of the passengers. I think it will be found that in all little communities new-comers are regarded as interlopers. Even in a railway carriage where there are two persons, the one who entered last is regarded by his companion as an intruder; if, however, they have entered into conversation, should a third party enter at the next station, they will both regard him, perhaps, with looks of mingled mistrust and aversion.

We have often heard and read of the gossip and scandal of a country village; trivial things, which would pass unnoticed in a city or large town, on board ship become objects of general attention. The wearing of a new dress will vie with a distant shark or whale as a subject of general conversation, though