



VELVET PAINTING.

By

Mrs. RANDOLPH-LICHFIELD.

PAINTING on velvet was, a few years ago, a very favourite and fashionable accomplishment, and in the days of our grandmothers, when home-made decorations were far more restricted than now, not only as to the materials employed, but the knowledge and taste required in their designing and manipulation, Velvet-painting was eagerly sought after as a very interesting occupation and most attractive addition to the ornamental elegancies of indoor decorations.

In the present day, however, its services are by no means so limited, and it is to the fact that hand-painted trimmings for personal wear are not only the most elegant, but the most fashionable of adornments, that Velvet-painting owes the great interest it inspires among its numerous devotees.

Another great attraction it possesses is the considerable effects that may be produced with a moderate expenditure of time and trouble; as any amateurs who have sufficient knowledge and application to design and paint in oil or water-colours may, by its aid, make elegant additions to their dress, that they would find excessively expensive, were they to become purchasers instead of producers.

As a remunerative art, Velvet-painting certainly would appear to be worth pursuing, judging from the very high prices charged by fashionable dressmakers for any article of dress that has been adorned by hand-painting.

realise they are on a flat surface.

I merely mention these instances as illustrations of the elaborate ornamentation possible of achievement by painting on textile fabrics; and though they may be on a higher

At one of the "drawing rooms" last season there was a remarkably elegant dress, with a petticoat of cream-coloured satin, painted with a graceful design of wall-flowers; these were just outlined with rather coarse silk, which had the effect of detaching the flowers and causing them to appear raised from the surface; and at the present time one of my friends is painting a court train which she intends to wear next season, with a design of cherries and leaves on ivory velvet, in which the cherries are so perfectly shaded it is difficult to

and grander scale than my readers may perhaps experimentalise in, yet I think it is always encouraging to know what heights may be reached by the very means we are employing.

The materials required for painting on velvet are silk velvet, or the best velveteen, with a short fast pile. The difference in price is so considerable that I should certainly advise my readers to make their first few experiments on velveteen; for about 3s. 6d. a yard this may be purchased of very good quality three quarters of a yard wide.

The colours needed will be either the ordinary oils in tubes, which may be bought of any artists' colourman, or moist water-colours. The brushes are stiff goat hair and red sables; the former to apply the first colour, which requires well rubbing into the material, the latter for shading and finishing touches on the ground already prepared for their reception by the first painting.

If moist water-colours are those you select for your velvet painting, the water with which they are mixed should have ox gall added to it in the proportion of two or three drops to a teaspoonful of water.

This is the ordinary method, but I find the one I personally adopt and have recommended to many of my friends is far more efficacious, and renders the work much easier of accomplishment. For plain water I substitute a medium made expressly for textile fabrics, and with it moisten my colours; their increase in brilliancy and solidity is remarkable. Another advantage is, it sets the colours, and prevents them running beyond the desired limits.

The first thing necessary is to stretch your velvet firmly on a drawing-board, taking great care it is kept quite smoothly and not the least on the cross. This satisfactorily done, the design is drawn in Chinese white with fine and correct lines. This is by no means easy, as the texture of the material often causes the brush to swerve from the desired lines.

There is, however, a method of keeping them within limits that simplifies these preliminaries considerably—that is, the use of what is technically known as "ship's curves." These may be purchased of any artists' colourman, and consist of very thin pieces of pear-tree wood. A great variety of "ship's curves" and others are cut in this wood—or, more correctly speaking, cut out of it, for the piece is cut through and removed, leaving a space which forms the desired curve. Many of these may be used to form the curves of leaves and flowers, and a little practice in their use will soon enable you to form an infinite variety of combinations in curves of the greatest use in your designs.

The piece of wood is put flat on the surface, arranged so that the curve should be where required, then a fine brush with Chinese white is drawn through the "curve," and when the wood is removed the line is seen perfectly formed and distinct.

Many artists paint in their design with Chinese white to form a ground for the other colours, but this, though successful for a short time, generally ends in causing the colours put over it to crack and peel off. In examining

any painting on velvet, silk, or satin that has not been very recently done, you may have noticed that some of the colours used have disappeared, leaving patches or spots of white in their place. This injurious effect has been produced by the means just described.

If, therefore, this underground of white is not first laid on, the faintest shade of the colour required is mixed with Chinese white, and well rubbed into the material—not merely painted on it—by a stiff goat's hair brush held nearly upright in the hand. This must be thoroughly done, and the surface of the velvet completely hidden, before any shading or finishing can be attempted.

All light and bright colours must be mixed with Chinese white, which gives them the requisite opacity and substance. For deeper shades it is not so necessary. When this groundwork—which must always be done with the palest of the shades required—is completed and thoroughly dry, the shading and finishing is to be done with red sable brushes, in the ordinary manner, the first painting with the stiff brushes—technically called “scrubs”—being merely a coat to work upon.

The method I personally adopt and have found not only far more effective, but easier of accomplishment than any other, is to give a thin coat of the medium I use for moistening the colours to every part of the design; this sinks into the velvet and makes a firm and delightfully smooth surface to work upon, prevents the colours spreading, and greatly increases their brilliancy, while there is no danger of its cracking or causing the over colours to do so.

The velvet court train with designs of cherries before mentioned has been painted in this way, and you will not underrate its advantages when I tell you that a cup of tea inadvertently spilled over a group of cherries did not affect the colours at all, though the velvet was of course stained.

This defect, however, was remedied by concealing the stain with extra fruit and leaves.

Had the painting been done with water and ox gall merely, instead of the “Veloutine,” the least liquid would have thoroughly destroyed it.

The preliminary grounding once accomplished, the finishing details are the same in all cases as those of ordinary water-colour drawings.

If the colours should not be found sufficiently bright they may be painted over and over till the desired effect is produced, care being taken that each coat of colour should be allowed to dry before applying another. The high lights may be put in with Chinese white alone or mixed with others, but considerably in excess. In all stages of the painting the brush must be carefully dipped in the colour that it should not absorb too much at a time, and the colour itself must be rather dry than over diluted.

The veinings of the leaves, tendrils, feathery grasses, and fine seaweeds, &c., may be put in with a quill pen, on which the colour must be cautiously taken; finer and more delicate lines may be produced in this manner than with a brush.

When the painting is successfully completed and has thoroughly dried, a thin smooth coat of the “Veloutine” medium all over it will

have the effect of varnish, effectually setting the colours and greatly adding to their brilliancy.

Velvet-painting in oil colours is still more effective than in water, and has also the advantage of being more lasting. The requisites are tubes of colours, turpentine, palette, and knife, and sable brushes of different sizes.

So many colours are produced by the blending of others, that it will only be necessary to purchase a few tubes, as it will always be easy to add to your store when experience has taught you what you most require. The principal colours needed are—flake white, Venetian red, cobalt, chrome yellow—in three shades, Nos. 1, 2, and 3—and vermilion; these are all opaque. The transparent and semi-transparent are carmine, Prussian blue, purple lake and burnt sienna, terre verte, and Vandyke brown.

The velvet must be firmly stretched on a frame or a board. Drawing pins are sold for the purpose, but small toilet pins are decidedly preferable, as they make smaller holes in the velvet. The pins should not be placed more than half an inch apart, to insure the velvet being firmly held. You cannot be too particular about this preliminary stretching of the velvet, whether for oil or water-colour painting, as all flexible materials shrink unequally when wetted, and will naturally “cockle” if this precaution should be neglected.

I will endeavour to give a few practical directions as to painting a group of flowers, and we will select for our design one of the sprays of apple blossom in a charming large picture called “Match Making at a Garden Party,” presented with the Valentine number of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.

The flowers are exquisitely drawn and shaded, and will be very effective on black velvet. Indeed, any flowers with plenty of white or yellow, such as field daisies, jasmine, honeysuckle, fruit blossoms, &c., are very attractive on a dark ground. First draw the design clearly and correctly; or, if this be beyond your powers, you must be content to trace and transfer it, thus: place a tracing-paper over the group you select and outline the edges, or as much of them as you think necessary; then lay a lightcoloured transferring paper on your velvet, with your tracing over,



securing all three very firmly together, and go very carefully over every line with an ivory

pin, knitting-needle, or other blunt-pointed instrument. The tracing and transfer papers must be lifted very carefully from the velvet to prevent the colour being rubbed on to it, and the design will then be found distinctly defined. It should afterwards be painted over with a little thin flake white.

In repeating any tracing designs you should never do so from your own copy, but from the original. However carefully the tracing may be taken, it is certain to deviate from the original in some slight degree; though in the first tracing this may be so imperceptible as to be of no importance, the defect will increase considerably in every succeeding copy. A curve that in the first tracing is the veriest *trifle* straighter than the original will, in the course of repetition, become an absolutely straight line.

Your palette must be set with a good quantity of flake white and a little carmine for the flowers; Prussian blue, terre verte, burnt sienna, and yellow chrome for the leaves. Vandyke brown will be required for the stems, and a little orange chrome for the stamen.

Mix your colours with a little turpentine, using your knife for the purpose, but work with them rather dry, as if they are at all wet they will run beyond your design.

Take a little of the carmine and mix with some of the white for the pink shades of the flowers. When this is mixed divide it in two or three portions, adding *different* quantities of white to each, so as to produce various degrees of pink.

The flower may be commenced by painting the whole with flake white, adding the mixed carmine and white to the petals while wet, wherever required; the two tints will then blend softly together.

The stamen, which must be painted with orange chrome, must be left till the flowers are thoroughly dry, as they have to be distinctly defined.

To do this take a little paint up on your palette-knife, and dip the brush in this, taking the colour quite on the point, and put it on distinctly and thickly, but in as fine a line as required. A little yellow chrome mixed with white will be the correct colour for the calyx.

For the leaves you will mix various shades of green, composed of Prussian blue and terre verte, adding yellow chrome for the high lights, and if you require the colour a little colder, as in the under part of a leaf, a little flake white will make the desired difference. When the leaves have a brown tint, a little vandyke must be mixed with the green, or applied thinly as a glaze afterwards.

The paint must be used thinly and the strokes taken in the direction of the leaves so as to imitate their texture. Vandyke brown mixed with white will be required for the stems; the knots and markings of the wood where they catch the light may be heightened with burnt sienna.

Velvet painting, whether in oils or water-colours, can be applied to so many purposes of household decoration, that when you become a little proficient in its production you will find an almost unlimited scope for your powers.

Screens, cushions, chairs, borders for table covers, *portières*, window curtains, and fireplace curtains, *valances* for mantelpieces and brackets, table mats, pincushions even, are all articles that may be rendered artistic ornaments by this species of decoration.

One thing I have not mentioned in this list, but reserved for a *bonne bouche*, as it may be a novelty to some of my readers, is most eminently adapted to show this branch of art work to perfection.

It is the fashionable piano scarf, a long straight strip of material, the width of the top

of the piano and sufficiently long to allow of its hanging about twelve inches over each end. These ends are the only part ornamented, and are generally edged with rich fringe, headed by a handsome border of art needlework. A velvet piano scarf with painted ends would be infinitely more beautiful, and the size and shape would allow of as elaborate a design as could be wished.

A novel method of decorating with velvet painting that is easy of accomplishment, very effective, and less expensive than painting on a large piece of velvet, is the application of velvet leaves and flowers on to a foundation of different material, such as cloth or Roman satin. The designs are painted on a strip of velvet, generally of light colour, such as cream. When finished they are cut out and appliquéd, edged with a fine cord or chain stitch of silk. For any large pieces of work, such as curtains and *portières*, this is very effective, and far more practicable than painting directly on so large a piece of material as would be required for such a purpose.

Where the taste and power to originate designs exist, the pleasure of the work is naturally increased tenfold, but those amateurs to whom copies, or hints for designs, are necessary will find an absolutely unlimited variety from which to select.

Almost all copies for water-colour painting are suitable for painting on velvet, or may be made so by a little alteration and management.

The Religious Tract Society publishes cards with verses and floral designs, the latter beautifully drawn and coloured; many of these are perfectly adapted for velvet painting. Several of the illustrated books for children abound in flower subjects, and the Christmas and New Year's cards, which have been brought to such perfection within the last few years, afford a never ending series of copies in so great a variety as to satisfy all tastes.

The beautiful illustrations accompanying this paper were designed expressly for it, and the most inartistic eye cannot fail to see how exquisite are their drawing and modelling, or how elegant their arrangement. The directions I have already given for painting apple-blossoms will of course apply to the illustration of a sleeve. The large group of roses and jasmine may be for a variety of purposes; it must be painted with the utmost delicacy and perfection of detail; the colouring should be copied from real roses of the species represented.

OUR PATTY'S VICTORY; OR, A WHITE HAND.

A TALE IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

By FAIRLEIGH OWEN, Author of "Her Sweet Revenge," "When I Was a Girl," &c.

CHAPTER I.

"Home, Sweet Home."



USH! Amy Blake is going to sing!"

A slight stir of expectation runs through the room as the young performer passes to the piano. Then the tones

of the instrument float softly out upon the evening air.

Had an artist been deputed to sketch the scene he would have hesitated

ere making his decision whether to take the

interior or the view without—both were so pleasant.

The low-ceilinged, wainscotted parlour, with its grey blue faded draperies, its old-fashioned couches and spindled-legged tables; the mellow light fetching into view the glazed corner cupboards, filled with rare china, real antiques; the lazy firelight rising and falling within the grate, glancing on the Dutch tiles, the brass fender and irons; while out of the shadows of curtained window seats, roomy couches, and screened cozy nooks, peeped the bright eyes and merry faces of some half-dozen young girls of various ages between childhood and womanhood.

A pair of glazed doors opened to a deep porch, covered with a flowering westeria, a smooth lawn lay beyond, on which some pigeons were lazily picking up their evening meal.

The slanting rays of the sun threw long shadows from the quaintly trimmed box trees and the big blush rose bushes. The background to all was formed by a mass of trees, in all the varied tints of autumn foliage.

In the seats of the porch and on the lawn are more girls, laughing, chatting, most of their fingers moving busily at some deft bit of needlework.

There is a scent of roses and a warbling of birds in the air, but with these our artist has nought to do.

The garden is gradually deserted, the group in the room and round the porch has increased, while the player has run lightly through a prelude, and in a voice of no great power, but very clear and soft, is singing a ballad of the time.

"How sweet!"

"Is it not lovely?"

"And the words, how beautiful!"

"Isn't she pretty!"

This in a whisper from one of the girls within the long parlour.

"And so graceful!"

"But her hands! Have you noticed her hands! They might be marble or wax. So white!"

Patty Holme involuntarily glances at her own hands as she hears the whisper, and slides them under the work which had fallen into her lap while she was so absorbed in the music as to forget all besides.

No "fancy" work that, though the garment was small enough for a fairy almost; but it was a real substantial fact, as was the young sturdy owner.

Patty had felt almost ashamed when she noticed the pretty flimsies which most of the girls had come provided with, in accordance with Mrs. Barnet's invitation to take tea with her, "and bring your work, girls."

Patty Holme had taken the word literally.

It was the first time she had ever been to "The Cottage." She had carried her work and herself into a shadowy corner, and nobody would notice her, she thought.

She had been lifted to a region of unknown delight in listening to the music, had forgotten everything else. But the melody ceased just as those words reached her which had caused her red hands to slip involuntarily beneath the muslin in her lap.

A few minutes later and she had quite forgotten them, as she was busily engaged in assisting, with others of the party, to set out the tables for tea.

A substantial meal this, which however did not lack the ornamental adjuncts of piles of fruit and big posies of flowers.

The bright faces of the girls, with the staid figures of a few older ladies, were soon gathered round, fully prepared to enjoy the good things provided.

"The days are getting just a little too