APPLE BLOSSOM DESIGN FOR PLAQUE.

BARBOTINE POTTERY PAINTING.

IN TWO LESSONS.

FIRST LESSON.

THE latest development of pottery painting is barbotine, or as some call it "slip" painting. "Slip" is a potter's name for thin clay, *i.e.*, clay of the consistency of cream, and barbotine painting is a method of painting with colours mixed with "slip" to make them opaque and give them body, so that a light colour can be painted over a dark one as in oil painting. Indeed, barbotine is very much like oil painting in character, all the colours being mixed with white (except in the case of a few transparent ones which can be used as glazes), and the design being painted on boldly and freely with broad, vigorous touches.

Enamel or overglaze painting, on the other hand, was similar to water-colours, the ware itself telling as the light, and the colours put on in thin transparent washes. Of course, very charming effects can be produced with enamels, and it would be unfair to hold up barbotine painting as something vastly superior to overglaze work. What we have to do is to point out what it seems to us is the province of barbotine, the kind of effects that can best be produced, with a few hints as to the method and practice of this new branch of pottery painting.

Those of our readers who paint china know that anything approaching the effect of an oil painting is impossible. The enamels require working finely and in thin washes, and the "touch" must be light, delicate, and careful, rather than broad, free, and rapid. The texture of the ware is glassy, and the colours are not absorbed but simply dry on the surface; and wherever a background is necessary it must be picked round the design, as the colours being transparent an underneath colour cannot be wholly obliterated by another painted over it. In barbotine all this is reversed, or nearly so. The colours can all be made opaque by the addition of the white, and consequently it is better to put the background on first, painting the design upon it. Then the surface is an absorbent one, as the ware is painted in its biscuit or unglazed state.

We have purposely drawn this contrast between the two methods of pottery painting because those who have been used to china painting will find that this knowledge of that method will not be of much use in barbotine, only in so far that any kind of painting gives one a facility for handling brushes and colours with the freedom that comes of use, and which practice alone can give.

Many people have failed as china painters because they say the work is too "niggling." This is especially felt by those whose style of work is free and bold and whose tint is broad. To these we believe the barbotine painting will be specially welcome, and we think that many who have failed as china painters may succeed in this, the latest development of pottery painting.

MATERIALS.

There are twenty-two colours, of which the following is a brief description. Those in italics are transparent, and can be used for backgrounds or for glazing. Those marked with a star will be found the most useful :—

1. *Turquoise* (1s. 6d.).—A light bluish-green transparent colour similar to that seen on old Persian pottery. Should always be used pure or as a glaze, as with white it loses much of its beauty.
2. *Ultramarine** (1s. 6d.).—Similar in tint to the ordinary French ultramarine. Can be mixed with white, but is, perhaps, better pure.
3. Cobalt* (1s. 6d.).—Very useful for mixing with white for skies and for making greys with other colours.
4. *Intense Blue* (2s.).—A deep, rich, purplish blue; useful for dark backgrounds and for tracing ornamental accessories.
5. *Transparent Yellow-green** (8d.).—Should be mixed with plenty of white for the brilliant lights of foliage. When used pure it is apt to run, except when employed as a thin glaze.
6. Yellow Green * (1s.).—Makes very nice greyish-greens with white. May be mixed with browns, to warm it.
7. Olive Green * (1s.).—Has the appearance of being a dark, cold green before it is fired, but carries out its name very well when glazed. Dark when used pure, but can be lightened with white.
8. *Dark Transparent Green* * (2s.).—A rich, deep green; very useful for backgrounds when pure, and makes good dark tints with white.
9. Chrome Green (1s.).—A crude colour; pure, but, when mixed with a good deal of white, makes good, cold-grey greens.
10. Yellow* (8d.).—A light powerful colour, somewhat like pale cadmium. Can be used for toning greens, and with white for yellow flowers.
11. Orange * (8d.).—A strong colour, resembling deep cadmium. With white, makes good tints for flowers and autumnal foliage.

DESIGN OF IRISES FOR PLAQUE.

12. *Raw Sienna* (2s.).—A rich yellow-brown, making good autumnal tints with white, and for toning greens.

13. *Burnt Sienna* * (1s.).—Deep, rich, reddish-brown, producing charming tints with white, and with any of the greens.

14. Red* (1s.).—Between light red and vermilion. Makes a good poppy colour with white. Should not be mixed with yellow.

15. Burnt Umber * (1s.).—A deep, dark brown, perhaps rather inclining to madder brown in tint. Makes good tints with white.

16. *Black* * (1s.).—A very strong colour, rather greenish in cast, and, with white, makes good, dull greens. With more white and yellow, can be used for the shadows of white flowers.

17. Iron Violet (1s.).—Makes good purplish greys with white, and is useful in landscape painting for roads and shadows.

18. Light Flesh (1s.).—A light, salmon tint, and, with white, makes a good flesh tint, and for pinkish-white flowers.

19. Deep Flesh (1s.).—A deeper tone of the last-mentioned colour. This and the foregoing colour make capital flesh tints.

20. *Purple* (3s.).—Useful for purple flowers, and for fruits like the blackberry. In landscape painting makes good greys and shadows.

21. *Violet* (3s.).—With white, gives the bloom on fruit, and for mauvish flowers. Both this colour and purple are powerful.

22. Pink* (1s. 6d.).—Cobalt, umber and white, with touch of pink, makes good greys; and, as a glaze over white, makes nice apple-blossom tints.

The white for mixing with the colours is a fine powder, and is sold in quarter-pound packets, price 1s. 6d. It should be mixed up with a palette-knife until quite smooth.

The medium is sold in small packets for melting, and also in 6d. bottles. That in the packet should be put in a jar with about a pint of boiling water and kept in the warm until melted, when it should be of the consistency of thin starch. This is the only medium used in barbotine painting, no turpentine or oil being required, consequently the colours can easily be remixed after they have dried, with a little pure water.

The proportion of white with the colours is a matter that must be left to the discretion of the student. An endless variety of tints can be produced by the use of a greater or less quantity of white. All the colours will mix with each other, and all will mix with white. There are thirteen colours marked with a star, and for all general purposes these will be found quite sufficient. Boxes fitted with twelve colours, with white, medium in bottle and in packet, are sold for one guinea, but those who prefer the single colours can have them.*

Almost any unglazed ware does to paint on; Minton's tiles are very good, and the ordinary white biscuit plaques and vases do very well. Terra cotta does not seem to be as successful, the texture being too close to allow of the colour sinking in as it ought to do.

A very good plan for keeping the colours you have ground up moist is to purchase some penny china ink wells and fit them in a box with a lid. Mark the colour on each pot, and by putting a little medium on the top occasionally, the colours will remain moist for a considerable time. The white you had better mix up as you want it, though of course it can be put in one of the pots. In mixing up the white and the colours use medium only, and in painting use both medium and water. We need hardly say that the medium answers the same purpose as the fat oil in china painting, enabling the colours to be worked smoothly as well as to bind them on to ware. You need not be frightened in using plenty of medium, as it does not affect the colours like an overdose of fat oil in china painting. If you find the ware very absorbent (one piece of pottery is much more so than another, though both may be of the same make), use plenty of medium, enough in fact to prevent the colour sinking in as soon as it is applied to the ware. It is very important to get the colours the right consistency, for if they dry in as soon as they are painted on they are apt to look patchy, and the more you try to remedy this defect the worse it sometimes gets, as every touch of the brush deposits fresh colour. In putting in backgrounds where a large surface has to be covered this is especially the case, and it is most necessary to success to get plenty of colour mixed up, so that you do not run short, and sufficient medium to enable you to work it tolerably smoothly. We don't wish to infer that the chief thing to study in a background is flatness and evenness. On the contrary, the colour can be broken and varied as much as is desired, but the colour must thoroughly cover the ware in *every* part without being *very* much thicker in one place than another, and though it may be thicker in parts it should in no place be too thin. We refer here more particularly to backgrounds mixed with white. Backgrounds of pure colour will be referred to later on.

The brushes most generally useful are round camel hairs in quill, say three sizes, a larger flat camel hair, say one inch to one and a half wide, in tin, three red sable riggers in tin, sizes two, three, and four.

The Bisque tiles can be had at Minton's and the Campbell Tile Company, prices six inch 4s. a dozen, eight inch 10s. a dozen, or thereabouts. Vases vary from 5s. per pair upwards, but as we may refer to these in a subsequent article, we will defer more precise information till then. Plaques or round dishes run in price from 1s. 6d. for eleven inches in diameter, twelve inches 1s. 8d., thirteen inches 2s. 2d., fourteen inches 2s. 6d., fifteen inches 3s. 6d., sixteen inches 5s. Flat, oblong and upright plaques can also be had.

BACKGROUNDS.

We will now commence the painting of a plaque, and we refer our readers to the design of apple blossom drawn for a twelve inch plate as being a suitable subject for our first lesson. It will be seen that the background goes from light into dark, which effect can be produced in blues, browns, and greens, whichever colour is preferred. We will choose brown, say burnt umber, and, having mixed plenty of white on a palette with sufficient medium to thin it, and your brown on another palette, start with the light colour by mixing a sufficient quantity of brown with the white to tint it. Take your large flat camel hair brush, and, having well filled it with colour, commence working it, so as to get the colour *out* of the brush and to cover *thoroughly* the portion of the pottery that is being painted. It is not a good plan to use your brush in broad strokes, covering a large surface at every stroke, as the colour in the brush soon gets exhausted, and the consequence is that little or no colour is deposited on the ware. Always work with a full brush to ensure that every part of the object to be painted is thoroughly covered. In order to deepen the background, add more and more brown, letting one tint blend into another without the change being perceptible. If in putting in the background the colour sinks in the instant it touches the ware, add enough medium to allow of the colour being painted on the ware without it drying in instantly. To get the colour the right consistency is half the battle, and this will only come with a little practice.

When the ware is covered with the background colour it may be desirable to tone it with some other tint, or to deepen or lighten it with the same colour. Use more medium than you did in putting in the ground, so that you can pass your brush over the surface without dragging up or disturbing the underneath colour, and at the same time depositing a thin film of the tint you are working over the original background. A good effect is often obtained by painting over your solid background with pure colours (especially the transparent ones), put on very thinly, instead of with colours mixed with white, and as long as you use plenty of medium there will be no fear of disturbing the ground.

We have dwelt rather minutely on the grounding of the ware, because when properly done the background is a very important part in the completed work. A rich, juicy, brilliant coloured background makes it less necessary to cover your plaque, vase, or tile with much work; indeed, the most successful barbotine painters put a very small amount of design upon their ware; and rightly so, as if the background is beautiful in itself it is absurd to smother it with the design. In the design of apple blossom before referred to, it will be seen that the bulk of the work is at the lower part of the plaque, and that the upper portion is more empty, and the contrast which is obtained between the mass of work in one place and the plain background in another greatly enhances the general effect of the whole, as the plain surface gives the eye the relief it seeks from the "busy" portion.

PAINTING.

The background being now complete, and we trust accomplished without very much difficulty, it becomes necessary to transfer the design to the plaque. Marking through with black paper is inadmissible, as the pressure necessary to make the black paper give a clear impression would damage the tender surface of the background. The only other method is to prick the design and pounce it on with powdered charcoal, and as this plan has been so frequently described in these pages, it is unnecessary to make further mention of it here. Those who have a correct eye or who merely wish to get the general spirit of the design, can paint it on at once by just sketching it on with a sable rigger and a little white. Of course, it will be understood that when a subject is taken direct from nature or painted from memory the background and the design would be treated simultaneously as would be the case in oil-painting, though it will be readily seen that it is much easier to paint a light on the top of a dark than to pick the dark colour round the light.

I should recommend the flowers and stems being painted in first, as the flowers being very distinctive points in the design, it is important to get these well balanced. To this end, in painting where no design has been prepared, it is as well to put in the flowers, fruit, or other striking objects first, and build the rest of the work around them. In painting white flowers a good grey can be made with cobalt, umber, yellow, and white; the proportion of each of the three colours must be varied according to the grey required. A nice warm grey can be made from black, very largely lightened with white and a touch of yellow. The truth is that greys are the most subtle tints used in painting, and the great thing is not to let it be seen how they are made. The best colourists are those who know how to tone each colour they introduce into a painting, weaving, as it were, a sort of invisible charm that binds all the colours together, and I have often been struck with the comparative few pure colours some men work with to produce the most charming and varied effects. The addition of a little pink in the grey is an improvement in the greys of apple and other pink blossoms. I always recommend pupils to put in their darks first; consequently, in light

* The colours, materials, and ware for painting on—such as plaques, vases, and tiles, can be obtained at 44, Devonshire-street, London, W. The works can also be glazed and fired there.

and white flowers, begin with grey, or your middle tint. This middle tint is the average shadow colour that runs through the whole effect. Dividing the scale of tones into "darks," "middle tints," "lights," and "whites," it will be seen at once that the middle tint should occupy by far the largest space, and the darks and whites the smallest. It is much safer to get the whole of the plaque put in without any of the brightest lights or deepest shadows, leaving these for the last, as they can then be put in crisply and not afterwards touched. I would lay some stress on this "crispness." The difference between what is known as "round" work—*i.e.*, work in which every sharp line, angle, light, and dark are smoothed away and softened down, and "crisp" work, in which the whole appears to have been dashed in at once right and then left, is very striking, especially in barbotine, for the glaze has a happy knack of softening and bringing together what may look at first somewhat harsh and disconnected, and consequently if the painting looks soft enough before it is glazed and fired, the probability is that when it comes out of the kiln whatever of vigour and crispness it originally possessed will have departed. The glaze does a great deal for one in pottery painting, and it is therefore essential to success to paint in such a way that your effect is enhanced and brought out by the glazing, and not, as is sometimes the case, softened down until very little is left to be seen. Broad, bold, free work pays best in barbotine; high finish and that painfully-stippled work that some water-colours exhibit are not the methods best calculated to bring success.

It will be noted that in the design of apple blossom the work is either dark on light, as in the upper portion of the plaque, or light on dark as in the lower part; and this system of darks on lights and lights on darks should run through all your effects on pottery, for unless you get relief in your painting half your labours are thrown away. I have frequently seen good, conscientious, carefully-painted work quite lost when glazed, simply because the division between the lights and darks had not been studied. Pottery is, generally speaking, painted to be looked at at a distance, and if the painting on a vase or plaque looks confused and indistinct when seen a little way from the eye, no amount of finish, careful work, and drawing will atone for this one general and great defect—*want of relief.* When the background is varied, one portion being dark and one light, as in fig. 1, more care is necessary to obtain relief than in a background either wholly dark or light. The difficulty in the former case is in the intermediate tones between light and dark; but by making the work distinctly dark on the light ground and light on the dark ground little danger in this direction need be feared.

Backgrounds of Pure Colour.

In the design of Irises, fig. 2, the background is dark throughout, though there is no reason why it should be the same colour all over. This is an instance of a background of pure colour without any admixture of white. Intense blue leading into dark transparent green would look well, especially if the Irises are made slightly yellow. In putting in background of pure colour more medium is necessary, as the colours must on no account be painted on thickly as in a background of body colour. Both intense blue and dark green are very powerful, and so long as you get the ground covered so as not to show much of the ware through you may be pretty sure your colours are on thickly enough. Ultramarine also makes a good background when used pure. Yellow-green or transparent yellow-green and dark transparent green going into the latter colour with a little burnt sienna make good green grounds. Be careful of the transparent yellow-green, as if used pure and at all thickly it will run and spread on to the work. It makes charming tones of transparent green when mixed with the darker colour. Instead of mixing one colour with another, you can paint a thin wash of one transparent colour over another. The dark transparent green or blue can be toned with transparent yellow-green, or burnt sienna, and this toning of one colour with another is perhaps even better than mixing the two colours together.

In painting the flowers and foliage it is sometimes better to glaze over a ground of white than mix the glazing colour with the white. Thus, the pink is much more effective and brilliant when washed on the flowers than mixed with white, and the sunlight parts of the leaves, pure white glazed with transparent yellow-green and yellow-green, is much more "sunny" than if the effect were produced with a mixture of transparent yellow-green and white.

When your painting is finished it must be sent to be glazed and fired. In our next article we shall deal with the more difficult branches of the art. FRED MILLER.

VARIETIES.

At the Bar of Conscience.—When anyone stands condemned at the bar of her own conscience it is of small importance to her happiness to be thought innocent by all the rest of the world.

The Power of Necessity.—My garret window rises upon the roof like a massive watch-tower. The corners are covered by large sheets of lead, which run into the tiles; the successive action of cold and heat has made them rise, and so a crevice has been formed in an angle on the right side. There a sparrow has built her nest. I have followed the progress of this aerial habitation from the first day. I have seen the bird successively bring the straw, moss, and wool designed for the construction of her abode; and I have admired the presevering skill she expended in this difficult work. At first, my new neighbour spent her days in fluttering over the poplar in the garden, and in chirping along the gutters. A fine lady's life seemed the only one to suit her; then, all of a sudden, the necessity of preparing a shelter for her brood transformed our idler into a worker. She no longer gave herself either rest or relaxation. I saw her always either flying, fetching, or carrying; neither rain or sun stopped her. A striking example of the power of necessity! We are not only indebted to it for most of our talents, but for many of our virtues!—*Souvestre.*

A Fundamental Truth.—Our Saviour's great rule, that we should love our neighbour as ourselves, is such a fundamental truth for regulating human society that by it alone we might, without difficulty, determine all the cases and doubts in social morality.—*Locke.*

How to Make any Day Memorable.

I do discover a fallacy, whereby I have long deceived myself, which is this :—

I have long desired to begin my amendment from my birthday, or from the first day of the year, or from some eminent festival, that so my repentance might bear some remarkable date. But when those days were come, I have adjourned my amendment to some other time. Thus whilst I could not agree with myself when to start, I have almost lost the running of the race.

I am resolved thus to befool myself no longer, I see no day to to-day; the instant time is always the fittest time. . . . . Grant therefore that "to-day I may hear Thy voice." And if this day be obscure in the calendar, and remarkable in itself for nothing else, give me to make it memorable in my soul, thereupon, by Thy assistance, beginning the reformation of my life.—*Thomas Fuller.*

The Choice of Companions.—It was a saying of Lord Clarendon's father, that he never knew a man arrive at any degree of reputation in the world who chose, for his friends and companions, persons in their qualities inferior or in their parts not much superior to himself.

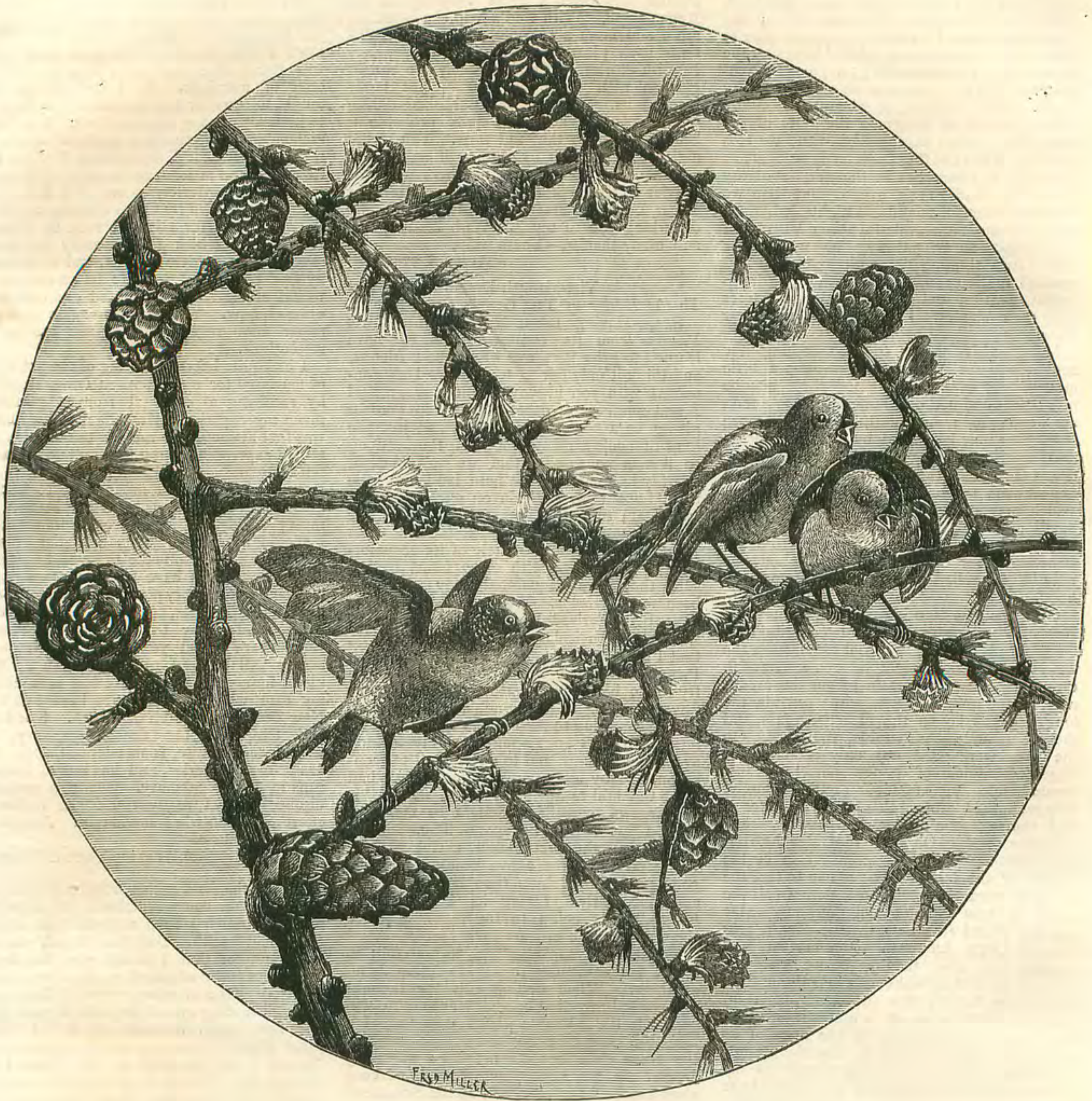
The Holiness of Home.—What is man without home affections, which, like so many roots, fix him firmly in the earth, and permit him to imbibe all the juices of life? Energy, happiness, does it not all come from them? Without family life where would man learn to love, to associate, to deny himself? A community in little, is it not it which teaches us how to live in the great one? Such is the holiness of home, that to express our relation with God, we have been obliged to borrow the words invented for our family life. Men have named themselves the sons of a heavenly Father! Ah! let us preserve these chains of domestic union; do not let us unbind the human sheaf, and scatter its ears to all the caprices of chance, and of the winds; but let us rather enlarge this holy law; let us carry the principles and the habits of home beyond its bounds; and, if it may be, let us realise the prayer of the Apostle of the Gentiles when he exclaimed to the new-born children of Christ: "Be ye like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."—*Souvestre.*

A Collection of Anagrams.

Golden land	Old England.
Great help..............	Telegraph.
Sly ware	Lawyers.
Moon starers	Astronomers.
To love ruin	Revolution.
I am an unreal plant..	Annual parliament.
There we sat	Sweetheart.
Ten madmen	Amendment.
Rare mad frolic	Radical reform.
A nice cold pie........	Encyclopædia.
Nine thumps	Punishment.
Real fun	Funeral.
Christianity	I cry that I sin.
Best in prayer	Presbyterian.
Comical trade	Democratical.
'Tis ye govern	Sovereignty.
No charm or March on..	Monarch.
Hard case	Charades.
Ten large men	Enlargement.
Nay, I repent it	Penitentiary.
Guess, then, our sin....	Unrighteousness.
Queer as mad	Masquerade.
Ten tea-pots...........	Potentates.
Got as a clue	Catalogues.
Evil fast	Festival.
Caution	Auction.
A magic tale	Enigmatical.
Lo! I dress	Soldiers.
Spare him not	Misanthrope.

A Warning to the Selfish.—Wrapped up in selfishness, Peter the bookbinder lived alone and friendless; and he died as he had lived. His loss was neither mourned by any one nor disarranged any thing in the world; there was merely a ditch filled up in the graveyard and an attic emptied in our house.—*Souvestre.*

Good Breeding.—Good breeding shows itself most where to an ordinary eye it appears the least.



BARBOTINE POTTERY PAINTING.

IN TWO LESSONS.

SECOND LESSON.

IN our former article we dealt more particularly with merely technical details, and although we touched on the subject of putting in backgrounds and painting, we purposely left over the more careful consideration of the latter subject to this article. The two illustrations accompanying the first article on Barbotine painting were of a more decorative or conventional character than the ones given to illustrate this article, and consequently our remarks there on the subject of backgrounds were directed to those of a decorative character. But there is no reason why the student should paint only in the conventional style, for Barbotine painting can be made as natural, as pictorial as an oil painting. For instance, landscapes can be painted most successfully with Barbotine colours, with all the richness and subtlety of an oil picture, and it was remarked to us by a very clever landscape painter who tried his hand at pottery painting, that Barbotine was quite a delightful medium of artistic expression, and that he could produce effects which would have puzzled him to have obtained in oil on canvas. This is no exaggeration, as the writer of this article can testify, for in the hands of an expert a more beautiful effect of colour can be produced with Barbotine colours than with either oil or water-colours. This may seem undue praise, but the reason is simple. Oil-colours are pigments applied to a material which has no special affinity for them, as the same colours can be painted on wood, metal, or canvas with equal results. Pottery colours, on the other hand, must be applied to one kind of material only, and must undergo the firing, and in the case of Barbotine colours the glazing, to perfect them and bring out their qualities. This firing and glazing produces a luminous transparency which can be obtained by no other means, and when developed and directed by the cunning hand of the master produce the most beautiful results. This being so, it be-

hoves pottery painters, both amateurs and professionals, to deal very lovingly with their materials, and not, as is too often the case, paint pottery more carelessly and thoughtlessly than they would a water-colour sketch. Pottery painting requires more forethought than any other art I am acquainted with, as the work in hand must be so *studied* as to produce the desired effect when glazed and fired with little reference to the result obtained before the painting is put into the kiln. Many pottery painters, especially those used to oils or water-colours, are content to get what seems to them a desirable result now, forgetting that the glaze and heat may upset all their calculations. In underglaze painting you cannot be too careful how you study your work while it is in hand, so that you will not be disappointed with the finished result.

This brings us to the first practical consideration which, just touched upon in the former article, we return to here in order that our readers may avoid a very fruitful source of *non* success.

First, be careful in putting in backgrounds, especially when you use colours mixed with white, to cover your pottery thoroughly in every part. Wherever the colour does not quite obliterate the ware, there will the glaze appear to eat away the colour, making it look thin and weak. To avoid this error it is as well, until practice has accustomed your eye to see when you go right, to wash over the colour with some of the medium and a soft brush. This gumming will soon show you where the colour is too thin, and it will also give you some idea of the depth of your colour, and be some guide as to what your painting will look like when fired; for the colours as the moisture evaporates from them assume a much lighter and more chalky appearance than they really are. Those who have painted in distemper, or who have watched a man colouring a wall or ceiling, know how dark a colour looks when wet, and how astonishingly light it dries. This lightening of the colours as they dry leads many into the error of trying to get depth of effect before firing, ending in blackness and sombreness afterwards.

Where a background is light there is not the necessity of mixing as much white with the colours as there is when the background is dark, for in this latter case you have to make all the colours sufficiently solid to "stop out" the background. The gumming, to see how the work looks, is very useful here, and wherever you see a colour with the ground showing through, you may be sure that you have painted that part of your work too thinly. In painting some flowers, like daisies for example, after you have put in the flower in grey, have some pure white mixed on a palette, and with one of the sable riggers put in the light petals, making those most prominent stand out with colour; for by putting on the lights thickly, so that the colour stands up in relief, an additional roundness is given to the flower. It will naturally follow that the shadows are to be painted on thinly, and indeed it is possible to produce the effect of shadow by painting on the white sufficiently thinly to allow the ground to show through. This requires so much practice to know how much of the ground ought to be blocked out, so that the desired effect is produced when fired, that it is safer to paint your shadows; and as an endless variety of greys can easily be obtained, there is no necessity to adopt the former suggestion.

In fig. 1 we give a design for a 12-inch plaque, treated more naturally than were our two former designs. The background should consequently be treated as sky, either pale blue or grey. In any case keep the ground light, and do not indicate too many clouds or strong effects of light and shade. Skies

SPRING.

SUMMER.

AUTUMN.

WINTER.

should never be too "busy," as they tend, if they are, to interfere with the design. Some light tone of grey is as good as anything. White toned with yellow and black will give you a good grey. Be careful to thoroughly cover the plaque in every part. We should advise our readers to enlarge the design and make a pounce of it, as unless the branches make agreeable angles with each other the design will be greatly marred. Our readers will recognise that the foliage is the young branches of the larch, drawn about March or April, when the tree is made additionally beautiful by its curious pink flowers. The foliage is only just bursting through the little nobs or bosses that cover the branches a month earlier, some of which are still seen in the design. Later on these "needles" expand until the whole tree is one mass of light yellow-green leafage, very beautiful, but not so adapted for designing purposes as it is in its barer state. I would recommend my readers to draw most trees and shrubs before they get their garments of luxurious foliage, as they are then easier drawn and more easily adapted to art purposes than when every part of the plant is covered with its full complement of flowers and leaves. The piece of larch from which the design was drawn was painted from nature without any attempt at alteration or adaptation. The design is the result of studies of several different pieces of larch, and by combining these, and making a few alterations so as to make the main lines fit into the space without forming ugly patterns, nature has been hardly departed from. The result is that the portion of the tree figured in our design might be found growing exactly as we have rendered it in nature; but as everyone has not the opportunity of searching through Nature's storehouse to discover just what is required, the licence of making a branch grow downwards or perpendicular instead of horizontal, is a designer's privilege—nay, his purpose. I have heard the remark made more than once concerning the blackberry—for instance, that the fruit is made by designers larger than it is usually found in nature. The only reply to that assertion is, that the duty of an artist is to carefully select those objects in nature which seem to him to suit his requirements and fit themselves, so to speak, into the niche he requires them to fill. He is not bound to take the first blackberry that may come to hand, as many causes may have been at work, preventing it from becoming a perfect blackberry. The better the designer, the more characteristic and suitable will be his selection from Nature's storehouse.

The stems of the larch are a dark, dull brown, with here and there a greenish tinge, the leaves light green, flowers pink. The introduction of the cones, which is quite in accordance with nature, will, we think, be admitted by most of our readers to add to the general effect. The birds introduced are blue tits. The bodies of the birds are pale greenish yellow, heads dark blue, backs dark blue, going into olive green, under-wings grey. A reference to a bird itself, if obtainable, will greatly help the student in painting them. Those of our readers who can get to the British Museum will find many kinds of tits which will guide them in their colouring.

The other four illustrations are drawn for 8-inch tiles, and, in some sort of way, are suggestive of the seasons. There are many purposes tiles can be put to, and in this instance they might be made to form the four sides of a flower-stand for the table. The framework can be made in wood or zinc, and it would be as well to have a tin tray to fit inside to catch any water that may run through the flower-pot stood in the stand; or it might be used to hold cut flowers. There are several firms in London who make window flower-

boxes who would make the framework in metal; or if wood is preferred, almost any carpenter could manufacture it for a few shillings. It would be better to paint the tiles first and leave them to be fitted together, as there is often a slight variation in the size of tiles, quite enough to throw the work out of the square.

Fig. 2—Spring—is a study of anemones or wind flowers, and bluebells or wild hyacinths with a sprig of wild cherry; material that can be met with in any country place in March and April. Longfellow says in one of his poems, "That is best which liest nearest," a truth proved by designers continually, as no plants offer such suggestive material or are so full of ideas as wild and everyday plants. While people are searching through conservatories and hot-houses for exotic and rare plants to paint from, they neglect the inexhaustible treasures spread all around them at their feet. In spring one is embarrassed with riches rather than with a paucity of subjects, for at no time in the year is there such a profusion of wealth as then. Primroses, violets, marsh marigolds, wood-sorrel, and dozens of lovely flowers, easily adapted to the purposes of the artist, are met with on every side, and all the student has to do is to select those which seem to him to fit in with his fancy. The anemone is a delicate white with a suspicion of pink, especially on the underside of the petals. The flower-stalk is also pinkish in hue, centres light yellow, leaves coldish green. The wild hyacinth is a purplish blue inclining to azure, leaves similar to the garden hyacinth. The wild cherry has very warm reddish-brown foliage in its early stages, with white flowers and pinkish calyx and flower-stalk, stem warm brown. In commencing this tile, put the ground in first, beginning with light yellowish-green, gradually deepening and breaking into brown. The flowers, leaves, blades of grass, and other details can then be painted on the ground.

Fig. 3—Summer—is treated in quite a different manner to the last design, consisting as it does of a branch of the wild rose, and to give a point of interest a bird has been introduced gazing rather hungrily at a butterfly. The ground in this case will be the sky, and should be kept light as in the plaque. The main stems are reddish-brown, the flower-stalks green. The flowers vary from pure white to a deep pink, but something between these two colours is desirable—stamens light yellow, foliage deep green. The bird can be painted as a blue tit, or another bird might be substituted according to the fancy of the student.

Fig. 4—Autumn—is treated similarly to the last design, a branch of bramble showing the flower as well as the fruit, with a bird to add to the interest of the subject. The bramble affords great scope for colour, as the foliage turns to the most glorious tints of yellow, red, and russet in the autumn. The fruit should be painted in white, making each berry to stand up in relief, and a thin wash of purple or violet put over, darker on one side than the other. By this means a richer and more juicy effect is produced than if the colours were mixed with white. A spot of light on each berry on the light side will add to the roundness. Some of the berries should be blacker (produced with purple and blue), and some pinker.

Fig. 5—Winter—brings us to the end of our article. It is a companion to Spring, being similar in treatment, as the plants chosen, the Christmas rose and crocus, are growing from the ground as in fig. 2. Here again the background should be put in first. The foliage of the Christmas rose is a dark green, the younger leaves yellower. The flowers are white with yellow stamens, and a slight pinkish tinge on back of petals. The crocuses should be yellow, as the white and mauve varieties have not quite the same growth as those indicated in design.

It will be noticed that the designs are not taken to the extreme edge of the tiles, but a margin is left all round to allow for the edges hidden by the rebate of the frames. This margin can be put in with pure colour, such as turquoise, yellow, orange, or brown. In colouring any of these tiles the chief point to be observed is to get a harmonious effect rather than a literal adherence to nature. Too many amateurs are apt to get their greens too strong and crude in colour, and I should recommend those liable to err in this direction to place a natural leaf by the side of their painted representation, and they will then see how very far from being bright and crude are the tints in nature. Spring would naturally suggest light delicate greens, summer rich greens, autumn warm tints, winter dull greens; and by thus forming a scheme of colour in your mind's eye you can work up to this imaginary key, getting unity and harmony of effect.

The subject of vase painting will be dealt with in another article.

We may remark that the illustrations accompanying this and the first article were drawn full size and reduced to their present dimensions by photography. If our readers enlarge them up to the sizes given they will only be bringing them back to their original scale.

FRED MILLER.

FAST COLOURS.

A TALE IN FOUR CHAPTERS.

One among the Reflections (wise, witty, pretty or profound) of a Looking-glass.

BY FAIRLEIGH OWEN, Author of "When I Was a Girl," "Patty's Victory," &c.

CHAPTER II.

AN INDISCRETION.

"NOT much the matter! It is all very well to say that, Dr. Verity. Of course, I did not suppose I was going to die actually—but ill, I feel so ill, my poor nerves have been so upset. It is no wonder if I feel utterly prostrate."

Mrs. Fribel was the speaker, as I could see by the aid of my opposite neighbour. The door of the closet being open, there appeared a diminished picture of the lady reclining in an easy chair, just within the window of my mistress's bedroom. She wore a silk dressing gown of rather gaudy hue, a fleecy shawl was about her shoulders, and a lace cap covered her head.

Her dress and attitude suggested invalidism, though her voice and gestures were brisk as ever. Near her stood a gentleman, beyond middle age, tall and slender. He leaned against the side of the long window, and was looking at the lady while she spoke with less of the interest, real or assumed, than is usually seen in the face of a medical attendant.

Half weary, half amused, I should have called the expression which, as his head was far above hers, was not visible to his companion, whose eyes were turned to the chamber within.

"This fine air and tranquil surroundings should do much for you too, after all your wandering to and fro," he said, soothingly.

"Well, really I don't know," was the fretful rejoinder; "I sometimes think it was a mistake leaving India. Of course the climate was fearful, but there was much to interest one—the dear friends I had, and one was somebody out there; really here everybody seems ——No, Corvée, I shall not want them."

This was to the maid, who came through the apartment with a pair of walking-boots in her hand. "I shall rest here till luncheon; I get the shade so beautifully this side the house, that is why I had my chair placed here. You've no idea, Dr. Verity, how fearfully the sun beats upon the windows of the front."

"Not quite so fierce as at Singeusobad," suggested the doctor.

"Oh well, that is different—don't take the boots away, Corvée, I may change my mind and go out; leave them there—that will do."

"Now, here," said Dr. Verity, stooping to take up one of the boots, with its high heels and sloping instep—"here is a more fruitful source of the maladies so many of your sex complain of than you would be willing to suppose. If I could only hope to make you all believe in the fact, the terrible injury you are inflicting on yourselves by a practice so utterly at variance with——"

"Oh, my dear Mr. Verity," interrupted the lady, "please, please do not begin a lecture here. My head really could not bear it. I have no doubt we are very foolish, and don't in the least know what is good for us, but habit is second nature, you know, and to make any change would worry me more than all the heels—I have always worn them, they have never hurt me that I know of."

"At least, you might *influence* others," said her companion, gravely, "those younger."

"Younger! Oh, well, they are full enough of absurdities, goodness knows! I am sure Adelaide has taken up with such notions and fancies——"

"Good ones, I hope," said Dr. Verity. "Miss Franklyn could scarcely have any others."

The lady glanced sharply up at him. But the doctor was gazing out into the garden, and whether he had spoken ironically or not it was impossible for her to guess.

"Well, I suppose you would approve, since you condemn my poor boots. She has lately been worrying our bootmaker dreadfully to get some made after her own idea—low heels and square toes, hideous things! At least, I think so," added the lady, as she caught a glance and a word which testified the approbation of her listener.

"And there are other things," Mrs. Fribel went on, "oh, absurd things. Of course, if people are to live in the world they must do as the world does."

"My dear lady!" ejaculated her com-