



### ON PAINTING IN OIL COLOURS.

By JOHN C. STAPLES,  
Author of "Sketching from Nature."

WHEN, last year, I addressed those readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER who desired some instruction in the art of painting in water-colours, I commenced my series of papers with one or two in which I gave some hints on drawing in outline and in light and shade, *irrespective of colour.*

Now that I have been requested to say a few words on painting in oils, I must take leave to assume that you, my readers, have made a sufficient progress in those initial stages on the high road of art to enable you, let us say, for example, to put your brush on the right spot and to carry it the right distance in the right direction when you want to give the ridge of a cottage roof, or the trunk of the tree that stands beside it, or the flight of irregular steps that run up to the half-open door. If you cannot do this, you had better go back and read those papers and draw diligently; for, speaking generally, the knowledge and the craftsmanship which you may thus gain are indispensable as a preliminary to painting, although much that you learn to do with the pencil in drawing you must afterwards forget to do with the brush in painting.

This part of the task before you needs only ordinary industry and intelligence, for drawing, as we understand it in common parlance, can as surely be acquired as can a legible handwriting. So, too, though this is more difficult and is a point less often insisted on, the eye can be taught to see truthfully. Now, these two acquirements may, as a matter of illustration, very well stand for facility in writing and reading in the sister art of literature; but I want you to understand at the outset that when you have the command of pencil and brush that I speak of, and the faculty of seeing things as they appear, you are yet no nearer painting a picture which shall have a real and permanent value, or be worth to others the pains it costs you to produce, than your brother who writes and reads well is to producing a book which will live.

If you ever paint a picture worth the name, it will be, not because you have learned to draw and paint, though you will have to do that somehow, but because you love Nature and have lived with her and have studied her, as you study the face of the friend who is dearest to



you, to catch the meaning of each fleeting expression and dwell upon the beauty of each curved line and soft shadow.

I have begun by addressing you in a serious vein, and holding up a high standard, because oil painting, with how much justice I cannot now stay to decide, has always been looked upon popularly as a more serious branch of art than water-colour drawing; and if you are reading this paper it is, I presume, because you have a serious desire to paint pictures. But there is a good deal of fun to be got out of painting, too, and the more you are impelled to approach your painting in the same spirit in which you approach your lawn tennis, taking, that is to say, the same sort of pleasure in dexterously laying on a tint of the right value in the right place that you would feel in cleverly returning a ball just where your opponent could not reach it—the same pleasure in finishing and carrying off a successful sketch from Nature that you feel in winning a set, the more you are likely to make good studies and eventually to paint good pictures; for Nature loves to be approached in a joyous spirit. If this is your feeling for the task which you have set yourself, and if you have steadfastness and perseverance, then there is some hope for you, and you may—nay, I venture confidently to promise you that you will—do work which will be a lasting joy to others as well as to yourself.

But, even if you fall short of the higher standard, you can scarcely fail to attain to a close and intelligent and appreciative knowledge and enjoyment of the works of the great artists of all time; so that your capacity for refined pleasure will be vastly increased, and life will be both the brighter and the better for you in consequence.

You wish, then, to know how to paint in oils. Well, it is to be done by painting, and going on painting and beginning to-morrow to paint again. Paint anything that you think pretty—anything that you admire. I cannot tell you what to admire, for this is not an essay on taste; but you must just paint what you do admire. Go on painting until you are disgusted with your work, and then go back to your drawing until the desire to paint returns.

I say this to impress upon your minds that, by comparison with work—with persevering practice—rules and precise instructions and definitions of “glazing” and the “*impasto*” and “scumbling” and the like (terms useful, chiefly, to the art critic who desires to make a show of knowledge) are of the smallest avail.

If you desire strongly to reproduce a scene which has fascinated you, and if you are courageous, you will dash away and give something that will have a value other than can be found in the work of those who paint by rule, though it will lack much that their work possesses. Nevertheless, it may have a freshness and an individuality which will atone to some extent for want of technical knowledge.

Of course I do not lose sight of the fact that the best way, and the shortest, and the only thorough way to paint is to go through the schools and to acquire the technique of your art by conscientious labour under the eye of a master.

But the fact of your sitting down to read this paper is, I suppose, sufficient evidence that you have been unable to follow this course, and I wish you to know of a certainty that, though the former is the best, it is not the *only* way, and that, by following your instinct and the path to which your intelligence points, though you may and will miss much that the trained student finds ready in his hand, you may also give qualities to your work, such, for instance, as a certain frankness and *naïveté*, which have a distinct and considerable value.

The chief thing is to do. Do something as

well as you can, and then forget it and do something else, and in the end you may do that which others will not forget.

It is very possible that you are getting impatient for me to give you some definite hints as to how you should begin, and maybe this is natural enough; but I wish most heartily that I had power in my pen to make you understand that what I have been saying above is truly and honestly far more to the purpose—the purpose, that is, of showing you how to paint, than anything that I can say to you about canvases, brushes, colours, and the mode of beginning a sketch. Far better for you would it be if, instead of—I had almost said—wasting your time in reading about “charcoal sketches,” and “drawing in,” and “underpainting” and the like, you would take the colours and the brushes, and, on any surface that presents itself, put down boldly but accurately, however roughly, a note of the scene which strikes you.

Shall I tell you the truth about yourself? You want to know exactly *how* to do it, because you are afraid. Yet if you would succeed, you must throw fear to the winds.

If you are too poor to waste some colours and canvases, you had better abandon your design, for waste them you must, at first. Therefore, you had better waste them cheerfully and get some fun out of the process.

You are afraid of doing it wrong; but I assure you that you cannot do it right until you find out how; and you had better set to work at that at once.

It is a characteristic of the amateur and the beginner to think a great deal of materials and tools. These do not really matter, except that, if you can afford it, you should have plenty of them and spoil them in a fine, lavish, generous spirit; because it is the amount of work which you do that tells, the quantity of practice which you have that tends to make you perfect, and these will be—with slight allowances for difference of intelligence and aptitude—a pretty accurate measure of each aspirant's progress.

The thing done, the circumstances under which it is done, and the means employed are by comparison of the smallest possible account. The quality of the canvas does not matter, for you are to cover it (indeed, common stiff brown paper is a capital material for sketches in oils; only your beginner would be sure to be dissatisfied with anything so cheap and so ready to his hand, and would think its valuable absorbent qualities and the dulness of the sketch when dry, grave drawbacks, which they are not), the brushes you use do not matter, for the best French-made “hog tools” and “sables” will at first be as unmanageable and disobedient in your hands as the cheapest and commonest bundles of bristles that you can buy, and the colours do not matter, for you need not yet trouble yourselves with questions of permanency and the like.

There are a vast number of requisites, conveniences, and luxuries provided for the use and comfort of the painter, an illustrated list of which may be had for the asking from most of the better sort of artists' colourmen; I shall, however, confine myself here to a catalogue of the merest necessities, leaving you to add, as you may feel the want of them and possess the means to purchase, such additional appliances as may seem to you desirable.

I would advise you generally to see what you can do without, rather than what you can do with. A white linen sketching umbrella, for instance, is a great comfort at times; but there are many days and many places where it is superfluous, and few circumstances under which, with a little ingenuity, or a little endurance, you cannot contrive to do without it. On the other hand, it has the drawback

of adding greatly to the load you have to carry on your sketching excursions.

The indispensable requisites with which you must provide yourself for painting in oils are—*Canvas*, under which head we may place paper and pasteboard, whether prepared for the purpose or not, and panels of wood.

*Paints*, including oils and mediums, and a box to contain these and the brushes.

*Brushes*, with a little charcoal and perhaps a bit of black chalk, and lastly—

*An Easel*, or a seat, or, perhaps, both; though if you have one of the French paint-boxes it will not be necessary for small pictures to take both, since, when seated, with your paint-box on your knees, the lid forms a sufficient easel, and when, on the other hand, you take an easel you may stand to your work and so avoid carrying the extra weight of your stool in your rambles in search of subjects.

With respect to the canvas, which is the material most commonly used for sketches and paintings in oil, there are several sorts sold, such as plain cloth, Roman cloth, and ticken. The first has the texture of common linen cloth, the second has a more pronounced and peculiar texture, and the third has a diagonal ribbed texture. These are all prepared in different ways with size and white lead or paint, so as to render the substance of the cloth less absorbent, and the surface more or less smooth. For my own part, of the canvases sold in shops, I prefer the plain cloth prepared in the manner known as “half-primed.”

Any ordinary linen-cloth may be prepared for painting on, in the following manner: Strain your material by tacking it at the edges on some flat surface, or straining it over the usual wedged wooden frames on which the prepared canvas is commonly sold in the shops, and having procured some painter's size and melted it with about its own weight of water in a saucenpan or gallipot, take a large hog's-hair paint brush and wet your cloth all over evenly and thoroughly with the hot size.

When this application is quite dry, take some white-lead (both the size and the white-lead are quite cheap) and mix it thoroughly in a gallipot or saucer with sufficient spirits of turpentine, commonly called “turps,” to bring it to the consistency of rather thin cream, and having added a dash of raw umber, or yellow ochre and black, or any other tint that pleases your fancy, just enough to qualify the raw whiteness of the white-lead, take your brush, and, as before, lay on the mixture evenly and smoothly all over the sized surface. When quite dry, your canvas is ready for use, but the longer it is kept the better it will be. I think most artists who have tried preparing their own canvases prefer them to those which are to be procured in shops. All sorts of textures can be secured in this way by purchasing different qualities of canvas or cloth, and the prepared ground can be varied as experience or fancy may suggest.

Brown or other papers, and pasteboard or milled-board, may be prepared in the same way, and will be quite as good and serviceable as the “oil sketching paper” and the “academy boards,” sold at the artists' colourmen's, at prices varying from about ninepence per sheet for paper measuring 24 inches by 19 inches, to one shilling and sixpence for “academy boards” of 26 inches by 19 inches.

The prices at shops for the prepared canvas mentioned above is about three shillings and sixpence per yard for plain cloth, one yard wide; and five shillings per yard for Roman cloth or ticken of the same width. With increase in width of the canvas the price rises in a very rapid ratio.

Prepared canvases strained on wedged frames may be had at prices ranging from one shilling for one measuring 8 inches by 6 inches, to one

shilling and sixpence for one measuring 12 inches by 10 inches, two shillings for one 16 inches by 12 inches, three shillings and sixpence for one 24 inches by 18 inches, and so on up to three pounds for one 8 feet 10 inches by 5 feet 10 inches. The intermediate sizes can, of course, be had. If one of these wedged frames be procured, any intelligent carpenter and joiner could make others from the pattern, or the frames can be bought without the canvas at the shops.

Panels of white wood can be purchased of a size to fit the grooves in the French paint-boxes, where several may be carried while wet without risk. For the smaller sizes old cigar-boxes may be used up; the wood is excellent for the purpose, being well seasoned, and the empty boxes can be bought cheaply at the tobacconists'.

NOTE.—The prices mentioned above are only given with the object of affording you a rough general idea of cost of materials; they are often subject to a discount or reduction to those who pay "ready money."

(To be continued.)

## CARVING AT TABLE.

By S. F. A. CAULFIELD.



It has been my endeavour throughout a series of articles in this magazine to demonstrate the fact that good-breeding should be evidenced in every act, word, and circumstance of each day's life; and while I now give a few directions as to the art itself of "Carving at table," I desire to point out that, in this service which we render to others, their health and strength are involved, a

kindly solicitude is evinced for their comfort and gratification, the means of subsistence is materially economised, over and above the fact that the carver's own delicacy of feeling and refinement may be therein displayed.

Thus, my readers' duties, when acting in such a capacity, should be regarded under a threefold aspect—viz., those of kindness, economy, and good-breeding; and they deserve the careful consideration of every young person, whether boy or girl. So, consequently not merely the art itself, but a study of the principles on which its due prosecution is based, should be made an item of their education.

Unfortunately, however, young people are apt to regard any care bestowed on the supplies of the table as an evidence of "greediness;" and they stigmatize those who take a different view of the matter as "gourmets," for whom they profess an unqualified contempt. Alas! How little they know what a subject of anxiety the provision for the home-table may have been to their mothers in the days of their early childhood; or how great a measure of their health may be attributed to the selection of specially suitable food for them, with a view to their peculiarities of constitution. Nay, more, they fail to realise to what straits, if the means were limited, that mother may at times have been reduced to make an expensive joint hold out over a certain number of dinners, and devising varieties in the dressing to make it palatable as well as nourishing. Should all this wise and loving solicitude be stigmatized as "greediness" on that worthy mother's part? Let our common-sense and good-feeling give an honest answer. Had she not made the sister arts of carving, cookery, and

economy her study, she would have made a lamentable failure of the task of supplying, day by day, a suitable meal to the little mouths that craved it of her.

Yes, in the matter of carving, as applied to flesh, fish, or fowl, we may improve the health, and even save the lives of those for whom we undertake the task; and we may transform an operation, in itself alone considered both troublesome and disagreeable, into one of natural gratification, which is most essential for the due assimilation of food. That this is the fact I can prove by an appeal to your own experience.

After suffering from a severe cold or attack of influenza, and when sense of taste and smell is gone, do you not loathe your insipid, flavourless food? Is not the process of eating tiresome? and is it not little that you can manage to swallow? It is no vice of "greediness" that makes anyone to fancy their food, and to appreciate it the better when properly dressed, served, and carved. To devote much thought and money on your own gratification; to help yourself to the best or the most, rather than give the preference to others; to persist in taking viands or drinks that are injurious to the state of your health and constitution, merely to gratify your fancy for them; or to eat as much as you can eat just short of feeling ill: in all these cases you would prove yourself really guilty of greediness, selfishness, and intemperance. I pray you, my young readers, to distinguish between the two pictures I have drawn, and do not "put bitter for sweet," nor "sweet for bitter."

I will now suppose that you have an invalid in the family circle, that you are to fill the office of carver, and that the *pièce de résistance* for the dinner is a leg of mutton. So, never having observed how it was done, nor given a thought to the subject yourself, you cut straight down till you reach the bone, and then when you make the second incision, you slope the knife outwards from the first which you made, so making the inner part of the slice thicker than the outside. Of course, the piece will not come out, and you have to struggle with the difficulty by cutting the slice through next the bone; and a nice help, truly, you then produce, the thick inner portion being underdone, sinewy, veiny, ough, and utterly unattractive. Besides this, through cutting too far inwards you have caused a crimson flow from that least done into the dish, and so have spoilt the gravy for many, and have turned them from their dinners as much as if presented to them in a slaughter-house. I speak from experience, for from such a style of carving I have myself suffered. A worthy acquaintance of mine treats a joint in this coarse way, and sends a "junk" of meat to you only fit to be thrown to a wild beast. Yet, this individual is kind and hospitable, and otherwise well-bred. To the strong, such an ill-favoured help would only cost a dinner; but to the delicate (especially after illness), it might cause a step backwards in their progress towards strength and recovery.

Refinement may be shown in every act of life, not merely in words, dress, and deportment; and refinement is very particularly needed in reference to such an unlovely-looking thing as a joint of meat! There are also painful and repulsive ideas connected with food of such a description, and it should be surrounded with pretty disguises, with garnishing of many kinds, and with various descriptions of flavouring sauces and pickles, besides the more common condiments to which the poorest have access. But none of these disguises and adjuncts will prove of much advantage if the art of carving be not brought in to our assistance, as the handmaid to that of cookery.

Over and above the questions of health and economy, it is grossly ill-bred to help any person at your table as you would feed a steam-

engine or fire-stove, with awkward lumps in the "anyhow" style. "Anyhow" is objectionable in every act of life.

And thus my pity is often drawn forth when I see how children are helped at many tables, and so early trained to fancy that this horrible "anyhow" will do. The principle is altogether an evil one; and if these little ones be trained to see how carefully the helping of animal food should be done, they will not grow up to think that lumps of fat meat, cut along the grain so as to form into strings, most difficult of mastication; pieces of hard, indigestible gristle, and what is erroneously called "gravy," are to be regarded as wholesome or palatable and attractive-looking exhibitions.

I quite disapprove of the waste of food by either grown-people or children, and as a general rule it is well that the latter should know that they are to finish the help given them. But parents should, under such circumstances, be the more careful as to the manner in which they help them. Our own appetites are not always equally great; our condition of health and the weather make them to vary from one day to another. Is it not so with children also? You should not treat them as mere machines, and arbitrarily give them a certain amount to finish, hungry or not; nor should you lay before them what you would not eat yourself.

I have seen a fine, healthy, good-tempered child endeavouring obediently to finish all the fat on her plate; but the moment the trying task was accomplished she had to fly precipitately from the room. Fat, in a certain proportion, may be advantageously eaten; but it is of so rich a nature that it should be but sparingly given, and more especially to some; and the training to eat it should be a very gradual process. But so little do people think of this, that meat is cut up by a servant in squares for them, and so carelessly done that sometimes one square is entirely of fat and another of gristle, which latter should have been carefully removed. How little consideration is thus shown for one who has but a few small teeth; and who eats, as well as speaks, learns, and runs about twice as fast as any grown person. Thus the tough and unpalatable lump is simply bolted, and the trials of the digestive powers are unnecessarily tried from early childhood. Carve very thinly for a child, and leave but little mastication to be done. Let the small proportion of fat be attached to the lean, and let the help be a spare one. If the child be hungry, allow it the privilege of asking for a second helping.

Before closing these general remarks, I must add a word respecting the gravy. Opinions and tastes differ considerably on the amount of roasting and boiling which brown meats require. The question is a vexed one, and to this I made very special allusion in a small book on "Home Nursing," which was recommended to the notice of our readers in vol. i., page 611. I will not therefore recapitulate my own views upon it; but in due consideration for the feelings of others who, like myself, abhor the sight of a crimson hue in the gravy to which they are helped, no less than for the sake of the table-cloth (should you have occasion to turn the joint, or drop a slice in helping), let clear brown gravy be served in a sauce-boat, and never in the dish with the meat. Of course when the gravy is thickened the case is otherwise, and it is not likely to be either discoloured in the process of carving, nor to be splashed over the cloth, like the clear and thin.

We now come to particularise in reference to the style in which certain meats are to be carved, warning you to have the carving-knife sharpened as nearly like a razor as possible. A blunt knife is a very wasteful implement, and so drags meat to pieces as to render it unfit to appear the second day. See



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WE come next to the consideration of the paints, or colours. These are the most important and interesting of all the materials, for they are, in fact, when mingled and tempered with judgment and deftly laid upon the canvas, the very picture itself; and if, in the last paper, I seemed to speak slightly of them, as though you should not concern yourself with them or their qualities, it was that I might emphasize strongly and impress deeply upon your minds the idea that while you are painting, your whole consciousness should be filled and permeated with your subject. To give that truthfully and cleverly upon the canvas is the business of the moment, and you should permit no preoccupations or disquietudes as to your materials to disturb you then.

If, however, you love your painting you will have a tenderness for your tools. And you cannot occupy yourselves better, when you are not sitting down to the contemplation and study of nature or noble works of art, than by making yourselves acquainted with the nature, qualities, properties, and especially

with the combinations of the colours you use.

Within the limits of these papers it is not possible to give you all the information under this head which might be desirable, but enough may perhaps be said to arouse your interest and to point the direction in which your reading and experiments may be profitably extended.

The raw material of the various pigments is derived from the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms, and the paints, as we buy them, are prepared for use in some instances by chemical processes which totally alter the colours and qualities of the basis from which they are derived, in others by a simple grinding of the natural product.

Thus the brilliant chrome yellows are produced from the dull-grey metal lead by chemical means, while the more sober ochre occurs in nature in the form of an earth, and needs only careful grinding and purification to fit it for use. The process of grinding is one of the greatest possible importance, and in old times formed the most laborious part of the artist's trade. Thorough grinding adds to the brilliance, the workable quality, and even, it is said, to the permanence of colours; and if formerly the master could delegate the manual labour of this detail of his profession to his pupils, he dared never omit the duty of thorough personal superintendence. Now, ingenious machinery and the skilled attention of men whose reputation depends on the accuracy and perfection of the processes they



employ have relieved the artist from much toil, and have substituted the responsibility of selection for that of individual manufacture.

Of the various sources from which the pigments are derived, the mineral forms the basis of the most numerous class. Next in number and importance, but at a long interval, come those colours which have a vegetable origin, and last, those derived from animal substances. The various colours, when commingled, have often a strong influence upon one another; in some instances this influence is of a favourable, at others of an unfavourable character; thus, the ochres and all pigments derived from iron as a base have the effect of blackening Naples yellow, which is a compound of the oxides of antimony and of lead; on the other hand, a little burnt umber added to vandyke brown, which is an excessively bad drier, causes it to dry with fair rapidity.

The vegetable colours are fugitive; as for example, indigo, brown, pink, yellow, lake. The notable exceptions to this rule are the madders (pink madder, rose madder, brown madder, and purple madder) and vandyke brown, which are quite permanent and of great value. Among the colours derived from animal substances are carmine and the ordinary lakes, which are prepared from the cochineal insect (these have all a bad character for permanence), sepia, a secretion of the cuttle-fish, and ivory black, which is an animal charcoal.

The following is a list of some of the colours in most general use, with a brief note of their most distinctive qualities appended to each. It does not contain one-half of the colours to be found in the lists published by artists' colourmen and manufacturers, but it contains all and many more than you will ever need, and perhaps five times as many as you will want at any one time; for if in the prismatic spectrum we see all the vast range of natural colours reduced to the elementary yellow, red, and blue, it follows that a good red, a good yellow, and a good blue will help you far on your way towards composing the varied tints which you see in Nature. Add to these, white; two more yellows, of characters differing as widely as possible from each other and from that already chosen; one green, such as emerald, which cannot be produced by mixture; a lake, a vermilion, and a brown, such as raw umber, and you will possess a palette which, though some may think it scanty and poor in resource, is sufficient for nearly every purpose. The saying is trite and threadbare, but it deserves, nevertheless, to be ever present to your minds that "the secret of good colouring lies in a simple palette." Make acquaintance with as many colours as you please, but let the colours of your choice, like the friends of your bosom, be a select and well tried few. It matters comparatively little which they are, provided you have arrived at an intimate and thorough understanding with them.

*Flake White* is an oxidized carbonate of lead, which depends largely for its good qualities upon the amount of honest care devoted to its manufacture. The best samples are excellent in all respects, and may be thoroughly depended on for durability. It has great body, that is to say it is very opaque, and a very small quantity makes itself strongly felt both in mixtures and in "covering" the canvas, and it "works" well; in other words, its texture and substance are such that it is easy to lay it on the canvas with the brush with crisp precise touches, or even and smooth sweeps. This is a quality which is much less marked in some other colours, such as raw sienna, terra verte, &c.

*Naples Yellow* is a good and useful colour, prepared in several depths of tint. Of these the lightest is the most generally useful. It is very opaque, permanent, dries rapidly, and works well. It should not be rubbed up with a steel palette knife, as iron causes it to be-

come black. For the same reason it should not be mingled with the ochres, Prussian blue, or other colours of which iron is the base; but may be used freely with flake white and other colours derived from lead or from antimony. It is said that the French Naples yellow is free from this drawback; it is, however, of a different cast of colour to the English.

*Yellow Ochre* is an earthy substance, which owes its colour to the oxides of iron present in it. It is found in a natural state in this and other countries. It possesses all the qualities of a good pigment, being permanent, drying well, working well, and possessing a fair substance or body.

*Raw Sienna* is of the same origin as the preceding, but is transparent and somewhat stronger in colouring properties. It is permanent, but does not dry well. It is very useful in landscape.

*Cadmium Yellow*.—This is a bright, warm, strong, semi-transparent yellow, prepared from the metal cadmium by a chemical process. Its extreme brilliancy renders it very useful on occasion. It works well, dries fairly well, and is said to be quite permanent.

*Pale Cadmium* is of the same origin as the above, and has the same qualities, but in colour it differs much, since it approaches the lemon, primrose, or pale-greenish yellows, while the former tends more towards the orange. The pale cadmium is the more widely useful in landscape, in mixed greens, by itself, and in tints with flake white.

*The Chromes* are colours whose chief recommendation is their cheapness. Though brilliant, they are coarse and heavy. They are not permanent under certain circumstances, and some of the greens formed with them are fugitive. They are prepared in several tints, of which that known as orange chrome is the least objectionable. The other tints may with advantage be replaced by such colours as the cadmiums, lemon yellow, and the like.

*Lemon Yellow*.—This is a fresh, bright yellow of a light tint, and of a chemical origin, with a tendency towards the greenish scale. It is semi-transparent, and very weak in colouring properties, but is permanent and very useful in landscape.

*Indian Yellow* is a pure, strong yellow, very useful for compounding strong, rich greens. Field in his "Grammar of Colouring" gives it a bad character for permanence, and but an indifferent one for depth and body.

*Yellow Lake*.—This is rather an unsatisfactory colour, but very tempting in consequence of its transparence and brilliancy. It does not dry well in oil, and does not form permanent tints with white lead or other metallic colours, but produces in mixture with the blues very bright, fresh greens; and with white—clear, cool, sunny tones; but it is not very permanent in any circumstances or combinations.

*Italian Pink* is a variety of yellow lake, for which, if preferred, it may be substituted.

*Light Red* is of earthy origin. It is, in fact, yellow ochre burnt until it assumes a red colour. It is a most valuable pigment, very permanent, a good drier, and works well. It is classed as semi-transparent.

*Venetian Red* is similar in nearly every respect to the above. The one difference being its rather more vivid colour, which approaches more nearly to scarlet, while light red tends rather towards orange.

*Indian Red* is a very valuable colour of earthy origin, owing its characteristic colour (which should be of a slightly purplish tendency, and more approaching to the lakes than either light red or Venetian red) to the presence of a large proportion of peroxide of iron. It is quite permanent, of very strong colouring properties, and a good drier. Opaque.

*Vermilion* is a sulphuret of mercury. It has great body and brilliancy of colour, and when pure is quite permanent. It is opaque, and it dries fairly well.

*Rose Madder, Madder Lake, Madder Carmine*, are all preparations in varying depth and differences of tint of the same pigment, which has a general character of rosy redness, and is of vegetable origin. As a class they are bad driers, but are quite permanent, and on this account and on account of their purity and beauty of colour to be preferred to the lakes which are prepared from the cochineal insect, and are fugitive and comparatively coarse in colour. They are all very transparent.

*Purple Madder and Brown Madder*.—These pigments may be mentioned here somewhat out of their true order, since they are of the same origin and have the same characteristics as the above. The one, as its name implies, has a purple colour; the other is of a warm, rich brown.

*The Lakes—Crimson, Scarlet, and Purple*—have much the same qualities as the madders, but lack their permanence. The latter are much to be preferred, but the lakes are still often and largely used.

*Ultramarine* is the most permanent and beautiful of all blues. It is prepared by grinding from the *lapis lazuli*, and has every good quality except that of cheapness, in which it is conspicuously deficient.

*French Ultramarine* is a cheaper substitute for and imitation of the above. It has nearly all its qualities in a lower degree. It is a good drier, and the purer samples are permanent. It is nearly transparent and most useful—almost indispensable to the landscape painter.

*Cobalt* is a pure blue of metallic origin with less body than ultramarine and paler in tone. It is also less transparent. It is, however, a useful colour which dries and works well.

*Prussian Blue* is a strong transparent colour prepared from iron; it has great body and dries well, but is of doubtful permanence. It is very useful.

*Antwerp Blue*, similar in all respects to the above, but not quite so strong.

*Indigo* is a beautiful, strong, and transparent vegetable blue, not so bright as the last two, and inferior to both in permanence. It dries well.

*Ivory Black* and *Blue Black* are two neutral black pigments, the one prepared from animal the other from vegetable charcoal. Of these the former has the greater body and the latter a paler, greyer tone, which is sometimes serviceable. The former is the most transparent. They are both quite permanent and work and dry well.

*Burnt Sienna* is a very valuable colour of the same origin and general characteristics as the raw sienna, from which it is prepared by heat, that is to say, it is permanent, has considerable transparency, works well, and dries better than the raw sienna.

*Orange Chrome* is the most eligible of the chromes and a useful adjunct to the palette. It has all the disadvantages of the other chromes, though in a less degree, but it also shares in their brilliancy and body.

*Orange Vermilion* is an excellent and useful colour of great body and opacity, permanent like the pure vermilion, and of the same chemical origin. It dries well.

*Vandyke Brown* is manufactured from a bog earth which is of vegetable origin. This is a valuable pigment of a coolish brown colour; it is very durable, of a semi-transparent texture, and good body. Its great drawback is the difficulty with which it dries.

*Cappah Brown* is of a similar character and origin as the last, but contains the mineral

manganese in admixture. The larger or smaller quantity of this mineral determines the varying quality of the sample. That containing more of the mineral is lighter and less transparent; that containing less is deeper and more transparent. Cappah brown dries much better than vandyke brown.

*Brown Madder* has already been noticed.

*Raw Umber* and *Burnt Umber* are two pigments of the same origin and general characteristics—the burnt umber simply acquiring by the process of roasting a deeper and more russet hue.

The umbers are of the same nature as the ochres. They are permanent, work well, dry excellently, and impart their drying qualities to other pigments with which they may be mixed, as, for instance, vandyke brown.

*Emerald Green* is a very brilliant, cold green of a tint that cannot be produced by mixture; it is permanent, but does not work very well nor dry rapidly. It is, however, useful and can be replaced by no other colour.

*Terre Verte* is an earth like the ochres, but of a cool, sad, green colour. It is semi-transparent, very permanent, and dries well, but does not work well, and is deficient in body.

*Green Oxide of Chromium* is a permanent green of a deep tone, but not very brilliant hue. It has great body and needs to be used with care.

*Verdigris* is an acetate of copper of a deep, cold green, very rich and transparent, but not durable. It affords, however, both in mixture with white and with other pigments, a range of colours not easily found without its range.

As I have already said there are many other colours the enumeration of which would be tedious. The above form a sufficient group to select from, and the curious or the dissatisfied may turn to more comprehensive handbooks, or to original experiment. In the next paper I shall touch briefly on colours in combination, and proceed to the qualities of oils and varnishes, &c.

## HOW TO SING AT SIGHT.

By EDWIN M. LOTT.



“AN you sing at sight?”  
 “I only wish I could!”  
 I wonder how many times I have overheard similar remarks, and from some of our girls too, who, if a melody were placed for the first time before them, could go to the pianoforte and give a very fair rendering of it, though confessing an utter inability to convey the least idea of the same passage with the voice. The question that consequently presents itself to an inquiring mind, is, why should there be so much difficulty about singing at sight when almost every girl with any practical musical education at all can play at sight?

To this question, like most questions, so easy to ask, let us see where we can find a satisfactory answer, and endeavour to solve the problem of how the thing is done.

As, in learning to read, a child has first to study the alphabet, with its successive metamorphoses into syllables and then words, so

must we, in learning to sing at sight, study the tonality of the different sounds comprising the musical alphabet; for, in singing, we have to produce the tones ourselves, whereas, on the pianoforte, the notes are all ready for us, and to produce the sounds we have only to strike the keys.

That the art of singing at sight is no invention of modern days is amply proved; in fact, the first singing school of which we possess trustworthy evidence dates as far back as A.D. 330, and was founded by Pope Sylvester. In the same century St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, effected great improvements in church singing, everything in his time being sung in one of the four diatonic scales, then called the Authentic modes. This state of things seem to have lasted until the pontificate of St. Gregory, between the sixth and seventh centuries. He instituted a music school at Rome, being himself the head teacher; and to him we owe the four extra scales, called the Plagal modes, which, combined with the Authentic previously mentioned, form what are now known as the Gregorian modes.

To come a trifle nearer our own times, Guido d'Arezzo, a Benedictine monk, in the eleventh century invented what has since proved a source of endless trouble to a good number of my young friends—to wit, the staff; and on this staff he placed the notes, calling them by the following syllables, Ut, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, these syllables being found in the accompanying hymn in honour of St. John the Baptist:—

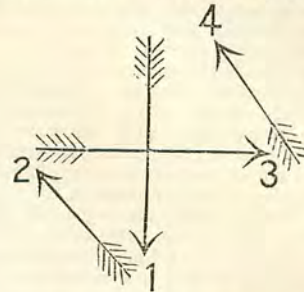
Ut queant laxis Resonare fibris  
 Mira gestorum, Famuli tuorum  
 Solve polluti. Labii reatum  
 Sancte Joannes.

You will observe that here we have the names of six notes only, corresponding with C, D, E, F, G, A, the seventh, or leading note, B, not having been introduced until the seventeenth century, when it appeared under the name of Si. These syllables are still in use in France, though other countries have replaced Ut by the more musical syllable, Do.

During the present century several systems have been invented for the facilitation of sight-singing, but I must confess to a partiality for old and tried friends in preference to new ones, and the solmisation in use in the seventeenth century, and founded on Guido's system, has not, in my opinion, been improved upon. By the word solmisation, I mean the appropriation to each note of its corresponding syllable; and the reason for preferring Do, Re, Mi, &c., to C, D, E, &c., for sight-singing, is that the former are certainly more adapted for the prolongation of sound. For instance, the note occupying the first space in the treble can very well be sung to the syllable Fa, but it could hardly be sustained with the letter F.

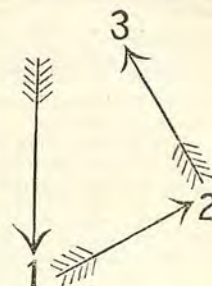
Now that we have, by a somewhat circuitous route, arrived at the most convenient names for the notes, let us consider how we can best determine the sounds to be represented by these notes. Kind Mother Nature has implanted in us, or at least in most of us, a fixed idea of tonality, a kind of musical conscience, which may be, to a certain extent, our guide. Of course this idea of tonality, commonly called an ear for music, can be developed and improved by education. The first requisite is a fixed starting-point from which the various intervals may be reckoned. Where there is no instrument as a check during practice, I should recommend, as a substitute, a tuning-fork or pitch-pipe, sounding Do. Up to the present we have said nothing about time. I presume all my young readers know the value of the various rests, with which an intimate acquaintance is really necessary to become a good sight-singer, and it is well, before beginning to sing, to be able to beat time

with the right hand. Thus, for common time, the beats should be—down, left, right, up.



The e four beats separately represent four crotchets, or one semibreve in a bar.

For triple time—down, right, up:—



For duple time—down, up:—



Singing should never be practised without this beating of time.

When once the Do is found, we should proceed to ascertain the tones of Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, and the octave Do, the easiest way to accomplish this being to practise the ascending and descending major diatonic scale, and note where the semitones fall. The distance from one note to its immediate neighbour is always called a second; but as there are two kinds of seconds in a scale, it is necessary to know which are major and which minor, the major seconds invariably consisting of a whole tone and the minor of a semitone. The intervals of major and minor thirds should then be practised by introducing, and afterwards omitting, the intermediate notes.



The next interval, the fourth, may be learnt in a similar manner, giving special attention to the tritone fourth between Fa and Si, which contains a semitone more than the other fourths. The difficulty here is occasioned by the fact that the ear wishes to hear the perfect fourth as before, and would naturally rest contented with Si flat, instead of Si.

The interval of the fifth is the easiest, with the exception of the imperfect fifth between Si and Fa, which is the inversion of the tritone fourth, and as difficult to sing as the interval from which it is inverted, and for correspond-



## HOW TO PAINT IN OILS.

By JOHN C. STAPLES.

HAVING enumerated and described with some care and detail in my last paper the more important of the simple pigments, I have now to address to you, on the subject of the combination of colours, a few hints which I warn you, however, must be largely supplemented by your own independent and persevering experiments. The subject is far too large for exhaustive treatment in these papers. The infinity of tints and combinations of colours, in groups of twos and threes and more, is at once the resource and the despair of the artist. You might as well try to calculate the number of tunes that can be played upon the piano, as the number of varying hues that can be produced from the colours on your palette in all their range of intensity, from the deepest power to the most delicate tint. The aid which can be given *by means of written instruction* in this branch of our subject, or, for that matter in any other, but too closely resembles the help which the skater gives to his unpractised friend when, leading him ten steps upon the gleaming ice, he leaves Tyro with a "Good luck!" and a neighbourly shove to overcome for himself his slippery difficulties.

White, the first pigment on our list, and the most important of them all, when mingled with any other colour raises its tone—that is to say, lightens it. In mixture with the transparent colours it renders them opaque or semi-opaque, according as more or less white is used, at the same time causing a noticeable change in the quality of the colour. This may be remarked, for example, in the case of Vandyke brown, which, when largely reduced with white, becomes quite a cool grey.

You will observe that you have, in the above list of colours,\* several natural

\* THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, vol. iv., No. 179.



secondaries,\* such as burnt sienna and orange chrome, which belong to the orange class, emerald green and terre vert among the greens, and purple madder among the purples; but you will need to supplement these by admixtures.

Of course, any red with any yellow will produce orange, and there are only two main considerations to limit your free choice.

One consideration is that if you want to produce a transparent orange you must mingle a transparent red with a transparent yellow; if you wish a semi-transparent orange, one only of the *ingredients must be transparent*; and if you wish an opaque result, both must be opaque. The other consideration is one of expediency, and looks to the character of the result of the mixture. Thus, for example, it would be unwise to mix Naples yellow with Indian red, since the iron which is the base of the latter colour would cause the former to turn more or less black in time. A study of the character and origin of the various pigments, as they are set forth in my list, will prevent you from going very far wrong in this direction. The whole subject of the changes which paints suffer from noxious influences, and from their action one upon another, is fully treated by Field in his "Grammar of Colouring (Weale's Rudimentary Series, 'Painting')."†

So, again, any blue with any yellow will produce a green, and the component colours may be used in combination freely, subject only to the limitations mentioned above. Black with the stronger yellows also produces a sober range of semi-neutral greens, very useful in landscape. Generally, it will be found that the pure blues and yellows form too crude a green: in such case a little red on orange may usefully be added to break the rawness. It is worthy of remark that no admixture of blue and yellow will give the peculiar hue of emerald green, a fact which renders this colour very useful and almost indispensable to the artist.

The above general remarks, of course, apply equally to the secondary purple, which, as you are aware, is a compound of red and blue. A little yellow or green may be used to reduce the extreme brilliancy of this colour.

Of the tertiary colours, olive, citrine, and russet, it is only necessary to say that they are formed by mixture of the secondaries in pairs, or by the mixture of *all* the primaries in varying proportions. In olive, blue predominates; in citrine, yellow; and in russet, red. The tertiary scale of colours will often form by far the largest part of your picture, and you can hardly devote too much time and trouble to study and experiment among the beautiful and subdued tints and hues which belong to this class.

Brown and grey are called semi-neutral colours; they have more of black in their composition than the others that we have been considering. The brown is, of course, the warm, and the grey the cool, semi-neutral. Turner painted some very precious studies and pictures exclusively in brown and grey before, in the course of study which he marked out, he trusted himself with the use of colour. Vandyke brown or raw umber mixed with a large proportion of white form beautiful cool greys, not too neutral in hue.

Black, the last colour on our list, is absolutely neutral—that is, it is not, strictly speaking, colour at all. It is a valuable addition to the palette, but should be used with great judgment and caution. A near approach to black may be made by the admixture in proper proportions of deep tones of red, yellow, and blue.

Prussian blue, brown, pink, and crimson lake will make a fine transparent black which, when laid thinly on other colours, allows them to show through.

I wish here to guard carefully against an idea which may possibly dwell in your minds—the idea that it is necessary to mix your colours smoothly and intimately together in forming a compound hue. This may, indeed, be sometimes expedient, but mostly it will be found that much more brilliant, tender, and beautiful results will arise from the imperfect mingling of the colours upon the canvas or picture itself, a result similar to that obtained by stippling in water colour. To make my meaning quite clear, suppose that it is desired to represent a warm golden light in the lower part of your sky: if you dip one corner of your brush into a little pure red, and with the other corner take up more, in proportion of a suitable yellow, and with the brush thus charged, boldly scrape up enough flake white largely to temper these colours, you will, by applying them in their integrity to that part of the sky where they are needed, and then lightly working them together so as to leave traces of the pure colours apparent here and there, produce a luminous and aerial effect, which would have been entirely lost had you in the first instance mingled and rubbed the same brushful of colour into a flat and heavy tint. The remark here made is applicable, more or less, to every part of your picture, whatever it may be. Again, if a point of opaque colour be allowed to dry, and be then lightly touched over with a transparent colour of a different hue, the result will be far more brilliant than if the two colours had been mingled. This operation is called glazing.

The colours as they are supplied in tubes by the artists' colourmen are generally of a convenient consistency, and it is seldom, indeed, that they really require dilution. An exception may be made in the case of flake white, which is often too thick for some purposes, such as painting skies, where rapidity and freedom are requisite. For this and for similar purposes it is well to have some tubes mixed thinner. Of course you can temper your own thick colours for yourself, and it is only because so much more white is used than other colours that I recommend you to get it in two forms. These remarks bring me naturally to the consideration of the next portion of my subject—the oils, mediums, and varnishes, namely, which are used in painting.

Those in most general use are raw linseed oil, boiled linseed oil, otherwise called drying oil or driers, copal varnish, mastic varnish, and spirits of turpentine. Megilps or mediums are generally compounds of the above.

Plain linseed oil is the vehicle used by the manufacturers in which to grind up and prepare most colours, and if your paint (being a good drier) simply needs to be made more fluid, you may add a little raw linseed oil for that purpose, mixing the paint and oil thoroughly together with your palette-knife. Boiled oil is linseed oil which has been boiled, with the addition of sugar of lead. This causes it to dry rapidly, and renders it very useful as an addition to those paints which are deficient in drying quality. Mastic varnish and copal varnish are solutions of the gums respectively so called, in spirits of turpentine. They are useful in compounding mediums, to which they impart some of their distinctive characteristics, as well as for varnishing the painting when dry; an operation which, I take this opportunity of remarking, should never be executed without great care and judgment, and never until the painting is quite dry and hard, when a little varnish of copal may be applied sparingly, in just sufficient quantity, but no more, to bring out the depth and richness of the colours, and to protect them from

dirt and the deleterious action of bad air and gases. Few things give a more vulgar and common look to a picture than the lavish and indiscriminate use of varnish.

A good medium for general use may be compounded of equal parts of drying oil and mastic varnish, which when allowed to stand for a few minutes turns to a jelly, and will be found very pleasant and effective in use. This medium may be mixed in small quantities, from time to time, upon the palette as it is required. There is ample choice of other megilps, mediums, and siccatives at the artists' colourmen's, where they may be procured made up in collapsible tubes like the paints.

The brushes chiefly used for painting in oils are made of hog's hair, flat or round, and some are made of sable, fitch, and other hairs.

You may begin with about a dozen brushes, say, two flat hog tools of the size known as No. 2, two of No. 4, two of No. 6, and two of No. 8; of sables, Nos. 1 and 3, one each, and a badger hair softener. This is a round or flat brush, with the hairs spreading outwards instead of coming to a point or edge. It is used for passing lightly over flat spaces in the painting, backwards and forwards, and in every direction to smooth and soften the tint. Many artists never use this tool, and all good artists use it with great caution, as its excessive use is apt to produce a "woolly" and insipid texture. The use of the other brushes need not be further dwelt upon than to say that the hog tools are used for the general broad, solid painting, and the sables for the more delicate portions. In choosing flat brushes for oil painting, see that you select those which come to a *fine*, even, chisel-shaped edge when wetted and smoothed out between the fingers. Note also the springy, flexible, and elastic quality which characterises the bristles of a good brush. Always use the largest brushes that the nature of your work will allow. Do not forget this—it is one of the best pieces of advice which I have to give you on the subject. The most delicate branches of a tree may be suggested better—that is to say, more artistically—by using the side or edge of a moderately large brush dragged lightly, delicately, and dexterously in the right direction than by the finest sable.

Never leave your brushes unwashed after you have finished painting with them. Nothing spoils a good brush so quickly and so effectually as allowing the paint to dry in it. Brushes should be washed in warm water with soap, and gently rubbed in the palm of the hand until the lather comes free from all stain of colour. The water should never be hot enough to dissolve or even soften the resinous cement which fastens the hair to the ferrule and the ferrule to the handle. The process of washing may be facilitated by rinsing the brushes first in spirit of turpentine or benzoline, and then washing them in the manner described above; or if at any time it is inconvenient to wash them at once, they may be laid in an oil-par—an oblong tin trough, sloping downwards towards one end, into which has been poured a little raw linseed or poppy oil. The brushes are laid in this, and are thus preserved moist. When they are wanted again the superfluous oil may be removed from the hair by wiping on a rag, and the brushes are again ready for use.

In addition to the brushes, a palette-knife should be provided. Palette-knives are made of various shapes, but the chief quality to be looked for is flexibility. This tool is used for mixing tints on the palette when necessary, and for tempering the paint by the admixture of medium or oil. It is also used for scraping the paint away from the palette, or from any portion of the picture when it is desired to do so. A porte-crayon will be found useful. In one end should be kept a morsel of dry, soft charcoal, to be used in the first rough sketch

\* The primary colours are red, yellow, and blue; the secondaries are orange, green, and purple; the tertiaries are russet, olive, and citrine. Brown and grey are semi-neutrals, and black and white are neutrals.



of your picture; in the other end you should keep a piece of black or red chalk, or a little charcoal which has been steeped in drying oil; either of these may be used for the careful drawing-in of the outline before commencing.

The palette should be as light as is compatible with strength, and should balance well upon the thumb, so as not to cause undue strain upon the muscles of that member. Though the colours may be allowed, for the sake of convenience, to remain upon the edge of the palette, where they are arranged as long as they will keep moist, and fresh portions be added from time to time as they become exhausted, yet the rest of the space upon the palette should be kept smooth and polished, so that the palette-knife will glide easily over the surface and remove the paint cleanly. It is well to moisten the face of the palette well with linseed oil, rubbing it in with rag from time to time for a day or two before beginning to use it. This prevents the paint from soaking in and staining the surface. Afterwards, the palette should always be cleaned when the day's work is over, first by scraping with the palette-knife, and then by rubbing with a rag and a little linseed oil or turpentine. A supply of clean rag should be kept in the paint-box for wiping the brushes or the palette, or for removing the paint, if necessary, from a part of the canvas where a mistake has been made.

Here my list of your tools and materials closes, for though there are other things in common use, they are not indispensable. Among them are a mahi-stick for resting the wrist upon while painting, a looking-glass or mirror for studying the accuracy of your drawing as it appears reversed in the reflection, a slab and muller for grinding up the colours, a T square, and a pair of compasses.

There are, however, three things which I have not yet mentioned: these are a paint-box, an easel, and a seat. Of convenient paint-boxes, many patterns may be seen at the artists' colourmen's, from which you may select the one which seems most calculated to meet your needs and your purse. It should be constructed to carry one or two canvases or panels in the lid without danger of smearing them while the painting is wet, and it should be provided with an arm or support to hold the lid firmly at a convenient angle while you are working on your sketch. You may thus dispense with an easel, by placing the box upon your knees, and painting your subject on the panel or canvas in the lid.

For my own use I have had a box constructed to hold canvases larger than can be contained in the boxes usually sold in the shops. It is made of thin soft pine wood, and is 24 inches in length and about 15 inches in breadth. In the back of the lid I fix, by means of drawing pins or tacks, a piece of loose canvas, and in front of this comes another canvas strained upon a thin, light stretcher, specially constructed to fit tightly into the lid. By this means I can carry with me two sketches about 14×22in. When packed they are face to face, and protect one another. The body of the box is divided into two main compartments, by a partition running from front to back in the centre. In one of these compartments are placed the oil colours, brushes, rag, turpentine, and oil bottles, etc., and these are kept in place by the palette, which is arranged face upwards to form a lid, and is fixed by means of small buttons or similar contrivances. In the other compartment may be placed small sketches or papers for chalk or pencil drawings, or, if you like, your water-colour box, with its water-bottle and a block sketch-book. The lid on this side is a piece of thin pine wood, clamped at the ends to prevent its warping, which forms a convenient

drawing-board. A sketch of this box appears in the initial.

If, however, you find it expedient to use an easel, as you must for pictures beyond a certain size, then, if it is to be used for-out-of-door work from Nature, see that the legs can be shortened or lengthened, to adjust the easel to any irregularities that may occur in the ground. The choice of a portable seat may be left to your own tastes and needs. If a square seat be chosen, I recommend those which fold quite flat, because they pack up with the canvases and the paint-box more neatly and securely, and form a protection for the former in travelling.

The last two drawing and painting competitions organised in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER were very disappointing from the large proportion of childish and tasteless productions which were sent in. Though discouraged by this result, the Editor does not despair, and in the hope that the subscribers to THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER will prove that the great revival of artistic taste which has been growing and spreading in this country has reached and influenced them, he has kindly consented to arrange a new competition, which will shortly be announced in these pages.

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## RHUBARB.

By PHILLIS BROWNE, Author of "The Girl's Own Cookery Book."

IN all affairs of life, housekeeping and cookery affairs not excluded, it is a decided proof of wisdom to be able to make the most of what lies close to us, instead of wishing for something that is out of our reach. In the spring of the year, for instance, when apples are going out, and before fresh fruit comes in, rhubarb is plentiful enough; yet how many there are who scorn it!

It is a most excellent fruit, nevertheless, and may be converted into most delicious dishes. It serves to purify the blood better than almost any other fruit, so that it is valuable on this account. And as it possesses the quality of imbibing the flavour of other fruits with which it may be dressed, and imparting its own flavour very slightly, it is satisfactory to mix it with small portions of the first fruits of the year. Very good jam, too, may be made of it for ordinary use, although it is not advisable to attempt to keep this for any length of time, because rhubarb jam is not celebrated for its keeping qualities. Moreover, it should be remembered that rhubarb jam is best made late in the season, because when fully grown it contains less juice, and is firmer, and therefore less likely to ferment quickly.

If it is one sign of wisdom to make the most of the good things we have, it is a sign of strength of mind to overcome prejudice, and as I am convinced that it is not unfrequently prejudice which leads people to object to rhubarb, I beg to suggest that they should exert a little strength of mind, and try some of the ways of cooking rhubarb which I am about to describe. I will not give recipes for rhubarb pies, boiled puddings, tarts, or turnovers, because everyone knows how to make these dishes. I would merely suggest that in preparing rhubarb for people who say they do not like it, it will be well to put grated ginger with the fruit, or, if preferred, grated lemon rind and chopped almonds. This will slightly vary the flavour, and will perhaps be considered an improvement. Of these two additions I will confess that I am in favour of grated ginger.

The recipes which I am about to give are not very numerous, but they are very good.

They make up in quality what they want in quantity. I will set them down in the order of my own preference for them, putting the dishes I regard as most excellent first.

*Compôte of Rhubarb*, then, is a real delicacy, especially when made in the early spring, while the beautiful forced rhubarb, which is of a bright pink colour, is in the market. This dish is at its best when accompanied by cream, and its pretty appearance renders it a suitable dish either as a sweet for supper, or as a substitute for jam at breakfast or tea. The fruit should be laid in a glass dish. As everyone knows, old rhubarb must be peeled, because the skin is hard, but the forced rhubarb should on no account be skinned, because the pink of the outside constitutes its chief beauty.

Wipe the rhubarb carefully with a damp cloth. Cut it into lengths of four or five inches. Put as much water as is required for the size of the dish into an enamelled stewpan with loaf sugar to make a good syrup. Boil this till it is clear, then lay in the fruit, and simmer very gently till it is soft without falling. Watch it carefully, and as each length becomes soft throughout lift it out carefully with a spoon and fork and lay it in the glass dish. When the fruit is cooked, boil the syrup a few minutes longer, let it cool, add five or six drops of cochineal to deepen the colour, and pour it over the fruit. There should be plenty of syrup. Some people dissolve a spoonful of isinglass or gelatine in the syrup to thicken it. Serve with cream and sponge fingers. Rhubarb stewed in this way is much superior to rhubarb stewed in the ordinary way, where the whole is reduced to one sightless pulpy mass.

*Rhubarb Mould* also constitutes an excellent sweet dish. Wash and cut into inch lengths as much rhubarb as will fill a quart basin. Put it into a stewpan with a gill of water, and boil it gently until it falls; then add refined white sugar to sweeten it agreeably, together with the grated rind and strained juice of half a lemon. Stir it well, and pour it out. Put with it half an ounce of gelatine (which has already soaked for an hour in as much water as will cover it) and dissolve separately; and add also three or four drops of almond flavouring and five or six drops of cochineal. Beat the rhubarb briskly for a minute or two, and when well-mixed and cool turn it into a damp mould and leave it to set. Serve it on a glass dish with cream or milk.

*Rhubarb Flummery*.—Prepare the rhubarb as in the last recipe, omitting the lemon-juice and substituting a cupful of good cream. Mix thoroughly, and when cool mould. If preferred, the yolk of an egg mixed with half a cupful of milk can be used instead of cream; but, of course, the rhubarb must not boil after this is added.

*Rhubarb Fool*.—Cut the rhubarb into short lengths, and stew it gently with very little water till quite soft. Sweeten it agreeably, then rub it through a wire sieve and mix with it as much cream or milk as will make it as thick as custard. Serve it in custard glasses or in a punch bowl, with knobs of Devonshire cream, or of whipped cream, here and there upon it; or, if the cream cannot be had, make a little pink sugar by rubbing crushed loaf sugar in cochineal for a minute or two, and sprinkle this over the fool just before sending it to table.

*Rhubarb Charlotte*.—Skin and cut into short lengths rhubarb to fill a quart mould. Stew this gently with very little water, and when soft sweeten it, flavour with grated ginger, and beat it briskly over the fire till it is stiff. Pile it in the centre of a glass dish, and arrange round it crumb of bread which has been toasted, cut into fingers, and spread with jam; or, if preferred, with sponge fingers.



## HOW TO PAINT IN OILS.



BEING now in a position to make an intelligent and judicious choice of your materials, it is time to go forth, and taking your stand before some simple but picturesque scene, to commence the labour and practice of representing it upon your canvas.

A word or two first, however, on the choice of your subject. It is part, I think, of the perversity of all things human that the beginner seems to be almost invariably impelled to select difficult subjects; often those from which the artist who has learned wisdom by experience might (not, indeed, shrink, but) approach with a certain diffidence, and a feeling that the result for him would be rather an increase of knowledge and power to be applied in the future than a success in his present effort.

Remember, then, what I have said above, and be careful to choose a simple subject, such a subject as I shall presently describe, for your early efforts, and pass gradually to more complex and animated scenes. A steady progress in your art may best be secured by a constant struggling with subjects a little, but only a little, beyond your power.

I am assuming here that you are but a beginner, and I feel it important that you should not be discouraged. Make up your mind, therefore, that your first sketches cannot, in the nature of things, be more than comparatively successful, and be satisfied if, after half-a-dozen trials, you find some things in your last study which are better than anything in your first.

Now, I have used two words in the last paragraph in rather a loose sense, and as, if taken in their popular acceptation, they are not unlikely to mislead you, we had better understand at once what we mean by them. I refer to the terms "sketch" and "study." Many people are in the habit of describing any land-

scape work executed direct from nature on the spot as a sketch, but the term may more properly be restricted to notes or memoranda made with pencil or brush of passing effects or momentary combinations. The sketch proper is never intended at the time to become a picture, whatever may afterwards be found to be its capabilities in that direction, but only to fix what is transient, and to aid the memory. Only the finished artist can "sketch" to any good purpose. A study is a careful transcript of a scene or of part of a scene given with all the completeness that the subject and the circumstances will permit. Both the tyro and the master may profitably spend very much time in making studies. On this point Mr. Alfred Clint well observes in his "Guide to Oil Painting," "A sketch is only useful to an artist of considerable experience, whose memory, from a long acquaintance with nature, enables him to supply all that is wanting in a sketch. To the beginner it is utterly useless."

To return to the choice of a subject. It is an excellent plan to begin by painting isolated foreground objects, as they are called; that is, objects situated near you. For instance, you may choose a branch or the trunk of a tree fifteen or twenty paces away, with just a little of the fern or grass at its root; the picturesque gable of a cottage; a stranded boat; or a rock at low tide, with its clothing of seaweed and its reflection in wet sand or shallow pool.

If, however, you prefer an entire scene, select for your early efforts a simple subject; one in which there are a few broad masses of light and shade, and not many small and intricate forms to puzzle you and to distract your attention from the relative tones of the grand divisions of the picture. Such a subject would be afforded by a bit of common land or heath with a mass of furze bushes, or some broken land in the middle distance, with perhaps a clump of trees on the right or left, or a cottage with its rustic paling, or even a fingerpost standing up against the sky.

If you cannot find in your neighbourhood a scene with simple elements such as these, perhaps you live near the sea and can sit down before a stretch of sandy or pebbly beach, with a line of distant cliffs running across the middle distance and meeting the sea. These subjects, and such as these, should not tax too severely your patience or your resources; especially if you take care to avoid at first the introduction of too prominent and numerous foreground objects. These are likely to spoil the unity of your picture, until you have acquired sufficient experience and judgment to keep them in their due subordinate relation to the rest of the composition. This is a mere matter of seeing your subject as a whole correctly and comprehensively—a power which will come to you with time and practice, and with repeated comparisons between your own work and that of the best masters of landscape art.

Having decided upon the scene which you wish to depict, you must begin by drawing upon the canvas carefully but loosely and lightly with charcoal the position and proportions of the more important masses and the larger forms.

Determine first of all the height upon your canvas of the line of the horizon, and then selecting some accentuated object at or near the centre of this line, mark carefully its form and position on the canvas; next draw in any other forms to the right or left of it so far as the scope of your canvas permits. This done, you will have a good guide for the position and size of the other objects above or below the horizontal line, which must all be carefully and attentively indicated with the charcoal, but without much detail, for all small markings will inevitably be lost when you come to lay on the paint.

This seems to me a convenient opportunity to warn you that you must not fall into the error of supposing that when your outline is complete, however carefully, the labour of drawing is over. You must draw as accurately and attentively with the brush all the time, and with as constant a reference to the model before you in nature as ever you do with the point, for you will constantly be losing bits of drawing beneath the paint which you must recover at the proper time with the brush.

Having got your broad masses correctly placed upon the canvas with dry charcoal, you may take a piece of chalk, black or red, or a fine sable brush dipped in colour made quite thin by the admixture of turpentine, and go over the whole of your outline, correcting and amplifying, or simplifying, as you go.

When this is done you are ready to begin painting, but first take a few minutes of calm and attentive contemplation wherein to study the whole extent of your subject, broadly and comprehensively settling once for all in your mind the relations of the large masses of light and shade.

Thus you may ask yourself, is your sky, as a whole, the lightest portion of your picture? if so, then be sure not to be led away when painting the clouds into the mistake of lowering the tone until it competes with the distances or the foreground. On the other hand, if a stretch of sunlit grass or sparkling sea should happen to be the highest light in nature, then be sure to introduce sufficient tone into the sky to throw up that light, whatever it may be, into due prominence.

By attending carefully to the just relations as to tone of these and other such broad masses, you will be less likely to be tempted into frittering away, so to speak, the simplicity and harmony of your picture by the introduction of unnecessary and impertinent detail. Great judgment and great experience are necessary before you can avoid this, and one of the highest triumphs of art is the just rendering of subtle and delicate relations of tone in the masses of the picture, while giving due but unexaggerated prominence to details.

When you think that you have fixed in your mind the true values of sky, distance, trees, foreground, &c., take your palette and begin with the sky. (This is the mode of procedure generally recommended, though I think it does not usually matter very much where you begin.) Take a good big squeeze of the thin white of which I have spoken in a former paper, and a little each of yellow ochre, Naples yellow, lemon yellow, *jaune brilliant* (Edouard's), crimson lake, light red, vermilion, French ultramarine, or, if you like, cobalt or cerulean blue. The mixture of Vandyke brown and white, to which I have formerly alluded, is also very useful in skies. With these colours you will be able to form tints which will represent almost any daylight sky. For sunsets you may have to use brighter and richer colours, and may then add to your palette raw sienna, Indian yellow, &c.

In painting skies you should use very little if any medium, and in mixing and laying on the tints remember that the blue pigments are always—I do not think there is any exception—too cold for the colour of the sky, as you see it in nature. With the blue of your choice, say French ultramarine and white, you mix a tint which shall be neither too light nor too dark, adding a very little yellow, say lemon yellow, or a little red, say lake, or both, and this you lay on, remembering that the colour is stronger and more purple towards the zenith—which means a little more blue and lake to your white high up on the canvas—and weaker and more neutral, though often warm towards the horizon, which means that as you come down you must add more

white to your tints, and perhaps a little more yellow, and substitute light red for the lake, if necessary. The varieties of colour in skies are indescribable and innumerable, and your own observation and ingenuity must be your guide.

The tints for clouds you will be able to mix from ultramarine and white, with light red, vermilion, or Indian red, and often with lake. A little black may sometimes be useful: indeed, some cloudy skies may be painted in entirely with black and white, just warmed with a faint touch of light red. And raw umber is not seldom found useful. A range of beautiful pearly greys may be compounded from cobalt, raw umber, and light red, in varying proportions mingled with black and white. For the lights on clouds you may try white and Naples yellow, white and light red, and to either of these you may add a touch of vermilion, if necessary. White, with a very little raw umber, is sometimes useful. And even lemon yellow may be used sparingly with advantage. For the extreme distance your palette will require little or no alteration or addition. The colours are the same, for the most part, but generally stronger and purer. Greys, blues, and purples will still be found to predominate, and these may be compounded from the colours already mentioned, but with a less admixture of white.

As we approach the foreground, the transparent and semi-transparent colours are more and more largely employed, with little or no addition of white, especially in the parts which are in shadow. In the middle distance, in addition to the pigments already chosen, such colours as raw sienna, burnt sienna, terre verte, madder brown will be found useful, either pure or in combination with white. In the foreground the full power and variety of the palette may be brought into requisition, and the richest and strongest colours may be employed as occasion seems to demand, so long as crudity and rawness are avoided. Here, too, details become more visible, and small objects and markings need to be made out, but always with due subjection to the harmony and unity of the whole picture. In the foreground the shadows should be painted thinly with transparent colour, which, while wet, may be painted into with semi-transparent and opaque touches, to give depth and variety to these shadows. The lights, on the other hand, should be painted strongly and firmly with opaque colour and a full brush.

There is one further point to which I would draw your attention. It is that the scene before you is constantly undergoing changes, some gradual and continuous, from the changing position of lights and shadows, some sudden and irregular, such as are produced by the passing of a cloud. The first of these is most important, as it renders it impracticable for you to paint for more than three, or at most four hours, at one subject, so that if you wish to paint all day from nature, you must be prepared with two canvases and two subjects, one for the early and one for the later conditions of light. The effect of the fleeting cloud may be disregarded, for you may wait until it is past; but sometimes the transient effect is so beautiful that you may well try to seize it with memory or with brush, and transfer it to your canvas. In effecting this object, however, a certain boldness and readiness of resource are necessary, which only come by practice and experience. That practice and that experience must result from your own exertions, and cannot be supplied by the guidance of others, however minute or painstaking their efforts, and it is to your own efforts that I now command you in the assurance that setting aside the diversity of natural gifts your success will be proportionate to your earnestness, your simple-mindedness, and your enthusiasm. JOHN C. STAPLES.