



CHAPTER XXV.

HELPS FOR AMATEUR ARTISTS.

**Crayon Work in Black and White.**

MATERIALS:—The materials for crayon work should be of the best quality, but a complete outfit is neither large nor expensive. The following articles are necessary :

A drawing-board 24 × 30 inches, a piece of chamois, an easel and a rest stick, a soft, rolled chamois stump, one dozen small paper stumps, a stick of square Conté crayon No. 3, a stick of round Conté crayon, a stick of German crayon No. 2, a piece of Conté rubber, a brass crayon holder, a few sticks of soft charcoal, one dozen artists' thumb-tacks, a block of wood 3 × 5 inches, covered with fine sand-paper, a small palette covered with chamois, a stretcher of Whatman's paper, and a sheet of manilla wrapping-paper.

If you wish to economize, make your own palette of heavy pasteboard, covering it with chamois. You can also make a block of wood and cover it with sand-paper. The block is

useful to clean and sharpen the rubber and paper stumps.

Make another block and cover it with fine emery paper, to be used in making a fine paint for the German and Conté crayons for paint work. The palette is for pulverized crayon, and when not in use it should be kept covered to prevent dust gathering on it. The paper stumps are sometimes called paperettes, and come in packages containing a dozen or more. They are good for producing soft effects. Do not use the stumps made of pulp. Whatman's Imperial and Double Elephant paper is best for all classes of work, though French tinted papers will sometimes be desirable. All paper should be attached to a stretcher, so that the work may be perfectly smooth. These stretchers are sold at all art stores, but they may be made at home if desired.

TO MAKE A STRETCHER.—Procure a pine frame 20 × 24 inches in size, or larger, if desired; lay a sheet of Whatman's paper upon the drawing-board with the face down, first holding the paper up to the light to discover the face side. Dampen the entire surface

with a sponge; lay the pine frame on the paper and trim the edges with a sharp knife, leaving the paper an inch larger than the frame; then cut out the corners. Have ready some smooth flour paste and apply it with a small brush to the edges of the frame and also upon the paper beyond the frame. Then with the fingers turn up the paper upon the edges of the frame as smoothly as possible, drawing out the larger wrinkles. Take up the frame carefully and gently draw each of the four sides, one after the other, from the center toward the corners and see that they adhere firmly. It is not necessary to draw it so tightly that it looks perfectly smooth, because this might make it split. If this plan is followed, no wrinkles will appear in the paper when dry. Do not touch the face of the paper with the fingers, because a spot however small will injure it.

TO PULVERIZE THE CRAYONS.—Take a stick of No. 3 square crayon and rub it on a piece of sandpaper, holding it over the palette and allowing the pulverized crayon to fall upon the chamois palette. Make a quantity of this powder, taking care to have it all pulverized finely. Take a paper stump and grind this "sauce," as it is sometimes called, into the surface of the palette. It is then ready for use.

Light.

In any branch of art-work proper light is a necessity, and it is especially to be desired in crayon portraiture. A north light is usually the best, and the easel should be so placed that the light will fall upon it from the left side. Crayon work may be executed at night by a shaded lamp or gas jet as advantageously as by daylight, and in this respect it possesses an advantage over oil work, which cannot be properly done at night.

Method of Work.

The darker shadows or the values as they

are sometimes called, should be put in first; the high lights in this branch of art will take care of themselves. It should be borne in mind that the beauty of crayoning in a great measure depends upon light touches; hard rubbing gives a muddy appearance to the work, but light touches produce a beautiful, transparent effect.

Take one of your paper stumps, insert it in the brass holder and then rub it in the crayon sauce until the point and tapering end are well covered with the sauce. Apply this first to the pupils of the eyes, then to the nostrils and the line through the center of the mouth, and lastly, with a broad smooth stroke, to the lids of the eyes, the shadows in the ears and the eyebrows, following the outlines very carefully.

The stump will now do to use upon the values of the face, and it must be applied in broad even strokes to these shadows. Tint the iris of the eyes, the shadows underneath and the curve in the nose and around the nostrils, using short parallel strokes first in one direction and afterwards crossing them with others at an acute but never at a right angle. Put in the shades of the cheek and forehead in the same way. The work will not appear well just at this point, but later on we will describe its proper finish.

In shading the cheeks begin at the outline, working toward the center, and curve your strokes slightly, avoiding all real lines. Scan your work well as you proceed, putting in the darker shades gradually, and do not make them too strong at first, as the transparent effect of this work must at all times be borne in mind.

We will now consider the drapery. This should be worked up with the chamois or paper stump with short, broad strokes crossing each other at acute angles. Be very careful not to make your strokes all one way and do not let

the drapery have the appearance of being cut off abruptly, but shade it gradually lighter and lighter, until it disappears entirely. In representing a black coat or a silk dress, commence at the darkest part of the shadows as before described.

Take the cleaner end of the chamois stump, and borrowing color from the values, sweep very gently and lightly toward the high lights, or rather across them, in different directions, crossing your strokes occasionally. Note carefully the photograph or whatever copy you are following. You may need to strengthen the values again and to even up your work. Take the Conté rubber with a rather sharp point and clean off the larger spots, using the rubber in the same way as you did the stump, crossing and recrossing until there is an even and general tone, which should, of course, be a little darker toward the shoulders and neck, and should end lightly if the subject is merely a bust picture.

Detail is not followed in drapery, except in that near the face, such as the collar, neck tie or lingerie about the neck; but the folds and the way the light strikes them are always carefully observed. To produce the proper effect the paper stump must now be used. Take up plenty of color at first, and put in the strongest shades with short strokes. These strokes should be "hatched" in, by which method both transparency and depth are secured. Work over all the drapery in this manner, using the Conté rubber to clean off the spots and filling up the lighter places with the stump. More color may be taken up on the stump where the shadows need strengthening.

Be careful not to leave the outlines of the shoulders too sharp, but work out a little beyond them so as to impart a natural roundness and pose. For the shade which is nearly always seen in the collar and vest-front, use the paper stump.

For lace work use a chamois stump lightly tinted, and take out the white spots with the rubber, working to obtain a soft, delicate effect. If a very strong white is needed, scrape the paper with a knife until it is as white as desired.

Sometimes it is necessary to go over the work again to give the drapery a perfectly even and regular appearance, and the round Conté crayon is best for this finishing or re-touching process. Sharpen one end of it to a fine point, place it in the brass holder, and with light, short strokes go over the imperfect places until all is satisfactory.

Backgrounds, Etc.

The background of a portrait is of considerable importance and claims special attention. Striking backgrounds should be avoided, because the face should have the first prominence. All other parts of the picture are merely accessories to the face, and should be so considered in treatment.

Cloud rifts make a good background, but their outer and upper sides must fade away with great delicacy. A very sharp point is often used in cleaning up a background, as this will give an even tone. Very few pictures will bear a solid, dark background. If the subject *requires* a solid background, make it in the following manner: First, go over the entire surface of the paper or stretcher with a pad of chamois, moderately blackened with crayon sauce, after which take the square Conté crayon No. 3, and with the broad, flat surface of the side, rub with a circular motion, until the paper will hold no more. Then go over this with two fingers of the right hand, using the same motion. Be careful not to spot the face or the drapery.

To produce a soft gray tint, after using the black crayon sauce, take soft white crayon and rub it over the black until you get the

tone you desire. For the hair it is best to use the stump in only one direction. The soft flow of the hair should always be considered. Avoid all lines, as they give a hard and wiry appearance. Represent hair in locks and masses. Borrow from the darker shades, and tint over the high lights with the chamois stump. Make it a little darker than necessary. Afterwards take out the high lights with the broad surface of the rubber. It is sometimes necessary to use the paper stump before the necessary softness can be obtained. The different degrees of shade must represent the color of the hair. For white hair, use very little color, and do the most of the work with the rubber. Mustaches and whiskers are made in the same manner, the high lights being taken out with the rubber. When the picture is nearly finished, a few lines or single hairs, either in hair or whiskers, may be put in, but use these lines very sparingly. The eyes may now be finished. Take the paper stump and tint it slightly with color. Use short strokes, crossing them lightly at an acute angle. Never have these strokes at right angles. Finish the upper lids first. Work upward, and away from them, toward the eyebrows. Darken them slightly. Strengthen the pupil as much as possible; tint the iris, giving a deeper shadow to the upper part than to the lower. This is done to represent the shadow cast by the eyelid. The lower lid is formed by the shading above and below it.

The peculiarities of expression must be well studied at this stage of the work. The catch-lights can be put in with Chinese white, after the rest of the work is finished. The corners should be darkened now, and the ball tinted. If you should get any part of your work too dark, take it off with the rubber. Tone the eyebrows down gradually, keeping perfect the form and shape. Now take a chamois stump

and pass it smoothly and broadly, back and forth, over the lids of the eyebrows, rubbing down a little on the forehead. This gives softness, and blends the shadows into the high lights. In the iris, opposite the catch-light, there is a lighter tone, a reflected light, which should be given. Shade the remainder of iris according to the subject, and strengthen the pupil, making it a very deep black.

The nose is our next consideration. Under the eyebrows, toward the nose, is a deep shadow; borrow from this to shade the sides, and put in the nostrils, taking care to keep them the proper shape. Keep also the proper roundness. Now work away from them and give the curves to the lower part of the nose. Carry up your tones toward the eyes and off in the direction of the cheeks. Should a wrong stroke be made, the rubber will soon take it out.

The mouth should be worked up with great care. The indications of sweetness and delicacy which should characterize the feminine mouth are sometimes lost by the same treatment which results advantageously in bringing out the firmness and strength of a man's face. Begin at the corners of the lips, being careful not to render them weak in tone, and work from them with a lighter touch to the center, where the greatest fulness lies. The slight curve here must be carefully preserved, and the working up done very carefully, to avoid a set or hard expression.

Passing to the forehead, work it up with short strokes slightly curved at the temples. The work on this feature when finished, should be clean, but moderately open. Soften the hair where it frames the face about the temples.

The line where the hair commences and the forehead begins, should be lost by a soft blending. The strongest light in any portrait should be on the forehead. If the subject is an elderly person, put in the wrinkles boldly

at first, using a paper stump, and afterward soften them above and below, using a clean stump. If you get them too strong, lighten them with the rubber.

The face now having all its values blended, all shadows should so be worked up as to give softness and roundness. The high lights should all be delicately tinted, each shadow blending off gradually into the high lights.

Finishing Touches.

Look over your work carefully now; on the outer edges of all parts of the picture, soften the outlines, and strengthen the shadows, where they need it, or lighten those that may seem too dark. The paper stump and rubber only will be needed for this work. Prepare the paper stump by rubbing it on the block of sand-paper. Trim the rubber stump with a knife, rubbing off the sharp edges on the sand-paper, and leaving this stump with a sharp point. On the skill with which these finishing touches are imparted, depends, in a great measure, the beauty of the portrait. No spots or specks must be left to mar the effect; the best rule for the attainment of general excellence is, study your subject well.

Pastel Pictures.

The degree of perfection to which this class of art work may be carried is evinced by the charming examples left by Girodet and Maurice Question. Crayon painting is rapid and easy of execution, and is especially favored by amateurs who wish to execute landscape or bird designs. In its instantaneous effects of light and shade it holds great advantages over work in oil colors. By its use the artist can avail himself at a single stroke of any happy combination of color, which may seize his fancy or be presented to his vision. The finger becomes his most necessary tool; it is brush and blender in one. In fact, if one wants brilliant results by the elec-

tricity of art, the pastel crayon should be his motor. Boxes of gradated series of crayons can be purchased suited to either landscape or portrait use, and the process is also employed for bird and flower painting, all required tints being made by blending and softening these prepared shades into each other. How to work comes as an inspiration with the progressiveness of acquired skill.

A special paper is manufactured for crayon work. This paper is sanded in such a manner that a velvety appearance is given to the work. That of a low-toned olive tint is best adapted to the purpose.

In preparing for work, always attach your paper to a drawing-board by artists' thumb-tacks, carefully pushing them in at intervals of three or four inches around the edges. Leave quite a large margin on the paper, larger than you propose to have when the frame is added. Then it can be cut down to the size desired.

Vellum is a fine surface for crayon work, as on it great delicacy of tint can be obtained. What is known as glass paper No. 1 is used to prepare the surface. The paper is held in the fingers and rubbed over the smooth side of the vellum circularly, until the surface is uniformly roughened up. Patience and a firm hand are necessary, in order to do this work correctly. Very desirable results are however obtained on this prepared vellum surface. The painting must not be begun until after the whole surface is evenly "petted," and the white powder discharged during the roughening process carefully rubbed off. The vellum must also be placed on a stretching frame and strained upon a backing of fine canvas, over which perfectly smooth paper has been pasted. Then it may be placed on the easel. The coloring on the vellum will be described after other general directions are given.

Crayon pictures must be framed at once when finished, and they should never be exposed to the direct rays of the sun. Moisture is also fatal to pastel work, but the durability of portraits that have been shielded alike from the effects of glare and damp is well attested.

The colors now manufactured are much superior to those of an earlier day, and less liable to change with time. Pumice paper answers very well for portraiture when one cannot use vellum. This paper should first be given a coat of starch, a large soft brush being used to apply it and the extra powder then brushed off.

Prepared surfaces can now be purchased at the best art stores. Canvas prepared as described may also be used for pastel work. Paper, before being put upon a strainer, should always be smoothly backed with one or two thicknesses of cloth, so that the rubbing of the finger will not tear it. In portrait work the drawing of the outlines may be made with a hard brown or gray crayon; do this drawing lightly, so that the marking will not appear under the other work. Never use a black-lead pencil for this purpose. A rapid and excellent method of working up a crayon portrait, is to lay in all the tints with a leather or paper stump. Proceed with the complexion first, beginning with the lights. Proceed from highest lights to deepest shades, put them in with equal strength, and blending the middle tones with great care, in order to unite the lights and shades by imperceptible gradations. When all the tints are in, which give *form*, *color* and *expression*, take the fore or little finger and blend them into perfect harmony. This method will soften not only the spirit of the color, but the tone of the whole work. Right here the necessity of having a clear and forcible sketch to begin with is apparent. When the blending is com-

pleted, use the crayon again to bring up the color to the proper tone. A little care and experience will enable one to become very skilful in the use of the finger, but before commencing to use it, be very certain that the tints are all in their proper places. Do not, in retouching, work upon the colors too much, as they will lose their freshness and transparency. Work up the breadths of expression in your picture and do not dwell too much on detail.

In feminine portraits, bright and fresh hues are employed. White, Naples, Vermilion and Madder, mellowed with yellows, or as taste and judgment suggest, empurpled with lake or carmine are adaptable to artistic treatment. Use stronger colors for masculine portraits, and develop your half tints more positively.

For draperies, dress and other accessories in portrait work, greater freedom and decision are allowable than in the features. Light backgrounds or dark ones may be used, according to the subject. A good general rule is to make the background around the head, lower in tone than the half tints of the face. This gives the effect of air and space around the head. If, in working, your paper becomes a little greasy or glazed, rub it gently with a piece of fish-bone. If the fibre of the paper should become loosened, wet it a little on the back with weak alum-water.

Should vellum be used for pastel portrait work, select a piece with smooth, even texture and prepare the surface according to the method described. Vandyke worked on the principle that there was no color in the shade of flesh. In this principle lies the art of delicate tints. Avoid all harshness of expression in pastel work; the charm of the picture lies in a soft, even finish.

In landscape-work harder crayons, manufactured expressly for this purpose are used. The following list comprises the best colors—

white, Italian chalk, straw color and yellow in shades deepening from pale-yellow to brown tints. In blue, begin with azure and get all the intermediate tones between this and very dark ones. In gray the pale and deep, the neutral and the very warm tones are available. In red all the shades from delicate pink up to Indian red, are likely to be needed, while in black Conté crayons Nos. 1, 2 and 3, will suffice.

The white Italian chalk is used not only for the lightest touches, but to blend and qualify all the other crayons. The Conté crayons Nos. 1 and 2 are used for outlining; No. 3 is used for reducing the tones of other colors.

In the manipulation of the crayon for landscape there are many points of difference from portrait work. Break off a portion of your crayon and apply it flat or lengthwise to the paper on which you are working. In this way, a lightness of tint, not otherwise obtainable is produced. Rub the color in with the index and middle fingers into the texture of the paper. The thumb, and in large landscapes even the palm of the hand may be also used. Continue these tintings until you get the proper tone, working and blending your colors together as they require. In this way the flat tints of the sky are laid. Upon these superpose the clouds, using the crayon as before described. Bring the breadth of the sky below the line of the horizon. Use this as a base for marking out the distant mountains or other far-away objects in your picture. Blend and repeat these tones until the work appears just right.

The middle distance and near objects are made by the neutral tints. Continue the use of broken pieces of crayon, working them horizontally or holding them in whatever position best suits the work. In sky and distance use the Conté crayons Nos. 1 and 2; these

are very helpful also in the near parts of the picture. Break off a fragment of crayon, suited in size to the object to be drawn, using the sharp edge of the fracture of the crayon to work on. After your work is drawn in with the Conté, tint with the necessary colors. This is done much in the same way as the glaze in oil painting is effected. Lay on your colors so as to gain transparency of finish; avoid opaque effects. Finish your picture with sharp, crisp touches, made with the broken edge of the colored crayons.

To fix the drawing: To five ounces of distilled vinegar add not quite two ounces of ising-glass. Pour into one quart of hot water, and set in a warm place, stirring often with a wooden stick. When the ising-glass is dissolved, filter the liquid carefully through paper, place in a bottle and pour in slowly a small glass of spirits of wine. Cork the bottle and shake well. This makes an excellent fixing liquid, which is applied as follows. Arrange the picture, crayoned side downwards, placing a soft pad under each corner, so that the drawing will not touch the table. Apply the liquid with a good sized brush to the back, and go over it the second time, but more lightly, until the crayoned surface is well penetrated. Spread the liquid evenly over the back of the picture, then turn the work, face upwards, to dry. A picture thus fixed may be varnished if desired, but before being varnished should be given a coat of strong solution of ising-glass, to which has been added one third spirits of wine. The same method of fixing can be used for crayon work placed on canvas.

Colored crayons are also used for finishing large floral and bird designs on plush. The design is first given a rough coat of white, laid on rather heavy. When dry, it is retouched with the colored crayons, the colors being used (in reference to shades) as in oil

