

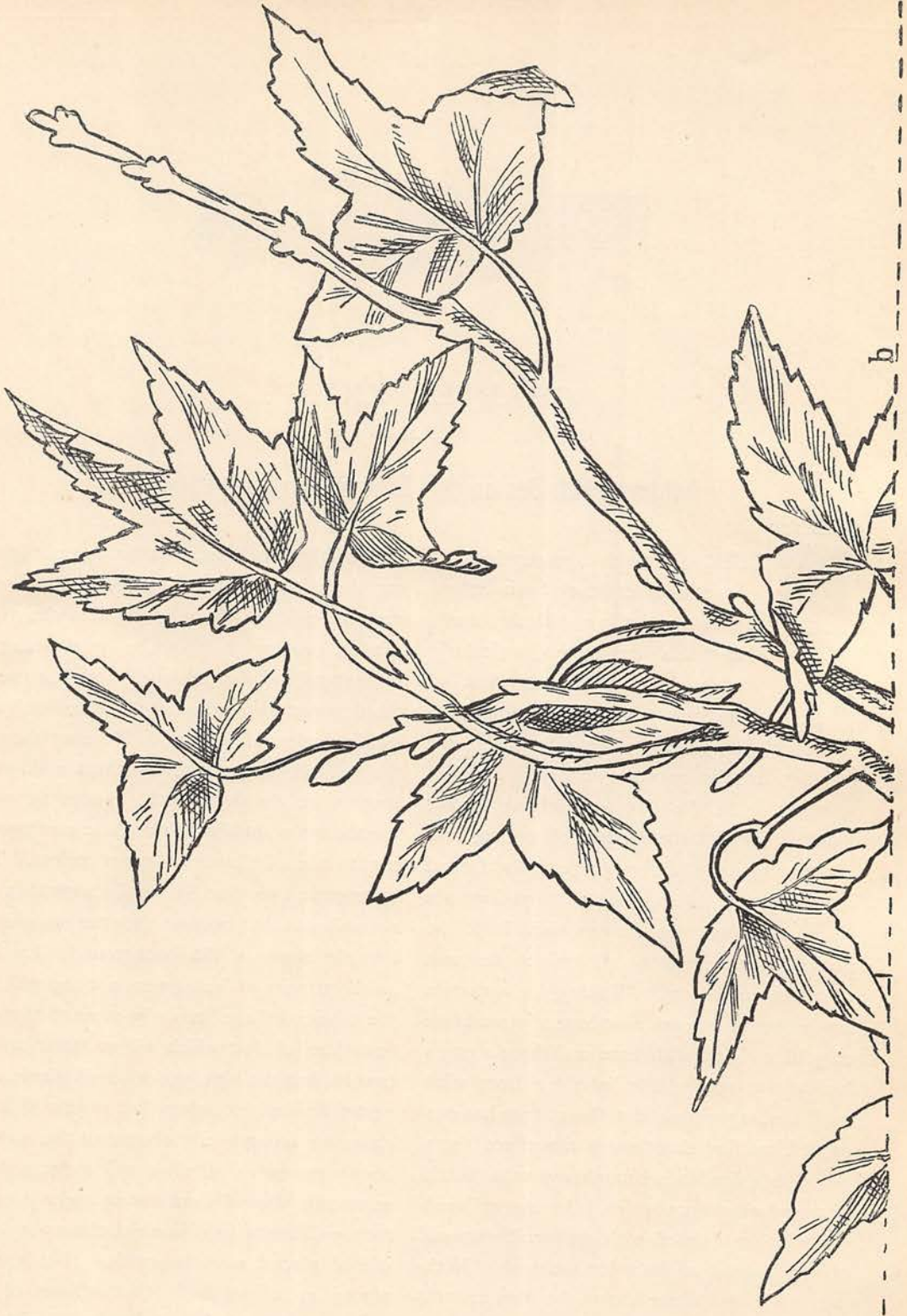
CHAPTER XXXIV.

Autumn-Leaf Design for Embroidering or Painting.



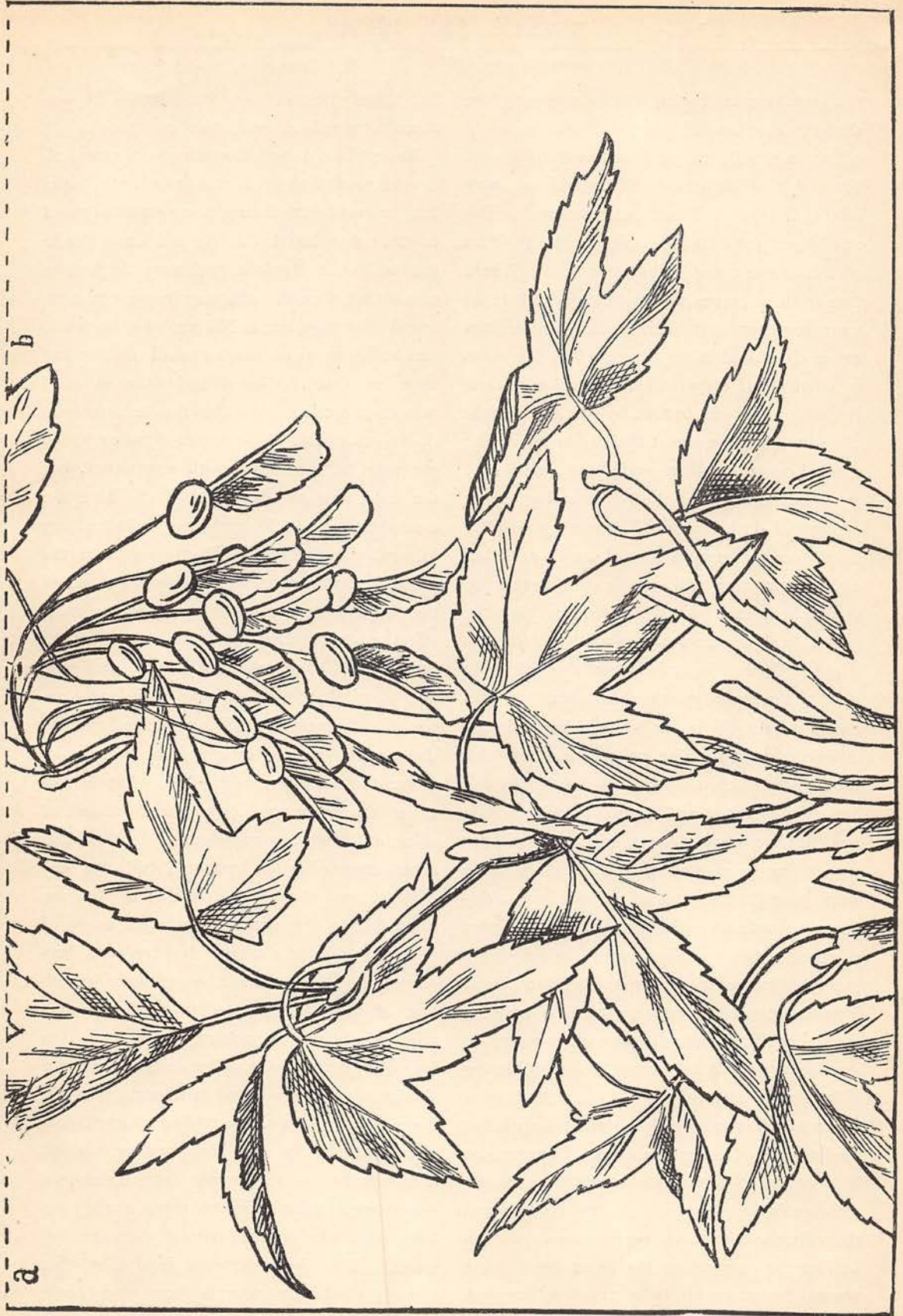
QUITE as much appreciation for artistic effects may be indicated with the needle as with the brush, and this design is particularly adapted to the development of realistic effects in embroidery, though its value as a design for painting in oils or water colors is quite as apparent. In the chapter entitled Flower Painting in Oils the method of tracing and transferring any design is explained, and assuming that this has been stamped upon a piece of olive-green sateen and is to be worked with crewels we will select the most desirable colors for it. Taking for a study a maple tree in autumn as it bursts into a blaze of gold and red, with here and there a green leaf left to remind the beholder from what cool, umbrageous shades the change has proceeded, we find that though the effect is gorgeous its splendor is brought out with the aid of many sober accessories. As our embroidery is to be painted with the needle we will choose a good medium for the work. Nothing could be better than the fine crewels which are procurable in all known shades, and of these we will select the full range of olive browns, giving the balance in favor of quantity

to the lighter and deeper tones, but not ignoring the middle tones altogether; of the reds we will select a fair proportion of the vivid shades, gauging the quantity by glancing at the natural study or a branch from it, some of the deeper tones and a little that has only the subdued glow of red in it. Turning then to the yellows and comparing them with olive browns we decide that the shades we want are the sunny, brilliant tints, those corresponding to aureolin tints in water colors. The olive greens we pass by, not because they are not valuable, but because they run too quickly into the shade of the background. Lastly a small quantity of leaf green, not the green of the tender foliage in early summer nor the rusty hue of that which clings latest to the branch, but the ripe, yet subdued shade suggested by the green tints that mingle with the changing foliage. By observing the natural bough groupings of color will suggest themselves, but some discrimination and allowance for the different light in which the embroidery will be placed, must be made. If it is to be placed in a dim light the outlines of the leaves may be boldly "sketched" with the strongest shades, the fainter tints being used inside of them. This method will preserve



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a



the outlines and give distinctness to the design, whereas if the embroidery is to occupy a prominent position in a strong light the effect of delicate shading will be more admired than boldness of outline. The shading of the drawing suggests the position of the deepest and brightest colors. Where two or three leaves in bright colors come so near together that their individual outlines are in danger of being obscured by the mass of color a leaf or part of one may be worked in dark cool green, broken by stitches of light olive brown that suggest the beginning of the turning process. Here and there a dark spot may be counterfeited by grouping short stitches of dark brown. The work should be done from the margin toward the centers, but a little practice will enable the worker to make the return stitch without carrying the crewel back to the starting-point underneath. The knack of doing this is worth acquiring in view of the rapidity with which chenilles, silks and arasenes disappear when a large design is being worked. The veining is done with darker shades than the body of the leaves and like the branch and stems should all be worked one way—that is with the stitches proceeding in a uniform direction. As the work progresses it may be viewed from a distance to note the effect, and the high lights subdued or the darker tones lightened by juxtaposition with darker or brighter tints. The entire range of olive greens in crewels, silks, chenilles, and all embroidery materials may be used with advantage in embroidering foliage upon any color that is not itself of a green which is too easily assimilated with the applied colors. There should, of course, be harmony, but when the decoration is not sufficiently contrasted with the background the effect is apt to be monotonous. In embroidery as in painting the exact hues of the natural flower are not to be too closely copied,

but these hues as they are affected by distance, atmosphere and other conditions.

Except in a design where a great many colors are needed to produce a desired effect it is best to avoid introducing a conglomeration of colors. A color that forms a friendly background to one shade may destroy the beauty of another, though both may represent tints found close together in Nature, who, however, sets her gems as no master in all the arts can hope to equal. Green and blue in solid masses are colors that the needle artist will do well to avoid. The secret of using green she may hope to learn with experience, but the cold, unresponsive tone of the blue she cannot overcome. Nevertheless, light feathery foliage, embroidered as if growing from the ground and starred by the tiny blossoms of the forget-me-not, constitute one of the most effective decorations that can be worked on browns and sage greens. The neutral gray and *écru* shades of canvas and linen are receptive to pink and all red shades, and the deeper browns are in sympathy with gold, maize and their various kindred. Let the eye assist the worker to formulate a scheme of color, and then having selected the tints and tones composing the harmony, study the play of light and shade to determine how to use them. In a repeating design, such as would be employed for a mantel-drapery, or a border of any kind, avoid a monotonous repetition of just the same shades of color at regular intervals, as such an arrangement is a foe to artistic results. Purple and lavender shades such as are found in wisteria, pansies, lilacs, etc., are not easily applied to any colors save black, white and light yellow, though occasionally superior artistic taste develops a symphony in color, in which these shades are harmonic links between strongly contrasting tones. The improvements in dyeing flax threads which have recently been made place

them little, if any, below silks in the artistic scale and they are used with most successful results for conventional embroidery upon canvas, crash, burlaps, linen, sateen, pongee and similar fabrics.

The two sections composing the design of autumn leaves given in this chapter may be

united at their edges having dotted lines and marked a and b, and the design will be found an effective one for screens, banners or any article to which such a decoration is adapted.

It is as has been previously suggested, quite as well adapted to painting in oil or water colors as to embroidery.

A Pretty Clock-Case.

It presents a very effective contrast, brought out by using fancy-headed nails upon a background of ruby plush, but its foundation is only a cigar-box, with a round opening cut in it, through which is visible the face of a little nickel-plated clock, such as may be purchased for a small sum. The opening must be a perfect circle, and the plush, to look well, must be smoothly applied. To fit it around the circular opening, it should be slashed crosswise and lengthwise through the center, the slashes extending almost to the margin of the opening, and short slits being made between them to permit of drawing the margin of the plush inside, where it

may be held in place with the tiny tacks used for this and similar purposes. All the outer edges having been secured with these tacks, the face of the box is decorated with ornamental tacks having star-shaped heads, their arrangement simulating a pretty scroll design around the opening. Sometimes a second box is covered, and set flatly for a base upon the shelf or table supporting the clock, and the clock cover or case is set in an upright position upon this. The ornamentation may be embroidery or painting instead of the brass-nail work, but the latter is just now much favored for decorating almost every article of furniture, both large and small.

