



CHAPTER XXXVII.

CRYSTALLIZATION PAINTING.



THIS variety of painting, though not an entire novelty, is more admired now than at any time in its history, because of the resemblance to illuminated or jewelled glass effects which may be developed in it. Two specimens of crystallization painting are included in this chapter. At Figure No. 1 a design mounted as a fire-screen is shown. The subject is a floral one, and includes a bird with outstretched wings, poised upon a branch. It is painted on glass, which should be clear and free from flaws of every kind. Before proceeding to paint upon it, the worker will do well to assure herself that it is absolutely clean, by polishing it with alcohol and chalk, and rubbing it with tissue paper or chamois. The design which is to be followed is then placed upon a table and the glass laid over it. With a fine brush dipped in bitumen, all the outlines are accurately traced upon the glass and the general effect of light and shade is indicated by free strokes. Strong lights and shadows may be thrown upon the portions directly in the foreground or first plane, but for those further removed the treatment may

be more uniform, though they should not by any means be thrown into a heavy shadow, unless such treatment is essential to the arrangement. Having given the subject the prominence upon the glass which the outlining and the laying in of the shadows produces, the unpainted portion of the glass is overlaid with a thick coat of bitumen, a coarse brush being used for the open, and a fine one for the interspaces. Extreme care is necessary in this stage of the work. The outlines should be kept distinct and the glass free from soils, as it is the side the painting is done on that will be enclosed, and no subsequent treatment can quite obliterate soils or finger marks.

In using the bitumen turpentine is mixed with it in greater or less quantities, according to the effect to be produced. It may be thinned with the liquid to the consistency required for the lightest washes, and it may be put on as nearly pure as its easy manipulation with the brush permits. Between these extremes its intermediate gradations are many, and they are regulated according to the depth and brilliancy of tone which the subject treated is to display. Having permitted the bitumen ample time to dry, the principal por-

tions of the design are painted in their natural colors. It is immaterial whether oil or water colors be used, provided either are of the best and are transparent. When a vivid effect is desired the colors are laid on quite thickly, and as nearly in their pure state as may be. The less conspicuous portions of the design, such as the stems and branches of the flowers, the beak and claws of the bird,

at a consistency that will give them a semi-subdued effect. When the natural colors are dry, such portions of the design as are to present a very brilliant effect are varnished with copal varnish, and the glass is backed with tinfoil or silver paper (the kind that is highly illuminated on one side and dark on the other), such as underlies pearl buttons upon the card, is the best. This paper should be



FIGURE NO. 1.—FIRE-SCREEN, ORNAMENTED WITH DESIGN IN CRYSTALLIZATION PAINTING.

are painted with opaque color, ochre, Naples yellow, vermilion and lead-white constituting a list from which the artist may select those ordinarily in demand for such subjects as are most admired for this style of painting. For the plumage of the bird very brilliant colors may be used, if the bitumen has been applied

crumpled in the hand and then drawn out almost smooth again, and a space of about one-fourth of an inch should intervene between it and the glass. To prevent the paper from impinging upon the glass, place triangular bits of pasteboard back of the corners and attach the paper to these, taking care

that it is adjusted in such a way that it will not strike the glass at any point. The glass is now ready for framing. The fire-screen illustrated is framed in a narrow moulding of brass, and the standard which supports it is of brass. The backing visible outside the paper may be wood, metal or a glass similar in size to the one painted upon. If the painting is to be mounted in the manner represented, glass is the most desirable selection,

lines of gold. The easel which supports it harmonizes with the frame.

A list of transparent colors containing those most in request for crystallization painting is as follows: aureolin, gamboge, Italian-pink, gall-stone, Indian-yellow; all the madders and crimson-lake; Prussian-blue, indigo and ultramarine; orange and burnt-sienna; brown-madder, Vandyke-brown and lamp-black.

Asphaltum or any good varnish of the

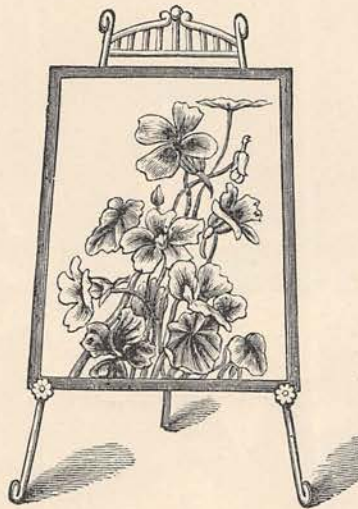


FIGURE NO. 2.—DESIGN IN CRYSTALLIZATION PAINTING.

while if it is to be hung upon the wall a wooden backing is adequate.

Figure No. 2 represents some variations in the treatment. The design was outlined with bitumen, and the lights and shadows washed in with diluted bitumen in the manner described, but the unpainted portion was painted a semi-translucent shade of white, in contrast with which the brilliant hues of the design present a very effective appearance. The frame of the picture is a narrow one, enamelled in white, slightly relieved by faint

grade used for oil painting may be employed for adding to the brilliancy of crystallization painting.

Some color mixtures which have been tested and found very successful for this style of work are as follows: for light green, Italian-pink and ultra-marine blue; for some shades of dark green, indigo is valuable; for others indigo and burnt-sienna may be mixed. Roses, which are particularly effective selections from the floral kingdom, may be painted in crimson-lake, rose-madder and brown-

madder, the most vivid colors being used for those that are to appear most conspicuous in the drawing. Colors that take a long time to dry may be mixed with Japanners' gold size and a little turpentine.

Water, correctly painted, has a very good effect in this variety of art. It should be shaded with long, straight, broken lines,

which should be quite dark in the front of the picture and gradually lightened toward the background. Mountainous or elevated distances may be represented with the aid of neutral tints mixed with a little white. For such subjects only a semi-transparent effect is desirable. Glass for painting on, cut to the requisite size, is easily obtained.

▷ ON THE TABLE. ◁

AN extremely pretty and quite durable table-runner, which is the name applied to the narrow, oblong mats spread over the center of the cover, may be made as follows: Take a strip of fine linen sateen about four feet long and from twelve to fourteen inches wide; work a design in Roman embroidery, using white flax thread for the button-hole stitching, and underlay the design with the strong white net which in weave resembles coarse Brussels net, and can be purchased at all fancy goods shops.

A pretty stand for the coffee or tea-pot consists of a flat tile. If you have a taste for china painting, you can decorate a few in blue, red, yellow or in any of the neutral or dull colors now admired for china decoration. To beginners in the study, a hint may be given, that considerable valuable experience

in grounding or tinting may be gained by making up a few color designs on tiles, and noting the effect after they are fired. For instance, a tile tinted in four shades of blue arranged in a geometric design or in two shades of blue, with coral and gray, would enable one who contemplated doing a set of plates in these tints to judge of their exact effect after being fired.

A pretty set of cups and saucers for chocolate is tinted in a warm but not deep chocolate color. The decoration consists of small branches of cocoa palms, two of which are bound together at each side of each piece with a golden ribbon, this being bowed in Pompadour fashion at the point of crossing, and arranged in a scroll between the palms. The latter are painted a dark brown with outlinings of gold.

