



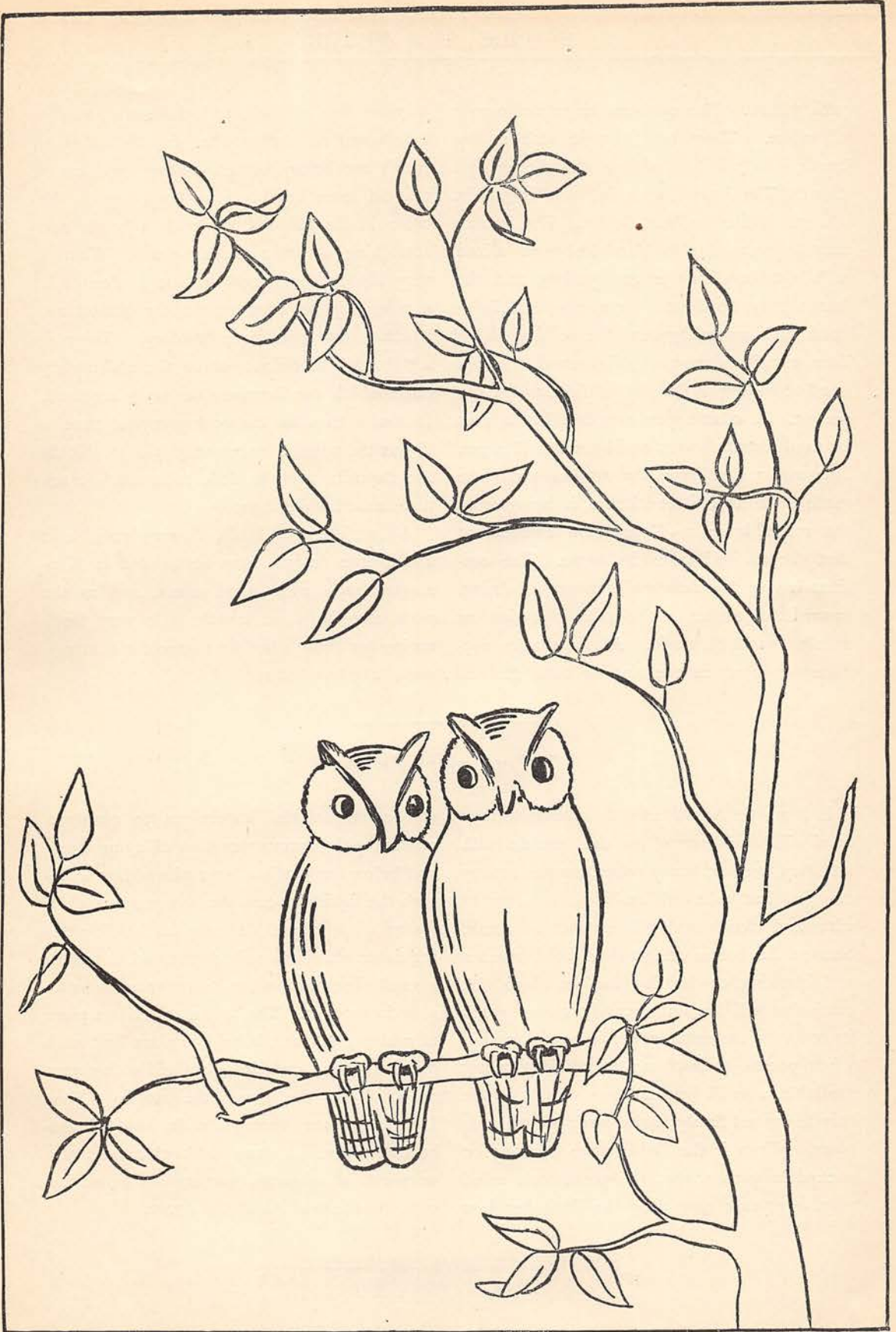
CHAPTER XXXIII.

Design in Kensington Painting: Owls on a Branch.



THE wise-looking birds chosen for this study are favorite selections with amateurs in bird-painting, and they are excellent subjects for practice. As here represented they are well adapted to the decoration of blotters, stationery-cases, banners, lamp-screens, etc. The method known as Kensington painting is much favored for such subjects. It is done as follows: the design is first sketched or stamped upon the material, and then the colors necessary are prepared upon the palette. Upon some materials they may be used just as they come from the tube, while on others, velvet or plush, for instance, many prefer to add a few drops of turpentine to each color as it is taken out upon the palette. A strong writing pen, preferably one of the long, stiff bank-pens used by business men, is used to do most of the painting. To do the painting fill the hollow of the pen with paint, wipe off the back and proceed to paint the most striking features of the birds, drawing the pen toward you with firm even strokes so as to cause the nib to spread and form the feather stroke which is characteristic of the method. The pen is held with the hollow

side upward, and should be placed firmly upon the goods and drawn with light, yet secure, touches. Should the pen turn over and deposit the paint in a heap do not attempt to take it up, but draw the pen through it, as if painting, until it is distributed. These owls are of the large brown and white variety. The coloring of the breast feathers is produced by mixing Vandyke-brown with white and a little lemon-yellow. Occasionally a feather of pure brown is painted, and the wings are principally white, a mottled effect being obtained by drawing short pen-strokes of brown through them. The tails are made very dark with ivory-black, and have a smoother effect than the wings and breast, owing to their longer and fewer feathers. A small brush may be used to lay the color on the bills, Vandyke-brown being used. Around the heads and faces considerable white is used, the male owl having darker markings which are painted with yellow and brown. To bring out these points well a single feather here and there may be painted quite dark, but the effect is marred if the whole head be very much darkened. The work on the claws is best done with a strong but fine pen, using Vandyke-brown livened



with yellow. The eyes are large and nearly all white. They are painted with a fine brush, which is held almost straight up and down. The brown spot in each is put in after the white has become dry. The branch may be painted with Vandyke-brown mixed with a trifle of white and yellow, and the leaves may be done in chrome-green lightened with emerald-green, the veining being done with Vandyke-brown lightened or deepened according to the play of light and shade sought. A coarse pen or a fine brush may be used for the leaves and branch. If a pen is used for the leaves the strokes should be made so as to imitate stitches, it being from the resemblance to Kensington embroidery that the method takes its name. The outlines having been covered the pen is drawn toward the center in the same direction as stitches would be made. All the shades necessary to produce the tint or tone desired

may be thus applied, and the same method is followed, no matter what size of leaves or petals are being painted. Very large leaves may be more quickly done by laying on the color inside the outlines with a brush and scratching it with a pen afterward. When a very slightly roughened surface is desired, a needle may be used to do the scratching, which is imitative of embroidery. There is a "knack" in counterfeiting the embroidery effect which can however be easily acquired. It is wise to allow the work plenty of time to dry as the paint is necessarily laid on thickly and deposits itself in little rolls which crack if disturbed while damp.

All varieties of birds, flower-pieces, fruit and foliage designs may be painted in Kensington style with good effect, and as the work may be done rapidly it is very fascinating for those who like to see their impressions take rapid shape.

A Convenient Trifle.

It is a little box lined with rubber cloth or oiled silk, and covered on the outside with imitation leather, heavy paper, canvas or any material that looks well and is not too frail to withstand close packing in satchel or trunk, because the box is designed to hold brushes and blacking, or dressing for the shoes. A catch that will keep it securely closed when its contents are not in use, is essential, and if a box possessing such an attachment is not available, a small leather strap with a buckle may be tacked firmly to the back to take its place. Even if the liquid shoe-dressing be packed in such a box, the possessor's mind may be at ease, providing she lines her box

with some material impervious to moisture, and takes the extra precaution of laying above and below the bottle a layer of wadding to absorb the liquid in case the stopper should be jostled out of place. A case for holding this requisite, which is easily duplicated, is merely a small pine box having its cover arranged to slide in grooves. The lining, which is a piece of rubber gossamer, is held in place by thumb tacks, and the outside is stained with cherry stain. Upon the cover the words "Shoe Dressing" are wrought with small brass-headed tacks. A strap and buckle, relic of a worn-out shawl-strap, impart additional security to the position of the cover.

