



### Painting on Terra-Cotta.

TERRA-COTTA forms a good background for either oil or water-color painting, and some very attractive and unique effects are produced upon it by the aid of the brush. Oil colors are more generally preferred for such work, but water colors are quite as well adapted to the purpose, if properly applied. Oil colors are best prepared by mixing them rather thick, and giving them plenty of body by combining with them flake-white or some similar color, and using only a little turpentine. In order that they may work freely without spreading, the deficiency in the quantity of turpentine used may be made up by adding Roberson's medium in such proportion as is needed to reduce them to the desired consistency. The first coat should be laid on rather thick and should be given ample time for drying before the final touches are added. In putting in the high lights and surface tints, the colors may be reduced with the aid of a little turpentine and some of the medium, but the addition of flake-white, or whatever corresponding body-color was used with the first coat, is not necessary at this stage of the work. After the second coat, or final touches of color, have become dry, the surface may be treated with a light coat of copal varnish, the best quality being, of course, the most desirable.

If water colors are used a preliminary wash of white size applied to the terra-cotta renders it receptive. Chinese-white is the best body-color for using with water colors, and the process of applying these colors is the same as described for oils. When the painting has become dry the surface may be lightly washed with very thin gum-water. After this has also dried, a coat of copal varnish is applied. In proceeding from one stage of the work to another, the chief caution to be observed is that of allowing time for drying. Experience will enable the artist to take advantage of many points, but the novice will do well to "make haste slowly." Sable brushes are best adapted to this class of work. The pencilled outlines should be made lightly; if an unskilled hand lays them on too heavily they may be erased with India rubber. Spirits of turpentine will remove inadvertent brush-marks. Quaint little figures, peering over balconies or resting against a mono-tinted background, may be rendered especially effective by having their backgrounds ornamented in colors, and such pieces are attractive and salable articles for donating to fairs and bazaars. They may be purchased for trifling sums in their undecorated state, and are usually quite artistic in design and execution.

