PROGRESSIVE LESSONS

INTENDED TO ELUCIDATE THE

ART OF PORTRAIT PAINTING,

IN WHICH IS INTRODUCED

A SYSTEMATIC ARRANGEMENT

OF THE

Colours and Tints used in Flesh, Draperies, and Back-Grounds;

WITH

EXAMPLES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE SEVERAL STAGES OF A PICTURE,

FROM

THE DEAD-COLOURING TO THE FINISHING:

TOGETHER WITH

THE PALLETS,

AS SET OUT FOR THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD PAINTING.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A Treatise on Miniature Painting,

IN THE COURSE OF WHICH

THE COLOURS AND TINTS IN GENERAL USE, THE PREPARATION OF THE IVORY, CHOICE OF PENCILS AND EVERY KIND OF INFORMATION IN THAT DEPARTMENT OF ART IS FULLY AFFORDED FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE PRACTITIONER.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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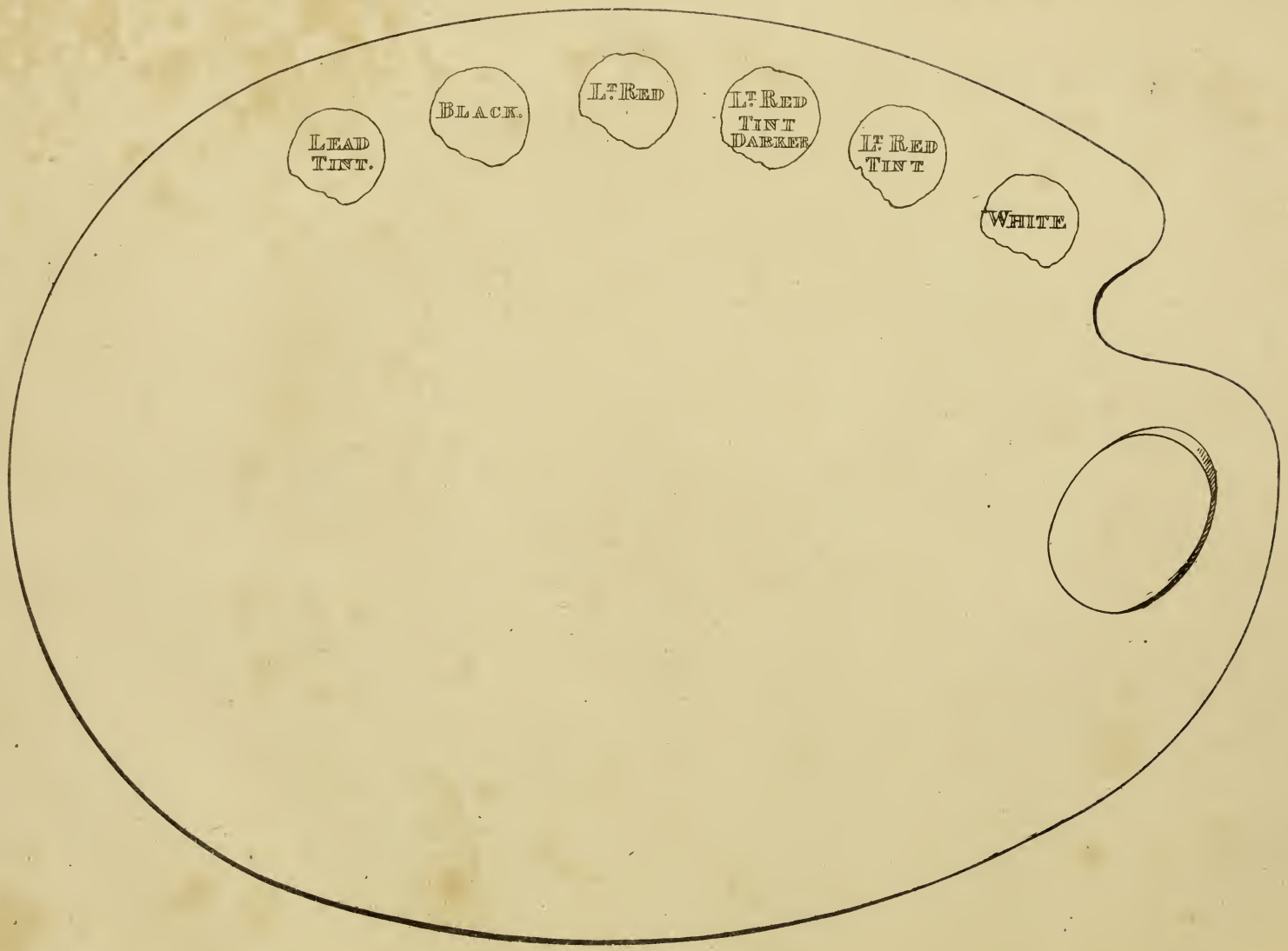
First Palette.



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PREFACE.

It is much to be regretted that few works of a practical nature tend to an elucidation of such principles as are essential to the easy attainment of the knowledge of painting; and the reason is too obvious to escape notice:—men of mere practical information usually prepare such works for the press, and consider theory of little or no importance—their remarks are therefore confined to the practice abstractedly; whereas the practice can only be understood in proportion as it is connected with theory. Again, it is not unfrequent that works on the arts are mere compilations by men wholly unconnected with the pursuit, and whose object in preparing such treatises would be fairly drawn from the reply of the razor vendor:—

"Made," quoth the fellow, with a smile, "to sell."

Such being the case, little surprize can be excited in the mind, that productions of this kind are of so little utility, and an apology for putting forth the present work, uniting the theory with the practice, will be felt to be quite unnecessary.

It is the object of the present work to furnish such hints to the practitioner as will remove the difficulties generally experienced, in his early practice, from a want of that information, which, without such aids, laborious study only will enable him to acquire, and in the

prosecution of which much time must be necessarily sacrificed. Founded on the practice of the best masters, from close observation, and long experience in the pursuit of painting, the following pages, it is confidently presumed, will afford such information as will materially facilitate the advances of the student, and render his object of easy and certain attainment. By the arrangement of the different pallets, and the explanations accompanying them, descriptive of the first, second, and third paintings, the process is so simplified as to be readily comprehended. Connected with this, and in accordance with the observations on the process, the plates shewing the different states or stages of a performance, are peculiarly adapted to exemplify such remarks, and to shew the effect of the picture after the several paintings from the dead colouring to the finishing. That nothing may be wanting which can possibly assist the rising artist, the grounds for painting on have been considered, the colours and tints in general use for the painting of flesh systematically arranged, and remarks given on portrait painting in general and the management of back grounds and draperies, together with some observations on the advantages of copying the old masters, and notices necessary to be made in the course of such studies.

Contrast in motion is founded on reason, which in a short time we can attain by practice, and with facility communicate to others, as is also the division or proportion of the members of the human figure; the same may be observed of lights and shadows, as far as they are connected with, and can be explained by the rules of perspective; but the disposing of colours by and over each other, so as

to produce a powerful effect, and at the same time contribute to the harmony of the whole, has been left to the study and exertions of each individual whose pursuit has rendered such knowledge or information necessary ; it becomes, then, little matter of surprize that out of the great mass of painters who have contributed by their talents to furnish works of art, so few have been successful in this particular branch of it. It is the object of this work so far to reduce the art of colouring to a system, as will form a ground-work for the efforts of those who, professionally or otherwise, may need such assistance in their progress of attaining knowledge.

As the art of miniature painting has been pursued with considerable advantage and success of late years in this country, we have annexed to the observations on portrait painting in oil, a treatise on the art of painting in miniature, in which the simplest and most easy process is pointed out, the tints of the flesh for the various complexions fully explained, together with the choice of pencils, and the best mode of preparing the ivory for the purposes of painting on.

PROGRESSIVE LESSONS

IN ELUCIDATION OF

THE ART OF PORTRAIT PAINTING.

THOUGH portrait painting has been ranked by some as a minor branch of the art, we find few who have excelled in it compared with the number who have come forth to the world in that particular department; and perhaps such failure may be owing rather to the manner in which it has been estimated, than to the real difficulties to be surmounted. The man who does not justly appreciate the difficulties he has to contend with, will never take the trouble to overcome them—hence, the individual who takes up this branch merely from a conviction of its easy attainment, will, in all probability, experience little else than disappointment. Comparing it with history painting, it will be readily admitted that the study is less difficult, and the necessary information less extensive: for, while the study of history requires the information of the historian, the fancy of the poet, a general knowledge of men and manners, and an acquaintance with the customs and costume of almost every age and every country, the portrait painter has little else than a good knowledge of the figure to attain, and a capability of representing with taste and correctness such objects as are placed before him to copy; this will require maturity of eye, facility of hand, and a good acquaintance with character and expression, without which a picture, though well painted, will afford little pleasure to the eye of the spectator.

The materials for painting are a prepared canvass, an easel, a pallet, either of mahogany, wainscoat, or other hard wood, about twelve inches long by nine in breadth, pallet knife, hog tools of various sizes, (French tools are the best); a rest stick for supporting the hand while painting, light drying oil and mastick varnish. The colours used in oil are bladder colours, which with all other materials for painting may be had ready prepared at the artist's colour shops. The drying oil should be of the purest sort, as the boiled oil sold at the common colour shops will be found to change all the colours with which it is used. White chalk will be likewise necessary, as it is the best substance for sketching in the gross forms on the canvass, and is easily brushed off when incorrect, without soiling or injuring the surface, a circumstance which should be carefully attended to, as all dark or black spots will be seen more or less through the painting, and spoil the effect, character, or colouring of the picture. A megelp for painting is made of drying oil and mastick varnish, in equal proportions in the following manner: put a little oil into a gally-pot, pour into it the same quantity of mastick varnish, beat them together till they are well mixed, in a few minutes it will stiffen to the consistency of thick cream or butter in warm weather; this should be used in all the flesh tints and other light parts of the picture in preference to drying oil, as the tints thus managed are not so liable to change, and the colours work full and fat.

Much has been said of the simplicity of the method adopted by the ancients, who are supposed to have confined themselves to the use of four colours only; but of this little is known, and as little can be said of the advantages derived by them from such practice, the artist of the present day having no opportunities of examining works that have long since fallen into decay; we can, therefore, consider such only which time has brought down to us, and the list that contains the names of Titian, Rubens, Vandyke, Rembrandt, &c. would be little improved, by the introduction of others that would carry the mind to an era nearly two thousand years ago. The

present work will furnish such information as can be derived from the study of those masters whose names stand in the first rank for colouring, and none, perhaps, are in higher estimation than those already mentioned. We have had since their time a Lely, a Kneller, and a Reynolds, who though the first in their day for the character and expression of their portraits, cannot be brought into competition with those before-mentioned, for their knowledge and style of colour.

OF GROUNDS.

Nothing is of greater importance than the colour of the ground on which a picture is to be painted, as all tints partake, in a greater or less degree, of those on which they are laid. For this reason the old masters very judiciously preferred warm grounds, as some do at the present day, to support their colours, and to prevent that deterioration of the warmer tints, which must otherwise necessarily take place. What is here said of the colour of grounds, applies to every stage or progressive state of a picture, as a preceding stage may always be considered as a ground for the next painting; the greatest attention is therefore requisite to the first painting, or dead colouring, as it is usually called, it being the chief object that this preparation should be suited to receive and support the second painting and finishing colours. In the use of grey grounds a method is sometimes adopted of laying in the shadow with one colour only, making out the parts as in drawing with Indian ink, leaving the colour of the canvass clear in the lights: this is done previously to the dead colouring, and always with a warm transparent colour. Burnt terra de Sienna is well suited for this purpose, as it warms and enriches the dead-colouring in the shadows. A still further advantage is derivable from this method: the young practitioner is enabled with little difficulty to put in the gross forms, and to arrange the masses, which, if obtained to his satisfaction, he is under no apprehension of losing

in the process of dead-colouring, as the drawing in burnt terra de Sienna being left to dry, cannot by accident be obliterated, as would sometimes be the case, if put in in chalk, pencil, or other dry substance.

OF THE COLOURS USED IN FLESH, AND THEIR PROPERTIES.

The principal colours used in the painting of flesh are flake white, ivory black, ultramarine, (or Antwerp blue changed with a small portion of vermilion, the Antwerp being somewhat inclined to a greenish hue), light red, vermilion, lake, carmine, Indian red, light ochre, Naples yellow, brown ochre, brown pink, asphaltum, burnt terra de Sienna, and raw ditto. Though the above colours are introduced in the painting of flesh generally, the whole of them will, perhaps, never be required in one complexion; the lake, carmine, vermilion and Naples yellow, being suited to the delicate; light red, Indian red, light ochre, vermilion, and sometimes brown ochre, to the stronger ones.

Flake White, if properly prepared, is the best white now in use, and, though apt to change, will be found to maintain itself, if used with light drying oil and mastick varnish beaten together, better than any other.

Ivory Black is a good working colour, and may be used as a glazing colour in strong complexions, where the retiring parts require additional strength; with the assistance of a little Antwerp blue it answers all the purposes of blue black when mixed to a grey or lead tint.

Ultramarine is the finest blue we have both for colour and constancy, not being liable to changes; but being expensive is little used. Antwerp blue, with the addition of a little vermilion answers nearly the same purpose.

Light Red is burnt light ochre, and is particularly useful in the general tints of the flesh, but should be improved with a little vermilion for delicate complexions.

Chinese Vermilion is the most to be reliedon, and should be used in preference to any other, being superior in colour and constancy, and possessing more of the tint of carmine.

Lake is a deep red, and a fine glazing colour; mixed with vermilion it answers the purposes of carmine where the complexion is not particularly delicate.

Carmine is a fine crimson, and from its peculiar transparency is well adapted for glazing; in delicate complexions it can seldom be dispensed with.

Indian Red is a strong useful colour, but can be used with success only in strong complexions.

Light Ochre is useful in most complexions where much delicacy is not required.

Naples Yellow is particularly useful in delicate complexions; in females and children it is, perhaps, the only yellow that can be introduced with advantage.

Brown Ochre is suited to warm, powerful complexions; it is a colour that stands well and works freely.

Brown Pink is a warm, rich, glazing colour, extremely useful in the stronger shadows, and, being very transparent, forms, with the addition of lake, one of the finest glazing tints we have in parts where great depth is not required.

Asphaltum is a fine, deep, warm brown, a good glazer, and extremely useful in strong complexions where great force is required; it is a bad working colour, and can be used successfully only in conjunction with drying oil and mastick varnish. Having your asphaltum on your pallet, put a little oil and mastick varnish into a cup, work them together, and with this mix your asphaltum on your pallet, it will then be more free and pleasant in working, and not drag in the pencil.

Burnt Terra de Sienna is a fine warm brown, of little depth, not much used in flesh, but extremely useful in the first making out of

your picture, as it tends to warm such tints as are laid on it, without in the least degree injuring their effect.

Raw Terra de Sienna is a rich yellow, extremely useful in strong complexions.

FIRST PAINTING.

OF THE PALLET FOR THE FIRST PAINTING.

As nothing contributes so much to the successful finishing of a picture as the first lay or dead colouring, I shall divide it into two parts, distinguishing the cold, delicate complexions from those of a warm and powerful character.

For strong complexions set your pallet in the following order; commencing at the off-side of your pallet, near the thumb-hole. White, light red tint, made of light red and white; the same with a greater proportion of light red; next, light red pure; black; and last, lead or grey tint, which is a mixture of black and white.

The preceding arrangement will be found particularly convenient, each colour or tint being so placed, that it may be strengthened or weakened by merely passing the pencil from the one to that next in order either right or left, for example: if your light red tint be too light, it can be strengthened by the light red next to it; if too dark, it can be weakened by the white on the other side; this preserves the centre of your pallet for any thing further which may be required, and will tend to keep your tints distinct,—your flesh tints on the one side, your grey and shadow tints on the other.

For cold and delicate complexions, the same arrangement will answer, improving your light red tint with vermilion, and your grey tint with blue; or your grey tint may be made of blue, white, and a small portion of vermilion, that it may the better harmonize with the light red tint improved.

OF THE PROCESS OF THE FIRST PAINTING, OR DEAD-COLOURING.

It is here presumed that the drawing of your picture is made out on your canvass in some warm colour, as mentioned in page 7, and that the masses of shadow are generally laid in, though not powerfully.

Lay in the broad and powerful shadows with light red and drying oil, strengthening with a small portion of ivory black, as may be necessary for the making out of the several parts. This should be done in the same manner as is practised in drawing in Indian ink, without any white, the beauty of the shadows depending much on their warm, transparent brilliancy, which the introduction of white would materially destroy, producing a heavy unpleasant appearance, not to be removed by the after glazing. Be careful that the shadows be laid in with a firm, bold hand, with a close attention to the general forms, avoiding too nice a making out of the smaller parts, to softening, or to producing a finished appearance, which would tend only to lower that force and powerful effect so necessary to bring the objects from the canvass. Having proceeded thus far, lay in your lead or grey tint close to your dark masses, in such proportions as may form a middle tint between your dark shadows and your flesh tints with which you paint in your masses of light, and which should be done in the light red tint, in different degrees of strength, with a full pencil and stiff colour, taking nature for your guide; the forehead being the lightest and most delicate part of the head, will require but little strength of colour; the cheeks may be laid in stronger, and the more powerful parts of the complexion, say the carnations, should be attended to in a broad and general way, but not particularly, as it is much better to leave it to dry, when in the second painting they can be touched with greater certainty. The lights and middle or grey tints may be now united, but not too much blended or broken into each other, and the middle tints united with the masses of shadow, without losing the bold character of the forms. It is well in this

stage of the picture to rub in the masses in the back ground ; light red and a little ivory black may be used on this occasion, as it will harmonize with the tints of the face, and serve as a ground for such other tints as the tone of the complexion or the colour of the drapery may require. It will be found, after thus blending the lights with the shadows, that a clean ground is prepared for the reception of such colours as may bring the complexion up to the life—a greater variety of tints in the first painting would perplex the practitioner, and render his after efforts extremely difficult, if not altogether abortive. The hair in this stage should be laid in in such colours as come near to the effect of nature in bold broad masses.

When yourpicture is dry, correct, if necessary, the different masses with the same tints you have already used, till the gross proportions and character are well established, lowering or heightening the parts till they are in general keeping ; that is, till they keep their places in the masses to which they belong, and your likeness as to forms is decided and evident, taking care not to soften too much, as your second and finishing painting will produce all the softening necessary. When dry proceed to the second painting.

SECOND PAINTING.

THE PALLET FOR THE SECOND PAINTING.

The following is the arrangement for the second painting, beginning as before on the off-side with white, then Naples yellow, raw Sienna, vermilion, lake, light red, black, blue, asphaltum, brown pink ; the mixed tints, viz. Naples yellow tint, raw Sienna tint, light red tint, lead or grey tint, lie more in the centre of the pallet, nearly opposite to those colours of which they are made.

OF THE PROCESS OF THE SECOND PAINTING.

The second painting is divided into two parts, the first of which consists in scumbling* the lights, and glazing† the shadows.

For scumbling the lights nothing is better suited than the light red tint, which should be used sparingly, carrying it no further than is necessary for improving the complexion, or correcting and making out such forms as may in this stage be required. By sparingly is not to be understood much oil and little colour, but driving or working the colour rather bare with a small quantity of oil.

Glazing is performed with pure colours, unmixed with white, for the reasons before stated, the more transparent the better, provided they are suited to improve those parts of the complexion where they are used. Lake and brown pink, from their transparency, may be used with success when great depth is not wanted. Asphaltum may be used in stronger complexions, but sparingly, as it is apt to get heavy; the glazing tints should never mix with the lights or middle tints, as they destroy the pearly hue of the one and the freshness of the other.

The second part of the second painting consists in improving the complexion both in the lights and shadows with pure colours, with the reds, the yellows and the blues, as they are observable in nature, in such a manner as that the dead-colouring or first painting may be seen faintly through them, which, indeed, should be preserved to the finishing of the picture. Though I have mentioned pure, or what is called virgin tints, it must be considered to relate more particularly to the shadows, as it will in the lights be found necessary to use the mixed tints occasionally—the Naples yellow and white, raw Sienna and white, and the light red tint. If it be found difficult to bring the parts sufficiently up to nature in this painting, suffer your picture to dry,

* The process of scumbling is that of working stiff colour over the lights with little oil, and as barely as possible.

† Glazing is performed with transparent colours and drying oil, and confined principally to the shadows.

and then repeat the process already described where it may appear necessary ; you will thus have prepared your picture for the third or finishing painting.

THIRD PAINTING.

THE PALLET FOR THE THIRD PAINTING OR FINISHING.

The pallet for the third painting differs little from that of the second. The same arrangement may suffice with the addition of burnt terra de Sienna, which may be placed next behind the brown pink, a tint of vermilion and white, and a tint of lead or grey mixed to a warmer tone than that used in the second painting, which will better harmonize with the tints in those places where it may be required.

OF THE PROCESS OF THE THIRD PAINTING.

It is presumed that the drawing and effect is now generally made out, and that the likeness is so far complete as to require little in the way of correction; finishing is, therefore, the principal object ; and as this part is of the more delicate kind, care should be taken to do no more than is essentially necessary to improve the picture. The most decided mode should be adopted in this stage of your picture ; every touch should be well considered, that it require no alteration, and that it may have the effect desired ; such touches should be laid on with freedom and certainty ; there should be nothing of a random or doubtful character, for on this depends the spirit and animation of the performance.

Though painting has been divided into three parts, first, second, and third, it is not to be understood that a picture is, or must necessarily be finished in what is called three paintings ; and it has been a frequent practice of our best artists to retouch their pictures several times, leaving them to dry between the various retouchings.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE COLOUR OF FLESH.

Though the different colours of the naked are as various as the objects themselves, it may be useful to observe on their three states or conditions—health, sickness, and death, as applied to the child, the man, and the woman; of the last stage, death, the portrait painter has nothing to do, yet it may be well for him not to be wholly unacquainted with the manner in which such effect is produced, or, indeed, it may prevent him from producing such effect where it is unnecessary. The child, when in health, is of a rosy colour, the man of a warm glowing colour, the woman of a fair colour. Being dead, the child is violet, the man more grey, yet somewhat yellowish, and the woman like the child, but more beautiful, having the whiter skin. The causes of these varieties, according to the age and sex, are discoverable on the following considerations, that the child having a thin skin, and being full of blood, must appear ruddy; the man, being more yellow, and his skin thicker, must appear more grey, since the blood can shine less through it; and the woman, having a white and smooth skin, must therefore shew herself somewhat ruddy. Hence it is that a child, in its tender parts, is more violet, a man more grey, and a woman blue, yet more inclining to the green than the violet. This is demonstrable by the colours themselves; for, mixing blue and red it becomes violet, for children; blue, red, and yellow, make a grey, for men; and yellowish white, mixed with very little red and blue gives a greenness for women.

OF BACK-GROUNDS.

On the management of back-grounds depends much of the effect, force, character, and harmony of a picture. They should be at all times subservient to the principal object, that is, the protrait, for on that we are now treating; and should be in conformity with the colour of the complexion, the drapery and embellishments introduced in the composition; not forgetting the age, sprightliness, or gravity of

the individual; for it would evidently be absurd to introduce the same brilliant or strongly charactered, back-ground, broken occasionally with spirited lights into a picture which is the representation of an aged or grave statesman or divine, which might with propriety and success be introduced in that of a naval or military officer. Opposition in light and shadow and colour constitutes the principal feature in the pictures of some of our best artists; while others, on the contrary, adopt too much of the opposite principle; each are good in their way: by opposition we get force, by the other we get sweetness and harmony. A judicious use and union of both should be the object of every artist, who aims at becoming eminent in the profession. By way of illustration:—Let a head be painted, put a blue or cold grey back ground to it of an uniform tint, and its appearance will be crudeness and want of effect: introduce some of the flesh tints and drapery tints, the reds, the yellows, &c. and it will tend to harmonize the picture; introduce various strengths or degrees of shadow, and more harmony will be observable; thus it will be seen that the back ground should possess a certain portion of the tints of the face, draperies, &c. Indeed, as has been judiciously stated, the back grounds should be composed, as it were, of all the colours of the finishing pallet. It must still be remembered, that though the back grounds should be thus broken by the tints of the flesh and draperies, the opposition of colour must still be preserved, as a fair and beautiful complexion will be rendered still more so by being placed against a warm ground, the shadows thereby becoming more soft and tender, and the lights better supported and more agreeable; on the contrary, a warm complexion will be found to require a back ground more approaching to the grey or purple, which will give value to the tints of the face. As some difficulty will be found to arise in those instances where the artist is circumscribed by the wish or direction of the sitter, with respect to the by-works of a picture, as in the event of a curtain of a crimson or other colour being required, which may not so well suit the complexion, it will be necessary to consider the kind of

yellow or crimson which may be introduced most successfully in such cases, and how they may be lowered or broken down by the mixture of neutral tints, particularly in those parts which, coming in contact with the tints of the flesh, would, if not so managed, tend to depreciate their beauty.

We shall now consider the embellishments or by-works of a picture, which deserve considerable attention, and should be such as to convey to the mind of the spectator the character or situation the individual may sustain in society, or the general or favourite pursuit in which he may be principally engaged, and for which he may be justly celebrated ; as

For an officer in the navy, books on navigation, a quadrant, &c.

For a professor of medicine or surgery, a skull, a skeleton, anatomical drawings, lectures on anatomy and medicine, &c.

For a statesman, a roll with an appropriate inscription, allusive of some prominent or useful act or circumstance for which he may be esteemed or celebrated.

For a divine, the books of the Old and New Testament, with Christian emblems of the true faith.

For a philosopher, a celestial globe, the statue of Nature, &c. &c.

The task would be almost endless to enumerate the various emblems of character ; those already mentioned may suffice to shew the course necessary to be pursued in the introduction of the by-works, the rest must be left to the discretion of the artist, or to the opinion or judicious direction of the sitter.

OF DRAPERIES.

Though the management of draperies may be thought a matter of minor importance, and has been much neglected by some whose minds were attached to that which is of the first consideration in painting, to wit, character and expression, yet so essential is a good

understanding of this part of the art, that it would be improper to leave it unnoticed, or to merely glance at it as a matter of a common or general kind; it will be therefore treated of somewhat particularly.

OF WHITE DRAPERIES.

OF SATINS.

The delicacy of white draperies renders it necessary that the ground for the lights should be white; such parts should be therefore left quite clear of colour in your first sketch or rubbing in, as the paper is left for the lights in Indian ink drawings. It is here supposed that the masses of shadow, with an attention to the larger folds, are already made out in warm colour, as proposed in the observations under the head treating of the colour of grounds, page 7. We now come to the process of dead-colouring the draperies; and here the grey tint of black and white, mixed to the depth that may be deemed necessary, will be found best suited to make out the folds and to arrange all the principal forms, taking care in this stage not to leave them too hard or decided, as the sharp decision of character will be better and more readily obtained in your next painting, which will be when your first lay is dry; you will here find that your grey or lead tint will mix with your white in a pleasing, friendly manner, while those parts falling into the shadows will receive an agreeable warmth from the colour with which the masses were originally rubbed in; as the shadows become deeper, a still greater degree of warmth will be required, and which will be easily obtained by a small addition of brown ochre, which will produce that warm greenish tint observable in the shadows of white draperies affected by reflected lights. If the making out of the folds or the general effect of the drapery should be too heavy, or the tone of colour should be found to be generally too warm in the first painting, it may be easily changed or improved by scumbling pure white over the whole, and then, while wet, going again over the folds which will be seen through

the scumbling; this will produce a freshness of tint approaching to the lead or pearl found in the light and middle degrees of shadow in white satin, and which may be readily improved in finishing to the effect desired, by strengthening in various degrees as seen in the object before you. The forms being now made out so as to require little or no alteration, it only remains to finish the lights, which should be done with pure white, (that is without the addition of any other colour;) which should be laid on with free, spirited touches, deciding the character firmly and at once, and touching the shadows in their darker parts. It will be observed that the principal distinguishing characteristics of white satin from those of linen, consist chiefly in the sharpness of the lights, and the angular turns of the folds.

OF WHITE LINEN.

The tints of white linen are nearly the same as those of satin, and may be used in the same way, observing that the middle tints of linen are somewhat warmer, and consequently possess less of the lead or pearly tint; the folds are much thinner, fall more regularly from their places of origin, and their lights not so sharp nor so bold as those of silk or satin; the strengthenings should be more tender, and the finishing touches neater and more delicate. As the lights will be affected by the colour of the canvass, it is necessary in the first painting that they should be painted in stiff colour, with as little oil as possible; a megelp made of oil and mastick varnish beaten together is preferable to oil in all parts where it is material that the tints should retain their primitive freshness; that is, in the lights and middle tints; in the darker shadows, where much glazing is necessary, oil may be used with success, as it works more freely, and its tendency to change to a warmer hue is not objectionable, but in some cases rather desirable.

OF YELLOW DRAPERIES.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that it is almost impossible to

lay down any precise rule for the mixing of tints for coloured draperies, as the varieties are infinite; the judgment must, therefore, be directed chiefly by the peculiar colour of the object; for in speaking of yellow, it must be remembered, that it may be a light yellow or a dark one, more or less inclined to the green or to the red, to the pale tint of straw, or to the stronger one of the sun-flower, so the colours used must consequently vary according to the colour of the object about to be represented; some hints, however, may be useful. As the lights in all instances require to be supported, they should be laid in with a good body of colour, as near to the general colour of the object as can be produced at the first painting; the middle tints and gradations must be somewhat colder; the addition of a little black will produce the tint required; for by this can at once be obtained the degree of depth necessary, and that cool tone of colour so desirable in the intermediate parts between the lights and strong shadows; the darker parts on this, as on almost all other occasions, require more warmth. Raw terra de Sienna strengthened with asphaltum will answer in most cases, especially in strongly-coloured draperies; but, in the more delicate yellows, brown pink, tempered with a little black, will be found to harmonize better with the lights, and is easily brought in point of depth to the strength required. Should the lights of draperies be too low in the first painting, they may be readily improved and brought up, by driving a little stiff colour over the masses of light, without regarding the smaller parts of such masses; as the colour being driven very bare, those parts will be seen through, and may be retouched to bring them to the strength required. This observation applies to white as well as to coloured draperies, the lights of which may be brought up by driving pure white over them; it should likewise be remembered, that, as white is cold in its hue, should the forms among the masses of light be too warm or snuffy, this process will recover them, and harmonize them with the lights; for the warm tints in white draperies must be confined to the masses of shadow. The reflections

should in all cases be warm, this gives value and brilliancy to the lights.

OF GREEN DRAPERIES.

As the principle is, in all cases, to fall into cooler colour in the middle tints, and as we get into the shadows and reflections to become warm, it will be seen that, whatever tint is used in the lights, it will require merely the introduction of so much cool colour, say blue or black, as will be sufficient to strengthen it for the middle tint; thus, if we make a compound tint for the lights in our first lay, of light ochre, Prussian blue, and white, mixed to a bright yellow-green, the introduction of more Prussian will produce the middle tint, and an increase of Prussian blue, with the addition of brown pink, will answer for the shadows and reflections; these being strengthened in the second painting to the depth required by glazing, little more will be necessary than to improve the reflections and lay on the lights to character with firm spirited touches. King's yellow and Prussian blue has been used with success in painting green draperies; but though the richness and beauty of such greens may be generally admired, we must be guided rather by the colour of the object about to be copied, together with the surrounding embellishments, than the mere abstract consideration of the beauty of any particular colour or tint.

OF SCARLET DRAPERIES.

The ground for scarlet should be made of light ochre, white, and light red; the shadows of Indian red, vermilion and a little black, with a still greater proportion of black in the deeper parts; with these make out the folds in broad masses, leaving the smaller parts for the second and third paintings; when dry, glaze the lights with vermilion, introducing a little lake or Indian red as you fall into the shadows; glaze the shadows with Indian red and a little black to the depth required; there remains now little more to be done than to

lay on the high lights, with pure touches of vermilion, and to retouch the shadows with Indian red and black, observing to keep the reflexions warmer and richer than the lights.

OF BLUE DRAPERIES.

As blue is the coldest of all colours, pure white for the lights, and black and white for the shadows, form the best ground for the after paintings; with these the forms may be made out broadly. Mix a middle tint of a fine azure; this tint improved with white will answer for the lights, taking special care that they are not too low in tone, by which means their brilliancy would be lost, and the trouble incurred of repainting those parts; and should they be too light, a glazing of ultramarine or Prussian blue will readily bring them to their proper depth. The shadows should be strengthened with Prussian blue and ivory black, and the reflexions improved with some of the warm colours, as light red or even brown ochre, if the general tone of colour in the picture is sufficiently warm to harmonize with it. The process is generally the same as that mentioned in other draperies; that is, by glazing to the depth required, after having made out the forms, and finishing by laying on the high lights in a free spirited manner. The chief difference observable is, that in warm coloured draperies the middle tints are colder than the lights, whereas in blue draperies the lights are colder than the middle tints, as we have nothing colder with which depth can be obtained. The advantage arising from the use of black in the middle and darker shadows is however the same, as, by reason of its less brilliancy, it gives more force and value to the lights, which would not be the case if they were strengthened with blue only, whatever depth might be obtained thereby.

OF BLACK DRAPERIES.

It may be supposed that nothing requires less attention, or is more easily managed than the painting of black draperies; but

experience shews such supposition to be ill-founded: the various tints observable in black not being so palpable as in other draperies, may account for such misconception. As black mixed with white for the lighter parts would produce a lead tint, it is necessary to improve it with a little light red; the middle tint has less white and the stronger parts are formed of black, Indian red, and a little brown pink, which will harmonize with the reflexions, and produce that warm transparent hue so essential in the shadows of black draperies. As the process of making out the forms with the middle tint, and glazing the shadows to the strength required, has been already explained in the remarks on the variously coloured draperies, a repetition in detail of such mode of proceeding becomes altogether superfluous; it may therefore be necessary only to observe that the shadows should be warm, clear and brilliant.

GENERAL REMARKS ON PORTRAIT PAINTING.

Hitherto the subject has been considered chiefly as to the practice; and, though this be the principal object of the present work, it must still be evident that practical knowledge alone will little benefit the individual who proposes to himself to become a painter, whatever department it may be his choice to follow. It may be presumed that few persons would attempt this branch of the art, who were not previously well grounded in a knowledge of drawing, and who had not already acquired a maturity of eye and facility of hand; such being the essential requisites or ground-work; but, notwithstanding even such acquisitions, something further will be found necessary to the completion of a portrait; a perfect knowledge of the expression of the countenance of a sitter is of the first importance; for, however correctly the various parts or features may be painted, it will be but an insipid, uninteresting performance, if destitute of that individuality of character and feeling which will be found on close observation to be peculiar to almost every subject that comes under the notice of the artist. On the placing of a sitter depends much of the success of

the endeavour to obtain a faithful and an agreeable portrait; his situation should be such as that the light may shew the countenance to the best advantage; and the distance that where the full effect of character can be best observed; for these purposes a high light is preferable, as a breadth of shadow is thereby obtained which takes from the features that liney and crude appearance too frequently observable in nature. The sitter should, if possible, be divested of the idea of being such, should be free from constraint, in a natural and easy posture—a posture which would be generally assumed by the individual in family or friendly society. Nothing contributes more to the easy action of a sitter, and relieves more from embarrassment than conversation on general subjects, which should at all such times be promoted: it relieves the mind, the features take their free and unconstrained character, the countenance becomes animated, and the artist is thereby enabled to appreciate the general and natural expresssion. Personal defects, either of a natural or accidental kind, should, if possible, be avoided, or at least relieved as much as the subject will admit of. Pimples or other excrescences are unfavourable appendages to the human face, and every judicious artist would wish to leave them out of his picture, which in most cases may be done with propriety and advantage, such things being marks of a temporary nature; a few days or a few weeks sometimes occasioning their removal. In portraiture nothing should be more carefully avoided than caricature; if a man possess one or more features, much out of the regular proportion, it certainly would not be his ambition to be rendered still more remarkable by an excess of that in his portrait of which by nature he possessed already too great a share to render him an object of admiration. No man would wish to be known by his defects, or signalized by his deformities.

OF THE IMITATION OF, OR COPYING THE PICTURES OF GREAT MASTERS.

The advantages arising from the studying or copying the works

of great masters has been so generally ackowledged, that little need be said in favour of the practice, especially as we have in the present day an establishment,* a principal object of which is to furnish an opportunity to the rising artist, to collect such hints by copying their pictures, as may lead him to select, arrange, and copy from nature with greater facility and success. But though such advantages are felt and admitted, it frequently happens that such study is attended with little benefit; the student, having a predilection for the colour of some one master, pursues him through all parts of his performance, even to the copying of his defects, and that so servilely and so fastidiously that he imbibes all his errors, and not comprehending his system, gains little by copying even the better parts. Those masters only should be selected who are the most faithful to nature, and who have copied her under the most favourable circumstances; for even nature, if badly chosen, may be copied without affording benefit to the pupil or satisfaction to the spectator. In such pursuit it is necessary not only to copy the various parts of a picture carefully and correctly, but to observe the manner in which such parts are arranged, as well in respect to place, as to light and shadow and colour; the situations, whether forward or remote, and the opposition and harmony to be seen throughout the performance; for it must be readily acknowledged that all beauty and harmony of colour must depend on such judicious arrangement: for example, the tender and broken tints in the distant objects, however artfully disposed and happily harmonized, would lose their effect in fore-ground objects; and the powerful opposition to be found in fore-ground objects would be ill-suited to those in the distance; again, it is essential to notice the ground colour on which an object is painted, and the tone of colour by which it is surrounded; a yellow, a blue, or a red—a green, a purple, or a violet, depending for their brilliancy and beauty on the tints to which they are opposed; if powerful, it is rendered more so

* The British Institution.

by opposition ; if tender, it is still more subdued by tints in harmony with, or corresponding to itself.

ON MINIATURE PAINTING.

As miniature painting is an elegant and profitable amusement, I subjoin such remarks on the subject as will be found particularly useful in the execution of portraits of this description.

OF CHOOSING AND BLEACHING OF IVORY.

Sheet ivory is used for the purpose, which should be carefully selected ; that which is close grained and free from streaks or veins, is the best. It may be procured at the ivory turner's, and likewise at most of those colour-shops where materials for drawing and painting in water-colours are usually sold. If bought in the rough, it should be prepared in the following manner; lay your ivory on a smooth board, and with a sharp penknife scrape the leaf of ivory, until the saw marks are entirely removed, then with a piece of fine glass paper or Dutch rush, polish it carefully, moving your hand in a circular direction till a perfectly smooth surface be obtained ; after this process, which will leave the ivory with too much polish, take some pumice dust and water, and with a small muller pass it over the ivory, rubbing in a circular direction as before, till it has a dull appearance, and the shining spots totally obliterated. As ivory for this purpose will require bleaching, an iron moderately heated should be placed on the ivory, which being covered with or folded in clean paper, should be turned frequently till it assume a whitish appearance; care must be taken that the iron be not over-heated, as in such case an unpleasant opacity is produced, not suitable to the complexion of the face ; when you think the ivory sufficiently bleached

place it under a weight, that when cold it may become flat. When the ivory is thus prepared, and previous to the commencing your picture, cleanse the surface from the dust of the pumice with a little clean water, and when dry it will be fit for use. Ivory may be procured at some of the before-mentioned places ready prepared. Fix your ivory on a piece of fine card something larger than your picture, with stiff gum-water, touching it round the edges, not suffering the gum to get under the centre of the picture, as it will cause a dark and unpleasant appearance.

OF PENCILS USED IN MINIATURE PAINTING.

The pencils in common use are called sable pencils; they are more elastic than camel's-hair, and much firmer, by drawing them through the mouth, and then applying them to the thumb nail, the point should be fine and compact. One of a moderate size should be preferred, as the work in such cases will possess a more soft and mellow appearance; and though much neatness is essential in this sort of painting, a hard liney effect should be always avoided, which would be the necessary consequence of using a pencil too small for the picture about to be executed.

OF THE COLOURS USED IN MINIATURE PAINTING.

The yellows most in use in the flesh tints are gall stone, light ochre, and Naples yellow; the reds, madder lake, carmine, light red, and Chinese vermilion; the blues, ultramarine, Prussian blue, and Indigo; the browns, seppia, Vandyke brown, burnt terra de Sienna, and burnt umber; King's yellow, lamp black and flake white are likewise used in the painting of miniatures, but chiefly in the dresses.

GUM WATER.

As the properties of ivory are not absorbent, it is necessary to use some adhesive substance to attach the colours to its surface; a pre-

paration of gum-water made from the large white pieces of gum Arabic is by some preferred for this sort of painting, and is very useful when properly prepared, which may be done in the following manner; select the whitest that can be procured, as any degree of colour in the gum will more or less change the hue of the tint with which it is incorporated, put it into a clean phial, in the proportion of one-eighth gum to seven-eighths water; the fresher your gum-water the better. Gum-tragacon is likewise used for this purpose, and as it possesses the same adhesive property with little or no gloss, it is preferable in the general painting of miniatures; it gives greater body to the colours without clogging in the pencil. Put the same quantity as before prescribed to the same proportion of water, let it stand for forty-eight hours, when it will be fit for use.

OF TINTS USED IN THE FLESH.

The greys used in the face are various, depending on the complexion of the sitter, and the parts of the countenance in which they are to be used.

In warm complexions the greys should be warm; in cold and delicate ones the greys should be cold; by which a harmony of colour is preserved. A grey tint of burnt terra de Sienna, Prussian blue, and carmine, will be found to answer almost all the purposes where greys are required, either of a cold or warm character, as it may be varied from the warm to the cold, as occasion renders necessary; the more Prussian blue and carmine the colder, the more burnt terra de Sienna the warmer; should the complexion be particularly delicate, as in children and some females, the burnt terra de Sienna may be entirely dispensed with. The greys are used for putting in the forms, or masses of shadow, or what is called modelling the countenance; and too great an attention can scarcely be given to the forming of this tint, that it may harmonize generally with the flesh tints, or lighter parts of the face.

For strongly coloured complexions the yellows are light ochre

and gall stone; for the more delicate, Naples yellow; the reds for the former are light red, vermilion, and carmine; for the latter vermilion heightened with carmine in different degrees, as the subject may require.

TINTS FOR WHITE DRAPERIES.

The management of draperies is of peculiar importance in this branch of painting, as such pictures being seen closely, are subject to the most critical examination; on the happy choice, therefore, of a shadow colour for linen draperies, depends much of the fame and celebrity of some artists engaged in this department. The greys already mentioned may be used successfully for this purpose, letting them in their reflections fall into the warmer tints.

OF CLOTH DRAPERIES.

As cloth draperies require a peculiar management, I shall furnish such hints as will tend to a successful and expeditious execution of them. To produce the appearance exhibited by cloth, a small portion of flake white will be found necessary; this gives a solidity or opacity peculiar to such substances; and the colour thus mixed should be laid or floated over the part with a full pencil; the process is as follows:—Having placed your ivory on a level table, fill your pencil with colour, lay it speedily over such parts of your ivory as you wish to have covered, letting it run equally on every part, then placing it out of the dust, leave it to dry; by this means a level surface is easily obtained, which is ready for receiving the shadows and which should be done with broad strokes laid closely by the sides of each other, taking especial care not to pass the pencil twice over the same place while wet, as the surface will by such means be disturbed, and rendered difficult to finish on.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROCESS OF MINIATURE PAINTING.

The appearance of a tall or short person depending on the situation of the head, care should be taken that it be so placed as to

give the desired effect of the stature of the sitter: for portraits taking in the head and shoulders only, the head should occupy one third part of the length of the ivory, the chin of which should be placed in the centre; this gives half the length of the head clear above the head, and the length of one head and a half below; this is the arrangement for persons of a middling stature, but is varied according to the different heights of the sitter; if tall, the chin should be above the centre, if short, below it. Place your sitter at such a distance that the full effect of the countenance may be seen distinctly, which in most cases will be from five to six feet, and with a light considerably above the head, which is managed by excluding the light at the lower part of the window; this will give breadth of shadow to the countenance, and contribute much to the force and effect of the picture.

Having made your sketch on the ivory as correctly as possible, and having obtained such a degree of likeness as may be expected to arise from the mere outline, lay in the masses or breadths of shadow with your grey tint formed of burnt terra de Sienna, Prussian blue, and carmine, observing that in delicate complexions, less burnt terra de Sienna will be required. This should be done in faint colour with broad strokes of the pencil as correctly to the forms as the picture in this stage will admit; proceed by strengthening with your grey tint where necessary, and modelling the forms of the face as though the picture were to be painted in this colour only; you will by this means have less to attend to, and preserve the hue of the picture clean and suitable to receive the flesh and finishing tints. The strengthenings having been so far attended to, as to shew the forms with tolerable accuracy, pass a flesh tint of gall stone and carmine over those parts where the shadows are not seen, proceeding to heighten the carnations of the cheeks, the colour of the lips, and such other parts as retain or possess a greater portion of colour, working in hatches with a pencil moderately filled. By hatching is meant working in lines crossways, not at right-angles but obliquely, the interstices forming

long diamonds rather than squares, which mode is pursued to the finishing of all the parts of the flesh, working your reds and yellows to the complexion, and improving the shadows in their reflections with the warm colours as you observe them in nature. In working on ivory much depends on the proportioning the quantity of colour in the pencil to the part you are working on ; if the pencil be too full, it is difficult to work with certainty, if too dry the work will be crude and hard. Never let the pencil stop on the ivory, except in parts where the space, being too small for the process of hatching, you must have recourse to *stippling* or *dotting*. The hair should be laid in broadly with a tint as nearly as can be adapted to the tint in nature, leaving the masses of light in the first process, and covering down such lights, after the shadows have received their strengthenings, as the subject may require. When the head is forwarded to a tolerable degree, proceed with the draperies and back-ground, laying in the shadows of the linen with the grey tint, and that of the coat, if a male subject, in the manner already mentioned under the head of Cloth Draperies, page 29. It has been the practice of some painters to float in the back-grounds of their pictures as well as the cloth draperies, for the sake of expedition, but as this is not only difficult, but attended with considerable disadvantages, it is much better to work them in hatches, in the manner explained for working up the complexion, as a greater variety of tint, and more harmony of colour can thereby be introduced, than can be obtained by floating in one uniform tint. The observations already given on the treatment of back-grounds in oil painting will furnish a perfect idea of the mode to be adopted on these occasions, for the purposes both of opposition and harmony. Flake white will be found necessary only in the high lights of white draperies, if used in the high lights of the face it will have a cold harsh appearance; indeed, the high lights of flesh are much better expressed by the clear tone of colour to be found in the ivory, if properly bleached, than any thing which may be used as an assistant. A good miniature for the purposes of occasional

reference will be found of considerable service in this branch of study.

GENERAL REMARKS.

As the process of this kind of painting requires much delicacy and certainty of touch, a good knowledge of drawing should be previously acquired from busts or from the life; large drawings for this purpose should be made and carefully finished; this will give to the practitioner maturity of eye and facility of hand, two great requisites in every branch of the art. The mere process of painting on ivory is easily obtained; but it is only by the combination of good drawing, light and shadow, and harmonious and natural colouring, that a picture can be produced worthy the attention of a judicious observer, and reflecting credit on the talents of the artist.

THE END.

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