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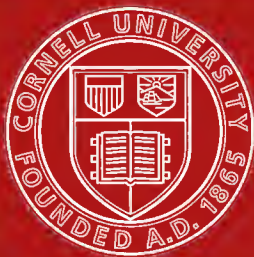
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The Practice of Water-Colour Painting



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The Practice of Water-Colour Painting

ILLUSTRATED BY THE WORK
OF MODERN ARTISTS

BY

A. L. BALDRY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY
DISTINGUISHED ARTISTS

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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FOREWORD

THE art of water-colour painting is capable of being applied in so many ways, and has such a variety of technical possibilities, that an attempt to sum up its processes arbitrarily is practically impossible : the object of this book, therefore, is to show how futile any such attempt would be, and in proof whereof there is given a series of personal explanations of the methods of certain representative water-colour painters who hold high rank as exponents of the art ; artists selected because they differ so much from one another in their artistic outlook and in their mode of technical production. The student who compares their methods will see that the widest possible range of expression is permissible in water-colour painting without any departure from the fundamental principles of this form of practice. He will be able

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

to choose, by the light of the experience of men who are masters of their craft, the way in which he is himself most likely to attain success ; and he will be able to judge how to secure that command over the mechanism of water-colour that he needs for the right development of his own artistic preferences.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR	I
MR. EDWIN ALEXANDER, R.W.S, A.R.S.A.	27
MR. R. W. ALLAN, V.P.R.B.C., R.W.S.	33
MRS. ALLINGHAM, R.W.S.	39
MR. WILFRID BALL, R.B.C., R.E.	45
MR. FRANK BRANGWYN, A.R.A.	51
SIR ALFRED EAST, A.R.A., P.R.B.A.	57
MR. GEORGE S. ELGOOD, R.I.	63
MR. W. RUSSELL FLINT	69
MR. ALBERT GOODWIN, R.W.S.	75
MR. W. AYERST INGRAM, P.R.B.C., R.I.	81
MR. FRANCIS E. JAMES, A.R.W.S.	87
MR. HERBERT MARSHALL, R.W.S.	93
MR. EDWIN NOBLE, R.B.A.	97
MR. ALFRED POWELL	103
MR. ARTHUR RACKHAM, V.P.R.W.S.	109
MR. ARTHUR WARDLE	115
SIR ERNEST WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.	119

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

	PAGE
MR. J. R. WEGUELIN, R.W.S.	125
MR. J. WALTER WEST, R.W.S.	131
HINTS ON SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS	137
TEMPERA AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WATER-COLOUR .	153
MIXED MEDIUMS	161

ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Forty Winks E. Alexander, R.W.S, A.R.S.A.	27
Marauders " " "	30
Sunset—A Sketch . . R. W. Allan, V.P.R.B.C., R.W.S.	33
Ferryden " " "	36
The Old Inn Helen Allingham, R.W.S.	39
The New Doll " " "	42
Bosham Wilfrid Ball, R.B.C., R.E.	45
On the Flats " " "	48
La Roque Frank Brangwyn, A.R.A.	51
The Bridge, Valentre . . " " "	54
In an Essex Quarry . . Sir Alfred East, A.R.A., P.R.B.A.	57
Greenwich on Bank Holiday " " "	60
A Flower Study George S. Elgood, R.I.	63
The Garden, Melbourne . . " " "	66
The White Cloud . . W. Russell Flint	69
A Sketch " " "	72
Winchester Albert Goodwin, R.W.S.	75
Bristol " " "	78

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

	PAGE
A Breezy Day . . . W. Ayerst Ingram, P.R.B.C., R.I.	81
A Sea Fog " " "	84
Roses Francis E. James, A.R.W.S.	87
Lilies " " .	90
Enkluisen Herbert M. Marshall, R.W.S.	93
A Thames Sketch " " .	94
Full Cry Edwin Noble, R.B.A.	97
The Farm Yard " " . .	100
Dittisham on the Dart . Alfred Powell	103
Leith Hill, Surrey "	106
Villars—A Sketch . . . Arthur Rackham, V.P.R.W.S.	109
The King and the Swineherd " " . .	112
Jabiru Storks . . . Arthur Wardle	115
Jaguar and Macaw "	116
Juan Les Pins—A Sketch Sir E. A. Waterlow, R.A., P.R.W.S.	119
A Sussex Windmill . . . Sir E. A. Waterlow, R.A., P.R.W.S.	122
A Mermaid—A Sketch . J. R. Weguelin, R.W.S. . . .	125
With Woven Paces and with Waving Hands " " . .	128
The Paroquet J. Walter West, R.W.S. . . .	131
The Paroquet—Pencil Sketch " " . .	134

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

THERE are certain definite and perfectly intelligible reasons for the particular character of the development through which the art of water-colour painting has gone in this country. The continuity of this development, its steady progress stage by stage, and its consistent advance from small beginnings to results of the greatest possible importance, cannot by any means be ascribed to chance ; there has been a sequence of causes each of which has had its full effect in directing the evolution of the art and in shaping its characteristics. All these causes have left their mark in turn upon the work which has been produced by successive generations of water-colour painters, and they have all helped in the building up of the traditions by which the art is controlled to-day.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

It is undeniably true that all forms of artistic production are appreciably influenced by the conditions under which the producers work, and by the surroundings in which they find themselves. Locality plays a part of no little importance in determining the style and manner of an art and in fixing the way in which it should be practised ; indeed, the popularity and success of many technical processes are directly due to purely local circumstances, which have affected mechanically or æsthetically the whole trend of artistic expression. For instance, in Japan the main principles of a very characteristic architectural style have been decided by the necessity which exists there of being always prepared for the possibility of an earthquake ; the more solid building construction suitable to other countries would there be inconvenient and even dangerous. Again, in India, the traditional carvings, with their delicate elaboration of detail and unusual lowness of relief, are evidently designed with consideration for the strong and sharply defined shadows cast by a tropical sun. Similar examples of the connection

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

between local conditions and artistic development could be multiplied ; they are common enough in the record of the art of the world.

Therefore, it is not unreasonable to seek to account for the remarkable growth of the British water-colour school by reference to the influences to which it has been subjected here. Among the chief of these influences is that of climate ; the humid, insular atmosphere in which we live is peculiarly helpful to the water-colour painter in more ways than one. It provides him with a great deal of subject matter that lends itself well to interpretation by means of a dainty and luminous medium—landscape motives that require exceptional subtlety of colour treatment, and atmospheric effects that are exquisitely delicate in their gradations of tone and in their elusive variety of suggestion. It gives him pictorial material that no other technical process can so efficiently translate, and that needs especially for its proper expression the inherent lightness and transparency of the water-colour wash.

But most of all, perhaps, the insular climate

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

helps the water-colour painter by creating the conditions under which the essential properties of the medium can be turned to the best advantage. In air that is moderately damp, water-colour can be far more conveniently handled than in a dry atmosphere which encourages very rapid evaporation. Some of the best results which are within the reach of the water-colourist are obtained by manipulation of the washes and touches while they remain wet, and too rapid drying of his work prevents him from gaining certain qualities of execution which are desirable if not indispensable. The beauty of many of the finest water-colours which have been produced by British artists, their tenderness, their breadth of effect, and their purity of colour, can be ascribed not unjustly to the influence of a favourable climate, and can be claimed as being in some sort the outcome of geographical situation.

However, the personal element has also to be taken into account in estimating the significance of the movement which brought the British water-colour school into existence. The intentions and

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

capacities of the artists who are active in the direction of such a movement, and whose influence is exercised consciously or unconsciously in bringing it under the proper control, have much to do with the completeness of the result which is ultimately attained. We have been obviously fortunate in possessing so many men able to perceive fully and practically the way in which they could profit by the local advantages they enjoyed, and ready to make the best possible artistic use of their natural opportunities. These men were prompt to recognise the genius of the medium with which they had to deal, and to see how well it could be made to serve them in their efforts to reach the highest level of achievement ; they did not spend too much time over preliminaries, but proceeded as quickly as possible to build on the foundation they had laid a system of practice which was capable of the widest extension.

Indeed, the experimental and tentative stage with which our water-colour school began about a century ago, lasted for only a comparatively brief

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

period. The earliest British water-colours were chiefly "stained drawings," that is to say, drawings made with the pencil or the pen, to which a suggestion of colour—it was rarely more than a suggestion—was added by means of flat washes. The purpose of these drawings was mainly utilitarian, they were mostly topographical views intended for reproduction by engraving, and they were prepared with more consideration for the engraver's convenience than for the artistic possibilities of the medium employed. They followed, in fact, a narrow and rather feeble convention, and were almost entirely mechanical in manner.

But among the men who were engaged upon work of this class, there were even then some who were anxious to find a wider scope for their individuality. They had some warrant for their belief that the medium was capable of much greater development, because they could refer to the sketches of the older Italian, German, and Netherlandish masters, who had used water-colour occasionally for notes and studies of a purely

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

pictorial kind. Even in England there was a precedent in the water-colour work of Gainsborough, who had made important experiments in this manner of practice. These earlier examples, slight as they were, pointed a direction in which much might be accomplished, and were distinctly inspiring in the suggestions they made to artists who were seeking the way out of a rather dull convention.

It was during the first half of the eighteenth century that the signs of the new purpose in British water-colour painting began to be definitely perceptible. Some of the topographical draughtsmen—the names of William Taverner, Samuel Scott, and John Joshua Kirby may be particularly mentioned—showed a certain inclination towards more personal modes of expression than were customary at that moment. Their attempts to be unconventional were timid enough, but they counted for something as evidences of a desire to substitute the actual study of nature for a dry formality which had in it scarcely any trace of naturalism.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

The man, however, who really grasped the necessities of the situation with vigour and intelligence was Paul Sandby. He has been called, with some justice, the father of the British water-colour school, on account of the influence he exercised over his younger contemporaries, and the importance of his intervention in artistic affairs throughout his long life. He was born in 1725, and died in 1809, so that he saw the rise of many of the greatest British masters of water-colour ; and as he was busily engaged as a teacher during a large part of his career he can fairly be said to have been directly or indirectly responsible for the striking progress of the art in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The time was ripe for the appearance of a broad-minded and judicious leader who could control the rather vague aspirations of the men around him, and point out to them the way in which their energies could best be applied ; and he was exactly the type of leader to fill the position which circumstances had created for him.

For what Sandby especially did was to reduce

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

to order the incoherent rebellion against cramping conventions and deadening formalities which was being started by the topographical draughtsmen. He was himself trained as a topographer and gave a good deal of his life to work of this character, so that he had a thorough experience of water-colour painting of the mechanical kind. But he possessed more fully than any of his immediate contemporaries an original sense of artistic responsibility, and he had, too, the courage to assert his convictions against prevailing custom. He saw that his records of fact could be absolutely accurate and yet be not only personal in manner but also suggestive of nature's variety and charm—that they could be works of art as well as statements of bare realities.

So, as opportunities came to him, he freed himself more and more from the restrictions which hampered his liberty of action as an artist. He made excursions beyond the bounds of topography into imaginative compositions and into pure landscape painting ; he sought for and interpreted the sentiment of nature sympathetically and

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

thoughtfully ; he learned how to manage his pigments and to make them express effects of colour and tone naturalistically instead of conventionally. He became, in a word, a sincere nature student with the courage of opinions based on serious observation, and with a grasp of technical processes which was sure and confident.

In his development was typified the evolution which was proceeding in the whole of the water-colour school during the period covered by his life. Helped, beyond doubt, by his example and precept, other men were systematising their study, were asserting their independence, and were learning to look properly to nature for inspiration and assistance, not only in choice of subject but, as well, in the manner in which they should treat the subjects they selected. The primitive "stained drawings" lingered on for a while because not all the water-colourists were bold enough to break away from the fashion to which they had grown accustomed, and because, no doubt, not all of them could appreciate the importance of close contact with nature ; but when the new

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

movement was once really started it went forward without a check, and gained year by year an ever increasing number of adherents and supporters.

When Paul Sandby died British water-colour painting was in a position very unlike that which it had occupied when he commenced his work fifty or sixty years before. Such artists as Alexander Cozens, and his son, John Robert Cozens, Devis, Hearne, Pars, Rooker, the two Cleveleys, William Payne, and Nicholas Pocock, to mention a few of the many men who were prominent, had helped greatly in raising the standard of practice and had done much to prove to the public that Sandby's estimate of the possibilities of water-colour was in no way exaggerated. But the full manifestation of the strength of the new gospel which he had been preaching came at the beginning of the nineteenth century when those supreme masters, Turner, De Wint, and David Cox, with other eminent painters like J. S. Cotman and Copley Fielding, arrived at maturity. Girtin, a genius who might have been the greatest master of them all, had lived

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

his brief life during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and had died seven years before Sandby ; but, even so, he must be reckoned as one of the chief helpers by whom the work of the pioneers was carried to completion, because he showed emphatically his entire acceptance of the æsthetic principles which they laboured so sincerely to establish.

By 1809 the old fashion in water-colour was gone ; its restrictions and conventions had no longer any power over the artists and no influence upon the public taste. The few men who were still working in the earlier manner were simply survivals from other days, and had ceased to be in touch with the spirit of the world about them. All the younger artists were in the new movement and were eagerly seeking to prove that they were fully conscious of their responsibility under the improved conditions of the art in which they were interested, and that they understood what were the possibilities of accomplishment opened up to them by the change which had been brought about.

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

To this eagerness was due a remarkable activity in production as well as an increase in the vitality of the art which was not less notable for its effect upon the popularity of water-colour painting. Societies which concerned themselves only with the advancement of this particular form of practice came into existence, and by gathering round them a host of supporters with genuinely artistic inclinations did much to put the water-colourists more closely in touch with the public. These societies, too, brought into association the men who had the highest qualifications for leadership, whose example and influence could affect most strongly the rising generation of workers, and who could prove by actual demonstration what was the direction in which the popular favour could most profitably be sought. Organisation gave the water-colour school authority and the power to claim consideration, and made it a prominent factor in art politics.

Under these conditions the rise of the greater masters during the first quarter of the nineteenth century came as a natural step in the evolution of

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

the school. They were not compelled, as they might have been years before, to suppress their aspirations under the necessity of making a living by doing mere journeyman work; they were happily allowed a wider scope for their activity, and they found themselves encouraged to move onwards always to the completer expression of their convictions. They had the better type of art lovers on their side, so things went sufficiently well with them.

Therefore it came about that men like Turner, Cox, and De Wint were able to take advantage fully of the opportunities which they enjoyed as water-colour painters living and working in the British Isles. And how they responded to the inspiration of their surroundings can be very plainly perceived in the manner and quality of their paintings. Turner's marvellous grasp of atmospheric subtleties, his infallible understanding of varieties of aerial effect, and his rare skill in representing the spaciousness of remote distances seen through a veil of misty air could scarcely have been acquired so completely in any other

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

country. Great master as he was, and great as he would almost certainly have been in any surrounding, he owed unquestionably the full training of his powers of expression to the large experience of nature in all her moods which came to him as a result of ceaseless observation of the atmosphere of his native land.

The same can be said of Cox, of De Wint, Copley Fielding, Cotman, and of all the other painters who helped to raise water-colour landscape to its great position as an essentially British phase of artistic achievement. Cox's open-air notes with their tender breezy skies, and gleams of sunlight, De Wint's broad, serene, and dignified studies with their large massing of tones, Fielding's luminous landscapes and sea-pieces full of movement reflect absolutely the impressions made by local characteristics upon temperaments sensitive and responsive. In all this work there is a revelation of personal views about the ways in which nature can be interpreted which is exceedingly instructive, and there is also plainly expressed an intention to assert these views with a sincere

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

and intelligent unconventionality. The present-day student of water-colour can learn much indeed about the fundamental principles of the art by analysing the methods and examining the intentions of these earlier masters. He can see how they respected these principles, and how they strove to use the local advantages they possessed to attain the fullest measure of artistic expression ; but he can see too that they held themselves free to deal with nature in the way that they personally preferred.

It must be remembered that the artists of this period were tasting the first joys of emancipation. They had thrown aside the earlier tradition as useless and inconvenient, and they were themselves building up a new tradition which was peculiarly fitted to the requirements of the school to which they belonged and capable of the widest application. They had decisively enlarged their view of artistic responsibility, and they had grasped boldly the vital fact that their own personal impressions of nature were the only ones which it was worth their while to set down. So they were

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

introducing into British water - colour painting a sentiment which had been hardly perceptible in it before, a sentiment clean, wholesome, and joyous, which was derived directly from the nature they worshipped and in which there was no taint of either affectation or expediency. Each man had learned to see for himself and to believe in himself; and each one consequently was able to contribute something definitely valuable to the common stock of æsthetic conviction which was to serve as the endowment of the school.

Happily, the spirit of these men did not die with them; as they began so those who succeeded to them continued. To the present day the local tradition and the local sentiment have been maintained unaltered in our water - colour painting. The immediate successors of the first great group of masters were quite as keen in their desire for the advancement of the art in which they were interested, and quite as strenuous in their efforts to carry it forward in the right direction. They sought as sincerely to develop the tradition of serious nature study, and to make a rational and

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

judicious actuality the dominating principle in all their productions. Year by year the outlook of the water-colour painters widened as they found fresh material they could deal with in the manner which they recognised as appropriate and legitimate, and year by year the hold of the water-colour school upon art lovers of the better sort has become more firmly established.

A long list, indeed, could be made of the men who came to maturity during the latter half of the nineteenth century—men who have a right to be reckoned among the masters of water-colour, and whose activities have been both important in themselves and valuable in their effect upon the vitality and progress of the school. Landscape painters like Thomas Collier, A. W. Hunt, W. Callow, E. M. Wimperis, A. W. Weedon, and that admirable student of nature, Henry Moore, whose pictures of sea and sky are of almost unapproachable excellence ; figure painters like Fred Walker, G. J. Pinwell, Sir John Gilbert, George Cattermole, E. J. Gregory, and that popular favourite, Birket Foster ; animal painters like

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

that superlative master, J. M. Swan, and a crowd of others, whose management of the medium was as skilful as their judgment of artistic essentials was well balanced, must be held in honour as worthy successors of the pioneers by whom the possibilities of water-colour painting were first explored. Of these artists some were simply followers of the earlier masters and, as followers, were content to accept without question the methods as well as the tradition which their masters had handed down to them, but others were seekers after new ways of expression, experimentalists who were anxious to discover fresh applications of the principles by which their art was directed.

The result of this healthy variety of opinion about details of practice has been to keep the vitality of the school at its highest level. Its stability has been ensured by the sober respect which a certain number of the nineteenth-century water-colourists have shown for the example of their leaders, its development has been encouraged by the energy of the other painters who have been

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

seeking to interpret in ways of their own the lessons they have learned, and its future has to all appearance been made safe by the enlargement of its sphere of activity and by the opening up of many new directions in which it can fittingly appeal for popular support. At the present moment British water-colour painting is in a condition of remarkable vigour ; it has passed successfully through all its preparatory stages and it has arrived at its full expression without losing on the way any of its freshness or freedom. Certainly it has not become stereotyped ; there is no sign to-day of the growth of any prevailing mannerism or of the adoption of any easy convention which will save the artists from the trouble of thinking for themselves. None of the defects, indeed, which are apt to appear in an art movement as it matures have as yet made themselves perceptible, and the sense of initiative among the workers, their desire to do the best with the means at their disposal, and their appreciation of the obligations they incur as exponents of water-colour art are seemingly as

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

much alive as they were in the days when the old "stained drawing" convention was first broken through by the apostles of a new æsthetic creed.

And what is to be the future of water-colour painting in this country? That is a question to which no one can pretend to prophesy an answer. What has been done in the past, what is being done at the present moment by artists of power and distinction can be counted, at least, as increasing definitely the sum total of the art of the world; but it rests with the artists themselves, present and future, to make or mar the school in generations to come. The plain duty of the men of to-day is so to deal with their inheritance that it can be handed on, not merely intact but amplified and improved, to their descendants, who will, we may hope, estimate as highly as we do the treasure that the last century has brought to us. That there is no shirking of this duty to be discovered now justifies the belief that our immediate successors, at all events, will not be able to excuse themselves for any lapse by blaming us for having set them a bad example.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

But, naturally, the quality of the progress which is to be made in years to come depends upon the way in which these successors of ours realise the significance of the opportunities which we have provided for them. If they see that the regard for vital principles which is characteristic of our attitude towards the art does not cramp individuality of expression, and that our work, with all its respect for tradition, has been lacking neither in variety nor in sterling originality, they will surely be anxious to tread in our footsteps and to keep their own production on sane lines. So long as they do this there will be no waning in the glory of the British water-colour school.

The almost inevitable result of any relaxation of effort would be the loss of that pre-eminent position which British water-colourists now occupy in the art world. Already the artists of other countries are competing keenly with us and are proving beyond dispute that they understand very well indeed what are the particular principles which govern this painting method. Doubtless they owe much to study of our masters, but they

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

know how to apply the lessons they have learned and how to adapt their knowledge to meet the local conditions under which their work has to be carried on. They have evolved their own way of handling the medium, they express with its assistance the æsthetic sentiment that is appropriate to them, and they have an independence of outlook and manner that absolves them entirely from the reproach of having merely adopted the ideas of other people. It is this independence that makes them such dangerous competitors, for it puts them beside us in the race for supremacy.

In Holland, for instance, there has grown up within comparatively few years a school of water-colourists which has already established a remarkable record of sound and well-considered achievement. It has secured the co-operation of many of the most able of the modern Dutch artists whose paintings are especially memorable for their dignity and breadth of style, and for the admirable management which is revealed in them of the better qualities of the medium. The power and directness of these paintings, their purity of

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

method, and their rightness in summing up the facts of nature give them the strongest possible claim to attention, and in their sincerity of conviction they are comparable with the best of the work that has been produced anywhere else.

That water-colour should be practised with so much success, and with such genuine appreciation of its capabilities, by the Dutch artists is not in any way surprising. The atmospheric conditions in Holland are wholly favourable to the painter in this medium, and help him, as they do in the British Isles, to get the best results from his materials. There is something eminently inspiring in the aerial effects, in the magnificent cloud masses, and in the subtle tone gradations of misty atmosphere which are characteristic of the country, something stimulating in nature's ruggedness and in the vehemence of mood which she is apt to display there ; and there is certainly a satisfying variety of pictorial motives from which the artist can make his selection. At present, it may be admitted that the outlook of the Dutch water-colourists is

PAINTING IN WATER-COLOUR

narrower than that of our own men, and that they limit themselves more definitely in their choice of material and in their manner of dealing with it ; but a school which has already reached so high a standard of craftsmanship, and which within its boundaries shows so large a measure of artistic intelligence, is capable of wide expansion.

Much excellent work in water-colour is also being produced both in Italy and in France. There is a tendency among the Italians to overdo the crispness of touch and the precision of brush-work which are possible in water-colour painting that concerns itself more with the clever statement of detail than with the suggestion of broad effects, and this tendency is accountable for the production of many things that are brilliant, undeniably, but a little unsympathetic and superficial. But there is also a quite considerable group of Italian artists who are painting both in water-colour and in tempera with a fluent directness of method and a dignified breadth of generalisation that can be frankly admired. In France, too, there is the same tendency towards dry precision, and there are similar

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

exceptions from the prevailing rule—water-colour painters like the veteran, M. Harpignies, who use the medium with judgment and fine taste and with a true understanding of its inherent technical advantages.

Decidedly, if there is now no water-colour school abroad which equals our own in comprehensive understanding of the resources of this form of artistic practice, there is more than one which might conceivably take our place in the future if we allowed ourselves to forget the duty which is imposed upon us by our great traditions, and to sink into mere followers of a convention. We must keep the spirit of the art strenuously alive, we must relax none of our keen individuality in the interpretation of vital principles, we must cherish devoutly the spirit of our artistic ancestors and prove always that we have a full share of their enthusiasm and clearness of purpose. So long as we do this we shall have no reason to fear the competition of any other school of water-colour painting.



E. De Lande, K.H.S., A.R.S., I.

By permission of Mr. Aston Webb, R.S.I.

FORTY WINS

MR. EDWIN ALEXANDER, R.W.S., A.R.S.A.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Edwin Alexander does not confine himself to only one class of subject, he has certainly shown in his water-colour work a preference for the study of animal life. He paints beasts and birds, living and dead, with brilliant actuality, and yet with a fascinating originality of manner which prevents his realism from ever becoming commonplace. His purpose is evidently not to present facts in an obvious way, but to use them, with all possible respect, as the basis for pictorial arrangements in which he can give full play to his sense of design, his feeling for expressive handling, and his love of harmonious colour. The technical charm of his paintings is always beyond dispute, and they have, too, the attractiveness of a personal style which reveals the temperamental attitude of the painter to his subjects.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

This attitude is one which he defends logically enough on the ground that it is inexpedient to make laws in the practice of art which define for all time the way in which things should be done. He contends that it is decidedly arbitrary to insist that the method adopted by certain men in the past in dealing with a particular class of material should be imposed as immutable upon all their successors who may wish to handle this same material ; and he feels that, as in painting the end may fairly be said to justify the means, an artist should be free to choose for himself the mode of procedure which will bring him most directly to the end that appears to him desirable.

For a number of years past Mr. Alexander has painted upon either unbleached packing paper, or linen, and he has chosen to work in body-colour because it lies better than ordinary transparent water-colour upon either the paper or the linen, both of which are decidedly absorbent. He likes a paper which has a definite tint dark enough to represent the general half-tone of his subject, and in cases where this tint happens to be too

MR. EDWIN ALEXANDER

light he lowers it by putting a wash over the whole surface before he begins the actual painting of his picture. To start with the general half-tone already stated is in his view a better system than to cover a sheet of white paper, piece by piece, with washes until the tone quality he wants is obtained.

Moreover, working, as he does, in body-colour, the use of the toned paper enables him to realise his effect with great rapidity, and as many of the subjects he selects have to be done very much against time everything that makes for speed is helpful to him. Often his studies which need very quick statement are set down straight away and not touched again, and yet, thanks to the assistance of the toned ground, they have the appearance of being carefully elaborated paintings with a full gradation of colour and ample variety of light and shade.

Concerning his manner of handling body-colour it can certainly be said that he avoids that dryness of surface and that dull chalkiness of colour which come sometimes from the injudicious

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

use of opaque pigments. But really, though he mixes white with practically all his colours, he puts on his touches so liquidly that they have a quality which is scarcely distinguishable from that possessed by the washes in an ordinary water-colour painting ; in fact his pictures become to all intents and purposes simple wash drawings. When he is trying for a higher degree of finish than he usually aims at in his rapid sketches he does not hesitate to lift off and alter his touches wherever changes or additions seem necessary to improve the effect of his work. It is not difficult to take out washes and to replace them by others without destroying the clean precision of his touch, and without injuring the freshness of his colour. Indeed, he claims that in this way he can gain a greater play of colour effect than is possible by other means, because he has available opportunities of contrasting opaque touches with those that are semi-transparent, and of combining agreeably pigments of different textures.

The colours he generally uses are yellow ochre, aureolin, burnt sienna, Venetian red, viridian,



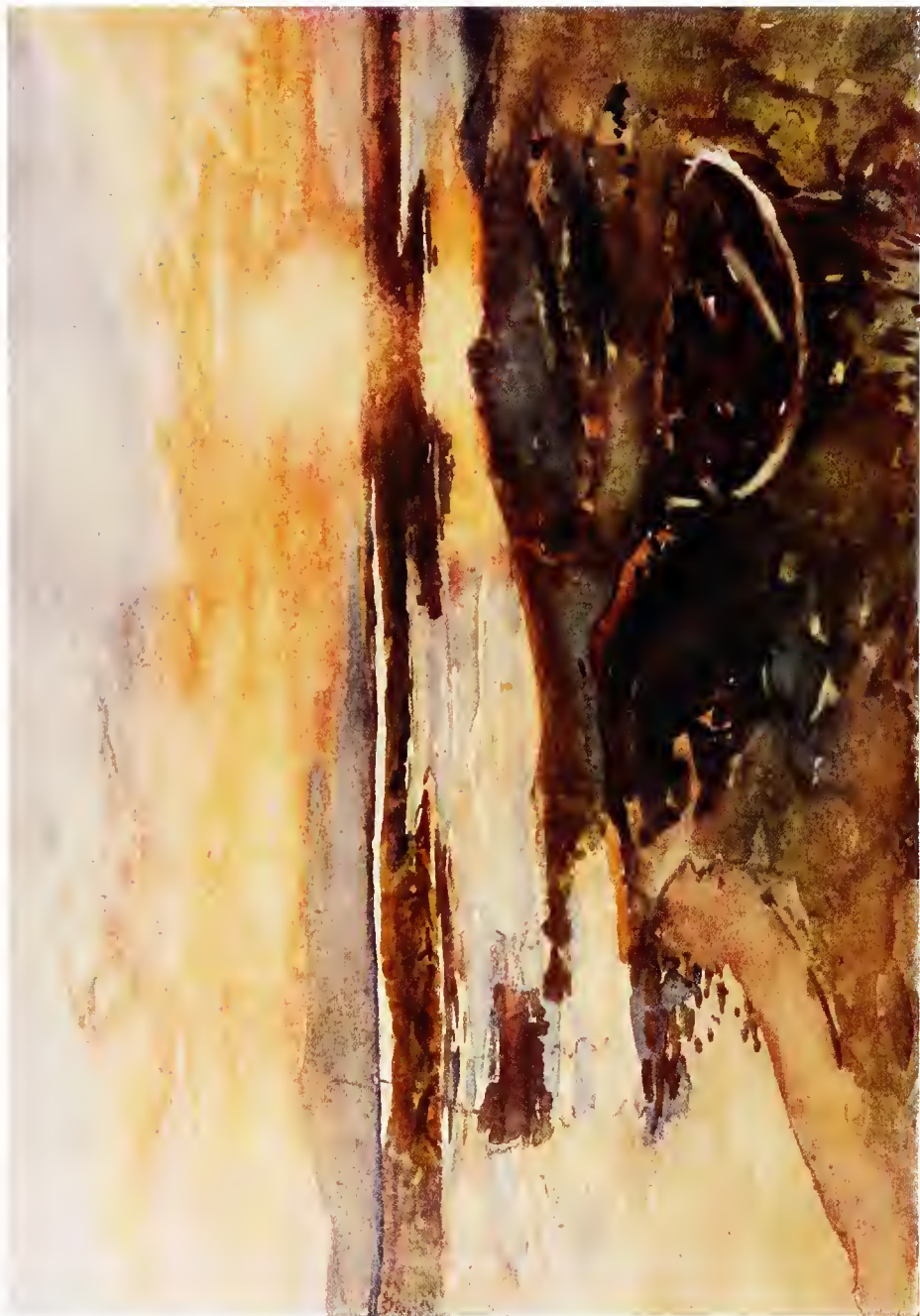
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NEAR ADDERS

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MR. EDWIN ALEXANDER

French blue, raw umber, Vandyke brown, ivory black, and Chinese white; and occasionally vermilion, rose madder or alizarin, light red, raw sienna, and Turner brown or sepia.



K. H. Ham, T. P. K. Co., K. H. S.

SUNSET - A SKETCH.

MR. R. W. ALLAN, V.P.R.B.C., R.W.S.

THE strength, directness, and frankness of intention which are special characteristics of Mr. R. W. Allan's work in water-colour make his productions of no small value as objects of study. There is, indeed, much to be learned from them as to the manner in which results of the greatest significance can be obtained by the straightforward use of materials, and by absolute simplicity in the management of the medium. The student can see in Mr. Allan's paintings how water-colour will respond to the artist's intentions, when these intentions are guided by a clear understanding of the character and nature of the subject which is to be interpreted, and how a perfectly intelligible representation of this subject can be arrived at without tricks of handling, or laborious mechanical devices.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

In fact, the one great lesson which Mr. Allan has been teaching through many years of busy production is that the first necessity for all convincing achievement is a distinct mental impression of the motive which is to be translated into a pictorial form, and that the clearness of this impression must be retained through all the processes of execution. The straightforwardness of his work is in a great measure due to the fact that he can see beforehand just what the result should be that he proposes to produce. He has grasped the thing as a whole, and every touch he puts on is designed to add no more and no less than he requires of it to the building up of the final, completed picture. He has visualised the finished thing before he begins, and he has decided how his touches are to be set down, so that each will fit with the other, like the pieces in a puzzle, and make its own contribution to the general design.

He begins with the slightest indication in pencil on the paper—with a suggestion of the main forms of the subject, so as to settle the

MR. R. W. ALLAN

spacing of the composition—and then proceeds to lay in his colour with a full brush on the dry paper, and as nearly as possible at full pitch. Every wash is carefully drawn with the brush, and the touches placed side by side, without any intentional blending, to make a mosaic-like pattern by which his impression of the chosen scene can be conveyed. When this pattern is properly filled in the picture is finished; there is no superimposing of wash on wash, and there is no working over the first lay-in except where smaller details have to be added in the large colour masses. The same crispness of touch is used in the drawing of these details as in the statement of the bigger facts.

As a rule Mr. Allan does not resort to any devices like sponging or washing down to give softness to his work, but if a correction or alteration has to be made he does not hesitate to wash out the part of the painting that fails to satisfy him, and to fill the gap again with direct and definitely drawn touches. The point that he insists upon is that there should be no fumbling or uncertainty

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

in the manner of applying the pigments. If changes are necessary they must first be carefully considered, and then carried out with just as much confidence as if they had formed part of the scheme from the first ; to hesitate over them would be to destroy the conviction of the work all through. For very small alterations he might occasionally use body-colour, otherwise he always paints transparently.

Clearly, success in water-colour of this vigorous type is only within the reach of the artist who can grasp the essentials of a subject with certainty, and whose vision of nature is both comprehensive and discriminating. It would be impossible with such a method to play about and try experiments in suggestion, with the hope that something effective might result ; and it would be useless to allow accident to take the place of deliberate intention. He must have the picture complete in his mind before he attempts to transfer it to paper—if he has not, he can expect nothing but failure.

The colours Mr. Allan uses are yellow



R. W. Allen, F.P.S., R.C., R.F.S.

FERRY DEN.

MR. R. W. ALLAN

ochre, permanent yellow, lemon yellow, cobalt, indigo, raw sienna, burnt sienna, light red, extract of vermilion, rose madder, brown madder, Vandyke brown, raw umber, and black.



Helen Allingham, R.A.S.

THE OLD INN

MRS. ALLINGHAM, R.W.S.

AN atmosphere of dainty sentiment pervades the whole of Mrs. Allingham's production, an atmosphere that is charming in its consistent delicacy and refinement, and in its gentle persuasiveness. The subjects she prefers, and with which she has made her greatest successes, are chosen from rustic life; they illustrate characteristically the attractive side of rural existence and the beauty of a world in which there are still lingering some traces of primitive peace and innocence. Her paintings are, no doubt, in the nature of idealisations, for they show the fascination of the country under its most perfect conditions and they disregard entirely the grimmer aspects of life, but they have their full measure of truthful suggestion and are sufficiently imbued with the real pastoral spirit.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

In its manner her work may be said to belong to the school of which Fred Walker was the leader ; it has much of his tender feeling and exquisite precision of touch, and it is akin to his in both style and method. But it is marked also by very definite individuality, and it shows plainly the control of an eminently personal taste by which its character is determined and its intention directed. Mrs. Allingham, indeed, has taken a sound tradition and has interpreted it in a way that is quite her own ; she has applied its principles independently, using what there was in it that was likely to be helpful in the development of her own art, but making many additions and adaptations to bring it as thoroughly as possible into accord with her æsthetic conviction.

It has always been her habit to make the closest possible study of nature ; this study, in fact, has been the guiding principle in her art and the basis upon which all her beliefs have been founded. At the same time she exercises a great deal of care in selecting from the infinite amount of material available in nature just that

MRS. ALLINGHAM

which is most suitable for her purposes and which will help best to give to her work the right kind of sentiment. Her idealisation does not imply disregard of reality, but rather the elimination of the things which seem to her unnecessary from the facts which nature sets before her—what she actually selects is recorded with the strictest realism.

Her method in painting is to copy with all fidelity what is before her, or rather, so much of what is before her as she wishes to represent. Anything that jars or that is out of harmony with her pictorial intention she leaves out, and the resulting gaps in her composition are filled up with appropriate material gathered elsewhere, but studied with just as much care and with as exact observation of nature. For instance, a picturesque cottage, spoiled by unsightly surroundings, would, under her method, be available as the main incident in her picture, but it would be provided with a more agreeable background and setting, painted from a better kind of subject matter. This compilation of

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

suitable details needs, of course, very judicious management, but when it is controlled, as it is in Mrs. Allingham's case, by artistic discretion and by a quite sincere regard for actuality, it leads to entirely acceptable results and it conveys a true impression of natural beauty.

The technical process she usually follows is one of gradual building up by small touches rather than by broad washes. These touches are put on comparatively dry, and upon dry paper ; and, as a rule, no sponging or washing down is used to bring them together or to reduce their crispness, nor is there any preliminary underpainting. The artist's aim is to realise as directly as possible the subject she has chosen, and to arrive at the end she has in view by simple and straightforward progression ; and if, as may happen occasionally, she resorts to any devices of softening or washing out, it is rather for the sake of correcting a mistake than with the idea of gaining a particular surface quality. It may be noted, too, that her method in sketching and finished painting is practically the same ; in a sketch her touch is,



Helot Allingham, R.W.S.

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THE NEW DOLL

MRS. ALLINGHAM

perhaps, a little looser and less precise, but this is the natural result of increased speed in working rather than the outcome of a deliberate intention.

The colours she generally uses are cobalt, ceruleum, permanent yellow, aureolin, orange cadmium, yellow ochre, raw sienna, rose madder, light red, and sepia.



W. G. D. 1911

BOSHANI.

MR. WILFRID BALL, R.B.C., R.E.

THE principle which guides Mr. Wilfrid Ball in his work from nature is a sound one enough—to find out exactly what he wants to paint, and to do it at once. It is because he follows it so consistently that his water-colours have such a definite atmosphere of frank intention, and such a clear, purposeful quality of handling. In learning how to make sure that the things he wants to paint are those which are really worth painting, he has acquired also the power of setting them down with just the right amount of executive brevity, and with the measure of subtle suggestion that is in each case appropriate to the subject.

Therefore his paintings can always be accepted as satisfactory examples of what may be called the summing-up of nature. They represent effectively the broad aspect of the subject in each instance,

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

and they include sufficient detail to properly fill out the composition scheme without producing restlessness of effect, and without frittering away the strength of the design. They are neither tentative nor assertive in manner; they keep rather to the happy mean which is desirable in all out-of-door work that is intended to faithfully record the artist's impression of the things presented to him. Mr. Ball is at no pains to prove that he is an executant of amazing skill, or that he is a master of ingenious devices of handling; what he really wants to show is that he can interpret correctly what seems to him to be the most paintable phases of nature, and that he has all the command over his materials that is required to make his interpretation convincing.

When he is sketching out of doors he begins by roughing-in the scheme of the composition with charcoal, so as to make sure of his main forms and more important masses. He prefers charcoal to pencil for this first drawing-in, because it gives him his effect broadly and strongly, and because the ease with which it can be flicked off

MR. WILFRID BALL

and altered enables him to correct and amplify his design without doing any damage to the surface of his paper. When the charcoal sketch is complete and the facts with which it is concerned are properly stated, he draws the subject in with a brush, following the lines of the black and white drawing, and then proceeds to lay in the colour straight away. He tries as far as possible to complete the sketch at one painting, as this, he holds, is the ideal method of working. To worry a quick impression into a kind of sham completeness he thinks unadvisable; the less a sketch is pulled about the more likely it is to suggest the spirit of nature, and to have the right technical quality.

He works in a different way when he is dealing with a painting that is to be carried to a considerable degree of finish. He thinks it out more closely, and he is much more deliberate in his preliminary processes. The washes he puts on are often softened and sponged down to bring them to the right degree of strength, and he builds up his picture stage by stage, instead of attempting to

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

reach its full pitch of colour and tone at once. But even with this more deliberate procedure he is careful not to lose the freshness of his brushwork, and he watches the progress of his work carefully to prevent its becoming dull and inexpressive as a consequence of the labour he is putting into it.

The paper that he prefers for his small rapid sketches is a rather thin French one, machine-made, with a very slightly rough surface. It takes the colour well, and is agreeable to work upon, but as, owing to its thinness, it is apt to cockle when wet, it is not so suitable for work on a large scale. His larger sketches and his more important water-colour paintings are done upon Whatman paper, which having a harder surface does not absorb moisture so quickly. Mr. Ball occasionally uses Chinese white for putting in small lights, but more often he scrapes them out with a razor.

His palette is made up with aureolin, yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, deep cadmium, Vandyke brown, raw umber, cobalt, Antwerp blue,



ON THE FLATS.

Walter Bull, R.B.C., R.A.

MR. WILFRID BALL

French ultramarine, brown madder, Payne's grey, rose madder, rose doré, scarlet vermilion, Venetian red, Veronese green, ivory black, and Chinese white, with the addition, on rare occasions, of cobalt green and madder orange.



L'ank B'atagapin, L.R. 1.

L.A. ROQUE.

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MR. FRANK BRANGWYN, A.R.A.

THE splendid independence of Mr. Brangwyn's artistic outlook gives a singularly stimulating quality to his art. It accounts not only for the character of his achievement, for the entirely personal manner in which he handles his pictorial material, but also for the way in which he sets to work to find the material which will lend itself best to the purpose that he has in view. This purpose is almost always to produce a piece of sumptuous decoration which will finely suggest the reality of nature and yet have a full degree of artistic invention, a decoration which will be perfectly balanced and properly arranged without being a merely conventional statement of fact.

It is because he attacks with absolute independence the problems which inevitably arise in such a compromise between realism and

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

convention that his work is so full of significance and so admirable in its suggestion. The rules by which he is guided in his practice are of his own devising, made to suit the demands of his artistic temperament, and tested by careful experiment to find out how they will serve him in the expression of his beliefs. But the fact that he subjects himself to these rules is especially instructive to the student ; it proves that even the most original and audacious effort in art is all the better for being disciplined, and that there is no incongruity in directing individuality of outlook into the right channels by the aid of orderly method. Mr. Brangwyn's amazing virility and inventive capacity would not be so convincing if he were not so intelligently systematic in his management of technical processes.

Therefore in studying his water-colours it is necessary first to appreciate his estimate of the capabilities of the medium. He does not believe that water-colour should be used for the realistic representation of nature ; it should rather be regarded as a device for translating certain selected

MR. FRANK BRANGWYN

facts into a form which is determined by suitably conventional restrictions. In his case his instinct as a decorator induces him to make his water-colours decorative transcriptions of the pattern of nature rather than exact records of her momentary aspects or her passing effects. His paintings are designs in which no superfluities of ornament are allowed to obscure the simple directness of the composition scheme, and in which, equally, no imitative trivialities are allowed to spoil the dignity of a broad and well-considered impression.

When he is commencing a water-colour painting he makes a preliminary drawing in pencil by which he defines upon his paper the main forms of his subject. If this subject is an indefinite one, with only broad, simple masses, the drawing is quite slight, but if he is handling a more detailed motive—an architectural composition, for instance—he carries his pencil work to a greater degree of elaboration and uses the lines frankly in combination with the water-colour washes. In this case he aims somewhat

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

at the effect of the old tinted drawings with their pencil outlines filled in with colour, except that his vigorous method has in it nothing of the tentativeness and timidity which characterised the technique of most of the earlier water-colourists.

His colour washes he sets down with a free brush and as nearly as possible at full pitch, and except for some special reason, he does not touch them again. Ordinarily no softening or washing down is attempted in his working method ; such devices do not appeal to him because he desires to retain as far as possible the freshness of the paper surface and the luminosity of the straightforward, transparent wash, and he feels that this quality is likely to be lost if the first decisive touches are interfered with or their character changed. At the same time he does not exclude Chinese white from the water-colour painter's equipment ; he uses it frequently, mixed with all his pigments, for work on tinted paper, but he very rarely employs it on white paper, and he avoids any combination of the opaque and



Frank Buttsopp, A. R. A.

THE BRIDGE, VALEN TRE

MR. FRANK BRANGWYN

transparent method in the same painting. He makes, by the way, no rule as to working with his paper wet ; he puts his washes on to a wet or a dry surface as circumstances may demand, or as the nature of the subject he is treating may seem to indicate.

The colours he uses are cobalt, French blue, yellow ochre, cadmium No. 2, vermilion, Venetian red, burnt sienna, sepia, black, and Chinese white.



Sir Alfred East, *1861-1931, P. 62 B. 4*

IN AN ESSEN QUARRY.

SIR ALFRED EAST, A.R.A., P.R.B.A.

THERE is more than one lesson to be learned from study of the water-colour work of Sir Alfred East. Not only are his technical processes exceedingly instructive, but the æsthetic purpose also which is revealed throughout the whole of his production is more than ordinarily significant. Not many artists keep so consistently in view a particular aim, or work out so logically a definite theory of artistic practice, and fewer still succeed so completely in preventing a pervading intention from degenerating into an inflexible convention. In everything he paints, the predominant idea is to produce a result which will be rightly decorative, a coherent and carefully adjusted design which presents the facts of nature in an orderly arrangement and sets out the structure of a chosen subject in a sufficiently

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

credible form. All his pictures are solutions of some problem of decoration and are planned and carried out with careful consideration for the particular difficulties which this problem presents—there is nothing accidental in his art, and nothing that does not in its necessary degree help to make clear his initial intention.

It is important in studying his water-colour work to take this intention fully into account, for it affects very definitely the character of his executive methods. These methods, indeed, he has adopted because his experience has proved that they will best enable him to arrive at the result he desires. His object is to simplify as far as possible the technical processes of painting, to find the most direct way of gaining his effects, and to eliminate from his practice everything that is in any sense superfluous or likely to confuse the clearness of his statement. He comes to his work with a distinct impression of the subject he has selected, and with his mind fully made up as to the means by which that impression is going to be recorded, so the simplifying of

SIR ALFRED EAST

his procedure is the natural outcome of his mental preparation for the task he has undertaken.

When he is beginning a water-colour painting he does not make any preliminary pencil drawing upon his paper ; indeed, as it is his habit to strain his paper over a board and to start painting upon it while it is still wet, the use of a pencil is practically impossible. He dislikes, it may be noted, paper that is already laid down upon cardboard, because the surface is apt to be hard and unresponsive to the touch of the brush. All his preliminary drawing is done with the brush in faint colour, and on this first faint laying-in he paints as far as possible at full strength straight away. He does not believe in any system of building up his colour and tone effects by successive washes, as he holds that the best qualities of the water-colour medium are to be arrived at by retaining the freshness and brilliancy of the single wash laid directly upon the paper.

He freely admits that there may be differences of opinion as to what is the most suitable manner of dealing with water-colour, but the method

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

he has chosen is the one which he has found to be most helpful in the expression of his artistic sentiment, and the most successful in securing the technical character which he prefers. Therefore, he aims invariably at the freshness and simplicity which come from direct handling, and at the transparency which can only be attained by full washes set down confidently and left untouched to the end. Retouching or washing out he regards only as expedients by which a fault can be corrected, or some change in design can be made; they are not, in his view, desirable as regular devices in the water-colourist's system of practice.

For large work he often uses Lyons' hair brushes, which give a certain richness and breadth of touch, but a favourite article in his equipment is a double sable brush—a large brush at one end of the handle and a small one at the other end—which can be screwed into a hollow handle and carried conveniently in the pocket.

His palette is simple, as he feels that a group of colours which will give him a sufficient



Sir Alfred East, J. R. S., P. A. S., R. A.

GREENWICH ON BANK HOLIDAY.

SIR ALFRED EAST

range without introducing complications need not be a very large one. Habitually he uses yellow ochre, pale cadmium, deep cadmium, rose madder, cobalt, French blue, transparent oxide of chromium, Turner brown, or warm sepia, and raw umber, and occasionally Venetian red and ivory black. To this, however, other colours may be added now and again to meet some unusual call from his subject. He does not hold to the necessity of having a clean palette, as he oftentimes finds accidental blends on an uncleaned one very much to his liking and his needs.



George S. Elgood

MR. GEORGE S. ELGOOD, R.I.

THE particular qualities of Mr. Elgood's water-colour work have gained him a very definite degree of popularity. It is true that he chooses generally subjects which make a very strong appeal to a considerable section of the public, but it is his manner of treating them that has really established him in the prominent position he holds among our modern water-colourists. This manner is entirely his own, quite characteristic in its general application and its special reservations, and it exercises a perceptible influence over the whole of his production.

Yet in his technical methods Mr. Elgood does not by any means follow any formal recipe ; they are varied, indeed, to suit the demands of the subject with which he may happen to be dealing, and each subject can, in a way, be said to suggest

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

to him the method of treatment which he ought to adopt. This readiness to adapt himself to circumstances, and to use the executive devices which seem most appropriate for the expression of the motive with which at the moment he is concerned, is an important factor in his practice ; it does not interfere with his personal outlook upon nature, and it safeguards him against that risk of becoming stereotyped to which all artists are more or less exposed.

When he is commencing a subject in which there is much architectural detail—especially if the detail is complicated and delicate—he draws the whole thing in carefully with the pencil, and he takes similar pains in the first stage of those garden subjects in which there are special flowers, or groups of flowers, which he considers it necessary to indicate precisely. But, when possible, he prefers not to tie himself by a hard and fast outline, and even in his most exact studies he draws as much as he can with the brush rather than the pencil. In a painting of a landscape, or of a subject in which architecture plays an

MR. GEORGE S. ELGOOD

unimportant part, he often lays the whole thing in at once, sometimes in colours which are not by any means those he sees in nature, but which are set down with absolute consideration for the other colours that he intends to superimpose on them in the finishing stages of his work.

Then, working from a strong dark as a focus—or from a light, or from both a light and a dark as his subject may suggest—he carries the painting to a comparatively finished condition. This is done more or less rapidly according to the class of subject he may be dealing with, or the mood of the moment. There are some motives which must be handled deliberately ; and the manner of treatment which is appropriate to one type of material is often quite unsuitable for another. For example, if he were painting a garden in which masses of flowers constituted the subject, he might set down at the first sitting only a comparatively small portion of the more interesting or the more fugitive flowers, and then use that portion as the centre or focus to which the subsequent work would have to be related.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

While Mr. Elgood does not refuse to adopt any executive process that may at the moment seem to him to be suitable, his preference is for pure wash, supplemented by a certain amount of "lifting." The sponge and the knife he uses very sparingly and only in cases where the character of the work he is doing distinctly demands such devices. Body-colour he has abandoned entirely, because, after considerable experience of it, he has come to the conclusion that its disadvantages are greater than its advantages.

The bulk of his work is practically finished out of doors, though he does not hesitate to add a certain amount of necessary elaboration to his paintings when he brings them back to his studio. But out-of-door work in his case does not mean as a matter of course the exact copying of what may be before him. He decides before he begins a picture how it is to be composed, what are to be its main masses, what its scheme of light and shade, and so on ; and in carrying out what he has decided he is content with a kind of selective reference to nature rather than with precise



G. W. S. Edmond, N.L.

THE GARDEN, MELBOURNE.

MR. GEORGE S. ELGOOD

reproduction of the facts she supplies. It is the impression made upon him by the subject as a whole that he seeks to convey, and of the details available he chooses only those which will make this impression more intelligible.

His advice to students of water-colour painting can be briefly summed up as advocacy of simplicity and straightforwardness. He recommends beginners to avoid tricks, to work with a simple palette, and to keep it clean ; to paint freshly and frankly, and to leave rubbing, sponging, and scraping alone until the possibility of doing without them has been fully realised ; because, as he argues, devices of this kind are useful servants on occasion, but very bad masters if the habit of depending upon them has once been acquired. Concerning the fashion for putting in a painting at full strength at once he suggests that this method is a sound one for those who can really use it, but that in the hands of the inexperienced it is apt to lead to an inadequate result—to a result less expressive than that obtainable by more patient and deliberate ways of working. The

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

painter's object, he contends, is to arrive at a certain end by the best road he can find, and not merely to minimise his labour. At the same time he is not a believer in labour for labour's sake, and he objects to stippled elaboration which makes the colour of a picture dull and lifeless and takes all vitality out of the handling.

In the matter of materials his preference is for a moderately smooth Whatman paper, which he insists on having properly stretched so as to avoid the discomfort which comes from trying to do precise and careful work on a surface which will not keep flat. His usual palette includes cobalt, French blue, indigo, Antwerp blue, rose madder, light red, brown madder, burnt sienna, aureolin, yellow ochre, raw sienna, brown pink, and sepia, with cadmium, lemon yellow, and vermilion as supplementary colours.



W. Russell Flint.

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THE WHITE CLOUD

MR. W. RUSSELL FLINT

THE characteristic vigour and breadth of Mr. Russell Flint's water-colour work make it not only attractive as an expression of his artistic conviction but also interesting as an illustration of the manner in which he uses executive devices as aids to the attainment of his particular intentions. He is a more than ordinarily skilful craftsman, and he manages the processes of water-colour painting with the confidence and certainty which are possible only to the artist who has a thorough understanding of the capabilities of the medium. He succeeds especially in retaining the freshness of his handling through all the stages by which the full effect of his paintings is built up, a spontaneous directness of technical quality which makes an undeniable appeal for admiration.

This air of spontaneity is the more notable

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

because Mr. Russell Flint's method is fairly complex, and the freshness of the results which he obtains by the use of it does not come merely from the simplicity of his procedure. When he is sketching out of doors he begins by indicating the main outlines of his subject lightly with charcoal, and then he lays over the entire surface of his paper a very wet wash of colour by which he aims at recording as nearly as possible the general effect of tone and colour which the subject presents. This wash produces a sort of broad impression of what is before him without, of course, defining exactly any even of the larger facts of the motive ; but it secures a certain correctness of suggestion, and it provides a definite foundation for more detailed work.

When this first wash is dry—he hastens the drying of it with a spirit lamp when the atmospheric conditions are unfavourable—he applies other washes of the same sort, always very wet and laid on an absolutely dry surface, gradually building up his general effect and increasing stage by stage the completeness of the suggestion of

MR. W. RUSSELL FLINT

the subject as a whole. In this striving for completeness of effect, he does not hesitate to modify the washes he has already laid on by scrubbing them down freely with a large hog-hair brush, if by alternations of washing in and scrubbing down he can obtain the qualities of tone and colour which he desires.

The next thing he does is to block in definitely the main masses of his composition and gradually to work up the smaller details which are required to give coherence and meaning to the painting ; and at this stage again he uses the hog-hair brush freely whenever he thinks it is needed to soften away excessive hardness of definition or over emphasis in any part of the composition. With the hog-hair brush, too, he scrubs away colour when he wishes to change his light and shade, or to gain increased subtlety of atmosphere. In the last stage he puts in—again on a perfectly dry surface—sharp touches of colour which give vitality and crispness to the painting and provide the accents in the pictorial design ; but even these sharp touches are often subjected to the scrubbing

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

down process if they do not come exactly as he intends they should. Sometimes small lights are picked out as well with a stiff sable brush.

Mr. Russell Flint's method, in fact, is one of building up by alternate laying in and scrubbing down until the effect that he has in his mind is rightly realised. As the work is always allowed to dry between each stage in its development this drastic manner of dealing with it does not destroy the underpaintings, but only brings them into a suitable condition to receive the touches which he intends to place on them. He does not, naturally, pay much attention to the surface of his paper, but as the paper he uses is a heavy one with a fairly rough grain, and as he has it mounted on board, it will stand a great deal of scrubbing and washing off without becoming unpleasantly sodden. It may be noted that in the earlier stages of his paintings he avoids colours which sink into and stain the paper instead of lying only on the surface—colours of this class he reserves until quite the last.

His method, altogether, is one which must be



H. Cross et Faint.

A SKETCH.

By permission of The Fine Art Society.

MR. W. RUSSELL FLINT

employed with judgment. It is not one which an artist could wisely adopt without having at the outset formed a quite definite idea of the result at which he intended to arrive. Aimless washings in and scrubbing out would lead only to meaningless indecision of effect and would produce an indefinite sort of texture which would be by no means attractive. But Mr. Russell Flint's management of the process is so well directed by the right kind of intention and by really practical understanding, that he is able to keep his work in all its stages fully under control, and to guide it always in the required direction.

The colours he ordinarily uses are cobalt, French ultramarine, Prussian blue, emerald green, Hooker's green No. 1, yellow ochre, Indian yellow, lemon chrome, crimson lake, vermilion, light red, brown madder, burnt sienna, raw sienna, burnt umber, raw umber, Vandyke brown, occasionally ceruleum and rose madder, and very rarely Chinese white.



W. G. W. W.

Albert Goodwin, R.A., 1904.

1904.

By Commission of The King, Ltd. No. 104.

WINCHESTER.

MR. ALBERT GOODWIN, R.W.S.

As a painter of poetic and imaginative landscape Mr. Albert Goodwin has long occupied a very prominent place among our modern water-colourists. He is an artist of remarkable individuality, with a rare power of visualising what can, not inappropriately, be called dreams of nature, and of making absolutely credible fantasies which, though founded securely enough upon fact, derive their particular charm from the temperamental quality of his interpretation. There is an unusual character in his work, a character which appears not only in the choice and treatment of his subjects but also in the technical processes he employs.

Emphatically, it can be claimed for him that he is a colourist, and one, also, to whom the sentiment of subtly harmonised and happily

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

combined colour appeals with especial force. In the earlier stages, indeed, of his career he was so preoccupied with colour, and colour only, that he was over-inclined to neglect the study of form and the cultivation of fine draughtsmanship. But spurred, as he admits, by the criticisms of Ruskin, he strove to correct this deficiency in his art, and for the past thirty years he has concerned himself as closely with questions of form as with problems of colour. To-day it is almost as much the sensitiveness of his drawing as the acuteness of his colour vision that makes his paintings so persuasive as technical exercises.

Like most artists who are responsive to the impressions of the moment he has no hard and fast system of production, and he has a well-pronounced inclination towards experiment in new forms of technical expression. When possible, he prefers to complete his painting out of doors, face to face with nature, but in so many instances the subjects he chooses—effects of atmosphere, aerial colour, and momentary illumination—are of such an evanescent kind that they cannot be properly dealt

MR. ALBERT GOODWIN

with by direct working in the open air. Therefore he has to trust to a considerable extent to his memory of what he has observed, supplemented by rapid notes made on the spot. These notes consist as a rule of a careful pencil outline of the forms of the subject, and a colour blot either done straight from nature or while the impression he has received is still vividly in his mind. Sometimes he adds a black-and-white tone study of the general effect; and with this material at hand for reference he is able to carry out his painting with due deliberation indoors. For this working method he has, of course, fitted himself by prolonged memory training and by systematic development of his selective sense.

In his methods of handling Mr. Goodwin aims primarily at simple directness of statement, at the quality which comes from frank breadth of brush-work; but he admits that such devices as washing down and stippling are both permissible and convenient on occasions. They should be used, however, as special expedients rather than regular working processes; it is wise, he contends, to

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

avoid them as far as possible and to have recourse to them chiefly when an alteration or a correction is required in the first bold "lay-in." But he argues justly enough that to carry a water-colour painting to full refinement of finish without making any mistakes in tones or colours is more or less an exceptional achievement, and that, when they have been made, the conscientious artist will not allow them to remain uncorrected. Therefore the worker must have at his command a technical device by which he can correct and amplify his paintings, and experience has taught Mr. Goodwin that the combination of washing out and stippling is the device that serves him best in emergencies. He has found, too, that certain subjects which are very complex in colour or in gradation of atmospheric tone cannot be fully realised by pure wash alone, and that in these the necessary degree of refinement and variety can only be obtained by stippling, judiciously regulated and combined with the work beneath.

There is one executive method frequently employed by Mr. Goodwin—a combination of



Albert Goobson R.I.S.

BRISTOL.

By permission of The Fine Art Society.

MR. ALBERT GOODWIN

pen-line with water-colour wash—which claims particular mention. In his hands it is more than ordinarily expressive because he makes the combination with the same sensitiveness and delicacy that he displays in the other phases of his production. This manner of working has the advantage of rapidity and certainty, and is valuable for sketches which demand accuracy and yet have to be done against time—when the artist, for instance, is making only a brief stay in a district which presents him with a large number of subjects that he desires to record. The pen is used because it gives an almost indelible line and so prevents the drawing being lost when the washes are applied over it; but, at the same time, as the pen-line is not absolutely indelible, it can be lightened or removed in places where a rigid outline is seen to be unnecessary after the colour tones have been added. The pen drawing is made first, on the plain paper, and the washes are floated on over it, the line being used simply as a guide and foundation for the later work, but occasionally the pen can be taken up again for finishing touches

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

to give here and there more definition to certain forms and to accentuate the outline where necessary.

The colours which Mr. Goodwin uses are ivory black, Turner brown, burnt umber, raw umber, raw sienna, burnt sienna, yellow ochre, aureolin, permanent yellow, Naples yellow, cadmium, Venetian red, Indian red, Chinese vermilion, permanent scarlet, pink or rose madder, emerald oxide of chromium, olive green, cobalt, French blue, Antwerp blue, neutral tint, and Chinese white.



H. J. by St. Ingemann, F.K.B.C., K.L.

A BREEZY DAY.

MR. W. AYERST INGRAM, P.R.B.C., R.I.

THE study of the sea is surrounded with difficulties which impose upon the painter who attempts it a greater strain than he is likely to experience when he is dealing with any other type of material. The conditions under which sea painting has to be carried on are often very exacting, and very liable to interfere with that spirit of quiet concentration which the artist finds necessary for properly expressing his intentions; and the sea itself is such an elusive subject and so abounding with subtleties of colour and effect that it requires for its right interpretation an exceptional amount of serious observation.

But despite these difficulties quite a number of water-colour painters have chosen the sea as their chief subject of study, and have succeeded conspicuously in realising its fascinating immensity

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

and mysterious charm. Among these painters Mr. Ayerst Ingram has made himself particularly notable by the sensitive quality of his work and by the extensive knowledge he displays of the behaviour of the sea under different conditions of weather. He has a thorough understanding of wave movement and of the way in which wave forms are affected by tidal action and by the force of the wind, and he appreciates fully the manner in which the colour of the sea is determined by varieties of illumination and aerial effect. His pictures, therefore, deserve to be closely studied as admirable examples of thoughtful expression, which carry conviction because they represent the conclusions at which he has arrived by prolonged investigation of his subject under all possible aspects.

They are instructive, too, as illustrations of the appropriate application of technical processes. Mr. Ingram is an executant with a thorough command over practical details, and he has the confidence which comes from experience; his method of painting is direct, well-controlled, and

MR. W. AYERST INGRAM

free from mechanical tricks, and it brings him by the shortest road to the end at which he is aiming.

In his out-of-door work it is simplified as much as possible because his sketches have always to be done against time, and therefore the quickest way of painting is the one that suits him best. He works on dry paper, lays in his colour at full strength, and uses any device of handling that answers his purpose at the moment. It is impossible, with such evanescent effects as he has to record, to wait to do things in any systematic fashion, but practice has enabled him to recognise by instinct what variation of method or what accident of touch will be most helpful in his effort to make his impression intelligible.

When he is painting a picture indoors, he is, however, much more deliberate. For his more important subjects he frequently prepares a cartoon in black and white or even in colour, and settles all the details of his composition before he touches the picture itself. In the actual painting he begins by laying in the general effect as nearly as

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

possible at its full strength of colour and tone ; but this vigorous lay-in is washed down at once until there remains only a faint suggestion of the subject as a whole. Then he proceeds, stage by stage, gradually building up the picture and adding in regular sequence the touches by which it is developed. If necessary, certain parts are washed down again and then worked on to bring them back into right relation with the rest. At the last the crisp sharp notes of colour and light and shade which give vitality to the whole arrangement and define the facts of the subject are added. All the drawing throughout is done with the brush, so that, if any corrections have to be made, there may be no difficulty in washing off anything that is not rightly stated, without damaging the surface of the paper.

The difference between Mr. Ingram's out-of-door and indoor method comes simply from his recognition of the difference in the conditions under which he has to work. In his sketching speed is one of the most important considerations and tidiness of execution is unnecessary as he is



U. Speer's original, P.K. 160, N.Y.

A SEA FOG.

By permission of Col. Hildrop.

MR. W. AYERST INGRAM

not aiming at neatness of finish. What he wants is a vivid and forcible note which will reinforce his mental impression of the subject and be of value for purposes of reference later on. In the slower and more detailed painting processes which he follows indoors the sketch serves as a record and guide to prevent him from losing the directness of his intention.

The colours he uses are cobalt, French blue, transparent oxide of chromium, yellow ochre, transparent golden ochre, cadmium orange, rose madder, burnt sienna, and raw umber.



From G. Jones's 'L.R.H.V.'

ROSES.

Preparation of Mrs. Van H. Joseph.

MR. FRANCIS E. JAMES, A.R.W.S.

By his paintings of flowers Mr. Francis E. James has gained a position of exceptional importance in the modern art world. He has done much admirable landscape work marked by unusual individuality of manner and by technical qualities of a very high order, but in his flower pictures he has for many years displayed a degree of originality and executive mastery which certainly entitle him to a place among the most accomplished exponents of this branch of practice that the British school has produced. Indeed, it can truly be said that among neither his predecessors nor his contemporaries is there any one with whom he can be at all closely compared, so personal is his art and so characteristic in its method and expression.

The dominant idea in the whole of his production is extreme care and accuracy of statement—

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

absolute precision of drawing and handling. He does not depend upon happy accidents of brush-work to give him the effects he desires ; everything is thought out and prepared for beforehand, and the result at which he arrives is, as far as it can possibly be made, the one at which he was aiming from the very beginning.

He begins his picture with a very slight drawing in pencil which is used only to give him the general placing of his subject on the paper and to define approximately the spaces which the different parts of the subject are to occupy. Otherwise the whole of the drawing is done with the brush, except that occasionally the pencil may be resorted to to record some difficult little detail of form which he wishes to remain expressed in the finished painting either by severe outline or by strong contrast of colour.

This drawing with the brush is minute and careful, every part of the subject is set down exactly and with the closest observation of the structure throughout. Subtleties of modelling and precise relations of colour are observed and

MR. FRANCIS E. JAMES

rendered as accurately as possible, and the proportions and focusing of the painting are definitely established. The colours are used direct from the pan, not mixed on the palette, so as to secure absolute purity and freshness of tint, and with the same object Mr. James keeps always by him two large glasses of soft water which is changed before it becomes really dirty. The work is kept in a high key to allow for loss of colour brilliancy in drying.

In the finishing stage he reverses what is with most artists the customary procedure, for he aims not at making his painting more elaborate and fuller of detail but rather at losing some of the elaboration he has given to the subject. He works very wet, obliterating what he calls "the tiresome evidence of labour" which results from the slow and studied process of drawing and building up that he has followed from the beginning ; and he leaves only those actualities of form and accent which he considers necessary for rightly suggestive expression. His object in the finishing stage is to give to his subject the aspect it would

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

have when looked at as a whole—a large breadth of effect and a completeness of relation of part to part and detail to detail. This eliminating process needs the closest concentration of thought and observation ; indeed, his manner of working all through entails no small degree of mental strain, as he never allows his attention to flag and never permits chance to divert him from his initial intention.

Naturally, the exact application of his method varies somewhat according to the character of the subject on which he may happen to be engaged. As flowers are fugitive in varying degrees it is only by experience that the painter can discover exactly what amount of time he can allow himself for each given subject, and this experience must be obtained by years of practice and by many failures. There is no royal road to success for the worker who concerns himself with such problems as those which have to be faced in the form of art of which Mr. James is so admirable an exponent, and such results as he achieves are the best proofs of all that he has striven seriously to overcome the many difficulties of his art.



Francis E. Jones, A.R.W.S.

By permission of Sir Hugh Lane.

LILIES.

MR. FRANCIS E. JAMES

The colours he habitually uses are cobalt, cyanine blue, ceruleum, French blue, rose madder, rose doré, carmine madder, carmine, crimson lake, vermilion, light red, burnt sienna, emerald green, green oxide of chromium (opaque and transparent), viridian, yellow ochre, cadmium (Nos. 1 and 2), cadmium orange, permanent yellow, aureolin, raw sienna, brown madder, Vandyke brown, Roman sepia, lamp black, and occasionally indigo and rose antique. Chinese white he uses very sparingly and never for corrections.



Robert M. Marshall, K.M.S.
1877

Robert M. Marshall, K.M.S.

ENKLUISEN

MR. HERBERT MARSHALL, R.W.S.

THERE is to be noted in the water-colour work of Mr. Herbert Marshall a very interesting combination of vigorous actuality and poetic suggestion, and there is, too, a decidedly instructive definiteness of technical method. The architectural subjects to which he has devoted a large part of his energies have certainly demanded of him decisiveness of statement and a certain firm precision of both drawing and painting, but his pictorial instinct has led him to temper the severity of the motives he has chosen by presenting them under attractive conditions of atmospheric effect. His groups of buildings and street scenes, painted in a glow of aerial colour or in the mystery of twilight, appeal quite as strongly to the lover of nature's beauties as they do to the man who interests himself in the solution of architectural problems—Mr. Marshall

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

looks at such subjects with an architect's knowledge, undeniably, but he interprets them with the sensitiveness and the subtlety of vision which are the chief essentials in the equipment of the landscape painter.

The habit of seeing things largely is, indeed, one that he has assiduously cultivated. It guides him very definitely in his method of building up a picture from small studies made out of doors, and it governs the whole working process by which he leads on to his intended result. With his small studies beside him he prepares a cartoon in pastel of the same size as the picture he is going to paint—using a brown or grey paper with a rough surface and drawing with the softest pastels obtainable—and in this cartoon he masses his subject without emphasising outlines or small forms, and establishes the broad scheme of colour and tone that he desires to reproduce in his painting. The friability of the pastel on the rough paper is an actual mechanical assistance, as it makes small drawing impossible and forces him to deal only with the large and generalised masses.

MR. HERBERT MARSHALL

When he begins the painting in water-colour he tries, if the subject is one with a dominating sky-effect, to block it in straight away. The paper is first thoroughly soaked, and then, with the board laid nearly flat, the sky is floated in and all darks such as clouds, distant passages, and so on, are laid upon the wet paper with colour as dry as possible. Each touch must be applied directly and without hesitation, and no attempt must be made to vary or correct it until the paper is quite dry. By this blocking-in the main facts of the subject are plainly defined at something like their full strength, and a firm foundation is provided for the more detailed work by which the painting is completed.

In subjects where the foreground objects are complicated and important—where, for instance, there is a group of shipping relieved against buildings in the middle distance—Mr. Marshall reverses his procedure, for he begins with the foreground masses and the strongest darks, and works, as it were, backwards, leaving the lightest passages of his picture to be dealt with last of all. In this, however, he is really maintaining the strict

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

principle of his method, that the broad masses and the general construction of his subject should be settled clearly before any of the smaller details are introduced. By such a sequence of processes he secures himself against any danger of getting any part of his composition out of right relation to the rest, and he keeps the whole scheme of his picture in proper order from the beginning to the end.

It may be noted that while he avoids body-colour in his general water-colour work he uses it frequently for his more rapid studies and landscape sketches, which are executed upon a dark-tinted paper. For pure water-colour painting he prefers O.W. paper made up into tablets for small-scale work but stretched on a panel board for larger paintings. It is advisable to have a large sheet of paper properly strained so as to prevent any chance of its not lying evenly when it is soaked for the first blocking-in of the picture.

The colours he uses are aureolin, cadmium, yellow ochre, orange vermilion, Venetian red, brown madder, rose madder, burnt sienna, Turner brown, terra verte, cobalt, indigo, and cyanine blue.



John Noble, R.B.S.

FULL CRY.

MR. EDWIN NOBLE, R.B.A.

THERE is in Mr. Edwin Noble's water-colours of birds and animals a pleasant unconventionality which suggests that he does not follow any particular system of working, but trusts rather to the inspiration of the moment to guide him in both the selection and the interpretation of his subject. Really, however, this unconventional manner is not at all accidental; it is attained, indeed, by very systematic and careful working, and is sought for deliberately through all the sequence of processes by which his paintings are built up. Mr. Noble is a firm believer in progression by stages to the final result, and in the value of studious preparation at the outset for the effects that are to be ultimately presented.

At one time it was his habit to work directly from nature, and to paint with his bird or animal

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

model before him during all the stages of his picture making. But this method, he found, led him into a hesitating and timid manner of execution, because he was always being worried by the restlessness of his models, and disconcerted by their habit of making sudden and complete changes of pose. The uncertainty as to what might happen next interfered with his exactness of observation, and the effort to finish what he had begun, despite the alteration in the subject before him, led him into a sort of half-hearted compromise which took the spirit out of his work.

Now, he has accustomed himself to prepare very careful studies of each of the animals that he proposes to introduce into his picture—studies in which the position is exactly recorded and which he finishes minutely in every detail—and when he has collected the whole series of drawings that he requires he draws in from them his complete composition with all possible accuracy. The composition itself he has settled beforehand by making a design in charcoal ; in fact he prepares a number of such designs for each of his pictures,

MR. EDWIN NOBLE

and he keeps by him the one which best satisfies his intention, as a guide while he is drawing his studies.

The first thing he does in the painting itself is to run a wash all over the paper so as to arrive at once at the general tone and colour effect of the subject ; and then he goes straight ahead without ever allowing the work to get quite dry, adding blots of pure colour here and there as may be necessary, and gradually bringing the whole scheme properly together. He hardly ever paints up to full pitch at once, but reaches it, not by successive washes, but rather by adding more and more colour to the first wash while it remains wet. As the picture progresses he allows it to become less wet, and he reserves his final small details to the very last ; and sometimes these details are afterwards partially wiped off with a brush so as to give a sufficient suggestion of small work without any interference with the general breadth of the painting. With a brush, too, the lights are lifted out where necessary. Finally the work is allowed to dry, the edges are cleaned up and any loss of

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

drawing is corrected ; but even then it may be put under a tap or into a bath and have more colour added to it if the artist does not feel that he has reached the full effect that he desired.

This method allows of reasonably rapid production, and by following it a fairly important painting can often be finished in a few days. But when the preparatory work is taken into account, and the time expended upon the preliminary studies is reckoned in, it is evident that Mr. Noble's working processes entail a more than ordinary amount of concentration and sustained effort. At no moment in the progress of his painting can he relax his attention or handle his materials carelessly. The chief essential for success is that every touch, every bit of drawing, every detail of form or colour should be thought out beforehand, and the manner in which it will help in the development of the whole pictorial scheme should be fully appreciated. To begin a painting without having all the needful studies at hand would lead plainly to much confusion, but equally there would be confusion if any work were put into the painting which had



Edson Noble, R.B.A.

THE FARM YARD.

MR. EDWIN NOBLE

not a definite purpose, and which did not contribute something to that completeness of representation that he was striving to secure.

The colours which Mr. Noble uses for general work are cobalt, French ultramarine, olive green, aureolin, yellow ochre, raw sienna, and light red; and for brighter effects Chinese vermilion, madder lake, Antwerp blue, neutral tint, lemon yellow, Hooker's green, No. 2, and occasionally emerald green. He avoids Chinese white.



Alfred Powell

DUFFISHAM ON THE DART.

MR. ALFRED POWELL

A PARTICULAR interest attaches to the water-colour work of Mr. Alfred Powell, because he can be accounted as one of the better exponents of the tradition which was established by the earlier masters of the art. In his paintings he follows the simple broad methods which were generally practised by the leaders in water-colour nearly a century ago, and he applies these methods with a very intelligent appreciation of their value and of the manner in which they should be employed for the interpretation of the subjects he selects. As a craftsman, indeed, he is markedly accomplished ; the directness and straightforwardness of his work can always be admired, and there is something that specially attracts in the certainty with which he states the conclusions to which he has been brought by his study of nature.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

In arriving at these conclusions he takes considerable pains to satisfy himself that he has used the right kind of observation, and that his nature study has been sufficiently deliberate and exhaustive. He is no believer in hasty generalisations, and he has a definite conviction that the artist who is most careful about preliminaries is the one who is most likely to attain satisfactory results. For instance, when he is making a first acquaintance with a new sketching ground, he insists upon a thorough exploration of the whole district before beginning to work, so that he may not only discover the best subjects, but may also decide which are the best conditions under which they should be painted—it is not always, he feels, the most accessible bit of scenery that is worthiest of the artist's attention, and every landscape ought to be studied under its appropriate atmospheric effect.

When he has settled on his subject he aims first of all at obtaining a definite mental impression of it as a whole, and this mental impression he tries to keep clearly before him through all the subsequent stages of his work, so as to avoid any

MR. ALFRED POWELL

departure from his original intention, and any division of the interest of his picture. In this first view of his subject he begins by studying its forms and masses, and then goes on to consider its light and shade values, and to see how it lends itself to that focusing of forms and tones which is necessary for the proper pictorial rendering of a landscape; and it is not until his mind is made up on these points that he starts his record of the scene before him.

Usually he makes at the outset a rough suggestion in charcoal of the general effect of the composition—he chooses charcoal because it can be easily dusted off the paper—and then he draws in his main lines lightly in pencil. Then he lays a thin wash of warm colour, generally a mixture of yellow ochre and rose madder, all over his paper, and as soon as this wash has dried sufficiently he puts in the delicate colours of his sky and distance. Next, he deals with the stronger colour masses in the middle distance and foreground, and establishes the relation between these masses and the more tender tints in the remoter parts of his picture. To this broad statement are added what finishing

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

touches the subject may require. In working he keeps the surface of his paper moderately damp by occasional washes of water, so as to avoid the risk of his touches drying with unduly hard edges.

The darker passages in his picture he lays in, as far as possible, with a single wash. He does not superimpose wash upon wash until the necessary depth of colour is attained ; he begins a dark mass, instead, at its lightest part, and taking more colour in his brush from time to time as he goes on, he expresses the gradation and modelling in this mass by floating the light and the dark in together. In this way he gains a pleasant quality of surface, and an agreeable blending of both colours and tones which is specially expressive ; and he also keeps his colour from that tendency towards opacity which is apt to appear when the dark passages in a water-colour are brought up to their full pitch by successive washes. Naturally, working in this way, he is careful not to allow his colour to become too sloppy ; if he did, the gradations in the wash would run together, and the modellings at which he was aiming would not be



LEITH HILL, SURREY.

Alfred Powell.

MR. ALFRED POWELL

distinguishable. He keeps his pigments in a creamy consistency, moist enough to enable them to be laid easily on the paper, but not so wet that a touch will spread appreciably beyond the place that it is intended to occupy. What exactly should be the amount of water used in this mode of handling water-colours the painter can only find out by experiment. Mr. Powell has developed the method into a certainty, and much of the charm of texture which can be perceived in his paintings comes from the skill with which he brings his pigments to the right consistency and avoids that excessive fluidity of touch which is so difficult to control. Yet he equally avoids dryness, and the hard definition of washes which is undesirable in finished work and not always acceptable even in a slight sketch.

The colours he uses are lemon yellow, gamboge, aureolin, yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, burnt umber, raw umber, Vandyke brown, sepia, blue black, orange vermilion, Venetian red, rose madder, brown madder, cobalt, Antwerp blue, indigo, and Payne's grey.



Village Kookiam, C.P.K.H.S.

VILLARS - A SKETCH.

MR. ARTHUR RACKHAM, V.P.R.W.S.

THERE are two sides to the art of Mr. Arthur Rackham, in both of which he has proved himself to be possessed of quite exceptional capacities. He is a very able painter in pure water-colour of landscapes and open-air subjects, in which he shows a dainty and poetic appreciation of the more subtle aspects of nature and a very delicate command over refinements of technical method ; and he is a fantastic illustrator, with an amazingly fertile imagination and executive skill of the highest order. In this illustrative work he uses a combination of pen line and water-colour wash which he applies with equal expressiveness to a wide range of motives, to strong, grotesque designs full of vigorous character, to dramatic incidents and scenes from fanciful myths and legends, and to compositions which require the most sensitive tenderness

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

of handling and an exquisite precision of statement.

Naturally enough, the habit of setting things down delicately and yet with all necessary decision, which he has acquired by his practice in line drawing, has its effect upon the character of his pure water-colour painting. His open-air studies, free and loose in handling as they are, are always admirably drawn and are distinguished by a searching sense of form. They have notably that confidence of manner which comes from a thorough technical equipment and from a well-cultivated power of observation. Yet they are not mapped out at the beginning with much formality of drawing ; they are, as a rule, started straight away with the brush, and the subject is built up part by part with washes and fluent touches which are all the more expressive because they are not made to conform to a rigid outline. In his interpretation of nature, too, Mr. Rackham allows himself a certain amount of freedom ; he selects the facts that help to explain the meaning of his subject and he eliminates those which might complicate

MR. ARTHUR RACKHAM

unnecessarily, or obscure, the artistic point that he wishes to make. It is an impression of his motive as a whole that he seeks to convey ; he does not try to produce a merely realistic record of the scene before him. Sometimes, when he is composing a painting, he works from studies prepared beforehand, but this is rather an occasional departure than his usual custom.

In his figure work—in those tinted pen drawings upon which he lavishes such an astounding wealth of imagination—he proceeds by a more elaborate sequence of processes. The beginning is a careful drawing in pencil by which he fixes both the main essentials and the smaller details of his composition, and on this pencil drawing the pen-and-ink work is imposed and is carried to completion. Then the pencil marks, where they have not been covered by the pen lines, are cleaned off and the washes of colour are added. Frequently between the pen-and-ink and the colour stages, the general tone effect is worked out with monochrome washes, on top of which the colour is finally placed ; but this is not his invariable practice

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

—it is a matter in which he would be guided by circumstances, and by the requirements of the particular subject with which he might happen to be dealing. Sometimes again, there is further drawing in pen and ink over the colour washes. This order of procedure is, however, subject to variation according to the exigencies of the moment. Mr. Rackham, like most artists who use technical devices in a personal manner, adapts himself to the needs of the work in hand, and does not hesitate to modify his methods if thereby he can arrive at a more effective result.

He has one other working habit which must be mentioned because it accounts for certain qualities in his drawings. With a general idea of his composition in his mind, he begins by setting down the surroundings of his figures before he draws in the figures themselves—he builds up, as it were, the scene before he brings on his characters to play their parts on the stage. This reversal of the usual order of pictorial composition is, in his case, decidedly justified by results; it gives an atmosphere of consistency to designs which from



Arthur Rackham, F.P.R.H.S.

By permission of Mrs. Z. Merton.

THE KING AND THE SWINEHERD.

MR. ARTHUR RACKHAM

their fantastic nature require a particular treatment to be made credible. If he drew his groups of figures first, and then filled in the background and accessories, there would be some danger of detaching these figures from their surroundings and of making them too prominent in the design. But when they are made to take their place logically in a well-prepared setting, the unity of the scene is preserved both dramatically and pictorially, and the whole thing becomes pleasantly coherent. That Mr. Rackham should have appreciated this fact and should have acted upon it so consistently is a proof of his thoughtful study of artistic principles, and of the thoroughness with which he considers the details of his practice.

The colours he uses habitually in his water-colour work are charcoal grey, raw umber, emerald oxide of chromium, French ultramarine, ceruleum, cobalt, crimson alizarin, burnt sienna, raw sienna, yellow ochre, aureolin, and Chinese white.



Arthur Wardle.

JABIRU STORKS.

MR. ARTHUR WARDLE

AMONG the artists who occupy themselves with the representation of animal life Mr. Arthur Wardle has made a marked success by his paintings of the larger beasts of prey. He has given years of study to the ways of the models he has chosen and has learned very thoroughly their distinguishing peculiarities of action, movement, and attitude, and their particular characteristics of anatomical structure. He draws them with a fine sense of their grace of line and their lithe beauty of modelling, and he paints them with the soundest understanding of the texture of skin and fur. In everything he does there is the foundation of sure knowledge, tested by experience and confirmed by constant reference to nature. Necessarily, with such subjects as he prefers, the training of his memory by close and prolonged

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

observation is a matter of great moment, because for the completeness of his work he has to trust largely to memory of what he has seen rapidly rather than to actual reproduction of facts that he can study at leisure. Therefore he has encouraged himself in the habit of making many careful and searching drawings and of taking great pains over the preliminaries by which he leads up to his final pictorial results.

But in his methods of painting he does not follow any fixed rule. Generally he works as his mood suggests or as the subject he has in hand seems to demand; his technical manner, in fact, is varied to suit the occasion and is not the same for one picture as it is for another. All that he asks is that the way he chooses at the moment should be the one by which the picture he intends to produce can be given most fully the aspect and quality he wishes it to have.

For some time past he has been using a fine-grained linen to paint upon instead of paper. This linen is mounted like paper upon stout boards so that it will keep flat and not cockle when wetted,



Arthur B. Dowling

JAGUAR AND MACAW.

MR. ARTHUR WARDLE

and not stretch unequally. It has a pleasant surface texture and it takes well the body-colour which he prefers for practically the whole of his work. He mixes white with almost all his colours and consequently makes his pigments semi-opaque, but as he lays them on in thin washes rather than in solid or heavily-loaded touches, the grain of the linen helps to give freshness to the brush-work and to enhance the interest of the handling.

He attaches considerable importance to the maintenance of a certain evenness of opacity in the colours while they are being applied—so as to avoid the discordant effect which would come from combining solid touches and transparent washes in the same painting. To this end he often mixes Chinese white with the water in which he dips his brushes, and thereby compels himself to carry white evenly into all the pigments with which he is working. The result is, naturally, more consistent than it would be if the white were added to the colours on the palette more or less at haphazard.

When he is painting on paper instead of linen

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

his method of handling is practically the same—a process of building up by thin washes of body-colour which are drawn with much care and crisply defined rather than floated together. But, of course, where blending is required to suggest subtleties of colour or tone gradation he does not hesitate to fuse these touches one into the other while they are wet; the executive process he employs is elastic enough to give him all needful liberty of action and to enable him to meet in the right way any technical difficulty that may happen to arise. His readiness to adapt himself to circumstances does not mean, however, that he is uncertain about the way in which his work should be done; it implies, on the contrary, an unusual degree of all-round knowledge of the working details of his craft, and a definite capacity for discerning which particular means of expression will best serve his purpose.

The colours he uses are lemon yellow, aureolin, yellow ochre, cadmium, raw sienna, burnt sienna, rose madder, brown madder, vermilion, cobalt, Prussian blue, sepia, black, and Chinese white.

SIR ERNEST WATERLOW, R.A., P.R.W.S.

No one could deny to Sir Ernest Waterlow the fullest measure of credit as a serious and sensitive student of nature or as a sincere and consistent seeker after beauty. His landscapes have a singular charm of manner due to the admirable taste he exercises in his selection of subjects and the refinement of the technical method he employs in interpreting them. There is always a delightful delicacy in his work, but at the same time it lacks neither strength nor distinction ; and his firm draughtsmanship, the freshness of his colour, and the subtlety of his suggestion of atmospheric effects give an unusually persuasive character to the whole of his production.

He has no technical tricks which affect the straightforwardness of his painting ; his main object is to record frankly what he sees and to realise to

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

the utmost the character of a subject which has attracted him. Therefore he chooses the simplest way of expressing himself and trusts wisely to the rightness of his observation to make his work convey the impression which he has himself received from nature. Of course, the manner of both his observation and expression is determined by his personal preference for a particular type of material, and by his instinctive appreciation of the proper way in which this material should be handled ; but the revelation of his personality is given without affectation and with none of that self-consciousness which is sometimes too obvious in the performances of men of strong and independent conviction.

One of his special aims is to suggest the brilliancy and purity of colour which appeal to him in nature. For this reason he does not wet his paper before he begins to paint, because he feels that on the dry surface he can lay his washes with the crispness and cleanliness that he desires. His colour, too, he puts in as near as possible at full strength so as to avoid the chance of losing any of

SIR ERNEST WATERLOW

its freshness by having to add wash on wash to bring it to the right pitch. Whatever fusing together of touches may be necessary to prevent hardness of edges or over-definition of forms he obtains by the natural properties of the water-colour medium ; he does not use any deliberate contrivances to obtain softness, and he does not wash down strongly-stated work so as to give it delicacy by mechanical means.

When he is painting out of doors he keeps the size of his sketch within definite limits, as a rule to something not exceeding half imperial, because work of this size can be comfortably finished in one or, at most, two sittings. If the subject happens to be an unusually elaborate one he makes some special studies of details on the spot and uses them later on to help him in finishing the painting in his studio. His paper he carries in a portfolio which he rests upon his knees and supports behind with a stick standing on the ground. This arrangement he prefers to an easel as it enables him more quickly to vary the angle at which his paper is placed and to put it in any position

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

which some momentary exigency of handling may demand.

All his large water-colours are painted indoors from the sketches and studies which he has made in the open. To attempt large work out of doors is not, he thinks, judicious because there is some risk of the original impression inspired by the subject being lost during the protracted labour necessary to realise it on any considerable scale. His limitation of the size of his sketches is due to the belief, founded upon experience, that an artist is less liable to wander from the treatment which he decided on at first for the material before him if he does not try to deal with this material in too ambitious a manner. In sketches to be finished at one sitting it is useless to have too much ground to cover—there must always be a certain amount of emptiness in large paintings which are done with excessive rapidity ; while, on the other hand, the result of giving several sittings to one study is generally to produce a conflict of ideas in which anything like decisiveness in the interpretation of the subject is apt to disappear. Sir Ernest's method



St. R. J. Hatching, R. L. P. K. B. S.

A SUSSEX WINDMILL

SIR ERNEST WATERLOW

has the advantage of being practical, and of being directed by common sense as well as by artistic expediency—as much of his out-of-door work is intended to be used for reference when he is painting pictures in his studio it is indispensable that it should be as accurate as possible in its presentation of nature's realities.

The colours he generally uses are cobalt, ceruleum, indigo, ultramarine ash, yellow ochre, raw sienna, lemon yellow, aureolin, cadmium No. 2, cadmium orange, light red, vermilion, rose madder, pink madder, brown madder, raw umber, burnt sienna, and charcoal grey ; and occasionally French blue, real ultramarine, cobalt green, cobalt violet, and Vandyke brown.



J. R. Hegarty, R.F.S.

A MERMAID—A SKETCH.

MR. J. R. WEGUELIN, R.W.S.

IT is especially as a painter of the nude figure in water-colour that Mr. J. R. Weguelin has made himself famous. He has taken up a class of subject that comparatively few artists attempt, and he has handled it in a long series of very attractive paintings with a charm and distinction that can be sincerely admired. He has a very pleasing fancy and a delightful sense of style; and his graceful draughtsmanship, his exquisite feeling for delicate harmonies of colour, and his brilliantly direct and expressive brushwork make his productions more than ordinarily important as examples of the judicious application of the water-colour medium.

The dominant characteristic of his method is straightforwardness—an attempt to arrive at the results he desires by the simplest means and by the frankest use of his materials. His fundamental

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

conviction is that water-colour when painted with real directness has a brilliant quality which is unattainable in any other way, and that if this quality is once lost in the processes of working it can hardly ever be regained by any devices of retouching. But he recognises that figures must be accurately realised—unlike landscapes, in which minor mistakes in drawing can be comparatively easily glossed over—and that imperfections in draughtsmanship must be corrected, even if thereby some of the freshness at which the artist may be aiming in his handling has to be sacrificed.

Therefore, he insists that the water-colour painter who wishes to treat figures by the direct method must first make himself a practised draughtsman, and be sure of the forms with which he has to deal. There must be no fumbling with the drawing and no tentative setting down of facts which would have later on to be laboured into correctness, because both the fumbling and the labour would interfere with directness of technical statement and would diminish the vitality of the finished work.

MR. J. R. WEGUELIN

Mr. Weguelin himself strives in his preliminary drawing for such absolute accuracy that when he begins to paint his subject he shall have nothing but the colour to think about, and in the actual painting he tries to gain by the simplest processes the colour and the effect that he wants. He puts on his touches fluently and models them while they are wet by adding more water to spread and lighten them, by running in body-colour, or by increasing where necessary the depth and richness of the colour, so as to fuse the work together before it is allowed to dry. In this way gradations of tone and gradations of tint can be obtained without either washing out or laying wash over wash, and the risk of losing the freshness that is one of the charms of water-colour placed frankly upon white paper is to a great extent avoided.

Sometimes after he has fully modelled a figure in transparent colour he floats a thin veil of slightly warm body-colour over it, leaving only the deeper transparent shadows and the stronger colour accents—a device by which he gains subtlety and delicacy without diminishing the strength or

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

destroying the definition of his under work, and by which he can soften and bring together his tones and modellings. He is always very careful to preserve the cleanness and crispness of the outlines, especially where they are relieved against a dark background, but by studious observation of the tones which suggest the roundness of the figure he prevents this crispness from degenerating into hardness. In fact, there is in all his work plain proof that he has not only a thoroughly practical understanding of the method he employs but also an intimate knowledge of the more subtle refinements of expression by which exactness of statement can be kept from becoming tediously obvious.

But, after all, his possession of this knowledge is the natural consequence of the close study that he has given to the practice of his art. Convinced as he is of the need for serious preparation to prevent the artist's facility from being hampered by insufficient acquaintance with fact, he has a not less firm conviction that the bald presentation of fact does not make for artistic beauty or for graceful suggestion. That his picture should have all

MR. J. R. WEGUELIN

the essentials of draughtsmanship, design, and handling upon which all good work is based seems to him a vital matter, but he feels not less surely that these essentials should be so happily combined that the painting as a whole should have an air of spontaneity and almost unconscious achievement.

The colours he uses are cobalt, ceruleum, cendre blue, French blue, oxide of chromium (opaque and transparent), Hooker's green, No. 1, yellow ochre, aureolin, cadmium orange, raw sienna, burnt sienna, purple madder, rose madder, light red, brown madder, Vandyke brown, raw umber, and flake white; and occasionally vermilion, burnt umber, and lampblack.



J. Walter West, R.W.S.

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THE PAROQUET.

MR. J. WALTER WEST, R.W.S.

IN the whole of the work which Mr. J. Walter West produces there is evident an intention to arrive at certain dainty qualities of finish, and to satisfy a real love of delicately studied completeness. He is a believer in elaboration that is properly controlled by a practical understanding of artistic exigencies, and that is helpful in explaining the purpose of the painter's effort, as opposed to merely niggling surface finish which has no meaning and no technical value. What he desires is to realise all the possibilities of his medium, sparing no trouble to attain to a full measure of expression, and grudging no labour that will enable him to reach the end he has in view.

He is very strongly of opinion that the artist who aims at beauty of craftsmanship and who wishes also to make his work complete must

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

frankly recognise the difficulties of water-colour painting, and must learn as quickly as he can the best way to overcome them. The way that he has himself adopted is to exercise extreme care in the preparatory stages of his painting, so as to escape the necessity of making any extensive alterations or corrections in the later stages, with the consequent danger of losing freshness and cleanness of touch. To establish at the outset a quite definite idea of what he proposes to do is, he holds, the surest aid to straightforward and successful accomplishment.

Therefore, he usually makes a very careful study in pencil, charcoal, or pen and ink, or in all three combined, of the subject he has selected. He uses for this a thin O.W. paper which has the advantage of being semi-transparent and of having a smooth texture that facilitates the transference of the study to the paper on which the painting itself is to be executed. By working out the grouping of his figures and accessory objects in the preliminary drawing he is able, not only to settle his composition with some approach to finality, but also

MR. J. WALTER WEST

to proceed with confidence when the actual painting begins and problems of colour have to be considered as well as those of form.

After the drawing has been transferred he lays on his colour with all possible precision, working in a rather high key because he feels that it is better to tone down excessive brilliancy than to attempt to strengthen a colour passage which has been made too dull to start with. To help him in getting brightness of colour he chooses to work upon the smoothest and whitest boards he can obtain—this smooth surface, too, he finds helpful in the rendering of the texture of the polished furniture and floors which occur so often in his pictures, and it enables him also to remove the pigment cleanly right down to the white ground in places where he wishes to introduce particular accents of specially bright colour. Sometimes in a very brilliant passage he drags on the pure pigments dry and then fuses them together by the addition of a small drop of water. But in all the technical devices he employs he is consistent in his effort to keep his work fresh, pure, and vivacious, and yet at

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

the same time to carry it to the fullest pitch of expression that the medium will allow.

The use of body-colour he defends as an occasional expedient. As so many of the recognised water-colour pigments are themselves opaque he argues that it is somewhat illogical for the purists to deny opaque white to the water-colour painter, especially as there are certain effects of illumination which cannot be better suggested than by the contrast between the solid, crumbly surface of body-colour in the lights and rich transparent washes in the shadows. His conviction is that the means by which the desired effect can be best produced is the one which the artist is entitled to adopt, and that hard and fast rules prescribing what is legitimate or not in the practice of an art are not desirable. In his own work he does not hesitate to use body-colour when he sees that it will help him to arrive at those qualities of colour and executive statement for which he is always seeking. His independence of view in matters of procedure is what might fairly have been expected of him ; the study he has given to the practical



J. Walter West, R.H.S.

THE PAROQUET—PENCIL SKETCH.

MR. J. WALTER WEST

side of water-colour painting has qualified him to think for himself on such questions, and has enabled him to choose surely the best way of reaching the result which seems to him to be right.

The colours he generally uses are cobalt, ceruleum, cyanine blue, smalt, French ultramarine, ultramarine ash, emerald oxide of chromium, yellow ochre, golden ochre, cadmium, aureolin, light red, rose madder, ruby madder, purple madder, cobalt violet, Turner brown, burnt sienna, and raw umber, and occasionally terre verte, alizarin yellow, pink madder, vermilion, orange vermilion, and sepia, but he often makes changes in his palette.

HINTS ON SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

ONE of the first essentials in the equipment of the out-of-door worker is an unfailing supply of patience. Painting in the open air is surrounded with a host of small difficulties which seem to have been specially provided by Nature to prevent her secrets being too easily discovered. Indeed, the attitude which Nature is apt to assume towards the sketcher's well-meant efforts to put himself properly in touch with her is a little impish and mischievous ; she teases him with petty annoyances none of which actually matters much, but which collectively do interfere a good deal with the maintenance of that spirit of quiet concentration which the serious student is always anxious to cultivate. But as these annoyances are inevitable the only possible course for the artist who desires to make the best use of his opportunities is to meet

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

them philosophically and without impatience, and to try and circumvent them, if he can, by the right kind of contrivances.

It is very important that the sketcher should avoid burdening himself with too complicated apparatus ; the simpler his equipment, indeed, the less likely is he to be worried by the natural difficulties of out-of-door working. Fortunately in water-colour painting there is no need to carry a great amount of material. For work of medium size a sketching block, a paint-box and water-bottle, and a folding stool will be sufficient ; the sketching block can be conveniently gripped between the knees and the paint-box can be held in the left hand or laid within reach on the ground. With things so disposed the sketcher can work in passable comfort ; the block is at a sufficient distance from the eye to enable him to see the effect of his sketch as a whole and to allow him to put on his touches at arm's length without any cramping of the movement of his hand, and he can hold the block so firmly with his knees that there is little danger of it

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

being shaken by even the most violent gusts of wind.

A gusty wind, it may be noted, is apt to be particularly troublesome when work is being done on a scale large enough to make necessary the use of an easel. Unless the easel is securely anchored by being tied to a convenient post, and unless the block or board is made quite fast to the easel by a clip or by some other trustworthy device, the whole thing is certain to blow over sooner or later—and this unpleasant accident usually occurs at a critical moment in the work, when the sketch is most likely to be irreparably damaged by falling face downwards on the ground. The easel, of course, must be reasonably light, or else it will become rather a serious addition to the sketcher's outfit ; but it must be rigid and strong enough to bear the strain of being weighted if necessary to keep it steady. A heavy stone tied to it, pendulum fashion, will often prevent its being blown over by an ordinary wind ; and spiked legs are desirable because when they are driven some distance into soft ground the easel is much less likely to be

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

moved either by the wind or by the pressure of the hand.

There is one objection, however, to the use of an easel in out-of-door sketching—the angle at which the work is set cannot be varied without a good deal of troublesome rearrangement. To meet this difficulty many artists adopt, instead of an easel, a portfolio which rests upon the knees and is supported from behind by a stick driven into the ground. This device is useful because the portfolio can be instantly tilted at any angle which may be desirable, and yet it is held securely enough to prevent its shifting unexpectedly. Of course, work of large size cannot be done this way because it cannot be set at more than a moderate distance from the eye, and the sketcher cannot walk back to judge the effect of bold touches as he can when his board is fixed upon an easel. But, as a general principle, it is not desirable to attempt very large work in water-colour out of doors ; things which can be finished in one or two sittings are preferable to those which have to be spread over several days. Water-colour, it must be remembered, is essentially

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

a medium for the rapid expression of a fleeting impression,—for direct and significant summing up of the facts of a subject seen under particular conditions,—and it is not so well suited as oils for painting large pictures in the open air. The artist who realises that the medium has certain natural limitations, and who restrains his ambition to try and use it in ways that are not altogether appropriate, is the most likely to arrive at the best results. He will be less hampered by mechanical difficulties, and he will have a better chance of producing work that is right in manner and distinguished by really sound qualities.

The water-colour painter would be well advised never to sit in such a position that the direct sunlight can fall upon his work. A sheet of white paper in sunlight is a very dazzling thing to look at and in a very short time tires the eye so much that the exact judging of gradations of tone and colour becomes almost impossible. Moreover, the strong light makes the colours which are being put upon the paper seem much more brilliant than they really are, and consequently the sketch when

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

it is brought indoors looks dull and monotonous and often excessively low in tone. Another trouble, caused by the heat of the sun, is the too rapid drying of the washes, and the consequent loss of the delicacy and breadth of effect which come from the proper blending of touches while they remain damp. A sketch done in the direct sun is apt to be hard and unsympathetic, without subtlety of modelling, and with many abrupt edges to the washes. It will certainly lack some of the more desirable qualities of well-controlled water-colour work.

Therefore, the sketcher in choosing a place to work should try to get into the shadow of a tree or a hedge, and if this is impossible should so dispose himself that the sketch block can be stood with its back to the sun. There is no real necessity for him always to face his subject ; he can quite easily acquire the habit of looking over his shoulder at the scene he is representing, and the small inconvenience of having to turn his head frequently to study his subject is much less worrying than the effort to see what he is doing in a glare of sunlight.

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

He can, of course, provide himself with an umbrella, but this is a rather burdensome addition to his necessary apparatus and is very likely to annoy him by blowing over when he least expects it. There is, too, a rather serious objection to the ordinary sketching umbrella, that being made of comparatively thin, light-coloured canvas, it not only fails to cast an opaque shadow but also throws upon the work a certain amount of yellowish colour which has a deceptive effect and often induces the artist to record inaccurately the shades of colour which he sees in nature. As a consequence of working in a half-veiled, warm light, he is not unlikely to make his sketch unpleasantly cold and colourless.

He must be warned, also, against allowing a strong reflection from any coloured surface near by to fall upon his work—the reflection, for instance, from a red brick wall with the sun shining on it would be very disconcerting and would interfere with his judgment of colour subtleties. Many a sketch has been spoiled by the artist's failure to take into account matters of this sort which are

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

seemingly of small importance, so it is as well to insist somewhat strongly upon the need for considering, when a subject is being selected, how the surroundings will affect the sketcher's comfort. There are plenty of other small disadvantages, some of them obvious enough, which he must be prepared to avoid ; but with a little experience he will soon get into the way of looking out for them and anticipating them instinctively. The more he learns to recognise what are the mechanical troubles he has to overcome the better will be the results at which he arrives.

One thing he will certainly have to be prepared for is the difference in the behaviour of the medium under varying conditions of weather and even at different times of the day. In dull, damp weather the washes will dry much more slowly than on a warm, sunny day when the air is free from moisture ; and in the evening they will hardly dry at all. To obviate this difficulty some artists carry a small spirit lamp as part of their sketching outfit and use it, when necessary, to hasten the drying of their work. But, generally, the

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

sketcher will be wise not to attempt on damp days, or in the evening time, subjects which require very exact definition, or in which there is much small detail that has to be crisply and firmly expressed; he will succeed better with broad generalisations and with soft atmospheric effects which can be treated with a certain amount of indefiniteness. It is as well, also, when working under these conditions, to use water rather sparingly—if the colours are moistened only just enough to enable them to be laid upon the paper, and if any tendency to sloppiness is avoided, the work is not so likely to get out of control, and there will be a reasonable chance of the touches drying.

The way in which a landscape subject should be treated must necessarily depend to a considerable extent upon the artist's preference and intention; the exercise of an individual taste in selection and in methods of expression is always better than subservience to an accepted convention. But the sketcher can be recommended to strive after two things, the capacity to see his subject as a whole, and rapidity in setting down the results of his

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

observation. He should aim at completeness in the statement of the general effect of the motive he has selected, at the rapid summing up of the matters which he recognises as vitally important, before he begins to elaborate the smaller pictorial details. The practical advantage of this manner of working lies in the fact that a sketch so dealt with has much more value as a record of nature than one which has been commenced without sufficient consideration of the main essentials.

It must be remembered that the atmospheric effect which often makes a subject worth painting, is, as a rule, a very fleeting thing, and that it is quite likely to change completely before any detailed record of it can be secured. But if the artist has grasped the main facts of the motive intelligently and has set them down from the first in their right relation, his sketch, no matter how slight it may be, will have an appreciable measure of vitality and significance. Even if it has to be left unfinished because the atmospheric effect has changed, the incomplete note will be of some permanent importance as a suggestion of an

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

attractive phase of nature, and will be helpful as a guide in working out a more deliberate picture on some future occasion. The merest blot which sums up suggestively a big effect is more worth possessing than an unfinished study of detail which realises only part of the subject and conveys no intelligible impression of the broad aspect of the landscape.

Of course, the artist who intends to use his out-of-door sketches as material for more elaborate indoor work must do more than take notes of atmospheric effects; he must make studies—many careful and precise studies—of the smaller details which have to be introduced into the pictures he proposes to paint. Without a very thorough grasp of broad effects, however, he will not be able to combine these details properly, and to make them keep their right place in a painting slowly evolved and deliberately worked out. Details which demand more attention than they are entitled to receive are only defects in an otherwise well-constructed picture.

Roughly, the way to manage a landscape

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

sketch is to lay in first the large forms of the sky with its chief varieties of colour and light and shade, then to define the middle distance, observing carefully not only its colour but the exact tone relation which it bears to the sky, and lastly to state definitely and broadly the foreground masses, the big spaces of tone and colour into which, if time permits, the smaller facts of the subject can be introduced later on. Not much preliminary drawing is necessary, a few pencil marks as guides to the placing of the main things in the construction of the subject will be sufficient; it is better to draw the sketch as far as possible with the brush, both for the sake of saving time and to secure greater freedom of expression. This lay-in will give a quite effective summing up of the subject as a whole, and as it can be done in a few minutes, when once the power of rapid statement has been acquired, it fixes clearly the character of even a quickly changing effect. By the time the foreground has been filled in, the sky should have dried sufficiently for the addition of the smaller modellings of the clouds and the more subtle

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

variations of colour, and then, in turn, the middle distance and the foreground can be carried a stage further. In this way the work will progress stage by stage without upsetting the relation between the different parts of the sketch, which is treated as a whole and brought all over to the same degree of development at each stage. This systematic mode of procedure is the best that can be adopted because it ensures a logical expression of the artist's idea, and because it enables him to produce a piece of work that has at each stage its appropriate measure of meaning. Such a sketch, in fact, is right from the beginning, and prolonged labour on it, though no doubt needful to convert suggestion into actuality, does not increase its truth to nature—indeed, a really brilliant sketch, finely felt and confidently handled, may quite possibly lose some of its freshness and charm if it is “finished” in the popular sense.

Therefore the sketcher must be at some pains to understand the difference between the right kind of finish and mere surface elaboration. No artistic end is gained by carrying a sketch further

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

than is absolutely necessary to express the character of the subject chosen and to present it under its appropriate aspect. In other words, there is always in out-of-door work a particular moment when the artist ought to leave off, and he should train himself to recognise with something like certainty when this moment has arrived. How to begin and when to stop are things he must know if he desires to produce paintings which have the qualities by which the really good sketch is distinguished—how to grasp the vital essentials of his subject and how to avoid waste of labour in worrying out unimportant trivialities which complicate the record of nature without making it more significant.

So, it can be seen that sketching out of doors, if it is to be successfully attempted, needs thought and observation, a sense of artistic fitness and a capacity to grasp quickly and to record with certainty a vivid impression. It is not a form of pictorial achievement which admits of hesitation, or even of prolonged deliberation; it cannot be controlled by the precise and comfortable methods

SKETCHING OUT OF DOORS

of the studio, and it has to be practised under conditions which are always a little difficult and sometimes actually disconcerting. But it is well worth all the trouble it involves because most surely it brings the artist into close contact with Nature and teaches him her secrets correctly and intelligibly. The really accomplished sketcher, who knows what to do and how it should be done, holds a place of the highest importance in the art world.

TEMPERA AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO WATER-COLOUR

ALTHOUGH tempera is scarcely to be counted as a true water-colour medium it is well worth the attention of the water-colour painter, because it has certain qualities which he will be able to appreciate and certain executive capabilities which he can turn to good account. Tempera, in fact, occupies a kind of intermediate position between water-colour and oil; it has some of the characteristics of both with, in addition, definite peculiarities which are all its own. It can be used, too, for a wide variety of subjects both out of doors and in the studio, and it presents no special technical difficulties which cannot be mastered by the worker who gives the necessary amount of thought to the mechanism of his art.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

The chief constituent in the vehicle with which the tempera colours are mixed is egg albumen—white or yolk of egg—and this causes the colours to dry very rapidly. This rapid drying is one of the peculiarities of tempera, a very salient peculiarity which has to be accepted by every one who wishes to make the right use of the medium. It prevents tempera being employed with the breadth and fluency of handling which are so eminently possible in pure water-colour, but it enables the artist to state the details of his subject with certainty and with considerable speed, because he has only to wait a few minutes for his touches to dry, and because he can work over and amplify almost immediately what he has already set down.

Naturally, with a medium which dries in this way, the artist cannot expect to make his effects by means of broad washes floated on to the paper and subtly blended while they remain wet; he must adopt a crisper mode of handiwork, and must set his touches side by side without counting so much upon their running together. But, if he accepts

TEMPERA AS AN ALTERNATIVE

this limitation he can use tempera much as he would water-colour, transparently upon white paper ; and he will find it quite pleasant to manage and quite effective in its results. The more directly he works, the franker his brushwork and the more decisive his handling, the better will he respect the genius of the medium. Certainly he must not fumble or use his brush in a hesitating way ; he can build up his effects of colour and tone more tellingly by superimposing successive touches than by trying to drag together colours which are rapidly drying. This superimposition of touch on touch is a comparatively easy matter because as soon as the under work has dried it cannot be disturbed except by treatment which is unnecessarily rough.

This transparent tempera work, discreetly managed, has both force and luminosity, and it should have, as well, an attractive freedom of manner. Of course some care must be taken to avoid the opacity which might come from laying on the pigments too thickly—by loading the paper over-heavily the brilliancy of the effect of the

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

painting is diminished because the white surface beneath is prevented from shining sufficiently through the colours laid upon it—but a little practice will soon enable the artist to judge how far he can go in the direction of richness and weight of colour without sacrificing the transparency of his work. He must not forget that it is decidedly difficult to lighten a tempera painting by washing or rubbing, when the pigments are once set, for the egg medium becomes when dry practically insoluble ; so it is unwise to lay in his picture too vehemently at the beginning with the idea of washing it down to the right degree of tenderness later on, as he would an ordinary water-colour painting.

The other way in which tempera can be used—the more usual way, indeed—is much like working in oils. The pigments are mixed with white and laid solidly upon paper or canvas ; and the lights are painted thickly instead of being left, as they have to be in the transparent method. Almost any kind of paper will serve, but perhaps the most agreeable to work on is a moderately

TEMPERA AS AN ALTERNATIVE

rough-surfaced pastel paper—preferably a grey one. If it is too dark a tint the paintings on it will be either too low in tone or will have to be loaded rather heavily to overcome the darkness of the ground ; so it is better to choose one which will give just sufficient backing to the semi-transparent dark passages of the painting and yet will not make necessary any very heavy handling of the lights. If canvas is preferred, the best for general purposes is one of rather fine grain and prepared with an absorbent ground, white or tinted ; to this the tempera pigments will adhere quite firmly.

But whatever may be the material selected by the artist to work upon, he should not forget that the medium is one which allows him full scope for decisive handling and direct brushwork. It is as well to warn him against the pedantic technical mannerism which has been adopted by some of the modern tempera painters—an affectation due to their unwise desire to imitate the methods of the early Italian painters, who applied their pigments with excessive preciseness and aimed at a laboured smoothness of surface. This archaic

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

kind of execution has, of course, its measure of archæological interest, but it is not to be accepted as the only, or even the best one for modern use. A medium which lends itself well to robust treatment, which approximates to oils in its possibilities of vigorous executive statement, and which offers opportunities for a wide variety of individual expression, should not be limited by a tradition which is based more or less upon a misapprehension. The early Italian tempera pictures were precise and smooth because at the time when they were produced precision and smoothness were accepted as essential principles in Italian art, not because the medium could not be legitimately employed in ways that were more spontaneous and flexible.

The quick-drying properties of tempera are just as evident in solid painting as in the transparent work ; and they are in many ways exceedingly useful. That they to some degree prevent that blending and fusing together of touches which can be so easily managed in oils can be admitted, but they make possible a good deal of delicate semi-transparent overpainting which can be used most

TEMPERA AS AN ALTERNATIVE

effectively to give subtlety to a tempera picture. A vigorous lay-in can be completed by judicious over-work within comparatively few minutes, and without any destruction of the underpainting if ordinary care is taken in handling the pigments; and on a sharply granulated surface—like the antiponce pastel paper for instance—it is possible to add finishing touches over the underpainting almost immediately, and therefore to carry a sketch to completion with very great rapidity. It is best in painting on such a ground to thin the pigments considerably with the tempera medium for the first lay-in and to use them more solidly for the over-work, as with the thin colour the large masses of the subject and the main facts of the effect can be most tellingly blocked in, and with the solid pigment the details which give brilliancy and completeness to the picture can be most surely realised. Moreover, the thin colour sinks at once into the depressions of the granulated ground, while the solid touches lie rather on the projections, so what risk there may be of the underpainting working up is almost entirely obviated.

MIXED MEDIUMS

THERE are certain possible ways of combining water-colour with other mediums and of arriving by such combinations at technical effects which are quite interesting and perfectly legitimate. One of these mixed methods is that which was employed by the earliest water-colourists who produced the tinted drawings once so much in vogue for topographical illustration. These tinted drawings—carefully defined outlines filled in with flat washes of colour—were mechanical and conventional enough, but they had executive capabilities which have been recognised and developed by later artists. At the present time, indeed, there is much good work being done by painters who bring most agreeably the pen or pencil line into association with the water-colour wash, and who gain by this executive device a particular freshness of effect.

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

A combination of line and wash is, of course, very commonly used in rapid sketching—in what may be called the shorthand notes made by an artist who wishes to set down the main facts of a subject that he has not time to record elaborately. But many men adopt this method for finished paintings and carry it to a considerable pitch of completeness. It is frequently applied with success to the treatment of architectural motives which require to be realised with rigid accuracy and in which the clear definition of forms is desirable ; and it is not uncommon in paintings of figure subjects and in black-and-white work for illustration. In pure landscape paintings it is more rarely employed, though even here instances could be quoted of the happy management of pen work to accentuate and define the broader touches of the brush, and to give precision of statement to the smaller details of the subject.

Much of the charm of this mixed method depends upon the quality of the line employed. It must be sensitive and expressive, rich and free rather than mechanically exact, and it must not be

MIXED MEDIUMS

unduly obtrusive. A thin, wiry line would combine badly with brushwork and would have a poverty-stricken effect ; and it would certainly be lacking in character. The best results are, perhaps, to be obtained by using a reed pen, which, though less flexible than the ordinary steel pen, produces a firm, well-defined line that is in itself full of meaning and yet approximates in character to one drawn with the brush. The reed pen, moreover, requires to be handled with some decision, and therefore does not allow the artist to fumble with his drawing or to put in tentative touches with the idea of labouring them into correctness afterwards.

It is, possibly, as well to point out that the combination of line and wash is not one which can wisely be attempted by any one whose draughtsmanship is uncertain. Weakness in drawing is, of course, always a fault to be deplored and to be striven against by every water-colour painter, but in pure wash work it can sometimes be hidden by the exercise of a little discretion and by some cultivation of the accidental qualities

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

of water-colour. But a line, whether it is made with a pen, a pencil, or a chalk point, shows plainly any weakness there may be in it, and it advertises mercilessly the artist's errors in draughtsmanship and imperfections of technical style. Therefore this particular mixed method should not be practised without due consideration and a certain amount of self-examination—real success with it is possible only to the artist who has been soundly trained and who has had a reasonable amount of technical experience.

Pastel is another medium which can be associated not unpleasantly with water-colour. The combination, indeed, is one which has been used by many artists of repute—the late G. H. Boughton can be quoted as a prominent example—who have produced in this way paintings which are far too important to be dismissed as merely freakish experiments. At first sight, no doubt, there seems to be some degree of incongruity in an alliance between the dry, crumbling texture of the pastel chalks and the even flatness of the fluid water-colour wash. This incongruity is, however,

MIXED MEDIUMS

more imaginary than real ; the two surface textures do assimilate sufficiently to make the effect of the work quite agreeable. The result is naturally something of a compromise, but the inclination is rather in the direction of the pastel quality than towards that of water-colour, and the completed painting has the effect of a piece of pastel work in which the chalk surface has been flattened by rubbing or pressure.

The best way of working this mixed method is to begin by drawing in the main effect of the subject with the dry pastel, and to rub the chalk touches firmly into the rough surface of the paper with the finger or a stump. Then, after any loose dust there may be has been shaken or blown off, the water-colour washes should be laid freely over the pastel drawing with sufficient brush pressure to spread the wash properly without any excessive scrubbing up of the work below. Water must be used liberally at first, because there is a good deal of resistance in the granulation of the paper, and the wash unless it is decidedly wet will not lie evenly. This first wetting of the pastel has a

WATER-COLOUR PAINTING

rather disconcerting effect, as it greatly darkens the chalk touches and seems to remove many of them entirely ; but, as the washes dry, the pastel returns to its right colours, and the greater part of it will be found to be still adhering to the paper.

In finishing the work after this first wetting the order of procedure can be varied as may seem convenient. When the surface of the paper is dry again fresh work in pastel can be added and then more washes superimposed, and the two mediums can be used alternately until the desired degree of completeness is attained. Or the painting can be advanced considerably in water-colour only, and finished at the last by free pastel touches applied to give accents of colour or sharp definition of forms. The process is one which allows much scope for individuality of expression, and it is not difficult to control.

It has, too, some really practical advantages. Pastel when combined with wash can be taken as a substitute for body-colour, inasmuch as its opacity is sufficient to allow of its being used for the addition of light touches over dark. But there are

MIXED MEDIUMS

more luminosity and better colour quality in pastel than in pigments which are made opaque by the admixture of Chinese white, so that more brilliant effects can be obtained by combining coloured chalks with water-colour washes. The pastel, again, is firmly set by being worked over with water-colour, and therefore even if free pastel touches are used, without any setting, in the final stage of the painting, the main facts of the picture are solidly established and subsequent ill-usage cannot do more than destroy details which are small and comparatively unessential—it will only remove what is absolutely on the surface ; the rest will remain. That the purist will object to such a mixture of mediums is quite possible, for the purist is always opposed to technical compromises ; but even a compromise is permissible if it can be proved by experience to be convenient and workable.

