

**CHINA PAINTING: A PRACTICAL  
MANUAL FOR THE USE OF  
AMATEURS IN THE DECORATION  
OF HARD PORCELAIN**

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China painting: a practical manual for the use of amateurs in the decoration of hard porcelain by  
M. Louise McLaughlin

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**M. LOUISE MCLAUGHLIN**

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# CHINA PAINTING.

A PRACTICAL MANUAL

FOR THE USE OF

AMATEURS IN THE DECORATION OF  
HARD PORCELAIN.

BY

M. LOUISE McLAUGHLIN.

"He may do what he will that will but do what he may."—*Arthur Warwick*.

CINCINNATI

ROBERT CLARKE & CO

1878.

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M. LOUISE McLAUGHLIN,

1872.

## P R E F A C E .

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Having been repeatedly urged to give the results of my experience in china painting to my fellow art-students, I take this method of doing so. A great desire exists at present among those interested in art studies, to acquire a knowledge of painting in enamel colors, and I hope that this record of personal experience may add something to the general information on the subject. It may perhaps be the means of saving beginners from the difficulties which beset my own course when entering upon the practice of the art.

CINCINNATI, *September*, 1877.

(iii)

*“Success depends on knowing how to be patient, how to endure drudgery, how to unmake and remake, how to recommence and continue without allowing the tide of anger or the flight of the imagination to arrest or divert the daily effort.”*

H. TAINÉ.

(iv)





The art of painting on china is certainly a beautiful one, and is, perhaps, peculiarly fitted to be an agreeable pastime for persons of leisure. There is, however, too general a tendency to consider it simply in the light of an amusement, unworthy of serious study, and an art for the practice of which no special training or knowledge is necessary.

Now, what is worth doing at all is worth doing well, and the idea that one can successfully practice any branch of art without having previously learned to draw is false. The eye and hand must be trained, and the taste cultivated, before any result worthy of the name can be achieved.

The best foundation for any art-work is a

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thorough knowledge of drawing; and the time spent in acquiring such knowledge will never be regretted. It is true that there are methods of decorating china with simple designs, which may be accomplished by those unskilled in the use of the pencil or brush; yet, as the hand of the master is revealed in the most careless sketch, so the want of skill or freedom of touch is apparent in the treatment of the simplest subject.

To those who have the time and patience, as well as the natural ability to learn to draw, we would say: Make it your first business to acquire that knowledge. Cultivate your taste by study of the best models; educate the eye to perceive beautiful forms in nature or art, and the hand to transcribe them.

Painting on china, may not offer the same facilities for the truthful rendering of nature as oil or water-color painting, but it has other compensating advantages in the beauty of the enamel, and the enduring qualities of the pigments, when fixed by the fire.

With the present greatly increased facilities

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afforded by the improvements in the manufacture of colors, china painting should regain something of its former prestige among the arts. In other times the greatest artists exercised their art upon this material, which, seemingly so frail, has preserved their work unharmed for ages.

A revival of the art, however, can not be expected from a servile copying of the old designs and methods. As well might the artists of the modern school have expected to arrive at their present knowledge of *technique* by copying the pictures of Durer or Van Eyck.

There will be no true revival of any branch of art unless founded upon study of nature and the adaptation of her principles to design, and there will likewise be no advance possible to the individual art student without this study and practice.

This study brings with it its own reward in the cultivation of what has been called the artistic sense, which, in the words of Thackeray, reveals "splendors of nature, to vulgar sights invisible, and beauties manifest in forms, colors, shad-