

# **A GUIDE TO WATER COLOUR PAINTING**

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A guide to water colour painting by R. P. Noble

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**R. P. NOBLE**

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## PREFACE.

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IN writing a work so limited in extent as that at present submitted to the public, much difficulty must necessarily be felt, in combining directions likely to appear trivial to some readers, with matter of a more interesting nature.

The writer has been so frequently applied to, by pupils, for lists of colours and their admixtures, that he supposed a Hand-book of Water Colour Painting might be generally useful; since there is no published work giving detailed instruction on this subject.

While it is imperative to omit nothing that will forward the views of the youngest beginner, and render the subject as clear and comprehensible as possible; it is, at the same time, essential, that the tone of the work should be initiative, so that the reader may not imagine he is saved the trouble of thinking, but rather induced to bring his thinking faculties to bear upon matters relative to art.

Many give up the study and practice of water colour painting, from the circumstance of their

labours never leading to a satisfactory result; others persevere, but waste much time in arriving at facts, which may be communicated in a very short time, or gained by the attentive perusal of a few pages; indeed, this is the advantage of a work of this nature, the remarks being confined within the narrowest compass, so as not to tire the patience of the reader.

On the publication of similar books, it has been found impossible to present the reader with an illustration; the example in the title page is printed in colours, and as nearly as practicable a *fac simile* of a water colour drawing, and also answers to the description in the work.

Great benefit is derived from the bringing this invention to such perfection, it being, above all things, necessary that the young student should find the tints in the illustration correspond with those described in the work; and not experience the disappointment which is an inevitable feeling when the contrary is the case. The accompanying engraving is so close an imitation, that nine out of ten pronounce it at once a drawing.

If the want so long felt in this branch of graphic art should be supplied by this work, the author will experience great happiness in having devoted his attention to the furtherance of an art peculiarly English.

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# THE GUIDE

TO

## WATER COLOUR PAINTING.

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The writer cannot hope to do more than render a hand-book of Water Colour Painting serviceable in assisting the student in his early endeavours, and in leading him to further inquiry. A perfect knowledge of the composition, light and shade, and colouring of a picture, is only successfully obtained after years of study, and the professional painter is happy to overcome the difficulties of his art after a life passed in the pursuit of Nature. There are many scientific and valuable works on these subjects, but a considerable previous knowledge of the subject is

presumed by their authors. The object of this little book is the instruction of those who, having already made themselves well acquainted with the use of the lead pencil, wish to please and amuse themselves by the practice of water colour painting, and, as far as may be achieved by such limited means, the facilitation of their progress.

If the writer succeed in giving his readers an insight into this branch of the graphic art, and exciting in them a desire to master the rules established in the more extensive works of celebrated masters, he will not have written in vain. Let not any one be deterred from the study of this captivating art, by being deficient in the qualification of what is commonly called a good touch; the more essential qualities, feeling and taste, should be chiefly considered. Mere freedom of hand is more the gift of a writing master than a painter, and when unguided by rule is of no avail, but of great advantage when influenced by precepts of art.

An appearance of ease attracts, because it is to be presumed that a fine work, which seems so easy, is the production of a very skilful master. Too much exactness is very prejudicial; it is apt to

make the painting little and lead to endless fine touches, while true finish (making everything appear as true and natural as possible, and concealing the pains and study by a pleasing deception) is neglected. It is, without doubt, very difficult to know when enough has been done. If the subject, and the manner of its treatment according to rules, be well considered, the drawing should be executed with as much ease and rapidity as possible, without bewildering the brain, by starting scruples and creating difficulties. Facility can only be acquired by possessing perfectly all the precepts of the art, and making them habitual. There are some who say "that a person having so little genius as to require rules, had better leave painting alone." But there is no doubt that the rules give readiness of hand to the slowest, while they guide and increase the ease which is a gift of nature.

Facility may be considered, firstly, as diligence and an aptitude of mind and of the hand; secondly, as a disposition in the mind, to remove easily those difficulties which arise in the work. The first is pleasing, but often leads astray and causes anxiety; the last makes us paint with tranquillity and repose