Black Paints

Black paints are often preferred for the finishing coat on steel work, carbonaceous paints being unsuited for application direct to the metal on account of their rust-stimulative action. Carbon pigments, such as gas carbon black, oil black, artificial and natural graphite (flake and amorphous) are usually the base pigments used in black paints. Silica and other earth pigments may be combined with the carbon. The slow-drying nature of such paints is lessened by the addition of litharge. The use of boiled linseed oil as a vehicle is advisable.

Magnetic black oxide of iron (precipitated) forms an excellent black protective paint when ground in linseed oil. The slightly basic character of this pigment accounts for its inhibitive value. The natural variety of black magnetic oxide of iron is also suitable for this purpose, but should be tested for freedom from soluble acid impurities before use. Willow charcoal is not made in commercial quantity; its use, therefore, will be restricted. Its inhibitive value depends upon the basic nature of the impurities present.

Green Paints

Mixtures of zinc chromate and Prussian blue in oil are highly inhibitive and have proved satisfactory in long service tests. Chrome yellow tinted with black oxide of iron to an olive shade is very permanent and protective. Chrome green made from lead chromate and Prussian blue is generally used when precipitated upon a barytes base.

Marine Paints

Steel vessels traversing bodies of salt water are rapidly acted upon, corrosion and incrustation by marine growths being shown. The bottoms of boats are usually protected by applying over the red-lead priming paint a coat of anti-corrosive paint containing iron and zinc pigments ground in a shellac-alcohol vehicle. There is subsequently applied a coat of anti-fouling paint, usually made of iron oxide, zinc oxide, and metallic zinc powder, admixed with a poisonous compound such as red oxide of mercury or bichloride of mercury. The upper portions of vessels are usually painted with a linseed-oil paint, the standard slate color of the Navy Department consisting of a mixture of white lead and zinc oxide tinted gray and ground in linseed oil. This is, of course, applied over a prime coating of prepared red lead. The boot topping or water-line paint is generally of a bituminous nature, the exposure at this point being extremely severe. Chinese wood-oil varnish improves the bitumen base.

Bituminous Paints

Bituminous coatings have a wide use for special purposes. They are often made by blending refined coal-tar pitch, asphalt, linseed oil and oleo-resinous varnishes, subsequently thinning down wtih turpentine or light mineral thinner. During recent years a heavy-bodied blown petroleum residual pitch has come into wide use in the manufacture of waterproofing bituminous paints. This pitch usually has a light melting point (150° C.). It is soluble in turpentine, benzol, and some mineral distillates. When in solution it may be admixed with oils for the production of rapid-drying elastic paints. The pitch has high resistance to acids and is not acted upon by the sun to the extent that coal tar is.

When coal tar is used in the manufacture of paints, it should be refined. Ammonia and water in the tar are the active causes of saponification or non-adherence to metal. The presence of large quantities of free carbon or naphthalene in the tar will cause disintegration and checking. For refining, the crude tar may be heated to approximately 115° C., holding it at that temperature until the water is evaporated. From 5 to 10% of lime may be stirred in, in order to neutralize the free acids. The tar may then be thinned with benzol or mineral spirits. If a rapid-drying paint is desired, a quantity of resinous varnish may be added. The addition of Chinese wood oil and asbestine in a coal-tar paint made along the above lines will aid in producing a film that is not so subject to alligatoring when exposed to the sun.

Bituminous paints of the above composition are used as coatings upon pipe-lines in acid factories, tanks containing dilute acids, metal submerged in water, and for other similar work. For such purposes it is generally advisable to first coat the metal with a thoroughly hard drying prime coating made by adding 2 lbs. of litharge to a prepared red lead or other rust-inhibitive paint. The bituminous paint may then be applied. Steel mine timbers subjected to sulphur water and gas, reservoir tanks containing water, submerged lock gates, tunnel metal, etc., may be efficiently preserved from corrosion by this method.

Painting Galvanized Iron

Roofing, siding, railing, drain pipes, cornice work, etc., constructed of galvanized iron require painting if they are to be kept in a good state of preservation. Paints are apt to peel from galvanized iron on account of the smooth spangled surface. This condition, however, is obviated by first treating the metal before painting with a solution of copper salts. Such a solution may be prepared by dissolving 4 ozs. of copper acetate, copper chloride, or copper sulphate in one gallon of water. By brushing on this solution the galvanized iron is roughened, a thin deposit of copper being plated out over the surface. After an hour or so, the surface may be lightly brushed and then painted with a thoroughly inhibitive oil paint. Firmly adhering films are thus produced.*

Painting Tinned Surfaces

Tin plate, such as is used for roofing and siding, will rapidly corrode unless protected by paint. The pin-holes present in the tin coating on the steel base metal act as pockets to catch moisture, which causes rust spots and pit-holes. Before applying paint to the sheets it is advisable to rub the surface of the tin with a cotton rag saturated with benzine or turpentine. This will remove the palm oil that is present upon the surface and allow the paint to firmly adhere. Iron-oxide paints containing an inhibitive pigment are widely used for preserving tin. The use of 15 to 20% of zinc oxide, red lead, or zinc chromate with a neutral bright iron oxide produces an excellent paint. The partial use of boiled linseed oil or kauri gum mixing varnish will add to the gloss and water resistance. Such paints are also suited for use on metal shingles and pressed-steel siding—plain black, galvanized, or tinned. For dipping purposes, turpentine or high boiling point mineral spirits should be used for thinning. Cheap driers containing a low boiling point benzine should be avoided.

*The writer has recently experimented with solutions of metallic salts of arsenic, antimony, tin, lead, mercury, cobalt, iron and manganese to replace copper solutions for the above purpose. Arsenic and tin were most satisfactory, but not as economical or desirable as copper.

Telephone lines are to be extended to Tromsoe, Norway, 200 miles north of the Arctic circle.