A FEW HINTS FOR PAINTERS.

STAINING WOOD (Mahogany).—To stain wood, mahogany, take logwood and boil until you have a strong decoction. When cold, add some apple cider vinegar, say one-third of the quantity required. A simple application to the wood will give a good imitation, but if a fine job of staining is required, have some burnt umber mixed with just enough glue to bind or fasten the colour on the wood, being careful not to put on any more than just enough to accomplish that, as too much glue will spoil the next operation, and make the whole job a botch. Try it on a piece of wood first, and if after this umber is dry the wood takes the stain of logwood, it is right; if it does not absorb quickly, then it has too much glue in it. Mucilage is a little more expensive, but I prefer it to glue, using it in the same manner. When this is applied, or while wet, wipe with a rag; when dry, stain the wood very freely with the logwood, using a sponge or rag to wipe out what the wood does not take, but do not rub so strongly as to work up the umber. Then shellac and varnish, or polish, as the case may be. The idea of the umber treated in this manner, is to have it enter the grain of the wood, and lines seen through the logwood staining show the darker shades, the same as the natural wood.

CHERRY WOOD.—Take common yellow ochre, getting the dark shade. Break it in water, add a little stale beer, and stain the wood with this for the first coat. Sandpaper lightly, to cut where the grain may have risen, then have some good red lake, ground in distemper for common work, but for better work in turpentine only, and add a few spoonfuls of drying japan, according to the quantity to be used, merely to bind it to the wood, and no more, wiping away all surplus, then shellac and varnish or oil. If you need something very fine, use a common grade of Munich lake. This will make the cherry now being used so extensively on furniture and house trimmings. Try it and you will like its richness, especially when polished.

POLISHING WOOD (Varnish Polishing).—To polish wood is to give it a smooth glossy surface, and at the same time show all the beauty of the grain. It is an old art, and was used long before high-gloss varnishes came into common use. At first these varnishes were very expensive, and therefore common material was used, and by friction a high gloss was secured. Then the material or varnish used was not of such a high grade as to retain a gloss as long as polish would, and so, even for fine furniture and fine house-ornamenting, polishing was resorted to, and it is still done to this day on a great many articles where the wood is to be finished in the natural state, and for all fine articles, made of expensive wood, that are handled much, such as musical instruments, fine furniture, house-furnishing ornaments, and rich wood decorations for interiors.

There are two kinds of polishing—varnish polishing and French polish. Varnish polishing is used for pianos and furniture with large surfaces, and is done in the following manner:—Take common corn starch, mix with turpentine and a little drying brown japan, and add any pigment to give it the colour of the wood to be filled. This can either be mixed thin enough to be spread and rubbed into the grain of the wood, or made into a paste and spread with a broad putty knife. When this is dry, sandpaper, holding the paper evenly on, or under a block, and do it just enough to let the substance remain in the cells or grain of the wood, and take off the surplus. If a common job, or one that is not extra, two coats of polishing varnish can be applied after this, but if a first-class job is to be done, lay on a very heavy coat of scraping varnish. This can be bought already prepared, and will dry hard in about a week or ten days. Now, with a well-sharpened steel scraper proceed to take off all this scraping varnish. You must start at one corner and proceed carefully, not cutting into the wood, but only the varnish. It is not a very hard job, as the varnish is prepared on purpose for this operation. Rub all over lightly with fine sandpaper, say No. ½, and clear and dust off. Over this give two coats of the best polishing varnish. Put away for at least a week or ten days, and longer if possible.

Next rub with fine pulverized pumice-stone and water, until a smooth level surface has been secured, but you must be careful not to cut into the wood. Clean off with sponge and water, and dry with chamois skin. Then rub very evenly with sweet oil and woollen cloths and rotten stone. When all the surface seems to have a little gloss and no scratches wipe with soft rags until all the oil and stone is cleaned off. Now take a piece of silk, and spreading some clean sifted wheat flour, rub strongly until you have a fine polished surface. The flour absorbs all the oil, and where the work is handled it does not leave a mark that a light rub of the palm of the hand will not take off.

GRINDSTONES.

A correspondent of an Eastern paper gives a description of a visit to the Bay of Fundy and along the shores, where the grindstone quarries are located. The superintendent of the quarry says when the tide is out his men go down at the rocky shore and work out near the water. At low tide the men on the shore drill some holes in the ledge, put in powder, and blast out great pieces of rock. When the tide rises again they float out big logs and empty-barrels over where the loosened rocks are. When the water goes down again they fasten a big rock to the raft with heavy chains, so when the tide again rises it lifts up the raft and the rock with it. Then they tow it as near shore as they can. If it is the right kind and size for a millstone, sometimes it is allowed to lie there until the workmen, with stone-chisel and hammer, work it into the proper shape. At other times, by means of a derrick, it is drawn out on the wharf. Then it is rolled on a track and hauled to the factory.

At the great stone factory the large piece of rock is placed on a carriage, and with a saw similar to the up and down saw in a mill, the rock is sawed into great slabs of the right thickness of the grindstone. The saw does not have teeth, but wears its way through the rock with the aid of sand and water, which are continually pouring on. Then the slabs are taken, a hole made in the centre, the edges trimmed off with a chisel, and the whole placed on a kind of lathe, turning it until it is true and the edge smooth. The rock from which the grindstones are made is a kind of sandstone, and there is a great difference in the "grit," some being coarse and some fine. Often several different degrees of "grit" are found in the same quarry. There are many quarries along the Bay of Fundy. The reason stone is taken from under the water, when there are many quarries a little distance from the shore, is because the best stone comes from the bottom of the bay, where it is covered at high tide.

TO REMOVE STAINS FROM MARBLE.—An equal quantity of fresh spirits of vitriol and lemon juice will remove stains from statuary marble. Put in a bottle and shake up well, wet the spots with the mixture, and in a few minutes rub with a soft linen cloth till they disappear.