

For the EDUCATIONAL REVIEW.]

**Hints for Primary Grades.**

By MRS. S. B. PATTERSON.

A most attractive wall decoration for a primary school-room is a panel of autumn leaves cut from colored papers. A large collection of maple leaves may be brought in by the children and pressed in some old magazines, so as to be ready for use as patterns. Before the leaves are pressed, however, the colors should be noticed and compared with colored papers, such as are to be found in Milton Bradley's sample color book.\* A careful selection may be made, and a package of papers ordered for future use. Later, when the leaves are well-pressed, each child, selecting the color to match, may lay his leaf on the white side of the paper, and, after drawing the outline with pencil, may cut out the paper leaf with a pair of scissors. When a sufficient number of leaves has been cut they may be arranged on a large sheet of card-board and pasted down carefully by the children. A stiff arrangement should be avoided; perhaps one of the best is an apparently careless grouping representing the leaves stem upward, in different positions, as if falling or being blown from the trees. The general effect will be better if care has been taken to have considerable variety in the color and size of the leaves.

The beauty of the highly colored foliage of autumn is attractive to children, and they also enjoy the rustling noise made by a run through heaps of dull brown leaves. Lead them to see that these leaves are useful, too, and quite worth being gathered. Thick beds of leaves around the currant bushes keep down weeds and furnish all the fertilizing necessary. Occasionally, too, they are used as bedding for cattle. Some child may also have noticed that his mother likes to get leaf-mould to mix with other earth for her house-plants.

**LEAF-IMPRESSIONS ON CLAY.**

Flatten and smooth off a piece of clay, forming a tablet about a quarter of an inch thick and some four or five inches square. On this lay a leaf, smooth side up, pressing it down firmly on to the clay. If the leaf is now carefully lifted off, a perfect impression will be found on the tablet. In this way a study may be made of the margin of different leaves and of the character of their ribs and veins. If these impressions are to be kept, the edges should be trimmed off even, and the

tablets lifted and laid flat on slates or paper from which they can easily be removed when dry. Small holes may be made in the tablets while they are soft so that they can be hung on the wall and kept for reference in future lessons.

A much more striking effect may be obtained by the use of chalk-dust on the clay. After the leaf has been firmly pressed on the tablet and before lifting it off, sprinkle chalk-dust, white or colored, all over the surface of the clay, rubbing it in well with the fingers or a stiff brush. Then, after blowing away any loose dust, lift the leaf off. All the surface of the tablet will now be colored except the space covered by the leaf; and the impression is thus made to show much more distinctly by reason of the strong contrast. Perhaps it should be said that the leaves used in this work should be rather tough, green ones, not faded or dried leaves, which would break too easily.

Clay may be obtained from any pottery all ready prepared for use, and may easily be kept in good condition in a wooden box, or barrel, closely covered with a damp cloth. Occasionally sprinkle it with cold water. Place the box in a cool, damp place, if possible.

There are many natural clay-beds in the country, and good material may be obtained from these if no pottery is near. If the clay is dry, a very good way to prepare a large quantity is to place it in a bag and let it stand for a few days in a pail of water. When the clay is thoroughly wet through lift the bag out and allow it to drip until the clay is in good condition for handling. It should not be muddy or even sticky; but just sufficiently soft to take an impression easily, or like soft putty. In preparing it for class-work, take a piece large enough to handle easily and throw it repeatedly for a few moments on any hard surface, such as a board laid on the table or floor; turning it each time it is thrown until it is closely wedged together into a brick-shaped mass. This may now be cut readily with a piece of fine wire or string into such sized pieces as are required by the pupils.

The first exercise in modeling should be that of making a sphere in connection with lessons on form. Taking a small piece of clay, the teacher should let the pupils watch her first, as she rolls it lightly but firmly round and round between the palms of her hands. The children should then practise the movement a little before receiving the clay, as in many cases they are apt to roll it back and forth instead of round and round.

Avoid the mistake of rolling a piece of clay too long, as the warmth of the hand soon dries out the moisture, and after it begins to crack it is useless, and, indeed,

\* A package of 100 sheets ordered as follows from Selby & Co., 10 Shuter street, Toronto, will probably give satisfaction:

"One package cutting paper, 5x5, unruled, coated, containing ten sheets each: Red; Red Shade No. 2; Yellow; Yellow Shade No. 1; Yellow Shade No. 2; Orange-Yellow Shade No. 2; Yellow-Green; Yellow-Green Shade No. 1; Green; Yellow Shade No. 1; Green-Yellow Shade No. 2."