



FIG. 18.—WORK OF MISS McLAUGHLIN.

The little exhibit in 1875 was a suggestion of suitable work for women, and also of a future of commercial importance for Cincinnati as a centre of activity in pottery-work. Certainly the results have far exceeded the most rose-colored expectations of those days, in the growth of the interest, and in the quantity and quality of the work done. As might be expected, in the amount of work done by so many untrained hands, much of it is crude and inartistic; but a collection such as may at any time be brought together of the decorated work of Cincinnati, in the various specialties which have been enumerated, would excite attention and interest, in proportion to the intelligence of those who saw it, wherever it might be shown. It is not too much to say that in the history of the potter's art in Europe, so far as we have accounts of it, there has at no time been a beginning more full of promise than that which this sketch has attempted to describe.

The impossibility of procuring skilled teachers has developed the best efforts of the amateur decorators, and may in the end prove a fortunate circumstance; it certainly will, should it result in the development of a distinctive type, which may in time become a national style. It is too early to predict what the American style will be, but it is encouraging that the tendency is to broad and pronounced effects rather than to pettiness of detail.

The aim of this sketch has been to present a historical outline of the beginning and progress of the decorative pottery work of Cincinnati from 1874 down to the time of this writing, mentioning some

of the different varieties which have succeeded each other in the short space of a few years. The attempt to convey a distinct impression by verbal description must be to a great extent unsatisfactory, since so much of the advance has been made in the successful use of color, and so much of the effect is dependent on it.

To name personally the numbers of women who have done good and promising work is beyond the possibilities of such an article, and the mention of

names is limited to those whose work has rather led the way in distinctive directions.

Begun by a few thoughtful women of taste and social influence, who foresaw possible results of importance to their city, as well as pleasant occupation to women of leisure, and a solution, to some extent, of the problem of self-support and independence for women, the work has gone on, one successful experiment after another marking its advance.

If, in the earlier part of the movement, clays from distant parts of the State were wanted, a woman sent for them; if kilns for firing decorated wares were needed, the money was provided by women. A young woman, after patient experimenting, and the bestowal of time and money, discovered the process of making Limoges faience; an amateur, self-trained, she has published a little volume of instructions to amateurs on overglaze painting, now in its ninth edition; and a similar handbook from the same pen, "*Pottery Decoration Under the Glaze*, by Miss M. Louise McLaughlin," has recently been issued from the press of Robert Clarke and Co.

A woman's taste and interest were influential in the manufacture of the Capodi-Monti porcelain of Naples, and for the faience of Oiron the world is indebted to a woman, these two specialties combining more of originality and beauty than anything Europe has produced in porcelain and faience.

In Cincinnati, the crowning result of the six years' work by women, and the earnest of the future, is also inspired and