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ART AND I

By C. LEWIS HIND

Author of
"Authors and I,"
"The *Post* Impressionists," Etc.

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DEDICATION

TO

FREDERICK DIXON

EDITOR OF *THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR*

When I arrived in America in 1917, it was the height of summer, and the height of the War. I went to Boston. There I called upon you, and in your orderly office, after we had spoken of friends in England and the unfriendly condition of Europe, suddenly you said—"What about writing on Art for *The Monitor?*"

I dissembled. At least that is what I meant to do, if I quite understand the meaning of that misused word. For I had come to America on War work. Art, oh, believe me, I had left all thought of Art behind in the languid, lovely days of Peace. You reasoned with me (perhaps you have forgotten all about it) that Art endures, that the roar of the guns is but a temporary disharmony. I saw the wisdom of your contention, for Art is one of the blessed escapes from turmoil, and then and there arranged to send, punctually and perfervidly (my word), each week an Art essay dealing with some Art idea, or influence, of the day, that had captivated me. We wanted to go on building up happiness.

I have been an Editor. Some editors are wicked. You are a good one. You gave me my head; you

let me write on anything I chose; you never asked me to eulogise an artistic aunt or a craftsman cousin; you let me be as long-winded as I liked, and you gave me a position on the page that even the vagrant eye could not help alighting upon.

Enjoyment is a weak word to express the pleasure and consolation I have had in writing these essays. They forced me to dwell on the things that endure, and to keep the flag of Idealism cheerfully flying. By Vasari! What a lot I have written! This book is lengthy, but I could have made it half as long again. You will observe that I have shaped the essays into groups—The Art of Today, The Art of Tomorrow, The Art of Yesterday, Art and Mr. X. I do believe that, according to my strength and vision, I have ranged the field of Art tolerably comprehensively; and if there be those who object to the title of the book—"Art and I"—all I can say in defence is—well, that describes it. It is my reaction to our Lady Art. I love her. I have spent much of my life trying to understand and appreciate her, and all I have written here about my adventures is, for better or worse, just a true tale. In other words "Art and I" is the record of Art and myself.

I beg you, dear Editor, to accept this Dedication, and to believe that he who pens it has found in writing for *The Christian Science Monitor* (and reading it) a chief solace and satisfaction of his villeggiatura in America.

C. L. H.

AUTUMN, 1920

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PART I

THE ART OF TODAY

ART AND I

1. EYES OR EARS

ONE day I entered the shop of an eminent art dealer. I did so rather diffidently. It requires courage to push open the swing doors of a palatial art establishment. Courage came to me through my admiration for a Primitive picture that was exposed in the window. It was a lovely thing, all blue and gold, showing a procession of gay youths and beautiful girls, clothed as Florence knew how to clothe her children when art was young, and love of beauty was rife, and men and women were unashamed to dress. The gay procession swept along to a pagoda where a Prince sat, and he was a fairy prince, and his table utensils were of gold, and everybody seemed to be happy, because they were living in a beautiful world, where beautiful things happened, and a man could not be a Bolshevik because he loved his Prince, and was happier in serving him than in looking after his own rights.

The frame of the picture, which was flat and wide, studded with blue and gold rosettes, and smeared with a filmy grey-blue, like a smoky opal, seemed to have grown with the picture.

After gazing at this decoration for a long time, I said to myself, "I wish there was a Circulating Picture Gallery, like the Circulating Libraries we have in England. I would gladly pay a hundred dollars to have that picture in my house for a month. It would cheer me, and make me happy, and make me more charitable to those who do not appreciate me." I looked again at the picture, and then said to myself, "I wonder what it costs. I wonder who painted it." With that I pushed open the swing doors and passed inside.

An elderly man with a shrewd, kindly face greeted me unostentatiously, but with a slight inclination of the neck. "Oh, I just wanted to ask the price of that picture in the window, and who painted it?"

The Frenchman at once sized me up. Plainly I was not a man of substance; plainly I was not worth consideration as a buyer of an Italian Primitive. So the Frenchman said, "The price, eh? Oh——"

His arms swept round, indicating an immense circle of money. Then he paused, adding presently, "The name of the painter? What matters it? It is a beautiful picture! What more would you have? It is from a Master's atelier surely. His name? Who knows? A lark has no name. You hear the song. It is enough."

I murmured an apology and, being something of a diplomatist, said: "It is a pleasure, and also an education, to meet a connoisseur."

The Frenchman smiled, bowed, and, being touched by this homage from a stranger, proceeded to show me the pictures, chiefly Primitives, in his collec-

tion. He spoke of them so delightfully, so intelligently, so caressingly, with such understanding of the intention of the painters known and unknown, that when, an hour later, I turned to go, I said, "Please tell me, how did you acquire your knowledge of art?" To which the Frenchman answered: "My father taught me to understand pictures through the eyes, not through the ears."

Come to think of it, that reply reveals the secret of true connoisseurship, and banishes from the hierarchy historians, delvers in archives, and all those, the great majority, who buy works of art for the names attributed to them, not for the face value of their beauty and interest. A Turner and a Gainsborough sold recently in London for large prices. They were not good examples. Had this picture by Turner, and this picture by Gainsborough, been sold anonymously they would have fetched, well—their value. They reached those large prices because most collectors buy through their ears, and because there are a certain number of small but determined collectors—ear-buyer collectors—who are determined to have examples by famous names. Rarity is the motive power of auction prices, and as Turners and Gainsboroughs become rarer each year the prices sweep higher and higher. Rarity was the reason that at auction a first edition of Edgar Allan Poe's "Tamerlane and Other Poems" sold for $11,600. "Tamerlane" has little merit, but only four copies of the first edition are known. It is a poor poem. It is not even a beautiful book. But it is a rarity: hence the price.

It is useless to scold: it is futile to complain that 90 per cent of the world buys through their ears, or for rarity. Obviously, it is better that people should collect through the ears than not at all. Indeed, it is rather a pleasant sight to see an elderly couple, prosperous, with a handsome bank balance, beginning to taste the delights of patronising art. You may see such couples at any of the fashionable evening auction sales. The gentleman is always in correct evening dress, the lady is always in resplendent costume. Be sure that they have examined the catalogue carefully beforehand, and have marked the works for which they propose to bid. The pictures of their desire have, of course, been painted by men whose names they know.

In any decade there are always a few living painters whose names, for reasons which are not as mysterious as might seem, have become familiar as family jokes in the art columns, and on Fifth Avenue and Bond Street. For these pictures the lady and gentleman who have begun to patronise art bid, and for none others. An exquisite interior by Smith may appear on the auction rostrum, or a delicately strong landscape by Jones, but they wait till a picture by Brown is offered. For that they bid. They know Brown's name. They are not buying a picture. They are buying a Brown. He may be living, he may be recently deceased; but the point is he has caught the ear of the market.

We must be gentle and urbane with this lady and gentleman who are patronising The Art of Today. They are beginning. They are having a delightful

time, for few indoor sports are so exciting as buying pictures at auction with your own taste, your own voice, your own money, for your own house. Besides, He and She may improve. The power of beauty—beauty touched with strangeness—in art may be gradually revealed to them. They may, half unconsciously, glide into the way of buying with the eyes: through rejections they may acquire taste. Then they will begin to frequent unimportant studios, and those dealers who encourage "les jeunes" and who are connoisseurs, lovers of art first and dealers second.

Perhaps some day they may notice the lovely and nameless Primitive in the Frenchman's window: perhaps He and She, having learned to appreciate through the eyes, will be drawn to it; perhaps, who knows, some day they will actually acquire a picture without a name, merely because it is beautiful.

2. WHAT IS ART?

I HAVE a friend: here is an episode in our friendship.

Early in life he set his heart on his own house, and his own bit of land. "In a wood," he would say, "on a wooded hill. My house must be in a wood. Trees are my familiars."

One day he wrote me: "The house is nearly finished, the studio is quite ready. I was there yesterday. You might walk over—it's within three miles of where you are staying—and tell me what you think of my long-waited-for Folly."

I started early, taking my luncheon, with the notion of exploring the intermediate country. Leisurely I covered the three miles. A rutty, half-mile-long lane wound out from the main road. I plodded along it into a wood. The path began to ascend and there was the gable of the house lurking in the trees. Branches clawed at the structure: it was indeed a house in a wood. It was nearly finished. As I stood there thinking how little a house in a wood would suit me (I want one on a hill), the carpenters, who were nailing the last cedar shingles on the roof of the porch, eyed me curiously. Higher up, 30 feet higher up, on a level with the roof of the house, was a smaller building. It seemed to be quite completed. "Ah," I reflected,

"the studio. He does not wish his work to interfere with domestic matters."

I entered the studio. It was ready for occupation: an ideal workroom was this wooden structure, 15 paces long, 12 wide, the north side mainly glass, two tall windows to right and left, and peepholes at the back through which one peered into the depths of the forest.

There were an easel, two chairs, and a table, and on the table was a copy of Tolstoy's "What Is Art?" I smiled. On the south wall of the studio were 10 large photographs in a line, affixed to the boards with glass pushpins. I knew those 10 pictures well. Each was by Velasquez. I smiled again. Clearly, my friend had prepared for me an æsthetic—or intellectual—trap—or lesson.

A whistle sounded from somewhere in the woods where lumbermen were cutting timber—the noon whistle. The carpenters threw down their hammers and trooped away to their midday meal. I was alone in the clearing with Tolstoy's "What Is Art?" and 10 photographs of pictures by Velasquez. For reasons—he always has reasons—my friend wished me to read that book and examine those photographs: did he desire to have a sort of artistic-ethical studio-warming: would he appear later eager for a talk? Maybe; for over the line of photographs I noticed that he had scrawled in chalk the words, "An hour before sunset." Well, the day was my own, and I had food. Why not, under these engaging conditions, study "What Is Art?"—a classic I had never read, but which cer-

tain Intellectuals of my acquaintance (who are not painters, and who know nothing about painting) had praised without reserve.

First I turned to the end of Chapter XX, called "Conclusions," where the old man eloquent, and so single-minded and pure in heart, tells the reader that the answer to the question "What is art?" had occupied his mind for 15 years, that he had begun to write upon it six or seven times, but that each time he had laid it aside because his mind was not sufficiently matured on the subject. I skimmed this chapter, found his conclusion of the whole matter, sighed, then turned to the first page. On I read. Whenever I raised my eyes they encountered those Velasquez photographs, and each time I found it harder to leave them and to return to the book, for each seemed to be saying—"I am art," and then the whole in unison would murmur—"We are art."

Tolstoy's early chapters are not intriguing. He quotes German professors. I nodded sleepily. I always nod when gentlemen with unpronounceable names, usually German, define beauty. They disagree one with another, and Tolstoy usually disagrees with them all, and at the end of the chapter I felt that I had been merely wasting my time—treating error as reality. Schiller and Kant both hold that the end of art is beauty, "the source of which is pleasure without practical profit." That seems rather like offering a man the pips of an orange. Amid these philosophers Tolstoy picks his path: a quarter of his way through the book

he reaches this sensible conclusion: "Art begins when a person, with the object of conveying to other people a feeling experienced by him, calls it up anew in himself, and expresses it by certain exterior signs."

I looked at the Velasquez photographs and murmured, "Yes, Master, that is just what you did." Tolstoy in the chapter called "Beauty and Goodness," dips back to Plotinus, Baumgarten, Schassler and dozens of others: then he begins to lash out. Music, poetry; novels from Boccaccio to Marcel Prévost, even Beethoven, even Maeterlinck, come under the sting of his whip. Even himself—for this fearless preacher will teach nothing but the highest—even himself—"I relegate to the class of bad art my own artistic productions with the exception of the story 'God Sees the Truth,' and 'The Caucasian Prisoner.'" (I have read them: they are poor stories, quite unworthy of the author of "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina.")

Having blasted all the producers of art who have any tinge of sensuousness, he proceeds to a chapter on "The Crimes of the Critics and Art Schools." "Critics explain!" he cries. "What do they explain? The artist, if he is a true artist, has, in his production, conveyed to other people the feeling which he lived through: what is there to explain?" Alas, so few of us—artists, critics, baseball players—are perfect.

Next he lashes professionalism: he will have no professional artists, and no schools; then he stings the rich people, the upper classes, who have made art

a special luxury for themselves. Here is his final lash on this subject: "These three conditions—the professionalism of artists, criticism, and schools of art—have brought it to pass that the majority of people of our time perfectly fail to understand even what art is, and take the coarsest imitations of art to be true art." Alas, that is what Tolstoy himself sometimes does.

In the chapter on "Art Good or Bad According to Its Subject," which is surely an absurd statement, I find this: "Concern for technical perfection and beauty, for the most part obscures feeling." I looked at the Velasquez photographs. They are a denial of this. But I really began to have doubts about Tolstoy as an art guide when he expressed high approval of a tenth-rate English picture because the subject is charity—a Lady Bountiful giving food to a beggar-boy. But how fine, how noble are the suggestions, or rather statements, he makes in the two final chapters, "How True Art Will Come" and "The Art of the Future."

He analyzes "the reason of the lie" into which art has fallen, and decides that "the cause of the malady was the non-acceptance of the teaching of Christ in its true, that is, in its full meaning."

And what, in the view of this great dreamer, is the destiny of art? Hear him: "To translate, from the region of reason to the region of feeling, the truth that the well-being of people consists in their union, and to substitute for the present kingdom of force the kingdom of heaven, that is, love, which presents itself to us all as the highest aim of human

life. . . . The problem of Christian art is the realisation of the brotherly union of mankind." I This great emprise may be accomplished, must be, the world is working toward it, but it will be accomplished by something greater than art, as we understand the word today.

Ninety out of a hundred artists regard their art chiefly as a means of earning a living, and they influence the world according to the measure of their power and sincerity. They are spurred onward by the desire to express themselves and to excel; and when a patron buys a picture the artist is glad beyond the mere money: he is glad because he is appreciated. Take away the spur of having to make a living, and to win approval; take away professionalism, as Tolstoy calls it; force the artist, as he proposes, to do other work, and to paint only when the mood is on him; make him choose a moral subject merely because it is a moral subject, not because it attracts him artistically, and you extinguish art. Velasquez would be blotted out. He was great because he expressed his best and highest self. He rose above his subjects which happened to be rather ugly royal personages. He painted greatly because he loved greatly. To love your art greatly: that is the secret of great art.

* * *

It is an hour before sundown. Here comes my friend. Why should not I try my hand at a definition, why should not I attempt to answer the question—"What is Art?" I take the chalk, I scrawl on the wall three words—"Art is love."

3. I LISTEN

THE house, perched on a grassy hill, overlooks the road winding to the sea. After dusk there is little traffic, but every twenty minutes a brilliantly lamped trolley-car bumps over the tracks, where, amid high grass, the rails feel for their level. This mass of brilliant lights, this swift-moving object grating and whirring, is not unpleasant. It reminds the secluded dwellers in the house on the hill of the outside world: it titillates without disturbing.

One sultry night a group of men were gathered in the porch. Three of them were expert talkers—the Painter, the Illustrator, and the ex-Editor; and in the corner I sat stroking the handsomest cat in the State.

The conversation had settled upon Tolstoy's "What Is Art?" Each had lately read an essay on this unanswerable question: a copy of the book had been borrowed, and each had been reading it.

"Tolstoy was a very great man," said the Painter; "he was as great in his life as in his books, and if he failed he failed gloriously; he failed because he attempted, in the nineteenth century, to live primitive Christianity, which is, of course, real Christianity. Art to him was not a craft, it was an ideal. I hold, as you know, that art is a craft.

In the hands of a great craftsman, a great genius, it may teach and uplift; but such teaching and uplifting is incidental to the man, not to the craft. Whether it be a picture, a rug, a chair, lustre earthenware, or apple-green Chinese porcelain, a book or a symphony, the thing done must be technically satisfactory, if not superb, and it must express the craftsman's individuality.

"Technically a good Gilbert Stuart and a good Albert Ryder are poles apart, but as each is an expression of himself, pushed to the limit of his powers, each is good art. Tolstoy's fallacy is that he ignores technique and individuality, and asserts that the end and aim of painting is to illustrate beatitudes. A beatitude can be painted wonderfully and beautifully; Burne-Jones did it in 'The Merciful Knight Who Forgave His Enemy,' and so have many others, but if the world of art were set to paint beatitudes, merely because they are beatitudes, art would become so boring that it would cease."

"True," said the Illustrator. "You can't make the world good by means of a Persian rug, or a Limoges enamel, but you can make such things so beautiful that the beholder realises beauty to the depth of his consciousness, and his life is the better for the vision. Such a vision brings exaltation. The observer is happier that day, and so makes those around him happier. Beauty is felt; it must not be defined."

"That's beautiful," cried the Painter.

Their eyes followed the blazing trolley-car flashing

through the darkness like a gigantic jewel. It raced forward; the sidewalk trees, for a brief moment, were fantastically illumined.

"That's beauty," continued the Painter, "and the moral is that light, even artificial light, beautifies everything, even a trolley-car. Tolstoy would never consider such an artistic statement as that. You see that family waiting at the Halt. Ah, the car's full! They're refused admittance. Tolstoy would have wanted a picture made of a group of passengers jumping up and offering their seats to that tired family; but that kind of picture wouldn't help to make the world unselfish."

"Tolstoy," said the Illustrator, "clamoured for the Illustration with a moral lesson: he barred the artistic motive as unchristian. Not that there's anything wrong in the Illustration. I guess that two-thirds of our painters ought to confine themselves to the Illustration. It is all they're fit for: an artistic painter is quite a rarity. Why don't they illustrate? There's all history to choose from. Why do Americans disregard historical pictures? I suppose they think it's beneath them. Yet it was good enough for Giotto, and Ghirlandaio, and Pinturicchio. The reason our public exhibitions are so dull is because everybody is trying the artistic motive, and few can carry it through; so few have the artistic flair of a Whistler, or an Arthur Davies. There ought to be a good communal studio where craftsman painters, who are not artistic, would be trained to paint sound historical pictures. Subjects abound. What a picture could be made of

that memorable scene, in the cherry orchard, at Clermont, where Pershing sought Foch and said: 'I have come to tell you that the American people would consider it a great honour for our troops to be engaged in the present battle; all that we have is yours; use it as you wish.' That meeting was the turning point of the war. Is it not a better subject than a sham picture of 'Daphnis and Chloe'? Do you remember the picture that the R. A. paints in Winifred Grahame's 'Mary'? The title was 'Have Pity on Joseph's Wife.' That was a real idea, and the authoress devotes half the book to illuminating it. Our painters lack thoughts and ideas. They're always fumbling toward an artistic motive, and they haven't the force of character really to grapple with it."

"Be merciful!" cried the Painter. "Because a few centuries ago there were men of transcendent genius making pictures, a sort of halo lingers over the business of painting, and most people, Tolstoy included, expect us to be something much greater than we really are. Tolstoy is like the young men who write the editorials for the high-brow weekly journals. They use words cunningly, oh, words, words, words, but their theories have little relation to life. They argue as if human nature and the basic fact of the struggle did not exist. Take my case. Outside what technical skill I possess, my fondness for beautiful things, and an inability to make my living any other way than by painting, I am a very ordinary person. I became an artist not because I desired to reform the world,

but because I had to earn my living, and my choice fell upon the career of art. It happened in the most prosaic way. I was raised in a western town, and at fifteen I was apprenticed to a harness maker. I didn't like the work, but that didn't matter; what boy ever liked fixed hours and unremitting labour? I became an artist through the dreadful theatrical bills, all gaudy colour and gaudier melodrama, that were left regularly at the shop for display. Those bills seemed to me wonderful. They were my initiation into the mystery of art, and I soon began to make copies of the bills on their blank sides. That was my beginning. I had found my vocation, my way of earning a livelihood. The next step was simple. A firm of lithographers in an eastern town advertised for an artist. I answered it and sent specimens. The firm engaged me at double the wage I was earning as a bad maker of good harness. For three years I worked for them, and then, with my savings and help from my people, I went to Paris to study. Glorious days!

"Now I am earning my living as a painter, supporting a family, and realising that I am one of an enormous number of artists who produce goods for which there is very little demand. Still, in spots, it's a glorious life, and I couldn't do anything else. Really, I regard myself as a high-class tradesman with certain goods to sell, with the disadvantage of not having any shop window to show them in. I console myself with the reflection, which is perfectly true, that 50 per cent of my wages

is in the joy I take in my work. A new idea, the first colour groping on a canvas, is like a sight of the Promised Land; but when I read a book like Tolstoy's 'What Is Art?' I feel sort of ashamed of myself; I feel that I have so few of the noble and altruistic feelings that he seems to think the artist should have."

"You've been talking sound horse-sense," exclaimed the ex-Editor, "and that is not common among artists. I've suffered from them. I've known some in my time who cling to the Tolstoy idea that the artist is sacred, separate, and apart, and not governed by the laws that ordinary mortals obey; that he has a mission. Nonsense! Ninety per cent of the working artists of today are, as our friend said, just high-class tradesmen who have high-class goods for sale. There is nothing to prevent their being prophets and teachers if it's in them, but their teaching must come through their craft. If the desire to teach is paramount in their natures, then let them be preachers, not artists. What," turning to me, "do you say? You've been very quiet all the evening. As a rule, you're fruitful in ideas. What secrets have you been whispering to that handsome cat?"

And I answered, "I was repeating to myself the opening of a poem by Amy Lowell:

> The cat and I
> Together in the sultry night
> Waited.
> He greatly desired a mouse,
> I an idea.
> Neither ambition was gratified.

4. I PROTEST

ON a pneumatic-tired, public automobile seating eleven passengers, in the course of an extremely hot afternoon, I realised that I was answering the unanswerable question—"What is Art?" At any rate, I decided, quite to my own satisfaction—

What Art Is Not.

The bulky automobile was conveying eleven opsimathic (opsimathy—education late in life) passengers through historic Boston—Cambridge (learning), Lexington (battles), Concord (transcendentalism), Waltham (watches), Walden (pond) and back to Boston over the Harvard Bridge, from which, as the eyes sweep around to the State House, may be seen, in contour and colour, one of the most beautiful architectural sights in New England.

From the roof of the awning, above the driver's head, hung a megaphone. Into this he roared information, but the automobile went so quickly, and the objects of interest were so plentiful, that had not I kept a level head I might easily have thought that the handsome Ford Motor Works building was Mrs. Jack Gardner's Venetian palace. I remained tranquil, in spite of the heat and the opsimathic excitement, until we had passed the Lexington Town Hall. What followed may be stated in dialogue form.

Gay Driver—In that building, ladies and gen-

tlemen, is one of the finest pictures in the world. It goes by the title of "The Dawn of Freedom."

Myself (pricking my ears)—Dear me, that's very interesting. You really consider it one of the finest pictures in the world?

Gay Driver—That's what I said.

Myself—Pray, who was the artist?

Gay Driver—There you have me. I haven't seen the picture, but what I say, I say. "The Dawn of Freedom" is one of the finest pictures in the world. Mind your head. This is leafy June.

The automobile stops. The driver alights, pushes and taps prominent portions of the engine. He resumes his seat. The automobile groans, grunts, leaps forward.

Myself (resuming)—What do you do if any of your passengers question the information you give them? Do they ever argue with you?

Gay Driver—Once in a while.

Myself—A megaphone is not conducive to argument. I presume that you agree with Whistler, who, when there were any signs of dissent from a group gathered about him, would say: "I'm not arguing with you. I'm telling you."

Gay Driver (attending strictly to business)—This is the Parker Boulder, where the Minutemen were lined up. It is inscribed with the words (raises his voice), "Standyourground Don'tfireunlessfired upon butiftheymeantohavewar letitbeginhere."

Rightly or wrongly, I did not pay much attention to the Parker Boulder, or the house where John Hancock and Samuel Adams slept; I was regretting

the publicity given to the incorrect art statement I had just heard.

"Every morning and afternoon through the season," I reflected, "an average of ten well-disposed people are told that 'The Dawn of Freedom' is one of the finest pictures in the world. They believe it because they do not take the trouble to question the information. In a proper state of society such an error, even on a hot afternoon in June, would not be allowed. You may say that I am fretting over a trifle, that this untruth is unimportant, but it is just this indifference to truth that explains the public apathy to art. The public is too content to accept the proposition that it is not being argued with; it is being told. I am troubled."

My troubles were not yet over. When the pneumatic-tired automobile reached the Old North Bridge at Concord, where "the embattled farmers stood, and fired the shot heard 'round the world," I and my opsimathic companions were allowed ten minutes for refreshment (lemonade and grape juice) and meditation. I was touched, poignantly touched, to see the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes entwined on the humble little memorial to the British soldiers who fell on April 19, 1775. On the rough stone I spelled out this inscription

> They came three thousand miles and died
> To keep the *P*ast upon its throne;
> Unheard beyond the ocean tide,
> Their English Mother made her moan.

That is quite well said. I felt good again. But when, after examining Daniel C. French's excellent statue of the "Minuteman," I purchased a pretty hand-book prepared by the secretary of the Concord Antiquarian Society, suddenly I became indignant once more. Yet everything seemed conducive to repose and serenity, for I was reclining under a tree, and it was Sunday afternoon, and the breezes were those of young spring. What disturbed me was this sentence: "The bronze statue of the 'Minuteman' is the most artistic statue that stands out of doors in America." I leapt to my feet. "That's another untruth," I cried to the sylvan battleground. "There is 'Sherman' and 'Lincoln' and 'Farragut' and 'Shaw' and 'Nathan Hale' and a dozen others. What is the art world coming to?" On the way home I gave but a glance at Lake Walden and quite ignored Waltham and Water-town. I was revolving in my mind the ignorance of the world in regard to art, and the sheep-like acquiescence with which the lay community accepts all it is told, anywhere, from anybody, about art. I recalled my own case, how, as a boy, through the stupidity of an uncle, I had become quite in-different to sculpture until I was grown up and capable of looking, thinking and reasoning for my-self. This well-meaning but ignorant uncle, whose chief virtue was that he was a Free Trader, was taking me for a walk through that dull and drab section of London known as Kentish Town. He paused before the statue of Richard Cobden and raising his hat said: "A great man, my boy, and

a great work of art." Now this statue of Richard Cobden happens to be one of the most commonplace Victorian statues that rise in ugly isolation in the streets of London. It has not the slightest pretension to be ranked as a work of art. It is a mere mason's effigy masquerading as art. The uncle, worthy man, thought that because Cobden was a great Free Trader, and because his statue had been placed in an important thoroughfare by an important "body of subscribers," therefore it was an important work of art, as thousands have thought since. The effect upon me was this: "If that is great sculpture," I thought, "I don't like sculpture." So I avoided effigies in stone and bronze, and it was many years before the awakening came.

That was due to the fact that, on a Lord Mayor's procession day, I was packed, like a sardine, in the crowd just in front of Le Sœur's statue of Charles I at Charing Cross, London. Unable to turn either to the right or to the left, I was forced to rivet my gaze on the statue. I forgot all about the Lord Mayor in realising, against my will, what a great and beautiful work of art this statue of King Charles by Le Sœur is. From that day I became a student of sculpture.

The loveliness of the view of Old Boston from the Harvard Bridge restored my serenity. Clouds had softened the splendour of the dropping sun, a haze had crept up, mystery had descended upon the buildings that creep and cling duteously to the curving Charles River. I thought of Whistler and

I knew that it was Whistler's "Ten O'Clock" that first gave me sight into what art really is. He answered the question—"What is Art?" Tolstoy muddled the inquiry with ethics. Whistler went to the core—straight.

And is there something more, something else that increasing understanding has brought to the answering of the question, "What is Art?"

Yes. The artist must first perfect his technique, without haste, without rest. It must always be ready, in perfect working order, for the great moment. When is the great moment? Walt Whitman said, "I loaf and invite my soul." An English poet called it waiting for the visitation of the muse.

But the technique must be there, wrought out in agony and joy, ready for the visitation, and the artist must be in tune. Otherwise, the muse will keep him waiting in vain.

"What is Art?"

It is the real I, purged of dross, the real I searching and consorting with my birthright—beauty. *i*

5. "BARE SPRING"

THERE was a new warmth in the air that day, and a new light in the sky. "Spring," I said, "is on the wing. I'll take a run into the country and see how Felix is progressing with his spring picture. The thought of Felix reminded me to ask him why my Ford self-starter will start once in three times only. He is an excellent mechanic; he locates and corrects disharmonies in the automobiles of all his painter acquaintances.

The Spring picture of my friend Felix is something of a joke. He began it in April, 1918; he worked on it in 1919, he is still labouring on "Bare Spring." That is the title. Early in April, 1918, standing on an outcrop of rock behind his house, gazing over the upland fields crowned by a windmill, looking at a peep of pink blossom at the end of a bough hanging over a pond, with a pensive redbreast perched close by, he had a strong sense of the hidden movement of spring in the dark furrows showing lights here and there, in the sense of growing things; in the young green on a few of the trees; in the splotches of vivid grass; in sprays of white in the sheltered orchard, and above all in the weight of the dark earth that he could almost think was moving with life. He warmed to the idea, and said "'Bare Spring,' that's the title."

Unfortunately he is not one of those happy artists

who see the end from the beginning. He makes his experiments upon his picture; he is forever changing the details; he thinks as he paints. The windmill has been converted into a tower, a shed into a white horse, a wheelbarrow into a broken down plough, and the pond has disappeared and reappeared twice.

Being a determined "pleinairist," he never touches "Bare Spring" in his studio! The canvas is tied to the easel, the easel is lashed to a scaffolding, imbedded in the croquet lawn (it's a bad lawn anyhow) and there he stands through the inclement April weather excogitating on "Bare Spring."

We have had many arguments as to his method of painting, I urging that it destroys impulse; that the result shows labour and no spontaneity; that a picture painted in this way produces on the beholder merely an example of twentieth-century technique without the sense of inspiration and ecstasy that gives purpose and value to a work of art. To my strictures he answers, "This is my way." To that I, of course, have no answer.

With this in my mind I had the impulse that light-hearted afternoon toward the end of April, to visit Felix and see how "Bare Spring" was progressing. For the railway journey I selected a new book—a translation of Raphael Petrucci's "Chinese Painting." It was my half-formed purpose to contrast, during the journey, eastern and western methods of painting—Felix's worried "Bare Spring" and say, the "Two Geese" (illustrated in Petrucci's book), by a nameless Chinese painter of the Sung

period, say about 1000 A. D. The "Two Geese" seem projected, not painted, into the picture. They are miraculously drawn, the technique hidden, the inspiration of a moment made lasting. Another picture, also illustrated by a Chinese artist, centuries later, is of a bird perched on a bough, a bough timidly flowering, that might be the bough and bird that Felix has squeezed into a corner of "Bare Spring." I thought, as I read Petrucci's clear account of the Chinese philosophical ideal which forced that great nation for centuries to search for abstract form, what would have been the effect on western art if we had paid less attention to Greece and Italy, and more to Korea, China and Japan. The Chinese, from the beginning, gave small heed to drawing and painting the human figure. They divided the subjects of painting into four principal classes—landscape, man and objects, flowers and birds, plants and insects. They do not change. The work of Ku Kaichih tells us of the kind of painting that was being done towards the end of the fourth century, and I read, "It is such as to indicate a long antecedent period of cultivation and development." Closing my eyes to reflect on this passage proclaiming the ages-old excellence of Chinese painting, I was startled by hearing the conductor cry, "Now, step lively, those who're gettin' off here."

I stepped lively. . . .

I found Felix standing in the same position as I had left him last year, still struggling with "Bare Spring." In the garden I noticed two new me-

chanical devices. In one of them, a novel way to fill the bird-bath, he had apparently made water run uphill. In my opinion he had not improved "Bare Spring." He had turned the white horse around, and converted the tower into a flag-staff. The bare pole—"bare spring—see?" he remarked. The pond and the wheelbarrow were gone; he had lessened the lights of the growing things and generally tidied up the picture. "Why not call it 'Spring Cleaning'?" I asked. He did not answer. Unabashed, I continued, "A Chinese artist would have indicated 'Bare Spring' by that dark bough hanging over the pond, with a redbreast blinking at the wisp of blossom at the end, and the dark furrows stretching away limitlessly. You take a countryside to express 'Bare Spring' and in the end, if it wasn't for the title, people wouldn't know what the picture meant."

The imperturbable Felix went on painting. Presently he said, "I happen to be a hundred per cent American, not a Chinese, and I'm going to paint my picture just in the way I choose."

"But you don't mind if I continue the argument?"

"Not in the least. To hear anybody talking while I'm painting rather helps me. I listen to the drone, not to the words."

I proceeded to interest myself by talking—"Since you will have nothing to do with the eastern method of painting which, I may remark, attracts me immensely, we'll discuss the western method to which you are chained. It seems to me, Felix, that you and your fellows are falling between two

stools. You spurn the eastern convention—lyricism, spontaneity, setting down in a decorative pattern the quick suggestion of something quickly but deeply seen; you spurn that, and yet you moderns fancy yourselves superior to the fictional realism upon which western painting is built—I mean the Anecdote, classical, historical, domestic or genre. But it's in your blood, nevertheless. You are painting a 'Bare Spring' with the laborious intensity that you would give to a 'Milton Dictating "Paradise Lost" to his Daughters' or 'The French Troops Entering Frankfort with Colours Flying.' It can't be done, my friend; spring won't stand it."

"Come off," said Felix, "you're talking through your hat."

"No, through my head. Painting in Victorian England became popular and esteemed entirely through the Anecdote from the Classical, through the Historical to the Domestic. The Landscape men, here and there, edged brightly into popular favour, but it was the Anecdotists—Leighton, Millais, Poynter, Orchardson, Richmond, Burne-Jones, Briton Riviere, who made fortunes by their pictures, and by engravings of them, and who made the art of painting a lucrative profession. Although you moderns have cast the Anecdote aside, you are still Anecdotists at heart, but your subjects are Nature, not Events. I should like to hang half a dozen big landscapes, worked upon, worried over, such as your 'Bare Spring,' side by side with half a dozen of Briton Rieviere's magnificent Anecdotes, say his 'Persepolis,' 'Daniel,' 'Sympathy,' 'The

Night Watch,' 'Miracle of the Swine,' and 'Beyond Man's Footsteps.' Briton Riviere was a good craftsman. As art productions I don't suppose that his pictures are better or worse than your 'Bare Spring,' or than the landscapes that have won prizes and medals this year. But I know this—the Briton Riviere things are much more interesting to look at."

"At least," Felix growled, "we are attempting Art, not Illustration."

"Nonsense. You are just painting exhibition pictures, as Briton Riviere did. It's your career, as it was his: you have to fight your competitors as he did; and you know perfectly well that this 'Bare Spring' is not your ecstatic statement of the wonder of the promise of spring: it is not your cry of joy in the loveliness of the world, bare or clothed; it is your exhibition picture by which you hope to ascend another rung up the ladder."

Felix laughed. His temper is admirable. Suddenly he grew serious, and I watched him change a bit of cloud into a hawk. Then he took a piece of wire and began to readjust the easel.

"You are not very encouraging," he said, "yet I don't know, perhaps you are. What do you propose that I should do?"

"Either adopt the Eastern Convention or fling yourself shamelessly into the Western Anecdote."

"I'd rather be a motor mechanic," said Felix.

Said I (but not aloud), "My dear fellow, that's just what you ought to be, what you were meant to be, with painting as a delightful relaxation."

6. ART TALK

A GROUP of artists and art writers were gathered in a garden. The moon was up, but it was not night: it was the almost imperceptible closing in of a brilliant day; and the eyes of the Traveller, who had arrived by train, still held the memory of the crimson ramblers that ran, in glowing profusion, for miles along the railway embankment. But, he confessed to himself, the roses were more beautiful in the garden at that still hour. There was enough light to see the goldfish in the tank, the soft colours of many flowers, the greeny blue parrot swinging in his cage, and the clump of delphiniums that rose against a grey-red rock. The air was like a chrysoberyl, the distance folded outward, not inward, and the garden was aglow with fireflies.

"It's too lovely," said the Painter. "Tomorrow I'll have a smack at those delphiniums against that wall. But what's the good? I can't get them. Nature beats us every time."

"Why talk about being beaten," remarked the Traveller. "There's no rivalry. Nature gives everything. You select and organise from her abundance—then you give yourself. Art, as you are aware, or unaware, is Nature seen through a temperament. Paint your delphiniums against that grey-red wall. You won't be giving us what we see

now; you can't; all you can do is to tell us how that incomparable sight has impressed you."

"Oh, you painters and writers," cried the Lady, "what a fuss you make about the things you do. I picked a handful of flowers this morning with the dew on them. I put them in a Leeds bowl. The effect was rapturous. They were much more beautiful than any picture. Nature beats Art every time."

The Traveller shook his head sadly. "I repeat," he said, "there's no competition. A Fantin Latour flower picture is not Nature."

"What then is it?" asked the Lady.

"It's a Fantin Latour flower picture. Many people like both nature and pictures. Some like nature only, others only like pictures. Take the case of your uncle. Where is he at this moment? Seated in his gallery in New York enjoying his painted canvases. I asked him yesterday where he was going this summer. 'Nowhere,' he answered. 'Why should I go away? I don't like traveling, I don't like things that fly, I don't like strange beds, I don't really like nature, but I love my pictures. I like looking at them, I like thinking of the men who painted them, I like to contrast and compare the various schools, so I stay at home among my pictures.' Your uncle, dear lady, is a born collector. He doesn't want to look at the wonderful sky arching above us now, or at that streak of light on the barn door; he wants to look at his Cazins and his Twachtmans. No, art and nature are quite different. An artist must, of course, go

to nature, the mother of all, for his information, and for a few facts, but——"

"See, I've caught a firefly," shouted the small son of the house. "Father, why don't mosquitoes light up?"

Their Host did not attempt to answer that difficult question. He allowed the talk to drift into that imbroglio of conversation; whether beauty is in the beholder, or in the object he beholds. And as they talked the evening grew lovelier.

* * *

When their Host had returned from putting his small son to bed (his wife is an advanced woman) he made an ungallant remark. "I'm glad that Post-Impressionist flapdoodle stuff has met its doom. It's gone forever, I guess."

There was a polite silence. Then the Traveller spoke. "When you see a field of golden corn, don't you give any thought to the fertilisers and the various chemical compounds that have made that field of golden corn what it is? Post-Impressionism has given just that service to modern art. More: it has liberated art, given the artist freedom from the lifeless conventions that bound him. More: it has entered into its own kingdom. Do you know that most of the war pictures of any value are Post-Impressionistic in character? The painted illustrations by the old gang, fine as some of them undoubtedly are, are mere statements of fact. I read their message as I read the account of the landing of the British dirigible R-34 at Mineola. I have acquired information. There

is nothing more to say. So with Anna Airy's 'Cook House at Witley Camp and Laura Knight's 'Physical Training.' I admire them, especially 'Physical Training,' but when I have assimilated their facts, as I assimilated the fact of the landing of the R-34, the episode is ended. I don't want to look at them again. How different is it with, say, Wyndham Lewis' 'Canadian Gunpit,' Paul Nash's 'Void,' and W. Roberts' 'The First German Gas Attack at Ypres.' These are Post-Impressionistic pictures. They are expressions of impressions: they lead outward; they set the imagination working. Before these pictures how can you say that the Post-Impressionist flapdoodle has met its doom. It is very much alive; it's 'kicking out.' We are feeling the kicks and enjoying the thuds. We are reacting to them."

"You're talking through your hat," said their Host. He frowned and looked disturbed. The Lady plucked a rose and smiled encouragingly. And the night grew lovelier.

* * *

Presently up the warm violet path came The Man Who Was Late. He had fuzzy-wuzzy hair; he wore glasses; but they could not veil the kindly watchful brown eyes; he was clothed in white, and he talked, oh, how he talked, without effort and with level animation. The parrot started him. He remarked upon its greens and blues beside the blue delphiniums and against the grey-red rock. He talked of colour, of a man in London who, with some queer instrument of his own invention, is

recording the colours of musical compositions; of a woman in New York who is throwing mobile colour upon a sceen from a lantern—dawns and sunsets and celestial combinations such as the morning stars may have seen when they shouted for joy. He talked of abstract colour pictures that are being painted, decorations, giving to the walls of rooms a significance that will startle the makers of traditional pictures into despair and emulation. He talked, but never of himself; his talk was always of what somebody else was doing. He was the interpreter, telling of an unheeded source of wonders of colour and form, imprisoned in the universe, which his companions were seeking and finding.

So The Man Who Was Late talked; then he went, silently as he had come into the blue night, through the rain of fireflies.

Hardly had he disappeared when the Traveller said: "A curious person that; a strange man! He's a wonderful talker, as you see. But that isn't all. He demonstrates. He asked me to a demonstration the other day in his upper room, and I'm glad to think that I tumbled to the lesson he had prepared for me. He didn't have to explain. As you know, he's a photographer, among other things, perhaps the best photographer in the world. He showed me a batch of his photographs, his latest work, the result of years and years of study. Three of them he was content with. They amazed me. I could hardly believe that they were camera work untouched by the hand. Light was his assistant. Nothing else. One was superb. There isn't a liv-

ing painter or sculptor who wouldn't have been proud to sign it.

"He had shown me what the eyes see. That was Act I.

"Then he showed me twenty or thirty paintings. What shall I call them—colour harmonies, colour rhythms, colour sensibilities? Some had a foundation of a figure or a tree, but most of them were colour abstractions, each following some law which I could glimpse, but could not follow. Some law —I could only think of Browning's line: "All's love yet all's law.' Do you take me? These were Act II. Act I was 'What the Eyes See.' Act II was 'What the Heart Feels.' A curious man. He's a fine talker, and his talk springs from the environment of the moment. Tonight it was that blue and green bird among the fireflies that set him going."

As the Traveller said these words the parrot cried, "Cut it out! Forget it."

And their Host remarked, "That bird's a genius."

7. I POSE

WE were relaxing in the Sun Parlour in the early afternoon of a lovely winter day. Perhaps we had earned the indulgence. Through the long morning the Painter had been working hard in his big, bare studio a quarter of a mile from the house; his Wife had been strenuous—domestically; so had his Niece; his Nephew had been oilily correcting a disharmony in the automobile, and I had been coaxing the recalcitrant pen.

We sat and looked at nature. It was an ideal place. The glass octagonal Sun Parlour outran the house to a broad spur of the hill, and all around and beneath stretched and rambled garden, village, ridge, woods, and river. The water was frozen; tiny figures swept by swiftly, skating. The sun flushed the red roofs and set the panes afire; the snow in shadow was blue; whichever way we looked through the circle of windows our eyes met the serene abundance of nature, clear, frosty, kindly.

For an hour and more we talked of the view, drawing each other's attention to particular aspects, subtleties of light, vagaries of colour; and the Nephew, who is something of a poet, peering into memory repeated:

Pale, yellow river and a lemon sky,
A heron calling;
Restless, dim woodlands where cold shadows lie,
And wan leaves falling.

It was the moment for poetry, and I asked if anyone knew the author of:

Whate'er thou lovest most
E'en that become thou must;
God, if thou lovest God,
Dust if thou lovest dust.

No answer was given, because the Painter suddenly claimed our attention. For some minutes he had been fingering his moustache, and his face had flushed deeper as he stared through the facing window; he moved his head quickly. Such signs I knew. The desire to paint was functioning within him. He sprang to his feet with the words, "I'm going to make a sketch. Hurry, or the light will go." Our hour of indulgence was over, banished. There was commotion. I realised that when the Master wants to work, everything gives way to his desire. His Wife put down her needlework, disappeared, and came back with an easel. Turning to his Nephew, the Painter said, "Just run down to the studio and bring back the two small canvases leaning against the north wall." To his Niece he said, "See if there is another bottle of turpentine on the shelf in the library. Stay, I'll go with you and get the palette. Did those new colours come?" I left my seat in the window, and sank into a chair behind the easel. "Am I in the way?" I asked, when he returned with the palette. "Not in the least. But I must be quick. The effect's going."

He began to paint—feverishly, fiercely. I watched him with curiosity and with admiration. He was

so quick; he sketched in the view with such decision—a section of the room, the arching windows, and the bright, cold panorama beyond. Suddenly he said, as if talking in a dream, "There was somebody sitting against the light. I want that black spot." My modest voice answered,

"Yes, I was there. Shall I go back?"

"Please."

I obeyed, taking an easy sideways pose.

Presently he said, "Take hold of a book and pull your cuff down. I want a high light."

I took the nearest book, the Corcoran Gallery catalogue of the Exhibition of Contemporary American Artists.

"Can I read it?"

"Oh, yes, do anything you like" (this rather irritably). Then, with more composure, "You've got a very paintable head."

I smiled.

Silence for ten minutes, during which I read the names of the painters who have won the Corcoran Gold Medal, and wondered if they would have been my choice.

Scribbled on the bottom of the page was a quotation from Renoir, "On ne se dit pas, 'Je serai peintre,' devant un beau site, mais devant un tableau." I was meditating on this when the Painter cried, "That book's too dumpy. Take a larger one. Here!"

He threw me a folio pamphlet, which I caught deftly. "Don't fiddle with it," he cried. "Hold it naturally as if you were reading."

Trying to hold it naturally I read the title—"'Frauds in Historical Portraiture, or Spurious Portraits of Historical Personages,' by Charles Henry Hart." That suggested good reading, and for the next hour I dipped into page after page, only to receive from the Painter, when I had found something especially interesting, a quick request to sit up, or to hold the book farther away. But I learnt, indeed, what I already knew, that many old portraits are portraits of somebody else, and those that are really historical portarits are often so unlike that the mothers of the sitters would not have recognised them. The Assyrians, Egyptians, Greeks and Romans were content with conventional effigies; the Italians of the Great Age were more concerned with producing works of art than likenesses. Velasquez achieved works of art because he painted the Royal House of Spain so often that "getting a likeness" did not trouble him; he could allow his art free play. Romney knew Lady Hamilton so well that he was never handicapped by the necessity of copying her features, and, as for Sir Joshua Reynolds, who can say that his great Portraits of Parade were like the ladies who posed to him in glades or in arched marble colonnades. When Reynolds and Gainsborough painted the same Personage it is curious how unlike they could be. Some of the best modern portraits are nameless, that is, the painter set himself to produce a work of art, ignoring the bother of the likeness. The reason why so many modern portraits are dull and monotonous is because the painter has been paid for

a likeness, not for a work of art. He knows that when the portrait is sent home the family will ask, "Is it like Papa or Mamma?" not, "Is it beautiful?" or "Is it a work of art?" Then I said to myself, "What is he making of ME?" Furtively I glanced at the Painter.

He was engrossed, working with fervour, oblivious of his surroundings, and of his cramped and obedient sitter.

I released my eyes from him, turned to another page of the catalogue, and read that the earliest authentic life portrait that we know is the famous portrait of Dante, in the Bargello of Florence, painted by Giotto, which probably owes its preservation to having been covered until 1840 with layer upon layer of whitewash. Turning to another page of the pamphlet I learned that when Sir Francis Galton sat for his portrait he beguiled the time by counting the number of strokes of the artist's brush. They numbered 20,000, and Sir Francis Galton, being Sir Francis Galton, when the work was finished, did not ask if the product was a likeness, or beautiful, or a work of art. The question he asked, thinking of those 20,000 brush strokes, was—"Have painters mastered the art of getting the maximum result from their labour?" I was about to seek for other titbits in the pamphlet when the Painter cried, "We'll stop. Light's gone."

I arose, and walked to the easel. It was a vivid sketch, bold and bright in colour, and finely constructed. Of course, what interested me was the figure reading the pamphlet. It was quite hand-

some, but it would have been useless for a passport.
"Are you pleased with your model?" I asked.
"You make a good black spot," he answered, wiping his brushes.

8. I AM CONSOLED

I HAD been in New York a month. The mathematical laying out of the city into avenues and streets appealed to my sense of method, but the noise and hustle, the height of the buildings, the stampede of the crowds (whither? whither?) jarred and affronted my sensibilities. I compared my condition to an æolian harp, the strings of which had been bruised by a gale.

True, I had experienced summary æsthetic sensations, such as the sight from Fifty-ninth Street Bridge, after nightfall, of the climbing city lit by a thousand lights; but this and other spectacles had bewildered without nourishing my sense of beauty. My thought was clogged, my heart was heavy: there seemed no place in the maelstrom where I could sit down and remember; where I could experience the intimacy, encouragement and consolation of art.

And I felt lonely, the inert loneliness that a great city provokes. Once only during that long, exacting day had my lips uttered a remark. It was in response to a curt command from the conductor of a street car. "Pardon me," I had replied, "by nature and disposition I am unable to step lively."

I have, as I have already remarked, a methodical mind. First, when I had settled down, I investigated the chief avenues of New York; I then

explored the chief cross-streets; and it was in a cross-street whose numeral I cannot remember that I encountered art, and met my joy again.

It happened fortuitously—a gush of exaltation, as if from a hidden spring, in the way that vital and significant experiences in life usually happen. I had paused at a newspaper stall in one of the most crowded of the cross-streets, had read on the front page of an evening journal the announcements, "Zep Up Eight Miles, Italian Flies 150 Miles," and I had turned away with a shudder, for I was in no mood for additional material facts, however noteworthy. As I turned away, heart-heavy, my eyes fell upon two coloured pictures, reproductions, in a glass frame affixed to the doorway of an office building.

I looked, and the nightmare of the streets passed; I looked, and art opened her arms and whispered: "Be comforted. Be glad."

What I saw was no novelty. A cup of cold water in a desert is no novelty. Yet it was new to me that day because all great work is lastingly new. The pictures that claimed my eyes were coloured reproductions of two works by Degas. Some people would call them ugly, even repulsive, because the subjects are ballet girls and washerwomen; but to me they had the endless beauty of supreme craftsmanship, piercing vision, and fine colour, the thing seen with sane eyes and executed with quick vitality. Moreover, they fulfilled the condition that I like to impose on works of art, which is this: Can they be described by one word? These two works by

Degas absolutely met that requirement. The picture of "The Dancer," a ballet girl pirouetting down the stage, was the personification of Movement; the picture of the two "Laundresses," massive figures, labouring under their baskets of linen, was the personification of Weight. Degas, in this picture, gives the weight of the human figure, as Cézanne gives the weight of the earth. Degas paints the essentials only; he abjures rhetoric and emotion. He gives us the epic of the laundry, as Millet gives us the epic of the fields.

I climbed the stairs of the building, eager to buy these coloured reproductions. The "Laundresses" cost me a dollar, "because," said the assistant in the print shop, "there is such a demand for it." I saw other works by Degas in that chamber on the top floor, and a number of reproductions in colour by various painters who have come to the front in the big business of picture-making. Among them were works by Napier Hemy, Royal Academician of Falmouth, England, a painter of the sea, prolific and pictorial, who had a successful career, and who, in a fugitive way, is connected with Degas because their earthly activities ceased about the same time. I sat by the open window of that print shop in an upper chamber and mused on these two painters, saying to myself: "If I can place them, contrast and compare them, I shall learn something of the enduring purpose of art. Now, why am I hot about possessing a Degas, and why am I lukewarm about possessing a Napier Hemy?

"First," I continued, "I should never tire of a

Degas, but I should soon be weary of a Hemy. Why is this? Primarily because Degas is by far the greater artist. Hemy's subjects—the dancing waves, the salt wind, the breathless avocations of those who go down to the sea in ships—are much more sympathetic to me than Degas' ballet girls, washerwomen, race horses and café habitués. Yet Degas wins each time. He soars. Hemy sinks. It is the difference between a poem by Browning and a poem by Longfellow. One has thought and feeling, the other has only feeling.

"Degas stands for those French artists, a commanding group who bring to their work a rare intellectual equipment. They are thinkers, makers of epigrams and tellers of their mental processes in talk and print. Degas reasoned, argued, rejected, and in his pictures he gives the fine essence of his intellectual emotional life, all he has learnt about character, light and colour. His pictures grip and abide, as 'The Ring and the Book' grips and abides. Napier Henry's sea frolics and river episodes glide past us as 'Evangeline' glides away in a mist of pretty platitudes."

So, having purchased "Laundresses" for a dollar, I returned to the cross-street, and with the picture tucked under my arm I felt so serene that I preserved my equanimity when every street car in Lexington Avenue refused to stop to carry me uptown.

I had rediscovered the consolation of art.

9. THE CHARM OF BAD PICTURES

LONG ago, when I began to be interested in American painting, I made this note in my diary; "Hudson River School—Native group o painters; racial; national flavour. Must see them." The promised day came, in New York, when I learned that, in honour of the completion of the Catskill Aqueduct, a collection of paintings of the Hudson River School had been assembled in room 25 of the Metropolitan Museum.

Thither I went; but my quest for room twenty-five took a long time—such delightful delays. Here I dallied, there I dallied, before objects that made my heart beat fast. All was new to me. I could have spent the whole afternoon in the Armory Exhibition Hall: I could hardly tear myself away from two seated Egyptian statues of a "Secretary and His Wife," B. C. 1300. Plastic art changes, but who dare say, looking at these two figures, that it advances. They are serene, unmoved, enduring. The group of Rodin's marbles is alive with momentary and exquisite pity and emotion. Wonderful is "The Hand of God," wonderful is "The Thinker," but the very emotional intensity of these works lures me to the reverent repose of Egypt's unknown craftsmen. It is ancient Egypt, not modern France, that is inspiring the best of our younger sculptors.

Nor could I tear myself away from certain of the pictures—the two Gilbert Stuarts, portraits of a Spaniard and his wife, so extraordinarily fresh and vivid; Rembrandt's "Old Woman Cutting Her Nails," a distasteful theme made beautiful by understanding genius. It is concentration Rembrandt has painted, not an episode of the toilet. How I enjoyed a faded, discoloured, unfinished work by Lucas von Leyden, which time and abuse have made doubly lovely, and (my taste is catholic) Sargent's "Henry C. Marquand"—his best portrait. These significant things, and others, delayed me. An hour and a half must have passed before I entered room twenty-five, and found myself among the Hudson River School pictures.

I sighed, and had I been a man of sentiment I would have dropped a tear. They were so dark and dowdy, so unexhilarating and uneventful. "Bad Claudes, bad Sidney Coopers, bad Leaders," I murmured. Two of them I liked a little—a "Camp Meeting" by Whittredge and "Bayside" by David Johnson—and I acknowledged the rhetorical glow of Church's "Parthenon"; and the glimmer of Cuyp's gold in Gifford's "Kaaterskill Cove"; but most of them lacked all that I like in landscape painting—colour, selection, rhythm; above all colour, the pure abstract, vocal colour that is the new note in lanscape painting.

"But I must be just," I reflected. "At any rate these men were pure American. No foreign influences touched them except the invitable Claude and Poussin. But——" I yawned, and strolled

away meditating on the development of landscape painting in America. "Being a young and vigorous nation, of course they were elderly and timid in art. That's a law. These Hudson River men, who plodded through the early Nineteenth Century, conformed to the tradition of the day. Later, when the rush to Paris began, their descendants conformed to Impressionism as they had conformed to Classicism. They did it uncommonly well, but it is not unfair to say that their works are French pictures—French in vision and treatment—painted by Americans. But many of them were now no longer Americans. They had become cosmopolitans, and the outstanding figure is John Sargent, born in Italy of American parentage, trained in Paris and living in England."

With that my thoughts flew to the Brooklyn Museum, to the groups of water colours by Sargent—factual vision and furious virility—and to the Winslow Homer water colours—factual vision and furious virility again, so different from Whistler's sensitised crepuscular vision.

I said: "If Sargent is the greatest cosmopolitan master, Winslow Homer is the greatest indigenous American master. Why, he was an old master while he was still painting. He makes the Hudson River men look like amateurs.

Hurrying to room fifteen, I stood before "Cannon Rock" and "Moonlight, Wood's Island Light," Winslow Homer's masterpieces.

It is the custom in American museums to remove the hat. Had this not been so I would have un-

covered before these two works. What a great man Winslow Homer was, elemental and rugged as the coast of Maine, content with his own land, a solitary, a patriot, a racial artist, a Titan, who wrestled his way up the heights, and boldly planted there his far-flung national standard. Cézanne, another Titan, a contemporary of Homer's whom he never saw, faltered through sheer stress of artistry, and the agony after perfection, before he could scale the heights. Winslow Homer was the last of the old hardy, confident, régime. Cézanne is the pioneer of the peering, questioning modern.

I was now eager to seek out the other Winslow Homers in the Metropolitan Museum—"The Gulf Stream," "Shooting the Rapids," etc. I was hastening through room nineteen when I heard three people, a youth and two girls, plainly art students, talking loudly and with animation before Augustus John's "The Way Down to the Sea," a picture that I had known in London and had written spurts of appreciation about—the new English note, the flaunt of genius, the this-is-I-take-me-or-leave-me oriflamme, which Augustus John waves to the world.

The three art students were talking of "The Way Down to the Sea," with flashing eyes and protruding thumbs. Their animation was a recovery of the old happy days in Paris when art was a living thing to be swooped upon, discussed and enjoyed. So intrigued was I with these ebullient art students that I followed them, and it so happened that we all came together in the Hudson River School room.

The students looked wildly round, screamed "O lor" (or something worse), and fled.

I remained. "It's odd," I said, "but after the excitements of John, Cézanne and Winslow Homer, I feel that these dull pictures are restful."

I remained there for a quarter of an hour, and in the company of these modest, sincere, untemperamental men, my mind became judicial, my pulse normal, and I attempted to compose a bird's-eye view of American landscape painting—the Hudson River lot; the French influence; the "delicacy" school of Twachtman and Tryon; the vitality and opulence of Winslow Homer; the racial landscapes —big rivers, sweeping line, bold design, strong colour of the Redfield-Symons-Schofield group, who are painting America as she is, with clear vision and clean colour. "I must see some of their pictures," I said. So once more I left the Hudson River School room.

Endeavouring to find my way to one of their "Winter" pictures, suddenly I encountered a "Winter," that by Rockwell Kent. "My word," I said, "that's a fine picture! It's racial, too. It's the new note in American landscape painting."

As this picture is uncatalogued, I determined to seek the curator and glean from him some information about Rockwell Kent. As I walked in the direction of the curator's room I became conscious of fatigue. "There are two courses open to me," I argued, "to sit at a table in the lunch room, or to sit upon a couch in the Hudson River School room." Strange to relate, I chose the latter.

So, in the midst of the Hudson River School pictures, I sat, very content, lulled and quiescent, until the gong sounded the hour of closing. I did not move. My eyes roamed over those dull canvases, and, oddly, they did not depress me. "What does it mean," I asked myself; "what is the charm of these bad pictures?" The answer was plain. These men approached nature with reverence and humility. They did not try to exploit their personalities or proclaim their cleverness. Inexpert, untutored, unambitious of medals and honours, trained to respect the brown tree, and to avoid the lively green, they were content to copy as well as they could what they loved so well. It was the old way, the stage-coach method, not the aeroplane flight.

An attendant appeared in the doorway, crying, "Closing time." I arose, and was surprised to realise that I was quite sorry to leave these dull, dim, dowdy—dear Hudson River landscapes.

10. A "DEFINITE JOB"

MICHEL ANGELO ROOKER is not the only individual handicapped by his patronymic. There is Claude Lorrain Spot.

C. L. Spot is a modern, aged thirty-three, and his father, worthy Hiram S. Spot, earns a decent living painting the initials of the owners of automobiles on their cars, and also in producing dignified lettering for advertisements. He is an adept at lettering. Some of his inscriptions are so good that they have been fathered upon Eric Gill of London.

But Hiram S. Spot, in the manner of fathers, was not content that his son should be a first-rate and much-in-demand letterer: he wished him to be an artist. So he called him Claude Lorrain Spot.

Mr. Hiram S. Spot sent his son to an "uptown," fine art studio, where he was supposed to learn how to become a genius, and where he was urged, by means of prizes and commendations, to express himself to the limit of his æsthetic intelligence. This he was able to do as his father gave him a small but sufficient allowance. So the years passed. Claude Lorrain Spot was not altogether a failure: he occasionally sold a picture, the purchaser usually being a relative, who was prepared to spend money for the honour of having a genius in the family. These buyers of the Spot clan did not know that

Claude Lorrain's landscapes were weak and derivative, and as art products not to be compared with his father's severe and noble lettering. But the strange thing is that Claude himself knew.

He had the artistic temperament; he possessed a subtle sense of beauty, and he was a man of character and common sense. Had this not been so he could never have gone on year after year producing those ineffectual landscapes, trying to imitate Corot's feathery flick through wet paint, Whistler's subtlety of surface, Monet's glitter of sunlight, Cézanne's sense of weight and weariness.

He went on year after year because, although a man of common sense, artistically, he was ignorant; he hoped against hope that by some adventitious aid, some lucky trick of insight, he would one day learn the business of landscape painting, be elected a member of the National Academy of Design, and sell his pictures for $5,000 each.

That day never came. But the awakening came. It did not strike him suddenly, such awakenings are never sudden, although they appear to be. The casting away of his brushes came through an article called "On Teaching the Utility of Art," that he read on the art page of a daily paper, contrasting "fine art" and "commercial or applied art" much to the disadvantage of the former. The article eulogised "commercial art" because it has "a definite job to do."

"I don't think the writer is quite fair," Claude Lorrain Spot soliloquised. "Bad as my landscapes may be, I see daily a lot of examples of commercial

art quite as obnoxious. I quite admit that some of the modern posters, so summary, so simple, so fresh in colour, have left many of the laboured studio landscapes far behind. And those large and impressive 'range-finding landscapes,' painted during the war opened to me a new vista in landscape decoration.

"Why are these things so good?" he asked himself. The answer came pat, and with driving force. Because the artists who made them had a "definite job to do."

Claude Lorrain Spot felt that he had reached a crisis in his art life. The time had come for him to make a great decision. He reviewed his past. His common sense helped him. He knew in his heart, and his lips assented, that he was not among the ten per cent of artists whose productions are works of art, who are entirely worthy, who are accepted of paint, as certain poets are accepted of song; he knew that he belonged to the 90 per cent who have some talent, who watch the market, who paint what they think is wanted, and who try to discover short cuts to fame and prosperity.

"I am an 'artist of temperament,'" he muttered; "I am a cuckoo, I have had no real training in building; I buy my colours and canvases at the shop 'round the corner,' and I haven't the faintest idea whether my colours and my vehicles are good or bad, transitory or permanent. I haven't learned the trade. I've tried to grow the flower without planting the seed, and, worst of all, I haven't a definite job to do. I get my inspiration, not from nature,

although I enjoy a sunset, or reflections in still water, as much as anybody; I get my inspiration from the works of other fellows. What they have seen I try to see.

"Now, having reached this point," said Claude Lorrain Spot to himself, "what of the future? I must amend my art life immediately."

He determined that, as a beginning, he would call himself C. L. Spot, realising that whenever he signed or saw the honest ugliness of the signature he would be reminded of the palingenesis of Claude Lorrain Spot.

Then he visited his father. "Dad," he said, "you've been very kind and generous in the matter of my allowance. I had hoped by this time to have been able to do without it, but something has happened. I've come to a decision. I want you to keep up my allowance for two years, because for that period I sha'n't be earning money. I'm going to learn my trade. I'm going to apprentice myself to the first capable craftsman-painter who will have me, and I'm going to swat through a school, the hardest I can find. I'm going to draw day in and day out. I'm going to study design and decoration and the materials of my trade. I'm not going to look at a single picture, and I'm not going to paint anything for two years. I'm going to learn my business and then——"

The old craftsman smiled. "I've been waiting for this day," he said. "I'm proud of you. Go ahead."

But C. L. Spot did not tell his father all. He did

not tell him his dream. That he nursed in his heart.

"What will happen," he asked himself, "at the end of two, or ten years, when I feel that I have acquired an expert knowledge of my craft? Shall I be any nearer to the goal? I am not a genius. I cannot impose my individuality upon the world, because the world doesn't want it. My talent is quite ordinary. It is not necessary to the world. When I have become a respectable craftsman I shall still be face to face with the fact that I have not 'a definite job to do.' What definite job can a mediocre but sincere landscape painter have in this muddled world?"

Being pure in heart C. L. Spot saw his job ahead of him without any mental effort. "There are such things," he said, "as Dawns, Sunsets, Twilights, Hills and Lakes. Everybody is interested in them: everybody loves them. Suppose, when I have mastered, in some measure, my craft, I were to interpret Dawns, Sunsets, Twilights, Hills and Lakes to a busy world. Take Dawns! Suppose I were to make a long and elaborate study of Dawn, and work up my knowledge into a dozen aspects of Dawn—small, decorative pictures, simple in design, frank in colour, giving the shy sequences of Dawn from herald to climax in twelve progressions.

"I would keep in mind the room where they would hang. I would show in the exhibition gallery a model of this room with the pictures properly spaced on the walls, and the next year I would do Sunsets, and so on with all the aspects of nature. That

would be a definite job and it would attract and help people."

Without more ado C. L. Spot began his new life. He went into Central Park and proceeded to draw, with pre-Raphaelite accuracy, a tree growing out of a rock. "When Giotto drew a tree growing out of a rock, I supposed it was because he didn't bother about accuracy. But here is just such a tree growing from a rock. I'll do it as well as ever I can, and then see just how much worse I am than Giotto."

As he worked, happiness came to him, for he was preparing to do a definite job.

11. A SOLITARY

RULES are made for mediocrity.
Genius makes its own rules.
These are dangerous doctrines, but they require to be stated if the work of Albert Pinkham Ryder is to be rightly considered.

The wind bloweth where it listeth. Art has no frontier. Ryder was one of the greatest of American artists (artists, not painters, mark you); but, although born in America of American parents, although he lived all his life in America, he was no more an American than Whistler—he was universal. The world was his nation—the world of beauty, of thought and of mystery. He passed his life virtually in one disordered room in an outlying suburb, or in a downtown, humble dwelling in New York. What did it matter where he lived so long as there was the night sky, the awakening silence of dawn, the mystery and menace of the sea, the profundity of his own thoughts, and opportunity to labour and labour through years on the inward dreams, and the sombre visions, that he wrought out in his pictures?

Rules are made for mediocrity. The framers of them postulate that their pupils dwell in the average zone. Therefore they hold the mirror up to classicism. "Study Raphael and Ingres," they say. This is right.

No student should ever copy Ryder. His goal was his aim, and so long as he reached his goal which may be described as the "magical quality of eternity," he was disdainful of such class-room ideals as correct drawing, values, realism, and imitation of nature or the model. Constable revolutionised the art world of his day by showing in paint that the wind blows, that rain wets, that leaves glitter in the sunlight. Ryder cared for none of these things. His landscape called "Pastoral Study" swings back to pre-Constable days. Yet it is wonderful—those solemn kine so patient under the solemn writhing tree. Technically, it is far inferior to a Constable, yet it is a greater picture, than, say, the "Hay-Wain." The reason is because the whole is greater than the part; that is, life, the whole, is greater than art, the part of life. Constable painted the part, the detail, magnificently; Ryder worked his way into a deeply felt, long-pondered expression of his attitude toward the whole. He is akin to the psalms of the Hebrew prophets, and to the sculptures of the Egyptians.

He never faltered in this quest. In the forty-eight works from his brush shown in his exhibition there was not one that fails to express his conversation with eternity, and any one of them could form the text for a paper on the intention of the art of Ryder. Consider his moonlights of mystery and sadness, his "Temple of the Mind," his vision of Jesus in the "Resurrection" picture, a work that seems hardly to be done with pigments; and that astonishing expression, the heart of the legend, with all of

the melody, rhythm and romance that Wagner infused into the theme called, "Siegfried and the Rhine Maidens." Here, indeed, is an example of the way that genius breaks rules, and yet attains the goal. Imagine the indignation of a professor of art if a student proposed to paint a picture in this way. We know precisely how it was done. Ryder himself explained how his "Siegfried" was produced to his friend, Mr. Elliott Daingerfield.

"I had been to hear the opera, and went home about 12 o'clock and began this picture. I worked for 48 hours without sleep or food and the picture was the result."

Obviously that is not the way to paint a picture, but it was Ryder's way, and the end justifies his means.

Instruct a painter, a good craftsman but without vision, to paint a picture of a boat drawn up in a cove, and he will produce a picture of a boat drawn up in a cove. It might be an excellent representation of the scene but it would be that and nothing more. How did Ryder paint this scene? He was an artist, a great artist; he felt all a poet feels, but he was not a poet, although he loved to write verse. In temperament he was cousin-german of Blake, but there was this difference between them. Blake was as unique a poet as he was artist. Perhaps he was greater as a poet. Ryder's verse was good, but ordinary. It was better than Turner's, which was execrable.

All the poetry in Ryder's nature went into his painting of the boat drawn up in the cove. The

boat lurking in the shadow of the cliff, hiding from the moonlit cove, is the heart of romance. It is pure poetry. Another of his moonlight pictures, "Under a Cloud," is pure allegory. It is as simple a statement as Shakespeare's "Ripeness is all." It does, in one rush of inspiration, what Watts was trying all his life to do, what innumerable men and women, half painters, half artists, have for ages been trying to do and usually failing.

It is tolerably easy to paint the part creditably; it is intolerably difficult to paint the whole creditably unless one's nature flows deeply, and one lives exhaustively on the plane expressed by William Watson:

> When overarched by gorgeous night
> I wave my trivial self away;
> When all I was to all men's sight
> Shares the erasure of the day;
> Then do I cast my cumbering load,
> Then do I gain a sense of God.

The possibility of merging the part in the whole—comes. It cannot be sought. "I did not know I had done it," an artist will say, when extolled for certain big qualities in his work. Unconsciously, sometimes, the artist relates the part to the whole and so achieves greatness. Two men paused in a museum before a bronze of a tiger on the prowl—tense, stealthy, menacing, inevitable. One of the men said, "That's fine. I'd like to own it. It's an abstract idea made bronze—it's fate." The other man said, "But, my dear fellow, look at it closely. You, a student and an admirer of Barye, cannot

possibly admire the modelling of this beast." "True," said his companion, "it is not particularly well modelled, but the idea is great, and in the bigness of the idea the weakness of the modelling is not apparent." He looked closer; he read the label. The sculptor had called it "Fate."

Ryder was a Solitary in art. He belonged to that little company which includes Blake, Matthew Maris, Botticelli in later life, and, in poetry, Francis Thompson. None of them liked facts. All of them pursued beauty. Each believed with Fromentin that the aim of art is to express the unseen. But Blake, having the power of expression in words, has revealed to mankind the innermost dreams of the Solitary in a fuller way than Ryder. Had they been able to meet, they would have understood one another. To each the external manifestations of life were of no importance, and they were of no importance to Francis Thompson, he who said you cannot touch a flower without troubling a star. Innocence, we are told, was the secret of Blake's life, and surely innocence was the secret of the spiritual, hermit life of Ryder. In those midnight walks, in his communion with the dawn, in his effort after magical quality in his art, he sought to recapture the first simplicity of mankind. Ryder put his thought into pictures, labouring them into a simplicity that a child can understand. He lived in the imagination as Blake did. He would have agreed with one of Blake's most subtle exponents who has said: "Blake's life was spent in calling witness to the paramount claims of the imagination over every other form of

human activity." And Ryder would have echoed Blake's own brave words:

> I rest not from my great task;
> To open the eternal worlds! To open the immortal eyes
> Of man inwards; into the worlds of thought.

12. SEARCHERS

I ASCENDED in the elevator. Then I crept tiptoe through the vestibule. Why?

Because within the open door of his office I saw the Proprietor of the picture gallery, seated at his desk, fanning himself. Why did I avoid him? I like him, I admire him, I respect his opinion upon art. I crept on tiptoe, hoping that he would not see me, simply because when I visit a picture exhibition I want to make the round of the walls alone. A proprietor of a gallery being a business man (he may also be an artist) necessarily regards his ducklings as swans, and I do not want his enthusiasm to intrude on my consciousness. When I was younger I was afraid of proprietors of picture galleries. One of them, there was nothing artistic about him, was wont to use a phrase about his wares that was effective, if limited. When I, through excessive politeness, remarked of a certain picture that it was good, he answered, "You bet!" I praised another that was not quite as good: again he rejoined, "You bet!" I eulogised a third that was quite bad. "Rather nice," I said. He replied as before, "You bet!" There was nothing more to say. I thanked him and withdrew.

The Proprietor of the gallery whose establishment I was now visiting is not that kind of man. He is

a student and a connoisseur. Strange to say, when I entered the exhibition room I forgot all about him. For, on one of the walls was a series of drawings that fascinated me, chiefly salient drawings of the human figure, but there were other kinds also, drawings of dryads and fauns, of abstractions, of winged horses, of fish acquainting themselves with coral; and there was a set of six lovely little landscapes, flushed with colour, illustrating that magical line of Shakespeare's, "Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy." While I looked, my delight growing, I became aware that the Proprietor was standing in the middle of the room admiring my admiration. I succumbed. Waving my hands toward the wall of drawings, I said, "That's a good man." "Yes," replied the Proprietor, "he's a Searcher." He said the word Searcher with conviction and appreciation, as if he were uttering a synthesis of all he had thought and felt and dreamed about the business of making art.

That sentence, "He's a Searcher," remained, and still remains with me. Come to think of it, the art that we like is the art of those who search. So few search: so many (they cannot help it, their minds have ceased to function) never search. They merely record the obvious, something we already know—a girl in a punt, a cow in a pasture, a child in a daisy field, a model in the land of mythology. But many artists have been, and are, Searchers in private. How often in running through the "unimportant" studies and sketches thrown aside in a studio have I found the Searcher revealed. I have

dug from the studio of an artist little works that tingled me, whereas his "important" exhibited work left me cold. How often in looking through cabinets of drawings by the Old Masters have I found small, disregarded things that have pleased and cheered me much more than their "important" works catalogued in massive volumes. There is a drawing of a sheepfold, at sunset, by Claude Lorrain, in the Albertina, at Vienna, that I would rather have than any of his gallery mythologies.

It should not be difficult to make a list of the Searchers in art. Botticelli was one, so was Rembrandt, so was Turner in the latter part of his life; so was Blake all his life. Leonardo da Vinci was the greatest Searcher of all: indeed he was always searching. He rarely troubled to find: the search was all. What a strange fate has overtaken his "Mona Lisa." It is not a great picture, it is almost a tricky picture: that inward smile is nothing more than studio "chic": Leonardo used it again and again. His "St. Anne" cartoon in the Diploma Gallery, London, is a much finer work of art than the "Mona Lisa." Why, then, is "Mona Lisa" so universally popular? Walter Pater is the culprit. His imaginative and imaginary interpretation of "Mona Lisa" is a finer work of art than the picture. His prose transcends "Mona Lisa." Similarly many of Ruskin's purple passages interpreting good, bad and indifferent pictures are, as art, often finer than the works they interpret. This applies to many of Turner's pictures; but not to all. Sometimes Turner outsoared the Graduate of Oxford,

and some of Turner's finest things were disregarded by Ruskin. They were done when Turner was in searching mood.

Albert P. Ryder was a Searcher always. Arthur B. Davies is a Searcher in technique as well as in subject. He is a tireless Searcher, and he seeks the goal that Botticelli and Piero di Cosimo sought, long ago, beauty touched with strangeness. Kenneth Hayes Miller, who painted "The Serpent" and "The Embrace," is a Searcher. E. E. Cummings, who painted "Noise" and "Sound," and Carl Kahler, who painted "Abstraction" and "Mechanism," at the Independent Show, are Searchers. Oscar Bluemner, the red elementalist, is a Searcher, so is Lily Converse, on trial rather, and Max Kuehne, and Abraham Walkowitz, and John Marin and many other experimenters." But it is when in later years they continue the search that the thermometer of my admiration rises. John Richard Green said, "I shall die learning." Stopford Brooke said, "I shall die unlearning." It is no paradox to say that Stopford Brooke's use of the word unlearning shows that he was on the Searcher's path. Every artist, every man of letters, in later years, has more to unlearn than to learn.

C. R. W. Nevinson has been a fierce Unlearner; he is now a fierce Searcher. His secret is quite simple. He approaches a new subject with a virgin mind and boyish enthusiasm. The subject dictates the technique—cubist, academic, impressionist, elementalist—the subject fires his imagination, and the treatment follows as the day the night. So we have

such amazing differences in vision and method as "Mitrailleuse" and "Dawn at Southwark," as "Dressing Station" and "Wet Evening, Oxford St.," as "The Cursed Wood" and "The Wave."

Rockwell Kent is also a Searcher. He finds his inspiration in solitude, not in crowds. He spent several months in Alaska. In that majestic but storm-ridden land, he made the series of elemental drawings—"Prayer," "Ecstasy," "The North Wind," "Adventure," "Sunrise," "Victory," "Star-Lighter." These sternly beautiful drawings, some of which will form the basis of pictures, may be called studies in unlearning as well as wayside expressions by a born Searcher.

Finally, there comes to mind something, a certain statement, so complete that no pen or brush can add aught to its significance. It is one of the sayings of Jesus from the Oxyrhynchus "Logia," discovered a few years ago. It is pat to this essay on Searchers: "Let not him who seeketh cease from his search until he find, and when he finds he shall wonder, wondering he shall reach the Kingdom, and when he reaches the Kingdom he shall find—rest."

13. SUCCESS

WHAT is success?
What I saw looked like it.
Imagine a large room, or rather a hall, in an important exhibition building in New York. Around the walls nearly a hundred pictures are hung, mostly on the line, mostly of one size, the companionable size, suitable for an ordinary room. They are all landscapes, sensitive and delicate, tremulous with feeling: you might call them Whispers—whispers about the beauty of the world. The voice of the painter of them is never raised; in undertones he tells you all his eyes have seen, all his heart has felt. You must be patient with these Maeterlinckian utterances; you must look at them kindly and with sympathy; you must not complain that the painter of them is not somebody else; that his vision is monotonous; that he evades the tumble of the world, its burr, its roughness, its virility, and that all he sees is soft and sweet, with a delicacy of perception that Corot would have understood and appreciated. So would Debussy. Look carefully at any of these landscapes, quiet beauties will reveal themselves, and you may smile happily at the memory of this Whistler story. He was showing one of his nocturnes to a friend, "Look and you will see the stars come out," he said.

It is ten o'clock at night. The large room where these pictures are being shown is crowded with people, some seated, some standing, all extremely interested. They look pleased: they are pleased because they are assisting at a new kind of Private View. They arrived at eight: they looked at the pictures, and at nine they listened to a speech, or rather a talk about the pictures and the artist. The Speaker stood behind the grand piano and talked simply, some say pleasantly, on the right way of looking at pictures. He begged his audience to banish their prejudices, not to consider whether they accepted this kind of picture, not to decide at once as to whether they approved of them or not, but to ask themselves what the artist had communicated to them, and if he had succeeded.

The Speaker suggested that every artist writes a letter describing what he has seen of beauty, wonder, and strangeness in the world, and the business of the public is to read his letters quietly and carefully, to study their calligraphy, to weigh their content, and to ask themselves if the pictures add to their knowledge of the beauty, wonder, and strangeness of the world. Briefly—"Do they help us to live?" With such a letter-symbol as guide it is possible to be very catholic, very appreciative of all the different schools of painting; for the world is wide, and the imaginings of man are as various as flowers, or clouds, or soils: with the idea of this letter in mind, it is possible to admire in the same glance Memlinc and Matisse, Gauguin and Kramer.

When the Speaker mentioned the name Kramer, a

tall, ascetic looking, elderly man, with whitened hair and heightened colour, standing in the doorway, tried ineffectually to hide himself behind the curtains. He was Edward Adam Kramer, the artist, in whose honour, this symposium was being held: it was the first time, I think, that he has heard his name mentioned in public. No wonder he felt lonely and conspicuous: probably he was immensely pleased.

The Speaker proceeded to compare the pictures to poems. He remarked that he had amused himself by choosing poems, or snatches of poems, to suit the pictures. Then pointing to one of them he murmured,

> Full many a glorious morning have I seen
> Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
> Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy.

Later in the evening a lady, a stranger, grasped his hand and said, "You gave us a beautiful talk, and I can guess who was the author of that lovely little poem you quoted." The Speaker smiled an interrogation, and the lady said archly, "You, of course." "Wrong," replied the Speaker, "it is by Shakespeare."

When the Speaker had finished, a Musician seated himself at the piano and made music illustrative of the pictures. He was a trained executant with feeling and power, and as he played dreamily, with here and there a stronger note, as in the pictures; and here and there a wandering off into recesses where

lurked whispered harmonies, and motifs interchangeable between music and painting, the listeners felt, in the melodious silence, that the two arts had mingled, and that they were helping and amplifying each other. And the Singer who followed sang songs that sang themselves into the pictures. Can you wonder that we said one to another, "This is the right way to present pictures. The new year is beginning well."

Each guest was given a pamphlet containing a catalogue of Kramer's pictures, and two essays by admirers, reprinted from two journals. The longer of the two began prettily, thus—"Saint-Beuve liked to play with the sage fancy of a temple to the unarrived, the misunderstood, the neglected, a shrine —*aux artistes qui n'ont pas brillé, aux amants qui n'ont pas aimé, a cette élite infinie que ne visiterent jamais l'occasion, le bonheur ou la gloire.*" "To the artists who have never shone, to the lovers who have never loved, to that infinite class whom opportunity, success, and glory have never visited."

This quotation was followed by a description of this artist who has had no success—and now has it.

Born in the business section of New York, son of a merchant tailor, his mother and father believed in their dreamy artist son and sent him to Munich and Paris to study. Teaching rolled off him, leaving him high, dry, bewildered—and himself. As he is now, so was he then—a lyrist, a connoisseur in delicacy, a one-string romanticist. Benjamin Constant, a wise man, told him bluntly to throw over realism, and to be himself. Himself Edward Adam

Kramer has been ever since. His is a curious case. He has not avoided the work of other artists. Far from it. He told me that for years he has not missed seeing an exhibition; but what he has seen has had no effect upon his work. The most it has done has been to make him get more music from his own string.

So I suppose an artist would work if he lived all his life on a Robinson Crusoe island. Mr. Kramer's island is an upper room in the Bronx, allotted to him by his kind brother, who is carrying on the family tailoring business. In that bare upper room he has produced his lyrics in colour, without encouragement from the public, without encouragement from the dealers. For a quarter of a century he has continued in his quiet way, not entirely without success, for I believe he sold a picture, perhaps two, at the Armory Show (fancy that), and a few friends who have believed in him have purchased a few of his pictures, for what they could afford. But what he sold was the mite of a living wage.

Yet he has not been without encouragement. Certain artists and connoisseurs, just a few, have always believed in him, and they felt that this modest, single-minded artist should be given his chance.

Poets, in a group, have expressed their admiration of Edwin Arlington Robinson. Artists, in a group, have expressed their admiration of Edward Adam Kramer, and weary of dissensions, the public, looking on at this spectacle of confraternity, is conscious of confidence, is encouraged, and is buying Robinson's Poems and Kramer's Pictures. Into a world

of discord behold harmony, fellow feeling, and loving kindness have been introduced.
What is success?
Ask Robinson Crusoe of the Bronx.

14. PROPAGANDA

SAID the Illustrator, "I'm tired of illustrating. I'll give it a rest for a year. I'll paint. I have views about subjects."

He glanced toward the Painter as if to challenge him; then his eyes roamed over the unsold pictures that were grouped about the studio. They are very attractive—mysterious figures doing nothing gracefully in a shimmery atmosphere of radiant colour. The Painter is modest about them, and he seems quite unable to distinguish between those that are good and those that are less good.

The Illustrator examined the pictures carefully. He was complimentary, of course; but a question that he addressed to the Painter was revealing; "Don't you ever want to be more definite?" he asked.

The Painter, who thinks slowly, replied, after a pause, "No, I think not."

"When a man," said the Illustrator, "has been making half a dozen drawings per week for stories and articles for three years, he begins to understand the difference between life-land and dream-land. I want to get into my painting the life-communicating quality that you find in Michelangelo, and Hogarth, in Hals and Rubens. Don't smile, that's my aim, my forlorn hope. I want action, not repose; subject, not sensitiveness: I feel with Robert Louis Steven-

son when he said that there is more latent life, more of the coiled spring in the sleeping dog, about a recumbent figure of Michelangelo's than about the most excited Greek statues. I don't mean to paint for myself—everybody's doing that. I want to interest the minds of the people, not to titillate their emotions. Do you know, I think that I divide artists into two classes—those who paint for themselves and those who paint for the world."

"It often happens," said the Painter, "that an artist or a writer best helps the world by being himself. People are more bored by sermons than by self-expression."

"That may be so," said the Illustrator; "G. F. Watts used to bore me with his sermons in paint, but when I was last in London I couldn't help feeling what a tremendous gift to the world are those pictures by him at the Tate Gallery. They seem so eternal, compared with the temporary expressions of art for art's sake. I take off my hat to 'For He Had Great Possessions,' 'Hope,' 'The Minotaur,' and 'Sic Transit.' He painted for the world. Raemaekers is a world artist, too. How trivial the work of other war illustrators seems compared to what he did. Do you remember his water colour called 'The Adoration of the Magi'—the Kaiser, the Austrian Emperor, and the Sultan offering weapons of destruction to the Child? That was terrible, wonderful—the most awful lay sermon of the war. I begged Raemaekers to paint it, to convert it into a large oil picture. And I wish he would paint a companion picture, 'The Child Triumphant.'

I'm keen now about Sermons in Paint, I'm all for art as propaganda."

"You've changed a good deal since you went to France."

"Yes, and more still since I returned home. I've seen things; I've seen everything, and the contrast between Over There, and 3,000 miles away, Here, fires me to paint all manner of impossibilities; but each picture will say the same thing—the words, Never Again. Certain people in this country, who haven't the least conception of what war really is, are now talking glibly about the next war. That makes me see red, for I know what war is, and I want to shock people into such a knowledge of its horrors that every man, woman, and child will cry, 'Never Again.' I've got books of sketches, and yet I haven't begun one picture. The scheme is so vast, the pictures must be co-ordinated, they must shout their message. Yes, I'm a propagandist, and my message to the world is proclaiming the colossal folly and wickedness of war. The very word ought to be banished from the language. I should like every one of my pictures to carry the dire message of that epochal work by Franz Stück which he called 'War.'"

"I'm glad that you've given up illustrating," said the Painter.

"Why?"

"Oh, merely because I think that it has become contemptible. An illustration should amplify the text, should tell us something about the characters and episodes that the author has not made plain.

Most modern illustrations merely repeat what the author has said. When we are told in the text that John takes Jane's hand under the table, and Papa, noticing that something untoward has happened, starts, there is nothing more to say. The episode is fully stated. Yet this is just the kind of thing that the illustrator selects. Moreover, the illustrations in the weekly press are so badly printed that they become an offence. I try not to look at them. The only kind of illustrations that interest me are those that illuminate the text, such as Du Maurier's own drawings for 'Trilby' and Keene's illustrations to 'Alice in Wonderland.' If I were an art editor I would make all the illustrations full pages. There should be a relation between them and the text, but each page should be an independent decorative statement, something that the reader can look at with pleasure even if he does not read a word of the letter press. As for the comic illustrations that crowd most newspapers, they appal me. I admire true caricature as much as anybody, but I resent, oh, how I resent the gross travesties of men and women that do duty in the comic pages of our journals. I can hardly believe that any draftsman can go on day by day repeating the monotony of their vulgarity. Alas, illustration is under a cloud! Editors, paper makers and printers conspire to make the fog thicker. It would take years to educate the public into even a glimmering of what the art of illustration should be. Yet the French can do it—there's Forain and Steinlen. But

those are the last of the old guard. The future looks hopeless."

"Don't despair," said the Illustrator. "It's always darkest before dawn; but I'm glad that I'm free from the illustrating toil for a twelvemonth. But now that I am free I begin to long for service again, for-sending-in-day dates and the paternal eye of the editor. Don't you fellows who paint your dreams miss the controlling and compelling force that the Italians had in the church, Velasquez in his king, Watts in humanity and Raemaekers in his righteous anger? You have nobody over you but your own whims. My controlling and compelling force in these war pictures I'm going to paint is the 'Never Again' idea. They're going to be blatant propaganda. Through this year of strenuous work I cast from me absolutely all traffic with beauty and art for art's sake. I'm going to be a fierce and relentless propagandist."

Just then the Painter's pretty sister, a charming apparition, entered the studio with an armful of those orange-red and white wild flowers called Butterfly weed and Queen's Lace. She arranged them in a posy, the nodding gleams of the orange-red and white, smiling above her head.

"Stay so for a minute, please, please," shouted the Illustrator, and began to make an excited sketch.

The Painter smiled. "Propaganda," he murmured, "but the propaganda of beauty."

Watching, he smiled again.

15. DOLLS AND A MAN

IT might seem that there is little alliance between Dolls and John D. Rockefeller: between Leon Bakst and Paul Manship: between the Russian Ballet and a severe, sensitive and ruthless bust. I am prepared to admit that the only alliance may be in my consciousness, and that it lodged there through the chances of modern life, through the adventitious importance of a visit I made one afternoon to a gallery to see the Manship bust of Rockefeller, and to another gallery to see the Bakst dolls.

To be precise I saw the Manship bust first. It spoke of silence, mystery, and a pathetic questioning. Then I went to the Bakst water colours. They chattered of colours, invention, skill, irony, and the variegated and noisy life of the moment. They enlivened, they cheered, as vital art, done with brevity and distinction, always does; and yet while I was being titillated by Bakst I could not get the Manship sobriety out of my mind. It floated there: so when I had finished with the Dolls I returned to the Bust, to find that I was even more impressed than when I had first seen it earlier in the afternoon. Since then there has passed through my consciousness a moving picture of those lively Dolls pirouetting and posturing around that silent, indifferent, enigmatic Bust. Of such toys we make our joys.

Paul Manship is a sculptor whose work, in my journeyings about America, has always attracted and held me—his "Dancer and Gazelles," his "Playfulness," his "Three Weeks Old Baby" at the Metropolitan Museum, so modern yet so suggestive of ancient China (merely the unity of art), and I have said to myself—"Here is a man to write about some day. He is a child of the ages; he has absorbed the best of Egypt, archaic Greece, Donatello, those Masters of the Renaissance whose very names are like flowers, and the Frenchmen from Houdon to Rodin, and yet he has remained firmly himself."

Manship's note is severe charm: he has neither rhetoric nor sentiment: his austere groups which have the rhythmic playfulness of gods rather than of men, also possess the rare and essential quality of seeming as if they apply not to a year, but to a century.

It is not possible to describe the effect on me of Manship's bust of John D. Rockefeller enthroned in that quiet room, against a background of old tapestry, with nothing else there but two or three old pictures. But I will say this, so as to present my opinion of this work of art quite clearly. I believe that, at any rate since Augustus Saint Gaudens, and perhaps he never did the equal of this, there has been no work in American sculpture so remarkable. The sculptor has done something that one would have thought was impossible: he has carved from marble a realistic representation of an elderly man and made of it a work of art. There can be no doubt about that. Technically it is

exquisitely wrought—the hair, the sagging neck, the clean-cut alert head, the long-drawn-down upper lip are carved and modelled by a master. And he has used with discretion—colour, in a yellowy stain to the marble, and soft yet salient tints in the eyes. But this is not all. He has given to this bust the "something more" that words cannot describe. You remember that passage wherein Walter Pater allows himself to wonder how Leonardo da Vinci experienced the last curiosity. That is what I see in the questioning eyes, and in the raised brows, crinkling an inquiry: in all the arrested moment in the life of this masterful man here presented. Of what is he thinking? This is how I read his look: this is what he seems to be saying—"I have handled this world with consistent skill. I have met comprehension with greater comprehension, and cunning with greater cunning; and now I look into the future, calm, watchful, waiting, unafraid, without fear and without any amazement."

Then the dolls. There are 30 of them smirking gaily and ironically from the walls, all kinds, all conditions, each superbly drawn and beautifully coloured, each with its own character and personality, each alive and alert as if challenging man to deny that they are less real than the toys which he calls men and women. Bakst designed these dolls for Goldoni's 1850 Neapolitan comedy with music by Rossini called "La Boutique Fantasque" or "The Doll Shop."

As all the world knows, Leon Bakst, born at Petrograd, designer, decorator, painter, stands out as pro-

tagonist in the modern movement of stage scenery and decoration; as the originator of the "Bakst colour schemes"; and as one of the forces, behind the curtain, of the Russian Ballet. I am not a Russian Ballet enthusiast. I have seen it (to me one is like another) in Paris, in London, and in New York, and always with a similar experience. In the first act delight and wonder at the wealth of colour and design, the swift changes and the lovely phantasmagorias; then gradually a lessening of interest because there was no mental stimulus or interest. In the second act, semi-somnolence, relieved by flashes of interest in new combinations of colour or grouping: in the third act complete somnolence. But in the Bakst designs, in his illustrations for "The Doll Shop," "The Good Humoured Ladies," "Sadko," "The Sleeping Beauty"; in his decorations for "L'aprés-midi d'un faune," "Daphnis and Chlöe," and "Pisanella," I found no tedium, because he is a great draftsman, colourist and designer, with an invention that never flags and is ever fresh.

Bakst can do anything in the path he has marked out, but I think he is happiest with his dolls. The eternal child in him plays with these creations of a child world, these actualities on paper, as Lewis Carroll played with them in print. "A Rich Doll with a Broom," "A Doll of the People," "An American Girl Doll," "A Russian Boy Doll" pattered along by my side as I made my way back to the room where Paul Manship's bust of John D. Rockefeller reposes.

All the world seemed dolls and toys—even this, even

this wonderful bust, and lingering there in the quietness I thought of that poem by Coventry Patmore called "The Toys"—how he had dismissed his little son for some fault "with hard words and unkissed"; and how later, regretful and repentant, he visited his bed—

> And I, with moan,
> Kissing away his tears, left others of my own;
> For, on a table drawn beside his head,
> He had put within his reach,
> A box of counters and a red-veined stone,
> A piece of glass abraded by the beach,
> And six or seven shells,
> A bottle with blue bells,
> And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
> To comfort his sad heart.

Toys—dolls—and a man!

16. WATER COLOUR

"WON'T you give us a talk on water colour?" said the Director. "You seem to have an affection for that branch of art."

I smiled. "Affection is halfway to knowledge," I said. "Yes, I like your word 'talk.' It's less frightening than 'lecture'; a talk can amble down bypaths; a lecture must keep to the highroad."

As I walked home I reviewed my knowledge of the subject, saying to myself—"I'll arrange it all pat in my mind, and tonight I'll inscribe the heads of my talk on a post card."

Thus I reflected—Water colour, like angling, is a gentle art. The English love it, and they have been most faithful to the gentle art of water colour. Nowhere has it been so highly esteemed as in England. For more than a century the exhibitions of the Old Water Colour Society have been the biannual attraction to a number of quiet, cultured people, many of whom belong to that class which has been described as "the rectory public." They have been brought up on English water colours: they adore these quiet transcripts of the countryside: they call them water colour drawings, and they have an aversion, amounting sometimes to anger, for the modern form of the art known as water colour painting. Over the tea table they have been known

to sigh, to shake their well-attired and wise heads, and to say that the modern dashing belligerent on-rush of colour and contrast, known as water colour painting, is an enemy of the suave and pacific art of water colour drawing. They lament that the art of water colour drawing, born and bred in England, traditionally English, has been seized upon by bril-liant buccaneers and made universal.

Now, you perceive that I had settled upon the two chief heads of my post-card synopsis—(I) Water Colour Drawing, (II) Water Colour Painting, one beginning in the Eighteenth Century with Paul Sandby, Alexander and John Cozens, etc., the other flashed upon the world by Turner in his latter years, and in modern times by Winslow Homer, Brabazon, Sargent, Dodge Macknight and others.

Although Englishmen have called water colour drawing the traditional British art, it was, of course, practised long ago. Almost all the great masters—Claude, Rembrandt, Dürer, Rubens, etc. —have used water colour for their sketches, have commandeered body colour, and employed ingenious methods and tricks—transparent washes, one over the other, the sponge, the scratch, the bath, any-thing so long as the effect was obtained, practices in which Turner was supreme. Water colour opens an avenue of freedom. Could the water colours of the great masters be exposed in a vast hall, the world would be astonished at the intimacy and freshness of the work done by these important per-sonages when nobody was looking.

It was England that gave to the water colour draw-

ing its tender beauty, its unsophisticated familiarity, and fostered it into a national art. "Girtin opened the gates and Turner entered in." But it began in England before Girtin's time; it began with the topographical drawing. Ill-paid drawing masters were the pioneers. In the early Eighteenth Century it became the fashion for the landed gentry to have pictures made of their country estates; in many cases a shaggy, beauty-loving drawing master was an appendage of the demesne like a farm bailiff or a master of the kennel.

When the artist had made a careful drawing of the castle or the dower-house, what more natural than that he should indicate the sky with a wash of blue, and the foreground with a wash of buff. Finding how attractive the drawing became with these flushes of colour, gradually he began to use nature, instead of a gentleman's seat, as his main motive, and he soon realised what an important part the paper itself could be made to play. A single sweep of the brush, a blot, a splash, here and there, and a rough blue paper would assume the look of a sea, or a feathery sky. So the art of water colour drawing began. It advanced under the skill of men of talent, like Paul Sandby; and under the inspiration of men of genius, like Alexander and John Cozens, de Wint, Cotman; on, on, till Girtin threw open the gates and Turner entered in.

Turner united in himself the two methods—the water colour drawing and the water colour painting—and he did them better than anybody else because he was a man of genius. Turner's later water

colour paintings have never been excelled; he showed the way, and all that has been done since may be said to date from him. With one exception —Winslow Homer. His oils have the rare quality of independence; he derives from nobody. For vigour, force, and a fierce joy in the pomp and power of nature his water colours stand alone. These are water colour paintings. The temperament of Winslow Homer had nothing in common with the delicate and intimate art of English water colour drawing. That is like a whisper by Maeterlinck. Winslow Homer's water colours are akin to a heroic passage in Shakespeare.

John S. Sargent's water colours also stand alone. They are the recreations of a portrait painter, the expression of his genius in holiday mood—the things he wanted to do, and loved to do. And chiefly in private collections, gathered in by collectors who "know," struggled for, are the water colour paintings by Dodge Macknight, who will one day be universally recognised as a great artist.

And in far-off England, in public galleries, and in the homes of connoisseurs who "know," may be seen the water colour paintings of Hercules Brabazon Brabazon. He was an old man when his friend John S. Sargent persuaded him to hold an exhibition. He demurred; he had never exhibited a picture throughout his long life; he was persuaded, the exhibition was held, and he at once stepped into the proud position of the first of English water colour painters. He held it to the end. No one challenged it. A Brabazon water colour stood out as the sym-

bol of something extraordinarily fresh, vibrant, bright and subtle.

He stands as the type of the perfectly happy artist. A country gentleman, owner of a large estate in Sussex, he handed over the reins of his lands to his nephew, and gave himself up with glee to his two passions—water colour painting and music. He painted for love. He never sold a picture, he never had a studio, he never had an easel; he held his painting board on his knee and rushed off his enthusiasm in gusts, finding a fresh gust with the new nature of each new day. Fame surprised him, bothered him a little; then he forgot all about it in the delight of a new allure of nature.

When I reached home I wrote on a post card:

WATER COLOUR

An intimate art.

Has always been practised.

England made it her own.

Began with the water colour drawing.

Cozens, de Wint, Cotman were masters of the gentle art.

Turner, a pioneer of the vigorous water colour painting.

Winslow Homer, Sargent, Dodge Macknight, Brabazon.

Peroration: Plead for water colour—songs on paper: lyrics, summary and swift.

17. ARCHITECTURE

WHEN we parted at the door of the club, after a long and interesting talk about the right way and the wrong way of buildings and decoration, the Architect said: "Will you lunch with me on Sunday? My house may amuse you."

It did, but I am glad it is his house, not mine. I need in a dwelling-place air, light and space. As a residence, this dim, mediæval building would depress me exceedingly; but belonging to another fellow, I am grateful to the architect for this re-creation of a past day. It is a show place to which I shall resort as often as I am asked.

Imagine a typical New York brown stone house recased in the Gothic manner. As for the inside, it has been torn out; two floors have been converted into one, producing a lofty, baronial hall with high, panelled walls, containing tapestry, Gothic furniture, primitive pictures chosen for their charm, sincerity and decorative frames; and a hearth, with andirons, that would have seemed quite homey to Richard Cœur de Lion. High up at one end of this hall is a gallery; at the rear is the dining room, screened from the street by Fourteenth Century stained glass, and above are the bedrooms, panelled like the rest of the house, dim, decorated with crests, and adorned with beautiful chairs that are quite

uncomfortable when sat upon. The baby's cradle (with a very nice Twentieth Century baby) might have slipped out of Ghirlandaio's fresco of the "Birth of John the Baptist," at Florence.

The table where we had luncheon had done service centuries ago in the refectory of a monastery; but the turkey was the best that Rhode Island could produce. Halfway through the dinner, I laid down my knife and fork, and said, "I can think of nothing but this house. You Americans are a strange race! You raise public buildings that are the wonder of the modern world; you invent machines that are almost human; you scatter labor-saving devices throughout the continent; you are the apostles of efficiency and utility; your country is in its spring-time; and yet, more than any other nation, you hanker for the ripe, the overripe fruits of a past age. You pretend to be Twentieth Century pioneers, but at heart you are wedded to conformity and compromise. Look at this house!"

"I rather like it," said the Architect. "But if you want modernity there is the Flat Iron Building."

"Ah, there you had to meet a new condition, and you met it with genius, as you have met the transit problem in New York. But unless you are forced into a new path, you glide back into the past. I quite admit that modern architecture in America is the finest in the world. Wherever I go I am elated by your state houses and public buildings. New York is crowded with superb banks and trust company buildings, and in my journeyings I have again and again come across public edifices in remote

towns so fine that I have stopped the motor for the mere pleasure of looking at them. They are a joy to the eye, but——"

"McKim, Mead & White," interposed the Architect.

"Yes. If ever any firm of architects deserve the appellation of genius, it is McKim, Mead & White. Their influence throughout America has been colossal, universal and always in the direction of fine work and purity of style, but——"

"There is always a but," said the Architect. "I suppose you accuse them of conformity and compromise."

"Undoubtedly, but it is conformity of the very finest kind. They are rooted and grounded in the architecture of the classic age of Greece; but, like Saint Gaudens in sculpture, they have given to classicism a raiment of morning freshness. The chief fault I have to find with almost all their buildings is that the light of day is allowed only to filter faintly into their interiors. The exteriors are always beautiful."

"So you divide up modern American architecture into the McKim variety, the Skyscraper variety, and the Eclectic variety, exampled by—my house."

I assented half-heartedly and with a tremor of apology.

To relieve my anxiety the Architect addressed a pointed question to me. "Which do you think are the finest modern buildings in America?"

This is the kind of question I delight in answering. "The three finest buildings in Washington, in my

opinion, are the new Lincoln Memorial, classical and exquisite; the Pan-American Building, noble and symmetrical; and the Masonic Temple, the completest expression of symbolism in architecture that I have ever seen.

"Of course," I continued, "you know which is the finest building in New York. It is entirely modern: it arose from the cause that all great buildings have arisen from; it arose from a definite demand; it met the case; it was built not to rival past beauty, but to meet a want of the present day, and, by a miracle, or by sheer knowledge and artistic 'flair,' it is entirely beautiful. I need hardly say that I refer to Cass Gilbert's Woolworth Building."

The Architect opened the stained glass window and inhaled a deep breath of fresh air.

"Believe me, I am quite serious," I said. "The Woolworth Building is the finest product of American architecture. It is an absolute expression of the day. Moreover, it is a utility building which has been wrought into beauty. It has been called, I believe, the 'Cathedral of Commerce.'

"Now, turn your mind for a moment to the new cathedral that is rising, in pomp and splendour, on Morningside Heights. What is it? Like your house, it is a mere conglomeration of glorious details of the past welded together at great cost, magnificence piled upon magnificence. No mind works through it, no simple intelligence directs it, and it does not represent in the slightest degree the effort and aspiration of New York in the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. The Woolworth Building

does. Do you know what I should do if I were an autocrat?"

The Architect drummed on his monastery refectory table, and vaguely shook his head.

"I should scrap the new cathedral on Morningside Heights as a mere echo of the past, and I should erect in its place a Woolworth Building, a real cathedral—a triumphant example of the skill and ideals of the present moment, which is what posterity will ask of us, which you would give posterity freely, gladly, if you were not hypnotised by the past.

"Why should a Cathedral of Commerce be absolutely characteristic of modern America, and a Cathedral of Worship entirely uncharacteristic?"

18. PRACTICAL ART

THE eleventh annual convention of The American Federation of Arts closed with a dinner —and speeches.

The speeches were excellent. Practical and informing, they kept tolerably well to the subject of the symposium, which was how to make American design, and the American Industrial arts, "first in the world."

Craftsmen, men and women—makers of textiles, furniture, stained glass, ironwork, costumes—spoke, and there was quite a proper feeling shown that the time had come for Industrial Art to be placed on an equal footing with Fine Art. Some asserted that Industrial Art is quite as fine as Fine Art. One speaker, the editor of *The Upholsterer,* made a hit: he struck out a phrase that won instant applause. Fumbling, as we all do, with such terms as Industrial Art, Applied Art, the Arts of Design in their relation to Manufacturers, suddenly he used the words—Practical Art. The audience applauded. That is precisely the right term. There is Fine Art and there is Practical Art.

The use of that term cleared my mind, gave the designers and makers of practical art things a position as definite as the makers of pictures; and it also had the effect of inclining me to be somewhat im-

patient with the speeches. Excellent though they were, gradually they seemed to be rather like arranging the furniture and decoration of the various rooms of a house before the house is built. The question in my mind was—how can you expect the public to be interested in Practical Art if, in the eyes of the public, you treat it as a kind of Cinderella, always kept in the background, while Fine Art struts abroad in the light, receiving all the honour and favour? None of the speakers struck this broad, big note; they were overmuch concerned with the details of their particular crafts, and they all had so much to say that no opportunity was given to me of delivering the speech which I was tremulously eager to launch upon the assembly. But I made the speech as I walked home, and it ran something like this:

"Ladies and gentlemen, interested in Practical Art, it occurs to me to ask why I am not able, tomorrow morning, to walk into a building in New York and there see the picked specimens, the prize examples of articles made in the twentieth century which have been so eloquently described this evening. In plain words, why is there not in this city, and in other cities, a Museum of Practical Art?

"I can see pictures that have been painted in the twentieth century, although not over many of them, and I can see endless pictures painted in past centuries, and innumerable examples of Practical Art, made in old Europe, rare and costly, and only obtainable by the very wealthy. But the Practical Art of today is neglected. Where, in any country,

can you see in an Exhibition Hall the best chair, table, couch, wall paper, rug, lamp made in the twentieth century? Nowhere. Such things are not considered suitable for a Museum. Yet these are the very things for which there is a continuous demand. Few persons are in the position to buy Fine Art; all persons, at some time or other of their lives, are buyers of Practical Art, and all are faced with the same difficulty. The Museums give them no guidance. They rarely show specimens of the best craftmanship of our own day, carefully chosen, carefully catalogued, with the names of the designers and makers, articles adapted to the needs of the time in which we live. The shops, following the Museums, repeat the models of past centuries, and most householders think they have earned the right to be called artistic when they have filled their rooms with so-called period furniture and decorations.

"You blame the people for not being interested in the Practical Art of the twentieth century. How can the public be interested in something which you never show them? What you manufacturers produce passes from your stock rooms to stores where designs, whether they be good or bad, are lost in the multitude of objects. The salesman is indifferent. Good and bad are one to him. He is there to sell.

"Why are paintings, for which there is no particular demand, always honoured? Why are chairs, tables, electric light fittings and radiators, for which there is always a demand, never honoured? Is it because

we are snobs, eager to pet Fine Art, prone to snub Practical Art? Why is there not a yearly salon of the Practical Art of the day, and a permanent museum for the best pieces? Why should not prizes—medals and money—be given for the best examples of Practical Art, as for paintings? It is useless to bewail the arrogance of Fine Art practitioners. Show the public that you makers of Practical Art are in earnest, proud of the work you are doing, eager to have it esteemed, and the public will respond. Be pleased with your own day: be fiercely favourable to its products. Make the twentieth century glorious.

"One of the speakers has referred to a rule made when the Victoria and Albert Museum, in London, was founded. The Board of Trustees announced that nothing made during the past fifty years should be exhibited. That, I submit, is an idiotic and cowardly rule. If the directors of a museum are afraid to determine what is good, and what is bad, among the craft works of their own time, they should resign. Why, they are chosen because they are arbiters of taste. Unfortunately, this rule is also implicit in American museums. What is the result? The average householder of today has no guide.

"In New York, the Metropolitan Museum does not help him. Of what use to the ordinary man is the sight of an Empire couch, or a Chippendale chair, each of which cost more than the entire sum he has to expend on furnishing? Get your museum of Contemporary Practical Art established. Make it

attractive; make it the meeting place of designer, manufacturer, and public.

"I have just used the word attractive. These museums of Fine and Practical Art must be made attractive, and they must be open in the evening. Have you ever asked yourselves why, in the evenings, the only leisure time that the average person has, the museums are closed? A quarter of a century hence people will be astonished at our present custom of closing museums at 5 in the afternoon, and at their lack of the ordinary social attractions.

"The Museum of the Future will be a Palace of Art, a Palace of Delight: it will be so humanised that a family, on the occasion of a festival or a treat, will say, naturally—'Oh, let's go to the Museum.' It will be placed in a park: there will be a lake there, and boating and walks: there will be music and dancing, and plays: there will be cheerful dining and refreshment rooms: there will be open colonnades for the display of sculpture; there will be flowers and trees in the grounds, and the centre of all this happy social activity will be the halls and lecture rooms of Fine and Practical Art, so well arranged, so well thought out, so harmonious that the practical things will be fine, and the fine things will be practical. That is my peep into the Future.

"I thank you."

PART II

THE ART OF TOMORROW

1. A TOMORROW PICTURE

SOME bemoan the Art of Tomorrow, which has disturbed the Twentieth Century, others extol it—that is the way of the world. This revolution did not begin precisely as the clocks chimed midnight of 1899. For years it had been germinating. Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin were all Nineteenth Century men, so was Georges Seurat; and Picasso (cubist) and Matisse (elementalist) were advancing before the Twentieth Century dawned. But the art historian who loves order, and delights in epochs, has decided that the new movement in art shall be pigeonholed as belonging to the Twentieth Century.

The new movement is neither very good nor very wicked, but it is on the side of the angels, because it belongs to growth. Extremists have debased it, and the horde of followers who are always on the scent for short cuts to notoriety have made it vulgar. But in spite of these disadvantages, the new movement remains vital, an opening avenue, because, *au fond*, it is a movement toward simplicity: it is an attempt to reach the heart of things by discarding the superfluities that follow the pursuit of art as

representation: it is an attempt to unbare essentials in the intuitive search for expression.

Representation versus Expression—the actual lion as seen by Landseer versus the lion-like quality of the lion as expressed in a bas-relief by an ancient Assyrian scúlptor. The actual horse, the actual tree versus the horsiness of the horse and the tree-iness of the tree. In a word, the difference between the art of West and East.

The new movement in art in the West simply means that there has been a throw-back to the immemorial art of the East. Add to it colour, frank, fine colour, rhythm, with a fierce quest for elementalism, and you have, according to your temperament and training, something that is either "The Purification of Painting" or "An Insult to Our Intelligence."

The new is not better than the old. Its value is that it is an expression of the time in which we live. The superiority of the new over the old, or the old over the new lies in the calibre of the artist. If he be a man of genius, or approaching genius, he should be able to convince us that his way was right for him. A landscape by Giovanni Bellini, such a one as "St. Francis," in Mr. Frick's collection, is not worse nor better than a landscape by Constable, although Constable gives a much more faithful representation of nature. It is different. Bellini's landscape is better because he was a greater man than Constable. Neither is a picture by Bastien Lepage, who may be called the last of the old, better

than a picture by Augustus John, who may be called the first of the new.

These two men may be taken as types of the two schools of Representation and Expression. Each is an outstanding figure, and the art of each is informed with that sanity which is dear to the heart of the historian. Neither is extreme, and yet neither has wavered from his conception of the thing seen. But there is this difference between them. Bastien Lepage painted his last picture in 1884; Augustus John is now at the most interesting stage of his career. He is the significant figure in British art, and although he has not yet been elected a member of the Royal Academy (the President should go to him with hat in his hand), Augustus John has reached that rare distinction of being as popular with the public as with the connoisseur.

To say that Bastien Lepage is the last of the old "representation" method of painting, and Augustus John the first of the new "expression" method of painting may not be academically correct, but 'twill serve. It doubly serves because now there is an excellent opportunity of comparing and contrasting remarkable pictures by Bastien Lepage and Augustus John. If you stand in Room 21 of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, you will see on the wall facing you "Joan of Arc," by Bastien Lepage, painted in 1879; then turn your eyes a little to the left, look through the doorway, and you will see Augustus John's "The Way Down to the Sea," painted in 1915. These two pictures do not coalesce. Why should they? They are statements of two

periods in art, by two remarkable men, and it is our place to attune ourselves to accepting them as we accepted the automobile when it took the place of the family barouche.

The "Joan of Arc" is a large green picture, once, no doubt, a very lively green, but now dulled by 40 years of exposure. The important part of the picture is the figure of Joan, a masterly statement of tense idealism, vigorously drawn. The head and the eyes are really the whole picture. All the rest is accessory—unwanted. But in Bastien's day—the period of Salon triumphs and huge competitive canvases—a painter had to tell his whole story, so we are given, in the background, vaporous, unconvincing representations of St. Michael and St. Catherine and a peasant's garden at Damvillers, where Bastien lived, nothing omitted, everything set down as it was, even to the arrangement for carding yarn, and the overturned stool. This is the art of representation which has existed in the West for centuries. This garden, painted as it was, is merely dull: it is without any decorative or rhythmical quality: all that matters in the picture is the tense idealism of Joan's face.

When the eyes turn from this to Augustus John's "The Way Down to the Sea," the observer is conscious of a shock, but to the right-minded and receptive it is a pleasurable shock. This blue picture called "The Way Down to the Sea" is unlike anything else in the gallery—indeed, it, and pictures of its kind, should hang in a room by themselves. You cannot put very new wine into very old bottles.

Wherein lie the charm and the abiding interest of John's picture? Because it is a decoration; because it is in the tradition of the East, not of the West; because, if it does not altogether ignore that exacting third dimension called depth, it treats the fetish with a light hand. There is no harm in representation. Great men, such as Velasquez, have done it superbly, to the world's great gain, but when the mediocre painter has so little imagination and temperament that he can do no more than represent facts, you get nothing more than "Washington Crossing the Delaware" or, in a higher degree, Bastien Lepage's garden at Damvillers.

But this Augustus John has something more than the essential decorative quality. It has pure, unworried colour, put on in sweeps of intense delight by one who had visualised the scene beforehand, and knew just what he was going to do. There are four fairly young and very statuesque women garbed in homemade blue, violet and yellow gowns, and a sunburnt, naked child. They stand against the blue sky and the blue sea, and in the foreground are scarce, symbolistic shrubs and flowers like those in pictures by Piero della Francesca.

Some people pause before this picture and snigger. That is because it is not like the "Way Down to the Sea" they know at Atlantic City or Coney Island, at Margate or Yarmouth. This is a dream "Way Down to the Sea," and after the way of dreams, waking or sleeping, it is more convincing than the actual thing. Augustus John saw this scene in his visual imagination; he saw it in terms

of colour and rhythm, and he had the courage, or the natural instinct, to paint what his pictorial imagination saw.

Augustus John was a great draftsman from the first. He came slowly, and with difficulty, to the messy business of loading his canvas with oil colour. He has never quite mastered the business. Probably he does not want to do so. He desires to go his own way and keep his freedom. That way he himself expressed some years ago when he and Orpen had an art school. Again and again he would say to his students, "Draw as well as ever you can and then decorate your drawing with a little colour."

That is what he has done in "The Way Down to the Sea," but the note of colour has become a bugle-call.

2. CEZANNE

IN the cities of Europe and of the United States exasperating little exhibitions are continually bobbing up from the deep traditional waters of art. They are styled Modern, Contemporary, or Revolutionary; but a better title for these sporadic shows is "The Art of Tomorrow."

The casual Philistine derides them, the serious student examines the amazing items attentively; he has his reward. Practice tells him at a glance which of these Art of Tomorrow pictures are insincere, done for effect with the tongue in the cheek, short cuts to notoriety. These may amuse (why should not the serious student be amused?), but having looked, he ignores them. They do not count; they have no art existence. He is content if he distils from one of these exasperating little exhibitions a few vital and significant works that may be classed as serious contributions to the Art of Tomorrow. They are pioneers of the new movement of art—toward freedom.

And so I come to Paul Cézanne, born at Aix in Provence in 1839. For it is from this recluse, from this splendid "failure," from him more than from anyone else, that moderns have learnt the meaning of Freedom in Art.

If the world of art is not yet free, and certainly it is not, the reason is because the world of art is

not yet worthy of freedom. Liberty is not license, and Freedom in Art, as in life, requires stern self-discipline, more rigorous, more self-denying than when art lived and moved entirely under the autocracy of academies and tradition. Some of the practitioners of the Art of Tomorrow are producing vain and vile works because they are not yet worthy of freedom. But a cause is judged, and advances, by the good in it, not by the evil. The unworthy brothers pass out, cease to exist, because of their unworthiness. It is the good that blossoms.

Of the thousands of Freedom pictures that have been painted since the century dawned, it may be said, speaking in the most general way, that Paul Cézanne was the parent, that is, the parent of the idea that binds them together. No doubt Cézanne would be vastly shocked and displeased at the look of some of his many offspring, yet they are born from his long, solitary broodings and reachings-out toward freedom of expression—and to the fourth dimension. He was not always a solitary; for years he was one of a group that worked diligently on the lines which he alone pursued logically and unwaveringly to the end. That was the difference between Cézanne and the brilliant companions of his earlier period—he, he alone, endured to the end as seeing, and always following, something that is invisible.

In those days he was an Impressionist, and he has been described as the boldest spirit in the circle of the Ecole de Batignolles that gathered around Manet. He, like Manet and Camille Pissarro,

eschewed the anecdote, despised the story, glided over the fact in their passionate search for the fleeting effect; but Cézanne's nature was deeper than Manet's or Pissarro's. He sought, and he never desisted from the search, for something more perdurable than the effect; he sought the heart of life, not the gestures.

So we find him, in the plenitude of his powers, retiring to his birthplace, Aix in Provence, where his father was a prosperous banker (Cézanne never lacked money), and there, day after day, month after month, year after year, the world forgetting, by the world forgotten, seeking the truth about art, continually experimenting, never fainting by the way, never reaching his goal, living in a state of "timid savagery." He was virtually a hermit; he never dined out; he never had callers; he was looked at askance by his fellow townsmen as one harmless but "touched," visited occasionally by a friend, M. Bernheim being one, content with learning how to paint what he saw, making such profound utterances as "There is no such thing as line, no such thing as modelling, there are only contrasts."

There was no hardship for Cézanne in this exile. Paris distressed him as London had distressed Wagner, who complained that in London he could not hear the inner memory. Cézanne fled from Paris. "There were within him such profound, such confused desires," says M. Elie Faure, "that the noise about him prevented his hearing them." Paris tortured his "terrible sensibility." His birthplace was kind to him.

How, then, has this strange man influenced the modern art world? By being himself—nothing more. He turned away from the three-decker masterpiece, and paddled out on the waters of art in his own canoe. For him nature only, her face and the face of man and woman, never "the lie of the noble subject."

So, if anyone says to you—"Show me the great works of Cézanne," you can but answer—"There are none." He painted many small landscapes, portraits and still lifes: he was not interested in producing "Masterpieces." His works are not easy to find—Cézanne is not yet as popular as Inness—but the true connoisseur, standing before them, is able to justify the grave words of Renoir—"Cézanne cannot put two touches on a canvas without its being already an achievement." Tentative, bits of the canvas untouched, generally unfinished, scraped, scored with erasures, many times repainted, yet a picture by Cézanne moves and stimulates with a rugged power that few modern pictures possess.

It is difficult to express in words just what that power is. But contrast Monet's "The Church of Vetheuil," with Cézanne's "L'Estaque, a Village Near Marseilles." Examine them carefully and you will understand why the fame of Monet is waning, and the fame of Cézanne is waxing. Monet's picture is the blare of a cornet, Cézanne's is the wail of a violin.

After his retirement to Aix Cézanne was indifferent to the fate of his pictures, when once his ardour had expressed itself on them. It is said that on

occasions he would leave them in the fields and tramp home meditating a fresh, splendid failure. But others, a few, saw their value. Père Tanguy and Vollard, those two French dealers of genius, bought stacks of them for trifles. Great has been the pecuniary reward of their foresight. And there were three days in Paris, in 1899, at Choquets' sale at Petit's, when purchasers fought for Cézanne's best things. He was then 60. He had arrived. Little he cared. Five years later, 31 of his works were exposed at the Salon.

Little he cared. He had already written his epitaph, summed up his toiling life, that day when he said, querulously, to a friend—"I am the primitive of the way that I have discovered."

3. FREEDOM

SAID I to the Mural Painter—"We have had many art talks. I have enjoyed what you have said, I have enjoyed what I have said, for nothing clears the understanding more than what they call in Scotland—'a guid crack'; but best of all I appreciate and remember your flashes at truth. Sometimes they are against your mundane convictions (pooh! pooh! what are convictions to one who wants to grow, and who is growing?); but I take these flashes to be the real you darting out; accepting them bravely, even if the dart assails and hurts your equanimity."

The Mural Painter sat up. "What have I done now? Explain! What have I said?"

"Please wait," said I. "There is something to be investigated and explained first. When I have finished I'll repeat two of your flashes at truth, and then leave you to be glad, or to be angry, at the self-revelation, whichever you like. But I'll tell you when it was you shot them forth. One was when you were talking about the mural paintings by Arthur B. Davies; the other leapt out at the loan exhibition of his works."

"Whatever did I say?" cried the Mural Painter.

"You said it in front of that remarkable decoration by Davies, called 'The Dawning.'"

"But I don't like it!" shouted the Mural Painter.
"Wait, pray wait! Just let me say how fortunate I am in being a stranger in America."
"Why? Don't you like the Land of the Free?"
"Entirely. Let me explain. I am fortunate, because I come here with an absolutely fresh mind. Everything is new to me. I have no parti pris, no predilections. I am virgin soil. Take the case of Arthur B. Davies. I gather that he is one of your most eminent, individual artists; that he is of the small class who grow; that he saw the virtue of that branch of post-impressionism called cubism, that he has practised it; and I find that his divagations, or growth, as I call it, have been received with immense respect by the American critics, which is much to their credit, although several academic heads have been sadly wagged. Davies is a fact in American art, a fact that is as lively as an electron or wireless; lively electrons, wireless and Davies are potential, pregnant, and any day may disclose something new.
"Now do you begin to understand why I called myself fortunate? A year ago I knew nothing about Davies. The day before yesterday I saw the exhibition of his collected works; yesterday I saw his mural decoration; today I sit here enjoying, hugely enjoying, the image of a new—that is, new to me—artistic personality, one who has made adventures in Freedom, who is perennially young, because he is always on the quest. His picture called 'Adventure' exactly expresses his attitude toward art. Against a hilly background of great beauty two

figures pause, wistfully, in wan delight ere they advance again into the land of adventure, where a figure shines, luring them on to a dream of freedom, yet an awakening freedom. This is a later Davies, later like the symbolistic 'Freshness of the Wounded' and 'Line of Mountains,' two pictures that cannot be dissociated from the titles. These, indeed, are art for life's sake, not art for art's sake.

"Few artists could stand such an unrolling of a life's work. Davies can, because he is frank, a frank adventurer in the best sense; that is, he is always seeking mental food from man as well as from nature. Like Raphael with his master, Perugino, like Turner with his ancestor, Claude, Davies takes his inspiration from where he chooses. I could mention a dozen painters, from Piero della Francesca and Giorgione to Whistler and Fuller, upon whom he has looked. But he does not plagiarise. Like a bee, he sips, passes on to another flower, and the honey is all his own. Such things are but food for his frame. His very beautiful picture called 'Sleep' is Watteau idealised, and Blake would have loved to paint his 'Flume of Destiny' had he been able to draw better.

"Davies is akin to Blake the mystic, and Shelley, the essence of poetry; he is of their family; he walks with them, and with those finer modern spirits of whom Romain Rolland has spoken, through the modern, distracting world.

"But he never closes his eyes: they are always open and the winds blow him secrets. So when Cubism

cut suddenly into the art world, that old Cubism, that old truth (Giovanni di Paolo practised it 450 years ago—450 years before Cézanne and Picasso formulated it), the hour found Arthur B. Davies peering curiously into it. He saw its power, bent it into his intelligence, and he knew that this Cubism, if properly used, was an avenue of Freedom.

"Did you ever read Cézanne on Cubism?" asked I. The Mural Painter signalled a negative.

"Cézanne, that wonderful man whom the academic world insists upon misunderstanding because he declined to paint masterpieces, and was in the habit of casting his pictures away when he had expressed himself upon them, said once to a companion—'Everything in nature is modelled on the lines of the cube, the cone and the cylinder. If you understand how to paint these simple forms you can paint anything. Contrasts and modulations—there you have the secret for drawing and modelling.'

"Cézanne did not tell all to his companion. Davies himself told more to a companion when one day he placed a glass before one of his own early charming pictures, and painted on the glass the significant lines of his picture. 'There,' he said, holding up the glass, 'this skeleton of form contains all the æsthetic emotion suggested by my picture. Now it is released from all extraneous interest, from all sentimental irrelevance.'

"Mr. Duncan Phillips, who tells this story, is unrepentant. He questions the seriousness of his

friend. Well, it is not the first time that a clever man has disdained the truth.

"Arthur B. Davies directed his faith into deeds. At his collected exhibition we saw many of his experiments in Cubism—swift, summary, the chill of mechanics lighted with the warmth of colour. And there is one work, the vast decoration called 'Dawning,' into which he has allied his new knowledge of the geometrical side of art with the old knowledge stored in his vivid, dreamy, inquiring mind. This disturbing, and compelling 'Dawning' fresco, which attracts more and more each time it is seen, should be in a public museum as an example to students, an index finger pointing to the simpler and purer form of mural decoration that must before long replace the old. It is an adventure in Freedom, not a dalliance with the Conventional, a phrase which describes most mural paintings.

"Already this sapling in decoration, this 'Dawning' wall painting, has borne fruit, for it was through this that he was commissioned to decorate an upper room in a house—in his own way. There it is—done; the four walls an ever-increasing delight, mental and æsthetic, Cubism triumphant, because it does not stand alone as in the cold, angular, austere creations of Picasso, but is allied to knowledge, to life. It is mind—and heart.

"And now," said I to the Mural Painter, "you have been very patient. Your waiting is over. Would you like to hear your two darts at truth which I appreciate and remember?"

"As you will."

"You said of Post-Impressionism (in an unguarded moment), 'It has freed me.'
"You said of the 'Dawning' decoration (in an unguarded moment), 'It is only mind.'"

4. A GAUGUIN LANDSCAPE

SUDDENLY I saw the "Red Dog Landscape," and I cried—"Hulloa! what's this?"

It happened thus.

It was in London. I was becoming interested in Gimson furniture, and as I knew that my friend, Maresco Pearce, had acquired some fine pieces for his house in Chelsea, I wrote to him, asking if I might examine them at leisure. He was absent on his military duties, but he gave me permission to roam his house, and to remove the holland swathes from the furniture. Maresco Pearce was glad, I daresay, to encourage a potential Gimsonite. So I roamed this Halsey Ricardo house, delighted with its plan and detail, and in time I reached the dining-room, which contains a Gimson table I particularly wished to see. I saw it later, because, as I entered the room, something intervened. It was as sudden as a flash of sunlight, and as delightful. As the holland swathes covering the table were being removed, my gaze caught the austere, companionable fireplace, and swept upwards to the mantelpiece. Then it was that I exclaimed—"Hulloa! what's this?"

A landscape hanging above the fireplace was the cause of this ejaculation. It gave me an immediate elation—its glowing colour, rich and clean,

its profoundly simple pattern, its majestic planes, its robust air. This picture lighted and dominated the room; and, as I looked, memories of recent landscapes I had seen by "les jeunes" here and in Paris began to flood my memory.

I knew not who had painted this jolly thing, this synthetical sweep of symbolism so much nearer to the heart of nature than mere naked realism, with the articulated hill, of green and rosy rocks, the flat sea, the flat corn, and the alert red dog starting up like a flag. It was plain that the painter, whoever he was, had vision, and an unerring decorative sense. At his bidding the cut corn has assumed a rhythmical pattern that is absolutely right, and the litter of cast clothes, that is right too. All is eloquent of the artist's vision and intention, all is visualised and communicated. Bother words! What joy it was just to look at it. This is the way to encounter art—unexpectedly; and to be immediately enriched, emotionally and mentally, by the sight.

Then I turned away, fixed my eyes resolutely upon the holland swathes, and tried to think who the painter might be. "Lots of little pictures in this manner," I reflected, "have come out of Chelsea, but this is not by any Chelsea man. It is by a master, one who had learnt his job, who was unafraid of a red dog, because he knew that the yellow and the blue called for a dominating red; who knew that a cunning red dog, even if his cousin is in a Noah's Ark, is much more amusing than a red sunshade. But who is he? Who is this

magician, able in grey winter to dazzle me with the splendour of high summer, wrought into a decorative pattern?

I perambulated the room; then impatient of further suspense, peered at the signature—"P. Gauguin, '90."

Well, great moments come to all—even to art critics. To me it was what the late Henry James would call an immense adventure to realise that this landscape was by Paul Gauguin, and painted thirty years ago. Hitherto, when I have tried to apportion the influence of the members of that mighty trio—Cézanne, Van Gogh, and Gauguin—on modern art, I have always felt disposed to omit the name of Gauguin. Not through any lack of fealty to this great modern master. That wall of his pictures at the Grafton Galleries in 1911 is one of the abiding art memories of my life; but I did not feel that these pictures have had much influence on the younger generation. The "Red Dog Landscape" changed my opinion. Look at it! Recall the little revolutionary landscapes that you have seen during the past five or ten years. Here is the parent of them.

Although painted thirty years ago, this Breton vision, which I have taken the liberty of calling the "Red Dog Landscape," will seem to many abominably new, unconventional, unlike the normal vision (a synonym for lazy and obvious), and therefore anathema. But Gauguin was painting to please himself, not to placate a Salon or a Royal Academy jury. He was a born decorator; his

artistic instinct, his sense of pattern and rhythm, were as sure as Whistler's, but more virile. Nature to him was something not to be copied accurately, but to be remembered rhythmically, as we recall and croon a melody. One of his sayings was, "Study your model, and then put her behind a curtain." Mr. Brangwyn, I believe, has uttered a similar sentiment. Gauguin vividly remembered this Breton scene; he had immersed himself in its swing, colour, and pattern. When he painted it, so it came, and that red dog paused defiantly on the green grass because the artist's colour sense insisted upon its presence. Blot it out with your thumb, and the picture is chilly. The red dog is daring, but it is a triumph. When M. Simon Bussy saw it, he read, *"Comme c'est bien rèussi—ce chien rouge."* Many will not like this picture, because "the brown tree" (like the devil, the "brown tree" takes many forms) still dominates the world. Gauguin was neither a Realist nor an Impressionist. He was an Expressionist. We talk glibly about art being nature seen through a temperament, and at once proceed to see it through somebody else's temperament. Gauguin drank from his own glass, and drank deep; he drank deeper after he had severed himself from the contagion of Parisian glasses. The civilisation of Paris desiccated him. His spiritual home was Tahiti. Thither he went, because he had an "immense yearning to become a savage, and create a new world." In Tahiti he wrote, "All I have learnt from others has been an

impediment to me. It is true that I know little, but what I do know is my own."

Like Degas and Chassèriau, Paul Gauguin was a Creole. Born in Paris in 1848, his father a Breton, his mother a native of Peru, young Paul ran away to sea when he was fourteen, and saw the untamed world—its magic, its strangeness, and the glory of its colour. Some years later, his visual imagination dyed in the colour and form of strange lands, he returns to Paris, enters a bank, marries a wife, and has children. Slowly art infects him; he paints on Sundays; the fever deepens; at thirty he turns artist; at thirty-two he exhibits his first picture. Timid at the beginning, inclined to adore Pissarro, soon he breaks away, farther, farther; a time comes when he is impatient with Monet, impatient even with Manet and Degas. His *génie intérieur* cries for something more elemental, something in deeper accord with his fierce dreams of "big, simple mortals and an unspoilt nature." The "great barbarian," the "great child" in him is awaking. When he made his first journey to Martinique, in 1887, it awoke fully. In 1888 came that terrible quarrel with Van Gogh at Arles, followed by a spell in Brittany, when he produced some of his finest work, including the "Red Dog Landscape." Gradually he wearied of civilisation. In 1891 he went to Tahiti. Two years later he returned to Paris. In 1895 he was in Tahiti again, and from that time onward until his death at Dominica, in 1903, Europe was but a place to visit. When chided by Strindberg

for forsaking civilisation, he answered—"Your civilisation is your disease. My barbarism is my restoration to health."

Gauguin could have told us, in short, succinct sentences, the mental processes, following the surge of emotion, that produced the "Red Dog Landscape." His voice is silent. We must read the picture for ourselves. Happily, it does not adorn the walls of a hut in Tahiti. Here it is in Chelsea in the house of an artist, and it is there because Maresco Pearce could not resist its splendour. He saw it in Vollard's window when he was passing through Paris in the autumn of 1912. He wanted the "Red Dog Landscape" badly (who would not?), but decided that he could not afford it, and went his way. Later—he returned to Paris, interviewed Vollard, and bought it. That is the way to acquire a fine picture. The owner adds, "You knew Vollard, I suppose—a formidable chap."

That is so. I have gone into Vollard's shop, bearded the "formidable chap," and come out empty-handed, but dizzy with joy, the quick joy that came when I saw this Gauguin on a sad winter day in Chelsea, and all my world was glad again.

5. GAUGUIN IN MY ANTHOLOGY

I KEEP an Art Anthology. The procedure is simple—merely a little book in which I note down, day by day, or week by week, the works of art that please me specially or inordinately. Against the title of the work are stated the reasons for my preference. In the list there are many erasures. These indicate rejections, discards, works that I have outgrown. A collector, in the abstract, as well as in the concrete, should be judged by his denials more than by his affirmations, as an editor should be judged rather by what he omits than by what he prints.

Gauguin's name appears again and again in my Anthology. The first entry, a whole page, is a dithyramb on the wall of Gauguins that astonished artistic London at the first Post-Impressionist Exhibition, held in the Grafton Galleries in 1911. That wall aroused the extremes of admiration and dislike; and then began the discussion about the recapture of the childlike vision, so real a thing, so arduous a pursuit, which Gauguin sought and found far, far from Paris, in Tahiti.

The second Gauguin entry refers to the purchase, by Professor Sadler of Leeds University, of a group of magnificent Gauguins, including "L'Esprit Veille," "The Garden of Olives," and "Jacob

Wrestling with an Angel," three masterpieces; the entry also describes a visit to Professor Sadler's house, where I saw the Gauguins hanging in a noble room, specially arranged and decorated for them, with white walls and black curtains.

The third entry applauds the "Red Dog Landscape," by Gauguin, at Maresco Pearce's house in London, about which I have already written.

Now we skip to New York, to the two Gauguins I saw at an exhibition. One of them hung at the end of the room. The title is painted on it by Gauguin himself, "Ia Orana Maria," in the Tahitian dialect; the owner of this outstanding picture is Mr. Adolph Lewisohn. Outstanding? Anybody can see that. This is a masterpicture, this direct vision of a glade in a Tahitian forest, where an impulsive religious ceremony is being performed by figures, painted frankly and forcibly, in the Gauguin manner; equally frank and forcible is the colour and line. The foreground girl's red garment sings. In the luscious tropical fruits and flowers the rich episodes of growth from seed-time to ripe harvest are implied. On an adjoining wall was a picture of flowers, an excellent work by a modern. While I was staring at the Gauguin and chuckling, a lady at my side said, "Before I saw this I was admiring those other flowers. Now they look tame."

The other Gauguin is less important, yet very important. It is a glass door in green wood: it is no longer an ordinary door because it is a door from Gauguin's house in Tahiti, and Gauguin has painted a scene on the glass. It is an authentic

Gauguin seen simply, and beautifully designed and drawn.

This door has an interesting history. It was brought from Tahiti by Mr. Somerset Maugham, and he had it by him when he wrote "The Moon and Sixpence." The book does not mention the name of Gauguin. Neither does it attempt to follow all the details of Gauguin's life. Indeed, in instances it carefully camouflages them. The hero of "The Moon and Sixpence" is an Englishman, lives the early part of his life in London, and marries an English girl. Gauguin was a Frenchman, lived the early part of his life in Paris, and married a Dane. Yet the book would not have been written if it had not been for Gauguin. He inspires it. He with Cézanne and Van Gogh, to name but three, are vigorous and unrelenting types of what Bernard Shaw in "The Irrational Knot" calls the "stupendously selfish artist." That is the theme of "The Moon and Sixpence." But this must be said in extenuation. This stupendous selfishness of the artist is not the ordinary selfishness of indulgence: it is the conviction that nothing matters but art. In face of that all else must suffer, wither, and go. Gauguin lived for one thing only; he had one passion only—to express himself in his art. That, as I have said, is the theme of Mr. Maugham's book. It ends as Gauguin ended, and it suggests the intricate question: Does much happiness distributed by a man of genius to the future atone for some unhappiness distributed by him to the present?

Gauguin, besides being a great technician in his art, was also a dreamer who demonstrated his dreams. "All I have learned from others," he said, "has been an impediment to me. I have an immense yearning to become a savage and create a new world." They spoke of him in Paris as "the great barbarian, the great child."

In Tahiti, 3,658 miles by sea from San Francisco, "the great barbarian" realised his dreams. There he wrote that strange prose poem called "Noa-Noa." Gauguin's influence as a painter has been enormous. The parent of the frank, unworried picture, simple and strong in colour, broad and elemental in design, is Gauguin.

His influence persists. But yesterday I saw a one-man show fresh and stimulating; and although the artist had not plagiarised, his vision would not have been possible had it not been for the ampler vision of that pioneer toward simplicity, that great child, Paul Gauguin, whose desire was for big, simple mortals and an unspoilt nature, who cried for the moon, and who never, for most of his pictures, got even a sixpence.

6. VAN GOGH

SOME years ago, probably in 1909, I received for review Meier-Graefe's two vast volumes on "Modern Art." A fine time I had reading this erudite exposition of the views of the learned and lively author, German in his thoroughness, German in his arrogance, yet, in spite of everything, the most informative, the most provocative, and—let me be honest—the best book on Modern Art.

A fine time I had reviewing it, a bewildering time, for there is a challenge on every page. Often the author says things that make me want to chasten him, and occasionally he says things that make me uncomfortable. This, for example: "Van Gogh, the most remarkable painter since the Old Masters."

Can you imagine my feelings on reading this sentence? There was I, a student of art, an instructor of those who are less well informed, proud of my knowledge; and here was this masterful German saying that this Van Gogh, a man whose name I had never even heard, is the most remarkable painter since the Old Masters.

That was eleven years ago. We live and learn. My ignorance has been corrected. I have learned all I can about the Dutchman, Vincent Van Gogh—art salesman, evangelist, preacher, artist, genius;

I have seen most of the pictures he painted during his brief career, three-fifths of them produced at Arles rapidly, with fury and fervour, between 1887 and 1889; and I have talked with men who have spoken to him.

"Oh, yes, I knew Vincent well," said a cosmopolitan artist to me. "We thought nothing of him at the Antwerp Academy in 1889. He amused us because of his intensity, his fierceness in painting. I never knew anything like it. He seemed possessed by a demon. He carried sticks of charcoal in his jacket pocket, and he would draw on any surface that was handy. When he came to see me I would cover up everything with newspapers to protect my belongings from Vincent's scrawls."

After the first Post Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, London, in 1910-11 had been running a week, no Londoner could plead ignorance of Vincent Van Gogh. The walls were crowded with specimens of his vivid, democratic art. I use the word democratic advisedly. Art, for better or worse, has been and is, with some exceptions, an aristocratic diversion. Its home is the rich man's drawing room. Van Gogh tossed it into the poor man's kitchen. His published Letters show that he was a man of culture and perception, a reflective, uneasy student, burdened with the desire to help and improve the world, eager to lead man to God, persuasively and by tender example. But when painting he became a Boanerges. "I think in colour . . . ," he wrote. "I lash the canvas with irregular strokes, and let them stand.

. . . I feel a power in me which I must develop, a fire that I may not quench, but must keep ablaze. . . ." If canvases could feel, they would have cried out when Van Gogh was painting upon them.

There is no doubt that his pictures at the Grafton Galleries shocked a great many nice, well-meaning people, because of their apparent violence, their strident colour, their headstrong drawing, and also because Van Gogh did not care a pennyworth of paint about the drawing-room convention. Cézanne and Gauguin, though revolutionists, were aristocrats in painting. Van Gogh was a demagogue. He painted for the people long before it became the fashion to patronise the people. He was a pioneer, and I do not think that Meier-Graefe exaggerates much when he says: "He was the real Father of the present movement in modern art."

Let me describe the effect of two of Van Gogh's pictures upon two people. A Dutch girl, of the peasant class, standing before his portrait called "A Seaman's Mother," frowned, bit her lip, and said: "I am ashamed to think that this ugly, this horrid, ugly picture was painted by a countryman of mine." I made no comment. You may lead a horse to the water: you cannot make it drink. I waited, watching the Dutch girl. The interesting fact was that she did not go away. People may be affronted by a new thing, but it does not follow that they desire to escape its message. Presently the Dutch girl said: "A lot of sailors' mothers are like this. They would like to see this portrait

hanging in a foreign café when they come off the sea. It would remind them of home. Am I right?"

"That, I imagine, was Van Gogh's intention in painting it," I answered.

An Englishwoman of fashion stood an instant before Van Gogh's "Sunflowers."

"I hate it," she said, as she swept away. "I detest sunflowers, and this picture gives me the very sensation that I dislike so much."

"That," murmured her companion, "is precisely what Van Gogh wished to do."

He lifted the lid of Pandora's box; he released Freedom, in a hundred rough and rude manifestations. He shook us out of our complacency; he proclaimed that Art is untamed and ready for all; he showed us the significance of what had seemed trivial—a dish of fruit, a cane chair in an empty room, a street in repair. He painted violently because his intensity would not allow him to paint gently. Quality, finish, delicacy, knew him not. He had no time for artistic nuances. Some of his pictures are wild and whirring. He hardly seems able to control the fury of his brush; but in such landscapes as "The Fields" and "Rain Effect" he takes his place in the very front rank of modern artists. Indeed, no one has expressed so vividly and with such a passion of feeling, the lie and weight of the land and the effect of strident rain on bare fields.

In his brief, fierce productive period he would paint four canvases a week, and when he had expressed himself he cared as little as Cézanne about

the fate of his pictures. The pure, kindly mind of the man is revealed in the book called "Letters of a Post Impressionist," by Vincent Van Gogh, and in other of his Letters. In one of them he says: "I always think that the best way to know God is to love many things. Love a friend, a wife, something, whatever you like, you will be in the right way to know more about it, that is what I say to myself."

Not until the age of 30 did he find his vocation. Before that he was employed at Goupils', the art dealers, in London, Paris and The Hague; he taught school in England; then the missionary fervour seized him; he preached to the miners in Belgium; he studied theology; and all the while he was dreaming about drawing and painting. Eventually, he entered the studio of Mauve, a distant relative; then to the Antwerp Academy, and finally he settled at Arles, where, as I have said, within two years he produced three-fifths of his pictures, urged by the frenzy of creation that possessed him. When he could not get out to paint he would make pictorial interpretations of the work of painters he admired. He had to produce; he had to create. Often he painted his own portrait—his stiff, red hair, his rugged flesh, his deep green eyes. His quarrel with Gauguin, his attack upon him was of the moment, a frenzy, arising, probably, from a sunstroke caught while painting bareheaded under the burning sun. In penance he cut off his ear. Then, of his own will, he entered an

asylum. His end was tragic. He shot himself. Alas, poor Vincent!

Holland is deeply interested in Vincent Van Gogh. When I was last in Amsterdam I strolled to the rear of the Ryks Museum, hoping to find some Van Goghs in the modern department. There was a roomful of them—landscapes, startling in their vivid reality; figures, uncannily alive; interiors, so simply realistic that one could almost walk into them; and a group of those wonderful dishes of fruit, swelling, huge, seeming to hold within themselves all the ripeness and richness of harvest. I know not whether Cézanne or Van Gogh was the inventor of these colossal, yet small, still-life pieces that have so taken the fancy of the younger artists of today. Everybody is doing them now.

I stayed most of the afternoon in that Van Gogh room. I sat in the window seat watching the Dutchmen studying the work of their great countryman—the elders thoughtful, the younger ones animated and gesticulatory. And I reflected on the great contribution to art of this little country—Rembrandt, Hals, Ruysdael, Vermeer, the Marises. Then, when there was a danger of the convention becoming formalised this vivid, violent Van Gogh breaks in and makes his countrymen, and the world, revalue their art convictions and rethink their thoughts.

7. MATISSE

I VISITED a roomful of drawings, sculpture, and paintings. They were odd, uncommon, and interesting, abstract expressions, flaming colour, with occasional distortions. The artist belongs to The Art of Tomorrow School. When I had made the round of the exhibits, and was preparing to depart, the Proprietor of this Advanced Gallery approached me, and said, "Well?"

"Very interesting," I answered, adding, as I stepped into the elevator, "Why don't you have a Matisse exhibition?"

The Proprietor replied, "I wish I could," and as he spoke he looked at me enigmatically.

I knew precisely what that look meant: it meant "I wish I could show a group of Matisse's best things. He is the originator of this affront to the orthodox. The man whose works I am showing is, although talented, only a follower. I am perfectly aware of that, and also that there are hundreds of such followers, perhaps thousands, scattered throughout the world."

Since that look, and my interpretation of it, I have been thinking about Henry Matisse. What a curious position he holds in the world of art. No one is so reviled and revered. He has had the extremes of praise and blame; he has been insulted and

idolised. Academies and art schools treat him as an object of distaste or of laughter; but "les Jeunes" (a section of them) have crowned him "Chef des Fauves," and I suppose that among the advanced wing no living artist has so many followers as Henry Matisse, King of the Wild Men, or the Wild Beasts. Fauves is hardly translatable. Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, and Matisse—these are the men who are dictating the procedure of those who are working in one of the most salient of the Art of Tomorrow groups. And I am beginning to think that Georges Seurat also had a hand in it; but he was certainly not a Fauve. I have heard a Professor of Painting in London describe the works of Matisse as an insult to his intelligence, and Kenyon Cox said something worse about him. A Royal Academician whom I escorted to a collection of paintings by Matisse in Paris was so indignant that he refused to remain in the house, and an American lady describing a Matisse at the Paris Independent Exhibition said, "Nobody would believe it, my dear, who hadn't seen it."

This, of course, is healthy and invigorating. Indifference is the chief enemy of art. Indifference is the attitude of many to most of the works in current official picture exhibitions. But no one is indifferent to Matisse. He is a challenge. You are extremely interested in him or extremely cross with him. He is original. He startles the eyes. His pictures are never representations of objects; they are abstract expressions of what he feels, not what he sees. He does not paint from the model; he

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memorises what he has seen. To quote his own words: "I only make studies from models; not to use in a picture, to strengthen my knowledge."

He is the apostle of the attempt to recapture the childlike vision, and dull, unkind people say that any intelligent child with a box of colours could produce his pictures. Such remarks show an abysmal ignorance of art, and of the trend of the artistic temperament.

Matisse's pictures are the result of pure reason; they are a search for the elemental significance of things, and his violent but glorious colours, his distortions, his seemingly harsh contrasts, his apparent uglinesses, are the demonstration of long and sustained thought. The preparation is arduous, the painting itself is done quickly in a flash of emotion, a summary record of essentials minus all the decorative unessentials so pleasing and comforting to the normal eye. I do not blame the normal eye for not liking his pictures and sculptures. To appreciate them art education is necessary, and sympathy, and a readiness to admit that apparent ugliness may be essential beauty in a cloak of strangeness.

You will find his artistic statement in the article he wrote for the *Revue des Arts* under the title "Notes of a Painter," by Henri Matisse. Here are a few extracts: "That which I pursue above all else is Expression. . . . I condense the signification of the body by looking for the essential lines. . . . I dream of an art of equilibrium, of purity, of tranquillity."

If Matisse keeps a Praise and Blame ledger containing extracts from his critics, he should derive considerable satisfaction from the commendations on the Praise side, which go far to balance the barks and bites on the Blame side. There was the letter that Mr. Bernhard Berenson wrote to *The Nation,* a letter of courteous and modest appreciation of the art of Matisse, an art that must be alien to all his standards. "We Europeans," said Mr. Berenson, "are so easily frightened by the slightest divergence from the habitual." And Matisse must have been pleased, if a little astonished, when an American critic wrote, "What is the meaning of that deathless passion that has come to flower in the sublime art of Rodin and Matisse?" Pleased, too, must he have been when he opened a new number of *The Burlington Magazine* and found in that staid periodical an important review of his exhibition at the Leicester Galleries, accompanied by a page of vital illustrations, and a statement contrasting the quality of most work on view in London with the Matisse "penetration, vigour, and freshness so vividly displayed in his exhibition." And a short while ago *The Times* of London, in an article on "Epatism," asserted that few of the masters have equalled Matisse in technical knowledge of colour. I mention these testimonies because even today there are many who wilt at the mere mention of the name of Henri Matisse.

To me he is a painter of singular interest and stimulation. I accepted him on sight for the simple reason that I ask of a painter not that he should

paint what I like, but what he likes. I admit that he startled me. Who would rather not be startled than bored? He opened avenues of freedom; he pointed the way to amazing possibilities of line and colour and design; in his dashing, vivid way he pushed the exploration of synthesis farther, much farther than the learned and laborious experiments of the great Cézanne. He is a Gay Lancer. Cézanne is a Heavy Dragoon.

I desire to be candid so I will say that when Henri Matisse first broke upon the Anglo-Saxon world at the famous Post-Impressionist exhibition in the Grafton Galleries, the effect upon two-thirds of the British art world was appalling. I was among the one-third, and wrote a book about him and Cézanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh. My interest in Matisse has never ceased. Everything he does, even if it hurts, is significant. Almost all wall decorations have been dull since I saw his vast panels of "La Danse" and "La Musique," red, green, and blue splashes of decorative rhythm and movement at the French Autumn Salon of 1911; and it was in that year that I spent evening after evening at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Michel Stein in the Rue Madame, Paris. She was an omnivorous Matisse collector. His works covered the walls of the vast studio, and on Saturday evenings young Paris flocked there to look and whisper. Mrs. Stein sat in a high chair on a dais, tranquil as a Buddha. In Matisse she found rest and fulfilment. She did not argue; she did not talk. His pictures were on

the walls. There was nothing to discuss. His visitors could stay or go, as they liked.

New York has had glimpses of Matisse. The Montross Galleries held an exhibition some years ago, and he was one of the New Men introduced, with fervour and understanding by Mr. Alfred Stieglitz at 291 Fifth Avenue. Last autumn, having seen nothing by Matisse for a long time, I strolled in one afternoon to the De Zayas Gallery, attracted by the announcement of paintings by Courbet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne, Seurat, and Matisse.

There were six pictures by Matisse—"A Room," "Bathers," "Landscape," "Music," "Apples," "Women and Roses." It is impossible to describe in words the effect on the right kind of observer of these works which looked so unimportant, yet which had such a potency of appeal. They were shorn of all adventitious aids; they told the bare truth; they spoke as a melody speaks.

And but the other day I saw an immense flower picture by Matisse just arrived from Paris. It is a picture of joy. Delicate joy in the colour, joy in the delicate design, a pattern ambling like a flower, the artist seems to be saying—"One must know what one wants. I wanted to express what I feel about these random flowers."

His followers are many. Some of them would have been wiser to found themselves on Raphael. They forget, perhaps they do not know, that Matisse went through the mill. He was a pupil of the Ecole des Beaux Arts; from 1895 to 1899

he painted on conventional lines; and for years he made copies in the Louvre for the government. Perhaps it was in protest against that drudgery that he tore himself away from the orthodox school, to Cézanne, to the early Italians, to the Persians, to the elementalism of the African Negroes and the Peruvian and Mexican Indians, to anything that would free the vision of the "fresh, healthy, robust, blonde" entity called Henri Matisse, who affronts the many and intrigues the few.

By the way, "epatism," a portmanteau word, deduced from "épater le bourgeois," has been defined as "an affront with a purpose."

8. A MASTER AND OTHERS

AT the exhibition of The Society of Independent Artists in New York I met the usual Exasperated Woman. She found some of the one thousand and more exhibits vulgar, childish, an insult to her mentality, defiant of the canons of the true, the good, the beautiful, and so on. I listened patiently, refrained from saying to her, "Then, madam, why do you come here? Why don't you stay at home?" But, after awhile, when she had repeated two or three times that she knew what she liked, and that she did not like the kind of pictures exposed by the Independent Artists, I said to her: "I cannot understand why art is made the victim of anger and vituperation. Other expressions of the ingenuity and taste of the twentieth century go scatheless. Take Millinery (she was wearing an abominable hat that positively hurt me to look at); why, the shop windows of New York, and I dare say Chicago, are full of atrocious examples of hatwear, but nobody ever starts an outcry against the vulgarity of hats. Nobody says that they are an insult to the intelligence. Why should not the Artist be allowed to experiment as well as the Milliner? Why do you and your kind insist that art stopped short with Raphael or at the cultivated court of the Empress Josephine? Why is

the artist not allowed to seek new avenues of expression like—like the Milliners?"

"Art is art, and Millinery is millinery," said my lady.

"True, but each, after all, is but an expression of something seen and felt. If you permit heterodox hats, why not allow heterodox pictures?"

"There's such a thing as fashion," she began.

I saluted and left her.

Personally I found those pictures on the walls of the roof garden of the Waldorf-Astoria, sans jury, sans hanging committee, entertaining and instructive. The dull ones, the silly ones, I passed by, as I close a dull or silly book.

I was much attracted by the pictures, a development of Cubism, that express abstract ideas in geometrical forms and vivid colours. Two of the best were "Noise Number 5" and "Sound Number 5." How much more interesting it would be to have these pictures hanging on one's walls (they would make admirable decorations for a large Play Room) than inferior Barbizon smudges or third-rate imitations of the eighteenth century portraitists. Equally interesting were "Movement," and "Mozart." This musical abstraction suggests to me, curiously and subtly, a Mozart symphony. And I found much to interest me in the M room (the exhibits are hung alphabetically according to names). It was in the M room that, on my first visit, a remarkable art adventure befell me, which did not lose its savour. I found that the thrill was repeated each time I revisit the M room.

On my visit I began at A, and as you can imagine, by the time I reached M that I was, as my nephew would express it, rather "fed up" with pictures. Something very special was needed to stir me. In the M room suddenly I made an exclamation. The exact words were, I believe, "Hello, what's this?" Before me was a tall portrait of a tall, dark girl, with long black hair; not the kind of portrait that other artists are painting. At once I said to myself: "This is synthesis: this is the way the Modernists are trying to express themselves: this is what they would do if they had the skill. If there were nothing else in the rooms but this swift summary, this delightful decoration, this delicate and gleaming harmony in green and black, the exhibition of the Independent Society would be justified. I was so excited about it that I looked around for someone to share my joy. Mr. Walter Pach, the treasurer of the society, was passing, and I called out to him, "What's this?"

"That's our Matisse," he answered gaily. "Isn't it fine? There's another by him facing it."

I turned, and cried aloud with pleasure, for there was a still life, compact of the most delicious colour, so frank and joyous as to justify Mr. Berenson's dictum that Matisse is one of the greatest colourists of the world. It is amusing, too, very amusing. Matisse has treated a dish of apples as if it were a hat or a coat; he has hung it upon a peg on the wall. And it looks quite natural—this dish of ruddy and golden apples, so large, so round—exuding sunshine and fertility, so lovely in colour. They

shine out from a black background, merging at the right lower corner into a glow of golden red and yellow. These two pictures, the "Portrait of a Spanish Girl" and "Still Life, Apples," are owned by Mr. John Quinn, who possesses the best collection of modernist pictures in America, perhaps in the world.

I tore myself from the M room, and proceeded on toward Y (Keechi Yamazoe) and Z (F. Zirnbauer); then I seated myself in the Lounge for a thorough examination of the catalogue. That done, I picked up, carelessly, a copy of the New York *Times* and in it I found a marked article by Walter Duranty explaining the methods of the Bolsheviki in Russia toward art. What do you think of this?

During the first year of the revolution every Russian artist became a Futurist (I may remark that Matisse is not a Futurist; he is a Classicist with a complete understanding that he is also a Free Man). Colour rioted when the Bolsheviki assumed power. Walls, doors, palings, became a blaze of colour and inchoate design. Old-fashioned painters were suspect. To be a Futurist implied that a Russian was an ardent revolutionist. Art became popular. Portraits of the Bolshevist leaders were wanted for towns and villages throughout the country. But the authorities soon found that the average Moujik needed a likeness, not a Futurist decoration. So the old-fashioned painters were called upon, released from cells: all the men were sent for who could make a man look like a man,

not like an exploding firework. That was the heyday of the orthodox painters: they were in quick and constant demand.

The Bolsheviki encourage art. Frequent exhibitions are held, which contain about 1000 pictures (like the Independent Society). There the resemblance ends, for the Bolshevist government buys 300 of the 1000 for distribution throughout the country. The 700 remaining are burnt by order. Recently, owing to the shortage of canvases, the government has cancelled the burning ukase; but the 700 are ordered to erase their pictures and paint something better on the canvas. This system might serve if the judgment of those who select the 300 best were infallible. It is not. Juries never have vision. Had this system obtained nearer home the early works of Courbet, Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir, the Pre-Raphaelites, and Matisse would have been destroyed.

Refreshed and amused, I began another peregrination of the Independent show, working this time from Z to A. I passed through room after room, pausing here, smiling there, making a mental note of the pictures I should preserve and those I should burn; and all the while wondering, subconsciously, if a second sight of the Matisses would repeat the exhilaration I had received at the first glance.

At last I came to Room M. There they were—that adorable portrait of a girl, that delightful dish of apples. I said to myself, "This exhibition contains the work of a Master, and other pictures."

9. PICASSO

SOMEBODY once remarked that nobobdy ever really loves a Political Economist. And nobody, I imagine, ever really loves a Cubist picture. We may respect Picasso, as we respect Euclid. But we shed tears over Euclid, not with him. I should not like to meet Picasso, the king of the Cubists. But perhaps all would be well in the chilly encounter. For he speaks no English, and his French has a strong Spanish accent.

Yet Cubism has a curious attraction for me. Estranged from it by temperament, yet I feel reverent before it, as before the higher mathematics. The understanding of Picasso's most advanced work is as alien and enigmatic to the normal eye as are the higher mathematics to the normal mind. The Cubist picture in its ultimate expression looks like an involved geometrical problem plus an arrangement of anatomical specimens. It means nothing to the untutored eye; it is the image not of a thing seen, but of a thought; and it is only when the abstract Cubist drops to a lower plane, and employs in his design some semblance of representation, such as a "Nude Descending a Staircase" or "A Man on a Balcony," that he becomes understandable of the Man in the Street. This is temporising with the Philistine.

In pure Cubism a subject may lurk in the stiff lines and smooth, irregular planes, but it does not emerge until a fellow Cubist indicates the whereabouts of the subject. Picabia, one of the confraternity, but a lesser man than Picasso, wrote thus in a brief essay in Stieglitz's "291": "In my work the subjective expression is the title, the painting the object." At the foot of his essay is a design. It looks like—what shall I say—an electrical machine? The title is obligingly printed under it—"Tennis Player Serving." And I am familiar with a picture by Picabia, a curious and interesting arrangement of lines, angles, and planes. He calls it "Star Dancer on Board a Transatlantic Steamer": he might have called it anything under the sun.

The title is always the drawback to advanced Cubist art. Without any title my imagination takes an austere pleasure in considering these severe arrangements of lines and angles, but when I am given the title my pleasure goes. I say, "This is not a Tennis Player, Serving"; and if the artist replies, "My intention was to suggest a 'Tennis Player, Serving'," then I answer, "That may be, but you have not conveyed your intention to me." If he called his designs Expression A, or Abstraction X, I should go on my way rejoicing and wondering, and no more curious about knowing what they mean than I am about the meaning of a Chinese plate or a Persian rug. These things give me more pleasure because they have colour and a recognisable pattern. Some Cubist pictures are brightly coloured, but Picasso, in

his highest manifestations, indulges himself in tone, not colour—beautiful tone.

I keep a portfolio of photographs and reproductions which is labelled—"Pictures: Pleasant and Unpleasant." It is my custom to show them to my friends, and I draw their particular attentions to the six Picassos. I do this because I am quite sure that Pablo Picasso is head and shoulders above all the others. We may like or dislike Cubism, but it is quite certain that in this convention of making a pattern (with a profound meaning to the artist) out of lines, angles, and planes he is a Master. My friends can understand Picasso's "Wandering Musician," done some years ago, for that noble and massive design, with suggestions of Cubism in it, is in the Cézanne tradition; so is his brooding, weighty portrait of Gertrude Stein; but when they look at examples of Picasso, the pure Cubist, such as his "Spanish Village" and his portrait of "M. Kahnweiler," they shake their heads and say, "It's beyond me."

Well, what kind of a man is this Pablo Picasso? I have not met him, but a friend who knows him well describes him as a stocky, vital man, very alert, and very intelligent. He is a Spaniard, but France has adopted him, or he France. He went through the Madrid Academy, that home of conformity and reactionism; but his eyes and his mind were with El Greco and Goya, the two Spaniards whose influence is paramount today. At 17 he is an art student in Paris, studying Puvis de Chavannes. That influence passed, and soon

Cézanne possessed him, as the Master of Aix possesses most of the young vital artists of the day.

Picasso capered through his paces like a colt in a meadow. His phases were many, even Impressionism and Pointelism; also Gauguin. His style changed with the seasons, gradually acquiring the sculptural form, now in a gamut of blue, now of red. He turned to the study of Negro sculpture, and his art began to assume a geometrical form—straight lines, swift angles, shining planes in accord or discord, and he realised, to quote Guillaume Apollinaire, that "Geometry is to the plastic arts what grammar is to the writer." Picasso stood on the top of the icy Cubic pole.

There are those who maintain that Cubism is implicit in Cézanne; that he opened the avenue, showed the road; then, turning away, settled down into his own laborious, wonderful path. Certain it is that Cézanne said—"Everything in nature is modelled on the lines of the sphere, the cone, and the cylinder, and one must understand how to paint these simple figures; one can then paint anything . . . Design and colour are not distinct . . . When the colour is at its finest, the form also attains its perfection." And we find M. André Lhote saying recently, "Cubism may be defined as the systematic exaltation of the most important and least elucidated peculiarities of the Cézannian formula."

I warn the reader that the literature of Cubism is tough; but so is the literature of the higher mathematics. MM. Gleizes and Metzinger, the French

cubist-artist-writers, have written on the subject with French clarity, also Guillaume Apollinaire; and in English we have Mr. Arthur Jerome Eddy and Mr. Willard Huntington Wright. These I can understand fairly well; but Mme. Gertrude Stein (see "Camera Work," August, 1912) baffles me; neither can I quite follow M. Lhote in his descant on the Fourth Dimension, and his explanation that Cézanne tried to express "this supplementary extra-geometrical dimension" by means of a series of planes like the steps of an irregular surface. Oh, the word Cubism is due to our friend, Matisse. He invented it in Paris in 1908, in derision, after seeing a picture showing a cubical representation of buildings. The first collection of Cubist pictures was shown at the Salon des Indépendants in 1911.

Reproductions of four of Picasso's paintings are pinned upon the wall in front of me as I write.

I. His magnificent "Wandering Acrobats" in his early manner, before the Cubist theory possessed him. Anyone can understand it; everyone must admire it.

II. His "Woman with Mandolin." Cubism has now captured him, but the figure is there, angular, allusively geometrical, but plainly visible.

III. His "Poet." Cubism is now controlling him. The hair and an ear of the Poet are just discernible amidst a whirl of precise Cubist forms. It is called "The Poet," therefore a poet and his imaginings must lurk within the design, but no one would guess it without being informed of the title.

IV. His "Figure" from the Galerie "L'Effort Moderne" (Léonce Rosenburg), the centre of Cubism in Paris. This is pure Cubism, a recent effort of Picasso's, curious, done with decision, but without any meaning to the lay eye. Art has become a problem, an experiment in the Fourth Dimension. This is essential Picasso. Helpless before such an abstract design as this, realising that the end was reached, the Neo-Cubists and the Post-Cubists struggled to introduce something of humanity, some approach to representation into their Cubist pictures. Such examples are to be found in every Independant show. But Picasso goes on in his own way—supreme, inhuman, unlovely.

Why bother, asks the reader? Why not let this chilly, geometrical negation of beauty pass out like the other isms that come and go, flicker and fade—Orphism, Synchronism, Futurism, Vorticism? Because Cubism is based on something permanent that many artists and others through the ages have gleaned and practised. Read "The Diagonal," edited by Mr. Jay Hambridge, stating his theory of dynamic symmetry; attend a lecture by Mr. Claude Bragdon on "Art and Mathematics," wherein he traces the geometrical origin of such familiar forms of ornament, expressing cosmic truths, as the acanthus and lotos, the egg and dart, and also of the Greek temples.

Picasso has but pushed to the optical limit a truth that was familiar to Plato and Dürer. Did not Paolo Uccello become "more needy than famous" because he "wasted" his time over geometry and

perspective? Today the influence of Picasso is becoming more and more widespread. A thousand painters are using Cubism, as a means not as an end. Mathematics has again entered fully into art. It is a check to emotion; its laws are invio-

lable; it links us up with the practice of the Greek and Egyptian masters. Art may perish, but two and two will remain four. Impressionism points to a world aspect. Cubism indicates a world order.

10. QUALITY

A PASSAGE in an art article by Mr. Royal Cortissoz, in the *Tribune*, drew my eyes—"The colourist does not take colour as he finds it. He filters it through his genius, and the result is what painters call 'quality'."

This article by Mr. Cortissoz had an especial interest for me because clearly we had been engaged on a similar art adventure. We did not meet; we have never met; but being inquisitive and contemplative we had both that day been considering, comparing and contrasting the work of J. Alden Weir at the Century Club, and Alfred Wolmark at the Kevorkian Galleries. This was an obvious thing to do, as Alden Weir rounds up an epoch, and Alfred Wolmark starts forward on a new one. Other artists might have been taken as exemplars, but these two happened to be presented to the public in the same week. Mr. Cortissoz and I differ a little. He approves of Alden Weir, and rather disapproves of Alfred Wolmark. I approve of them both, I like them both, for the very simple reason that each gives the best of himself. But I am more interested in Wolmark because he is striding out on a new path, and is treading it logically, with precision, and with gusto.

Mr. Cortissoz likes Alden Weir's tone colour, he

does not like Wolmark's raw colour. I object, of course, to the word raw. Simple colour would be exacter. Wolmark's colour is not in the least raw. There is as much quality in it as in Alden Weir's colour, but it is a different kind of quality, and it has force and virility, which Alden Weir's colour has not. The educated eye is usually shocked by force and virility, and continues to be disturbed until custom softens the estrangement.

First let us look for a moment at this subject of colour. The educated eye usually recognises and judges colour, not as it may be seen in nature, but as it is seen in pictures by old and elder masters. But does the educated man or woman who, by the very nature of his education is subject to conformity, ever realise that the pictures by the Old Masters that he admires so much are not the pictures that left the artists' studios?

Sir John Millais, who was a fine painter, in his youth, at any rate, and an honest man, said once that Father Time is the best Old Master. It is Time, including the fading of colours, and the effects of air and dirt, that gives to many old pictures their consolatory patine and their air of harmonious tone. This old masterly look is extremely popular, and it is this old masterly look that many orthodox modern painters, who have been educated to keep well within the tradition, and who have no desire to depart from it, copy, or rather found themselves upon. Does it ever occur to them that many of the Old Masters would hardly know their own pictures if they could see them as they look today?

There are written statements about individual paintings, which now enjoy Time's patine, showing that when they were painted they were bright and vivid, that sometimes even they were examples of what Mr. Cortissoz calls raw colour. My contention is that many modern painters have founded their performances not on the Old Master pictures as they looked when they left the painter's studio, but on the look that Father Time has imposed upon them.

Far be it for me to say anything against quality in painting. I am quite in accord with Mr. Cortissoz in his admiration for the "gracious harmony" in the works of Titian, Velasquez and Vermeer, to name but three, but I do suggest that Time has had something to do with that harmony. And I also suggest that such modern masters as Whistler and Alfred Stevens set themselves to acquire that "gracious harmony," and being men of genius they were able to succeed. The disadvantage of thus following a tradition of art, and not going direct to nature, is that lesser men fill the world with an enormous number of pictures, which are not an expression of themselves, but a repetition of a tradition in painting that they have grown, almost imperceptibly to themselves, to adopt as the right way of painting. When an artist breaks away from this tradition and paints a picture in simple, not in raw colour, and from his own vision, not from the memory of other pictures, as Augustus John did in "The Way Down to the Sea," loaned to the Metropolitan Museum, the educated eye is startled and

affronted, as people were startled and affronted when they first heard Ibsen's plays. But soon the eyes become accustomed to the new vision. It is interesting to stand before "The Way Down to the Sea" and to observe how people are being gradually converted and conquered. When there is a roomful of such pictures, hung on white walls, many people will find that they are impatient with brown, toned, conventional pictures.

Which do you prefer—to sit in a stuffy room gazing at things, or to look from an open window at life and colour? Quality, like the stars, differs in glory. There is one quality of "the thin white fabric thrown over an Infanta's rosy farthingale," another of the garments of Augustus John's statuesque women, and another in Wolmark's "Boats" or "Model Resting."

Among the giants J. Alden Weir is a lesser man; among the painters of average stature he is like a figure six feet two inches high in a crowd. I have the utmost respect for his memorial exhibition at the Century Club. I admire the sensitiveness and delicacy of his portraits of women and landscapes, and I am quite prepared to echo Mr. Cortissoz's enthusiasm for his "silvery exquisiteness" and "tremulous lightness," even if I feel, as I said earlier, that he rounds off an epoch, and that my interest in his work is perhaps more historical than artistic. This kind of painting, so full of sensibility, so empty of force, so conventional, so lacking in accent, gesture or wonder, can hardly be advanced much farther. I admit that it is still very popular, and very much

admired, and if I were to rise up in the exhibition gallery and say, "Go to, the lily has been over-painted, the gold is so refined that it is all quality and no substance," I should be treated as a voice crying in the wilderness, or as a brawler. When Mr. Cortissoz writing of Alden Weir says, "Here is the true colourist using colour as a key to artistic loveliness," I would reply, "We are overdone with 'artistic loveliness,' and it is because this 'artistic loveliness' has been made into a fetish, and because so many artists repeat and repeat this studio convention of 'artistic loveliness,' the untrained public, accustomed to the colour and movement of the great world, has fallen into the way of regarding the artist as an odd, fantastic, and unpractical being pursuing his fading dream and withdrawing himself more and more from actual life."

When I left the Alden Weir exhibition and wandered up Fifth Avenue the colour and movement formed such a contrast to the pictures I had been looking at: they were so enlivening and heartening that I understood in a flash the Wolmark point of view and why Mr. Cortissoz resents his stridency and the noise of his colour. Wolmark is a citizen of the world, not of the studio.

The Alden Weir pictures make me lower my voice; they would sadden me were I not a philosopher. The Wolmark pictures make me want to talk and gesticulate; they enliven my consciousness, and make me eager to enjoy the avenue of colour and decoration that Wolmark is exploring. That they are not in the tradition does not trouble me at all. New

traditions are forever being introduced, and forever being acclimatised. Who resents wireless and the airplane because they are not in the tradition of the penny post and the locomotive?

So I return to Wolmark and to the quotation with which I began this article—"The colourist does not take colour as he finds it. He filters it through his genius, and the result is what painters call 'quality'."

True. And that is precisely what Wolmark does. But the filtering process is his own, not the Alden Weir tradition, and personally I find the Wolmark method more interesting and more stimulating than the Weir.

Surely it is only fair to judge each artist by his performance and not by the way he conforms or nonconforms to a convention. There is a picture which delights me more and more each time I see it. This is "Devant la psyché," by Manet. This lovely thing, with the gay, rippling colour, fresh and unworried as a spring morning, belongs neither to the quality, tone convention of Alden Weir, nor to the quality, colour adventure of Alfred Wolmark; it is just Manet, the quality of a Manet. Each great artist gives us his own vision and technique. By these we should judge him, by these alone.

. . . .

When Alfred Wolmark was in New York preparing for his exhibition he asked me to sit to him. At first I refused. Posing for a portrait is not one of my vanities. I weary of the interminable sittings, and when the likeness is good I lament that I

am not better-looking. But when Alfred Wolmark told me that he only wanted one sitting, that he never required more than one sitting, I consented. Here is the story of that sitting. It betrays his method.

First came a preliminary meeting in his studio, a gossip over tea. I was conscious that he was studying me carefully: later I learned that he was deciding the pose, and the colour and pattern of the decorative treatment that suited and complemented me.

He allowed a fortnight to elapse; then he asked me to come to the studio one day as early as I could, and to sit till the light gave. When I arrived I found that he had made six rough charcoal sketches, each the size that the portrait was to be, of six different positions in which he had drawn my obedient body. Finally he had selected one of them, and there it was pinned on the easel board. The decorative design was also indicated. The irregular spaces were marked in charcoal the colours they were to be—yellow, green and blue. He kept absolutely to his plan. The pose and the colours were carried out exactly as he had willed them.

He makes no changes. His hand completes the picture exactly as he sees it in his mental vision before he begins to paint. He does not use a palette; his palette is a primed canvas placed flat on a table; he does not paint in pure colour as some think, but the effect is one of pure colour. He employs this method in all his pictures—first a mental decision as to colour and design, reached only after long re-

flection, then a quick painting. If the work does not progress well, if he is dissatisfied with it, he stops and takes another canvas. He never alters or works over a picture. Consequently his work has an extraordinary air of freshness and spontaniety. He considers the frame part of the picture, a carrying out of the decorative design, so each of his frames is painted with a design in harmony with the picture.

He began with my head, first the hair, then the eyes, then the collar and neck and the salient points of the body; and while thus engaged, his hand would sweep masses of flat paint—yellow, green, and blue—over the decorative spaces. By 4 o'clock it was all finished except the hands. For them I gave him another hour's sitting on the following day. It is not my place to say anything about this portrait, but my friends tell me that it cheers them. It was certainly a very interesting experience, and when the exhibition opened I was much entertained at the sight of myself intrigued into being a Wolmark decoration, and at the comments of the orthodox.

11. TWO PIONEERS

AT the Private View of the Painter-Gravers of America I had a rebuff. This has happened so often that I accept such rebuffs with equanimity. What was the rebuff? Oh, merely that I took a friend up to something I admired very much to find that he did not share my enthusiasm. I should have learned by experience. People do not like to have æsthetic preferences forced upon them.

My companion and I had quite a pleasant row over it which continued because presently he conveyed me to something that he highly admired, but which did not please me. Such æsthetic disputes are welcome. They are evidences of interest and mental activity. Moreover, we may both be right, for each individual seeks the æsthetic stimulus that he needs.

My mind dwelt that evening of the Private View on small pictures—lyrics, as opposed to large pictures—epics. I discovered, too, that I am not singular in liking to hymn my appreciations. Two artists with whom I discoursed were dithyrambic about two artists whose works New York had the pleasure of seeing (if it wanted to do so) during that week. I listened gladly to the praises of John Marin and Walt Kuhn because I adore enthusiasm, when it comes from fellow-artists, and because, unlike Pooh-Bah, I was not born sneering.

Next day I visited the John Marin exhibition. He is true artist. There is nothing of the painter, the mere maker of pictures in his composition. He paints as a bird sings, because he likes to sing, not for listeners, for himself. He is in the tradition of Turner, the Turner of the "delight drawings," not of the huge, competitive canvases; and of Brabazon, the Sussex squire, who painted water colours all his life for the love of doing them, and who, at three score years and ten, was "discovered," became famous, and was acclaimed as the best water colour painter England has had since Turner. I should like to see an exhibition containing 10 of Turner's best water colours, 10 Brabazons, 10 Winslow Homers, 10 Sargents, 10 Dodge Macknights, and 10 John Marins. That would be an exhibition of pure art, insight, impulse and love of beauty for beauty's own sake.

I think it will be agreed that John Marin has added much of his own to the potentialities of water colour. The popular word in art today is the word Abstract; Marin has pushed some of his colour impressions into a region so abstract that the Man in the Street shakes his head and says: "They're beyond me"; but to the Connoisseur they are delightful beyond words. I do not say that the Connoisseur does not like other and very divergent pictures as well; but these Marin abstract colour impressions give him the joy that Shelley, in his most ethereal passages, passes on. They promote the rush of joy one has when suddenly the lark's song breaks out above a sun-flickered English meadow.

But Marin is no pedant in etherealism. The 50 water colours he exposed at the Daniel Gallery may be taken as representing his work for the past 10 years and as showing his passage—how shall I express it?—say, from sense to inspiration, the path Turner trod, the path all true artists tread who rely upon nature, not upon the work of other men for their inspiration. Nature, in her wonderful and inexhaustible beauty, must lead the true artist deeper and deeper, and higher and higher into abstract realms; as he watches and learns more and more he loses form in colour, he desires to suggest rather than to represent, he approaches with bared head, and brooding joy, the ethereal substance of nature. Marin's "Mountain Forms No. VI," and his "Sea-Blue Effect" are plain to anybody, the forms are recognisable; but these are but the steps that lead him to the magnificent "Sunburst" and the abstract loveliness of "A Sea-Effect, Deer Island, Maine."

I admit that what interests me especially in Marin is that he has the courage and the integrity to confine himself to explorations in water colour, which is manifestly the work to which he is called: he has kept to that way, he has fostered his particular talent and has not allowed himself to be tempted to produce mere pictures because there is a better market for mere pictures. Fashions, schools have not drawn him from his own path. In his own way he is as characteristically racial in vision and subject, as were Twachtman and Winslow Homer. Of French extraction his family has been settled in

America for some 200 years. Born in New Jersey, he studied at the Pennsylvania Academy, and worked awhile in Paris, but his real and only master is nature. She is his strength and dictator, as she was Turner's in the latter part of his life, and Brabazon's always.

John Marin has freed himself! He has cast off the swathes of representation, and the pull of Precedent and academical teaching. Walt Kuhn has not yet quite freed himself, but he has breathed freedom into his painting impressions of Life Among the Indians, actual or imagined. He is a decorator, his colour sings, his subjects are subordinated to the rhythm, and the movement and colour that they suggest to him. "Entirely Surrounded by Indians" causes the spectator no anxiety as to the safety of the palefaces. I am no more disturbed by their danger than I am by the woes of the heroines in the Russian Ballet. This picture and the others are decorations, charming decorations, and if this were an artistic nation, which of course it is not, town halls would be fighting for Walt Kuhn's decorations, and ladies would be anxiously longing for a Marin water colour as a basis upon which to decorate their boudoirs.

The pioneers, and these two men are pioneers, have not only to break the path, but they must also pay for the breaking of it. A few years, a quarter, a half of a century, and such pioneers are admired and honoured, and chosen by the Colony Club of New York to give distinction to an exhibition. There, in a beautiful room, beautifully decorated, was

Gauguin—his incomparable "Maria Orona"; Cézanne—his magical "Still Life"; Degas—his lovely blue reclining figure; Seurat—his witty "In the Park."

And it is possible that 50 years hence the Colony Club of that day will be showing a group of Walt Kuhn's rhythmic adventures among Indians, and a group of John Marin's conversations with the abstract. Meanwhile these pioneers, these two men and others, must placate the Present which is not easy. The 1 per cent is enthusiastic, the 99 per cent is indifferent.

12. WANTED: A NAME

HIS full name is Emanuel Ray, but he calls himself Man Ray, which, professionally, is good. His parents were Russian; he was born in Philadelphia, and is now living in New York. Short, young, dark, intelligent, a thinker and a student, modest in manner, but quite sure of himself, he is one of that group of artists, born of foreign parents, often Slavonic, who have become American citizens, and who are producing art that is quite different from the accepted canons.

I saw his exhibition at the Daniel Gallery, and was so interested that I visited the Man Ray "drawings and paintings" three times, and followed it up by an evening at his studio. We had a long talk. I handled, examined, and discussed examples of his work done since 1913. I give these particulars so that you, reader, may be prepared for my attempt to explain why I am devoting an essay to Mr. Man Ray.

By way of preliminary it is necessary to make myself clear on two points. First, I do not claim that he is a genius. I do not even claim that he is a great originator. Although he has never been abroad, and consequently has not followed the development of Picasso and Picabia, to name but two, he has of course seen stray works by them, and

reproductions that have come to America. For better or for worse they were the originators of the new geometrical (there is really no word for it) movement in art, and Mr. Man Ray would readily admit it. For ten or more years Cubism has been in the air in America, the Armory Show of 1913 rushed it to those American studios (not very many) that were attuned to its definite hieroglyphics. Marcel Duchamp, whose "Nude Descending a Staircase" picture was the most discussed work in the Armory exhibition, was the link between Picasso and young America. When I asked Mr. Man Ray what he thought of the Armory Show, he answered solemnly (he is quite solemn and earnest), "I did nothing for six months. It took me that time to digest what I had seen."

And when I say that he is not a great originator, I do not mean to imply that he is an imitator. Far from it. Think of the number of minds that helped to perfect the Tank. Each added something vital, and the inquiry as to the inventor of the Tank, instituted by the British Government has not been able satisfactorily to determine the mind which had the first idea. An inquiry into the originator of Cubism would discover that there are hints and suggestions of it long before Picasso. If Euclid had possessed the passion for tone that he had for geometry his claim to be the parent of Cubism in art might be urged.

Man Ray has informed Cubism with his own personal vision and thought. From the structure of Picassoism he has evolved a method of abstract

painting that seems to me to be independent and original. There have been numerous examples of it in the Independent shows in Paris, London and New York, some interesting, some futile, some insincere. I write about Man Ray because I feel that he is consistent, talented, and in earnest.

Here it is necessary to say that interest in the Art of Tomorrow does not mean that one has ceased to be interested in the Elder, or Old Art. When I express my enthusiasm for Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin and Matisse, there is always some silly person who says, "Oh, then, you throw over Memling, Raphael, Titian and Velasquez." I do nothing of the kind. I am not an idiot. But I allow myself to regard art as the expression of personality, and if an artist produces something that is strange to me, I do not resent it, as many do; I try to discover his intention and to determine if it has significance and vitality.

Pleasure was the result of my first glance at the pictures by Man Ray at the Daniel Gallery. My eyes were gratified, my mind was stimulated. I bore no grudge against the artist because he was not painting like Manet or Monet, who in their youth were regarded as revolutionaries and rebels against tradition. That did not enter into my æsthetic judgment. I was content to be interested in a new vision and a new method.

The pictures in the anteroom at once interested me. There were ten of them, each the same size, each done in vivid flat colours, and each carried its title, such as "Mime," "Long Distance," "Orches-

tra," "Legend," "Dragonfly"; and each was flat and geometrical, never plastic and representative. It was manifest that the artist had abjured plasticity, had banished the third dimension. They were all in two dimensions. To be quite frank, although my eyes were charmed by their colour, and the mathematical precision of the designs, I doubt if I should have attached much meaning to them had it not been for the indicating titles. I felt rather like Alice, who, when she read the poem called "Jabberwocky," said to herself, "Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas—only I don't exactly know what they are." But how delightful to find pictures that, besides pleasing the eyes, crowd the head with ideas, inchoate—-nebulous, if you like—but ideas. Soon the design called "Legend" meant a great deal to me, and so did "Orchestra" and "Long Distance."

Looking closer at these strange, bright, mathematical, rhythmical things, I discovered that they were **not** painted with the brush. The designs are **cut** from coloured papers, arranged harmoniously, according to the artist's scheme, and pasted upon boards. Later, I was to learn from the artist that this method is a protest against the importance that has been, and is, accorded to technique. He strives to escape from technique, to give not a quality of paint, but a quality of idea. He wants to work in a medium that is already controlled, like musical notes, so that he can give all his thought to inventive form and line in two dimensional aspects: he wants his painting to be unworried by tactile

values (which Mr. Berenson adores) and to show not handiwork but the idea at the back of it.

Carrying on this notion of negation, of protest against the obtrusive handiwork of technique, he shows in the next room a group of paintings that are produced entirely by the air brush. He invents the design, schemes the colours with mathematical precision, and then squirts the colour on the board, always exactly following his formula. To him the idea and the abstract realisation are everything; the concrete carrying out of the idea he maintains is mechanical, and can be done by anybody with a little training. Mr. Man Ray looks forward to the time when pupils, with air brushes, will repeat a master's design in colour a dozen, a hundred times, as often as needed by the public. By this method the idea, reft of circumlocution and embroidery, is represented stark and often beautifully, as in "The Rope Dancer Accompanies Herself with Her Shadows," "Silhouette: the Dancer Dances," and "The Admiration of the Orchestrelle for the Cinematograph."

Three brush paintings are also shown, including a large version of "Legend." Close the eyes, repeat to yourself the word "Legend," and there arises, does there not, a picture of the crisp, quick, original idea: then there proceeds from it, through centuries, gradually getting thinner and more diffuse, the accretions that accumulate on the idea, until it fades into a blur in which the quick, crisp, or original idea of Legend, although still present, is almost blanketed out of recognition. That, I take it, is

the meaning of the Intellectual Colour Pattern he calls "Legend."

It is obvious that we have here a young man who has something to say, and it is nothing against him that his productions are not in line with the teaching of academies. He studied in drawing academies, impatiently and without fervour, until, by happy chance, he fell in with an architectural engineer draftsman. With delight he went through a course of mechanical drawing, which, as everyone knows, demands definite designs and mathematical accuracy. But he is no stranger to the traditional drawing and painting. I have seen some admirable drawings from the model by him, also some remarkable landscapes, and the head and bust of a "Woman Sleeping" that is as powerful and vital as anything I have come across lately. It is a picture, not of a woman sleeping: it is a picture of sleep.

I have tried to explain Mr. Man Ray's art—its colour, its design, and its meaning. And I have been trying, without much success, to find a name for his productions. What shall I call them—Abstract Pictures, Intellectual Pictures, Geometrical Pictures? That omits the joy of their colour, and the amusement of their design. How would Geometrical Joy Pictures do? No, I fear I must fall back upon the artist's own title—Drawings and Paintings by Man Ray. Why not Ray Paintings? For in them are rays of a new vision.

13. THE 99 PER CENT

I AM interested in the 99 per cent who do not buy pictures. I want to minister to their æsthetic needs, to persuade artists to cater for them, and adapt their talents to comforting the 99 per cent. The 1 per cent, who buy pictures, can look after themselves. For a wealthy member of the 1 per cent the Romney group of the Beckford girls was destined. In buying it he was influenced by the fact that it obtained the highest price ever paid for a picture at auction. This Romney fetched at Christie's £54,600 ($273,000) (old style). Such prices partake of sport rather than art. I like sport, but I prefer art. Because I like the irony of this kind of sport, which values a thing for its cost and rarity, I enjoy the comment of a famous book-binder who had bound for a fabulous sum a precious volume for a client. Something went wrong with the binding, and the indignant client brought the book back to the binder. The binder examined the book carefully, and then said, "It's your own fault. You've been reading it."

I told this story to an artist at a private view of modern pictures. He laughed so understandingly that, to reward him, I said, "Show me what you have here." He took me to his picture, a large, very large, fine, sombre nocturne, marked rather by

technical skill than by impulse. "That's a gallery picture," I said, "an epic in the 1-per-cent category. Do you ever paint lyrics for the 99 per cent?"

He is the kind of man who, when he does not understand the whole of a question, answers part of it. "My little boy paints lyrics," he said. Then he added the astonishing statement: "He's a better painter than I am because he has never been taught: I wouldn't teach him anything for the world. He's an abstract painter, like all children and savages. All this talk about recapturing the childlike vision is perfectly sound, but few of us can do it. I can't. When my little boy brought me his last batch of pictures (I've got them here in a parcel: I'll show them to you directly), I said, 'This is abstract painting.' To which he naturally replied, 'What's abstract, Poppa?' I gave him the dictionary meaning—'Separated from matter, practice, or particular examples, not concrete. Essence. Summary.' The boy looked bewildered, so I said to him: 'Never you mind, Sonny, what your paintings mean, or the how or why. Just go ahead and do them.' This abstract painting is very interesting. My boy gets the essence, the summary, the separation from matter apparently quite easily. I'm learning a lot from him. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings—— Also I'm unlearning a lot. I'm unlearning every day, and perhaps when I have unlearned almost everything I have learned, I shall begin to paint—lyrics. Or—what I mean is, why shouldn't a man some day be able to express in colour and line on a flat surface ideas as simple

and profound as the statements in the Sermon on the Mount? It has no technique—at least it doesn't show any. Truth doesn't need any technique. My boy's paintings are just truth to his own pure vision."

Later he opened the parcel in the cloakroom and showed me his small son's paintings. They were just what I expected. I have seen many of the kind before. Of course they were immature and incorrect according to art drawing master standards, but they had something—essence, summary, that no school can teach. "The world can give him the world's knowledge," said the father, "but in gaining it he'll lose the real thing."

Later in the week I paid my friend a visit. He lives in a beautiful and secluded place. I won't say where it is, because, although a well-known painter, he is still a student, and it is not wise to answer letters of inquiry while you are still learning. I took with me a copy of the London *Athenæum* because it contained an article by Roger Fry on "Teaching Art," with an account of the work done in the art class at the Dudley High School for girls under the tuition of Miss Marion Richardson. The article attracted me because when, looking it over, I noticed that Mr. Fry had suggested that the word "intuition" would be nearer the mark than "tuition."

My friend conducted me upstairs to the studio and proceeded to show me his pictures. They were all exhibition works—epics. I had no fault to find with them, except that these noble and

sombre interpretations of nature were gallery works, and executed for the 1 per cent. As he hoisted one after another upon the easel (he must have shown me 10), my eyes wandered to the wall upon which he had pinned the studies that he had made for these pictures, and others, direct from nature, *premier coup*, that is, begun and finished at a sitting. They were fresh and impulsive, with strong colour, and upon each he had, like Constable, written the time of day, the direction of the wind and the atmospheric conditions. There was a blue pool with white sheds reflected in the water; there was a green hill-top with clouds coming and going; there was a bright meadow with one tree and a stream. Each of these had been painted a dozen times, under different weather conditions, from dawn to eve; and in each, so it seemed to me, his idea was to lose form in light. He did not neglect form, but he made it subservient to light, as if over all objects he had dropped a luminous gauze of abstract colour.

"Those are lyrics," I said, "those are for the 99 per cent."

His eyes roamed the wall, and he said, "Oh, those are merely sketches."

"Those," I remarked, "are merely you, the real you. They are abstract statements of colour and form. You have not evaded the objects, but you have been engrossed in painting light, not the objects. You have not given a thought to technique, you have not given a thought to producing clever painting; you have just let yourself go in the

rendering of light; you have enjoyed yourself, and in thus expressing your real selfhood, you have got nearer than you think to what you admire in your boy's work, to the childlike vision."

"But these sketches," he interrupted, "are nothing compared with my large, serious pictures."

"Why not? The large pictures, I admit, are more learned, the world's learning; but they are all lumbered over with our western convention of technique. That's what the 1 per cent wants. I don't. I want the results of intuition, not of tuition; I want personal vision, not the school vision, and that, I take it, is what the 99 per cent want, and also Roger Fry.

"In this paper on 'Teaching Art' he makes this excellent and acceptable statement, 'It is not difficult for savages and children to be artists, but it is difficult for the grown-up civilised person to be one.' Elsewhere he says, 'Everyone is potentially an artist, since everyone has a unique spiritual experience.' That runs with Fromentin's great saying that the true aim of painting is to paint the invisible, or, in other words, to express our own personal vision. We can't do that if we are dragged down by the effort to represent things as they look to the outward eye with a technique that has been imposed upon us. Turner's real expression of himself, his spiritual vision, were his water colours, 'Delight Drawings,' as Ruskin called them, not such material theatricalities as 'Dido Building Carthage.'"

"Then do you want me to give up painting big pictures?" he asked.

"By no means. There is always the 1 per cent, which includes the public galleries of the world. Live and let live. Nobody will be more delighted than I when you paint a masterpiece, but I only beg you not to try it too often, and I also ask you not to forget the 99 per cent, many of whom hunger for art, and who go unsatisfied because painters, a reserved, aloof and rather narrow lot, will not cater for them. The kind of things the 99 per cent want are what your son will one day do, if you allow him to follow his own personal vision, and those things of yours pinned there on the walls. What the 99 per cent needs is a choice among an artistic freight that has tossed overboard those old-men-of-the-sea—laborious technique and inflated prices."

While I was talking a shaft of light from the setting sun darted into the room. We both looked from the window and both exclaimed. Our exclamations differed, but each meant, "How beautiful!"

He seized a 20x16 board, and began to work excitedly, impulsively, thinking of nothing but the joy of interpreting the spasm of beauty that evening had revealed. He worked on, forgetful of time, forgetful of me, forgetful of technique and ambition, and I, watching this "Delight Picture" growing under his hand, murmured: "This is the real man, this is the childlike personal vision, this is Number One of the belated offering to the 99 per

cent who need the rejuvenation of art. This is a Tomorrow picture—this flash of the moment eternal."

While he was painting two lines of Meredith's were pattering through my head:

> Life that had robbed us of immortal things,
> This little moment merciful gave.

This little moment! To seize that moment, that flashing moment of insight, which comes to everybody. And to make the moment eternal. Is not that what is needed?

PART III

THE ART OF YESTERDAY

THE ART OF YESTERDAY

1. O RARE WANG WEI!

"HE fasted three days before opening the Roll."

Long ago, when I read that sentence, I became interested in Chinese painting.

To fast three days before examining a painting, so as to be prepared for encounter with a masterpiece, argues a height of connoisseurship rather uncommon. The incident is authentic. Prime Minister Tung Ch'i-Ch'ang of Hangchow (1555-1636) was the connoisseur, who fasted three days before opening the Roll, and Wang Wei (699-759) was the artist (he was also a poet). The Roll in question was Wang Wei's "Snow Clearing Up on a Mountain by a River," painted about 750 A. D.

O rare Wang Wei! We Europeans can never have the privilege of fasting before one of your masterpieces for the adequate reason that none have come westward. The nearest we can get to the experience is the landscape in the British Museum painted in the style of Wang Wei by one Meng-Fu. Even in this derivation, Wang Wei's mountains and river have the sweep of an eagle.

Think of it! Here is a nation that records the

existence of two sages, one the inventor of writing, the other the inventor of drawing, who flourished under the Yellow Emperor more than 4,500 years ago; a nation that has allowed the Japanese, once their pupils, to override them in art, and trounce them in war; a nation that made most of the discoveries of natural science without troubling to apply them, and who today do the labour of the world and wash out notes on the chronology of the Chinese dynasties from my shirt-cuff.

East is east and west is west and never the twain shall meet. In art certainly they never meet, except in that awful room at a Paris Exposition where certain Japanese artists, who had studied in Paris, showed portraits done in the western convention. Oh, how sad, and bad, and mad they were. A Chinese artist would never have descended to such traffic with the round-eyed vigorous westerner. The modern Chinese paintings, rolled up as of yore, painted this century, painted a year ago, are all in the immemorial tradition; a little freer in brushwork, but dealing with the old themes exquisitely, as of old, filling the space, unrealistic, yet catching the spirit of the wild duck, the bamboo, clouds, purling water and stealthy fish; always decorative, always reverent to nature; always akin, but differing, of course, in degree, to essential beauty.

The convention of Chinese painting has never changed. Masters great, masters small, have passed across the centuries, but the ritual, the grave ceremony of the art, in production and in presentation,

persists to this day. The pictures are on rolls, and the master of the house never displays more than three or four at a time, always choosing those suitable to the rank and taste of his guest. Special pictures, thoughtfully selected, were surely shown to Prince Chun (circa 1086), who, as a painter, "exhausted every charm of the bamboo." And to Wu Tao-tzu, "a poverty-stricken orphan," who "now stands by universal consent as the head of all Chinese painters."

About A. D. 750 the Emperor requested Wu Tao-tzu to paint the Chialing River. After months he returned without any sketches. Asked by the Emperor to explain, Wu Tao-tzu answered, "I have it all in my heart." Special pictures, too, must have been shown to that minor painter (but what subtlety was his) who said that it is comparatively easy to paint fine weather turning to rain, but very difficult to suggest rainy weather turning to fine.

A great race of artists—these silent, sensitive Chinese. To them painting was poetry, and poetry painting. They would speak of written pictures and painted poems, and in their pictures a verse about a swallow and the swallow in flight mingle as dawn and day.

In China the custom of the studio has been preserved for centuries and centuries. The Chinese artist paints usually from a height; his viewpoint is that of a bird on the wing; he stands before a red table upon which the silken painting-ground is spread, and with full brush and unerring instinct

he puts down in rhythmic sweeps, or in sumptuous detail, the memory of something that he has stored in his heart—today a river winding through miles of country, tomorrow a plum blossom, a tiger, a prince or a sage, always in a decorative environment. The Chinese artist is never vulgar, never robustious. Whistler is China's western child.

Centuries ago it was ordained that there are six fine arts—ceremonies, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy, and mathematics.

Note that word "calligraphy." From it Chinese painting has sprung.

In the beginning, in China, writing and drawing were one. So decorative were the six styles of script, or ideographs as they are called, that a poem, written, say, in the "grass" script, is as attractive as a painting, and is shown as if it were a painting. The change from calligraphy to painting was gradual. Indeed, it may have been almost instantaneous, dating from the time when Meng Tien, employed in building the Great Wall in 200 B. C., used his leisure in inventing the writing brush for use on silk, a great advance from the stylus painfully incising letters on the bamboo. Suppose that Meng Tien, sitting one day in the shade of the Great Wall, made a poem about the swallow and wrote it down with flowing brush in pretty decorative squares. What more natural than that his sweetheart (they must have had them even in B. C.) should ask him to make a picture of the swallow about which he had sung so prettily, or perhaps she made one herself in the letter she

wrote back to him. The idea "caught on," as we say. It developed; but calligraphy has never been quite dethroned. Everyone who has seen a Chinese or Japanese picture has noticed what an important part the signature plays in the decorative scheme. Whistler had this in mind when he signed his pictures with a butterfly.

This marriage between calligraphy (how a Chinese artist would hate the typewriter) and painting has always interested me. Once I asked my amiable laundryman to put into Chinese script that haunting poem from the Christ Church MS. called "Preparations"; but the negotiations fell through—trade was too good. And when I inquired at museums for specimens of fine Chinese calligraphy, I was met with negative shakes of the head, and shown superb examples of Chinese painting—museum pieces. "But I want to see how it all grew," I said. "I want to watch the bud blossom into the flower."

Then one day by chance (is it chance?) the opportunity came. I heard that a lady had arrived in America from China bringing with her a curiously interesting collection that had belonged to a Chinese merchant who had spent years gathering it in from all quarters. It contained no fewer than 40 specimens of calligraphy, some Ming (1365-1644), others Ch'ing (1644-1911). The poems have all been translated and a copy of the translation goes with each scroll. And there were also in this collection 20 ancient and important pictures, 20 ancient pictures of charm but less important, and

35 quite modern works. Looking at them, the westerner may at last understand the significance of Chinese calligraphy, how it merged gradually into painting, and how the art is bound up with the dreams, ideals, ethics and philosophy of China, symbolised in handwriting, which is so personal, so intimate, which offers such opportunities for loving adornment, and symbolistic messages from one heart to another. And we have thrown it all over for the typewriter.

I spent an afternoon examining this collection, and as one after another of the pictures—calligraphic and pictorial—was unrolled and hung on the white wall, I lived the thought and heart of China: I saw in imagination the Chinese gentleman who hung two scripts, decorative as pictures, on either side of his desk. One said to him, "Although man cannot see"—and the other said to him, "Stored in my heart I myself know." Then I was shown a picture of a Chinese interior with children paying their respects to their grandparents on New Year's Day—a delightful room, a real Chinese room, a household where calligraphy is still treated as an art, where Chinese pictures are properly shown according to the custom of the country, and the ritual of the Book of Rights.

And I said to myself—"Here is an opportunity for a museum to step down from its pedestal of exclusiveness to the ways where the people walk and live. Let a typical Chinese room be built, a dwelling room, not a show room, and let there be exhibited in it, at stated times, a collection such

as this, showing how calligraphy merged into painting, shown as it would be shown in China, in the right surroundings, with the right furniture. That would be real art education—the intelligent understanding of one nation by another—home calling intimately to home, not museum vying splendiferously with museum.

And presiding over this room I see the benign and ascetic figure of that admirable Prime Minister who fasted three days before opening the Wang Wei Roll.

O rare Wang Wei!

2. JAPANESE PRINTS

BETWEEN Japanese paintings and Japanese colour prints there is a deep difference. The paintings were done by men of good family for aristocrats. The colour prints were done by men of the people for the people. But genius is not a respecter of persons. So some of the eighteenth and nineteenth century colour prints are works of genius, as are some of the venerable paintings. You may buy Japanese colour prints today for a few cents: you will have to pay hundreds of dollars for a beauty, and for a great beauty perhaps thousands, if it also happens to be a great rarity.

I have a story to tell, but before beginning, it may be well to say a few words about the Japanese colour print, for the useful writer always assumes that his reader knows nothing. The art is fairly modern. The dates of Utamaro are 1753-1805; of Hokusai 1760-1849; of Hiroshige 1796-1858. These colour prints were meant for the people, as the coloured Christmas supplements of the London illustrated weeklies are meant for the people. If you ask me why the Japanese colour prints are so much better, I can only answer that people get the colour prints and the Christmas supplements they deserve. Eastern art has always been decorative and symbolistic. It has never made an idol of

representation as Western art has. It has been content with two dimensions—height and width. Western art has made a fetish of the third dimension, depth. In this convention the West has produced great and wonderful works, and in doing so it has, to a large extent, lost sight of the injunction that a picture should be primarily a decoration. It was the decorative quality of the Japanese colour prints, and their acknowledgment of the eloquence of empty space that made Whistler, when he first saw them, slip from the hand of Courbet and glide into the arms of the Japanese.

I have said that the popular school of painting in Japan, of which the colour print was the chief outcome, is of recent growth. There were Primitives in this as in all other arts. One was Moronobu. His father was a maker of gold embroidery. The son was first a dyer and then a painter. This Primitive was at the height of his modest fame in 1700. A good date to remember.

The Japanese colour prints—art for the people, "Ukiyoye," which means "Mirror of the Passing World"—have virtually all been produced since 1700. They were really potboilers. Painting was the fine thing to do, but the colour prints brought in the ready money. The same thing happens today. A man earns a living by illustrating, while looking forward to, and longing for the time when he will have a picture on the line at the Royal or National Academy, or a one-man show in Bond Street or Fifth Avenue. But Fame is a pranky mistress, and Utamaro, Hokusai, and Hiroshige

are famous today, not because they painted symbolistic pictures for the well-to-do, but because they made cheap colour prints for the People.

For these colour prints were cheap, very cheap. Would you like to know how they were made? Three stages were necessary, and three persons:

1. An artist made the design on thin, semi-transparent paper.
2. An engraver cut it on a block of cherry-wood, one block for each colour.
3. A printer printed the colour blocks in succession till the work was complete.

The Japanese is a wonderfully artistic workman. To Western eyes the excellence of this colour block work is amazing.

These colour prints were thought little of in Japan. They were sold for a trifle; they were scattered broadcast. Toward the end of the eighteenth century a few came into the possession of some Dutch merchants. For years little was thought of them in Europe or in Japan. Sometimes they were used as wrapping paper for goods. But by the second half of the nineteenth century the De Goncourts, Bing, Gonse, and such artists as Degas, Monet, and Whistler began to hymn their beauty. Since those days the appreciation and value of Japanese colour prints has increased by bounds. In the past 10 years knowledge about them, and the desire to possess them, has enormously advanced. Japan now knows their value. And England. And America.

I have been a dabbler in collecting them for a

quarter of a century. I own five beauties. I always forget who they are by. I know only that they are beautiful, and that the artist's signature on a flame-colour background is part of the decorative scheme.

I also know that the front seat of an auction is the place to learn about pictures. So when it was announced that 400 Japanese colour prints were to be sold at the Anderson Galleries I determined to be present. It is rather an ordeal to sit from a quarter past 8 till nearly 11 through two evenings, so I took with me a copy of Arthur Waley's "Japanese Poetry" just received from London, thinking that I would beguile the time in learning two or three Japanese "Tanka" or "Short Songs," five lines long. In the "Ten Thousand Leaves," an Anthology of Japanese poems written between 670 and 759 A. D., there are 4,173 "Tanka." I did not learn any. The sale was too exciting, partly because, at the last moment, a friend gave me a marked catalogue and asked me to bid for 32 items. I did not get one of them. He is a connoisseur. He knows the best. But there were other connoisseurs in the room, more ardent than he. He was willing to go to $500 for Shunsho's "Portrait of a Young Woman." It fetched $1,025. He offered $300 for Hiroshige's "The Bow Moon." It brought $475. And for Shunyei's "Two Women Conversing," a beautiful thing, like a Goya, he suggested $300. It fetched $390.

But I was not thinking so much about prices during those two long-short evenings, as about the difference between Eastern and Western art. How astray we have gone in our search for realism, and our competitive anxiety to produce exhibition pictures. Even the commonest of these Japanese pictures please the eyes because they are decorative and follow the laws of rhythm. They are in a tradition which honours mass, line, form and colour. Their colour captivates: their lyricism invites. And as for subject, here is a description of one—"A mother, holding a bunch of iris flowers, is accompanied by her daughter. They are highly pleased to hear the notes of the cuckoo." Another shows a heron perched on a trunk of a weeping willow; another a flock of sea birds flying over waves; another girls promenading under wistaria lanterns; another a woman and child admiring the moon, rising above a grey cloud. They were of all kinds and of all qualities ranging from five to a thousand dollars. I have long passed the $5 stage. I am afraid I have become rather an expert, and must content myself with the five beauties I possess, for this sale proclaimed that there are now few bargains to be picked up. People know too much. A poet had to pay $160 for Hiroshige's "Downpour of Rain." I had hoped to get it for $100.

When the sale was finished I returned to my apartment and pondered over an album of reproductions of important Western paintings. Realism and

dashing technique. Size and swagger. Hardly a lyric among them.

Perhaps some day a Western artist will arise who, realising how suitable the essential decorative quality of these Japanese colour prints is for wall decoration, will set himself to produce pictures for the house, not for the exhibition gallery. The effort, I know, is being made, witness the coloured Wood Block exhibition at Boston, but it will be a long climb. Are we not a little vulgar in our eagerness for the big picture, by a big name, in a big, shiny frame, exposed on the pretentious wall of a big house? No, I won't say again that East is East and West is West. But it is.

Japan has a long tradition of this lyrical, rhythmical picture—one thought, one emotion, one reflection, simply and suddenly expressed. How the tradition has lasted! The "Tanka" or "Short Songs," although many of them were written an immense period of time before the Colour Prints were made, have a similar inspiration and form. Listen—

The spring rain
Which hangs to the branches
Of the green willow
Looks like pearls
Threaded on a string.

Here is another—

The wild geese returning
Through the misty sky
Behold, they look like
A letter written
In faint ink

And

Beautiful
From the direction of my house
Clouds rise and come!

I could find a poem in this book for every lovable picture that flitted through the auction room.

3. ANCIENT ART AND THE SOLDIER

I WAITED on a cold Sunday for the Metropolitan Museum of New York to open. There were soldiers among the expectant group, and one of them was gazing intently upon a picture in a Sunday journal. The soldier moved the paper as if inviting me to share what he was enjoying. It was a monument to Segantini, the Italian landscape painter, which has been erected at S. Moritz, showing a flock of sculptured sheep pasturing round the base, under a range of the mountains among which Segantini lived, and which he painted with forceful, sculpturesque beauty.

I like telling soldiers things and I never make the mistake of "talking down" to them. So, as the rain pattered, and the doors remained firmly closed, I said—

"Segantini was one of the most original of modern landscape painters. His technique was personal; his vision was personal; he fulfilled his mission, and, strange to say, he has founded no school."

"Was he better than the ancient painters?" asked the Soldier.

"That is a good question," I replied. "All modern landscape is better than ancient landscape painting, simply because in ancient times landscape was not regarded as a serious branch of art. Man was the

object, nature was an accessory. It was only when man began to love and appreciate nature that he began to paint landscapes—for exhibition."

"But were the ancient fellows who were not landscape painters better than the moderns? Our chaps were having a talk about this last night, and I thought I would come here today to see some of the old things."

"In sculpture," said I, "—within their prescribed limits—the ancients were undoubtedly better, but, speaking generally, art runs in circles, which are usually started by the rise of some great man; then the imitators rush in, and the movement dissipates itself in futilities. Then another great man arises, the circle begins again, often taking a higher sweep, but it usually ends in decadence. The end of the circle in the island of Crete, in the Ægean Sea, round about 1500 B. C., was very like the end of the circle marked by the advent of the Russian dancers just before the war. There were frescoes in Crete in 1500 B. C., which might have stood as posters for the Russian ballet in 1914 A. D. Each was decadent, and each, to my thinking, rather unpleasant."

The Soldier looked rather mystified, but it is my way, when I am interested in a subject, not to mind very much if my thought is not being followed.

The Soldier was an intelligent man. "Where can I see these things from Crete?" he asked.

"Why, here! The new classical wing of the museum, including many of the things excavated

from the palace of Knossus, in Crete, Minoan period (you remember the legend of the Minotaur) is just the right place. We'll go around together, if you like. I should enjoy having your opinion about ancient art."

"I know more about the Lewis gun," said the Soldier. "Hello, they're opening the doors."

At the entrance to the new wing we were confronted by a row of Roman statues, mighty and magisterial, rough sentinels, guarding the evocations of beauty by the delicate Greeks arranged within.

"What do you think of them?" I asked.

"Formidable," promptly answered the soldier.

"Precisely the right word. '*Le mot juste*,'" I said. "These are originals. Always study originals, never casts, if you can help it. An original is as superior to a cast as fresh salmon is to tinned salmon. Now we will examine some of the Cretan recoveries. There—look at those frescoes! Unfortunately they are not originals, except bits here and there, but the restorations have been done very skilfully."

Nearly a dozen of these frescoes hang upon the walls of the first room of the new wing. They are extraordinarily modern-looking and they show, with numerous other finds from the palace of Knossus in Crete, what a high state of civilisation and luxury was reached in this island beginning about 3000 B. C. The procession of three figures in gay apparel might be an illustration in a pantomime number of the London *Sketch;* the fresco

of the "Cat Hunting a Pheasant," the circus scene with a bull, and the girl toreadors, look astonishingly modern.

"And they all amount to nothing," said I, "except to show that the desire for fun and relaxation is as old as man, and that man of 4,000 and 5,000 years ago worked on the same narrow and satiety producing lines as today. Now we will look at something real."

We walked into the hall of the new wing and paused before No. 12, "Head of Athlete," second half of Fifth Century B. C., possibly by Kresilas, and No. 14, "Head of Youth," Fourth Century B. C., school of Scopas. I said, "There, in that convention, is finality, perfection, essential beauty. These fragments are by masters. A work by a modern master, like Rodin, may equal them. It is not better, it is different; a different vision, a different technique—that's all."

We passed into the Pompeian room. I shook my head. "Here again the kindly earth has preserved records of a past civilisation, historically extremely interesting, but as art—negligible. Pompeii was the Coney Island, or shall I say the Newport, of Naples, and when this pleasant resort was destroyed by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, in 79 A. D., all the vanity and vainglory were buried. The wall paintings you see here were discovered in 1900 in a village near Boscoreale, not far from Pompeii on the slope of Vesuvius. What do you think of them?"

"Pretty," said the Soldier.

Once more my eyes gleamed. "Again the right word," I said. "They're pretty—no more. They reflect the day, so they are interesting, but as art they don't count. Follow me."

The patient son of Mars was led to the three Assyrian alabaster reliefs from the palace of Ashur Nashir Pal.

"Originals," said I. "Unapproachable. Nothing that has done service in this convention approaches them. Here relief carving, consummate technique, vision deep and restrained, symbolism perfectly open, yet completely hidden, reaches the zenith centuries before the Parthenon, the zenith of Greek civilisation, was built. Look! There is a model of the Parthenon, not as it looks today under the blue sky of Athens, maimed, broken, but more beautiful than ever, much more beautiful, I tell you, than it looked on the day it was finished, painted, gilded as you see it here, in the restoration by C. Chipiez. It is the most beautiful building in the world; it is the zenith of classical perfection. And yonder, across the gangway, is a model of the great hall of the temple of Karnak, a dozen centuries earlier. Greek perfection soothes and satisfies; but the ripe art of Greece,—man made perfect, man deified,—lacks the sense of awe and mystery—man abashed before the vastness of eternity—that the sterner art of Egypt and Assyria suggest. It is on the promise of Egypt and Assyria, not in the performance of Greece, that the young craftsmen of today are seeking their inspiration. Art changes, it does not necessarily improve. It

sweeps in circles, and always after Last there cometh First."

. . . .

"Well, I must be going," said the Soldier. "I guess there's more ancient art than modern."

"Perfectly true," I murmured. "Like Marshal Foch you have a way of saying the right thing."

4. THE MOUNT OF VISION

ON the easel were two of the Elder Painter's newly finished pictures. They were beautiful: they sang with colour, the radiant impulsive colour that is a gift, that can never be taught; the trembling touch of a rare violinist cannot be taught, nor the decisive handling of intricate machinery by a rare mechanic. The subjects of these two pictures were—what you will! You saw flowers in glass vases, lovely embroideries, graceful inward smiling or brooding Chinese and Japanese figures all woven into a pattern by a master-hand; not actual life, but the happy life lived in a happy dream of amassed memories.

I gazed, gazed again, smiled happily, then said—

"Somebody wrote the other day that the aim of art is 'to beautify existence.'. You've done that in these two pictures. And the satisfactory thing to me is that you've done it by way of symbolism, not by way of realism. I'm tired of realism; it leads nowhere; it offers the imagination no avenue of escape from the stark realities of life. I never look at an issue of an illustrated weekly journal without a feeling of acute depression. Symbolism is the only method, but it must be sincere symbolism. If a man doesn't believe in sacred or secular symbolism, he had better by far paint the actual facts of life,

which, at any rate, his eyes believe in. Let him paint a quarry team on a macadam road, or a sacred picture of the gaudy ephemera of popes and cardinals. But such things are not art; they are illustrations. And talking of sacred pictures, I consider Raphael's Colonna altarpiece quite a bad picture."

The Elder Painter smiled. He seemed to approve of this outrageous sentiment. The Younger Painter said, "Whew!" and then added: "Why? Why is the Colonna altarpiece a bad picture?"

"Because Raphael didn't believe in what he was painting. It is insincere. Raphael, of course, was a great master and all that, but he got to love principalities, and powers, and pomp and flattery more than his art, so his art suffered. He couldn't paint badly, he was a genius, but he fell into the languor of painting easily and fluently. Ease, not ardour, encompassed him, so he became one of the world's passing bells."

"How?" asked the unruffled Elder Painter.

"The phrase is Ruskin's, one of his magnificent passages. I'll read it to you. Here it is in my notebook, among a number of magisterial utterances which I like to read when I am hanging upon a strap in the subway. They are antidotes to asphyxiation.

" 'The names of great painters are like passing bells. In Velasquez you hear sounded the fall of Spain; in Titian that of Venice; in Leonardo that of Milan; in Raphael that of Rome. And there is profound justice in this: for in proportion to the

nobleness of power is the guilt of its use for purposes vain or vile; and hitherto the greater the art the more surely has it been used, and used solely for the decoration of pride, or the provoking of sensuality.'"

"Fine!" said the Elder Painter.

"Great!" said the Younger Painter.

"Go to the Metropolitan Museum in the city of New York," I continued, "stand before Raphael's Colonna altarpiece, and you will know why Rome fell—the decoration of pride, etc., etc. Then let your eyes range from this fluent and heartless 'Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints' to two portraits, simple, straightforward portraits, by Frans Hals that hang on either side—no pomp, no power, just genius, sincerity and ardour. Even the names of these sitters are forgotten. One is called 'Portrait of a Man,' the other 'Portrait of a Woman.' They are tolerably ugly and quite ordinary, but they are the essence of art, the fine essence, a fusion of technique and vision, the commonplace made rare and regal, a sleeve painted with such swift and lyrical intuition that it becomes a poem. Yet what are these portraits? They are merely literal representations of——"

The Elder Painter smiled.

"Yes, yes," I cried. "These two portraits by Hals are stark realism——"

The telephone bell rang. It always does at critical moments.

When the Elder Painter returned from the instrument, I broke in with my interrupted explanation.

"Call them realism, but are they? Are the works of Velasquez and Manet realism? No, no! Hals in these two portraits has painted something much more than actual people; he has painted their envelopment in light and atmosphere; in a word he has painted spiritual qualities. See? So we come to this paradox. Raphael painting the 'Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints' produces an ineffective, material picture. Frans Hals painting a dull Dutch man and woman, produces an effective, spiritual picture."

"Well?" said the Elder Painter.

I walked to the window, and looked out upon one of the most wonderful sights in the world—the sight of New York from a twelfth story, at the crepuscular hour when daylight and artificial light begin to mingle. Slowly I spoke, and with difficulty. "It is foolish to say that symbolism in art is wiser and more welcome than realism. A painter can offer us just which he likes so long as he convinces us of his integrity. It is character that tells, and it is the biographers who have confused us. They have made Raphael an angel, and Hals a toper. Whereas their lives are written in their works—that bad sacred picture by Raphael, those good secular pictures by Hals. Innkeeper Hals was true to his love of art. Courtier Raphael was true to his live of luxury. It was the innkeeper who scaled the Mount of Vision.

"Each painted what he had become—Raphael with ease, Hals with difficulty. 'By the thorn-path and none other, is the Mount of Vision won.'"

5. THE JUFFROUW AND VERMEER

SHE was Dutch—that was plain. Her father is a modest frame-maker and artists' colourman in one of the little towns washed by the Zuider Zee, where painters congregate. So she knows a little about art.

When she came on a brief visit to New York I was asked to show her "something special in the picture way," as it was thought advisable to accelerate her art education. Well, I reflected, Gustave Courbet was a big man, and a pioneer man, and as there will probably never again be so complete an exhibition of his works as the 40 examples at the Metropolitan Museum, I'll take her there. Her name troubled me. It seemed to be all composed of the letters j and y. I could neither pronounce nor spell it, so I begged her to give me a generic word for her standing in life. "You may call me Juffrouw," she answered. "Which means —" I began. "It means either married or single, and any class." "Good," I replied, "and why should I not address you as Meisje?" "Because that means a flapper, which I am not, and Mevrouw means a woman of high rank, and Vrouw a woman of ordinary rank."

Having thus made all clear, the Yuffrouw and I started out for the Courbet exhibition. On the

way we passed a handsome building, and I said, "That's one of the nicest looking houses on Fifth Avenue." "It's like a Dutch house," she cried, looking very pleased. "Yes," I answered, "it's the Knickerbocker Club," not caring to add—"It's more Georgian than Dutch!" Our pedagogic adventure, you observe, was beginning rather well. Presently she said, "Tell me of this Courbet."

"About 1850 Gustave Courbet was at the height of his fame, and also of his abuse, for all pioneers are abused by the comfortable orthodox, always have been, and always will be. He may be called the father of modern Realism; he was an out and out Realist—that is, he maintained that the painter should only paint what he sees before him. He must not invent; his imagination or fancy must be entirely subservient to his eyes. Courbet was great because he kept to this idea; he never swerved. He had rather a heavy touch, but a good Courbet is so massive, deep-delved and weighty that we are content to miss delicacy and charm. His landscapes and seascapes haven't a hint of the fairy-like grace of a Corot or a Monet, but his colour is magnificent, and in such pictures as 'The Lake,' 'The Wave,' 'The Mediterranean' and the 'Environs of Ornans,' he strikes an organ note that is like a swelling passage in Milton."

"Oh," said the Juffrouw, and gave what lady novelists call a sly smile. For a moment I thought that I would take her to see Charlie Chaplin instead of Gustave Courbet, but by this time we were at the doors of the Metropolitan Museum.

"Now," I said, "first I'll show you some of my favourites, and then before seeing the Courbets we'll just look at a wonderful, a very wonderful Vermeer, showing a Dutch girl opening a casement, letting light into a room and into the world of art——"

"Johannes Vermeer of Delft," cried the Juffrouw, "he was as great as Rembrandt. People visit The Hague just to see his Meisje and his 'View of Delft.'"

"Well, well," I muttered, "perhaps it is you who will educate me." But the Juffrouw was not going to depose me easily, so I passed before the "Portraits of a Woman and a Man," by Frans Hals, in Gallery II, and said, "Can you beat them?"

"Have you seen the Frans Hals old women in the Museum at Haarlem?" asked the Juffrouw.

I had, but I did not want to be reminded of them at the moment. We looked at Rembrandt's "Old Woman Cutting Her Nails," and at Hals' "Yonker Ramp and His Sweetheart," and the Juffrouw smiled again.

Little Holland has a great past.

Then we paused before that gay and quaint panorama by Patinir called "Imaginary Landscape," the kind of thing that Courbet said should never be painted, as if the world is made up of Courbets and nobody else; and from this we passed to that lovely panel, which was once a decoration for a settle or a marriage chest by Sano di Pietro, a golden harmony which is as unlike a Dutch picture as a sunbeam is unlike a shop window. The

Juffrouw was not altogether pleased with this fancy of Sano di Pietro's, this Sienese rendering of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. She is used to black frames, and this frame is like a rainbow. She was more complimentary to two exquisite pictures that hang side by side, Lawrence's "The Rev. William Pennicott," one of the best portraits this unequal artist ever painted, and Constable's "Tottenham Church," a gem, Dutch precision dipped in the freshness of Constable.

Approaching Room 26, I requested the Juffrouw to close her eyes. "Now open them," I cried. Before her was Vermeer's "Young Woman with a Water Jug," or to give it the prettier title, "Young Woman Opening a Casement."

The Juffrouw gave a cry of delight. She lingered there. I could hardly persuade her to leave this picture of a girl letting light into a room. Light is here honoured by this wonder-artist, Vermeer of Delft, who was born 197 years before Courbet and 210 years before Manet. It was Manet who announced that Light is the chief object in a picture. Vermeer of Delft had already made it so, over 200 years before. The subject is negligible, merely a girl opening a casement with one hand, and with the other holding a brass ewer, but mark how light filters through and encompasses everything; mark how superbly the objects are placed, everything in relation, yet everything is subservient to the girl's figure, to the placid face, so quiescent, yet so watchful under the white hood—the Vermeer whites—and there too are the Vermeer blues

—those wonderful Vermeer blues. She opens the casement and light, more light steals into the room, and all the pictures around seem commonplace, for this is a Masterpiece.

With difficulty I persuaded the Juffrouw to leave the Vermeer. "We've come out to see the Courbets," I said, "and Vermeer, great though he be, must not stand in the way."

A noble show the Gustave Courbets make, and patiently I conducted the Juffrouw from one to another of the 40 examples. "Yes," I said in reply to her question, "he was a forceful, ebullient, shapely man, proud of his will and proud of his appearance. You see his portrait in no fewer than four of these pictures. He is the elegant huntsman leaning against the tree in 'The Quarry'; he is the ecstatic 'Violoncellist'; he is the fierce 'Huntsman on Horseback Finding the Trail.' You can gather from these pictures what Courbet looked like to himself."

"What was Vermeer of Delft like?" asked the Juffrouw.

"Nobody knows! He made one picture of himself painting in his studio, but he turned his face away."

"Dutch modesty," murmured the Juffrouw.

We then looked at the Courbets again, as I was conscious that the Juffrouw was showing herself a little lacking in enthusiasm. Finally I said to her, "You seem to be rather tepid in your admiration of Courbet."

"It's your fault," answered the Juffrouw. "You should not have shown me the Vermeer first."

6. I HANG HOLBEINS

SOME people when travelling make their temporary dwelling-place homey by arranging about the room photographs of their relatives—and others. I give my temporary dwelling-place an air of serenity by affixing to the wall, with glass pushpins, photographs of the ladies and gentlemen of King Henry VIII's Court.

It is a whim. These sweet, arch ladies and swarthy, elegant men, relics of the days when folk were unashamed to dress, and to pose, are an antidote to the Labour complexity. They remind me of a time when life went softly (when Henry VIII was not about), and possibly with less friction than in the present strenuous days. It is comforting to look at the gay gravity of the Lady Vaux, the Lady Lister, the Lady Mertas, the Lady Audley, the Lady Parker, the Lady Barkley, and at such pretty men as William Parr, Marquis of Northampton; Thomas, Lord Vaux; Thomas, Earl of Surrey; Sir Thomas More's son, and Mr. Elliott, Knight, all so decorative, so assured of the supremacy of their class. Sometimes I think that I will place under them a row of the Labour members and their wives just to remind myself that all passes, and that only love is eternal.

These ladies and gentlemen of the court of King

Henry VIII who decorate my walls are by Holbein. They are 26 in number. I have fixed the photographs upon the wall, two inches apart, in two long lines, and they have become extraordinarily companionable. The Lady Parker is an engaging child; Lady Barkley is a frisky matron; the Lady Audley is an ascetic in jewels. Lord Brooke of Cobman would be an ill man to appear before for poaching, and I pity the hind who had to answer to Waramus, Archbishop of Canterbury, for an offence against ecclesiastical law. There is quite a likeness between Edward, Prince of Wales, who became Edward VI, and the present Prince of Wales. Each has the candid, ingenuous look which sometimes wears away.

Through the art of Holbein these portraits done in Tudor times, done lovingly and patiently by a master, speak to us. This is the immortality of which Horace sang. One thing is common to all these portraits. Holbein focuses on the face. The body, the clothes, the accessories, save when he is especially interested in a jewel or a fur garment, are secondary. The face is the thing with Holbein; the character, the expression, the disposition, marvellously he builds it up; he searches for every tiny depression or protuberance, every accent and innocence, and indicates them with an economy of line and shading which is the despair of artists in these days, when we are supposed to have learnt so much more about the art of drawing. Holbein could do anything from a miniature portrait, exquisite and unrivalled, the size of a watch,

to the enormous fresco he painted in 1537 for the Privy Chamber of the Palace of Whitehall, showing in a group Henry VIII and Queen Jane Seymour, with Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. This fresco was destroyed by fire in 1598, but a portion of the original cartoon is still preserved at Chatsworth.

Unlike Velasquez, this industrious German of genius made drawings for his portraits. Thanks to the excellence of modern photography, anybody, for a few dollars, may surround himself, as I have, with Holbein drawings, of which over 80 are preserved in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle. These drawings have a curious and eventful history. Once they were lost or forgotten and were rediscovered through the curiosity of a Queen. Early in the reign of George II, while rummaging one day in an old bureau in Kensington Palace, Queen Caroline found them hidden away in a drawer. That was a lucky day for the prying Queen; in this old bureau she also found the priceless drawings by Leonardo da Vinci which, with the Holbeins, make the glory of the royal collection at Windsor. You can never really know Leonardo and Holbein until you have sat a long morning in the Royal Library handling and examining the supreme handiwork of these two masters. I suppose King George can stroll into the library ny day after dinner and play with the drawings, if he is in the mood. But royal people are not usually as interested in their possessions as are some of their subjects.

How did these Holbeins get to the Royal Library of Windsor Castle? It is a long story, and the drawings are justly described as "much travelled." Holbein visited England in 1526, 1531 and 1539; he became the King's painter, and when he died these drawings were presumably among his effects in his studio in the Palace of Whitehall. Some time afterwards they were bound together in a big book and remained overlooked, forgotten, until the rediscovery of them by Queen Caroline in the old bureau. She must have been a lady of taste, for she had them framed and glazed, and for many years they decorated her apartments, first at Windsor and afterwards in Kensington Palace. Before this they had gone through many hands, passing in and out of royal possession. Monarchs amused themselves by trading their objects of art (they cannot do it now) and we find Charles I exchanging the Holbein drawings, with the Earl of Pembroke, for a little picture by Raphael of "S. George Slaying the Dragon." There is no accounting for taste. Perhaps Charles I was bored by these ladies and gentlemen of Henry VIII's court; perhaps they reminded him too closely of the ladies and gentlemen of his own court.

A hundred or so years before Charles sold them they belonged to poor little King Edward VI. There can be no doubt about that as the following occurs in a royal inventory of 1590—"A greate booke of Pictures doone by Haunce Holbyn of certyne Lordes, Ladyes, gentlemen and gentlewomen in King Henry the 8: his tyme, their names

subscribed by Sr John Cheke, Secretary to King Edward the 6, wch book was King Edward the 6."
Spelling was not the strong point of Tudor folk. In another Court account book Holbein is referred to as Mr. Hanse Holby. The antiquary and art historian, Edward Norgate, of Charles II's time, in his "Miniatura or the Art of Limning" in the chapter on crayon drawing, says—"A better way was used by Holbein, by priming a large paper with a carnation or complexion of flesh colour, whereby he made pictures by the life, of many great lords and ladies of his time, with black and red chalke, with other flesh colours, made up dry and hard, like small pencil sticks."

The magnificent collection of Holbein drawings at Windsor in four portfolios, now properly mounted and arranged, does not by any means contain the whole of his drawing production. There are a number at Basel and others in private and public collections. Some have suffered from time, careless guardianship and the impudent hand of the amateur, but what a superb monument they are to Holbein's genius. It is supposed that most of these drawings were preliminary studies for his magnificent portraits. But as only about 30 oil portraits are known which correspond with the 80-odd Windsor drawings, there are probably still a number of Holbein portraits hidden away in garrets or in dark corridors. They await discovery, a discovery that will be equal to a small gold mine to the fortunate owner.

Meanwhile those who have searched their garrets

and dark corridors, and have found nothing that looks at all like a Holbein may console themselves with pinning on their walls a selection of Holbein facsimiles as I have done. They will find that daily they grow more friendly with the Lady Parker, and the Lady Audley, with William Parr, Marquis of Northampton, and Thomas, Lord Vaux, with all those who stalked and prattled through Tudor times. Art leads to history. Slowly one learns something, more and more, about these attractive makers of social England, and the thought comes to me why does not some historical novelist weave a Tudor romance about these portraits, with the eighth Harry in the centre? . . . A Tudor Romance by ———. Illustrated by Holbein.

7. LEONARDO'S SMILE

INTELLIGENT critics are always saying that a great work of art is produced only through intense feeling, that pigments must be engineered by passion. And every painter knows that in labouring on a gallery picture, the difficulty is to sustain the rapture of the first sketch.

This applies also to writing—even to art writing. A man writes well when he is moved. There was an article in the *Burlington Magazine* on "Florentine Painting Before 1500," by Sir Claude Phillips, apropos the exhibition of early Florentine pictures at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, a delightful subject, a well-informed, scholarly article. For nine columns he calmly dignifies and decorates his theme, but with the tenth and last column something happens. Passion intrudes. His intense feeling carries him away, and, consequently, he carries his reader away with him. I, for one, ended the article in a glow. Joy called to joy, enthusiasm to enthusiasm, and was answered.

Why was this? What work of art was it that kindled our sedate critic, and set his sedate reader vicariously aglow. It was occasioned by a group of works that each has seen scores of times. But that is the miracle of great art. It gives and re-gives; it never loses its radium power.

This group of works comprised some drawings by Leonardo da Vinci from the royal collection at Windsor and his cartoon of the "Madonna, Child and S. Anne" from the Diploma Gallery of the Royal Academy, London.

Those who sit at a table in the Royal Library of Windsor Castle, passing in review the collection of drawings by Leonardo, have, perhaps, the art experience of their lives. From these drawings by the Myriad-minded, often with comments in the margin, minutely written with his left hand, from right to left of the page, we gain a deeper insight into the mentality of this great Florentine than even his marvellous paintings offer. Art to him was an episode, life was his province. He investigated everything: he experimented with everything from a flying machine to a roasting spit. He was always learning, always disinclined to finish a work. One day he procrastinated over a Madonna, on the next over a parachute. When Isabella d'Este demanded a picture from him, suggesting a Madonna "pious and sweet as is his style" she was informed that "he is entirely wrapped up in geometry and has no patience for painting." But Leonardo always had the patience to write and draw, and his drawings are such that Claude Phillips, seeing them at the Burlington Fine Arts Club, is lifted into a fervour of feeling and cries: "With some simple delineation of man or woman, he sets the door ajar and gazes into the essential mystery of life, as no creative artist before or after his time has done."

Perhaps the drawings of Leonardo require some

connoisseurship for their complete appreciation, but the cartoon of the "Madonna, Child and S. Anne" appeals to everybody, learned and unlearned. It hangs, usually, dim and lovely, large and magisterial, in an inner room of the Diploma Gallery. Visitors rarely penetrate to this chamber, so the student can usually count on being alone with the witchery of this picture. To me it is much more impressive and intimate than the finished or unfinished (for Leonardo rarely finished anything) oil painting in the Louvre. Gazing upon it one becomes deeply conscious of the inward smile that illuminates and deepens the faces of the Madonna and S. Anne, the haunting Leonardo smile, that he wrought out to the uttermost mystical expression in the portrait of Mona Lisa.

The Leonardo smile was the fashion in Florence. It is no fancy. Walter Pater refers to the "seeptical smile" of one of Leonardo's angels. It has been claimed that Leonardo did not invent the smile. A Russian, Dmitri Merejikowski, who has written a remarkable novel around the life of Leonardo, asserts that he had already seen this smile on the face of Thomas in the picture of his master, Verrocchio. But as Leonardo worked in Verrocchio's studio and on his pictures he may have overtly introduced the smile. I prefer to think that it is all Leonardo's. "Mona Lisa" made the smile popular and fashionable. For years afterward the cub painters of Florence introduced the Leonardo smile into their pictures.

This smile pervades the books on Leonardo. Two

are important, that by Osvald Siren—accurate and dull, and the novel by Dmitri Merejikowski—creative and vivid. In England it is called "The Forerunner," a proper title, as this unique man was a forerunner. A score of twentieth century "discoveries" were foreseen and investigated by him. In America "The Forerunner" is called "The Romance of Leonardo da Vinci," an unworthy appeal to so-called popular taste. The reason is plain. Merejikowski imagines that Leonardo, the bachelor, elderly when he painted her, had a pure friendship, overwhelming and lifelong, for Mona Lisa Gioconda, the young wife of a Florentine personage. It was her smile that fascinated him, and to produce it and to keep it hovering on her face he arranged, when she sat to him, that music should be played, and that she should listen to the sound of running water. When he went to France in the service of Francis I, he took the portrait with him. Francis saw it at the Château Cloux, where Leonardo lodged, was fascinated by it, and offered a huge sum. But Leonardo was determined to keep the portrait by him. Eventually King Francis obtained it, and Mona Lisa, as all the world knows, now belongs to France.

This story of Leonardo's love for Mona Lisa is quite credible and quite possible, but there is no authority for it. We know that he painted her; that he employed music and running water and told her stories to keep her amused, and to retain that elusive smile rippling on her face. And it seems certain that Leonardo, prizing this portrait, carried it with

him to France and also two other pictures. For in the Naples Library there is a manuscript describing a journey made by Cardinal Luigi of Aragon from Tours to Amboise, which is near Château Cloux. It was written by his travelling companion, Don Antonio Beati. The manuscript is dated Oct. 10, 1517, and contains this passage: "In one of the suburbs we went to visit the Florentine, Lunardo Vinci, an old man, the most eminent painter of our times. He exhibited to His Excellency three pictures, one of them representing a certain Florentine lady painted from nature at the desire of the late Giuliano Magnifico de Medici." The second represented John the Baptist as a youth; the third, Mary sitting in the lap of St. Anne. These three pictures are now in the Louvre.

Leonardo was an onlooker. He took no side. He made weapons of warfare for friend or foe. His interest in making them was because thus he could establish his theories. He could write in his Journal, "I maintain that Force is something spiritual and unseen"; he could write, with gravity, an invocation like this, "O Prime Mover! the angle of incidence must be equal to the angle of reflection." Flying obsessed him. Could he have foreseen that in the twentieth century an airman may breakfast late in Paris and lunch early in London, what would he have thought? Possibly he would have asked himself the question which a few twentieth century lookers-on address to themselves—"Is this new knowledge any more helpful to the world than the knowledge that Moses had?"

8. MISSING THE MARK

J. L. MOTLEY described Macaulay's conversation as "perfection of the commonplace without a sparkle or flash." Those words came to my lips when I stood before the portraits of M. and Mme. Leblanc by Ingres, at the Metropolitan Museum.

Ingres is an honoured name in modern art. We think of him with chilly reverence. Books and innumerable articles have been written about him. The bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum has an article of nearly four columns in praise of these two portraits, which were acquired at the Degas sale. This article analyses these honoured portraits of M. and Mme. Leblanc, which were painted by Ingres at Florence, in 1822-23; it inspires the reader to hasten to the Metropolitan Museum and to feast his eyes on these masterpieces by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres.

Disappointment awaits him; he dare not say it aloud, but in his heart he finds these two portraits complacently dull; he sees before him two commonplace, faultlessly accurate likenesses; he stares at madame's plump arms and hands and remembers that the writer of the note, quoting from Lapauze, tells us that Ingres before painting the arms "drew them separately, then together, first uncovered, then

with mittens, then again with the right hand on the arm of the empire chair—the left drawn twice in the position of the portrait, resting on the left leg," and so on.

Every art student knows that this is not the way to produce a work of art, but it is certainly the right way to do what Ingres wanted to do—and did faultlessly, but without a glimmer of fervour or fancy.

These portraits, although historically interesting, are not works of art at all. They are excellent examples of Ingres, and as a museum should contain specimens of all masters, great and small, who have played a part in the evolution of art, the museum authorities were right in acquiring these perfections of the commonplace portraits. Were these laboriously literal renderings of the faces and clothes of a prosperous French lady and gentleman works of art the art lover might, without reproach, decide to seek æsthetic satisfaction elsewhere than in art. But let him not despair. Let him do as I did. Let him leave M. and Mme. Leblanc and walk straight to the portrait of a Dutch man and woman by Frans Hals. These are works of art. "Elan vital" runs through them. The garments they wear are suggested, not copied, you see the fabrics move, you hear their rustle, the light touches them and shifts; but the garments in the portraits by Ingres have no quality of life; they are merely laborious copies of what Ingres saw with the outward eye and faithfully rendered. Strange it is that Frans Hals, a Dutch innkeeper, should have

this power, and Ingres, director of the French Academy in Rome, an influence, a venerated master, should be entirely without it. The explanation is, of course, that Hals had genius. Ingres had not.

Ingres was merely a great ordinary craftsman who had learned how to copy accurately objects placed before him. He is esteemed because the world adores the commonplace: it is safe. Ingres is venerated as one of the eminent moderns who flourished before art took wings, before the day of Whistler and Sargent. Why, M. and Mme. Leblanc are not fit to hang in the same room as Whistler's "Portrait of My Mother" and "Carlyle," or with Sargent's "Marquand." Compared with these they are artisan's work.

We should neither idolise nor depreciate Ingres. He has his assured place in the logical development of French art. When his admirers tell me, with glee, that Degas treasured these Ingres portraits more than any of his belongings, I smile and reply—I should like to hear Degas on that. Of course he prized them because he, being a Frenchman, had a high respect for the tradition of French art. Ingres is one of the outstanding figures, as Pope is one of the figures in English literature, but although he holds a place in the history of poetry, Pope was no poet. Degas cherished these Ingres portraits, but he did not copy them. He went his own way and that way was the study of nature seen through his artistic temperament. Ingres cherished Raphael. He regarded him as his

supreme model, and when he painted a picture the thought in his mind was not how does this subject appeal and appear to me, but how would Raphael have painted it. In this way Ingres produced his "Apotheosis of Homer," an accurate and dull classical picture—Raphael and barley water. His "Source," which visitors to the Louvre cannot help seeing, is the kind of nude that a Greek would have painted had he possessed the materials and the technical skill. A contemporary, looking at the "Source" murmured that Ingres was an ancient Greek lost and bewildered in the modern world. If Ingres was bewildered in the art world of the nineteenth century (his dates were 1778-1867) what would have been his mental condition towards the art world of the twentieth century? What would he have thought of Matisse and Picasso? Yet in his day Ingres was called a revolutionary. His "Œdipus and the Sphinx," painted in 1808, was received with "horror and dislike" by the pundits of the school of David. To us today "Œdipus and the Sphinx" seems sternly classic and stolidly uninteresting: to the classicists of 1808 it was revolutionary, and they groaned and cried that Ingres had failed in fealty to the "grand and noble style of the great masters of the Roman school." What would they think of Sargent's "Gassed," or Childe Hassam's "Flags in Fifth Avenue," or Augustus John's "Canadians Before Lens"? The world moves: it also changes, not always for the better, but Degas was certainly a higher type of artist than Ingres.

Ingres was a prodigious worker. If industry could make a great artist he would be among the first in the world. In the museum at Montauban there are 20 studies for his portrait of Mme. Leblanc. But genius is much more than a capacity for taking pains. Enthusiasm, emotion, passion never entered into the art of Ingres, but in his equipment there were character and a cold rectitude "dogmatic and defiant like that of an early saint." Archæology, not actuality, was the fashion in his day, and everybody was quite pleased when, in 1800, Ingres won the Grand Prix de Rome with "Achilles Receiving in His Tent the Envoys of Agamemnon." His "Roger Delivering Angelica," taken from Ariosto's "Roland Furieux," shown at the Salon in 1819, was an advance. This picture has been claimed as one of the pioneers of pre-Raphaelitism, a suggestion which would not have pleased Ingres, as to him Raphael was all in all. It shows a youthful knight, astride a hippogriff, slaying a marine monster, which is about to make a meal of a beautiful young woman unkindly chained to a rock.

Ingres was an academic draftsman, without imagination and timid of vision. He should never have composed pictures. Today he would have made his living with portraits and drawings. When he had a model before him, such as M. Bertin, director of the *Journal des Débats,* a man of forceful character, and striking physique, he was able to produce a strong and vivid portrait, and there is something magisterial about his full length of "Le Duc d'Orléans." The details of the uni-

form and accessories are painted with excessive care, yet buttons, decorations and epaulets do not seem as real as such things are under the twirls, blobs, and flourishes of Frans Hals' magic brush.

And now, having ended my grumble about Ingres, I close my eyes and recall certain drawings by him of young and elderly women. How exquisite they are. In their way, within their limitations, they are perfect. Yes, acquire an Ingres drawing by all means, if you can get one, and hang it by itself on a white wall. It will be a perpetual joy. Such drawings are Ingres *intime,* Ingres doing what he could do best, what nature meant him to do; but when you go to see Ingres in his public capacity, in his competitive, masterly manner, say the portraits of M. and Mme. Leblanc—prepare to be disappointed and uncomfortable. For no one is comfortable when an archer with a great name misses the mark.

To attain the commonplace so often is to miss the mark.

9. ART AND THE ANGLO-SAXON

LISTEN, Belinda, please listen—

"'On entering Gallery F8 the visitor will probably experience something of Aladdin's bewilderment when the treasures of the secret cave first met his eyes.'"

"Well?" murmured Belinda. "Well?"

"Why, don't you see—here is enthusiasm, real enthusiasm, in an official publication! The passage I have read to you is in the pamphlet issued by the New York Metropolitan Museum describing the Pierpont Morgan wing. Enthusiasm in a curator! I am impressed. He has conveyed his enthusiasm to me. We must go to the Metropolitan Museum at once and enjoy these objects of Renaissance art of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries. We won't look at anything else in the Morgan wing. We'll put on invisible blinkers. We'll confine ourselves to Gallery F8. Such official enthusiasm must be treated with the highest respect. We, as dutiful——"

"But," interjected Belinda, "we had arranged to see the Loyalty procession, and then we were going to walk across the park to make acquaintance with the pictures belonging to the New York Historical Society."

"Fine," I said. "We'll do all three. We'll have

a jolly afternoon of sunshine, loyalty, pictures and bibelots."

Three hours later Belinda and I seated ourselves on the sward that eases toward a corner of the lake in Central Park and prepared to converse. A busy water rat looked at us for a moment as if saying—"Why are you not working?" then scuttled away; a squirrel waited at a safe distance, imagining that when two people sit together at a lakeside they must be about to eat; but when he found that we were only talking art he retired to a tree.

"Pierpont Morgan was quite an extraordinary man," said I; "in a way he was unique. Collectors are numerous, but usually they collect one kind of thing. Pierpont Morgan collected everything in the art way, from pictures to snuff-boxes, from Gothic sculptures to china cups. One rule, one only, he had—they must always be the best. To him the best often meant the costliest, and the value of many of the things he acquired was their rarity, not their artistic achievement. Now art, as Whistler said, is a goddess of dainty thought, reticent of habit, abjuring all obtrusiveness. Daintiness and reticence are not the notes of the Morgan collection, rather prodigality and universality. He spoiled the climes; he gathered in everything that the artistic ingenuity of man has constructed. The result is wonderful, but it isn't necessarily art."

"We owe a great debt to him," said Belinda. "Any museum, in any country, would have gone on its knees to acquire the treasures that are now grouped in the 11 rooms of the Metropolitan Museum 'for

the instruction and pleasure of the American people'—beautiful phrase that."

"True," said I. "Like everybody else I am immensely grateful; but we mustn't lose our heads. We must exercise wisdom, and express ourselves with judgment. We are alone here, you are discretion itself, the water rat and the squirrel are busy with their own affairs, so I can say what I think. In spite of the curator's enthusiasm, in spite of the glowing (but rather general) accounts in the newspapers, with their chatter about Merovingian and Romanesque art—mere names, mere names—I was bored by the hour I spent in Gallery F8."

"Bored!—bored in a room which contains the Benvenuto Cellini cup, and seven examples of the priceless Henri II ware!"

Meekly I bowed my head. "I agree," I said, "that the things you mention are great rarities, that at auction they would fetch enormous prices, because there are a dozen collectors in the world who would give almost anything to possess them; but I submit that they are not art. They are examples of work by extremely able craftsmen, whose chief concern was to show their extraordinary cleverness. These things are not in the same class as 'the fan of Hokusai' or 'the marbles of the Parthenon.' I doubt, always have doubted, if Cellini was an artist at all. Was he anything more than a first-rate, rather fulsome craftsman? It is the man, the ebullient, swaggering, fearless man, not the craftsman, who has dominated the world. That cup of his in Gallery F8, 'in red jasper ornamented with gold,

enamel and jewels,' is merely the expression of very competent fingers and a rather vulgar mind. Why, you yourself went into ecstasies over the thinness with which the jasper had been carved. That isn't art—it's expert craftsmanship.

"And the other innumerable 'objects of art' in this Gallery F8—precious, priceless, many of them, yes, but their value is one of oddness, overloaded richness and rarity. Art is a different thing altogether—shy, reticent, unobtrusive. Art demands form, colour and right proportion, and there must be no vanity in the worker. Almost all the things in this Gallery F8 are vain things, little magnificence piled upon little magnificence, each and all proclaiming how clever was the man who made them. Why, the only things there that gave me real pleasure were the two pieces of Medici porcelain, fine in form and colour, early specimens of this ware—shy, reticent, unobtrusive. I salute them as art, but I will not bow the knee to the many vain and precious things in Gallery F8. They bored me because they are not art—that's the simple reason."

"Then why," said Belinda, "was the curator so enthusiastic? He ought to know."

I shrugged my shoulders. "He lives among such things, always has. They've hypnotised him. Every man to his taste. I seem to be becoming a scold. It can't be helped. The War made me eager to get at the right view of things. Constantly I meet with attempts to camouflage art, not with intent to deceive, but because there seems to be an impression that in art matters you can lead the

public to believe anything if only you are insistent enough.

"The Latin races understand art instinctively; the Anglo-Saxon has an immense respect for art, but, as a rule, he has little instinct for it. You and I enjoyed ourselves at the New York Historical Society, because like Henry Hudson we were explorers and unlike him we knew where we were. When I write up my diary tonight I shall say something like this—'Visited New York Historical Society for first time. New building—collection of pictures on upper floor—badly shown—one wall in blinding light, the other in shadow—seven eighths of the pictures ordinary—one-eighth remarkable—among them half a dozen masterpieces—Memlinc, Mantegna, Dürer, Mabuse, etc.—these are hung anyhow, mixed up with others as if they were ordinary pictures—a third-rate Murillo in alcove by itself—was told it had been hung there because it fitted the space—strange it is how little the Anglo-Saxon knows about art.'

"Those will be my notes," said I. "Of course we enjoyed the adventure because we have been trained to discover masterpieces. But this unintelligent way of showing pictures is wrong. The public is not instructed. I think a leaf should be taken from the book of excellent Artemus Ward. When he was guilty of a 'plaisanterie' it was his way to add in parenthesis, 'N. B. This is a goak.' Why should not the Historical Society affix to the frame of each of these outstanding pictures—'N. B. This is a masterpiece'? Then the public would begin to be

perplexed and to ask questions; then might begin an intelligent interest by the Anglo-Saxon in art."

"A counsel of perfection," said Belinda, rising because a sailor and his sweetheart had just nosed their boat, thinking they were alone, into the secluded spot. "You aim high, sir."

"What else am I here for? Of course I aim high. Doing so, I may hit the bull's-eye, like Fromentin when he wrote. Whereas, if I aim low, I remain merely a healthy, unintelligent Anglo-Saxon."

10. PESELLINO BY THE SEA

"WILL you walk down to the sea?" shouted the Painter from the garden gate.

Seated in the doorway of my cottage, I hesitated. It was 8:15 P. M. The soft phlox and the strident tiger-lilies still held the light. The hot day was declining with exquisite serenity. Here and there a few fireflies winked into flame. Really I did not want to walk down to the sea; I was reading something which held me pleasantly. It was about a Florentine painter, hardly known to the general public, mildly patronised by connoisseurs, for he is far from being a great swell—this Francesco Pesellino, 1422-1457.

Pesellino is one of those painters whose biography looks all titles of pictures, and names of painters and owners, so tiresome to most people. Here is a specimen from the National Gallery of London catalogue. "A closer resemblance to Filippo Lippi is seen in his crucifixion (Berlin), the Highnam Court 'Annunciation'; the 'Madonna and Saints' on a gold ground (private collection Berlin), the 'Marriage of St. Catherine' in the Uffizi, and especially in the 'Holy Trinity with Saints and Angels' painted in 1457 for the Church of the Trinity of Pistoia. The central part of the 'Holy Trinity' is in the National Gallery; the rest scat-

tered in diverse places—in the Royal collection, in Lady Henry Somerset's, in Lady Brownlow's, and in private hands in Italy."

I smiled. "What would a Doughboy make of that?" I asked myself. "But the National Gallery catalogue, the best art collection catalogue in the world, was not written for Doughboys. It was written for individuals like myself.

This Pesellino is a shade, a collection of titles, places, and names; it would really be rather interesting to give him flesh and bones, ideas and fancies, to fix him in the mind as something more definite than the grandson of Giuliano d'Arrigo Giuochi and the pupil of Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippo—to give the scene of his life colour, to make Pesellino a real person doing natural things between painting his second-rate sacred pictures which the art galleries of today prize in bits when they cannot get the whole thing."

"Hurry up!" shouted the Painter. "I want to walk down to the sea."

On the way I continued my reflections aloud, after explaining to the Painter what I had been reading—"This Pesellino does not strike me as having been a particularly pious person; he had to paint sacred pictures as our artists had to paint war pictures. Of course, he must have been enormously impressed by Fra Angelico, who was a wonder; but it was Angelico's craftsmanship, not his saintliness, that Pesellino admired. I fancy that he had his eye on the world all the time that he was painting the 'Virgin and the Child with Saints,' owned by Sir

George Holford which we have both seen. It's under a foot high; it's hardly more than a miniature, and only one of the eight figures has any kind of spirit, the boy Saint in armour, Michael, I suppose, who stands to the right, pouting, and surely somewhat impatient of the ceremony. Like Foch, he doesn't like showing off. Looking at this panel carefully, I feel that the parts of the picture that Pesellino was really interested in was the armour which the pretty warrior saint wears, the star on the Virgin's shoulder, and the little flowers on the grass plot where the group is posed."

"Yes, I noticed those flowers," said the Painter. "They're formal, but they're very pretty. The pattern is like a chintz. I suppose many of these early men would have painted nature if they'd been allowed."

"Yes, but it's queer what a lot of excellent people have thought that landscape painting is infra dig. Botticelli despised it, Burne-Jones sneered at it, and Carlyle was contemptuous. He said—'Landscape painting, if you think of it, is a poor thing in comparison with other painting or even with nature herself.' Yet when he said this, Carlyle was looking at the very views that inspired some of Whistler's most exquisite things. But there is no need to defend landscape painting today. Everybody's doing it. They tell me it's rather easy."

The Painter smiled. "It's what you like, astonishingly easy, or immensely difficult. It depends how

you do it. But we've wandered away somewhat from Pesellino."

"True," I said. "Pesellino seldom let himself go, but when he did he was like a boy released from school. Do you know his 'Story of David and Goliath' and 'The Triumph of David'? They were not painted for a church, so he could let his fancy play: a Florentine could say what he liked on the panel of a marriage chest. Pesellino's narrative is as amusing and detailed as the episodes in Frith's 'Derby Day,' or in Paolo Uccello's 'Moonlight Hunt.' Uccello was born quarter of a century before Pesellino; he was a far greater artist. My word, yes! Still Pesellino's 'Triumphs' are delightful, and I guess that they represent the real man, a bright creature who was more interested in the look of things than in the meaning behind them. I am sure he wore pretty clothes, had adventures, roamed the hills about Florence, studied rain clouds, and began to notice how objects are affected by light and atmosphere."

"What makes you think that?" asked the Painter.

"Pesellino seems to me to be merely one of those second-raters who copied their betters, and painted on panels, with considerable skill, the traditional types that the monks understood, and wanted—they wanted nothing else."

"When you next visit New York," I answered, "drop in to the Metropolitan Museum and look at the Pesellino that has recently been acquired—a Crucifixion. The figures are of the usual kind, done to order, without passion, without feeling even, quite proper. But beyond the hill, the artist,

sub rosa, as it were, has dropped in a landscape. The rocks in the foreground are the rocks that Duccio and all the early chaps painted, following one another like sheep, and the pines and cypresses are those that Fra Angelico did so neatly; but when Pesellino painted the horizon and the sky, and the wisps of clouds he let himself go as in the 'Triumph' pictures. He has suggested rain clouds, and has made the horizon, boldly, the lightest part of the picture, and if you look very closely you will see that he was conscious of the atmosphere that unites and relates everything—that atmospheric envelopment without which a picture has no mystery."

Here our talk ceased, for we had reached the sea, and were seated upon a bench in front of the bathing boxes. Although it was a few minutes past 9 o'clock the swimmers were still diving from the raft quite far out at sea, and cleaving through the opalescent water. It was a scene of great beauty. All definition had gone from the figures upon the raft; sea, sky, swimmers, that island of the greenest grass, that white boat, were all harmonised in the magical atmospheric envelopment.

The Painter gazed with the light of contemplative ecstasy upon his face, and I said—"That's beyond Pesellino." I added, "There are two men who might have done it, who might have done this scene something like justice."

The Painter looked at me and I looked at the Painter, and then we said, almost in unison (it was really rather odd)—"Vermeer of Delft, and Whistler."

11. EL GRECO'S MODERNITY

NO MAN ever calls him by his real name; no man ever says, "What an astonishing painter Domenico Theotocopuli" was; the bevy of young ladies (advanced schoolgirls) who fluttered into the photograph room of the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and listened ardently, while their Mistress discussed his artistic relationship to Tintoretto, never once called him Theotocopuli. To them he was El Greco—the Greek—as he is, and was, to everybody. The Spaniards first called him El Greco simply because they couldn't pronounce Theotocopuli.

El Greco is the very latest influence in Montmartre, at the Slade School, and in the studios around about Washington Square. Velasquez, Titian, Rembrandt are, of course, all right in the eyes of these young enthusiasts; but they are finished, deified, pigeonholed; there is nothing more to be said or done about them. They are safe on Olympus, but they are not in the modern movement, no! El Greco is, immensely so. Has not Roger Fry linked him up with Cézanne, in spite of the fact that three centuries or so separate them? But what are centuries in art? El Greco's alleged affinity with Cézanne gave him the final push into his niche in the modern movement. It was Roger Fry who

propelled him there. He tells us that when von Tschudi, the eminent Swiss art critic (he who was deposed by the former Kaiser for admiring Van Gogh), was showing him El Greco's "Laocoön," which he had just bought for Munich, von Tschudi murmured, "Do you know why we admire El Greco's handling so much? Because it reminds us of Cézanne."

And in the spring of 1920 El Greco created a rumpus (George Eliot uses the word, so I may) in London. The National Gallery already owned two El Grecos. The Director acquired a third from Spain, an "Agony in the Garden." He hung it in the newly arranged Spanish Room: no sooner was it placed there than the rumpus began, but with tongues, not with fists. I am told that crowds gathered before this picture; that groups harangued groups; that violent altercations took place. Indeed, it would seem that there was a repetition, in little, of the scenes that occurred at the first exhibition of the Post-Impressionist pictures in the Grafton Galleries.

Mr. Roger Fry was, of course, delighted. In *The Athenæum* he devoted four solid columns to "The New El Greco at the National Gallery." He said that it gave the British public an electric shock; that people argued and discussed it and lost their tempers; that they talked of it as if it were a contemporary picture—"a thing about which they have a right to feel delighted or infuriated, as the case may be." He also called "The Agony in the Garden" "a superb masterpiece."

Let us look a little closely at this El Greco, this Domenico Theotocopuli, who was painting vigorously at Toledo, in Spain, in the year 1600, and who, in 1920, seems to artists "not merely modern; but actually appears a good many steps ahead of us, turning back to show us the way."

He was born at Candia, in Crete, about 1545. It is strange to think that the boy may have played above the buried palaces of Knossos, Phaistos, and Hajia Triada; above their treasures, 2,000 and more years old, hidden deep beneath his feet. Many of them are now in the Metropolitan Museum. The small boy did not see them, did not concern himself with their existence. The sixteenth century was not interested in excavations. Stiff, angular Byzantine art was the fashion then, and had Domenico stayed in Crete, had he been like the other Cretan youths, he would probably have painted pictures in the orthodox Byzantine manner that had prevailed for a thousand years.

We know nothing about El Greco's youth, and little about his after life; but it is clear that in 1570, at the age of 25, he shipped to Venice, and there entered the studio of, or became the pupil of Titian, who was then 93. Of a certainty Domenico was a forceful youth. It needed courage to offer himself to the mighty Titian. The same year he was in Rome. No doubt he showed around the letter that he carried from Julio Clovis to Cardinal Farnese-Viterbo beginning—"There has arrived in Rome a young man from Candia, a disciple of Titian, of rare talent. . . ."

Five years later, in 1575, no man knows why, he voyaged to Spain, settled in Toledo, and lived there till 1614, when his career ended. Although Philip II does not seem to have favoured El Greco, he was esteemed in Toledo and received many commissions. He signed his pictures in Greek, which shows that, though a voluntary exile, he did not forget his homeland. Pacheco, who visited him in 1611, has recorded that El Greco was in all things as singular as in his painting, also that he was of an extravagant disposition, a great philosopher and given to witty sayings.

For nearly three centuries he was disowned, forgotten, although there were always some who paused before his pictures in Madrid, Toledo, and elsewhere (they were often catalogued under other names) to wonder at his strange, elongated figures, and the fire and fury of his handling. He came into his kingdom in 1908, when Manuel B. Cossio published in Madrid his important work on "El Greco." Later, in 1911, one of Don Manuel's pupils, San Roman y Fernandez, hunted Toledo for records of the painter. He discovered and published 80 new documents—lawsuits, contracts, receipts—described in his "El Greco in Toledo." These documents contain nothing of importance, except a reference to his "straitened circumstances and wide reading," and that when he passed away there were 120 pictures in his studio.

What, then, is the meaning of the El Greco hubbub? Why do the art crowds in London rage? Why, when you mention the name of El Greco in

any group of artists who are alive to the modern movement (I mean in those studio talks when men blurt out what they really think and feel) does a mention of El Greco send them foraging in portfolios and scrapbooks; and when the things are found, holding them up with expressive movements of the thumb, with the lighting of the eyes, and the uplifting of the artistic consciousness, that is so much more effective than words.

I admit that it needs some art education to appreciate El Greco. It is easy to say much against him—the fatal word Baroque, his melodrama, his rhetoric, his apparent carelessness, his repetitions, his exaggerated religiosity. Portraits and religious pictures sum up his *œuvre*, and the religiosity of Spain in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries is something very alien to the modern mind.

Other painters of his time had the Baroque temperament, and the rhetorical flourish, such men as Caravaggio, and Bassano; but El Greco stands away from them—isolated, apart. He has something of Van Gogh's intensity, something of Tintoretto's fury. The work of this lonely painter, this exile, working in far Toledo 300 years ago, shows that he had faced, consciously or unconsciously, many of the problems that affront the modern artist—the effect of one colour upon another, such as the subtle change that comes from putting red against blue; the interplay of planes; distortion and emphasis; light and shade used arbitrarily; values disregarded, colour used at will. Briefly, although

a naturalist, he was also an expressionist, willing to break any rule so that he might express significant form in the quickest and most direct way. These are the reasons why El Greco has been annexed by the Modernists, and why the Great Public, which does not want change, which wants illustration, not expression, argues hotly with the Modernists in the Spanish Room of the London National Gallery.

El Greco is in the limelight. I notice that people are beginning to linger before his "Nativity" at the Metropolitan Museum. Not one of his best, this picture has all his virtues and all his faults. Its flamboyancy, its rhetoric, are obvious, pass them by. But note its rugged intensity, its impulsive use of colour, its unreligious but dramatic force, and how frankly he lights the whole picture from the shining aura of the Child. The portrait of Palavicino in the Boston Museum is essential Greco. It has a piercing reality, an actuality, a fervour that we do not find even in Velasquez or Titian. They are dignified, serene; they are in repose. El Greco rushes at life and fixes it upon the canvas.

And one day another El Greco came into view, came to startle. Suddenly I saw it in the Spanish Room at the Metropolitan Museum, New York—an anonymous loan to the Fiftieth Anniversary Exhibition.

This "View of Toledo," how modern it is; how direct the planes of green; how daring the snaky, climbing buildings; how menacing the sky; how fearfully this El Greco flaunts mere accomplishment.

All my days El Greco has fascinated and troubled me, especially the elongated heads of his many figures, rising gauntly from thin, ascetic forms. There is the Cardinal in the National Gallery, London, with the gaunt, narrow face, the long, thin head, the alert, sad eyes; there is that blue wonder, an emaciated Saint in a magnificent desert once owned by Sir Hugh Lane; there is his masterpiece in the Church of St. Tomé, at Toledo, "The Burial of the Count of Orgaz," with its twenty and more figures, each head direct and forcible, a realistic picture, eloquent in its directness and characterisation.

This, his masterpiece, the young Velasquez may have seen, must have seen. Here is a dream-picture that the mind happily harbours—the young Velasquez at Toledo looking at El Greco's masterpiece. Now we moderns are all looking at El Greco.

He links yesterday with today.

PART IV

ART AND MR. X

ART AND MR. X

1. INTRODUCING MR. X

MR. X is a man of substance. Inventor of the Perfect Bath Tub and first President of the Company, he, like many other successful business men, is now modestly patronising Art. He has honoured me with his friendship. I am becomingly grateful and amused.

He is a man of regular habits, and likes to take his constitutional in East 57th Street, New York, between Madison and Park Avenues—"Spacious, sir, and not without dignity."

We often meet there. I seek him. On a recent occasion, after we had made amiable remarks about the weather, and reconstruction, he said:

"I know, sir, of two new mammoth hotels which will require 1,000 new baths. My baths, as you are aware, are works of art—applied art as you term it, and it is my intention as a thanksgiving for a successful business career to further patronise the fine arts. It is my purpose to make a choice collection of American and British pictures in honour of the Anglo-Saxon alliance, and I should esteem it a great honour if you would give me the benefit of your advice and assistance."

I murmured acquiescence.

"Then, with your leave, sir, we will adjourn to my apartment. As you are aware it is nearby.

"My bath, sir," said Mr. X, when we were comfortably seated, "is the bath of the future. Founded on the classic model, yet it reflects, and is in harmony, with the spirit of the day. I suppose you might call it a Post-Impressionist bath. There is no rhetoric about it. It dips deep into reality. Yes, sir, my bath is a pioneer; it is the bath of tomorrow, and I want my collection of American and British pictures to be confined to such works as reflect the Art of Tomorrow. How should I begin? My business training tells me that it would be unwise to visit the artistic haunts and say—'Gentlemen, I am in the market for pictures representing the Art of Tomorrow.' That would never do. The prices would at once jump. What do you advise?"

"Suppose," I said, "that somebody invented a nickel fitting impervious to discolouration, what would you do?"

"I should investigate the invention, sir; study it, make experiments, and if satisfactory adopt it in my factory."

"An excellent plan. Why not use a similar procedure in making your collection of British and American pictures? Why not begin by studying the market?"

"But how?"

A sudden idea occurred to me. I withdrew a book from my pocket, and rapidly turned the pages.

"What's that?" said Mr. X. For a massive business man his instincts are quick.

"This," I answered, "is a new magazine, or rather annual, called *New Paths*. It is one of those libations to the muses that 'les jeunes' are wont to issue at infrequent intervals. It is composed of verse, prose and pictures of the Art of Tomorrow variety."

"I take you, sir. But what has this to do with my proposal to make a collection of—er—advanced pictures?"

"It so happens," I answered, "that *New Paths* contains an article called 'Tendencies in Present Day English Art' by J. G. Fletcher. I do not know Mr. Fletcher: he is probably young, and being young, he is fearless and revolutionary; he ignores the established reputations of Great Britain, disregards the Royal Academicians and Associates of the Royal Academy, and banishes from his survey any commendation of official and academic art and established reputations. You and I, Mr. X, being men of established reputation, cannot, of course, indorse all that our young friend says, and yet I do not altogether disapprove of his artistic Bolshevism."

"It seems to me, sir," said Mr. X, "that this essay should contain just the kind of information that I want."

"Yes, that idea occurred to me. I suggest that I should give you the gist of this essay on 'Tendencies in Present Day English Art.'"

Mr. X seated himself and folded his hands.

I proceeded—"The writer of this essay begins with a platitude which is always worth repeating. He states that English art, like English literature, has always been a matter of individuals rather than of schools: he instances three of these individuals, Turner and Constable, whom he calls daring innovators, and Alfred Stevens, who is referred to as the final summing up of a great tradition."

Mr. X began to nod. It was necessary to accelerate my pace.

"On page two our author jumps back to 1913, and announces that in the year before the war England's artistic effort revolved about the poles of Walter Sickert and Augustus John, representing realistic impressionism and idealistic decoration respectively."

Mr. X withdrew his pocketbook and wrote in it with a gold pencil (I looked over his shoulder), "Poles—Augustus Sickert and Walter John."

There was no light of apprehension in his eyes when I proceeded to read to him that Sickert is entirely a product of French Impressionism, and that the oustanding influence upon his work is that of Degas. And that John derives through Ingres, and possibly Puvis de Chavannes, to the Italian primitives, notably to the Umbrian painter, Piero della Francesca, and to the Florentine Botticelli. (I wonder why he does not mention Cézanne.)

Mr. X though somnolent was still shrewd, "You tell me, sir, that English art is a matter of individuals and yet you confess that the two outstanding

personalities in 1913 were derivative, markedly derivative."

"A hit, Mr. X, a palpable hit, but these two men are not in the very highest class. They are not great originals like Turner and Constable, but if I read Mr. Fletcher aright he considers that they were the best that Great Britain could show in 1913. After John and Sickert our independent author proceeds to eulogise another pair—Wilson Steer and C. J. Holmes, both landscape painters. Steer, he says, has carried Constable's daring analysis of atmosphere vibration to a point where his pictures tend to lose themselves, to be without any recognisable form. C. J. Holmes has maintained a more conservative, a more architectonic attitude."

"Do you mind spelling that word?" said Mr. X, gold pencil in hand.

I did so.

"These four men, according to Mr. Fletcher, were showing the most interesting work in England before the war broke out. On the eve of hostilities England was confronted with a new English school, rejoicing in the title of Vorticist, who loudly proclaimed that to them Cubists and Futurists were merely 'vieux jeu.'"

I am afraid that Mr. X took "vieux jeu" to be the name of a Vorticist painter. While he was correcting the error I hurried on to this statement—"What the war accomplished was this: it showed us that there were many new ways of stating new things, and then raised the tremendous and

insistently vital question, 'What, then, are the important—the essential—things to state?'"

"I get that," said Mr. X. "The same problem confronted me in my taps and plugs. A new thing must be stated in a new way, but it must be anchored to utility and—er—common sense. How does your gentleman answer the question?"

"He mentions certain artists who, according to their temperament, in various days have sought a solution of it. He instances Nevinson, described as one of the most discussed and vitally important artists we have among us: he acknowledges Nevinson's debt to Cézanne, who proved once and for all that one can paint a plate of apples and invest them with the gravity and emotional significance of the Pyramids. He also includes Paul and John Nash, Anne Estelle Rice, Ferguson, and Peploe, whose work is interesting as showing the full development of that chromatic scale of rhythmical colour which was perhaps the best gift French Impressionism left us. He also refers to boisterous Gertler, grim Kramer and these others—Roberts, Kauffer, Fry, Lewis, Etchells, Wadsworth, Gill, Nina Hammett, Vanessa Bell, Brodzky, Meninsky and Schwabe."

There I stopped, waiting while Mr. X carefully copied the names in his pocketbook.

"When I visit London," he said, "I must look these gentlemen up. Where can I find them?"

"Mr. Roger Fry will be able to give you their addresses. But you should also visit the Royal Academy, the New English Art Club and the

National Gallery of British Art. Mr. Fletcher's taste in art is not everybody's taste."

"I will go slowly," said Mr. X. "I was told many years ago that Edwin Long was one of the bulwarks of British art. I own a steel engraving of one of his classical productions. I associate the name of Mr. Long with a witticism which I have forgotten. Do you recall it?"

"Yes, somebody said that art is long, but Long isn't art."

Mr. X laughed long and heartily. Then he relapsed into silence, and I, judging that the moment of his afternoon nap was approaching—withdrew.

2. MR. X AND ADVANCED ART

"AS a collector, I want to go slowly," remarked Mr. X one morning, as we paced the spacious stretch of 57th St. "My 'Perfect Bath' was the work of years. All collectors, I am informed, make mistakes at the beginning. They learn through buying the wrong pictures and the wrong objects of art, and they spend years in sifting out and discarding their errors. I am told, sir, that if you really want to appreciate a public gallery or a private collection, you must go down into the cellars and examine the—er—broken steps by which they have ascended to their present pinnacle of—er—good taste."

I grasped the good man's hand. "There is much wisdom in your analysis," I said. "If I read you aright, Mr. X, you want to correct your errors in taste without depleting your bank balance: you want to separate the goats from the sheep in your mind, not on the walls of your gallery."

"Precisely. And I suggest, sir, that when you make your weekly peregrinations to picture galleries you should sometimes allow me to accompany you. I could, as it were, make my selections in my head, and you could approve or disapprove of my choice."

To which I replied, "An excellent plan. We will

begin at once. We will lunch at an Automat, always an adventurous experience (I love to watch the dignity of Mr. X in untoward environment), and then we will visit the newest exhibitions. I have three on my list—the twenty-ninth annual exhibition of the New York Water Colour Club, a collection of lithographs by George Bellows, and the Exhibition of Modern Art at the Bourgeois Galleries. You have already had a first lesson in current British painting; today we will make a brief survey of current American painting. But please remember that these three shows are in no way representative; they just happen to be three exhibitions of the week."

"I take you, sir," said Mr. X. "You will find me an attentive pupil. I feel like Sir Isaac Newton, who asserted, after a lifetime of work, that he had examined but a few pebbles upon the seashore while the whole truth of the ocean lay unexplored before him."

It was edifying to watch Mr. X making a business-like examination of the 331 exhibits of the New York Water Colour Club. He began at No. 1, "Rue de Fil, Pontivy, France." First he read the title, then he looked at the picture. Occasionally he placed a "g" for good against something that pleased him, and a "b" for bad against something that displeased him; he showed neither elation nor boredom; he examined the items with the same care that he would give to the items in a plumber's catalogue, and when he reached No. 331, he sighed, fanned himself, replaced his gold pencil, and

said—"May I ask, sir, if you consider these works examples of advanced art?"

"No! This club, like the old Water Colour Society and the Institute in London, represents the timid, temperate Anglo-Saxon at his best and at his worst. He has the recipe: he can repeat it forever: he will continue to produce pretty effects, picturesque bits and genteel sentiment. It is not art; it is making pleasant pictures. They will always be popular, but as they are neither vital, nor significant, nor 'life-communicating,' to use Mr. Berenson's expressive term, they remain just what they are—pictures of the day, forgotten in a day."

"You are severe, sir," said Mr. X. "I presume you brought me here to show me the kind of works I should avoid in forming my collection of advanced American pictures."

I smiled. "You never know what you may draw from the lucky bag of art. There are a few pictures here that stand out, that show a measure of originality. No doubt you have observed them, Mr. X, and marked them in your catalogue."

With rather a dazed look Mr. X ran his eyes down the scrawls of "g" and "b" that decorated his catalogue. He handed it to me.

"Ah," I said, delightedly, "your art sense, Mr. X, is admirable. I observe that you have written a 'g' against Gifford Beal's series of six water colours. Quite right. They are spirited, they have gusto, and they show a lively sense of form and colour. And you have written 'odd' against Lief Neandross'

'Rabbits' and 'Soaring Bird.' You call them odd because they show a personal observation. The artist has not looked at these rabbits and that soaring bird in the common way. And I see that there is a hieroglyphic which may mean either 'g' or 'b' against Eugene Higgins' 'The Huns Are Coming' and 'The Island Fisherman.' These two works have attracted your attention. Why? Because they have power. A little uncouth, a little savage, yet they have force, and that means a good deal nowadays. It is the apathetic, anæmic picture that bores us and makes us feel that we never again want to see another so-called work of art."

As we left the gallery I said to Mr. X, who did not seem to be at all displeased with his first adventure as art critic, "Now we will go downtown to the Keppel Gallery and look at George Bellows' collection of lithographs. He is an outstanding man, an athlete and a musician, I am told, as well as an artist, and your collection will certainly have to include a Bellows."

"Did not they call Tintoretto the Furious?" asked Mr. X, when we had examined the 54 lithographs by George Bellows.

"Yes."

"Then I think that epithet might also be applied to Mr. Bellows. He appears to me to be an artist of great virility and with a sombre, almost brutal imagination. I do not find his pictures sympathetic. In peace time I am a pacificist, sir, and I do not find his vivid illustration of an episode at a prize fight, called 'A Stag at Sharkey's,'

at all attractive. I may be quite old-fashioned and behind the times, but I prefer Mr. Colin Campbell Cooper's sympathetic 'Old House, Westport, Connecticut,' which we have just seen at the Water Colour Club, to Mr. Bellows' violent 'Stag at Sharkey's.' I fail to see, sir, why advanced art should be bellicose and brutal."

"No reason at all," I said quickly, for Mr. X was clearly getting a little out of hand, "but you must take an artist as he is. Bellows is a Berserker. He puts to sea in any weather: he plunges splendidly at any theme. I am grateful for his art dash and bravery, but he has the defects of his qualities. Look at that series called 'Studies in Belief.' They are caricatures. If not caricatures, if meant as pictorial statements, they fail utterly. They may be satire: if so, we have outgrown that kind of satire."

"There is a deal more in art than I imagined," said Mr. X, as we strolled uptown. "Mere pictures have made us both today rather angry. That 'Stag at Sharkey's' enraged me, but it was rather magnificent. It might almost be taken as a lesson against physical violence. Of course, it isn't the kind of picture one could hang in the parlour. Perhaps it might not be altogether out of place in a corner of the billiard room. I am interested in it unwillingly, sir, if you understand what I mean." Mr. X was destined to be again interested unwillingly at the Bourgeois Galleries, which concluded, for the day, his art education.

In the hushed rooms, into which no sound from the outside world came, Mr. X examined, with particular care, the groups of works by nine advanced American artists. He made no marks in his catalogue, but when he had finished his survey he said abruptly: "Why don't they finish them? What would my clients say if I sent out my baths without any enamel on them?"

"These nine men," I answered, "are Expressionists. They maintain that a work of art is finished when the artist has said all that he has to say."

"Do you mean to tell me," said Mr. X, "that Mr. Ben Benn has said all he has to say in that —er—suggestion called 'Three Figures in a Landscape'?"

"Certainly. He gives the significant statement of three figures in a landscape, the skeleton, the content of the scene; he gives the significant facts. Your imagination should do the rest."

Mr. X gazed at "Three Figures in a Landscape" with an intensity that was almost embarrassing. Then he arose and walked into the farther room. When he returned he gazed again at the "Three Figures in a Landscape."

"Are you aware, sir, that it is beginning to interest me more than Mr. Colin Campbell Cooper's 'Old House, Westport, Connecticut'?"

"Yes," I answered, "that is because you are contributing something yourself. Your imagination is working."

Mr. X looked vastly pleased. "My imagination

working," he repeated. "I wish Mrs. X could hear you."

He chuckled.

"Come into the end room," he said. "There is something there by Mr. Oscar Bluemner called 'Red House with Tree.' It isn't a house, and it isn't a tree. The tree, I tell you, sir, isn't like a tree, and the house isn't like a house, and yet they are. You told me some nonsense the other day about some man painting, not a horse, but the horsiness of a horse. I suppose you would say that this man Bluemner in this idiotic picture has painted the treeiness of a tree and the houseiness of a house."

"That is so."

"Well! Well!" said Mr. X. He looked at the "Red House with Tree" again; he seemed disturbed, but not displeased.

Mr. X touched the bell of the elevator. "There's something in it," he said, as we descended to the street; "there's something in it, but how am I going to explain them to my wife when I take an armful of these advanced pictures home? Of course, there's always the billiard room."

3. MR. X AND PRESENTATION

"YOU were talking the other day," said Mr. X, "of Presentation. You spoke with some vigour. Pray, sir, exactly what do you mean by Presentation in regard to art?"

As he spoke Mr. X waved his gloved hand (his attire is always correct and rather formidable) around the room wherein we were sitting. It was an interrogatory gesture, as if inviting me to express an opinion on the method of presenting pictures.

The room where we sat is Mr. X's new studio-apartment, which will eventually contain his collection of modern pictures. At present the carpenters are in possession, and the painters are due next week. It is a long, lofty room with three handsome windows on the east side, and another to the north. The blank walls are being panelled, and the panelling will provide five rectangular spaces, each about five feet square, for the presentation of pictures. The architect knew this: he has designed these spaces for pictures.

But you must not infer that Mr. X's collection is to be confined to five works. In the south wall is a concealed door. Open it and you perceive a small chamber, or cubby-hole, entirely filled with an arrangement of racks. These racks will contain

at least fifty pictures. Do you begin to see the method of presentation? The five pictures on view will be changed periodically. But Mr. X, who is a man of substance, in appearance as well as in pocket, will not be called upon to endure the violent exercise of moving his pictures. He will seat himself in an Adam chair before an Adam cabinet which contains a card catalogue of his collection compiled by an expert (ahem!). Each picture is described: its tendency, and what it stands for is given, together with some information about the artist, and his standing among his contemporaries. According to his mood, or the disposition of the guests whom he is expecting, Mr. X will select the appropriate pictures. Obviously the group chosen for his famous "Culture is halfway to Heaven" parties, will not suit a gathering of his associates in the hardware world. The man who adores Botticelli is not likely to have the same taste as the man who is addicted to inventing improvements in bathtubs. Mr. X, seated in his Adam chair, makes his sensitive choice, and then relegates the task of changing the pictures to his admirable man servant, who, being of English birth, realizes that there is a service which is perfect freedom.

So when Mr. X waved his gloved hand with inimitable interrogatory gesture around the apartment, I nodded affirmatively, and then, when the noise of the carpenters' hammers had ceased, it being on the stroke of their dinner hour, I pro-

ceeded to answer his question as to what I meant by Presentation in regard to art.

"The world knows little," I began, "about the presentation of pictures, and cares less. It is a very important subject, and it is almost disregarded. The names of Hanging Committees are printed, not without honour, in catalogues, but the trend of convention is so strong that the hanging usually consists merely in covering every available square yard with pictures. Before the war some curators were beginning to practise the new and proper method of presenting pictures. Well do I remember an exhibition in, I think, Munich, in 1912. It was a show of modern works: it was held in brand-new exhibition rooms situated in a park, one line of pictures only, a space between each work. To each room were two doors: they opened into a sunny, happy world. People strolled in and out. Ennui was unknown. Art was a part of life—fresh, stimulating, as life giving, as impulsive as flowers and trees. Those pictures were properly presented. Consequently they sold well. Folk said —Let us transfer this joy to our homes. See?"

"I take you," said Mr. X. "I take you" is his favourite remark. He likes it because it is a combination of humility and understanding.

"Contrast with this exhibition," I continued, "the shows at the Royal Academy in London, and the National Academy of Design in New York. You enter from noisy streets; once inside you are trapped like a rat in a cage. There is an air of confine-

ment, of being forced, for an afternoon, to digest pictures. You have to swallow art; there is no escape from art presented in the most bourgeois manner imaginable. The selecting and hanging committee may have been at work, but there is no sign of it. Dimly you know that so-called important pictures are hung upon the line, but a tyro in art soon learns that important pictures, if they do not happen to be signed by important names, are placed anywhere except upon the line. The rule seems to be—so much wall space to be covered, so many pictures to cover it, let the filling-in process be as complete as possible. Can you wonder that the public is bored by picture galleries? The dealers are beginning to realise the importance of presentation. The Flaxman drawings at Messrs. Scott & Fowles' were perfectly presented. Even the specially designed frames were a joy. Result—almost all were sold. Messrs. Knoedler have been showing five Sargents and four Abbott Thayers in their large gallery. They, too, were perfectly presented. In a vast exhibition the exquisite Sargent Simplon landscape and the Thayer monumental landscape would have been lost. Here they told: they showed themselves to be outstanding works. A companion Thayer landscape has been lately acquired by the Metropolitan Museum. It is probably a better work than the Knoedler Thayer. I have studied them both. The Metropolitan Museum Thayer is skied. People pass it by. It makes no impression. The Knoedler Thayer arrests everybody."

"I take you, sir," said Mr. X. "Some day I will ask you to come downtown and see my shower baths." He bent toward me: his voice dropped to a whisper—"At certain hours of the day," he murmured, "we have the water running."

"Governments," I continued, "being absolutely and complacently devoid of taste, naturally ignore presentation. The hanging of the exhibition of British naval pictures was sad. If half the number had been shown, and properly displayed, the patriotic effect would have been increased 50 per cent. A bricklayer or a paperhanger could have arranged the innumerable 'works of art' of the Allied War Salon quite as well as they are shown at the American Art Galleries. Interminable rooms! Interminable things to show! Mix them up! That was the idea: that was done. I plodded through the rooms, as if on a walking tour. When I reached the end I said to myself, 'There is one great talent in this show—Raemaekers, the Dutch cartoonist of genius. In art he is the hero of the great war. His series of cartoons should have been featured—splendidly featured. What happened? He was relegated to the corner of a side room. Next in honour are the works of Jonas, the Frenchman, and Spencer Pryse and Eric Kennington, Englishmen. These men should have been the centre of the exhibition. As it was, they merely occurred as episodes in the huge whole.'"

(While I was talking, Mr. X was busy with his

notebook and gold pencil. He is a wonderful pupil. I do hope that I am usually right.)

"Of course," I hastened to add, "presentation is useless, indeed is harmful, unless the works presented are worthy."

"Quite so," said Mr. X. "It would be wicked to put a leaking bath in a bank president's house."

"Nobody," I continued, "can deny that the pictures donated to the Red Cross that adorned Fifth Avenue were admirably presented. They hung alone. Each had a magnificent position—but——"

"You can trust me, sir," said Mr. X. "I am all discretion."

"Well, the artists who contributed them meant well. They snatched moments from a busy life to paint them. But such pictures won't do. These slap-dash things served no purpose except to show that art is cloistered and somewhat sacred and cannot be forced into the highways to serve the busy claims of the moment."

"You are severe, sir," said Mr. X, "but I take you. Fine art and also applied art should be exclusive. I am with the Greek who said—'Nothing too much.' Last week my publicity man came to me with a number of apo—apo—apophthegms suitable for inscribing in my best bathrooms. He wanted them to run all round the tiles. I said—'No; one will do—nothing too much.' And which one do you suppose I chose?"

It seems vain in retrospection, but I could not resist the answer—" 'Cleanliness is next to——' "

"Just so," said Mr. X, flattered yet dismayed, "but

I shall not inscribe it round the tiles. That would be too didactic. No, sir, that famous sentence shall go round the hem of the bath, almost out of sight. Presentation, eh?"

4. MR. X AND VELASQUEZ

USUALLY I avoid payment days at the Metropolitan Museum, New York, for the economic reason that a quarter is a quarter of a dollar. But that Friday (Friday is a payment day) I had an impulse to visit the museum, and my impulse was stronger than a quarter. It arose from seeing Maeterlinck's "Betrothal," incidentally from his moving idea of making the portentous, forcible-feeble figure of Destiny shrink, as the play proceeds, into its natural nothingness. And I wanted to contrast Maeterlinck's idea of Destiny with the idea of Fate by an American sculptor, Alexander P. Proctor, shown in his remarkable and not readily forgotten figure of a prowling, ponderous and ominous beast of prey. So, with my quarter ready, I proceeded to Eighty-second Street.

On the steps of the museum I encountered Mr. X. He had paused to inhale the invigourating air for which New York is famous, and he had removed his silk hat, inviting the zephyrs to play about his well-shaped brow. It is the brow of a weighty, prosperous man, who is using his prosperity wisely and with an air. There is nothing of the Bolshevist about Mr. X. Indeed, I could not help admiring his goodly figure, his astrachan coat, his severe trousers, his grey-black gloves, his spotless collar,

and the peep of white cuffs. I felt proud to be honoured among his acquaintances.

We exchanged salutations and I proceeded to make a jocular remark (a blemish on my character which I have not yet quite been able to eradicate). "It's a paying day, Mr. X," I said.

"I am aware of it, sir," he answered, "and I beg to inform you that when I visit this excellent institution I invariably select those days when a modest charge is made. The institution has to be supported financially, and I consider it the duty of a successful business man to choose those days when a charge is made—and" (a faint smile flickered for an instant over his well-modelled lips) "and when the—er—proletariat is a little less in evidence. Moreover, when I visit this institution, I pay some regard (if you will permit a personal reference) to my costume. An ill-dressed man, an untidy man, or one who has neglected to shave himself is not fit company for important works of art. Do you take me, sir?"

"Entirely! I offer you my felicitations, Mr. X. Philip IV of Spain would have approved of your costume."

A shade of suspicion fluttered in Mr. X's eyes, but as my face was solemn he contented himself with saying, "Why Philip IV?"

"Because when Philip IV ascended the throne of Spain in 1621, he instituted a plain and sombre method of dress—black, all black with a wide linen collar and cuffs, sometimes relieved by a golden

chain from which hangs the Order of the Golden Fleece."

Mr. X purred and fingered his massive watch chain.

"Philip's fancy for sombre clothes may incidentally have assisted the expression of the genius of Velasquez who, as you know, was Philip's favourite painter and friend. He gave him a studio in the palace at Madrid and Velasquez devoted most of his life to painting the portraits of Philip and his family. They live not through their deeds. They live through the art of Velasquez. That is immortality on earth. But all this is an old story to you, Mr. X."

The good man bowed. "No, sir, I am always glad to learn. Years of absorption in the task of manufacturing the Perfect Bath have not allowed me to devote as much time as I could have wished to the art and life of Velasquez. You were saying, sir, something about the dark costumes imposed on the Spanish court by Philip IV helping the art of Velasquez."

"Yes, it forced Velasquez to investigate the fascinating problem of blacks, that is, the gradations of black—blue-black, purple-black, grey-black—all the variations of the family of blacks seen under the changes of light. Velasquez saw colour. He could paint colour. Those who say that Velasquez was not a colourist have only to be reminded of 'The Surrender of Breda,' a dream of colour and the greatest historical picture in the world; of the portrait of the monarch known as the 'Fraga Philip,'

now in the Frick collection, an orderly riot of colour; of the shimmering rose-pink in the dress of the 'Infanta in Red'; but it is the blacks of Velasquez that fascinate me—the diaphanous drapery beneath the body of the 'Rokeby Venus'; the blacks and greys, wonders of tone and values, in 'The Maids of Honour,' and the noble blacks in the portrait here, in this museum, of 'Philip Young.'"

Mr. X tucked his umbrella (it was the right kind, with a collapsible crook so that it can be packed in a trunk) under his arm, and advanced his right patent shoe a few inches. I have noticed that when, in talking, I get the bit between my teeth, he waits until I mention something concrete, something he understands, and then he pulls me up sharp with a jerk.

"Here, in this museum," cried Mr. X. "Pray let us examine it." He paused a moment to reprimand three children who were using the swing-door as a plaything, and then linking his arm in mine (I hope the janitors noticed us) he paid the two quarters, affably waving aside my remonstrance, and then allowed me to lead him to Gallery 37.

There, in the place of honour, hangs Philip IV by Velasquez, painted when Velasquez was 25 and Philip 19. This early work is singularly attractive. It is the straight painting of a young master. The trained hand of the artist has followed the unerring eye. It is attractive because it is so sure, so frank an example of the painter's power of draftsmanship, and of placing a figure on the canvas, boldly yet modestly.

Velasquez never showed off, never flirted with cleverness, never allowed his technique to outdistance his theme. He painted as he lived; his art is a reflection of the life of a Spanish gentleman, plain and courteous, of noble birth and modest manners, who received a small salary as Philip's Palace Marshal, including yearly a new suit of clothes; and who filled in his time painting masterpieces. Here is Philip Young, before Olivares, his Prime Minister, had brought Spain to disaster; before he had sucked the orange of life dry finding it bitterer and bitterer; Philip fair and surly, tall and alert, with the Hapsburg mouth and the Hapsburg nose; Philip IV of Spain, unhappy, unfortunate, unregretted, who is said never to have been angry and to have laughed only three times in his life.

When I look at a portrait like this, the present fades away into stillness and the past becomes eloquent. So real did Philip Young seem to me, so vivid the scene when he would steal away from the claims of state and proceed by a secret staircase to the studio of Velasquez and there sit talking, that I forgot all about Mr. X.

I turned to find that the worthy man had seated himself on a cane chair and was gazing intently at Philip Young.

"A remarkable portrait, sir," he said. "And no doubt an excellent likeness. As a good democrat, kings have little interest for me, but, if I may say so, this seems to me to be an admirable portrait of a man, a weak man, but a kingly man, if I may use the expression; certainly he had good

taste. I approve of dark clothes, especially on important occasions, and those worn by King Philip seem to be exceptionally well made. . . . It is a remarkable portrait; it seems to me to have qualities of gravity and sincerity that are all too rare in art."

Mr. X's eyes wandered. I followed their direction. They had roamed to the portraits by Van Dyck that hang on either side of the Velasquez. Then he said something which explains why I so constantly seek Mr. X's society. Yes, X betrays, periodically, remarkable artistic acumen. He said,

"The Van Dycks look superficial beside the Velasquez."

"Oh, rare Mr. X!" I cried.

"I can understand," he continued, hastily, "why Sir Walter Armstrong" (he referred to his notebook) "should have called Velasquez the greatest painter the world has produced. Oh, yes, I make a note of brief, definite statements like that by authorities. You were saying, sir, that Velasquez painted his royal master many times."

"Endlessly. There is a 'Philip Young' at Boston, others in the Prado at Madrid, many of 'Philip Middle Aged'; and in the National Gallery, London, a half length of 'Philip Old', superb, a masterpiece, the joy of artists, the despair of copyists. This Philip here is the result of the unerring eye, and the faultlessly obedient hand of Velasquez working in combination; you can follow the processes of his draftsmanship and painting; but in the 'Philip Old' at the National Gallery, all you

can say is, that it seems to have been willed—and it was done. And if we say this of the simple figure of 'Philip Old' what shall we say of the group of figures, 'The Maids of Honour,' at Madrid, called by Spaniards 'The Family Picture'? The parents of little Princess Margaret wanted another portrait of her, so she was conducted to the painting room of Velasquez in the old palace at Madrid. But the child was tired of having her portrait painted; she protested, she rebelled, so her little maids of honour were called, and they brought with them her favorite dwarf to amuse her, and her big dog, and the King and Queen were there looking on and saying, 'Now be good, there's a dear; and the Master of the Ceremonies had drawn back the curtain, at the back of the vast chamber, letting in a flood of sunlight, and there was Velasquez standing before the canvas as big as the wall of a cottage, and his quiet deep eyes took in all the scene, including his own figure, which he could see in a mirror—the protests, the entreaties, the cajoleries and the way the light lost itself and found itself again in the dim heights, amid the rafters of the painting room. Velasquez looked. He saw that it was good. He began to paint. Some time later, long after, when the picture was quite finished, Philip IV said to Velasquez, 'There is one thing wanting,' whereupon he took a brush, dipped it in red pigment, and painted on the breast of the figure of Velasquez in the picture —the cross of Santiago."

"A fitting honour," said Mr. X. "That is the

right way to bestow knighthoods. I have often thought that were I an Englishman, I would refuse a knighthood like Mr. John Galsworthy and others. And yet, and yet" (Mr. X smiled), "suppose King George were to meet me in the corridor of Buckingham Palace, after he had been enjoying a bath in my Super A tub, and out of sheer gratitude were to—tush! tush! sir. Pardon me. Such levity is unbecoming, indecorous, surrounded as we are by noble works of art. But that must have been a proud moment for Velasquez!"

As we walked away I said—"How about your collection of British and American advanced pictures, Mr. X? Is it progressing?"

"Sir," he answered, "it is in abeyance. When I see an Old Master I feel less confident about my judgment of the—er—young Modern Masters."

5. MR. X AND SUN PAINTING

THERE came my way a copy of "Natural History," the journal of the American Museum of Natural History. Within was an article by Howard Russell Butler called "Painting the Solar Corona," handsomely illustrated in colour, with the information that this picture of the total eclipse of the sun, painted at Baker, Oregon, on June 8, 1918, is now enshrined, in an appropriate setting, in the Natural History Museum of New York.

Sensible sun painting! For his portraits Mr. Butler requires from 10 to 12 sittings of two hours each. The sun would only allow him 112 seconds, the period of totality of the eclipse. But much could be done beforehand, much afterward, and those precious 112 seconds were spent not in painting, but in recording and checking. Manet and Corot in painting man or nature worked in values; that is, in the relation of the deepest dark to the highest light, and Mr. Butler, in painting the Solar Corona, prepared to work in the same way. Obviously, the deepest dark is the moon hiding the sun, and the brightest lights are the flames that shoot out from the rim of the darkened solar furnace, darting up, some of them, to a distance of 480,000 miles at the rate of 100 miles a second.

These prominences, these leaping tongues of fire, had to be portrayed in their proper colour and brilliancy. Working in values, Mr. Butler decided, after many experiments, on a sky value of 25, and a prominence value of 60, the total variation in values thus being limited to 35 points. Many modern painters, except, of course, Futurists and Bolsheviki, employ, directly or indirectly, a system of notation for their values. The layman can practise it sitting on a hilltop, or in a room. Make 10 your highest light and 1 your deepest dark; then, half closing the eyes, arrange in your mind the intermediary numbers. This is an inexpensive family game, and of course it does not matter much if the gradation of your values is not absolutely right. But in painting the Solar Corona Mr. Butler had to make his values as right as is humanly possible.

In appearance this picture of the Solar Corona is not unlike the iridescent jellyfish that annoy bathers on the Dutch coast. Fleecy clouds sweep over an indigo sky, and in the middle of the picture, surrounded by the pale blue oval of the corona, is the dark circle of the moon blotting out the solar furnace. Round the rim are the prominences, the riot of flame anything up to 480,000 miles high. In the picture the biggest prominence is about half the height of a bird seed.

I looked with veneration at this example of sun painting, knowing the intelligence, labour, and time that had gone into its production. Having saluted it, I returned to the Central Hall of the Natural

History Museum, purposing to examine with more care the prize sweet peas, and the marvellous meteorites.

Immediately I entered the hall my attention was challenged by a figure standing in front of the seated marble statue of Morris Ketchum Jesup, president of the Natural History Museum from 1881 to 1908. The person who was so intently examining this specimen of Victorian statuary was Mr. X. I regret to say that he was admiring it. Do you know this statue that stands in the middle of the Central Hall? There is nothing to be said against it, except that it is not art: there is nothing to be said in its favour except that it is a copy in marble of how Mr. Jesup looked when he was seated in a costly chair, dressed rather carefully, including a handsome pin in his necktie. I believe that the sculptor, whose name is not given, really tried in a passing glimpse to be artistic. Has he not arranged the tassels of the chair in a negligé manner: has he not caught up two or three of them in disorderly array?

Let that pass. What concerned me was the discovery that Mr. X was thoroughly enjoying this crude example of illustrative sculpture. He nodded his head gravely; he smiled approval; and I am sure that he was seeing himself at some far-distant date in a similar position. He glanced down at his figure; he took a deep breath; he saw himself, rotund, and handsomely clothed, in marble. Alas, all my admonitions had failed. Was this the result of my art ministrations?

I tapped him on the shoulder. He started guiltily, linked his arm in mine, and said (he is really a man of considerable self-possession), "Were it not for the children, who seem to become noisier every year, the Natural History Museum would be a very agreeable place to spend a Sunday afternoon."

As we walked toward Central Park, I said, "I went there to see Butler's 'Total Eclipse' picture."

"So did I," said Mr. X. "Great minds jump together." He said this with a smile as if he had uttered something witty.

Continuing to smile, he compelled rather than led me to a tree, withdrew the magazine he was carrying from under his arm, dropped it upon the sward, and sat upon it. Then he proceeded to unload upon me a prodigious amount of lore about eclipses—how Oppolyer's "Canon der Finsternisse" gives the elements of no fewer than 13,000 eclipses, both of sun and moon, which have taken place since 1207 B. C., and which will be seen before 2152 A. D., and so on.

At last I broke in and said—"You've been reading the article in 'Natural History.'"

Have I told you that Mr. X is sly? He withdrew the magazine from under his body, and tucked it under his arm again, acting as if I had not observed what he was doing. Then he turned the conversation. "In what category, sir, would you place Mr. Butler's picture?"

"Sensible sun painting," I answered.

Out came his pencil and notebook. He wrote the words down. Mr. X is rather a dear.

6. MR. X AND A CRITIC

OCCASIONALLY Mr. X is peremptorial. Then I obey. He was peremptorial the other morning over the telephone. "I have a Critic here," he said. "Come and hear him discourse, 4.30 sharp. Mrs. X is away for the day."

When I arrived at his new studio-apartment, which has already been described, I found the good man "picnicking," as he expressed it. The painters had finished. The panelled walls are a beautiful purply grey discreetly relieved with gold lines, an excellent background for most pictures. The walls are a rare colour and I may hint, in passing, that for a week a friend of Mr. X stood by the bewildered, sulking painters and forced them to produce the right tint of purply grey.

Propped against this delectable wall was a reproduction in colour of the first pure landscape produced in the western painting world—"S. Francis Preaching to the Birds," by Giotto, a lovely, archaic, time-stained thing inadequately described by Mr. X as "not chic, sir, but it takes some beating." Indeed, against the purply-grey wall this silvery-purple landscape looked adorable. I should have enjoyed the harmony more had it not been for a strong odour of beeswax and turpentine, and I was

also discommoded by the trouble of crossing the floor on the boards and pieces of wood that had been laid upon it. Mr. X, you see, had been advised to have a black floor. The painting was dry, but two men had been employed all the morning in waxing the surface.

Hence my discomfort. The Critic, when he arrived, was evidently also disturbed. His face puckered up, his nostrils quivered and he seemed quite disinclined to cross the rickety board to a chair that had been placed for him at the farther end of the room. Here Mr. X shone. He is always fine in an emergency. It was heartening to watch him conduct the Critic to his chair with an air that an Eighteenth Century macaroon might have envied. Having assembled us in our seats, Mr. X cleared his throat and said, "Gentlemen, I have asked you to honour me with your presence here, because I have just made a purchase and I wish to have your opinions upon it."

Whereupon he opened a fat brown-paper parcel and displayed a selection of the Medici prints. On the top was Botticelli's exquisite fresco of "Giovanna Tornabuoni and the Graces," now in the Louvre. A vast smile of self-approbation overspread Mr. X's serene countenance. "I bought them on my own responsibility," he said, looking at me with quizzical interrogativeness. "I argued thus—as these prints are, so I am informed, faithful facsimiles of the originals, a careful study of them should acquaint me with many masterpieces of paintings. Pray, sir, give me your opinion on

my choice." With that he dumped the bundle on the Critic's knee.

The Critic winced. "Oh, art in bulk bores me," he moaned. "And as for reproductions, either of pictures or marbles, I don't give a fig for them."

He looked wearily through the bundle, and I, knowing him, waited, hoping that something would kindle his imagination and provoke him to talk. But the subject of his talk, which is often good, must come from himself. I doubted if the present occasion was propitious. Well meaning, but blundering, Mr. X had borne down the Critic, physically as well as mentally, when he dumped that heavy brown-paper parcel upon his knee.

Suddenly the Critic started, awoke from his lethargy. Holding out a facsimile of "Jean Arnolfini and His Wife," by Jan van Eyck, from the picture in the National Gallery, London, he said, "Painting is an amazing thing! We talk about progress, but here is a picture done in the early Fifteenth Century that is perfection. In the genre of intimate, domestic pictures, this work has never been excelled, and yet Jan van Eyck was in at the beginning. He and his brother Hubert were virtually the inventors of oil painting. And in one burst he produces this unparalleled masterpiece. Marvellous!"

Mr. X scrutinised "Jean Arnolfini and His Wife." Then he proceeded to shuffle the other examples of great and greater, less and lesser masters.

"Stop!" cried the Critic. (He is an aggressive

man and does not seem to realise Mr. X's importance.) "Stop! I want to look at nothing else. Why distract my mind with other things? My appreciation is satiated. At this moment, Jan van Eyck is supreme alone. Nothing else can approach his throne. For the moment I want to keep him there." He placed the facsimile upon the ledge of the wall and gazed at it rapturously, yet knotting his brows.

"I salute you, Master," he cried. "You, who reached perfection in a single stride, and your elder brother, Hubert, who was doubtless the author of the best miniatures in the 'Heures de Turin,' may even have been a greater man than you or than Pol de Limbourg. Incomparable brothers, I salute you!"

"Pray, sir," interposed Mr. X, "what is your opinion of Guido Reni?"

I suppose that at that moment Mr. X was nearer to being struck, assaulted by the fists, than at any time of his mature life.

But the Critic kept his temper admirably, and subtly punished Mr. X by addressing his remarks directly to me. "I am always provoked," he said, "when an editor, or a collector, or the world tries to hustle me into an attempt to make me admire things in the bulk. I am a subjective critic—indeed, I am not a critic at all. I am an appreciator, and I assume it to be the duty of a critic to do as M. Anatole France does, to narrate the adventures of my soul among masterpieces. I have no use for objective criticism. It does not interest me to

compare one work with another, or to give a few kindly lines to every picture in an exhibition. That is what editors usually want, but it is a sure way to produce a tedious and unreadable article. My way is to seek one thing, some work that arouses my interest, and to base my article on that alone. I am constitutionally unable to give my attention to the other facsimiles in our friend's bundle. The van Eyck fills my heart and mind, its subtle draftsmanship, the delicate but profound way the paint is handled, the——"

"Pardon me," interposed Mr. X. "If you will permit me I will walk up and down this board for a while. Pray continue your remarks, sir."

The Critic proceeded to address his remarks even more immediately to me: "I'll give you an instance of what I mean. Yesterday I visited a 'Loan Exhibition of French Art, Periods of Louis XV and Louis XVI.' The room or hall is smallish, and into it have been crowded 262 items, ranging from a commode of Louis XV to a miniature portrait of St. Just; from a wall of Beauvais tapestry to the baby shoes that belonged to Jean Jacques Rousseau. As I have told you, art in the bulk appals me. Individually, many of these things were interesting, but to examine them one after the other, because my editor insists upon a general view of every exhibition I attend, only makes me contemptuous and certainly produces a bad article. On I plugged —portrait of the Marquise de La Fayette, three vinaigrettes, pair of candelabra, and so on, and so on. Then suddenly, on the last wall, I saw the

thing that was specially for me. My spirits bounded. My power of appreciation gushed upward like a fountain. It was a small picture by Fragonard, 'Le Premier Baiser,' just a pretty subject, but oh, the treatment of it, liquid gold, the exquisite draftsmanship, bathed in an auriferous little lake of golden light—a Fragonard, a perfect work by a perfect little master who had no other desire than to please. Am I clear? Do you follow my thought? In an ideal state my editor and my public would demand of me, as critic, an appreciation of only what has pleased me—the van Eyck in Mr. X's bundle, the Fragonard at the French Loan Exhibition!"

Slowly Mr. X fastened the string around the bundle. When he had made it neat he turned pointedly to me and said: "Perhaps, sir, on some future occasion you will give me your opinion on the other pictures in this assortment."

Really, for so magisterial a man it was quite a pretty rebuke.

. . . .

Mr. X has skipped away to Palm Beach wearing a new Panama hat, and a necktie which I begged him to discard before he returns to civilisation. He took with him a copy of Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies" and Rex Beach's story, "Too Fat to Fight"—"for relaxation, sir." On a post card just received from him he says—"I have seen the Royal Poinciana Tree in bloom. It gives me a better understanding of Post-Impressionism and,

to a certain degree, reconciles me to that revolutionary movement. I have not yet had an opportunity to discuss art with any of the wealthy men who reside here in cottages. Cottages—ahem!"

7. A LETTER TO MR. X

TO Mr. X, Palm Beach, Florida.

My dear Mr. X:

It was a great pleasure to receive your letter following your picture post card, and to note at the top, in correct businesslike fashion, the words, one inclosure. If the President of Mexico had conferred upon me the rank of General I could not have been more surprised than when I realised that your "one inclosure" was a typewritten poëm by yourself in vers libre under the caption, "In Praise of Art at Palm Beach." We need not despair of America if her successful business men take to writing poetry, even if the form be that of vers libre.

So Palm Beach has held an art exhibition in a houseboat, a proceeding which has moved you to write a poem, in your bedroom, in the "small hours." But my dear Mr. X, you must not use the expression "feathered warblers" when you mean birds, and you must not refer to "starry orbs" when you are describing the eyes of young ladies. I admit that the moonlight and the memory of Mrs. X, who is unfortunately detained in Philadelphia, and the "balmy airs," to quote your own expression, tempt the poet to hyperbole. But the great artist

in words is as relentless a foe to the cliché, as the great manufacturer is to adventitious aids.

You, Mr. X, are a king in the Bath Tub world: let your fine discretion and austerity accompany you in your experiments in the world of art. Do you not remember that one Easter you described yourself as a Crusader among plumbers, and that upon your oriflamme were emblazoned the words, "Utility, Simplicity and Beauty."

All the same, my dear Mr. X, I am much interested in your poetical description of the exhibition of works of art held in a houseboat, "on Neptune's realm," as you express it in your ninth line. And I am also much interested in the report of the conversation you have had with one of the wealthy men dwelling in a cottage "in sylvan solitude," as to the prospects of art in the United States, and the necessity of bringing art in fuller measure before the people. You ask me to give you some information as to the way art matters are conducted in England, so that the wealthy man and yourself may have some ground to work upon in the next conversation you have on this subject. As you justly say—"Forewarned is forearmed."

Well, first as to Patronage, an ugly word in theory to the true democrat, but in practice most useful to the artist. It means advertisement of art, and advertisement, as you well know, is another way of spelling the word success. The spring exhibition of the Royal Academy in London is advertised. Hence crowds and sales and fame for a number of shy painters who bear their fame re-

markably well. The spring exhibition of the National Academy of Design in New York is not advertised. I only know when it opens through seeing a review of the pictures in small print in the papers. The Royal Academy, on a spring afternoon, is so crowded that it is almost impossible to see the pictures. At the National Academy of Design on a spring afternoon you could pace the rooms, my dear Mr. X, and compose a poem on "The Loneliness of Art."

Why this difference? Because the people of England (who, I may say, in parenthesis, are not in the least artistic) have been schooled, for years and years, into the belief that art is an important asset in their lives and also that the opening of the Royal Academy Exhibition is a great social event, quite as important as the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race and the Ascot Gold Cup, and almost as important as the annual Amateur vs. Professional cricket match at Lords. The opening of the Royal Academy Exhibition, on the first Monday in May, is heralded for weeks beforehand by newspaper paragraphs describing the pictures that are being painted. The Monday before the exhibition opens is Varnishing Day; Tuesday and Wednesday are Press Days; Thursday is Royal Day; Friday is Private View Day, when lady journalists assemble in the first room and dispatch special messages to their newspapers with accounts of the frocks. On Saturday the Banquet is held, with speeches by notabilities, the reports of which sometimes fill four colmns of *The Times*. Royalty

graces the occasion. Everybody knows that the art season has begun, and painters who desire to become a member of the Royal Academy buy a new silk hat. Can you wonder, my dear Mr. X, when the galleries open to the public on the following Monday that they are crowded, and that they remain crowded until the end of August. This, sir, as you will readily perceive, is not art: it is a method of publicity that makes art seem important. Which it is!

Another British way of arousing interest in art is the attacks that for half a century have been made upon the Royal Academy for its conservatism, for its indifference to new movements, and so on. The public reads these attacks, is interested, quite impartial, but is generally aware that art is, as you might have expressed it before you took to vers libre, "alive and humming." These attacks were usually made by a group of catholic critics and literary painters who, if I may so express it, devoted much of their time to the politics of art. Like yourself, they were Crusaders: they desired to get things done; they wanted art to be honoured and efficient, and they are pegging away still—they or their sons.

It was this group that forced the government to send to the seats of war the younger painters, the men of force and vision such as John, Orpen, Nevinson, the brothers Nash and others. There has always been a group of Britishers who have fought in the columns of the daily and weekly press, and in books, year in and year out, for art. Hogarth

began it. Ruskin devoted his life to the enterprise. Gradually the British public began to realise that art is important, and gradually wealthy men (I know you are interested in wealthy men, dear Mr. X) began to offer their support. That always happens. Drive it home that a thing is important, that it is a national necessity, and the Patron appears. He appears because writers have forced into his consciousness the importance of Art.

Let me give you a few instances. In the early nineties, the shameful condition of the way that the nucleus of the National Portrait Gallery was being treated was attacked. Art writers protested. They called it a scandal: they urged immediate action. Result: Mr. Alexander came forward and built the National Portrait Gallery in St. Martin's Place. In 1896 the cry for a National Gallery of British Art was raised in the press. Result: Sir Henry Tate built the Tate Gallery. In 1909 art writers fulminated against the neglect of the Turner bequest of water colours, unfinished oils, etc. Result: Sir Joseph Duveen built the Turner wing to the Tate Gallery.

Later the group began to agitate for a Gallery of Contemporary Foreign Art, a testimony to the union of the Allies. Result: Sir Joseph Duveen II offered to build such a gallery as an annex to the Tate Gallery. Plans are now being prepared, and the collection will include American pictures. There are other things I might tell you, my dear Mr. X, of the ways we adopt in England to drive home to the public the importance of art. But I

have said enough to give you a basis for your approaching conversation with your friend, the wealthy man, in his cottage at Palm Beach.
I have just reread your poem, and I am tempted to send you the following, which, as you will perceive, is also in vers libre, or "lazy verse," as some call it. I would point out to you that the avoidance of rhyme, rhythm, and scansion makes the writing of poetry much easier than heretofore.

TO ONE AT *PALM* BEACH

Return, Mr. X,
Leave the *E*verglades
And the *P*oinciana Trees in bloom
So falsely *P*ost-Impressionistic.
Return, admirable sir, to little old
New York
Where men are poor but good,
Where we bath in comfort,
And Art is honoured in steam-heated rooms,
Velvet-hung, parquet-floored,
Not as at *P*alm Beach
In houseboats
Moist and drafty.
Manhattan, ay, and Brooklyn, need you, Mr. X,
Return, good sir,
For without you
We are
Dull.

As this is the first poem I have written since the war, I may signalise the occasion by signing myself

A FELLOW POET.

8. MR. X AND MURAL PAINTING

MY dear Mr. X:

I am much interested to learn that you have been invited by the Go-Ahead Club of your home town to give an informal talk on Mural Painting and Street Decoration.

You say, dear Mr. X, that although you "know what you like" in regard to Mural Painting and Street Decoration, yet your knowledge of those subjects may be described as rudimentary, and you suggest that I should furnish you with a few hints.

I am delighted to do so. Decoration, interior and exterior, is one of my pet subjects. My advice to you, valiant sir, is to be bold, to be yourself, for there never was a time when the important subjects of Mural Painting and Street Architecture needed plainer speaking. To reduce the matter to its simplest axioms I suggest that Decoration, whether in the city hall or in a public square or street, can be divided into two classes—decorations that charm, and decorations that instruct. The ancient and mediæval world, which understood decoration, did both. The modern world, which does not understand decoration, usually does neither. Let me take a concrete example of modern decoration.

One of the adornments erected by New York in

honour of her returning soldiers was the Arch of Jewels, spanning Fifth Avenue at Fifty-ninth Street. It was a pretty thing, particularly at night, when the searchlights played upon it. At Coney Island or at Earl's Court this Arch of Jewels would be, as you would term it, an "attractive feature"; but what had this fairy-like gewgaw to do with the resolute, solemn men who marched under it? The stern work they did demanded something sterner and finer than this flashing frivolity. I examined the arch carefully by daylight, and here, Mr. X, is a point for your informal talk. On the columns of the arch facing downtown were sculptured decorations. I studied them carefully and could discover in their design neither instruction nor charm. Dominating each of the groups was a huge figure: one wore a gas mask, the other had a sour, symbolic visage. Beneath these two grotesques were puny figures in allegorical attitudes. Tell this to your audience and ask them what purpose is served by these brainless architectural sculptures. They gave nothing either to civilian or to soldier: they neither charmed nor instructed: they aroused only a bored wonder as to their meaning.

When I walked round to the other side of the arch, facing uptown, I had a most agreeable surprise. There were no sculptures on this side. In their place was dignified, well-wrought, and well-spaced lettering, always so pleasant to the eyes, and rightly done, a very attractive form of decoration. And the text of the lettering was so well

chosen that I gave myself the pleasure of copying it for your edification. Here it is:

God give us strength and wisdom to do it wisely.
God give us the privilege of knowing that we did it
without counting the cost.
*E*very foot of ground that they won was permanently won
for the Liberty of Mankind.
Not to glorify America but to serve their fellowmen.

There, my dear Mr. X, you have examples of the right and wrong way of patriotic decoration. One is futile, the other is fine; one is stupid, the other is stimulating. Why have meaningless figures when you can employ sentences of fine meaning in fine lettering?

I think you will agree with me that improvement is not possible until our decorators and architectural sculptors make up their minds as to the purpose of their art. In the olden days, when reading was rare and knowledge infrequent, mural painting had the definite purpose of instruction. Those days are past. Nobody dreams today of being instructed by a mural painting. We look at Mr. Sargent's frescoes in the Boston Library for their design, drawing and colour, never for their teaching. I have spent many, many hours examining modern mural paintings in Europe and America, and I always come to the conclusion that they are almost always on the wrong lines. Diaphanous figures that are meant to mean so much and mean so little. Empty designs that neither instruct nor charm. How often have I felt that a flat surface

of fine colour would be much more agreeable, or even a sweep of sky and green headlands emerging from a painted sea. Surely, in a city, nature is the proper form of mural painting. Frankly I prefer wall decorations whose aim is to charm, and nothing else, as a Persian rug, or a Japanese screen charms. Plead, Mr. X, for the banishment of the figure, and the re-entry of the decorative design that does not attempt to express anything but pleasure in pattern and colour.

We western moderns are the slaves of representation in art. The great decorators of Assyria and Egypt knew instinctively that representation was not the right way. They used men and animals merely as symbols to express their meaning. Recall, or, better still, get slides of the "Procession of Archers" and the "Marching Lions," in the frieze of enamelled bricks from the palace of Artaxerxes II, now in the Louvre; recall the Assyrian Alabaster reliefs from the palace of Ashurnasirpal, now in New York; recall the "King Stabbing a Lion" from the palace of Darius at Persepolis, now in the Louvre. Representation? They didn't care a fig for it. Why, the lion in the Persepolis relief is standing rhythmically and heraldically upon his hind legs ready to be stabbed so that he may take his place nicely in the decorative scheme. And the strange thing is that this symbolic treatment is more impressive and significant than if the combat had been portrayed according to academic rules of representation.

Fundamental thought must have gone to these

designs, and fundamental thought is just what our mural painters and architectural sculptors (many of them) avoid. When Mr. Edwin H. Blashfield painted his vast, highly coloured, and melodramatic "Carry On," which I observe now hangs in the Metropolitan Museum with the word "Purchase" inscribed beneath, can he really have thought that looking at this crude representation of war would help anybody to "Carry On"? Its effect upon me is to carry myself away from it. The man who paints such a picture should carefully think out, before he begins, the effect of his message upon the multitude. In the making of patriotic pictures the mind should have a larger share than hand and eye.

If mural painters are determined to instruct they must use their heads; they must realise that they are painting for the modern mind. The authors of the sculptures on the Arch of Jewels should study the architectural sculptures of St. Gaudens and Stanford White. They said something, and they said it finely and simply. Mr. Bacon says something finely and simply in his Lincoln monument at Washington, which, dear Mr. X (are these hints serviceable?), you should examine on your way back to New York.

May I hope, dear Mr. X, that my words may be of some service to your practical mind. No, I do not advocate reading your talk from manuscript. Audiences like talks to be talks. The danger of a talk is that you are apt to adventure down a byway and in the course of the divigation

to forget what you were saying when you left the highroad of your talk. Beware of byways. A good plan is to station Mrs. X at the end of the hall, with instructions to raise her handkerchief when the byway is beginning to tempt you. Accept, dear Mr. X, my compliments and best wishes.

9. ANOTHER LETTER TO MR. X

WHAT, Mr. X, more lectures? Dear me! Congratulations! I am tickled by the account of your talk at Pugsville, Florida, on Mural Painting, and the news that the Go Ahead Club has asked you to lecture again, at the closing session of their course. You seem to have been a marked success and your analysis of the reason is illuminating. As you observe, most lecturers are mere writers, experts, and scholars, and that you are probably the first Man of Substance who has addressed an audience at Pugsville. I can quite understand what an asset that is. A Man of Substance, speaking about art, has a background denied to the mere student of æsthetics. And you did well to aim, in your platform manner, to quote your own words, at "the clarity of Woodrow Wilson with the bonhomie of Burton Holmes."

I note that you have chosen "American Painting, Past and Present," as the subject of your Talk. Oh, pardon, I must call it Lecture, as you "opine" that the word Lecture has an ampler, a larger dignity than Talk; and that you have chosen "American Painting, Past and Present," as a subject, because you feel the need of an ample field for your remarks. I also note your postscript to the effect

that a few hints on the subject of American Painting, Past and Present, will not be unwelcome. I accept your invitation joyfully, as it enables me to make some disjointed remarks about American painting which I should hardly have the courage to compose into more permanent form. Let me divide my causerie into two courteous parts—the Past and the Present. First—the Past. Of course, you must begin by saying a few words on "a certain spirit of moderation" so characteristic of American art, and also something about the willing dependence of American artists upon the traditions of Europe. But you need not stress this point, as the exceptions are not scanty (Winslow Homer, for example, stood entirely upon his own feet) and some of the younger Americans who are beginning to make their art cries heard, owe little to anybody. But you might dwell upon the paradox that it is the old nations who are daring in art, and the young nations who are timid. You should be able to raise a smile by suggesting the following as a new crest for the National Academy of Design—an Athletic Figure with the Right Foot firmly embedded in the Rock of the Acropolis, and the outstretched Right Hand firmly grasping the Base of a Skyscraper. And you might add that the three departments of art in which America excels are the Skyscraper, Landscape Painting and Vers Libre. If I were asked to give three prizes for the best specimens of architecture in the Twentieth Century in the City of New York I would cite the Woolworth Building, the Bush Terminal Build-

ing, and the Metropolitan Tower. These fulfil that elemental essential of good architecture—the growth of beauty from utility.

If you have made these points, dear Mr. X, with your accustomed smiling suavity, I think your audience should now be alert, and ready to be lulled into a brief disquisition on the past. I know that you would like to say something on the Hudson River School, on George Inness, on Dwight W. Tryon and on John La Farge. That is a point you must decide for yourself. I may be wrong, but I am not their man. The four artists (excluding Whistler, who was a cosmopolitan) I would suggest as the outstanding American artists of the past are Gilbert Stuart, Winslow Homer, Twachtman, and Ryder.

A good Gilbert Stuart is high up in the first class in modern painting. He was a pupil of Benjamin West, but he outsoars West as a 1920 airplane outsoars a pre-war model airplane. In delicacy and surety of drawing, in quality and tenderness, in intimate handling of paint, a good Gilbert Stuart can hang beside the best Romney, Hoppner, or Lawrence and sometimes beside Reynolds and Gainsborough.

Winslow Homer was an old Master in his lifetime. If a collection of his works could be shown today, say at Paris, I believe he would be hailed as the greatest painter of the sea that art has known. And not only the sea. His water colours are superb. Nothing stronger than "A Wall, Nassau," and "The Bather" has been done, and as for "Tornado,

Bahamas," the way the blown trees have been indicated with single sweeps of the brush is a tour de force that places him in a class by himself. Twachtman is at the other pole to Winslow Homer's strength. He is all delicacy, yet a delicacy that is never weak. A sensitive and exquisite landscapist was John H. Twachtman, and I can speak of his work unreservedly because I have had the privilege of studying it carefully in Mr. John Gellatly's collection. He owns the finest Twachtmans and the finest Ryders—Albert P. Ryder, that cloistral, inward peering genius who, after working upon a picture, off and on, for 20 years, would complain that a buyer wanted to take it away from him before it was finished. Mr. Gellatly has also acquired Ryder's masterpiece, "Christ Appearing to Mary." Had Ryder painted nothing but this jewel-like mystery of paint and feeling, it would have placed him in one of the centre seats at the high table of American art.

And now for the Present. That, dear Mr. X, is a more difficult matter, for the workers in the vineyard of art are multitudinous, and their ways are various and devious. Suppose I limit my suggestions to two exhibitions of the moment and tell you about some of the pictures.

There is "Nonchaloir," one of the most beautiful small pictures John S. Sargent ever painted. It is essential art as a lyric by Shelley is essential poetry. Then I would like you to dwell upon "Wild He-Goat Dance," by Arthur B. Davies—spirited romanticism; "Winter," by Rockwell Kent—bold and

elemental, bordering on black and white, yet full of colour; "Constance," by Gari Melchers—a child picture, an opening bud, the paint active with intelligence. And—but I must not make a catalogue. These well chosen pictures are all exceptional and agreeable. They please, but they do not excite.

For excitement, for pictures that set the imagination working, I must refer you to such specimens of modern art as "Aspiration," by Oscar Bluemner, a remarkable landscape, strange and new, that is actually a representation of the word "Aspiration"; to the same painter's "River," one of the series he has been making of waterside buildings screamingly red, stridently blue or any colour that has obsessed his colour imagination; to Abraham Walkowitz's rhythmic studies, musical in their swing, of the dancing of Isadora Duncan and her pupils; to John Marin's personal landscapes; to the work of Lily Converse, Maurice Sterne, and Joseph Stella —ah, catalogue making again! These are "les jeunes," painters of abstract themes, inquirers; these are the artists who are insisting upon our notice—upon yours and mine.

I post you the catalogues of these exhibitions, dear Mr. X. From their Forewords and from my notes you may glean some material for your lecture on American Painting—Past and Present. I try to visualise you addressing the Go Ahead Club —the clarity of Mr. Wilson, the bonhomie of Mr. Burton Holmes, combined with your own impressive, unaware manner.

10. MR. X IS DISTURBED

FOR the third time I was visiting the "War Paintings and Drawings by British Artists" at the Anderson Galleries, New York. The call was imperative. I could not keep away from these new visions of war—the mental as well as the bodily vicissitudes—by young and youngish men, all with the new vision. And I wanted to see again that new type—the Airman, world-famous in his early twenties, with that look in the eyes, the eagle-look, yet calm and serene, that the Infantryman, however heroic, never achieves. There they are, one after the other, looking at us so quietly from the walls, caught to the life, caged, if free things can ever be caged, by the swift, sure brush of William Orpen. And there in the catalogue we may read thus of them—"accounted for 22 enemy aeroplanes—captain of Eton 1915-16—when last seen was fighting two German machines."

Thinking of these matters, seeing thus the mind and heart of the British Army in these portraits done at the front, within the roar of the guns, each sitting a matter of a few hours, unessentials omitted, I went for the third time to the Anderson Galleries eager to see these portraits again, and Orpen's "Deserter" and "Thinker"; and John Nash's "Stand To Before Dawn," and Nevinson's

"The Road from Arras to Bapaume," an amazing landscape, and another amazing landscape by him —a wood—illustrating a poem by Siegfried Sassoon. The conjunction is happy. Nevinson as artist, and Sassoon as poet, are the two men who have reached nearest to the metallic heart of modern warfare. And yet, much as I wanted to do so, I did not see them that afternoon, for in the entrance hall I encountered Mr. X. And Mr. X, as you know by this time, is not the kind of person who permits himself to be overlooked.

The worthy man was seated under a lamp in a handsome armchair of carved walnut, upholstered in maroon velvet. Upon the wall, on either side of him, hung presentments of Chinese sages, and I could not help thinking, as I watched him, what an admirable mandarin Mr. X would have made had he lived in China some centuries ago. Like the sages on the wall he was in repose. He was reading a book, but a certain flush on the neck, and other signs, told me that he was seeking literature rather as an emollient than as a restorative.

I suggested this and he replied, "Yes, sir, I spent two hours upstairs among the British war pictures, and I frankly confess that they have disturbed me more than I care to admit, more than I care that my friends should perceive. So to recover my equanimity I seated myself in this exceedingly comfortable chair and then I proceeded to soothe myself with literature. I always carry a pocket volume. This happens to be Charles Dickens' 'American Notes.' Let me read you a brief passage which

confutes the idea that this book is over-critical." With that the good man read this aloud:

"'There is no doubt that much of the intellectual refinement and superiority of Boston is referable to the quiet influence of the University of Cambridge, which is within three or four miles of the city. The resident professors at that university are gentlemen of learning and varied attainments; and are, without one exception that I can call to mind, men who would shed a grace upon, and do honour to, any society in the civilised world.'

"That," said Mr. X, "is a well-expressed and well-merited compliment, and its felicitous language has quite restored my balance, if I may so express it."

The good man smiled benignantly. Really he is not unlike a character in Dickens, say a brother Cheeryble with a touch of Mr. Gradgrind.

"But, Mr. X," I said, "why were you upset?"

"Well, sir, I am always temporarily upset when an onslaught is made upon my preconceived opinions and convictions. I regard Great Britain as a conservative country, and when I recall her former war pictures there comes to mind Mr. Horsley's excellent but rather unsoldier-like representation of 'Volunteers at Wimbledon.' They are, I remember, smiling, and they wear mutton-chop whiskers; and also Sir Edwin Landseer's 'Wellington, in Old Age, Visiting the Field of Waterloo.' Those, sir, are orthodox pictures, but the British war pictures upstairs are unorthodox—heterodox. Why, sir, among them are cubist and futurist paintings, an aberration I never expected from the British Gov-

ernment, and, sir (here Mr. X's manner became almost malignantly magisterial), many of Maj. Sir William Orpen's pictures are not finished!"

"Oh, Mr. X," I protested, "surely you know, by this time, that an artist's work is finished when he has said all that he has to say. Why encumber a picture with rhetoric when you have told the truth in quickest and briefest way. Orpen finishes a portrait when the truth needs it. Take his 'Grenadier Guardsman.' That's finished. Every inch of this powerful and forcible portrait of a type is finished. A type! I know why Orpen finished it. You remember how a Grenadier Guardsman looked before the war. Here he is after four years of the dire game. Every detail of him is changed, is new; so Orpen painted every detail. Contrast this with Major McCudden, the most decorated member of the Royal Air Force, who accounted for 54 aeroplanes. The artist has concentrated on the head of this fair, alert hero, a type of the new man. That is what matters—the mind and character of the man who is the most decorated member of the Royal Air Force, so the rest of the canvas is almost left bare, save for touches of colour that hint the flare of shells, and the flash of his decorations."

"I appreciate your explanation, sir," said Mr. X. "But I shall be obliged if you will answer me two questions. What induced the British Government to become—er—extremist in matters of art, and who are these young and youngish men who were given rank in the army, and sent out to the battle-

fronts with carte blanche to paint and draw anything they chose? Why were not the elder battle painters of established reputation sent? Who made the choice?"

"Well, England is fortunate in having at the head of such institutions as the National Gallery, the Wallace Collection, the Tate Gallery, the War Museum, connoisseurs who are thoroughly in sympathy with the new movement in art, and who are also fighters for art: England is also fortunate in having men of insight and adaptability who hold the positions of critics to the leading journals. It must have been the united influence of these men of light and leading that induced the Government to send these young and youngish artists to the war."

"I admit that youth must be encouraged, sir," remarked Mr. X. "Charles Dickens was quite a young man when he wrote 'Sketches by Boz.'"

"But these war artists are not all very young," I said. "Orpen—I find it quite impossible to call him Maj. Sir. William Orpen—is not. He is an Irishman, ready and witty, who performs the labours of six men with a laugh. The task of painting 103 pictures is no more to him than the labour of writing prefaces is to Mr. Bernard Shaw. Nevinson is much younger. The war has made him. Before 1914 he had mastered an expert technique. Peace time was too tame for its employment. He was all dressed up and nowhere to—to——"

Mr. X chuckled.

"War broke out and he at once found a vehicle

for his technique. Paul and John Nash are originals. They were a cult before 1914. Now they are emerging, but they keep their quaint vision. Spencer Pryse is a classicist, who dips classicism into a bath of graceful and forceful modernity. Muirhead Bone was a past master in architectural drawings before the war. The sights he has seen have had little effect upon his art. He remains a searching and exquisite draftsman. John Everett has seen the rich beauty of colour in the camouflaged ships. He is the most gallant of the war artists; he gives to these ships a beauty——"

I paused, because Mr. X was not listening. He was smiling at his own thoughts, and as he smiled he began to turn the pages of 'American Notes."

"You used the word 'gallant,' sir. It is a favourite word with Mrs. X, and on more than one occasion she has applied it to Charles Dickens. And upon my word, sir, I think Madame is right. In the early portion of 'American Notes' he refers to the beauty of the ladies of Boston, and on page 108 he uses almost precisely the same term in reference to the ladies of New York.

"There was no camouflage about Charles Dickens —no, sir!"

Suddenly his face became grave. "The British War Pictures are disturbing, sir. I repeat it. I might almost use the word audacious. May I suggest to you, that when the opportunity offers, you should drop into the official ear that admirable slang phrase—"Go slow."

He said it twice. He was so pleased with himself that the cloud passed from his face.

"Go slow." You take me, sir?

He beamed.

11. MR. X AND WHISTLER

THE bathing season was over. Deserted was the beach. I sat on a bench in front of the dressing-room pavilion, the doors locked, the patter of feet stilled, rather enjoying the silence and isolation; and immensely enjoying the beauty of the moveless, many-coloured sea. Such a sea Whistler, perhaps only he, could have suggested. He might have called his picture "Variations in Violet and Green No. 2" (he painted one under that title) and then some donkey of a critic would cry—"But it's blue." So it was. It was blue. But it was also violet and green, constantly changing, variations in violet and green. And some yards from the shore was the diving float, or raft, the surface a dazzling white. The rays of the setting sun caught it: that dazzling splash of white helped the blue, made it still more wonderful. It was a lovely scene. Alas, it would fade so quickly. I thought of Artemus Ward who, when his little son said to him—"Papa, why do summer roses fade?" answered—"Because it's their biz. Let 'em fade."

Did I say that the shore was deserted? Not quite. Far in front of me, at the sea end of the boarding promenade, sat a girl crouched up, her eyes fixed on the horizon. She wore a vivid red jersey. Thus

the colour scheme of the picture was—red, white and blue—a note of violet red, a splash of glittering white, and that stretch of blue, in which was violet and green—indeed all shades. "Needs a bit of black, somewhere," I murmured. Even as I spoke the bit of black intruded, entered the scene with quiet dignity.

Perhaps you may think that I am romancing. Nevertheless it was he—our excellent friend, Mr. X. Afar I recognised him, musing by the sad sea waves, then walking forward, slowly progressing toward the point where I sat. Now and again he paused, and once stood with arms folded, gazing at nothing, in the attitude of Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon*. I hailed him. He waved, and advanced as majestically as one can in thin shoes on a pebbly beach.

After salutations and inquiries as to each other's summer activities, he said—"And so you have been writing an art article each week. Remarkable! My felicitations! But tell me, my friend, is not the finding of a subject sometimes—er—difficult?"

"Not at all, dear Mr. X. If one is deeply interested in art it is surprising how many interesting subjects spring up during the week, subjects which might easily be missed by the general public if their attention was not drawn to them. I let the subjects of the week simmer, and toward Saturday, when the time has come to begin my article, one subject always enlarges and clamours for consideration."

"An excellent method," said the good man, "and pray, sir, what is your subject for next week?"

"Look around you, Mr. X, look at the value of these yellow sands against that blue sea; note how the waters fade into the sky at the horizon in indistinguishable rosy-grey. What painter does this exquisite sight recall to you?"

Mr. X reflected, gravely studying the panorama. "May I suggest, sir, that it is reminiscent of a landscape background in an early Sienese picture."

I looked at him with indignation. Sometimes Mr. X tries to be clever. "No, sir; the Sienese landscapes are archaic and ill done in spite of their sincerity. This scene should remind you of one whom I may call the most accomplished artist of modern times—James McNeill Whistler—as great with the figure as in rendering these exquisite crepuscular effects, and who was the first Anglo-Saxon to state in the written word the essence of pure artistry. But I need not point out to a man of your insight, dear Mr. X, that 'The Ten O'Clock' did not say all there is to be said about art. It was a perfect expression of the Whistlerian creed, but life and art are greater than the Whistlerian creed. Art contains something more than supreme taste. Why, while 'The Ten O'Clock' was being delivered, the 'fauves,' the savages, were girding themselves for the warpath: Van Gogh and Gauguin were preparing their artistic bombs: Cézanne was laboriously and slowly effecting a revolution: and while Whistler, that night in 1885, was chastising those who make any

sort of an alliance between art and literature, a mild-mannered gentleman who was present at the lecture whispered to his companion—'Michelangelo was a pretty good painter, and he made a pretty good alliance between art and literature on the ceiling of the Sistine chapel.'"

"True," said Mr. X. I have never met our friend's equal for giving emphasis to a monosyllable.

"So you see," I continued, "Whistler seems to be coming into our limelight this week. And there is something else, indeed two or three other current episodes, that urge me to keep him there. In London, in the spring of 1917, I spent an afternoon at Mr. Arthur Studd's house in Chelsea. It was a memorable afternoon, because on the walls of the room where we had tea—a large apartment with tall windows overlooking the Thames—hung three Whistlers. One was 'Cremorne Lights,' a nocturne in blue and silver, a twilight scene in two tones, such as the sight we see before us now; the second was 'The Fire Wheel,' a nocturne in black and gold; the third was 'The Little White Girl,' a symphony in white, which Mr. Pennell, his biographer, calls 'the most complete, the most perfect picture he ever painted.' It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1865: it captivated Swinburne and he wrote some verses for it. The poem was printed on gold paper and pasted upon the frame, but it has disappeared. These three pictures are now in the National Gallery of London. They were bequeathed by Arthur Studd, a lifelong admirer and friend of Whistler's."

Mr. X, I am glad to report, did not say "Some gift!"

"So London," I continued, "is now rich in Whistlers, but nothing compared to Washington through Charles L. Freer's magnificent gift. When the new building is opened (Mr. Freer gave $1,000,000 to house his collection) it will be found that Washington possesses the greatest assembly of Whistlers in the world. Some years ago when Mr. Freer showed me his collection in Detroit, his Whistlers, including lithographs, pastels and etchings, numbered over 1100 items."

Mr. X mused. "The collector," he said, "who leaves his treasures to the nation deserves our highest commendation. He passes on his love for beauty. Do you think, sir, that living with beautiful things improves the character?"

"To be quite frank, Mr. X, I answer—no. Of course it may do so, but generally speaking a fondness for exterior beauty does not change the disposition. Why should it? Improvement comes from within, not from without. Take the case of Whistler. His feeling for beauty was phenomenal, his taste was unrivalled, but—have you read his 'Gentle Art of Making Enemies'?"

"No, sir."

"Well, it's one of the smartest and wittiest art books that were ever written, and also the cruelest and unkindest. He had no pity for an enemy: he had no pity for Sheridan Ford, who suggested the book, and worked hard upon it until, well, until Whistler changed his mind and determined to edit

the 'Gentle Art' himself. It's a long story and it floated back into currency when a rare copy of the 'Gentle Art,' 'edited by Sheridan Ford,' was sold at auction in the Avery sale. It was described as a unique copy of the excessively rare Paris edition, issued after Mr. Ford's Antwerp edition was seized, and it was found impossible to secure a publisher either in England or America. This volume contains extra letters and anecdotes. If I were an excessively rich man I should have bought it, for this unique 'Gentle Art' has an especial interest for me."

"Why so, sir?"

"Merely because I dined with Whistler at the Savoy Hotel, in London, one night in the year 1890, just after he had seized the 'pirated' copies, and acquired, as he expressed it, 'Sheridan Ford's scalp.' The dinner was fixed for 8.15. He arrived at 9.20 in the gayest mood and dandiacally garbed. His gold-headed cane was almost as tall as himself. He talked the whole evening of his triumph over the unfortunate Sheridan Ford, and I don't know which was the more abundant, his wit or his venom. No, Mr. X, I am afraid that a love of beauty does not necessarily connote loving-kindness."

Here Mr. X shivered. "Suppose, sir," he said, "we continue this interesting conversation at some adjacent hostelry."

On our way through the village it was pleasant to note the deference paid by the natives to my companion's majestical air. It seemed quite fitting

that he should remark, as we passed a photographer's shop—"It would be a gratifying episode in one's life to be painted by an artist of Mr. Whistler's calibre."

I assented, and presently touched upon his collection of pictures.

Mr. X smiled. "I will borrow a phrase from your ex-Prime Minister—'Wait and see.'"

Is Mr. X beginning to bore me?

12. MR. X IN A PLAY

THE post informs me that Mr. X has an admirer in Florida who desires to possess his photograph. I mentioned this to the good man. He refused flatly, and added, "I should blush to think, sir, that a presentment of my features was being handed round from hand to hand." In spite of this I cannot resist relating how, one evening at the play, when Mr. X was seated by my side, I saw him, to my confusion, on the stage. The admirer in Florida, and others, may take this hint, and watch for a revival of "Dear Brutus."

It seems that Maria, a cousin of Mr. X's wife, had been urging him to see "Dear Brutus" by Sir J. M. Barrie. "Now that you have more leisure, Thomas," she wrote, "since the Bath Business has been converted into a Company, Inc., I think you should more fully cultivate the amenities of life. Sir James is a whimsical writer, and I suggest that you may obtain from his play an interesting lesson in the attractive quality of "Whimsicality."

Mr. X, who is the most complaisant of men, at once assented, purchased two orchestra stalls, and invited me to accompany him to "Dear Brutus," which I had already seen. Mr. X has an admirable theatre manner, and I was pleased to see, as he took his seat, that his bulky, but dignified

figure attracted considerable attention. He wore a dinner jacket and a stiff white shirt, with a black tie, and he explained to me, in a whisper, why he appeared in this moderate evening garb at a fashionable theatre. "Although, sir, the Great War is over, I do not think that during the arduous reconstruction period one should don—er—tails, a white waistcoat, and a flower."

He perused the programme and read aloud the Shakespearean tag that follows the title: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings." To which he made the comment, "Cryptic, sir, but we shall see! The play's the thing. Ha! ha!"

Then he leaned his elbow on the back of the stall in front of him and, making a half turn toward me, said, "Maria has insisted upon the whimsicality of Sir James Barrie. Pray, sir, is that, in your opinion, a quality that may be acquired? Was it inherent in Sir James, or did he learn it at a School of Journalism, such as we have in Columbia University? Perhaps you are acquainted with this whimsical playwright and author?"

"Oh, yes, I have known him for years; knew him in the days before he wrote plays, when he suddenly delighted London with his humorous essays in the *St. James's Gazette*. Their whimsical, fantastical, sly, sentimental, sob-stuff, and laughter-stuff humour was patent to everybody. Barrie was the parent of the Kailyard School and he made the Scotsman almost as lovable as the Irishman. Of

course, he's a sentimentalist: he glories in it, but his humour, ever bubbling, always saves the situation. He's freakish, and he can sting prettily; but he's never bitter nor lashing like Shaw and W. S. Gilbert.

"His whimsicality has grown, nurtured, I think, by his love for children, and his ability to invent stories for them. No, Sir James's whimsicality hasn't been acquired. It's just grown as he's grown. As novelist and playwright he is the most natural of writers. He feels something; the sociological truth at the back of 'The Admirable Crichton'; the eternal truth about the childhood of 'Peter Pan'; the inner literary knowledge of fatherhood at the back of 'A Well-Remembered Voice'; his imagination—impish, idealistic, tearful, tender, ironic—flutters about the theme, and a play is made out of fanciful material which no other dramatist would dream of handling. He, of course, is Peter Pan; he is the child who can never grow up; and because he keeps this childlike vision, he strikes truth oftener than the learned; and because there is something of the child lingering in all of us, his audience is universal, and he is the most successful of living playwrights.

"I don't know the genesis of 'Dear Brutus.' The idea may have come to him after seeing 'A Midsummer Night's Dream,' but it's all delightfully modernized. Lob is a Twentieth Century Puck; Matey, his butler and fellow conspirator in the midsummer-eve revel of the second act, is a Twentieth Century Bottom. Lob and Matey

know what is in store for the guests in the magical wood on that midsummer night; they know that in that Barrie never-never land, east of the sun and west of the moon, these worldlings will be given a second chance, an opportunity to live their lives over again—a new birth, and a fresh choice."

"Does Sir James show any of this—er—curious quality of whimsicality in his appearance and conversation?" asked Mr. X.

"Yes and no! He's a little, alert man with watchful eyes and a big brow; he's retiring and unimportant looking. I mean he doesn't look like Mr. McAdoo in the movies. He's silent in company, and he has a way of lurking in corners and curling up in chairs like Lob in this play. You could almost put him in your pocket, Mr. X."

Here I paused to take breath. Mr. X was sagely nodding his head and staring at the top of the stall in front of him, as if he were visualising the small, whimsical figure of Sir James M. Barrie standing there shyly.

Then the lights in the theatre went down; then the curtain went up, and then something happened, that was really most embarrassing.

Matey, the butler, large, pompous, dignified, funny, and, alas, a rascal, appears early in the first act. I started and glanced uneasily at Mr. X; but in the darkness could not determine if he shared my surprise and apprehension. For Matey bore an amazing resemblance to Mr. X. Indeed, he was his double—figure, deportment, utterance, mutton-chop whiskers—everything. Can Mr. Louis Cal-

vert, that excellent actor, have seen Mr. X in life, and have modelled the part on him? Had Matey been one of Sir James's sympathetic characters it would not have mattered; but Matey is an amusing scamp. He has his second chance in the magical wood, and he repeats his larceny on a larger and more lucrative scale. Poor Mr. X! Did he realize the likeness? If he did, he dissembled admirably. A world-wide experience of plumbers has given him a unique command over his astonishment.

The dramatic intensity of the close of the first act, when the characters step out of the magical wood certainly impressed Mr. X. But he did not allow any feeling for art to interfere with his disapproval of the alcoholic propensities of the broken-down artist. "It is well, sir, that America has gone dry," said Mr. X.

Matey, as a successful company promoter, in his second chance in the second act, was not so violent an image of Mr. X as when he wore his butler's clothes; but the likeness was near enough to be disconcerting to me. Fortunately, most of the scene is a dialogue between the artist, new born, interested in painting, not in alcohol, with a young daughter, the fruit of his happier second chance. I found the scene between the artist and his dream daughter a little tedious, but Mr. X was delighted. He patted the arm of his seat, not knowing that actors do not care twopence about subtle applause. Strange it is how prone to sentiment successful business men are. When, at the close of the act, little Margaret, alone in the magical woods, cries,

"I don't want to be a might-have-been," Mr. X murmured, "Poor child." His comment on the act was, "Whimsical, sir, but creepy. Sir James Barrie's humour is very unlike Mr. Al Jolson's."

Mr. X was vastly entertained by the third act, wherein the characters return from the magical wood to Lob's house, and gradually lose consciousness of the experience of their second chance. He laughed heartily at the line, "Keep hold of the hard-boiled eggs," and when Matey emerges from the idea that he is a millionaire company promoter, and realising that he is a mere butler, prepares to return downstairs, Mr. X remarked gravely, "Yes, his proper place."

The good man seemed to have got it into his head that the Puck-like character of Lob, Puck in early Nineteenth Century smallclothes, was really Sir James Barrie in disguise. "A most whimsical character," he said, and when at the close Matey seizes hold of the big chair in which Lob is curled up, and, turning it swiftly round finds that Lob has vanished, Mr. X said, "That isn't whimsicality, sir, that's sheer legerdemain."

Later over a cup of cocoa and a club sandwich, Mr. X expressed his high approval of "Dear Brutus."

"A most diverting play," he said, "with ideas at the back of it that compel thought. But Sir James's character drawing is unequal. Consider, for example, the part of Matey, the dishonest, but not unamusing butler. In appearance and manner he is quite unlike any British butler that I have

ever seen. It is not generally known, sir, that although I am a naturalised American, and American to the back-bone, I was born in England, on Brixton Hill. Many of the people of the detached houses of that neighbourhood keep butlers, and this man Matey does not bear the slightest resemblance to any of the types that I have seen there. No, sir, I shall write to Maria and tell her that whimsicality is all very well, but that we must not be whimsical at the expense of truth."

13. MR. X AS A FATHER

IT has not been my habit to introduce domestic matters into this record. But something has happened in the domestic world, linking itself, strange to say, with the applied arts, that I break my rule. The event must have a paragraph to itself.

Mrs. X has presented Mr. X with a fine boy.

Of course I conveyed my felicitations to Mr. X in person. I found the good man more expansive and expressive than ever. It was a delight to watch him pacing his apartment reading aloud a list of Christian names that he had compiled, rolling them on his tongue. He decided finally on Woodrow Theodore.

"A double-barreled compliment, sir," he said.

A pause.

"Now comes the question of extra accommodation," he continued, uttering the words slowly as a man does when he thinks aloud. "I may say, sir, that when I purchased this duplex apartment I did not anticipate this—er—happy event. We shall now require some additional rooms. It is my purpose to acquire the apartment above this, and colloquially speaking, sir, to knock a hole through the ceiling, perhaps two holes, to install

extra staircases, and reserve the upper apartment entirely for Woodrow Theodore and his entourage."

"That's rather a large order, Mr. X," I hazarded.

With an ample gesture he waved away my pusillanimous interjection: a dreamy far-horizon look came into his eyes—"Owing possibly to the bathless conditions under which our brave soldiers lived in France, I may tell you, sir, that the Bath Tub Business was never better. I can well afford to indulge myself with architecture and the applied arts. But please understand that my indulgence is not personal. Although the world does not generally know it, I have views, strong views, on the upbringing of children. Their education should be visual as well as auditory. I intend that Woodrow Theodore shall grow up in surroundings as perfect as good taste, good workmanship and money can supply. His dawning mind shall develop amid the highest forms of decoration and applied art that the twentieth century, the crown of civilisation, can show. I shall call this upper apartment the Woodrow Theodore wing. It will be a model for parents. I am inclined to design the furniture myself."

"Like Mr. Louis Tiffany," I interposed.

Mr. X gazed steadfastly at me for a moment, and then said most impressively, "If you will permit me to say so, sir, I have rather outgrown the Tiffany method of decoration. Once I cried aloud in the wilderness the merits of the Tiffany favrile glass, but now—ah, sir, change and progress. I will put my artistic advancement in the form of an

epigram—'Exit William Kent; enter Robert Adam.' My audiences invariably applaud that sentiment, because I always say it with emphasis, but I doubt if all of them know exactly what I mean. I am not quite sure myself. I learn slowly, sir."

Here the admirable man paused, and I could see by certain rhythmic movements of his ample body that some thought was amusing him. Presently he learned toward me, slapped me on the knee, and said—"I should like to form a School for Parents. How can I correct Woodrow Theodore's æsthetic faults, until I first learn how to correct my own? What do you say to A Parents' Museum? Do you remember that you once wrote about A Citizens' Musuem in which you canvassed the claims of 'Practical Art?' Good. Why not call it A Parents' Museum? Such a museum would show me how to furnish and decorate the Woodrow Theodore wing in a way that would insure his growing up with the best examples of the decorative and applied arts always before him. Now, sir, I am all attention. Would you be so good as to enlarge upon your proposed Citizens' Museum?"

He sank deeper into his chair: he folded his hands across his waistcoat. This signified that Mr. X was ready and willing to listen.

For a few moments I looked steadily at his large, eager face, then I began—"Your point, Mr. X, is clear to me. You are desirous of furnishing the Woodrow Theodore wing with the best modern furniture, designed for modern needs, and expressive of twentieth century taste and culture. When

you say that you prefer Robert Adam to William Kent you mean simply that you prefer the simple and the severe to the rococo and the gaudy. You are a modern man; you are known as the inventor-constructor of the perfect modern Bath Tub, perhaps the finest current example of meeting a want materially and artistically; and you wish your new furniture to be just as expressive of our own time, as your Bath Tub, done as perfectly as it can be done by designers and craftsmen working in the twentieth century."

Three times Mr. X inclined his head gravely.

"But when you seek the best examples of modern furniture, you are, as you express it, all at sea. In museums you are confronted with countless examples of furniture of a past day, going back for hundreds of years: in stores and shops you are bewildered by innumerable specimens of every kind of furniture, usually copied from past examples. But you find no guidance,- no authoritative specimens of twentieth century furniture approved by experts. You are offered endless pieces called by the names of past makers, but none by living makers. Every age seems to be honoured except our own."

Again Mr. X inclined his head three times gravely.

"Your dream is A Citizens' Museum—pardon, A Parents' Museum—which would consist of a number of rooms, or even of houses, each furnished with prize pieces of furniture and accessories, chosen by men who have made this subject their special study and which would serve as model to people like yourself who are suddenly confronted

with the problem of furnishing. Annual prizes are given for pictures, why should not annual prizes be given for articles of furniture from a bed to a bell-push, from a bookcase to an electric-light fitting? And why should not these prize things be arranged in rooms as they ought to be arranged, so that parents and others may learn what is right and what is wrong, what to choose and what to avoid? Why should there not be a National Academy of Crafts? Why is every age exploited but our own? Why——?"

Mr. X rose and grasped my hand. He paused as if listening. "We will continue this conversation presently," he murmured. "The idea of A Parents' Museum pleases me. Stay. Did you hear anything?"

I listened and was aware of an infant's cry, remote but shrill. Mr. X ran to the door. I had never seen him run before. There was something almost sublime in his movement.

* * *

Mr. X never breaks his word, so I am confident that his collection of American and British advanced pictures will one day be formed. But Woodrow Theodore has intervened. What will happen?

14. GOOD-BYE TO MR. X

I AM angry with Mr. X. I have almost decided to ignore him until he shows signs of common sense in regard to his infant, Woodrow Theodore. His interest in Advanced Art appears to be in abeyance; he has eyes and ears for nothing but that uninteresting baby: worse, he has backslided, resumed his admiration for an effete kind of art (I cannot spell it with a capital) that was popular in the time of Queen Victoria and Abraham Lincoln. Listen!

I called upon Mr. X with the intention of inviting him to accompany me to the Press View of an exhibition of Advanced Art, and I found him —well, you would hardly believe it!

Around a white, woolly rug stretched upon the floor he had formed a sort of zareba inclosing his sprawling, swaddled child. Two chairs and a screen formed three of the walls of the zareba, the fourth wall was a huge steel engraving, framed in mahogany, discoloured and dirty, that I should have thought now existed only in junk shops. It is called "The Ironworker and King Solomon": it was painted by Prof. C. Schusserle in 1864 and engraved by John Sartain of Philadelphia in 1871. Where Mr. X found it I know not. From the dim recesses of what lumber room he exhumed it

I cannot guess. But there it was, propped up on the polished floor of his brand-new apartment, one of the walls of his nursery zareba.

I have worse news. Woodrow Theodore is immensely attracted by this preposterous picture. His fat little hands pat it; his chubby fingers try to caress the anatomical figure of the Ironworker seated in the place of honour. His grotesque body sprawls against the picture. Of course the child is attracted by the reflection in the glass. That, to my mind, is the simple explanation.

Mr. X thinks differently. "My dear sir," he said, "you have before you an admirable example of the dawn of Art appreciation in the infant mind. Woodrow Theodore wails until I bring 'The Ironworker' to him. This excellent work is his introduction to the study of Æsthetics. He has a thorough appreciation of the picture. I am delighted at his prescience, sir."

I was dumbfounded. Around the walls were Mr. X's recent purchases—a Rockwell Kent Alaska drawing, a Robinson allegory, a Marin water colour, a Davies nymph, a Bluemner building, a Branchard sincerity, a Wolmark still-life, yet here he was tutoring his child on this chilly steel engraving of an academic ineptitude.

"But my dear Mr. X," I cried, "you are going back into the dark ages. I called to ask if you would accompany me to an Advanced Art picture show."

Mr. X mused darkly. Woodrow Theodore, discovering some new attraction in the steel engrav-

ing, uttered a howl of delight, and Mr. X said, what do you think? He said solemnly but not without sweetness, "And a little child shall lead him. I am content, sir, to be guided (this very modestly) by my infant son."

"But my dear Mr. X," I began, "you——"

At that moment the nurse entered the room, and the child, protesting vehemently at being severed from the picture, was removed.

"I am a witness of this extraordinary lesson in art appreciation every afternoon," said Mr. X. "It makes me 'furiously to think' as our French friends say. Pray, sir, what is your objection to Professor Schusserle's 'The Ironworker and King Solomon'? It seems to me to be an accurate, painstaking and impressive illustration of a famous Jewish legend. I doubt if Sir Edward Poynter, P. R. A., could have done it better."

I gazed at him in astonishment, then I walked to the window and looked sadly down at the traffic of the street. That, at any rate, was normal. He, my pupil! This was the end of all things.

"Well, sir, I await your answer."

"O my dear Mr. X, I could give you a dozen answers, but what's the use."

"Give me one objection," he said.

"One—why, why it's entirely lacking in temperament."

"What is temperament?" cried Mr. X. "Pooh, sir, pooh."

I handled my coat, I possessed myself of my hat and cane, then I paused, glaring at Mr. X, noticing

for the first time how smug, self-satisfied, prosperous and content he looked. I became almost angry.

"You are a typical Anglo-Saxon," I cried. "You despise temperament: having none yourself you despise it in others. But let me tell you, sir, that without temperament art is nothing—dull and barren. And I'll tell you something else, something that is happening in England as well as in America. By whom is the best work, the most promising, the most significant and the most vital being done? By foreigners who have become British and American citizens—Polish Jews, Russian Jews, all the smaller, outcast and outlying nations, all the despised and rejected. They have temperament. And why have they temperament? Because they have suffered. We Anglo-Saxons are so prosperous, so content, so accustomed to having everything our own way, that we have lost our temperament, have exorcised it because it doesn't make for efficiency, for money-getting, and getting on."

Mr. X looked at me reproachfully. I feared that he was about to proclaim that he had temperament; he spared me that. Excited though he was, he exercised admirable self-control. Slowly, punctiliously, as if desirous of giving his irritation time to abate, he removed "The Ironworker" from the floor and placed it carefully upon an Adam settee. Then he said with dignity, "I may not have temperament, sir, but I have eyes in my head, and I have Common Sense. If I were asked to choose between the gifts of Temperament and Common

Sense, I would choose Common Sense any day and every day. Would Temperament have produced the Perfect Bath Tub? Answer me that, sir."

I shrugged my shoulders, and said with scorn, "I was under the impression, sir, that you desired to become a connoisseur."

"So I do, sir, but a Connoisseur whose connoisseurship is founded upon COMMON SENSE."

He pronounced the word as if every letter was a capital, and before I had time to think of something scathing to say, he continued:

"You may care to know, sir, that a month or two ago I was the underbidder at the auction sale when George Inness' 'Sunset On the River' was sold for $17,000. My own opinion of this handsome picture was confirmed when the auctioneer informed us that it is 'the finest American landscape ever painted!' It was Common Sense, sir, not Temperament, that apprised the auctioneer and apprised me of that important fact."

"Well, good-bye, Mr. X," I said.

Further words were useless.

He extended his shapely hand and grasped mine cordially.

"Not good-bye," he said, *"au revoir.* I look forward, sir, with pleasure to some day resuming our conversations. Pray accept this as a souvenir of our pleasant and most informing intercourse."

He handed me a photograph of Woodrow Theodore in a gold frame.

THE END

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