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THE NEW PATH.

VOL. II.] JULY, 1864. [NO. 3.

THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRUE AND THE POPULAR ART SYSTEMS.

THE present is a time when vitality is asserting itself against mortality, and spirit against letter in all pursuits, to a most remarkable degree. We who have been born within the last, half century, do not notice this so much, because we have always been accustomed to it. But those who can look back into the last century tell us of the wonderful change that has come over human affairs. "The intellectual spirit is moving upon the chaos of mind." This renovation may be said to have commenced with the French Revolution, and the overturning has since been experienced throughout all Christendom. Not only have political institutions undergone a change, but so also have the natural sciences, and all branches of knowledge. The time has arrived when principles which have heretofore been very imperfectly apprehended, and at best only known in the letter, are beginning to be understood from their deeper grounds to their ultimate results.

The renovation has extended into the Arts, and has already effected a very marked change. The modern school of realists, though numerically small, is yet beginning to be felt formidable by the adherents to tradition and conventionality, and the assertion of its principles threatens no less than the life of the popular system.

The essential difference between the reform movement and the old system consists primarily in their different conceptions of the very nature and use of Art.

According to the common theory, its chief end and function is to *please* society. For this reason very superficial and false Art is most likely to succeed, since the mass of society are superficial in their tastes, and do not look for the deepest truths in Art.

The professors of this system give themselves up to the gratification of the popular desire, and hence the people themselves, not suspecting that Art has any more serious ends, remain superficial in their ideas of it, and become confirmed in their content with falsehood and regardless of truth. Even those artists who are commonly supposed to have taken higher ground, are found, upon examination according to principles of truth, to fall into the same category as the above. Weak sentimentalism and affected seriousness and false religious enthusiasm have produced a corresponding series of works. But such works are addressed also to a corresponding class of minds, who, not having knowledge of genuine truth, suppose that these works are the offspring of true sentiment and true religion, and, finding some sympathy awakened in their own minds, become deeply affected, and suppose the artist must be an extraordinary genius. In these works you shall seek in vain for the record of any natural truth, or the evidence that the artist has ever felt one genuine sensation of the transcend-

ent loveliness and eloquent teaching of the Creator's work. But instead of this you shall find "man and his fancies, man and his trickeries, man and his inventions — poor, paltry, weak, self-sighted man—which the connoisseur forever seeks and worships." You shall never once forget the painter in your contemplation of his theme, and you shall depart from his work "with the praise of man on your lips rather than the praise of God in your heart." As for the moral of their religious themes, I will say nothing here. The most efficient way to expose such shallowness is to do our utmost to direct the public mind to the contemplation of pure truth in the records of the "humblest facts of physical nature and the aspirations of the human soul."

According to the realist principles, the only worthy aim of Art is to enlighten and instruct the mind concerning the precious truth, beauty, and loveliness which cannot be expressed by any other means. This Art, to be duly appreciated, requires sympathy and love for genuine truths. It is not addressed to the superficial and sensual mind; to such it can only appear "foolishness." But it supplies inexhaustible food for thought to those who bring themselves into capacity to understand it, by directing their tastes, according to principles ordained by the Creator, to the everlasting sources of instruction and healthy enjoyment to His creatures. To appreciate this Art, and be fed by it, the mind must not seek pleasure in extravagant and exciting amusements, or conventional, morbid, human notions of the sublime, but must give due heed to every appeal of the Creator's work. Every channel must be opened to receive right enjoyment from pure sources. It is in the enjoyment and contemplation of truths that God has appointed happiness and knowledge to consist.

The realist artists do not seek to gratify the uneducated senses, but to present truth in such a way as to lead to enjoyment of it, and convey instruction as well as pleasure. The superficial school talk much of certain principles, which are undoubtedly true, but not in the sense in which they apprehend them. Neither are they of the slightest use without consummate knowledge of facts. They lay great stress upon generalization, composition, etc.; but the realists understand these principles upon truer grounds. "Generalization is unity, not destruction of parts; and composition is not annihilation, but arrangement of materials. The breadth which unites the truths with her harmonies is meritorious and beautiful; but the breadth which annihilates those truths by the million, is not painting nature, but painting over her. And so the masses which result from right concords are sublime and impressive; but the masses which result from the eclipse of details are contemptible and painful."

And with respect to finish, the popular system is wholly superficial. It is impossible for a man to finish without knowledge. Elaboration is of no value without meaning. And therefore much of the foreground painting by Church is no better than it would have been with less than half the work bestowed. We do not mean to rank Mr. Church among the wholly superficial men. He is a man of large capacity—and though he does not always work up to his full strength in everything, is yet, beyond all comparison, the best landscape painter of those not professing to be realists. Yet we suppose the high estimation in which he is held by the public is less in consequence of his really great qualities than for these superficial ones. The public always like to see elaborate work, merely because it is elaborate, with very little care or

thought whether elaboration is given for a worthy purpose—namely, the expression of truth. This love of elaboration, when required for its own sake, implies a want of perception of the ends which render it necessary. And herein lies the essential difference between the realists and all other men. It is the difference which the public, in the present state of their knowledge, cannot appreciate, namely, the difference between that elaboration which is given because no less means will express the truth, and the elaboration that is given without knowledge, and to serve no better end than display of mechanism.

The public, in this country, have heretofore known so little about these matters, that they have overrated American Art. The men who attained celebrity thirty years ago would not be rated so high now, even among the masses, were it not that the names they acquired then gives them a traditional reputation, which the masses cannot disregard.

In proportion as society becomes more intelligent on the subject will tradition cease to be regarded, and infinitely more will be required of a man before he can stand in the first rank; the growing acknowledgment of the right of individual judgment in all matters whatever, is one of the most marked signs of the progress of the present age.

The new impulse that realistic Art has received within the last fifteen years in England and America, though identical in its main spirit with the realist Art of centuries ago, is yet totally unlike it in its development. If its professors are faithful it will be yet more noble, inasmuch as the moderns have the knowledge of more truth. Superstition does not possess the universal mind to such an extent as it did three hundred years ago. Purer themes remain to be interpreted by Art than could have been conceived at that time, and the modern development of the perception of power and beauty in landscape is without precedent in the world's history.

The progress that will be made within the next half century in truthful Art, depends almost entirely upon the way in which the public do their part. It is undoubtedly the duty of the artists first to put the right thing before them; but when this is done, the public must respond with reasonable encouragement. At present those who are working for the true cause have great difficulty to maintain themselves, and they have need of great patience, and calm, deliberate determination to persevere against all odds. The public do not yet understand the superior value, in every respect, of perfect work. They do not realize what they might get from the artists if they were more discriminating in their judgment. Mr. Ruskin says:

"Such pictures as artists themselves would paint could not be executed under very high prices; and it must always be easier, in the present state of society, to find ten purchasers of ten-guinea sketches, than one purchaser for a hundred-guinea picture. Still I have been often both surprised and grieved to see that any effort on the part of our artists to rise above manufacture, any struggle to something like completed conceptions, was left by the public to be its own reward. In the water-color exhibition of last year, there was a noble work of David Cox's, ideal in the right sense—a forest hollow, with a few sheep crushing down through its deep fern, and a solemn opening of evening sky above its dark masses of distance. It was worth all his little bits on the walls put together. Yet the public picked up all the little bits—blots and splashes, ducks, chickweed, ears of corn—all that was clever and petite; and the real picture—the full development of the artist's mind—was left on his hands. How can I, or any

one else, with a conscience, advise him after this to aim at anything more than may be struck out by the cleverness of a quarter of an hour. Cattermole, I believe, is earthed and shackled in the same manner. He began his career with finished and studied pictures, which, I believe, never paid him; he now prostitutes his fine talent to the superficialities of public taste, and blots his way to emolument and oblivion. There is commonly, however, fault on both sides; in the artist for exhibiting his dexterity by mountebank tricks of the brush, until chaste finish, requiring ten times the knowledge and labor, appears insipid to the diseased taste which he has himself formed in his patrons, as the roaring and ranting of a common actor will oftentimes render apparently vapid the finished touches of perfect nature; and in the public, for taking less real pains to become acquainted with, and discriminate the various powers of a great artist, than they would to estimate the excellence of a cook, or develop the dexterity of a dancer."

We can hardly be sure how many of our own men have been ruined by want of due appreciation and reward for their most faithful work. And though it is possible that a man who has very much ability will work his way through in spite of everything, yet there is undoubtedly much valuable possibility lost for want of encouragement. Two or three of our present artists did once show signs of health, though their work was never the result of singleness of pure aim; yet this was probably the fault of outside influence, and they would doubtless have done good work if it had "paid." They are now probably hopeless; whether it be their own fault or the fault of the public, we are not entirely certain, probably both. It indeed requires greater tenacity to stem the current than any one can know without experience. But the time is doubtless near at hand when the faithful workers shall be reasonably rewarded.

PICTURES AND STUDIES.

Technical terms are always very limited in meaning. The special vocabulary of any trade or mechanical pursuit consists of names of things and processes and of verbs denoting processes, and such nouns and verbs are necessarily exact in meaning and strict in application. It is fortunate when such words are coined for the purpose, or are, at least, used for no other purpose, and in no other sense. It causes confusion and inaccuracy when words, used by society at large in a wider, are also used by a class of men in a narrower sense. Thus he is esteemed by fishermen a poor creature who talks of a "net," when he means a seine or fyke, and yet he is in the right, using a generic term, which is properly applied to every reticulated fabric. Thus he seems very ridiculous in a maritime community like ours, who uses the word "ship" to denote any other vessel than one having three masts and square-rigged, the French *trois mâts*;* and yet he might claim that he also uses a generic term properly applied to every sailing vessel, and might plead the authority of the authorized translation of the Bible, and of the Greek and Latin school lexicons, which translate *navis* and *ναυς* by "ship," inasmuch as

* The clipper ship Great Republic has or had a fourth mast, and was none the less rated by Lloyd and called by sailors a ship; an exception to the arbitrary rule proving its arbitrariness

the ships of St. Paul and of Jonah, of Nicias and Pompey, were certainly not of the kind rated under that title on Lloyd's list.

In our times the word "picture" has come to be used in a sense purely technical. It means, when used by an artist, picture-dealer, or amateur, an oil painting, in contradistinction to a water-color or pencil or pen-and-ink drawing, and to a print or a photograph; and, furthermore, a finished and salable oil painting in contradistinction to a sketch or a memorandum in the same medium. Of course the original and correct signification of the word remains; it has recently been asserted in Mr. Millais's collection of wood cuts, "The Parables of Our Lord . . . with Pictures by John Everett Millais"; the child is right who calls his book of prints a picture book; "Otto Speckter's Picture and Verse Book" remains a standard work; photographs are sun pictures still; but the would-be connoisseur is considered a detected jackdaw if he call anything a picture but a somewhat elaborate oil painting. Now in this limitation there are two ideas contained, both of them obviously incorrect, since, as we have said, "picture" is properly a generic and not a specific term, and includes all representation by copying forms and hues on a flat surface; but one of them arbitrary and useless, the other very necessary to us until a new word shall have come into use. It is not wise to insist on the limitation of the word picture to paintings in oil color, because you cannot logically or consistently so limit it, because the tempera paintings of the early Italians, and William Blake's so-called frescoes of water colors mixed with carpenters' glue, and wall paintings on plaster, whether real fresco or not, are just as certainly pictures as any oil paintings of them all, and may not be denied the name in its most limited sense; because, also, it is unnecessary, as the modifying epithets are easily used, and it is much better to say "oil painting," "water color," "wood cut," according to your meaning. But it is necessary that we should in some manner distinguish between an artist's finished work, which he exhibits as his standard of art, and which he is willing to leave behind him for posterity to judge him by, and the work he does for his own instruction, and keeps as much to himself as a philologist does his first lessons in a new language. And for this distinction we have only the words "picture" and "study." We could wish that the former could be kept as a generic and all-including name, and that some other word would be invented or brought into use to convey the special meaning of work that is not study but teaching. But at present there is none. Throughout the rest of this article we shall use the words "study" and "picture" in the above-mentioned contrary senses, and as including together all works of graphic art on flat surfaces.

Studies, then, are painted or drawn or sketched with brush or pen or pencil, in black or in gray or in any color or two or more colors or in full color, or in white on black with slate or blackboard, or scratched in the sand, or burnt into a board with a hot poker, or blotted on a thumb nail with a pen, or slopped about a table with spilled ink and a forefinger; studies are an artist's lessons, his schooling, his means of acquiring information like other students, his way of recording facts, noting down thoughts, working out ideas, embodying conceptions before they escape. As a child is told in his *Ollendorff* the French for table and chair, and the formation of the past tenses of *avoir*, and, lest he should forget, has a number of insipid sentences containing these words and modifica-

tions to turn into French, so the artist sees, and, lest he should forget, records. It is not merely that he may have by him in handy sketch books the record of what he has seen with the body's eye or the mind's, it is also, and perhaps mainly, that he may have it more clearly in his memory. Every one who has drawn or painted knows how clearly he sees and how accurately he remembers that which he has copied. Moreover his studies are to give him power of hand, as well as of eye and memory. Practice makes perfect. You must do over and over and over again that which you would do well. It takes five years of constant and ardent labor with pencil and pen to draw aright a human hand or a ledge of rocks. It take five years of mingling colors with the pallet and brush to gain the power of sketching in color from nature both rapidly and usefully. The artist who would draw trees rightly must draw a great many sprigs of three or four leaves each, and then a great many leafy boughs in all sorts of positions and aspects, and then bare trees in winter; with such training he may hope to draw a summer forest at last, as it should be drawn; without such training he certainly cannot. He who would paint animals in rapid motion must draw them often still, and then paint them still in sunshine and shadow, and then make the best memoranda possible of their appearance as they move by him; so at last he may draw aright an eagle's pounce upon its prey, and paint, perhaps without seeing it, the gleam of a lion's tawny coat and the shadows of his mane in his leap.

Studies, then, must be made in earnest. Their record must be true record; they must be made for a purpose; each one must be of something not yet thoroughly known or felt; each one must add something to the previous stock of recorded observations. The requirements of a good study are that it shall have been undertaken with earnest and modest desire to learn, that it shall have been carried through without hurry or slovenliness, and that it shall have been left untouched from the moment when the student felt he had learned all that the subject could teach him with advantage and economy of time. If, for instance, an artist—or student, the words being synonymous in this connection—sit down to make a study of a blackberry bush, he should not spend one moment on accessories of fence or stone, unless he notice some special fact in fence or stone which he wishes also to study; he should not spend a moment in making his sketch pretty, in introducing detail of other subjects because they group prettily with the main object of his study. If he sketches a face he need not draw carefully all the details of the head, but merely indicate its outline; if he draws elaborately a head with all its details he need not farther represent the body than to show the position it held in respect to the head, that is, to show whether it was a recumbent or an active body to which the head in question belonged. No pains are to be taken to make the study when finished look prettily to any one or tempting to a purchaser; it may look very odd indeed and almost incomprehensible to any one but the artist, just as an architect's sketch book may show scraps of buildings and sections of mouldings and measured and figured diagrams of construction, to the bewilderment of the unprofessional man who looks it through.

A picture, on the other hand, should have more in it than faithful work, more than faithful record; a picture should be not study but the result of study, not the learned lesson but the intelligence formed by many and many a lesson. Browning, for instance, calls

a sculptor a "thinker in marble." So a painter of pictures should be a thinker on canvas or paper, and a picture should be thought on canvas or paper. Or, to speak more accurately yet, and rightly to define the kind of thought meant—a picture must be a poem. Now, in writing, a topographical description of a mountain does not make a descriptive poem; an official account of a battle is not a narrative poem; an exhortation or sermon is not a didactic poem; earnest thought and earnest words on religious subjects may be, and not be a religious poem. But the poet must needs note down facts worth remembering; write a description, while he stands before it, of the beautiful view that so impresses him; study, till he perfectly understands all the details, the story of the gallant fight; clearly apprehend all the arguments on his side of the case, before he seek to clothe his exhortation in measured words of poetry; grow familiar with the Bible record and the best interpretations of it, if he be wise, before he chants his hymn. Moreover, the poet must have a perfect and easy command of his language, and this is to be gained and kept only by constant care and labor. So the painter, in like manner, must know how to describe aright, and must be supplied with abundant facts; and he must be accustomed to think and to feel and to pray, and to grasp the whole of the subject offered him, and to see at a glance the relation of each truth to every other: moreover he must have command of his language—form, and color, a fairer language than this of words; he must be prepared to use it as readily and with as little thought about its rules of grammar and construction as the writer uses his; he must be prepared to make as ample and various use of it as the writer makes of his. We shall be told by those who slight their own work, and who have no idea how the real workers do theirs, that we give to these artists with the pen and the brush too much work to do. Not so; the facts are more than we have stated them, with the writers—the facts must be as we have stated them, with the painters. The poet who loves nature, and would understand and describe nature aright, will note down in this fashion the facts about a New England wayside spring, such a day in August: Water welling out of a slope of grass-covered soft ground, which it makes sodden with wet. Roots of neighboring trees show themselves here and there, slippery when naked, often covered with moss. The water trickles down the bank in several little threads, and filters through moss and roots in drops that catch the light. Little ferns, lizard moss, and very minute vines cover the bank; one of the vines has very small round leaves and smaller pink flowers, both leaves and flowers borne singly on short, erect stems; another has round leaves also, but set upon the main stem alternately, and close together. The water runs into a basin about two feet in greatest diameter; the surface reflects nothing but the bank above; there is not the flash of a ray of light on its smoothness, so the bottom is plainly visible, of dead leaves and little stones, covered thick with a brown slimy deposit. This description he keeps and can refer to it at will, and by and by three lines in a poem of his will seem inspired, they so accurately render in twenty words the essential truths about such a spring. So the painter will make a study of the spring in the almost perfect medium of color on paper, as the writer will with the unready pen; and by and by a quiet picture of New England landscape will take its completion and its power to completely touch the heart of the exiled Yankee from the few firm and resolute touches

that make the bank drip with moisture and hollow the pool beneath it. Tennyson must know something of the facts as they are in a cavalry charge with drawn sabres, before he can write the lines

> "Flashed all their sabres bare
> *Flashed as they turned in air;*"

and something of the facts as they are with broken infantry, before he can tell that the

> "Cossack and Russian
> Reeled from the sabre stroke
> Shaken and sundered."

So must the painter (yet to come) of the magnificence of our great war learn and practically understand how a cavalryman holds his horse in hand, and how an infantry soldier carries his rifle musket, else his pictures will have as little merit as the battle pieces which were the admiration of our fathers. Battle must be painted as it is, if the picture of it is to be impressive. Let the next painting of a bayonet charge show it as it is at *some* moment—show the steady front coming on at the double quick with arms on the right shoulder, until the moment when the shrill order is heard above the tramp of the rapid feet, and the muskets come down with a rattle and a yell, and it is "Charge bayonet!" at last.

How does a picture by Paul Veronese differ from a study of his? The picture, let us suppose, is a fancied representation of an event in Scripture history. The scene as painted may lack in verisimilitude, being conceived by the painter as it certainly could not have happened; there is magnificence where we know there really was humble and unpretending poverty, and we must not judge the work from a point of view whence the artist himself certainly never looked at it. There is splendid architecture, classic columns and entablatures in gleaming white marble, pavements, and sweeping flights of steps with heavy balusters, all of marble, and all designed by the painter as the most magnificent setting he could devise for that which he regards as itself magnificent beyond this world's extravagances. There are crowds of people ascending and descending and standing in converse, haughty or gentle or contemptible in presence, clothed in glorious colors and tracery of gold and richness of brocaded silk, and gleaming here and there with polished arms and armor; all the forms helping, by subtile and refined graces of proportion, one another and the whole group, all the colors disciplined into fine harmonies, the whole invested with a garment of mellow light, the nearest approach possible in art to the true light of day. All the human figures, natural as they are, true "types of mankind," are *invented* by the painter—or, if some are reminiscences of men and women he has seen, they are made to suit his purpose. All the architecture is the painter's own; the jewelry is the painter's own, it is easier for him to design such trifles of decoration than it is to seek good jewelry and copy it; the dress patterns are often the painter's own, for the thought of a great designer teems with splendid possibilities of decoration and beautifying; the story is told in the painter's own way, as no other man could have told it; the whole work, conceived as a whole, is an emanation from the painter's brain and heart. But the studies of the artist have been not pretentious nor at all imaginative; they have been chalk drawings of the nude figure; sketches of his fellow citizens of Venice; monks and nobles and soldiers; architecture sketched on the canals and studied in principle as an art compounded of science and invention; horses and trees, when a visit to the mainland brought before him those natural objects, rare in Venice; the sea;

the Euganean Hills to the north, with the sky behind them. None of these studies were sold to churches or wealthy patrons, or given away as being of any general value, or exhibited as being works of art, or thought of by the painter otherwise than as school exercises. Their results only were shown, in the great pictures that the world still marvels at and worships, in its wise fashion, learning as few as possible of the lessons they might teach it.

How does a picture differ from a study by Raffaelle? The picture shows faces filled with expression, speaking faces, into which the artist has crowded all his art could express of anger or rapture, or worship or madness; it shows the human body in rapid and vigorous motion, or calm repose, or numb with the sudden coming of death, or slowly groping in instantaneous blindness. But his studies were of such men and women as he could find in Rome, with such expression of face and attitude of body as he could surprise in the street or market place; or they were academic models merely; whatever success he may have had in securing good models, he found none for Elymas the sorcerer, or Ananias and Sapphira—certainly none for the Christ and the prophets in the Transfiguration. It is a favorite idea with many people that it is genius that produces wonders of expression and passion in art, genius and not work. It is a beautiful thing to talk about, the inspiration of genius that makes painted canvas seem a distorted or peaceful human face. It is often said of a portrait that it is rightly drawn, but has not the right expression—that the features are like, but there is not soul enough in it. But all such remarks are translatable by the single phrase *badly drawn*. For instance, drawings are made in the life-school, of an old man with a short pipe and laborer's dress, quietly sitting with hands on knees; of all these drawings the one most like in expression as well as in measurable length of nose and height of forehead is the best drawing. Expression in a face depends on certain and reproducible lines and conformations of surface. When a quiet face suddenly changes and is convulsed with pain, it is nothing inexplicable and uncopiable that changes, only the lines of the face. A cast of such a face would have the same expression as the face itself. Hence the power of rendering the expression and play of a face is merely power of right drawing. And Raffaelle, making studies of heads in Rome's streets, was merely learning to draw.

How does a picture by Turner differ from one of his studies? We call Turner the chief of naturalist landscape painters, and so he was; but it does not follow that he was satisfied with exact studies of landscape, or that he considered such as finished and satisfying pictures. No pictures more truly deserve the name of thought on canvas than his. Certain truths about a scene strike him, truths perhaps unseen by all but himself, and a picture is painted to embody those truths. The Swiss lake is so painted with the mountains around it as to give most perfectly the idea of the lake which the artist formed in his week's sojourn. If it is necessary, in order to show in this manner the whole character of the lake in one drawing, the views from two points or more are boldly combined into one. His "Steamboat making Signals," a large oil painting, is a reminiscence of a night spent on the deck of a boat in the English Channel. His "Old Temeraire Towed to her Last Berth," is a pathetic farewell to a sort of British "Old Ironsides," a brave old ship of Nelson's conquering fleet, going to be broken up, with a glowing and gorious sunset behind her;—perhaps it rained,

very likely it was cloudy, most probably it was not a splendid sunset in misty England, that night when the Old Temeraire was moved for the last time. The pictures, then, of Turner, the great and model "naturalist" painter, are very different things from studies. His studies filled scores of sketch books and covered reams of thin paper. His studies were the constant work of every moment out of doors. Every phenomenon of nature, every cloud shadow and peep of sunlight, every form of hill and bank and valley, every tree that grows; fishing boats and steamers and men-of-war at anchor and laboring in storm; every town on the coast, fort, battery, rocky or sandy point; all were recorded with an exactness of sight and grasp of essential facts giving him the command of all the aspects of the earth. But these studies of his—we speak of those sketches never intended for sale, exhibition, or publication by engraving—are entirely without pretence to picture making; some are scrawled rapidly across the two pages of the open sketch book, the crumbling chalk filling up the crevice where the leaves meet, the swift and vigorous pencil scoring deep into the paper, and endangering the former sketch on the other side, on the previous two pages; some are dashed with brush and color, one on each side of a square of thin paper, which precious scrap was afterward folded in four, or perhaps had previously been folded, the creases catching the wet color in strange ways; some are carefully and minutely, with the delicacy of a line engraving, finished in the middle for a square inch, the rest being left in pencil outline. The essential part of them is neither haste nor deliberate care, but certainty of aim, decision of work, assured success in getting just that bit of knowledge which the faithful student of nature had not before secured.

Studies, then, are the means; pictures, the end. Studies are preparation, pictures the result. Studies are the aspiration and the beginning, pictures the achievement and the end. It is not well that the distinction should ever be lost sight of or denied. It is not well for young students of art to try to sell their studies, because they will be constantly tempted by the desire to make them popular and pleasing. If the young student of art is entirely in earnest, and has only the one object in life, to learn his business properly as seer and recorder, and if he is in the right path with no longings for the treacherous fields on both sides where money may be found, but art is lost—then he will make faithful studies, and none other, and if these find admirers and purchasers, perhaps we ought not to object. Some of these studies of an able student may really be worth buying. Besides filling little books with pencil sketches, there is careful, week-long work to be done in painting that rock fissure by fissure, lichen by lichen, making of it a photograph in color; and such a study, even if the grass underneath it is only indicated, and the background a purple haze, will be worth a glass and a place on your walls in sight of men. We do not forbid the lover of true art to buy a good study, more especially as he may often wish to help in this manner a worthy young painter who needs help, and who certainly ought not to attempt to paint a picture or to do anything but make studies for two years to come. But the student ought not to be led to suppose that his work is valuable in any other way than as a record of a beautiful fact; the buyer ought not to praise the study as a "work of art," or buy it as such, but should declare his wish to "have a memorandum of that splendid rock," or to "keep those roses you painted all winter in my room." In other

words, one who means to be an artist worthy the name must draw and paint for years with the single aim at recording all accessible facts of nature; and all his friends should encourage him in this endeavor, and help to rebuke and check him if he forsake it.

We remember the work of a young man, a student some years ago in the studio of an artist in New York, whose time was spent mainly in making cartoons for illustrations to Shakspeare, the figures a foot high, and this at a time when he could not, as his work showed, draw rightly a hand or a foot, or sketch a man standing erect otherwise than grossly out of proportion and anatomy. Nor is his a solitary instance. Hundreds of students work in that way; or, if they take to landscape art, they "compose" lake pieces and mountain landscapes out of the half-dozen pencil scrawls they make in the summer, or can borrow from a friend. These men are working as badly as they can, doing all the harm to themselves that they can, and, as they gain reputation and sell their pictures, will do society all the harm they can.

Far otherwise is the preparation and the study of men who reverence and love the truth, and wish to devote themselves to telling something of it to the world.

We have recently published a series of ten photographs from studies by young artists, and so many of our subscribers have them, that they to a great extent answer our purpose of illustrating by means of them what we say about working from nature. These studies are made in the right spirit, and are studies of the right kind. An artist's self-instruction should consist of such work as they, together with slighter and hastier sketches, made daily, perhaps hourly, in the presence of facts worth recording, in sketch books, or perhaps on convenient letter-backs or fly leaves of books, in the necessity of haste, to secure the form of the fleeting cloud or the evanescent glow of sunset. It would complete our series of illustrations to publish some of the best procurable specimens of such work as this hastier sketching—complete it, that is, as far as black and white drawing is concerned, for as yet there is no possibility of properly reproducing gradated color.

But to the studies before us. We have the artists' assurances concerning all but one of them that they were made, every stroke, from the object of study itself, two of the nine being of indoor subject, the others having been finished throughout in the open air. But no assurances are needed, for they are studies undertaken for self-improvement, and with no other purpose, by men who are determined realists. They are all young men—their powers have not yet reached maturity—they have yet to prove that they can paint immortal pictures and take rank among the immortal painters; there are degrees of practice and skill among them; the ten drawings we present are of very different degrees of merit; there are differences of character and artistic nature among them, and their work gives promise of very different results hereafter; but they all work faithfully and with meaning and purpose, and they all are sure to be painters of the true and noble school of illustrative and historical art, if they never rise higher, and meantime will have done all in the power of man to raise themselves to the highest.

There are, among the ten, three pencil drawings by Mr. Farrer, a gentleman to whose work at the last exhibition of the Academy of Design we were glad to call attention. That work was oil painting from nature, as entirely study as are these pencil drawings. His landscape work hitherto has been,

we believe, altogether without selection, except of the general subject to be painted, and without rejection of anything included in such subject; that is, he has, so far, never tried to make a picture out of his work, but has chosen what he would paint, and has then painted it faithfully.

In the first of these drawings of his, "Spring Weeds," two tall plants of the Indian Poke, or American Hellebore (*Veratrum Viride*), fill nearly all the space of the drawing; another comes into sight on the right of the spectator; a great rock is at their feet, around which little vines and sprigs of young leaves are twining, and upon which sits a frog, in the drawing of which creature (as he very probably jumped away before he was completely portrayed) there has occurred what seems a curious mistake; and the whole background is filled with thick foliage of young trees in the May softness of their leaves. Those who have the photograph before them should know that the original drawing is somewhat larger, being nearly fifteen inches high, while the photograph is only eight inches high; but for this explanation the drawing would seem to be of impossible delicacy; it is marvellous enough in the original. The drawing of the large plants in the foreground reproduces them exactly as they grew by the brookside in New Jersey, back of the Palisades, in the later spring of 1863; nothing more is wanted to tell the spectator and remind the artist of every fact connected with the not yet blossomed plants, except their color. The more distant foliage we offer as an example of perhaps the most perfect management possible of a most difficult subject—one which has always been an almost unmanageable subject; for we ask the reader, well knowing what his answer must be, if he has ever seen foliage from ten to thirty yards distant rendered with the truth to nature of this in any work by an American artist. Mr. Farrer, it seems, has held up a mental frame before him, and drawn with fidelity and patient skill everything which it enclosed, even a bird that at one time lit among the trees, a long-bodied dragon-fly, who established himself a moment on a leaf of one of the Hellebore plants, the shadows on the large stone of flickering leaves not in the drawing, and the reflections from sunlit rock or invisible water on the under side of the upper leaves of the central plant. Such work deserves the most enthusiastic praise that can be given to faithful and tender copying from nature; the higher praise because the artist—as other work of his has sufficiently shown — loves color dearly, and can only have given the long time necessary to complete this drawing from the knowledge that it is only by such means that power of drawing is gained and kept. The "Pumpkin Vine" was drawn last summer, at Catskill, as also was the drawing of "Horseradish" in the Academy exhibition. The subject is less elaborate than the "Spring Weeds": there is a ruined well-curb at the top of the drawing, and the grass grows long and rank between it and the spectator, through which grass a vigorous pumpkin vine is stretching its long shoots, probably some six inches a day, as those lusty plants will in midsummer, the great leaves held up like prickly umbrellas above the grass. The tangle of grass blades and clover leaves is admirable, as is the whole drawing. The lighter copies of this photograph are the best; the others fail to show the delicacy of the shades on the surface of the large leaves. "May in the Woods," is a drawing made this spring; there is a tangle of last year's old blackberry vine stems, with sharp briers, and among these a wealth of the new-

sprung wild flowers. In the foreground are large-lobed leaves of Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria*), the flowers of which have perished; around, are thickly growing the common so-called Anemone (*Thalictrum Anemonoides*); and mixed with this some white strawberry flowers and their leaves, one blue violet with the round leaves belonging to it, two or three retiring white violets, and what seems to be the Wood Anemone, though of this we are not sure. This drawing, as perhaps the most generally interesting of the series, needs no further comment.

Mr. C. H. Moore furnishes one pencil drawing. There are seen the trunks of a few trees in an open forest; the ground is thickly covered with dead leaves, and in the foreground a clump of mandrake plants, the leaves of one of the trees, a hickory, just showing within the square of the drawing above them.

The study of "Ferns," by Mr. Newman, is of a less highly finished character than those already mentioned, and shows a curious inability to perceive the minuter gradations of light and shade on small surfaces. It is worthy of careful observation, because showing what careful and enthusiastic fidelity can do while the eye is yet very unpractised and the hand untrained. Mr. Newman has done better work than this since this was done. If we could give illustrations in color we could publish water-color studies of his of great promise for the future; but whatever success he may attain to, the way to it will have lain through such patient and delicate drawing as this.

Mr. Farrer's "Yellow Water Lily" is a sepia drawing, made some years ago, a careful study of an interesting subject. There is little more we wish to say about it. Let the student observe that, in the drawing of the alder bushes at the top, and of the long grass in the left hand lower corner, the lighter color of the leaves and grass is put on first, as a wash, and the darker background worked around the intended leaves and blades with the brush.

The photograph of Mr. Moore's study of the "Cedar Tree" is of the same size as the original. The work is therefore as delicate as it seems in the photograph to be. In this wonderful drawing every possible requirement of a study from nature is met. The student has set himself to perfectly render the form and growth of the red cedar, the appearance of its trunk, branches and leaves against the sky and the snowy ground, and all the shadows within the square of his drawing in their true relative intensity;—three undertakings, each of great difficulty but of importance as great, success in all of which would make great representative art of any piece of delineation, however faulty otherwise. And in this drawing he has succeeded in all three. Any one at all familiar with the cedar as it grows near New York (this drawing having been made at Catskill) will recognize the accurate portraiture, here, of all the peculiarities of that tree, portraiture more accurate than that of the photograph, which never perfectly renders tree forms and foliage;—or of all the peculiarities save one; there is a tendency of the outer bark of the cedar to peel off in dry, loose strips; this we do not see hinted at, but we cannot say that it was visible in the tree in question at the distance taken; we only mention it to repeat that, except this characteristic, the whole tree is there. The other truths are as perfectly told. It is curious to see how the snowy hills and road and the white house are kept white in contrast with the dark tree, while they are drawn completely, and the shades and shadows upon them given in full intensity with the same black pen touches that have made up

the tree. Let the reader look again at the pencil drawing of "Mandrakes," and he will find there the same mastery over delicate shades; in the subject of this there was no such contrast as in the other; the tree trunks and the dead leaves were not so different in intensity of shade as the dark evergreen and the snow, and the new leaves, however much they might contrast in color, were but little lighter in tone. The power over light and shade shown in both these drawings is simply the power of drawing aright what is first rightly seen. So of the foliage;—compare the hickory leaves in one with the cedar foliage in the other; see how different they are, and yet both how perfectly drawn; there is no secret in this, and no marvel beyond seeing and drawing the whole truth. We are glad to be able to give to our readers, in these two drawings, and in Mr. Farrer's pencil drawings, examples so perfect of the way in which our young painters ought to study nature, and proofs how pleasant and immediately profitable such study may be.

Mr. Hill's study of "Mullein," is a study of effect rather than of form; of a very common and very beautiful effect, the tangle and confusion of wayside weeds, and the disappearance into mysterious shadow of leaves and stalks that seem, at first glance, completely defined. No one can show like Mr. Hill the beauty of line and group that can be found in very simple and everyday objects of landscape. And the subjects he selects for studies help him to the end he seems to have chosen. See how picturesque and lively is this cluster of weeds, and how the stiff fence-rails help the effect, contrasting sharply with the soft forms around them. It is well to see how different faithful studies from nature may be. Without stopping to consider whether Mr. Moore's way of work or Mr. Hill's is the better, let it suffice that they are both good and true, as seen in these drawings we publish; that it is not because of, but in spite of his good studies, that Mr. Hill has sometimes fallen into the slightness and want of meaning of which we have before been compelled to speak.

There remain two oil paintings, one of an animal, one of the human figure. Mr. Pattison's study of "Dog's Head," or of "Puppy's Head," was made last winter, and the painting was exhibited in the last exhibition of the Academy of Design, where it was hung so high as to seem very odd and inexplicable in perspective. The dog was made to lie on the floor, and his head and shoulders and paws painted with the carpet on which they rested,—to be understood, it should of course be placed below the eye. The effect of light and shade is, as always in the case of a painting, completely changed in photography, the photograph giving almost as little idea of this as of the color.

Mr. Farrer's "Gone! Gone!" is perhaps rather a picture than a study. For our purpose, however, it is only a study of a woman, in modern costume; for the beautiful sunset sky is lost in the photograph, the Palisades faintly and inaccurately seen, and the interior of the room lost in darkness. Consider it merely as a careful study in oils of a young woman, as she stood leaning against the window trimming, hiding her face with her hands, while the light came through the lower part of the window only, as the blind was half down. Nothing more is attempted in the figure than exact copying of the model; for it was easy to pose the model in the position chosen to convey the idea of the picture, and the face is not shown; so that the expression of the thought required no invention in the face, and none in the figure beyond

the selection of the attitude. For our purpose, therefore, this picture is a study of the figure.

It may be charged upon the makers of some of these studies that confusion seems to exist in their minds between the two things which we have declared should always be kept separate—the study and the picture. Indeed, such a drawing as "May in the Woods" is as well worth buying and exhibiting as a picture could be, and the subject was probably chosen as much for its picturesqueness as for its fitness for study. We repeat, the practice is dangerous; for, in the first place, an artist should wish to keep his studies by him; and, in the second place, the disposition to make his studies into pleasing pictures will often tempt him to neglect the work of self-improvement to which only the study should subserve. And, as some of these studies are almost pictures, so, as we have seen, some of the pictures are studies and studies only, except in being the vehicles to convey a thought. The "Gone! Gone!" might have been announced in the catalogue as a study by twilight, and it would have been rightly named. It *is* called by a suggestive name, and on the frame are written the words: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As it is made to call for sympathy with the desolate, and to bid the desolate look for the best sympathy to their Saviour, it becomes, therefore, a picture of worthy aim and noble subject.

For this tendency Pre-Raphaelitism is partly responsible. It was a rule of Pre-Raphaelitism that nothing should be drawn except from the object itself. The rule was right and necessary; no remedy less severe could have brought the arts into health and energy. But it was not a rule to be obeyed always by all men; while it must always be obeyed by young men and beginners. The effect of the rule on the early work of the Pre-Raphaelites was to make it comparatively uninteresting — because more or less ignoble or commonplace in subject, and formal and stiff, of course, when nobler subject was attempted. But Pre-Raphaelitism has saved the art of England, and made it the first art of the modern world, and Pre-Raphaelitism will save our art, yet, if we can but have the modesty and patience to obey its teachings. Hear W. M. Rossetti, criticising a recent exhibition in London. "The advance of style which the British school now presents is mainly due to the stern and true discipline of Pre-Raphaelitism. This has taught painters how to exhibit facts, they are now practising how to combine realized facts into pictures."

Should we ever publish the series hinted at of photographs from slight and sketchy studies, one of them would be from a sketch by Turner of a swan. The bird was flying, as the manner of swans is, close along the surface of the water, in which his feet dragged. Turner's pencil flew, and the shape of the swiftly-moving bird was in a moment seized; but, as the rapid sketch was completed, the wings had assumed outlines that pleased Turner better, and this second fact was added to the first, and the swan has two right wings in pencil outline. Then a little white chalk was put on to give surface as well as outline, and this was given to the second wing alone, but the pencil outline remains. Now, such a drawing as this is not much in the way of Pre-Raphaelite work. And, so far as Pre-Raphaelitism denies itself such work, it is wrong and injures itself. But it would give us a chance for the future of our American art if half our painters would become unquestioning and undoubting Pre-Raphaelites, under all the limitations and narrownesses of that school at its strictest time.

From the "*Conclusion*" of Viollet-le-Duc's valuable *Dictionnaire Raisonné du Mobilier Français, Première Partie, Meubles*, we translate the following sentences:

To-day, everybody wishes to be surrounded with the luxury suitable to a minister of finance; but, as few possess a fortune which will enable them to pay the value of sumptuous and well-made furniture, the result is that the manufacturers seek to give the appearance of splendor and richness to the objects which are the poorest in make and material. Everywhere we find nothing but inlaid tables which will not stand firm upon their feet, carved and gilded arm-chairs of which the fragments strew the floors, hangings of woollen and of cotton which imitate silk.

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The most certain sign of an advanced civilization is harmony between customs and the various expressions of art and products of industry. "Show me your furnishing, and I will tell you who you are." But, if we should judge by appearances to-day, we should mistake small tradesmen for nobles. It is certain that, in our days, the moral sense is changed. Resignation is considered as a defective knowledge of life, and vanity a means of success. The customs of the middle age, so praised by some, so decried by others, are, at all events, badly enough understood; as citizens of a nation we are worth more, it seems to us, than they of the middle age, but as private men we are far from equalling the decided, energetic, individual characters which we encounter at every step down to the century of Louis XIV. . . . We have precious traits of character; we possess in a high degree, comparatively with preceding centuries, the sentiment of public duty; we have the sense of law and of justice; above all we are in a state to distinguish the true from the false; why, then, should we, in private life, smother these sentiments, pretend to be other than we are, and cling to the ancient shams in which no person really believes?

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Among these cheap splendors, this false taste and this false luxury, we are delighted when we find a well-made bench, a good oaken table standing firmly on its feet, woollen curtains which appear to be of wool, a comfortable and solid chair, a press which opens and shuts rightly, showing within and without the wood of which it is made, and suggesting the uses to which it may be put. Let us hope for a return toward these healthy ideas, and that, in matters relating to furniture, as in everything, we shall come to understand that good taste consists in seeming to be that which we are, and not that which we desire to be.