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## The new path. Vol. II, No. 7 July 1865

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# THE NEW PATH.

VOL. II.]

JULY, 1865.

[No. 7.

## A LETTER TO A WORKING-MAN.

NEW YORK, June, 1865.

MY DEAR T. H. R. :

AND so, you have bought the "Clytie!" And how did you get her home? Not in a dray, I hope, nor in an express-wagon, to be banged down in the passage, by a disobliging young man, in a great hurry, twenty-four hours after she was promised! Rather heavy, I allow, to be carried home in one's arms, and it might have had a queerish look, too; but, though I think she ought to have entered the house in a triumphal fashion, somehow, the main point is, of course, that she is there! Isn't she handsome? Isn't her hair magnificent? And what a noble neck she has, with those delicate rings about it, such as all beautiful women's necks are circled with, and which make necklaces ridiculous! I wonder if physiologists, anatomists, and that matter-of-fact breed have anything about those rings in their books? I dare say they have some learned name or other, "*Annuli Smithii*," perhaps, or "*Tompkinsii*," and that they serve the most common-place purpose in the world—help these beauties to swallow, or keep them from choking, but to my unscientific eye they suggest the poet's lines to the nightingale that—

"In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green and shadows numberless  
Singeth of summer in full-throated ease!"

I fancy I see the song bubbling up from that beautiful, bountiful bosom as

it does from a robin's throat—for we have no nightingales, you know. The way in which her head is set upon her neck, too, is graceful in a way very far removed from anything like prettiness or affectation; it is in keeping with the expression of the face, which, while it has nothing mournful or sad in it, is just touched with a tender melancholy that makes the lovely lips seem a little tremulous at times. She hangs her head as this great damask-rose does, in the glass on my table. The perfume and richness and blooming luxuriousness of life weigh it down. The very depth of her happiness in the full, unstinted draught of existence makes her thoughtful, or, rather, for hers is not an intellectual beauty, touches her unconsciously with the presentiment of humanity. "Not always," a voice seems to whisper in her ear, "not always shall this bloom of youth, this joy in life endure!"

But, apart from her beauty, which is supreme, and will grow upon you all—never tiring you, but feeding the eye forever with its richness and fulness, I think what draws me most strongly to the Clytie is my conviction that it is a portrait of a real person. In this respect it differs from all the other antique heads classed as ideal, some of which, I dare say, you saw in the old Italian's cellar in William st., where you bought this cast. Did he show you the Psyche—she who has the slice cut off the top of

her head? C. D., who wouldn't buy the Venus of Milo, because he said he couldn't encourage such an unprofessional style of amputation as her arms, or what is left of them, exhibit, would, I am sure, never have bought this trepanned divinity. And yet she has a lovely face. There is the Ariadne, too, and the Minerva, and Venuses without end. But no one of these has the peculiar charm, the home-look, the human look of the Clytie. If you study her face well—and of course you will put her in your living-room, where she will have a chance to become one of the family; don't, please, shut her up in any "best parlor,"—you will see that not one of her features is perfect, or, to use the artist slang, "ideal." Her nose, I am sorry to say, is not exactly what we call a "good" nose. The "graceful" school, the "classic" people, would turn up their noses at it. But it is an actual, real, human nose, for all that. Every line of it says it has smelled roses and orange blossoms, and the rich, aromatic Roman wines—'tishn't a goddess's nose at all, but a Roman girl's, who, mayhap, saw Horace or Virgil, or made Julius Cæsar forget his selfish plans, forget himself, for a moment, as he caught sight of her beauty.\* The form of her head,

the arrangement of her hair, the contour of her face, her low forehead, her individual chin, the undulation of the eyebrows—all these features are quite different from the antique ideal generally. On long acquaintance they deepen the impression that it is a portrait; at all events, if this be not allowed, the whole treatment of the head shows great individuality in the artist, who could thus separate himself from the style of his age and make a creature so individual, so harmonious, so satisfying. I think he must have been a Pre-Raphaelite!

You see, I cannot get away from Clytie. No, I love her almost as if she were an elder sister. Ten years, now, has she stood in my house on that same pedestal, and shared, or seemed to share, in all the joys and sorrows of our varied life. When the baby was born to us, Clytie smiled down upon her as I held her up in my arms to pat and push the rounded Roman cheek—a smile as sadly tender as any Virgin sheds from lips and eyes on her own child held motherwise in holy arms. And when the little one was taken, and lay in her pale purity, a lily lapped in lilies, the Roman girl

pu's into her other hand a large, full-blown sun-flower blossom. Query, was this the first representation of the flower? Sometimes the head is called "Isis," and the leaves are considered as lotus leaves, but both names are purely fanciful. Mr. Townley's name is to be preferred, it seems to me, because the expression of the face is not inconsistent with the story of Clytie. The bust is certainly not that of a goddess. The most reasonable conjecture seems to be, that it is the portrait of an Italian girl, made by a Greek artist. The face and head are Italian, but the workmanship and treatment are too fine for Roman. Could not something be learned from an examination of the marble? A learned friend who, like Solomon, knows all that is known of trees, from the Cedar tree, that is in Lebanon, to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall, tells us that they probably meant by the sun-flower one of two plants—either, the common "heliotrope" of our gardens, a native of Europe; or, the "turnsole," Fr. "toursolo" (turnsol—turn-sun—turn-with-the-sun), a native of the Mediterranean coast, and cultivated for the deep purple dye, called "turnsole." The common "sun-flower of our country gardens is a native of South America.

\* The "Clytie" was bought in 1772, by Mr. Townley, an Englishman, from the Lorenzani family of Naples, in whose possession it had been a long time. He considered it the chief ornament of his celebrated collection, which was bought, after his death, by the British Museum. We have never met with any attempt to trace its probable origin, whether Greek or Italian. The name "Clytie" was given to it by Mr. Townley, and was suggested by the leaves that surround the bust, which it was thought might be intended for the petals of the sun-flower, into which Clytie was changed by Apollo for refusing to return his love. These leaves do not, in truth, bear much resemblance to the petals of the common sun-flower, which is generally supposed to be the flower referred to in the mythal story. But this could not have been the flower the Greeks meant, for it was not known in Europe until after the discovery of America. Annibale Caracci, in his picture of Clytie repelling Love, which she does by cruelly and maliciously poking a thorny stick into his plump little side,

seemed to whisper to her like a white spirit of the past—"Come, dear one, to the great company of little children who wait for thee, and wish for thee."

And when the deeper sorrow fell, and she—the elder daughter, ripe in beauty, ripe in love, the glad-hearted, the dutiful, the consolation, she who knit together in the rose-garland of her youth, the past, the present, and the future—heard the voice of God, saying, "My daughter, I have called thee," and rose up, and meekly, patiently, without fear, passed through the awful veil and left us alone—the same still face, not coldly impassive, bloodless, calm, as that of a goddess ought to be—but warm with life, full of a sweet, compassionate, yearning humanity, bent over the later born, the later lost, indeed, but her equal now, the sharer with her of the eternal secret—bent over, and welcomed her to the eternal peace.

You will understand, then, why we love the Clytie, and why, when you alluded to the name, I spoke so warmly to you about buying the cast. I trust you won't think that I am exaggerating, or speaking in a sentimental mood. I think it is the simple truth. Ten years of continual companionship have made this bust a part of home; and although habit might have attached us, as it has, to many a thing that has no real claim on our thoughts and affections, there are few works of Art that would justify one in speaking as I have done of the Clytie.\*

\* And yet there are a few others beside her, some, much greater than she. I think I could not make up my mind to part with Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," though I should be glad if the Pope and St. Barbara could be induced to take themselves off;—nor with Holbein's "Meyer Family," though it is as hard to like at first as olives:—nor Raphael's "Madonna of the Chair," of which, we may well believe tradition when she tells us it was a direct transcript of nature, sketched by Raphael on the head of a wine cask; well, these are my daily bread; I must have these, but I scarce know anything else I *must* have, that Art has done! "How few! you say;" yes;—beautiful things, many; sweet, tender, pleasing things, many, Art has done, and still does; but, the great, the immortal,—it must be, that she has done these but sel-

So, then, if you ask me what next to buy, I say, by all means buy nothing yet, but wait. It is better to have one good book, one good friend, one good work of Art and know them thoroughly well, than to dissipate the mind by trying to enjoy many things. You will get more from the "Clytie" in a year, by constant companionship, than in five, by half knowing a dozen things, even if they were as good. Take this beautiful woman into your family circle, [place her where the best light falls, in the room you are oftenest in; do not treat her as a stranger, and she will reward you with ever-growing loveliness and gracious looks.

I often think, when I am looking at pictures and statues—indeed, I cannot separate the notion from other elements of judgment;—"How do these things stand related to our common humanity? Only yesterday, I stood at Goupil's window, and beside me was a hard-working laboring man, soiled, dirty even, rough, from hod-carrying or some such work. We were side by side, and he looked at the pictures with a strong, earnest look, as if he were trying to see something in them, to find out what they were meant for. I am afraid he didn't get much satisfaction. There happened to be nothing really good there. But then he may have thought things were good that I didn't. However, I longed to

dom. Other things there are that will not be shamed utterly by the presence of these great ones. Giotto's "Dante" looks unabashed at Holbein on the opposite wall; and Turner and Durer gravely salute each other from side to side. The good are at one with the good, even with the more greatly good; there is less difference between any two degrees of loyalty to truth, of worship of the good, than between the lowest degree of good, and the least degree of evil. I can bring a drawing by John Henry Hill or Charles Moore into the room with Michael Angelo, and put it on the knees of his "Night" or "Morning," and though it may tremble, as, indeed, it must, it can look up clear-eyed into the Master's face. For each of these workers is striving after the truth in a humble and reverent and expectant spirit—and Angelo himself could do no more.

speak to him, to put a question or two, to get at what was working in his mind. I felt that his approval was, somehow, necessary. If he found absolute emptiness there, nothing that seemed to him fit for a man's looking at, nothing that was worth much more than baby-toys, I acknowledged a certain respect due to his simplicity and freedom from conventional judgment. The truth is, that this very simplicity of judgment, this freedom from prejudice, this looking at things as they are, and not as fashion, education, social conventions, say they are or ought to be—is the very last attainment of culture. Indeed, I do not know that it is *attained*, at all. I think it is inborn in all of us, and may be preserved or lost, like innocence and purity. Men of genius, as we call them, preserve it; the mass of men lose it.

However this may be, attained, or only not lost,—it is only with children and the untaught that it is found outside the small circle of those who are endowed with the gift of seeing, which we call genius. And, therefore, I always like to hear what children say of a picture; what plain uneducated working people say, although, often enough, they cannot be got to say anything. When they do speak, though, mark their words well; ten to one you will get a criticism worth remembering.

Now mind, I am not sentimental. I don't mean to say that if Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," or Holbein's "Meyer Family," or Michael Angelo's "Night" or "Morning" had been in the window, that the working man would have understood them and appreciated them. And yet, I really do think that, if he had looked at them as earnestly as he was looking at the things that were there, he would have felt instinctively that they meant *something*; that they were not toys for children, but worth a man's looking at.

Now, I believe that all Art worthy of

the name is suited to the spiritual growth and education of human nature. So are all great things. Homer, Shakespeare, Dante, the Bible, can you shut them up in parlors, do you think? Are they only for the educated, the scholarly, the refined? How came seven cities to fight for the honor of having given birth to Homer? Whose lips and memories handed his golden words down from generation to generation before writing or printing were in use? The people's love did it. The heart of the world cherished him. The Greek women sent thrills of manly valor into the babes they nursed, as their dark eyes glowed to the rhythmic chanting of those lordly strains. Homer fought the Greek battles; Homer conquered India through Alexander, the spell of his heroic music breathing from the casket under the hero's pillow, and mingling with his dreams. You cannot fancy such a poet the especial dainty of a few luxurious, dilettante connoisseurs. He is strong food—bread and meat and wine, not syllabub nor spongecake.

Or, Dante, in his Italy? The name of Dante is the watchword of his countrymen in their battle with despotism. They love him as we love Washington, as we shall love Lincoln. 'Tis a personal affection, but Dante, the Artist, they love no less. It is his poetry that feeds their aspiration. They quote his words, they cherish his thought, his verse inspires their painters, sculptors, soldiers; the stone he sat on in the public square is an altar more sacred to the people than that of St. Peter's itself. There rested the great poet who made the common tongue of the Italian peasant the medium of immortal thoughts, the nurse of the nation's life, the Italian whose name is cherished as one of the three great poets of the world.

Of course, Homer and Dante are not for us. It was to the Greek people that Homer was dear; it is the Italians who

cherish Dante. Not that the strokes of nature, the vivid character-drawing in them would not be recognized by our people; they do, indeed, make a part of our intellectual and moral life, Hector, Achilles, are names created by Homer, but they are our heroes, Europe's heroes as well. And the main points of his story are really well known to everybody, though it is of course in a way that does not influence our daily experience. So with Dante. He is all Italian, and only students in other lands, cultivated people, know much of him. A Longfellow, a Rossetti, a Norton, makes a life-long study of the Poet's work, and others of us read him in our small way, but, of course, the working world of England and America have not time to break through the rose-hedge of his foreign tongue to get into the pleasant meadows, daisy-and-lily-sprinkled, of his "New Life," or the dark, shadowy wood of his "Divine Comedy."

And, so, God has given us a great poet of our own speech, and a great book, so nobly translated that we hardly ever think of it but as an English book, from both which we draw—all of us, rich and poor, learned and unlearned—deep draughts of life—Shakspeare and the Bible. And I think I cannot be wrong in saying that the strong foundation of the love and reverence in which these books are held is built, not on the approval of them by critics and scholars, and learned, accomplished people alone, although, of course, all such critical and thoughtful approval is of great corroborative value—but on the instinctive acceptance of their truth to nature, of their consonance and identity with all that is good in us, by the wide worlds of English-speaking men.

Coleridge and Göthe have not taught Americans to love and understand Shakspeare: he has won his own way to our hearts; his truth has made itself felt without outside help, and his

greatness would have been recognized if no scholar had ever written a line about him.\*

And, now, the same argument holds with all good works of Art. It is beginning at the wrong end to say, as some do, that the reputations of the great men are due to the educated class, and that the world has been taught their excellence by a few sharp-sighted critics who have spied out what, but for them, would never have been recognized at all. So far is this from being the truth that, as everybody who will read a little on the subject may know, all the works of Art which the world recognizes as great—the masterpieces—were made, not for any single person's pleasure, not for that of any exclusive set—but, for the public, and have been crowned by the multitudinous applause of generation after generation of the common people. Take Phidias, for example. You know, even if you are not familiar with the name of any particular work of his, that he stands as a synonym for Sculpture. All that is great in that art seems to be praised enough, when we have called it "Phidian." Well, he made the great ivory statue of Minerva that stood in

\* While the writer of this letter was spending a week or two in a small village in the centre of Vermont, a place of twelve hundred inhabitants, he read in the town-hall (a neat and convenient room for lectures, concerts, and like entertainments such as can be found in every village in New England) some plays of Shakspeare; and on one occasion he walked from the hall, after the reading, with one of his audience, to the country-store, where, seated on chairs, barrels and boxes, a few of us had a talk about Shakspeare, which one of the company, at least, will not soon forget. The talk proved, not only, that almost everything good in criticism of the poet, from Wilhelm Meister down, had been read, and well read, but, that in this little out-of-the-way village, hid in the bottom of a valley of the Green Mountains, shaped like a tea-cup, and not much bigger than the independent study of the great poet, and others too, for that matter, had been pursued by people who in England and on the Continent would have been content if, after the shop was shut, the last shoe cobbled, and the post-office closed, they could get up in intellectual steam enough to plod through the county newspaper.

her temple on the citadel-rock of Athens, and that of Jupiter, at Olympia, the body of which was of marble, but whose robe was of gold covered all over with a mosaic of precious stones in a pattern-wreath of animals, birds and flowers—a statue so grand and beautiful that it was counted one of the wonders of the world; and, best of all, he made the famous statues and bas-reliefs for the temple of Minerva, at Athens, which, to save them from being destroyed by the Turks, the English Lord Elgin carried away from Greece, and lodged in the British Museum, of which they now form the very choicest treasure, the envy of the world. Well, does anybody think that Phidias wasn't Phidias till Lord Elgin introduced him to the British aristocracy? He seems to have been thought a great artist, by the Greeks of his time, who employed him on all their work that required the highest intellect, taste, and skill; and there is no intelligent English ostler, or American farmer's son who could see his horses of the Parthenon-frieze and not confess (in his vernacular, no doubt,) that they were made by a man who knew something about horses. All that is greatest in Phidias appeals to what is universal, to humanity. The refined, the educated, the scholarly find food for their best thought in it, but it may well be, that all Phidias was conscious of putting into it was seen and enjoyed by the poorest and humblest of his fellow-Greeks, and would appeal, if once it were fairly looked at by them, to the corresponding class in our modern society.

One illustration more, and I will pass on. All the early Italian painters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries worked, for whom, and in what way? They had no high notion about their art. They looked upon it as a pursuit, a trade like those of other men. They had

no "studios," but only shops, where they painted on panels—for canvas, and colors mixed in oils came in much later—pictures whose subjects were almost exclusively religious, and sold them to such customers as came. Of course, they were held in honor, because they ministered to the religious sense of their fellows, to whom their work seemed holy as well as beautiful; but they themselves seem to have put on no airs in consequence. Then, if a convent wanted its chapel walls painted with the story of the Saint's life to whom it was dedicated, or with that of the Virgin, or the dining-room of a monastery, or if the chancel of a church was to be painted or decorated, the little shop would be shut up, and the painter—sometimes accompanied by a boy who was learning his master's trade, and who began by grinding and mixing his colors for him—would trudge along, over hill and dale, unless, perchance, the nuns or priests, wishing to do him honor, or get him at his work quicker, had sent him a mule to ride on; and having reached the convent or monastery, would take up his abode there, and work away on wall or ceiling until it was finished, and then home, to wait for another call elsewhere.

Now, of almost all these early painters—and in many of the best qualities of pictures, these are unsurpassed—we shall learn on examination that they were poor boys, sprung from the laboring class, and who never had any of the advantages of education. And, as there were comparatively few educated people at that time—and certainly very few critics, amateurs, connoisseurs, by whatever name you call the men who give themselves up to the study of the Fine Arts—these men worked, firstly, to please their employers and earn their money; and they did this best by painting pictures that everybody could understand and enjoy. And, without thinking of any

reward, perhaps, or, rather,—for man cannot work without thinking of some reward—without thinking of exactly the reward they got, they found themselves loved and praised by their fellow citizens; their work sought for far and near; themselves called hither and thither all over Italy; and churches, convents, monasteries thinking their buildings not good enough, nor rich enough, till they had been painted all over, on every blank bit of wall and ceiling that could be found.

Rich private men, societies of amateurs, antiquaries, museums, are busy, to-day, searching Europe in every nook and corner, and spending large sums of money to buy up the furniture, chairs, tables, presses—the utensils, altar-furniture, the tapestry, the locks and hinges, the iron-work of every description, the stained-glass, the carved wood-work, everything in short that the busy hands of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth-century men contrived and fashioned out of brass and iron, gold and silver, wood and stone. For whom were these things made? The costly for the rich, no doubt, but the plain, the simple—beautiful in their plainness, ingenious in their simplicity—for the people, for everybody. And even the richest things, the quaintest, most highly ornamented, were made outright by the workman from his own designs, no architect's help required, as nowadays, no drawings, no middle men—the carpenter, the mason, the blacksmith, were artists in those days.

And, the moment it began to be otherwise, the decline in all the arts set in. The moment that the artist began to separate himself from the people, to work for the rich, for amateurs and judges of pictures, that moment the breath of life began to depart from the nostrils of his art. The artist was no longer a child of the people, painting things that every man, woman,

and child could understand and enjoy; he was the pet of princes, worked in kings' and popes' palaces, painted, now religious and now profane, now holy, now licentious subjects; now the tale of Cupid and Psyche, now the Madonna of St. Sisto, with St. Barbara in the pose of a ballet-dancer.

From that day, or night, rather, which Raphael ushered in, what is the history of Art? What relation has it borne to the world of working, toiling men and women? "Art," says the critic, the man of leisure, the amateur, "Art is meant to soothe, to please, to make us forget the ills of life, to lap us in a dream of brighter worlds, serener skies, and a bliss that eludes us here." Well, does Art do this for anybody that needs it? I deny that it is the end of Art at all. I think Art, like every great and noble influence—like Religion, like Science, like Literature, lifts us above the world, and what is low in it, but it does not lap us in dreams. It is meant to lift us up that we may work more nobly, more steadily, more faithfully, more hopefully. Some men think Religion was meant to draw people away from the world, and make us despise and loathe it. I know a fair saint who—in all this long war of ours, waged for the best interests of the world, a religious war if ever there was such a thing, a war waged against oppression, against injustice, against the attempts of wicked men to fasten the curse of slavery and caste on the mass of their countrymen—has never read a newspaper, has kept her mind steadily, and of-purpose, cold and estranged from the cause, and has never allowed that chaste and high-seated heart to indulge in one pang of agony when the cause of right and justice was in peril, nor in one thrill of joy when it triumphed. And why? Because it was a contest of the world's contriving. Its success wouldn't advance the cause of missions or Sunday-schools, or, at least, those were not its



objects. Therefore, the right has triumphed with no help from her. And so, some men think Science has no relations to humanity; and there are scientific men who believe they have reached a legitimate aim when they have proved that men were monkeys once, and might as well be monkeys now, for all the essential difference there is between them. But, Religion and Science, once removed from the daily life of men, rot the souls of those who pursue them; and Art, separated from humanity, makes the Artist a trifler and a useless excrescence on the social body.

One consequence of this changed state of things is the growth of, at least, four successive generations of men in Europe and America, to whom Art is a mere unmeaning sound, and the productions of Art mere toys and luxuries for the rich and refined. Some think that it is useless to hope that it will ever be different; others, that it is not desirable it ever should be different. There are plenty who think that the age of Art is passed; that the day of Science has dawned, and that Science is to take the place of Art. I cannot believe it. I believe Art to be necessary for the development of the race. Art is the embodiment of spiritual ideas; their expression to the eye of man. Science is the mere knowing of the material world; what it is, what it contains, what forces drive its machinery, what powers check its wheels. But, it has nothing to do with the spirit; the material is its charmed prison. The business of a man-of-science is with facts; he meddles when he tries spiritual deductions; and though no one will more cheerfully thank scientific men for their work than I—though no one can rejoice more in its accomplishment, I believe that, without Art, the world would suffer, is suffering, the loss of a nobler sense. I don't mean to say that Science necessarily materializes—in the hands of a really great man it cannot;—

but I know that the contemplation of great works of Art feeds the spirit of man, and that their creation must lift him up above the material world.

So, I plead for Art that she may become one of the educators of the people, one of their friends, as she once was. How to bring her out of her seclusion, out of her parlors, galleries, academies,—where she grows a stunted, withered, whitened thing,—into the broad, free air, where she may take deep root, and spread, and branch, and hang forth her beautiful fruit, food for a world of hungry men—corn and wine and oil for those who faint in the heat, and droop in the tired places of the earth? How to do this? That is one of the problems of the time. Is there more than one way? Is there any way but, to begin to educate the young; to teach them to desire Art; to create the need of it in their minds? I wish the noble old art of fresco painting, of painting on walls, could be revived; that our churches, our schoolrooms, our public halls might be painted all over with the story of man, with stories of the saints, the true saints of the world, with the lives of heroes, of patriots, with noble allegory, with high imaginations. I wish Art meant something broader, more generous, more human, than costly, extravagant pictures in splendid frames, bought to be shut up for the pleasure of a few rich people in their luxurious houses. I wish that Art were not another name for luxury, but that she were, as in the old time, the common food of the common people. We might then have another Dante, another Shakspeare, another Phidias, another Giotto; but, as we lace Art to-day in her brocaded silks, weigh her down with gold, and stifle her in our perfumed palaces, she is too weak to bear another child.

And, one of the first steps toward bringing about a changed state of things is, to make people thoroughly disgusted with

the present state. I should like to see the honest, justifiable contempt with which a hard-worked, sweating farmer turns up his nose at "picters" and "stat-ters" penetrate into circles that lay claim to more culture and a broader sense. The bulk of the pictures and statues that are painted and carved, to-day, are contemptible; and the men who get high prices for them don't earn their money. They serve no useful purpose, teach nothing, move us not at all, elevate us not at all; and when the weathercock of fashion changes, will be consigned to the lumber-room with as little mercy as if they had never cost a cent. Meanwhile, the men who make them put on more and more airs every year. They are beginning to claim immunities. They won't be criticised. They cut the critic. They slander the critic. They challenge the critic. If they had their way, they would make laws against criticism.

Now, in America, nothing can be done to change this state of things until the mass of the people get different ideas, and feel an interest in that to which they are now profoundly indifferent. I wish I could see a noble cast, a good engraving, a single honest, faithful bit of study-from-nature, in every working-man's house in America. I wish we had a public collection like the British Museum, or the Louvre, or the South Kensington Museum, open to our people. I think that every school-room ought to

be made beautiful by the best Art. At present, the Free Academy is the only school I know of in the land that has anything that can be called Art in it, and that is confined to sculpture. But, something is wanted wider and deeper. Art is degenerating for want of new blood. It wants to be vitalized by mixing with the people. At present, it cares as little for them as they for it. You never see a laboring man in the Academy. What should he do there? Do you ever see one in a milliner's shop?

But you and I, my friend, desire a better day. And you have taken the Clytie home with you, to make a small beginning. She is an Italian, an exotic, but, for all that, a human being. She isn't, thank the Lord, a "Greek Slave," nor a "White Captive," nor an abstraction of any sort. And, by-and-by, some neighbor's child who has played in the room with her for years, and learned, without knowing it, to love her lovely face, her tender smile, will find himself trying to put into marble the thoughts she has awakened in him—thoughts not small and puny, maudlin and affected, but large, burning, manly thoughts; and we shall have an American statue worth looking at, something that rough men in the streets, fair women, bright boys, laughing girls shall like to look at, and that shall feed, and not belittle, what is earnest and honest in them. So hopes,  
 so prays,  
 Your friend,  
 "THE NEW PATH."

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#### ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS IN THE ACADEMY.

FOR a number of years the display of architectural designs has formed a feature of the "Academy Exhibitions." Never a large or prominent portion of the exhibition, however, it has of late years dwindled nearly out of notice, which the architects excused on the ground that the small, ill-lighted room

to which their drawings were consigned gave very poor opportunity for their exhibition, and was a slight to the profession.

While the justice of this complaint was admitted, the hopes of those who, appreciating the noble study of architecture, desired a large and worthy exposi-

tion of the works of its followers, were turned to the new Academy-building, where drawings should not be hung in entries and umbrella-closets.

It is, then, with no slight degree of disappointment that the admirers of this art regard its very limited display in the present exhibition.

The new galleries are all equally well lighted; the hanging committee have treated the architects as fairly as other artists; the old grounds of complaint are removed, but, the collection is little larger than usual.

It has been remarked by our most accomplished architects, with profound regret, that the public taste, so far as their profession was concerned, has deteriorated during the last few years, owing, perhaps, to the sudden acquisition of wealth by the uncultivated, and the spreading desire to build quickly and showily for to-day, rather than well and nobly for both present and future.

If this alleged retrograde in public taste is really regretted by the architects, or if they desire a higher standard on the part of the public, could they do better than to place before them a large number of their best studies and designs? And though the multitudes that throng the Academy might not fully appreciate them, yet they would provoke comment, comparison, reflection, a healthy agitation leading to real progress.

The designs which should be first noticed (for the sake of giving the respect due to antiquity), are No. 110 and others by A. J. Davis. The drawings are yellow and weather-stained, and have probably figured at many an Academy-exhibition, but at such long intervals that, meantime, they have been forgotten, and for practical purposes are as good as new. Most of the buildings represented were erected some twenty or twenty-five years ago, and, like the drawings, are now in their dotage.

Yet these drawings serve a useful pur-

pose—that of marking the advance of architectural art during the last twenty-five years. At the commencement of that period such buildings were supposed to be paragons of fine taste and skill; with jealous eye did the “builder” of those days regard the architect who could send forth such “plans” from his office.

A comparison of these with the best modern designs in the collection makes fully evident the decided progress in the practice of this art. The views which led to and governed the designs of the architect twenty-five years since, will be seen to be widely different from those which inspire the best modern work. Castles, colleges, and temples were the goal for nearly all the efforts of the architects of those days. Few clients were considered so poor as not to be worthy of a lodgment in a castle or Grecian temple, and none so rich that their aspirations for display might not be fully met in the “English Collegiate Gothic.” (Vide 110.) These buildings had the advantage of being as well adapted to one family as another, but the disadvantage of being ill-adapted to any, for, a building of a certain character was erected, and the occupants left to adapt themselves and their wants to it, instead of the building being a tasteful expression of their comforts and enjoyments.

Did the architect anticipate that his clients, many of them practical, well-to-do business men, would, on their return from the day's *labor* in the city, desire so far to abandon themselves to the pleasures of imagination and sentiment, that, calling together their servants, they would spend the night in their watch-towers, or behind their battlements or parapets, waiting for encounter with mysterious and Quixotic foes?

A strong contrast to these buildings, both in motive and treatment, may be found in No. 150, “Design for a School-

house," by Vaux & Withers—a quaint and massy little building, and a very intelligible and sensible development of what may be supposed to be a very satisfactory plan. It wears no mask, does not weakly ape some building of greater dimension and elaboration, or of different purpose, but rejoices in a character and expression of its own, of which it has no reason to be ashamed.

The honesty of the design is at once apparent; free from needless features, the essential ones have been treated with such frankness and good sense that both the judgment and taste are gratified. The well-marked entrance, the groups of windows with their unique but simple voussoirs, the quaint and quiet bell-turret, the bold chimney, the large dormer, together with the handsome masses of brick-work and slate, are the attractive features of this building, the whole expressing well its character and purpose.

No. 120—"Study for a Museum and Library"—by the same architects, possesses many of the qualities of the previous design. The entrance, however, seems unworthy the building, lacking force, impressiveness, and the quiet dignity pervading the most of the design. The basement windows do not appear to have nearly the depth of those above them, detracting from the appearance of solidity which the lower portion of such a building should present. The treatment of the oriel window is very successful and pleasing, as is also the engaged tower in its vicinity. We think, however, that the principal campanile should be loftier. The study possesses less sculpturesque decoration than might be expected in so important a building. The shields which ornament the lower portion are rather monotonous; their places might be filled with something more appropriate and interesting.

By way of contrast, again, it is worth while to notice No. 27—"Designs for a Block of Houses on Central Park,"—

H. H. Holly, architect. We find here a façade, the style of which seems to have been adopted from what is far from the best Parisian street architecture; there is a total lack of repose, caused, in no small measure, by the thorough breaking up of the plain wall-surface by projections, pilasters, and nondescript ornament which has no inherent beauty to apologize for the space it occupies.

The design fails to show any fresh or interesting details, though not without much that is curiously bad. Look, for instance, at the dormer windows, the larger of which are fashioned after the worst class of pier or toilet-glasses, and the smaller after the papier-maché mantel-clocks. It is greatly to be hoped that such architectural stumbling—"blocks" will not disfigure the vicinity of Central Park.

Design 108 and others by R. M. Hunt, show us the appearance of the various entrances to Central Park as they will be when completed.

So much interesting and beautiful work already graces the Park, that one might reasonably suppose the later additions would be influenced by this standard, advancing rather than falling behind it. The work already executed has been a most efficient means of public instruction—interesting whoever has seen it, causing reflection, comparison, and a constant elevation of taste.

Good as it is, however, there is opportunity for progress, improvement, and nobler results, which the public will be prepared to appreciate by their acquaintance with that already existing. Bearing this in mind as we look at design 108 and its companions, a few questions naturally arise. Do these later designs take up the work where the others left it, and mark a fresh and decided advance? Do they abound in features which increasing cultivation and taste will dwell upon again and again with renewed interest? Is the feeling and

sentiment of them appropriate to the place? An analysis, we think, will lead to quite an opposite conclusion. For instance, the architectural portions of 108 (and the companion drawings do not differ essentially in the work proposed to be executed) consist of three flag-staffs, eight common-looking pedestals, such as one may see in any cemetery, two large columns of the Corinthian order, surmounted by bulbous-shaped ornaments, and, last of all, two plain metal gates.

The sculptor, with his statuary, may give interest to this, provided he treat not of pagan or mythological subjects; but, what has the architect contributed to honor his art, to interest and instruct the public? What portion of it will be examined and remembered with pleasure? What impression, indeed, will be left of the general effect, except that architecture acted as a stolid porter to bear aloft the trophies of sculpture?

Men may indeed admire the height and straightness of the flag-staffs, wonder at the size of the stones forming the pedestals, or that the classic columns are so much loftier than those supporting their own shop-fronts, yet we cannot believe that they will tarry here long, but, rather, pass on to their old favorites—the sculptured flowers and animals of the terrace stair-case.

Adjoining this we find No. 55, “Design for a small Chapel or Chancel Organ,” J. Cleveland Cady, architect. The aim in this design has evidently been to give on correct principles an economical and efficient pipe-organ, of a few stops, which may take the place of the overgrown accordeons, politely called Harmoniums, Cabinet Organs, etc. For, these instruments, however noisy they

may be, fall entirely short of the volume and purity possessed by a single stop of good pipes.

The principal features of this organ are, apparently, its effectiveness, economy, and expression of purpose. The pipes not being boxed up as usual, are free to let forth their unmuffled voices—a decided gain in power, as well as a considerable saving of expense; and the straight-forward manner of treating and honoring the *pipes* (which are the individuality of the instrument) gives it a proper and characteristic expression.

Our organ-cases usually represent miniature temples or cathedrals, in the windows of which a few pipes are allowed to stand; but, this is certainly no proper development of the organ itself, but merely a thoughtless, indolent way of passing over the matter. Better far to develop the graceful gradations and combinations of pipes, the simplest form of which artists of all ages have delighted in depicting St. Cecilia as bearing in her arms.

No. 28 has the appearance of a congress or convention of Mr. Vaux's country-seats, lacking, as it does, unity of design, breadth, and subordination. Its lofty mansard roofs, and absence of ostentation, must, however, be mentioned to its credit. Time and space do not permit us to notice the few remaining designs in the collection, which are by the same architects as the works already noticed, and possess similar merits or defects.

Another season, let us hope, will show a large increase in the number of designs, especially of those which contain freshness of thought, and exhibit a studious and healthful progress.

## "THE BUILDER" versus "THE NEW PATH."

We have received a copy of "The Builder" for May 20th, in which we find the following:

"*The New Path* for April contains a paper on Miss Hosmer's statue of Zenobia, and one titled 'Our Furniture: what it is, and what it should be.' The writer of the first, instead of taking a new path, follows an old one, and a wrong one, in asserting that the American works sent to the 1862 Exhibition were treated with the same 'studious disrespect which everything American instinctively received in England at that time.' Mr. Page's portraits, says the writer, were left to shiver by themselves in the gloomy American department; Mr. Story's fine statues were placed so that they could not be seen; and Miss Hosmer's 'Zenobia' had an 'ignominious position' at the 'back door' of Gibson's Temple. Such evil misrepresentations are to be regretted; and, when made, as in this case, by one professing to write with high aims, and with truth for a watch-word, to be wondered at. The position of Mr. Page's pictures was determined by the small committee of Americans who at the last moment arranged their department: one of Mr. Story's striking statues was placed so that it was the first thing that met the eye on entering the Roman Court, and the other so that it was the last object seen on quitting it; while Miss Hosmer's 'Zenobia,' set up by special arrangement in connexion with her master's works, had one of the most prominent sites possessed by statue in the whole exhibition. Not the least curious part of the matter is that, after these unfounded complaints, the writer proceeds to show, by nine columns of print, that the 'Zenobia' is a thoroughly worthless statue, unworthy of any place at all!

"We have pointed to these observations because we revolt against any attempt that is made to foster unkind feelings between two kindred nations, speaking the same tongue and animated to a great extent by the same motives; and would reprobate it strongly from whichever side of the Atlantic it might proceed."

As we had no intention to do any injustice, and not the least wish in the world to foster any unkind feelings between England and our own country, we make room on the first opportunity for this counter-statement on the part of the "Builder."

With regard to Mr. Page's pictures we have nothing to say if "The Builder" is well informed. It, of course, means to imply that other and better positions were to have been obtained for these fine works, but that the Americans in London did not choose to accept them, but hung their countryman's works deliberately in the barn-like apartment which contained the other trophies of American skill,—the patent cow-milker, and the Great American Dessert, "Pop-Corn." If the Builder does *not* mean thus to be understood, we do not see that it has helped the matter much. Doubtless, if there could have been obtained no better place for the pictures of Delaroche, Cabanel, and Luys—the French and Belgian commissioners would have felt obliged to put their countrymen's masterpieces along with the silks, laces, and furniture, in the part of the building allotted to their contributions in that kind.

The simple truth we take to be, that the American gentlemen had to choose between the place assigned to the cow-milker, and no place at all; and they took what they could get. It seems to us that, if the English people had felt in-

clined to be civil to America, which, in 1862, they certainly were *not*, they would have offered to the few American pictures, not more than four or five in all, a place in their own gallery among English works, which to all intents and purposes they were. That is all we have to say on that score.

As for Miss Hosmer and her statue, we admitted that her place was better than that accorded to either Mr. Page or Mr. Story. We do think and know that the "Zenobia" is a thoroughly worthless statue, although we did not say so in the seven, not nine, columns, devoted to her. What *we* think, however, is of no importance in the argument as to whether she were well treated or not. There are plenty of people, in this country and in England, who think very differently. But, it is simply a question of fact. "The Builder" makes the singular statement—although, as it does *not* "profess to write with truth for a watch-word," we suppose it is not so "singular" as ours—that the statue had one of the most prominent sites in the whole Exhibition. This will do very well to say, three years after the event, to Englishmen who have forgotten, and Americans who never knew what is the true state of the case. Gibson's homely "Venus" did in truth have a prominent—most undeservedly prominent—place, standing as it did in front of the Greek Temple designed by Owen Jones expressly for it, and facing a broad and ample court extending in front of the great staircase leading down from the picture galleries. Two passages from this handsome court led to the nave of the building on either side the temple, on each side of which were other two statues by Gibson; and under the back portico of the temple, facing a cross-passage twenty-five feet wide, in which stood either benches or something to look at, was the Zenobia. Not to make too much of this matter, "The

Builder" is certainly mistaken in saying that it was as well placed as any statue in the Exhibition. There were twenty others better placed, some of which, we admit, deserved it, while others deserved it quite as little as Harriet Hosmer's.

But, wanting in candor, as we cannot but think "The Builder" in what it says of the treatment of Mr. Page and Miss Hosmer, its statement with regard to the position of Mr. Story's statue is more uncandid still. The reader will please imagine a room or passage twenty-five feet wide and perhaps fifty long. Let him put a door in this passage in the middle of the end, leaving, perhaps, ten feet on each side between the door and the wall. Now, let him suppose a double row of statues up and down the middle of the passage and a row on each side against the wall. Then let him put in each corner, at the right and left on entering—between the door and the wall—Mr. Story's statue. If you stopped to look at the "Sybil" on entering, you were pushed and jammed by the stream of people that poured in behind you, and it was in vain that you attempted to get a satisfactory view. If you were foolish enough, in coming out, to hope to get a good look at the "Cleopatra," the persistent punching and pushing which you got from the outflowing crowd soon brought you to your senses. We know what we are saying when we affirm that no statues in the Exhibition were placed with less judgment than these, where it was so impossible to see them in comfort; and, whatever may be allowed for either Mr. Page's work or Miss Hosmer's, we believe no one will deny that few statues in the great building were worthier to be looked at than those of Mr. Story. If both, or either one of them, had been put in the place occupied by Gibson's "Venus," looking—as Punch makes a fat, blousy old woman, who is staring at her, say—"Exactly like

our Hemmer!"—it would have been as much less honor than they deserved as it was more than Gibson's due. And this is all we have to say on that score.

Nor should we add another word, were it not for "The Builder's" indignation at what it calls "our attempt to foster unkind feelings between two kindred nations," &c., &c. This, from an Englishman, is simply impudent. We shall believe that "The Builder" is sincere in its reprobation when we learn that it ever showed equal readiness to resent one, even the least, of the thousands of cruel, unjust, unfeeling, and disgraceful things that have been said, with deliberate purpose to make ill-feeling between England and America, by the leading journals in its own country during the last four years. A certain class of Englishmen have suddenly learned that America has a great many claims to respect, of which they have been able to discern nothing from the day when the good news came to them that the great Republic was no more, until it is, unfortunately, proved that, all that they and the South could do to bring about that event so much desired by them, has been miserably unsuccessful. We do not believe that ever in the history of the world were national hatred and envy shown with more undisguised malignity than they have been by the best class—intellectually and socially—of the English people during our bitter trial. We do not mean to say that there were not good and noble people for us—Cobden, Bright, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Hughes, Goldwin Smith, Harriet Martineau;—these indeed struck manly blows, for which we thank and thank them; blows which did them honor and us good service. But, out of all England's nobles, these were all. Mrs. Browning brought us God's curse as on a salver,—which we accepted because we deserved it, though we could have wished for another than an English lackey—and died before she felt commis-

sioned to take it away; while her husband finds time to sneer at us in "Mr. Sludge," but none for friendlier words; Mr. Carlyle hurled his brutal logic at us;—we tender him our sympathy on its, to him, no doubt, most mortifying refutation; Thackeray turned his back upon us; Tennyson, Dickens, and, with them, all the lesser brood of authorship, were silent, or, if they broke silence, broke it only to hiss, and sneer, and prophesy and wish for evil. Punch, too, "scurriljester," as, in a maudlin fit of penitence, he rightly styles himself, thinks, with a copy of doggerel rhymes, to wipe out the Tenniel cartoons of the last four years, in which a brother nation, and that nation's noblest character—few purer in the world—were persistently held up to the scorn of the British public as representing all that was cowardly, low, and disgusting in humanity.\* If report says true, a name held in love and honor, manifested in many ways, through the length and breadth of this land—John Ruskin—has spoken words of such bitterness and unreason, on our national struggle, to his best friends here, that intercourse with him is no longer possible; saying, among other things, that we are washing our hands in blood, and fighting to make slaves of white people; and, even at the last, when our whole people were in deep distress and mourning for the death of our good President—mourning such as has, once or twice, been possible in the history of Europe for a dead ruler—for William of Orange and for Albert of England—the "London Times," with the brutal insolence of a New Zealand savage leaping on the body of his slaughtered enemy—threw square in our

\* Think of the writers and designers for "Punch," a choice company of the best wits of England, meeting at the Weekly Dinner, and in cold blood discussing, designing, and approving such a Cartoon as that of a very recent date, representing the American nation as the Phoenix, the head of the bird being a loathly caricature of Mr. Lincoln!



faces its insulting proposition that Mr. Johnson should resign, or, be forced to do so, by the popular voice. The English people may gather a little of what we felt—though we admit that words so scurrilous, from a source so vile, should not have been felt at all—if they suppose that on the death of Albert, the government organ here, in view of the thousand-fold gossip that runs back and forth over Europe and America as to the condition of Queen Victoria's mind, had insolently proposed that she should resign in favor of another. Such words would have been counted blasphemy by the English mind; but, anything was good enough for the people of another nation, especially if they thought that nation in no condition to resent their insulting words, their unjust actions.

Perhaps we betray an unbecoming heat. But the wound which wicked English words have made in American

minds rankles deep. We are great enough to forgive, but it would be more than human if we could forget what we have had to endure. Still, we gladly remember the good words that have been spoken; and they were so good, and spoken by such noble men that, doubtless, in time, they will have leavened the whole lump of national discord with the leaven of good feeling. But do not let "The Builder," or any English journal, after what has happened, offer to lecture us, or any American, for a few innocent, and, as we have tried to prove, justifiable complaints relative to a not very important matter, as if it were we who were guilty of stirring up ill-feeling. English journals live in a large house of particularly brittle glass, and they are very much mistaken if they think they can throw stones at other people with impunity.

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#### MR. LEUTZE'S PORTRAIT OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

For once, from all that we can gather, the "NEW PATH" has the satisfaction of agreeing with the world of amateurs and critics, in condemning Mr. Leutze's last and, therefore, worst performance. A more infelicitous choice was, perhaps, never made than when he was selected to fix on canvas the portrait of a man of such purely American characteristics as Mr. Lincoln. He has so utterly failed to understand his subject, that every honorable trait is supplanted by an ignoble one; and the rugged outside—a ruggedness which has been greatly overdrawn—has been deliberately put out

of sight; and, instead of it, we have a softly, mealy-mouthed, sawney orator of the graceful school, with a face like that described by the amiable Heine—"looking like a donkey with his head in a pitcher of molasses." The execution of the picture is very discreditable. The perspective is ludicrously incorrect. The portico of the Capitol is, apparently, a quarter of a mile away, and the figures of persons sitting directly behind Mr. Lincoln are no larger than his forearm. But, Mr. Leutze, we know, is a great historical painter.

## TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

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It is with great reluctance that we are obliged to take the step of appealing to the subscribers of the "NEW PATH" for help. Without more money we shall not be able to continue the publication of our Journal. We had calculated that the funds subscribed by a few persons to enable us to resume the publication, would be sufficient to carry us at least through the year 1865, enabling us to complete the second volume, and keep our word to our subscribers. And we also felt pretty confident that if we could support it that long, we should find sufficient encouragement to warrant us in going on for a still longer time.

But we do not prosper. The Journal seems to find favor, as our extracts from the newspapers show. Subscriptions come in but slowly, but there seems to be a considerable number of purchasers. Still it takes a great many purchasers of single copies at twenty cents, and a great many subscribers at two dollars a year, to pay bills for printing and advertising that average a hundred dollars per month.

Mr. Miller, our publisher, who has shown a most intelligent and kindly interest in the "NEW PATH"—although, even if we were as prosperous as we could ever in reason hope to be, his commission on our sales would not go far toward enriching him—thinks that, there is no doubt whatever, that if we can carry the journal through this year and next, its successful establishment is certain. And other publishers and well-informed men say the same thing. Now, will our subscribers kindly help us? Remember that the "NEW PATH" is not published for pecuniary profit. No writer for it is paid, and the editor receives no penny. Our only wish is to establish a thoroughly independent Art-Journal, devoted to a high aim. There is so much to be written, and so many who seem eager to read all that can be written on the subject, that it does certainly seem as if there must be money enough to support what is needed. If each of our subscribers would give us what he could afford, and felt moved to give, —be that sum small or large—we should no doubt see our way a little clearer. If the subscribers we have would average five dollars apiece, we should feel that our continuance for this year at least was no longer problematical.

We do not easily believe that our subscribers are indifferent to the success of our little venture. Too many kind and encouraging words come to us, for that. But, they ought to consider that no journal, however wide the circle of readers to which it appeals, however popular the subjects of which its treats, was ever established without capital. Where the results promised seem to make it worth while, rich men are always ready to subscribe large sums of money, year after year, and see them sunk apparently, swallowed up without any tangible result, because they know that the foundations of every building are hid under ground, and that no building not so based is sure to stand. Our little temple, dedicated to the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, needs the help of a few friendly hands to complete it, and when that is done we shall gladly entrust it to the divinity it enshrines.

