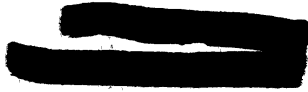


JOHN TWACHTMAN

By ELIOT CLARK

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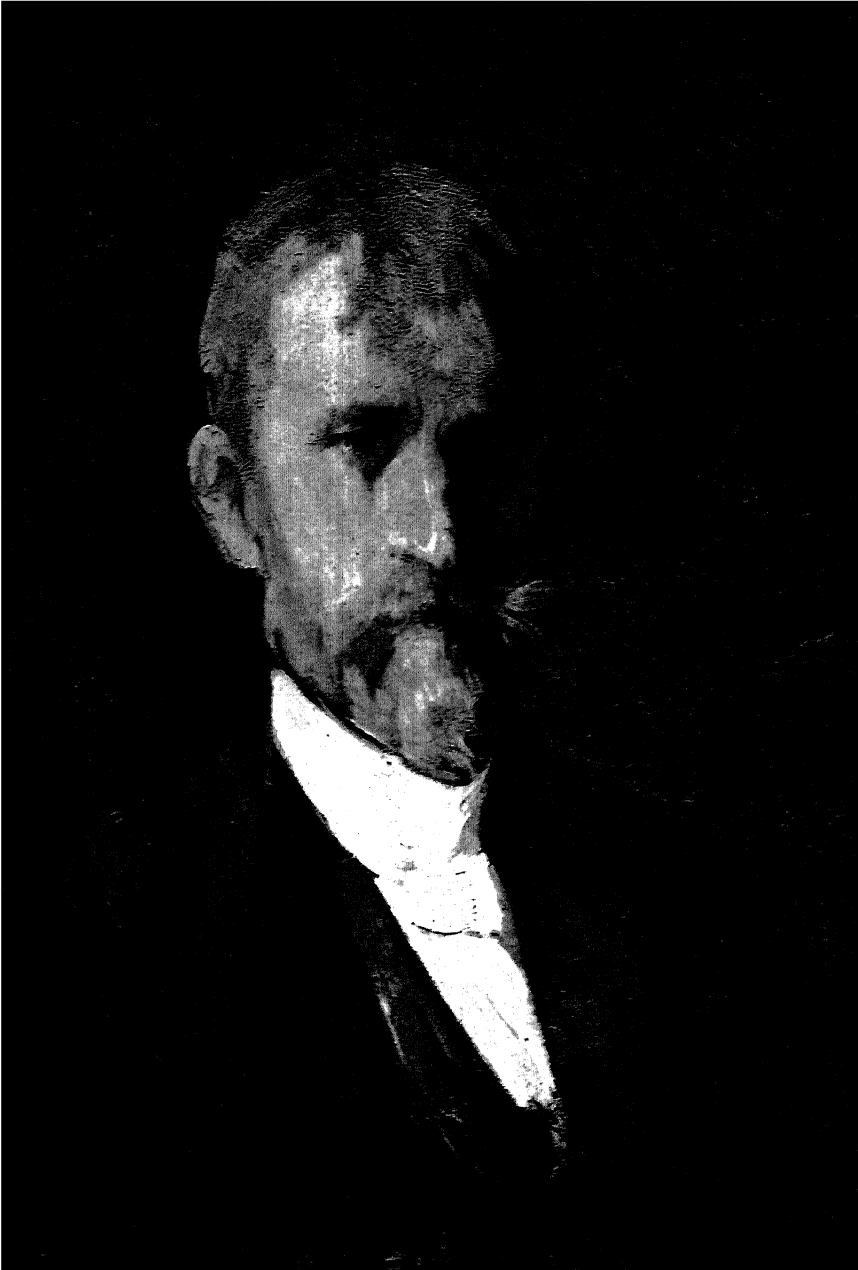
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Clark, Eliot Candee,
1883-
John Twachtman,

1924.



JOHN H. TWACHTMAN

From the portrait by J. Alden Weir.

The Cincinnati Museum of Art, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Canvas, 21½ inches high, 17¼ inches wide. Signed and dated,
1894.

JOHN TWACHTMAN

BY
ELIOT CLARK



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by
Frederic Fairchild Sherman

TO MY WIFE

THE AMERICAN ARTISTS SERIES

George Inness. By Elliott Daingerfield. (Out of print)

Fifty Paintings by George Inness.

Homer Martin. By Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.

Fifty-eight Paintings by Homer Martin.

Alexander Wyant. By Eliot Clark.

Sixty Paintings by Alexander Wyant.

Ralph Albert Blakelock. By Elliott Daingerfield.

Winslow Homer. By Kenyon Cox.

Albert Pinkham Ryder. By Frederic Fairchild Sherman.

John H. Twachtman. By Eliot Clark.

IN PRESS

J. Francis Murphy. By Eliot Clark.

J. Alden Weir. By Frederic Fairchild Sherman.

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JOHN TWACHTMAN

JOHN TWACHTMAN

PART ONE



THE true account of an artist's life is rendered by his own hand, fixed forever on canvas in unalterable form. Could we read the subtle thought expressed thereon we would gain an insight into the character of the painter and the times in which he lived, for the brush is a most sensitive instrument recording exactly the feeling and mental state of its master. Focused in its material point is not only the aspiration of the ego, but the very world spirit seeks expression through its charged and narrow channel. The painter lives in his work, and his character is revealed therein.

The expression of the past could not have been otherwise; nor the present. It is the immutable law of cause and effect. It is as inconceivable to imagine an impressionistic picture being painted at the time of the renaissance as a picture of that time being sincerely produced at present. We read from the faces of pictures as from the faces of life the eternal paradox of the universal existing in the particular, the impersonal in the personal.

In the work of John Twachtman we see his true character. Whatever may have been his outward action, his pictures reveal his inner spirit. Outwardly

gruff, hedonistic, skeptical and insensitive; inwardly he was impressionable, sensitive and sincere. In manner bantering, didactic, inconsistent, careless; in spirit delicate, constant, naive and loving. An instinctive understanding of true aesthetic values gave poise and confidence; but a lack of patronage and a contempt for popular banalities created skepticism and incredulity. Thus we see in Twachtman, the man, a dual character. One instinctive, the other acquired; one real, the other affected. In judging the man we must make this distinction; in judging his art it is not necessary, for therein we find the man truly himself.

The saving grace of the skeptic is a sense of humor, and Twachtman, perceiving the significance and relativity of values, played with them for his own amusement. But his wit was of a personal nature and his jest contained a sting. Faithful and consistent in his work, he gave himself the privilege and pleasure of changing his fancy and opinion at will. Of Twachtman's whimsicality Carolyn Mase writes: "He was inconsistent in details, but consistent about big things. For instance, for months he harangued against the elm trees, and then he discovered that they were the most beautiful of trees. He was swayed by his moods, his emotions. One day a thing appealed to him, the next day it bored him. One day his talk was spiritual — you looked for the halo; the next day you laughed at yourself for the feeling. But the steady, strong convictions which were his towards his work never varied — never even by a hair's breadth." I well recall

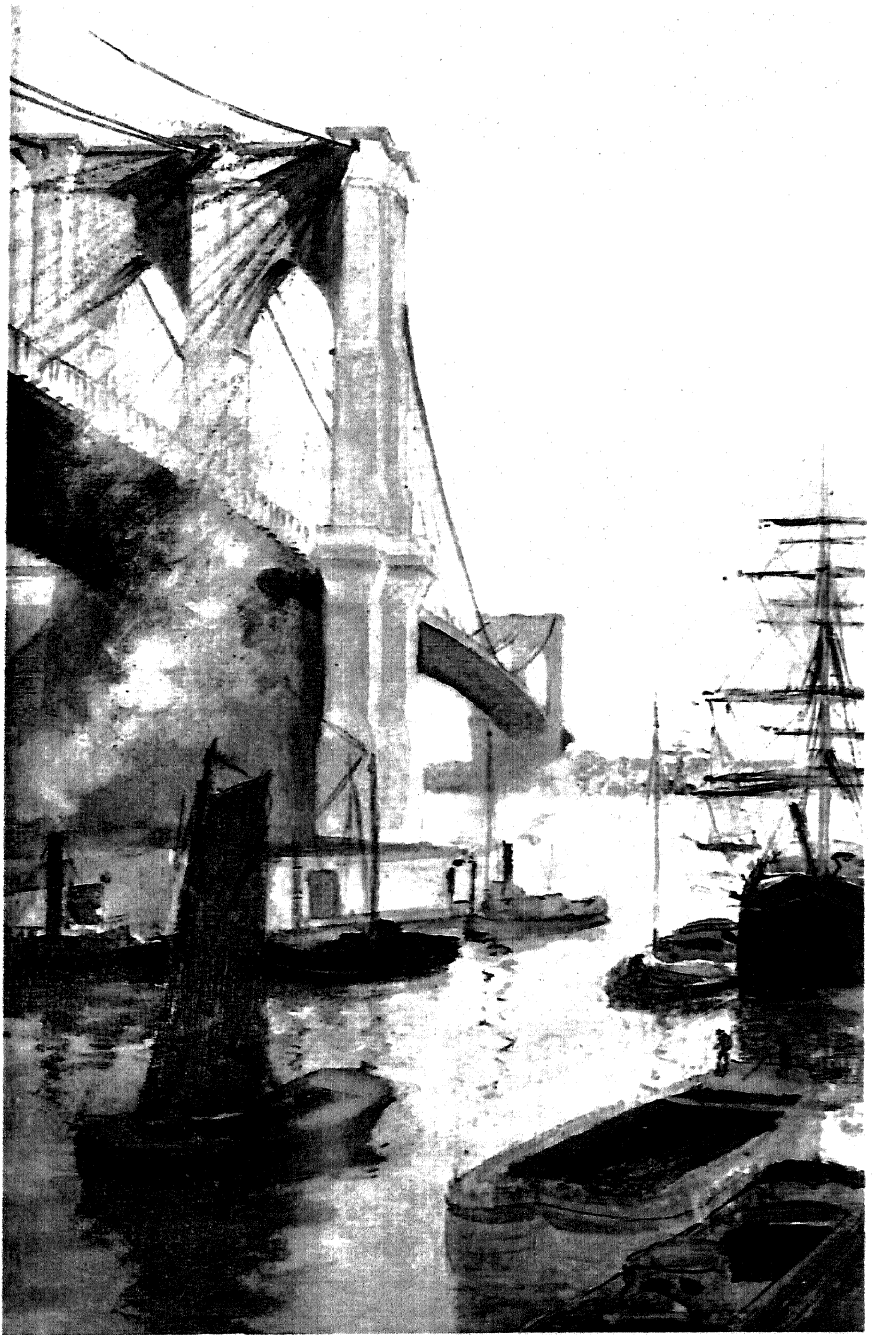
an incident at Gloucester. Several artists were stopping together at one of the Summer hotels. Twachtman had been painting rather large canvases (that is, about twenty-five by thirty, for pictures were not painted as large at that time as at present). He took great joy in joking the others about painting on small canvases. One couldn't paint a picture on them; why not work on a real canvas, and so forth. Within a fortnight's time he was painting small thumb-box panels, using cigar-box covers which he treasured with great care. I recall also that he was always joking, and that often his jokes, which were of a personal nature, would end in a row. To which Miss Mase refers: "He loved to stir up the fads of people, and one day on his way to the dining-room at the Holley House, knowing well the people, he said, 'You say so-and-so, and I will say so-and-so, and in two minutes we will have a row on.' And in two minutes they did have a row on." An echo of the gentle art of Jimmy Whistler; yet not so studied or subtle, but rather obvious, rollicking and fun making.

Twachtman was not, in the accepted sense, a cultured man. Skeptical of acquired learning and intolerant of show, he had, nevertheless, a true appreciation of real values. There was nothing academical about the man. He considered things at first hand and accepted them for what they meant to him, not what they were accredited to be. Everything was, therefore, a personal discovery, and its value was according to his personal interest. The label on a thing was

merely a mundane decoy. He was suspicious of things that were generally accepted and, therefore, taken for granted. But Twachtman was not a belligerent radical. He had too much humor for that. Independent and courageous, he was, however, humanly susceptible to praise and approval. Modest and unassuming, he, nevertheless, liked the glow of admiration and enjoyed the propinquity of a credulous circle. Not consciously a poseur, he affected something of the flair of his more illustrious confrere, Whistler. He would have delighted in being apt at aphorism and repartee, and sometimes was, in the opinion of his hearers, but in the presence of wit he was more personal than brilliant. With his comrades he was jovial and debonair. He rather liked the distinction of being modernistic, and poked fun at the old timers. With younger men and with his pupils, or to those to whom he took a fancy, he was not only sympathetic but radiated a genuine enthusiasm. There was no sense of separateness. R. J. Wickenden writes of Twachtman in Paris in 1883: "Twachtman was eight years my senior and had already achieved a certain recognition, but no consciousness of superiority was evident in his frank 'camaraderie'. He was a student among students, anxious to add to his store of skill and knowledge from every available source." He had a great fondness for children. Nothing pleased him more than to treat the gang and joke with the youngsters, who in turn jollied him. The Gods took him young. It is inconceivable to think of Twachtman as an old man.

BROOKLYN BRIDGE

Collection of Mrs. Thomas E. Gerrity, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.
Panel, 16 inches high, 10 inches wide.



Twachtman was not studious in an academical or exacting sense. He was not methodical. He may have laughed at inspiration or the divine spark. Nevertheless, he followed his impulse and his personal predilections. At times he would work constantly and consistently, and then again lay fallow. But always he was impressionable, and on the lookout. His eye was always searching and measuring. "‘Johnny’ would swing along, his eyes eagerly worming the hidden beauty out of the landscape — his thoughts never off ‘nature’. Even in the midst of some of his most fanciful sayings, or interrupting a joke, or breaking with a witticism, he would stop and point out some beauty of line, some harmony of color which had escaped the others."

Suspicious of the over serious, he saw art and life as one. An admirer of the great masters, he, nevertheless, believed in his own reactions. His painting is purely sensuous in the sense of its being a record of his visual impressions, and in that sense he was truly an impressionist.

He was equally awake to aesthetic enthusiasms and susceptible to new discoveries. In Munich we see the echoes of the old masters; in Holland and France he became aware of the beauty of grays and the significance of values, and later he was saturated with — the significance of envelopment and light. The art of the Japanese was an important discovery, and to the Japanese Twachtman, like Whistler, owes much of his appreciation of arrangement and design. It was a

new point of view as distinguished from the traditional picture making of the west. Then Velasquez was the idol for a time. But that may have been an echo from Whistler.

Had Twachtman lived, would he have entertained a similar enthusiasm for the Post Impressionists? The question is not an idle one, and if it could have been enacted, might have been the test of character. Nothing is truly more pathetic than a one time modernist becoming an old timer. Twachtman was, however, not a faddist or an opportunist. In his work, from the earliest examples, we see an absolute and unimpeachable integrity, an integrity for which he sacrificed popularity and reward, and we observe a personal tie that binds it all together, that despite its disparity gives it unity and purpose. Susceptible to contemporary creation as he was to visual impression, he used it for his own purpose, assimilated it in his own being, made of it a living, vital force, and hammered the malleable matter in his own crucible.

Twachtman's attitude toward nature, his approach to his subject, was not that of a naturalist, a pantheist or a realist. It was more truly that of an artist. He was not curious about botanical structure or the absolute veracity of naturalistic form; he had not the religious feeling of the affinity of nature with its creator or its relation to man; nor was he a graphic reporter of realistic facts. He saw in nature the means for an arrangement of form and color; he sought not so much the beauty of a part as the relation of parts to an organized

whole. He was not emotional in a romantic sense, that sense which is related more to the association of ideas or the symbolical suggestion of nature. He was not affected by the dramatic and carefully refrained from introducing the moving and turbulent aspects of nature. He was suspicious of the interpretation of the so-called moods of nature. Disdaining poetical associations he respected the reaction of his eye, not for its informing facts, but for its aesthetic sensibility. Therein he is related, not only to the dictum and practice of Whistler, but to the aesthetic doctrine of his time.

If Twachtman was not poetical in the literary sense, a form of expression which requires the associative and intellectual idea, he was truly poetical in the aesthetic sense, a sense which is more elusive, possibly because less used, and which finds its poetical expression in painting not so much in a merely graphic way, but in the more abstract expression of form and color, which is a language quite unique and independent of the thoughts formed by words. His work is, therefore, not without idea, but it is an aesthetic rather than a literary idea. The aesthetic idea in painting is not, however, created out of nothing. Its beginning and evolution, like every other form of expression, is from the human emotion, and Twachtman was essentially human. His nature was comparatively little corrupted by superficial conventionalities. Instinctively sensitive to his environment, susceptible to the quickened tendencies of the artistic "milieu", and

animated by the joy of living, Twachtman intuitively expressed in his painting the newly discovered beauty of the outer world reflected by means of the eye on the inner soul. The world in which he lived was his subject, his impressions of it his expression. Hedonistic in spirit, he was a highly sensitized medium on whom the objective world acted and conveyed through the sensuous susceptibility the mystical meaning of manifestation expressed in form and color. Careless of himself in so many ways, not building up with calculated purpose or for material reward, Twachtman never sacrificed his purity of purpose to popular applause.

Robert Reid has happily summed up his impression: "Twachtman was of those to whom the subtle beauties of nature, which, though not hidden, have been seen only by the few, appealed most strongly; and it was the element in his nature which responded to that appeal that gave the charm to his work. Enthusiasm seems to have been the keynote of his character, a singularly gentle enthusiasm, a smiling rather than a laughing sympathy with his work, his family and friends. In his work it pervaded all he did, from the pastel note of a wild flower on a bit of tinted paper to his completest painting."

In his teaching he encouraged the personal viewpoint, and prompted his pupils to seek new discoveries. He was not a methodical teacher. Drudgery and determination didn't count. One could stipple a drawing until doomsday and be only told to go home and

OYSTER BOATS

Collection of Mr. Gilbert S. McClintock, Wilkes Barre, Pa.
Canvas, 16 inches high, 24 inches wide. Signed and dated at lower
left, "J. H. Twachtman, N. Y., '79".



1st Deck
1949

wash dishes. He was intolerant. An artistic note would win more favor than a finished drawing; an aesthetic appreciation was more highly prized than a literal and exact rendering. Observation was encouraged more than intellectual knowledge. The master was not over strong on construction. The study of anatomy destroyed the naiveté of the eye. It was a difficult matter to reanimate an antique, and Twachtman used the cast more as an object for visual study than for a dissertation on beauty. He insisted on the relation of the result to the means employed. Charcoal was an instrument with a point, not to be smudged, but etched. Delicacy and sensitiveness of touch were a part of expression not to be slighted or clouded; the paper was not to be a Nubian battlefield, but a decorated surface. In the antique class at the League the master would give a bi-weekly criticism of work done outside class. In this he reveled. He delighted in starting artistic adventure. Free from the static model and realistic comparison, he incited a search for the picturesque and the beautiful.

Twachtman trained the direct observation of the eye without the added intellectual interest or association of idea. With color he believed that the eye saw more truly when the mind was not conversant with the nature or local color of the object. He contended that children saw the color of objects at a distance more truly than adults because they were not conscious of the local color of the object. Alluding to this, Mr. Charles Curran writes: "With his own children he

invented a game of seeing color, standing them in a row out of doors and training their sight, not by statement on his part and implicit belief on theirs, but by questions from him which brought out and strengthened their own truthful observation."

PART TWO.

IT is interesting to note that Cincinnati was the birthplace of several distinguished American artists, who were born shortly before or about the time of the Civil War. It is difficult to conceive that the time or the place were particularly propitious for the cultivation of artistic genius, and it may be asserted that the gifted ones were wise enough to seek other environment. It may also be remarked that these artists were of German origin. Whether it was that beer brought many Germans to Cincinnati or that Germans cultivated the fine arts will not be debated, but it must be observed that our artists of German heritage have shown little of the traditional influence of German art and its particular predilections in color and form.

It was in Cincinnati that John Henry Twachtman was born on August fourth, eighteen hundred and fifty-three. His forbears were prosperous farmers, living in the little town of Erichagen in the free State of Hanover, Germany. That his people were held in local esteem was evinced by the fact that when Napoleon passed through their country Twachtman's grandfather was one of a committee of three appointed to meet him. Conditions becoming unfavorable,

partly due to political changes, Twachtman's father, Frederick Christian Twachtman came to America where he settled in Cincinnati and where he later married Sophia Droege also from the province of Hanover. There the elder Twachtman gained his livelihood by working in a window shade factory. The decorative embellishment of the shade, which was then fashionable, prompted the son to try his hand at painting, and encouraged by his father he supplemented his practice by studying art at the night school of the Mechanics Institute and later at the Cincinnati School of Design where Frank Duveneck was instructing. The family of Duveneck were old friends of the Twachtmans and hailed from the same country in Hanover. Duveneck, five years older than Twachtman, studied in Munich from eighteen seventy to eighteen seventy-three. As the painter of "The Whistling Boy", "Woman with a Fan" and "Portrait of Professor Ludwig Loefftz", he was already an accomplished master. Proclaimed among the younger painters in Munich it was not, however, surprising that his work was unappreciated in the provincial city of his birth where he gave an exhibition of his Munich pictures on his return in 1873. It was not until the memorable year, 1875, when he showed his work in Boston that Duveneck met with immediate and unqualified success. This at once determined him to return to Munich. Interested in Twachtman, not merely as his instructor, but on account of friendly family relations, recognizing the aptitude of the younger painter, and

knowing from experience of the favorable conditions for development in the more sympathetic environment abroad, Duveneck advised Twachtman to return with him to Munich.

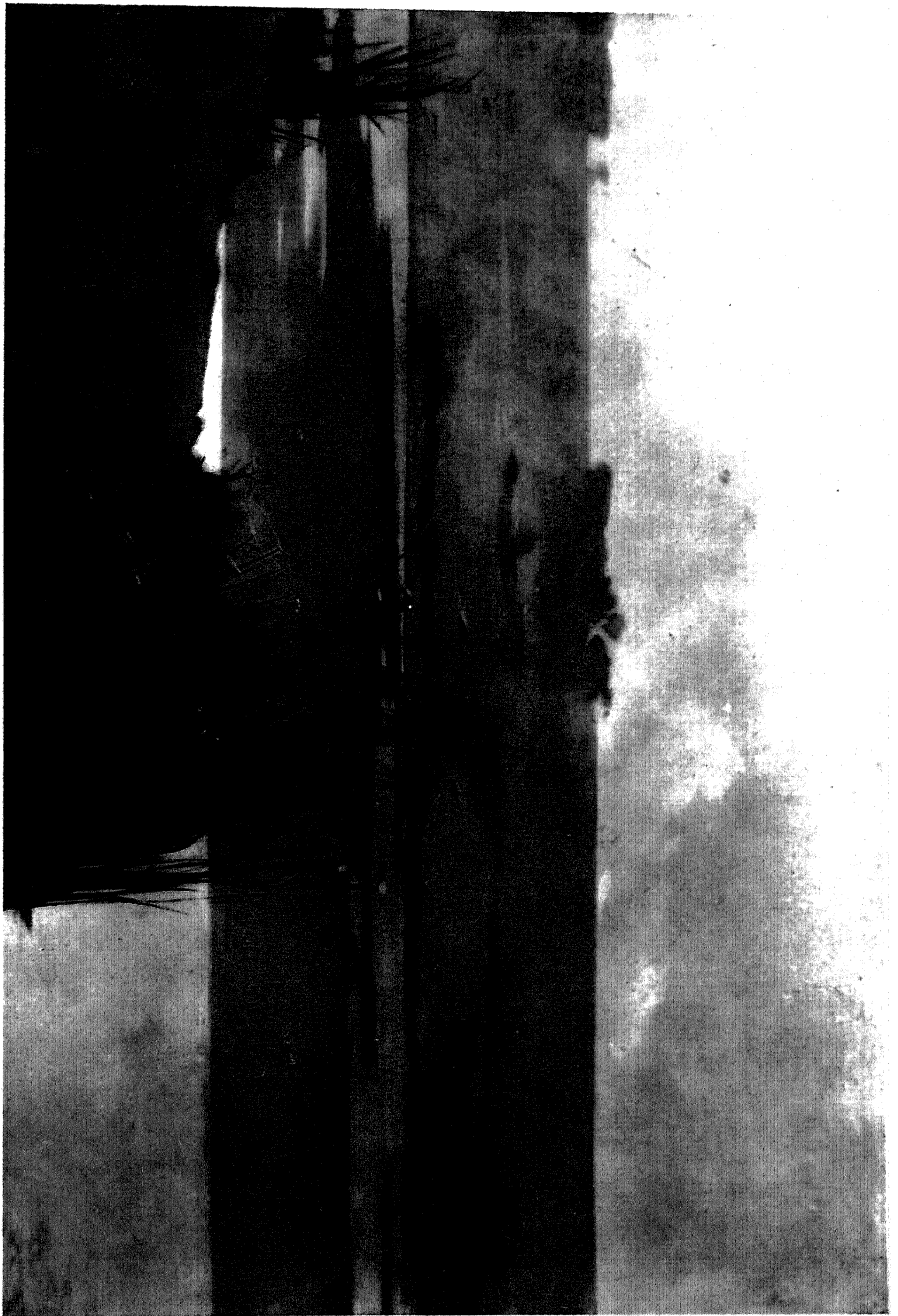
It was a memorable experience. I well recall Duveneck's glowing account of the voyage. Young, ambitious and talented, the world of experience and promise mysteriously loomed before him. He wore a gray stovepipe hat and when he stepped on board the ship, he said: "Why! Rubens isn't in it." His mother had filled the extra spaces in his traveling bags with goodies, and she being a good old time German housewife, when the bags were opened, the savory sauerkraut and limburger smelled to heaven. Sailing from New York in 1875, the young couple landed in Hanover and immediately proceeded to their old home town where they spent some little time feasting with their respective families.

At Munich Twachtman studied under Ludwig Loefftz, who had previously been a fellow student of Duveneck at the Royal Academy under Wilhelm Dietz. The artistic atmosphere of Munich at this time was most sympathetic and exhilarating. The younger painters, freed from the somewhat grandiose artificialities of their predecessors, were vitalized by the new spirit of realism which had been stirring in France. Insisting on the individual and first hand observation of the subject, the movement was technically a return to direct painting. One can imagine what a wonderful experience it was for the youth from the new

ARQUE LA BATAILLE

(Study for the larger canvas)

Canvas, 18 inches high, 26 inches wide. Signed and dated at lower left, "J. H. Twachtman, 1885".



world. Coming from a provincial city where everyone was engrossed in commerce, with no historical or traditional background and little culture, it must have been a marvelous mecca for an impressionable youth. The training was of inestimable value. Surrounded by brilliant and enthusiastic craftsmen, studying the great masters in the Pinakothek and living in an environment reflecting Continental culture, Twachtman, naturally receptive, reacted to the artistic impulse of the time.

Remaining in Munich two years, Twachtman joined Duveneck and Chase at Venice where he worked during the following year. Numerous studies of this period bear witness to the industry of the painter, and much of the time was passed out of doors along the waterways of the picturesque city.

In 1878 Twachtman returned to America. Several of his canvases, fortunately dated, tell us of his being in New York in '79, and a little later we find him at Cincinnati, where he painted a number of interesting pictures in the neighboring country of Avondale. In the fall of 1880 he sailed again for Europe, passing the winter in Florence where Duveneck the year previous had settled with a group of American pupils, who had followed him from Munich. Little pictorial record of this second experience abroad remains to inform us of his study. Norbert Heermann, in his interesting little book on Duveneck, in speaking of this sojourn in Florence, quotes Oliver Dennett Grover who was working with Duveneck at that time, "The

advice of John Twachtman, of the Cincinnati contingent, one of the older ones, whose knowledge was wider, was appreciated next to that of the 'Old Man', as they lovingly denominated Duveneck. The student days in Italy were all too short, but while they lasted, they were more significant, probably, than a similar period in the lives of most students because more intensified, more concentrated. The usual student experiences of work and play, elation and dejection, feast and famine, were ours, of course, but in addition to that, and owing to peculiar circumstances and conditions, the advantage of the intimate association and constant companionship we enjoyed not only with our leader but also with his acquaintances and fellow artists, men and women from many lands, was unique and perhaps quite as valuable as any actual school work. We lived in adjoining rooms, dined in the same restaurant, frequented the same cafes, worked and played together with an intimacy only possible to that age and such a community of interests." Duveneck had been for a short time in Rome and naively told Twachtman that it was really worth while seeing. So the latter was induced to make a brief journey thither. But there was nothing of the sentimental sight-seer about Twachtman, and he was more interested in the living world and visual impressions than in historical associations.

In the spring of '81 we find Twachtman again in America, and shortly afterward he married Marthe Scudder, daughter of Jane Hannah and John Milton

Scudder, the well known physician and writer, who for many years was head of the Eclectic Medical School.

The same season the newly married couple went abroad, first visiting London, and then spending a short time in Dordrecht. Here they met J. Alden Weir, his brother, John Weir, and Walter Shirlaw. It was from this short stay in Holland that our painter gathered material for a number of pictures and several etchings in which windmills figure conspicuously. It was here too that Twachtman met Anton Mauve and was much pleased with the encouraging criticism of his work. Twachtman then returned to Munich and made a sketching trip to the neighboring town of Schleisheim where he painted a number of large canvases directly from nature, pictures which attest the artist's facile use of the brush, and in which the prevailing low toned browns of the Munich formula are much in evidence. After a short visit in Venice the painter and his wife returned to New York.

Their stay in America was, however, of comparatively short duration. Feeling that the environment was more stimulating and sympathetic abroad and wishing to continue his technical studies, Twachtman returned to Europe in 1883. This time he settled in Paris. The change was a decisive one. Coming under the influence of the younger school of France, his appreciation of light and values was awakened, and the bituminous palette of Munich was discarded for the cooler hues of the open air. A fellow student tells us

of his impressions of that time: "As far back as 1883 when I knew Twachtman at Paris he impressed me as being a painter de race. His clear eye, straight nose flanked by sensitive nostrils, curved moustache and trimmed beard, evoked I know not what souvenir of Van Dyke and Rubens. Convinced and serious in his views, he carried with him a certain atmosphere of Romanticism, acquired possibly during his earlier sojourn in Munich. He was then working under Lefevre and Boulanger at the Julien atelier, and his academic work was supplemented by study of the Old Masters at the Louvre, where, in the intervals of classes at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, I was similarly occupied. At noon we usually went to a nearby restaurant where questions relating to art, ancient and modern, would be discussed over biftecks aux pommes and vin ordinaire." Another friend, speaking of the same period, writes: "Le Fevre used to invite his most promising pupils to his private studio on Sunday mornings to talk painting, and to see any of their work done outside the school. It was a stimulus and a pleasure to him to receive this recognition of his work, done on his own initiative."

In the summer Twachtman spent some time at Honfleur, where Homer Martin was staying. The two painters, later so disparate in their expression, found much in common in their artistic adventures. We note reminiscences of this trip in the etchings, "Quay at Honfleur", "The Mouth of the Seine", and "Road near Honfleur", and also a number of small

pictures of harbor and river subjects. Another sketching trip was made to Arque la Bataille, near Dieppe, a country finely suited to the delicate style of Twachtman, with decorative arrangement of trees, low lying hills and winding river. Some of the finest examples of the early period were painted in this vicinity.

The winter of '84 was passed in Venice. Preparatory to his return to the States in '85, the painter had shipped many of his canvases in advance. Alas! The ill fated ship went down and with it much of the best work of Twachtman's continental experience.

During the ten years which had elapsed from the first trip abroad to his final return to America, between the ages of twenty-two and thirty-two, Twachtman had not only acquired a thorough knowledge of the craft and a splendid understanding of construction and composition, but had produced a group of pictures esteemed by his fellow painters and later to be highly prized by appreciative connoisseurs.

In 1878, shortly after returning from his first trip abroad, Twachtman exhibited two pictures at the first exhibition of the Society of American Artists, held at the Kurtz Gallery, both pictures being Italian in subject. In 1879 he was represented by five canvases, three of which were painted abroad. It was in this year that he was elected a member of the Society. In 1880 he contributed six examples and in 1881, 1882 and 1883 he was represented by pictures mostly of foreign subjects.

The loss of much of his work at sea was frightfully

discouraging, and although his pictures were known and appreciated by his fellow artists and favorably exhibited, they were not of a character to be easily negotiated. It was at this juncture that Mrs. Twachtman's father suggested that it might be well to combine landscape painting with farming and offered them a house on some land which he owned up north. Farming was probably not a very exciting but an exacting occupation, and Twachtman was very glad to accept an unexpected commission to work on one of the great war cycloramas then popular, picturing the battle of Gettysburg. Twachtman's particular contribution was in painting the sky, with bursting bombs and the lurid accompaniments of battle. This work, though tiresome and uninteresting, was remunerative and kept the painter in Chicago for some time. But it was merely a makeshift and Twachtman was happy to return east in '88 where he joined his old time friend, J. Alden Weir, at Branchville. While there, several trips were made to Bridgeport, not far distant, where he found many congenial and sympathetic subjects along the wharves. Several of these he reproduced in etching, and some of his most picturesque pastels were also made at Bridgeport, notably the old "Foot-Bridge, Bridgeport."

In the summer of '89 Twachtman had a small class at Newport and was at the same time enabled to do some work about the neighboring water front. While there a fellow painter spoke very enthusiastically of the landscape about Greenwich, Connecticut, and on

SUMMER

The Phillips Memorial Art Gallery, Washington, D.C.
Canvas, 30 inches high, 53 inches wide. Signed at lower right,
"J. H. Twachtman".



returning Twachtman set out to look over the country. He had determined to quit paying rent, to have a place of his own, and to live in the environment which he wished to paint.

Before the time of the commuter and costly summer estates the country about Greenwich was quite natural and charming. Following the road westward Twachtman came upon a little farm about two miles distant. The beauty of the spot determined the painter and he at once made arrangements to acquire it. It was in this favored situation that he settled in the fall of 1889, and there during the next ten years most of his best pictures were painted.

Within easy reach of New York Twachtman combined the joy of being in the country with the association and the activities of the city. The Players Club was a favorite rendezvous in those days, and there he gathered with his intimate friends, Weir, Hassam, Metcalf, Reid, Simmons, Carlsen, and others of a notable group of painters. It was at this time also that he accepted an offer to instruct the antique class at the Art Students League, a position which he held during the remaining years of his life. Twachtman made of teaching rather a congenial occupation, for to students who were not responsive to his artistic dictum he paid little attention, and rather than urge them on he was frankly discouraging; whereas with those aesthetically inclined, he established at once an artistic camaraderie and imparted his criticism with interest and feeling. His comment was often sarcastic

and biting, and frequently irrelevant and unconstructive, depending much upon the mood of the moment. There was an appreciable silence when his nervous, agile figure appeared at the door, and beginning always at the further end of the room, the duty of the day was dispatched.

From his anchorage at Round Hill Twachtman made several excursions further afield. While visiting Mr. Charles Carey of Buffalo, he made several pictures of Niagara Falls, and as a result of this association he was commissioned by Major W. A. Wadsworth of that city to paint a series of pictures of Yellowstone Park.

Later we find the painter spending the summers at Gloucester, returning to his much loved subjects of houses, wharves and shipping. Duveneck was there and de Camp and Corwin of Florentine days. One cannot say it was an intellectual group. There was little reminiscing and less artistic speculation. The glamour had passed. There was much joking and jollying, sarcasm and irony. Duveneck occasionally started a canvas, but he lacked the interest and will to continue it. Twachtman worked constantly. It was a form of exhilaration. But his mental impulse was not as vigorous as his visual. He started many canvases and enjoyed the initial attack, but it had become more difficult for him to sustain the aesthetic effort. There seemed something gnawing at the soul of the man, and for one who was approaching fifty something curiously uncertain and restless. Never robust

in physique he did not care for himself as his nature required. His vitality became weakened, and when illness came, he was not sufficiently strong to overcome it. He died at Gloucester in the month of July, 1902. He was survived by his wife and five children.

PART THREE

THE painting of John Twachtman may be classified in three periods, in each of which we observe a radically different style and treatment. The first we may associate with the Munich School; the second derives from France and Holland; while the final and mature period belongs to America. One does not seem to grow out of the other; it is rather a reaction from the other. But each manner is thoroughly consistent within itself. We never feel at any time that uncertainty or confusion of purpose and that technical solecism which is its result.

The great contrast between the early work of Twachtman and his mature expression can only be explained by studying the larger art movement with which his work is associated. It is, in brief, the contrast between the Munich School of the seventies and the Parisian School of Impressionism of the nineties; the contrast between the dark, colorless, but strongly painted canvases which reflect the sombreness of the north and the light, airy and vibrant canvases which one associates with sunshine and the south.

Although we can thus simply and briefly classify the work of Twachtman, it is at once apparent in his

earliest canvases that he was gifted with an instinctive artistic sensibility and a very personal viewpoint. This is observed not only in his brushwork, but in his singleness of vision and purpose, which is undoubtedly the origin of good brushwork. There is a directness, a freedom of touch and a certain command and authority in the early painting of Twachtman, which if it does not indicate the future way of the painter indicates at once that he is a painter. It is not merely the result of clever and superficial brushing; it is not merely a mannerism; but it implies a clarity of vision, a comprehension of things seen and an instinctive ability in reducing them to simple and expressive pictorial forms.

Little of the work of the very early Cincinnati period remains to reveal the effort and influence of the adolescent painter. We have a photograph of a picture entitled "Tuckerman's Ravine", dated 1873, owned by Louis Twachtman, brother of the painter. The title does not suggest the picture; nor does the picture suggest the painter. Great mountain peaks rise in the background, in front of which is a placid lake, bordered by gnarled and time worn trees. The subject was probably suggested by other pictures; the mountains have no structural form, and the picture is of interest merely as being a very early example of the artist.

The work executed between seventy-five and eighty is dominated by the Munich influence and Twachtman's association with Duveneck. The con-

THE HEMLOCK POOL

Collection of Mr. John Gellatly, New York.

Canvas, 30 inches high, 25 inches wide. Signed at lower right,
"J. H. Twachtman".



trast of light and dark is exaggerated; the color is subdued, in variations of brown and black; the paint is applied heavily and with an unctuous, fatty quality due to a free use of varnish. The brushwork is vigorous, impulsive, direct and expressive. The pictures of this period are mostly small in size and intimate in conception. It is to be noted even at this early time that the motives are derived from direct observation. There is no endeavor to make the subject poetically picturesque, or to embellish through added details and associations the particular aspect of a place. His pictures have, therefore, local character.

Some of the best canvases of this period were painted at Venice. The picturesque buildings, the waterways, the shipping along the Guidecca gave the painter a splendid opportunity to display his sense of design, and he is more personal in these small decorative panels than in the more ambitious landscapes of the same time. Twachtman had a very happy faculty of arrangement without seeming or studied effort, the effect of which was to strengthen the salient characteristics of the subject and give it a significance singular to itself. There is a splendid sense of architectonic balance, a fine appreciation of spacing, that gives to these little pictures, an air of distinction and style. Twachtman showed some of these early canvases later in life and alluded to them as being as "black as your hat". The Boston Museum has an example, entitled "Italian Landscape", dated Venice '78. Although painted in sunlight as indicated by the shadows, it is

dark in key and brown in tone. The technique is spirited and facile, following the Munich formula.

Most of the pictures of this time are in the proportion of three by five, a proportion then more frequently used than later. But the interesting "Venice" with the Dogana high in the canvas and the distant San Giorgio is more in the proportion of five by six.

In speaking of this period of Twachtman's work, Carolyn Mase writes: "Once I recollect his showing me a brownish-black water color, reeking with all the colors that nature does not show. 'That', he said with a chuckle, 'is sunny Venice, done under the influence of the Munich School.'" If, however, the outward aspect of the early pictures savors of the brown sauce of Munich, the true content of the composition, the aesthetic conception is distinctive and personal. There is nothing of the picture making pattern, the standardized and purely conventional composition. Taught the use of paints and a formularized mode of mixing, Twachtman uses them for his own purpose. Several of these smaller canvases in the possession of Mrs. Twachtman show a very sensitive aesthetic sense and a deliberate and conscious conception of design. His association with Duveneck was of inestimable value, particularly from a technical standpoint, but in subject and composition it is noticeable that we see little trace of his earlier master.

On returning to the States it was no doubt difficult for the painter to adjust himself to new surroundings and a less sympathetic environment. In New York,

however, he at once seized upon the pictorial possibilities of the harbor with its shipping, docks and bridges. We recall a picture dated "N. Y. 79", in which fishing boats with sails furled are lying at the docks, the upright repetition of the masts contrasted by angular wooden houses in the background. The painter has very happily contrived forms which are aesthetically stimulating, and at the same time are made to express most intensely the purely graphic elements of the subject. In technique it is a veritable "tour de force". The painter never realized his subject with greater command of brush. The arrangement which does not suggest deliberate composing is nevertheless nicely calculated and characterizes the subject with picturesque and striking effect. When we reflect that at this time Manet was startling his Parisian public by the frank realization of the intimate life about him, we must recognize that the realism of Twachtman must have appeared most blatant to the blinking eyes of his American contemporaries.

Likewise, in his little picture of Brooklyn Bridge, Twachtman has revealed the pictorial possibilities of modern mechanical construction, and a theme which might so temptingly have been used to parade the great engineering achievement of the new world and display with pride its imposing grandeur Twachtman treats casually, with a sense of familiarity and a discerning understanding of its aesthetic significance.

Many of the landscapes of this time, that is, between '79 and '83, were painted at Avondale, near

Cincinnati. In these little canvases we sense the consciousness of rhythm, the flow of line, the significant spacing, which later became the distinguishing characteristic of Twachtman's art. The contrast between sky and ground is enforced, thus emphasizing the sky line. The resulting silhouette is treated with great consideration and distinction. Therein we perceive the particular penchant of the painter. If later his color, value relations and handling change completely, we will find that his sense of design, of silhouette, of line, in short, the purely constructive elements of the picture are unfolded along the lines of his early efforts. The angle of vision is extended, the composition oblong, the attention concentrated on the distance, the middle ground often vacant and structurally rather thin, but the significant relation of form is apparent.

In Germany he attempted a number of large landscapes painted out of doors, and repeated the performance at home, but the result is not felicitous. Strong and expressive in technique, the effect is over obvious. Commonplace in conception, they lack the charm of Twachtman's spirit. "The Valley", painted in 1882, is one of the largest pictures of the Avondale period. The trees are in full foliage, the color scheme dark green and gray, the painting full and vigorous, but the composition somewhat overburdened. We also recall several smaller pictures, oblong compositions in which it is noticeable that the heavy unctuous pigment of Munich has given place to a thin, flowing brush, a manner which he continues to use later in

France. Thus we may note the winter pictures of Avondale with a hint of the dramatic in the dull overcast sky and the dark winding brook against the white snow or distant country in angular perspective; quite different in mood from the delicate ethereal landscapes of a later time; or the picture entitled "Nutting" with its splendid decorative silhouette; the very artistic little "Coney Island" with its unusually effective spacing; and many other examples which show the active observation and keen descriptive insight of the painter.

The sojourn in France was most significant in the artistic career of our painter. Coming at a time when he had achieved something of a mastery of his medium, and still in an impressionable and formative state, Twachtman was able to appreciate and assimilate the most constructive influences of the time. The artistic circles of Paris were then agitated by the advent of the so called Impressionists, whose first collective exhibition was held in 1874. Manet died in 1883, the year of the arrival of our painter, and in 1884 a memorial exhibition of his work was given at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Monet, then forty-three years of age, was producing some of his finest canvases. Bastien Le Page, whose naturalism and scientific study of values had a dominant influence in his day, died in 1884. The Barbizon painters had been proclaimed and officially crowned. Rousseau died in 1867; Corot and Millet in 1875; Diaz in 1876; Daubigny in 1878; Dupre in 1889. Courbet, the great inaugurator of the realistic movement, whose art was not so popular, partly on account

of its objective and unsentimental approach and partly for political reasons, was, nevertheless, a growing force among the virile and vigorous painters of the period. Courbet died in 1878. Whistler was an international figure. The famous Ruskin trial was held in 1877. The portrait of the artist's mother, shown at the Royal Academy in 1872, was awarded a gold medal in the Salon of 1844 and purchased by the Luxembourg. Paris had become the undisputed center of painting, and the youth of the world flocked thither to assimilate her teaching.

For Twachtman, then just thirty years of age it was a critical and decisive training. A painter friend of that time writes: "A cult of the precise realism of Bastien Lepage was then tempering the classical teachings of the Academy, and a somewhat clandestine admiration already existed for the impressionism of Manet and Monet. Twachtman wished to clear his palette from the bituminous tones of Munich, to strengthen his power of precise design, and altogether to freshen his ideas in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Paris. At the same time, analysis of older masters, such as Velasquez, and of works by the great landscapists, both ancient and modern, confirmed him in basic principles. Whistler's art also influenced him, as well as that of the Givernay master, Claude Monet." It is noteworthy that Twachtman, already accomplished as a painter, should work humbly at Julien's under Academic masters. But he wished to create a strong foundation for the future and attain in drawing and the construction

of the figure something of the facility which he had attained in painting.

The pictures of the Parisian period, 1883-1885, show little influence in color or method of the impressionistic practice, but they are quite opposed to the Munich formula. In contrast to the earlier palette of browns and blacks, of unctuous impasto, and powerful brushing, the French pictures are characterized by a delicate technique, a close study of relative values, simplification of forms, and a cool gray color scheme. The canvas is a fine French linen; the pigment is applied thinly with sure but sympathetic touch. Many of the motives introduce water, showing scenes along the Seine or the waterways of Holland. There is seldom an attempt at sunlight so that the gray lines of the clouded sky and its reflections dominate the color scheme. The composition is restricted to very simple themes, most of which depend upon the nice placing of the horizon within the chosen proportions of the canvas; the spotting of a group of trees in the middle ground effectively breaking the sky or the simple line of river bank leading into the picture. The form is rendered in simple flat contour; the composition is long; the first plane is in the immediate foreground, and the perspective is limited. We observe the facile and sympathetic treatment of field flowers, grasses and foreground forms, which later were rendered so exquisitely in pastel. The color, in variations of silvery grays and greens, is suggestive of Bastien Le Page, but the tendency toward

decorative spacing and simplification is reminiscent of Whistler.

One of the most distinguished and representative pictures of this period, and at the same time one of the largest of the painter's works, is the "Arque la Bataille," painted from a smaller study, at Paris, in 1855. Simple in theme, it is most decorative in effect; delicate and sensitive in painting, it has splendid force and carrying power. In it the painter has completely summed up his expression of that time. It is a consummation. A barren hillside runs horizontally across the upper portion of the picture, broken only by an effective clump of trees in simple silhouette against a gray moisture laden sky, reflected in the placid stream below. The soft, grass grown river bank breaks the left foreground, from the center of which tall picturesque water grasses rise against the mirrored hillside. Still, sad and serene, the river; fateful and melancholy, the hillside; delicate and sensitive, the fragile river weeds. It typifies the river country of northern France. In the land of no other people will one find the same wistful, melancholy beauty, the same enchanting, indescribable charm. The color is in tones of gray, gray green, gray violet and brown. It is thinly painted, with flowing brush, directly and freely. The foreground is a masterful performance, in which the painter has displayed both skill and feeling. There is a lovely sense of surface, and a discerning differentiation of quality in the softness of the grass, the fragility of the rushes and the placidity of limpid waters. The treatment of edges is

extremely subtle and sensitive, soft and refracted, yet sure and solid. Note in particular the contour of the river bank against the light water, suggestive and alluring, with a sense of going over; and note also the consummate skill in the treatment of the rushes and the constructural beauty of form.

“The Windmills,” also of this period and of similar dimensions, is a most felicitous arrangement, wherein we find a very exact adjustment of the relative positions of masses and the division of areas. Gray in tone, the effect is produced by light and dark, rather than color. We remark again the picture plane beginning in the immediate foreground and the skilfull treatment of rushes and flowers. Executed with technical mastery and quite perfect in presentation, the composition is, however, rather over obvious and insufficient in volume to fill such a large canvas. This may be due to the fact that the large pictures were painted after smaller studies and in losing something of their intimacy do not gain in grandeur.

Thus we see in the small canvas, “Canal Boats”, from which the etching, “Mouth of the Seine,” was drawn, a more satisfactory filling of space relative to the dimensions of the canvas, and a corresponding concentration of effect. The incisive use of the brush, the effective disposition of the darks, the simple but descriptive outline of the distant woods, make this picture one of the most striking products of the period. Similar in tonal theme is the “Sketch” in the Boston Museum. The composition is squarer in proportion,

with rather low horizon; a group of dark barges against the river bank at the right, and a French village breaking the distant sky line. The painting is hardly more than a thin wash. The river, reflecting a gray clouded sky, in which the attention is centered in a picturesque row of poplar trees on the opposite shore paralleling the picture plane, again figures conspicuously in "L'Etang". The "Landscape", formerly owned by Mr. Montross, is a characteristic example, simple in the treatment of line, and decorative in the spotting of the mass. Very thinly painted, it has almost the aspect of water color.

The "Winding Path" which we know only in photograph, painted in 1885 at Arque la Bataille, is an important canvas. More ingratiating and poetical in theme, it is less typical of the artist's style. Almost panoramic in extent, it introduces a distant perspective uncommon in the artist's composition.

Other pictures of the French period show an intense interest in the significance of line, the simplification of form, a freedom from conventional composition, and a decorative sense of arrangement. The color is restrained, the effect is produced by a simple relation of tones. The contour is studied with precision; the painting is thin with no indication of suggestive textures. With a predilection for the tender effects of gray and a pervading sense of melancholy, the prevailing sentiment of the French landscapes is one of intimacy and charm. If we do not find fullness of form or color and their accompanying weight and volume,

we may rightly say that in their modification the artist has intensified the aesthetic charm which he wished to express, and it is part of Twachtman's distinction that he respected given limitations and worked within them.

PART FOUR

THE intermediate manner was significant. It revealed the painter to himself. He saw his nature manifested in delicacy rather than strength, in the sensitive rather than the striking, in the subtle rather than the obvious.

It is difficult to trace the transitional steps from the pictures of the French period to the ultimate development of the painter. Returning to America in 1885, the work of the next few years is not prolific or altogether promising. Burdened with the cares of livelihood, there was much distraction and interruption. In 1887, two landscapes were exhibited at the Society, and the following year six, three of which bear foreign titles. It was not, however, until Twachtman settled at Greenwich in 1889 that he seems definitely to have found himself, and from that time until his death in 1902 he produced the series of pictures by which he is most universally known and appreciated.

The choice of location could not have been happier. It has the charm of not being over obvious. Hidden among the hills, one might pass it by unnoticed. But to the artist's eye was revealed its subtle beauty. Before the competition in hedges and park like palaces, one could see the natural rhythm of the land

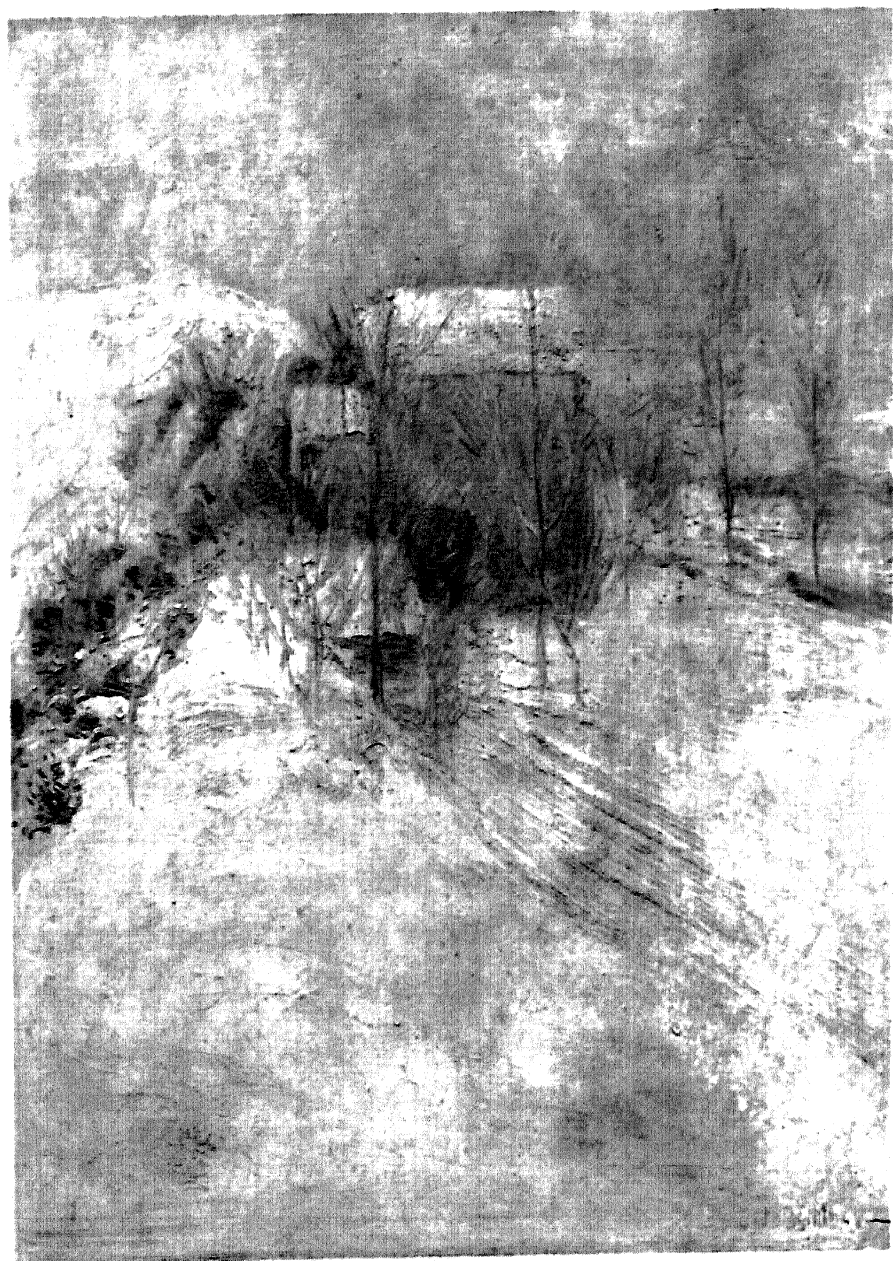
scape. The old stone fences rambled over the hills, the fields were tilled or used as pasture, the woods were thinned for timber, and something of the anatomy of the earth could be discerned. Just below the artist's house there is a lovely little brook, winding merrily in and out, sometimes revealing its quickened beauty as it tumbles over the rocks, and then flowing silently between grass covered banks. It is surrounded by picturesque trees, sentinels of an earlier time, before the advent of farm or woodman; lonely now, perhaps, when lawns encroach upon their loveliness.

Here within his own grounds Twachtman produced his finest canvasses. There is a feeling of home in his pictures, of a country well beloved. The painter has, as it were, become a part of the thing painted. We feel a perfect intimacy, which comes from perfect understanding. Not descriptive in a purely graphic or illustrative sense, the pictures of Connecticut reveal the type and character of the country, its nearness, its friendliness, its peculiarly intimate charm. It is not the loneliness of great expanse, nor the rugged dramatic power of nature that Twachtman portrays, but rather tranquility and repose, and the interest of nearby landscape made significant by the way in which it is seen and composed. Thus the neighboring pool, the little waterfall, the undulating stone fence, the outcropping rocks and the varicolored fields assume an importance which elevates the commonplace to the realm of profound beauty. The human figure is seldom introduced, although we frequently see a

SNOW

The Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Mass.

Canvas, 30 inches high, 30 inches wide. Signed at lower right,
"J. H. Twachtman".



neighboring house and indications of human presence; but whether directly indicated or not, the human interest looms large in the presence of the spectator who, as it were, occupies the foreground and shares the interest of the artist.

The later work is essentially tonal. The color is related to values and the values to light. The local color is modified by the dominant hue of the atmosphere in which the form is enveloped and refracted. But Twachtman was not a luminist in the full sense of the term. He preferred the diffused light of hazy days, or the gray days of autumn, to the blatant effects of sunlight and its corresponding contrasts. In fact, most of his color schemes are harmonies wherein the color manifests entirely relative to the predominant hue. He expressed the elusive and fascinatingly evasive effects of nature; the delicate modulations of a simple theme, brought together by subtly combined variations and textures. He was a master of nuance. His interest in winter landscape was, therefore, natural. He has rendered the aesthetic beauties of snow rather than the rigour of winter; he discovered the beauty of closely related values and softly modulated forms under clouded skies; but he did not record the brilliant sunshine and the crisp, clear days of New England winter. Chiaroscuro is not employed as an element in composition or as a means of engendering a mood. The illumination is universal and not focused. Twachtman never endeavored to suggest in paint the fascination of illimitable perspective or the transcen-

dental mood engendered thereby. On the contrary, his viewpoint is seldom in the distance; he designs with known quantities against simply related planes, and he seems instinctively to see in nature its pictorial value in terms of color and form rather than the associative idea. He had not a romantic reverence for nature. The subjects which had inspired his predecessors were to him merely sentimental. The awe inspiring grandeur of primitive nature was of little significance; scenic splendor and the sublimity of vastness and expanse awakened no responsive chord.

The simple linear spacing of the earlier works has developed into more subtle and less apparent design; the contrast of horizontal and upright has given place to undulating masses and rhythmic interchange of form. The curve becomes significant. The flat thinly painted contours of the French period are followed by an evasive sense of form, suggested rather than defined. The edges are carefully lost and found with a resulting effect of volume. The painter is continually experimenting with space relations and varies the proportions of his canvas to carry out his schematic intention. Occasionally we see a decided oblong, nearly in the proportion of one to two; but more generally the composition is spaced within a square proportion, the skyline being placed high in the canvas, so that the eye does not travel beyond, but is arrested and entertained in the middle ground. Twachtman was, in fact, one of the first of our landscape painters to use the square canvas, and the new possibilities

of spacing within an untried proportion resulted in many interesting innovations in design.

The mood is one of intimacy and charm. The spectator shares with the painter the exhilaration of the moment, the feeling that each motive is a new discovery. One senses the animation of artistic adventure, the delight in the search for the beautiful. Twachtman has shown us the country in the dress of different seasons, but perhaps the most appealing are the neutral hues of November and the snows of winter, when the intricate forms of nature are replaced by undulating fields of snow. One can see the soft contour of the hills and the rhythmic flow of line; the outcropping rocks; the old stone wall that follows the easiest way over the hills; or the brook is revealed winding in and out of snow covered banks, and withered brambles remind us of the earth underneath. Naturalistic accuracy of detail is subordinated to more universal relations, and the impression is produced by suggestion rather than by objective delineation.

Twachtman was, however, interested particularly in the delicate and ethereal manifestations of winter, when the snow is revealed by a hidden radiance or softly falling, dims the distant landscape. Typical of this effect is the "Round Hill Road" in the Evans collection at Washington. The country, snow covered, is veiled in ambient atmosphere, and the distance is almost lost in the moisture laden sky. Within a square canvas the road winds to the right, forming a

high embankment at the top of which a stone wall rambles down the hill, while poplar trees form a decorative sequence, winding into the distance. The values are closely related. The technique is suggestive of soft surfaces and flowing forms. In the "Snow", at the Worcester Museum, we see a similar effect in elusive grays, but in a more static composition. Under a barren hill in light contour against a dull sky a simple house with snow covered roof occupies the center of the canvas, the dark barn like door forming an effective contrast to the snow covered fields. Slender trees break the horizontal line of the roof. The pigment is applied in a heavy under painting, over which the darks of the trees and rocks are rendered with a facile wash. There is a sense of silence and serenity in the almost naive and simple conception of the subject.

It is interesting to compare this picture with the "Old Mill in Winter", wherein we see the same subject from a little further viewpoint. But the conception is quite different. The hill and house, instead of being placed directly against the sky, appear in front of a wooded distance, which is high in the composition. The brook just below the foreground embankment creates a contrast, leading into the picture, where the open door again gives an emphatic touch. In the first picture the impression is one of austere solitude; in the second picture there is a sense of friendly protection and association expressed in the flowing line of stream and hills. Thus we see the painter

NIAGARA FALLS

Canvas, 30 inches high, 25 inches wide. Signed at lower left,
"J. H. Twachtman".



evolving entirely different themes from similar pictorial material. It is also interesting, relative to the natural aspect of the subject, to note how the artist has added or taken away trees to quicken his aesthetic expression, but has, nevertheless, in both pictures preserved the fundamentally local character of the landscape.

The picture of snow in the Boston Museum entitled "February" is conceived within an oblong proportion. Here again we have the simple relation of neutral hues and an even diffused light without shadows or contrasts. A brook winds below undulating fields of snow, above which evergreens stand against a clouded sky. The surface quality is produced by heavy underpainting, over which the tree forms are deftly drawn. The grouping of the trees is not altogether happy, overcrowding the center of the composition and allowing the eye to run out of the undecorated area at the right. The rocky embankment across the stream is splendidly constructed, and the sense of intricate forms among the trees where the brook descends is effectively suggested. The subject, seemingly unpictorial, has through intimate appreciation become imbued with vital significance.

In the picture called "Snowbound", the artist has chosen his theme just below his studio. Under the snow embankment of the encircling hills the running stream cuts its way, creating curious forms of white against its darker background. The painter has expressed with unassuming air and perfect simplicity

the intimate charm of secluded hills and the wayward course of unconcerned waters. The slender trees seem to have been added later. The value contrast of nature is modified, so that dark uprights shall not disturb the pristine purity of almost ethereal snow forms, but their introduction is not entirely an organized part of the composition.

In the pictures of snow we find the distinctive attribute in the utterly unaffected simplicity of characterization. Entirely uninfluenced by the standardized conception of composition and what a subject should be to make a picture, Twachtman takes the most homely theme and makes it interesting by bringing out its essential characteristics.

The pictures of autumn we associate with gray days and modified hues, rather than the more vivid and apparent colors of that season. Here again Twachtman avoids the obvious and the spectacular. We do not recall a frankly blue sky or a contrasting orange so typical of autumn. But he does not continue the brown tones of his predecessors. Painted in a higher key, the russet colors of autumn are apparent only by relation to the dominant cool palette. There is a delicate bloom which pervades the color scheme, bringing to the landscape an ethereal charm. Typical of the late autumn season and the artist's mood is the "Hemlock Pool". Twachtman considered it one of his best canvases. Without aiming at the poetic, it is imbued with the essence of poetry; without thinking of picture making, the painter has revealed the pic-

turesque. Simple, suggestive and serene, the "Hemlock Pool" is a magical revelation of hidden beauty, made apparent by the sympathetic eye of the painter. Painted just below the artist's house, a supreme characterization of a local situation, the picture makes, nevertheless, a universal appeal.

The landscape of summer is not so frequently rendered. The problem of greens is reduced to a modified hue, rather than the full intensity of the pigment. More sympathetic to the summer mood was the sea haze, the harbor and the reflected coolness of summer skies. We recall, however, several interesting color schemes in late afternoon light, when the green in shadow has a delightful bluish tone and the sunlight is golden hued. Most important of the landscapes in the season of green is the large canvas entitled "Summer", now in the collection of Mr. Duncan Phillips. It is an interesting problem in design and local characterization, revealing the contour of long rolling hillside, the gradual uphill road, the house with sloping roof, the flying clouds and fleeting shadows, all brought together in a manner which not merely discloses the general topography of the country, but brings to it an indefinable and sympathetic charm which is inspired by the painter's personal conception. The color scheme is in cool gray greens and gray blue.

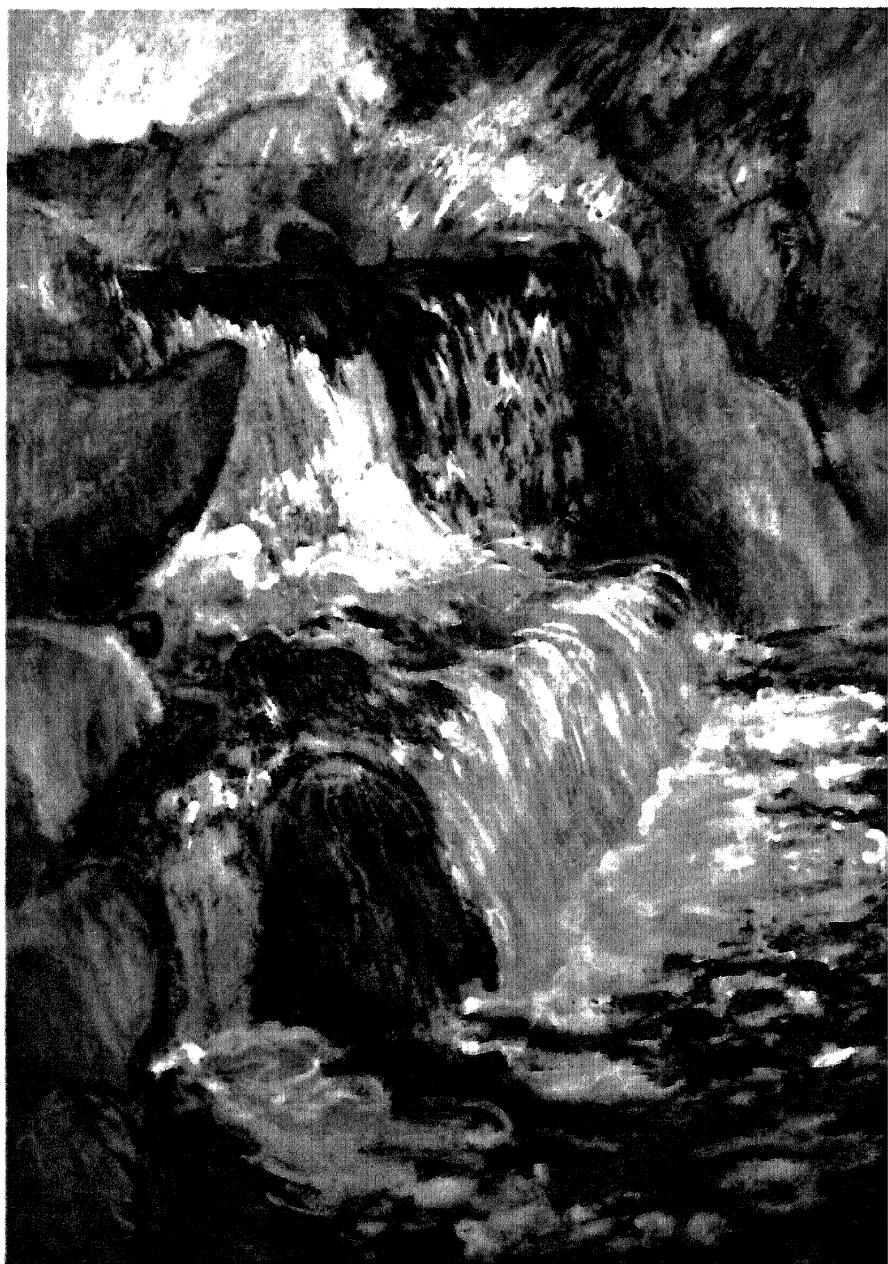
Painting directly from his subject and dependent upon nature for suggestive impulse and stimulation, Twachtman's later work, however, becomes more

consciously synthetic and deliberately organized. From the realistic influence of impressionism and the doctrine of atmospheric illusion the artist comes to appreciate the more abstract significance of design and to use it as a creative means of expression. This evolution of the aesthetic idea is interestingly illustrated in the series of waterfalls which Twachtman painted just below his house at Greenwich. The first studies are the most naturalistic, studies of a particular waterfall having the ordinary aspect of the ordinary waterfall. Later, the forms are enlarged and simplified, the angle of vision is reduced, the perspective is limited, a single aspect is pictured, and the action of the water is represented, not by a faithful and naturalistic rendering of the surface qualities of water, but by selecting the most expressive forms and so arranging the design that these forms are an integral and structural part of the composition. The waterfall in the nearby woods thus becomes aesthetically as important as the overwhelming immensity of Niagara. The artist has seized the universal in the particular.

In the Yellowstone Park Twachtman painted several of the vari-colored pools, the falls of the Yellowstone, and the canyon. But these canvases, although interesting in color, have not the same intimate charm as the more familiar subjects found nearer home. Twachtman was evidently not impressed by the grandeur and sublimity of nature, or perhaps thought it outside of the limitations of pictorial representation. We sense the fact too that he is happier within the

THE CASCADE

Collection of Mr. Horatio S. Rubens, New York
Canvas, 30 inches high, 30 inches wide. Signed at lower left,
"J. H. Twachtman".



human habitat, where the presence of man, if not indicated, is always suggested. He failed to humanize the Yellowstone, or to bring to it that human emotion which might do so, but he brought back some splendid bits of color from its opalescent pools and radiant waterfalls. His intimate placing of forms and his endeavor to see things in a new way are, however, not so happy in the presence of great constructive forces where nature has built on a grand scale and has patterned everything relative to stress and strain. Twachtman was not impressed by that elemental power; nor did he attempt to express it. He is more purely sensuous in his perception.

The pictures of Niagara are happier. Here the terrible and relentless power, the elemental force of nature, is veiled with mists and the evanescent hues of the rainbow. The variations in white, the subtle relation of values, and the delicate harmonies of closely related hues appealed to the painter's aesthetic sensibility. The rhythmic movement of water, the repeated action of the waves, the rising vapors were as the realization of an artistic vision. Twachtman has revealed this beauty and showed us something other than the largest falls in the world, but he has not expressed the force, the volume and immensity of this marvelous exposition of nature's power.

The pictures of Gloucester represent the final period of Twachtman's production. Harbors and shipping seem always to have held a vague fascination for the painter, who enjoyed the pictorial suggestive-

ness of houses, wharves, water and their infinite possibilities for artistic arrangement. There was a human association too, which though not directly indicated in the pictures appealed to the painter. And perhaps there was a reawakening of the earlier romantic days at Venice. His quest was as eager and spirited now as in the more youthful time, but his thought is scattered over many canvases and in his maturity he is still actuated by momentary impulse. It is reflected in his painting. There is a joy in the first attack, but in many of the canvases we feel the lack of sustained effort, the consistent building up of pictorial purpose, and an over reliance upon the mood of the moment. In consequence, the result is uneven. His pictures of this period have not a sense of perfectness, the inevitable conclusion of an idea carried out in definitely conscious and calculated terms. In experimenting with the unity of form and color and their effective relations, the painter has neglected their content and significance. There is little differentiation in substance and surface, that relation which exists between the solid and the soft, the resisting and the non-resisting, and in short those distinctions which are based upon the relativity of things and their impression upon the human mind apart from the visual illusion. Charming in arrangement, suggestive and technically spirited, one does not feel the fullness of form, the volume and solidity which are a part of complete realization. Many of the Gloucester pictures are, in fact, unfinished, canvases which were started in a moment of

interest and then discontinued. But the best examples attain great beauty of design and individual expression. Among these, perhaps the most interesting are the motives looking down on the harbor from the hills of East Gloucester, where the fish houses and wharves jutting into the water and the distant city form an effective background for the rocky pastures and patterned trees of the nearer plane. Each picture seems to a certain extent an experiment, a venturing into new realms of consciousness and appreciation, and it is precisely this quickened spirit that the painter has so successfully imparted to the spectator.

At Gloucester Twachtman made numerous "thumb box" studies, suggested possibly by the early "pochades" of Venice, impulsive sketches which allowed the painter to artistically improvise without that continued effort which is so necessary in the larger composition and which allows of that casual treatment which is not so satisfying on a larger scale. Diminutive in size, there is a mastery of touch and a bigness of conception which lends to these little souvenirs a true distinction and style.

As a figure painter Twachtman achieves a very happy ensemble and an intimate realization of his subjects in their own environment. There is nothing deliberately contrived or set up. He seems to surprise a living moment and transfer it to canvas. His subjects are never on show. When the figure forms the principal element of interest, his constructional rendering is not altogether convincing, but Twacht-

man had a splendid sense of poise and posture and a fine understanding of contour and silhouette. This gives to his compositions an authority and distinction, without which his figures would seem somewhat empty.

Trained as a figure painter in the Academical schools of Europe, few of the early examples survive, as much of the continental work was lost at sea. The canvases which best represent Twachtman in this genre date from the Greenwich period, and are for the most part pictures of his immediate family. Not portrait studies or physiognomical characterizations, the figure is seen as a whole, and the painter finds his interest more in the attitude and suggested environment than in detailed delineation and likeness. He is interested particularly in the luminous envelopment of the figure and in the study of the local color as modified by the dominant hue of the light.

Twachtman never used a studio in the academical manner. His subjects were painted in their accustomed environment and thus assume a naturalness and intimacy quite foreign to the cold light of the studio proper. This indicates again the impressionable rather than the analytical nature of the artist. Twachtman is pure vision. He eliminates as much as possible the intervention of the intellectual. His figures, therefore, are not so interesting as individual characterizations as for their artistic significance.

FIGURE IN SUNLIGHT

Property of Mr. Frank K. M. Rehn, New York.

Canvas, 26 inches high, 21 inches wide. Signed at the left,
"J. H. Twachtman".



TWACHTMAN'S technique has three distinct manifestations, which may be associated with the three different periods of his work. The first is directly influenced by the methods of Munich and the manner of Duveneck, a practice which the painter found in vogue on his advent in the German schools in 1875. A revolt against the classicism of the preceding epoch, it was a return to the realism and the more direct painting of the masters of the low countries. Influenced by the new movement of France, in which the vigor of Courbet was a constructive force, the artist saw his subject in nature rather than in imagination or the historical drama of the past. The classical method was a thin coloring over a carefully modulated undertone. It was based on drawing. The reaction recognized the definite characteristics of the brush. It was based on painting. Constructively the emphasis was placed upon planes and contours, rather than the more sculpturesque development of the round realized by chiaroscuro. The composition was arranged by mass rather than line. The teachers encouraged direct painting and bold brushwork, in contrast to the somewhat effete polish of their predecessors. Not imitating surface qualities the paint was applied with unctuous impasto and brushed with expressive significance. It was a splendid training for our painter and accounts for his technical facility acquired at an early age. The method is, however, more adapted to the construction of linear planes and strongly charac-

terized contours than it is to aerial perspective and envelopment.

The transitional stage is observed in several small canvases painted at Avondale between '80 and '83. The brown palette of Munich is retained, but the pigment is applied more thinly and evenly. It is not, however, until the French period that we see a complete change in technique. Whether this was due entirely to Parisian influence, the requirements of new subjects, or the response to the aesthetic efflorescence we shall not say, but it is apparent that the change of technique is intimately related to the change in expression, and the manner and matter are welded into one. The simple lines of French landscape, the low-lying hills, the gray expanse of sky and mirrored waters, the evanescent atmosphere were not suited to the exploitation of pyrotechnics in pigment, and the painter showed his artistic sensibility in adopting a more sympathetic method of expression. Whereas in the earlier manner we observe expressive unctuous brushwork and impulsive improvisation, in the French landscapes we see a thin, flowing brush, a blending of colors and a more methodical control of the pigment. The contours show a delicate refraction as one plane merges into the other, a softening of the edge, which is sympathetically related to the gray tones of the subject. The robust vigor of the Munich manner is replaced by delicacy and reserve; the agitation of varying contours by simple flat surfaces.

It is not until the final period of the nineties that

we observe the mature manner of the painter and his more personal characteristics. His method of painting was a direct outcome of his aesthetic idea. As he pictured the more elusive and evanescent effects of nature, so too his technique is elusive and subtle. He seems to lend to his treatment something of the spirit of the thing itself. The snow is heavy, though soft, and the texture of the pigment indicates its surface; the flowing water is painted with a rapid and expressive brush; the painted flowers of the field seem imbued with the delicacy of their own nature.

Working directly from nature, Twachtman's manner was, however, indirect. As he was not a realist in the literal sense of the term, his search was first for the aesthetic filling of space, and therefore the beginning of the picture seemed almost formless and unintelligible. This was done in a light wash or scumble and with the observance of only the most significant masses and color relations. Several of his later canvases have been left in this first state, unfinished, and yet in the creative sense complete. This first vision preceded any further work on the canvas, and if satisfying, all went well; if not, the struggle and torment of adjustment played havoc with the surface. But before the painter was satisfied with the arrangement there could be no further development of the more imitative embellishment of the picture. This is why Twachtman, in the last phase of his work, was not a finished painter in the academical understanding of the term. He did not follow a fixed or conventional

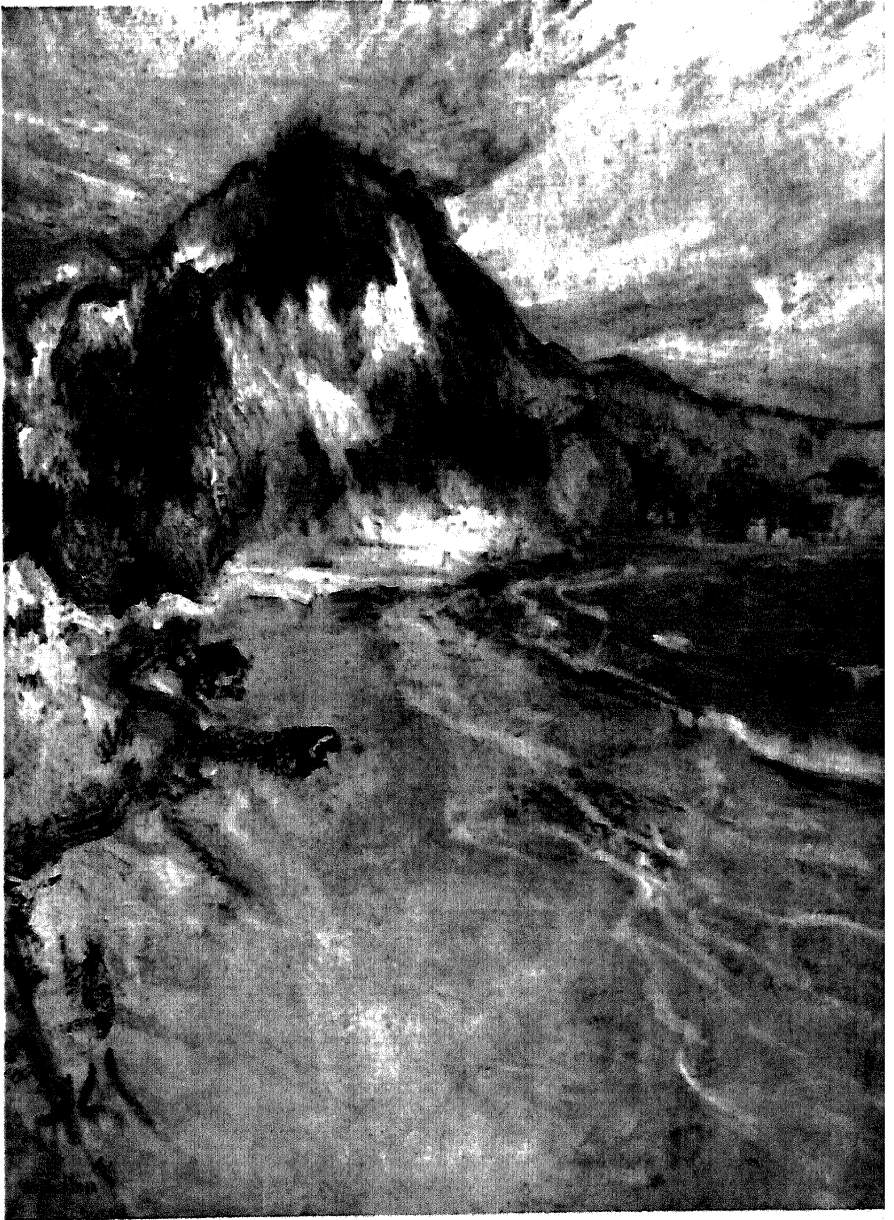
method of painting. It is not affected, insistent or mannered; but on the contrary is varied as a result of his different pictorial problems suggested by the character of the subject and the mood of the moment. His method was the outcome of an idea rather than the exposition of a method.

Frequently Twachtman achieves his result "a premier coup", with a delightful flow of color. The movement of the brush is free and unconscious, the pigment is animated and suggestive. But although impulsive and exhilarating, the effect is somewhat thin and lacking in that solidity and fullness of form which he achieved when working over carefully prepared undertones. For Twachtman was not a facile or clever painter; nor one who relied on technical tricks and factitious effects. The painting is not exploited for itself, but is preceded by the artistic vision which actuates it, and Twachtman's vision was far too refined and searching to be content merely with professional proficiency.

If Twachtman did not strive for meticulous finish or a suave ingratiating surface, he attained a very personal technical style, and one quite consistent with the effect which he desired to produce. Working in a high key, he deliberately avoided an unctuous, varnishlike effect and would frequently expose his pictures to sun and rain to relieve the pigment of superfluous oil and thus produce a uniform mat or dry surface. Although seemingly free in handling, Twachtman often labored incessantly over his canvas

BEACH AT SQUAM

Collection of Mr. Burton Mansfield, New Haven, Conn.
Canvas, 24 inches high, 30 inches wide. Signed at lower left,
"J. H. Twachtman".



before he achieved the desired result. In fact, he relied greatly on building up an opaque underground to produce a suggestive texture which allowed the painter to work in thin, semi-transparent washes, by means of which he rendered so successfully the illusion of the atmospheric veil and imparted a freedom of brushwork which has the air of casual improvisation.

Although susceptible to the colorful innovations of the impressionists and their technical expression, Twachtman was not interested in the science of color and did not attempt to create the optical illusion of light by the juxtaposition of complimentary contrasts, or the method of the so called "Pointillists" or "spotists" in rendering it. Using broken or division of color to quicken and enhance its activity, he did not make of it a mannerism or cultivate it as an element of style.

When Emil Carlsen told Twachtman that he was a great technician, Twachtman said, "Technic, I don't know anything about it". It is often true that one becomes utterly unconscious of that about which one knows most, and to become entirely unconscious of technic is certainly to have mastered it.

PART SIX

THE ETCHINGS of Twachtman were made during the late eighties, at a time when the younger painters were using the needle with a quickened interest in line as a means of original expression, as con-

trasted to the stereotyped professional etchers of an earlier period. Whistler had awakened a keen interest in the aesthetic possibilities of the art, its expressive significance and power of suggestion. Duveneck's plates were produced between the years 1880 and 1884, and although his mastery of the medium and his virile, solid construction were not so tempting for the novice to follow as the more simple and alluring treatment of Whistler, they, nevertheless, established an American precedent, particularly for the young followers of the master in Italy. It was natural, therefore, that Twachtman should be tempted by the newly discovered possibilities of the medium. If by nature he was not sufficiently self disciplined ever to become a technical master of the resources and processes of the art, he was artistically peculiarly fitted to use the needle in a most effective manner. His understanding of significant line and his appreciation of space relations at once gave him the most valuable attributes of the painter etcher, while his discerning vision and responsive hand furthered the more objective realization of the subject. Ever more interested in the beauty of form than the form in itself, his aspiration was more closely related to the art of Whistler than the more robust and objective expression of Duveneck, and his best plates show a sensibility similar to the former master. The true value of Twachtman's etchings lies, therefore, not so much in the exposition of the art as in the expression of the artist.

Twachtman etched twenty-six plates, mostly diminutive in size, though some were 8 x 12 inches or larger. Many of the compositions are from previous pictures or drawings, so that the conception was well visualized before the wax was drawn upon. Although preserving an air of impromptu and a flair of familiarity, the line was very definitely and consciously considered. The foreign subjects, eight in number, are somewhat heavy in execution and biting and less personal than the later motives found nearer home.

The "Mouth of the Seine", evidently from the picture of the same subject, is however most felicitous in spacing and in emphatic but suggestive line. The artist had a sensitive regard for the unetched surface, and the characterization produced by the accentuation of line and spotting of darks. In the "Quay at Honfleur" the white sail of a nearby boat is effectively contrasted to the masts and rigging which form a weblike background. The figure on the quay is suggestive of Whistler. The Venetian plate of the Guidecca lacks the beauty of balance and design so characteristic of the artist.

In the two landscapes of Avondale, the nervous, sensitive touch is most suggestive and descriptive; summary in manner, yet full and expressive in realization. The little plate of Branchville has something of the significant treatment of the familiar "Six's Bridge" of Rembrandt. Casual in its effect, it is most subtly calculated in design. One realizes in this ex-

ample that true distinction and style are entirely irrelevant to the so-called importance of a subject, and it may require a more highly sensitized appreciation of line to convey the sense of the unaffected, random or natural than the more ambitious compositional conception. In "The Old Mill, Bridgeport", the dilapidated framework has been made to express something of majesty irrespective of motive, and the form has been made a true product of the mind.

Twachtman is at his best in the Bridgeport group. The angular picturesqueness of docks, buildings and boats is particularly adaptable to him. The intimacy and animation of the water front made a very personal and human appeal to the painter. There is something peculiarly American about the physiognomy of these window-spotted frame houses, the sea-worn piers with outstanding piles, the light rigged yacht, and the heavy, unkempt barges, all jumbled together in an odd mixture of kind and condition. Nowhere else is there quite this same salt sea slovenliness, of use and disuse. The dock is public property, a meeting place as free as the high seas, and as adventurous. This was particularly true during the time of our painter. The shanty is now obsolete, the pier is private property, and the water front is parcelled out to industrial companies. We see the reflection of man in his works and Twachtman has portrayed the human aspect of his subject with instinctive understanding and incisive effect.

FALLS IN JANUARY

Collection of Mr. Robert C. Vose, Boston.

Canvas, 25 inches high, 30 inches wide. Signed at lower right,
"J. H. Twachtman".



ABBOT THAYER is quoted as saying, "Twachtman is like a beautiful flower growing up in a new country". This is particularly applicable to the artist as a pastellist. Twachtman made of the medium a personal expression. He used the dry color for its delicacy and purity, and with an aesthetic regard for its definite limitations. Rather than attempt a full realization of the subject, he sees in pastel a means of suggestion and chooses a subject compatible with its nature. We remark again the influence of Whistler in technical practice and aesthetic guidance. Like Whistler, Twachtman employs a gray or buff cartridge paper, and uses the chalk as a means of drawing in color as suggested by its own nature, rather than as an imitation of the fuller technical method of the oil medium. The color registers, therefore, relative to the background, which is left the natural color of the paper, and the pastel is applied with a due regard for its delicacy and with expressive and sensitive touch.

Twachtman executed few pure landscapes in pastel, but made many interesting notes about the harbor of Bridgeport, some lovely little drawings of his children, and most truly personal and unique are the exquisite studies of field flowers. We have remarked that in the early pictures of Twachtman the first plane begins in the immediate foreground, and that he rendered the rushes and flowers with great skill and sympathetic understanding. In the pastels the flow-

ers become the subject. Drawn against a background of neutral toned paper, the color is rendered in delicate harmonies, the form lightly and deftly suggested. Unstudied in composition, without apparent arrangement, the flowers of the field seem to radiate something of their own wild but exquisite nature. In no other form has Twachtman registered a more personal expression. Not conventionally decorative or striking in effect, these delicate studies are a beautiful tribute to the subject and the medium in which they are manifested.

In the drawings of the artist's children one remarks at once their intimacy and unaffected charm. Not deliberately posed, the subject seems to be arrested in a happy moment and is fixed only on the painted surface. There is a certain endearment in the way in which the colored stroke is rendered, a sensitive reflection of the artist's temperament and a silent testimony of his affection.

There is a great charm also in many of the notes made about the painter's home at Greenwich, slight and unpretentious, but delightfully suggestive. In a certain way these sketches display Twachtman's highest attributes as an artist. Unencumbered by the technicalities of the heavier medium, he uses pastel with purely intuitive mind. Before the blank paper he sees his vision complete, and with a few magical strokes realizes it perfectly. Twachtman had an instinctive ability in placing a subject and this sense of relative adjustment is nowhere more fully manifested

than in the pastels. The Twachtman house at Round Hill, which figures in so many canvases, is perhaps more perfectly placed in some of these seemingly random notes than in the more ambitious pictures.

Of the Bridgeport group we recall particularly the old "Footbridge", the one which we see reversed in the etching of the same subject. The artist has seized in this temporary structure its significance as pure form, and has so rendered it in oblong spacing as to bring out its essential nature. A relic of the past, the old footbridge remains on paper a permanent record of aesthetic achievement.

PART EIGHT

IT has been frequently remarked that Twachtman was entirely unappreciated during his lifetime, and that his art was ahead of its time. With the passing years this assertion has been repeated and accepted. In the real sense this is not true. We must beware of measuring our degree of appreciation by prices paid in the salesroom; as we must also beware of overstating the significance at the present time of one who is thought to have been neglected in his own time. The more we appreciate the departed artist in the present, the more we insist on his lack of appreciation in the past. It premises an understanding which was not given to the painter's contemporaries; an applause which becomes sentimental and colorless. In brief, Twachtman is now taken for granted. Thus do we truly create our dead masters.

If, however, we measure the degree of appreciation of an artist's work by the records of the sales-room, we must conclude that Twachtman's art is now universally appreciated and agree that during his lifetime it was entirely neglected. But we must not confuse art and business; and Twachtman was notably a poor man of business. It is true that he had several prominent patrons and that he was never in any immediate danger of starvation; but on the whole he was commercially not a success. Artistically, however, Twachtman was recognized and honored, not only by his confreres, but by amateurs. If it is a fact that many artists did not either enjoy his pictures or approve of his artistic principles, it only reveals that his work was reckoned with and that other artists have personal opinions also. Universality of agreement is a sure sign of atrophy. One does not criticise Velasquez for his inability to admire Raphael, or Ingres for his admiration of him.

It must also be remembered that Twachtman died comparatively young. Several of his contemporaries, who were then equally unsuccessful, have since met with notable success, and undoubtedly Twachtman, had he lived, would through accumulated recognition have come completely into his own.

It was a part of Twachtman's genius that he expressed the temperament of his time, and if we may judge the appreciation of his work, not by its universality, but by its intensity, we are inclined to say that

it was most fully and rightly appreciated at the time of its production.

The period of the nineties in America was quickened by an intense artistic impulse. The pictures of the Impressionists, whose work had been proclaimed abroad, had revolutionized the visual world, and our young American painters who had studied in France returned with enthusiasm and youthful exhilaration. But fortunately they did not return merely with a formula or a fad. The great lesson which they learned was to appreciate and portray their environment. Whistler had shown that the pictorial possibilities of a place depend upon its susceptibility of arrangement, rather than its scenic or associative value. Monet, less sensitive to the niceties of decorative adjustment, but infatuated with the glory of sunlight and the great outdoors, transcribed with sensuous exuberance the ever changing picture of the world of light and color. The West was becoming awakened to the aesthetic significance of the East. It was an art of suggestion and decoration rather than representation.

These universal influences are intimately reflected in the later work of Twachtman. Not imitating or echoing the work of others, he happily assimilated the significant expression of his time. To Whistler he owes much of his interest in decorative arrangement, his search for the suggestive, his militant dislike of conventional composition and hackneyed banalities. Through Whistler he came to know something of the art of the Japanese which quickened his natural

susceptibility to design. But the relation is indirect and we see little outward manifestation in Twachtman's pictures. It is more appreciable in some of the etchings and pastels in which it colors to a certain extent the choice of subject and technique.

If Whistler incited Twachtman's aesthetic sensibility and stimulated the search for new discoveries in line and form, Monet awakened his appreciation of light and color. Previously using color only in an extremely modified sense, a new world of beauty seems to reveal itself, and the painter revels in the subtle harmonies of sunlight and atmosphere. If in the early work the subject is selected for the picturesque contrast of light and dark, in the later work we find everything dependent upon tonal relations and unity. In this he echoes the spiritual yearning of the period, the love for the nuance as expressed in the haunting verse of Verlaine, wherein the sound has a magical affinity with the suggested sense; the plaintive, ephemeral melodies of Debussy; the variations of Whistler; or the colorful harmonies of Monet. The artist veils the form and the manner of expressing it, lest it be too apparent. The message is indirect. It is essentially a suggestive expression. At times this love of subtle relations led to weakness, when the effect becomes so illusive as to be almost lost; and at times it assumes something of the nature of a stunt, wherein the painter has displayed only the keenness of his observation. There is a fear of the over obvious. Whistler had ridiculed the sunset. It was bad taste

to paint one. And Whistler too had enveloped his mood in mist.

Twachtman openly declared the decorative intention of his painting. But he did not define his understanding of the decorative. He did not take a ready made pattern and impose it on his subject or translate his subject into a preconceived formula. Even such a distinguished designer as Whistler often adapted a Japanese design to a subject with which it had no inner relation. It is thus that design is debased. Twachtman's work has nothing of ornamental prettiness or affected pattern. He was not artfully clever and would have found it more difficult to paint a popular potboiler with its ingratiating suavity and factitious sophistication than to conceive a picture in his own back woods. He avoided the pictorial commonplace, but he made the commonplace pictorial. His interest was not that of an ornamentalist or a realist. He took a purely sensuous delight in the beauty of the visual world, and felt a keen enjoyment in the relative significance of form and color. And this for Twachtman was the decorative. But there is something else which gets into his work for which we cannot account in the purely decorative. It was that element which was so much a part of his nature that the painter was not conscious of its existence. It was his indescribable appreciation of the human significance of things. This vitalizes his line and informs his composition with meaning, without which the merely decorative is empty. It is this mysterious, indefinable

something which evades analysis that imbues his work with enduring charm.

Twachtman's artistic viewpoint is clearly expressed in the phrase of his friend, J. Alden Weir, in speaking of "the elimination of certain preconceived ideas as to what constitutes a work of art". In challenging the standardized and conventional conceptions of tradition, nature at once bears re-examination. Discarding the stereotyped composition and the accustomed idea of picture making, the whole world is open for new discoveries. One realizes that realization is a thing of infinite mystery. We see nature as we have been taught to see it. The popular picture is of interest largely on account of association or the various human endearments artificially grouped together in a single composition. Seldom, however, does nature compose in the grand style. Instead, therefore, of forcing nature into a preconceived idea Twachtman sought beauty in nature; instead of searching the country for places that conformed to pictures, he endeavored to make pictures out of places. This is quite different from saying that everything is of interest and everything is of beauty. Twachtman was not a realist merely by way of jotting down every day facts. His subject was carefully considered although it was not a typical subject. It was selected for its inherent relations of form. Beauty is revealed by mental comprehension. It is the manifestation of appreciation and the painter's purpose to express it. In the search for the scenic other painters had passed

beauty unaware; Twachtman ignoring the scenic, discovered beauty in his own comprehension of it. His viewpoint was not apparent, but personal.

We are saying, in brief, that Twachtman was an impressionist, and as such he was a follower rather than an imitator of a movement. The derivation of his impulse comes from France. But if the general viewpoint is of foreign origin, Twachtman makes a very personal use of it. He was, therefore, more individual than original. This is at once apparent if we compare his work with the initiator of the movement, Claude Monet. Whereas we may observe similar characteristics, we will find that the structural form of the composition, the aesthetic organization and its technical manifestation are quite different. Monet has a more colorful palette; a more vigorous and exuberant expression, as he was in physique likewise more robust. Twachtman is more delicate and reserved, more subtle and evanescent. In line Twachtman has a more rhythmic sense, a presentation less obvious, and an approach to stylistic distinction; while Monet is more natural and apparent. With our own master, Theodore Robinson, who was in a way a connecting link between Twachtman and Impressionism, there are likewise certain similarities and as apparent differences. Robinson painted at Greenwich for a time and was closely associated with Twachtman. Robinson was technically more clever and felicitous, more graphic and deliberate in characterization; but Twachtman had a finer and more unusual

sense of design, a freer use of paint, and if more sensitive in perception, at the same time more monumental in expression.

With the other members of the impressionistic group in America we find a common purpose but individual expression. Thus Weir, who was so much in sympathy with Twachtman's aims and attainments and influenced by similar sources, created quite a different style. But both artists were tonalists, reduced the value contrasts to a very limited range, and worked in variations of modified hues. With mutual enthusiasms their choice of subject was, however, governed by individual selection, with an inclination for things different, but never affecting the bizarre or the sensational. Yet both had a flair of modernism. Hassam is more truly decorative. Never in altogether spiritual rapport with nature, he uses it as a background for deliberately arranged figures, or sees in it a means of ornamental exposition. In manner more truly impressionistic, in color more prismatic, he has not the same suggestive charm of Twachtman, but is more effective and striking.

If, however, we make contrasting comparisons we shall discover not only Twachtman's characteristics, but his apparent limitations. Thus, if we compare Twachtman with Winslow Homer, we will see immediately the subjective aspect of the former and the objective aspect of the latter; the personality of the one and the impersonality of the other. Twachtman delicate, ephemeral, evanescent; Homer bold, vigor-

ous and dramatic. The one hiding the form of nature in atmospheric refraction; the other seeking to reveal it by striking contrast. Twachtman using the illusion of suggestion, sensing the softness of ambient form; Homer expressing the austerity and uncompromising severity of natural force and substance. Both working directly from nature, the attainment is strikingly opposed.

When we speak of Inness we enter quite a different realm. Enveloped in a romantic haze, lost in colorful illusion, moved by the recurrent changes of nature, tossed with turbulent skies, bathed in golden glow, we become a part of a soul imbued and efflorescent world. Impassioned, intense and dramatic, the pictures of Inness seem overcharged in the presence of the wistful and quiet canvases of Twachtman. Swayed by the great impulses of nature, the fleeting moments of splendor, Inness portrays her moods with poetic fervor, while Twachtman seeking the tranquility of sequestered places sees in nature a motive for an appealing arrangement.

Contrasting comparisons if irrelevant are sometimes illuminating. One recalls the phrase of Buffon, "Le style c'est l'homme".

Twachtman was not a universal genius. His emotional reactions were limited. Sensitive to the refined and the delicate, his nature did not respond to the powerful and the dramatic. Quickened by the alluring lines of grace and the harmonic relations of tones, he is oblivious to the stress and strain of nature, its

massive bulk and age defying constancy. His work is imbued with charm and feeling. Finely attuned to the fleeting, it misses the eternal. The ennobling emotions, the transcendent thought, the moods of the mind, are not reflected in the evanescent hues of the master. Dependent upon optical stimulation and the exhilaration of the moment Twachtman lacks something of the universal quality that transcends the particular. Working directly from nature he misses the more abstract significance that comes from meditation. It is a sensuous rather than an intellectual art, and is therefore more pleasing than profound. But, however limited, it is pure and unadulterated. It is useless to compare the violet and the oak. Both are unique. If Twachtman does not soar in the universal empyrean, he lures us to the tranquility of his own world of beauty.

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MEDALS AND HONORS

In 1893 Twachtman was awarded a medal at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago; in 1888 the Webb Prize, Society of American Artists; in 1894 Temple Gold Medal, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; in 1901 Silver Medal, Pan American Exposition, Buffalo. He was a member of the Society of American Artists; the Ten American Painters; the New York Etching Club; and the Pastel Club, New York.

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