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PAINTERS AND PAINTING

BY

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PREFACE

It is in no way hoped that this little book shall take the place of a pocket-Dictionary of Painters—a serviceable work of reference whose business being to include the insignificant, is foredoomed to dulness: has no chance to be interesting.

In my pages—occupied with the performances and personalities of artists who are the connoisseur's delight—there is not room for the inclusion of all Schools; for the faint praise of the commonplace; for the grave condemnation of coteries lifted momentarily into prominence, and sure to be once more obscure. And several men, really great, who have been discussed too much, I scarcely discuss at all. My purpose will have been accomplished if this book shall be found not quite wanting in interest by those who know, and not quite wanting in utility, besides, by those who do not know, about pictorial Art.

F. W.

December 1912.

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PAINTERS AND PAINTING

CHAPTER I

THE PRIMITIVES

Of all pictorial Arts, major and minor—Painting in Oil or Water Colour, Engraving, Etching, and Lithography—it is Painting that makes to the mass of us the easiest and most fascinating appeal. Scarcely less than the others it may have the virtues of Design and of Draughtsmanship; in the magic of touch it is their equal; and it has richly what they wholly lack, the glamour of the colours of the world. For all that, I cannot in this volume on pictorial artists confine myself quite strictly to Paint alone.

Changing circumstances, the passage of long time and of an endless variety of men and peoples, have allowed the art of the painter—the art of the etcher and engraver, too—to become at last, only less than that of the writer, the record of the past and

present—the record of the visible and of the vanished scene. Nor, any more than the great art of Literature, is Painting—or pictorial art broadly—simply that record. Not only nature and human nature lie within its purview. Conceptions and yearnings it has interpreted, as well as beings and facts. Its themes include the ardour of many a faith, and the hopes and the dejections of men's dreams. Those who have practised it appear to the mind's eye in vast procession —figures innumerable, from the hours of an early civilization to those of a late. For this procession begins, it may be, with Apelles, whose brush was used under the blue of Grecian heavens, and it does not quite end with Corot, Courbet, Manet, Boudin, whose eyes were witnesses of tempered illumination, and of vaporous dawns, and of the pearl-grey, steel-grey, oxidized silver, of the skies of France.

Amongst the mass of painters and engravers who were artists—who had individuality and an ideal, who were not mere copyists of Nature or of a few forerunners much greater than themselves—a little book like this can choose, for treatment or for reference, relatively few. It is important that the selection be, in nearly

every case, as far as one man's judgment can make it so, from among the best only. The reader, too—it is from among the best alone that must be drawn those things that he, as plainly as the writer, should desire to study. To select wisely from many fields—to select only artists who are, in one way or another, lawfully attractive—is to engage in an exercise that is in any case not duty alone, or pleasure. It is certainly nothing less than a discipline. To try to choose the best, in any such field, is to administer to one's self a lesson in taste—almost a lesson in morals.

But, in the study of an art, there is room —fairly and rightly there is room—for the display and the indulgence of such preference as is not dictated by ignorance. And a preference too natural for the tolerant and far-sighted to have any wish to suppress it is the preference, broadly speaking, for the modern conception, for the modern method. It is not mere novelty that is the attraction here—the attraction we make bold to defend. It is familiarity, or possible familiarity rather: it is approachableness. The artist relatively recent has the advantage of speaking to you in the dialect you

know. His very accent, so to say, brings him nearer to you than can the accent of his forerunners. Other attractions, of course, than that attraction of familiarity, which is the present's, belong to the work of the past —of the remote past even—so that the art production of bygone days is never hopelessly handicapped. It appeals to the antiquary within us—and a little of the instinct of the antiquary is found to declare itself in the breast of every man of thought who is no longer in extreme youth. It appeals to the imagination. To the craving for romance it brings its own response—it brings a measure of nourishment. And, by the depth and range of its virtues—of which we cannot fail to take account—some of it is immortal. But art, to be immortal, must be of full accomplishment. It must be mature and complete. The tentativeness of the Primitive is pardonably engaging, but it is engaging as the *naïveté* of a child.

Italy and the Low Countries have long been held to be the seat of the best work of the Primitives; nor need this general opinion be seriously contested or reviewed, merely because of the circumstance that the French early pious Art—that, for example, of the

now famous "Maître de Moulins"—has, until lately, been strangely overlooked. Certainly, it is of importance to remember that France—the South of France, mainly—had her share in these beginnings; but, that being allowed, it is to be conceded that that share remains a relatively small one. We need not insist or linger. French Art, the earliest French Art in painting, has no doubt a character of its own, and a charm; but in the justified vision of impartial eyes, it does not bulk so largely—for it is not of the potency, the irrepressible vitality and independence—as, for example, in the consideration of architecture, does the architecture of the French Renaissance. The contribution of France to the Renaissance—to the arts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—was infinitely greater than was her contribution to the beginnings. And France can well afford that the pride of place that for so long in this matter has been enjoyed by Italy and Flanders shall yet be theirs, undisturbed.

But if the ascendancy of the Low Countries and Italy in the earlier pictorial art is still to be accepted, it should be recognized that that is owing much less to what the earlier

Primitives actually were, than to what their immediate descendants so rapidly became. The very early people—who in this writing shall be nameless—would be forgotten if they had not been so very promptly followed by Giotto and Perugino (Raphael's master) in Italy, and in Flanders by Van Eyck and Memling.

John Van Eyck's "Triumph of the Lamb," at Ghent, was worthy to engage the overwhelming admiration of a far later, but a kindred spirit—no other than Flandrin. And Memling's quaint imaginative history, written at Bruges upon the "Chasse de Ste. Ursule," has in its own kind, high beauty of execution to recommend it, as well as *naïveté* of thought.

Of Italian early art, central Italy was the source—though at Padua, in the North, is to be seen something of the best of Giotto. But it is generally Florence that is the source and origin—Florence, a little less austere than Siena. Fra Angelico, Fra Lippo Lippi, Perugino, Francia, Botticelli, mark different stages of progress and accomplishment. With the later of them—perhaps already with Fra Lippo Lippi (Mr. Browning's poem would at all events teach us to think so)—the view of the Renaissance and its breadth and refresh-

ment is within reach : it is the dawn of the Renaissance spirit that has become evident then: Perugino, with his often accomplished union of feeling and of grace, is the link between the beginnings and Raphael. And Raphael's own earlier work—the divine " Belle Jardinière " of the Louvre almost included—is in part the result of his inheritance from a past with which he was in youth—and not in actual youth alone — very happily in sympathy. Youth not long over, and his own end too near, Raphael became himself in fulness—a something different: not wholly better and not wholly worse. But that was the Renaissance. Unlike the earlier work, his work of that time had the Classics for its source. The day of the Primitives was over.

In passing briefly in review, however, the general characteristics of those earlier labours —tentative, patient, devout—to which the name of " Primitive " is most fittingly given, we must be struck by the gentle assiduity of the workman, and by the limitations of the themes of his work. Religious aspiration and sacred story—the record of one order, only, of sentiment and fact and legend—were enough to fill or cover church and convent wall with altar-piece and fresco.

But it is impossible that they should have been enough to develop the individuality of all the different minds who wielded in Flanders and Italy an untiring brush. Hence, save in the case of the few greater men whose methods and manners were their own, there is room for endless conjecture and never-to-be-settled dispute as to the authorship of how many a panel! This sort of discussion does not add seriously to men's capacity for the appreciation of beauty or of high accomplishment; but it gives to the collector—and especially to the English collector—a certain "sporting" interest in the piece which forms for the moment the matter in debate. Therefore, before the average Englishman, of decent education, but of no marked originality of character, turns into other channels the attention he now bestows upon the art he learnedly gropes amongst, that "sporting interest"—quite human, but quite trivial—will have to be withdrawn; and one does not know how or when this will be effected. There is this to be said, however—that at least fashions change.

Again, there is one other cause that accounts for the curious accumulation of interest in the Primitives on the part of the ordinary

cultivated person, who knows next to nothing of the real secrets of art. The greater number of the Primitives — and more particularly of the minor Primitives — are Italian. In the Low Countries there are a few outstanding names: not many. In Italy there is a crowd. And English people, when not romantic in any other way whatever, are apt to wax spuriously romantic about Italy. Hence for them, as regards the least accomplished efforts of Italian Painting—as regards work the gentle Fra Angelico would not father, and Perugino could not own—there is to be added to that sporting interest which counts for much—and that antiquarian interest which counts, and has a right to count, for something—an interest which sometimes those who are a prey to it suppose to be poetic. It is at all events sentimental.

CHAPTER II

DÜRER AND HOLBEIN

Not in the least sentimental is the interest that attaches to the work of the advanced Renaissance. To admire Michael Angelo and Mantegna, Holbein and Dürer—and within the limits of these great men's life-

times the Renaissance was comprised—is to admire artists who carried to absolute perfection the methods that their time and their temperament combined most of all to commend to them. The doing homage to them is no excusable or inexcusable result of the love of a particular land, or of the attachment to a particular faith. It is the act, not specially of saint, not specially of sinner; and in it, Catholic and sceptic, cavalier and Puritan, may be agreed. It is the wholesome recognition of a Heaven-sent insight, and of a diligently, dare I say an austerely drilled, force.

And if each of these men was distinguished not alone by personal ability, but likewise, and it seems in equal measure, by a profound acceptance of Fact, each was dowered, too, though in different degrees, with an imagination without which fact—much of fact—is never properly to be apprehended. Speaking of Holbein and Dürer more particularly, it is the imagination of Dürer that is the more obvious; it is probably actually greater than that of the genius who succeeded him. Things came to him as visions, and as symbols—and symbolism was a part of Dürer's tongue. Yet portraiture like Holbein's—so sure, so

delicate—is not to be produced without some capacity of transportation into the thought and being of another. Imagination, therefore, cannot possibly be denied—can be denied no more than the capacity for strenuous labour—to the great artist who was painter enough to have produced the picture of the Duchess of Sforza in her comely and quiet youth, and draughtsman enough to have produced the drawing of Archbishop Warham, with the amassed treasure of his ripe meditation and of his garnered experience. To live with Dürer's prints, or Holbein's drawings and rare pictures, is to live with the work of the finest intellects and of the most amply trained hands.

Both of these masters of design were of South German birth—Augsburg the town of Holbein; Nuremberg of Dürer. To them, then, as compared with whoever were their contemporaries in the North, more remote than their own, Italy was accessible; and Dürer certainly, and in all probability Holbein, passed over from the gloomier and more sombre to the gayer and the brighter land: enlarging there the boundaries of their art, but retaining, unimpaired, the severity of their Northern manhood. That Dürer

was at Venice is matter of history. The late Sir Joseph Crowe, without its being matter of history at all, came definitely to the conclusion that nothing but direct contact with the teeming South—that no mere study, however elaborate, of this or that imported instance of fine Italian artistry—could have imbued Holbein, to the degree with which he was imbued, with the Italian, the Renaissance spirit. If we think—and Dürer's followers, the Little Masters, help to make us think—that the Germans are great ornamentists—that in the most luxurious or least ascetic of their designs a spirit of symmetry and order is disclosed, as of a people not ill-contented to be led and controlled—it is Holbein who breeds in us that thought; and it is the Behams and Aldegrever and Jacob Binck, who worked a little earlier than he did, who, more than any others, tend to confirm us in it.

Holbein, hardly more than the great Dürer, was ornamentist mainly. His—in a degree that was peculiar and memorable—was a searching knowledge and a close study of actual human life. His is the wonderful portrait of Joseph Maier at Basel; his the realization of the gravely absorbed countenance of Erasmus in front of his dark tapestry

hanging at the Louvre; and his the series of drawings which, installed at Windsor from the day when they were done, chronicles, with a touch never hesitating and a purpose never insincere, the people of quality and brain about the Court of our Henry the Eighth. These drawings remain up to the present moment as high standards of excellence; standards, indeed, than which there are no higher. In them there is alike not a trace of superfluous labour and not a trace of scamped performance. The art of Holbein, in those later years at least, was complete and consummate, and it had almost begun by being accomplished and assured. Holbein's latest years were never advanced years. He was well under fifty when, in England—in the England of Charles the First—the plague took him; that plague which was a foretaste only of the greater pestilence which swept over London something like twenty years afterwards.

If it is true that even Holbein's painting, although faultless within the limits the narrowness of which it tacitly avows, must not be asked to supply us with the charm of "modulations of surface or subtle contrasts of colour in juxtaposition," we must deal

frankly with the fact that much of Dürer's painting—and Dürer's whole is, after all, but a little—is not only lacking in all that Holbein's lacked, but wants, and goes without, even the modest harmony which Holbein did, without visible effort, attain. The lack of that is naturally more conspicuous, or more frequent, in Dürer's earlier than in his later work. It is conceivably most traced during a period which witnessed the production of what Sir Sidney Colvin calls the "striking, restlessly elaborated half-length of Oswald Krell at Munich"—a period, he reminds us, closed by two examples of far higher value, one of which is the Paumgartner altar-piece (at Munich also) with its romantically attractive composition of the Nativity, and the other, "The Adoration of the Wise Men," now housed in the Uffizi at Florence. Here there is more of harmony; albeit Dürer's Germanism, his own individuality, and the aims and the ideals of his epoch, conspired to lead him to insist ever, in his painting, more upon the faithful reproduction of detail than upon unity or charm of general effect.

Into the second and third decade of Dürer's working life—from the time of his second visit to Italy—we need not, with regard to

his painting, attempt in this small book to follow him. More to the purpose is it to insist that it is not to his painted pictures at all that Dürer owes the fame that is now rightly his. He owes it in a measure to his drawings—those at the Albertina at Vienna, most conspicuously—which give evidence of a fancy prolific and ingenious, and of a highly skilled hand. He owes it most of all, however—may I urge with earnestness ?—to his noble achievement in engraving. There he is unhampered by those problems of colour with which but seldom could he dexterously, or instinctively and spontaneously, deal. There he is upon his own ground—on the field to which almost with Rembrandt he has equal right. "Black and White" it is called. It is Line really, and gradations of illumination and darkness. And, though seemingly circumscribed, that, in reality, is an extensive keyboard. And there, Rembrandt-like, of every note he is the master. His best imagination is in his prints. And in them, too, is the most faultless certainty of his hand. In his prints there is room for his symbolism—the "Melancholia"; room for his piety—his belief, fervent and innocent: his "Virgin with the Pear,"

his "Virgin by the City Wall." And his Madonna, of course, is a placid German girl; and his East—well, it does not pretend to be the East at all—any more than does Rembrandt's, or, in our own day, Uhde's. His East is but the outskirts of a German town: a hill-side town of forts and towers. Or—in a background, as in the "Virgin with the Child in Swaddling Clothes"—it is a reminiscence of Venice and the light over the stretched lagoon.

Nor is this quite the end. No, it is not at all the end of what his art of black and white allows to Dürer. His graver's tool is capable of setting perfectly before us the beauty of his ornament, as in the two Coats-of-Arms pieces—the symmetry and balance, the sober originality of his design, as in his "Little White Horse"—and, last, in his quite exquisite plate of "The Three Genii," the grace of eye and hand, in a slight composition, purely decorative. Decorative grace does not get further. It is his own; yet it is not unfitting that it should reflect and make plain to us what was, not once or twice only, the source of Dürer's inspiration. Dowered with the greater and the better of all the German qualities, he yet would not have been quite Dürer, quite

himself, if he had not revealed—as in "The Three Genii" he revealed unmistakably—what was his debt to the long tradition of Italian charm. The land, the art, which, not seldom only enfeebles, and makes affected, English amateurs, did actually nourish Dürer—did enrich and refine him. And without it, "The Three Genii" would hardly have been.

CHAPTER III

THE LITTLE MASTERS

ONLY second in interest to Albert Dürer's work is the abundant and delightful work of the Little Masters. The Little Masters learnt from Dürer, learnt from Italy, and had also a note, even many notes, of their own. Never since they lived, I must suppose, has there been a time when in Germany their work has been neglected; and never yet, I apprehend, has there been a time in England when their work has been appreciated properly.

But the day for the just appraisement of these artists, even amongst ourselves, is nearer, now, than we think. There are signs that there falls upon them already the beginning of the advantage which the lately increased

interest in the thought and craftsmanship, the invention and dexterity, of the original engraver must bring to every worthy practitioner of a noble art. Honoured at home, and now distinctly sought for by those American collectors who enter, as it seems, instinctively into the enjoyment of what is finely but never pettily finished, these German Little Masters will be accorded, perhaps before we know it, here in England, their "place in the sun." In studying them a little, it may seem to us that their most salient note is that of the marriage that their work affords proof of between the art of Italy and the art of the North; but with them, as with Dürer himself, we must guard against attributing too great a share in this visible union to one side only of the parties to it. What did that extraordinarily observant and comprehensive chronicler of the art of many a time, Vasari, say on that matter? We condone the curious mistake by which he calls Dürer a Fleming, in virtue of the justice he is eager to render to him and to his school. "Had this man, so nobly endowed by Nature, so assiduous, and possessed of so many talents, been a native of Tuscany instead of Flanders—had he been able to study the treasures of Rome

and Florence as we have done—he would have excelled us all, as he is now the best and most esteemed among his own countrymen." And about the visions of St. John in the Island of Patmos, drawn by Dürer, so imaginatively: "The variety of the forms which Albert has imagined for all those visionary animals and monsters has, indeed, been a beacon to many of our artists, who have largely availed themselves of the fancies and inventions of the master."

The seven Little Masters—"little" only by reason of the smallness of the scale on which it pleased them to carry out their conceptions and to pursue their almost always arduous labour—are Altdorfer, Sebald Beham, Barthel Beham, Aldegrever, Pencz, Binck, and Brosamer. The brothers Beham and George Pencz were Nuremberg men. Altdorfer came from Ratisbon; Aldegrever from Soest; Binck from Cologne; Brosamer, perhaps the least known, probably the least important member of the group, came from or belonged to Fulda. Of these contemporaries, Altdorfer was the eldest: indeed, only nine years divide his birthdate from the birthdate of Dürer. The youngest member of the group was twenty years Dürer's junior.

Bartsch—who catalogued all these men with a thoroughness not final indeed, but quite amazing when one considers the narrow opportunities of compilation and comparison available in his day—assigns to Altdorfer ninety-six original pieces, irrespective of woodcuts: ninety-six pieces on copper. More important, however, than the number of his works is the ground that they covered. Altdorfer was almost the first man to seek in pure landscape an interest sufficient to support and give interest to his design. For this branch of his work, when on metal at all, he employed and found convenient the process of Etching. Generally the work of the Little Masters is "burin" work, work of pure line. The etchings of Altdorfer are numerous and slight, and in them eccentric taste is mixed with romantic character. Work at Bremen and at Berlin, and the "Battle of Alexander and Darius" in the Pinacothec, Munich, reminds us that the citizen of Ratisbon was painter as well as engraver. He was also a busy architect: an official post was given him; and, for the last decade of his life, it and perhaps other architectural concerns caused him to lay aside the burin and the etching needle, and probably also the brush.

In whatever he did he had his merits; but they were neutralized, sometimes more than neutralized, destroyed, by his indulged yearning for the fantastic. The student and collector of original line engraving may be justified in passing on quickly from the consideration of Altdorfer's work — as of Brosamer's — to that of those amongst the Little Masters more considerable, and, in this medium of engraving, more finely accomplished.

George Pencz and Jacob Binck, considered in this connection, occupy a middle place. The late W. B. Scott, who, of all English writers, has written the best and the most fully on the group as a whole, does not attach especial importance to either of them. But perhaps it is Pencz who in his subject pieces—he is not notable in ornament—best discovers the flowing grace and suavity of Italian design. "He left the Fatherland," says Mr. Scott, speaking as with the sympathies of a German, "and *subjected* himself to Italian influence." That does not, however, altogether put him out of Court. I think the modification may be traced in his work: I think that one welcomes it. Binck, Mr. Scott numbers with those who are "of compara-

tively little consequence." I have said, in another place, that I hope the excellent Mr. Scott attaches great weight to his "comparatively"; for otherwise he has done to Binck a rude injustice.

We come to the three greatest members of the group—the Behams and Aldegrever—the "greatest," especially, if it is for the volume and quality of their work as original engravers that we are mainly considering them. The tradition is that both of the Behams were in the studio or workshop of Dürer. The story used to be that they were not brothers, but cousins, and that it was Barthel who was the elder of the two, and who was in a sense the instructor of Sebald. This idea of their relationship—their professional relationship to each other—arose, probably, from the fact that Hans Sebald did on occasion copy Barthel's designs. But it is W. B. Scott's probably quite accurate conjecture that Barthel, going to Italy, left with his brother certain plates and the freedom to deal with them; and, the demand continuing for given designs, the edition was exhausted, the plate worn, and Sebald minded himself to reproduce it, that the demand might be met. In any case, Sebald was not "grounded for lack of

matter." He was profuse in invention; his imagination was ever serviceable and sane; and his pure craftsmanship, in the opinion of many who know, was the most accomplished of all—stands visibly second not even to Dürer's. Not ill-advised in the least was the late W. J. Loftie in concentrating his efforts mainly on the collection of this one man's abundant and varied work.

Barthel died young; but he had had time to place with unremitting energy upon the copper sixty-four spirited, finely-thought-out works of art. Sebald lived longer, though he did not live to be old; but when he died there had been, according to Bartsch, two hundred and fifty-nine plates—according to Loftie, two hundred and seventy-four. Some of his pieces are little German genre-pieces—dealing, with a certain tender realism, with familiar and popular life. Some are of Allegory. Some are Ornament entirely—ornament finely devised and perfectly executed; the composition well-balanced, ingenious—its arrangement of light and shadow noble or pleasing. Like Dürer, he had his Coats-of-Arms pieces. Like Dürer again, he had his "Adam and Eve." Barthel had subjects of the latter class—nay, of both classes—and frieze-shaped composi-

tions, tiny as jewellers' work, of combats between the gods of the sea—not to speak of a much esteemed portrait of Charles the Fifth, in which the artist leaves the realm that is his own essentially. Both of the Behams, to a great extent—like Binck and like Pencz, and, of course, Aldegrever—were "emancipated from the wilful despising of the graces."

The engraved work of Aldegrever, the master of so charming a fancy, revelling, at his best, in every grace of flower-form, leaf-form, fruit-form, arranging it with a knowledge and taste that are consummate—the engraved work of Aldegrever stops only with his two hundred and eighty-ninth plate. As a pure Ornamentist, perhaps Aldegrever is the finest of all his group. He knows—but they all know—how to occupy and steadily fill a given space, without crowding it. But he knows, as no one else, I think, not only how to give to his line symmetry, but how to give it the enduring grace of rhythm. The beautiful campanula-like ornament (Bartsch, No. 197) shows that conclusively. In this way some of Aldegrever's work owns and brings into play that which is akin to the charm of music, or to the subtler, less evanescent charm of rightly ordered words.

CHAPTER IV

GREAT PAINTERS OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

THE great Dutch Painting, and the great Flemish, apart from Memling's and Van Eyck's, was painting of the Seventeenth Century. The times were late already—at least, they were already advanced—and the genius of originality and power vouchsafed to Nuremberg and Augsburg found its match in only two of the artists of the crowded company of painters who had their patrons and their pupils, their schools and their supporters, among the enriched *bourgeoisie* of Holland and the priestly coteries of Antwerp and of Brussels. Two only of these artists of the moist and chilly North were something quite distinctly different from mere consummate craftsmen, though they were consummate craftsmen to boot. The one was Rembrandt; the other—and though one hesitates to seem to place him quite upon the same level, it is necessary to admit that the fire and the fascination of invention, and invention in the great manner, was likewise his—the other, then, was Rubens.

Both of these painters, whatever may repel us, or may fail at first to attract us, in the

work of the one or the other, both have to be accounted as immense artists; and no two artists—though these two were of the same period and the same latitude—no two were more strongly contrasted, more essentially different. Had they anything in common but a facility of expression? Nothing that I know of, except a profound interest in humanity, and the physical and psychological need of all creative artists, in any art whatever, for giving birth to that which is within them: *le besoin de créer*, as the French say. Landscape interested them both: people, it has been said already, interested both; but that hardly brings them together, since in people it is only an unintelligent being who fails to be interested. The world that each imagined, and that each saw, struck him in every hour of his experience, and of his inner life as well, entirely differently. The genius of the one was spiritual, essentially; the genius of the other was mundane, carnal, but in the grand way.

Rembrandt loved beautiful things, as Rubens loved beautiful women. Beautiful things Rembrandt collected. Two beautiful women Rubens married—the second's beauty was only excelled by that of her own

sister, the Helena Fourment of our National Gallery's, "Chapeau de Poil"—and in painting these women, and painting others, Rubens spent no small a portion of his life. Looking at Rembrandt's work and looking at Rubens's, we conceive that the Dutchman was homely and the Fleming magnificent. A palace is the place in which to encounter Rubens: a quiet home, Rembrandt. With the Fleming there is an interchange of stately courtesies: with the Dutchman, intimacy. A blare of trumpets announces Rubens's presence; but Rembrandt simply holds your hand. In defining thus our possible relation with the one and with the other, we get forward a step or two towards defining the undefinable—their genius.

As far as *technique* is concerned, both developed upon habitual lines: in both the obvious carefulness of youth was in the main succeeded by the obviously relished decision and mastery of mature years. In Rembrandt's work, the counterpart can be found to that early Virgin of Rubens's in the Gallery at Brussels which exhibits the art of the Fleming in its earliest perfection, with a finish precise indeed, but never tortured, mean, or mechanical. In his work, too, is to

be found the counterpart or equivalent to the assured brush-play, the rapid decisiveness, of his contemporary's later portraiture or later presentations of opulent, abounding nudity. But, on the whole, it is Rubens whose course is the more regular. Rembrandt has a way of baffling all critical schemes of arrangement, all theories and traditions of progress, by suddenly, from time to time, springing upon us a thing we should have associated with almost another generation: twenty years later that thing might have been painted, or twenty years earlier. But hardly —one would have supposed—hardly just then.

In portraiture, Rubens was interested in external splendour, in pomp and circumstance, the joy of being and the pride of Life, rather than in the adventures of the soul. Rembrandt, in portrait work, was interested in the individualities of character, the intelligent *naïveté* of childhood, the business man's absorption in his labours, the elderly woman's sometimes narrowing, sometimes more philosophical and tolerant outlook upon Life. In landscape, Rubens was interested in a scene that was peopled: it might be a boar-hunt, or a civilized, cultured champaign, alive with the incidents of agrarian careers. And

here, what interested Rembrandt was retirement and placidity; the light and shade of the everyday and uneventful land of farm and field, and barn, canal, and hillock. If the scene became, as now and again it did, dramatic and exciting, it was because, not men and women, but the forces of Nature were suddenly the persons of the drama. More than one landscape of Rembrandt is not so much the anticipation as the actual beginning of modern landscape art—more than of modern landscape art, of modern vision.

Rembrandt, a noble colourist where colourist at all, a discoverer of faultless harmonies of gold and golden brown, of lurking lights, of shadows that quiet when they do not menace or appal, was a master of tone, more pre-eminently. Hence, for example, the triumph of his etchings, which were the perfection of tone, of line, and of the seizure of character. Rubens was colourist always—that is, he was painter essentially. To deprive him of colour would be to deprive him of what one thinks he must have found the most enjoyable of his means of expression. With him, high light and a shadow gentle, modified, in itself surpassingly luminous, swept over the faces of his *blondes* of the *bourgeoisie*—

over the shoulders and haunches of goddesses opalescent or pearly. His gifts being what they were, and Rembrandt's being what they were as distinctly, is it remarkable at all that in the main the art of Rubens should be Pagan —Pagan gloriously—and the art of Rembrandt sadder, calmer, modestly Christian and humane? In dealing with the uncomely, his realism was, it is true, uncompromising. His modes were at fault, but so, it must be confessed, was his taste. Or, at the least, he possessed in superabundance a kindly toleration of the plain.

To accept the plain, not so much with toleration as with enthusiasm and preference, to revel in the physical ugliness so often the sign and the betrayer of internal degradation, was one of the characteristics of too much, of far too much, of the Dutch seventeenth century art. That attitude went, in its ravenous eagerness, in its stupid content, quite beyond Rembrandt's gesture of kindliness and acceptance; and it defaces and disfigures too many a panel of Teniers and Ostade, of Brauwer and Bega—of Bega, saved in his etchings, by the vivacity of his truthfulness, his sense of easy, natural composition, and the picturesque and happy strength of his chiaroscuro.

There are, in the Dutch seventeenth century, clever little painters, very clever little painters, of domestic incident and interior—sometimes with specialities of their own, as "candle-light Van Schalcken," or Slingeland, or as the less unimportant, but never very thrilling or admiration-compelling, Gerard Dow—who are not victims to this "Realism," but who succumb ever to the more insinuating temptations of prettiness. They have had their day for the most part, and—if prophecy is safe—it is not a day that will return.

Then there are the great examples of that Dutch genre-painting which succumbs neither on the one hand nor on the other, which holds its own healthily—the great, the scarcely less than noble genre-painting of Terborch and Metsu, of Nicholas Maes, and De Hooch, and Jan Vermeer of Delft. The subtlety of the first three, the safe and solid breadth and brilliance of the two last-named of this group—their observation of humanity and of still life and of those effects of fleeting illumination to which they attended so much—make them sure, in perpetuity, of their honourable and pleasure-giving place. It is perhaps in Gerard Terborch that there is the most complete, if also the gentlest, grasp of human character, as

it is discerned dimly in a race undemonstrative and reticent, unstirred and self-contained.

But there is one other master of Genre remaining to be named, and the greatest of all, in some respects. He is a gentle high comedian of painting. And that is Jan Steen. Terborch's Genre, and Metsu's, in its relation of incident, in its presentation of character, has some affinity with the fiction of Anthony Trollope. It is occupied with the slow realization of the placid truth—of a truth never, of course, as deep as Samuel Richardson's. But with the Genre of Jan Steen, art is whipped into piquancy, or, quite as often, it spontaneously rises to liveliness—sometimes there is about this anecdote and episode painting of the brilliant Dutchman a reminder of the naughtiness, the rebellious imagination, of Sterne. His touch, too, has Sterne's gaiety and Sterne's feeling; there is much in *A Sentimental Journey* that Jan Steen would have enjoyed to illustrate. One thing besides Jan Steen possessed, which is hardly in our art of literature at all. He had the faculty of setting forth, as nobody, I think, besides him has ever set forth, except Watteau, the delicate, unblemished joyousness of childhood, the flower-like charm of its

irresponsible thoughtfulness. The children of Ostade and Teniers are dull and oppressed grubbers among only material things; but the air in which Jan Steen's children have their being is light and clear as the atmosphere of France. Of motherly, and fatherly solicitude, and childish enjoyment, and happy family merry-making, Jan Steen is the painter. He is the painter also of the intrigues of licensed comedy, and of bedside scenes in which Æsculapius, in the guise of a Dutch physician, deals artfully and assiduously with the troubles and disturbances of the Fair.

In Dutch landscape art, it is Rembrandt—spoken of already—who reaches the summit; where, however, he sometimes finds himself in the near company of De Koninck, who is now and then legitimately mistaken for him, and in the near company of Hobbema, not finer, indeed, but more recognizably individual than the other, and, at least in the "Avenue at Middelharnis," actually great. Wynants, with his humble and familiar theme of tracks across the sandy uplands, has a simplicity and truth of curious charm. And if his work and Hobbema's may be accepted as the source of the Norwich School, there are pieces by Ruysdael, who was a master also, which

may be viewed as in spirit the "only begetters" of certain of the landscapes which, in mid-nineteenth century, the potent Courbet painted, amongst the ravines and running waters of Franche Comté.

The finest Dutch sea-pieces of the great older time are the calms of William Van de Velde and of Van der Capella. To paint these was an achievement, though with Van der Capella the achievement became a mannerism. It became so only because Van der Capella limited himself a little too resolutely, some would say too timidly, to the thing it was agreed by all men he was sure to do well. Backhuysen has at times a quaint and just excusable fascination. He can even be spirited. But Mr. Ruskin, to whom it has been so difficult generally to do any justice to the Dutchmen, was not, about the Dutchmen, wrong without intermission. He was not wrong substantially in his estimate of Backhuysen as a painter of the storm. The storm of Backhuysen is a storm of the stage. It is a storm of second-rate and old-world melodrama. Yet for the adequate portrayal of crashing waters and charged sky, we must wait, strange though it seems to have to do so, for some few masters of the nineteenth

century, in French and English painting. To be content, we have to wait for Turner, Cotman, Constable. We have to wait for Courbet and for Boudin.

CHAPTER V

LATER DUTCH PAINTING

After the seventeenth century, Dutch painting languished. If, from the eighteenth, mediocrity has now and then survived, it is because greatness did not live at all—the great did not exist. There was heard, in the Holland of the eighteenth century, the feeble echo of voices then already remote. The nineteenth century had to be reached—nearly half gone through—before a new vigour, something of a new inspiration, came into Dutch painting.

And when this new inspiration, this new force, came, it must have been a little difficult to say what was its source. The honourable and accomplished art of the large group of men whom Jacob and Mathew Maris, Israels, Bosboom, Neuhuys, and Mesdag may best represent for us, had signs of relationship, undoubtedly, with the elder art that had vanished. But it was not clearly the successor

of it: at least, not in method. And England—rich already, before the middle of the nineteenth century, in landscape art, impressive and original (Turner's and Constable's, Cotman's and Dewint's, not to speak of the earlier productions of Richard Wilson and of Gainsborough)—England, there is no reason to suppose, is answerable much for the direction that modern Dutch art took. Something it got from England, more from France—the France of the Romantics, from whom it eliminated generally the actually Romantic touch—and something it got from its own older traditions: a certain reticence and reserve, a certain willing, perhaps even instinctive subordination of colour to light and shade. The older School had a variety of theme and treatment which the newer has not equalled, has not emulated.

Of the six men I have mentioned—and I ought, I think, to have mentioned Mauve besides—it is certainly not Mesdag, and it does not seem to me to be Israels, who could put forward best a claim to originality. That Mesdag—mainly a painter of the sea, and, as a painter of rough seas, very accomplished—has not allowed himself to fall into mannerism, is, of course, to his credit. It is less to his

credit, or it is more to be remembered as his ill fortune, that he has not impressed us with his own personality. In Mesdag the craftsman is in evidence: the individual has been slow to assert himself. Mesdag's work is eclectic, as his own tastes have been. Never, perhaps, was there a painter who more thoroughly enjoyed than he did to surround himself with the performances of gifted brethren. Liberal in purse and in feeling, Mesdag amassed the materials for a "Tate" Gallery of Modern Dutch Painting.

Josef Israels, with delicate observation, and with what is called scrupulous fidelity, has painted the sea; but his sea, unlike Mesdag's, has to have children in front of it. That there may be children in front of it, there has to be a beach—from all which one thing is quite evident: Israels is a painter of incident, or of humanity, as well as of landscape. It may be but a trifling incident when there is landscape—seascape—to support it: the interest of atmosphere, silvery generally, the interest of space. But if the incident is, as it often is, an incident of the interior, and of the cottage of the humble, then it is almost certain to be more actively dramatic: it has pathos probably; and the

pathos may deepen to tragedy. Herein, of course, perhaps in the gentler pathos most of all, is Israels' most popular appeal. There is no doubt whatever that he has overdone it. One is, before the end, permissibly weary of the minor key, and of the muted strings. I know, in real life, absolutely nobody, and at the Theatre only one person, Goldsmith's Mr. Croaker, who could say, genuinely, to the unfatigued recorder of human discomfort, "Mr. Israels, it is a perfect consolation to be miserable with you." For all that, Israels is miserable so very cleverly that with comparative approval, with a measure of satisfaction, you can behold his picture when it comes "a single spy." What is annoying is to be desperately aware of the imminent approach of the "battalions."

Neuhuys sees life more cheerfully, because he sees it whole. He is the painter not mainly of the fisherman, decrepit, in extreme age, who has wept already over the departure of every conceivable kinsman. He is the painter of normal human life—of the commonplace fortunes of the given hour, lightly accepted, modestly, even gaily, enjoyed—the work that has its interest; the leisure that comes pleasantly; the satisfied affection. His art

forecasts the not improbable brightness of to-morrow's sky. Really there is a great deal of close observation of character displayed in Neuhuys' canvasses, and it is set forth with its reasonable share of painter's charm. Very high beauty of the face and figure is not for any Dutchman, one supposes—Nature, experience, has not supplied him with the stimulus to present it. But with Neuhuys, as with Terborch, the painter of gentlewomen, and Jan Steen, the painter of *soubrettes*, in early days, a woman is of decent comeliness—she is felt to be approachable. Sometimes her modest measure of attractiveness goes yet a little further. Into the countenance there creeps some subtlety of expression: a little,—about as much as in a woman by Vermeer of Delft, more than two hundred years ago.

If the word "exquisite" deserves to be applied to any of these modern Dutch practitioners of very sound painting, it must be applied, presumably, to Mathew Maris. Inexpressibly dainty is certainly at times his execution; and the daintiness fits well the presentation and realization of a fancy that is dainty too. Mathew Maris, in many of his pictures, has thought in pale and pleasant colour. He has been, as it were, in the com-

pany of harmonious dreams. He is alone, abstracted, and there has been from time to time revealed to him a world not ours. Not ours altogether, quainter and more precise: its epochs mixed a little, but, after all, scarcely new Heavens, or a new Earth.

Mathew's great brother, James, the Jacob Maris of Dutch catalogues and criticisms, is of our world, or of the common world, absolutely; the world of his time; but it is of the world finely seen, although seen and depicted with the minimum of colour: it is tone, it is light and shade, it is form seen largely, it is the painter's courage that shirks no reality, but loves no ugliness, that contribute to make it effective. And James Maris sees his world massively; there is volume as well as line in it. And the whole of it interests him—Amsterdam, with the movement of its teeming population; grey Dordrecht, set beside its noble breadth of water; the canal and the canal boat; the long, low land and the windmills; the sky, not often of the Dutch Summer—not Cuyp's sky, or Van der Heyden's—the sky of windy Autumn or of sullen winter, a sky of swollen cloud or of hard greyness. Precise, and visibly elaborate, and a little dry, James Maris was—

or could be—in his youth and early middle days. He became broader, richer, fatter in touch, more simplified in selection. So simplified indeed, very often, that some considerable survey of his work might leave us not indisposed to consider him as mainly a great sketcher, a man whose sketches had not only removed the superfluous, but had, to boot, evaded, rather than conquered, difficulties that are obstinate. However that may be, James Maris's work, at its most characteristic, has the impressiveness of unity and power.

As regards method, Johannes Bosboom—our last very important modern Dutchman (though we might perhaps have discoursed on Anton Mauve)—would have the same tale to tell as Maris. He too, at the cost of a temporary dryness, and of too great precision, and of detail expressed laboriously, instead of significantly indicated, got thoroughly grounded, had the foundation laid for the later freedom, which was so learned, and which seemed so easy. Like Emanuel de Witte, of the Dutch seventeenth century, the interiors of churches, spacious churches, cold to the common eye, were his habitual theme. Cold or not cold, Bosboom, often with but

a few touches, conveys to you their interest and their charm. What is their charm? Well, it is perhaps unseizable and indescribable. It is not at all in their beauty of detail; for beauty, any abounding beauty of detail, they often have not got. They are Dutch churches, gaunt and featureless—they are not English or French. And Bosboom, one is sure, would not have had them other than they are, would not have spent the best of his life in drawing them (and the best churches of Bosboom are not oil paintings, but water-colours) had he not understood, and very readily accepted what it was that alone they could offer. What *could* they offer? That sound sense of proportion, generally, that governed their architects from the first—and their spaciousness —an interest in itself. On such a great stage could be played out the drama, and played out most effectively, with a high dignity. Light and shade were its persons. Light concentrated here, shadow distributed there, in varying degrees of closeness and of mystery. Light and gloom, space, the vista, massiveness, volume—it is in these things, in their presentation with a simple, undeniable power, that lies the charm of Bosboom's church drawings. It is to the imagination that they speak.

CHAPTER VI

VENETIAN MASTERS

THE Republic of Venice was not a place for the Primitives. It was hardly more a place for them in the days of its early prosperity than in those of its gorgeous decadence. And yet, whatever was best in the Primitives of the Italian peninsula was found in a Venetian. Bellini combined faith—unquestioning faith, sincerity, and good intention—with what some most admired Primitives lacked curiously or lacked conspicuously: a high capacity to draw and paint. That combination in him of the qualities of worthy folk a little earlier than himself, as early it may be, as Giotto, with qualities vouchsafed in richest measure to men of genius who were his immediate successors, unites Bellini to the generation that had passed and to the generation that was next to come. So he becomes a link. That does not prevent us from discovering and recognizing that his highest attractiveness exists by reason, not of his relation to this or that School or person or period, but because of his individuality, those gifts of his that were emphatically his

own. In him we have a sedate chronicler of truth, an artist dignified and noble, a craftsman who had perfected, wellnigh to the uttermost, the means which he was minded to employ. Most of this praise is, one reflects, as applicable to Giorgione as to him of whom it has just been uttered, and of Giorgione this must be added—he was poetic, profoundly.

Yet in Venetian art, the Bellini and Giorgione, with all their virtues and their charms, and Carpaccio, with all the quaintness of his pictured history, were in a sense, but forerunners. It is after their departure from the scene that the curtain rises to disclose the very greatest performers: to show executants endowed most richly with staying power. As, at some modern entertainment, the moment is a late one at which those appear whose persons and whose gifts stir the deepest or the most general enthusiasm. The day is no longer young, the time is ripe, that produces Tintoret and Titian, and that third master of stately presentation, Paolo Veronese. Scarcely, perhaps, is it in accordance with the newer fashions in painting to continue the simile, and to connect with only the latest and the tired hour those engaging practitioners of eighteenth century painting, those exponents

of eighteenth century life, Tiepolo and Longhi, Canaletto and Guardi. And yet, no fashion that is to be respected at all, can claim, or has claimed, for the Venetians of an illustrious decadence the rank and the attention properly the due of those great masters who performed when art was at its zenith—nay, whose capacities of noble thought and splendid line and faultless affluence of colour were just the factors that permitted to pictorial art the level it once reached.

The art of Venice has been written about so much, so learnedly, and so abundantly, whether as regards those manifestations of its excellence as remain in the churches and the galleries and the council halls, or as regards those other pieces which enterprising purchase or the fortune of war, or other accident, occurring during the three centuries of their existence, has borne away, it may be, to Madrid, it may be Paris, it may be even to Trafalgar Square, that the author of a mere sketch-history, the opener of a window upon the painting of the world, may be pardoned—more, it is even to be hoped, commended—if he is brief where others have been long. Leading features, the most salient traits, are what, in the case of the Venetians, I shall in this small

volume mostly be concerned with. I shall invite the beginner to take cognizance of the most patent differences between the efforts of the artists whose more subtle unlikeness has been elsewhere, and by other hands, elaborately traced.

Mainly there are to be considered—especially as regards the great period—performances in religious painting, in portraiture, and in decoration; and of the three artistic giants of that great period, all are concerned, in different degrees, with each one of these branches of work. Branches they are which interlace, however, since it must be seen clearly that often there is no reason whatever why religious painting should not also be decorative; and Tintoret's "Miracle of the Greek Slave" may be taken as a consummate instance of the union of those two genres. There is no inevitable restriction of the expression of piety—and Tintoret's piety was dramatic to the limits of an easel picture. Again, the scale and something of the treatment of Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin," in the Venetian Academy, marks that out as being not decorative alone, or pious alone, but pious and decorative.

The themes of classical allegory or myth-

ology—Titian's "Venus and Adonis," in the National Gallery, is an example—obviously lend themselves to treatment upon the large or "decorative" scale. Only in the North, where, often for mere warmth's sake, rooms are small, and thus the wall-space limited and quickly absorbed, would even a Poelemberg think of depicting the naked forms of two-inch-high nymphs or Goddesses in a landscape perhaps ten inches broad. The Low Countries are the especial home of the easel picture. But portraiture, unless indeed grouped portraiture—and Venice offers us nothing in portraiture exactly comparable in intention or fact with that which Haarlem shows us as the best life-work of Franz Hals—portraiture, at all events whenever it is short of "full length," is on the scale of an easel picture, habitually. Therefore Titian — the great portraitist of our group of the three giants of Venetian painting—occupied and covered the least space of the three. He it is, of the three, who, notwithstanding the execution by him of the two large and noble pieces I happen to have named, and others like them, in the course of the long years of his unceasingly busy life, is the most eligible to be compared with the great painters of lands not

his own : with Velasquez, one would say, and with Rembrandt. That which the technical students of art intend to indicate when they use the word "quality"—that is fineness, in the best sense, of texture : a verisimilitude not so much imitative as interpreting—is to be found, thus naturally, far more in Titian than in Veronese or Tintoret. One would not say for a moment, Tintoret is without it, for Tintoret himself paints portraits. But he has it more rarely. Then, with an added richness, he has noble design, carried out in noble draughtsmanship, in lines of muscular action, of abounding energy. Veronese paints pageantry, the stately scene; and in the painting of the stately scene, design has its marked function. It must be design that dominates. The design of Veronese is as noble, as firmly laid, as Michael Angelo's. It is, in itself, not nobler : but then it is less interfused with, I would not for the world say less contaminated with, passion. And so, of course, it has in a degree I should have called unique but for the advent, in our own time, of Puvis de Chavannes—it has, in a degree *almost* unique, the boon of restfulness.

The Venetians of the eighteenth century—masters of a delightful decadence—remove

us from this high world of their elders to a world of everyday. Even Tiepolo does that to some extent. I am not sure that it has not somewhere been said of him already that he was not so much a poet as the stage-manager of poetic effects. His energy and impulse, his command of sweeping line, leave him attractive. But he speaks, rather, the language of a mundane rhetoric; a facile, promptly exercised art is often in the place of inspiration; he has not (yet he does not know that he has not) "the broad utterance of the early gods." At the same time it is quite possible, and would be quite pleasant, to justify and defend the modern revival of interest in him.

Longhi, by the nature of his conceptions, by the scale and character of his canvasses, courts comparison with those French masters, more or less his contemporaries, who depicted drawing-room life, drawing-room courtesy, grace, and vivacity, and drawing-room intrigue. With the less illustrious of those masters he can stand comparison well enough. It is only when his work is brought into juxtaposition with that of a dominating genius that it is seen as relatively ineffective; and, even then, Longhi is not to be altogether

ruled out, for he gives you, being Venetian, a variation on Parisian sentiment, and—it is his good fortune rather than his merit, yet we count it to him for righteousness—he gives you in the creatures of his comedy a new type, and, in the scene of it, an unfamiliar *décor*.

Canaletto and Guardi, the two chief painters in the eighteenth century, of the outside of Venice—the painters, not of its buildings only, but of its skies and waters—were less creative than Longhi, less creative than Tiepolo; because, with human fortunes, human nature, even human movement, they were relatively unconcerned. To them men and women were appropriate and useful spots and dots on the Venetian landscape, and the action of the gondolier, monotonous but graceful, was the action that they principally portrayed. Certainly Canaletto was a great draughtsman; but was not Guardi a not less impressive one? It may be that the most complete Canaletto is a completer thing than the finest Guardi; but how much more than the average Canaletto has the average Guardi the charm of vividness and impulse, the suggestion of high spirits, the sense of enjoyment on these free waters, of palpitating life in every fascinating transition from brilliant light to obscure

shadow, and out again from this deep shadow, into the sunshine of piazzetta and façade! Unless Canaletto's reputation rested on a very few of his pictures, such as the best, for instance, in the British Royal collections, it is surprising to me that it was ever in advance of Guardi's. Amongst us it was known first, we need not doubt; and we are loyal to our favourites: we displace them reluctantly. There is, in our loyalty, sometimes, just a suspicion of dullness, and, in presence of Guardi, a measure of inconstancy to Canaletto may by this time be condoned. The average Canaletto cannot be impeached as a chronicle. Therefore we must respect it. But then, the average Guardi brings joy to us, which is so much more than respect. The average Canaletto is a record, and the average Guardi a song.

CHAPTER VII

THE SPANISH PAINTERS

Two generations ago, a study of Spanish painting, undertaken in England, would have centred in, and in great measure consisted of, a study of Murillo, popular in the treatment of religious subjects, popular too

in subjects of the street. The point of interest has by this time changed. English taste in this matter has moved upon the lines of continental opinion, nor moved, indeed, so greatly in the rear of it. Velasquez is the god of our idolatry, and—not to speak of men now living, who bring to him with heartiness the tribute of their allegiance—this newer attitude had the promptings, a generation or two ago, of sojourners in Spain, enlightened like Sir William Stirling Maxwell and Sir Clare Ford.

Not to conspicuous failings at all recently discovered in conception or execution, but to a vein of sentimentality running through his work, is mainly to be attributed Murillo's decline in public favour. It would be unfair to suggest that any considerable part of present lukewarmness, displayed to the suave master of Seville, is due to a general lessening of interest in religious themes—themes which Murillo treated so often, and Velasquez so rarely. With the position of scarcely reasoned favour enjoyed by the Primitives—the Italian Primitives, especially, in our mind's eye (and not much memory and not much knowledge is needed to enable us to realize that)—it can hardly appear to us that religious painting,

quâ religious painting, is very seriously at a discount. Certainly the collector of either old or modern art is less occupied with it than of yore. It is not decoration for the dining-room wall. But its profoundest masters in the past—of whom one is not sure that Rembrandt, instead of Raphael, may not be the chief—retain the regard of the thoughtful; and if to-day a religious painter arose, capable of avoiding, on the one hand, the Scylla of the commonplace, and, on the other, the Charybdis of the eccentric, had he genius as well as merely good will, there would be, if not a *clientèle* to buy, at least a public to admire.

What has put Murillo into the background —and perhaps a little too completely: for the painter of the "Assumption" at the Louvre had dignity, solemnity at need, fair draughtsmanship, feeling—and what has brought Velasquez to the front, is a change in our ideals. We have of late become accustomed to demand no veiled or sentimentalized vision, but, whatever may be the theme, decisiveness, breadth, accent, character. It is the happy function of the art of Spain, it is in accordance with the temperament of her people, to answer in abundance this typically modern request.

Of the dead painters of Spain, the three

who, whether we like them altogether, or have yet certain reservations in regard to their work, do in any case arouse the largest measure of contemporary interest, are Velasquez, El Greco, Goya. Some things they all three have in common; all have in common those characteristics which we have named as almost a condition of interest to-day, but each, to boot, is rich, conspicuously rich, in individuality. Nor if, instead of taking as examples or tests, the three great men, dead long ago, who have been singled out, who seemed to claim such selection—if, instead of El Greco, Velasquez, Goya, we take a man recently dead, dead prematurely, Garrido, delightful painter of the gay heart and vivid life of childhood, and two men working at this hour with vigour, fertility, aplomb, the popular and often striking Sorolla, who covers a wide ground, and Zuloaga, who is restricted, concentrated, unforgettable (certainly the greatest Spanish artist of any recent generation)—we shall find that they too, all of them, though in different measure, respond to the requirements that have been indicated as those of the newer ideal.

There is a reason for a relative slowness in assigning, at all events in assigning with

justice, to artists their exact, their at all closely defined place in the ranks of Spanish art. No great civilized land has, until lately, been so little visited as Spain. Spain's geographical position in Europe is that of Cornwall or of Lincolnshire in the map of our own islands. Lincolnshire and Cornwall are cut off, because they lead nowhere. Spain leads nowhere, and so is cut off. And, it so happens that, even more than Italy itself, Spain requires to be visited, beheld and entered into, before its art can be at all properly gauged. It must be visited because of its galleries—it must be beheld because of its people. Immeasurable is the light thrown by the one upon the other. We need not labour the point; but the very conditions under which British painting has been produced—its scale, the purposes it has been destined to serve—make it quite possible (though one hopes it may be only in the remotest future) that it may come to be studied in the world across the Atlantic almost as completely as in London. In a sense, of course, all art is to be studied best in the places that produced it. Dutch patriotism has effectually prevented the Hague and Amsterdam from becoming superfluous. But

think of the Rembrandts at St. Petersburg and Vienna : think of the masters of Genre that are in the Peel Collection !

As regards fashions in admiration, the rage for El Greco, the weird, enchanting master of Toledo, is not only more recent, but is, besides, less widely spread, less wholly justified, than is the fashion for Velasquez. Yet there is much to defend it, and, were the claims of El Greco supported only with a wise enthusiasm, and never fanatically at all, they would everywhere be conceded. The book in which they are best urged is of but recent date, and is the product of two authors, each of whom has his independent say. M. Paul Lafont, curator of the Museum of Pau, has long made a learned study of El Greco's various labours, what they indicate, what they reveal, and the relations between them. And if there is in France to-day a writer, a born writer, distinguished above his fellows by a measured picturesqueness and an imagination refined and poetic, it is M. Lafont's companion, M. Maurice Barrès. Maurice Barrès realizes in himself the deep veracity of Buffon's saying, "*Bien écrire, c'est bien penser.*"

Born in Crete, and of Greek parentage, in 1548, the artist destined to be known to the

Western world as " El Greco " joined when a youth that colony of his compatriots—illuminators, miniaturists, glass-workers—established at Venice under the shadow of San Giorgio, and preserving under Venetian skies something of the Byzantine tradition. At Venice, during a stay of half a dozen years or so, El Greco received his education as designer, draughtsman, painter. When he left Venice his originality remained undeclared, but—mainly under the influence of the genius and the practice of Tintoret—he had acquired the skill to paint quite decent, creditable Venetian pictures, which his public was prepared to find satisfactory. Equipped in that way, he journeyed into Spain, and for reasons we need not here pause to inquire into, fixed himself at Toledo : there lived, developed himself, sprung as an artist into individual being : there died, in 1614, the possessor of a recognized rank, a painter whom Pachecho, the master of Velasquez, made a point of seeing, when circumstances brought him to the austere city whose people looked out from tower and battlement and the bridge over the river to the remote distances of arid and steep land. The character of Toledo, emphatic, rugged, unyielding, attractive, but attractive savagely,

entered into El Greco's art, and through Toledo his own originality was disengaged. On Spanish soil, he developed a style curiously Spanish in temper, Spanish in the depths as much as on the surface. It was compact of his own visionariness, and of a penetrating observation, and of an execution fearlessly decisive and fearlessly austere; and those even who like El Greco's riper manner least, admit, generally, that the actual touch has interest.

There is a portrait of El Greco with a short beard, pointed, becoming grey—a serious man with a high brow and a tall and compressed head—that, in a certain intensity and narrowness of concentration, suggests much of the work that came from him: not, indeed, the "Profane Love," which, whenever it was actually produced, savours more of Titian himself, and of the Italian Renaissance, than of Spain; but many and many a portrait of inquisitor, ecclesiastic, dignitary, and that great monumental composition, a summary, albeit elaborate, complex, of all Toledan character, thought, hope—that "Burial of the Count Organza" which is the object of high interest in the church of San Tomé. Here, in the lower part of the composition, with a realism unexaggerated but unflinching,

some scores of gathered Toledans, of every age and type, are presented, singing a requiem over the body of a man who was one of them; —while, above, the opening heavens disclose a beatified company, and promise to accord the worthy who has left the earth a welcome gracious and radiant.

Not less Toledan really, and not less individual, is a picture possessed by M. Durand Ruel: a view of the city, with brilliant lights, deep shadows, and great storm clouds, the scene a little harsh, a little weird, and presented, as was El Greco's wont, of course, with accent and emphasis. "El Greco's wont;" but yet a habit from which he could, at given moments and for given purposes, detach himself—as in some measure in a long famous example, a "Young Woman's Portrait," that of the painter's daughter, it is commonly thought, which came to Sir William Stirling Maxwell from out of the Collection of Louis Philippe, a bust, a thing of utmost suavity, and of the South: the young face of a pure oval, "le teint mat," with large eyes opened wide. To some extent that work is exceptional.

Finding ourselves with Velasquez, we are conscious at once of being in a greater, more

tolerant, less intense world. Realist though this master may generally be accounted, his work is pervaded by a courtlier, kindlier sense of things than any that belongs to his forerunners or contemporaries. "We can forget the Inquisition," Mr. Charles Ricketts well says, in reference to his tone and temper, as much or more than to his mere themes. But, as we have noted in El Greco that he was hardly El Greco at all in the half-dozen years or more of his Venetian period, so it must be remembered that the Velasquez of Seville gave at least only partial indication of the Velasquez of Madrid. A foretaste of what was coming, but a foretaste only, is apparent in the Duke of Wellington's early "Water Carrier," that well-authenticated, long-accepted canvas that represents, with a force and luminousness already extraordinary, a man in tattered brown doublet, bearing in one hand the large jar, and, with the other, tendering a glass of water to a boy beside a table.

To speak only of work that is in England, and to recall the late R. A. M. Stevenson's contention that, in the outdoor full-length portraits in which *ensemble* and atmosphere and realized background, a sense of the presence of the actual and the changing

world, must needs count for much, there is not to be looked for that near and searching treatment of the visage which the best studies of the head—sometimes the head alone—by Velasquez reveal, we may compare the Duke of Westminster's "Don Balthasar," conspicuous for its subordination of the claims of personal portrayal to the claims of general effect, with more than one portrait of Mariana of Austria, extraordinarily fresh and vigorous and complete. Greater yet, one thinks, for colour, character, and, there is no other word for it, "modernness" or actuality, is the Apsley House "Innocent the Tenth." In it, as in the other canvas that records the same sitter, the finest qualities of masculine portraiture are combined and displayed. The key to human expression, painters sometimes assure us, and mainly rightly so, is in the corners of the mouth; and charged with the love of life, the love of its good things, and with a certain thirst for domination, is this mouth of Innocent's. But is his eye less revealing—wary here, and shrewd; watchful, yet full of fire?

So much for English things—for canvasses that are in England to-day. So much, and not a word thus far for the exceptional "Venus"

from Mr. Morrett's at Rokeby. In England Velasquez may be known not badly. But in Madrid many a picture emphasizes the truth that to know Velasquez thoroughly, we must know him in Spain.

Our reference shall be brief, and shall concern three pictures, of the most widely different aims and varying appeal, of which the earliest is "Las Lanzas" ("The Lances"), a title which is a prompt reminder of one's first impression of the composition, of its leading pictorial feature. Another name recalls its historical incident, "The Surrender of Breda": the surrender after a ten months' siege, which was endured until the garrison and people—like the Parisians, valiant and firm, in 1871—had "finished their last bread." Then, Justin of Nassau, the Governor of the town, waited upon Spinola, the Spanish commander; and that submission, which his attitude in the picture typifies, was received with consideration and the "stately Spanish grace," the boon of which was vouchsafed also—Tennyson reminds us—to the vanquished fighters on board the little *Revenge*. Behind and at the side of the two principal figures, the soldiery and Spanish Generals, and Spinola's prancing horse, with haunches towards us, occupy and crowd the

scene. In middle distance, a company of spearsmen ride along the land, and beyond them a country of field and stream and village, a plain, peopled and endless, a blue-green distance at once pictorial and real, stretches to the horizon. Mr. Brabazon thought "Las Lanzas" the greatest Velasquez. Passages in that work anticipate the breadth of a generally broader time; and there is interest in remembering that Velasquez, whose sense of Style in landscape is evidenced abundantly by his rendering of the Classic or Renaissance grace of the Gardens of the Villa Medicis—two of such works are at Madrid, one with the straight lines of scaffolding veiling an archway—had never really seen the land depicted in the long stretching background of "The Surrender of Breda." But he studied bird's-eye views, topographical records, and reconciled the claims of fact with the claims of art.

As regards the portrait of him who must have been for Velasquez, as he is certainly for the public, the chief personage of the scene, Spinola, unjustly disgraced not long after the incident which is on this canvas recorded, died before the painting of the picture. But Velasquez had studied him well. In 1629 he had travelled with him to

Italy, by sea, and the long hours of the voyage are likely to have been beguiled by the narrative which a master of action could afford to an artist who was something more than a painter of spectacle.

The two other Prado pictures which remain to be spoken of belong to the last period of Velasquez' practice: a time at which his hand had learnt the lesson of how to be wholly economic in labour, a time at which the fullness of perception and knowledge was expressed in tersest phrase. Thus, while the modelling of the head in the "Alonso Cano, the Sculptor," as it used to be called—but Señor Madrazo believes that the person here recorded in an early stage of his struggle with the massed clay is Martini Montanez—is most completely indicative, the clay bust upon which the modeller is working is suggested in chief by canvas dexterously bare. But what a grave directness in the occupied face; what a watchful eye, and what a handling, by the modeller's fingers, of the modeller's tool; what a study in the simple severity of collar and cloak!

The painter Mengs remarked of "The Tapestry Weavers," a scene in the deserted convent of St. Isabel, that "it appeared as

if the hand had had no part in it : it had been the work of pure thought." The phrase, like many a painter's utterance, is, if momentarily impressive, a little enigmatic. "The Tapestry Weavers" displays no more continuity of thought than fullness of sentiment. What it does display is observation unerring, a cunning of the hand that knows no possibility of defeat. The loveliest of the figures—the girl, robustly lovely, whose "profile" we may almost contentedly suffer to be "lost," in more than the sense of the French phrase, so long as she reveals to us the fineness and the strength of outstretched arm—is at once modern and a reminiscence of the type of Titian. The arrangement of colour, the disposition of light and shade, the placing of each object with a view to balance and effect—these are as evident as is that sense of *la vie vécue*, the life men lead, not dream of, which is present, I suppose, in greater or in less degree, in every canvas that came from Velasquez' hand. The truth of action is complete : the wheel of the elder woman moves not more certainly than the arm of the winding girl, robust of contour, delicate of hand. The realism of Velasquez, as displayed in "The Tapestry Weavers," was

concerned with three things; and as two of these things are character and beauty, his is the realism that may claim to be Truth.

Amongst other Spanish painters, Zurbaran was an artist of mark—of mark so certainly that an "Epiphany" in the National Gallery, assumed at present to be the product of his brush, has been held in the Past to be an early work of the great Velasquez himself. And Ribera too, potent, though limited, has a place, a niche, of his own. Pictures of "pious subjects" from his hand may be gloomy; but at least they are simplified and impressive. Another century has nevertheless to be reached before we are again arrested —as with Velasquez: as, in a measure, with El Greco—by a personality of the first rank. And then it is a Revolutionary, a painter indeed who recalls the old, but who is equipped with the new; it is a man of conceptions fearless, unfettered, and sometimes to the point of irreverence: a man of abundant invention, now graceful, now grotesque and *macabre*. I suppose I have indicated that I am coming to Goya, who looms large on the horizon of Art. He is a person that intelligent people study, that nearly all intelligent people more or less enjoy, to-day.

Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes—for picturesqueness or for musical quality, does not his name very nearly rival the most attractive that we know, that of the contemporary of Goya's latest years, the painter Diaz: Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña?—Francisco Goya lived through three generations, and under many *régimes*. Born near Saragossa in 1746, and dying at Bordeaux in 1828, Goya was the mutinous *protégé* of at least four Royal patrons. His youthful talent was encouraged by Don Louis, brother of the then Sovereign, Charles the Third. The old King himself, aware, as a commentator upon Goya has well pointed out, that "without great subjects a King is but a small Prince," did, though Bayeu was his official picture painter, scarcely less than his share to contribute to Goya's practice and to his fame. Charles the Fourth, in 1789, gave Goya, in connection with his art, a recognized post, the emoluments and prestige of which the man of genius pretty promptly abandoned when the far from blameless wife of the Sovereign—moved thereto by the solicitations of the Countess of Benavente, who had been enamoured of Goya, and whom Goya had painted—banished from her Court

a lady, the famous Duchess of Alba, to whom the master, by this time, was profoundly attached. The Duchess was invited to seek her country house, and its quietude; and it was in Goya's company that she repaired to it. Returning later to Madrid, the painter, like most, it seems, of Charles's Court, thought fit to take the oath of allegiance to Joseph Bonaparte. He was already in old age, but in an old age capable and energetic, when, in 1814, the Prince of Asturias came back to his own, and was crowned as Ferdinand the Seventh. "You have deserved exile, nay, the rope itself," said the legitimate Sovereign; "but you are a great artist, and we will forget everything." He sat to Goya many times. At the Academy of San Fernando there is an equestrian portrait. There is a picture at the Prado, full of character and truth, showing the monarch "hot from a gallop," Mr. Rothenstein tells us, and, in the distance, his horses are led away. Received again into favour—yet himself a little proudly doubting it—and with health lowered now, and power to some extent shrinking, Goya, in 1822, determined upon exile. He settled at Bordeaux, and there, in the company of one or two closely attached

friends at all events, he died six years afterwards, eighty-two years old.

Goya was fertility itself, and flexibility itself; the range of his achievement is even more remarkable than is the span of time he was enabled to devote to it. An enemy of the Church, as he knew it in Spain, in days in which the Inquisition had not wholly lost either its force or its bigotry; a scoffer at ecclesiasticism so much, and with such bitterness and delight, that we can scarcely avoid the conclusion that, with all his intelligence, he was partisan and prosecutor rather than quite just judge, Goya was yet not incapable of painting a religious picture with earnestness and dignity. He was imaginative, in the sense that he was dramatic; but never was he visionary at all. For his drama, the basis must be a fact of which he had cognizance, or, at least, a fact of which he could conceive. Were there occasion for satire in the telling of his story, so much the better for him, and the happier; for satire he loved, loved it so much that he was unaware, probably, how often he presented it obscurely. If there were not satire in his design—I am speaking of his groups, not of his single figures—there must be violence of action, gaiety or cruelty

or weird terror. His prints of the "Disasters of War" were of scenes that had touched him to the depths. In his "Caprices"—the finest of the several sets of etchings or lithographs with which he varied or refreshed himself from his labours as fresco and portrait painter—there is less experience and more imagination; or, rather, there is the experience that has prompted imagination: the experience, refined upon and considered, sometimes consciously worked upon, sometimes put by until mere passage of time allowed it to be expressed in terms of Art.

As for the "Caprices," very rightly now, collectors are insisting upon choosing the finest and discarding the least interesting. That means, men have arisen who decline the work as a volume for their shelves, but seek, and pay high prices for, the best subjects, piquant or beautiful, as prints to put along with Rembrandts, Meryons, Whistlers, in their solander-boxes.

In the way of figure-subjects, nothing interested Goya more than the treatment of a group, a crowd, a popular rejoicing or half impromptu festival—"Mât de Cocagne" for instance. A bull-fight was a spectacle with endless opportunities, ranging from stately

entry to wild and ignominious or tragic collapse. Manolas on the balcony, with their gallants in shadow behind them: there was occasion for intrigue and for alluring mystery. There must be a Maja draped and a Maja nude, and in the Maja nude in the Academy of San Fernando there is more than a hint—it is believed—of a lady of the great world, of whom Goya was at the time the lover. With a palette described as simple, Goya was wont to attain, along with sometimes doubtful, since too audacious draughtsmanship, magical effect. Yet whatever was the effectiveness of his colour, he said—or there was a time at which he said—that with light and shade he could do everything. Certainly the etchings prove—and the Series of the "Caprices" proves best of all—that he was a master of etching. And his etching had unusual technical range. Aquatint, added to Line, often gave to it the particular charm of drawings.

Of the painted portraits, some have what has been recognized as a Gainsborough-like charm. That is in part, but only in small part, an affair of the period and of the dress. Others have as their characteristic pure potency of brush-work, or instant penetration into complex character. Then it is Velasquez

that they emulate, Velasquez to whom they declare their debt. I am not sure that the Prado portrait of Bayeu, the painter—Goya's friend and a little his senior—has not in it a suggestion of one quality or another of each of the two great men I have named. In that case, it is in its particular blend of them that its own high originality is discovered. Instantly striking, at the least, for pose and vision, is the portrait of Asensi, in the palace of San Telmo at Seville.

Of the three more or less memorable and in different ways typical Spanish painters of the beginning of the twentieth century, who, in an earlier page, have been just named, Garrido has, as the magnet drawing us to him, his Southern gaiety and sunniness, his fine capacity for realizing, in any case, a certain side of the life, thought, feeling, of the children of the people. And Sorolla has, as his characteristic, a range that is not Spanish at all, as a possession, generally. Central Europe might account for Sorolla—France alone certainly might account for the greater part of him.

But the third artist, Zuloaga, only Spain could account for. And Velasquez himself, and Goya too, sometimes quite as distinctly,

is an artist by whose methods and vision Zuloaga has been inspired. But Zuloaga has never for a moment been imitator or copyist; and the author of the pictures in the Salon of 1912—the picture of the beast, bleeding and tired, going home over rough country, from the wars of the bull-fight, and the picture of "My Uncle Daniel and his Family," with all Spain lying beneath them—they are people you have known all your life, when once you have beheld Zuloaga's canvasses—the author of these things, I say, has Molière's right of old. Material everywhere is his own, if he chooses to take it.

CHAPTER VIII

HOGARTH TO ROMNEY

THE eighteenth century in England, which offers us in Literature an array of greatness—heights of Psychology scaled by Samuel Richardson in *Clarissa*, the summit of all charming Style in Sterne, the summit of Biography in Boswell's volumes, the summit of all dutiful and sturdy human Wisdom in the pronouncements of that man of letters, noble and beloved, who was the theme

of Boswell's portrait—that eighteenth century in England offers no really corresponding heights in the art that is pictorial.

Yet in that art the English eighteenth century is not unworthy. It is variously fascinating. It offers us first, in William Hogarth, a master of character, grim comedy, and tragedy, and still-life painting; next, in Richard Wilson, our great classic landscape painter—whom later Barret, Palmer, Samuel Finch followed—and then, in Reynolds, Gainsborough and Romney, three portrait painters, each in his own way distinguished, each in his own way admirable. In the eighteenth century, Crome had just begun—Crome, but not Constable. Last, at the very end of it, we saw, in Cozens, Turner, Girtin, the interesting rise of English Water-colour. Cozens, on his own limited lines, was a poet simple and complete. Girtin had knowledge, taste, reticence; and these combined make charm. The nineteenth century had but just opened, when at twenty-eight he was gone. There was left Turner. The work that he had done by Girtin's side should alone have been enough to have made Turner lasting; but had he, like his friend, died only two or three years after 1800, that

work would have been for the well-equipped connoisseur—it would not have been for the public.

In two short paragraphs I have tried to summarily name those English painters of the eighteenth century whom we may most enjoy and remember. Admirable all of them: most worthy of study. But is it to be seriously contended that, as an expression of the national life and national vision, these, taken together, have the fullness and range of the men who, in the eighteenth century in France—representing the life of France in all its phases, from stage to boudoir, from cottage to château—would have answered to a similar roll-call? Watteau we should have asked for; Nattier, and Lancret; Boucher—superficial in sentiment, but great in the facile accomplishment of his aim—Chardin, strong, tender, and grave, a very bulwark, as well as a mirror of the morality and stability of his world; Quantin Latour, incomparably penetrating, unsurpassably brilliant; Moreau le Jeune, with his incarnate elegance; and Prud'hon, with the suavity of his classic dream.

But we are amongst Englishmen. Let us begin with Hogarth, who of all is the most

forcible and exact exponent of his own rough land and time.

With Hogarth, as with most of the greatest men, the inquiry would be an idle one "Who was his master?" Idle at all events if it were made seriously. A great man's master is generally an accident—an accident we can afford to neglect. Of important English painters, Hogarth was substantially the first. None of his elders within reach of him were in the least his equal, though it does chance that he had in his own master, Sir James Thornhill, an artist who had absorbed and profited by great tradition: an artist who cared, as a decorative artist of real worth is bound to care, for the solution of problems of design, and for the effects which design, properly guided, may attain. At Blenheim, at Moor Park, and in the Painted Hall at Greenwich, there is evidence of Thornhill's style.

Hogarth was engraver as well as painter, satirist as well as engraver. Moralist he was, and a stern one. But the sternness of his morals was not incompatible with freedom of theme and of treatment. Hogarth never minced matters. His was not the art of delicate or even of indelicate innuendo. A spade was indeed a spade with him. He had

a story to tell : he told it with directness. He had a moral to inculcate; and ruthlessly he rubbed it in. Rake's progress, harlot's progress—there is no faltering in his chronicle of their disastrous march. "Marriage à la Mode"—the pictures in the National Gallery—gives him occasion for many a lighter touch, though he moves ever, and knows that he moves ever, towards his tragic end. His observation was subtle : his lesson obvious.

Hogarth's merriest mood and lightest satire is seen in prints that, without recourse to the professional engravers who gave us brilliantly their version of "Marriage à la Mode," he himself roughly but effectively engraved. There is the "Laughing Audience" for instance, with its varied guffaw, and its incidental touches of a Watteau-like vivacity and grace. There is the "Sleeping Congregation"—the dulness of the preacher has often been an acceptable theme. There is that rich and life-like record of the itinerant players : "Strolling Actresses dressing in a Barn." So much for the prints—of which, it is permissible to tell the reader who is not yet a collector, some of the quaintest, bought to-day, cost but a few shillings, and the finest only a few pounds.

We turn again to the paintings; in part to note the sound, painter-like method; in part to be reminded that in conversation pieces, family groups on a small scale, and the most unambitious portraiture, there is found often in Hogarth's work the maximum of charm. Take the broad, simple, vivid sketch of the "Shrimp-girl"—head and bust—a thing that came to the National Gallery, not very many years ago, from the Leigh Court collection. Had Franz Hals painted it, it would have been painted with no more masterly dexterity, and with much less of fascination.

The typical landscape painter of the English eighteenth century was Richard Wilson. For, strictly considered, Crome was of the nineteenth century: twenty years—that is two-thirds of his working life—was in it, but it was the nineteenth century of the provinces, and in the early nineteenth century, more markedly than now, the provinces lagged behind. It is not an unfair thing, then—and it is a tempting and convenient thing—to speak of Wilson and "Old" Crome together, at least for a moment. One was so utterly realist, the other so utterly idealist. But, pronounced as both were in the pursuit of their particular plan, Crome was not realist

to the point of the exclusion of beauty, and Wilson was not idealist or dreamer to the point of the exclusion of truth; and both, when in full practice, had profited by the influence—never, of course, by the direct teaching—of the masters. Poussin and Claude, in their surviving work, influenced, if they did not inspire, the one Welsh painter of genius; and Crome's methods, as well as his themes, were founded upon those of the great seventeenth century Dutchmen. Without Hobbema, Ruysdael, Wynants, ornaments of the Dutch seventeenth century, could Crome, amidst the lanes and heaths and coppices of Norfolk, have become what he was? Perhaps not. But more than Hobbema, more than Wynants and Ruysdael, he added tenderness to strength: he kept real, but he made comely, his presentation of the homely fact. Painting the solid earth, and the gnarled tree, and the rustic cottage beside the humble stream, and, now and then besides, the wide waters of the Norfolk coast, and, not so seldom, the heath-covered table-land that lay upon the outskirts of his native town, he painted air and light as well, and the passage over his great, broken landscape, of skies luminous and

changeful. So did he come to anticipate the virtues, some of the virtues, of Eugène Boudin, and of our modern English water-colour painter, Thomas Collier. Never did Crome paint air and light better than in his "Mousehold Heath" of the National Gallery; and his best etching, an etching that will live, is "Mousehold Heath" also.

In atmospheric effect, though it is in very different atmospheric effect, lies much of the charm of Richard Wilson. And by reason of that fact the two come together—for in enabling the man who saw his pictures to realize the air and the illumination of the hour, Wilson was no more artificial, no more stereotyped, than Crome: he was only more restricted. He had his favourite and his happiest moments, and they were moments of cool morning or serene evening, generally. Crome had a greater range: seldom did there arise an hour, a scene, that he was incapable of recording. In noting that, it becomes our business to remember the circumstance that partly accounts for it. Crome was only once out of England: not often out of Norfolk. His life was spent mainly in a land of atmospheric change, whilst Wilson, long in actual habitation, and longer afterwards in thought

and memory, was associated with the landscape—and with the skies, faithfully fine—of central Italy. His world was the Roman Campagna, the winding Tiber, and the spurs of the Apennines. For Wilson, England was almost non-existent, and even his own Wales was not much more than an episode.

While, then, Richard Wilson cannot be charged with conventionality in any rendering of the weather and the atmosphere that he was privileged to know, or that he most cared about, there is to be remembered to some extent against him a paucity of obvious theme, a repetition of the same subjects. His "Niobe," done for the Duke of Cumberland in 1760, when the painter had approached middle age, may not have been repeated; but "Mæcenas' Villa" and "Cicero's Villa" and other such painter's motives which gave occasion for the realization of classic architecture in classic landscape, abound in the volume of his production. He began by Portraiture; but in youth he did not find himself, and the portraits by which for a few years he lived, nobody now talks about. Italy, when he was thirty-five, opened his eyes, nourished his genius, his talent and his tastes. Wilson was Classic essentially. Instinctively

he searched for and discovered symmetry and style, without which nothing can be Classic at all. Consummate was his sense of composition. He never placed a figure wrongly during all his life, one may assert; though, along with praise like that, there must be made the admission that sometimes it was a little too obvious that he had placed the figure where it should be. Yet excessive faultlessness and the passive error of the zeal skilfully exercised and not so skilfully concealed, must not blind us to the distinction and dignity of his performance, or make us insensible, or unappreciative, of the ordered poetry of his soul. Hogarth and Wilson were the first great English painters. It is amusing and at the same time instructive to reflect that except their greatness and their straight and sturdy craftsmanship they had nothing whatever in common. Wide and long must needs be that road of Art upon which gifted men can travel always and meet so seldom.

Hogarth had not yet been laid in Chiswick churchyard, Wilson had still a quarter of a century to live, and that master of a comely realism in landscape, John Crome ("Old" Crome, as his fellow citizens called him) was

not yet born, when, just about the middle of the eighteenth century, Reynolds and Gainsborough first rose to distinction. It was Reynolds who "arrived" first—a Devonian who had travelled in Italy. A hold over the public, acquired quickly after his return from a contact with what was left of the Renaissance—from experiences in Venice and Rome that were profoundly teaching, that bestowed upon him his means, his necessary equipment—was never from that time relaxed, till he died, forty years later. He was fashionable just before Gainsborough, and, in the estimation of the public and of the great world, the lead he began with he maintained.

Reynolds, notwithstanding an excursion or so into the realms of landscape and allegory—a fine late vision of Richmond on the Thames, designs of the Virtues, destined to be put into glass for the windows of the chapel of New College, and the quite fascinating fancy-rendering or allegorical representation of Miss Morris, presented under the title of "Hope Nursing Love"—was in the main frankly a portrait painter.

Gainsborough, in the eastern counties, before he was famous, painted portraits that he might merely live, and landscape that

he might do more than live—be happy. What a felicity must have been his when he accomplished his "Great Cornard Wood" —that early Suffolk landscape that is in the National Gallery! Removing to Bath when he was beginning to be encouraged, but was not as yet well known, he threw himself more seriously into the art of portraiture: loved the character and grace surrounding him in Bath—the carrier, the musician, the Squire's wife, or the Peer's daughter. But he did not become, and probably in Bath he would never have allowed himself to become, so busy as to find closed against him the gates of the country. Landscape was still a vivid interest for him, though most of his landscape pieces remained unsold. He had not Reynolds's shrewd appreciation of the main chance, and at Bath he was content to linger until his years were forty-seven. Then—a foundation member of the Academy, but never giving any particular attention to its fortunes—he took up his abode in town, received Royal patronage—as is shown not only by his portraits of the Princesses—painted Mrs. Siddons while she retained the charm of youth, and that diviner portrait of Mary Graham which adorns the Scottish National Gallery. There

is an old story of Reynolds visiting him, when Gainsborough lay on his death-bed. These men had been estranged, as, nearly a hundred years after, two much less equal rivals for the world's regard: Dickens and Thackeray. To the courtly President, the natural man spoke tenderly, and looked forward to companionship with him—with him and Vandyke—in another world, where would assert themselves no longer the clashing interests of this one.

Gainsborough was a great unconventional painter, a genius, and a simple temperament, not eager for money, happy in work, happy, too (as Ingres was) with the fiddle, and in light and pleasant company. It is not altogether to the discredit of Reynolds—who had the incapacity for recklessness of an ideal civil servant, and the method of a bank clerk—that he cared for the society of thinkers, that he was at bottom far more intellectual than emotional or merely æsthetic. His character had its unlovely side. He had abnormal prudence, and with a strategist's assiduity he laid his plans. Even in his art, save in the experimental employment of colour, he was prudent over much. But if he was a *bourgeois*, he was at all events a

weighty *bourgeois*, a *bourgeois* sagacious and thoughtful. Reynolds put into his discourses to the students of the Royal Academy, in measured language, the thoughts and prejudices of his time, and, along with his own narrowness, many a shrewd remark that was his own equally. He understood so great a man as Samuel Johnson well enough to paint him. And, annoyed by the restless mobility of Garrick, he found anchorage in the friendship of Burke.

As a portrait painter it cannot be said of Sir Joshua Reynolds that he showed deep capacity for entrance into the subtleties of feminine character. He arranged his subject with dignity; and his colouring, based on the Venetian—but at how great a distance from its resplendent glory and its mellow harmony! —had merit generally, and magic never. As for the face, he was a chronicler of women's features much more than of their expression. High beauty of expression he must reach, to judge from the engravings, in his "Lady Carlisle," and in that portrait of the Duchess of Rutland of his time which was burnt, years ago, at Belvoir. But these and a few others are exceptions. A certain animation he attained to in his record of more than one

actress: notably in Mrs. Abington as Miss Prue in "Love for Love"—Mrs. Abington, that Lady Bancroft of her day, in whom Johnson found so much to interest him, and whom Garrick cordially hated. And there are one or two delightful portrayals of the frank accessibility of Nellie O'Brien and of Kitty Fisher. Subtle, too, for once, subtle absolutely, and of inexhaustible charm—is Reynolds's portrayal of the blonde reverie of Esther Jacobs. He painted these people with less of responsibility, with a less weighty obligation, than that which is generally perceptible in his rendering of those who have been brought up upon the velvet of the social sward. His great lady was but seldom visible to us in her habit as she lived. Nor would she be put into purely classical draperies, as, a little later, she might have been put by Romney. The dress was a compromise between the actual and the classic, and, like a compromise very often, it did not work. A gifted dressmaker finds it hard to understand Reynolds's folds and fastenings.

Sir Joshua's portraits of men, and more particularly of exceptional men, are at bottom, much greater, though they are far less popular, than his portraits of women. They

are at once more matter-of-fact and more profoundly penetrating. Scarcely even could that grave Lady Carlisle, the beautiful Duchess of Rutland, the engaging Kitty Fisher, the quite delightful Esther Jacobs, be placed without some diminution of attractiveness—not of the woman's attractiveness, but of the painter's—beside a perfect Titian, a perfect Velasquez, a perfect Rembrandt or Moroni. But the second great portrait of Johnson—the Johnson old—could be looked at with enthusiasm beside the portrait of Jan Six, or the portraits of the Syndics of the Cloth Hall, that are the treasures of Amsterdam. Nor should the " Johnson " stand alone. Strange to think, after that, that to the greatness of Rembrandt, Reynolds himself was relatively blind !

The last of the three men who, in the eighteenth century, carried English portraiture to its high level—George Romney—appears less frequently virile than Sir Joshua; and he lacks Gainsborough's characteristic charm — a curious, French-like subtlety of grace, which, in all British Art, Gainsborough, it may be, shared with one man only: Allan Ramsay.

Romney's draughtmanship, though on

broad, classic lines, suave and agreeable, is scarcely to be called learned; and his colouring, wont to be simplified for good or evil—wont also to be hot—showed seldom all the variety and range that a fine colourist revels in. He had his mannerisms, and was obliged to have them. Yet when all this has been admitted, much of Romney's work must still remain to be enthusiastically praised. It is in human nature to enjoy it. A portrait such as that of Mrs. Carwardine shows the occasional fulness of his appreciation of thoughtful dignity and high solicitude and womanly tenderness; and fifty "Lady Hamiltons" make evident the zest with which—the vivacity and suave distinction of Emma having once been felt by him—Romney settled himself, like a bee on a flower, on beauty patent and unquestioned.

From Greek Art Romney learnt, much more than either Reynolds or Gainsborough had done, rhythm of line akin to that of happy verse; and his sensibility to such rhythm was almost to the end kept alive by that spectacle of beauty so friendlily vouchsafed to him—Emma Lyon in captivating movement, and in blameless rest. With no great intricacy of expression, perhaps, but with command

of picturesque and marked transitions, her face, as well as her figure, allowed her to assume with ease and with rapidity the appearance of emotions not her own—that is, she was, within limits, dramatic: potential actress as well as actual model. And she was Romney's friend: a friend considerate and sincere; and there may have been hours when he would have liked to be her lover. Charles Greville had brought her to him in the first instance—a dilettante who imagined, at that time, when Emma was twenty-one, that he could himself never grow weary of her. But Greville had the dilettante's instability. It became agreeable or possible to him afterwards, under some pressure of money matters, to transfer her to his uncle—an object of Nature parted with (but not even for a consideration) like an object of Art. In time came marriage; but before that, Emma was long "protected" by the Ambassador at Naples—the day still a remote one when, Sir William having become a more or less acquiescent husband, Nelson should lay siege to her heart. In all her vicissitudes—from humble days to days of exaltation—Emma's kindness laid the refined lusciousness of her beauty at the service of Romney's brush. On

his canvasses she was Euphrosyne and again a Bacchante, and Circe, Sensibility, Cassandra, and a demure spinning-girl. Romney pined in her absence, and rejoiced on her return. Never perhaps, since Andrea del Sarto, was there a painter to whom one model gave so much inspiration. Even when he made his portrait of Miss Lucy Vernon as the "Sempstress," Romney could not banish Lady Hamilton from his thought.

Addicted to the so various record of Lady Hamilton's charm, Romney, it is little to be wondered at, impressed the public more easily as an imaginative artist who could conjure up visions of grace, than as a picturesque chronicler of actual persons, sitters who came, with commissions, to the studio in Cavendish Square, where, pretty early in his career, was Romney's house: that "privileged and fortunate abode" as his friend Hayden (Cowper's biographer) called it. But in what the public of Romney's day deemed mostly creative art, there is recognized, at present, the constantly recurring portraiture of one flexible being. The wonderful series that attest the painter's preoccupation with a particular woman must not blind us, however, to the more than occasional

delightfulness of so many another record, simple and broad, of feminine beauty and breeding. It must not be the excuse for our forgetting the success of Romney in chronicling child-life and children's individuality—all that they have of their own, that they lose when they are children no more. Still less must it be a barrier to the loyal recognition of Romney's triumph with the heads of quite exceptional men. Not even the best of Sir Joshua's male portraits, not even Gainsborough's winning record of Willshire, the parish clerk, can cast into the shade the tender delicacy of Romney's vision of John Wesley, or that treatment, promptly massive, of the head of Isaac Reid, the eighteenth-century authority on Shakespeare—a portrait that, judged by the mezzotint of Dickinson, has the decisiveness, the great square touch, and more than the simplicity and the economy, instinctive yet learned, even of Velasquez himself.

It is possible to overrate Reynolds: it is very possible, indeed, to overrate his Scotch successor, Raeburn. To overrate Romney may be an error of the future—since the greatest may be extolled beyond their due—but it is not an error of to-day. For, not-

withstanding Romney's popularity, there is no disposition to forget his deficiencies; and there is not absent from the academic verdict of grudged and doubtful approval some phlegmatic ignorance and easy self-satisfaction, that retards the universal tribute to certain of his noblest gifts.

CHAPTER IX

TURNER AND CONSTABLE

THE eighteenth-century production of pictures tempts men, in England, to make comparisons between Reynolds and Gainsborough. The nineteenth brings into visible, provoking rivalry the art of Turner and Constable.

These masters of Landscape—each of whom knew the other to be very gifted, and each of whom, in speaking of or dealing with the other, manifested a certain coldness and reserve—held the field, from the beginning of the century, onwards for many years. Constable held it—or shall we better say, gradually, painfully won it ?—between the century's opening and 1837, when he died. Turner, put into full possession at an earlier period of his career than that of his then less

acceptable brother-painter, held on—held on to his life at least—till 1851; but it was the middle of the 'forties that saw the tardiest triumph of his later practice. Constable died first—died earlier by fourteen years than Turner—but though Turner lived to a day appreciably nearer our own, it is not he who is in spirit the more modern artist.

Seeing that nobody, not even the person to whom at bottom his work appeals the least, contests, I do not say Turner's supremacy, but his originality, his genius, does a man ask, hurriedly, "Why was not Turner the more modern"? He does ask, perhaps, and if he does there is no obligation to delay the one rough answer, "Turner knew every Classic, and every dead man who was not a Classic; he knew the past to the point of being oppressed by it." Less burdened with impediments, carrying a lighter baggage, Constable marched quickly, and, had his temperament allowed, would have marched even joyously, along the open road he knew to be his own.

One result of this difference is that, while the art of Turner has most affected the conservative connoisseur, the art of Constable has had, in England and in France, the deeper influence upon the modern practitioner.

Turner had faults and mannerisms. After his early, sober, self-possessed time of blue-grey, neutral-tinted drawings of landscape and architecture—drawings which might be mistaken for Girtin's—he was, in turn, studiously poetic and unconsciously matter-of-fact. He had his exaggerations of scale; he had his debauches of colour. For years and years during the very heart of his career —in so much of his middle period: in all the latter part of it—he was over-elaborate, over-intricate in theme. He crowded into a canvas or a drawing more than the most widely embracing eye could possibly discern in the natural scene which he had set himself to depict. A draughtsman of fine certainty, leaving the literal truth quite voluntarily when he left it at all—a colourist who generally could be splendid or tender, but at times seemed bound to be abnormal—Turner was wont, throughout his middle period, and, to some extent indeed during nearly the whole of his life, to make a map, to make a chronicle, to make a history; not merely, and sometimes not at all, to make a picture.

In his early time and in his latest alone, and chiefly in the latter, did Turner, on occasions at least, content himself with painting

an effect. Again, in the more intricate, but not in the simpler of his labours, he worked too constantly as if he knew himself in the chiding or the encouraging presence of this or that departed master. He worked with an amazing ingenuity, and with an all-embracing variety of theme, in fetters he had forged. His influence, had he been influential amongst the painters who succeeded him, might have been against freedom —probably would have been. To Constable then—though it may have been owing in part to the happy accident of the exhibition of his landscapes in the Salon of 1824 or 1825 —to Constable, and not to Turner, did the French, and after them the English, look for the eye and hand, the theory and practice, that liberated landscape art.

All this one may say, and yet retain for Turner, the inventor of so many visions that were exquisite and scenes that were magical, a keen interest, a deep admiration. But if one worships one must worship sanely: one must guard one's common sense. Examine that which is an instance of the work of Turner's middle period—his middle period mistake (and one may use that word not at all disrespectfully)—examine the "Yarmouth"

water colour : it is a drawing that was translated subtly, by William Miller, into the "black and white," the infinitely varied greys rather, of the line engraver. It is in the *England and Wales* series. The print is wonderful : it is finely, very finely, representative of a wonderful drawing. Quite numberless are the objects and the incidents, the themes and the events, introduced into the picture. In the very middle, upon the stretch of flattened sand beach, between the sea itself and the pool-like waters where craft find shelter by pier or quayside, stands a lighthouse or tall monument that gleams white against the greyness of the sea. There is shipping in the roads. There is, above the far horizon, a sky of radiance and a sky of promptly threatening storm. The greater part of the town is in the distance, to the extreme left; where, amongst many another building, the parish church, with steeple and vast nave, is plainly discernible. But scarcely even as far as middle distance, there are houses too, many of them, and the sails of a windmill. What is the actual foreground ? To the right it is an inroad of rushing water, which only embankments or a pier restrain. To the left, it is a rounded

hill or broken cliff-top, against which a man shelters, with a large empty basket, wrong end uppermost, by the side of him, and in front, laid out on the rough grass, all the basket contained; and not far from the man, still in the foreground, or the second distance, in a scene wherein distances are innumerable, there is a young woman tripping gaily, to secure the wind-menaced things upon the grass. Not so much summarized and hinted at as actually depicted is all the life of the town. The cleverest possible, because it is after all not an apparently unnatural disposition of light and shade gives to the picture —well !—as much unity as, the material being what it is, it is possible to give it.

A drawing of the earlier middle period, the "Whitstable" of "The Southern Coast," assigns to the arrangement of light and shade a similar function. But here, the passion for intricacy and elaboration not having gone as far, the function is fulfilled more easily, with a happier and more complete triumph. The "Watercress Gatherers" of the *Liber Studiorum*, which is a work also of the earlier middle time, is, on account of this particular matter, as interesting as the "Whitstable," and as happy. But it has also what the "Whit-

stable " could not have so well, and what the " Yarmouth " may have had once and later lost—a composition of line carried far beyond meagreness, but never carried to superfluity. " Watercress Gatherers " portrays, moreover, and at a period not advanced, that which occupied Turner very little in any time except his last: it portrays, nobly, an " effect."

Portraying an effect, the fine print of the " Watercress Gatherers " serves us as a means of transition from the art of Turner to the art of Constable; for it was in effects, in atmospheric effects, that Constable revelled. To record them was one of the purposes of his great modern practice. Long before him, it had been one of the purposes of Rembrandt, in Rembrandt's rare Landscape; for Rembrandt, at his hours, was as modern as Constable, as modern as the men whom Constable inspired. And that, Turner—saturated with the earlier traditions, an adept in every classical, that is in every accepted exercise, and original, personal and inventive to boot—that, Turner never claimed to be, and never could be, called.

Constable's art was less eclectic, and, in its nominal theme and obvious subject, far less varied. Oftentimes, however, it proved

not less varied in its result. If one takes Constable, Turner, and the great simple Crome—who was their contemporary in their earlier days—and asks oneself which of the three attained the least completely and habitually the aim before him, it will have to be Constable, probably, who, judged in this fashion, will be deemed to have been the least successful. Constable on the whole was greater as initiator than as executant: that is, no small proportion of what were meant to be amongst his more important pictures express inadequately his personal vision—his way of looking out upon the simple English land to which, like Crome's, his outlook was confined. For all that, as has been indicated on an earlier page, it was his particular function to start men on new tracks. He had his part in their emancipation. It seems he had it even when, at the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, he showed in Paris, "The Haywain." The generosity of Mr. Henry Vaughan—exercised in his lifetime: that is, when it cost him something to exercise it—placed the historic composition of "The Haywain" (the waggon crossing the stream) at the disposal of the National Gallery. It is

delicate, perhaps even subtle; wrought, of course, with assiduity and knowledge, and a sense of the charm of the June weather and of the actual scene. But there are other pictures, and some of them much smaller and slighter ones, more significant and characteristic. There is a "Salisbury"; there is a "Yarmouth Jetty"; somewhere there is a noble "Brighton"—just a sea beach, shelving steeply, and a beached boat or two, and a fisherman mending his nets, and the dramatic background of sparkling waves, and a sky over which a west wind hurries the pace of the clouds. The sketches of Constable, even more than the sketches of Turner, are wont to be masterpieces.

Turner owed much to his engravers, and his engravers much to Turner. Of the truth of both statements the best of *Liber Studiorum* is the living proof. As a mountain piece, take the "Saint Gothard," as a marine the "Flint Castle," with freshening water and with breezy sky. As an English pastoral, take "The Strawyard"; as a thing nobly classical, "Woman with Tambourine." But there are other proofs, and in abundance, of Turner's good fortune and of the engraver's too, in the line engravings of Miller

and the brothers Cooke, and in the happy labour of John Pye, whose triumph is concentrated on one smallish plate, wondrously luminous, "Pope's Villa."

Now, until recent times, when Sir Frank Short, on one or two occasions, most of all in "A Sussex Down," has been admirably exercised in interpreting him, there has only been one engraver, and that is Constable's contemporary, David Lucas, who has been notably concerned with Constable, in any way. Lucas owed a little to Constable; but Constable has owed a world to David Lucas. It is by the two dozen or so plates of the "English Landscape" that we can most of us best know Constable in our homes, and by these we can know him perfectly. Constable was a master of tone and of grey painting, as De Koninck was, before him, and after him Boudin (a master of much besides); and tone and the grey painting, engraving, if the right kind be chosen, can render. David Lucas—himself, by the large public, stupidly disregarded—has, with the discerning, been the great and the efficient popularizer of Constable. He had his faults —or his fault. What is called the "sooty-black" of his deep shadows, a black often

effective and significant, a convention that answers, is sometimes overdone. But in the treatment generally, what breadth, what learned breadth, what understanding of the master, of that which he accomplished, of that by which he is classed! "Summer Morning," with its fresh June weather—Constable declared that the earliest hours of a June day gave us the English landscape, of wide stretching upland and placid river, at its very best—"Noon," with the quiet ripeness of the earth; "Spring," with the March skies of driving cloud over the great flat land; "A Sea Beach, Brighton," with its vivacity and windy sunshine; "Old Sarum," with its present sunk in its past, and its past apprehended in the solitude of the Downs under a darkened sky: these prints of Lucas's, which bring all Constable before us, are obtainable to-day for a few pounds apiece. Years ago, it was only a few shillings. And the progress must continue. With the best of the *Libers*, as representing the art of Turner, everybody who can should possess these Lucas-Constables.

As regards oil pictures at the National Gallery, the "Cornfield," and not that alone, stands for Constable, along with, and quite as much as, "The Haywain." Notable,

wherever it may be seen, is his "Salisbury," with its steely greys, its oxidized silver. And at the Tate Gallery—the gifts and bequests, they have been, often, of Constable's daughter, Isabel Constable, who was the sunshine of his life—there are oil sketches, vivid impressions, in abundance, which display the sympathetic directness of his vision, the singular frankness of his record. Occasionally, though very occasionally, he used water colour; but he never really mastered its methods, or, seemingly, really cared to master them. As a water-colour painter, Constable may be neglected. But an occasional drawing in charcoal displays at least the freedom of his hand, and his drawings in the happy medium of pencil, which should be, and which fortunately are to some extent, valued and cherished, evidence at once the fulness and the closeness of his observation, and register with equal readiness and equal charm the long curve of the waggon in his Suffolk fields, and the quick coming and going of every kind of craft about the quayside and the busy and peopled waters of the harbour at Harwich. They are not, like Prout's pencil drawings, of at least two generations ago, or Fulleylove's, of ten or twenty years since, or

Muirhead Bone's of to-day, realized pictures. But they are memoranda agreeable and accurate: dexterous, spirited, precise, yet free.

CHAPTER X

THE LATER ENGLISH ART

Such an instance of revolutionary change as that which presents itself in the art of France with the accession to influence of the classic David, is, for good or for evil, nowhere afforded in the history of English painting. The strong and simple naturalism of "Old" Crome stood, indeed, in decided and marked contrast with Richard Wilson's ordered suavity; and Constable, as we have seen in the last chapter, rebelled at certain dictates which Turner still generally obeyed. But there was no approach to visible or universal cleavage in the volume and construction of the English School. The homely art of Morland — his rusticity, graceful, yet not unmanly and not unveracious—had affinity or sympathy with the naturalism of Gainsborough. It, like the feebler but yet elegant, not unobservant art of Francis Wheatley, was in a measure an echo or reverberation from such of Gainsborough's work as was not

concerned with portraiture, and the portraiture of the well-bred. And in portraiture, the first steps to celebrity of Hoppner and Lawrence were made in no spirit of aggression —in them there was no purpose of revolt against the laws Sir Joshua had tacitly laid down, or tacitly accepted.

How far Art of any kind, pictorial or literary, is really refreshed and renewed by movements more decided than any of these — by a reversal, determined and avowed, of procedures heretofore graced with all the sanctions of authority—might be an interesting subject of inquiry; but in considering English painting, it does not present itself anywhere until at least we reach the futile insurrection of the Pre-Raphaelite, upon which, in other quarters too much discussion has already been bestowed. And least of all does it present itself when we are occupied, as in the first page or so of this chapter we need to be, with portrait painters like those who were in fashion in the last twenty-five years of the long reign of George the Third, and, after his demise, in the decade between 1820 and 1830, when, Hoppner being dead, there was no one left—unless indeed, it was John Jackson—to contest the supremacy of Sir Thomas Lawrence.

Lawrence's position of pre-eminence was alas! least assailed just when his art had proved least worthy of the place it occupied. He had had an immense talent: he had made the most of a youth brilliant and careful. Lawrence had promised much and had performed something. But before late middle age he had succumbed to the temptations of popularity and numberless commissions. His labours had become meretricious and mechanical, pretentious and tricky.

Hoppner, with his Teutonic origin, was unlikely to have received the gift of distinction, which Lawrence had received, and rather richly, but which he had not retained. But other gifts Hoppner possessed, and they were precious ones. His colour could be opulent, and, in its opulence, harmonious; and unlike Lawrence's, at Lawrence's worst, it could not be harsh and garish. Never perhaps stately, his performances, especially when plump young women were the theme of them, rarely lacked sensuous charm. His wife was quite amazingly good-looking. Best of all he painted her in the "Salad Girl"—a personality as attractive as that of Mrs. Paul Sandby, known as "The Nut-brown Maid" in the print after Francis Cotes. Were Hoppner and were

Lawrence called upon to represent great minds, exalted souls, it was but to make the spectator of their effort envious of the departed days when Reynolds worked, and Gainsborough.

In speaking of Sir Thomas Lawrence, I momentarily named an artist, a portrait painter, not much remembered to-day; but his turn may come, for sometimes it is dealers who start fashions; and dealers know that Reynolds and Gainsborough, Romney and Hoppner, are not inexhaustible. The artist is John Jackson, who, beginning under the influence of that Bristolian who was the paramount favourite of the Court and of Society in the later Georgian period, lived on to the time of William the Fourth. A capable craftsman, an executant vigorous and estimable, Jackson had an eye for character, and he was not insensible of the attractions of beauty. But there were two painters, working at a time at least not remote from his own—the earlier of the two was Opie, and the later Geddes—whose appeal may still be wider. Of these men, indeed, the Scotsman, Geddes, is, as is perfectly natural, already the object of a cult. Geddes, at least as etcher and portrait-painter, is worthy of admiration. His dry-points of landscape suggest themselves to our

minds as a link between Rembrandt and Muirhead Bone; and a painted portrait of his Mother, in the Scottish National Gallery, —impressive, simple, sound—is as memorable for insight as for execution.

Opie, no more than Geddes, was portrait-painter alone. Called, finely, a painter of History, he assuredly had in his talent something of the dramatic. Even as an illustrator of Shakespeare he was far from incapable. What does Samuel Redgrave mean by saying that Opie had "no feeling for female beauty"? Nothing, probably, but that, unlike certain popularity-loving painters, Opie did not stand or fall chiefly by his rendering of that. Apart from such qualities, gifts, or acquirements as could be manifested on canvas, Opie had a capacity denied to painters, for the most part—the capacity for consecutive thought. Like Sir Joshua, he wrote, and gave his excellently ordered lectures—not only wielded the brush. A year or two before his death in middle age, Opie, as Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy, discoursed on Design, on Invention, on Chiaroscuro, on Colour.

The incident and genre painter of the nineteenth century to whom it most behoves

us not quite to fail to do justice, is, of course, Sir David Wilkie, who came into some prominence about the time Opie was dying—that was in 1807—and who continued, and not wrongly, to fill a great space in the public eye until his death, certainly, in a sense, premature (he was but fifty-six) and lamentably sudden, in 1841. I said, premature "in a sense," and what was meant by the qualification was just this—that Wilkie had reached excellence early; that it is the opinion of many, with a claim to be heard, that the works even of the first eight years of his practice were never surpassed by him: some would say, never equalled. "Village Politicians" was conceived and wrought while he was still a student at the Academy Schools. "The Blind Fiddler" was painted when he was just of age. He was only twenty-four when he painted "The Rent Day"; twenty-seven when he painted "The Village Festival." Of course these works, at all events the first of them, were more restrained—drier, smaller in character to some people—than those of a quite later manner. They were less ambitious; they were perhaps less immediately impressive; the ideals of the better and more humane Dutch and Flemish genre

painters—Jan Steen at his discreetest, Teniers when he kept company with the well-behaved —were those of David Wilkie, when, with close observation and deft hand, he created his pictures of the popular life and the home life of Scotland.

Wilkie's pieces might have been illustrations of penetrating literary fiction. As it is, they were penetrating fiction themselves: studies of character exact, humorous, homely. In early middle life, or when early middle life was hardly reached, going into Italy, passing thence into Spain, there came before his mind, in art as well as in nature, new splendours. By them, for a time at least, Wilkie was derailed, or to be more accurate, *désorienté*—they left him without his compass. Time, longer time than was accorded him, was needed for him to adjust his methods, to turn altogether to profit (if that might be) instead of partially to loss, those sights, experiences, and fresh illuminations which others have utilized more promptly. A second occasion this energetic ever-studious and even too impressionable Scotsman afforded himself for visiting the South. That was not long after the "John Knox Preaching" had been followed by the portrait of the Duke of Sussex, and the

portrait of the Duke of Sussex by that of the young Queen Victoria holding her first Council. Nor was it the South only : the near East he succeeded in reaching : Smyrna, Beyrout, Jerusalem itself, his goal; and he went there with one knows not what ambitions. Then he yearned for home; but sudden illness, the result only of imprudent feeding, overcame him in the harbour of Malta. He died within an hour of the ship's setting sail. That evening, Wilkie's body was committed to its "vast and wandering grave." The scene lives in our minds through the picture which a few months afterwards came into being, that the passionate lamentation of Turner might be expressed.

The later years of Wilkie's life, and the last ten years of the life of Turner, which immediately followed, saw the maturest labours of another great English artist—a man who is to-day most insufficiently appreciated by the large public, the one great English painter of the nude, William Etty. Born in York in 1787, the son of a small miller, Etty, when twelve years old, was apprenticed to a printer at Hull. He served his time conscientiously, cultivating in every spare hour a gift for drawing; and when the 'prentice years were

over, an uncle in London, fairly well-to-do, and stirred by his entreaties, invited him to the capital. Etty took a drawing to Opie, who gave him an introduction to Fuseli, and, notwithstanding his years in the wilderness, at twenty he was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools. He had first thought to paint landscape: then "heroic subjects"—another term, apparently, for classical history. His eyes were opened next to the beauty of women, and, to justify his painting of the nude, it was to mythology that he turned. The nude of every kind—blonde and brunette in every pose of rest, and in some poses of at least impending action—this, with a thin sub-soil, a slim foundation, of ancient fable, he painted to the end of his days; going back, a bachelor, to York, his native city, when he was sixty-one, and dying there, about a year afterwards.

More than the chance observer of his work is aware of, and especially in his earlier and his middle days, Etty painted portraits. Now it was a man of some character—the character did not escape him—and now it was a kinsman's baby; and now, as in a portrait group long gone to America, it was a young, engaging mother, and her two children, a family scene,

natural and "intimate" as it could be; and now it was a "half-length" of the daughter of one who had encouraged Etty in difficult days; and the model here was conspicuously one whom he enjoyed to see and to depict in her blonde and luminous youth, so that the canvas owns a discreet and tranquil gaiety, and gives occasion for the employment of a characteristic palette—his palette of opal and pearl.

The pleasantness of such a portrait brings us back to the recognition of this artist's pre-eminence in recording the colours and contours of women and the flesh. There have been draughtsmen more learned, draughtsmen undoubtedly with a greater natural aptitude for the retention and portrayal of the characteristics of form. But of the beauty of women in texture and hue, Etty was a chosen exponent. Living in our own day, he might have been, in aim and kind, though hardly in accomplishment, less exceptional. And he would have been more encouraged. Early Victorian sentiment stood in the way of his carrying out, in a garden-house at Buckingham Palace, a scheme of decoration for which he had prepared: not many years ago the late Sir William Agnew

showed us at the " Old Masters " a canvas on which, in the garden of the Hesperides, figures daintily blonde or splendidly embrowned danced about the golden tree. The Buckingham Palace work—this work in its fulness —might have been executed, but was not. That is a loss. Men come into the world for different ends. The simple, modest, elderly *bourgeois*, William Etty, came here, I must suppose, so that, two centuries after the works of Rubens, and with a suavity that was not his at all, there might, in colours incomparably subtle, be record of the hues and texture of the flesh.

CHAPTER XI

WATER COLOURS

Of all the mediums through which Art—pictorial art—expresses itself, it is no doubt water colour that best unites the suffrages of the most different. The greatest painter, the most qualified connoisseur, feels and admits there are occasions on which, used with due regard to its appropriate limitations, water colour can accomplish or suggest what nothing else can. And at the same time, strange to say, the veriest tyro, the most superficial

excursionist into the land of art, claims the right to enjoy it. It seems to him—and more particularly to *her*—refined and pretty; and, being refined and pretty, it is, from that particular point of view, exactly all that any art can possibly desire to be.

With a pride not altogether unjustified, it is claimed in England that water colour is an English art. It *is* an English art, specially. But, like one other art that Englishmen have practised with uncontested success—the art of mezzotint engraving—it is not of English invention. It is of English practice and perfecting. It is within the English realm, and during now nearly two centuries, that water colour has been best used—and most abused, also.

Water colour does not date from the first period of its English practice—which was Paul Sandby's time: about the middle of the eighteenth century. Two hundred years before that, Dürer—a great initiator indeed—had made brilliant little water-colours. And half-way through the interval of years that divides that Immortal from the neat and ingenious Sandby, dainty and finished water-colours—albeit they were in some respects rather too much upon the lines of oil

painting — had been wrought in the Low Countries, by Cornelius Dusart and Adrian van Ostade. These performances detract nothing, however, from the merit of the English, which came later. The English neither emulated Dutch successes nor consciously profited by Dutch mistakes. Artists of England developed water colour instinctively or by reflection. And they developed it on the right lines.

In Sandby there was recognized a steady-going craftsman. Something more came with the advent of Hearne and Dayes. For those men gave to washed drawings, topographical and architectural, a little of the poetry of subdued, harmonious colour, and knew how to suggest the interest of atmosphere and distance. People of charming taste give place in their turn to men of potent genius. There had been a touch of genius, the solemnity of the real poet, in the blue-grey, brown-grey drawings of John Cozens, who had worked in Central Italy and south of it, and given, with a dignity and unity and quiet directness no one could better, his visions of Pæstum, and of the Lake Albano, and of the stone-pine and the cypress, the shepherd and the sheep. Before the death of Cozens—about 1799—the

more widely accomplished genius of Girtin had already been exercised. It was not to be exercised long. And by "Tom Girtin's" side, in his youth, had sat—to copy drawings at Dr. Monro's, the connoisseur's, in the Adelphi Terrace—Turner, who was to appreciate and extol him: Turner, who was to survive his comrade for nearly fifty years, to practise the art in every fashion, and, having witnessed the best performances of Cotman, was still to live to see the best performances of Dewint, and, in 1845 or thereabouts, when the artist he was beholding was rather more than sixty, the magical enlargement of the vision and the method of David Cox.

And now, about some of these water-colour men of the end of the eighteenth century and the first fifty or sixty years of the nineteenth, a little more detail, before we can pass on appropriately to the few masters nearly connected with our own period, and indeed in one or two cases—in the case of Thomas Collier and of John Fulleylove, for instance—actually of it.

Turner is treated to some extent in the chapter that is devoted to himself and Constable. This is the moment for talking a little about Girtin, whose drawing of "The

White House at Chelsea" the more largely accepted master admired so much that when an outspoken amateur, visiting his own drawings, said that he had outside, in a hackney coach, "something finer than any of yours," Turner, instead of taking offence, replied cheerfully and confidently, "Then I will tell you what it is you have. You have Tom Girtin's drawing of 'The White House at Chelsea.'"

It is reported that on another occasion, the hermit of Queen Anne Street said, "If Girtin had lived, I should have died"—a remark which really does not indicate that Turner saw in Girtin almost more than there is to see in him. I am not speaking of the actual performances during the few years—as few almost as Bonington's—vouchsafed to Turner's presumed rival: I am speaking of what Turner saw, or thought he saw, in the distance, in his mind's eye—Girtin's capacity to cover, nobly, so many a field.

Girtin died before he was thirty. With Turner, when he was hardly out of his 'teens, he took a long sketching tour through English country town scenes. The drawings of both men—but it was of a time before their topographical designs had reached to poetical ex-

pression—were engraved in Walker's *Itinerant.* Girtin must have gone later than that to Durham, York, and Ripon, to do the work that has given him so much of his fame. And it was immediately upon the conclusion of "The Peace of Amiens" (1802) that he set out for Paris, and made, only a few months before his death, twenty prints, potent and elegant, of Paris architecture, and of the stately passage of the Seine through capital and suburb.

Girtin—like Turner at precisely the same epoch—advanced the use of colour; and Girtin never lived to a period when the use of it was not restrained. With him, Colour was to the end the reticent handmaid of Design and Draughtsmanship; never essaying to replace them, to be a substitute for them. Yet his colour did get advantageously beyond the merely neutral tints—harmonious tints, of course—of his predecessors, and it remained harmonious too. He had, with frequent intricacy of learned composition, a breadth, a quietude, splendid and restful.

Turner, in the long years that followed, as has been indicated elsewhere, carried much further intricacy of composition, especially on the less desirable side of it, mere intricacy

of detail. But, in his middle period, intricacy of colour, intricacy of illumination, were also conspicuously his. And this went on—Ambition, sometimes triumphing, sometimes overstepping itself, "to fall on the other side"—until, in the first 'forties of the nineteenth century, he entered upon his last epoch, and forestalled to some extent, if one may say "forestalled," Claude Monet the Impressionist, and Brabazon. Both these men owed, and confessed that they owed, much to Turner; but—hard as may be the saying for the English amateur, especially for the English amateur whose taste was formed thirty or forty years ago—each of them in a sense improved on Turner; each did with ease, and, partly, thanks to him, things which he himself never quite so happily essayed, if he essayed them at all.

The demi-god of English amateurs—the charming, gifted artist who is so curiously assumed by them to have been able to centre in himself every conceivable æsthetic virtue and attractiveness—was only just a middle-aged man when there burst on the world, to last but for the space of a few years, the brilliant, clean, cold, superbly capable talent of Richard Parkes Bonington. Born near Nottingham

in 1801, and, when fifteen years old, already resident in Paris, Bonington pored over and copied, or not copied, but made, in oil sketches, wonderful little interpretations of the works of the Old Masters at the Louvre. He got into the intimacy of the Classics—a good thing always, for any one. Then he became a student at the École des Beaux Arts; then an occasional pupil of the Baron Gros; then a dazzling and correct dealer, in oils and water-colour, with themes of architecture and landscape. A few years, and it was over; for in 1828 he died. We had to mention him; and it was better, perhaps, to mention him here than elsewhere; and as long as his work lasts he is certain to be honourably known. But English though he was—and not only by his birth—English also in a measure by the order of his talent, by the order of the themes to which his taste often took him—Bonington in the English School must be reckoned isolated, or nearly so. Harding, who in lithography has interpreted him so well—and Bonington was himself a very capable original lithographer—is to some extent a connecting link. But the connection cannot be carried far.

An Englishman profoundly, though an

Englishman who, on two or three occasions, at a time when the achievement was not a frequent one, had travelled in France and lingered there, was one of the two great masters of the Norwich School: John Sell Cotman. Cotman's noblest and most authentic and authoritative work was done, in the main, in water colour. There are very few exceptions. As an oil painter his performances were infrequent, and there is no reason to consider that they were always satisfactory. He was a master of water colour — as, to bring under consideration, for a moment, minor mediums, he was a master of the charcoal and of the pencil drawing. From first to last he saw his themes with dignity and elegance. Almost invariably he rendered them with breadth and power. Working from about the beginning of the nineteenth century to the earliest days of its fifth decade —he died in the first 'forties—Cotman painted, or drew, architecture (that is, the Gothic churches and great civic buildings of Normandy, as of East Anglia), Landscape, the landscape of Norfolk and the landscape of the Thames only a little way up-stream from London, and, lastly, in point perhaps of frequency, but not in point of power and

importance, the coast-line of his native county and the dull thunder of the falling waters of his inhospitable Northern Sea.

As a draughtsman of open landscape and of landscape "effects"—especially in charcoal—Cotman increased in strength and in expressive economy of means until the last. To do so is, for an artist of high capacity, no altogether unusual thing. As long as capable age lasts (and Cotman was hardly old at all) it is not unlikely that in this direction—the direction of magical shorthand—there may be progress. And as regards Cotman, one would not claim that the progress here was suddenly important. Where the *change* was a serious one, in the work of Cotman—I will not say the progress—it was in the matter of colour. But this change was not the accompaniment of only his latest years. It came about in early middle life. His water-colour drawings of the quite early years of the nineteenth century have what was, for the period in question, a full, a rather unusually full measure of variety and strength of hue. Of course that full measure never included violence, garishness, and never actual splendour. It was sobriety, solidity, an ordered and harmonious beauty—neither

less nor more. Some of what were Mr. James Reeve's possessions of the earlier dates (now in the British Museum Print Room), and some fine things that still remain at Norwich, and the "Bishopgate Bridge" drawing which I bought at Yarmouth in one fortunate hour, more than thirty years ago (and which Mr. Reeve assigns to about the year 1810), are witnesses to this. It was about 1820 or 1825 that Cotman, who had already been a little ahead of his time, moved on and was still ahead of it in method, though not always with the old success. To this period, and from it on to the end, belong those water-colours which are now splendidly radiant—dreams of gold and blue, quite in advance of Turner at that date—or heated, discordant, garish; and it is, alas! a little more likely that they will be the latter than the former. Of the latter—obviously undesirable: cursed, so to say, already in my own description of them, by the use of three disparaging adjectives—I need cite no examples. Of the former, of the serenely splendid, let me cite the "Blue Afternoon" and "Golden Twickenham" that were acquired by that generous collector, James Pyke Thompson, who gave them to the Turner House at Penarth.

To sum up, in regard to Cotman, it will have been made plain already that while I think that nothing can be finer in its own way than a Cotman of the later time, if it is fine or satisfactory at all, I think that the steady level of charming and even powerful accomplishment is to be looked for in the work of the earlier. In his later years, in many of them, the great Cotman's spirit passed from extremes of depression to extremes of exaltation. His nervous system was on the brink of disaster. Turner's "Elect Cotman! Elect Cotman!" to the authorities of King's College, who wanted a drawing-master—and who had the chance, and took it, of electing a genius—would not have been uttered then. When it *was* uttered there was still in Turner's mind, and still in great measure in fact, the man of genius whose ways and thoughts and eyes and hand were steadily sane.

Samuel Prout—great in his pencil drawings—has been overrated as a water-colour painter. There was not much fine colour in his work, during the period of his greatest output and his greatest contemporary popularity; and there was a constantly repeated mannerism and cleverish trickiness in the broken line of

his camel's-hair brush—sometimes even his reed-pen—by which he rather mechanically noted, implied or chronicled, the broken and worn surface of his Gothic stones. Also, his scenes in colour are a little airless, generally. His colour, or his application of it, took but scanty heed of "values" and of "planes." What is really good with him, in no way meanly imitative, besides his pencil drawings, is, first, his well-considered sketches, with a controlling line or lines, supported by pale wash (of that his admirable drawing of Calais in the "Prout and Hunt" book of Ruskin's is a convincing example), and, second, the somewhat early but not *very* early water-colour English coast-pieces, which have a solidity, a massiveness, that resembles, and brings him at this period strangely near to, the more essentially poetic and more sensitive artist, Cotman.

David Cox, who in a certain measure was inspired in his old age, who breathed into his drawings, then, his sense of pathos (the landscape weeps in "A Welsh Funeral"), his sense of mountain and of woodland beauty, his sense of the adventure of the wind, "the world's rejected" but persistent "guest," that passes under rain-charged skies and over

an earth laid prostrate, but yet not finally subdued—David Cox spent the greater part of his life in teaching amiable women, and in doing pretty things : neat, dainty, monstrously pretty things sometimes. It is not the bulk of his work that will endure, but the exceptional performance of his later time, when he rose to his full stature and delivered in no faltering voice his message of simple homeliness and simple sublimity.

And Mr. Dewint's drawings ?—"Mr. Dewint," as Henry Vaughan used always to say to me in talking of him—what is to be the fate of these works ? The large and laboured things—the things which ought not to have been done in water colour at all,—the immense "Nottinghams," and one knows not what else, tortured, tortured, till all the life has gone out of them—they must please those only who demand the painful evidence of labour, and not its dexterous suppression. But Dewint's sketches, whilst they preserve their colour fairly intact (Dewint's grey skies have a horrible trick of getting reddish, because, under exposure to the light, only the Indian red remains, and the cobalt-blue, that he united with it to make grey, quite vanishes) they, whilst successfully preserved, will de-

light the lovers of a masterly simplicity, of the attainment of an aim seen clearly from the first, and rapidly reached. There is nothing very romantic—still less is there a suggestion of the pretty—in the sketches of Dewint. But they do not sing the praise of the ungainly. From the admiration of the repulsive in nature and humanity—and it is in humanity rather than nature that the repulsive presents itself—from the admiration of the repulsive, Dewint, like all sane artists and sane critics, was spared.

Dewint gives you the common land and the more subdued aspect of the common day. Under the sky, sometimes, of a June sunshine, much oftener under the diffused grey of the autumn heavens in which no change of light seems imminent or hurried, lies, perhaps the windmill or the haystack, in a great flat land, or a canal boat makes its steady and slow way between the long stretched banks, or the scene may be a rising ploughed land, backed by trees and a church tower. All is touched massively and simply, the last stroke seeming to have followed pretty closely on the first.

I cannot feel that there was a single great painter of water colours between David Cox

and Dewint on the one hand and Hine and Thomas Collier on the other. There were many interesting ones. William Callow was interesting, especially in that early day which, in his extreme old age, he learnt to despise. How delicate was his work, how quiet, how measured, and how good, when it was exhibited at the rooms of the Old Water Colour Society, by the side of Prout's, by the side of the nobler of the David Cox's!

In this connection, it is worth remembering that while most of the earlier practitioners of water colour were members of the "Old" Society—the old Society included John Varley, a giant by reason of the noble rightness of the broad, yet always careful sketches of his first period of almost neutral tint—most of the later men of real distinction belonged to the "New Society," as it was called; subsequently it became "The Institute." Callow, like Varley and the rest—like Prout and Dewint—belonged to the "Old Society." Hine and Thomas Collier—the people I am coming to—belonged to "The Institute," or "The New." So did Fulleylove, who died since they did—one of the very finest draughtsmen of Southern cities, of Classic lands, of ordered gardens where the sunlight rests on the yew hedge

and the statuary. And so did an artist whom this generation has apparently forgotten—his drawings rest, one must suppose, in but few hands—David McKewan, who, having painted commonplace, if not cheap, catchy landscape, out of doors, during one generation, was, by the consideration of the Gods, afflicted with the most violent rheumatism, so that he never painted out of doors again at all, but suddenly became a man of genius, and drew, with breadth and richness, (on a rough sugar-paper, I think), the tapestried interiors of Knole, Cotehele, and Cassiobury.

But it is time to speak of Hine and Collier, and to end our rough survey of artists who will last through the quality of their performances in a medium English indeed.

Hine was a little like McKewan in this one thing, that he did not find his real vocation until he was middle-aged. Had he died at fifty, nobody living now would ever have heard of him. By that time he appeared to have tried everything, and in nothing had he succeeded. Then suddenly—as I remember well his telling me, when he was nearly eighty, and a Classic while living—it occurred to him to paint the Downs, the heights and

hollows of those rolling Sussex hills amongst which he was born. He painted them with knowledge and tenderness; delicately yet decisively they emerged upon his drawing-paper: the suave, broad sweep of the silvery or golden-green chalk down; its softly shadowed "bottoms"; its silence and its peace; its remote background of pearly or opalescent sky. No one had done the thing before. Copley Fielding, capable craftsman enough, but so much more of a drawing-master, had only seemed to do it.

One man did it afterwards, or in Hine's advanced old age; and that was Thomas Collier. And no two men could have done it in ways more absolutely different than these, who, as it happens, were friends, of different ages: never master and pupil. Again, one must remember that what became the specialty of Hine never became more than the frequent but still the almost accidental occupation of Collier. To the Downs, of which he felt, and made us feel, the firm structure, as they stretched themselves from the foreground through broken mile and mile of distance, under clouds that gathered or clouds that were spent, Collier did justice, in the fashion of a consummate sketcher

of effects. Hine painted the afternoon that lasted; Collier, the minutes that went.

And Collier painted too—or "drew," as one says generally when water colour is the medium—Collier drew as well and as forcibly, with an immediate truth (but he put each touch deliberately), the barge's unromantic progress along the monotonous mileage of the Kennet and Avon Canal, with dark elm trees in the flat distance, a grey sky over it; or drew the more pronounced features of the upland of the North; or drew the grey sea-waters beyond the long coast-line. Of course, there is no obvious violence about the art of Collier. But there is obvious strength. So certain, so decided, is his hold on his subject, that it becomes a hold upon the student of his work as well. His is an interpretation of the natural scene steadily potent, because at bottom it is strangely subtle besides.

I think we may have two or three great painters in water colour still living amongst us. Collier, Hine, Fulleylove—and why not add Brabazon?—are the last who have died.

CHAPTER XII

THE GRAND MANNER—AND NATTIER

As, in the life of many a great artist there is a moment, distinctly ascertainable, at which he throws off the influences, now usefully supporting, now overwhelming and injurious, that have affected his earlier work, so, in the history of a great School of Painting, in the history of the art of a race, there comes a time when the national production is exotic no longer, when it owns no accidental bias, is controlled by no influence from without, but at once obeys and reveals the native instinct, is original, individual, new.

To France that time came — in painting, even more than in architecture—in the earlier decades of the eighteenth century: when Louis Quinze was young, when Watteau had left Valenciennes. To say that there had been nothing of France herself in the best French painting of the seventeenth century—in the designs of stately dignity we owe to Poussin and to Claude—would be, of course, to say too much. Yet it was Italian residence, and the example of Italian art, that shaped these men's creations. Their work was no more mainly French than

in the selfsame century, was the work of Berghem and Jan Both mainly or characteristically Dutch. Not till the eighteenth century opened was France the mistress in her own house of art. Then it was French methods that carried into execution French conceptions. We behold then for the first time, to the full, in her painting, the vivacity, the easy correctness, the grace and gaiety and sensibility of her spirit: "*l'âme française*" —that which everywhere has made France what she is.

But the earlier time—no time of immaturity, let us remember; for, though it did not give us Watteau's indescribable charm, it had passed long beyond the stage of the Primitive's naïve grace—that seventeenth century cannot be dismissed till to its character a word of tribute has been paid. It was the day of the Grand Manner. Wanting though their art was in intimacy and tenderness, wanting though it was even in the reflective pathos, the poignant melancholy, which are among the most appealing gifts of him who was accounted the master of the frivolous, of the monotonously gay — I am talking of Watteau—the seventeenth-century leaders, Poussin and Claude, had had bestowed

upon them in generous measure the virile qualities of creative design. Their native dignity had been fortified by learning, and it was not always unconsciously that every work of theirs, from preparatory drawing to canvas colossal and stately, was charged with that patent of nobility men are wont to think they have described when they have termed it "Style." "Style," though it is greatly a gift, is also greatly an inheritance. Yet in the transmission of it, facility is never guaranteed, and it is often withheld. Poussin and Claude were so constituted that they were able to receive it. They got it from the art of the Italian Renaissance—from the atmosphere of the South.

Claude, near to nature in his atmospheric effects, expressed, in Landscape, changing moods. The serenity of the morning is followed by the obscurity, or the at least threatened obscurity, of midday storm. The clouds sail on; the drover and the shepherd of the Campagna slacken the progress of their herds and flocks, and the long hours end with a flush of sunset. In Claude's landscape, to give it vitality and significance, there must be some interest of human fortunes, in the Present; and every fragment

of ruin that lifts itself in Roman regions is a reminder to him of the Past, and his art is full of its sentiment.

Poussin paints history more explicitly: paints with unerring dignity and, it may seem to us, with a less praiseworthy remoteness, history or mythology that is classical and history that is sacred. To see both well, no one in Europe is obliged to take a further journey than that to the National Gallery and the Louvre. The Louvre "Finding of Moses," though very characteristic in the deeply considered disposition of figures and of background, and of all that that background contains to give to the composition a stately grace, lacks, perhaps, that full measure of masculine fascination that is discernible in a piece in Trafalgar Square. Mainly, the interest of a Claude picture is to be found in its landscape; but the figures count, and help, and this not merely as elements in the composition. To a greater extent the interest of a Poussin picture is to be found in its presentation of incident—yes, the incident's "presentation," rather than the incident itself. To find interest merely in the incident itself would be to reduce the Grand Manner to the proportions of Genre.

The grand manner, as applied to portrait, and not to classical landscape, lived on to a period at which it was already in contact with the ways of a newer time, and the charm of a newer school. Rigaud and Largillière, with their "portraits d'apparat"—their stately, ceremonious, but still sterling records of monarchs, administrators, warriors, dominant priests—are, in a certain sense, the descendants and followers of the first leaders of French art in the seventeenth century, and it is to the general conception of dignity in painting common to that time that their own is most akin. The finer graces of art were neither Rigaud's nor Largillière's. About Largillière's portraits, this is to be noted—they are the portraits of gentlemen and ladies, when, as is almost always the case, it is that that they intend to be. An exception may be thought to be furnished, by one interesting portrait group at the Louvre, which we must respect cordially. It is the group depicting the painter and his wife and their young daughter. The painter is all right. This earnest and judicious man is by personal experience, by talent and by character, above the rank of his family. His daughter, indeed, is harmless and neutral—but that is not saying

much. His wife is a sensible but unengaging lower middle-class housekeeper.

Nattier, with whom the last lights of the grand manner flicker out, would probably have hesitated to complete a portraiture so prosaic as this one. Would that have been because he lacked courage, or because he possessed high taste ? It is certain that he often missed Largillière's sturdy grip of his theme. He was not bent upon character-painting. Even a visible likeness, the seizure of which need not, one thinks, have presented many difficulties, was by Nattier often enough abandoned. That makes it a little hard to identify some of his portraits, although his portraits were, for the most part, of the famous. But the models of Nattier, when they lack individuality, do not lack individuality to be deprived of style. And if his pictures are not often intimate, they are never inefficient, in the presentation of headstrong Princess, noble dame, illustrious *demi-mondaine*, as these are wont to face the world and play their parts of honour and dishonour on its stage.

The Louvre, Versailles, Chantilly, Hertford House, and a few great private collections of things inherited or acquired, in England

and France, contain notable Nattiers. The Louvre contains this man's conception of the Magdalen—it is attractively realized, and in a spirit not wanting in shrewdness. That many of his heroines *prepare* to be Magdalens may be the reflection of the pessimist who bears in mind their aspect or their history. The collection of Sir Lionel Phillips contains a noble if fanciful vision of one of them: the Duchesse de Châteauroux. Hertford House contains, in the portrait reproduced in this volume, a delightful portrayal of a woman whom there has been ground for imagining to have been the Duchesse de Châteauroux again; but the evidence on the whole makes for this picture being a second and different version of Nattier's rendering of that Mlle. de Clermont—"feu Mademoiselle de Clermont, Princesse du sang, Surintendante de la Maison de la Reine," she has once been described—whose suave and friendly beauty is admittedly chronicled in a picture that was the Duc d'Aumale's, a picture that is an ornament of Chantilly, as that in English possession is of Hertford House. Versailles holds in greatest number Nattier's Princesses. It holds them, too, in greatest variety, from Marie Adelaide de France, comely, observant, thoughtful, to

Louise de Lorraine, lusty and polished, splendid and imperious.

The Samuel Butler who was not the author of *Hudibras*—the interesting Butler whose *Erewhon* made its less lasting mark in the third quarter of the nineteenth century—said that a great portrait was "always more a portrait of the painter than of the painted." That is an exaggerated recognition of a truth not difficult to grasp, yet sometimes forgotten—the truth that, even putting *technique* apart, if the model collaborates with the painter, the painter, it must at least be allowed, collaborates with the model. For there is, independently of execution, the point of view, the individual conception of the thing that is beheld. Mr. Butler follows up his visible exaggeration of the fact, by amplification of his statement, by giving his examples. For instance, "When we look at a portrait by Holbein or Rembrandt, it is of Holbein or Rembrandt that we think, more than of the subject of their pictures." Possibly. But our doing so is only by reason of the performer being more interesting than the person represented. We have learned that he is illustrious; we believe that all his ways are important. To us, then, the likeness of the person he paints is not the essential matter;

the essential matter is at least, in that case, the method, the execution. It is the brush-work, perhaps—for there is the artist's handling. Or it is the palette—for there is the artist's scheme of colour. Now Nattier's execution, adequate, brilliant, is yet not in the highest degree masterly. And the agreeable artist, whose record of the individuality of character is not his strong point at all, addresses us naturally with an authority less august and unquestioned than the authority of Holbein or Rembrandt, of Titian, of Velasquez; it may be even of Goya. His is a lighter effort to a lighter end. His own soul has not been in travail.

But, without a keen or deep sense of personal character—at all events of the character of men—without any really subtle differentiation of the types or beauties of women, whose fairness and whose flower-like health he painted and enjoyed, Nattier, unconcerned often with the particular likeness, was never unconcerned with the confirmation and enforcement of the sex's charm. The spirit of womanly beauty is generally on his canvasses. He is the painter, not of humanity, but of the female sex—in specimens for the most part desirable.

CHAPTER XIII

FRENCH EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ART

WATTEAU, who led French art throughout the most remarkable of all its periods, was nothing less than one of the world's great masters. He led French art not only in his lifetime: his spirit and the work he left behind him led it for two generations after his death. Gradually, slowly, the impulse was exhausted. About a hundred years ago, Watteau, and those to whom by him the Bread of Life had been given, were relegated to a secondary or a yet humbler place. Theirs from that time, until the nineteenth century was far advanced—theirs was a back seat.

But the judges of art—the critics, the historians, amateurs, practitioners; all but the hopelessly academic—have now again, for some time now, come to their senses in this matter. Watteau is no longer accounted a trifling entertainer, lightly ministering to the idle, because, viewed superficially, he has the air of being only the chronicler of a long, pleasant picnic. No, no; Watteau has something else to do than merely

to invite you to take with him and various ladies of a "coming-on" disposition, a circular tour of "the enchanted isle." It is his to express perfectly, in terms of paint, the vision of a landscape gracious and familiar, the presence of a humanity that has endless varieties of character, experience, feeling—the life of men and women and of little children, who, to adopt to the matter Balzac's words in speaking of the daughter of Evelina de Hanska, "breathe the air through every one of their pores, and all their soul lives."

The almost fanciful limitations of Watteau's themes, in his great day, when he was himself most truly—for his merely natural landscapes, and his military or camp pieces, are the work of his earlier and more tentative time—are the signs of no corresponding limitations in his understanding or in his outlook on the world. What were really his accomplishments? As a draughtsman he has shown himself the equal of Raphael—the Raphael of the Classic period and of the Roman labours, of the excellent designs to which the contemporary engravings of Marc Antonio ensured a wider publicity than could, without these, have been theirs. And the equal of Raphael was, of course, the equal of Ingres. Measured even

against Rembrandt for expressive draughtsmanship, Watteau comes off not badly. He had not, indeed, at his command, apparently, the magical shorthand of the mighty Dutchman. His was a middle way. Rembrandt's way altogether would have been incompatible with Watteau's ideal of completeness and suavity, hardly less than it would have been with Raphael's great Greek sense of purely formal beauty. Beauty—though not so much formal beauty as sweetness of happy life and pleasure-giving temperament—dominated Watteau. The ungainly he put aside. But the merely pretty, the comeliness that is *façade* only, that has nothing to reveal, nothing to be explored, would have seemed to him about as unsatisfactory as the hideous.

We are anticipating matters a little; yet now the observation shall be made: Boucher the fertile, unfatigued recorder of feminine grace and physical perfection—Boucher (whom in England it has for generations been the custom to malign) would have been greater even than he is—would have been nearer to Watteau—had he looked at womankind with some touch of high imagination; with understanding that reaches forth beyond material things. Instead, however, of stepping, as it were, into the place

of the poet who exalts and adores, the pose into which Boucher fell, quite naturally, was the pose of an experienced Sultan.

It is not uninstructive to continue for a moment the comparison between Watteau and Boucher, by a reference to their perception of colour, and to their handling of it. Rose and pale blue, the charming combination, by no one used more happily than by Boucher, became a convention: was a convention from the beginning perhaps, appropriate to the schemes of the lighter master, the more superficial surveyor of the world. A painter avowedly decorative, Boucher found that combination, and all that was akin to it, adequate to the expression of his flowing line, his supple grace. He was right in finding it adequate. It would be absurd to reproach a painter of mainly decorative intention for not having composed a palette comparable to that Venetian one, with its tones so warm and deep and resonant, that alone could have satisfied, and alone sufficed for, Watteau, in his smaller canvasses, his restricted surfaces that must be charged fully, that must be glowing and rich. Still, here again is revealed the difference between the higher and more difficult and the humbler and easier ideal.

"Easier," but yet not easy—so that, in regard to this artist, we do not need to reach the question of draughtsmanship before we realize the truth of the old eulogy: "One is not Boucher by wishing to be." The palette of Watteau had its great, deep notes. But in its lightest tones, in its whites, for instance (see the "Pierrot" at the Louvre), what variety, what nobility! They are comparable in range and tranquil beauty with the blacks of Velasquez, with the whites of Rembrandt, justly enough extolled, and with those even of one who knew the range of white, or what we call white, almost as Boudin knew the incomparable range of greys: I mean that admirable master of good painting in France, Théodule Ribot.

There is yet a third matter in which, comparison being made between Watteau and Boucher, the result of it is in favour of Watteau. And that is the matter of handling. Paint may be laid upon canvas with what all will agree to be, apart from actual colour, very perceptible differences of charm. Boucher's application of paint is neither conspicuously bad nor conspicuously good. Watteau's application of it is not itself the most fascinating of any that we know; but it

is alert, dexterous, sensitive—it predisposes us to interest in his performance. This master of draughtsmanship is, then, master of colour; and this master of colour is, in a degree that is sufficient, master also of the application of paint.

We have referred already to Watteau's penetrating insight into character, into the character of the most civilized, of those whose lives of cultivated pleasure, or, better yet, artistic work, have made them very subtly, one may even say abnormally, refined. His pieces are not numerous; his life was not long; and, beautiful as are the pictures, one somehow feels—even before the "Setting out for Cythera" of Potsdam (which is the engraved canvas), or the "Setting out for Cythera" of the Louvre—that the man was yet greater, or not so much "greater" as more interesting and complex than his work in bulk or in detail. He was irritable, he was supersensitive; he was a creature of moods and of fancies. He had no physical strength, no inexhaustible vitality. Consumption, or, if not consumption, then nerves too highly strung for long existence in a work-a-day world, carried him off when he was yet scarcely in sight of middle age; and if it had not been for the devotion of M. de

Julienne, and that of the friendly Abbé who made Watteau stay with him in quietude, at Nogent on the Marne, he would—as to his physical life—have lasted a yet shorter time. Paris exhausted him; but outside Paris he could not have become what he was. Artistic France lived for two or even three generations after his death on the tradition and the fact and the rich inheritance of his greatness. It was not until the Revolution—it was not until the uprising of the star of David—that his influence was arrested and his name dishonoured. A long time of neglect. Then, in the full middle of the nineteenth century—or even later—when the galvanized Classicism (which yet had merits of its own) had long had its day, Time's revenges became perceptible.

By this time, Watteau is more than reinstated. Almost is his resurrection, comparable, if we may bring together two different worlds, to that of Jeanne d'Arc. In any case, by the whole priesthood of Art, he has been gravely and appropriately canonized.

Of the two artists who most resembled Watteau—and both of them resembled him much more than did Boucher—one, Pater, was directly his pupil, indebted to him most deeply; and the other, an older man,

Nicholas Lancret, was a follower at times inclined to dispense and capable of dispensing with the leading-strings by which Pater —a fellow townsman of Watteau's, since he too came from Valenciennes—found it generally convenient to be guided. By reason of such occasional portraits as those of Mlle. Camargo and Mlle. Sallé—whose dances on the boards of the theatre a luminous line or two by Voltaire, as well as the engravings after their portraits, keep in our memory—Lancret is entitled to ask for some independent place of his own. Besides, those compositions of his which illustrate the *Contes* of La Fontaine (such as the "À femme avare, galant escroc") contain things more definitely dramatic than anything that Watteau ever did. In his grasp of everyday character, Lancret is firm and fresh. Watteau's quintessence of refinement was not for him, nor his stately or elegant reverie.

Still, it is not Lancret's frequent exhibitions of vigour, any more than Pater's research after dainty and pretty invention, or pretty adaptation from his master, that can suffice to give to the begetter of them the post next to Watteau's, in French eighteenth-century art. Nattier might claim it if it

could be claimed at all by one who, for all practical purposes, was portrait painter alone. But, were the portrait painter admitted, Nattier would have a rival, thanks to the brilliant pastels of Quentin La Tour. Boucher —notwithstanding his faults, which are sometimes shortcomings and sometimes excesses— might claim it, were there not Fragonard: for to Boucher we owe much. Greuze, with all his mannerisms, might claim it, were there not Boucher. Fragonard might claim it, were there not Chardin. On the whole, it is to Chardin that it must be given.

But before I go on to urge why the credentials and recommendations of Chardin are overwhelming legitimately, it must be sought to characterize, in a few words, these others, who will continue to have honourable fame.

Incidentally, in the use I have made of him in defining others, Boucher himself has been in a measure defined. But of a master so prolific and so individual, the inventor of a Genre, and the popularizer of it, some little further mention should in fairness be made.

The Goncourts tell us that Boucher was greater as colourist than draughtsman: they go so far as to say that in his middle time he was, as colourist, actually great. Neither

opinion is one to which it is easy to subscribe. I find Boucher's colour never actually great. At the best I find it pretty, decorative, superficially attractive; nor am I disposed to accept as an explanation of its presumed failure, of its deterioration, at all events, as time proceeded, the fact that the master was influenced for evil, was restricted and narrowed, by the frequency of his employment on designs to be executed in tapestry of Beauvais or the Gobelins. That he did so deteriorate may be perfectly possible; but the implied apology does not cover the ground. A colourist, quite as much as a poet, must be born, not made. Boucher—poor man!—was only "made"—and made rather ineffectually. Certain schemes suited him: light schemes, schemes thin and primitive, the schemes of the average dressmaker. They were gay at least: happy, but in a commonplace way. Boucher had rarely success at all when he went beyond them.

On the other hand, the Goncourts seem unduly severe when they comment on Boucher's draughtsmanship. Of course, they recognize cleverness, readiness, the expert's aplomb. They say, however, that Boucher acquired a manner; that his manner took the place of Style. In his nudes, they admit the extreme

dexterity of the turn of his crayon, which suggests the curve of a surface, which plants, as one may say, a dimple suddenly, as a swift finger might plant a beauty-patch upon real flesh. But he had not "distinction": at least he had not if distinction in draughtsmanship is to be assigned to no one who fell short of Watteau's share of it. All things are relative. The master of Valenciennes is distinction itself, and Boucher, amazing, brilliant, suave, adopted a convention, seemed seldom to have grasped the interest of the individual, was content to have accepted a type, plump and supple, of infinite capacity of movement, gracious, *avenante*, and, as to years, habitually six-and-twenty. Still he was wonderful in sculptural roundness—for gaiety, for action, for swift suggestion of youth and health, intact and unblemished. Very dramatic, seriously dramatic at all, Boucher was not; which is why the pose of his model is more interesting than her experience, and why the red chalk or the black chalk study is more engaging, more vital, than the completed canvas.

Of his patroness, Madame de Pompadour, is there a single portrait that can be called a masterpiece? Is there *any* portrait by

Boucher which rises to the glory of a *chef-d'œuvre?* One asks these damaging questions. One does it without the wish to condemn him if the answers cannot be altogether satisfactory. One has one's resource—one's remedy. One leaves the painted portraits, as one has left the gods and goddesses of the mythological canvas. One goes to the drawing—be it in sanguine or in black. One goes even, one is thankful to be able to go, to the reproductions by Demarteau, things of Boucher's own century, that in good examples have caught, and in good condition retained, the whole of his spirit. In the prints of Demarteau, a Fleming whom a Belgian of Brussels or Liège (M. Leymarie) has daintily catalogued in a volume issued by Rapilly—and some of the best of whose plates the outlay of a very few pounds for each, and of a little time in collecting them, will still make ours—in these Demarteau prints the best of Boucher, the thing he did finely, lies open to our view. We should try to put in our own portfolios—say, a chosen half-dozen. And these should include, if that may be, the pretty rusticity of No. 146; the less naturalistic, more obviously decorative No. 123, with an amphora and the bearer of the amphora and

her costume antique or of the elder world; the allegory with an aged figure and young girls at his feet; the unquestioned little masterpiece of a Venus seen from behind—the bath just over (No. 315); and the domestic subject of "Les Crêpes," a young woman: children about her, she leaning forward, and, with outstretched arm, manœuvring a pancake on a dish on the low hearth—a design made by the artist in another mood than that in which he lived with gods and goddesses: Boucher *bon enfant*, a child of France, a child almost of the people.

The mood, the temper, which was but occasional with Boucher, whom the Pompadour favoured—who flourished well in the atmosphere of the Court of Louis Quinze—was a mood, a temper, a criticism on life, or an exposition of it, constant in Chardin. Chardin is the altogether sympathetic historian, the faithful and unwearied chronicler of the children of the middle classes. The middle classes had become important in the mid-eighteenth century, and Chardin, as well as Boucher, belonged to them, and Chardin recognized their human interest, their value as subject-matter for his art. He was a healthy optimist: not in the least a

visionary. And the account his canvasses afford of the home-life of his humane and civilized people is a veracious chronicle: none the less exact because incidentally it is a eulogy. In his canvasses, as in the pages of a sympathetic writer—some master of poetic realism (it might be René Bazin or François Coppée)—there is exposed to us, without emphasis, with the simplicity that is artistic, the deeply studied and completed picture of French frugality and order, of French graciousness, of French affection.

The years of the long middle of the eighteenth century are filled with the record of Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin's work. The work was in oil paint for the most part. He made practically no drawings. And, only in the later time, stimulated by the successes of La Tour—who was much more to Chardin than the Rosalba, or Perronneau—did the master historian of the lives of the *bourgeoisie* decide to work in pastel. And in pastel, wisely enough, Chardin did nothing but portraiture. His painted portraits, of which, a few years after his success of 1737 with "La Fontaine," an interior of a scullery, he did a limited number, have, with one or two exceptions, vanished. Scarcely are the exceptions even

sufficient to establish a standard by which work of this kind, put forward as his, is to be rejected or taken. But for more than thirty years, from 1737 onwards, his interiors of homely life appeared, in numbers sufficient and not overpowering, with reasonable regularity and precision. Slowly and certainly there was built up the volume of his work upon this theme. In the scullery, with "The Cistern," he is—he may be there too with the girl who is scraping the vegetables and the aproned youth who has charge of the wine bottles. The "Pourvoyeuse"—the active woman who has been bustling round on her marketing, who has just finished, who has laid her burden down—is as paintable an instance as can possibly be wished for of the treatment of the themes of the kitchen. Quite admirable is the provisioner's pose, at once of lasting robustness and momentary relief. In expression not less perfect is the "Gouvernante": the nursery governess full of solicitude about the docile but not brilliant boy who stands before her for inspection, judgment, kindly remonstrance. "L'Économe" shows the elderly lady of the house patiently busy over her calculations with an account book. Can anything of which that

world conceives seem more important than those labours? "La Mere Laborieuse" brings upon the scene the mother and the child she is instructing. Then, there are the children at the table, before the outspread meal—"Le Bénédicité" it is called—and the children are to give thanks to Heaven devoutly, as in a picture of Fragonard's, "Dites merci!", they are to give thanks politely to their mother. "Dame prenant son thé" shows us a buxom woman of a certain age, planted contentedly before a rough earthenware teapot. And the "Study of Drawing" shows a youth bending forward attentive, immersed absolutely in his business of copying the "Mercury" of Pigalle, a cast of which is placed in front of him.

Every incident and accessory portrayed by Chardin in this informal series of great range—and I have mentioned, of course, but a part of it—is portrayed with sympathetic truth, arrived at after observation elaborate and faultless. The Goncourts hit the nail upon the head when they point out as a defect—it is a small one, but it is the one thing in which the genre work of Chardin is inferior to the genre work of

Metsu—they point out as the one defect a certain inadequacy in the flesh painting, a certain want of lightness and of transparency there. But if the record of the face sometimes in this respect misses perfection, the gesture is of the last subtlety.

It is hardly possible to examine all these pictures and not be struck with the presence in many of them, of a quality not hitherto mentioned, their dexterous, modest, yet broad and ample record of "Still Life," though still life in association here with incident or character, in a word, with humanity. To see the "Pourvoyeuse," for instance—it is a conspicuous example, and again, the "Fontaine" is another—is almost to be certain that Chardin, at his hours, would paint still life for its own sake, and would paint it nobly. He did paint it nobly. He painted it often in ideal fashion. Nothing in Dutch art—scarcely even the best practice of De Heem—is quite upon the level of this still life painting. Again, this work has been the inspiration and the sustenance of modern men, quite recently, in France and, to some extent, in England; and these men, never meanly imitative, have really, I believe, been the men — Courbet and Edouard Manet

possibly, Bonvin and Ribot more assuredly—who in all the ages have come nearest to its excellence.

Some of the very finest Chardins, of still life, as of domestic incident and character painting, are, rightly and naturally, at the Louvre. There, in the "Salle Lacaze," where, in the matter of such French pictorial art of the great elder time, of that great eighteenth century, as modern taste most cordially approves, a bequest priceless and opportune, was lodged, some forty years ago, there is to be found—along with fine Watteaus and a delightful Pater and a Fragonard nymph whom Cupid playfully assails as she sprawls and struggles, her rose flesh backed by cream-white draperies: it is called "La Chemise enlevée"—a whole collection of Chardin's performances, now in genre painting, tender and reticent, and now, in still life, sober and splendid. Here is a "Bénédicité" and here a "House of Cards," and here a jewel-casket, lined daintily, and here the pink-grey peaches, softer than velvet, and the homely wine bottle, and here the silver beaker, that famous "Goblet d'Argent" which Jules de Goncourt conveys to us in his etching, and which, when Chardin painted it so nobly, may

have come, not many years or days before, from the workshop of Joubert.

Nothing obvious at all brings Chardin and Fragonard together—nothing brings them together but the deep and private bond of a common hold on reality, in which Beauty is never stupidly denied her chance. True, Fragonard was for a short while Chardin's pupil; but then he was Boucher's also; and, though individual absolutely, his sentiment about life, his way of considering it, was much more in accord with that of the untired chronicler of natural joys than with that of the recorder of the steady and placid performance of the everyday task. Besides, Fragonard was never bourgeois, either for good or ill—Fragonard was of Provence, pleasure-loving. Born and bred upon that southern hill-side where Grasse sets its face to the sun—where, as in the land that Browning speaks of, a "footfall" is enough to "upturn to the warm air half-germinating spices," where,

> "day by day,
> New pollen on the lily-petal grows,
> And, still more labyrinthine, buds the rose"

—born there, no experience of Paris in his later youth, nor of Rome soon afterwards

when, as the winner of "the prize of Rome" he journeyed to Italy, counteracted the effect produced upon Fragonard by the Provence which was the home of his soul.

The result of the quite temporary Roman influence, that never went deep or far with Fragonard, is seen a little in the ineffectual tragedy of the "Callirhoé" of the Louvre—a tragedy conceived by one who was ever happily incapable of horrors. Afterwards, Fragonard learnt what were the things in which without effort he could be sincere and personal. He addressed himself to the facile but ingenious painting of portraits; to the realization of the visions of great ordered landscape which he owed to the years of his youth; to the painting of figures, either in allegorical design, under which pure reality scarcely affects to conceal itself, or in scenes of common life and of familiar passion, of which he caught the grace and caught the fire. The great series of decorative paintings, undertaken in the first instance for the mistress of a King, and which found refuge, in Fragonard's own later days, in the darkened *salon* of the house of his kinsman at Grasse, is at one with the small concentrated treasure I have already described—the struggling

nymph and Eros of the Salle Lacaze — in being allegorical; but in neither case is the attraction so much in allegory as in the evidence of alert observation, ready grasp of the actual when it has impulse in it and that charm of vivacity and vividness, of waywardness and of gay mutiny, which with Fragonard counted for so much.

The critical moment of "The Contract"—Genre painting at its subtlest and most refined, Genre painting with a dramatic perception delicate as Terborch's—is realized as thoroughly as is the sudden impulse and contest of "Le Verrou," or as are the impetuous demands of the two rival lovers in "La Coquette fixée," which is Venetian, or vies with the Venetian in flow of form and liberal grace of posture.

Of the French elegance and French alertness that were around Fragonard in daily life, perhaps it is drawings—because, most often, they, of all artists' works, are the things derived from Nature most directly—that, with the greatest of all conceivable correctness, register the charm. A sepia drawing at the Louvre, of two heads bent together—it is called "Reading," and the heads nestle side by side in the happy consciousness of the

shared page—convey the models' elegance and their contented absorption. In the Goncourt collection there was a red chalk drawing, with, it may be, a less immediate sense of *ensemble* and of mastery, but in the end, perhaps even more interesting; so rich is it in the last secrets of human expression. It is a study of a young woman seated. The head, compactly built, with the firm chin cut sharply, is serenely leant back; and eyes of infinite expressiveness, so lively and so knowing, address, as it were, and hold in their possession, the unseen sharer in a fascinating dialogue.

Master of draughtsmanship, as draughtsmanship expresses itself in line and wash, a painter more uncertain, whose combinations or whose schemes of colour are sometimes heated and unreal, sometimes a little thin and shallow, and sometimes, as in "La Chemise enlevée," faultlessly harmonious, faultlessly luminous—it is not astonishing that on the rare occasions when Fragonard passed to another medium, and expressed himself with the etching needle, his work should have been remarkable, and, with its ease and elegance, curiously complete. I assume that he first took up the medium of

etching in Venice. There Tiepolo, one at least of whose works it pleased him to interpret, had himself etched. But it was not in Venice, it was in his later maturity in Paris, or, it may be, later still, when he had withdrawn to Provence, that Fragonard executed the half-dozen prints, wholly original, profoundly characteristic, which reveal his gaiety of conception, his dexterity of touch. Prosper de Baudicourt has catalogued these and the rest, in his supplement to the books on the French Painter-Engravers. He says their characteristics—amongst them Fragonard's "*pointe, extrêmement spirituelle*"—have always been appreciated by the amateur. But the expression is relative; in no case until lately has the amateur been eager to stake sums of any importance on the adventure of procuring them—and of the reality of a desire, the willingness to expend money is an efficient, though not in all cases a final, test. Six of Fragonard's etchings now appeal, and surely will continue to appeal to the collector. One of them, the "Parc"—it is a terraced classic garden—though wrought with extreme delicacy, is on a scale rather too small. It is the Elzevir of etching, and Fragonard has nowhere the Bodonis. Another, "The Two

Women on Horseback," shows two graceful young figures—one is behind the other—with an excellent seat, upon a barebacked steed, lifting his hoofs high in determined progress through a country whose vegetation obstructs his step. The four others are a set, called "Bacchanales," though more than one is entitled to another appellation, "The Satyr's Family." These have grace, spontaneity, character, even humour, abundant charm. They have the fascination of free movement, of the nude figure wholly at ease, leading its life. Fragonard has conceived of these things as *bas reliefs*, framed by and beheld in the abundant herbage, the luxuriant grasses of the South. It is the Pagan world, with its instinctive joyousness renewed, so gay, so innocent—in all pictorial art there can be nothing quite like them.

The imagination of Fragonard, though reality was its basis, took him, as we have just seen, now and again, to other times, and other worlds. Quentin La Tour's world—which it is next our business to speak of—was of the French eighteenth century only—its latter half—the world of his own day. He knew it absolutely, and he recorded for us, not indeed its social incidents any more than its

streets or its landscape, but piece by piece in a long succession of pastel portraits, now elaborately completed, now decisively and greatly sketched, its characters salient and distinguished; politicians, writers, courtiers, financiers, advocates, dancers, and actresses, and noble dames.

I remember M. Jacques Doucet telling me, in Paris—and he gave me an object lesson by showing me examples both of the highly wrought and of the summary—that the La Tour at St. Quentin (where are exclusively the collection of " preparations," or sketches, left to La Tour's native town by La Tour's brother) had been brought into undue prominence, in relation, that is, to the most finished work, like the " Duval d'Epinoy, " and like the elaborate pastels of " Marie Lecsinska," and of the " Pompadour "—is it not ?—at the Louvre. I could not agree with him absolutely; although of course I am not insensible of the elaboration of these larger, highly wrought works, and of the astonishing triumph over difficulties which these things display. And I did not agree with him quite to the full because I cannot be the advocate of what, in any art, one may call the undue stretching of the means one employs. It

seems to me that a medium must accept its conditions, that a scale must accept its limitations, that the short story should not seek to compass the effects within much easier and more appropriate reach of the full-length novel, and that a medium like pastel is exercised best, not in vying with the achievements of oil paint, and especially the more elaborate of them, but in executing sharply, clearly, with draughtsmanship subtle, economical, considered, the sketch instead of the picture.

Therefore, with high regard for M. Doucet, a benefactor of artistic France, a master of good taste in more arts than one, I must still say to the student, "Study La Tour at St. Quentin most of all." It is in a modest apartment—"*froide salle*," Maurice Barrès calls it—of the Museum in the grey manufacturing town that the true vision of the eighteenth century world rises most clearly before us. There, thanks to La Tour's deep insight, and to his subtle and decisive hand, the eighteenth century of art and fashion and Letters—Rousseau and Diderot, the Camargo and Mlle. Fel, live to this day their lives before us. There is the weightiness of their wisdom, their characteristic bearing,

stately or graceful; there is the point of their wit, and the fascination of the mobile mouth and gleaming eye. History, social and personal history, written by a contemporary, learned, observant, of unsurpassed penetration, offers to us, in that St. Quentin gallery, its open, unstinted page.

CHAPTER XIV

CLASSICS : ROMANTICS

THE close of the eighteenth century was one of those epochs in which the course and current of a nation's life does influence to some extent, though it cannot long control, the current of its art. Without the Revolution—without the struggle, too, to which France braced herself in the early years of the First Empire—there might never have been David. And without David something might have been lacking to the full expression, in painting, of French character and taste. France has her hours of heroic austerity, as well as her hours of indulgence. The art of Fragonard and of Lavreince—the art even of the more chastened Moreau le jeune—no

one would describe as severe. But David's art, like France herself, went back towards the ideals of Greece and Rome. It celebrated the civic virtues. Of physical prowess it made much. Fittingly, David was hardly colourist at all. Colour implies luxury. Fittingly, he was a stern and capable draughtsman, whose portraiture, as a rule, made most of worthy people with a deep sense of their responsibilities. But, as an expression of the true classical spirit, David was inferior to Ingres. To him we will immediately turn.

With the long life of Ingres, which ended in the middle of the nineteenth century, French Classicism made a dignified course, and at all events, for the time being, a glorious end. Ingres was David's follower. He could not always excel David in dignified grace. He could not, perhaps, have painted the portrait of Madame Récamier with quite David's simplicity—austere simplicity—of charm. Yet his own simplicity was austere. Ingres is too much known in England by a single piece of his work, the beautiful "Source," a happy labour of his then already advanced years—a piece of which the late Sir Andrew Clark said cruelly, to a friend of mine,

that she was a young woman with a disease of the hip joint. That picture, fresh and fascinating as those who do not live with disease find it, is not and cannot be an instance of that nobility of imagination which lifted Ingres to heights that David did not rise to. The heroine of "La Source," drawn from a concierge's daughter, is a young woman, discreet, agreeable, chaste, without thinking of chastity: not much besides. "A vegetable soul." But in the intricate compositions of "The Golden Age," painted for the *château* of Dampière, and in drawings that are part of Ingres's bequest to his native town in the South, Montauban, and, most conspicuously of all, perhaps, in his extraordinarily significant conception of the young Christ, full of conviction and grave purpose, expounding to and reasoning with, the Doctors of the Jewish Law, Ingres's nobility of imagination has full play.

It may be said, just incidentally, that Ingres's portraits—chiefly of people of the cultivated, or shall we say the intellectual middle class?—are astounding pencil drawings. By reason of a faultless draughtsmanship, their characterization is the more complete. But having said this, our thought

should perhaps return to the imaginative work, and to the preparations for it—those wonderful Montauban drawings of strong men and slim virgins, their figures poised perfectly. They are denizens of a Classic world. But the little Christ may remind us that, unlike Landor in our English literature—with whom in other ways he had so much affinity—Ingres was not Classic alone. He could be Christian, too, and, in the modern sense, religious.

It must be remembered that the most genuine and impressive religious painter of the nineteenth century revered Ingres, and was his pupil. Hippolyte Flandrin had a fervour and an unction that was not Ingres's. Yet, for all that, he inherited from his master the gift of reticence and wise restraint. Those of us who go to Paris without ever visiting the interiors of the churches of St. Germain des Près and St. Vincent de Paul, or go to Nîmes without visiting a church he has there decorated, cannot, of course, know Flandrin. To know him is to have at least the chance of doing justice to his splendid veneration, his measured, ordered force, and, in processional and decorative painting, the rhythm and very beat of his line.

The enemies of Ingres were the Romantics, Decamps and Delacroix perhaps principally; and Ingres inveighed against them as against criminals guilty of treason to the State. To be careless of a correct contour, to concentrate your thoughts on colour and action—that was to do nothing less than to offend against morality. Ingres was *intransigeant*, an irreconcilable, or he believed that he was. In reality, in his later practice, a certain "spirit of the time" obtained over him, although he knew it not, a little influence, but of course no ascendancy: it did not diminish the gulf that lay between his serenity, his ordered calm, and Delacroix's too frequent violence; but it did—though he would have denied it—contribute its share to make some of his work and some of Delaroche's appear less obviously antagonistic. Delaroche, not a great genius perhaps, not strikingly original, was himself not an extremist. But he had what Decamps in a measure and Delacroix more largely lacked—the French sense of order: so that one understands that his large composition of the Hemicycle was liked by Henry Irving, who had, in his dressing-room at the Lyceum, a large engraving of it, which I remember his telling me he found helpfully

restful. Those were days before the fame of the immortal Puvis—greatest decorator of all, as another "hemicycle" (that of the Sorbonne) and the museums of Amiens and Marseilles sufficiently convince us—had spread beyond his own land.

"Romanticism," the "Romanticism" of Painting, survives, if it survives at all effectively, in the best, or at all events in the most fascinating, of the painters of Barbizon. In the main it survives in landscape. Yet the landscape of Theodore Rousseau had, in truth, Naturalism for its basis. It was of the solid earth as clearly, though not perhaps so entrancingly, as was the landscape of Crome and of John Constable. But Romance was in every canvas, and in every touch, of Diaz. Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña—how could he but be romantic and distinguished, with such a name? His themes, in landscape proper, were narrowly limited. Generally there must be a rough foreground, a darkened distance, and, perhaps, in middle distance, a glint or gleam of sunshine striking some rugged tree trunk. That is the prescription of Fontainebleau, the formula of Barbizon. But in his figure-pieces, Diaz soars; and of the Romantic figure-painting,

his is that for which we remain grateful. His nymphs and Cupids, rich in colour, have suavity and grace in form and movement. A true and fine Romantic—and yet inspired by Constable—is certainly Jules Dupré. Both he and the great Englishman revelled in the rendering of weather, and, oftener than not, Constable's weather and Dupré's was a weather of sweeping wind and laden skies.

Not atmosphere, not clouds—the "irrevocable travellers," whose course and passage make such an appeal to the imagination—were at all mainly the subjects of another Romantic, or another painter of Barbizon, Charles Jacque. Jacque was for long years, both in painting and etching, the vivacious and well-equipped chronicler of the pursuits of the farm, and of its creatures. For him, especially the chicken-run, the sheepfold, and the slow journey of the herd across the plain. His figures have variety, and truthful action. Judges applaud his work; he has his money value. But he is too sterling in his art, too single-minded in the manner of his appeal, to have commanded, in any full degree, the noisy success of popularity.

This, if it has been attained at all by the Romantics or those who were akin to them,

has been attained by Corot and Jean François Millet—craftsmen and chroniclers as honest as the rest; inclined generally as little to a sentiment artificial and spurious; yet aided, both of them, in their appeal to the public, by that measure of sentiment which was really a part of themselves.

But here let us distinguish. Millet's sentiment began and ended in the faithful presentation of the agricultural poor, in the suggestions of their humble lives and outlooks. He was the Crabbe, or, better perhaps, the Bloomfield of French village life—he wrote again, in terms of paint, *The Farmer's Boy*. It was rusticity with no suggestion of philosophy or moral teaching. True, but a little on the surface—as the imagined Realist, in any Art is often found to be. From the goal of his endeavour to that of Wordsworth's *Michael* or Wordsworth's *Leech Gatherer*, the journey is too long and too impossible to be accomplished—it is a journey to another world. Millet, on his own lines, is, of course, to be respected. We can admire and be interested without raving about him. And to the words that have here tried to briefly trace his place, it may be added that he is nowhere more satisfactory than in work in which he is seen

the least often : his treatment, sometimes in paint, sometimes in crayon-drawing, of the rustic Nude. His "Goose Girl," stretching her limbs to the quiet stream—bathing in the privacy of the woodland—has an honest charm, a truth exact and comely, as notable, in its own way, as that of the "Angelus," the "Diggers," and the solitary "Churner."

Now Corot's sentiment, that at least that commends him to the public, is the sentiment of the landscape painter alone. His work expresses his delight, and the delight of those who follow him, in the elegant and the impalpable, the suave and the evanescent, the tender, the delicate, and, so to say, the retiring. Like Hardy's lover, in "Her Definition," he delivered himself in no "full-featured terms, all fitless," but "perceived" at a moment—only with Corot the moment went on to half a lifetime—how "the indefinite phrase could yet define." In Corot—the Corot of popularity and greatest price—nothing is positive and fixed. No colour is strong, no light and shade, no outline. There is no noonday to portray. It is the dainty morning, or the pensive evening. Such air as stirs sends but a shimmer through the tree's leaves and lightest branches.

The most approved work of Corot is that which is most lacking in volume and in form—it is Corot's silver-grey dream of Central France in chosen hours. This work is of his later, sometimes even of his latest time. But there was the "Corot of Italy." The Corot of Italy saw the castle on the hillside, and the dark-haired peasant girl of the Campagna, and now and then—but not for long after his return from the South—even a villa on the Marne, or a tranquil street of Paris, with sanity and breadth, with the definiteness and simplicity of ordinary vision, and under the illumination of the common day.

One thing brought from the South, seen there, at least in his imagination, and there absorbed, Corot kept with him to the end, or near it. That was a certain Classic ordering of his scene—a scene apt to be peopled, too, upon occasion, not with a red-capped peasantry, but with nymphs, dancing. In this department of his labour, the Classic and Romantic seem to meet. For these opposing factions—never at bottom so hopelessly opposed as they conceived themselves to be—a *modus vivendi* has, in these works, been found.

CHAPTER XV

IMPRESSIONISTS AND "THE GOOD PAINTING"

THE title given to this chapter is not intended for a moment to suggest that it is impossible to be an Impressionist and a good painter. Very much the reverse. Human and individual impressions of the facts—not the dead facts themselves—have been painted habitually, and throughout many centuries, by most of the painters who have painted well. Those who call themselves the Impressionists are not, in truth, so much of innovators as they imagine. Yet their label may remain. It does express, roughly, and with a certain convenience, a thought and aim that binds them together. They do not garner specimens of the world as the Naturalist knows it, as the man of Science has reason, temporarily, to think that it exists. They are interested in the appearance of things. They concern themselves with most of that which they can fairly be asked to be concerned with; and that is the passing show of our human experience, day by day. The passing show, at one hour, one place, may be a show of atmospheric effect. At another moment, at

another spot, it may be the movement of some stirred crowd. Or it may be a revelation of character, an exhibition of feeling. Or it may be a line of race-horses nearing the winning-post; or it may be the tempting forms, the rich or dainty textures, and the chromatic glories of very pretty hats, stuck up on little posts or rods, in a French milliner's window.

But what is the meaning of the words "the Good Painting"? For is it likely that either here or elsewhere we should deliberately be occupied with the bad? The truth is, *la bonne Peinture*, like "Impressionism" itself, is also a label that links, that brings together, certain men. The men of the one school, or group—for, really, seen in proper perspective, they are no opposing Schools: it is by no means a history of the Classicists and Romanticists over again—have been, mostly, contemporaries of the men of the other. To take no note of what has been produced during the last twenty years, a generation, a generation and a half, has been required to comprise and embrace the labours of the men of *la bonne Peinture*. It is a title that they did not themselves invent. As regards "the Good Painting," the twenty years just gone need not be

counted; for the men I indicate by the term are a group that is small and pretty compact, and the time of their work ranges only from the advent of Courbet to the death of Boudin or Ribot. Examples, these masters of *la bonne Peinture* have left behind them: examples, but scarcely followers. Impressionism, on the other hand, is a movement, or a phase (Mr. Walter Sickert, benevolently autocratic, decrees that there is no such thing as a "movement"); it is a phase then, which continues, and is apt to continue—it would have been well if "the Good Painting" could have continued also. The two, between them—the two schools or groups, different, very different in certain of their manifestations, yet, as has been declared already, not, in essentials, opposed—represent, either by the actual performances of their members or by their influence upon more recent work, the progress, illustrious and triumphant, of the modern art of France.

A painter of Dutch race and birth, Barthold Jongkind, and a painter of American blood, Whistler (both men practised their profession for years in France), are seen, when things are largely and rightly considered, to belong to the Impressionist group. Eugène Boudin, the greatest painter of the harbour

and the coast, the "master of the skies," as Corot and Courbet united in recognizing him, while not actually and statedly an Impressionist, was, as far as personality, and as far, too, as aims and methods of work are concerned, the link between Impressionism and *la bonne Peinture*. Courbet had nothing of Impressionism except its frankness and its breadth—of *la bonne Peinture* he had the strength, the sterlingness, the unity, the charm of touch. The group of the *bonne Peinture* owed much to Courbet. So did Whistler, a painter of genius, who, with sweets of his own, did not disdain to sip honey from many a flower. So does to-day J. W. Morrice, the distinguished Canadian of Paris. The earlier efforts of the Impressionists owed something to Boudin and to Jongkind. In considering, carefully, most of the eminent artists, ornaments of their calling, belonging to, or affiliated with, one or the other of these groups, it is convenient to begin with a very giant of painting—Gustave Courbet—and next, perhaps, to make reference to Jongkind and to Boudin.

Courbet and Jongkind came into the world together: both were born in 1819. Courbet died, not an old man, it will be seen, in

1877. Jongkind lasted to 1891, when at least he was seventy-two. But at that time he had long outlived the period of his noteworthy performances. He had become much less himself. He had gone to pieces; his work was less characteristic and less personal, before old age reached him: as Courbet indeed, in years which should still have been the years of middle life, had ceased, or almost ceased, to produce canvasses of high value or of lasting charm. Jongkind, in all the latter part of his career, was a genius off the line. And Courbet, when he died at La Tour-de-Peilz, near Vevay, a broken exile from his land and his fellows, Courbet had the pain of remembering that in a past already seemingly remote, lay the bulk of his great achievements.

What, in a few words, was Courbet's life-story? And what the range of his labour? And what the cause of the vicissitudes to which, over a period still not actually long, his fame has been subjected?

The son of people neither rich nor penniless, neither peasants nor gentlefolk, Courbet was born in a hill-district of Franche-Comté, came to Paris, was a painter from the first, and a painter very much self-taught. He

was only three-and-twenty when he actually painted, and twenty-five when he saw honourably exhibited, the rich and forcible canvas, "Courbet with the Black Dog," which his surviving sister gave, not long ago, to the Parisian public, at the Petit Palais. Shown at a time when the Romantics were already in the ascendant, the picture was a blow struck for Realism—and "blows struck successfully for Realism" is a phrase in which I may sum up the story of Courbet's life and labour. Yet in calling Courbet a realist, we must never think of him as the eccentric antagonist of the admirable. He was no opponent of poetry. But from the first he seems to have understood that in pictorial design, just as much as in the most moving of creative Literature, reality, the thing seen, and the emotion felt or witnessed or divined, must be the basis of the performance that is to last. Eugène Delacroix, who was a leader of the professed Romantics, hated Courbet sometimes, and sometimes was irresistibly attracted to him. Not much of that which Delacroix accomplished, full as it was of violent movement and of obvious effectiveness —touched, too, as it was, upon occasions, with a real penetration and poetry—has any

chance of outlasting, in the estimation of the wise, that great, deep Realism of Courbet—fearless truth, in the main—which for a quarter of a century he was uttering. He uttered it for the first time in a manner that drew upon him for a while, at least, universal attention, in a large canvas "After Dinner at Ornans," a powerful and subtle portrait group of Courbet and his father, and a friend who lights his pipe, and a friend who fiddles dreamily. If we did not remember what ridiculous judges practising painters often are of other painters' work, it might surprise us to be told that before this picture, that demi-god of the Romantics, Eugène Delacroix, was rather coldly reticent, and the fine master of Classicism, impulsive and convinced—I mean Ingres—lamented that he found in it neither composition nor drawing. A literary critic, as usual—it was M. Champfleury—stepped into the breach. "It is long," said he, "since one has seen so sudden a success."

But then, and for a good many years afterwards, half the public of Paris, asphyxiated by the artificial, must have been unable altogether to take cognizance of the true. How otherwise can we account for the reception accorded, at the Salon of 1850, to "A

Funeral at Ornans"? What was there in "A Funeral at Ornans" that shocked, that hurt, that must be met with a protest? To-day, we cannot even guess. Courbet's reputation has been high and low and high again in the interval since it was painted. For myself, if I know anything, I know that this is one of the great pictures of the world.

It has been said already that Courbet had been in the main without teaching from the professors; but it must not be forgotten that he had travelled widely, and had stared long and hard at the great Masters of Spain, and at Rembrandt, Hals, Jordaens, some of the Venetians—this, not to copy or with any servility to imitate, but to absorb them: food, material, encouragement, warning, "*savoir pour pouvoir*," he says. Reckoned an initiator, Courbet, in truth, was much more a restorer. He gave men back an inheritance that had passed from them: great legacies that they had never properly enjoyed. Something of a malcontent in social matters —in his survey and appreciation of them— Courbet was, of the traditions of art, as it were, a steadfast curator, a Conservative eminently. He used largely the old formulæ in embodying his massive vision. He saw

the world in his own way; selected his own themes, and that with a wide choice; but he showed no impatience, no sense of any need to reach eccentrically forth for means of expression hitherto unfound and unknown.

Regions of practice in which Courbet was triumphant hardly less than in that realm of portrait and of homely incident in which we have thus far seen him, require a brief mention. All his life he was a landscape painter. In that early portrait of himself that has been spoken of, the background of Franche Comté rocks and grottos and a hint of the plain that lay outstretched beneath them, had an interest for him; and few things from his brush are more characteristic than his embrowned visions of the uplands near Besançon, and their cascades and the grey cliffs and running waters. Here not seldom he is the equal of Ruysdael. Then, from a remembrance of the Norman coast, or within actual sight of it, he built up his noble picture of "The Wave" that is at the Louvre: a new, great thing in painting: a piece than which no sea-piece by Turner or by Constable, by Cotman or by Boudin, can possibly be more impressive. Again it must

be said quite plainly, "The Wave," at the Louvre, is one of the world's masterpieces. Lastly—though one would like to put in a word for his portrait of Champfleury (a head and bust, at the Louvre also), so subtle, so decisive, so charged with character, intelligence, charm—lastly, there are his Nudes. Vulgarity was not invariably repellent to him—in a sense, in a measure, he was *peuple*—and, as a whole, I do not desire to utter Benediction upon "The Hammock" or the "Young Ladies"—they are Parisian shopwomen of quite the second order, "on the Banks of the Seine." But huddled clothes and half-undress are difficult to treat, always. In his Nudes, he reverts to beauty. "Venus and Psyche," several bathing subjects, and "The Woman with the Parroquet," are opulent nudes, splendid in colour and contour, alive in their momentary inaction; alive yet more in their movement.

His lamentable association with the Commune, in 1871, brought about Courbet's ruin. It is possible his influence saved the Louvre; but he was debited with the destruction of the Colonne Vendôme, in its noble eighteenth-century *Place*. He was judged unfairly—perhaps even unfairly on that

matter. He was never forgiven. Probably he has his vanity to thank for it ; for, all his life, this great man was as vain as Mr. Whistler, and as anxious that, cost what it would, the world should be talking about him. His savings, a fortune, though a small one, were swallowed up and yet insufficient to clear him of the costs exacted from him in the matter of the Vendôme column. He had to go away to Switzerland; and in his native land it became a point of honour not to buy his pictures. Upon the shores of Léman he painted many poor canvasses, and one or two strong ones, such as the "Chillon." At that date, somebody, a subordinate, helped him with his work, far too often and too much. The little Republic of the Canton de Vaud honoured Courbet. The worst of his politics and his social opinions were not in his new surroundings considered offensive. But he was sad and embittered and failing, and, like Jongkind in his retreat at the Côte St. André near Grenoble, Courbet, at the Tour-de-Peilz, took to the brandy bottle. He died, not old, in 1877. Only he is an immortal.

If really Courbet was the greatest master of *la bonne Peinture*, Manet was the greatest

Impressionist. But one has first to say a word in recognition of Jongkind, and of his initiative; and after that is uttered it may be well to treat remaining masters of the *bonne Peinture* group.

Jongkind, a native of Rotterdam, established early in France, was, in the method of his labours, above all things economical. His extraordinary economy of means became almost exaggerated in several of his etchings. In all but the happiest of his oil pictures it was a deterrent, making any general acceptance of him slow to come. Perhaps it was least unwelcome in his broad water-colour sketches of harbour quays, and of the flat lands in which only a windmill lifted itself over the level marsh, or only the mast and sail of a slowly moving barge rose from the long, still waters of the straight canal. One tires a little of his skating scenes and of his endless moonlights, in which I admit that, with more variety, and a truth seized instantaneously, he was the powerful successor of Artus van der Neer. He had no charm of colour; but his touch was sometimes magical, and the choice of his line was certain. Boudin, who knew him at Honfleur, and in 1875 went with him to Rotterdam, paid generous tribute to the

quality of his productions, and recognized that gradually the public would discern that beneath the roughness of the rind there was a fineness in the flavour of the fruit. Not statedly an Impressionist, it was the Impressionists with whom in truth Jongkind had most affinity.

Jongkind's friend Boudin—Eugène Boudin, born at Honfleur in 1824, the son of the captain of a small steamer plying between Honfleur and Le Hâvre—exhibited at the first of what were for a while the annual Shows that the Impressionists held. At the first and at no other. Influenced by the Impressionists, modified by them—their sympathetic father, in a sense, since he was the master of Claude Monet — this great, broad-minded, sensitive, various artist, was never an Impressionist merely, or an Impressionist actually, shall we say? But, in all his mature life—as an expression I have used ("modified by them") must have already implied—Boudin, a master of the *bonne Peinture* assuredly, stood by the Impressionists, held with them the belief in the importance of open-air labour, the belief too, that a landscape painter has no more certainly appealing duty than that of never

sacrificing to finish, superfluous and elaborate, the freshness and strength of the first vision. Boudin reached freedom of expression, rapid economy of performance, with his small, broad pastels of the coast, and the fat meadows, the tumbling waters, and the ever-changing skies, now radiant, now cloud-laden, long before the greater number of his oil canvasses or panels displayed a like emancipation from more conventional methods. It was at least as early as 1868 that Baudelaire, in presence of these pastels of Calvados and of the Seine Inférieure, their coasts and ports and pasture lands and jetties, made their eulogium in one of the finest passages of descriptive writing that French Literature contains.

At that time, some only of Boudin's pictures (for Boudin was slow to develop, slow to become himself) had passed beyond the stage of an uninteresting, learned dryness, and of an elaboration competent enough, but never inspired. The 'Seventies had to be entered upon, Brittany was revisited, and Bordeaux was seen for the first time, before Boudin, in those smaller, not necessarily very small pictures which must ever be accounted his finest ones, showed

us the endless subtlety and certainty of his observation of an hour. Even afterwards, there were wanted, and there had to be supplied, for Exhibition purposes, for the imaginary needs, it may be, of civic galleries, managed stupidly, those sprawling, relatively empty canvasses—those "great machines" he called them scornfully when he hated them—which dealers in conventional art think better worth eight hundred pounds than the small, living, luminous canvasses or panels which enchant us with steady, cumulative revelation of the real Boudin's refined, perfected strength. His art, most certain perhaps to be excellent, most of all individual, in the seven years beginning with 1873, fell off, more than a little, in the 'Eighties. That is, a smaller number of his works in that decade are admirable. He was changing his manner. He revived in the the early 'Nineties, when, as the inspired record in the National Gallery—"A Squall from the West"—itself sufficiently shows us (but many smaller, equally broad visions show us hardly less certainly), he was luminous most of all. The 'Seventies for the harbour scenes, the 'Nineties, up to within a year of his death in 1898, for his coast pictures and his cattle-peopled pasture

lands, most of all—though then again the harbour scenes, his *avant ports* of Havre, his jetties of Trouville, his few massed fishing-boats, became admirable—are the periods of his work for which we most seek him. His washerwomen of the Touques, pictures tolerably observant, tolerably clever, never move us very much. Not for Boudin, the stooping backs of four middle-aged French-women, their hands wringing out the linen energetically, and they unsuccessfully existing to absorb unworthily a part of the interest which, with so great a painter of the *paysage*, and of the *paysage de mer*, should be in *paysage* alone.

We feel very differently about his landscapes with cattle. Boudin's broadly painted beasts, well placed throughout his wide, rich meadows, count for much in a scheme of colour nobly conceived and executed. And they have such weight, always. These canvasses will, ere long, receive an appreciation markedly in advance, not only of the work of the first Breton period—the "Sainte Anne de la Palud," for instance—but of the "*grandes machines*," sometimes pretentious, and of certain insignificant chronicles of the familiar piers, which, in his later life, when they could sell his

product, the dealers snatched from Boudin, irrespective of their quality. Yet it is the harbour at its best, the jetty at its best, with massed masts and gathered crowd, the freshened seas with yachts like white birds flying, the Channel waters changeful, in front of ever-changeful skies, now broken into grey and turquoise, now an impenetrable, threatening mystery of slate-colour—these things it is by which Eugène Boudin, a skipper's son, who loved his coast profoundly and represented it with magic truth in every guise, will, most of all, be classed and valued.

To another artist of our *bonne Peinture* group—to a painter who enjoyed certain small private means, it seems, and so came into public recognition and acceptance long before Boudin, who was very poor—Boudin was indebted. This was the helpful, worthy François Bonvin, a complete draughtsman, but, on occasion, in his conscientious rendering of old world street and of still convent, a little dry and precise. The charm of the broad, free touch and of the luscious or the luminous palette was not then, or was not always in these themes, his; and to the method then and there employed, it is not his real reputation, but only a measure of rather

early popularity, that may be due. A little later, the better, quiet Dutch Genre painters were the source of his inspiration, or of his capacity: only it is the pleasant models of French peasant and bourgeois life that he appreciatively paints. His youthful cook maids, demure but awakened, very open and understandable, give a tranquil charm of human presence to his scenes of the kitchen and the larder. Bonvin, in placing them before us, occupied contentedly, showed a touch of the spirit of Chardin.

No one would turn to themes like these, if, in addition to a healthy appreciation of nice everyday folk, he did not add a peculiar and learned apprehension of the charm of great Still Life. With Bonvin, the pose of the young woman who shells the peas, or is busy with the cauliflower, is observed keenly and is sure to be pleasant and true; but the still life will still be a substantial though not a dominating part of the interest of his picture. And perhaps Bonvin is most certain to be remarkable, from beginning to end of his canvas, when it is still life alone with which he is concerned. His still life—unlike Vollon's, which is generally, and finely, stately gold vessels and some gorgeous fruit—is

humble still life, with scarcely an exception, and it is painted quietly, modestly, withal fearlessly, and with the spirit of one who, in dealing with simple matter, lies, as it were, under the spell of a devout fascination. Like Rembrandt, Bonvin can, by dint of sheer sincerity, make uncooked meat quite possible material for his art. It is so much more than meat, it is meat surrounded by atmosphere, it is meat in relation to the home. Or, near a glowing copper-pan, there is perhaps a vegetable—and the instruments in Bonvin's orchestra are delivered of resonant notes. Or, upon the kitchen slab, there is a flat, round, creamy cheese, cut already, and a little oozing. It is painted perfectly, just at the very moment when the *bonne Brie* should be eaten with gratitude.

A painter of wider imagination than Bonvin, an artist of readier entrance into the depths of character and the variations of mood—I mean Théodule Ribot—had for the painting of still life, which average English people despise ignorantly, a faculty as great as Bonvin's. Somewhere or other the Luxembourg possesses an absolutely noble record, by Ribot, of poached eggs in perfection : the yolks of golden yellow surrounded by their collars

of translucent white, and the translucent white held up, restrained, by the dark rigid saucepan into which, with just enough of firmness, they settle. In private possession too, a large, a very large tomato, darkly ripe, has its place beside a huge green pear, a keeping pear, of Anjou, its greenness flecked with gold. And in the pictures of domestic incident—a mother teaching her child canvas work, a housewife gravely concerned with marshalled jugs of rough earthenware, a little *gâte-sauce* of a boy (a cook's apprentice in a white apron) or, it may be a cellarman who has brought up from the depths a precious bottle —this manly painter's preoccupation with still life, his fondness for it, his true sense of its dignity, is constantly made manifest.

But Ribot—much more than Bonvin, who dealt for choice with those of tranquil mien and circumspect behaviour—Ribot is a great character-painter. He knows the charm and fun of boyhood, the early wisdom of the serene girl-child, and the moods in which she "inquires curiously." He knows men; and he knows, best of all perhaps, or at the least, as the result of knowledge, sets down with unsurpassed courage and force, the woman old, with character, and perhaps irresistible will,

stamped firmly upon every inch of a weather-worn, time-beaten visage. Sometimes she is decided merely: placid and contemplative. Sometimes seven devils have entered into her —have not so much contorted her features as made repugnant and alarming her expression. Sometimes hallucinations have seized on her.

Whichever of these persons he paints, and whichever of these moods, or states of the soul, Ribot, from the time when he was in his 'Thirties to the time of his death, more than a quarter of a century later, painted steadily as a master. A master in the relatively early days—he was not a painter at all when he was actually young—he was a master not less certainly when age came upon him. His small scale Genre pieces, dignified and humorous, were no unworthy precursors of the bolder effort, when the group, or the single figure, was realized more largely—and when life seemed always earnest, often severe, and now and then tragic. Do not let us attach too much importance to that which in certain other compositions, and in the method of treating them, Ribot owed to Ribera. "Christ on the Cross," "Saint Sebastian" in martyrdom, the "Good Samaritan" pouring

oil into the wounds of the belaboured wayfarer—they are a worthy contribution to the sum of his achievement, but they are not that part of his achievement on which this master painter, competently grave, sometimes brusque, could with justice have relied for the fame which other branches of his work ensure. Ribot, like Boudin, was fashionable, he was the desire of the collector, a few years before his death, and a few years after it. Then interest fell away from him, to something novel, and now, just as with Boudin, it is returning where it may be justified.

Lépine, Stanislas Lépine, "*Parisien de Paris*," affords yet a third instance of appreciation coming late, and at one time, or in some measure, shifting. But then, the pure landscape of Lépine suffers naturally enough the disadvantage of recalling Corot, his master —without being Corot. We must get Lépine amongst his special subjects to see how unsurpassed, almost how unequalled, he was, when it was those that he treated. He painted old towns with a dignified reticence that yet was complete truth. He painted them very tenderly, in a low key of colour: Caen and Rouen, and the pleasant suburbs of these cities—suburbs quiet and green, and

through which (that was the case with the neighbourhood of Rouen at all events) a river flowed placidly. Had he painted only Caen and Rouen and something of the Seine's course, his place would have been honourable, but it would have been less distinguished. It is his particular glory to have painted Paris: sometimes, and admirably, its important monuments—Panthéon, Pont Neuf, Institute of France, Henry the Fourth's statue at the north-western end of the Île de la Cité—and sometimes, and then with very personal charm, its quiet corners. An artist who knows Paris as few know it—my friend Eugène Béjot—is the first to bear witness to Lépine's delicate fidelity, not only to the character of buildings, but to the Parisian atmosphere of every hour. It is light generally, and brisk sometimes: sometimes it is sun-laden; often—and then it is that it must be apprehended and seized with a refinement unsurpassable—it has a little silvery moisture, so that its stones, its vistas, and its distances are just perceptibly veiled by that which has not even the slightest resemblance to a fog, but is the timid, gracefully receding ghost of a mist.

Montmartre, where Lépine lived, was quiet, green, and silvery itself, in Lépine's day,

and often he painted corners so familiar to him, where modest detached houses looked out across a road, half country and half town, to a fence perhaps, and to lonely willows, and to poplars rising steadily into the still air, or bending slowly under the passage of an autumn wind. Or, farther yet from the heart of Paris, say—not Parisian at all, but still pre-eminently French—he made a picture, classic in simplicity and dignity, out of a *magasin de fourrage*, the mere fodder store. And it was painted broadly. A little pool was in the foreground. In mid-distance the serviceable building stretched itself, lightly brown, across the whole picture; its lower storey, or the wall that continues it, pierced with arched outlets, beyond which, and through which, some little stretch of landscape is seen, of greyish green, and over all there is a low grey sky, unchanged lately, and to be unchanged still in these quiet afternoon hours.

From Lépine to Manet, from the most soothing peaceful fascination of Lépiné's strains, all in a minor key, to the sharp, clear, energetic utterance of a Manet, the transition is abrupt. Lépine was not the least admirable of our school or group of "the Good Painting."

Manet was a good painter—at his best a great one—and of the avowed, pronounced Impressionists, he was one of the first. At least three Impressionists, famous and remarkable, are living to-day, it happens, in scarcely differing stages of what must be accounted old age. But, living, one's remarks, that they may be safe, must be few, upon them. Let it be said, however, before talking of Manet more particularly, that they are Degas, Renoir, Claude Monet. Nor is that quite all that shall be said.

Degas, a master of draughtsmanship, has applied his knowledge and his instinctive, natural force, that he derived from nobody, to the quite faultless record of form not faultless at all. The search for beauty of line, the visible appreciation of it, has never been his. The search for action—action of the horse, action of the plain and ill-shaped ballet-girl—has been continual with him, and its attainment constant. Not in the least insensible has Degas shown himself, in his pastels, to arrangements of colour splendid and original. Time will not take away from him the fame that gathered years have by this time accorded: the fame of the observer whose sight is penetrating for the things he has cared

to behold: the fame of the rather cynical chronicler whose records are not wont to err. Valuable by his work—however little by the ordinary mortal it may be found sympathetic—Degas is valuable, too, or at the least, important, by his influence. Many men of talent and one man of genius—Henri de Toulouse Lautrec—owe him a visible debt.

If one finds oneself much less frequently, and then with greater reservations, admiring Renoir, that is perhaps because, to Degas's indifference to beauty of form, Renoir adds his own very frequent, not by any means constant indifference (one would even say his frequent insensibility) to beauty of colour. Discords abound in his colour. Too many of his Nudes suffer the disadvantage of combining heated hues with ungainly form. Certain of them are admirable. And admirable also, in the way of light, vivacious chronicle, are many of Renoir's scenes of popular rejoicing. And there are portrait and Genre pieces in which this artist, of whom fineness of taste is by no means the characteristic, has portrayed children who are individual, children who are likeable, possibly lovable: certainly not distinguished.

Claude Monet is mainly, in the broad

sense wholly, a landscape painter. His preoccupation, in whatever he has painted, has been the great question of colour and light. Infinite haystacks—the somewhat formless and, as it were, accidental haystacks, of France—but about them an infinite variety of illumination, where it was possible, a genuine beauty of colour. Visions of London he has received and conveyed, and such as would have appealed to Turner—as justified experiments at all events—in Turner's great old age. And in France, the fronts of ornate Cathedrals, the noble traceries and flamboyant growths of church architecture at Rouen, have served as material, as surface, over which might extend itself in wide variety Claude Monet's noble vision of colour and light. Claude Monet has pressed into his service many an object and theme. He is an artist never restlessly, but always alertly, interested in things that have freshness for him. But, if we were asked where were to be found the themes that in his life, prolonged and busy, he had treated to the finest purpose, we should have to say, perhaps—at the end of a long circuit of inquiry amongst a mass of worthy achievement—that they would be found in records of the sparkling sea,

made looking down from the high cliffs of Varangeville—made, they and their like, some of them twenty, some of them thirty, some of them even forty years ago. It is with an excellent regard for beauty that Claude Monet has studied, during now not much less than two generations, the scintillations of colour, the vibrations of light. He has studied these things from the middle life of Boudin to more than the middle life of Besnard. Boudin initiated him into the mysteries; and Besnard, following Monet, takes up the wondrous tale—paints "Femme qui se chauffe," and, at Benares, all the hues of India.

The more one studies the French painting of the nineteenth century, the more one is impressed by the peculiar goodness of the painting of the Coast and Sea. Edouard Manet, himself the greatest Impressionist of all, if by Impressionist we are to mean, not only open-air painter, but learnedly swift recorder of a vision that may soon vanish, painted the sea and shore with an amazing conviction, and an authority we cannot question. In naming the epoch-making, the "important" pictures, that mark the milestones upon Manet's way, these fresh and true performances, some of them scarcely more

than notes for his delight, may find small place or none. But their existence, in considerable quantity, should not escape us. I have seen them, I remember, at M. Durand-Ruel's Impressionist Exhibition at the Grafton Galleries. I have seen them, I think, at M. Pellerin's, at Neuilly, before he scattered many Manets—that he might buy more Cézanne's, it is said. And I have seen one lately, at Baron Denys Cochin's in the Faubourg St. Germain—an expanse of freshened and vivacious waters, and little boats, perfectly happy, and an exhilarating breeze from the West. But these are not the pieces for the public of Exhibitions.

Manet, born, in 1832, into the ranks of the upper *bourgeoisie*, found himself for a while in the studio of Couture, and had his first success—it was accounted then his eminent failure—with his great picnic picture, "Le Déjeûner sur l'Herbe," of 1863. He was independent from the beginning; and to him it seemed amazing that in but continuing or reviving the tradition of Giorgione, who painted, in his "Concert in the Fields" two men, attired, and two women undraped, he should have been suspected of an intention of offence. The picture has its comic side, un-

doubtedly, and to that Manet was not quite alive. It is a little amusing to see Miss Victorine Meurand, Manet's favourite model of that day and afterwards, squatting quite naked on the grass, refreshed by fruits and altogether joyous, while the painter, in the costume of his period and a velvet smoking-cap—lest he should take a cold—lounges opposite to her, with hand extended and explanatory, all his soul busy with the task of persuading a man friend, who is by the model's side, of the rightness of those opinions about Art which he is at the moment expounding. "Amusing," I have said: certainly not offensive. Yet Manet had to die before the grave beauty and grave truth and the curious charm of the picture—for it has these notably—was apprehended by the many, as it had been from the first by the few. For myself, to the "Déjeûner sur l'Herbe" I attach more importance than to the "Olympia."

Five years later, came "The Execution of the Emperor Maximilian," a thing of unforgettable realism, although "constructed" from stray pictorial material supplied, and from a narration furnished, and by the aid of the loan, day after day, from the barracks, of

just enough private soldiers to constitute a firing-party. Two years after that, came the single young woman's figure on the couch, called "Rest"—studied from Mlle. Berthe Morisot, who was already Manet's follower, and who became his sister-in-law. Three years passed, and then there was "Le Bon Bock"—a Franz Hals, said Alfred Stevens, the Belgian painter, rather maliciously: at least he said that the drinker, obese and genial, was "drinking Haarlem beer," and that carried men's thoughts, and was meant to carry them, to the bold Haarlem master. "Au Café"—little girl, and meditative father, and fat mamma, sitting all in a row, with mild refreshments in front of them—came in 1878, and is a piece of actual life also. "Le Bon Bock"—so full of humour and of force—had partly reconciled the public, by this time. Open-air painting is at its best in 1880, with the party "At le Père Lathuile's." The "père" kept a popular and comfortable restaurant, in the Avenue de Clichy. An uglier piece of realism, as I have always thought it, and without the abiding interest of many smaller themes, was the almost too well-known "Bar of the Folies Bergère" of 1882. By that time Manet's health was fail-

ing; and, for acceptance or rejection, he sent to the Salon no more. It is well to add that in the few years that preceded the working on "The Folies Bergère" and his death, Manet did certain flower pieces of refinement and vividness, and certain small fruit pieces of quality distinguished and fascinating.

It is not surprising that so almost faultless a recorder of the thing seen should have been not a great painter only, but an expressive etcher. *Nuances*, visible *nuances* in etching —studied gradations, subtleties—were not what he went in for. But there is vigour in his prints, decision, energy, the qualities which were so much his own at all times, and the possession of which had placed him rapidly in sympathy with the masters of Spain. His actual palette, except indeed in his earliest time, was unlike that of the Spaniards—curiously. It was of the very essence of Manet's riper, more developed work, that much of it should be painted in a high, clear key. In high, clear key had he beheld his themes. In that, they must be represented.

On the last page, there was just mentioned Manet's immediate follower, Berthe Morisot. Let her be named again, that two things may be said. First, she is an instance of the

wholly happy exercise of masculine influence upon the female sex. She would have been —Heaven knows what: nothing particular, probably—were it not for this great brother-in-law. Wonderful is the measure of his strength and brilliance that Berthe Morisot absorbed: wonderful too, the feminine charm she added to the things she had received. Her young girl with the butterfly net, in the light coppice; her young girls sitting white on the bedside—justifiably sanguine as to the appearance they will present at some later stage of their toilette—have a refinement and rare grace that is Berthe Morisot's own. The second thing it is convenient to say, à propos of her, is that in French art it is she and Mme. Vigée Lebrun who—in a minority tiny, but influential, distinguished—proclaim, with charm, that there are women painters who must seriously count.

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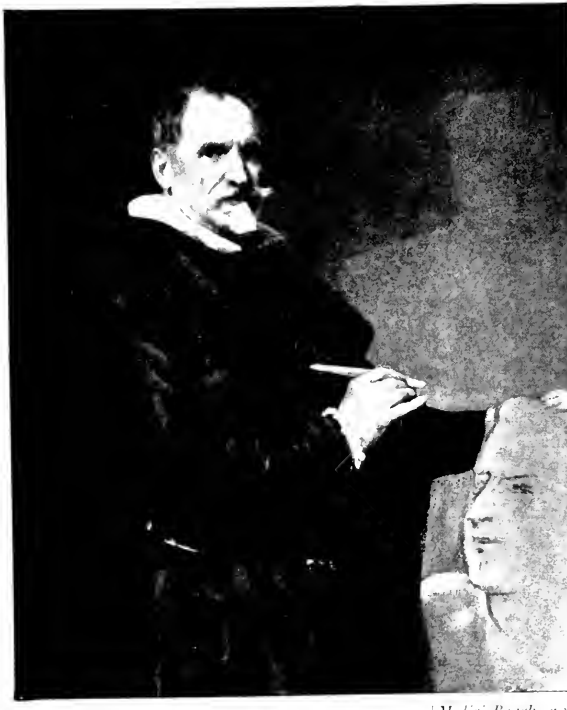

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