

NEW YORK ARTISTS.

BY AN OLD CONTRIBUTOR.



o little has recently been said or written about our own artists of America, that the following, from the *Knickerbocker Magazine* (the gem of American Magazines), comes to our mind with a freshness, and feeling of pleasure, even as the sweet perfume of a fresh blown rose to our nostrils.—Ed. P.

& F. A. Jour.]

Reader, did you ever spring into an omnibus at the head of Wall street, with a resolution to seek a more humanizing element of life than the hard struggle for pecuniary triumphs? Did you ever come out of a Fifth-avenue palace, your eyes wearied by a glare of bright and varied colors, your mind oppressed with a night-mare of upholstery, and your conscience reproachful on account of an hour's idle gossip? Did you ever walk up Broadway, soon after meridian, and look into the stony, haggard, or frivolous countenances of the throng, listen to the shouts of omnibus-drivers, mark the gaudy silks of bankrupts' wives, and lose yourself the while in a retrospective dream of country-life, or a sojourn in an old deserted city of Europe? A reaction such as this is certain, at times, to occur in the mood of the dweller in this kaleidoscope of New York; and as it is usually induced by an interval of leisure, we deem it a kindly hint to suggest where an antidote may be found for the bane, and how the imagination may be lured, at once, into a new sphere, and the heart refreshed by a less artificial and turbid phase of this mundane existence. Go and see the artists. They are scattered all over the metropolis; sometimes to be found in a lofty attic, at others in a hotel; here over a shop, there in a back-parlor; now in the old Dispensary, and again in the new University: isolated or in small groups, they live in their own fashion, not a few practising rigid and ingenious economies, others nightly in *élite* circles or at sumptuous dinners; some genially cradled in a domestic nest, and others philosophically forlorn in bachelor solitude. But wherever found, there is a certain atmosphere of content, of independence, and of originality in their domiciles. I confess that the ease, the frankness, the sense of humor and of beauty I often discover in these artistic nooks, puts me quite out of conceit of the prescriptive formalities of Upper-Tendom. Our systematic and prosaic life ignores, indeed, scenes like these; but the true artist is essentially the same everywhere—a child of nature, to whom "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever;" and therefore a visit to the New York studios cannot fail to be suggestive and pleasing, if we only go thither, not in a critical, but in a sympathetic mood.

Many of our cherished artists—Allston, Greenough, and Cole, are no more: many, like Doughty, have in a great measure retired from public view, and not a few are abroad. Powers is at Florence, executing his unrivalled busts: Crawford is at Rome at work on the Virginia monument, the horse for which was cast not long ago at Munich, and won enthusiastic admiration: while the statues of Patrick Henry and of Jefferson, already at Richmond, are acknowledged master-pieces; the Beethoven, too, now in Boston, proved a complete triumph: Paige, called the modern Titian, is deemed there the greatest of portrait-painters; Chapman, his neighbor, is etching Roman peasants in a manner no one can excel; Freeman, near by, is studiously evolving a masterly work, and Thompson has made the most perfect copy of the Beatrice seen for years; while Ives models

better than ever, and Miss Lander handles the clay and modeling stick with progressive aptitude and high promise.

One of the most familiar faces among our Roman artist-friends may be seen triennially in our own busy thoroughfares, and not seldom at an evening party "up-town." Terry seems to have preserved intact his native ways amid the vagaries of Italian life: the same kindly, sensible fellow as if he had never thrown *bon bons* at the Carnival or joined in the chorus at a picnic at Ostia. He was ever an attentive cicerone to his countrymen, and especially, country-women; and now that he has re-established himself in a handsome studio of the Eternal City, very comfortable are his artistic receptions, where rides to the Appian Way, a party to witness the illumination of St. Peter's, or join in a ball at Torlonia's, are talked over by fair visitors to their hearts' content. Weir is at West Point, every now and then sending to Williams and Stevens, a domestic or religious picture marked by a Flemish exactitude of detail, a fine disposition of light and shade, or an attractive tone of feeling. Morse has put his artist fire into a locomotive shape, and writes with electric fluid instead of painting in oil. His last picture hangs in the drawing-room of "Locust-Grove," his beautiful domain on the Hudson; and while it testified too much skill and feeling for the lover of art not to regret his withdrawal from the field, it also symbolizes the domestic enjoyment, which with science and a great public economy, now more than fills the deserted sphere of his youth: it is an admirable full length portrait of his daughter. Leutze is busy upon American historical subjects, at Dusseldorf; and his grand picture of "Washington crossing the Delaware" keeps his memory green in the hearts of his countrymen, through the widely-distributed engraved copies. Mount is at his home on Long Island, but doubtless will have ready one of his inimitable reflections of humble or humorous life for the next exhibition. Rossiter* has been at work on a large scriptural picture at Paris; and Pearse Cranch is there engaged on landscapes, occasionally weaving a poem for the *Crayon*, or his friend Dwight's *Musical Journal*. Hunt's peculiar talent, so long the delight of his friends at the French capital, will, it is hoped, derive new inspiration from his bride. May varies his studies here by occasional trips to England, where he turns the more lucrative branch of portrait to good account. H. K. Brown, whose studio is in Brooklyn, L. I., has been for many months absorbed in his Washington statue. G. L. Brown was last heard of at Lake Albano, gathering materials for an elaborate Italian composition: and Ingham reappears occasionally in his pristine fame, to the admirers of high and dainty finish, in the shape of his lovely "Flower-Girl." Duganne, though lately interrupted by illness, models, draws, writes, and teaches indefatigably and efficiently as ever. Cheney goes about making his matchless crayon-heads—a branch of portraiture more and more in vogue, and one in which Miss Stebbins,† Darley, and Collyear have gained of late some enviable laurels. Baker's excellent portraits are in constant demand, and Cole's beautiful legacy, the "Voyage of Life," has just been engraved in the best style. But space will not allow us to expatiate upon all the individuals who honor and illustrate artist-life among us, and, for the present, we must glance in at the New York studios, and renew our subject when more scope is allowed for a theme so broad and delectable.

My visit to the President of the Academy was repaid by an agreeable surprise. I found in his studio, beside the familiar trophies of his progressive career, two new and original pictures embodying phases of nature such as he has never before so distinctly put upon canvass, and the masterly execution of which attests the steady advance inevitable with such principles of art as guide the pencil of Durand. One of these was a group of forest-trees, standing in their native individuality, and unassisted by any of those devices which are usually introduced to set off so exclusively a theme. Only the great skill and truth of their execution would atone for the paucity of objects in such a landscape. Yet so characteristic is each tree, so natu-

* Just returned under most afflicting circumstances.

† Sailed for Europe in May.

ral the bark and foliage, so graphic the combination and foreground, that the senses and the mind are filled and satisfied with this purely sylvan landscape. Mark the spreading boughs of that black birch, the gnarled trunk of this oak, the tufts on yonder pine, the drooping sprays of this hemlock, and the relief of the dead tree—is it not exactly such a woodland nook as you have often observed in a tramp through the woods? Not a leaf or flower on the ground, not an opening in the umbrageous canopy, not a mouldering stump beside the pool, but looks like an old friend: it is a fragment of the most peculiar garniture that decks the uncleared land of this continent. In an English gallery it would proclaim America. How Evelyn, Michaux, Audubon, or Bryant would hail it with loving eyes! Its unexaggerated, simple, yet profoundly true expression, shows how the genuine artist can effect wonders without adventitious means. In another painter's hands it would prove but a sketch; in Durand's it becomes a landscape; and one of the most fresh and vigorous he has ever made. Not less remarkable, although in a diverse way, is that view of mountains and a lake during or just before a thunder-storm. The deep shadow that is cast by the black cloud, while it falls opaquely over a portion of the scene, is diversified by a faint, tremulous light in the lap of the hills, while farther off hangs a bluish mist—the effect of partial sunshine and a patch or two of blue sky: many a time have we witnessed such a magical result of dense, over-hanging vapor suddenly casting a pall over the Hudson, on a bright summer day: the transient character of the elemental phenomena renders their successful transfer to canvass more impressive: we seem to behold the change itself instead of a moment of its process: the details of the landscape are faithful, and the transition wrought by the gust is at the same time caught and fixed. In these pictures two of the most difficult points in landscape painting are accomplished; the trees look real, and the *chiaro oscuro* of nature are reflected: the evanescent is staid by the limner; a rare observation and a poetic sense have ravished from the picturesque its most effective traits. A work of singularly pleasant associations as well as of characteristic beauty has just received the final touches of this artist's pencil. Two or more years since, an English gentleman, Mr. Graham, left the sum of five thousand dollars to establish a school of design in Brooklyn, (L. I.) A part of the interest, it was provided, should be expended annually for the purchase of a picture by an American artist, and thus a gallery instituted. Mr. Durand was applied to, and, in order to recognize this admirable precedent for the improvement of local taste and the encouragement of native art, he cheerfully agreed to execute a large work for the Association, at a price merely nominal in comparison with the usual remuneration and actual market-value of his landscapes. His sympathy with the object is manifest in the elaborate care and graceful feeling exhibited in this beautiful scene. In the background rise mountains, whose American character is evident both in the shape of their summits and the tints that clothe the most distant in blue mist, and the nearer in clear day-beams falling on umbrageous declivities: a stream brawls in the foreground, and, amid the rough timbers of a clearing, is a settler's log-hut approached by a rude path, near which runs one of those primitive boundaries called a snake-fence: between the woods and the domicile a large field of ripe grain lifts its mellow and waving tufts to the sun-shine, and, at its edge, stands the gleaner about to swing his sickle through the golden ranks. The details of the picture are worthy of its genial conception; bark, moss, stone, leaf, spire of herbage and hue of cloud, wear a genuine look; the ridges of the hills recall the White Mountains; the trees are indisputably those of an American forest, and over all broods the modified glow of the ripened summer. This landscape rejoices in the felicitous name of "The First Harvest," applicable both to the scene itself and the circumstance that it initiates the national collection of a judicious benefactor of art, whose name the painter has gratefully inscribed on one of the rocks in the foreground.

Of all young painters, Huntington gave the most emphatic promise of that religious sentiment which embalms the names of the old Italian masters. His "Dream of Mercy" breathed the

holy effluence that so instantly excites veneration and tenderness. He has paid a visit to England recently, and made some fine portraits of church dignitaries; and, since his return, having been mainly occupied with likenesses which are claimed as soon as finished, his studio contains, at present, but few specimens of art. I was, however, delighted with four noble studies which he made in Paris, with a view to his picture of "The Good Samaritan:" this painting awaits the completion of the private gallery which it is destined to adorn, and, in its absence, it is interesting to examine these studies. They consist of two male and two female heads: the originals are rare models, worthy a painter's devoted attention: and Huntington seems to have transferred them to canvass not only *con amore*, but with the most elaborate fidelity. Such relief, strength, expression, and color could only result from vigorous and earnest limning: seldom do we see four more effective and individual heads; there is the greatest degree of artistic significance in the details and general effect; they show that Huntington's powers have vast latent force, and that he is capable of greater things than he has yet achieved; only will and inspiration are needed by a man who can so command the elements of art, to realize the highest conceptions. Bishop Melvaine's portrait is a fine work: it has great reality and an excellent tone.

Now let us step into the room of a young Italian who has but lately set up his easel in New York. He is from the most prosperous and liberal of the continental states, a Sardinian. He has studied painting in the gallery of Turin. Whoever has visited that collection will remember it by the glorious Murillo it boasts—representing Homer with sealed eyes and a laurel crown—one of the most truthful and characteristic works of the gifted Spaniard. Signor Angero excels in cabinet portraits; several excellent ones of well-known residents among us, attest the fidelity of his pencil. His flesh-tints are very good; and some of his studies from the old masters, suggest great insight. His style is likely to be popular; and may success attend the intelligent young artist who has come to test his fortune among us.

In contrast with this mercurial son of the South, let us turn to a young Dane whose pale and earnest face has affinity with his ideal countryman whom Shakspeare has immortalized. Wenzler is as devoted a student of art as is to be found in this metropolis. His standard is high, his zeal unremitted. In spirit he is kindred with the most self-devoted of his profession. No one has painted more exquisite miniatures, with such lovely flesh-tints, such fine drawing, and delicate color. They remind us of the *chef d'œuvres* of that branch of the art, hoarded in the caskets of beauty and worn on the bosom of affection. His last triumph in a department of art where mediocrity is so common and the highest success rare, is a portrait of the highly-endowed and deeply-lamented son of our respected fellow-citizen, Dr. Francis; although dependent on a daguerreotype and his affectionate memory alone, so perfect in expression, so lifelike in lineament, so characteristic to the minutest detail, is this beautiful work, that we feel, as we examine it, that love inspired what genius conceived, and thus re-produced the living image so endeared, to console hearts otherwise indeed bereft of all but the memory of his nobleness and his worth. The oil portraits of this artist have won great admiration for the extreme reality of their details and for their excellent drawing: in tone and hue they have been more experimental, and therefore less satisfactory; but in landscape, two or three specimens have borne evidence of deep study and remarkable truth of effect: they have arrested the eye, when exhibited, and excited high anticipations of his future career. Wenzler's characteristic as a votary of art, is earnestness; and he has seized, with great tenacity and precision, certain elements of painting. It is needless to add that such a spirit and attainment render him an object of peculiar interest, as destined to work out and realize a true ideal. The variety and faithfulness of Kensett's* studies of landscape may be learned at once by the sketches on the

* Embarks for England this month, to sketch among the Lakes of Cumberland.

walls of his room. The traveller recognizes localities at a glance. One of the marked excellencies of this artist is the truth and definite character of his outline: accordingly we behold a fragment of the Appenine range, an Alpine peak, and the more rounded swell of American mountains, in these artistic data for elaborate works. Careful observation is the source of Kensett's eminent success. He gives the form and superficial traits of land and water so exactly as to stamp on the most hasty sketch a local character indicative of similitude. His landscapes would charm even a man of science, so loyal to natural peculiarities is his touch and eye. Equally felicitous in the transfer of atmospheric effects to canvass, and with a genius for composition, scenery is illustrated by his fertile and well-disciplined pencil with rare correctness and beauty. In rocks he is especially effective. Every material that goes to the formation of a landscape he appears to have carefully studied. We retrace, at ease, our summer wanderings, in his studio: there are the "Hanging Rocks" which bound good Bishop Berkeley's old Rhode Island domain; here a bluff we beheld on the Upper Mississippi; and opposite, an eagle in the gorge at Trenton where we watched the amber flash of the cascade. How finely is reflected the morning and afternoon light of early autumn in America, in these two charming pictures; there is Lake George itself; the islands, the shore, the lucid water; how native is the hue of yon umbrageous notch; and what Flemish truth in the grain of that trap-rock; how rich the contrast between the glow of summer and the colorless snow on the summit of the Jungfrau. The trees in this more finished piece, are daguerretyped from a wood, with the fresh tint of the originals superadded. Any one who desires to carry to Europe a reliable American landscape should bespeak a picture from Kensett. If we may judge from the sketch, the view of Niagara for which Lord Ellesmere lately gave him a commission, will prove not only a satisfactory work, as conveying a just impression of the wondrous scene, but an honor to American art.

Opposite Grace Church is the studio of the Chevalier Fagnani, a Neapolitan artist who came to this country, if we mistake not, with Sir Henry Bulwer, by whom he is highly esteemed. We have seen various specimens of this accomplished painter's talent—fine original composition drawings, remarkable studies of the head and figure, etc.; but his great versatility of style and unusual success in characterization, have caused his time to be almost exclusively occupied in portraiture. When the subject is favorable, he gives a peculiar charm and interest to his likenesses; we recall, especially, two or three of his female heads in which the air, coloring, and general effect have been, in the highest degree, refined and artistic. Beside masterly portraits in oil, Fagnani makes admirable crayon pictures. Among his latest elaborate portraits is a composition, his own beautiful family grouped in most natural attitude, around a tuft of pond-lilies, on the edge of a stream: he has also recently finished a speaking likeness of President King, of Columbia College. He excels in children, seizing on their graceful outlines and glowing or delicate tints. He also excels in portraits, many of them of cabinet size, executed in colored pastels, in a way peculiar to himself: the finish, expression, and beauty of these works have made them so popular that the artist's time is quite absorbed.

There is, as usual, on Elliott's easel, a strong, richly-colored head in the process of completion: how true the lines, how effective the relief and contour, and with what nature the white hair rests upon the florid temple! There is not such a vigorous pencil among our lingers; when an old man whose face is ploughed with the thought and cares of an adventurous life, and yet alive with the latent fires and marked with the strong will of robust maturity, sits to Elliott, the portrait becomes not only a noble likeness, but a grand study of character and of color. Laing has recently painted a beautiful full-length of a lady; he has a ready melo-dramatic talent, and his work is radiant with an enjoyable spirit. His studio exhibits a crowd of lovely children. Gignoux could almost allure a snow-bunting from the sky with his truthful winter landscapes. His imitative skill in detail is marvellous; and he has just sent to its fortunate owner

an autumnal landscape that resembles a large daguerreotype caught and tinted in an American wild in the deepest flush of October. Richard M. Staigg is here in the winter season, to finish his roll of commissions begun in summer at Newport, his permanent home. His miniatures are in constant demand; he often succeeds in obtaining the best effects of oil-painting in these exquisite works; and is more uniformly successful in his likenesses on ivory than any votary of that delicate art. As a colorist, too, there is truth and freshness in his miniatures; those of Webster and Everett, engraved by Cheney, are the finest specimens of the kind yet achieved in this country; and Staigg has done artistic justice to some of the loveliest of American women.

We contemplate with peculiar interest the results of Church's recent visit to South America; although his stay was brief, such is the thorough New England industry and quickness of this popular artist, that he seized upon more hints for landscapes, and brought away a greater number of traits of scenery than a less spirited observer would acquire in a year. Some of these he has transferred and others is now transferring to canvass: one especially proved a novelty: it is the view of an extensive water-fall; the tropical vegetation, the long distance occupied by the broken cataract, and the singular formation and quality of the hills, make this landscape, in the literal style of Church, a very suggestive and remarkable picture. He has dealt with South American cascades as faithfully as with the flushed horizon of his native country, and we find a new mine of the picturesque opened by his graphic hand. Seldom has a more grand effect of light been depicted than the magnificent sun-shine on the mountains of a tropical clime, from his radiant pencil. It literally floods the canvass with celestial fire, and beams with glory like a sublime psalm of light. A butterfly impaled under a glass in Church's studio actually scintillates azure; and when visitors question the authenticity of his brilliant tropical hues, he points them to his insect witness of nature's radiant tones in those latitudes. There is a resolute, progressive, and apt spirit in Church which gives a living interest to his landscapes, and fills the spectator with a sense of his rare promise in art. Edwin White has lately returned from Europe, and opened a study in the New York University, with ample proofs of careful studies; his pictures, however, have been distributed among their owners, and but a few remain in his studio: he has in hand a subject certain to be popular among the descendants of the pilgrims, "The Signing of the Compact in the Cabin of the Mayflower." To the traveller, however, who cherishes Italian memories, there is more of the poetry of life in his "Beggar-Child," who looks as if he had just stepped out from an angle of the Piazza d'Espagna or the shadow of Trajan's Column, so much of the physiognomy and the magnetism of the clime are incarnated in form, complexion, attitude, eye, and expression. Equally suggestive is the *Pifferini*, two of those picturesque figures that swarm in Rome at Christmas-time, and are indissolubly associated with her fêtes, ruins, and shrines; the elder leans against a church-wall, on which a half-obliterated ecclesiastical placard looks marvellously familiar, his peaked and broad brim hat set on his head in a way inimitable for its effect of shadow and grace, his luxuriant beard, velvet jerkin, effective attitude and meditative gaze, are precisely true to fact; at his side nestles a boy whose long tresses and large, pensive eyes, whose olive cheek and angelic smile remain indelibly stamped on the memory of all recent visitors to the Eternal City. We recognize in this beautiful urchin one of the "things of beauty," which the English poet, who died in Rome, has told us so truly "is a joy for ever;" the pilgrim's instrument is at his feet. How come back to the heart, as we gaze, the dreaminess, the sunny lapse in life's struggle in which it was our privilege to revel, and is now our delight to remember, as the most peaceful and brilliant episode of our days of foreign travel! These two figures, caught from the passive life of old Rome, typify it completely to the imagination, and touch the key-note of an ended song.

Here we are in the room of a representative of the English school (only to find him packing up for a migration to his kin-

dre's home in the South-west), an artist who painted Byron in Italy, and won the heart of Sam Rogers by his picture of Annette—the poor girl who watched in vain for her lover in Irving's sad and graceful story. It was at the epoch when that author was the favored guest in London; and we cannot wonder that, with such reminiscences, West* should cling to the subjects and the style then prevalent in England. He is loyal to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and elaborates composition portraits with the most patient care and tasteful study. An "Angel-Child" is very expressive and delicately treated: "Judith" is a gorgeously and effective piece of coloring and dramatic action; and several portraits, with beautiful costumes and accessories, attest the refined taste of the artist, and the number of lovely young friends who have sat and listened to his charming reminiscences while he, with glad patience, delineated their charms.

I found a "Winter-Scene" on Cropsey's† easel of both artistic and historical interest. A picturesque, shelly mountain impends over a dell in the Ramapo valley; two or three cottages with snow-crowned roofs are grouped in lonely brotherhood; the white drifts on the shaggy and precipitous side of the cliff, the wintry sky, the unsullied expanse of the foreground, where a woman is crossing with a pail, a boy loitering with his sled, and a load of wood stands ready to be piled away, unite to form a landscape at once indicative of the season and the country: the tint of the frozen pool and the hue of the atmosphere are given with much truth to nature. In this vicinity Washington made his head-quarters during the fearful episode of our revolutionary struggle identified with Valley Forge: and from the summit of this abrupt and lofty mountain, he often gazed toward New York, thirty miles distant, visible on a clear day. With how many months of weary and intensely anxious vigil is that bleak and isolated observatory associated; and how vividly the terrible ordeal through which the scanty and famished army passed, re-appears to the mind while contemplating the scene in all its wintry desolation! An entire contrast is afforded by a view of Greenwood Lake. I knew it belonged to New Jersey from the character of the rocks, familiar to all who have wandered along the Passaic. In the umbrageous glen Cropsey has passed many a dreamy hour. His summer studio is near by. Another sketch is quite characteristic of the region: it represents an inundated valley over-grown with dead trees, whose huge, spectral limbs have a melancholy fascination. There is a spirited view of a gorge in the Catskills, wild enough to charm Salvator; a shivered tree hangs over a chasm, and down its sides of gray stone, half-hid by a thicket, a foaming cascade is dashing. Those familiar with the aspect of the Mediterranean coast, will recognize the cliffs, water, and sky of the Genoese territory in the masterly scene drawn from nature there. Cropsey intends revisiting Europe; and amateurs are quite secure of faithful landscapes who give him liberal commissions. That large canvass is outlined with an effective picture of the Roman Forum; every column and arch wears a grand yet familiar look, and recalls the delicious spring morning when I watched the snail-like excavators of these children's barrows and indolent motion, and the solemn nights when the moon glistened on architrave and frieze, and memory conjured back a triumphal procession or a Ciceronian discourse. But here is something nearer home: a beach with granite ledges and a high cliff—a seaward perspective and the green billows fringed with those majestic, graceful, half-transparent, and fair figures watching the beautiful scene; that curve of the shore, the mould of that rock, the outline of the cliff, are easily recognized: it is the favorite trysting-place of lovers, the delight of children on their afternoon walk, the goal of the Sunday evening promenade at Newport—the shore below the "Forty Steps." How many will gaze on this bit of coast-scenery with emotion. More than one poet has set there in reverie; more than one flirt been awed into momentary earnestness by the limitless expanse of wave and sky thence stretching before her fickle eye; and many a rosy-cheek urchin has gathered bright pebbles there and wet his little feet, while the nurse listened, forgetful of her charge,

to an insinuating coachman. The place, too, has witnessed rare sport. My friend, the pastor, Isaac Walton, Jr. has landed on the slippery ledge many a giant tautog, and a less clerical fisherman grown profane as he jerked his broken hook from the clinging kelp, or waded through the advancing tide to dry land, with nothing but bait in his basket. I wonder not that the humorist who used to wake laughing echoes here with his bon-mots, set Cropsey to work in order to have the beach and its environment reflected by his truthful pencil. During this half-hour in Cropsey's studio, I have been lured to Rome, to the Catskills and the Passaic, to the Ramapo Valley and to Newport; and each locality, beside refreshing my eye with natural beauty, has awakened fond reminiscence. Now let us knock at the opposite door, and see what Hicks* is about. With the recollection of his miraculous escape from the hecatomb of victims that perished by the railway catastrophe at Norwalk, it was delightful to find this popular artist cheerily directing the pencil of his wife, another survivor of that tragic scene. What a contrast between their tasteful occupation and quiet studio, and the remembrance of that pitiless fate which overtook so many of their companions! Hicks is a fine colorist. Examine that head of a stolid burgher of Long Island, there is little in feature or expression for an artist to make effective. Yet this want is atoned for by the consummate skill with which the tints are disposed. One is reminded of Gilbert Stuart. Another point, in which success is rare, is obvious in that full-length, so well drawn and toned; the figure stands firmly and easily. How seldom can this be said of the portraits in the City Hall! Have you ever been to Trenton Falls? If so, you doubtless remember the landlord and his thriving family. Here they are very cleverly grouped together, one leaning against a tree, another handling his gun; one playful, another contemplative; and, in the back-ground, through a leafy vista, we have a glimpse of the rushing water: the likenesses are recognized at once; the attitudes are natural and well varied; and there is a pleasant moral atmosphere and unity of effect in the whole. Some fine heads adorn the wall, all full of character and several with exquisite flesh-tints: those of Halleck and Longfellow are remarkably good. Hicks well deserves the fame and the constant and lucrative occupation he has won as a portrait-painter.

From this busy limner, whose fresh array of pictures indicates that every passing hour brings its task, let us turn to a dreamer who lives in the past, because he is too ideal to clutch at the present. Yet if ever a man had the true artist feeling, the genuine sense of beauty and poetic conscience, it is John Cranch.‡ I know this from many a colloquy with him while strolling along the Sunny bank of the Arno, and through his acute and sympathetic comments in the Florence galleries. He used to make beautiful impromptu studies from Shakspeare. He has a keen perception of the humor and the sentiment of the poet, and could translate them daintily with pen or crayon. He is one of those artists who should live in Italy: the executive is subordinate in him to the imaginative. I found him copying a portrait: it was that of a genuine Italian woman:

"Heart on her lips and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime and sunny as her skies."

He was doing it for the love of the thing, wishing to preserve a memorial so characteristic. I remembered an old man's head, a Tuscan painter's beard, and other gleanings from that southern land; and there were books I knew at a glance came from a stall in the Piazza del Duomo, in Florence. There sat Cranch, intent on the fine outline of the handsome Italian, contentedly touching her great orbs of jet with light, and tinting her softly-rounded olive cheeks to a Fornarina richness: the same reserved, quiet, and genial dreamer as years ago in Italy; never satisfied with his achievements, full of sensibility to the claims and the triumphs of art, and apparently content to breathe the air made vital by its enchantments. Some of our wealthy lovers of Shakspeare should commission this artist to

* Recently gone to Tennessee, where his family reside.

† Sailed for Europe in May, with many commissions.

* Just opened a new and elegant studio near the Mercantile Library, Astor Place.

‡ Now established at Washington, (D. C.)

illustrate a scene: he would do it with zest and spirit. Several good portraits may be seen at his studio.

There is something in Gray's pictures that gives one the feeling of maturity, one of the most rare sensations of American life. A refreshing absence of the crude, the glaring, and the melo-dramatic lends a singular charm to his studio. Here is something like mastery; all is not experimental; and we feel the comfort of achievement instead of the unrest of endeavor. How clean are the outlines of his best heads and figures; no attempts at evasion, but so true and gracefully drawn as to gratify our sense of exactitude and completeness. Gray is what may be called a conservative painter: he does not sacrifice the enduring to the temporary. His subdued tints in such pleasant contrast to the gaudy hues prevalent in our streets and houses, attract the eye at once. They are mellow, and linger on the artistic sense as old wine on the palate: his *chiaro oscuro* is often exquisite, some of his portraits have the deep clear tone, and the high finish which are the distinction of the old masters. They look as if pointed to last, to become heir-looms and domestic treasures, and as if they ought to be hung against carved oak panelings, or in cabinets sacred to meditation and illumined by a tempered light. There is a sweet autumnal spell often radiated from the canvas of Gray. It may be a fanciful idea, but his most characteristic pictures affect me like his immortal namesake's verse—correct and thoughtful—and with a latent rather than a superficial charm. On his easel is a deftly-grouped study of Hagar, Ishmael, and the angel; what a strong contrast, yet how much pure harmony in the composition. The rigid gaze and oriental face of Hagar, the aerial position and rich blonde of the heavenly visitant, the bowed form and pure tints of the drooping child; figures, drapery, color and grouping, all betray the patient and skilful artist. A nude figure which he will turn from the wall at your bidding, is a triumph of color and form. Note, in a sympathetic mood, the little picture called "Twilight Musings;" how cool and sweet is the light, how graceful the loose-clad figure; what a pensive attitude; how the tessellated pavement, the dark-veined wood, the vase, the open window, each object induces reverie; and how admirably is the tone of the whole in accordance with the reflective enjoyment that steals from the lovely countenance of the musing girl! The London critics appreciated this picture. The "Peace and War," though too allegorical for popular effect, has many of the excellencies of drawing and color and expression that distinguish this accomplished artist. We are not surprised that his cabinet portraits are so much sought. Many of them are gems of art, and, when associated with the features of the loved and lost, must become greatly endeared to their possessors. It is delightful to have a picture adapted by its size for boudoir or drawing-room, that combines the attraction of mellow coloring and high finish with the personal associations of a family portrait.

One is sure to find good bits of Southern scenery at the studio of Richards: a native of Carolina, he knows her live oaks, streams, and evergreens by heart; and has recently given excellent proof of his appreciation of nature in her most picturesque American forms, by the articles written and illustrated by him in Harper's Magazine. Lake George, the Juniata river, and Vermont mountains, have been favorite and well-studied subjects with him. He is thoroughly aware of the scenic phases of the different States of the Union, having passed many summers in sketching their respective features. He has a large number of studies, some of patches of woodland, some of forest streams, and others of the details of landscape, plants, stones, and individual trees. With this suggestive material, and his own fertile invention, Richards is constantly at work upon original compositions, some of which are quite poetical as well as correct. Here is a large canvass with the purple haze of the Indian summer; on a cliff over-hanging a deep, broad vale, covered with variegated foliage and a golden-tinted atmosphere, sleeps an original chief dreaming of his paradise; which thus mystically looms to the eye from this "shoal of time." The most subtle and gorgeous effects of an American autumn are given with rare beauty and impressiveness.

Ehninger's etchings illustrative of "Dolph Heyliger," and "The Bridge of Sighs," executed five or six years ago, showed a decided talent for expression, and an executive facility that quite warranted him in adopting the vocation of an artist. Mindful of these signs of promise, I sought the young draughtsman with an eager desire to behold what he had accomplished during the interval passed abroad. My best anticipations were more than realized. Not only has he proved a faithful student of the elements of his art, but has attained a degree of practical skill, and manifested an individuality rarely achieved in so brief a period. Wisely devoting himself to drawing under the eye of a thoroughly educated French artist, he has avoided the careless habits and incomplete discipline which so hamper and limit the success of most of our young painters. Some of Ehninger's figures are outlined and foreshortened with the correctness of an adept; one can see in them a well-drilled hand; but what is still more pleasant to recognize, he knows how to seize on the principles of expression. His forms and faces have a decided meaning; there is positive character in his pictures. Somewhat of these traits might have been confidently predicted from the merit of his early sketches. They are finely toned; he knows the value of neutral tints; and manages light and shade with a most pleasing effect. Here, for instance, is a somewhat hackneyed subject, "The Yankee Peddler," but there is nothing Yankee in it but the subject; a patient handling and an expressive significance are manifest; nothing crude, hasty, or extravagant. Look at the two girls examining a piece of stuff; how characteristic the faces and attitudes! See the baby stretch over its mother's shoulder (while she bargains for the coffee-mill held temptingly up by the peddler), and strives to reach the trumpet the little brother holds to his lips: what mature and wise arrangement; mark the boy's features in the shadow of his hat, and the heads of the horses; they are full of truth and character; the general artistic effect is almost too good for a subject of this class; though very apt in their treatment, a higher range is more appropriate for the artist. There, for instance, is a gem; it is only a "New England Farm-yard;" but were I exiled to the tropics or Southern Europe, this picture would symbolize my country to imagination and memory. A negro-boy is watering a horse at an old mossy trough; down the road a woman is slowly driving a cow toward the gate; in the middle of the yard are four barn-yard fowls. Such are the simple materials. Note them in detail. The boy is one of those sable anomalies found about New England farms, that once known can hardly be forgotten: his action and face are inimitable; the horse is excellent, drawn and colored to the life, its individuality and its breed recognized at a glance; the expression of the face singularly true to nature; then the fowls, how exactly they look as we see them every summer-day from the window of our rural domicile; it is not merely that attitude, form, and plumage are given with precision, but the natural language of the birds is preserved: one is reminded of Hawthorne's graphic description of the Pyncheon fowls, only Ehninger's are less antiquated and in better condition. How sweetly falls the afternoon's mellow light adown the vista of the adjacent road, and over the freshly-tinted foreground. Some of the most natural points of the Flemish school are evident. Four little studies of costume and character, French in subject, and daintily executed, suggest that the artist would excel in the sphere to which Newton and Leslie have given popularity. His forte is *genre*. A small picture on panel has a finish and expression that would charm a virtuoso. It represents a youth killed in a duel, and his greyhound regarding his body; a dusky chamber with antique appointments, a richly-dressed form stretched on the floor, a bloody rapier and a dog are the objects depicted; but the look of the animal, the dead face, the *chiaro oscuro* affect one like Mrs. Radcliffe's night-scenes, or an episode of Froissart. My eye is irresistibly attracted by a small landscape; a cart whose Gallic origin is self-evident, drawn by horses of equally obvious Norman breed, a woman seated on the top of the load, with the well-known dress of a French peasant, a man in a blouse walking beside the team, a seaward view stretching from a treeless coast, on the bank of which rises a

picturesque mill, unite to form a scene that recalls my day's ride on the top of the diligence, from Havre to Rouen, when every object was novel, and I knew, for the first time, what it was to be a stranger in a foreign land. This is a perfect bit of Normandy; not an object or effect but tells the same story: a thunder-cloud, half-irradiated with sunshine, pours a rich though subdued light over the prospect. It is seldom that so many evidences of versatile ability and genuine feeling in art greet us in the studio of so young a painter; and we have lingered there only to enjoy. The class of pictures in which Ehninger excels is adapted, by the simplicity of the subjects and their size, to our drawing-rooms. The "Needle and the Sword," or, "The Lady at an Embroidery Frame," and the other, "A Man examining a Foil," etc., are gems in their way, and it is unjust to this artist's manifest and special genius, that he should give so much time to bank-note vignettes, excellent as they are.

It is well to consider if there be anything ridiculous in one's manner or appearance before coming within the scope of Darley's vision. If your nose is *retroussez* or pointed, your figure dumpy, or the way in which you try to be agreeable, slightly exaggerated, the quick perception and ready crayon of Darley may transform you into such a nasal individuality, such an incarnated dump, or absurd exquisite that whoever once beholds the sketch, will ever after involuntarily laugh at the sight of you even at a funeral. Lord Brougham said that the idea of his life being written by Campbell, the biographer of the Chancellors, added to the horrors of death; and the idea of being caricatured by Darley, may well add to a sensitive man's horrors of life. How many worthy individuals whom I would fain approach with respect, or at least courteous interest, has this wizzard's pencil made for ever grotesque to mind's eye! There is one who has become, to my consciousness, only a walking proboscis, whose nose I was not ever aware of until I saw it outlined by Darley; another whose real features I can never detect, because of the emphatic smirk with which the same magician has invested his face; and a third who never looks to me as if he stood on *terra firma*, but appears like a galvanized dumpling bouncing on an imaginary steed; and these transformations being based on the natural language of the parties, have just enough truth to be broadly hinted by their ordinary appearance, and thus the funny image and the real person are indissolubly mingled to the fancy. Two or three lines suffice Darley to metamorphose his fellow-creatures while he preserves their identity. I recognized instantly one of his portraits, although nothing was represented but the hind-quarters and the back of a pair of legs. It is easy to imagine the result when this facility and characteristic limning is applied to illustrate graphic verbal description. The artist not only re-produces but often transcends or satirizes the author's conception. It is no wonder that so clever and prolific a draughtsman is beset by the publishers; his free, significant, and original sketches will give a zest to any book. He makes one realize how ironical, acute, observant, and natural it is possible to be with no instrument but a lead-pencil; he tells a story with a dash, reveals a character by a curve, and embodies an expression with two or three dots. It is better than a comedy to look over his sketch book; he needs no coffee and pistols for two, but makes a palpable hit at his adversary with a pen-stroke. That is more fatal to dignity, if not to life, than a sword-thrust. It is well that with such a power to annoy, Darley has a noble spirit; it is only those who provoke his gift that he impales, or those who are really such a reflection on humanity that they are worth preserving as specimens of nature's journeyman's work: his talent for caricature is usually elicited by an amiable contest of wit with his brother-artists, or made the legitimate medium of a deserved reproof of intolerable affectation or overwhelming conceit: he only shoots at fair game. But there is another side to Darley's mind. He holds a master's pencil, and can do justice to the most earnest and pathetic sentiment. Witness some of his elaborate compositions, his beautiful designs, his finished heads and groups; and especially that work of true genius, the illustrations of Judd's story of Margaret. We have had nothing in this style of art to compare with the exquisite and impressive drawings in which Darley has em-

bodied his sense of the beauty, power, and truth of that remarkable fiction. Were the execution of the novel as classic as its material is original and profound, these illustrations, like those of Flayman, would have a world-wide celebrity.

At the corner of Broadway and Nineteenth Street, is the studio of Samuel Lawrence, an English artist. His peculiar merit is that of seizing the essential character of an individual and giving its predominant expression in a portrait. In this regard he has few equals. Witness his head of Rogers the poet, through whose age-stricken features gleam the benign wisdom and fastidious taste that breathe from the 'Pleasures of Memory;' or that of Carlyle, whose prominent brow and thoughtful attitude bespeak the earnest antagonist of shams; or the dreamy face of the Howadji; the keen eye of Bancroft; the expressive look of Longfellow; the ideal air of Tennyson; the lofty cranium of Henry James, and the Vandyke-like portrait of G. H. Calvert. In each of these well-known men, and in the 'counterfeit presentment of many others of the gifted and the fair, is at once visible the characteristic both of lineament, of mind and of disposition. Invaluable to friends are such intellectual reflections of the loved and honored; while crayon drawings thus strongly outlined and individually expressive, are the best of all for transfer to steel, copper, or stone.

Here we are in one of those spacious avenues projected by the sagacious council of Gouverneur Morris, which redeem this metropolis; a glance suffices to convince us that it is not the fashionable one: a railroad-car glides along the centre; plain, substantial brick dwellings line the way; provision, dry-goods, grocery-shops, form the basement range: the street, though broad has a most provincial and trading look; even an old Dutch gable would be a relief to the eye; but only monotonous, unadorned fronts, and flaunting ells of woollen and chintz, or huge quarters of pork, vary the perspective. Yet even in this unpicturesque thoroughfare, we discover an artist. Ring at that yellow door where the plate is inscribed with the musical appellative of Eugenio Latilla*; by his velvet coat and straggling beard, giving a Vandyke air to the figure, we should know him anywhere for a painter; and he is established in the Sixth Avenue, a man that has fraternized with some of the best artists of the day, lectured to his English students, presided at meetings of the British Institution, and after a long sojourn in Italy, brings to the new world his versatile ability and wide experience. Latilla is the brother-in-law of Freeman. He executed in Florence a series of fine linear etchings on steel illustrative of the New Testament, with the passages in original characters of his own invention richly illuminated. This elegant volume is a gem of its kind; the heads, figures, and grouping are in a chaste style, and abound in devotional feeling. Fortunately the plates are retained by the artist, and several copies of the work have been disposed of to lovers of Christian art in this country. Haydon once addressed a letter to Latilla commencing:

'My dear Fresco Master;' and it is in this branch that he excels; two houses in this city bear witness to his superior taste and execution in fresco painting, and the wonder is, that this beautiful method of decoration is not more generally adopted; whoever contemplates such an experiment will do well to consult Latilla. He has also studied architecture with much success, and has planned a Modified Gothic remarkably adapted to the wants of this country: we hope an opportunity will be granted him to exhibit his designs in the shape of a public building: the style would prove very effective in church architecture. As a portrait painter his skill and taste are excellent: witness that lovely face over the fire-place; it is one of those fair and delicate English girls who seek the mild skies of Italy, and bloom there in extoic beauty: it was painted in Florence where the lady's family reside. Opposite is an elaborate historical painting, the subject biblical, which gained the approbation of capital judges in London. This artist has just finished the portraits of fifty of the most eminent American clergymen, taken from daguerreotypes, of cabinet size, and intended for a large engraving, which will doubtless be exceedingly popular. The truth of these portraits is extraordinary; indeed, Latilla never fails to catch the

* Now established as rural architect in the neighboring county.

expression of his sitters; and his time has been mainly occupied since his arrival, in this most lucrative branch of art. What a fine head is that Greek of Malta near the window! Latilla has proved of signal benefit to the School of Design, lately established in this city. His instruction already bears fruit, in the well-executed wood-engravings of the most advanced pupils; his benevolent sympathies, as well as his artistic intelligence, have been enlisted in this philanthropic scheme. But knowing as we do, his varied abilities, we hope to see his graceful designs in the higher class of our publications, and a public edifice erected according to his truly original plans, and internally decorated in his genuine fresco style. He has lately devoted himself to rural architecture, and for that purpose contemplates a permanent residence in the country. All who are familiar with the biography of Campbell, are aware of the poet's idiosyncrasy analogous to that of Goethe, a sentiment for childhood, not as psychological as that of Wordsworth, but having all the character of an individual attachment. This beautiful trait seems quite appropriate to the author of the 'Pleasures of Hope;' it was not, however, entirely the result of his ideal and sensitive nature, but doubtless gained emphasis from his domestic misfortunes; in the prime of life he was deprived of those enjoyments which a home yields, and on which his heart was singularly dependent. One day Campbell entered the house of a friend and was instantly magnetized by the portrait of a child that hung on the wall of the drawing-room; it was one of those bright, winsome faces that appeal irresistibly to the sense of beauty. The poet was eager in his inquiries as to the history of the picture, and learned that it was borrowed from the artist, and a genuine likeness of his little girl. He could not rest until his friend promised to obtain for him the refusal of the work; then he desired an introduction to the painter, and when the portrait became his own, he sought the acquaintance of the beautiful child, who immediately became an object of the most enthusiastic interest; he visited her with regularity and the devotion of a lover; and to her were addressed the ardent 'Lines to a Child,' in his poems. The head that accompanies them, in the illustrated edition is engraved from the portrait, the painter was Latilla, and the original is his daughter, whom I have seen there by the fireside, (and could trace the resemblance clearly in the eyes), subsequently the fair bride of a clergyman, and whose early death husband and parents now unceasingly mourn. With this charming episode of artist-life, we must, for the present, take leave of the New-York artists,