

APRIL SUPPLEMENT TO THE NEW AGE

Edited by HUNTLY CARTER

VOL. VI. No. 23.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 1910.

NOTES.

WANTED a Bureau of Art Revision. Such, THE NEW AGE believes, is one of the pressing needs of to-day. Accordingly it hastens to devote itself to the manifold interests of the Art world.

* * *

"A bureau of art revision!" I think I hear someone exclaim. "What in the name of thunder is that?" I admit the term is neither a particularly fascinating nor illuminating one. Indeed to some persons who are not interested in our present form of civilisation it will convey no meaning whatever. But to others who are conscious that we live in an age of organisation and bureaus it will have its full significance.

* * *

"And what does this bureau propose to do?" One proposed benefit is the reversal of the present state of art affairs. It hopes to perform the service of turning freaks into works of art instead of turning art into the works of freaks. For instance, there is a wearisome monotony in the make-up of our present-day art critics, even of our most responsible journals. They are lacking in balance, honesty, imagination, in a proper sense of their duty; they are either too young or too old or too timid, but never too bold; they do not suit their posts; they need sorting out, arranging, amplifying, and revising. An overdose of them has made the public turn in wrong directions for its art, and it has wandered, drugged and dazed, into dark tunnels where it now remains gasping for fresh air.

* * *

"Who is going to do the revising?" it may be asked. Mr. Walter Crane in his letter replies:

I quite think it would be a good thing if artists would express their views openly on art matters and all that concerns the welfare and prospects of art.

And Mr. F. H. S. Shepherd, dealing with the same matter says:

As a matter of fact, in my opinion no one has written on art whose works do not exhibit about an equal proportion (at their best) of sense and nonsense; but being a painter myself, I, perhaps naturally, feel that the writings of painters occasionally exhibit a higher percentage of sense, so that, from that point of view, I should think your supplement might be extremely interesting.

I might point out to Mr. Shepherd that in one particular of his opinion painters themselves will entirely concur. From many other letters I gather that the bureau of revision should be controlled and directed by painters themselves.

* * *

These letters come from artists who, like Whistler, are naturally interested in any efforts made by painters to prove they are alive. Of course there are painters on the other side who have made Wilde's discovery, that there were once two painters called Benjamin West and Paul Delaroche, who rashly lectured upon art. As of their works nothing at all remained, Wilde concluded that they had explained themselves away, his conclusion being, "to be great is to be misunderstood." I fear this will be Mr. Robert Anning's fate if he persists in saying:

I find I haven't anything that I want to say in the Press.

To tell you the truth, I think that if the papers were forbidden to say anything about artists at all it might be a good thing for art. Nevertheless, I expect you will get some interesting matter. I find that I generally read whatever I come across about art and artists, though theoretically I feel that it would be better left unpublished.

* * *

Mr. Anning appears to have some doubt, not openly expressed, as to whether a painter is a judge of painting. I too have a doubt as to whether a culprit who treats prison as though it were his private residence is a judge of oakum. Mr. Anning assures me he does not write—i.e., he does not write in a deliberate, precise, and formal manner. Well, I should like to invite him to write in his own humorous, self-expressive way, and I would guarantee that he would write in the columns of this journal for more than an hour with really astonishing humour and eloquence on the absolute uselessness of all efforts of artists to air their own grievances. And he would succeed in proving to the entire satisfaction of everyone, including himself, that the artist is the only one who can write charmingly and convincingly on his own subject. He is indeed, when he likes, a master of expression. And in this opinion Mr. Anning would, as I suggest, receive the firm support of Mr. Anning himself.

* * *

"Well then," a painter inquires, "if we are to do the talking what are we to talk about? What is to be the ground of our complaint?" I reply everything concerning Art that is not exactly as it should be. And as there is nothing concerning Art exactly as it should be it means the ground of your complaint covers the whole wide domain of Art itself. Art and Science (Art in relation to the individual and Society, in psychology, biology, and sociology); Art and Philosophy (Æsthetic and the nature of Art); Art and Ethics (Art in the abstract); Art in the concrete, in its many and varied forms (Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Music, Drama, and Literature); Art and Politics (the encouragement, protection, and promotion of Art); Art and Economics (Art Education and Art in its relation to the prosperity and advancement of the individual and the race); Art and Sex (Art as it concerns the relations of the sexes, as shown in the work by Finck).

* * *

Of the great multitude of questions springing from these various fields perhaps the most important and urgent arise in the regions of politics and economics. The main question which is agitating the minds of artists to-day is not that of producing works of art, but that of the conditions under which works of art may be produced. And the grim fact is that these conditions are about as bad as they possibly could be. To those persons who have a clear vision it is apparent there is a giant conspiracy afoot to rob the artist of the reward of his labour, and to prevent him from producing work save that which shall enrich others. Greed and Ignorance are abroad, and behind them a far-reaching, ever-widening trail of burning questions outline rebellion against tradition and convention, against cant and hypocrisy in high places. Questions of State aid rush forward. Ought artists to be subsidised? Ought genius and original talent to be endowed? Ought modern forms of Art to be rescued from the lumber heap of neglect? Ought artists to be employed to embellish cities and public institutions? Ought matters of Art that come before the Government to be handed

over to a consultative body of experts, and not left at the mercy of an ignorant government department? Ought there to be a Minister of Art? Ought there to be free exhibition galleries for struggling artists? Ought the Government to take artists from their present workshops, stables, lofts, and outhouses, and set them in clean, healthy, inspiring model studios? Questions of private aid press closely on these, and light up startling facts of the economics of genius. They reveal that the men in power, the millionaire philanthropists, are doing nothing for the modern artist, neither endowing him nor his work, nor anything that is his. So the pageant of flaming questions passes, and it smites the senses and calls forth tears and blood, and we come to realise that the whole life of Art is a distressing problem. We find, too, it is so simply because we as a nation know nothing of the art of life. We are not an artistic people, and we are insusceptible to artistic impressions. We are possessed by all sorts of phobias, nosophobia, belenophobia, iophobia, and the rest; obsessed by all sorts of manias, graphomania, grama-phomania, and so on; but not by a mania for Art. And that is all about it.

* * *

Having thus set forth with my accustomed elaborateness of a scientific treatise the need, aim, and scope of THE NEW AGE open court for the claims of artists, I shall be asked who is going to set the ball rolling and make a disturbance of the peace? For answer I may point to the names under which the articles in this Supplement are written. Collectively they make a brave show, and individually they are uncommonly interesting. And they promise fruitful reading. As one sympathiser writes: "You have certainly prospered in getting contributions." We intend to go on prospering in the same direction. The scheme, in short, has attracted a great deal of attention, and its sympathisers may be divided broadly into two classes, those that are actively attracted and those that are passively attracted.

* * *

The attitude of the active spirits, those who are thirsting to come into the open and have it out with their critics, may be nicely expressed in the words of Mr. Victor Reynolds:

The scheme put forward is an interesting one, and one to which I shall enjoy making a contribution. My views upon modern French painting are pretty definite, but as I knew THE NEW AGE to be hospitable to free speaking, I don't suppose this will be much of a drawback.

I hasten to assure Mr. Reynolds that it will not be in any sense a drawback. THE NEW AGE certainly stands to encourage free and frank speaking. It does not aim to be violently aggressive, neither does it seek to bury the hatchet. It does not prune riotous imagination nor deny the use of adjectives. It is not a devastating machine. It does not invite authors into a maze of cog wheels of revision in order to have the spontaneously produced and carefully nourished children of their brains torn and lacerated, tricked out in the fripperies of rhetoric and rigid uniformity, arrayed in a strait-jacket, and presented to a fainting public as the natural children of talent or genius. In a word, it does not seek to out-Herod Herod in the matter of the slaughter of the innocents.

* * *

As to the nature of the present contributions not much need be said. Mr. Sickert in his article is chiefly concerned with Art and Economics. He shows intensely the feeling which many artists have against the mad action of certain well-meaning but light-headed and lop-sided philanthropists and social reformers who seek to confer culture upon the working class what time the culture-men and women, the artists—the only real fount of culture—are perishing in our midst of neglect. Mr. Sturge Moore seeks to expose the fallacies underlying the notions of Realism and Impressionism. His tilt at Realism comes at the right moment, at a moment when our notions of realism certainly need revising, and this on a basis of metaphysic. Both Mr. Shackleton,

Mr. French, and Mr. Victor Reynolds are in revolt against certain methods of the moderns, and strongly declare for a return to the original sources of inspiration. A genuine reaction which is a revolt against tyranny or stupidity is always to be welcomed. It adds a new impulse to Art and strengthens the springs of originality and productiveness. It is chiefly in this direction, I believe, that these three painters are reactionaries. It should be mentioned that Mr. Shackleton's notes are printed in place of an article which he was too busy to write through having to attend to an exhibition of his pictures at the Bradford Arts Club. Bradfordians should certainly see this exhibition. Mr. E. B. Havell writes on Art and Economics in India. He has had a long and wide experience of the subject with which he deals, and perhaps no man is better qualified to raise a plea for the better understanding of the artistic temperament of the Indian. The latter, he tells us, is by nature artistic. Art inspired him; it has been allowed to fall into decay. Its revival should be made the prelude to a new and better order. If it is permitted to fall short of this purpose it will be to England's loss and everlasting disgrace. Mr. Havell has taken up arms in the defence of Art in India, and mentions in his letter that he is busy launching a society which has for its aims the promotion of the study or appreciation of Indian culture in all its æsthetic aspects, with the support of Sir George Frampton, R.A., Mr. George Clausen, R.A., Mr. W. R. Colton, A.R.A., Professor Lethaby, Mr. Roger Fry, Count Plunkett, D.R.A.I., Mr. Reynolds Stephens, Mr. W. Rothenstein, Mr. T. W. Rolleston, and Sir Theodore Morrison. Mr. Havell's book of essays on Indian Art and Education deserves to be widely read.

* * *

Among the passive sympathisers who are attracted to THE NEW AGE scheme, but are unable to turn aside from work to which they are pledged to writing for it, is Professor C. J. Holmes, whose words, "I sympathise with your aims," tersely summarise the views of many other correspondents. Mr. Will Rothenstein, busy though he is preparing a paper on the Social Aspect of Art, to be read before the Sociological Society on April 12th, at once promised to send a digest of his paper for the Supplement or for a subsequent issue.

* * *

To complete my survey of the whole field of battle, which I have sketched out together with the warring tribes, I should mention a third class of artists, a very small one, no doubt, and of no real importance. I refer to the men on the barricades, the indifferentists, those that held aloof, calmly smoking their pipes, and are content to let everything go to pot for all they care. This position is admirably illustrated in a letter which I received from a clever child artist. It says:

As I looked back in one of the old numbers, I saw a cartoon which interested me very much. I never read THE NEW AGE myself, but I like to look over the cartoons. The one I like is "Requiescant in Pace." It well represents the House of Lords withering to a skeleton, and then disappearing altogether.

I think we can all imagine Miss Halszka Bevan standing on the brink of the Dantean Inferno which the artist has drawn, gurgling with delight and loudly clapping her hands, what time the distinguished gentleman in the coronet disappears slowly from view. "Will she stretch out a saving hand?" we ask. "Did Adam have a mother-in-law?" she replies. She continues: "I am neutral, strictly neutral, on political ground. Now if he were a brother artist it would be different, oh so different. Then I would save him. Because artists are of some use in this world, you see." Quite right, Miss Bevan, all sane persons agree with your estimate of the artist. Let us go out together, you and I, and rescue a brother artist or two from the circle of despair into which neglect has driven them. And then let us invite them into the arena which THE NEW AGE is offering to artists for their benefit, and there encourage them to jump on their iniquitous enemies. Then we shall see some real fun.

The Revival of Indian Art.

By E. B. Havell.

THE Mogul style is a symphony of artistic ideas formed into an interchanging harmony by the fusion of Hindu thought with the art of the two rival sects of Muhammadanism, the Sunni and the Shia. Ruskin's criticism of Mogul architecture as an "evanescent style" is a very superficial one. The great development of Mogul art represented by the Taj died out because during Aurangzebe's long reign the bigotry of the Sunni sect was in the ascendant, and the Shia and Hindu artists were banished from the Mogul Court. But before Aurangzebe's accession the traditions of Mogul architecture were firmly established in the more distant parts of his dominions, and there they survive to this day, absorbed into the great synthesis of Indian art, and only prevented from continuing their natural evolution through the fatal want of artistic understanding which has made the dead styles of Europe the official architecture of India.

To the art student nothing can be more fascinating than the endeavour to analyse the artistic thoughts of different countries and different races. But England as a nation has a concern in trying to understand Indian ideals. For it is neither by railways and canals, sanitation and police, coal-mines and gold-mines, factories and mills, nor by English text-books, and the real or imaginary fusion of Western and Eastern culture, that we shall build for ourselves a permanent Indian Empire. Nor should we flatter ourselves that British justice is creating in India a lasting sense of gratitude for British rule. The very uprightness of our rule is slowly but surely creating an Indian question which, though it seems smaller than a man's hand to-day, may fill the Eastern horizon to-morrow. When India has grown out of its political infancy it will yearn for something more than just laws and regulations. India is governed by ideas, not by principles or by statutes. Concrete justice, as represented by the complicated machinery of the British law, is to the Indian a gamble in which the longest purses and most successful liars win. Abstract justice, as it was personified in the Great Queen, the mother of her people, touches India to the quick. That one idea has done more for Indian loyalty than all the text-books of the Universities or Acts of the Governor-General in Council. It was only an idea that roused India in 1857, and before an idea which touched the profounder depths of Indian sentiment all the Western culture in which we believe might be swept away as dust before a cyclone and leave not a trace behind.

It is the most suicidal and fatuous policy to assume that the skilled Indian handicraftsman must be turned into a coolly minding a machine. Yet this is the policy which many people seriously put forward as the only means of reviving Indian industry.

The decay of Indian art is mostly due to the fatal mistake which has been made in Indian public buildings in supplanting the living traditional styles of Indian architecture by imitations of modern European scholastic styles. Architecture is the principal door through which the artistic sense of the people finds expression. If that door is mostly choked with rubbish, as it is in India, is it surprising that art industries should decline?

Why do the princes, aristocracy and wealthy men of India continue to build those monstrous and ridiculous palaces and mansions, in imitation of the most corrupt period of European art, to the detriment of the art industries of the country, and to the disgust of every one whose artistic sense is in any degree developed?

Why then regard as the only policy in India that which means the multiplication of social plague spots? India is intended both by Nature and by the genius of her inhabitants to be a hand-worker's paradise. Why should we only employ methods originating in totally different conditions of social economy, and give her an inferno for her paradise?

But what I want chiefly to emphasise is that a national decline in artistic taste spells not only intellectual impoverishment but commercial disaster, and for this reason the problem of the industrial reorganisation of India is as much an artistic as an economic one. It is certainly not from sentimental or purely artistic reasons that England since 1857 has spent millions of hard cash on schools of art and design, but because the Government after many years was forced to the conclusion that other countries with better artistic knowledge were driving many English manufactures out of the market. It is also certain that India's ruinous loss in industrial capacity would have been far less serious, or have been avoided entirely, if during the last hundred years a sound artistic policy had been established. At the present time we seem to be as far off as ever from the realisation of those measures which are necessary to prevent further deterioration in that great commercial asset represented by India's artistic power and understanding. India has had no share in the marked artistic revival which has been progressing in Europe for the last fifty years, though her traditional art knowledge is being continually exploited in every direction for the benefit of European art and manufacture.

It is easier to take the line of least resistance, and bend or break everything Indian into a European mould, than it is to promote a new life in Indian institutions by adapting them to their modern environment. It is easier to dissolve the old Indian village communities than to make them an integral part of the administrative system. It is easier to fabricate sham classic and Gothic architecture for public buildings than to acquire the knowledge and artistic skill necessary for adapting the living traditions of Indian architecture to present-day administrative uses. It is easier to foist a travesty of Western culture upon India than to revive the old spirit in her ancient institutions. And it is certainly easier to leave the old Indian industrial system alone than to restore its vitality and help it to combat on fair terms the influences which are now destroying it.

Perhaps the greatest fault to be found with our educational methods in India is in their lack of imagination. Following the traditions of the English public school we have always regarded the schoolboy as an animal in which the imaginative faculties should be sternly repressed. Build a barrack in the heart of a dirty, overcrowded city, pack it with students—that is a college. Cram the students with Shakespeare and Milton before they can express their own ideas in tolerable modern English—that is culture.

But I fear that history will not judge the treatment of the artistic side of education in India with the same indulgence, for on the one hand we have neglected the most magnificent opportunity, and on the other hand countenanced and encouraged the most ruthless barbarity. Even the Goths and Vandals in their most ferocious iconoclasm did less injury to art than that which we have done and continue to do in the name of European civilisation. If the Goths and Vandals destroyed, they brought with them the genius to reconstruct. But we, a nation whose æsthetic understanding has been deadened by generations of pedantry and false teaching, have done all that indifference and active philistinism could do to suppress the lively inborn artistic sense of the Indian peoples. All that recent Indian administrations have done to support and encourage art is but a feather in the scale against the destructive counter-influences, originating in times less sympathetic to Indian art, which have been allowed to continue under their authority.

The artificial culture of the West has destroyed the natural culture of the East. The want of a consistent artistic policy, which is painfully conspicuous in the whole administration of India, and the absence of all artistic considerations in the education of the youth of the country, have not only suppressed originality of thought and lowered the standard of culture, but they have brought about a state of things that neither Indian educationalists nor statesmen can afford to ignore.—From "Essays on Indian Art."

Encouragement for Art.

By Walter Sickert.

IN an article on Whistler in the "Fortnightly" of December, 1908, I defined genius as "the instinct of self-preservation in a talent." Talent is not infrequent, but the cultivation of it year-in, year-out with sequence (suite) through a lifetime is not common. I am grateful for the opportunity that has been given me of answering in a Socialist paper ("il ne faut être Sauce-ialiste que dans sa cuisine," as Daumier's chef says to his little apprentice-cook) some such questions as the following:—"What conditions have you found favourable to the utmost development of such talent as you have? Having watched, for a quarter of a century, with interest and enthusiasm, the talents and careers of your fellow-craftsmen, what should you say is a fostering and what a blighting atmosphere? Don't you think it is perhaps time that something should be done? For those, bien entendu, whose aims are high, couldn't the Treasury, for instance, be approached? Don't you think a small, oh, ever so tiny a tax on 'bus-conductors and charwomen would yield enough for acquiring, annually, to begin with, works of Serious Effort and Probity of Vision for our municipalities? Wouldn't aforesaid 'bus-conductors and charwomen be thereby raised to a higher Conception of Civic Life? Couldn't Mr. Tate's admirable example be extended, so that both St. John's Wood and Chelsea might get annually a little lump of sugar all round? Couldn't a small committee be formed of, say, Sir Hugh Lane, Mr. McColl, Mr. Roger Fry, the brothers Spielmann, Lord Lytton, and Mr. Will Rothenstein?"

I cannot say that I have the slightest doubt as to my answer, if I am to speak the truth. Art can only be extracted from us—as any labour from any workman—by the same means as oil is got from a nut—by pressure—inconstant, cruel, regular, grinding, unintermittent, painful pressure. I have turned King's evidence, and that is the truth, and there is not a craftsman who doesn't know it.

For this purpose, then, we are most fortunate if we are deprived by fortune of any property whatever; if we are forced by hunger, or the need of rest, to an incessant dribbling production, entirely precluding all leisured theorising, or grandiose recasting of our talent, or readjustment of it to what we, in our limited and ignorant self-criticism, consider a higher walk of our art or craft.

For this purpose is best an unsympathetic and callous contractor, man, or, better, company, in that less personal, with some accumulated or inherited work, in the form of capital, which it is desired to turn to account in the most remunerative manner.

Speaking as a nut I do not say I like it, or that I have liked it, or that if I could at any time wriggle out of the press, I wouldn't do so. But speaking as an amateur and a connoisseur of oil, I cannot but see that things are excellent as they are. Whether in a world where Colenso and Euclid are repealed, as they doubtless will be in time by the Liberal Party, and where water boils at 3 deg., and does not rise to its own level, a totally different system might not yield good results, I cannot say. Life seems to me too short for such purely academic speculations.

I do believe that those of us who are intellectuals owe much more to those who work with their hands than we ever pay. I think our indifference to these is shameful. We, relatively skilled in thought, as they are in deed, should be ashamed to offer them, in return for their faithful labour, their plumbing, their ploughing, their washing, their dustmanship, and what not, the selfish and callous insincerities of our lying political philanthropies, in which, it is needless to say, we do not pretend to believe for ourselves.

We, who love work, who know that it is perhaps the only good, the only entire satisfaction that life contains, should be ashamed to preach to these that the object of life is to earn "leisure" by as little work as possible.

We should be ashamed to tell them the lie that anyone has an abstract right to such and such a minimum of leisure. Does a man, seeing his brother sorely struggling to swim ashore against tide and wind, say, looking at his watch, "You have swum eight hours. You have a moral right to leave off." We ought to be ashamed to tell them that to pass their eyes frequently over printed matter is a *sine qua non* of a worthy life. That leisure is culture; that reading is education; that the ideal for the bootmaker is, "How shall I raise myself by some political hocus-pocus to pass as little time as I can at the last, and gain as much time as I can for"—what is it? I don't quite know. "Lectures at a Polytechnic," I suppose, "or drowsing over some horrible treatise." How did Turner spend his leisure? As Minnie Cunningham used to sing:

"Par" ought to know,
"Par" ought to know.

Why try to stuff the working man up, as schoolboys say, to be elevated? I say advisedly, "Try." For I have certainly heard wiser, saner, and profounder thoughts emitted over the last, or behind a barrow, or on the driver's seat of an omnibus than I have read in books.

Of course we painters do not pretend to be walking monuments of erudition. "*Le peintre en général est bête*," says Gauthier. But you can't stuff us up with that nonsense. You haven't the face to come to a matriculated student of the University of London (the pride of it!) and say: "Doesn't it seem very hard that because Mr. Sargent has a knack of hitting off the kind of showy and brilliant likeness that is in demand, and the opportunity of so displaying it in Piccadilly as to afford the richest and noblest arrivistes just the kind of discreet and flaring advertisement they crave for (oh so ardently!), you should get as many tens as he does thousands for his paintings? Surely some day in the Louvre and the National Gallery will not your, etc.?" I forbear from modesty.

"Don't you think," your agitator, black-coated, and therefore, I hope, risen, goes on, "you had better come out? Hadn't you better threaten to cease to paint? Hadn't you better arrange to be prepared to put your brushes down at a moment's notice? What do you say? 'The paint will dry and spoil'? Never mind about that. 'You will lose your skill'? What of it? Give concerts like the Penrhyn miners. 'You can't sing'? That doesn't matter. Knowing it is for a cause, people will overlook your voice production. What's that you say? 'You had rather paint for the cause of your own cupboard and take less? If it comes to the worst, you would rather pay to paint than not paint at all'? Gaw blimey (I am not sure whether I catch exactly the right tone of cultured Socialist conversation), George, or Bernard, or Abel (to the secretary of the Amalgamated Sons of Rest, salary £x a week), come out of it! Come out of his adjective studio. What can you do with a bloke who prefers his present participle paintpots to the Dawn of Humanity?

You know I should laugh in your face. Why have you, who are lettered, the face to talk such nonsense, then, to a miner or a cobbler?

No. Let us begin and talk to them as we talk to our real brothers. Of how well we feel, and how lucky it is that kind necessity drags us out of our beds early, so that our wits are with us, while the poor rich are sleeping. Of how lucky we are in a world where *crétins* of means are compelled to kill dear time by losing £1,000 at a game "resembling draughts" to a perfect stranger, that our little path is safely marked out for us from our beds to our workshops, and so home again. How lucky that while the super-cows and super-geese of Society can find no better use for their preposterous wealth and their baneful leisure than to rend the air with the hooting of their murderous motors that are whirling them from one indigestion to another, to discuss for all entertainment the *sæcular* quarrels and *raccommodements* of a gang of elderly Sapphists, we are permitted to go to bed in decent time in

the blessed monogamy (reasonably tempered by an occasional caprice) to which our restricted means have condemned us for our good.

When you can offer to gentle and simple a more wholesome and more fortifying ideal than to do your duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you, your sneers at the Christian religion may fall a little less flat. And note that this formula does not exclude God's calling you from the plough or the last to the telescope, or the type-writer, or the palette—if that is any catch—which I doubt!

A Formula of Art.

By William Shackleton.

I.

THE formula of Art as I conceive it to be, and what it conveys, is as follows:—

It is to visualise the ideas that life gives, whether these ideas arise by abstract thought working from observation, or from personal experience.

* * *

It is concerned as much with thinking and feeling as with seeing.

* * *

It is rarely the appearances of things only, but more the significance of things that lies within.

* * *

What do you see in Life? and what have you got to say about it? are questions that I mentally ask of an artist, whether musician, writer, sculptor, or painter. Indeed, these are the questions we unconsciously ask of all men, and as a man has some gift of answering, and has something worth saying—so he is to be accounted an artist.

* * *

Thus, to my mind "Art for Art's Sake" is far from holding first place as a standard of æsthetics. Indeed, a beautiful formula may hold little or no intellectual or emotional outlook.

* * *

I sometimes think there is a talent of formulæ alone. Men are born with a gift of saying "This is how the Venetians looked at life," or "This is how the Greeks rendered life," when what is needful is that an artist should say "This is how I look at life." Moreover, "Art for Art's Sake" means, simply, adequate workmanship, and all that it gives is included in the standard I set up. It has to be there before the work is worthy of serious notice.

* * *

"Idealism," also, is just a part, and not the whole of this standard. It is merely one, though one of the most beautiful, of the many chords. It is obvious that it answers neither of the two questions directly. It is often the refuge of a sensitive nature that cannot bear the contact of reality.

* * *

What I have stated in the few preceding paragraphs of course precludes beauty as an end in itself. It has its place incidentally. But if an artist's work has any great place in life, the need of humanity is that existence should be so revealed as to be made more tolerable. To my mind Idealism and Beauty avoid the issue, and the natures that feed thereon have existence made thereby less tolerable. Nevertheless, I would repeat, all these things are right in due proportion. A work of Art, to be of use in the world, is like a man; it must have vitality to live; it must have thought in it if it is to make people think; it must have feeling in it if it is to make people feel; it must have ecstasy in it if it is to move the soul.

* * *

Nearly all my works treat of some aspect of man and his destiny—of man, woman and child in the absorbing problem of life.

* * *

Man has a mind, a heart, a soul and a body; and

passion dominates all four. It leads, to intellectual activity in the mind, to feelings in the heart, in the soul to religion and ecstasies, and in the body to the desires of the flesh.

* * *

And the interplay of all these in the setting of man's environment is the greatest of all themes for expression. An artist is as surely a realist in painting the visions or aspirations of man as in imitating externals—the colour and form of his body and clothes.

* * *

The environment, from a visual point of view, one may simply say is the land, the sea, and the sky. These, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say, have also a mind, a heart, and a soul.

* * *

At any rate a sky, for instance, is very like man in its inner nature. A sky can be calm or stormy, it can be ecstatic or depressed in mood, voluptuous, passionate, cold or austere or mystical. In fact the range is the whole gamut of human emotions, and seems not so much a thing apart as one intimately concerned with man, even in its indifference.

* * *

All things interpenetrate, and the mystery of the Infinite is over all.

* * *

My pictures, I think, might almost be classified under different headings, as Symbolical, Historical Visions, Realism, Romantic Idylls, and Poetic Realism. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that they incline towards one or other of these.

* * *

To several I have added short descriptive notices that may indicate my intentions. In most cases the intentions developed as the work progressed; this is, when the work had started from something seen. When I had an idea in my mind I had slowly to gather material in order to use it as a means of conveying the idea. One cannot imitate an idea as one can imitate an object, and the workmanship or treatment is conditioned by this fact.

* * *

However, I like good workmanship, colour, form and light; and I shall be quite content if any one who is not interested in the foregoing ideas will look at my work from this point of view—the Technical one.

* * *

As the Spell of Art is that which is left over when the last analysis has been made, it may seem that an artist ought not to be too conscious of his intentions; but I hold that the more that can be reduced to system, the greater will be the field of mystery open to us. And the greater the consciousness we achieve, the larger is the import of life.

* * *

An artist ought not to be afraid of using his capacities to the full, knowing well that they make, not Art, but a nobler setting for the indefinable.

II.

Notes on Pictures.

No. 56.—"THE PASSING HOUR."

A meditation on life. Humanity is represented by a group of naked children at the edge of a vast sea. Children are playing, with gaiety or thoughtfulness as their different temperaments direct, but all heedless of the beauty and the mystery and the solemnity of the brooding spirit of the passing hour.

The ship starting on its unknown voyage—the wreck—somewhat obvious symbols—also a few sea gulls in the left-hand bottom corner hovering over a bone—all suggest the mortality that lurks behind the veil of beauty

* * *

No. 59.—"SHRIMPERS AT NIGHT."

On the north coast of France the fisher-people go with their nets into the sea at all times, when it is low tide. When the nights are warm in August the sea is phosphorescent, and the breakers gleam with green and blue light. And when the big shrimp nets are lifted, all

saturated and dripping, they glow with this blue light, and trickling stars of it ripple down to the ground.

The shore life at such times appears most magical and bewitching, men and women and children flitting about with golden lanterns, intent upon their tasks, the light flashing here and there on faces, baskets, costumes, and making beautiful reflections in the pools.

The fisherman in this picture has come ashore to empty his basket of shrimps, just caught, into the one the woman holds. A little girl peeps in, and a lantern, held in the middle of the group, but hidden by the woman's body, glows on her face and on the man's hands as he removes bits of seaweed, crabs and little fishes. These have just been darting about like streaks of green fire in the shallow ebbing water, which, lapping on the sand, leaves chains of flickering phosphorescent sparks like diamonds.

* * *

NO. 61.—"THE ROAD."

A sombre aspect of life, typifying the fatality that impels people along their unknown life's course. The road leads to an unknown destination.

Three types of people are represented. First comes the woman, the strongest character, the motive force, the character that realises and acts. Somewhat apart, she draws with greater will power the weaker characters with her. A type that fights to the end, however much the victim of fatality.

The man next to her is of the weak kind that submits nervously without questioning. He would not be there at all without the others.

The man at the right is big, physically strong, of the type that never thinks, but takes for granted that all it does it does because it wants to. This type is fatuous, and would be helpless without the forceful active character typified by the woman.

The sky in this picture is as important as the figures. It typifies the mysterious power—to all seeming indifferent to humanity's woes—that nevertheless seems to hold the key to all riddles, and would be able to justify all life's hardships and injustices, could it but be understood. But it remains mystic, and unfathomable, and terrible.

* * *

NO. 67.—"THE LOVE CHILD."

It is difficult to trace any meaning into life at all in terms of our human understanding, but sometimes one can trace a certain training and development of consciousness by the events that come to one, whether the result of our own or others' actions, that seem to imply a purpose we do not understand but have to take on trust.

This is usually the outcome of suffering, and suffering seems to be either the outcome of excessive sensibilities and sympathies or, as in this case, the putting of oneself into antagonism with accepted (however secretly derided) canons of conduct. And it is still more ironical when it is the result, as also in this case, of an unpremeditated deviation; a simply natural action of a person without the sophistries of civilisation.

This is not a picture preaching conventional conduct; it is simply a comment on the sordid side of life, and an effort to see some meaning in the exasperating irony that baffles one at the springs of being.

Whenever fatality puts people into this false position, the outcome is often a great enlargement of personality; the girl suffers and she thinks, trying to comprehend; she is angry and feels that the scoffing onlookers are unjust. A vegetative nature has awakened into consciousness, and, for the first time in her life, she has been realising her own identity.

* * *

NO. 68.—"CHRIST AT JERUSALEM."

"Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another."—St. Mark, xiii.

I have taken this episode not as representing the particular incident of the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, but in the larger sense of proclaiming the transience of all earthly things, and, in its full purpose, the need for the renunciation of all things as of no account when put in the balance with the soul.

The passionate mysticism of Christianity has caused almost as many woes to humanity as it purports to alleviate. The picture has been painted representing all that is material wrapped in an unsubstantial glamour, as if indeed the great buildings were even now fading away like a beautiful dream.

People are coming out of the Temple door on the left, and as they come within the spell of the utterance, they listen in groups. The man with the blue hood is of acutely intellectual, disbelieving, mocking and ironical nature—the contrasting type to the religious enthusiast. The short man in dark red is of the credulous kind, easily led, easily believing and easily doubting—the Thomas type. The woman seated on the steps is more interested in her baby than in any dissertation on the vanities of this life. And the other woman in front with two babies, who has her full share of daily worries and is puzzled with life's perplexities, is held with the fascination of the voice and dimly and vainly hopes once again for some elucidation of practical and immediate difficulties. This picture, together with its fellow "Phryne at Eleusis," may be said to represent "The things that are seen are temporal, the things that are unseen are eternal."

* * *

NO. 72.—"PHRYNE AT ELEUSIS."

This picture, in contradistinction to "Christ at Jerusalem," is intended to represent the natural or pagan life and its philosophy, that fights so hard against the self-renunciation of the Christian ideal. The episode is the well-known one of Phryne the courtesan, beloved of Alexander and the sculptor Praxiteles, who went with the Athenians to the great festival of Eleusis, and there on the sea-shore disrobed and went into the sea nude in front of all the Greeks.

In my picture Phryne symbolises not only woman and love, but the allurements of material life in all ways, and also on the physical plane at its best.

The three principal male figures are—the Priest in purple, the Soldier in the helmet, and the Artist just showing his head between the other two, and holding in his hand a little green statuette of Eros (Praxiteles gave her one). These I have taken to represent the maleficent effect of the overpowering allurements of the material life—the Priest corrupted; the man of strength and will weakened; the man of imagination selling his soul.

Over all lies the appealing pathos and pity, and the passion of it all in a transient splendour of a voluptuous sea and sunset of scarlet and green and gold.

This picture also, like that of "Christ of Jerusalem," is a dream fabric of the transience of the things that are seen.

Aesthetic Aims.

By T. Sturge Moore.

I.—REALISM.

"It looks just as if it were real." That is praise, though no longer fashionable praise. Did not Shakespeare so commend acting "whose end both at the first and now was, and is, to hold as it were the mirror up to nature"? Hold a mirror up to nature; the sunlight will so flash from it as to nearly blind you. Can the rival of this silver-backed glass be formed with pigment? Certainly not. Then why strain after a goal which no imaginable improvement in human capacity would bring within reach?

Why square the circle?

The pleasant Greek may have portrayed a towel so as to take in his rival at whose picture of a lettuce horses neighed. Had artists done nothing but emulate him, there would have been no Titian, Rembrandt, or Michael Angelo. Yet perhaps some good art has been produced with the idea that so to deceive would be to triumph. The general truth is, however, that artists do not aim at imitation; for they do not wish to hit it off as closely as they might. The frame and accidental lighting impair the illusion. Then why put up with them? Van Beers has proved a peep-show more effective. Why strive so hard to do something, when

unwilling to take such simple steps to attain as near the goal as circumstance will admit?

Yet surely such extravagance does not underlie every assertion that imitation is the end of art.

"Experience attests the fact that imitations are universally delighted in. The lively pleasure which learning involves, not only for philosophers, but for all men, however limited their powers, causes them to gladly contemplate the minutely faithful representation even of such painful objects as repulsive animals and corpses. Thus men love to gaze at a portrait, because they infer the while, and say: 'Ah! that is the man himself.' But for those who have never seen the original, pleasure from the copy will be due to the execution, colouring, or some such cause."

Thus Aristotle beat the bush and drove out this notion. Art's power springs in part from imitation, in part from harmony. Now harmony has notoriously been discovered between the parts of single objects and in the arrangement of aggregates. The artist may emulate it by nice proportions between spaces, shapes, surfaces and colours, and by suiting all to the capacities of the materials he employs.

Like the camera, pure realists can copy, but not arrange; can perceive, but not prefer; incapable of distinguishing between accident and intention, they are machines.

2.—IMPRESSIONISM.

One day a youth turns from the garish confusion without, and faithfully copies some discreet impression retained by his memory. He is the realist of the momentary, just as those others are impressionists of the ever-recurring. He needs must draw on Aristotle's second source of power; for all parts of a work, which it may take hours or days to execute, have to harmonise with the burden of a single minute. A great number of instants must be voluntarily coloured, toned, moulded till they conform with that recollected one. So much so that should a second glance fall on the original object, now in a different light, the hoarded image will revive, yet not suffer alteration.

Few units in the long stream of perception can so be retained and reproduced; selection is thus enforced. This choice opens a further field for harmony, since the artist will usually exert it under the influence of some personal preference, and, in fact, dominant moods are as a rule discerned.

A representation thus produced may be both very incomplete and altogether misleading if compared at leisure with the objects portrayed.

No matter; its virtue lies elsewhere.

"An ill-favoured thing, sir, but mine own," as Touchstone says of Audrey. And elsewhere Shakespeare invidiously remarked: "You laugh when boys and women tell their dreams"; that is, at those who, merely because something has occurred to them, conceive it important and wish it put on record.

Like dreams, impressions occur, and the less common the more like dreams they are. Thorough-going impressionists, having no wish to correct them, act on the most ludicrous first-impressions; they are found in madhouses.

3.—TASTE.

The realist is slavishly solemn over the apparent world, the impressionist takes himself too seriously. True artists smile and select in common with rational beings, great artists respond to as complex a hierarchy of values as do the finest minds. These ever strive to improve both observation and impression, studiously comparing the content of one sensuous moment with another, the preference of this living soul with that. Hence, patient in experiment, they evolve standards of taste and apply them with docility.

Though individuals designated (by their own voice or that of others) realists and impressionists are in various degrees aspersed by these reflections, the full onus is borne by the theories alone with which human practice, fortunately, never consists. Rarely indeed has fidelity to principles emasculated the born painter or sculptor of all spontaneous choicefulness!

"Reaction as Progress."

By Victor Reynolds.

WHEN Ruskin wrote of Michel Angelo that he destroyed Italian art by his "influence over admiring idiocy," he discovered a truth by no means confined in its application to the Tuscan master. It must have been a new idea in Ruskin's day, for in a footnote to the passage he pats himself on the back for having thought of it. Nowadays, however, we possess the materials for a survey of art-history undreamed of by Ruskin, and throughout the whole course of it we find this condition of affairs repeating itself again and again. Styles and traditions may develop slowly, or they may develop fast; they may take one lifetime of fifty years to complete them, or they may take six generations and a couple of centuries; but sooner or later there comes a point in their course when nothing else remains to be said. In Italian art this point is represented by the Renaissance, which (unhappy misnomer), far from being a rebirth or a reawakening, does but represent the triumphant completion and subsequent withering away of the entire artistic genius of the Italian people.

We habitually regard this completion as taking place at the hands of three or four supreme artists, whom we have consequently named classics. We have agreed to treat their would-be followers with contempt, rightly regarding their work as but a pawing-over of dry bones, empty, mechanical, and eclectic.

This law of artistic evolution is neither strange nor unnatural; it is probably true in an equal degree of most other phases of human activity. Nowhere, however, do we observe its action so clearly as in the history of art.

We have most of us realised this long ago. Few of us, however, are to-day one whit the nearer than were our forerunners to applying the lesson either to our own work or in the attitude which we take towards that of our contemporaries.

As the most flagrant instance, people still continue to talk of neo-impressionism and of newer movements in impressionism, quite regardless of the fact that the fundamental principle of impressionism (at the best of times never one of very vital æsthetic import) has already been exemplified and developed to its extreme limits, and that as a force or a starting point for anything new it is as dead as the Pharaohs. Deader, indeed. Nothing is more hopeless than a moribund tradition, while on the other hand the eldest, most primitive sources, such as Egyptian art itself (partly because they survive only in a condition so fragmentary as to preclude any possibility of direct imitation), have ever been the seeding ground and the hope of future progress.

When, therefore, one is asked to give a short survey of the "newer movements" in French art to-day, one is staggered to find how little there is to write about. Movements, indeed, there are by the hundred, and forest-like they are called new. But a very little study suffices to show one that the element of newness in the majority of exhibits at the Indépendants or the Autumn Salon is restricted to the name; that they are for the greater part eclectic repetitive offsprings of the Impressionist movement, similar in character and of as little real value as any other eclectic work of former times.

As to the Indépendants and its square miles of canvas, I have no wish to speak harshly of a phase of modern painting which has caused me and numberless others so many hours of innocent mirth. But no amount of affection for the humourist can blind one to the fact that the fun is beginning to wear thin, and that as an impetus to the product of works of art the wish to *épater le bourgeois* has had its day.

The glamour of the past lies heavy upon the human mind. It is, says Nietzsche, when Art puts on her oldest clothes that we recognise her most clearly for Art. The seed of all new movements, of all that is most daring and vital, most full of effrontery and

modernity, has ever lain deep buried in the earth or under numberless fathoms of the sea; and like those men of fourteenth century Florence we are, all of us who desire any progress for our Art, grubbers and searchers in the earth of the past, or scrapers of its thick-written palimpsest.

In a recent work on Paris, the writer, wishing to express his dislike of the exhibits at the Autumn Salon, says that they are "like Aztec decorations." If intended as a stricture the comparison is scarcely happy, since the decorative powers of the Aztec people, to judge by such specimens as we possess of their pottery, must have been very remarkable indeed. It is just in such instances of return to primitive sources of inspiration, and a resemblance to such things as Aztec decoration, that the hope of any future for art lies.

It was, no doubt, certain of the recent works of M. Picasso which prompted the comparison. In him one sees an almost isolated instance of the power to react against the current tradition, and one of the very few men in modern France whose work can in any real sense be called progressive. I believe that at a very early age he was producing work in the manner of the Spanish classics like Velasquez and Goya. After he came to Paris, however (he is a native of Barcelona), his work took a wholly different aspect. In the collection of Mr. Leo Stein there are several exquisite studies of heads painted in a bluish monochrome on millboard, strange and delicate as Lionardo, and with something of that master's use of line. These are, however, still the work of a transition stage. Such also is the painting of a girl in a blue dress, with its curious ritualistic or religious air, which seems to suggest a profound influence of Piero dello Francesca, or possibly Puvis de Chavannes. There is a nobility about this painting which he hardly seems to have recaptured in any later effort. To these succeed a number of the strangest decorations, in which all element of representation is thrown overboard, and an attempt made to express emotion of form by the use of an extremely large and simple curve. I believe that these were actually produced under a combined influence of Ingres and of negro carving; they are, in fact, like "Aztec decorations" or the statues from Easter Island.

M. Henri Matisse is regarded as a *chef d'école* among that section of the art world over here who, I believe, style themselves the "excessivistes," and are popularly known as *les fauves*, owing to their practice of shaving clean. Everything certainly looks a little tame after his work, in the colour scheme of which vermilion and verte emeraude play an unsullied and unstinted part. Colour is not used by him with any merely decorative or harmonious intent, but rather as a means of more vitally expressing the qualities of things inherent in their form; just as he would paint mustard red because it possesses the faculty of burning the tongue. As to the great originality claimed for his work, I confess that it seems to me not vastly different from that of Ganquin or Van Gogh, and without possessing a tithe of the decorative powers of the former. M. Felix Valotton recently gave a one-man show of paintings in the Galeries Druet. These show the keen sense of form one would have argued from his beautiful woodcuts, which can almost sustain a comparison with contemporary English cutting; but he is, unfortunately, wholly devoid of colour sense. I do not remember to have seen anything more unpleasant in painted art than the brickly mixture of vermilion and black with which it is his habit to symbolise flesh colour, rendered the more unpleasant by the uncompromising realism of form to which it is allied. Indeed, these paintings are little more than stylish life-studies. With a few exceptions, such as the Europa, a brick-coloured figure sprawling on a chocolate-coloured bison in the midst of a Reckitt's-blue sea, the paintings have the heavy static look of certain modern German efforts.

Sculpture has generally taken the lead of painting in the solution of its problems and the development of its resources. Vasair, I think, attributes the more rapid growth of early Italian sculpture to the fact that such ancient fragments as were unearthed, being exclu-

sively sculptural, were of more practical service to the sculptors than the painters. This may be partly true but is it not also conceivable that sculpture is the simpler and more vital art, its returns upon its primitive fundamentally being more swift and its powers of renewal consequently greater than those of painting? How else shall we explain the fact that while the mass of young Parisian painters are still pursuing that worn-out formula of the spectral palette, no small number of sculptors have already turned in reaction against the overwhelming personality of Rodin, and are producing work wholly free from any suspicion of his influence? I think that hardly anyone could have visited an exhibition like the last Autumn Salon without feeling that sculpture is in a healthier condition on the Continent than painting. A large proportion of this being by men of other than French nationality, Poles, Russians, and Germans, hardly comes within the scope of my present article. But to enforce my argument I need only point to the work of Aristide Maillol, whose exquisite little bronze, "Coureur Cycliste," was perhaps the dominant feature of an exhibition of singular interest from a sculptural point of view. The power to react immediately against the force of such a personality as that of Auguste Rodin alone argues an extraordinary vitality of talent. The work of this latest of French masters shows the influence of Egyptian or very early Greek work. Austere, unimpassioned, exquisitely simple, it is as far removed in feeling from that of Rodin as is the latter in his turn from the bronze or marble twaddle which chokes his masterpieces in the Gallery of the Luxembourg.

The Virtue of Tradition.

By Cecil French.

WERE we not persuaded that in the acknowledged masterpieces of art we beheld in some degree or other an exposition of our own particular theories, I think that those theories would not hold us long. Indeed supremely great works gather together so many aspects of the human intelligence that they may almost be likened to magic mirrors, wherein each beholder finds the qualities he most loves. I have heard the masters of the past upheld as examples of an all but unlimited number of conflicting opinions. Our analytical faculty may enable us to give a reason for our delight, but when this is done something yet evades us; every great work, as though it were an ever-brimming fountain, reveals some fresh facet of its glory to the latest comer. It would seem as though the smile of Mona Lisa, that mystery which the generations have not been able to unravel, were common to all beautiful and enduring creation. Our first attempt at analysis, when brought face to face with a work of art, should naturally be: "What does this bring into the world which we cannot find and possess equally well elsewhere?" But this is not all, for fine painting, in addition to representing an activity of the brain, is a thing of sensuous enchantment, and can affect us as will a bunch of flowers, a noble countenance beheld in passing, the flush of an evening sky. The painter-hero of Rossetti's youthful story not only prayed to S. Mary Virgin and meditated over the evils of mortal existence, but "would feel faint in sunsets and at the sight of stately persons."

The more I live and observe, the more am I convinced that vision is mainly a quality of the mind. When Blake said, "A fool sees not the same tree as a wise man sees," he was forestalling science in that as in many another particular. Any scientist will explain how light falling on the retina of the eye will stir a portion of the brain, thus conveying the images which by repeated experience we have come to accept as

reality. No one denies that qualities of brain differ very widely; as regards their application to vision we need only ask several persons to describe with care some particular scene or event in order to be convinced how varying have been the images received by each of them; or those who can evoke memory with sufficient lucidity can convey the sense-impression received in the past from some particular locality with that received by us to-day. Certain drugs may entirely alter our perception of natural objects, either heightening the sense of beauty or producing unreasoning terror. A glass or two of whisky even may cause a man to behold two moons in the heavens and otherwise distort for the time being his relation with the visible world. From such crude evidences I am convinced that subtler causes are continually modifying our standard of objective reality; nay, objective reality may hardly be said to exist. The pictorial efforts of very primitive peoples are expressed, I believe, in strong, crude outlines, and lately I was speaking with an individual of little æsthetic sensibility, and found that he could not understand shadow or relief, for he complained if the flesh in a painting were not of an uniform reddish tint. A certain painter whom I have the honour of knowing, a designer of vigorous masculine themes, is all but insensitive to the delicate rose and violet of so much contemporary painting. His art, untouched by recent subtleties, belongs entirely to another age, and he glories in its ancestry. Others with whom I am acquainted, colourists learned in the art of exquisite evasion, regard my friend's clarion notes with amazed suspicion. Once I questioned a man who was almost completely colour-blind as to the world he lived in, but unfortunately he had not sufficient introspective power or sufficient command of speech to be able to convey any adequate idea of it.

I hold that thought and those who transmute thought into definite achievement are ever making and unmaking the successive generations of mankind. Homer, maybe, has given us energy and freedom, while the translators of the Bible and the nameless carvers of Gothic chancels may have dowered our sweethearts with an added wistfulness. Had not the Emperor Constantine, having become the receptacle of the thoughts of many, rendered them into an edict, we and our uncles and aunts might be dancing round an altar pouring libations to Dionysius, instead of attending a church service every seven days; modern England might have been ruled by another Heliogabalus, and have possessed no Albert Memorial. In like manner it is not difficult to regard our vision of form and colour as the collective result of the art of bygone ages. Moreover, our very position in the world may have been brought about by such influences, for had not the Greeks and, in later times, Raphael set the standard of physical loveliness, who can be certain that our grandfathers, looking upon our grandmothers, would have found them fair, and so have wooed and won them?

To thoroughly understand that we are creatures made by the past is to understand how important to us is the study of that past. One who could pick out the variously coloured threads that make up his own little pattern in the unending tapestry would be far on the way to mastering his destiny, but so remote and complicated are the forces which have moulded us that we can but watch the straws blown by the wind. Many, however, neglect even such clues as we may possess. Nobody, I imagine, would deny that the study of history is necessary for the man of action who would have a right understanding of the contemporary outlook, yet one hears of artists (inferior artists, I admit)

who maintain that the "Old Masters," as they are so vaguely termed, should not be considered overmuch. Presumably such inspired leaders are fearful lest they should lose their much-vaunted innovations; they resemble those timid persons who retire to monasteries and convents through no other reason than that of sheer terror. I found this attitude reduced to its barest essentials in a student who wished he had never seen a picture, imagining that under such conditions he might be entirely original in his art. Had his wish but have been made a reality through some peculiarity of his upbringing, of what order would have been his æsthetic impulse? Or had his ancestors passed their years in an atmosphere equally unique, would the æsthetic impulse have arisen in their descendant? But questions such as these are fantastic. I confess that I am impatient of such views, for I have nowhere met with this unique originality, springing of a sudden like Pallas, fully armed, from the brain of Zeus. Rather have I found originality to be as the perfume added to the brightness of the flower, some mysterious last gift of the gods, bestowed now here, now there, living its life all unconscious of its power.

A child of peculiar and freakish habits finds out only gradually through experience and the shock of repeated contact that he is different from other children; so, too, the man of distinguished thought may continue for years to be in ignorance of the fact that his thoughts are not shared by the multitude. The true eccentric is not usually self-conscious, and is apt to resent the interest and curiosity about him displayed by his neighbours.

In the evolution of Art, as in that of Nature, I find few shoots or violent developments. Italian painting may be likened to a number of boxes, the one fitting within the other; Flemish and Dutch painting have an ordered growth scarcely less marked. The visit of Vandyck to England and his employment by the Martyr-King led the way for those stately canvases of the eighteenth century which have become our especial pride. Constable, it is true, affirmed that he would fain forget the sight of pictures other than his own, but the practise of his art was otherwise. An early Constable has its sure foundation in the monochrome of his forerunners, and daring innovator as he may have appeared this gravity of method never wholly vanished, even under the fierce impasto of his latest manner. The Pre-Raphaelites, in their scorn of mere technical skill, upset the tradition of English painting, but Rossetti, as we know, used to lament his lack of early training, and in his latter days evolved a system so mathematical as often to all but swamp his magnificent natural gifts. Burne-Jones also, after his first careless rapture, settled down to a technique than which nothing could be more patient and exacting, so that we find the brooding ecstasy of his King Cophetua echoed in every inch of that canvas, which is still the meeting ground of unlimited admiration and unlimited contempt. In France, Watteau, chiefly conscious of his efforts to equal Rubens, produced something entirely personal to himself, and Millet, who wished to be regarded as another Poussin, found himself labelled a revolutionary despite his protests. Millet's great simple nature rebelled against the premeditated intentions attributed to him, his incessant cry being that he merely rendered what he saw and felt. That certain painters should break up their forms into minute particles of colour has no very definite bearing either one way or the other as regards the virtues that go to make up enduring art. Light was studied with equal ardour in the Holland of the

seventeenth century. Rembrandt beheld humanity in a glow so mysterious that we can hardly know whether it is because of the shifting cloud-charged skies or because of his own passionate reverie. In his famous "View of Haarlem," Jan Vermeer, of Delft, I am informed, beats the "impressionists" on their own ground. I have not the good fortune to know this picture save in reproductions, but I can imagine no rendering of light more searching or more sensitive than in the little masterpieces which can be studied with such advantage by Vermeer's untravelling admirers. It must be remembered that even Monet, whose very name became a battle-cry, was no sudden irruption of fresh forces; for instance, he studied Turner with reverent care, as is well known. Moreover, the French impressionists, who are popularly supposed to have revolutionised modern painting, will stand or fall inasmuch as they may or may not have produced harmonious decorations charged with an emotional significance. Mr. George Moore, in a moment of petulance, may proclaim that oil paint has at last emerged from its long misuse, but such sudden setting-up and throwing-down has ever proved to be misleading. Who can point out exactly where the old ends and the new begins? To be new must always be but a relative virtue; the process of time is inexorable. Art, in a degree even less than science, can never consist of a series of epoch-making discoveries, for it may never enter into competition with the latest triumphs of material utility. Pictures that are more talked about than looked at speedily pass into oblivion.

When the style of Raphael slowly emerged from Perugino's workshop and that of Leonardo from Verrocchio's, the position was widely different from that which hampers the modern painter. Painting was a recognised trade, and was taught as such, even as shoemaking is taught, and to my thinking painting should be taught to-day. Nowadays the student, on leaving the art school, has to begin all over again if he wishes to express himself with sincerity. Ignorant of the working of any system, he has before him that most difficult of all tasks, to evolve a system for himself, whereas, had he been apprenticed as of old to some master of repute, he would have possessed a groundwork to which his own personality might by degrees have been added. Our vaunted freedom has led to chaos, the energies of the best years of a young painter's life being too often dissolved in repeated experiment. In its relation to more general influences also the position has become more complicated. The enormous advance made by museums and the facilities of reproduction have brought the whole world's art to our very doors. It is hard for us to realise the enthusiasm which fired Gainsborough at the sight of a Naysmith, or Blake at the sight of engravings after Michael Angelo, or even to understand how Burne-Jones in his turn was quickened to activity by the discovery of a Rossetti water-colour at Oxford. To-day we cannot avoid great works, even if we would. The periodical Press from time to time may show us how the Florentines made space rhythmical, or how the Greeks treated the human form. This being so, were it not the height of affectation in an artist to pretend to ignore the past? Photography, it would be imagined, might have caused a greater reverence for style and tradition and a lessening of the prosaic faculty for mere imitation, but the reverse has been the case. Many painters would seem to have little aim but to compete with the photographer, and seeking to render some obvious phenomenon of nature, in their disregard of the gracious caressing surfaces of their forerunners, to offer

us craftsmanship so unpleasant in its violence that their pictures keep us at an uneasy distance as though they were so many snarling dogs.

Those who think that truth in Art is of no value when divorced from beauty have a difficult road to follow; theirs is the necessity of gathering up something which has been all but lost. Style, like the manners of a person of breeding, has to be mainly unconscious. Let us not, therefore, be too critical of such painters as would appear sometimes to be consciously stylistic rather than born stylists. Those who perforce must contend against the fashions of their age have sorrows and difficulties which the more easily pleased, unthinking many do not even suspect. To recover the gold coins which have fallen by the way-side certain travellers have need to turn back, enduring the laughter of their comrades who journey on all untroubled towards the fair city of the journey's end. But which will be the wealthier when all may have been admitted at the gate?

Happily there are signs that artists of a newer generation are seeking something which will help them to carry on the great flowing pattern which is the world's inheritance. A general dissatisfaction with recently prevailing standards has made itself felt; an attitude of greater weight and seriousness is taking the place of blind instinct. Men such as Messrs. Ricketts and Shannon, Mr. Cayley Robinson, and Mr. William Shackleton have produced works, each in their varying sphere of achievement, which have a decorative fitness and a rhythmical unity which gives them a place apart from the modish recording of passing phenomena. To these and to their fellows we should render our thanks. Such artists need no praise or apology from any writer, obscure or otherwise. They may well stand by what they have expressed, but for those who as yet have achieved little or nothing of recognised accomplishment I would that my words might be "the trumpet of a prophecy."

The Artist in the Making.

His Origin: Ideals and Ideas.

AT a moment when the painter is engaged with a new form of art, when he is searching for the means to meet the needs created by new conceptions of life, and when the idea of a return to the past is firing the souls of certain artists here in England and abroad, it is peculiarly interesting and instructive to turn to books containing the different aims of painters in different ages in order to examine the old theories with regard to the production of a work of art. In doing so the question naturally arises, Of what precise value are the ideas and ideals of the old masters to modern men? How far are they useful and necessary to them? For instance, is Cennini Cennino's animated discussion of the mysteries of painting of his day—a discussion concerned with the chemistry of paint and other mediums, the preparation of ground, in a word, with the early efforts to obtain material beauty—of use to the modern man who seeks a method peculiarly suited to his personality and period? Likewise, what value may artists attach to a study of the aims, ambitions, and methods of Lionardo as contained in his book of philosophical and scientific recipes? The reply to the last question is that on the historical side they will find that the writings of Lionardo, who as Vasari said laboured much more by his word than in fact or deed, afford a clear insight into the great Florentine's conception of nature and man and the intention of the soul of man, together with his particular form and method of expressing it, namely, that adopted by the great early Florentine school, from Giotto downward, through the attitude and movements of the limbs. On the modern side they will turn to it for that vital principle which underlies all forms of art, binding them together and linking the present with the past, as well as for many pieces of

practical instruction in the principles of modern impressionism which Lionardo apparently understood but did not apply. Herein his precepts may be said to differ from his practice, as in the case of Reynolds, though in a different way. It is interesting to compare these principles with those contained in modern works on impressionism, as for example those by Mauclair and Druet. Perhaps the most noticeable thing about Lionardo revealed by his book, and which renders the latter of great value to other readers besides artists, is the fact that he was that astounding paradox, a scientist, a philosopher, and a great artist. As a rule, we are inclined to accept the philosopher as a bad artist, and by no means a judge of art. But when we are faced with the incontestible proof of the existence of a man who successfully combines the two qualities, we hasten to set the dictum aside in order to give an attentive hearing to each æsthetic philosopher we meet, even though he has never produced a work of art, lest he should betray not only the ability to reason skilfully, but also some knowledge of his subject matter.

"Lionardo's Note Books." Ed. by E. McCurdy. (Seeley. 5s. net.)

* * *

His Temperament: The Creative Spirit.

This habit of presupposing each proverbially barren place to be an unworked mine of precious minerals has led me to become acquainted with Benedetto Croce. Most painters and art critics who maintain that only an artist is a judge of art, that the æsthetic philosopher is a very barren person and the philosophy of art a very barren discussion, and of no use whatever to artists who are primarily concerned with producing tangible things of beauty and not with discussing the nature of art, such persons would have taken up his bulky volume and laid it down again without a sigh, unopened. But I, remembering my responsibility as a reviewer, not only opened the book, but read it, and, in fairness to the author, I must say that it expresses many opinions in which I entirely concur. Oddly enough, they do not belong to the author. But it also contains opinions from which I dissent. And these do belong to the author. For instance, I do not agree with Mr. Ainslie, who has given the book its present admirable English dress, that "Æsthetic" is a work of art. Possibly he has been guided to this opinion by the author's own statement that his theory is not new, it has been in the air for some time, and it has now received complete expression for the first time. This is really Mr. Croce's excuse for writing his book. He had a theory to expound, and he desired to illustrate it from the opinions of many artists who have not been compelled to hold their tongues on all subjects save mediums and methods. In so doing he has established the harmony of philosophy with art, and proved that between the two there is no wide difference, save in the use of terms. The language of art remains entirely charming, whereas philosophy continues to search for *le beau dans l'horrible*. Thus when Mr. Croce, who is a philosopher, turns to his theory and begins by defining art as the creating of something out of nothing, he says, "Art is pure intuition completely expressed." And Puvis de Chavannes, in order to express the same idea, says quite simply, "Once I had evoked all the world from nothingness"; and Blake, "I know that the world is a world of imagination and vision"; and Fromentin, "Painting is nothing but the art of expressing the visible by the invisible"; and Whistler, "Art happens"; and George Moore, "Art is wholly intransmissible"; all which is equal to saying that art is the manifestation of the creative imagination operating in space in quest of beauty. So it follows in the words of Wilde, "There are not many arts, but one art merely: poem, picture, and Parthenon, sonnet and statue—all are in their essence the same, and he who knows one knows all." But there are forms of art, and as new forms are the offspring of the creative imagination, while there is a creative imagination there will be new forms of art also. Consequently there is no such thing as progress in art, only rebirth. Beauty the author defines as complete expression—soul speaking lucidly to soul, as it were;

ugliness is incomplete expression—soul failing to communicate itself to soul, so to speak. "Ugly is only half-way to a thing," says Meredith. This much, and more, Mr. Croce points out in terms of metaphysics. "Philosophy needs art, but art does not need philosophy," is the Crocean way of telling us that art is not concerned with messages and nonsense of the sort, but with clothing the world of phenomena with beauty and eternal youth. He aims in his intuition theory to place poetry first in the scale of conscious activities and the poet nearest the truth of things. This supremacy of the lyricism of the soul was foreseen by Wilde where he says, "The poet is the supreme artist and is lord over all life." The author was also preceded by Goethe in much that he says concerning the identity of linguistic and æsthetic. The German poet has strongly emphasised the necessity of a proper use of words, and of individuals learning to think and express themselves in their own language, and not that of other individuals. From these illustrated examples it may be gathered that there is a great deal of wisdom scattered throughout Mr. Croce's stimulating and profound essay. Its value is greatly enhanced by a wide survey of writers on the theory of æsthetic, among whom I notice many of the wisecracks that Shelley, in a moment of extreme youth and misguided inquiry, called in to complete his poetical education. Back to intuition is the theme of this book.

"Æsthetic." By Benedetto Croce. (Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.)

* * *

If I were asked for a book that admirably illustrates Benedetto Croce's spirit theory, I would unhesitatingly lay my hand on Mr. Sturge Moore's "Art and Life." Mr. Moore's book is a brilliant study of the adventures of the creative spirit in search of truth and beauty. He has chosen two remarkable types, which to the superficial eye may appear to have little or no relation to each other, and he has shown, either consciously or unconsciously, how well both the precepts of Flaubert and Blake illustrate the latest intuitional theory of æsthetic according to Croce. Both "conceived art as an ideal life," both set out to give complete expression to their conception. Herein they were successful, and the achievement of one in literature and of the other in poetry and painting is in the fullest sense art. I say Mr. Moore has shown this unconsciously advisedly, because this is not his avowed intention in bringing these two artists together. I have mentioned this side in order to illustrate Mr. Moore's power to suggest themes as well as to state them. Mr. Moore has really conceived the idea of illustrating the vital import of æsthetics from the precepts of Gustave Flaubert and William Blake, and inasmuch as he has completely and successfully expressed his conception he is entitled to rank as artist. His book not only reveals a rare appreciation for the fine work of the creative spirit, but the possession of the creative spirit itself also.

"Art and Life." By T. Sturge Moore. (Methuen. 5s. net.)

* * *

His Training: The Descent of the Creative Spirit.

According to Hsieh Ho, a famous Chinese painter of the sixth century, the creative spirit in descending into a pictorial conception must take upon itself organic structure. This great imaginative scheme forms the bony system of the work, lines take the place of nerves and arteries, and the whole is covered with the skin of colour. Professor J. C. Holmes, who is both a distinguished painter and writer, has written a book the object of which is to confer upon the painter all that knowledge of the process of his science which will enable him to build up the organic structure of which Hsieh Ho speaks, and to give it the requisite harmonies of line composition and colour. In other words, Professor Holmes assumes, as a result of his practice, there is a machinery common to all painters for giving tangible form to the highest activities of the creative imagination. By this means the conception is brought to earth, as it were, given complete expression, and as a result reappears as a work of art made visible and lasting by science. Art is synonymous with beauty.

The specific beauty with which Professor Holmes is concerned is that of decoration. In his view, the painter should be able, before all things, to seize, emphasise, convey, and perpetuate the decorative value of life. He pays no heed to the importance of the practice of recording the subtle gradations of light as colour. He attempts rather to break away from impressionism, and to return to pattern-designing. He is therefore taken up with a statement of the rules and precepts, with the graces and ingenuity which underlie and appear in the wonderful formal and precise surfaces of the great pattern designers past and present, from the primitives to Burne-Jones. "Design is the first element, the groundwork, the foundation of all art," he tells us. As to the kind of machinery he advises for the purpose of solving the decorative problem the plan of his book shall speak. The work is divided into three main parts—namely, Emphasis of Design; of Materials; and of Character. Each emphasis has a dual aim, expression and decoration. Each good picture should contain four qualities—unity, vitality, infinity and repose. The purely technical part of the book is occupied with a discussion of the use of different mediums, the different methods of oil and water-colour painting, and the different processes of drawing and engraving. The concluding section of the book deals with the emphasis of character, and raises problems of a sociological nature, mostly pitfalls for the unwary. Such, in brief outline, is Professor Holmes' admirable plan to confer upon the student that knowledge of the science of picture-making, both in theory and practice, which the professor himself possesses, and to enable him to give full expression to his æsthetic emotions, so far as may be done by instruction. So far as may be done—and here Professor Holmes places me in a difficulty. In his preface he writes against himself, so to speak, urging upon the artist the importance of asserting his individuality. Accordingly I want to tell artists to keep away as much as possible from manuals, treatises, and text-books, and to work out their own artistic salvation in their own way. But then I want to praise Professor Holmes' very able book. What am I to do? Perhaps I had better tell artists to buy the book and decide for themselves.

"Notes on the Science of Picture Making." By C. J. Holmes. (Chatto and Windus.)

* * *

If it is true, as Whistler said, that the artist is born to pick and choose and group with science the natural elements of colour and form, that the result may be beautiful, it is therefore obvious that he must not neglect what science has to say in the matter, even though her distinguished professors have the bad habit of occasionally throwing their goddess overboard. He should, for instance, make a point of studying Professor Ross's "Theory of Pure Design," in spite of the fact that the competent American teacher or expert, who has apparently taken every matter into consideration before setting to work to write his book, comes to the final conclusion that personality, like murder, will out. In his work they will find line and movement reduced to a system, and the laws and principles of design and decoration clearly and sufficiently expounded and illustrated for the development of those who are amenable to schools of instruction. The author's aim has been to supply the measureable quantities and qualities to the processes of the science of picture-making, "to define, classify, and explain the phenomena of design." The practice of pure design, as he describes it, is contained in "the composition and arrangement of lines and spots of paint; of tones, measures and shapes; this in the modes of harmony, balance, and rhythm, for the sake of order and in the hope of beauty. Says Professor Ross, "By design I mean order." The pursuit of order has actuated him throughout, and has resulted in an elaborate, copiously illustrated and, in many ways, useful diagrammatic treatise, which should serve, among other things, as an eloquent testimony to the professor's ability to think in diagrams and other eccentric terms of order. But is not design largely a matter of instinct? Are classifications and schematisations such as this book contains to

be reconciled with the activities of artistic faculties of the highest order?

"A Theory of Pure Design." By D. W. Ross. (Houghton, Mifflin, Boston, U.S. 10s.)

* * *

Mr. Solomon, also, has written a manual of instruction, and if he seeks an excuse for his act he may find it in Durer's words: "If a man is to become a really good painter he must be educated thereto from his earliest years." But whether a man will become a really good painter from a close study of Mr. Solomon's rules and precepts is quite another thing. If he is diligent and conscientiously absorbs the lifelong and no doubt valuable experience, together with the wisdom, of Mr. Solomon, he will, of course, become as Mr. Solomon wants him to become—namely, a Solomon-made painter, *i.e.*, a thoroughly sound craftsman and an eminently reliable practical painter. This, and nothing more, as Poe's raven would say. In the course of his becoming he will notice that the author takes him carefully through the various departments of his academic experience, proceeding in order from anatomy to the various stages of the construction of the figure, to light and shade and modelling to painting in colour; thence to the National Gallery for an introduction to the Old Masters; and finally treats him to a few friendly words on the study of æsthetic and mural decoration. On the whole he will have a fairly pleasant time providing he is not convinced that the whole system of art education is wrong, that neither colour nor composition can be taught, and he can see his way to wax enthusiastic over the old men in the National Gallery. If he is a beginner or amateur he will greatly enjoy Mr. Solomon's manner and matter. But if he is a hardened veteran, like myself, he may complain that Mr. Solomon has written his book mainly for the purpose of introducing a large number of really excellent plates and in order to air his opinion.

"The Principles of Oil Painting." By S. J. Solomon. (Seeley. 6s.)

* * *

His Chronology.

Those who are concerned with research work, or with sketching out the history of the gradual evolution of painting and schools of painting, would gain much assistance from the use of the Winchester Charts. These charts contain a great deal of useful information, chronological and other, and the lines are clearly and simply traced. Possibly owing to a desire to avoid unnecessary complication is due the fact that certain influences are not shown. To take but one instance, Michael Angelo is seen to be influenced by Ghirlandaio, but his return in his old age to Massacio and the Primitives is not shown. The charts are contained in special covers which are copies of beautiful specimens of Byzantine art and Venetian binding. The twelve parts of the "Great Painters of the XIXth Century" form a very useful work of reference, containing extensive information on the subject with which it deals. The entire work, indeed, constitutes a careful chronological history of the most important European painters of the period, together with a well-selected gallery of 400 reproductions of their principal works. Herein M. Léonce Bénédict, of the Luxembourg, has compiled over 800 brief records. Though it would be impossible to include in a series of this sort the name of every well-known European painter, there are some names that deserve to be included, but are not. In England, Steer, Sickert, Russell, and Rothenstein; in France, Luce, Bonnard, Leprade and so on. The coloured plates to the mystic number of thirteen irritate me; they are unforgivably bad. I absolutely refuse to pass them.

"The Winchester Charts of Italian Painters." (W. A. Mansell and Co. Cloth, 2s. 6d.)

"Great Painters of the XIXth Century." By Léonce Bénédict. (Pitman. 7s.)

HUNTLY CARTER.

Books received: "Manet and the French Impressionists." By T. Druet. (Grant Richards.) [An admirable version of M. Druet's comprehensive and intimate survey of the work of Manet and the Impressionists immediately influenced by him. A review will follow.]