

THE STUDIO

A Weekly Journal of the Fine Arts.

New Series. Vol. V. No. 21.

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Price Five Cents.

THE STUDIO FOR 1890.

1882,
EIGHTH YEAR,
1890.



CLARENCE COOK, Editor.
JOSEPH J. KOEHL, Manager.

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ARTICLES. In 1890 THE STUDIO will enter upon its eighth year of publication, and the fifth volume of the New Series. The arrangement the editor has made with eminent writers on art matters enables him to promise greater variety in the literary contents of the journal, while at the same time preserving that independence and individuality that have made a great part of its success, and have won for it the support of the educated and cultured portion of the community. Art criticisms, sales, etc., by the best critics, notices of home and foreign exhibitions, correspondence from England and France, with occasional letters from Germany and elsewhere; book reviews and notes on matters of art-interest, the world over. Nothing will be spared to make THE STUDIO in the future as it has tried to be in the past, an impartial and interesting record of all that is going on in the art world of our own land, while the best foreign correspondents procurable will enable us to keep our readers informed of the important doings in the older world.

ILLUSTRATIONS. During the course of the year a number of valuable illustrations will be published: Etchings, Engravings, Photo-Gravures, Photo-Etchings, Wood-cuts, and Drawings, these last reproduced by process, representing the best that can be accomplished by American artists. Recourse will seldom be had to foreign assistance: the aim of THE STUDIO being to do all that lies in its power to encourage and develop the talent of our own men and women not in any blind spirit of know-nothingism, but because we think in this way best to interest the world at large.

ETCHINGS. Mr. SIDNEY L. SMITH, already known to the readers of THE STUDIO by his Etchings of "A Silver Coffee-pot set with pearls," "A Portrait of John Quincy Adams at the age of sixteen," "Hermes leading Sappho to Charon." These two groups are of the highest beauty and are not excelled by any thus far discovered. III, a group from the base of the bronze Candelabrum designed by Barye, "Athene and Aphrodite." Only three copies of the Candelabrum are known. IV, a group of Angels from the fresco in the Riccardi Chapel, Florence, by Benozzo Gozzoli. Mr. OTTO H. BACHER has completed a plate of an inkstand of majolica of Italian manufacture. This remarkable work bears distinctly the date 1492, the date of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, and will no doubt be a conspicuous object in this coming four-hundredth anniversary of that event. Mr. Bacher has produced a brilliant and spirited etching. His etching is the exact size of the original object, and wants only color to reproduce its full effect. Other plates by Mr. Bacher will appear in the course of the year. Mr. WILLIAM M. CHASE has promised to etch a plate from some one of his recent works. Mr. ROBERT F. BLUM has accepted a commission to make an etching from a picture in the Gallery of the Yale School of Fine Arts. This portrait, attributed to the school of Francia, represents a Princess of the Vellelli family, and is a striking and beautiful work.

WOOD ENGRAVINGS. Mr. HENRY MARSH, it is hoped, will enrich the pages of THE STUDIO with some of his wood-cuts—an announcement that we are sure will be read by the lovers of pure art with as much pleasure as it gives us to make it. Mr. Marsh's wood-cutting made an era in the art in this country: it is one of the things in that field of which we have most reason to be proud, and we cannot consider THE STUDIO complete until it has something to show from the hand that engraved the Moths and Butterflies of Massachusetts, and the drawings by Francis Lathrop, not to mention other works in which this subtle and original genius has expressed himself.

DRAWINGS. Other artists have promised their co-operation: among them Mr. KENYON COX, one of our most brilliant and accomplished draughtsmen, who has just finished a drawing for Ceraeobi's Bust of Washington, lately shown at the Centennial Loan Exhibition, and which was published in the November, 1889, issue. Messrs. H. W. HALL, SIDNEY L. SMITH, ROBERT F. BLUM, C. A. VANDERHOOF, and others, have also promised drawings.

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THE STUDIO for December 7th contains a Brilliant Essay on the Life and Works of Antoine-Louis Barye, illustrated with an original Etching by Otto H. Bacher, of a Venus and Juno, from the Bronze Candelabrum designed in 1846 for the Duc de Montpensier; two Photo-Etchings of Bas-Reliefs, by Barye, dated 1831; a portrait of Barye, by Bacher; and seven engravings of the most important of his bronzes

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With the first number of the new volume, the fifth of the New Series, published on Saturday, December 7th, THE STUDIO began its weekly issue. The number published on the first Saturday of the month will contain from three to five full-page supplements consisting of etchings, photo-gravures, photo-etchings, photo-engravings, etc., etc. The literary contents will continue to be of the same high character as at present: art criticisms by the best hands, notices of home and foreign exhibitions, correspondence from England and France, with occasional letters from Germany and elsewhere; book-reviews and notes on matters of art-interest, the world over.

The numbers of THE STUDIO to be published on the succeeding Saturdays of the month will consist of eight pages, but will be increased to twelve as occasion arises. This issue of THE STUDIO will not be illustrated. All the issues of THE STUDIO will be printed on the same size page, with paper of the same quality, but in smaller type, except the headings, which will be uniform in all the numbers.

It is intended in this portion of THE STUDIO to cover a field that has thus far not been occupied by any art-journal in this country, though something like the same purpose is served by the *Chronique des Arts*, the *Courrier de l'Art* and the *Kunst-Chronik*, the weekly flyers of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, *L'Art*, and the *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, respectively. But even these publications do not cover the whole field to be occupied by the weekly issue of THE STUDIO, which is intended to be a chronicle as complete as the publishers can make it, of all the minor art matters of the country, and of as much as is possible to get hold of, of what is going on abroad in each week. This chronicle will consist of announcements of art exhibitions, present and to come. Reports of sales, items of news, short book notices; whatever, in short is of current interest and importance in the world of art.

This venture must, we are certain, commend itself to the art-public, to connoisseurs, amateurs, and to artists, instructors in art, to art clubs, schools and art institutions.

THE STUDIO can be ordered through any art, book or newsdealer in the United States, or subscribed for at this office for a year, six or three months, as desired.

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Chase, William M., 51 West 10th St., New York.
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CLARENCE COOK, EDITOR.

JOSEPH J. KOCH, MANAGER.

Offices: No. 864 Broadway, New York City.

PAINTINGS, SKETCHES, AND STUDIES BY
JOHN LA FARGE.

MR. JOHN LA FARGE has placed on view in the gallery of Messrs. Reichard & Co., in New York, about a hundred examples of his art, in oils, water-color, and other mediums, some of them lately done, and others, examples with which the public has long been familiar. Among the newest are the studies and sketches made by the artist during his recent visit to Japan. These make about one third of the exhibition.

While there is, no doubt, considerable pleasure to be had from this exhibition, it is not to be disguised that, as a whole, it is somewhat disappointing. It is, after all, little more than a collection of scraps, mostly of a trifling sort, of small importance in themselves, and certainly not always made more important by their treatment. We are not sure that we are justified in objecting to the reappearance on these walls of drawings which have been seen again and again in public and private exhibitions, and in particular collections of Mr. La Farge's works; since those who have not already seen these water-lilies and bits of landscape and book-illustrations may like to see them now, and there may be some who would say they cannot see them too often. But we must think we shall carry many with us when we express a wish that some one would buy the "Nicodemus and Christ" and the "Isaiah" and the various "studies" of angels of one sort or another, and cherish them henceforth jealously at home. They do Mr. La Farge but little credit, either by their conception or their execution. The "Nicodemus and Christ" is disagreeably crude and unmeaning in color; the figures are weakly drawn, the hands without force—a failure very common with Mr. La Farge, as we have often pointed out; and, most serious objection of all, there is no dramatic relation between the two personages. Of all the badly drawn figures that Mr. La Farge has produced, the two worst, assuredly—not even excepting his "St. Paul" and "St. John"—are the

"Moses" and "Isaiah" in that *omnium gatherum* of decorative scraps, Trinity Church, Boston. They are ridiculous as conceptions of character, and, as paintings, they are fussed and fumbled beyond telling. At this late day, therefore, we had not expected to be reminded of these artistic shortcomings; but it is evident that Mr. La Farge still cherishes an affection for this work of his salad days, since he insists upon bringing out again this study for the figure of "Isaiah," and asking us not only to look at it, but even to buy it. Leaving out of the question the confusion of the drapery in which the luckless prophet is muffled, we are lost in wonder at the awkwardness of the pose. What can a man mean by putting a prophet-hair like Isaiah—bold, haughty, relentless—into an attitude so mean—spreading a great hand upon his thigh, as if some rude Israelitish gamin had hit him with a stone? We do not like to use the word "affectation," but if it were not affectation it must have been want of taste or want of tact that dictated such a movement.

And angels! We certainly cannot think Mr. La Farge has anywhere proved that he has a vocation to paint angels! Yet, here in a miscellany-lot of sixty-five drawings, etc., there are not less than sixteen angels, or studies of angels; and after going over the whole company carefully, we find ourselves carrying away no individual impression from any one of them. They are the merest commonplace, while the iteration of the same idea—curiously reflected in the catalogue, where ten "sames" follow one another down the column—shows, to our thinking, a singular lack of invention. But, certainly, invention is not Mr. La Farge's strong point, nor ever was."

The greater number of these pieces, where they are not declared studies from nature—flowers, landscapes, or portrait-studies—are either directly borrowed, as to their design, from the works of the Italians of the Renaissance or else are distinctly reminiscent of these. Thus, the "Male Head with Helmet," No. 56, recalls the well-known drawing by Leonardo—"A Warrior with a Helmet"; the "Suonatore," No. 55, is own sister to the family of child-angels who strum on various lutes and viols on the steps of the Madonna's throne in Lombard and Venetian pictures; the "Working design for Embroidery," called a "Motif from Sansovino," might as well own up at once to its parentage without circumlocution, for, unless our memory much misleads us, the part of it that is not Sansovino's must be very small. And what shall we think of the taste that can propose an ornament designed to be carved in marble, as a "Working Design for Embroidery"? The effect of such a de-

sign in execution can be judged by looking at this painting from the other side of the gallery, when its heaviness and the want of balance between the wreath and the background will be only too apparent.

If the exhibition make an impression upon the visitor of scrappiness and want of ideas, it is because scrappiness and want of ideas are characteristic of Mr. La Farge's contribution to our art. This would not have needed to be said had the artist been content to work in fields where his abilities and his taste could have been employed naturally, without straining or exaggerating. Mr. La Farge's sense of color, though by no means always sure, is often happy, and he sets an excellent example in these days, when morbid tones and dull combinations are so much in fashion,—the easy refuge of men who cannot trust themselves,—by the frank use he makes of pure color and fresh hues. Had other things been equal, he would have been a valuable man in a monastery, set to work upon initial letters or borders to the missals, or at designing anything on a small scale. No sooner, however, does Mr. La Farge attempt anything of large dimensions or on a grand scale, whether it be the decoration of a church or the designing of a big window, than he loses himself in confusion, and produces a patchwork without beginning, middle, or end; where models, gathered together from various sources and warmed over to suit, dazzle the eyes of the unwary, but cease to please as wider knowledge teaches the secret of their factitious charm.

There are plenty of bits on these walls that show an exceptional talent for color, in which, however, we come to have less confidence as we see how often it goes astray. Thus, it is hard to understand how the same taste, or want of it, that produced the Nos. 14 and 15, "Flowers: Decorative Studies," which are only coarse parodies of Diaz in one of his moods, with the other pieces on which we have already commented, could have produced the "Noli me tangere," No. 21; the "Wild Rose," No. 5; the "Study of Pink Hollyhock," No. 4; the "Study of Apple-blossoms," No. 26; and, among the Japanese studies, the "On the Pacific—Sunlight," No. 24. There might be, also, more to like in No. 44, "A Shepherd Listening to the Song of the Siren," if the design were not spoiled by the shepherd himself, a sad case of curvature of the spine.

The Japanese studies and sketches are a disappointment, or ought to be, considering the amount of talk and writing there has been about them—though it must be allowed that these have measurably abated since their publication in the *Century Magazine* began. The drawing in most of these Japanese sketches is of a primitive sort, recalling the painful exercises of clever school-girls fifty years ago, or less; and none of it is beyond the reach of painstaking and patience. The "Avenue of Cryptomerias," the "Bronze Tomb of Iyeyasu," the "Stable of the Sacred Horses" etc., etc., are neat performances, but there is surely nothing artistic about them; while the various lifeless faces of Buddhist priests, tattooed grooms, etc., etc., have nothing to show beyond the skill of any one of fifty of our young draughtsmen. So far as real interest goes, and the sense of being in company with a competent and intelligent

reporter who is thinking only of how best he shall make us understand what he has seen, much more was to be had from Mr. Wores' pictures of Japan than we can get from these of Mr. La Farge; while, in an artistic sense, the Japanese themselves have set so high a standard of perfection in design, draughtsmanship, and color, that it is almost an impertinence, for one not exceptionally endowed, to labor in the same field.

A LETTER FROM MR. SALOMON REINACH. THE DISPUTED TERRA-COTTAS.

CHATEAU DE ST. GERMAIN-EN-LAYE, }
SEINE-ET-OISE, }
12 April, 1890. }

TO the Editor of THE STUDIO: I would not have thought of answering M. Gaston Feuardent's letter published in THE STUDIO of March 1 if that gentleman had not deemed it proper to mix up my name in a discussion pendent between Mr. Stillman and himself. Several reasons, on which I think it unnecessary to insist, have always induced me to avoid any antiquarian polemic with those who are busied in the commerce of antiquities. One of these many reasons will suffice: dealers have always the right, perhaps even the duty, of putting forward the *secret professionnel*, and are perfectly entitled to refuse the information they may possess about the antiquities, or so-called antiquities, which are brought on the market or intrusted to them for sale.

M. Feuardent's letter gives no new argument in favor of the genuineness of the groups and the figures *ejusdem farinae* which are now being sold as *Tinnograen*, *Corinthian*, etc. There is not one qualified archæologist in Europe—as far as I know—who would dare *print* a testimonial vouching for the antiquity of the groups and figures which I attacked ever since 1884 in the *Nation*, the *Revue Archéologique* and the *Classical Review*. All the German authorities—Conze, Furtwaengler, Kekulé, Mayer—have openly adopted my opinion; the case of Dr. Furtwaengler, in Berlin, was particularly interesting, as he had begun by believing in the groups, and had even caused several of them to be purchased by the Antiquarium in Berlin.

I do not think it worthy of myself to answer M. Feuardent's statements on the "rough manner" in which I am said to have conducted the excavations in Myrina. Such talk is merely a non-acknowledged loan from Dr. Frohner's preface to the Græu collection; but I have answered that gentleman's accusations and exploded his *voluntary* mistakes, so that, while referring your readers to the *Revue Critique*, 1886, I, pp. 481-486, I may abstain from stating once more of what little notice such scurrilous attacks are worthy.

M. Feuardent quotes Dr. Frohner, who, in his remarks to the Burlington catalogue, indicates the groups for the "neighborhood of Myrina." He also quotes M. Cartault's pamphlet, published in 1887, where the Asiatic *provenance* of the groups is sternly maintained. But he forgets that the same M. Cartault, who is a mere dabbler in Greek ceramics, pub