

Fine Arts.

AMERICANS IN PARIS SALON.

BY MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.

As usual, the American exhibit in this year's Salon shows more influence of Latin than of Saxon schools. Spanish and French have almost exclusively the field, the only noticeable exceptions being in the work of Copeland, who studied long years in Antwerp, and that of Picknell which is pre-eminently American. Jules Stewart, of Philadelphia, is showily modern-Spanish; Sargent has abandoned, in some measure, his Spanish-Fortuny ideal, and indeed, for that matter, apparently every other ideal than that of clear, sheer, audacious and insolent ugliness, yet still has a Spanish air, while W. T. Dannat, although a pupil of Munkacsy, in his dazzling high lights, contrasted with dark local color and dense shadow, shows a Spanish inclination, although with a dignity and reticence of brilliant power, seemingly quite beyond the reach of the first two named.

Henry Bacon's two pictures, "He Will Return" and "Who Loves Me Follows Me," show a mixture of influences and a falling off of skill. The first named is in his usual style, labored and circumscribed, with posey attitudes, high artificial complexions, rouged lips and ensemble of color verging upon cheapness, although bright and clear. The other shows an admiration for the Bastien Lepage generalization of color, and is more largely treated than is the artist's wont. It shows a coarse, rustic female figure carrying milk pails and followed by swine.

F. M. Boggs sends two examples of his refined impressionism—smoky skies and clouded water, Turner-esque with un-Turner-esque sanity; in atmospheres not so much surcharged with dazzle and blaze of light as infused and mellowed by it. "The Old Canal of Dordrecht," was evidently painted as much for picturesque quality of line as for color or for imaginative effect. The peaked, colorful red roofs are in slanting light; the left side of the picture is many colored, with balconies, canopies, mottled walls; yet with wonderful delicacy is kept in tone with the broad, colorless gray walls across the canal.

Henry Bisbing sends "A Morning Effect in Holland"—sulky, anatomical cows, in a low, dull mass of green.

Walter Blackmann sends two heads, one, "La Nin," the other, "Tête de Paysanne." They are but heads and shoulders, are painted with faces in semi-shadow and light falling from behind, have a slight tendency to purple in flesh-tints, and to silhouette effect, but are elegantly and gracefully refined.

George W. Chambers, of St. Louis, sends "The Dunes." A desolate sea-coast, with female figures outlined against gray sand, pale sand-flowers and sapless grass bending in the wind. The figures are clumsy, coarse and real; the faces are idealized, somewhat as Jules Breton idealizes, not in form, but in expression. The foremost young girl, coarse-skinned and unbeautiful, gazing forward with the dreamy, other-world-seeming expression, such as that with which Jeanne Darc must have listened to The Voices.

Benjamin West Olindeinst, of Baltimore, sends a masculine portrait—flat, pale, somewhat wooden, yet not without dignity.

John T. Oulidge sends, also, a portrait, a lady's, full of the broken shadows and muddled brushwork of the Duran School—clever, "free" work, but not beautiful.

Wyatt Eaton's portrait of Madame H. de W. is faultless and meritorious—a sweet, placid, elderly face, placidly painted.

Clifford Greyson, of Philadelphia, sends "Ohé, le Canot," a dusky fisher-girl figure, outlined in profile against light sea and sky. It is clever workmanship, of the smooth, hard, bright Gerome School, but so abstract from Nature, while yet so remote from any poetic ideal as to leave the spectator quite unimpressed, save coldly, by its studio dexterity.

Alexander Harrison sends two canvases, in which the influence of Bastien Lepage, one of his masters, strongly predominates over that of Gerome, the other—two as opposing theorists as it is possible to imagine, and chosen, one would think, the one to

counteract the other. One canvas is a "Seascape," a vast expanse of heaving water sweeping down upon the spectator. Its defect is in opaque, painty surf. The twilight effect on distant water is excellently rendered in blue, darkening to purple, with a slight superfluous of the dusky purple red of departed sunset. The other represents desolate Dunes, with thin growth of juiceless grass and flowers, and faint, far glimpses of sea. It is called "Les Naufr Agés de Glenans," and shows a group of ugly wooden crosses, bending all ways before the winds over the grave mounds of the drowned. The canvas has no beauty to the eye, the color is faded and the perspective upright, after the Bastien-Lepage manner, and its spirit wholly misses the imaginative and poetic melancholy which the subject is so capable of expressing. The atmosphere is cheap; the crosses have the appearance of photographers' cameras.

Penfold's "Veuve" is in poetic contrast to this picture. It represents a widow, bending over the just recovered corpse of her drowned husband. Grief and pain are in the very atmosphere, gray and brooding over storm-worn sands, where the dead man lies in the center of a rough group of bareheaded fisher folk. Even the distant, vague village seems a city of weeping, and one almost hears the dull gray waves moan.

Robert Hinkley sends a flat, characterless portrait—an old lady in black, sitting before a preternaturally shining silver teapot; a timid portrait, unlike this artist's usual assured bourgeois work, and quite unlike Carolus Duran's teaching.

William Henry Howe, of Ravenna, Ohio, has a group of sunny cattle in rain-cloud brooded landscape, the cattle spirited and full of life, the drawing and modeling animate, the ensemble of color luminous, strong, yet refined.

Henry Mosler is represented by two of his hard, precise canvases, one usually as much like another in color and handling as two peas. "The Last Sacraments" is more pleasing than "The Village Clockmaker" to one who has seen enough of this artist's dark, bitumened interiors, with their profusion of bric-a-brac, their purple whites, and definite precision of forms, leaning to the fault rather of hardness than of freedom, to have them somewhat pall upon him. The "Derniers Sacraments" represents a priest and two acolytes leaving the peasant cottage where death is, and against the door of which a grief-stricken mourner bows her head.

Charles Sprague Pearce has a praying figure of a young girl against flat, unbroken background. The girl is a ragged paysanne, in gray, patched gown and tight-fitting blue white skullcap. It is a thoroughly cold art, emotionally speaking, but with masterly reserve of strength in treatment, as Pearce's work usually has, and, with its beautiful modeling, has a certain high-bred elegance—an aristocrateness of technique, so to speak—joined to a perceptible commonplaceness, which is not of the subject, but of the artist's imagination.

Henry R. Poor has "Ulysses Simulant la Jolie," that is, plowing the pebbled sea-shore with yoked horse and ox. It has the heroic forms of Luminais, his master, even although the man seems absurdly small compared with the prodigious animals. The drawing of the animals is very bad—the horse wooden, the ox impossible, the gait of both almost ridiculous. The figures are all in bold relief, the color clear, light, bright.

E. E. Simmons has one decorative panel and a picture, "Les Bout de la Cour." The first is a surface of delicate light green, a faint vista of verdure clouded with white, fluffy sprays of bloom. A faint, low-toned figure of a young paysanne stands, with her knitting, in the center of the shadowless, perspectiveless canvas. The second is a low-toned, broadly painted figure-picture, in its flat simplicity scarcely less decorative than the first.

Edwin L. Weeks has two white architectural canvases representing East Indian scenes. One has a portal at top of flight of high steps, said portal picked out with cheap colored green oriental decoration; at the foot of the stairs an elephant, covered with cheap cardinal red. The other, "Un Sanctuaire à Bombay," is an elaborately peopled canvas, still architectural; brilliant in tone, but showing no poetry of idea, although an abundance of florid prose.

Ogden Wood has a cowscape, with carved cows, and opaque green grass—cows far less bovine than sculptural, smooth hided, with expressive heads.

Fred D. Williams, of Boston, calls his picture "End of a Fine Day in October, in the Environs of Vezelay." It represents a somewhat distant spired and domed town, with a chateau upon a hill. There seems very little of Nature in the picture, and it was evidently painted from a good deal of memory and from bits of memoranda. The whole is bathed, one might better say swamped, in a curious, unreal light—a livid, purplish magenta, anything but artistically effective or pleasing. It looks to be a quite accidental and unintended effect, as if some extraneous color-fluid had been, par hazard, slopped over it.

Harry Wilson Watrous, of San Francisco, has a tiny cabinet picture, "Le Café," rep-

resenting an old man, in eighteenth century costume, holding a cup to his lips. This picture has a Dutch finish, and exactness of detail, minute, and of rich, low color.

R. W. Curtis has a peculiar and effective play of two lights, not exactly crossing, but meeting and barely touching each other. It is called "A Venetian Idler," and represents an olive-skinned Italian peasant woman, sitting upon a window-sill against a background of sun-bathed foliage. The cold gray walls and floor of the room, completely bare of detail, converge, like the walls of a tunnel, toward the illumined focus where the girl sits. A side light comes in from some invisible window, and falls half across the figure, the other half of which is steeped in background sunshine, while the face is in shadow. The general treatment is of almost classic severity; the light treatment of marked and scientific finesse.

Charles H. Davis, of Amesbury, is represented by an uninteresting contribution called "A Village in a Plain." A flat, monotonous expanse of crude green grass, unbroken save by a square space of black, plowed ground, and one or two half-dead trees, runs up to a horizon line cutting across the middle of the canvas. A dull, uninteresting collection of roofs, and an ugly nondescript church in the distance, with a sky of painted tin, complete the unimpressive scene.

C. E. Dubois's "Sans les Oliviers-Menton," is an "effect" picture, sharp shadows and vivid sunshine, gnarled, fantastic, gigantic tree trunks, dusky masses of distant foliage and blue hills set rather than fused in a brilliant Southern atmosphere. It is not a tranquil canvas, although every form in it is still, the optical effect being too pungent to give any impression of repose.

Dennett Grover, of Chicago, sends two portraits bourgeois faces, bourgeoisly painted.

Ernest Parton sends one of his stenciled landscapes, with wiry foliage and Partonesque daffled pool; and distinguishes himself from among his countrymen by appearing in the catalogue as "né en Angleterre."

Olaf Pilatt, of New York, has a Dutch landscape, broadly painted, yet with such careful precision and clear lines, that, at its magic point of view, it has an almost elaborate definiteness. The sky is billowy, the atmosphere clear enough for frozen Greenland, rather than suggestive of vaporous, canal-threaded Holland, the color harmonious, the tone silvery.

O. S. Reinhardt has two delicious bits of color—delicate and refined. One canvas, "La Pêcheuse de Moules," is a painted poem, even although only an old fisherwoman looking out over the sea. She is not a real old woman, however, weather-coarsened and unclean, but an imaginative creation, which, while true to broad, absolute truths of Nature, has a grace, a dignity, a refinement of form, pose, expression, that only the imagination of man can lend to Nature's hard prose.

O. Z. Ulrich sends "The Glass Blowers," exhibited last year in the New York Academy—his hard, bright, highly-finished work, with strongly-characterized faces, thrown up by artificial light.

John H. Twatchman, of Cincinnati, shows a tiny canvas of colossal unloveliness, called "L'hiver en Amérique." It is a "snowscape," a white expanse, broken by spaces of withered grass, where the snow has melted or blown away. Two or three dreary, horrible American farmhouses, perfectly square, with square windows, eaveless, flat-pitched roofs and no hints at decorative balcony, piazza, gable or portico—looking more like barns than human habitations—give one shivering realization of the sordid uncomeliness of the lives within, and deprive the scenes of even such poetic melancholy as its purely elemental dreariness might otherwise have given it.

Fred Waugh sends "A White Frost"—a misty, blotchy sketch of frost-rimmed bush and grass rising almost to the top of the canvas, and over-run with misty, blotchy bogs; an atmospheric study, successful in its way.

Alfred B. Copeland, of Boston, sends a "Coin d'atelier," an orderly disorder of studio "props," beautifully drawn and painted.

E. D. Boit sends some excellent drawing in a mass of crude, inharmonious color, representing a geometrically laid-out garden—one of the shrieking carpet patterns—in which blazing geraniums lay cheek by jowl with purple mignonette. It is good brush-work, worthy a little better subject.

J. L. Stewart sends a showy "Conversation Piece," representing "Five o'clock Tea." A collection of fashionables gorgeously arrayed and gossiping all over the canvas. It is the popular illustrated-journal style of art, painted in an impossible light, such as never was on land or sea, and which can only be described as like that reflected from ten thousand quicksilvered mirrors, flashing and ref flashing each other.

The gem and prize of the whole American exhibit is Dannat's "Quartette." The subject is Spanish, the treatment broad, bold, and even dashing, yet with masterly dignity and reserve, the types marvelously interesting and picturesque, the whole canvas a marked object in the Exhibition.

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