

GIFTS AND LOANS TO THE MUSEUM.

The President of the Metropolitan Museum of Art has again put the city under an obligation. He has added six valuable canvases to the gallery of old masters previously given to the Museum. The thirty-seven have now become forty-three, and specimens of English, Flemish, Dutch, and Italian masters have swelled the assembly in the new Eastern Gallery. These arrivals have caused some changes to be made in the hanging. The noble Van Dyck remains, as before, on the south wall, flanked by the large Constable landscapes, but the opposite wall contains a big, rich landscape by Gainsborough, one of Mr. Marquand's new finds.

Unlike the "Girl with a Cat," this large landscape is full of hot golden-browns, such as were the fashion once upon a time for landscapes taken at any hour in the day in any country. We are more "realistic" now, but it is a fair question whether our modern craftsmen get much nearer to the actual sunlight than did Gainsborough and the men of his day. When we look at the strong pinks and purples that stare at us from the canvases of some modern landscapists, we may well ask if Poussin, Gainsborough, Michel, and Decamps were not closer to nature. Not so much was asked of the old landscapists. Nowadays, when artists pretend to render Nature exactly as she is, they make an assumption which must bring down on them the most searching criticisms. This landscape is of the ample, noble sort, with woodlands nicely massed to produce broad effects, and a certain human interest by reason of the cart and horses, the sheep, and other rustic signs. But next to its fine air of balance and repose we must place the tone, that golden, mellow tone for which some critics have still a perverse relish, though cool thought allows that it is far from true to facts.

A Hogarth is another of the gifts, not one of his satires enlarged in paint, but the portrait of a young girl playing at card houses. It has a bluff, wholesome, unclever, but honest look, this portrait of little Miss Rich. Hogarth was not a deft, but he was with all his limitations an able, artist, and his work still gives pleasure. A "Susannah and the Elders," ascribed to Rubens, has much that is Rubensy in the half-nude Susannah, who is painted from the second wife of the artist, Helena Fourment. The left side of the picture, where Susannah crouches at her ablutions, seems all Rubens, but the right, where the wicked elders leer at their victim, does not give the same assurance. It is possible that this side has been repainted. The subject has been often treated by Rubens, but always in a less disagreeable form. It must be confessed that this Susannah looks far from virtuous, while the elders are disgusting. Mr. Marquand has found another Rembrandt to add to his treasures, a man's head, full face, wearing a broad hat. The bent nose and bearded chin are firmly drawn, but the painting is not full and sharp. It is dated 1665, and therefore must belong to the last period, when he worked with less precision but no less perfect art. It comes from the collection of Sir William Knighton. The portrait of a young lady of the fifteenth century on a panel, holding in her hands a salver full of cherries, is called a Lionardo da Vinci. She has a pale face as if carved from wood, lips firmly modeled, and in general the air of a personage. The sixth picture is a small "Deposition from the Cross" on a panel, which is assigned to Jan Van Eyck, although the types of the five assistants at the ceremony seem Italian or Spanish rather than Flemish. The curious and minutely-painted panel came from Steephill Castle on the Isle of Wight.

Others besides Mr. Marquand have presented the museum with pictures this year. Mr. Godfrey Mannheimer has given the large painting by Benjamin Constant of the Emperor Justinian listening to the reading of the law. This is a particularly successful piece, and is on such a scale that although it hangs in the big central gallery, now given up to the collection of casts, and is high up on the semicircular eastern wall, it can be seen very well from the floor of the hall. Mr. Erwin Davis's gift, the "Joan of Arc" by Bastien-Lepage, has returned from Paris, where it was shown at the Universal, and makes its first appearance here since it was presented to the museum. A portrait of the composer Richard Wagner, painted by Prof. Pecht of Munich, has been given by Mr. Frederick Loeser. "Les Fileuses," French girls spinning yarn, by Walter Gay of Paris, has been presented by "A Friend." "Bleak December," a large and handsome English landscape by William L. Picknell, is the gift of S. P. Avery, Jr.

Not less noteworthy than these are the paintings lent by Mr. H. O. Havemeyer. They are fourteen in number and contain superb examples of Rembrandt, Pieter de Hooghe, Decamps, and W. Kalf. Here is the far-famed and justly famous "Gilder," which used to belong to Mr. William Schaus. Here are the two Van Beeresteijn portraits brought over by Cottier & Co. The Gilder, dated 1640, is very differently painted from the Beeresteijns, dated 1832. Here are two small portraits by Franz Hals from the Sécretan collection, those of Scriverius, the historian of Haarlem town, and his wife, both delightfully original, if not the highest flight of the painter's genius. Then Mr. Havemeyer bought from the same collection that "Dutch Interior of the Seventeenth Century," by P. de Hooghe, which creates such a sensation among lovers of the old masters for its jewel-like color, its light and shade and singular power. Among the later masters a Decamps is pre-eminent for its unusually delicate yet strong workmanship. It is called "Landscape; Environs of Smyrna." The old complaint that American cities had no "old masters" to educate the eyes of pupils in the fine arts is fast becoming pointless. The Marquand and Havemeyer collections contain a large number of priceless works by the masters of the past.

PAINTERS IN PASTEL.

Less than a hundred pastels are to be seen at the Wunderlich Gallery, 868 Broadway, contributed by an erratic little society called Painters in Pastel. The painters in pastel do not exist as such for eleven-twelfths of the year; only during one month do they materialize and become visible to the naked eye. Some of them return every year with the cherry blossoms; others make but one appearance and return no more. Messrs. Chase, Carroll Beckwith, and Alden Weir are hardy perennials; Twachtman, Bolton and Francis Jones, Fitz, and Theodore Robinson are biennials; Childe Hassam, Edith Sackett and Robert Reid are annuals, who are with us this Spring but may not be again. It is a queer little society, is Painters in Pastels, to which no artist belongs of right. But any artist may suddenly discover himself distinguished by a request to contribute to its show. Pastel is a treacherous material, because it looks so easy and at once gives very definite and tangible returns to the person who uses it. There is no sinking in or unexpected change of colors. Any child can draw with pastels. But to handle the chalks with mastery requires a special training that many very excellent artists do not or can not undergo. Some who use them a good deal never get really satisfactory results.

Among the twenty-nine contributions of the eighty-nine drawings not one appears to have hit the right method of using pastels better than Mr. J. H. Twachtman. He uses paper of different shades—brownish, greenish, grayish, or pale straw, and does not elaborate and insist too much on his picture. He leaves the paper ground a good deal bare, and sketches, rather than draws, an elaborate picture. His "Cliffs at Newport" is not, however, so much of a sketch, yet it is one of the best drawings shown. "Sailboats," "Coal Dock," and the "Mary Ann" are delightful marines touched in with spirit, but not made tedious. Miss Cecilia Beaux offers a full-length portrait of a young girl, which is plentifully clever, but here one asks whether oils would not have done better. Very lively with sunlight and very charming in color is the Normandy shore, with two peasant girls lying down, called "Afternoon Sunshine." It is by Mr. Robert Reid. Miss Caroline T. Hecker's "Roses" are very attractive; these and the "Portrait Head" are drawn in a summary fashion which is particularly pleasing in this sort of work. Seven pastels by Mr. Childe Hassam show his astonishing versatility. He seems equally at home in oils, water colors, and pastels. "The Window Seat," by Mr. Alden Weir, and "Gravesend Bay," by Mr. William M. Chase, are freely drawn. Mr. Irving R. Wiles gives a fine note of color in a portrait from behind called "The Green Gown," and from Mr. Carroll Beckwith we have a pleasant bit called "Sewing in the Shade." The largest contributor is also that one who expresses himself with the greatest ease in pastels, Mr. Twachtman, though his range of subjects is limited to marines and landscapes. He is followed by Carroll Beckwith with eight and Messrs. Hassam and Chase with seven each. Others present are Theodore Robinson, whose shepherd boy "By the Seine" is strong with pinks and purples; R. B. Fitz, Elizabeth Okey Vanderhoof, Francis Day, Augusta Berg, Henry F. Taylor, Benoni Irwin, Edith Sackett, Henry O. Walker, Charles Warren Eaton, Walter Palmer, Louis Kronberg, Otto H. Bacher, Rosina Emmet Sherwood, C. T. Chapman, Maria Brooks, and C. Y. Turner. Many of their contributions will repay an hour's dawdling in the pretty little room.