

Sculptures from the Eastern Pediment of the Great Temple of Zeus, at Olympia. The Contest of Pelops and Oinomaos: attributed, questionably, to Praxinos.

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON.

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS.



A GENERAL conviction of the need of a public establishment in Boston to be devoted wholly to the fine arts was, in the autumn of 1869, made active by several circumstances. The Athenæum had for many years done a great service to the community by exhibiting at one time or another all the pictures of interest which came into this neighborhood, and by acquiring a collection of its own, of considerable value.

The increase of its library, however, had already obliged it to curtail the space it had given to paintings and sculpture, when the bequest by Col. T. B. Lawrence of a fine collection of armor, and the offer of Mrs. Lawrence to fit up a room for its exhibition, made it plain that a new building was required. At the same time the Social Science Association had called attention to the importance of procuring a large selection of casts of the best sculpture. Harvard College had no means of making available to the public the admirable collection of engravings made by the late Francis C. Gray. The Institute of Technology had no sufficient room for its casts of architectural ornament. Other institutions, in whose objects there were some points of contact with the new project, gave cordial aid in promoting it. Representatives of these bodies, with a few others interested in the arts, came together, and soon solved the difficulties which presented themselves at the outset. A general plan was formed, and a charter procured from the Legislature, and in March, 1870, the Trustees of the Museum were organized. Their first need, that of land to build on, had been anticipated. Through the efforts of a few citizens who foresaw the coming want, the Water Power Company had been induced to convey to the city of Boston, a large piece of land on St. James Avenue, to be used for an Institute of Fine Arts, and this land was granted by the city to the Trustees under suitable conditions. The appeal of the Trustees for funds, actively supported by many gentlemen interested in the scheme, was answered by a subscription of \$261,000. After a limited competition, the plans for the building offered by Messrs. Sturgis & Brigham were accepted, and one wing of the front was built and opened to the public on the 3d of July, 1876. The Lawrence armor had unhappily been destroyed in the great fire; but the building was well filled by the collections of the Athenæum, the Gray engravings, the Egyptian antiquities presented by Mr. C. Granville Way, the casts of ancient sculpture coming from the bequest of Hon. Charles Sumner, gifts of much value from Mr. Lawrence and others, and many loans. The Museum was soon overcrowded by fresh acquisitions, and in 1878, a second subscription of \$126,000 enabled the Trustees to complete the front. The new part was opened in the spring of 1879. The space thus added enabled the Trustees to rearrange the collections on a better plan, and to give sufficient room to the School of Drawing and Painting, and the other schools of art already established in the building. The Museum is managed by a Board of thirty Trustees, of whom three are appointed by Harvard College, three by the Boston Athenæum, and three by the Institute of Technology; there are five *ex-officio* members, of whom three, including the Mayor, represent the city of Boston; the remainder were first named in the Act of Incorporation, the vacancies among these being filled by the whole Board. An Executive Committee has the care of the building, and the Committee on the Museum, of which Mr. Charles C. Perkins is chairman, has the direction of the collections. The Museum has been from the beginning under the immediate charge of Gen. C. G. Loring as curator, and it is largely indebted for its success to his able administration.

The favor with which the Museum has been regarded by the public make it worth while to consider what should be its general aims, and to what prospects it may look forward, although within the limits of this article these can be but partially and imperfectly indicated. They are to be gathered from its history and surroundings, and from the progress of similar establishments elsewhere. Great collections

of art have not only grown and multiplied within this century, but they are much altered in character. They were formerly the private property of sovereigns, and were confined to what may be called the luxuries of art—the pictures of the masters, the remains of Greek and Roman sculpture, engraved gems, examples of the best goldsmith's work. The museums of to-day open their doors to all the world, and the scope of their collections has broadened to meet the public needs. None the less, however, are the best pictures and marbles their prizes. The master's hand, expressing the master's mind, gives that which fills the eye and touches the imagination as nothing else can, and no opportunity should be neglected to procure for our museum works of this original and permanent value. The fact that such works of the older painters and sculptors are daily becoming more rare and costly, as they are gradually being gathered into the public collections of Europe, should be rather a stimulus than a discouragement; for at the rate at which they are now being absorbed, they will, in another generation, be almost unattainable. At the same time the high prices that are asked for them make needful the greatest caution against the arts which dealers use to palm off works of inferior worth or doubtful authorship. The intrinsic merit of a work of art is of course the main test of its value to a museum; but it is not the only consideration that should govern a purchase. If modern criticism has proved anything, it has proved that an artist's work can be well understood only through a knowledge of that artist's surroundings. The influence of his masters, the influence of his contemporaries, throw a great light upon his achievement. Hence the need of a selection in which historical sequence shall be borne in mind, in which the picture or the statue shall stand not for itself alone, but for the time and the influence which it represents. Judgments of intrinsic merit, too, though they be the main tests of value, are nowhere infallible. They vary somewhat with individual tastes; they vary more with the shifting tendencies of the time. The critic of forty years ago did not clearly foresee the standards of this generation, and it is possible that the judgments of the critic of to-day may be passed by somewhat slightly by his successor, forty years hence. What we need is a collection of permanent value, and in forming it, it will be well to avoid too strict an adherence to the theories and fashions of the day. The function of the managers of a museum is, not criticism, but the collection of materials for the criticism of others. While they should carefully guard against the inroad of pictorial rubbish, they should bring to the increase of their stores a broad and tolerant spirit.

Our Museum, too, has its local duty to perform, in gathering together adequate examples of the artists associated with this neighborhood. A public gallery at The Hague, which failed to show us Paul Potter, a public gallery at Birmingham in which David Cox was ignored, would be justly censured. A Boston collection would be singularly deficient if it did not contain a full representation of Copley and Stuart, of Allston and Crawford, of Hunt and Rimmer.

Museums, however, can no longer be kept within their former range. The spread of public interest in the Fine Arts and in all the applications of them has developed new wants and brought fresh resources to light. Schliemann and Cesnola have reminded the world of the precious records of old civilizations which the friendly earth has covered over and kept safe in Greece and Asia Minor. America should not lose a share of these for lack of enterprise. Fresh explorations in those countries are now projected, from which the Museum may hope to reap benefit. Japan has opened to us within our time an art rich with the traditions and achievements of centuries, and untouched by European influence. India and China have yielded up treasures of pottery, metal-work and enamel, of woven fabrics and embroidery; and the insatiable curiosity of our time asks of every race examples of its arts. New applications of science, moreover, enable us to procure reproductions of works which are themselves obtainable with difficulty or not at all. The most elaborate metal-work of the Renaissance, the finest coins of Greece and Sicily, the drawings and studies in which we surprise the masters of painting in the glow and stress of production, are imitated for us with deceptive accuracy. The courtesy of foreign museums makes the casts of the best sculpture obtainable. All these things are opened to us at the time when we in New England most need them. Decorative art may

almost be said to have come into existence among us within fifteen or twenty years; and many great industries, and many industries still in their infancy but certain to become important, are yearly more dependent on decorative art: dependent, that is, upon designers skilled in line and color. Such designers, trained by improved and improving methods are now sent out from our schools of art; but schools are not sufficient for their education. The designer needs a museum of art, as the man of letters needs a library, or the botanist a herbarium. The very facility with which the design is executed re-acts upon its author. He is tempted to trust to the finish or the brilliancy of the mechanical or chemical process to conceal what is false or feeble in his work. He is not working for all time, but to hit the fashion of the year. His education alone will not keep him in the right path. He must have within his reach examples of art from the ages which mastered more perfectly than our own the secrets of beauty of form, from races more happily gifted than ours with the sense of color; while these examples should be chosen with care, he should look at them, not as models to be copied, nor as ticketed and guaranteed pieces of perfect work to be admired without question; but he should have them in variety and abundance, that he may use his intelligence in comparison and judgment, that he may see how fine qualities may be marred by mis-directed aims, and how little a perfect execution can redeem a poor invention. The effect of such examples in educating popular taste, which so easily accepts tawdriness for splendor, weakness for grace, elaborateness for perfection; their importance in satisfying the increasing thirst for knowledge of art, are themes too large to be dwelt upon here.

In the direction of these aims a beginning has been made which is satisfactory, because hopeful. To do its part fully, however, in cultivating the arts which fill the mind through the delight of the eye, the Museum has no light nor narrow task. Its own restricted means are utterly insufficient to respond to the most legitimate demands, or to seize even the most favorable opportunity. Receiving no aid from state or city, it can rely only on the liberality of the public for its resources. Its hope and its strength are in the vigorous impulse and the persistent support of the community it serves.

MARTIN BRIMMER.



Bas-relief from the Chateau d'Anet, by Jean Goujon. From a Cast at the Museum.

THE MUSEUM BUILDING.

THE building belonging to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which has, since the commencement of the work of construction, attracted a degree of attention not very much inferior to that bestowed upon its collections is a substantial edifice of red brick and terra-cotta, occupying a very prominent position in the new quarter of the city, the portion already built fronting on the open space formed by the intersection of Huntington Avenue, St. James Avenue, Boylston and Dartmouth Streets, which is already nearly surrounded by buildings of very considerable architectural importance. Trinity Church forms its nearest neighbor toward the northeast, the new building of the Old South Society is not far off toward the northwest, another church stands opposite, and the two newest hotels in the city, the Brunswick and the Vendôme, are near by, while the proposed building for the Art Club is to be within a stone's throw. The lot appropriated to the Museum stands on the corner of St. James Avenue and Dartmouth Street, measuring three hundred and fifty feet on the street, and two hundred and sixty feet on the avenue. The portion of the structure already built occupies only the shorter side, fronting on St. James Avenue; when the whole is finished, the Dartmouth Street front, which is much longer, and borders on a wide and much-frequented thoroughfare, will become the principal one. Other streets bound the two remaining sides of the lot, so that the building upon it will be completely isolated from other structures. In addition to this separation, it was wisely decided to set the building thirty feet back from the street-line on all sides, allowing only minor projections, such as buttresses and porches, in this reserved space.

The first steps taken toward the erection of the building consisted in a call for competitive designs, issued under date of June 15, 1870. Sketches only were asked for, at a scale of one-sixteenth of an inch to the foot, and six equal premiums were offered. The programme was not long, and as it will be of interest to compare the list of requirements with the plans, reproduced on another page, by which they were, in the opinion of the judges, most successfully fulfilled, the most important items may be copied here.

The design was required to cover the whole area available for building, but it was to be so arranged that the portion to be immediately erected should not exceed in cost the sum of one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, and should provide accommodation for the following objects, viz.:—

1. A collection of sculpture, on the lower floor, occupying about six thousand square feet of floor space.
2. A collection of paintings, occupying about one hundred and seventy-five running feet of wall.
3. A room equal in area to thirty by forty feet, for the Lawrence collection of arms and armor.

4. A room equal in area to about twenty-five by forty feet, for the Gray collection of engravings.

5. A room about equal in size to the last, for the Tosti collection of engravings.

6. A room of about eight hundred feet area, for a library, and for coins and miscellaneous collections, but to be used at present for meetings of the Trustees.

7. A room of about two hundred feet area, adjoining the last, for the Director's room.

8. An exhibition room for paintings, occupying about the same space as No. 2. Nos. 2 and 8 were required to be lighted from the top, and provision was allowed to be made in the design for future removal of Nos. 6 and 7 to some other part of the building. Provision was also required to be made for the future addition of a lecture room, library, and class-rooms for students, and for extension of the collections.

The whole building was required to be completely fire-proof, with walls of stone, brick, or iron.

The competition was closed Nov. 1, 1870, and the designs of Messrs. John H. Sturgis and Charles Brigham were selected for execution. A little less than a year later, under date of October 4, 1871, a permit was issued by the Department of Buildings for commencing the work upon the ground.

Like all other structures in this part of Boston, the Museum stands upon piles, driven through the gravel filling to a firm stratum of clay, and cut off about midway between high and low water mark. The walls are very thick, not only to insure absolute stability and fire-proof quality, but to resist dampness from the outside. The outside walls average about two-and-a-half feet in thickness, a considerable part of which however, is occupied by an air-space which serves to isolate the inner lining from the outside masonry. The lining wall is plastered directly upon the brickwork, and although there is some necessary connection of the inner with the outer wall at angles and around openings, the unusual thickness of the latter, with the circulation of air in the hollow space, have up to this time prevented any moisture from penetrating to the plastering.

The most striking feature about the exterior of the building is the profuse employment of terra-cotta, for arches of doors and windows, columns, string-courses, cornices, copings, and ornamental work, including several large panels, each made up of a number of separate pieces of the material. Two colors are used, red, and white, or rather, a tint resembling that of Amherst sandstone. The colonnettes in the window-jambes have capitals and bases of the lighter color, with shafts of red, both capitals and shafts being delicately, but very richly decorated. Inside the vestibule on St. James Avenue, other similar work is found. The whole of the terra-cotta was made in England, its manufacture in this country having, at the time the Museum was commenced, hardly passed beyond the experimental stage. All the work on the outside of the building was executed by the Blashfield Terra-Cotta Company, from drawings sent out by the architects. The modelling was done throughout under the supervision of Mr. J. K. Colling, the author of the standard works "Gothic Ornament," and "Art Foliage," and the success with which the burning was effected, without warping or distorting the lines, even of the long horizontal string-courses, will commend itself to every expert.

The interior work in the same material was made by the Watcombe Terra-Cotta Company, also of England.

The use of burnt clay in architecture has now become so common among us that most persons know something of the forms in which it is employed, but it may be interesting to some to learn that the different blocks, though apparently solid, consist really of shells about one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick, strengthened where required by ribs or flanges, in the same way as a casting of iron, and filled up from the rear, after being set in place, with cement, small pieces of broken material, and brickwork.

The Museum of Fine Arts was for a long time the most prominent example of terra-cotta construction in this country, holding, in this respect, much the same position as the Science and Art Schools at South Kensington, and even now there are few buildings of equal extent in which it forms so large a portion of the structure.

The interior of the Museum shows the same solid construction as the exterior. The partition walls are of brick throughout, plastered directly upon the masonry, and the ceilings and floors are of iron and brick or concrete, simply overlaid with a wood covering, for greater comfort to the feet of visitors. The mouldings which form the base around the foot of the walls, with a "chair rail" or additional moulding about two and a half feet from the ground in some of the rooms, are run with fine Keene's cement, over a foundation formed in some places of Portland cement, and in others of the coarse grade of Keene's cement. This, like the employment of terra-cotta, was, at the time of commencing the building, comparatively unknown as a material for construction in this country, but the result has entirely justified the action of the architects in adopting it.

The doors and frames, besides the frames and sashes of the windows, are of wood. Though not incombustible, the amount of inflammable material which they present is trifling, and the danger in using them would probably be more than counterbalanced by the inconveniences which attend the use of iron for such purposes.

Although the present structure affords room for collections both varied and extensive, it comprises less than one-fourth of the entire building as it will be when the design is fully carried out.

THE COLLECTIONS.



From a Specimen at the Museum.

A VISITOR to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts usually finds waiting before it hackney carriages, which are evidently those of tourists, and by this we are reminded that the institution is of more than local interest. The foreign tourist will not, to be sure, be greeted by an obsequious and shabby individual who offers to explain the collections in one's native tongue, spoken more fluently than intelligibly; this height of civilization we have not yet reached. Yet it is certain that the few foreign travelers who do pass through the good city of Boston will not fail to see what an art museum means in this land of science and industry. In Europe, within a few years, the idea of an art museum has undergone a great modification. It is no longer a national storehouse filled with treasures and spoils of conquest, nor is it merely a gallery devoted to *chefs-d'œuvre* of classic art, for the benefit chiefly of artists and amateurs. Democracy is a great destroyer of mythologies, and art can no longer remain a mere religion for certain votaries; it must enter into every-day life, and justify its culture practically. The Louvre in Paris, the accumulated growth of centuries, represents the earliest type, while the second idea of an art museum is illustrated by the South Kensington Museum, an organization rather than an institution, created recently to meet the necessities of industrial enterprise. It is a school whose collections supplement its organized instruction. It is this latter type alone which is possible with us, and the success of the South Kensington Museum is the corner-stone of our art museums.

Let us, then, visit our museum as a foreigner, and note what would strike him as some of its characteristics. As he pauses before the portion of the proposed building, which for the present constitutes the Museum, he will perhaps be startled by the contrast of the red brick and yellow terra-cotta against the pitiless American sky, and wonder what prejudice favored a granite basement, whose crude white strikes a harsh note in the façade. The architecture, however, is good in character, and needs no inscription to announce the purpose of the building. Entering a central vestibule or staircase hall, on either hand open a series of halls devoted to sculpture, or rather to casts. Casts are the best apology which modern industry can offer to art for no longer rivalling classic works. When the Government at Berlin resolved to form a museum of the fine arts worthy of the German nation, in the impossibility of collecting many original masterpieces at so late a day, they shrewdly decided to form a complete collection of casts, which should unite for comparison the sculpture of all other galleries, — an example which is of direct interest to our embryo museums. The collection of casts here, though not large, fairly represents the different periods and styles of sculpture. Six halls are given up to Greek art, one to Roman, one to the Renaissance, and one to architectural bits. The halls are filled in chronological order, beginning with a collection of *bona fide* Egyptian antiquities of undoubted value. These were collected in Egypt between 1828 and 1833, by Robert Hay, Esq., a Scotchman, and presented to the Museum in 1872, by C. Granville Way, Esq., of Boston. Besides a fair representation of each division of Egyptian antiquities, the specimens of mummies and sarcophagi are unusually fine. To this collection have been added several valuable pieces of sculpture collected in 1835, by the late John Lowell, Esq. They date from between 1700 to 1300 B. C., which was the period of Egypt's greatest splendor; but its purer art, of 2000 years earlier, is not properly represented in the collection.

The hall of architectural casts has specimens belonging to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology which form a good beginning of a collection, whose value to architects and decorators cannot be overestimated. The present museum catalogue makes quite inadequate mention of this collection and this is the more marked if comparison is made with the space allotted to sculpture, for in the latter case the "catalogue" becomes a handbook.¹ Here is to be seen a full sized model of the Pandroseum of Athens, but crowded as it is in a corner of the hall it no more represents the renowned gem of the Acropolis than a lizard bottled in alcohol does the living creature flashing upon a sunlit wall. The cause of science is more easily advanced by mere specimens than is that of art, for the latter requires that objects shall be at least approximately reproduced in their original conditions to be of value to the artist. A position at the end of a hall would give a fairer idea of this model of the Pandroseum.

The hall devoted to Greek vases contains the first of General di Cesnola's collection of Phœnician pottery, and also some Greek glass taken from the Necropolis of Idalion (Cyprus). Here also is some Etruscan pottery chiefly "Chiusi" ware. Besides some Greek vases, T. G. Appleton, Esq., has presented the much-discussed

Tanagra Figurines, here exhibited. Before leaving the halls it may be suggested that the one in which the walls are tinted warm red so agreeably sets off the white casts that a similar treatment in place of the cold drab of the other walls would be an improvement.

It is not until we reach the second story that the "South Kensington" aspect develops. Here the halls to the left of the vestibule are filled with different kinds of bric-à-brac which in spite of a name associated with *dilettanti* collectors, includes objects of the greatest importance to industrial interests. A recognition of this fact is found in the recent creation of the Hôtel Cluny and of the Decorative Art Museum in Paris. The narrow and mistaken views of art which made directors of French museums overlook inestimable opportunities of collecting treasures of mediæval art may be measured by the importance now attached to the fine museum of Gothic work in Munich. We may learn from this how catholic should be the judgment of museum directors upon objects illustrating the development of art. Above all, a museum should cherish objects and traditions of local art, though it may be urged that many such objects have not enough artistic inspiration to be placed before the public as examples, it must be remembered the very purpose of a museum is to teach the public to discriminate between the various grades of excellence in works of art.

In the large hall devoted to textiles are specimens of varying excellence, but all interesting to the amateur, if not to the artist. First among them are three fine Flemish tapestries once belonging to Louis Philippe, and rescued from the burning of the Château de Neuilly, and now lent by Geo. O. Hovey, Esq. There is, also, a specimen of Gobelin of the fifteenth century, and an Arrazetto of the sixteenth century. Two other less important tapestries complete the collection, which, in view of the number of tapestries always in the European market, is unfortunate in not having a piece of Beauvais, the famed rival of Gobelin. In cases are some good Italian embroideries, besides a rich loan of laces. These are scattered examples of various branches of art, but we come now to a case of embroideries, which not only are the rarest specimens of their kind, but also form part of a complete collection of an extraordinary national art, which has within the last few years deeply affected European decoration, and in so doing has lost the purity preserved through centuries of isolation. I refer to the Japanese collection which Dr. W. S. Bigelow has lent to the Museum, and only about half of which has yet been exhibited for want of show-cases. This collection includes the finest examples of every department of Japanese art at its best period, and would find a welcome place in any European museum. Nothing on exhibition in this country can be compared with it. The embroideries and lacquers cover the whole ground with the finest specimens. Several of the latter represent the *ne plus ultra* of Japanese work. Among these may be named examples of white and purple lacquers of legendary rarity. The collection of swords, sword-mountings and guards, when joined with the bronzes, makes the collection of metal work very full. The ivories and ceramics are not less complete. When this whole collection is exhibited it will do much to give prestige to the Museum.

The porcelain and pottery in the Museum, thanks to generous loans from the fine collection of G. W. Wales, Esq., and other amateurs, includes a great variety of fabrics, though they fall short of the completeness which the Avery and Cesnola collection give to the New York Metropolitan Museum. Of the pottery, the rarest are some pieces of Majolica, presented to the Athenæum by the late T. B. Lawrence, Esq. It may be noticed that some of the glass exhibited by dealers is announced as for sale, a proceeding, which, if generally permitted, is hardly consonant with the dignity of a public museum.

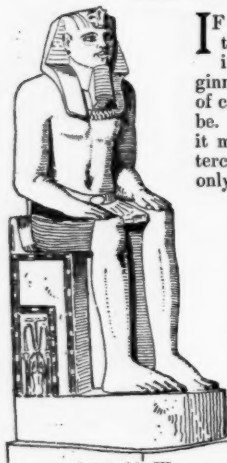
Passing on, in other cases will be noticed various examples of gold and silver work, with a slight sprinkling of enamels. The Athenæum lends a collection of Italian Renaissance bronzes. A few examples of wrought-iron make the want of a larger collection of this useful art felt the more seriously. There are some losses which confer a melancholy prestige, and the Museum has gained a certain notoriety for losing in the great Boston fire the Lawrence collection of armor which had a European celebrity. A memorial monument to it exists in the room which Mrs. T. B. Lawrence had presented for its exhibition. This consists of the interior of a richly wainscoted room of the sixteenth century, with carved bas-reliefs and nine portraits on panels. This and the next room are now occupied by ancient furniture, carvings and armor.

This review does not attempt a notice of the rare collection of engravings, including the famous Gray collection, which, with a large gallery of pictures, fills the halls to the right of the vestibule. Among the latter a foreigner would not fail to be struck by the fine exhibition of Stuart's portraits, while he would find it difficult to name a gallery in Europe which contains so many good pictures by modern French painters, as the present loan exhibition offers. It is thus by slight individual efforts that valuable exhibitions can be organized, which cannot fail to add greatly both to the usefulness and fame of the Museum. Undoubtedly the ransacking of garrets in some of the old family houses in the city would produce goodly results in the way of specimens of bric-à-brac, and if to this were more frequently added works of art which families absent for the summer or traveling in Europe have insecurely left in their own houses — instead of placing them in the fire-proof galleries of the Museum — the results could not fail to be gratifying alike to the public and the Trustees of the Museum.

ARTHUR ROTCH.

¹ The new catalogue, which is to contain a full and accurate enumeration of the casts in this collection, is already in the hands of the printer.

THE COLLECTION OF CASTS.



Amenophis, III.
From a Cast at the Museum.

IF there be any collection within the walls of the Museum which can claim to be complete in itself, or in other words, to have a beginning, a middle and an end, it is the collection of casts from the antique, incomplete though it be. This is no contradiction of terms, for while it might be almost indefinitely enlarged by intercalation, and thus greatly enriched, it would only thus become a larger unit. It contains examples of works belonging to each of the six main divisions of plastic art in Greece and Rome, which may here be briefly enumerated: 1 and 2. Pre-historic and archaic, that is from the earliest times to the fifth century B. C. 3. At its highest ideal stage, under Polyclete, Myron and Phidias; 4. During its strivings after outward truth, under Scopas, Praxiteles and Lysippos; 5. In its latest schools at Pergamon, Rhodes and Ephesos; 6. In the Greco-Roman period; that is, from the destruction of Corinth by Mummius to the reign of Trajan. The casts have been arranged with as strict regard to chronology as the limited space at command would permit, and as they show the rise, progress and decay of Hellenic sculpture, its principal epochs and varieties of style may be followed in them from the Gate of Lions at Mycenae to the column of Trajan at Rome. The æsthetic and historical value of such a collection can hardly be overestimated in a country like ours, where a knowledge of ancient sculpture can only be cultivated through reproductions in a common material of originals which, in the nature of things, it can never hope to possess. Let us not despise plaster, for though it wants the harmonious tone which time gives to marble as well as its translucent beauty, its firm texture and its solidity, it renders with scrupulous fidelity the most minute external details of all objects cast in it, and makes the comparative study of schools and styles possible. This is the reason why collections of casts are formed even in those European cities which have sculpture galleries rich in marbles. Each wants a transcript of what the other has, and thus while Berlin furnishes casts of the marbles of Olympia and Pergamos, Munich sends out those of Ægina, London of the Parthenon, and Paris the Venus of Melos and the Borghese Achilles. America, though unable to return in kind, stands with outstretched hands like the archaic statues of Greek divinities, ready to lay them all under contribution, and thus to obtain the perishable, though ever renewable materials for her artistic education.

It is not my purpose in this article to describe the Museum casts one by one, both because it must be brief, and because I have already done so in the section of the catalogue devoted to sculpture and antiquities, to which all who desire fuller information can refer. All that I can do is to take a general survey of the collection, and point out some of the casts most worthy of attention. They were purchased at London, Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Rome and Athens, and, excluding several hundred specimens of architectural ornament, are 360 in number. The greater part are cast in solid plaster, the rest are made of coarse linen canvas, coated with plaster by a French process; technically called "*en staffe*," which combines lightness with strength, and is applicable to such monumental objects as Trajan's column, which, at some future day, will be set up in the great court of the Museum with other large casts. Like all histories of sculpture, and complete collections of casts, our own begins with Egypt, and though we have but few reproductions of Egyptian works, they serve to fill what would otherwise be a gap in the Way collection of antiquities. It contains several statues and many fragments in stone, but these would not suffice to give a fair idea of the leading characteristics of Egyptian sculpture from the pyramid-building epoch to the age of Psammetichus, were they not supplemented by such casts as those of the colossal statue of Amenophis III, of the great bas-reliefs from the northern wall of the Temple at Karnac, and by many busts and reliefs in plaster. To these should be added one of the early wooden figures at Boulaq; one of the oldest statues in stone from the Louvre; an example of the late Saitic school, and one of the time of Hadrian, in order satisfactorily to illustrate Egyptian plastic art in its naturalistic and hieratic styles, its pastoral and military phases, its grand though monotonous spirit, its extremes of breadth in the treatment of masses, and elaboration in that of details.

On passing from the Egyptian into the first Greek room one is struck with the justness of the remark, that while Egyptian statues are so objective that one may see whole rooms of them without caring to know who made them, the earliest Greek works are so subjective that the question of authorship becomes one of interest. A certain impress of an individual mind is stamped upon these archaic figures and reliefs, and the workings of a free spirit are perceptible in them. They show also the external influences which bore upon early effort, not enough to thwart its tendencies, but to sustain them as with a friendly support during their period of infancy. Thus in the oriental symbolism of the Gate of Lions, the frieze from Assos, and the Lycian reliefs, we see the effect of Asia upon the beginnings of plastic art in Greece, and in the rudely fashioned Apollos from

Thasos and Bæotia, that of Egypt upon the sculptors of the seventh century B. C., who, unlike those from the banks of the Nile, strove to imbue the work of their hands with life. This endeavor is still more marked in the Æginetan pediment groups, which are, however, purely Hellenic. They are the realistic results of that close and exclusive study of Nature through which the predecessors of Phidias laid the solid foundation of his idealistic school.

As I have already said, it was not possible to arrange the casts in strict chronological sequence in all cases. Thus, in the second Greek room Praxiteles predominates, and in the third Phidias, whereas the reverse should have been the case. So again, the Olympian casts should have followed after those from the marbles of the Parthenon, while the early Apollo from the theatre of Dionysus as representing a pre-Phidian period should have been placed in the first room. These and similar departures from a general rule were necessitated by the size and shape of the rooms, which admitted of no better disposition. The visitor must regard the two as one large hall, containing casts of Greek works dating from the middle of the sixth to the latter part of the fourth century B. C., and take the Apollo standing upon the Omphalos (No. 79) as his starting point. From this standard example of the rigid style of the earlier Attic school whose sculptors aimed at a literal rendering of the human form, as exhibited to them in the arena, he can follow the development of the art through the serene idealism of the Phidian period, as illustrated by the marbles from the Parthenon; the sensuous grace of the Praxitelean epoch, whose most perfect expression is to be found in the wonderful Hermes from Olympia; to the studied elegance of that of Lysippos, who adopted an artificial canon of proportion, and though still preserving something of the ideal element, as in the Ludovisi Mars, aimed at effect for effect's sake, and thus introduced an element into art which led to its eventual degradation.

As the casts from the marbles of the eastern pediment of the Temple of Zeus, at Olympia, have been described in a series of articles published in the *American Art Review*, and are also discussed in the pages of this number of the *American Architect*, I need only refer to them here in order to remind those who see them that the originals were placed at a great height above the ground, and that they depended for their effect quite as much on color as upon form. Seen as they here are, almost on a level with the eye, and in a perfectly colorless medium, they appear clumsy in shape and rough in execution. In their abnormal position and condition they are placed at great disadvantage. Their sculptor, Paeonios of Mende, appears to much greater advantage in the Victory, a cast of which stands near the door leading into the third Greek room. Casts of the western pediment marbles will be purchased for the Museum as soon as they have been made ready at Berlin, and as they are ascribed to Alcamenes, the contemporary and so-called rival of Phidias, one may expect to find in them greater evidences of genius than in the work of his Thracian associate. The inaccuracies and carelessnesses of execution in the marbles of both pediments leave no doubt that they were put into marble by inferior workmen, after sketches prepared by the two sculptors. The casts in the fourth Greek room are from marbles of various dates by post-Phidian sculptors — among them the beautiful bas-reliefs from the Temple of the Wingless Victory, the splendid Amazon relief from the Villa Albani, certainly the finest Greek work at Rome, and the Orpheus, with Hermes and Eurydice, belong to the same school as the marbles of the Parthenon, and are all works of the latter part of the eighth century, B. C. The marriage of Neptune and Amphitrite, over the door leading into the hall, belongs to quite another school, that of Scopas, who with Praxiteles divided the throne of sculpture after the death of Phidias. They differed in style, as the Dorian differed from the Lydian mode in music; that of the first, who gave plastic embodiment to the myth of Niobe and the Niobides, was fiery and dramatic; that of the last consummately graceful and sensuous. Technically, perhaps, the greatest of all Greek sculptors, Praxiteles, tempered the severity of the Phidian ideal with an earthly element of loveliness, and won the suffrages of a time when Greek faith in the gods had lost much of its spirituality. Scopas, if we appreciate him rightly, had a more vigorous fancy, greater power of conception, a wider range of thought than his rival, and in the treatment of vast compositions in relief, for the decoration of temples and monumental works, far surpassed him. If we compare the Olympian Hermes with the Niobe group, always remembering that the first is an original work, while the last is probably a copy, we get some faint idea of the peculiar characteristics of each of these great artists, and of their respective aims in art; but it must always be remembered when we attempt to individualize Greek sculptors by studying their more or less well-authenticated works, that at the best these are so few as to stamp the correctness of our conclusions with the impress of uncertainty. Space forbids me to enlarge upon the interesting collection of casts from funeral stèles in this room. They include the Dexileos stèle, whose approximate date is fixed by the inscription upon its base; the Amazon relief of the Villa Albani (No. 159); and several examples of an earlier date in this and the first Greek room.

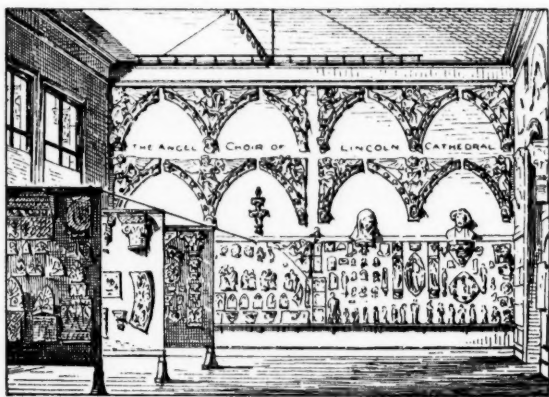
Referring the reader to the pages of the catalogue for a description of the vases and sarcophagi and the remainder of the casts in this room, I pass on to the fifth and sixth rooms, on the opposite side of the hall, where casts of many well-known marbles, such as the Apollo Belvidere, the Laocoön, the Diana, etc., together with some example of the latest Greek schools of Ephesos and Pergamos are collected. The Dying Gaul, and the Wounded Gauls, which belong to the class of

works commemorative of the victories of Attalus and Eumenes, Kings of Pergamos, over the northern barbarians, have lately gained an additional interest by the discovery of the splendid series of bas-reliefs representing the gigantomachia at Pergamos, which have now found their way to the imperial gallery at Berlin. The great relief from the arch of Titus representing the triumphal procession of that Emperor in which the golden candlestick was borne through the streets of Rome; the statue of Augustus discovered a few years ago at the Villa of Livia; the series of busts of Roman Emperors, and fragments of the relief on Trajan's column, represent Greek and Roman art during the first century of the Christian era. Owing to the size and importance of the cast of the Pandroseum or Portico of the Caryatides, which made it worthy of a conspicuous place in the Museum, as also on account of its nature, it was placed in the room devoted to architectural casts, where, when completed by the addition of the crowning member, it will show to the best advantage. Two of the walls of this room are decorated with casts of Arabic, French, and English ornamental sculpture. These specimens of various decorative national styles illustrate their differences with considerable fullness, and furnish a rich mine for the study of artistic designs.

The Renaissance room, which opens from the Architectural, is an example of how concisely the history of an art during several centuries can be illustrated. The period embraced is from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, that is, from the Pisani to John of Bologna, or in other words, from the Revival to the Decadence. An epitome of the history of sculpture in central Italy during this period is thus presented in works by all the most eminent Tuscan sculptors, including the Pisani, Orgagna, Donatello, Ghiberti, Vecchiotta, Miro, Desideria, Robbia, Michael Angelo, and John of Bologna. These are representative artists whom to know is to know what is best worth knowing in the plastic art of Italy. The room is like a volume of elegant extracts which presents specimens of the writings of men whose entire works would fill a library, and like such a book its chief use is to make the visitor desire to know more of those whose genius is but partially revealed to him. May the time come when the collection of casts at the Museum of every important period and school shall suffice to satisfy all such longings.

CHARLES C. PERKINS.

THE ARCHITECTURAL COLLECTION.



Southern End of the Architectural Room.

THE room which has been assigned to the architectural casts deposited at the Museum is on the entrance floor, and occupies the whole of the east end of the building as now built. It was made several feet higher than the other rooms on this floor, in order to get height enough for large casts. The finish of the room is perfectly plain, and the walls are colored in distemper with a light tint, which gives an admirable background for the white casts. Various colors have been tried in the rooms of the Museum which contain casts, and the lighter tints have been found to be much more satisfactory than the darker; though the latter may give greater relief to the cast, it is at the expense of the general harmony of the room, and if the tint be as dark as the Pompeian red which has been so much in favor, a certain amount of harshness and obtrusiveness cannot be avoided.

The architectural casts now contained in the collection number over 600, and fall naturally into the following divisions: classical, that is, Greek and Roman, 95; Byzantine, 19; Gothic, 299; Moorish, 143; and Renaissance, 58. Visitors usually enter the room by the northwest door, and can then examine the casts in historical sequence, beginning with the classical, and ending with the Renaissance.

By far the most important object in the collection as it now stands, both in point of size, and as representative of architectural art, is the Caryatide Porch. This cast was taken from that in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts at Paris. While the figures of the caryatides are faithful reproductions of the originals, showing the mutilations which these have undergone, the entablature and base have been restored and present the lines and surfaces intact, in what may be supposed to have been their primitive condition. From an archi-

tectural standpoint, this has its advantage; but for obvious reasons a cast of the actual condition of the porch would be much more acceptable. The caryatides are, however, the main feature, and these are eminently satisfactory. There are six of them in the original, while the Museum cast has but four, the two on the sides being omitted, so that, while the front elevation is the same, the depth of the cast is much less than that of the original. The Pandroseum, as this porch is sometimes called, is one of the most beautiful specimens of Greek architecture, and forms a part of the group of temples called the Erechtheum, on the Acropolis of Athens.

The use of caryatides was not common among the Greeks, who probably felt the difficulty of adapting the human form to architectural requirements. When they were used, however, it was always in conjunction with Ionic details: and those of the Erechtheum may be seen in the two full-size casts of one of its capitals upon the wall at the right of the porch, and also in several pieces of mouldings which hang upon the first screen. The whole character of the porch is monumental, the decoration is subordinate and restricted almost entirely to the cornice and the treatment of the figures; otherwise there are no details of especial note. In the original, each of the four caryatides of the front differs from the others, while this cast has but three varieties. As it came from Paris there were two pairs of figures exactly alike, the casts having been taken from only two models; but fortunately the Museum already possessed a cast of the original caryatide which is in the British Museum, and this, being a third variety, was substituted for one of the others, which was then placed upon the pedestal outside in the front of the Museum. The two right-hand figures of the cast will be found upon examination to be identical.

This cast is a very valuable feature of the collection, and affords an opportunity to architectural students for the study of Greek mouldings and proportions, such as could be surpassed only by the original. Moreover, its position in the Museum is admirable, and it gives a character and dignity to the architectural room which would otherwise be quite lacking with its contents of small details and heterogeneous fragments.

In addition to the Caryatide Porch, Greek architecture is represented by the few casts on screen No. 1. Several of these are also details from the Erechtheum; one is from the Parthenon, and there are single casts from Metapontum, Bassæ, etc.

The Seat of the High Priest, from the temple of Bacchus at Athens, is placed in this room, although it is scarcely an architectural object. Its decoration, consisting of griffins and priests in the Assyrian style, suggests the expedition of Bacchus to Asia.

On the pedestal which stands in the centre of the room is a complete cast of the frieze of the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates at Athens. This frieze is about a foot in height and is ornamented with a continuous series of figures, representing the story of Bacchus and the Tyrrhenian pirates. The god had hired of these pirates a vessel to carry him from Icaria to Naxos. On the way they, not knowing who he was, determined to sell him as a slave, and bound him; but he, freeing himself from his bonds enveloped the whole vessel in a mass of vine and ivy leaves, while music was heard and rivers of wine flowed through the vessel:

"On the topsail there ran, here and there
A vine that grapes did in abundance bear;
And in an instant was the ship's mainmast
With an obscure green ivy's arms embraced,
That flourished straight and were with berries graced;
Of which did garlands circle every brow
Of all the pirates, and no one knew how."

This prodigy revealed the nature of their prisoner, whereupon the captain and pirates all threw themselves into the sea and were changed into dolphins. The sculptor of this frieze has represented the last part of the myth, but the scene is laid upon the sea-shore instead of on the vessel.

The other casts upon this pedestal are of Greek fragments, and with the exception of the inscriptions, mostly from terra-cotta originals; they are all interesting, and some—like the two companion pieces of Paris and Helen, and Helen and Menelaus, and also the Winged Victory—are beautiful. The large Greek vase which surmounts this stand is from the Campo Santo at Pisa. It is ornamented with a Bacchic procession, and is historically interesting, as it was one of the antique objects studied by Nicholas of Pisa, and so figures in the history of the sculpture of the Renaissance.

On screen No. 1 are several Pompeian pieces, such as table legs, acroteria, etc., which form the connecting link between the Greek and Roman,—the specimens of the latter are certainly inadequate in number, the most notable being some details of the florid work of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, several rosettes, acanthus leaves, etc., also rosettes and a scroll from the Tomb of the Scipios in the Vatican.

Next follows the screen called Byzantine, though this title is scarcely exact, as many of the examples are more properly German round-arched Gothic,—such as the capitals from Aix-la-Chapelle, Bonn, etc. This is the style which flourished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries along the valley of the Rhine, and died out early in the thirteenth century under the influence of the French Gothic. Fergusson says: "It is really the national style of Germany, and had it been carried to perfection and not been abandoned for the adoption of a foreign style, the result would have been a mediæval style, rivalling, if not surpassing the pointed Gothic style which

reached such perfection in France and England. The capitals of the columns surpass in beauty and richness anything of their kind executed during the Middle Ages, and though sometimes rude in execution, equal in design any capitals ever invented. They only wanted another century of labor to enable them successfully to compete with any part of the pointed architecture which succeeded them." The capital from Moissac is interesting as an example of that strange architecture from the southwest of France, which differs from everything else in the country, and bears striking resemblances to the pure Byzantine style as shown in St. Mark's and Sta. Sophia. This architecture is probably that of the Basques, as the names of the places where it occurs invariably end in the syllable *ac*.

Standing in the alcove between screens 2 and 3, the student may see at a glance the characteristic distinction between classical (in this case Roman) and Byzantine ornament. The former is applied and the latter incised; the acanthus leaves and honeysuckle ornaments which form the principal features of classical ornament are all superadded to the form of the architectural member and might be removed without detracting from its perfection — while quite the reverse is true of the Byzantine ornament; this being cut into the surface could not be removed without destroying the form itself. This same distinction holds good largely between the Byzantine and the Gothic styles.

The two large panels showing the combination of animal and vegetable forms are admirable examples of Byzantine sculpture.

We now reach the Gothic architecture which is better illustrated than either of the other styles. Of the French there are no large pieces, and many are mere fragments of foliage and carving. The Sainte Chapelle, Notre Dame of Paris, Chartres, Noyon, Rouen, are represented by capitals, corbels, crockets, etc.; and there are bits of moulding, bases, panels, spandrels, etc. Conspicuous on the south wall, high over the other French casts, at the right, are the two colossal heads of the Virgin and the prophet Ezekiel, from the central doorway of the Cathedral of Rheims. They are very beautiful, and a more complete collection of the iconography of this, which is perhaps the most perfect of the Gothic cathedrals, would be a great gain to the series. The pieces upon this wall are almost entirely from sculpture, and not purely architectural forms. Their arrangement is quite effective; the central space being occupied by the "Vierge à la Coquille" from Notre Dame, flanked on each side by two angels with candlesticks, from the same cathedral; while overhead are two angels singing, and two with musical instruments. On the left are nine heads from the Cathedral of Chartres, arranged in a square field; while below eleven of the quaint and admirable statuettes of monks from the tombs of the Dukes of Burgundy at Dijon occupy the shelf which extends the entire length of this wall. Screen No. 6, the left-hand lower portion of the south wall, and the whole upper portion are filled with the specimens of English Gothic. The most important examples in quality and number are from Lincoln Cathedral, and Southwell Minster, and like the French, consist of capitals, corbels mouldings, and fragments. There are, however, several notable exceptions, the most important of which is the Angel Choir of Lincoln. There is also a series of misereres, — the corbel-like attachments of the under sides of the seats in church choirs, which when turned up enabled the clerks to sit while they still appeared to stand — they are frequently comical in character, and one of these represents a Resurrection, in which only the feet and lower edge of the garment of Christ appear. A series of arches, each containing an angel with a musical instrument, is interesting.

The whole upper portion of this wall is occupied by twelve of the thirty angels which compose the so-called Angel Choir of Lincoln Cathedral. The Choir was finished towards the close of the thirteenth century. The figures of angels with musical instruments occupy the spandrels of the triforium arches of the five bays at the west end of the building. They are among the very best examples of early English art, and have always excited great admiration. Different interpretations have been assigned to the figures, but their exact intention is still uncertain. It is suggested that the scrolls which many of them bear once contained inscriptions explaining the series. For a full description of the choir, with drawings, see a paper by C. R. Cockerell on the Ancient Sculpture of Lincoln Cathedral in the Lincoln volume of the Archaeological Institute.

The whole west wall of the room is devoted to casts of Moorish ornament from Algiers and Spain; the former sixty-three in number, are the gift of Miss Brewer to the Museum. Some are undoubtedly from modern French work done in imitation of the old style. A number are interesting as showing the window tracery. The most prominent piece, that thrown across the head of the doorway, is of great delicacy and elegance of design and is probably modern. The specimens from the Alhambra, seventy or eighty in number, consist of wall and ceiling decorations, columns, and portions of the honey-comb vaulting so characteristic of Saracenic architecture; again there are inscriptions and one (No. 64) is of great interest, as it is a block of the actual wall of the Alhambra, showing the state of the original ooring which is dull and impure in the extreme.

Nearly all of these examples are of very great richness and beauty; the stucco in which the original is moulded lending itself to great elaboration, and, in fact, needing it where ornamentation in form is attempted.

The Renaissance casts are prettily arranged on the north wall under the windows and up and down between them; the style is charming, and is well shown in quite a number of pilaster and other panels, capitals and small details.

The whole collection as it now stands consists of over 600 casts. Of these only one, the Caryatide Porch is a monument in itself — and this as we have seen is incomplete, although enough is given to show what the original really is — everything else is fragmentary and interesting only from the point of view of detail and style. It is hoped in time to add to the collection such full-sized casts of the smaller monuments of architecture as can be obtained and accommodated. There are many beautiful architectural works, such as tombs, fountains, screens, altars, pulpits, etc., which might be had and which would be of the greatest advantage to the student, and which would adequately illustrate all the peculiarities of the different styles. Besides, there should be full-size casts of all the classic orders, taken from the best examples; as, for instance, a column and portion of the stylobate and entablature of the Parthenon; also a pediment of one of the Greek temples — *Ægina*, perhaps, in which might be placed the casts from this temple already at the Museum, thus showing the combined use of sculpture and architecture, the one complementing the other. It is the intention in time to have some cast of Greek architecture upon which shall be applied the system of Greek polychromy, carried out according to the best authorities.

In the Gothic division there is an almost infinite opportunity for advantageous selection; a reproduction, in part at least, of the doorway of one of the great cathedrals, with its multitude of mouldings and sculptures, would be interesting, and an excellent feature would also be one of the smaller windows with its gorgeous stained glass, or a reduction, if space failed, of one of the large and famous windows, like the great rose of Rheims, or the Tree of Jesse at Chartres.

All this supposes of course an extent of space very much beyond what is at present available or even proposed, yet as the building is extended it might be practicable to arrange a large court-yard where accommodation could be had for many of the objects suggested. An important feature of a complete architectural collection would be a series of cork models of all the famous buildings of the world, made to the same scale, and to this should be added a parallel of ornaments, both from the point of view of color and of form.

The controlling idea in the formation of an architectural collection for a Museum of Fine Arts, of course, is the fine art side, and this excludes all that portion of architecture proper which bears upon construction and simple utility.

The present collection has been catalogued, and is thus available for the purposes of historical research, while under the established regulations it may be freely used by any one for sketching, or copying in any other manner, and it is safe to say that there is absolutely nothing else of the kind in this vicinity which offers equal advantages to the architectural student.

E. H. GREENLEAF.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, MASS. MESSRS. STURGIS & BRIGHAM, ARCHITECTS, BOSTON, MASS.

[Gelatine Print.]

This view, taken from the northwest, shows the portion of the building already finished.

PLANS OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, MASS. MESSRS. STURGIS & BRIGHAM, ARCHITECTS, BOSTON, MASS.

The two plans in the upper right-hand portion of the page are reproductions of the successful competitive plans. The plan at the bottom of the page represents the building as it is to be carried out, while the plans in the left-hand upper portion show the disposition of rooms on the three floors of the section of the Museum already built.

THE LAWRENCE ROOM.

The official catalogue contains the following information concerning this room: Fittings in carved oak of the sixteenth century, English, consisting of upper and lower panels, ceiling [the ceiling is not in place because it would shut out almost all the light], mouldings, cornice, brackets, pendants, pilasters, carved figures, six bas-reliefs representing the history of the Prodigal Son, a pair of gates, and nine portraits on panels. Over the mantel are those of Henry VI, and Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII; over the east door are those of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Cardinal Woolsey, copied from Holbein; opposite are Elizabeth, Essex, and Leicester (?). Purchased in London at Mr. Wright's in Wardour street in 1871, by Mrs. T. B. Lawrence, and presented to the Museum. (The mantel-piece is a modern reproduction).

CHARCOAL SKETCHES.

These sketches illustrate the system of blocking out the work practised in the elementary class of the School of Drawing and Painting.

LIFE STUDIES. BY MR. W. CLAUS.

These drawings were made in the life-class of the School of Drawing and Painting, under the supervision of Mr. Grundmann.

PORTRAIT HEAD. BY MISS ANNA BLAKE.

THE STUART COLLECTION.

HAD space permitted, we would have reprinted, for the sake of completeness, portions of the admirable review of this exhibition which we published a short time ago. (See *American Architect* for July 31, 1880).

THE GRAY COLLECTIONS OF ENGRAVINGS.

THE collection of engravings formed by the late Mr. Francis Calley Gray, and left by him to Harvard College, is at present deposited at the Museum of Fine Arts under the terms of an agreement made between the College and the Museum. It consists of about 5,500 prints, many of them of very great beauty and value, and all of interest in the history of art. In addition to the engravings, there is belonging to them a reference library of about 300 books upon art subjects. The collection, since its removal to the Museum, has been entirely arranged in such a manner that the student can easily follow the progress of engraving as a distinct art, from its origin to the present time. The first division which is made is that of nationality: all the works of the Italian, German, French, Dutch and English engravers are kept in separate divisions, and in these the prints are arranged chronologically, according to the dates of the engravers, beginning with the earliest and coming down to modern times. Several hundred of the best specimens in the collection, such as the Rembrandts, Dürers, etc., are kept permanently on exhibition in show-cases, while the cases in an adjoining room are filled with as many more which are changed about once in six weeks. In this way the whole collection will in time have been shown to the public.

In addition to this, students may at any time, by making an application to the curator of the engravings at the Museum, see, under his supervision, such prints as they may desire, which are not on exhibition.

Purchases are made from time to time with the income of the fund which was left for the maintenance of the collection, and thus it is still increasing in size.

THE OLYMPIAN CASTS.



The Victory of Pæonios.

IN a former paper upon the Olympian discoveries¹ the opinion was expressed that it was the art of building and its history that had most benefitted by the results. Besides the three peripteral temples, the colonnades, entrance portals, and monuments for display of various descriptions, and the many edifices of which no antique examples are elsewhere known to exist, such as the treasure-houses, the Greek Gymnasium, the Exedra of Herodes Atticus and its water-works, the Pelopæion, Buleuterion, Prytaneion, Leonidaion, and the less certainly recognized workshop of Phidias—besides all these discoveries of such direct importance to an understanding of Greek architecture, there is to be considered the insight gained by following the changes which affected these various buildings during antiquity, the restorations to keep them in repair, and the alterations to modify their uses. And the new topographical map of the Olympian plain recently published in the fourth official volume of the expedition is now so determinate as to allow an incomparable appreciation of Greek architectural composition upon the grandest scale. But it would almost seem that the Olympian marbles also are quite as important to the architect as to the sculptor. With the single exception of the Hermes, all the remains of Hellenic sculpture were intended to decorate enclosures or buildings, and were consequently more or less subordinated to architectural considerations. The Victory crowned a strictly stereometrical pedestal straight in line, a marble structure more than twice as high as the figure, which bore bronze shields and was of independent importance from the many inscriptions upon it. The statue itself was dedicated to Zeus, before whose temple it stood in historical commemoration of a Greek victory. Erected with a title of the booty taken from the enemy, it was a monumental trophy which marked the largest open space of the temenos sacred to the god. The metope reliefs harmonized in projection and line with the details of the entablature of the cella; the gable groups were even more subordinated in relation to the building, the scenes they represented were fitted to the low triangle formed by the inclined lines of the roof, as were the episodes in the metopes to the squares between triglyphs and epistyle and cornice. Both were more truly component parts of the great temple than in any sense independent works of sculpture.

It is interesting to observe these architectural considerations as illustrated in the technical carving of the Olympian statues represented by the casts in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts; in the wisdom and skill with which bodies, draperies, and even particular muscles, are posed and cut with reference to the various decorative positions in which the works were to be placed. The Hermes, an independent figure elevated but little above the ground, is elegantly and carefully modelled for close inspection, there is not, either in form or execution, a trace of any ornamental conventionalization. The treatment of the Victory is wholly different; the fluttering folds, intended to be seen at a height of five metres or more above the eye, and from a proportionate horizontal distance, are sharply and firmly incised, the light bands of drapery across the knees and body consequently appear hard and strap-like when seen in

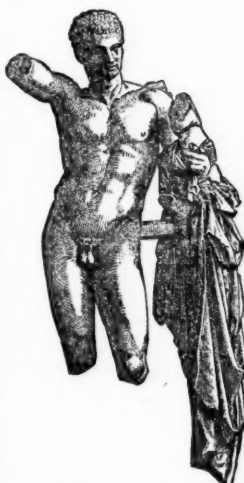
the immediate vicinity. In this one respect the folds are similar to some of the draperies of Bernini and his debased school of decorators, who exaggerated all undercuttings to gain striking effects, at the expense of natural truth and delicacy of taste; the pretentious masters of the Rococco, however, always employed for its own sake a coarse over-valuation, admitted by the Greeks only to lend effects at a distance. The figures forming the gable groups, heightened as these were by color and by bronze accessories, were intended to be effective when seen from afar, muscles and draperies are there indicated in broad and simple masses,—not with the sharp indication of modelled surfaces or the firm undercuttings of folds peculiar to the Victory, exposed to view as this was, from all sides, with no other background than the bright sky. The gable marbles depended for their effect upon the grouping and action of the various trunks and extremities, outlined against the dark wall-veil of the tympanum triangle; thus relieved, they did not require the sharp indication of details. As an intermediate stage between the more independent Victory and these architectural compositions stand the metopes, bold works in high relief, —from their position above the

Metopes from the Temple of Zeus.² Atlas bringing to Heracles the Apples of Hesperides.

pro and epinaos of the cella, under the shade of the pteroma, intended to be seen by certain peculiarities of reflected light, for which provision has been made in the wisest manner. The only one in Boston is that of Atlas, perhaps the best preserved of those found by the Germans, though the remains brought from Olympia to the Louvre by Blouet would be worthy of consideration in selecting casts representative of the temple sculptures. More carefully executed than the gable figures, because placed at less distance from the eye, the bodies of Heracles, Atlas, and of the nymph of the Hesperides are treated with similar breadth and boldness; they illustrate again the incomparable composition of the chosen episodes within spaces determined by the constructive lines of the building.

Any collection of casts should be judged by the selection made from the great works of antiquity and by the location of these sculptures, that is to say, by the manner in which they are presented to the public. The unprejudiced observer of the Olympian casts in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, will find little to commend in regard to either of these points.³ The eastern gable group of the great temple is alone represented; of the western gable, the remains of which are of superior workmanship and artistic value, not a figure has been procured; yet the best preserved and most interesting of all the temple sculptures are the Apollo and Deidameia. Two-thirds of the fragments in the Museum are useless in their present disconnection; such formless blocks as those upon the floor, (Nos. 54, 58, and 65), merely encumber the available space of the room.

To illustrate the treatment of detail, the nude Zeus, the draped Hestia, and perhaps the kneeling charioteer Myrtilos, would have been sufficient. Of the general composition of the group no idea can be obtained, for although the eastern gable is exclusively represented, it is by no means entirely so,—not half of its twenty-one figures are in the Museum, and no attempt at all has been made to place those chosen in their relative positions. Nor does any great value appear to be set upon completeness: of the Victory, Hermes, and of almost all the gable figures, important additional fragments have been found, and are to be had in casts. Thus, for example, the head and lower limbs of the Victory and a large portion of the central gable figure of Zeus, are the more missed because they are now procurable.



The Hermes of Praxiteles.

and near another that only one quarter of its circumference can be seen from any distance. The Hermes, on the other hand, which stood with its back close to the wall of the Heriaon cella, and was

² The illustrations of the Atlas metope, the Hermes, and the pediment sculptures are reproduced from Meyer's *Konversations-Lexikon*.

³ While reading the proofs of the present article the writer notices with pleasure that casts of the figures of the western gable are to be procured at some future time. It is possible that the very promptness and enterprise which took pride in securing for the Museum early casts may have worked to its disadvantage, by crowding the available space of the present building, and exhausting the funds by the purchase of blocks which might not have been chosen upon second thought.

¹ *American Architect*, Nos. 230, 231, 232, 233.

not seen from behind, or even in direct profile, is planted boldly in the middle of the Second Greek Room. It is necessary to go around it to examine other casts, and thus it is presented in a view for which it was never intended, the back not being finished, the hair scarcely indicated, and the supporting tree left in the first rough stages of stone tooling. The casts of the gable figures, which were designed to stand at a height of eighteen metres or more, are placed just on a level with the eye, and there are minutely inspected by visitors who naturally go away disappointed by the coarse, flat forms. Surely this is an unfair representation of the antique, more wrongful, because less generally appreciated, than a false translation. The careful attention paid by the ancients to such points is attested by the many anecdotes preserved by classic writers; the contest between Phidias and Alcamenes was decided by this very consideration of the exact height at which the work was to be seen.¹ If the stand upon which the casts of the gable fragments now rests were to be elevated as high as the room would permit, an entirely different and more correct point of view could be obtained, while an economy of space would be effected as other statues could be placed beneath and before it. The Victory, to which the same objections apply, should be elevated upon the upper part of the stepped triangular shaft. This might easily be imitated from the drawings and measurements given in the second volume of the official publication, and, as the only known pedestal of the best period of Greek art, it would have an independent interest.

JOS. TH. CLARKE.

THE PAINTINGS.—THE RIMMER COLLECTION.



Portuguese Chair at the Museum.

THE organization of a permanent exhibition of selected pictures has proved a success in every way. None of the objections to the dealers' galleries or to the collections shown by societies and clubs hold good as regards the exhibition in the Museum. Here, in an excellent light, and for a long season, the artist may hang his picture for public inspection, and the owner may show his choicest possessions under the most favorable conditions. The best of foreign pictures and the most notable home productions

are collected in this permanent exhibition, and the list is changed often enough to give variety to the display. Although it is intended to occupy only the summer months, it has continued in reality through the year, with the exception of short seasons of special exhibitions, as that of the Hunt pictures or the general exhibition of contemporaneous art. At present writing there is found in the galleries, in addition to the paintings, engravings, and other works of art belonging to the Museum, and the permanent exhibition above spoken of, a collection of William Blake's works, the memorial exhibition of Dr. Rimmer's draw-

ings, paintings, and sculpture, and the complete collection of Stuart's portraits. The value of this combined display as an art educator cannot be too highly estimated. Constant, but not too frequent changes in the galleries stimulate study, and keep the public interest constantly alive. It is perhaps in this department, quite as much as in any other, that the Museum may be cited as enterprising quite beyond comparison with any similar institution.

The works of art in permanent possession of the institution are not numerous, but there are among them fine examples of both ancient and modern masters. There is a sufficient number, indeed, of representative works of various schools to convey to the student an intelligent idea of the general characteristics of the same, and to recall to those who have visited foreign museums fresh souvenirs of the great masterpieces. With the present facilities of studying the old masters, by means of photographs and engravings—a department in which the Museum is especially rich—there is much less need of the actual presence of old pictures than there was before the camera was in use. Now it is possible to form something like an accurate idea of a school of painting without ever having seen an example. The single element of color is the one which the canvas keeps to itself. Now it is of double importance, under these circumstances, that whatever examples of the old masters be placed before the public, they be good ones. A thousand mediocre paintings are of less value than one masterpiece. It is satisfactory, indeed, to find, in the small collection hung in the Museum, few pictures which might not fill a good place in any gallery in the world. A highly-finished small picture of Bacchus, with attendant faun and satyr, by Rubens, gives an excellent idea of some of the rarest qualities of this master's work. A large marine, with a fleet of vessels, is a representative Van der Velde, and a portrait by Albert Cuyp is valuable as a curiosity, since the artist is little known outside his chosen line of cattle painting. Gerard Douw's "Lace-Maker," from the Sumner bequest, is as good an example of the skilful execution of the Dutch painter as one would expect to find in a foreign gallery. Even more admirable is a good-

sized Holbein belonging to the Athenæum, a portrait of a donor and his two patron saints. It has not suffered from recent restoration, and the strength of the coloring and purity of drawing are perfectly preserved. There are one or two other examples of the Dutch and German schools which will serve every purpose of illustration of the peculiarities of the painters they represent. A Guercino, owned by the Athenæum, and a portrait ascribed to Tintoretto are the most important of the Italian pictures. There are few more pleasing specimens of Greuze's work than the "Chapeau Blanc": it has the charm of his favorite arrangement of delicate tones, and what is better, the expression is free from the simper which often makes his female heads undignified and uninteresting. In no gallery in Europe will be found such fine specimens of the exquisite art of Millet, the French peasant painter, as may be studied here. Of the number of his pictures usually seen on the walls, the Museum owns two good ones.

The English school is illustrated, not at its best, to be sure, but still well enough to give an idea of the best portrait painters which photographs and engravings fail to convey. Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait of Benjamin West, will be studied with interest as long as the two names live, and in the "Banished Lord" and the portrait of a "Young Girl," by Sir Joshua Reynolds, there is enough of the spirit of the master to make them valuable as examples of his work. Probably no paintings by an American artist are more widely known than Stuart's heads of Washington, and Martha Washington, owned by the Athenæum. Apart from the excellence of the execution there is a sentimental interest attached to these unfinished portraits from life which greatly increases as time passes. Other important portraits by Stuart are the large Washington, and the General Knox from Faneuil Hall. Copley's John Hancock and Samuel Adams are among the best of his male portraits, and show perfectly his peculiar precision of touch and accurate drawing of all parts.

Washington Allston, and Benjamin West, may be both studied at their best. The "Belshazzar's Feast" of the former illustrates all the better for being unfinished, the academic method of the painter and his powerful execution. The student will get his best lesson from this picture in imitating the courage with which Allston sacrificed the elaborate finished figure to make room for what he considered necessary changes in the composition. As far as the painting goes it is interesting more than instructive to examine the methods of the English school of the last generation. West's "King Lear" is an excellent example of the rigid academic work of his time, and is, perhaps, as pleasing a specimen of his dramatic painting as could be selected. Ary-Scheffer's "Eberhart, Count of Württemberg Mourning over the Body of his Son," shows probably better than any other single picture by this artist, the singular power of expression at his command and the skilful execution. Unfortunately, the picture which is a replica, it is understood, of the one in the Rotterdam Museum, is in a wretched condition, the result doubtless of the use of bitumen in the colors. Many more pictures might be referred to in substantially the same terms of commendation as representative works, but it will be seen from the brief notices of those mentioned that there is a sufficient number of pictures in the possession of the Museum to make an interesting and instructive display without any outside assistance. From time to time pictures are added by bequest or gift, and by this process, however slow it may appear, a large collection will be made almost before we are aware of it. It only remains to exercise the greatest discretion in the choice of work of art that they be valuable as examples, and not solely as bric-a-brac.

The memorial exhibition of the late Dr. Rimmer's works, is interesting in inverse proportion to its size. Perhaps, however, the narrow limits of the exhibition may be considered a gain rather than a loss since it permits the examination of the whole without great fatigue, and facilitates the acquirement of a comprehensive idea of the life work of the artist-sculptor. Possibly, for the reason that he rarely exhibited his works, Dr. Rimmer was most widely known as a teacher of art-anatomy. It was generally understood that he was a sculptor, but the public at large had no better conception of the scope of his talents than that obtained from an acquaintance with the granite Hamilton. The display in the Museum is chiefly made up of drawings and paintings. The casts of his important pieces of sculpture are only four in number.

A single glance at the sculpture is sufficient to show the turn of mind of the artist and his habits of study. In every detail of form is the appreciation of the antique plainly marked, and its influence felt. He used nature as a guide, not as a pattern. With his knowledge of the antique and his love of Michael Angelo he made nature serve the purpose of suggesting to him the spirit and the action of the figure and the charm of the form as he enjoyed it. In the Fall-ing Gladiator, undoubtedly the greatest work of his life, the action is marvellously truthful and the details of form accurately studied, while the masses are such as nature only hinted at. It needs no argument to prove that the treatment of the nude in an utterly realistic way would have been in this case almost ludicrous. The statue as it stands has all the realism that is necessary, with sufficient idealism to make it the sculptor's own. The drawings, which are marvellously made, are so full of the literary element that every one of them would bear discussion. In general they are more intensely illustrative of some poetical idea than suggestive of possible pictures. The nude figure was Dr. Rimmer's alphabet, with which he expressed all the passions and illustrated all the emotions of the human mind. This figure was of course conventional, but so skilfully conventional that no one could refuse to accept it. A per-

¹ Tzetzes, Chilliades VIII. 193.

fect knowledge of anatomy with an accompanying grasp of the limits of human action, made the figure in his hands as supple as life itself, and he placed it in all possible positions with wonderful ease and perfect readiness. With this love of the nude, the regular class of subjects followed as a matter of course. Milton, Dante, and the Bible, with mythology and remote history, gave him the motives of his compositions. Some of them—indeed most of them—are arranged in a decorative way, so that they would serve as cartoons for wall paintings, but few may be described as pictorial. Excellent examples of his foreshortening are "Nine Days They Fell," and "Dead Soldier." "The Horses of the Sun" is one of the most spirited and richest of the decorative series, and studies of a lion show as well as anything else the vigor with which he executed a sketch from life. There are several little groups with female heads of wonderful sweetness, and various complicated compositions which are not easily described. The marvel of the works lies not so much in their execution, although some of them are elaborated with great pains and care, as in the spirit of their conception. In this peculiar vein Dr. Rimmer stands alone in this country. In England, where the study of classic art and literature is carried further and is much more popular than it is here, there is a school of artists who draw the nude with perfect ease and great skill—the nude, be it understood, as a means of expression and not as a study of nature. They illustrate the same class of subjects Dr. Rimmer chose, and with much the same effect.

The paintings must be looked at solely as illustrative works, and not as pictures. Considering the amount of practice he had, Dr. Rimmer certainly acquired an uncommon skill with the brush. Nevertheless the difficulties of execution are plainly seen in every work. "Flight and Pursuit," two figures running at full speed through arched corridors is exceedingly spirited in action. A good example of the force of the idea expressed is found in the "Lion in the Arena," and also in the "Study of a Lion." Neither of them resemble in anything but the ferocity of the expression and the character of the action the animal which they are supposed to represent. Yet in spite of their originality they impress one as the type of a lion of the highest class. It is this triumph of the idea that gives to all of Dr. Rimmer's works their peculiar value. Without it they would be commonplace.

F. D. MILLET.

THE SCHOOL OF DRAWING AND PAINTING; ITS POLITY AND POLICY.



Panels from a Screen.
Designed by Miss Edith Howes.

IT is the purpose of this article to discuss the present and the future rather than the past. The history of the school has been admirably written by the secretary of the permanent committee in his annual reports, which I shall briefly epitomize in order to render what follows more intelligible to those who have not perused them. The birth of the Museum of Fine Arts (July 3, 1876) gave rise almost immediately to the birth of the School of Drawing and Painting. Hitherto all had been aspiration. As early as 1874, efforts were made to establish a school; but, though these efforts were then fruitless, "much was done in the way of preparation." In their act of incorporation the Board of Trustees were enjoined to encourage education in the arts. They accordingly decided to co-operate with the gentlemen interested in the establishment of a school, who were personally known to them, and in whom they had confidence. This co-operation at once bore fruit. On the one hand, the Museum was to furnish the rooms; on the other, the gentlemen were to guarantee the funds. A sufficient sum having been raised by subscription, a permanent committee was appointed, "with full powers, consisting of four painters, three architects, the three principal officers of the Museum, and two other gentlemen, making twelve in all." As a result of their labors the school opened on Tuesday, January 2, 1877.

It would be hypercritical to find fault with the constitution of the school while in its infancy, and ungenerous not to bestow ample praise on its founders, eager above all things to make a beginning. But to-day, after a lapse of three years, the polity of the school may fairly be criticized. In form its government is oligarchical, and like all oligarchies has its blemishes. It directly represents neither the community, nor the artists, nor the Museum of Fine Arts. Indirectly, it represents the community, inasmuch as its means of support are drawn from that source. Indirectly, too, it represents the Museum, inasmuch as three of the principal officers of that institution are members of the permanent committee; but neither the public, nor the artists, nor the Museum have a direct voice in the management of the school. The committee is absolute and lifelong.

The members of large committees may generally be placed in one of two categories,—the working or the ornamental. Some lend a clear head and a stout hand, others the influence of a name. Not that the vigorous hand and brain are wanting to these latter, but circumstances limit their active co-operation to an occasional vote or signature. As a supervising body, such a committee may be an apt instrument, but as an executive body, composed as it frequently is of

heterogeneous elements, it is an awkward tool. Recognizing its executive weakness the permanent committee has judiciously intrusted the government of the school to a sub-committee, composed of three of its own members, and the two principal instructors; retaining to itself more general functions, including the veto-power, the voting of supplies, and the appointment of instructors. This is a move in the right direction.

It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when the school will be adopted by the Museum of Fine Arts. Several of the more active members of the permanent committee are trustees of that institution. The world at large already thinks that the school is an integral part of the Museum. Why not realize this surmise? At present the school is in a measure a waif, liable to drift away with the interest of its promoters. Were it incorporated into a durable and conservative institution like the Museum, it would be safely moored for generations.

The judgment of the nineteenth century has weighed heavily on art-schools and academies. An academy by many is deemed the embodiment of all that is pernicious. The epithet "academic" is in itself a stigma. It suggests visions of cold, artificial, pseudo-classic figures. Anti-academists cite the splendid names of the divine Italians who flourished in the palmy, pre-academic days, more than three centuries and a half ago. Academies and decadences, they say, came in simultaneously, and so they did; but not mutually related as cause and effect. From the days of that vast upheaval of deep-rooted prejudices and superstitions, from the time that men's eyes and souls were unclouded by the gloom-dispelling breezes of the Renaissance, personal liberty has been steadily waxing. What did education mean in the *quattro-cento*? It meant an apprenticeship germane to slavery. The youthful tyro was article to a master with whom he lived and toiled, and from whom he learned his trade.

Here is a memorandum of his son's apprenticeship, made by the father of Michael Angelo, when the latter was fourteen years old:

"First April 1488. I, Ludovico di Leonardo di Buonarroti, place Michel Agnolo my son, with Domenico and Davit, sons of Tommaso Curradi for the three following years, with these agreements: that the said Michel Agnolo shall remain with the above for the said time, to learn to paint and to exercise himself therein, and to do what the above may desire, and that the said Domenico and Davit are bound to pay him, during these three years, twenty-four florins as per agreement: the first year six florins; the second year eight florins; and the third year ten florins; together the sum of ninety-six livres." Wilson: Life and Works of Michel Angelo.

The above contract—cited only as a specimen—was far more liberal in its terms to the apprentice than was usual in those days. That Michael Angelo was no neophyte in his art when he entered the atelier of the Curradi is evident, from the circumstance that he received, not made, a payment in his first year.

What would young America, self-acting, self-thinking, say to such a bondage? Young America that ill-brooks the mild suggestions of a modern art-school. Personal liberty has done away with the system of apprenticeship, such as it existed several hundred years ago, and substituted the academy, or the private atelier. The old régime bore glorious fruits, but it was long since doomed.

The Renaissance furnished yet another cause for the establishment of schools. With love of the classics, came veneration for the relics of the past. This veneration begot collections, and collections begot academies. The painter Squarcione at Padua, and Lorenzo the Magnificent, at Florence, were among the first to establish these academies. The latter, under the direction of Bertoldo, nurtured Michael Angelo (after he quitted the Curradi), the former, Mantegna. At their birth academies were favorable to artistic growth. Later, when the race of demigods had passed away; when art had begun her downward course; when pedantry was a substitute for feeling; academies were unfavorable to æsthetic development; not *per se*, but because they were the embodiment of the depraved taste of the age; because they were pedantic parasites, feeding on by-gone glory, drawing inspiration from the dusty past, not from that source of eternal growth—Nature. Is there any reason that academies should cling to hackneyed, bloodless, conventionalized forms? That they should not inculcate a passion for Nature? With the eloquent past as a lesson, we should fear no repetition of its errors. The reactionary, realistic present is fraught with far more danger. In face of the pronounced and almost brutal realism, the question to be decided to-day by Americans is not, whether art is to be more or less academic, but whether there is to be any art at all. If, by the term "academic," is meant pseudo-classicism, then by all means let us consign schools and academies with their antiquated paraphernalia to the oblivion of the lumber-room. If, *per contra*, it means "a scrupulous and patient observation of chosen forms," and respect for those traditions which the verdict of three centuries has approved, and which are the products of experience dating back to the creation, then art-schools should be tenderly fostered. In foreign lands academicians and naturalists flourish side by side. Their influence has been mutually beneficial. The self-guiding devotees of Nature have purged the academies of their stupid conventionalisms, and, on the other hand, the academies have influenced the children of Nature more perhaps than the latter are willing to admit; at all events, they counteract their too frequent, loathsome eccentricities.

Unfortunately, we have no such restraining influence in our country. We are young, radical, enthusiastic, liable to be wafted away by the latest theory. Art is essentially conservative—not to be apprehended in an off-hand way in a few short months. Our enterprise and self-reliance—the very qualities that have made us a mighty nation—are against us; qualities, which, if duly controlled, may be utilized to our everlasting glory. Politically, commercially, artisti-

cally, we are jealous of interference, and impatient of restraint; too prone to throw off the tutelage of the past. These idiosyncracies militate against our aesthetic development. The field of the fine arts cannot be scratched like a western prairie and yield a harvest. Should, then, all innovations be quashed; should the spirit of investigation be discouraged? Of course not. We cannot contend against the legitimate tendencies of the age; but we can modify them for good or for evil. It is precisely this modification for the good that is the scope of an art-school. A school should be conservative (not immutable) as a constitutional government is conservative. Radicalism should thrive in the private ateliers. An individual may experiment as no public institution has the right to do. Some American art-schools are introducing innovations, which, judged by all that experience has thus far proved, seem to be suicidal. These innovations are certainly interesting, but they are not for academies. Such experiments come within the lawful scope of private studios. Should they succeed, then the academy must profit by their success. If the impression has been given that academies can never take the initiative, it is a wrong one. Academies may experiment *ad libitum*, if they can do so without losing sight of those solid principles that have ever constituted the back-bone of instruction in the fine arts. The individual, on the contrary, may fling the baggage of the past out of the window, and start anew. Such starts are often salutary, and should not be discouraged, when enthusiasts choose to immolate themselves — for immolation it generally is — by hazarding them. Centralization is less favorable to art than decentralization. In other words, the co-existence of the public art-school and the private atelier is advantageous. The relation of academies to studios is an interesting question, worthy of discussion, but needing more elaboration than can here be given to it.

There is a vague notion that feeling is the all in all to an artist. That it is a *sine qua non*, no one will deny. It is axiomatic. A rhymester was never yet a poet. It is to be supposed that those who choose an artist's career feel within their souls embryonic inspirations. If not, hard is their lot: for no school can give them. Many cavil because the academic curriculum does not annually hatch a goodly number of full-fledged, promising artists, and every now and then a genius. Be it remembered that genius is a rare bird, so rare and so self-reliant that one is inclined to risk the assertion that it thrives, not because of its education, but in spite of it. Genius is a law unto itself. The fault lies oftener with the pupil than with the school. The latter takes it for granted that the former has the artist's temperament, and tries to supplement it with sound training. As in poetry, thought and word should be co-equal, so in art thought and execution should be co-equal. Nature supplies the thought, school the execution — though school may re-enforce the thought. Hence the soulless artisans, the too frequent offspring of academies. But whose the blame? Hence, too, on the other hand, the chaotic compositions, undefined forms, and slovenly handling so much in vogue. These latter fills a well-organized school can, and does, correct, when the pupil is amenable to discipline. Those who are artistically endowed by nature are in a decided minority; and perhaps it is as well that it is so. Yet, on the commonplace majority, the school can work to advantage. The public taste is potently influenced by the amateurs, who are largely recruited from the non-professional graduates. If, then, by a stroke of good luck, our school should turn out a genius per generation, a limited number of artists of talent, and a legion of sound-minded amateurs, on whose judgment the public could rely, — certainly its patrons should feel amply rewarded for their outlay.

The School of Drawing and Painting offers a programme unequalled by any art-school in the country. The facilities that Boston affords for an artistic training are exceptional. Few schools, established in a Museum of Fine Arts can co-operate with an Institute of Technology, a Society of Decorative Art, and a Lowell Institute. Incalculable benefit is derived from the daily, intimate life passed with the various collections, — a benefit denied the frequenters of private ateliers. This intimate life with *chefs-d'œuvre*, is in itself an education to a recipient nature.

The history of the school has thus far been a history of intelligent experiments. At first, much was necessarily tentative. To-day it has a policy, which is simply to begin at the beginning, and end at the end. It is an undeniable fact that heretofore in our art-schools elementary training has been shamefully neglected, — and this deficiency the school is now trying to meet. To craze the head of a bewildered tyro with high artistic problems before his eye can calculate with tolerable accuracy the relative positions of objects, or his hand "block in" his subject with precision, is sheer madness. Though to the uninitiated, the hours devoted to a simple, elementary way of seeing and representing things seem like a waste of time, yet experience has demonstrated that it is the shortest route to an accurate and facile execution. Difficulties are presented to the pupil, and solved by him one by one; not thrust upon him pell-mell all at once to digest as best he may. Leonardo da Vinci's rule was to begin *ab initio*. "The beginning of the science of painting is the point, the second thing is the line, the third the surface, and the fourth the solid." Again: "The beginner should first learn perspective; then the measurements of objects," etc. Could preparatory schools supply the elementary training, the School of Drawing and Painting would gladly rid itself of the primary work, and devote its energies exclusively to advanced instruction. Seeing, however, that there are no preparatory schools, that elsewhere the elementary work is entirely ignored — or so imperfectly comprehended as to amount to the same

thing — the authorities wisely decided to offer to the public a complete scheme of elementary instruction. The attempt has met with a merited success.

It would be superfluous here to attempt a detailed explanation of the prospectus of the school. It may be interpreted by the circulars and annual reports. For our purpose a bird's-eye view will suffice. There are three classes or divisions in the school. In the first, or elementary, the pupil learns to handle his materials in representing various objects in various ways; generally the cast, but occasionally drapery, and, towards the end, the life. To this class the pupil is admitted on application. In the second, or middle class, he devotes himself to the life, the portrait, drapery, still life, the antique, the copying of the drawings by the old masters, and to whatever else the instructor may suggest, and in whatever material, save oils. An examination is the test of admission to this class, where the pupil remains till he is ripe for painting. A series of lectures on anatomy, shades and shadows, perspective, architecture and architectural history, the history of ornament, the theory of color, mythology, history of painting and sculpture, and costume, accompanies the daily instruction in drawing. Proficiency in the subject-matter of these lectures is exacted before promotion is granted. The third and highest class is for the painters. Here, too, examinations are the test of admission. The members of this class are comparatively free agents; they are not required to attend lectures, and are left as much as possible to their own inspirations. In a word, they are guided, not curbed.

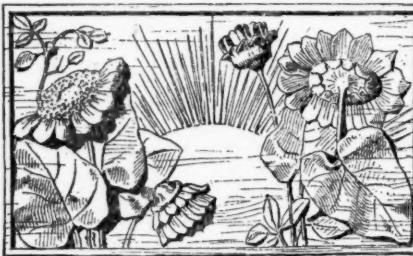
No distinction is made between the professional student and the amateur. As a rule, amateurs prefer the solid professional training, even though they but taste it. It is unquestionably more profitable to devote the minimum period of twelve weeks to the elementary discipline of eye and hand than it is to scour the whole range of art. Attendance in the drawing department is obligatory; in the lecture-room it is voluntary. Promotion, however, depends on proficiency both in draughtsmanship and (as has before been stated) in the subject-matter of the lectures; so that an amateur who has but little time to command, and less inclination, stands but a poor chance of clearing the elementary threshold.

The lectures form a prominent feature in the new prospectus. Of these, some are essential, others merely salutary. No figure-painter, for instance, can omit anatomy or perspective; but, though a knowledge of mythology or the history of sculpture can scarcely be called indispensable, yet it is highly beneficial, stimulating alike the imagination and enthusiasm. Young minds can digest readily, and should be liberally supplied with wholesome *pabulum*. Mental inanition is as baneful to the creative faculties as physical inanition is to the body. The brain suggests; the hand executes. If we have nothing to say, what do our hands avail us?

Let us hope that the pupils will appreciate their exceptional advantages, and encourage the believers by their zeal. Let us hope, too, that the public will in due time appreciate the excellence of the school, take a pride in it, and endow it with that for which all institutions clamor — that which art affects to scorn, but without which it cannot thrive — money.

FREDERIC CROWNSHIELD.

THE SCHOOL OF CARVING AND MODELLING.



Sample Study.
Designed by Mr. John Evans.

IN the southeast corner of the basement of the Museum are the rooms of the School of Carving and Modelling, which has, by the kindness of the Trustees, been established in the Museum since the autumn of 1878.

During the previous season it had been held in the Church Street ward-room, granted for its use by the city government.

The course of instruction includes drawing, modelling in clay, casting and carving in plaster, and carving in wood. The modelling is done partly from the round and partly from the flat; the lessons in both cases advancing in difficulty from simple to more complicated examples of conventional form. Sometimes also the pupils work directly from natural objects; and they frequently make memory sketches. In almost every case a plaster cast is taken from the clay model when finished, and in this way some knowledge is gained of what is known as "waste moulding."

In the lessons in plaster-carving, blocks of plaster of the required size are first cast, and upon these the designs are drawn and cut. In wood-carving the same course is pursued, the lesson in both cases advancing in difficulty from the simple bevelling of rectangular blocks to the cutting of leaves, flowers, and animals, or of conventional forms. When a thorough knowledge of the use of the tools and of the difficulties inherent in the materials worked upon has thus been acquired, a little more liberty is allowed; and in this way various articles of use or ornament have been made, such as chairs, picture-frames, fire-screens, etc.

An hour a day is devoted to drawing; and whenever a new subject is given out, a charcoal sketch is first made, from the flat or the

round as the case may be, and it is then modelled in clay with the aid both of the drawing and of the original; lastly it is carved in wood, the clay model serving as a guide.

The accommodations are ample, and afford space for about twenty pupils to work comfortably. The school was at first intended for women only, but in response to numerous applications, an evening class for young men, to which women also were admitted, has been held during the past two winters. The whole school is under the direction of Mr. John Evans, a well-known carver.

The school was established in 1877, by the Woman's Education Association, for the purpose of providing another occupation for women, especially for those who are obliged to earn their own livelihood. Business at that time was in a very depressed condition, and the question was raised whether it was worth while to offer instruction in a branch which would of course be one of the principal things to suffer so long as such a state of affairs should continue. But the committee thought they saw signs that the use of carving as a means of interior and exterior decoration was then only beginning in this country, and that by the time the pupils of the school had passed through the two or three years' course marked out for them, business would probably have revived sufficiently to enable the taste for this especial kind of decoration to have free scope. The soundness of this judgment is proved by the great demand for carvers during the past summer and the large wages they have been receiving, — amounting in some cases to sixty dollars a week. Numbers have been drawn away from Boston to other parts of the country, and it has even been found necessary to import men from France. The fact that in spite of all this so small a number of the pupils who started with the school three years ago are prepared to take advantage of this favorable state of things, is in great part only another proof of the difficulty of convincing Americans, and especially American women, of the necessity of a thorough and long-continued training. Immediate and rapid results are what is generally looked for; and that occupation has the preference which requires the shortest and slightest preparation, or in which a want of training is least obnoxious.

It is doubtful whether the importance of a knowledge of the art of modelling is sufficiently understood, or whether the variety of ways in which it can be made useful and valuable is appreciated. It is difficult for a teacher of drawing to carry his pupils beyond a certain point in their studies unless they acquire the knowledge and appreciation of the round which the practice of modelling would give them. It certainly seems reasonable that next to drawing from the flat should come modelling from the round, both processes being a copy in kind; then, as more difficult, would come drawing from the round or modelling from the flat.

The same causes which have impaired the usefulness of the school in the past, imperil its future. It has a first-rate teacher; the course of instruction is thorough and comprehensive; the accommodations and opportunities furnished by the Museum are all that could be desired; but if these advantages are not appreciated by enough persons to supply the necessary number of pupils, the school must close. The present term will last until the new year, and by that time it will be seen whether there is sufficient encouragement to justify the committee in continuing the school.

THE SCHOOL OF POTTERY AND PAINTING ON PORCELAIN.



Banner-Bearer from Siena, at the Museum.

THE same discouraging want of perception of their opportunities on the part of the pupils which threatens the School of Carving and Modelling with failure, seems likely to bring disaster on another school which found encouragement and hospitable entertainment at the hands of the Trustees. Here again it is woman who has failed to understand how to profit by her advantages, and the success of a third school, which for a time found house-room in the Museum, suggests the unwelcome conclusion that in spite of all her assertions to the contrary, and loud-voiced aspirations for higher employment, woman finds her truest and most congenial occupation in the exercise of the peculiar housewife's implement, in the management of which she has passed a long and involuntary apprenticeship.

Both the School of Carving and Modelling and the School of Pottery and Painting on Porcelain were founded primarily as a means for furnishing to such women as must support themselves by the work of their own hands, opportunities for perfecting themselves, with a thoroughness impossible of attainment should they enter, even as bound apprentices, the work-shops of employers of such skilled labor, in two pursuits of which the commercial standing offered every assurance of a secure and honorable career, while their rank among the minor arts seemed to offer the peculiar attractions demanded by the female mind in those occupations to which it devotes itself.

Whether the special classes which these schools were intended to assist have not seen fit to take advantage of the offered facilities, or whether it has been impossible for them to do so, the fact remains that the teachers have found it impossible to inculcate in the minds of the pupils the necessity for, and advantages of, steadfastness of purpose and honest thoroughness of endeavor. Perhaps the mistake

has been made in each school in not seeking to attract more youthful, and consequently more ductile scholars.

The School of Pottery and Painting on Porcelain was founded under the auspices of the Society of Decorative Art two years ago, in consequence of the wide-spread interest in the decoration of pottery which was developed in this country by the wonderful display of pottery at the Centennial Exhibition. During its first year the attendance was large, the interest well-sustained, and the progress and achievements satisfactory; but this favorable beginning failed of development in the second year. Whether it was that the committee in charge of the school was so dilatory in making arrangements for the second year that the would-be pupils had made other arrangements; whether the interest in the pursuit was only a fleeting fashion; or whether the pupils, finding that there was more real difficulty in mastering it than almost any other art, were unable to make front against the disappointments of repeated failures in firing their work, the result has been that the second year's experience was so unsatisfactory that it has not yet been decided whether the school shall be carried on for another year, or be definitely given up.

The failure of either of these schools would be regrettable from more than one point of view, and it is to be hoped that such promising beginnings will not have to be abandoned either from want of fostering care on the part of the managers or from the lack of pupils. The difficulties that attend the study of china painting are such as to deter most amateurs from becoming successful practitioners of the art, and it is unfortunate for the success of the school that its pupils have belonged to the class of society which dabbles in such matters simply *pour passer le temps*. Had there been amongst the first scholars a few who had distinctly in view the purpose of preparing themselves for a life-long occupation, a different tone would have been given to the undertaking. Amateurs are impatient of delays, their desire is to turn out with the least delay finished and perfect works — as they understand these terms — and this, perhaps, is the reason that oil-painting is so much more popular than any other form of art. It is easier for an amateur to make a finished — save the mark — picture in oils than, for instance, in water-colors; the heavy color covers at once, it does not fade in drying as water-color does, nor does it run and spread. But the practice of neither art is attended with the heart-burnings and disappointments that await the amateur china painter, who sees return from the kiln bleached and discolored the piece of china on which has been lavished the work of days, and which went to the firing an apparently finished work of art. It is not to be wondered, then, that so many give up after a few failures and turn to other pursuits where success is not hampered by such discouraging uncertainties. Neither carving nor china-painting are to be learned in a day, nor is there any short cut to proficiency. They are both distinctly commercial arts, as it were, and the majority of those who undertake to perfect themselves in them should do so in all seriousness, keeping in mind the business aspect of their future occupation, and learning patiently and thoroughly. Unquestionably, there are in Boston and its vicinity more than enough girls and women to fill both schools, and do them credit by the earnestness of their work, could the fact of the existence of the schools and their opportunities be brought to their notice; but as neither art can be classed amongst the elegant accomplishments, we fancy that these pupils are to be found in a somewhat different class of society from that which has hitherto furnished their scholars.

THE WORKS OF WILLIAM BLAKE.

WITHIN the past few years the work of William Blake has been thoroughly explained and commented upon for the benefit of a generation born to very infinitesimal knowledge on the subject. To the general public Blake will probably remain *cavare* in spite of all that may be said or written, and this for reasons which are inherent in his work itself. But to all students, and all true lovers of art, he is no longer what his biographer, with justice, called him not many years ago, *pictor ignotus*. He is better known to students to-day, and his special points are more fully understood by them, than is the case with many artists of greater actual importance to the world. So well has he been written about, so clearly has he been described, and so sympathetically interpreted, that it would almost seem impertinent to undertake a survey of his work with the expectation of finding therein anything of importance as yet undiscovered and unrevealed. To all who may take an interest in his work, Mr. Gilchrist's biography will ever be an invaluable hand-book and commentary, and, supplemented by other recent writings that treat of Blake, it will be all-sufficient for those who may wish to study him. The way in which, as I think, Mr. Gilchrist occasionally overrates Blake's ability, is as nothing compared with the clear and sympathetic manner in which he explains his work as a whole, entering into its spirit and seizing its essence, while seeing most of its defects, and emphasizing most of its limitations. Agreeing as one cannot but do in the main with Mr. Gilchrist's estimate of the artist, it would be but a twice-told tale did I here attempt to set in order a complete account of his work. It will be much better merely to mention what specimens of it have been on exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, to note in how far they differ from the reproductions to which we have been accustomed in the books that treat of Blake, and to add a few words upon the points where, in my opinion, Mr. Gilchrist's estimate has not been unimpeachable. I may say at the outset that, as there has never been a talent more purely personal and characteristic than Blake's, no one can at all appreciate his drawings who is unacquainted with himself. If there are any of my readers who are strangers to Mr. Gilchrist's "Life," I would recommend it, moreover, for still another reason, because it is interesting and valuable for its own sake, a pearl among biographies, and because it contains within its covers some of the rather small amount of good art-criticism that has ever come from an English source.

Many numbers in the collection of which I speak, are the property of Mrs. Gilchrist, and may therefore be presumed to have been in each case as fair a sample of the work in question as it was possible to secure during a search that lasted over many years. There are further, a number of water-colors

belonging to Mr. E. W. Hooper, and a few contributions from other sources, among them Blake's masterpiece, the "Book of Job," loaned by Mr. Scudder. In the same category with this last, showing Blake's talents as an engraver of his own compositions, I may note the large plate of Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims. Of another sort are twelve of the plates to Blair's "Grave," showing how his designs look when translated by another. The water-colors are to all appearance sufficient in quantity and variety to give a fair notion of his work in that line, and are supplemented by a number of what Blake called "fresco" paintings. Printed plates, some with color added by hand, and engravings after the designs of others, go far to complete the list of the various modes of work which Blake practised side by side during the long and busy years of his life. It will be seen that here are sufficient data from which to judge the artist and Mr. Gilchrist's estimate of him.

The first point upon which one feels an impulse to disagree with the biographer, is, I think, his constant and enthusiastic eulogy of Blake as a colorist. There is no doubt that the hand-applied color adds a great deal to the designs in such plates as those of the "Songs," for instance; without it they are, while still showing marks of power and hints of beauty, but rough and incomplete. I do not, of course, mean "unfinished" in the popular acceptance of the word so often, as every artist knows, applied to work that is entirely finished in the best and truest manner. They are evidently incomplete to the artist's eye as well as to those of his critics. This may be readily seen in the four or five uncolored plates from the "Songs" published with Gilchrist's "Life." But when completed, to judge from the examples here exhibited, they do not bear out the biographer's estimate of the artist as a colorist. One feels, indeed, as if he were being judged by an entirely wrong standard if considered as a painter in the true sense of the word. An artist by endowment Blake very certainly was, a draughtsman of great power and often of singular skill, a painter not at all, by aim, by cultivation, or, seemingly, by nature. His theories were those of a draughtsman only. We know his enthusiasm for a hard-and-fast line, his contempt for melting tints and atmospheric effects, his condemnation, utter and ferocious, of the Venetian school and the Flemish, of Sir Joshua's methods, of everything and everybody that was identified with painting emphatically so-called. But, it may be said, a man's theories, however distinctly held and however forcibly stated, are not always in accordance with his practice. We have, however, in my opinion, only to look at the first colored cut or "fresco" of Blake's that meets our eye, to see that his theories were even exceeded by his practice. We ought not, indeed, most often, to call his system of coloring, painting at all in the truly technical sense of the word. It is usually illumination of a peculiar sort, sometimes hopelessly puerile, sometimes very effective, but seldom approaching to real painter's work. His colors are, as Mr. Gilchrist says, often beautiful in themselves, and an immense addition to the clearness of the designs. But they are not employed as are a painter's tints, and serve primarily to give a decorative effect to the page rather than to reproduce nature whether literally or imaginatively. In proof, whereof, I may cite Mr. Gilchrist's mention of a sheet where a tiger is painted with every color almost, save tiger-colors, which last are applied to a tree in his vicinity. The process which Blake called "fresco" consisted in a curious manner of painting with water-colors on a plastered ground which had been applied to board, canvas, or linen. It more nearly resembles tempera than any other recognized mode of working. One can readily imagine that, whether it constituted the whole work or was superadded to a drawn or printed outline, it could not have been a very satisfactory sort of coloring, the tints being usually heavy and opaque without the least brilliancy or depth.

Even apart from the question of color his technical performance is extremely variable. At times he draws like a clever child. At times he draws so that not the greatest master could overmatch him. When beginning to speak in detail of his work, what one should first notice is its imaginative, creative side. Of all the artists who have ever lived, he is the one with whom the conception goes for most, the technical expression for least. It has often been said that Blake was a poet, not a painter, that he strove to express by the graphic art ideas and conceptions only suited to expression in words, or even, as some have held, in music. That he had a poet's inspiration, no reader of his verse can doubt. But his execution with words was even less accomplished than his execution with the pencil. He had mastered the language of verse no more thoroughly than he had mastered the language of lines and colors. Not so thoroughly, indeed, for there are instances where he has perfectly conquered line at least, but very few, and those of the simplest kind, where he has obtained sufficient control over the materials of poetry to carry him through a single poem. There are extant more works of Blake's in the domain of art that are admirably rendered than in the domain of poetry. A few almost perfect little lyrics may be cited, but what is to match the "Job"? I do not think that the ideas Blake attempted to put on paper were unpictorial ideas. On the contrary, they are remarkable for just that coherence, precision, and definiteness which are the essential characteristics of things pictorially, as distinguished from poetically, conceived. His sort of imagination is, indeed, a rare sort for a painter, a sort much more likely to be found in a poet's nature. And this has, I think, led superficial critics to declare that he strove to paint unpictorial themes. But it is not the theme itself, it is the way it presents itself to the imagination of the artist, that renders it fit or unfit for representation by the graphic arts. When Blake's imagination worked with a view to pictorial expression, it worked in a truly and noticeably pictorial manner. When he failed to render his imaginings pictorially successful it was because his technical resources were inadequate, or because he erred in the way he used them.

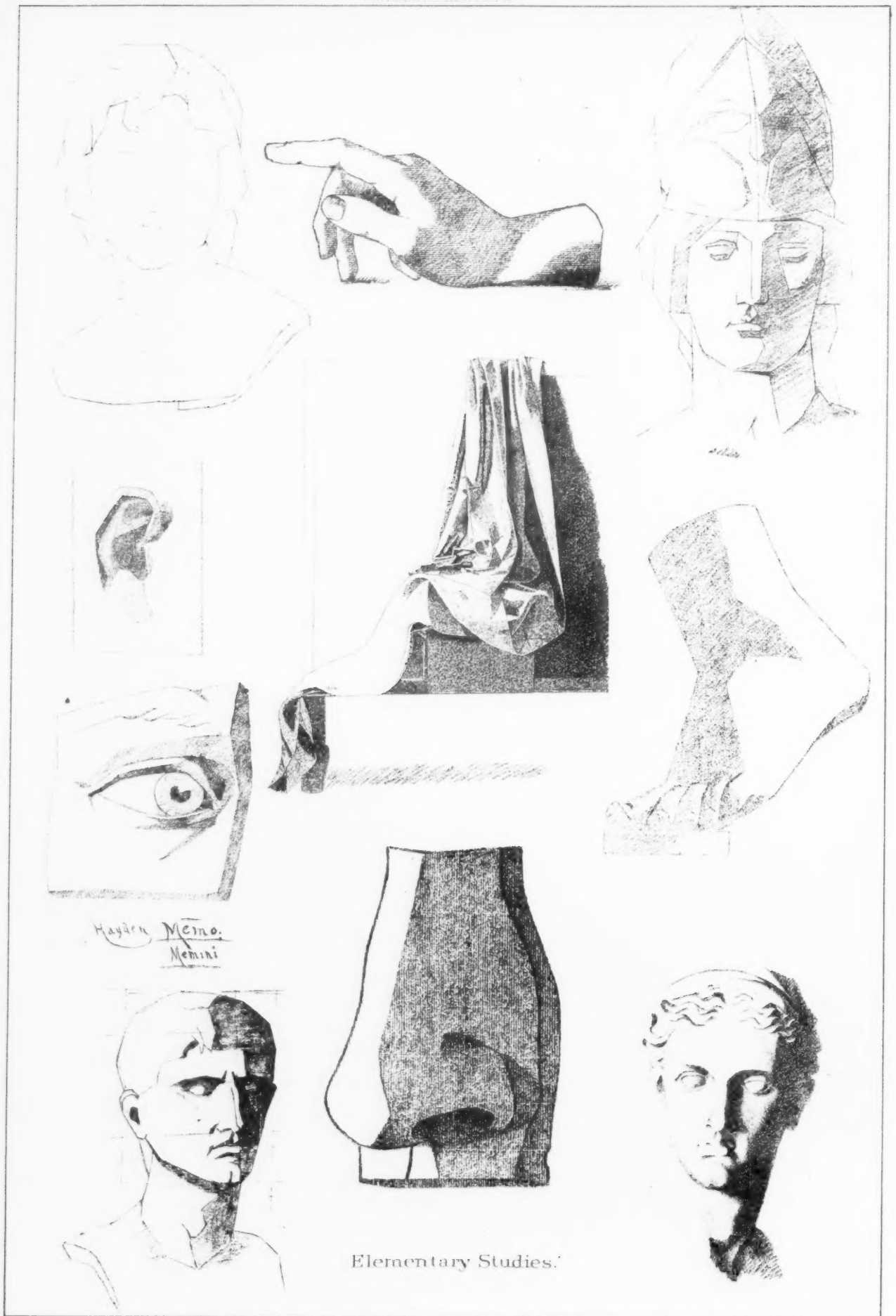
It was not because those imaginings could not, in the nature of things, have been effectively rendered. That this is true, is shown, I think, by the interest and value that attach to so many of his works that are very imperfectly executed. A non-pictorial idea may have a certain value if cleverly expressed according to the techniques of the art. But surely a non-pictorial idea that was also badly expressed could have no interest whatever. Both artistic factors being cancelled, the result would surely be null as art. Now, some of Blake's designs that are almost ludicrously inefficient in manipulation are not only interesting but pmissible. For no reason could this be so except because of the existence of a pictorially fine fundamental conception, a great potential picture visible beneath the imperfect actual one. Take the "Elijah in the Fiery Chariot," for example, of which we had a cut with an article on Blake in a recent number of *Scribner's Magazine*. Even in the cut it is, technically speaking, very imperfect, and in the large hand-finished print shown us in the exhibition, it has even less executive charm. The color is extremely conventional without being beautiful in itself; it is heavy, crude and disagreeable, and, as may be seen in the woodcut, the drawing was far from perfect. At first glance one is repelled by the almost childish inefficiency of the work; but after a moment the eye grows accustomed to this, and can penetrate below it and seize the spirit of Blake's conception, can see the supernatural grandeur he had seen, feel the solemn inspiration he had felt. Surely, no such impression could have been produced by a picture so stammeringly expressed if the underlying idea had been an unpictorial

one. It is with this as it is with all Blake's compositions. Its definiteness is what makes it so forcible, the strong grasp he has had upon his subject, the clear way in which it had presented itself to him. These enabled him to present it clearly and forcibly to us in spite of his imperfect command over the resources of his art. I need hardly repeat that it is this vividness of definite conception which marks a man an artist born as distinguished from a thinker who strives to paint his thoughts. From the vagueness, the formlessness, the obscurity, the incoherence, of much of Blake's poetry, we can guess how wild and shadowy and indistinct must have been very many of his visions and ideas. There could be no stronger proof that he was born a graphic artist *par excellence*, than the fact that in spite of such a temperament, he used his pencil only to express such things as were distinctly and vividly presented to his mind. The strangest inventions of his prolific hand wear the clearest and most graphic shapes. There is nothing vague or undecided about the "Visionary Heads," for instance. Note especially the "Personified Flea," the fantastic impossibility, yet the logical precision of the idea. It is terrible in its convincing reality. If we turn to more important things, who could imagine, one might think, the exit of a soul from the body and show it to us in a definite and tangible way, representing both soul and body by prosaic and quite similar means, yet characterizing each in the most intelligible and artistic way? Orcagna might have done it, perhaps, or some Gothic sculptor. But I doubt whether any one could have done it as well as William Blake, save Michael Angelo. It is not wonderful that a person reading over a list of Blake's drawings should deem them subjects unsuited to the graphic art. His imagination, as Mr. Gilchrist truly says, is different in kind from that of almost every other artist who has left a record of himself. But looking at the drawings themselves, we see that his imagination has not mistaken its limits, merely that it has been so much clearer and stronger and more intense than in other men, that it has been able to use materials with which they would infallibly have made shipwreck. His wildest, most supersensual subjects have been, not imagined as a poet would have imagined them, but seen with a clear and distinct vision as only an artist can see things whether of or above the senses, and as an artist must always see them if he would adequately reproduce them by means of pictorial art.

The impression that Blake's conceptions make upon us of having been clearly seen is accompanied, as we might expect, by the impression that they were intensely felt, thoroughly believed in by the artist. It is interesting to compare his work in this respect with the work of Gustave Doré, who has treated in some sort the same subjects as Blake, has shown us angels and devils, scenes of mystery and of awe, visions of the night, and waking dreams. Of Blake's illustrations to Dante I know nothing, save from the tiny fragments given in his biography. It is a question, to my mind, whether Doré may not have drawn much of his inspiration from them and from other works of Blake's. Whether this be so or not, however, the work of no two men could possibly make a more different impression upon us in so far as its spirit is concerned. There is a note of insincerity through all of Doré's work: it impresses us as that of a man who had taken an interest, of course, in what he was about, but not a very vital interest, and who had believed in it not at all. Blake could not have illustrated Dante without making us feel that he had believed as firmly as the poet in the scenes he was depicting. If he had not so believed, he simply could not and would not have done the work at all. This we know from his life and its records, but we could have told it just as certainly from the sign-manual of sincerity and intense absorption that rests on every line of his work. So, had he illustrated Dante on a scale such as that on which Doré has worked, his designs must have been as distinct, as firm, as coherent, as impressive as the poet's verses. Doré's pictures, strongly as they excite our interest, — curiosity were, perhaps, the better word — plainly as they show an inexhaustible fancy on the part of their designer, do not interpret Dante for us in the least. They terrify or sicken our senses, perhaps; they never stir our own imagination or move our heart as a truly imaginative work must do, as Blake's work does in the hastiest and simplest of its examples. The insincerity which speaks to us from Doré's work may not be dependent upon the vagueness of his conceptions, but it certainly is inseparable from them. He is only definite and clear, only seems to believe in his work when he has scenes to depict that may be made up of ordinary human elements, composed with small reference to the higher imagination, scenes of grotesque torture or of mere physical transformation. Even in these he failed in the one point where true imaginative power would show itself, in the facial expression of the figures. They are not tragic in the true sense of the word, however convulsed or agonized or imploring they may be. They do not move us with "pity and terror," no matter how much we may shudder at the horror of their situation. They affect our physical senses only, and do not stir the higher emotions. In the whole of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* there is not as much tragic power as in Blake's one print of the "Death of the Strong Wicked Man." When we turn from tragedy to visions of beauty and wonder, the distance between the two artists is wider still. In Doré's views of Heaven there is a wonderful sense of space and multitude. I know of no art whatever in which these two things are so well expressed. But they are not the most important of things, and his individual figures lose all value by reason of the very vagueness which enables him to realize them. His innumerable companies of angels are mere winged things, — things which fill all space, it is true, but which in themselves are nothing. There is not one among them that expresses adoration, purity, strength, intelligence, any of the attributes of angelhood, in a word, as they are expressed by many of Blake's figures in his borders even, — figures not an inch long, and made with two or three tiny lines. But minute and sketchy though they be, they are as definite and characteristic to us as their prototypes must have been to the imagination of the man who could draw them thus. What shall one say, then, of the magnificent, "The Sons of God, shouted for Joy," in the fourteenth plate of the "Job," surely the most perfect and tremendous conception of angelic beings that art has ever given to the world, wrapped in no penumbra of vagueness and mystery like Doré's, but as clearly and distinctly rendered as could have been the person of Blake's nearest neighbor. In beauty, which is another indispensable element in imaginative work at least, Blake is as entirely superior to Doré as in decision and verity. There is not a beautiful face in all Doré's work, and beauty of line of any sort, save in the most formal arrangements, is rare with him, while with Blake it is the rule. In its highest developments, — note, for example, the daughters in the last prints of the *Job* series, — nothing could go beyond it. And even when in pursuit of effects of terror his instinct keeps him almost invariably within the limits of beauty in line and composition. I have already compared his imagination to that of the mediæval sculptor, with whom he had, indeed, very much in common. But in this matter of beauty, we have a sharp line of difference between them. In the vividness and strength of his imagination, he was the sculptor's peer. In the grace and artistic symmetry with which he could render it, he was far ahead. M. G. VAN RENSSELAER.

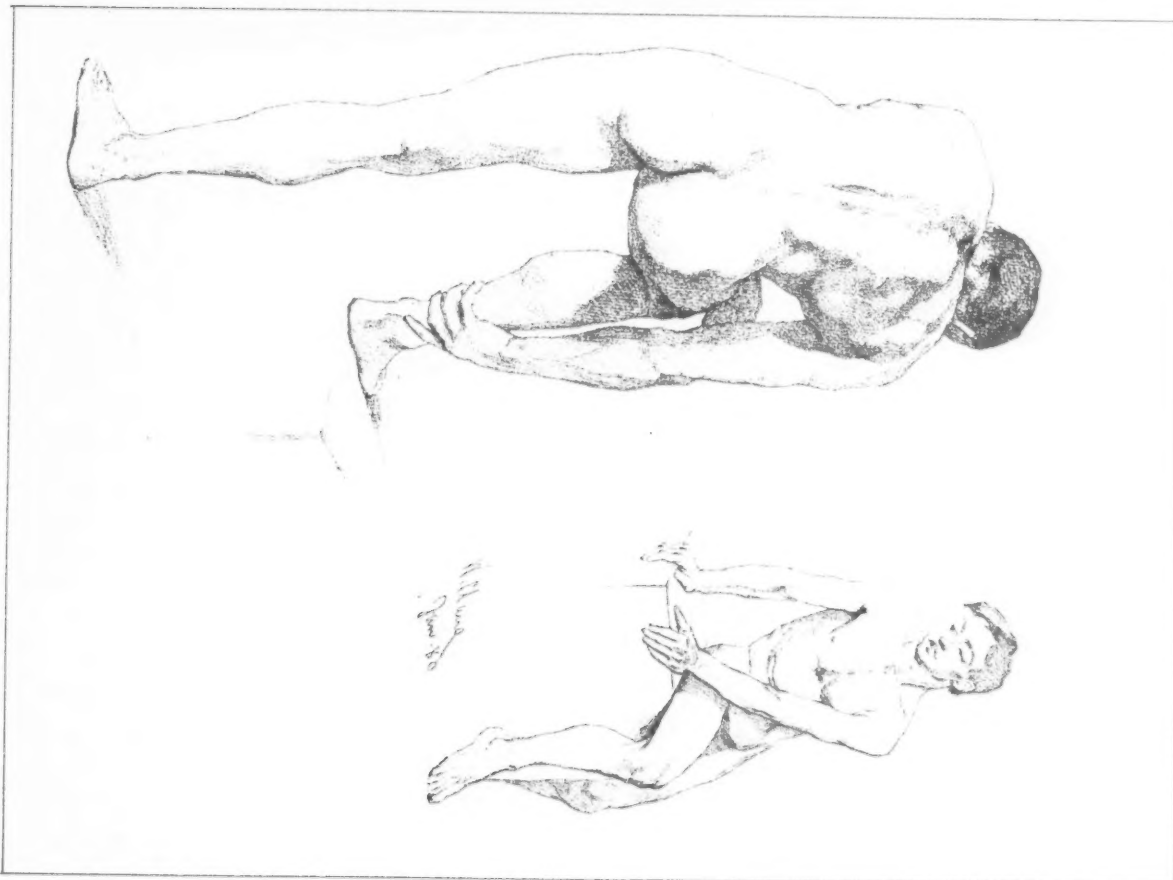
[To be continued.]

¹ "Grandeur of ideas" says Blake himself, "is founded on precision of ideas."



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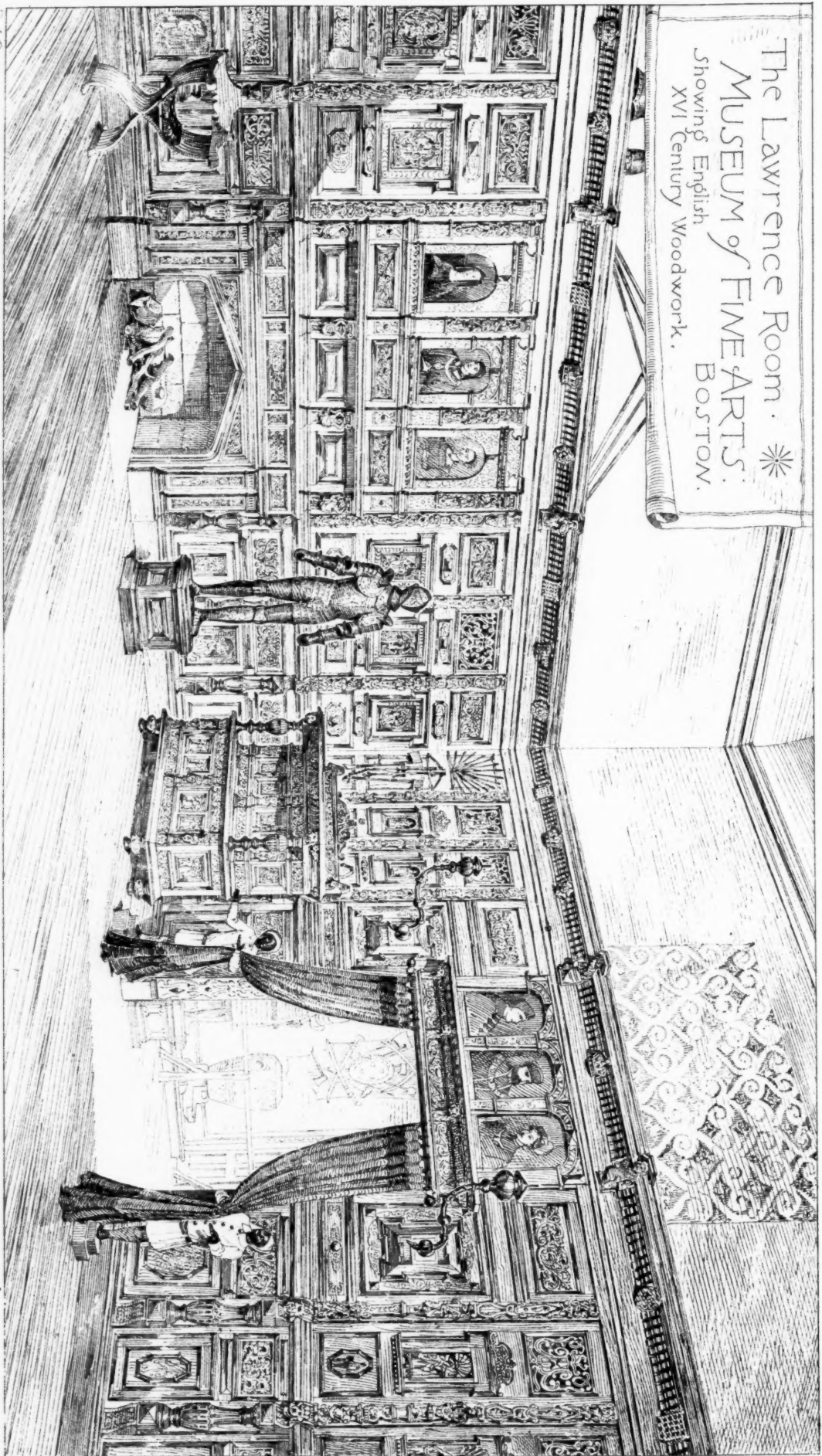
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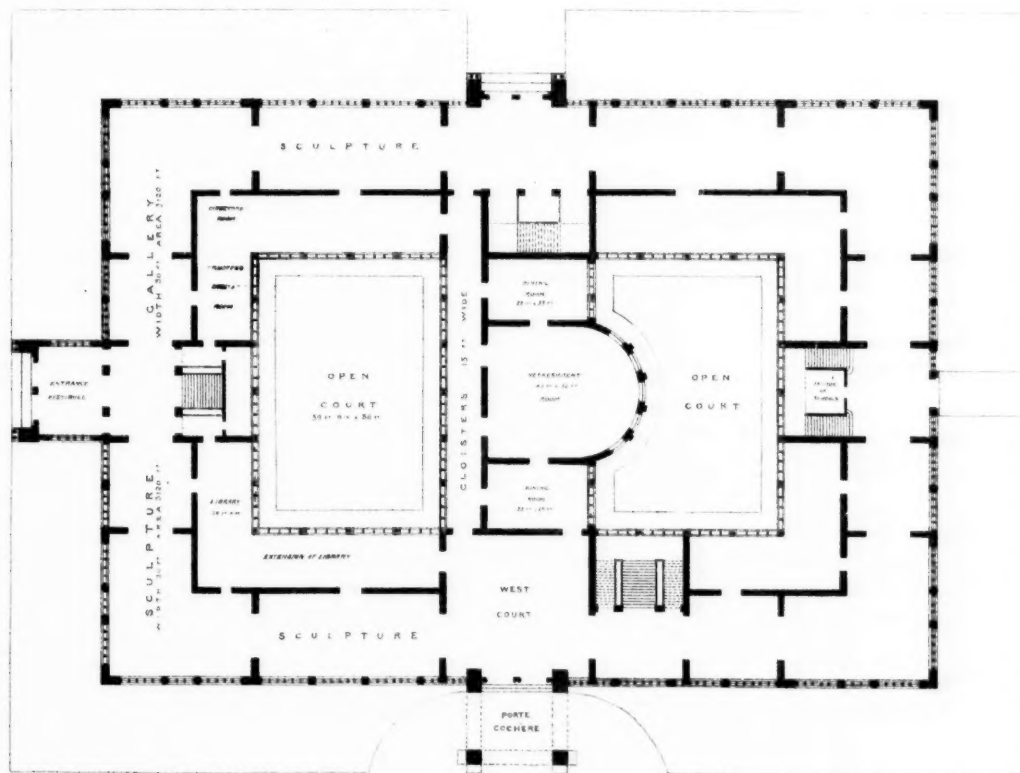
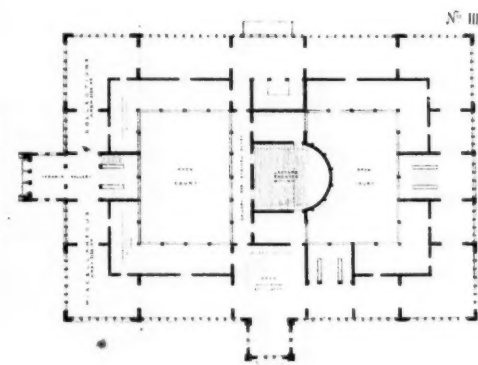
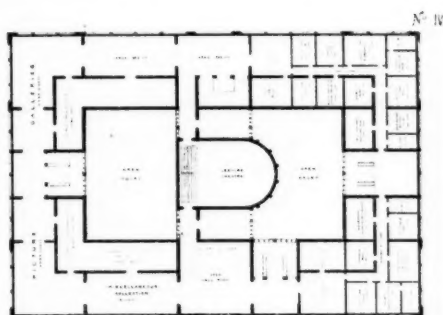
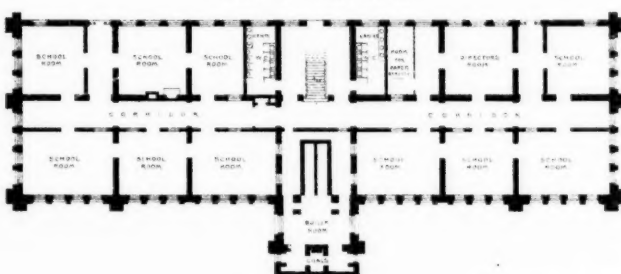
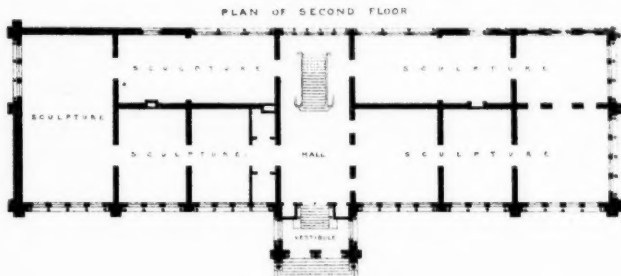
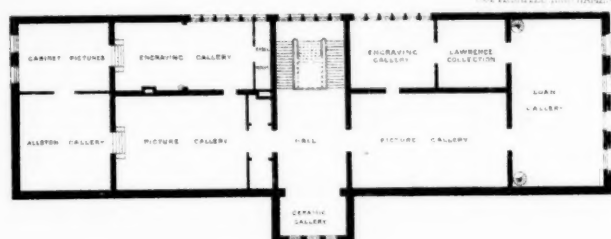
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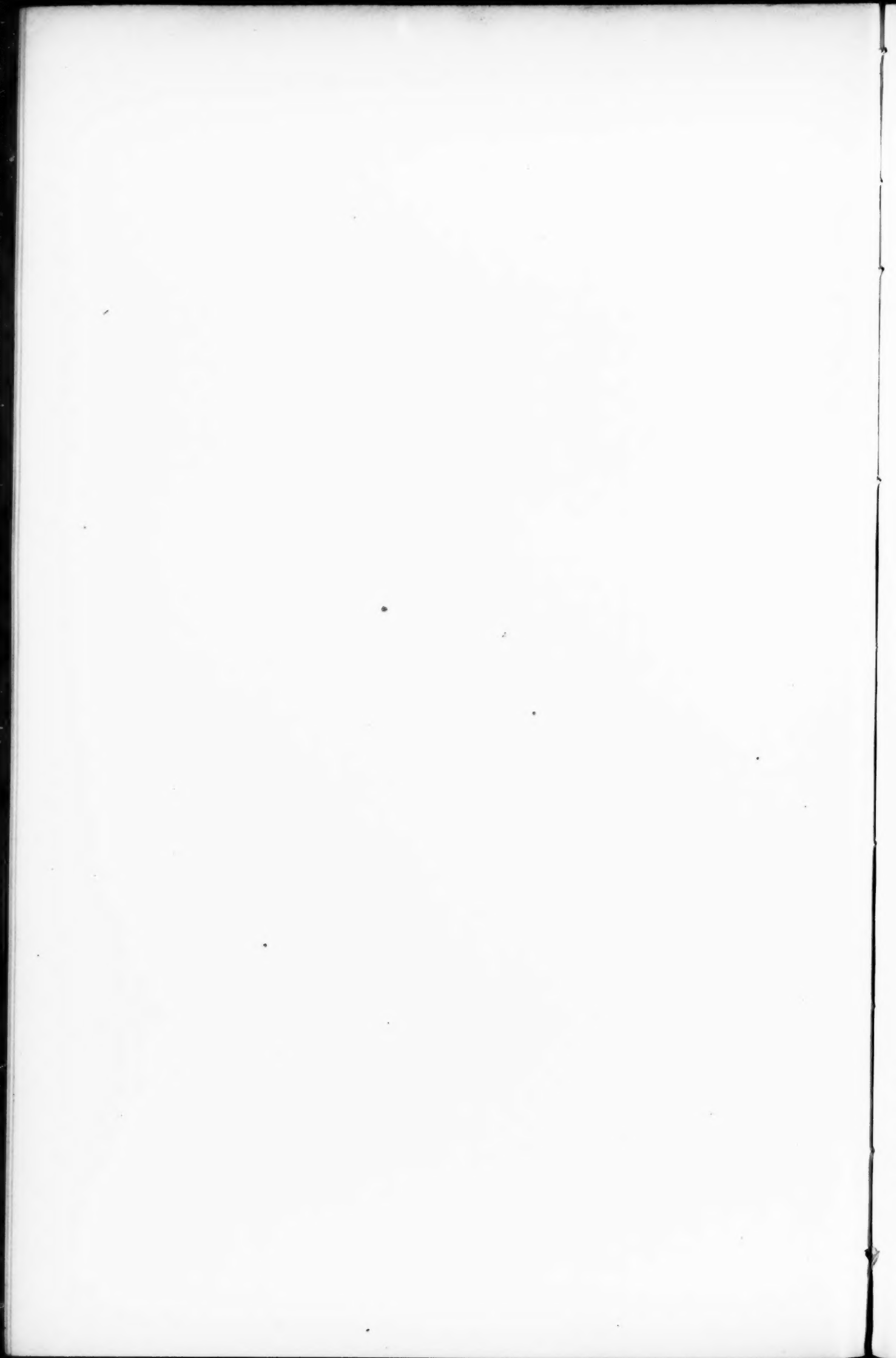


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