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Fine Arts.

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARTISTS.-II.

THERE is a fine collection of landscapes in the present exhibition of the Society. A flat meadow, a rivulet winding through it with rushes growing on its banks, a group of trees, and a broad expanse of sky, are the simple elements out of which Mr. J. Francis Murphy has made his excellent picture, "Brook and Fields," No. 101. The color scheme is as simple as the composition; the greens of the meadow and the trees are contrasted with the warm, grayish white of the great masses of noonday clouds which cover the sky. This picture is both truthful in effect and decoratively beautiful. The composition is agreeable, and it is freely and broadly painted.

Cape Ann Sands," No. 24, by Emil Carlson, is purely a study of nature. It evinces the most careful observation and a plain, straightforward way of painting, and, like most of Mr. Carlsen's work, it is especially strong in color. The painting of middle distance, where the high ground lies, with ledges of rock cropping out in the greensward, and of the foreground of sandy beach, is very commendable. The sky, though lacking somewhat in atmospheric quality, is good in tone and keeps its place well, its dull grayish blue playing an important part in the effective color scheme of the picture. Especially deserving of praise is the feeling for form which is shown throughout, for this important element in landscape painting is too often neglected nowadays.

An effect of warm sunlight on a strip of head-

land is shown in "Late Afternoon, Massachusetts Coast," No. 135, by R. W. Van Boskerck-a truthfully painted piece of nature, very effective in the simple lines of the composition and the complete way in which the subject is treated. The reality of the sunlight is remarkable. It is real sunlight, obtained without exaggeration. This picture is, moreover, strikingly pleasing in color.

A quieter effect of sunlight, in which the hazy atmosphere of autumn subdues and softens the hotter glow of midsummer days, is shown in "September Sunshine," No. 36, by Kenyon Cox. A flat meadow in the foreground, stretching away to rising ground in the middle distance, with a strip of sea and some white sails beyond, is the motive, and simplicity of method characterizes the painting of it. Like Mr. Carlsen's picture, it is a study of nature without any apparent attempt at composition other than that naturally existing. It is a good study, and so truthfully observed and so tenderly painted as to make a charming picture.

"The Harvest," No. 38, by Bruce Crane, is frank and vigorous, as Mr. Crane's best work generally is. In this scene in the grain field, with its long rows of shocks and freshly cut stubble, its clumps of green trees clustering about the white farm-house in the distance, and the flock of blackbirds rising from the ground, we have a familiar picture of country life. It is freshly painted withal, and full of light. "An Early Snow," No. 105, by Walter L. Palmer; "Nightfall," No. 126, by D. W. Tryon, and "Winter," No. 132, by J. H. Twachtman, are three snow scenes-Mr. Palmer's picture being an effect of sunshine, in which there is a delightful bit of painting in the pinkish light on the distant hillsides in the background; Mr. Tryon's, of twilight, remarkable for beauty of color and unity of effect; and Mr. Twachtman's, that of a cloudy winter's day, in which the heavy atmosphere seems full of snow, and the muffled look of nature in its heavy white mantle is admirably depicted. "First Snow," No. 41, by Charles H. Davis, a larger canvas than any of these, is a sunset effect and is agreeable in color, but somewhat conventional. It is seriously deficient in drawing and feeling for form. Much better is "A November Morning," No. 42, by the same artist, a small picture with a misty atmosphere, which is refined and truthful. "Afternoon-September," No. 99, and "Moonlight," No. 98, by R. C. Minor, both remarkable for fine qualities of color; "A Virginia Landscape," No. 76, by Arthur Hoeber, a quiet little picture of flat plain and sky, painted with a delicate appreciation of values; "The Vicinity of Stratford, Conn.," No. 148, by A. H. Wyant, a sober, graytoned landscape with excellent quality of atmosphere; "Canal Boats on the Seine," No. 57, by C. H. Eaton, a pretty bit of French greens and grays; and "Cottage Garden," No. 65, by J. Evans, a study of fruit trees precisely and delicately drawn, are yet other notable landscapes. "The Seine near Paris," No. 14, by George H. Bogert, is a small picture of early moonrise over the river in the outskirts of Paris, which is a most truthful impression and possesses fine qualities of color. A picture of genuine poetic feeling is "Early Moonrise," No. 145, by Carleton Wiggins. Cattle are seen standing listlessly at evening, in a meadow, with a group of trees in the foreground, while the full moon-appears in the sky, just above a distant line of pur-ple-tinted hills. "Moonlight," No. 116, by Otto Stark, is a strikingly truthful effect of moonlight in a narrow street of some French village, through which a man leading a horse, and a boy with a lantern, are passing. The light falls directly from above the middle of the picture, as the moon is too high to be seen, casting dark shadows towards the spectator. The impression of a bright moonlight night is rendered with admirable fidelity.

A picture which deservedly attracts much attention is "Five o'Clock," No. 2, by W. S. Allen. There is a sufficient resemblance in it to some of the work of the French impressionists for the basty. critic, at first sight, to class it in that group of modern work, but it will be found on closer acquaintance to be quite different in intention from that of pure impressionism. Mr. Allen has chosen for his subject a spacious room, in which, at the hour of the afternoon tea, a small company of seven or eight people are enjoying a sort of improvised concert. A young man and a young lady, the former in morning attire, and the latter dressed in an evening costume, are seated in the immediate foreground at the left of the picture. Other little groups are placed on the same side further back, seated about a piano and a harp. At the extreme right, in the furthest corner of the room, a little girl in a white frock is standing playing the violin. A painter impelled only by impressionistic motives would have attempted to seize the scene comprehensively and represent it as concisely as possible on his canvas, giving prominence to the things of the greatest importance and eliminating any details which by being insisted on might injure the general effect. In Mr. Allen's picture nothing is omitted; even the bronze figure of Delaplanche's "Music," which stands on a pedestal at the back of the room beside the little girl, who, by a quaint conceit of the artist, is shown unconsciously imitating the movement of the statue, is carefully painted. There is an evident purpose in this picture to give an air of reality, and to obtain it simply by giving to everything in the room, its proper importance and preserve harmony in the ensemble at the same time. This is no easy task of itself, and, when combined with another consideration which has plainly been held by the painter as of primary importance, namely, fulness and beauty of color, success in it constitutes a real artistic achievement. This success belongs to Mr. Allen's "Five o'Clock," and, except for some eccentric drawing in the figure of the young man in the foreground, there is little to find fault with. The picture is rich and distinguished in color and original in style. Its individuality is noticeable even in this exhibition, in which there is such a large proportion of unconventional work.

"An Aztec Sculptor," No. 19, by George De F. Brush, a picture of an Indian seated on a rug beside a marble slab, which forms part of a wall, on which he is intently cutting with chisel and mallet, is well drawn and painted with much quiet beauty of tone. "In Holland," No. 93, by J. Gari Melchers, a small picture of a Dutch interior with a woman ironing clothes on a table, marked by exact drawing and truth of values; "The Little Cook," No. 88, by H. A. Levy, also a Dutch interior with a single figure, but a canvas of considerable size, simple and artistic in subject and treatment, good in effect and well executed, notably in the painting of the still life; and "A Ride through the Wood," No. 26, by Lyell Carr, a horseman riding along a road at the brink of a ravine, with the sunlight falling upon him through the bare branches of the trees, in which the landscape is typically American, and the effect of a sharp, dry day in early winter is excellently given; are some other works by figure painters whose good qualities commend them to favorable notice. Along with these, also, should be mentioned "A Pempeiian Slave," No. 97, by F. D. Millet; "Alma Mater," No. 75, by G. W. Hitchcock; "Proteus," No. 137, by Henry Walker; "May Roses," No. 47, by Herbert F. Denman; "A Window Seat," No. 46, by Percival De Luce; "Tea Rose," No. 12, by E. H. Blashfield; and "A Song," No. 142, by J. Louis Webb.

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