

*Gaston La Touche*

**T**HE MODERN FRENCH PASTELLISTS.—GASTON LA TOUCHE. BY OCTAVE UZANNE.

MASTER of the pyrotechnics of colour, enamoured of all the prisms of light, ever seeking after the sumptuous decorations of the eighteenth century and the evocations of *fêtes galantes* of reigns gone by; curious, moreover, as to all the arts of painting, Gaston La Touche of course could not fail to be attracted by the delicacies and the subtleties of the pastel. He arrived there slowly, by the force of things, when his talents had already expanded themselves on many big compositions in oils, and in the water-colours in which he always excelled. It was a time when his capacity was still a matter of lively discussion at the exhibitions, a

time when his representations of Italian actors and his ecclesiastical interiors at once aroused full admiration on the part of his faithful admirers, while at the same time they were calling forth vehement protests from the majority, who demanded to know what he could be doing in the domain of Latour and Perodeau and La Rosalba!

Now, as nothing on the subject of processes and æsthetic treatment could be of so much value as the ideas and opinions of an executive artist himself, I decided to go and interview my friend Gaston La Touche with reference to his pastels. In his cottage-studio at St. Cloud, where I found him, there was no abundance of pastels—those works done with the soft crayon in flat and velvety tones. I should have liked to examine carefully on the grain of the paper, white or grey, if not on the canvas, the secret of his skilful rubbing, the



“LA COPISTE”

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FROM THE PASTEL BY G. LA TOUCHE

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