

*English Drawing***E**NGLISH DRAWING. — THE
LANDSCAPE AND FIGURE
SKETCHES OF THE OLDER
MASTERS. BY T. MARTIN WOOD.

THE pleasure derived from the study of drawings lies in appreciation of the draughtsman's sensitive vision as displayed in them and the responsiveness of his pencil. The touch of the artist in a fine drawing is a thing of nerves. This nervous quality was essentially the feature of drawing until these present times, for the reason that the art of line drawing was insisted upon to such an extent that an easy skill in it was then looked upon as the first equipment in every artist. The modern tendency of training has meant the loss of those finely sympathetic qualities of drawing which evolved from persistent training. This scholarship in drawing remains only with a remnant of artists to-day, a pure stream difficult to find uncontaminated by so-called systems invented in the schools. The ability to sketch brilliantly whilst depending on the same qualities is yet a case apart. As with the gift

of poets, the sketcher's vivacity of sight comes with him at birth. The laws which govern the creation of a sketch are not to be defined, they answer to an inward vision on the part of the artist. The great interest of the sketch is in the fact that it represents the process of artistic thought, which may or may not eventually concentrate in the finish of a painted picture.

To accept a difficult composition from nature, to define its sentiment in a few lines so instinctively chosen that they are the lines which give the whole meaning of the subject, is to make a good sketch.

In the particular set of sketches with which we illustrate this article the reader will, we hope, be able to trace that personal character in which their meaning is to be found, and to note with interest the quality of the touch with which pencil is put to paper, as distinguishing the work of one artist from another. There is no attempt here to touch the history of drawing in England during the period which our illustrations cover. The subject would scarcely come within the province of our pages; but the sketches reproduced emphasise the salient features of a variety of styles. The most



PENCIL SKETCH

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