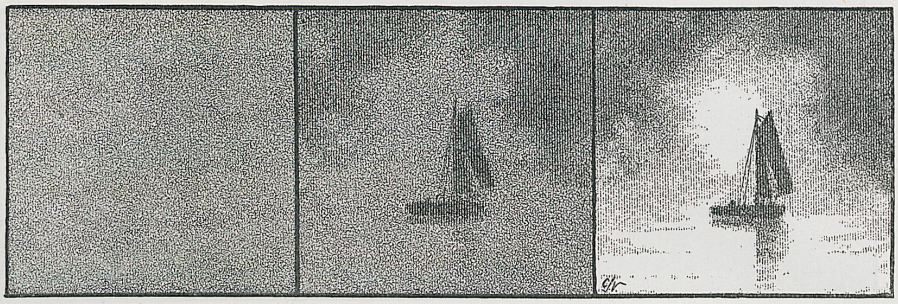
Drawing for Reproduction



DRAWN ON PAPER WITH BLACK AQUATINT GRAIN

vour being to give a nice clean-looking result, rather than to reproduce the *actual* work of the artist.

A glance at the papers where this cheap process is in vogue will explain a good deal. There is a high average of mechanical work, well drawn, but with a line devoid of the slightest artistic expression, unsuggestive of either form, texture or colour, amounting to what one might almost term the skilful evasion of nearly every artistic quality. But this work reproduces well; whereas a drawing that possesses those qualities of workmanship which I think desirable, returns from the hands of the process firm, more or less a collection of ragged fine lines and black blotches, the despair alike of artist and engraver. And this is not necessary; for the ordinary photo-engraver at his ordinary price can and does give a very fair reproduction of this class of work if pressure is put on him; but while he can get men to sacrifice themselves artistically in order that he may reproduce their work well (*i.e.*, without trouble), he is scarcely likely to take an affectionate interest in other kinds of work.

I have been shown scores of drawings by these cheap photo-engravers that have had the quality necessary for a good reproduction, and I can conscientiously say that it was the only quality they possessed, and that I have never seen a single artistic pen-and-ink drawing which an ordinary photo-engraver considered suitable for process. His ideal seems to be an engineer's drawing, which, although excellent in its own line, is not, I think, peculiarly adapted to artistic illustration.

I myself find that if you are unfortunately obliged to work when not in good form, you will turn out an indifferent drawing that will reproduce beautifully; and working to the requirements of the cheap process amounts to keeping oneself under par, and prevents one from taking any really artistic interest in one's work.

Good process, on the other hand, places absolutely no restraint whatever on the artist. For such I have used a line of varying greyness and thickness in some drawings which have been excellently reproduced by Gillot (at a very moderate price too), but this was done by retouching by hand, which causes the difference in price between good and indifferent process, the latter leaving off where the former has only commenced. But I am not asking for this hand-work from the cheap photo-

ON PAPER WITH WHITE DIAGONAL LINES

ON PAPER WITH WHITE STRAIGHT LINES

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