

Sketching Grounds. No. II.—Spain.

broken, and does not yield so good a half-tone as the black papers.

(5) *White straight lines.*—The remarks in No. 4 apply in this case also.

(6) *White aquatint lines.*—Perhaps the most useful of the white Gillots, producing a most artistic stipple-effect; but many ordinary drawing-papers will give a similar though not so fine result.

(7) *Canvas-grained, white.*—Effect irregular, and requiring much care in working, the nature of the surface rendering it difficult to prevent the development of unsightly patches.

The scraper or knife is soon blunted, and requires constant sharpening if the artist is to work with comfort. Care should be taken when scratching to produce a half-tone, not to scratch too deeply in places, and thus inadvertently produce high lights and spoil the half-tone. A good pen-knife would appear to be the best scraper, although these latter are made in many shapes.

Too great reduction should be avoided. The examples are reduced by a bare quarter of an inch—which fines the lines slightly without confusion, which is apt to result with great reduction.

The black diagonal and straight are decidedly the most useful of the seven papers for ordinary drawings. The eighth example shows that a failure in itself may suggest effects to be utilised afterwards.

C. J. V.

Writing from Bordighera to the *Westminster Gazette*, Mr. Grant Allen touches a very vital question when he says:—"Coming to Italy with our ideas fully formed about everything on heaven and earth, we naturally say to ourselves, 'Great heart alive, what sadly degraded frescoes! To think the art of Raphael and Andrea del Sarto should degenerate even here, in their own land, to such a childish level!' But we are wrong, for all that. It is Raphael and Andrea who rose, not my poor nameless Sasso artists who sank and degenerated. Italy was capable of producing her great painters in her own great day, just because in thousands of such Italian villages there were work-a-day artisans in form and colour capable of turning out such ridiculous daubs as those in this tawdry church on the Ligurian hilltop. . . . To us English, on the contrary, high art is something exotic, separate, alone, *sui generis*. We never think of the plaster star in the middle of our ceiling as belonging even to the same range of ideas as, say, the frescoes in the Houses of Parliament. In Italy, art is endemic. In England, in spite of all we have done to stimulate it of late years, with guano and other artificial manures, it is still sporadic."

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LETTERS FROM ARTISTS TO ARTISTS. — SKETCHING GROUNDS. NO. II.—SPAIN. BY FRANK BRANGWYN.

MY DEAR W.—In my last letter we were, as I told you, en route for Jacca. Early in the morning we started by train; unfortunately, we fell asleep, and passed the station where we should have changed; got out, and found ourselves at Tormillo Lastanosa. A little light refreshment seemed desirable under the circumstances, but the brass-bespattered stationmaster said it was impossible. Eventually we joined an old man making for a village in the hills; it was warm work, up dried river-beds, by stony footpaths, over herbless and treeless wastes, scorched and cracked by the sun, till at the end of a ravine we saw El Tormillo. Pushing our way to the posada, we had a dish of tortillo, a compound of eggs and garlic fried in oil. This village was certainly the most uncanny I remember seeing. It seemed a



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village of the dead: no one moved about. It was a most paintable place, but impossible to do anything in, as there was nowhere to put up. We heard of an ancient castle, and set off to see it, with our host as a guide. It contained a lofty vaulted chamber with the remains of a fine staircase. On either side were the doorways