

Studio-Talk

Imaginative art reasserts its rights in the person of Mr. Walter Crane, whose fanciful genius is seen in the meeting and the kiss of the Rainbow and the Wave. Mrs. A. L. Swynnerton's *Hebe* is conceived in something of the same spirit of fancy; but our dreaming is rudely broken, for the divine Hebe turns out to be simply a peasant girl in all the reality of the sunshine. Next we come to a placid piece of painting, delicate in scheme, as befits the patient humility of poor little Cinderella—a fine example of true perceptive artistry by Mr. G. Clausen. Charming, too, Mr. W. B. Richmond's portrait, its delicate harmonious colouring suggestive of all innocence and freshness. Mr. La Thangue is certainly fond of his animals, and justly so. St. Francis of Assisi, whom I mentioned just now, one day sold his cloak to save a lamb from the butcher's knife; and the sweet Franciscan poetry tells, too, of the Saint and the wolf of Gubbio and the bird-catcher's doves. Mr. La Thangue, who in his picture shows with great truth a group of shepherds feeding their young goats, would find in these poems many a subject he would like to paint, and would paint well. Mr. Alfred East's charming landscape shows the soft mists behind the trees, with the moon mounting high in the heavens, while the light shining from within the dwelling speaks of the peaceful home-life of the fields. In Mr. Boughton's *Rosemary* we find the same sweet and moving sentiment of melancholy—a poetic impression conveyed by sheer talent on the part of the artist. To call a thing poetic is to state the feeling it evokes; there can be no praise beyond that, and perhaps no criticism. What profits it to discuss the method, or the composition, or the colouring? Each man has his own particular manner of going to work, and no exact rules can ever be laid down for his guidance. For the fact remains that the painter who can succeed in conveying to others the feelings he himself has felt, must always be an artist of true power; and that is enough.

This digression demands an apology; yet it is in no way foreign to the subject in question. Take for instance, Mr. George Wetherbee's picture, as illustrating just the opposite of what I have referred to. His *Youth and the Sea-Maiden* appears to my eyes like a grouping of work-room studies, in which the bare intention of the artist is suggested; and the same must be said of the laboured allegory by Mr. Herbert A. Olivier, with the happily chosen title of *A Garden of Chances*. Mr. John Sargent's portrait of Countess Clary Aldringen is in his best manner. Broadly treated and full of life, this fine picture shows to perfection

the artist's audacious methods. His subject seems just about to speak, her lips parted, as if to exchange a greeting, and her hand half open, as though bestowing alms. The catalogue says nothing about Mr. John Collier's beautiful picture, perhaps in order that we may divine the subject for ourselves, as indeed it is not difficult to do. There are two young girls, one lying down and the other seated beside her. And they are thinking or chatting about those things which girls of their age think and talk about, when one of them has a ball-programme in her hand.

Mr. Leslie Thomson paints *Ophelia*, but he has not conceived the subject in the same light-hued fancy as the great poet. With many good qualities, his picture is unfortunately quite devoid of brightness; Ophelia would surely have shunned the contact of this black water and these sombre flowers! Mr. Britten retells in pastel the ancient fable of Hercules and the Centaur Nessus, with landscape surroundings which, if scarcely Greek, are none the less beautiful.

In the Atrium, near the little fountain, spurting its stream into a marble basin surrounded by lovely hydrangeas, we come upon a polychrome bust by Mr. George Frampton, done in the style of the Italian sculptors, and dispensing with the ugly turned socle. The graceful title inscribed below Mr. Albert Toft's delightful portrait in relief explains itself; and to conclude, after mention of Mr. Gilbert Bayes' supple metal work, just a word in praise of Mr. Drury's plaquette in admirable profile, which merits its title of "Queen," just as Mr. Toft's bust deserves—as its name denotes—to be loved!

AMAN-JEAN.

STUDIO-TALK

(From our own Correspondents)

LONDON.—The sale of Lord Leighton's pictures and sketches produced some rather surprising results. The prices obtained for the few large pictures which remained in his studio at the time of his death were generally low, while some of his small sketches and studies of landscapes brought considerable sums. Judging by the readiness of collectors to acquire the less characteristic examples of his work, it would seem that the late President might have secured a far wider following had he limited himself less persistently. As a landscape painter he might easily have been in the first rank, for he showed in his

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