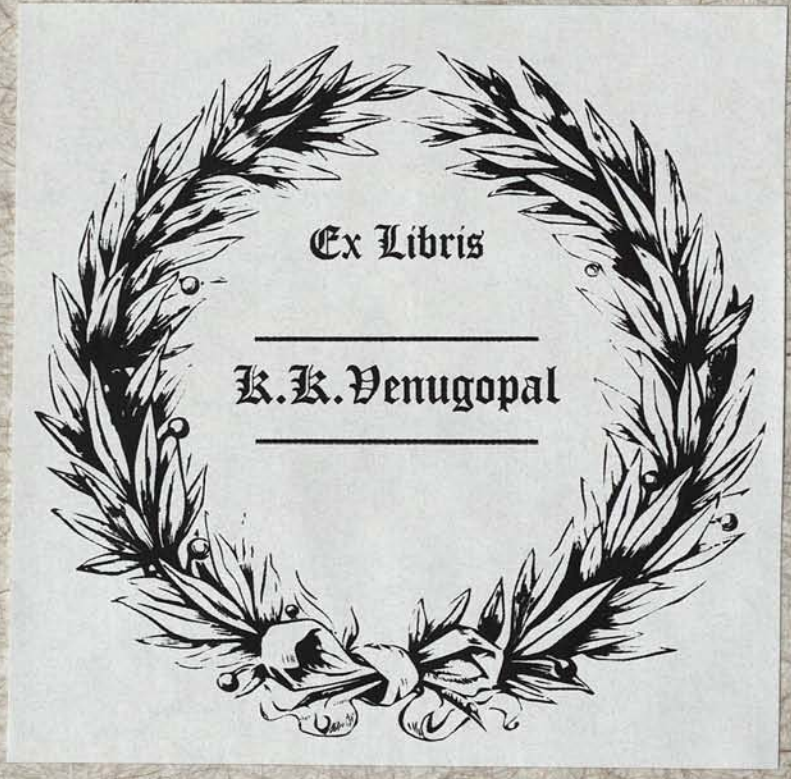
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DUTCH PAINTERS

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

DUTCH PAINTERS

OF THE

NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

EDITED BY

MAX ROOSES

Curator of the Plantin—Moretus Museum, Antwerp.

Translated by F. KNOWLES.

With Six Etchings by PH. ZILCKEN, Six Photogravure Plates and over 200 other Illustrations.

LONDON

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1900.

CONTENTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS APART FROM THE TEXT.

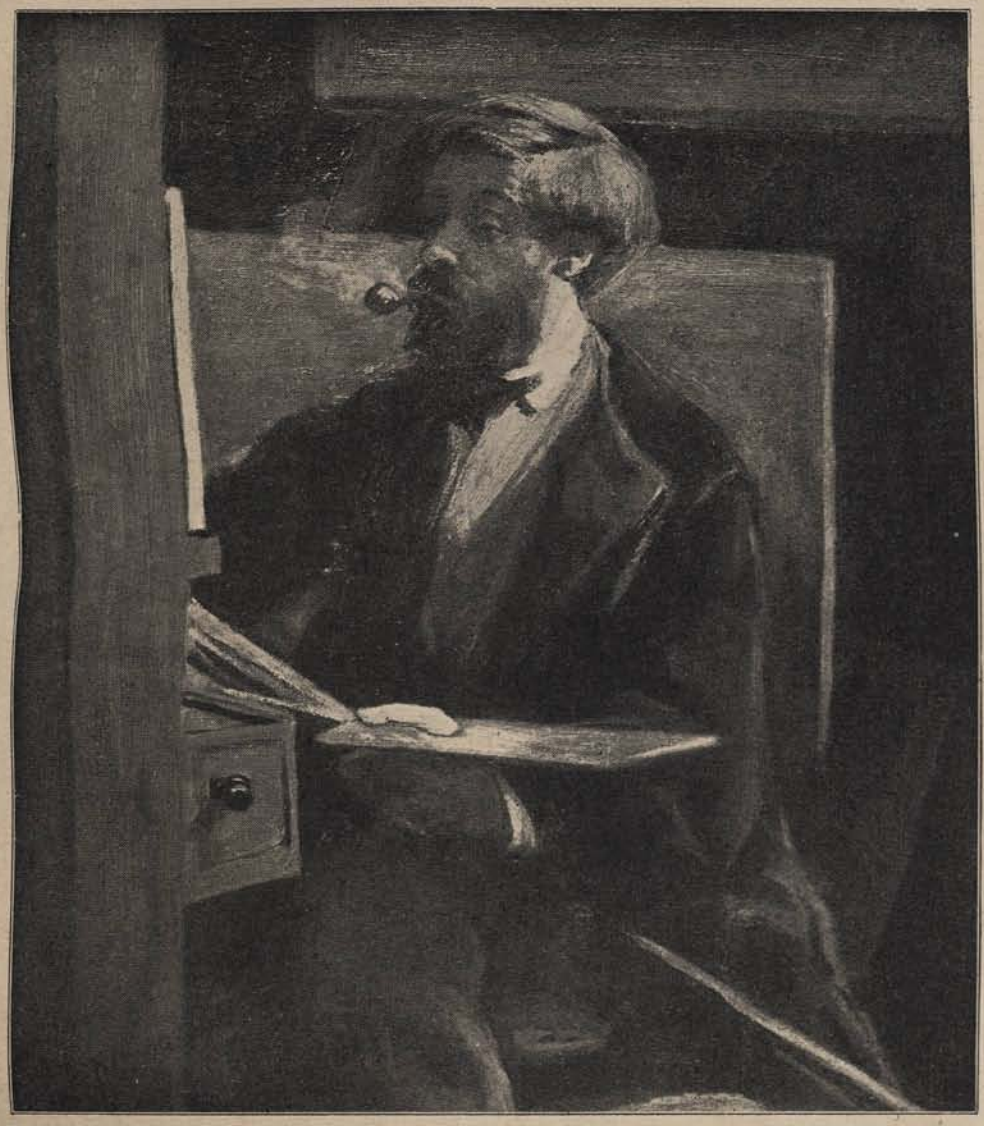
ANTON MAUVE

BY

A. C. LOFFELT.

Horses wading through the ford, from a painting, in the possession of Mr. J. C. J. Drucker (London).

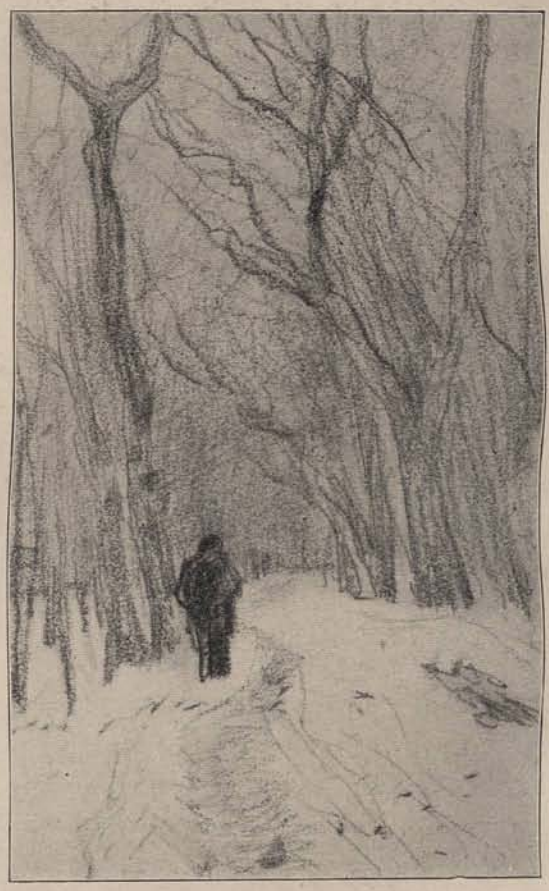
ANTON MAUVE.
1838—1888.



When I take my favorite walk, through Clingendaal to Wassenaar, in the spring or early summer—that walk so well known to the inhabitants of the Hague—I often think of Mauve and his light, soft, silvery art, that touch so delicate and sympathetic, so pleasing and artistic. The atmosphere of a pale grey-blueish tone, as soft as satin; the ground covered with the finest green grass—such as grows only near the downs—; the small lanky trees, birch and poplar, clothed in their scanty spring attire, and should the wind blow from the east, there hangs over the landscape a fine, transparent veil which gives to the whole a lovely caressing mood. Should it chance, too, that

the farmer was busy with his plough and harrow, or the labourer with his spade, it would seem to me as if I were walking through a gallery of pictures, and all of them signed by Mauve. The chain of soft mossy downs, which surrounds the scene, is a wall founded by Mother Nature to hang these pictures on, the one harmonizing with the other and blending into a whole, worthy of the name of so great an artist as Anton Mauve. I acknowledge that it is a queer proceeding to make a hotch-potch of reality and art in this fashion, but does not this strange *mélange* speak well for the artist, who is able so to deceive the lover of art with his brush, that nature herself seems represented on the canvas and is able to enchant those who love the soft, hazy landscape of the Netherlands.

Even so I think of Daubigny when walking along the shores of the Oise; or of Diaz when wandering in the forest of Fontainebleau. Again, if strolling in the neighbourhood of Hooghalen, I seem to be turning over the pages in a sketch book of Hobbema.



A study.

Mauve loved nature such as I have been describing. Every artist has his especial taste in the matter of landscape; every man sees nature through different spectacles, and every artist according to his temperament; he (the painter) sees her, not so much by sight as by disposition. She will appeal to his mood and stir his humour according to the vein he is in. The sound and healthy Roelofs, the lively ever-green Weissenbruch, loved the soft emerald coloured *polders* and *plassen*. The less passionate Van de Sande Bakhuyzen —that good and well-balanced practical philosopher (among artists)—feels himself most at home under the golden rays of an autumnal sun. William Maris' art is neither like the one nor yet like the other; it has not the spiritual tenderness of Mauve nor the power and strength of the others I have named; he is calm and yet cheerful, always preferring nature in her moments of youth and freshness and in her times of fertility. And what about his brother Jacob? He is the modern Rembrandt of Dutch landscape painters. What *he* saw in *germ* he reproduced through the magnifying glasses of his own personality. He is more *romanticus* than is generally supposed and as little realistic as Rembrandt was said to be. In his full power and perfection Jacob Maris' pictures may be said to equal Byron's poems.

The river, from a painting in the possession of Mr. J. C. J. Drucker.

When Mauve had found his level, so to speak, and felt thoroughly convinced in what particular line his talent lay, he ever after remained faithful to the green fields and country lanes, to the rich meadows with grazing cattle, and to soft greyish downs, all so characteristic of some parts of Holland. He studied much in the neighbourhood of Scheveningen, not only on the sea shore, but wandered far inland to the so-called "Inner Downs," which are softer and greener than those nearer the sea, away from the influence of wind and storm.

He spent a long time at a farmhouse called Kranenburg, near Dekkersduin in the neighbourhood of Loosduinen, a real "Mauve spot." The soft, pale coloured downs of that district, sparingly covered with tufts of grass, and continually nibbled to their very roots, by small poor looking cattle—very much of the type of the lean kine that we imagine Pharaoh to have seen in his dream—inspired him and woke within him the fire of his art. It was in this spot that our artist found the bent of his brush, such subjects as seemed created for his use and finding an echo in his heart. His taste did not run in prize animals, nor in the buxom maidens of North Holland, but in the hard-worked, sad-eyed women, standing over the washtub, or minding the sheep and goats, looking as if *they* too lived on the meagre grass tufts and knew what it meant to be cold and hungry.

The old road from Meerdervoort to Kranenburg with the huge, well-known poplar halfway, was always a favorite walk for lovers of nature and fascinating in the extreme for every landscape painter. Many a sketch has been made along that road by celebrated men. De Bock in particular loved that rather dismal low-lying but highly picturesque lane. Alas! Alas! times change and not for the better as regards artistic beauty, for now, along that road, runs a steam tram. Civilization is barbarous to the beauties of nature.

Mauve enjoyed his stay at Kranenburg and there led the real Bohemian life. In after years I walked with him to the farm, through all the well-known and much-loved spots, and how excited he was over every little place. How he told me something about every stick and stone; how he extolled the beauties of almost every blade of grass; how every thing recalled to his memory some little event or occurrence. It was in the spring of the year when young and tender buds showed themselves in every direction, spring flowers coming up at our feet, especially the lily of the valley growing wild in great abundance, the "Down-rose" too so plentiful and sweet smelling; young tendrils climbing and creeping up every wall or fence, in fact new life showing itself on every inch of soil, reminding one involuntarily of the love of God and the continuation of life.

I already mention in these early pages Mauve's sojourn at Kranenburg, as it proved so important, not only to himself in particular, but to the world of art in general. It led to what was called "The Grey School," which was at first much abused, but in later days the pearly-grey softness which characterizes Mauve's works —and those of his pupils and followers—was appreciated by all true lovers of Art.

On the heath, from a painting in the possession of Mr. J. C. J. Drucker.

Let us now first of all cast a look over Mauve's youth and early career.

He was born on the 18th of September 1838 at Zaandam, where his father was Baptist minister. Shortly after his son's birth Mauve *père* was appointed to the Baptist church in Haarlem, which promotion he gladly accepted. At a very early age Anton showed a great taste for drawing, and this artistic inclination grew day by day stronger and stronger, till he fully made up his mind to *become an artist.* There are few sensible parents who are willing for their children to follow the very precarious and uncertain "trade" of "Becoming an artist." They well know how that path is strewed with snares and pitfalls and how overcrowded it is with struggling artistic souls, few of whom meet with financial success. "Many are called but few are chosen."

The family Mauve was by no means rich and therefore a very sensible and

Minding the cows, from a painting.

practical point had to be considered. But what is to be done with a lad who has but one idea in his head, and whose whole soul and being is dominated with the love of nature and the artistic picturesqueness of the world. Out of such material it was not possible to make an ordinary work-a-day world individual; his dreaminess and impressiveness excluded all hope of his ever becoming a useful member of society, or a necessary screw or wheel in the machinery of this prosaic world.

Father and son, however, came at last to an amicable, though perhaps not altogether satisfactory, arrangement. Anton *might* take up painting under the condition that he worked with the idea of becoming a drawing master in time, which would lead to his being able to earn an honest penny should the Muses refuse to smile upon him. Although his intentions were good, experience will

teach any one that a man like Anton Mauve, with his artistic soul and his manner of art interpretation, could not agree with the ideas of the drawing-committee and school examiners, with whom he had to do, nor could he conscientiously follow the usual orthodox rendering on conventional lines, the reproducing of lifeless things, mechanical and inartistic—irrespective of the true principles of Art—which were required of him, if he ever expected to become a certificated drawing master. These were bitter pills for him to swallow. History relates that he was often found bathed in tears and muttering to himself that in this wise he could never become a "real artist."

Mauve's sentiment and art convictions made him, already in those early

Sheep going home, from a painting.

days, see nature from a highly artistic point of view and not by rule of measure. His was the tender humouristic impressionism which remained with him till his dying day. It is not easy to say whether perhaps he did not somewhat imbibe this tenderness from Joseph Israëls. It certainly is a fact that Mauve adored Israëls and that the two artists, though unrelated by ties of blood, were closely connected in mind and spirit. But even after Mauve had won his spurs and was celebrated all over the world—especially in England—and when his pictures were selling for large sums of money, even *then* he often heard that some of his purchasers and admirers were not altogether satisfied with his cows and sheep, or with his rustic figures. It is worthy of notice that some of his countrymen and several of his brothers-of-the-brush preferred his early

figures and cattle—the style he learnt to perfection at Kranenburg—to those of his more finished and later works. And yet the well-known art collectors in England, such as Staats Forbes, Sir John Day, Alexander Young admire and value more the works of his riper years. Is it not strange that during the last five years of our artist's life he should strive after anatomical accuracy and classical beauty? I feel that I may safely say that this was due to the influence of the immortal Millet, whose works, at that period, he studied so closely and for which he showed the greatest admiration and sympathy. Spending an evening with him, not so very long before his death, I noticed a great collection of photographs of Millet's works hanging on his studio wall; they seemed to be numbered amongst his most treasured household gods. Mauve handled these photographs with a tenderness and devotion which was really quite touching to see, drawing my attention to the various points to be admired and becoming enthusiastic as he talked of the "sculptor" Millet.

When Mauve lived in Haarlem and was a young fellow he studied for a time with Van Os, the animal painter, who, however, was but half satisfied with his "obstinate and wayward" pupil. He complained that the fellow refused to finish off his works. There is no doubt that master and pupil did not understand each other; such different characters and dispositions—seeing art through different coloured glasses—could not well amalgamate. The works of Van Os were highly finished, having a sort of polish, like well-to-do furniture, and for which he found an ever ready market. Indeed his pictures were made and disposed of like manufactured articles and were looked upon, in those days, as necessary wall decorations for the rich. How could *such* a man understand the highly sensitive artistic nature of Anton Mauve. The latter could not finish his canvases, simply because he felt they were not what he wished them to be, and he could not go on wasting his time over work that he knew could never succeed, under the existing circumstances. But the moment came when he was expected to earn his own living, and indeed it was necessary to put art to one side and to remember that man cannot live on air, however artistic the air may be. So Mauve suddenly began to follow the example of his master and paint "taking" little pictures, clean and bright and suitable for the homes of the inartistic *nouveau riche*. These works can still be occasionally found at art sales, but really not even connoisseurs can discover "Mauve" in any of them.

Can you not imagine what a blessing it must have been to Mauve when he finally made up his mind to "kick over the traces" and turn his back upon Van Os and his teaching. With a light heart and a still lighter purse he grasped his staff, and, with his loins girt, so to speak, he wandered away, determined in future to follow his own bent, and see with his own eyes. His first resting place was Oosterbeek. Not the Oosterbeek of the present day, with its collection of modern uncharacteristic villas, but a pastoral spot, dotted over sparingly with highly picturesque smiling cottages, basking in the sun, or

Cows on a road near Drenthe.

partially hidden in a veil of soft hazy mist, so truly Dutch of the Dutch. Surely this was the very spot for Mauve, as if made for his brush. Oosterbeek was, in those days, the "Barbizon" of Holland. Civilization had not yet penetrated its portals and spoilt its beauty. There were no boards stuck up at that time, "This desirable bit of land for sale for building purposes." There was no builder within miles of the place; every inhabitant was his own architect and builder, and patched up his rather tumbled-down dwelling to the best of his ability, although never *looking* "tumbled-down," for the Dutchman is ever ready with his pot of bright green paint and pail of whitewash, making his home seem as if newly erected, although it may have been the home of his ancestors. In those far away days the steam tram was not heard puffing along the "Road Street"—called so because of the pavement down the centre, although in every other respect a perfect country road—between the straight rows of beeches, looking like sentinels on guard, or a row of soldiers lining the way for royalty to pass. In those distant times Oosterbeek rejoiced in many flocks and herds of sheep, which have almost entirely vanished now along with their shepherds and shepherdesses, not the shepherds and shepherdesses dressed in the style we see at fancy dress balls, but rough men and women, old or middle-aged, and seeming to have as little sense (or perhaps less) than the animals they are tending. All this has vanished from Oosterbeek. Bilders *père*, the well-known landscape painter, was in those days the "Wodan" of this delectable corner of Gelderland. Everything in that spot was a joy to him, from the old gnarled oaks to the light emerald green and deep reddish purple cabbages. He (Bilders) relates that he chose his cottage on account of its standing in a field of variegated cabbages and that the natives thought he was going to be a "cabbage planter." Since Bilders discovered this paintable spot crowds of landscape artists have flocked there at all seasons of the year. The fearless and undaunted Bilders was undoubtedly the nestor and mentor of the place and seemed to represent an earlier form of government. He had served, when young, as volunteer in Belgium and won his *metalen kruis* (iron cross); how he loved in later years to fight his battles over again. Is it surprising that Mauve became the friend of such a man and at the same time companion to his son (the two were contemporaries), that son whom the world of art mourned at such an early age.

A study.

Even as the woods of Fontainebleau have their historical and celebrated trees, so Wolfhezen, near Oosterbeek, has its "*Wodanseiken*" (oaks of Wodan). Every Dutchman has surely heard of these oaks, and probably many a nature-

loving foreigner too. A short account of them, will not, I think, be out of place here. They are a group of old gnarled oaks, with heavy dead branches and dying trunks. No doubt the children of former oaks, equally old and tottering, all springing up simultaneuously without having been planted by the hand of man. These trees stand in a natural ravine, formed by a brook which originates from springs at Bilderberg and Sonnenberg, flows past Wolfhezen and so on to Heelsum and Renkum. Lovers of nature, artists and picnic

Gathering in the hay, from a painting.

parties form a constant stream of visitors to these Wodan oaks, and no doubt they look up, with a certain amount of awe and wonder, at these old trees, thinking of the ancient Druids who were supposed to have performed their singular rites and cruel sacrifices under the shadow of their branches. The reader of folk-lore sees in his imagination the long-bearded priests, in the time of the Wodanfeest—which is but another name for our Christmas—gathering, with golden sickles, the mystical mistletoe branches, which were considered holy if growing on the oak. Alas, the *name* "Wodanseiken" is not really as

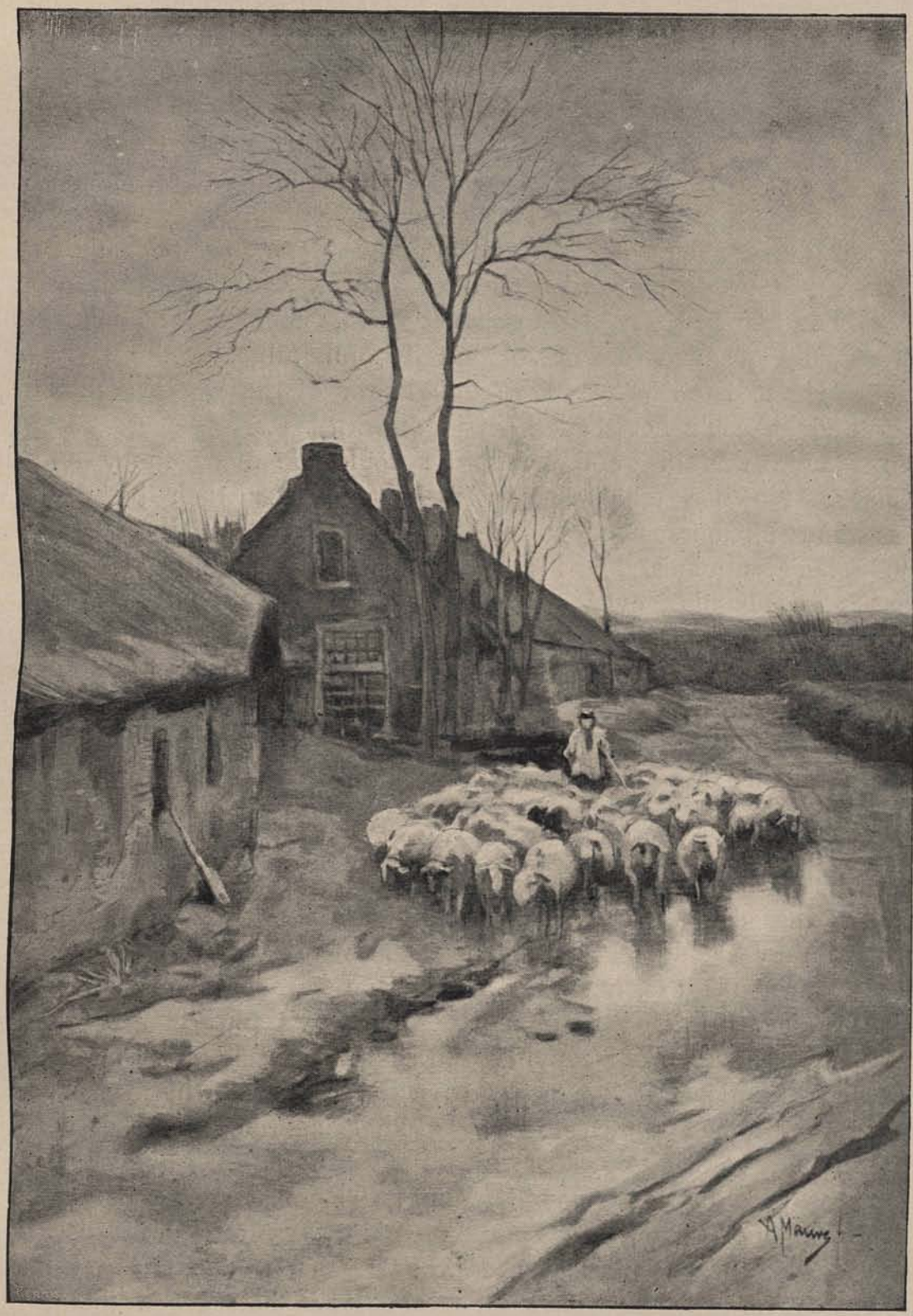
old as we are led to suppose by our guides, or guide books. The name dates back only from the time of Bilders *l'ancien*, who stood godfather to these old oaks and christened them with the name of Wodanseiken. Every new comer in Oosterbeek, if an artist, was taken to Wolfhezen and baptised in the sacred ravine under the old Druidical trees by Bilders, the high priest. The ceremony was amusing and worthy of the humour of the man. An old wheelbarrow was placed in the water under the branches of the trees, whereon Bilders and his victim stood; the christening rites being observed with great solemnity. This ceremony caused so much fun and amusement that it became a popular entertainment ever after, until the high priest was "no more."

And yet *I* maintain that there *is* something in the name, and that it is not altogether innocent of history and truth. A few years ago, a friend of mine, a certain engineer Groneman, got leave from Baron van Brakell—the owner of the land—to dig in the vicinity of the old oaks. He (Groneman) declared that there had stood once upon a time on that spot a Christian chapel, and really this proved to be so, for in course of digging they discovered old stone coffins, polished stones, urns with ashes, and a variety of objects which led to the supposition that a religious building of some sort had once stood on that spot. It is a well-known fact that Christian churches were frequently built on the very spot where heathen communities had held *their* religious rites, and as this site had many advantages—principally the unlimited supply of good water and its proximity to the Rhine—it is not unlikely that it had been chosen by the old Celtic and Germanic tribes. Who can say but that these very Wodan oaks, or their predecessors, were not the sacrificial temples of the ancient Druids.

Since the days when Mauve was baptised in the sacred stream at Wolfhezen, —in the presence of the Art fraternity then sketching at Oosterbeek—a great change has come over the spirit of Art, there is now an entirely new and different style in painting. This may sound strange, but there is a fashion in pictures as there is a fashion in a lady's hat. Just as Barbizon has been completely deserted by the artist, even so has Oosterbeek been abandoned. All this now is out of date. But who can say but that it will all revive again and the taste for this picturesque spot be once more all the rage.

Art, like everything else, "moves in circles." Of all the artists that Mauve got to know at Oosterbeek I think William Maris attracted him the most. The first time he saw him was in the Wolfhezen woods and they became friends from the very first. When Maris showed his sketch book to Mauve the latter was enchanted. That was drawing such as he (Mauve) did not yet understand himself, broad, impressive and teeming with character; splendid effects of light and shade, marvellous contrasts of sunshine and warmth, foreshadowing what eventually his great works would be.

But Mauve's greatest friend, amongst the younger artists at Oosterbeek, was undoubtedly young Bilders. There existed a great sympathy between these



Sheep driven out to graze, from a water-colour.

two young painters although the one (Bilders) strove after sunshine and warmth, with strong contrasting effects of light and shade—brought back no doubt from his travels in Switzerland and France—whereas Mauve's style was grey and hazy and thoroughly Dutch. To denote and better understand Mauve's art and manner of painting, it is as well to find out what his favourite books were and what style of literature he generally read. When I visited him one day in his home at the Hague I particularly took notice of the books, ranged on modest deal shelves, in the studio. First of all, in the most honoured place stood the Memoirs of his friend young Bilders, (cut off in the prime of life). Then I noticed the works of the immortal Shakespeare (translated, of course), then followed novels by Hildebrand, Cremer, Heering, Hollidee, Werumeus Buning and a row of volumes by Multatuli, also the works of Hans Andersen. He told me he was a great admirer of the works of Shakespeare and regretted he could not read them in the original.

When Mauve was in good spirits he could be very funny and highly entertaining. No one told an amusing story better than he did. When relating some humourous or comical experience he could look as solemn as a judge. The mimicry of his contenance was irresistable, he was almost a born actor, brimming over at times with satire and wit (if in a healthy frame of mind, for there were moments in his life when he could be woefully depressed), and this humorousness can even be noticed in some of his pictures. His figures, such as labourers, wood-cutters, shepherds, market-gardeners, etc., have all an individuality of their own, and although solemn and serious-looking hard-worked men, yet for all that they have a touch of humour about them. He cared little for plastic beauty or anatomical perfection.

In early life Mauve lived for a time at the Hague, at least during the winter months, when he worked up his summer sketches into saleable pictures. But he progressed but slowly; his paintings did not fetch high prices, not indeed what they should. His work at that time was not altogether original; it was a mixture of ideas, not only of his own, but of others; he had not, so to speak, found his level and fixed upon his own particular style. It takes time for an artist to finish copying and imitating, "chopping and changing" shall I call it, until he takes up one particular *genre* of his own, sticks to it and thereby becomes known to the world. Experience teaches us all that working carefully and slowly and with attention at first, in every profession, is the truest way of gaining a sound footing. "Rome was not built in a day," and this may more especially be said of the career of an artist. Israëls, Roelofs, Mesdag, Weissenbruch, the brothers Maris, and many others, who now work so powerfully "broad impressionists" shall I can them, they all commenced with careful drawing, neatness and scrupulous correctness, all of which in no wise resembles their later works, but was undoubtedly a good foundation upon which to build their present established fame. Many of the younger men of the present day expect to climb to the top of the ladder

"Under the trees"

FROM A WATER-COLOUR DRAWING

in the collection of H. W. Mesdag at the Hague.

with one bound. The result is that their work is often careless and unfinished. Much of this comes from the hurry and impatience of the present day.

When Mauve was young he spent many a day at Scheveningen. A very different Scheveningen to that of to-day. There was then but one hotel, a long, low, rather picturesque old building, nestling in the downs; the quiet roads and sparingly scattered dwellings of the fisher folk, the repose and quiet and peace of the whole, making a perfect paradise for an artist. And what is it now? A town, a crowd of people, paved streets and modern houses—heaped one on the top of the other; everywhere fashion and display. The constant tinkle of the electric tram bell, cycles and motor cars galore, shops

Cow in a stable, from a painting.

and restaurants, in fact wherever the eye rests it meets with brick and mortar, unless indeed it gazes out towards the sea, that grand, turbulent restless sea, the one thing that man cannot alter, nor fashion spoil. *Sic transit gloria mundi* . . . . .

Scheveningen has produced, in the course of time, a multitude of subjects for our artist to paint, many of them sad and dreary. How well I remember gazing with admiration upon one picture in the which the artist had brought out, so palpably and forcibly, the sorrows of the poor little hard-worked donkey; the picture spoke volumes for itself. There was a group of these little creatures, undersized and underfed, enjoying a moment of rest and liberty on

the downs, rubbing their noses together, as if talking to and consoling each other. These stubborn little beasts are the delight of the children of the rich, who come down to Scheveningen during their summer holidays and ride these little donkeys to death, when they have to wear saddles that rub and chafe, and feel the cruel stick of the donkey boy. The whole picture was a symphony in grey. The little animals were grey like the sand, and the sky above them almost the same colour. The picture greatly impressed me.

But as for melancholy subjects, which Mauve has selected to paint, the worst are the groups of thin, worn-out horses feeding on the scanty grass near the seashore, whose lot in life is not of the pleasantest. These poor half-fed quadrupeds are used for hauling the *pinken* (fishing smacks peculiar to the Dutch coast) up on to the shore when they come in heavily laden with fish. These poor forlorn animals have a hunted look and yet how resigned and patient they seem as they stand, with their heads hanging, knowing full well that at any moment they may hear the hoarse voice of the fisherman and feel the sting of the whip and then be put to work which is beyond the power of their strength. Surely strangers may well ask "Is there no society in Holland for the prevention of cruelty to animals?" Perhaps the artist has painted the picture too black! Let us hope so.

A study.

I believe that Mauve painted six or eight of these touchingly sad pictures. I know where two or three have found a home. One is in the Museum at the Hague, the other belongs to the heirs of Mrs. van den Santheuvel in Dordrecht. The former is a large picture, very colourless, and which I did not at first admire, but time and age have improved it, and now I can be counted amongst its admirers. I consider that in none of his pictures does he show such a tendency to Israëls' "sad tragedies" as in these pictures where the main theme is the lean, half-starved Scheveningen horse.

It was at the Hague that Mauve got acquainted with the lady who afterwards became his wife; a pretty woman, highly gifted, with a sweet disposition and extremely musical. Miss Carbentus was just the woman to become in time "the angel in the house" for a man like Mauve, a man so irritable and subject, whenever his nervous system collapsed, to fits of intense depression. Their

marriage was blessed with four children who were a great distraction to him and often helped to avert these terrible attacks. Our artist was undoubtedly a very domestic man, who loved his home above all places in the world, and who enjoyed life to its fullest when surrounded by wife and children. Where was he so happy as in his own studio, or in his wife's sitting-room, or perhaps of all places his garden was the dearest to him. He had many friends and artists who visited him informally, among others Arts, Ter Meulen, Bastert, Tholen, Tersteeg and his brother-in-law Le Comte. Many a pleasant evening have these brothers-of-the-brush spent with Mauve in his *atelier*.

In 1873 he (Mauve) had a very severe attack of melancholy and depression, when work became impossible and life unendurable. His friends packed him off to Godesberg, near Bonn. The entire change and rest (for he undertook no serious work) did him good. When he returned, restored to health and spirits, how amusingly he related the various incidents of his sojourn on the Rhine. He called the Rhine scenery the "toy-box of nature." He said that "you could so well rest there and do nothing, just lie down and gaze at the beauties; eat, drink and sleep and get better without any medicine, without any effort." And yet the scenery did not really appeal to him, not from an artistic point of view. Loving as he did the low-lying Dutch landscape, enveloped in soft haze and in rising mist; the indistinct outline of things, blending the one into the other, how could he become enthusiastic over the hills and dales; sharp contrasting outlines; the straight sticks that support the vines; the many modern Swiss villas and the almost coquettish ruins—like stage decorations—that make up the scenery of Father Rhine.

A sketch.

When he was at Godesberg he amused himself of an evening with smoking white plates, I mean holding plates over a lamp and with the finger rubbing out portions, till he had a regular picture in black and white. These plates were in such great demand, by all the visitors and guests at the various hotels, that very soon there was not a white plate left in the whole neighbourhood.

At home, too, Mauve could be sometimes most entertaining, provided he was in the right mood. If, of an evening, a few friends dropped in to have a chat, they were always made welcome and bidden to remain to supper. Should it so happen that amongst them there was a gastronom, then he would pretend to make great preparations for the repast. Upon such an occasion he would pretend to run into the kitchen to order dainties, then dive down into the cellar to fetch up champagne, apologizing for the absence of ice wherewith to *frappé* the wine. The result of all this "to-do" would end in bread and

cheese and good old honest beer, or perhaps a bottle of ordinary claret, the excuse being that fine champagne could not be enjoyed warm from the cellar. Sometimes a pot of English jam was produced as a great treat, and should the weather be cold he mixed an excellent toddy.

When Mauve lived at the Hague he used to wander about in the suburbs and surrounding country, all so suitable to his taste and style. There he found the ubiquitous Dutch cow, standing in the rich meadowland and nearly always being milked; the pretty country lanes; the ditches filled with chickweed and the ever-busy market gardener—for in some of the suburbs of the Hague there are parts where it is but a continuous market garden: bright cabbages and creamy-looking cauliflowers, spinach and lettuces, all as "green as grass," giving a touch of colour to the long stretches of flat country.

He made but the roughest sketches in his sketch book, mere outlines in fact, classical in their simplicity, but full of colour suggestions. These lines were enough for his fertile brain to go by. With them he could create beautiful works of art and produce splendid pictures.

A study.

A short time after the master's death Mr. Tersteeg, the representative in Paris of the house of Goupil (Boussod, Valadon & Co.) organized an exhibition of Mauve's sketches in London and at the Hague, which proved to be full of interest and gave a good insight into Mauve's gift of grasping the wonders of unadulterated nature. This exhibition so impressed me and renewed my memory and recollection of my friend and artist that I wrote the following in *Het Vaderland:* "Mauve understood the bond between poetry and reality—and it is this that makes his Art immortal. Should a key be required to explain the connection between Mauve's finished works and his sketches, a confidential examination of his sketchbook would expound matters at once. Mauve's taste was undoubtedly classic, in the highest degree; his eye, by intuition, could choose just those lines and spots in a landscape that reflected in the simplest possible manner the characteristics of the whole. In the suppressing, or sacrificing of the superfluous he was classic *par excellence.* Amongst these sketches—'scribbles' as he pleases to call them himself, there are some which seem to be but a few strokes of the pencil or brush, and yet denoting entire landscapes. They are so little that stupid people might call them 'nothing' and yet they portray the beauties of nature, more fully sometimes than many an inferior artist's finished canvas, of perhaps yards in width, and where we see only just what is within the dimensions of the frame and not one inch beyond, whereas Mauve's sketches, to say nothing of his paintings, seem to

comprise miles of country, and we feel ourselves—when gazing upon them—what the French would call *dehors*. Look at his birch-trees, so characteristic of some parts of Holland; look at his country lanes and paths, that seem almost to induce one to go to the spot and walk along them oneself; look at his hard-worked labourers, one almost envies them working in such picturesque surroundings; look at his meadows, so soft and green, making one long to fling oneself down and take 'forty winks' with insects buzzing and humming around one's ears, in true country fashion. The use I make of the word 'Classic' must not lead my reader into a maze, which so often is the case with artistic words. I do not mean by 'Classic' certain visible and conventional styles and forms, but simplicity, truth, sincerity, which *I* take to be the

Ploughing, from a water-colour.

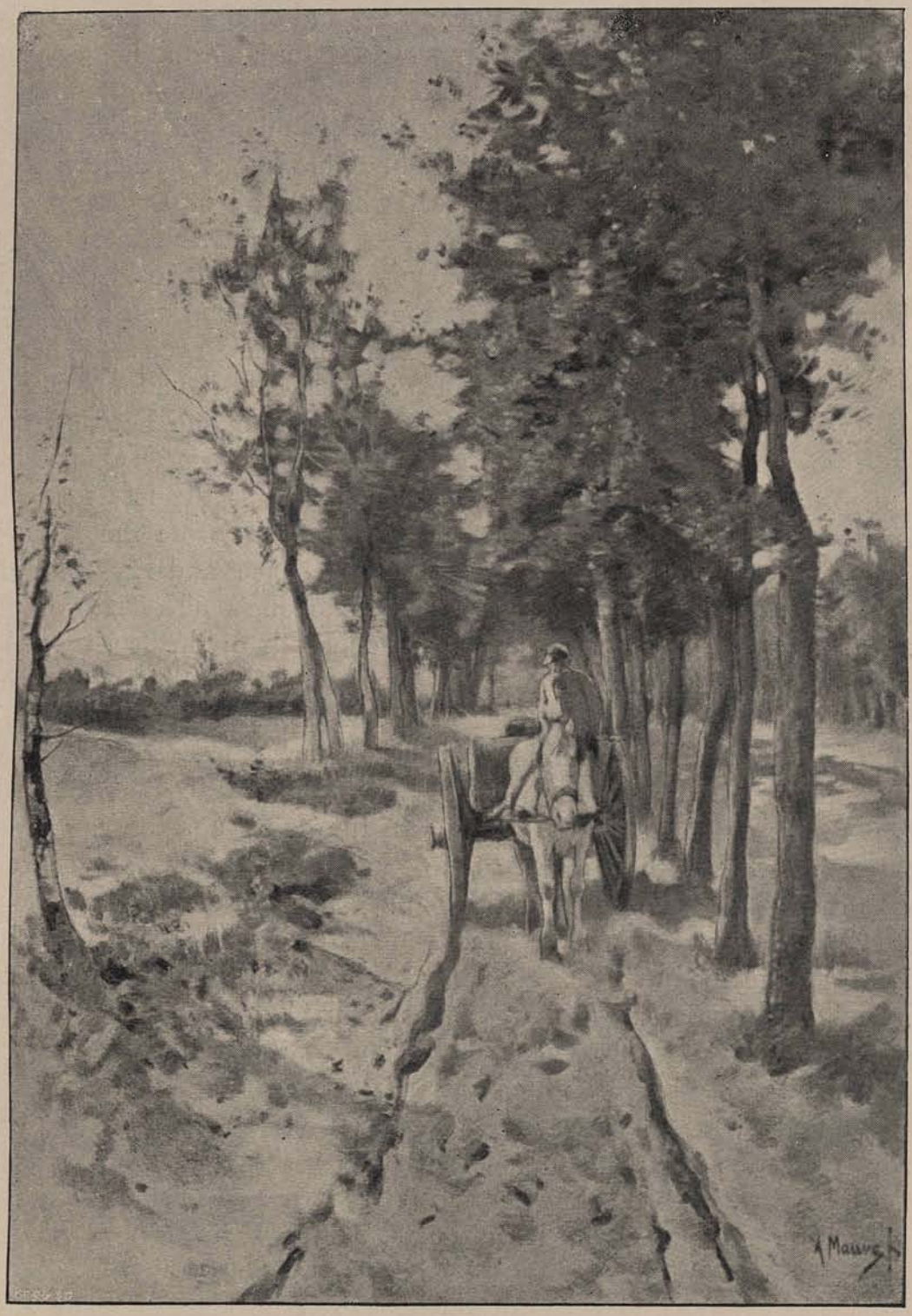
unchangeable basis of all real poetical and artistic feeling. Mauve may also be called 'Classic' in his hunour. At times his highly strung nervous system—almost distorted for the moment—made him impossible to live with for the time being, but then again, as I have already stated, he had moments of extreme tenderness and humanity, not unmixed, however, with a feeling of superiority, though without presumption. Superiority, because in these tender moods he felt himself almost above nature, inasmuch as he knew himself to be her master.

Certainly Mauve's works are 'classical' when looked at from the point of view of simplicity and from his manner of expressing himself (with his brush), as well as in the sombre and not over-crowded canvases, but he certainly was

not 'classical' in a Grecian sense, nor in the application of his knowledge of the anatomy of man and beast. I cannot say whether this humouristic attraction for type dragged him into this dangerous and unjustifiable impressionism, or if we must put it down to an unsteady handling of the brush. But Mauve's last works show decidedly that he strove, in this respect, after perfection. The figures of Millet attracted him amazingly, as I have already stated, and they may have been the means of bringing him into a better vein of thought and style. It certainly *is* a talent to express a certain type or form with exaggeration, but in that case it is caricaturing, and caricaturing is an art of a lower order. Amongst Mauve's labourers and country louts, amongst his sheep and cows, his calves and lambs, his horses and dogs, there were sometimes creatures who looked as if they had not been created by the good and all-wise Creator. Amongst Mauve's sketches at the exhibition of which I have spoken, there was a drawing of a man pushing a wheel-barrow, and another man picking up potatoes, in which Millet's influence could clearly be seen. I happened, on that occasion, to meet a friend of Mauve's, who placed the master's later works below those of his earlier days, exalting a certain roughness that appeared in some—luckily not in many—of his former productions. This betrays, I think, either the want of insight or a desire to hide behind other faults. They are '*plus royalist que le roi*.' Equally silly it would be to praise and extol Etruscan sculpture and place it above the best of the Grecian, simply because the former had been unaided. *Naïveté* has certainly something very attractive, up to a certain point, but when it degenerates into awkwardness it is dangerous for art to seek therein a new gospel. If man has learnt how to speak properly why should he return to a period of stuttering and stammering?

In the summer of 1883 Mauve went to Laren to paint. At first he was but a sojourner but later however he settled there, and that set the fashion amongst artists, and crowds flocked there to paint. Amongst the prominent artists who were sketching and painting there during Mauve's time were Valkenburg, Albert Neuhuys, Israëls, Kever, Tony Offermans and Bastert, and amongst foreigners the French painter Lhermitte. In 1886 Mauve, with his family and household gods, took up his abode at Laren where he rented a very pretty villa. It became necessary for this great lover of nature to be surrounded by those beauties that were his very life's blood. This little primitive village, with its small ancient-looking dwellings, its picturesque limes with sheep grazing in the green meadows, its stunted beeches and groups of dark fir-trees, constituted almost a paradise to him, especially when enveloped in that soft hazy atmosphere so generally observed in the vicinity of the Zuyder Zee. The Hague and its environs failed any longer to attract him; he felt the need of more rustic scenes, he required fresh buoying up and new interests. Although the style of country in and around Laren was by no means new to his brush he had never "lived" on the spot, and that was what he longed for.

The Exhibition of drawings at the Hague, in April 1886, clearly showed that



A country road, near Laren, from a painting.

the master's hand was strengthened by his new and healthy surroundings. In that exhibition hung a lovely water colour called "In the kitchen garden." In the middle of the fruit trees, with their young and tender green, and amongst beans and cabbages we see a woman, small of stature, and no longer young,—dressed in a coarse blue bodice and wearing a white cap—gathering beans for her midday meal. The simplicity of the subject and the modelling, combined with the attitude of the woman, reminds one decidedly of Millet. With what taste a patch of yellow flowers is introduced into contrast with the green grass and the charming hazy softness of the whole. The struggle after ideal beauty and well-being in this woman's figure has a decided relation to the spirit we see in the works of Albert Neuhuys. In one word this drawing is delightful; the harmony between light blue and pale green—with a shade of grey over all—and the delicate soft touch makes it undoubtedly one of Holland's finest water colours. At the same exhibition and hanging opposite to the little woman picking beans, hung another lovely drawing "On the Heath," a style of picture which the painter went in for during the last few years of his life. Under the influence of this water colour I wrote the following in *Het Vaderland:* "It is a landscape filled with space and rays of light; so attractive that it seems almost impossible to take one's fill of it; you feel as if you were on the heath yourself and felt the breath of the fresh air blowing in your face and nostrils, filling you with renewed health. A poet might well write some lines in praise of this work of art as a pendant to Dryden's lovely ode to music; 1) for indeed from Manve's handiwork there streams a harmony strong and powerful enough to bring calm and peace to the troubled soul. The extensive bit of heathland, the colour of the sand, and the various greens and tints of the stunted shrubs and tufts of grass are wonderfully reproduced. The sheep are like life; the clumps of dark firs in the background, with a few scattered birches to one side, make up a charming *ensemble.* This fine production of Mauve's art has, I am happy to say, remained in our country and is now in the possession of Mr. Servatius in Overijsel.

Alas; when in 1888 the 13th exhibition of water-colours was held at the Hague, the name of Mauve had, in the catalogue, a black border around it. The committee had for the last time the pleasure of hanging Mauve's works, and, as a loyal tribute to his memory, filled the exhibition, the "Thirteenth," as it was commonly called, almost exclusively with Mauve's works. A great many of his important drawings were lent by private collectors and several chalk and charcoal sketches owned by his heirs. Something like seventeen water-colours and fifteen black and whites, to say nothing of many sketches. A beautiful and important exhibition, but decidedly sad.

To give a more or less thorough account of Mauve's works, I should feel inclined to describe each and every work of the master, at least every work

1) "Alexander's Feast; or the power of Music" composed by Handel.

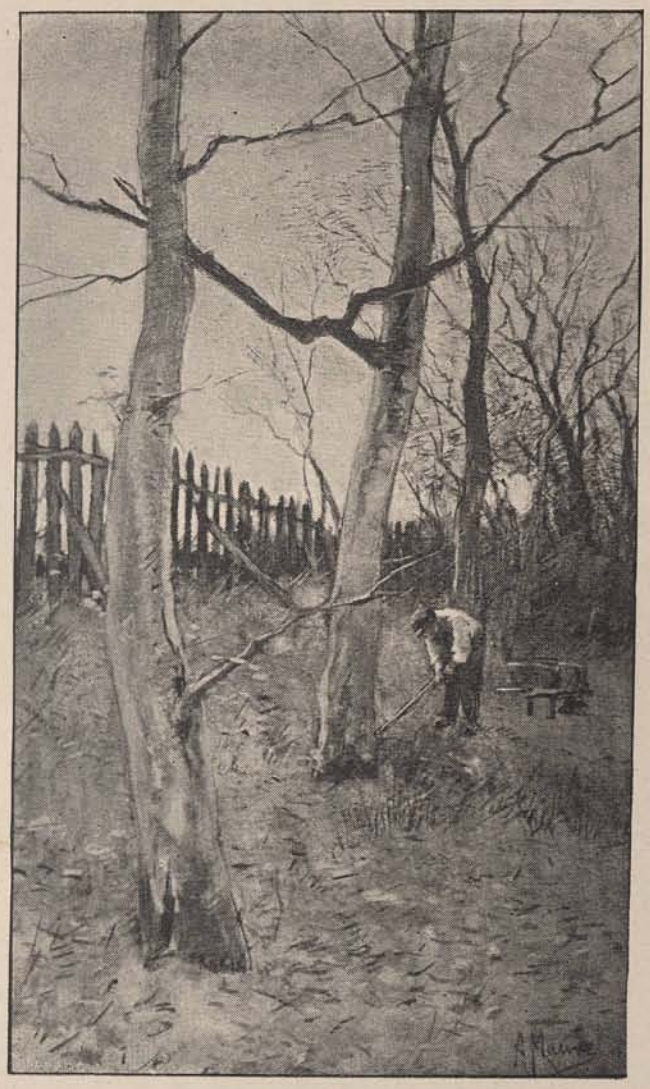
that has come under my eye and observation. But this would require an immense amount of space and time and *might* perhaps, however interesting, become monotonous in the end, for it is not possible for artists to avoid a certain amount of sameness in their subjects. An artist who depicts cattle or sheep brings them into every canvas; those again, who prefer horses or human figures are seldom without the one or the other or both. Then again those who paint interiors generally stick to the same style of thing and we recognize the creator without looking for the name.

Anton Mauve on his death bed, from a drawing by A. Le Comte.

I will therefore only give a short *résumé*. During the thirty years, or thereabouts, that Mauve worked, he produced and sent out into the world an immense number of paintings, water-colours, drawings, black-and-whites, all glowing with sympathetic beauty whereof, I regret to say, few have remained in our own country. Mauve's works are as much appreciated in England and in America as they are in his own land. The poetry of Mauve's art, its tenderness, the calming influence portrayed in his sad-faced, hard-working labourers; his poor cottagers, his quiet, silent-looking woodcutters, the domestic look of his men and women--when working near their own homes, or tending

their sheep— may well be esteemed by all seriously minded people who are lovers of art.

Our artist is best known throughout the world by his flocks of sheep, portrayed under every conceivable aspect of weather and seasons and in every catagory of light and atmospheric condition; by his sheep in the pens; by his cows being milked; by his horses before the plough or drawing heavily-laden carts with logs of wood along sandy roads. It is not alone the beauty of his figures and the serenity of the scene that makes his pictures so charming, but the influence of the soft, hazy atmosphere, so truly characteristic of the low lying parts of Holland.



November, from a water-colour.

How delightful are the warm broad rays of the midday sun reflected upon the emerald grass of some of his meadows; upon the orchards, or upon the variegated colouring of his kitchen gardens. How lifelike are the lights and shadows upon the hides of his cattle, producing that velvety appearance that even a queen might wish for on her royal robes.

Also the richness and fertility of the land he loved to depict; the plough drawn by either a black or a white horse. Especially noticeable is the light that reflects upon a white horse, making a good contrast to the dark soil. Sometimes we can almost see the steam rising from the heated body of the horse and the breath proceeding from the dilated nostrils of the tired animal.

There was a very representative water-colour by Mauve in the Exhibition of 1881 at the "Pulchri Studio" and which is now in the collection of the marine painter H. W. Mesdag. It represents a sale of timber in the country. The notary, the auctioneers, the farmers, the village carpenters, etc., all stand about in various attitudes, some apparently quite indifferent to the proceedings. Most of these men are viewed from the back, but from their postures we can tell what the expression is on their faces. Each figure has its own personality and attracts the eye. This picture, in some respects, reminds one of Charles Rochussen.

The clumsy and rather bony labourer or farm-hand Mauve knew so well to

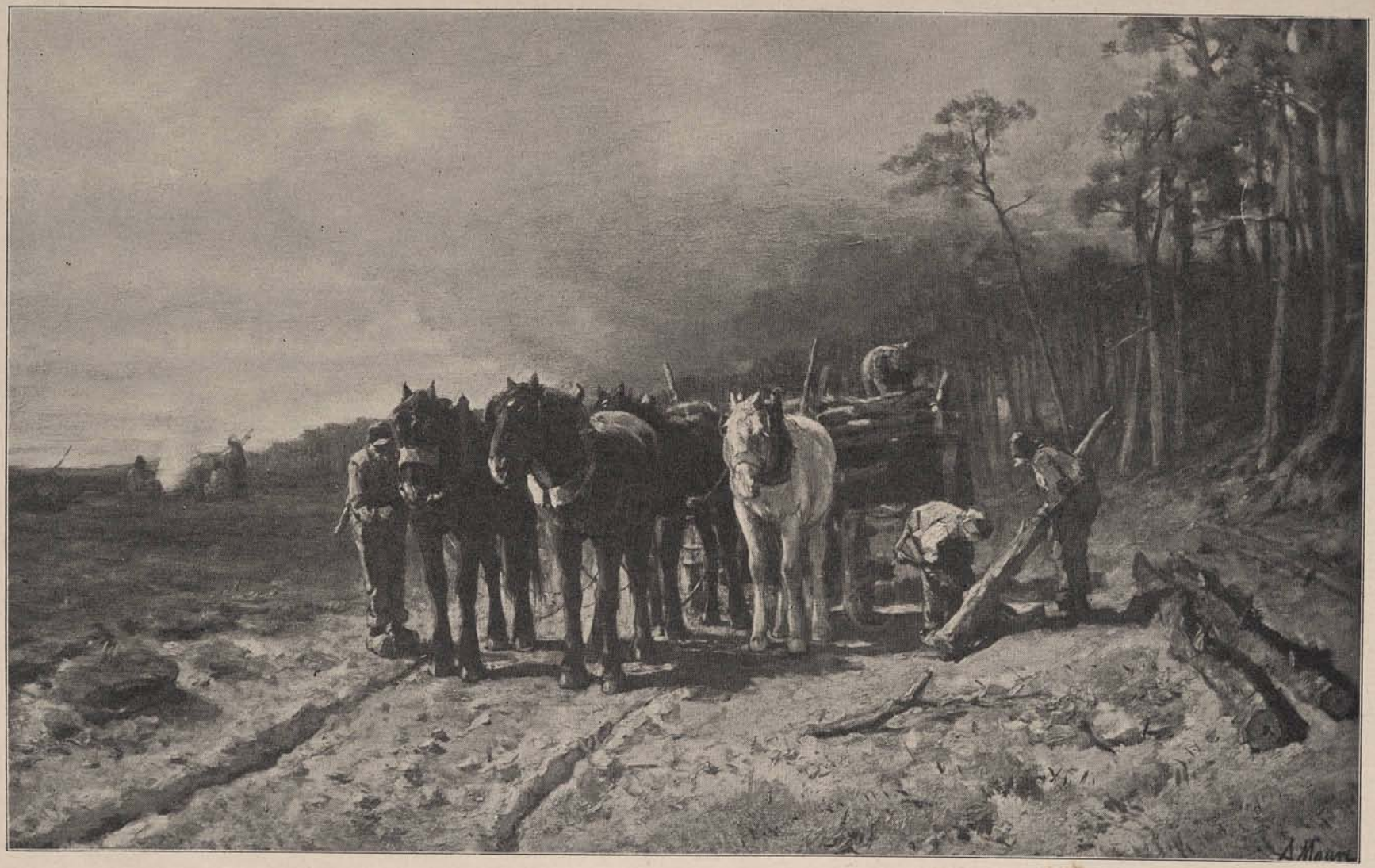
depict. Who does not know his "*Gooi-en-Eemlander*," the two uncouth-looking villagers from Gooi and Eemland, sitting in a farmhouse reading their provincial paper? Mauve could not resist occasionally a touch of caricaturing, but such caricaturing came from quite a different sense of feeling to the so-called witty illustrated French papers. The landscapes and figures of Mauve's show, now and then, a similarity to the late Charles Keene or to the late Randolph Caldicott.

Mauve loved our Dutch country lanes with their straight lines of trees. These lanes he would give life to, either by a heavily-laden cart—generally piled with logs of wood—drawn by one or two horses, or a farmer going to his work. In the copses he often placed a woman—generally small and old—gathering firewood. He knew so well how to give these country scenes a tint of soft pearly grey; his were no hard outlines; no great contrasting shades; no scorching sun. *He* knew too how to make the farmer's blue shirt or his wife's blue bodice harmonize with the surrounding tints of green. Amongst his pictures there can be found an occasioual snow scene, generally sheep pens partially buried under the driven snow. The birch is undoubtedly his favorite tree. He could draw their delicate branches with a wonderfully light touch, enshrouding them in a silvery hue, casting over the whole a pearly tinge.

Mauve was thoroughly contented at Laren, surrounded by his wife and children and doing much satisfactory work. Alas! that joy was not of long duration.

In January of 1888 he felt one of his attacks of melancholia coming on. He consulted a doctor who advised him to go away for a total change and give up painting for a time. He listened to the doctor's advice and started off, first of all to Dordrecht to visit friends, after which he went to Arnhem to see his brother. It was there that he died suddenly, on the 5th of February, from heart's failure. A few days before his death he said "My head is bad, I shall never be able to work again!" Some of his melancholy attacks have been known to last for weeks or months, but this last one was short and ended in his death. I have known him in several of these sombre moods. Sometimes it was good for him to see a few friends, in a quiet way. His wife was a sensible woman and knew just exactly how much he could do and what was best for him. I have found him sitting in his studio, or in his favorite spot in the garden, holding his head with both hands, staring sightlessly before him, his eyebrows knit, a picture of utter misery and woe. Seeing him like that one day I could not help thinking of the frontispiece in one of the editions of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

It took a great deal of coaxing to get Mauve out of these depressions. I used sometimes to go and sit with him—by his wife's request—and talk "small-talk" to him. Recall some of the amusing events of his youth, and many a gossip we had together over the days at Oosterbeek and Wolfhezen. I would then take down an old portfolio and the sketches would bring back to his mind some amusing event, smoothing the wrinkles from his brow and bring a smile to his gloomy face. Sometimes when the fit was passed we amused



Loading wood, from a painting.

each other with a game of dominoes. Then again at other times we would take a walk together, down his favorite lanes or along some of the canals, and if a spot attracted him, or it brought back to his remembrance some picture or sketch, the veil of gloom would suddenly rise and he would be himself again. Once I recollect taking such a walk with him, trying to raise him from his depression, when, suddenly, seeing some touch of nature which appealed to him, he took his pencil from his watch chain and made a drawing on his shirt cuff. I knew then that the fit of low spirits had departed.

Mauve never walked in the country without an eye, shall I say, to business. He was always looking out for pretty peeps and material for his brush. I have seen him cut a square out of a bit of paper—generally a leaf torn from his sketch-book—and look through this cut out portion, as through a window pane, and thus get a picture in a frame. He said this was a great help to artists in planning a new canvas.

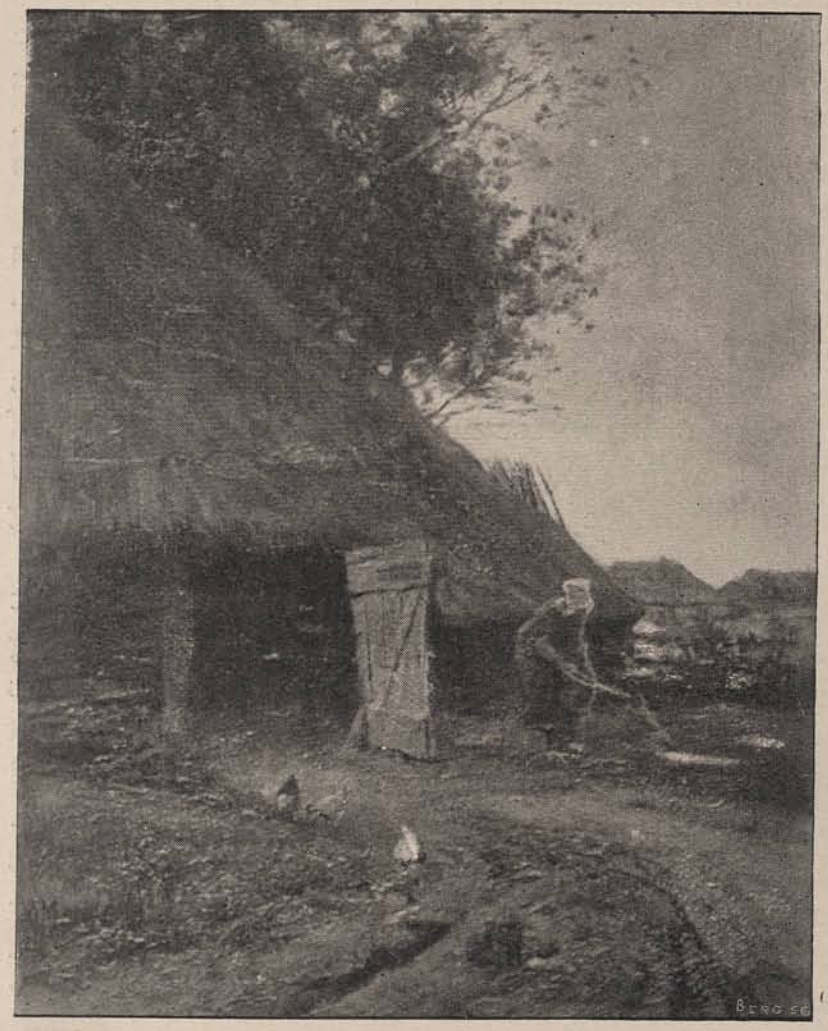
I think we may compare Mauve to Corot. But the Frenchman was not as original as the Dutchman. He (Corot) often saw things through the eyes of Claude.

Mauve was a quick worker when in a normal state. He told a friend that he had once upon a time finished off eight paintings and fourteen water-colours in one week. This was after one of his worst attacks. Of course many of these paintings and water-colours were more than half finished before. I believe he worked his best after his sombre attacks, and it goes without saying that he was at his lowest ebb before they came on.

The news of Mauve's sudden death was received with deep sorrow throughout the land. The artist had shown such a great improvement in his work during the last years that his countrymen and art lovers had looked for much as time went on, and the sudden cessation of that clever hand was a disappointment to many. In spite of that, and notwithstanding the adoration he received from his own people, few of his best works are to be met with in Holland. When Mauve got a firm footing in England and in America, and when his pictures fetched high prices in those countries, they had become too expensive for the Dutchman's purse. Added to this the Hollanders have never been great admirers of their own style of country. Hobbema and Ruysdael scarcely earned a crust of bread, while our lesser painters were getting quite nice sums for their pictures if they went in for Italian decorative style. Hobbema was helped to a modest employment by the cook of the Burgomaster of Amsterdam, and when he died he was buried in a pauper's grave. Ruysdael died in Haarlem in the almshouse. Think of this, dear reader, when their pictures now sell for such high prices that only the very rich can afford to obtain them. Cuyp was a poor man too, but by a rich marriage he managed to maintain himself. His art, was likewise "discovered" by the English. Although Englishmen have not an "artistic" name among foreigners, they have always been the first to find out a good thing and have it too, at any price. The fact is, that the Dutchman's purse, although thought to be deep, is by no

means bottomless, and those works of art which are sold for such fabulous sums can only be bought by very few in this land. The average Dutchman spends most of his time at his office, and if he desires a "pretty picture" to decorate his walls, he chooses by preference some German or Swiss view, full of bright colouring, hills and dales, and teeming with "subject matter," which charms him more than the hazy atmosphere of his own country.

The sympathy that was felt all throughout the land when Mauve died is clearly apparent in the great obsequies he had. Who does not remember the funeral cortege at the Hague. The mortal remains were received at the station, not only by his family and relations, but by many societies and deputations. When the coffin was placed on the hearse and completely covered by wreaths and palms, the solemn sounds of Beethoven's Dead March met the ear, impressively rendered by the Royal Military Band. Mauve's colleagues: Mesdag, Van Hove, Sadée, Artz, Gabriël and Weissenbruch were pall-bearers. From all sides came tokens of love and respect mingled with the deepest feelings of regret. A splendid wreath was sent by the Pulchri Studio, also by Arti, and one especially noticeable came from the pupils of the Academy of Plastic Art. All around the hearse hung wreaths of immortels and the figure of "Honour and Glory," on the top of the hearse, carried in one hand a palette made of hot-house flowers, and in the other a maul-stick to which was attached a bow of crape. Hundreds of people followed the procession. The house of Joseph Israëls was shut up from top to bottom, the procession having to pass its portals, also the building of the firm of Goupil; in fact there was general mourning, not only at the Hague, but throughout the whole country, and the crowd that gathered around the grave at the cemetery has seldom been surpassed. There were many ladies present; not only the world of Art was represented, but also the world



An old barn, from a painting.

of rank and fashion. The three little sons of the deceased, standing by the grave of their father, were a pitiable and sad sight, and touched the heart of every one. When the coffin was lowered into the grave Artz, the President of Pulchri Studio, spoke a few touching words. He spoke of Mauve's struggles and ultimate success, and how at last he filled one of the most important niches of the Dutch school. Then he went on to say how well and successfully every thing progressed after he had "turned the corner," but alas, there had been much to deplore in his health, and but for *that* he might have been one of the greatest artists of his time. He compared his sudden death to an unexpected storm on a fine and cloudless day. He spoke of the talented, clever hand becoming stiff and cold by the sudden advent of the angel of death; of the work that *might* have been done had God spared him a few years longer. But Mauve would never be forgotten.

Then Greive, the President of Arti, said a few words, after which the venerable grey-haired Israëls said in a trembling voice: "And where shall we find another Mauve? The void he has left behind will probably never be filled. There is no one to step into his place. I have lost a friend, but the country has lost an artist."

Then Ter Meulen stepped forward and praised the deceased and his art. "Mauve," he said, "has been a guide and example to the young and struggling artist, a help to his followers and an ever ready friend to beginners."

Dr. Mauve, the rector at Arnhem, at whose house the artist died so unexpectedly, thanked the people, who had gathered around the grave, for their sympathy and kindly interest in his lamented brother. He then took the hands of his small nephews and led them up to the mouth of the grave to look at the coffin for the last time. They scattered some flowers on the lid and then were taken, weeping, home to their mother. Again the solemn sound of Beethoven's Dead March was heard, and quietly the crowd melted away.

In the "Keizershof" Mrs. Mauve the widow, received the visits of condolence from her many friends and her late husband's numerous admirers. Who would have thought that that young looking woman should so shortly follow her husband to the grave. On the 28th of March 1894 she was laid beside him, never having quite regained her spirits after her deplorable loss.

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On the 5th of February 1889, just one year after Mauve's death, a number of his friends and admirers met together, on the self same spot, where they had met twelve months before for the sad laying-to-rest of the great artist. Upon this second occasion it was for the unveiling of the tombstone placed over his grave by his friends and fellow artists. The committee—all of them members of the Pulchri Studio—had been authorized to arrange this sacred matter. When Mauve died, the spot where he was to take his last long rest

Sheep and shepherd, from a water-colour.

had been carefully selected. The cemetery had been ransacked for a suitable site, and it was here that, on the 5th of February, one year after the funeral procession had filed into the graveyard, with so much pomp, that a small group of friends met together to place a token of respect above the mortal remains of this great man.

Ter Meulen spoke a few appropriate words, sketching the outline of Mauve's career; he spoke of the honour and adoration he had received and of the continuation of that adoration even now; of the simplicity of his style and the tender sympathy and love that breathed in all his works; of his retiring modesty, caring not for outward show or pomp, but working quietly and industriously; he spoke of the poetry of his pictures and his thorough knowledge of nature; of the feeling of calm and repose that involuntarily came to those who gazed upon his canvases. He then thanked all the friends who had so nobly aided in the erection of this monument—and especially M. le Comte of Delft, (Mauve's brother-in-law) who had been the chief projector.

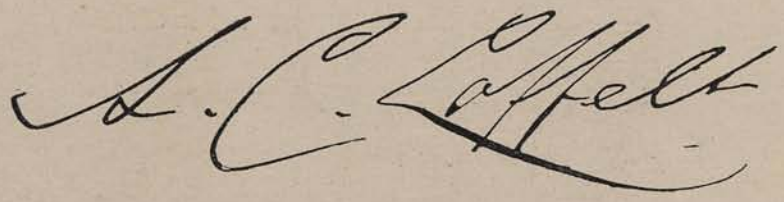
After this speech the monument was unveiled, showing a beautiful granite stone, placed at the upper end of the grave and overshadowed by the branches of a birch and fir tree. The stone is only polished on the front side and broken off at the top, an emblem of his sudden and rather early death. The whole has a rustic appearance. Under an engraved golden star we read the following, in golden letters:

ANTON MAUVE.

1838—1888.

From his friends and admirers.

But Mauve is not dead. When we walk in those pretty country lanes under the birch trees with their silvery leaves and pearly aspect; when we watch the sun caressing the emerald green meadows and playing about among the branches of the willow, or over the alder and hazel trees; when we hear the echo of the tinkling bell of the sheep on the heath, we say: "Mauve lives, he is here, he is here!"



MRS. BILDERS-VAN BOSSE

BY

AUGUSTA DE WIT.

Beeches, from a painting in the possession of Mrs Kneppelhout, Hemelsche Berg, Oosterbeek.

MRS. BILDERS-VAN BOSSE.

Some names are as the fundamental tone of a chord, the one note upon which all the relative tones vibrate and tingle, constituting a harmony sweet to the ear and pleasing to the senses.

The name of Bilders-van Bosse is such a note and the echo of that sound is "Veluwe," the landscape of birch and beech, of heath and solitude. These are the favorite subjects and aspects of an artist who loves and prefers her

own native soil to all others, not only from a patriotic point of view, but from an artistic feeling and appreciation of the picturesque, though low-lying country of the Netherlands.

In 1875 our artist went to Vorden and from that moment her successes began, for until then she had had nothing but bad luck, troubles and bothers of all sorts, I mean artistic troubles, not domestic or otherwise, nor worries from want of money. Money is not everything, whatever may be said to the contrary. There was no lack of bread, no poverty to battle with, no want of friends. But man cannot live by bread alone .... there are other things as necessary as food; to some natures food comes last, to Marie van Bosse Art came first.

* * *

Marie van Bosse, the daughter of Minister van Bosse, desired to *become* an artist! This seemed impossible, there must be something wrong, something rotten in the state of Denmark ....

When Marie came home from school, what is commonly called "for good" (it is sometimes for bad), she straightway announced to her father her determination to *become* an artist. The first thing she did was to select a room in her father's house with a northerly aspect, and the second move was to cover herself up with a large and businesslike-looking apron. So far so good. Drawing pretty little pictures is a peaceful accomplishment for a young woman. Spoiling terra-cotta plates by painting on them Swiss views, castles (in the air) seen by moonlight, rocks with eagles soaring on high, pretty little ships floating on a calm emerald green sea, or an indigo blue lake, all this was permissible, but to *become* a real bona-fide artist, that was altogether a different thing ....

And so the new artist started work in the carefully selected apartment and behind the shelter of the protective apron .... when the artistic spirit from within awoke and whispered: "There are other things of greater importance; messing is *not* a necessary appendage to painting; Art does not mean things under certain conditions. *Art is work, steady hara work.*" And the apron was cast to one side and earnestness took the place of "make-believe," and the struggle began.

It was Van de Sande Bakhuijzen who encouraged and advised her. He approved of her work and gave her every hope of success.

* * *

And Marie van Bosse determined to succeed.

But success is not picked up like shells on the beach, or like pebbles in a brook. Success means, in some cases, years of toil and many disappointments. The ladder of fame is not taken at a bound. Marie had many difficulties to

On the Ryn, from a study in charcoal.

contend with and often had to fight single-handed against the stream. Some of her father's friends considered it preposterous, wondering how the father could allow his daughter to take up this career in earnest. All this made the young girl more determined.

And Marie van Bosse did succeed!

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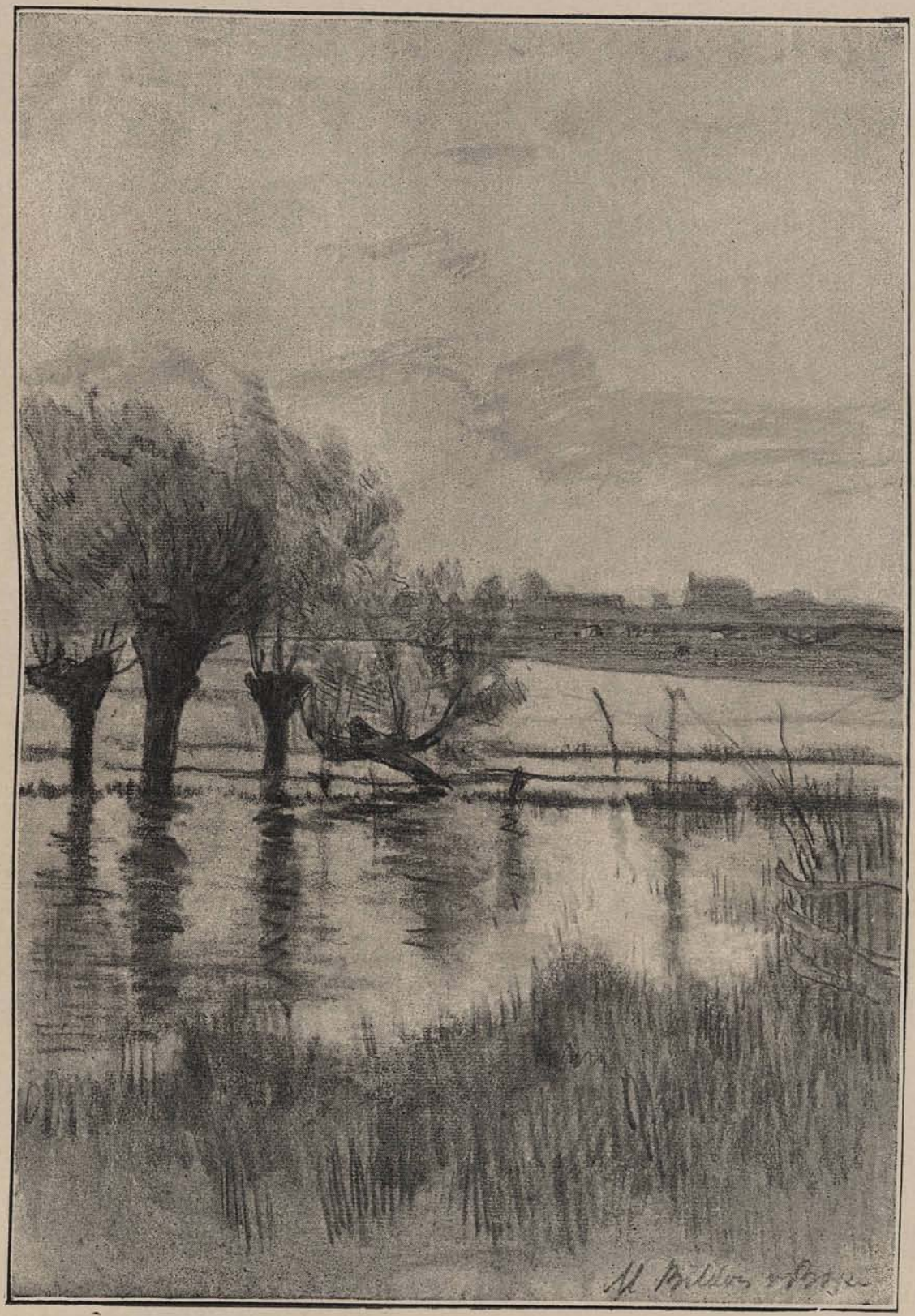
And here we must stop to note who it was that helped her the most and rejoiced over her ultimate success. It was Bosboom, the immortal Bosboom,

Rhenen, from a drawing in chalks.

now alas, numbered amongst the dead, though his works will live on for ever. *He* encouraged her, *he* showed her her faults and gave her the very best of advice. A friend, not of the fatherless, but of the struggling artist. He did not always praise, but often found it necessary to correct, till at last one day he exclaimed: "Out with it, the moment has come!" and so the woman's work was launched into the world of art, and the first rung of the ladder of fame was successfully reached.

Then Marie went to Vorden and as I have already stated her victory was won.

It was at Vorden that she met her husband, the celebrated painter Bilders. It was at Vorden that new life entered into the heart and soul of the woman and her joy was complete.



High water, from a drawing in charcoal.

Marie did not waste her time. Early in the morning she might be seen starting out for her day's work, ere the dew was off the grass, with a look of eagerness in her eye and determination in her face. She worked with a will that was positively beautiful to behold, heeding not the pitfalls, caring not for disappointments, and saying with Jacob Cats: "Whosoever stumbleth, yet falleth not, advanceth."

Now Bilders became her guide and Bosboom and Bakhuijzen were for the moment forgotten. *He* it was now who took her in hand, never spoiling her

Mill at Heelsum, from a study in oils.

originality, never wishing her to copy his or any one else's style, but encouraging her to stick to nature, seeking in nature her all in all.

And the woman's hand improved and strengthened, and day by day steps were taken in the right direction and improvements followed each other in rapid succession.

When the summer was past Marie van Bosse returned to her home at the Hague, where her work had occasionally to be put aside, as Miss van Bosse had to do the honours of her father's house—her mother died when she was very young. This was sad "waste of time" according to her idea and you

may be sure that she toiled all the harder, when she could, to regain that time. But can "wasted time" ever be regained? This is a disputed question.

Bilders now started work at the Hague to see as much as he could of the young artist. He became one of the intimate friends in the home circle. The two artistic souls drifted into *des bons camarades*, which led to affection, and so step by step to love. They seemed made for each other "*im gleichen Schritt und Tritt*" and the story ended happily in wedding bells! and Marie van Bosse became Marie Bilders.

* *
*

In 1880 they went to Oosterbeek, that visit which proved so rich in work and so poor in years.

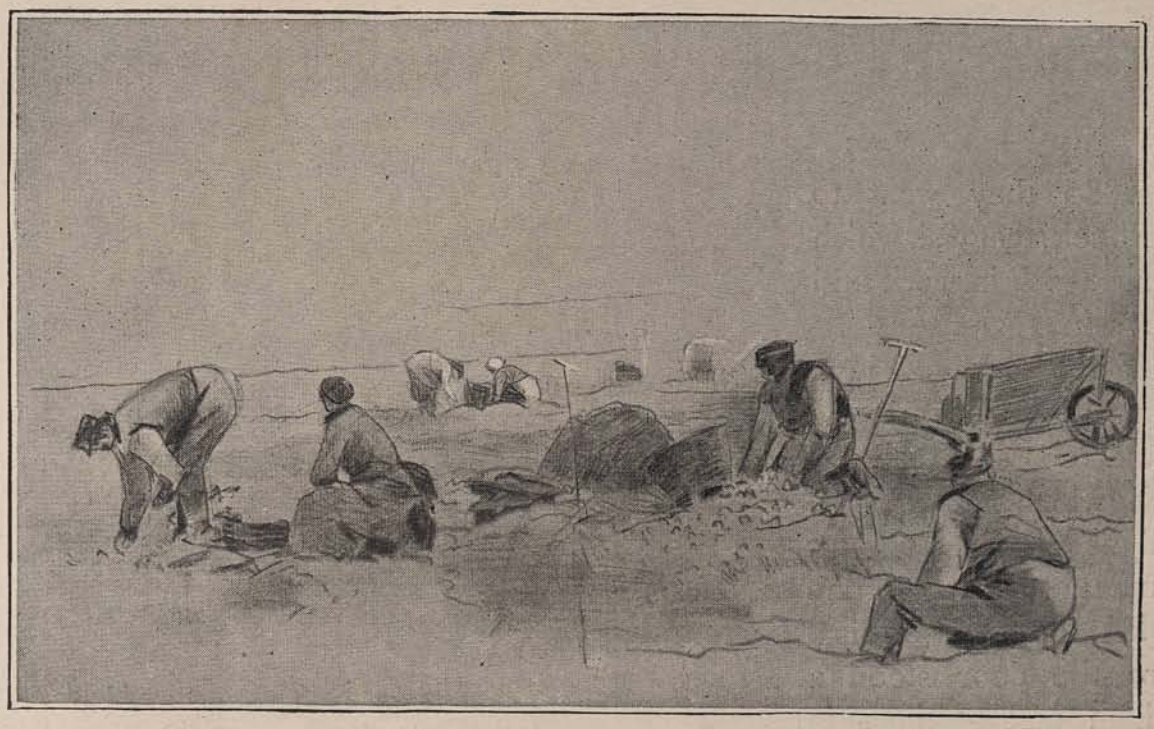
At first they lived in a very pretty house opposite the old church—that old church which looks as if it might topple over at any minute, leaning to one side like the tower of Pisa. Before the door stood a big lime and at the side flowed the river, pleasant and cool in hot weather. The water which overflowed its banks in spring was often still high in August, keeping everything fresh and green, filling ditches and pools and reflecting on its shining surface the clouds or the branches of the overhanging willows. In the meadows close at hand the cows spent their peaceful lives in switching away, with their tails, the ever persistant fly.

Fowls, from a drawing in charcoal.

Oosterbeek enchanted Mrs. Bilders; the peacefulness of the spot, the haziness of the atmosphere, the lights and shades, the graceful trees, the water

reflecting the surrounding objects, all became digestable food for her ever hungry brush.

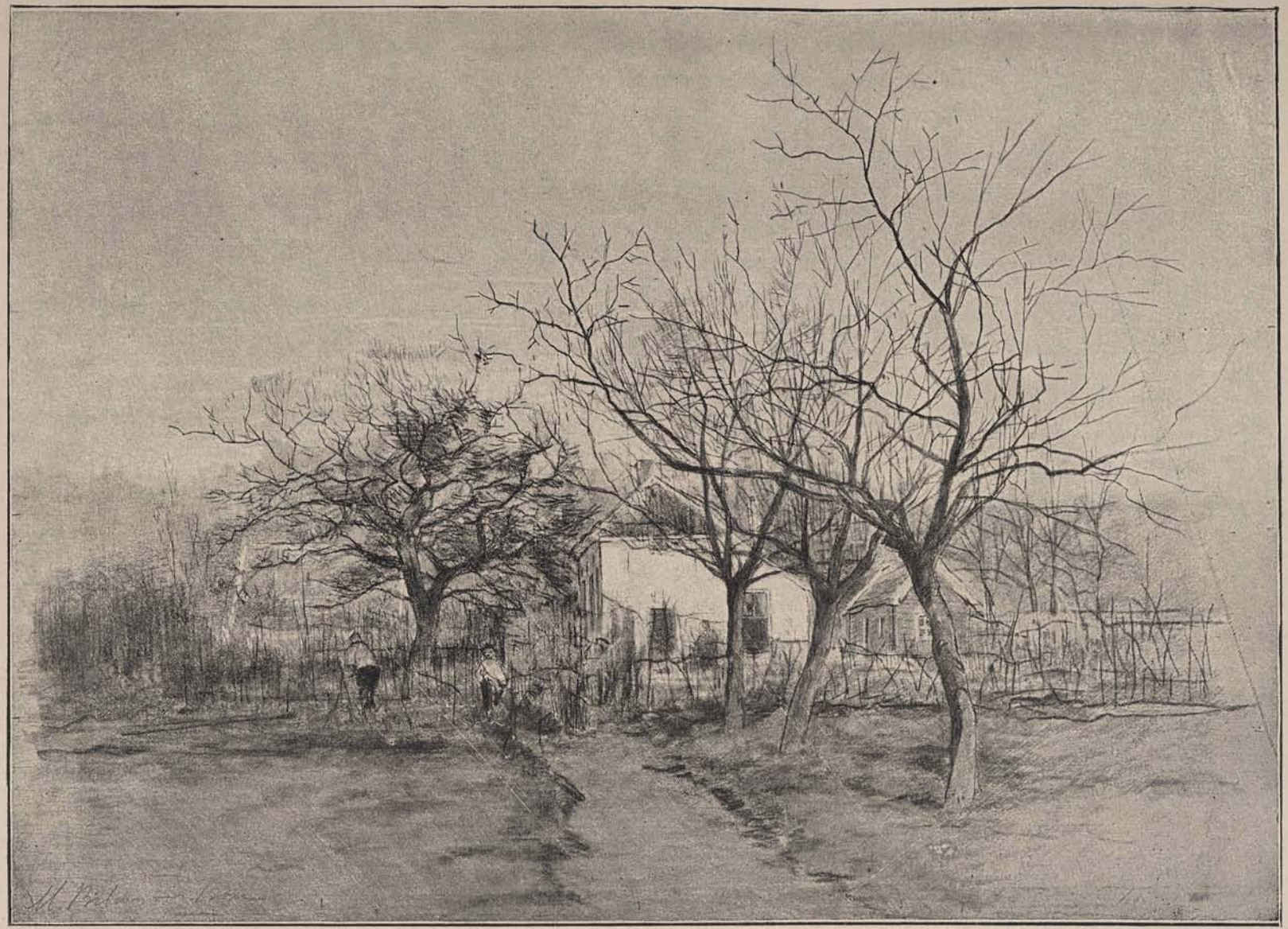
It was at this particular period that she painted one of her finest pictures which is now in the possession of the Prince Regent of Brunswick. It represents a deep pool, overshadowed by old gnarled willows in their early autumnal foliage, their silvery trunks bending over as if to see themselves in the clear, still water. On the edge of the pool are flowers and variegated grasses, the latter looking as if they wished to crowd out the former, as if *they* were in the right and the flowers in the wrong, as if such bright-hued creatures had no business to be eclipsing their more sombre tones, as if *they* and *they* only belonged to the silent, forsaken spot.



Sketch in chalks.

In the meanwhile the two artists (Bilders and his wife) had left the old house and established themselves in a better one, a large old-fashioned picturesque low building, overshadowed by stately chestnuts, perhaps too much so, at least in the front. At the back there was a pretty sunny garden where the great trees in the front could not cast their gloom, and where the sun had full play; a garden rich in fruit trees and blazing in summer with the brightest flowers. Bilders' *atelier* looked out upon this garden and an old barn, seen through the trailing branches of a wild vine—like a natural curtain—was converted into an *atetier* for Mrs. Bilders. On the walls of an inner court hung the branches of a very old peach tree, climbing up into every available corner and projection, covered in the spring with pink and white snow, and in August with golden fruit, (alas, the squirrels, which, abound there often left the mark of their triangular

Oosterbeek, from a drawing in chalks.



In the garden, from a study in chalks.

bite in the luscious fruit) and in the garden were many old-fashioned flowers, columbine, larkspur, love-lies-bleeding, Marygold, sweet-William, flowers that seem to belong to a former generation. Under the apple trees stood a bench, the favorite seat of the happy couple.

The drawing-room was to the front of the house, darkened by the shadow cast by the huge trees, delightful in warm weather, and in the winter those great trees were bare and did not interfere with the rays of the sun. In the window of this room stood an armchair, the chair of the old artist, (Bilders was now an old man, being many years in advance of his wife) and by the side of this chair stood a table on which books were always placed, *few* but *good*. By the side of the books invariably stood a glass vase containing wild flowers, enlivening the quiet shady corner. In this room there was a very old-fashioned chimney-piece and an antique cabinet, on the top of which stood some valuable Delft vases. The walls were hung with good pictures by well-known hands. Amongst them I noticed his own "Heath" but in the most conspicuous place hung a reproduction of Hobbema's "Old Mill." Lisa Mona fascinatingly but enigmatically smiled from the wall and in a prominent position stood—in bronze—Beethoven, the monarch of music, frowning down on the world in general.

This was the little paradise of Bilders and his beloved wife, where *he* found the rest so much needed for his old age, after doing work to the best of his abilities and looking back with satisfaction on the years that were gone, and where *she* found rest for her active brain and encouragement for the years to come. Both happy, each in his or her own way, *he* looking back, *she* looking forward; spring and winter united, the one with life in the germ, and the other with the ripe fruit ready for gathering.

Oh, these happy evenings at Rozenhage! sitting in the twilight, the wife pouring out tea for her tired husband, conferring together, thinking together, acting together. The pleasant confidential talks of the past which delighted the old man, but which were not good for him, for they excited him and brought on fits of coughing, followed by sleepless nights. Sometimes in imagination he would be shooting wild fowl, sometimes soldiering, with his gun over his shoulder and marching to the sound of military music. Then again he would be painting his *first* picture—wanting to paint everything he saw. When the buxum farmer's daughter would nod to him in a friendly familiar manner as he passed the farm gate on his way to some spot he had carefully selected. Then again he would, in imagination, be waiting for the verdict of the hanging committee, waiting, oh so anxiously—none but an artist knows what that means. It means sleepless nights, loss of appetite, starting up at every sound, watching for the postman and yet dreading his knock. Then, as years rolled on, he would fancy himself enjoying Rachel's wonderful art or listening to Jenny Lind, the nightingale of the world. Or he would be in Venice, in a gondola, gliding along the peaceful waters by moonlight, or standing beside

some celebrated old master. All these recollections were pleasant but injurious to him (how often pleasant things are bad for us). But the thoughtful wife would not allow these thoughts to occupy too long the mind of her failing husband. Suddenly she would break in with "Come, come, this won't do, you will not shut an eye to-night."

He was already then beginning to fail visibly, both in body as well as in mind. Great care had to be taken, his food carefully selected and all excitement avoided. It was an anxious time for his devoted wife, but she knew so well how to manage him, how to humour him, how to treat him.

An old watermill at Heelsum, from a drawing in chalks.

The winter months were trying to the old grey-haired artist, when he might not go out and breathe the fresh keen air of the heath. But in the summer, when days were long and a friendly warm sun shining, renewing the vitality of the earth, *then* he could enjoy the cool shade of his big chestnut trees or bask in the sun midst the bright flowers of his garden.

In the meantime the studio, in the old barn, was *not* having a holiday. Mrs. Bilders managed to snatch many an hour for work from her husband's side. The heath was often visited, at all hours of the day, every effect of light and shade observed. Then the country roads and lanes; the neighbouring

"The forester's cottage"

FROM A PAINTING

in the possession of Mrs. R. W. D. Heyligers.


M Bilders van Bosse

woods with the fine old beeches and birches; the river hard by, in which occasionally a boat or barge glided silently along; the pools of water; the small lakes surrounded by the ever-present Dutch willow with its over-hanging branches, as if coquetting with its own image reflected in the dark waters. Then the autumnal tints were not forgotten. On the contrary, they were closely observed and marvellously reproduced. And so, with hard work, close study, seeing, thinking, noticing, she learnt to know the "Veluwe" its character, its style of landscape, strengthening her hand day by day, and adding to the power it eventually possessed.

Autumn in Doorwerth, from a painting in the possession of Dr. H. J. Betz at the Hague.

At last the day came when Bilders gave up work altogether. The hand was shaky; he could no longer hold his brush. So the master rested on his oars under the shadow of his laurels. He knew that he had done his best and what more can a man do. He felt that his mantle was descending upon younger shoulders, in fact upon the shoulders of his wife. He knew that Marie Bilders would, in time, take the place of Johannes Warnardus Bilders. He knew that her work was good and true, the work of *an artist;* that she sought only to reproduce nature as she is and not through the eyes of a fanciful imagination; that she was satisfied with nature as she found her, and not thinking—as so many do—that they know better than the great Creator Himself.

* *
*

Now when I walk by chance along the road that leads past Rozenhage, the place looks sad and unfamiliar;—the old armchair stands no longer in the

window, the wild flowers on the table are likewise gone, the barn is again a barn and used for garden tools. And where are the old-fashioned flowers? Where the larkspur and columbine? Where the Marygold and sweet-William? All modernized, all changed! And the familiar bench, where is that? The bench under the chestnuts, the seat of the "lovers"? Gone, gone, gone!

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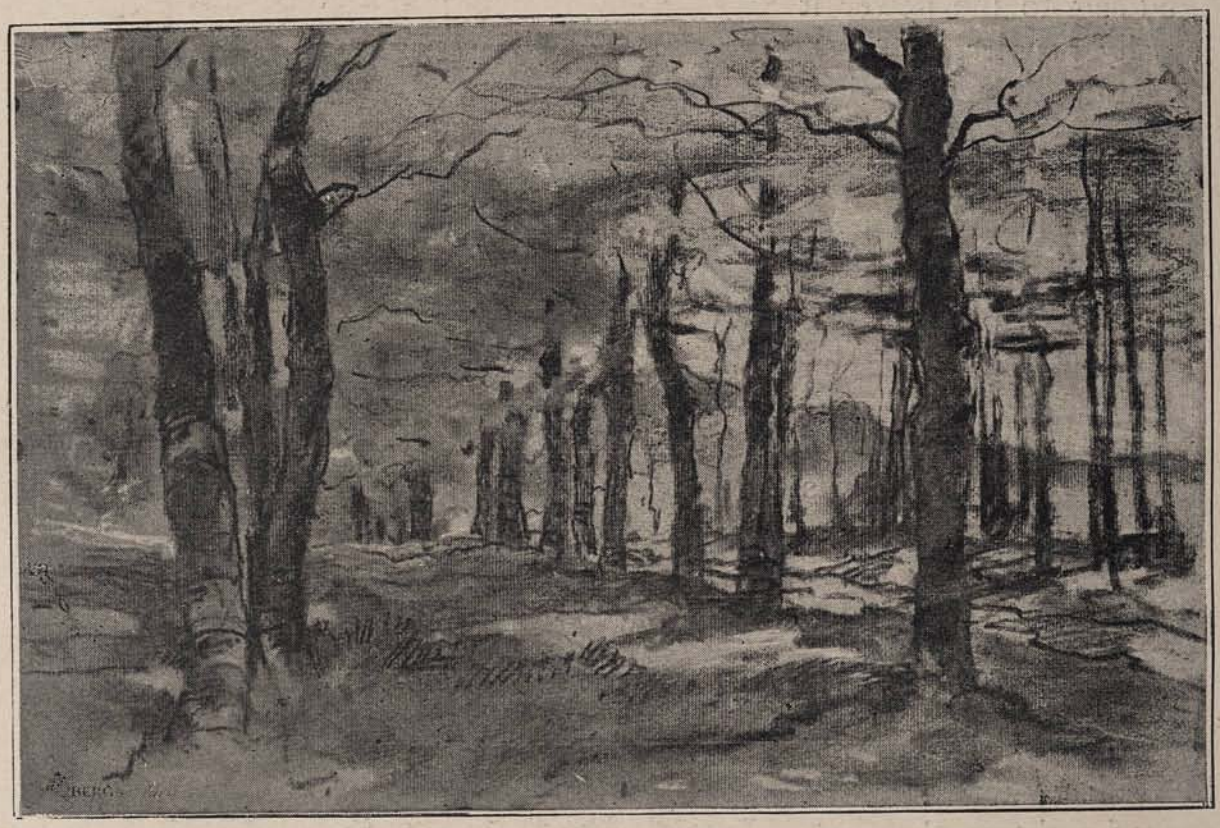
After the death of her husband Mrs. Bilders had a severe illness. She kept up, however, until she had helped to arrange an exhibition of his pictures.



Early spring in the woods, from a charcoal sketch.

Excitement and love sustained her, but then she afterwards broke down and a long spell of illness with complications followed. Rheumatism ensued, brought on perhaps by much out-of-door sketching in all weathers.

Mrs. Bilders took up her residence at the Hague after her sad loss. The home of her youth was strange to her at first. The confined aspect of nature was trying. Her love of space and adoration for the heath, with its stunted shrubs and wind-swept trees, and where she could, with so much facility, see the sun rise and set, all this she missed.

But it did not last long ere Mrs. Bilders found compensation in the many advantages of living in a large town, seeing friends, meeting interesting people,

The old beech, from a painting in the possession of Miss Wolterbeek at Oosterbeek.

and above all finding herself in the world of art, mixing with artistic souls and keeping in touch with progress and advancement.

In her studio at the Hague Mrs. Bilders now works as energetically as in the old barn at Rozenhage, putting her whole soul into her work, thankful that the "first struggles" are over, and yet not satisfied with her work of *to-day* hoping better things for the *morrow* and dreaming of that perfection that we can see in the dim distance, but which we never reach on earth.

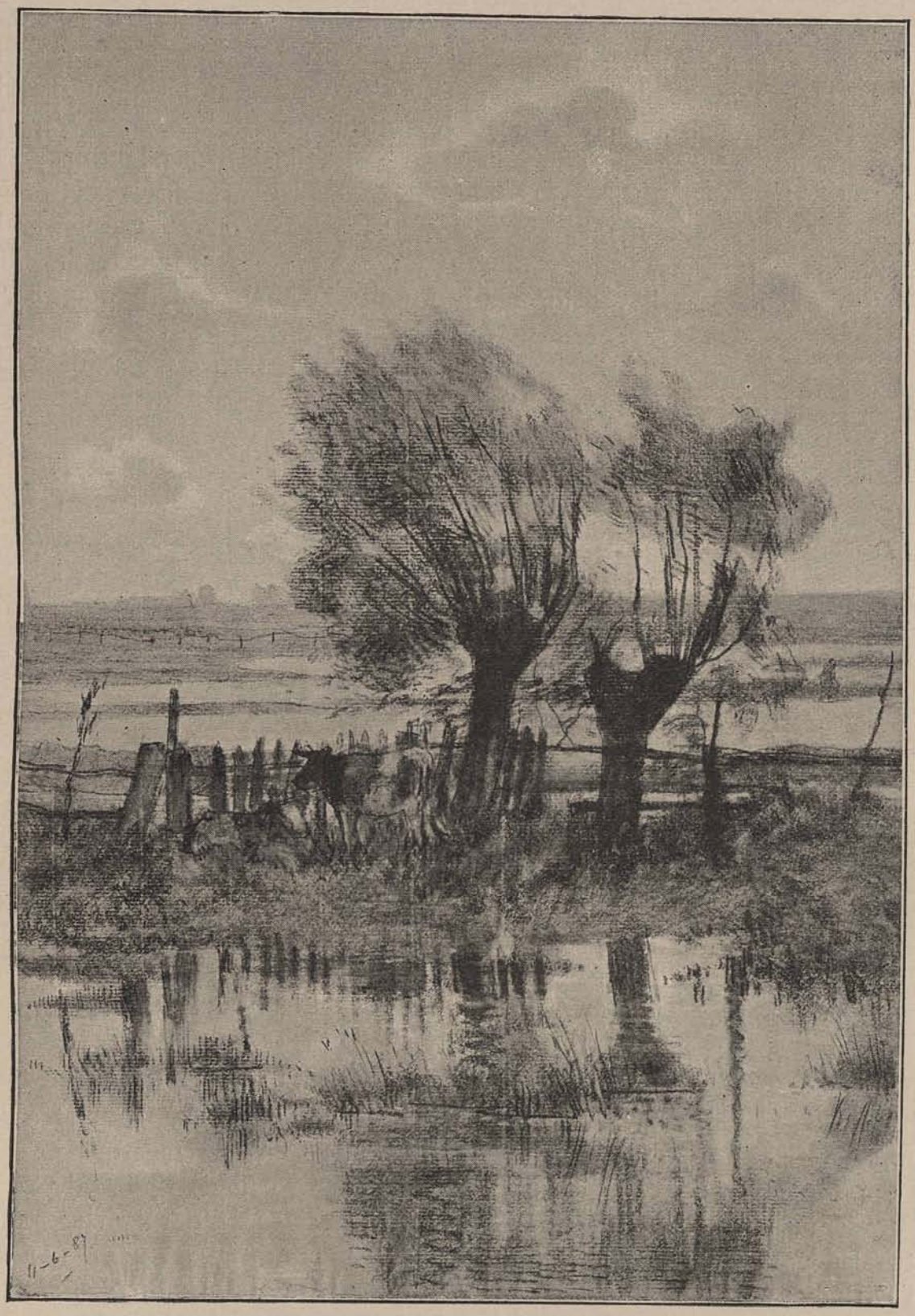
In the summer she sometimes goes back to the "Veluwe," to her beloved heath; to the silent woods and to the bright corn fields, to the pleasant intercourse with the simple folk of that neighbourhood, in whose humble daily

The entrance to the wood, from a sketch in charcoal.

life she shows such an interest, a life that may be called dreamy and melancholy.

Mrs. Bilders feels keenly every phase of nature. She has studied every aspect of her own low-lying country as well as the higher parts; the setting sun with its golden rays, the early spring foliage, the summer tints, the fall of the leaf, the reds and browns of October, the trees, especially the beech with its stately mien and manifold branches; in fact everything that constitutes the beauties and art of landscape painting.

In one picture she has taken, for her subject, her dear heath, seen by sunset on a cold windy day. The spot is near an old gnarled oak, standing majestically and wind-swept near the edge of a deep pool, upon which the dying sun has cast a purple tinge. Across this pool we see the shadow of a thin meagre



High water, from a drawing in charcoal.

birch, stunded in its growth by the unkind elements We can almost see the day dying and night approaching, those dark hours of night, so solemn and terrifying on the wide silent heath.

But in June that heath is oh, so different! Walk over its open stretch on a warm June day, when there is not a leaf stirring, a soft haze over everything, occasionally lifted by the sudden appearance of a flash of sunlight, making the spare heath grass look like the rich meadowland, everything made beautiful by spots of gold and streaks of silver. Then pass on to the lower lying country, to the rich meadows, with the lazy cattle switching away the flies or chewing the cud; the hay fields ready for the haymaker, or perhaps already

A tobacco barn at Rhenen, from a drawing in chalks.

being cut or tossed, and a patient horse standing before a hay cart piled up high, his colleague eating from the stack unharnessed, happy and careless, knowing not that at any moment *his* strength too may be overtaxed.

Then the summer when we see the golden corn fields ripe and ready for the reaper; also the yellow mustard and the white aniseed so picturesque in a Dutch landscape.

Then comes autumn, with the fall of the leaf and its bright colouring. Then winter, cold winter, when bees and artists disappear and when the earth goes to sleep, like a dormouse, to wake up again in due season; and thus the cycle is completed.

The town studio of Mrs. Bilders is in the Alexander Square at the Hague,

The old oaks of Wodan at sunset, from a painting.

a studio consecrated to the memory of Mauve, for it was his for a time. The house, to which this studio is attached, is decidedly pretty and has an extensive view for a town residence. It stands immediately opposite to the drill field where the soldiers parade or exercise their horses, and where the sound of the bugle is often heard.

Inside the house all is beauty and taste. Valuables and antiquities meet the eye at every turn, yet necessary things are not wanting. Many of the things are heirlooms. On the walls are many works of art; drawings, pastels, paintings, etchings, etc., here and there we see a relic from Italy, the holy land of Art; also many photographs or souvenirs of celebrities.

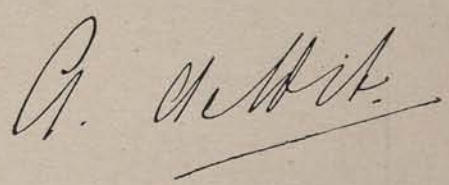
Then we must not forget to cast a glance over the book shelves, so important a feature in the life of intellectual folk. We begin at once by discovering Dante, the Seer of Song, then we pass on and our eye is attracted by the name of Walt Whitman and Thoreau; then among the novels we notice Thomas Hardy, and frowning down upon the whole we recognize our friend of Rozenhage, the monarch of music, the immortal Beethoven.

Mrs. Bilders loves all that is beautiful in colour, in form, in sound and in word. In those four elements she lives and moves and has her being.

She has many friends and their friendship she values above rubies. She can be happy and glad too, which, if genuine, is like the good old wine, not merely a short momentary effervescence, but such wine as gives renewed health to the blood and strength to the limbs.

We all need renewed strength, we all need good wine, but no one more than the artist who strives to reproduce, for our benefit, that which is beautiful, and in thus striving exhausts his own vitality and weakens his strength.

> ... The Lady Beauty in whose praise
> Thy hand and voice still shake. Long known to thee
> By flying hair and fluttering hem, the beat
> Still-following her, of thy heart and feet,
> How passionately and irretrievably,—
> With what fond haste, how many days and ways!



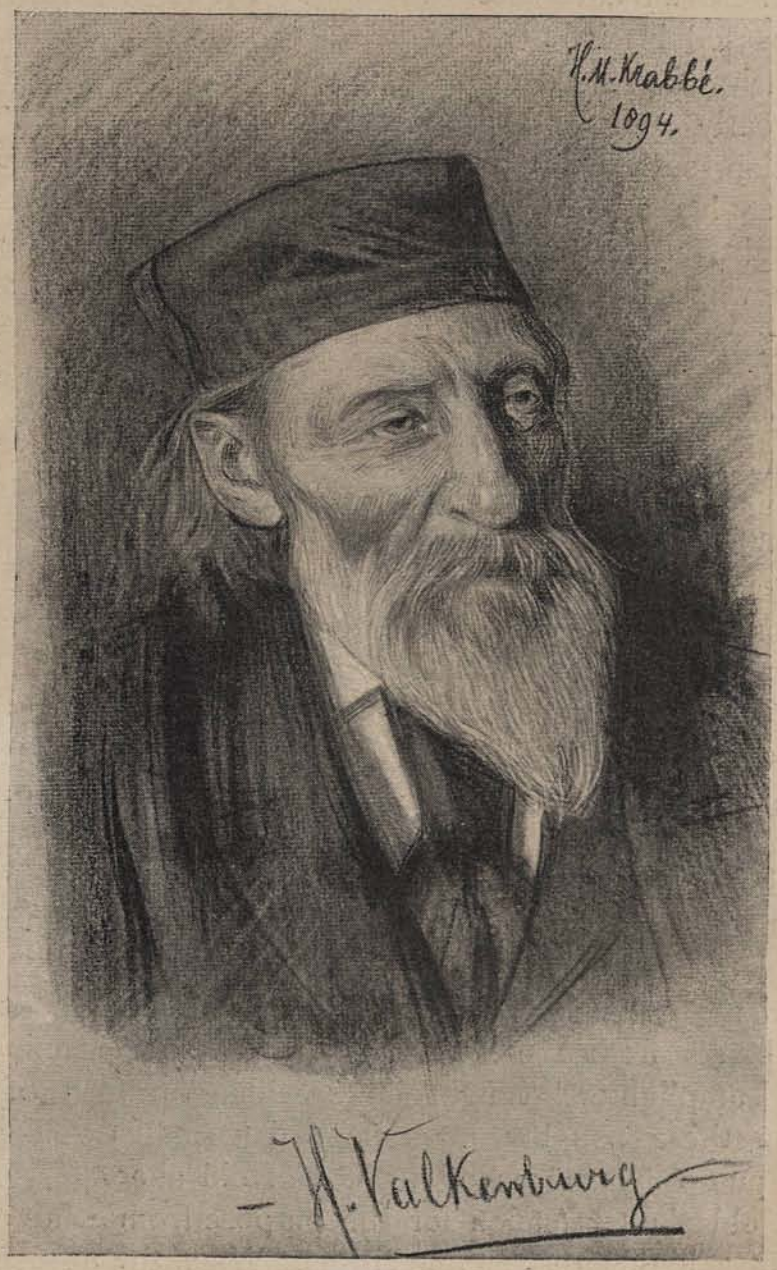
HENDRIK VALKENBURG

BY

JOHAN.

An interior at Twente, from a painting.

HENDRIK VALKENBURG.



"Good gracious, why here comes Mr. Valkenburg. Come in, Sir, come in and be welcome!" These words, or similar ones, always greeted Hendrik Valkenburg whenever he went to Laren to sketch. A general favourite was Hendrik Valkenburg both with young and old, and more especially with all the pretty Pollies and Mollies, Janies and Susies of the neighbourhood. His

small bent figure was always a welcome sight to the eyes of the villagers; their rough and ready greeting had a ring of genuine pleasure and sincerity.

Hendrik Valkenburg was born on the 8th of September 1826. His life was one of many changes and manifold experiences. It would take volumes to relate all the adventures and incidents of his chequered career and the struggle he had to attain his ultimate success.

Valkenburg passed his infancy and youth at Deventer. His father belonged to a poor branch of the Valkenburg family, and although the lad Hendrik evinced, at an early age, a talent for drawing and a burning desire to follow art as a profession, such a thing was not to be thought of. On the contrary, as soon as ever his school days were over a profession or business was immediately sought out for him, so that he should soon become self-supporting.

In order somewhat to satisfy his wish he was put to work at a jeweller's, that *métier* being considered artistic. He managed to stick to it for two years when he threw it up as *impossible*. He was then placed in a book shop, hoping that literary surroundings might please him. But "Hein" was determined and at last he was allowed to join a drawing class in his free hours. He now came under the teaching of Vredenberg. These were eventful days and the most amusing in his life. It was the beginning of his artistic career, the first step on the difficult road. I have heard him relate with delight many amusing anecdotes of those school days in Deventer. The boys of the school to which he went for drawing lessons were notorious for their inexhaustible love of practical joking. It was most entertaining to hear Valkenburg tell some of the tales; he always remained as solemn as a judge, which made the jokes sound ten times more ridiculous. One of his stories was about a great shindy that took place one day because the oil in one of those old-fashioned oil lamps dripped on to the work of one of the pupils, a drawing ready for the examiners, and the oil put it *hors de combat.* The oil dripped from a small receptacle under the hanging lamps, placed there to avoid this very catastrophe, but owing to the thing getting fuller and fuller by the constant drip, it at last overflowed its banks from the want of care in daily cleaning. Needless to say that the "Lamplighter" caught it to within an inch of his life. Upon another occasion these naughty boys flooded a small dwelling, connecting it with the town pump by means of a piece of old shoot. Again they placed one evening an old shutter (stolen for the purpose from some one else) against the front door of a highly respectable citizen. When the unsuspecting domestic opened the door from within this heavy obstruction fell, with a loud noise, down the flight of stone steps to the street. The police had occasionally to be "called in" but generally the matter was patched up, thanks to the forgiving spirit of the dwellers of Deventer.

Notwithstanding all this the school had a good name and turned out many a first-rate man of all kinds, not only artists (they are not produced by the score) but carpenters and cabinet-makers, etc., thanks principally to Vredenberg,

In the kitchen garden, from a water-colour.

the head master, a man of great capabilities and much dry humour. The boys were made to do steady hard work which, at the time, they called "brutal," but many of them have since thanked Vredenberg from the bottom of their hearts.

It was at the Deventer school that Hendrik successfully gained his two first "glories;" a silver pocket pencil and a silver medal. The first was won in the yearly competition by a drawing, *à deux crayons*, of a head by Julien. I have seen Valkenburg smile with satisfaction when talking of that "glorious moment" and the joy he experienced at the time, such joy as he said he

A sketch in chalks.

never remembered feeling in all his life again. The silver medal was obtained later by a study from the nude.

As long as his father was alive drawing had to remain of secondary consideration. At his death however, in 1844, Hendrik immediately took French leave of the bookshop and devoted all his time and energy to his dearly loved study. By the help of his small inheritance, and by the timely aid of friends, Hendrik Valkenburg was able to keep his head above water. He studied with a will but very soon the narrow artistic sphere of Deventer became too cramped for the ambitious youth. He longed for wider fields and better advice. Antwerp was the promised land. In those days all young artists went to Belgium as being the chief centre for the study of art in that

part of Europe. So in 1848 Valkenburg turned his back on his native land, quitted for the first time the soil of his forefathers, and was very soon working at the Academy of Drawing in Antwerp.

Now began a strife between the enthusiastic art student and the utterly penniless man. To keep body and soul together was a puzzle difficult to solve, and had it not been for an iron constitution, as well as an iron will, he would undoubtedly have succumbed. He denied himself everything but the absolute necessaries of life, and these, too, he often went without. His kind-hearted "hospita" was often anxious when she saw the pale face and pinched look of her lodger.

But at the end of eighteen months, notwithstanding his economy, he *had* to

A sketch in chalks.

give up the Antwerp Academy and return to Deventer, to seek aid from his own countrymen, aid in the shape of finding kindly purchasers for his drawings, and also in order to part with a few worldly possessions—things left to him by his father at his death—in a private way. He met with so much kindness that it enabled him, in the course of time, to return to Antwerp and take up the lost thread. He remained there till 1853 and then he wandered for a time, seeking art in different quarters, selling his works in some places which paid his way in others.

It was at this period that he received the offer to become the drawing master at a large boys' school in Almeloo. The prospect of a settled income was enticing, after years of living from hand to mouth. He did not stop to

Mowers. From a study in oils

"Making up to mother"

FROM A PAINTING

in the Municipal Museum in Amsterdam.

think that such a position was "death to art," that by going to Almeloo he was burying himself, but creature comforts and a settled home were things he could not resist after years of absolute want.

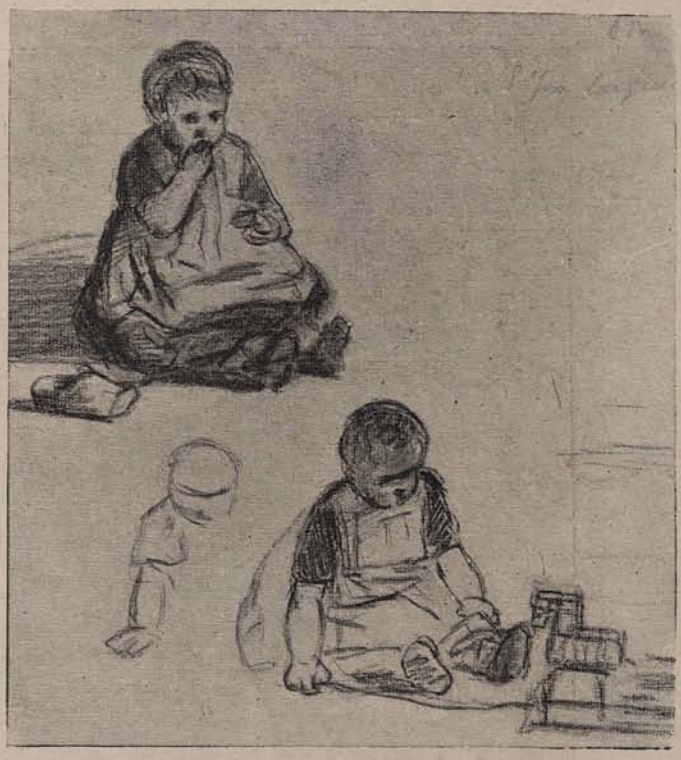
Brim full of his Antwerp ideas, brim full of historical subjects—then so much

Darning stockings. From a painting.

in vogue—he found nothing to attract him in the small provincial town, little dreaming *then* that in time he would choose these very subjects and surroundings amongst which he was living, and they would become his own particular style

of art: farm-houses, women and children of the poorer classes, simple home-like interiors.

At Almeloo he remained thirteen years, thirteen years of rest. He made many acquaintances, and, partaking of the hospitalities of his friends, he felt a desire for a fireside of his own. This home happiness he found in the shape of a certain Miss Johanna van Lochem, who proved a very suitable wife and a good mother to his children.



A sketch in chalks.

It was in 1863 that Valkenburg, hearing that the post of drawing master at the large boys' school at Helmond was vacant, applied for it, and got it, too. This necessitated a general move. He sold all his household goods, as the removal of furniture would have been too costly, since there was no train communication with Helmond in those days. It is always a trial to part with one's home belongings and I know that Valkenburg and his wife felt it sorely.

The idea of trying for this particular berth at Helmond had suggested itself to our artist on account of its vicinity to Antwerp. He longed to revisit the old haunts and feel once more in touch with Art. He now began to paint with the view to becoming better known and with the intention of sending his pictures to the various exhibitions. His first successfully exhibited canvas was called "Eastertide" and was well hung at one of the large exhibitions in Antwerp. This picture rushed him into notice, for until then he had been but little known outside his own people and circle.

He did not remain long at Helmond for he had a much better appointment offered him at Zwolle, which he gladly accepted. It was to teach drawing at the night school which would enable him to work for himself during the hours of daylight, and there would be a long mid-summer holiday when the night school was closed.

But it was not long ere this too was thrown over. It was not what he wanted. A craving after true art and the companionship of artists and artistic people became so overpowering that he seriously thought of leaving Zwolle and going to Amsterdam to live. It so happened that just at that time the Royal Scholarship was first started and Valkenburg thought he would try for it, so he sent in several canvases and awaited the result anxiously. The

At the cradle. From a painting.

committee thought so much of these pictures that they sent for the artist (to Amsterdam) in order that they might become acquainted with the man himself. They considered that the "young" man who had done such good work ought undoubtedly to be helped and deserved to travel in foreign parts, for which the Royal Scholarship (subsidy) was intended.

When Valkenburg arrived and presented himself before the gentlemen of the committee, they were amazed at seeing a middle-aged man of about 45, a modest man who did not ask for the benefits of foreign travel, not a trip to

Thrashers. From a painting.

Rome, but asked only for help to enable him to live in Amsterdam. This wish was granted and a studio provided for him in the Rozengracht. Here he worked during the summer months when the night school at Zwolle was closed. He was so happy that he longed to quit his post at Zwolle and to establish himself, wife and all, in Amsterdam.

To this end, however, he would have to find something to do in Amsterdam, for to live alone from the sale of his pictures, in such an expensive place as Amsterdam, was out of the question. He was successful and got work in the shape of the appointment of drawing master at the High School for girls. He

Bible Reading. From a painting.

retired from Zwolle as gracefully as he could and started, for the first time, a home in Amsterdam.

He made a lucky and auspicious start in his new surroundings, for on the very day he moved from Zwolle he received the notice that the picture he had sent to the Hague Exhibition was not only accepted, but hung. It was called "Just going out for a moment," (page 74) an old woman grasping an umbrella with both hands and a basket on her arm. Not only was it well hung but it gained the gold medal and found a purchaser, Baron van Hardenbroek.

There is an amusing little anecdote attached to this picture. Valkenburg,

Midday-meal. From a painting.

wishing to visit the Exhibition, and naturally curious to see how his own work looked, went to the Hague for a day. Not knowing his way about he asked the hotel keeper, to whose house he had gone for refreshment, the way to the Exhibition. After indicating the direction the hotel keeper added: "And be sure you look at the best picture there, an old woman grasping an umbrella with both hands."

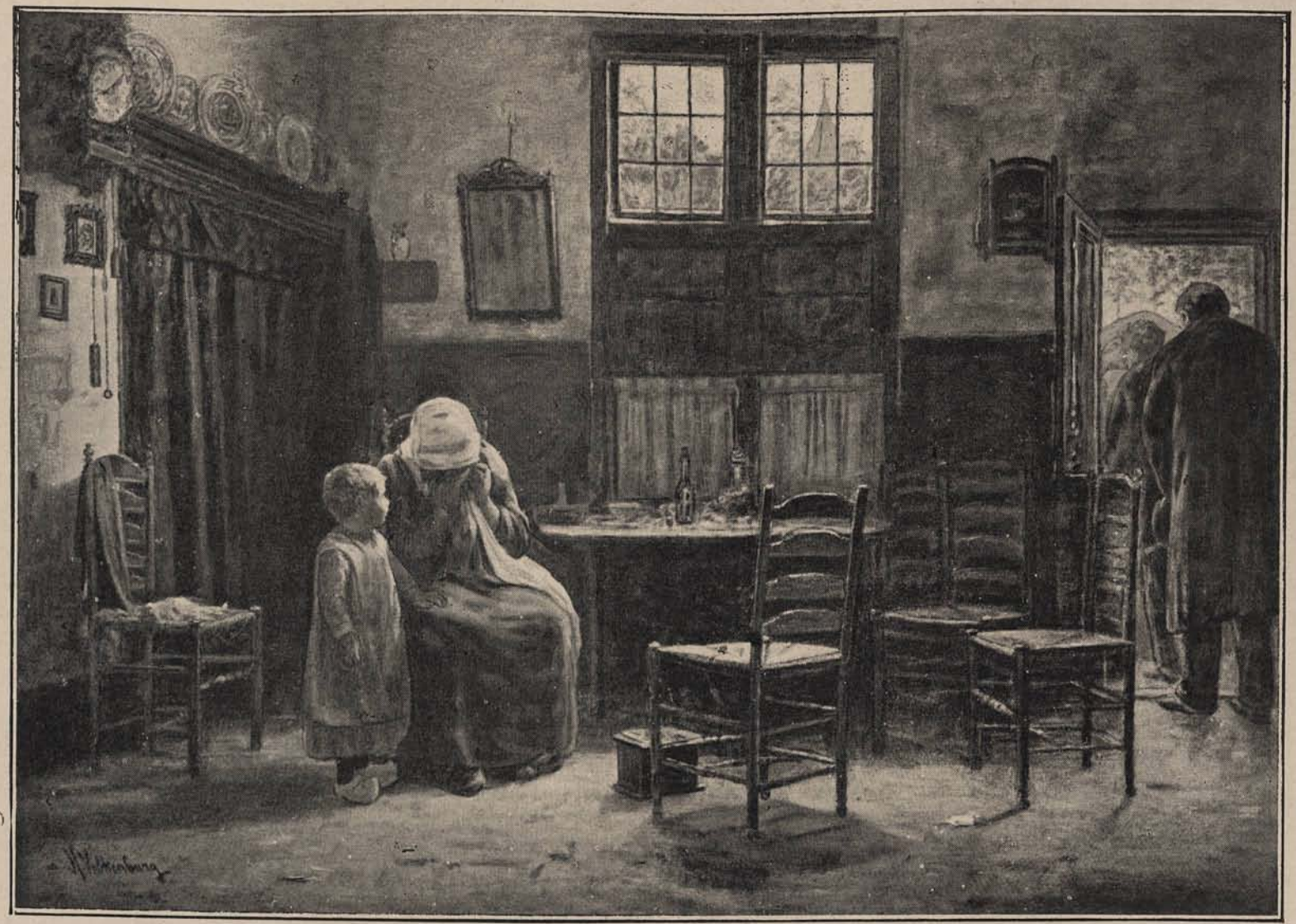
The newspapers praised our artist kindly and brought him into the public eye and it may be said that he placed his foot into the stirrup at that moment. But for all that the first years in Amsterdam did not run smoothly. The school where he had to teach twenty-eight hours a week, in a hot room, was a great

Old Harmen. From a painting.

fatigue and severe strain. In 1873 he was forced to give it up and soon after he was down with a lung complaint. Yet all the same he was steadily and gradually making a name for himself. The prospect ahead did not look so very dark. When he recovered he devoted all his time to painting, and for the first time, for many years, was not tied to any school or teaching. In the summer he wandered about in the country, working in his town studio in the winter. He worked much at a village called Twente, a place he knew well and where he had many friends. A good many of his best pictures date back

Preparing dinner. From a painting.

to that period. One of his most celebrated large canvases called "Bible Reading" (page 69) was painted there. Like most big pictures it was not finished off in "one sitting" but was completed long after it was commenced, having been put to one side for many years. He had often attended these Bible readings and always thought what an interesting picture they would make, with the varied expressions on the faces of the listeners, some young, some old, all equally intent upon the reader's words. Many sketches were made and much time spent over it, but it was not finished till the first International Exhibition (in Amsterdam) in the year 1883; in fact the prospect of



"The Village bell is tolling." From a painting.

"Just going out for a minute." From a painting in the possession of Baron Hardenbroek.

such an Exhibition fired him with the desire to complete this big canvas. Valkenburg wanted to exhibit a large picture, something that would attract the attention of the public. In this he succeeded and it brought him in the gold medal. It was purchased by Baron Van Boetzelaar.

Valkenburg was attracted by quiet scenes of home life, especially from the homes of the poorer classes. Some of his prettiest pictures are "Goodnight," "The Christening Breakfast," "What the Stork Brought," "Looking at Pictures," etc. The first named obtained the silver medal at one of the yearly exhibitions in Amsterdam.

As the health of one of the little Valkenburgs was not satisfactory, the doctor advised a lengthened visit to Zandvoort. The whole family moved there and our artist found much interesting matter for his brush among the poor fisher folk, yet he never accomplished any important canvas there. After that they went to Laren in Gelderland, where his best and most satisfactory work was done.

A sketch in chalks.

In the meantime Valkenburg was trying to break away from the Antwerp school and from his early style. During his stay at Laren he was thrown much with Mauve which undoubtedly put him on the right road, and laid the foundation of what his work eventually became. If you place some of his early works alongside of those done at a later period you cannot believe that the same hand fashioned both.

It can be said of few artists, but it can certainly be said of Valkenburg, that he went on improving even into his old age; that every work of importance showed progress and a careful desire for improvement. From Mauve he learnt how necessary it was to follow nature, and only nature and to seek, even among the minor events and aspects of life, that which is beautiful and true. He (Mauve) inspired him with enthusiasm and helped him to see beauty even in such small things as a ray of sunshine entering a cottage through a window pane, and lighting up the face of an old man or woman; or a tumbled down barn with little children, in ragged garments, playing about; or an old woman picking up sticks or sitting, bent double, over a poor fire. He pointed out to him too the importance of painting objects in their own surroundings and *just* as they are in nature, no embellishing, no improving. This is not difficult to do in Laren, for the poor villagers welcome the many artists who

Reading the Bible. From a painting.

visit the place with open arms, as it brings them in quite a nice little income and they are always pleased to be "put into pictures." It was in Laren that Valkenburg found what he had been seeking for unconsciously and where he eventually found his "level."

The picture by Valkenburg, hanging in our National Museum, was painted in Laren. It is so well known that it needs no description of mine. His water-colours are also very attractive, although the study of water-colour painting he only began late in life. He gained the bronze medal for one which he sent to an Exhibition in Liège in 1871, and many of them have found their way with the ever increasing stream flowing to the new country. By new country I mean America, where *good* pictures always find a ready market.

It is quite certain that Valkenburg's works are appreciated beyond the borders of his native soil, for he has gained medals for exhibited work, in London, Paris and Berlin. In the latter city he exhibited, with so much success, "The Village Church Bell is Tolling" (page 73) that it was bought by the Government for their Museum.

Valkenburg could look back with satisfaction upon his life, although *perhaps* his work did not approach quite to that state of perfection prophesied in his youth, and *if* he did not gain that worldwide reputation that he deserved and might have had, then think, dear reader of the years of toil and disappointment and "waste" that had been his fate. Twenty-five years out of the best part of a man's life is not easily replaced, and it was quite that number, if not more, that Hendrik Valkenburg had to teach instead of studying for himself, and struggle for his daily bread, instead of being able to think of art and throw his whole soul into his dearly loved work.

It was in the year 1896, two months after having celebrated his 70th birthday, that he died quite suddenly. The tokens of love and admiration that he received on that day were scarcely faded, the laurel wreaths quite fresh when again he was overwhelmed with sincere tokens of appreciation, not only from his friends and relatives, but from a saddened nation and from all lovers of Art.

RECOLLECTIONS

BY

F. P. TER MEULEN.

Sheep in the pens at night, in Drenthe, from a painting.

RECOLLECTIONS. [1])

Having been repeatedly requested to write down some of the events of my life, I beg, before doing so, the indulgence of my readers if I state facts and events that seem unimportant and appear to merit but scanty attention, for it is often that the trivial things of life best illustrate a man's biography.

I begin... before the beginning. My mother called herself, with a certain amount of pride, a "*Kosterskind*," which means to say that she descended on both father and mother's side, from publishers and printers (in Haarlem). Hence no doubt that literary vein which shows itself now and then in my personality. On my father's side I inherited a love of deep thought *and* an overpowering love for nature. Perhaps it would interest Taine to learn that my paternal grandfather was an artist colourman at first, and afterwards a white-lead manufacturer. He would no doubt attribute the grandson's love of painting

1) Upon our request, for a few more autobiographical particulars, the writer replied: "I quite agree with you that I have seized the opportunity of being 'silent' about myself when writing about myself. I have endeavoured to fill up the gap, but I see no way of doing so without the risk perhaps of some self-praise and running the danger of blowing my own trumpet, and I am not a trumpet-blower, but a painter.

to the first cause and an inclination to spoil his work (by too much body-colour) by reason of the second.

In the golden hours of youth, when I lived in the dear quiet old home at Bodegraven—when despondency and despair were unknown emotions—painting smiled at me from out of the dim future as a joy unshadowed by any cloud of sorrow or disappointment. Although I heard and saw nothing of Art, yet I went on bravely with my own little drawings, (liking I remember best of all to make pictures of goats with big horns)—without help, without advice, full of hope and believing in myself.

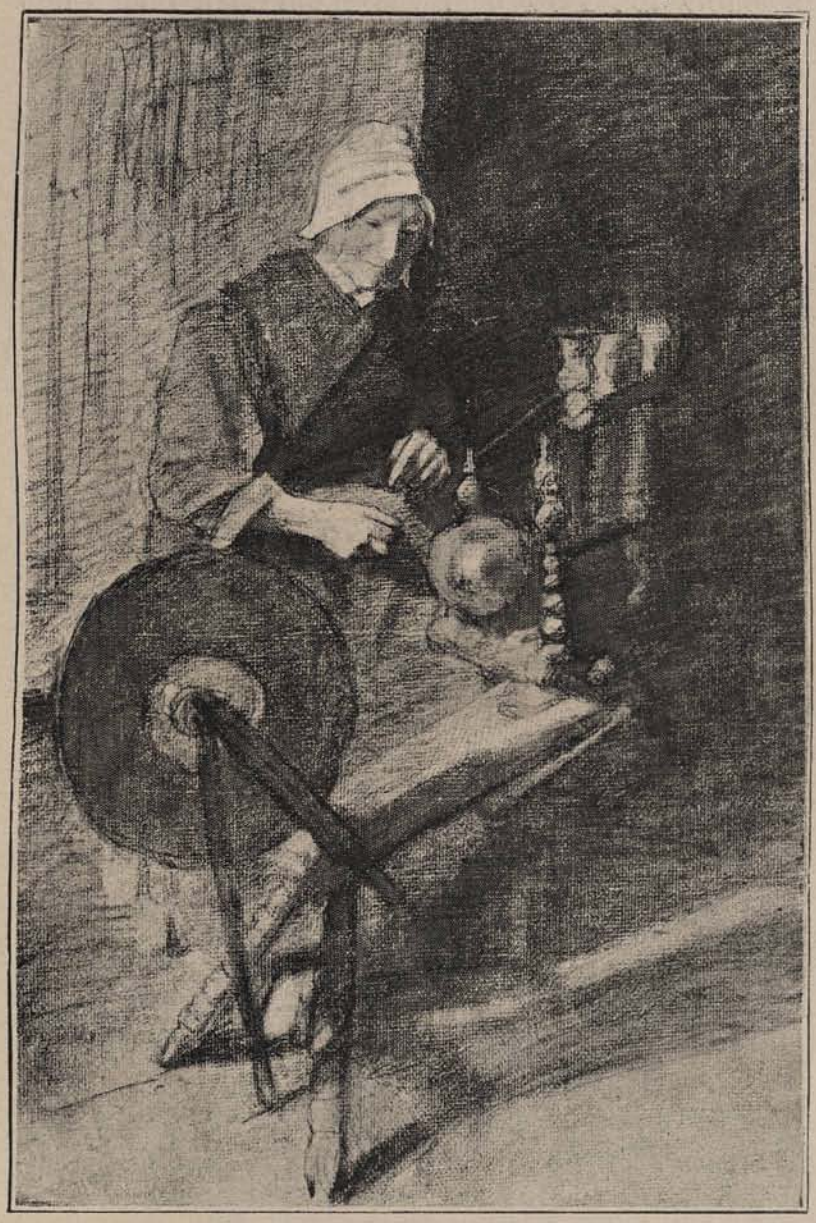
Of the school I went to I particularly remember the curl in the beard of one

A Flock of Sheep on the Road. From a painting.

of the masters, a certain tall young man, very thin and always standing erect behind his desk. I became very fond of him in time. But what impressed me most of all at that "Institute for young gentlemen" was the picture that hung over the mantelpiece in the big class room and which remains fresh in my memory even now. The stag swimming for dear life from the hounds at his heels, the huntsmen on the river side urging on the pursuit. With what delight I used to gaze up at it, a pleasure not unmixed with awe. It is really not surprising that it engraved itself on my memory.

Still fresh in my mind too is an incident that happened even before my school days. It was mid-winter, the snow lay thick upon the ground. As I looked out of the breakfast room window one morning I saw two sheep huddled

close together, sheltering under our verandah. They had probably not been able to find any food and as the ditches were frozen over there was no barrier to keep them within bounds. For a boy who loved animals and whose imaginations and ideas were not spoiled, such a sight so unusual and unexpected —in a house where everything went by rule and regulation—took the form of a romantic adventure. How often I used to wish that those same sheep would repeat their early visit.



At the Spinning Wheel. From a study.

Should I or should I not be an artist? To be or not to be! My father, I remember, possessed a book called "How to become a painter." It was by Conscience. I thought to myself: "Here's a chance, now I shall know what to do." I got my father to read it out aloud, but to my disappointment I could not discover any absolute rules to follow and certainly no sign-post indicating the way. That book taught me nothing.

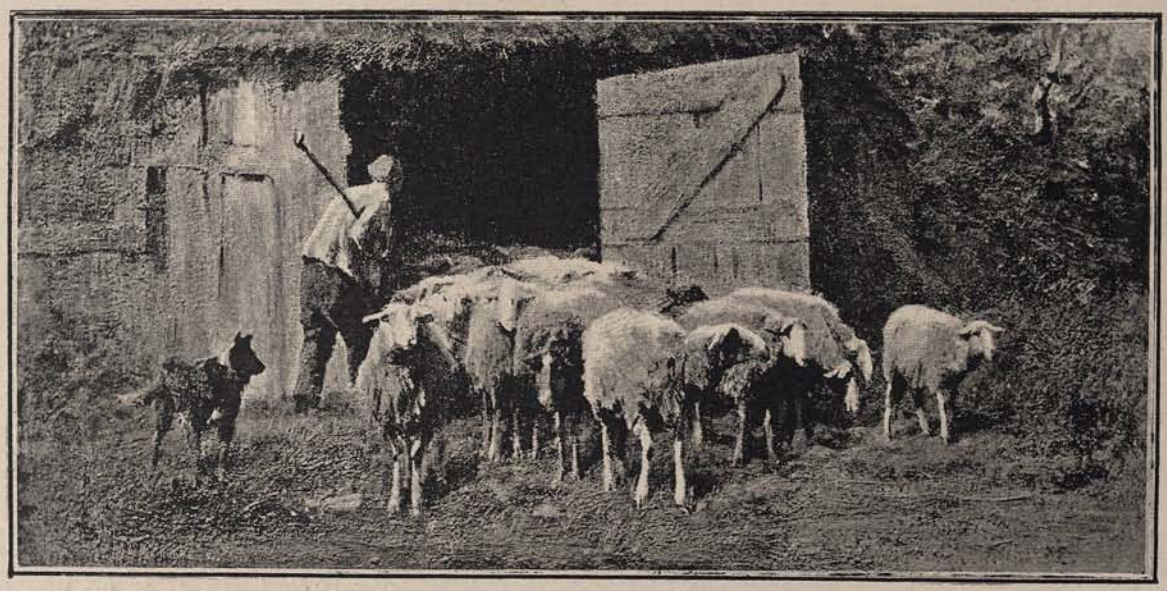
But the dark cloud had a silver lining. It so happened that my people became acquainted with the family Van de Sande Bakhuyzen, that artistic family in the which father, son and daughter each became, in their own time, celebrated painters. In due course I was taken to the Hague and placed with old Bakhuyzen who was to guide my tottering steps through the difficult maze of art.

I lived with the Bakhuyzens and very comfortable I was too, but my work did not progress smoothly. After four years of struggling I decided to throw it up and go in for literature, for which I fondly imagined I had a vocation. I worked hard and applied myself with might and main and progressed, for a time, with rapid strides. I studied Greek and Latin, went to the Academy and

became a candidate for a scholarship. In the mean time the love of Art and the desire to paint welled up again within me—probably from having totally abstained for so long—and it suddenly dawned upon me that I was not born to be a schoolmaster nor a professor of literature. Thanks to my lenient parents I was allowed to return to my first love, after a pause, shall I say unfaithfulness, of ten years, probably the very best years out of a man's life.

In 1874 I went to live at the Hague where I came under the magical influence of Israëls and Jacob Maris, also under that of Bosboom and Mauve.

During my ten years of truce my eyes had been opened, chiefly by the following occurrence. Standing one day in front of a picture dealer's window I gazed with awe and admiration at a reproduction of one of Israëls' pictures. The subject was a body that had been washed up on the sea-shore and was



Driven out of the Sheepfold. From a painting.

being carried across the downs. This picture, with its group of dark figures against a grey sky and only a ray of light sinking on the horizon, made an indelible impression upon me. It was one of Israëls' earliest works and may perhaps not be considered amongst his best, but for me it had a certain fascinating sentiment and it touched me to the quick. I may truthfully say that it was the turning point in my life and it gave me an insight into a new world.

Two years later I made a second step when I paid my first visit to Mauve's studio. I was astonished at his pictures, so attractive and yet so simple. The subjects were of an every-day type, no arranged groups of men and animals and the landscapes were taken from parts of the country where there was absolutely "nothing to be seen." The skies, too, were "dull and uninteresting," grey with leaden clouds or threatening rain. Everything was just the reverse of what I had formerly thought beautiful. It was just in this "stillness" and "dullness" and "greyness" that their charm lay. I began to realize that man

or beast *posed* was unnatural and inartistic and that all theatrical style was wrong. In short, I succumbed to the charm of a genial man of fine character and refined taste and I knew that his art, summed up in one word, was *real.*

And this pleasant impression returned to me and was renewed every time I visited this great artist, till, alas! he was called away at a comparatively early age. Every time I gazed at his works I was attracted by such varied aspects of nature as had never before fascinated me nor even occurred to me as being at all paintable. It was if I had looked at the "ordinary" things of this world with eyes that were blind-folded, and had missed seeing *just such points* as were most adorable to an artist. I was always refreshed after such visits, yet with the sensation of a boy who expects, at any moment, to have his ears boxed.

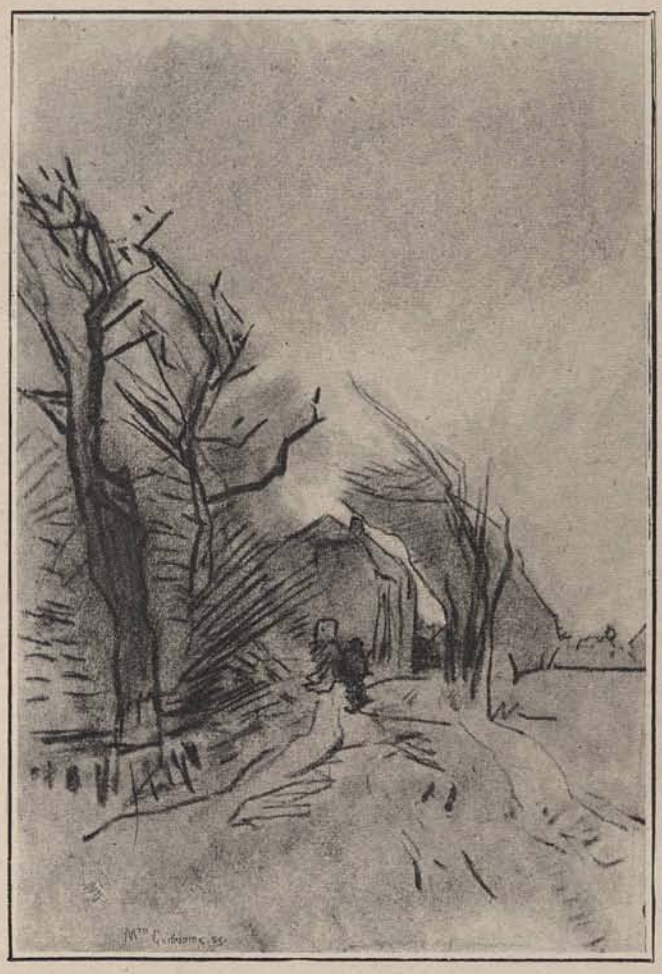
Young Cow Drivers. From a sketch in chalks.

Anton Mauve thy works waft their refreshing breath of nature towards me, as full of vitality as ever they did when their creator's hand still lived.

Personal intercourse, too, with Mauve was of great use to a struggling artist. He was always so ready to give advice and help and was, in this respect, not unlike Bosboom. With what spirit the latter could convey to others his impressions upon Art; this I fully realized when I was dabbling in literature and writing articles myself upon the subject.

I was often surprised at the way in which reviewers and critics wrote about exhibitions and picture galleries; that their judgment and opinion tallied somewhat with that of the artist himself did not altogether surprise me, but that they should seek for the beauty of a picture entirely without taking into consideration the thought or intention of the painter was, to my idea, a theoretical folly. And when one writer lifted up his voice in a certain periodical, making himself ridiculous by bestowing great praise on a picture by reason

of the story (invented by himself) and finishing up by exclaiming: "See ladies and gentlemen, this is painting!" I felt like lifting up *my* voice and in the name of Art saying: "Nay, gentlemen, this is writing." I also felt the necessity of giving an account of what the painter *himself* had intended, not in long-winded phrases but in few words of the purest Dutch, such as would do credit to my *Alma Mater* of Leyden where I had developed the acquirement of terse phraseology and the love of beautiful and pure language. And so it came to pass that I wrote an article in the "*Gids*" (the Guide) of September 1874, under the title of "The Scale of Art." I began by remarking how ridiculous it was for people when looking at a picture to begin by saying: "What is it?" Really for such people a catalogue is sufficient guide and, armed with one, they can go home happy and satisfied. People certainly have a right to their own ideas and opinions and everybody may have his or her favourite *genre* and style (probably without any connection to Art) but we expect something better from a critic. Sometimes even sensible people, as soon as ever Art is mentioned, launch forth on the subject regardless of veracity. For their benefit I mention the following: A highly respectable and well-known writer who, after speaking of the praise bestowed upon Rembrandt by one of his contemporaries—chiefly on account of his having given Samson long hair and placed the wedding guests on benches instead of upon chairs—added: "You see that amongst Rembrandt's contemporaries there were some who not only admired his clever brush but saw in him a fine intellect." Remark therefore that some of the best painters and art critics did not look up to Rembrandt, only by reason of his wonderful art, but likewise by reason of his ability for grasping historical detail, which they are pleased to call a proof of his artistic intellect.



In the Neighbourhood of Noordwijk. From a sketch.

"The representation," I went on to say, thus harping on the universal opinion, "the *representation* is called the subject thought of the painter, and the *lines and colour* the form or material side of the work; according to this therefore the thought of the artist is first considered by desiring the subject

to be put into so many words. On this wise the picture does not speak to the spiritual intellect of the beholder but contains a symbolical meaning which requires to be 'translated' into commonplace words."

To contest these views I could not do better than give an account of how a picture comes into being. It is certainly clear that the outward visible form of nature inspires the painter and urges him to produce a certain harmonizing whole of lines and colours, and that the reproducing of objects is not the only aim but simply the means whereby he hopes to reach his ideal.

Again I travelled along another road and discovered that a picture should be valued according to the worth of its own visible beauty and not according

In a Wood. From a sketch in the collection of J. J. Tiele.

to the wealth of words by which it can be described. I wish therefore to state that *Art* is an independent form of poetry and for those who understand her language (her lines and colour) she gives as much pleasurable satisfaction as the tones of music give to those who are musical. By the word Art (I mean the producing of pictures, not the colouring of canvases for wall decorations) I intended to convey, in this particular sense, all ideals brought to a certain height of perfection by a natural and true representation of nature.

Then again I tried to discover how clever writers, such an professor Opzoomer, could be carried away by the general idea. But I could find no other explanation than that many—whose feelings for beauty are not sufficiently developed to seize the thought of the artist and who desire more than a representation

of certain objects—seek the signification of the picture where it cannot be found, namely outside of the visible beauty.

At the same time I showed up, in a comical manner, how some people hunt with the hounds and run with the hare; how they speak of a picture which "charms the eye and delights the mind" and say moreover "It is not only beautifully painted but there is a sentiment in it." I was once asked by someone who had heard me sing the praises of a picture: "Would it not please you better if the subject represented was more important?" How ridiculous! I might as well have asked someone who was drenched through with rain in a

Dusk. From a sketch in chalks.

north wind, whether he would not have been wetter had the wind blown from the south-west.

But enough. In conclusion I referred to the, in every respect, decisive testimony of our forefathers:

"There was a time when artists had to submit to the foolish prejudice that they might only bring *their* ideal into form through the same channel by which others had established *theirs*. This was at a time when no visible beauty might be created but such as stirred the recollection of what others had already pronounced beautiful. To the Old-Hollanders must be given the credit of having been the first to throw off this yoke. Our old masters did not stop

"A winter's evening"

FROM A PAINTING

in the possession of Mr. Grimoni in Bologna.


Th Mealen

to ask: What will the Church think? What will the poets say? but simply: *What is my own ideal?* What did it matter to them if they put their ideas into such form as did not suit others, because 'those others' could not see beauty where they saw it. It was *their* business to represent nature in the form that *they* considered the most beautiful, regardless of the opinion of others. Never has the standard of Art been raised higher above conventional 'wrong-notions' than in the time of these old Masters.

"Now you would imagine that in a land that has produced *such* men, Art would be better understood. If the old Masters had never lived and if some one came along with the ideas I have set forth, one might *then* say to such a person: 'What do you wish to argue about? Do you mean to say that

Carts hauling Sand. From a painting.

great artists spring up in our land and that you are convinced of the unreasonableness of the commonplace way of thinking?'

"But it would seem that in this respect the works of the old Masters have not been fruitful. Their works are, however, convincing enough. Visit the Museum Van der Hoop 1) and there you will see a series of grand masterpieces which according to the common idea are rubbish, and alongside of them hang brand new pictures some of which are so hideous that one is inclined to think they have been placed there by contrast, and yet many of them have undeniably *fine thoughts*. The old Dutch Masters show us, in an overwhelming amount of masterpieces, that inspiration, by means of visible beauty, can be raised to the highest flight of ideal poetry....."

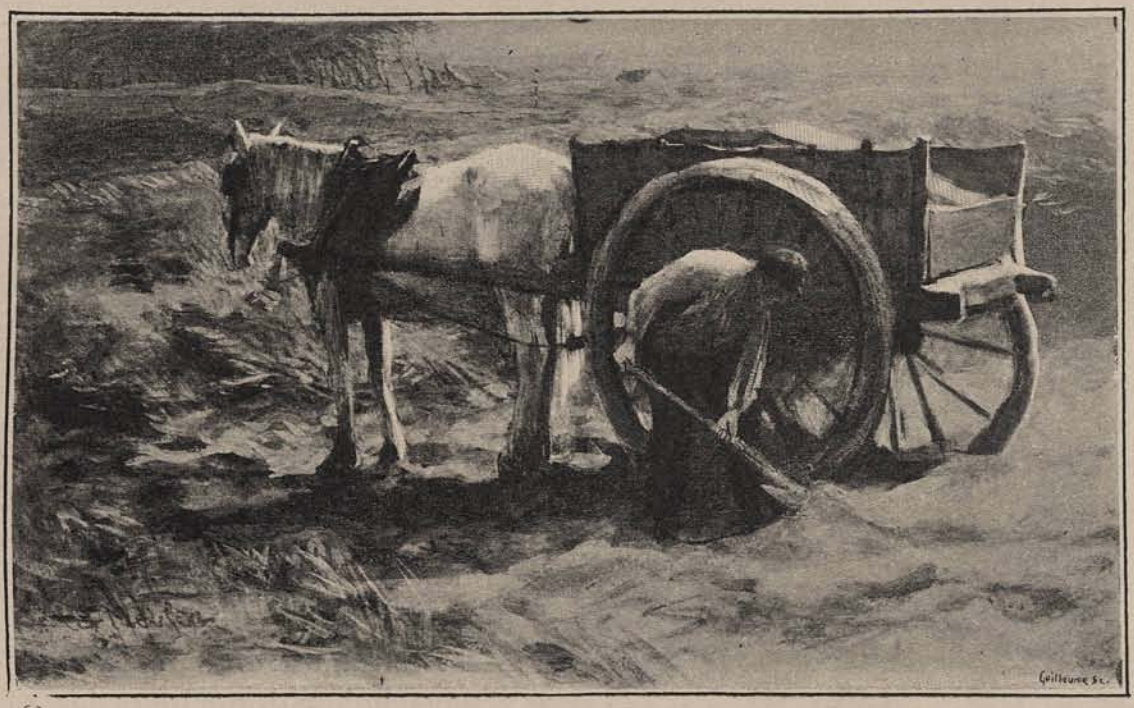
1) When this article was written there existed a separate Museum Van der Hoop.

Now imagine how agreeably surprised I was when, four years later, I read in the *Tijdspiegel* (Mirror of Time) the following by Vosmaer: "Fromentin in his '*Les maîtres d'autrefois*' discusses, in the fourth chapter, a question not

A Road in the Downs. From a drawing.

new to us, but in which I rejoice to find an ally in the French Masters. The technical worth of the 17th century was so exceedingly great that it reigned for at least a couple of centuries and blinded the eyes of criticism to her less

Sheep in the Pens, at Night, Drenthe. From a drawing in the collection of R. W. Mesdag.



A Sand Cart. From a drawing in the collection of J. J. Tiele.

perfect side. However much Fromentin admires that school, he wonders, not unjustly, at the total absence of that which we are pleased to call 'subject.' That school thought only of style and ignored all imaginative feeling.

Winter. From a drawing.

The painting of the old Hollanders was technical work, quite apart from feeling or imagination." (Thus the Hollanders were enlightened by the honorable writer).

Again I took up my pen and wrote in the "*Gids*," of January '79, an article which I called "The Worth of Art" in which I began by desiring my readers to judge for themselves:

A Pensioner. From a sketch in chalks.

"Imagine someone who, although possessing much sound judgment and common sense, yet having no taste when it comes to the question of old pictures, reading the above quotation and then remembering what has been done by Vosmaer and others to throw light upon the history of those old Masters, and remembering what is always being done in order to give every one the opportunity of learning to understand their works, would not such a person ask: 'Why make so much to-do over these poor old painters? What does it matter whether some centuries ago there lived a few patient and good 'workmen' without heart and perhaps without education, and in whose works we do not perceive whether the higher gifts of imagination had fallen to their lot; and why talk of them as artists? Call them rather artisans and acknowledge openly that we can very well do without them as long as there are conjurers and rope-dancers in the world. These too are artists, and far more amusing. What is the use of talking of the "less perfect side" in connection with such aping and imitation? Until now I had fondly imagined that the present day artist could as well do without that which the old Masters seemed to have lacked as a man of science can do without brains, or any ordinary mortal without blood."

Really I could not tell such a person, who expresses such views and who does not wish to leave his own common sense out of the game altogether, why the old Dutch painters are deemed worthy to be judged if they are such as represented in the above lines. The manner in which Louis the fourteenth said: '*Otez moi ces magots*' was right and sensible. You cannot sufficiently condemn an artlessness which calls itself Art.

"But" I continued, "the question might be asked if the pictures of the Old Hollanders are more complete by reason of the absence of what we call

'subject matter,' and above all whether the beauty we admire is the result of technical ability?"

Thereupon followed an argument which I refuted by saying that both questions should be answered in the negative.

I had the good luck to come upon the following lines in Bilderdijk's poem:

A sketch in chalks.

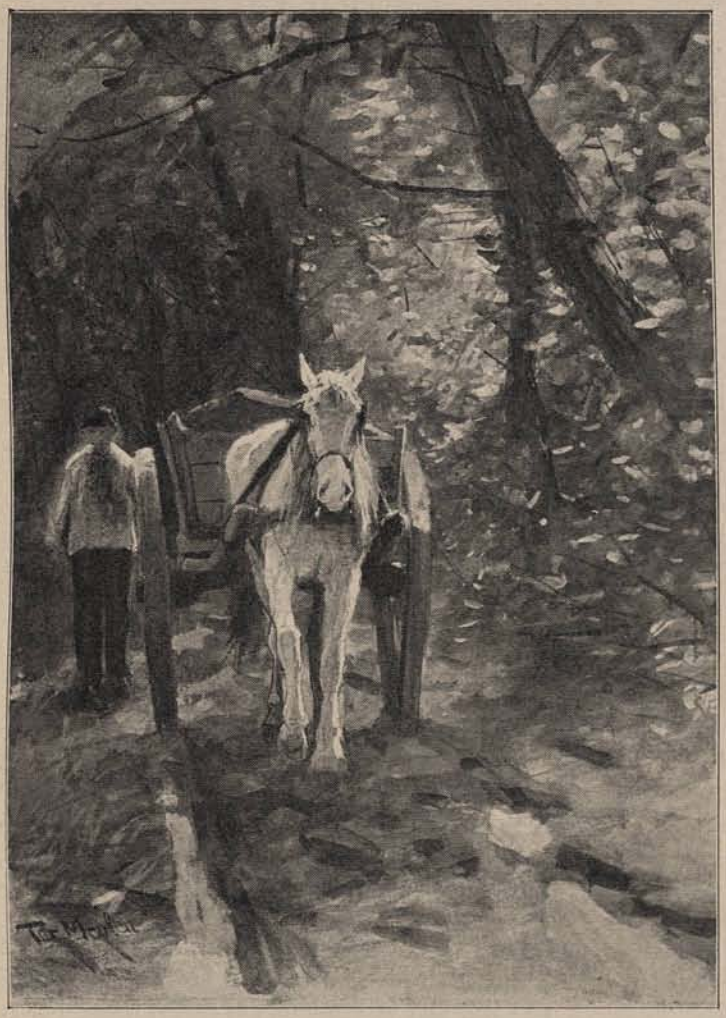
"The art of painting," which clearly showed that the author, who although not a connoisseur of art (which is proved by some of the verses) had a clear insight into the "being" of Art. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting these lines again. (I had placed them above my newspaper article as a sort of motto):

"The common belief in a series of reproduced features
"Is nature. Thy form it has borrowed and Art is revealed.
. . . . . .
"Her purpose is not Nature as follower to denote
"....But Beauty! But Joy!
"Thou Beauty, the image of God! Thou Truth!
"In the garb of creature, wherein she tolerates our being.
"And not to blind our eyes, by the brightness of her look,
"She enshrines herself in the material we see and reproduce.

Sheep near the River. From a painting.

"Oh Beauty! It is at thy feet we lay all our offerings.
"Useless it is to blend colour, line and sound
"If thou animate not the form, nor spiritualize the whole
"Without such, the produce of our industry is but worse than monsters.
. . . . . .
"The soul, it is the language that floweth from the heart
"Thine it is too, who lute and maulstick wield.
. . . . . .
"Breathe but for Beauty and where'er thine eye thou cast.
"Though it were plain, if *Art*, to thee as Beauty seem."

These lines I considered very à *propos*. It seemed almost as if Bilderdyk had written the text for my sermon. In that "sermon." I had the pleasure of showing up the remarkable peculiarity of the Frenchman upon the point in question, who, throughout the whole book contradicted himself in a manner such as no adversary or opponent could improve upon. Amongst other things I said: "As regards Fromentin, although he sings the usual tune, when writing about the old Masters in general, yet the book teems with proofs that he thinks quite differently when speaking about any painter in particular. When mentioning Rembrandt, for instance, there are many evidences such as these: 'an inspired creature ... above all things a visionary ... a spiritualist ... an imaginative, I mean a disposition whose dominion is that of ideas and whose language that of sentiment ... every touch pathetic and comprehensible; all the outcome of deep emotion.'" And yet all this did not prevent the writer from saying (in the fourth chapter) "And they lacked imagination, etc."



In the Woods. From a drawing.

Then in my grievance I repeated that art critics in general think only of two things: in the first place of the literary point, that is to say in how far they can put the representation into fine words, regardless of the intention of the artist: and secondly the more or less successful imitation of nature, leaving absolutely no room for artistic ideals.

I grasped this occasion, once more to demonstrate the activity of the painter: "To be a poet means to give expression, by one's own creative powers, to the *thoughts* that centre in love and beauty. A painter desires visible beauty 1); the beauties of nature awaken in him thoughts of perfection which create in his imagination a harmonious whole, producing, through his under-

1) It is perhaps not superfluous to mention here that when contemplating Art in general, it is necessary to picture to oneself some ideal painter in particular. But no one, of course, answers completely to this "ideal."

standing a completeness of conception. To bring such a vision into substance he borrows nature's form, choosing with care from the objects she offers, making a certain desired harmony of his own with lines and colours. 1) On such wise a unity is blended and a whole is brought into being, adding nought untrue to nature, desiring nought untrue to nature, making every detail necessary. There is not a jot or tittle that his imagination cannot use in the service of his ideal. 2) It is quite wrong to speak of "omitting" things that are "not beautiful," or "adding" thereto, as if such constituted idealism. The workings of imaginative power must never be considered mechanical, but chemical. The latter is the means whereby everyone sees and observes; but in the case of the artist it becomes another material by his powers of desire and individual feeling. For him every detail is necessary to complete his whole, every variation utilised in the arranging of his picture, every aspect grasped without difficulty and as if by chance.

It is obvious that these remarks were intended for artists, as I have principally described their mannerisms. 3) Nothing, however, pleased me more than to be able to fall in with their views. Bosboom had so often spoken to me on the subject. I recollect on a certain morning when meeting him out walking he called out in the distance to me: "I have read your article!" I need not add that this flattered me very much. I was idealist enough myself to think, with pleasure, that I had done a service to Art by throwing light on the "ideal" and placing it first and foremost; and although I wished I had said and done things better and differently, I had the satisfaction of feeling that I

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1) The words "lines and colours" require explanation. By lines we do not exactly mean the outline of the objects, but the most conspicuous points of colour, or of light and shade, which cause the various points to melt the one into the other in a soft harmony. In such a manner a picture can offer to our gaze a beauty of "lines" although it may not represent any particular fine models or objects. By the term "colours" I mean, in short, to comprehend all colour, light, shade and tone. I wish here to note that these variations are enormously overlooked, and they mean perhaps the most important points for developing the feeling of beauty, for they denote and decide the character and expression of line and colour.

They are the animation which gives to a picture a feeling of life, although they seem to be there but accidentally, *nuances*, in the which a poor copy generally fails and the original representation badly expressed and all life and movement wanting. They are the results of lightness, of strength, of flexibility, of life, of transparency, of fire, of warmth, of mystery and of numerous other properties which cannot be expressed in one word. These properties, in their mutual connection with each other represent in a great measure the poetical side of visible nature. Under these circumstances there is this to be said that there are other ways and means than those used by the painter to reproduce the beauty he meets with in nature. For instance, look at etching. What can be more against nature than representing the sky by means of scratches, angles and corners. When however this is possible and by thus doing expressing the depth and glow of the everchanging sky, a sheet of paper can likewise interpret the poetry of floating clouds in the atmospheric firmament.

2) There are no doubt painters who are not agreed on this point in question. The words of Töpffer, in his charming little book: "*Reflexions et menus propos d'un peintre Génévois*" are very convincing. "*Qui donc n'a pas rencontré tels peintres, et parmi les plus excellents, qui imitent de la façon la plus libre, la plus belle, la plus poetique tout en ne croyant que copier humblement, servilement. M. Jourdain faisait de la prose, eux c'est de la poésie qu'ils font sans le savoir.*"

3) I thank my friend J. van de Sande Bakhuyzen—to whom I am moreover much indebted—for his sound advice and wise observations on my articles upon the theory of Art.

had pleaded the cause of the old Dutch Masters by my reasoning, and that I had done what I could by expressing myself plainly and boldly, showing that my reasons had been derived from the Existence of Art and established by the Experience of the Artist.

By my words—not spoken lightly nor without serious meditation—I have endeavoured to throw light upon the subject in question, and I rely upon the integrity of my reader in judging my opinion from an impartial and, shall I say, from an Artistic point of view.

F. P. ter Meulen

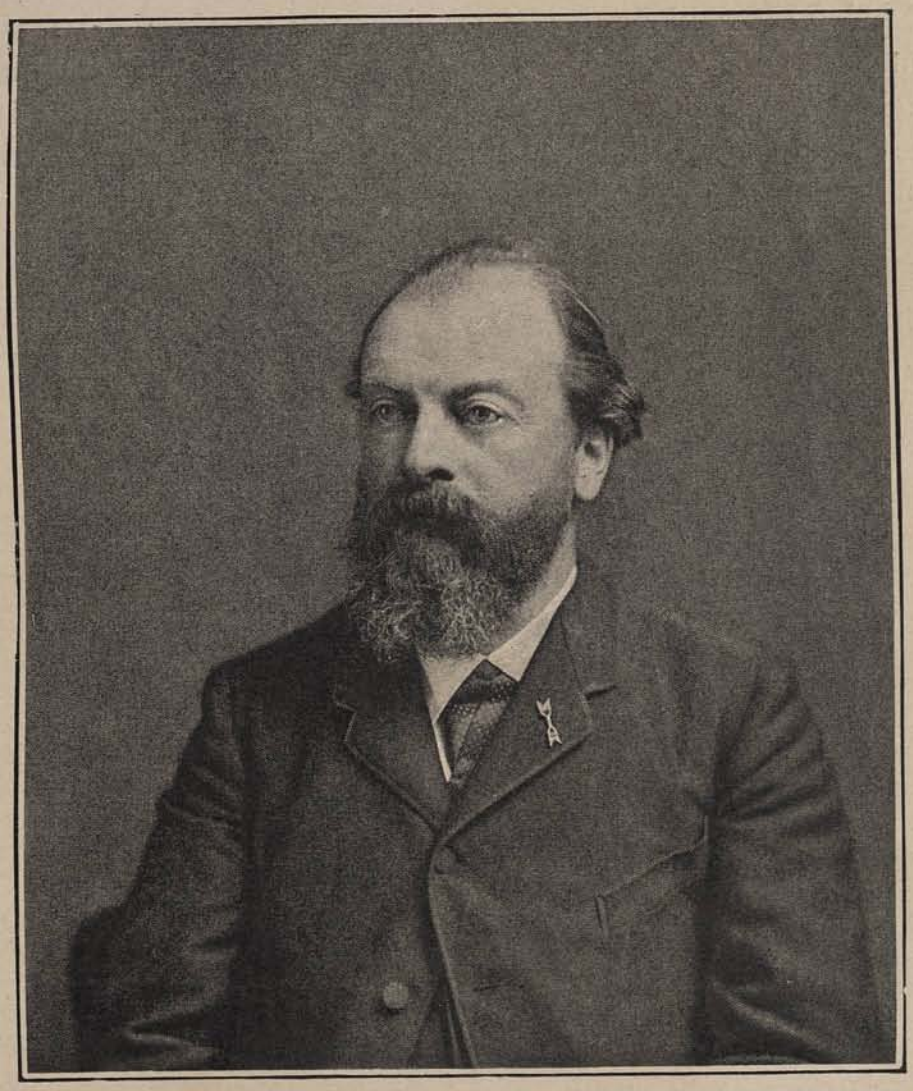
PHILIP LODEWIJK JACOB FREDERIK SADÉE

BY

JOHAN GRAM.

On the sea shore, from a painting, collection Hoevenaar-van Geldrop.

PHILIP LODEWIJK JACOB FREDERIK SADÉE.



About forty years ago five young men were painting, from a model, up in a garret that had been metamorphised into a studio, on the *Houtmarkt* at the Hague. The model was placed in the full light of the window, a sturdy young fellow posing as Mutius Scaevola at the moment when the undaunted Roman had placed his hand in the flames. Mutius Scaevola, who in ordinary life answered to the name of *Hein* and was a lamplighter and apothecary-messenger by trade, stood there, without the least notion of his importance, clad in a Roman toga, his right hand resting on a cigar-box which stood on a tumbled down table, the arrangement representing the imaginary fire.

As little as *Hein* resembled the fearless Roman—whom adverse circumstances forced him to represent—even so little did the bare garret resemble the usual well-appointed studio. To reach this dove-cot—which was divided into two compartments, front and back—you had to ascend two flights of narrow creaking stairs. The walls—originally grey—presented a grand field for the wanton and luxurious fantasy of the tenants and were covered all over with sketches, caricatures, palette scrapings, names and portraits of models, etc.; some of them surrounded with white chalk lines representing frames. In one corner stood a skeleton, the bones of which were joined together by brass hinges, and on the head of which was placed a ticket, with these satirical words: "formerly millionaire."

The Poor of the Village. From a painting.

This was the studio of J. E. J. van den Berg, known by the fraternity as "Professor," but called the "Baas" (Boss) by his pupils. The five young artists, so busily employed upon the morning in question were: Tom Cool, Taco Scheltema, Kachel, de Famars Testas and your humble servant. Van den Berg was a worshipper of classical art, preacher of the doctrine that without a good scientific foundation no good work could be accomplished. He maintained that the form and character of things in general, and of the human body in particular, could only be learnt by minutely studying every individual part. He despised all the romantic ideas he saw in vogue around him. To see that pale sombre looking man sitting in his badly lighted room, busily occupied with compasses and triangles, absorbed in a question upon perspective, reminded

one more of a modern Spinoza than of a descendant of Jan Steen or Ostade. A dusty grey skeleton in one corner, a couple of book cases, containing old musty volumes, in another, a few prints from the old Italian Masters on the wall, made a very suitable background for such a grave man, who had

On the Look-out. From a water-colour.

withdrawn himself entirely from the world, giving himself up to theories and science. Our professor was a worshipper of David and a follower of Sheffer, finding his highest point of delight in a Venus de Melos or an Apollo... Our professor was always surrounded by a little group of pupils, and although

it is said that "every road leads to Rome" many a sigh has been heaved in that garret, where we sat doubled up, day after day, studying anatomy, proportions and dioptrics—the bread and water of art—instead of being allowed cheerfully to grasp palette and brush and with a light heart paint away merrily. The "Baas" was, however, immovable. He maintained that painting was drawing with colours and how could any one expect to produce good work unless his hand had properly acquired every minute detail of proportions and anatomy. Then he would talk to us of the great painters, of Michel Angelo, of Leonard da Vinci and others, to convince us by what hard work and application those old Masters had been able to produce such marvellous works of Art.

Upon the morning in question, the "Baas" entered the studio, dressed in

Pencil Sketches.

his usual long black velvet coat and scull-cap of the same material, leading by the hand a fair-haired young fellow of about fifteen, whom he introduced to us with a friendly gesture.

This youth was Philip Sadée.

"Young men, I introduce to you a new comrade, one who likewise wishes to consecrate himself to Art." Mutius Scaevola cast an impertinent look over the young acolyte; we rose and shook hands with the new comer. He was then led into the back apartment—the retreat of the debutant—we with our model occupied the front and chief part—in which stood a box full of human bones and in the centre a table where perspective was taught, every article stamping it as the purgatory of a theoretical trade. It was here that the new arrival had to try his strength upon a plaster-mask. It was moreover quite necessary for him to be well armed against the attacks and chaff of the older

Skittle Alley. From a painting.

pupils of the front studio, who did not neglect occasionally to pull the nose of the Benjamin or play some practical joke upon him.

When, however, the mask was splendidly reproduced upon paper and when the youth, without a touch of pedantry or self-consciousness, asked for the opinion of the older men, then immediately a mutual sympathy sprang up and the new comer was enrolled as a friend.

The "Baas" hugged the Benjamin to his heart, for whatever the master disapproved of for the progress of an artistic education and whatsoever he preached in its favour, was listened to attentively, and implicitly followed, by the young enthusiast. Yet there were moments when he could scarcely resist the temptation of launching forth with palette and brush, but from his desire to please his "Baas" he clothed himself in dust and ashes and plodded for days together along the whithering desert of anatomy and perspective.

Pencil Sketches.

And yet if ever the pupils of a studio have learnt the truth of the French saying: "*Chassez le natural, il revient au galop*," then certainly those of Van den Berg have. Bakkerkorff, who qualified under the guidance of our excellent Van den Berg, became a painter of lilliputian panels, in Meissonnier's style, that would certainly not have found grace in the eyes of the "Professor." De Famars Testas established his reputation by a series of Eastern folklore representations and by a number of romantic illustrations. Taco Scheltema, into whose ears Greek and Roman art had been ding-donged, ended by exhibiting two lovely miniature *genre* paintings, which brought him into fame on the spot. Tom Cool broke away early from classical Art to find success in depicting the life of the Gelderland farmer.

And so it was with Sadée too. After building up a good foundation, and after carefully studying every proportion—which had become almost like second nature to him, and which had made him the apple of his master's eye—he appeared before the public in toga and peplum, the reflection of the art of his master; (which is generally the case with every pupil starting in life). But as a young plant, when left to itself, and free from the hand of trimmer and pruner, often shoots out stronger branches, bearing healthier fruit, even so it was in the case of Sadée.

In 1857 he exhibited his first picture at the Hague: "The arrest of Peter Hasselaar at Haarlem." Two years later he painted "The Spanish brothers" and after that followed several Biblical subjects, amongst which were: "John leading the mother of Jesus from the Cross" and "Jesus and the woman of Samaria."

Talent, thoroughness and hard work were apparent in these pictures but they bore too much the stamp of the Academy. It was a refined and tasteful melody but one that had repeatedly sounded in our ears.

Then Sadée, with his loins girt and his staff in his hand, or in plain language armed with sketch book and paintbox, wandered off into Germany travelling through Hessen and Zwaben where he found himself greatly attracted by the natives and their primitive villages. Every thing charmed him, be it hill or

Potato Gleaners. From a painting in the National Museum in Amsterdam.

dale, wood or field, stream or waterfall, but most of all he was attracted by the country folk in their picturesque costumes and the quaintness of their dwellings. He allowed nothing to escape his artistic eye. He made many friends and ended up at Dusseldorf where he tarried some time and where he became much attached to some of his colleagues.

In 1866 he surprised everyone by showing at the Hague Exhibition two beautiful pictures: "The Village Church coming out" and "The return from the Christening." This was indeed a surprise! I still remember the excitement of the art fraternity over this wonderful change. There was life and soul in these compositions. It is true that the young artist had not been able immediately to throw off the influence of the Dusseldorf school, but the freshness of the subjects, the *naturalness* and *truthfulness* of these productions, amazed every one and attracted, not only connoisseurs, but the general public. This

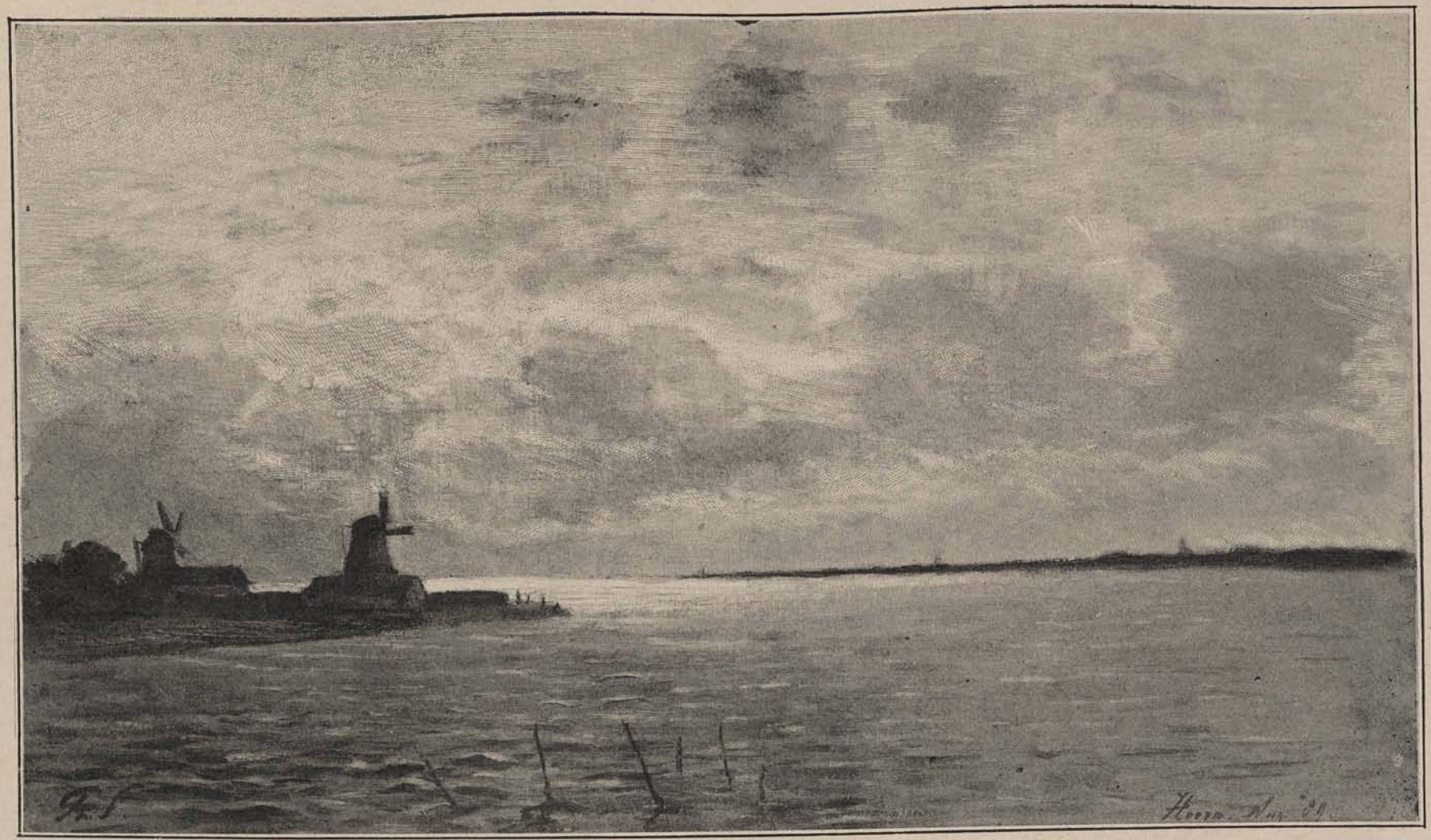
young artist who, up to now, had only represented Greeks and Romans, Biblical men and women or scenes from ancient history, was suddenly "turning round" and seeing beauty in his immediate surroundings, and amongst every day scenes of every day life. And in the producing of these realities, and in every outline of the country folk, at every step of his career, by every figure he represented—whether historical or commonplace—the good foundation that he had received by Van den Berg, showed itself plainly and proved his thorough knowledge of the anatomy of the human body. Vosmaer writes: "The history of an artist is like a genealogical table of tints and colours, which, though appearing to stand the one next to the other, in sharp distinct outlines, have not, however, a decided borderland, for the colours flow imperceptibly the one into the other. No biography of an artist is complete unless his teachers are discussed and an account given of his earliest artistic awakening, the source and spring of the commencement." Even so we may say

Pencil Sketches.

that the influence of professor Van den Berg showed itself in every work of Sadée's. He had had dinned into him the beauty of every line of the human body, developing his taste and familiarizing his eye with every point and detail.

Sadée did not remain faithful very long to the German peasant life. His wanderings, however, gave him a taste for travel for after that first trip he never allowed a summer to pass without seeing fresh scenes in foreign lands. After the Hessian and Zwabian craze he took to depicting the lives of our fisher folk. Being a native of the Hague he had not far to go to find the sea-coast. He threw himself heart and soul into the inner life of the fisherman and his family, acquainting himself with all their peculiarities and studying them in their moments of sorrow and trouble as well as in their times of joy.

Scheveningen became his point of observation and it may be said that he "painted" the history of the Scheveningen fisher folk. It was in 1867 that the public first became aware of Sadée's new departure; it was when he

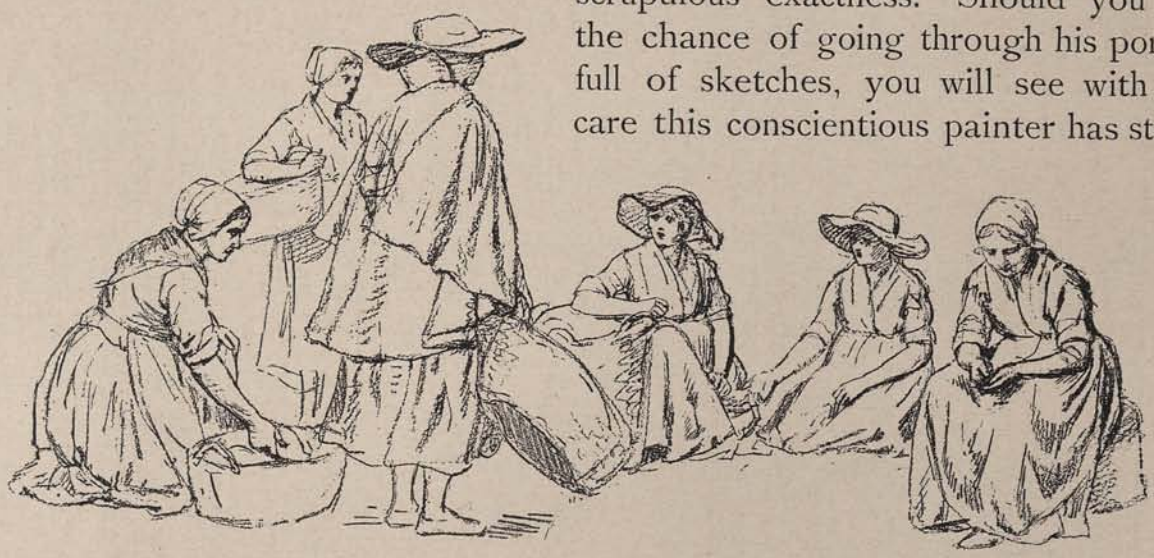


The Zuyder Zee at Hoorn. From a sketch in oils.

exhibited "Father has gone to Sea" at one of the big picture exhibitions at the Hague. Everybody was enchanted and art collectors and picture dealers showed their appreciation by eagerly buying up every work of our artist, as quickly as he could produce them.

Sadée's works are stamped with his own personality, and although the careful training of his youth is visible, yet he paints entirely in his own way, every thought, every touch is original, true to nature and true to himself. His figures are recognizable in their careful outlining, in their happy and natural attitudes. His immense variety of poses is marvellous and surprising. In the choice of drapery—always simple and flowing naturally—one cannot help recognizing the teaching of a classical master and the study of the Antique, also the following in the footsteps of Poussin and other great men.

Sadée's subjects are generally very simple but always carried out with scrupulous exactness. Should you have the chance of going through his portfolio full of sketches, you will see with what care this conscientious painter has studied



Pencil Sketches.

and how much trouble he has taken to exercise his hand in the various movements of the body. I dare say you think that after settling in his mind what his well-planned composition is to be, that he goes to work with each figure (model) one after the other, till the picture is complete. But not so, as that would produce a stiffness and a woodeny appearance which would be hateful to our artist. No; he has caught the pose of his figures in moments of natural and unstudied attitudes, entrapped them, I may say, in his sketch book. These studies, combined with his wonderful memory, make up sufficient matter for his pictures. Sometimes he has a model especially engaged to draw from, but never for a long and fatiguing "sitting." He has a quick hand and a still quicker eye and perception and if he only gets the outlines he can fill up the rest from long practice. His figures certainly have a lifelike appearance and are extraordinarily correct to nature, and fascinating in the extreme.

When you look through the cycle of Sadée's Scheveningen fisher folk, you have at the same time a complete history of the life and being of that community. Scenes of the deepest sorrow and light hearted joy; scenes from the life of the well-to-do to that of the poorest of the poor. In the „Widow" you see portrayed the deepest grief; a lonely woman looking out over the stretch of sea, the grave of her husband; in his "Almsgiving" you see the need of the needy. Many people consider this Sadée's finest work. The dispensing of doles is taking place in a church, the portals of which are besieged by a group of poor and indigent. Such a variety of types, such a multitude of attitudes. Submissive old age and restless youth. Certainly "Almsgiving" is a touching and interesting picture and beautifully painted.

Pencil Sketches.

Again we are taken to the beach in "After the Departure" when the pinken (dutch fishing smacks) have just sailed away for their deep-sea fishing and we see the women and children returning to the village after the last good-byes; one woman, carrying an infant, is looking back at the sea over her shoulder, as if taking a last tender farewell. Sadée gives us many such scenes from the life of the wives of the fishermen. He returns to the subject again and again. In "After the Storm" we see the trembling women, with beating hearts, sad and expectant, knowing not what the sea may cast up. We seem to feel as they feel, we tremble with them, we gaze with anxiety at the cruel waves.

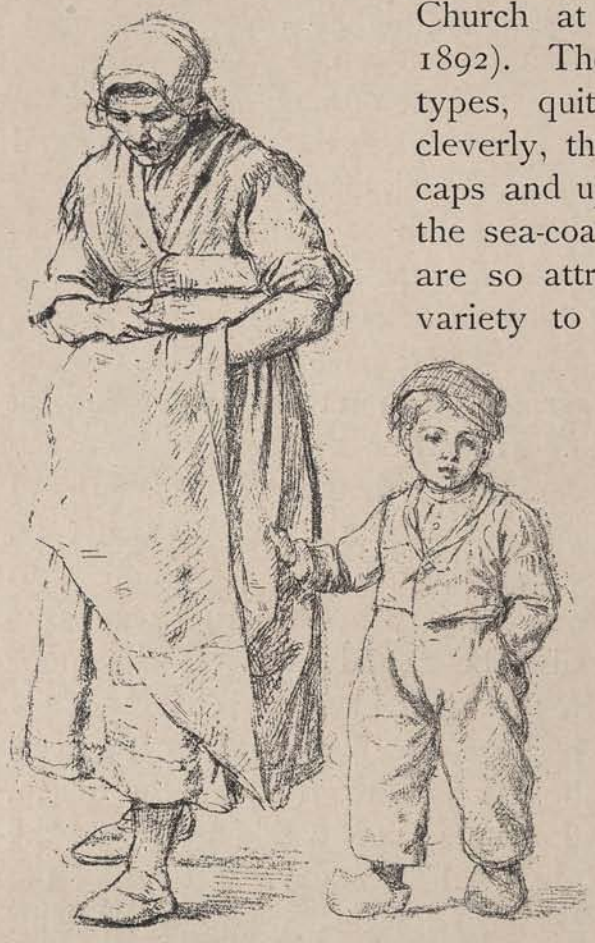
But joy can also be found amongst the poor fisher folk. When these same *pinken* return, heavily laden with fish and we see them tossing about in the surf, while the fish is thrown out on the beach, —the usual auction immediately taking place—the excitement runs high, the women chatter and the men shout, and on all sides we see happy satisfied faces. "On the beach" depicts this particular scene. A famous picture, exhibited in Munich in 1888.

It cannot be said of Sadée that he chooses strong contrasting colours. He usually prefers a clear sunny day for his pictures. He knows so well how to portray the effect of light and dark clouds upon the turbulent waters of the deep: the reflection of the sun's rays upon the sea and the shore. His pictures are never dazzling, never glaring; generally a soft grey tone pervades the whole; the grey tint on the sand contrasting softly with the tinge of green on the approaching waves, which break gently on the beach.

Sometimes he depicts his Scheveningites gathering in their potatoe crop, from the sheltered hollows of the soft downs, where the potatoes grow so well. On one canvas he represents them returning home, tired out, yet looking

satisfied with their harvest. Another well known picture is called "Gleaning" (page 107). Not the gleaners in the corn field but in the potato patch after the owner has gathered in his crop. This picture was bought by the National Museum in Amsterdam.

It is not often that Sadée gives us the fisher folk in their homes. He generally portrays them out of doors where, after all, the greater part of their lives is spent. Not because his brush is less clever at such scenes; by no means, for a very celebrated picture called "Smoking herrings" (1878) was so charmingly portrayed that art-lovers wished he would more frequently give them such scenes. Another exquisite subject is: "In the Church at Scheveningen" (exhibited in Munich in 1892). There we see a great variety of faces and types, quite a character study, the light falling so cleverly, through the high windows, upon the women's caps and upon the white-washed walls (page 113). But the sea-coast and the fisher folk, in their own element, are so attractive to our artist and there is so much variety to be gathered from these subjects, that it is not so surprising that he remains faithful and true to such groupings.



Pencil Sketch.

It is only necessary to run through Sadée's many portfolios and sketch-books to convince ourselves of his large "art capital." In those sketch-books you will find other subjects than those of the fisher folk, or scenes from the sea-coast; in fact every conceivable kind of view or style of scenery. Some of them you can scarcely believe are from the hand of our artist, for every place he has visited has paid him its tribute. At a moment's notice out comes the sketch-book and down goes *something* that may be of use *some day*. This good habit he learnt from Van den Berg. The rapidity with which he (Sadée) can dot down a group of figures or an atmospheric effect is truly marvellous. His memory, too, is very remarkable. He makes some scratches and his memory supplies the rest. And it is very extraordinary how these "scribblings," as he pleases to call them himself, develop in time into lovely works of art.

Sadée's excellent memory, for what he sees in nature, can be attributed to a very good custom instituted by Van den Berg in the early days of his career. When the pupils were working in the "sky parlour" (of which I spoke on the first page) they were made to go every Monday to van Gogh, the

In Church. From a painting.

picture dealer. There they chose a picture, whatever they fancied, and without the aid of the useful sketch-book, they had to bring it all back in their mind's eye and do the best they could to represent the same within the walls of the studio. This was certainly splendid practice and has proved invaluable to Sadée throughout his life. No industrious study in our youth is thrown away upon us; on the contrary it always bears satisfactory fruit, although it may be late in life ere the benifit is reaped.

Everything of an artistic nature was noticed by Sadée when knocking about in new countries or in the many picturesque parts of his own land. A very good picture of his is "The Market place at Nijmegen" on a rainy day, done

After the Storm. From a painting.

from a rough sketch but minutely and carefully remembered (page 116); also many views of Amsterdam, of the quaint old bridges and some of the picturesque streets, and a very clever canvas has been produced, merely from a sketch, of the Railway Station at the Hague.

One year Sadée wandered into the Austrian Tyrol after a visit to Munich. With his friend Hendriks, the well-known portrait painter from Arnheim, he made a trip on foot through the Dolomites. He brought home many themes from this trip, both as regards quantity as well as quality. The enormous amount of sketches of those peculiarly formed rocks are most fascinating to look through, those rocks so ably described by Van Nievelt and illustrated by Sadée by way of explanation.

It matters not where, Sadée finds food for his greedy brush wherever he goes! Amsterdam, Paris, Venice, Maastricht, the Zuyder Zee etc, etc., all come as fish to his net. In Paris he was particularly attracted by the cemetery at Montmartre. He made of that sacred spot a very fine picture: sunset, the sad and tearful women slowly descending the steps, after having visited the grave of some loved one. This picture came into being by means of the most unimportant looking sketch, only a few lines, yet the picture eventually produced is counted amongst his very best and is in the collection of Queen Emma.

If the public does not often see these town views; these pictures painted in Paris, in Munich and in other foreign places; these hills and dales; these rocks

Amsterdam. From a sketch in oils.

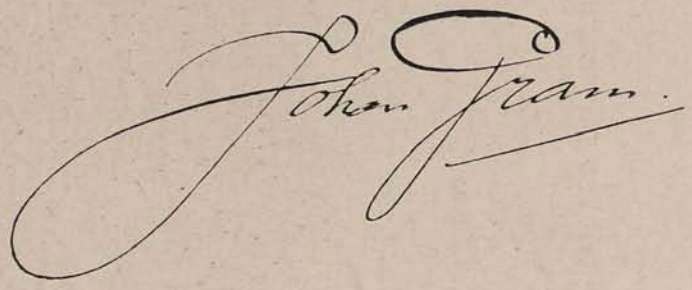
and waterfalls; it is entirely its own fault, as it insists upon having Scheveningen and Scheveningen only, clamours for the fisherman and his family and demands the shore; the heavy *pinken;* the freshly caught fish and the general life of the dwellers by the sea. The insatiable England has eyes only for the representation of the simple lives of our fisher folk and although sometimes an artist feels inclined to break away from his usual "topics" he cannot do so when the call is "urgent" and the dollars are flowing in. Many of Sadée's oil paintings and drawings in water-colour—as charming and taking as his oils—are to be found in art collections and galleries, not only in his own land but in foreign ones. Only very occasionally do we see exhibited any subject

The Market place at Nijmegen, on a rainy day. From a sketch in oils.

different to his usual style. I can recall four at this moment, which have been eagerly sought for: "A skittle alley" (page 105); "The poor of the village" (page 102). Both these were painted at Limburg. "The Cemetery at Montmartre" (already mentioned) and "The Convent Garden" at Maastricht. This picture is truly charming: a sunny day with happy looking nuns and healthy children. It was exhibited in Brussels in 1898, at the Exhibition, and attracted general attention.

As artist, so *atelier!* Sadée's workshop, as he himself delights to call it, is a fascinating place, at the top of his house in De Riemer Street. Here we see many antique statuary, either on pedestals or on tables, showing the taste of the inhabitant. Copies of Jan Steen, Cereso, Rembrandt and Murillo being on the walls, copies made by our artist in his young days and showing his carefulness and preciseness in copying. In this charming and peaceful retreat Sadée paints his masterpieces, for which he has earned a well merited reputation and many honours, in the shape of gold and silver medals, the cross of St. Michael and the Belgian Leopold order.

Sadée was born at the Hague on the 7th of February 1837.



W. B. THOLEN

BY

X.

A street in the early morning, from a painting.

W. B. THOLEN.

With great pleasure we have taken upon ourselves the task of writing a few lines to be added to the reproductions of the paintings and drawings of the artist Tholen, but the reader must not be vexed with us if we do not state many personal facts, for we found him unwilling to be interviewed, that is to say, on the subject of *himself*. We cannot but help agreeing with him that the "intimate life and interior" of an artist, or of any celebrity, does not concern the public at large. Those who take an interest in the works of any particular artist and think that they can judge his pictures better by knowing something of his inner life, must, in the case of Tholen, find out these details for themselves. One often hears it said: "How I should like to know the man who has painted this or that lovely picture and whose talent I so enjoy."

But such knowledge is not altogether so easily obtained by a writer, especially when it has to do with the life of a *living* man.

Tholen was born in 1860. Circumstances induced him to go in for drawing examinations and try for a scholarship. As luck would have it he succeeded and this was the means whereby he acquired a theoretical education which proved in the end of much use to him.

His early works show a minute study of every conceivable object, in fact they may be called "object lessons." All that, however, changed in later years. When he established himself at the Hague in 1886 he made rapid strides, especially when he became personally acquainted with the leading artists of

Sunday. From a sketch.

the day and had the chance of studying their works. Goethe said: "*Es geht durch die ganze Kunst eine Filiation*" meaning that even the most original of artists have made themselves familiar with the best works of their predecessors, and you have only to take a few examples into consideration to justify the truth of this saying. Take Beethoven, for instance; there never was a more original composer, yet how much he learnt from Haydn and Mozart. Learning is quite a different thing to copying. You need only cast a glance over these reproductions of Tholen to be convinced that we have to do with a very independent and original artistic nature. Although Tholen goes his own way he never forgets the old saying of "never too late to learn." To my mind this manner of developing is a better guarantee for the future than

the method of seeking novelties by wilfully differing from the good and great examples of our own times.

No one who understands art, or is interested in art, will deny the worth and importance of technicality. Without technics every artist would remain a duffer. But I grant you that feeling is of greater importance, feeling that is refined, sincere and intense.

We have already mentioned how circumstances, by which Tholen developed his technical education, turned out for his good. His manner of working, the correctness of his drawing, we may, without the least fear of contradiction, call masterly. Of greater significance, however, was the growth and development of the artistic side of Tholen's talent; the power of reproducing his impressions with so much vitality, which in later life became still more striking. This talent was immensely helped by technical ability and inspired intensity.

Study.

Study.

But perhaps you will say that painting is after all only the art of imitation. As long as you have been taught how to reproduce on paper or canvas that which you see before you, what can be the use of "inspiration?" What can be the need of "intense feeling?" It is really not at all difficult to find picturesque spots; you need not, like Tholen, seek for beauty in milk cans or in old dogs sitting upon cushions. If you want to paint "The last Judgment" or "The Covenant of the Elders" then, of course, a certain amount of inspiration is necessary, but to represent a house with a few trees, or a street on a rainy day, what can that have to do with "inspiration" but merely with the art of correct drawing. One often hears such sentiments expressed. At many an exhibi-

A Page of Studies.

tion I have heard remarks and seen astonishment on people's faces, when looking at some of the pictures, wondering at the subjects selected, especially perhaps amongst the Dutch painters. For those who have read the ideas set forth by Ter Meulen in his "Recollections" and in the article he wrote for the *Gids* (The Guide) it must be quite evident that the astonishment of the public proceeds from ignorance or lack of artistic knowledge, because it only observes the subject chosen by the painter and does not discover the inspiration that prompted the subject. We cannot, I think, throw light upon Tholen's works better than by looking into the matter more carefully.

Music is a much more popular art than painting. Everyone who has the

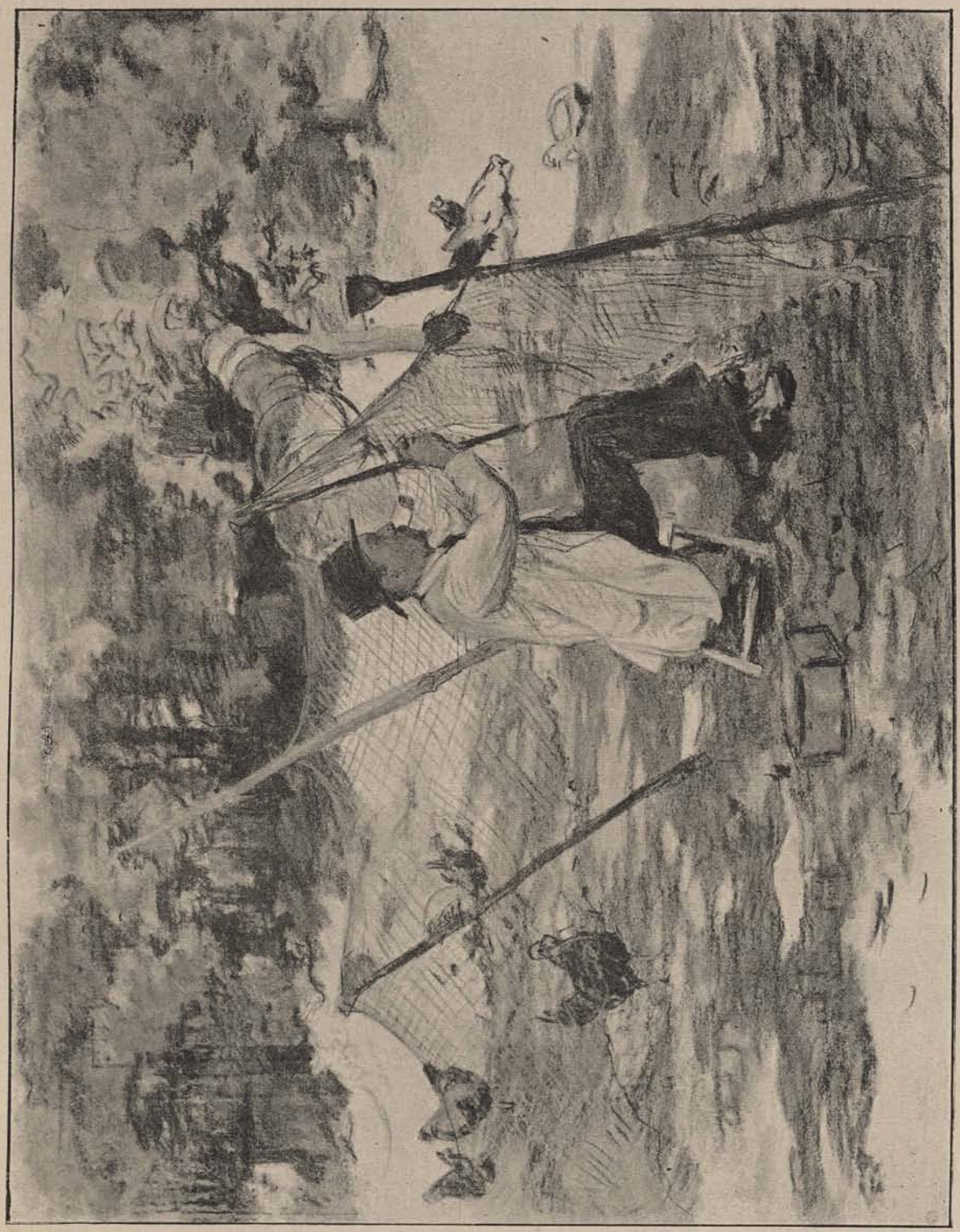
Landscape. From a drawing.

power of hearing recognizes the harmony of sounds and knows that each individual tone is distinguished by the composer, and cleverly put together so as to form the sweetest melody. No one asks about the subject of the Sonata or Symphony, and if any one should do such a thing, either as regards an opera or song, he knows perfectly well that those same words can be set to different music, and that the music is entirely apart from the meaning of the words. A violinist who plays a concerto by Mendelssohn delights hundreds, not one of whom will ask for the subject matter that inspired the composer, and although the feeling and impression may affect his listeners diversely, yet the melody and harmony is recognized by all.

Very well. Just as there is a beauty of tones and sounds, so there is a beauty of lines and colours. This beauty, however, is not quite so easy to

A Page of Studies.

distinguish as that of music, but it exists none the less. Just as the harmony of accords can vibrate through every nerve, even so the charm of a picture,



Mending Nets. From a drawing in charcoal.

for those who have feeling and taste, can cause a thrill of delight. Painting is an "imitating art," but the paintings of a true artist are not mechanical like the art of photography. It all depends how the artist looks at things in nature,

and how he is able to reproduce the same for our benefit. And while the composer has to consider his various instruments, each of which brings forth a different sound, the painter has nothing but a flat piece of canvas and a few paints. How ever much he may have conceived in his mind a beauty of line and colour, to represent the same he has but dead material to produce his thought-out masterpiece, and must concentrate the same within the dimensions of his canvas, and not an inch beyond the edge of his frame. The principal thing is neither the material side nor the subject, but the combination of lines and colouring which make out of the material something beautiful. Even so therefore can a collection of fish or a group of milk cans be the material side

Evening. From a drawing.

of a work of art, and equally well portrayed into a thing of beauty as the loveliest "out-look," provided the feeling and thought of the artist is grasped.

But the lovely "out-look" is not always a matter of agreement between the artist and the ordinary individual. Where one sees picturesqueness the other sees but a commonplace scene.

Look at Tholen's picture representing a dog sitting up on a cushion (page 134). It is an ugly little animal. The dog fancier would give you absolutely nothing for it, yet that doggie makes a charming picture. The white hair contrasting so cleverly with the surrounding darker colours. His white curls make the colouring so to speak. No doubt you have seen hundreds such dogs in your life, but never thought for a moment that they would be worth the trouble of

"Near the mill"

FROM A WATER-COLOUR DRAWING

in the possession of the Firm of Frans Buffa and Sons.


W.S. Thorn

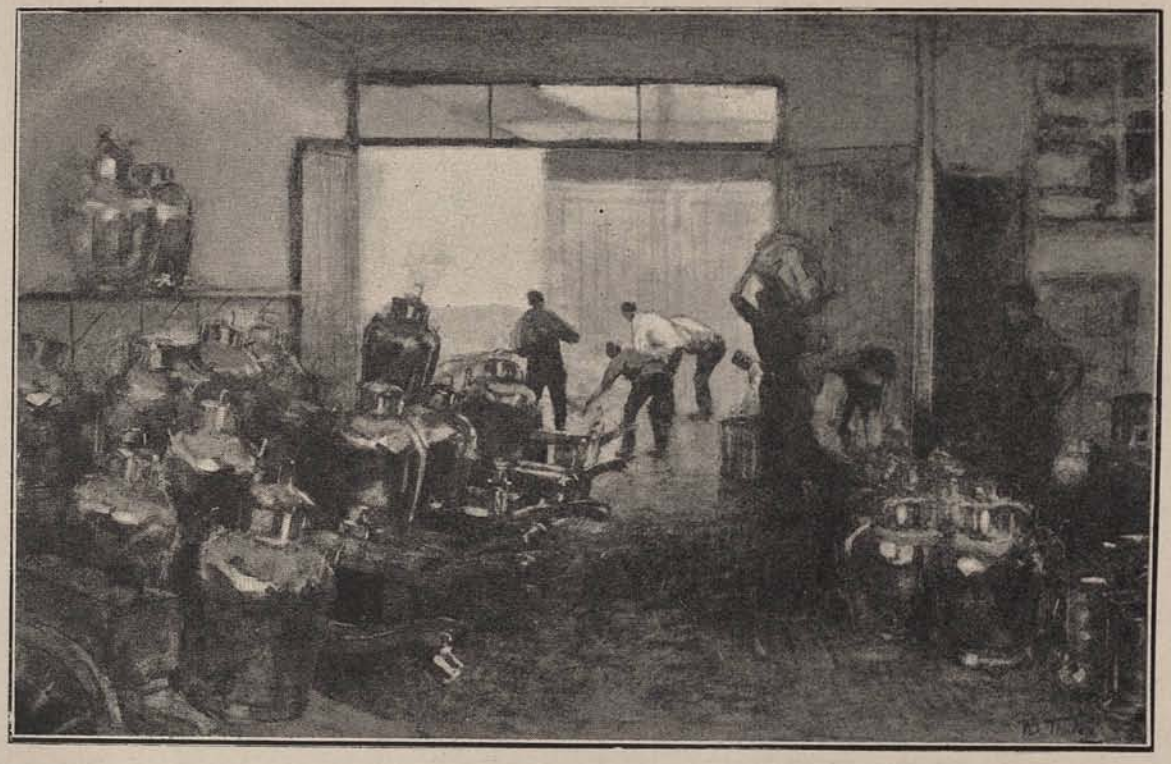
painting. But the talented eye of the artist saw in the shaggy white coat an opportunity for contrasting shades of dark and light. Then again, look at the milk cans! I ask you, is there anyting less romantic than milk cans? You would naturally call them a very prosaic subject for art. But those shining brass cans create a strong effect of light and shade. It is therefore not surprising that the eye of an artist is attracted by such happy effects even if only by the effects of light shining upon brass milk cans in a large "milk factory" (page 130). Tholen was inspired by the harmony produced by these "brass instruments," or in other words, milk cans, and he succeeded in producing a picture worthy of the man. How cleverly he has managed the reflection of light you will see by examining the picture carefully. You can scarcely realize

Scheveningen in Winter. From a painting.

that you are looking merely upon a piece of paper covered with a few touches of water-colour. It therefore only shows that an artist can see beauty where an ordinary mortal sees none. We therefore advise all those who take any interest in art not to think only of the subject, when looking at a picture, but to try to realize what the painter had in his mind when producing the work. If we have to do with a fine work of art, the difficulty of thus thinking is not so very great. We should examine the work with discretion, not as one who thinks he knows better than the artist himself. Any observation upon the detail or minor points would show that the speaker is incapable of judging the work as a whole.

After all the aforesaid it will not be necessary I think to go into any minute

detail upon the works of Tholen reproduced in these pages: we would but tire the reader. Let him rather examine them for himself. We wish, however, to remark upon the variety of subject which our artist is capable of depicting. There are artists who are continually falling into the bad habit of repeating themselves; never being able to leave out something which stamps the work with the personality of the painter. This is, however, not the case with Tholen. He is a man of great perseverance, and can overcome any difficulty which may crop up when portraying a new subject. Note his variety of styles: landscapes, streets, interiors, the sea-shore and figures in all attitudes. We cannot say that he excels more in the one than in the other, nor can we say that he is

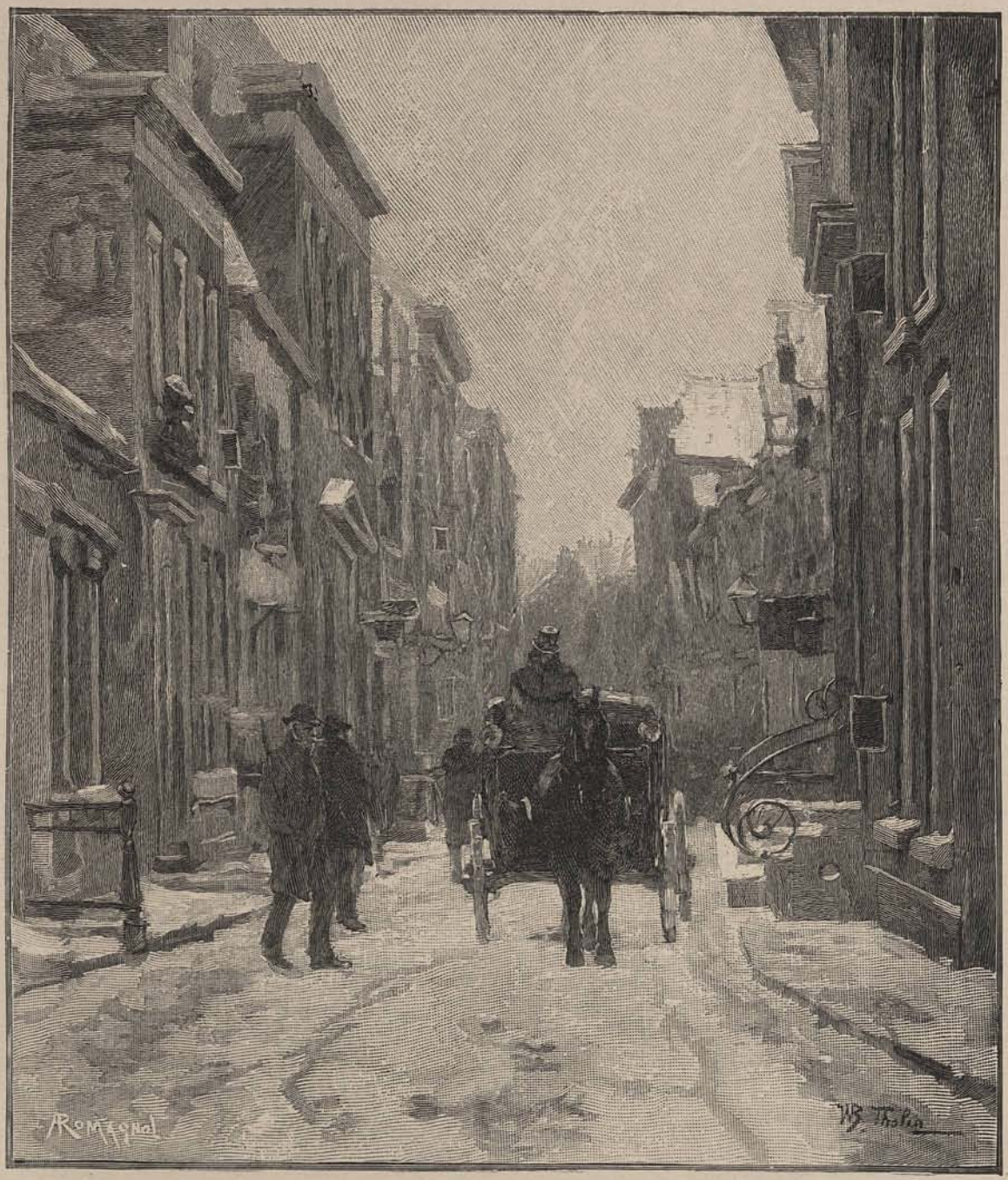


Milk-factory. From a drawing in water-colours.

weaker in the one than in the other. The "Milk factory" is as charming as the sunny "Gracht at Delft" (page 132), or the wet "Street in Scheveningen" (page 133). They are all true to nature and express her mood in various ways.

Here perhaps the reader will pause and say: "What do you mean by mood? According to your way of thinking every mood is beautiful and has only to do with lines and colours, therefore why talk of fascinating moods? This brings us outside of the dominion of art and within that of poetry." Whereupon we would like to answer that by speaking of lines and colours we by no means abstract from truth and reality. Mood is created by lines and colours and as they are visible they come within the dominion of the artist.

What we contest is that people seek for the subject in that which is not



A Street. From a painting in the possession of the firm of E. J. Wisselingh & Co., Amsterdam.

View over the Heath. From a drawing.

absolutely visible, only perhaps suggested by some thought, but not visibly expressed. To illustrate this: A short time ago a picture was reviewed in a well-known paper. The subject was two knights riding for dear life. The

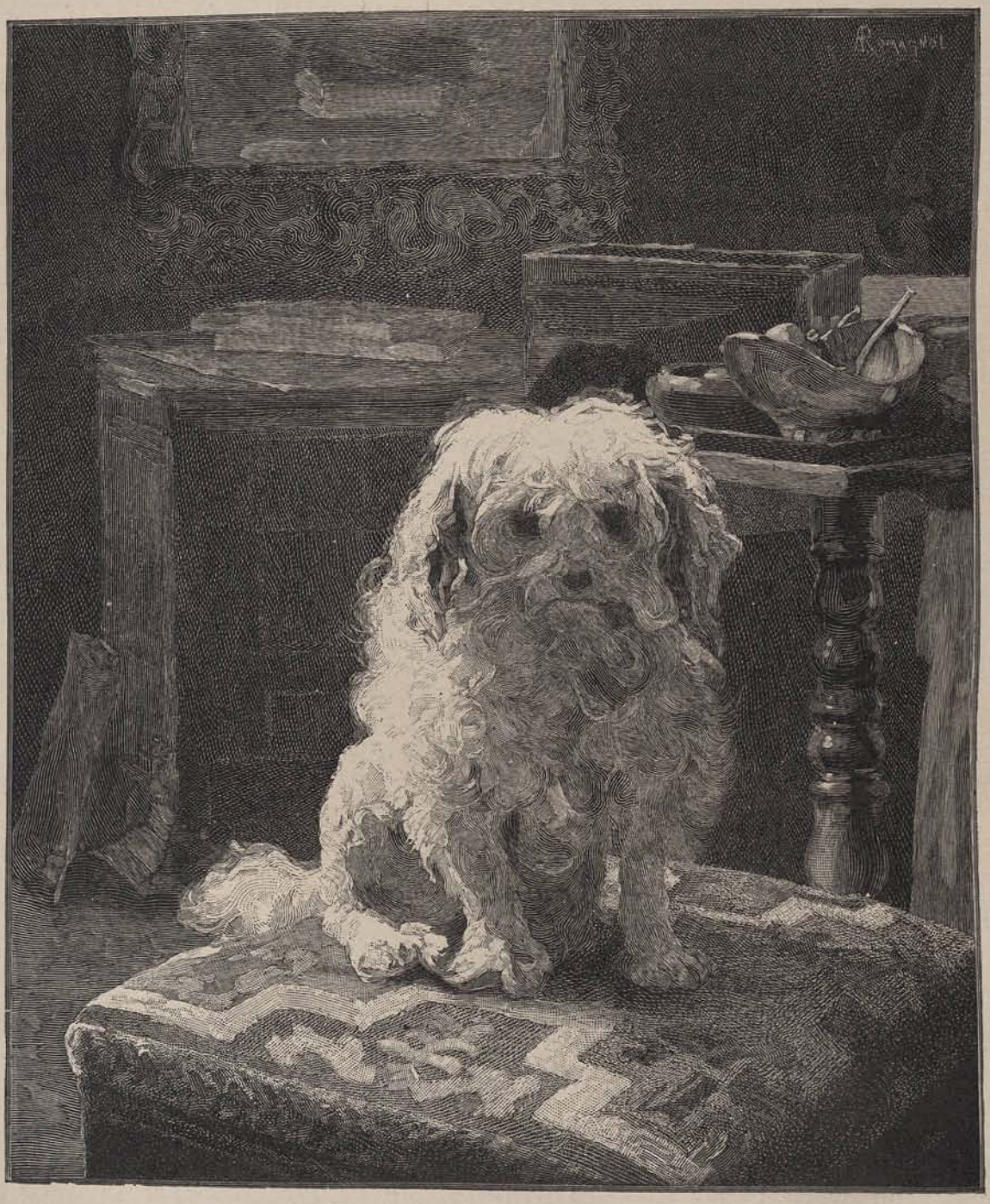
A Gracht in Delft.

title was "Drouet and his servant pursuing Louis XVI." The title, of course, we take to be the idea of the artist. But the artistic value of the picture cannot either be enhanced or detracted from by the fact that the knights represented were either called Drouet or by any other name, and it is immaterial whether they are in pursuit of Louis XVI, or any other Louis. The artist endeavoured to touch the imagination of the public by the title, but from his own artistic point of view it was merely two riders in the open air, which was the subject he desired to paint and the only one in his mind. When

After the Rain. From a drawing in water-colour.

Tholen paints for instance the shades of night or the tints of twilight, it is the merit of the work which stirs up within us that charm of beauty, not only a charm of lines and colours but the fascination of a certain mood and feeling, and a thorough appreciation of the works of art.

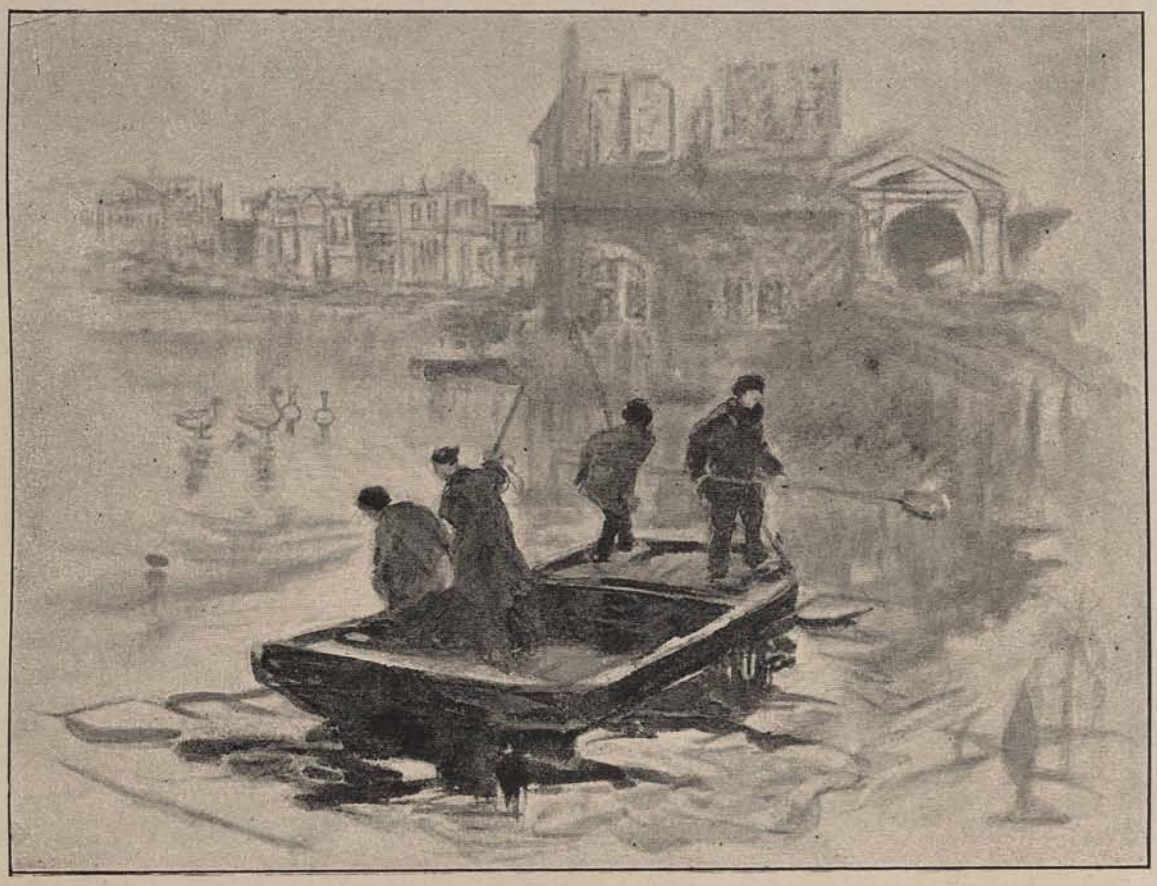
We therefore allow ourselves the privilege of saying, when contemplating an evening landscape by Tholen, that the peaceful mood of the evening is expressed by him in a fine and touching manner. But at the same time we acknowledge that the borderland of the fine feeling is not easily defined.



A Dog. From a painting.

Certain it is, however, that there is not a trace in Tholen's works which show a desire to agitate the minds of the public. Certain it is however that there is not a trace in Tholen's works which shows a desire to agitate the minds of the public. He recognizes that natural effects are all sufficient beauty, and need no tampering with; he adopts no interpretation to satisfy this or that convention.

Dexterously he simulates the wan radiance of a wintry sun upon the snow



Breaking the Ice. From a sketch.

covered earth, giving us the river or lake still and stiff, as if touched by the hand of the angel of death; or we feel the warmth of a summer's day and perceive the golden rays of a mid-summer's sun. But more of a favorite is the aspect of rain, with the light and shade incident to a passing shower.

His style is vigorous and free, yet showing a patient practice and a vigilant observation.

His canvases possess the merit of being effective and a welcome adornment to such homes where Art is understood and where Beauty is esteemed.

DAVID ADOLPHE CONSTANT ARTZ

BY

P. A. HAAXMAN JR.

Gathering in the potatoe crop, in the collection of Mr. J. T. Cremer at the Hague.

DAVID ADOLPHE CONSTANT ARTZ.

Adolphe Artz was cut off suddenly in the prime of life. His death at the early age of fifty-three came as a shock to his friends and to the world of Art. He had given no signs of failing health, nor had he shown any apparent weakness. His friends had seen him shortly before, looking the picture of health and full of vitality, and it seemed almost impossible to realize that this sound young-looking man, this hard-working successful artist, had gone for ever from their midst.

Ten years have elapsed since this sad news reached the ears of the picture-loving world, and yet his works are as eagerly sought for and as popular as ever they were. Partly from personal recollections, partly from the various necrologies which have been registered about Artz, and from the many works he has left behind, it will not be difficult to write an account of his life.

The last time I saw him was in 1889, shortly before his departure for Paris, where he was sent to represent the Dutch school at the great International Exhibition and where he was nominated as one of the committee for the judging of the Exhibition pictures; an honour greatly appreciated by his countrymen.

For some years Artz used the big hall at the "Pulchri Studio" as his

Sunday Morning at Scheveningen. From a painting.

atelier, after the members of the club had given it up 1). In this famous studio, with its good light and roomy dimensions, Artz was able to work with pleasure and ease. I see him still, with spectacles on his nose and wearing his usual little cap, looking the picture of "business" with his palette in hand and the attributes of his "trade" visibly around him. Always ready with a witty remark or amusing tale, putting everyone in a good humour.

Upon my last visit to his studio he was busy putting the finishing touches to "Mother's Comfort", the picture destined for the Paris Exhibition and I feel sure that everyone who visited the Dutch Art Department at that

1) An account of this club, the "Pulchri Studio", is given in Vol. I of this work.

Her First Seam.

Exhibition, will have noticed this painting. The interior of a poor dwelling, with a ray of light cast on the centre figure: a sad-eyed widow sitting disconsolately at a table. A thoroughly Dutch picture and full of sentiment, in fact, showing more pathos than is generally seen in Artz's works. His style was that of Israëls, Blommers, Sadée and Elchanon Verveer, preferring the portraying of the fisherfolk in their hard-working lives, to that of any other. But his pictures, although taken from the same subjects as these artists, differed somewhat, showing another train of thought, making them even more Dutch than the other painters of the same style and stamping them with his own character and personality. You do not often meet with the same sentiment in the pictures by Artz as you do in those by Israëls, that soft ethereal colouring which strikes the beholder even more perhaps than the reality might possibly do.

Israëls gives us poetry; Artz on the other hand may be called the painter of prose. Look at his young men and maidens, his laddies and lassies of the working classes, his young farmers or the daughters of the fisherfolk; it was not poetry he represented, but plain unadulterated prose, the realities of life, without embellishment. He saw his world as it was, and represented it unvarnished. His figures have the touch of an accomplished hand and that of a master in the art, and although true to nature there is always sufficient light and shade and tone to make his pictures works of art, without falling into sentimentality. Whether he painted scenes from the lives of the poorer classes, taking for subject the hard-working world in their out-of-door toil, or whether he depicted a girl knitting or darning, either by the fire side or in some sheltered spot in the downs, it was always just as the scene had actually happened, and he portrayed the same without embroidery; in fact, he "called a spade a spade."

I daresay if Artz's life had been prolonged, he would have increased in power and brought his art to a higher pitch of perfection. Of all the modern Dutch painters he approached the nearest to the celebrated artists of the 17th century, who likewise were true to nature and honest in their representations. To confirm this idea I will mention three works by our artist: "Potato Gathering," in the possession of Mr. Cremer; "The Sewing Class," and

"Granny's Darling." I am sure that every one who visited the Amsterdam Exhibition in 1883 will remember the last mentioned. The subject is a little imp of a child receiving an apple from the hands of its grandmother. It is stretching out its fat dimpled arms in a very determined manner; the mother is looking on with pride, and the eyes of the older women are brimming over with love and admiration. The whole scene is one we might see any day, so thoroughly true to nature. You feel that any weakness in the drawing, any imperfection in the attitude of the figures would have spoilt the splendid whole, and that not even the beauty of the colour and tone could have saved it. Colour was not our artist's strongest point, he strove only for the simplicity of the reality, and we must confess that in this he always succeeded.

A Study.

The two other pictures mentioned were powerful examples of this striving after reality. In "The Sewing Class" we see this perfection to such a degree that this canvas will eventually place Artz amongst the celebrated painters of the 19th Century. Here again we see the same superiority in the drawing and composition, the same clever management of the light, as it falls upon the girls and envelops them in a golden tint, and the wonderfully natural manner in which he has grouped the figures.

"Potato Gathering" deserves too a moment's attention. In the field we see a man digging up potatoes and the hard-working women around him gathering them in. The beauty of this picture lies chiefly in the poses of the gatherers, all so perfectly natural and unstudied. Yet Artz was a careful arranger, and it often took him a long time to make up his mind before starting upon a fresh canvas. No one would or could believe how he "troubled" and planned and changed his mind a dozen times and more. When, however,

the picture was finished it seemed as if it had been all a *matter of course* and had not given him the least particle of trouble or anxiety.

* *
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The works of Artz show absolutely no trace of the artist having lived so long in Paris. He remained there from 1868 to 1874 and made many friends, amongst them the lady who afterwards became his first wife (she died in 1878). His second son, Constant, was born in Paris in 1870 and is at present a teacher of drawing at the Academy at Delft. In every respect he is the very replica of his father and has inherited his pleasant sunny nature. This struck me most forcibly when talking to him a short time ago. We conversed together upon the subject of his lamented father, and Constant told me several interesting little episodes: amongst others that he remembered very often seeing the brothers Maris at his home when he was a small boy, also the genial Kaemmerer. Constant spoke amusingly of their house in Paris which had, as a child, appeared to him as being very fine and grand, although no doubt it was of the most every day kind.

Artz was thirty years old when he first went to Paris to live. He went armed with good letters of introduction and recommendation from Israëls and Kneppelhout, the well-known *maecenas*, who befriended him and other struggling artists and musicians, amongst them the violinist Jan de Graan. One of these letters was to the art-critic Thoré Burger, who thought that the best thing he could do for the Dutch painter was to introduce him to Gustave Courbet, who was then at the zenith of his fame. Alas, he (Courbet) clouded his reputation—but for a short time only—by participating in the revolutionary commune. The upshot of Artz's acquaintance with Courbet I found amusingly stated in an article in the "House friend" of January 1885, signed by F. S. K. After telling him of a good *atelier* to go to for classes, under a well-known painter, he said, by way of first advice: "Be yourself." Now as Artz felt that he was *nobody* he knew this was impossible. He determined therefore to become *somebody* and then "be himself." The second advice was: "Hire a studio for yourself, get a model and lock your door." It was not long ere he followed this last

"Love making"

FROM A PAINTING

in the collection of Mr. A. van Naamen van Eemnes.

A favourable Moment. From a picture in the possession of Baron Creutz at the Hague.

advice and profitted by the former words of wisdom. He found a studio, he procured a model and he locked his door, only, however, opening it to his two best friends Jocob Maris and Kaemmerer, both having a right to enter, as they had paid part of the rent, making use of a certain portion for themselves.

This studio was situated in the Rue Mercadet, Montmartre, and it was there that Maris and Kaemmerer passed the umpleasant days of the Commune. But Artz, who had gone through the siege and who had communnicated with his friends by means of the pigeon post and balloon, got tired of it and left Paris as soon as he could get out. He turned his back, for a time, upon the burning capital, *la ville de lumière et de . . . pétrole* and went back to his own country where he enjoyed a thorough rest. It did not however last very long, for the attractions of the French capital were so great that he soon returned to his work and his friends. Mr. Kneppelhout, who had financed him and supplied him with the where-with-all to enable him to remain in Paris, begged him to look after his young ward, the violin-virtuoso, John de Graan. The manner in which Artz fulfilled this mission can be gathered from the pamphlet: "A celebrated boy," written by Kneppelhout, in the which he describes the short life of this fascinating young violinist (he died at the early age of 22). I have heard Artz called the substitute for Kneppelhout in his family protection and the way in which he watched over the fragile life of the delicate youth. In the beginning of 1872, when de Graan's life was despaired of, Artz took him to Italy. From Pisa de Graan wrote to Kneppelhout: "I cannot be sufficiently thankful to Artz, first for his great care of me in Paris and secondly for sacrificing himself by coming all the way here with me, when I know how busy he is."

Artz had a great support in the firm of Goupil Brothers, the founder of which, Mr. Vincent van Gogh, was a friend to all young Dutch painters and had in a great measure helped to revive the Dutch school. You will not easily guess with what strange looking luggage Artz arrived in Paris in 1868. Besides a large supply of good humour and joviality, he had an immense basket crammed full of Scheveningen costumes, that is to say garments worn by the Scheveningen fisherfolk. His friends opened their eyes in astonishment, but wisely remarked that he ought to have brought Scheveningen itself too. Very soon Artz discovered the wisdom of this saying, for a Paris model dressed up as a Dutch fisherman or woman was indeed a funny sight. He struggled with this queer arrangement for a short time when he had to give it up as useless. He decorated his studio with the costumes and made up his mind to give up that style of picture till he could paint the fisherfolk on their native shore, and not like fish out of water. He tried many different *genres*, but his own true style, and by which he eventually made his reputation, he entirely ignored; but all this practice, in the various realms of nature, helped him amazingly, especially in the matter of "line and colour." In Zilcken's introduction to the catalogue of Artz's sale, he especially mentioned one of the works

painted during the period of which I am now speaking. He happened to have seen it in Edinburgh and he praised it for its splendid colouration. The picture represents a girl in yellow standing near a piano; to the right a lady in grey

Tony, son of Artz. Belonging to his mother.

and to the left a man in black; a gamma of tone and tint, which characterizes a true colourist.

During Artz's sojourn in Paris Japanese art was at high-water mark. The passion for Japan and the Japanese filled the whole art world, showing itself not only in the collecting of bibelots and the decorating of homes with Japanese

knick-knacks, but in the subjects taken by the artists of the day for their pictures. Artz fell a victim to this craze and painted several pictures *à la Japonaise*, that is to say Parisian figures in a Japanese surrounding of rich embroideries. In his widow's drawing-room (she is now the wife of Mr. G. Sûes) there hangs a lovely picture, a perfect "colour study" by her late husband, painted at the time of his Japanese period: a young woman standing in a graceful attitude in her boudoir, leaning somewhat backwards and looking at herself in a hand mirror, the light from behind falling on her face and shoulders. The elegance of the pose and the graceful curve of the full-length figure, combined with the exquisite colouring, stamps the work as that of a master.

In the same house—where the name of Artz is not forgotten—hang many fine specimens of our artist's hand, which show better his taste and inclination than many of his works painted with an eye to selling, or shall I say by command of patrons and picture-dealers. I particularly noticed the portrait of one of his children, a dear little fellow called Walter, who died when he was barely four years old. The little chap stands close to his father's painting stool, which towers above the fair curly head, no doubt thus placed to show his diminutiveness. As a work of colouration it is a marvel of beauty, and as time goes on and the paints subdue and melt into each other, it will become more of a gem than ever. There were many portraits I noticed of the family and several canvases rescued by relations and friends from the sale. A charming view of Katwyk attracted my attention: a long stretch of soft yellowy sand on which shone a peculiar light. When Artz died his friend Jacob Maris was allowed to choose a souvenir from amongst the works left behind by the artist. He fancied a small picture, which to unsophisticated eyes might appear as a work of little importance, but which in reality in a small masterpiece of execution.

Hanging alongside the works by Artz are many pretty pictures done by his friends, given to him as pleasant souvenirs. A charming picture by Kaemmerer, although a view from his own country, (from Katwijk) yet thoroughly French in style. The outlining of the houses, and the general manner of depicting the old village, is quite different to that of Artz and Blommers.

Another striking picture is a portrait of Artz himself when about 32 years old, painted by Thijs Maris when they lived together in Paris It is a peculiar

The Old Paupers in the Union, at Katwyk. From a painting.

portrait; there seems something strange about it, probably from the unusual manner in which it is executed. One cannot really call it painted as there is so little paint visible. The manner in which it was achieved is thus: Thijs Maris first put in the left eye, exactly in the centre of the canvas (it is a three quarter length), having finished this he then painted the nose, mouth, forehead, etc., after which the right eye, then followed the contour of the head and lastly, a tinted background. Notwithstanding this novel manner of painting a portrait it is perfectly correct as regards proportions.

I also remember seeing at that house, in the Laan van Meerdervoort, an uncommonly good sketch by Willy Martens, of two of Artz's children, playing in the warm sands at Katwijk, under a blazing midday sun.

If you had wanted to become acquainted with the works of Artz's contemporaries you should have visited his studio where there were many choice specimens, almost a better way of judging of their style than by seeing their pictures at big exhibitions. Most of these pictures were lost to public view till the sale at the "Artz Atelier," after the death of our artist, which brought them to light again. There was a canvas by Bosboom, very small but splendid in colouring, painted during his best period; of Thijs Maris representing a wonderful tale of the most material kind told in the most spiritual fashion; of Mollinger there were a number of landscapes; of Kaemmerer several graceful and thoroughly characteristic sketches and paintings, contrasting well with those of Israëls', of which there were several treasures. Also works by Neuhuys, H. W. Mesdag, William Maris, Tony Offermans and above all, not to be forgotten, a dream of beauty by Anton Mauve.

This was the *atelier* of Adolphe Artz which showed the taste of the talented artist and his appreciation of the works of his brothers-of-the-brush.

Having returned to Holland, after living in Paris for so long Artz soon became acquainted with all the leading Dutch artists and art loving people, and with his literary and musical tendencies became, ere long, the popular man of the day.

This is what Johan Gram, one of Artz's necrologists wrote in the "*Eigen Haard*" (Home Hearth):

"Every one who came into contact with Artz could not help but feel the influence of his sunny nature and appreciate his lively disposition. He loved telling anecdotes about himself and about his early artistic career. His laugh was catching, his smile infectious. In short he was good company, and in consequence made many friends."

Zilcken writes about Artz, in the already mentioned introduction to the catalogue of his works:

"The family circle of Artz was indeed a happy one and made beautiful by a great number of good paintings, pleasant souvenirs and clever sketches and studies of his many friends. There we find works by the brothers Maris, by Mesdag, by Bosboom, Israëls, Mauve and others. He was a conscientious worker who threw himself heart and soul into his work. He lived quietly and produced much that was good. Artz has sometimes been called the pupil of Israëls. This is in so far true as he selected the same sunjects and had even occasionally the same models to paint from. Also he followed Israëls in seeking after the same subdued light, in the interiors of the poorer classes, and his out-of-door aspects were generally (like Israëls') represented in the soft downs, or on the rosy-tinted sea-shore. Owing to a very close friendship between the two, they often conversed upon each other's individual work and freely expressed their opinions. Artz's nature was very simple and naïve and his pictures partake of these characteristics, never showing any desire of importance nor straining after greatness.

The following lines are by Artz himself and will show his personality:

"I joined, already at the age of 19, the evening classes at the Amsterdam Academy, under the able direction of Mr. Engenberger. Later I joined the day classes as well and worked under Professor L. Royer, the Director. At those classes I had the good fortune to make the acquaintance of Israëls. That acquaintance developed into a lifelong friendship and I feel sure that it influenced my whole career. Although Israëls was much older than I was, and indeed older than all the pupils, yet he found pleasure in working with us. His marvellous talent and his powerful determination made us all look up to him with respect and awe. I was delighted when he invited me to visit him at his own studio. I feel sure that whenever I *do* succeed in producing something worth looking at, it is entirely owning to my knowledge of Israëls' works."

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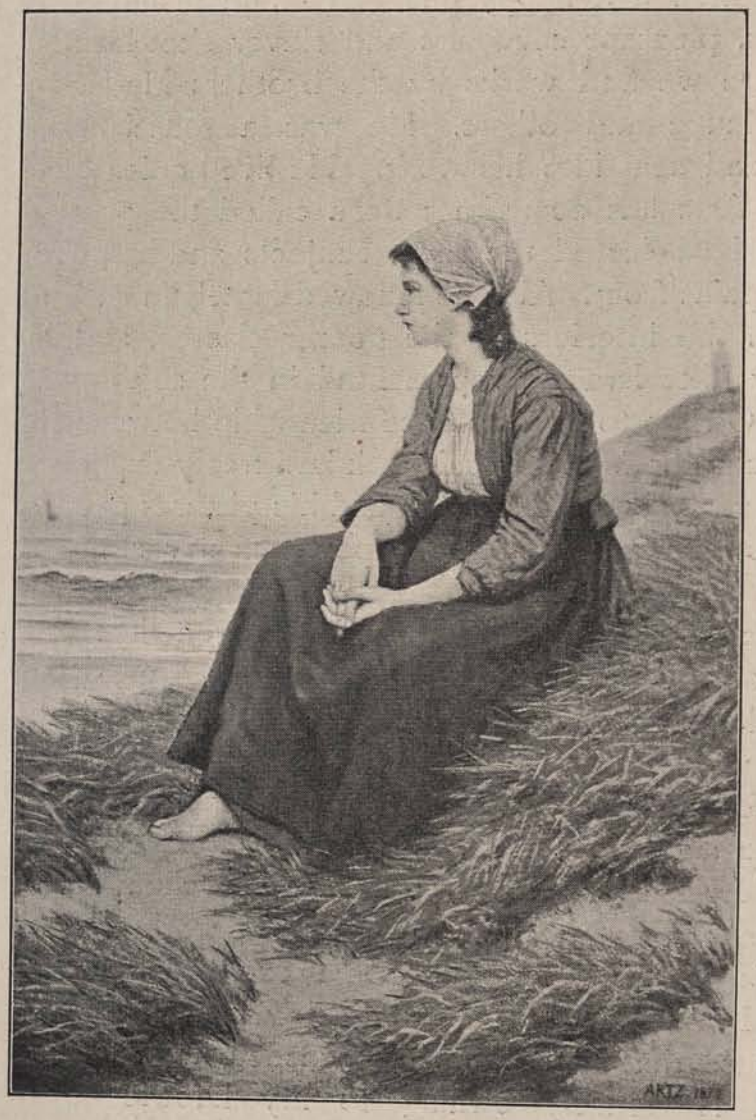
Let us dot down a few dates from out of the short but rich life of our artist. Artz was amongst the first Dutch painters to be thoroughly appreciated in Paris and who made a name for himself yearly at the Salons. It was not, however, till 1880 that he appeared in print, before the public, when he received an "honorable mention" followed in 1889 by the order of the "Legion

of Honour." Here, in his own country, as well as elsewhere, Artz represented the Dutch School and the Dutch Painters in a manner which could not be improved upon; he was twice President of the "Pulchri Studio" he stood firm in their interests, often to the sacrifice of time and self, and in the year previous to his death, when nominated Vice-President of the International Jury in Paris, of his health.

In 1873 he obtained in Vienna the "Medal for Art" for his canvas entitled: "Sunday morning in Scheveningen" (page 140). A charming picture which portrays the buxom daughters of the fisherfolk in their picturesque dress—clean and fresh for the Sabbath—sitting idling on the sunny downs, their highly polished golden ornaments —like corkscrews protruding from the close fitting caps—catching the rays of the sun.



The Seaman's bride. From a painting.

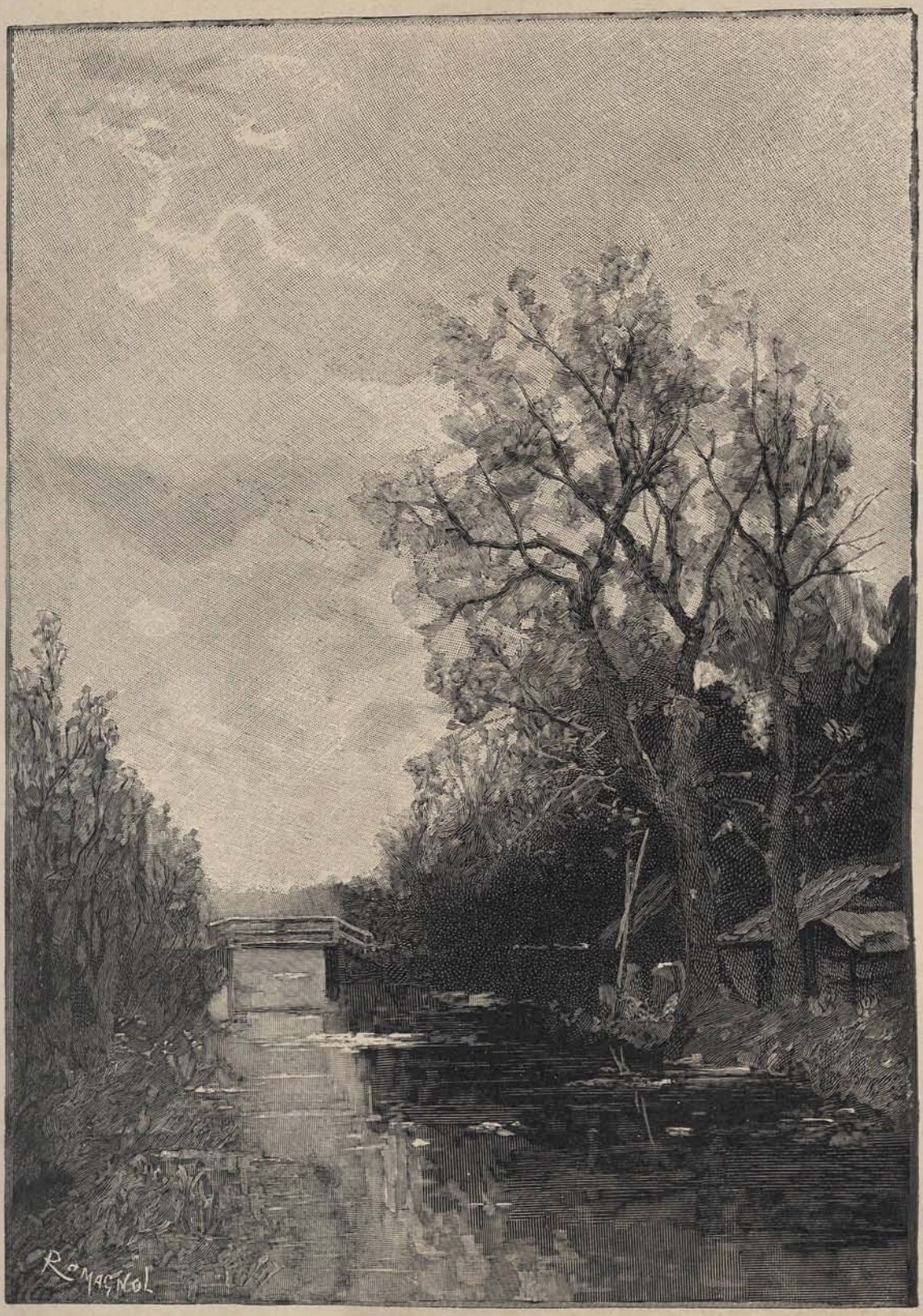
On page 141 we are given a delightful little picture called: "Her first seam." Here we see the woman and her child in their everyday garments, no lace and jewellery as displayed on the previous page.

The picture on page 145 tells its own little story, a story which is understood in every language and in every class of society. It requires no explaining. We congratulate Baron Creutz upon his possession and consider that he has chosen wisely. On page 149 we see old age, not represented within marble halls, nor living in the lap of luxury. But notwithstanding the poverty of their surroundings and the frugality of their meal the old folks look contented and serene. A clear conscience is evidently their happy lot.

"Visiting the Grandparents" (page 153) is a touching scene; the little girl is saying grace and the fond eyes of the older people are affectionately watching her and forgetting to close in silent prayer.

In 1879 Artz was made Knight of the order of the *Eikenkroon* and in 1883

Visiting the Grandparents.



On the river, from a painting.

FREDERICUS JACOBUS VAN ROSSUM DU CHATTEL.

When we look through the galaxy of our landscape painters, we cannot help being surprised at the variety of style which they present to us. How is it possible that in a Lilliputian country like ours, where everybody knows everybody else, there can be such sundry and divers tastes in the art of landscape painting.

I think it must come from the variety of scenery in our small but picturesque

Holland, and perhaps, too, from the manifold temperaments of the artists themselves, who see the same things through different coloured glasses.

If you name Gelderland, North Holland and Drenthe, you name three provinces as different in character and nature as the fair-haired Swedish maiden, the Italian black-eyed beauty and the French piquante coquette. Even as the birds of the air swoop down, as swift as the flight of an arrow, wherever there is food to be found, so do the artists flock to such paintable parts where either the landscape, or the quaint costumes, or the interest of peasant life, attracts their artistic fancy. As with everything else in the present day, fashion has much to do with it. There was a time when figure painters thronged to Dongen, to paint the picturesque interiors of that quaint old place—where professor Allebé did so much fine and interesting work—just as there was a time when landscape painters crowded to Wolfhezen and Oosterbeek, where the celebrated Wodanseiken (Oaks of Wodan) were worshipped by the fraternity. Then again Mauve "discovered" the land round about Laren and it immediately swarmed with artists, young and old, acolytes of art, they came, they saw, they conquered. At the same time another "batch", of landscape painters, journeyed into Drenthe and went into raptures over the beauty of that province from a paintable point of view; some of them making pilgrimages to the far north, to Rolde and Westerwolde, investigating that almost unknown tract of land.

Gelderland, with its hills and dales, will always remain the happy hunting-ground for the Dutch artist. The dark firs and pines and the majestic oak are favourite subjects for those who go there armed with palette and brush. The oaks at Wolfhezen have been artistically and poetically immortalized by Bilders.

Roelofs and Gabriël have paid their respects to the low-lying country in and around Utrecht and South Holland; to those *polders* and *plassen*, the home of the wild-fowl, and where the tall waving reeds and floating water-lilies add so immeasurably to the beauty of the scene. We know these pictures so well, these extensive stretches of water and swamp, above which hangs a threatening sky or a cloudless atmosphere, making one feel hot and oppressed. Or we are taken, hard-by, to the rich green meadows in which the sleek black and white cattle graze in a sleepy, lazy fashion, half their bodies hid by the thickness and richness of the grass, or sinking deep down, if standing near the edge of a ditch, the light reflected on their shining hides, yes, this is the domain of Gabriël and Roelofs.

Gabriël loves above all things the early morning, the awakening of nature, that mysterious moment when Aurora lifts the veil and disperses the mist.

Jacob and William Maris find in their own immediate neighbourhood the desired inspiration. Jacob in the seashore at Scheveningen, on the downs, at the canal side or seashore, or where not; William in the meadows in and round the Hague, where his able brush gives us such lovely sunny peeps under pleasant atmospheric conditions. They have both brought their art to such a

Near Harmelen. From a water-colour, in the possession of Mrs. H. G. Tersteeg.

state of perfection that they work now only with eye and mind, no longer with pencil and sketchbook.

Mauve was always the exponant of quiet country scenes, of the poetical heathland, and of sheep in the pens. Julius van de Sande Bakhuyzen is always versatile in his choice of subject. Sometimes the Hague would attract him, then again he wanders off to farm houses, or he goes into Drenthe and rejoices over the luxurious foliage of that northern province, as if trying to convince us that his bride is equally lovely whether attired in the costume of the north or in the dress of the south, *provided she be Dutch.*

Van Borselen was particularly fond of our canals and water-ways, on the banks of which we generally find tall graceful reeds, sometimes in their glory of full blown ripeness, and sometimes in their early spring garb. Apol, on the contrary, preferred the earth in her winter apparel and has to thank the snow for his popularity and success.

Du Chattel may consider the river Vecht as his special domain. Our artist is, however, generous enough not to drive away other artists who come and anchor in his waters. He does not put up "trespassers will be prosecuted" as his contemporary Bastert did. Du Chattel feels himself a part-owner in the river, in that picturesque Vecht; he looks upon himself as a native and a citizen of her borders and so great was his enchantment of that thoroughly Dutch stretch of country that he took up his residence there for several years, in order to have his darling always under his eye, to learn to know her in every mood and to thoroughly study her under every atmospheric effect. In 1883 he went there with wife and children and lived at Vreeland, on the borders of the Vecht, till 1886.

Du Chattel became gradually aware that it was not good for him to live in one spot and isolate himself from all other phases of nature. From an artistic point of view there is much truth in the philosophical remark of the old citizen Poirier in Augier's "*Le gendre de Mr. Poirier.*" "Why," said he, "do I love your mother so much? (his mother-in-law) Because I see her so seldom." Many an artist has discovered that to paint exclusively one style and one spot narrows his ideas. He becomes too accustomed to the ways of his beloved and ends by loving her less and less every day, and at last is indifferent to the very charms which, at one time, set him all aglow, and he looks without emotion upon that which had, at one time, given him so much joy. Some artists are pedantic enough to say that they have exhausted their neighbourhood and that they must pitch their tent elsewhere. See therefore the reverse side of the picture how "too much familiarity breeds contempt."

The ideal for an artist is, that the style of landscape he particularly effects, should be within easy reach, yet not at his very door. Just as the seashore is within easy reach of Mesdag at the Hague; Wolfhezen was within a short journey from the home of Bilders, and Oosterbeek not far from Mauve's residence. We thoroughly agree with old Poirier. For a sportsman too it is

more desirable to live at some little distance from his "field of battle." It is not good for a Nimrod to live within sight of his game and with his gun for ever loaded; he needs to seek and seeking find.

Mauve could, however, safely live at Laren during the last years of his life, because his art and experience were thoroughly established; he had no longer to fear defeat or backsliding. Certain it is though, that for a young artist, who has not yet reached the top of *his* tree, isolation is a mistake. In the centre of a big town, where the artistic circle is large and where artists are continually rubbing up against each other, and visiting each others' studios and seeing each others' work, is undoubtedly the best place for beginners and enlarges their views. In the midst of such surroundings and exchange of

On the Leidschendam. From a study in chalks.

thought there is less danger of a man thinking his own geese are swans. Such a place as the Hague or Amsterdam, where there are so many artists and so many studios, to say nothing of all the museums and galleries, and where artists can hear the public opinion of their own works, such a place I maintain is the right spot for a hard working and determined artist.

Many an artist has discovered to his cost that isolation, in the provinces, for a long period is the worst thing possible. His cock crowed the best because it was the only cock of the walk. This was pernicious to his progress, and from the want of the necessary contact with the world and competition, he was inclined to stand still, get rusty, and eventually die out.

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"Het Hemeltje" (The little Heaven) near Vreeland. From a study in chalks.

Before Du Chattel allowed himself to be captured by the charm of the Vecht, he had already many years of hard work behind his back.

He was born on the 10th of February 1856. His youth was spent with pencil and chalk in hand scribbling over every bit of paper he could lay his hands upon. He was encouraged by his father and in this respect he was lucky, for most artists have begun their lives struggling against unbelieving parents. 1)

Du Chattel *père* was a bit of an artist himself and versed in the art of restoring old pictures; he sent his son first of all to the well-known drawing school at Leyden of the Society *Mathesis scientiarum genitrix* where the lad worked well, and industriously, until he obtained the distinction of the King's scholarship.

Then Du Chattel, at the age of seventeen, came to the Hague and went really hard and earnestly to work, not, however, under any particular master, but working with other young artists, each going their own way and only taking nature as their model; that ever great and rich source of all that is beautiful and complete. But the variety of ways in the which nature is understood by different temperaments is surprising and Du Chattel himself, although so young and inexperienced, discovered this too.

To bring his art to the height of perfection of William Maris—that warmth and glow, that sunshine and freshness, that clear atmospheric beauty—was Du Chattel's greatest ambition. If you know William Maris's goodness of heart, his unequalled discretion and disinterestedness, you would not be surprised to hear that he stood by young Du Chattel and gave him a helping hand. The young artist worked away lustily and the support and help he got from Maris was invaluable and set him going in the right direction.

And so matters remained till the young painter placed before the public his first picture (that was in 1875) at the triennial exhibition at the Hague. This canvas was entitled "Near Oestgeest," and the charm of it was immediately recognized by all. Connoisseurs foretold future successes to the young impressionist. This first endeavour was a simple picture, taken from a quiet neighbourhood and the subject treated with modesty and simplicity.

From that time Du Chattel began to make a name for himself and has brought his art to that pitch that now people speak of "a Du Chattel" which means, in the art world, not only that the artist has stamped his work with his own personality, but that his pictures are recognizable amidst hundreds of others.

The broad water-ways lined with tall trees at each side; the straight canal with boats and barges; the winding rivers and bubbling stream, find in Du Chattel an able panegyrist. With what endless variety he can portray the beauties of the Vecht; the peeps at sleepy villages on its banks; the ubiquitous Dutch wind-mill, standing out in the bend of that picturesque river, with its

1) This will be found perfectly true if the various volumes of this work are read through.

rich verdure and stately trees. Then again at other times it is a farm house, hid behind a thick screen of tall trees; or the boats standing out against a blue sky and distinctly reflected in the crystal waters beneath them; or the smaller rowing boats looking so tempting on a hot day.

Pictures of peace and plenty. So inviting that a desire comes over one to step into one of the boats and have a row, lazily allowing the oars to dip into the limpid water. Then again we have a change of scene and we are presented to the Vecht at her broader point, where the villages are larger and more flourishing and smile and dance in the sunshine, where we see pretty white houses and country-seats with over hanging trees. It is the Vecht in all her

On the Leidschendam. From a study in chalks.

glory. We are made familiar with her under all circumstances and in all seasons; in sunshine and rain; in cloudless skies or in approaching storm; on a summer's evening or on an autumnal day, when the foliage has turned brown and yellow with a tinge of gold; or in the early morning when the first ray of the sun touches the tops of the houses.

It is true that the Vecht now is rather altered in some places, modernized, up-to-date houses stand where castles stood of old, yet there are parts so unchanged that one can almost quote the poets of old, who sang her praises, in the 17th and 18th centuries.

No one less than Constantyn Huygens who dedicated the following epigram to Goudestein near Maarsseveen:

"Ik doe recht, Maarsseveen, als stoute kind'ren plechten, 1)
Die me aan de lesse in 't school moet houden met een wenk;
Ik sit op *Hodwijk* staag aan *Goudestein* en denk,
En vliede van mijn vliet, om voor de *Vecht* te vechten.
Het Voorburg komt in roer, om tegen mij te rechten
Voor de eere van de Plaats, die 't volk segt dat ik krenk,
Als ik uw *Maarsseveen* te langer lofdicht schenk
En voor de *Vecht* alleen te veel laurier wil vlechten.
Maar ik heb haast gedaan met pleiten; sy syn 't quyt
Eerse omsien; goed of quaad, sy moeten 't my wel geven,
Daar ik se met geweld van redenen verbyt
En roeme Maarsse-veens paleis en keurigh leven,
De lieffelijke locht in allerhande weer;
De klaarheid van den stroom en 't blank hert van den Heer."

You should see the pictures in "The triumphant Vecht" an *édition de luxe* which came out in 1719. There you see her stately residences, the palatial homes of the noble families of that period, they begin near Utrecht and finish at Muiden.

In these fine old engravings you see not only the beauties of the river, but the old family castles and estates. Nature, in fact, curled and scented. Fountains and long straight walks with yew hedges and statues, or tall stately looking trees. The spirit of *Le Nôtre* seems to float in the atmosphere and the smartly attired and much perfumed ladies seem in harmony with their surroundings, as they trip around their lordly mansions and cull the roses in their gardens. Nature, like themselves, well-groomed. The poet de Regt has ably described the Vecht in the following lines:

Oh Vecht, I love thy birds and fishes,
Thy swans so white and trees so green;
Thy farms and hamlets so delicious,
Thy verdure always fresh is seen.

And when I see the farmer making
Furrows straight behind his plough;
A holiday indeed I'm taking,
Which smooth the wrinkles from my brow.

And when I need a trip of pleasure,
I stroll along the meadows rich;
Thy fields of corn with golden treasure,
Excite my joys to highest pitch.

1) The translator considers that this would be spoilt in translating.

Vreeland. From a water-colour.

And when upon thy banks I'm seated,
And feel refreshed and lay me down;
My blood is hot and overheated,
From work and worry up in town.

Thy nightingales my joys awaken,
Far more than song of human voice;
My spirits are within me shaken.
It is the music of my choice.

Near Nichtevecht. From a painting.

I look up and I hear a twitter,
A sound of thousand birds as one;
The echo rolls far o'er the water,
And dies away the trees among.

They fly o'er herbs and grass and flowers,
From Nieuwerode to Goudestein;
They play about the stately towers,
Of castle Muiden grand and fine.

Thy cattle listen quite enraptured,
They prick their ears and seem quite mute;
They think that Arion is recaptured,
Or Orpheus plays upon his lute.

I look down from my pleasant quarters,
And see the fishes sport and dance;
Beneath thy silvery crystal waters,
They look up with a mocking glance.

I listen to thy gentle flowing,
With now and then a little splash;
And when the wind the leaves are blowing
I look up at the oak and ash.

And everywhere are roses planted,
And violets scent the atmosphere;
Oh Vecht, thou hast my heart enchanted,
It is thy land I love most dear.

Thy land it flows with milk and honey,
And all the good things of this earth;
Thou'rt richer than a King with money,
Nor in thy land is e'er a dearth.

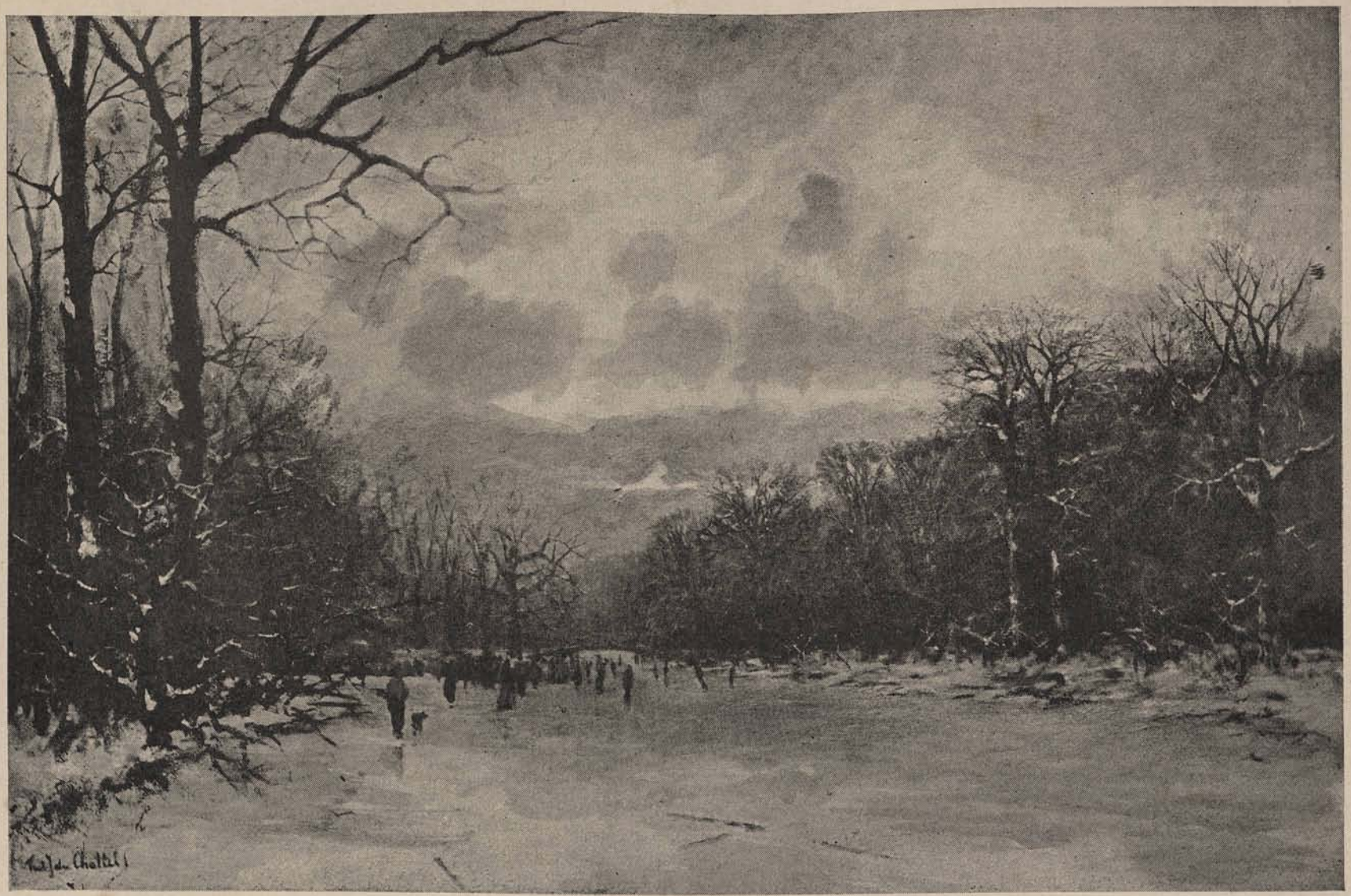
Our forefathers swore by the Vecht and the rich Amsterdam merchants and patricians used to spend much time in their fine mansions on her banks.

But Du Chattel honours the Vecht by his brush more than by all these rhymes and rhythms and boasting jingles do. If we look through his portfolio of sketches and drawings, we see this picturesque river in her every mood and whim, and in every aspect of time and season.

Du Chattel's talent in water-colours is so great that they have the power and intensity of oils. At a distance it is almost impossible to tell the one from the other. His water-colours have so much breadth and depth and yet withal are simple and unaffected. His skies, too, are wonderful; thin and light, almost transparent looking, with white fluffy downy clouds chasing each other in the azure blue; all this we see reflected in the clear crystal of the stream which is fringed in some places by wooded patches of dark foliaged trees, or in other parts by rich verdure and fertile soil, or by the parks of the nobility. Then again we see boats and barges, gliding along so quietly and peacefully with narrow streaks of blueish smoke rising from their small funnels. You think neither of process nor of paint, nor of any material means but only of lovely nature and you feel as if your lot had been cast

"Evening"


Fred T. du Chattel



Winter. From a painting.

in pleasant places, merely by looking at these true and faithful representations of such charming spots.

Du Chattel has given us a great variety of scenes from his dearly loved Vecht. He has been a faithful tenant and taken a long lease of her charms.

According to the present taste in Art the sketchy water-colour seems particularly popular. They tell a story of one of our celebrated men that he

Near the Bridge at Geest. From a study in chalks.

once commenced a landscape: houses, trees, mills, etc., on a well-stretched paper, when suddenly he saw the vision of a seascape; he had done so much rubbing our and washing that quite a different view appeared before his eyes and the landscape was forgotten and in its stead stood the glorious sea. In water-colour, too, the artist is far more able to be free and easy than in the manipulation of oils. In water-colour he shows himself as he is, we see him,

as it were, behind the scenes, like a young woman in her easy morning gown without the discomfort of tight garments; whereas in oils the painter is in full dress, in doublet and hose and irksome paraphernalia.

Would not Du Chattel's masterly water-colours and sketches be spoilt if recreated into oil paintings. They would lose that light touch, that hop, skip

On the River near Loosduinen. From a study in chalks.

and a jump of the active light-hearted brush or pencil; it would do away entirely with that spontaneous freshness, that life and naturalness.

Smart little ladies who take two lessons a week in water-colour drawing from Mr. This or That, at two or three guineas a lesson, think that the art of drawing in water-colours is an easy proceeding and can be acquired without effort, provided you have the necessary tools. Leave them to think so if it

makes them happy .... ten years is not enough and then .... why then it is after all only a matter of feeling and sentiment which cannot be *acquired* but must be born with a man. Even in the most unimportant sketches the true art of an artist is apparent, not so much in the dexterity of his hand but the sentiment which flows from his thoughts and inspires his brush. When looking at Du Chattel's portrayal of the Vecht, with her villages silhouetted against the blue sky; the country lanes with stately trees; the pretty houses hiding, as it were, behind the shadow of the big branches; the peaceful waters with white swans gracefully gliding over the surface and many birds overhead, then I feel I am indeed breathing the fresh air of the country and know that it is not only the clever hand of the artist that makes me feel so, nor his technical ability, but the power of the man's artistic thought which gives me this pleasant sensation.

Although Du Chattel and the Vecht are so to speak one, and although he is called "the exponant of the Vecht," yet her charms did not so completely absorb him to the crowding out of every other style and *genre*. He has made many lovely pictures in other places: from the neighbourhood of the Hague, from the Leidschendam, from Loosduinen, etc. He has wandered in many parts, sketchbook in hand, seeking for picturesque peeps. Many a small and unimportant spot has been the motive for a large picture; he casts his line in many waters and fishes not for one kind of fish but for whatever species lives in these particular streams or brooks.

Winter, too, attracts Du Chattel, the snow has helped him to win some of his laurels. When the trees have lost their foliage and wrapped themselves in soft white, when the waters are frozen and nature has decked herself like a bride, then Du Chattel is happy and in his element. He is no less attractive when presenting to us winter than when depicting the pleasanter time of the year. Look at "Behind Rijswijk" (page 175) and you will see that I am right in this respect. I cannot imagine a sweeter scene, the tall skeleton trees, with a few touches of white, standing out against a cold, clear wintry sky and the underwood more heavily laden with the pure flakes.

No one will be surprised to hear that Du Chattel has been often rewarded. At both the Colonial Exhibition in Amsterdam, in 1883, and at the World's Fair in Paris in 1889, he gained the silver medal. At the International Exhibition in Berlin in 1891 he received a mark of distinction and the Prince Regent of Bavaria, who always takes a great interest in Dutch Art, honoured our artist in 1891 with the order of St. Michael, and in the previous year he received the gold medal in Munich. A year or two later the Belgian Government presented him with the Leopold order.

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There was a time (the romantic period) when artists were recognizable by the eccentric cut of their clothes, the length of their hair and the wonderful

Near Loosduinen. From a painting.

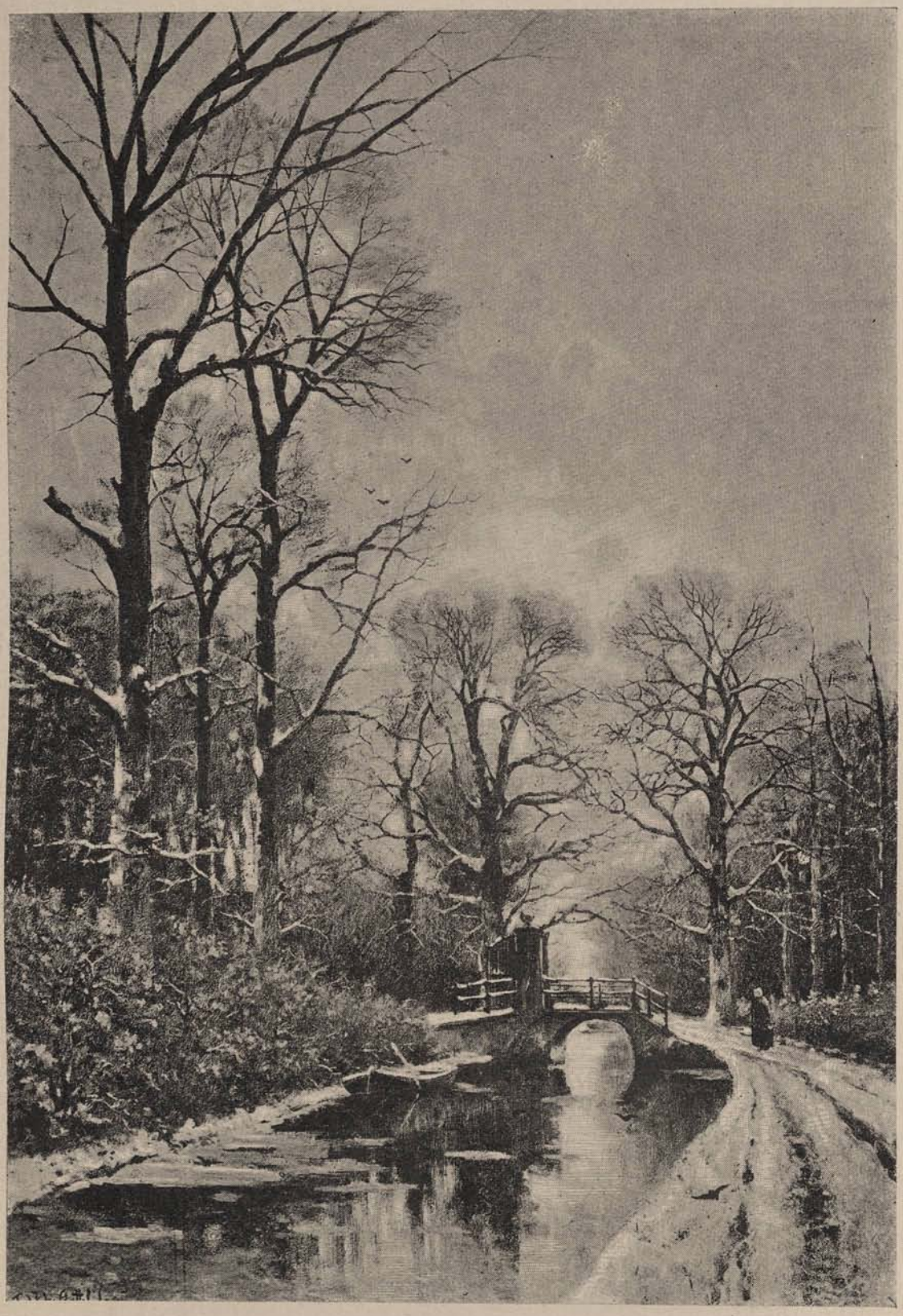
shapes and styles of their head covering. But those days are all passed and gone. Now it is not easy to identify an artist in a crowd, for they look just like all other members of society, they do not try to be singular or ridiculous.

Go to any picture gallery or art exhibition and you will not be able to pick out the artists from among the visitors. With the hero of this article it

Rijswijk. From a study in chalks.

is even so. You might easily take him for an infantry officer, who is interesting himself in Art during his spare moments.

The portrait of Du Chattel, which heads this little biography, will speak for itself and illustrate what I have said. He would indeed be an ornament to any regiment, with his fine manly appearance and strong constitution. His attractive art, Dutch to the back-bone, rejoices the heart of a very large "regiment" namely the public.



Winter near Rijswijk. From a study in chalks.

If we cast a glance over Du Chattel's works, reproduced in these pages, we cannot help rejoicing too, not as a "regiment" but as independent individuals. the peeps are taken from such quiet peaceful scenes of nature, that alone to gaze upon them gives us pleasure and a feeling of repose. Look at the water-colour on page 166 "Vreeland" (the translator would like to spell it Freeland) what a truly peaceful aspect. The good folks who live mid such serene surroundings can know nothing of wars or rumours of wars, nor can they have the worries which fall to the lot of their less fortunate brethren whose lives are passed in populated centres.

On page 175 we see winter. The river has but a sluggish, almost imperceptible movement; the cold has not been of sufficient intensity to freeze its surface. The branches of the trees are defined by a sidelong light, cast by a dying sun. The small studies, in chalks, on pages 161 and 164 include the ubiquitous Netherland windmill which stamps them at once as Dutch.

The "little Heaven" on page 162 is really well named. Let us hope that the "greater Heaven" will be as delightful. On page 170 we see a truly North Holland landscape, the long straight road lined on each side by tall straight trees.

Du Chattel's canvases give us a sense of open-air, of spaciousness, of pathos and sentiment. In his work there is a freedom of manner combined with brightness of key and a fine atmospheric feeling. His execution is not wanting in vigour nor in harmony of colour He may decidedly be named an exponent of open-air effects. He is very clever in his treatment of perspective linear and arial; his pictures convey the intimation of that open air in the which, no doubt, they were painted. His colours are never intense, nor are they ever hard and metallic. Sometimes we see a soft mist which veils the landscape, giving a presage of a fine day as the sun rises higher above our heads and dispels this soft fog. The freedom of handling and the grace of colour are characteristic of Du Chattel's style. His pictures are freshly harmonious in tint and in tone, his trees are never heavy and ponderous, never massive and bulky but generally sparingly foliaged, giving scope for the light to play about amongst the branches and to cast shadows on the water which we mostly find is the chief motive and theme in Du Chattel's paintings.

"Without the Arts the world would be but a barren waste" was wisely remarked by some thoughtful man, and indeed, me may add, that without pleasing and refreshing pictures—such as emit from the studio of our friend Du Chattel—wherewith to decorate our walls, our homes would be but a dreary wilderness.

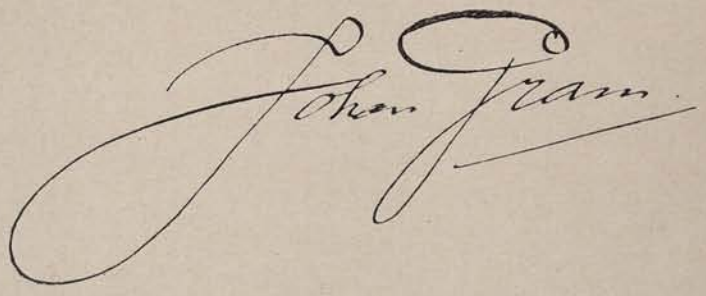
Du Chattel's life has been passed peacefully, resembling, in that respect, the waters of his dear Vecht. His life's history is, therefore, easy to relate in these few pages. He was born, became artist, husband, father, and has spent his days in tranquility.

Near Abcoude. From a study in chalks.

He no doubt agrees with these words by Dr. Lud. Smids upon the subject of the Vecht:

Land of beauty, I'll not leave thee,
At every step more charms I see;
But if by fate I should be banished,
Oh let me gaze 'ere all has vanished,

And see once more thy lovely scenes,
Of azure blue and brilliant greens;
Thy streams and lakes my spirits lighten,
Thy country views my life will brighten.



JAN VROLIJK

BY

P. A. HAAXMAN JR.

A road through the meadows, from a painting in the possession of the widow of the artist.

JAN VROLIJK.

If I was writing the history of the Hague and her inhabitants the name of Johannes Martinus Vrolijk would hold a conspicuous place. (He was born in the *Residentie* on the 1st February 1846 and has lived there ever since). I should first like to peep into the happy home of that jolly painter and have a good look round, then place before my reader a picture of a real old-fashioned respectable Dutch family. Mrs. Vrolijk is in every way a suitable wife for her husband and the house echoes with the merry voices of happy children. There are three bright-eyed, pink-cheeked little girls and one fine sturdy little

boy who, although very young, is already absorbed in picture books, especially those of horses and cattle. When the little Vrolijks sit at their nursery window the passers-by stand gazing up with admiration. It is a feast for the gods, that fair quartette, and Raphael could have wished no better models for his angels and Madonnas.

If I was further called upon to discuss the inhabitants of this Hague dwelling I should like first to mention that Mr. Vrolijk was a general favourite with everyone; that he looks at the world from an optimist's point of view; that he is not fond of criticizing the works of others, probably because he himself has felt the many difficulties that artists have to contend with; that he is inexorable towards those who judge others without being able to show anything better themselves; and that he says what he means, and means what he says, showing the nature of the man.

I have spoken involuntarily of Mr. Johannes Martinus Vrolijk but now I speak of Jan Vrolijk the cattle and landscape painter, who, although possessing a large studio under his own roof, is more in his element in unlimited space, with the blue sky as his only canopy. Already as a youngster his element was the rich meadow lands where he was fond of observing the cattle, long before he realized what his ultimate career would be. In those days out-of-door painting was not as universal as it is at present. The art of drawing was more cultivated. But things have changed and now drawing is neglected and painting taken up too soon. But to return to our subject, Vrolijk commenced his studies under the guidance of his brother Adriaan, a pupil of Andries Schelfhout. As a boy it was Jan's greatest delight to sit next to his elder brother of an evening and watch him draw the things he had noticed during the day, some from memory, some from sketches. All sorts of things: landscapes, animals, street views, portraits. Especially clever was Adriaan in catching likenesses and the celebrated artists of those days he ably reproduced. I have seen portraits of Destrée, David Bles, S. Verveer, Herman ten Kate, Scheeres, Bakhuyzen Senior and others, all contemporaries of the artist who drew them, and every one of them capital likenesses.

Jan speaks with enthusiasm of his first master, of whose instructions, however, he did not long profit, as Adriaan died at the age of 28. One comes occasionally across works by Adriaan Vrolijk at auctions or at old sales, beautiful little gems undoubtedly of the period of Schelfhout and Koekkoek. In Jan's private collection you will find many clever pieces by his brother, also a fine portrait of their father painted by the elder Vrolijk.

In the meantime Jan had been sent to the Drawing Academy at the Hague where he applied himself with perseverance under its able Director, Professor Van den Berg, afterwards J. Ph. Koelman. Anatomy and studies from the nude brought him his first laurels. About that time he made the acquaiutance of Petèr Stortenbeker, the cattle painter, who greatly encouraged him and allowed him to accompany him into the meadows and study the ubiquitous

Dutch cow under his tuition. To this Vrolijk attributes much of his ultimate success in life.

Now commenced the "Storm and stress period" of our artist's life. He set up for himself a small studio on the Hofspui and put his shoulder to the wheel, for much hard work had to be done ere he could venture to launch a picture into the world. In those days sending a picture to an Exhibition was quite an event and influenced perhaps the whole life of an artist. Exhibitions were few and far between, so different to the present day craze for exhibiting.

But disappointments of course cropped up and Jan, like most mortals, was not spared them. When he thought he had climbed to the top of the mast, down he would come with a crash. But as the old adage has it "perseverance conquers,"

A Cow grazing. From a study.

so Jan found he had much to be thankful for and he was not ungrateful. His good humour helped him through many difficulties. He was rich in illusions but poor in care and a general favourite with his friends and colleagues.

At the age of twenty Jan sent two pictures to the Exhibition in Amsterdam: landscapes with cattle, one in fine weather, the other under less favourable climatic conditions. The following year he exhibited at the Hague: "Going to the Horse-fair" which was bought by Mr. E. L. Jacobson, the well-known *maecenas* of those days, who possessed a fine collection of pictures. This canvas was a lively subject: in the foreground the horses being led by their owners to the sale, and in the background a busy village scene. Amongst Jan's early efforts this canvas deserves notice.

It was now that our artist allowed himself the pleasure of a sketching tour, and when he stepped on board the boat that was to take him to the Drielsche Veer, *en route* to Oosterbeek—where he had arranged to lodge with a certain widow named Lamers—no man could have been happier. To hear him relate the various events of that first trip is highly entertaining.

At that time there was a great craze amongst artists for sketching tours and foreign travel. One man would go to Rome, another to Paris and a third would select Dusseldorf. The trip undertaken by Bosboom and Sam Verveer had become historical in the Dutch artistic world and our friend John could not help thinking of it when starting on his "travels." It was his first experience of independence, having always been a decided "home bird."

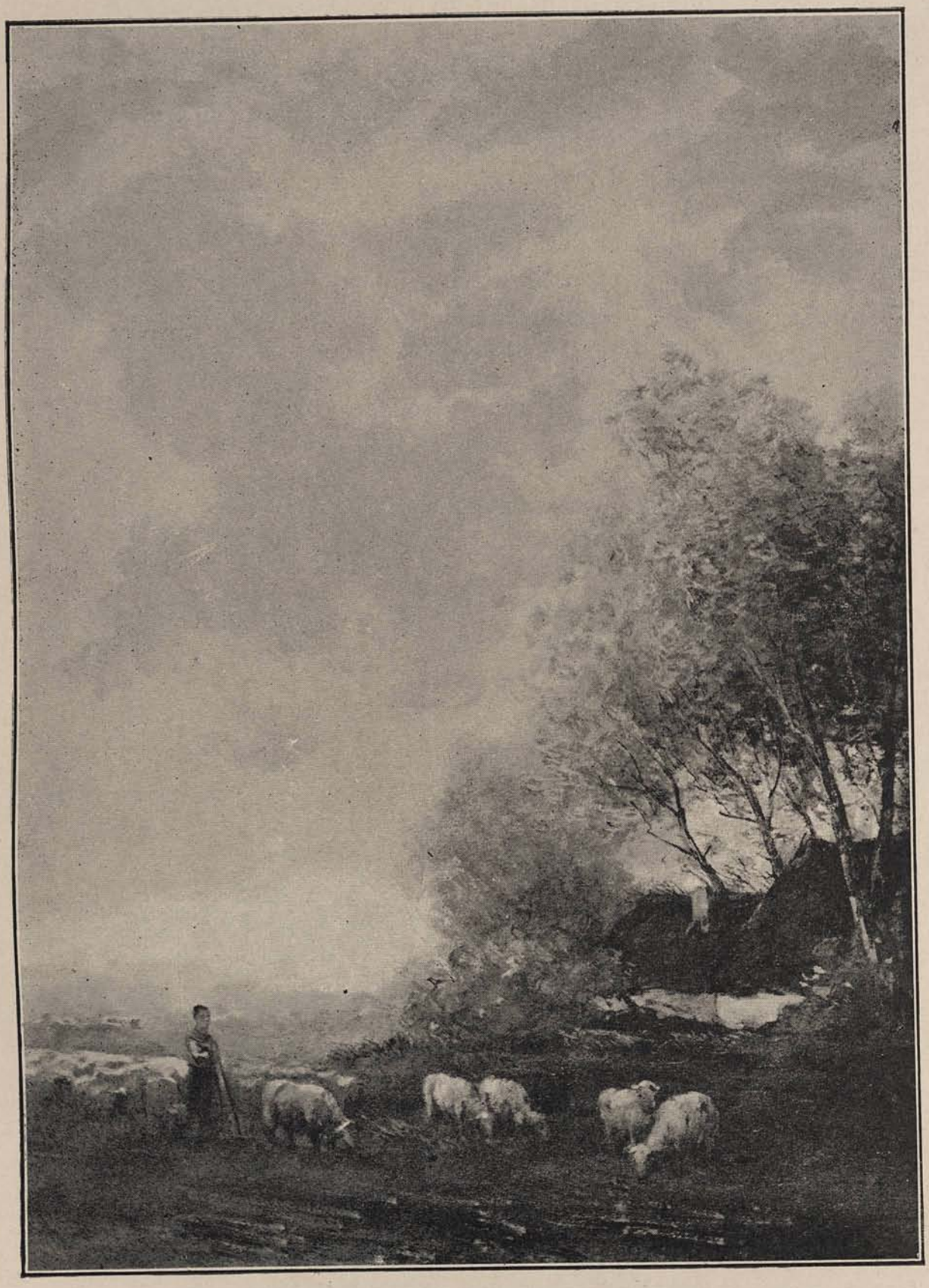
Towards evening he reached Driel and when he stepped on shore the country at once made a favourable impression upon him, with visions of lovely pictures in the near future. He started to walk to Oosterbeek, a long straight road by the side of the river, with splendid trees on the opposite side, a typical Gelderlandish landscape. It however commenced to get dark, the way seemed long, and shall we confess it, Jan began to feel a wee bit nervous. Grasping his small bag more firmly he walked on a little faster, when suddenly the silence was disturbed by hurried footsteps coming up behind. Faster and faster came the rapid strides as if the approaching individual was in haste to overtake the stranger; faster and faster went Jan, for he thought perhaps this man wants to rob me of my money. All his mother's kind words and affectionate injunctions crowded into his mind with her parting words of advice to be careful of himself and of his money. But what was he to do, he could not take to his heels and run, for that would be like confessing that he had money in his pocket and he would be probably immediately overtaken if he did. Now the steps behind seemed to multiply and it sounded like a company of robbers, or murderers or cut-throats, everything horrible in fact. To look round would be fatal, and Jan made up his mind to fight bravely for his life. Hullo! here were the highwaymen at his heels .... and ....

"Good evening, young gentleman, you know how to walk! Art going to Oosterbeek?"

The man spoke pleasantly and Jan saw to his relief, that the troop of robbers had melted into this kindly spoken little old man, who proved to be the tailor and town clerk of Oosterbeek, in fact "chief cook and bottle-washer" of the village. He was nervous at being alone so late and in the dark on the lonely road, and so he determined to overtake the stranger ahead of him. Partly too from curiosity, for a stranger walking along the narrow path, by the river, was an unusual sight in that neighbourhood.

Now this little old man proved a welcome companion to our artist, for he was able to find out from him many things about Oosterbeek.

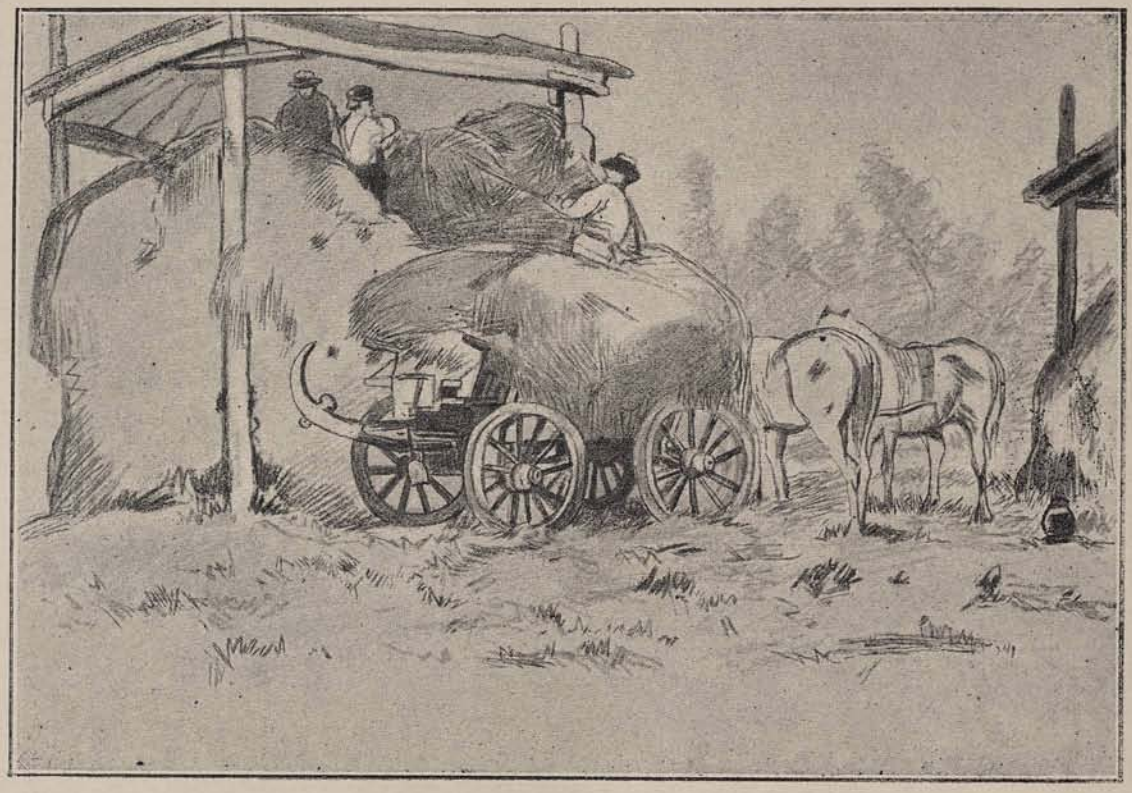
Did he know the widow Lamers? Why, of course, he did, he made and mended for the whole family. She was a good soul and *Mynheer* would be



On the way Home. From a water-colour in the possession of Mr. Steese of New York.

very comfortable at her house and if *Mynheer* was an artist he must not fail to make the acquaintance of a certain Mr. D.... who was also a bit of a painter, and drew the trees and houses so beautifully that you could scarcely believe your eyes that they were not real.

In short Jan knew every soul in the place before he set foot in it. His friendly *cicerone* showed him the house of his future *hospita*, but that lady having gone out to gossip with her neighbours, the house was empty, so Jan bethought him of Mr. D.... the native landscape painter, and made up his mind to go there at once. He took a friendly leave of his town-clerk cum tailor, promising his patronage when mending was needed, and knocking at

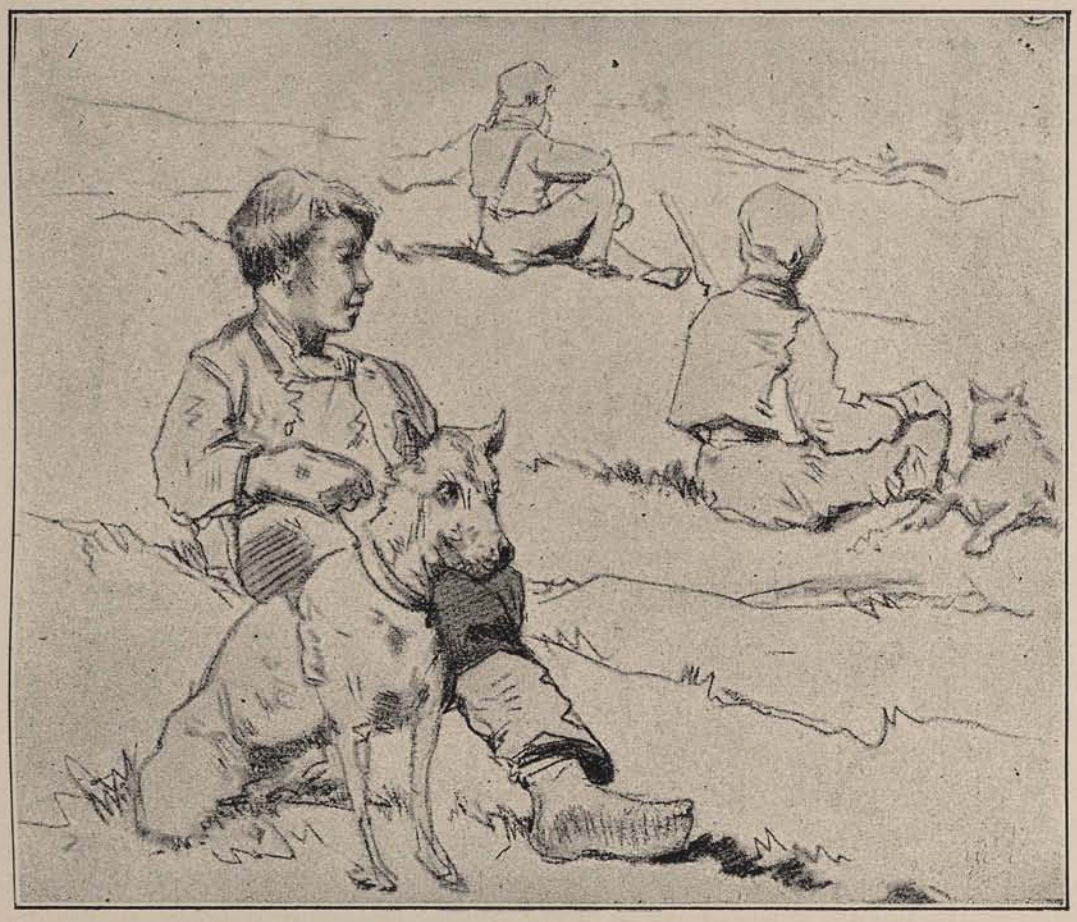


The last load. (Study).

Mr. D's. door, he found himself most kindly received. He had disturbed the family D. at supper, the artist in his bedroom slippers and loose painting coat. Jan was bidden to join the family circle which he gladly did, no pressing being necessary. Jan was touched by the hospitality offered to a complete stranger. Mr. D. proved, as time went on, a most useful friend, giving our artist many lessons and much good sound advice.

Distant painting tours Vrolijk never undertook. As soon as he discovered the bent of his talent he applied himself with might and main to the study of landscapes with cattle, and this subject was not difficult to find in the neighbourhood of the Hague. He also studied much in and around Gouda, Stompwyk, Veur, Zoetermeer, Leidschendam, all these places became in time

as familiar to him as the Westlands. The rich meadows of Ryswyk and the extensive fields of Wassenaer (the property of Count van Bylandt) were fruitful hunting grounds for Jan Vrolijk. He always made it a point of selecting the finest specimens of cattle he could find. He knew so well how to get round the farmer that he had no difficulty in discovering the prize animals. The natives of the low-lying country are very fond of artists who come and paint in and about their farms. The good mother of the house brews them a cup of coffee at any hour of the day, and they have only to mention when they



Study.

require their meals to return and find a well-spread table ready. Everyone was always ready to give Jan Vrolijk a helping hand and drive in Molly the cow, or Neddy the donkey, so that the artist could get a near view, and I assure you that Jan did them credit. Out of gratitude he often left a canvas behind, perhaps a "misfit", to ornament the best parlour. He could make himself so agreeable of an evening, talking to the farmer's family and making them feel that he was putting them on an equality with himself.

No wonder that Vrolijk's contemporaries and fellow students delighted to accompany him on his sketching tours. It often happened that Jan and his

companions remained weeks together in some spot where they had discovered much that was paintable. Generally the best room in the farm was given up to the "gentlemen". Hard work and much work was accomplished, the artists returning to the Hague with overflowing portfolios and sketch-books, filled to the brim, with subject matter, for winter work. Sometimes Jan and his companions would arrange a little amusement for the farmer and his family. Perhaps it so happened there was a marriage or a christening in the family circle, or amongst the neighbours, and the artists would seize the opportunity for giving them some entertainment. Sometimes they would arrange a pastoral play, making use of an old arbour or summer-house as stage, the meadows serving as auditorium. Louis Apol and our friend Jan were generally the leading spirits

Long-ears. From a study.

and played the chief parts. They acted all sorts of things, serious and comic, lively or sad, varying the performances with occasional *tableaux-vivants*, for which they were famed. It would seem almost as if the spirit of "*Pulchri Studio*" had penetrated to Veur or Stompwijk or to any of those pretty Gelderland villages.

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In 1874 Vrolijk sent his first work to foreign lands. His "Escaped Bull" went to the South Kensington International Exhibition of that year and gained for the young painter a bronze medal. It was a splendid picture representing a foreshortened bull, with broad powerful shoulders, lashing his flanks with his tail and lowering his head in anger. The canvas was known in Holland as

it had been exhibited the previous year at *Arti*, and where it had attracted general attention. Since his "Horse fair" Vrolijk had made great strides. Mother nature, whom he had carefully studied, had led him into the right path.

In 1879 Vrolijk obtained the Royal Bronze medal at *Arti* for his large painting entitled: "In the Meadows," of which the subject is a drove of splendid looking cattle, taking shelter from the midday sun, under a clump of trees. It was exhibited again later on at Antwerp, when it was the private property of the well-known art collector Mr. L. V. Ledeboer of Rotterdam, through whose kindness it was sent there for exhibition. I still see that kindly

A black and white Bull. From a picture in the possession of Mr. Overvoorde at the Hague.

old gentleman in his fine house on the Leuvehaven and I can hear him singing the praises of that picture, which had a place of honour in his gallery. Vrolijk, seeing how successful he had been with that subject, painted several more of that *genre*. Amongst others a very fine picture of cows in the meadows, ordered by Mrs. Zubli van den Berch van Heemstede, at the Hague, for her private gallery. Not only are all his cattle so correctly and beautifully portrayed, but also his trees and foliage, his skies and atmospheric effects show his mastery over landscape which had already been recognized in his cattle.

He has met with much success since those days. In 1881 he exhibited at Zutphen a cattle piece called: "A rising storm" for which he obtained the

gold medal from the Society "Pictura". The chief motive in this picture is a splendid bull which stands alone by the river side; overhead are gathering clouds and the landscape is full of effects of light and shade. Another fine picture: "On the Downs," exhibited in Amsterdam in 1883, at the International Exhibition, was awarded an honourable mention by the jury.

Our King was a great admirer of Vrolijk's works. He gave him the order of the *Eikenkroon* in 1888 in honour of a picture entitled: "Behind the Farmhouse," which was afterwards bought by H. M. Later, in 1891, this same canvas was sent to the Berlin Exhibition by permission of the Queen Regent. It attracted universal attention and was especially noticed by the Emperor, to whom Vrolijk was presented, with his two friends Elch. Verveer and W. Martens, by the artist Mesdag. It is said that Emperor William is so fond of this above named picture that he has it removed from palace to palace as he changes residences.

At this same exhibition in Berlin there was another picture by Vrolijk called: "A Summer's Morning." In the foreground we see cows standing in the water drinking, the sun shining upon the meadows in the distance with myriad tints and tones. A soft etherial atmosphere pervades the whole. For his picture Vrolijk was given the big gold medal.

As a pendant to the "Summer's Morning" Vrolijk painted a "Summer's Evening." It was taken from the neighbourhood of Ryswyk. This picture went to the World's Fair at Chicago. His success in the States was so great that all his exhibited pictures were sold and he received many orders for more.

In 1893 he sent a picture to Munich which was very favourably criticized. It represented a drove of cattle which seemed to be running right out of the frame towards the spectator, each animal hustling its neighbour. The modelling of these fine creatures is exceptionally good, the light is cleverly reflected upon their hides and the background is very successful. It is altogether a well thought-out and splendidly achieved subject.

That Vrolijk could hold his own as a colourist with the French celebrities was plainly to be seen at the exhibition, held at Scheveningen by the Rotterdam Art Club, in the summer of 1892, when some works by Vrolijk—in warm brown tints—hung in the dangerous proximity of those of Troyon and Diaz.

Vrolijk stands high in the art of water-colour. In the annual winter exhibition of *aquarelles*, at the *Pulchri Studio*, his works were never missing, nor yet admirers either. Some of the visitors go there especially to see the works of Jan Vrolijk. He was made member of the *Société Royale Belge des Aquarellistes* and when he exhibited some of his water-colour drawings in Brussels, the King of Saxony, who happened to be there, bought one of the finest specimens.

Some of Vrolijk's best works are to be found in private collections, such collections as those of Mr. P. J. van den Burgh, Mr. Betz, Mr. Heyligers, M. Kruyt, Mr. W. A. Schroot, Mr. J. Apol, Mrs. Zubli, Mr. J. G. Patyn, Mr. Overvoorde, Mr. Nieuwenhuyzen at the Hague; Messrs. Polak & Joseph

Sheep on the downs. From a water-colour.

de Kuyper in Rotterdam; Mr. van den Schalk in Schiedam; Mr. Hoffen in Utrecht; and Mr. Krayestein in Arnheim, etc., etc. These art collectors—and I am happy to say that there are many more of them—each possess one or two, or perhaps more pictures by our artist. His finest paintings, however, have gone into other countries. Mr. Steese of New York owns no less than four.

Besides all this, Vrolijk's works are to be found in museums and public galleries. In the Museum of Modern Art at the Hague and at Teyler's Institute, also at Boyman's Museum in Rotterdam. The last named possesses some fine etchings. Vrolijk takes a great pleasure in etching. He does not etch with timidity and fear, but boldly and bravely, direct from nature, and is able with his sharp needle to represent the glowing ray of the sun.

Sometimes, too, he changes his brush for a pen and makes most tasteful pen and ink sketches of cattle in a surrounding landscape. Many of these are in the possession of our young Queen.

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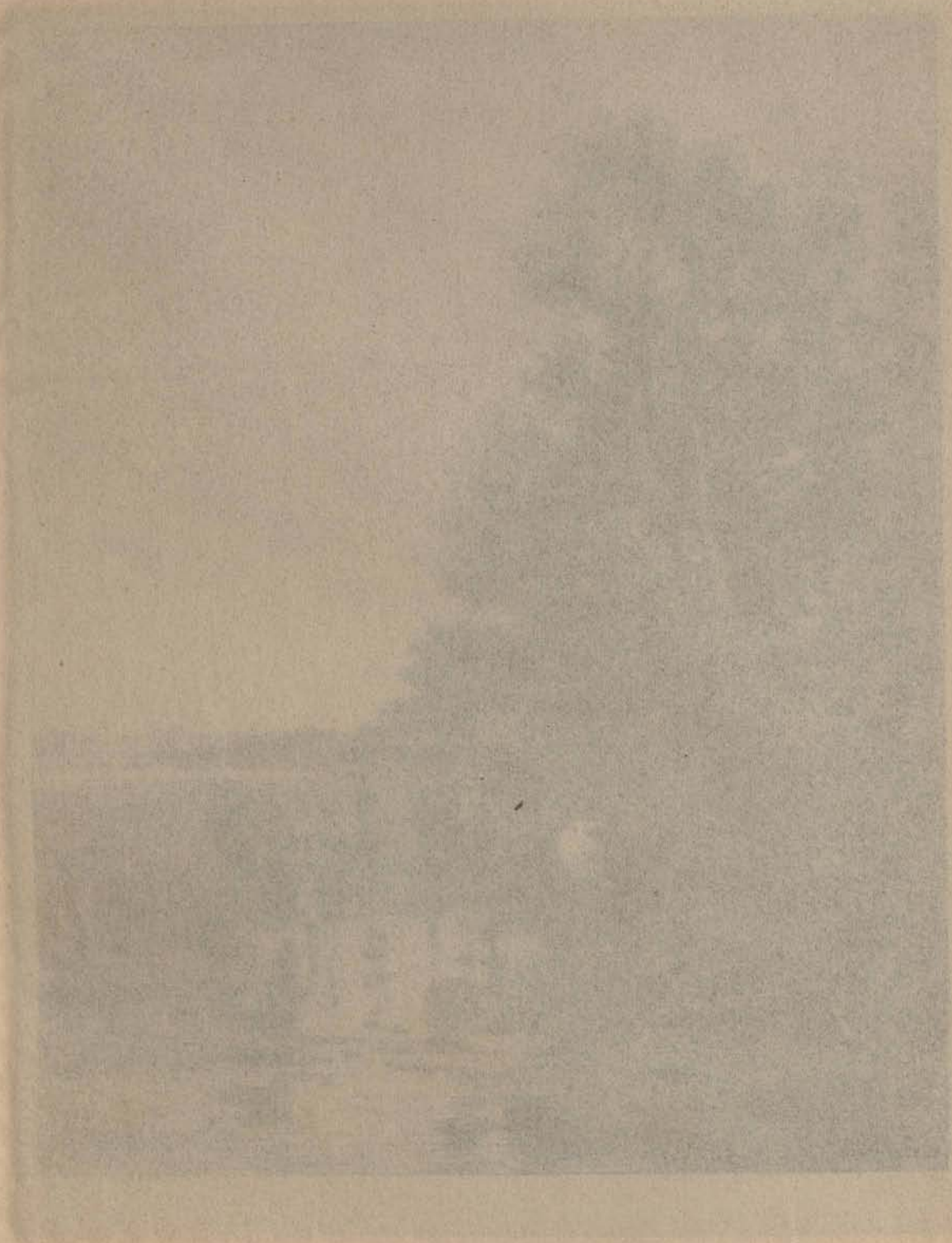
Vrolijk has a clever way of "handling" a cow, and a bull, as well as their mutual relation the ox. Cattle are really very difficult "posers" and require an immense amount of patience on the part of the artist. They have no method in their madness and you can never know what they will do next. Either they are very sleepy and immovable or else they are restless, timid and fidgetty. Vrolijk not only studied their anatomy but also their ways and habits. To accomplish this latter he took many tramps through wet fields and muddy patches and, moreover, hours of waiting and watching were required. But he succeeded in the end and could read the mind of the meek cow and the fierce bull, that is to say, if they possess such attributes. He can draw a cow in every conceivable attitude, either chewing the cud in company with others, or standing aimlessly at a distance—with an intense look of sleepy boredom—or else grazing in family groups, either the red or black or blaze cattle, or the more common black and white. An amusing bit of rhyme was discovered by one of Vrolijk's friends scribbled on the edge of his school drawing book. I venture to insert it here:

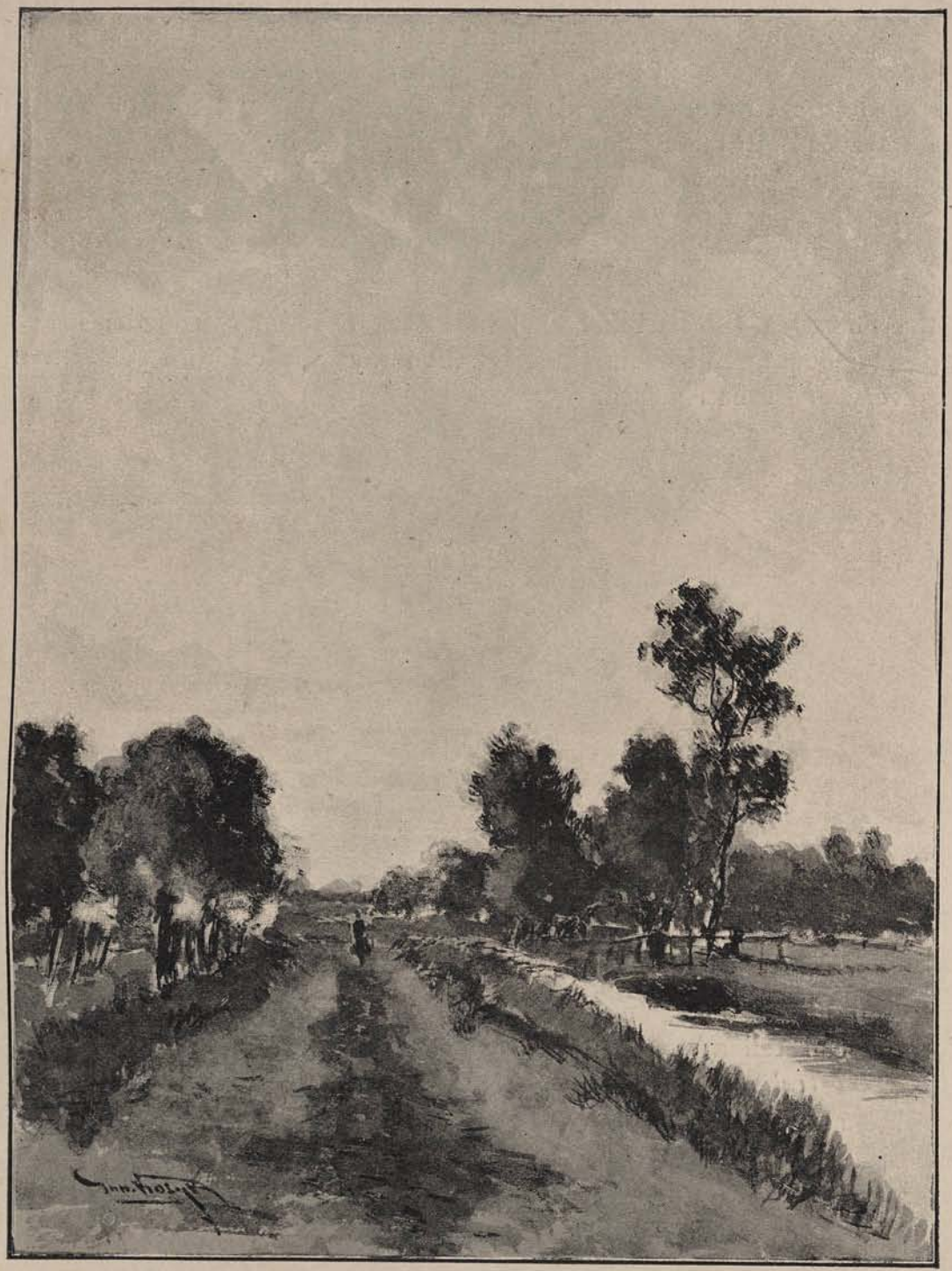
Cows are mimics with a language of their own,
A sound very queer, but full of sweet tone;
Understood not perhaps by your Worship I ween,
If even in Leyden to school you have been.
They visit sometimes t'other side of the plas,
And inconvenience the turnips of Janus de Bas;
Or voyage of discovery they skittishly make,
And tread down the corn for mischief's own sake;



"On the borders of a plas" (*lake*)

FROM A PAINTING

in the possession of Mrs. Zubli-Van den Berch van Heemstede.



A Road in Vreeland. From a water-colour.

Or perhaps with a bull they playfully sport;
Or roll in the grass, or I may say in short
They kick o'er the traces, and refuse to be meek,
Although they've not learnt either Latin or Greek.

It is as if the cows understood the language of our artist; instinct tells them that he would not for worlds gossip behind their backs, that is to say, that he would never make an ugly picture of them. This is a trait of character that can be applied to Vrolijk and his two-legged friends also. I never met with a greater optimist than Jan Vrolijk. Whenever he speaks of his friends, and especially of his colleagues, he always shows the best side of their character and the finest of their works. When I was asked to write this article and interviewed our man I found that I went away stocked with pleasant matter about every artist but himself.

A sleeping dog. From a study.

No one can tell a story better than Jan, especially when it has to do with the merits of others. He has a way of gesticulating with his right arm in an expressive manner as if to say "that settles the matter." He told me much about Elchanon Verveer and about Holswilder, the clever caricaturist, and about lots of others. He said that Verveer's Scheveningites were not to be looked for among the well-to-do nor in the public roads and large thoroughfares of that picturesque seaside village, but amongst the poorest of the poor, in back streets and dingy alleys. As to Holswilder—that alas early lamented portrait painter—he said he could catch a likeness with only a passing glimpse, and turn out a typical caricature, or a splendid likeness. Furthermore he went on to say that once meeting Holswilder on his way to the Chamber of Commerce, to make a drawing of one of our then celebrated men, as they were

talking the man in question passed. "I spotted him first," said Vrolijk, "and drew H's attention to him, whereupon he (Holswilder) took a careful look till the statesman was out of view and then continued his walk with me. This had been enough and the following week there appeared in one of the illustrated papers a splendid caricature of Mr. X.

Vrolijk is one of those men who tries to draw modest talent into notice

Under the willows. From a painting.

and is always ready and willing to assist struggling beginners. In this he has a good opportunity since his appointment on the committee, in the room of Mr. J. W. van Borselen, for the granting of the Royal Scholarships to young artists.

Vrolijk was always a much beloved and greatly honoured member of the *Pulchri Studio* at the Hague. His kindliness of heart, his general good humour

and his unruffled joviality are much appreciated. When he was made commissioner of the Pulchri art department he succeeded in selling the largest percentage of pictures ever sold before or since, probably owing to his pleasant manner of persuading the public to buy. When the Society gave its entertainments, in that well-known *Hofje van Nieukoop*, he was the moving spirit and the leader of the most comical parts. Sometimes too, classical evenings were given, when dramas were performed, dramas with wonderful contrasts of seriousness and wit, dramas in five acts: "Cetewayo and Jakub-Khan, or the two dethroned monarchs." This amusing hodge-podge, invented and rehearsed

A Winter Landscape. From a water-colour.

in the studio of Du Chattel, aided by the wit and wisdom of Apol and Tony Offermans, was set to music by Keuskamp.

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If you succeed at last in getting Vrolijk to speak about himself, and his own art, his tone changes completely. He then becomes serious, almost pessimistic, quite contrary to his usual nature. He gives you the impression of a man who has worked hard, drudged in fact, and who is not satisfied with the result of his toil.

"I climbed the greasy pole again to-day," he will remark, "and I slipped down oh! so easily."

Then with care one must get him back to the point in question, namely himself, and not allow him to wander off to the works of others, to his never-ceasing praise of Paul Potter's bull, to the pictures at the various Museums and Galleries, etc.

Vrolijk's studio is not filled with odds and ends and unnecessary rubbish, but has a thoroughly hardworking appearance. It is large, high and well lighted, and on the walls hang some fine specimens of cattle.

When sitting with him in his studio he always will talk about other pictures than his own, and when he catches your eye looking at some sketch or drawing on the wall, or some picture on an easel, he will remark in the most casual

A Cow stable in the Beeklaan. From a painting in the possession of the widow of Jan Vrolijk.

manner and without the slightest desire for praise: "Yes, that was painted direct from Mother Nature."

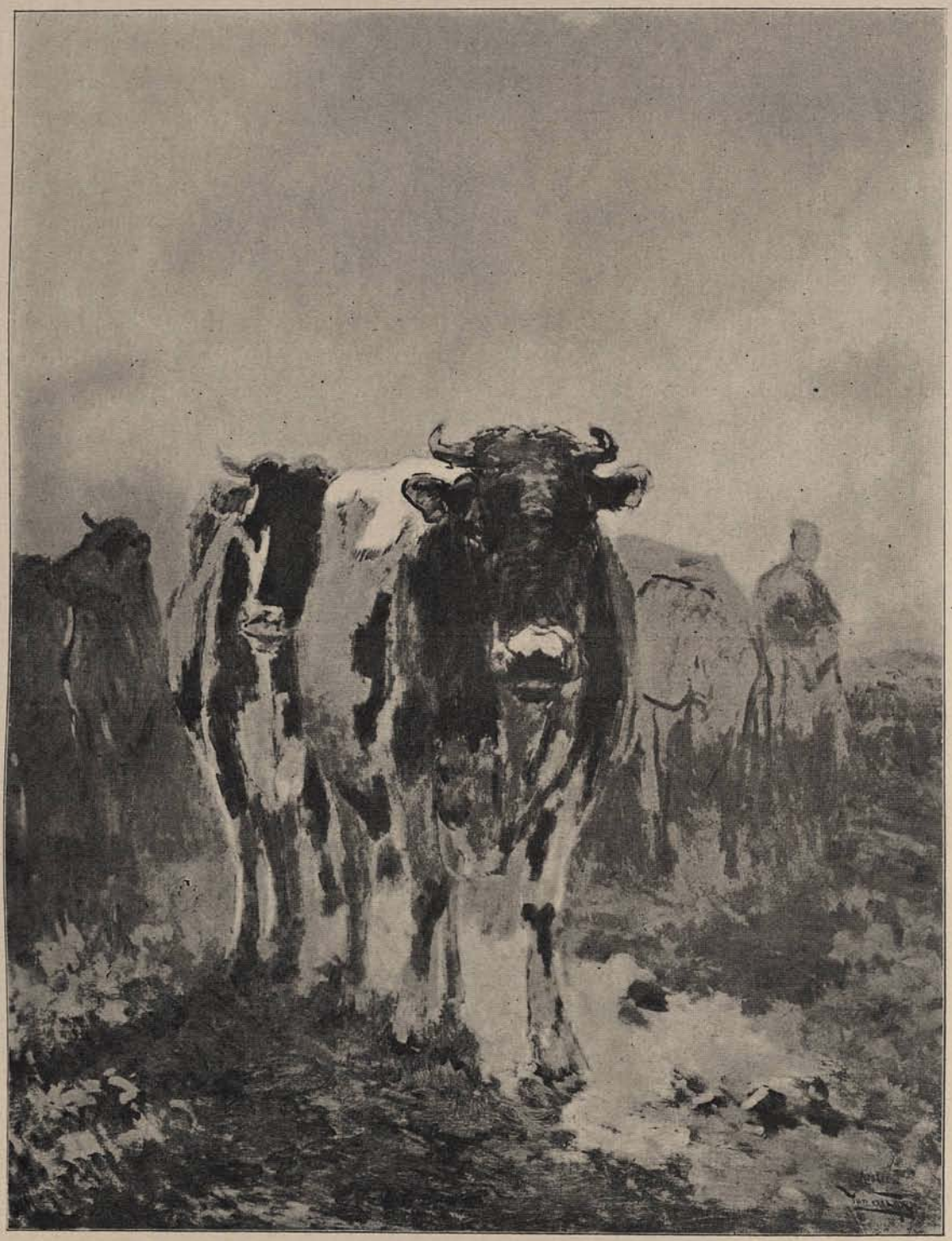
Mother Nature is the load star of his life, his guide, his all. Whosoever neglecteth her may as well roll up his mat and depart, these were the terse and convincing words used by Jan Vrolijk himself.

If you examine the reproductions, in these pages, of Vrolyk's various works you will agree with me that he is a cattle painter of no ordinary type, and that his animals are life-like and a marvel of all that is natural. Look at the picture on page 199, the cows depicted there seem to be walking out of the frame, we would not be surprised to hear them lowing.

On page 193 we are given a delightful little landscape into which cattle are not introduced; a beautiful clear sky against which the dark foliage, of the trees, stands out in cleanly defined contrast. On page 195 we see a few lazy

A Summer's evening. From a water-colour.

looking cows taking "forty winks" under the shade of some cleverly drawn



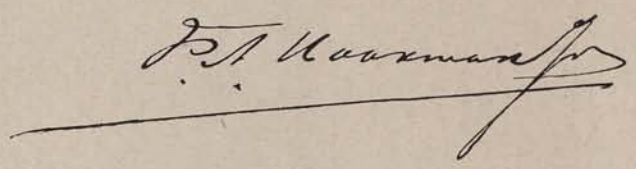
Coming back from the meadows. From a study in the possession of the widow of Jan Vrolijk.

willow trees. The grass is checquered with sunlight and the small and trembling leaf of the pretty Dutch willow blends softly with the tender tones of the sky,

not a sharply outlined contrast as in the picture on page 193 which I have just mentioned.

Page 185 gives us a water-colour, the chief theme, in this case, is a flock of sheep; to the right we see a group of trees faintly silhouetted against the swiftly passing clouds overhead. It is a water-colour not only extremely pleasing to look at but cleverly painted. This charming work of art has found a home across the Atlantic. Another water-colour we find on page 191, here we see two pretty little ba-lambs (as a central motive) disporting themselves amongst the low stunted shubbery of the downs. The most charming water-colour, to my mind, is the one reproduced on page 198 "A summer's evening": green meadows where cattle stray by the waterside; the clouds overhead are illumined by sunshine which induces a play of light on the soft shiny hides of the contented looking cows. This subject is treated with remarkable skill. Although it is a hot summer's day the air seems cool and refreshing and we imagine that the atmosphere is redolent of the scent of the luxurious grass.

Vrolyk has essentially individual qualities and is particularly clever in working out the problems of light. He gladdens the heart of those mortals, who are doomed to live midst brick and mortar, with his vivid glimpses of rural life; his pictures bring a feeling of freshness into those lucky homes where we meet with his work. He holds a distinguished place in the Art-world and has few rivals, as cattle painter, in past or present times; the freedom and power of his executive method are equally apparent in his oils as in his water-colours.



IN MEMORIAM.

This short account of the life of Jan Vrolijk must alas be concluded with the sad account of his recent death. Who would have thought that that sturdy looking youngish man, with his happy face and powerful frame would be called away so suddenly. There was but one opinion and that was that the world had lost, in the prime of life, an able and successful artist. Every face expressed grief. He is missed, not only by his personal friends, but throughout the whole art world.

It is sad to think that he was called away when his fame was at its zenith; when orders were flowing in from America, from Germany, from England and

In the meadows. From a water-colour.

from other foreign countries. He had worked hard during the last years of his life and he left much that was fresh and beautiful behind him. It is sad, however, to think how much more numerous his works might have been had the angel of death passed by the lintel of his door.

When last I saw his works they were gathered together in a special exhibition at Pulchri. It seemed almost impossible to realize that the hand that had fashioned them was cold and stiff in death. Involuntarily I watched the door, hoping to see my friend Jan enter, with his smiling countenance and agreeable appearance. All art lovers know his pictures though they may not, like myself, have had the happiness and privilege of being personally acquainted with the painter. His art is the sound representation of the Dutch School, at the end of the 19th century. It is not too much to add that this opinion is not only held by the present generation but will be held ever after by posterity.

P. A. H. Jr.

GERKE HENKES

BY

LOUIS DE HAES.

In the consistory, from a painting.

GERKE HENKES.

To my mind there is nothing more hateful and irritating than to be badly treated and ill-used when not in a position to defend ones self and unable to make any protest.

Such a thing happened to me once in my life, in my very early life, before

I could even speak. As I remember the circumstance so well the injury must have been very great and must have made a deep impression upon me at the time.

Ever since that memorable day I have been sighing for the moment of revenge, and at last it has come. As the proverb says: "All things come to those who wait."

Let me hasten to explain: Mr. Gerke Henkes, the hero of this article, was and is a great friend of my parents, and of course as such was expected to admire the new and latest sprig of the family, the darling Benjamin (that's me).

Now, at my present age, I appreciate and understand this politeness in admiring the ugly red-faced "sprig", for I too am occasionally called upon to do the same and in so doing I almost lose my thirst for revenge.

I see the man Henkes now (just as I saw him in those distant days); I can feel my lower lip sinking and the clouds gathering on my small visage, my eye-brows contracting, and I can hear the sharp angry cry that proceeded from my baby lungs. Then again I see Mamma rushing to the rescue and I can hear her say: "He never cries, he is such a good child." (I have heard those same words since from dozens of equally fond foolish mothers). Then once more I see Mr. Henkes (Mr. in those days, now simply Henkes) take me up in his arms and in my ear I hear the echo of these false words: "What a dear little fellow"! As my screams continued and my angry little temper was up, the kind-hearted visitor took me into his arms and proceeded to dance me up and down till my brains (if I had any) were well scattered and churned up like butter. Then he rushed me off into the garden, up and down we went, *au grand galop*, which of course silenced my screams, for there was no breath left in my poor little body. I kicked, but of no avail; I swore, (inwardly, please to understand) and I tried, though I fear unsuccessfully, to look daggers. I hated the man, this false creature, who called me "a dear little fellow," when instinct told me he didn't mean a word of it, and I made up my mind, then and there, that I would revenge myself some day. And the hour has come, actually come! "Revenge is sweet," says somebody, I cannot remember at this moment which philosopher, but I feel the wisdom of his words.

This episode in the life of your humble servant was enacted in the year of our Lord 1864. Little did that tyrant think that some day he would fall into the hands of that horrid screaming, kicking child; but such is really the case.

I mean to tip him unceremoniously out of *his* cradle, shake up *his* brains and hold *him* up to the world to be gazed at from every point of view. Let *him* protest as much as he likes, let *him* kick and try to scream, for I will take good care that he cannot, for *his* lungs shall also be emptied of the necessary air, *he too* will be forced to silence. But I will be fair and say at the end that he is "a good little fellow" (he is small and I am now big). Whether I really mean this is another matter altogether.

When the last proof sheet comes in to me for correction I will show him what I have said, when protestation will be too late and kicking of no avail.

* * *

Gerke Henkes is a small man, with a pleasing appearance, but with rather a nervous manner, quite the opposite to his work in which not an atom of unrest or nervousness can be detected.

The Knitting School. From a picture in the possession of Mr. H. W. Mesdag.

He is not unlike Gabriël in many ways, not only as regards personality and a nervous manner, but also as regards his ideas on the subject of Art.

He is a little hasty sometimes, but never ill-tempered (unless perhaps on that memorable morning when he nearly finished me off). By hasty I mean that when relating something of interest, on the subject of art, and should he not find a suitable expression to convey his ideas, he will clench his fist and shake it in the air, or stamp upon the ground in order to give force to his words.

He can defend his own work with warmth if he is talking to someone who

does not quite understand his interpretation of art and who does not see the same thing through the same glasses.

It is his great desire to paint everything and every subject as true to nature as possible. This exactness has sometimes spoilt his canvases as regards colour. He knows this himself, yet he would not for worlds brighten the tints and thus disturb the truthfulness.

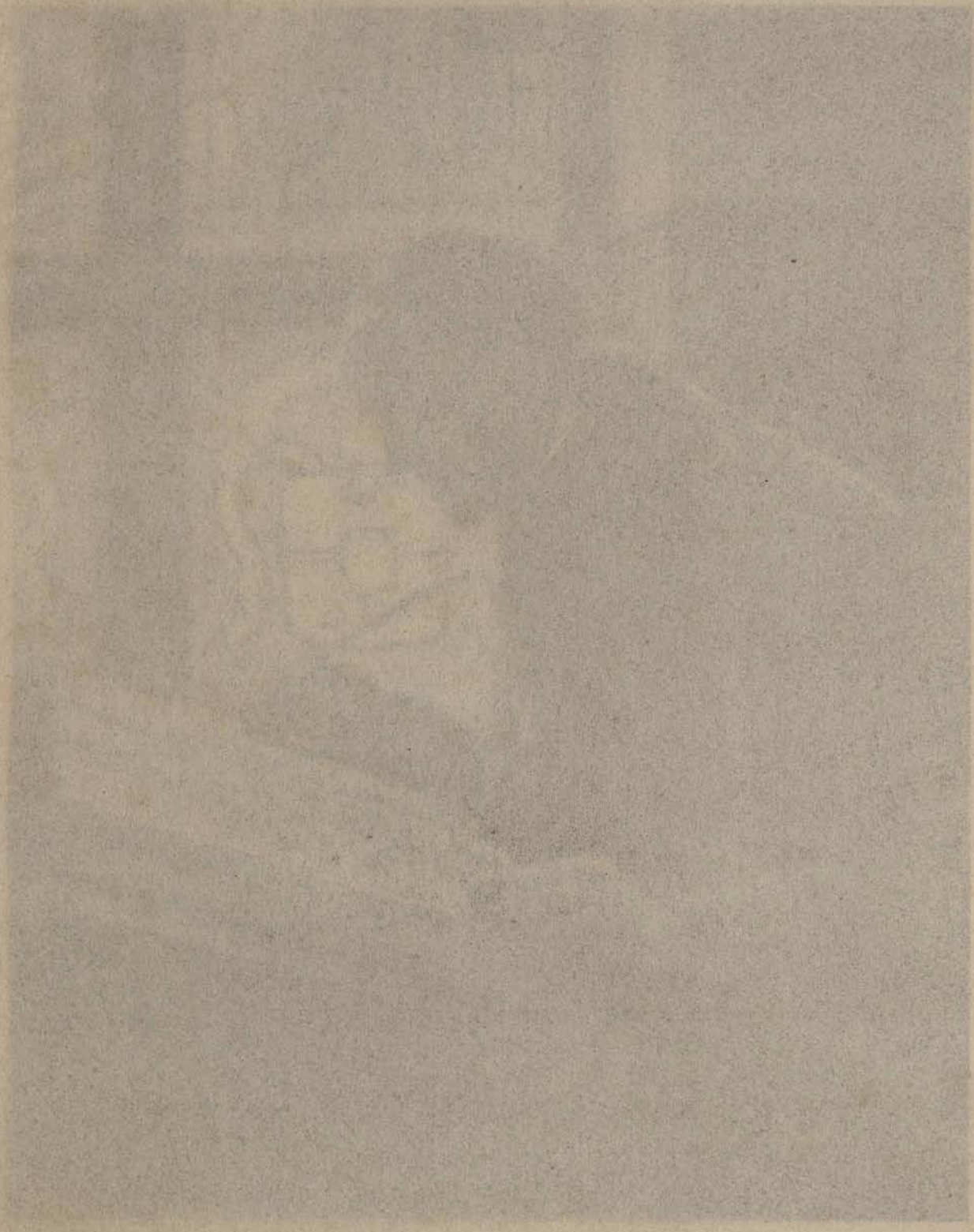
"An artist seeks but seldom finds," says Henkes, meaning that he never finds exactly what he seeks, although the public may be satisfied he is not.

Sporting adventures. From a painting.

The moment an artist is satisfied, maintains Henkes, that moment he ceases to be an artist.

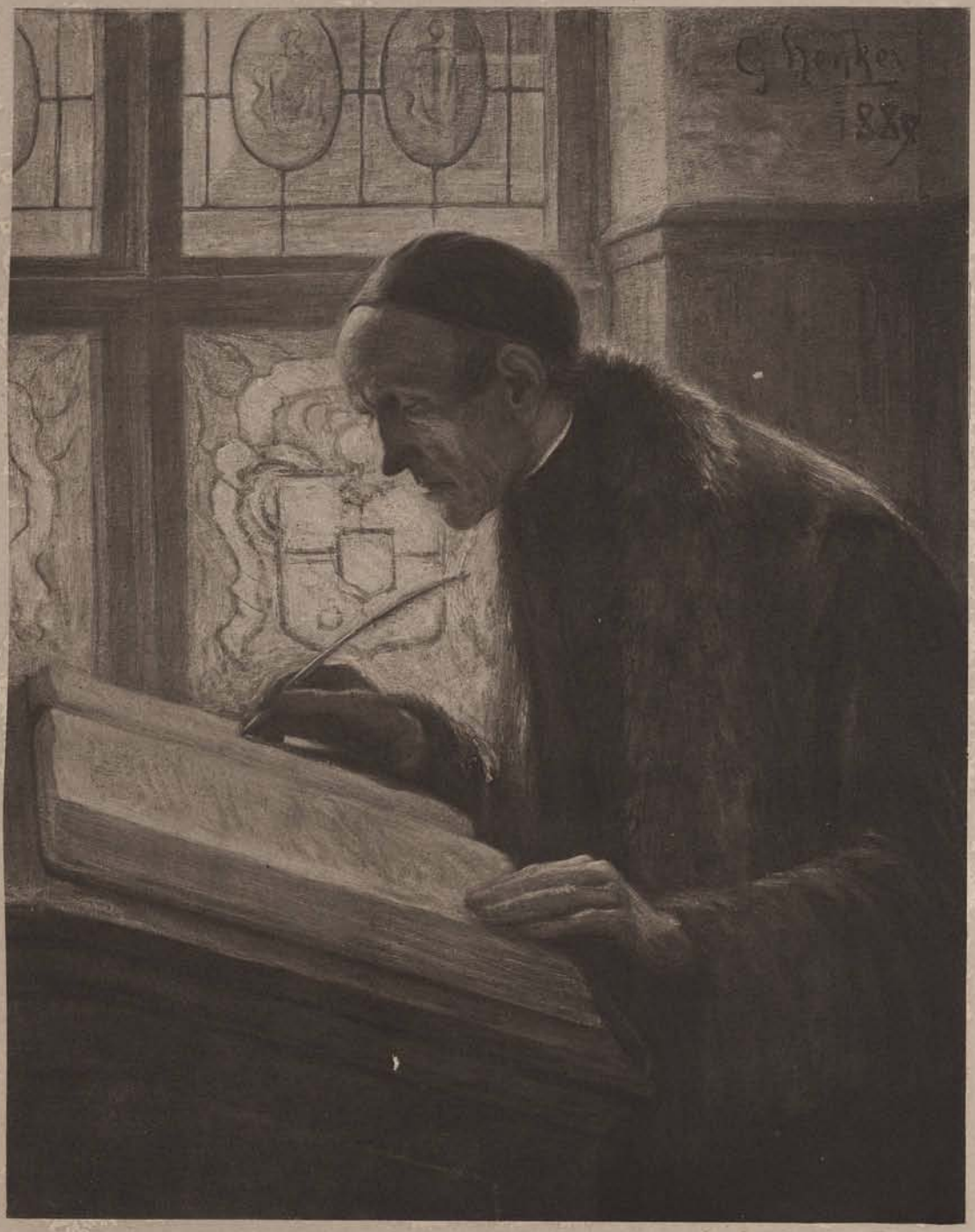
This can be explained in various ways: Some seek subject, some colour, others outline and correct drawing Some neglect the one in seeking for the other, some try to excel in all and therefore fail in most, yet, of course, there are some who are successful in all the branches of perfect art.

Henkes thinks out his subject with precision and care. What he has in his mind's eye he tries to carry out. Should he at first not succeed he puts the



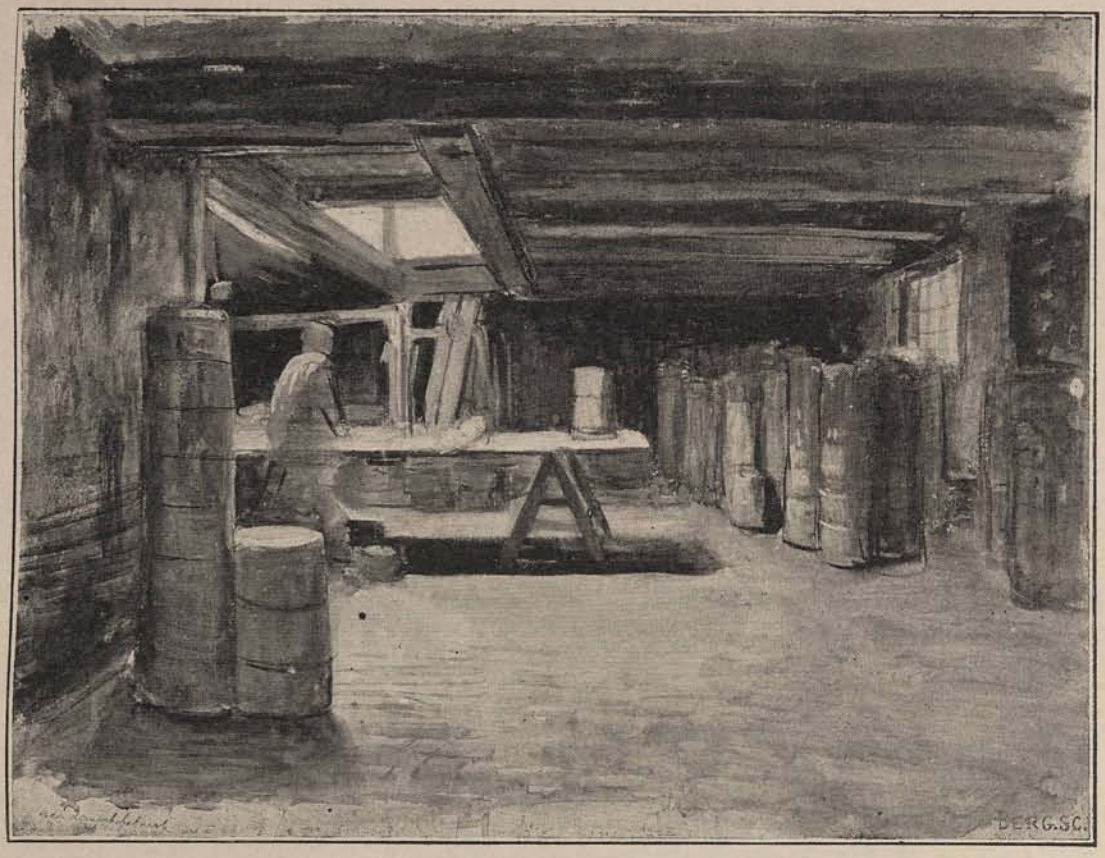
"The philosopher"

FROM A PAINTING



thing to one side for a time, perhaps weeks, perhaps months, then he brings it to light again, and with his usual obstinate determination sets again to work till the picture is satisfactorily accomplished.

Some artists, when they find that they cannot succeed with the exact subject they have undertaken, either give it up or make some small concessions, and by clipping and pruning they produce a picture, although not what they had originally intended. This Henkes calls "fabricating pictures". *He* works till he



In the Potteries. From a study in water-colour.

has succeeded, and if not quite satisfied must put up with being partially so. *Quite* satisfied he never is.

* * *

You may say what you like about the works of Henkes but they undoubtedly possess a strong personality and a peculiar *cachet* of their own, which is not to be gainsaid.

His work can be recognized amongst a hundred and shows uninterrupted hard study and a strong desire to excel in one particular *genre*.

He is the exponent of old men and women of the lower and middle classes,

old dames who gossip over the tea cups and tell of their neighbours' shortcomings, but never of their own.

"You don't mean to say so! And you saw it yourself?"

"Yes, with my own eyes, else I wouldn't have believed it."

"What is the world coming to, I wonder?"

"Yes indeed! Well! well! well! And God permits such things! How can a woman do such a thing; she's not very young either. Dear, dear! Have another cup of tea?"

"Yes, thank you, and a little more sugar, if I may make so bold. Dear! dear! and it has come to pass so suddenly. Who would have thought it?"

"Yes indeed, who would have thought it! It was only yesterday that I spoke to his wife's sister and *she* said nothing, but she *did* say... You won't repeat it, will you?"

"Now do you think I would do such a thing! If I was to repeat everything that people tell me... well, you simply wouldn't believe me. I will, however, tell you one thing and that is... Is your tea to your liking; shall I make it a little stronger?"

"Oh no, thank you! It is delicious! I always say that I never get a better cup of tea anywhere than I do at your house. It is really most excellent. I hate gossip and saying things behind people's back. There are some people who are always gossiping and telling tales out of school. What do your neighbours say about it? They must know something. I will stop in and see Mrs.... and hear what she has to tell. Well, good-bye, I really must be going. I will let you know if I hear anything about... and... good-bye!"

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Henkes spent his youth in Delfshaven (a small quaint old-fashioned town near Rotterdam) where his father was an important and well-known member of the small community: a consistorian, a member of the municipality and a leader in Church matters. It was only natural that he should come into contact with all sorts and conditions of men, and young Henkes had the chance of observing just those sort of individuals who afterwards figured so largely in his pictures.

If we look at his beautiful canvas entitled: "In the consistory" (page 205) we get a good idea of the style of elderly men he so cleverly portrays. The chairman, a well-to-do old gentleman, in high white choker and with a conscious look of importance, sits quietly smoking his long pipe. Around this self-important personage are grouped less important members of the church, good simple-minded old men, in long-tailed coats and with the orthodox green umbrella, one of which we catch a sight of in the back ground; little dried-up old things, who, owing to their long married lives, have become accustomed to constraint and submission, and who after so many years of petticoat government, in their

A back street. From a painting.

own homes, naturally, and as a matter of course, yield to their chairman. Not however, to be entirely deprived of some little consolation they cherish their long pipes, but which at this moment they are not indulging in, out of respect to their superior who himself is comfortably leaning back in his chair enjoying his smoke as a privilege of superiority.

* * *

Although the public seldom or ever see anything but the one style of picture by Henkes, our artist has certainly painted many other kinds. You can become better acquainted with the *genre* of an artist by visiting his studio than by only occasionally seeing a picture at exhibitions. Amongst his pictures I have seen very clever street views, considered by many the most difficult of all subjects to make picturesque, (a few reproductions will be found in these pages) and although, as a rule, there are few or no figures visible, yet the houses seem to suit the characters he generally depicts, as though they might be living under those very roofs. He never gives us new or modern streets, but always quiet out-of-the-way corners, where change and fashion are an unknown quantity.

A Street in Maassluis. From an oil painting.

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In speaking of the variety in the works of Henkes we must not forget to mention his clever interiors of workshops and manufacturies.

I know one dear little picture, hanging in his studio, in which he was particularly successful as regards colour. I regret to say that it has not been reproduced in these pages. To my idea it is one of the cleverest little things our artist ever painted, especially from a colour point of view; it is positively

bathed in a soft golden tint. The picture represents a candle manufactory at the moment when the workmen are having their dinner. Henkes, with his usual love for the aged, has introduced two very old men, small and bent, who are quietly eating their bread and cheese up in one corner; men grown old and grey in the service of the firm, whose lives have become almost mechanical from long habit. The sun is shining into the place lighting up the chief figures in the foreground; a large tub casts a shade over a group of men in the middle distance, while a small figure, in the background, is again brilliantly illuminated, bringing it out with marvellous distinctness.

Also clever and interesting are his interiors of potteries and ship-building yards. The complication of material, the confused mass of timber and tools seem fascinating to the artist. Happy too is he in his rendering of old-fashioned prim looking rooms, furnished with stiff straight-legged furniture, and although there are so many corners, angles, and sharp edges in those rooms we do not "bark our shins," so to speak. Every line, however straight and rigid, seems as it should be, and we know that we are looking at a facsimile of the apartment which attracted the eye of our artist.

It is just with these straight old-fashioned lines, that Henkes has worried himself for so many years (I believe he has a table and a couple of chairs in his stomach and will not be satisfied till he has digested them). Again and again he goes back to the same subject, always, however, holding on to his original idea, maintaining that most things are suitable models for artists, provided they are conscientiously and successfully reproduced.

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As a public character the hero of my tale will forgive me if I touch upon his private life, but the reader must pardon me if I go wrong with dates. I have always disliked dates (unless the edible kind) since my school days when they were dinned into me by force.

To begin with I cannot remember the date of Gerke Henkes' birth, but you can easily guess it from the portrait on the title page, where we see our artist in company with one of his favourite models, a very safe old lady to be closetted with. This picture is called "*Le peintre et son modèle*," a very characteristic portrait, not only a good likeness of the artist, but an equally good one of his highly respectable model.

It is Henkes and his work.

The cradle of our artist was rocked in the quaint old town of Delfshaven. It was here that he was reared, where he lived and moved and has his being and where he became, in time, the joy of his doting parents. All went well till suddenly a cloud appeared on the brow of his kind-hearted father. And what was the cause? Why the cause was that Gerke showed a desire to be an artist! What a singular idea! Where could the lad have picked up such a

strange, almost unholy desire? It meant of course his ultimate ruin, his downfall, and there was trouble in the House of Henkes!

Old Henkes was a liberal man upon most subjects, but that his son should wish anything quite so impossible was very unsettling. *And what was an artist?* To draw for amusement was one thing, but to expect to earn one's living by such a nonsensical uncertainty was another... "No, no, my boy, don't talk such nonsense, that will never do!" and in order to crush such foolish ideas completely he placed him with a notary. And so the young enthusiast, the lover of Art, became a notary's clerk!

At first he hated it: opening doors, carrying messages and notes, doing all sorts

Confidences. From a sketch in oils.

of menial work, when suddenly the picture presented itself to him from another point of view; he saw that the very figures and characters he loved to draw were the very ones that were constantly visiting his master's office and which he was called upon to usher in or usher out, in fact, he had fallen into a bed of clover.

This discovery was indeed a windfall; he now began to sketch on the sly. The anti-chamber of the principal notary's office, in the small town, was the exact spot for seeing quaint odd characters: old women waiting to consult the notary upon, to them, important matters; old men looking as if belonging to a different world and wanting the law's advice upon some prehistoric question.

Sometimes a whole row of these "ladies and gentlemen" would be sitting on the bench, waiting their turn.

I think we may safely assert that the notary's entire *clientele* was jotted down upon scraps of paper.

At last the notary himself got wind of it, and as such proceedings were

A Drawing in sepia. Study.

undignified and unseemly, the lad was withdrawn and to his own amazement was placed with the artist Spoel in Rotterdam.

Later he was sent to the Academy in Antwerp, then to Germany, and last, but not least, to Paris. Fruitlessly we seek for something romantic or amusing to record in regard to his sojourn in the gayest city in the world. But Henkes was too much taken up with his work to be frivolous and unkindly forgot his future biographer. This was really too bad of him.

Every public character should be obliged and made to do something eccentric, something that an ordinary mortal holds up his hands at in astonishment, in order to give his biographer a chance of being amusing.

As it happens my friend Henkes forgot this duty and as truth is required above all things, we must simply skip over this period of his life as we find nothing to relate, and meet our artist once more at the Hague, on the quiet Laan of Meerdervoort, where he took up his abode.

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Henkes' own words at that time were: "I know nothing, absolutely nothing." He confessed to be able to draw and to have gained a certain deftness with his brush, but to make a *regular picture* such a thing was impossible. These, I say, are his own words, not mine. But I really do not think that they could have been true, or else the difficulty was soon overcome, for shortly after he settled at the Hague he sent a picture to the Paris Exhibition, which gained for him at once a certain amount of success. Soon after that another canvas was sent to Brussels to be exhibited. This picture was entitled: "The Knitting School." It was well hung and favourably criticized in the Belgian art papers, as well as in some French ones, which, however, is not saying much. But when the picture was bought for the celebrated Mesdag collection at the Hague, that was saying much. This was undoubtedly the beginning of his fame and brought him first into notice.

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Most people would call the Laan of Meerdervoort a quiet spot, especially in the days whereof I am now speaking, but our friend Henkes thought it too noisy.

Altogether life in a big town was not to his taste, it was too busy and he was too often interrupted in his work by visitors, and more especially by his colleagues. He wanted to work all day undisturbed and then spend his evenings quietly in his own home circle. In fact solitude was his one idea and that could not be obtained in a city like the Hague.

He seemed sometimes almost rude to his visitors from the desire to be left alone, yet rudeness was far from his intention, nor indeed could the word ever be applied to him.

To live at the Hague and to confess at the end of the summer that you had not once been to the *Kurhaus* at Scheveningen, was almost like confessing to be a lunatic, or worse still, a fool; and not to be a member of "The Tent" was equal to acknowledging oneself not a fit and proper member of society.

Such, however, was, I believe, the case with Henkes; but I must not tell tales out of school.

Working in the Potteries. From a study in water-colour.

Then again never to be seen at operas, or theatres, or at evening concerts, was taken as a sign of approaching insanity, but Henkes just saved his reputation by occasionally appearing at some evening function. "As long as I can have my days to myself" was the burden of his song.

He hated being disturbed in his studio by friends or colleagues continually dropping in. It was upsetting to him. I heard a good story once about a visit that Mauve paid him:

"Dear me, Henkes, that's a good thing you are doing."

"You like it? That's all right."

"Yes, capital, excellent, but . . . but . . . I should prefer to see a little more tone brought in, a little deeper shade here and that figure in the foregrond a little to the . . . I am not offending you, am I?"

"But, my dear Mauve, then . . . ."

"Don't interrupt me, let me have my say. It wants here undoubtedly a little more colour and there up in this corner I would . . . ."

Henkes irritated: "Then it would no longer be a Henkes but a Mauve!"

"Yes, and then it would be trash!" was the curt reply. "Good afternoon, Henkes." And Mauve was gone.

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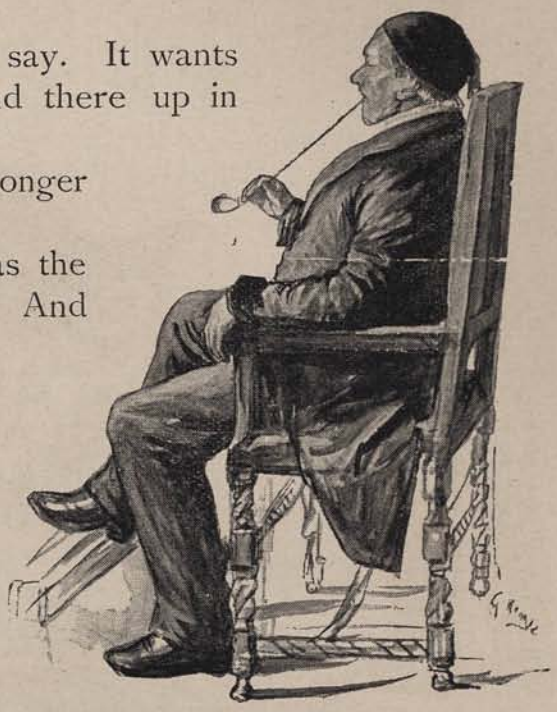
A similar visit from Israëls is also related; *he* also suggested some alteration. The picture in question was a street view:

"You should put a figure into it," hinted Israëls politely, "it would greatly improve the thing."



A Deacon. From a study in oils.

"That's just what I don't want to do; I like the calmness and repose. I don't want any figures brought into it, it suits my ideas better without."

"That's all very well, my dear fellow, but you must think of your public. Now to my mind a . . . ."

"The thing is as I have thought it out myself, and as I want to have it. It suits me and that's enough."

"There's no reasoning with you, Henkes; you'll never give in, I know."

And this is Henkes' character all over. He never gives in, taking the phrase in every sense. He sticks to what *he* thinks is right and seeks to gain *his* ideal and *his* conception of completeness and perfection.

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We have wandered from our subject. Such things *do* happen sometimes and more especially amongst artists.

To go back to Henkes. He did not like living at the Hague so he weighed anchor and cast it out again at Voorburg, where he is still living, but where I think he has not found all that he expected.

Complete repose is almost impossible to find anywhere, in the present day, but in comparative peace he now works, in the large house—which he has arranged so suitably and according to his own taste—in the small country town.

His studio is reached by an oak staircase, lighted up by the rays of the sun shining through stained glass windows. Here and there are old settees and embroidered cushions and quaint old-fashioned pieces of furniture, making the place look, for all the world, like the interior of a church.

Going to Church. From a study in oils.

The studio itself is large and simply furnished, but at the same time very artistically, chiefly with the spoils of his travels. In one corner hangs a fine gobelin and all around runs an old oak wainscotting with wide ledge, upon which stand some fine specimens of china and many small studies.

Behind a heavy curtain, looking rather mysterious, you will find a conglomeration of rubbish: not beautiful but necessary.

By the windows and in the full light of day you see an antique table covered with green baize, very much the worse for wear; on this table are two articles which appear in Henkes' pictures: an hour-glass and a tin inkstand. He calls them his "still life."

In the brightest light sits Henkes himself, quite as part and parcel of the place and perfectly suited to his surroundings.

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Henkes' style is marked by undoubted originality; his keenness of perception, no less than his technical power is strikingly exemplified in his finest works. The manner in which he casts the light upon his old tea-drinking dames, illumining the spotlessness of their white caps and aprons, is truly characteristic of the artist, casting their more sombre garments into the shade, not allowing the prying public to see the thread-bare appearance of the gowns that have done such good and faithful service and clothed, for perhaps years, their bodies of solid build, not figures that would appeal to Wörth or his descendants. These models of Henkes are women who have done much hard work in their lives and helped to increase the population of the world, and are now spending their last years in gossiping about the younger generation and in drinking tea all day long.

An ably treated little drawing by Henkes called: "An old Sempstress"

In the ship-building Yard. From a water-colour.

was exhibited at the Goupil Gallery in London last year. It was much admired and favourably criticized. The subject was an aged dame industriously sewing in her trimly kept room.

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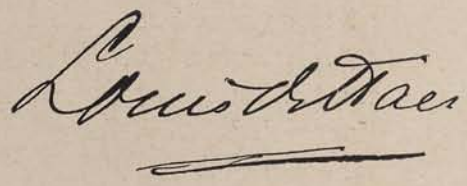
After you have read this article you will agree with me that the life of Henkes has been quiet and uneventful. I regret to say that he has not given me the satisfaction of racing him up and down, and shaking the life out of his body as I originally intended to do. I must, however, own that while writing these lines my revenge has cooled off and the renewed acquaintance with the tormentor of my infancy, has improved my ideas of him.

When he spoke the untruthful words to my mother; "He is such a dear little fellow," he did not think that this same "dear little fellow" would some day say, though *with truth*, the same words when speaking of him.



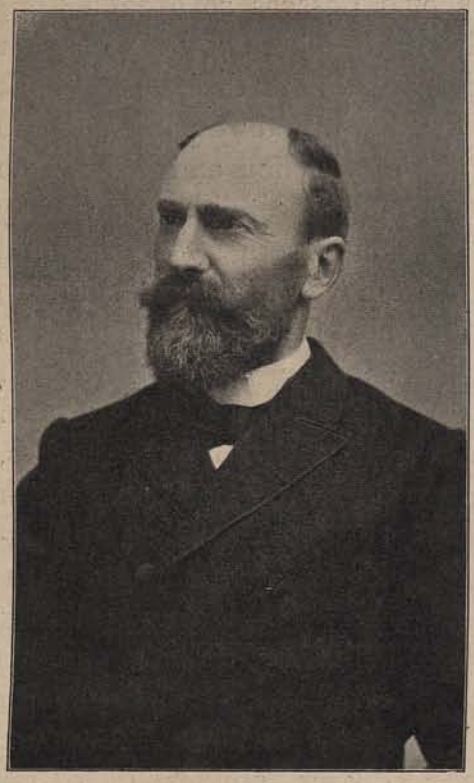
W. C. NAKKEN

BY

P. A. HAAXMAN JR.

Taking out the horses on market day at Trouville, from a painting belonging to the Queen Regent.

W. C. NAKKEN.



Our well-known artist Gabriël once told me in his amusing and artistic way, that people are quite wrong when they say that every landscape painter sees the green shades of the meadows through different coloured glasses.

They will argue thus: "Look at the pale green of Van Borslen how different to the green of Stortenbeker, of Roelofs and of Bakhuyzen."

Very well, but notice please how the shades of green vary in every province of Holland. Not only are the tints of colour different but the cattle have a different formation and even the people are different, not only outwardly in appearance and costume but inwardly in mind and character. It would seem as if the land, with man and beast, went hand in hand "in the unity of the spirit and in the bond of peace."

This diversity is so great and so remarkable that when I was living in Brussels, with Roelofs, and when the latter returned from his painting and sketching tours through Holland I could tell the spots where he had been, from the tints and shades of green and from the general look of his cattle and figures, although those very neighbourhoods were unknown to me.

It is just this great variety of aspect that makes the works of some artists—those who frequent different neighbourhoods—so versatile, whereas those who stick to one part of the country become perhaps a little monotonous in their sameness of tones.

When I was asked to write this short account of William Carel Nakken and his work the above words by Gabriël came into my mind. (Talking about Gabriël who could imagine that he had already celebrated his 70th birthday. One would not think so either judging by his appearance or by the fine pictures which still flow uninterruptedly from his studio.)

In the works of our friend Nakken there is certainly something peculiarly and especially his own. I call him "our friend" as who, amongst artists, is more popular than Nakken, unless perhaps it be Eerelman. Nakken has a

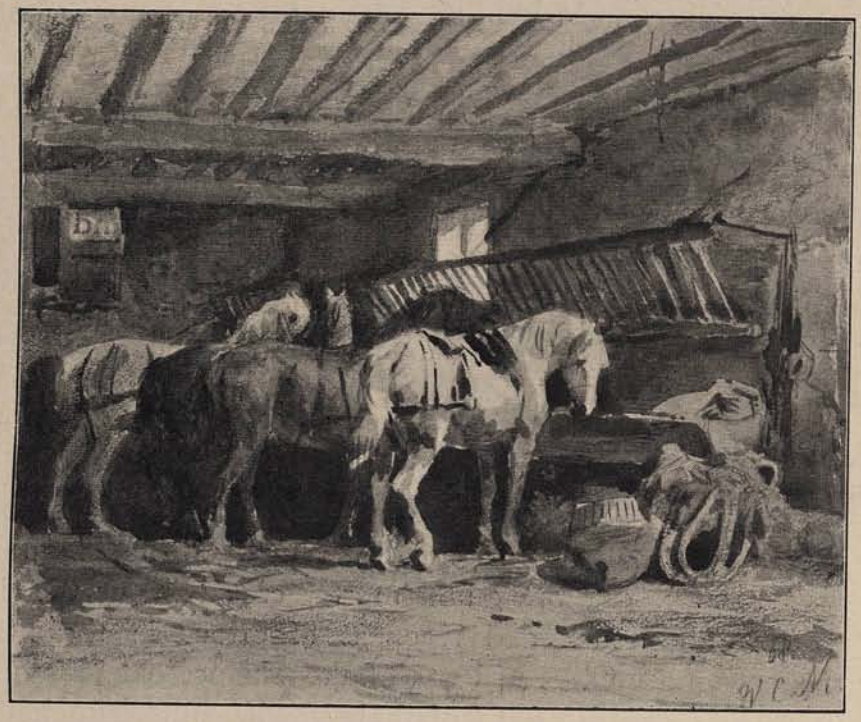
wonderful knack of varying the same subject, sailing round the same spot in different winds and weathers. You won't catch Nakken painting the exact same subject over and over again, however much he may like it. But is it surprising, that a man who has visited Normandy fifteen times—not for pleasure, but for "business", but "business" is pleasure to Nakken, as it should be to every rightminded man—and who has ransacked every corner of his own country, is it surprising I say that such a man should possess so great a store of subject. Indeed Nakken ought to be blessed with at least two lives wherein to accomplish all the work he has had in hand Should he desire to exhibit all his works, or even only expose them to view, he would require a studio with a wall space equal to that of the building of Science and Art at the Hague. At present he has many of these pretty panels carefully stored away in boxes made for the purpose, and all his water-colours, sepias, sketches and drawings are in portfolios. Some of them date from very far back and are his first efforts on the slippery road of Art. In the early works of Nakken we see but few horses, chiefly landscapes with cattle. This style he affected during the years 1851 and '55. He may thank his early training and his careful study of nature for many things. His painstaking studies have not been time wasted. He gained his first reputation by depicting the heavy powerful Normandy and Limburg horses—Limburg has often been called the Normandy of Holland—these fine animals have very glossy coats and strong frames and yet are withal so gentle. Even if you take them out of the pictures you still retain a pleasing landscape. This is owing to Nakken's early study of landscape painting. His very earliest drawings seem to have been old ruins and monastic gateways, also old historical buildings, most of which are now "no more." These drawings, if published in book form, would be an interesting memento of old Holland and they would form an illustrated history of our country, with its picturesque and quaint architecture. The visitor to the Scientific Architectural Exhibition in the *Pulchri Studio* a few years ago— arranged by the Government architect C. H. Peters—will certainly remember the charming drawings by Nakken which hung alongside of the fascinating sketches of churches by Bosboom and the works of de Haas Hemken, Klinkenberg and J, G. Smits, giving a more cheerful aspect to the rather serious background of scientific architecture.

Old barn in the neighbourhood of Antwerp. From a drawing.

When a boy of only eighteen Nakken already commenced painting in water-colours. With the usual painstaking and exactitude of beginners he was most careful to study and reproduce every blade of grass, every bit of old splintered wood or even a rusty nail.

Amongst these there is a marvellous drawing of the river near Zwammerdam with a line of fish cauf (boxes with holes for containing the fish alive). The colouring is splendid, although it is a work of his youth, and I believe it was perfectly original and completely unaided, but it showed the early taste he evinced and the naïve desire to copy nature and be "truthful" and a diligent striving after careful work.

At sixteen Nakken, and his friends Julius Bakhuyzen and S. van Witsen,



A stable near Paris, from a study in sepia.

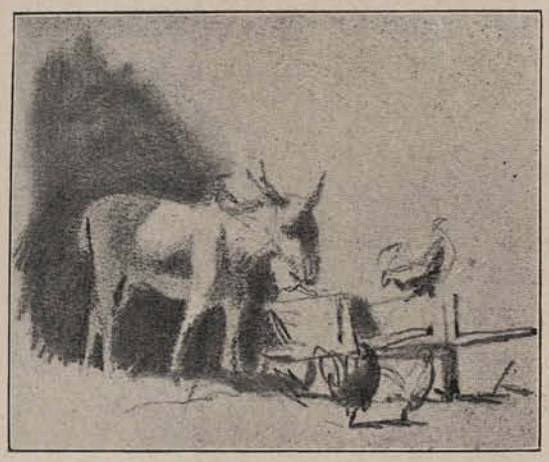
took a tender leave of their school benches, the "spare the rod and spoil the child" period of a boy's life. They all three started drawing lessons with A. F. Dona, a well-known drawing-master of the Hague. The desire to draw direct from nature was early developed in our friend Nakken.

In looking through those portfolios I came across some charming views of Brederode and of Eik-en-Duinen; of the castle of Doornenburg (in the Betuwe) and of Ockenburg. Also a charming reproduction of the old gate at Nymegen, (Wiemelpoort) and of the old convent at Utrecht; a very ancient house at Ryswyk and quite a series of pictures of what was left of the old House ter Haer, which has since given place to the building erected by Dr. Cuypers, the new castle of Haarsuylen: all venerable remains of an honourable past in the

national architecture of Holland, and a brilliant evidence of the skill of the painter W. C. Nakken.

The character and personality of Nakken have helped him, in a great measure, to "find his way" so to speak, and his determination has brought him success. He is not one to "show off" and he hates the very word *réclame*, such things are not in his nature. He has practised a different art, the art of work and study. Yet with all his hard work he always finds time to devote to his dearly loved *Pulchri Studio* which counts him amongst her most cherished members.

In his studio you will find more works by other artists than by himself. Of his friend Sadée—with whom he made his first trip to Antwerp and Brussels in 1857—you will see a charming picture of the sea shore, beautifully painted and with a charming soft silvery tint over the whole; opposite to this picture by Sadée, there are horses by Verschuur Sr. and Jr.; a cleverly brushed in head by S. van Witsen; a pleasing landscape by Van de Sande Bakhuyzen; an artistically arranged "still-life" by Miss Merling; studies by Koelman and De Vogel, and a charming representation of the beach at Trouville by his friend, the French painter, Eugene Boudin, and so on. Yet here and there we see clever works by the hand of Nakken himself. Near the old-fashioned chimney-piece hang some studies—at least thirty years old—of the neighbourhood of the Hague in its picturesque *ci-devant* beauty, ere brick and mortar crowded out the fine old trees and green fields. The touch and ripeness of colour in these sketches are beautiful in the extreme. Old residents of the Hague, old in more sense than one, if they wish to recall the days of their youth, cannot do better than pay a visit to Nakken's studio and there refresh their memories with the beauties of their native town, before it fell, alas, into the hands of the builder.



From a pencil sketch.

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It will perhaps interest my readers to hear something about the life of Nakken first before discussing his pictures; becoming, as it were, acquainted with the man before judging his work.

Nakken was born on the 9th of April, 1835, at the Hague. He was one of the few happy exceptions amongst artists, in as much that he had artistically inclined parents, who encouraged him in his taste for art. As a general rule young painters and enthusiasts have very prosaical fathers and mothers and have great difficulty in making them understand their ideas, in fact in making

them understand themselves. Nakken took advantage of this encouragement, no spokes were put in his wheels. He gained his first laurels, in the shape of medals, at the Drawing Academy at the Hague, where he underwent a serious course of study. In 1858 he won the highest mark of distinction he could for anatomy, that is to say, for a drawing from the nude.

No wonder therefore that Nakken's figures are so perfectly formed, and add so immeasurably to the beauties of his landscapes however small he may introduce them. In the early days of Nakken's career there was then no idea of exhibiting at Exhibitions, that rage had not yet commenced. The course of academical study was varied by trips into the country. Out-of-door painting

An old gateway at Ryswyk (South Holland). From a study in sepia.

was in its infancy. The Young Dutch painters, of those days, were quite as good *pleinairists* as those belonging to the school of that name, and which was trying to make a noisy reputation and to usurp the monopoly of novelty and renown.

Nakken began out-of-door painting as early as 1860 when he made sketching trips with his friend Ph. Sadée, who already then played first fiddle amongst the professors of art.

Round and about Antwerp Nakken collected innumerable studies and matter for his brush. In 1861 he visited the Ardennes in company with the painters J. B. Tom, De Bloeme and Van Borselen. By the recommendation of the marine painter W. A. van Deventer, who had painted much at Etretat, Nakken

made a sketching tour in Normandy in 1867. His journey thither was not without adventure and certainly was not of the swiftest. He choose to go by sea to Havre from Rotterdam, a favourite mode of going to the North of France for lovers of the sea. He started in midsummer when one might reasonably expect fine weather, but the ship was overtaken by a terrific storm and they were obliged to put in at Goerêe, where they laid so long that provisions gave out. A boat was sent ashore, manned by the pick of the crew, to get necessaries. Goerêe was but a very small village in those days and catering was not so easily accomplished. However "all's well that ends well." Nakken arrived at last at the port of Havre, eager to start on his painting tour. But he had not been idle during the long sea voyage for he had made successful portraits of the captain, the steward and of some of the sailors, (we presume he was not troubled by that terrible evil *mal-de-mer*). These portraits still ornament the cabins of that line of steamers between Rotterdam and Havre.

An old stable. From a study.

In the course of time Nakken became as familiar with the scenery of Normandy as he was with that of his native land. He made many friends amongst the hospitable and cordial inhabitants of the Departments of Calvados, Seine Inférieure and Eure. The pains he took to study and become acquainted with the people, their ways and costumes are told by his pictures and that they were appreciated by the public is furthermore proved by the greedy way they were bought whenever exhibited for sale.

Some very clever canvases, by our artist, hang in his own studio, and show how seriously and industriously he worked in Normandy. There you will see a picture of a busy market day at Chartres. The market people in their picturesque costumes, the heat of a July day almost felt by the spectator, and the noise of many voices and the din of the usual market bustle, almost heard. It is beautiful in colouring as well as perfect in technique.

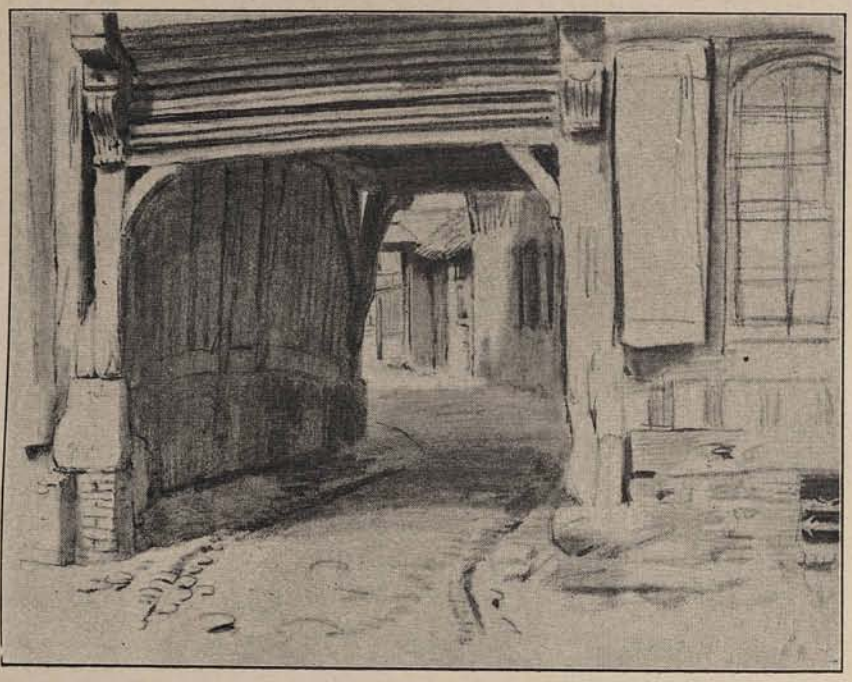
A Normandy market cart, from a pencil sketch.

The Normandy horse became, in time, a very favourite subject with Nakken;

these strong animals, with their shining coats and powerful frames are now nearly always to be found in Nakken's landscapes, which are in themselves pictures equal to any of the first quality of landscape painters, whether Dutch or French.

Sometimes we are shown the stables where these fine creatures get their night's rest, often only rough sheds or old barns. Hanging about are portions of their harness, bright with many colours. Sometimes we see these stables empty, sometimes the stalls are occupied; occasionally only by our long-eared friend, eating the proverbial thistle, but looking happy and contented all the same and quite unconscious of the picturesqueness of himself and his trappings.

Many other interesting pictures and sketches I have seen in his studio: the *près-salés* of Harfleur; the wonderful "Horse-fair" at St. Gilles, near Pont



Honfleur. Drawing in chalks.

Audemer, which although called "Horse-fair" is really a general market for everything, at certain times of the year. Here you can be clothed from head to foot; here you can have your joint roasted and your bread baked, and every man can have his chin shaved. All these are pictures from his early days. Of his later works I saw many studies and drawings which afterwards developed into fine canvases. I looked through his portfolios with the greatest interest, I found innumerable sketches of horses and peasants, of market days in different Normandian towns and many clever peeps of the country in and around Beuzeville, Trouville, Tancarville, Harfleur, Bayeux, Ryes etc. Also hay carts piled up high with the sweet smelling stuff, or wood carts heavily laden or horses toiling through sandy roads with their necks well into their collars.

Nakken became so enamoured of the scenery in Normandy that, by the advice of César de Cock, the well-known landscape painter, he painted his pictures direct from Mother Nature and not any longer as he had been doing heretofore: making drawings and sketches of the original and then working them up into pictures within the walls of his home studio.

Walter-colour was also a favourite medium with our artist.

Amongst the many artists that Nakken became acquainted with, in this delectable land (Normandy), he took a particular fancy to Eug. Boudin, painter of harbours, canals and water-courses.

Nakken was by no means the only Dutch artist to be found wandering about in Normandy, it is a favourite part of the world for our landscape painters, not only on account of the beauty of the country but the variety of picturesque costumes, to be found amongst the peasants and country people, was very attractive; to say nothing of the breed of horses so fascinating to an animal painter.

The artist at work at Houthem (Limburg) from an instantaneous photograph.

Nakken had no end of amusing adventures in France. In his youth the Dutch artist was not so well known in Normandy and Brittany as he is now. Shortly after the war of 1870-71 he was taken for a German spy, when painting a farm house. It so happened that Nakken resembled a German officer who had once been seen in the neighbourhood, and who had to thank the swiftness of his horse's legs for getting away with a whole skin. The mayor of the small town had to come to the rescue and Nakken's passport did the rest. I think this episode happened at Beuzeville (Eure).

Nakken tells a good story of a French family who got into trouble in the same place merely by looking at the outside of a farm. They were arrested and taken to prison and with difficulty released. Such was the suspicion of the Frenchman.

But on the whole Nakken says that the Normandians are quiet civil people and with whom he could get on first rate.

On a certain occasion when he was at Honfleur and making a picture of a decrepit old horse and a ditto cart, an old farmer's wife came and talked to

"A team of Normandy horses"

FROM A WATER-COLOUR

in the possession of Mr. G. J. C. van Vollenhoven.

him. She gazed in astonishment at the picture, then shaking her head she said: "Dear, dear, to what pitch of poverty some people are brought; to think of gaining your living by such rubbish."

* * *

Not only has Normandy been the means of bringing Nakken into notice but Limburg has aided considerably. These neighbourhoods have a singular resemblance to each other. Nakken spent many summers roaming over these districts, no corner was neglected, every farmhouse was examined, and every

A team of horses resting under apple trees. (Normandy) in the possession of Mr. C. C. Dutilh in Rotterdam.
The original sketch for this picture (in smaller size) was exhibited at the Pulchri Studio in 1897. It was afterwards completed as a picture and bought by H. M. the Queen.

market place visited. In the environs of Kan, near Maastricht, he made wonderful discoveries, as far back as 1856. Of course he has visited Oosterbeek, that El Dorado for artists, neither did he neglect Amerongen and Renkum, Calmpthout and Aarle-Rikstel, and especially delighted was he with charming Dinant. But when he returned home and visited Ryswyk, he thought that after all it was not necessary to seek for a gold mine (of beauty) so far from home when it could be found at his door. I mention all this to show that Nakken was never idle and knew how to divide his time profitably. Wherever he went he found something and never left a place without culling some of its sweets.

Nakken is a prudent man in every respect, and especially careful in passing his judgment upon the works of others. He takes time to consider and weighs

well what he says, giving a good reason for every remark. I remember meeting him at a certain exhibition, in which hung many daubs, brand new things by brand new artists, queer subjects queerly handled, symbolical representations out of which the spectator could gather no meaning, nor could the painter, I should say, have explained the mystery himself. Well, as I have already said, I met Nakken and it appeared to me that he was making strange faces to himself, though apparently not meaning to do so. Now I thought to myself his judgment on these pictures will not be a mild one. But it was now my turn to pull a strange face when I heard my friend Nakken praise some of those daubs and point out their good qualities. In fact I was getting a lesson in *critique*. Yet however a few *buts* and *ifs* cropped up, in the course of conversation, and I gathered that although he was praising these *works of art*, it was from the kindness of his heart and not from his artistic intellect that these words proceeded. His last words were: "You cannot do anything without learning." We may certainly call this one of the golden rules of life, and one which Nakken himself has not neglected.

After having profited by good instructions and years of hard study, first at the various schools and academies and afterwards from Mother Nature herself, Nakken brought his art to the present state of perfection and we may add that many of his contemporaries did the same. When they were young it was the fashion to apply oneself and learn from others, now the younger generation expect to climb the tree of knowledge at a bound.

When Nakken exhibited his first picture, in 1855 at Zwol, he was only twenty years old. This picture: "The resting plough-team" was immediately bought. The following year he was equally successful when exhibiting in Rotterdam. The picture upon this occasion: "A stable at feeding time" was bought by Mr. S. B. Madry. I mention Mr. Madry's name as he was the first to discover the unusual talent in the young artist.

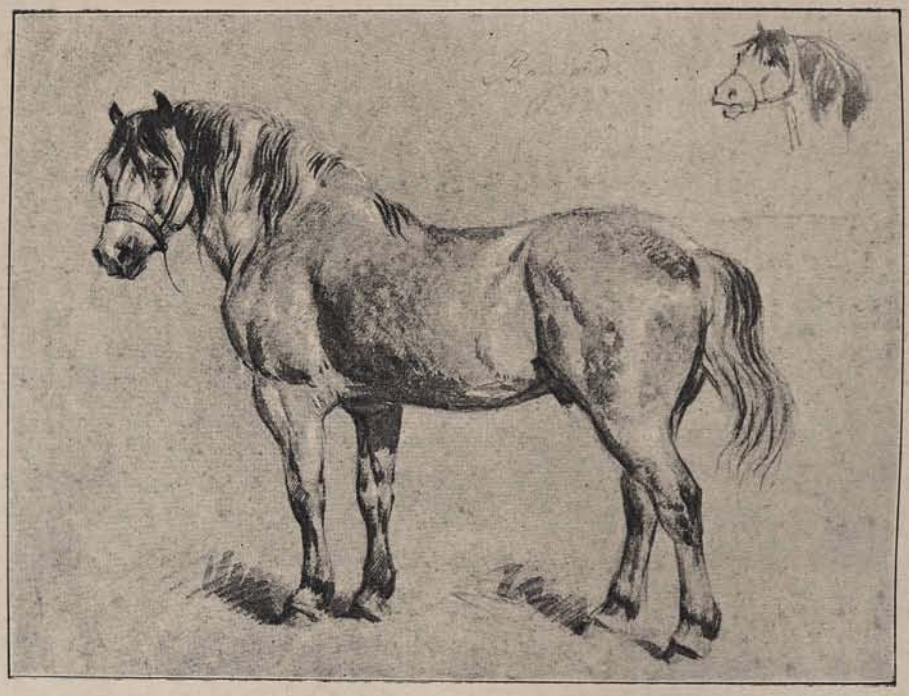
Nakken now commenced to paint the portraits of horses and dogs, which he has continued to do from time to time. Mr. Hugo Gevers has some fine examples of Nakken's talent in the portraits of his horses and dogs. For Mr. J. Visser he painted a retriever, with exceptional success, and the heirs of the Baron Constant Rebeque have to thank Nakken for inheriting some good paintings of thoroughbreds, belonging to the family.

The firm of Goupil has greatly aided in bringing Nakken to the fore. They always managed to sell his pictures for him at once. His first pictures date back to 1868 and '69. In '68 he exhibited in Rotterdam and Bremen, the subjects being from Dinant. His first Normandy views were exposed in Amsterdam and at the Hague. One of these was bought by the late Mr. Ravestein, another by the late Mr. Th. L. Gevers Deynoot. At the death of the latter this picture: horses dragging a heavily laden cart, passed into the possession of the Boymans' Museum in Rotterdam. "Teyler's" collection owned a very fine water-colour by Nakken which was bequeathed afterwards

Horses in the Forest of Saint Gatien, carrying wood. From a water-colour drawing in the possession of Mr. P. J. van den Burgh at the Hague.

to the *Pulchri Studio*. In 1869, at the Hague Exhibition, there hung a charming picture representing a Normandy peasant girl riding home from market; this scene was taken from the mouth of the Seine. It was bought by Mr. Bingham of Utrecht.

Now commenced a very busy and fruitful time for our artist. It would however be impossible for us to enumerate all the important works that left his studio, nor could I say where they all went to. But I must however mention one picture, the studies and drawings for which I saw in his "workshop" and they greatly impressed me. The subject was a stone quarry, not very far from Paris, in which we see horses dragging heavy loads of stone from the mouth of the quarry. This picture was exhibited in Amsterdam in 1871.



A Normandy stallion. From a sketch in chalks.

In 1872 Nakken gained his first reward in the shape of the gold medal at the Triennial Exhibition at the Hague. The picture which brought him this honour was: "Unharnessing the horses on market day." (Beuzeville Eure). This picture eventually became the property of Baron Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, H. M. Commissioner in Utrecht.

The gold "medal of encouragement" given, in the name of King William the Third, at the exhibition of paintings and water-colours at *Arti* and *Amicitæ*, in 1873, was carried off by Nakken for his picture entitled: "Horses carrying wood in the forest of Saint Gatien." That canvas is now in a private collection of pictures in Wageningen. Nakken spent much time in that delightful forest of Saint Gatien and he has given us some charming representations of that neighbourhood and of the powerful horses, peculiar to that spot. The roads

being so bad and so narrow carts are unable to pass, therefore the horses have to carry the heavy logs of wood upon their backs. A similar picture will be found upon page 235.

A very fine large landscape gained a medal at the big International Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876, first however having been placed in the exhibition of paintings in *Arti* and finally bought for the founding of a new gallery for Modern Art in Amsterdam. (At this same exhibition, in Philadelphia, Nakken sold a charming little picture called: "Haystacks in Normandy" to an American).

England possesses likewise some of Nakken's finest works. In 1886 he exhibited in Edinburgh, a fine bold work: "The horse-fair at St. Gilles, near

The forester's winter supply of wood. (Saint Gatien des Bois).

Pont Audemer." This was bought by a Scotchman. In Liège he gained a medal for a water-colour. In 1874 he exhibited at the Paris Salon: "Harvesters returning home." This remained in France and was bought by Mr. Robert de Massy. In the same year a gem was bought by the Baron van Pallandt for his well-known collection. In '75 he sold a picture to the Hon. Miss van Heeckeren van Kell entitled: "Stacking the hay, at Honfleur."

After having painted so successfully the portraits of Baron van Brienen's horses and dogs he had the order to paint his prize bull and two cows. The Baron also bought a well-known picture by Nakken: "Unloading the harvesting carts"; a picture that had been exhibited in '77.

Nakken's finest pictures were undoubtedly those he painted in 1884 and '85: "A stone quarry in the neighbourhood of Marseille (Beaulieu)"; bought by an

English picture dealer; "The last load of wheat coming in" (Kan near Maastricht) the property of Mr. J. G. Everwijn in Utrecht; "Accident in the hay fields, in the alluvial ground of the Seine," which gained for our artist a medal

The entrance to a farm (South Limburg). From a painting now in England.

at the exhibition of pictures in Scheveningen and was bought by Mr. G. M. van der Kuylen at the Hague.

When in 1889, upon the occasion of the centenary of the Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, when an exhibition of paintings was held, the works of

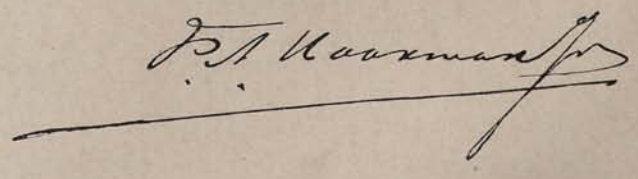
A horse fair in Normandy. From a painting.

Nakken were especially noticed, more particularly a canvas called: "On the way to the market at Honfleur." The picture represents two farmers' carts, going to market, racing each other. A spirited subject and cleverly handled. It was bought by the Burgomaster of Brasschaet (near Antwerp), a great connoisseur and lover of art.

I have stated as many facts and dates as I can remember from the busy life of W. C. Nakken. I have no doubt there are many more equally important, but I must not forget to mention two very flattering purchases, which will be a good winding up to this short biography. These purchases were effected by the Queen Regent, who has always been a great admirer of the works of our artist. One of these pictures was seen by Her Majesty at an exhibition in Arnhem in 1893, and purchased on the spot, as a gift to her Royal daughter (our present Queen). It represents a scene in a hay field, on a hot summer's day, at the moment when the hay makers are resting under the shade of a big apple tree. Four horses are standing by, patient and quiet, harnessed to a big hay cart. The other picture was bought two years later when Queen Emma saw it at one of those popular exhibitions at the *Pulchri Studio*. It represents horses taken out of the farmers' carts, on market day, and having a feed. It is a souvenir of Trouville. A reproduction will be found on page 225.

A couple of years ago the Queen lent a small picture to the *Pulchri Studio* for exhibition which proves that there hung more than two of Nakken's works on the Royal walls. This picture was the original sketch, in a small size, which afterwards developed into one of Nakken's finest big canvases. The latter is in the possession of Mr. C. C. Dutilh of Rotterdam. The subject is charming. The tired horses, four in number, with the heavy old-fashioned plough, are enjoying the pleasant shade of a large apple tree, their bits are being taken out preparatory to a feed, the men likewise preparing their midday meal. The attitudes of man and beast are most natural and easy: the picture is altogether most charming. A reproduction will be found on page 233. It is a scene taken from some part of Normandy, where the apple trees are so large and the horses broad and sturdy.

The niche that our friend Nakken occupies, in the modern Dutch School, is not that of a pioneer, or one who impresses with great force or strong individuality. His particular *genre* has never indeed given him the chance or opportunity. But his works will outlive him and pass with honour to the generations still to come, and he will always be reckoned amongst the industrious and successful Dutch artists of the end of the 19th century.



PIETER DE JOSSELING DE JONG

BY

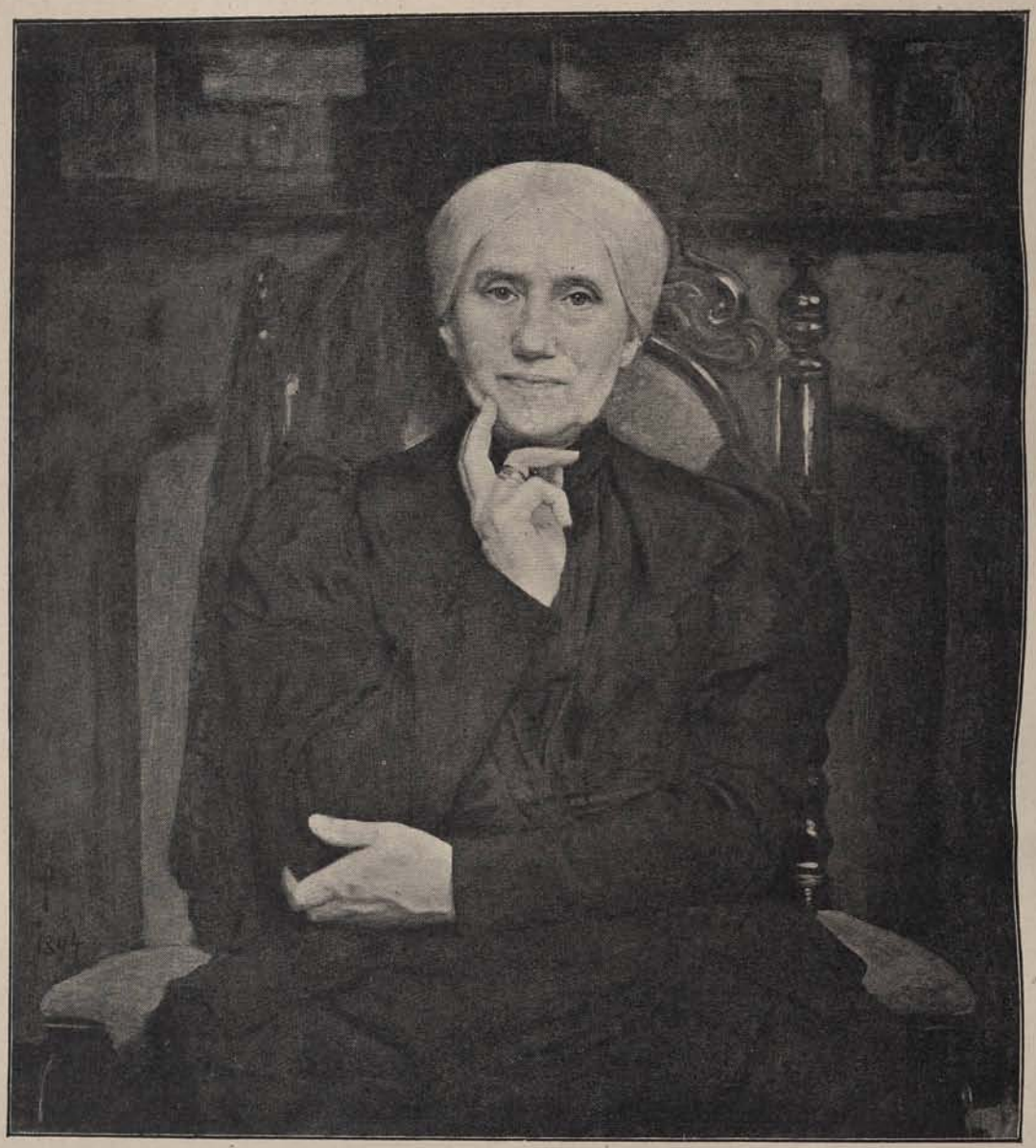
P. A. HAAXMAN JR.

Her Majesty the Queen Mother, a study in chalks for the portrait in oils.

PIETER DE JOSSELING DE JONG.

Some years ago, (I think it was in 1887), the *Pulchri Studio*, in the *Hofje van Nieuwkoop*, that well-known artists' club, gave a brilliant fête. It was to celebrate the 70th birthday of their much beloved member, the venerable painter Bosboom. The enthusiasm which prevailed on that evening has never been surpassed. It was the younger men who helped to make it such a success and who brought so much life and merriment into the entertainment. The architectural beauty of the club's dome-shaped central hall looked splendid

on the evening in question, and not only splendid but highly picturesque with its suitable array of decorations. At the entrance stood a nigger (one of the students) looking like a bronze statue; up in one corner a colossal "still-life" of luxurious ripe fruit, most tastefully arranged; on the walls were hanging illuminated emblems and proverbs suited to the occasion and in the centre sat



Portrait of the artist's mother.

the members, at the festal board, amongst these picturesque and brilliant surroundings. Everyone who assisted at this festival will remember the great feature of the evening when, at the end of the supper, a curtain was drawn to one side showing a tableau-vivant, representing one of Bosboom's famous pictures. A stream of light was thrown upon the figures, in the same way

that Bosboom lighted up his figures in his interiors of churches and monasteries. The prime mover of that fête was undoubtedly Pieter de Josselin de Jong, the subject of this biography, a young man of only five-and-twenty at that time. I can see him now as ring-leader of the festival sitting, torch in hand, on the top of the carriage, in the which Bosboom was driven home, the younger men having taken the horses out and drawing the coach themselves.

Several years later, in '93 I think, a similar fête was organized in the small Brabandt town of St. Oedenrode, near Bois-le-Duc. The whole place was en fête to do honour to their chief, and perhaps only, physician, old Doctor Stroebel, a sturdy old gentleman of 84 years, who was to celebrate the jubilee of his profession, having lived and practised for over 50 years in this small country town. But he was not to be the only hero of the day, a younger man, and a native born of St. Oedenrode, was to share in some of the honours. This was our artist De Josselin de Jong, who had lived in that quiet country home till the age of 16, when he had wandered away into the world and had already, at an early age, made a name for himself. The entertainment committee had asked him to paint a portrait of their old doctor, timidly stating, when writing the request, that they had but little money to lay out upon the picture, but that they would look upon it as a great favour if he would, for a small consideration, paint the portrait of their beloved doctor. No order, for a portrait, was ever more eagerly accepted and certainly no pains were spared by the artist. The canvas was finished within eight days, the artist having laid aside all other work in order to accomplish this. The portrait was on view, at the small public schoolroom, a day or two before the jubilee celebration and all the townsfolk came to see it. On the morning of the festal day the picture was carried, in solemn procession, to the house of the old man. Here all the world and his wife (of St. Oedenrode) flocked to offer their congratulations. The various companies of the town turned out with their banners and bands. First came the cross-bow and archery clubs, followed by the guild of singers and choral societies, lads and lassies in their best garments, with the entertainment committee *à la tête*. In the evening there was a torchlight procession and the old doctor was serenaded by all the musical societies and glee clubs.

The two episodes, in the life of our artist Pieter de Josselin de Jong, will give my reader some idea of the character of the man. In the Bosboom festival we see him fired with enthusiasm for the venerable painter to whom he looked up with the greatest amount of respect and admiration. In the second fête we see him again happy to do honour to old age and ready and willing to fall in with the enterprise of the moment and again helping immeasureably to the success of the day; not only in respecting ripe old age but full of enthusiasm for his native place.

It so happened that when De Jong was called upon to paint the portrait of Dr. Stroebel, Israëls was given a similar order in honour of the jubilee in the

career of the artist Roelofs of whom he was desired to paint a portrait. When, in the course of time, these two portraits found their way to one of the Hague museums and when De Jong caught sight, for the first time, of Israëls' portrait of Roelofs, he said he had a sensation as if he had received a slap in the face; meaning, I suppose, that the picture was so lifelike. He said that it all but spoke.

* * *

In the life of most artists we notice a perpetual contention with parents and guardians who object to the profession of "artist", chiefly on account of the

The imploring letter. Painting in the Ghent Museum.

pecuniary uncertainty. Our friend Pieter however had no such trouble. At an early age he was allowed to "waste" his time drawing, till one day, his father seeing the serious bent of his desires sent him to a drawing school. This school (at St. Oedenrode) treasures the sketches he left behind and is proud to claim him as a pupil. Certainly Pieter was always encouraged in his artistic taste. His father gave him a large blackboard whereon he could draw whatever fancy dictated. He developed a great ability at an early age for catching a likeness. When he was sixteen he painted the portrait of his father, this likeness was so good that even now, whenever he sees it, he is struck with it himself. Later he was sent to the Royal Academy of Arts at Bois-le-Duc

where he made rapid strides under the able instruction of Professor Slager, who strongly advised him to go to Antwerp to study.

De Jong retains a warm corner in his heart for Slager, who was not only his master but his friend. A few years ago he went to Bois-le-Duc to take a well-earned holiday with the idea of giving himself a thorough rest; finding himself once more within the walls of the dear old studio, where he had spent

Portrait of Charles Rochussen. In the Boymans Museum in Rotterdam.

so many happy days, under the eye of old Slager, he could not resist the temptation of taking up his brush once more, although he had made a firm resolution of being idle for a time. Seeing on the walls a blank space of considerable dimensions, he amused himself by drawing upon it a prancing steed. Other figures followed until the space was covered with a wild fantasy of men and animals. A rearing horse is throwing his rider, the attitude of the falling

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man is very clever. Slager proudly draws the attention of his visitors to the fresco, for such it undoubtedly is.

In Antwerp De Jong made splendid progress and soon began to carry off the first prizes. This was saying much for his early instructors and not a little for his own perseverance.

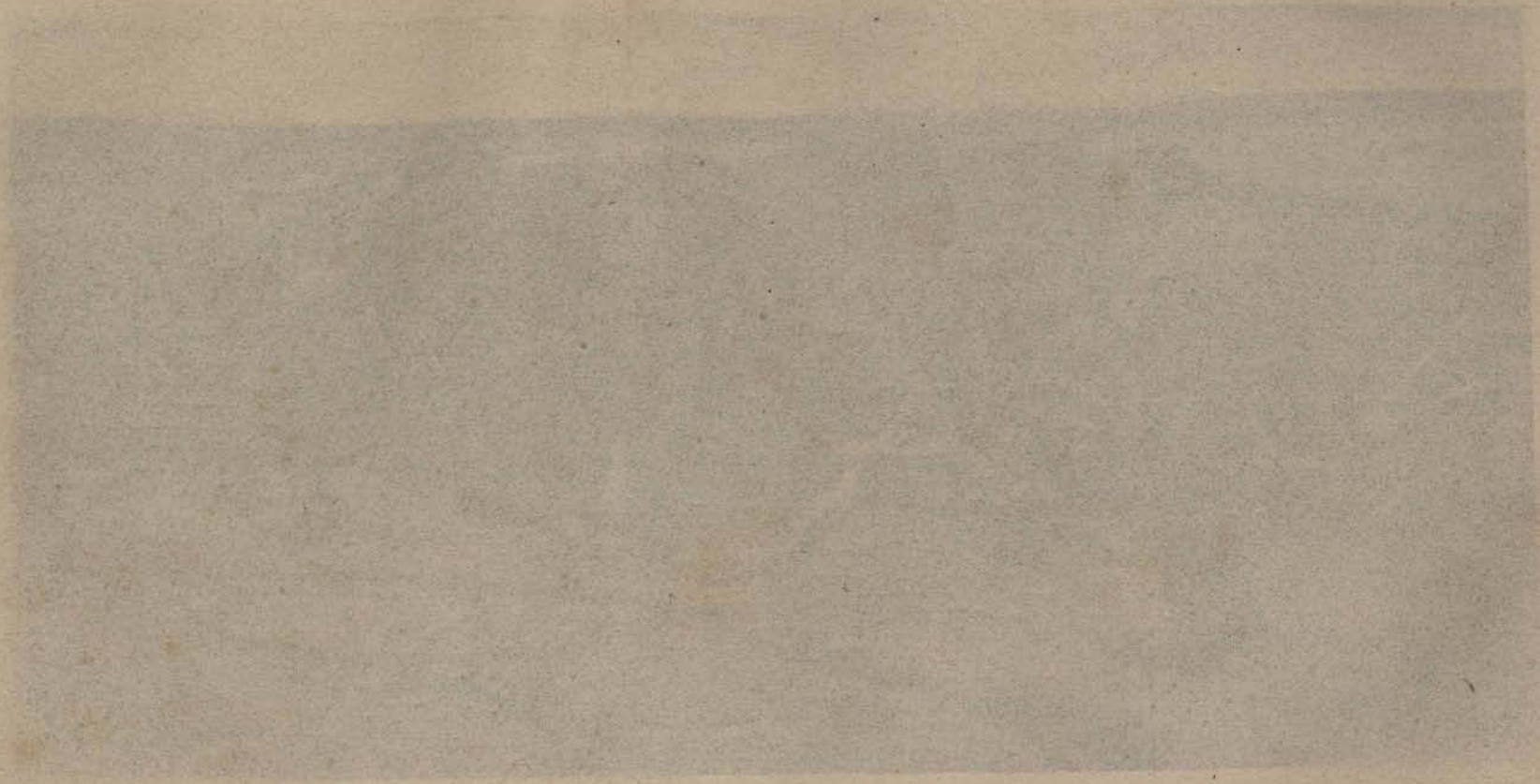
At the end of three years after De Jong had left his home, he lost his father, which plunged him into the deepest grief. Old Mr. Josselin de Jong was the principal notary at St. Oedenrode and father and son were much attached to each other.

The King, hearing of de Jong's unusual talent, placed him in a position to

A study for a water-colour: Sleeping in the train. A drawing in chalks.

continue his studies in Paris by especially recommending him for the Royal scholarship, which he was lucky enough to gain in the usual competion. Once in Paris he started a studio of his own and became what is called "An independent artist." The sound instructions, and the good foundation, laid in Bois-le-Duc and Antwerp, ripened in Paris, aided no doubt by his own energy and determination; he overcame every difficulty and fought every obstacle and we may say that soon success cast her bright beams upon him.

His first important picture was "The imploring letter," (a reproduction will be found on page 246). This picture was exhibited in Ghent in 1883, and it was so higly thought of that the town bought it for their museum and the



"The hour of rest"

FROM A PAINTING

in the possession of Mrs. de Man-Calkoen.

press commented favorably upon it. *La Flandre Libérale*, of the 2nd Sept. 1883, called it a *chef d'oeuvre*. The subject of this picture is a young woman who has brought a letter begging for pardon for one of her dear and near relatives. The inquisitor is reading this letter and a monk, leaning over him, is whispering some words of advice into his ear, probably cruel words of unforgiveness.

At that time historical painters, when depicting the days of the Inquisition, generally took as subject the hangman, the tormentor, the rack and torture chamber, prisons and terrors of all sorts, but De Jong sticks only to three types from those terrible times: the oppressed, bent with sorrow or in attitudes imploring pardon; the inquisitor who judges, and the monk who influences. De

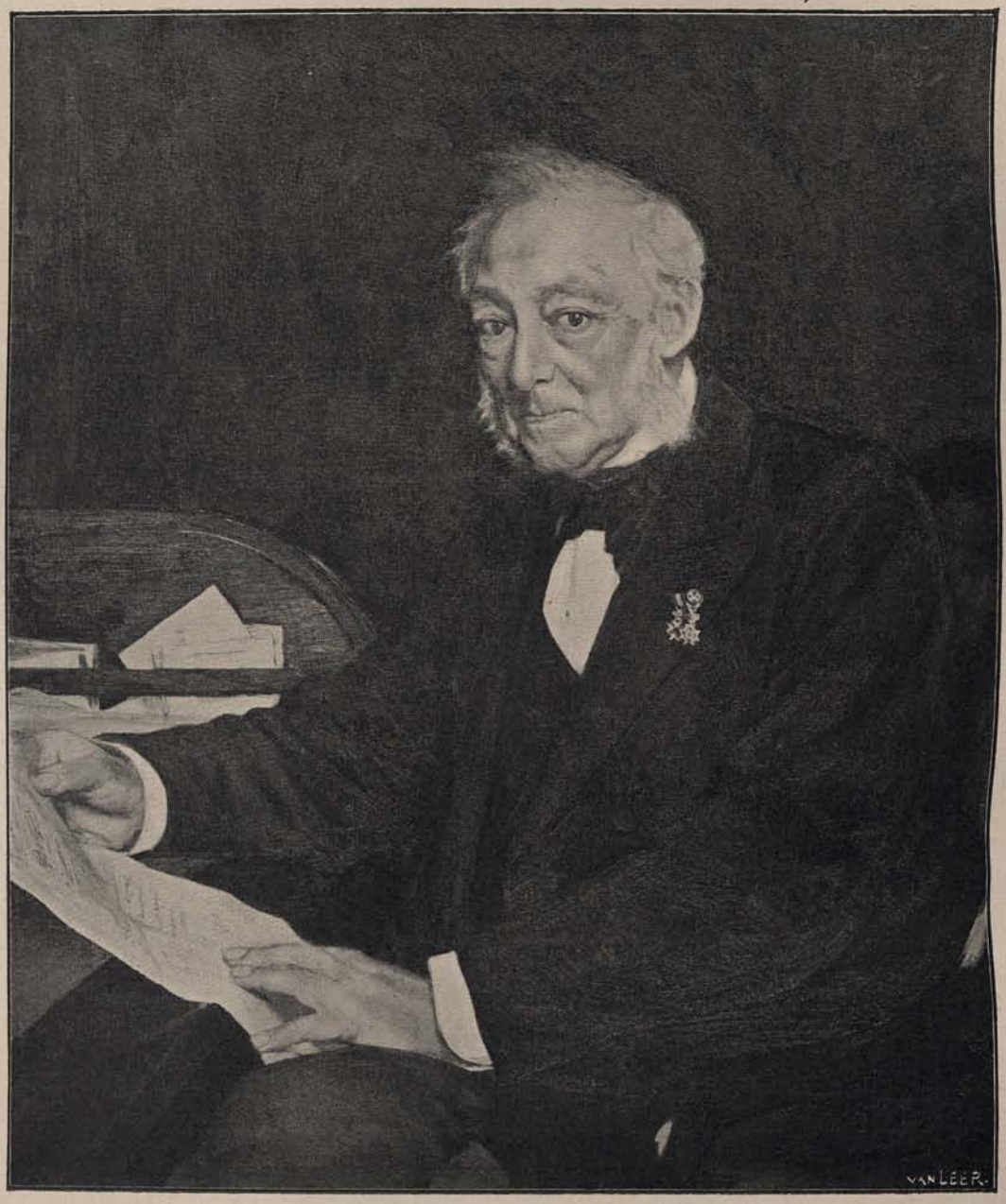
Horses being watered. A plas in Limburg. Drawing in chalks.

Jong goes in chiefly for expression and attitude whereas his contemporaries sought for effect by horrors and tortures, by brilliant colours or the clang of weapons and in the general pomp and terror of the *mise-en-scène*.

All this success was very satisfactory, and certainly unusual, for a young man of 22, more especially as he was amongst strangers. But it was not long ere he gained a reputation in his own country too. He established himself at the Hague and in a very short space of time he was reckoned amongst the celebrities in the Art World. This did not however slacken his industry nor cause him to be idle for a moment.

He sent, in '84, a portrait of the cattle painter Stortenbeker, to the triennial exhibition at the Hague; also a large canvas representing Cain, fleeing into

the wilderness, after the murder of his brother Abel. I feel sure that if this picture had been exhibited in Belgium it would have been bought by the nation, but the subject did not appeal to the Dutchman. It brought him however into notice and gained for him the honou rof being requested to paint the

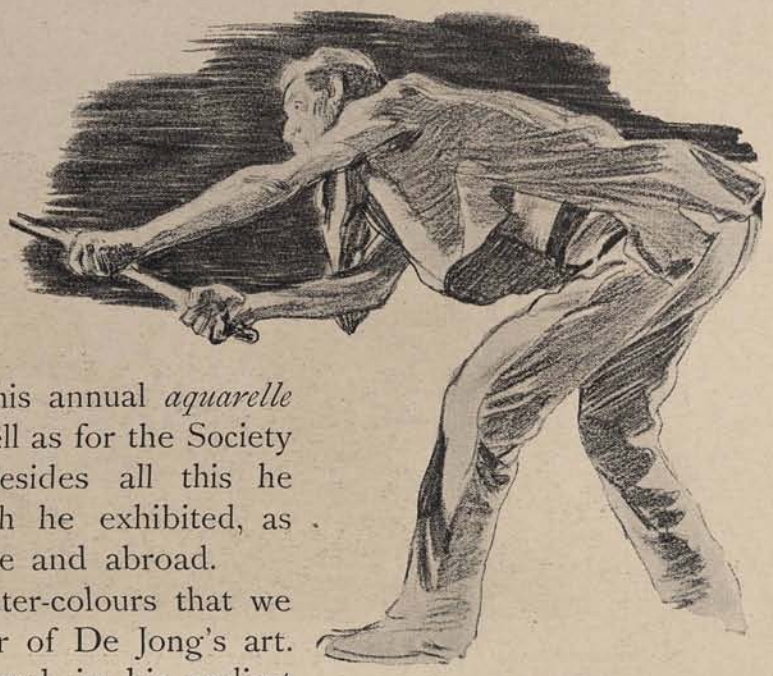


Portrait of Mr. Vaillant, late President of the Court of Justice in Rotterdam.

portrait of Princess Wilhelmina, who was then five years old. He accomplished this pleasant, though somewhat difficult task, to the entire satisfaction of the Royal parents. It is a full-lengthed portrait; the artist has presented to us our present Queen in a graceful and natural position. The little lady is wearing a white frock, prettily trimmed with lace. He has succeeded in catching her

exact expression and her sweet smile. This portrait hangs at present in the summer Palace at Soestdijk.

Orders for portraits now followed in rapid succession. His favourite dimension was three-quarter length, life-sized. Undoubtedly one of his cleverest portraits was that of one of our chief magistrates. It gained for him a gold medal. In 1887 he obtained a second gold medal for a family group: children playing in a richly furnished apartment. It was not only well painted but the arrangement was easy and graceful, which cannot be said of most pictures of that kind. Now no exhibition, either in Holland or Belgium, is complete without at least one portrait by De Jong. The splendid portrait of his mother (page 244); the portrait of Charles Rochussen (page 247); of Mr. Vaillant, President of the Court of Justice (page 250); of the Burgomaster Vening Meinesz; of old Mr. Viruly, the magistrate, (in Boymans Museum); of Mrs. Betz; of the Hon. J. De Steurs and many more show that the artist was not merely satisfied with producing a good likeness but studied the peculiarities and character of his sitter.



Puddler.

Painting so many portraits took up of course much of his time yet he never allowed any work to interfere with his annual *aquarelle* for the *Pulchri Studio* as well as for the Society of Dutch water-colours. Besides all this he painted other subjects which he exhibited, as well as his portraits, at home and abroad.

It is especially in his water-colours that we notice the vigour and power of De Jong's art. These qualities were observed in his earliest water-colour drawings, one of which was bought by Mesdag for his celebrated collection. Who does not remember his "Office Clerk." He could have sold the picture a hundred times over had he been willing to repeat the subject. But painting the same subject over and over again is not a thing that De Jong can do. His ingenuity and love for new ideas is so great that his life must be reckoned too short to deal with his manifold inspirations.

At one of the *Pulchri* exhibitions he exhibited some clever water-colours. In one we see a labourer digging, in heavy clay soil, standing in a bent position, as if the work was hard; in another we are shown a crushing-mill, men toiling by the sweat of their brow. All these figures show a great knowledge of anatomy, they look like sculpture, the modelling is so realistic and natural. We see every muscle straining and every sinew at work, one

almost expects these men to rise from their bent attitudes and wipe the sweat from their faces. Another charming water-colour, at that exhibition, was a picture of Scheveningen lasses, in their coquettish caps, rosy-cheeked and smiling. We would not be the least surprised if they spoke to us.

When De Jong's day dream was fulfilled, when he found himself actually in Rome, the desire to practise modelling became so overpowering that he indulged in it for a time. If you look on page 254 you will see a very clever bas-relief. The busts of two young Roman archers, very classically executed, showing every nerve and muscle at work, proving the hand who fashioned them to have a great knowledge of the anatomy of the human frame. His taste for classical art gave him this inspiration; you have but to examine his sketch books to find that his taste runs very much in decided outline and anatomical exactness.

Coal Barges. Water-colour.

I was allowed to look through his sketch-books one day and I found them most interesting. An artist's sketchbook speaks like a written diary and tells the character of the man quite as well. For every portrait that De Jong ever painted, and their name is legion, there are numberless drawings and "trial trips" in these books. You can see plainly how determined he was, not only to catch the face of his sitters, but their peculiarities and character as well. One book contained nothing but studies for the portraits of various members of the government. Such typical figures as van Heemskerk, Schaepman, Corver Hooft, Buma and many others, all well-known men. Most interesting too are the sketches that De Jong made in England of some of the large iron foundries and the miners. We see those strong powerful men in every attitude of hard toil, handling their heavy tools with ease, and shall we say, grace.

De Jong has also illustrated books, especially to be noted is the well-known work "Walewein" by G. H. Betz, which was most cleverly pictured.

The next studies and sketches of interest were these he made during his short visit to Rome. He tarried in Italy about six months; here was a wealth of interesting matter to look through: picturesque Italian men drinking in public houses, or standing idly gossipping in the street; women in bright coloured garments, ragged perhaps, but in artistic taste; beggars on church steps; worshippers of all ages entering the sacred edifice: workmen, gamblers, idlers, every style and character of the typical Italian man, woman and child. Merely looking at these drawings was almost like visiting Rome. Some of the sketches were portraits of handsome young women destined later to be worked up into pictures (see page 255); beautiful large-eyed creatures with soft brown skin. Then again in another book I noticed sketches of the Vatican, the Pope in all his pomp, blessing the believing crowd; on other pages the Campagna and the Roman labourer with his team of oxen, plodding through the stiff soil.

You may say that De Jong keeps up the old tradition of the dearly loved *Pulchri Studio* of bygone years. He who was at one time the life and soul of that artistic club has now taken the big centre hall, which dates back to the 17th century, as a studio for himself, where he seems to work amongst the spirits of departed friends and brothers-of-the-brush. He has arranged it most artistically with fine gobelins and many *objets d'arts* (See page 259). Over the mantelpiece you will notice a large picture, a copy by De Jong of one of Jacob Maris' pictures, a canvas beautiful in colouring and grand in execution. On the walls hang many interesting paintings by De Jong himself as well as by others. We notice in a place of honour the artist's mother, of which we have already spoken, a portrait full of sympathetic feeling (page 244), also a very clever picture of his wife (page 257). On the cornice, above the mantelpiece, we read these characteristic words à propos of the delightful gatherings of yore, held in this big hall: "*Zoo lang nog de lepel in de breipot steekt, treuren wij nog niet,*" meaning when translated: "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," or perhaps a better translation would be: "Never say die." Also the following by Horatius: "*Pictoribus atque poetis quidlibet audendi semper fuit aequa potestas*" which would read if put into English thus: "It is permitted to artists and authors to venture upon each and every subject." But I should like to add: "*If* they have the talent and power to accomplish the same properly." De Jong possesses this quality in the highest degree. You have but to examine his work to add that his own particular motto should be: "*Quidlibet audendi potestas.*"

De Jong threw himself heart and soul into the new movement in Art, which ended in the founding of the "Haagsche Kunstkring" (the Hague circle of art) and the organizing of exhibitions wherein foreigners were given the opportunity of shewing their work in Holland. It proved in every way a great success and led to much interchange of ideas on the subject of art.

De Jong also took a great interest in the entertainment got up to celebrate the jubilee of the *Pulchri Studio*. One of the features of the evening was a *tableau-vivant* representing a landscape, with a temple of the Muses in the centre, to the top of which an artist is ascending. The idea was good and the colouring exquisitely harmonizing.

When the question was broached of decorating the walls of the new *Kunstkring* De Jong, who never knows how to refuse, fell in with the general desire that he should undertake the designing, and assist in the work, by doing the principal panels and chief decorations. He willingly consented and sketched the design of the symbolical composition of a youth being baptised at the sacred font of Art.

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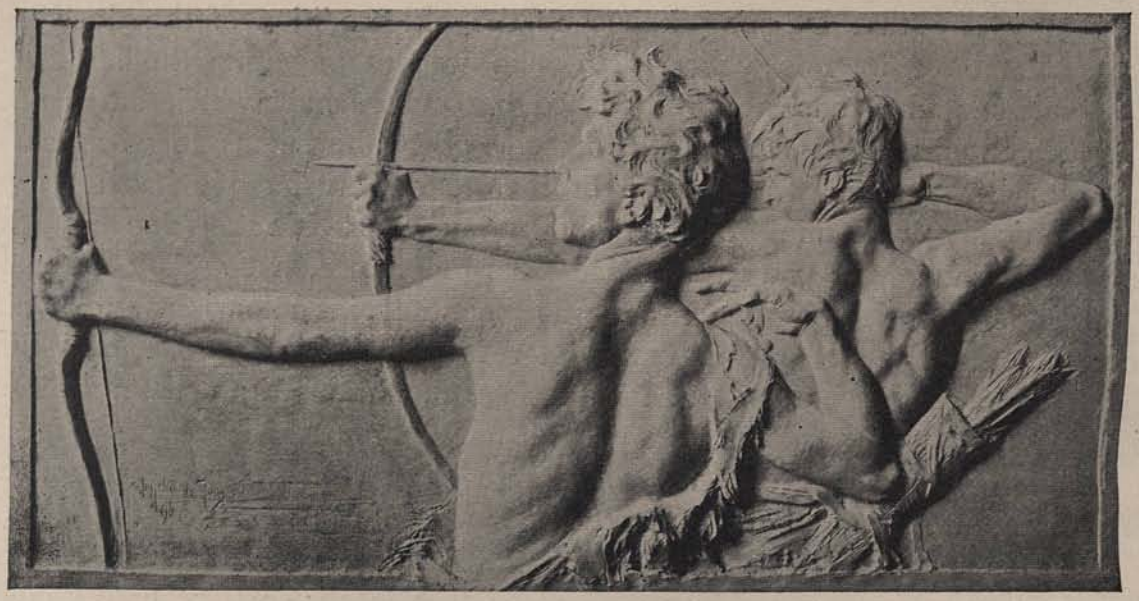


A bas relief.

When I visited de Josselin De Jong for the first time in his splendid studio he was busy putting the finishing touches to the large portrait of the Queen-mother. How he managed, not only to get the likeness so perfect, but the character and expression so exact, was a marvel to me. There stood her Majesty with her usual kindly smile, and yet there was the serious look we all know so well, that look of anxious care for the well-being of her little daughter (now our reigning sovereign). De Jong gave me a crayon drawing of this portrait (see page 243). He made many sketches ere he was satisfied and studied carefully that pleasant face, until he knew every trace and every change of expression.

De Jong, as I have already stated, takes infinite pains with his portraits. He

studies and poses them in a position natural to themselves. He talks to them and watches their every movement and espectally the manner of holding their heads. He catches any peculiarity and watches for any particular habit or mannerism.

Among the many surprises in store for me, when visiting De Jong, was a

A gay young Italian woman. Study in oils.

splendid etching of this very portrait of which I have been speaking. I had no idea that his talent lay in that direction too.

"Have you ever painted a portrait of the late King?" I asked.

"Yes, I have; the Queen gave me an order for a life-sized portrait. It now

Harrowing in Drenthe. Water-colour drawing.

hangs in the palace at Noordeinde. I have also made a mask of the King after death. I received the order to go to his bedside and make a drawing of the face of the departed. How well I remember that day. The solemnity with which I was surrounded worked upon my nervous system and I found it difficult to collect my thoughts. I did the thing in an hour and I am happy to say that it gave satisfaction."

Portrait of Mrs. de Josseling de Jong. From a painting.

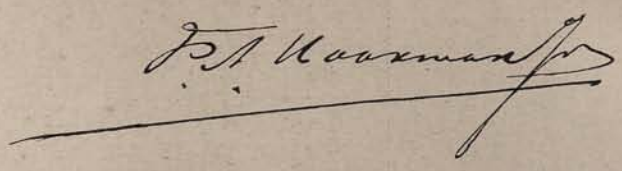
Of his own life and work I found it difficult to gather much. But he waxed enthusiastic over the works of his contemporaries and especially over those who had been spared and were working still, which, he said, gave him hopes of being able to do likewise for some time to come. He spoke with sorrowing regret about those who were alas gone, many of them at a comparatively early age.

The easterly provinces seem to attract De Jong the most, for his landscapes,

which he paints as well as his portraits. The clay soil, of that easterly neighbourhood, which obliges the labourer to wield his spade with effort and where the horses have their work cut-out to drag the plough-share through the heavy clods of earth, seems suited to the talent of his brush.

I remember seeing a picture of this kind called "The land at rest." It belongs to Mrs. de Man-Calkoen of Arnhem. This kind lady lent it to the Loan Exhibition for the works of Dutch painters of the last 25 years.

That de Josselin De Jong will continue to do as he has already done, or better perhaps (if possible), is vouched for in his own personality and in his energy and thoroughness. His lucky star has given him an artistic wife, the talented Miss Jeltje Kappeyne van de Coppello, whose charming companionship has secured for him an ideal life full of happiness and beautiful expectations.



De Josseling de Jong in his studio.