

Artists' Corner.

GREAT MASTERS.

PAUL REMBRANDT VAN RYN.

(Concluded from our last.)

Rembrandt gathered into the school which he had established, all kinds of fanciful materials for his art. He had a great collection of turbans, fringed scarfs, ancient armour, old rusty swords, halberds, and daggers, with a lot of old spangled stuffs, which he used to exhibit to his friends and visitors as his antiques. Shortly after his return, he married a handsome peasant girl of Ransdorp, without fortune, but possessing considerable personal attractions. He was not long in introducing to the world his wife's portrait by the side of his own, and, like it, dressed up sometimes in the most fantastic and extravagant female attire. The love of money became however deeply seated in Rembrandt's mind, and he had recourse to various expedients to gratify it. In the school which he established, previous to his marriage, he received a very high price for the instructions he gave, and he retouched the works of his pupils and sold them as his own. He also dated several of his etchings at Venice, to make them more saleable; a circumstance which caused some of his biographers to believe that he was actually in Venice in 1636 and 1638. But he never left Amsterdam, though he frequently determined to quit Holland in order to increase the demand for his pictures. As early as 1628 he had applied himself zealously to etching, and soon acquired great perfection in the art. His etchings were esteemed as highly as his paintings, and he had recourse to several artifices to raise their price. He sold off impressions from unfinished plates, then finished them and sold off other impressions, and having used them made some slight changes, and thus sold the same work three or four different times. In his "Raising of Lazarus," an engraving held in high repute, the first impression,—some of which have been valued at £180 sterling—the figure in the act of running away alarmed is uncovered; in the print of the second impression the same figure wears a cap. This sort of thing was practised constantly by him. Again, he would secretly buy up at auction sales, or otherwise, his own works, and then cause his son to offer them for sale secretly, as if he had stolen them from his father. By means of these artifices, and by having his studio always well filled with scholars, Rembrandt soon amassed considerable wealth. Rembrandt is considered a master in all that relates to colouring, distribution of light and shade, and the management of the pencil; but in composition, grouping, design, perspective, drapery, and taste, he is very deficient. His drapery is fantastical, and arranged without taste. His works possess expression, but they are destitute of dignity. But his pencil is masterly and unique, possessing an energy and effect belonging to no other artist. His colouring is effective in the highest degree. Each tint was applied in its proper place, and with the greatest correctness and harmony. His pictures are, therefore, full of warmth, and his chiaroscuro replete with imitable truth. He generally introduced very strong lights in his pictures; and as he always preferred light from above, he had a small aperture in his chamber by which alone his model was lighted. To this may be ascribed the uniformity of his colouring, and the somewhat monotonous effect it has throughout his works. The occasional visits which he paid to the country residence of his friend and patron, the burgomaster, revived the taste of his earlier years for landscape painting. But he carried into the studio of nature that gloomy, yet poetical feeling, which seemed to attach itself to him on every occasion. His delight was to deal with the wind and the tempest; he covered the heavens with dark and ominous thunder clouds, between which the sunlight breaks with

strange and supernatural brilliancy; or he brought forward heavy masses of foliage and deeply shadowed foregrounds to tell against the brightness of an evening sunset. His numerous paintings are dispersed in various public and private cabinets. The most celebrated are Tobias and his family kneeling before the angel; The Two Philosophers; Christ at Emmaus; The Workshop of a Carpenter; The Good Samaritan; The Presentation in the Temple; The Portrait of himself and his wife; The Threatening Prisoner, Samson and Delilah; a Descent from the Cross; Christ among the Little Children; The Apostle Paul; The Portraits of his Mother and himself; a Holy Family; Hagar; Christ in the Temple; a Burial of Christ; The Sacrifice of Manoah; The Feast of Abasuerus; Gany-medo; Saul and David; a Circumcision; Tobias; Himself and Family, and some landscapes. His most distinguished pupils were Ferdinand Bol, Gerard Douw, Gerard Van Eckhout, Michael Poorter, Philipp Koning, Govaert Flak. According to Houbracken, Rembrandt died at Amsterdam in 1671, but DeWife says he died in 1668. He left one son behind him, who inherited the wealth, but not the genius, of his father.

Varieties.

PLEASURE OF CONTENTMENT.—I have a rich neighbour who is always so busy that he has no leisure to laugh; the whole business of his life is to get money, and more money, that he may still get more and more money. He is still drudging on, saying that Solomon says, "The diligent hand maketh rich." And it is true, indeed; but he considers not that it is not in the power of riches to make a man happy, for it was wisely said by a man of great observation, "That there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them." We see but the outside of a rich man's happiness; few consider him to be like the silkworm, that, when she seems to play, is at the very same time spinning her own bowels, and consuming herself. And this many rich men do—loading themselves with corroding cares, to keep what they have already got. Let us, therefore, be thankful for health and competence, and, above all, for a quiet conscience.—*Isaac Walton.*

SELF LOVE.—The ingenuity of self deceit, is inexhaustible. If people extol us, we feel our good opinion of ourselves confirmed. If they dislike us, we do not think the worse of ourselves, but of them; it is not we who want merit but they who want penetration. If we cannot refuse them discernment, we persuade ourselves that they are not so much insensible to our worth as envious of it. There is no shift, stratagem, or device which we do not employ to make us stand well with ourselves. We are too apt to calculate our own character unfairly in two ways, by referring to some one single act of generosity, as if such acts were the common habit of our lives, and by treating our habitual faults, not as common habits but occasional failures. There is scarcely any fault in another which offends us more than vanity, though perhaps there is none that really injures us so little. We have no patience that another should be so full of self love as we allow ourselves to be; so full of himself as to have little leisure to attend to us.

The beauties of a crystal spring, a silent grove, a daisied meadow, chasten the feelings of the heart, and afford at all times, to those who have a taste for Nature a permanent and pure delight.

The powers of the human mind are of greater extent than is generally imagined. He who, either from taste or necessity, exercises them frequently, soon finds that the highest faculties of which our nature is capable reside entirely within ourselves.

Scenes of serenity, whether created by tasteful Art or by the cunning hand of Nature, always bestow, as a gift from the imagination, tranquillity to the heart.

A cheerful disposition, a placid temper, and well regulated passions, will prevent worldly vexations from interrupting our happiness.

The transition from joy to sorrow is easiest in pure minds, as the true diamond, when moistened by the breath, recovers its lustre sooner than a false one.

IMPATIENCE, is a stifled anger, which men silently manifest by looks and gestures, and weak minds, ordinarily, by a shower of complaints.

PLUTARCH tells a beautiful anecdote of Pericles. He was a whole day loaded with reproaches by a vile and abandoned fellow, but he bore it with patience and silence; continued in public for the despatch of some urgent affairs, and in the evening walked slowly home, this impudent fellow following and insulting him all the way with the most scurrilous language until he came to his own door, when, it being dark, Pericles calmly ordered one of his servants to take a torch and light the man home.

A GOOD ANECDOTE is related by Mr. Eaton in the *Kennedee Journal*, of one Boggs, who introduced the first flock of sheep into Warren. He brought them from the Penaquid by water, and while sitting on the windlass one day, got sleepy and began to nod. "The patriarch of the flock, taking it for a challenge, drew back and knocked him sprawling upon the deck. Whereupon Boggs, more pugnacious than wise, seized the old fellow by the wool, and chucked him overboard. But he got more than he bargained for by this counter movement, for the whole flock, feeling bound in all cases to follow their leader, popped over after him; and Boggs, being several miles from land, was obliged to heave to, and with much difficulty recovered them again. He concluded that he had the worst of the battle at both ends."

A POSER FOR A PROFESSOR.—A Professor of logic was once endeavouring to argue "that a thing remains the same notwithstanding a substitution of some of its parts." A wag held up a knife, inquiring—"Suppose I should lose the blade of my knife, and should get another made and inserted in its place—would it be the same knife it was before?" "To be sure," replied the professor. "Well, then, the wag continued, "suppose I should then lose the handle and get another, would it be the same knife still?" "Of course," persisted the professor. "But if somebody should find the old blade and the old handle, and should put them together, what knife would that be?" We never learned the professor's reply.

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