

chilling tears, seeking a face that would return to her no more. Yes, the civil war had prepared the American people to receive, with a spirit of affection, the mournful masterpieces of the French painters.

The excellence of the German, the English, and the Italian art in the Centennial Exhibition was fully appreciated. The technique in each case was artistically correct. The Italian gallery with its score of Madonnas painted by the old masters and loaned by great personages, was judiciously and critically compared with the Vandykes, the Reynolds and Gainsboroughs, of England; while the Rembrandts of Holland were not forgotten in that critically artistic review. The art of these nations left an impression upon the painters at that time, an impression that is even seen in their paintings of to-day. But the artists of America were up in years; what they came to see was not the subject but the method of manipulation. In the French gallery they delayed too long, however, to learn nothing more than the technique. The face, young and beautiful, of some dying soldier by Detaille recalled sad memories. In silence they turned to the lonely landscapes of Corot, where, with many a distant village steeple melting in the evening light, the last rays of the sinking sun seemed—in nature's own painting in our every day life—like a solace for discords of the day or unexpected sorrows. The impressions made by Corot's paintings were of such a character.

And this is sentiment! Sentiment—is it incompatible with the true end and aim of art? I venture to say this, that the influence of a poetic picture upon the artist's mind, all things being equal, is infinitely greater than the most masterly production of an unsentimental subject.

The impression made by the French painters of that date was simply marvellous. Many flocked from the schools of art in the New England cities, from

the Academy of Design in New York and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, to the great *atelier* of arts, and soon the French capital became the nursery of the "New Idea" in art. The American capitalist purchased largely from the French salons.

With the increase of patronage, the character of the art changed. The vivacious nature of the Celt found new fields for tilling, new phases of life, and entered into the work with a vim that returned him a thousand-fold for his toil. The seventeen years of French art has been marked by a gradual development to a state of triumphant realism. Mark how the American painters have followed step by step their French masters, till we see from the young men who since 1876 have gone to Paris, work in every respect equal to the best canvasses of the French painters.

Nor is this French influence felt alone in the school of American artists. The Russian is as strongly imbued with the spirit of French realism as is his American brother of the brush. And, but for the subject alone, the pictures of Moscow and St. Petersburg might as well have been painted by an American or Parisian painter.

Even in colossal subjects, permeated with a certain regal grandeur, when the imperious nature of the Russian is unveiled, there still is seen evidence of the French influence. In minor subjects, at least in the method of execution, in tone and atmospheric effects, like the American painter, the Muscovite has deemed the French system the all in all. In sentiment, the Russian is true to his native instincts. The clink of the steel-girt scabbard sounds everywhere, and, though disguised, you may trace the avenging fire of the nihilist. Yet all this seems as though it found expression in French.

The subtle savagery of the passionate Spaniard finds expression in the French methods. The light tints impasted upon absorbing canvas—he