THE AMERICAN STUDENT AT THE BEAUX-ARTS.

IN THE LATIN QUARTER. (C. A. VANDERHOOF.)

THE young American who has come to Paris to learn to paint will, of course, make straight for the "Quartier Latin," if only to be near the school of the Beaux-Arts. He will pleasantly recall a good deal he has read about "the Quarter," and he will be too well prepared for delight to escape disappointment. That habitat of the student race is no longer the picturesque tangle of old-fashioned streets with which the prose poetry of the Romantic period has made us familiar. The hand of civic improvement is rapidly reducing the region to right angles. The aboriginal inhabitant or student flies before the invader to the most inaccessible parts of this labyrinth, but, in some instances, he sees the folly of resistance, and takes his lodging in the straight streets. The American, however, is always the last to yield, for to him these most unreasonable thoroughfares constitute one of the charms of living abroad. He likes to wind himself into his house like a shell-fish, as though to find relief from the maddening geometrical memories of a childhood passed in a city of "blocks." There is but little of the old Quarter left, what with the Boulevard St. Germain cutting through it at one angle, and the equally straight, broad, perfect, and altogether exasperating Boulevard St. Michael intersecting it at another. Between these two, however, some quaint old bits still nestle, or rather hide, as though in terror of approaching dissolution, and, by fairly diligent search, you may find just enough of decay to make a picture.

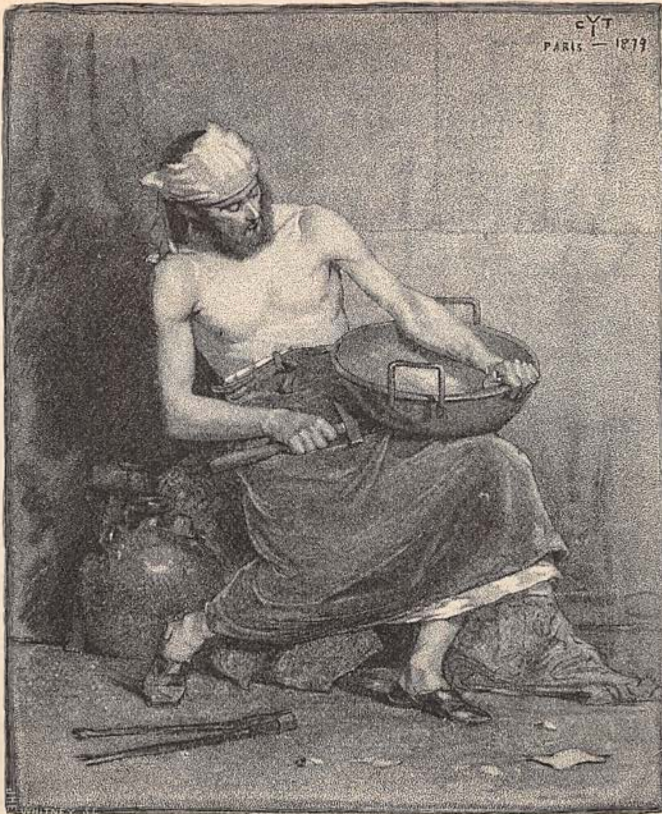
The men are at first as disappointing as the Quarter, but they are disappointing in the best sense. The novice, fresh from the schools at home, will miss much of the raw art talk, rough-hewed in the block from Ruskin and Symonds. The student of the Quarter is a man of action in art. His devotion, however intense, rarely finds expression in any form of words, though often enough in a quiet endurance of hardships. It is just as bad form at the Beaux-Arts as at Magdalen to talk like a book about the studies of the place. There has, in fact, been a change all around in the character of the youthful colony. It has extended to the girl students, who once gave no small scandal here by trying to ignore the difference in manners and customs be-

tween Paris and Poughkeepsie. They thought that what a blameless Una might do there, she surely might do here, and so they sometimes went into the studios among the men,—French in the main, be it understood, —with very disagreeable results. In consequence, many worthy people at home still entertain a lively horror of these pilgrimages of young women for foreign study. They do not know that now that the pilgrims have consented to keep to themselves the peril has almost disappeared. The Daisy Millers of our time have learned that, if you want to live in Europe with comfort, you had better conform in some respects to European ways. Frenchmen never understood the system of "mixed classes" in art. It always seemed the drollest of foreign eccentricities, inviting to something worse than eccentricity in return. They ought, no doubt, to have been better read in manners and customs, but this is just what they used to say of us. The ladies have lost nothing; there are good special studios for them in Paris where they may have the teaching of such men as Bonnat and Carolus Duran. Many, too, have adopted a line of art which admits of their working very much by themselves. Some take to flower-painting; and one of the most successful is a painter of animals—a Rosa Bonheur of the future, who finds her models in the goats of the Champs Élysées and in the lions of the Jardin des Plantes.

The freshman will soon be made free of the Quarter, and his chums will do him the immense service of teaching him how to live. They will show him how to lodge in one room for six and a half dollars a month, to get his coffee and roll in the morning for five *sous* (a fraction under five cents of United States currency), and his twelve-o'clock breakfast of meat and vegetables at from twenty-two to twenty-five cents of the same money. Some of the boarding-houses offer two solid meals a day, without lodging, at from eighteen to twenty-four dollars a month. The less said about the quality of the meat the better. It too often tastes of the harness of its original state of nature. One favorite restaurant is a long square tube rather than an architectural structure, with a place for customers at one end, and at the other an open kitchen filled with the smoking food.

A ROSA BONHEUR OF THE FUTURE. (HENRY BACON.)

Gustave Doré has complained of the French academical system that it forces all minds through one mold, first taking out of the students the peculiar talent, the germ of individualism, as a weed to be cast away. The academical system certainly takes a good deal of the nonsense out of a young student, whatever else it puts in; and it is always interesting to observe the student's surprise during the earlier stages of this process. He generally brings with him to the school a larger stock of feeling than of drawing, and he thinks he can make pictures with the first, but he is quickly undeceived. In time, he gives up the rebellious struggle and he meekly accepts academical direction. There



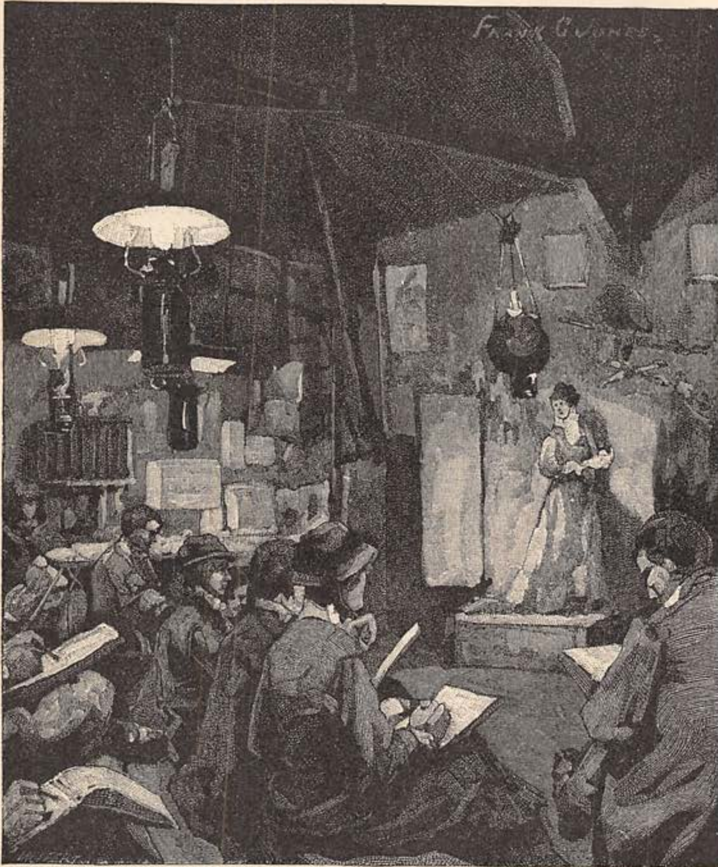
THE COPPERSMITH: A STUDY UNDER MUNKACSY. (C. Y. TURNER.)

are some few instances in which this original self, good or evil, is not to be put down either by the system or even by the man. I knew one American student, for instance, who had the curse of caricature upon him. Whenever he saw a new face it worked on him like a spell. He had caricatured all the men in his set; not that he wanted to do it, but because he could not help it. All his taste for art was for serious work. He worshiped Holbein, and if he could have helped it he would never have drawn a line to raise a laugh. He was really a strong man, but now and then he had to yield to what he considered his infirmity, like a reforming tippler returning to his old habits under stress of temptation. There is a story of his calling on a new man, with the air of a visitor who is half-ashamed of his errand. "Sit still," he said, sadly—"it wont take me long"; and without another word he drew out a pocket-book and fell to work on what proved to be a wonderful caricature of the freshman's face. It was a thing to take the conceit out of a sitter for half his life-time, and the sourness and ill-nature for the whole of it—it was so genial with intention and so alive with fun. "You see, I knew I should have to do it some time or other," he said, "and I thought I might get it over at once, if you didn't mind. Please keep it," he added, meekly handing his victim the sketch—"it is of no use to me now," and they parted the best friends in the world.

This life in the Latin Quarter is the life of the beginner in art. The men who have "arrived," as the French say, must be looked for in quite another part of Paris. Cross the exquisite little Park Monceau to the Avenue de Villiers, and you will see a row of palaces, finished models of the Gothic, the Italian-Renaissance, and many other beautiful and gorgeous styles. Meissonier lives in one of them, Detaille in another, Munkacsy in a third, and De Neuville and De Nittis are not far off. Very often they lay the foundation-stone of the building with the proceeds of their first picture, and they pay as they go on, the fine, sandy soil soaking up their millions like a sponge. Meissonier's place is not finished yet, because it takes so long to carve the wood-work from his own designs.

Admission to the Beaux-Arts is usually

obtained by application to a professor for leave to become an "aspirant" member of his class, or man taken on trial. Most of the Americans go to Gérôme. Students are beginning to avoid Cabanel, once the very prince of draughtsmen, but now grown lazy with age and success. Gérôme has a kindly manner, but an interview with him is rather impressive. He is one of the kings of art, and though kings at a distance may not appear very formidable to republican eyes, the presence has always its disturbing effect. The enliness, as a single glance at his painting might show. The place is so trim, like a room in a public museum, well swept and dusted, and with every "curiosity" in its place, that your first impulse is to ask for the catalogue. His kindness of manner is, perhaps, providentially bestowed to temper great severity of expression. He is lean and has high cheekbones, and strongly marked features generally, with wiry gray hair, a heavy mustache, and bright eyes, which look the brighter for their cavernous orbits. He has need of all



THE FOUR-O'CLOCK SKETCH-CLUB. (FRANK C. JONES.)

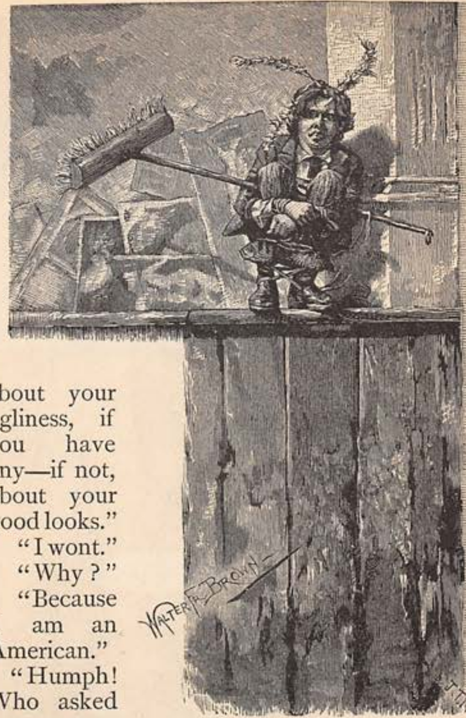
studio is on the Boulevard de Clichy, in a row of houses built for the use of artists. He does not live there, but at his luxurious house in the country, only now and then using it as a *pied à terre* for town. His work-room is splendidly furnished. He has made the most of his artistic properties—his suits of Roman armor, reproduced in electrotype from originals in the museums, his Japanese and other Eastern weapons, and, in short, all the tasteful accumulation of a long and prosperous artistic career. He has a horror of all slov- his good-nature to bear the boredom of his lot. If all aspirants were earnest and fairly competent, it would be well; but so many who come to him are neither one nor the other, but bring him daubs with the greatest assurance in the world, and expect to be immediately summoned to the *atelier*, and to be made the objects of his peculiar care.

The number of admissions at a professor's disposal in the Beaux-Arts is limited by the mere area of the place, while the applications are virtually without number.

This first interview over, the fortunate student's next meeting with Gérôme will be in "the antique," at a very early hour, when the professor is walking the great common hall in which all the aspirants work. His men rise as he approaches, and listen, with an air of profound humility, to his criticisms. They never get nearer to him than that, except at the annual dinner to which each *atelier* invites its professor, and here a man from Providence, Rhode Island, has been known to sing a negro song and dance a breakdown before the master's awful eye. On other days, it is the turn of other professors of painting—Cabanel, who has the air of a very superior *bourgeois;* or the ascetic-looking Lehmann, who seems to have stepped clean out of a painted window to take his class. This homage to the professor is the only payment at the Beaux-Arts, where the poorest lads of all countries get the first teaching of the age without the expenditure of a *sou.*

Some day the professor will tell the student —in answer, perhaps, to his second or third timid application—that he may leave "the antique" and enter the *atelier.* His period of probation is now passed, and this move into the *atelier* is the most important of the young fellow's life. In the first place, no matter what his standing in art has been at home, he is now convinced that he is a dunce. The best men from the American schools and from the British Royal Academy come here, and melt up, as it were, like wax before the fire. They have their theory of the superiority of this or that man at home, to say nothing of their opinion of themselves as his most successful imitators. The theory goes to nothing, and in six months it is an insult to remind them that they ever held it. No special influence kills it; it simply cannot live in the bright sunlight of French art. Then, again, the *atelier* is a state, while "the antique" is merely a territory. It has its rights, customs, privileges, and even its feelings. One *atelier* is very jealous of another. Gérôme's is in a condition of simmering war with Cabanel's, Cabanel's with Lehmann's, and so on. It has also its peculiar institutions, one of which is that the last new-comer regularly goes into bondage as a fag.

The fagging at the Beaux-Arts is the most novel of all new experiences for the transatlantic man. When he first hears of it he will probably ask for explanations from one of his set, and he must be easily satisfied if they are at all re-assuring. They are the less likely to be so, as he will get no sympathy in resistance, even from the old hands. "You have to be a slave to the fellows," he will be told, "to fetch and carry for them, wash the brushes, run errands, and stand any amount of chaff about your ugliness, if you have any—if not, about your good looks."



PUNISHMENT OF A NOUVEAU. (W. F. BROWN.)

"I wont."

"Why?"

"Because I am an American."

"Humph! Who asked you to come here? When you are at Rome—you know the proverb."

"I mean to fight for it."

"No, you wont do that."

"Why, do you mean to say I'm afr——"

"Most decidedly I do—afraid of being turned out of the school."

"Then I shall appeal to the professors."

"Sneak!"

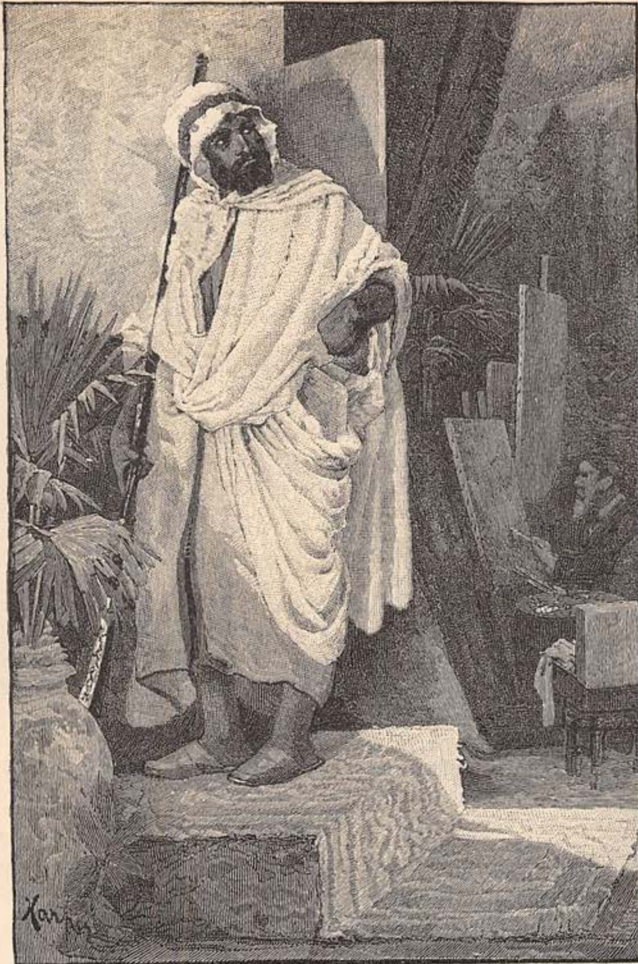
"What about passive resistance—a Quaker shake of the head, without a blow or another word?"

"They'll put you out of the *atelier.*"

"I'll come in again."

"They'll daub you with paint till you are like Sitting Bull, or truss you up—arms and legs together—worse than any sitting frog, and hoist you upon a shelf. And you'll howl to come down, I can tell you; it hurts. No, old fellow, it wont do. There are, no doubt, a hundred ways of being fagged, but there is only one good one at the Beaux-Arts—to bear it with a grin. They soon call off the pack when there is no sport."

The freshman will finally come to the same conclusion, and will go down to the *atelier* as secure against any outbreak of temper as good resolutions can make him. In this frame of mind he will seek out the *massier*, a supervisor, a student elected by the others to manage all their common affairs.



THE ARAB CHIEF: A STUDY UNDER MUNKACSY. (ST. JOHN HARPER.)

This is generally a big fellow, bearish in look and manner, his head covered with a tangle of long hair, and his glance the perfection of surly insolence as he surveys you from head to foot.

"*Nouveau*" (freshman), he says, contemptuously,—he never once calls you by your name,—"you know our customs. Have you brought the money for your footing?"

The freshman is prepared for this, and he hands him thirty francs as his contribution to the cost of the "plant" in the *atelier*, and twenty more for refreshments—the last with the easy grace with which a man empties his pockets for the benefit of a Sicilian brigand who has friends in the neighboring bushes.

"Now, *Nouveau*," he says, "we had better go out and fetch the things; some wine, cigars,—I smoke a two-*sous* weed myself; you can get some at one *sou* for the rest,—anything that's nice."

Very likely the freshman will not be prepared for this.

"What! take your orders for my treat! That's rather rough."

And who will blame him if he gets red in the face?

"*Nouveau*," says the *massier*, complacently, "is the treat for us or for you? *Oh, ces braves Yankees! Mille tonnerres!*"

"Bravo, young Barnum. Don't you go."

"*Vive l' Indépendance des États Unis!*" cry half a dozen *faux frères*, whose faces are hid in the forest of easels. The true one, of whom he first sought counsel, and who, in spite of his affectation of being nonchalantly out of it, has all this time been watching his countryman from a distant corner of the studio, simply shakes his head and frowns. The *nouveau* understands him at once, smiles sweetly on the *massier*, and goes out for the things.

In half an hour he comes back, heavy

STUDY FROM LIFE. (FRANK FOWLER.)

laden. There is everything eatable and uneatable, including in the last category cheap French cheese. His entry is heralded with a great shout, which is the signal for the suspension of work in the *atelier*.

They drink his health, the health of George Washington, and the health of Mrs. Clarkson —the heroine of one of Dumas's plays, and about the only other person, with the exception of Mr. Barnum, of whose name they have ever heard in connection with the United States.

"He is a good *nouveau*," says one, without looking at the unhappy giver of the feast; "at least, I should judge so by his sardines."

"I don't like his nose," says another, with the same absolutely impersonal air. "There's crime in it; he might go wrong at any moment."

"And to think he was once a savage."

"Hush! They carry knives in their boots."

"Now, *Nouveau*," says the *massier*, as the feast is in its last stage of sour apples, and the pupils are going back to their easels, "you must sing a song."

"You would not understand it."

"*Nouveau*, we understand everything here; go on."

"I will see you hanged first. I am tired of this foolery; the play's played out."

This in English — probably because he means it so much.

"What does he say?" shriek a dozen men at once. "We don't speak Iroquois."

"He says he will do it with the greatest pleasure in life," says that good angel in the corner, coming forward and looking the freshman steadily in the face.

"Do it properly, *Nouveau*," shouts the *massier*. "Get up on the model stand."

He gets up.

"Oh, he's singing with his coat on!" says somebody. "That's pretty cool."

He takes off his coat.

"If you will only turn your back on us,

Nouveau," says another, "that will be perfect. I'm a believer in the evil eye."

In this way the freshman sings the first three stanzas of "Johnny comes Marching Home."

"Very good, *Nouveau*," says the *massier*. "Now go and fetch some black soap to clean the brushes, and that will do for to-day."

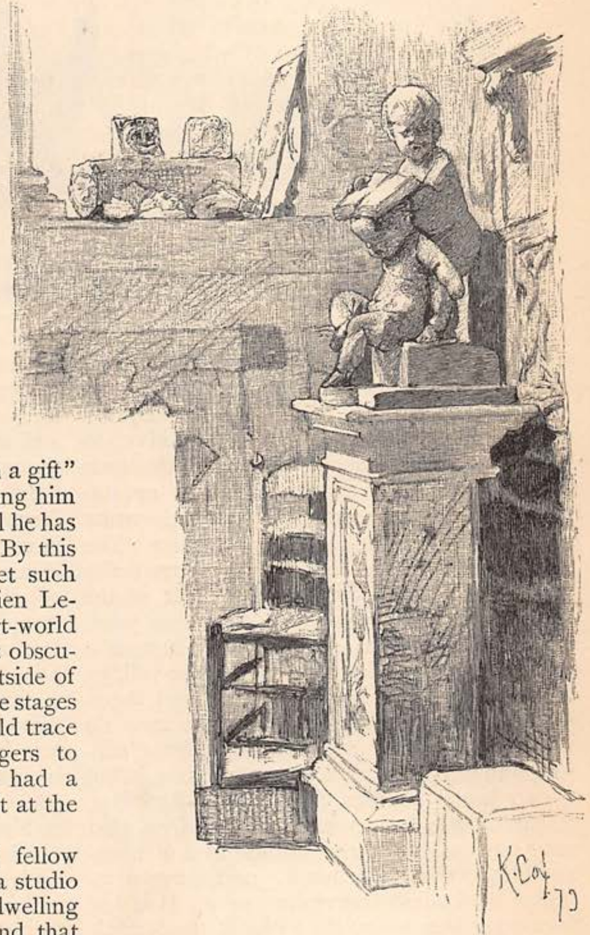
In less than a month from that time, the *nouveau* is helping to serve another *nouveau* in the same way.

But the morning's work at the *atelier* is not enough for a man who wants to get on, and so, to fill up time, the student often goes to a private school outside; a well-known one is Julian's, where Boulanger, Lefebvre, and Tony Fleury teach. At such schools you can enter for a part of the day, or all day, just as you like, at fees ranging from about three or four dollars a month to eight dollars. Many leading artists, like Bonnat, Laurens, Munkacsy, and Carolus Duran, take pupils at about the same moderate rate. This meets the wants of men who cannot get into the Beaux-Arts, or who do not care to try, because they think it too academical, or object to its many holidays, or fancy a particular master outside. The man who has reached this stage should be happy if he lead a life without events for the next six or seven years. He ought to go on steadily as though he were working out a mere apprenticeship to some common trade. No one would wonder at his toiling at tailoring for something like this period without beginning to sell. But it is not so easy to make people understand that he must show at least as much patience in the infinitely more difficult trade of an artist. The want of a steadily pursued early training, gone through day by day, like a school-boy's task, generally means sure failure in art. Most men have to begin to sell too early, and they drift from pupilage into mastership on wretchedly insufficient preparation. They seldom recover themselves. Their work hereafter is labor and sorrow to themselves at least, if not to the world as well, being wholly without that spontaneous ease of execution which a great thinker on canvas must attain if he is to think in peace. It will be useless to try to make good the loss later on, when the painter is in the open market of production. A soldier cannot learn his drill on the field of battle. Gustave Doré has all his life been trying to do this, and, of course, he never will do it. He was led into a revolt against the school system, as a boy, by his own fatal facility. He only half-learned to draw, and he did not learn to paint even so much as that. The consequence is, that every penny-whipster of the Beaux-Arts may "take his sword" in both. Some men are not misled by vanity, as he was, but by hard necessity, and at one time the Americans contributed most largely to this class. They were stimulated to production by premature demands from home for a "picture." Their call to art was not always believed in by fathers who had won their money in other ways, and only a grudging consent was given to their trying the experiment at all. It was usually accompanied by

OLD FARM-HOUSE IN SWITZERLAND: A VACATION STUDY. (C. E. DU BOIS.)

the condition that within one or two years they should begin to earn their own living by the brush. Men in the Quarter used sometimes—do sometimes still—read the most heartbreaking letters from extremely well-meaning people at home, urging them to commit what is virtually suicide in art by rushing into this crude production. The worst thing in the letters was the eminent good meaning with which they were written. It was not that the writers themselves were unable to keep up their remittances for the board of a lad in Paris; they simply thought that for his sake they ought to be unwilling; they were steadily killing him as an artist in the firm faith that they were saving him as a man. The French are rarely so foolish; their worst Philistines know and admit that art-teaching must take its time. They derive this conviction in part from their national tradition of taste, in part from that larger belief that nothing grows of itself—a belief which, for good and for evil, has shaped their whole history as a nation. Even the poor old *concierge* and his wife, who scrape a few hundred francs together out of their savings to keep their "boy with a gift" at the Beaux-Arts, never think of asking him for any pecuniary account of himself till he has studied to manhood at their expense. By this system, and by this alone, can we get such astonishing successes as that of Bastien Lepage, who, from the first, stormed the art-world with master-work, and left the deepest obscurity for a blaze of renown. No one outside of his student circle could remember all the stages of his growth as an artist; no one could trace him from mere pot-hooks and hangers to his free running hand. The public had a wonder and a miracle placed before it at the beginning.

It is a proud day for the young fellow when he gives up his lodging to take a studio—a place which has everything a dwelling should not have except a top-light, and that makes up for all. The studio is so professional that no self-respecting youth can long live without it. The moment it is opened, the minor professionals soon find out the tenant. Models thrust cards under the door—Angelo Carpino, who announces that his line is the heads of apostles, and Salem, of Timbuctoo, who stands for sultans or other miscreants of the East. Those who could not afford a model used, at one time, to join the four-o'clock sketch-class, where students of both sexes met to pose for one another in turn. Home magazines, newspapers, and books lay on a side-table in the class-room: it was a regular American institution *in partibus*. The time allowed for the sketch was just one hour, and sometimes fairly good work was done. The elected manager posed the model, and called a short rest every quarter of an hour. The proceedings were conducted with railway punctuality; and the model's mute appeal for relief was never allowed to take effect until the very second-hand had completed its journey. But this was, after all, too much of an American institution: some of the best men kept out of it for fear of missing the influences for which they came to France; and it is now no more.



A BIT IN THE CHAPEL. (K. COX.)

Once a month comes the exciting *concours de place*—a keen competition for the best place in the *atelier*. Men send in life-studies made since the last trial, and the professor looks over and numbers them according to merit. Then the men assemble, and as their

VACATION DAYS. (C. E. DU BOIS.)

numbers are called, they walk in and choose the places they mean to occupy for the rest of the month. At the end of July, the Beaux-Arts breaks up for the summer holiday, to spread all over Europe. Some of the men go to Switzerland, not to look for mountains, but for quiet lowland landscape worthy of England or the south of France. The artist's horror of the conventional is gradually leading to rather gross ill-treatment of the Swiss peaks, the Swiss goats, the Swiss peasants, and the *Ranz des Vaches*. There is a whole world of quiet rural life in the valleys, as yet unexplored by the tourist, and therefore dear to the painter. But most men do not go even so far as Switzerland for a subject, and the limit of their wanderings is but a two hours' journey from Paris—Barbizon. So much has been written of Barbizon, that once quiet artists' retreat in the forest of Fontainebleau, that it is hardly necessary to attempt a detailed description of it. It is fast becoming like one of the Cities of the Miracle of Italy or South America: every house in it is more or less of a shrine. Even Siron's eating-house, which was once simply a house in which to eat, and no more, has now that semi-sacred character, and in a few years it may become something of profanation to eat there at all. Many great men have broken bread at Siron's—often the bread of sorrow, for the shades of rural Barbizon could tell their tale of artistic want, poverty, neglect. The sketches with which its walls are covered are, in many instances, part of this tale, and not a few of them have been left as payment of tavern-scores. Others are contributions of gratitude from men who have passed out of Siron's poor and unknown, and who have come back in the maturity of fame to leave their mark on the wall in some brilliant improvisation. This French trick of mural decoration by genius is not confined to Barbizon, nor to one art. Wherever painters assemble amid the dozens of villages outside Paris, you will find such traces of them in the local restaurant; and in the neighborhood of Étretat, where poets have met as well as painters, quite a volume of first-rate album-verse has been left in the visitors' books of a farm-house, by men who now hold the highest places in literature. It is a pretty custom, and long may it last; but one could wish to see it brought to an end at Siron's, where recent contributions have not been up to the high level of the past. With too many men, now, the sketch on the wall is rather the object than the accident of their visit. This is only another way of saying that Barbizon has become very self-conscious—as self-conscious as modern Rome in regard to the value of its ruins and its rags. Barbizon lives on art, and the peasants' wits have become so sharpened in consequence, that the simplicity which made them famous is now becoming little more than a pose. There may be *figurants* of the forest as well as of the theater. They still contrive to dress with some success for threadbare effects of the picturesque, but, do what they may, they can hardly give themselves the heavy, ox-like gaze of their fathers that Millet drew.

These had it by nature; their sons often preserve it only as a tradition of a good trick in trade. They have been to the village school; they read the "Petit Journal"; they have seen the world,—that is to say, Paris during the *fête* of the 14th of July,—and the glare of its illuminations has made them forever wide-awake. In a few years, their whole generation will be as unreal constituents of the rural scene as were the courtiers of Versailles sitting to Watteau.

Millet's home is interesting as a reminiscence of simplicity's golden age. It would hardly be possible now for a painter to live in such a house, even at Barbizon. There would be sure to be more of Paris in his surroundings. simply lodged, and it may be questioned whether Millet could have done a single stroke of work under such a roof.

The school re-opens in October, and the student whose heart is in his work will find that the holiday has been too long. It is, in fact, a professor's rather than a student's holiday, for the young men are generally working all the time they play. The holiday is only work out-of-doors; and when they tire of the quiet of Nature's work-room, it is about time to return to the excitement of the school. And the Beaux-Arts, remember, is, in its way, just as exciting as Wall street. The number of prizes offered by individuals or by the Government is legion, and it covers in its

MILLET'S STUDIO AND HOUSE AT BARBIZON. (C. A. VANDERHOOF.)

Rosa Bonheur's retreat at Thomery, near Fontainebleau, is a mansion fit for a retired millionaire. One bit of it dates from the end of the seventeenth century, and all the rest very much from the end of the nineteenth, though this looks, in point of style, the oldest of all. The lady's aim is the same as poor Millet's—quiet; but she secures it in a far different way. Her artistic independence is intrenched behind a large court-yard and front gates, flanked by a porter's lodge, where man or mastiff is on duty night and day. In fact, her lines of defense are the best known to modern social fortification. Art is no doubt well, and in a sense becomingly, lodged there; but it is not

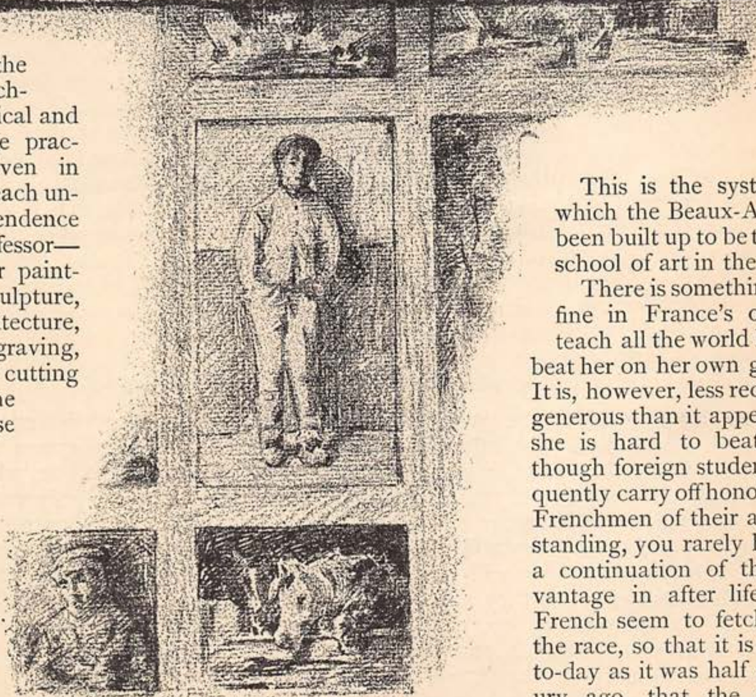
list of subjects every detail of artistic merit. There are monthly competitions, as we have seen, in each *atelier;* and each *atelier*, before the break-up for the summer holiday, gives medals for the work of the whole year. Then there is the struggle for admission to Yvon's class. This class is purely for drawing; they do not paint there, but the drawing is the very rigor of the game. The competition is one of the largest at the Beaux-Arts: it is open to all comers, and sometimes as many as five hundred men enter the lists. Their numbers are soon thinned by successive examination in perspective, anatomy, history, and ornament until only seventy remain for

IN THE COURT OF THE BEAUX-ARTS. (T. ROBINSON.)

the final heat—a drawing from the figure, which has to be finished from head to foot in six days, of two hours' work a day. The seventy drawings are afterward rated according to merit, and to be rated number one is no empty honor.

By and by the medalist of Yvon will be competing for the Grand Prize of Rome—the full if not the final flower of state aid. The competition is restricted to Frenchmen who have taken medals in the school, and its object is to discover the absolutely best man of the year, in the academical sense. The weeding-out process begins in the very first stage, the crowd of competitors being reduced to manageable proportions of twenty or thirty by giving them a subject to sketch in oils, and rejecting all but the best sketches. Then the chosen few compete again among themselves on a figure in oils, and this brings down their number to ten. Then the ten men, neither more nor less, enter the decisive stage of the fight. The first thing is to go *en loge*—in other words, into a studio provided at the school for each competitor, where he is to live and work for the next three months. This is supposed to insure the requisite privacy and seclusion. The moving-in day is one of the sights of the Quarter. The ten, with the better part of their earthly belongings,—easels, painting-tools, books, and bedding,—laboring like nomadic Kirghiz across the court-yard, once *en loge*, their final subject is given to them, and in one day they must sketch out their idea of the treatment, and from this idea they must not depart. Then they settle down to work the rough sketch into a finished picture, and for three months each studio is as a monk's cell, shut to the world, until the name of the man who has done the best picture is announced as the winner of the Grand Prize of Rome. This is no barren honor; it gives the holder four years in Rome to study the masterpieces of ancient art, his studio and models being paid for by the state, and 4000 francs a year for other expenses. He must stay in Rome all the time, except under special leave of absence, and he must send every year something done by his own hand—either a copy or an original—to the Beaux-Arts. If these *envois de Roma* are very good, they are bought by the state. Even on his return, the artist still has the state by his side. He may compete for the honorable mentions and medals of the *Salon*, or for its prize, which gives him another monetary recompense, not by any means to be despised.

Of the nine hundred and seventy students at the Beaux-Arts at the time of a recent numbering, two hundred and sixty-three were painters, one hundred and seventy-one sculptors, and five hundred and thirty-six architects. In addition to these, there were three hundred "aspirants" trying to qualify for

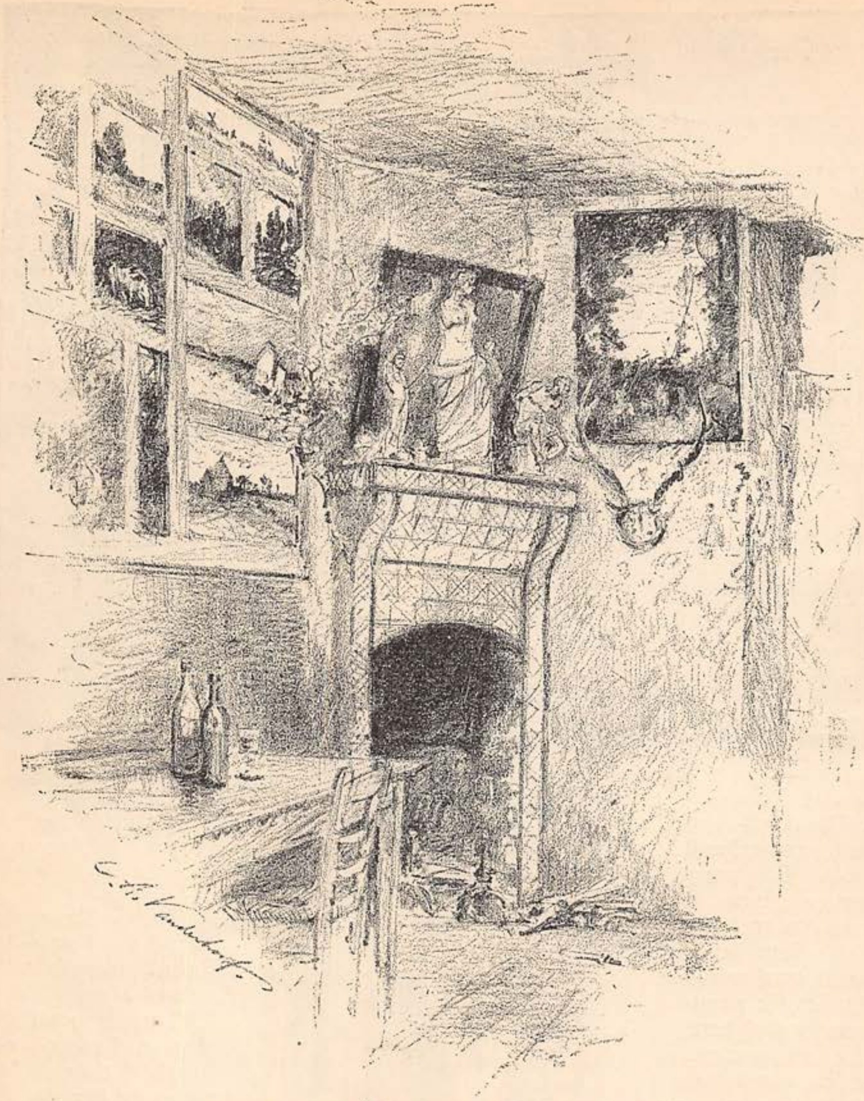


SKETCHES IN SIRON'S DINING-ROOM. (FRANK C. JONES.)

admission to the school. The teaching is both practical and theoretical. The practical part is given in eleven studios, each under the superintendence of a noted professor—three studios for painting, three for sculpture, three for architecture, one for line-engraving, and one for the cutting of gems. The theoretical course consists of lectures on subjects useful to artists, such as history, literature, archæology, æsthetics, anatomy, perspective, mathematics, mechanics, descriptive geometry, physics, chemistry, and even the building laws. French students must be between fifteen and thirty, but for foreigners there is no limit of age.

This is the system by which the Beaux-Arts has been built up to be the first school of art in the world.

There is something very fine in France's offer to teach all the world how to beat her on her own ground. It is, however, less recklessly generous than it appears, for she is hard to beat; and though foreign students frequently carry off honors from Frenchmen of their age and standing, you rarely hear of a continuation of that advantage in after life. The French seem to fetch up in the race, so that it is as true to-day as it was half a century ago, that the world's leaders in nearly every department of fine art are of this nation. If we divide Art into two great branches—the way of doing the thing and the thing to be done, we shall find no pos-



A CORNER OF SIRON'S DINING-ROOM. (C. A. VANDERHOOF.)

sibility of dispute as to the superiority of the French in the first. The other question, as to what picture they paint, is still open to considerable discussion. But they certainly teach a man the whole grammar and rhetoric of his art to perfection. They will not put up with slovenly drawing; they will not put up with careless composition; they will insist on knowledge and purpose in every stroke—in a word, on thoroughness. In so many other schools, and notably in the English, right tendency is too often allowed to stand for right method. Critics look too much at the sentiment of the picture, apart from its execution, and painters accordingly get their vicious practice of painting wholly "for the heart." The French abhor the word, at least in their art-course; and, oddly enough, while no nation is so prone to excess of sentiment on other subjects, on this one, where the temptation would seem to be greatest, it shows a most exemplary self-control. In this Stoic virtue, indeed, French art goes rather too far, for to tell the plain truth about the Beaux-Arts, the man who has faithfully followed its six or seven years' course is likely to come out a terrible scorner of every human emotion. But we ought to be glad, after all, that the French have still some faults in art, or other nations would have no opportunities. And who knows? America's road to peculiar distinction may one day be found in the union of a perfect sentiment with a perfect *technique*.