

## AMERICAN PAINTERS IN PASTEL.



IN THE LAUNDRY. (PASTEL BY ROBERT BLUM.)

THE time is not long past when, if the average educated American spoke of pictures, he meant oil paintings alone; if of prints, steel engravings only. Art—true art, “high art”—was confined for him to these two methods; and he would not have understood that certain so-called minor branches, of whose existence he was dimly conscious, might properly be ranked beside them. He would not have understood that each of these, however limited its scope, has yet an individual importance of its own, an aim, a character, and an outcome quite peculiar to itself.

But in all art there are two great factors: the mind that speaks, and the medium—the materials—through which it speaks. And in pictorial art the various mediums are extremely potent, each limiting with decision the effects that may be wrought in it, and so prescribing with authority those which should be sought. No painter, however great his mastery of oils,

can do everything by their sole aid. To secure certain effects, he must perforce seek other help, and find it in some one of those humbler branches which until lately were ignored or despised by us. And so it is with engraving: etching, mezzotinting, and wood-engraving have each a province far beyond the power of steel and burin to embrace.

Great as has been our advance in oil painting within recent years, I think our most notable evidence of progress lies in the fact that these minor branches are no longer either unfamiliar or despised; that we have turned with eagerness to many methods of interpretation our fathers did not touch. It is but seventeen years since our Water-color Society was formed, and only five or six years since its exhibitions have attracted either much public attention or the hands of our strongest men. Now these exhibitions are perhaps the most popular of the season, and hundreds of



varied works annually fill their walls. Middle-aged readers will remember what it was that gave the first impulse to water-colors in this country—the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1853. If they contrast the astonished interest then excited by a small group of English aquarelles with the number and popularity of our own productions at this moment, they will realize how our ideas of art have broadened and how our practice has developed.

I need hardly speak of the recent revival of wood-engraving in this country; of how it has grown within fifteen years from an unintelligent, unambitious craft—only one or two men practicing it in an artistic way—into a full-fledged art, into a truly national development. Etching is a still younger branch with us. This year we had but our fifth annual exhibition (the third with a separate catalogue), yet our etchers, too, are numerous, eager, and industrious. Look again at our collections of work in black and white, consider the variety of processes displayed, and think how many of them have only recently been made known to us. How long is it since charcoal, for example, has been recognized as a valuable means of expression—as something more than a mere stage in a student's practice while color is beyond his reach? Only, I think, since William Hunt explained it to his Boston pupils.

The fact that we have thus eagerly taken up these varied mediums does not of itself, I know, prove an actual growth in our artistic feeling. Further evidence is needed to show that our innovations are due to something more than a mere craving for novelty on the part of the artist or his public. But I think it may be said that we have taken them up not only eagerly, but intelligently. The number of our water-colors is not a more patent fact than their steady growth in general excellence—the testimony they afford that our painters realize the proper aims of the art, and so its best methods and most desirable results. If they are not all able to produce admirable aquarelles, yet taken as a whole they show their perception of what these ought to be. They are on the right road, though its ultimate goal has been reached but by a few of their swiftest runners.

So it is, I think, with our etching; and so, to a notable degree, with our wood-engraving. Here the goal we set ourselves is in many respects quite new—a goal we have ourselves discovered and proclaimed. But none could be more legitimate and worthy; and our results are not only so novel, but already so valuable and persuasive, that they have begun to affect the practice of the art in all foreign lands.

We are not overconfident, then, in feeling

that our recently acquired impulse toward variety in medium is genuine, and not factitious; is a vital effort, and not a mere imported fashion, a mere expression of impatience with the beaten track, a mere search for novelty and change. I think we failed to appreciate these arts in other days partly because they were comparatively unfamiliar to our eyes, but chiefly because we felt no desire for the expressional facilities they offer. Absolutely unknown they were not, but their germs lay dormant till we awoke to a wider wish for self-expression. As soon as we really wanted to say many things through art, its language became of interest to our eyes, and we scanned its various dialects to find the one best suited to the moment's need. Great ideas, intense feelings, artistic messages of a deep and potent sort, I confess, we do not often speak as yet. But most of what we *do* say is appropriate to the form of speech selected. And this is the important because the fundamental fact. It proves that our instinct is not inartistic, and warrants the drawing of much prophetic comfort from the future.

For these reasons we cannot but rejoice that still another medium has recently found favor with our younger workmen. The first annual exhibition of the "Society of Painters in Pastel" was held in New York in the month of March, and its catalogue showed some sixty entries. Scarcely one of these lacked interest, and as a whole they proved that their painters had understood the nature of the method—not only its technical management, but its expressional possibilities—and had striven to conform themselves thereto.

A brief history of pastel painting and a brief explanation of its character may not be out of place as a preface to my notice of these works, since the art is unfamiliar to American eyes, and since its range, moreover, is commonly misconceived even by those who have seen its earlier examples preserved in foreign galleries.

It is a question among artists, I believe, whether pastel should be called a process of drawing or of painting. "Painting" usually implies the use of some liquid medium; but pastels are simply cylinders of dry color which are handled much after the manner of the charcoal stick, the substance worked upon being commonly rough paper, to the "tooth" or burr of which the color-particles adhere. And yet it does not seem quite right to speak of drawings in pastel, partly because of their color and partly because of the way in which their effects are wrought. "Drawing," though it must often be used with less precision, really implies work with the *point*. One draws with the pencil or the etcher's needle, and



the effects one seeks are effects of *line*, not mass. But with pastels one seeks effects of mass, not line. Either the color is completely blended with the stump or fingers, as was often the case in former days, or, if one uses the harder crayons most in favor now and their strokes remain distinct, these are comparable rather to the brush-marks of a painter than to the true lines of a draughtsman. The point too is used in pastels upon occasion, but subordinately—never conspicuously in the most artistic work. If, then, we must have a strict definition, we may call the process a sort of *dry painting*.

Since the color is not incorporated with the ground, but simply adheres to its surface, it will be seen that pastel work is of necessity somewhat fragile, yet not so fragile as is commonly supposed. Fixative may be used upon it, though with some danger to the color. And even without this, if it is covered with a glass and hung where no damp can reach it, there need be no cause for fear. Thus protected, a pastel should have, indeed, a surer chance of immortality than a work in oils, for it has no such troublous elements within itself. Its apparently vaporous tones are quite unchangeable, whereas we all know how Time the Destroyer finds a mighty ally in the slow transformation of pigments mixed with oil and varnish.

No color method is so useful to outdoor workers as is this. Since dry tints cannot readily be mixed, the pastel painter gets his ready-made from the hand of the color-man in an almost endless variety. They are light and portable, and always ready for instant, rapid use, without the necessity of any pause for dryings. And an added advantage (in which water-colors at least cannot claim to share) lies in the ease with which corrections may be made. A mistake can be effaced by friction, or, as the color is opaque, a superimposed tint retains its purity, and quite obliterates all that may lie beneath.

It is impossible to say just when pastels were first invented. They were used in a rather tentative fashion by Leonardo da Vinci and some of his near successors—sometimes alone in rather slight productions, but more often for the addition of color-notes to work in monochrome. It was not until the eighteenth century, however, that pastel painting attained its full stature as an independent art. Many artists of that time are known to-day by their pastels only—artists like Latour and Léotard and Vivien and Caffé and Rosalba Carriera. Others who were great in oils were great also in pastels, like Chardin, whose portraits of himself and his wife are, with La-

tour's "Madame de Pompadour" (all now in the Louvre collections), perhaps the most triumphant essays the history of this earlier development can show.

Portraiture was preëminently the art of the time, and most eighteenth-century pastels fall within its category. As the crayons were then used, no medium could have been in greater sympathy with the spirit of the age of Louis Quinze, when powder and pearls and soft rosy flesh, and clothes of pink and blue and white, made up the ideal of beauty—when grace not strength, when charm not force, when buoyancy not depth, when sensibility not earnestness, characterized both life and art. Every traveler will remember the rooms in the Dresden gallery which are filled with pastel portraits of the friends and favorites of King Augustus, and of the Venetian fellow-townfolk of Rosalba. How appropriate seems the dainty, facile, fragile, rather superficial process to the humantypes it shows, and to the epoch which they vivify for us!

Yet, charming as are the pastels of this age, they do not reveal the whole of which the art is capable. So plentiful were they, however, and so perfect in their way, that they long blinded the world to further possibilities which lay behind them. As then practiced, the art was characterized by elaborate finish, carefully blended tones, soft effects, and a gently florid or a rather pale and chalky scheme of color. It seemed fit only for a super-elegant, somewhat shallow, and sentimental sort of work, unfit for spirited masculine intentions, for bold and rapid handling, for brilliant or emphatic color. Thus, when a robuster art arose upon the ruins of the shattered eighteenth century,—when the school of David came with its sobriety and dignity, and the school of Delacroix with its fire and force,—pastels were almost wholly given up. They only lingered humbly in the background, as when Prud'hon and Delacroix, for instance, used them to make hasty notes or to plan out their schemes of color. But later Millet took them up more seriously, and worked for a year or two almost wholly by their help. And to his example is chiefly due, I think, the renaissance of the art in its altered shape to-day. Mr. Shaw of Boston has a roomful of Millet's pastels, which are not only delightful in themselves, but most instructive, when their spirit is contrasted with the spirit of such work as Latour's. Here, as I have said, softly blended effects were produced by a marvelously tender, delicate, and patient touch. But Millet's work does not differ more widely from Latour's in subject-matter and sentiment than it does in treatment. Under his hand the medium which had seemed fit



for boudoir use alone — a hot-house plant of art, a lovely, gracious, sympathetic, but rather nervous and effeminate form of speech — grew rapid, vigorous, direct, and masculine enough. Millet's color, too, is stronger, though for brilliancy he did not strive.

Of very late years the art has been widely practiced, especially in France, pushing still further the qualities which Millet gave it, and adding to their list the most pronounced and vivid color. Mr. Whistler gave it fresh impulse and popularity with his exquisite, subtle, yet freely handled and brilliantly colored Venetian studies. And finally, De Nittis showed that it was suitable for the most ambitious efforts. Single figures of large size were common, it is true, in the eighteenth century; but De Nittis paints elaborate compositions, in which the strongest color, the most difficult effects, and the most powerful handling are attempted. I remember one of them that showed a scene at a race-course with almost life-size groups — a marvel of technical audacity, a work that was remarkable, above all, for the strength which had so long lain unsuspected in these little cylinders of paint. In such pastels De Nittis seems to say: "See! I will take this medium which you have called charming but nothing more, which you think appropriate for rosy babes and powdered beauties only, and I will give you in it everything *but* charm — vigor, decision, rapidity, and breadth — and will paint you all subjects save those you deem most fit for it, even a mass of black umbrellas under a gray down-pour and over a turf of vivid green." He does, indeed, touch the outer limit of the art on the side of impetuosity and strength, and his example has visibly molded current practice. The pastel painters of to-day differ widely among themselves, but more, perhaps, are followers of De Nittis than of Whistler, while the eighteenth-century manner is entirely out of favor.

It will not take long to tell the history of the art in our own country. I can think of but one man who essayed it here in antebellum days — the Italian Fagnani, whose small portrait-heads are still preserved in a hundred New York homes. But not, we may assume, for strictly artistic reasons, since they have little cleverness or charm — are niggled little drawings, carefully worked up with the point, rather than true pastel paintings. In later years a few pastels were from time to time inspired by a sight of the new work abroad. But the public heard nothing of them, for no exhibition would grant them hospitality. They belonged to no recognized category — were neither the fish, the flesh, nor the good red herring of art. So, continuing to grow in

favor with the profession, they have been driven to set up in the world for themselves — a fact we need not at all deplore, since a specialized exhibition is apt to incite to special effort, and since its appeal to the public eye is peculiarly direct and clear. This first collection of our "Society of Painters in Pastel" was but modestly heralded and was opened in an unfamiliar gallery; yet it attracted much attention, and undoubtedly went far to explain to intelligent eyes the peculiar characteristics of the process. Let us now briefly review its contents and see what those characteristics are.

At a first hasty glance the pictures looked very like an assemblage of works in oil, so analogous were they in their varieties of size, of subject-matter, and of color-scheme. But upon deeper examination this resemblance did not prove to be of a fundamental sort. As soon as we studied the process we began to see which were its most valuable because most *characteristic* results. We began to feel that, whatever his theme, the wise pastel-painter will choose from the mingled qualities of nature those which are most in sympathy with his material, from her multitudinous effects those which it best can render; and we began to learn that these are not quite identical with the qualities and the effects most consonant to the more familiar brush. We missed some charms which that brush can give, but we gained by others that it cannot imitate.

If we looked first at the landscapes, for example, we were particularly struck by Mr. Ross Turner's "Fiesole" — by the refinement of its feeling, the tenderness of its tone, the sensitiveness of its color, the suavity of its gradations, the pulsating vitality of its light. And we noted, too, how delicate was the manipulation which yet had not been blended into insipidity or smoothness. An oil might have been more forcible, a water-color more vivacious, but nothing save a charcoal could have been so deliciously modulated, so soft and yet so firm in substance; and here we had lovely color in addition to all that charcoal might have given. Turning now to Mr. Harry Chase's "North Sea, Holland," we found something of amore emphatic kind. The touch was bolder and broader, the color more positive, the effect more striking. But here, too, a delightful softness of texture had been preserved, in spite of the admirable way in which the quality of the water had been rendered. And it is this softness (which is not in the least akin to weakness or flimsiness, or to what painters call "sweetness") that enables pastel to give with unrivaled felicity certain of nature's features — such, for example, as her spring-time colors and as her atmosphere,



especially when it is in a hazy, misty mood, when its light is diffused and veiled rather than direct and vigorous.

But nowhere is this peculiar softness more at home than in the painting of fair human flesh; nowhere have its results a more distinct and inimitable value of their own. The actual material nature of pastel—the impalpable sort of bloom which marks its surface—has much in common with the character of such flesh. And then it is possible, in this medium, to elaborate with such nicety, and yet keep one's handling so very fresh and pure! Take, for instance, Miss Hecker's half-length of a girl in black against a blue background, which, in spite of many that were signed by more familiar names, seemed to me the gem among the portraits. Nothing could exceed the thoroughness with which all subtleties of modeling, color, and expression had been followed out; yet there was no niggling, no porcelain-like over-elaboration of the surface. Each of the delicately "telling" crayon strokes remained distinct and vital, and the effect was as spirited and artistic as it was complete. Nor was there, by the way, a more brilliant bit of technique on the wall than we saw in the lady's fluffy feather fan. I do not know how well Miss Hecker can do in oil, but in any case she will hardly make a mistake if she keeps faithfully to pastel. Such a portrait as this should not stand alone while we count so many maidens whose faces are a type of what pastel can best interpret.

Some of Mr. Beckwith's children's heads were very lovely; light but not chalky in tone, and extremely refined but not weak in workmanship. At the end of the scale, in the direction of audacity, was Mr. Chase's portrait of himself, as vigorous and vehement a piece of work, both in color and handling, as any painter need desire to show in any medium whatsoever.

Looking now at the collective work of each artist, it seemed to me as though Mr. Blum deserved the honor of first place, not so much because his pictures were very diverse and very clever, as because he showed in some of them a deeper intention, a more original mental impulse, than any of his fellows. We had had so much of mere clever workmanship in recent years; we had had so much of themes selected for their technical opportunities only; we had had so much of decorative frivolity, of shallow effectiveness, of picturesque futility; so many studio interiors with carefully careless accessories; so many models that were palpably nothing else; so much of the seductive froth and foam of manual dexterity, and so little keenness of artistic insight or spontaneity of artistic feeling, that we were thankful indeed

for the fresh and genuine impulse that had prompted some of Mr. Blum's pastels—and doubly thankful, since superficial work might so easily have satisfied himself, and all but satisfied his friends, when he was trying a new process, extremely fascinating on its merely technical side.

His three chief pictures were groups of working-girls—actual transcripts from the local life about us, and from a side of that life which offers rich opportunities which have hitherto been neglected. They were no less truthful than novel, and were truthful in the best fashion—with a veracity touched by artistic idealization, but not transformed by it out of true verisimilitude. The artist had worked as an artist should,—realistically, but judiciously, I might almost say *judicially*,—keeping to the facts of nature, but carefully choosing from among them those which would best insure artistic felicity in his result. One of these pictures, reproduced in our engraving, showed a group of young laundresses at work; another, a room full of busy seamstresses; and the third, called "The Sisters," two girls sewing by a window. All were unconventional and apparently unstudied in arrangement, rapid, frank, and nervous in handling, and charming though subdued in color. All had a gray scheme and a rather light tonality, cleverly vivified in the two first-named by touches of brilliant yet harmonizing color; and in all three the light shone strongly from the pictured windows toward the spectator's eye. Such a device often savors of affectation, or of a desire to secure effectiveness at the expense of simplicity and repose. But here it was so well managed that it seemed as natural and unforced as any more conventional expedient. It was merely an evidence of that artistic *choice* to which I have referred—a choice which is praiseworthy or blamable, not according as it is conventional or eccentric, but according as the result confirms or does not confirm its rightness. Another evidence of apt selection lay in the character of the figures themselves—in the grace and charm that had been given without taking them outside the bounds of faithful portraiture. All our working-girls are not ugly, coarse, or vulgar. Far from it, as the first street or shop will prove. And we owe Mr. Blum a debt for the clear yet discreet way in which he marked the fact—for his protest against the oft-supposed necessity of painting ugliness whenever we turn from "imaginative" work to the transcribing of our every-day contemporary life. The spirited facial expressiveness which he always manages to give his figures, even when they are most conventional in conception, was another



merit in these pictures, and was further illustrated in a piquant little "Study in Red and Gray," which showed a saucy face smiling over the back of a chair.

A single figure in white by Mr. Francis Jones had no originality of invention to recommend it, but was nevertheless charming in sentiment, and from a technical point of view a truly exquisite bit of work—with a fine delicacy in the perception and rendering of difficult values that could hardly be overpraised. And Mr. Blashfield's "Sibyl," though not very successful in its main intention, gave an interesting proof that pastels can interpret smooth and shining surfaces as well as those of softer and opaquer kinds.

These were not all the good works on the wall, for, as I have said, scarcely one of the sixty failed to interest or please to some degree. But a mere *catalogue raisonné* would be of little value here. It is more important that I should turn once more to the testimony given by the exhibition as a whole with regard to the specialties and the limitations of the process.

It showed us that pastel is a very flexible medium, in so far as execution is concerned. In some specimens the handling was extremely refined, sensitive, and subtle; in others it was very dexterous, spirited, and crisp; in others strong and self-assured, or as broad and fluent as it well could be without falling into absolute manual license. We saw that delicacy with pastel need not mean feebleness; that accuracy need not mean hardness; that breadth need not mean diffuseness, or swiftness insufficiency. We saw, in a word, that technical individuality had here as wide a field as when the brush is used. And yet we could not ignore a difference in the technical results of the two arts. We could not fail to see that the delicacy, accuracy, breadth, or freedom of the pastel painter's work differs a little from the same quality when it is realized in oil.

We saw, again, that pastel color can range from the beauty of vaporous vagueness to the beauty of sparkling emphasis, or of incisive force, or of vivid brilliancy. But still just here in color there was one thing wanting, that one thing which is the peculiar glory, the distinctive specialty of work in oils—depth. Pastel color, bright and powerful though it may be, lacks profundity, liquidity, translucent glow, simply because these qualities are inherent in the oil medium and in the peculiar sort of transparency that comes to pigments mixed therewith. Water-color is transparent, but it too has little depth; while fresco and distemper in truth have none. And to these last pastel is somewhat akin in the quality of its

tones. That dry, powdery, efflorescent nature which, rightly used, is its chief title to honor, giving a bloom, an airiness, a tenderness, a decorative grace that oil can hardly rival, marks out, on the other hand, the limitations of its power.

The general result of a color-scheme is the *tone* of a picture; and where color cannot be deep in the truest sense of the word, neither, of course, can tone. The tone of a pastel may vary from the palest to the darkest, an absolute black being as well within its reach as the most evanescent of hues. But *deep-toned* a pastel can never be—not deep-toned as Rembrandt, for example, would have understood the term. We can imagine many masters to whom pastel was unfamiliar who might be glad to try its power could they come back to life to-day; and among them would be some of the world's most brilliant colorists. But this one master—who is pre-eminently the master of luminous profundity of tone—would hardly be tempted by their possibilities. I think we can hardly imagine a pastel with the signature of Rembrandt.

Clever manipulations can, in truth, do much to mask these limitations. Mr. Ulrich, for example, sent to this exhibition the head of a negro that had almost the translucent depth of oil. But still I cannot omit the "almost"; and I must add that the secured success did not seem to me to compensate for the absence of more characteristic qualities, sacrificed of necessity in its attainment. It is not the best way to praise pastels to say, as I have heard it said by some of these young painters, "They can do anything that oil can do." *Almost* anything they can, in truth, though some things not so perfectly as oil. But if this were all, there would be no reason, save occasional convenience, why an artist should essay their use. It is because they can do certain things that oil can *not* do so well that they have a real claim on his attention. The most pertinent way to praise them is to state this fact; and the most admirable way to use them is to prove it in one's work. The pastel painter can do such lovely things with these docile crayons, can do things so unique in their artistic value, that he need not grudge the brush its own successes. He can do such lovely things—can fix such unsubstantial moods of nature, can seize such evanescent, shy effects, can imitate such inimitable textures, can elaborate such bewitching, rare tonalities, and such aerial or such audacious schemes of color—that he need surely not essay a *tour de force* and try for the deep translucency, the dignified severity, or the passionate force of oil.

If there are certain dangers attending the



use of this medium,—if its supple facility may easily lead a painter to be superficial, puerile, or vapid, if its coloristic charm may tempt him to be content with mere decorative effectiveness instead of true pictorial beauty,—it has certain safeguards within itself which almost forbid his sinning in the opposite direction. If he tries very hard, he may do crude and “showy” work; but his crudeness and vulgarity will not be so offensive as though he had been working with the brush. And, though he try his very worst, he can hardly arrive at positive glare or harshness or brutality of effect.

And now, to conclude, I will come back to the point from which I started, and repeat

that most of the artists represented in this collection had evidently understood their medium. Some of their results were distinctly valuable; almost all showed cleverness of hand at least; and their wide versatility had in general been of the proper sort—free within the true limits of the art, but not lawless in a wish to overpass them. And this is the reason why the exhibition seemed worthy of notice and of praise; not because it was made up of charming pictures, but because these pictures showed that we had laid hold of a new art with interest and intelligence, had perceived its true ends and aims, and had tried to make them clearly visible.

*M. G. van Rensselaer.*

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## THE POET HEINE.

### THE VENUS OF THE LOUVRE.

Down the long hall she glistens like a star,  
 The foam-born mother of love, transfixed to stone,  
 Yet none the less immortal, breathing on;  
 Time's brutal hand hath maimed, but could not mar.  
 When first the enthralled enchantress from afar  
 Dazzled mine eyes, I saw not her alone,  
 Serenely poised on her world-worshiped throne,  
 As when she guided once her dove-drawn car,—  
 But at her feet a pale, death-stricken Jew,  
 Her life-adorer, sobbed farewell to love.  
 Here *Heine* wept! Here still he weeps anew,  
 Nor ever shall his shadow lift or move  
 While mourns one ardent heart, one poet-brain,  
 For vanished Hellas and Hebraic pain.

*E. L.*

THE recent publication in a German magazine of a fragment of the long-lost “Memoirs of Heine,” lends the fresh excitement of a contemporary interest to the poet's classic name. If the German public were naturally inclined to greet with a certain skepticism the discovery of this duplicate autobiography, all doubts as to its genuineness must vanish with the appearance of the work itself. No one but Heine arisen from the grave could reproduce that magically pictorial style, with its exquisitely interwoven tissue of fancy, sentiment, and humor.

A fatal and irreconcilable dualism formed the basis of Heine's nature, and was the secret cause not only of his profound unhappiness, but of his moral and intellectual inconsistencies. He was a Jew, with the mind and eyes of a Greek. A beauty-loving, myth-creating pagan soul was imprisoned in a Hebrew frame; or rather, it was twinned, like

the unfortunate Siamese, with another equally powerful soul,—proud, rebellious, oriental in its love of the vague, the mysterious, the grotesque, and tragic with the two-thousand-year-old Passion of the Hebrews. In Heine the Jew there is a depth of human sympathy, a mystic warmth and glow of imagination, a pathos, an enthusiasm, an indomitable resistance to every species of bondage, totally at variance with the qualities of Heine the Greek. On the other hand, the Greek Heine is a creature of laughter and sunshine, possessing an intellectual clearness of vision, a plastic grace, a pure and healthy love of art for art's own sake, with which the somber Hebrew was in perpetual conflict. What could be the result of imprisoning two such antagonistic natures in a single body? What but the contradictions, the struggles, the tears, the violences that actually ensued? For Heine had preëminently the artist capacity