

THE GOLDEN AGE OF PASTEL.



HE hopes of rendering some service to the art of painting with crayons, and of explaining its principles for the benefit of such as in this age of dissipation may prefer the silent amusement of a beautiful art to the delusive enchantments in the gay circles of unrestrained pleasure, have induced me to this undertaking.

So wrote John Russell, R. A., portrait-painter in pastel to his majesty George III., in his work, "The Elements of Painting with Crayons," published in 1777. Pastel-painting is indeed a beautiful art. Its delicate purity of color and its delicious crispness of texture lend themselves more easily than any other medium to the reproduction of feminine beauty and the exquisite complexion of childhood. It is to oil-painting what the vaudeville is to the tragedy, or the sonnet to the epic, and in the hands of a master it can show all the vigor and depth of oil. Easily destroyed if left unprotected by glass, the medium was at first regarded with suspicion, and its durability questioned; but paintings made a century and a half and even two centuries ago still retain the same lovely qualities with which they delighted the beholder when fresh from the artist's easel, while some oil-paintings of the same period have sunken in and blackened. This is only what we ought to expect, for a piece of pastel is pure color. All that chemical action can do has been effected in the absorption of the pigment by the chalk. No oil or varnish is mingled with the paint to darken as time passes and to obliterate or obscure the original hues. When pastels have faded we must conclude that poor pigments were originally used, for the delicate tints of the earliest masterpieces enjoy an immortal youth which years cannot destroy. The most insidious enemy of pastel is dampness. Mildew may dim the colors if the paintings are hung in moist climates or in seaside cottages; but properly protected by backing and glass, and in our dry atmosphere, there is nothing to fear.

John Russell's hope of rendering service to the art of pastel-painting was fully realized in his portraits, if not in his somewhat didactic and tedious book. His paintings, wonderfully clear and fresh in color to-day, amply prove the durability of the material, while his genius as a painter showed that its possibilities were no whit inferior to oil. The pastels of Russell

hold their own in loveliness and artistic perfection beside the portraits of Gainsborough and Romney.

Born in 1744 in Guildford, in the beautiful county of Surrey, he came to London at the age of fifteen and devoted himself to art with such success that he soon became the popular painter of the fashionable world. It was a very naughty world, as we well know, but "the silent amusement of his beautiful art" kept him from its "delusive enchantments." He had another scholarly taste, a penchant for astronomy, and he found time to invent an instrument to show the phases of the moon, and to write a work on that luminary which he illustrated with engraved plates.

An explanation of this unusual combination of tastes so incongruous as those of astronomy and art was given us by the grandchildren of the famous astronomer Sir William Herschel. While visiting them at Observatory House, near Windsor, the remark was made that the best portrait of their grandfather was a pastel painted by his friend Russell, now among the art treasures at Guy's Cliff, Warwick. It pleased George III. to affect to patronize men of letters and of science, and when Herschel's wonderful discoveries electrified the world, the king created him Astronomer Royal, and presented him with a patent of nobility, and in the gay circles of court life Russell made one friendship which colored his entire life.

Our first acquaintance with the works of this master came about through a happy chance.

We had gone abroad on a pastel pilgrimage, our plan being to search the galleries of Europe for examples of the beautiful works done in this medium in the last half of the seventeenth and during the eighteenth century—works which have proved the inspiration of the brilliant galaxy of French painters, to whom is due the present renaissance of the art. Our quest was richly rewarded in Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and especially in France, but at the outset only discouragement met us in England. There are no pastels in the National Gallery, and only an insignificant number in the South Kensington and other museums; but very opportunely there came to us an invitation from Mr. Edwin Lawrence, a munificent patron of the South Kensington Museum. "Come and lunch with us," he wrote, "and see my collection of pastels by J. Russell, R. A." It was a rich collection. Mr. Lawrence had found in the hands of an art



“CHILD WITH CHERRIES.”

PASTEL BY JOHN RUSSELL, R. A., IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS.

dealer the portfolios of unfinished sketches and studies for portraits accumulated in the artist's studio during his long career as court painter, and had pounced upon them with the sagacity of a connoisseur. Many of the portraits were torn across, and these the present owner has restored with much skill and taste. The paintings had been subjected to the roughest usage, having tumbled about in odd corners unprotected by glass for upward of a hundred years. Now exposed to the light, now rolled or crumpled, the paper has become ragged; but the colors are exquisitely fresh. Mr. Lawrence has been very generous, sharing his treasures with the South Kensington Museum and with friends, but his collection is still unrivaled. Nagler gives a list of the portraits painted by Russell, which includes nearly all of the celebrities of London of that period.

His portraits of his fellow artist, John Bacon, R. A., and of Mrs. Bacon, have been lent to the South Kensington Museum by Miss E. S. Bacon. A very popular picture, his "Child with Cherries," is in the Louvre. In style it reminds one of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and has recently been reproduced for several art journals.

But with the exception of the works of Russell our pastel researches in England were destined to meet with disappointment. The portraits by La Tour, Liotard, and Rosalba Carriera, many of which exist here, are hidden away in private collections. It is in the museums of France that admirers of pastel will find the best representations of its golden age, in the works of La Tour and his great contemporaries.

The real inventor of pastel-painting is unknown to history. It is possible that the perfected art was developed very slowly from the drawing in crayons of which the early Italian painters were so fond. A drawing, executed in black, white, and red chalk by Frederigo Barroccio, bearing the date 1528, is in the Dijon Museum. To these three colors others may have been gradually added until the crayons arrived at the full gamut of the portrait.

Robert Nanteuil and Charles Le Brun (1619-1690) have left us numerous pastels of such excellence as to prove that they were not the first who have used the medium.

A gap of half a century occurs between their latest portraits and the first of the galaxy of pastelists who appeared during the reigns of Louis XV. and Louis XVI. Nevertheless, Le Brun's portrait of Louis XIV., in the pastel room at the Louvre, is so characteristic that it deserves special mention. Bombastic, theatrical, selfish, and unscrupulous, the Grand Monarch stands revealed to us as in a magician's mirror. Le Brun was able to keep his place throughout life as the king's favorite painter. He has been

rightly called the Louis XIV. of art, for he perfectly expressed the theatrical and grandiose taste of his royal master. Le Brun's pupil Vivien is the only link to connect him with the golden age. His color was hot, and his paintings do not usually attract us; but he gave the medium the same seriousness of effort which others gave to oil, and in the museum at Rouen we came across a most admirable portrait by him.

The Italians make a claim to the invention of pastel based on the fact that the name used by all nations for the material is derived from the Italian word *pastello*, signifying little rolls of paste. Whoever may have first discovered the medium, it is to a gifted Italian lady that we probably owe the prevalence which the art obtained in France during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and the impulse received about the same time by English and German artists.

Rosalba Carriera was born in Venice in 1675. She early attained great honors in her native country, was elected a member of the academies of Bologna, of Florence, and of Rome, and painted the portraits of many noted Italians, among others that of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Cosimo III. In 1720 she made a visit to France, accompanied by her mother and sisters. Her stay was marked by a series of ovations. Vivien's popularity was due rather to the novelty of employing the material for large paintings, and for dark and sumptuous accessories, than to any real genius in the painter, and Rosalba's management of pastel was a revelation to the Parisians. She painted the king, Louis XV., then only ten years of age, and during the year of her stay was the most popular woman in Paris, receiving the most distinguished hospitality and flattering social attentions. Watteau, Vivien, and the other leading artists of the day gave her the most generous recognition, and on the 26th of October she was received with acclamation as a member of the French Academy. She is described as forty-five years of age, not beautiful, but possessing grace, modesty, and charm, which set off her rare talent. She received more orders during her Parisian visit than she was able to execute, and returned to Venice delighted with her French experience. Three examples of her work are preserved in the Louvre, all portraits of women, displaying great delicacy and grace of treatment, but painted on a rather white and chalky key when compared with the glowing carnations of Prud'hon and Chardin. Her name Rosalba, white rose, is said to have been a sobriquet given by her friends, possibly on account of the very light and delicate tints which she affected. After her return to Venice her popularity increased. She painted so many traveling Englishmen that the number



A VENETIAN LADY OF RANK.

PASTEL BY ROSALBA CARRIERA, IN THE DRESDEN GALLERY.

of her works still preserved in England gave rise to the impression that she had visited that country. She is mentioned in Russell's work on pastel-painting, and Russell was doubtless familiar with her portraits, perhaps receiving his inspiration toward that medium from them. In 1730 she was called to the court of Vienna, and the King of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, acquired a number of her paintings, which are now in the Dresden Museum. It would be interesting to ascertain whether any pastels of real merit were produced in Germany before this date. If not, whatever nation may have invented the material, to the White Rose of Italy belongs the honor of the first propagandism of the perfected art. At every station of our pilgrimage we found some example of her work. In the fascinating Museum of Arts at Dijon—which has grown out of the old palace of the Dukes of Burgundy—we discovered four of her most characteristic and lovely portraits; at Innspruck were two in her style, and purporting to be her work, but of doubtful authenticity; but it was at Venice, as might be expected, that we found her at her best. Twelve of her finest portraits hang on the walls of the Academy of Fine Arts, the old assembly hall of the brotherhood of Santa Maria della Carita. They are the legacy of Count Omobon Astoria, and are chiefly of members of the Astoria family. The Astorias were men and women of marked and varying characteristics, for the collection shows two ecclesiastics of gentle, studious mien, two nobles in curled wigs and brocade, with handsome, luxury-loving features, one stern old woman, elegant ladies in delicate shades of satin set off with flowers and jewels and exquisite lace, and two beautiful children. But by far the most interesting portrait in the collection is that of Rosalba, painted by herself. She is robed as richly as the Astoria ladies; there are great pearls in her ears, and yellow chrysanthemums relieve her brunette complexion; the face is of such dignity and intelligence that we quarrel with the French writer who said that she was not beautiful.

Rosalba died in Venice at the age of eighty, working up to her last decade, when she lost her sight and a little later her reason.

Italy did not retain the preëminence which she had gained, and it is to France that we must look for the finest display of the art. It flourished most brilliantly during the latter half of the eighteenth century.

In 1704 the town of Saint-Quentin in Picardy gave to the world a painter of extraordinary original genius, Maurice Quentin de La Tour. To his personal work and to the influence which he exercised upon his contemporaries and followers is due the golden age

of pastel. The names of all other pastelists of this time group themselves about La Tour, and after his death the art fell into speedy decadence. La Tour's father opposed his desire to become an artist. The boy had his own way to make, and while pursuing his studies in Paris he made cheap portraits, choosing pastel as a medium, because of its rapidity of execution. From the first he displayed a marvelous aptitude for catching a likeness, and though at this period his work was immature and careless, it caught the popular fancy, and he speedily sprang into notoriety. As money came to him he wisely declined orders, preferring to give himself to more serious study, thus improving the quality of his work. In 1737 he made his first appearance at the Salon, exhibiting a portrait of Mme. Boucher, and one of himself.

Standing before Mme. Boucher's portrait one is not surprised that it gained for him a great artistic and popular success. His fellow artists recognized a painter of marvelous power in depicting character and of great originality of treatment. The populace were attracted by the strikingly lifelike qualities of the portraits. This homely, honest man, with his slightly ironical smile but kindly eyes, seemed to look them through and through with a quizzical expression which was not to be resisted. There was no attempt to parade technic; it was nature itself. The crowd lingered before his pictures, and came again and again, attracted by the same magical spell. The critics could only blazon abroad the universal opinion that a new master had appeared in France. From that time his success was assured, and the small shopkeepers of Paris lost their little painter of rapidly made portraits at four dollars a head.

He did not, however, desert the mistress who had made his fortune, and La Tour did as much for pastel as pastel had done for La Tour. Thoroughly enamored with the medium, he devoted himself exclusively to it throughout his long life, giving it an unprecedented vogue, placing it side by side with oil-painting, and proving it the equal if not the superior of the older manner of painting for the perfectly naïf representation of nature.

His popularity increased each year. The critics declared it impossible for art to go beyond his work in its perfect resemblance, its delicacy of color, and its grace of style. Louis XV. became his chief patron, and for forty years from the date of his first exhibition he was the leading portrait-painter of his day. He painted nearly all the noted men of his country and age, preferring, we are told, to make the portraits of celebrities for his own pleasure to painting those of opulent nonentities at any price. In spite of this assertion he showed himself an able man of affairs, speedily amass-

ing great wealth from his extraordinary prices, finding fault with the sum, twenty-four thousand francs, paid him by Mme. de Pompadour for her portrait, and claiming that he should have received double that amount. Ten thou-

sented in armor magnificently painted, relieved by the blue sash of the order of Saint Esprit. It is said that the marshal, who was a great friend of La Tour's, had fallen into disgrace with the king, who, in consequence, had con-

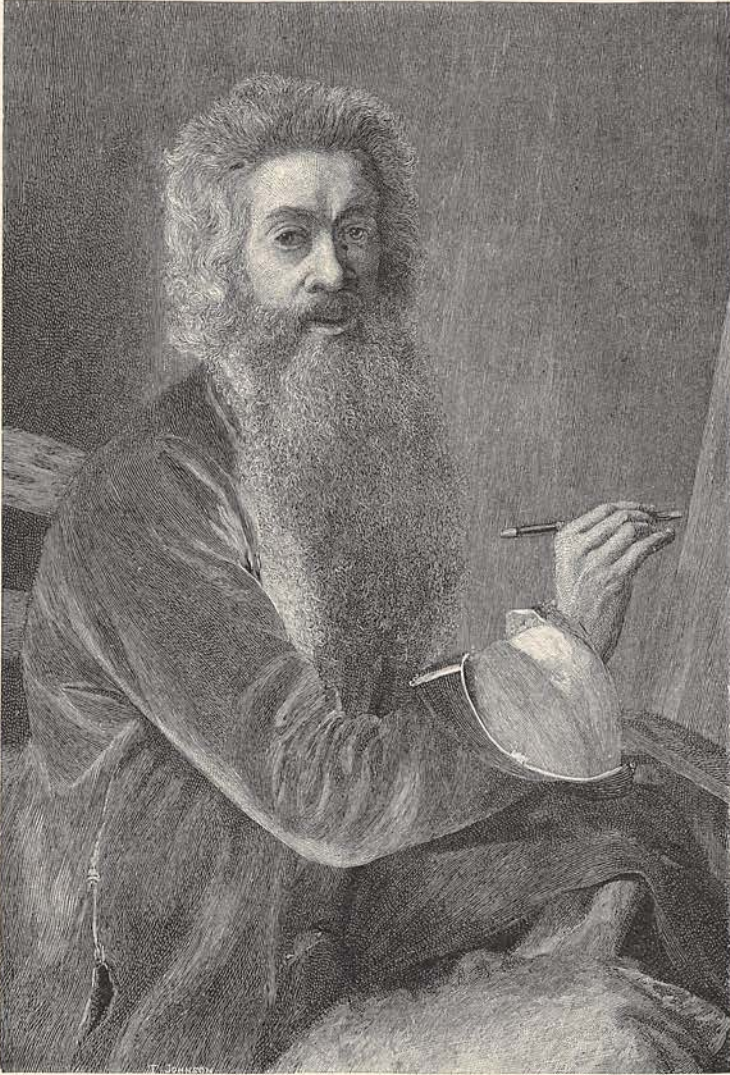


LOUIS OF FRANCE, THE DAUPHIN. PASTEL BY MAURICE QUENTIN DE LA TOUR, IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS.

sand dollars seems to us a rather exorbitant demand for a portrait in pastel, but there was only one La Tour, and this was his masterpiece. It is doubtful whether it has ever been excelled. Universally conceded to be the most important picture in the pastel room of the Louvre, "it is the despair of all pastelists and also of all painters in oil." The accessories are cleverly treated, while the lady, from her blond tresses to the high heels of her dainty shoes, is a delicious bit of painting. The delicate-flowered satin gown, the lovely hands and bosom, and the small but perfectly shaped features, are all exquisitely rendered. The head, we know not for what reason, was cut out of the picture at the time of the Revolution, and has been replaced. The painting forms a striking contrast to La Tour's strong portrait of Marshal Saxe, which hangs on the next wall. He is repre-

fiscated his possessions. La Tour, knowing him to be in want, interested Mme. de Pompadour in his behalf while painting her portrait, and she interceded with the king with such success that the marshal was reinstated in royal favor.

Louis XV.'s portrait by La Tour was painted in his prime, and shows a dashing handsome face slightly marred by a disagreeable mouth. The portrait of his wife, Marie Leczinska, an insipid but smiling beauty, hangs beside his own. La Tour painted their son, Louis of France, more than once. The portrait, which represents him as a young man, resembles his father, but the face is softened by the mother's amiability, and is singularly innocent in its expression. The dauphin never came to the throne, for his father outlived him. His character was gentle and lovable, and he was deeply regretted by



JEAN-ÉTIENNE LIOTARD, PASTEL BY HIMSELF, IN MUSÉE RATH, GENEVA.

all who knew him. La Tour's portrait of the dauphin at the age of eight or ten is still more charming, for here he is represented in perfect health, with no premonition of early death in the plump face and pouting lips. His hair is puffed and powdered, and tied in a queue, and he wears a stiff little stock and a frill of delicate lace, which falls upon a satin coat of pale rose-color decorated with the rich silver star and the broad blue ribbon of Saint Esprit. But in spite of this courtier costume the little prince is not one bit priggish or affected. The beautiful dark eyes sparkle mischievously, and the retroussé nose has a saucy turn. He is a bewitching mother's darling, whose loveliness of feature and character explain the satisfied smile on Marie Leczinska's face—a smile which could not have been occasioned by the treat-

ment which she received from her handsome husband.

Rich as the Louvre is in fine examples of La Tour, the town of Saint-Quentin possesses a still greater number of his works. He was always fond of his birthplace, and when he returned to it at eighty his fellow townsmen welcomed him with acclamations of joy. The church-bells pealed chimes of welcome, and the inhabitants, in holiday attire, headed by their magistrates marched to meet him, while in the evening all the houses were illuminated. They had reason to love him, for he had done much for Picardy. He left to its principal city, Amiens, ten thousand francs, the income of which is given each year "to the author of the most beautiful action or of the most useful discovery in Picardy." But the sums given during his

life and at his death to Saint-Quentin amounted to a hundred thousand dollars, distributed between different charities and in the founding of a school of design. He had left his home a poor boy; he returned wealthy, to make his native town his principal inheritor. For four years he lived quietly and peacefully, an eccentric old man of whom many whimsicalities are related, but who was nevertheless greatly beloved. He left a large collection of pastels, which he had made for himself, to his brother, who in turn left them to the museum of the art school which the artist had founded, where they form a unique and interesting collection, unknown to the world at large, but well worthy a pilgrimage to any lover of art.

Contemporary to La Tour there appeared in different parts of Europe a comet-like genius called, from his Oriental costume, *Le Turc*, the Swiss painter Liotard. His extraordinary ability as a pastelist was acquired during his residence in France, but the Louvre has no examples of his pastels. It is fortunate, however, in possessing thirty masterly little sketches in red chalk made during his travels in the Orient. Versailles has merely a copy of his pastel portrait of Mme. d'Épinay to show his peculiar piquant charm and cleverness in the management of his material. Happily, other European galleries are richer in examples of his talent. Born in Geneva in 1702, Liotard began his career as a miniaturist and painter in enamel, but, coming to Paris, he became devoted to pastel. The French ambassador to Naples took him to Italy in his suite. At Rome Liotard met some wealthy traveling Englishmen, who persuaded him to join them in a tour to the Orient. He remained for several years in Turkey, adopting for convenience the costume which he never entirely relinquished, and allowing his beard to grow. In 1742 he paid a visit to Vienna. It happened that just at this time the Count Dietrichstein had committed the misalliance of marrying his pretty servant. All Vienna was shocked, and Liotard had the good fortune to be able to paint the portrait of the bride, which was at once the observed of all observers. It was a happy combination of *réclame* and real merit, for the painting was the now celebrated picture known as "*La Belle Chocolatière*." It was immediately purchased at a high price, and is now one of the jewels of the Dresden gallery. The event led to an order by Maria Theresa for her portrait, and Liotard's future was secure. He returned to Paris preceded by his reputation. His Turkish turban rendered him conspicuous. The king ordered a number of miniatures, to be set in diamonds and worn as bracelets by the queen and other members of the royal family. But the old passion of roving was unquenchable,

and patronage could not chain him to Paris. He crossed to England, when he painted the Countess of Coventry, Garrick, and other celebrities; wandered to Holland, where he executed portraits in pastel of the Prince of Orange and Nassau, and of the Duke of Brunswick, and where he succumbed to the charms of a little maid of Amsterdam, who consented to marry him after having first induced him to shave his beard. He settled down at last in his native town, where he died in 1790, leaving the city some of his best paintings. To Geneva, therefore, we came in our pastel pilgrimage. We found three of his celebrated portraits at the Rath Museum—the original of Mme. d'Épinay, copied for Versailles, his Maria Theresa, and his portrait of himself, painted before Love had shorn his flame-like locks and Turkish beard. He chose to depict himself using the crayon-holder, the badge and implement of his profession.

The works remaining in his studio at the time of his death were left by Mme. Liotard to the museum at Amsterdam.

One of La Tour's most characteristic portraits is that of his friend, the artist Siméon Chardin. Another pastel portrait of Chardin, painted by himself, hangs in the same gallery of the Louvre. Comparing the two, we find that Chardin has not flattered himself, for his portrait, exceedingly broad in treatment, shows only a strong, homely face, with spectacles on nose, and crowned by a grotesque sort of night-cap, or turban. There is nothing to indicate the rare intelligence, the genius for composition, which was rather a faculty for the discovery of harmonious relations of things, the prompt, assured grasp with which he seized the artistic aspects of nature, and his naïf but masterly interpretation of the effects of light. He was by nature a colorist, reveling in sunshine. He was born in 1699, making his appearance, as Charles La Blanc tells us, just as the pompous art of Louis XIV. was disappearing, and the affected art of Louis XV. was coming on, though he had no affinity with either style. Diderot wrote of him: "He has no style. I am wrong, he has his own; but since he has a style, he must be false in certain circumstances—yet Chardin is never false." It was this childlike following of nature, as it was given to Chardin to see nature, which made him an original genius. His paintings at first were unambitious—still-life subjects painted with great fidelity, and with a caressing touch which told how he delighted in their representation. He afterward turned his attention to figure-paintings, painting scenes of domestic life with much delicacy of sentiment and honesty of feeling. One genre painting, "*Le Bénédicité*," is famous. It represents a little girl with folded hands



THE DAUPHIN, LOUIS XVII. PASTEL BY MME. VIGÉE LE BRUN.

repeating her grace before meat, while her hungry glance wanders slyly to the plate of steaming soup which her gentle mother holds ready for her upon the completion of the prayer.

In all of the mothers whom he painted it is said that a resemblance is traceable to his wife, Marguerite Pouget of Rouen. His portrait of her, painted when he was seventy-seven, is one of the treasures of the pastel room of the Louvre. Reiset says of this portrait, "La Tour himself never painted a better." The face is

full of "the beautiful lines of experience" and the ripest and richest coloring. It beams as with an inner light, irradiating intelligence, benevolence, sweetness of disposition, matronly grace and good sense, and a certain all-pervading motherliness, which makes us exclaim, as Diderot did before the pictures of Greuze, "One sees well that this man loved his wife." Chardin received moderate appreciation while he lived, and was speedily forgotten. This beautiful portrait, together with his own, was sold thirty years after his death for twenty-

four francs! Real merit could not long suffer such oblivion, and the fame of Chardin has of late been disinterred.

A great contrast to this quiet, domestic life, its moderate ambition satisfied, its entire course so tranquil and blessed in every aspect, is the stormy career of another great colorist, Pierre-Paul Prud'hon.

He was the son of a master mason, born in the provincial city of Cluny, so noted for its Romanesque houses and its beautiful old monastery, for which the Cluny Palace at Paris was merely the abbot's city residence. It was in this monastery that Prud'hon received his education and his first impulse toward art. Here indeed he reinvented oil-painting, for being told while engaged in attempting to copy one of the altar-pieces that he would never succeed, as it was *painted in oil*, the boy of fourteen set to work to experiment, messing together various dye-stuffs with salad oil, doubtless greatly to the despair of his good mother, until he succeeded in furnishing his palette with the colors which he required. But although he afterward attained eminence in oil-painting, Prud'hon's peculiar talent as a colorist found its best expression in pastel. His sketches and schemes of color for his oil-paintings were made in chalks. A very lovely study, a half-nude figure, said to be a sketch for a figure in one of his large compositions, is one of the chief ornaments of the pastel room of the Louvre. The coloring, attitude, and expression of this study are all very lovely. The hair is reddish gold, and the flesh tints are the rich carnations when the milky blond complexion is warmed by a touch of auburn fire. Prud'hon was the French Correggio, but a hint of melancholy broods over his most joyous creations. He had a sensitive, poetic nature, which was embittered by an uncongenial marriage, and by early struggles with an adverse fortune. He worked incessantly, and when *la grand peinture* failed, decorated *bonbonnières* with cupids for confectioners. Unable to feed his family with bonbon boxes, pastel portraiture attracted him by its rapidity of execution, as it had first appealed to La Tour, and he left Paris to make a tour through Franche-Comté, painting portraits at the village inns at a single sitting.

During this trip the itinerant artist made the acquaintance of a certain M. Frochot, a man whose friendship was destined to stand him in good stead a little later. Prud'hon had a peculiar faculty for making friends. There must have been something irresistibly attractive in his personality, for all who knew him loved him, and it was to his friends that he owed the success which his genius merited, but which he was not sufficiently self-assertive to claim. M. Frochot became prefect of the

Seine, and in his prosperity he remembered the traveling painter of pastels who had interested him so much in Franche-Comté. He sought Prud'hon out and invited him to dine, telling him at the dinner that he wished to order an important painting for the criminal courtroom. A sudden inspiration came to the artist, and he rapidly sketched a design of the picture which afterward made him famous, "Vengeance and Justice Pursuing the Criminal." When the painting was finished his friends counseled his exhibiting it at the salon of 1808, together with his "Psyche Carried Away by the Zephyrs." Another friend of Prud'hon, Guizot, the historian, was then a young man who amused himself by writing art letters for the public press. He was profoundly impressed by the varied powers displayed in these two pictures, and he heralded in glowing terms the advent of a new genius. The praise of the art critic had its effect on the career of the artist. It drew the attention of the public, possibly that of Napoleon, to the pictures. The emperor decorated Prud'hon with the cross of the Legion of Honor, and ordered a portrait of the Empress Josephine. His fame as an artist was secured, and for a time fortune seemed to smile upon him. It was but a delusive gleam, and Prud'hon's life closed early under a cloud of domestic misfortune, the inevitable result of his own erring conduct.

La Tour's success had given such popularity to pastel, that there immediately sprang up an overwhelming number of pastelists of more or less talent. It became the fashion to have one's portrait painted in pastel, and there were painters of the first order for great purses, and mediocre painters for little ones. The medium was especially affected by women painters, two of whom, Mme. Vigée Le Brun and Mme. Guiard, deserve to stand in the first rank with their brothers of the crayon. The same year, 1783, saw them both created members of the Academy.

Adelaide Labille Guiard, afterward Mme. Vincent, was a pupil of La Tour and of the miniaturist Vincent. She possessed remarkable talent, and although she did not attain the celebrity of Mme. Le Brun, her paintings have a power and charm which prove her the peer of her famous rival. The Revolution found her popular with the nobility, but she was pardoned this favor of the aristocrats, and enjoyed the patronage of the new régime, painting the portraits of Robespierre, Talleyrand, Beauharnais, and others. It was the dying effort of pastel-painting, which was completely crushed by the Revolution. There is a charming example of her work in the Louvre, a portrait of a handsome man in a light-gray satin coat. Few tourists find it, for the guides do not point

it out, and it is skied in lofty loneliness over one of the doors.

Mme. Le Brun held the same position for the court of Louis XVI. that La Tour had occupied during the preceding reign. She was the friend of Marie Antoinette, and her three portraits in oil of this lovely and unfortunate queen look down upon us from the walls of Versailles. She painted the dauphin in pastel, the little prince about whose death in the prison of the temple there rests so much of mystery. Mme. Le Brun's pastel of the dauphin hangs in what was formerly his bed-chamber, in Le Petit Trianon. He is represented at nearly the same age as La Tour's charming dauphin of the Louvre, and wears the same decoration, the blue ribbon and silver star of Saint Esprit; but here the resemblance ends, for his long dark hair is unpowdered, and there is something almost plaintive in the sweet expression.

Mme. Le Brun's art was identified too closely with Marie Antoinette to obtain any great success after the death of her royal patron. Like Mme. Guiard she painted a few pastel portraits during the Revolution, adapting herself to the change in the temper of the times with wonderful tact. The account in her memoirs of the impromptu Greek dinner given in her studio is a proof of this adaptability, as well as of the power of the classical renaissance. The dinner was a pretty *pièce de théâtre*, arranged with charming spontaneity; but the theatrical spirit was destined to stifle everything that was natural and simple in art. Mme. Le Brun was one of the last French pastelists of note of the period. Johann Heinrich Schroeder, the German court-painter, at this time was very popular, and has left many charming pastels of the beauties of his country; none lovelier than the celebrated pastel portrait of the Countess Potocka in the Berlin gallery. But the golden age of pastel-painting was drawing to a close. The works of the painters La Tour, Chardin, Prud'hon, and Mmes. Le Brun and Guiard had begun and carried it to its height in France. The modest pastel room of the Louvre, to which we have referred so frequently, may well be said to inclose "infinite riches in little space," for here are to be found excellent examples of these artists, and of the English painter John Russel, of Rosalba Carriera, and of many others less known but scarcely the inferiors of those we have mentioned.

Among these are Ducreux, La Tour's pupil, represented by an admirable laughing portrait of himself, and Perroneau, the rival of La Tour in later years, whose delicate color and graceful treatment never received full recognition during his life, having been overshadowed by the fame and popularity of his great contemporary. Here, too, are Mme. Sturel Paigné, with her magnificent flower-pieces; Lundborg, a Swedish artist, pupil of Rosalba Carriera, whose portraits of the artists Boucher and Natoire are highly finished and lovely in color. Charles Le Brun and Vivien are represented by the ostentatious grand seigneurs with whom they were so popular; and there are many charming studies by other pastelists whose names are unknown or whose fame is forgotten.

In the neighboring room of drawings are the sketches in red chalk by the Swiss pastelist Liotard, and others in the same material by Watteau, Boucher, Fragonard, and Portail. It seems almost impossible that these artists did not use pastel, as the medium is so well adapted to their graceful style.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the hour had struck in France for a change in its art as well as in all of its institutions. It was the birth of the Republic. Henceforth no more of the graceful art of beauty and pleasure, of delicate tints and poetic sentiment. Romance, gallantry, amusement, refinement, and playfulness were all swept away by the great tide of emotion. Prud'hon fought during the latter part of his life for the art of pure beauty, but he was overpowered by the rising popularity of a new genius, David. The French Revolution had modeled itself on ancient republican institutions, and David sprang to the front with a renaissance of classical art. Oil-painting was his chosen medium, and the beautiful art of pastel faded from view.

But the medium is too lovely to suffer this ignoble neglect. So well adapted to the art of the landscapist, the flower-painter, the painter of still-life, and, above all, to the requirements of the portrait-painter, it was to be expected that the turn of a century would bring it again to the surface, and that the renaissance of pastel would find among its most enthusiastic adherents the colorists of the day.

So strong is the movement lately begun by the leading French artists that we may even hope that the renaissance will surpass the brilliancy of the golden age.

Elizabeth W. Champney.