



Apropos of the Art League.

Mrs. Blake, who has studied pictures and read.

Miss Fedora Pallet, her niece, who studied abroad and paints.

Mrs. Stanton, a caller, who is rather utilitarian.

Mrs. Pettie, a caller, who wishes to buy a picture.

Miss Minor, a caller, who is eager to learn.

Place:—Mrs. Blake's parlour.

Time:—Afternoon tea, Friday, November 22.

Mrs. Blake.—And none of you saw the pictures on the opening night? Why I thought Fedora and myself the only delinquents.

Mrs. Stanton.—Well what is the use of going? I have my time filled already with church and social duties. Why should I dawdle two hours in an art gallery when I know not the first thing about Art? I really should like to know why you are going—if you are.

Miss Pallet.—Why, to see what the lion has done, of course.

Miss Minor.—I am going chiefly to see Irma's picture. I have scarcely seen her for the past month—she has been so busy.

Mrs. Pettie.—I'm going because there is a horrid spot on the paper in our parlor, and I want to buy a picture that will fit and harmonize.

The Others.—Fit and harmonize! O, you Philistine!

Mrs. Pettie.—I know it. But I might as well buy my picture there as anywhere. Encourage home talent, I say. (She sips tea calmly.)

Mrs. Stanton.—Are you exhibiting, Miss Pallet?

Miss Pallet.—No, I am a new comer. Besides, I am diffident. But I shall go to get the calibre of your artists.

Mrs. Blake.—For my part, I go to get what I can from the pictures. I am painfully ignorant—(Cries out, Mrs. Blake!)

—but I learn something in every exhibition, and I am a member of the League.

Miss Minor.—O Mrs. Blake, won't you tell us how you learn something? I suppose the Art League is not merely to exact a semi-annual creation for those who can express themselves in paint and plaster. I suppose it vaguely aspires to spread the knowledge of Art in this community. We are ignorant enough of it, I am sure.

Why couldn't some of the artists have had for their contribution the creation of an intelligent public? They might have worked up a series of popular articles, telling us the right way to see pictures.

Miss Pallet.—One reason is because there is no short cut. It is the study of pictures themselves that brings this knowledge of them.

Miss Minor.—But how do you study a picture? Can we not know any marks of difference between good and bad painting? I have stood dumbly before pictures and longed inexpressibly to know why some had been awarded prizes and others not.

Mrs. Blake.—I have followed some simple rules for myself, Miss Minor, and with Miss Fedora's assistance I will tell you what I have done.

All Yes, Mrs. Blake. Do, do. Will you be so kind?

Mrs. Blake.—First, I look at the hand-work—coloring, drawing, painting. If they are bad, the picture will be worthless. As we enter a gallery, we are carried by color. The eye naturally sees the bright colors first, but I distrust them. So few artists have been "colorists." Young artists, I find, revel in warmth. Older ones are wiser and know that the low tones can be more successfully blended.

Miss Pallet.—Excuse me, Aunt Mary, I can add Her Fernau's testimony to that. He advised me to paint an urn splendor with autumn skies beclouded.

Mrs. Blake.—I wish, Fedora, that you would talk for me.

Miss Pallet.—No, I can only interrupt.

Mrs. Blake.—To proceed, then, I have found that reserve in color often means gain in perspective, atmosphere and feeling.

Mrs. Stanton.—But would you condemn all high coloring? Surely there are blue sky, red leaves, yellow trees and green grass often under a blazing sun. Why not paint them?

Mrs. Blake.—Yes, if we can. Artists succeed more easily in other lines. A quiet thing more often, to my mind, shows the sentiment it is meant to show. Atmosphere makes such havoc with colors, unless we understand atmospheric effects. Remember that objects, trees for instance, bluer and lose tone as they recede, the two fold atmospheric effect, and the grayish bluer is truer to nature than the green tree in miniature.

Miss Pallet.—The Blottisque style is Ru-kin's name for it.

Mrs. Pettie.—Nevertheless, some of the impressionist things are just lovely for a lawyer and white room.

Miss Minor.—(Aside) I should think so! And for any room.

Mrs. Blake.—Besides atmospheric effects, we must consider tone. Colors have different values, or tones. A green tree here, and one a half mile distant—are they the same? In bright

sunlight and under a cloud? An algeroba and a cocoon? Do you see what I mean by values? I look to see if the different values are maintained. Then textures. Are they flesh, wood, stone, cloth, air or water? Or does the imagination dub a palace that is white, marble, whether it looks snow or stucco? And we call a pink and white oval a human face—by imagination.

Miss Minor.—But the faces are so patchy, the lights so exaggerated! The reds so dark, the pinks and yellows so bright, the tip of the nose is always polished.

Mrs. Blake.—Then go away as far as possible and look. The proverb is, "The smell of paint is unhealthy."

Miss Pallet.—Herr Fernau used to put his face close to a picture as we stood at the end of the room and compared the real with the painted face. Find some one to do that for you, Miss Minor, and you will be surprised at the deep colors that are in any face, and the high lights.

Mrs. Blake.—Then I ask myself another question: Does the light come from only one direction? Does one atmosphere envelop the whole picture?

But color is not all. I see you look nearer to the answer to your question? So many of us are confident that we can see—that at least we can judge of drawing.

Miss Pallet.—(From the depths of her chair). Alas! The natural eye is at enmity with art. It needs training.

Miss Minor.—Why can't we judge drawing?

Mrs. Blake.—Won't you tell us, Fedora?

Miss Pallet.—You do not draw. You do not see. You do not know exactly. But you have general impressions. And you have some sense of proportions. With that look, observe, study closely, as Fernau says.

But sometimes artists prefer to suggest rather than draw exactly. Even to distort, apparently: all to give an appearance of motion, of life, and this is difficult. Old Michael Angelo's figures always seem to be writhing or stretching, moving or about to move.

Miss Minor.—I believed I have felt that myself, only I called it "different."

Mrs. Blake.—Individuality it is. When it carries us away in spite of rules, it is genius.

But shall we discuss this further? I see that Mrs. Stanton and Mrs. Pettie are thinking of other calls.

Mrs. Stanton.—I must go now, but I am sorry to leave. I have been following you, and I am determined to be a trifle more intelligent hereafter in my Art dissipations.

Mrs. Pettie.—Very interesting, I am sure. I've been charmed, but I must go.

[Both ladies make their bows and depart in a shower of Good Afternoons. The three remaining draw their chairs nearer.]

Miss Minor. O, Mrs. Blake, I really ought to run in and see Irma, but can't you tell me just a little more? About the different kinds of pictures, for instance?

Mrs. Blake.—Once I memorized a running criticism, so to speak. Shall I recite it like a school boy? I have forgotten part of it, and the author, but it runs somewhat like this: In landscapes look for color, tone, atmosphere, light and shade; feeling and grandeur sometimes. In figure compositions notice the pictorial in drawing, grouping, gradation of light, color and textures, besides dramatic effect, passion, character.

Miss Pallet.—Brava, Aunt Mary! Miss Minor has her cue at last. We shall be looking for art criticisms.

Mrs. Blake.—As to portraits, I look to see if the face is well drawn, if the flesh has blood and muscle.

Is it built over bones, or is it oiled paper covering putty? Then I look for likeness that expresses the character, which is the test of the portrait, never the finish of the picture.

Miss Minor.—You know that Van Dyke Brown painted Grandmother Minor's portrait, and when the family criticised the likeness, he wondered if the great portraits of the world had been thought satisfactory by the families of the sitters! Now, who should see the likeness, he or we? He is a good artist, undoubtedly. Grandma calls it one of her English ancestors! I see the Vantines coming, and I must run. But Mrs. Blake, may I go with you and Miss Pallet when you visit the Art League? Will you telephone when? Good afternoon. [Exit hurriedly.]

Mrs. Blake to Miss Pallet as they stand awaiting the Vantines.—My dear, why did you allow me to harangue when you know so much better than I? I fear she did not learn much after all.

Miss Pallet.—It was not technical, Aunt Mary, and any words of mine would have been of little use to that child. How enthusiastic she is! How she would enjoy studying pictures with Hans Fernau. I think I will suggest to him that he write a book for just such ardent learners as Miss Minor.

SYBIL.

A Waste of Powder.

An English gentleman was pigeon shooting in his grounds the other day with an Irish friend. He shot a pigeon very high up, and it came down with a plump at their feet.

"Faith, that was a waste of powder and shot," said his Irish friend.

"Why?"

"Because, sure, the fall alone would have killed the poor beast without any of the shooting!"—London Answers.

SUGARED HAM.

As Prepared by the Cuban Daughters of Liberty.

Sugared ham is presumably a Cuban delicacy, as it was sold at a recent fair held by the Society of the Cuban Daughters of Liberty for the benefit of the wounded Cuban soldiers. Three days are necessary to its preparation. A plain boiling on the first day, on the second an immersion in cider, in which it is boiled again, and on the third a coating of sugar icing put on. The formula reads temptingly, and is worth trying—ham, as every housekeeper knows, offering special inducements of toothsome results, in combination with various flavors—New York Times.

A Holiday Pointer.

Turkeys will not fatten if confined in close coops, as they pine if deprived of liberty, but if several turkeys are confined together in a small yard for ten days they can be made quite fat in that length of time. Feed three times a day as much as they will eat, giving corn meal, ground oats, middlings and ground meal equal parts by weight, scalded, morning and noon, and wheat and corn at night. Keep a head of cabbage in the yard, also sharp gravel, ground charcoal and fresh water. A few turkeys can be fed with chickens, if preferred. It is not necessary to force them to eat.—Exchange.

They Can't Escape.

Spanish Citizen.—"Ah, back I see!" Spanish Military Officer.—"Yes; just ran back to look up a few thousand reinforcements." "So? How are things in Cuba?" "Oh, we've got the rascals. They can't escape from the island!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

MR. DUANE, OF AUCKLAND.

We shall print the whole of Mr. Isaac Duane's letter, only regretting that it is not longer. He might have mentioned that June, the month in which he wrote, is the coldest month in the year in his country, and January the hottest. He might also have reminded us that New Zealand is almost as large as Great Britain, with a much more desirable climate. He might further have said that it is a wholesome fact to live in a place where the chief sources of disease, and possesses no insect so noxious as the English wasp. Yet on reading his letter we shall find that those attractive islands in the far Southern Sea are not free from an enemy we are called upon to fight here in England, as elsewhere throughout the world.

"I have much pleasure in writing you," says Mr. Duane, "as to me it is a privilege as well as a duty to describe an experience in which I am confident you will be interested.

"Ever since I was a boy I have not only suffered from indigestion in its worst form, but I have been a martyr to it. Such success in life as I have achieved has been in the face of the constant opposition set up by this miserable ailment.

The bad taste in the mouth, the fitful appetite, the distress in the stomach after eating, the pains in the chest and back, the dull headache, the sense of weariness and fatigue, the depression of spirits, the want of ambition to taste hold of any labour, the weakness resulting from lack of sufficient nourishment, &c.—all these were part and parcel of my life from my youth to a time I am proud to speak of in a moment.

"I can only account for it by assuming that I must have inherited a tendency to this disease. At all events it cast a gloom over my whole history up to the date of my recent happy deliverance. The record of the six epileptic, wretched nights I passed would make almost a volume by itself. Times beyond counting I have arisen from my bed in the morning, glad the night was gone, and yet in no frame of mind to welcome the day. To the chronic dyspeptic rest does not bring strength as it does to others.

"You will hardly need to be told that I made every effort to obtain a cure. I tried medicine after medicine—now something I thought of myself and then something advertised in the newspapers. And as to doctors (against whom I desire to say not a word), I tried one after another, and faithfully used the prescriptions they gave me; but nothing more than a temporary relief came of it.

"About four years ago a friend spoke to me of the great reputation of Mother Seigel's Syrup in curing all ailments of the digestion, and urged me to make a trial of it. I might as well say frankly that I had little faith that it would do me any good; but I was in such pain that I was in a mood to try anything that offered the remotest chance of a cure. So I bought a bottle, and the very first dose made me feel better. This was so cheering and hopeful that I continued taking the Syrup, and to my surprise I grew better and better until I was cured. All the symptoms which made life a burden for so many years are now gone, and I am a different man. If ever, from any cause, I have a temporary recurrence of indigestion, a few doses of Mother Seigel's Syrup produces immediate relief, and leaves me in good health. You have my full consent to publish this letter. I am well known in Auckland and always glad to tell any one by word of mouth what a wonderful cure your remedy worked in my case. [Signed] Isaac Duane, coachbuilder, Karangahape Road, Auckland, New Zealand, June 26th, 1895."

"Our home readers will perceive that not in England alone but in far distant quarters of the globe this celebrated medicine is known, and is successful where others do not avail. It is the most common place of truths that its praises are sounded wherever civilization extends, and almost in every written language the name of Mother Seigel's Syrup finds an acknowledged place.

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