

## NOT I!

Ye bubbling springs that gentle music make  
To lovers' plaints with heart-sore throbs im-  
mixed,  
When as my dear this way her pleasure takes,  
Tell her with tears how firm my love is fixed;  
And, Philomel, report my timorous fears,  
And, Echo, sound my heigh-ho's in her ears:  
But if she asks if I for love will die,  
Tell her, good faith, good faith, good faith—  
not I!

## The New-York Tribune.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 1908.

Whenever two or three writers depart in much the same fashion from the current mode, some one is sure to arise with the refreshing information that we are about to witness a new "movement" in literature. For example, we are now told that the novelists are tending in the direction of "larger canvases." In a little while, if we are to believe this assertion, the reading of fiction is to take more time than has been given, as a rule, to any author since the days of the Victorian masters. It may be doubted if there is really any cause for alarm. The writer whose temperament urges him to produce his picture on a large scale will, of course, be read—if he happens to bring something like genius to the execution of his task. The Holts report that they are printing Mr. De Morgan's "Joseph Vance," an exceedingly voluminous tale, for the seventh time, and we dare say they will go on printing it indefinitely. A story as good as that one may be as long as it pleases. But mere length will probably never be fashionable again. The old "three decker," to which the English circulating libraries gave such a vogue, is as dead as nail in door. It disappeared not only for the practical reasons which brought the American idea of a single volume novel so triumphantly to the front, but because few latter day romancers have had the staying power required for the adequate filling of "larger canvases." Sooner or later the public was certain to refuse to be fooled by writers who stretched through three volumes a tale easily to be told in one, and tolerance in this matter is to-day rarer than ever.

In noticing the recent death of Mr. John C. Nimmo, the publisher, "The Athenaeum" recalls a service he rendered to the art of illustration. "The best etchers of England and France found him a liberal patron," we are told, and those who are familiar with the books he made can testify to the wisdom of his policy. It is true that his books illustrated with etchings were made in every way with great care, and were issued in limited editions at rather high prices. But this is not to say that etched plates are generally impossible. Books illustrated with photogravures or halftones, or by the three-color process, are brought out at high prices. Why has the etching been practically abandoned? For purely reproductive purposes the photogravure or halftone is of course superior, but it would be delightful if illustrations of landscape or architecture, and imaginative or historical designs, could once more be produced, at least occasionally, through one of the most fascinating of all artistic mediums. They would be more costly, but this trouble could be disposed of by the simple process of illustrating a book with, say, half a dozen etchings, instead of with fifteen or twenty times that number of plates made by another method. The reader, we believe, would be the last to complain. Who does not prefer quality to quantity? No one could expect etched illustrations to prove madly popular or extraordinarily profitable, but they might now and then be used successfully enough, and without loss.

An article in "The London Standard" calls attention to a change in the methods of English publishers. They have made much shorter the long established intervals between the publishing seasons. Ten years ago "there was literally nothing doing in the book world through July, August and September." Now, while nothing is published in August, a few publishers bring out books in July, and September has also been invaded by them. The writer adds: "The publishing season in 1907 did not end until we were close on the heels of the holidays, and as a consequence more than one attraction—worthy of a better fate—suffered a measure of neglect, simply because it was hopelessly belated and people were too busy buying presents of what is called the seasonable kind to find time for anything else." It cannot be long before publishers everywhere recognize the necessity of distributing their new books over a larger proportion of the year. It is, perhaps, desirable that little save fiction should appear in July and August. Those months are, after all, pretty generously devoted to open air amusements. But there is every reason why the new books should be issued on a more flexible system than is now generally followed. To concentrate them within the comparatively short period just prior to the holidays, and within an even shorter spring season, is to baffle many a reader, and to diminish the sale of many a book. The man who is confronted, all at once, by fifteen or twenty books that he would like to possess, is far less likely to purchase them all than he would be if, one at a time, they were put beguilingly before him at different periods in the course of a year.

## AMERICAN COLLECTORS.

## A Monumental Work on Their Treasures of Art.

NOTEWORTHY PAINTINGS IN AMERICAN PRIVATE COLLECTIONS. Edited by John La Farge and August F. Jaccaci. Illustrated. Folio, pp. xx, 517. The August F. Jaccaci Company.

This is the first volume in a series of fifteen which has been planned along remarkable lines. In making a record of the American art collections which have been increasing in number with such rapidity during the last twenty-odd years, Mr. La Farge and Mr. Jaccaci have in view something much more valuable and interesting than a luxuriously printed catalogue. Their work is, indeed, magnificently printed, illustrated and bound, but it is not the mere piece

however, the book is only begun, as it were, for in addition to them, and filling many pages, there are critical studies of individual pictures contributed by many authoritative hands, American and foreign. Again and again a single work is analyzed by several different connoisseurs, who in the course of their historical or interpretative remarks bring out many a point of interest that would almost inevitably have escaped a commentator placed in sole charge of the enterprise. The result is an extraordinary body of really illuminating comment. Finally, to round out a scheme as serviceable as it is charming, the editors give an elaborate bibliography, issuing it in a separate portfolio, so that additions may conveniently be made down to the publication of the fifteenth volume. No more workmanlike contribution to the literature of the subject has been made in recent years on either side of the Atlantic. It inspires only one regret. Like the private collections in this country, which, in such curious contrast to those

about him in the moments of work and intellectual struggle, what his eye rested upon; and one might fancy that there was some reason for these special objects placed to meet the eye of their owner at moments of excessive strain." This personal note is scarcely sounded in the collections here commemorated. The point enforced relates rather to the amazing scope and impetus of the movement which, almost in a day, has enriched America with scores, if not hundreds, of the masterpieces of ancient and modern painting. It is a commonplace of recent art history that substantially all of the finest of the old masters are fixed forever in certain European galleries, public and private, but, as has often been pointed out in our columns, the really great painting out of the past nevertheless seems somehow to come into the market from time to time, and how readily it is acquired for America these pages clearly show. Collectors and dealers are as vigilant as they are liberal, and though countless prizes have been placed once for all out of their reach, they have obtained, and are still obtaining, more pictures of the highest rank than one would believe to be available. The book before us, then, throws vivid light on a definite phase of our social development. It brings out the enlightenment, the taste, the passion for the noblest attributes of luxury, by which the present generation, here and there, is bound to profit, and by which, in the future, a far larger mass is certain to be leavened.

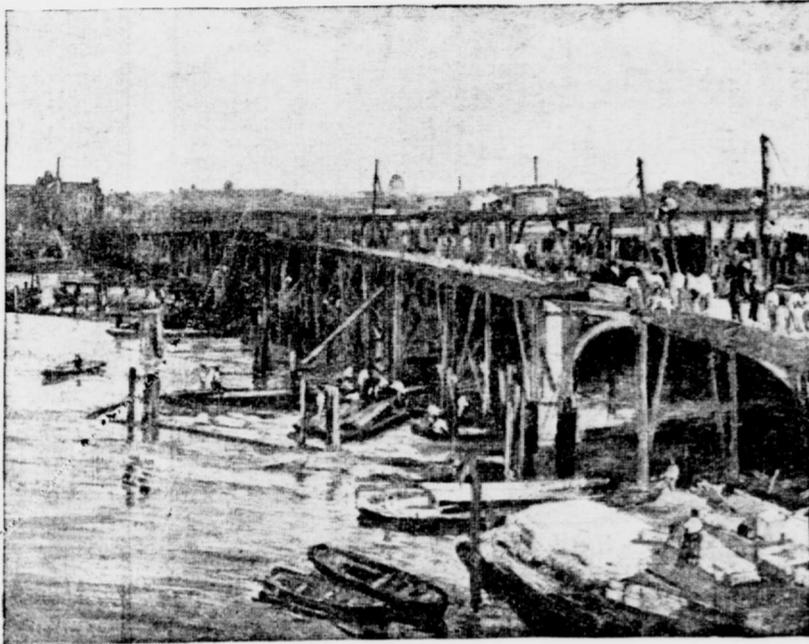
Turning from the general to the particular aspects of the publication, one is impressed first and last by the interesting and suggestive character of much of the text. Mr. La Farge, for example, had a rich theme in Mrs. Gardner's collection, and he has developed it with all of the subtlety which we associate with his critical excursions. At the very outset he gives us a specimen of his insight which is so characteristic, so useful, that we wish it were not too long to quote intact. He is speaking of the "Love's Greeting" of Rossetti, a picture which many a critic would be inclined to dismiss with scant appreciation. Mr. La Farge of course sees its limitations, but he justly says, "however deficient, however faulty, and it is faulty almost all the way through, it is most essentially a flower of that singular [Pre-Raphaelite] movement," and he goes on to make some remarks which must immediately impress any one who knows the work of that school as singularly true and sympathetic. He says:

The influence of which Rossetti is the most perfect example, still persists in English art; and yet this example, this specimen of that fashion, painted by the foremost of the Brotherhood, seems already far away—as if some drift left on the shore by some receding ocean and ages. This is in part, perhaps, because of its being such a personal expression, such purely voluntary poetry, and because, partly from intensity of feeling, partly from deficiency in the usual training of the painter, it has its own technique, its own methods. These are not based on the imitation of nature, but on the acquired habit, if one may so say, of admiring certain paintings and works of art belonging to a great and noble past, in which the knowledge which is now so cheap, had not been accumulated. There is here all the charm of a child's admiration for what has been done that is beautiful, preceding the power of equalling it; there is also the passion of the poet, a manner of enthusiasm more self-conscious, more observant than the simpler, healthier emotions felt by the many. A little more affectation and consciousness would degrade the feeling expressed. But the abandonment and recklessness of the expression of the subject give a real life to the archaeology, to the arbitrary poetry of the little painting.

To how many of the paintings of Rossetti might not these searching words be applied? Mr. La Farge, studying one of an artist's works, seems to get beneath the skin of that artist, to penetrate to all the essentials of his character, and in doing this he gives his criticism a significance far beyond that which attaches to such writing as you would expect in a catalogue pure and simple. This book is, we repeat, not a catalogue, but a work of criticism.

Though it is nowhere touched by the heat of acrimonious controversy, it presents in more than one instance the fruits of scholarly reflection on debatable questions. This is an important matter. The trade in dubious "old masters" never slackens anywhere and it has had its full share of support in America. For this reason it is especially desirable that the pictures in our collections be scrutinized with the utmost care and impartiality, and it is good to see that the editors of this work have opened their pages to the fullest discussion of every painting inviting it with which they have to do. Their contributors, entering into the delightful spirit of the whole project, have avoided pedantry as they have avoided ill temper. Doubtless they were the more stimulated to discourse without harsh dogmatism inasmuch as, in every case, the editors appear to have stood ready to publish arguments on both sides of a given problem. Their excellent judgment is perfectly illustrated in the pages devoted to that "Madonna and Child, St. John and Female Saints," in Mrs. Gardner's collection, which is attributed, inaccurately, we think, to Mantegna. Plenty of space is given to Mr. Roger E. Fry to demonstrate his theory of the authenticity of the picture, at least as regards its composition and design. But equal opportunity is afforded Dr. Kristeller and Dr. Frisconi to develop the much more plausible hypothesis that it is "kin to him [Mantegna] and inspired by his immediate influence," rather than a production from his own hand. The upshot of the matter is that the reader is not overborne by pontifical assertion. All the available facts obtained by research are put before him, with the opinions of differing critics, and he may thrash out his own conclusion.

Here and there a point of discussion is cleared up beyond all peradventure. In Mrs. Gardner's collection there is an interesting painting which has figured as a portrait of Michael Angelo. Mr. La Farge observes that "at the present moment



THE LAST OF OLD WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

(From the painting by Whistler in the Pope Collection. Copyright, 1907, by the August F. Jaccaci Company.)

of gorgeous bookmaking into which it might so easily have been transformed. The idea of the editors has been to treat only of things that are worth while, and to treat them in a vein of high seriousness. No pretence is made of describing every picture in a given collection; the pictures selected are those which have a permanent value. They are dealt with after a peculiarly admirable fashion.

In the first place, each of the five collections celebrated in the present volume is surveyed in a broadly written essay. Thus Mr. La Farge writes of Mrs. Gardner's pictures in Boston; Mr. Kenyon Cox describes the collection of Mr. A. A. Pope, at Farmington; Sir Martin Conway briefly sketches the artistic possession of the late John Hay; Mr. Samuel Isham performs the same service for the collection of Mr. Herbert L. Terrell, in New York, and the paintings belonging to Mr. A. A. Sprague, of Chicago, are traversed by Mr. Cox. With these chapters,

of the noble houses and great connoisseurs of Europe, remain generally inaccessible to the public, this book is not by any means intended for the average student. It is printed in an edition of only one hundred and twenty-six copies, and is issued at a price which only men of wealth can pay. But this is, of course, a matter apart from its intrinsic character, a character on which Mr. La Farge and Mr. Jaccaci deserve the warmest congratulations.

Between the lines of this beautiful book we may trace the revelations of a "social document." Mr. La Farge, in his introduction, alludes to Charles Blanc's work on the collection of M. Thiers. "The sense of a very busy political chief," he says, "of an accumulator of written facts, and of a great worker, came out in some way through the description of the placing of these works of art. One knew what the busy politician and journalist, and later leader of his country, liked to have specially



THE MYSTIC MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE.

(From the painting by Van Dyck in the Sprague Collection. Copyright, 1907, by the August F. Jaccaci Company.)