PAINTINGS AND PRINTS.

Current Exhibitions, Mostly of American Art.

Among the men who have made independent exhibitions of their work this season—and the list has been long—no one has justified himself more clearly than has Mr. Emil Carlsen. He is a skilful painter with a good sense of color, and the pictures which he is showing at the Bauer-Folsom gallery leave a very interesting impression. His best work is done in studies of the sea, spacious and luminous canvases in which he gives you the truth delicately touched with his temperament. The sparkling picture

THE RETURN HOME.
(From the painting by Messionier.)

called "The Blue of the Ocean," the silvery "Moonlight on Kattegat," and the wild, moving scene which he has painted in a light key, "Skagens Odde—the Meeting of the Seas," are all fine in conception and finely painted. Curiously, however, even these beautiful pictures leave the observer wishing that they might have been made just a shade more powerful, that they might have been painted with greater gusto and freedom. Mr. Carlsen has a feeling for breadth. He could not, otherwise, have painted "The Blue of the Ocean." But he never seems to let himself go, to paint with an eager emotion. He would appear to work, rather, in a literal mood, carefully recording his facts and, so to say, gathering up all the loose ends as though he were in pursuit of an ideal of neatness and finish. He is too sincere an artist, he has too genuine a gift, for his work to become merely hard and dry. But with greater flexibility and boldness his art would be enormously strengthened. He would then make, we dare say, a better picture of his "Fishing Boats Going to Sea," for example, a work which, as it stands, with its woolly surf, is oddly disappointing. It is because of the somewhat nerveless handling in them that his four or five blond impressions of Venice fail of their full effect. The suavity and restraint with which they are painted go perilously near to landing them in insipidity. Nevertheless, Mr. Carlsen, with all his limitations, exercises a charming talent. His exhibition should not be missed.

At the Macbeth gallery there is a collection of thirty-four pictures by Mr. Louis Loeb. It is a retrospective show. Several portraits and other paintings reappear from old Academy exhibitions and in fact we renew acquaintance with most if not all of the more ambitious pieces which this artist has produced in a number of years. His ambition is one of his chief virtues. He is interested not only in landscape and portraiture but in ideal subjects. We have more than once paid tribute to his imaginative aim, and it is a pleasure to praise him again for this none too common trait. In such pictures as his "Nymph" or "The Dawn" or "The Summit" he discloses a winning vein of romantic sentiment. He is, too, a capable craftsman, adequate though not at all distinguished in his draftsmanship and modelling. These merits are especially conspicuous in his portraits, which are all straightforward and sound performances. There is, however, a strange discrepancy between Mr. Loeb's abilities and the attitude which he holds toward nature when he turns from portraiture pure and simple. Just twice in this exhibition, in the painting of "The Lake" and in the figure study called "The Peacock," he suggests that he has come to close quarters with his material, and painted it with directness. For the rest, his facile pictorial habit steadily betrays him. He makes his pictures graceful and pretty rather than strong and beautiful. The assembling of a considerable quantity of his work only emphasizes his besetting weakness. An air of unreality hangs about this collection, for all that it testifies to such conscientiousness and to such thoughtful feeling.

A number of paintings at the Durand-Ruel galleries illustrate the art of the late Victor Huguet, an artist who almost but not quite succeeded in exploiting an exotic motive to truly brilliant purpose. There have been many French Orientalists since the great days of Marilhat and Decamps. Rarely have they produced works of the highest order. Huguet's studies of Arab scenes are clever, animated bits of painting very effective with their staccato play of light and shade, but not in their finest estate do they persuade you that he had a wholly satisfactory warrant for painting them. His composition is good, and sometimes he achieved a certain quality in his tone. Witness "Le Ravin," a decidedly handsome canvas, and the mildly impressive picture of "The Statues of Memnon Near Thebes." But Huguet is at bottom a rather commonplace type, a man destined to fill only a minor place in the art of his time. Some water colors by a young Frenchman of the present day, M. Fernand Janin, may be seen at the Knoedler gallery, vivacious impressions of Spanish and Moorish scenes with others noted in Belgium and in Paris. His work is a little spotty and his drawing especially is without charm, but he uses his bright colors in pleasing fashion, and in a small way makes an entertaining effect. In the next room there are half a dozen portraits by Mr. Edwin B. Child, decorative canvases painted with some aptitude. At the Photo-Secession gallery there are some sketches in oil by Mr. Alfred Maurer and some water colors by Mr. John Marin. The latter appears to be beating out a method of his own which may some day be productive of interesting results. His color even now is not without merit, and there are signs of good observation in his street scenes, but in respect to style his experiments are as yet unconvincing. Mr. Maurer's crude sketches are even less promising. At the Montross gallery there is an exhibition of pictures painted by Mr. Childe Hassam in the desert in Eastern Oregon. The current exhibition at the Powell gallery is given to pictures by Mr. C. P. Gruppe.

A Whistler exhibition, about evenly divided between his etchings and his lithographs, has been opened at the Wunderlich gallery. It is small but choice. The etchings include some rare and very beautiful impressions. They range from early plates like that amusing "Title to the French Set" in which the artist portrayed himself with such graceful humor, to specimens of that period in which he concentrated the learning of a lifetime into an exquisitely dainty play of line. What amazing freshness there is in his etchings! He could, indeed, dispense with that "human interest" of which he was so suspicious. Take, for example, "The Velvet Dress," that lightly touched portrait of a lady in which elements of character have no prominence whatever. Just the carriage of the figure is what he drives at, and just the flow of drapery. These things are enough. With them he produces a design of incomparable elegance. The lithographs make a fascinating array. Among them is one little known portrait, the unfinished sketch of Lady Haden. This, to be sure, is more interesting as a rarity than for any other reason, though there are some characteristic touches in it. More appealing in every way are such bits of picturesqueness as "The Pantheon from the Luxembourg Gardens," or the delightful drawing made at Vitre. It is interesting, by the way, to compare the full rich quality of this lithograph and of two or three of the figure subjects with a condensed note like the "Gaiety Stage Door." In that little sketch Whistler works a kind of magic, getting his picture as though by sleight of hand.

There is an exhibition of eighteenth century French engravings at the Keppel gallery which contains many good plates and has been arranged on an especially good plan. The designers are placed in the foreground; we are asked to admire the fine craftsmanship which went to the making of these prints, but we are asked even more to consider the painters without whom they could scarcely have existed. The artists of the eighteenth century on both sides of the Channel were singularly fortunate in the reproduction of their masterpieces. Side by side with Reynolds, Gainsborough and the other great portrait painters of England there flourished a large group of mezzotint engravers, consummately qualified to translate their work into black and white. Watteau and Lancret, Boucher and Fragonard, Chardin and Lavreince, were equally lucky. These Frenchmen even had a certain advantage over the English painters, inasmuch as the stuff in which they worked was more perfectly suited to the uses of the engraver. They, too, were skilled in portraiture, but they were above all things interpreters of a social movement, celebrants of fashion, costume and the lighter emotions. In their graceful compositions the gayety and elegance of a pleasure loving period are daintily poetised and at the same time most truthfully portrayed. Their decorative interiors, carefully copied from the boudoirs and drawing rooms of the time, their stately terraces and romantic gardens, are enlivened by courtly and charming figures involved in episodes entertainingly significant of eighteenth century sentiment and manners. Such social documents simply clamored to be reproduced in engravings and the

THE SENTINEL.
(From the painting by Bargue.)

genius of the burin was in this instance in absolute harmony with the genius of the brush. Watteau and his followers live their own life in these prints. It is accordingly almost the essence of their art that you get in this enchanting little exhibition. With the absence of color there goes, of course, much of their beauty, but the spirit of an epoch remains.

The exhibition at the American Art Galleries this week is of the paintings of the Barbizon and other modern schools which were collected by the late John T. Martin. The sale takes place at Mendelssohn Hall on Thursday and Friday evenings. The pictures reproduced on this page are from the Martin collection. The pictures belonging to Señor Mendonca, which were placed on view at the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries last week, will be sold in the Grand Ball Room of the Waldorf-Astoria on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. The American Art Association announces the dispersal of the artistic property in the residence of Mr. Henry W. Poor, on Gramercy Park. It consists of old Italian carved and decorated ceilings, Italian and Spanish carved mantels and doorways, antique furniture, Gothic and Renaissance tapestries, bronzes, silver and divers miscellaneous objects. Cards to be obtained on written application will admit visitors to the house on April 19 and 20. The sale is set for the afternoons of April 22, 23 and 24.

R. C.

GOING TO WORK.
(From the painting by Millet.)

NATURAL KINDNESS.

It was at a railroad junction in the South that the Northern traveller found himself hungry, but with only two minutes to spare before his train left. "I'll take a cup of coffee," he said to the young woman in charge of the restaurant. "I've no time for anything else."

"You can take all the time you want, sir," said the young woman, cordially. "You look at this bill of fare, and I'll telephone to the superintendent to delay the train a little while."

"Why, can that be done?" asked the traveller, in amazement.

"Certainly," said the young woman. "Of course it can. It's a branch road, and no other train coming or going over it to-day—and the superintendent would want you to have a good meal. He owns this restaurant."—Youth's Companion.

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