

Vasilii Verestschagin

PAINTER OF THE HORRORS OF WAR.



DEATH OF VERESTSCHAGIN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

Now that he has gone and the enchantment of his magnetic presence no longer complicates an estimate of him, one may discuss this great Russian as an individual artist. During the days of his artistic activity he perhaps provoked more criticism than any man of his time. He was, in the best sense, a revolutionist, and nothing that was in his particular craft considered classic escaped the mordant scrutiny of his criticism.

That something was accepted as sacred and claimed universal artistic acquiescence was sufficient to stir in him an eagerness to know why it was so regarded, and he seemed fated to continually realize, to the satisfaction of his own conscience, that most of the acquiescence was traditional.

Having absolutely no respect for tradition and believing, as John Boyle O'Reilly once said, that "the world is made when a man is born," he set up for himself—and like all great imitators found a large apostolic following—certain art tenets, to which, through good and evil days, he adhered with heroic consistency. With all this, however, this sketch has nothing to do.

The days of his productivity are now over and he will be estimated as an artist by the work he left behind. Time alone can determine whether this rating will be high or low. When the distance is great enough to justify an arrangement of the art of the Nineteenth Century he will naturally fall into his place somewhere between "the line," which enthusiastic admiration demanded should always be his, and "the sky," to which avowed criticism during his lifetime fringed him. Now is it necessary again to recount the thrilling romance of his life as a traveler and soldier, nor tell of his wounds and hairbreadth escapes on the Danube and in Central Asia, for they have been attended to elsewhere.

Three presents have to do with him as an individual quite aside from his art or his picturesque wanderings.

A dear, good friend of his, during his last visit to America, while Vasilii Verestschagin was under discussion, said, in concluding an argument wherein no one gave promise of being convinced, I think we

are all too near him to truly estimate his worth as an artist, but I am certain that any of you who knew him as I do would esteem him as much even if he were only a mechanic, for he is, in truth, one of the most remarkable individuals of his time.

In the versatility of tongues he was almost as great as Cardinal Ximenes. He spoke and wrote all European languages, a score or more of Russian and Asiatic dialects, and when last in Japan, in 1901—being then about 50 years of age—with Slavic facility he added that unspeakable tongue to his polyglot achievements.

VERSATILITY OF TONGUES.

This marvelous facility of languages and the fact that he traveled through Europe exhibiting the marvelous translations of what his eye had seen threw him into easy communication with the most distinguished men in Germany, France, Italy and England. He knew them all—statesmen, poets, orators, artists and war lords—and everywhere he went he left behind him the vivid impression of a truly unconventional intellect.

In Germany, since his death, scores of critiques concerning what they are pleased to call his "mystic" have been written, and while there is no concert in the note they sound, they are, taken as a whole, unanimous as to the striking force of the man's intellectual side.

And so, to go back to what his New York friend said of him at dinner, it is essential to an appreciation of him to look for the sources of his greatness—for he was a great man—on the personal and not on the artistic side.

It is not generally known that his activities were not confined to painting. That was the most spectacular product of his life, and so attracted the widest notoriety. He was fired with a burning desire to readjust human affairs on a more rational basis than he found prevailing, and this naturally led him into the field of political and social speculation, wherein, in his native tongue, amid the babel of Russian clamor for modernity, he had his say. Here he recognized that in that great confusion of voices wherein modern Russia walls its longing for the abolition of the conventional and arbitrary he could claim but small audience, and so his

preaching and reforming faculty shared itself in the graphic art. Here at least, he thought, he could preach his sermon and hold his audience. Although in his day he painted more than a thousand battle scenes, he was the most distinguished apostle of peace in the Nineteenth Century.

I held a brief for him once when his international admirers claimed for him the Peace Medal, bestowed every five years at The Hague upon that person who has since the last bestowal contributed most to universal peace, and that year it went, paradoxical as it may seem, to the head of the Red Cross Society, the only organization that in modern times has made any contribution looking to the establishment of comfort in war.

To make war hideous was the main object of his life, and he had painted it in every phase, from the crash of battalions and artillery parks at Plevna to the mountain staking of lonely cavaliers on the narrow road approaches to Himalayan villages.

HIS LAST MISSION.

He had in mind to put on canvas the appalling horror of new kinds of death when he went aboard the flagship of his boyhood friend, Admiral Makaroff, at Port Arthur early in April last. He recently said his sermon would not be complete until he had added to it the most modern aspect in which "the glory of war" appeared. Who knows but that in the hideous final moment, when on the fated Petropavlovsk, surrounded by 700 struggling, maddened men, he may, in an illuminated flash, have seen in his mental vision the infernal picture which was to have concluded the sermon, but which his hand was never to execute?

The political, social and economic ramifications and influence of Verestschagin's work in making war hateful and abolishing the glamour that facilitates conscription cannot yet be estimated. His picture, in the estimation of thoughtful men, did more than all the preaching during the close of the Nineteenth Century to correct mistaken notions of military glory, on which Governments rely to justify a war, and another in the Imperial Museum at St. Petersburg—and the stimulating memory of his fine magnetic self are all that remains. In the American or English sense he left no estate. This was a deliberate desire on his part, for he once shrewdly remarked: "When I am gone the priests and lawyers will find me very thin."

NOT A "BUSINESS ARTIST."

I recall, during his last visit to me, denouncing in terms which only fraternal affection could justify, a business imbecility of which he had been guilty, to his cost, and from whose consequences there was no escape, hearing him say in his picturesque English: "Hart, this denunciation amuses me highly because I am, you must understand, in Europe considered the most business artist of any."

If this is true it is needless to pray "God

help them." He must be doing it daily or they could not exist.

His radicalism and his energetic protests against conventionalities of every sort cost him dearly. He once refused to accept a commission to paint for the House of Representatives an historical picture of Alexander at the battle of Plevna, and I remember, years after, hearing him, in conversation with Jules Claretie, now the director of the Comedie Francaise, justify this by saying:

"How can I do such a thing? Emperors require, in such circumstances, to be heroically on horseback, sword in hand, at the head of the charge. I know that is not so; they fight the big fights on a camp stool with a telescope. Such a picture is not heroic. My work must be true."

He applied his unconventional ideas to his intimate life, too, for he had a little son whose mind he declared should never be distorted by anything that was not true, nor should he be forced to accept what was until he could realize it was so. This naturally excluded the boy from mental participation in the physical

marvels of the Old Testament, so that when the day came for him to matriculate at the academy in Moscow he was found to be singularly defective in that important branch of human knowledge. Although he was a perfect phenomenon in mathematics, medieval and modern history, and had mastered three modern languages, he was rejected.

This developed an awkward situation, since without the knowledge of the ancient marvels the boy could not enter the school. The artist compromised in a fashion thus amusingly told in a letter:

"Since it is necessary in Russia to-day to know and believe those things about Jonah and the whale and Joshua and the sun, I have opened his eyes to all this. Now he can answer with the others. But the priests do not also know that with Joshua and those other old gentlemen he is now also acquainted with the creations of Hans Christian Andersen, and they are to him all of equal importance. When I think of such a havoc as his mind now is I shiver."

BEAUTY AND NERVES (Can a Woman Retain Both?)

If you would be beautiful in face, disposition and character, then avoid as you would the plague or smallpox a tendency to irritability and general fault-finding.

When things and people begin to get on your nerves and even one's closest and best friends may, at times, do that, don't stop to think about what effect a sudden departure may have upon your immediate surroundings or those about you, but fly with all possible haste to a different atmosphere.

Now, the selection of your own apartment, or better still, hire yourself out for a brief walk and commune with nature a bit. This will soothe your tired nerves and give you a chance to regain your usual mental and physical poise.

Should you continue to let yourself be surrounded with what appear at the moment to be aspirations and annoyances that are well-nigh intolerable, you will become one of those thoroughly exasperating and altogether unreasonable creatures from whom everyone else will fly—a nervous woman.

The rapid rate at which we Americans live, move and take our enjoyment in the pursuit of the elusive dollar has brought about a condition of nervousness in both men and women that is positively alarming. Indeed as a disease, it has been dignified as a form of malady all our own and called Americanitis. Every person who is fine or sensitive to fineness is naturally of a nervous temperament, but it does not follow that they must in consequence become the victims of that nervous organism.

The calmness that seems to bespeak the equable temperament often hides a nature on which the whole gamut of human emotions plays, but it is the supreme power of self-control that has made the possessor the wholly charming and magnetic person he or she is sure to be.

Self-control does not mean that you should force yourself to endure things that continually grate on your sensibilities. Not at all. If the cause of annoyance cannot be removed then, in the name of all common sense, remove yourself, if it be only for ten minutes, from the scene of action and give the atmosphere a chance to clear and the thoughts of one and all to glide into new channels.

Now, of course, the first thing to do if you have allowed yourself to become harp on of time is to attend to the general condition. Beyond that the cure lies with the patient. She must take herself in hand. When she has learned how to relax, or, in other words, shake off the feeling of rigid resistance by slipping

away from her environment in mind and body, she will very soon find she can do so.

She will realize that nervous tension is a most deadly enemy to health and good looks, and having arrived at this conclusion she may begin to demonstrate the fact with beneficial results.

RECIPES WORTH TRYING

At this season of the year the family is apt to have a craving for dishes slightly out of the common, as the familiar ones begin to grow monotonous.

A French method of preparing chickens is in every way desirable and gives a pleasant variety.

Clean plump spring chickens cut up as for fricassee.

Allow two tablespoonsful of olive oil, a sprig of parsley, a bay leaf, a slice of onion, a half teaspoonful of salt, a quarter teaspoonful of pepper and five mushrooms to each.

Put the oil in the frying pan, and when hot brown the chicken nicely on every side; then add the seasoning, with mushrooms peeled and cut into bits, and a quarter of a pint of brown stock.

Stand over a good, moderate fire and cook slowly until tender, from half to three-quarters of an hour, and serve with a sauce made from the liquor slightly thickened with browned flour.

Serve with French fried potatoes and a nicely dressed salad of lettuce.

A dish of poached eggs with mushroom sauce is delicious and makes a welcome addition to the family menu.

For twelve eggs one-quarter of a pound of fresh mushrooms will be sufficient.

Peel and wash them, then place in porcelain-lined saucepan with a tablespoonful of butter and a few drops of lemon juice.

Cover the pan and cook on a moderate fire for ten minutes; then add a quarter of a glassful of good Madeira wine; cook again for two or three minutes longer, when add one still of bechamel sauce; let come to a boil and season to taste.

Poach the eggs carefully and dish on rounds of toast.

Pour the sauce around the dish, reserving the mushrooms to use as a garnish.

For the bechamel sauce cook half a tablespoonful each of butter and flour together until they bubble; then pour in half a cupful of milk, add half a bay leaf, a sprig of parsley and stir until the boiling point is reached.

Season with salt, pepper and a dash of nutmeg; let cook slowly for five minutes; then pass through a fine sieve.

PARASOL AS CUPID'S DART.

Outing Girl Will Select Sun Shades to Match Her Frocks and Her Moods.



Rose-pink velvet ribbons are cleverly fastened together to form this stock with epaulettes and stole fronts.

WRITTEN FOR THE SUNDAY REPUBLIC.

The old saying, two heads are better than one, is at no time truer than when the heads belong to a man and a maid, and they are together under a fluffy parasol on a sunny summer morning.

There is no doubt the beauty of the parasol adds to the interest of the situation; for, as it is beautiful, so it will make the girl more charming, and the more charming she is, well, the girl knows.

The clever girl, then, will look well to the selection of her parasol this summer. By instinct she knows that she never looks more bewitching than when she affixes the harsh light of the day by holding above her head a soft-hued, dainty parasol.

That witching creature known as the Summer Girl, who comes each year to charm us anew, plans to introduce this season many new fashion fads.

She is studying more than ever every little detail of her dress, and her aim is always to look a finished picture.

She orders her hat to match her frock, and then—not content with this—she selects her parasol, her veil and her gloves to carry out perfectly the color harmony of her costume.

The majority of her gowns for summer-time wear will be in delicate tints. Already she is showing a preference for faint gray, ivory tints, and the palest of greens.

The fabrics she selects are soft and airy, and the greater number of them are transparent. In place of serge and cheviot she will wear the new silky, supple mohair or Bielleme, and she specially favors the velvets and the soft, pliable taffetas.

Her gowns will be elaborate, but never will their elaboration interfere with their artistic effect.

And what is true of the summer gowns is true of the parasols.

Each parasol is beautiful from an artistic standpoint, to say nothing of its showing the trend of the newest fashions.

The tucked gown has emphasized the popularity of the tucked parasol. Soft little ruchings, which constitute the trimming of so many of the newest French frocks, are also depended upon to give a new touch of charm to the parasol of fashion.

There are shirred parasols to match shirred gowns, lace parasols to carry with lace frocks and parasols specially hand-made and hand-painted to exactly match particular gowns.

This fad for matching the parasol and the gown is not only shown in the more elaborate frocks and sunshades, but in the linen gowns for morning wear and the coaching coats.

To carry with a linen gown is worn, there are smart-looking linen parasols in the same shade as the dress, and trimmed with a cut-out pattern in embroidery.

The coaching parasols are made to match in color either the coat or its trimmings, and the newest have a finely carved horse's head in ebony wood for the top of the handle, or the handle is capped with a crystal ball, which, when you look into it, reveals a tiny coach-and-driver.

Clusters of conventionalized gossamer in shades of pink and white are used to form the decoration of an exquisite almond green silk sunshade. The design is hand painted and the parasol is indeed a work of art.

The tucked parasols and the parasols trimmed with little ruchings are much the mode this spring for everyday wear. The maid with an economical turn of mind can purchase a plain shade and deck it with tiny ruchings, thereby saving a neat penny. They are fashionable in gram green, onion brown, navy blue and champagne, and many of them are made waterproof, which is certainly an achievement.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE HOUSE.

Whether wealth is or is not to be her portion, she is early taught to take her part in domestic councils.

The business of welcoming and looking after guests, a task peculiarly fitted for the exercise of her gracious powers, is largely allotted to her.

She helps her mother in reducing the burden of notes, letters, applications for help and money that every day's mail brings pouring in to the breakfast table.

She writes and answers invitations, gives hints as to the disposition of the daily menu for meals, remembers the dishes papa likes and the boys have called for, and receives claimants on her mother's time and attention.

When she is acting in her mother's stead her youth and buoyancy throw off a hundred trifling annoyances of the household that through years of iteration have begun to wear heavily on the older housekeeper.

With the younger children she establishes the lovely ties of vice queen, carrying out the mandates of the maternal sovereign and making herself a delightful comrade of nursery and schoolroom.

To her father and grown brothers the rightly trained girl becomes a veritable blessing.

To her they carry confidences and worries which it does not seem expedient to convey to the generally overburdened mistress of the house.

Her sympathy and camaraderie create a green spot in their workday lives.

She finds a natural field of activity in the arrangement of flowers, the oversight of house plants, the disposition of furniture, books, pictures, bric-a-brac.

She understands the composition of different dishes and the theory of cooking, and when the household is without domestics, takes a responsible part as menager.

She has her own allowance of pocket money and dress money and is taught the use of a bank account and a check book.

All this and much more does the athletic girl of culture to-day when she is the daughter of wise parents.

She does it because, remembers the dishes papa likes and the boys have called for, and receives claimants on her mother's time and attention.

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NEW HANDBAGS BEAUTIFUL.

The new handbag and card cases show even more extravagance and beauty than their immediate predecessors. They are the costliest affairs in their respective lines ever turned out.

The handbags are large and have long, straight metal tops, with most of the ornamentation upon the tops instead of the sides.

They open by pressure on the top, or with a clasp, and, instead of a metal chain or round leather handle, are fitted up with an exceedingly stylish-looking leather strap, no wider than a finger, and very thin.

This strap is knotted in a single loop at the top, merely for purposes of individuality, as the loop gives quite an air of cache to the strap.

These straps are in the same tints as the leather of which the bag is made, and when silk is employed the strap is of the color that prevails in the silk.

The bags of thin, dressed leather, in dainty colors, are pleated the whole way along the top in full pleats.

This gives quite an air of distinction to the bag and makes a pleated fullness at the side, with rounded corners at the bottom.

Silk bags are treated in the same manner.

Favorite silks are large-figured pompadours, in which pink prevails as a decoration, and there is some soft, quiet tint as a background. The straps are of the color of the background.

Handsome brocaded stripes of flowers, or large, spreading figures, or hand-painted effects, are made up into the large bags, and smaller figures in deeper tints into small ones.

As yet beaded and embroidered effects have not appeared in these new bags.

A variation in new bag styles is a long, rather narrow flat bag, made like several open envelopes laid together and fastened only at the bottom. The center compartment has a slender metal rim and clasp.

Into these compartments a woman tucks her handkerchiefs, camels powder, and any other flat things that she wants to carry about, as well as her cards and bills. A handle holds these together.

In a much smaller shape, and of heavy leather, are purses that have compartments on each side of the clasp purse for holding cards, bills and the handkerchief.

The sides come up two or more inches above the top of the purse in a curve that has a curved slit in it for the hand. This double handle arrangement holds the sides of the purse, closed together.