Sunday Morning Among the Cross-Words



Notes of Art and Artists - Continued From Twelfth Page

by Albert Spalding, violinist, but originally built for Charles L. Freer of Detroit, founder of our Freer Galley, and the "Home of the Ernest Watsons" in Monterey.

AN EXHIBITION of block prints and pencil drawings by Ernest and Eva Watson, now on view at the Art League, is also being extended beyond the original closing date; it will remain for several weeks. All but three of the 80 items included are the work of Ernest Watson, a master, both of the pencil and block print.

Block print in black and white are shown as well as color prints, which are, however, the more numerous and more attractive to the average person. The making of color prints is far more laborious than that of black and white prints, for several blocks are necessary; theoretically, one block for each color used. But in practice, an artist frequenty uses two or more colors on one block, a method called "block painting," which simultaneously complicates the process and extends its scope. One group of six prints in Mr. Watson's exhibition reveals the process to the beholder in five proofs, shown with the finished print: "Homeward Bound."

That all of the painstaking care required has been richly rewarded in this artist's case, is apparent from such exquisite prints as "Harbor," "Cornwall Bridge," "The Victor." (a yachting race), "Rest on the Hill," "Venetian Mornings" and others too numerous to mention. The gradations of color are so subtle they are impossible to describe. As evidenced by a large number of items, Mr. Watson loves spacious sky and cloud effects, and reproduces them consummately. His prints are fascinating in their color range; there are many examples of both monochromatic and analogous harmonies. They reveal a cultured, quiet taste as distinguished from the modernists' preference for gorgeous, clashing contrasts inspired by peasant art, in many contemporary color prints.

MORLEY FLETCHER'S wood block prints in color, on view until January 28 in the division of graphic arts, Smithsonian Building, are excellent examples of the medium which his own researches have done so much to develop in this country. "Mount Shasta" is one of the larger prints shown. Its colors are soft and harmonious; the rich blue sky, blue-wiolet mountain (in several tones) and graygreen of trees intensify the "cool" effect of the snow-covered peak. Still waters which mirror what is above and beside them, obviously appeal to Mr. Fletcher, as four of the prints incorporate this feature: "Meadowsweet," "Wiston River" (in his native county of Lancashire, England), "The Waterway" and "Floodgates." This device, showing the landscape elements in reverse, results is a very attractive balance in the composition. There is but one straight

figure subject, "The Bookworm," the others being landscapes, river scenes or other types in which figures are incidental. "Solinas River" is typical of California, where Mr. Fletcher now resides, showing as it does, a mere trickle of water through a wide dry river bed, with beautiful mountains in the distance. "Pilgrimage Play," which Mr. Fletcher made in collaboration with Allen Tierney, presents something of a contrast to the rest of the work, as the design approaches the modernist idiom, in its geometric shapes and balance.

Mr. Fletcher and also Ernest Watson were represented in "Fifty Color Prints of the Year," the first traveling exhibition of the kind to be circulated in this country, which was sent out by the American Federation of Arts last year, and proved so popular that for the present season, it has been taken to Canada under auspices of the National Gallery at Ottawa, while a second exhibition of the same nature is on a circuit of the United States. Both shows were assembled by the Print Makers Society of California.

NEARLY 200 daguerreotypes are included in an exceptionally engaging exhibition on view throughout this month in the foyer of the United States National Museum, which was opened January 4 by Andre de Laboulaye, the French Ambassador. One hundred and fifty of these are from the collection of M. Therese Bonney of Paris, which are supplemented by items from the National Museum's section of photography, and by a small group of original Brady daguerreotypes lent by the L. C. Handy Studios of Washington.

This exhibition commemorates the centenary of Nicephore Niepce, one of the inventors of photography, who died in 1833. (Mile. Bonney's portion of the exhibition opened the 1933 art season in Paris and came to Washington from New York City, where it was shown at the Knoedler Galleries.) Why so many exhibitions and celebrations commemorate anniversaries of the deaths of valuable people is a mystery to us, but one is disinclined to quarrel with this queer custom when it supplies an excuse for so charming a show as the present one, of pictures made by the process of which the invention was completed by and named for Louis-Jacques Daguerre, partner and collabora-

tor of Niepce.

This exhibition has numerous facets of interest. It should appeal to the photographer as illustrating the inception of one of our newest art media, as well as one of our most important industries; to the historian, as it is a review of "The Second Empire" in France, and also affords glimpses of figures in our own nineteenth century history; to the biographer, as it includes such a dazzling number of famous persons, and to the

costume designer, as indisputable evidence of what the people wore during a specific Mile. Bonney's collection includes about 30 rare portraits on silver backgrounds, 1841-1845, one of which is reproduced herewith: A little girl in a striped gown, which the owner calls "Mitts." It is one of the earliest dated portraits in existence: April. 1844. In addition, there are exceptional pasteled daguerreotypes, such as No. 80, "Goyescas," which Mile. Bonney considers outstanding. Although she has collected for only eight years, as a hobby, she has acquired such important items as daguerreotypes of Liszt, Chateaubriand, the Duke of Morny, Princess Bernadotte of Sweden, Edgar Allen Poe, Delacroix, Chopin (from a sketch by Georges Sand, which has been lost), Victor Hugo, and Mme. Doche, the first actress who played Camille. To the large number which cannot be identified Mile. Bonney has given fanciful names.

The collection also includes some fine ambrotypes, and one of the first ferotypes on oilcloth, as well as a series of daguerreotypes by the best known American makers of the period, Anson, Gurney, Root and Brady of Civil War fame. The Brady group from the Handy Studios includes portraits of Daniel Webster, the French poets, Lamartine, Audubon and two of Brady himself, one with his wife and her sister.

The public which took "Little Women" to its heart so enthusiastically should find something of the same appeal in these daguerreotypes.

COMETHING of the marner in which African art has influenced works by contemporary artists may be seen in a number of wood sculptures now on view at the House of Seven Arts, included in an exhibition by West Virginia artists, which opened last Monday for a fortnight's showing. Several of these artists seem to work with equal facility in a number of mediums. Joe Goethe shows several small heads in various woods. elongated and highly stylized, all reminiscent of African wood carvings, particularly his "Zombie." He also shows two standing nude figures, a number of small torsos, one carved from soap; a water color landscape, and a group of crayon drawings, the latter being hung on the stairway. A self-portrait and two still-life paintings in oils as well as two plaster sculptures, a seated nude and a head, represent C. Alexander. Arvid L. Kundzin contributes "Harvey's Mill" and "Archie's Barn," landscapes in oils, as well as two wood sculptures in a style similar to those by Mr. Goethe. A group of canvases in the cubist idiom by James E. Davis includes a scene on shipboard, a landscape and an acrobat, done

with a very simple palette. Most of these are in the library on the first floor.

On the walls of the music and banques rooms on the second floor are crayon drawings by Leontine Barnett and June Stamm, chiefly landscapes.

AN EXHIBITION of 16 oil paintings en titled "Conservative vs. Modern Art" was opened at Howard University's Art Gallery on January 7 to remain until February 4. exhibition, circulated by the American Fed eration of Arts, aims to reveal certain essential distinctions between the two types of work, even though the startling contrasts between them apparent a few years ago have been considerably modified. Perhaps the most noticeable difference in the present instances, and also the most ironical, is that of viewpoint. Our conservatives here are chiefly interested in appearance; our modernists, in essential form. And in recognizing this fact we note that our conservatives are nearly exponents of some form of the impressionist technique, which when it first made its appearance created a furor, and was considered the most superlative kind of "modes ernism"; whereas, those whom we must class as modernists in the present group, in theta endeavor to suggest the form of their subjects, have gone back to the aims of most of the old masters. F. S. B.

The South Sea Bubble

THE modern failures in business, great at they have been in many cases, fall short of the failure which rocked England, the famous South Sea bubble.

This scheme was launched by Harley, the Earl of Oxford, in an effort to pay off the public debt. A company was formed which was given exclusive right to the South Sea trade and also to certain import duties. A company was launched to carry out the project and the stock sold to the public. The stock rose rapidly until it was quoted at a figure 10 times over par.

When it reached the high point, the directors sold out and the bubble collapsed with a thud which threw all England into distress.

The directors were found not to have committed any illegal act, but, nevertheless, their property was confiscated and aided in alleviating part of the distress. The government remitted part of the debt owed to the government, \$35,000,000 of the \$50,000,000 originally owed, but still the failure left the English people in very distressing circumstances.