

which there is a certain novelty about it which renders Mr. Whittredge's sketches particularly interesting; besides this, he has worked well and conscientiously, and brings back with him many sketches which, to the common eye, would appear tame and uninteresting, but which, to the initiated, are motives for fine and telling pictures. Here is a mistake which too many of our artists are apt to make: they consider that to make a perfect picture they must have the traditional mountain distance, middle distance, and a foreground replete with rocks, flowers, shrubbery and trees, whereas, in nine cases out of ten, the most telling subjects may be made from the simplest and most uncouth material. Take for instance Mr. Whittredge's "View on the Plains," which is to be exhibited at the Fund exhibition, and we find this truth fully exemplified. The picture represents one flat surface, the Plains, while in the distance, or more properly middle distance, a row of hillocks stretch across the canvass, and loom up against a sky replete with cool, pearly greys; the only object of interest introduced is an emigrant train, whose white wagon tops dot the plains, and relieve the monotony of color. This, you will set down in your mind, is a most uninteresting picture; not so: its very simplicity, and to use an Irishism, want of interest make it interesting: it is novel—something out of the common run—and we are struck as well by its originality as the superior excellence of its execution. Mr. Whittredge has treated his subject well, and by his clever handling, has made, from very slight material, a thoroughly excellent and praiseworthy picture. I shall have occasion to speak of this work again in reviewing the pictures of the Artist Fund Society's Exhibition.

J. F. Weir has just finished a study of the Foreman of an Iron Foundry, which is brimful of strength and character, and does great credit to this rising young artist.

Gignoux has on his easel an exquisite picture which he entitles "First Snow." Mr. Gignoux has taken for his subject that glorious season of the year when nature is decked in her brightest and gayest attire—a snow storm has covered the Autumn landscape with its bright crystalizations, and here and there bright patches of gold and crimson peep out from amid the wilderness of white, while over all the setting-sun casts a glorious radiance. Mr. Gignoux's picture is well conceived and well executed, being full of numberless beauties and excellences.

Theo. Kaufman has just finished a very clever portrait of General Sherman. The General is discovered, in shirt sleeves, sitting by a camp-fire and enjoying the sweet fragrance of his cigar, while in the background are to be seen numberless tents, between which we catch glimpses of the landscape beyond. The figure of the General, in addition to being a good portrait, is well painted, the effect of fire and moonlight being particularly admirable, but beyond this the picture calls for but little praise, the landscape being hard and crude, while the arrangement of the tents is unnecessarily stiff and ungraceful.

I cannot refrain, e'er I close, from mentioning an excellent portrait by Geo. A. Baker on exhibition at Avery's Gallery; it is strongly and beautifully painted, while the coloring is simply ex-

quisite. Mr. Baker's *forte*, heretofore, has been the painting of female heads, but in this he shows us that he is equally capable of seizing the masculine character.

PALETTA.

LITERARY MATTERS.

"CHARACTER AND CHARACTERISTIC MEN." By E. P. WHIPPLE. Published by Ticknor & Fields.

This is a series of lectures and addresses delivered at various periods of the author's life, mainly with the view to illustrate the nature, growth and influence of character, individual, collective and national. Hence we have the distinctive characteristics of the American and English mind; the eccentric, the intellectual, and the heroic character, to portray the collective form, and an able analysis of the characters of Thackeray, Hawthorne, Everett, Washington, and Agassiz, as individual portraits. Mr. Whipple is a writer of close observation, acute perception, and bold expression. No writer of ordinary capacity or of feeble and hesitating character would have ventured to have written the trenchant, incisive exposition of national foibles and national virtues, as exhibited in his dissertation on American character, and the same fearlessness exhibits itself in all the other expositions of character treated of in this volume. It should find a place in the library of every thinking American.

"THE PICTURE OF SAINT JOHN." By BAYARD TAYLOR. Published by Ticknor & Fields.

Mr. Taylor is undoubtedly a poet—not a great one perhaps, but still a poet—and "The Picture of Saint John" is one of his best works. The story is strong and dramatic, and moreover well and tersely told, while some of the ideas and descriptive positions are perfect gems in their way. Here is an exquisite specimen:

More slowly rolled the silver disk above
The hiding hills, than ever moon came up:
The sky's begemmed and sapphire-tinted cup
Spilled o'er its dew, and Heaven in nuptial love
Stretched forth his mystic arms, and couched
beside
The yearning Earth, his dusky-featured bride:
The pulses of the Night began to move,
And Life's eternal secret ruled the tide.

Mr. Taylor is a true admirer of nature, and looking on her with an artist's eye, has all an artist's love for her many beauties. What can be more beautiful than this:

Under the forest's sombre leaves there slept
No darkness, but a balsam-breathing shade,
Rained through with light: the hurrying waters
made
Music amid the solitude, and swept
Their noise of liquid laughter from afar,
Through smells of sprouting leat and trampled
grass,
And thousand tints of flowery bell and star,
To sing the year's one idyl ere it pass!

Here is a truly poetic idea:

The House of Life hath many chambers. He
Who deems his mansion built, a dreamer vain,
A tottering shell inhabits, and shall see
The ruthless years hurl down his masonry;
While those who plan but as they slowly gain,
Where that which was gives that which is to be
Its form and symbols, build the house divine,—
In life a temple, and in death a shrine!

We could go on multiplying selections *ad infinitum*, but the above are sufficient to show that Mr. Taylor's book is composed of right material and has the true poetic ring. In some passages of the work we are disappointed, but the general impression after a perusal of its pages is one of great satisfaction, and Mr. Taylor can rest content in having written a poem far above the general average of poetry of the present day.

LOUIS NAPOLEON'S NEW GRAND OPERA HOUSE.

[From "Le Menestrel" of Paris, we translate the following elaborate description of the new grand Opera of Paris, or "L'Academie Imperial."]

On a vast piece of ground in the shape of a lozenge, 560 feet long by 488 feet wide, in the centre of a large square formed by the Boulevard des Italiens, and Rue Scribe, Rue Auber and Rue Rossini, stands the new opera House, the building of which commenced some years since.

This magnificent structure is composed,
1st. Of an immense portico.

2nd. Service of the Vestibule or Lobby.

3d. Service of the Stairs.

4th. Service of the great and the little *foyers* or green-rooms.

5th. Service of the Theatrical Hall.

6th. Service of the Stage.

7th. Service of two lateral pavilions, one of which is designed for the service of the Emperor and the other to the café-restaurant and the admission of carriages.

On the principal *façade*, the portico develops itself. It is an open-work and will be shut at night by iron-railings. From the *rez-de-chaussée* one may count up seven arcades.

On each side of the principal *façade* and projecting on the lateral *façades*, are two pavilions before which will be seen two groups of statues, elevated on magnificent stone pedestals. In the *pienroit* or pier of each arcade, statues will also be erected, and, above, some medallions cut in the stone itself.

On the story of the principal *façade*, the portico is composed of seven large balustrades or *travies*, ornamented by double columns which are richly sculptured; between each column, are seven bays which give light to a large open gallery or *loggia*, situated behind.

Above each bay are "veils-dè-boeuf," in the middle of which will be put up the busts, in gilded bronze of the principal composers of music who have illustrated the French lyric stage.

Above the gallery or *loggia*, the entablature will be developed; then a story *en attique*, with basso-relievo and groups of statues will ornament the *pienroit* of the columns.

The two pavilions projecting on the principal *façade* will be surmounted by two circular *portions*, the tympanons of which shall receive sculptured basso-relievos.

On the lateral *façades* of the building, at the *rez-de-chaussée*, the arcades continue on a sub-basement in stone. On the first story, each of these *façades* are pierced with eighteen bays, surmounted with medallions, sculptured and ornamented with columns.

At the *rez-de-chaussée*, when coming by the Boulevard des Italiens, is found a large gallery,