

external ground—in relation with the demesne in hand—to our own individual plan.

#### DARLEY'S OUTLINE ILLUSTRATIONS OF "MARGARET."

ALL Art which rises above the merely imitative and transcriptive may be divided, with, we imagine, little possibility of error, into two kinds, considered with reference to the subject they present—the purely creative, and the illustrative. While the former takes rank beside the highest orders of poetry—that which is also creative, the latter follows the creations of the poet as commentative, or, as it is most happily defined by the common term, taken in its true, purest sense, *illustrative*—giving farther light upon the meaning of the ideas which it considers—elucidating them by the application of a language which, in some directions, possesses powers which that of the poet does not. It is evident, then, that all so called illustrative Art must be examined rigidly from this point of critical view, and we shall then find it divided into the true and the false, or the really and the seemingly illustrative. Of these again we may at once reject the latter, a large elimination, indeed, since it embraces the great part of all the so-called *genre* Art, the story telling—all that which, be its theme Shakspearian, Goldsmithian, historical, or Scriptural, does no more than repeat in form what the writer has said in words. That is not enough, there must be added ideas, new light given, or there is no illustration. To make our meaning more definite, let us examine, for example, a work by one of these pseudo illustrators, and this no less an artist than O. R. Leslie. For brevity we select the simplest of his works. We remember a "Beatrice," from "Much Ado About Nothing."

"For look where Beatrice like a lapwing runs!  
Close by the ground to hear our conference."

It is merely a half length figure, and so far as the action implied in the quotation is concerned, expressive enough; we understand at once that *somebody* is anxious to overhear somebody else say something, but if we look for a clearer idea of what Beatrice was—for a great mind's understanding of what the ideal of another great mind must have been; in short, if we look for an intelligent commentary on a creation of a master intellect, by which we may be helped to realize that creation, we shall find no response to our seeking. Leslie's picture goes no farther than an actress who should assume the attitude and repeat the words of the play. But, it will be said, so severe a ruling demands that, in order to illustrate Shakspeare, one must be the peer of Shakspeare, and so we shall have no illustrations until we find men equally great with the men they would illustrate. True, except that one need not be the equal in every direction, or even in creative power, but so far as the capacity to comprehend fully is concerned, in whatever point illustration is attempted, there must be equality. We do not care for the opinions of little *no-genius* as to what great *genius* has done, and the sooner we exclude his prating from our Art repertoire the sooner we shall rid the world of a

quantity of chaff and rubbish. The use of the illustration is to enlighten, and if it perform not this use, it is worse than nothing.

As an example of genuine illustration, take Grimm's household stories, illustrated by Wehnert, where the vein of the story has almost invariably been followed out, and rendered with a most happy illumination, with an undercurrent of meaning which tells of profound reflection. A curious word-puzzle, for instance, perfectly inexplicable, a riddle unsolvable, is illustrated by a knotted cord, in which we can find neither end nor manner of untying. And here, simple as the whole thing is, is found the antithesis of the *lucus a non lucendo* illumination of modern Art, and the whole law of illustration complied with. The same view of this branch of Art as applied to character, will ask something beyond a mere picturesque adaptation of forms and figures to ornament a story or a poem—it will insist on a thoughtful realization of the ideals of character involved, and so the truest and most earnest illustrations will be those which present us with the most faithful portraiture of the individuals as seen by the artist in the mind of the author, and that not as involved in any accidental circumstance, but showing, as all good portraiture should and must, the ideal nature of the object.

In this true use of the term, Darley is fairly entitled to the rank of an illustrator, and successful as humoristic ideals as his former works have been, we are inclined to regard "Margaret," on the whole, as the most successful and noble of all he has yet done. The designs would have been more just as illustrations had they rendered more actually the New England characteristics—the slight degree of conventional expression which the artist has allowed himself in many of them, preventing us from realizing their *locality* with that precision which we have a right to demand in local illustration. There is no such thing as a conventional New Englander; they are all live, most absolutely actual personages, and the skilled eye may always detect the lines of the hills around their birth-places, somewhere in their visages. Margaret's foster-parents might have been born in Germany; we would not say they were, but we couldn't swear to the contrary. Hash must have been a "Kennuck," and some of the coarser characters we fail utterly in finding the local traits in. In the charming and touching "Parson Wells and his wife," the lineage as well as the character is most admirably told. Chilion, pensive, sensitive, and wayward as genius may be, is just such a *lusus naturæ*, as we find often in the villages of Yankee land,—a startling exception to all around them, refined when all else is coarse, spiritual when all else is gross, and poetic when every one beside is to the extreme prosaic. Yet not one of all is there unstudied or characterless, but subtle and masterly in their expression of the character aimed at; nothing vague, —nothing undecided. With Margaret we were least pleased of all;—*somebody* she certainly is—Darley's conception of Margaret doubtless, but not in accordance with our estimate of what the author's ideal was. The individuality is strong; but neither strong enough for "Margaret," nor

externally manifested with the intensity with which she would have shown it. According to our mind, she must have been unprepossessing at first sight, except for the brilliancy of her eyes, and there must have been a strength and energy about the lines of the mouth, which Darley's dreamy, tearful-eyed Margaret has not. She is too beautiful; the Margaret of the book was rather splendid than beautiful. It is undeniable that Darley's strongest points are those which approach the grotesque, and here "Pluck," the camp-preacher, "Brown Moll," "Hash," and "Deacon Ramsdill," evidently were more thoroughly enjoyed than the quiet characters. Of "the Master" we fail to receive any very definite idea. The volcanic gravity of "Tony Washington," and the picturesque loutishness of "Obid," are exceedingly good points.

In technical respects we have here the best compositions and the most effective drawing we have ever seen by Darley. The two scenes in which Hash and his oxen occur, particularly the one in which the little Margaret crowns the composition, are exquisitely composed, and the oxen are drawn with most noble skill. "Chilion played and they were silent," is full of grace and ease. "Retrospection" has a feeling of sublimity in its lines, and the repose of the figure of the woman quite unique and almost perfectly satisfactory. "Nimrod exhibits his humor" is capital both in action and composition, and is irresistibly comic.

The book is published in superb style; the outlines engraved on stone, by Conrad Huber.

#### A TWILIGHT REVERIE.

WHAT eyes have they for twilight skies  
Who have no hope the sun will rise  
To make a morrow to their night;  
But, while they watch the waning light,  
Measure existence by its shades,  
And, shuddering, know that life there fades!  
'Tis hope that bids the day adieu,  
And calmly rests till light anew  
Creates its world—while sad despair  
Feels only in the freshened air  
Which evening brings, death's growing chill—  
Rather to mem'ry of the light clings still—  
And strains to catch the last faint ray,  
Dim token of what once was day.

W. SYLVESTER.

TASTE AND ART.—All men are in some degree impressed by the face of the world; some men even to delight. This love of beauty is taste. Others have the same love in such excess, that, not content with admiring, they seek to embody it in new forms. The creation of beauty is Art. \* \* \* The poet, the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the architect, seek each to concentrate the radiance of the world on one point, and each, in his several work, to satisfy the love of beauty which stimulates him to produce. Thus is Art a nature passed through the alembic of man. Thus in Art does nature work through the will of a man filled with the beauty of her first works.—R. W. Emerson.

MATERIALS.—It is not with pigments, oils, and varnishes alone that a picture is wrought. Reynolds, Titian, Rembrandt, and Wilson, mixed their colors with genius; and painted, not only with their brushes, but with mind.—*Library of the Fine Arts.*