

tol building again as he passes into the rotunda, in the midst of the "curious" pictures that illustrate the history of the United States. The Declaration of Independence excites *un vif battement de cœur*, and others, by West, (!) obtain the verdict of *naïveté*; all of the latter are proclaimed to be "something false and theatrical, a bad imitation of Paul de la Roche. the painter, who for the American Union, realizes the highest ideal of Art."

The following *rationale* of a prevailing taste in the community is ingenious:

"Formerly a portrait-painter earned considerable money; sometimes he would acquire a fortune in a single tour throughout the United States; but the daguerreotype has brought them to misery—those poor painters of portraits! An American is always engrossed with his own business, and his wife, detesting the long sittings which are so essential, in fact indispensable, in order to enable a painter to furnish a good portrait, much prefers the prompt execution of the photograph, which requires but a few seconds of time. I may say that this half-civilized people—a people so backward in certain respects, especially in relation to the sentiment and delicacies of Art, show a decided preference for the dry, hard, positive and unfeeling results of Monsieur Daguerre's discovery."

The above is a fitting preface to more philosophy of the same profound character:

"Before my trip to the United States, I would often ask myself why American artists of the first rank, like M. Powers, their chief sculptor, and M. Healy, their greatest painter, should reside, the first in Florence, and the second in Paris. Since I have become acquainted with the nature of the Americans, and am aware how impossible it is to procure models of the two sexes, the secret is explained to me. These two gentlemen, with much practical good sense, say to themselves, in this fashion, 'those of my fellow-countrymen who might desire to have either a bust or a portrait—a very rare circumstance—(!) travel abroad; they come to France, and visit Italy; they find us installed in these countries, and they only esteem us the more for being there. On the other hand, what have I to hope for, by living at home deprived of artistic pleasures and recompense, in a country where liberty is the watchword, but where slavery the most ferocious abounds—a slavery superinduced by the hypocritical and austere customs of the country—a slavery that smother the slightest expansion of the first manifestation of the faintest spark of electrical sympathy? Let us betake ourselves to Europe, for if there we find a material dominion over public affairs, there is at least real freedom of sentiment, of nature, of thought, of hope, and the triumphs of genius.'"

We have not by any means exhausted the treasures of thought contained in M. Antoine Etex's "Coup d'œil of American Art." But our space forbids further encroachment upon the patience of our readers. We took up his book to show a principle of psychological attraction—like to like—in the fact of his humbug picture having gravitated to our humbug city government. We cannot insist too strongly upon the study of Art. Art reveals what would otherwise escape notice; it shows the false in all its aspects. The moral of the whole is, whoever would pass for a true man or true woman, let them avoid accepting and displaying presents the product of self-conceit, and as such the badges of corruption.

GENERAL HISTORY OF THE SEMITIC LANGUAGES.*

Up to the extent of his ability, the learned author of this book has proposed to do for the Semitic languages what M. Bopp has done for the Indo-European languages, that is, to give a tableau of their grammatical system, so as to show in what manner the Semitics attained to a complete expression of their thoughts through the medium of language. The true theory of languages, says our author, is in one sense but their history, languages having to undergo—being the immediate result of it—all the modifications of the human consciousness. In starting from the historical principle of languages, one arrives at the consideration of the scientific theory of a family of languages, as containing two essential parts: the first being the *exterior* history of the idioms which compose it, their role in time and space, their geography and chronology, and the order and the character of the written monuments which make them known; the second being their *interior* history, such as the organic developments of their processes—their comparative grammar, considered not as an immutable law, but as a subject of perpetual changes. The Semitic languages have had, in the history of philology, the singular destiny of suggesting the comparative method to the learned who early cultivated them, but from the moment this comparative method issued in fruitful results, they become all but utterly barren in the regeneration of linguistic studies. Three or four years' study sufficed to unveil, by means of the analysis of the European languages, the most profound laws of language, whilst the Semitic philology has remained, up to our days, lifelessly shut up within itself, and all but entirely foreign to the general progress of science.

Without agitating the question as to the primitive unity of the Semitic languages, our author thinks that they must be considered as corresponding to a distinct division of the human race, as the character of the people who have spoken them is marked in history by traits as original as the languages which have served as formulas and limits to their thoughts. It is in the religious, and not the political order that the Semitics have exercised their influence. The conquests of Asia, the civilization of Nineveh and that of Babylon are not fairly attributable to them; and we in vain seek the traces of a great Semitic empire anterior to the powerful impulse given by a new religion to the Arabian nation. But that which they failed to do in the order of exterior things, they did in the moral order, and

* Histoire Générale et Système Comparé des Langues Sémitiques, par Ernest Renan. Paris, 1855.

The Arabs, the Hebrews, the Babylonians, the Chaldees, the Assyrians, the Gauris, and Persians, are considered the Semitic races, and the languages spoken by them the Semitic languages. The word "Semitic" is derived from Shem, the oldest son of Noah, to whom Asia was allotted in the division of the globe between Noah's three sons—Shem being considered as the ancestor of the Semitic race, Ham as the father of the Egyptians and Africans, and Japhet as the progenitor of the inhabitants of Asia Minor and Europe.

one may, without exaggeration, fairly attribute to them one-half, at least, of the intellectual work of humanity. *Science* and *philosophy*, which hitherto have served as the two great avenues to the truth, were all but entirely foreign to them, but they always instinctively understood, and had a special aptitude for religious studies. It is the Indo-European race, however, who, from the centre of India to the extremities of the west and north, from the remotest times up to the present, has sought to explain God, man, and the world by a rational system, and has left behind it, at the several stages of its history, philosophical creations always and everywhere submitted to the laws of a logical development. The sharp and penetrating intuitions of the Semitic race unveiled the Divinity, and without reflection or reasoning attained to the highest religious form known to antiquity. The philosophical school has its home in Greece and India, in the midst of a curious race, and one vitally absorbed in unravelling the secret of things. Psalm and prophecy; wisdom explaining itself through enigmas and symbols; the pure hymn and the revealed book—such are the appanage of the theocratical race of the Semites. They are emphatically the people of God, and the people of religions, destined to create and propagate them. And, moreover, is it not remarkable that the three religions which have hitherto played the greatest part in the history of civilization—the three religions marked with a special character of duration, of fecundity and proselytism, and linked in other respects so narrowly together that they seem three branches of the same trunk, three translations unequally pure of the same idea—are all three the children of Semitic parents, and from them have sprung forth into far-reaching destinies. There is but a few days journey from Jerusalem to Sinai, and from Sinai to Mecca.

It would be beyond measure carrying pantheism into history, to place all the races on a footing of equality, and to seek in their varied combinations the same plenitude and the same richness, under the pretence that human nature is always beautiful. Our author is, therefore, the first to recognize that the Semitic race, compared to the Indo-European race, really represents an inferior combination of human nature. It has neither the high spiritualism of the races of India nor Germany, nor that sentiment of proportion and perfect beauty which Greece has bequeathed to the Neo-Latin nations; nor that delicate and profound sensibility, which is the dominant trait of the Celtic races. The Semitic conscience is clear, but limited in extent; it has a marvellous comprehension of unity, but is unable to attain to an adequate idea of multiplicity. Monotheism is its compendium, and explains all its characteristics. It is well to notice here a coincidence of view between M. Renan and M. Lassen on the question before us, which shows the happy results of high historical studies, carried out in the right direction. M. Lassen, with good reason, sees in the *subjectivity* of the Semitic race the leading feature of its character. In no other race have the selfish passions had a ranker growth: the life of the Arab is but

a succession of hatreds and revenges. In their religion M. Lassen also discovers a spirit of intolerance and exclusiveness.

The Semitic race has conceived the government of the world only as an absolute monarchy; its theodicy has not advanced a step since the Book of Job was written; the grandeur and the aberrations of polytheism have likewise been foreign to it. Monotheism is not invented; the people of India who have thought so originally and deeply, have not even to this day attained to it; the whole force of the Greek mind, unaided by the Semites, would have failed to carry humanity up to the idea of monotheism. It may even be said, that the Semites themselves could never have had an idea of divine unity if its germ had not been in the imperious instincts of their own minds and hearts.

The absence of philosophical and scientific culture among the Semites is due, it seems to our author, to the want of extent, of variety, and, consequently, of the analytic spirit which characterizes them. The faculties which engender a mythology are, in like manner, those which engender a philosophy; and it is not without reason that India and Greece have presented us the phenomenon of the richest mythology by the side of the profoundest metaphysics. Exclusively engrossed by the unity of government observable in the world, the Semites have seen in the development of things but the inflexible accomplishment of the will of a superior being: the idea of multiplicity in the universe never occurred to them. Now the conception of multiplicity in the universe is polytheism among infant peoples; it is the science of modern days. We now see why Semitic wisdom never went beyond the proverb and the parable, just as if Greek philosophy had terminated with the maxims of the seven wise men of Greece.

We have thus skimmed a few leading thoughts from the beautiful labor of M. Renan, with a view of attracting thoughtful readers to a careful perusal of it. The press furnishes but few labors of this kind, and of such high merit; but few as they are, we are afraid that they are not as well known as they deserve to be. There is a happy union in M. Renan of fine natural parts, with an extensive and accurate erudition, and an impartiality of conception which enable him to serve the truth, without respect to persons, sects, or institutions. He has also the artistic power of combining the discussion of the most recondite questions with a freshness, clearness, and simplicity of style which we seldom meet with. When to the study of a language in itself are added the psychological attributes of the race or races who speak it, the subject becomes of general interest, and full of instruction. We hope M. Renan will crown his historical labors on languages by giving us a philosophy of language, not as it has hitherto been written, but with a view of showing its agency, both in advancing and retarding the progress of the human mind, and how it has been inspired by the heart, and constructed by the intellect. If we regard language as involuntarily originating in the affections, thence extending

itself to our actions, and finally culminating in speculation, we can study it relatively to the growth of the human family, and combine it with the study of universal history, or human society.

THE STUDIO OF KAULBACH,

FROM "AN ART-STUDENT IN MUNICH."

NUMBER ONE.

Miss HOWITT has given us a very pleasant, unpretending little book. She seems to have inherited that genial temperament which has made the name she bears a household word on both sides of the Atlantic. It is refreshing even to think of the deliverance of an enthusiastic young Englishwoman from all the proprieties and respectabilities of her prosaic native island, to the fresh, poetic atmosphere and academical freedom of a German student's life.

Munich is just now, so far as actual production is concerned, the Art capital of Europe. The king is the Cosmo de Medici of our century, and under his royal patronage so large and varied an artistic activity has sprung up that the little German city is fast becoming a kind of Teutonic Florence. The lover of beauty must see its wonders as well as those of Venice and Rome. The old Pinakothek offers the treasures of the ancient; the new Pinakothek, those of the modern schools. The Colossal Bavaria of Schwantaler, the Siegesthor Bavaria, the Rumeschalle, the Hof Kapelle, the Glyptothek, will each reward a serious attention. We cannot serve our readers more acceptably than by laying before them at some length the impressions of our clear-eyed student. We find her at first in the studio of Kaulbach, which we will permit her to describe—

"This old crazy door admits you into a field, where still blocks of stone, a very chaos of them, are seen in the distance, lying in wild disorder about a ruinous building, partially covered with a straggling vine. Close before you is a long, grey, desolate-looking house: you turn the corner, you stand in the field—one lovely, odorous mosaic of flowers, and deep, rich grass. Here the tall salvia rears its graceful spike of brilliantly blue flowers; clover, white and red, scents the air with its honeyed perfume; the delicate eyebright, daisies, trefoils, harebells, thyme, buglos, yellow vetch, the white powdery umbels of the wild carrot, and the large, mild-looking dog-daisies, bloom in a gay, delicious tangle; crowds of rejoicing butterflies dance and flutter unceasingly about the flower mosaic like showers of falling pear-blossom; myriads of happy little creatures, beetles, grasshoppers, lady-birds, revel among the flower-stems and blades of grass: all is joyous life; an odor, a gentle murmur—a very hymn of Nature. And there, seated beneath those elder trees in full bloom, before the desolate grey house, is a group of merry, brown-eyed children, playing with a beautiful white rabbit, while a large, sagacious mastiff sleeps beside them.

"And now, opposite to you, across the field, and half hidden by thickets and a group of poplars, you see the studio; two grey wings, with a higher centre. All is bowery and green, overhung with vines and creepers."

Within we are introduced to the designs of this artist

for the Berlin and other frescoes. We commence our survey with the Destruction of Jerusalem—

"Above the human turmoil, agony, famine, despair, and triumph, which fill the lower portion of the picture, throned upon clouds, and dimly visible through a haze of heavenly light, sit the four great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, who prophesied in vain to the stubborn and blinded Jewish nation; again they repeat their awful warnings, pointing with solemn gestures to their open books. The seven angels of God's wrath, as described in the Revelations, descend on swift wings, and with swords of flame, like a mighty whirlwind. And now, whilst the avenging angels descend, and the prophecies are fulfilled, Titus, seated on his white snorting charger, is seen in the distance riding onward over smouldering ruins, into the doomed city; grim-visaged licitors surround him; the Roman generals, with standards and glittering spears, crowd on behind him; a multitude of soldiers, half lost in smoke and gloom, precede him, announcing their victory with triumphant music. Roman soldiers have already obtained possession of the holy altar (the centre of the picture); have planted the Roman eagle upon it; have sacrificed upon it to their She-Wolf; crowding upon it, clinging to it, they celebrate their triumph by the braying of trumpets, the clang of arms, and the shouts of war. One soldier stretches forth his robber-hands towards one of three Jewish virgins, who, shuddering, cling together; another leans from his horse, which is laden with spoil from the Temple, and with rude grasp seizes the arm of a woman, who, clasping her hands in agony, shrinks from him towards the earth. Then is fulfilled the abomination of desolation foretold by Daniel.

"And now like a huge wave around the altar, driven on by the tide of entering Romans, see a crowd of Jews passing forth beneath their upraised shields. They cast wild looks of agony and hatred towards the desecrators of their holy altar, and above them swiftly descends the whirlwind of angels. Here, round that caldron, cowers a fearful group: one old hag snaks blood and devours the flesh of her own arm; another devours some horror no less revolting; and a young and handsome woman, frantic with hunger, slays her infant; with rabid and glazed eyes she sits gazing at the pale corpse and her blood-stained knife. And up those broad steps, leading to the Holy of Holies, fly crowds of men, women, and little children; here lies a corpse, there sits a mother, wild with alarm, seeking to screen her children, who cling to her and hide their heads in her lap. Aloft, beneath the pillars of the Temple, cold, scornful, and impassive, stands John of Gischalla and Simon, the sons of Gioras, the reckless and wicked Jewish leaders; wildly gesticulating, frantic men and women gather around them: with clenched hands raised with impotent imprecations against heaven, they curse the descending angels of God's wrath and the triumphant Roman hosts. Beyond this infuriated throng, illumined by the ruddy glare of fire, you dimly see the sacred ark supported by its cherubim, and the waving arms of more and more fugitives and supplicants.

"Such is, in truth, the background of the picture, from which stand forth three remarkable and principal groups. The centre figure of the centre group is the High Priest in his robes. His dark, haggard countenance, and bloodshot eyes, are riveted upon the approaching Romans; he thrusts the keen point of a long dagger through the golden border of his sparkling breast-plate; one foot is planted upon a corpse which lies on the