

IMPORTANT

NEW

ETCHINGS



IMPORTANT NEW ETCHINGS.

Original Plates by American Artists.

IMPORTANT NEW ETCHINGS

BY AMERICAN ARTISTS

Text by Ripley Hitchcock

Author of "Etching in America," "Representative Etchings," etc.

ORIGINAL ETCHINGS BY

C. A. PLATT

J. D. SMILLIE

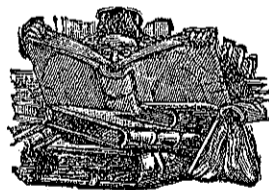
W. ST. JOHN HARPER

E. W. KEMBLE

C. D. WELDON

OTTO H. BACHER

J. A. MITCHELL



New York

Frederick A. Stokes & Brother

1888

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INTRODUCTION.

The Future of Etching.

IN any one of the larger New York print-shops there may be found etchings which illustrate the great art of Rembrandt, the master etcher. Near at hand, perhaps, will be an etching drawn in swift, vigorous, expressive lines, which is signed with the name of Seymour Haden. Elsewhere in the room, the wall modestly shrinks behind one of the huge, showily framed reproductive etchings of the day, a monument of servile labor and misdirected pains. From this the visitor may turn to a photogravure of a quality which sustains comparison with its aggressive neighbor. Here are four examples of picture-making, to choose the simplest phrase; but the larger meaning of these four prints is that they illustrate the history of the art of etching. Here is Rembrandt, who stands for the birth and greatest glory of the art in the seventeenth century. Haden we surely may accept as a worthy representative of that modern renaissance of etching which began in the atelier of Leopold Flameng nearly forty years ago. The artless piece of wall-furniture which follows Haden's personal expression is the outcome of the decay of the chromo, and a demand for a substitute,—the result of clamorous efforts by dealers and artists to turn to commercial account the reputation gained by the etching as something intrinsically "artistic." Let the photogravure stand for the future. There are many possibilities to be considered, allowances to be made, exceptions to be taken. Yet in intaglio and relief engraving to-day there is little comparable in interest and consequence to the development of applied photography as a means of picture-making. It has seemed to me profitable to look to the future rather than the past, and the question of the immediate future concerns the effect of this development of photographic processes upon etching and all forms of hand-engraving.

It may be said that this is only a phase of a question as old as the discovery of Daguerre, half a century ago. In one sense, this is true. There were portrait-painters then who believed that their art would become extinct. It is related, whether correctly or not I do not know, that the late Alvan Clark abandoned portrait-painting because he believed that the daguerreotype would supplant the painter's work. His argument was faulty, but the results which he reached as a maker of achromatic lenses for telescopes, justified his decision. There are some who will urge that the argument is equally erroneous now. But the conditions have changed. Within the last generation, and, indeed, within the last ten years, scientists and inventors have introduced applications of photography which have already exercised a powerful influence upon the fortunes of hand-engraving. Some new "process," or rather some modification of an old principle, comes to light almost every week. Any attempt at a list of processes would be like the biblical pedigrees. The Woodbury-type begat the Albertype, and the Albertype begat the Lewis process; or, the Meissenbach process begat the Ives process; or, the Goupil photogravure begat a chapter full of descendants. Even these few names are used with some timorousness, for the multiplication of processes involves all manner of explanations and delicate distinctions which may not be safely ignored. On the one hand, there is the photogravure plate published separately like etching

plates. A representative of the Paris firm, whose photogravures are at least the best known, has explained, that, "after the picture to be reproduced has been photographed on to a gelatine plate through the medium of bi-chromate of potash, the deposit which renders it capable of printing impressions is produced by means of the electric pile; or, in other words, this is practically the galvano-plastic process." This explanation is not presented as a model of completeness or lucidity, but the source invests it with some interest. Next come the innumerable relief processes, which depend upon the peculiar properties of bi-chromatized gelatine, its indissolubility when exposed to the light, and its power of hardening so that impressions can be taken directly, or casts taken and electrotyped. There are the typographic blocks produced with and without the use of acids; and among the processes used in letterpress printing are the modifications of "half-line work," of which the Ives process is a convenient example. There is already a considerable literature of photography as applied to separate publications, and as applied in the printing-press, and I need hardly say that no adequate technical explanations are attempted here. These few allusions serve only to suggest the changes in the conditions since Daguerre caused a panic in the studios of the portrait-painters.

In our day, therefore, we can deal very largely with facts rather than with matters of speculation. When the Princess Victoria was crowned Queen of Great Britain, line-engraving was still held in high esteem, together with stipple-engraving and mezzotint. Hardly a dozen years later, Leopold Flameng, in Paris, abandoned engraving as an art necessitating an "excessive striving after mechanical perfection, which involved such a terrible sacrifice of time." Within twenty-five years line-engraving was a decaying art even in England. To-day there are none to take the places of the masters of engraving, and the art hardly exists, unless we take into account its commercial applications. Within the past few years we have seen several attempts in England to revive mezzotint engraving; but interest languishes, and these attempts cannot have results of large consequence. The passing of engraving was hastened by the renaissance of etching. I need not dwell upon the story of this renaissance, and its splendid results, nor upon the demoralization which presently followed a popularity dating back hardly a dozen years. Etching has become mechanical; the mechanical processes have become more personal, if the expression may be allowed. But, without insisting upon the deterioration in the quality of etchings, there is the fact to be noted, that the relation of etching to applied photography to-day is almost identical with the relation of engraving to etching a generation since; that is, photography is claiming more and more of the territory formerly held by etching, and, it may be added, of that formerly held by wood-engraving as well.

In Paris, the home of the photogravure, "etchers have already been forced to become workmen in establishments for producing photographically engraved plates; thus actually serving the new process which is undermining their profession." This "impending extinction of all forms of hand-engraving" has drawn from M. Bracquemond, one of the strongest of French etchers, an impassioned appeal to the government and to publishers for the encouragement of artists working with the burin or point. Every one who follows French publications has noted the increase in the proportion of pictures which are reproduced, and of books which are illustrated, by the aid of photography. It is photography, not etching or wood-engraving, which is used in *Les Arts et les Lettres*, in the finest *salon* catalogues, and in books like Detaille's "Book of the Grand Army;" to say nothing of the illustrated lighter literature like the Tartarin series of Daudet. In England, which has been called the home of hand-engraving, the Print-sellers' Association has formally recognized the photogravure as a "work of art." An analysis of the proofs stamped by this association from year to year furnishes a fact worth more than any amount of theorizing. In 1879 the proportion of photogravure plates to the total number of plates declared was one-thirteenth. In 1885 it had risen to one-third. I have no figures for the year 1887, but it is certain that this gain continues. In 1879 one-half the number of plates declared were mezzotint engravings, but in 1886 the proportion of these engravings had fallen to one-fifth. The output of photogravures for the London market alone, by a single French firm, amounts to over one hundred thousand dollars annually. It is clear that such an increase in the demand for photographic reproductions means that

prejudice against this form of picture-making on account of its "mechanical" character is not likely to be permanent. In our own country it is impossible to obtain statistics like those furnished by the London Print-sellers' Association, but the growing use of photographic processes in book and magazine illustration is familiar to every one. American wood-engravers have gained the first place in their profession, but many of them freely acknowledge that the existence of their art as a means of illustration is now in danger. In the print-shops the etching retains its popularity in large part; but the etchers of the day are forced to recognize the excellent quality of many foreign photogravures, and the advance which American ingenuity is making in all kinds of photographic work. I need not insist upon the competition of applied photography with etching and all forms of hand-engraving, for its encroachments must be patent to every observer. Perhaps I may be permitted to cite my personal experience, since most of the important prints and illustrated books come within my notice. This is not an attempt to advance an argument in favor of a theory. But the conclusion which seems warranted by facts may be stated in the words of an English critic, who has recently said, "Not only is engraving dead, but etching is seriously indisposed."

Against the facts of the present situation, we have to set the arguments of the friends of hand-engraving. A French amateur recently repeated to me the familiar declaration, that mechanical work could never take the place of results due to the skilled eye and hand of an artist. He mentioned Bracquemond, but Bracquemond himself has publicly called upon the state to save his art from extinction. Moreover, the photogravure does represent, to some extent, the artist's skill. The engraver's case has been put more forcibly by the Vicomte Henri Delaborde, who has said, "Nothing could be truer than the idea that it is all over with hand-engraving, because, as mere copies, its products cannot have the infallible fidelity of photographic images, if the only object of line-engraving were to give us a literal copy, a brutal effigy of its original. But is it necessary to mention again, that, happily, it has also the task of interpretation? Owing to the very limited field in which he works, as it were in monochrome, the engraver is compelled to choose and to combine the best means of rendering by analogy the various colors of his original, to organize its general effect, and to bring out both the character and the style, now by the simplification of certain details, now by applying the principle of selection to certain others. We have no longer here the stupid impartiality, the unreasoning veracity of a mechanical apparatus, but the deliberate use of feeling, intelligence, and taste, — of all those faculties, indeed, which mould and enter into the talent of an artist. Now, as long as there are men in the world capable of preferring idea to matter, and the art which appeals to the mind to the fact which speaks to the eyes, line-engraving will retain its influence, however small it may be supposed, however limited it may really be." If we cross the Channel, again we find in England Mr. Herkomer protesting against recognition of the photogravure as a "work of art," while Mr. Frederick Wedmore has publicly urged the necessity of combating the advance of applied photography, and of sustaining hand-engraving. Yet Mr. Hamerton has expressed himself as convinced that all forms of hand-engraving must die out, and be replaced by drawing for reproduction by photographic processes, and M. Philippe Burty has declared his belief that reproductive etching must give place to the work of applied photography. It must be said that the expressions of Messrs. Herkomer and Wedmore appear to be founded upon sentiment, the conclusions of Messrs. Hamerton and Burty upon fact.

No one who cares for art can view the probable extinction of a noble form of expression without regret; but the artists themselves must bear some share of the responsibility. The preference of the greater number of painters seems to be for the most transparent and impersonal mediums of reproduction. They are unwilling that another personality should come between themselves and the public, and their suffrages are frankly given in favor of a process. Again, the great rapidity of process-work counts for much in an age when the "sensation" of a season's exhibition may be forgotten before the engraver or etcher can complete his plate. That this ready reproduction has its evils, is sufficiently obvious. The painter is tempted to make a bid for popular suffrages by choosing story-telling or sentimental subjects. In France, especially, as one writer has pointed out, some artists have been induced "to modify the

color of the picture in order to meet the limitations of the photograph, — the commercial value of the copyright often exceeding that of the original, — so that color development is checked, and the artist self-limited to colors which are favorable to a well-balanced reproduction in the camera." Nevertheless, I think that many of us will agree with the writer when he goes on to say: "The substitution of any process, which, being mechanical, insures absolute fidelity to the original, is a boon to lovers of art. It puts, too, within the reach of everybody reproductions of the subtler and more inaccessible works of art, such as were unattainable in the days of engraving. Engraving can only be considered superior to photogravure when, as in the case of Turner, the artist himself makes changes which compensate for qualities sacrificed in reducing to white and black, or which improve by changing the originals. We have long since given up the reproduction of old masters in white and black made by an artist, in favor of the photograph: there is no reason why we should not equally accept the photogravure instead of line-engraving, much more, then, of mezzotint and other inferior kinds. In fact, the photogravure does not exclude, in case of need, the compensations of the burin. It is always possible to enforce, emphasize, and render more brilliant the photogravure, without in the least sacrificing the fidelity to the most subtle qualities of the original." Some exceptions may be readily taken to these statements, but they embody many suggestive truths. It will be urged that the etching needle is still employed as a means of reproducing old masters; and the value of work done by Waltner, Unger, Rajon, and Koepping must be acknowledged. Yet when the direct comparison was made between Koepping's elaborate etching after Rembrandt's "Syndics of the Hall of Cloths," and the superb Braun photograph of the painting, there was much to be said on either side. The results given by the Amand-Durand process in some publications of the Chalcographical Society, the photographs of Millet's charcoal drawings, and the photographic work in some of the latest German art publications have certainly afforded slight cause for regretting the absence of engraver or etcher.

Much remains to be said; but these notes upon the present condition of the conflict between hand-engraving and applied photography seem to warrant a prediction of victory for the latter. That is, the probabilities are that applied photography will come into general use as a means of reproduction, and that reproductive etching will suffer in consequence, as line-engraving has already suffered at the hands of both etching and photography. There are substantial reasons for predicting that even original etching, as practised at present, will not hold its own. But I would not be misunderstood. "The camera can never supersede the brain and hand of the designer." The work of the camera and press lies in reproduction and multiplication, not in creation. "We think it extremely probable," Mr. Hamerton has lately said, "that all kinds of hand-engraving will die out, and be replaced by drawing for reproduction by photographic processes." Mr. Hamerton probably had in mind a method like that devised by a Scotch artist, Mr. George Reid, and carried out by M. Amand-Durand. Here the artist has nothing whatever to do with the preparation of the plate. His part ends with the making of his drawing in pen and ink, or another simple medium, upon white paper. By photography the drawing is transferred to the plate. This is covered with a ground so prepared that the spaces between the lines of the drawing will be insoluble in water, while with warm water the lines themselves can be easily washed out. Then the plate is ready for re-touching, if necessary, and for biting, — matters attended to by a professional engraver. As I have indicated before, in speaking of this process, there are likely to be many variations; and no one can predict universal acceptance for any given method. But some method like that devised by Mr. Reid is likely to come into general use. The conclusion is unavoidable, that etching as practised at present has before it only a limited term of existence, that photography will be the basis of reproduction, and that photography will also be used as a means of reproducing and multiplying original drawings.

The freshness and consequence of this question of hand-engraving *versus* photography will be accepted, I think, as sufficient reason for its consideration in the introduction to a group of representative American etchings. So far as recent etching is concerned, there is little which invites comment differing from that made in the past. The last exhibition of the New York Etching Club

was another illustration of the present tendency to meet a popular demand by the manufacture of huge, mechanically elaborated plates, presenting anecdotal or sentimental subjects, re-enforced by extraordinary remarks. Candid observers of this display, and of the admirable exhibition of the work of American women etchers at the Union League Club, were compelled to acknowledge the superiority of the latter in the amount of personal, direct, genuinely expressive work. The Rembrandt exhibition at the Wunderlich gallery presented some worthy examples of the master etcher, and the Buhot exhibition at the Keppel gallery illustrated the familiar phase of commercial enterprise which seeks to persuade the public into accepting cleverness or talent for genius. If the year has not been an encouraging one, so far as American etching is concerned, it must be remembered that this is not altogether the fault of the etchers, as I have often pointed out. For there are many American artists who have proved their ability as painter-etchers; and yet, within the last few years, their time has been absorbed by uncongenial commissions, or they have abandoned etching altogether. Within the next year it is probable that an exhibition will be organized to illustrate adequately American painter-etching. Many of our etchers frankly acknowledge the evil tendencies of present practice of the art. The movement for an exhibition of original work is encouraging, although it must be held to indicate a temporary rally rather than genuine convalescence. The recent action of the Etching Club in limiting the size of plates, and in establishing more rigid conditions of admission, indicates a realization that some features of modern etching are open to criticism; and perhaps there may be some improvement. In any case, the promised exhibition of painter-etchings should prove, and not for the first time, that our best etchers are capable of a very high order of expression with the needle.

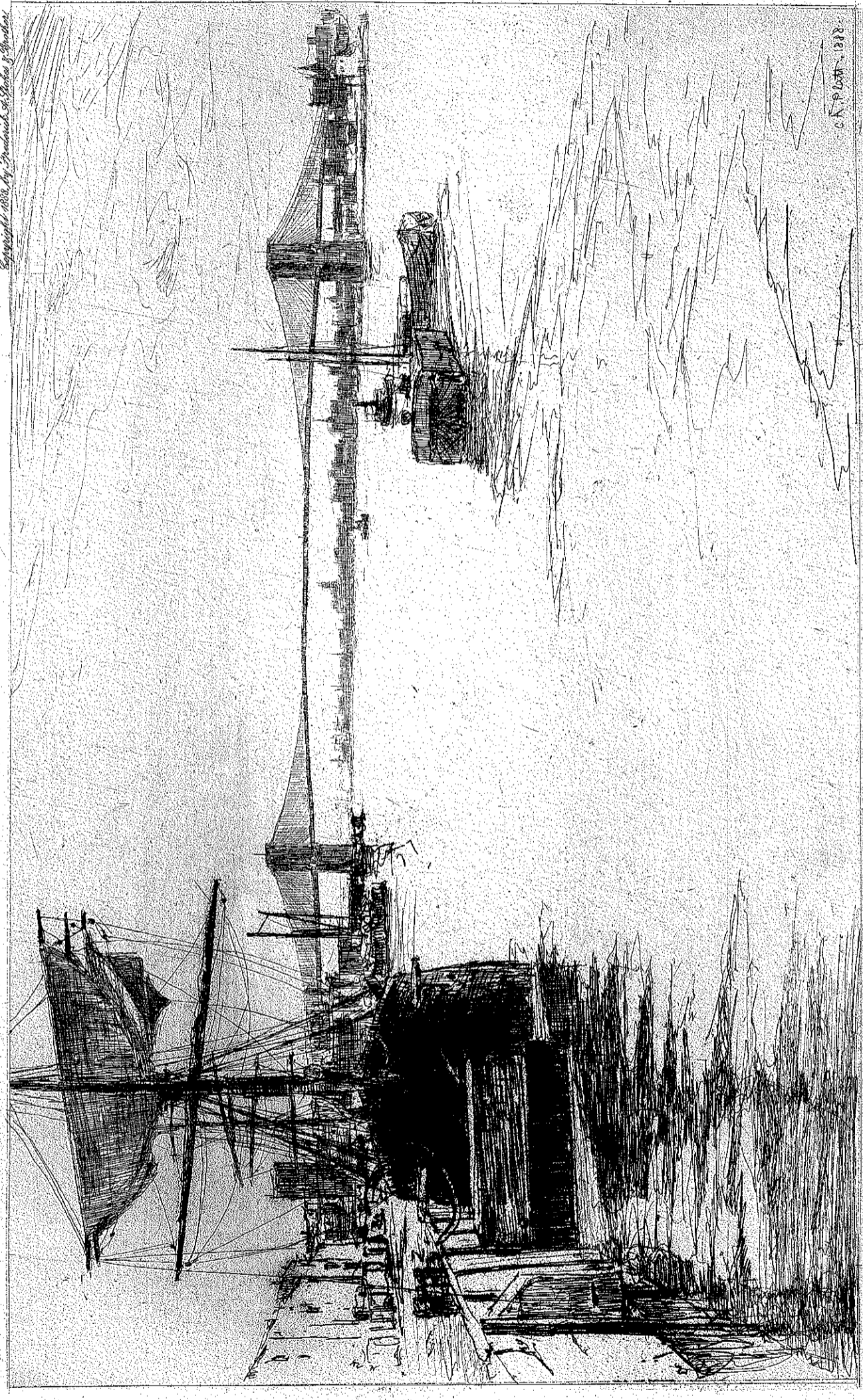
It will be noticed that all the artists represented in this collection have employed the needle to translate their own designs,—not to reproduce the work of others. This, as it seems to me, imparts a personal quality to the collection which brings us closer to the artists; and it may be added that all or nearly all the subjects are characterized by “contemporaneous human interest,” to adopt a hackneyed phrase. The seniors and juniors among American etchers are both represented. Mr. Smillie’s long experience, complete mastery of technical work with needle and burin, and earnest desire for personal expression have been long familiar to amateurs of prints. Mr. Kemble is a newcomer in this special field; but every reader of the *Century* and some other magazines has enjoyed his admirable tact in the delineation of character, especially in the class of *genre* represented here. Mr. Mitchell has etched less than we could wish; but allowances can be freely made for an artist who has done so much else, who has founded a successful illustrated journal in a city which is a very graveyard of such ventures. The work of Messrs. Platt and Bacher is known to every one who has been interested in the course of American painter-etching. Mr. Weldon, a later-comer, proves that the sentiment of his paintings can be translated into black and white; and Mr. Harper shows again his preference for the rich painter-like effects possible in dry-point work.

With the selection of these etchings I have had nothing whatever to do, nor have I had any part in the selection of etchings for the four collections published since 1884 by the publishers of this volume and their predecessors. On my side there has been perfect liberty of expression. Eulogy is so often regarded as a necessary accompaniment of publications like this, that I think it fair to acknowledge the readiness of the publishers to concede perfect independence in the performance of my modest part.

*THE EAST RIVER BRIDGE, FROM
BROOKLYN.*

Drawn and Etched by C. A. Platt.

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Copyright 1888

THE EAST RIVER BRIDGE, FROM BROOKLYN.

Drawn and Etched by Charles A. Platt.

A FEW years since, several amateurs of prints chanced to meet after a sale in a European capital. In response to some slighting remark, an American dealer who was present placed upon an easel an example of Mr. Platt's earlier work, "The Market Slip, Low Tide, St. John, N.B." At first the etching was received with incredulity. When convinced of its American origin, an Italian connoisseur said, "I knew that pork and petroleum came from America. I did not know that America produced works of art like this."

Yet Mr. Platt is one of our younger artists. He was born in 1861, in New York, where he lived until 1882. He began the study of art at New York schools in 1879, and in the following year he etched his first plate. In 1882 he went abroad, and for five years spent his winters in Paris, studying painting with Boulanger and Lefebvre in the famous atelier of Julian. Etching, as well as painting, occupied the artist meantime; and visitors to the exhibitions of the New York Etching Club soon learned to look for the work of Mr. Platt. In 1882 he showed fourteen etchings of scenes at St. John, N.B., and subjects found for the most part along our own coast, which afforded the larger part of the material for his eight etchings shown in 1883. The following year, and in 1885, his etchings presented scenes in France and on the Thames. In 1886 two interesting studies of scenes on the Connecticut River were exhibited, together with nine studies in France and Holland. This year Messrs. Platt and Parrish easily bore off the honors of the exhibition. The "Goldsmith's Bridge" and "Pier at Havre" were Mr. Platt's subjects in 1887; and in 1888 his needle suggested to us boats on the Seine, Brittany trees and landscape, Cape Ann willows, and Dieppe wharves. He has been classed with Mr. Parrish as "of the school of Seymour Haden;" a recognition of the demand for "classification" which may be accepted for whatever it is worth.

Mr. Platt has etched about one hundred plates, half of which have been destroyed. In his earlier plates he used the continuous process; that is, the heaviest lines were drawn and bitten first, and the lighter and more delicate work added as the biting advanced. In his later plates he has frequently used the stopping-out process, which was employed in the preparation of the present plate.

This view of the Brooklyn Bridge is an unusual one. It furnishes a glimpse of the great Brooklyn warehouses, which bear so important a relation to the commerce of this port, as well as of the metropolis stretching away in the distance, with an airy, graceful passageway from the great storehouses to the great market-place. It is not strange that the Brooklyn Bridge has become a favorite subject for artists, and it is pleasant to find our artists seeking "the picturesque" at home.

It would be unjust to omit recognition of Mr. Platt's work as a painter. This has earned his election to membership in the Society of American Artists, and the Water-Color Society. His membership in the New York Etching Club antedates the first formal exhibition in 1882, and he is a member of the London Society of Painter-Etchers.

“WHAT O’CLOCK IS IT?”

Drawn and Etched by F. D. Smillie.

Copyright 1908 by Frederick S. Stokes & Brothers



"WHAT O'CLOCK IS IT?"

Drawn and Etched by James D. Smillie, R.A.

AN inheritance of special aptitude for art may be exceptional, but we have examples near at hand in the Weir and Smillie families. Mr. Smillie is the son of the late James Smillie, whose talent and remarkable technical proficiency earned for him the first place among American landscape engravers. Mr. Smillie was born in New York in 1833, and before he was of age he was intrusted with work upon his father's plates, among them plates in the series of Cole's "Voyage of Life." By degrees Mr. Smillie became engaged in work for the American Bank-Note Company, and his vignette engravings have been circulated from Greece to Japan, and from Russia to Brazil.

In 1862, after a course at the Academy of Design, and after his first visit to Europe, Mr. Smillie's natural desire for original expression impelled him to devote himself to the study of painting. He modestly writes, that many of the succeeding years were given up to unlearning what he had already learned; but the public have decided that Mr. Smillie's actual achievements in art need no apologies. In 1864 he left the Bank-Note Company, and in the summer made his first out-door sketching trip. In the autumn he took a studio with his younger brother, Mr. George H. Smillie, and in the spring of 1865 his first oil-painting was accepted and exhibited at the National Academy of Design. He was at once elected an associate academician, and the quality of his work was recognized by election to full membership in 1876.

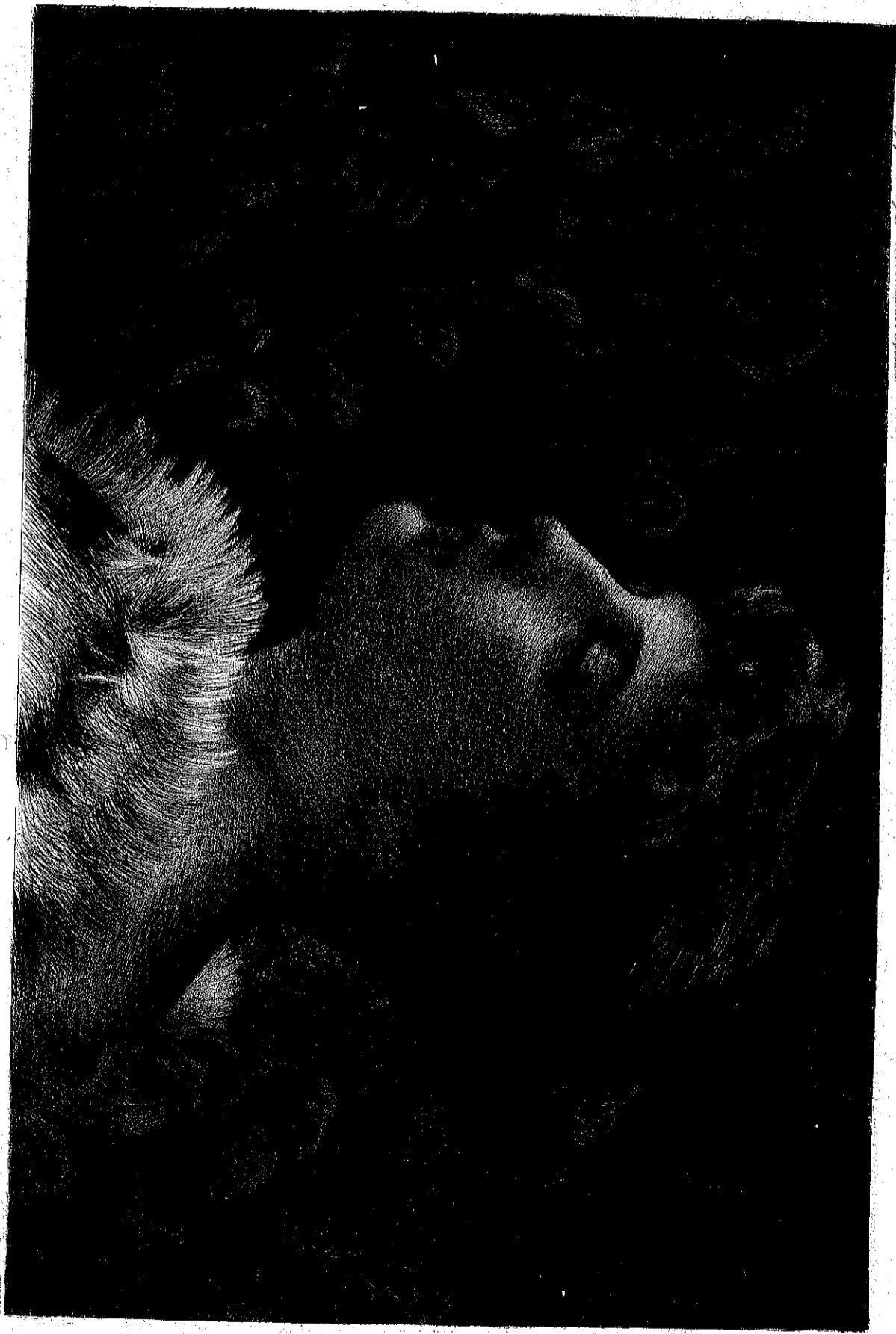
Mr. Smillie was one of the earliest members of the American Water-Color Society, founded in 1867. He was the first treasurer; and after holding that office for six years, he was promoted to the presidency, retiring after five years of service. In company with Dr. Leroy Milton Yale, and a few others, Mr. Smillie organized the New York Etching Club, eleven years ago, and assisted in the preparation of the first plate etched in the club. He served the club both as secretary and as president. In 1881 he was elected one of the "Original Fellows," at the formation of the Painter-Etchers Society of London.

"Concerning my processes in etching," Mr. Smillie writes, "I hardly know what to say. I have no established methods, and am ready to employ any devices that promise to accomplish the end in view; but my early training makes me almost unconsciously something of a purist, which is the mildest form of criticism that I can now think of. After all my interest in etching, I really have done but little. The etching 'What o'clock is it?' is but my thirty-eighth attempt at original work, and I have done no large plates. I have made reproductive etchings, all for book-work, after Jacque, Breton, Alma-Tadema, Eastman Johnson, Winslow Homer, Daniel Huntington, F. A. Bridgman, and others."

Although there was nothing by Mr. Smillie at the last exhibition of the Etching Club, he has usually been represented; and amateurs have long since learned to respect his abundant technical knowledge, the sincerity of his art-feeling, and his sound and serious views regarding expression with the etching-needle.

LUCILE.

Drawn and Etched by W. St. John Harper.



LUCILE.

Drawn and Etched by W. St. John Harper.

NEARLY thirty years have passed since "Lucile" was written,—years which have brought to Robert Bulwer the titles of Baron Lytton and of the Earl of Lytton, and the great honors of appointments as Viceroy of India and ambassador to France. Yet it is said that the mature ambition of the Earl of Lytton is for literary fame. Perhaps the measure of that fame has been already determined; for neither the "Fables in Song," "Glenaveril," "After Paradise," nor "The Earl's Return" has approached the popular success of his "parlor drama," "Lucile," published in 1860, and republished so often since, that "Owen Meredith" has become a name far more familiar to the English-speaking world than the real title of the ambassador at Paris.

Whether or not Mr. Harper has satisfactorily realized the heroine of the poem, its readers will decide for themselves. They will turn to the lines —

"O'er a bodice snow white streamed her soft dusky hair;
A rosebud half-blown in her hand; in her eyes
A half-pensive smile."

"Eyes—the wistful gazelle's,"

the poet tells us in another passage; but it is necessary to turn from ideal beauty to the practical methods which have given to the artist's conception an actual existence.

"The present plate," Mr. Harper explains, "is a pure dry-point, drawn on a polished plate, direct from nature. No acid tints were used. The work was done with the usual dry-point tools, needles of various sizes, scrapers, burnishers, burin, etc. I have drawn this plate *entirely* in dry-point, because it seemed to me best suited to the subject; just as I should make another plate in pure etched line, or a combination of both methods, as the subject seemed to indicate. In other words, it seems to me that an artist working on copper should be permitted to choose the manner of working, just as he would, in a drawing on paper, choose pen and ink, distemper, or charcoal; or, in water-colors, choose gouache or aquarelle, as would seem best suited to the interpretation of the subject."

Mr. Harper was born in Rhinebeck, N.Y., in 1851, and studied at the Brooklyn Academy of Design, the National Academy, and the Art Students' League. From 1872 to 1877 he was attached to the staff of the *Daily Graphic*. Mr. Harper was one of the incorporators of the Art League in 1875, and in 1881 he was elected its president. In Paris he was a pupil of Bonnat and Munkacsy, and while abroad he spent much time in studying and copying paintings in various museums. He has illustrated several books, and his designs have appeared in the *Century* and other magazines. Mr. Harper has been a regular contributor to the oil, water-color, and black-and-white exhibitions. In 1886 he exhibited for the first time with the New York Etching Club.

UNCLE REMUS AND THE LITTLE BOY.

Drawn and Etched by E. W. Kemble.

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Edw. W. Kemble
1891-88

UNCLE REMUS AND THE LITTLE BOY.

Drawn and Etched by Edward Windsor Kemble.

THERE is no sense of strangeness in meeting "Uncle Remus" as an actual personage. He has had the "warm corner" at the hearths of so many households, that it seems natural to return his visits, and find him telling the adventures of "B'rer Rabbit" and "B'rer Fox" at his own fireside. We have grown to think of the kindly, deliciously original old *raconteur*, with his wonderful memory, his humor, and his petty weaknesses, as a real person,—as real, indeed, as the very different type, "Uncle Tom," seemed to the readers of the last generation. Surely none of Boccaccio's mouthpieces has shared more applause with his tale. Even the real story-teller stands in danger of finding "Uncle Remus" permanently substituted for Joel Chandler Harris.

Mr. Kemble's past work assures us that he has been in full sympathy with his subject. Art, like other professions, is divided into all manner of "specialties;" and Mr. Kemble has made himself known to a very large circle of readers as an appreciative delineator of Southern *genre* subjects, an illustrator of the character of the negro and the "poor whites." He was born in Sacramento, Cal., in 1861. His natural taste for drawing was developed by himself, and he never studied under a teacher. He began his professional career as an illustrator in 1881, and for nearly a year he was employed upon the staff of *The Graphic*. "Accidentally," as he says, he "drifted into Southern character study." The first book which he illustrated was Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn." Since then—that is, since 1884—he has been connected with *The Century Magazine*.

To the readers of this magazine Mr. Kemble needs no introduction. They will remember his illustrations of Cable's "Au Large," Joel Chandler Harris's "Azalia," and Stockton's "The Cloverfields' Carriage;" of Mr. Allen's essay upon "Mrs. Stowe's 'Uncle Tom' at Home in Kentucky;" of "Hodgson's Hide Out," a sketch of the poor whites of Northern Alabama; of phases of life in New Orleans, and of character studies by Mark Twain. In the work indicated by these examples, Mr. Kemble has proved himself the possessor not only of a lively appreciation of the humorous, but also of a power of differentiating types and expressing individual character. This has been done for the most part with pen and ink, a medium admirably adapted to swift, telling draughtsmanship, yet severe in its requirements. The artist's liking for this medium has naturally led him to take up work with the etching-needle, the principle of which he believes to be identical with the principle of etching. This is his second plate.

TOKENS.

Drawn and Etched by C. D. Weldon.

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TOKENS.

Drawn and Etched by C. D. Weldon.

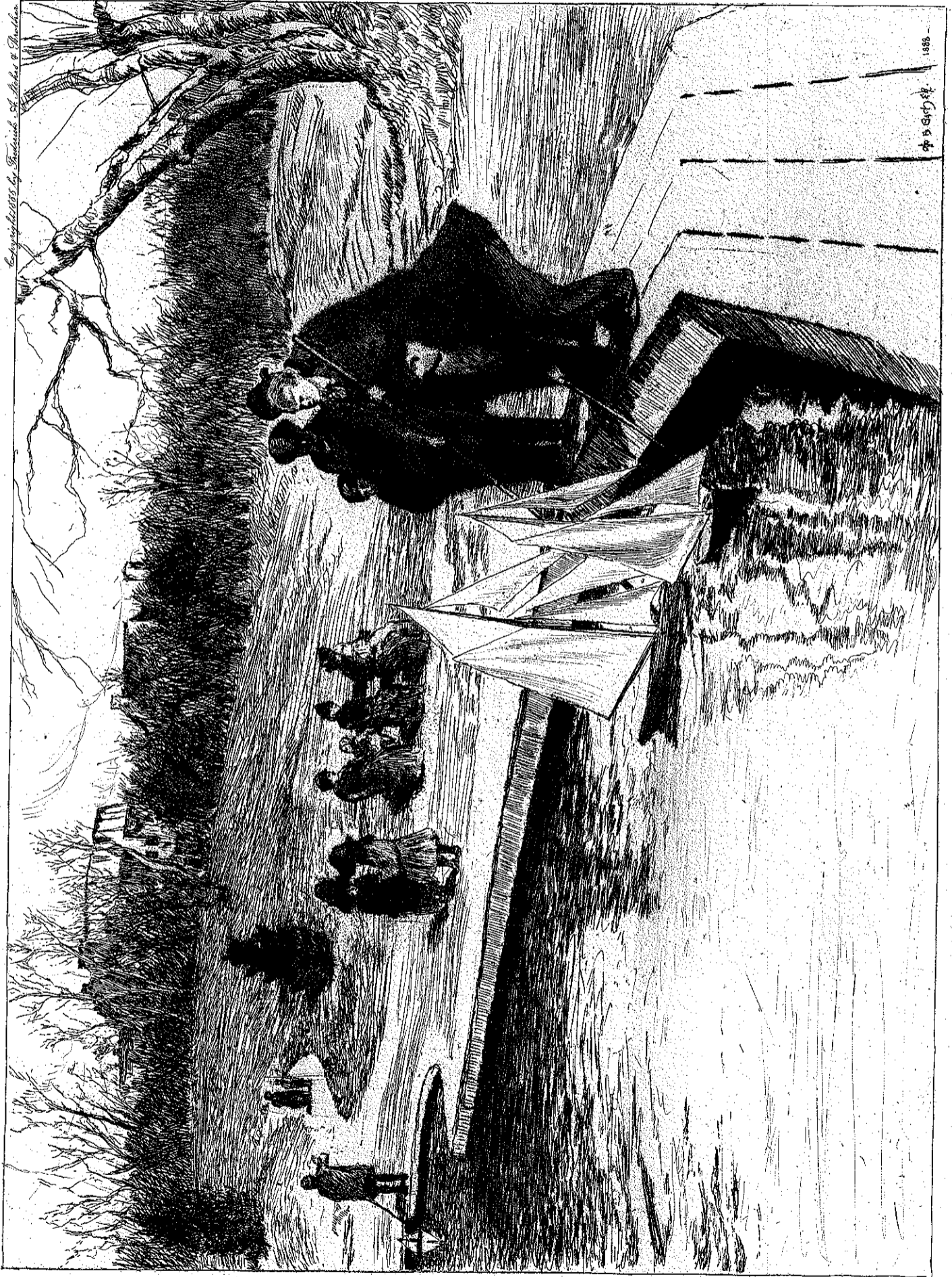
MR. WELDON deals in romance, and romance is forbidden us by some would-be dictators. To the realist, a subject like that chosen by our artist must be essentially depressing. It implies romantic love, and we are taught that we should substitute a batrachian esteem for the passion of the older novelists. To the realistic mind, Mr. Weldon's heroine is a very foolish young person. She is wasting time over purely sentimental concerns,—and, according to the apostles of "truth," sentiment is too slight and evanescent to be seriously considered,—and, when subjected to the tests of real life, her love will last perhaps only a little longer than the flowers. She is self-deluded, and we ought to feel that her present estate is a very sad one; but I fear that some of us will sympathize, and persist in believing that these tokens may be significant of enduring happiness.

It would be difficult to limit Mr. Weldon to uncompromising realism, for his pictorial work has shown him to be the possessor of a lively fancy and a sense of humor. This work has become familiar to visitors to the National Academy and Water-Color exhibitions, where the artist has appeared as a contributor for the last half-dozen years or more. He was born in Ohio, in 1853, and first studied in New York under one of the "strong Munich men," Mr. Walter Shirlaw. In Paris, Mr. Weldon, together with Messrs. W. T. Dannat, C. Y. Turner, and others, was a member of a sketching-class which received instruction from Munkacsy. In 1881 he sent a picture called "A Parting Glance" to the Water-Color exhibition. This was followed by a study of a child reading, by "The Fortune-Teller," "Borrowed Plumes," "The Elopement,"—a fanciful sketch of a Japanese doll soaring aloft with a waxen beauty,—the "Threads of Gold," and "Incense." Mr. Weldon has used oil as well as water-colors for the delineation of his quaint Japanese marionettes; and one of his paintings of this class of subjects, "Dreamland," is in the collection of Mr. T. B. Clarke. It was in 1883 that Mr. Weldon first exhibited at the Academy of Design. In 1884 he exhibited a more ambitious picture, which told the pathetic tale of a widow driven by want to pawn her wedding-dress. Mr. Weldon, it will be noted, is always a figure-painter, and his figures are usually invested with sentiment or humor.

In addition to his use of oil and water colors, Mr. Weldon has done no little work as an illustrator. It is only recently that he has taken up the etching-needle. He is a member of the American Water-Color Society.

*SAILING TOY YACHTS IN CENTRAL
PARK (MARCH).*

Drawn and Etched by Otto H. Bacher.



SAILING TOY YACHTS IN CENTRAL PARK (MARCH).

Drawn and Etched by Otto H. Bacher.

ONE who is a discriminating student of etching, as well as a true etcher, said, a year or two since: "Of original etchers America has produced very many who have the fresh and immediate way of telling their tidings, which is the charm of free-hand etching. Such are Bacher, Gifford, Parrish, Pennell, and Platt." Mr. Bacher earned honorable rank among American painter-etchers at an early age. He was born in Cleveland, O., in 1856, and his first plates were etched in Cleveland in 1877. His education as an artist was obtained for the most part abroad. He studied in Munich, Florence, Venice, and Paris. His first etchings of foreign subjects were a set of twenty-four plates, dated 1879, representing scenes on the Danube. Between 1880 and 1882 this work was followed by sets of eighteen small and twenty-four large plates, etched in Venice and Florence. Mr. Bacher's "Rainy Night in Venice," and "Vido," were reproduced in *The Century Magazine* in 1883. His large plate of Milan Cathedral was etched in Paris and Milan in 1886; and his etching of the interior of St. Mark's, Venice, was made in 1887, from his picture painted in 1881. His etching of "Desdemona's Palace, Venice," and another of the "Church of the Holy Sepulchre," were made in New York. The latter, which was executed for *The Century Magazine*, has been already published. Mr. Bacher has well earned his election to membership in the Painter-Etchers' Society of London, as well as in the New York Etching Club.

In the subject chosen for this collection, one who is zealous for "moral purpose" in art might find a hint of the good done by Central Park to our people, even in the inclement seasons of the year. But the artist's purpose has been artistic,—the expression of the animated movement of figures, the sweeping line of the bank, and the roll of the bare hills, if the term is not too ambitious for a landscape where nature has been placed under the control of art. As regards the preparation of this plate, Mr. Bacher informs us that it was etched directly from nature by the old or "interrupted" process; that is, drawing, biting, stopping-out, and then proceeding, instead of working continuously in the bath. Mr. Bacher's manner of expression, it is hardly necessary to say, has varied greatly in different plates, but the "classifiers" have usually placed him in the "school of Whistler," together with Messrs. Duveneck and Pennell. Mr. Bacher has usually expressed himself both with the broken line and with strong painter-like contrasts of light and shade. He has made much of the figures in his foreign etchings; and although his figures may sometimes be too wraith-like to satisfy the demands of an age which deals in facts, they are seldom devoid of vivacity.

A POLITICAL MARRIAGE.

Drawn and Etched by F. A. Mitchell.

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A POLITICAL MARRIAGE.

Drawn and Etched by John Ames Mitchell.

I SUPPOSE it is well within bounds to say that the success of the illustrated journal *Life* is due to Mr. Mitchell in larger measure than to any other one man, whether writer or artist. New York has been called a graveyard of humorous journals; and the propriety of the phrase will be recognized by those who have some knowledge of the long series of deaths, from *Vanity Fair* and *Charivari* down. It was natural to predict failure for Mr. Mitchell's venture in 1883; but within three years it was proved that there was a profitable field for a journal which appeared as the exponent of refined humor, expressed without the emphasis of chromo-lithography.

Although Mr. Mitchell's talent for fanciful and humorous design has found its outlet in *Life* for the last five years, his education and his versatile abilities have fitted him for work in other directions. He was born in 1845. Seven years of his life were passed as a student in Paris. From 1867 to 1870 he studied architecture at the *École des Beaux Arts*, and from 1870 to 1876 he practised his profession in Boston. It was probably a desire for the greater freedom in creative design afforded by the graphic arts which drew him again to Paris. In the course of his residence in Paris he studied etching with that accomplished artist, Brunet-Debaines, and painting in the *ateliers* of Julian, Boulanger, and Lefebvre, and also under Albert Maignan. His paintings were accepted at the *salon*, and he gained "honorable mention" at the exhibition of 1878. Among his more important work with the etching-needle was a large plate presenting a view of "La Place de l'Opéra," published by *L'Art*. The same journal also published a series of Mr. Mitchell's etchings entitled "À Travers l'Exposition." Mr. Mitchell adds, "I have always been more interested in black-and-white than in color, and it was owing chiefly to this that *Life* was started."

The subject of the present etching has the charm of immediate human interest, as well as the effective splendor of mediæval pageantry. The appealing timidity of the tiny bride; the effort of the bridegroom, already conscious of the sweets of power, to play his part becomingly; and the gravely decorous yet not unsympathetic expression of attendants and courtiers, — are all readily comprehended. The original of this etching was suggested by the betrothal of the eleven-year-old son of the king of Castile to the daughter of the king of Aragon, then four years of age. Other examples of such political marriages will be readily recalled. There was Margaret, daughter of Maximilian I., Emperor of Germany, who was affianced to the Dauphin of France at the age of three, — a contract broken by the French king. There was Margaret of Parma, who was married to the Grand Duke of Tuscany at the age of twelve. Possibly in our own time the baby king of Spain may play the leading part in another political marriage of infants.

