American Art in the Paris Exposition. The following extract from the "Report on the Fine Arts," by Frank Leslie, United States Commissioner to the Universal Exposition at Paris, is interesting. After enumerating the drawbacks to which the collection of works for the American gallery was exposed, Mr.

Leslie says:-Notwithstanding all disadvantages, seventyfive pictures, by thirty-eight artists, were sent forward from the United States and placed in the Exposition. Of this number at least onethird should not, under any pretense or influ-ence, have been admitted to a place. It is doubtful if they could have obtained room in any local exhibition where ordinary discrimination is exercised in the choice of pictures. Now, we have upwards of 400 painters, members of the different academies of design in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities, and it is idle to pretend that the place of the twenty-five mediocre or utterly worthless pictures could not have been supplied by at least creditable works of art. Many such works were accessible. Among them may be mentioned with credit the fine pictures by Bradford, drawn, after careful study, among the icebergs and on the coast and among the natives of Labrador. One of these, offered by the artist, he was obliged himself to exhibit in Paris, where it speedily found a sale, while the eye of the visitor to the Exhibition was offended by, in one instance certainly, no less than four so-called works of art from a single unpractised and obscure hand.

The American collection occupied one end of the British gallery and the walls of the Avenue d'Afrique dividing this gallery from the Italian. This passage was constantly crowded, so that the lower ranges or tiers of pictures could seldom be seen, or, if at all, at a great disadvantage. Thus Gifford's "Twi-light on Mount Hunter," Hubbard's "View of the Adirondacks," and McEntee's "Virginia in 1863," were hung in very bad light, while works far inferior had prominent places in the gallery itself.

Not only was the American exhibit of paintings by no means an exhibition of the various styles of American artists, but it was equally deficient as a type or representative of American art in 1867. Few of the pictures had a distinctive, still less a distinctively, American character, except Johnson's well-known and justly appreciated "Kentucky Home," which compared favorably with the best European works of similar character and attracted much attention from students. Some other small pictures by the same competent artist could hardly be called finished, and might judiclously have been left out of the exhibition. It is to be regretted that of character or genre pictures we had so few specimens, since in this department, always the most popular, we

might have achieved a real distinction. The department of painting in which the United States may lay claim to highest excellence is undoubtedly landscape, aud, as was to be expected, the largest proportion of pictures in the American gallery were landscapes— twenty-eight in all. But these were inadequate representatives of the genius of our painters in this, their favorite branch of art. They were not characteristic: for, with the exception of a single work by Bierstadt, with his broad effects; one by Church, accurately studied and well manipulated, and one each by Gignoux and Gifford, they represented no important scene or combination of scenery in the United States, and might be taken as presenting views in almost any other country. autumn and winter scenery found no proper representation, although in depicting these we have artists of real merit. It may be said generally that our landscapes are brighter, more cheerful and pleasing than those of European artists—a result, considering our clearer and more brilliant sky and atmosphere. Our artists, as a whole, have to deal with bolder scenery, and are consequently often more effec-tive in their results. The dull skies, long twilights, and generally tame outlines of nature in European countries are reproduced in pictures also dull, leaden, and monotonous, but nevertheless carefully manipulated. Yet, with all our natural advantages of subject and general success in landscape painting, it is numiliating to say that we did not rank any higher in the Exposition than Prassia, Sweden, and Switzerland.

In saying this it is not meant to be understood that the Exposition, as a whole, presented any remarkable landscapes. A number might be called good, but few could be pronounced excellent.

And here it may be observed, in parenthesis, as a matter worth remembering by aspiring artists, that landscapes have a less general or popular appeal than meny other classes of paintings. Authors of the best works in this department, not in the American alone, but in every other, would be astonished to see how indifferently their productions were passed over by the thousands who wandered through the galleries of the great Exhibition, while figure subjects and representaactive or historical scenes tions of never missed attracting a crowd of

gazers if not critics. The natural scenery of our country, its variety and kaleidoscopic effects, cannot be surpassed. Italian sunsets and Alpine scenery have become conventional in Europe as synonyms artistically of the tropics and of grandeur in vale and mountain, and, as contrasted with the dulness of English skies and the puny altitudes of Wales and Scotland, they may be justly regarded as beautiful and grand. But Washington is in a lower latitude than Rome, and Florida is parallel with the Desert of

Every aspect which nature exhibits, from the torrid heats of Algeria to the bitter cold of Norway, is to be found in our own country on every scale of extent and grandeur. Our Atlantic seaboard stretches over 3000 miles, and our Pacific line from the headlands of California to the pole. Our field of art, like our area of development, is almost illimitable, and it is no fault of ours if the wilderness in one instance be uncultivated, for in the other nature's wonderful combinations unportrayed on the canvas. It has taken almost 500 years to rear the unfinished Duomo of Milan to its present proportions. It was commenced 105 years before the discovery of America by Columbus, and yet scarcely 100 years have elapsed since the United States had a being.

Nevertheless, as already said, we have an art material that ought to inspire and develop the native artist, whatever his tastes or talents, whether as a painter of lake, river, marine, and seashore subjects; of mountain, prairie, or forest scenery, or of the thousand striking aspects and episodes of busy and adventurous life of which the United States offers so many illustrations. The stormy Atlantic and the placid Pacific, the broad lakes of the North and the shadowy lagoons and bayous of the South, the turbid Mississippi, crystal Hud-son, swirling and plunging Niagara, St. Law-rence and Columbia, and the Colorado flowing through the deep refts of plateau and mountain, are all equally subjects for the poet's pen and the painter's pencil. The severe landscapes of Maine, with steel-solored lakes framed in by dark evergreens and reflecting the cold, stern hills, afford abundant scope for a taste gloomy and severe. The rich valleys of the Middle States, Nagast,' a code of civil and conon law.

green with growing crops, golden with ripen-ing grain or ruddy with autumnal tints, brightened with cities and villages, ap streaked with railways and canals; t' .. smoother expanses of the South, its undless wastes of pines, broad, dreamy cotton plantations and level horizons of rice-fields, its orange and palm trees-these, too, offer their thousands of combinations to the eye of the artist and their inspiration to his touch. Our meteoric conditions and phenomena are equally varied and grand, and we have the characteristics, accessories, and incidents; belonging to three great and broadly defined of men and types of human life and civilization.

We should excel in landscape painting in a degree corresponding with the variety and majesty of our subjects and with that exceptional favor with which this branch of art is regarded in our country. But our artists must be less timid and catch more of the boldness and vigor which made Norway and Sweden, and even Russia, conspicuous in the Paris Exhibition, and enabled them to take rank as our superiors in landscape painting. But one picture in the American gallery was

honored with an award-namely, Church's

"Niagara." (The artist's medal with 500f, in gold). This well-known picture has an established American and a considerable English reputation, and is a faithful and effective rendering of nature. The second and, perhaps, more ambitious picture exhibited by the same artist, "The Rainy Season in the Tropics," received not unmerited criticism for the dazzling glow of its rainbow, a meretri-cious feature, which blinds the eye to the five effects of cliff and mountain, which constitute the chief merit of the picture. The next largest and perhaps in all respects the most conspicuous picture in the American gallery was Bierstadt's "Rocky Mountains." In arrangement of light and shadow, and in the rendering of the water, its purity and depth, this picture was probably unsurpassed in the entire exhibition. And it derived signal advantage from the introduction of an element too often neglected even when admissible in a landscape, viz., life in the foreground. The introduction of a camp of explorers, with Indians, etc., is not only effective but appropriate, and gives a living interest to the picture without detracting from the silent majesty of the natural features which it was the great object of the painter to portray. Had the solitary award made to the United States been left to the suffrages of the mass of the lovers and appreciators of art who visited our gallery, it is not improbable that that doubtful honor might have been conferred on "The Rocky Mountains."

"Mount Washington," by Gignoux, is a good effective picture, but by no means one of the fbest productions of that artist, and lost much of its real effect by being badly hung in the gallery. Had this profile painter been consulted in the matter, the America gallery might have been greatly enriched and the credit of American art much elevated. Gifford had two very excellent pictures in the Exhibition, though but one of them was hung, together with Hubbard's good and well-manipulated "View on the Adirondacks," in the dim passage called Avenue d'Afrique, where it was difficult to see it at all. George in Autumn," by Kensett, a carefully studied piece, but deficient in force in the foreground, attracted much attention and was well appreciated. "The Symbol," by Durand, was generally regarded as an effective picture by competent foreign critics, as was also "Virgina in 1863," by MacEntee. "Autumn in the Woods," by the artist last named, is by no means one of his best works. These were the principal landscapes exhibited. The remainder were either mediocre or absolutely poor, and, if their places could not have been supplied with better works, they might, for the credit of American art, have been omitted from the gallery altogether.

Valuable Manuscripts. One good result of the war in Abyssinia is revealed in a letter from an officer of the British Museum. When the British troops occupied Magdala they found about one thousand manuscript volumes, which King Theodore had gradually brought together in order to form a library for the church which he intended to build, dedicated to the Saviour of the world, Machani 'Alam. From this mass of manuscripts, Mr. Munzinger, British Consul at Massowah, an accomplished linguist, and Mr. Holmes, of the British Museum, archaeologist to the expedition, selected three hundred and sixty of the finest. The remainder were given to the priests of the church of Chelicot, from whom some of them appear to have been purchased and taken to England by both officers and soldiers. The Indian Government in liberal compliance with the recommendation of Lord Napier, has presented this entire collection to the trustees of the British Maseum, with the exception of a few of the hand somest volumes, which are destined for the royal library at Windsor.

Mr. W. Wright, of the British Museum, who gives this interesting information, describes the collection as follows:-

"In point of age- these manuscripts may perhaps disappoint the expectations of some scholars; for, with few exceptions, the greater number belong to the seventeenth and eigh teenth centuries, and some were transcribed during the reign of Theodore himself. A considerable number, especially of the liturgical class, contain pictures in the different styles of Abyssinian art.

"As regards its contents, the collection fairly represents every branch of the Ethiopic literature, which is, like the Syriac, almost exclusively ecclesiastical, and consists, in great part, of translations from the Greek, Arabic, and Coptic. We have here numerons Biblical manuscripts, comprising, besides the ordinary canonical and apocryphal books, the Book of Enoch, the Kutalo (Liber Jubi beorum, or Parva Genesis), the Ascension of Isaiah, the Paralipomena of Baruch, and the Apocalypse of Ezra. The liturgical section contains manuscripts of the Psalter; the Deggwa and Me'rat or anthems and hymns for various occasions, with musical notation: Missals and various other office books and hymn-books. To this class also belong the Nagara Maryam, or discourses for the festivals of the Virgin Mary; the Gebra Hemamat, or services for Passion Week; the Dersanat, or homilies for the festivals of the archangels

Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, etc. "In the department of theology we find such books as Kerles; that is, Cyril, comprising Cyril's Prosphoneticus ad Imperatorem Theodosium, the dialogue 'quod unns sit Christus,' and a collection of hemilies by various Fathers; the 'Ancoratus,' and other works of Epiphanius; Chrysostom on the Epistle to the Hebrews the homilies of Severus of Eshmunian; the works of Mar Isaac of Nineveh; the treatises ascribed to Kalamentos, or Clement: the 'Sino dos, or Councils of the Church,' and the 'Didascalia Apostolorum.' Besides these, there are copies of the 'Haimanota Abau, or Faith of the Fathers;' Philoxenus of Mabag on the Monastic Life; the Gannata Manakosat, or Paradisus Monachorum;' the 'Hawi,' a huge compilation, apparently known by the name of 'Talmid,' drawn up by George, the disciple of Anthony the Syrian; the Aragawi Manfarawi, ' Faus Manfasawi,' and others. Here,

"In chronological and historical works the literature of Abyssinia is not rich. To the former class pertain the well-known treatise of Abû Shaker; to the latter, the Universal History of George ibn Amil; the 'Zena Aihud; or, History of the Jews,' by Joseph Ben Gorlon; and the 'K-hra Nagast, or Glory of the Kings.' There are also two Chronicles of Ethiopia, which may prove both useful and interesting. The one seems, roughly speaking, to contain the history of the latter half of the last century; the other is a work of greater extent, commencing with the creation, but entering more or less into detail from the time of Amda Siyon onwards. It is brought down by continuators far into the present century. The histories of Alexander the Great, King Sekendes, and Serkis, or Sergius, of Armenia, are rather historical romances than histories. Of ecclesiastical legends there is, however, no lack. Besides the Miracles of Our Lord, of the Virgin Mary, and of the three Archangels, we may here mention the 'Gadla Hawaryat, or Acts of the Apostles and Disciples;' the 'Senkesar, or Synaxarium,' that is, the Menologium, or Martyrology for the whole year, generally comprised in two large folios or quartos; and numerous Lives and Acts of single Saints, such as Givorgis, or George, Eustathius, Takla Haimanot, Fasiladas, Lali-

"Almost all the above works are in the aucient Ethiopic language; the number of those in the modern Amharic being very small. With very few exceptions, the MSS, are legibly, often beautifully written on well-prepared vellum; and many of them are not inelegantly bound in wooden boards, covered with stamped

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