

rapidly a liquid evaporates, the greater the fall in the temperature; thus when Eau de Cologne, or any other liquid containing spirit, is applied to the skin, it dries more quickly, and is cooled more effectively. The rapidity with which a liquid evaporates at ordinary temperatures is greater, the lower its boiling point; thus, as the boiling point of oxygen is very low, the evaporation is very rapid, and the consequent fall in the temperature proportionately great. Prof. Dewar exhausts the atmosphere above the surface of the liquid air, and so increases the rapidity of evaporation, and thus reduces the temperature so much as to get masses of solid air.

Notes on Art.

THE NEW GALLERY.

(First Notice.)

It was very pleasant, on entering this Gallery, to find two young Nurses in their picturesque brown costumes, guide-book in hand, devoting the closest attention to the very pictures which to many would be least attractive—the earliest Italian works. Would that we could find them oftener in the great Galleries of London, for it is certain that few things could change their thoughts and rest them more than visits to the glorious works of the Old Masters.

The New Gallery is, as everybody knows, a singularly pleasant place to see pictures in, and the collection now under consideration is full of interest. No strictly chronological order has been attempted in the placing of the pictures, but an endeavour has been made to group together artists of the same period and the same cities, and the exhibition is limited to Early Italian Art from 1300 to 1550, though in the case of works of art other than pictures (and many of them most interesting), the period has been extended to the end of the 16th century.

To begin, however, at the beginning. We will pass by the first few pictures, such as those by Cimabue, Giotto, and Gaddi, which are interesting enough, but are almost too archaic to attract the attention of any but students. We must, however, refer to one of the earliest painters, Angelico, if only for the sake of recalling what Mr. Ruskin said of him—"His intense, ineffable adoration: Compare his work with the vile-ness that succeeded when men had begun to bring to the Cross foot their systems and not their sorrow." Perhaps Angelico is best represented here by No. 23, though none are typical. We come soon to No. 15, the *Triumph of Chastity*, which only bears the label "Florentine School," and has no more direct identification. It is very typical of Florentine work—the treatment of the sky is greenish blue, with the little clouds that Bellini was so fond of, and the pale red colour of the cover of the car is still beloved by Tuscans; it is, moreover, an early example of really good colour. The most noteworthy and important work in the room is the *St. George*, No. 35, by Lorenzo di Credi (who lived 1459-1537). It is very delicately finished and fine in treatment, and reminds one of his great contemporary, Perugino, though the colouring is less pure than his. There is also, by Credi, No. 276, *A Portrait of a Young Man*, in wonderful drawing.

Masaccio has always been a favourite early master of mine (1401-1428). One of his works seems to have been overlooked, and yet it is a wonderful representation of an Angel flying; look at the Indian pink robe.

Perhaps the most lovely picture in the West Gallery is No. 159, *A Portrait of a Lady*, by Ghirlandaio (1449-1494). She has light brown hair, crimson dress with damask sleeves which are so wonderfully painted that it is almost difficult to believe that a piece of real material has not actually been stuck on the picture. Her white cap is fastened by a cord with jewel on the forehead. It must have been a wonderful portrait, but the Old Masters were very great at portraiture, painting the soul of the people they saw, and, as Ruskin says, "introducing portraits into all their highest work . . . as the very source and root of their superiority in all things; for they were too great and too humble not to see in every face about them that which was above them, and which no fancies of theirs could match or take place of; therefore we find the custom of portraiture constant with them."

This notice must conclude with a brief reference to Alessandro Botticelli (1447-1510). He was one of the first to be graceful and fanciful, and to introduce into his pictures the most delicate treatment of flowers and other natural forms. You must go to Florence to see him in perfection, but the examples in the New Gallery are singularly good. Perhaps the best is No. 121, the *Virgin and Child*, the latter stands with a pomegranate in His left hand; look at the beautiful filmy drapery, the lovely face of the blessed Virgin, and the landscape seen through the window. That is how the Italian Masters painted four centuries and a half ago, and painted for all time. Their work was singularly poetical and it thoroughly represented the time at which it was produced; and this is much more than can be said of the best of our modern work.

A Book of the Week.

MEN, WOMEN, AND BOOKS.

It is a pleasant change, after reading several volumes of modern short stories, to take up this book of Essays chiefly dealing with the writers of the past. One of our daily papers has recently invented a new verb—which we trust Dr. Murray will take notice of and add to his dictionary—the verb to Birrell describes by the very sound of it, the sort of pleasant murmuring style in which these papers are written. The first Essay is about that fascinating, but incomprehensible, personage, "Dean Swift." Mr. Birrell tells us several interesting stories about the great Dean, and he assures us that Swift was always in sober, deadly earnest when he abuses his fellow men. But he adds:—

"What an odd revenge we have taken! His gospel or hatred, his testament of woe, his 'Gulliver,' upon which he expended the treasures of his wit, and into which he instilled the concentrated essence of his rage, has become a child's book, and has been read with wonder and delight by generations of innocents. After all, it is a kindly place, this planet, and the best use we have for our cynics is to let them amuse the junior portion of our population."

"Essays about Men, Women, and Books." By Augustine Birrell (London: Elliot Stock, 1894).

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