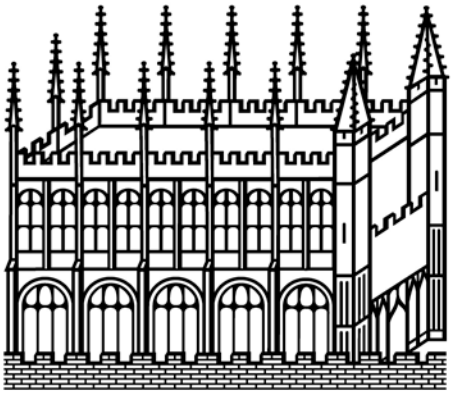
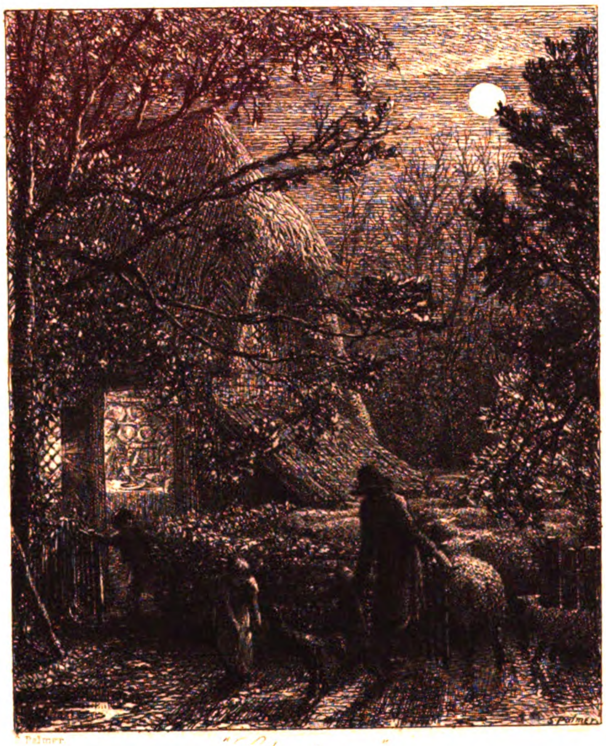


SAMUEL PALMER

A MEMOIR

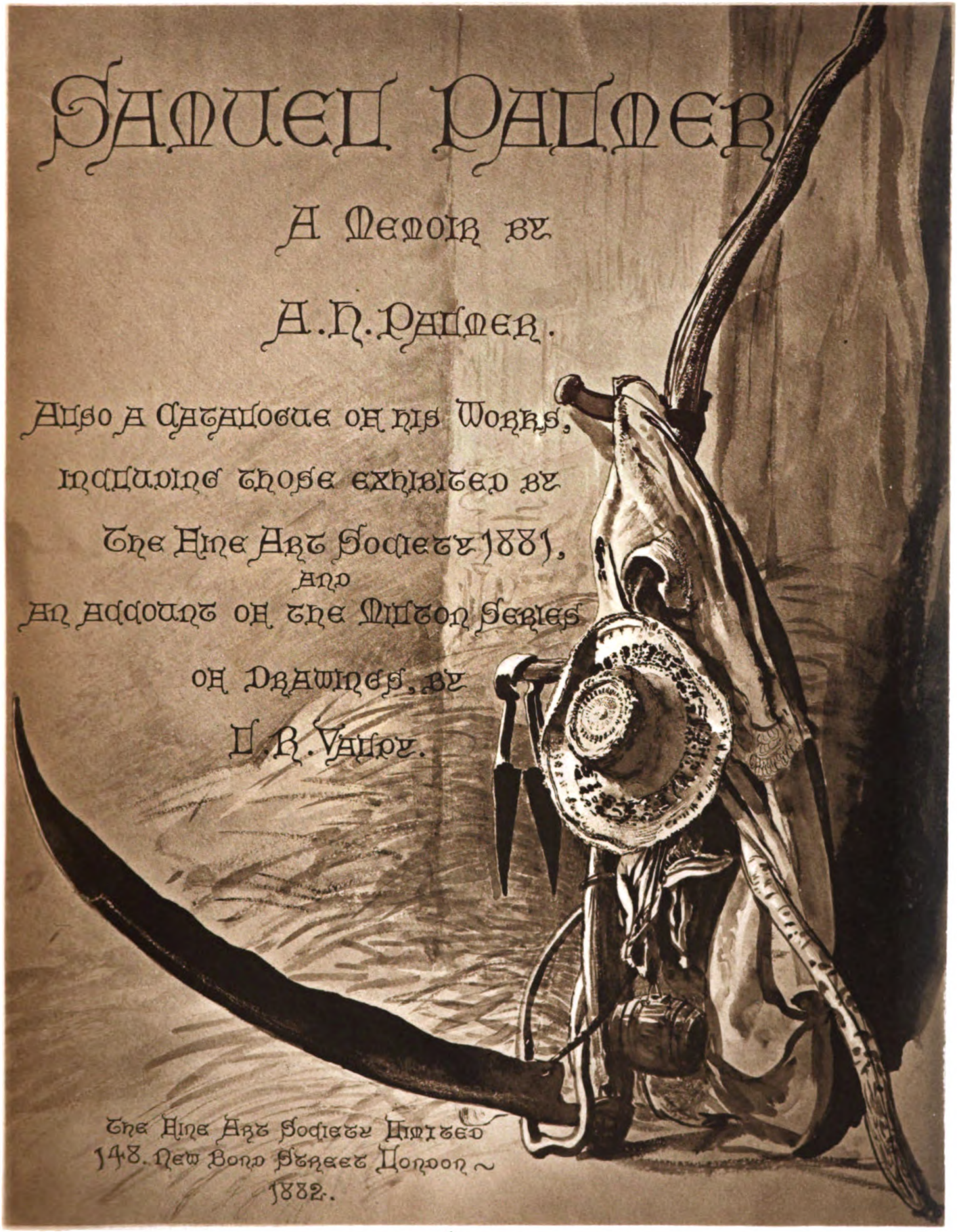
BY

A. H. PALMER



Palmer

[illegible]



SAMUEL PALMER

A MEMOIR BY

A. H. PALMER.

ALSO A CATALOGUE OF HIS WORKS,
INCLUDING THOSE EXHIBITED BY
THE FINE ART SOCIETY 1881,
AND
AN ACCOUNT OF THE MILTON SERIES
OF DRAWINGS, BY
L. R. VALLOY.

THE FINE ART SOCIETY LIMITED
148. NEW BOND STREET LONDON ~
1882.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

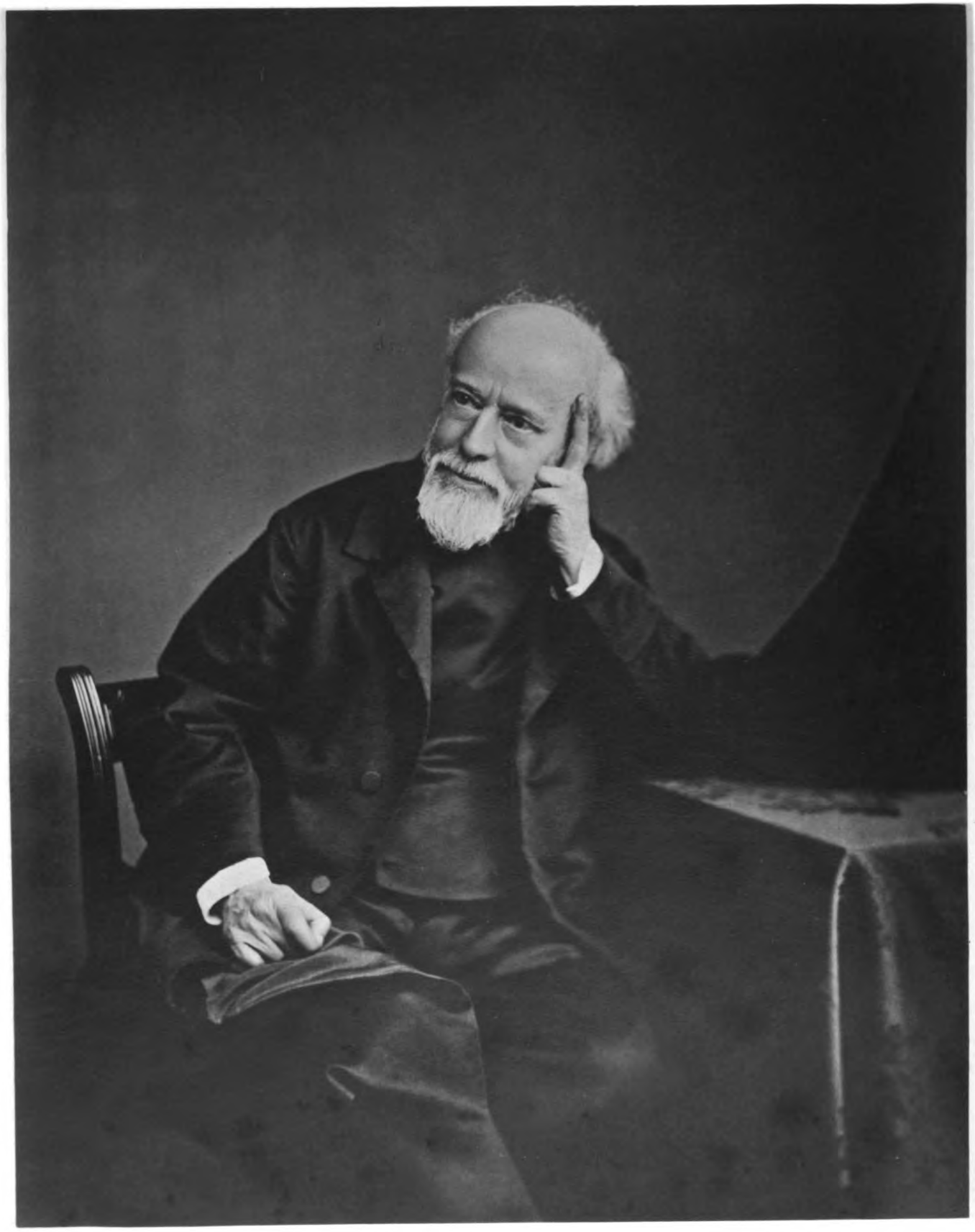
ORIGINAL ETCHING.

AUTOTYPES.

NINE WOODCUTS ILLUSTRATING 'THE DISTANT HILLS,' IN ADAMS'S 'SACRED ALLEGORIES' (1856)

From the Original Blocks in the possession of MESSRS. RIVINGTONS.

For Quotations see page 18 *and the Catalogue at the end of the Volume.*



PRINTED FROM A NEGATIVE BY Mr FRADELLE.
TAKEN FOR THE ART SECTION OF HIS
NATIONAL PHOTO-MEZZOTINT GALLERY.

SAMUEL PALMER.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY DAYS.

SAMUEL PALMER was born at Surrey Square, in the parish of St. Mary, Newington, on the 27th of January, 1805. His parents were upright, old-fashioned, and simple-minded people. They considered him too delicate for a school life, so he received at home a thorough groundwork of education, in which the study of English took a very prominent place. His attention was early directed to the classics of our own language. 'I remember,' he writes in 1872,* 'the priceless value of a faithful and intelligent domestic, my nurse; who, with little education else, was ripe in that, without which so much is often useless and mischievous—deeply read in her Bible and *Paradise Lost*. A Tonson's *Milton*, which I cherish to this day, was her present. When less than four years old, as I was standing with her, watching the shadows on the wall from branches of elm behind which the moon had risen, she transferred and fixed the fleeting image in my memory, by repeating the couplet,—

> "Vain man, the vision of a moment made,
> Dream of a dream and shadow of a shade."

I never forgot those shadows, and am often trying to paint them.'

This little passage of autobiography shows how congenial, even at that early age, was poetry. The nurse thus mentioned (one of an almost extinct race of servants who were also friends), was not neglected when the child grew up. He was present at her death-bed many years afterwards, and sincerely mourned her loss.

* *The Portfolio*, No. 35, November 1872.

His first great sorrow was the death of his mother when he was about thirteen years old—an event which saddened many succeeding years. His father was now his great friend. Being a man well read, especially in English literature, he fostered in his son those wholesome tastes which afterwards appeared so prominently. 'He carried in his waist-coat pocket,' wrote Samuel Palmer, 'little manuscript books in vellum covers, transcribing in them the essence of whatever he had lately read, so that in our many walks together, there was always some topic of interest when the route was weary or unattractive.'

Soon after his mother's death it was determined that Samuel Palmer should adopt painting as a profession; and he began almost without instruction, but with a success that was evinced by his receiving on his fourteenth birthday, the news of the sale at the British Gallery of his first exhibited picture, together with an invitation to stay with the purchaser. This was one of two oil-paintings sent by 'S. Palmer, jun.,' to the British Institution in 1819. Either 'Bridge Scene, composition,' or 'Landscape, composition.'

Unacquainted with artists, his progress was comparatively slow, until he was thrown into contact with Mr. Linnell, under whose advice he began a course of figure and other serious artistic studies.*

Shortly afterwards followed his introduction by this artist to William Blake, with whose works he was already acquainted. 'He fixed his grey eyes upon me,' we read, 'and said—"Do you work with fear and trembling?"—"Yes, indeed," was the reply. "Then," said he,

* Since the above was written, it has been publicly asserted that Samuel Palmer owed all his technical skill to Mr. Linnell. The writer refrains from comment upon this assertion, but prefers to quote (with permission) the words recently spoken by his father's oldest and most intimate friend—intimate from almost childhood upward—Mr. George Richmond, R.A.:—'I have known Mr. Linnell and your father,' he said, 'for sixty years, and my opinion is that Mr. Linnell owed as much to Mr. Palmer in his art, as Mr. Palmer did to Mr. Linnell—perhaps more. Mr. Linnell was certainly attracted to him in the first instance by the beauty of his work, and in *oil* painting gave him friendly technical instruction. The origin of the acquaintance was owing to Mr. Linnell seeing some sepia drawings by your father.'

"you'll do." No lapse of years can efface the memory of hours spent in familiar converse with that great man.'

Gilchrist says:* 'The acquaintance commenced when Blake was about midway in the task of engraving his *Job*. "At my never-to-be forgotten first interview," says Mr. Palmer, "the copper of the first plate—"Thus did Job continually"—was lying on the table where he had been working at it. How lovely it looked by the lamplight, strained through the tissue paper!" Again: 'On his [Blake's] way from Fountain Court to North End, he would often call on a young artist, also a frequent visitor of Mr. Linnell's—one day to be more nearly related—and the two would walk up together. This was Mr. Samuel Palmer, now an accomplished painter of poetic landscape, well known to visitors to the (old) Water-colour Society's Exhibitions; then a stripling and an enthusiastic disciple of Blake's.'

Judging from Samuel Palmer's writings and paintings before this time, there can be little doubt that Blake's influence fell on congenial soil and took therein deep and lasting root. A mind gifted already with an unusual appreciation of poetry and poetic art, would the more readily be impressed by such a man. To what extent this was the case will be the more clearly shown by a few extracts from a letter to Mr. Gilchrist in 1855:†—'. . . Blake, once known, can never be forgotten. His knowledge was various and extensive, and his conversation so nervous and brilliant that, if recorded at the time, it would now have thrown much light upon his character, and in no way lessened him in the estimation of those who knew him only by his works.'

'In him you saw at once the Maker, the Inventor; one of the few in any age; a fitting companion for Dante. He was energy itself, and shed around him a kindling influence; an atmosphere of life, full of the ideal. To walk with him in the country, was to perceive the soul of beauty through the forms of matter; and the high gloomy buildings between which, from his study window, a glimpse was caught of the Thames and the Surrey shore, assumed a kind of

* *Life of Blake*, 1st Edition, vol. i., page 297. † *Ibid.*, page 301.

grandeur from the man dwelling near them. Those may laugh at this, who never knew such a one as Blake, but of him it is the simple truth.'

'He was a man without a mask; his aim single, his path straight forwards, and his wants few: so he was free, noble, and happy.'

'His voice and manner were quiet, yet all awake with intellect. Above the tricks of littleness, or the least taint of affectation, with a natural dignity which few would have dared to affront, he was gentle and affectionate, loving to be with little children and to talk about them.'

'Declining, like Socrates, whom in many respects he resembled, the common objects of ambition, and pitying the scuffle to obtain them, he thought that no one could be truly great who had not humbled himself "even as a little child." This was a subject he loved to dwell upon and to illustrate. . . . . I can never forget the evening when Mr. Linnell took me to Blake's house, nor the quiet hours passed with him, in the examination of antique gems, choice pictures, and Italian prints of the sixteenth century.'

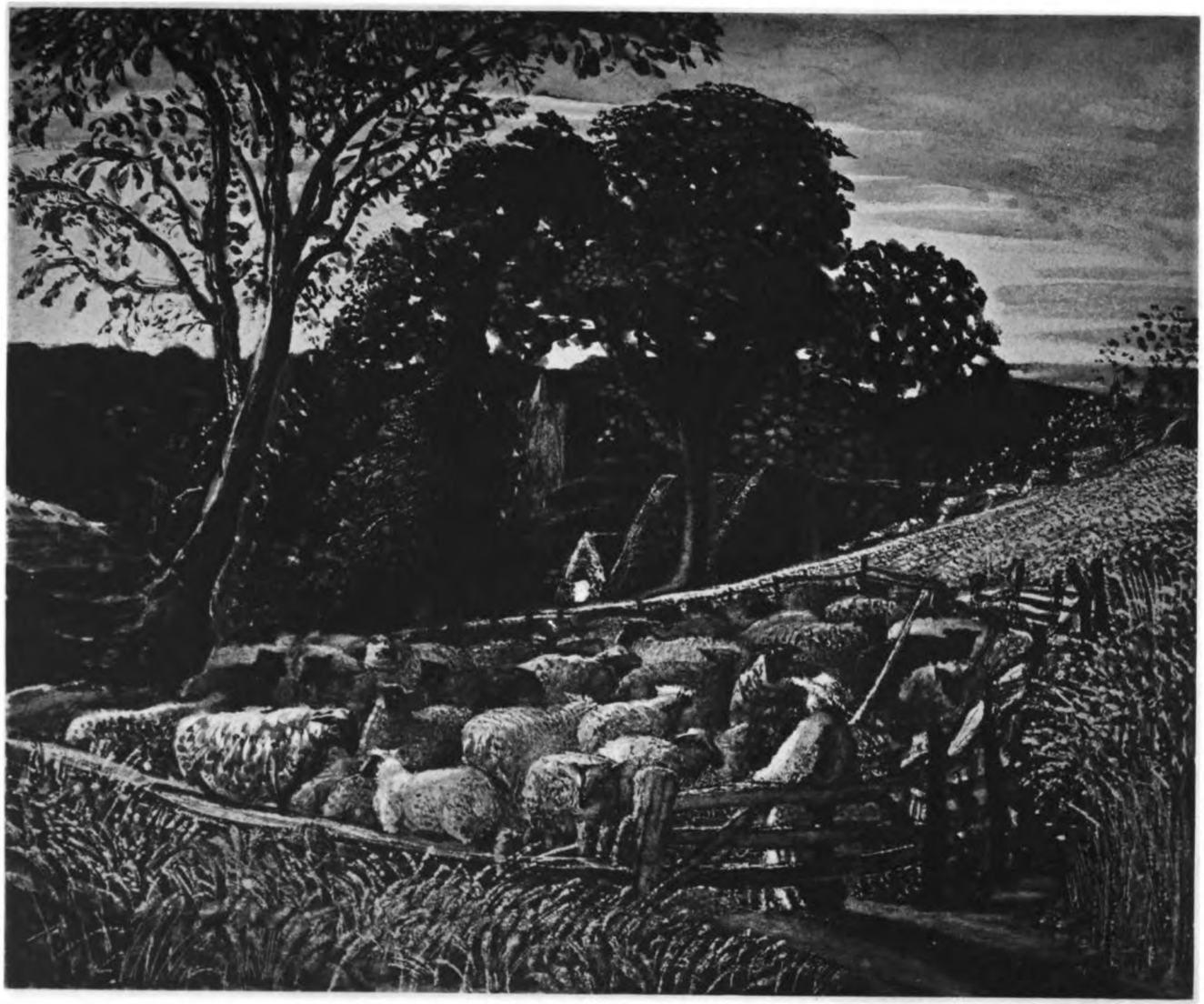
So, too, his acquaintance with Blake (more perhaps than with any other person) influenced Samuel Palmer's painting. Many of his works about this time savour of the master at whose feet he sat, both in colour and design.

Among relics treasured long afterwards, not the least were a sheet of the Thornton *Pastorals*, given by Blake himself, with his autograph on the margin; his spectacles, and a copy of Lavater's *Aphorisms on Man*, with Blake's annotations.

The same year in which Samuel Palmer sold his first exhibited picture, he contributed to the Royal Academy three works,—'Cottage Scene; Banks of the Thames, Battersea' (259); 'Landscape with Ruins' (257); and 'A Study' (414).

Soon afterwards ill health demanded country air, and he began with his father a long residence at Shoreham, near Sevenoaks, in Kent.

This is the great epoch in his life. He himself loved to dwell upon it in after years, and those who knew him best, delighted to hear him discourse of that old time.



The village of Shoreham is still a place of natural beauty, though now no longer spared by the ubiquitous railway. It lies in a valley forming an opening in the great chalk range, through which the beautiful little Darent—not unknown to song—winds its silver way. The few miles which separate the village from London, formed, before the days of rapid travelling, a barrier against the conventionality and modernizing influence of great cities. Everything connected then with Shoreham, seemed to abound in an ancient sentiment—an aroma of old English poetry and pastoral.

Here were stately parks replete with antique oaks of giant growth; huge chestnuts with outstretched limbs sweeping the ground, and many a 'gloomy dimble,' worthy of Ben Jonson's witch herself. The deeply hollowed lanes were fringed with luxuriant vegetation and gnarled roots, and at night were black with intense darkness. In sloping orchards, gray-stemmed patriarchs still fruitful, were covered in the spring-time with clotted blossom, to be afterwards bowed beneath an autumnal load of crimson apples, in rich contrast with the white fleeces of the sheep in the chequered shade beneath. The soil was tilled and the golden corn was reaped, by sturdy villagers, whose dress was picturesquely beautiful, their implements archaic. Their strenuous flails resounded in spacious, lichen-covered barns, where the thick masses of dark green moss half hid the deep overhanging thatch. They lived in oak-beamed cottages with ample chimney-corners, in which, on tempestuous winter nights, many a strange legend and weird superstition lingered still.

The sunsets seemed more glorious and varied than in degenerate after years; the deep twilights more intensely solemn. Lowering tempests which followed days of sultry and oppressive heat, were more terrific, and—

> 'The clouds
> From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
> Fierce rain, with light'ning mixt, water with fire
> In ruin reconcil'd;'—

while the flashes gave momentary glimpses of rich valleys or densely wooded hills. The 'full-orb'd moon' shone of a size far larger and

a colour richer than to-day's pale reality; pouring a light more warm and genial over the undulating landscape.

Such were the surroundings of this village. 'There,' he writes, 'sometimes by ourselves, sometimes visited by friends of congenial taste, literature, and art, and ancient music, wiled away the hours, and a small independence made me heedless, for the time, of further gain; the beautiful was loved for itself, and if it was right, after any sort, to live for our own gratification, the retrospect might be happy: but two-and-twenty centuries of yore, the master of philosophy taught men to distinguish between happiness and pleasure.'

As before mentioned, chief of his friends was his father, whose love for literature and the grand old poets equalled his own. Devout, high principled and kind hearted, he was in every sense a companion congenial to his son. Other friends, were the late Mr. John Giles (Samuel Palmer's cousin), Messrs. George Richmond, Edward Calvert, and Henry Walter,* besides the presiding genius of the little group, William Blake.

Though technical artistic studies doubtless claimed Samuel Palmer's chief attention now, and music had its share, yet literature played a no less important part in this simple country life. A good singer and violinist, it was nevertheless to books that he turned with the greatest avidity, not only for improvement but for recreation. There was a shelf of fine old editions of our best classics, particularly the poets, and from these venerable folios—Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Spenser, or Milton—the friends would read aloud far into the night, committing much to memory.

* The works of Messrs. Calvert and Walter are not so widely known as is merited by their beauty. Mr. Walter (long since deceased), excelled in animal-drawing, and his skill in portraiture was considerable. Of the works of Mr. Calvert (who still lives), especially his woodcuts, Samuel Palmer had always the very highest opinion:—'In Mr. Calvert's designs and studies,' he says, 'there is a refined sentiment and sensitive delicacy of expression rarely to be found elsewhere.' He treasured in his most select portfolio, such as 'The Christian ploughing the last furrow of Life,' and other smaller blocks, full of ancient idyllic sentiment.

Following his father's habit, Samuel Palmer carried with him clasped memorandum-books, in which he wrote all that was noteworthy —picked passages from favourite poems, poems and essays of his own, long lists of uncommon or old-fashioned words met with in his reading, rough designs in black and white,—all may be found in these old books; a wonderful reflection of the mind that filled them—a mind to which poetry and letters were a necessary food. There was also one other inseparable companion; a duodecimo edition of Milton's minor poems, strongly bound with brazen clasp and corners, with the intent of being constantly carried in the pocket. As this little volume lies now before us, the smooth and rounded brass and darkly polished leather binding, speak of the twenty years during which it accompanied its owner everywhere.

It is not surprising that the beneficent influence of such training, combined with that of beautiful and unsophisticated scenery, should be reflected in the art practice not only of this time but of after years. We find that the many works in colour and in monochrome produced at Shoreham, are all more or less distinctly stamped with the same beauty, the same archaic charm. A few perhaps may travel to the verge of eccentricity, but they never fall to the commonplace. Their quaintness is condoned by an innate sentiment. What Johnson wrote of pastoral poetry, may with equal justice be applied to this early art of Samuel Palmer:—

'It exhibits a life with which we have always been accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence; and therefore we can readily set open the heart for the admission of its images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves without resistance to be transported to Elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.'

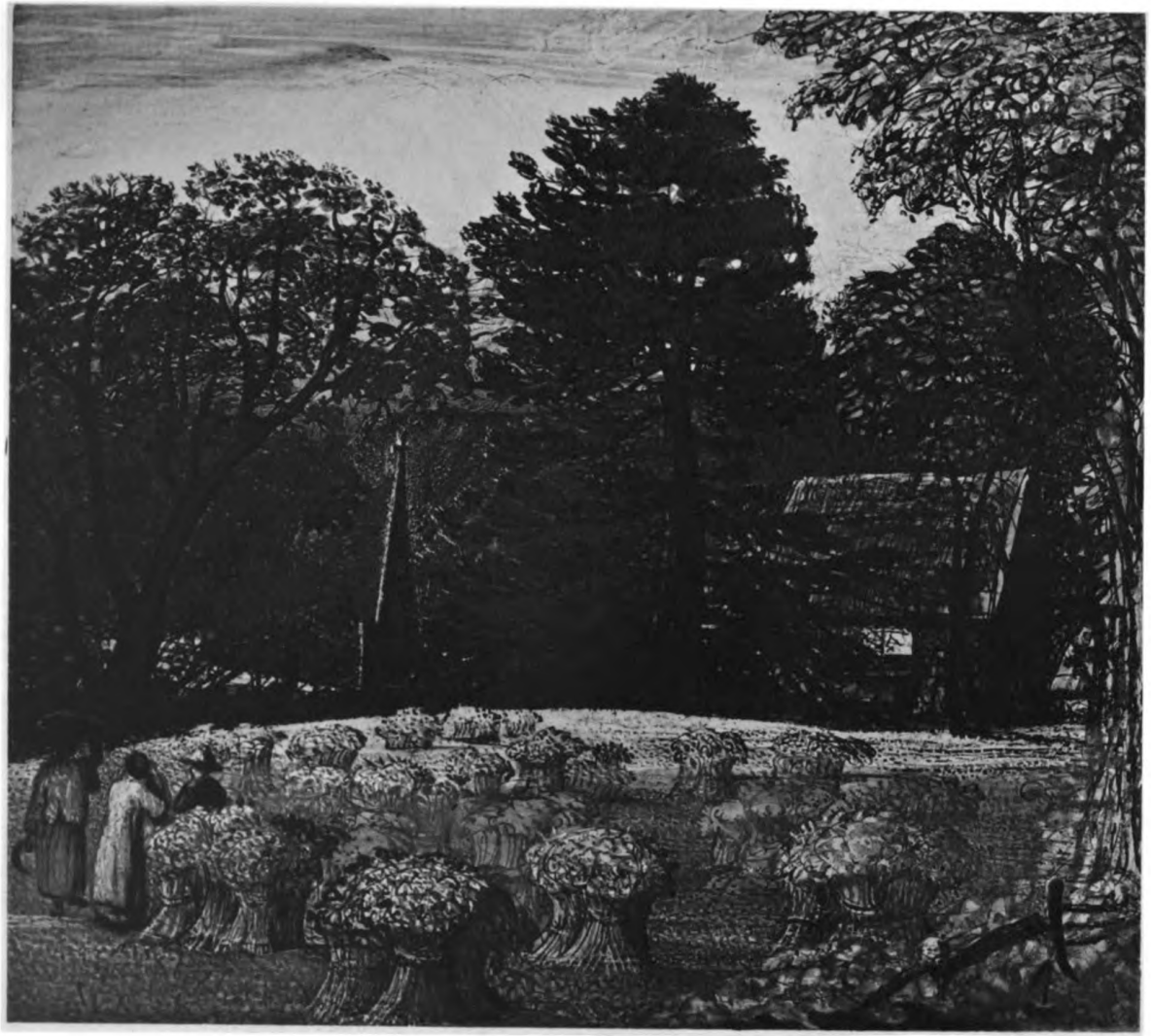
Among the works in oil, painted at this period, 'The Gleaning Field,' 'The Bright Cloud,' 'Twilight,' 'The Harvest Moon,' and

some others, are prominent. The 'Gleaning Field' and 'Twilight' especially, really reflect the sympathies of their author. They show us scenery, effects, and colouring, which we know he felt at that time most intensely, and which, if we will allow them, will grow upon us the more we gaze, till they spirit us quite away from things present, to the old bucolic world of poetry they portray so well. In smaller works—water-colours in sepia or ivory-black—a pre-Raphaelite minuteness of detail and finish, is softened with the same poetic sentiment. These are more numerous than the oil-pictures, which were executed on thick oaken or mahogany panels, and were usually begun in tempera, but always on a bright white ground.

Those years of quiet life at Shoreham, are attractive from their great and almost pastoral simplicity. We have seen how the time glided serenely on, occupied often by designing, more often by literature, and sometimes by ancient and classical music. In summer, long walks were planned among the friends—frequently for the night—through the wild Kentish lanes and valleys, or to the much-loved Dulwich Gallery. Special spots were chosen, from which a solemn twilight, or fair sunrise, could be seen to the best advantage; and when 'the thunder, that deep and dreadful organ-pipe,' began to mutter far away among the darkening hills, the enthusiasts would hasten out to revel in the wonderful effects that accompany a tempest. In the winter we find them still bathing in the half-frozen Darent, and shortening the long evenings with animated conversation, or with the never failing poets. There was no distracting bustle or agitation—nothing to be done 'against time.' If a journey to London became necessary, it was accomplished sometimes on foot, sometimes in a country cart or waggon.

Once indeed Samuel Palmer was constrained to take an active part in local politics, and we find him diligently canvassing, or, in the character of a red-hot Tory, writing a fiery squib for the benefit of the electors of West Kent.

Many other pictures besides those previously mentioned, were



completed or begun at Shoreham, and nearly all of pastoral or of Scriptural subjects. Among them were those exhibited in the Royal Academy in 1820–4; besides others at the British Institution.*

It is uncertain at what date he finally left the village, (where he afterwards possessed a small property); but in 1835, we find him in a house of his own in Marylebone,† from whence he travelled in the same year on a sketching expedition to North Wales.

Some of the delightful glimpses he gives us of the finer Welsh scenery (gathered during this, and two or three other visits, one an 'effect tour' in October), are elaborate and true to nature; especially a series of water-fall studies. His soul was in this work; he rejoiced in the rugged beauty of wild, impetuous currents, no less than in the still translucent depths; and held that a landscape, however lovely, was never perfect without at least some glint of water.

* His last contribution to the Academy as a painter was in 1842.

† 4 Grove Street, Lisson Grove.

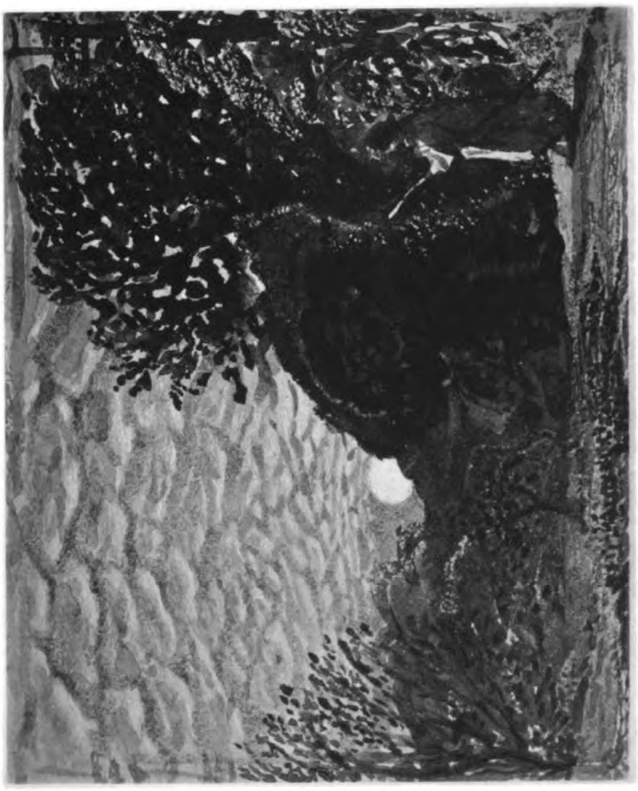
CHAPTER II.

ITALY AND KENSINGTON.

IN 1837 Samuel Palmer married Mr. Linnell's eldest daughter, whom he had known from her childhood. They travelled by carriage through France to Italy, having as companions Mr. and Mrs. George Richmond, also recently married.

An old hope of Samuel Palmer's—to visit the native land of his beloved Virgil—was now to be realized. Not only was he to revel in the many classical associations of Italy, but an early passion for fine ecclesiastical and other architecture, was to be gratified alike by the churches and cathedrals on the route, and by the indestructible remains of Pagan Rome. Indeed, it must have cost him no small self-denial, to refrain from wandering idly and dreamingly among the wonders that everywhere surrounded him. But, rejoicing in the marvellous hues of the sunlit mountains, cities, and vineyards, he set resolutely to work; gradually accumulating a large store of elaborate studies, painted invariably in water-colours and direct from nature. Not content with sharing this labour, Mrs. Palmer, whose skill with her pencil was very considerable, executed a series of admirable copies (more valuable in the days before photography), from the Sistine Chapel Michael Angelos, the Stanze of Raphael, and many other works.

After a little more than two years spent thus in Italy, they returned with reluctance from that genial climate to the dreariness of a London winter. He often spoke of the dismal contrast between the November fog which greeted them in the Thames, and the bright blue skies, left behind for ever; and he attributed to the



unhappy change of climate, the origin of an asthmatic affection which troubled him in after years.

They settled where he had lived before, in Marylebone, and at first he painted a good deal in oil, but in a more conventional manner than in the Shoreham days. His present pictures* were truthful, elaborate, and very painstaking, but lacked much of the bold conception and rich colouring, both of his early oil and his later water-colour works.

He seems gradually to have drifted more and more completely into the practice of this latter branch of art, and though he still occasionally began a study or a picture on canvas or panel, his election as Associate of the Society of Painters in Water Colours, in February, 1843, determined his future career.

His first child, a boy, was born in 1842; but the death, five years afterwards, of a bright-haired little girl—her father's pet—threw such a gloom over the house, that he determined to leave Marylebone, and removed in 1848 to No. 1A Victoria Road, Kensington; then within an easy distance of a few fields and an apology for a lane or two. Better still, it was close to Kensington Gardens, where fine old trees transmitted through their foliage, the rays of a sun setting in a splendour oftentimes unclouded even by the murky air of London. He must have longed to be once more among the Kentish giants of Lullingstone and Knole; their gnarled and moss-grown boles resting in glades still quiet and beautiful, as when, in almost pre-historic times, the first sprinkling of sere leaves, floated down the autumn breeze. But full of other associations than those of the 'West End,' he gathered from Kensington Gardens more than one effect, which he rendered afterwards with a landscape very different.

In 1848 another blow fell heavily upon him—he lost that greatest of all friends, his father.

* Two examples, 'The Bay of Naples, from Monte Nuovo' (No. 3), and 'Children returning from Gleaning' (No. 8*a*), will have been seen in the Exhibition, and in many respects are very pleasing; particularly where, in No. 3, the rich sunlight brightly illuminates the distant city and the mountains beyond. The trees, too, are graceful and carefully drawn.

Having moved once more (to No. 6, Douro Place, near his former house), Samuel Palmer toiled on indefatigably at labour which was often very uncongenial. Many a man of genius, fain to stifle the upward and more noble aspirations of a poetical taste or romantic imagination, will remember how he has groaned in spirit, when the all-pervading, all-powerful cares of this world, and the stern demands of housekeeping, have obliged him to turn from delightful themes, to others which would the more certainly be profitable. Samuel Palmer escaped in some measure from this expedient but galling slavery. His sort of art could not be brought to pander altogether to the taste which (to their shame), is known as that of 'the public;' for he was almost incapable of understanding the trite vulgarity of the popular commonplace. If we glance through the list of the drawings exhibited after he became an Associate of the Old Society, we find many titles still savouring of idyllic poetry. But what has been said before of the oil-pictures painted at the time of the return from Italy, applies in some degree to the water-colours of the same period. The chiar-oscuro of many is less bold and telling, the composition perhaps a trifle more conventional than in later works, the colouring not so lustrous. This may have been partly due to the contrast of the comparatively sombre tones of English scenery, as seen after the prismatic splendour of the Italian hues. Years afterwards, Samuel Palmer asked a cousin resident in Rome, what struck him most, in the colour of the English landscape, compared with that of Italy;—'I see no colour,' he replied.

But, nevertheless, these transition works, as they may be aptly termed—a link between the Shoreham days, when poetry and imagination revelled paramount to everything, and those when, though still paramount, they were tempered with a more highly cultured taste, and great knowledge gained by old experience,—these connecting links, have a charm and many beauties of their own. In such as the 'Farm-yard, Prince's Risborough' (1846) [No. 81], the 'Aged Oak' (1846) [No. 12], 'Gleaners Crossing a Shallow Stream' (1849) [No. 31], and others, the colouring, though comparatively faint, is delicate and pleasing, the

drawing and composition careful. In some (which, from their weaker tints, we are disposed to class with those just mentioned), the reins are given more completely to the imagination; as in the sky and middle distance of the 'Christian descending into the Valley of Humiliation' (1848) [No. 32], and 'The Brothers, guided by the attendant Spirit, discovering the Palace and Bower of Comus' (1856) [No. 56], and particularly in the 'The Dell of Comus' (1855).* Occasionally too, among these earlier works, there occur a few in which more glowing colour is combined with a conception poetically bold. The rich tints and the solemnity of the sky, (painted, we believe, from a sketch made direct from nature), in 'The Guardian of the Shores' (1844) [No. 22], need no comment.

A few years later, and Samuel Palmer's work became still more characteristic,—'Robinson Crusoe,' for example, and 'St. Paul landing in Italy' (both exhibited in 1850), and 'The Brothers in Comus lingering under the Vine' (1856) [Nos. 20, 26, and 82], three drawings of exceptional beauty and skill of treatment. The dazzling effulgence of the sun's rays, piercing the eye in long golden pencils through the lacey foliage, and the bright aërial hues above, will be appreciated by all.

For some years of his London life, Samuel Palmer taught drawing in school classes and to private pupils, either in their own houses or at home. No doubt to the astonishment of the neighbours, he would suffer the 'weeds' and grasses of the small suburban garden to reach their unshorn maturity, and would then use them as a lesson from the windows. But such a distracting and active occupation as teaching, could not have been greatly to the taste of one who loved best to live in quiet seclusion with his pencil and his books; to take a holiday sometimes in the National Gallery or the Print Room of the British

* This drawing is, in our opinion, one of the most remarkable and most poetic ever produced by Samuel Palmer. The beautiful passage which it illustrates will be found in the Catalogue. Although the delicacy of colouring places it among the works of the 'transition' stage, the wild grandeur, as well as the intense poetry of the composition, yield place not even to the richest gems of the Milton Series.

Museum; or, after his day's work, to spend a few quiet hours with an intimate friend. Earlier in his life, Samuel Palmer had belonged as a violinist, to a small musical society, of which William Hone (whose masterly self-defence against the brow-beating of Lord Ellenborough is well known), was also a member. But a friend's timely admonition, that too great a love for music would be prejudicial to artistic progress, was enough to cause an immediate withdrawal from these amateur musicians. Although in an essay on 'Household Government,' in one of his earliest memorandum-books, Samuel Palmer calls those of the later evening 'Sacred Hours'—sacred to literature or music, and to be spent as much as possible at home; yet, the attraction of congenial intercourse would draw him now and then to gatherings where his conversational and musical ability made him a welcome guest.

He would speak sometimes of one well remembered occasion when, a guest at Mr. Ruskin's table, he sat next to the immortal Turner himself, and conversed with him for more than an hour. This must indeed have been a notable event to one whose admiration for Turner's works was so enthusiastic.

But all social pleasures, and even his profession, were secondary to the prevailing motive of his present life—the education of his elder son. No father could have been more devotedly attached, or more assiduous and unremitting in his care to shape the budding intellect to a pure and noble form. The soil was worthy of the culture; the son inherited his father's taste and musical ability, adding thereto good store of academic knowledge. We can imagine how grateful was each success achieved, each prize brought home from school. We can see them both, walking together (as Samuel Palmer, nearly half a century before, had walked with his own father), and comparing the nuggets that each had lately delved from the golden mine of literature. They would often go on pilgrimage to that great shrine at Westminster, so full of relics inestimably precious to a cultivated Englishman. Conceive the thrill with which a highly imaginative man, who had, besides an intense admiration for fine architecture, 'a passionate love' (as he

himself expresses it), 'for the traditions and monuments of the Church,' would wander along the dim cloisters of the Abbey! or, as a tasteful and most sensitive musician, would drink in the solemn strains of the organ—an instrument in which, above all others he delighted—the celestial voices, 'like silver bells,' of the young choristers. Imagine with what thoughts he would take his child, awe-struck, into the 'Poets' Corner;' to stand not far removed from the sacred dust of Chaucer, Spenser, and 'Rare Ben Jonson,' and of the 'Great Lexicographer' himself; the men to whose immortal works he owed some of the happiest hours of his life. Then onwards, perhaps, to the sculptured tombs of England's great Warrior Kings. We can see him gazing up at the dusky roof, covering centuries of old association, or at some opalescent window, and maybe repeating his favourite lines:—

'But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloysters pale,
And love the high embowed roof
With antic pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into extasies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.'

At other times they would visit 'Wren's great Masterpiece,' and it is probable that, next to the Abbey, none of our great architectural monuments so delighted Samuel Palmer as St. Paul's. An enthusiastic admirer of Wren, he would often commiserate the agonizing difficulties with which the great architect was forced to combat; the dogged obstinacy and brutal stupidity of those who placed such impediments in his way; no less than some of the proposed modern schemes for decoration, which he regarded as the most gross Vandalism.

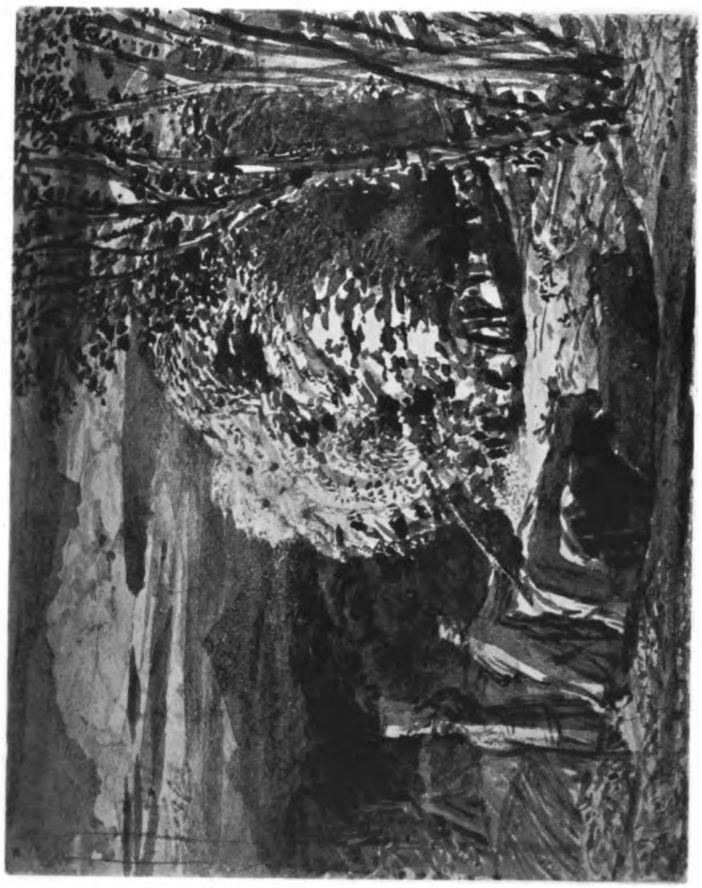
One other building was held particularly sacred—St. Giles's, Cripplegate, the resting-place of Milton. But it would be tedious to enume-

rate. All will know how many a grimy London thoroughfare teems with great associations, and some will realize how far a cultivated and imaginative mind may withdraw from the din and traffic of to-day, casting back to the same scenes in times of old, illumined then by worthies dead but not forgotten.

In 1853 a third and last child was born to Samuel Palmer, and the same year witnessed his election as a member of the 'Etching Club.'

'The Willow,' his probationary plate, has been seen in the Exhibition; but one would hardly suppose it to be the first essay in an art so difficult. Though wanting in some of the higher qualities shown in subsequent works, it is careful and pleasing. Helped and encouraged by his friend Mr. Cope, R.A. (his master in etching, as Samuel Palmer always called him), and by the kindness of Mr. Barlow, R.A., he was not long in placing himself by common consent, in the first rank of English etchers.

In these days, when the word 'etching' has been applied so often to any entanglement of bitten lines, scratched on the copper with the crass conceit of utter ignorance, and made in the end, barely fit to compete with like ephemera, for transient fame in some shop-window, by the printer's unacknowledged skill—when the word has been thus prostituted, does it seem fair to apply it to the ripe result of a deep knowledge of the materials employed, combined with successful calculation, inexhaustible patience, and such marvellous manipulative skill as Samuel Palmer lavished on designs so worthy of their reproduction? Instead of carelessly rushing to the mordant with any crude, ill-balanced sketch that might suggest itself, he held that a design worthy to be multiplied, should be first winnowed with the most punctilious care, from the quintessence rather of the mind than the portfolio; then pondered with thoughtful deliberation, until, in ripe and perfect maturity, each line of composition and every shade of chiar-oscuro, were faultless as learning bought of old experience, could make them. And now the labour was but just begun. As in some infallible and noted clock, each cog upon the smallest wheel, performs its necessary and appointed



part in producing the wonderful result; so, each touch of Samuel Palmer's upon the copper was a distinct thought: not one was put without reflection; not one, however small, but had its bearing on the whole. The mordant, therefore, instead of perpetuating a tangled maze of tentative and unpremeditated scratches, added step to step in a progress well ordered and assured. That after-process too, upon which so much depends, that it was said and wisely, 'One day's "stopping out" is worth five with the needle,' cost him many an hour's laborious and thoughtful task. It was with him, he said, 'the better part of etching, placing within reach all those varieties of tone which copper will yield.' Every plate shows his great success in this particular. He frequently quoted an apophthegm of a distinguished living etcher,—'Lose your line and you lose your light,' and so preferred, though at the cost of increased labour, to work in such a way that the minute white sparkles between the lines, which help to give so much of the characteristic brilliancy of the true etching, should not be sacrificed to the *retroussage* of the printer; which, though it is used to gain, so often quite extinguishes all real brilliancy, destroys the beautiful half-tints, and upsets the proper balance of the light and shade; though, when skilfully and very sparingly applied in the right place, it is often beneficial.

To those who have been privileged to see Samuel Palmer at work upon his etchings, who know how great a monument they are, of skilful patience and matured experience, it is a small wonder that he should have contributed but thirteen plates to this his most favourite of all branches of art; still less that, as an etcher, they have given him in all probability an imperishable name.

Eight only were completed at Kensington: 'The Willow,' 'The Vine,' 'The Skylark,' 'The Herdsman's Cottage,' 'The Sleeping Shepherd,' 'Christmas' (from Bampfylde's sonnet),* 'The Rising

* This etching, one of Samuel Palmer's most successful plates, faces the title-page of this volume. It was one of a set of four, nearly alike in size and executed on steel. It is, we think, not only executively excellent, but, like so many of his smaller coloured works,

Moon,' and 'The Herdsman.' But both 'The Morning of Life' and that great favourite, 'The Early Ploughman,' were begun there.

Of 'The Rising Moon,' a curious fact may be mentioned; that the design was first suggested by bars of moonlight, seen behind some houses at Margate—a strange antithesis to 'An English Pastoral,' another title of this plate. 'Why,' Samuel Palmer wrote, 'did the moonlight etching please everybody? Partly by structure and effect, partly because the matter was not above comprehension, while it was a kind which I most strongly feel.'

As a wood-draughtsman his work was very limited, and was done during his residence in Kensington. The earliest drawings, four in number, were illustrations for an edition of Charles Dickens's *Pictures from Italy*, published in 1846, and led to some correspondence with the great novelist. In 1856 nine drawings* were executed for the story of 'The Distant Hills,' in an edition of *Sacred Allegories* by W. Adams, and three for a book of poetry for children; but some of these drawings were so delicate, as to render them difficult of interpretation by the

a perfect idyl in itself. For the benefit of those who may be unfamiliar with Bampfylde (who was a contemporary of Sir Joshua Reynolds), we quote the passage from which the subject of the etching is taken:—

'With footstep slow, in furry pall yclad,
His brows enwreathed with holly never sere,
Old Christmas comes to close the wanèd year,
And aye the shepherd's heart to make right glad;
Who, when his teeming flocks are homeward had,
To blazing hearth repairs, and nut-brown beer;
And views well pleased the ruddy prattlers dear
Hug the grey mongrel; meanwhile maid and lad
Squabble for roasted crabs. Thee, sire, we hail,
Whether thine aged limbs thou dost enshroud
In vest of snowy white and hoary veil,
Or wrapp'st thy visage in a sable cloud;
Thee we proclaim with mirth and cheer, nor fail
To greet thee well, with many a carol loud.'

* Through the kindness and courtesy of Messrs. Rivington, the publishers of *Sacred Allegories*, we are able to give in this volume impressions from the original blocks. They must not be criticised too severely, as they have sustained the wear and tear of several editions.

engraver, and they lost by reproduction much in the same way, though not to that extent, as did those of Blake (in Thornton's *Pastorals*), which were delivered over to the tender mercies of some prosaic human automaton, and form an edifying contrast to the ones which Blake engraved himself. These, said Samuel Palmer, evinced the true genius of wood-engraving—that which should distinguish it from other reproductive arts. 'They are,' he said, 'perhaps the most intense gems of bucolic sentiment in the whole range of art. They seem to me utterly unique.'

He deprecated the modern efforts, marvellously skilful though they be, to do more or otherwise by wood-cutting, than that for which its peculiar character is suited. It is much to be regretted that he found no time to cut his own designs, like Blake or his friend Mr. Calvert. In early days, indeed, he did begin a few rough blocks, but never completed them.

In June, 1854, Samuel Palmer was elected a full member of the Society of Painters in Water Colours,—having contributed, during the eleven years of his associateship, seventy works to the Exhibitions of the Society, then held only in the summer.

In 1857 he visited Cornwall on a sketching expedition, accompanied by his elder son; Devonshire (his favourite county) in 1858, and again in 1860, for a like purpose, but alone. The great beauty of Wales had tempted him thither three or four times. His portfolios also contain a series of studies made at Margate; and there are a few recording an early visit to Red Hill in 1849, as well as one to Guildford five years previously.

He knew the importance of this direct reference to Nature to a landscape-painter; and though he hated that prescribed and unimaginative art which is her slave, 'Nature,' he said, 'contains the things that make design, if you will but look for them.' So from time to time, he forsook his easel, and travelled far away from London smoke, to cull the unbesmirched and picked beauties of some favourite country side. His painting apparatus was complete, but singularly simple; his dress

and other bodily requirements simpler still; so he could walk from village to hamlet, easily carrying all he wanted, and utterly indifferent to luxury. With a good constitution, it mattered little to him how humble were his quarters, or how remote from so-called 'civilization.' 'In exploring wild country,' he writes, 'I have been for a fortnight together, uncertain each day whether I should get a bed under cover at night; and about midsummer I have repeatedly been walking all night, to watch the mystic phenomena of the silent hours.' He enjoyed to the full this rough but not uncomfortable mode of travelling, and was better pleased to take his place, after a hard day's work, in some old chimney-corner—joining, on equal terms, the village gossip—than to mope in the dull grandeur of a private room.

He held, and not unwisely, that intelligence is not quite denied to those who lead a quiet country life, to be lavished on those favoured ones who live a grimy one in the turmoil of cities. 'Virgil,' he wrote, 'was simple enough to suppose that a country life had a moral influence on our common nature; nor was he aware that the cultivation of the earth was a stupefying employment, and the peasant, skilled in the varieties of rural labour, a log: no! "*Non omnia possumus omnes*,"—that discovery was reserved for us. How could Virgil anticipate our progress, with whom the bucolic mind has become the synonym of fatuity? But those who are "behind the age," and not very anxious to overtake it, will discern in their ancient friends—in the Ploughman who lives in Chaucer's verse, and his kindred, something better than a barbaric foil to the intelligence of the modern artisan; specially that hapless one, dwarfed within some one of the minute subdivisions of labour; ever putting heads upon pins, or slave-in-waiting to the machine which can do it more quickly.'

In 1855 Samuel Palmer became acquainted with Blake's biographer, Mr. Gilchrist, and spent with him some very memorable evenings, of which he often spoke, revelling in the treasures from Blake's pencil which Mr. Gilchrist had collected. The letter to that gentleman, from which I have previously quoted, will be known to many.

The extreme care with which Samuel Palmer evolved and ripened his designs, continued to increase proportionately with his knowledge and experience. From much that he wrote about this time, on like subjects, we may extract the following :—

'CONDUCT OF A PICTURE.—After reading in *Blackwood's Magazine* of December, 1857, a quotation from Fergusson on Hindoo Architecture—("They built like Giants and finished like Jewellers"), and after thinking of Gothic Cathedrals, and the vast amount in both, of absolute work and labour—it seems that Landscape Painting is worth such labour, and that the moment of beginning is when the general effect has been obtained. Then should come the finish and enamel of the figures, and the tracery of the near boughs and grass flowers: the best place to begin, will be, I think, the high lights of foliage, getting the principal ones right by elaboration and *design*. This will prevent their being carelessly covered down, and at once give mystery to the darks :— First general effect secured. Second, the tracery work, beginning with the lights. Conduct a picture so that from the first it may be sightly—for its state. At the moment when I would shudder to show it, let me pause and ask?— "Why?"'

Again, in 1859.—'What must I do to attain excellence? Increase what I love. What do I heartily love? Much! Figures of antique grace and rich picturesqueness. Intense depth of shadow and colour. Mystery and infinite going-in-i-tiveness. The focus a well-head of dazzling light. The utmost deep and heaped-up Devonshire richness.'

'EFFECTS.—Midsummer glowing twilight and rising moon, with trees of intensest depth. Moonlight with fire-light. Sunsets. Sunsets through trees. Dawn and silver sunrise. Cloudy, fresh, dropping spring morning, with one focus of cream-white cloud.'

We find also in the volume from which these extracts are taken, lists of 'Best Subjects,' or 'Spines of Subjects,' illustrated with small pen-and-ink diagrams or sketches, some of them the origin of subsequent works.

CHAPTER III.

RED HILL.

WE are now approaching the saddest events in Samuel Palmer's life, from the effects of which indeed, it is to be doubted if his spirits ever completely recovered.

It has been previously mentioned how completely he was absorbed by a great affection for his elder son—by watching an intellectual development which was rapid and prosperous. We have told how the school successes, no less than a love for literature and a great proficiency in music, rejoiced his father. The time had now almost come, when it was hoped that school life would be exchanged for a successful university career; but early in 1861 the young man became too ill to remain longer at school, and country air having been prescribed, his father, with a heavy heart, visited in April, that lovely part of Surrey near Abinger, in search of lodgings. He decided on a beautifully situated farm-house, just under the western side of Leith Hill. Hither the invalid was brought, in the hope that the fresh country air, the rest, and the complete change from the bustle of London to the quiet bucolic life, would restore the waning vital energy. But it was too late: the brain had given way under the strain of overwork, and Samuel Palmer was doomed to see all his most intense and earnest hopes slowly crumbling to nothing. Growing day by day more weak and ill, his son lingered painfully until the 11th of July, when the father was called upon to part (to use his own words) from 'the hope and ornament' of his life—the object of his one earthly ambition, the constant companion of many happy years. They laid him in the

village churchyard of Abinger, which he had visited not long before, while on a walking tour with a school-fellow.

Those who know how extremely affectionate and sensitive Samuel Palmer's nature was, will realize how intense his grief must have been; how great the effort to go about his work with a spirit completely broken down. He owed much at this period to the wonderful kindness of certain friends—kindness which lived as fresh in his memory to the last, as the calamity which called it forth. In 1877 he wrote :—'Time does much to soften even these heaviest of life's trials; but sometimes the very day and hour of my sad loss seems to rush back again suddenly, though sixteen years have passed; and then as sudden a cry of distress cannot be restrained. Our offset to this "horror of great darkness," is the blessed hope of reunion; a motive one would think for much carefulness of life and conversation, among dear friends who desire to meet at last, where "there shall be no more sorrow or crying."'

The parents returned to Kensington only to prepare for removal. As in the case of their little daughter's death, the scenes so much associated with their loss were insupportable, and this time they determined to leave London altogether. After passing a year in the town of Reigate—a year in which Samuel Palmer had to battle not only with his sorrow, but with frequent and severe attacks of illness—they finally settled at Furze Hill House, Mead Vale.

Those passing through the ghastly modern town of Red Hill (partly a reclaimed swamp) by railway, can have no conception of the beauty of some of the scenery not far distant; though if they branch off upon the line leading westward to Reading, under the great chalk range, by Reigate, Box Hill, and Dorking, they will be better able to judge of the character of this part of Surrey.

Parallel to the range of chalk hills, runs another one of sand, and about half the height; that of the latter averaging in this neighbourhood some 400 feet. Standing upon the brow of this range, the last of a scattered group of houses which are concealed by the surrounding trees

—with nothing save a copse of beech and larch to interfere with a magnificent view over two counties, as far southward (on a clear day) as the South Downs; bounded on the east by the hills of Kent, and on the west by the great spur ending in the crest of Leith Hill, —overlooking this beautiful and thoroughly English prospect, stood the small house chosen by Samuel Palmer as his future residence; and here were executed many of his most important and characteristic works.

A rough sketch of his mode of life in the earlier years of his residence at Red Hill, may, perhaps, be of interest.

His love of simplicity and hatred of 'cursed gentility,' caused him to dress, though with neatness, yet with regard to comfort rather than to fashion; and an equally cordial hatred of affectation, forbade anything at all approaching the 'artistic.' He always wore a rather long frock-coat (well furnished with ample pockets for sketch-books), and a double-breasted waistcoat buttoning very high, with an old-fashioned white cravat. A pair of silver spectacles (also old-fashioned) for near sight, were used for distant objects, but seldom in reading, writing, or painting. He did not wear, nor was he ever known to possess, one single article of jewelry, nor carried even a watch; for which, indeed, in this quiet period of his life, he would have had but little use. But his pockets were well furnished with black and white chalk, lead-pencils, 'that prince of implements, charcoal,' knives that were really sharp, and books for memoranda and sketching.

Though fond of reading and designing, sometimes rather far into the night, he was seldom late in rising, and at this time he competed with the writer, who should be the 'lark,' or first to appear in the morning. After breakfast and prayers he would spend perhaps half an hour in the garden, see that lessons were in progress, and then would retire into his study, to work intensely until an early dinner: that over, he would usually take a short nap, reading till he fell asleep; and awaked, would go to his work again till tea-time. Then the garden once more, or a short walk, and finally the 'Sacred Hours,' to be devoted (when there were no visitors), to literature, letter-writing, or designing.

He was one of those fathers who court the society of their children, at all times when not engaged in work demanding great quiet and concentration; and he made the time spent in his society so delightful, that it lives in our memory, fresh as the events of yesterday.

During the country walks through lanes and ripening cornfields, he would revel in the exceeding loveliness of the wild flowers and grasses. Many of these were transplanted to a corner of his garden, which was devoted to the culture of 'weeds,' and allowed to attain an unkempt luxuriance, sacred from interference by the votaries of serpentine gravel paths, or geometric flower-beds all ablaze with scarlet geraniums.

Few would imagine the unceasing and extraordinary delight derived by Samuel Palmer from this small strip of ungenteel nature; how sedulously the wild transplanted beauties were tended, watered, and protected from the noonday sun, until, in many instances, they took kindly to the strange soil. Among the special favourites were the large white convolvulus, the harebell and scarlet poppy, the purple heath and the woodbine, the various grasses and the periwinkle. Some of these soon attained their native exuberance, and were then often sketched; but a clearance was made, even among them, for a small plant of the classic laurel, fraught with such ancient and countless associations. The profuse dark green periwinkle, Samuel Palmer said, seemed always to suggest itself as an inviting couch, upon which some snow-white Virgilian heifer might have luxuriated in the hot hours. The wild honeysuckle was trained to climb the trees; and what were once but little seedlings, hung afterwards in festoons of blossom, vying with the humbler wallflower, which should waft the most delicious perfume. He thought, with Bacon, that 'the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air (where it comes and goes like the warbling of music) than in the hand.'

There were other attractions in the garden besides these. Little winding paths were cut in the undergrowth of the shrubs and trees, leading to some spot whence a vista of distant country was made visible by the judicious use of the pruning-knife; and a small hill was

built (not without labour) to give a downward glimpse into the steeply sloping copse.

In fact, this little, insignificant plot of garden ground, seemed to enlarge—to become an expansive wilderness of delights, the demesne of Imagination.

Towards evening in the summer, Samuel Palmer would nearly always go out into the neighbouring fields, adding to the enjoyment of the sunsets and succeeding twilights, by pointing out special beauties in the hues, or peculiarities of the phenomena. There was one chosen spot from which to see to the best advantage a rich and solemn twilight sky, behind the dark spine of the great range of hills. As in the old days, so now, the dreadful tempest, succeeding the heat of some summer's day, was never missed; and its slow advance over the wide and darkening landscape beneath, lit up now and again by sudden flashes, was enjoyed until the thunder rattled almost overhead.

In the winter evenings there were resources within doors. Perhaps beginning with a hit or two of Samuel Palmer's favourite, indeed his only game, backgammon, he would read aloud, sometimes from Scott and Dickens, but oftener from Shakespeare, with fragments of Chaucer or some other favourite poet. This was the greatest treat of all; for Samuel Palmer was, by common consent of those who knew him, the best reader they had ever heard, particularly of poetry. When friends came in to spend the evening, they would beseech, before they went, for some particular passage from the poets. But, with this exception, the evenings were generally spent in conversation, often of great interest and brilliancy; particularly when in later years, either of two most intimate and favourite friends were present—brothers whom he had known from their first visits to Furze Hill as boys; and afterwards the one a clergyman, the other a First-class-man of his University, then a Fellow. The three ranged wide and deep into such themes as theology, art, poetry, philosophy, and literature, particularly the two latter; and then was the time to see Samuel Palmer at his best and happiest. The writer (though, unfortunately,

not able to join in these conversations) well remembers how keenly his father enjoyed the particular evenings set apart for the regular visits of these University men; and how, in their turn, they rejoiced to plunge into the congenial topics, while the hours seemed as minutes.

Literature was now, even more than it had been in times gone by—next to religion—the delight, the comfort, the indispensable to Samuel Palmer.

His constancy and devotion to it may be the more clearly shown by the three following extracts from his letters—the first, from Rome in 1839, to his friend Dr. Williams:—'. . . . Much as I love my calling I am a true book-worm, and hope on my return to find, about once a-month, a whole day for a Great Read! "Some place the bliss in action;" *I*, in a dull, pattering, gusty December day, which forbids our wishes to rove beyond the tops of the chimney-pots—a good fire, a sofa strewed with books, a reading friend, and, above all, a locked door, forbidding impertinent intrusion. There should be a light dinner about one o'clock; then a little prosy chat—not too argumentative—just to help digestion; then books again, till blessed green-tea-time winds us up for Macbeth, or Hamlet, and ecstasy!'

'If I love any secular thing,' he writes in 1871, 'better than art, it is literature. Would that even now I might serve a late apprenticeship to it! Surely the direction of a line, or the gradation of a colour, are not more interesting than the structure of a paragraph. . . . To be engaged for years in writing books, is my ideal of secular bliss: for a yet higher kind I fear we must turn away from the intellectual hemisphere altogether.'

Once more, in 1880:—"There is nothing like poetry,' said Charles James Fox, who might often be found engrossed by Virgil's *Eclogues* in the intervals of a very different career. I think we may extend his remark and say, "There is nothing like books." Of all things sold, incomparably the cheapest; of all pleasures, the least palling: they take up little room, keep quiet when they are not wanted, and, when taken up, bring

us face to face with the choicest men who have ever lived, at their choicest moments.'

'As my walking companion in the country, I was so un-English as, on the whole, to prefer my pocket Milton, which I carried for twenty years, to the not unbeloved bull-terrier "Trimmer," who accompanied me for five: for Milton never fidgeted, frightened horses, ran after sheep, or got run over by a goods-van.'

Samuel Palmer's study at Furze Hill was a small, comfortable room, to which only a chosen and privileged few were admitted. It had a large bow-window of western aspect, and looking towards Leith Hill, that place of sad association. Along the opposite end, ran curtained shelves, laden with a heterogeneous but precious burden of plaster casts and gems from the antique, waxen models, colours, and the all-pervading books; while in one corner lay the old violin, silent now, upon which long years ago, in the quiet Kentish village, he had so often fingered many a beautiful old English air, with other sweet and ancient music. On one side were other and much larger shelves, holding portfolios, in which were classified the innumerable sketches of all sizes, in all materials, and of all degrees of finish—a life's selection from Nature's material, landscape and figure. Under these shelves, in box-folios, were the elaborate outdoor studies, English and Italian. Then came that *sanctum sanctorum*, the etching corner—a rough, home-made cupboard, standing on a chest of drawers; containing, the one a veteran set of tools and a stock of copper plates, new or in progress; the other, a collection of early and touched proofs of former plates, some favourite etchings by other hands, and a few relics of the childhood of the son and daughter who were dead. Hard by, there was a simple three-legged easel, upon the sides of which were chalked in short, one or two particularly favourite axioms and maxims; a rough painting-table, laden with a rack, full of china palettes; with brush cases, and many mugs and saucers. Some more book-laden shelves on either side the fire-place, and an arm-chair or so, completed the arrangements of the study—a room bare of the smallest pretensions to luxury or superficial elegance,

yet the birthplace of so many masterpieces of refined beauty and poetic sentiment, and so redolent of literature. Here, while the north wind without, was drifting the snow over the desolate landscape, and having sometimes invited to tea a favourite cat of winning manners, Samuel Palmer would light the lamp (for gas was held an abomination), with drawn curtains would 'refresh the fire and have tolerable weather with the poets.'

Christmas was a time to which he always looked forward with particular pleasure, for it brought, and had done so for many years, a visit from his cousin, the late Mr. John Giles, already mentioned as one of the most intimate friends of the old Shoreham days, and even earlier. It is hard to imagine two natures more completely congenial than these. Starting, as members of the Church of England, on the common ground of a deeply-rooted and most strenuous religious faith, their minds seemed instinctively to ramify in almost identical channels, ethical and intellectual, from their youth up. Deeply and permanently impressed by Samuel Palmer's influence, his cousin became imbued with the same keen sense of humour and by an ardent admiration of the same literature, while he learned to love with a wonderful intensity, the same artistic works, ancient music, and kind of scenery, which he clothed with the same imaginative and poetic associations. A man withal of the most kindly and genial disposition, it is not surprising that these Christmas visits of Mr. Giles were hailed by Samuel Palmer with delight.

They would spend nearly the whole day together in the study, talking over the old Shoreham times, and of those still earlier, but fresh in the memory of both. The 'Shoreham portfolio' was always in requisition, and was turned to again and again with unfailing interest. It was a large one, and full of designs and sketches in colour and monochrome, with a sprinkling of the works of Messrs. Richmond, Calvert and Walter, of the like early period. These, with some contemporary oil-pictures, prints from the old masters, and a few of Blake's engravings, occupied the day; while the evenings were passed with conversation and reading, equally attractive.

From all this it can be imagined how severe a blow to Samuel Palmer, was his cousin's death in 1880, hardly a year before his own.

Although he strictly refrained from work or secular reading on Sunday, and (health permitting) never omitted to attend morning church, yet he was far from making the day one of solemn misery and idle penance, by fanatical austerity. The writer can remember that spent with his father, Sunday was the pleasantest day in the week. In the summer there were walks, and the garden's countless attractions; in winter many things that might be done indoors, and much that might be read. Intellectual or moral food was never crammed down throats unwilling. The young mind was led, not driven, to acquire knowledge. Wisdom and virtue were inculcated as much by example as by precept. The knowledge of baseness and evil was not prohibited, but was made to appear unattractive, by the alluring beauty of their opposites.

In 1864, at the instigation of his friend, Mr. L. R. Valpy, Samuel Palmer began a long-continued but most congenial task; a series of eight large drawings, embodying and interpreting the essence of, rather than illustrating, certain picked passages from *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. He had thrice already (in 1855 and 1856) chosen themes from *Comus*, and imbued deeply from his earliest years with Miltonic sentiment, was never weary of designing from favourite passages, or selecting others for future use. We can therefore understand how enthusiastically he gave himself to the undertaking. But we refer the reader to Mr. Valpy's own interesting account at the end of this volume. The works themselves will have been seen upon the walls of the Exhibition.

For some years after his removal to Red Hill, Samuel Palmer had been obliged to abandon etching, through pressure of water-colour commissions, though with great reluctance, as it was an art he far preferred to painting, which he would, if possible, have wholly given up in favour of the needle.

'So curiously attractive,' he wrote, 'is the teasing, temper-trying,

yet fascinating copper. . . . . Oh, the joy!—colours and brushes pitched out of window—plates, the *Liber Studiorum* size, got out of the dear little etching cupboard, where they have long reposed; great needles, sharpened three-cornerwise like bayonets; opodeldoc rubbed into the forehead to wake the brain up, and a Great Gorge of old poetry to get up the dreaming, for, after all, *that's* "the seasoning as does it." Not while he was tarring his sheep, or counting his woolsacks, but while Endymion slept on Latmos, did Cynthia pause.'

But now, in 1872, a scheme suggested itself, which would allow of a return to etching.

An intense admirer of Virgil, and finding in him 'such a wealth of imagery and suggestion (in the latter comparable only with Milton) as would fill volumes,' Samuel Palmer had begun years before in Kensington, a paraphrase of the *Eclogues*, in verse; it seeming to him 'desirable that those who do not read them in the original, should have some version from which the pastoral essence had not quite evaporated. . . . . Whatever mine may be, it is a work done *con amore* in the superlative degree.' Soon after he settled at Red Hill, this version was taken up once more, and worked at diligently, mostly in the winter evenings. His taste being extremely fastidious, it was long ere the paraphrase was fashioned to Samuel Palmer's mind; and it was not till 1872 that, when finished, he wrote concerning it to Mr. Hamerton (with whom he had for some time corresponded on matters literary and artistic):—'I think it is *extremely kind* that, with all your engagements, you should sympathize with my Virgil project and wish to help me. I feel the more grateful, because, in matters of this brief life, it is my sole remaining hobby. I had a stud of them once, before my dear accomplished son left us. It was begun with the advantage of his criticism—finished in sorrow.'

After further counsel with Mr. Hamerton, Samuel Palmer decided to illustrate the work with ten etchings, one to each Eclogue; and he began while at the seaside in 1872, the series of designs upon which, small though they were, he bestowed more time, thought and labour,

than upon any other work he had ever undertaken :—'I found in my Virgil designs,' he wrote in the same year to Mr. Hamerton—

> '"Society where none intrudes
> By the deep sea;"—

for five weeks inventing, selecting, rejecting, and finally beginning, the ten upon their proper papers. Never was work more enjoyed. I am anxious to complete them, but they will take time, seeing that they admit of no art expletives or conventionalities. I hope to make them distinctly the best things I have ever done.'

Elaborate as was the thought and care with which these subjects were evolved from the quintessence of mental material, as well as that of all the picked portfolios—completely beautiful as they seemed, drawn in pen and ink, on cardboard—yet some were afterwards abandoned when nearly finished, for other conceptions yet more perfect; or entirely reconstructed. Indeed, in some instances this happened more than once with the same subject, and always with manifest improvement, though that had seemed so impossible.

Delayed by press of other work and by occasional illness, as well as by this extreme fastidiousness of selection, the scheme ripened but slowly; and though some of the finally selected designs were quite finished, others were yet incomplete (though in their incompleteness beautiful), by the beginning of 1881.

It is hoped however, that all this patient labour—the cream of half a century of study—may not be wholly thrown away; that the scheme fondly cherished through so many years of Samuel Palmer's life, may at last be realized, now that he is gone.

CHAPTER IV.

LAST DAYS.

DURING the first years of his residence at Red Hill, Samuel Palmer occasionally visited London, either on business or when attracted by an exhibition of special interest; but an increasing delicacy of throat, and a tendency to asthma, before long forbade such risks in the autumn or winter.

Perhaps the greatest of all his summer pleasures was an annual visit to his old friend, Mr. J. C. Hook, R.A., first at Witley in Surrey, afterwards at Churt, near Farnham; where the great beauty of the surrounding country charmed him no less than the delightful variety of his host's farming and gardening occupations. When he became unable afterwards, through increasing bodily infirmity, to travel far even in the summer, it was one of his chief regrets that he should see 'Silverbeck' no more.

This great susceptibility to changes of temperature, was sometimes latterly the cause of severe indisposition; but he bore it with cheerful resignation, though he was left very weak and powerless. 'No doubt,' he writes after one of these attacks, 'it is one of the providential uses of sickness to have time to stand still; to look leisurely before us and around us, and, above all, upwards.'

Even when hardly convalescent, and obliged in inclement weather to remain for days in bed, he would, by means of a small table made for the purpose, get to work at his designs, or even on coloured drawings, if the light were favourable. Becoming gradually more and more a prisoner to the neighbourhood, his mental activity increased in inverse

ratio to his bodily weakness. He says in 1869:—'I have reason for thankfulness that I work now with more energy than at thirty, and that, through mercy, my mental faculties are more youthful and active; therefore it would be wicked to repine at any bodily predicament, which is always at the mercy of a chill or a draught.' His naturally strong, though near sight, remained quite unimpaired, so that he could easily undertake the minutiæ of etching; or, as many of his letters testify, change from his usual legible, masculine hand, to one equally legible, but almost microscopic. He kept up a frequent correspondence with many of his friends, who have uniformly preserved his letters—always interesting, often really eloquent.

Save for the reasons given before, and that he could no longer refresh his mind with the choice works of art in the National Gallery and elsewhere in London, he was perfectly content with a quiet home life, and the literary resources to which he had always been accustomed to resort for entertainment.

His power of designing, and knowledge of the arts of composition and chiar-oscuro, became greater year by year—his colour more glowing. Indeed it was now that in his own, and the opinion of many others, some of his best works were accomplished, though they were fewer than before. 'For some years past,' he says, 'I have exhibited less than formerly, having tied myself to a self-imposed law, to show nothing that was not done as well as I could at the time—conformably with my old friend Mr. Mulready's maxim—"Do *everything* as well as you can."'

Visitors to the exhibition of Samuel Palmer's works, will have had an opportunity of forming an opinion for themselves, on the merits of such masterpieces (so we consider them) as 'The Near and the Distant' (1870), [No. 72], 'The Travellers' (1875), [No. 52], and 'Tityrus restored to his Patrimony' (1877), [No. 23]; besides the Milton series, which (not including the Comus drawings) ranges from 1868 to 1881. Many much smaller works of a like range of date, showing the same ripe qualities of poetic sentiment and opalescent colour, may be quoted. Among them 'The Shining River' (1878),

'Dawn,' 'Sabrina' (1880), 'A Day-dream of Salerno' (1866), and particularly 'The Golden Hour' (1865), [No. 83], known also as 'The Glorious Sunset,' a reproduction of which, through the kindness of its possessor, Mr. George Gurney, we are able to place opposite this page. It is a work to which we can turn again and again with undiminished pleasure. Its sentiment is perfect, and of that penetrative kind which reaches all the imagination dormant within us, and, like soft and solemn strains of music, thrills it. We pause before this English pastoral—the cattle by the cool river brink, the old church tower and water-mill, nestling under the deep 'shadow in poetic sleep,' of the trees relieving against the 'glorious sunset'—we stand listening to the subdued murmur of the water, and perchance the 'bewilder'd chimes' of the old clock, just as we should if, by good fortune, we could meet with their prototypes in nature. It is interesting to pass from such small but glowing gems, to works of tenfold size, but the same concentration of selected imagery. It may be said with equal truth of the smallest, as of the largest of these picture-lyrics, that it forms a window, as it were, in the wall upon which it hangs, and the mind 'cumbered and paralyzed by worldly cares,' looking, may be refreshed by glimpses of another world, and see,—

> '—— all that is most beauteous imaged there
> In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
> An ampler ether, a diviner air,
> And fields invested with purpureal gleams;
> Climes that the sun, who sheds the brightest day
> Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.'

Soon after he had resumed etching, Samuel Palmer set up a copper-plate printing-press in his own house; and the writer received a series of lessons in the art, from Mr. Goulding; a teacher of such zeal, kindness, and efficiency, that in future all the proofs required, were able to be taken at the private press. This was an additional impulse to further etching, and in 1878 two fresh plates, of a larger size than any hitherto undertaken, were begun. They were versions of drawings in the Milton series—'The Bellman' and 'The Lonely Tower,' both

from *Il Penseroso.* Of the former etching, Samuel Palmer wrote to Mr. Hamerton:—'I am very glad you like my "Bellman." . . . . It is a breaking out of village-fever, long after contact—a dream of that genuine village where I mused away some of my best years, designing what nobody would care for, and contracting among good books a fastidious and unpopular taste. I had no room in my "Bellman" for that translucent current, rich with trout—a river not unknown to song; nor for the so-called "idiot" on the bridge, with whom I always chatted—like to like, perhaps! But there, were all the village appurtenances—the wise-woman, behind the age, still resorted to; the shoemaker always before it—such virtue is in the smell of leather; the rumbling mill and the haunted mansion in a shadowy paddock, where sceptics had seen more than they could account for; the vicarage, with its learned traditions, and Wordsworth brought to memory every three hours by—

'—— the crazy old church clock
And the bewilder'd chimes.'

Twelve etchings had now been published, and in the summer of 1880 another was begun. This plate, 'Opening the Fold,' is one of the ten Virgil subjects previously mentioned, and the design was, therefore, one of picked excellence—the outcome of infinite study and selection. Some have agreed that it is Samuel Palmer's best production on copper. We are inclined to concur in this opinion; but, be this as it may, the work is ample evidence in itself, of a still unclouded brightness of the faculties, and an undiminished manipulative skill.

Though his working hours were more energetically employed than ever, and more productive of the refined and subtle qualities he sought—though time wafted him gently over the 'three-score years and ten,' sparing the infliction of many infirmities so often the accompaniment of life's last days; yet there was now an increasing bodily fragility, and a more feeble power of recovery from illness. Rising later, he was forced to restrict his painting to the morning, while the evenings could

not so often be devoted to designing as before. But this weakness, far from lessening the resources of recreation, added to them by allowing more of the 'Sacred Hours' for reading. Quite understanding 'why Johnson put Cocker into his pocket to amuse him in his travels,' Samuel Palmer would often divert himself in the evenings, with algebra and other arithmetical exercises, before plunging into the book which happened to be in progress. A local circulating library supplied him (as best it might) with contemporary literature; but this was still secondary to the intimate and tried companions of his early life, faithful still, and in their old binding, worn and time-stained, but enwrapping such wealth of poetry and wisdom, somewhat resembling their owner. A few favourites were always at hand, together with a book for designs and a second volume (just begun), of his commonplace-book, into which, still following his old habit, he extracted any passage of special interest met with in his reading.

In the colder months he could never now leave the house, and it was indispensable that he should live, as far as possible, in an even and very warm temperature. And here it becomes a most agreeable duty to record the unremitting care and watchful assiduity of his wife, who devoted herself completely, and regardless of all else, to administering to his mental and bodily comfort. In the evenings she read to him for hours together, and during these latter years would never leave him (except for the time required for household duties), nor take any change of scene or air, as he could not share it with her. Thanks to this ceaseless devotion, and to the skill of his doctor—a man of such geniality that his visits, apart from their professional character, were a real pleasure—Samuel Palmer was able to pass through the last few winterly ordeals, in health and even comfort.

Although he was getting too feeble in his walking powers to be able to go far on foot, in the summer he still delighted in the garden, and in those of his old friends the 'weeds,' which yet survived. Another outdoor pleasure was found in long drives in certain special directions, where the country was fairer, or could be seen to great

advantage. The favourite route (opened by the kindness of Lord Monson, the proprietor) lay through Gatton Park; a place of much beauty, lying partly upon, partly under the great range of chalk hills, and where the rolling masses of fine timber, and the delightful undulation of the land, savoured of the much beloved 'Devonshire richness;' while from the highest point of the estate, some 700 feet above the sea level, a prospect opened far and wide over three counties, as far as the South Downs. Under those unhappily rare effects, when all nature seems aglow with unusual colour, and empurpling cloud-shadows are wafted rapidly across the rich sunlit distance, this expanse well repaid the steep ascent of Reigate Hill. The sloping woods in Gatton Park beneath, were a great attraction to Samuel Palmer; who, never without a sketch-book, extracted from them more than one tit-bit of 'tree essence' for use in his designing.

Thus old age crept gently upon him, inexorable but not unkind. He looked forward with no dread to the approaching change, for he believed it would enable him to enjoy, in a far more perfect manner than was possible in this short life, a state of intellectual light and vigour.

As long ago as 1856 he had written:—'The shortness of life, and the helplessness which so often accompanies old age, when contrasted with the scope of our intellect, and our increasing aspiration after excellence and wisdom, beyond the range of present attainment, would be I think, without any revelation from above, an evidence of some strange catastrophe in the history of our race. A mental and bodily organization so vast and intricate as man's, must first have been set in motion to last much longer than "three-score years and ten." Thoughts which wander through eternity must find their *home* in eternity, and can surely never be extinguished beneath a little heap of worms and corruption. Death is unnatural to man, and his final stroke equally strange and terrible; until enlightened by the Gospel, we see in him only the sturdy husbandman, ploughing those deep furrows, to which we "go forth weeping and bearing precious seed,"—

not the ashes, but the seed of those we love—soon to hear the songs of harvest, and to return in joy, bringing our sheaves with us.'

Soon after the beginning of 1881, Samuel Palmer determined to proceed in earnest with the remainder of the ten etchings intended to illustrate the Virgil paraphrase; and he talked the matter over with the writer at great length, deciding finally upon a plan of action. He was now rapidly completing the last of the Milton series of water-colour drawings—'The Bellman,' 'The Prospect,' and 'The Eastern Gate.' The two latter were afterwards exhibited at the summer exhibition of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours. But 'The Bellman,' as Mr. Valpy explains hereafter, was reserved for the addition of those reflective ripening touches, by which Samuel Palmer's work always gained so much. Some smaller water-colours were being finished at the same time. These completed, another of the Virgil subjects was designed, and elaborated with the same indefatigable painstaking as before, so that ere long it became a bucolic gem. One more was sketched in, and being cheerful about the scheme, now once again well afoot, Samuel Palmer showed no signs of any serious approaching change of health. None thought then, that this pleasing Virgilian design, so suggestive even in its beginning, would never be completed—that the hand which should have matured it, would have so soon to lay down the familiar pencil; no more to open for us, by its magic touch, glimpses of a brighter world than ours—nor to call us far away from the scurry and the prosaic monotonies of the modern business life, to the ancient romantic days of poetry, when Sabrina still visited the herds 'along the twilight meadows,' or some 'belated peasant' saw at a distance in the moonlight, the 'Fairy Elves' at their midnight revels by some old English forest side.

Early in May, Samuel Palmer became too ill to work, but at first no fear was entertained that the attack was other than one of those from which he had recovered before. But by the middle of the month there was a serious change, and from this time, though there were one or two temporary rallies, there was but little hope. We

saw him on the 19th, when he was evidently sinking; but even then he spoke cheerfully on many matters, among them the Virgil scheme still cherished. He bore the painful and irksome illness with singular patience and gentleness, and would express regret that he was giving so much trouble. His old true friend, Mr. George Richmond, R.A., was with him for some days before the end, and did much by his presence and great kindness to soothe his last hours. He soon became too weak to speak distinctly, although in other respects his faculties were unimpaired; and on the 24th he passed peacefully and painlessly away, his last words, scarcely audible, having been an unselfish wish to benefit another.

He was laid in a quiet, pretty spot in Reigate Churchyard, where, many long years before, he had sketched a few of the picturesque and time-worn tombstones; and was followed to the grave by some of his oldest and most intimate friends. There had been a warm shower, and it was a 'fresh, dropping, spring morning,' such as he had loved. The tall 'hedgerow elms' near at hand, cast on the bright green beneath, the familiar 'chequered shade;' and as the words were read, 'I heard a voice from Heaven,' a lark, just overhead, burst into joyous song, and hovered there, against the clear blue sky, singing its sweetest, until, as the last echoes of the service died away, it dropped silent into the long grass beneath. Who could have wished a happier requiem!

So ended the career of Samuel Palmer; a man who has left a void in the lives of those who knew him intimately, impossible to fill. His kindness and consideration to and for all with whom he had to do, attached them to him with no common ties of affection. How much stronger were they, in the case of such as had passed their lives under the beneficent shadow of his influence; upon whom he had lavished infinite benefits and kindness from their earliest days; who owe all that is worth the having, to his unremitting and patient care to do them good.

Has not the simple story of his life, shown to some extent his

nature? It is difficult to describe such an one without drifting into trite and contemptibly sentimental phrases; or (which would be worse) falling short of the truth. In pointing out, as briefly as we can, the chief points in Samuel Palmer's character, we are most anxious, as we have been throughout the memoir, to avoid the slightest exaggeration, to divest ourselves as much as possible of the prejudice natural to near relationship, and not to press into the service those threadbare and shallow expressions, so often met with in old epitaphs and modern conversation.

There have not been so very many who, when called upon to lay down their shield and spear in death, could look back upon a good fight fought, a complete victory won over—Themselves: who have achieved the innumerable virtues comprised in that one attribute, Unselfishness; and have gained besides, the noble chaplet of a spotless name—an absolutely blameless reputation.

Envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, were qualities utterly unknown to Samuel Palmer; and this seems no small matter, when we carefully consider what an amount of evil is involved, even in the single vice, uncharitableness. His soul was symmetrical; and as he once wrote—'A symmetrical soul is a thing very beautiful and very rare.' Simple and innocent himself throughout his life, he suspected no one, would believe no evil against others; scarcely even when forced to do so by unanswerable evidence; and when, as was now and then the case, an advantage equally unmanly and unprincipled was taken of this point in his character, he forgave freely and entirely until 'seventy times seven.' Thus he had few, if any enemies. Truth, nobility, and honour, were in him innate, and manliness was tempered by a tenderness without effeminacy.

But there was also what has been well described as 'The rugged side of his character.' Oppression of, or injustice to, the powerless and weak, the overweening insolence of gilded and upstart Wealth, and of mincing Gentility to their '*Inferiors*,' the worthy but the Poor, or any act of gross and brutish Vandalism, would provoke an outburst

of indignation, expressed in words as eloquent as they were forcible and true.

It is singular that some of his own expressions, in describing the characters of Blake and Flaxman, are peculiarly apt, when applied also to his own :—

'He was a man without a mask; his aim single, his path straightforwards, and his wants few: so he was free, noble, and happy.'

'His voice and manner were quiet, yet all awake with intellect. Above the tricks of littleness, or the least taint of affectation, yet with a natural dignity which few would have dared to affront, he was gentle and affectionate . . . . Declining like Socrates the common objects of ambition, and pitying the scuffle to obtain them, he thought that no one could be truly great, who had not humbled himself "even as a little child."'

'He knew that order and proportion are divine principles, and of universal application; that as they, governing the conduct of a picture or poem, can alone reproduce the unity of the first idea, so, without them, the life of a man cannot be consistent or complete, nor even a single day, perhaps, be employed to the best advantage.'

'He could distinguish gold from tinsel, the transient from the enduring; assigning to everything its proportionate value. He adjusted life to the purposes of his art, which he loved without idolatry; receiving it as a gift, and using it so far as he might, to the glory of the Giver.'

'He represented well the dignity of his calling: there was nothing mercenary in his diligence, or penurious in his economy, or mean and contracted in that simplicity and humility of soul, without which the pathos of art can never be conceived, nor its most touching results accomplished.'

'He *Honoured the Poor*, and never wounded them by an affected condescension. In man he honoured the image of God, and did not discern that image less readily, through the tatters of Lazarus, than

under the trappings of grandeur. . . . . He rebuked frivolity and dissipation by the quiet tenour of his life,' but was not 'eccentric or cynical.'

All who knew Samuel Palmer intimately, will, we think agree, that these words of his concerning others, well describe his own character, and do not exaggerate his virtues.

CHAPTER V.

ART OPINIONS AND PRACTICE.

IN endeavouring to describe Samuel Palmer's practice as a painter and an etcher, and especially in giving some of his opinions on the principles of art, it is difficult, without a considerable expense of time, to arrange the matter in a form which is not disjointed and incoherent, and to select that which is of the greatest interest. Some notes, principally relating to oil-painting, have already appeared in the *Portfolio*,* and more may have been gathered from a perusal of the foregoing pages; but yet we think, considerable interest is attached to what remains, and which we offer in its incompleteness, merely as a few fragments of ore from a mine which was inexhaustible, and with the preliminary statement, that though so well qualified to instruct, not only in art, but in many other ways, yet, with a few exceptions, Samuel Palmer's opinions were given with diffidence, and always with respect for those of others.

A glance at almost any of his subject drawings, especially those which are most characteristic, will show that he did not belong to the 'Naturalistic' or realistic school of painters; that in principles he differed widely from those who think that the function of art is merely the imitation of natural objects, however carefully chosen, or however beautiful they may be.

It will be seen by those who can look beneath the surface, that he endeavoured in his designs to extract the quintessence of nature's essence; to secure '*the why*'—the inner spirit of all he represented. In this, we think, he was eminently successful.

* No. 76. April, 1876.

The following quotations give some of his opinions in his own words, addressed to his friends, Messrs. Hamerton and Valpy:—

'I have been reading again Fuseli's lectures—our best, I think. . . . He wrote in vain, it seems, as, for the last thirty years, we have been walking backwards, not towards nature, but naturalism.'

'The philosophers—who are by no means too imaginative—can set us right. Lord Bacon says, it is the office of poetry to "suit the shows of things to the desires of the mind." We seem to aim at suiting the desires of the mind to the shows of things. Does not the former imply a much more profound and inclusive study of "the shows of things"—"nature," we call it, itself? What was it but his ideal of Helen which obliged the Greek to study all the most beautiful women he could find?'

'When I was setting out for Italy I expected to see Claude's magical combinations—miles apart I found the disjointed members, some of them most lovely, which he had "suited to the desires of his mind;" there were the beauties, but the Beautiful—the ideal Helen, was his own. And the sense of this ideal is so lost and forgotten by the materialistic eye, that Claude himself is considered rather as an accomplished master of aërial perspective, or what not, than as the genius, equally tender and sublime, who reopened upon canvas the vistas of Eden.'

'But is not all this gaseous rodomontade about the Ideal, exploded by the fact, that every artist worthy of the name, finds it almost impossible to render one tithe of its beauty, when he sits down either to copy or to imitate the simplest object? I think not; and it seems to me that in the present state of our faculties, any system which is without its paradoxes, is by the same token as suspicious as an exact correspondence of several witnesses in a trial at the Old Bailey.'

* * * * * * *

'It strikes me that the great masters work in companionship with, rather than in slavery to nature: that, profoundly learned in the phenomena, their nature-knowledge, instead of being made to stare and startle in their pictures, is used as the means of embodying their ideas,

the loves of their minds, in those philosophical abstracts they used to make. Thus Claude's pictures display finer combinations than nature, while each bit has been separately investigated from nature. But they knew too well the limited means of art, as to compass of light and dark and colour, to be fond of contending with nature on equal terms. They did, however, in a single picture, what nature can only do for us during perhaps, a month's travel—they told the story of a people, a polity; or of some fairy land, of which, indeed, nature may have afforded a wondrous though momentary glimpse, to those who having it within, could grasp, or rather embrace it, when it appeared without.'

'Their imitation was not mimicry. They rather enthral than amuse. They often delight by crowding apparent fewness with infinity of suggestion; so they make the beholder's process of thought *analytic* while he remains before them. He cannot gratify his curiosity by counting the individualities from corner to corner; but being led from the great to the little, where there is nothing petty, if he discover a daisy in a corner, it is a whole in itself. I have often marvelled at this in the finest antique sculpture. You analyze till you come to a finger-nail—and lo! the finger-nail is a whole and a greatness in itself. This involves stupendous knowledge, and by it is evolved, that in which centres all that is lovely or august—STYLE.'

'In the painting of ground I think Claude is at the top. Indeed, where is he not? His knolls, so softly clad, are round and figure-like. As to trees, he is indeed, pre-eminent. Titian alone may compare with him. Whether with pen or brush, in drawing, in conception, in colour, they so imbue us with delight, that even laudatory criticism is out of place. . . . . I wonder less and less at Reynolds's saying—"The world *may* see another Raphael, but never another Claude."

'Claude, Poussin, Bourdon, did not attempt to satisfy that curiosity of the eye which an intelligent tourist ever feeds and never sates; nor did they attempt to reproduce a scene: for they knew that every hedgerow contains more matter than could be crowded into a picture-gallery, and that, supposing that they could deceive the eye, the real

impression could not be completed but by touch and hearing; the gushes of air and the singing of birds. They addressed not the perception chiefly, but the IMAGINATION, and here is the hinge and essence of the whole matter.'

The result of this conviction that art should do more than give copies of nature's external forms, photographically correct, but quite missing their essence ('that which makes a thing to be what it is') may be seen more especially in Samuel Palmer's representations of animals. They are not such as would satisfy the subscribers to Farmers' almanacks, or 'Live Stock' periodicals, but do they not savour intensely of the picturesque (not the 'apotheosis of pigsties, but the poetic-picturesque') and of antique bucolic sentiment? His sheep are not grouped around the latest and most perfect machine for slicing turnips; his oxen could compete in no modern ploughing-match; but they carry us far back to days when 'time and labour-saving machinery' appeared neither to be required nor wished; when the 'drudging goblin' still earned his cream-bowl, plying his 'shadowy flail' in ancient barns, and the bellman yet blessed the village doors from 'nightly harm.'

We quote the following as bearing on the subject:—'Flaxman was one of those who was most deeply touched with the bucolic sentiment in Blake, condensed like an essence, in those few little woodcuts, graven by Blake's own hand, for Dr. Thornton's *Pastorals of Virgil.*

'I once saw, and have since endeavoured to trace it, but in vain, a small bas-relief by Flaxman, of a flock of sheep, and nothing more; *ideal* sheep, of course—let drovers laugh! Its matter and detail were as nothing; yet it has lain in memory some thirty years, without losing a certain savour. Perhaps it would not be amiss to give some heed to Flaxman's dictum, that however complex the means, "Sentiment is the End of Art." . . . .'

'If it be true, as Lord Bacon has told us, that "there is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the proportion," Flaxman was not the man to stumble at it; but to the men of fact, and

to the men of pork, there is a stumbling-block somewhere in the grand works; and as a nation we have never taken kindly to the Antique, or to the great works of the revival. The Sistine Chapel does not commend itself to the educated multitude, nor are their manners always mended when pearls are cast to them; the disposition to turn and rend, sometimes increasing with the value of the jewel. When the prize would have been Virgil's head, the Imperial critic regretted being too late.'

'In Flaxman's day, criticism, though disorderly, was not quite inverted; and men never expected to find in ideal art, the reproduction of an individual model; and, perhaps, in the grandest works, just what would stagger the *naturalists* as a "strangeness in the proportion" would have appeared to Flaxman, and to the men of his tone, only strangely beautiful.'

The following extracts continue the same theme:—'It seems that art must, more or less, illustrate physiological truth; but that it is not its function to do so. Its function seems to me to be the display separately, or in any proportion united, of the sublime, the beautiful, the pathetic, and perhaps the picturesque; if, according to Sir Uvedale Price's book (well worth reading) on the picturesque, it is to be considered as a separate quality . . . . Nature is not a physiological diagram. It is the vain expectation of finding in the trees and rocks of the great masters, amusing illustrations suitable to a geological or arboreal *lecture*, which has caused such absurd criticism of their works. Both nature and art confuse and perplex distinctions; science (so-called) depends upon them.'

'Art, however, unites several sciences, according to Mr. Hamerton's definition in his excellent *Thoughts about Art*, which I have lately read: "Painting is not a simple matter, but a very deep and subtle compound of several sciences with poetry."'

* * * * * * *

'The real charm of art seems to me not to consist in what can be best clothed in words, or made a matter of research or discovery. Its

technical means are conversant with several branches of science, and it demands life-long investigation of phenomena—but I do not think that the *result* is a science, though Constable truly said that every picture is a scientific experiment.'

'The result I take it to be, not interpretation, but representation; its first appeal, not to the judgment but to the imagination.'

* * * * * * *

'Art unites things in themselves remote: Vision, Matter, Science, for instance; so it comes to pass, that of some of its wisest saws the reverse is equally true; and this suggests catholic scope and delicate handling.'

'We lose a great deal of truth however, if we refuse to believe some things which, *in the present state of our faculties*, are contradictory—verbally so, I mean: for there are niceties of thought and feeling, which words, however well chosen, do but inadequately express.'

* * * * * * *

'I can hardly contain myself, when I think of the condensing power of art—when I mentally contemplate the rough, unsightly back of an old panel, not half the size of one of the leaves of a small Pembroke table, and know that on the other side, is Raphael's vision of Ezekiel.'

We cannot but see that many of Samuel Palmer's own works are notable instances of this condensing power. They are not crowded with incidents or objects, which seem to scream, 'See! we are here!' but if we look, and wait, we find the mind gradually filling with associations created by suggestive passages, and by the sentiment which seems to pervade these landscapes. Size matters nothing. In some, not a tenth the size of a leaf of a small table, attentively looking, we find ourselves enticed far away among the herds cooling themselves in the clear shallows, along miles of twilight meadows. In others we can roam at curfew from hamlet to hamlet; watching, in the deepening gloom, the glimmering lights disappearing

one by one from the cottage windows — we explore those rich masses of rolling woodland, where, in the moonlight, grey crags or Druidic tors are dimly visible; and where perhaps, are Fauns and Dryads, or the 'unseen genius of the wood,' to charm our ear with sweet fitful strains of remote music.

And yet this thrilling art is not of a popular kind, for, as Samuel Palmer says:—'The present leaning of art-fashion, tends perhaps to too much repression; to the soft and pretty, rather than to the Strenuous and the Solemn.'

Next, we think, to the æsthetic (not in the new and sickening sense of this much abused word) and more subtle qualities in Samuel Palmer's works, is their strength in two exceedingly important but more technical particulars, chiar-oscuro and composition (though these perhaps are somewhat interchangeable); qualities which we place advisedly before their colouring, pre-eminent in many cases though that be; for those who have turned over the pages of this volume, will have seen how comparatively little the paintings, of which reproductions are given, have lost by translation into monochrome.* This would not be the case, were the composition, or light and shade, lacking in knowledge or power; neither would an artist, weak in these respects, have so infinitely preferred etching to painting, as a means of expression, as did Samuel Palmer.

We have described before, how much thought and study was given to the first designs, whether for etching or water-colour; how they grew from little blots of pen and ink, chalk, or even charcoal; sometimes on the backs of old envelopes, and not two inches square. These were the indications of 'effect structure,' and contained the

* Unhappily the great difficulty of interpreting certain kinds of work, by any process based upon photography, (owing partly to its merciless analytic tendency), stands in the way of complete success. In the preparation, however, of the illustrations for this volume, no pains have been spared to do justice to the works which they reproduce. The writer is happy to avail himself of the present opportunity of offering his thanks to Mr. J. R. Sawyer, of the Autotype Company, to whose kind attention the measure of success which has been achieved is mainly due.

'spinal darks.' Then, in many cases, came a larger and more elaborate sketch, also in monochrome, or in pen and ink; a very favourite material with Samuel Palmer, who says:—'I am trying the crow-quill for evanescent passages; it is yielding and tender, and apt for dreamy delicacies. It belongs, of course, not to the great organ, or choir organ, but to the swell . . . . Up to any amount of tone, I can work better with pen and *writing* ink, than in any other material . . . . It is with me, beyond all comparison, the best means of expression.

In these larger sketches, the battle was fought with the light and shade and the composition. We do not consider ourselves qualified to point out how, and why, Samuel Palmer's works excel in these respects. That they do excel, those who are eminently qualified to judge, have agreed. We quote some words of his own, addressed to Mr. Hamerton:—

'I have been reading with much interest your notes on Æsthetics; in the last, you are approaching the deep matters of placing: placing of lines, of shadows, of colours. This art, under the name of 'Composition' is probably despised by the naturalistic school. Yet what is composition but the art of placing things naturally; a result, however simple, of most subtle knowledge, acquired in the course of a life-long comparison of nature with art? If the lights and shades are finely disposed, as in Tintoret, for instance, the work, irrespectively of subject, will gratify the eye, turn it upside-down, or whichever way you will. I have often wondered whether such men could define in words the GRAND SPECIFIC, or give us more than the few golden traditions which they have left; such, for instance, as "Many lights, many shadows, much middle-tint."'

Next in importance to the placing of shadows, comes their quality—that they should look shadowy; should not have their liquid transparent beauty, frittered by misapplied texture:—

'Bonasoni seems to me the greatest master of shadowing upon copper. "Well, but it is like baby's work; there is no execution." That is it; that is precisely what I mean. "But there is no richness

of texture." I have yet to learn, that unless after flagellation, the human skin is much granulated. Let any one who can draw, copy exactly in pen and ink some boldly shadowed limb of Bonasoni's, and afterwards turn it into a tree trunk by vigorous line work, expressing the texture of the bark; and he will then see texture in its proper function and shadow in its poetic sleep. Claude, the supreme tree master (his mother must have been a Dryad!), never transgresses the neutrality of shade, though, from the intricacy of his matter, the science is less obvious than in Bonasoni. Textureless shadows, composed of parallel lines in gentle, unaffected curve, will be found, I think, in Titian's landscape sketches, and in the drawings and etchings of all landscape painters who have founded themselves upon the human figure; textural shadows, in those who, without such discipline, have struggled after the picturesque; and as a meretricious accomplishment in almost all the line engravers since the time of Woollett.'

'Shadow in its poetic sleep,' may be seen in many of Samuel Palmer's works; and that also which cast by breeze-stirred foliage, moves in mazy dance upon the ground. 'Happy that artist,' said he, 'who can make shadow move and dance as it does in nature.' Those who have looked at a small study made in Clovelly Park (and No. 101 in the Exhibition), will have seen, we think, that he could do so. But this is but one example out of many.

It has been remarked, that he was perhaps, too much devoted to subjects involving the representation of the sun and moon. We should ourselves have imagined that no defence against this hyper-criticism could be needed; and that it would be equally *àpropos* to object to a necklace of lustrous pearls or rubies, on the ground of sameness or repetition. But here is his vindication:—

'I have often thought of my sun-and-moonism; but, after all, the earth is never so fair without its luminaries—*they are its eyes;* and if it border on mannerism often to introduce them, it is the same often to omit them. Sun-and-moon effects have each varieties which

several lives could not exhaust, and several of these varieties in a collection (though they have a sameness relatively to the artist) give variety and spirit to the whole.'

Those who still object to suns and moons, may take comfort; for the great technical difficulty of representing the dazzle of the setting sun, or the more silvery effulgence of the lesser luminary, is so great as to prevent such choice of subjects from becoming very common. Yet success in these, is surely worth the hardest struggle to attain it. Samuel Palmer courted the difficulties, great though they were; and examples, where he really seems to make the sun shine into our eyes, and to cast moving shadows, are not far to seek. Is not 'The Herdsman' etching* also (especially in its earlier and better state) an instance in which the full moon seems to be racing through the clouds, as it appears to do in nature?

In the representation of the luminaries in his subject drawings, it will be seen that Samuel Palmer latterly eschewed the use of body colour (except in one or two cases of very small drawings), preferring the much more luminous tone of the pure paper or board, kept absolutely clean until the drawings were quite finished, by a small covering of paper, cut to the shape required, and slightly attached by gum. Indeed, as a rule of later years, he employed body colour very sparingly, if at all, in any portion of his works; which, though they are called 'water-colours,' approach, as he said himself, more to the older tempera process.

Of the glowing brightness of his colouring, many works in the Exhibition have been sufficient evidence. By what technical means it was attained it would be a long task to tell in detail. A minute examination of certain brilliant passages will do much to show this. But there were certain laws by which he worked.

The reader, passing through a wood in spring-time, when the young foliage is at its freshest, may have chanced to glance upward towards the unclouded sun, and to be struck by the extraordinary

* No. 113.

brightness of the green leaves through which the sunlight passes, as contrasted with those upon which it merely falls, without piercing through them to the eye. It was the splendour of the sunlight, transmitted through any coloured object, that always attracted Samuel Palmer; and no doubt, was one reason for the frequent choice of subjects in which the spectator faces the sun. He wrote for the benefit of a young student as follows:—

'Painters have described very gorgeous pictures, as resembling stained glass. This does not mean that they can be conducted on the same principles, but that the best of them give a pleasure to the eye, akin to that which stained glass produces.'

'Two particulars suggest themselves in which stained glass and fine pictures agree — that the lights are not merely coloured, but luminous, and that the darks are not merely deep, but full of colour. The lustre of stained glass is produced by the light of the sky shining through from behind the colours. In oil, the body colour prevents the cases from being parallel, but practically these very body-colour lights, as well as other colours in a picture, are sustained and supported by the nearest approach we can make to the light from the sky behind — *a pure white priming*. This is a counter-agency to the dulling of the colours by time. The old pictures, painted on a dark or low-toned ground, will not bear comparison with those painted by the same masters upon a white ground.'

The following technical notes on the same subject are interesting:—

'Golden green, such as that caused by the sun's rays transmitted through leaves, cannot be achieved in art without difficulty. To do so, either model with cool green, leaving here and there little sparkles and scratches of the white ground, and glaze with a gorgeous yellow (such as yellow cadmium), or reverse the process. It may be necessary to repeat two or three times, until the desired tint is obtained. Red leaves transmitting sunlight, being a little darker than yellow, may be afterwards touched upon with varieties of Field's extract,

vermilion, and the madders. The transmitting greens will be touched with transparent green over the yellows; and thus in the unity of one transparent golden glow, may be many varieties.'

Again:—'*Sun shining through leaves towards sunset.* Perhaps the most splendid yellow, which is the ground of the subsequent tints, is produced by raw sienna over yellow cadmium; over these, again (for autumn tints), come first the scarlets, then the reds, then the pinks—generally in that order, somewhat darker and darker. The things which by contrast enforce the splendour, are the *semi*-contrast of the transmitting greens, the *contrast* of the holes of dark, dark tree stems and branches, and particularly the opposite position of foliage in shadow, receiving a faint, coldish light on the shadowed side *behind* the spectator, or, as we might say, from the blue sky. *Note*—When there are portions of pure sunlight, mirrored by polished leaves, leave the paper white, if possible; if not, cut them out afterwards (not deeply) with a very sharp knife.'

This last was a frequent practice of Samuel Palmer's, when he wished to get small glints and sparkles of great brilliancy.

The colours, such as Field's extract of vermilion, the cadmiums, and the madders, which were used in small quantities for the brightest passages, were kept in cakes in a little box apart, and labelled 'Eyebrights;' and the greatest care was taken to prevent them from becoming sullied by dust or otherwise.

'To know what to omit,' said Samuel Palmer, 'is the second most important thing in art.' It is unnecessary to point out many works where this judicious omission of matter—where some broad shadow, allowed to cast a veil over a portion of the middle distance or foreground, and thus to render it indefinite, has secured a host of qualities.

It will be noticed in his later drawings, especially when they are compared with many other water-colours, to how great a depth he attained for that branch of painting. This was partly due to the following causes. Many of his earlier works were executed upon

ordinary drawing paper, but he found afterwards that he could reach a far greater depth, by the use of Turnbull's hot-pressed London boards (made of many sheets of Whatman's drawing paper compressed together), which caused the colours to bear out more satisfactorily, and gave the firm, smooth surface which he preferred. Another cause was the way in which he prepared the colours. Except for outdoor sketching, and with a few other exceptions, he never used them in cake, pan, or tube. For many years he had made experiments with all kinds of vehicles; in size, in egg, and different gums; but finally he settled down to the use of gum-arabic, in sufficient quantity to bring out the colours to any degree required, with the addition of enough honey to prevent them cracking off a glazed palette when dry; as, if they would adhere to that, they would certainly do so in the case of paper. He kept nearly all of them in finely ground powder, either dry or under water in bottles. From thence he took, from time to time, a considerable quantity, which was mixed with the vehicle upon china palettes—one for nearly every colour. He could thus apply the vehicle in differing degrees, as the colour was required for various purposes.

The drawing boards were prepared for use by a wash of Chinese white, with the addition of a very little orange cadmium, to obtain a warm ivory tint.

The guiding lines were drawn in from the first sketch, very delicately, either in lead pencil or red chalk. The preliminary tints were then laid in boldly and rather dryly over the golden ground, with broad, flat, camel-hair brushes. The drawing was now strengthened with colour used in a swan-quill—a favourite implement that was resorted to again and again throughout the progress of the work. 'For,' said Samuel Palmer, 'water-colour has the one great and weighty advantage over oil, of the PEN LINE. Without its equivalent in etching, I doubt whether Turner could have made his monochromes so attractive. Line seems to me like the cymbals in a band; as the dashes of shade are like the great drum; we scarcely miss the colours, where line pervades everything in its mysteries and its might. The precision of its delicacy clears things

up, like that tiny flute which announces the melody—with no unpleasant shrillness—in a full orchestra.'

It is no doubt due to the force obtained by the frequent use of the pen, and the high pitch to which it demanded that the brush-work should be wrought to support it, that his works, especially the later ones, owe some of their characteristic power and depth.

In the larger ones the palette-knife was sometimes used for a bold, luscious touch in the foreground, or some deep shadow; and there was no niggle from first to last; for although there was great elaboration in certain eyes and focuses, it was an elaboration rather of design and placing, than of mere bald execution.*

There were usually two or three drawings, or even more, in hand at once; for Samuel Palmer would never, if he could help it, finish any work outright, nor without putting it away from time to time after a good spell, in order that he might come upon it with a fresh eye. A drawing was never forced to a completion. They were often kept back, after they were apparently very highly finished (as a perusal of the notes on the Milton series will show), for the addition of those 'gossamer touches and tendernesses' like the 'last sun-glows which give the fruits their sweetness.' There was indeed 'nothing mercenary in his diligence,' for it was no uncommon thing

* An admirable example of the wide scope and the comprehensiveness of Samuel Palmer's execution, will have been seen in an unfinished drawing, 'The fallen Tree,' [No. 69], well worthy of an attentive examination.

A large trunk, moss-grown, and here and there still retaining its fading leaves, has been snapped just above its roots by the raging mountain blast, and lies, a picturesque and seemly ruin, right across the foreground. A young girl leans against the trunk, her distaff neglected, as she listens to her companion, a youth seated near her. From a great elevation the eye wanders over miles of wild and romantic country, bounded on the horizon by the sea, and by a chain of sun-lit and very lofty mountain peaks; while on the left hand, slightly above the spectator, towers an ancient fortress with more modern buildings at its foot, all basking in the sunshine that illumines the landscape far beneath. A flock of sheep are being driven down the steep mountain track, towards a densely wooded ravine from which a blue mist rises.

This is a very striking composition—one for which 'The Mysteries of Udolpho'

for a drawing to be sent back by his own wish after exhibition, that he might spend a day or so in perfecting it. All this must be borne in mind, when we admit that his works were few in number.

It was his habit, and a practice of which he thought highly, to examine works in progress, by the uncertain light of a single candle after dark, when points of composition and light and shade would strike the eye, that would escape notice in a stronger light. He disliked a north light, thinking it tended to produce cold, ungenial colouring, and preferred a western or even southern aspect for the window of his study.

Owing to his peculiar method of preparing the colours, his execution was untrammeled, and was bold and (so to speak) solid. A good example of this freedom, though rather an early one, is 'A Landscape—Sunset' (1847), [No. 17]. This work, when examined closely, appears slight and unfinished; but viewed from a little distance, it seems quite the reverse, and both in subject and treatment is very pleasing.

In short, Samuel Palmer's method little resembled that of traditional water-colour practice. In some respects it approached nearer to that of oil-painting, and, as we remarked before, achieved a result far more powerful and of greater depth than that usually seen

might furnish a motto, or which is worthy even of the landscape in L'Allegro. But the chief interest lies, we think, in the technical treatment; at once eminently skilful, bold, and minutely delicate. Turning from the rich, solid, and broad painting of the gnarled tree-trunk, emphasized with vigorous pen lines (painting so bold and solid that it suggests the use of oil rather than water-colour) we find that in the girl's face, in portions of the middle-distance, and in the mountain beyond, the execution is so fine and delicate, the tints so tender, that they savour almost of a miniature. And yet, had the drawing been completed, they would have been wrought so skilfully, as to hold their own still more completely against the overwhelming force of the foreground, but with no loss of delicacy. This work is particularly interesting and instructive, as it has been stopped at a stage through which many others of Samuel Palmer's have passed; and shows so well how boldly his knowledge enabled him to strike the key-note of depth and force thus early in the progress of a painting, and how wonderfully wide was the compass of his colouring and execution.

in water-colours. Compared with the ordinary manner, it was as the violoncello to the violin—the ophicleide to the trumpet.

He held that it was invariably injurious to accept criticism until he had *fully satisfied his own mind* with the work upon which he was engaged. Then, he said, criticism was often invaluable. Though he listened to it with attention and respect, he never suffered himself to be lightly diverted from his own convictions; and often quoted that story of Michael Angelo; who, it is said, upon being told by a spectator while he was at work upon some piece of sculpture, that such and such a point would be benefited by alteration, affected to agree completely with the critic; and having covertly taken up some marble dust in his hand, proceeded apparently to make the alteration with mallet and chisel, gradually dropping the dust as if he were doing so, but in reality not touching the marble at all.

It has been remarked of Samuel Palmer that, considering his diligence, skill, and length of days, his pictures were but few; and it is certain that he cannot be called a prolific painter, in the ordinary sense of the term; but (as we have already remarked) when the great amount of research and depth of study, in addition to the utmost fastidiousness of selection, which most of these paintings represent, are taken into consideration, we cannot so much wonder that their number was limited. To us, who have seen so many in progress, the wonder is of an opposite kind. It must also be remembered that few, if any, are in any part mere transcriptions from nature. They are designs or (to use the old expression) 'compositions' throughout — designs not merely in their general contours, but in detail. We cannot call to mind a single instance in which a portion of the many hundred sketches from nature which filled Samuel Palmer's portfolios, was drafted direct into a subject drawing. The first design was born of Imagination, and ruled paramount. Nature's material was absorbed by, rather than engrafted upon it, and it was matured not by handiwork so much as by thought. Every touch, from first to last, whether with the palette-knife and the brush two

inches broad—the finest pencil, or the smallest pen-knife, represented reflection and idea; and was as essential to the whole, as each minute fragment in a beautiful mosaic.

We have referred before to Samuel Palmer's great devotion to etching, and quoted a few of his opinions concerning it; but we add the following extracts from letters to Mr. Hamerton, as of no little additional interest:—

'Somehow or another, I fancy that we have all of us more or less the notion, that because an etching should be spirited, it should be done in a hurry. I grant that there is a sort of vigour and a very agreeable texture got in this way, which delights the eye for a short time, but beyond which the work never grows upon us; but Rembrandt's (many of which are in the leading points very highly finished; which he was constantly revising, sometimes to the extent of organic changes) retain their hold long after the first ocular pleasure is over.'

* * * * * * *

'It is some time since I saw a fine collection of Rembrandt's etchings, but my impression is, that in every instance they are the better in the ratio of the labour; some of the finest being exquisitely finished, and as etchings, the more essentially precious. What wonder, if the labour be a labour of love? Would Veyrassat's "Crossing the Ford" have been bettered by slightness? Is not tone the prerogative of etching, and chiar-oscuro its territory? Etching, regarded from your point of view, does seem to be the finest of the mental methods, and it can easily be shown to be better than wood-cutting, which lacks variety in its dark shadows, though the sparkle of its light is joyous.

'Then let its flashes illuminate etching; let all be inclusive and cumulative. What is any art but that which genius has made it by extending its boundaries, while criticism demurred at every venture? Whence this strange gratification in scraping art with a potsherd, and paring the eyelids of Regulus?'

* * * * * * *

'Etching seems to me to stand quite alone among the complete arts in its compatibility with authorship. You are spared the dreadful death-grapple with colour, which makes every earnest artist's liver a pathological curiosity.'

* * * * * * *

'Etching does not necessarily demand more than individual or local chiar-oscuro; and the crayon will seize brilliant phenomena. But the great peculiarity of etching seems to be, that its difficulties are not such as to excite the mind to 'restless ecstasy,' but are an elegant mixture of the manual chemical and calculative; so that its very mishaps and blunders (usually remediable) are a constant amusement. The tickling sometimes amounts to torture, but on the whole it raises and keeps alive a speculative curiosity—it has something of the excitement of gambling, without its guilt and its ruin. For these and other reasons, I am inclined to think it the best exponent of the artist-author's thoughts.'

* * * * * * *

'I do not like large etchings, thinking it an unnatural use of a process accomplished by lines. And I am disposed to think that "*retroussage*," unless very sparingly used, lowers the quality of etching half-way to lithography. It is the latent brilliancy of the ten thousand "interstices between the intersections," which gives etching its dewy sparkle. But in this, as in everything else, as we gain time, we lose quality.'

* * * * * * *

'I am not alone in discovering that where tone is aimed at, copper bites into time, as greedily as acid into copper . . . . knowing by old experience what time an etching insidiously consumes before I can make the effect ring. . . . . The fact is, that outline with its *local* shadows, can be etched rapidly; not so that mystic maze of enticement, ideal chiar-oscuro, of which I think you will agree with me, that etching is the best exponent.'

'Mezzotint is the more obvious; but however well done, it lies in some degree under the disadvantage so fatal to oil-paintings, of a dark ground, by which the pictures of a whole nation have been disfigured ere now. Like that cruel Othello, it puts out the light, and then puts out the light, eclipsing the sun before closing the shutters. Though with Ben Jonson's witches, etching says to a shadow here and there, "Deep, O deep, we lay thee to sleep," yet like those deepest of the deep, yet clearest of the clear, early Flemish pictures, there is the virgin white of the gesso ground behind.'

* * * * * * *

'In etching at home, I don't think a line should be scratched before, at the cost of whatever study, a little sketch is made, showing the general effect (I care not how smudgy), in which the masses and trains of dark are right, and the emphatic lights and darks in their proper places. And this, whether the etching is meant to be worked into tone, or suggested almost by line.'

Before concluding, we cannot refrain from quoting the following words of the well-known author and artist, to whom we are indebted for the extracts from Samuel Palmer's letters just given:—

'He is one of the truest, most sincere, most richly gifted artists who ever used water-colour, and his etchings themselves are among the most exquisite and admirable works of art ever wrought in England. Works of art! at a time when amongst the enormous production of painted canvasses and etched or engraved coppers going on in Europe, works of art are yet by no means of frequent occurrence.'

'The aim of Samuel Palmer as an executant is a certain richness and tenderness, always subordinated to feeling. It never runs away with him, but pauses for the varying thought. His etchings are pure poetry; every gleam and hint in them is due to some sweet ineffable sentiment. . . . . During the negotiations about the plate which is given herewith ['The Early Ploughman,' in *Etching and Etchers*] he wrote to me one or two letters, and asked amongst other things if I had studied the etchings of Claude. In asking this, he

wrote a sentence of delicate appreciation, which I thought it would be well to disseminate and preserve, and so begged permission to quote it. "His execution," said Samuel Palmer, "is of that highest kind, which has no independent essence, but lingers and hesitates with the thought, and is lost and found in a bewilderment of intricate beauty." In this sentence we have the key to the writer's own ways of work as an etcher: he dislikes execution, however brilliant, which is not subordinate to the thought; or, perhaps, to put it more accurately, the best execution in his view is tentative, and submissively waits whilst the mind seeks, always humbly following and endeavouring to obey; never hurrying the executive processes till they get ahead of the perceptive and inventive processes. And I venture to add, that the beautiful sentence in which Samuel Palmer described the excellence of Claude, is accurately descriptive of his own excellence; and I would have said of Samuel Palmer, if I had known how to write anything so good, just these words: "His execution is of that highest kind, which has no independent essence, but lingers and hesitates with the thought, and is lost and found in a bewilderment of intricate beauty." '*

* * * * * *

'As for the thoughts which he has to express, they are pure poetry, and come to him from that rich realm of the imagination which poets only can find at all, and which they find everywhere. There is more feeling, and insight, and knowledge, in one twig drawn by his hand, than in the life's production of many a well-known artist. Words cannot express the quality of such work as his, but we can say that it unites the ripest and fullest knowledge with the most perfect temper—a temper of patience almost without limit, and of tenderness which is alive to all loveliness, even that which is most lowly and obscure, hardening itself against nothing that is beautiful. Rarely has an artist's maturity been so complete.

* *Etching and Etchers.* 1st Edition, page 142.

The work of his old age is like a great fine fruit which has been in the sun for many days, until all its juices have had just the full time and heat needed for the most perfect mellowness, yet on which you shall not find the slightest sign that it has hung on the branch too long. No young man ever had the fulness of knowledge which is necessary for such work as that, and few old men have had the serenity of temper, or the powers of work, which are needed for such a complete expression of their knowledge.'*

* * * * * *

'During twenty years Samuel Palmer's work has become for me more and more beautiful, more and more abundantly satisfying. It is so tender as to remind us of all that is softest and sweetest in the heart of pastoral nature, and yet so learned that it seems as if some angel had met the artist in his studious solitude, and taught him. Imaginations, graceful as a maiden's dream, but without her ignorance, teachings profounder than those of Science, yet without her pedantry, a serene spirit inherited from the true and great poets of the times of old who are his fathers, all these he gives us with his art. Is it not well that we who are younger should assure him, before the days draw near when neglect and praise are alike indifferent, that he has not worked in vain? Something of his gentle nature has entered into ours, and there is a deeper poetry in the twilights that we see, since he has watched and painted them before us. It is not fiction, but the plainest and simplest truth, to say that for me there is a solemnity in every evening and a richness in every tree and hedge that are distinctly traceable to the influence of this noble artist. And as we work, may we not profitably accept for our example his loving watchfulness of the humblest things in nature and his patience that never fails?'†

We will conclude with the words of an eminent critic, written soon after Samuel Palmer's death:—

* *Etching and Etchers.* 2nd Edition, page 327.

† *The Portfolio*, No. 35, November 1872.

'The art of Palmer is essentially classical in its refinement; it is the fruit of education, and, above all, monitory and suggestive without being didactic, instinct with a pious underthought, and in dealing with nature as homely, or rather as simple, as it is possible for it to be, and utterly irreconcilable with whatever is crude and harsh. As to the man to whom we owe these noble masterpieces, which breathe the very spirit of ancient art, he was like his works.'*

January 1882. A. H. PALMER.

* *The Athenæum*, June 3rd 1881.

THE MILTON SERIES.

Notes concerning the Milton Series of Water-colour Paintings, and other Works, in the late Exhibition, the property of L. R. Valpy.

AS a prisoner on the treadmill of professional life in London, the writer sought refreshment in Nature's deepest and highest utterances as rendered by some of our English artists, with the addition, in certain cases, of the privilege of personal friendship, resulting from intercourse connected with works secured. In a very special manner was this refreshment and privilege secured in connexion with the Master whose works, included in this Catalogue, are about to be exhibited. And here the heart yearns to pour forth of the abundance of its respect, gratitude, and love, which some seventeen years of personal intercourse, and very full and free correspondence, had evoked: but this is not the place for indulgence in such a sympathetic strain.

The first communication was a note, written in 1863, inquiring whether Mr. Palmer would be willing to review a drawing in the Old Water-Colour Gallery, if not sold during the Exhibition, in the one respect explained. The reply was as follows:—'You have exactly described my own impression as to the lights in windows, and reflections. I think they glare a little, and should rather glimmer. I am always glad to adopt a suggestion like yours, especially when it would enhance poetic mystery.'

This work is entitled 'Twilight—the Chapel by the Bridge,' and who shall fathom, much less exhaust, the extent of mental vision condensed into that tiny space? Here is a suggestive, helpful, remark of Mr. Palmer, written at a later period, and respecting another contemplated work, viz. 'Dawn—Corpo di Cava,' of a somewhat similar size:—'When a design is small, we may make an advantage, a merit as it were, of that smallness, by choosing a concentrative subject, as you did in the "Dawn," and "Noon—Resting-time."' 'We thus get qualities as intrinsically good as in a larger work; the artist's

notion (whatever may be his power of realising it), being that of a small casket containing precious jewels.'

These three drawings, 'Dawn,' 'Noon,' and 'Twilight,' are Nos. 44, 47, 54 in this Exhibition.

The review of the 'Twilight' drawing being completed, Mr. Palmer wrote:—'I have spent a morning on the "Chapel by the Bridge," and not an unpleasant one, as I think it has made the difference of the few last sun-glows, "which give the fruit their sweetness."'

In connexion with the design for No. 44, the following remark will illustrate the generous, tender, sympathy of the artist for the yearnings of those who were to possess his works:—'With respect to the glow of the "Dawn," if it exceed, I think it is only by a hair's breadth. We can look at it together. . . . . We must always, as Reynolds says, work with the balances in our hands; not, however, forgetting the words of the great poet and critic:—

> "Yet ne'er so sure our passion to create,
> As when they touch *the brink* of all we hate."

Mediocrity seldom offends, but never charms, by touching this brink.' Again he wrote:—'I have virtually worked much on the "Dawn," although the hand has not touched it.'

The landscape and cloud effect in this drawing were based on studies made at Corpo di Cava many years back.

Sympathy expanded, and acquaintance was ripened into friendship, and the following passage from one of Mr. Palmer's letters indicates the line of attraction which was permitted to secure for a hungering mind the bestowal of a small share of the wealth stored in his ripe gifts and powers:—'You ask me to show you anything which specially affects my inner sympathies. Now only three days have passed since I did begin the meditation of a subject which for twenty years has affected my sympathies with sevenfold inwardness, though now for the first time I seem to feel, in some sort, the power of realising it. It is from one of the finest passages in what Edmund Burke thought the finest poem in the English language. The passage includes "The bellman's drowsy charm." I never artistically knew "such a sacred and homefelt delight" as when endeavouring, in all humility, to realise, after a sort, the imagery of Milton.'

Thus was the germ planted, which was to spring into abundant life, and the initiative had been taken for the consideration of a plan involving the development of what now appears, as the Milton Series from *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso;* intended to secure, not mere illustrations, but worthy renderings

of certain clusters of choice thoughts. Strange fact, that the first Milton subject referred to, was the last worked out by Mr. Palmer.

'You have set me longing,' wrote Mr. Palmer, in July, 1864, 'to see what you have marked "as Miltonic gems in rich settings." Even though one knows every line by heart, select and precious passages gain somewhat by social sympathetic love. The choice of subject is at once a compliment and a stimulus to the artist. It will, no doubt, be a work of time to make the selection, and there is much to be thought and said. Your thought of the amber sky rather haunts me. For Milton, space is essential, as also to secure more final dreaming and refinement; not large enough for diffuseness, but large enough to make that amber sky a *spread* of light. Long sweeping lines and largeness of parts are essential for Milton. . . . . I am never in a "lull" about Milton in the abstract, nor can I tell how many times I have read his poems, his prose, his biographers. He never tires. He seems to be one of the few who have come to full maturity of manhood.'

Again:—'Your Milton paper is most interesting. I have not yet had time to study it, but already catch some new lights on passages, and at all events I have to thank you for a new and strange light, in your mention of the amber sky in connexion with the poems; for, if I mistake not, it gives me a hope of realising one particular passage, which, for the simple reason of its being so exceedingly fine, I have never yet pleased myself in attempting.' . . . . 'The yes or no as to a first stone would influence my plans, as I fear that Miltonic work would make me sacrifice a good many things to it—that I should mount my hobby with a will—not the classical Pegasus which you seem to dread. However, what you mean by the "classical," I hate as much as you can hate it.'

The first stone was soon laid, and in September, 1864, a letter was received with two Milton renderings sketched on it. Later on Mr. Palmer wrote:—'I find, after repeated reference to your paper, that we both wish for the same result. I always accepted your view, which is not materialistic, but capable of the highest treatment; you have well put it, as "keeping within a boundary, but keeping near it." Let the subjects be once begun, and eagerness will come in like a flood; so it is well that the channels should be rightly cut. Truth in art seems to me to stand at a fixed centre, midway between its two antagonists—Fact and Phantasm. . . . . Exquisite as are some of the favoured aspects of Nature, no facts, nor representations of facts, alone, can give *rest* to the mind which has humbly dwelt on the works of the ideal Masters. Though sight is the most refined of the senses, yet sight of colour and shade is a sensual pleasure, unless the visible suggest the historic and poetic; and it is,

perhaps, the very intensity which belongs to sensual appetite that makes us fasten with such appetite upon sketches taken at once from Nature. But He who gave us the senses wills that we should use them in measure, and with thanksgiving. We have a sensual pleasure in smelling a honeysuckle, but of so refined a class that it almost suggests poetry.'

Thus the realisation of the main line of thought to be expressed was gradually being developed; and here is a sample of the spirit in which Mr. Palmer meditated and evolved results which are concentrated in the works exhibited:—'Too ill for regular work, but with that serenity of thought which sometimes alleviates bodily weakness, I got my newly-made Milton portfolios close to the invalid chair, a bit of chalk or two, and then, having carefully collated your most useful and suggestive papers, began to feel my way through some *L'Allegro* difficulties which have haunted me for years. Like Lady Macbeth (in a remarkably obscure passage by-the-by):—

"Of all things else I do desire a clearness,"

and so, till all the series are settled upon pretty clearly, I do not see how we can well choose the first pair; nor how, considering the uncertainty lurking in the future, and the fragility of life itself, we can *make sure* of the set.'

This passage should be borne in mind, as at the close of these notes a remarkable coincidence connected therewith will become apparent.

What with occasional illness, and other causes, the marking out of the final lines was much delayed, but with deeply interesting compensating features in the outpourings of the soul-life, the aspirations and experiences, of Mr. Palmer, which he was good enough to convey by his letters.

A few selections are here given, as indicating the spirit which inspired the artist, and the root principles whence have blossomed the images of beauty depicted in this series:—

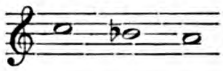
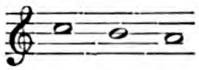
'Yesterday some of the designs came to me unawares, and an impulse to begin. How different is the inward *sight* of a thing, to speculation about it. Milton's nuts are worth the trouble of cracking, for each has a kernel in it. That mystery which cannot be commanded, that immaterial and *therefore* real image, that seed of all true beauty in picture or poem, falls into earthly soil, and becomes subject in a great measure to the conditions of matter, and fails or fares as the soil permits: the desert sand, the ploughed fallow, the rich garden mould. To say that the seed does everything is fanaticism. Milton saw both. What a soil was *he* preparing, who knew Homer almost by heart at sixteen!'

'I dare scarcely leave the room except for indoor exercise, although in vigour

of thought and work, such as it is. *What* it is, I never can tell when about it, or directly it is done; but can only conjecture from the sort of moral influence which is upon me at the time. If I am in a "fine fellow" state of mind, then I suppose it will be trash; but generally it turns out tolerable, if I have the grace to suffer and to love. For the intellectual is a strange counterpart of the spiritual. Love stoops to suffering, takes it up, carrying it in her arms:—

"And makes e'en suffering sweet."'

'I terrier'd into the Milton warren, and in a moment pounced upon the prey—sought for years—that shy animal, *The Curfew*. Handel has set that very finely, and in the end, the lights in the villages seem to go out one by one, through the use of what I may call the double minor, where in the third the semitone changes its place—

Thus  instead of 

But I must not remain in the warren.'

'The real THOUGHT comes in a moment, and is caught and chalked down in two minutes; and woe betides if one alters these first lines. They are the gift, richer or poorer, according to the capacity of the earthen vessel to which they are vouchsafed.'

'Now the preliminaries for six of the subjects are secured, and lie harmless in the portfolio, and having given my whole thoughts to them, it is a relief to forget them, while proceeding with the "Towered Cities." The variety will be marked.

'Danger is likely to arise rather from my own over-fastidiousness than otherwise; and in art that is sometimes more dangerous than rashness. If in the handling, caution and fear get ever so little ahead of impulse and joy, a work is, I think, in its worst peril; though all four are good, each in its time and turn, throughout life. I am the very "youth" of the biography, upon whom Blake turned with the question—"Do you work with fear and trembling?" I could tell him now, as I told him then—"Indeed, I do;" but I look cheerfully on the Milton series, because my mind is in undivided allegiance to them, and in their very arduousness I find my delight. Each will be done best, when its impression on the artist is most vivid.'

'I find that quiet looks in still seclusion, have done, and are doing, so much for the drawings, that the delay is profitable all ways. It would be a great pleasure to see you, and to have a Milton conference.'

'I have had another raid among the Miltons, continuing until I had fully satisfied myself as to the treatment of all. I don't think a single suggestion

of yours has been neglected. Whenever conference is desirable, I would rather come to London on purpose than neglect it. It is curious how, without my seeking, my sketches of very picked scenery have pressed themselves into the service.'

The following are remarks by the Master on the several works included in the *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* series. How seldom has such an instrument to fathom the inner depths been secured! How privileged the friendship which was thus made the vehicle for conveying, in black and white, 'the first lines,' 'the gift' bestowed on the Master! The remarks will be selected as applied to the various works, taking them in the following order, as they were completed:—'The Towered City,' 'The Lonely Tower,' 'The Dripping Eaves,' 'The Curfew,' 'The Waters Murmuring,' 'The Eastern Gate,' 'The Prospect,' and 'The Bellman's Drowsy Charm.' The corresponding numbers in the Catalogue are Nos. 71, 74, 68, 60, 64, 78, 70.

No. 71.—'In the amber sky, all depends upon the silver stream reflecting the upper sky; the castle of romance extended to provide the hint of "The Towered City;" a plateau reserved for the Hymen group, in sympathy with the golden gleam over the woods. I hope to realise this quite *con amore*, as it is a sky and effect I have never tried. . . . Romantic sentiment, remoteness of time and place, just the opposite of that preference for the present, which certain critics say is the mark of genius. The stream, in combination with "The Towered City," the Hymeneal procession, and that of the armed knights hinted at as passing the bridge, may enable students of Milton to recall

> "Such sights as youthful poets dream,
> On summer eves by haunted stream."'

No. 74.—'Now that I have softened the unfinished films, the sky in "The Lonely Tower" forms part of the most subtle piece of gradation I have ever realised—that is, so I fancy. As I was touching on the sheep, all of a sudden—I don't know why—the whole seemed to come as I intended: so I packed it up to make it difficult to get at, lest I should spoil it. In this state a few breathings, after we have had a final look at it together, will be precious. We must reach poetic loneliness—not the loneliness of the desert, but a secluded spot in a genial pastoral country, enriched also by antique relics, such as those so-called Druidic stones. The constellation may help to indicate that the building is nothing else but the tower of *Il Penseroso*. Shepherds may gaze, not at the sky, but at the light given forth by

> "My lamp at midnight hour."'

No. 68.—Of 'The Dripping Eaves' subject he wrote: 'The showery gusty morn-

ing is not wanting in poetic force, when the "clouds big with blessing," break upon rich glebes such as adorn the sides of Dartmoor. We may unite the sympathies of poetic remoteness with such homely reality as the smell of newly turned-up earth and the details of a farm afford, though, unhappily, painting is at fault equally with perfumes as with sounds. . . . . Feeling that I had never before so nearly realised my thought as in those dark downs, I felt you would prefer delay to their endangerment.'

This drawing was, in some respect, revised after exhibition. Here is Mr. Palmer's expression of generous feeling with reference to the result:—'I am not using too strong a word to say that I am *delighted* to find that you feel the revised work so strongly.' He gives his own feeling as follows:—'Rightly or wrongly, I fancy that the dark moorland is the best thing I have ever done. I aimed at Southern Dartmoor sentiment, where the valleys run with cream, and where they clout pilchard pies with clotted cream; and it is this, I trust, I have embodied. I do like the beeves, because to me they look ancient and bucolic. I hope I have also secured the lull in a rain-and-wind storm *after* sunrise, and at an hour when otherwise "morn" would be "trickt and frounc't" in her full splendour—when *plates* of golden light wherever the sun can get through are the characteristic. At no other time are these plates so platy.'

No. 60.—'"Wide-water'd Shore," according to "conscience clause," receives attention every morning (Sundays excepted), and has become *a whole*. It is now seducing me into those tender breathings and bloom which, after all, are the "seasoning as does it." It was those which made "The Dripping Eaves" what, on your word, I believe it has become. It ("The Wide-water'd Shore") is getting more and more, at every touch, of the solemn fusion belonging to the theme, and directly it reaches that point at which it is on even balance, and another touch may do it harm instead of good, I will send it.'

'Its state is this: in breathless stillness I am absorbed in it, and I think I see my way clearly.'

'I am glad you are so indulgent as to give me yet a little more time, for I think some gossamer touches and tendernesses may be added, which are always to be done at the proper time, but come strangely when one cannot account for it.'

'The attempt has been made to render a wide-watered shore without suggesting swamps, pollards, water-rats, and miasma. Whatever is dull, disagreeable, and atrocious, seems inadmissible in literature and art, unless it occur in satire or tragedy. Poetry has dealt with the murder of Duncan, but would eschew the same violation of hospitality by Mr. and Mrs. Manning. As

painting cannot "roar," it can only, by a minute touch, indicate the curfew's solemn sound.'

No. 64.—'"The Waters Murmuring" will realise golden reflected light in chasmal hollows wherein is a brook, which glides and drops beneath a blink of the "garish eye." I have taken much to the close covert, with the delightful difficulty of making the waters murmur. This will be an opportunity for cool colour and luminous shade (not a bull, in art language). I have for a long time been cultivating coolness in shadows, and that makes the lights more gorgeous. . . . . The moment supposed is that immediately before the poet (in the covert) wakes; when the nymphs, sent by the genius of the wood, have just given a staccato tang, preluding the "sweet music," which he is to hear as he awakes. As much seclusion and enclosure among the mountain clefts as could be consistent with the "pleasures" of melancholy. Some air of poetic antiquity may be given even to inanimate nature, though it be all equally old. Gray has—"some *old* poetic mountain." Some subjects hang upon delicacies—upon innuendos (in the harmless sense of the word), and as you can read such qualities I wish to give them you to the utmost of my ability. It is the last, almost imperceptible movement of a screw, which puts a stringed instrument quite in tune; yet before that last movement, the discord increases as we approach to unison or harmony.' . . .

'I have gotten again on "Waters Murmuring." Only think that I, who hate above all things procrastination, should become its victim! But in a sad, as well as very blessed sense,—

> "There is a Providence which shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."'

'Since I have been convalescent, I have been involved in such a maze of matters as has made things too hot for the serenity of Milton musings, therefore I feel your kindness the more in not urging me to immediate work.'

'I hope, D.V., to fall upon the remaining subjects tooth and nail, and carry them through with interkindling zeal after my late art retreat for deeper study than heretofore. If I carry them on together, which would be for their own great advantage in the present stage, it will be rather longer before they can make their *début*. The new light which I suppose myself to have gathered, will enable me to unite much delicacy and harmony with force.'

'Without aiming at anything beyond or outside my tether, I hope, if it be not presumption, to produce a few things which may justly be called works of art. I have not been urged to my late interior discipline by any adverse criticism, but rather driven to it by the contrary; that I might do *my* part

towards justifying any favourable judgment which friendly critics have been pleased to form of my work.'

No. 78.—'Your letter caught me at full swing with "The Eastern Gate," a difficult one to open, but the more pleasant when accomplished, as I have every reason to think it will be. . . . The grey touches where the sun cannot strike quite express my own feeling. I think the best, and, in fact, the least tardy way, will be to do my very best to the last. Indeed, for several years, this has been my rule with every work, from largest to smallest. I have been making a little model of my ploughman and beeves in "The Eastern Gate," and could soon finish "The Waters Murmuring," but as I want it to express the quiet sylvan refinement, should prefer keeping it somewhat longer.'

'I have no misgivings about "The Eastern Gate." The fulness and finish of Milton's "unpremeditated verse" is the result, mental and moral, of his whole previous life; when he had once secured his "Eastern Gate" he was at no further cost for building materials. Painting, however, must build in form: What form? is the question. Again, when Milton's sun "begins his state," what does it illumine? Nothing but the familiar georgic and pastoral. Yes; and these employments were formerly thought worthy of kings and heroes, and perhaps Milton might have doubted whether Abel's "keeping of the sheep" was not as poetical a matter as "the first great epic" of his murder.'

No. 69.—'The other day I think the true "vision" came of "The Prospect." It is a curious subject, for there seems no medium between a mappy Buckinghamshire treatment, and a genial poetic swoon. If we can but cause the eye to shoot across the scene, we shall obtain a prospect whence "new pleasures" may be caught, and these will be added to, by tempting curiosity in due time into its recesses, and the hints of ancient habitation, and present culture, without which a prospect may be very extensive, but very depressing.'

'I do not falter on "The Bellman's Drowsy Charm." Here we enter seclusion without desolateness; where light enough remains to show the village sheltered in its wooded nest, and that the ground heaves well and is rich enough in pasture. Increasing gloom sometimes enforces the sentiment of exuberance by giving more play to the imagination. If, as Dr. Johnson fears, "there is always some melancholy in his mirth," there is certainly no wretchedness in Milton's melancholy. . . . . I think "The Bellman" will go smoothly on to a satisfactory ending. Do you know that you have almost exactly described the scene in the description—your word-picture—of a Hereford village, in one of your letters from that neighbourhood? I happened to be reading it the other evening, and at the moment fancied almost that I had

stolen my subject from your letter, till I remembered that it had been designed a twelvemonth earlier.'

These are the artist's heart utterances concerning the poetic renderings he was pouring forth.

'The Bellman's Drowsy Charm' is absent from this Exhibition. The reason why, is mentioned later on.

Nos. 56 and 82 are renderings from Milton's *Comus*. These had long been enjoyed as they were viewed during the delightfully refreshing 'whole day visits' for burrowing into the portfolios of past outdoor studies, and to drink in the spirit of purity and power from works completed or in progress, and the result was that the two Comus works were added to the Milton series. It seemed impossible to resist the impulse to possess these additional witnesses to the complete accord found to subsist in such true and great spirits as the poet and the painter.

Meanwhile also there had been another transaction. After the first burrow into the portfolios, certain of the studies were specially stamped on the memory, and they seemed to have become a part of one's very self. Well has it been observed that there is a sacredness in the truth of Impression. Somewhat freely applying that sentiment, it may be said that the impression produced by that day's feasting on the studies was such as to make them part of the heart-life of the visitor, and thus it seemed that, if they were ever to be sent out on their proper mission of instruction, elevation, and refreshment, they might fairly be secured by one who had already tasted of their sweets.

Here is the artist's response to the softly-indicated appeal made:—'It gives me much pleasure to feel that you were not disappointed with the studies which you came so far to see. It is curious that half a life's labour should pack away into a few small boxes. What shall I say or do about the works you name? I feel pleasure in keeping them unbroken. Shall I put the first spade into the virgin soil? I have long ago been advised by the wise never to part with original studies. What am I to do? I feel half inclined, ere Prudence knocks at the door, to capitulate on your present summons.'

The opportunity was eagerly seized, and the assault was pressed to the extent of Nos. 55, 58, 59, 63, 77, 87, 88, 89 in this Exhibition.

James Holland wrote in reply to a somewhat similar appeal:—'Parting with a sketch is like parting with a tooth; once out, it cannot be replaced. Yet there are times when pain is a pleasure, and to add to your refreshment is sufficient inducement to comply.'

Then the 'Waterfall and Brook' (No. 77) was next surrendered. At first, however, there was the old hesitancy. 'There are some pleasant associa-

tions connected with the "Brook" (Waterfall) subject, which indispose me to part with it. Moreover, it was, as regards subject and structure, one of those original inventions of "Nature" which one might never meet with again.' The first assault repulsed, led to a mark on the frame-back, indicating that if ever S. P. changed his mind it was to be first named to L. R. V. Thus the wall was pierced by a tiny aperture, and at last it fell—to the great joy of the besieging foe.

The latest work secured was the 'Windmill.' No. 43. This had been examined at one of the visits to the art burrow, and it led to some remarks on cloud illumination, as distinguished from the cold hard coatings of white surface too often accepted as indicating the rolling masses of ever-varying vapour. The suggestions were received in the same generous spirit as in other cases, and later on Mr. Palmer wrote:—'I have spent time upon the little Windmill since you saw it, and unmistakably increased its balance. It had not *quite* the weight and tone of a *gray day;* now I think it has, and the globe of cloud light looks really luminous. Many very striking qualities may be rapidly secured, but those which touch the feelings and imagination cannot be tossed off. Your remark concerning the *retention* of light within illuminated moisture, and yet the pouring of it forth back again to the eye, I greatly value, and I think you will see that the drawing has profited by it.'

To draw these notes to a close—sweet employment and enjoyment though it be to cull from such a correspondence as has furnished the foregoing extracts. It will be remembered, that when writing on the development of the series of subjects, Mr. Palmer referred to the 'fragility of life,' as preventing us from making sure of the completion of the set of eight works contemplated. Seven are on the walls of the present Exhibition. The eighth, 'The Bellman's Drowsy Charm,' was reviewed early in this year—the last visit paid to the source of so much of helpful influence. The picture was to have had a few touches to meet certain points of recognised incompleteness. The last communications received relating to this culmination of his powers were as follows:—

'March 9, 1881.—I wish "The Bellman" to be in our Gallery next spring, as, in case of my death, this note will certify.'

'April 19, 1881.—"The Bellman" is nearly finished; but with me the difference between nearly and quite is quite surprising. I feel as much quiet pleasure in the subject as Mrs. Gamp with the bottle of gin, which she desired to be placed on the mantleshelf without pressing her to take any. So, in the interest of the work itself, I hope you will stretch your patience a little further, and let me take my own time, in the assurance that it will not be neglected.'

The expression of Mr. Palmer's wish would, of course, be enough to account for the absence of his latest work from this Exhibition; but beyond this it must be added that the members of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours at once expressed their desire to hang this work on the walls of that Gallery where his reputation was made. One passage from the letter of Mr. Alfred Fripp, the present Secretary of the Society, is extracted here; and this the less hesitatingly, and without asking leave, because it does honour to him who wrote, while testifying to the reputation amongst his fellow-members of the departed master:—

'I need hardly say how fully the Society shares your feeling as to the irreparable loss art has sustained in Samuel Palmer's death. He was, indeed, as you express it, "one of its strongest yet most tender teachers," and never stronger, never more poetical, than in the two magnificent works which now (June, 1881) enrich the Society's Exhibition, which surpass anything he ever did.'

These works were 'The Eastern Gate' and 'The Prospect.'

Other testimony the writer is privileged to be able to offer—that of two men, whom to know in their art-powers is well-nigh a source of personal pride, and whom to be able to reckon among one's friends is truly a privilege, and cause for special thankfulness—two such men as F. W. Burton and D. G. Rossetti, had given indications of their appreciation of the gifts of Samuel Palmer, and they now permit the following remarks from their correspondence to be added to these notes.

Mr. F. W. Burton wrote during the exhibition of 'The Lonely Tower' and 'The Towered City:'—'I must congratulate you on having added two such works of Palmer's to your collection as those now in the Gallery. They are amongst the finest he has done, and they take a lofty rank in the school of ideal landscape, which is limited to so few masters, because it requires three qualities which are rare in combination—a high and pure order of mind, strong imagination, and cultivation. I hardly know which of these works I prefer, but on the whole, perhaps, I lean to the reading of the *Penseroso*. There is a high imaginative quality in this subject, and the treatment of the moon-light is such as only a man who well knows the true aim, as well as the resources of his art, would have ventured upon. This subdued gorgeousness is just what is missed by ordinary painters in representing moonlight—a light which is seldom cold, if ever, and which always suggests colour, even when the colour is undefinable. The distance is most noble: but there are a thousand things in this work which I hope some day to go over with you. The other picture is extremely fine, rich, and full, and although he has chosen the solemn

evening hour, yet he has contrived to give a jocund, festive, air to the whole which is wonderful, and by means which are not easily traceable. The middle distance is magnificent.'

Since the artist has been called away, Mr. Burton wrote :—'Palmer is well-nigh the last of the school of English poetic landscape-painters—a school which may now be said to belong to the past, but the works of which, so long as time spares them, will ever increase in value to the thoughtful and refined mind. By means of an exhibition of his works, the present generation will have an opportunity of showing their own worth, by their appreciation of his.'

Mr. Rossetti wrote, some time back :—'There is an inevitable sense of presumption on the part of a junior like myself (though certainly a ripe one enough) in venturing to say thus cursorily what remains in my mind as to the result of our conversation relating to Samuel Palmer's genius. Such a manifestation of spiritual force absolutely present—though not isolated as in Blake—has certainly never been united with native landscape power in the same degree as Palmer's works display ; while, when his glorious colouring is abandoned for the practice of etching, the same exceptional unity of soul and sense appears again, with the same rare use of manipulative material. The possessors of his works have what *must* grow in influence, just as the possessors of Blake's creations are beginning to find ; but with Palmer the progress must be more positive, and infinitely more rapid, since, while a specially select artist to the few, he has a realistic side on which he touches the many, more than Blake can ever do.'

Since the death of Mr. Palmer he (Mr. Rossetti) wrote:—'I knew that you were one of those who were most attached to the good man as well as to the good painter. His works are clear beacons of inspiration, which is a point very hard to attain to in landscape art ; but in him one may almost say that it was as evident as in Blake.'

The writer must be pardoned for one word more. It seems to him that Samuel Palmer's character and life-work were, in their full fruition, the outflow of light and love infused within—constraining, purifying, elevating all. Deeper it would not be permissible here to penetrate. The heart was, indeed, a reflecting medium of the truths and forces shed from the unseen. The powers he received, the gifts bestowed, were with him no mere selfish possessions, but means well and constantly used to disseminate truth and beauty.

L. R. V.

October, 1881.

A COMPLETE CATALOGUE

OF

THE WORKS OF SAMUEL PALMER,

EXHIBITED AT THE GALLERY OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS.

AS ASSOCIATE, 1843–54 AS MEMBER, 1854–81.

Date.	No.	
1843.	56	THE COLOSSEUM AND ALBAN MOUNT.
	114.	HARLECH CASTLE—TWILIGHT. 'The moon is up, and yet it is not night.'
	131.	AT DONNINGTON, BERKSHIRE; THE BIRTHPLACE OF CHAUCER.
	197.	OLD FARM, NEAR THATCHAM, BERKS.
	218.	RUSTIC SCENE, NEAR THATCHAM, BERKSHIRE.
	238.	EVENING—THE RUINS OF A WALLED CITY.
	304.	THE BAY OF BAIÆ FROM MONTE NUOVO.
	312.	THE CAMPAGNA AND AQUEDUCTS OF ROME.
1844.	10.	JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL. 'And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.'—*Gen.* xxxii. 26.
	75.	THE VILLAGE OF PAPIGNO ON THE NAR, BETWEEN TERNI AND THE FALLS. 'The river glideth at his own sweet will.'
	89.	THE GUARDIAN OF THE SHORES—TWILIGHT AFTER RAIN. 'The storm-rent vapours pass, and lurid shapes Fantastic hover o'er the dusky shore.'

Date. No.

133. THE MONASTERY—A SCENE FROM SOUTHERN ITALY.

246. THE POET'S GRAVE. ENGLISH BURIAL-GROUND AT ROME; THE BURIAL-PLACE OF KEATS.

'Belov'd till verse can charm no more,
And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.'

264. MOUNTAIN PASTURES.

'Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite.'

278. THE SILVER CITY—MORNING ON THE JURA MOUNTAINS, LOOKING TOWARDS THE ALPS.

286. THE 'GLIMMERING LANDSCAPE.'

'The ploughman homeward plods his weary way.'

1845. 98. LA VOCATELLA—A CHAPEL BUILT BY A HERMIT NEAR CORPO DI CAVA, IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SALERNO AND NAPLES.

122. THE CITY OF ROME AND THE VATICAN, FROM THE WESTERN HILLS. PILGRIMS RESTING ON THE LAST STAGE OF THEIR JOURNEY.

158. EVENING IN ITALY—THE DESERTED VILLA.

'The sun sets red and rises bright;
But yon grey halls are still as night,
With masque and revel wake no more
The echoes of the past'ral shore.'

159. TIVOLI AND THE CAMPAGNA OF ROME, WITH THE WATER-ORGAN AND THE GREAT CYPRESSES OF THE VILLA D'ESTE. THE CITY OF ROME IN THE REMOTE DISTANCE.

272 FLORENCE AND VAL D'ARNO.

306 PORTA DI POSILIPO AND THE BAY OF BAIÆ, WITH ISCHIA AND THE PROMONTORY OF MISENUM.

'The balmy spirit of the Western gale,
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail.'

337. AT SUNSET—THE MOUNTAINS BEHIND PÆSTUM AND SALERNO, AND PART OF THE SALERNIAN GULF, FROM THE SLOPES OF MONTE FINESTRE.

Date. No.

1846. 108. THE AGED OAK.

111. THE CORN-FIELD.

113. CHILDREN GLEANING.

120. A LANE SCENE.

122. THE LISTENING GLEANER.

141. CROSSING THE BROOK.

201. A FARM-YARD NEAR RISBOROUGH, BUCKS.

1847. 148. THE BROKEN BRIDGE.

176. A LANDSCAPE—SUNSET.

241. THE CORN-FIELD—CLOUDY MORNING.

253. THE GIPSY DELL—MOONLIGHT.

259. THE SKIRTS OF A VILLAGE.

1848. 5. SION HILL, UNDERRIVER, KENT.

51. MOUNTAIN FLOCKS.

122. WOODLAND SCENERY.

175. THE RUINS OF A MONASTERY—STORM COMING ON.

204. CHRISTIAN DESCENDING INTO THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION.
Vide 'Pilgrim's Progress.'

217. MERCURY DRIVING AWAY THE CATTLE OF ADMETUS.

228. CARTING THE WHEAT.

251. CROSSING THE COMMON—SUNSET.

1849. 88. FAREWELL TO CALYPSO!

100. SIR GUYON, WITH THE PALMER ATTENDING, TEMPTED BY PHÆDRIA TO LAND UPON THE ENCHANTED ISLANDS.—*Faery Queen.*

149. SUN AND SHADE—ARESTORIDES.

Date.	No.	
	175.	SHELTERING FROM THE STORM.
	222.	KING ARTHUR'S CASTLE, TINTAGEL, CORNWALL.
	244.	SYLVAN QUIET.
	255.	CROSSING THE HEATH.
	334.	GLEANERS CROSSING A SHALLOW STREAM.
1850.	58.	CHILDREN NUTTING.
	177.	WIND AND RAIN.
	205.	ST. PAUL LANDING IN ITALY.
	217.	ROBINSON CRUSOE GUIDING HIS RAFT UP THE CREEK.
	304.	CATTLE IN THE SHALLOWS—SUMMER EVENING.
	326.	CARTING THE WHEAT—SHOWERY WEATHER.
1851.	192.	THE WINDMILL.
	303.	SHEEP IN THE SHADE.
	321.	THE BREEZY HEATH.
1851.	107.	A SHOWERY MORNING—SCENERY OF WEST SOMERSET.
	237.	THE FORESTER'S HORN.
	251.	SHADY QUIET.
	263.	THE APPROACH OF DINNER.
	275.	THE SKIRTS OF A COMMON.
1853.	18.	THE RUSTIC DINNER.
	210.	CHILDREN AND SHEEP.
	228.	HASTE AND PATIENCE.
1854.	241.	FAST TRAVELLING.
	252.	THE FOLDED FLOCK.

Date. No.

1855. 73. THE DELL OF COMUS.

'This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill; but ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods.'

251. THE RUSTIC CONVERSAZIONE.

255. SUNSET OVER THE GLEANING-FIELDS.

277. THE BAY OF NAPLES.

1856. 147. THE BROTHERS GUIDED BY THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT DISCOVERING THE PALACE AND BOWERS OF COMUS.

'*Attendant Spirit.* Immur'd in cypress shades the sorcerer dwells.
You may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandish'd blade rush on him, break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce sign of battle make and menace high.'

153. THE BROTHERS IN 'COMUS' LINGERING UNDER THE VINE.

'Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinkt hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.'

1857. 6. TWO YEARS AGO ON THE SOUTHERN COAST—THE BRITISH FLEET IN SIGHT.

238. FIRST LOVE.

240. THE DIP OF THE SUN.

248. THE LOVE-LETTER.

250. WELCOME HOME.

Date. No.

284. A BRIGHT DAY IN AUTUMN.

313. THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE—SQUALLY WEATHER PASSING OVER.

1858. 229. THE PROPOSAL.

'Look where he comes forlorn !—say "Yes."'

238. THE WIDOW'S DAUGHTER.

'Two comforts had that widowed soul,
Her Bible and her Daughter.

256. GOING TO INDIA—THE FATHER'S BLESSING AND THE MOTHER'S PRAYER.

258. THE BLUEBELL.

'Give her this glass of mulled ale, good-wife ! That will be warmer work than shaking hands in the moonlight.'

264. THE HONEYMOON — IN THE BACKGROUND THE ROCKS OF KYNANCE.

266. FORTUNE-TELLING—THE GIPSY AND THE WAGGONER.

312. THE RISING MOON.

1859. 175. THE COMET OF 1858, AS SEEN FROM THE SKIRTS OF DARTMOOR.

186. RETURNED FROM INDIA.

210. THE ROMANCE OF LIFE.

219. THE RISING MOON.

232. A LETTER FROM INDIA.

236. THE FISHING-BOAT GOING OUT.

241. RETURNING FROM THE VINTAGE.

243. THE MORNING OF LIFE.

1860. 112. THE BALLAD.

157. THE ABBEY.

172. MOUNTAIN PASTURES.

Date. No.

235. FROM THE FIRST VOYAGE.

1861. 68. THE ABBEY STREAM.

127. DISTANT MOUNTAINS.

133. IN THE CHEQUERED SHADE.

183. AFTER THE STORM.

216. IN VINTAGE TIME.

226. SUNSET ON THE MOUNTAINS.

232. THE STREAMLET.

1862. 241. THE PATRIARCH OF THE ORCHARD.

'They climb, and fill their baskets grey;
Swing by the boughs, and pelt and play;
So played in its maturity
Their grandsires round that hoary tree.'

251. IN THE COUNTRY.

'The sunshine over hill and dale,
The fresh field and the foaming pail.'

259. A POET.

'The sisters listening to his verse were moved,
And Madeline the simple goatherd loved.'

267. THE FISHERMAN'S WIFE.

'The storm, and anxious night are passed;
The wished for sail appears at last.'

291. WRECKED AT HOME.

'Th' occasion met, the peril braved,
A brother and a husband saved.'

1862. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

390. THE FURZE-FIELD.

407. FINISHED STUDY FOR A PICTURE—'THE SHADOWY POOL.'

'The thirsty oxen from the sunshine wind
Into the shadowy corner of a pool.'

Date. No.

1863. 229. THE BROTHER COME HOME FROM SEA.

'"Awake! awake! our Robin is come home;
Just landing by the bay, no more to roam!"
Brothers and sisters answer to his cheer,
And 'twill be merry in the cottage there:
Pullet and junket, and the old brown ale,
And all agape to hear the traveller's tale.'

238. THE SHEEP-SHEARERS.

'But who, from England's olden time,
Sent Jason's freight to every clime,
With generous wealth and plenty blest,
Our loom-built cities of the West?
Poor shepherds shearing in a row,
Upon some sunny upland brow.'

285. THE SACRED RUIN.

'Upon the marish in the vale
A vapoury sun look'd wan and pale.
The Abbey rose—the ground was till'd—
The sun on golden harvests smiled:
And still he loves that ruin grey,
Making it golden in decay,
And lends a colouring of his own,
Where once the deep-stain'd windows shone.'

1863. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

65. THE CHAPEL BY THE BRIDGE. (Known also as 'Twilight.')

'There was a little oratory by the bridge foot, and as we approached in the dying light we could hear the chanted responses.'

303. A DREAM IN THE FOREST.

'In such green palaces the first kings reigned—
Slept in their shades and angels entertained.'—WALLER.

316. 'ON SUMMER EVES BY HAUNTED STREAM.'

323. THE 'TRAVELLER'S REST.'

'They help the girls and children down,
Belated from the market-town;
The cheer is good, the fagot bright,
Within the oaken screen to-night.'

358. MOUNTAIN PASTURES.

'The milkmaids on the mountain brow,
The heather fleck'd with fleecy snow.'

Date. No.

1864. 150. A DREAM IN THE APENNINE.

'Suddenly, at a turn in the mountain road, we looked for the first time on that Plain ; the dispenser of law, the refuge of philosophy, the cradle of faith. Ground which Virgil trod and Claude invested with supernatural beauty, was sketched—but with a trembling pencil.'

1864. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

189. THE EARLY PLOUGHMAN. (Known also as 'Dawn.')

196. LYCIDAS.

320. STUDY OF A WATERFALL NEAR TREFRIEW, NORTH WALES.

366. 'THE RIVER GLIDETH AT HIS OWN SWEET WILL.'

368. NEAR CLOVELLY—A PAGE FROM THE BLOT-BOOK.

421. GOING HOME AT CURFEW-TIME.

'And now wind homeward in the dying light;
Homeward, my flocks, for Hesperus is bright.'

434. HOVERING CLOUDS.

1865. 111. THE GOOD FARMER.

'Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.'

271. THE CLOSE OF A CLEAR DAY.

'That promises each past'ral lawn
A starry night, an amber dawn.'

273. THE GOLDEN HOUR. (Known also as 'The Glorious Sunset.'

'Though heaven and earth with August glow,
Our island streams unstinted flow.'

1865. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

105. A SKETCH IN CLOVELLY PARK, LOOKING TOWARDS THE CLIFFS ON THE FURTHER SIDE OF MOUTH-MILL RAVINE.

111. STUDY OF A MIDDLE DISTANCE—CLOVELLY PARK, NORTH DEVON.

THE BOUNDARY LINE IS THE ABRUPT EDGE OF HIGH CLIFFS WHICH HAVE LITTLE OR NO TABLE-LAND, THE GROUND INCLINING THUS IN WOODY SLOPE.

Date. No.

348. HOPE, OR THE LIFTING OF THE CLOUD.

'The day at first was sombre, like the shadowy turrets we were to explore. Then there was a distant gleam; the breeze began to stir, and the rain-cloud slowly rising disclosed the mountains.'

352. THE HAUNTED TURRET.

'All day the clouds had hovered over the mountain, but about sunset they parted; the cumuli rested far off, and the turrets glimmered in a more genial light.'

1866. 253. STORIED SUMMITS—FROM THE 'LEGENDS OF WEST SURREY.'

'Who dropped the rock upon that central hill?'

305. A DAY-DREAM OF SALERNO, WITH THE OLD LIBURNUS, FROM SLOPES OF MONTE FINESTRE.

'More pleasing than the fitful gleam,
With storm behind and gathering nigh,
Still to frequent the temperate shade,
Look far and see the prospect bright.'

1866. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

60. A STUDY AT TINTERN—DRAWN ON THE SPOT.

194. FLORENCE—DRAWN ON THE SPOT.

237. A STUDY OF WOODY HILL AND SLATE MOUNTAIN NEAR FESTINIOG, NORTH WALES.

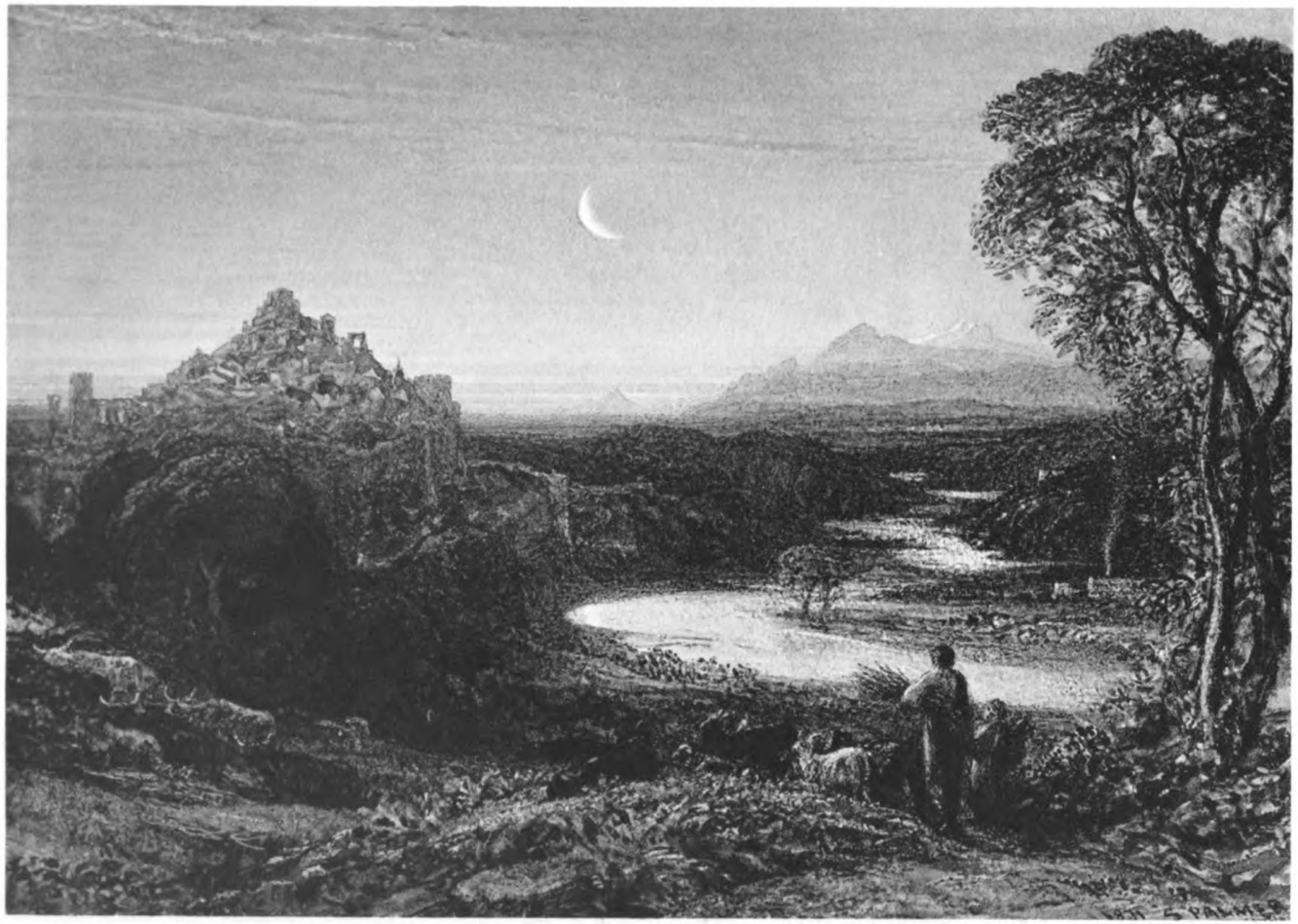
353. ARTHUR'S GATE—A LEGEND OF TINTAGEL.

'They say that under that postern the body of King Arthur passed to burial.'

1867. 252. AT BACKWAYS, NEAR TINTAGEL—DRAWN ON THE SPOT.

1868. 16. FROM 'IL PENSEROSO.' (Known also as 'The Lonely Tower.')

'Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook.'



Date No.

93. A TOWERED CITY—FROM 'L'ALLEGRO.'

'There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp and feast and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.'

193. MORNING. (Known also as 'The Dripping Eaves.')

'Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.'

200. POMPEIIAN MEMORIES.

1870. 97. THE CURFEW.

'Oft on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar.'

105. THE NEAR AND THE DISTANT—FROM SOUTHERN ITALY. (Known also as 'Italy Far and Near.')

1871. 161. THE FALL OF EMPIRE. (Known also as 'The Colosseum.')

'There is given
Unto the things of earth which Time hath bent
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.'

205. AN ANCIENT MANOR HOUSE, BENEATH.

'The Western downs of lovely Albion.'

1871. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

317. A CASCADE IN SHADOW, DRAWN ON THE SPOT, NEAR THE JUNCTION OF THE MACHNO AND CONWAY, NORTH WALES.

378. PAPIGNO ON THE NAR, BELOW THE FALLS OF TERNI. [Bistre.]

'Fluminaque antiquos subterlabentia muros.'

Date. No.

1872. 245. CROSSING THE BROOK—SCENERY OF WESTERN SURREY. THE CUMULUS IN MINIATURE.

1873. 79. A GOLDEN CITY.

'Oh, Rome! my country! city of the soul,
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee
Lone mother of dead empires, and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye
Whose agonies are evils of a day:
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.'

112. LYCIDAS.

'Together both ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night.'

1874. 91. OLD ENGLAND'S SUNDAY EVENING.

1875. 272. THE TRAVELLERS.

1877. 5. THE WATERS MURMURING—FROM 'IL PENSEROSO.'

'There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep'.

100. TITYRUS RESTORED TO HIS PATRIMONY.

'O fortunate old man!
Then these ancestral fields are yours again;
And wide enough for you. Though naked stone,
And marsh with slimy rush abut upon
The lowlands, yet your pregnant ewes shall try
No unproved forage; neighb'ring flocks, too nigh,
Strike no contagion, nor infect the young.
O fortunate, who now at last among
Known streams and sacred fountain-heads, have found
A shelter and a shade on your own ground.'

Date. No.

1877. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

380. AUTUMN.

402. IN MEMORIAM—A RECOLLECTION OF THE BURIAL-PLACE OF KEATS, NEAR THE PYRAMID OF CAIUS CESTUS, ROME. [Sepia.]

431. PLOUGHMEN.

'Man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening.'

435. CROSSING THE BROOK.

1878. 238. RIVER BANKS AT EVEN.

1879. 240. HASTING TO COVERT—A THREATENING RAIN-STORM.

257. MOUNTAIN STREAM AND AN ANCIENT FORTRESS.

1879. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

352. WESTERN SHORES.

360. GOING TO FOLD.

1880. 218. SABRINA.

'Still she retains
'Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows.'

1880. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

313. AURORA. (Known also as 'Opening the Fold.')

'Now with her rosy fingers had the dawn
From glimmering Heaven the veil of night withdrawn,
And folded flocks were loose, to browse anew
O'er mountain-thyme and trefoil wet with dew.'

1881. 18. THE PROSPECT—FROM 'L'ALLEGRO.'

'Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pide,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies
The cynosure of neighb'ring eyes.'

Date. No.

56. THE EASTERN GATE—FROM 'L'ALLEGRO.'

'Right against the Eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.'

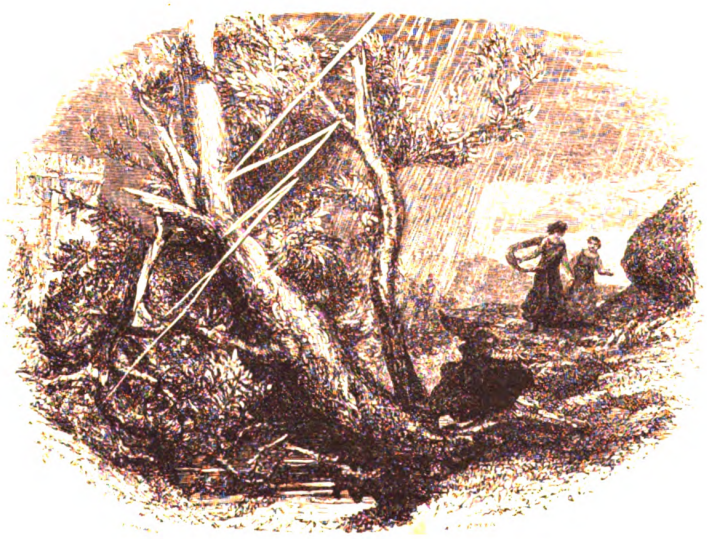
1881. *WINTER EXHIBITION.*

364. EVENTIDE.

The following Drawing—the last of the Milton Series—will, as explained in Mr. Valpy's Notes, be exhibited at the Gallery of the Royal Society of Painters in Water-Colours, in the Spring of 1882.

THE BELLMAN—FROM 'IL PENSEROSO.'

'—— the Bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.'



CATALOGUE OF THE WORKS

EXHIBITED AT THE

FINE ART SOCIETY'S GALLERIES,

1881–2.

NOTE.

THE FINE ART SOCIETY tender their respectful thanks to the following Contributors of Works to this Exhibition:—

MR. GEO. BELL.
„ GEO. BOULTON.
„ H. J. CARR.
„ CHARLES L. COLLARD.
MRS. FIELD.
MR. BIRKET FOSTER.
„ W. J. GALLOWAY.
„ GEORGE GURNEY.
THE REV. E. GURNEY.
MR. J. M. HEAD.
„ J. P. HESELTINE.
„ JOS. J. JENKINS, F.S.A.
„ J. W. KNIGHT.
MRS. MORRISON.
„ DYCE NICOL.
MR. J. W. OVERBURY.
„ A. H. PALMER.
„ H. REECE.
„ W. F. ROBINSON, Q.C.
„ JAS. G. ROBINSON.
„ G. E. STREET, R.A.
„ W. A. SMITH.
„ F. TEESDALE.
„ R. TOWNROE.
MISS L. TWINING.
MR. L. R. VALPY.

They also wish to express their indebtedness to the Members of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, who had intended that a feature should be made in their present Winter Exhibition of a selection of their deceased Member's works, and who courteously altered their intentions on learning that Mr. Palmer had, during his life-time, made arrangements for the present Exhibition.

CATALOGUE.

OILS.

	CONTRIBUTED BY
1. A Kentish Hop-Garden (early)	*Mr. J. W. Overbury.*
2. The Gleaning Field (early)	*The Fine Art Society.*
3. Monte Nuovo and the Bay of Naples (cir. 1842)	*Mr. A. H. Palmer.*
4. A Sleeping Shepherd (early)	*Mr. J. W. Overbury.*
5. The Skylark	*Mr. J. W. Knight.*
6. The Bright Cloud (early)	*Mr. W. F. Robinson, Q.C.*
7. Twilight (early)	*The Fine Art Society.*
8. The Harvest-Field	*Mr. W. F. Robinson, Q.C.*
8*a*. Children Returning from Gleaning	*Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

WATER-COLOURS.

9. Tivoli and the Campagna of Rome (1845)	*The Fine Art Society.*
10. The Herdsman (cir. 1855)	,,
11. Landscape—Evening	*Mr. R. Townroe.*
12. The Aged Oak (1846)	*Mr. A. H. Palmer.*
13. A Golden City (1873)	*Mr. Geo. Boulton.*
14. A Poet (1862)	*The Fine Art Society.*

CONTRIBUTED BY

15. A FARM-YARD (finished recently) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

16. A LANE SCENE (1846) *The Fine Art Society.*

17. A LANDSCAPE—SUNSET (1847) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

18. TIVOLI AND THE CAMPAGNA OF ROME (outdoor Study, 1839) *Mr. W. F. Robinson, Q.C.*

19. ANCIENT ROME (outdoor Study, 1839) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

20. ROBINSON CRUSOE GUIDING HIS RAFT INTO THE CREEK (1850) „

21. WRECKED AT HOME—A HUSBAND AND A BROTHER SAVED (1862) *The Fine Art Society.*

22. THE GUARDIAN OF THE SHORES (1844) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

23. TITYRUS RESTORED TO HIS PATRIMONY (1877) *Mr. Geo. Gurney.*

24. THE COMET OF 1858 (1859) *The Fine Art Society.*

25. MODERN ROME (outdoor Study, 1839) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

26. ST. PAUL LANDING IN ITALY (1850) *Mr. Chas. L. Collard.*

27. THE ABBEY (1860) *The Fine Art Society.*

28. FROM WIMLETT'S HILL, KENT *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

29. CATTLE IN THE SHALLOWS (1850) *The Fine Art Society.*

30. AMPHITHEATRE, POMPEII (outdoor Study, 1839) „

31. GLEANERS CROSSING A SHALLOW STREAM (1849) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

CONTRIBUTED BY

32. CHRISTIAN DESCENDING INTO THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION (1848) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

33. PONTE ROTTO (out-door Study, 1839) *Mr. W. F. Robinson, Q.C.*

34. A BROTHER COME HOME FROM SEA (1863) „

35. A BEGINNING (cir. 1868) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

36. SABRINA (cir. 1855) *The Fine Art Society.*

37. SHEEP-SHEARERS (1863) „

38. THE FORESTER'S HORN (1852) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

39. POMPEIAN MEMORIES (1869) *Mr. Charles L. Collard.*

40. A STUDY—REIGATE *The Fine Art Society.*

41. RIVER BANKS AT EVEN (1878) *The Rev. E. Gurney*

42. MOUNTAIN STREAMS AND AN ANCIENT FORTRESS (1879) *Mr. J. M. Head.*

43. THE WINDMILL *Mr. R. L. Valpy.*

44. DAWN (1864) „

45. A DREAM IN THE APENNINE (1864) *Mr. Jas. G. Robinson.*

46. JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL (1844) *Mr. Charles L. Collard.*

47. NOON—RESTING-ITME *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

48. THE SHADOWY STREAM *Mr. J. M. Head.*

49. HASTING TO COVERT—a threatening Rain-storm (1879) „

50. SABRINA (1880) *Mr. W. A. Smith.*

'Still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows.'

CONTRIBUTED BY

51. A FARM — *The Fine Art Society.*

52. THE TRAVELLERS (1875) — *Mr. Geo. Gurney.*

53. A SKETCH IN FRANCE (1839) — *The Fine Art Society.*

54. TWILIGHT—THE CHAPEL BY THE BRIDGE (1863) — *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

55. A STUDY — ,,

56. THE BROTHERS, GUIDED BY THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, DISCOVERING THE PALACE AND BOWER OF COMUS (1856) — ,,

57. SUNSET OVER THE SEA — *Mr. W. J. Galloway.*

58. A STUDY—ITALY (1839) — *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

59. CLOVELLY PARK, LOOKING TOWARD THE CLIFFS (outdoor Study) — ,,

60. THE CURFEW—From *Il Penseroso* (1870) — ,,

'Oft on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar.'

61. A DAY-DREAM OF SALERNO (1866) — *Mr. G. E. Street, R.A.*

62. THE DIP OF THE SUN (1857) — *Miss L. Twining.*

63. DOLGARROG FALL—NORTH WALES (outdoor Study) — *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

64. THE WATERS MURMURING (1877)—From *Il Penseroso* — ,,

' There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep.'

CONTRIBUTED BY

65. 'SHADY QUIET' (1852) *Mr. Jos. G. Jenkins, F.S.A.*

66. FIGURE WITH PINE, &c. &c. (worked at recently) *The Fine Art Society.*

67. A DREAM IN THE FOREST (1863) *Mr. Chas. L. Collard.*

68. THE DRIPPING EAVES (1869)—From *Il Penseroso* *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

'Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.'

69. THE FALLEN TREE (unfinished) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

70. THE PROSPECT—From *L'Allegro* (1881) *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

'Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pide,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes.'

71. A TOWER'D CITY—From *L'Allegro* (1868) ,,

'Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
* * *
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
* * *
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.'

CONTRIBUTED BY

72. THE NEAR AND THE DISTANT, FROM SOUTHERN ITALY (1870) *Mr. Geo. Gurney.*

73. GOING HOME AT CURFEW TIME (1864) *Mr. Chas. L. Collard.*

74. THE LONELY TOWER—From *Il Penseroso* (1868) *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

'Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes'—

75.

76. AT BACKWAYS, NEAR TINTAGEL (1869) *Mr. J. P. Heseltine.*

77. A CASCADE IN NORTH WALES (outdoor Study) *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

78. THE EASTERN GATE—From *L'Allegro* (1881) „

'Right against the Eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.'

79. THE GOOD FARMER (1865) *Mr. J. P. Heseltine.*

80. IN SURREY (beginning) *The Fine Art Society.*

81. A FARM-YARD NEAR PRINCE'S RISBOROUGH, BUCKS (1846) *Mr. J. M. Head.*

CONTRIBUTED BY

82. COMUS: THE BROTHERS LINGERING UNDER THE VINE (1856) *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

'Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.'

83. THE GOLDEN HOUR (1865) *Mr. Geo. Gurney.*

84. THE SACRED RUIN (1863) *Mrs. Morrison.*

85.

86.

87. POTHLWYD FALL—NORTH WALES (out-door Study) *Mr. L. R. Valpy.*

88. STUDY OF MIDDLE-DISTANCE—CLOVELLY PARK ,,

89. A STUDY IN FRANCE (1839) ,,

90. LYCIDAS (1873) *Mr. Geo. Gurney.*

'Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn.'

91. A BRIGHT DAY IN THE AUTUMN (1857) *Miss L. Twining.*

92.

93. ITALIAN DAWN *Mrs. Field.*

94. LOWERING CLOUDS *Mr. Birket Foster.*

95. THE FURZE-FIELD (a Study from Nature) *Mr. A. H. Palmer.*

96. WESTERN SHORES (1879) *Mr. J. M. Head.*

97. THE WIDOW'S DAUGHTER (1858) *Mrs. Field.*

98. THE SOWER (illustrating a Poem of Miss Procter's) *Mr. Geo. Bell.*

		CONTRIBUTED BY
99.	ROME FROM THE VIA SISTINA (a Study from Nature, 1839)	*Mr. A. H. Palmer.*
100.	THE HAUNTED TURRET (1865)	*Mr. Birket Foster.*
101.	IN CLOVELLY PARK (a Study from Nature)	*Mr. A. H. Palmer.*
102.	GOING TO FOLD (1879)	*Mr. J. M. Head.*
102*a*.	AURORA (1880)	*Mr. H. J. Carr.*
102*b*.	BLACKBERRY GATHERING	*Mr. F. Teesdale.*
102*c*.	AUTUMN (1877)	,,
102*d*.	THE DELL OF COMUS (1855)	*Mrs. Dyce Nicol.*

ETCHINGS.

103. THE LONELY TOWER. From *Il Penseroso.* Published by the Etching Club, 1880. Plate destroyed.

104. THE HERDSMAN'S COTTAGE. (1850.) Published in the *Portfolio.*

105. THE BELLMAN. From *Il Penseroso.* (1879.) Published by The Fine Art Society.

106. THE SKYLARK. (1850.) Published by the Etching Club, 1857. Plate destroyed.

107. CHRISTMAS; OR, FOLDING THE LAST SHEEP. From Bampfylde's *Sonnet.* (1850.)

108. THE WILLOW. (1850.) Mr. Palmer's first Etching.

109. THE SLEEPING SHEPHERD. Published by the Etching Club, 1857. Plate destroyed.

110. EARLY MORNING—OPENING THE FOLD. Published by The Fine Art Society.

111. THE VINE. Two Subjects on one Plate. Published in the *Songs and Sonnets of Shakespeare*, 1852. Plate destroyed.

112. THE EARLY PLOUGHMAN. Published in Hamerton's *Etching and Etchers*, 1868.

113. THE HERDSMAN. Published by the Etching Club, 1867. Plate destroyed.

114. THE MORNING OF LIFE. Published by the Etching Club, 1872. Plate destroyed.

115. THE RISING MOON. Published by the Etching Club, 1857. Plate destroyed.

OPENING OF THE FOLD (sepia, 1880) *Mr. H. Reece.*

LONDON:
Printed by STRANGEWAYS & SONS, Tower Street, Upper St. Martin's Lane.