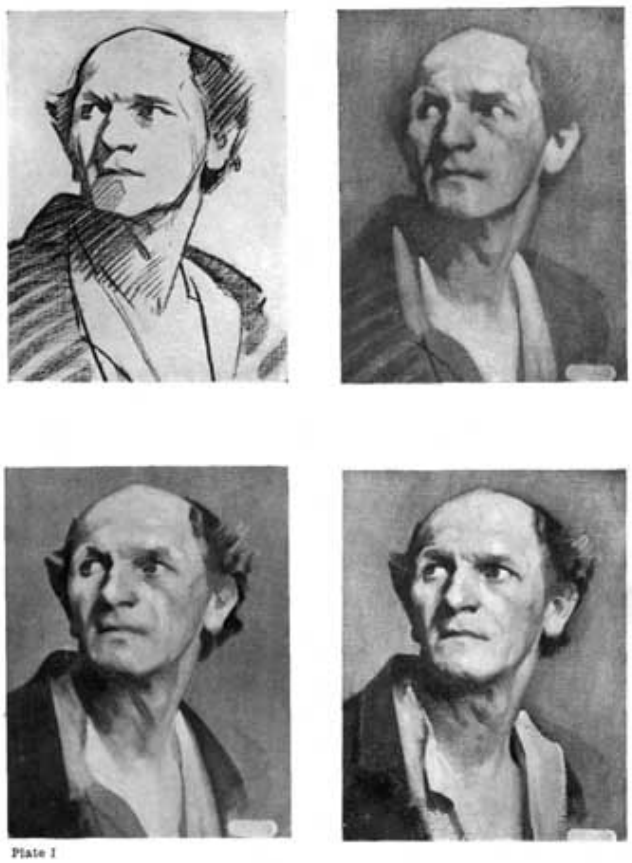

Plate I

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF SAME MONOCHROME PAINTING IN DIFFERENT STAGES ILLUSTRATING A METHOD OF STUDYING MASS DRAWING WITH THE BRUSH

Plate I.

FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF SAME MONOCHROME PAINTING IN DIFFERENT STAGES ILLUSTRATING A METHOD OF STUDYING MASS DRAWING WITH THE BRUSH

PREFACE

Permit me in the first place to anticipate the disappointment of any student who opens this book with the idea of finding "wrinkles" on how to draw faces, trees, clouds, or what not, short cuts to excellence in drawing, or any of the tricks so popular with the drawing masters of our grandmothers and still dearly loved by a large number of people. No good can come of such methods, for there are no short cuts to excellence. But help of a very practical kind it is the aim of the following pages to give; although it may be necessary to make a greater call upon the intelligence of the student than these Victorian methods attempted.

It was not until some time after having passed through the course of training in two of our chief schools of art that the author got any idea of what drawing really meant. What was taught was the faithful copying of a series of objects, beginning with the simplest forms, such as cubes, cones, cylinders, &c. (an excellent system to begin with at present in danger of some neglect), after which more complicated objects in plaster of Paris were attempted, and finally copies of the human head and figure posed in suspended animation and supported by blocks, &c. In so far as this was accurately done, all this mechanical training of eye and hand was excellent; but it was not enough. And when with an eye trained to the closest mechanical accuracy the author visited the galleries of the Continent and studied the drawings of the old masters, it soon became apparent that either his or their ideas of drawing were all wrong. Very few drawings could be found sufficiently "like the model" to obtain the prize at either of the great schools he had attended. Luckily there was just enough modesty left for him to realise that possibly they were in some mysterious way right and his own training in some way lacking. And so he set to work to try and climb the long uphill road that separates mechanically accurate drawing from artistically accurate drawing.

truth is the search for beauty. People whose vision does not penetrate beyond the narrow limits of the commonplace, and to whom a cabbage is but a vulgar vegetable, are surprised if they see a beautiful picture painted of one, and say that the artist has idealised it, meaning that he has consciously altered its appearance on some idealistic formula; whereas he has probably only honestly given expression to a truer, deeper vision than they had been aware of. The commonplace is not the true, but only the shallow, view of things.

Plate II

Copyright photo, Braun & Co.

DRAWING BY LEONARDO DA VINCI FROM THE ROYAL COLLECTION AT WINDSOR

Plate II.

DRAWING BY LEONARDO DA VINCI FROM THE ROYAL COLLECTION AT WINDSOR

Copyright photo, Braun & Co.

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"Art is the expression of the invisible by means of the visible"

expresses the same idea, and it is this that gives to art its high place among the works of man.

Beautiful things seem to put us in correspondence with a world the harmonies of which are more perfect, and bring a deeper peace than this imperfect life seems capable of yielding of itself. Our moments of peace are, I think, always associated with some form of beauty, of this spark of harmony within corresponding with some infinite source without. Like a mariner's compass, we are restless until we find repose in this one direction. In moments of beauty (for beauty is, strictly speaking, a state of mind rather than an attribute of certain objects, although certain things have the power of inducing it more than others) we seem to get a glimpse of this deeper truth behind the things of sense. And who can say but that this sense, dull enough in most of us, is not an echo of a greater harmony existing somewhere the other side of things, that we dimly feel through them, evasive though it is.

But we must tread lightly in these rarefied regions and get on to more practical concerns. By finding and emphasising in his work those elements in visual appearances that express these profounder things, the painter is enabled to stimulate the perception of

Plate III

STUDY FOR "APRIL"
In red chalk on toned paper.

Plate III.

STUDY FOR "APRIL"

In red chalk on toned paper.

Let us test this definition with some simple cases. Here is a savage, shouting and flinging his arms and legs about in wild delight; he is not an artist, although he may be moved by life and feeling. But let this shouting be done on some ordered plan, to a rhythm expressive of joy and delight, and his leg and arm movements governed by it also, and he has become an artist, and singing and dancing (possibly the oldest of the arts) will result.

Or take the case of one who has been deeply moved by something he has seen, say a man killed by a wild beast, which he wishes to tell his friends. If he just explains the facts as he saw them, making no effort to order his words so as to make the most telling impression upon his hearers and convey to them something of the feelings that are stirring in him, if he merely does this, he is not an artist, although the recital of such a terrible incident may be moving. But the moment he arranges his words so as to convey in a telling manner not only the plain facts, but the horrible feelings he experienced at the sight, he has become an artist. And if he further orders his words to a rhythmic beat, a beat in sympathy with his subject, he has become still more artistic, and a primitive form of poetry will result.

Or in building a hut, so long as a man is interested solely in the utilitarian side of the matter, as are so many builders to-day, and just puts up walls as he needs protection from wild beasts, and a roof to keep out the rain, he is not yet an artist. But the moment he begins to consider his work with some feeling, and arranges the relative sizes of his walls and roof so that they answer to some sense he has for beautiful proportion, he has become an artist, and his hut has some architectural pretensions. Now if his hut is of wood, and he paints it to protect it from the elements, nothing necessarily artistic has been done. But if he selects colours that give him pleasure in their arrangement, and if the forms his colour masses assume are designed with some personal feeling, he has invented a primitive form of decoration.

And likewise the savage who, wishing to illustrate his description of a strange animal he has seen, takes a piece of burnt wood and draws on the wall his idea of what it looked like, a sort of catalogue of its appearance in its details, he is not necessarily an artist. It is only when he draws under the influence of some feeling, of some pleasure he felt in the appearance of the animal, that he becomes an artist.

Of course in each case it is assumed that the men have the power to be moved by these things, and whether they are good or poor artists will depend on the quality of their feeling and the fitness of its expression.

Plate IV

STUDY ON TISSUE-PAPER IN RED CHALK FOR FIGURE OF BOREAS

Plate IV.

STUDY ON TISSUE-PAPER IN RED CHALK FOR FIGURE OF BOREAS

The purest form of this "rhythmic expression of feeling" is music. And as Walter Pater shows us in his essay on "The School of Giorgione," "music is the type of art." The others are more artistic as they approach its conditions. Poetry, the most musical form of literature, is its most artistic form. And in the greatest pictures form, colour, and idea are united to thrill us with harmonies analogous to music.

The painter expresses his feelings through the representation of the visible world of Nature, and through the representation of those combinations of form and colour inspired in his imagination, that were all originally derived from visible nature. If he fails from lack of skill to make his representation convincing to reasonable people, no matter how sublime has been his artistic intention, he will probably have landed in the ridiculous. And yet, **so great is the power of direction exercised by the emotions on the artist that it is seldom his work fails to convey something, when genuine feeling has been the motive**. On the other hand, the painter with no artistic impulse who makes a laboriously commonplace picture of some ordinary or pretentious subject, has equally failed as an artist, however much the skilfulness of his representations may gain him reputation with the unthinking.

The study, therefore, of the **representation of visible nature** and of **the powers of expression possessed by form and colour** is the object of the painter's training.

And a command over this power of representation and expression is absolutely necessary if he is to be capable of doing anything worthy of his art.

This is all in art that one can attempt to teach. The emotional side is beyond the scope of teaching. You cannot teach people how to feel. All you can do is to surround them with the conditions calculated to stimulate any natural feeling they may possess. And this

that is so satisfying. One cannot come away from the contemplation of that wonderful ceiling of his in the Vatican without the sense of having experienced something of a larger life than one had known before. Never has the dignity of man reached so high an expression in paint, a height that has been the despair of all who have since tried to follow that lonely master. In landscape also this expression of largeness is fine: one likes to feel the weight and mass of the ground, the vastness of the sky and sea, the bulk of a mountain.

On the other hand one is charmed also by the expression of lightness. This may be noted in much of the work of Botticelli and the Italians of the fifteenth century. Botticelli's figures seldom have any weight; they drift about as if walking on air, giving a delightful feeling of otherworldliness. The hands of the Madonna that hold the Child might be holding flowers for any sense of support they express. It is, I think, on this sense of lightness that a great deal of the exquisite charm of Botticelli's drawing depends.

The feathery lightness of clouds and of draperies blown by the wind is always pleasing, and Botticelli nearly always has a light wind passing through his draperies to give them this sense.

As will be explained later, in connection with academic drawing, it is eminently necessary for the student to train his eye accurately to observe the forms of things by the most painstaking of drawings. In these school studies feeling need not be considered, but only a cold accuracy. In the same way a singer trains himself to sing scales, giving every note exactly the same weight and preserving a most mechanical time throughout, so that every note of his voice may be accurately under his control and be equal to the subtlest variations he may afterwards want to infuse into it at the dictates of feeling. For how can the draughtsman, who does not know how to draw accurately the cold, commonplace view of an object, hope to give expression to the subtle differences presented by the same thing seen under the excitement of strong feeling?

Plate V

FROM A STUDY BY BOTTICELLI
In the Print Room at the British Museum.

Plate V.

FROM A STUDY BY BOTTICELLI

In the Print Room at the British Museum.

These academic drawings, too, should be as highly finished as hard application can make them, so that the habit of minute visual expression may be acquired. It will be needed later, when drawing of a finer kind is attempted, and when in the heat of an emotional stimulus the artist has no time to consider the smaller subtleties of drawing, which by then should have become almost instinctive with him, leaving his mind free to dwell on the bigger qualities.

Drawing, then, to be worthy of the name, must be more than what is called accurate. It must present the form of things in a more vivid manner than we ordinarily see them in nature. Every new draughtsman in the history of art has discovered a new significance in the form of common things, and given the world a new experience. He has represented these qualities under the stimulus of the feeling they inspired in him, hot and underlined, as it were, adding to the great book of sight the world possesses in its art, a book by no means completed yet.

So that to say of a drawing, as is so often said, that it is not true because 36 it does not present the commonplace appearance of an object accurately, may be foolish. Its accuracy depends on the completeness with which it conveys the particular emotional significance that is the object of the drawing. What this significance is will vary enormously with the individual artist, but it is only by this standard that the accuracy of the drawing can be judged.

It is this difference between scientific accuracy and artistic accuracy that puzzles so many people. Science demands that phenomena be observed with the unemotional accuracy of a weighing machine, while artistic accuracy demands that things be observed by a sentient individual recording the sensations produced in him by the phenomena of life. And people with the scientific habit that is now so common among us, seeing a picture or drawing in which what are called facts have been expressed emotionally, are puzzled, if they are modest, or laugh at what they consider a glaring mistake in drawing if they are not, when all the time it may be their mistaken point of view that is at fault.

But while there is no absolute artistic standard by which accuracy of drawing can be judged, as such standard must necessarily 37 vary with the artistic intention of each individual artist, this fact must not be taken as an excuse for any obviously faulty drawing that incompetence may produce, as is often done by students who when corrected say that they "saw it so." For there undoubtedly exists a rough physical standard of rightness in drawing, any violent deviations from which, even at the dictates of emotional expression, is productive of the grotesque. This physical standard of accuracy in his work it is the business of the student to acquire in his academic training; and every aid that science can give by such studies as Perspective, Anatomy, and, in the case of Landscape, even Geology and Botany, should be used to increase the accuracy of his representations. For the strength of appeal in artistic work will depend much on the power the artist possesses of expressing himself through representations that arrest everyone by their truth and naturalness. And although, when truth and naturalness exist without any artistic expression, the result is of little account as art, on the other hand, when truly artistic expression is clothed in representations that offend our ideas of physical truth, it is only the few who can forgive the offence for the sake of the genuine feeling they perceive behind it.

Plate VI

STUDY IN NATURAL RED CHALK BY ALFRED STEPHENS

From the collection of Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon

Plate VI.

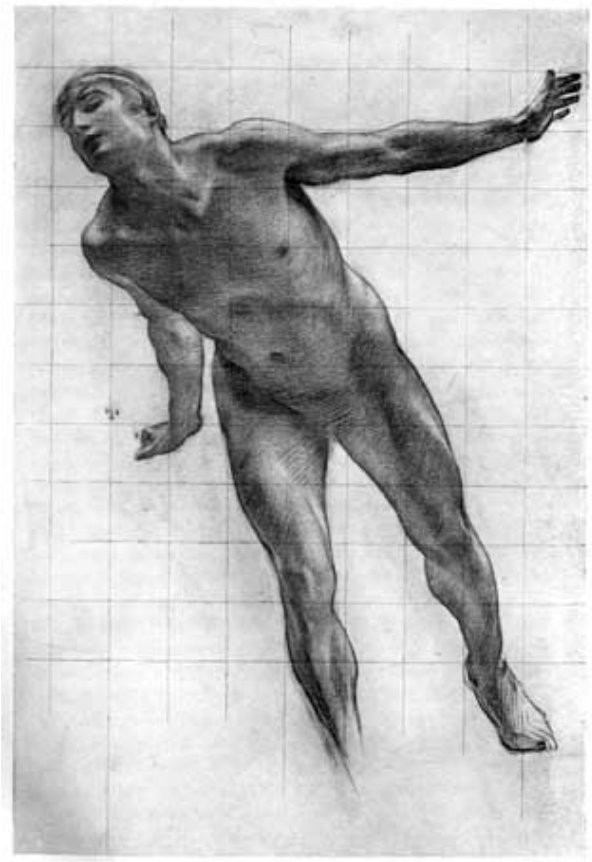

Plate VII

STUDY FOR THE FIGURE OF APOLLO IN THE PICTURE "APOLLO AND DAPHNE"

In natural red chalk rubbed with finger: the high lights are picked out with rubber.

Plate VII.

STUDY FOR THE FIGURE OF APOLLO IN THE PICTURE "APOLLO AND DAPHNE"

In natural red chalk rubbed with finger; the high lights are picked out with rubber.

But to return to our infant mind. While the development of the perception of things has been going on, the purely visual side of the question, the observation of the picture on the retina for what it is as form and colour, has been neglected—neglected to such an extent that when the child comes to attempt drawing, **sight is not the sense he consults**. The mental idea of the objective world that has grown up in his mind is now associated more directly with touch than with sight, with the felt shape rather than the visual appearance. So that if he is asked to draw a head, he thinks of it first as an object having a continuous boundary in space. This his mind instinctively conceives as a line. Then, hair he expresses by a row of little lines coming out from the boundary, all round the top. He thinks of eyes as two points or circles, or as points in circles, and the nose either as a triangle or an L-shaped line. If you feel the nose you will see the reason of this. Down the front you have the L line, and if you feel round it you will find the two sides meeting at the top and a base joining them, suggesting the triangle. The mouth similarly is an opening with a row of teeth, which are generally shown although so seldom seen, but always apparent if the mouth is felt (see diagram A). This is, I think, a fair type of the first drawing the ordinary child makes—and judging by some ancient scribbling of the same order I remember noticing scratched on a wall at Pompeii, and by savage drawing generally, it appears to be a fairly universal type. It is a very remarkable thing which, as far as I know, has not yet been pointed out, that in these first attempts at drawing the vision should not be consulted. A blind man would not draw differently, could he but see to draw. Were vision the first sense consulted, and were the simplest visual appearance sought after, one might expect something like diagram B, the shadows under eyes, nose, mouth, and chin, with the darker mass of the hair being the simplest thing the visual appearance can be reduced to. But despite this being quite as easy to do, it does not appeal to the ordinary child as the other type does, because it does not satisfy the sense of touch that forms so large a part of the idea of an object in the mind. All architectural elevations and geometrical projections generally appeal to this mental idea of form. They consist of views of a building or object that could never possibly be seen by anybody, assuming as they do that the eye of the spectator is exactly in front of every part of the building at the same time, a physical impossibility. And yet so removed from the actual visual appearance is our mental idea of objects that such drawings do convey a very accurate idea of a building or object. And of course they have great advantage as working drawings in that they can be scaled.

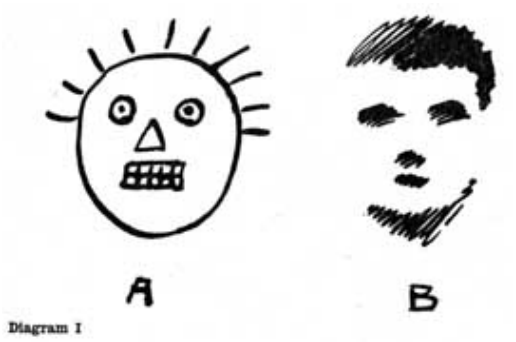

Diagram I.

Diagram I.

A. TYPE OF FIRST DRAWING MADE BY CHILDREN, SHOWING HOW VISION HAS NOT BEEN CONSULTED

B. TYPE OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED IF CRUDEST EXPRESSION OF VISUAL APPEARANCE HAD BEEN ATTEMPTED

If so early the sense of vision is neglected and relegated to be the handmaiden of other senses, it is no wonder that in the average adult it is in such a shocking state of neglect. I feel convinced that with the great majority of people vision is seldom if ever consulted for itself, but only to minister to some other sense. They look at the sky to see if it is going to be fine; at the fields to see if they are dry enough to walk on, or whether there will be a good crop of hay; at the stream not to observe the beauty of the reflections from the blue sky or green fields dancing upon its surface or the rich colouring of its shadowed depths, but to calculate how deep it is or how much power it would supply to work a mill, how many fish it contains, or some other association alien to its visual aspect. If one looks up at a fine mass of cumulus clouds above a London street, the ordinary passer-by who follows one's gaze expects to see a balloon or a flying-machine at least, and when he sees it is only clouds he is apt to wonder what one is gazing at. The beautiful form and colour of the cloud seem to be unobserved. Clouds mean nothing to him but an accumulation of water dust that may bring rain. This accounts in some way for the number of good paintings that are incomprehensible to the majority of people. It is only those pictures that pursue the visual aspect of objects to a sufficient completion to contain the suggestion of these other associations, that they understand at all. Other pictures, they say, are not finished enough. And it is so seldom that a picture can have this petty realisation and at the same time be an expression of those larger emotional qualities that constitute good painting.

The early paintings of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood appear to be a striking exception to this. But in their work the excessive realisation of all details was part of the expression and gave emphasis to the poetic idea at the basis of their pictures, and was therefore part of the artistic intention. In these paintings the fiery intensity with which every little detail was painted made their picture a ready medium for the expression of poetic thought, a sort of "painted poetry," every detail being selected on account of some symbolic meaning it had, bearing on the poetic idea that was the object of the picture.

But to those painters who do not attempt "painted poetry," but seek in painting a poetry of its own, a visual poetry, this excessive finish (as it is called) is irksome, as it mars the expression of those qualities in vision they wish to express. Finish in art has no connection with the amount of detail in a picture, but has reference only to the completeness with which the emotional idea the painter set out to express has been realised.

Plate VIII

STUDY FOR A PICTURE

In red conté chalk and white pastel rubbed on toned paper.

Plate VIII.

STUDY FOR A PICTURE

In red conté chalk and white pastel rubbed on toned paper.

47 The visual blindness of the majority of people is greatly to be deplored, as nature is ever offering them on their retina, even in the meanest slum, a music of colour and form that is a constant source of pleasure to those who can see it. But so many are content to use this wonderful faculty of vision for utilitarian purposes only. It is the privilege of the artist to show how wonderful and beautiful is all this music of colour and form, so that people, having been moved by it in his work, may be encouraged to see the same beauty in the things around them. This is the best argument in favour of making art a subject of general education: that it should teach people to see. Everybody does not need to draw and paint, but if everybody could get the faculty of appreciating the form and colour on their retinas as form and colour, what a wealth would always be at their disposal for enjoyment! The Japanese habit of looking at a landscape upside down between their legs is a way of seeing without the deadening influence of touch associations. Thus looking, one is surprised into seeing for once the colour and form of things with the association of touch for the moment forgotten, and is puzzled at the beauty. The odd thing is that although thus we see things upside down, the pictures on our retinas are for once the right way up; for ordinarily the visual picture is inverted on the retina, like that on the ground glass at the back of a photographic camera.

48 To sum up this somewhat rambling chapter, I have endeavoured to show that there are two aspects from which the objective world can be apprehended. There is the purely mental perception founded chiefly on knowledge derived from our sense of touch associated with vision, whose primitive instinct is to put an outline round objects as representing their boundaries in space. And secondly, there is the visual perception, which is concerned with the visual aspects of objects as they appear on the retina; an arrangement of colour shapes, a sort of mosaic of colour. And these two aspects give us two different points of view from which the representation of visible things can be approached.

49 When the representation from either point of view is carried far enough, the result is very similar. Work built up on outline drawing to which has been added light and shade, colour, aerial perspective, &c., may eventually approximate to the perfect visual appearance. And inversely, representations approached from the point of view of pure vision, the mosaic of colour on the retina, if

extensive study."

The outlines of the human figure are "invariably the same"? What does this mean? From the visual point of view we know that the space occupied by figures in the field of our vision is by no means "invariably the same," but of great variety. So it cannot be the visual appearance he is speaking about. It can only refer to the mental idea of the shape of the members of the human figure. The remark "particularly those that do not bend" shows this also, for when the body is bent up even the mental idea of its form must be altered. There is no hint yet of vision being exploited for itself, but only in so far as it yielded material to stimulate this mental idea of the exterior world.

Plate IX

STUDY BY WATTEAU

From an original drawing in the collection of Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon.

Plate IX.

STUDY BY WATTEAU

From an original drawing in the collection of Charles Ricketts and Charles Shannon.

All through the work of the men who used this light and shade (or chiaroscuro, as it was called) the outline basis remained. Leonardo, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Titian, and the Venetians were all faithful to it as the means of holding their pictures together; although the Venetians, by fusing the edges of their outline masses, got very near the visual method to be introduced later by Velazquez.

In this way, little by little, starting from a basis of simple outline forms, art grew up, each new detail of visual appearance discovered adding, as it were, another instrument to the orchestra at the disposal of the artist, enabling him to add to the somewhat crude directness and simplicity of the early work the graces and refinements of the more complex work, making the problem of composition more difficult but increasing the range of its expression.

But these additions to the visual formula used by artists was not all gain; the simplicity of the means at the disposal of a Botticelli gives an innocence and imaginative appeal to his work that it is difficult to think of preserving with the more complete visual realisation of later schools. When the realisation of actual appearance is most complete, the mind is liable to be led away by side issues connected with the things represented, instead of seeing the emotional intentions of the artist expressed through them. The

hopeful signs in the art of the moment.

V [58]
MASS DRAWING

In the preceding chapter it has, I hope, been shown that outline drawing is an instinct with Western artists and has been so from the earliest times; that this instinct is due to the fact that the first mental idea of an object is the sense of its form as a felt thing, not a thing seen; and that an outline drawing satisfies and appeals directly to this mental idea of objects.

But there is another basis of expression directly related to visual appearances that in the fulness of time was evolved, and has had a very great influence on modern art. This form of drawing is based on the consideration of the flat appearances on the retina, with the knowledge of the felt shapes of objects for the time being forgotten. In opposition to line drawing, we may call this Mass Drawing.

The scientific truth of this point of view is obvious. If only the accurate copying of the appearances of nature were the sole object of art (an idea to be met with among students) the problem of painting would be simpler than it is, and would be likely ere long to be solved by the photographic camera.

This form of drawing is the natural means of expression when a brush full of paint is in your hands. [59] The reducing of a complicated appearance to a few simple masses is the first necessity of the painter. But this will be fully explained in a later chapter treating more practically of the practice of mass drawing.

Plate X

EXAMPLE OF FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHINESE WORK
BY LUI LIANG (BRITISH MUSEUM)

Showing how early Chinese masters had developed the mass-drawing point of view.

Plate X.

EXAMPLE OF FIFTEENTH-CENTURY CHINESE WORK BY LUI LIANG (BRITISH MUSEUM)

Showing how early Chinese masters had developed the mass-drawing point of view.

The art of China and Japan appears to have been more [influenced by this view of natural appearances than that of the West has been, until quite lately. The Eastern mind does not seem to be so obsessed by the objectivity of things as is the Western mind. With us the practical sense of touch is all powerful. "I know that is so, because I felt it with my hands" would be a characteristic expression with us. Whereas I do not think it would be an expression the Eastern mind would use. With them the spiritual essence of the thing seen appears to be the more real, judging from their art. And who is to say they may not be right? This is certainly the impression one gets from their beautiful painting, with its lightness of texture and avoidance of solidity. It is founded on nature regarded as a flat vision, instead of a collection of solids in space. Their use of line is also much more restrained than with us, and it is seldom used to accentuate the solidity of things, but chiefly to support the boundaries of masses and suggest detail. Light and shade, which suggest solidity, are never used, a wide light where there is no shadow pervades everything, their drawing being done with the brush in masses.

When, as in the time of Titian, the art of the West had discovered light and shade, linear perspective, aerial perspective, &c., and had begun by fusing the edges of the masses to suspect the necessity of painting to a widely diffused focus, they had got very near considering appearances as a visual whole. But it was not until Velazquez that a picture was painted that was founded entirely on visual appearances, in which a basis of objective outlines was discarded and replaced by a structure of tone masses.

60

When he took his own painting room with the little Infanta and her maids as a subject, Velazquez seems to have considered it entirely as one flat visual impression. The focal attention is centred on the Infanta, with the figures on either side more or less out of focus, those on the extreme right being quite blurred. The reproduction here given unfortunately does not show these subtleties, and flattens the general appearance very much. The focus is nowhere sharp, as this would disturb the contemplation of the large visual impression. And there, I think, for the first time, the whole gamut of natural vision, tone, colour, form, light and shade, atmosphere, focus, &c., considered as one impression, were put on canvas.

All sense of design is lost. The picture has no surface; it is all atmosphere between the four edges of the frame, and the objects are within. Placed as it is in the Prado, with the light coming from the right as in the picture, there is no break between the real people before it and the figures within, except the slight yellow veil due to age.

But wonderful as this picture is, as a "tour de force," like his Venus of the same period in the National Gallery, it is a painter's picture, and makes but a cold impression on those not interested in the technique of painting. With the cutting away of the primitive support of fine outline design and the absence of those accents conveying a fine form stimulus to the mind, art has lost much of its emotional significance.

61

Plate XI

Photo Anderson

LOS MENENAS. BY VELAZQUEZ (PRADO)

Probably the first picture ever painted entirely from the visual or impressionist standpoint.

65

But even from the point of view of the *true* visual perception (if there is such a thing) that modern art has heard so much talk of, the copying of the retina picture is not so great a success. The impression carried away from a scene that has moved us is not its complete visual aspect. Only those things that are significant to the felt impression have been retained by the mind; and if the picture is to be a true representation of this, the significant facts must be sorted out from the mass of irrelevant matter and presented in a lively manner. The impressionist's habit of painting before nature entirely is not calculated to do this. Going time after time to the same place, even if similar weather conditions are waited for, although well enough for studies, is against the production of a fine picture. Every time the artist goes to the selected spot he receives a different impression, so that he must either paint all over his picture each time, in which case his work must be confined to a small scale and will be hurried in execution, or he must paint a bit of today's impression alongside of yesterday's, in which case his work will be dull and lacking in oneness of conception.

And further, in decomposing the colour rays that come to the eye and painting in pure colour, while great addition was made to the power of expressing light, yet by destroying the definitions and enveloping everything in a scintillating atmosphere, the power to design in a large manner was lost with the wealth of significance that the music of line can convey.

But impressionism has opened up a view from which much interesting matter for art is to be gleaned. And everywhere painters are selecting from this, and grafting it on to some of the more traditional schools of design.

66

Our concern here is with the influence this point of view has had upon draughtsmanship. The influence has been considerable, particularly with those draughtsmen whose work deals with the rendering of modern life. It consists in drawing from the observation of the silhouette occupied by objects in the field of vision, observing the flat appearance of things as they are on the retina. This is, of course, the only accurate way in which to observe visual shapes. The difference between this and the older point of view is its insistence on the observation of the flat visual impression to the exclusion of the tactile or touch sense that by the association of ideas we have come to expect in things seen. An increased truth to the character of appearances has been the result, with a corresponding loss of plastic form expression.

On pages 66 and 67 a reproduction of a drawing in the British Museum, attributed to Michael Angelo, is contrasted with one in the Louvre by Degas. The one is drawn from the line point of view and the other from the mass. They both contain lines, but in the one case the lines are the contours of felt forms and in the other the boundaries of visual masses. In the Michael Angelo the silhouette is only the result of the overlapping of rich forms considered in the round. Every muscle and bone has been mentally realised as a concrete thing and the drawing made as an expression of this idea. Note the line rhythm also; the sense of energy and movement conveyed by the swinging curves; and compare with what is said later (page 162) about the rhythmic significance of swinging curves.

Then compare it with the Degas and observe the totally different attitude of mind in which this drawing has been approached. Instead of the outlines being the result of forms felt as concrete things, the silhouette is everywhere considered first, the plastic sense (nowhere so great as in the other) being arrived at from the accurate consideration of the mass shapes.

Notice also the increased attention to individual character in the Degas, observe the pathos of those underfed little arms, and the hand holding the tired ankle—how individual it all is. What a different tale this little figure tells from that given before the footlights! See with what sympathy the contours have been searched for those accents expressive of all this.

Plate XII

STUDY ATTRIBUTED TO MICHAEL ANGELO (BRITISH MUSEUM)

Note the desire to express form as a felt solid thing, the contours resulting from the overlapping forms. The visual appearance is arrived at as a result of giving expression to the mental idea of a solid object.

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Plate XIII

STUDY BY DEGAS (LUXEMBOURG)

In contrast with Michael Angelo's drawing, note the preoccupation with the silhouette, the spaces occupied by the different masses in the field of vision; how the appearance of solid forms is the result of accurately portraying this visual appearance.

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Photo Levi

How remote from individual character is the Michael Angelo in contrast with this! Instead of an individual he gives us the expression of a glowing mental conception of man as a type of physical strength and power. 67

The rhythm is different also, in the one case being a line rhythm, and in the other a consideration of the flat pattern of shapes or masses with a play of lost-and-foundness on the edges (see later, pages 192 *et seq.*, variety of edges). It is this feeling for rhythm and the sympathetic searching for and emphasis of those points expressive of character, that keep this drawing from being the mechanical performance which so much concern with scientific visual accuracy might well have made it, and which has made mechanical many of the drawings of Degas's followers who unintelligently copy his method.

VI 68
THE ACADEMIC AND CONVENTIONAL

The terms Academic and Conventional are much used in criticism and greatly feared by the criticised, often without either party appearing to have much idea of what is meant. New so-called schools of painting seem to arrive annually with the spring fashions, and sooner or later the one of last year gets called out of date, if not conventional and academic. And as students, for fear of having their work called by one or other of these dread terms, are inclined to rush into any new extravagance that comes along, some inquiry as to their meaning will not be out of place before we pass into the chapters dealing with academic study.

It has been the cry for some time that Schools of Art turned out only academic students. And one certainly associates a dead level of respectable mediocrity with much school work. We can call to mind a lot of dull, lifeless, highly-finished work, imperfectly

Plate XIV

DRAWING IN RED CHALK BY ERNEST COLE

Example of unacademic drawing made in the author's class at the Goldsmiths' College School of Art.

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DRAWING IN RED CHALK BY ERNEST COLE

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It is difficult to explain what is wrong with an academic drawing, and what is the difference between it and fa fine drawing. But perhaps this difference can be brought home a little more clearly if you will pardon a rather fanciful simile. I am told that if you construct a perfectly fitted engine —the piston fitting the cylinder with absolute accuracy and the axles their sockets with no space between, &c.—it **will not work**, but be a lifeless mass of iron. There must be enough play between the vital parts to allow of some movement; "dither" is, I believe, the Scotch word for it. The piston must be allowed some play in the opening of the cylinder through which it passes, or it will not be able to move and show any life. And the axles of the wheels in their sockets, and, in fact, all parts of the machine where life and movement are to occur, must have this play, this "dither." It has always seemed to me that the accurately fitting engine was like a good academic drawing, in a way a perfect piece of workmanship, but lifeless. Imperfectly perfect, because there was no room left for the play of life. And to carry the simile further, if you allow too great a play between the parts, so that they fit one over the other too loosely, the engine will lose power and become a poor rickety thing. There must be the smallest amount of play that will allow of its working. And the more perfectly made the engine, the less will the amount of this "dither" be.

The word "dither" will be a useful name to give that elusive quality, that play on mechanical accuracy, existing in all vital art. **It is this vital quality that has not yet received much attention in art training.**

It is here that the photograph fails, it can only at best give mechanical accuracy, whereas art gives the impression of a live, individual consciousness. Where the recording instrument is a live individual, there is no mechanical standard of accuracy possible, as every recording instrument is a different personality. And it is the subtle differences in the individual renderings of nature that are the life-blood of art. The photograph, on account of its being chained to mechanical accuracy, has none of this play of life to give it charm. It only approaches artistic conditions when it is blurred, vague, and indefinite, as in so-called artistic photography, for then only can some amount of this vitalising play, this "dither" be imagined to exist.

It is this perfect accuracy, this lack of play, of variety, that makes the machine-made article so lifeless. Wherever there is life there is variety, and the substitution of the machine-made for the hand-made article has impoverished the world to a greater extent than we are probably yet aware of. Whereas formerly, before the advent of machinery, the commonest article you could pick up had a life and warmth which gave it individual interest, now everything is turned out to such a perfection of deadness that one is driven to pick up and collect, in sheer desperation, the commonest rubbish still surviving from the earlier period.

But to return to our drawings. If the variations from strict accuracy made under the influence of feeling are too great, the result will

be a caricature. The variations in a beautiful drawing are so subtle as often to defy detection. The studies of Ingres are an instance of what I mean. How true and instinct with life are his lines, and how easily one might assume that they were merely accurate. But no merely accurate work would have the impelling quality these drawings possess. If the writer may venture an opinion on so great an artist, the subtle difference we are talking about was sometimes missed by even Ingres himself, when he transferred his drawings to the canvas; and the pictures have in some cases become academic and lifeless. Without the stimulus of nature before him it was difficult to preserve the "dither" in the drawing, and the life has escaped. This is the great difficulty of working from studies; it is so easy to lose those little points in your drawing that make for vitality of expression, in the process of copying in cold blood.

FROM A PENCIL DRAWING BY INGRES

Plate XV.

FROM A PENCIL DRAWING BY INGRES

Photo Bulloz

The fact is: it is only the academic that can be taught. And it is no small thing if this is well done in a school. The qualities that give vitality and distinction to drawing must be appreciated by the student himself, and may often assert themselves in his drawing without his being aware that he is doing aught but honestly copying. And if he has trained himself thoroughly he will not find much difficulty when he is moved to vital expression. All the master can do is to stand by and encourage whenever he sees evidence of the real thing. But there is undoubtedly this danger of the school studies becoming the end instead of the means.

A drawing is not necessarily academic because it is thorough, but only because it is dead. Neither is a drawing necessarily academic because it is done in what is called a conventional style, any more than it is good because it is done in an unconventional style. The test is whether it has life and conveys genuine feeling.

There is much foolish talk about conventional art, as if art could ever get away from conventions, if it would. The convention will be more natural or more abstract according to the nature of the thing to be conveyed and the medium employed to express it. But naturalism is just as much a convention as any of the other isms that art has lately been so assailed with. For a really unconventional art there is Madame Tussaud's Waxworks. There, even the convention of a frame and flat surface are done away

Diagram II

SHOWING WHERE SQUARENESSES MAY BE LOOKED FOR IN THE DRAWING ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

Diagram II.

SHOWING WHERE SQUARENESSES MAY BE LOOKED FOR IN THE DRAWING ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE

Plate XVI

STUDY BY RUBENS FROM THE COLLECTION OF CHARLES RICKETTS AND CHARLES SHANNON

A splendid example of Rubens' love of rich, full forms. Compare with the diagram opposite, and note the flatnesses that give strength to the forms.

Plate XVI.

STUDY BY RUBENS FROM THE COLLECTION OF CHARLES RICKETTS AND CHARLES SHANNON

A splendid example of Rubens' love of rich, full forms. Compare with the diagram opposite, and note the flatnesses that give strength to the forms.

From lack of this elementary tone study, the student, when he approaches painting for the first time, with only his outline and light and shade knowledge, is entirely at sea. With brushes and paint he is presented with a problem of form expressions entirely new. And he usually begins to flounder about, using his paint as much like chalk on paper as possible. And timid of losing his outlines, he fears to put down a mass, as he has no knowledge of reducing appearances to a structure of tone masses or planes.

I would suggest, therefore, that the student should study simultaneously from these two points of view, beginning with their most extreme positions, that is, bare outline on the one side and on the other side tone masses criticised for their accuracy of values only in the first instance. As he advances, the one study will help the other. The line work will help the accuracy with which he observes the shapes of masses, and when he comes to light and shade his knowledge of tone values will help him here. United at last, when complete light and shade has been added to his outline drawings and to his mass drawing an intimate knowledge of form, the results will approximate and the two paths will meet. But if the qualities appertaining to either point of view are not studied separately, the result is confusion and the "muddling through" method so common in our schools of art.

VIII [84]
LINE DRAWING: PRACTICAL

Seeing that the first condition of your drawing is that it has to be made on a flat surface, no matter whether it is to be in line or mass you intend to draw, it is obvious that appearances must be reduced to terms of a flat surface before they can be expressed on paper. And this is the first difficulty that confronts the student in attempting to draw a solid object. He has so acquired the habit of perceiving the solidity of things, as was explained in an earlier chapter, that no little difficulty will be experienced in accurately seeing them as a flat picture.

Observing Solid as a Flat Copy.

As it is only from one point of view that things can be drawn, and as we have two eyes, therefore two points of view, the closing of one eye will be helpful at first.

The simplest and most mechanical way of observing things as a flat subject is to have a piece of cardboard with a rectangular hole cut out of the middle, and also pieces of cotton threaded through it in such a manner that they make a pattern of squares across the opening, as in the accompanying sketch. To make such a frame, get a piece of stiff cardboard, about 12 inches by 9 inches, and cut a rectangular hole in the centre, 7 inches by 5 inches, as in Diagram III. Now mark off the inches on all sides of the opening, and taking some black thread, pass it through the point A with a needle (fixing the end at this point with sealing-wax), and across the opening to the corresponding point on the opposite side. Take it along to the next point, as shown by the dotted line, and pass it through and across the opening again, and so on, until B is reached, when the thread should be held by some sealing-wax quite taut everywhere. Do the same for the other side. This frame should be held between the eye and the object to be drawn (one eye being closed) in a perfectly vertical position, and with the rectangular sides of the opening vertical and horizontal. The object can then be observed as a flat copy. The trellis of cotton will greatly help the student in seeing the subject to be drawn in two dimensions, and this is the first technical difficulty the young draughtsman has to overcome. It is useful also in training the eye to see the proportions of different parts one to another, the squares of equal size giving one a unit of measurement by which all parts can be scaled.

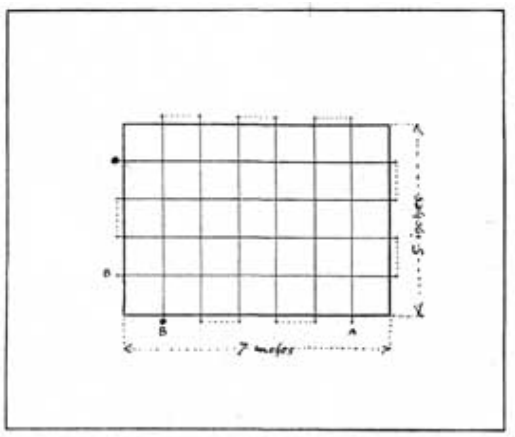

Diagram III

A Device for enabling Students to observe Appearances as a Flat Subject

Diagram III.

A DEVICE FOR ENABLING STUDENTS TO OBSERVE APPEARANCES AS A FLAT SUBJECT

Fixing Positions of Salient Points.

Vertical and horizontal lines are also of the utmost importance in that first consideration for setting out a drawing, namely the fixing of salient points, and getting their relative Positions. Fig. Z, on page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV], will illustrate what is meant. Let A B C D E be assumed to be points of some importance in an object you wish to draw. Unaided, the placing of these points would be a matter of considerable difficulty. But if you assume a vertical line drawn from A, the positions of B, C, D, and E can be observed in relation to it by noting the height and length of horizontal lines drawn from them to this vertical line. This vertical can be drawn by holding a plumb line at arm's length (closing one eye, of course) and bringing it to a position where it will cover the point A on your subject. The position of the other points on either side of this vertical line can then be observed. Or a knitting-needle can be held vertically before you at arm's length, giving you a line passing through point A. The advantage of the needle is that comparative measurements can be taken with it.

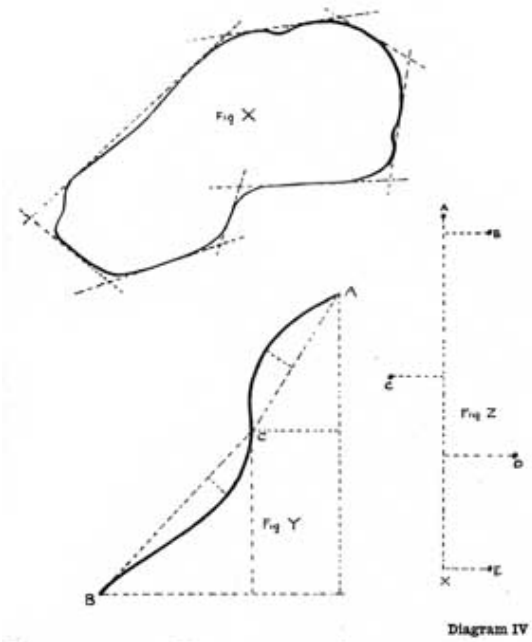

Diagram IV

SHOWING THREE PRINCIPLES OF CONSTRUCTION USED IN OBSERVING FIG. X, MASSES; FIG. Y, CURVES; FIG. Z, POSITION OF POINTS

Diagram IV.

SHOWING THREE PRINCIPLES OF CONSTRUCTION USED IN OBSERVING FIG. X, MASSES; FIG. Y, CURVES; FIG. Z, POSITION OF POINTS

In measuring comparative distances the needle should always be held at arm's length and the eye kept in one position during the operation; and, whether held vertically or horizontally, always kept in a vertical plane, that is, either straight up and down, or across at right angles to the line of your vision. If these things are not carefully observed, your comparisons will not be true. The method employed is to run the thumb-nail up the needle until the distance from the point so reached to the top exactly corresponds with the distance on the object you wish to measure. Having this carefully noted on your needle, without moving the position of your eye, you can move your outstretched arm and compare it with other distances on the object. **It is never advisable to compare other than vertical and horizontal measurements.** In our diagram the points were drawn at random and do not come in any obvious mathematical relationship, and this is the usual circumstance in nature. But point C will be found to be a little above the half, and point D a little less than a third of the way up the vertical line. How much above the half and less than the third will have to be observed by eye and a corresponding amount allowed in setting out your drawing. In the horizontal distances, B will be found to be one-fourth the distance from X to the height of C on the right of our vertical line, and C a little more than this distance to the left, while the distance on the right of D is a little less than one-fifth of the whole height. The height of B is so near the top as to be best judged by eye, and its distance to the right is the same as B. These measurements are never to be taken as absolutely accurate, but are a great help to beginners in training the eye, and are at times useful in every artist's work.

Plate XVII

DEMONSTRATION DRAWING MADE BEFORE THE STUDENTS OF THE GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF ART

Illustrating how different directions of lines can help expression of form.

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DEMONSTRATION DRAWING MADE BEFORE THE STUDENTS OF THE GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE SCHOOL OF ART

Illustrating how different directions of lines can help expression of form.

It is useful if one can establish a unit of measurement, some conspicuous distance that does not vary in the object (if a living model a great many distances will be constantly varying), and with which all distances can be compared.

In setting out a drawing, this fixing of certain salient points is the first thing for the student to do. The drawing reproduced on page 90 [Transcribers Note: Plate XVIII] has been made to illustrate the method of procedure it is advisable to adopt in training the eye to accurate observation. It was felt that a vertical line drawn through the pit of the arm would be the most useful for taking measurements on, and this was first drawn and its length decided upon. Train yourself to draw between limits decided upon at the start. This power will be of great use to you when you wish to place a figure in an exact position in a picture. The next thing to do is to get the relative heights of different points marked upon this line. The fold at the pit of the stomach was found to be exactly in the centre. This was a useful start, and it is generally advisable to note where the half comes first, and very useful if it comes in some obvious place. Other measurements were taken in the same way as our points A B C D E in the diagram on page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV], and horizontal lines drawn across, and the transverse distances measured in relation to the heights. I have left these lines on the drawing, and also different parts of it unfinished, so as to show the different stages of the work. These guide lines are done mentally later on, when the student is more advanced, and with more accuracy than the clumsy knitting-needle. But before the habit of having constantly in mind a vertical and horizontal line with which to compare positions is acquired, they should be put in with as much accuracy as measuring can give.

Blocking in The next thing

The next thing to do is to block out the spaces corresponding to those occupied by the model in the field of your vision. The method employed to do this is somewhat similar to that adopted by a surveyor in drawing the plan of a field. Assuming he had an irregular shaped one, such as is drawn in Fig. X, page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV], he would proceed to invest it with straight lines, taking advantage of any straightness in the boundary, noting the length and the angles at which these straight lines cut each other, and then reproducing them to scale on his plan. Once having got this scaffolding accurately placed, he can draw the irregularities of the shape in relation to these lines with some certainty of getting them right.

You should proceed in very much the same way to block out the spaces that the forms of your drawing are to occupy. I have produced these blocking-out lines beyond what was necessary in the accompanying drawing (page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV]), in order to show them more clearly.

How to observe the Shape of Curves. 91

There is yet another method of construction useful in noting accurately the shape of a curved line, which is illustrated in Fig. Y, page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV]. First of all, fix the positions of the extremities of the line by means of the vertical and horizontal. And also, as this is a double curve, the point at which the curvature changes from one direction to the other: point C. By drawing lines CA, CB and noting the distances your curves travel from these straight lines, and particularly the relative position of the farthest points reached, their curvature can be accurately observed and copied. In noting the varying curvature of forms, this construction should always be in your mind to enable you to observe them accurately. First note the points at which the curvature begins and ends, and then the distances it travels from a line joining these two points, holding up a pencil or knitting-needle against the model if need be.

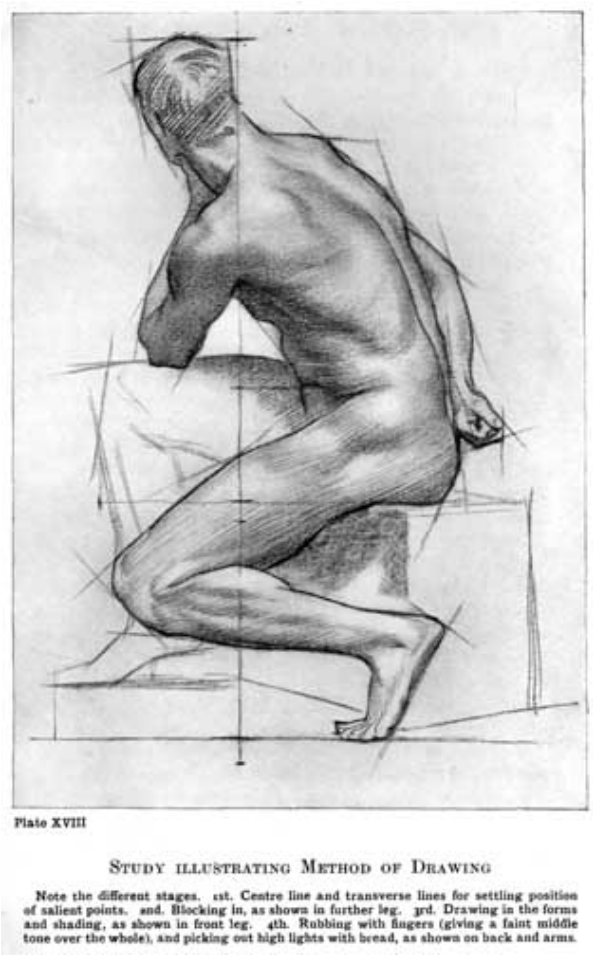

Plate XVIII

STUDY ILLUSTRATING METHOD OF DRAWING

Note the different stages. 1st. Centre line and transverse lines for settling position of salient points. 2nd. Blocking in, as shown in further leg. 3rd. Drawing in the forms and shading, as shown in front leg. 4th. Rubbing with fingers (giving a faint middle tone over the whole), and picking out high lights with bread, as shown on back and arms.

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The Drawing proper. 92

A drawing being blocked out in such a state as the further leg and foot of our demonstration drawing (page 90 [Transcribers Note: Plate XVIII]), it is time to begin the drawing proper. So far you have only been pegging out the ground it is going to occupy. This initial scaffolding, so necessary to train the eye, should be done as accurately as possible, but don't let it interfere with your freedom in expressing the forms afterwards. The work up to this point has been mechanical, but it is time to consider the subject with some feeling for form. Here knowledge of the structure of bones and muscles that underlie the skin will help you to seize on those things that are significant and express the form of the figure. And the student cannot do better than study the excellent book

by Sir Alfred D. Fripp on this subject, entitled Human Anatomy for Art Students. Notice particularly the swing of the action, such things as the pull occasioned by the arm resting on the farther thigh, and the prominence given to the forms by the straining of the skin at the shoulder. Also the firm lines of the bent back and the crumpled forms of the front of the body. Notice the overlapping of the contours, and where they are accentuated and where more lost, &c., drawing with as much feeling and conviction as you are capable of. You will have for some time to work tentatively, feeling for the true shapes that you do not yet rightly see, but as soon as you feel any confidence, remember it should be your aim to express yourself freely and swiftly.

There is a tendency in some quarters to discourage this blocking in of the forms in straight lines, and certainly it has been harmful to the freedom of expression in the work of some students. They not only begin the drawing with this mechanical blocking in, but continue it in the same mechanical fashion, cutting up almost all their curves into flatnesses, and never once breaking free from this scaffolding to indulge in the enjoyment of free line expression. This, of course, is bad, and yet the character of a curved line is hardly to be accurately studied in any other way than by observing its relation to straight lines. The inclination and length of straight lines can be observed with certainty. But a curve has not this definiteness, and is a very unstable thing to set about copying unaided. Who but the highly skilled draughtsman could attempt to copy our random shape at Fig. X, page 87 [Transcribers Note: Diagram IV], without any guiding straight lines? And even the highly skilled draughtsman would draw such straight lines mentally. So that some blocking out of the curved forms, either done practically or in imagination, must be adopted to rightly observe any shapes. But do not forget that this is only a scaffolding, and should always be regarded as such and kicked away as soon as real form expression with any feeling begins.

But it will be some years before the beginner has got his eye trained to such accuracy of observation that he can dispense with it. 93

In Blocking in observe Shape of the Background as much as the Object. In the case of foreshortening, the eye, unaided by this blocking out, is always apt to be led astray. And here the observation of the shape of the background against the object will be of great assistance. The appearance of the foreshortened object is so unlike what you know it to be as a solid thing, that much as it is as well to concentrate the attention on the background rather than on the form in this blocking-out process. And in fact, in blocking out any object, whether foreshortened or not, the shape of the background should be observed as carefully as any other shape. But in making the drawing proper, the forms must be observed in their inner relations. That is to say, the lines bounding one side of a form must be observed in relation to the lines bounding the other side; as the true expression of form, which is the object of drawing, depends on the true relationship of these boundaries. The drawing of the two sides should be carried on simultaneously, so that one may constantly compare them.

Boundaries. The lines of Overlapping. The boundaries of forms with any complexity, such as the human figure, are not continuous lines. One form overlaps another, like the lines of a range of hills. And this overlapping should be sought for and carefully expressed, the outlines being made up of a series of overlappings.

Shading. In Line Drawing shading should only be used to aid the expression of form. It is not advisable to aim at representing the true tone values.

In direct light it will be observed that a solid object has some portion of its surface in light, while other portions, those turned away from the light, are in shadow. Shadows are also cast on the ground and surrounding objects, called cast shadows. The parts of an object reflecting the most direct light are called the high lights. If the object have a shiny surface these lights are clear and distinct; if a dull surface, soft and diffused. In the case of a very shiny surface, such as a glazed pot, the light may be reflected so completely that a picture of the source of light, usually a window, will be seen. 94

In the diagram on page 95 [Transcribers Note: Diagram V], let A represent the plan of a cone, B C the opening of a window, and D the eye of the spectator, and E F G the wall of a room. Light travels in straight lines from the window, strikes the surface of the cone, and is reflected to the eye, making the angle of incidence equal to the angle of reflection, the angle of incidence being that made by the light striking an object, and the angle of reflection that made by the light in leaving the surface.

It will be seen that the lines B1D, C2D are the limits of the direct rays of light that come to the eye from the cone, and that therefore between points 1 and 2 will be seen the highest light. If the cone have a perfect reflecting surface, such as a looking-glass has, this would be all the direct light that would be reflected from the cone to the eye. But assuming it to have what is called a dull surface, light would be reflected from other parts also, although not in so great a quantity. If what is called a dull surface is looked at under a microscope it will be found to be quite rough, *i.e.* made up of many facets which catch light at different angles. 96

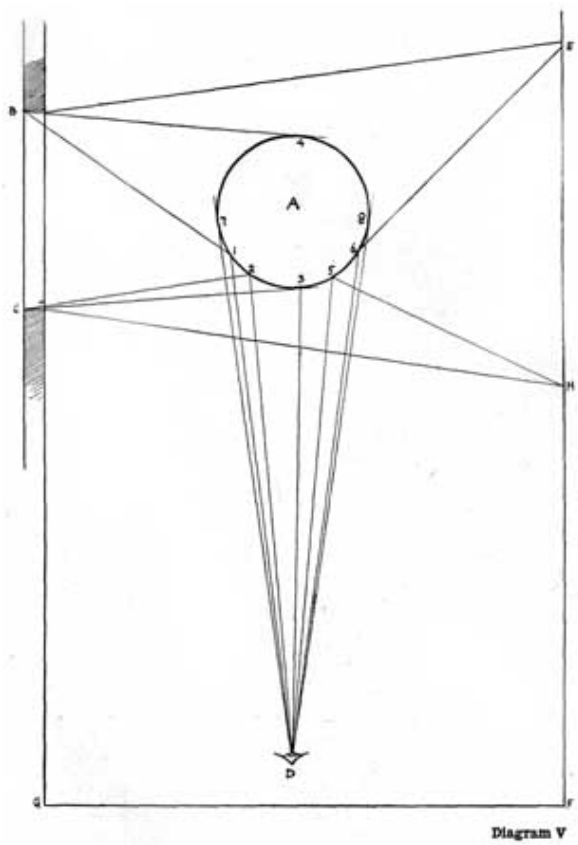

Diagram V

PLAN OF CONE A, LIT BY WINDOW BC; POSITION OF EYE D. ILLUSTRATING PRINCIPLES OF LIGHT AND SHADE

Diagram V.

PLAN OF CONE A, LIT BY WINDOW BC; POSITION OF EYE D. ILLUSTRATING PRINCIPLES OF LIGHT AND SHADE

Lines B4, C3 represent the extreme limits of light that can be received by the cone, and therefore at points 3 and 4 the shadow will commence. The fact that light is reflected to the eye right up to the point 3 does not upset the theory that it can only be reflected from points where the angle of incidence can equal the angle of reflection, as it would seem to do, because the surface being rough presents facets at different angles, from some of which it can be reflected to the eye right up to point 3. The number of these facets that can so reflect is naturally greatest near the high lights, and gets gradually less as the surface turns more away; until the point is reached where the shadows begin, at which point the surface positively turns away from the light and the reflection of direct light ceases altogether. After point 3 there would be no light coming to the eye from the object, were it not that it receives reflected light. Now, the greatest amount of reflected light will come from the direction opposite to that of the direct light, as all objects in this direction are strongly lit. The surface of the wall between points E and H, being directly opposite the light, will give most reflection. And between points 5 and 6 this light will be reflected by the cone to the eye in its greatest intensity, since at these points the angles of incidence equal the angles of reflection. The other parts of the shadow will receive a certain amount of reflected light, lessening in amount on either side of these points. We have now rays of light coming to the eye from the cone between the extreme points 7 and 8. From 7 to 3 we have the light, including the half tones. Between 1 and 2 the high light. Between 3 and 8 the shadows, with the greatest amount of reflected light between 5 and 6.

Plate XIX.

ILLUSTRATING CURVED LINKS SUGGESTING FULLNESS AND FORESHORTENING

I should not have troubled the reader with this tedious diagram were it not that certain facts about light and shade can be learned from it. The first is that the high lights come much more within the edge of the object than you would have expected. With the light directly opposite point 7, one might have thought the highest light would have come there, and that is where many students put it, until the loss of roundness in the appearance of their work makes them look more carefully for its position. So remember always to look out for high lights within the contours of forms, not on the edges.

The next thing to notice is that **the darkest part of the shadow will come nearest the lights between points 3 and 5**. This is the part turned most away from the direction of the greatest amount of reflected light, and therefore receiving least. The lightest part of the shadow will be in the middle, rather towards the side away from the light, generally speaking. The shadow cast on the ground will be dark, like the darkest part of the shadow on the cone, as its surface is also turned away from the chief source of reflected light.

Although the artist will very seldom be called upon to draw a cone, the same principles of light and shade that are so clearly seen in such a simple figure obtain throughout the whole of nature. This is why the much abused drawing and shading from whitened blocks and pots is so useful. Nothing so clearly impresses the general laws of light and shade as this so-called dull study.

This lightening of shadows in the middle by reflected light and darkening towards their edges is a very important thing to remember, the heavy, smoky look students' early work is so prone to, being almost entirely due to their neglect through ignorance of this principle. Nothing is more awful than shadows darker in the middle and gradually lighter towards their edges. Of course, where there is a deep hollow in the shadow parts, as at the armpit and the fold at the navel in the drawing on page 90 [Transcribers Note: Plate XVIII], you will get a darker tone. But this does not contradict the principle that generally shadows are lighter in the middle and darker towards the edges. Note the luminous quality the observation of this principle gives the shadow on the body of our demonstration drawing.

This is a crude statement of the general principles of light and shade on a simple round object. In one with complex surfaces the varieties of light and shade are infinite. But the same principles hold good. The surfaces turned more to the source of light receive the greatest amount, and are the lightest. And from these parts the amount of light lessens through what are called the half tones as the surface turns more away, until a point is reached where no more direct light is received, and the shadows begin. And in the shadows the same law applies: those surfaces turned most towards the source of reflected light will receive the most, and the

amount received will gradually lessen as the surface turns away, until at the point immediately before where the half tones begin the amount of reflected light will be very little, and in consequence the darkest part of the shadows may be looked for. There may, of course, be other sources of direct light on the shadow side that will entirely alter and complicate the effect. Or one may draw in a wide, diffused light, such as is found in the open air on a grey day; in which case there will be little or no shadow, the modelling depending entirely on degrees of light and half tone.

In studying the principles of simple light and shade it is advisable to draw from objects of one local colour, such as white casts. In parti-coloured objects the problem is complicated by the different tones of the local colour. In line drawing it is as well to take as little notice as possible of these variations which disturb the contemplation of pure form and do not belong to the particular province of form expression with which drawing is concerned.

Although one has selected a strong half light and half shade effect to illustrate the general principles of light and shade, it is not advisable in making line drawings to select such a position. A point of view with a fairly wide light at your back is the best. In this position little shadow will be seen, most of the forms being expressed by the play of light and half tone. The contours, as they are turned away from the light, will naturally be darker, and against a light background your subject has an appearance with dark edges that is easily expressed by a line drawing. Strong light and shade effects should be left for mass drawing. You seldom see any shadows in Holbein's drawings; he seems to have put his sitters near a wide window, close against which he worked. Select also a background as near the tone of the highest light on the object to be drawn as possible. This will show up clearly the contour. In the case of a portrait drawing, a newspaper hung behind the head answers very well and is always easily obtained. The tone of it can be varied by the distance at which it is placed from the head, and by the angle at which it is turned away from or towards the light.

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Don't burden a line drawing with heavy half tones and shadows; keep them light. The beauty that is the particular province of line drawing is the beauty of contours, and this is marred by heavy light and shade. Great draughtsmen use only just enough to express the form, but never to attempt the expression of tone. Think of the half tones as part of the lights and not as part of the shadows.

There are many different methods of drawing in line, and a student of any originality will find one that suits his temperament. But I will try and illustrate one that is at any rate logical, and that may serve as a fair type of line drawing generally.

The appearance of an object is first considered as a series of contours, some forming the boundaries of the form against the background, and others the boundaries of the subordinate forms within these bounding lines. The light and shade and differences of local colour (like the lips, eyebrows, and eyes in a head) are considered together as tones of varying degrees of lightness and darkness, and suggested by means of lines drawn parallel across the drawing from left to right, and from below upwards, or vice versa, darker and closer together when depth is wanted, and fainter and further apart where delicacy is demanded, and varying in thickness when gradation is needed. This rule of parallel shading is broken only when strongly marked forms, such as the swing lines of hair, a prominent bone or straining muscles, &c., demand it. This parallel shading gives a great beauty of surface and fleshiness to a drawing. The lines following, as it were, the direction of the light across the object rather than the form, give a unity that has a great charm. It is more suited to drawings where extreme delicacy of form is desired, and is usually used in silver point work, a medium capable of the utmost refinement.

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Plate XX

STUDY FOR THE FIGURE OF LOVE IN THE PICTURE "LOVE LEAVING PSYCHE" ILLUSTRATING A METHOD OF DRAWING

The lines of shading following a convenient parallel direction unless prominent forms demand otherwise.

Plate XX.

STUDY FOR THE FIGURE OF LOVE IN THE PICTURE "LOVE LEAVING PSYCHE" ILLUSTRATING A METHOD OF DRAWING

The lines of shading following a convenient parallel direction unless prominent forms demand otherwise.

In this method the lines of shading not being much varied in direction or curved at all, a minimum amount of that "form stimulus" is conveyed. The curving of the lines in shading adds considerably to the force of the relief, and suggests much stronger modelling. In the case of foreshortened effects, where the forms are seen at their fullest, arching one over the other, some curvature in the lines of shading is of considerable advantage in adding to the foreshortened look.

Lines drawn down the forms give an appearance of great strength and roughness, a tense look. And this quality is very useful in suggesting such things as joints and sinews, rocks, hard ground, or gnarled tree-trunks, &c. In figure drawing it is an interesting quality to use sparingly, with the shading done on the across-the-form principle; and to suggest a difference of texture or a straining of the form. Lines of shading drawn in every direction, crossing each other and resolving themselves into tone effects, suggest atmosphere and the absence of surface form. This is more often used in the backgrounds of pen and ink work and is seldom necessary in pencil or chalk drawing, as they are more concerned with form than atmosphere. Pen and ink is more often used for elaborate pictorial effects in illustration work, owing to the ease with which it can be reproduced and printed; and it is here that one more often finds this muddled quality of line spots being used to fill up interstices and make the tone even.

Speaking generally, **lines of shading drawn across the forms suggest softness, lines drawn in curves fulness of form, lines drawn down the forms hardness, and lines crossing in all directions so that only a mystery of tone results, atmosphere**. And if these four qualities of line be used judiciously, a great deal of expressive power is added to your shading. And, as will be explained in the next chapter, somewhat the same principle applies to the direction of the swing of the brush in painting.

Shading lines should never be drawn backwards and forwards from left to right (scribbled), except possibly where a mystery of shadow is wanted and the lines are being crossed in every direction; but never when lines are being used to express form. They are not sufficiently under control, and also the little extra thickness that occurs at the turn is a nuisance.

The crossing of lines in shading gives a more opaque look. This is useful to suggest the opaque appearance of the darker passage that occurs in that part of a shadow nearest the lights; and it is sometimes used in the half tones also.

Draughtsmen vary very much in their treatment of hair, and different qualities of hair require different treatment. The particular beauty of it that belongs to point drawing is the swing and flow of its lines. These are especially apparent in the lights. In the shadows the flow of line often stops, to be replaced by a mystery of shadow. So that a play of swinging lines alternating with shadow passages, drawn like all the other shadows with parallel lines not following the form, is often effective, and suggests the quality of hair in nature. The swinging lines should vary in thickness along their course, getting darker as they pass certain parts, and gradating into lighter lines at other parts according to the effect desired. (See illustration, page 102 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXI].)

Plate XXI

STUDY IN RED CHALK

Illustrating a treatment of hair in line-work.

Plate XXI.

STUDY IN RED CHALK

Illustrating a treatment of hair in line-work.

To sum up, in the method of line drawing we are trying to explain (the method employed for most of the drawings by the author in this book) the lines of shading are made parallel in a direction that comes easy to the hand, unless some quality in the form suggests their following other directions. So that when you are in doubt as to what direction they should follow, draw them on the parallel principle. This preserves a unity in your work, and allows the lines drawn in other directions for special reasons to tell expressively.

As has already been explained, it is not sufficient in drawing to concentrate the attention on copying accurately the visual appearance of anything, important as the faculty of accurate observation is. Form to be expressed must first be appreciated. And here the science of teaching fails. "You can take a horse to the fountain, but you cannot make him drink," and in art you can take the student to the point of view from which things are to be appreciated, but you cannot make him see. How, then, is this appreciation of form to be developed? Simply by feeding. Familiarise yourself with all the best examples of drawing you can find, trying to see in nature the same qualities. Study the splendid drawing by Puvis de Chavannes reproduced on page 104 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXII]. Note the way the contours have been searched for expressive qualities. Look how the expressive line of the back of the seated figure has been "felt," the powerful expression of the upraised arm with its right angle (see later page

155 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XII], chapter on line rhythm). And then observe the different types of the two standing figures; the practical vigour of the one and the soft grace of the other, and how their contours have been studied to express this feeling, &c. There is a mine of knowledge to be unearthed in this drawing.

There never was an age when such an amount of artistic food was at the disposal of students. Cheap means of reproduction have brought the treasures of the world's galleries and collections to our very doors in convenient forms for a few pence. The danger is not from starvation, but indigestion. Students are so surfeited with good things that they often fail to digest any of them; but rush on from one example to another, taking but snapshot views of what is offered, until their natural powers of appreciation are in a perfect whirlwind of confused ideas. What then is to be done? You cannot avoid the good things that are hurled at you in these days, but when you come across anything that strikes you as being a particularly fine thing, feed deeply on it. Hang it up where you will see it constantly; in your bedroom, for instance, where it will entertain your sleepless hours, if you are unfortunate enough to have any. You will probably like very indifferent drawings at first, the pretty, the picturesque and the tricky will possibly attract before the sublimity of finer things. But be quite honest and feed on the best that you genuinely like, and when you have thoroughly digested and comprehended that, you will weary of it and long for something better, and so, gradually, be led on to appreciate the best you are capable of appreciating.

Plate XXII. *Photo Neurdein*

STUDY FOR DECORATION AT AMIENS "REPOSE"
BY PEUVIS DE CHAVANNES

Note how the contours are searched for expressive forms, the power given to the seated figure by the right angle of the raised arm, and the contrast between the upright vigour of the right-hand figure with the softer lines of the middle one

Plate XXII.

STUDY FOR DECORATION AT AMIENS "REPOSE" BY PEUVIS DE CHAVANNES

Note how the contours are searched for expressive forms, the power given to the seated figure by the right angle of the raised arm, and the contrast between the upright vigour of the right-hand figure with the softer lines of the middle one.

Photo Neurdein

Before closing this chapter there are one or two points connected with the drawing of a head that might be mentioned, as students are not always sufficiently on the look out for them.

In our diagram on page 107 [Transcribers Note: Diagram VI], let Fig. 1 represent a normal eye. At Fig. 2 we have removed the skin and muscles and exposed the two main structural features in the form of the eye, namely the bony ring of the socket and the globe containing the lenses and retina. Examining this opening, we find from A to B that it runs smoothly into the bony

prominence at the top of the nose, and that the rest of the edge is sharp, and from point C to E quite free. It is at point A, starting from a little hole, that the sharp edge begins; and near this point the corner of the eye is situated: A, Figs. 1, 2, 3. From points A to F the bony edge of the opening is very near the surface and should be looked for.

The next thing to note is the fact that the eyebrow at first follows the upper edge of the bony opening from B to C, but that from point C it crosses the free arch between C and D and soon ends. So that considering the under side of the eyebrow, whereas from point C towards B there is usually a cavernous hollow, from C towards D there is a prominence. The character of eyes varies greatly, and this effect is often modified by the fleshy fulness that fills in the space between the eyelid and the brow, but some indication of a change is almost always to be observed at a point somewhere about C, and should be looked out for. Any bony prominence from this point towards D should be carefully constructed. Look out for the bone, therefore, between the points CD and AF.

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Never forget when painting an eye that what we call the white of the eye is part of a sphere and will therefore have the light and shade of a sphere. It will seldom be the same tone all over; if the light is coming from the right, it will be in shade towards the left and vice versa. Also the eyelids are bands of flesh placed on this spherical surface. They will therefore partake of the modelling of the sphere and not be the same tone all across. Note particularly the sudden change of plane usually marked by a fold, where the under eyelid meets the surface coming from the cheek bone. The neglect to construct these planes of the under eyelid is a very common fault in poorly painted eyes. Note also where the upper eyelid comes against the flesh under the eyebrow (usually a strongly marked fold) and the differences of planes that occur at this juncture. In some eyes, when there is little loose flesh above the eyelid, there is a deep hollow here, the eyelid running up under the bony prominence, C D. This is an important structural line, marking as it does the limit of the spherical surface of the eyeball, on which surface the eyelids are placed.

Fig. 4 is a rough diagram of the direction it is usual for the hairs forming the eyebrow to take. From A a few scant hairs start radiating above the nose and quite suddenly reach their thickest and strongest growth between B and E. They continue, still following a slightly radiating course until D. These hairs are now met by another lot, starting from above downwards, and growing from. B to C. An eyebrow is considered by the draughtsman as a tone of a certain shape and qualities of edge. And what interests us here is to note the effect of this order of growth upon its appearance as tone. The meeting of the strong growth of hair upwards with the downward growth between points B and E creates what is usually the darkest part of the eyebrow at this point. And the coming together of the hairs towards D often makes another dark part in this direction. The edge from C to B is nearly always a soft one, the tone melting into the flesh, and this should be looked out for, giving as it does a pretty variety to the run of the line. Another thing that tends to make this edge soft is the fact that a bony prominence is situated here and has usually a high light upon it that crosses the eyebrow. From C to D you usually find a sharper edge, the hairs running parallel to the line of the eyebrow, while from D to B and A to B a softer boundary can be looked for. The chief accent will generally be found at B, where a dark mass often comes sharply against the tone of the forehead.

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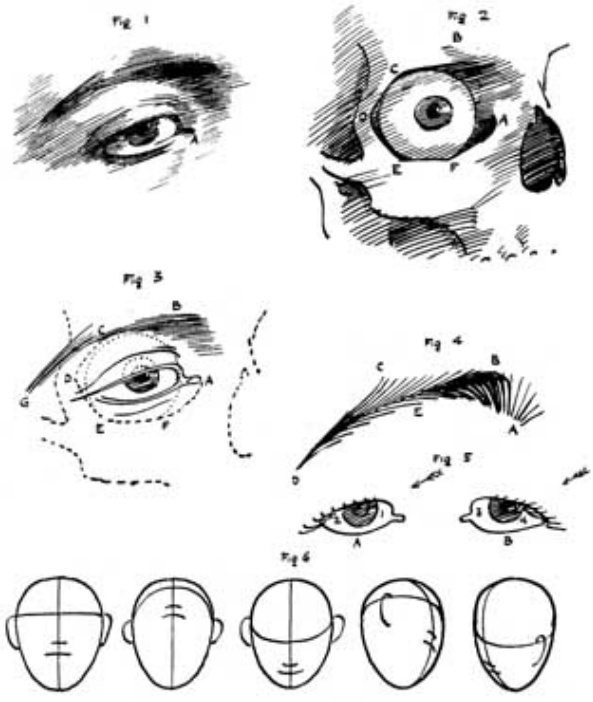

Diagram VI

ILLUSTRATING SOME POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE EYES NOT ALWAYS OBSERVED IN DRAWING A HEAD

Diagram VI.

ILLUSTRATING SOME POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE EYES NOT ALWAYS OBSERVED IN DRAWING A HEAD

The eyelashes do not count for much in drawing a head, except in so far as they affect the tone impression. In the first place they shade the white of the eye when the light is above, as is usually the case. They are much thicker on the outer than on the inner side of the eyelids, and have a tendency to grow in an outward direction, so that when the light comes from the left, as is shown by arrow, Fig. 5, the white of the eye at A1 will not be much shaded, and the light tone will run nearly up to the top. But at B4, which should be the light side of this eye, the thick crop of eyelashes will shade it somewhat and the light will not run far up in consequence, while B3, A2 will be in the shade from the turning away from the direction of the light of the spherical surface of the whites of the eyes. [109]

These may seem small points to mention, but the observance of such small points makes a great difference to the construction of a head.

Fig. 6 gives a series of blocks all exactly alike in outline, with lines showing how the different actions of the head affect the guide lines on which the features hang; and how these actions can be suggested even when the contours are not varied. These archings over should be carefully looked out for when the head is in any but a simple full face position.

IX [110]
MASS DRAWING: PRACTICAL

This is the form of drawing with which painting in the oil medium is properly concerned. The distinction between drawing and painting that is sometimes made is a wrong one in so far as it conveys any idea of painting being distinct from drawing. Painting is drawing (*i.e.* the expression of form) with the added complication of colour and tone. And with a brush full of paint as your tool, some form of mass drawing must be adopted, so that at the same time that the student is progressing with line drawing, he should begin to accustom, himself to this other method of seeing, by attempting very simple exercises in drawing with the brush.

Most objects can be reduced broadly into three tone masses, the lights (including the high lights), the half tones, and the shadows. And the habit of reducing things into a simple equation of three tones as a foundation on which to build complex appearances should early be sought for.

Exercise in Mass Drawing

Here is a simple exercise in mass drawing with the brush that is, as far as I know, never offered to the young student. Select a simple object: some of those casts of fruit hanging up that are common in art schools will do. Place it in a strong light and shade, preferably by artificial light, as it is not so subtle, and therefore easier; the light coming from either the right or left hand, but not from in front. Try and arrange it so that the tone of the ground of your cast comes about equal to the half tones in the relief. [111]

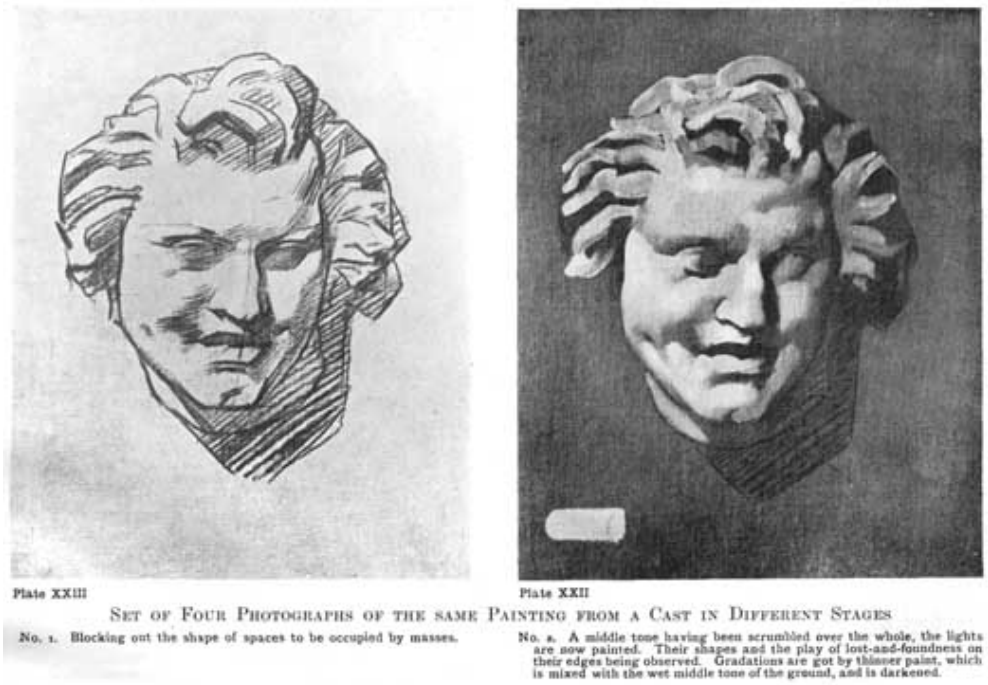

Plate XXIII

Plate XXII

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME PAINTING FROM A CAST IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 1. Blocking out the shape of spaces to be occupied by masses.

No. 2. A middle tone having been scumbled over the whole, the lights are now painted. Their shapes and the play of lost-and-foundness on their edges being observed. Gradations are got by thinner paint, which is mixed with the wet middle tone of the ground, and is darkened.

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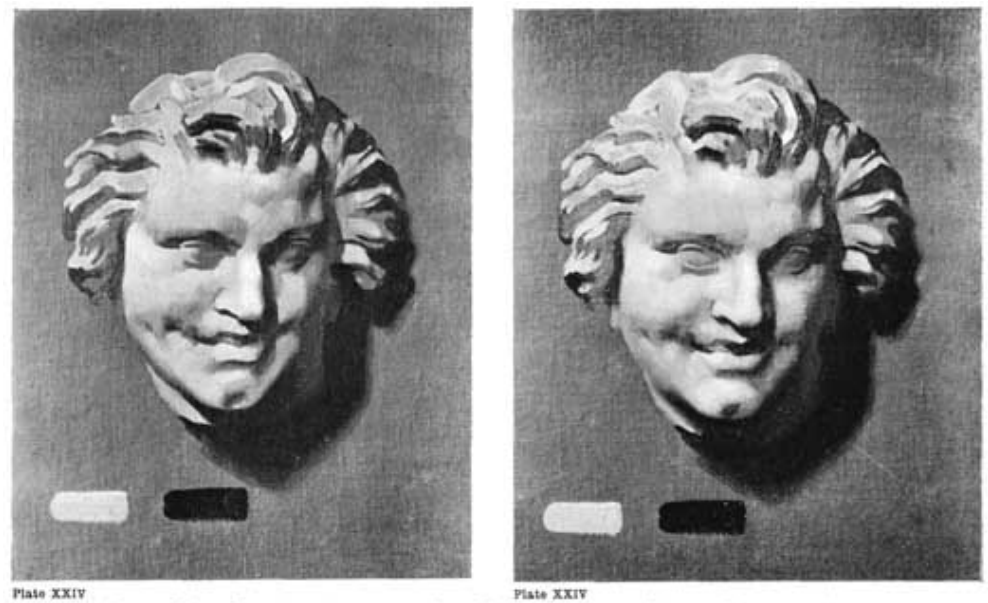

Plate XXIV

Plate XXIV

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME PAINTING FROM A CAST IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 3. The same as the last, with the addition of the darks; variety being got in the same way as in the case of the lights, only here the thinner part is lighter, whereas in the case of the lights it was darker.

No. 4. The finished work, refinements being added and mistakes corrected.

Plate XXIV.

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME PAINTING FROM A CAST IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 3. The same as the last, with the addition of the darks; variety being got in the same way as in the case of the lights, only here the thinner part is lighter, whereas in the case of the lights it was darker.

Many charming things are to be done with a mixture of solid and transparent paint, but it is well at first not to complicate the problem too much, and therefore to leave this until later on, when you are competent to attack problems of colour. Keep your early work both in monochrome and colour **quite solid**, but as thin as you can, reserving thicker paint for those occasions when you wish to put a touch that shall not be influenced by what you are painting into.

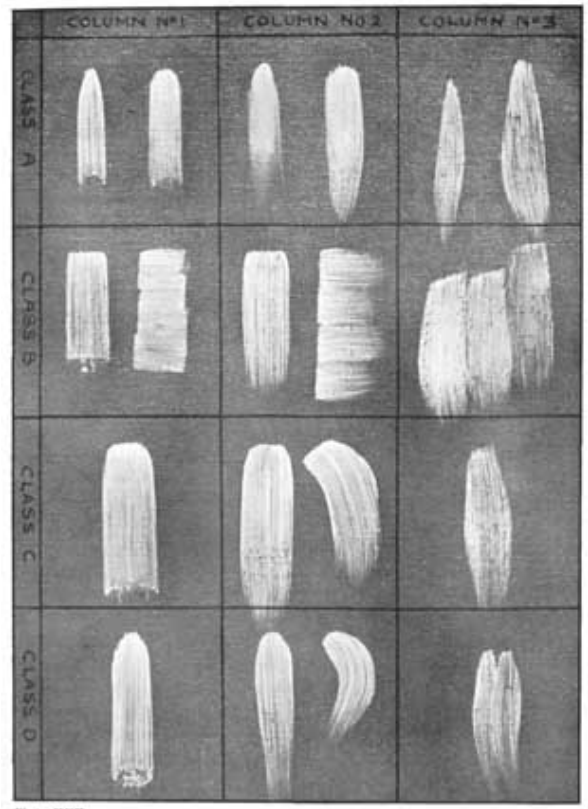

Plate XXV

ILLUSTRATING SOME TYPICAL BRUSH STROKES MADE WITH FOUR CLASSES OF BRUSH

Class A, round; Class B, flat; Class C, full flat brush with rounded corners; Class D, filbert shape.

Plate XXV.

ILLUSTRATING SOME TYPICAL BRUSH STROKES MADE WITH FOUR CLASSES OF BRUSH

Class A, round; Class B, flat; Class C, full flat brush with rounded corners; Class D, filbert shape.

It will perhaps be as well to illustrate a few of the different brush strokes, and say something about the different qualities of each. These are only given as typical examples of the innumerable ways a brush may be used as an aid to very elementary students; every artist will, of course, develop ways of his own.

The touch will of necessity depend in the first instance upon the shape of the brush, and these shapes are innumerable. But there are two classes into which they can roughly be divided, flat and round. The round brushes usually sold, which we will call Class A, have rather a sharp point, and this, although helpful in certain circumstances, is against their general usefulness. But a round brush with a round point is also made, and this is much more convenient for mass drawing. Where there is a sharp point the central hairs are much longer, and consequently when the brush is drawn along and pressed so that all the hairs are touching the canvas, the pressure in the centre, where the long hairs are situated, is different from that at the sides. This has the effect of giving a touch that is not equal in quality all across, and the variety thus given is difficult to manipulate. I should therefore advise the student to try the blunt-ended round brushes first, as they give a much more even touch, and one much more suited to painting in planes of tone.

The most extreme flat brushes (Class B) are thin and rather short, with sharp square ends, and have been very popular with students. They can be relied upon to give a perfectly flat, even tone, but with a rather hard sharp edge at the sides, and also at the commencement of the touch. In fact, they make touches like little square bricks. But as the variety that can be got out of them is

Plate XXVI

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 1. Blocking out the spaces occup'ed by different masses in charcoal.

Plate XXVI.

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 1. Blocking out the spaces occupied by different masses in charcoal.

Plate XXVII

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 2. A middle tone having been scrumbled over the whole, the lights are painted into it; variety being got by varying the thickness of the paint. The darks are due to the charcoal lines of initial drawing showing through middle tone

Plate XXVII.

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

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Plate XXVIII

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 3. The same as the last, but with the shadows added; variety being got by varying thickness of paint as before.

Plate XXVIII.

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 3. The same as the last, but with the shadows added; variety being got by varying thickness of paint as before.

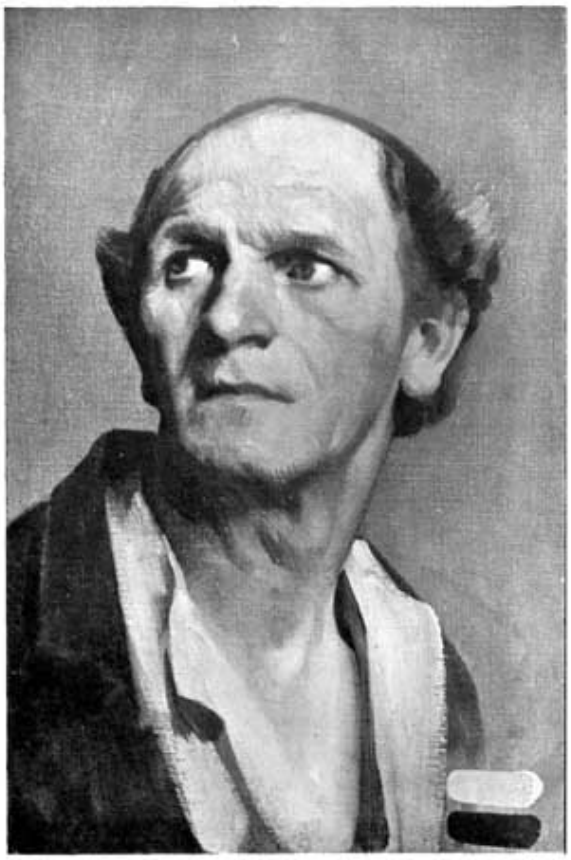

Plate XXIX

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 4. The completed head.

Plate XXIX.

SET OF FOUR PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SAME STUDY FROM THE LIFE IN DIFFERENT STAGES

No. 4. The completed head.

In the chapter on line work it was stated that: "Lines of shading drawn across the forms suggest softness, lines drawn in curves fulness of form, lines drawn down the forms hardness, and lines crossing in every direction atmosphere," and these rules apply equally well to the direction of the brush strokes (the brush work) in a painting.

The brush swinging round the forms suggests fore-shortening, and fulness of form generally, and across the forms softness, while the brush following down the forms suggests toughness and hardness, and crossing in every direction atmosphere. A great deal of added force can be given to form expression in this way. In the foreshortened figure on the ground at the left of Tintoretto's "Finding of the Body of St. Mark," the foreshortened effect helped by the brush work swinging round can be seen (see illustration, page 236 [Transcribers Note: Plate XLIX]). The work of Henner in France is an extreme instance of the quality of softness and fleshiness got by painting across the form. The look of toughness and hardness given by the brush work following down the forms is well illustrated in much of the work of James Ward, the animal painter. In his picture in the National Gallery, "Harlech Castle," No. 1158, this can be seen in the painting of the tree-trunks, &c.

The crossing of the brush work in every direction, giving a look of atmosphere, is naturally often used in painting backgrounds and also such things as the plane surfaces of sky and mist, &c.

It is often inconvenient to paint across the form when softness is wanted. It is only possible to have one colour in your brush sweep, and the colour changes across, much more than down the form as a rule. For the shadows, half tones and lights, besides varying in tone, vary also in colour; so that it is not always possible to sweep across them with one colour. It is usually more convenient to paint down where the colours can be laid in overlapping bands of shadow, half tone and light, &c. Nevertheless, if this particular look of softness and fleshiness is desired, either the painting must be so thin or the tones so fused together that no brush strokes show, or a dry flat brush must afterwards be drawn lightly across when the painting is done, to destroy the downward brush strokes and substitute others going across, great care being taken to drag only from light to dark, and to wipe the brush carefully after each touch; and also never to go over the same place twice, or the paint will lose vitality. This is a method much

in. At least, this is roughly the theory to which a study of the two great art developments of the past, in Greece and Italy, would seem to point. And this theory is the excuse for all the attempts at primitivism of which we have lately seen so much.

Art having lost touch with its primitive base owing to the over-doses of naturalism it has had, we must, these new apostles say, find a new primitive base on which to build the new structure of art. The theory has its attractions, but there is this difference between the primitive archaic Greek or early Italian and the modern primitive; the early men reverently clothed the abstract idea they started with in the most natural and beautiful form within their knowledge, ever seeking to discover new truths and graces from nature to enrich their work; while the modern artist, with the art treasures of all periods of the world before him, can never be in the position of these simple-minded men. It is therefore unlikely that the future development of art will be on lines similar to that of the past. The same conditions of simple ignorance are never likely to occur again. Means of communication and prolific reproduction make it very unlikely that the art of the world will again be lost for a season, as was Greek art in the Middle Ages. Interesting intellectually as is the theory that the impressionist point of view (the accepting of the flat retina picture as a pattern of colour sensations) offers a new field from which to select material for a new basis of artistic expression, so far the evidence of results has not shown anything likely seriously to threaten the established principles of traditional design. And anything more different in spirit from the genuine primitive than the irreverent anarchy and flouting of all refinement in the work of some of these new primitives, it would be difficult to imagine. But much of the work of the movement has undoubted artistic vitality, and in its insistence on design and selection should do much to kill "realism" and the "copying nature" theory of a few years back.

Although it is perfectly true that the feelings and ideas that impel the artist may sooner or later find their own expression, there are a great many principles connected with the arranging of lines, tones, and colours in his picture that it is difficult to transgress without calamity. At any rate the knowledge of some of them will aid the artist in gaining experience, and possibly save him some needless fumbling.

But don't for one moment think that anything in the nature of rules is going to take the place of the initial artistic impulse which must come from within. This is not a matter for teaching, art training being only concerned with perfecting the means of its expression.

Plate XXX

A Study for a Picture of "Rosalind and Orlando"

Ros. "He calls us back; my pride fell with my fortunes."

Plate XXX.

A STUDY FOR A PICTURE OF "ROSALIND AND ORLANDO"

Ros. "He calls us back; my pride fell with my fortunes."

Although the curve of the perfect circle is dull from its lack of variety, it is not without beauty, and this is due to its perfect unity. It is of all curves the most perfect example of static unity. Without the excitement of the slightest variation it goes on and on for ever. This is, no doubt, the reason why it was early chosen as a symbol of Eternity, and certainly no more perfect symbol could be found.

The circle seen in perspective assumes the more beautiful curve of the ellipse, a curve having much variety; but as its four quarters are alike, not so much as a symmetrical figure can have.

139 Perhaps the most beautiful symmetrically curved figure of all is the so-called egg of the well-known moulding from such a temple as the Erechtheum, called the egg and dart moulding. Here we have a perfect balance between variety and unity. The curvature is varied to an infinite degree, at no point is its curving at the same ratio as at any other point; perhaps the maximum amount of variety that can be got in a symmetrical figure, preserving, as it does, its almost perfect continuity, for it approaches the circle in the even flow of its curvature. This is, roughly, the line of the contour of a face, and you may note how much painters who have excelled in grace have insisted on it in their portraits. Gainsborough and Vandyke are striking, instances.

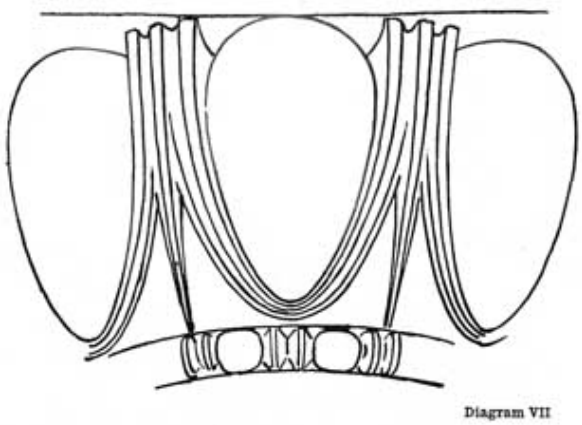

Diagram VII

EGG AND DART MOULDING FROM ONE OF THE CARYATIDES FROM THE ERECHTHEUM IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Diagram VII.

EGG AND DART MOULDING FROM ONE OF THE CARYATIDES FROM THE ERECHTHEUM IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

140 The line of a profile is often one of great beauty, only here the variety is apt to overbalance the unity or run of the line. The most beautiful profiles are usually those in which variety is subordinated to the unity of the contour. I fancy the Greeks felt this when they did away with the hollow above the nose, making the line of the forehead run, with but little interruption, to the tip of the nose. The unity of line is increased, and the variety made more interesting. The idea that this was the common Greek type is, I should imagine, untrue, for their portrait statues do not show it. It does occur in nature at rare intervals, and in most Western nationalities, but I do not think there is much evidence of its ever having been a common type anywhere.

Diagram VIII

ILLUSTRATING VARIETY IN SYMMETRY

Note how the hollows marked A are opposed by fullnesses marked B.

Diagram VIII.

ILLUSTRATING VARIETY IN SYMMETRY

Note how the hollows marked A are opposed by fullnesses marked B.

In drawing or painting a profile this run or unity of the line is the thing to feel, if you would express its particular beauty. This is best done in the case of a painting by finally drawing it with the brush from the background side, after having painted all the variety there is of tone and colour on the face side of the line. As the background usually varies little, the swing of the brush is not hampered on this side as it is on the other. I have seen students worried to distraction trying to paint the profile line from the face side, fearing to lose the drawing by going over the edge. With the edge blurred out from the face side, it is easy to come with a brush full of the colour the background is immediately against the face (a different colour usually from what it is further away), and draw it with some decision and conviction, care being taken to note all the variations on the edge, where the sharpnesses come and where the edge is more lost, &c.

Variety in Symmetry

The contours of the limbs illustrate another form of line variety—what may be called "Variety in Symmetry." While roughly speaking the limbs are symmetrical, each side not only has variety in itself, but there is usually variety of opposition. Supposing there is a convex curve on the one side, you will often have a concave form on the other. Always look out for this in drawing limbs, and it will often improve a poorly drawn part if more of this variation on symmetry is discovered.

The whole body, you may say, is symmetrical, but even here natural conditions make for variety. The body is seldom, except in soldiering, held in a symmetrical position. The slightest action produces the variety we are speaking about. The accompanying sketches will indicate what is meant.

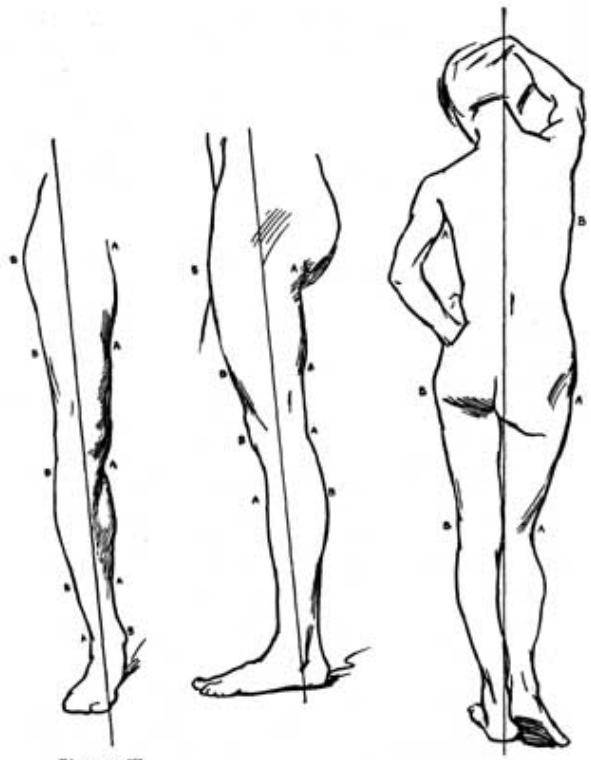

Diagram IX

ILLUSTRATING VARIETY IN SYMMETRY

Note how the hollows marked A are opposed by the fullnesses marked B.

Diagram IX.

ILLUSTRATING VARIETY IN SYMMETRY

Note how the hollows marked A are opposed by the fullnesses marked B.

Of course the student, if he has any natural ability, instinctively looks out for all these variations that give the play of life to his drawing. It is not for him in the full vigour of inspiration that books such as this are written. But there may come a time when things "won't come," and it is then that it is useful to know where to look for possible weak spots in your work.

Variety of Thickness and Accent

A line of equal thickness is a very dead and inexpressive thing compared with one varied and stressed at certain points. If you observe any of the boundaries in nature we use a line to express, you will notice some points are accentuated, attract the attention, more than others. The only means you have to express this in a line drawing is by darkening and sharpening the line. At other points, where the contour is almost lost, the line can be soft and blurred.

It is impossible to write of the infinite qualities of variety that a fine draughtsman will get into his line work; they must be studied first hand. But on this play of thickness and quality of line much of the vitality of your drawing will depend.

XII [144]
RHYTHM: UNITY OF LINE

Unity of line is a bigger quality than variety, and as it requires a larger mental grasp, is more rarely met with. The bigger things in drawing and design come under its consideration, including, as it does, the relation of the parts to the whole. Its proper consideration would take us into the whole field of Composition, a subject needing far more consideration than it can be given in this book.

In almost all compositions a rhythmic flow of lines can be traced. Not necessarily a flow of actual lines (although these often exist); they may be only imaginary lines linking up or massing certain parts, and bringing them into conformity with the rhythmic conception of the whole. Or again, only a certain stress and flow in the forms, suggesting line movements. But these line movements flowing through your panel are of the utmost importance; they are like the melodies and subjects of a musical symphony, weaving through and linking up the whole composition.

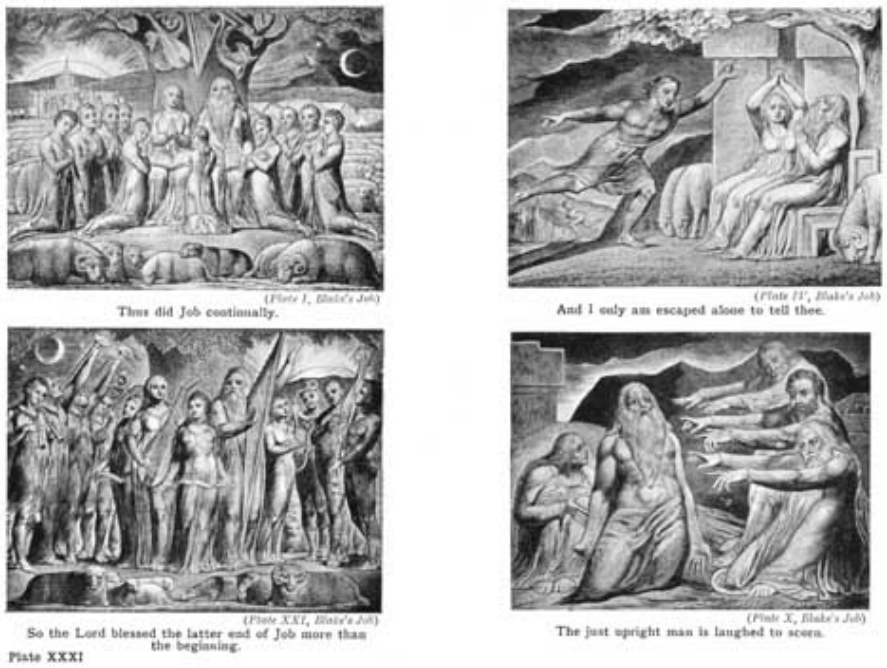

Plate XXXI.

Thus did Job continually. (Plate I, Blake's Job)

And I only am escaped alone to tell thee. (Plate IV, Blake's Job)

So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than the beginning. (Plate XXI, Blake's Job)

The just upright man is laughed to scorn. (Plate X, Blake's Job)

Some rude things were said above about the straight line and the circle, on account of their lack of variety, and it is true that a mathematically straight line, or a mathematically perfect circle, are never found in good artistic drawing. For without variety is no charm or life. But these lines possess other qualities, due to their maximum amount of unity, that give them great power in a composition; and where the expression of sublimity or any of the deeper and more profound sentiments are in evidence, they are often to be found.

The rows of columns in a Greek temple, the clusters of vertical lines in a Gothic cathedral interior, are instances of the sublimity and power they possess. The necessary play that makes for vitality—the "dither" as we called this quality in a former chapter—is given in the case of the Greek temple by the subtle curving of the lines of columns and steps, and by the rich variety of the sculpture, and in the case of the Gothic cathedral by a rougher cutting of the stone blocks and the variety in the colour of the stone. But generally speaking, in Gothic architecture this particular quality of "dither" or the play of life in all the parts is conspicuous, the balance being on the side of variety rather than unity. The individual workman was given a large amount of freedom and allowed to exercise his personal fancy. The capitals of columns, the cusping of windows, and the ornaments were seldom repeated, but varied according to the taste of the craftsman. Very high finish was seldom attempted, the marks of the chisel often being left showing in the stonework. All this gave a warmth and exuberance of life to a fine Gothic building that makes a classical building look cold by comparison. The freedom with which new parts were built on to a Gothic building is another proof of the fact that it is not in the conception of the unity of the whole that their chief charm consists.

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On the other hand, a fine classic building is the result of one large conception to which every part has rigorously to conform. Any addition to this in after years is usually disastrous. A high finish is always attempted, no tool marks nor any individuality of the craftsman is allowed to mar the perfect symmetry of the whole. It may be colder, but how perfect in sublimity! The balance here is on the side of unity rather than variety.

The strength and sublimity of Norman architecture is due to the use of circular curves in the arches, combined with straight lines and the use of square forms in the ornaments—lines possessed of least variety.

All objects with which one associates the look of strength will be found to have straight lines in their composition. The look of strength in a strong man is due to the square lines of the contours, so different from the rounded forms of a fat man. And everyone knows the look of mental power a square forehead gives to a head and the look of physical power expressed by a square jaw. The look of power in a rocky landscape or range of hills is due to the same cause.

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Plate XXXII.

When the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me. (Plate II, Blake's Job)

With dreams upon my bed Thou scarest me, and affrightest me with visions. (Plate XI, Blake's Job)

Printed the wrong way up in order to show that the look of horror is not solely dependent on the things represented but belongs to the rhythm, the pattern of the composition.

And my servant Job shall pray for you. (Plate XVIII, Blake's Job)

When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (Plate XIV, Blake's Job)

The Horizontal and the Vertical

The horizontal and the vertical are two very important lines, the horizontal being associated with calm and contemplation and the vertical with a feeling of elevation. As was said above, their relation to the sides of the composition to which they are parallel in rectangular pictures is of great importance in uniting the subject to its bounding lines and giving it a well-knit look, conveying a feeling of great stability to a picture.

How impressive and suggestive of contemplation is the long line of the horizon on a calm day at sea, or the long, horizontal line of a desert plain! The lack of variety, with all the energy and vitality that accompany it, gives one a sense of peace and rest, a touch of infinity that no other lines can convey. The horizontal lines which the breeze makes on still water, and which the sky often assumes at sunset, affect us from the same harmonic cause.

The stone pine and the cypress are typical instances of the sublime associated with the vertical in nature. Even a factory chimney rising above a distant town, in spite of its unpleasant associations, is impressive, not to speak of the beautiful spires of some of our Gothic cathedrals, pointing upwards. How well Constable has used the vertical sublimity of the spire of Salisbury Cathedral can be seen in his picture, at the Victoria and Albert Museum, where he has contrasted it with the gay tracery of an arch of elm trees. Gothic cathedrals generally depend much on this vertical feeling of line for their impressiveness.

The Romans knew the expressive power of the vertical when they set up a lonely column as a monument to some great deed or person. And a sense of this sublimity may be an unconscious explanation of the craze for putting towers and obelisks on high places that one comes across in different parts of the country, usually called someone's "folly."

In the accompanying diagrams, A, B, C and D, E, F, pages 152 [Transcribers Note: Diagram X] and 153 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XI], are examples of the influence to be associated with the horizontal and vertical lines. A is nothing but six straight lines drawn across a rectangular shape, and yet I think they convey something of the contemplative and peaceful sense given by a sunset over the sea on a calm evening. And this is entirely due to the expressive power straight lines possess, and the feelings they have the power to call up in the mind. In B a little more incident and variety has been introduced, and although there is a certain loss of calm, it is not yet enough to destroy the impression. The line suggesting a figure is vertical and so plays up to the same calm feeling as the horizontal lines. The circular disc of the sun has the same static quality, being the curve most devoid of variety. It is the lines of the clouds that give some excitement, but they are only enough to suggest the dying energy of departing day.

Now let us but bend the figure in a slight curve, as at C, and destroy its vertical direction, partly cover the disc of the sun so as to destroy the complete circle, and all this is immediately altered, our calm evening has become a windy one, our lines now being expressive of some energy.

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Plate XXXIII

FÊTE CHAMPETRE. GIORGIONI (LOUVRE)

Note the straight line introduced in seated female figure with flute to counteract rich forms

PLATE XXXIII.

FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE. GIORGIONI (LOUVRE)

Note the straight line introduced in seated female figure with flute to counteract rich forms.

To take a similar instance with vertical lines. Let D represent a row of pine trees in a wide plain. Such lines convey a sense of exaltation and infinite calm. Now if some foliage is introduced, as at E, giving a swinging line, and if this swinging line is carried on by a corresponding one in the sky, we have introduced some life and variety. If we entirely destroy the vertical feeling and bend our trees, as at F, the expression of much energy will be the result, and a feeling of the stress and struggle of the elements introduced where there was perfect calm.

It is the aloofness of straight lines from all the fuss and flurry of variety that gives them this calm, infinite expression. And their value as a steadying influence among the more exuberant forms of a composition is very great. The Venetians knew this and made great use of straight lines among the richer forms they so delighted in.

It is interesting to note how Giorgione in his "Fête Champêtre" of the Louvre (see illustration, page 151 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXIII]), went out of his way to get a straight line to steady his picture and contrast with the curves. Not wanting it in the landscape, he has boldly made the contour of the seated female conform to a rigid straight line, accentuated still further by the flute in her hand. If it were not for this and other straight lines in the picture, and a certain squareness of drawing in the draperies, the richness of the trees in the background, the full forms of the flesh and drapery would be too much, and the effect become sickly, if

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not positively sweet. Van Dyck, also, used to go out of his way to introduce a hard straight line near the head in his portraits for the same reason, often ending abruptly, without any apparent reason, a dark background in a hard line, and showing a distant landscape beyond in order to get a light mass to accentuate the straight line.

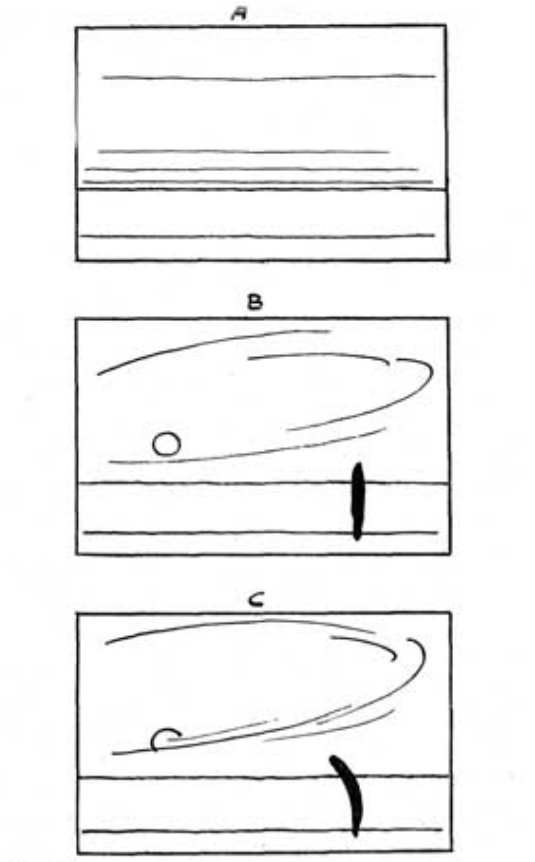

Diagram X

ILLUSTRATING, A, CALM RHYTHMIC INFLUENCE OF HORIZONTAL LINES SUCH AS A SUNSET OVER THE SEA MIGHT GIVE; B, INTRODUCTION OF LINES CONVEYING SOME ENERGY; C, SHOWING DESTRUCTION OF REPOSE BY FURTHER CURVING OF LINES. THE CALM EVENING HAS BECOME A WINDY ONE

Diagram X.

ILLUSTRATING, A, CALM RHYTHMIC INFLUENCE OF HORIZONTAL LINES SUCH AS A SUNSET OVER THE SEA MIGHT GIVE; B, INTRODUCTION OF LINES CONVEYING SOME ENERGY; C, SHOWING DESTRUCTION OF REPOSE BY FURTHER CURVING OF LINES. THE CALM EVENING HAS BECOME A WINDY ONE.

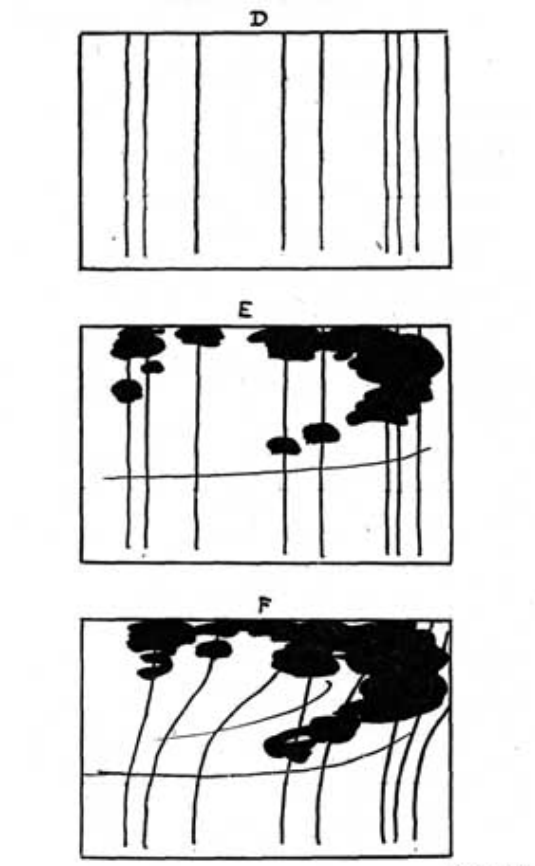

Diagram XI

ILLUSTRATING, D, RHYTHMIC INFLUENCE OF VERTICAL LINES; E, THE INTRODUCTION OF SOME VARIETY; F, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE VERTICAL AND CONSEQUENT LOSS OF REPOSE

Diagram XI.

ILLUSTRATING, D, RHYTHMIC INFLUENCE OF VERTICAL LINES; E, THE INTRODUCTION OF SOME VARIETY; F, THE DESTRUCTION OF THE VERTICAL AND CONSEQUENT LOSS OF REPOSE.

The rich modelling and swinging lines of the "Bacchus and Ariadne" of Titian in the National Gallery, here reproduced, page 154 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXIV], would be too gross, were it not for the steadying influence of the horizontal lines in the sky and the vertical lines of the tree-trunks.

While speaking of this picture, it might not be out of place to mention an idea that occurred to me as to the reason for the somewhat aggressive standing leg of the female figure with the cymbals leading the procession of revellers. I will not attempt any analysis of this composition, which is ably gone into in another book of this series. But the standing leg of this figure, given such prominence in the composition, has always rather puzzled me. I knew Titian would not have given it that vigorous stand without a good reason. It certainly does not help the run of the composition, although it may be useful in steadying it, and it is not a particularly beautiful thing in itself, as the position is one better suited to a man's leg than to a woman's. But if you cover it over with your finger and look at the composition without it, I think the reason of its prominence becomes plainer. Titian evidently had some trouble, as well he might have, with the forward leg of the Bacchus. He wished to give the look of his stepping from the car lightly treading the air, as gods may be permitted to do. But the wheel of the car that comes behind the foot made it difficult to evade the idea that he was stepping on it, which would be the way an ordinary mortal would alight. I think the duty of the aggressive standing leg of the leading Bacchante, with its great look of weight, is to give a look of lightness to this forward leg of Bacchus, by contrast—which it certainly does. On examining the picture closely in a good light, you will see that he has had the foot of Bacchus in several positions before he got it right. Another foot can distinctly be seen about a couple of inches or so above the present one. The general vertical direction of this leg is also against its look of lightness and motion, tending rather to give it a stationary, static look. I could not at first see why he did not bring the foot further to the right, which would have aided the lightness of the figure and increased its movement. But you will observe that this would have hurled the whole weight of the mass of figures on the right, forward on to the single figure of Ariadne, and upset the balance; as you can see by covering this leg with your finger and imagining it swinging to the right. So that Titian, having to retain the vertical position for Bacchus' forward leg, used the aggressive standing leg of the cymbal lady to accentuate its spring and lightness.

Plate XXXIV.

BACCHUS AND ARIADNE. TITIAN

Photo Hanfstaengl

A feeling of straight-up-ness in a figure or of the horizontal plane in anything will produce the same effect as a vertical or horizontal line without any actual line being visible. Blake's "Morning Stars Singing Together" is an instance of the vertical chord, although there is no actual upright line in the figures. But they all have a vigorous straight-up-ness that gives them the feeling of peace and elevation coupled with a flame-like line running through them that gives them their joyous energy.

Diagram XII.

A, B, C

The combination of the vertical with the horizontal produces one of the strongest and most arresting chords that you can make, and it will be found to exist in most pictures and drawings where there is the expression of dramatic power. The cross is the typical

example of this. It is a combination of lines that instantly rivets the attention, and has probably a more powerful effect upon the mind—quite apart from anything symbolised by it—than any other simple combinations that could have been devised. How powerful is the effect of a vertical figure, or even a post, seen cutting the long horizontal line of the horizon on the sea-shore. Or a telegraph post by the side of the road, seen against the long horizontal line of a hill at sunset. The look of power given by the vertical lines of a contracted brow is due to the same cause. The vertical furrows of the brow continuing the lines of the nose, make a continuous vertical which the horizontal lines of the brow cross (see Fig. A in the illustration). The same cause gives the profile a powerful look when the eyebrows make a horizontal line contrasting with the vertical line of the forehead (Fig. B). Everybody knows the look of power associated with a square brow: it is not that the square forehead gives the look of a larger brain capacity, for if the forehead protrudes in a curved line, as at C, the look of power is lost, although there is obviously more room for brains.

This power of the right angle is well exemplified in Watts' "Love and Death," here reproduced, page 158 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXV]. In this noble composition, in the writer's opinion one of the most sublime expressions produced by nineteenth-century art, the irresistible power and majesty of the slowly advancing figure of Death is largely due to the right angle felt through the pose. Not getting it in the contour, Watts has boldly introduced it by means of shading the farther arm and insisting on the light upper edge of the outstretched arm and hand, while losing somewhat the, outline of the head beyond. Note also the look of power the insistence on square forms in the drapery gives this figure. The expression is still further emphasised by the hard square forms of the steps, and particularly by the strong horizontal line of the first step so insisted on, at right angles to the vertical stand of the figure; and also the upright lines of the doorway above. In contrast with the awful sublimity of this figure of Death, how touching is the expression of the little figure of Love, trying vainly to stop the inevitable advance. And this expression is due to the curved lines on which the action of the figure is hung, and the soft undulating forms of its modelling. Whereas the figure of Death is all square lines and flat crisp planes, the whole hanging on a dramatic right angle; this figure is all subtle fullness both of contour and modelling melting one into the other, the whole hung upon a rich full curve starting at the standing foot of the advancing figure. And whereas the expression of Death is supported and emphasised by the hard, square forms and texture of the stone steps, the expression of Love is supported and emphasised by the rounded forms and soft texture of the clustering roses. On this contrast of line and form, so in sympathy with the profound sentiment to which this picture owes its origin, the expressive power of this composition will be found to depend.

Diagram XIII

ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC POWER OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS

Diagram XIII.

ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC POWER OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS.

Plate XXXV *Photo Hollyer*

LOVE AND DEATH. BY G. F. WATTS

A noble composition, founded on the power of the right angle in the figure of Death, in contrast with the curved lines in the figure of Love. (See diagram opposite.)

Plate XXXV.

LOVE AND DEATH. BY G.F. WATTS

A noble composition, founded on the power of the right angle in the figure of Death, in contrast with the curved lines in the figure of Love. (See diagram opposite.)

Photo Hollyer

In the diagram accompanying the reproduction of this picture I have tried to indicate in diagrammatical form some of the chief lines of its anatomy.

In these diagrams of the anatomy of compositions the lines selected are not always very obvious in the originals and are justly much broken into by truths of natural appearance. But an emotional significance depending on some arrangement of abstract lines is to be found underlying the expression in every good picture, carefully hidden as it is by all great artists. And although some apology is perhaps necessary for the ugliness of these diagrams, it is an ugliness that attends all anatomy drawings. If the student will trace them and put his tracing over the reproductions of the originals, they will help him to see on what things in the arrangement the rhythmic force of the picture depends.

Other lines, as important as those selected, may have been overlooked, but the ones chosen will suffice to show the general character of them all.

There is one condition in a composition, that is laid down before you begin, and that is the shape of your panel or canvas. This is usually a rectangular form, and all the lines of your design will have to be considered in relation to this shape. Vertical and horizontal lines being parallel to the boundaries of rectangular pictures, are always right and immediately set up a relationship, as we have seen.

The arresting power of the right angle exists at each corner of a rectangular picture, where the vertical sides meet the horizontal base, and this presents a difficulty, because you do not wish the spectator's attention drawn to the corners, and this dramatic combination of lines always attracts the eye. A favourite way of getting rid of this is to fill them with some dark mass, or with lines swinging round and carrying the eye past them, so that the attention is continually swung to the centre of the picture. For lines have a power of directing the attention, the eye instinctively running with them, and this power is of the greatest service in directing the spectator to the principal interest.

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It is this trouble with the corners that makes the problem of filling a square so exacting. In an ordinary rectangular panel you have a certain amount of free space in the middle, and the difficulty of filling the corners comfortably does not present itself until this space is arranged for. But in a square, the moment you leave the centre you are in one or other of the corners, and the filling of them governs the problem much more than in the case of other shapes. It is a good exercise for students to give themselves a square to fill, in order to understand this difficulty and learn to overcome it.

Other lines that possess a direct relation to a rectangular shape are the diagonals. Many compositions that do not hang on a vertical or horizontal basis are built on this line, and are thus related to the bounding shape.

Plate XXXVI

THE SURRENDER OF BREDA. VELAZQUEZ (PRADO)

Photo Anderson

Plate XXXVI.

THE SURRENDER OF BREDA VELAZQUEZ (PRADO)

Photo Anderson

When vertical, horizontal, or diagonal lines are referred to, it must not be assumed that one means in all cases naked lines. There is no pure vertical line in a stone pine or cypress tree, nor pure horizontal line in a stretch of country, but the whole swing of their lines is vertical or horizontal. And in the same way, when one speaks of a composition being hung upon a diagonal, it is seldom that a naked diagonal line exists in the composition, but the general swing is across the panel in harmony with one or other diagonal. And when this is so, there is a unity set up between the design and its boundaries. A good instance of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines to unite a picture is Velazquez's "The Surrender of Breda," here reproduced. Note the vertical chord in the spears on the left, continued in the leg of the horse and front leg of the figure receiving the key, and the horizontal line made by the dark mass of distant city, to be continued by the gun carried over the shoulder of the figure with the slouch hat behind the principal group. Velazquez has gone out of his way to get this line, as it could hardly have been the fashion to carry a gun in this position, pointing straight at the head of the man behind. Horizontal lines also occur in the sky and distant landscape, one running right through the group of spears. The use of the diagonal is another remarkable thing in the lines of this picture. If you place a ruler on the slanting line of the flag behind the horse's head to the right, you find it is exactly parallel to a diagonal drawn from the top right-

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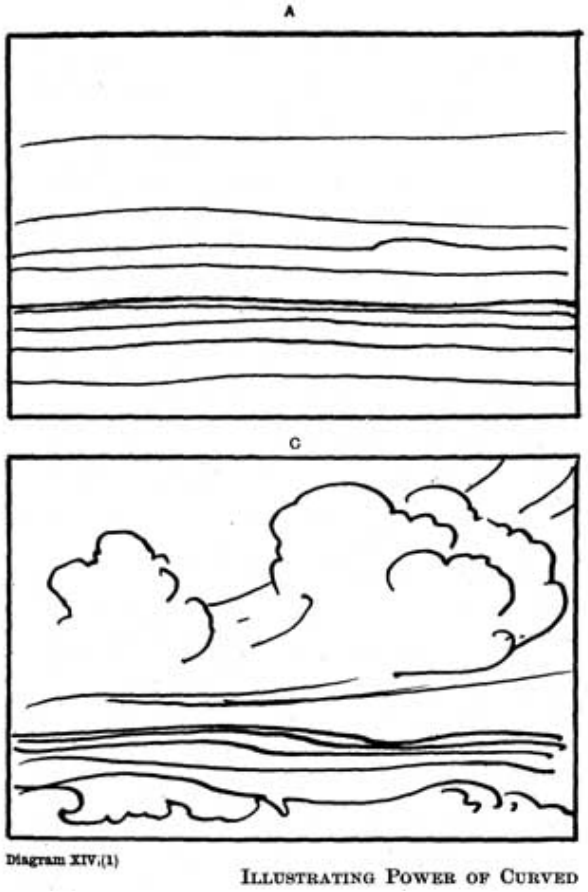
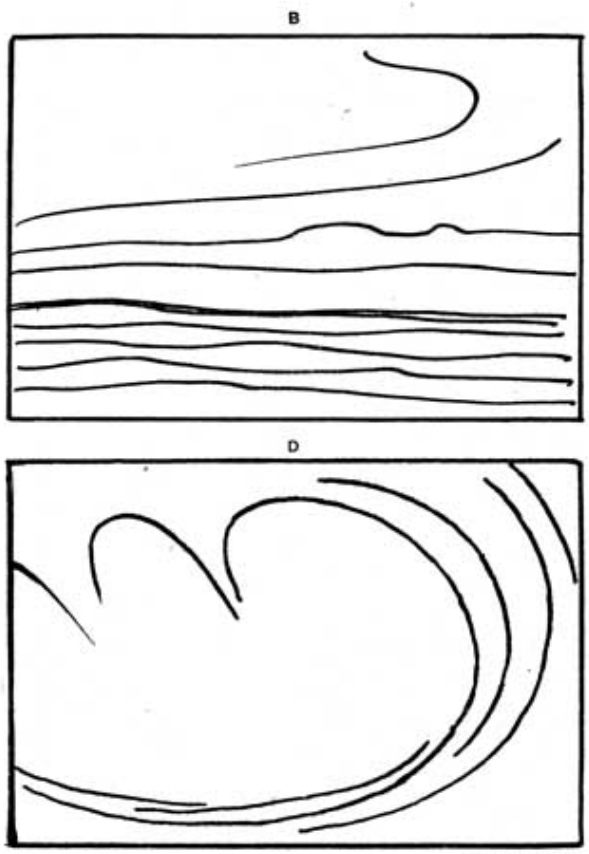


Diagram XIV.(1)

ILLUSTRATING POWER OF CURVED

Diagram XIV.

ILLUSTRATING POWER OF CURVED LINES TO CONVEY ENERGY. A, B, C, D.



LINES TO CONVEY ENERGY

Diagram XIV (2)

Diagram XIV.

ILLUSTRATING POWER OF CURVED LINES TO CONVEY ENERGY. A, B, C, D.

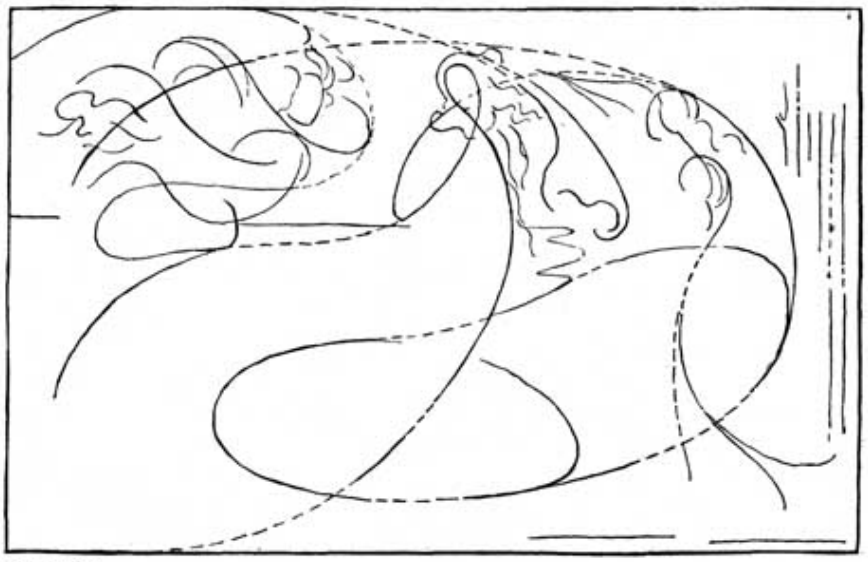


Diagram XV

ILLUSTRATING THE FLOW OF LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC UNITY OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS

Diagram XV.

ILLUSTRATING THE FLOW OF LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC UNITY OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS.

Plate XXXVII

Photo Anderson

THE BIRTH OF VENUS. BOTTICELLI (FLORENCE)

A beautiful example of Botticelli's refined line rhythm. (See diagram on opposite page for analysis.

Plate XXXVII.

THE BIRTH OF VENUS. BOTTICELLI (FLORENCE)

A beautiful example of Botticelli's refined line rhythm. (See diagram on opposite page for analysis.)

Photo Anderson

In both cases note the way the lines lead up to the principal subject, and the steadying power introduced by means of horizontal, vertical, and other straight lines. Veronese has contented himself with keeping a certain horizontal feeling in the sky, culminating in the straight lines of the horizon and of the sea edge. And he has also introduced two pyramids, giving straight lines in among the trees, the most pronounced of which leads the eye straight on to the principal head.

Botticelli has first the long line of the horizon echoed in the ground at the right-hand lower corner. And then he has made a determined stand against the flow of lines carrying you out of the picture on the right, by putting straight, upright trees and insisting upon their straightness.

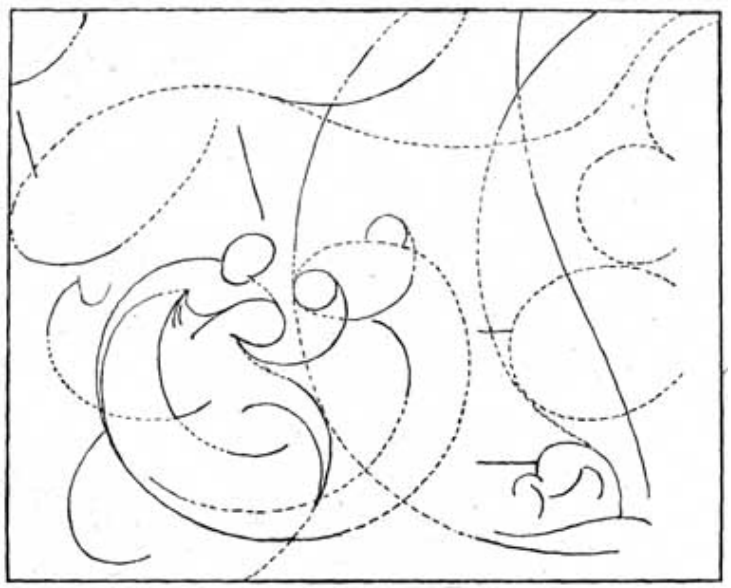


Diagram XVI

ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE MAIN LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC UNITY OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS

Diagram XVI.

ILLUSTRATING SOME OF THE MAIN LINES ON WHICH THE RHYTHMIC UNITY OF THIS PICTURE DEPENDS.

Plate XXXVIII.

THE RAPE OF EUROPA. BY PAOLO VERONESE (VENICE)

A composition of rich full forms and rich full colour. (See the diagram on opposite page for analysis of line rhythm.)

Photo Anderson

Another rhythmic form the lines at the basis of a composition may take is a flame-like flow of lines; curved lines meeting and parting and meeting again, or even crossing in one continual movement onwards. A striking instance of the use of this quality is the work of the remarkable Spanish painter usually called El Greco, two of whose works are here shown (page 172 [Transcribers Note: Plate XL]). Whatever may be said by the academically minded as to the incorrectness of his drawing, there can be no two opinions as to the remarkable rhythmic vitality of his work. The upward flow of his lines and the flame-like flicker of his light masses thrills one in much the same way as watching a flaring fire. There is something exalting and stimulating in it, although, used to excess as he sometimes uses it, it is apt to suffer from lack of repose. Two examples of his pictures are reproduced here, and illustrate his use of this form of movement in the lines and masses of his compositions. Nowhere does he let the eye rest, but keeps the same flickering movement going throughout all his masses and edges. The extraordinary thing about this remarkable painter is that while this restless, unrestrained form of composition makes his work akin to the rococo work of a later period, there is a fiery earnestness and sincerity in all he does, only to be matched among the primitive painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and very different from the false sentiment of the later school.

Blake was also fond of this flame line, but usually used it in combination with more straight lines than the energetic Spaniard allowed himself. Plates III and V in the Job series are good examples of his use of this form. In both cases it will be seen that he uses it in combination with the steadying influence of straight lines, which help to keep the balance and repose necessary in the treatment of even the most violent subjects in art.

A continual interruption in the flow of lines, and a harsh jarring of one against another in an angular, jagged fashion, produces a feeling of terror and horror. A streak of fork lightning is a natural example of this. The plate of Blake's No. XI, p. 148 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXII], reproduced here, is also a good example. I have had it put sideways on so that you may see that the look of horror is not only in the subject but belongs to the particular music of line in the picture. The effect of the harsh contrasts in the lines is further added to by the harsh contrasts of tone: everywhere hard lights are brought up against hard darks. Harsh contrasts of tone produce much the same look of terror as harsh contrasts of line. Battle pictures are usually, when good, full of these clashes of line and tone, and thrilling dramatic effects in which a touch of horror enters are usually founded on the same principle. In the picture by Paolo Uccello in the National Gallery, reproduced on page 170 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXIX], a milder edition of this effect is seen. The artist has been more interested in the pageantry of war and a desire to show off his newly-acquired knowledge of perspective, than anything very terrible. The contrasts of line are here but confined to the smaller parts, and there are no contrasts of light and shade, chiaroscuro not being yet invented. However, it will be seen by the accompanying diagram how consistently the harsh contrasts of line were carried out in the planning of this picture. Notice the unconscious humour of the foreshortened spears and figure carefully arranged on the ground to vanish to the recently discovered vanishing point.

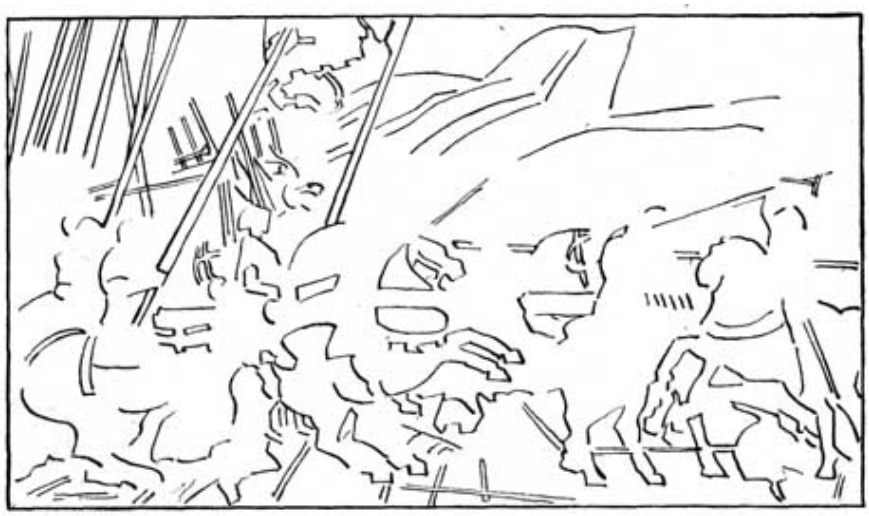


Diagram XVII

SHOWING THE CLASH OF LINES IN SYMPATHY WITH THE MARTIAL NATURE OF THIS SUBJECT

Diagram XVII.

SHOWING THE CLASH OF LINES IN SYMPATHY WITH THE MARTIAL NATURE OF THIS SUBJECT.

Plate XXXIX

Photo Morelli

BATTLE OF ST. EGIDIO. PAOLO UCCELLO (NATIONAL GALLERY)

Illustrating the effect of jarring lines in composition. (See diagram on opposite page.)

Plate XXXIX.

BATTLE OF ST. EGIDIO. PAOLO UCCELLO (NATIONAL GALLERY)

Illustrating the effect of jarring lines in composition. (See diagram on opposite page.)

Photo Morelli

Lines radiating in smooth curves from a common centre are another form employed to give unity in pictorial design. The point

from which they radiate need not necessarily be within the picture, and is often considerably outside it. But the feeling that they would meet if produced gives them a unity that brings them into harmonious relationship.

There is also another point about radiating lines, and that is their power of setting up a relationship between lines otherwise unrelated. Let us try and explain this. In Panel A, page 174 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XVIII], are drawn some lines at random, with the idea of their being as little related to each other as possible. In B, by the introduction of radiating lines in sympathy with them, they have been brought into some sort of relationship. The line 1-2 has been selected as the dominating line, and an assortment of radiating ones drawn about it. Now, by drawing 7-8, we have set up a relationship between lines 3-4, 5-6, and 1-2, for this line radiates with all of them. Line 9-10 accentuates this relationship with 1-2. The others echo the same thing. It is this echoing of lines through a composition that unites the different parts and gives unity to the whole.

The crossing of lines at angles approaching the right angle is always harsh and somewhat discordant, useful when you want to draw attention dramatically to a particular spot, but to be avoided or covered up at other times. There is an ugly clash of crossing lines in our original scribble, and at C we have introduced a mass to cover this up, and also the angles made by line 3-4 as it crosses the radiating lines above 1-2. With a small mass at 11 to make the balance right, you have a basis for a composition, Diagram C, not at all unpleasing in arrangement, although based on a group of discordant lines drawn at random, but brought into harmony by means of sympathetic radiation.

Plate XL. *Photo Anderson*

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST. BY DOMINICO THEOTOCÓPULI CALLED EL GRECO

Note the flame-like form and flow of the light masses, and the exalted feeling this conveys.

Plate XL.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST. BY DOMINICO THEOTOCOPULI CALLED EL GRECO.

Note the flame-like form and flow of the light masses, and the exalted feeling this conveys.

Photo Anderson

Plate XLI *Photo Anderson*

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST. BY DOMINICO THEOTOCOPULI CALLED EL GRECO

Another example of his restless, flame-like composition.

Plate XLI.

THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST. BY DOMINICO THEOTOCOPULI CALLED EL GRECO

Another example of his restless, flame-like composition.

Photo Anderson

In Panel D the same group is taken, but this time line 3-4 is used as the dominant one. Line 7-8 introduces 3-4 to 1-2, as it is related to both. Lines 9-10 and 11-12 introduce 3-4 to 5-6, as they are related to both, and the others follow on the same principle. By introducing some masses covering up the crossings, a rhythmic basis for a composition (Diagram E) entirely different from C is obtained, based on the same random group.

In Panel F, 1-2 has been taken as the dominant line, and sympathetic lines drawn on the same principle as before. By again covering the crossings and introducing balancing masses we obtain yet another arrangement from the same random scribble.

I would suggest this as a new game to students, one giving another two or three lines drawn in a panel at random, the problem being to make harmonious arrangements by the introduction of others radiating in sympathy.

Often in a picture certain conditions are laid down to start with; something as ugly as our original group of lines drawn at random has to be treated pictorially, and it is by means such as here suggested that its discordancy can be subdued and the whole brought into harmony with the shape of your panel. The same principles apply in colour, discordant notes can be brought into harmony by the introduction of others related to both the original colours, thus leading the eye from one to the other by easy stages and destroying the shock. Somewhat in the way a musician will take you from one key into another very remote by means of a few chords leading from the one to the other; whereas, had he taken you straight there, the shock would have been terrible. As it is, these transitions from one key into another please and surprise one, and are very effective.

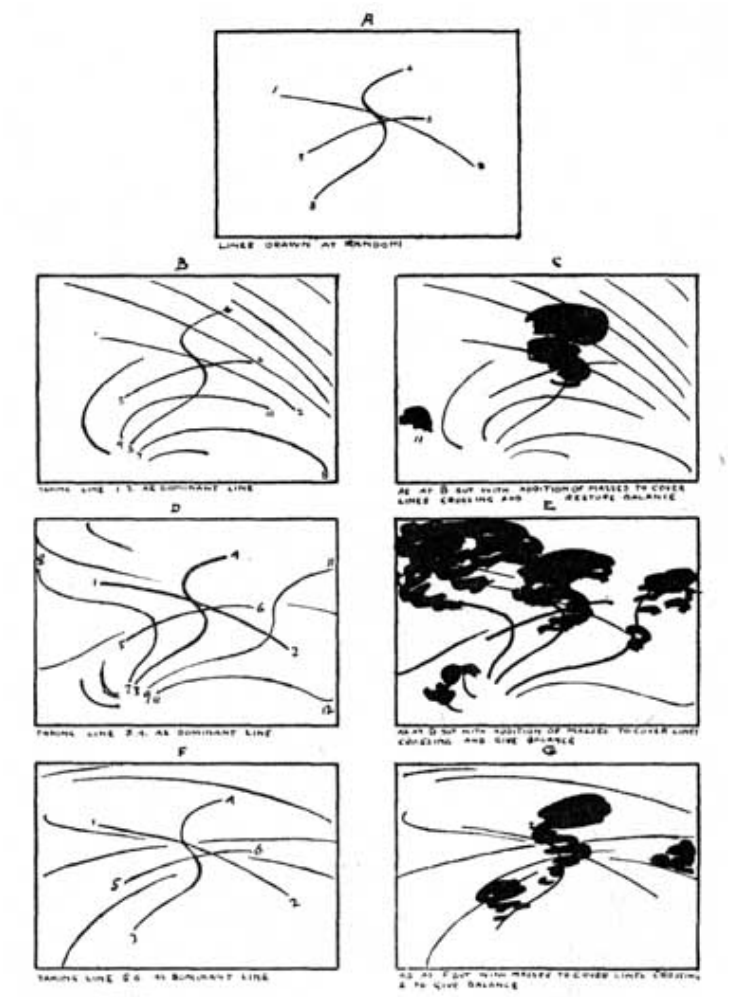


Diagram XVIII

SHOWING HOW LINES UNRELATED CAN BE BROUGHT INTO HARMONY BY THE INTRODUCTION OF OTHERS IN SYMPATHY WITH THEM

Diagram XVIII.

SHOWING HOW LINES UNRELATED CAN BE BROUGHT INTO HARMONY BY THE INTRODUCTION OF OTHERS IN SYMPATHY WITH THEM.

A. LINES DRAWN AT RANDOM.

B. TAKING LINE 1-2 AS DOMINANT LINE.

C. AS AT B BUT WITH ADDITION OF MASSES TO COVER LINES CROSSING AND RESTORE BALANCE

D. TAKING LINE 3-4 AS DOMINANT LINE

E. AS AT D BUT WITH ADDITION OF MASSES TO COVER LINES CROSSING AND GIVE BALANCE

F. TAKING LINE 5-6 AS DOMINANT LINE

G. AS AT F BUT WITH MASSES TO COVER LINES CROSSING & TO GIVE BALANCE

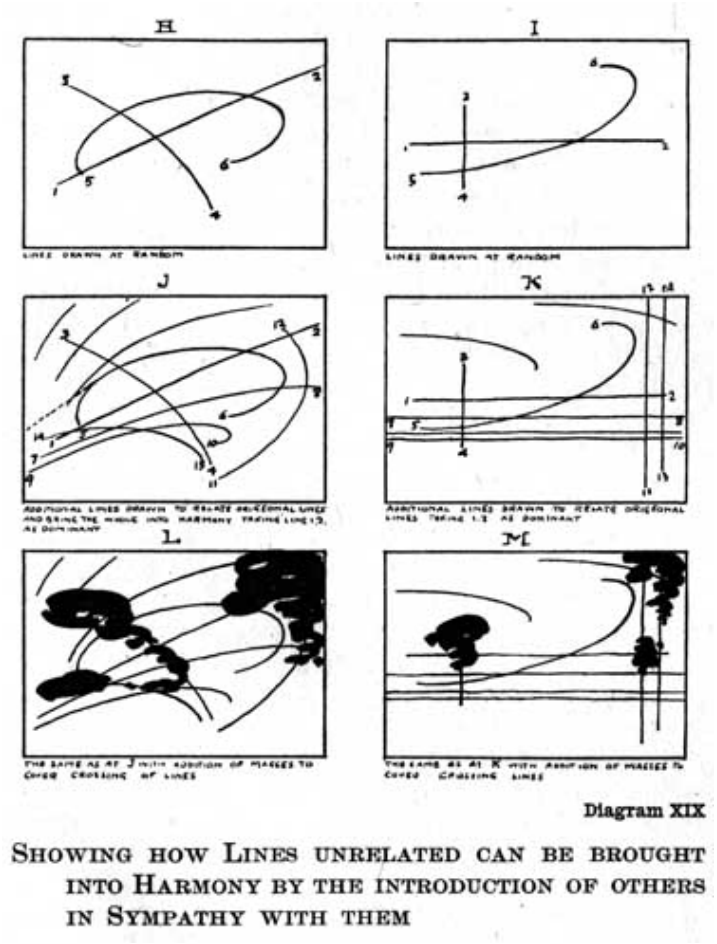


Diagram XIX.

SHOWING HOW LINES UNRELATED CAN BE BROUGHT INTO HARMONY BY THE INTRODUCTION OF OTHERS IN SYMPATHY WITH THEM.

H. LINES DRAWN AT RANDOM.

I. LINES DRAWN AT RANDOM.

J. ADDITIONAL LINES DRAWN TO RELATE ORIGINAL LINES AND BRING THE WHOLE INTO HARMONY TAKING LINE 1-2, AS DOMINANT.

K. ADDITIONAL LINES DRAWN TO RELATE ORIGINAL LINES TAKING 1-2 AS DOMINANT.

L. THE SAME AS J WITH ADDITION OF MASSES TO COVER CROSSING OF LINES.

M. THE SAME AS AT K WITH ADDITION OF MASSES TO COVER CROSSING LINES.

In H, I have introduced a straight line into our initial scribble, and this somewhat increases the difficulties of relating them. But by drawing 7-8 and 9-10 radiating from 1-2, we have introduced this straight line to 5-6. For although 5-6 and 9-10 do not radiate from the same point, they are obviously in sympathy. It is only a short part of the line at the end marked 5 that is out of sympathy, and had 5-6 taken the course of the dotted line, it would have radiated from the same point as 9-10. We still have line 3-4 to account for. But by drawing 11-12 we bring it into relationship with 5-6, and so by stages through 9-10 and 7-8 to the original straight line 1-2. Line 13-14, by being related to 3-4, 11-12, and also 5-6, still further harmonises the group, and the remainder echo 5-6 and increase the dominant swing. At L masses have been introduced, covering crossing lines, and we have a basis for a composition.

In Diagram I lines have been drawn as before, at random, but two of them are straight and at right angles, the longer being across the-centre of the panel. The first thing to do is to trick the eye out of knowing that this line is in the centre by drawing others parallel to it, leading the eye downwards to line 9-10, which is now much more important than 1-2 and in better proportion with the height of the panel. The vertical line 3-4 is rather stark and lonely, and so we' introduce two more verticals at 11-12 and 13-14, which modify this, and with another two lines in sympathy with 5-6 and leading the eye back to the horizontal top of the panel,

some sort of unity is set up, the introduction of some masses completing the scheme at M.

There is a quality of sympathy set up by certain line relationships about which it is important to say something. Ladies who have the instinct for choosing a hat or doing their hair to suit their face instinctively know something of this; know that certain things in their face are emphasised by certain forms in their hats or hair, and the care that has to be taken to see that the things thus drawn attention to are their best and not their worst points.

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The principle is more generally understood in relation to colour; everybody knows how the blueness of blue eyes is emphasised by a sympathetic blue dress or touch of blue on a hat, &c. But the same principle applies to lines. The qualities of line in beautiful eyes and eyebrows are emphasised by the long sympathetic curve of a picture hat, and the becoming effect of a necklace is partly due to the same cause, the lines being in sympathy with the eyes or the oval of the face, according to how low or high they hang. The influence of long lines is thus to "pick out" from among the lines of a face those with which they are in sympathy, and thus to accentuate them.

To illustrate this, on page 178 [Transcribers Note: Plate XLII] is reproduced "The Portrait of the Artist's Daughter," by Sir Edward Burne-Jones.

The two things that are brought out by the line arrangement in this portrait are the beauty of the eyes and the shape of the face. Instead of the picture hat you have the mirror, the widening circles of which swing round in sympathy with the eyes and concentrate the attention on them. That on the left (looking at the picture) being nearest the centre, has the greatest attention concentrated upon it, the lines of the mirror being more in sympathy with this than the other eye, as it is nearer the centre. If you care to take the trouble, cut a hole in a piece of opaque paper the size of the head and placing it over the illustration look at the face without the influence of these outside lines; and note how much more equally divided the attention is between the two eyes without the emphasis given to the one by the mirror. This helps the unity of impression, which with both eyes realised to so intense a focus might have suffered. This mirror forms a sort of echo of the pupil of the eye with its reflection of the window in the left-hand corner corresponding to the high light, greatly helping the spell these eyes hold.

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Diagram XX

INDICATING THE SYMPATHETIC FLOW OF LINES THAT GIVE UNITY TO THIS COMPOSITION

Diagram XX.

INDICATING THE SYMPATHETIC FLOW OF LINES THAT GIVE UNITY TO THIS COMPOSITION.

Plate XLII. *Photo Hollyer*

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S DAUGHTER
SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES, BART.

An example of sympathetic rhythm. (See diagram on opposite page.)

Plate XLII.

PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST'S DAUGHTER SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES, BART.

An example of sympathetic rhythm. (See diagram on opposite page.)

Photo Hollyer

The other form accentuated by the line arrangement is the oval of the face. There is the necklace the lines of which lead on to those on the right in the reflection. It is no mere accident that this chain is so in sympathy with the line of the face: it would hardly have remained where it is for long, and must have been put in this position by the artist with the intention (conscious or instinctive) of accentuating the face line. The line of the reflection on the left and the lines of the mirror are also sympathetic. Others in the folds of the dress, and those forming the mass of the hands and arms, echo still further this line of the face and bring the whole canvas into intense sympathetic unity of expression.

The influence that different ways of doing the hair may have on a face is illustrated in the accompanying scribbles. The two profiles are exactly alike—I took great trouble to make them so. It is quite remarkable the difference the two ways of doing the hair make to the look of the faces. The upward swing of the lines in A sympathise with the line of the nose and the sharper projections of the face generally (see dotted lines), while the full downward curves of B sympathise with the fuller curves of the face and particularly emphasise the fullness under the chin so dreaded by beauty past its first youth (see dotted lines). It is only a very sharply-cut face that can stand this low knot at the back of the head, in which case it is one of the simplest and most beautiful ways of doing the hair. The hair dragged up high at the back sharpens the lines of the profile as the low knot blunts them.

Diagram XXI A

ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECT ON THE FACE OF PUTTING THE HAIR UP AT THE BACK. HOW THE UPWARD FLOW OF LINES ACCENTUATES THE SHARPNESSES OF THE FEATURES

Diagram XXI.

ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECT ON THE FACE OF PUTTING THE HAIR UP AT THE BACK. HOW THE UPWARD FLOW OF LINES ACCENTUATES THE SHARPNESSES OF THE FEATURES.

B Diagram XXII

ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECT ON THE SAME FACE AS DIAGRAM XXI, OF PUTTING THE HAIR LOW AT THE BACK. HOW THE FULLER LINES THUS GIVEN ACCENTUATE THE FULLNESSES OF THE FEATURES

Diagram XXII.

ILLUSTRATING THE EFFECT ON THE SAME FACE AS DIAGRAM XXI, OF PUTTING THE HAIR LOW AT THE BACK. HOW THE FULLER LINES THUS GIVEN ACCENTUATE THE FULLNESSES OF THE FEATURES.

The illustrations to this chapter have been drawn in diagrammatical form in order to try and show that the musical quality of lines and the emotions they are capable of calling up are not dependent upon truth to natural forms but are inherent in abstract

But although nature does not readily suggest a design fitting the conditions of a panel her tendency is always towards unity of arrangement. If you take a bunch of flowers or leaves and haphazard stuff them into a vase of water, you will probably get a very chaotic arrangement. But if you leave it for some time and let nature have a chance you will find that the leaves and flowers have arranged themselves much more harmoniously. And if you cut down one of a group of trees, what a harsh discordant gap is usually left; but in time nature will, by throwing a bough here and filling up a gap there, as far as possible rectify matters and bring all into unity again. I am prepared to be told this has nothing to do with beauty but is only the result of nature's attempts to seek for light and air. But whatever be the physical cause, the fact is the same, that nature's laws tend to pictorial unity of arrangement.

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Variety of Tone Values

It will be as well to try and explain what is meant by tone values. All the masses or tones (for the terms are often used interchangeably) that go to the making of a visual impression can be considered in relation to an imagined scale from white, to represent the lightest, to black, to represent the darkest tones. This scale of values does not refer to light and shade only, but light and shade, colour, and the whole visual impression are considered as one mosaic of masses of different degrees of darkness or lightness. A dark object in strong light may be lighter than a white object in shadow, or the reverse: it will depend on the amount of reflected light. Colour only matters in so far as it affects the position of the mass in this imagined scale of black and white. The correct observation of these tone values is a most important matter, and one of no little difficulty.

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The word tone is used in two senses, in the first place when referring to the individual masses as to their relations in the scale of "tone values"; and secondly when referring to the musical relationship of these values to a oneness of tone idea governing the whole impression. In very much the same way you might refer to a single note in music as a tone, and also to the tone of the whole orchestra. The word values always refers to the relationship of the individual masses or tones in our imagined scale from black to white. We say a picture is out of value or out of tone when some of the values are darker or lighter than our sense of harmony feels they should be, in the same way as we should say an instrument in an orchestra was out of tone or tune when it was higher or lower than our sense of harmony allowed. Tone is so intimately associated with the colour of a picture that it is a little difficult to treat of it apart, and it is often used in a sense to include colour in speaking of the general tone. We say it has a warm tone or a cold tone.

There is a particular rhythmic beauty about a well-ordered arrangement of tone values that is a very important part of pictorial design. This music of tone has been present in art in a rudimentary way since the earliest time, but has recently received a much greater amount of attention, and much new light on the subject has been given by the impressionist movement and the study of the art of China and Japan, which is nearly always very beautiful in this respect.

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This quality of tone music is most dominant when the masses are large and simple, when the contemplation of them is not disturbed by much variety, and they have little variation of texture and gradation. A slight mist will often improve the tone of a landscape for this reason. It simplifies the tones, masses them together, obliterating many smaller varieties. I have even heard of the tone of a picture being improved by such a mist scrambled or glazed over it.

Plate XLIII

MONTE SOLARO CAPRI

Study on brown paper in charcoal and white chalk

Plate XLIII.

MONTE SOLARO CAPRI

Study on brown paper in charcoal and white chalk.

Plate XLIV

PART OF THE SURRENDER OF BREDA. BY VELAZQUEZ

Note the varied quantity of the edge in white mass of tunic. (The reproduction does not unfortunately show this as well as the original.)

Plate XLIV.

PART OF THE SURRENDER OF BREDA. BY VELAZQUEZ

Note the varied quantity of the edge in white mass of tunic. (The reproduction does not unfortunately show this as well as the original.)

Photo Anderson

In naturalistic work the necessity for painting to one focal impression is as great as the necessity of painting in true perspective. What perspective has done for drawing, the impressionist system of painting to one all-embracing focus has done for tone. Before perspective was introduced, each individual object in a picture was drawn with a separate centre of vision fixed on each object in turn. What perspective did was to insist that all objects in a picture should be drawn in relation to one fixed centre of vision. And whereas formerly each object was painted to a hard focus, whether it was in the foreground or the distance, impressionism teaches that you cannot have the focus in a picture at the same time on the foreground and the distance.

Of course there are many manners of painting with more primitive conventions in which the consideration of focus does not enter. But in all painting that aims at reproducing the impressions directly produced in us by natural appearances, this question of focus and its influence on the quality of your edges is of great importance.

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Something should be said about the serrated edges of masses, like those of trees seen against the sky. These are very difficult to treat, and almost every landscape painter has a different formula. The hard, fussy, cut-out, photographic appearance of trees misses all their beauty and sublimity.

There are three principal types of treatment that may serve as examples. In the first place there are the trees of the early Italian painters, three examples of which are illustrated on page 197 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XXIII]. A thin tree is always selected, and a rhythmic pattern of leaves against the sky painted. This treatment of a dark pattern on a light ground is very useful as a contrast to the softer tones of flesh. But the treatment is more often applied nowadays to a spray of foliage in the foreground, the pattern of which gives a very rich effect. The poplar trees in Millais' "Vale of Rest" are painted in much the same manner as that employed by the Italians, and are exceptional among modern tree paintings, the trees being treated as a pattern of leaves against the sky. Millais has also got a raised quality of paint in his darks very similar to that of Bellini and many early painters.

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Giorgione added another tree to landscape art: the rich, full, solidly-massed forms that occur in his "Concert Champêtre" of the Louvre, reproduced on page 151 [Transcribers Note: Plate XXXIII]. In this picture you may see both types of treatment. There are

the patterns of leaves variety on the left and the solidly-massed treatment on the right.

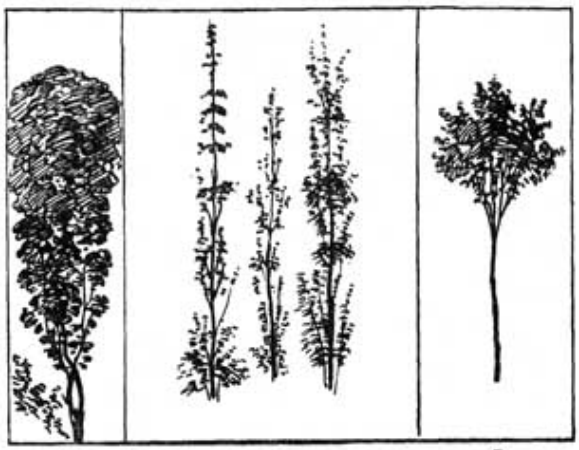

Diagram XXIII

EXAMPLES OF EARLY ITALIAN TREATMENT OF TREES

A. From pictures in Oratorio di S. Ansano. "Il trionfo dell' Amore," attributed to Botticelli.

B. From "L'Annunziazione," by Botticelli, Uffizi, Florence.

C. From "La Vergine," by Giovanni Bellini in the Accademia, Venice.

Corot in his later work developed a treatment that has been largely followed since. Looking at trees with a very wide focus, he ignored individual leaves, and resolved them into masses of tone, here lost and here found more sharply against the sky. The subordinate masses of foliage within these main boundaries are treated in the same way, resolved into masses of infinitely varying edges. This play, this lost-and-foundness at his edges is one of the great distinguishing charms of Corot's trees. When they have been painted from this mass point of view, a suggestion of a few leaves here and a bough there may be indicated, coming sharply against the sky, but you will find this basis of tone music, this crescendo and diminuendo throughout all his later work (see illustration, page 215 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XXVI]).

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These are three of the more extreme types of trees to be met with in art, but the variations on these types are very numerous. Whatever treatment you adopt, the tree must be considered as a whole, and some rhythmic form related to this large impression selected. And this applies to all forms with serrated edges: some large order must be found to which the fussiness of the edges must conform.

The subject of edges generally is a very important one, and one much more worried over by a master than by the average student. It is interesting to note how all the great painters have begun with a hard manner, with edges of little variety, from which they have gradually developed a looser manner, learning to master the difficulties of design that hard contours insist on your facing, and only when this is thoroughly mastered letting themselves develop freely this play on the edges, this looser handling.

199

For under the freest painting, if it be good, there will be found a bed-rock structure of well-constructed masses and lines. They may never be insisted on, but their steadying influence will always be felt. So err in your student work on the side of hardness rather than looseness, if you would discipline yourself to design your work well. Occasionally only let yourself go at a looser handling.

Variety of Gradation

Variety of gradation will naturally be governed largely by the form and light and shade of the objects in your composition. But while studying the gradations of tone that express form and give the modelling, you should never neglect to keep the mind fixed upon the relation the part you are painting bears to the whole picture. And nothing should be done that is out of harmony with this large conception. It is one of the most difficult things to decide the amount of variety and emphasis allowable for the smaller parts of a picture, so as to bring all in harmony with that oneness of impression that should dominate the whole; how much of your scale

Plate XLV

CORREGGIO. VENUS. MERCURY, AND CUPID (NATIONAL GALLERY)

A fine example of one of the most effective tone arrangements; a brilliantly-lit, richly-modelled light mass on a dark background.

Photo Hanfstaengl

Large flat tones give a power and simplicity to a design, and a largeness and breadth of expression that are very valuable, besides showing up every little variety in the values used for your modelling; and thus enabling you to model with the least expenditure of tones. Whatever richness of variation you may ultimately desire to add to your values, see to it that in planning your picture you get a good basic structure of simply designed, and as far as possible flat, tones.

In speaking of variety in mass we saw how the **nearer these tones are in the scale of values, the more reserved and quiet the impression created**, and the **further apart or greater the contrast, the more dramatic and intense the effect**. And the sentiment of tone in a picture, like the sentiment of line and colour, should be in harmony with the nature of your subject.

Generally speaking **more variety of tone and shape in the masses of your composition is permissible when a smaller range of values is used than when your subject demands strong contrasts**. When strong contrasts of tone or what are called black and white effects are desired, the masses must be very simply designed. Were this not so, and were the composition patterned all over with smaller masses in strong contrast, the breadth and unity of the effect would be lost. While when the difference of relative values between one tone and another is slight, the oneness of effect is not so much interfered with by there being a large number of them. Effects of strong contrasts are therefore far the most difficult to manage, as it is not easy to reduce a composition of any complexity to a simple expressive pattern of large masses.

This principle applies also in the matter of colour. Greater contrasts and variety of colour may be indulged in where the middle range only of tones is used, and where there is little tone contrast, than where there is great contrast. In other words, you cannot with much hope of success have strong contrasts of colour and strong contrasts of tone in the same picture: it is too violent.

If you have strong contrasts of colour, the contrasts of tone between them must be small. The Japanese and Chinese often make the most successful use of violent contrasts of colour by being careful that they shall be of the same tone value.

And again, where you have strong contrasts of tone, such as Rembrandt was fond of, you cannot successfully have strong contrasts 209
of colour as well. Reynolds, who was fond both of colour and strong tone contrast, had to compromise, as he tells us in his lectures, by making the shadows all the same brown colour, to keep a harmony in his work.

Plate XLVI. Photo Neurdein

OLYMPIA. MANET (LOUVRE)

A further development of the composition formula illustrated by Correggio's "Venus." Added force is given by lighting with low direct light eliminating half-tones.

Plate XLVI.

OLYMPIA. MANET (Louvre)

A further development of the composition formula illustrated by Correggio's "Venus". Added force is given by lighting with low direct light elimination half-tones.

Photo Neurdein

There is some analogy between straight lines and flat tones, and curved lines and gradated tones. And a great deal that was said about the rhythmic significance of these lines will apply equally well here. What was said about long vertical and horizontal lines conveying a look of repose and touching the serious emotional notes, can be said of large flat tones. The feeling of infinity suggested by a wide blue sky without a cloud, seen above a wide bare plain, is an obvious instance of this. And for the same harmonic cause, a calm evening has so peaceful and infinite an expression. The waning light darkens the land and increases the contrast between it and the sky, with the result that all the landscape towards the west is reduced to practically one dark tone, cutting sharply against the wide light of the sky.

And the graceful charm of curved lines swinging in harmonious rhythm through a composition has its analogy in gradated tones. 211
Watteau and Gainsborough, those masters of charm, knew this, and in their most alluring compositions the tone-music is founded on a principle of tone-gradations, swinging and interlacing with each other in harmonious rhythm throughout the composition. Large, flat tones, with their more thoughtful associations are out of place here, and are seldom if ever used. In their work we see a world where the saddening influences of profound thought and its expression are far away. No deeper notes are allowed to mar the gaiety of this holiday world. Watteau created a dream country of his own, in which a tired humanity has delighted ever since, in which all serious thoughts are far away and the mind takes refreshment in the contemplation of delightful things. And a great deal of this charm is due to the pretty play from a crescendo to a diminuendo in the tone values on which his compositions are based—so far removed from the simple structure of flat masses to which more primitive and austere art owes its power.

Diagram XXIV

SHOWING THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THE MASS OR TONE RHYTHM OF THE COMPOSITION REPRODUCED ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE IS ARRANGED

Diagram XXIV.

SHOWING THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THE MASS OR TONE RHYTHM OF THE COMPOSITION REPRODUCED ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE IS ARRANGED

Plate XLVII

L'EMBARQUEMENT POUR CYTHÈRE. WATTEAU (LOUVRE)

A typical example of composition founded on gradated tones. (See analysis on opposite page.)

Plate XLVII.

L'EMBARQUEMENT POUR CYTHÈRE. WATTEAU (LOUVRE)

A typical example of composition founded on gradated tones. (See analysis on opposite page.)

Photo Hanfstaengl

But Watteau's great accomplishment was in doing this without degenerating into feeble prettiness, and this he did by an insistence on character in his figures, particularly his men. His draperies also are always beautifully drawn and full of variety, never feeble

and characterless. The landscape backgrounds are much more lacking in this respect, nothing ever happened there, no storms have ever bent his graceful tree-trunks, and the incessant gradations might easily become wearisome. But possibly the charm in which we delight would be lost, did the landscape possess more character. At any rate there is enough in the figures to prevent any sickly prettiness, although I think if you removed the figures the landscape would not be tolerable.

But the followers of Watteau seized upon the prettiness and gradually got out of touch with the character, and if you compare Boucher's heads, particularly his men's heads, with Watteau's you may see how much has been lost.

The following are three examples of this gradated tone composition (see pages 210 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XXIV], 213 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XXV], 215 [Transcribers Note: Diagram XXVI]):

Watteau: "Embarquement pour L'Île de Cythère."

This is a typical Watteau composition, founded on a rhythmic play of gradated tones and gradated edges. Flat tones and hard edges are avoided. Beginning at the centre of the top with a strongly accented note of contrast, the dark tone of the mass of trees gradates into the ground and on past the lower right-hand corner across the front of the picture, until, when nearing the lower left-hand corner, it reverses the process and from dark to light begins gradating light to dark, ending somewhat sharply against the sky in the rock form to the left. The rich play of tone that is introduced in the trees and ground, &c., blinds one at first to the perception of this larger tone motive, but without it the rich variety would not hold together. Roughly speaking the whole of this dark frame of tones from the accented point of the trees at the top to the mass of the rock on the left, may be said to gradate away into the distance; cut into by the wedge-shaped middle tone of the hills leading to the horizon.

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Breaking across this is a graceful line of figures, beginning on the left where the mass of rock is broken by the little flight of cupids, and continuing across the picture until it is brought up sharply by the light figure under the trees on the right. Note the pretty clatter of spots this line of figures brings across the picture, introducing light spots into the darker masses, ending up with the strongly accented light spot of the figure on the right; and dark spots into the lighter masses, ending up with the figures of the cupids dark against the sky.

Steadying influences in all this flux of tone are introduced by the vertical accent of the tree-stem and statue in the dark mass on the right, by the horizontal line of the distance on the left, the outline of the ground in the front, and the straight staffs held by some of the figures.

In the charcoal scribble illustrating this composition I have tried carefully to avoid any drawing in the figures or trees to show how the tone-music depends not so much on truth to natural appearances as on the abstract arrangement of tone values and their rhythmic play.

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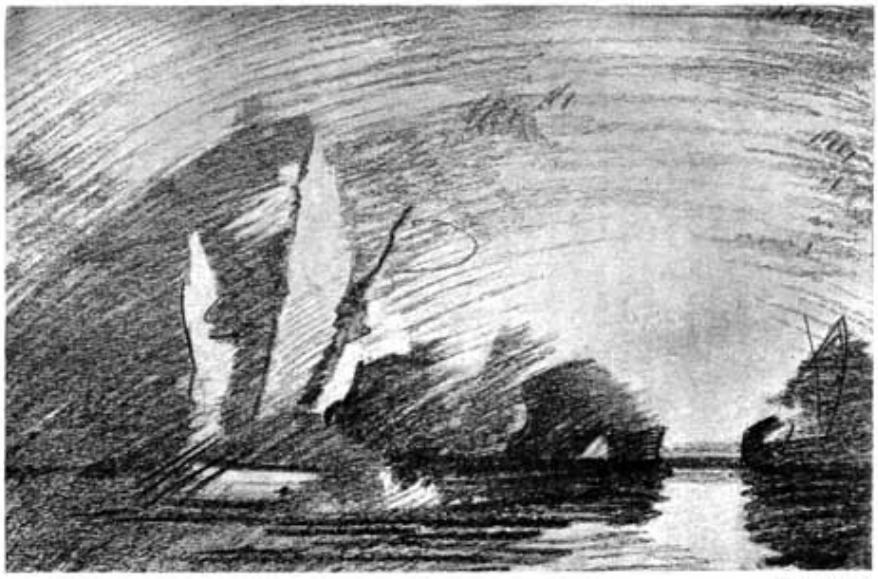

Diagram XXV

SHOWING THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THE MASS OR TONE RHYTHM IS ARRANGED IN TURNER'S PICTURE IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF BRITISH ART, "ULYSSES DERIDING POLYPHEMUS"

Diagram XXV.

SHOWING THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH THE MASS OR TONE RHYTHM IS ARRANGED IN TURNER'S PICTURE IN THE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF BRITISH ART, "ULYSSES DERIDING POLYPHEMUS"

Of course nature contains every conceivable variety of tone-music, but it is not to be found by unintelligent copying except in rare accidents. Emerson says, "Although you search the whole world for the beautiful you'll not find it unless you take it with you," and this is true to a greater extent of rhythmic tone arrangements.

Turner: "Ulysses deriding Polyphemus."

Turner was very fond of these gradated tone compositions, and carried them to a lyrical height to which they had never before attained. His "Ulysses deriding Polyphemus," in the National Gallery of British Art, is a splendid example of his use of this principle. A great unity of expression is given by bringing the greatest dark and light together in sharp contrast, as is done in this picture by the dark rocks and ships' prows coming against the rising sun. From this point the dark and light masses gradate in different directions until they merge above the ships' sails. These sails cut sharply into the dark mass as the rocks and ship on the extreme right cut sharply into the light mass. Note also the edges where they are accented and come sharply against the neighbouring mass, and where they are lost, and the pleasing quality this play of edges gives.

Stability is given by the line of the horizon and waves in front, and the masts of the ships, the oars, and, in the original picture, a feeling of radiating lines from the rising sun. Without these steadying influences these compositions of gradated masses would be sickly and weak.

Corot: 2470 Collection Chauchard, Louvre.

This is a typical example of Corot's tone scheme, and little need be added to the description already given. Infinite play is got with the simplest means. A dark silhouetted mass is seen against a light sky, the perfect balance of the shapes and the infinite play of lost-and-foundness in the edges giving to this simple structure a richness and beauty effect that is very satisfying. Note how Corot, like Turner, brings his greatest light and dark together in sharp contrast where the rock on the right cuts the sky.

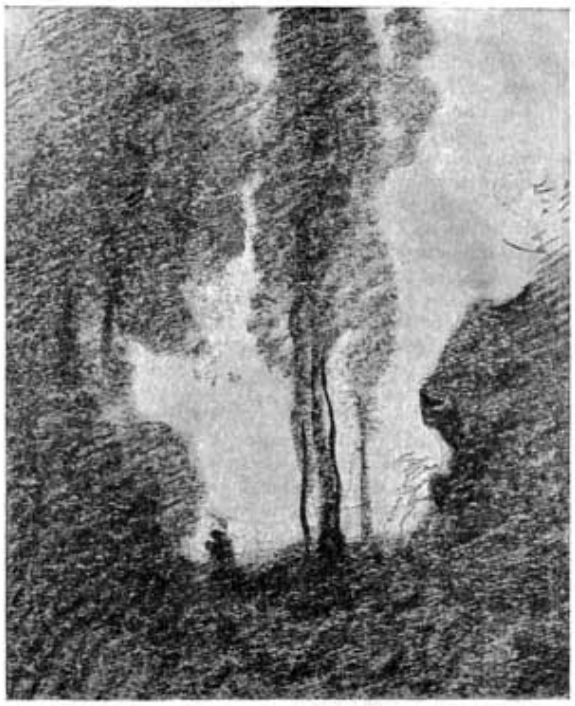

Diagram XXVI

TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF COROT'S SYSTEM OF MASS RHYTHM, AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS

Diagram XXVI.

TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF COROT'S SYSTEM OF MASS RHYTHM, AFTER THE PICTURE IN THE LOUVRE, PARIS

Stability is given by the vertical feeling in the central group of trees and the suggestion of horizontal distance behind the figure.

THE ANSIDEI MADONNA. BY RAPHAEL (NATIONAL GALLERY)
A typical example of static balance in composition.

Plate XLVIII.

THE ANSIDEI MADONNA. BY RAPHAEL (NATIONAL GALLERY)

A typical example of static balance in composition.

Photo Hanfstaengl

In many pictures of the Madonna, when a hush and reverence are desired rather than exuberant life, the figure is put in the centre of the canvas, equality of proportion existing between the spaces on either side of her. But having got the repose this centralisation gives, everything is done to conceal this equality, and variety in the contours on either side, and in any figures there may be, is carefully sought. Raphael's "Ansidei Madonna," in the National Gallery, is an instance of this (p. 230). You have first the centralisation of the figure of the Madonna with the throne on which she sits, exactly in the middle of the picture. Not only is the throne in the centre of the picture, but its width is exactly that of the spaces on either side of it, giving us three equal proportions across the picture. Then you have the circular lines of the arches behind, curves possessed of the least possible amount of variety and therefore the calmest and most reposeful; while the horizontal lines of the steps and the vertical lines of the throne and architecture, and also the rows of hanging beads give further emphasis to this infinity of calm. But when we come to the figures this symmetry has been varied everywhere. All the heads swing towards the right, while the lines of the draperies swing freely in many directions. The swing of the heads towards the right is balanced and the eye brought back to equilibrium by the strongly-insisted-upon staff of St. Nicholas on the right. The staff of St. John necessary to balance this line somewhat, is very slightly insisted on, being represented transparent as if made of glass, so as not to increase the swing to the right occasioned by the heads. It is interesting to note the fruit introduced at the last moment in the right-hand lower corner, dragged in, as it were, to restore the balance occasioned by the figure of the Christ being on the left. In the writer's humble opinion the extremely obvious artifice with which the lines have been balanced, and the severity of the convention of this composition generally, are out of harmony with the amount of naturalistic detail and particularly of solidity allowed in the treatment of the figures and accessories. The small amount of truth to visual nature in the work of earlier men went better with the formality of such compositions. With so little of the variety of life in their treatment of natural appearances, one was not led to demand so much of the variety of life in the arrangement. It is the simplicity and remoteness from the full effect of natural appearances in the work of the early Italian schools that made their painting such a ready medium for the expression of religious subjects. This atmosphere of other-worldliness where the music of line and colour was uninterrupted by any aggressive look of real things is a better convention for the expression of such ideas and

emotions.

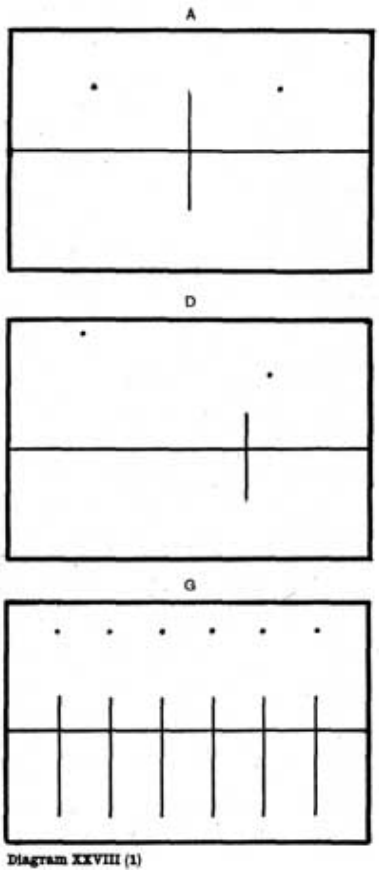

Diagram XXVIII (1)

Diagram XXVIII(1).

A, D, G

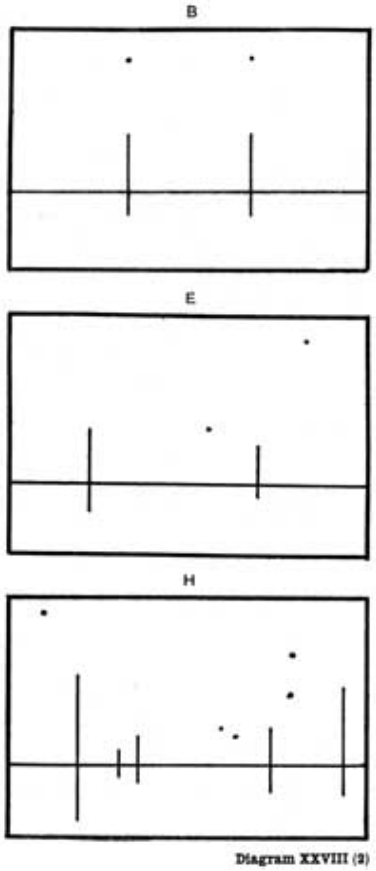

Diagram XXVIII (2)

Diagram XXVIII(2).

B, E, H

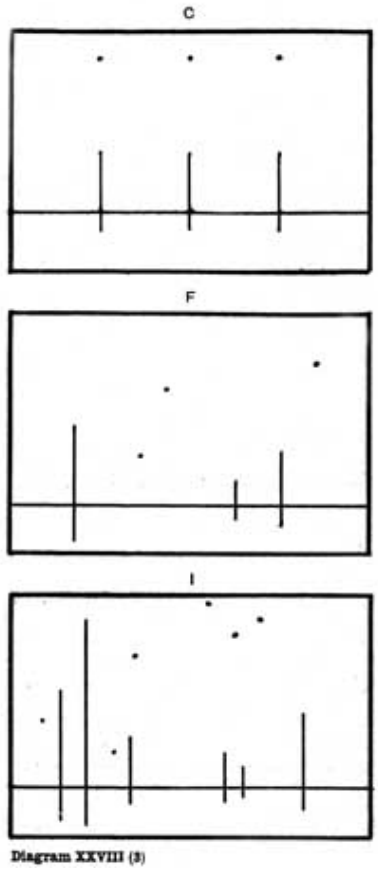

Diagram XXVIII (3)

Diagram XXVIII(3).

THE FINDING OF THE BODY OF ST. MARK
TINTORETTO (BREDA, MILAN)

Compare with Raphael's Ansidei Madonna, and note how energy and movement take the place of static calm in the balance of this composition.

Plate XLIX.

THE FINDING OF THE BODY OF ST. MARK TINTORETTO (BREDA, MILAN)

Compare with Raphael's Ansidei Madonna, and note how energy and movement take the place of static calm in the balance of this composition.

Photo Anderson

A pleasing proportion that often occurs in nature and art is one that may be roughly stated in figures as that between 5 and 8. In such a proportion the eye sees no mathematical relationship. Were it less than 5, it would be too near the proportion of 4 to 8 (or one-third the total length), a dull proportion; or were it more, it would be approaching too near equality of proportion to be quite satisfactory.

I have seen a proportional compass, imported from Germany, giving a relationship similar to this and said to contain the secret of good proportion. There is certainly something remarkable about it, and in the Appendix, page 289, you will find some further interesting facts about this.[238]

The variety of proportions in a building, a picture, or a piece of sculpture should always be under the control of a few simple, dominant quantities that simplify the appearance and give it a unity which is readily grasped except where violence and lack of repose are wanted. The simpler the proportion is, the more sublime will be the impression, and the more complicated, the livelier and more vivacious the effect. From a few well-chosen large proportions the eye may be led on to enjoy the smaller varieties. But in good proportion the lesser parts are not allowed to obtrude, but are kept in subordination to the main dispositions on which the unity of the effect depends.

XVII[239]
PORTRAIT DRAWING

There is something in every individual that is likely for a long time to defy the analysis of science. When you have summed up the total of atoms or electrons or whatever it is that goes to the making of the tissues and also the innumerable complex functions performed by the different parts, you have not yet got on the track of the individual that governs the whole performance. The effect of this personality on the outward form, and the influence it has in modifying the aspect of body and features, are the things that concern the portrait draughtsman: the seizing on and expressing forcefully the individual character of the sitter, as expressed by his outward appearance.

This character expression in form has been thought to be somewhat antagonistic to beauty, and many sitters are shy of the particular characteristics of their own features. The fashionable photographer, knowing this, carefully stipples out of his negative any **striking** characteristics in the form of his sitter the negative may show. But judging by the result, it is doubtful whether any beauty has been gained, and certain that interest and vitality have been lost in the process. Whatever may be the nature of beauty, it is obvious that what makes one object more beautiful than another is something that is characteristic of the appearance of the one and not of the other: so that some close study of individual characteristics must be the aim of the artist who would seek to express beauty, as well as the artist who seeks the expression of character and professes no interest in beauty.

Catching the likeness, as it is called, is simply seizing on the essential things that belong only to a particular individual and differentiate that individual from others, and expressing them in a forceful manner. There are certain things that are common to the whole species, likeness to a common type; the individual likeness is not in this direction but at the opposite pole to it.

It is one of the most remarkable things connected with the amazing subtlety of appreciation possessed by the human eye, that of the millions of heads in the world, and probably of all that have ever existed in the world, no two look exactly alike. When one considers how alike they are, and how very restricted is the range of difference between them, is it not remarkable how quickly the eye recognises one person from another? It is more remarkable still how one sometimes recognises a friend not seen for many years, and whose appearance has changed considerably in the meantime. And this likeness that we recognise is not so much as is generally thought a matter of the individual features. If one sees the eye alone, the remainder of the face being covered, it is almost impossible to recognise even a well-known friend, or tell whether the expression is that of laughing or crying. And again, how difficult it is to recognise anybody when the eyes are masked and only the lower part of the face visible.

Plate L

FROM A DRAWING IN RED CHALK BY HOLBEIN IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM PRINT ROOM

Note how every bit of variety is sought for, the difference in the eyes and on either side of the mouth, etc.

Plate L.

FROM A DRAWING IN RED CHALK BY HOLBEIN IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM PRINT ROOM

Note how every bit of variety is sought for, the difference in the eyes and on either side of the mouth, etc.

If you try and recall a well-known head it will not be the shape of the features that will be recollected so much as an impression, the result of all these combined, a sort of chord of which the features will be but the component elements. It is the relation of the different parts to this chord, this impression of the personality of a head, that is the all-important thing in what is popularly called

Plate LI

SIR CHARLES DILKE, BART.

From the drawing in the collection of Sir Robert Essex, M.P., in red conté chalk rubbed, the high lights being picked out with rubber.

Plate LI.

SIR CHARLES DILKE, BART.

From the drawing in the collection of Sir Robert Essex, M.P., in red conté chalk rubbed, the high lights being picked out with rubber.

There are many points of view from which a portrait can be drawn—I mean, mental points of view. And, as in a biography, the value of the work will depend on the insight and distinction of the author or artist. The valet of a great man might write a biography of his master that could be quite true to his point of view; but, assuming him to be an average valet, it would not be a great work. I believe the gardener of Darwin when asked how his master was, said, "Not at all well. You see, he moons about all day. I've seen him staring at a flower for five or ten minutes at a time. Now, if he had some work to do, he would be much better." A really great biography cannot be written except by a man who can comprehend his subject and take a wide view of his position among men, sorting what is trivial from what is essential, what is common to all men from what is particular to the subject of his work. And it is very much the same in portraiture. It is only the painter who possesses the intuitive faculty for seizing on the significant things in the form expression of his subject, of disentangling what is trivial from what is important; and who can convey this forcibly to the beholder on his canvas, more forcibly than a casual sight of the real person could do—it is only this painter who can hope to paint a really fine portrait.

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It is true, the honest and sincere expression of any painter will be of some interest, just as the biography written by Darwin's gardener might be; but there is a vast difference between this point of view and that of the man who thoroughly comprehends his subject.

Not that it is necessary for the artist to grasp the mind of his sitter, although that is no disadvantage. But this is not his point of view, his business is with the effect of this inner man on his outward appearance. And it is necessary for him to have that intuitive power that seizes instinctively on those variations of form that are expressive of this inner man. The habitual cast of thought in any individual affects the shape and moulds the form of the features, and, to the discerning, the head is expressive of the person; both the bigger and the smaller person, both the larger and the petty characteristics everybody possesses. And the fine portrait will express the larger and subordinate the petty individualities, will give you what is of value, and subordinate what is trivial in a person's appearance.

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The pose of the head is a characteristic feature about people that is not always given enough attention in portraits. The habitual cast of thought affects its carriage to a very large degree. The two extreme types of what we mean are the strongly emotional man

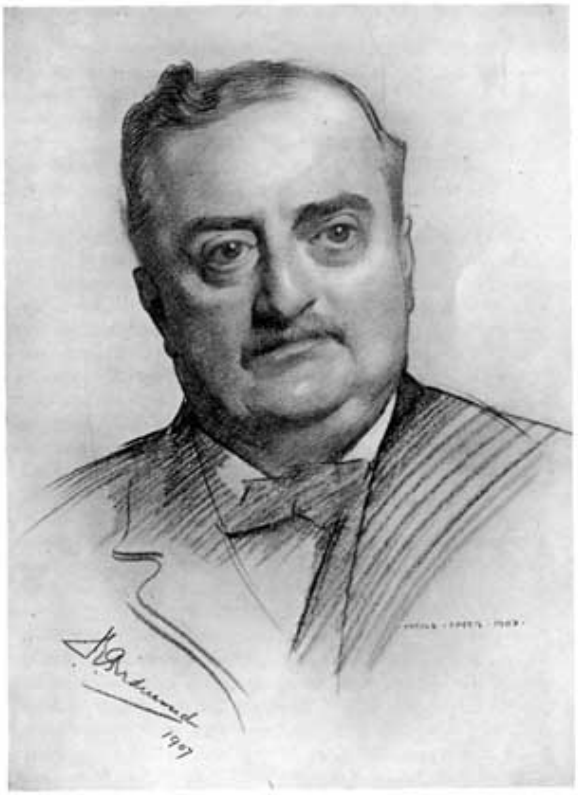

Plate LII

JOHN REDMOND, M.P.

From the drawing in the collection of Sir Robert Essex, M.P., in red conté chalk rubbed, the high lights being picked out with rubber.

Plate LII.

JOHN REDMOND, M.P.

From the drawing in the collection of Sir Robert Essex, M.P., in red conté chalk rubbed, the high lights being picked out with rubber.

Another point of view is that of the artist who seeks to give a significant and calm view of the exterior forms of the sitter, an expressive map of the individuality of those forms, leaving you to form your own intellectual judgments. A simple, rather formal, attitude is usually chosen, and the sitter is drawn with searching honesty. There is a great deal to be said for this point of view in the hands of a painter with a large appreciation of form and design. But without these more inspiring qualities it is apt to have the dulness that attends most literal transcriptions. There are many instances of this point of view among early portrait painters, one of the best of which is the work of Holbein. But then, to a very distinguished appreciation of the subtleties of form characterisation he added a fine sense of design and colour arrangement, qualities by no means always at the command of some of the lesser men of this school.

Every portrait draughtsman should make a pilgrimage to Windsor, armed with the necessary permission to view the wonderful series of portrait drawings by this master in the library of the castle. They are a liberal education in portrait drawing. It is necessary to see the originals, for it is only after having seen them that one can properly understand the numerous and well-known reproductions. A study of these drawings will, I think, reveal the fact that they are not so literal as is usually thought. Unflinchingly and unaffectedly honest they are, but honest not to a cold, mechanically accurate record of the sitter's appearance, but honest and accurate to the vital impression of the live sitter made on the mind of the live artist. This is the difference we were trying to explain that exists between the academic and the vital drawing, and it is a very subtle and elusive quality, like all artistic qualities, to talk about. The record of a vital impression done with unflinching accuracy, but under the guidance of intense mental activity, is a very different thing from a drawing done with the cold, mechanical accuracy of a machine. The one will instantly grip the attention and give one a vivid sensation in a way that no mechanically accurate drawing could do, and in a way that possibly the sight of the real person would not always do. We see numbers of faces during a day, but only a few with the vividness of which I am speaking. How many faces in a crowd are passed indifferently—there is no vitality in the impression they make on our mind; but suddenly a face will rivet our attention, and although it is gone in a flash, the memory of the impression will remain for some time.

The best of Holbein's portrait drawings give one the impression of having been seen in one of these flashes and rivet the attention in consequence. Drawings done under this mental stimulus present subtle differences from drawings done with cold accuracy. The drawing of the Lady Audley, here reproduced, bears evidence of some of this subtle variation on what are called the facts, in the left eye of the sitter. It will be noticed that the pupil of this eye is larger than the other. Now I do not suppose that as a matter of mechanical accuracy this was so, but the impression of the eyes seen as part of a vivid impression of the head is seldom that they are the same size. Holbein had in the first instance in this very carefully wrought drawing made them so, but when at the last he was vitalising the impression, "pulling it together" as artists say, he has deliberately put a line outside the original one, making this pupil larger. This is not at all clearly seen in the reproduction, but **is distinctly visible in the original**. And to my thinking it was done at the dictates of the vivid mental impression he wished his drawing to convey. Few can fail to be struck in turning over this wonderful series of drawings by the vividness of their portraiture, and the vividness is due to their being severely accurate to the vital impression on the mind of Holbein, not merely to the facts coldly observed.

Plate LIII

THE LADY AUDLEY, HOLBEIN (WINDSOR)

Note the different sizes of pupils in the eyes, and see letterpress on the opposite page.

Plate LIII.

THE LADY AUDLEY. HOLBEIN (WINDSOR)

Note the different sizes of pupils in the eyes, and see letterpress on the opposite page.

Copyright photo Braun & Co.

Another point of view is that of seeking in the face a symbol of the person within, and selecting those things about a head that express this. As has already been said, the habitual attitude of mind has in the course of time a marked influence on the form of the face, and in fact of the whole body, so that—to those who can see—the man or woman is a visible symbol of themselves. But this is by no means apparent to all.

The striking example of this class is the splendid series of portraits by the late G.F. Watts. Looking at these heads one is made conscious of the people in a fuller, deeper sense than if they were before one in the flesh. For Watts sought to discover the person

Plate LIV

STUDY ON BROWN PAPER IN BLACK AND WHITE CONTÉ CHALK

Illustrating a simple method of studying drapery forms.

Plate LIV.

STUDY ON BROWN PAPER IN BLACK AND WHITE CONTÉ CHALK

Illustrating a simple method of studying drapery forms.

Let us assume that you have found a subject that moves you and that, being too fleeting to draw on the spot, you wish to commit to memory. Drink a full enjoyment of it, let it soak in, for the recollection of this will be of the utmost use to you afterwards in guiding your memory-drawing. This mental impression is not difficult to recall; it is the visual impression in terms of line and tone that is difficult to remember. Having experienced your full enjoyment of the artistic matter in the subject, you must next consider it from the material side, as a flat, visual impression, as this is the only form in which it can be expressed on a flat sheet of paper. Note the proportions of the main lines, their shapes and disposition, as if you were drawing it, in fact do the whole drawing in your mind, memorising the forms and proportions of the different parts, and fix it in your memory to the smallest detail.

If only the emotional side of the matter has been remembered, when you come to draw it you will be hopelessly at sea, as it is remarkable how little the memory retains of the appearance of things constantly seen, if no attempt has been made to memorise their visual appearance.

The true artist, even when working from nature, works from memory very largely. That is to say, he works to a scheme in tune to some emotional enthusiasm with which the subject has inspired him in the first instance. Nature is always changing, but he does not change the intention of his picture. He always keeps before him the initial impression he sets out to paint, and only selects from nature those things that play up to it. He is a feeble artist, who copies individually the parts of a scene with whatever effect they may have at the moment he is doing them, and then expects the sum total to make a picture. If circumstances permit, it is always as well to make in the first instance a rapid sketch that shall, whatever it may lack, at least contain the main disposition of the masses and lines of your composition seen under the influence of the enthusiasm that has inspired the work. This will be of great value afterwards in freshening your memory when in the labour of the work the original impulse gets dulled. It is seldom that the vitality of this first sketch is surpassed by the completed work, and often, alas! it is far from equalled.

In portrait painting and drawing the memory must be used also. A sitter varies very much in the impression he gives on different days, and the artist must in the early sittings, when his mind is fresh, select the aspect he means to paint and afterwards work largely to the memory of this.

Plate LV

FROM A SILVER-POINT DRAWING

Plate LV.

FROM A SILVER-POINT DRAWING

Its charm is the extreme delicacy of its grey-black lines. 275

Silver and Gold Point. Similar to lead pencil, and of even greater delicacy, is silver-point drawing. A more ancient method, it consists in drawing with a silver point on paper the surface of which has been treated with a faint wash of Chinese white. Without this wash the point will not make a mark.

For extreme delicacy and purity of line no medium can surpass this method. And for the expression of a beautiful line, such as a profile, nothing could be more suitable than a silver point. As a training to the eye and hand also, it is of great value, as no rubbing out of any sort is possible, and eye and hand must work together with great exactness. The discipline of silver-point drawing is to be recommended as a corrective to the picturesque vagaries of charcoal work.

A gold point, giving a warmer line, can also be used in the same way as a silver point, the paper first having been treated with Chinese white.

Charcoal. Two extreme points of view from which the rendering of form can be approached have been explained, and it has been suggested that students should study them both separately in the first instance, as they each have different things to teach. Of the mediums that are best suited to a drawing combining both points of view, the first and most popular is charcoal.

Charcoal is made in many different degrees of hardness and softness, the harder varieties being capable of quite a fine point. 276 A chisel-shaped point is the most convenient, as it does not wear away so quickly. And if the broad side of the chisel point is used when a dark mass is wanted, the edge can constantly be kept sharp. With this edge a very fine line can be drawn.

Charcoal works with great freedom, and answers readily when forceful expression is wanted. It is much more like painting than any other form of drawing, a wide piece of charcoal making a wide mark similar to a brush. The delicacy and lightness with which it has to be handled is also much more like the handling of a brush than any other point drawing. When rubbed with the finger, it sheds a soft grey tone over the whole work. With a piece of bread pressed by thumb and finger into a pellet, high lights can be taken out with the precision of white chalk; or rubber can be used. Bread is, perhaps, the best, as it does not smudge the charcoal but lifts it readily off. When rubbed with the finger, the darks, of course, are lightened in tone. It is therefore useful to draw in the general proportions roughly and rub down in this way. You then have a middle tone over the work, with the rough drawing showing through. Now proceed carefully to draw your lights with bread or rubber, and your shadows with charcoal, in much the

Plate LVI

STUDY IN PEN AND INK AND WASH FOR TREE IN "THE BOAR HUNT"
RUBENS (LOUVRE)

Plate LVI.

STUDY IN PEN AND INK AND WASH FOR TREE IN "THE BOAR HUNT" RUBENS (LOUVRE)

Photo Giraudon

The kind of pen used will depend on the kind of drawing you wish to make. In steel pens there are innumerable varieties, from the fine crow-quills to the thick "J" nibs. The natural crow-quill is a much more sympathetic tool than a steel pen, although not quite so certain in its line. But more play and variety is to be got out of it, and when a free pen drawing is wanted it is preferable.

Reed pens are also made, and are useful when thick lines are wanted. They sometimes have a steel spring underneath to hold the ink somewhat in the same manner as some fountain pens.

There is even a glass pen, consisting of a sharp-pointed cone of glass with grooves running down to the point. The ink is held in these grooves, and runs down and is deposited freely as the pen is used. A line of only one thickness can be drawn with it, but this can be drawn in any direction, an advantage over most other shapes.

Etching.

Etching is a process of reproduction that consists in drawing with a steel point on a waxed plate of copper or zinc, and then putting it in a bath of diluted nitric acid to bite in the lines. The longer the plate remains in the bath the deeper and darker the lines become, so that variety in thickness is got by stopping out with a varnish the light lines when they are sufficiently strong, and letting the darker ones have a longer exposure to the acid.

Many wonderful and beautiful things have been done with this simple means. The printing consists in inking the plate all over and wiping off until only the lines retain any ink, when the plate is put in a press and an impression taken. Or some slight amount of ink may be left on the plate in certain places where a tint is wanted, and a little may be smudged out of the lines themselves to give them a softer quality. In fact there are no end of tricks a clever etching printer will adopt to give quality to his print.

Paper.

The varieties of paper on the market at the service of the artist are innumerable, and nothing need be said here except that the texture of your paper will have a considerable influence on your drawing. But try every sort of paper so as to find what suits the particular things you want to express. I make a point of buying every new paper I see, and a new paper is often a stimulant to some new quality in drawing. Avoid the wood-pulp papers, as they turn dark after a time. Linen rag is the only safe substance for good papers, and artists now have in the O.W. papers a large series that they can rely on being made of linen only.

It is sometimes advisable, when you are not drawing a subject that demands a clear hard line, but where more sympathetic qualities are wanted, to have a wad of several sheets of paper under the one you are working on, pinned on the drawing-board.