

VISIT TO THE ART UNION.

To criticise paintings with justice, the critic should be acquainted with the advantages and experience of every artist on whose productions he proposes to pass judgment. It is a matter of great wrong, that almost all critics on art speak out their venom alike on the veteran in the arts, and the young aspirant, offering his first essay to the mercy of the public. How often is it the case, that some poor student has toiled for weeks, and months, over some conception of his mind, and when at last it is finished and his eye glows with pleasure, and hope of commendation steals sweetly into his heart, his feelings are crushed, and his head bowed to the dust, by the unfeeling critic, or would be thought *connoisseur* in art, blasting the beautiful flower of his creation, and planting in its place discouragement and despondency. And again, how often do we see them profuse in lavishing their praise on the productions of those who bear a good fame, whether the work before them is worthy of that fame or not, commending for name sake and not for the work's sake.

We propose viewing the paintings on the walls of the Art-Union Gallery, speaking of each picture, as we hope with due reference to all circumstances, impartial and generous, and will grieve should we injure the feelings of any artist, other than pointing out faults, the correcting of which cannot but be to his advantage.

In the order of the catalogue:

1. The Standard in Danger, and the Standard Bearer, ("after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well,") by J. W. Glass.

Two well conceived pictures, full of truth and spirit, and tell a longer story than a volume of words.

2. Boone's first view of Kentucky.—The poorest picture of Ranney's in the room, and the poorest he has painted for years. We will speak more of him when we come to another of his pieces.

3. The Secret Discovered,—by Fischer.—a beautifully painted picture and by one who always seems to paint well.

4. The Villa of Macænas,—Tivoli. The arrangements of the clouds, and the form very good, as also the effect of light and shade through the whole picture, but the color appears unnatural, although in Italy skies and atmospheres are different.

5. Arabian Horse, by Wenderoth, and well executed.

6. Titian's Studio,—by Rossiter.—A poor picture, by a very good artist. The man who painted Ruth and Naomi, ought not to have been the author of this. Many parts of the composition are good, but altogether unpleasing, and all by careless execution.

7. Peasants of Cevarro,—by Hicks.—Evidently from nature.

8. The Trio,—by Louis Lang.—Not a good picture for Mr. Lang.

9. First Love,—by Peele.—There is no picture in the gallery that has more poetry in it than this; one cannot look at it without having called to mind one of those incidents of his younger years, that rest like sunshine upon the heart. Mr. Peele is always happy in the choice of subjects, and his pictures are calculated to do good by awakening in the beholder the purest thoughts.

10. Moonlight,—by Gignoux.—Too high to be judged of correctly.

11. Sea Coast in a Storm,—by Boutelle.—Labors under the same difficulty.

12. Long Ship's Lighthouse,—by Birch.—The sea here seems actually to dash against the rocks, filling the air with spray, looking fearful as the sea looks when mad.

13. Landscape,—by Oddie.—Hung too high, but looks well.

14. On Otter Creek,—by Church.—We will pass by this and wait until we come to something better by Mr. Church. But perhaps it is well to say here that Mr. C. paints twilight as twilight only looks, but we think, as do many others, that he is