

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## NATURE AND ART.

Nature is the true foundation of great and worthy art, and it is genius alone, a heaven-born power in man that enables him to produce something akin to a true resemblance of nature in its various and ever-charming moods and changes, but it is beyond the art of the loftiest genius to represent nature truly and completely in every detail, and the greater the genius that worship at its shrine truly and simple; nature unadorned is ever adorned the most.

Suppose that the beholder of a work of art is wafted into a gallery containing famous paintings and there sees one—A chief-d'œuvre painted by the hand of one of the world's acknowledged greatest painters; suppose that the subject of the picture represents a thunder-storm; the beholder is pleased to know that a great work of art is now before him. Every object seems to him to be truly rendered, the work he thinks great, and atmospherically grand, the moisture laden and rolling clouds appear as if moving and rising upward, and kissing farewell to the horizon which is enveloped in tints of sable hues, the seeming mighty force of the cloudy power approaching each other in order to clash together ere the elemental crash is heard. In every particular the work is unmistakable the production of a master mind and the beholder leaves the exquisite charm with feelings of regret, landing the painter's excellence.

Suppose that the same person should find himself out in nature's wide domain and such a scene were presented to his gaze as the one described, he both sees and actually feels that there is a storm brewing, every object is obscured in misty darkness producing in his mind a feeling something akin to fear; the cattle seems disturbed and running toward the trees for shelter. A rift now appears in the clouded sky, then a gentle wind and pattering drops of rain descend soon to emerge into a wild howling tempest playing havoc, tearing and twisting the limbs and branches and scattering the leaves of the trees. A brief will, a distant rumbling sound, a down-pour of rain; more rumbling sounds; loud, and still louder is each succeeding crash; the gates of the clouded sky is thrown open and the drenching down-pour of rain soon saturates the dry and needy soil and the cattle begin to scan the landscape intuitively, knowing that the storm is spent, they speedily run from their place of shelter back to their pasture near by a river.

Another charming picture in nature is again presented to the vision. The dark though luminous clouds which were scattered in the force of the thunder-storm now embrace each other and the faint, gentle breathing of the zephyr carries them athwart the sky in sublime and magnificent order soon to appear in a grand picturesque array of form and color, forming a curtain of a deep, pearly-gray tint which envelops the extreme and middle distance of the landscape. Then the orb of day throws its bright and genial light in slanting rays through a rift in the cloudy sky; then a yellowish tint greets the eye and seems to dance and flicker for a breathing spell creating the orange and the red on

one edge of the bow and the green, blue, indigo and violet on the other. The rainbow is one of the most wonderful, and peerless effects that adorn any of the many atmospheric created charms. Its brief existence of one of extreme beauty, calculated both to cheer and gladden the vision, arrayed and clothed in the garb of charming prismatic order of color and harmony.

How much greater are the works of nature in every respect than all the skill and greatness of the lofty and esteemed sons of genius. The differences of quality of superiority is beyond all comparison. The many charming qualities found in the arts aesthetic are only indeed a poor imitation of the works of the Creator, in whom all things were made forever to exist, though the works of the genius-born deserve and ever will meet with the admiration of the intelligence of mankind. Who has not felt extreme wonder in scanning and looking up to the firmament on the calm and still night. They must be blind, indeed, who remain unmoved by the glorious sight of beauty and order which is contained in one of the most stupendous works of the creator's hands. The poet turned his harp in unison with the heavenly theme, when in rapture he sung:

The spacious firmament on high,  
With all the blue ethereal sky,  
And spangled heavens, a shinning frame,  
Their great original proclaim.  
The unwearied sun, from day to day,  
Does his Creator's power display;  
And publish to every land  
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,  
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,  
And nightly to the list'ning earth,  
Repeats the story of her birth;  
While all the stars that round her burn,  
And all the planets in their turn,  
Confirm the tidings as they roll,  
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What, though in solemn silence all  
Move round the dark terrestrial ball!  
What, though no real voice, nor sound,  
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?  
In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice;  
For ever singing, as they shine,  
"The hand that made us is divine."

Notwithstanding the greatness of the mind and skill of the hand of those endowed with genius to shine in any of the aesthetic or scientific arts, their innate productions, though they may indeed be worthy of all acceptance, still, they only remain in comparison a mere twinkling sound to the loudest cup of heavens artillery, to the mighty greatness of the works unfolded to our vision that are created and made by him the master-genius of all, who has by his will and power wonderfully and supremely fitted his works and framed them in perfection, in order to supply all the desires, needs and wants of his created ones.

Some have been called to feel and experience both joy and its contrast, pain, who have enjoyed one after having suffered the other; reliance and mighty faith in him who both creates the tempest and lulls the storm; he that rules his creations according to his own mind and will. Those that are so blessed are ever able to accept and bear any amount of sufferings; while others having lesser

faith feel solely beaten and suffer great anguish if their surroundings appear dreary and hopeless, not a ray of light is to be seen and they are being rocked in the cradle of the deep. Mankind can scarcely be placed in a state where the power of divine help is more needed and often called for.

They are, indeed, blessed who can sing we have faith, though in this dreadful night and on the dangerous sea, "We'll always trust in providence where ere we may be." When old Neptune is lashed to fury by the stormy, howling: tempestuous winds, and the heaving, groaning and lurching ship is sorely buffeted in ocean's mighty fury. The creaking of the masts, and the shrill whistling of the wind in notes of the highest treble playing a dirge-like wail around the rosy harp-strings.

The deepest bass notes are truly mocked in the force and power of the breaking and mighty waves. Such a storm in some degree might form a subject for the musical genius, but I am afraid the effort would only sound in the ear a symphony in harmony broken loose. His art, at least, would fail in producing the heart-felt fear and awe that the human soul is bound to feel and suffer during such a scene. 'Tis only God-given faith that can give strength to the mind in order to bear the ordeal and overcome all the dangers of the deep. Now the overwhelming power of the ocean is gently breathed upon; the howling winds and tempestuous waves begin to sing; the storms dirge in a lower and more agreeable key; joy now succeeds dire and gloomy fear. The eager and watching eye is pleased to behold that the furious and raging storm of the night is nearly spent; and its sable cloak is about to rent.

The horizon is now faintly discovered and the welcome and glorious light of breaking day is beginning to chase the cloudy night away; breathing and scattering the sable curtain of night into strange, wonderful, fantastic shapes and forms. The golden and rosy tints of morning now paints in rare beauty giving charm to the fleeing tinted clouds; the orb of coming day in silent voice is saying. Ye clouds of night and ye sea, part asunder and give room for me." Soon the genial, welcome and smiling face of Sol bursts out from his atmospherical cradle, breathes anew, and throws his luminous light and beauty, illuminating the still clouded sky and sea in tints of liquid fire.

Sailing toward an approaching haven the ear is pleased to hear the dash, dash, dash, on thy cold gray stones, O sea, and the wild discordant sound of the sea-birds cry and the thud, thud, of the breaking waves and the sough of their dying wail. The eye is also pleased to see that the misty mantle of morning only envelopes the heights of the rock-bound coast and the seeming strange, grotesque sculptured objects that adorn the rocky cliffs. This graphic scene displays many of the stern realities that are to be found in nature and shows a pictured power of greatness, strength and rare beauty; often to be viewed so that the mind is terror-stricken in beholding the power displayed, when the elemental forces in nature are master of an awful and tremendous spell. His unadorned creations are so perfect and complete that the pictured greatness of the painter-genius in comparison may be likened to the feeble light of a can-