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is no longer the case, as a visit to the Metropolitan Museum, or the recent Loan Exhibition in aid of the Society of Decorative Art, both in New York, amply demonstrates. The taste for *bric-a-brac*, fine porcelain, gold, silver, and glass vessels, has recently been remarkably developed in this country, and many gentlemen now possess fine collections. Even artists are beginning to gather objects of art, since they prove to be indispensable accessories in many pictures. The representation of still life which is given herewith illustrates how great are the possibilities in this branch of art. The painter has artistically combined flowers, game—the deer, a hare, grouse, duck, etc.—objects of art such as plaques and vases, with a buffet. As if to add to the stillness of the picture, a sleeping cat has been introduced! The opportunities for drawing and color in a work of this nature, are almost illimitable, and will require the exercise of the highest skill on the part of the artist. At the Universal Exposition, held in Paris in 1867, the American art gallery was deficient in pictures of still life, fruits and flowers; and the same may be said of the Exposition of to-day. The majority of our painters, said the United States Commissioner in 1867, are landscape artists, and such they must probably long remain. Whatever the reason may be, our artists do not take kindly to still-life pictures. It is true, Mr. George C. Lambdin paints roses, and Mr. George H. Hall, fruit; while a number of women attempt to paint flowers, and bits of still life, one of the most successful being Miss L. Whitcomb. The late John A. Howes painted at least one fine still-life picture, called "Quarant Ore," being a high altar at a Catholic church, and showing the ecclesiological knowledge of the artist in the truthfulness of the details, while the color was rich, flowing and luminous. Now and then an artist, as Mr. Frank Waller, or Mr. D. Maitland Armstrong, paints a corner of a studio, or a quaint fire-place, the mantel set with objects of art, porcelain, etc. Yet no American woman paints flowers like Teresa Hegg, who revels in the flora of Switzerland; and no American gentleman attempts such objects of art as Blaise Desgoffe, or such superb flower-pieces as J. Robie. Here is a large field for our artists waiting to be cultivated.

Among the most marvelous paintings of still life, in the French Exhibition for 1867, were five pictures by Desgoffe, two of which belonged to the empress. In one of them was an ewer, silver-gilt (style of the sixteenth century); a Christ in bloodstone; a bust of the Virgin in rock crystal; a door-knocker; a statuette in box-wood, made by Jean de Bologne; an enameled vase, etc., grouped together with consummate skill, and painted with Rembrandtish effect. For drawing, management of light and shade, minute manipulation, delicacy and accuracy, these pictures were unexcelled. The works of this artist are much

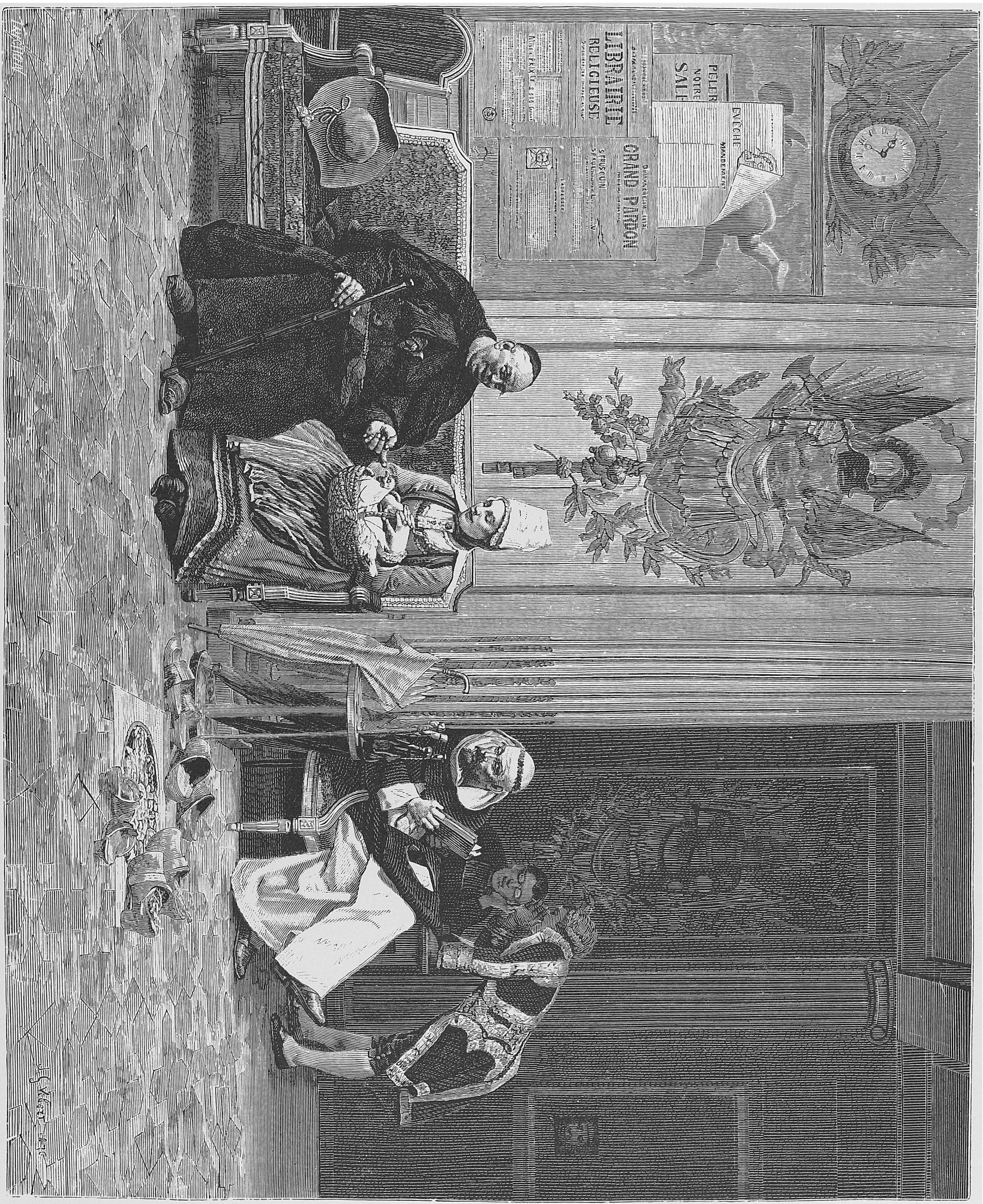


STILL LIFE.—AFTER DE LA CHARLERIE.

sought after in New York. His "Objects of Art formerly belonging to Maria Antoinette," was in the Goupil Gallery a couple of years ago; Mr. Parke Godwin has one of his still-life pictures in his collection; and so, too, have Messrs. Edwin Matthews, Charles Stewart Smith, J. Abner Harper, and Jordan L. Mott. The gallery of William H. Webb, sold in March, 1876, contained a fine example by this artist. Mr. Harper's picture is called "Objects from the Louvre." A very pleasing picture, one eminently interesting to Americans, could be made of the objects of art once belonging to Washington, as shown at the Centennial Exhibition, among which we recollect a pair of rare and valuable vases of old Worcester pottery. The late Daniel Webster left much in the shape of *bric-a-brac* and quaintly carved furniture, which should delight the eye of an artist. Even so plain and unartistic a man as the late Horace Greeley possessed quite a collection of objects of art; while Charles Sumner took special delight in gathering them. The late William Cullen Bryant owned many interesting art objects, quite enough for a fine picture. Many of the Knickerbocker and wealthy families of New York possess articles of *virtu* as interesting as those belonging to any of the queens of France. Our Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts, with its Cesnola collection, taken from the Temple of Venus and Cypriote Tombs, supposed to be 2,500 years old, is rich in jewelry, silver, bronze, glass and earthen utensils; *intagli*; *terra cottas*; busts; vases; *candelabra*, lamps, etc. What better material can any artist wish, out of which to arrange a still-life picture of objects of art?

JEHAN GEORGES VIBERT.

AT the Universal Exposition, now being held in Paris, the pictures by J. G. Vibert hang in the small room with Gérôme's. Among them are his portrait of M. Coquelin, so exquisite in painting and marvelous in its fine comedy; "Le Depart des Mairés, Espagne," "La Sérénade," "La Cigale et la Fourmi," besides others, and a new one, never before exhibited, "Une Vente Mobilière." This is a very picturesque composition representing all the humors of a sale which takes place in an old court-yard,



L'ANTICHAMBRE DE MONSIEUR. — AFTER J. G. VIBERT.

the costumes being at the end of the last century. As usual, the execution and color are pleasant as well as careful. In reproducing one of his masterpieces "L'Antichambre de Monseigneur," we have the artist at his best, and present, for the first time, to the readers of THE ALDINE, a sketch of the master with a specimen of his work.

The characteristics of Vibert, as an artist, are his strength as a colorist; his perfection as a draughtsman; his ability to properly compose a picture; and his tact at telling a story with his brush. None of his pictures are uninteresting, although he sometimes records trivial events. If he is inclined to be too realistic, exhibiting scenes in human life exactly as they are, we can forgive him, since the phase he depicts is so well done; the artist is forgotten while looking at the canvas, and the story becomes all absorbing. He gives to the men and women he paints marked individuality; he not only draws cardinals and monks, but makes them show themselves in verity—men with passions and appetites like other human beings, who know well how to enjoy the good things of this life.

In "L'Antichambre de Monseigneur" there are real live monks, one of whom, fat and jolly, is amusing himself, and chatting with the girl seated by his side, while the other is more curious to overhear the conversation than he is to know the contents of his open book. A *valet de chambre*, in velvet uniform heavy with gold lace, is giving a third pious old monk a bit of gossip which is evidently relished, while a fourth is watching the whole company from a secret panel in the casement. There is a wealth of accessories in this picture—the rich furniture; the armor, posters, and clock upon the wall; the floor of inlaid and highly polished wood; the wooden shoes placed near the grating; the fowl in the basket, etc. The treatment of this picture is good, and the gradation of light and shadows all that can be desired. Like Meissonier, Vibert is a careful and truthful painter. He never omits the slightest detail; everything is reproduced almost with photographic precision.

In the Paris Salon for this year M. Vibert is represented by his great work, "Apothéose de Monsieur Thiers." The late President of the Republic is lying on a bier, a striking likeness of his profile being visible. At his head, pointing upward, stands a figure of Fame; beside the bier is a female veiled in crape personifying France; behind, crushed and gory, lies a female who has lost her life—some vanquished party. In the foreground is a large mass of wreaths and *immortelles*; the whole city of Paris forms the back ground, with the siege in full fury on the right, and the funeral *cortège* of the dead president filing off on the left. The twelve volumes of the "Consulate and Empire," are represented by a ghastly company in the clouds. The predominant color in this remarkable picture is violet.

A series of ten etchings, of some of Vibert's most important works, has been published in Paris, and can be had in this country, at the art dealers, for something like \$150 the set. The titles of these pictures are "Partie Inégale," "El Primer Espada," "Le Repos du Peintre," "Portrait de Coquelin," "La Sainte Collation," "Le Premier Ne," "Le Marchand de Melons," "Un Pretexte," "L'Importun," and "Le Forgeron." Of these, the bull-fighter and the blacksmith are single figures, displaying immense muscular power. "The First Born" is a pretty domestic scene, with father and mother bending over the cradle. It was exhibited in the Salon of 1873, and belongs to Mr. Stebbins, of New York. "The Repose of the Painter" shows the interior of a studio, in which the artist has been painting the portrait of a stout old gentleman. The sitter having fallen asleep, the artist takes advantage of the situation to kiss a pretty woman who is present—possibly the wife of the man who is having his portrait painted. "The Melon Merchant" gives us an Oriental, sitting upon stone steps, surrounded by baskets of melons, pine apples, etc. "Un Pretexte" is called, in this country, "The Offer of an Umbrella," and was in the John Taylor Johnson collection. "The Feast, or Holy-day Collation," shows a cardinal, seated upon his throne, before a well-filled table, feasting, while a servant, upon his knees in a chair, reads prayers! The portrait of M. Coquelin was exhibited in the Salon of 1874, and represents him in *le rôle de Mascarille des Précieuses ridicules*. At the same Salon he exhibited "La Réprimande," belonging to Miss Catherine L. Wolfe, of New York.

Many pictures by Vibert can be found in the private collec-

tions of American gentlemen. Perhaps two of the finest are "The Convent Under Arms," a Spanish scene, containing some twenty figures, painted in 1876, and owned by Charles Crocker, of San Francisco, and "The New Clerk," owned by Mr. T. R. Butler, of New York. The collection of Hon. Milton S. Latham, of San Francisco, sold at auction in New York last winter, contained an excellent Vibert, which attracted much attention, "The Committee on Moral Books." Before a large fire-place, in which a roaring fire is devouring a heap of condemned books, sits a cardinal in his red robes, a pair of tongs clasped to his breast, reading aloud some choice *morceau* from a huge volume, to the intense edification of a monk who sits behind and has for a moment suspended his own reading! The chairs and floor are heaped with books yet to be examined; and, in the distance, a servant, who has been overhauling the book-shelves, also stops to read the doubtful literature passing through his hands. This picture, like all of Vibert's, is strong in color, harmonious in composition, careful in detail, and tells its story so pointedly the intent of the artist is at once discovered.

The Goupil Gallery, in 1876, contained two works by Vibert, "The Bouquet," and "Church and State"—"La Secret d'État." The art collection, recently belonging to H. T. Chapman, Jr., of Brooklyn, contained "The Old Cook," and "The Vesper Hymn," both by Vibert. The collection of Mr. William H. Webb, of New York, contained the "Story of the Bull Fights," by Vibert. The John Taylor Johnson collection, sold in December, 1876, had three pictures by this artist, "Servant Reading," a water color; the "Knife Grinder," a pen-and-ink sketch; and "The Offer of the Umbrella," a water color, 18 by 13 inches, which sold for \$1,000. Mr. W. L. Anderson, of New York, owns the "Carlist Scout," by Vibert, and has exhibited it at the Metropolitan Museum. The eighth annual exhibition of the American Society of Painters in Water Colors, held in New York in the spring of 1875, was rich in the works of this master, containing no less than six examples, "The Politician," and "Testing the Vintage," belonging to Mr. S. P. Avery; "The Sleeping Cavalier," belonging to Mr. F. H. Smith; the "Matadore," belonging to Mr. Richard R. Haines, and "The Duel," and "The Fisherman." Mr. John H. Sherwood, of New York, owns "The Spanish Matador," by Vibert, and Mr. H. E. Howland owns the "Old Soldier." Both of these pictures were exhibited at the New York Centennial Loan Exhibition. Mr. William Schaus has a charming Vibert, painted to order, titled "The Mysterious Footsteps." A cardinal in his bright robes, in walking along the street, in the deep, new-fallen snow, past a residence, finds a lady's slipper, which in the haste of flight has been left behind. A rope ladder, dangling from the chamber window, tells the story of an elopement. The cardinal is intently looking at the bottom of the slipper, as if to recall to mind the foot it once contained! Mr. John Hoey possesses a Vibert, which was exhibited at the Loan Exhibition in aid of the Society of Decorative Art, at the National Academy in 1877. Mr. Robert L. Cutting is the owner of "La Chatelaine," by this well-appreciated artist.

Jehan Georges Vibert was born in Paris in 1840, and studied art under M. F. Barrias. He is now regarded as one of the foremost *genre* artists of the modern French school. He received medals from the French Academy of Fine Arts in 1864, 1867 and 1868, and was made a Chevalier of the Order of the Legion of Honor in 1870. In personal appearance he is a stout, portly man, with a face expressive of considerable determination of character, as well as much good nature. He resembles, in looks and physique, Spurgeon, the celebrated London preacher. He has a magnificent studio at 18 Rue de Boulogne, Paris, attached to which are accommodations for his pupils. His favorite subjects are monks, cardinals and priests engaged in secular employments; but he does not confine himself to these, since he often tells a story upon canvas from the vast field which, as a *genre* painter, he may choose.

—J. B. F. W.

THE HOUR BUT NOT THE MAN.

IN 1871 this picture was first shown to the English public at the Exhibition of the New British Institution in Old Bond Street, London, when it was much admired for its rich coloring and effect of sunlight and shade, as well as for its delicate