

WINSLOW HOMER

neither of these pictures being of any value in the careers of their authors. But once you sat on the rocks of Maine, and watched the climbing of the surf up the morning sky after a heavy storm at sea, you realize the force of Homer's gift for the realities. His pictures are yankee in their indications, as a work of art could be, flinty and unyielding, resolute as is the yankee nature itself, or rather to say, the original yankee, which was pioneer then in a so rough yet resourceful country. It is the quality of Thoreau, but without the genius of Thoreau for the poetry of things.

Homer's pictures give you nothing but the bare fact told in the better class terms of illustration, for he was illustrator, first of all. While the others were trying to make a little American Barbizon of their own, there were Homer, Ryder, Fuller, Martin, working alone for such vastly opposite ideas, and yet, of these men, four of them were expressing such highly imaginative ideas, and Homer was the unflinching realist among them. I do not know where Homer started, but I believe it was the sea at Prout's Neck that taught him most. I think that William Morris Hunt and Washington Allston must have seemed like infant Michelangelos then, for there is still about them a sturdiness which we see little of in the American art of that time, or even now for that matter. They had a certain massive substance, proving the force of mind and personality which was theirs, and while these men were prov-