

OUR IMAGINATIVES

the way of interpretive power or synthetic understanding. It is the tendency to keep on the comfortable side in American art. Doubtless it is more practical as any innovator or investigator has learned for himself. Artists like Ryder and Martin and Fuller had nothing in common with market appreciations. They had ideas to express, and were sincere to the last in expressing them.

You will find little trace of commercialism in these men, even when, as in the case of Martin and Ryder and I do not know whom else, they did panels for somebody-or-other's leather screen, of which "Smuggler's Cove" and the other long panel of Ryder's in the Metropolitan Museum are doubtless two. They were not successful in their time because they could not repeat their performances. We know the efforts that were once made to make Ryder comfortable in a conventional studio, which he is supposed to have looked into once; and then he disappeared, as it was altogether foreign to him. Each picture was a new event in the lives of these men, and had to be pondered over devoutly, and for long periods often, as in the case of Ryder. Work was for him nine-tenths reflection and meditation and poetic brooding, and he put down his sensations on canvas with great difficulty in the manner of a labourer. It seems obvious that his first drafts were always vivid with the life intended for them, but no one could possibly have suffered with the idea of how to complete a picture more than he. His lack