

## THE VIRTUES OF AMATEUR PAINTING

the essence of the thing itself. You feel that unquestionably Rousseau's Paris is Paris, and you are made to feel likewise that his jungle scenes are at very least his own experiences of his earlier life in Mexico. Rousseau convinces by his unquestionable sensitivity and integrity of approach. He was not fabricating an art, he was endeavoring to create a real picture for his own private satisfaction, and his numerous successes are both convincing and admirable.

As I have said, if you have access to a variety of amateur pictures created during the mid-Victorian era, of whatever style or subject, you will find in them the most admirably sincere qualities of painting as well as singularly enchanting gifts for simplification and the always engaging respect for the fact itself out of which these painted romanzas are created. There was the type of memorial picture for instance, with its proverbial tombstone, its weeping willow tree, and its mourner leaning with one elbow, usually on the cornice above, where the name of the beloved deceased is engraved; below it the appropriate motto and its added wealth of ornamentation in the way of landscape, with houses, hills, winding roads, with maybe an animal or two grazing in the field, and beyond all this vista, an ocean with pretty vessels passing on their unmindful way, and more often than not, many species of bright flowers in the foreground to heighten the richness