

THE VIRTUES OF AMATEUR PAINTING

Lind and Castle Garden, though of course in Mrs. Cowdery's case she is too young actually to have survived that period literally. It is the grace of that period, however, to which she has become heir and all her efforts have been exercised in rendering of the graces of this playful and pretty hour of human life.

We are reminded, for the moment only, of Monticelli, chiefly through similarity of subject, for he also was fond of the silent park inhabited with gracious beings in various states of spiritual ecstasy and satisfaction. In the pictures of Mrs. Cowdery there is doubtless greater intimacy of feeling, because it is a private and very personal issue with her own happy soul. She has come out on the other edge of the horizon of the world of humans, and finds the looking backward so imperatively exquisite as to make it necessary for her to paint them with innocent fidelity; and so she has set about, without any previous experience in the handling of homely materials, to make them tell in quaint and gracious accents the pretty story of the life of her revived imagination. In these ways she becomes a kind of revivification of the spirit of Watteau, who has made perfect, for us all, what is perfect in the classicized ideality of experience.

I think of Mrs. Cowdery's pictures as mid-Victorian fans, for they seem more like these frail shapes to be wafted by frail and slender hands; I seem to feel the quiet glitter of prisms hanging from