HANDBOOK OF DRAWING



By

William Walker

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HANDBOOK OF DRAWING

BY

WILLIAM WALKER

LECTURER AND TEACHER OF FREEHAND DRAWING IN THE OWENS COLLEGE

WITH UPWARDS OF TWO HUNDRED WOODCUTS AND DIAGRAMS

'Art is universal in its influence; so may it be in its practice, if it proceed from a sincere heart and quick observation. In this case it may be the merest sketch, or the most elaborate imitative finish. Either will be whole and perfect.'—GOETHE.

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1880

Art
Library

PREFACE

TO THE AMERICAN EDITION.

THE very fair proposal of Messrs. Scribner to issue this Handbook in America affords me the satisfactory prospect of extended usefulness amongst the real amateurs of a great country; and I shall indulge the hope that it may meet with as kind and appreciative a reception in America as it has done in England.

WILLIAM WALKER.

THE OWENS COLLEGE,
Manchester, February, 1880.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE purpose of this work is to furnish such information on Elementary Art Education as is not likely to be met with in any other compact form. It has been prepared under the guiding principle that *all true education consists in the cultivation of the judgment.*

Books of *Examples*, good and bad, are in abundance; but the language of Art,—any more than Greek or German,—is not to be learned by merely copying its signs. Art has its grammatical elements and rules, and should be studied in its exact delineative and intellectual aspect, as well as in its more emotional expression. The former will find its sphere in the class-room, the latter amidst the beauties of Nature, or in the studio.

The information here presented, and the practice recommended, will enable the student to make truthful and significant outlines, and drawings from outlines and diagrams put before him in lecture-rooms and elsewhere.

The work has been prepared chiefly during intervals of physical suffering, and has many imperfections. Two courses only were open to me—either to let the hours pass away useless to others as to myself, or to bring out the book in its present form, and I chose the latter. The desire and duty to help my fellows are my reasons and apology for issuing this little volume.

WILLIAM WALKER.

Fairlands, Hayfield.

ADDRESS TO STUDENTS.

As a false start, or a wrong bias, may lead to failure, an inquiry or two, which perhaps has not occurred spontaneously in entering upon this new field of work, is here suggested, and a few indispensable facts are stated which may prevent such wrong tendency at the outset.

In the first place, then, let us ask, Why do we wish to learn to draw? To reply, Because we like it, would hardly be deemed satisfactory, or worthy of thoughtful men; but if our reply should be, Because it may be useful, that certainly would be more reasonable. But, suppose our answer should take a higher form, and we should say that we wish to study Art in order to develop in us those nobler faculties which God has given for the appreciation of His works in nature *æsthetically*, as Science enables us to do *intellectually*, then we at once come to the root of the matter; we start with a worthy motive, and may reasonably expect success.

In beginning, then, the study of this new language, let us ask, What course will be most likely to secure the results we seek? The answer would undoubtedly be, That course which would lead to an acquaintance with the fundamental principles on which the Art is based. Just so. And in the pursuit of any subject of this nature we should naturally expect to go through some labour, perhaps drudgery, of preparation, equivalent to learning

French verbs, or writing Greek hexameters, and not unwillingly, provided always that we were certain that such labour would bring us nearer to the desired goal.

It is just in this temper that we ask a student to study Art, remembering at the same time that, whilst French verbs and Greek hexameters will occasionally be useful and pleasant, the language he now proposes to study is closely related to everything about him; and that, in fact, many of the Arts and Sciences are utterly incomprehensible without its aid. What would be thought of a work on Physics, or Chemistry, or Anatomy, or any physical science whatever, without illustrations? Language alone is one of the worst means of expressing form, while drawing is incomparably the best. Physical science stands still so soon as it becomes 'a reasoned statement instead of a sense-subjected fact.' To a medical student drawing will be as indispensable as Latin; and even Mathematics would be impossible of acquirement without sensible form.

To learn, there should be action with perception, and enjoyment with power; for 'Art is conversant with hand and eye, main sources of power, pleasure, and perception.'

A youthful mind should not stand, phial-like, to receive so much instruction from this master, now so much from that—so much Chemistry, then so much Geology, and so on; but rather it should be treated as a mysterious agent, which, gathering to itself knowledge of all kinds, weaves it into a new development of that which is the image of God Himself.

INTRODUCTION.

If it were announced on the Manchester Exchange, or amongst any other large gathering of intelligent men, that not one in every hundred of them could see correctly the appearance of the walls or windows about them, it might cause no small amount of surprise, if not disconcert; yet such is probably the fact.

Millions of persons pass through life unconscious of the change that takes place in the *appearance* of things around us, yet each time we move an inch a complete alteration in the appearance of everything is the result. Appearances are constantly at variance with facts, and vision, like any other faculty, requires cultivation. It is not because our eyes are open that we therefore see. The mind requires to be furnished with some means by which the eye may be able to judge accurately of the form which every object assumes under various aspects. This continual change of things is an infinite source of pleasure, especially when we are in the midst of landscape, but is so constant and common to us that we fail fully to enjoy it. If there were not variety both in general form and color, as well as in the detailed appearances of things, the world would be full of monotony. An oblong room is more pleasant to dwell in than a square one. A circular room would be wearisome.

The actually different hues and colours in the world is another infinite source of pleasure, but much enjoyment of it is lost because we are not quick to observe, or we have not been trained fully to appreciate. If a knowledge of music, and a well-trained ear, are necessary to a full appreciation and enjoyment of sound, how important is it that the mind should be furnished with all the helps, both of knowledge and feeling (love), so necessary to the appreciation and enjoyment of the charms of form and colour by which we are surrounded. If it be considered necessary that young persons should spend so much time in the practice of music, is it not equally important to cultivate the eye to observe, and the hand to note things in this beautiful world, which would immensely enlarge and enrich our minds with fine thoughts and imagery?

As the eye is the most important gateway of knowledge, so far as the physical world is concerned, it ought to receive great culture, even with only a utilitarian motive, for the time is rapidly approaching when drawing will *demand* its right place in education in this country. With the Greeks, writing and drawing were synonymous; and in France and Germany every child is taught to draw just as he is taught to write, and much time is given to the practice of both; and if England is to hold her own in the Arts she must pay more attention to the right teaching of drawing and the principles of Art as a primary step.

Every purchase we make of anything with a design or pattern about it, encourages good or bad Art, though

we do not think so at the time. We are too apt to buy what pleases us, instead of what is good in quality and pure in design, as well as suited to its place and purpose.

No doubt everybody has taste; but taste may be good and pure, or it may be bad and false. If those who buy Art, and are in a sense its patrons, do not know what is good, so as to distinguish it from what is bad, it is useless to expect manufacturers to work artistically, or shopmen to sell that which is true,—they must prepare what the public will buy. It is most desirable, therefore, that the public generally, as well as the manufacturer, should know what is right in Art.

True education in man, whether as applied to Art or morals, is that which fits him to become the highest and best of his nature's capability; first, in view of the Infinite Creator of all things, the 'Father of us all;' and, secondly, in view of himself and his surroundings, whether of the material universe—the world, or of the spiritual universe, as manifested in man, and perfectly only in the one perfect Man. In this great work surely the study of Art is an important factor.

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HANDBOOK OF DRAWING.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

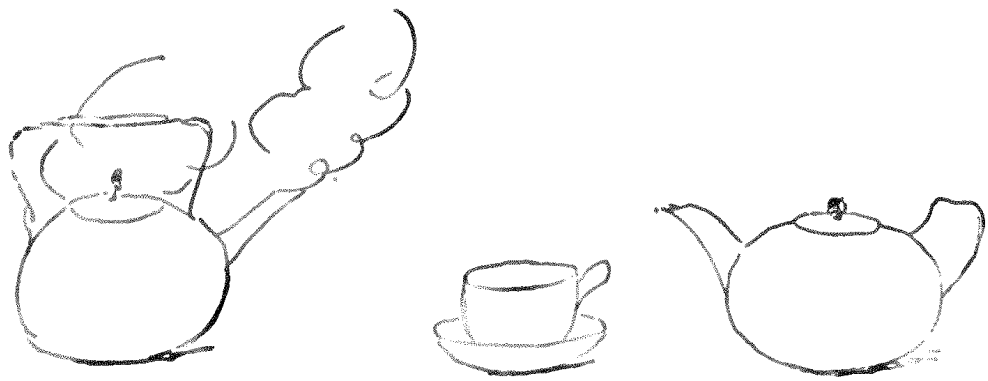
ON DRAWING.*

1. THE misunderstanding of the term *free-hand drawing* has led to considerable confusion. It was originally applied to the copying, *without instruments*, of a series of outline designs issued by the Department of Science and Art, and has, unfortunately, become associated with that alone. Rightly understood it has a much wider significance, and should be applied to all drawing where instruments, such as compasses, rulers, &c., are not used. In geometric drawing, instruments are used, and therefore this is not *free*-hand work. Strictly speaking, models, flowers, landscapes, drawn without mechanical assistance, ought to be considered as free-hand drawing.

* A definition of the term '*drawing*' must be very comprehensive if it is not to exclude some art into which drawing enters more or less. Hamerton says:—'If we say that *drawing is a motion which leaves significant marks*, we are as precise as the numerous varieties of the art will permit us to be.'

2. Its elementary study is the first step towards expressing our ideas through the medium of art, and should be practised more or less from earliest infancy as a most useful language, by which the *perceptive faculties* will be quickened, and knowledge conveyed in a sort of short-hand language requiring no translation, and understood by all.* In this respect it has often a great advantage

* Atkinson, the well-known Russian traveller, told the writer that on many occasions he would have been most seriously inconvenienced had it not been for the readiness with which he could use his pencil. The following anecdote, also, will show the advantage of being ready with this universal language. An artist who had neglected to secure his lunch before going amongst some Welsh mountains for his day's painting, after some hours' work began to feel faint for want of food, and seeing a cottage at some distance, went to inquire if he could have a cup of tea. His reception was not an agreeable one, as he was attacked by a couple of curs, which frightened him and put to flight a number of noisy fowls. On the good woman of the house opening the door a few inches the artist made his request for a cup of tea, to which he got the reply, '*Dim Sasenach*' (No English). After again urging his request, and meeting with the same determined, settled, and settling answer, '*Dim Sasenach,*' he bethought him of his pocket sketch-book, which had been of like service to him among the mountaineers of Switzerland, and he instantly made a sketch like the following, and showed it to the unwilling dame, who, recognising his



want, instantly opened wide the door, beckoned him into the cottage,

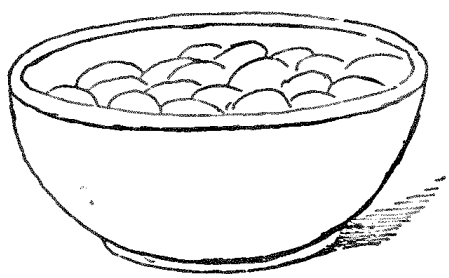
over writing, as will be evident if, as in business, we wish to describe in writing almost any common article of daily use —say a sofa, or a coal-vase—instead of drawing it. This is a strong argument in favour of *all* persons learning to draw as well as to write.

3. The question is often asked, 'Can every one learn to draw?' and although it may seem an ignorant question, it had better be answered. All persons who can learn to

and offered a chair. In an unknown language two children, who had concealed themselves behind their mother, were hastily despatched, and soon returned, one with a bundle of sticks and the other with a can of spring water. Very quickly the kettle was boiling, and cakes were baking on something like a Scotch 'griddle,' hung from a chain in the chimney. Soon the artist was enjoying himself, and the remembrance of the noisy cackling amidst which he was introduced, suggested to his mind the possibility of making his repast more substantial by the addition of a few eggs; so he politely, but thoughtlessly, asked his hostess if she could oblige him with an egg or two. The inevitable '*Dim Sasenach*' soon showed him his mistake; so, getting out his pocket sketch-book, he sketched something like the following:—whereupon the good woman, charmed at her power of interpreting, went off to a cupboard, and immediately returned with a large, clean, wooden bowl, filled with eggs, of which the rough sketch will give an idea. Satisfied, refreshed, and again ready for work, the artist prepared to depart, but not before he ascertained the power of his hostess to understand, without any sketch, the value of English silver.







write can learn to draw. If it were required, 'Can any one become an artist?' the question might be answered by another, 'Can any one become a poet?' Great painters, like great poets or great composers, may be born, but not made. But though there are not many Beethovens, or Handels, or Mozarts in a generation, there are many persons who add to national happiness by less pretentious efforts than Oratorios and Masses. On the Continent drawing is taught to all children in the best national schools, and it ought to be taught in our own: not because it is insisted on in Continent schools, but because it would be of incalculable service in the business of life to those who had learnt it.*

4. But here arises an important question: What do we understand by learning to draw? There are various kinds of drawing, and that which may be suitable to one purpose may not be applicable to another. For example, the kind of drawing and knowledge requisite for a man of culture is scarcely that best suited to an artisan. The first and elemental requirement of an artisan is that he should

* The following remarks from Professor Huxley appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, January 1878. Speaking of the preparation for technical teaching he says:—'And especially I should require some ability to draw: I do not mean artistically, for that is a gift which may be cultivated, but cannot be learned, but with fair accuracy. Everybody, or almost everybody, can learn to write; and, as writing is a kind of drawing, I suppose that the majority of the people who say they cannot draw, and give copious evidence of the accuracy of their assertion, could draw, after a fashion, if they tried. And that "after a fashion" would be better than nothing for my purposes.

'I suppose that in nine trades out of ten it would be useful if he (the student) could draw.'

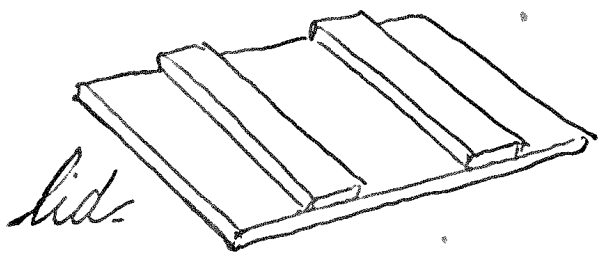
be able to draw accurately, say a brick, and understand it when it is drawn; for if he can draw a brick he can draw a box, and if a box, then a table; and thus he has a safe foundation on which to build his knowledge as it may be required.

5. On the next page is given a supposed order for a common box, which, though very rough (as though drawn in haste), would be clearly understood by an intelligent workman without any chance of error. How great the advantage of drawing in this case is over a written description only, may be felt if the student will try to write out instructions for such a box *without any drawing*—instructions that might not only be understood, but that could not be misunderstood.

6. To those who travel, even a little knowledge of free-hand drawing, as here understood, will be not only useful but delightful. The slightest sketch taken by oncself will, in after years, recall more of the circumstances and associations than a lengthened description, or evcn a photograph. Illustrations of this kind of memorandum sketch will be found in various parts of the work.

7. But if true education be that which fits a person for the after circumstances of life, then the requirements of an educated man will bc something far beyond the power to sketch a few simple objects intelligently. He must have a knowledge of the general principles of Fine Art, and such power in practice as will develop in him that æsthetic faculty without which he can neither fully enjoy, nor accurately judge, in matters of taste.

Order.
Box for packing.
Deal, 3/4 inch. not planed
2ft. 6in × 2ft. 1 × 9in.
inside measurement.



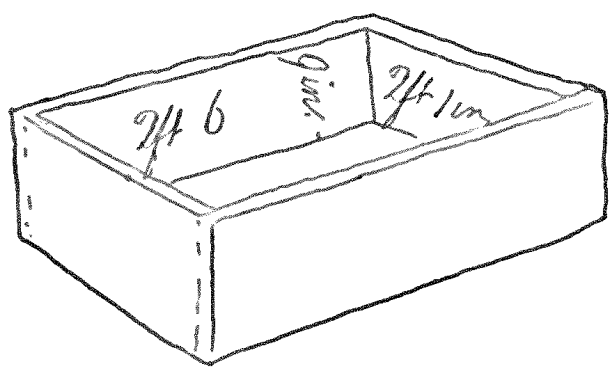


FIG. 1.

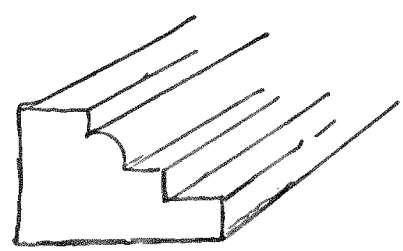


FIG. 2.