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Francis Davis Millet

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## AMERICAN ART NEWS.

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## BUREAU OF EXPERTIZING.

Advice as to the placing at public or private sale  
of art works of all kinds, pictures, sculptures, fur-  
niture, bibelots, etc., will be given at the office of  
the American Art News, and also counsel as to the  
value of art works and the obtaining of the best  
"expert" opinion on the same. For these services  
a nominal fee will be charged. Persons having art  
works and desirous of disposing or obtaining an idea  
of their value, will find our service on these lines  
a saving of time, and, in many instances, of un-  
necessary expense. It guarantees that any opinion  
given will be so given without regard to personal or  
commercial motives.

## COLLECTORS &amp; COLLECTIONS.

The continuing announcements of  
the purchase for large sums of famous  
pictures and art works by American  
collectors of great wealth has influ-  
enced much published comment in  
English and European journals on the  
subject of art collecting. It would  
seem that the following remarks of an  
editorial writer in the "London Times"  
have much of truth, and furnish food  
for reflection to American collectors  
and art lovers.

"Expert" knowledge has been de-  
veloped in the few to its present high  
pitch partly by the need of protecting  
the public, and partly by a genuine  
scientific curiosity—by the desire to  
follow up the minute traces, artistic  
or documentary, which may ultimate-  
ly lead to a knowledge of the history  
of works of art and their authors.  
Nobody who has followed with any  
care the investigations of a Morrell, a  
Furtwängler, or a Bredius, can deny  
that there is an extraordinary fascina-  
tion in research of this kind. Yet one  
cannot help feeling a certain envy of  
our ancestors who lived in an age  
when knowledge was less exact and  
faith came easier. They went on the  
grand tour; they mixed with Roman  
or Florentine society; and they  
brought back, perhaps advised by  
semi-experts like Gavin Hamilton,  
pictures with reasonable pretensions

to bear great names, for the adorn-  
ment of their country houses.

"Tradition, till yesterday, only help-  
ed to strengthen these attributions,  
and three or four generations were  
placidity conscious of possessing  
Titians and Fra Bartolommeos, which  
nobody had ever doubted, because  
they were bought from Italian pal-  
aces so long ago. Then came in the  
devastating modern critic, telling the  
unhappy owner that the original of  
his Andrea was in the Vienna Gal-  
lery, that his Titian was a Bolognese  
copy of the 17th century, and that a  
finer version of his Rembrandt had  
been sold last year to Boston.

"Unfortunately, the critic, by pho-  
tographs and catalogs, is generally  
able to prove his point, and the in-  
nocent enjoyment of the old family  
is ruined. The only comfort is that  
if criticism of this kind destroys  
much, it may also construct. It brings  
back to their own a multitude of for-  
gotten reputations. A poor Leonar-  
do may turn out to be a good Giam-  
petrino; and Rembrandt suffers no  
injury by having to surrender a fine  
landscape to his pupil Philip Koninck.

"Thus, the balance is redressed, but  
not to the owner, who naturally goes  
about a sadder, if a wiser, man. But  
that science is the only rock to build  
upon is the conviction of all serious  
collectors to-day. The pleasant, easy-  
going, amateurish standards of the  
past, the standard of buying because  
the buyer likes the object bought, are  
fast disappearing. The standard now  
is scientific; it is humiliating to have  
to add, because what is scientific is  
commercially the most sound. The  
great buyers are millionaires; and mil-  
lionaires are commercial men, who  
seek what will not disappoint them  
as men of business. Not long ago a  
London guest, with some reputation  
in the art world, was taken to see one  
of the great New York collections,  
and he naturally admired the Rem-  
brandts and Hobbemas, expressing  
himself warmly to that effect to the  
owner. 'Ah!' was the reply, 'your  
praise means a dividend on my  
'pictures!'"

## FRENCH NOBLES AS AGENTS.

A special cable to the New York  
"American" from Paris says the story  
is told there with circumstantial de-  
tails which seem to indicate its truth,  
that leading members of the French  
nobility have become the nominal pro-  
prietors of valuable tapestries, old pic-  
tures and various other objects of art  
and value, chiefly for the purpose of  
fooling American purchasers.

The noblemen pretend that these  
works of art have been in their fam-  
ilies from generation to generation and  
consequently have the hallmark of au-  
thenticity upon them, when in reality  
they frequently have only just received  
them from dealers who bought them  
at some auction sale.

Dealers who are engaged in this trade  
fix the price at which the nobles who  
have lent themselves to the scheme may  
sell each article. Any sum they get be-  
yond the given price and plus ten per  
cent. they may keep for themselves.

## INNESSES SELL WELL.

From the exhibition of paintings by  
George Inness now on at the School of  
Applied Design for Women, several  
sales have been made. Mrs. E. H. Har-  
rigan paid \$10,000 for "Edge of the  
Meadow." Another example was sold  
to a Chicago woman for \$2,500. The  
school receives 10% of the proceeds of  
the sales.

## FLORENCE LETTER.

Florence, April 9, 1912.

As Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan was leav-  
ing Rome for Florence the other day, a  
noisy crowd collected at the station and  
caused him much annoyance, due to a  
report that Mr. Morgan had bought an  
old master and was trying to smuggle  
it out of the country.

Mr. Morgan bought several rare art  
objects while in Rome, his chief acqui-  
sition having been a necklace of the  
Lombard epoch, recently exhumed and  
which consists of eight golden swans  
linked together by Greek masks.

While here, he inspected several pic-  
tures belonging to the same dealer who  
last year sold him the famous Barce-  
lina family's cup and others worth  
\$300,000.

## SPRING ACADEMY SALES.

Some 27 canvases were sold at the  
Academy Exhibition which closes to-  
day, and the total amount received was  
\$2,300. Among the works sold during  
the last week were Everett Warner's  
"A March Day;" Bruce Crane's "The  
Hills;" Guy C. Wiggins' "Wind and  
Snow, New York;" William Ritschel's  
"Desert Wanderers;" Irving Couse's  
"The Magic Pool;" L. E. Baermans'  
"November;" "Moonlight Night," by  
Eugene E. Speicher; "Capri," by C. F.  
Warren; "The First Snow," by F. K.  
M. Rehn; George H. Shorey's "Boy-  
hood;" Helen Watson Phelps' "The  
Coiffure," and Eliot Clark's "City Sky-  
line."

## BLACK MIRROR AGAIN.

That mysterious occasional and an-  
onymous publication known as the "Black  
Mirror" and which although apparently  
proceeding from Chicago has a strong  
New York flavor—after disappearing  
for six years, has been revived, and  
number seven, dedicated to Henri  
Rousseau, "The Sincere Man," has re-  
cently appeared.

The stir this anonymous publication,  
which "calls a spade a spade," made  
in the American art world some years  
ago, is well remembered and its re-  
vival will be greeted with varied feel-  
ing of pleasure and annoyance by art-  
ists, dealers and others interested in  
the art movement, especially annoyance  
on the part of those who may have rea-  
son to fear adverse criticism or revela-  
tions of any kind.

The presence of such a fearless  
scourge in the American art world is  
not an unmixed evil, for the Black Mir-  
ror detests shams and hypocrisy, dis-  
honest dealing and absurd pretension,  
and these are all too rampant in the art  
world just now.

## Mr. Newman's Death.

Editor the American Art News.

Dear Sir:

In your issue of April 6 there was an  
obituary of R. C. Newman. It was very  
painful to me and to other of his friends to  
notice that it was so worded as to make it  
possible to infer that he committed suicide.  
Mr. Newman although eight-five years of  
age, enjoyed life more than younger men.

On March 30 he left his room in Brooklyn  
and came to New York, as he felt that there  
he would be nearer his friends. He was  
suffering from a cold and feeling poorly had  
called in his doctor. Next morning he was  
found dead in bed. In his room was a gas-  
heater, and it was discovered that some of  
the jets had been blown out, and gas was  
escaping. It was evidently accidental, as  
one jet was still burning, and the escape of  
gas, though not sufficient to result in an  
explosion, was enough to cause the death  
of so aged a man.

It would be a great satisfaction to Mr.  
Newman's friends if you would correct the  
wrong impression the obituary in your  
paper has conveyed to many people.

Yours faithfully,

Alphæus P. Cole.

New York, April 17, 1912.

We regret exceedingly any unmtentional  
suggestions in our obituary notice of the  
respected and sincerely mourned veteran  
painter, that could have caused feeling even  
to those near and dear to him and in a  
naturally sensitive state of mind.—[Ed.]

## OBITUARY.

## Francis Davis Millet.

Francis Davis Millet whose name is  
on the list of those lost on the *Titanic*,  
was born in Mattapoisett, Mass., in  
1846. He enlisted as a drummer boy  
in the Civil War and was afterwards  
made assistant in the Surgeon's corps.

At the close of the war he entered  
Harvard and after graduation took up  
journalism in Boston. In 1871 he be-  
gan the study of art at the Royal Acad-  
emy, Antwerp, but returned to Amer-  
ica in 1876 and the next year became  
a war correspondent in the Russo-  
Turkish conflict. After the war he  
went to Paris and devoted himself again  
to art study.

In 1879 he married Miss Elizabeth  
Greeley Merrill and lived in Boston for  
a year, and in 1881 moved to Worcest-  
ershire, England, where he lived for  
thirty years. Some of his canvases  
hang in the Metropolitan, the Union  
League Club, the Detroit Museum and  
the Duquesne Club of Pittsburgh. Mr.  
Millet became more widely known as  
an artist the past 25 years and his work  
earned for him decorations from half  
a dozen countries. He was pre-emin-  
ently a painter of easel genres, but also  
won distinction as a mural painter and  
in other lines of artistic work. He has  
resided in Washington for some years  
past, engaged most of the time in mur-  
al work, but went to Rome to succeed  
Frederick Crownshield as President of  
the American Academy there, a few  
weeks ago. He was returning on the  
*Titanic* to close up his affairs here, pre-  
paratory to taking up permanent resi-  
dence in Rome, and had with him his  
cartoons and designs for the new murals  
in the New Bedford Public Library,  
which were lost with him. Mr. Millet  
was elected an Academician in 1885.

## Martin O'Brien.

The death is announced of Martin  
O'Brien, the dealer, at his home in  
Chicago on April 11, aged 83. He was  
born in Ireland of a family noted for  
its art, came to Chicago in 1853 and  
two years later formed the art firm  
which now bears his name. He was  
a collector and owned many rare books.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## A Philadelphia Protest.

Editor *American Art News*,

Dear Sir:

I write concerning the recent sale in  
Philadelphia, of the original Gilbert Stuart  
portrait of Washington for \$16,100. That  
such a painting by such a master should  
have been allowed to leave Philadelphia, its  
rightful home, for such a small sum is in-  
comprehensible. Had it been a portrait of  
some insignificant member of the English  
aristocracy, by one of the English painters  
of the same period, \$200,000 would not have  
been thought too much to pay by some  
of our so-called patrons of art.

I congratulate Mr. Thomas B. Clarke up-  
on the acquisition of such a prize, and ven-  
ture the prediction that if this painting  
should come upon the market in fifteen or  
twenty years from now it will bring thrice,  
perhaps five times what it brought a few  
weeks ago.

When will Americans awake to the art of  
their own country? When will they cease  
to buy pictures because of the name on  
them, or because they come from the gal-  
lery of some nobleman? Within the last  
year an immense sum, said to be half a  
million, was paid for a landscape, the au-  
thenticity of which is questioned by one  
of the greatest experts of the world. But it  
came from the collection of one of the aris-  
tocracy. A painting from the gallery of a  
duke may bring half a million, while the  
same painting might not bring a tenth of  
that sum if in the collection of a private  
gentleman.

How Philadelphia, with its Stotesburys,  
Johnsons, McFaddens, Wideners, and  
others, could have let this painting go is  
one of the mysteries. Almost as soon  
could we conceive of the Liberty Bell being  
sold to an outsider and removed from the  
shadow of the State House, from whose  
tower it proclaimed liberty to all the peo-  
ple.

T. HENRY SWEETING.

Philadelphia, April 15, 1912.