Bulletin of
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SPRING PASTURE (Detail)
CHINESE. YUAN PERIOD (?)
GIFT OF MRS. WALTER R. PARKER

SPRING PASTURE

A Chinese landscape painting may be pictorially charming and satisfying, but whoever would fully enjoy it must regard it as something more—as an experience; something to be shared, not merely observed; to be entered and moved in, not gaped at from afar. Even Chinese perspective contributes to this end, inviting the eye and the mind to wander from vantage point to vantage point within a composition. Especially is this true of works of the *shou-chüan* or "hand-roll" type. These are intended to be unrolled upon a table, one end of the scroll being closed as the other is opened. Though the total long design is pictorial, it is not meant to be seen as a whole. Rather, the observer moves progressively through it from end to end.

Such a scroll is that to which we have given the English name *Spring Pasture,* one of the paintings recently presented to the Institute of Arts by Mrs. Walter R. Parker. It is painted in ink with the addition of some color, chiefly green, brown and flesh, on silk, and it measures 12¼ inches in width and 118⅞ inches, or nearly ten feet, in length. It represents water buffaloes in a pasture grown with weeping willow trees, through which flows a winding stream. There are 88 animals, including three cows of the kind familiar to us in the West. With them are 35 boys; and here it may be said that the water buffalo, the well-nigh universal draft animal of China south of the Yangste, of uncertain and sometimes vicious temper with adults, is almost invariably gentle and docile with children.

The whole picture is painted with great skill and knowledge. Each animal, each boy, each tree is as individual as nature. It was probably done by an artist of accomplishment who was either a native of Chekiang province or who knew the country around Hangchow while or soon after that city was the capital of the southern period of the Sung dynasty. On the basis of its general technique it would not be unreasonable to assign the painting to the Yüan period, about the middle of the fourteenth century. However, it may have been painted even earlier, during the Sung dynasty.

The last private collector to own the scroll was Mr. P'u Ju (Hsin-yü), a Manchu noble of Peiping, and eight of the fifteen seals on the picture and mount are his. Four of the remaining seals indicate that the painting formerly belonged to the great Prince Kung, one of the foremost statesmen of the nineteenth century, distinguished connoisseur, and grandfather of Mr. P'u. The scroll by Ch'ien Hsüan called *Early Autumn* in our collection was at one time in Prince Kung's collection.

Now the buffalo scroll has on the outside a modern label attributing it very definitely to the painter Li T'ang who worked under the Sung dynasty at the beginning of the twelfth century, and who was famous for his paintings of cattle. His name also appears in very small characters at the extreme left end of the picture. Mr. P'u, who is himself a noted painter and connoisseur, said in conversation that he regarded the painting as being by an unknown Sung artist in the style of Li T'ang. A seal in the lower right hand corner of the

picture silk bears the names of Ch'iu Yüan who lived in the second half of the thirteenth century at the end of the Sung and the beginning of the Yüan dynasty. If it is authentic it tends to support the Sung dynasty dating.

But let us stroll through the pasture as we unroll the scroll from right to left. Under the slender, long, waving branches of new-leaved willow trees—weeping willows, which grow nowhere else in the world as they do in China—is a quiet group of the hairy, stolid-looking cattle, lying motionless or standing solemnly. The Chinese artist has no need to paint shadows to make us feel the cool shade of the trees, and when we see the young calves with their mothers, and the four boys busily stealing young birds from a nest, we are well informed that it is spring. Farther along we see two bulls fighting with much vigor. In the next bend of the stream a naked boy swims after his buffalo, while the others stand gingerly on the nearly submerged backs of theirs. Most of the boys wear only an upper garment, like a shirt or coat, and their bare legs gleam against the darker beasts and the darkened silk background.

On the further shore three boys sit playing some sort of a game with hands, while two others on top of a rock are telling stories or comparing notes on their charges. Under the trees the buffaloes go soberly about the serious business of being buffaloes, with all the unimaginative earnestness we are wont to interpret into them.

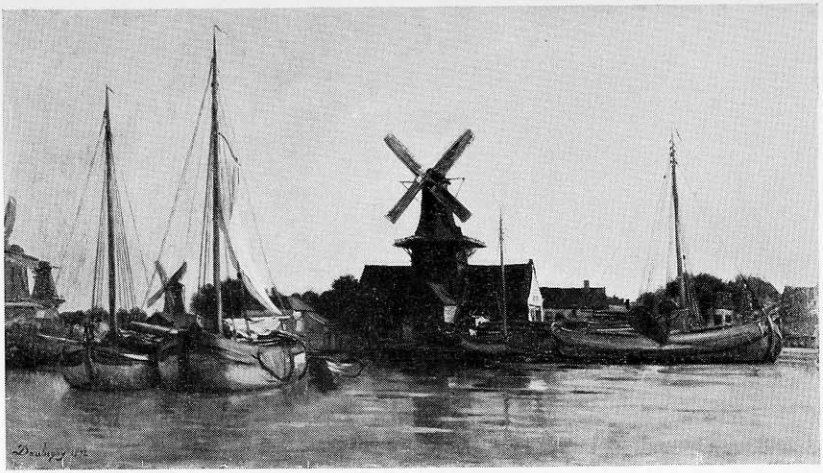
Another bend of the river brings us to the end of the scroll, and we find one boy having some trouble getting his buffaloes out of the water. Beyond the stream a small, half-hidden thatched cottage gives an ultimate destination to our wanderings, and imparts a pleasantly domestic touch to the scene.

BENJAMIN MARCH.

A LANDSCAPE BY DAUBIGNY

Fashion in art, like any other fashion, is changing continuously. The favorites of yesterday have yielded to the favorites of today, and these again will perhaps tumble down from their pedestals tomorrow. This may be sad for the artists, if they are still alive, and unpleasant for the collectors who have acquired their treasures when their popularity was at its peak. But it seems to be an eternal and inexorable law, and as a law it has its beneficial effects, too. Only after the ephemeral and often artificially created craze for a particular phase of art has subsided, will we be able to judge unbiasedly, to separate the wheat from the chaff, to distinguish the really creative personalities among a group of artists from the mere followers and cheap imitators: just as we can detect the intrinsic value of a certain stock in times of depression better than during boom periods.

The school of Barbizon had its heyday of popularity in this country during the years around 1900, until about the time of the world war. Since then the general demand for its works has declined more and more and the prices for paintings by some of its masters have



THE MILLS OF DORDRECHT
JEAN FRANCOIS DAUBIGNY
GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. E. RAYMOND FIELD

decreased considerably. On the other hand, there is Corot, who holds his place unshaken; and we realize his lasting greatness perhaps better today than we did at the time when his name was linked with those of other minor stars of the school, such as Diaz and Dupré.

Another artist of this group whose work has been able to withstand the treacherous judgment of fashion is Daubigny. Daubigny was the only one of the Barbizon painters proper whom Corot held worthy of his friendship. Both men were mature artists when they first met. But in spite of the great difference in age—Corot was more than twenty years older than Daubigny—and the difference in talent which is still greater, it seems that, if one had an influence upon the other, it was Daubigny. For it was through his example—probably more than through his advice—that Corot was led to the practice of painting his landscapes entirely out of doors in front of nature itself, a fact to which the sketchy and fluid character of Corot's marvelous late works bears clearest evidence. In this respect Daubigny has to be regarded as one of the most important forerunners of the great Impressionists.

Jean François Daubigny was born in Paris in 1817. Both his father, Edme-François, and his uncle, Pierre, were painters, so that he learned the elements of his art in his own family. At an early age he began to devote himself to landscape painting, and even on his study trip to Italy in 1836 he soon ran from the museums and churches of Rome into the Campagna and the mountainous country side. In 1838 he exhibited his first canvas at the Salon, a view of Notre Dame. The selection of this familiar theme is characteristic of the painter, who from the very beginning stood in opposition to the then prevailing school of the classical and sumptuously heroic landscape. "Back to nature" was not his slogan but the essence of his striving. He realized that nature's beauty was everywhere, even in the simplest site. "I don't care," he writes in one of his letters, "for these too well arranged compositions which call for the presence of Tircis or Galatea. What I like is the true country side where an honest heap of manure has not been bashfully removed." While in his early

period he still executed his pictures in his studio, from sketches he had done from nature, he later on transferred his complete activity into the open air, painting even canvases nine feet long entirely *"aux champs."* In the history of landscape painting this was an innovation of great audacity, and of considerable significance for its further development. Gradually the fame of the painter began to spread and in the later fifties it was firmly established. In the sixties he realized a very curious idea with which he had played for some time. He acquired a good sized barge and made it into a sort of floating atelier. From now on he often spent weeks in summer calmly traveling up and down the rivers and canals of the country in search of his simple and serene subjects. In his philosophy of life, too, he was an artist. Daubigny died in Paris in 1878.

During the later years of his career he extended his summer trips into the neighboring countries, visiting England, Spain and Holland. It is during or immediately after this trip through the Dutch country side that the large canvas originated which Mr. and Mrs. E. Raymond Field most generously presented to our Museum. It was finished in 1872 and appeared in the same year at the exhibition of the Salon under the title, *The Mills of Dordrecht.* It was sold at the then considerable price of 4,500 francs, and came later on into the well-known Yerkes Collection of New York, which was sold at auction in 1910. *The Mills of Dordrecht* is a characteristic work of Daubigny's late manner, broad and vigorous in brush work, with colors that are velvety, rich, and deep. The unpretentious simplicity of his composition, together with the warm colors of the setting sun that gilds the red roofs and the masts of the sleeping boats, convey a feeling of peaceful and refreshing repose. Altogether we could scarcely have found a better example of the healthy and genuine art of this sympathetic painter.

WALTER HEIL.

TEXTILES FROM OLD SPAIN

The Textile Department has received an important gift from the Edsel B. Ford Fund: a collection of one hundred and eighty-seven specimens of the Spanish weavers' art; more correctly, specimens collected in Spain, for seven fragments are of Italian origin, a panel of Gothic velvet of a rare plum shade and fragments of woven orphreys of the fifteenth century; two specimens illustrate French silk weaving of the early nineteenth century—the First Empire—and one specimen, from an ecclesiastical vestment, is a tapestry border of the pre-conquest period of Peru, which may have been brought to Spain by the followers of Pizarro. The one hundred seventy-seven Spanish fragments cover a period of six hundred years, from the twelfth to the early nineteenth century and include not only a very complete collection for study, but also many panels large enough for exhibition in the Textile Gallery.

In the history of textile arts Spain stands apart, for at all times her textile output seems to have been limited to her own territory, while Italy and later France literally monopolized the export market. But then, Spain and Portugal were always self-centered, their knights did not take part in the crusades for the liberation of the Holy Land, but were satisfied to reconquer their own country from the Moorish usurpers. The Moors had conquered almost the entire peninsula after the terrible battle of Jerez de la Fronteira in July, 711, and some decades later invited the last of the Omayyads, Abd-er-Rahman, who founded the independent caliphate of Cordova. Southern Spain flourished under Moorish

FIG. 1

rule, the caliph and the emirs patronized all the arts and crafts, into which they introduced elements brought from the Eastern conquests, adopted from Sasanian, Syrian and Byzantine sources. This Moorish art, together with a sprinkling of Visigothic art of northwestern Spain and Carolingian art from the Spanish march of Catalonia, forms the Hispano-Moresque style.

The tide of the Moslem conquest was first effectually stemmed by Ferdinand I, king of Castille and Leon, and the reconquest begins with the romantic personality of Rodrigo Diaz, whom the Moors called El Seid, the Cid, and El Campeador, the champion par excellence. All through the reconquest and even afterwards, Spanish art retained the taste for clever combinations of arabesques with purely Christian motives, and for centuries the Moorish subjects of the Christian rulers continued building, moulding and weaving in Estilo mudéjar.

A new element appears with the introduction of Sicilian weavers during the Spanish domination of Sicily. These weavers, descendants of Sarazens, brought a more naturalistic tendency which fused well with the geometrically inclined art of their Moorish brothers of Spain. In the fifteenth century we find endless varieties of interlaced ribbons, cufic and pseudo-cufic inscriptions, and a highly conventionalized flora interspersed with birds and quadrupeds, many of which are heraldic devices.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century Spain becomes united through the marriage of Isabella, queen of Castille and Leon, and Ferdinand, king of Aragon. In 1492 Granada, last Moorish stronghold, falls; a few months later Columbus discovers America for the Catholic kings. An era of prosperity and wealth, such as had never fallen to the lot of any country before, now begins and reaches a climax with the rule of Charles V (1519-1556) and Philip II (1556-1598). Of all the arts and crafts, that of the weavers seems to have profited to the greatest extent. Charles

FIG. 2

V, born and brought up at Antwerp, inherited a predilection for tapestries from his Burgundian ancestors; like his great-grandfather, Charles the Bold, he took the precious sets with him on his many journeys. When he made war against the emir of Tunis, Chaireddin Barbarossa, his court painter, Jan Vermeyen, accompanied him and sketched his heroic deeds. The set of the Conquest of Tunis, woven by Willem de Pannemaker at Brussels, has belonged ever since to the most cherished properties of the Spanish Crown; the emperor himself wrote to the weaver to use only the best thread *"quoi quil puisse couter."*

The kings and their court were patrons of the Spanish silk industry which in the sixteenth century flourished in many of the provinces. Fabrics patterned with large and small heraldic devices were in great demand for hangings and liveries. The Italian pomegranate motif mixed well with the Moorish arabesque, and the small patterned fabrics, especially, often show compositions of delicate tracery like filigree work while retaining the angularity of the earlier productions. The lingering influence of the Moorish style can be traced well into the seventeenth century, although during Philip III's rule (1598-1621) six hundred thousand Moriscoes, among them many thousands of expert weavers, were driven from the country.

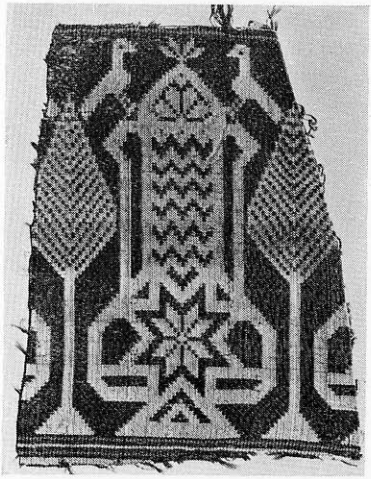


FIG. 3

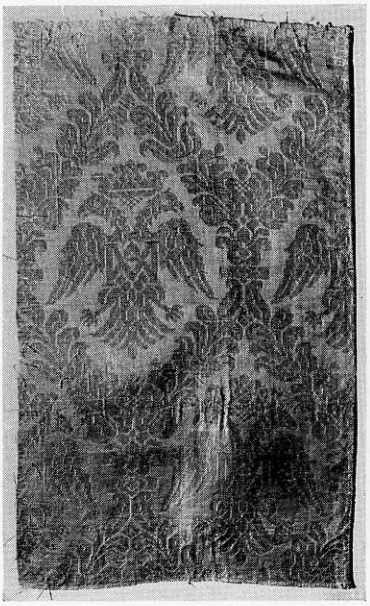


FIG. 4

At the close of the seventeenth and in the eighteenth century the Spanish weavers lose all individuality; their place is usurped by the embroiderer. French influence is paramount during the reign of Philip V, the grandson of Louis XIV (1701-1746), with a distinct revival of the old craft.

The domestic looms all through the centuries produced good linen and wool fabrics with indigenous patterns for the popular trade.

All the different types of design and weaving are well represented in our collection. Chronologically it begins with two fragments found in a bishop's tomb of the twelfth century, at Seo de Urgel, Catalonia. Of greenish-golden silk, they are woven with small diaper patterns and differ so fundamentally from contemporary Hispano-Moresque fabrics that we fell inclined to allot them to a

native workshop which kept up the Gothic-Frankish traditons. Fig. 1 shows a fragment of a polychrome silk damask of the Alhambra style.

Many fragments belong to the Mudéjar style; others illustrate the plateresque style of the sixteenth century. The pomegranate motif occurs in large and small patterns. Brocaded velvets and velvets with small bunches of higher pile dangling from smallish patterns, gold and silver brocades join fabrics which closely imitate embroidery; a group of ecclesiastical and popular embroideries is included and some linen and wool fabrics of the sixteenth to eighteenth century. Fig. 2 is an all-linen fabric with a quite naturalistic pattern of hoopoes on flowery tendrils, in white twill weave on scarlet satin ground. Fig. 3, a silk damask, is a good example of the Mudéjar style, with its highly conventionalized cypress trees flanking a vase with two birds. Fabrics with heraldic devices are well represented: fig. 4, a damask of red silk and gold metal thread, displays the imperial double-headed crowned eagle, bearing a shield with the monogram A M; stylistically it belongs to the earlier part of the sixteenth century, the period of Charles V. Fig. 5, silk damask, shows a type of blazoned fabric for liveries: the armorial devices, lion and swan, are enclosed in ogival compartments formed of two ribbons with jewelled rings and alternate with rosettes and promegranates.

FIG. 5

Fig. 6, an emerald green silk damask patterned with flowers, birds and lambs, is a good example of the influence of French rococo and the tendency to imitate embroideries in woven fabrics: brocaded in silver and gold metal thread, outlined in salmon red silk, we see two little landscape vistas, with shepherdesses and little castles—*châteaux en Espagne*, castles in the air—a fit end for an industry which gave promise of tremendous development and was stifled by human stupidity.

ADELE COULIN WEIBEL.

FIG. 6

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SUPPLEMENT TO BULLETIN OF THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS
VOL. XIII, NO. 6

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MARCH, 1932

EXHIBITIONS

February 18-March 20. Eleventh International Watercolor Exhibition.
February 24-March 20. 15th and 16th Century European Paintings (Colored Reproductions).
February 26-March 30. Picasso's Illustrations of Ovid's Metamorphoses.
March 22-April 4. Detroit Architecture, under auspices Detroit Chapter, American Institute of Architects.

LECTURES

(Tuesday evenings at 8:30)

March 1. "Persian Miniature Painting," by Dr. Mehmet Aga-Oglu, Curator of Near Eastern Art.
March 8. "American Independency—Homer and Eakins," by E. P. Richardson, Educational Secretary.
March 15. Saga and Legend in Gothic Tapestry, by Adele Coulin Weibel, Curator of Textiles.
March 22. "French Painting," by Stewart Dick.
March 29. "Leonardo da Vinci," by Dr. W. R. Valentiner, Art Director.

(Sunday afternoons at 3:30)
Concert by Chamber of Music Society of Detroit,
followed by lecture.

March 6. Concert by Park Congregational Church of Grand Rapids, C. Harold Einecke, Director.
March 13. "Weathercocks—An American Folk Art," by Adele Coulin Weibel, Curator of Textiles.
March 20. "Two Contemporary Masters of Graphic Art—Rivera and Orozco," by Isabel Weadock, Curator of Prints.
March 27. Easter Sunday. No lecture.

(Saturday afternoons at 3:30)

"Art and Culture of the Middle Ages," by Adele Coulin Weibel, Curator of Textiles.

March 5. Reims.
March 12. Gothic Architecture and Sculpture in Germany.
March 19. Bamberg and Naumburg.
March 26. No lecture.
April 2. Romanesque and Gothic Architecture in England.

GALLERY TALKS

(Tuesday afternoons at 2:30 and Friday evenings at 7:30)

March 1 and 4. Modern Galleries.
March 8 and 11. The Art of Sculpture.
March 15 and 18. Portrait Painting.
March 22 and 25. No gallery talk.
March 29-April 5. Textiles.

MUSICALES

(Auditorium, Friday evenings at 8:30)

March 4. Concert under the auspices of the Tuesday Musicale.
March 11. Detroit Quartet, under auspices of Chamber Music Society of Detroit.
March 18. Beethoven Sonatas, by Dr. Mark Gunzberg and associates.
March 25. Civic Opera Chorus, Thaddeus Wronski, Director.