

A TOUR IN A DONKEY-CART

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A Tour in a Donkey-Cart by Frances Jennings & Henry Tonks & Isabel Derby

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FRANCES JENNINGS & HENRY TONKS & ISABEL DERBY

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PLATE 1.

**A TOUR IN A DONKEY-CART
BY FRANCES JENNINGS** ♣ ♣

WITH THIRTY-TWO COLLOTYPE REPRODUCTIONS OF
HER DRAWINGS AND A NOTE BY PROFESSOR HENRY
TONKS AND AN INTRODUCTION BY ISABEL DERBY



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LETTER FROM PROFESSOR TONKS

I AM writing away from the Slade School, so I am unable to give any dates, but I will tell you of a few things I remember of Frances Jennings. She was always difficult to teach, in fact, was unteachable, and I do not think we can take any credit at the Slade for having made her what she was. She had a sense of form as expressed by line more highly developed than in any other draughtsman I have ever met. She drew best when she simply followed the outline, relating one contour to the other without any kind of calculation. If she used shadows, they did not often help her drawing. She was entirely dependent on the model and seemed to have very little power of drawing from memory. The human figure was all that seemed to interest her, and though she would have liked to express all sorts of strange mental experiences, she never seemed to me to succeed. Naked children she chiefly drew, I don't think because she liked them, but because they were more

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easily obtained, and she was able to have two or three posing together, which led to some of her best drawings. I think as far as her drawing went it was done quite easily; she could not have continued working long on any drawing. Her departure from the Slade, the result of a sudden paralysis, was a great disappointment to us there, as we were profoundly interested in her remarkable gift. It is useless to speak of what she might have become, we must make the best of what remains. Her drawings will interest none but the draughtsman, fortunately they are entirely free from sentimentality.

The interesting thing to note, as I hinted above, is that with a mind extraordinarily impressionable to all sorts of mystical influence, her drawings remained direct statements of facts, the result of her own immediate observation; facts stated with a simplicity and often with a grace without a rival.

HENRY TONKS.

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