

**ARCADIAN DAYS;
AMERICAN LANDSCAPES
IN NATURE AND ART**

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Arcadian days; American landscapes in nature and art by W. H. Downes

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BY
W. H. DOWNES



ILLUSTRATED BY A. H. BICKNELL

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GIFT OF

A. F. MORRISON

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TO

“THE GROUP”

OF KINDRED SPIRITS WHO USED TO MEET IN BICKNELL'S
STUDIO TO TALK ABOUT ART, IN AN ATMOSPHERE
OF GOOD FELLOWSHIP AND TOBACCO SMOKE.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN these sketches, which were written out of doors, I have first endeavored to record in appropriate words the impressions caused by the actual landscapes spread out before my eyes, somewhat as the landscape painter would record his impressions in his language. Then I have ventured to recall the works of certain painters whose canvases have been brought to mind by a sight of Nature. It may be considered rash to bring together in this way famous names and some which are almost unknown to the great world; but an art critic should be ready to incur such a risk, if he has any convictions, and surely he may never feel safer than when judging men's works by the standard of Nature.

It would not be the easiest thing in the world to determine which method of suggesting Nature

INTRODUCTION.

is the more difficult, the painter's or the writer's. At best, no one can give more than a hint. Cold types and rebellious pigments alike are inadequate means of expression.

The simplest rustic subjects have seemed the best, because they are the most familiar. It is hoped that some of these sketches may appeal by their truthfulness to the reader's pleasant memories. But the whole value of the work, if it has any value, lies in its tendency, in what it merely hints at, — the great desirability, for instance, of using one's own eyes and of cultivating one's powers of observation; for how much of pleasure and profit this might add to the lives of most people, no matter in what particular sphere of action they may be placed!

We see what we look for. It is best to be on the watch for beauty, and to let none of it escape our vigilance.

W. H. D.

SUTHERLAND ROAD,
BOSTON, April, 1891.