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ART. I.—*A Compendium of Christian Antiquities: being a brief view of the Orders, Rites, Laws, and Customs of the Ancient Church in the Early Ages.* By the Rev. C. S. Henry, A. M. Philadelphia, Joseph Whetham. pp. 332. Svo. 1837.

A PETTY ambition to be recognised as authors is, we fear, a growing vice among Americans. One of the lowest forms in which the passion shows itself, is that of abridgment. Not that abridgment, in itself, is evil; but because the abridger, in the cases now referred to, cannot deny himself the happiness of being thought a *bona fide* author, by that class of readers who confine themselves to title-pages. On the elegant title of the volume now before us there is no intimation that the book is not the offspring of the Rev. C. S. Henry. A very little turning of the leaves, however, suffices to show that it is all from Bingham, and on looking at the preface, we are gravely told, that “it makes no pretension to originality of investigation.” This is not strictly true; for the *pretensions* of a book are to be looked for in the title-page; and besides, there is some pretension in the affected statement that “the work of Bingham has been relied upon, as to facts and authorities—as well as followed

ART. VI.—*Graphics; a Manual of Drawing and Writing, for the use of Schools and Families.* By Rembrandt Peale. Second edition, improved. New York: B. and S. Collins. 1835. pp. 96. 12mo.

THIS is the second edition of a manual, which comes to us recommended by such names as those of Mr. Sully, Professor Morse, Judge Hopkinson, Professor Anthon, Chancellor Kent, Miss Leslie, and the late Dr. Hosack. We are led to notice it as pointing out a path in the field of elementary education somewhat unfrequented, and highly promising. On some points of the system we are not entirely free from doubt, but the manly and liberal tone of the work, and the reputation of the artist from whose pen it proceeds, command our unqualified respect.

On such a subject it is always pleasant to be instructed by a master. To use a favourite expression of Coleridge, Mr. Peale manifestly 'writes down upon his subject,' and his remarks are merely the overflowings of a full mind. Being an artist almost by inheritance, familiarized by frequent visits with the great works of Italy, and for many years in the practice of the art, he gives us directions which awaken far more confidence than those of the ordinary guides to the use of the pencil. It is an additional recommendation, that the book is written with terseness and condensation of style, and without a single dash of egotism. It is a small volume of about one hundred pages, well executed, as to type and illustrations. The characteristic of the system is the position that drawing and writing are branches of the same imitative art, and that the former is the proper introduction to the latter. The general views of the author may perhaps be best learned from his own words:

"Writing is nothing else than drawing the forms of letters. Drawing is little more than writing the forms of objects. Every one that can learn to write is capable of learning to draw; and every one should know how to draw, that can find advantage in writing. The two may be taught together without increasing the task of the learner, provided the teacher understands the right method; which is to habituate the hand to move in all directions, and the eye to judge whether the movements be correct. The art of drawing, therefore, requires a knowledge of the forms and proportions

of objects, and the practice of marking them on a plane surface, as they might be marked on a glass held between the eye and the objects.

“Writing is chiefly acquired by practice, and executed without thought, becoming so mechanical a habit, by constant repetition, that the writer can seldom form his letters but after one fashion. Those persons, therefore, who are capable of diversifying their writing, have learned to draw their letters after different models; and can, with comparative facility, learn to draw the forms of other objects.

“It is worthy of especial remark, that there is no person, however ignorant of drawing, who does not habitually discriminate between the proportions and contours of objects, even in the human countenance, in their most minute variations. This demonstrates the universal accuracy of the eye, and leaves us to conclude that nothing more is required to become draughtsmen, than to analyze those objects, to reason upon their proportional differences, to define them by specific rules, and to acquire, by strict manual exercise, a habit of prompt obedience to the will in the imitation of those contours; as all the facility which is necessary and may be attained in drawing, as in writing, depends upon the habits of motion to which the fingers and wrist may be trained by frequent observations and practice.”

In correspondence with these principles, the author proceeds to give a series of studies, directions, and examples, first in drawing, and then in writing. The analysis of forms is simple and pleasing. The pupil begins with the practice of simple lines, straight and curve, regular and irregular, and is taken through sixteen examples of this kind. Special attention is directed to the means of overcoming the difficulty of perpendicular lines, and oblique lines from the left downwards, and to what the author well calls “fixing the rule and compass in the eye.” In this, as in every part of this manual, we are agreeably impressed with a marked exemption from that artistical pedantry which would tie down the beginner to the necessity of drawing perfect figures, before he advances to practice; a pedantry which deforms many instruction-books, and disheartens many learners.

Next comes the transition from drawing to writing. “The regular course of drawing is here suspended, to introduce a system of writing which is essentially founded on that of drawing, and for which the student must be now prepared. To attempt to write before the eye has become critical of

forms, and the hand can obey the judgment, is only to labour against reason, and to fall into bad habits. The teacher of writing endeavours to guard against these by the force of habit, which, in a degree, answers the purpose; but not with the certainty and charm which encourage such as have been prepared by the elements of drawing. It is time enough then to commence writing, which is of so much importance that its attainment is worthy of every effort; but no effort can be so effectual as one which follows a well grounded study of principles which are the foundation of that as well as so many other arts. Children are usually put to writing too young. They cannot begin to draw too soon. And they should not be permitted to learn to write until they are somewhat prepared for it, which will make it easy and desirable; indeed it is the only rational mode of proceeding, and chiefly advantageous as the eye is taught to judge without hesitation of every kind of line which the hand may be required to execute."

Without the use of figures it would be scarcely possible to render any abstract of this portion intelligible. Let it suffice to express our high admiration of the judicious rules and models here suggested. Especially would we commend the liberality of views with respect to allowable variations in the form and posture of letters, which we have seldom found in teachers of this art. The remainder of the work is occupied with exercises in drawing and writing intermixed. On these we need only remark, that they seem to be exactly such as the system demands, and such as will secure proficiency to those who faithfully use them. There are a few observations of Mr. Peale, on instruction in writing, which express so exactly our own views, that we shall subjoin them in an insulated manner.

"As in drawing, so in writing, it is an error to commence with heavy strokes. Accuracy of form is best attained by light lines; and all the beauties of hairstroke and swell can be afterwards studied, and easily grafted upon the true forms. It is enough to conquer one difficulty at a time; nor is it necessary to compel delicate little fingers to strain in the formation of very large letters in copies, the professed object of which is to teach a small current hand, when a medium size is sufficient for their definition.

"It may be remarked, as advantageous in this manual, that the elegances of copperplates have not been employed, which, both in writing and drawing, frequently deter young people

from attempting to imitate them. Ruder lessons, given with the pencil or the pen, less perfect though they may be, are more within the reach of ordinary abilities. The object here is to teach correct principles and a good honest practice, a medium common-sense course, which may enable the student afterwards to acquire, by self-directed efforts, more varied refinements and elaborate excellencies.

“Since the great purpose of writing is to be understood, simplicity of form, with certainty and facility of execution, are more desirable than curious and bewildering flourishes; yet every elegance in the fashions of writing may be ultimately cultivated by those who have a fancy for such refinements. It appears, therefore, to be of primary importance in seeking the power and advantages of writing, to divest it of all needless incumbrances, to articulate every letter distinctly—and, as in music, to understand the air before attempting any variations.

“The course which is usually pursued in learning to write, enjoining the absolute necessity, undeviatingly from the first stroke to the last, of giving the exact swell and hair stroke to every letter, greatly retards the progress of the learner, whose first and chief attention should be directed to the forms and proportions of letters. Besides, as every person’s experience shows, the regular and alternate succession of hair-stroke and swell, which has been acquired with so much labour at the copy-book, is almost entirely incompatible with that facility which the business of life requires; and the rapidity, which is often subsequently practised, is attained by abstaining from the effort to swell, except in a few letters, which serve to give some force and effect to the page. Is it not reasonable, therefore, so to instruct the writer, that he shall have nothing to unlearn? And to obtain the essential use of writing before any attempts be made at the embellishment of it? The style of writing which is taught in large hand copies, is seldom wanted, and may much more easily be learned after the student is able to draw the letters correctly, and write them fluently; which depends less upon the motion of the joints of the fingers and thumb, than upon that of the wrist and elbow, with an occasional exception.

“Although facility can be gained only by practice, yet to practise carelessly or incorrectly is to labour in obtaining bad habits. Every repetition of a line or copy should be made with the spirit and resolution to perform it better, or it should not be done at all. It is therefore seldom advisable

to write at one sitting more than two or three lines of the same copy. The custom of filling up a page with one dull theme, always proves itself to be injurious or useless, when the last lines are worse than the first or second—which is generally the case.”

If to any reader we should appear to be dwelling unduly on a trifling subject, let us make the avowal that we regard nothing as unimportant which lies among the foundations of all sound education. Before leaving Mr. Peale's little volume, we must take occasion to say, that his whole manner of delivering his opinions is at once so modest, concise, polished, and original, that we feel persuaded he would do well to let the public hear from him more at length, upon such topics of the arts as might draw forth richer results of his long experience.

It has been usual to rank drawing among the mere *accomplishments* of education, that is, to regard it as an elegant and ornamental art, but altogether supererogatory. It is high time that so gross a misconception should be dislodged from the public mind. Drawing should enter into every plan of education, as being a useful and elementary art. ‘Writing is nothing else than drawing the forms of letters. Drawing is little more than writing the forms of objects.’ The remarks of Pestalozzi are quoted by Mr. Peale, and must carry conviction with them.

“Our artists have no elements of measure; but by long practice they acquire a greater or less degree of precision in seizing and imitating outlines, by which the necessity of measuring is superseded. Each of them has his own peculiar method of proceeding, which, however, none of them is able to explain. Hence it is, that if he comes to teach others, he leaves his pupils to grope in the dark, even as he did himself, and to acquire, by immense exertion and great perseverance, the same sort of instinctive feeling of proportions. This is the reason why art has remained exclusively in the hands of a few privileged individuals, who had talents and leisure sufficient to pursue that circuitous road. And yet the art of drawing ought to be an universal acquirement, for the simple reason, that the faculty for it is universally inherent in the constitution of the human mind. This can, at all events, not be denied by those who admit that every individual born in a civilized country has a claim to instruction in reading and writing. For let it be remembered, that a taste for measuring and drawing is invariably manifesting itself in

the child, without any assistance of art, by a spontaneous impulse of nature; whereas the task of learning to read and write is, on account of its toilsomeness, so disagreeable to children, that it requires great art, or great violence, to overcome the aversion to it which they almost generally evince; and that, in many instances, they sustain a greater injury from the means adopted in gaining their attention, and enforcing their application, than can ever be repaired by the advantages accruing to them from the possession of those two mechanical acquirements. In proposing, however, the art of drawing, as a general branch of education, it is not to be forgotten, that I consider it as a means of leading the child from vague perceptions to clear ideas."

The phrenologists have an organ allotted to the cognizance of *Form*. We have all observed the difference of men's apprehensions with regard to figure, and other accidents of visible things, and also the high degree of cultivation which may be given to this power, as in the case of all delicate artizans. This faculty of observation cannot be neglected with impunity, and it should be a chief part of juvenile education to develope and train it. There is no species of discipline which will so effectually do this as the art of Drawing. There is a new sense of things communicated by the practice of design. We never so fully learn a figure, as when we contemplate it with a view to reproduce it. This is perpetually taking place in the use of the pencil. Such of us as have not forgotten the impressions of the drawing-school, know that after our earliest attempts at regular imitation, we were at once drawn to the eager examination of every outline in nature. The exercise is highly important, even without reference to practical utility. Between the man who contemplates nature with the ordinary, indiscriminating gaze, and him who traces and scans the lines and shades of the whole scene, there is almost the same difference, as between the clown who sees the characters of the printed pages, and the scholar who recognises in them letters and words: it is the difference between *looking* and *reading*.

This admits of an exemplification in the case of geography. Time was, when geography was taught chiefly by getting sentences by rote out of a book; maps were few and imperfect and less regarded than the text-book. The state of things is altered, if not wholly, yet in good measure. The map and the globe are considered as the grand source of information. Now in the study of geography, the learner

would be perfect, if he could carry a complete map in his head; and he is best who approaches most nearly to this. If we were desirous of putting to the test the knowledge of any one as to the geography of Germany, for instance, we should not be content to ask him for the latitude and longitude of Munich, Dresden, Leipsick, and Frankfort; but we should call upon him to describe with pen or pencil the trapezium formed by these four great cities. In like manner we should cause him to delineate the precise courses of the great rivers, singly and comparatively. He who can do this, is so far a geographer: and no one can do this without cultivating just that kind of observation which is educed by the practice of drawing. Hence the use of outline maps, and of black-board exercises in map-drawing. The old-fashioned mapping, wherein the girl or boy slavishly copied a given map, is by no means desirable; the pupil should be in the daily practice of delineating from memory, on a large surface, and in bold outline, every country which he pretends to learn. Why do boys find the geography of *Italy* comparatively easy? Because it resembles a *boot*. Hence they carry in their mind the inflections of the coast. But if they were accustomed to catch the outline of every country, as drawing forces them to do, they would find a similar assistance in all. In the work before us, Goethe is quoted as saying that "we talk too much and draw too little," and that "persons who never see attentively, and whose eyes convey but dim images to the mind, never become good observers and seldom close reasoners." This brought to our mind the descriptive writings of this great poet, and we reflected with pleasure on the means by which he probably improved his wonderful faculty of minute and graphic description. The reader of Goethe's works remembers his scenes, as actually beheld, rather than described. We shall add a passage from his autobiography, which happens to strike us as illustrative of his great nicety and care in this particular. "As I had been accustomed from my youth to look upon every landscape as a picture, I was naturally led to seek some way for fixing in my mind a permanent impression of the momentary view. Interruptions and haste conspired to render necessary a strange method. No sooner had I seized upon an interesting object, and indicated its outline on my paper by the most general touches, than I began to fill up *with words* the details, which time forbade me to represent with the pencil. By this means, I gained so intimate a presence of such views, that if

afterwards I had occasion to introduce the locality in a poem or a narrative, the whole scene passed before my memory, and stood at my command."* Nothing could more fully point out the sort of observation which is cultivated by the arts of design.

The art of drawing is almost indispensable to a teacher of mathematics or the natural sciences. There is in the university of Paris a celebrated professor of comparative anatomy, who is said to owe much of his popularity to the ease and accuracy with which he executes drawings on the black-board, in gigantic outline. The same facility is in a certain degree important to the student, that he may carry away with him exact copies of the numerous figures which illustrate his course. If space were allowed, we could introduce numerous facts, showing the value of drawing in various branches of British manufacture.

There is one consideration which has been too much overlooked in estimating the value of this art; it is that the introduction of visible illustrations into books is more common than it has ever been in any age of the world; and therefore it is in the same proportion desirable that every author should be able to avail himself of the important auxiliary. The wonderful improvements in wood engraving, and the cheapness of lithography, have united to bring pictorial embellishments within the reach of the poorest readers. We can scarcely regard a man as fully competent to be a traveller, particularly in a new field, who knows nothing of drawing. How different are the impressions and recollections of such a one, from those of a Bartlett or a Catherwood! When we consider that our missionaries are penetrating into every region of the earth, and are transmitting to us from accounts of foreign and almost undiscovered countries, accounts and narratives, superior in fidelity and fulness to any thing the world has had before; coming as they do from veracious and educated men, usually residing in the lands which they describe; we cannot but lament that so few of them should have acquired even the elements of drawing.

In all that has preceded, we have not even touched upon the art of design as one of the fine arts: being desirous to rest our little argument on a safe foundation from which it could not be pushed by the most resolute or cynical utilitarian.

* Goethe's Works, vol. xlviii.