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MATREYA
CHINESE. 520 C. E.
GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. EDESEL B. FORD

MAITREYA

"In the first year of Jeng Guang, the tenth month and the twenty-seventh day, I, Fu Ling-du, on behalf of the parents of seven generations (who have passed on), for the family now living, and for all infinite creation, reverently cast this image of Maitreya, and offer in sacrifice incense and flowers, hoping that the entirety of living creatures, passing through Maitreya's three stages of transformation, will quickly become buddhas."

So runs, in the words of the excellent translation of Mr. Arthur W. Hummel, Chief of the Division of Chinese Literature of the Library of Congress, the inscription engraved on the back of the pedestal of the Chinese bronze figure recently presented to the Museum by Mr. and Mrs. Edsel B. Ford. The information it contains is specific as regards the donor, the date, the identity of the image and the purpose of its making. Fu Ling-du we shall have to set down, for want of other information, as a pious and filial person. The date of the dedication is the equivalent of 22 November, 520, in our calendar. Maitreya is commonly referred to as the Buddha of the Future.

Known in Chinese as Mi-lo Fo, in Japanese as Miroku, Maitreya is generally regarded in Northern Buddhism as the successor of the historic Buddha Shakyamuni. His day is yet to come and it will be a day comparable to that of the second coming of the Christ, with this difference, that while Christ's coming will bring universal judgment, Maitreya's will bring universal salvation and felicity. Death for the Buddhist is an entrance into a temporary condition of penance and adjustment, a kind of purgatory, to be followed by rebirth on a plane in accordance with the deserts of

the individual. Progressive elevation, until a state of freedom from mortal existence of buddhahood is reached, is both the hope and the destiny of every life, and the speedy attainment of this objective is naturally desirable. Thus it is obvious that the prayer inscribed on our figure is specifically purposeful, and directed toward a divinity competent to assist effectively.

A similar prayer, including the definite hope that the ancestors of seven generations might early be reborn in heaven, occurs in the inscription on the painting of the year 797 from Dunhuang in the collection of the Museum.¹ The idea of the seven generations relates to the Indian origin of Buddhism; seven is not an especially notable numeral in characteristically Chinese lore. Another piece in our collection to which this figure may be compared is the large seventh century bronze image, with hands in similar gestures, identified as a Maitreya².

The present figure is of gilt bronze and has a total height, including the pedestal, which is of one piece with it, of 17¾ inches. The pedestal is an open platform supported on four legs, on the top of which is a lotus. The flower is not inverted, as the form is usually described, but has the petals wide open and spread downwards to reveal the seed pod, on which, in the very heart of the bloom, the Buddha stands. The slender figure is enveloped in flowing garments that seem to flutter as in a breeze, so that the silhouette from the front is that of a tall triangle with serrate edges. From the side the form is thin and rather flat, emphasizing the relief quality of the modelling. Three long robes may be distinguished by their several hems. An ample mantle falls

¹B. March, "A Tun-huang Buddhist Painting," *Bulletin D. I. A.* X, 109, May, 1929.

²B. March, *Bulletin D. I. A.* XI, 30, November, 1929. "Detroit's Bronze Maitreya," *Art in America* XVIII, 144, April, 1930.

over the shoulders and the right end is crossed over the front of the body to hang from the left forearm. The back of the image has an open cavity in which were deposited such symbols as might endow it with the internal organs necessary to spiritual vitality and efficacy. The remnants of two projecting lugs indicate the original existence of a glory.

The right hand is upheld in the gesture of reassurance and the left is turned outwards in the act of dispensing charity. The head is tilted slightly forward, and

on the face is an expression that is sweetly tender yet aloof.

In every way the Maitreya represents the style of the maturity of the Northern Wei dynasty, under which many of China's finest and most spiritual sculptures were produced. The serrate outline is typical and may be observed in most of the pieces of the period, notably in a figure very similar to ours in the University Museum in Philadelphia,³ and in the Suiko sculptures of Japan as well. Also characteristic is the incorporeal quality of the body and the expression of the face.

It can scarcely be too often emphasized that men make gods in their own images, that the deities directly reflect the minds of the makers. Thus, during the Wei period Buddhism was making its great migration into China. It was fostered with the zeal of earnest missionaries, and its adherents gave to it the fresh enthusiasm of new converts. The gods were veritably imminent and the makers of figures wrought in the shadow of the divine. The sense of the immediacy of the deities is apparent in their representations, in which the presence of the spirit is keenly felt, while the human form is little more than a convenient symbol. The natural result is the establishment of a prevailing style, reflecting the social mind of the period, and its influence is seen in even non-Buddhistic figures such as the two Wei tomb guardians in our collection.⁴

The figure which has now, through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Ford, found a permanent sanctuary in Detroit, is one of the most noted of small Chinese sculptures. Formerly in the collection of Dr. Friederich Sarré of Berlin, it was for some years exhibited in the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst. It was included in the exhibition of Chinese art held by the Société des Amis de l'Art Asiatique in



³O. Sirén, *Chinese Sculpture*, London, 1925, Pl. 158.

⁴B. March, "Two Wei Dynasty Tomb Guardians," *Bulletin D. I. A.* XI, 97, April, 1930.

Amsterdam in 1925,⁵ and in 1929 it was a distinguished contribution to the exhibition of Chinese art arranged by the Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst and the Preussische Akademie der Künste in Berlin.⁶ In the autumn of 1929 it was brought to the United States for the Loan Exhibition of Chinese Art in the Detroit Institute of Arts.⁷ In addition to its publication in the cata-

logues of these several special exhibitions it has been described by Cohn in *Kunst und Künstler*⁸ and included by Glaser in his *Ostasiatische Plastik*.⁹

In view of the pious wish of its inscription, we may be permitted to express the hope that it will continue to bring blessings to all who come within its range of influence.

BENJAMIN MARCH.

THE WEDDING DANCE BY PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER

Pieter Bruegel the Elder is one of the great names in the history of art. In the second half of the sixteenth century, a period which lies like a lowland between the two high peaks of fifteenth and seventeenth century Dutch art, his personality towers aloft, separating the old epoch from the new. Primitive characteristics are still in evidence in his flat, picture-bookish art, but in his bold, realistic style, which breaks away completely from the church-ruled art of the Middle Ages, he is the beginner of the modern age and a point of departure for the great humorous art of Holland in the seventeenth century,—from Frans Hals to Jan Steen. Not only is the national Dutch painting of the seventeenth century almost inconceivable without Bruegel, the Flemings also—particularly Rubens and Brouwer—are much indebted to him.

In Bruegel's youth there reigned in the Netherlands that mannered, Italianized style which signified the end of the great primitive art of the fifteenth century and which was a sign of the inner weakness of the Netherlandish painters,

who, owing to the lack of native inventiveness, allowed themselves to be carried away to an emulation of the dazzling appearance of the art heavens of Italy. Pieter Bruegel was the pupil of Pieter Coeck van Aelst, who was, in turn, a pupil of Barend van Orley, and through him comes in contact with the art of Raphael, after whom Orley's art was patterned. In a tapestry in the possession of the Museum (large hall) for which Pieter Coeck made the cartoons, we can see this Raphaelesque style which, with its northern mannerisms, has become almost a caricature. How ocean-wide on the other hand is the distance which separates the art of Pieter Bruegel from that of Raphael, to whom his teacher did homage! What of the South can be perceived in the types of the newly acquired *Dance of the Peasants*, in the laughableness of their demeanour, in the grotesque appearance of their costumes, in their unlovely yet candid faces; what in the scenery of the village, or the homely landscape with its oak trees and far-stretching fields? Unaided, Bruegel has accomplished this

⁵H. F. E. Visser, *The Exhibition of Chinese Art, Amsterdam, 1925*, The Hague, 1926, Pls. 26, 27.

⁶Catalogue No. 248.

⁷Catalogue No. 66.

⁸W. Cohn, "Maitreya," *Kunst und Künstler* XXI, 69 ff. (1922-23).

⁹C. Glaser, *Ostasiatische Plastik*, Berlin, 1925. Figs. 29, 30, 31.



THE WEDDING DANCE BY PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER
ANTWERP (1525/30—1569)

break with the South at a time when the "official" art of the North was still in bondage to the Italians.

It is significant that when the young Bruegel, after the custom of the times, had been sent to the South to study, he brought back with him a sketchbook filled, not with drawings from the antique and the masters of the Renaissance, but with a series of landscape sketches which show that he had especially sought out the mountains, both on the way to Italy and in Italy itself, and was the first to observe them with northern eyes in all their real beauty. These drawings and graphic sheets, which were subsequently supplemented by studies in his own land, are the first representations of pure landscape in Netherlandish art, already quite in the spirit of the landscape painters of the period of Van Goyen and Jacob Ruisdael.

After his return to Antwerp in the

year 1553—he may then have been about twenty-five years old—he began his career with designs for engravers, in which he depicted, with a humor unknown in his day, representations of the life of the common people, to illustrate proverbs, or clothed them in allegorical or mythological garments. It was only at the end of the decade that he executed those paintings of large format whose acquisition is the aim of every significant collection and which have secured his fame as one of the greatest painters of all times. As he died in 1569, the number of his paintings is very limited, not more than thirty-five being known—about the same number as those of Vermeer. But the imitations of these compositions, first of all by the artist's own sons, especially Pieter Bruegel the Younger, are countless, and are seen so often in the galleries that at least the themes of the elder Bruegel are known

to all visitors of public collections, even though in insipid form. The greatest number of his original works are preserved in the Vienna gallery, owing to the fact that two of the Hapsburgs, Emperor Rudolph II and Ferdinand II, took particular delight in Bruegel's masterpieces. Most of the other great museums, such as the London National Gallery, the Louvre, the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, the Munich Pinakothek, the Brussels Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum, have only in the last decades been able to acquire even one example of his art, and then with much difficulty. The painting acquired by the Art Institute has been known through several school copies, one of which the Antwerp Museum secured last year through the Spiridon auction. It is one of the masterpieces of the artist's last years (dated 1565), during which time, as Dr. M. J. Friedländer has pointed out, in his excellent book on Bruegel, his style developed its finest *malerische* quality.

In the choice of the subject itself, it is a happy creation of the artist, more unified in its setting than many of the earlier paintings, in which at times numerous episodes of different sorts are represented next to each other; and in its realistic depiction of a peasant festival, it conforms more to the artist's own temperament than do some of his religious representations, and stands closer, too, to our own modern sympathies than the allegorical scenes. In the strong rhythmic movement of the seven dancing couples, Bruegel's powerful individuality expresses itself in a marvelous manner. In the history of painting of the last century, for instance in that of England or America, one may search

long before he will find artists who have attempted what Bruegel has; and if we occasionally meet among the illustrators a related inventive genius, it is still a considerable step from the illustrator to the painter of great style, which Bruegel was.

And along with the spirited feeling, what order in the composition, in which the mass of more than one hundred and twenty-five figures are held closely together! While the groups of dancing couples insert themselves like a wedge into the depth of the planes of the picture, the edges of this triangle are lined by standing figures which become ever smaller as they recede into the distant landscape background; at the corners in the foreground large single figures form a clear conclusion and at the same time a *repoussoir* to the picture. Unity is also created by the simplicity of the color combinations, in which the same warm cinnabar is distributed in broad planes over the costumes, contrasted with the white and blue-green which is placed against the warm brown which forms the ground tone of the picture. But were we to go into the matter of the charming details, the varied types and their droll deportment, which have made the pictures of Bruegel among the most popular in the painting galleries of the world, a special chapter would have to be devoted to the description. All in all, we may say that the acquisition of this painting belongs among the most significant of our Museum and fills one of the greatest gaps which exist between the representation of primitive Netherlandish art and that of the time of Rubens and Rembrandt.

W. R. VALENTINER.

AN ITALIAN WOOD MADONNA OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

While the Gothic period of Italian sculpture is rather well represented in



MADONNA AND CHILD
ITALIAN XIII CENTURY
GIFT OF MR. AND MRS. EDEL B. FORD

our Museum—Nino Pisano's marble Virgin being, indeed, the outstanding piece of plastic art in the entire European section!—the preceding Romanesque phase of this art could thus far be studied only in a few and scarcely very impressive examples. This gap has now been considerably narrowed by the acquisition of the large wood statue of a Virgin Enthroned which came to the Museum as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Edsel B. Ford.

Although during the Romanesque age, that is, from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, European art and culture were unquestionably centered in the North, above all in France and Germany, Italy, too, made her contributions, especially in the field of architecture. As to sculpture, it was the north of the peninsula, Lombardy and the Emilia, that produced the most prominent schools. We have here, at the beginning of the twelfth century, the masters Wiligelmus and Nicolaus, with their series of reliefs on the façades of the cathedrals of Modena, Cremona, Piacenza and Ferrara,—works that are often technically crude, yet strangely fascinating in their primitive sincerity and expressive power. To the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the following century belongs Benedetto Antelami with his atelier, active for the most part in Parma and Borgo S. Donino. Benedetto's glory is based chiefly on his sculptural work on the Baptistery of Parma, of whose splendid architecture, too, he seems to have been the designer. His style, obviously revealing his knowledge of contemporary French creations, is characterized by a monumentality, a clarity of conception and a technical perfection far excelling that of his predecessors.

Sculpture in central and, still more, in southern Italy, reflects the fact that

these territories had for centuries been the battleground of the most heterogeneous peoples from the north, south and east. Byzantine influences prevail, but Norman and even Saracen strains are also distinguishable. Tuscany takes a firm lead only comparatively late, launching toward the end of the thirteenth century, through the great Pisan masters, Niccolo and Giovanni, that development which was to give a glorious start to the entire plastic art of Italy. At the height of the Romanesque period in the twelfth century, however, the crude sculptural works done in this part of the country still stand in striking contrast to the splendid creations of architecture erected there, with decorations consisting mainly of elaborate mosaics and marble encrustations. Then, at the end of the century, a closer contact was established with the flourishing sculptural school of northern Italy—and indirectly with that of France,—through the so-called "Comacini," wandering stone cutters and sculptors chiefly from Como, the most prominent of whom was Guido da Como, active in Lucca and other Tuscan places in the first half of the thirteenth century. Shortly afterwards, in 1260, Niccolo Pisano completed his famous masterpiece, the pulpit in the Baptistery of Pisa, the first conscious and successful attempt in western Europe at a revival of the formal ideals of the classical antique.

Stylistically, the newly acquired statue belongs, without any doubt, to a period prior to Niccolo. Though slightly restored—some of the fingers and parts of the polychromy are modern—it is altogether in such a good state of preservation that a more exact establishing of school and date is feasible. The Virgin Enthroned, in strict frontality, with the folds of her garment symmetrically arranged, presents, as it were, to the worshippers, the young Saviour, who, seated in an erect, unchildlike manner on His mother's lap, raises His right

hand in benediction. This type, the most solemn and "unearthly" western art has ever created for the eternal theme, can be found in several European countries at the period of the fully developed Romanesque style, for instance in France and Germany around the middle of the twelfth century. It was influenced, most likely, by Byzantine models. The earliest example from Italy is, to my knowledge, the large wood-carved Madonna in the Berlin Museum, a signed work by Martinus, presbyter of Borgo S. Sepolcro, dated 1199. From about the same time is the magnificent Virgin in Santa Maria Maggiore at Alatri, likewise of wood and entirely gilded. Most closely related to our statue is the wooden Madonna which was acquired some years ago by the Museo Nazionale (Bargello) in Florence from a church in Umbria. Here we not only find the facial types of Mother and Child rendered in a very similar manner, but the same head covering, also peculiarly shaped, as if starched. The form of the throne, too, resembles that of the Detroit piece.

We may therefore conclude that our Madonna also comes from Umbria, or, at any rate, from a part of central Italy in close proximity to this province. The date of the Florence Madonna is not known. The figure is certainly later than the above mentioned pieces from Berlin and Alatri and can be placed, by comparison with other datable works, especially from Tuscany, in the middle of the thirteenth century. The Detroit statue, too, with its more plastic forms and the more realistic rendering of its details, represents a style advanced considerably beyond that of the two examples from about 1200. Since, on the other hand, it shows as yet no traces whatsoever of the Pisan style, which prevailed at the end of the century in most parts of central Italy, we might date it rather safely in the decades about or shortly after the middle of the thirteenth century. WALTER HEIL.



PORTRAIT OF HORATIO WOOD
THOMAS EAKINS
AMERICAN 1844-1916

A PORTRAIT BY THOMAS EAKINS

We are fortunate in having secured for our permanent collection before it became too late, a fine and characteristic portrait by Thomas Eakins. With the gift of thirty-one works from the brush of this artist recently made by Mrs. Eakins and Mary Adeline Williams to the Philadelphia Museum, the city where practically his entire life work was done, and with the growing recognition of his significance among American artists, it

will be increasingly difficult to find available examples of his work.

The paintings and sculptures which were presented some fifteen years after his death formed the nucleus of an exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum in March, 1930, of more than sixty of his works—an exhibit which revealed a sturdy vitality rarely met with among American artists; and the part which he subsequently played in the triumvirate

of Eakins, Homer and Ryder at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in April, is a further intimation of the place which will be accorded him in American art annals.

Since his death in 1916, the appreciation of the art of Thomas Eakins has been slowly growing in public esteem. The reason for the deferred recognition which is now coming to him, is not far to seek. All his life he was walled in by a restricted environment. Even within the limits of the city of Philadelphia where his life work was begun and completed, his remarkable abilities were overlooked by all except the students of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and of the Philadelphia Art Students League (which he founded), who came under his influence and who caught something of the power of his individuality; for Mr. Eakins was a modest man with little interest in the outside world and his work was not shown to a large public. Then, too, he was constantly absorbed in subject matter that was so intensely local and commonplace that for the most part it failed to attract the attention of his contemporaries even in his native city.

Born July 25, 1844, he was the son of Benjamin Eakins, an old-fashioned writing master. Like most art students of his day, after his preliminary training in Philadelphia, he went abroad in the fall of 1866 to study in Paris under Gérome, Bonnat and Dumont. Upon his return to Philadelphia he studied anatomy at the Jefferson Medical College, and in 1875 his famous "Clinic of Dr. Samuel Gross" was completed as a result of this experience. This picture, portraying a purely local incident, is executed with an astonishing exactness; the figures are well placed in space; there is a fine sculptural quality in the rendering of the forms, and the portraits are meticulously carried out; yet, how little it was appreciated even by those who were participants, is shown in the fact that it

was at first refused by the Jefferson Medical College and was later purchased for the modest sum of three hundred dollars. This lack of appreciation must have given Eakins the first glimpse of the solitary and lonely road he was to travel. To do without the acclaim of his fellowmen he must have had a conviction that was impregnable.

His approach as revealed in the *Clinic of Dr. Gross* is typical of his whole life work. If he painted oarsmen on the river, a life class gathered about a nude model, a group at a prize fight, or the innumerable portraits of his close and intimate acquaintances, his attitude was always the same. He shows an engrossing absorption in the subject before him, yet in his single-minded effort to portray the character of his sitter with reality, he unconsciously imparts something of his own personality. For the most part, his sitters were men and women with whom he came in frequent contact in his daily routine. They were neighbors, and in his portrayal of them this relationship is feelingly suggested, even though his sitters were unaware of it. He paints them not only as he sees them but as he knows them. For this reason his portraits did not always please, and many of the best were still in his possession at the time of his death: portraits of fellow artists; of physicians whom he had known intimately; of musicians whom he had sketched in the act of performance; of his father, who as "The Writing Master," is perpetuated in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; and of other members of his own and his wife's family, including the strong portrait of his father-in-law, William MacDowell. With the care and precision of a biologist he probed for the character of his friends and neighbors, for the human side that he saw in them. He was so little concerned with monetary reward that he seldom made any business arrangement with his sitter in advance, and some-

times when those who posed for him were offered their portraits as gifts, they did not even bother to carry them away.

His was a simple life, devoid of shams and artificialities and scorning social pretenses. He was a man of such strong conviction that the changing styles in painting which followed one another in quick succession at the end of the nineteenth century, swayed him not at all. He plumbed the depths of the familiar with an assurance and a concentration that wrested from it an amazing reality, and as we look at his work today we see that it is a strong commentary on American life of a not particularly attractive period. Though the people whom he painted in their commonplace surroundings were not flattered by his conception of them, as we see them through the lapse of a few years they are absolutely real. Eakins, like many great artists of other times, has given us so human an interpretation of his surroundings, and the subjects he portrays are so intensely local, that they become of universal interest.

The Portrait of Dr. Horatio Wood secured for our museum is rich in the qualities for which Eakins is noted. This bearded physician is seated at his mahogany desk in a sombre-carpeted room

with heavy golden-hued hangings; he is clothed in a dark blue velvet jacket, black trousers and shoes. On the table are seen several volumes of books in varicolored bindings, yellow, green, and red, together with a manuscript which lies before him. In the immediate foreground on the floor, additional books in colorful bindings are to be seen. The picture possesses an uncompromising insight into the personality of this noted physician and scientist and at the same time is rather more colorful in its detail than many of the paintings left by the artist.

Dr. Wood was a well known character about Philadelphia. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1862, he was for a time Professor of Botany at his Alma Mater and from 1875 to 1901 was clinical professor of nervous diseases. He was also president of the College of Physicians from 1870 to 1873, and was made a member of the National Academy of Science in 1879. In addition to his general practice he was a distinguished author of medical subjects and had a degree conferred upon him by Yale University in 1889. It is as the scientific author working on his manuscript that Eakins has portrayed him.

CLYDE H. BURROUGHS.

CALENDAR OF LECTURES AND EXHIBITIONS

EXHIBITIONS

- October 21-November 23. Exhibition of Mohammedan Decorative Arts.
 October 15-November 15. International Exhibition of Lithography and Wood Engravings.
 November 25-December 21. Contemporary Japanese Painting.

SUNDAY AFTERNOONS

Concerts by the Chamber Music Society of Detroit at 3:30 P. M. every Sunday will be followed by lectures by members of the staff.

November 2. "Mohammedan Rugs and Textiles," by Adele C. Weibel, Curator of Textiles.

November 9. "The Revival of Print Making," by Charles Barker, Etcher.

November 16. "Egyptian Magic," by E. P. Richardson, Educational Secretary.

November 23. "Last Judgment," by Adele C. Weibel, Curator of Textiles.

November 30. "A Gentleman of Spain, Velasquez," by Marion Leland, Museum Instructor.

REGULAR GALLERY TALKS

(Every Tuesday afternoon at 4:00 and Friday evening at 7:30)

November 4 and 7. The classic world: Greek and Roman galleries.

November 11 and 14. Early Christian art: Early Christian and Italian Gothic rooms.

November 18 and 21. The rise of a new world: Romanesque and Gothic galleries.

November 25 and 28. A Venetian palace room.

During special exhibitions there will be a gallery talk on the exhibit every Wednesday afternoon at 2:00.

TUESDAY EVENING LECTURES AND MUSICAL PROGRAMS

November 4. Lecture and recital by Frank Bishop, Curator of Music, "Bach."

November 18. Lecture and recital by Frank Bishop, Curator of Music, "Mozart."

November 25. Lecture by Benjamin March, Curator of Asiatic Art, "The Painting of Japan."

OTHER MUSICAL EVENTS

Friday, November 14. Concert by the Madrigal Club of Detroit, 8:30 P. M.

EXHIBITIONS

In conjunction with the Exhibition of Mohammedan Art, a series of photographic reproductions of architectural monuments of India, Persia, Turkestan, Turkey, Egypt, and other Islamic countries, is being shown in the large exhibition court on the ground floor. In the textile department can be found a special showing of Islamic textile fragments, most of them dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

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The Loan Exhibition of Contemporary Japanese Painting which will open on the evening of November 25 was ar-

ranged in Japan by Mr. T. Hori especially for the Detroit Institute of Arts. Thirty-eight screens and hanging scrolls (*kakemono*), all pieces which have been exhibited in important shows in Japan during the last two years, will give a good representation of the work of the followers of the Araki school, who are especially noted today for their bird and flower painting. On the evening of the opening, Benjamin March, Curator of Asiatic Art, will introduce the exhibition and inaugurate the Tuesday Evening Lecture Course for this season with a talk on "The Painting of Japan."