

**VIEWS AND  
REVIEWS: ESSAYS IN  
APPRECIATION. ART**

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Views and Reviews: Essays in Appreciation. Art by W. E. Henley

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**W. E. HENLEY**

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AND REVIEWS  
ESSAYS  
IN APPRECIATION

By W. E. HENLEY

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ART



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1902  
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TO  
ROBERT, LORD WINDSOR  
THESE ESSAYS  
IN THE APPRECIATION  
OF AN ART HE PRACTISES  
AND LOVES

W. E. H.

WORKING, *January 1902.*





## PREFATORY

*To hold opinions and state conclusions about an art whose technical processes are strange, and whose practice is impossible: this, it has ever seemed to me, is to take oneself more seriously than he may do that would sit well with posterity. And yet, humanum est errare: to hold views, and to publish them, is human; and in this bookling I confess myself as naturally given as the rest. Indeed, I have taken not a little pleasure in the work of recovering and presenting its materials from the several volumes in which they were dissembled; for, to be plain, I have seen little to change, and more than once, as in the case of the living Rodin and the dead Charles Kesne, I have found myself revising stuff which has so much the trick of to-day, as to seem commonplace and old. Yet was it written near a dozen years ago, and, at the time of writing, sounded alike violent and new and singular. In the same way I see no reason for mitigating what I wrote of Corot and Courbet, of Meissonier and Delacroix, of Rousseau and Vollon, of Monticelli and Rossetti, Reynolds and Gainsborough, Constable and Millet and the brothers Maris. It is not all the truth I*

*know; but I believe that it is mostly by way of being true, and I pass it on for what it is worth. Frankly, I think it is worth something: whether little or much is not for me to say. If I mistake, and it be naught (like the Knight's pancakes), at least I may claim to have read few books into my pictures, to have done my best to keep my painting more or less unlettered, to have proffered my conclusions, such as they are, fairly well purged of sentiment. So did not Hazlitt, nor did Ruskin; and if it must be that I fail with these, I doubt not (such is the vanity of Man) that I shall take a sour pleasure in reflecting that, be things as they may, my failure is not on all-fours with theirs.*

*It remains to add that what is hereafter set forth is selected from (1) the 'Catalogue' (1888) of that Loan Collection of French and Dutch Pictures (the first of its kind done in these Islands) which, thanks to my dear dead friend, Robert Hamilton-Bruce, makes memorable the Edinburgh International Exhibition of 1886; (2) the 'Century of Artists' (1889), prepared by Messrs. MacLhose as a Memorial of the Glasgow Exhibition in 1888; (3) the little 'Catalogue of a Loan Collection of Pictures by the Great French and Dutch Romanticists of this Century,' prepared for the Messrs. Dowdeswell in 1889; and (4) the 'Sir Henry Raeburn,' published by the Royal Association for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in Scotland in 1890. The Keene and the Rodin date from the same year, in the May and June of which they were*