

of the later Middle Ages, when the love for illuminated manuscripts had spread from Greece, in the East, through southern and western lands into the Frankish monarchy, among the Anglo-Saxons and the inhabitants of the Netherlands. It is, therefore, a fact of no slight importance for the history of modern art, that "the celebrated brothers Hubert and Johann van Eyck belonged essentially to a school of miniature painters, which, since the last half of the fourteenth century, attained to a high degree of perfection in Flanders."\*

The historical paintings of the brothers Van Eyck present us with the first instances of carefully-executed landscapes. Neither of them ever visited Italy, but the younger brother, Johann, enjoyed the opportunity of seeing the vegetation of Southern Europe when, in the year 1428, he accompanied the embassy which Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, sent to Lisbon when he sued for the hand of the daughter of King John I. of Portugal. In the Museum of Berlin are preserved the wings of the famous picture which the above-named celebrated painters—the actual founders of the great Flemish school—executed for the Cathedral at Ghent. On these wings, which represent holy hermits and pilgrims, Johann van Eyck has embellished the landscape with orange and date trees and cypresses, which, from their extreme truth to nature, impart a solemn and imposing character to the other dark masses in the picture. One feels, on looking at this painting, that the artist must himself have received the impression of a vegetation fanned by gentle breezes.

In considering the master-works of the brothers Van Eyck, we have not advanced beyond the first half of the fifteenth century, when the more highly-perfected style of oil painting, which was only just beginning to replace painting in tempera, had already attained to a high degree of technical perfection. The taste for a vivid representation of natural forms was awakened, and, if we would trace the gradual extension and elevation of this feeling for nature, we must bear in mind that Antonio di Messina, a pupil of the brothers Van Eyck, transplanted the predilection for landscape painting to Venice, and that the pictures of the Van Eyck school exercised a similar action in Florence on Domenico Ghirlandaio and other masters.† The artists at this epoch directed their efforts to a care-

\* Waagen, *op. cit.*, th. i., 1837, s. 59; th. iii., 1839, s. 352-359. [See Lanzi's *History of Painting*, Bohn's Standard Library, 1847, vol. i., p 81-87.]—*Tr.*

† "Pinturicchio painted rich and well-composed landscapes as inde