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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CLOUDS AND ARTISTS

"Nothing is more extraordinary in art," writes A.W. Clayden, the well-known English photographer of clouds, "than the general neglect of cloud forms. Many of them are quite as worthy of careful drawing as the leaves of a tree, the flowers of a field, the ripples of a stream, or the texture of a carpet or a marble pavement. Yet it is the common rule to find pictures, which are otherwise marvelous examples of skill and care, disfigured by impossible skies with vague, shapeless clouds, as untrue to nature as it would be possible to make them."

Ruskin, in his "Modern Painters," insists that no artist except Turner has drawn clouds correctly. Elijah Walton, the English landscape artist, published a book on the drawing and painting of clouds in which he called attention to the sins of modern artists and the Old Masters in this matter. He says of Rubens: "Nearly all his landscapes are destitute of light and are very imperfect in cloud drawing. His cumulus is without truth of character; his cirrus of questionable formation; and many times those combinations so often seen in nature are utterly ignored, not to mention his entire neglect of the time of day which is to be represented.

The English physicist Dr. W.J.S. Lockyer used to visit the annual exhibitions of the Royal Academy, in London, and subsequently describe in the journal "Nature" the curious skyscapes he found there. Some of his discoveries were appalling.

Everybody who has occasion to paint or draw clouds ought to have at his disposal a first-rate collection of cloud photographs.

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