

produces forty-two prints, (twenty-three from his own collection), of which about a dozen are adequately representative of the art of their creators; and he adds notes that are catalogue descriptions rather than illuminating comments. Astoundingly, he omits from his list of artists the name of Toyonobu, whom we now know to have been one of the most gifted of the Primitives; and he confidently says that the obscure but interesting artist Tamura Sadanobu survives to us in only two works—whereas the fact is that there are in American collections at least half a dozen more examples of his art.

Herr Einstein's volume on the Primitives is an inoffensive essay of twenty pages, followed by forty reproductions, of which two-thirds are quite inadequate as examples of the genius of the various artists represented. The volume is appropriately dedicated to Frau Tony Strauss-Negbaur, from whose collection all the illustrations are drawn. Fine as the Strauss-Negbaur collection may perhaps be, it is obviously insufficient as the sole source of material for the Primitives. No Kwaigetsudo print is shown us; and the only Toyonobu reproduced is a most woeful specimen of the work of that brilliant artist.

Herr Succo's volume on the tremendous actorpainter Shunsho cannot be taken seriously. His attempt at establishing some chronological order for Shunsho's prints relies chiefly upon the author's vague impressions of changes in technique from year to year; and this is by no means good enough. Absolutely exact dating of most of the actor-prints is quite possible by ascertaining from the records of the Yedo stage the precise time when the actor who is depicted was appearing in the particular rôle represented; but Herr Succo does not avail himself of this only safe source of information. Further, he fails to convey any very vivid impression of the genius of Shunsho as an artist; in nothing that he says do I catch an echo of the spirit of this great master of dramatic emotion and thrilling color and soul-shaking rhythm who has haunted my sleeping and waking dreams. I have spent days and weeks in the great collections, looking at nothing but Shunsho designs, lost utterly in Shunsho's world of line-and-color incantations: but I find here no faintest record of a similar experience. Nor do the majority of the prints which Herr Succo reproduces help one toward an appreciation of Shunsho; on the contrary, they exhibit only the more banal, the potboiling portion, of his work. One is forced to the conclusion that the author is unacquainted with the majority of the important masterpieces of this artist; indeed, he himself says, as if it were a matter of no account, that he has never seen the extraordinary "Five Actors in Red" which first established Shunsho's fame as an actor-painter. Really, it is nonsense to write of Shunsho unless one has made oneself familiar with the eight or nine hundred prints by this artist which are to be found in the Spaulding, Gookin, Buckingham, Boston Museum, and other American collections; it is exactly like writing of Velasquez without having gone to the Prado. And finally, and not least, one must note that Herr Succo writes in a style that is just a little bit too awful for belief: there is hardly a page on which he does not try to EMPHASIZE WHAT HE IS SAYING by printing from TWO TO TEN OF HIS PHRASES IN CAPITALS LIKE THESE — and the result is about as agreeable as if someone with whom you were quietly conversing suddenly fired off a pistol and shouted at you through a megaphone: IN OTHER WORDS IT IS ONE OF THE MOST HORRIBLE TRICKS OF STYLE THAT I HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED!!!! No, Herr Succo's volume will be of little help to Mr. Frederick William Gookin when that learned gentleman FINALLY FINDS TIME TO DO HIS DUTY and, bringing together the results of his long labor, produces for us the great and definitive monograph on Shunsho.