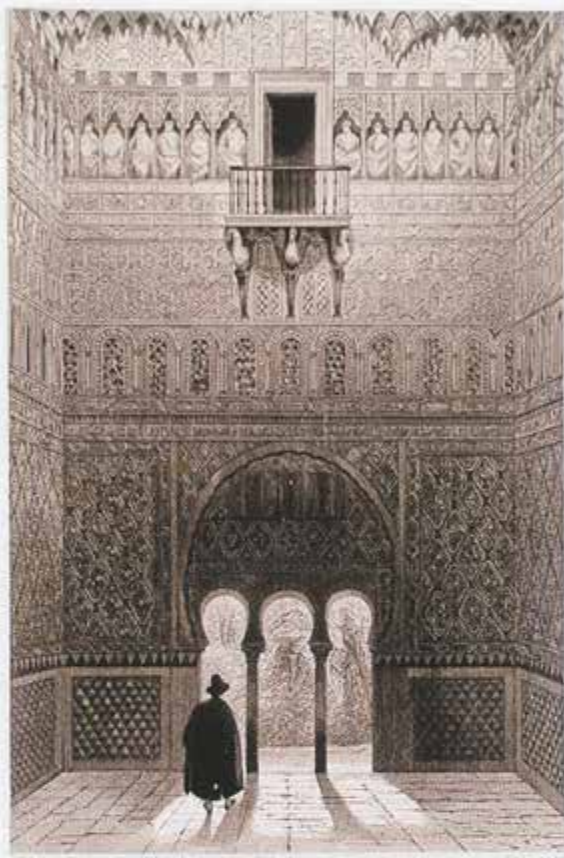


that I have read. His premise is that the printed images circulated by the Art-Union and the financial speculation that the association encouraged paralleled the contemporaneous circulation of and speculation involving paper money in the United States. Brownlee argues that such speculation in paper without adequate specie to back it up led to over-extension, a cycle of inflation and deflation, and ultimately a loss of confidence in the paper note and a financial panic. In fact, the Art-Union even produced medals to stabilize market forces in moments of volatility. Indeed, the Art-Union's bankruptcy and sale of assets at the end of 1853 was less than four years before the Panic of 1857. The final essay in the book, by Ramer, describes the history, trajectory, mission, successes and failures of the Art-Union's free gallery, which was open to the public between 1847 and 1852.

This volume is beautifully illustrated with a number of high-quality colour images and many reproductions of Art-Union prints, medals and selections from Art-Union publications, many of which are in the Gilcrease collection in Tulsa, Oklahoma (fig. 167). The only drawback is that the dimensions of illustrated objects are not noted. This publication does not appear to be an exhibition catalogue, but seems to mark the acquisition of ten prints by the museum in 2011, as noted in the list of works on the last page. It is a quick but interesting read. With the exception of Hills's and Brownlee's essays, which attempt to redraw Art-Union history and its implications, much research in the book is drawn from the standard sources and documents. But Hills's essay extends her previous provocative, thorough and fascinating research, while Brownlee's is a gem. JOY SPERLING

**BARON TAYLOR'S TRAVELS.** The three volumes about his travels in Spain, Portugal and the North African coast by the French dignitary Baron Isidore-Séverin-Justin Taylor (1789<sup>2</sup>–1879) are the subject of a recent book (Alisa Luxenberg, *Secrets and Glory: Baron Taylor and his Voyage pittoresque en Espagne*, Madrid, Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2013, 323 pp., 81 col. ill., €48). Filling a gap in scholarship which has long privileged Taylor's other publications, this recent study closely examines Taylor's nearly 450 pages of text and 165 illustrations.

Luxenberg scrutinizes every bibliographic aspect of Taylor's multi-decade project, correcting an array of errors that have persisted in the historiography of his *comtes*, some of which originated in the misleading title-pages of the books themselves. Her detailed research reveals new information about the book's production that is crucial for an accurate contextualization of Taylor's project and is significant for the larger history of nineteenth-century book illustration. In particular, she proposes a new chronology that clarifies the dating of the book's various parts between 1823 and 1850, aligning each with a specific trip of Taylor's to Spain. She also elucidates how the team



168. William or Edward Francis Finden after Pharamond Blanchard, *The Hall of the Ambassadors, Alcázar of Seville*, from *Voyage pittoresque en Espagne: Planches, Première Partie* (Paris, 1832), no. 64, steel engraving, 179 x 118 mm (New York, The Hispanic Society of America).

of roughly 30 illustrators and engravers that he hired for *Voyage pittoresque en Espagne, en Portugal et sur la côte d'Afrique, de Tanger à Tétouan* intersected with other commissions in England and France, and thus untangles a web of connections endemic to book illustration projects.

Luxenberg is equally thorough about Taylor's life, revealing new information about his deliberately obscured personal circumstances culled from her exhaustive archival research. She argues convincingly that his friendships, freemasonry activities and diverse government appointments may have influenced the evolution of *Voyage pittoresque*. These claims dovetail with the dense historical context she weaves, showing how political circumstances translated into dangerous realities for French travellers, thereby assuring that Taylor's audience would be titillated by the sense of adventure and risk underlying his narrative. Luxenberg focuses on Taylor's treatment of Spain, his



dominant subject. She traces the evolution of Franco-Spanish relations from the Napoleonic Empire through the July Monarchy, explaining that it was particularly Taylor's role as a secret agent in Spain for King Charles X and then Louis-Philippe between 1835 and 1837 which ensured that his travel book would be praised in the same patriotic terms as his clandestine mission to remove art from Spain for the Louvre's newly created Galerie Espagnole. Among other topics, Luxenberg explores contemporary travel literature, identifying some of the ways Taylor adheres to or diverges from its established conventions.

Taylor made an unusual choice to use steel engraving instead of lithography for his book's illustrations and commissioned English printmakers to transfer the designs (fig. 168). Luxenberg refers several times to this, but her book might have benefited from a more thorough investigation of steel engraving's repute and usage in mid-century France. Taylor's eschewal of lithography was particularly noteworthy in light of his previous successes. He had used lithography to startling effect in his grander, award-winning publication, the *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France*. Furthermore, the wash drawings for his Spanish book's illustrations could have been more approximately rendered in lithography rather than engraving. His decision to use steel engraving over lithography, and copper engraving for that matter, was a decisive aesthetic turn in his career.

As Luxenberg notes, Taylor's preface acknowledges Alexandre de Laborde's luxurious and lauded publication of 1806–20 on the same subject, *Voyage pittoresque et historique de l'Espagne*, which was illustrated with 370 copper engravings. Describing his own work as 'modest' by comparison, Taylor locates the significance of his book in the newness of its illustrations, clearly referring to their technique. He also cites a Scottish publication as his source of inspiration. Luxenberg suggests this was Amédée Pichot's *Vues pittoresque de l'Écosse*, since it bears a similar format to *Voyage pittoresque* even though it has lithographed illustrations (p. 107). Given that Taylor specifically refers to the book's English engravings, a more likely candidate is James and Henry Sargant Storer's *Views in Edinburgh and its Vicinity* (Edinburgh, 1820).

Taylor's choice of medium for his illustrations in the 1820s also reveals an awareness of the commercial viability of steel engraving in France at the time, and particularly of travel books engraved by English printmakers, who were celebrated for their facility with this challenging form of intaglio. However, as Basil Hunnisett describes in his *Engraved on Steel: The History of Picture Production Using Steel Plates* (Aldershot, 1998), French engravers proved their facility with steel engraving in the 1840s and within two decades its popularity had begun to wane. This may partly explain the turnaround between the enthusiastic reception of Taylor's illustrations by one critic at the Salon of 1827 and Henri Beraldi's condemnation of the prints as

'mediocre' in 1892 (compare Luxenberg, pp. 257–58 and p. 61, note 46). Although Luxenberg proves the impossibility of a full assessment of how Taylor's book was perceived in the nineteenth century, the shift in steel engraving's appeal would bolster her analysis of the vacillations in the critical assessment of Taylor's narrative.

Offering numerous avenues of investigation for the future study of Taylor's *Voyage pittoresque*, Luxenberg's comprehensive account argues convincingly for its historical and aesthetic importance and is an essential source on the subject. ELIZABETH M. RUDY

FORAIN. In one fell swoop in 1992 the Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis, TN, became one of the major centres for the study of Jean-Louis Forain's art (1852–1931) when, with the help of a group of generous donors, it acquired 58 works by the French master. Two years later, the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam was the first venue of a European tour of an exhibition based on the Memphis collection. In 2011 a second exhibition was staged in Paris at the Petit Palais and in Memphis, accompanied by French and English catalogues, in which the lead contributor was the artist's great-granddaughter, Florence Valdès-Forain (*Jean-Louis Forain (1852–1931): 'La Comédie parisienne'*, exhibition catalogue, Paris, Le Petit Palais, 10 March–5 June 2011; Memphis, Dixon Gallery, 26 June–9 October 2011; Paris, Le Petit Palais, 2011, 256 pp., 255 col. and 27 b. & w. ill., \$40 / €39). Joëlle Raineau and Cécile Coutin also provided essays; it is unfortunate that the latter's name is given several times in error as Céline. The exhibition included paintings, watercolours, drawings, pastels and a substantial group of prints.

Forain's art has a curious caesura, which means that one could almost imagine that his oeuvre, particularly his prints, might even have been the work of two distinctly different personalities. Initially, his paintings and works on paper were elegant, but his later prints could be described as graceless and full of fury. Forain took up etching in the mid 1870s under the tutelage of the sculptor Alexandre Charpentier. It is important to remember when looking at his work that he was not a Parisian; he was the son of a sign painter and came from the city of Reims. Most important to Forain was his brief period as an assistant to the sculptor and painter Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux. His early etchings were full of humour, tamer versions of the prints of Manet and Degas. Forain clearly also studied the plates of Goya and Rops. It is likely too that he was interested in Constantin Guys.

Forain's work was included in four Impressionist exhibitions from 1879 to 1886 and he was one of the younger artists to be praised by J.-K. Huysmans, who became his mentor, and whose novel *Marthe* he illustrated. A moving etched portrait of the elderly writer and critic was included in this exhibition. The key to the start of Forain's changed approach must lie in his increasing work as a so-