

George Inness

1825-1894

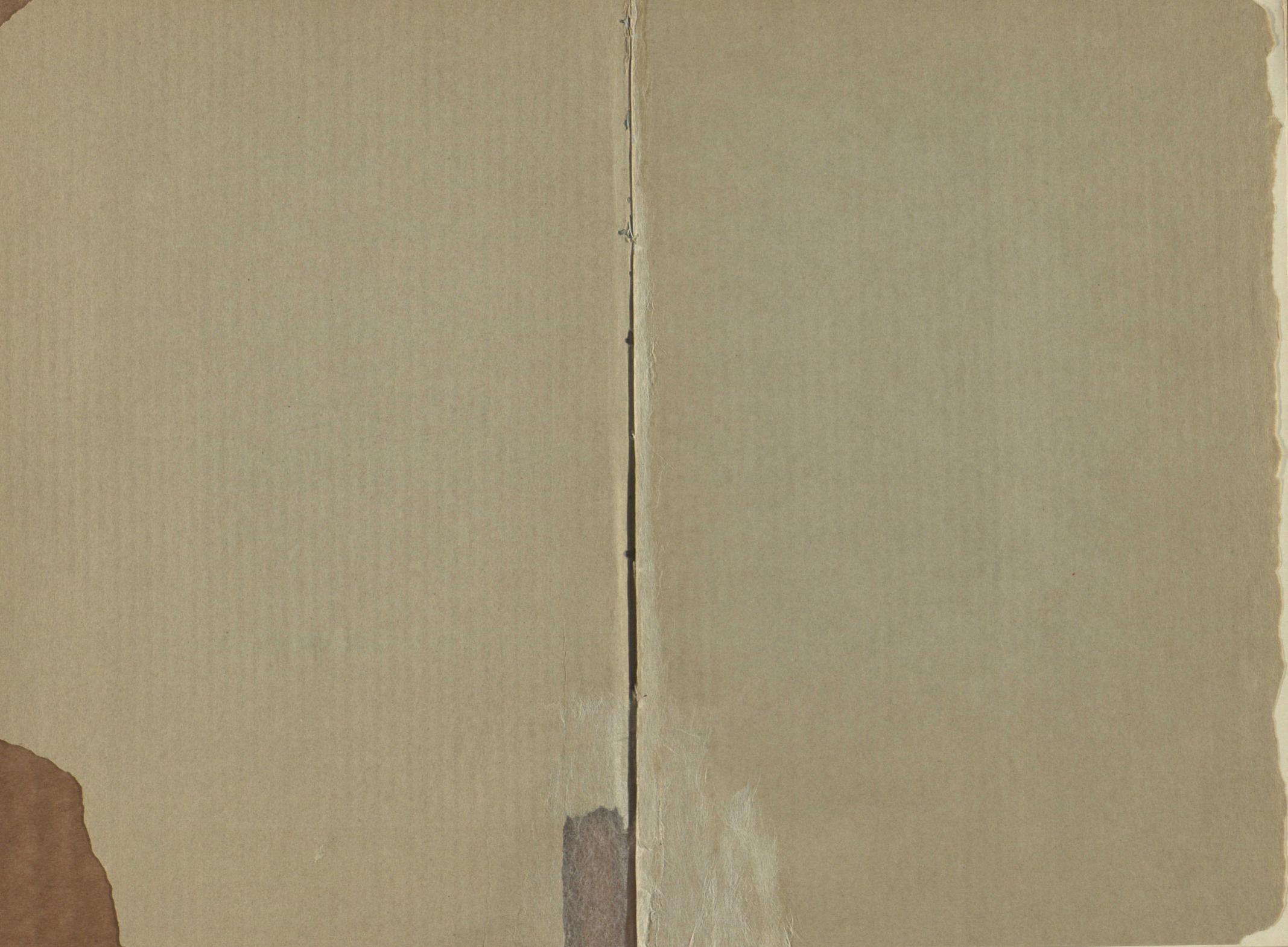
Centennial Exhibition



The MACBETH GALLERY

15 East 57th Street

New York



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January 20 :: February 9

1925



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whose generous cooperation in
lending their pictures has made
this exhibition possible.



GEORGE INNESS
1825-1894

Foreword

GEORGE INNESS was born one hundred years ago this spring. The date is perhaps the most important in American art history; it is certainly the most important as concerns the history of American landscape painting.

It was a foregone conclusion that one of America's leading art institutions would properly recognize the event. It was a sad discovery that there was no such intention. A dealer's gallery cannot be the place fittingly to commemorate the birth of Inness. Such a memorial justly demands larger space and better facilities than any private show rooms can offer.

No excuse, however, can be permitted to justify a total disregard of the occasion. A limited showing is better than no showing at all, and if the logical candidate for such an exhibition will not rise to its opportunity, the task devolves upon those with less claim to the distinction, whatever their handicap.

So we of the Macbeth Gallery do honor to Inness in all humility, and with full recognition of the fact that the small collection we can present, carefully chosen though it

Foreword

be, can do no adequate justice either to the man or his art.

To the owners who, at considerable sacrifice, have removed their choice possessions from their homes for this occasion, we and our visitors are deeply indebted. We acknowledge, too, with cordial thanks, the courtesy of The Century Company through whose permission we reprint part of Mr. Daingerfield's Introduction to the Life, Art and Letters of George Inness, by George Inness, Jr.



SUNSET AT MONTCLAIR, 1892

George Inness

By Elliott Daingerfield

OUR study of the great work of George Inness easily discovers its sincerity. It matters not if we are looking at the careful studies of early days or the more synthetic canvases of the last years, we read in them all knowledge. How like the name of a god the word comes in the midst of work based on crudity. To Inness it was an essential thing, and always behind the consciousness of knowledge was nature.

In those works which express the man's message, there is never a servile copying of place or thing; yet both are in place, both fully understood, and the beauty of the nature he wishes us to see is fully revealed—revealed, too, in George Inness's way. And that again is one of the beauties of great landscape art—any art, for that matter, which claims to be fine art—it is always plus the man.

There is little gain for art in the exquisite copying of things. Many have tried it, many have spent long hours and days in servile reproduction, and begotten in the end an emptiness, a thing which has the same relation to art that an inanimate has to an animate creature; but in the study which produces understanding, in the loving

George Inness



ACROSS THE VALLEY, 1869

observation which teaches, in the absorption of idea—in such ways men acquire the knowledge which gives them expression, which permits them, within the silence of four blank walls, to see visions and to give gifts to men. It is through such works that we know and love great men, and through such works that they uplift humanity and better civilization. They lift for us a curtain, and eyes which have been dull before are illumined. A great work indeed!

It is because of this great inner vision that George Inness must take rank among the greatest landscape-painters, almost, we might say, himself the greatest of all, but

George Inness

for that American objection to the claims of any man in any walk of life to being acclaimed the greatest

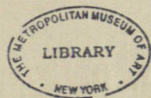
Much has been written of him as artist and man, much that savors merely of the reporter's comments, and some things so vague and wordy that nothing of an image remains. I, myself, have tried to set down in various places and ways my impressions gained in many years of close association, but I am aware of the futility of recreation. He has gone, and the wisest and best way to know George Inness is to sit before his works, to search them in their depths, to study each item of composition, its bearing upon the great mass, to find, if one may, the law by which he constructed his proportions and placements, to discover the reasons for color or tone choice, or that deeper significance, the impulse, artistic and religious, which created it. So we will come into closer touch with his great genius, so we will live with his spirit, and presently be able to understand why he should be accorded that high place in landscape art which is second to none, more dynamic than many, intenser than all, true as the best, and with a musical chord in his color that has never been approached.

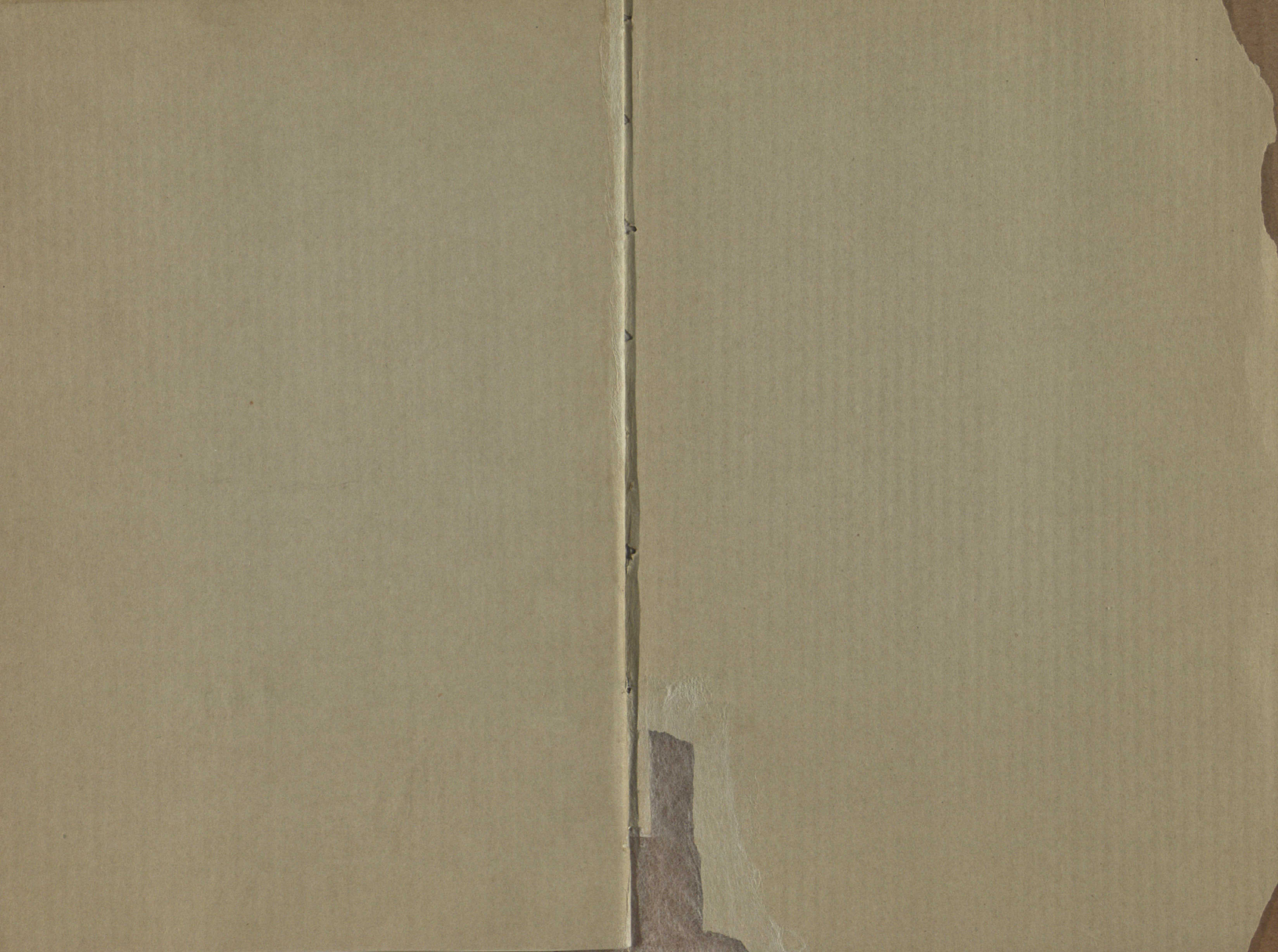


SUMMER FOLIAGE, 1883

Titles

- 1 Eagleswood, N. J., 1868
- 2 On the Hudson, 1875
- 3 Sunset Glow, 1883
- 4 Moonrise, 1888
- 5 Home of the Heron, 1891
- 6 Summer Foliage, 1883
- 7 Winter Morning, Montclair, 1889
- 8 Early Spring, 1890
- 9 The Wood Gatherers, 1891
- 10 The Hayfield
- 11 Silvery Autumn, 1886
- 12 A Passing Shower, 1860
- 13 Sunset at Montclair, 1886
- 14 Evening, 1881
- 15 Near Medfield
- 16 Across the Valley, 1869
- 17 Etretat, Normandy, 1874
- 18 Meadowlands in June, 1883
- 19 Coast of Cornwall, 1886
- 20 June, 1882
- 21 From My Studio Window, Tarpon Springs, Florida, 1892
- 22 Sunset, Villa Barberini, Albano, 1876
- 23 A Sunny Autumn Day, 1892
- 24 Sunset at Montclair, 1892
- 25 The Rainbow, 1878
- 26 Barberini Pines, 1876
- 27 March Breezes, Virginia, 1885
- 28 Sunrise, 1891
- 29 Gathering Wood, Montclair, 1889
- 30 Old Elm at Medfield, 1860
- 31 Late Afternoon, October, 1886





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