

STURGES + COLE

[table near W window]



THOMAS COLE, *View on the Catskill, Early Autumn*, 1836-37, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA, Gift in memory of Jonathan Sturges by his children, 1895 (95.13.3)

Sturges commissioned Cole to paint the valley you can see from this room. The view was changing rapidly, as railroads and factories arrived.

Cole to Sturges, February 1837

Cole, Thoughts & Occurrences, August 1, 1836

This picture is a view in the valley of the Catskill near this place. It was a favorite haunt of mine, but its beauty has passed away.

Where the rail road is now, the charm of quietness and solitude is gone. [Journal]

Sturges to Cole, March 1837

I can imagine what your feelings are when you see the beauties of nature swept away to make room for avarice—we are a truly destructive people.

Cole, Thoughts & Occurrences [Journal], August 1, 1836 (NYSL)

If men were not blind to the beauty of nature, commerce might be carried on without destroying it. But it is not so - They destroy whatever they touch.

Sturges later helped finance the construction of the very railroads he condemned in his letter.

Can development be balanced with preservation?